It’s amazing to think that it has been 30 years since Ashgate Hospicecare opened! The appeal at that time for three quarters of a million pounds started a couple of years earlier and enabled the first patients to be admitted in October 1988. On a personal basis I acted as Medical Director for the first few years, but never did I think I might be asked to write a few words 30 years on, or even around to do so!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody who has been associated with the Hospice during these past years since it opened. There has been incredible devotion and valued input in every aspect of the work in the Hospice. There have been many changes in staff, but all have served Ashgate wonderfully and I take this opportunity to say it in words.

There have been many changes which, along the way, have improved the services that Ashgate Hospicecare have been able to provide. In particular, since opening in the late 80’s, caring in the community has significantly expanded such that outreach of palliative care and all that it encompasses for patients and families has been able to reach many more people than just those admitted to the Hospice itself.

It is with great admiration for those involved that I have been able to see wonderful additions and extensions to the building with a large and active Day Hospice, as well as more rooms that allow care in a more personal environment. All this of course requires huge amounts of money to be raised, and it is a tribute to the people of North Derbyshire that they have so often dug deep into their pockets to make such changes possible.

Inevitably, more is planned to keep up with the changes of modern life and I have every confidence that all of you, both professional and voluntary, have the vision and drive to continue with the good work under the guidance of the Trustees.

Here’s to celebrating 30 years of hospice care...

Dr. Richard Atkinson
Vice President of Ashgate Hospicecare and founding Doctor

This is a very special edition of the Hospice News magazine and I am delighted to be part of it. I can’t help but reflect on the numbers of people whose lives have been touched by the Hospice since it first opened, most particularly the many patients and families who have been cared for by our staff and volunteers.

Ashgate Hospicecare has been fortunate through the years to have had the generous support and care of many people like you from North Derbyshire and further afield. In these pages you will read about some of the impact of your efforts and your compassion. This history, and the services we provide every day, is a testament to your efforts. Every bucket filled, every step to complete a marathon or a Sparkle Night Walk, every moment of sponsored silence connects directly to the patients and families for whom we are able to care during some of the most fundamental and precious times of their lives.

I thank you for everything you have done over the last 30 years – and here’s to the next 30!
I started working for Ashgate Hospicecare right from the beginning, in 1988. We had a date that we were supposed to open in early September, but we didn’t open for two weeks because we didn’t have any beds or carpets! We had carpets everywhere in the first few years, even in the bays!

Before 1988, I worked here in what is now the Harry Fisher building. Back then it was called the Ashgate Annex, a convalescent hospital where patients would come from Chesterfield Royal Hospital for periods of time after an operation, broken bones or skin problems such as ulcerated legs which was very common back then.

I’ve always enjoyed working in units where we can ensure that patients die with dignity and where we can support their friends and family too. So, when I heard that the Hospice was going to open I thought that this was the place for me and I’ve worked here ever since!

Lots of things have changed. Mostly, the size of the building and the number of people working here, and the way it is run has totally changed. We used to be a small hospice with only an Inpatient Unit of only 14 beds. We used to take in patients to give respite to their families and carers and we also had patients that came in over Christmas and Boxing Day because they had no family or friends to go to. When it first opened, the matron on the Inpatient Unit had a vision of meals being served on trays with little flowers and posh serviettes.

We still have that same ethos today, of giving patients the best possible care, but we do a lot more now than we ever were able to do. The most important thing for me is that I am still able to take the time to listen and talk to patients. I’m really proud to work here mostly because there are so many different services we can offer to our patients and their families. There are many patients that stick in your mind and that’s what the job is about.

Within our first six months, we opened a Day Hospice to extend our care. We had a few volunteers helping in there and in the Inpatient Unit, and we had one volunteer fundraiser. We now have over 700 volunteers in total! The Hospice at Home service followed a couple of years later. In the beginning, the patients we had on the Inpatient Unit were more like the patients that now go to the Day Hospice. This is because we now have the ability to care for these patients at home.

Ashgate Hospicecare grew slowly over the years to introduce other departments like Hospice at Home, Occupational Therapy, Lymphoedema, Physiotherapy, Supportive Care for families and so on. One of the biggest changes was the extension in 2005; the whole hospice doubled in size which meant double the fundraising! We needed to employ more nursing staff, more housekeepers, more cooks – the lot!

There was a major change in the way our fundraising teams operated, which came a few years ago and has made a huge difference to the amount we can now raise. In the 1980s, hospices like ours received around 85% of funds from the government and now it’s less than 30%. However, we run on a much bigger scale now and have got to put a lot more effort in to raise the money to keep going and to keep updating our services.

To me, the care we give is still as excellent as it was 30 years ago. Medicine has moved on so much and patients now have more complex illnesses, so Ashgate Hospicecare has had to keep adapting to this. We are specialists in palliative care and we have plans to update the Inpatient Unit to accommodate the new specialist equipment we now use. The bathrooms have just been redone and we have plans to make the reception area look more homely too – we want to move away from a clinical feel.

I have lots of special memories of Ashgate Hospicecare and there are some patients that stick in your mind. Right at the beginning, I remember a patient who died and his wife was absolutely distraught. I remember her asking me if she could lie next to him on his bed after he passed away and she was there for quite a while. She wrote a beautiful letter to me and I will never ever forget it. I’ve kept it all these years.

More recently, I witnessed the wedding of a patient. Dr Sarah Parnacott went out of her way to get the registrar here as soon as possible as the patient was quite unwell. Sarah bought a cake and the fundraising team called a local wedding shop who immediately lent us chairs and flowers to make the conservatory look nice and the event itself was a tear jerker. This is not the first wedding we’ve had at the Hospice. We’ve also had a couple of christenings, lots of wedding anniversaries and birthday celebrations. It shows a different side of the Hospice than what people expect and also illustrates how all the departments often come together to make something special happen.

One of the most extraordinary things about working at Ashgate Hospicecare is how many of the staff are remembered by the families of patients for years to come. We had a patient whose husband was visiting her, when we asked her one morning whether she would like a bath, a shower or a bed bath. The husband replied that she would love a bath as she had not been able to have one in hospital and would love to have her hair washed. She was unable to get out of bed to stand or climb into a bath. Because of the equipment we have at the Hospice it is possible to take a patient to the bathroom on her bed, then using our hoist system lift them into the bath.

We bathed and washed this patient taking the time to moisturise her skin, dry her hair and return her to her room happy, although tired. This lady died a few weeks later and again her husband asked us if we could put some earrings in. These are earrings he had bought her for her birthday but she had not worn them yet. We did as requested and the husband was very pleased. Four years later, the healthcare assistant who was with me that day was on holiday and was approached by a gentleman who said, “You are the lady who bathed my wife and put her earrings in. It meant so much to me.” This is something we did without thinking about it, but to be recognised four years later, not in this country, and without our uniforms on, shows how much we make a difference to others.”
We are immensely grateful for the products and services that these companies and many others have donated. Over the last 12 months businesses have saved Ashgate Hospicecare over £90,000 enabling this money to be spent directly on patient care. Businesses have provided produce or services free of charge, sponsored rooms and nurses, hosted their own fundraising events and involved their whole workforce in supporting hospice care.

Here are some of the businesses that have chosen to partner their local hospice:

**Weddings by Dragonfly**
Transform venues every year for Hospice events such as the Ball free of charge.

**AA&G Systems**
Sponsor events like Hospice Heroes.

**Blue Castle Group**
Provided a vehicle free of charge to help transport patients.

**Tig Brighton**
Supplied consultancy and drawings free of charge.

**Green & Benz**
Donated a diamond for our Sparkle Night Walkers’ to win.

**Anxter**
Held a Ball in aid of the Hospice and their staff tuck shop raises lots.

**GWH Price**
Supply all the Hospice’s fresh fruit and vegetables free of charge for patients’ meals and have done since 2015. And also sponsored the pink t-shirts at our Sparkle Night Walk.

**Ascenso**
Sponsor training sessions at the Hospice.

**Spectrum Freight**
Donate monthly to the Hospice.

**GF Tomlinson**
Sponsor an Ashgate Hospicecare Nurse, host charity football days and fundraise for us.

**Arnold Clark**
Provide the Hospice with a car free of charge.

**NAPIT**
Staff have fundraised over £10,000 and volunteered their time to the Hospice.

**Jackson The Bakers**
Supply the Hospice with delicious fresh bread and cakes free of charge.

**Pulse Associates**
Staff have organised a quiz night a golf day and sponsored cycle to New York!

**Transform venues every year for Hospice events such as the Ball free of charge.**

**Provide the Hospice with a storage container free of charge.**

**Provide a vehicle free of charge to help transport patients.**

**Supplied consultancy and drawings free of charge.**

**Donated a diamond for our Sparkle Night Walkers’ to win.**

**Held a Ball in aid of the Hospice and their staff tuck shop raises lots.**

**Supply all the Hospice’s fresh fruit and vegetables free of charge for patients’ meals and have done since 2015. And also sponsored the pink t-shirts at our Sparkle Night Walk.**

**Sponsor training sessions at the Hospice.**

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**Provide the Hospice with a car free of charge.**

**Staff have fundraised over £10,000 and volunteered their time to the Hospice.**

**Supply the Hospice with delicious fresh bread and cakes free of charge.**

**Staff have organised a quiz night a golf day and sponsored cycle to New York!**

We are looking forward to supporting the ball again this year!
Ashgate Hospicecare through the years

The Harry Fisher Building and Front Gardens
Formally an original grade II listed building, which formed part of the Hospice when it first opened, the Harry Fisher Building now focuses on supportive care and offers training and education facilities.

The Harry Fisher Reception
In 1998, this was the Day Hospice until the extension in 2006.

Nurses Station
In 1988, this was the main nurses station, however when they had the extension in 2005 another station was made which is now the main ward reception.

Volunteering Office
In 1988, this space was utilised by staff members as a kitchen. It is now home to the Volunteering team.

The Family Suite
Back in 1988, the current Family Suite used to be an area that our Day Hospice patients would go to for their lunch.

The Dining Room
This room was also the Day Hospice before its time and after the 2005 extension, it was used as the staff dining room before it became Care for a Cuppa, a cafe for all, in March 2017.

Courtyard
The Courtyard was introduced when the extension took place in 2005. This is now being transformed into a dementia friendly courtyard.

Inpatient Unit Patient Bay
From a 14 bed Inpatient Unit in 1988, the Inpatient Unit has grown in capacity to 21 beds to meet the increased demand.

Back Garden
The gardens have stayed extremely private and beautiful since the photo was taken in 1988. There has been the introduction of a sun house, where patients can go to relax.

Volunteering Office

Barns
From an unused outbuilding, the barns have now been refurbished to store and maintain equipment used in patients’ own homes.
In those days, the volunteers would not only serve the suppers but also cooked for the patients. The kitchen staff would go home at the end of the day leaving the volunteers to run the kitchen. They would leave sandwiches and desserts made up and labelled but if patients wanted an omelette, poached eggs, boiled eggs, beans on toast, or whatever we would make it and take it out to them. Each patient would have their own tray with their own cup and saucer, teapot, milk and sugar. It was like a hotel or somebody spoiling you with a meal in bed. We only went home once all dishes were collected and washed. If we were particularly busy, the housekeepers would help us to serve. Now that the Hospice has grown this does not happen.

Volunteering at Ashgate Hospicecare keeps one in touch with reality. There are always people who make a strong impression on you. I will always remember one lovely old lady who was in the Hospice for about 3 months. I got to know her well and she reminded me of my grandmother. Most patients don’t stay in very long now because many of their conditions can be stabilised and they go home. In order not to get too upset, I like to think that every patient who moves out of the Inpatient Unit has gone home. Of course many of them do go home, which is something most people don’t realise. A lot of people think that you come into a hospice to die, but that’s not the case at all. Lots of people think the Hospice is a sad place to be but it’s not. It has its sad moments of course, but quite often we have a good laugh. I remember once I was picking up a trifle and managed to take the whole layer of cream off the trifle in one fell swoop and it landed with a splat on the floor. It was in one of the patient bays and we all howled with laughter! It’s nice to be able to laugh with the patients and hopefully brighten their day.

Without volunteers, the Hospice would simply not be able to run. We are an extra pair of hands that free up the staff so that they can do what they need to do. As a volunteer, you need to be happy doing whatever job needs doing at the time and get on with it willingly. It is also important that we stay and finish the job we’re doing, otherwise it will get left for somebody else. It is also important to establish a connection with patients and their family members. A popular topic of conversation is often my accent. We will talk about whether the patient has been to Scotland, what they think of Scotland, what they think of the Scots, and so on! It can be difficult sometimes if a patient doesn’t want to talk, but I can understand it. Whether they’re young, middle aged or old, most seem to come to terms with their illness. It never ceases to amaze me that so few show anger or bitterness.

If anybody is considering volunteering at Ashgate Hospicecare, I would tell them to do it. I’ve made many friends over the years and feel that I have benefited greatly. I’ve also recommended it to a number of people I know. Quite a few young people have shadowed me over the years, including people who wish to become doctors, nurses or dentists and others who would like to gain experience in a healthcare setting. I have thoroughly enjoyed this as they have so much enthusiasm and lots of care to give; it’s wonderful to see! Like I said, volunteering gives you so much and is a much-needed leveler in life. That is why I do it and it’s why you will still find a number of volunteers and staff who have been here for as long as I have.

After attending the inaugural meeting to discuss the opening of the Hospice, I decided to fundraise for it. I knew several cancer patients, some who had no support and felt that a hospice was really needed. When the Hospice was built in 1988, I joined some of the nurses that I had met in the Royal Hospital and became a volunteer.

Many things have changed since then, but it’s still as wonderful as when it started. I’ve been in all areas of the Hospice during my time as a volunteer. When I first came I used to do personal care, acting as an extra pair of hands for the nurses by feeding and bathing the patients. I also used to cook the evening meal. Now, everybody has to have the right qualifications to do these jobs. All my memories of Ashgate Hospicecare are special; down to every little chat with a patient, a visitor, or a nurse. I think the nurses and healthcare assistants deserve a lot of praise. We are lucky to also have people like Dr Sarah Parnacott who is devoted to the Hospice and very supportive to everyone. When I’m collecting donations and people talk to me about their experiences and connections with the Hospice they always say that our healthcare professionals are tremendous.

It’s so important to keep the Hospice going and volunteers play a key part in this, which is why I still fundraise and volunteer. We are very lucky to have such a wonderful hospice and we absolutely must help it to continue. Anybody considering volunteering here should definitely come and give it a try. There are lots of different roles and the volunteer coordinators will help you to find the one that suits you. I have met a lot of people who have come here to volunteer and found that they belong here and, like me, have made many friends and become part of the Hospice.”
Events and Awareness days

January
- Treecycle (8th-10th)
- Young Carers Awareness Day (23rd)
- Wellbeing Day (29th)

February
- Care for a Cuppa
  Join others in your community by holding a ‘Care for a Cuppa’ event in February for Ashgate Hospicecare. Whether that’s a coffee morning or an afternoon tea, your event will help to make a real difference to patients in North Derbyshire with a life-limiting illness.
- Dignity Action Day (1st)

March
- National Apprentice Week (5th-9th)
- Woofs and Wellies (18th)
- Family Bike Ride (28th)

April
- Manchester Marathon (1st)
- World Health Day (7th)
- London Marathon (22nd)

May
- International Nurses Day (12th)
- National Mental Health Awareness Week (14th-20th)
- International Day of Families (15th)

June
- National Volunteers Week (1st-7th)

July
- Markovitz Ltd Sparkle Night Walk (7th)
  Last year 2,589 local people walked the 10km route across the town and raised an unbelievable £232,185 for our patients and their families! Join us again at 10pm on the 7th July at the Proact Stadium for Chesterfield’s biggest fundraising event of the year! Registration for anybody aged 11+ is now open online at www.sparklenightwalk.org.uk and by phone at 01246 233404.
- Dementia Awareness Week (21st-27th)

August
- Open Air Cinema (10th/11th)
  To celebrate our 30th Anniversary we will be showing a classic film from the year 1988 on August 10th and another one will be shown the following night on August 11th! Look out for the poll on Facebook to cast your vote for the films! Doors open at 7:30pm and the film will begin at 9pm on Ashgate Hospicecare’s meadow. Don’t forget to bring your camping chair or picnic blanket! Tickets will go on sale in May for a suggested donation of £10.
- Summer Fair (11th)
  Get the date in your diary 11th August and come along to Ashgate Hospicecare’s Meadow between 11am and 4pm for a great summer’s day out! Fun for the whole family with rides, animals, stalls, food, bar, live music and more! A park and ride service will be available. Just £2 entry fee, under 16’s go free!

September
- International Day of Charity (5th)
- Remember a Charity Week (11th-17th)

October
- Hospice Care Week (8th-12th)
- World Mental Health Day (10th)
- Redbrik Chesterfield Half Marathon (21st)

November
- Christmas Market (17th)
- Carol Service (17th)

December
- International Volunteers Day (5th)
- Light up a Life (9th)
  From November onwards, you will be able to dedicate a Light to someone special. The event is open to everybody and gives us time to stand together and remember those we have loved and lost over the years. There will be a park and ride service available on the night. Don’t forget to wrap up warm and bring a torch!

30 for 30
Ashgate Hospicecare will be celebrating its 30th Anniversary in 2018. Throughout the year we’ll be celebrating the fantastic work of our staff and volunteers in delivering excellent care to patients with a life-limiting illness. Do you have 30 hours of your time to volunteer at Ashgate Hospicecare? For more information please visit 30for30.ashgatehospicecare.org.uk or email our volunteering team at volunteering@ashgatehospicecare.org.uk

30 for 30 (cont’d)

For more information, please visit www.ashgatehospicecare.org.uk/giving-in-memory/
The Ho spice has done for it. me than I have done a great deal more for each other. That’s why I always say that the amazing to see the kindness, love and care that people care for their loved ones in the most intimate of ways. It’s incredibly humbling to meet the partners of patients who watch their child die, no matter how old they are. It’s also heartbreaking when a parent must witness the bravery of people when faced with horrible one of the most humbling things about being here is patients; they have so much to give. and we always like to have a chat and a laugh with the patients. We bring them food and cups of tea ask the patients what they would like to eat and they can choose from a menu. We’ve been here for 30 years and we’ll certainly be here for many more. The need for hospice care will never, ever diminish. In fact, with the current challenges in health care and with people living longer and having more complex illnesses it’s completely unthinkable that we could do without hospices all across the country. Ashgate Hospicecare has adapted well to the higher demand for the services by attracting more sponsors and partnership donations which have made a significant impact to patient care. We now have much more support to offer the patients and their families. Raising the amount of money we need to run the Hospice is no easy task, but that was an essential relief. It gave me that course, but that was an essential relief. It gave me that opportunity to really look after her. We used to go out for walks, but we couldn’t do that after she got much worse. Ashgate Hospicecare were really there for me during the hardest time. One of the nurses started coming once a week for a whole afternoon. It wasn’t for many weeks, of course, but that was an essential relief. It gave me that respite I needed. Even though I was only going out to do the shopping, just being able to get out of the house for an hour or two was such a help. It was getting so difficult by that point; I don’t know what I would have done without that time to myself and I’m really grateful to Ashgate for that. We’ve been here for 30 years and we’ll certainly be here for many more. The need for hospice care will never, ever diminish. In fact, with the current challenges in health care and with people living longer and having more complex illnesses it’s completely unthinkable that we could do without hospices all across the country. Ashgate Hospicecare has adapted well to the higher demand for the services by attracting more sponsors and partnership donations which have made a significant impact to patient care. We now have much more support to offer the patients and their families. Raising the amount of money we need to run the Hospice is no easy task, but that was an essential relief. 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By the time mum moved in, her condition was really bad and she was only here for three and a half weeks in the end, but Ashgate Hospicecare delivered all the specialist equipment mum needed. It was really stressful for me even with all the help the nurses provided. Fortunately, my employer allowed me time off so I was able to care for mum full-time during her final weeks. Even so I had no spare time. I pretty much devoted all of my time to looking after her. We used to go out for walks, but we couldn’t do that after she got much worse. Ashgate Hospicecare were really there for me during the hardest time. One of the nurses started coming once a week for a whole afternoon. It wasn’t for many weeks, of course, but that was an essential relief. It gave me that respite I needed. Even though I was only going out to do the shopping, just being able to get out of the house for an hour or two was such a help. It was getting so difficult by that point; I don’t know what I would have done without that time to myself and I’m really grateful to Ashgate for that. Even with that extra help, over the course of those last weeks, my energy levels seriously declined. I wasn’t sleeping properly as I was getting up to check on mum every few hours throughout the night, just to make sure she was alright. Mum didn’t want to go into a hospice or a home, so I’m fortunate that she was able to stay at mine until the end. However, the care she needed was too much for me to deal with on my own. Ashgate Hospicecare do such an amazing job, I can’t actually believe just seven healthcare assistants work in the Hospice at Home team! We would have really benefited from a 24/7 service where we could have seen the same nurses whenever we needed them - at nights and weekends and those really difficult moments, but they obviously need more funding and more staff to make that service available.

We’ve been here for 30 years and we’ll certainly be here for many more. The need for hospice care will never, ever diminish. In fact, with the current challenges in health care and with people living longer and having more complex illnesses it’s completely unthinkable that we could do without hospices all across the country. Ashgate Hospicecare has adapted well to the higher demand for the services by attracting more sponsors and partnership donations which have made a significant impact to patient care. We now have much more support to offer the patients and their families. Raising the amount of money we need to run the Hospice is no easy task, but I truly believe that the amount will increase. Everybody in the community seems to recognise the Hospice as a really special place. It’s nice to look back and see how much we’ve done for the local people too. If you’re unsure about volunteering at the Hospice my advice is, just go for it! It’s so easy to pick up the phone or pop in for a chat to find out where you’d fit in. Everybody is very friendly and you only have to donate the time you can spare. There are so many things you can do as a volunteer – you can take part in the Sparkle Night Walk, come along to the summer fair and our other events or collect donations. We really need your time and you will get a huge amount out of it.”
The Sparkle Night Walk became our flagship event almost overnight and we are so proud of how far we’ve come and how huge this event now is! You may have seen it advertised as ‘Chesterfield’s Biggest Fundraising Event’ and it’s not hard to see why...

The re-brand of our Midnight Walk into the new Sparkle Night Walk came about in June 2015 and we were astounded at the success of this brand new event.

In that first year, 1,509 people signed up to the sponsored walk, 122 volunteers were there on the night to marshal, sign people in and help us run the event and a staggering £165,600 was raised for Ashgate Hospicecare!

2016 saw the Sparkle Night Walk sponsored by a corporate company for the first time and it became the Blundells Sparkle Night Walk. The popularity of the event had increased which meant a higher number of people taking part and more flashing bunny ears than ever - 1,964 to be exact! We had 160 volunteers helping this time around and the event raised £174,020 in total.

2017 reached record breaking levels, and we aren’t sure if we’ve quite got over the excitement of it yet! This time, the event was sponsored by Markovitz. A phenomenal 2,589 people took to the streets of Chesterfield to ‘Sparkle’ for their local hospice and together they raised a breathtaking £232,185. Of course, this would not have been possible without the 181 volunteers who turned up on the night to make sure this event is a success and a big thank you to Markovitz for sponsoring 2017’s event.

In 2018, we’d love to reach the goal of 3,000 people taking part in the Sparkle Night Walk! We need the help of our local community to spread the word about what an amazing thing it is to be a part of Sparkle Night Walk and how much fun we have on the night. We also need more volunteers to help us keep everyone safe by marshalling the route and assisting us with the running of our biggest event!

SIGN UP NOW to Markovitz Sparkle Night Walk 2018 to stop families being left without hospice care when they need it.

Early Bird Offer of £10 a person!
Entry £15 after 28th March

REGISTER NOW for what can only be described as the most memorable and commemorative night out Chesterfield has to offer!

Let’s show off what amazing things can happen when the people of North Derbyshire come together for one night, turn on those flashing bunny ears and Sparkle for Ashgate Hospicecare

www.sparklenightwalk.org.uk

“As the main sponsor of 2017’s Sparkle Night Walk we were delighted to see so many people turn out in support of such a well-run event. We were even more thrilled to hear that the night had raised well over £200,000 for Ashgate Hospicecare; such a worthy cause providing an essential service for our community. Here at Markovitz we are proud to continue our association as main sponsors of Sparkle Night Walk 2018 and we wish it every success.”

David Hopkins, CEO of the Markovitz Group
**Westfield Health Grant**

Late last year, we received a generous grant from Westfield Health Charitable Trust for £103,025 which will be used to create a beautiful garden room and dementia friendly courtyard for our patients, their families and visitors.

Karen Walker, Ward Manager at Ashgate Hospicecare: “We are really proud of our ‘Outstanding’ rating from the Care Quality Commission for our care.

The wonderful grant from Westfield Health means that we will have an outstanding area to match that care.”

**Triage Service**

On 26th June 2017 the Service Development Team, in collaboration with the Palliative Care Specialist Nurse Team and Clinical Administration Team, launched a brand-new Triage service for all incoming referrals to the Palliative Care Specialist Nurse Team. The aim of the service was to streamline the process for all referrals to the team providing patients with a more appropriate response to meet their needs. The Triage follows a consistent, patient-led template ensuring that all patients referred into the service receive an equitable and structured first assessment giving the right care at the right time. The service has seen a remarkable improvement in home visit response times and has received exceptional positive feedback from users.

**Living Well Services**

New developments within our Day Hospice have given us the ability to offer patients a ‘Living Well’ Service one day a week covering a 16-week programme. The new service, which is nurse led and based in our Day Hospice, offers people the opportunity to access educational sessions on a range of topics to help promote independence in a supportive environment which also offers social interaction and some light-hearted fun.

**Supportive Care for Patients and Families**

Since the beginning of 2017 when the team moved into their new purposely designed area within the ‘Harry Fisher Building’ we have increased the amount and types of psychological and spiritual support we can offer to our patients and their families. We have employed our own Palliative Care Social Workers, increased our volunteer counsellor and support worker team to over 40 individuals, added new spiritual support to our chaplaincy team and are very proud to be hosting student placements for Art Therapy and Social Work. We have new exciting projects planned for the coming year to expand the supportive services we offer to young people, extend our reach further by working much closer with the local community and launch an Oral History Project working with Sheffield University.

G F Tomlinsion

G F Tomlinson, a family run construction company based in Derby, officially become the first company to sponsor an Ashgate Hospicecare Nurse in February last year. Thanks to the support of G F Tomlinson, Ashgate Hospicecare is able to provide more care and reach more patients in their own homes.

**Retail**

Last year was a record year for the retailers. Our Furniture Store in Hasland reached over £1million in sales, beating our previous in store record. Retail also went digital, with a new addition in the form of the Ashgate Furniture Co, extending our range of brand new furniture, to be available in store and online. We opened a new coffee shop in Clowne, which is extremely busy. This year also saw the introduction of our latest shop in The Peak Village Shopping Centre, Rowsley. Situated in the old railway station, it is a unique shopping experience.

**Advice Line Service**

The Advice Line service was launched on 2nd October 2017 as a second brand new service. This offers patients, carers and health care professionals access to specialist support and advice 9am – 5pm, 7 days a week. The Advice Line is staffed by Palliative Care Nurses and is a pilot service running until March 2018.

**Amy Bannister**

**Volunteer with the Fundraising Team**

Amy, aged 17, from New Whittington first came into contact with the Hospice 5 years ago when her uncle was admitted, and then again in 2013 when her grandad, who has now sadly passed away, was staying in the Inpatient Unit.

“I volunteer here because it means a lot to me, but it’s also wonderful to know that when I give my time here I’m helping people and it has the added bonus that others know I’m helping people too.”

As a volunteer, you are made to feel like part of the team. You’re not separate to the staff – everybody is as important as each other. Last year, staff and volunteers from all different departments did a Christmas video and they insisted we film it on the day that my friend and I were here volunteering. They said that, it really made us feel like an integral part of the team. It was hilarious too!

I’m currently doing my A-levels as well as applying for university, so coming here gives me a well-needed break from the pressures at school. I come to the fundraising office for a couple of hours each week. We do lots of different things from sorting through old photographs of the Hospice in preparation for the 30th anniversary, to helping to create boards for events, to preparing Santa’s grotto for the Christmas market! We are trusted to get along with most things by ourselves, but if we are ever unsure about anything, we can just ask someone in the team and they will always help us. There’s no pressure here like there is at school.

When I come into the Hospice every week, it fills me with a feeling of calm. I’ve got to know lots of different people over the years and everybody always ask how I am and how my family are doing. I feel very well supported by the extra community I’ve found here. Plus, my uncle’s wife and my grandma always tell me that they love the fact that I’m here maintaining that special connection to the Hospice.

I know that my grandad would be proud of me too. Moving on next year will be hard, but I know I will keep popping back in to say hello!

I’ve learnt many things through volunteering and developed a lot of the skills I will need in the future, even down to simple things like having the confidence to say hello to somebody I don’t know. I’ve also done presentations about the Hospice at my school to large groups of people. As well as gaining confidence, being here has raised my awareness of the sheer amount of work that goes into running the Hospice and how many people are involved. It amazes me!

To any young person considering volunteering here, I would say, do it! You’ve got nothing to lose! If you’ve never been to Ashgate Hospicecare before and you’re scared, the moment you walk in, you will realise there’s nothing to fear. You’ll fall in love with the place and then you won’t be able to stop volunteering!”

“You’ll fall in love with the place and then you won’t be able to stop volunteering!”
24/7 Hospice at Home Appeal

Ashgate Hospicecare wants to give people the choice to die at home.

Our Hospice at Home currently runs Monday to Friday 9am until 5pm, leaving patients without support at times when they are most likely to need it. This may result in them being admitted to hospital - something many people don’t want.

“Ashgate Hospicecare do such an amazing job, I can’t actually believe just seven healthcare assistants work in the Hospice at Home team! We would have really benefited from a 24/7 service where we could have seen the same nurses whenever we needed them - at nights and weekends and those really difficult moments, but they obviously need more funding and more staff to make that service available.”

Alan Oliver

How can you help

- £18 could pay for a Hospice at Home visit for 2 hours
- £38 could pay for our therapy team to deliver and install equipment at home
- £25k a year to sponsor a member of the Hospice at Home team

Thank you to everyone who has already donated to our our 24/7 Hospice at Home Appeal.

1 in 4 families who need hospice care can’t get it

To find out more about how your support helps in the community, please read ‘Alan Oliver’s story’ on page 19

We only have a small team of support workers on our Hospice at Home Team but, with your help, we could do so much more.

We want to increase the number of Hospice at Home staff until every person who needs our services is able to access them when they need it at any time—weekdays, nights and weekends.

Hospice UK Statistic in the Independent Palliative Care Funding Review (2011)
At the moment our Hospice at Home Team work Monday to Friday 9-5

But our patients need us 24/7

Please donate today
Call 01246 567250 or visit www.ashgatehospicecare.org.uk

24/7 Hospice at Home Appeal