Autumn/Winter 2026

It takes a whole community that cares

Thames hospice Moments



The moments your support makes possible

Read Irene's story on page 10



Rachael with 'Spring Awakening' in Windsor Great Park

Hello

What an incredible summer it's been at Thames Hospice!

From **Trunks across the Thames** bringing our community together across Windsor and Slough, to opening the doors of our new, bigger store in **Gerrards Cross**, there has been so much to celebrate.

And then came another very special moment: our latest **CQC assessment**, which rated Thames Hospice as **'Outstanding'** overall.

None of these moments happen by themselves. They happen because of you.

Your support helps us care for patients and families. It helps our stores raise vital funds, our volunteers give their time, our teams do what they do best and our whole community come together behind something that really matters.

So, when you see what we've achieved this summer, we hope you'll feel proud to know that you helped make these moments possible.



Nurse Sinead at our Gerrards Cross store opening



Outstanding care doesn't just happen. It takes people. It takes teamwork. And it takes a community that cares.

As we look towards the months ahead, there are so many more moments to share with you. In this edition of Moments, you'll see the difference your support makes every day; meeting the people behind the care, hearing from patients and families, discovering the stories behind our stores and finding out how you can help make even more moments possible.

The moments you make possible don't stop here.

As we head towards Christmas, there are plenty of ways to be part of what happens next from Christmas shopping and festive events to coming together.

Thank you for being part of our Thames Hospice community. We hope you enjoy reading this issue and look forward to seeing you at one of our many events this coming season.

Rachael de Caux

Dr Rachael de Caux
Chief Executive


Rachael with some of our Inpatient Services Team

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Windsor Road
Maidenhead
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Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR
Charity No.1108298



Jack with his Mum Sarah

Read Jack's story here

Jack's story

Making time for what matters

The care his parents received gave Jack something precious: time to be together, make memories and focus on what mattered most.

In early 2025, both of Jack's parents came under the care of Thames Hospice within weeks of each other. At one point, his mother was in hospital while his father was being cared for at the Hospice, leaving Jack trying to support them both at the same time.

> **"Knowing that Dad was being looked after at the Hospice, it was a massive weight off my shoulders."**

Although his father was only at the Hospice for a few days, the care he received left a lasting impression. Just a month later, his mother was admitted too, and once again the family found themselves surrounded by kindness, compassion and support.

For Jack, the care went beyond meeting his parents' physical needs. With the support of the Hospice team, he was able to focus on spending time together as a family and creating memories that would stay with him forever.

"The close time I got to spend with my Mum and Dad when they were there is something I don't think I would have ordinarily had. Because other people were caring for them, I could just focus on spending quality time with them."

One of those moments was particularly special for Jack. He and his wife, Courtney, had planned to marry later that year. As his mum became more unwell, they knew they needed to find another way to share the occasion with her. With support from the Hospice, a small ceremony was arranged in The Sanctuary at the Hospice, allowing Jack's mum to be part of their wedding day.

"We had a little ceremony in The Sanctuary at the Hospice, which was just amazing. I'll cherish those memories forever."



Courtney and Jack with their loved ones in The Sanctuary at Thames Hospice



One of the many Hospice colleagues supporting families like Jack's is Staff Nurse Jaime.

Every day, nurses like Jaime and the wider Inpatient Services team help create the time and space families need to be together. By caring for patients with compassion and understanding, they help families focus less on practical worries and more on making the most of precious moments.

Jaime joined Thames Hospice six years ago as a Health Care Assistant, aged 20.

She hadn't planned to become a nurse, but as she gained experience, she realised it was something she wanted to pursue. Encouragement from colleagues gave her the confidence to take that next step, and she went on to complete her nursing degree while continuing to work at the Hospice.

Read Jaime's story here

Today, Jaime loves being able to care for the whole person.

"Each patient has different needs and wishes. Providing holistic care is an important part of what we do here."

It is this level of personalised care that makes working at Thames Hospice so rewarding for her. And for Jaime, knowing she has made a difference is what matters most.

"When you leave to go home, you feel like you've made an impact."

£32

Could help fund a patient's admission, enabling them to settle comfortably while supporting their loved ones, every step of the way.

Donate at
www.thameshospice.org.uk/moments-donate

91 elephants brought colour and creativity to



Look at what we achieved together

Trunks across the Thames

This summer, our elephants have been bringing people together across Slough and Windsor – and what a herd it has been!

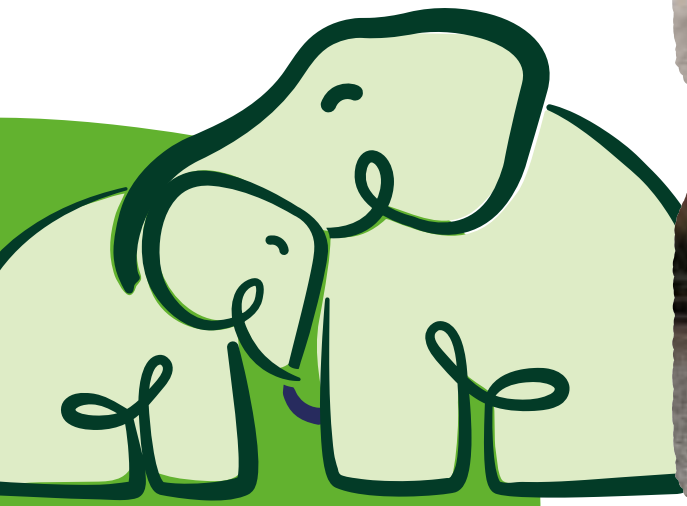
From the artists who brought each sculpture to life, to the sponsors, volunteers, schools, businesses, local organisations and our own teams who made the trail happen, Trunks across the Thames has been a true community effort.



Our Head of Counselling Mel with her sister Kate at 'Stomp to Attention' by Windsor Castle



3rd Upton Scout Group visiting 'Queen of Hearts' in Slough





One of our amazing elephant guardians, cleaning 'Spring Awakening' in Windsor Great Park

Windsor, Slough and Maidenhead.



The big community moment

- **Families spent time exploring together.**
- **Children discovered art on their doorstep.**
- **Businesses got behind their local hospice.**
- **Friends met up for a walk amongst the herd.**
- **The community discovered new places.**
- **Everyone came together around something hopeful, colourful and meaningful.**

Our incredible community clocked up

over 3,000 miles

That's the equivalent to walking around the perimeter of Windsor Great Park 200 times!

The elephants also helped start conversations about hospice care, and about the support Thames Hospice provides to local families when they need it most.

Every sculpture visited, donation made, social post shared, conversation started and mile walked helped raise awareness of our work.

Over **80,000** sculptures collected on the app

Trunks across the Thames may have been made up of individual elephants, but its success came from something much bigger: thousands of people coming together behind one shared cause.

'Stomp to Attention' was our most popular sculpture

Enjoyed the trail?

Help ensure local hospice care is here for everyone who needs it.

Donate at www.thameshospice.org.uk/moments-donate

The people behind the care. Because every moment of care has a person behind it.

Behind every moment of compassionate care are the many unsung heroes who help make our Hospice such a special place.

From our housekeeping and facilities teams to our receptionists and dedicated volunteers, their kindness and commitment happen quietly behind the scenes every day. Together, they create a welcoming, safe and supportive environment and we couldn't do it without them.

Meet our Reception Team

The first faces you see

Meet Monika, Cherry, Claudine and Natalie, the welcoming faces at the heart of our Hospice Reception Team. Working alongside 20 wonderful volunteers, they keep everything running smoothly while making patients, families, and visitors feel truly welcome. From remembering familiar faces and sharing a friendly chat to supporting the wider Hospice behind the scenes, their warmth, kindness and care make a real difference every day.





Meet Abel

Our Housekeeping Supervisor

Abel has been part of the Thames Hospice family for seven years. Alongside his team, he helps keep the Hospice clean, comfortable and welcoming for our patients, families and colleagues. Abel loves supporting those around him and making a difference every day, helping to create a space where everyone feels cared for.

Meet Sam



Keeping Thames Hospice running behind the scenes

Sam joined 11 years ago after a career in hospitality and facilities, including running a pub and working for GlaxoSmithKline. Ready for a change from the corporate world, she wanted to work for a charity. Today, she leads a team across housekeeping, maintenance, reception, the switchboard and volunteers.

"It's different every day. That's what I love about it. The people are kind, dedicated and brilliant."



Meet Karen

A friendly face at the Hospice

Since October 2020, Karen has been a welcoming face at the Hospice. Volunteering as part of the Reception Team, she welcomes visitors, answers phones and makes time for a chat. Having experienced end-of-life care herself, Karen values the difference compassionate hospice care makes. Volunteering once a week, she loves meeting people and making a small but meaningful difference.

Read Karen's story here

Meet Sharon



One Friday morning, countless moments of care

For three years, Sharon has volunteered every Friday morning with the Inpatient Services team, offering compassion, companionship and practical support to patients, families and staff. "Volunteering gives me a real sense of reward," she says.

Read Sharon's story here

"It's a privilege and an honour to be part of Thames Hospice. When I go home, I always feel so grateful for what I have."



Irene's story

The support helps me carry on

Watch Irene's inspiring story

When Irene was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease in 2024, she knew her life was going to change. What she couldn't have imagined was how much she would continue to do.

Today, Irene attends Thames Hospice's Outpatient Services, where she finds specialist support, friendship and the opportunity to keep doing the things she loves.

"It's lovely to come here. You meet people going through similar experiences, but it's also a chance to talk about everything else happening in life. It's not all about illness. The staff are kind, supportive and always there when you need them."

Despite the challenges she faces, Irene continues volunteering, speaking publicly and connecting with others.

For Irene, hospice care is about having the support to live well, stay connected and focus on what matters to her.

And this is what your support helps make possible – for patients like Irene and Pauline today, and for people who will need hospice care in the future.



Andrew Haydon, Outpatient and Engagement Manager, with his team

"Our Outpatients Services Team have time to build relationships with patients and families. We're not having conversations in A&E at three o'clock in the morning."

£220

Could help fund our Outpatient Services Team for a day, helping patients feel supported and understood.

Make tomorrow possible

Making sure no one faces the end of life alone.

Life is uncertain. We can't predict what's around the corner or when everything might change.

Hospice care is something most of us don't expect to need until the moment it becomes a reality. Whether you've experienced Thames Hospice first-hand, seen the difference it made to someone you love, or simply believe everyone deserves compassionate care at the end of life, you'll know the difference expert support can make.

At Thames Hospice, our specialists ease pain, answer difficult questions, support families and create moments of comfort, dignity and peace.

Did you know?

Only 28% of our funding comes from the NHS. That's the equivalent of around 14 weeks of our annual running costs. The remaining 38 weeks of care rely on the generosity of our supporters.



Behind every home visit, every late-night phone call and every family supported is someone who chose to care.

Over the past three years, our NHS funding has remained virtually unchanged, but the cost of providing our clinical services has increased by 25%, and demand for hospice care continues to rise. Our local community has never been more important.

Your donation today could help provide comfort, care and dignity for people and families who need us – today, tomorrow and in the years to come.

£15 — **Could help fund a Health Care Assistant to offer a comforting hand and reassuring words after a terminal diagnosis.**

£32 — **Could help fund a patient's admission, enabling them to settle comfortably while supporting their loved ones, every step of the way.**

£71 — **Could help fund a Clinical Nurse Specialist visit, helping a patient stay comfortable at home with expert clinical and emotional support.**

£135 — **Could help fund a counselling session for a bereaved family member, offering them a lifeline as they navigate their grief.**

£220 — **Could help fund our Outpatient Services Team for a day, helping patients feel supported and understood.**

Scan to donate

Donate at www.thameshospice.org.uk/moments-donate

Every purchase you make today, helps fund our care tomorrow

Every moment has a *story* behind it

From stepping up for the Sunflower Walk to giving preloved furniture a creative new lease of life, the Reading Superstore team are finding their own ways to make a difference. Meet Rebecca and Nicola and discover what inspires them to do what they do.



Meet Rebecca

From volunteer to Coffee Shop Supervisor

Rebecca first joined the Reading Superstore as a volunteer over a year ago. Since then, her passion for the Superstore, its customers and the Hospice has grown, and she has now taken the next step in her journey, joining the team as a member of staff and becoming Coffee Shop Supervisor.

Today, Rebecca is at the heart of the Café, enjoying the variety each day brings. While there are plenty of familiar faces among the regular customers, no two days are quite the same. She particularly enjoys the friendly atmosphere and working alongside a team who support each other.

> **"I love working in the Café. It's always busy, but it's a really relaxed environment. The team are incredibly good at what they do, and everyone works so well together."**

Rebecca also loves doing what she can to accommodate customers' individual requests, even when they're not quite on the menu!

Meet Nicola

Giving furniture a new lease of life



For Nicola, working at the Reading Superstore is the perfect combination of creativity, purpose and giving back. As a Home Studio and Repair Shed Assistant, she helps transform preloved furniture, giving unwanted pieces a new lease of life.

After a 20-year corporate career, Nicola joined the Superstore as a volunteer. She had always enjoyed upcycling at home, so when she spotted an advert for a role in the studio, she applied. Today, she has turned a passion into a role supporting a cause close to her heart.

Nicola particularly enjoys transforming older furniture, recognising its quality and potential. Supported by around 45 volunteers, she repairs, refreshes and creatively transforms pieces before they return to the shop floor.

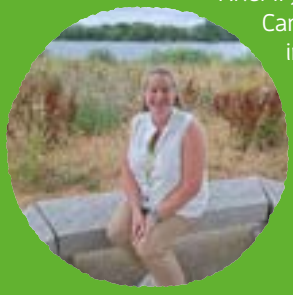
"There's something really special about taking a piece of furniture that no one wants, doing something with it and seeing it go back onto the shop floor with another 20 years of life ahead of it."

For Nicola, upcycling is about reducing waste, recognising potential and raising vital funds for Thames Hospice, while bringing creativity, community and purpose together every day.

"I get to do the thing I love and get to give back to a great cause. It feels as though I'm retired but I'm living my best life," she says.

Read Rebecca and Nicola's stories in full

Say hello to Annie



After 11 years at Thames Hospice, Annie Campbell knows our retail world inside out. Now, as our new Director of Retail, she's taking on an exciting new chapter – helping our shops continue to thrive and play their part in making more moments possible for patients and families.

Thames hospice Superstore

Take a visit and discover our amazing range of upcycled furniture and so much more, then finish off with a delicious coffee and slice of cake in our Café.

Thames Hospice Superstore
16 Richfield Avenue, Reading RG1 8EQ

Open Monday – Saturday 9.30am – 5.30pm
Sunday 10.30am – 4.30pm

Ali's story

The moments that help us find a way through

Ali knows that grief doesn't follow a straight line. But with the support of her family, friends and Thames Hospice, she and her two children, Freddie and Tilda, have found ways to face it together.

Ali's husband, Toby, was diagnosed with bowel cancer in January 2024 and died just five months later.

"When Toby was diagnosed, I knew I wanted to show the children that you can find a way through. I don't want the children to give up. I don't want to give up."

When Toby was referred to Thames Hospice after extensive treatment and a long hospital stay, Ali wasn't sure what to expect.

"At first I did have a level of confusion as to how they were going to help us."

That soon changed. The Children and Family Support Team became part of the family's lives, supporting Freddie and Tilda to understand and express their feelings in ways that worked for them.

"Miranda very quickly tapped into how Tilda loves her arts and crafts and listened to Freddie and his cricket chat. It's so lovely because they have that time to talk about what's going on."

For Ali, knowing her children had someone they could talk to made a huge difference. The support was there for Ali too. As well as counselling, she accessed complementary therapies including reiki and reflexology.



Ali

"It took me by surprise how exhausting grief is. The energy to help children through grief as well. It is a lot, because it is almost like you are grieving for three people."

"When the children went back to school in September, I think that is when I finally took a minute for myself. The sessions I had with the counsellor at the Hospice were really great. Just knowing that you've got people around you is the one thing that can help."

Two years on, Ali continues to find her way forward with Freddie and Tilda, carrying Toby's memory with them.

"There's a quote from Dr Seuss, 'don't cry because it's over, smile because it happened'. That's what Toby would've wanted and Toby's love will keep me going forever."

Read Ali's story here



Community Paramedic Specialist Emma with some of her Hospice at Home colleagues

The care behind the moments

> **Their home, their safe place. I am always grateful to be part of that.**

Emma Freyne
Community Paramedic Specialist, Hospice at Home team



Children and Families Support Worker Miranda with Tilda

Every family needs something different

From supporting someone at home, to helping children understand grief, to giving a parent space to look after themselves, our support reaches far beyond one type of care.

£135

Could help fund a counselling session for a bereaved family member, offering them a lifeline as they navigate their grief.

Donate at
www.thameshospice.org.uk/moments-donate



Join us for a magical Christmas

The festive season is just around the corner, and we're getting ready to make it sparkle.

Soon, you'll be able to step into any one of our stores, beautifully adorned with festive decorations, and immerse yourself in a truly enchanting Christmas shopping experience. Discover a sparkling array of gifts for everyone on your list, alongside dazzling ornaments to deck your halls and add a little extra magic to the season. Whether you'll be searching for the perfect present or simply soaking up the festive spirit, there'll be something wonderful waiting for you.

Our Christmas cards have arrived!

Explore our beautiful range of Christmas cards, now in all our stores and available to shop online, perfect for sending a little festive joy to friends and loved ones this Christmas.

Scan to buy





Maidenhead Homestore

Christmas is coming to the Maidenhead Homestore on Saturday 7 November! Step into a real winter wonderland and discover our beautifully dressed store, bursting with festive inspiration and wonderful preloved finds, perfect for making your Christmas extra special.

Find us at

Unit A Boyn Valley Industrial Estate, Boyn Valley Road, Maidenhead, SL6 4EJ

Events at Café by the Lake



A festive Christmas at the Café by the Lake

Christmas is a truly magical time at Café by the Lake, and we're looking forward to welcoming you for some festive cheer this season.

Enjoy our beautiful Christmas menu, including a stunning festive breakfast, the perfect way to start your day before exploring everything the season has to offer.

Throughout the festive period, our Café will also be filled with the sounds of Christmas music, creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere for friends, family and loved ones to enjoy. Keep a look out for further information on our Christmas music events and festive offerings, there's lots to look forward to!



22 Oct



3 Dec

Pumpkin making evening

Join us for a spooktacular and creative evening of pumpkin making!

We'll be getting crafty and creating our very own unique pumpkins from recycled materials. Come along, get into the Halloween spirit, and conjure up something wonderfully spooky! Give old materials a new lease of life and turn them into a fang-tastic pumpkin that's full of personality. No tricks, just treats, creativity and plenty of Halloween fun!

Thursday 22 October 6.30 – 8.30pm

£25 per person includes Halloween refreshments and all materials

Christmas wreath making workshop

Get festive. Get creative. Make something beautiful.

Create your own festive wreath using upcycled materials, Christmas toys and beautiful baubles.

Unwind, get creative and enjoy a relaxed Christmas experience as you craft your very own bespoke Christmas wreath with expert guidance and plenty of inspiration along the way.

Thursday 3 December 6 – 8.30pm

£50 per person includes seasonal refreshments and all materials



Jenni with her husband Nick

Jenni's story

The care that stays with you

Jenni is passionate about ensuring more families can access the specialist hospice care they need. Her experience with Thames Hospice has shown her just how much this care can mean – not only for someone at the end of their life, but for the family around them.

Jenni and her beloved husband Nick met in the 1960s and spent more than five decades together, building a family and a life they loved.

When Nick was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2022, everything changed. Yet he faced the gruelling treatment with the same quiet determination Jenni had known throughout their life together, rarely complaining and simply getting on with it.

In 2024, after several weeks in hospital, Nick's health rapidly deteriorated, and he needed palliative care. He was admitted to Thames Hospice.

> **"For the first time, I felt safe. I knew Nick was safe too."**

For Jenni, it was the little things as much as the care itself that made a difference – the kindness of the Hospice team, the familiar faces and the moments of comfort they shared.

> **"From the glass of wine instead of 'another' cup of tea, to the counselling, the team in the coffee shop who makes my hot chocolate and the ladies on reception – everybody is so lovely. I don't think I would have coped, and I'm still learning to cope, without their loving, warm care."**

Nick died peacefully at Thames Hospice surrounded by his family.

For Jenni, the care they received has stayed with her. It has strengthened her belief in the importance of hospice care and her hope that it will continue to be there for local families when they need it most.

"The Hospice is about providing timely, unhurried human care to patients and their families – bringing together a multi-professional team with the time to listen, talk and provide the right support when it is needed most."



Dr Nick Dando
Deputy CEO and Medical Director, Thames Hospice

Your legacy could help families like Jenni's

Every year, Thames Hospice supports thousands of local people living with life-limiting illnesses, while also caring for the family members and loved ones around them.

Gifts in Wills are a vital part of making that care possible for future generations. By leaving a gift to Thames Hospice in your Will, you can help ensure that families receive the compassion, dignity and specialist care that meant so much to Jenni and Nick.

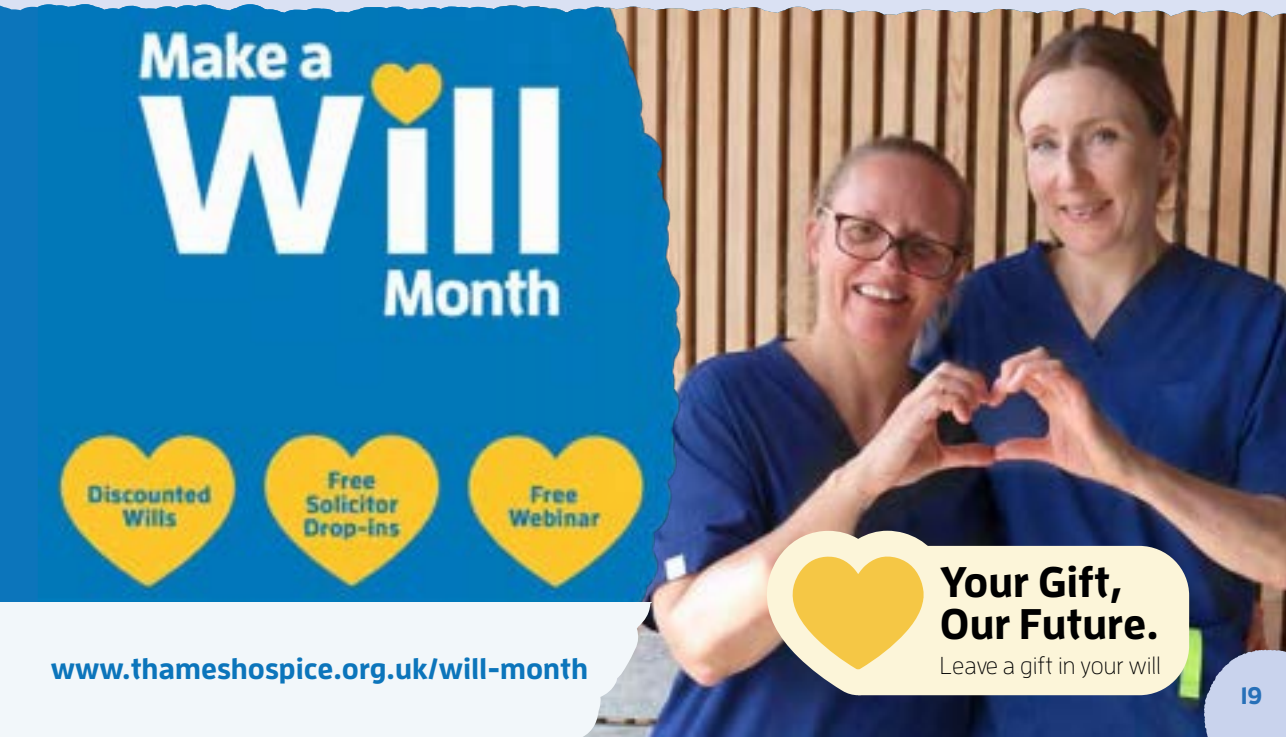
It is a simple way to leave something lasting – a legacy of care, love and hope for people in our community.

THIS IS HOSPICE CARE

This October you can write your Will and support Thames Hospice by taking part in our 'Make a Will Month' scheme. Huge thanks to our local supporting solicitors who will write a simple will for you, free of charge, in exchange for leaving a gift in your Will or a suggested minimum donation of £200 to Thames Hospice.

If you need advice on writing your Will, please come to one of our drop in sessions for free advice from a local solicitor or you can sign up for our free webinar 'Wills Explained' with Octopus Legacy.

Bookings now open.
Scan here



www.thameshospice.org.uk/will-month

moments that bring us together

Be part of the Thames Hospice community this Christmas, join us at one of our festive events and celebrate the season with us.





29 Nov

Light Up a Life

A special gathering to remember and celebrate the lives of loved ones.

6 Dec

Marlow's Santa Fun Run

Get into the Christmas spirit and join us for a festive dash through beautiful Marlow.





14 Dec

Wellington College Christmas Concert

Our annual festive celebration with special guests together with Christmas carols, heart-warming mulled wine and of course mince pies.

17 Dec

Eton College Christmas Concert

Our annual enchanting evening with special guests, beautiful Christmas carols and the warmth and magic of the Christmas season.

Sign up at thameshospice.org.uk/upcoming-events

Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

Thames hospice