



your
IMPACT

2025/26

St Helena
Hospice
For *all* the people you love



4,478

people **supported**
in 2025/26

3,569 patients

909 family members

Thank you...

St Helena could not support so many people across north east Essex without you.

In this magazine you can read about some of the ways you made an impact in financial year 2025/26.

Alongside celebrating our 40th year, last year was one of transition for St Helena. We had a difficult summer in 2025 when, like most hospices nationally, we sadly had to make tough decisions about the number of our beds, our clinical services and our people, due to unprecedented financial pressures.

Our colleagues have been exceptional throughout and remain committed, passionate and caring. We are in awe of the amazing people we work with.

A year later, **we are proud to say we are now in a sustainable financial position**, and we expect to be for at least the next three years. This means we have an exciting year ahead.

We were awarded a significant sum of money by the government in a one-off grant in 2025/26. While we would love to have spent the money on our clinical services, we were only allowed to spend it on capital items and digital infrastructure, but spend it we did!

St Helena
Hospice
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Thanks to this money, we paid for building works and equipment that will improve the environment and experience for patients, visitors, staff and volunteers. We bought two hybrid electric vehicles for our community teams to visit patients at home in a more eco friendly and cost-efficient way.

We would like to give our heartfelt thanks to all those who support St Helena and help us continue the excellent work we do for all the people you love. By volunteering, donating, taking part in events, playing our lotteries, pledging to leave a gift in your Will, supporting through your workplace, shopping with us, buying our commercial cleaning services, using our paid-for bereavement or care and support services, and in many more ways, **you make a difference.**

Together we are St Helena.

Kate Heslegrave and Dr Karen Chumbley
Co-Chief Executives



40 years of care



Reunion at Heritage Stories



CNS Diana with Rod at Life Stories

Thanks to you and to our generous supporters over the decades, we marked our 40th anniversary on 20th May 2025.

Together we celebrated **40 years of outstanding care** across north east Essex. We celebrated our people, our communities and all the people we love.

We celebrated our history with an exhibition hosted in local art galleries thanks to a heritage grant and local arts & cultural funding. The exhibition explored our past and present with Heritage Stories, a collection of stories of people who were involved with setting up the Hospice; and Life Stories, featuring memories of patients.

We celebrated our fourth Queen's Nurse as Nichole Hockett, SinglePoint senior sister, was awarded the prestigious honour as formal recognition of her commitment to improving patient care.



316

new volunteers

joined the team last year and 911 people volunteered in roles across the charity



Cally, Angela, Lotte and Pat

We celebrated our fab four ruby award volunteers. After 40 years, Cally and Angela are still digging and planting the Hospice garden, Lotte is still helping on the ward and in the kitchen as she has

done since day one, and Pat started helping on the ward in the first week and now you'll find her volunteering in our Frinton book shop.

Thanks to you

At home

Thanks to you, our Hospice in the Home **clinical nurse specialists (CNS)** support and care for people in the place where they live surrounded by what matters to them, in communities across north east Essex.

Julia Heard is a CNS providing compassionate care at home.

“

I am always grateful to be allowed into people's homes to offer my support. Building up trust with someone and their family to help them through one of the most difficult times in their life, is an honour. We can't always make things right, but we are there for them when they need it the most.

Julia”



1,454

people had a visit or phone call with a CNS; that's

12,123

caring conversations with patients and families at home

Neil was visited by Julia at his home to manage his pain relief and support his family with any worries.

“

She was talking to me about where would I like to go at the end. I said I'd rather be in my own house if possible and she said that's no problem.

I've had a good life, I've had a good wife and kids, so I'm not worried. I just get fed up with the pain in the jaw when I'm eating and talking. Some days I'm in agony, then we phone up Julia for advice.

Neil”

Neil died peacefully at home, where he wanted to be.

Our **Pier to Pier** walk sets off from Clacton and Walton each May. An incredible **790 people took part in 2026** and **721 people walked the route in 2025**, all raising money to support people in need of hospice care. Many participants walk in memory and celebration of people they miss, remembering loved ones together.

Meet two of our CNSs who care for patients and families at home along the Tendring coast.



“

Looking after people in their own homes is a real privilege. Being at home allows people to be open about their concerns. Home is also an environment they feel comfortable with, especially if they have pets and young children. I feel great satisfaction in supporting my patients and allowing them to die as they have chosen.

Debbie Vincent, Clacton and Jaywick

”



“

I love my role as it is a privilege to support people in their own homes during some of life's most challenging times. I am welcomed into their homes and lives to offer support through a difficult time. Being given the opportunity to make a difference to people and supporting them with the choices they make is an honour.

Michaela Hammond, Walton, Frinton and Brightlingsea

”



£93,970

raised at Pier to Pier 2026

£85,650 in 2025

At home

Thanks to you, our **SinglePoint** team is on the end of the phone 24/7 every day of the year to give advice and support to patients, families and carers, and to healthcare professionals.

Rapid response nurses and doctors are also on hand to visit patients in crisis who need urgent assessments and immediate help with symptom management.

38,048

calls were made day and night to **SinglePoint**



Jo, SinglePoint nurse

4,563

SinglePoint rapid response visits were made to people in crisis



Having SinglePoint there 24/7 was vital for Claire when she was caring for her husband, Bradley.



Elaine, SinglePoint rapid response nurse

“

We wouldn't have managed as well at home without all the advice from SinglePoint. When you're sitting at home as a non-med, the sole carer completely responsible for somebody, and it's 3 o'clock in the morning, where are you going to get that advice from?

How else are you going to get that support if somebody is in pain in the night with a highly aggressive cancer progressing rapidly; what are you going to do, sit and wait till the morning?

Claire.”

212

admissions to our
**Specialist Palliative
Virtual Ward**

Sometimes patients at home need a period of more intense monitoring by Hospice in the Home. They may be admitted to our **Specialist Palliative Virtual Ward** which provides medically-led care to eight virtual beds in the familiarity of home as an alternative to admission to hospital or the Hospice.

For people in the last weeks of life, our **Home Ward** helps patients remain where they live and prevents unwanted admission. **St Helena Care & Support** provides personal care to people on Home Ward, helping with all hygiene needs such as washing and mouth care, as well as providing support to the family.

The Hospice in the Home team makes sure local people dying at home have dignity and comfort. They can provide this help free of charge **thanks to you**.

10,086

Home Ward visits were made to **273** people, helping them die in comfort and with dignity

Dr Ramesh

St Helena care & support

4,270

**Urgent Community
Response visits** were
made to **137** people at
home following a crisis

6,802

visits were made to
39 private customers



At home

As well as giving comfort to people on our Home Ward, **St Helena Care & Support** offers paid-for domiciliary and care services and, **thanks to the people who choose our care agency**, it brings in an income to support the Hospice.

Hayley Bird is a senior care and support assistant who pops in three times a week to help John keep on top of household tasks after his wife died last year.

John pays for St Helena Care & Support to do some light housework and to do his shopping, and sometimes he goes for a trip out to the supermarket with Hayley when his back isn't hurting. The team provides companionship and John enjoys a chat about his collection of Cornish figurines over a cup of tea.

John & Hayley

12,654

visits were made to
111 people who needed
short-term care and support

3,261

Night Owl visits were made
to **65** people to prevent an
admission into hospital

St Helena Care & Support also provides a range of commissioned care services arranged and funded by the local NHS, councils or other organisations.

The team provides a **PoP and Braces** service supporting people who have been discharged from hospital in plaster of Paris or a body brace with some extra help at home for a few weeks.



Night Owls are on the road from 11pm to 7am offering reassurance, support and peace of mind.

St Helena Care & Support is also commissioned for **Urgent Community Response** where the team can step in to support at home, helping people stay safe, avoid unnecessary hospital admissions, and feel cared for in a time of crisis.



St Helena Care & Support was awarded an accreditation for its high-quality professional standards in end of life care by Hospice Education.

The accreditation demonstrates St Helena Care & Support's commitment, having completed a 12 month programme where staff developed skills through training, coaching and supported development.

Hospice Education is a partnership between St Helena, St Elizabeth and Farleigh hospices, which offers training and education in specialist end of life and palliative care for local health and social care professionals and care homes, so people can experience excellent hospice standards wherever they are living.

70

training courses were delivered
by **Hospice Education** to
656 delegates, including
29 funded sessions



education

At the hospice

Thanks to you, local people who need a little extra specialist care for complex needs, additional symptom control or adjustments to their medications, may be admitted to the **Hospice** inpatient unit for a short stay.



During her stay at the Hospice, Hazel was overjoyed to celebrate her daughter Lucy's wedding ring blessing in a small ceremony in the Hospice garden.

Later, Lucy was interviewed by ITV Anglia news supporting the call for fairer funding for hospices because of the impact of hospice care on her family.

“

I had a cry to one of the nurses the other day and she gave me a big hug. Everyone's so attentive and understanding. The doctors sit down and spend time learning about what's happened, what's worked, what hasn't worked.

They don't avoid talking about dying and that's something I've found really helpful because that's the reality, that's what we're living in. To skirt around that topic is not helpful in any way; it doesn't help us process, it doesn't help us accept it or make it what she wants it to be, so talking about it has been really helpful.

When they come in and check on Mum, they also check on us a lot of the time; how are you, do you need anything? That makes you feel you're supposed to be here and you're valued as a family member here. It's the little things.

Lucy”



202

people were admitted to the Hospice last year; that's **229 admissions** as some people stayed more than once



Thanks to you, lots of special moments for patients and their loved ones were created last year.

Patients and families enjoyed plenty of **animal cuddles** from our three therapy dog visitors and one-off larger creatures including alpacas, a Shetland pony and a couple of reindeer.

We brought **Christmas forward** for one young family, turning the Hospice lounge into a winter wonderland and preparing a festive roast to make special memories.

We scored when **Colchester United FC** players popped in to meet some of the children whose parents were cared for by St Helena Hospice. Tom Flanagan, Tom Smith and Dom Gape enjoyed chatting and doing football stickers with our families before signing some shirts and memorabilia.



Thanks to you, patients enjoy homemade food from the Hospice kitchen.

“

It's great having my poached eggs in the morning. The quality of the food has been excellent.

Jack”

23,083

homemade meals, savoury snacks and sandwiches were served by our kitchen team



Support where needed

Thanks to you, our multi-disciplinary team supports people at the Hospice and at home in communities across north east Essex.

Nicola Smeeth is a physiotherapist providing rehabilitation support in the Hospice and at home.

When John arrived at the Hospice with complex pain affecting his mobility, he had been in bed for weeks. Once his pain became under control, his goal was to stand. Nicola and the rehabilitation team set about supporting him to achieve that, which meant the world to John.

430

people had **rehabilitation support** at the Hospice or at home last year

“

The whole physio experience is vital. I'd been desperate to get out of the bed and over the weeks Nic and the team worked with me every day. They got me to sit up, then they got me into the reclining chair, which is a wonderful thing, and I then started using the walker, working hard on my muscle recovery.

Never in my life have I been in a wheelchair, but I started whizzing around the garden. For me to get into a wheelchair, was incredibly liberating; because of the movement, I could make decisions about where I was going. I'm in control. That was amazing. I saw the pathway, I saw the pond, I went down the hill, all with Nic keeping an eye on me.

John”



John's story



Bridget Russell, occupational therapist, and Nicola Smeeth, physiotherapist, support people at the Hospice and visit people at home across north east Essex.

John felt his wellbeing greatly improve when he tried complementary therapy for the first time, enjoying hand massages and Reiki given by volunteers.

“

The way they treat the patients at the Hospice is outstanding and I found the key to its success is in its philosophy and ethos; kindness and love and empathy. It's changed me, I feel different.

John.”



212

patients and **50** family members were referred for **complementary therapy** and **174** people received spiritual care support at the Hospice or at home

10

volunteer **complementary therapists**, **7** social and wellbeing support volunteers, and **7** spiritual care volunteers donated their time and skills to patients and families at home and at the Hospice

Thanks to you, the rehabilitation team helped John into a wheelchair and he achieved his goal of independently reaching Alison, his partner of 21 years, in the Hospice lounge for their **wedding ceremony**.

3

patients had a **marriage blessing** at the Hospice last year

Support where needed

Thanks to you, patients and their families can access **counselling and emotional support** face to face at the Hospice and at home, over the phone, and in our new bereavement cafés.

Wendy finds regularly speaking over the phone with counsellor Sarah Harper-Rowe is vital support to help manage the emotions of her palliative diagnosis with family life.

“

I had a prognosis of 18 months and that just seems to have gone very quickly. It's been very difficult for everybody to come to terms with that and when the counselling service kicked in it was a game changer for me.

I've got a very loving family around me, lots of friends, a really good support network, but being brutally honest about how you feel and how scared you are, is something that you don't want to burden other people with. Being able to talk to Sarah about my feelings openly is incredible, it came at the right time.

It keeps me level, balanced, I feel safe, I feel calm. I trust her implicitly and I really look forward to our conversations. Living with cancer is a difficult thing and she's made it so much easier.

Wendy ”

246

patients and **858** family members received counselling or emotional support last year; that's **938** adults and **166** children

£194,000

was raised through online
in memory pages to
honour someone special

Thanks to you, our first **bereavement café** began at the Hospice, providing a mix of support over a cuppa from trained staff and volunteers. It's a chance to talk, listen or simply be around others who may feel the same.

“

I went to the café meeting because I feel drawn to the Hospice after David died and also to people in the same situation. It is comforting to know that I'm not alone in my grief, which is far greater than I ever could have imagined.

Felicity”



30

people had **266** private
counselling sessions

forgetme not
BEREAVEMENT COUNSELLING

WITH PROFIT
5th
PURPOSE

Forget Me Not offers paid-for bereavement counselling for adults, with all the profit going back into Hospice services.

15

new leaves were added to our memory tree and **23 leaves** were renewed in memory of loved ones

Our community

Thanks to funding from grants and trusts our **Safe Harbour** and **compassionate communities** projects support underserved and marginalised people, building better understanding of needs, experiences and concerns, and addressing inequalities in access to primary care and hospice services.

Sarah is a compassionate communities volunteer who helps out at training sessions and network meet ups.

Sarah is autistic and her confidence with people has grown since she began volunteering.

Sarah volunteered at our compassionate conversations awareness training in a dedicated LGBTQ+ safe and supportive space, to give people the skills to talk openly with family, friends and colleagues about dying, death and bereavement.



“

I really wanted to work with the community and I wanted to do something where I can get supported in a space that would reward me. I have been to a lot of places and I learn a lot of things and talk to people through this role, and that has expanded me so much. I'm so glad.

Sarah”





Catherine, Kay & Lindsey

Lindsey is a community connector supporting people in their last year of life who may be isolated. She also supports people with symptoms of dementia with their advance care planning through our **Care Choices** service.

Lindsey worked with local resident Kay to record her wishes for when she becomes more unwell. Kay is living with Alzheimer's disease, and it was a relief to her daughter, Catherine, to know her mum's wishes can be accessed by health professionals if needed.



We welcomed a group of adults with learning disabilities to the Hospice to build understanding and confidence of clinical settings, where they met a doctor and a nurse.

I did think it would be a good idea because then there won't come a time when I lose my speech and I can't tell people what I want, or I can't work out the questions in my head to tell people what I want, so having this done is a brilliant idea.

It's nice that people are interested in you because you do feel a bit left out when you can't follow everything and you don't quite know what's going on, which I don't.

Kay

We empower people who are living with an incurable illness, dementia or frailty to record and share their choices for future care, including end of life care.

The **My Care Choices Register** is an electronic record of these decisions which can be accessed securely day or night by

professionals responsible for their care, so everyone looking after them knows what they want.

5,000

people recorded their wishes on the **My Care Choices Register** last year

Our community

Thanks to you, our **charity shops** and **online stores** are helping to fund care and support for people who need it at home and at the Hospice.

Our 24 shops across north east Essex along with our online Vinted, eBay and Etsy stores, are well-stocked with fantastic clothes and items donated by our generous communities and through our house clearance service.

Sandra is a loyal customer who enjoys chatting with our friendly shop volunteers.



My jacket and necklace were bought in the St Helena Vintage shop. I love it there; good jewellery, great prices and lovely people.

Sandra



Sandra

1,706,264

items were sold
in our shops last year

£309,496

raised through Gift Aid
on donated items



Jane

704

people **volunteered**
across our retail teams

Our shops also sell new goods including Christmas cards, jam, knitting wool and household items.

New goods bring in additional income for the Hospice, as well as attracting new customers.

- 🌐 Most new stock is end-of-line goods that would otherwise go to landfill
- 🌐 Our key suppliers are Disability Confident Employer champions
- 🌐 We prioritise local suppliers, including Tiptree Patisserie for the delicious cakes, jams and condiments in our shops and cafés
- 🌐 Our UK-based card supplier uses vegetable inks, biodegradable packaging and FSC® Certified paper
- 🌐 We ensure all our suppliers have anti-slavery policies in place as well as signed terms and conditions with their manufacturers to enforce these



Our valued volunteers support our retail operation in a variety of roles.

People donate as little or as much time as they would like to their roles including on the shop floor, steam cleaning clothing, sorting in our donation centres, and packaging up items sold online.

Rosina volunteers as a puzzle sorter

completing donated puzzles of all shapes and sizes to make sure no pieces are missing before they go on our shelves. Rosina, is our oldest volunteer aged 99.



“

I enjoy it very much. It's a pleasure, a very great pleasure. I like doing most puzzles as long as it's busy and not too many trees, not too much sky or sea. I like them busy.

Rosina ”



Our community



Ruby Ball

Thanks to you taking part in events and challenges, donating regularly or as a one-off or giving in memory of loved ones, your generosity helped raise over £1.3 million in our ruby anniversary year.

Community support makes a huge difference for patients and families and we are so grateful to everyone who supports us.



Cinderella

Our **40th anniversary year** saw three new events, together raising a whopping **£100,000**:

228 people attended a glitzy evening of celebration and entertainment at our **Ruby Ball**.

21 staff and **9 volunteers** brought festive joy to the stage with a production of our first **pantomime**, Cinderella, directed by advanced clinical practitioner Josh Wilkins.

670 runners took on our first **Harwich Half Marathon**, cheered on by the energetic crowd along the route.



Harwich Half Marathon



34

people ran **890.8 miles**
in the London Marathon
in 2025 and 2026



Ruby

Ruby took part in **Pier to Pier** to join her family in raising money in memory of **Holly**, her uncle Jordan's partner. Ruby was eight when Holly died and she knows how much the family continues to support the Hospice. Now age 11, Ruby made cakes and cookies in return for donations and when she received one she would look up what that could pay for to help other patients and families.

Her uncle **Jordan** was one of our awesome **London Marathon** runners in 2026. Team St Helena raised **£63,000** this year, and our fantastic 2025 London Marathon heroes raised **£62,000**.



Jordan

412

ruby roses were purchased in memory along with **174 rose leaves** engraved with the names of loved ones

To celebrate our 40th anniversary and remember people we love, ruby red ceramic roses were sold and we held a reflective **Roses for Remembrance** event for people to come together.

Peter attended the event with his wife, Sue, whose mum was cared for by our Hospice in the Home team last year, which brought back memories of when his first wife, Steph, died at the Hospice almost 20 years ago:

“

The Hospice was a dignified place to end time and was calm and respectful, and we could make happy memories with the children and be together.

There was emotional support on hand for the children and that meant I could give more of my attention, more of everything I had, to Steph. I'm eternally grateful to the Hospice for not just while she was there but for the family support we had afterwards.

Peter”





Hannah

Thanks to people playing one of our weekly lotteries, **£1,349,586** was raised to help fund compassionate care and support for our patients and families.

We run **Your Hospice Lottery** which supports hospices, and **Make a Smile lottery** which supports non-hospice charities across Great Britain.

The two lotteries held exciting Super Draws last year, offering big prizes alongside their regular weekly prizes and raised an extra **£581,000** worth of ticket sales.

Together our lotteries help raise vital funds for 35 partners and last year they generated **£2.2m** for our charity partners.



799,361

Your Hospice Lottery
tickets were bought by
11,598 players to support
St Helena Hospice

Our community



Thanks to you, our commercial ventures are making profits which all go into patient and family care and support.

One of the innovative ways we raise money to help fund the care we provide is through our commercial cleaning business,

Total Clean in Support of St Helena.

We work with businesses across Colchester, Ipswich and Chelmsford providing high standard cleaning in offices and clinical environments, with the customer knowing that every pound in profit we generate helps fund our charitable services.

Total Clean in support of St Helena has presented a Social Value Certificate to the Colchester office of national commercial energy supply company, PE. Chris Harris from PE chose to award the cleaning contract to benefit St Helena, because he and his colleague have personal connections with the care provided by the Hospice.



Amber

32

local businesses are cleaned by **Total Clean** in support of St Helena



Peter & daughters

“

When my father in law, Peter, was in the Hospice, he almost got his spark back because he was treated with respect and dignity and treated as a human. Peter returned home for the last two weeks of his life, supported by Hospice in the Home, and the family felt the care he had helped them cope with a sad time.

Chris”

Our community

Thanks to people who leave a gift in their Will to St Helena Hospice, we can give care, comfort and dignity to more people in their honour.

Eva, much-loved nan to Maria, generously left a gift in her Will to make sure another family could experience the level of comfort and dignity the nursing team gave to her daughter, Lesley, who died at the Hospice.

“

My mum died on my nan's birthday with my nan holding my mum's hand. It was a very compassionate and empathetic experience and it really did make everyone feel at ease.

Those nurses, even in my mum's unconscious state, still got her washed, dressed, brushed her hair, creamed her feet, creamed her hands; things that none of us would ever have even thought about doing, they were on it. We couldn't have asked for anything more.

Maria”



£1.8m

was generously given
as gifts in Wills, making
a **lasting difference**

Kirsty

Thanks to our local business community

for making a meaningful difference last year through a range of activities including sponsoring our events, donating funds and items, and arranging volunteer days for their staff to be involved with at St Helena Hospice.

44

corporate organisations
volunteered last year



“

They were fantastic and looked after Karen and also our family when we were going through this hard time. For this, I would like to thank everyone who supports St Helena Hospice.

Clive ”





Together we are
St Helena

Visit sthelena.org.uk for information on anything featured inside.



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St Helena
Hospice
For *all* the people you love



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