



**Dorothy  
House**  
HOSPICE CARE

# Impact Report 2024/25



## Welcome

Welcome to our Impact Report for the financial year April 2024 – March 2025 (FY24/25), our chance to showcase the hard work of our staff, volunteers and community partners in delivering personalised care and support to those who need it most.

This year, we have cared for more people than ever, with more than 90% of this care being delivered out in the community (as opposed to at our Winsley site). We have invested in community bereavement support, providing training and the opportunity for people to support others around them through the most difficult times (page 6). We have further developed our beautiful grounds in Winsley to become a true community asset – a space for reflection and connection with nature (page 10).

Despite increasing our income significantly (page 15), over the last year we have faced huge financial pressure including wage increases and cost of living rises. This means we have had to focus on delivering our care in the most efficient, innovative ways, embracing technology and collaboration to ensure we continue to serve our communities, when and where you need us the most.

This is the last Impact Report of our seven-year strategy, as from FY25/26 we launch our ambitious new three-year strategy, titled 'It's personal' (page 14).

Throughout the last year we have reorganised our teams and redesigned some services to ensure we are of the right structure and size to deliver this new strategy, and to continue to serve our communities now, and into the future.



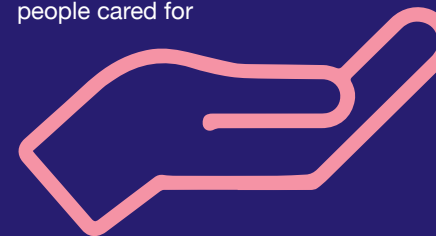
Wayne de Leeuw  
Chief Executive Officer



## Your Hospice in numbers

# 4,254

people cared for



Average review score on iWantGreatCare:

★★★★★ 4.93/5 stars

# £4,235,502

raised by our supporters

# 15,334

H@H visits to patients' homes

# 2,750

calls to our 24/7 Advice Line

# 9,116

hot drinks served on our Winsley Hospice site

# 263

admissions to our Inpatient Unit

# 88,958

visitors to our website



# 26,648

individual donations (including legacies) received

# 1,305

Dorothy House volunteers

# 27

number of retail shops

# 335

Children's Support Worker visits

# 16,524

pairs of shoes sold in our shops

# 7,347



hours of internal and external training delivered by our Education team

## Support that surrounds loved ones

### Friends, families and carers' open day

We know that it can be extremely rewarding to care for a relative or friend through their final years, months and days, but we also recognise that it can be a challenge to support a loved one in such difficult times.

In 2024, we held a 'Friends, families and carers' open day' to ensure those who are looking after someone with an end of life diagnosis can also access the support they need. We held workshops and talks around self-care, relaxation, diet advice and financial support. We also offered the chance for attendees to spend time talking to others in a similar position to themselves.



### Bereavement support groups

Bereavement Help Points (BHP) are free, volunteer-led community drop-in sessions, where all people who are bereaved are welcome. Experience has taught us that sharing stories of loss and grief can alleviate the feelings of isolation and loneliness that often arise when people are bereaved. Working in partnership with other community groups, we are currently providing support to bereaved community members through BHPs in eight locations across our patch. Throughout FY24/25, we have seen 216 people attend these groups.

"I can say with no hesitation whatsoever that being a BHP Facilitator is the most rewarding volunteer role that I have ever had. I've seen first-hand that they **ABSOLUTELY WORK**. At last week's session we had two new men who were both very upset when they arrived. I did my best to put them at ease and they sat with some of the 'regulars'. Then an hour into the session I looked around and saw that these two guys were sat next to each other, deep in conversation, and supporting each other physically and emotionally; I have to admit that it made me cry - but I was incredibly proud to have been a small part in helping them to come together."

*Tracey, Dorothy House  
BHP Volunteer.*



In addition to our existing BHPs, we have launched a new bereavement support group, 'Widowed and Young', which runs at the Hospice in Winsley aimed specifically at younger people (<50) who have lost a partner, are working and have younger children. We launched this group in response to a community need which identified that for many younger people it was not practical to attend groups held in the daytime and the age range at these sessions was not relatable. We have enjoyed seeing friendships blossom outside the group. It is clear from the feedback that this group is appreciated by its members and makes a meaningful contribution to their ability to process their loss.

"I have found it a safe place that gives you the opportunity to connect with others in a similar situation who just get it! Talking about specific topics, knowing that your feelings are validated and that others have similar experiences and emotions."

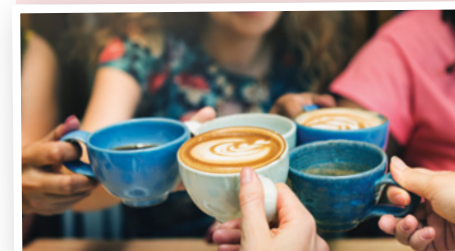
*Widowed and Young group attendee.*

### Coffee Connections

Coffee Connections are free, drop-in community support groups open to anyone whose life is impacted by a life-limiting illness. We are now running the sessions at four locations across our patch, each supported by a Clinical Support Assistant, volunteers and at the Winsley session, a Dorothy House nurse. We have held 154 Coffee Connection sessions throughout the year, with 1,221 attendances at these sessions.

"Friendly, caring, welcoming, answers any questions and worries. I feel safe for the rest of the week when I've been to Coffee Connections."

*Coffee Connections attendee.*



## Empowering our communities

### Our educational reach

Our dedicated Education team offers training and education to our communities both via bespoke, bookable sessions and through collaboration with higher education organisations. Over the course of the year, the team has offered more than 6,000 hours of training to external delegates, with attendees coming from as far as Cornwall and Birmingham.

### Training bereavement volunteers

In order to help people have confidence and the ability to support bereaved people, our Family Support Team has developed a number of teaching modules around grief and bereavement. Over the last year we have trained 225 volunteers, helping to empower our workforce and our community partners to better serve those going through this difficult time.

“Access to bereavement training has had a positive impact on our volunteers. It has deepened their understanding of bereavement support, ensuring they are well prepared and confident in taking on facilitation roles. Most importantly, it has created a sense of safety and support, enabling volunteers to feel confident and equipped in their roles.”

*Bath Carers' Centre.*

### Supporting end of life planning

We want our communities to feel comfortable talking about their end of life wishes, though we know this is sometimes a difficult topic. We have created a free Peace of Mind Planner, designed to help prompt these difficult conversations, and hold important information such as funeral wishes and spiritual belief. We have given out almost 7,000 of these planners since they were created, and several partner health and social care providers have identified the planner as such a useful tool they are now giving it out to their patients.

We hold regular, free, later life planning clinics in our retail spaces and other community venues in collaboration with local solicitors. We have also joined with Farewill and the National Free Wills Network to offer our community the chance to make or update a will, free of charge. Over the course of the year, 133 people have used this free will writing service and around half of these people were generous enough to leave Dorothy House a gift in their will.



# 7000

Peace of Mind Planners given out to our communities

# 133

Free wills created last year

Around  

# 1 IN 5

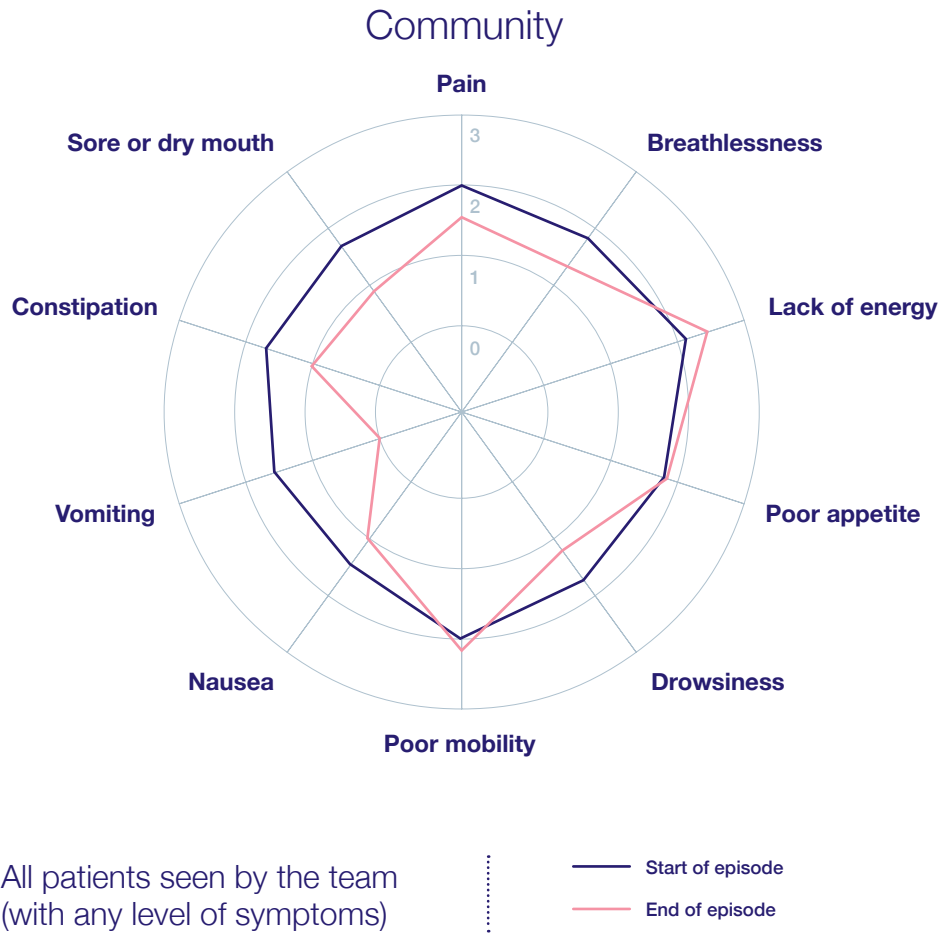
Patients we care for are funded by gifts in wills





# The impact of our specialist care

The heart of our work is improving patient outcomes through their end of life journey. One of the ways we monitor the impact of our care on each individual is using a tool called the “Outcome Assessment and Complexity Collaborative (OACC)” suite of measures. These tools allow us to track the progress of our patients’ symptoms through the phases of their illness by recording self-assessed scores at regular intervals. The below charts demonstrate the impact of our care, with average patient scores at the start of their care, compared to later scores.



## Constipation

5 out of 10 had constipation at episode start

3 out of 5 had improvement in constipation by 1st phase change

5 icons → 3 icons

## Depressed mood

5 out of 10 had depressed mood at episode start

3 out of 5 had improvement in depressed mood by 1st phase change

5 icons → 3 icons

## Ability to share feelings

6 out of 10 had ability to share feelings at episode start

3 out of 6 had improvement in ability to share feelings by 1st phase change

6 icons → 3 icons

## Practical problems addressed

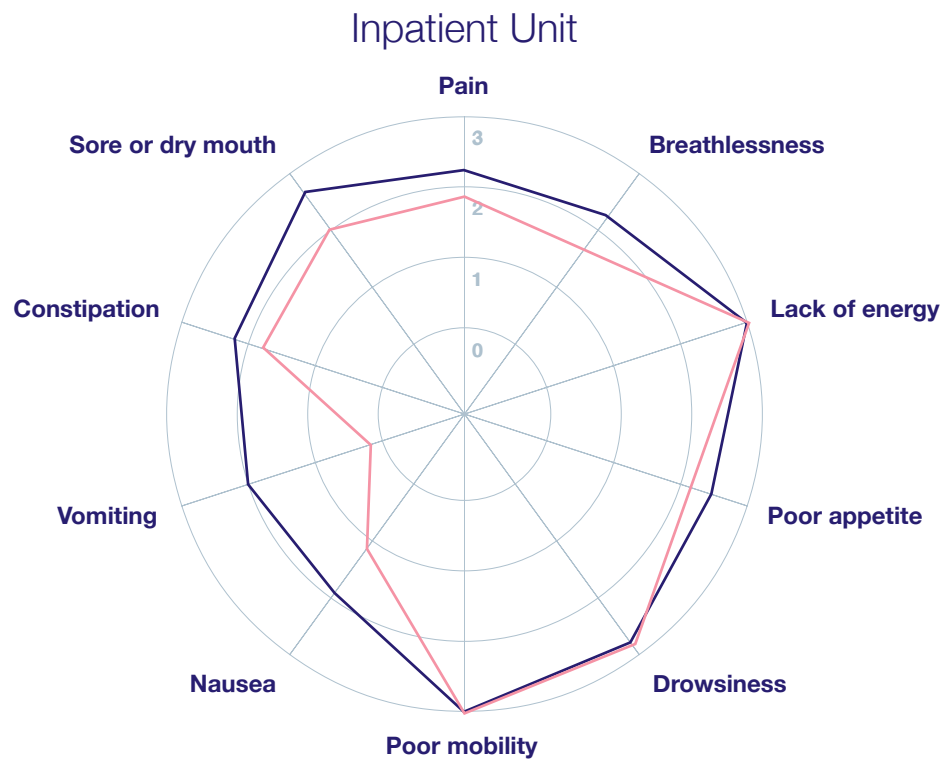
6 out of 10 had practical problems addressed at episode start

3 out of 6 had improvement in practical problems addressed by 1st phase change

6 icons → 3 icons



The impact of our specialist care *cont.*



All patients seen by the team  
(with any level of symptoms)

— Start of episode  
— End of episode

Poor mobility

6 out of 10 had poor mobility at episode start  
4 out of 6 had improvement in poor mobility by episode end

Lack of peacefulness

9 out of 10 had lack of peacefulness at episode start  
5 out of 9 had improvement in peacefulness by episode end

Anxiety

8 out of 10 had anxiety at episode start  
5 out of 8 had improvement in anxiety by episode end

Nausea

5 out of 10 had nausea at episode start  
3 out of 5 had improvement in nausea by episode end

Diet and nutritional advice

Individual services are also developing ways to measure the impact of their care. For example, our specialist dietician now sends a survey to the people she sees after their consultation, and to date has received 100% 5\* reviews.

“She listened to my concerns, asked pertinent questions and gave me plenty of ideas as to how I could improve my diet.”

“Only gratitude. Very helpful, informative and reassuring. And very patient with all my questions.”



## A space for reflection in nature

We are incredibly fortunate to have beautiful grounds at our Winsley Hospice site, which are fully open to the local community to enjoy. Maintained by a team of incredible volunteers, and with views across the Wiltshire valley, our grounds really are a special site for reflection and connecting with nature. Within our grounds, we have several notable installations including the beautiful Firefly Woods, and our interactive Nature Trail.



### Firefly Woods

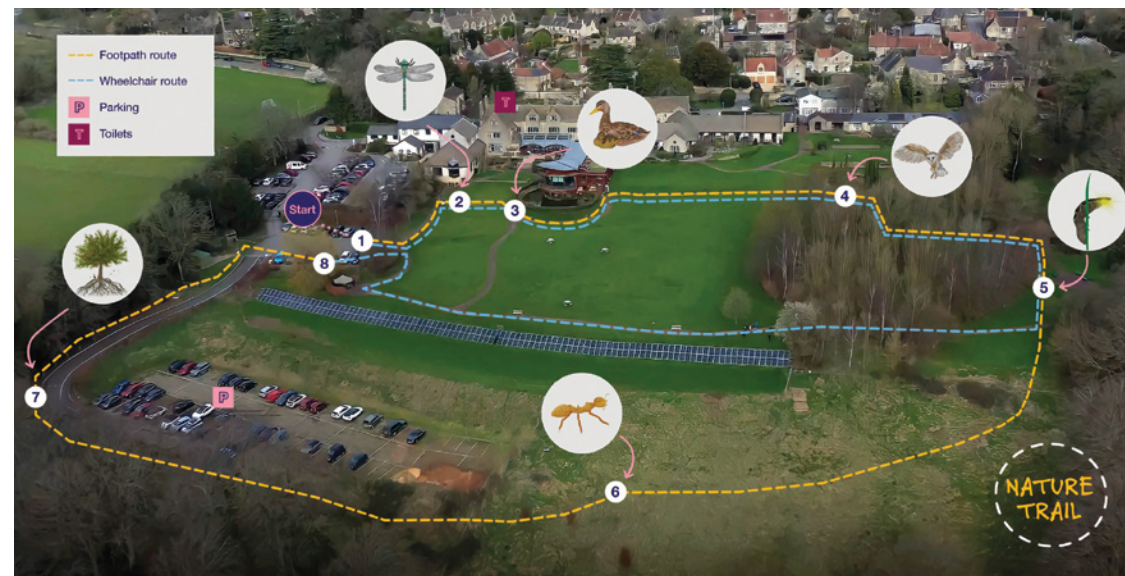
A unique large-scale light installation nestled in the grounds of the Hospice, our Firefly Woods contain a beautiful constellation of individually handmade 'Fireflies', kindly gifted by world-renowned artist Bruce Munro. Each Firefly is made up of tiny, separate lights, 19,800 of which glow together to leave a huge impact. Anyone in our community has the opportunity to dedicate a light on a Firefly in memory of a loved one. It has been incredible to see the number of people coming to visit the Woods increase over the years, with more people than ever experiencing the positive

impact that the Fireflies can have. We also have a 24/7 webcam in the Woods, which has now been visited by more than 1,100 people. Sue is a wonderful Dorothy House volunteer who heads up the team maintaining the Fireflies.

**'My team and I get so much from the Fireflies. We all have a Firefly and get great comfort from them. We have wonderful companionship working together, but the best thing is seeing the benefit of what we are doing, and the joy it brings to everyone. If you come and see them in the evening it is magical. It is my special place, and I couldn't imagine not coming here each week.'**

Since they were installed, Firefly dedications have raised an incredible

**£180,000** for the Hospice.



### Nature Trail

In May 2024, we opened our new interactive Nature Trail in the Winsley grounds. A collaboration between the Hospice and the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, following generous fundraising from The Rotary Club of Chippenham, the trail offers our communities the opportunity to visit the beautiful grounds and discover more about the proven benefits of being connected with nature. Throughout the trail, visitors can access an augmented reality app which opens up a world of fascinating facts and animations. 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 opt to try out nature rubbings created by the Hospice's Creative Arts Therapists and explore the fascinating life cycles represented on the eight interpretative trail boards.

Since it launched,

**293**

people used their phone to access the Nature Trail app.



## Together in Adversity - Emma's story

Earlier this year, we launched our Together in Adversity campaign to help us meet the gap in funding caused by wage increases and cost of living rises. Thanks to the generosity of our community, we were able to raise an incredible £1million over the course of the campaign. Our grateful thanks go to Emma Lynham and her family, who supported our campaign with her story...



### Emma's story

Emma was 49 when she was referred to Dorothy House. Living in a flat in Frome, she worked as a botanical illustrator, a career that she had only recently come to and discovered she loved.

### Emma's referral to Dorothy House

When Emma was diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer, she was immediately referred to Dorothy House's care. When first told about the Hospice, she experienced conflicting feelings.



"That it's where old people go to die. I think I had the idea of people looking very unhappy. But it's streets apart from that, it's a very lively place. It's very full of life and I think it's given me the ability to live, you know, not die with cancer. Live with cancer is a big difference. Even though my prognosis is quite short, it still gives me that opportunity to make the most of life with huge amounts of support behind me, and laughter and humour and everything else that you need to get through."

She began by taking part in our Creative Arts sessions, which she enjoyed as a creative outlet, and joined Coffee Connection to meet others in a similar situation. But as her health deteriorated, it was suggested that she stay at the Hospice for a period of respite, where she was offered a holistic treatment plan, including immersive virtual reality scuba diving experiences, gentle massages, reflexology, yoga, helping her to manage the pain she was experiencing and to manage her mental health. She also spent time with our Spiritual Lead, Dave:

"He has given me the space to make this journey and I think that's invaluable."

### Emma's time at the Hospice

Emma felt that having Dorothy House staff supporting her, both at home and in the Hospice, allowed her family to just be her family, not her carers. They could enjoy their time together.

Emma's mother lives in Italy, and she was able to phone and speak to those caring for Emma if she had any concerns. Her sister lives in Australia, and when she came to visit Emma she experienced a warm welcome, while her brother who lives in the UK was able to spend time with her in our beautiful grounds.

"My family couldn't have done it without Dorothy House."

### Death as a part of Life

Growing up in the country and spending much of her time drawing plants and observing nature meant that Emma understood that death is a part of life.

"I knew that it would happen to everyone, that everyone dies at some point. But that doesn't necessarily make it any less scary."



Emma decided that she no longer wanted to proceed with chemotherapy, and to just enjoy the time that she had left. She found that with the support of Dorothy House, she was able to understand what her journey would look like and that gave her the energy and knowledge to transform the experience into something that should be celebrated, rather than shied away from using euphemisms.

"I realised that you spend your whole life looking for the evidence that you're loved and that people care about you. And it seems so bizarre, but it's right at the very end, and you get that realisation that there's so many people, strangers included, who are there for you."

"My immense gratitude to everyone. From the volunteers, who bring the food in the evenings and at lunchtime, right up to the top. It's just it's an extraordinary experience. I have been very lucky to be able to benefit from it."

Emma died at the Hospice not long after being admitted. She had just been taken out to the gardens to watch the sunrise for the last time.



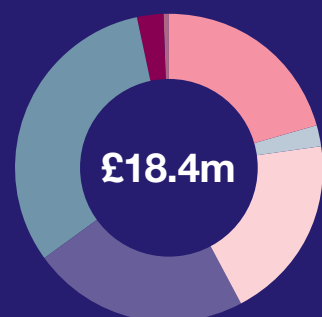
Watch  
Emma's video



## Finances

Our income in FY24/25 was £18.4m, 12% more than last year. This was made up of NHS and education contracts, fundraising, our retail shops and legacies left in wills.

NHS	£3.8m
Education	£0.4m
Legacies	£3.6m
Fundraising	£4.2m
Retail	£5.8m
Other	£0.5m
Investments	£0.1m



## Looking to the future

Our new three-year organisational strategy launched from April 2025, with an unchanged vision that we are committed to living in 'A society where death is part of life' and a new unique purpose 'To empower, collaborate and deliver so that no-one faces death alone'.

### Empower:

Enable patients, families, and communities to take control of their care and support.

Example: In order to empower our health and social care partners and help ensure a high standard of care across our community, we provide a formal training course for care staff, as well as our own registered clinical staff at Dorothy House.

### Collaborate:

Work with partners to provide holistic care.

Example: The Coffee Connection is a social group aimed at those affected directly or indirectly by a life-limiting illness. It is co-hosted by Dorothy House and local cancer charity, We Hear You (WHY). As well as this collaboration with another charity, our team fosters community partnerships with local venues and businesses to host and run the groups.

### Deliver:

Provide high-quality, compassionate care.

Example: Compassionate Companions is a Dorothy House volunteer-run service designed for people who are at the very end of their lives who might otherwise have no one with them, or whose friends and family need time away from the bedside.

The strategy is underpinned by four transformation objectives for the coming year:

1. Implement an operating model fit for the future
2. Achieve financial sustainability
3. Enhance our strategic influence and alliances
4. Further develop our leadership and culture



## Looking to the future *cont.*

### Care Services Strategy

A key aspect of 'Delivering an operating model fit for the future' has been to develop the new Care Services strategy.

The strategy has been developed through asking, listening, and learning from the

workforce, people (patients and families) and the local community. The focus is on enhancing and delivering personalised care and support, improving clinical and care services, and ensuring that people receive the right care, at the right time, in the right place.

The delivery of the strategy focuses on three **core commitments**:



### Integration

Focus on seamless integration and collaboration in care services



### Innovation

Embracing new ideas and approaches to enhance our care



### Impact

Measuring the effectiveness, value and outcomes of care

We need to balance our ambition with deliverability, acknowledging that financial sustainability and efficiency is key. By focusing on personalised care and support, we aim to improve the overall experience for people, ensuring they receive best practice and appropriate care, at the right time.



## 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

Winsley, Bradford on Avon,  
Wiltshire, BA15 2LE

## Dorothy House catchment Area



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Thank you to all  
our supporters!



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