

Autumn 2026



st nic's

news from **St Nicholas** Hospice Care



"Nothing was too much trouble"

How one family's experience of our care became a lasting reminder of the people who stood beside them.

*because
you matter*

**St Nicholas
Hospice Care**

A Registered Charity No. 287773

Inside:

- Support through the night
- Why hospice care must not be left to chance
- Your support helps fund the £18,000 needed every day

Because you matter, we're here

Welcome to the autumn edition of St Nic's, and thank you for taking the time to read about the difference your support makes.

Thanks to your incredible support, we were able to be there for local people across West Suffolk and Thetford when it mattered most. See our impact across four key services:

At home



Our Community Team helped people live as well as possible, for as long as possible, in the place they call home.

993

Referrals to our
Community Team

25,200

Contacts with
patients and families

Expert support, wherever it's needed.

On Sylvan Ward



When symptoms become too difficult to manage at home, our ward provides expert care, comfort and compassion.

254

Admissions

3,067

Days of specialist
inpatient care
provided

When every moment matters.

Impact 2025-2026

1,814

people supported last year

Every day, it costs £27,000 to run St Nic's, and while the NHS contributes around 32%.

Local people help fund around £18,000 of our Hospice care every day.

Supporting families



794

Referrals for emotional and bereavement support

145

Children supported through our services

Support that stays with you.

Through the night



When worries can't wait until morning, our Out-of-Hours Service is here with expert support.

437

Patients supported by our Out-of-Hours Service

99%

Remained at home following contact

Help when the night feels longest.

When the day ends, the need for care doesn't stop.

Our Out-of-Hours Service is helping us deliver on that promise when it matters most.

Since launching in July 2025, our dedicated overnight team has provided almost 1,500 hours of support across 145-night shifts, responding to 700 calls for help from patients and families.

This responsive service, which will shortly be extending to seven nights a week, is shaped to the individual's needs. Our clinicians offer clinical expertise, communication support and education in the moment. Often being present and responsive offers the most reassurance through the night.

The impact has been significant, with more than 99% of patients being supported in the place they call home, helping people remain in their preferred place of care with professionalism and dignity.

"We see first-hand the difference this service makes every single night. Being there to support patients and families in their homes when they feel more isolated out of hours makes a real difference."

Daisy Jacobs
Service Lead

Total contacts



Phone calls



Home visits





Lenka, Patsy and Amy



Daisy, Amanda and James

The service also helps ease the experience for families by recognising and supporting changes in patients' conditions and providing care around a patient's death. It reduces distressing delays through timely responses and offers compassionate support through to bereavement.

"They took the pressure from me and helped immensely. This service is going to be invaluable."

Family feedback

This vital service is helping to ensure that no one in our community has to face the end of life alone, no matter the time of day.



Sarah



Charlotte



Amie

“I’m not going to sit in my shed anymore.”

When Gerry Newcombe was told he had a terminal lung condition, everything changed.

What began as what he thought was a chest infection became a diagnosis of pulmonary fibrosis and, with it, a period of fear, isolation and declining mental health.

“For a long time, I shut myself away,” Gerry explains. But, with courage, he reached out for help; a decision that led him to our Patient and Family Support Team.

At first, Gerry was unsure about counselling. It was only with gentle encouragement from his brother Colin, who made sure he got to each session, that he began to engage.



Over time, those sessions became a lifeline.

“Only later did I realise how much I needed that support,” he says.

With the Hospice’s help, Gerry began to reconnect with life and with the people around him.

That same connection inspired Colin to give something back. After spotting a poster at the Hospice, he decided to take on the London Marathon.

“The only reason to run it was for the Hospice and for Gerry,” he says.

With just ten weeks to train, Colin committed himself to the challenge, determined simply to cross the finish line.

On marathon day, Gerry travelled with his brother to London, a milestone in itself. Watching Colin run alongside thousands of others had a profound effect on Gerry.

“For the first time since my diagnosis, all that pain in my head was gone,” Gerry says.

Colin completed the marathon, not only raising vital funds for the Hospice, but also becoming part of a record-breaking moment.

“The funny thing is, I didn’t set out to break any records,” Colin says. “But the marathon broke the record for the most finishers ever and so every finisher was awarded a Guinness World Records ‘record breaker’ accreditation.”

For Gerry, the impact has been life-changing.

“I’m not going to sit in my shed anymore. I’m out,” he says.

Thanks to the care he’s received, Gerry now sees hospice care differently: not as a place where life ends, but where people are supported to live well, for whatever time they have left.

And thanks to people like Colin, that care can be there for others who need it most.

Most agree on one thing: everyone deserves access to expert end-of-life care.



As national debate continues and financial pressures grow, hospices across the UK face an uncertain future while continuing to provide care.



The past year has seen significant discussion about end-of-life care, particularly through debate around assisted dying legislation.



**Yet, one point of common ground is clear:
everyone deserves access to high-quality end-of-
life care and support, regardless of where they live
or their circumstances.**



Hospices play a vital role in providing that care. However, rising costs and growing demand mean many hospices are facing significant challenges.

Hospice Care Week 2026: 5-11 October



During Hospice Care Week hospices like ours will celebrate the difference hospice care makes, while highlighting the challenges facing the sector. This year the theme is: Don't leave hospice care to chance.

"Hospice care, for me, is about truly caring and being present for the person behind the patient. The people around them, their family, and those that they love. As a nurse, my role is to support them in upholding meaning in their lives. Wherever I meet them in their journey, and to help them continue to experience human connection, to feel seen, heard, and valued."

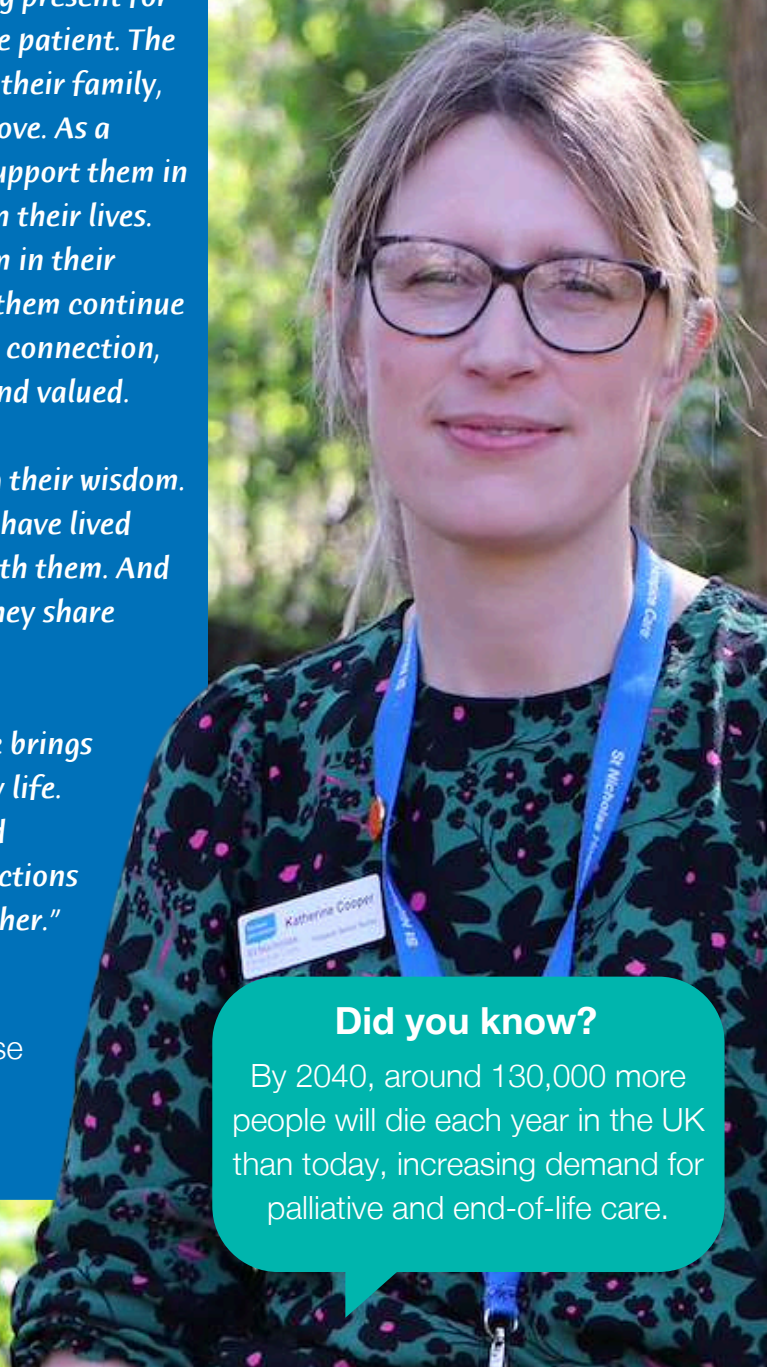
"It's about respecting their wisdom. Everything that they have lived through and carry with them. And honouring the love they share with others."

"For me, hospice care brings such a richness to my life. It's about that shared humanity. The connections that bind us all together."

Katherine Cooper
Hospice Senior Nurse

Did you know?

By 2040, around 130,000 more people will die each year in the UK than today, increasing demand for palliative and end-of-life care.



A decade of Wills Weeks support celebrated

While St Nicholas Hospice Care's Wills Weeks initiative has supported the Hospice for many years, the last decade alone has seen it raise a magnificent £224,421.30 to help fund vital care and support for local people.

Over the past five years alone, participating firms have raised £96,661.24 through the initiative, which sees solicitors offer their professional services in exchange for donations to us.

"Wills Weeks have become an important part of our fundraising over the past decade. We are immensely grateful to all of our local solicitors for their willingness to give their time and expertise in support of the Hospice. Every donation made through Wills Weeks helps us to continue our support across the community."

Nick Duncan

Gifts in Wills Manager



visit: stnicholashospice.org.uk/wills-weeks

Celebrating our Volunteers

Our volunteers are at the heart of everything we do.

Whether they're welcoming visitors, supporting patients and families, helping in our shops or working behind the scenes, their compassion and dedication make a real difference every single day.

Our Garden Party during Volunteers' Week was a chance for us to say thank you and to recognise the impact they have across our Hospice.

We'd like to thank Bluesys IT Services for their kind contribution towards the celebration event.

If you've ever thought about volunteering, there are so many ways to get involved, whatever your skills, experience or availability.



To find out more about volunteering, visit our website.

Nothing was too much trouble

When Heidi Franklin's dad became ill, her family found themselves facing a period of devastating uncertainty. Delays, conflicting information and difficult conversations left them feeling overwhelmed at a time when they most needed support.

Heidi immediately stepped into the shoes of becoming her dad's carer and advocate, while also helping the rest of the family cope with what lay ahead.

When we became involved, the family finally felt they had people around them they could rely on. The support was practical, honest and consistent, helping them navigate an incredibly difficult time. The community support provided enabled Heidi's dad to remain at home for as long as possible and helped Heidi to manage the day-to-day worries that she encountered.

"It meant I could be a daughter again," Heidi said.

When her dad was admitted to our ward, staff took the time to get to know him and understand what mattered most.

A lifelong lover of the outdoors, Heidi's dad was happiest outside feeling the wind on his face and being surrounded by nature, so the family spent time together in our garden at every opportunity. One day, at his request, they planted pots of tulip bulbs while he watched.

"Nothing was too much trouble," Heidi recalls. "It's the quality of care that makes all the difference."

Those planted pots have taken on a special significance for the family.



After her dad died, Heidi's son Charlie often asked to visit the Hospice to see how "Granddad's tulips" were growing. As the seasons change, new flowers are added to the pot, making sure there is always a splash of colour.

The Hospice has remained part of the family's life since then. Heidi has continued to receive support, and the family still visit on a regular basis. The garden, and the planted flowers in particular, are a reminder of the time they spent together.

Earlier this year, Heidi shared her family's story as part of our Sunset Walk campaign, taking part in the walk alongside her children, raising money so other local families can receive the same care and support when they need it. For Heidi, taking part was a way of remembering her dad and saying thank you for the support they all received at such an important time.



Because of you, we're here

Thank you. Every day, local people help fund around £18,000 of hospice care across West Suffolk and Thetford. The stories below reflect just a small number of the people, groups and businesses whose generosity helps ensure St Nic's can continue.

After 12 years with St Nic's, Miranda McCoy asked colleagues to donate instead of giving leaving gifts, raising £356 for local hospice care.



In memory of her brother Daren, Victoria Butler took a leap from 10,000ft and raised £700 for Nicky's Way.

Sylvia Walton and Barbara Youngs marked their 98th and 90th birthdays by asking friends and family to donate instead of bringing gifts.



Inspired by the care his family received, Richard Badger cycled from Elveden to Worcester Cathedral, raising more than £1,700 in memory of his mum.

The team from Swift Recruit took on the Newmarket Half Marathon and raised an incredible £11,745.



To mark 10 years since losing her husband, Nigel, Jane Cooper is taking on 10 challenges in 12 months. Having already raised more than £500, she's determined to see the challenge through.

Our Corporate Golf Day, sponsored by FWD Accounts and Metrita Wealth Management, saw many local businesses come together at Stowmarket Golf Club to raise £4,264.20.



The team at Chassis Cab tackled the Three Peaks Challenge and hosted their annual Golf Day, raising more than £8,000.

Thank you to everyone who opened their gardens: Special thanks to The Hidden Gardens of Bury, Thetford, Exning, Lavenham, Sudbury, Sturmer and Cavendish Open Gardens.

This year's Pakenham Charity Beer & Music Festival raised an incredible £21,000, bringing its three-year total to £50,000.

Thank you to all of those who helped make our St Nic's Cycle Ride, Sunset Walk and Skydive Day such successes.

Twenty years of support

For 20 years, Thetford Open Gardens has supported St Nic's, and we are incredibly grateful to everyone who has played a part in its success.

Thank you to all committee members, past and present, and to every gardener who has opened their gates over the years. While the Open Gardens day is a much-loved highlight, fundraising continues throughout the year through plant sales, curry nights, concerts and more.

A special mention goes to Sue Norman, who has baked her socks off in support of the Hospice. Thetford Open Gardens shows just what can be achieved when a community comes together to make a difference. Thank you for two decades of support that has helped local people and families when they needed it most.



Light up a life

Come together to reflect, remember and celebrate those who are special to us. Our Light up a Life events are open to all.

29 Sudbury 3pm
Nov St Gregory's Church, CO10 1BA

01 Lavenham 7pm
Dec St Peter and St Paul Church, CO10 9SA

03 Thetford 7pm
Dec Methodist Church, IP24 2BQ

06 Hospice 3.30pm
Dec Hardwick Lane, IP33 2QY
Booking required

08 Mildenhall 7pm
Dec King's Church, IP28 7EF

10 Newmarket 7pm
Dec All Saints Church, CB8 8ES

12 Haverhill 3pm
Dec St Mary's Church, CB9 8AX

13 Bury St Edmunds 4.30pm
Dec St Mary's Church, IP33 1RT

20 Hospice 3.30pm
Dec Hardwick Lane, IP33 2QY
Booking required

From October, share the names of those special to you here:
stnicholashospice.org.uk/lightupalife

Sponsored by:

Armstrongs
INDEPENDENT FUNERAL SERVICE



ChassisCab
TRUCK CENTRES

Our Events

Take part and help raise funds for St Nic's!

September

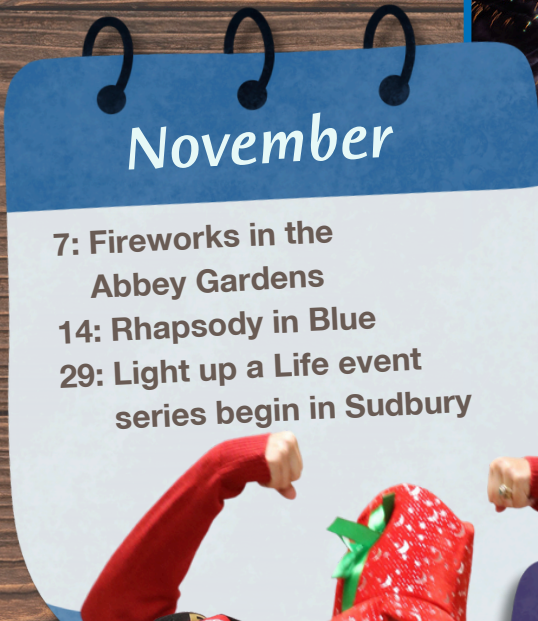
- 4: Firewalk - brave the flames
- 14: This is Hospice Care
- 21: Local Hospice Lottery Superdraw
- 25: TaskRaiser
- 27: St Nicholas Hospice Care 10k Run



October

- 2: Clay Shooting Corporate Day
- 8: Cultivating Beauty: The art of designing beautiful gardens
- 8: Faith Communities Drop-in
- 5-11: Hospice Care Week





November

**7: Fireworks in the
Abbey Gardens**

14: Rhapsody in Blue

**29: Light up a Life event
series begin in Sudbury**



December

**From 13:
Christmas
Jumper Week**



**Join in
the fun**

We'd love to see you at
our events.

stnicholashospice.org.uk/events



Do you need to update your details or contact preferences?

If we need to amend our records, please email your new details (please include your old address details too) to SupporterCare@stnh.org.uk.

Visit www.stnicholashospice.org.uk/yourdata to learn more about how we look after your data.



Our shops



Bury St Edmunds: Barton Road

The Bartons Retail Park,
Bury St Edmunds, IP32 7BE
Tel: 01284 747613

St John's Street

87 St John's Street, Bury St Edmunds,
IP33 1SQ Tel: 01284 756197

Haverhill

St Nicholas Hospice Care Haverhill Hub,
Camps Road, Haverhill, CB9 8HB
Tel: 01440 712992

Long Melford

10 Hall Street, Long Melford, CO10 9JF
Tel: 01787 468626

Mildenhall

8-14 Mill Street, Mildenhall, IP28 7DP
Tel: 01638 717965

Newmarket

79 High Street, Newmarket, CB8 8LB
Tel: 01638 669750

Sudbury

8 Gainsborough Street, Sudbury, CO10
2ET Tel: 01787 373330

Keep in touch



Tel: 01284 715566

SupporterCare@stnh.org.uk

St Nicholas Hospice Care, Hardwick Lane,
Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 2QY
T: 01284 766133 E: enquiries@stnh.org.uk
www.stnicholashospice.org.uk

St Nicholas Hospice (Suffolk) Ltd.
Registered Charity No 287773



[/stnicholashospicecare](https://www.facebook.com/stnicholashospicecare)



[/st-nicholas-hospice-care](https://www.linkedin.com/company/st-nicholas-hospice-care)



[/stnicholashospicecare](https://www.instagram.com/stnicholashospicecare)



[/stnichhospice](https://twitter.com/stnichhospice)

