



# SUMMER 2024 NEWSLETTER

- Building relationships with the Homecare team
- Hikers hit Cheshire's hills
- Royal connections



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# WELCOME

# TO OUR FAMILY



**As I write this introduction you may be out in the sunshine, preparing for holidays, enjoying your gardens and the young people will be finishing their exams and winding down in preparation for the long summer break.**

But for many of our families the summer holidays can be a nightmare; not only will the siblings be at home and needing occupying but also daycare, schools and other services become more difficult to access, paid carers take their summer holidays with their own families, and support services, oxygen suppliers and specialist equipment repairers are difficult to contact.

Of all the times in the year this is when our Homecare service is really busy.

Since the pandemic we have had to re-evaluate how we support families. Following independent research with the families, part of the answer

was more of the homecare and daycare that had been offered as help during the lockdown.

As we manage to increase the number of people on the care team, the Homecare team will grow to provide support in hospital, at home and with daycare either in the family home or at Francis House.

The Homecare team are the “face” of Francis House - the first point of contact for families when they are initially referred to Francis House. It is the Homecare team that shows new families around, who maintain telephone contact with the families when they are new to our roll.

How to  
contact us

Francis House  
Children’s Hospice,  
390 Parrswood Road,  
Didsbury, Manchester,  
M20 5NA

Hospice tel:  
**0161 434 4118**  
Fundraising tel:  
**0161 443 2200**

Eventually Homecare may be part of the multidisciplinary team giving end of life care if the family choose to stay at home. When we are able to engage enough staff, the hope is that the Homecare team will be the main support to assist our families with end of life care if they choose to remain in the family home.

All very exciting developments which you will read more of in this edition. Francis House continues to put families and the best way to meet their needs at the forefront of our planning and development, but we are also keen to make the best possible use of the money that our supporters and regular donors entrust to us.

This last year 91.7p in every pound donated was used to care for families, we feel that we owe it to them and to you, our committed fundraisers, to keep administrative costs low.

That we can continue to do this work is thanks to all of the people of the North West who generously give to our funds and so we send to you a heartfelt message of thanks.

**Keep us in your thoughts and prayers. We wish you all a wonderful summer and hope to see you at some of our fundraising events.**

*David*

A family enjoying a sensory group session at Francis House.





## HOMECARE

# BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

**From the first meeting to end of life planning, the homecare team works alongside families every step of the way. With the expansion of the service post Covid, two exciting new groups are changing lives.**

Quiet gasps of excitement fill the air as a variety of soft furry animals are carefully placed onto the laps of children or held up to be stroked by their gentle hands.

The fun is all part of a unique sensory group experience for parents and their children in response to a growing need for day care activities to allow families to spend precious time together.

Supported by all four members of the Francis House homecare team (Alison, Esther, Rachel, Megan and play specialist Emily) eager families descend upon the hospice every other month, and for a couple of magical hours all cares are forgotten.

Care team member, Rachel Ellis explains: "The aim of the Saturday group session is to encourage newly referred families of younger children,

to see what we can do to support them and to build up their confidence in us. Some of our parents can feel very isolated and don't have many friends or family around. A mother and baby would normally go to a play group and make friends, but when you're the mum of a child with complex needs and health conditions, you don't feel like going to groups out there in the community. When they come here, no one bats an eyelid if their child has got a tracheostomy or gastrostomy and it's time for a tube feed. They can get a lot of support from the other parents because they're all going through similar things."

To achieve the relaxed atmosphere and happy smiles takes hours of careful planning by the team. Every family has their own individual needs, and all come with specialist equipment and bags full of medication.

The session starts with a welcome song and nursery rhymes and has a theme with activities, messy play, and arts and crafts to stimulate all the senses.



**“Families always go home with something, like they would if they went to your typical play group. Parents tell us ‘because our children don’t go to nursery, they don’t get these things.’ They don’t get a photograph or a picture that goes on the fridge,” says Rachel.**

The families can turn to the homecare team for support and advice about anything to do with their child’s condition or their symptoms.

Rachel says: “Here they don’t feel judged. They can come here and be a family. When they are here we can keep to a child’s normal routine and they can go and have a sleep. Things are just normal but they can get out of their four walls.”

After the young families have departed, the team tidy up and prepare for the arrival of a dozen or more teenagers and young people for an afternoon group session in Francis Lodge.

Having not left their homes during Covid, many of the young people with life-limiting conditions slowly started to return to the hospice for day care.

They enjoyed time on the PlayStation and playing games with the care team, but never left their rooms or met anyone else. As increasing numbers of young people came for day care, a new social group was formed specifically for them.

Activities include quizzes, games and enjoying an evening meal together. With its large communal lounge and dining area there is plenty of space for wheelchairs to be seated around the kitchen table. As the young people get to know each other, friendships are made and increasing numbers are now staying for respice care.

Nurse, Esther Napier-Hemy explains: “We’ve seen huge changes in the confidence of the teenage boys. When they first came they wouldn’t even look at us. Now, there is laughter, they’re chatting and getting to know each other, they have really changed.



“Their mental health has really benefitted and some now come for respite. It’s so nice to see them all sat around the table doing a quiz together. They would never have done that a year before.”

Families of vulnerable children who are not yet confident to leave their child for respite but are wanting to use the facilities at Francis House - like the jacuzzi and sensory rooms - are invited to come for day care. It’s an opportunity for the homecare team to build up trust, talk about the hospice and the different services on offer.

The work of the homecare team is varied with no two days the same. A shift may include meeting a family in crisis who has just been referred, greeting a family on their first visit to the hospice, having difficult but helpful conversations with parents around advanced care planning, delivering end of life care in the home, interprofessional working with other critical care teams across Greater Manchester, and follow up practical support.

“Families lean on us for support and advice. They might want us to liaise with their key professionals to help them with something, for example wheelchair services, or if they are struggling with some sort of symptom that is ongoing. They tell us some of their happiest memories have been here for day care.

**They can get out of their four walls, and we understand what they are going through. They know everyone here and they’ve built relationships. It’s a familiar place, a safe place for them,” said Esther.**



# MAKE A WILL THIS SEPTEMBER



**Make a Will Month returns this September with legal firms from across Greater Manchester signed up to support the scheme.**

**Jill Waddington - O'Donnell Solicitors**

During September you can have your Will written by a Solicitor at a special discounted rate of £100 for a single Will or £175 for a mirror Will for partners or a husband and wife. The fee is then donated to the hospice enabling both you and Francis House to benefit.

Jill Waddington of O'Donnell said: "We are delighted to be part of Make a Will Month for Francis House. No matter your age or size of your estate, we always advise our clients to have a Will in place to give you peace of mind – why not support a worthy cause in the process."

Twenty five people benefitted from the scheme in 2023 and with more firms taking part this year why not make September the month that you finally make your Will!

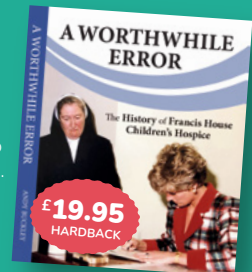
**For more information visit [www.francishouse.org.uk/will-month](http://www.francishouse.org.uk/will-month)**

## A BOOK ABOUT THE HISTORY OF FRANCIS HOUSE

**A Worthwhile Error** is the fascinating history of Francis House Children's Hospice, one of Manchester's most loved charities, brought to life in a stunning 208 page hardcover book.

By purchasing this book you are directly contributing to the care of the children, young people and their families.

£19.95 plus delivery or collect in person from the fundraising office.



Call **0161 443 2200** or purchase online: [francishouse.org.uk/online-shop](http://francishouse.org.uk/online-shop)



# ROYAL CONNECTION

**Dr Eamonn O’Neal DL is the High Sheriff of Greater Manchester and a Trustee of Francis House.**

Our family has been supporting Francis House in one way or another since it opened, so I was particularly delighted to be appointed a Trustee of the charity in May 2023.

Throughout my professional career as a broadcaster and journalist I have had the opportunity to highlight the amazing work done by everyone at Francis House through television and radio programmes, videos and newspaper features but I never expected to be in a position to make a special award to the hospice.

However, in April 2020 Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II appointed me as the High Sheriff of Greater Manchester and it was during that time that I presented my High Sheriff Special Recognition Award to the staff and volunteers of Francis House for the incredible way they continued to look after young people and their families during Covid.

Now, I find myself in the unique position of having been appointed High Sheriff of Greater Manchester for a second time, this time by King Charles III and I will remain in post until April 2025.

The Office of High Sheriff is the oldest secular title in British history and among the most ancient in the world, dating back more than 1,300 years.

At that time the Sheriff represented the monarch, collected taxes, raised armies and was the rule of law across the county.

I won’t be collecting taxes, or raising an army, but as High Sheriff I’ll be proud to represent the King as the ceremonial head of the judiciary in the county.

I also regard this Royal appointment as recognition of the connection we have with our communities. Francis House is the perfect example of how a hospice can offer invaluable and unique support to our young people and their families.

**Dr Eamonn O’Neal DL**



**Dr Eamonn O’Neal DL**

# HIKERS HIT CHESHIRE'S HILLS



On one of the warmest days of the year, more than 200 walkers ventured out in the heat to support the annual Francis House Cheshire Three Peaks Challenge in Tegg's Nose Country Park, Macclesfield.

With up to 14 miles to cover and several long, steep climbs in their path, the humid conditions were not for the faint hearted. Those on the longer route climbed Tegg's Nose, Shutlingsloe and Shining Tor, clocking up 2,828ft of ascent.

Bands of barristers, shop workers, architects, teenage friends, families and solo hikers took in the stunning scenery and enjoyed a huge sense of achievement as they were presented with their finisher certificates. The event is expected to raise over £15,000 in vital funds for the hospice.

**Congratulations everyone!**

# STEPPING OUT

## Boutique Lunch

Back by popular demand the Francis House Boutique Lunch returns to Gusto Italian Restaurant in Cheadle Hulme from 12pm until 4.30pm on Friday 20th September 2024.

For an afternoon of guaranteed glamour put on your best outfit, grab your friends, and we'll take care of the rest!

For your £50 entry ticket you'll enjoy a glass of fizz on arrival, a delicious two course lunch, fashion show by the stylish Flair Boutique, a variety of tempting stalls to browse and purchase beautiful gifts, exciting raffle, fun party atmosphere with DJ Tom Finkill and new for this year PicSTAR Photobooth!

Kindly sponsored by Sinclair Law with all proceeds to Francis House Children's Hospice. Don't delay - book your tickets today!

[www.francishouse.org.uk/boutique-lunch](http://www.francishouse.org.uk/boutique-lunch)



## Make September your STEPember

Last year 34 people stepped up for Francis House by walking 10,000 steps a day throughout September. Their combined efforts raised an impressive £5,605.

Supporter Rebecca Bristow from HMG Paints Ltd achieved her daily steps by combining lunchtime walks near her work with evening walks and trips to the gym. "I really enjoyed it, even though it was a bit of a challenge some days having a desk-based job. Having the reason to get out of the house, rain or shine for such a great cause was so rewarding," said Rebecca.

Registrations for STEPember are £7 and include a fundraising pack, a wall chart and Francis House t-shirt. Visit [www.francishouse.org.uk/stepember](http://www.francishouse.org.uk/stepember)



# SUPPORT US

HELP KEEP  
OUR VITAL  
SERVICES  
RUNNING

## DONATE

Become a Regular Giver by setting up a Standing Order. Complete the Regular Donation form on the next page, or you can set up a charity Direct Debit via our website.

[www.franchishouse.org.uk/donate](http://www.franchishouse.org.uk/donate)

Thank you for your support.

# MAKE A REGULAR DONATION

To continue to expand and develop our services we need to raise £4.8 million each year. Become a regular giver and make an ongoing difference to the lives of the children and families that we support. If you are a UK taxpayer, please also sign the Gift Aid Declaration to increase the value of your donation by 25% at no extra cost to you. Fill in the form below to make a regular monthly donation or set up a Direct Debit via our website [francishouse.org.uk](http://francishouse.org.uk)

## STANDING ORDER

Name of Bank/Building Society .....

Branch Address .....

..... Postcode .....

Account Name .....

Account Number ..... Sort Code .....

Please pay:

**Francis House Family Trust**

**Virgin Money**

**48-50 Market Street**

**Manchester**

**M1 1PW**

Account Number **68170373**

Sort Code **05-05-73**

The sum of £..... each month

Commencing on ..... until further notice

Name .....

Address .....

..... Postcode.....

Signature ..... Date.....

**GIFT AID DECLARATION** I wish Gift Aid to apply to this donation and all donations I make in the future or have made in the last 4 years. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in that year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Signature ..... Date .....

Please return this form to Carole Fletcher,  
Accounts Office, Francis House Children's Hospice,  
390 Parrswood Road, Didsbury, Manchester M20 5NA

**Thank you for  
your donation**

Registered Charity No. 328659

## Every donation will help the families of Francis House



**SCAN TO DONATE**

- **Donate at [francishouse.org.uk](http://francishouse.org.uk)**
- **Donate by phone 0161 443 2200**
- **Donate using the form below**

I would like to give a single donation

£10    £30    £50    other £

I enclose a cheque made payable to **Francis House Family Trust**

Title.....First Name .....Last Name .....

Address.....

.....Postcode.....

Telephone Number..... Email Address.....

### Gift Aid

**Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 donated**

*giftaid it*

I wish Gift Aid to apply to this donation and all donations I make in the future or have made in the last 4 years. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in that year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Signature..... Date.....

### Keep in Touch

Your support is vital and we look forward to keeping in touch with you by post, sharing our news, activities and appeals.

Would you like to receive our supporter emails too?

Yes, I am happy to hear from you by email.      Email Address.....

If you do not wish to receive information by post, or wish to change how we get in touch, please contact [rachael.taylor@francishouse.org.uk](mailto:rachael.taylor@francishouse.org.uk) or call 0161 443 2200.

## THANK YOU

**Please return this form with your donation to:**

Francis House Family Trust, Francis House Children's Hospice,  
390 Parrswood Road, Didsbury, Manchester M20 5NA



FRANCIS HOUSE  
CHILDREN'S HOSPICE

FRANCIS HOUSE CHILDREN'S HOSPICE  
PRESENTS THE

# Winter Sparkle Ball

3 COURSE  
DINNER

FABULOUS  
LIVE MUSIC

HOLIDAY  
RAFFLE

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 30TH 2024

Mottram Hall, Cheshire

TICKETS FROM £85 PER PERSON

[FRANCISHOUSE.ORG.UK/WINTER-SPARKLE-BALL](https://francishouse.org.uk/winter-sparkle-ball)  
SUSIE.POPPITT@FRANCISHOUSE.ORG.UK | 0161 443 2200

# EVENTS 2024/25



2024	
STEPtember walk 10,000 steps in aid of Francis House	September
Charity Golf Week in Almerimar, Spain	19th - 26th September
Boutique Lunch at Gusto Cheadle Hulme	20th September
Manchester Half Marathon at Old Trafford	13th October
Festival of Christmas Trees at Quayside MediaCityUK	26th October - 8th December
Francis House Open Day	9th November
Francis House Christmas Ball at Mottram Hall - NEW VENUE!	30th November
Run Heaton Park	1st December
A Christmas Story at St Elisabeth's Reddish	6th December
2025	
Easter Chick Appeal	January - April
Adidas Manchester Marathon	27th April
TCS London Marathon 2025	27th April
Francis House Open Day	12th May

To find out the latest information or to take part in any of these events contact the fundraising team on **0161 443 2200** or email [fundraising@francishouse.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@francishouse.org.uk) or visit [www.francishouse.org.uk/get-involved/events](http://www.francishouse.org.uk/get-involved/events)

## STOP PRESS!

**Anyone for Golf? Places remain for a Charity Golf Week in Almerimar, Andalucia 19th - 26th September staying at the Hotel AR Golf Almerimar in a Deluxe room. For a week of golf, good times and fundraising email [ralph.warrington@travelcounsellors.com](mailto:ralph.warrington@travelcounsellors.com) or call 0161 826 4802.**

Cover image: Jump Photography

## Newsletter Mailing List

If you no longer wish to receive a copy of the newsletter through the post, please call the fundraising office on 0161 443 2200 or email [rachael.taylor@francishouse.org.uk](mailto:rachael.taylor@francishouse.org.uk) and ask to be removed. Visit our website to subscribe to our monthly supporter newsletter via email and view our newsletters online [www.francishouse.org.uk/news/newsletters/](http://www.francishouse.org.uk/news/newsletters/)

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

 [www.francishouse.org.uk](http://www.francishouse.org.uk)

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