Newsletter

ISSUE 28 | WINTER 2026



We're Here When You Need Us

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East Lancashire Hospice

East Lancashire Hospice

Our Year in **Numbers**

2025 - 2026



195

IPU admissions



2,936

Hospice at Home visits

604

night support visits



972

referrals for support and wellbeing



90

unique attendees at our Bereavement Café

A Message from Our CEO, **A Vision for the Hospice**

It is once again a privilege to write my welcome message for the Winter edition of our newsletter, as Chief Executive of East Lancashire Hospice. I have now been in post for three months and continue to feel incredibly honoured to lead such a special organisation and continue to be amazed by the compassion, dedication and expertise demonstrated every day by our staff, volunteers and supporters.



Hospice care holds a unique and vital place within our communities, supporting patients and their friends and families through some of life's most challenging moments. Since stepping into this role, I have seen first-hand how this commitment is reflected in everything we do, from the exceptional quality of our clinical care to the warmth and compassion shown in every personal interaction.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our staff and volunteers, whose tireless efforts make such a meaningful difference to those we support. I am equally grateful to our donors, partners and the wider community. Your generosity and commitment enable us to continue delivering and developing the services that so many local people rely upon.

As Chief Executive, my priority is to provide strong leadership, stability and support for our organisation, while ensuring we remain true to our values and mission. I am also committed to listening, learning and working alongside colleagues, patients, families and stakeholders as we continue to build on our strengths and plan confidently for the future.

This edition of the newsletter showcases just some of the incredible work taking place across the Hospice. I hope it offers a glimpse into the impact we are making together and highlights the importance of sustaining these vital services for generations to come.

Thank you for being part of East Lancashire Hospice and for your continued support.

Warm regards,

Nicola Hanna

Nicola Hanna

CEO

Meet the **Team!**

We asked six members of our team three simple questions: what they love most about East Lancashire Hospice, what they enjoy most about their roles, and what they wish more people knew about the work they do.

Here's what they had to say!



Barney Shaw
Legacy & Engagement Officer

"It's really special to know that the support we provide has such a positive impact on our patients, and their friends and families, at what can be a very difficult time.

It's inspiring to see our local community come together and the difference their generosity makes for local families. Whether someone is fundraising, donating, or choosing to leave a gift in their Will, it's wonderful to see how that support makes our work possible.

I'd love people to know how much we enjoy hearing about their personal connection to the Hospice when they get in touch to make a donation. Every gift has a story, and hearing why people choose to support the Hospice is incredibly meaningful. As a Legacy and Engagement Officer, I also want people to know that leaving a gift in their Will, no matter the size, can help future generations of patients and their friends and families receive the support they need."



Lianne Robinson
Trustee

"The warm welcome that makes you feel relaxed and comfortable across all services. Also, the absolute commitment from all our clinical staff to give the best possible care and experience to our patients and their friends and families. They truly do care.

Being able to share my knowledge and experience to help the Hospice develop and further achieve our ambitions. Also, hearing about people's experience of care or their experience as an employee.

Being a trustee is a real privilege. To be able to contribute to and set the direction for hospice care across East Lancashire is a rare opportunity, and I would encourage more people to look at ways in which they could support charitable organisations as trustees."



Ghazala Hassan
Finance Team Leader

"My favourite thing about the Hospice is the people. What I genuinely love is how welcoming, caring and professional everyone is. The dedication shown to our patients and their friends, families, and our supporters is incredible, and people always go above and beyond. We also have some very witty colleagues who make work enjoyable whilst still taking their responsibilities seriously.

My role involves a variety of different tasks throughout the month, which keeps every day interesting. I genuinely enjoy everything from updating the office rotas to carrying out bank reconciliations. In fact, some days the office rota feels more complex than the bank recs!"



Ashleigh Foster
Complementary Therapist

"The whole team is very caring and supportive, and we strive to make the Hospice the best it can be for everyone, and I love that we can see the difference this makes to those we care for and their friends and families.

The thing I enjoy the most about my role is being able to spend one-to-one time with patients. We get to spend longer periods of time with the people we see in a quiet and therapeutic space. This gives us more time to get to know our patients and help with not just the physical effects of palliative conditions but also offer support mentally and emotionally.

The main thing for me is that my patients leave feeling better than how they came in; sometimes people need to talk and get things off their chest, and sometimes people just need a quiet hour to themselves enjoying a treatment. We have amazing complementary therapy rooms; the music, lighting and aromatherapy really have a way of transporting you to a much calmer place. We do much more than massage; we have a small team of highly skilled therapists. We do practice massage, but we also offer sound bath and meditation experiences, reflexology, reiki, HEARTS, MTechnique and group relaxation. We offer something for everyone that needs some time out from 'being a patient'."



Sharon Wilson
Accrington Shop Manager

"Supporting a charity close to my heart, after everything they did for my late mother, they are angels.

Absolutely passionate about my role and love everything about it. Can't wait to go to work and don't want to go home. I would work 7 days a week if I could.

How much hard work I put into my role and how much I care about everything I do and everyone that I work with and the appreciation I have for my volunteers."



Jessica Machinowiec
IPU Team Leader

"I've never worked anywhere with such a strong culture of kindness, compassion and support. No matter how busy or challenging a day might be, everyone pulls together, and there's always someone willing to help. It's a very special place to work.

For me, it's the opportunity to build meaningful relationships with patients and families. Having the time to listen, get to know people, and support them through their journey is a real privilege. Along the way, there are so many special moments, from heartfelt conversations to shared laughter, and those are the moments that stay with you.

I wish people knew that being a Nurse Team Leader on the Inpatient Unit is about much more than leading and supporting a team. Hands-on nursing remains a huge part of my role, and I'm still very involved in caring for patients and supporting families. Being able to combine leadership with direct patient care is incredibly rewarding, and it's a privilege to play a part in making each day the best it can be for those we support."

“The Space They Left Behind”

Learning to Live When Someone You Love Is No Longer Here

When Jonny talks about his mum, Kathryn, one thing becomes immediately clear: she was the kind of person who always put others first.

“She was selfless, kind-hearted and genuine,” he said. “She’d do anything for anyone and always put everyone before herself.”

Kathryn, from Baxenden, was 67 years old when she died at East Lancashire Hospice in May 2026, just five weeks after being diagnosed with an aggressive form of non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

The diagnosis came as a devastating shock to the family. “It was the day after Mother’s Day,” Jonny recalled. “She went into hospital and they found cancerous cells in her liver and lungs, an inflamed pancreas and aggressive blood cancer. Five weeks later, she died.”

Doctors advised against chemotherapy and instead considered a less invasive treatment, however, the cancer progressed rapidly. Eventually, the family were given the news they had feared.

“The doctors came to see mum and told us there was nothing more they could do,” said Jonny. “They said it was too far gone and that we needed to start thinking about comfort and quality of life.”

When asked where she wanted to be, Kathryn’s answer was immediate. Jonny added; “She said she wanted to come to the Hospice.” It was a place she already knew and admired. Kathryn had been a regular supporter of East Lancashire Hospice and knew the Corporate Fundraiser, Marisa, through their Slimming World group.

Kathryn and her husband had spent their lives helping others. Kathryn worked as a Patient Transport Service Duty Manager, while her husband worked on the ambulance service before becoming a bus driver.

“The kindness, gentleness and dignity were mind-blowing,” shared Jonny. **“Everything was done with a smile. From the nurses to the cleaning staff, everyone made an impact.”**



That is where their love story began on a bus in 1979. “Dad picked mum up as a passenger at a bus stop,” Jonny smiled. “She travelled into Accrington for work. He noticed her, and later he saw her again playing pool in the Railway pub. That’s where it all started.”

While nothing could ease the heartbreak of losing Kathryn, the care she received at East Lancashire Hospice gave the family precious moments together and memories they will treasure forever. “They went above and beyond, I feel they really were by our side,” said Jonny. “There was nothing they wouldn’t do for mum. If she wanted a caramel iced coffee, she’d get one. Ice-cold water, snacks, anything she wanted.”

The support extended to the whole family. “I remember dad saying, ‘You’re taking everything off my shoulders and putting it on your own.’ That’s exactly how it felt. We could just focus on being with mum.” Special memories were made in the Hospice gardens, where Kathryn could enjoy the sunshine and spend time with those she loved. “We’d sit by the pond with the patio doors open and the sun shining,” Jonny said. “Honestly, it didn’t feel like we were in Blackburn and it didn’t feel like we were at a hospice. It felt like a beautiful holiday home.”

Those moments also included Jonny’s cocker spaniel, Jax, who became a constant source of comfort. “I brought Jax in because he keeps me grounded. He slept beside me every night.”

For Jonny, the Hospice exceeded every expectation he had of end-of-life care. “It reinforced everything people say about hospice care and magnified it,” he said. “The love and support were incredible.”

The family are also grateful to know that bereavement support is available as they continue to navigate life without Kathryn. One particularly poignant reminder of his mum remains close to Jonny’s heart. During her stay, Kathryn wore a nightdress embroidered with the words, ‘Collect Beautiful Memories.’

Today, those same words appear on the cover of Jonny’s grief journal, “The Space They Left Behind”, which will be published later this year. For Jonny and his family, East Lancashire Hospice provided so much more than care. It provided comfort, precious time, and a place where Kathryn could spend her final days, surrounded by love.

Every Voice Matters

Helping Us Improve Hospice Care



At East Lancashire Hospice, every experience matters. Whether you've received care, supported a friend or family member, volunteered or raised money, your feedback helps us learn and improve.

Feedback is one of the most valuable tools we have for learning and improving.

We have learnt that small concerns can feel much bigger when our patients and their friends and families are facing challenging circumstances. Clear communication, reassurance and compassion can make a significant difference to your experience of care. Most importantly, people want to know their voices have been heard.

What People Say

> "The care and compassion shown to our family was exceptional."

> "Nothing was too much trouble. We felt supported throughout."

> "Everyone treated us with dignity, kindness and respect."

Have Your Say

Because your voice matters!

Scan the QR code to leave your feedback

or call our team on 01254 965833

We're Here When

24 hours a day, 365 days a year!



Throughout every season, East Lancashire Hospice is here to provide specialist palliative care and support for patients and their friends and families.

With your support we can continue to be here for more people across Blackburn, Darwen, Hyndburn and the Ribble Valley now and in the future.

Scan the QR code to donate

Help us be there for more people all year round

You Need Us!



On our Inpatient Unit, we ensure that the spiritual and faith needs of our patients, as well as their friends and families, are met just as much as their care needs.



Our Physiotherapy team supports our patients to live as independently as possible, enjoying the best quality of life. For many, that's to regain confidence again.



Sometimes it's the simplest moments that mean the most. Feeling the warmth of the sun on your face, watching the world outside, and taking a moment to simply be. At East Lancashire Hospice, we're here to help patients enjoy the moments that matter.



Our Clinical Nurse Specialists provide expert palliative care for patients with complex symptoms, supporting people at home and helping to avoid unnecessary hospital admissions. We ensure our patients are cared for in their preferred place, wherever possible.



Our Creative and Support Therapies Christmas party gives our patients the opportunity to come together, enjoy festive celebrations and make special memories at a time when support and companionship matter most.

Anita's Story

Volunteer Story

For over 14 years, Anita Knagg has been a dedicated volunteer at East Lancashire Hospice, giving her time, creativity and enthusiasm to our shops and fundraising events.

She now volunteers at our Blackburn Crabtree Street shop and Wilpshire Boutique, as well as supporting at various annual events.

Anita's connection to the Hospice began when a close friend's niece was cared for here. Wanting to give back, she joined two other families to form the 'FUNRaisers'; a group that organised discos, party nights, quiz nights and fashion shows to raise funds. Her husband, daughter and brother-in-law often joined in, making it a real family effort.

Volunteering has given Anita a strong sense of purpose since retiring. She values the people she has met through the Hospice, and she speaks fondly of Café Retreat for its welcoming atmosphere and role as a social space for the wider community.

Anita has always enjoyed making earrings and bracelets for herself, but her jewellery volunteering began when the Wilpshire shop received a large donation of broken semi-precious gemstone beads. Saddened at the thought of such beautiful materials going to waste, she began creating earrings, necklaces, and bracelets, gradually learning what customers liked and adapting her designs.

She soon realised many jewellery donations arrived tangled, broken or incomplete. Anita began sorting the bags herself, untangling pieces, repairing anything that could be fixed, and taking apart unsellable items to reuse the beads. Single earrings became beautiful pendant necklaces, broken strands became new bracelets, and beads were turned into necklaces.

"I'm unusual in that I enjoy untangling things," said Anita. "A bag of knotted necklaces is a thing of joy."



Anita finds the jewellery work therapeutic and loves knowing that discarded items can have a new purpose, while supporting the Hospice for her local community. Anita's creativity, care and attention to detail have made a real difference, and we are grateful for her contribution.

You can find Anita's jewellery at our Wilpshire shop or Oswaldtwistle Mills, plus stalls at some of our events.

Become a Volunteer!

Volunteers are at the heart of East Lancashire Hospice. Every day, they help create a warm and welcoming environment for patients and their friends and families, while supporting the many services that keep the Hospice running.

We currently have 266 volunteers across the Hospice who contribute more than 41,000 hours of their time each year, representing an incredible saving of over £558,000. Their dedication helps us continue providing specialist palliative care and support across Blackburn, Darwen, Hyndburn and the Ribble Valley.

Whether you're interested in supporting patients and visitors, helping at events, driving patients to appointments, working in our shops, assisting in Café Retreat, gardening, administration or education, there's a volunteer role to suit a wide range of interests and experience. Whatever time you can give, and whatever your background, there's a place for you here.

Scan here to find out more

East Lancashire Hospice

Our Year of **Volunteering**

2025 - 2026



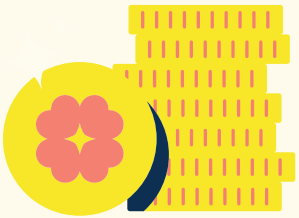
266

volunteers hospice-wide



41,496

hours per year



£558,121.20

savings using the RWL hourly rate

Challenge Champions

Going the Extra Mile for Hospice Care

Every year, our supporters take on challenges to raise funds for East Lancashire Hospice. From skydiving and wing walking to running and walking hundreds of miles, these dedicated individuals are helping ensure East Lancashire Hospice is there for the people of Blackburn, Darwen, Hyndburn and the Ribble Valley.

5 Half Marathons in 5 Months

As part of Canterbury Fireplaces' Corporate Challenge, Paul Cooper took on an incredible challenge: completing five half marathons in five months. Paul's fundraising was inspired by the care his grandma received on our Inpatient Unit in 2023.

"The care she received, and the support our whole family received, was second to none. It made her last few days peaceful, and I'll always be grateful for that."

Through additional fundraising activities with Canterbury Fireplaces, Paul raised an incredible £1,951.25 for East Lancashire Hospice.

> "Every donation, big or small, helps East Lancashire Hospice continue the amazing work they do for local people and their friends and families."





Jenna Takes Fundraising to New Heights

For our Inpatient Unit staff nurse, Jenna Hudson, East Lancashire Hospice is more than a workplace. After volunteering with us almost ten years ago and later seeing her grandad cared for on our Inpatient Unit, she knew this was where she wanted to build her career.

Now part of our nursing team, Jenna took on one of our most daring fundraising events: the wing walk. Standing on top of a vintage aircraft is far outside her comfort zone, but she was determined to raise funds for a charity that not only has helped her build her career, but which she has seen first-hand the difference the care makes to our patients and their friends and families.

> "So many people are helped by our services, and the care here is above and beyond. When someone you love is at the end of life, this is exactly the care you would hope for them."

Could You Be Our Next Challenge Champion?

Whether it's running, walking, wing walking, skydiving or creating your own challenge, every pound raised helps East Lancashire Hospice provide specialist palliative care and support for patients and their friends and families.

Take on a challenge and make a difference! Call our fundraising team on 01254 965877.

Kevin Andrews' Story

Kevin was admitted to the Inpatient Unit at East Lancashire Hospice following a diagnosis of prostate cancer and died in April 2025.

Kevin was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2016 and after treatment, he continued to live a full and active life — a season ticket holder at his beloved Burnley Football Club, spending quality time with his eight grandchildren, and remaining a much-loved part of his community.

A sudden heart attack in 2023 led to a decline in his health. As the cancer spread, he later developed metastatic spinal cord compression, leaving him paralysed and requiring full-time care at home. As Kevin's needs increased, he was admitted to the Inpatient Unit at East Lancashire Hospice, where he received specialised palliative care.

From the moment he arrived at the Hospice, the team on the Inpatient Unit did everything they could to make Kevin feel comfortable and ensure his friends and family felt supported. "It felt like home almost straight away. The staff couldn't do enough for us," expressed his stepdaughter, Leah.

Kevin's family were able to stay close to him in the overnight family room, giving them space to spend meaningful time together, without worrying about practical responsibilities.



"It gave us the chance to just be together, as a family," said his partner, Lorraine. Both Kevin's two sons, Karl and Scott, and his three stepdaughters, Leah, Kirsty and Kerry, and his partner Lorraine, were all able to stay by Kevin's bedside, day and night, for the duration of his final days.

Inspired by their experience, Kevin's family have since raised funds and created care packs for families staying at the Hospice. During the time they spent at Kevin's bedside, they realised many families arrive at the Hospice without personal items such as toothbrushes or toothpaste and wanted to ensure that other families had access to basic toiletries when they needed them most. "We didn't want anyone else to worry about the little things whilst going through something so difficult," his stepdaughter Kirsty added.

Kevin's family continue to stay connected to East Lancashire Hospice by attending events and supporting fundraising activities.

Brian's Support Through Our Bathing Service

For Brian Morris, 61, from Lower Darwen, East Lancashire Hospice has become much more than a place of support.

After being diagnosed with Parkinsonian syndrome in 2013, Brian says the Hospice is now somewhere he feels understood, welcomed and cared for.

Before his diagnosis, Brian led an active and fulfilling life. As a University Lecturer in Computer Games Development and Design, he enjoyed a range of activities, including football coaching, kickboxing and water sports. But as his condition progressed, everyday tasks became increasingly difficult. "Parkinson's affects every second of your life," Brian explained. "Everything you try to do, say, plan or even sleep."

After accessing counselling through East Lancashire Hospice in 2022, Brian was introduced to our Bathing Service when concerns about his mobility and the risk of falls began to make showering and bathing more challenging.

At first, he felt apprehensive. "I'm quite a private person, so I worried about my dignity and how I'd feel being supported by someone else." However, Brian's concerns quickly disappeared. "Everyone is so nice, kind, caring and thoughtful."

Brian now attends regular bathing sessions at the Hospice, supported by members of the team, including Graham, our Therapy Assistant. "Graham is ace," he said. "The service itself is second to none. The bathing is incredibly relaxing; it's like a whole new world." The support extends beyond Brian himself. His partner, Katie, has also accessed counselling through the Hospice, helping her navigate the realities of caring for someone living with a progressive condition.

Reflecting on his journey, Brian explained that his perception of hospice care was very different before accessing support. "My vision of the Hospice was that it was somewhere people came to die. I didn't realise all the other available services."



East Lancashire Hospice Opens Book and Music Shop in Clitheroe



The new shop, located at 29 Moor Lane, Clitheroe, marks the Hospice's eighth retail outlet and its third shop in the town, joining the successful Boutique and Kids shops. Lady Mayor, Cllr Mary Robinson and local author Jonny Green, were joined by Head of Retail, Claire Shilton, staff, volunteers and East Lancashire Hospice Trustees and Chief Executive Nicola Hanna, to celebrate the official opening.

Opening Times
Mon - Sat: 9:00am – 5:00pm



Opening Times
Mon - Sat: 9:00am – 5:00pm
Sun: 10:00am – 4:00pm

Crabtree Street Charity Shop

Celebrated First Anniversary

East Lancashire Hospice charity shop on Crabtree Street in Blackburn, celebrated its first anniversary in September, after a successful first year serving the local community.

Since opening in September 2025, the shop has become a popular destination for shoppers looking for great value and quality bargains.

From men's, ladies' and children's clothing to household goods, furniture, toys, games and books, there is something for everyone.

We are so grateful for the continued generosity of donors, and the shop is currently fully stocked with plenty of quality items waiting to find a new home.

Café retreat

Bringing Fine Dining **Home**

The talent of the Café Retreat team extends well beyond the day-to-day service.

Earlier this year, Head of Catering, Lee Hyatt delivered an amazing six-course tasting menu and wine experience for Winter Ball prize winner Graham Helm.

Hosted at Graham's home and inspired by the excitement and spectacle of the Goodwood Races, the bespoke menu took guests on a culinary journey from "The Paddock Arrival" through to a stunning "Winner's Circle Dessert."





The event raised a further £425 for East Lancashire Hospice, with Graham also generously donating the proceeds from the afternoon directly to the Hospice.

The exclusive dining experience is a popular prize at the Hospice's annual Winter Ball, with Lee and the team generously volunteering their time each year to make it happen.

The People
Behind the Plates

Behind every dish served at Café Retreat is a dedicated team committed to making a difference.

One such person is Kev Rompca, our chef, whose journey to the Hospice kitchen is a remarkable story of resilience, friendship and finding purpose.

After serving in the armed forces and later returning to the UK from Germany, Kev began volunteering at East Lancashire Hospice. It was through volunteering that he discovered an opportunity to combine his love of helping others with his passion for food.

Head of Catering, Lee, recognised Kev's talent and offered to train him; Kev is now a key part of the Café Retreat team. Known for bringing creativity and flair to the kitchen, particularly through his Mediterranean-inspired dishes with Korean influences.

Today, Kev continues to play a vital role in creating delicious meals and memorable experiences for patients, their friends, families and visitors alike.



East Lancashire Hospice

Secure your family's future, and **remember us in your Will**



You could leave East Lancashire Hospice even 1% in your Will, so those closest to you inherit 99%

Scan to visit our website!

Get in touch

01254 965877

fundraising@eastlancshospice.org.uk

eastlancshospice.org.uk/support-us/gifts-in-wills

Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

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