

Snapshot



St Oswald's
Hospice

Autumn | Winter 2020
News and updates

You did it!

You might remember our appeal back in 2017/18 to raise funds to build a brand new family room on our Adult Inpatient Unit and fully refurbish the adjacent garden. We asked for your support to make this happen and your response was simply incredible!

The build of the family room was kindly funded by the Margaret Innes Trust and Amos Hinton & Sons Centenary Fund and together, you all donated to decorate and furnish it. In Summer 2018, our appeal to completely transform the garden the family room leads onto was just as passionately supported with the groundworks and build funded by a long-time supporter and friend of the hospice. Your generous donations to our garden appeal allowed us to add the special touches, from plants to lighting and furniture to water features.

In May, as the garden was still being completed, it had the chance to really shine as the venue for a very special wedding for one of our patients. Plants were still being added to flowerbeds minutes before the service, as the doors were opened, guests saw the garden bathed in sunshine, with flowers, balloons and lanterns adorning the entrance to the family room. It was a really special day for the family involved.

We hope to move onto the next stage of the garden development soon, which will see the installation of the gazebo, railings around the pond and more planting to add the finishing touches, followed by an official opening. Our clinical teams are already planning activities to make the most of these beautiful new spaces for our patients including afternoon teas, pizza and movie nights, craft activities and family celebrations.

Because of you, this wonderful project has been possible. Thank you so, so much!

“ Adult Inpatient, Jaqueline Maddison, recently enjoyed an afternoon tea experience in the Family Room with her granddaughter.

It did me the world of good and it was just brilliant to get the chance to spend time with my family in difficult circumstances. The afternoon tea was such a treat and the room had been set up to look so lovely. It really gave me a lift.



Celebrating the lives of your loved ones

This year has been a particularly difficult one and sadly, many of us will have lost someone we love. Covid-19 restrictions have impacted on the planning of funerals, meaning you might not have been able to say goodbye as you would have wanted.

We'd like to share with you some of the ways that our supporters choose to celebrate the lives of their loved ones whether their loss is recent or happened many years ago and things we offer at the hospice to help you through a difficult time. We hope they bring you comfort.



Lighting a candle in our chapel

Over the last few months, you told us you were struggling with not being able to have funerals in the way you would like to. Many supporters still visit St Oswald's long after their loved one stayed here, to light a candle on a special anniversary or just to feel close to them. Our Spiritual Care Team can light a candle in our chapel on your behalf, please let us know if you'd like to arrange this by emailing enquiries@stoswaldsuk.org



Tribute Tree

Located in our peaceful hospice garden, St Oswald's Tribute Tree commemorates the lives of people whose families have chosen to open a Tribute Fund in their name. The branches of the tree are adorned with leaves, engraved with the names of those being remembered.

To find out more about opening a Tribute Fund, call **0191 246 9123** or visit www.stoswaldsuk.org/in-memory



Christmas begins in our house once the Light up a Life star and Christmas cards arrive. We remember several much loved family members and keep every star, hanging them on the same branch of our tree. This makes it feel like they are part of our Christmas, which is a real comfort to my family.

- Pam Mudie



Planning for the future

Did you know that we offer a Free Wills service in partnership with McClure Solicitors? Losing someone close to us can make us consider our own future and making a Will is something we all think about but rarely get round to doing.

Your Will be professionally written free of charge with the option to make a donation to the Hospice. If you already have a Will but need it amended or updated, McClure also offer a Free Will Review service, so anyone can benefit from the scheme.

You can book an appointment direct with McClure Solicitors on **0800 852 1999** quoting 'Free Wills for Charity' or email contactus@mcclure-solicitors.co.uk.



Light up a Life of a loved one



Light up a Life is our Christmas celebration of life, which everyone is welcome to join in with. In return for your donation to St Oswald's, you'll receive a personalised card bearing the name of the person you are remembering and a star decoration to hang on your tree. A light will also sparkle for them on our own tree at the hospice.

Thousands of local people remember someone this way, whether or not they have a direct connection to the hospice. By taking part, you'll be helping to support other families at a difficult time.

Light up a Life Celebration Event

Although we sadly can't invite you to attend a Celebration Event in person this year, our Spiritual Care Lead, Davina Radford, will lead a virtual service at 7pm on Sunday 6th December at the hospice that you can watch from home. We hope you will join us by hanging your star on the tree, placing your card on the mantelpiece and lighting a candle at home. You can find more information on the enclosed flyer or on our website at www.stoswaldsuk.org/light-up-a-life

Eleanor Langan from Gosforth is usually unable to attend our Light up a Life Celebration Event due to her mobility, but now that it's taking place virtually, she will be joining us to remember her husband, James.

"Before Coronavirus, I would meet with Brenda from the bereavement team once a week and now we have our sessions in the form of a weekly phone call. Grief is something that is with you all of the time, and without the hospice I don't think that I would be the same person."

"I've always wanted to go to the Light up a Life service but I've been unable to in the past due to bad mobility. As its virtual this year, I can take part with my daughter who lives in London, and the rest of the family, to remember James together."



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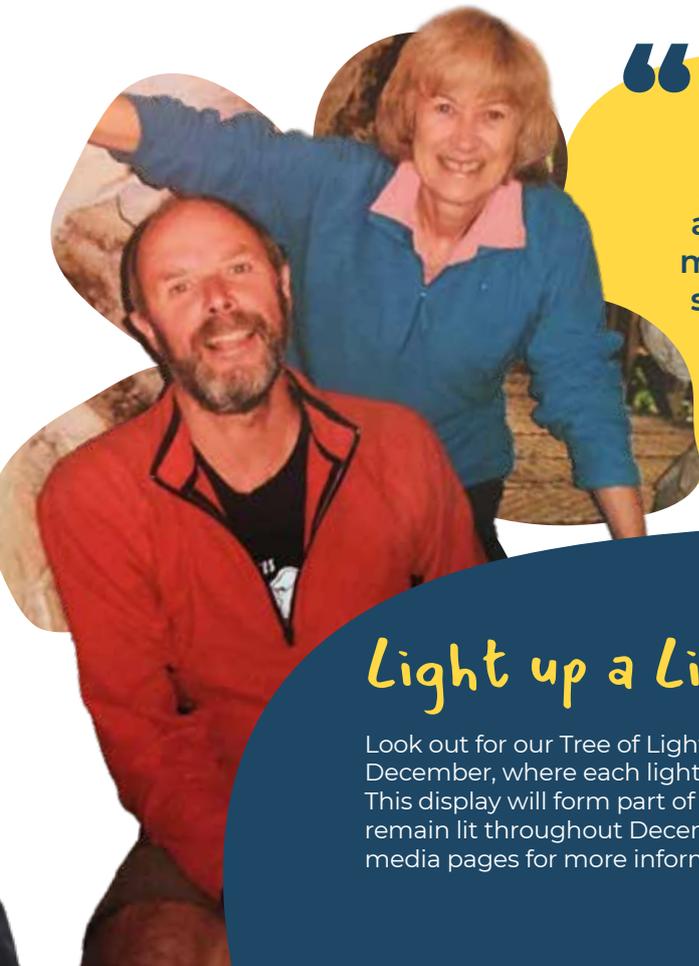
I dedicate a light for my husband Steve each year, and when the card arrives in the post, I put it straight on my window ledge. It goes in the same spot every year and it makes me feel as though he is here with me.

-Liz Bangs

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Light up a Life Tree of Lights

Look out for our Tree of Lights display outside of St Oswald's this December, where each light will sparkle in memory of someone special. This display will form part of our Virtual Light up a Life celebration and will remain lit throughout December. Keep an eye on our website and social media pages for more information.



A brighter future, thanks to you



Providing the same outstanding care, with some important changes



We can't pretend the last few months haven't been tough and we know there are still challenges ahead. We've been overwhelmed however, at the support you and our local community have shown us, not just with donations to keep our patients cared for and supported at this most uncertain of times, but also your kind words and gestures that mean the world to our whole team and the local families we support. Thank you from all of us. In this section, we wanted to share with you some of our latest developments, thanks to your continued support of our charity.

The future of end of life care in the North East

You may remember from a previous edition of Snapshot that, as part of our Vision, we are working alongside partners in the region to further develop palliative care education and research in the North East. Last year, we opened the St Oswald's Hospice Research Centre which, in conjunction with Newcastle University Medical School, Northumbria University, Newcastle Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, will help St Oswald's Hospice be at the forefront of specialist palliative care delivery and development in the region moving forward.

As part of this research work, we'd like to introduce to you our first staff member who will be central to this development; Amanda Lee, Research Centre Manager.

Amanda said:

"We're thrilled that St Oswald's has been formally recognised for our commitment to palliative and end of life care research, and it is a privilege to be working alongside our various partners to progress this important work. This is a huge development for our region, as palliative care is an area that is under-researched internationally, with only a handful of similar sites in the country.

"Currently we're working on a number of projects including looking at the impact of Covid-19 on the provision of end of life and palliative care for patients, as well as the wellbeing of the staff and volunteers on the frontline who deliver this care. We are involved in research with the University of York to look at the health of mothers of children with a life-limiting condition, and also speaking to the healthcare professionals who provide their care too. Finally, we are looking at a joint research unit with Great North Children's Hospital to focus on Children and Young Adults palliative care, and although it's early days, we are in the process of forming a partnership with Sobell House Hospice in Oxford, looking at complementary research projects which could benefit both regions."

Amanda ended:

"It has been proven that organisations that have a research focus have a better outcome for patients. And with that in mind, our vision is to deliver internationally recognised research to enhance and deliver the best palliative care for people of the North East and beyond."

To find out more about our research projects and to get involved please contact Simon Gordon, Director of Strategy and Development at simongordon@stoswaldsuk.org or Amanda Lee, Research Centre Manager at amandalee@stoswaldsuk.org



Continuing to adapt our services to meet the needs of our patients and families, we've recently started to deliver art therapy group sessions online. Although patients told us they appreciated the individual support they continued to receive, they were missing their peer support which gave them among others things, a sense of belonging.

Fiona Clark, Art and Therapeutic Activities Facilitator tells us more:

"We would usually have around 80 patients a week attending our Day Hospice and group sessions. As face to face contact is now not possible with this group of extremely vulnerable people, as well as their individual contact support, we have started to meet up and deliver sessions online. The impact has been very positive. Our patients have told us how these group sessions have made their time in lockdown both fun and helpful in many ways. They have been able to create nice memories during these uncertain times."

These vital developments continue to be supported by your donations, funding the resources and equipment needed. Thank you.

Thank you

From the very bottom of our hearts, we thank you for being with us every step of the way, We are humbled and delighted to announce that our **Covid-19 Appeal**, which you so generously supported this year, has to date raised a massive **£305,201**. The difference this will make to the hospice at a very difficult time is significant and we can't thank you enough.

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