



# The RWT Charity Newsletter

Making a real difference to the lives of our patients, their families and staff.

## Winter 2025



## King's Award honour for Wolverhampton service

Selfless volunteers who support The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust in its hospitals and community are "absolutely thrilled" after receiving The King's Award for Voluntary Service.

The accolade is the highest award a local voluntary group can receive in the UK and is equivalent to an MBE.

The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust Charity and Volunteering Service was one of 281 local charities, social enterprises and voluntary groups to receive the prestigious award last year. Its work, along with others from across the UK, highlights all the ways fantastic volunteers are contributing to their local communities and working to make life better for those around them.

The King's Award for Voluntary Service aims to recognise outstanding work by local volunteer groups to support their communities. It was created in 2002 to celebrate Her Majesty The late Queen's Golden Jubilee and was continued following the accession of His Majesty The King.

Recipients are announced annually on 14 November, The King's Birthday.

Ashleigh Key, Volunteer Services Co-ordinator at The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust, said:

"We are absolutely thrilled to receive the news that our phenomenal volunteers have won a King's Award for Voluntary Service.

"It is incredibly well-deserved, and this award really is for each and every single volunteer who has contributed their time to support our patients, staff and wider Trust. Past and present, our volunteers are heroes and continue to make such a significant impact to our local communities in Wolverhampton.

"Working in volunteering is such a rewarding experience, and nothing is more satisfying than seeing our volunteers win the highest achievement for voluntary service. We'd also like to acknowledge our former colleague Eleanor Morris for all of her support."

Amanda Winwood, RWT Charity Development Manager, added: "Huge congratulations to this super group of people who are committed to making a difference to both our patients and our staff through their volunteering roles.

"Our Charity supporters give up their time to help us with vital fundraising, get involved with events and help us spread the word about all the fantastic projects underway across the service. We couldn't be more proud of them."

Professor Martin Levermore MBE DL, RWT Chair of RWT Charity,

added: "The Kings Award for Voluntary Service (KAVS) recognises the outstanding contribution and dedication of our volunteers alongside all the many supporters of the Charity. The award highlights the unwavering commitment the Charity holds in improving our community through our volunteers' selfless acts and positive impact.

"It recognises and demonstrates the importance of volunteering and civic responsibility. I am truly proud and humbled by our volunteers' collective efforts in expounding the importance of community cohesion and selfless service."

The winners will receive a signed certificate from His Majesty The King, presented locally by the Lord-Lieutenant of the West Midlands and a crystal award with their certificate.

In addition, two representatives will attend a garden party at Buckingham Palace in May and June this year, along with other award recipients.



The King's Award  
for Voluntary Service

The MBE for volunteer groups



# Couple's fundraising in memory of a special baby

A bereaved couple whose first baby sadly died, after being born prematurely and extremely poorly, are determined to help other families who need the support of the Neonatal Unit at Wolverhampton's New Cross Hospital.

Spencer and Kelly Cree lost their son Freddie when he was three days old in May 2016. He was born just under 24 weeks and weighed 1.2 pounds.

They became determined to help others and are shared their story during Baby Loss Awareness Week.

Freddie was born at Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital but was transferred to New Cross for the Neonatal Intensive Care he needed.

Kelly said: "He was cared for by wonderful Doctors and Nurses – they didn't just look after him, they looked after us too."

"New Cross staff were absolutely amazing, we could not fault any second they looked after our boy and they also provided us with a room to sleep in, showers and three meals a day without question."

"Lindsey was our main Nurse who was so friendly and supportive. Our little boy fought on, but we were told Freddie was not improving and there was nothing more that could be done. He was suffering and we had to make the decision for Freddie to be taken off his machines. He passed away on 22 May which destroyed us mentally and emotionally."

Kelly and Spencer, both 36 of Oakham near Dudley, requested donations at their son's funeral and raised £500 in his memory.

They raised £3,000 back in 2018 after Spencer and two friends Phil Coleman and Rob Salter walked up Mount Snowdon in Wales and the couple held a charity night at Dudley Ex-servicemen's Club.

Spencer, a van driver for Mitie, where Kelly is an account manager, said: "We were going to do more events to mark Freddie's 10th birthday, but we have the attitude of "Why wait?" so we carried on in the run up to his ninth birthday"

Last year they raised £1700 from a charity darts match, supported by West Midlands Air Ambulance and their daughter Ruby-Mae, seven, sold bracelets and keyrings she made.

Spencer is in training for another Snowdon climb on 12 April this year along with friends Phil Coleman, Mikki Kazmi, Aaron Poole (H) and Chris Kemmings.

"I have already lost three stones and am hitting the gym to get ready for the challenge," he said.

The couple also want to thank Nicci Sutton from Dudley Ex-Servicemen's Club for all her support with their fundraising.

"We just want to do what we can to help other families – whether that's money for extra milk warmers or more equipment for Neonatal," added Kelly.

"This was the worst time of our lives, and we couldn't have got through it without the care and compassion shown to us."

A family fun day has been set for 5 May and a disco/quiz night on 23 May, all at Dudley Ex-Servicemen's Club.

To support the family's fundraising please visit <https://bit.ly/4eHbJh6>

Amanda Winwood, RWT Charity Development Manager, said: "I can't believe how dedicated this family is to helping others after going through such tragedy themselves."

"Their selflessness will help so many other families and our Neonatal Team is so grateful for their generosity."

*"Their selflessness will help so many other families and our Neonatal Team is so grateful for their generosity."*



Fundraising in memory of a special boy

# 'Spooky' Surinder makes donation to children



A self-styled 'Halloween Queen' got into the spirit of the season to raise more than £1,000 for poorly children in Wolverhampton.

Civil servant Surinder Mann raises money every year for charity and this time chose the Children's Ward at New Cross Hospital.

The mum of two, 48, from Oxley, has so far raised £1,095 – her biggest amount and more than double last year's total – following a Halloween event she held at her workplace.

She organised several Halloween-themed activities such as Bhangra dancing, a bake off, and origami activity.

*"It's brilliant what Surinder has done, and we thank her very much."*

*"It's not just an overnight thing – she has spent a long-time fundraising for this, so it was a massive effort on her part."*

Local businesses generously donated a driving experience in a Porsche, go-karting, a Merrythought Bear, a trip to West Midlands Safari Park, and a spa day, among the highlights.

The money has been used to buy pens, colouring books, games, puzzles and toys for sick children in hospital.



'Spooky' Surinder makes donation to children

Surinder has spent much of her spare time over many weeks organising the event and is grateful for the help she has had from her work colleagues, and her husband Suky Mann, 51.

"I just like to give back to the community and do my bit," said Surinder, who donated to The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust (RWT) Charity for the second time in her five years of fundraising.

"I've had a lot of support from work colleagues, so special thanks to Sarah Johnson and Amie Fewtrell for their tireless work and fantastic support promoting and selling raffle tickets, and Amie for helping with obtaining the prizes."

"I could not have done it without these wonderful colleagues. A huge shoutout too to our local Indian food suppliers who supplied more than 300 samosas, onion bhajis, and eggless cakes which added a boost to our fundraising success."

Suky contributed towards food supplies, as well as collecting and delivering them.

"It was hard work, but it paid off as we had a lot more prizes – and people have said they are the best prizes they have seen," added Surinder.

Sarah Lewis, Matron, Acute Paediatrics at RWT, said: "It's a lovely way to celebrate Halloween and bring some joy, so we're very grateful to Surinder."

"It will make such a difference to our patients and bring Halloween to the ward."

Amie Rogers, Fundraising and Lead Digital Engagement Officer for The RWT Charity, added:

"It's brilliant what Surinder has done, and we thank her very much."

"It's not just an overnight thing – she has spent a long-time fundraising for this, so it was a massive effort on her part."



# Diabetes Centre is £1,000 prize winner



Diabetes Centre is £1,000 prize winner

Wolverhampton's Diabetes Centre has received a £1,000 boost after an IT team generously donated its national award prize money.

The Software Development Team at The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust (RWT) won the Evolve Project of the Year Award in NDL's Community Awards for developing a diabetes podiatry system tool.

Diabetes can reduce the blood supply to feet and cause a loss of feeling. These problems can lead to ulcers and infections.

The replacement tool screens data from some 100,000 patients across Wolverhampton, Walsall and South Staffordshire from GPs and Pathology as well as retinas so the condition can be identified quicker in those who might be more susceptible to it.

It also provides a full summary care record to manage all identified Diabetes and Podiatry patients on an ongoing basis.

This includes referrals, test requests recording medications, observations

(BMI etc) and diagnoses (e.g. Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes) data. It integrates with Pathology retinal and regional data sets to provide users with the care record. This is also able to show key data visually, using historical trend graphs for each metric, such as height, weight and cholesterol.

Both the Software Development Team and the Diabetes Centre – which recently celebrated its 30th anniversary – are based at New Cross Hospital.

And it was a real example of cross-team working over two years, with the Software Development Team liaising closely with Professor Baldev Singh, Consultant in Diabetes and Endocrinology at RWT.

Richard Hough, who leads the 10-strong team as Software Development Manager at RWT, said: "We were delighted to win this award, and it only seemed fair and right to donate it to our own Diabetes Centre, so diabetes patients can benefit.

"Prof. Singh was very involved in

helping to design the tool, and through close dealings with him over time we have become aware of how big a problem diabetes is in this region.

"A lot of people don't know they have diabetes, and this tool should identify patients with the condition quicker."

Based in Wetherby, West Yorkshire, NDL is a national company which enables digital transformation across the public sector.

Declan Grogan, Chief Executive Officer of NDL, said: "To create something that is so helpful to patient research is both very impressive and very rewarding.

"Congratulations and well done on this fantastic achievement."

Amie Rogers, Fundraising and Lead Digital Engagement Officer from The RWT Charity, said:

"Well done to the Software Development Team for its innovation. It's great to see diabetes patients benefitting from the prize too."

# Greetings from The Grinch

Grumpy Grinch showed he really does have a heart by spending time laughing and joking with children at a Wolverhampton hospital.

There were lots of very bad jokes and a few grumpy insults along the way, with nobody safe from the cheeky character when he visited New Cross Hospital's Children Ward.

Played by Bernard Moseley from Gornal, The Grinch said: "I love seeing people smile, especially the kids and the staff. I really enjoy coming back every year, especially in these hard times."

Hema Mistry's 11-year-old son Viraaaj was one of the 'unlucky' children to meet to Grinch. She said he wasn't sure to start with but the jokes made them both laugh.

She said: "The Grinch was really funny and even though he wasn't here for a long time, he brightened up our day and made things fun for us."

Sarah Lewis, Matron for Acute Paediatrics, said: "It's been great to see the children, parents and staff have a laugh on the ward. It's nice to give the children a distraction from being in hospital and enjoy some Christmas festivities."

Amanda Winwood, Charity Development Manager for The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust Charity, added: "Being in hospital can be difficult for adult patients but being a child in hospital at Christmas can be even more daunting. We wanted to try and bring some festive cheer and what better way than with the Grinch! There were lots of giggles and insults from him and children and staff loved it."



Grumpy Grinch

## Talented pupils' hand crafted kindness

Talented pupils have donated crocheted items for premature babies on a Wolverhampton Neonatal Unit to help keep them warm and offer comfort.

Inspired by their Head of Year Ella Underhill and Associate Assistant Principal Hardeep Toor-Hamrahi, who had her son Hector Singh Toor-Hamrahi at 32 weeks, students from St Edmund's Catholic Academy have made hats, blankets and mittens for New Cross Hospital's youngest patients.

Hector was born in October 2016 and weighed just 1lb 7 oz. He spent six weeks on New Cross Hospital's Neonatal Unit.

His mum Hardeep, Associate Assistant Principal, said: "The care we received at New Cross Hospital was second to none. He was my first born and it was a really daunting time for us. I spent the first three days of his life on ICU and my

husband and staff helped with collecting my colostrum and tube fed Hector.

"Staff were so friendly, helpful and caring I couldn't have done it without them. They gave us so much support with skin to skin, breastfeeding and how to care for Hector. I was given a blanket to take home that smelt of Hector when I wasn't with him, and this offered so much comfort. Hector also had one that smelt like me, so we didn't feel like we were apart. I am so glad we could come and thank staff as well as give them our donations. I really hope they help like they helped me."

The students crocheted the items in their spare time and during study breaks. Stelle Ojo, 17, from Wolverhampton, was one of the pupils. She said: "It has been really lovely to come here and give staff our donations. Crochet can be very therapeutic and also help during



Donation from talented students

the stress of the exam period. To go out into the community and help is really important and it is great we can provide these knitted items for the babies."

Amanda Winwood, The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust Charity Development Manager, said: "We are so grateful for the kindness shown by the students at St Edmunds school for wanting to support our youngest patients and their families at such a difficult time. These items will be welcomed by families who often are not prepared with items when their little one decides to make an early appearance."



# All aboard the Santa Express

Poorly children from Wolverhampton and Walsall enjoyed a magical trip on board the Santa Express thanks to the generosity of a volunteer-run railway.

The trip, organised by The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust (RWT) Charity and Walsall Healthcare's Well Wishers Charity, whisked youngsters on a festive train trip around Chasewater Country Park in Burntwood.

Seven-year-old Sophia Bowdler from Essington was one of the special VIPs onboard. She is currently receiving chemotherapy for an optic pathway glioma which is a slow-growing brain tumor that arises in or around the optic nerve, which connects the eye to the brain.

She said: "I love Christmas – it is my favourite time of year. It was so exciting to meet Santa."

Her mum Michelle Bowdler said it was fantastic to go on the train together as a family with her husband Tom and 11-year-old daughter Paige. She said: "Due to Sophia's treatment it is really hard to get together and do something as a family. To make it out has been lovely – making memories with the family. It is a really special start to Christmas."

Thanks to Chasewater Railway, families who use the hospital services at RWT and Walsall Healthcare were able to ride on the train for free.

Those on board were able to take in the beautiful scenery whilst also meeting Santa and his elves.

Another special passenger was four-year-old Olivia Guy and her two-year-old brother Jonas. Olivia has 1p36 deletion syndrome, a disorder that typically causes severe intellectual disability and spent last Christmas day in hospital.

Her mum Aimee said: "It is such a lovely event to be part of, thank you. Olivia really loves all the festive lights and tinsel, so it has been a magical ride."

Five-year-old Verity Murphy was on the train with her twin sisters Sienna and Sofia, three, and brother Joseph, eight. Verity has CDKL5 deficiency which is a rare neurodevelopmental condition.



Santa Express Train

Her mum Sarah said: "We were all very excited to come here. It is really lovely and nice to come out and celebrate Christmas as a family."

Andy Mould, Director of Chasewater Railway, said: "We wanted to put on these special NHS Santa Express Trains today free of charge to give something back to the community. It is important to us to support the local communities, and it was a privilege to welcome the families aboard the Santa Express and see all the children's smiling faces".

"We hope that everyone had a magical experience which will stay with them for years to come."

Amanda Winwood, Charity Development Manager for The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust Charity, added: "Christmas can be a difficult time of year when you have a poorly child, so we are grateful to Chasewater Railway for gifting such an amazing experience. We have loved organising this magical trip for all our young patients and their families who are dealing with complexed medical conditions".

"Each child has also been given a Christmas story book from Santa, we hope will bring some more magic and festive cheer."



# School donates £1,700 for garden appeal

Children and young people in hospital will benefit from a generous £1,700 donation from a school which will boost a garden appeal.

The Friends of Birchfield School in Albrighton chose The Royal Wolverhampton NHS (RWT) Charity as its cause to support from the proceeds of a raffle at last year's annual summer ball which had a masquerade theme.

The Friends is a group of parents who raise funds for the school and charities to enhance children's time at school by delivering fun experiences and complement their learning.

Money raised will go towards The RWT Charity's £30,000 appeal to transform the Children's Ward garden at New Cross Hospital into a bright and beautiful space.

The Charity's wish list for the garden is focused on sensory features, including a walk-through space with paths wide enough for wheelchairs and beds, lighting and projections for night-time use and a cinema projection space.

This will allow children and young people to watch films outdoors from beanbags, wheelchairs or their hospital beds.

Rebecca Hewitt, Transition Clinical Nurse Specialist at RWT, whose son attends Birchfield School, said: "The Friends decided to choose this charity as being in hospital can be a scary place for anyone, but being a child it can be especially hard."

The proceeds from the raffle at the summer ball were donated by Penny Simkin, The Friends of Birchfield chair.

Penny said: "We are so pleased to support the development of the garden at New Cross which will hopefully provide an outside sanctuary for children to play and also a place of reflection for parents."

Kirsty Lewis, Senior Matron for Acute Children's Services, said: "We're very grateful to Birchfield School. This will really help in our quest to give children a place to play and relax at an otherwise stressful time for them."

Amanda Winwood, Charity Development Manager, said: "Thank you to Birchfields School for its generous donation – this is a great boost to our appeal towards giving the children a space to savour and enjoy while they're in hospital."



School donates £1,700 for garden appeal

# Delivering joy to patients

More than 500 gifts were donated for New Cross Hospital patients to receive over the festive period thanks to the generosity of customers and staff at Dunelm Wolverhampton.

The presents were given to The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust Charity (RWT) as part of the store's 'Deliver Joy this Christmas' appeal which saw customers taking tags from a Christmas tree and buying a present that suited the description.

Lily Page, Store Manager, at the Bilston Road store said it was the best response the store had had.

She said: "We run the campaign every year and each year we are overwhelmed by the generosity of our community. This year we have exceeded our target again which we are so pleased about. Everyone has been so kind."

The gifts were donated to RWT Charity for distribution. They were taken to Paediatrics, Gem Centre, C18/C19, Cannock Hospital, West Park Hospital, Fracture Clinic, Dermatology, Urgent Care and Phoenix Centre.

Amanda Winwood, RWT Charity Development Manager, said: "We



Delivering joy

are overwhelmed with the support from Dunelm and our community again. We have been able to support so many more areas with these donations."



## Winter wonderland at New Cross Hospital

Patients, visitors and staff at New Cross Hospital were urged to have themselves a Merry Little Christmas when broadcaster and journalist Suzi Perry switched on the festive lights after a fun Friday of seasonal treats.

Members of The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust (RWT) Charity Team had swapped texts etc with Santa Claus to ask him to support the annual Christmas Fayre and lights switch-on in the marquee outside the Emergency Department.

And the jolly gent proved a popular crowd pleaser for visitors to the event prior to the big magical moment. A host of stalls ran through the day offering gift ideas for all ages and interests and Arts and Heritage Group volunteers gave people an opportunity to create a piece of artwork using their thumbprints.

Prior to the magical moment Motorsports presenter Suzi switched on the lights, the RWT Singers delighted everyone with carols including Mary's Boy Child and O Little Town of Bethlehem.

Following a prayer by Joe Fielder, Chaplaincy Team Leader, and before she did the honours, Suzi reminded the crowd that "togetherness" was important at Christmas. "It's lovely to be here, which is a funny thing to say about being at a hospital! I'm happy to be turning on the Christmas lights but Christmas can be a very difficult time of year for many people, and this is where being together to share love and memories is important. Togetherness is important. I wish all of you a wonderful Christmas."



Winter wonderland

Mandy Bains, Healthcare Assistant, was among visitors. She said: "This is a lovely event, and it does get you feeling all Christmassy. Thank you to our Charity for organising it all."

Richard Woodhouse, Estates Officer, and Neil Arrowsmith, Supervisor, are part of the Trust's Estates Management Team which arranged for the lights to be installed so that the winter wonderland could be created. "We have had donations from William Gough, Eyre and Ellison and Brykol which have been used for the lights and the displays we have on our Children's Ward," explained Richard. "As soon as Suzi switched on the Christmas tree lights we went round the site to switch on all the others."

Amanda Winwood, Charity Development manager, said the Christmas countdown had definitely begun. "We thank Suzi for supporting the event along with our stallholders and estates who have worked hard getting the site ready for us."

## Suzi spreads some Christmas cheer

"Wolverhampton is my home – it's the sense of community and the sense of humour I love most."

For broadcaster Suzi Perry, the opportunity to visit New Cross Hospital to turn on its Christmas lights last year was one she's really looked forward to.

She may be internationally known for her near 30-year career of broadcast journalism but her heart still lies in the city where she was raised.

"Wolverhampton is my home and I have been spending a lot of time here over the last couple of years," she said.

Two of the things that make it so special to me are feeling like a part of something and feeling at home. It's the sense of community and sense of humour that I love most,

and I still hang around with the girls I grew up with. I had a really happy upbringing in Wolverhampton.

"I worked at the Grand Theatre and Civic Hall and a lot of the favourite times of my life happened then. I also get back to watch Wolves whenever I can too."

"I know there's sometimes criticism of the city centre and its regeneration, but we have some absolutely beautiful walks and features in and around the Wolverhampton area. I love the homely pubs too and the live music scene. There's clearly something about being in the place I love and perhaps belong that brings me back time and time again."

Suzi is a fan of Christmas, although she made an exception to her rule to be The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust's special guest.

"I don't normally get into the festive spirit until the 1st of December but I'm willing to ignore this by a couple of days!" she said.

"I think we could all do with some cheer as it has been a difficult time for everybody in one way or another and I don't think the covid situation helped. A lot of people have struggled and are struggling still. That's another reason why I joined the Wolves Foundation as an ambassador, they do such an array of vital work for the city."

Suzi explained she has been "in and out" of the hospital over the last couple of years with her parents, as well as her own health needs.

"It's such a busy hospital and the staff are really in demand so I wanted to come to New Cross and give something back."

## Ex-Goodyear workers fund £6,400 machine

Heart test results can now be given to young patients instantly after generous former Goodyear workers paid for a £6,400 machine to improve their hospital care as part of a £500,000 legacy.

The Children's Outpatients department at New Cross Hospital in Wolverhampton has its first electrocardiogram (ECG) machine, which records the electrical activity of the heart.

It means patients who need their heart tested can have this done there and then, rather than visiting the Heart and Lung Centre in an adult setting. Having their own machine means the appointment is also quicker – around 20 minutes rather than an hour and a half. Between 15 and 20 patients per week are already benefitting from the new machine, rising to 50 to 100 per week as more staff are trained to use it.

Dr Minoth Kanagaratnam, Consultant Paediatrician at The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust (RWT), said: "This vital piece of equipment has become our new best friend! "Now we have this, children don't have to go to an adult setting which might be daunting and stressful, and we get the results straightaway rather than having to wait longer – maybe even days. This is the first time we've had an ECG machine in Children's Outpatients and I can't thank the former Goodyear workers enough. It saves huge amounts of time, it improves flow, and it prevents delays in diagnosis. Results are now instant and we can see if there's



Workers fund £6,400 machine

anything abnormal going on, so the patient experience is far better."

Kirsty Lewis, Senior Matron for Acute Children's Services, said: "This machine has provided quick reassurance for children and parents because waiting to rule out a heart condition can be quite an anxious time for both. "Carrying out an ECG can be seen as invasive for our patients. Using the skills of our children's Nurses, we are able to communicate in a way they understand and ensure they feel at ease throughout."

Nikki Hewitt, who is RWT's first Paediatric Clinical Nurse Specialist, has trained staff to use the machine. She said: "It's been amazing – having this is making life so much easier. Colleagues are very excited about it and patients are comfortable with it too."

Cyril Barrett, Chair of the 5/344 Transport and General Workers Union Benevolent Fund (Ex-Goodyear Wolverhampton), was delighted to hand over the cheque. "For what the NHS staff do, we

should get down on our knees to them every day – what wonderful human beings they all are, we feel it's important to create a living legacy and that's what donations like this have done said Cyril".

Cyril's former colleague Wayne Devaney, who had a pacemaker fitted at New Cross Hospital, added: "My 27-year-old daughter Sylvie has been looked after here on a regular basis with juvenile arthritis as a child. We have been inspired by the staff here many times."

This donation from the 5/344 TGWU Benevolent Fund means ex-Goodyear workers have contributed almost £500,000 to RWT projects over the last seven years.

Amie Rogers, Fundraising and Lead Digital Engagement Officer at The RWT Charity, said: "This fundraising effort has been phenomenal and members can rest assured they have helped patients today as well as helping so many future generations."



# People flock to Care, Create, Conserve display

More than 200 people flocked to a history fair in Wolverhampton, with many signing up to an oral history project on healthcare.

Items – including an early version of a nasal cannula – were displayed at the fair at the Wolverhampton City Archive in the Molineux Hotel Building.

A stall was hosted by volunteers from the Care, Create, Conserve project, part of the Arts and Heritage Group of The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust (RWT) Charity. People handled a collection which includes a pair of Tudor Edwards oxygen spectacles from the 1930s, and a medicine bottle from Wolverhampton-based chemist Reade Brothers and Company.

Items were from both the former Royal Hospital which closed in 1997, and New Cross Hospital, part of RWT, where the Royal's services were transferred to.

Elinor Cole, Arts and Heritage Co-ordinator, said: "The event went very well. The archive had 250 people through the door despite poor weather, and the volunteers spoke to 60 people, having in-depth conversations with each. We got some sign-ups for our oral history project, and a fair few memories shared on our A2 display board – someone even recognised herself in one of our old photographs! We also made some lovely connections with other groups and heritage venues, including the Wolves Museum."

Volunteer Helen Steatham said: "Most people we spoke to had memories of the Royal and a few had worked there. It was lovely to



Conserve Display

hear how much it meant to them. The staff had particularly fond memories, and many had a tale to tell. Having a small selection of medical objects on display and allowing visitors to handle them was a great conversation starter, and engaged even the few visitors who were unfamiliar with the Royal. Visitors were fascinated by the oxygen spectacles and baby feeding bottle, while the ear syringe inspired quite a lot of speculation."

Fellow volunteer Helen Trainer said: "It was brilliant able to talk to people about the history of Wolverhampton hospitals. It was also great to be able to sign up people to the oral history project, and to hear their stories, for future generations to listen to. Most people had lovely memories of the Royal. A few people worked there, and two described the 'pebbly' surface on the floor of the swimming pool! Folk were very interested in holding the objects – they loved the oxygen spectacles and Nurses' badges."

The Care, Create, Conserve display was one of numerous stalls featuring community groups, local history groups and genealogy societies.

Historians, organisations, and individuals shared their knowledge, answered questions and told people about their activities.

Care, Create, Conserve is an 18-month long programme of arts and heritage activity, funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Central to this project is a Healthcare Heritage Centre, housed at Wolverhampton Central Library, which has started to exhibit the Trust's fascinating collection of medical artefacts, photographs, and memorabilia.

It also acts as a community co-creation hub, hosting a vibrant programme of talks, events, and workshops.

Anyone interested in taking part in the oral history project can email [elinor.cole@nhs.net](mailto:elinor.cole@nhs.net)

# "Rich and rewarding" workshops bring many benefits

"By looking back at the past we learn how to do things better in the future."

A trio of Wolverhampton arts projects considering issues of identity, disability and language within a healthcare context has come to a successful close.

Real Arts Workshops (RAW) teamed up with The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust's Arts and Heritage Group to deliver the projects, which saw school pupils and recovering patients taking part in workshops.

As a result, a 2D collage of The Royal Hospital building in All Saints and a 3D model, complete with a lift off roof, were produced, along with a reproduction painting of Gary O'Dowd's "Two Worlds" which depicts Deaf and Hearing worlds working together in harmony. And water colour paintings, dot drawings and a 3D model were created using The Weeping Chapel building – part of the original women's hospital at West Park Hospital.



Rich and rewarding



The workshops sessions formed part of the Care, Create, Conserve project, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, which has seen a healthcare Heritage Centre developed within Wolverhampton Central Library. Visitors can see artefacts dating back to 1840 and discover the rich history of healthcare in Wolverhampton.

RAW is a Wolverhampton-based team led by graphic designer, artist and musician Alex Vann and profoundly Deaf crafter and BSL tutor Gary O'Dowd.

Elinor Cole, Arts and Heritage Co-ordinator at The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust, said: "We have seen some thought-provoking work produced by participants in these workshops – work that really allowed them to immerse themselves in the project. And the resultant artworks will help us to raise further awareness of our Heritage Centre and spark greater interest across our communities, as well as prompt reflection."

RAW worked with Penn Fields School pupils, Warstones Primary School's Deaf Resource Base and West Park Hospital's rehabilitation patients.

Gary from RAW said: "It was great to have the opportunity of working with the young people at the Deaf Resource Base at Warstones School. We were able to borrow some archive hearing equipment from the Wolverhampton Sensory Team which the pupils had a great time learning about and interacting with. I spoke with the children about how technology has advanced since I was a pupil myself at a school for deaf children in the North East in the 1980s. In recent times there have been huge advances in digital hardware for Deaf people and smartphone technology now features deaf inclusive apps such as instant messaging, SMS texting, video calls and more specifically platforms such as Sign Video, Zoom, Facetime and BSL 999. Unfortunately, there are still many inequalities for Deaf and disabled people although BSL has eventually been officially recognised, it's still not accessible everywhere it's needed or on the school curriculum. Projects like this are useful to raise awareness of such issues – framed in a creative, fun and interactive way."

Alex from RAW added: "We found this such a rich and rewarding experience and it was fascinating to see the artworks develop along the way. But it's important to appreciate the wider benefits of these projects as we saw people of all ages developing new skills and gaining a real sense of satisfaction. They also benefitted from positive, social interaction with others and enjoyed working as a team. Projects like this help to break down barriers and challenge perceptions and remind us all, that by looking back at the past we learn how to do things better in the future."





# Festive Cheer across RWT *Thank you*

"A huge thank you from the Charity Team to everyone who donated over the festive period and helped bring some magic and smiles to our patients away from family over the Christmas holiday. Without your support we can't make a difference".



We were all left 'feeling good' after Jamie Flanagan In The Style of Bublé joined us at The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust. He got us in the festive mood and a great night was had by all with guests dancing and singing along.



More than 180 advent calendars delivered by DPD Wolverhampton to our children's department and Gem Centre.



Staff from The Dodd Group had a collection and bought toys to be distributed over the Christmas holiday to children coming into hospital.



Staff from MOOG UK in Wolverhampton donated sweet treats for patients and made sure there were ones suitable for all dietary needs.



From one charity to another, Matts Mission Children's Charity shared the love with gifts from an appeal to make sure no one missed out at Christmas. Great to see charities working together.



A pallet full of toys delivered from the team at BJS Distribution in Wednesbury. The Children.



Quizzers from Wednesfield Conservative club donated two TVs to our children's ward along with £740 to buy some additional items to bring some smiles to young patients on the ward.



Civil Enforcement Officers from Marston Holdings, Wolverhampton held a fundraiser to buy arts and crafts, story books and treats for patients in hospital over Christmas.



Rupinder and Aminder Sahota were cared for in our Neonatal unit December 2023 when their son Yuvraaj was stillborn. They wanted to bring in treats for babies and their families as well as staff spending time on the unit at Christmas.



Macauley and Natalie from Mpower Competitions saw the recent visit from Hells Angels MC and wanted to get involved and help bring some smiles at Christmas. A fantastic donation of toys and sweet treats were delivered by the owners and many smiles made.



Wouldn't be Christmas without a visit from Alfie's Smile, always wanting to make a difference for patients spending time in hospital away from families and friends. So much thought put into the goodie bags from a family who have spent much time in hospital.



Wolverhampton's Winter Wonderland stopped by our Charity office with some special gifts from Santa. They wanted to make sure children who were poorly in hospital and couldn't get to Wonderland didn't miss out and sent the gift to them.



Staff and Head Office from Constellation Cold Logistics UK chose us as their charity for Christmas. Raffles and competitions were held raising funds to buy new toys for our children's ward.



Generous staff from Orthotics department at the Trust wanted to give back to patients this Christmas. Instead of secret Santa they all put in and bought treats, fluffy socks, toiletries and much more for our elderly patients on Ward C39. What a great team.



Generous donation of care packages from Crafting in the Communities for our Palliative Care patients.

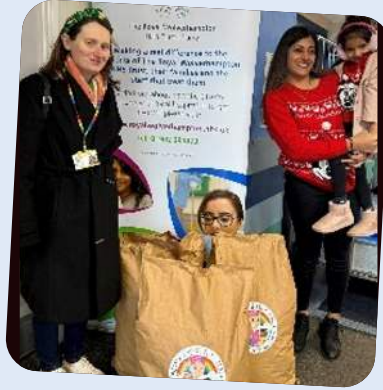


Christmas Day gifts for staff on delivery suite from Soroptimists across Bilston, Wolverhampton and Cannock to show their appreciation for their work.



Thanks to The Black Country Artist, Anuj our Children's ward has been transformed into Polar Express ready for activities over the festive period.





A wonderful donation from Sara-Jane and Kiran for their annual collection of nightwear in partnership with Children's Hospital Pyjamas Trust. This donation supports families who have unexpected stays in hospital and can't get back home to replenish items needed for their stay.



Dave Robertson and the Funko Pop Heroes community have delivered again with a selection of pop heads for all ages to be distributed over Christmas.



Novus Property Solutions decided they wanted to bring some festive cheer to patients at the Trust this year and bought a bumper haul of toys and activities.



A big thank to Amelia who has supported paediatric oncology patients and bought them items from their wish lists. Amelia runs fundraising through the year and then has an amazing shopping spree checking off children's lists.



Stacey and Craig arranged a Santa visit around their estate in Willenhall and raised more than £60 for our charity along with 120 selection boxes gifted them by Collins Aerospace. Its great hearing about our community spirit and how supported we are.



Dedicated supporters Hit The Dhol visited the Trust and made a fantastic donation to the children's ward, with arts and crafts toys and activities to occupy our youngest patients.

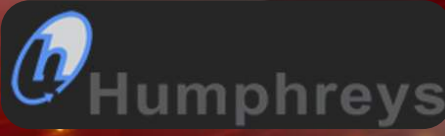


Members and Supporters of Hells Angels MC Wolverhampton delivered a bumper haul of goodies including, gifts, bikes and cars to be given out to children and also added to the garden project on the ward.



Wolfruna Chapter UK delivered selection boxes, cuddly toys and activity books for our children's ward to bring some cheer whilst feeling under the weather.

Thank you to local businesses who supported us by donating to our Christmas lights around the trust this year, you really helped bring the sparkle to RWT.



Thank You

# Thankful Michelle was a mum on the run



A grateful mum went on the run to raise more than £500 to buy toys and equipment for Wolverhampton's Children Ward.



Michelle-Bridgwater Donation

Michelle Bridgwater from Cannock raised £525 by running the Stafford 10k and used the money to donate items for the younger patients at New Cross Hospital.

She runs 2 Step Dance Academy which has classes around the area and two local schools, was inspired by the treatment her children received at The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust (RWT), but noticed some of the toys had seen better days. Her eight-year-old son had cellulitis of the arm, spending a week in hospital and was put on intravenous drugs.

Her daughter, aged five, had two stays in New Cross – on oxygen for a week after having RSV, then suffering facial cellulitis. Both have fully recovered.

*"I'm hoping for a different experience because people often talk about the crowd willing them on, but it was pouring with rain so there was hardly anyone watching!"*

"The last time I went I'd noticed that the toys were broken, and the outdoor space was tired, so I decided to do the 10k race to raise money for it," said Michelle.

She dances six days a week and hosts evening classes, but starting running from scratch in the summer holidays.

"Working so much and with a family, I don't have time to run when I'm at home, so I did most of the training on holiday every day before breakfast, and I went from nothing to 10k in four weeks," added Michelle.

Despite her lack of previous experience, she completed the race in one hour three minutes and is now hoping to run a half marathon. "I'm hoping for a different experience because people often talk about the crowd willing them on, but it was pouring with rain so there was hardly anyone watching!"

Among the items she bought or the ward were a giant Jenga, a scooter,

trikes, ride-in toy cars and interactive books, but she still has £35 left and plans on buying more.

"It's a tough time for children and their loved ones when they're in hospital, so for them to have things to do and play with is important because they need to be stimulated, the children I teach are all of the same age as those on the ward and the same could happen to them, and I'd want them to have good toys and equipment to play with. My experience from seeing my kids in hospital has made me want to do more, and if I can do that, I will."

Kirsty Lewis, Senior Matron for Children's Services, said: "The items Michelle has bought will make a massive difference to our younger patients, so we thank her very much."

Amanda Winwood, RWT Charity Development Manager, said: "Michelle's efforts have enabled her to make a generous donation to the Children's Ward and we're very grateful."





## Hundreds to benefit from new equipment

A Wolverhampton hairdresser proved she is a cut above by dressing as Edward Scissorhands to raise money for equipment that will benefit up to 900 patients with prosthetics.

Mum of three Anita Platt, 43, dressed for a week as the 1990 film character Edward – or Edwina as she called herself – at Nic Russell’s Hair Studio in Pendeford, raising £250.

The money has bought equipment for The Maltings Mobility Centre in Wolverhampton, including two agility ladders and hurdles, an adjustable height workout step, dumbbells, footprint markers and resistance bands.

The equipment will help patients improve their mobility by enabling them to take part in exercises to strengthen their limbs.

Anita’s partner Matthew Miller, 44, a double amputee for six years, noticed when he completed in agility events that some equipment wasn’t available to patients at The Maltings.

So, the Wolverhampton couple, decided to raise money to buy it.

“I had some strange looks when I went to buy lunch at the local shops, but it was good fun and we’re very thankful to our clients who gave generously,” said Anita. “I wanted to help because it’s a cause close to my heart.”

“We see these as essential items, but the NHS can only so much, so we decided to do something to support people.”

Lou Tisdale, Clinical Specialist Physiotherapist in Amputee Rehabilitation at The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust, said: “Some of these items were missing in our toolbox when the patient and I did a running training course – items the trainer had but we didn’t. All the items will be useful to support people to gain confidence in the use of their prosthetic limbs through improving balance and control of the leg. We are really grateful to Anita and Matthew for thinking of our service in their fundraising. Matthew wanted to ensure we could support others in their rehab and Anita wanted to support that wish.”

Father of five Matthew lost both legs below the knee due to sepsis in 2018 after contracting septic pneumonia (blood poisoning).



Equipment Donation

The former Grenadier Guard had to go on an Extra Corporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) machine which removes blood from the body, cleans it and restores it to the body.

In a coma for three weeks, he had his heart restarted three times and was in hospital for three months.

Matthew, who wears his prosthetic limbs all the time outdoors, is so thankful to Anita. He said: “She’s great – she even drove to work in costume, and she takes me to all my appointments. The equipment is a real boost.”

Amie Rogers, Fundraising and Lead Digital Engagement Officer from The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust Charity, which organised the donation, said: “These items will really benefit our prosthetic patients and we thank Anita for her efforts.”

*“She’s great – she even drove to work in costume, and she takes me to all my appointments. The equipment is a real boost.”*

## Inco Contracts' "chemo comfort bags" delivery

More than 1100 ‘chemo comfort bags’ and 1000 radiotherapy water bottles are going to be delivered to the Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust Charity after Inco Contracts smashed its fundraising target for 2024.

The principal contractor, which has its headquarters in Cannock, pledged to support cancer patients in the Midlands as its charity of the year and has successfully generated more than £20,000 through a series of golf days, a ‘Miles in March’ competition and a one-off £4000 donation from integrated healthcare specialist Phoenix Medical Supplies.

Staff are now busily filling the hypoallergenic bags with contents to assist patients while undergoing their chemotherapy journey, including wet wipes, lavender oil, tissues, activity books, a handheld fan, lip balm, colouring pencils and, following a local campaign, different coloured knitted hearts made by craft groups in the area.

Inco Contracts will also hand over more than 1000 radiotherapy water bottles as part of its campaign, doubling the number they were looking to deliver when they started the drive.

West Midlands Contracts Manager Tim Lewis, who has undergone his own cancer journey, said: “There has been a fantastic response to this year’s charity drive, with every single member of staff and many companies in our supply chain getting behind it. After all, nearly every person in the UK will know someone who has experienced a battle with cancer. “Having successfully gone through chemotherapy myself, I know how important the ‘chemo comfort bags’ are to you – it’s the little things that make a big difference and we have raised enough money to ensure 1100 people get one!”

He added: “A massive thank you to everyone who gave money and their time, especially to Phoenix Medical Supplies, which has given us £4000. That is the single largest donation this year. The ‘knit a heart’ campaign also proved what a fantastic group of local crafters we have. Albrighton Craft Group, Brewood Women’s Institute and Wednesfield in Bloom played a huge role, with the latter knitting 200 hearts on her own!”

Nigel Swift, Phoenix UK’s Deputy Chief Executive, added his support: “This is a cause very close to my own heart and fits perfectly with the company’s desire to support the good causes and local communities we operate in. “We were delighted to have made our contribution



Chemo Comfort Bags and 1000 Radiotherapy Water Bottles

and helped Inco Contracts smash its targets on chemo comfort bags and radiotherapy water bottles. The difference these will make is huge.”

Inco Contracts is not stopping there and has added its name to the refurbishment of the children’s garden at New Cross Hospital.

The £35,000 project will bring a tired space back to life with a full redecoration, the build of a large pergola, installation of festoon lights and an outdoor cinema projection screen to provide much-needed outdoor entertainment for poorly children.

Tim said: “Working with our supply chain partners, we’ve agreed to provide all the painting and electrics for the lights and cinema for free. Families are going through a very difficult time and this outdoor space can provide some welcome relief and distraction – it was a no brainer for us to take part.”

Amanda Winwood, Charity Development Manager at The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust Charity, said: “Local businesses play such a big role in helping us improve the experience of patients we are looking after, and this is another fantastic example of that in action. Inco Contracts set out an ambitious target at the start of 2024 and not only hit it but actually surpassed it. The ‘chemo comfort bags’ and water bottles are really appreciated by individuals going through some tough times and we can’t wait to start handing them out next year. Tim and the company have not stopped there, throwing their weight behind the children’s garden DIY SOS, which will start in earnest in February.”



## Children benefit from £1,000 toy windfall

A generous mum and daughter have helped raised £1,000 for Wolverhampton's Children's Ward and donated a host of toys and equipment to give young patients a happy Christmas.

Debbie Stanesby, 62, and Hayley Parsons, 36, who own the Dress Store Boutique in Claregate, decided to devote their annual charity collection to poorly children through The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust (RWT) Charity.

They appealed on social media to fellow local businesses in Claregate, Codsall and Tettenhall for raffle prizes, held a bake sale and invited customers to donate items, and were overwhelmed by people's generosity.

People also bought bed socks and blankets, to ensure teenage patients can receive a gift too.

"Mum said she wanted to take Christmas back to what it's about, which is being kind, considerate and giving," said mum of two Hayley,

who with Debbie celebrates the shop's fifth anniversary this month. We have spoken to hundreds of people over the last few weeks, and we were blown away by how much people donated. Not just that, but also by how much people say New Cross Hospital is a credit to the city. The feedback about the Trust was constantly positive – no one had a bad word to say about it."

Hayley's sons aged five and 10 were both born at New Cross, while Debbie recently attended the Heart and Lung Centre for investigations into her heart, another reason for giving back. "We held a bake sale in the store, and it was a lovely day. It brought up a lot of people's experiences of being in hospital," added Hayley.

"I've got a friend with a son who has leukaemia, and she said the children get bored in hospital so we asked people to collect toys. As part of that we wanted to raise some money, with a target of £500 to begin with. My mum has worked

so hard on this, working into the evenings and ringing loads of people."

Kirsty Lewis, Senior Matron for Children's Services, said: Thanks so much to Hayley, Debbie and everyone who has donated."

Amie Rogers, Fundraising and Lead Digital Engagement Officer for the RWT Charity, said: "Hayley and Debbie have really pushed the boat out with their amazing donations of money and toys – we're extremely grateful."



Charity Donation £1,000

## Mistletoe and Michael spread seasonal smiles

Rudolf was busy at the North Pole but his reindeer friends Mistletoe and Michael brought miles of smiles to young patients at Wolverhampton's New Cross Hospital when they visited.

Organised through The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust's Charity (RWT Charity), the festive furry friends made themselves at home outside the Children's Ward and proved a real tonic – for all ages.

Aoife, aged four, enjoyed watching them. She said: "They were really good."

Bianca Gambone and Alice Lloyd's one year old daughter Lorena also enjoyed visiting the pair. Bianca said: "This was amazing and totally unexpected as well. It's so good of the Charity to make this happen on the ward. The reindeer were so sweet."

Harrison, eight, said the visit helped put him in the mood for the most magical time of the year. "It was really fun seeing the reindeer, I've never seen such majestic animals," he said. "I'm looking forward to Christmas, meeting family and reuniting with everyone."

Ten year old Anabell was happy to feed Mistletoe and Michael. "I'm used to feeding horses so I was fine to



Mistletoe and Michael

give them some food," she said. "They loved it."

Families whose babies are on the Neonatal Unit were also invited to enjoy some festive cheer.

Amanda Winwood, Charity Development Manager, said this was one of the busiest times of year for the Charity but one of the most rewarding.

"Seeing so many happy faces is absolutely priceless and makes all of our work so worthwhile. The children loved meeting Mistletoe and Michael but this was also a seasonal treat for their parents and carers and our own staff."

## Praise for volunteers' vital support to vulnerable residents

Valued volunteers who are involved in a project to support vulnerable residents across Wolverhampton have been thanked for "the big difference" they have made to people's lives.

The Holistic Opportunities Preventing Exclusion (HOPE) Project is a partnership between The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust (RWT) Charity and Wolverhampton Voluntary and Community Action (WVCA).

The Charity was awarded £220,000 from NHS Charities Together to address issues around the support needs of people of Wolverhampton affected by mental health due to social isolation or other factors as a long-term consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes patients, their carers and their other family and friends.

Volunteers were invited to an event to share their personal experiences of supporting people, gain an insight into the progress of the project and enjoy lunch with others.

Alison Dowling, Associate Director of Patient Relations at RWT, said this initiative was the first time the Trust had partnered with a voluntary organisation in this way. "We wanted to take a moment to really thank you for everything you've done so far, we really do appreciate the impact of what you do," she told the volunteers.

Geoff Griffin, HOPE Project Volunteer Co-ordinator, said there were now 120 volunteers involved. "We get feedback from our clients who tell us they look forward to your visits and what a big difference it makes to their lives," he said.



Praise for volunteers

We have supported around 100 vulnerable people in Wolverhampton and who knows where they would be if you hadn't provided that support.

Adesuwa Sandra Usonegbu, 48, is one of the volunteers and she has been in her role for six months.

She supports a widow who has been struggling with loneliness. "We talk and we watch TV together and we learn from and support each other. She looks forward to my visits and I look forward to spending time with her."

Paul Edmonds supports a woman whose husband has dementia. "We have built up a good trust now and it is so lovely that she can take some time for herself when I visit to sit with her husband and have some respite as she is her husband's main carer," he said. "We had to build up gradually to this but now it is working well."

Idris Azeez, like many HOPE volunteers, feels he is "giving something back" to his community through his role.

"My 11 year old son Abdul has cerebral palsy and over the years he has needed healthcare which has always been there for us – now I can return that kindness," he said Idris supports a wheelchair user and has been able to accompany him outdoors as well as spend time visiting him. "It makes him happy when I go to see him, we get on well and I feel like I'm giving something back."

The HOPE project works alongside the city's Social Prescribing Service, run by WVCA, to help tackle loneliness, isolation, depression and anxiety.

Sarah Harris, WVCA link worker, attended the celebration event and said: "We couldn't do what we do without you, thank you so much."

*"We couldn't do what we do without you, thank you so much."*



# All Hands on Deck – Mark's events raise over £4,500

A triple fundraiser which attracted two reality TV stars helped raise over £4,500 to help young hospital patients in Wolverhampton.

Andy Pearce and his daughter Issy – who featured in the popular ITV show My Mum, Your Dad – were among the guests at a charity quiz night at The Rainbow pub in Coven.

Their presence helped smash the fundraisers' target of £2,500, and the celebrity theme continued as winners took home prizes such as Ollie Murs VIP tickets. Fundraisers Mark Hands and Stephen Cooper hosted darts and pool competitions alongside the quiz, attended by Andy and Issy.

Mark, 53, of Heath Hayes, was diagnosed with a rare blood condition in 2022 and is monitored at Cannock Chase Hospital, part of The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust (RWT). A friend's child was a patient on the RWT Children's Ward, so the duo decided to raise money to help young patients at the Trust that has been supporting Mark.

Stephen, 52, from Codsall, said "When young people are in hospital

*"We wanted to be able to do something that helped to ensure the children were able to have some fun." our young patients are going to love the new toys and equipment."*



Mark Hand donation

there is a limit to how much there is to do to keep occupied.

"We wanted to be able to do something that helped to ensure the children were able to have some fun." In the darts, Stephen was pipped by a regular player, while Mark played the part of quiz host.

The quiz was won by a team from Mr Fish, a new mobile fish van owned by Jenson Shore and George Hague, who made a large donation.

Mark said: "There was a right buzz on the night. It was just great fun to do something for a good cause. We had a great turnout – even people who aren't pub goers dropped by to help their local hospital, which is really heartwarming."

"I'm excited to see what the charity can do with the money – it's nice just knowing you're able to make a difference."

Stephen added: "A big thank you to the Rainbow Inn for hosting us – it's a real community pub and we were welcomed with open arms."

Sarah Lewis, Matron on the Children's Ward, said: "We're so grateful for any donation and we know the hard work that goes into the events.

"The money will go towards two TV/DVD combinations and refurbishing a parent room on the ward, as well as the kitchen space, to support families to have somewhere to go and take a break and have some quiet time, should they need it."

Amanda Winwood, RWT Charity Development Manager, said: "We are overwhelmed at this donation and that we are already able to cross off the works for the parent room so early into 2025. The impact this will have is great.

"It is lovely to see the community spirit and everyone coming together to make a difference."

Mark and Stephen are now looking forward to their next event in April – an Oasis tribute band.

# Caring students bring fun gifts

Future healthcare staff have already been showing their caring side after donating toys for Wolverhampton and Walsall children in hospital.

Health T Level students at Walsall College donated around 20 gift boxes filled with toys and games for children at New Cross Hospital in Wolverhampton and Walsall's Manor Hospital.

The Health T Level (equivalent to three A levels) at Walsall College offers work placements at New Cross, Cannock, West Park or Walsall Manor Hospitals, where learners can be placed on various wards and in departments.

A donation bank was set up in the college's main atrium, where students from all courses and college staff were able to donate toys. This was open for two weeks. Items donated included toys for all ages – from helicopters to teddy bears and dolls.

Sarah Lewis, Matron for Acute Paediatrics at The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust, was on hand to receive the donation at New Cross. She said: "Thank you all for your generosity. The children will be very grateful for the gifts."

Taylor Williams, 16, hopes to study Paediatric Nursing in the future. She said: "As a class we wanted to get involved with a charity and do something that would benefit our local communities. We imagined the children in hospital and how unsettling it might be, so we wanted to bring some joy with a few gifts this Christmas."

Dania Downey, 17, said: "It feels really nice to be able to do something like this for the children. We hope it will make a difference."

Dania is still exploring which area of healthcare she likes best while classmate Lily Green, 16, likes the idea of working in elderly care.

Lily said: "Some kids are so poorly that they're in hospital a lot, and it's not the same as being at home, but hopefully this helps the ward to feel more homely. We hope this donation helps the parents as well,

as they've got the stress of their child being ill, but hopefully it helps them to see their child having some fun."

Walsall College Lecturer, Neelam Pallen, said: "Having settled into their industry placements, our students were eager to give back to the Trusts by spreading festive cheer. They were pleased to present staff with Christmas gifts boxes filled with treats, activities and games for the Children's Ward patients to enjoy during their hospital stay. Their generosity and compassion are testament to the outstanding healthcare professionals they aspire to become."

Amie Rogers, Fundraising and Lead Digital Engagement Officer, said: "We are grateful to the students for thinking of those who are spending the festive season in hospital this year. Their kindness will help bring smiles to our youngest patients and their families

*"It feels really nice to be able to do something like this for the children. We hope it will make a difference."*



Toy Donation





## Cheers to generous fundraisers

Generous pub customers have raised a glass to cancer patients and their families by organising a huge haul of gifts to be given out to patients.

Regulars at the Broadway pub in Lichfield Road, Wednesfield, rallied round to show the community's support for patients having chemotherapy treatment at the Snowdrop Suite at Wolverhampton's New Cross Hospital.

Broadway staff members came up with the idea and spread the word amongst colleagues and customers. A Christmas tree was put up and tags added with gift ideas to be bought. They were overwhelmed at the support their appeal received.

Steph Friedl, CNS Oncology at The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust's Hospital at Home service, said "It's not nice for children being in hospital over Christmas. For their families having extra gifts is lovely as a lot of families can't work due to their child having chemo so will help them at such a magical time.

"Patients will be overwhelmed that the community has such a big heart."



Cheers to fundraisers

Joanne O'Sullivan, Living with and Beyond Cancer Support Manager with Macmillan at the hospital, added: "I want to thank all of the customers and staff for their generosity and for including all patients on their cancer journey".

Amie Rogers, Fundraising and Lead Digital Engagement Officer, said the gifts had been well received so far. "We have such a generous community who always pull together and make a difference for our patients and – at lets our patients know that they are not alone".

## Capital gains for young cancer patients

Christmas came early for young cancer patients in Wolverhampton, thanks to a generous donation from a kind-hearted company.

Capital Group of Kingswinford supplied an individual sack of toys and goodies to each of the 27 children who were receiving treatment for the disease at New Cross Hospital.

Each sack of goodies contained a Capital-branded teddy bear and



Capital Group of Kingswinford

sweets but the rest of the presents were age appropriate for the patients.

Dean Bell, Head of Utilities at Capital, which employs around 150 people across the sectors of utilities, shopfitting, warehousing and road sweeping, said: "As a father to a nine-year-old daughter, it truly hit home to hear about these children and their ages. We decided to do what we could to bring a little joy to their day and remind them that even strangers in their community are thinking of them during this festive period. Our hope is this small gesture brings a smile to their faces and helps them feel the warmth and care of the wider community this Christmas season. Christmas is a time of joy and giving, and we firmly believe it should be special for everyone, especially for children who are facing such challenging circumstances. If we have the opportunity to bring even a small amount of happiness and support to these children during this festive

season, we are truly honoured and grateful to do so."

Duncan Evans, Capital's managing director, said: "It's truly lovely to be in a position to help bring even a small bit of happiness during these tough times. With two young children of my own, it really brings things home and highlights how meaningful it is to make a positive difference."

Kirsty Lewis, Senior Matron for Children's Services at The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust (RWT), said: "It's so thoughtful of Capital to recognise the needs of each patient at what is a difficult time for them, so we thank them very much."

Amanda Winwood, RWT Charity Development Manager, said: "Capital has been really generous with its donation and the children's faces lit up when they received their presents."

## Anglers make a £750 splash

A grateful angler reeled in a £750 donation as a thank you for his life-saving cardiac surgery and his wife's cancer treatment.

Ian Madylus, 66, underwent mitral valve surgery, spending 15 days on Ward B8 in the Heart and Lung Centre at New Cross Hospital.

His wife Jary, 65, has been undergoing chemotherapy and radiotherapy for bowel cancer for two and a half years on Georgina Ward at Russells Hall Hospital in Dudley.

Ian is one of 20 members of Rybalsky Fishing Club and they raised £375 each for B8 and Georgina Ward, from a raffle and an auction of a gallon bottle of whisky at the club's Christmas meal.

Ian was admitted to New Cross Hospital after struggling for breath for a week, thinking he had COVID-19.

Tests revealed he had severe mitral valve regurgitation caused by a leaking heart valve. This was urgently repaired by Mr Stephen Billing, Consultant Cardiothoracic Surgeon at The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust (RWT). "I could have died so I can't thank all the staff enough for what they did for me and the ongoing support for my wife – we really appreciate it," said Ian, a retired electrical inspector for Birmingham City Council.

"I didn't realise that anything above what the NHS provides is self-funded and how stretched they are. Until you need help you don't realise what a fantastic and impossible job staff do. It's humbling really. So I thought we should do something and the members have been very generous. When we meet up we have a breakfast then we draw the raffle and have a meal later – we're like a family and there's lots of banter."

Formed 11 years ago, the club is made up a lot of retired Birmingham City Council workers from the Second City, Tamworth, Droitwich and Redditch.

Ian, who was born in the UK to Ukrainian parents, was asked by members to produce its name, which is the closest word in Ukrainian to fishing.

And he was proud to make the donation, adding: "The staff gave us such a warm welcome when we came in – it was very heartfelt and they seemed genuinely touched by our donation. It made our day. Both hospitals remain in our hearts and we often speak of them."



Anglers make splash

Rebecca Simmons, Matron for Cardiology and Cardiothoracic Services on B8 at RWT, said:

"It is lovely to see our patients visiting the ward having recovered fully and returning to their hobbies and enjoying life! We are grateful for the donation and will discuss with staff how it can be used to benefit both staff and future patients."

Amanda Winwood, RWT Charity Development Manager, said: "We're delighted to see Ian well again and thank him for his donation, which will help our patients and staff. We also wish Jary all the best with her treatment."





# We need your help!



Have a Christmas gift you can't return?

Or maybe a gift set you just don't need anymore?

Don't let them sit unused in your cupboard. By regifting to us, you're helping us make a difference beyond what the NHS can offer.

There's no better time than now to share those items guilt-free with your local hospital charity. If you're interested in donating, just give us a call at 01902 694473.

Are you a keen knitter and are able to support us with producing bonding squares, cardigans, bonnets, booties, mittens, blankets etc which will support our tiniest babies to our elderly care patients. If so, please get in touch with the Charity Team.



You can reach us by any of the following ways:



@TheRWTCharity



@therwtcharity

LinkedIn

**For further information about the Charity or how to support it, please contact our team on 01902 694473 or email [rwh-tr.fundraisingteam@nhs.net](mailto:rwh-tr.fundraisingteam@nhs.net) Website [The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust Charity](http://The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust Charity)**

Check out our events page and see if there are any race events you could take part in and support us.

Scan the QR code to this Events page.

