

The Sunflower

supporter newsletter



Issue No. 02
Autumn 2023



Registered Charity No: 279473



St Margaret's
Hospice Care



Goodbye to Ann...

After **24 years** of dedicated service to St Margaret's, this September we wave goodbye to our wonderful CEO Ann Lee as she embarks on a new adventure... retirement!

Ann joined St Margaret's in 1999 as Director of Nursing & Patient Services after working at Frimley Park Hospital as Assistant Director of Nursing and Clinical Governance. She later became Clinical Director and Deputy CEO of St Margaret's and was then appointed as our CEO in 2015.

It's hard to put into words how much of an impact Ann has made at the hospice but we'll give it our best shot!

Throughout her tenure, Ann's commitment to St Margaret's has been unwavering and she has been instrumental in the evolution and development of the hospice. She radiates kindness and greets everyone she meets with a big smile, infectious enthusiasm and a can-do attitude.

Always a blue-sky thinker, Ann's passion for palliative care has shone through every project she has turned her hand to. Ann has influenced care provision nationally as a trustee at Hospice UK and has always ensured St Margaret's has been innovative, embraced technology and never been afraid to try new ways of working.



Over the last 24 years Ann has championed the hospice's vision and values at every turn and has helped to raise thousands of pounds to support patient care.

She's done everything from welcoming supporters and local dignitaries at our summer fetes, to bringing Rod Stewart to Taunton in front of an audience of 18,000 people. From abseiling down Cheddar Gorge dressed as Santa last December to buying tables and inviting guests to our Annual Balls, and filming a heartfelt video supporting our Light up a Life appeal in 2020. Ann has always put her best foot forward and has gone above and beyond to support our fundraising as she knows just how much difference it can make.

Ann has touched the lives of thousands of people across Somerset by transforming our clinical services so they are fit for both the present and future. She leaves behind a fantastic legacy and St Margaret's owes her a huge debt of gratitude.

As we get ready to embark on a new era in our history with a new CEO at the helm, all of us at St Margaret's would like to thank Ann for her extraordinary leadership, boundless kindness and innovative thinking which have helped us to grow and thrive over the last 24 years.

Ann, we simply couldn't have done it without you.

Thank you!

Pioneering innovation: celebrating Ann's achievements



Over the last two decades Ann has played a significant role in strategically developing our clinical services, which has not only benefited the patients, families, and carers we support, but has enabled health professionals across the county to work collaboratively together. Without Ann's tenacity and guidance, all these achievements simply wouldn't have been possible.

Throughout the 2000s she expanded our services, contributing to the charity's commitment and capability to enhance care. Ann was instrumental in designing and commissioning the facilities in the Yeovil unit, launching the **Central Referral Centre (CRC)** and **24-hour adviceline** to ensure ease of access and support for patients. This culminated in her re-engineering the whole service to expand our community team which is now successfully operating **24-hour care across our community**. This includes our bereavement services which now provide family support and care for bereaved children.

In 2016 she spearheaded the **Fit for Future review**. This report identified key challenges and helped create a strategy to **broaden our community services**, adapting end of life care to meet rising demands and the complex needs of our patients.

We've delivered on this strategy by securing consultant medical staffing across NHS Trusts and support for GPs providing quality end of life care across the county. Additionally, St Margaret's hub in Taunton is now the overnight base for Taunton and West Somerset **District Nurses** and Yeovil District Hospital's **oncology services** are now provided in our Yeovil hub.



Under Ann's leadership, St Margaret's has been recognised with prestigious accolades and praise for the care and support it delivers. Most notably in 2018, St Margaret's was named as **Hospice of the Year** in the Charity Today Awards, and it was also recognised for its **Outstanding Services to Somerset** at the Believe in Somerset Awards. Most recently, in 2022 St Margaret's was declared runner-up at the **Somerset Business Awards**, and nominated in the **Student Nursing Times Awards** for community placement of the year.

In 2019, Ann helped launch St Margaret's new patient and carer portal. This technology enabled patients to see and contribute directly to their personal clinical notes for the first time. It means patients can have more input to decisions made about their care – helping hospice staff and volunteers provide the best time to care for each patient.

Under Ann's leadership, what matters most to each individual has become the touchstone for St Margaret's. **What a fantastic legacy to leave for an organisation she loves.**



Tim cherished the idea of a "normal" family Christmas, and the hospice nurses worked closely with the family to make it happen

“No matter the situation I faced, the wonderful team at the hospice were always there”

Life can change in an instant, and when Natasha's husband, Tim, was diagnosed with cancer in his early 40s and given only weeks to live, their world was turned upside down. Suddenly faced with an uncertain future and the immense responsibility of caring for Tim at home while juggling their three young children, Natasha found herself in desperate need of support. Fortunately, St Margaret's Hospice stepped in to provide a lifeline during their darkest days.

Tim's first encounter with the hospice was in our In-Patient Unit in the run up to Christmas 2021. Although his stay was brief, the care he received left a lasting impression on Natasha. "I was blown away by the compassion and attention given to Tim during his time in the unit. Thanks to the hospice team, we were able to have the final family Christmas we all wanted," Natasha explained.

When Tim returned home, St Margaret's Hospice's community nurses swiftly arranged for the necessary equipment to ensure his



comfort and mobility. Natasha vividly recalls the challenges of witnessing Tim's pain and its impact on him. However, the hospice nurses were a constant source of support, visiting regularly to ensure his medications were balanced and effectively managing his pain as best they could. Natasha fondly recalls the joyous memories they created during that final Christmas, sharing a festive meal and even singing carols accompanied by Tim on the piano. While the day left him tired, the memories of that Christmas as a family are now priceless treasures.

Tim stayed at the hospice four times between Christmas and his daughter Amelie's birthday in February, to ensure his symptoms were effectively managed, allowing the family to spend precious quality time together. "Thanks to the hospice team, he was well enough to come home for



Amelie's second birthday, which felt incredibly special," Natasha shared, reflecting on those precious moments.

Natasha expressed her relief at never feeling alone in her caregiving journey. The hospice's advice line became a lifeline for her, available

24/7 to address any concerns about Tim's medication or to provide additional support when needed. "No matter the situation I faced, the wonderful team at the hospice were always there to help," Natasha gratefully acknowledged.

Natasha warmly describes Tim as funny, energetic, encouraging, loving, and warm—a person who stood out and touched the lives of many within their local community. As a much-loved Chaplain at Queen's College in Taunton, Tim made an impact on the lives of many in the community. Even the smallest acts of kindness had a significant impact when Tim was involved.

As Tim's final days approached, the entire family was grateful for the constant presence of hospice nurses, who provided unwavering support whenever needed. "It was a relief to have nurses on hand to help with anything we needed at any time so we could just concentrate on spending precious time together as a family."

Reflecting on her experience, Natasha confessed that she had known little about hospices until encountering St Margaret's. However, throughout their journey, she felt enveloped by love and support from everyone at the hospice. The whole family was looked after, and what could have been an unbearably difficult time became a more peaceful experience.



Tim died at the hospice in March 2022 with his family by his side. But the story does not end there. Natasha and the girls continue to be supported by the Family Support team at St Margaret's, helping them to cope with their loss and build a different future for themselves. Thanks to your support, we carry on taking the time to care for families, as long as they need us.

Find out more about our services at st-margarets-hospice.org.uk/our-services





Mel, Head of Volunteering:

‘We simply could not do what we do without them!’

From the moment we opened in 1980 to today, volunteers have been a huge part of the fabric of our success as a charity here in Somerset. By dedicating their time, skills and experience, our volunteers make a huge difference. From welcoming patients and visitors, providing a listening ear, maintaining our hospice grounds through to fundraising, helping out at events and volunteering in our retail shops – each volunteer is a key part of our mission, so that we can bring vital care to people who need it most. We simply could not do what we do without them!

We’re so proud and privileged to have over **900** volunteers on board and I continue to be amazed by their passion and dedication. With their help, we continue to care for around **5,000** people each year, and I am truly grateful to each

person who supports St Margaret’s in this way. Not only for giving their time and energy, but also for being such amazing ambassadors of palliative care in Somerset. They really do play a huge role in raising the profile of the hospice among their communities in and around Somerset.

For many people, the choice to volunteer is a personal one. Some have experienced first-hand the care we provide and find comfort in being part of and ‘giving back’ to the hospice. Others volunteer for social reasons, like meeting new people, or spending time with others to boost their wellbeing. Each person has their own motivation for volunteering and choosing to volunteer can help people develop their skills or gain experience to help with future employment goals and aspirations.

I feel honoured to get to know the wonderful people who make up our St Margaret’s volunteer team.



LYNNE AND LESLEY - WARD VOLUNTEERS



Lynne: “My husband spent the last two days of his life in the hospice. Prior to that, I nursed him at home and the hospice was there for us every step of the way. The care they gave us was nothing short of amazing. That’s why I vowed I would volunteer to help staff to care for patients.”

Lesley: “My husband was diagnosed with cancer and I also nursed him at home with St Margaret’s support, which was wonderful. I started volunteering for the hospice before my husband died, but I stopped to look after him. I got back into volunteering after some time away and haven’t looked back! I really enjoy working alongside my sister and meeting patients; listening to their stories and bringing them comfort when they are on the In-Patient Unit.”

PEARL - RETAIL VOLUNTEER



“My husband’s cousin was cared for by the hospice, and they did such an excellent job that I wanted to give something back to say thank you. I’ve been volunteering at the Burnham-on-Sea shop since it opened. I remember meeting our first donor who’d brought in his late wife’s clothes – it was a moment I’ll never forget. I love how much volunteering helps me to connect with people. I think it’s quite easy to become solitary at home, but volunteering can help to boost your confidence and broaden your outlook so you feel better about yourself.”

SUSANNA - VOLUNTEER GARDENER



“I love volunteering in the hospice garden. I work with a lovely team of people and love the surroundings. It feels great to be doing something where I am making a difference to the patients, volunteers and staff. Being part of a group effort through volunteering is amazing. You can get so much for yourself and your wellbeing, whilst improving the experience for people coming to the hospice.”

ALMA - RECEPTION VOLUNTEER



“I started volunteering for St Margaret’s around 5 years ago after seeing an advert in my parish magazine. I had just moved to Somerset and wanted to give some time to support local charities. I initially volunteered and supported patients in the community but stopped when COVID hit. For the last year I’ve been a reception volunteer and I absolutely love it, it’s brilliant.”

Feeling inspired to volunteer?



We have a wide range of opportunities available in our hospices, shops and out in the community. Whether you have a few hours every now and again or regular time to give, there are plenty of ways you can get involved. Contact the Volunteering Team on **01823 333822 / 01935 709480** or email **volunteering@st-margarets-hospice.org.uk**
We’d love to hear from you

All thanks to you... a year of care in Somerset

Thanks to your generosity, we've been able to care for **4,818** people – friends, loved ones, neighbours, colleagues – right here in Somerset. But we can only take the time to care because of you.

So whether you make a regular donation by direct debit, have pledged us a gift in your Will, took part in one of our fundraising events, played our weekly lottery or bought something from one of our shops: every penny you give helps us care for people with a terminal illness in our community.

Thank you for choosing to support St Margaret's Hospice; your help meant that in the last year:



33,437

telephone calls were managed by our expert teams, providing specialist advice and support around the clock, day and night



26,685

visits and calls were made by our community team to patients, families, carers and healthcare professionals



2,708

patients were provided with compassionate care in their final days, weeks and months



1,864

new patients were referred to our community nurses



1,382

patients living with lymphoedema were treated by our specialist team



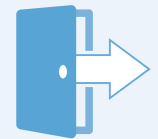
470

patients are receiving care from hospice teams in any given week



239

new patients were welcomed to our Sunflower Centre day hospices



238

admissions onto St Margaret's In-Patient Unit, where specialist nurses provide round-the-clock care for patients with complex symptoms



728

family members and carers were given direct support, from offering a shoulder to cry on to more practical support applying for care packages



49

families were supported by our Bereavement Support team to grieve their loved ones



72

families were helped by our Family & Patient Support teams to prepare for the death of a loved one, and cope with their loss afterwards



Sustainable fashion: join the revolution in Somerset

In a world where climate change looms large, more and more people are recognising the significant environmental impact of the fashion and textile industry. It now ranks as the joint third highest emitter of greenhouse gases globally and makes up 5% of global emissions. As consumers become increasingly aware of their role in this global challenge, many are seeking sustainable alternatives to fast fashion, paving the way for a more eco-conscious future.

Embracing this shift towards sustainability, the charity shop fashion industry has emerged as a beacon of hope, offering a

responsible and ethical solution to the fast-paced trends of the high street. In Somerset, St Margaret's 31 charity shops have become part of the answer to building a more sustainable wardrobe and home.

Thanks to the tremendous support and generosity of our community, a wealth of pre-loved items has found new homes, making a significant impact on our environment. Our diverse range of offerings includes not only clothing but also bric-a-brac, beds, and even electricals. By choosing to shop at St Margaret's, you are contributing to the rewear, recirculate and reuse revolution that aims to reduce the harmful effects of fast fashion on our planet.

Did you know?

For the first six months of 2023, St Margaret's shops have achieved something truly remarkable – **offsetting** an astonishing **571** tonnes of used items from ending up in landfill. This amounts to an incredible **7 million** kilograms of CO₂ prevented from entering the atmosphere. This feat has been made possible not just by selling items in our shops but also by implementing a comprehensive RAG system. Under this system, items that cannot be sold are thoughtfully sorted, re-used, and recycled, ensuring that nothing goes to waste.

Be part of the solution

Join us in this transformative journey towards sustainability and environmental consciousness. Whether you are donating pre-loved items or finding treasures for yourself, your involvement matters. Together, we can work towards maximising product circularity and promoting a more sustainable outlook for our wardrobes and homes.

Every small step counts, and by embracing the ethos of St Margaret's charity shops, you become a crucial part of the solution. Let us create a future where fashion is not just stylish but also kind to the Earth we call home. Step into a more sustainable world with St Margaret's charity shops today. Together, we can make a difference, one pre-loved item at a time.

Find your nearest St Margaret's shop at: st-margarets-hospice.org.uk/our-shops

Summer Sewing Bee Challenge 2023



Bees and sewing machines alike buzzed along through the summer months. Worker bees put their sewing skills to the test to upcycle and reinvigorate a pre-loved item of clothing with material purchased from their St Margaret's shop.

The winner was Thelma who honeyed up four accessories out of a men's shirt from our Wincanton clothes shop. The runner-up was Katy who fashioned a complete summer outfit with a jacket and trousers from our Taunton store.

A catalyst for a compassionate community: how St Margaret's is really making a difference

Joanna Hall - Director of Fundraising,
Retail & Communications



St Margaret's is rooted in the community that we serve. Every day we can care for and support families because local people have generously given their time or donated money to help pay for that care. Many give because they have first-hand experience of St Margaret's, while others recognise that one day, they may need our help. Regardless of motivation, we know that St Margaret's holds a very special place in the hearts of local people.

For me it's important to recognise that St Margaret's means something different to everybody. For some we are the shops on the high street, an employer, for others we are the building with beds, while for many we are a reassuring voice at the end of a phone or a nurse who will visit us at home to help alleviate our pain. We embrace the fact that we can be all these things and so much more in our community.

I've been lucky enough to be involved in a project that has started

to look at the impact of St Margaret's beyond providing care. Through this work we have started to gain a greater understanding of just how far reaching and embedded in the community our work and wrap around care can be.

Whether that's raising funds in memory of loved ones, participating in events together with family and friends, or volunteering in our shops, St Margaret's touches the lives of so many in a variety of ways. We act as a catalyst for a compassionate community, building resilience, providing companionship and new opportunities, which in turn helps to create a sense of unity and collective purpose.

Recognising and measuring the added social value that we bring to the community we serve is an important change for us. It will help us stand out from the crowd, raise more funds and ultimately touch the lives of more local people. As an organisation, we look forward to sharing more details about our social impact in Somerset in the near future.

Joining together to remember loved ones

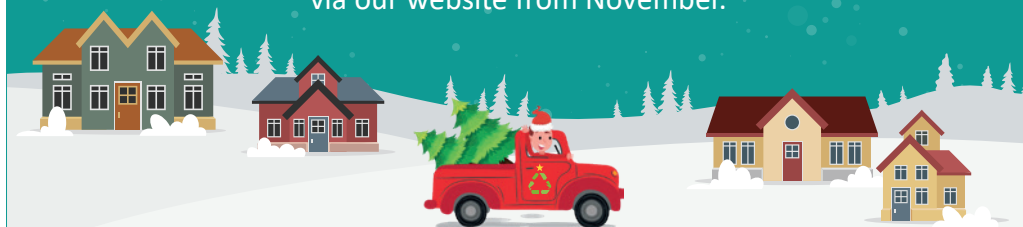
For **Light Up A Life**, our annual remembrance event, we come together to celebrate the lives of loved ones. We invite and welcome everyone in our community and beyond to join us in **dedicating a star in our virtual sky** and **lighting a candle during our virtual service**. More information about how to take part will be available soon.



Branching out for charity: take part in our Christmas Tree Collection!

Join our Christmas Tree Collection Crew! All you need to get involved is a van or truck and be willing to volunteer your time to help collect trees across the county on Saturday 13 and Sunday 14 January 2024. Email fundraising@st-margarets-hospice.org.uk or call **01935 709496** to find out more.

Book your Christmas Tree Collection
via our website from November.



Support our fundraising around Somerset and
get involved with your friends and family!



9 - 15
October

Wear it YELLOW!

Wear yellow, hold a yellow cake sale, host a yellow day or decorate your place yellow. All to support patients and their families facing life-limiting illness in Somerset during Hospice Care Week.

st-margarets-hospice.org.uk/wearityellow



Sat 2
Dec

Sponsored
SANTA ABSEIL at Cheddar Gorge

Tackle the 60ft drop and enjoy breathtaking views of one of Britain's most spectacular natural landmarks - while dressed as Santa!

Places are limited so book now to avoid disappointment.

st-margarets-hospice.org.uk/santa-abseil



New Year
2024

**New Year's
Charity Dip**

at Minehead Beach

Start 2024 in the best way possible with a New Year splash for St Margaret's. Date and time to be confirmed.



Glorious Gardens 2024

Contact our team to register your garden by January 2024.

01935 709496 or visit st-margarets-hospice.org.uk/glorious-gardens

A new chapter for St Margaret's Hospice



We are delighted to introduce James Rimmer who will join St Margaret's as the new CEO of the Hospice, following Ann Lee's retirement. With his **impressive wealth of experience and knowledge, James is poised to steer the hospice towards continued success and growth, enhancing the care and support we provide to our community.**

Most recently James led the Somerset Integrated Care System (ICS) and was Chief Executive of the Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). Previously he was Chief Executive at Weston Area Health NHS Trust, and held executive positions leading strategy, transformation and performance at University Hospitals Bristol, Royal United Hospital Bath and Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

James said "I am delighted to be joining St Margaret's Hospice and am looking forward to meeting the

team, patients and their families and friends to learn more about the services we provide and the impact this has on the community.

Having grown up in Somerset and having worked here for more than half of my career I have a long-standing relationship with St Margaret's and a passion for serving the people of this county. Professionally I have worked with the Hospice in several NHS leadership roles, stretching back over the last 20 years, most recently as Chief Executive for NHS Somerset CCG.

On a more personal note, I have seen first-hand the exceptional care the St Margaret's team gave my father towards the end of his life. I am therefore proud and genuinely excited about the opportunity to build upon and lead St Margaret's through its next chapter."



Helping Alan live as well as he can, for as long as he can

Alan's journey began in 2022 when he noticed troubling changes in his breathing. Concerned, he visited his GP. Just twenty-four hours later, Alan had been diagnosed with terminal cancer and was given a prognosis of just five years to live. The weight of the news was overwhelming and the realisation that his time had been cut so short was an immense burden for Alan.

Following a three-week stay in the hospital and recognising that he needed support in managing breathlessness, and coping with his diagnosis, he was referred to St Margaret's. Since then, Alan has become a regular visitor to the Sunflower Centre day hospice, and talks fondly about the care he has received:

"I can't fault the support that St Margaret's Hospice has given me; it's been life-changing. Everyone has been so supportive. They've helped me come to terms with my diagnosis by giving me the confidence to talk openly about my feelings."

The Sunflower Centre, staffed by a dedicated team of professionals and volunteers, offers a wide range of therapies, support and activities designed to help people like Alan live as well as they can for as long as possible.

For Alan, this meant finding ways to manage his breathlessness and restore his independence.

"The hospice came up with a plan to help me regain control of my breathing and gave me exercises I can do at home or when I'm out and about. It's made a huge difference, and I'm so grateful to everyone who supports St Margaret's so they can help people like me."

Every day, more people in our community are referred to St Margaret's after receiving the life-changing news of a terminal illness. With a regular gift, you can help more local people like Alan make the most of the time they have left. To make your donation, please fill in your details on the next page. Thank you so much for anything you can give, we are so grateful for your support.



Service User Number

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Yes, I'd like to make a regular gift

Payment by Direct Debit

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay St Margaret's Hospice Care

Name and full address of your Bank or Building Society

To the Manager:

Bank/Building Society

Address:

Postcode:

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

Branch Sort Code

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Bank/Building Society Account Number

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Instructions to your Bank or Building Society

Please pay St Margaret's Hospice Care Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with St Margaret's Hospice Care and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature(s):

Date:

Bank and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions for some types of account.

How much would you like your regular gift to be?

☐ £5 ☐ £10 ☐ £15 ☐ £25 Other amount

How often would you like to make a donation?

☐ Monthly ☐ Quarterly ☐ Yearly

Please turn over

My details



Title:	First Name:	Surname:
Address:		
Postcode:		
Tel:	Email:	

Make your donation go further with Gift Aid

giftaid it

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

I want to Gift Aid my donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to St Margaret’s Hospice Care (Registered charity number: 279473). Please tick box: ☐

Signature:	Date:
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Let’s keep in touch!

Your support means a lot to St Margaret’s, and we look forward to keeping in touch with you by post and phone, sharing our news, activities and appeals.

Would you like to receive our emails too? ☐ **Yes I’m happy to hear from you by email**

If you would rather not hear from us, or would like to change how we contact you, please get in touch by calling **01935 709485** or emailing **supportercare@st-margarets-hospice.org.uk**

St Margaret’s Hospice Care takes its responsibility to protect your privacy and personal data seriously. You can read our privacy notice on our website:
www.st-margarets-hospice.org.uk/privacy-statement

Please return this form to:

St Margaret’s Hospice Care, Little Tarrat Lane, Yeovil, BA20 2HU