

# Newsletter

Autumn / Winter 2024



## A community of love

In this issue

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The difference we make

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Intimacy at end of life

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# Chief Executive's message



After achieving my personal fundraising target of £6,000 by completing my arduous Vietnam Trek in

April for Dorothy House with a truly fabulous and inspirational group of supporters (who together raised over £95,000), it is fair to say that the hard work and ups and downs of hospice work continue apace. With this autumn edition of our newsletter, I want to share how vital our collaborative work with partners is, and will continue to be, to ensure we reach the unmet need of people living within our communities.

As reported in many national newspapers recently, one in five hospices in the UK is cutting services, as state funding has failed to match growing demand and rising running costs. It is becoming increasingly concerning that many of our hospice colleagues both locally and across the UK are faced with difficult choices. At the heart of all of this, of course, are patients and families who are navigating their own difficult paths towards the end of life.

At Dorothy House we have been working hard to ensure we meet the needs of more patients and families. Throughout the 2023-2024 Financial Year we have made great progress, caring for 2,986 patients (5% more than last year) and 1,078 families/carers (an incredible 15% more than last year). We know we are not yet reaching everyone who needs us, but by expanding our training, education and digital self-help resources and collaborating closely with community partners, we are working hard to

ensure we offer an excellent level of care to as many people living with a life-limiting illness as possible.

It takes a great many dedicated people to create a society where death is a part of life and in this newsletter you will discover more about how we are collaborating to articulate this vision through our Motor Neurone Disease Specialist Service (Pg 8), our new Interactive Nature Trail (Pg 10), our Ambassador Programme (Pg 14) and through our community volunteers (Pg 4).

As has always been the case, I am personally so proud of the ongoing commitment of our staff and volunteers, who go the extra mile to personalise the care and support of our patients and families. This approach of always focusing on 'what matters most' to a person recently gained national attention when the Royal Marines' Band performed at our Inpatient Unit in Winsley (Pg 9). It is moments like these that remind us all of how important it is not to forget that at the heart of national statistics and fundraising targets, are individuals and the ripple effects of compassion and kindness can be felt far and wide.

This is why I urge you to help us by championing our Bridge the Gap Appeal (Pg 5). We estimate that we're currently only caring for around half of the people in our community who are at end of life. Help us bridge this gap, and together we can create a society where death is a part of life and where no one has to face death alone.

Thank you,

 **Wayne de Leeuw**  
(Chief Executive)

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### Privacy statement update

Dorothy House is committed to protecting the data we hold, whether this relates to patients and clients, donors, staff or volunteers. We have updated our privacy statements to explain how we handle data for the different groups of people we work with. You can find these at: [dorothyhouse.org.uk/privacy/](https://dorothyhouse.org.uk/privacy/)

If you are unable to view them online and would like a hard copy, please phone 01225 722 988.

## Your support

# Community Heroes



### 1 Phil and Moose

In May 2024, two Westbury-based friends, Phil Stockley and Michael Reaney (aka Moose) ran an incredible 100 miles from Reading to Bristol in memory of Phil's parents; Marg and Terry Stockley, and Michael's father, Chris Reaney. The formidable pair raised over £3,000 through their impressive efforts, with all proceeds being donated to Dorothy House. Many thanks to Phil and Michael for their ambition and dedication, which is truly inspirational.



### 2 Reece's baldy boys

Earlier this year, Reece Hulland and his friends braved shaving their heads in memory of Reece's mother Jennifer (Jen), who passed away in our Inpatient Unit in Winsley in May of this year. Their JustGiving page took off within hours of being set up, and the boys raised over £13,000 within a few days. It was heart-warming to witness the phenomenal support from the community - a testament to the love felt for Jen and her family. Thank you Reece, Reece's friends, Jen's husband and family for supporting Dorothy House.

# Corporate Heroes

### 3 H2 Creative

Our friends over at H2 Creative have been working closely with our Fundraising Team to put together the very first Gig in the Grounds, which took place on Sunday, 1 September. H2 Creative were the event's sponsor and have supported with the design work for it, as well as helping design our fantastic limited edition running vests for the Frome Half Marathon which took place in August.

### 4 Gooding Accounts Charity Fundraising Challenge 2024

Gooding Accounts Ltd. have been celebrating their 10-year anniversary with a bang in 2024! The local accountancy firm, headed up by Sam Gooding, decided to celebrate their 10-year anniversary by hosting a series of fundraising events for local causes and ones close to their hearts. Dorothy House partnered up with the team for their Charity Golf Day, which took place on 11 July at Cumberwell Golf Park and raised an incredible £5,000 for Dorothy House. In addition to this successful event, two members at the firm braved the skies for Dorothy House through our own Skydive fundraiser on 21 September. Thank you for all your efforts on behalf of the Hospice!





# Strength in community

At Dorothy House, we would be nowhere without our community volunteers. They are the golden thread that runs through our care and support in the community. In order to ensure everyone has access to our end of life services, we are committed to a strength-based approach; working alongside and empowering our communities.

We use Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) to build on the assets (individuals, associations and organisational skills, talents, gifts, and resources) found in our community and mobilise them to come together to realise and develop their strengths.

## Our volunteers support our vital work in the community:



### Bereavement Help Point Volunteer

The Bereavement Help Point (BHP) is a community based drop-in service where all people who are bereaved are welcome. Our volunteers provide companionship and a listening ear, prepare the session and serve light refreshments. When appropriate, they also direct attendees to trained professionals.



### Coffee Connections Volunteer

Our drop-in Coffee Connections are friendly social groups aimed at those affected directly or indirectly by cancer or a life-limiting illness. Volunteers help prepare the tea and coffee, set up and clear up the space and chat with the attendees.



### Companion Volunteer

Our Companions provide practical and emotional support to patients and their carers in their own homes. This may include driving patients and accompanying them to appointments, local activities, groups, shopping, helping them with light practical tasks around the house or garden, and supporting them in reengaging with social activities.

All these roles are invaluable to our patients and their carers, and are pivotal in our ABCD strategy of empowering communities.

If you would like to join our inspiring group of volunteers, visit our website to see the latest opportunities with Dorothy House. [www.dorothyhouse.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer/](http://www.dorothyhouse.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer/)



We need to help more people, and to do that we need your support. People across our community are facing death every day. When you look at the number of people estimated as having an end of life care need, we are only supporting...

A group of Dorothy House Champions will receive a message and an individual fundraising page link from us at 10am on 3 November. They will then use this to reach out to their networks through phone, text, social media and email, asking for support to help bridge the gap in vital hospice care.

Donations will be directed to their unique fundraising pages, contributing to their local community target. And even better - thanks to our amazing matched funders, all donations made within the super-sprint will be doubled<sup>1</sup>.

### Why run a local appeal now?

Across our communities, we are caring for just over half of the people estimated as having an end of life care need<sup>2</sup>.

This gap varies by area, but across the board, we know we need to care for more people. You, your friends, family or neighbours may one day need end of life care or bereavement support, and we want to be there for all of you.

Our amazing group of Champions will help raise vital funds to ensure those facing death in their local neighbourhood get the care they deserve.

Bath\*  
**47%**  
Help us raise  
£100,000

Malmesbury\*  
**56%**  
Help us raise  
£50,000

Chew Valley\*  
**56%**  
Help us raise  
£50,000

Chippenham\*  
**50%**  
Help us raise  
£50,000

Frome\*  
**55%**  
Help us raise  
£50,000

Trowbridge\*  
**57%**  
Help us raise  
£50,000



\*and surrounding areas

Support Dorothy House and become a Champion:  
[dorothyhouse.org.uk/support-us/bridge-the-gap-appeal](http://dorothyhouse.org.uk/support-us/bridge-the-gap-appeal)



Sign up!

Give us your details via the form on our webpage. Just scan the QR code above.



Sun 3 Nov 10am – kick off!

Share our message with your network. Keep going, contacting anyone and everyone you can during the 36 hours.



Celebrate!

Sit back and watch the donations come in.

<sup>1</sup> Matched Funding will be awarded up to the total funding amount available. Donations received after the matched funding has been met will be gratefully received but not eligible within this funding offer.

<sup>2</sup> Estimated using a calculation from Marie Curie 2015, that 0.67% of the population will have a requirement for palliative and end of life care. Figures based on DH referrals FY23-24.

# Research update into intimacy needs at end of life

Amongst the many concerns of people receiving end of life care is how best to adapt to the impact of a life-limiting illness on intimacy.

Intimacy includes emotional as well as physical aspects ranging from closeness, to love, companionship and sex. Intimacy is an essential element of human existence and can support peace and happiness at the end of life. At Dorothy House, we are aware that intimacy can be a difficult and sensitive topic to discuss, both for patients and their partners, and for healthcare professionals (HCPs).

Since May 2023, the Research Team has been conducting interviews with Dorothy House patients, their partners, bereaved partners, and HCPs to understand the lived experience of patient and partner intimacy needs within the context of end of life care, and how HCPs can best support these needs. Initial findings suggest both groups felt more support and information was necessary to address intimacy needs:

“You can forget sometimes there is a person underneath this illness...”

- Partner



In March 2024, we were awarded Research Capability Funding (RCF) from B&NES Swindon and Wiltshire Research Hub to extend this work to other hospices. Accessing a larger hospice population will help capture a diverse range of intimacy needs' views. Our long-term aim is to develop an educational package to inform and train hospice HCPs and our wider healthcare community to feel more confident to discuss intimacy with patients and partners.

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**Dorothy House is keen for patients and the public to be involved in shaping the way we work. If you would like to find out more about how to support the project or join our Hospice User Group (HUG) please email [research@dorothyhouse-hospice.org.uk](mailto:research@dorothyhouse-hospice.org.uk) or phone Charlotte Spence on 0345 0130 555.**

“I don't want to get into a chat I can't close.”

- Healthcare Professional

## KNITTED Memory Hearts initiative

We are pleased to launch the 'Knitted Memory Hearts' initiative to family members of patients on our Inpatient Unit (IPU). This is part of a wider project led by Megan McGee, IPU Nurse, to continue to develop our care after death practices on our unit. The hearts form part of a new memory box which we will be introducing this year.

The hearts offer comfort and solace to the patient and their family members; a keepsake to hold on to once their loved one has died. One goes home and one stays with the patient.

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**We are always looking for new knitting volunteers to help with crafting the hearts. If you think you could help us, please contact Helen Richards for patterns at [helen.richards@dorothyhouse-hospice.org.uk](mailto:helen.richards@dorothyhouse-hospice.org.uk).**



## Staff Spotlight Jo Aubrey-Boyles



Senior Social Worker and Safeguarding, Mental Capacity Act and DoLS Lead for Dorothy House.

“I trained as a social worker at the University of Bath. I have a range of experience working with adults, mainly in hospitals, but also in the community. I am trained as a practice educator so I can teach student social workers, and I have also taught on a social work course at university level. I am passionate about human rights and people making their own decisions if they are able.

Although it's a cliché, I trained as a social worker because I wanted to help people. I specifically wanted to work at Dorothy House as I have always worked with people at the end of their lives and have seen the impact that good holistic support can have.

I have also had personal experience of losing a loved one and of the impact this can have on a family. I wanted to be able to support others at this time, promoting patient independence, but also helping family and friends in a way that I was not supported.

I manage and support the three Social Workers, our Children and Families Practitioner and our Homeless Link Worker here at Dorothy House, and also support patients/clients when my workload allows. I am also the Safeguarding, Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) lead, which means I am the lead professional for these areas in the Hospice. This involves ensuring best practice throughout the Hospice for all professionals, and that training is up to date. I am also working on projects to improve care and practice. It is an extremely varied role and I enjoy it immensely!

“I like working at Dorothy House because I enjoy being able to support people at their time of need, together with working with a very talented multi-disciplinary team of professionals who all have the best patient care at the heart of their practice.



The hospice funding crisis: it's time to raise your voice!

**Hospice care is for people at the most vulnerable time of their lives. Hospices are facing intense financial pressure. As costs have surged, local communities like ours are doing their best to step up, but around the country this isn't enough.**

With state funding not keeping pace, right now the state of the hospice sector's finances is the worst it's been for 20 years, with services being cut in many places.

With a new government, Hospice UK are urging people to write to their MP to say how much hospice care matters. It takes 30 seconds to do so here: [www.hospiceuk.org](http://www.hospiceuk.org). There is also a new campaign for Financial Conduct Authority bank fines to go toward hospices:

“There are hundreds of millions in annual FCA fines which go into the government pot... there is no better way to complete the circle by allocating these funds to the UK hospice sector.

.....  
**If you agree you can sign the petition to 'Save the first £100 million of FCA bank fines for hospices' at [www.change.org](http://www.change.org). Whatever you do, thank you for your support!**





# Motor Neurone Disease support at Dorothy House

The Motor Neurone Disease (MND) Service is run jointly by Dorothy House and the Royal United Hospital. The service offers a single point of contact and ongoing support for patients with MND, their families and carers.

It provides specialist information, sign-posting, support and guidance from diagnosis onwards. Our MND specialist practitioner works within the RUH, Dorothy House and the community, and can visit patients in their homes.

## The MND specialist practitioner can offer:

- Information about MND and referral to community teams
- Benefits information
- Access to Motor Neurone Disease Association support
- Advice and support with Advance Care Planning
- Referral to Dorothy House courses, emotional support, complimentary therapy and end of life care advice
- Advice, education and support for healthcare professionals and nursing homes.

At any one time, the MND Specialist Practitioner is working with 40-45 patients with MND.



It is important to me that people living with MND do not feel alone...



## Motor Neurone Disease Specialist Practitioner – Dawn Beckett

“I have always been passionate about Motor Neurone Disease (MND) as my own life has been touched by it. I have worked with people living with MND since 2008, when I qualified as an Occupational Therapist. I became a volunteer for the Motor Neurone Disease Association in 2017. Then in 2018, a secondment opportunity to join the MND service between the RUH and Dorothy House became available, which I jumped at. I loved every minute of it, so was thrilled when the permanent position was offered to me a year later. I haven’t looked back since!

It is important to me that people living with MND do not feel alone, and have equal access to services available to other people living with a life-limiting illness. I am also keen to share my knowledge and interest in the disease through education and training with other health care professionals, and learning from those living with the disease as they are the true experts.”



## Andrea’s story

Sadly, Andrea, who suffered from MND, died last year under Dorothy House’s care. Before she died, she spoke to us about her time in our Day Patient Clinic and what Dorothy House meant to her.

“It’s the one thing I look forward to. First of all, it’s a safe place to come. The people here are amazing, right from Reception, volunteers, everybody.

“I can’t use my arms, so I have a volunteer to help me. They’re so kind, so observant. They noticed my lips were dry so they came along with some stuff for that. They noticed that I have to keep my hands on my lap and they would get sweaty so along they come with the cotton towel, little things like that just mean the world to me.

When the MND Practitioner suggested I attend the Day Patient Clinic, I jumped at the chance and just can’t speak highly enough of it. It’s such a big thing to me.

They always make time for my husband. They always ask how he is and how he’s coping. But the Day Patient sessions are huge for him, because he’s got the day to go off to do what he wants to do. And that’s probably as important to him, as it is to me coming here; for him to have that space and to know I’m safe here.

People think it’s a sad place, but far from it. It’s so much fun.”

If you or someone you care for is affected by MND, please contact Dawn, MND Specialist Practitioner, who works Wednesdays and Fridays:

Phone: 01225 824 673

Mobile 07870 984 469

Email: dawn.beckett@nhs.net

# Royal Marines Band play one last goodbye

On Tuesday 18 June, Dorothy House played host to the Royal Marines Band Collingwood, who performed for patients, staff and volunteers, but most importantly, to two of their band members, 26 year old musician Sophie Ward and her husband, Lance Corporal Richard Ward.

Sophie was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease in January and she and her family are being supported by our specialist MND team.



You can watch the emotional performance and find out more about the band’s incredible fundraising campaign #26forSophie here: [www.dorothyhouse.org.uk/news/royal-marines-band-dorothy-house-patient/](http://www.dorothyhouse.org.uk/news/royal-marines-band-dorothy-house-patient/)





# Dorothy House launches free

## Interactive Nature Trail

As a Hospice, our vision is of a society where death is a part of life. Through its seasons, nature reminds us of the fragility of life and offers peace and solace from sadness and overwhelm. The Dorothy House Interactive Nature Trail is the next step in our ambition to open up the site to anyone wishing to find a wellbeing space to reflect in nature, or to find serenity in grief.

Opening on 19 May this year, the launch was a great success, with over 100 users and 400+ connections made with the interactive app to date.



### The Interactive Nature Trail

As well as learning lots about wildlife habitats, throughout the trail visitors can access the augmented reality app which opens up a world of fascinating facts. Using a mobile phone, visitors can take selfies with the resident creatures, discover more about the natural cycles of life and death, and learn about the range of species found in the preserved wild grassland meadow.

Families seeking to go tech-free can try out nature rubbings created by the Hospice's Creative Arts Therapists and explore the fascinating life cycles via eight interpretative trail boards.

From impressive Yellow Ant eco-engineers to UK Fireflies, Bechstein Bats and cucumber-scented herbs, there is much to wonder at whilst enjoying the stunning views across the Wiltshire valley.

Children especially will enjoy the Nature Trail. In a survey of 102 pupils conducted with Abbeyfield School, Chippenham, 95% stated that they enjoyed nature trails. With many explaining that they were "calming," "relaxing," "peaceful," they could "learn about nature," "see trees and plants in different seasons" and that they ensured "spending quality time together."

### Art installation

The trail incorporates the stunning light installation, Firefly Woods, created by internationally renowned artist, Bruce Munro and that features 800 fireflies; each one a constellation of separate small lights dedicated in memory of a loved one who has died.

*"The Dorothy House Interactive Nature Trail is phase one in the 'Winsley House Place' Project to make our Winsley estate accessible and attractive to our patients, families, staff, existing supporters and wider community. It is also a physical articulation of our vision of a society where death is a part of life and a space where anyone who has experienced grief can reflect and find peace."*

Wayne de Leeuw, Chief Executive.



### A sustainable success

Thanks to the minimal disruption to the lower grassland meadow, Dorothy House has not only successfully sequestered a large area of soil carbon, but preserved a unique habitat for invertebrates, diverse grasses, bats and birdlife. Accessed by carefully carved out pathways, visitors can discover more about the impact of rewilding and consider ways in which they too can create biodiverse habitats in their own gardens.

The Nature Trail is one of many examples of how the Hospice is working innovatively to reduce its carbon footprint and achieve its sustainability goals.

### A community collaboration

Thanks, in part to an ongoing partnership with the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, and generous fundraising donations received from The Rotary Club of Chippenham, the Nature Trail offers the wider community the opportunity to visit the beautiful grounds at the Inpatient and Day Patient units in Winsley and discover more about the proven benefits of being connected with nature.

### Nature Trail Bat Tours

We recently ran two fascinating Bat Tours following the Nature Trail, led by Richard Mann, a local bat enthusiast. Richard brought his bat detector to help us hear the local bats and also shared some interesting facts about the bat species that call the area around Dorothy House home. Visit the website for our next tour dates.

The trail is open throughout the year, we hope you enjoy connecting with nature in Dorothy House's beautiful grounds.

## Sustainable September



After a successful two years, we were excited to bring back our Dorothy House Sustainable September campaign. Initially established to drive awareness of the benefits of shopping second-hand - specifically from Dorothy House shops - over the last two years, the campaign has grown to show the wider benefits of sustainable shopping, not just within our community, but for the planet.

A key element of this year's Sustainable September was our Corsham Warehouse sales. These events invite people in our community to shop a wide selection of preloved clothing (as well as books, furniture, bric-a-brac, and toys), and fill a whole bag of goodies for just £10. The 2023 events were so popular that this year, we've been opening the doors of our Retail HQ every month since February. During each event we sell an average of 15 rails of clothing - each of which hold up to 95 items - that's over 14,000 garments saved from landfill each year!

Our final Warehouse sale of 2024 takes place on Saturday, 2 November from 9am - we hope to see you there! Find us at Corsham Warehouse Unit E, Fiveways Trading Estate, Corsham, SN13 9RG.

WE AIM TO RAISE  
**£2,200**  
PER WAREHOUSE SALE

OUR TOTAL  
FUNDRAISING  
BETWEEN  
APRIL AND JUNE =  
**£6,300**



# It is your life. *Write your own ending.*

In March 1616, William Shakespeare summoned his solicitor and drafted his will. One month later he died. Reading through the will is hard work as my ‘olde’ English is tenuous at best, but Shakespeare meticulously divided and distributed his assets as he wanted, and this was recorded in his will. My favourite bequest is leaving his ‘second best bed’ to his wife, Anne Hathaway. This is not as odd as it seems because at that time, as your ‘best bed’ was always kept for guests. The second best bed would have been the one that he and his wife shared together.

Why am I sharing this random piece of information? One it is interesting, and two, it clearly shows why leaving a will is of importance. A well-written and valid will is your last set of instructions. It is your voice and as long as the document is not ‘contra bonos mores’ (against good morals), your wishes have to be carried out.

**Make your will for free**

At Dorothy House, we witness first-hand how stressful it can be for both our patients and their loved ones if a will is not written in advance. Part of our aim in facilitating a peaceful death is to actively promote will writing. We have partnered with National Free Wills Network and Farewill to enable our patients, families and supporters to get a simple will at no cost to the service user. Why? You get peace of mind and we know that 1 in 5 of our patients is cared for, thanks to gifts in wills.

A gift left to Dorothy House can make such a difference, but it is not obligatory in order to make a free will; this particular type of gift costs nothing in our lifetime and yet it can make a difference for years to come.

**How it works**

Dorothy House refers interested supporters to the **National Free Wills Network** office who will then provide them with a pack, which details how they can make a will face to face with their local participating solicitors.

Farewill offers an **online and telephone** will writing service. They believe in making the processes around death simpler and more affordable. Their aim is to help you protect those you love and say goodbye in your own way.

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If you would like to learn more about our will services, leaving a gift in your will or simply to have a chat, please contact Sarah, Head of Legacies on 01225 721480 or Sarah.Dodd@dorothyhouse-hospice.co.uk.



.....  
Visit our website to make your free will.



## The Dorothy House Pioneer Programme needs you!

Join our Pioneer Programme today and become part of a vital network of investors funding key areas of development in hospice care.

Currently we have a group of supporters helping us take pioneering steps within research, community care, and training for health professionals. Through their kindness and generosity, we are gaining deeper insight into patients’ and families’ needs. The Pioneers are also helping us to enhance our community nursing practice, and enable scores of carers to acquire new skills and knowledge.

By pledging to donate £1,000 per year for three years, you can help us drive innovation across fundamental areas of our work, making meaningful progress a reality.

For 2024, we have made some changes to the programme. Pioneers now have a greater choice in which areas of our work they wish to support and play a pivotal role in shaping the future of our care.

As a Pioneer, you’ll receive a report three times a year detailing the key progress we are making in the areas you are investing in. You’ll also have opportunities to visit the Hospice, meet key staff and attend various events each year.

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To find out more, please call our Supporter Care Team on 01225 721480 or visit: [www.dorothyhouse.org.uk/support-us/pioneer-programme](http://www.dorothyhouse.org.uk/support-us/pioneer-programme).



## Give your preloved furniture a new lease of life!

### Having a clear out? Need to make room?

If you have any clean and undamaged furniture items, then please consider donating them to Dorothy House. We are always grateful for saleable furniture, including sofas, desks, dining tables and chairs, and coffee tables. Every quality item donated helps us to support more people living with life-limiting illnesses in our community.

We have six furniture shops across our 800sq mile patch and our vans collect in most areas up to six times a week, including Saturdays.

While we would love to be able to accept all donations, there are some items we are unable to, due to size, quality or for safety reasons. This includes gas appliances, upholstered furniture without a fire label and damaged furniture with missing parts. There is a more extensive list on our website you can check before you donate.

Donate and feel great!

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To book a free furniture collection, please call 01225 255224 or complete the online booking form and one of our friendly team will call you back: [www.dorothyhouse.org.uk/dorothy-house-shops/online-furniture-collections/](http://www.dorothyhouse.org.uk/dorothy-house-shops/online-furniture-collections/)





# Seb Chester-Phillips – Why I am a Young Person’s Ambassador

Dorothy House holds a very special place in my heart, and I have tremendous love for their community. Back in December 2015, I lost my mum to cancer. To this day I still can’t comprehend how such a horrible thing happened to such a wonderful woman. Dorothy House was there for my mum, and my family, every step of the way. The nurses were angels; they even put up with my mum politely demanding rounds of toast every 30 minutes!



Based on this, I feel it’s pretty obvious why I want to be an Ambassador:

- To make my mum proud
- To express my gratitude for Dorothy House and the members of their community
- Because I know how it feels to grow up as a kid with a heart full of pain, anger and confusion. I also know how it feels when I use the energy from that to thrive, and develop a profound sense of fulfilment.

If my experience can help kids who are in similar situations that I was once in to regain their sense of enthusiasm and fulfilment, I’d be over the moon. I also relish the idea of discussing ways that schools can best comfort and support any pupils who are struggling with grief.



If my experience can help kids who are in similar situations that I was once in to regain their sense of enthusiasm and fulfilment, I’d be over the moon.

## Seb’s message to young people...

I know how alienating it can be, I understand how much anger and pain you might have, I understand how hard that can be when no one understands and you don’t know who to talk to because you want to look strong for your family and your friends. But when you get home and you’re on your own in your bed you feel like crying. I know how that feels.

I am 21 now and the way I view my grief, because I have had time to process it, is to use it like rocket fuel. I have a memorial tattoo of my mum on my back, and it’s on my back because I can’t see it, but it’s always there and it always pushes me forward.

It’s a privilege and it’s all about perception. I understand how painful it can be and it’s never going to get easier. It’s like carrying a bag your whole life; you never drop the bag, but it gets easier to hold it, you become more familiar with it. You now have the privilege of having two sets of motivation; you have your own motivation and you have the motivation to make whoever you have lost, proud.

That is a massive privilege if you ask me. You can achieve great things with it. Don’t feel like you are disadvantaged; It’s all about perception. Feel like, this is what’s happened now, this is what I can do with this, and you’ll find a lot of power and strength in it.

To discover how else Dorothy House is supporting young people to come to terms with death and grief, watch our recent feature on Sky Kids Lifecycles here.



# light up a life 2024



This December, our beautiful Christmas tree at Winsley will be shining brightly with hundreds of lights dedicated to those we wish to remember. Each light is a symbol representing those we love, but also a symbol of the care that we will continue to provide to others in their time of need.

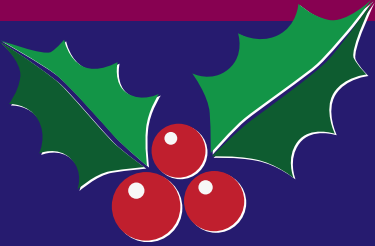
Light up a Life can be part of a healing process; a way to help come to terms with death during a time of grief. For some, Light up a Life can be a part of a spiritual journey; this can be faith-based, or not. For all of us however, it is a time of remembrance, a poignant and special way to celebrate a loved one.

If you would like to dedicate a light this year in memory of a loved one, there is still time to do so. We also look forward to welcoming you at one of our Services of Light.

To dedicate a light or book onto a service please do so here: [www.dorothyhouse.org.uk/light-up-a-life](http://www.dorothyhouse.org.uk/light-up-a-life)

Our services take place at Winsley House and at Bath Abbey in November. We will be live-streaming the Bath Abbey service for those who are unable to attend in person. We also provide an online, recorded version of our services after the event. You can use this set of resources to hold your own service, perhaps in a place that is meaningful to you.

## Christmas at Dorothy House



### Schools Reindeer Run:

In December 2023, 3,351 children and their teachers raised a fantastic total of £21,112 for the Hospice through Elf Runs! In 2024, we are jingling up the event by holding a festive Reindeer Run – where each school can choose the format and the date – but switch out their elf hats for free reindeer antlers.

### Volunteer for us!

Do you own a van, have a chipper or are a business looking for a different volunteering initiative? Look no further! Our collection grows year on year, and we’re always looking for extra help.

Email us at [christmastrees@dorothyhouse-hospice.org](mailto:christmastrees@dorothyhouse-hospice.org)

### Christmas Fair:

We’d love you to join us at Winsley House on Saturday, 30 November from 10am – 2pm for our Christmas Fair. Shoppers will be treated to festive live music and can enjoy delicious refreshments whilst picking up quality gifts and treats.

### Jingle Jog:

This Christmas fun run is open to the whole family! Choose to run or walk either 2.5k or 5k. The event will take place on the morning of Sunday, 1 December, with final details on timing and location to be confirmed.

[www.dorothyhouse.org.uk/get-involved/events/jingle-jog/](http://www.dorothyhouse.org.uk/get-involved/events/jingle-jog/)

### Christmas Tree Collection:

Our flagship Christmas Tree Collection is returning this year, with collections taking place between Friday, 10 January and Sunday, 12 January, 2025.

Stay tuned for when our registrations open and make sure to sign up your tree at [www.dorothyhouse.org.uk/support-us/christmas-tree-collection/](http://www.dorothyhouse.org.uk/support-us/christmas-tree-collection/)



Scan here for our full range of festive events.





## Phone

Switchboard: 01225 722 988  
Fundraising: 01225 721 480  
Clinical 24hr Advice Line: 0345 0130 555

## Online

[dorothyhouse.org.uk](http://dorothyhouse.org.uk)  
[info@dorothyhouse-hospice.org.uk](mailto:info@dorothyhouse-hospice.org.uk)



## Post

Dorothy House, Winsley, Bradford on Avon,  
Wiltshire, BA15 2LE

# Newsletter

Autumn / Winter 2024



## A community of love

In this issue

The difference we make

Intimacy at end of life

Interactive Nature Trail

Young Person's Ambassador

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this newsletter, contact the Communications Team:  
**[comms@dorothyhouse-hospice.org.uk](mailto:comms@dorothyhouse-hospice.org.uk)**

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