

Snapshot



St Oswald's
Hospice

Autumn | Winter 2024
News and updates

Remembering Rob

Rob and Mary, both Newcastle United season ticket holders, met in a bar after a match in 1999. They were inseparable from then on. The pair became engaged 4 years later and loved watching football and attending music gigs together.

Life was perfect until Rob started experiencing difficulties with his hands in 2010. Following tests, they were given the news a week before Rob's 50th birthday that he had Motor Neurone Disease (MND).

Rob and Mary married soon after, surrounded by family and close friends. They then travelled to Central America, where they sailed along the Panama Canal. Rob and Mary regularly attended an MND Clinic at the General Hospital where it was suggested they visit the Focus on Living Centre at St Oswald's Hospice.

Rob didn't want to go but reluctantly agreed. The experience had a huge impact.

During their weekly visits to St Oswald's Hospice, Rob received expert medical care while Mary, who has Rheumatoid Arthritis, had complementary therapy. The couple also made strong friendships with other patients, and Occupational Therapist, Dr Lisa Bushby, even arranged for Rob to fulfil a lifelong dream and take a trip into the clouds in a glider.

Mary remembered: **"Rob was so happy when he landed that they took him up again!"**

As Rob's symptoms worsened, he began attending short breaks in our Adult Inpatient Service, with Mary able to stay overnight in the room.

It was Rob's desire to die at home, and with the support of Mary and his care team, he was able to do so. Rob died on 14th November 2013 with Mary by his side.

Mary had Bereavement Support at St Oswald's Hospice following her husband's death and took up writing poetry to manage her grief. Mary also set up a tribute fund in aid of St Oswald's Hospice in honour of Rob, and she regularly attends our Light Up a Life memorial events. Mary finds comfort in joining others who are grieving.

She said: **"Grief changes you forever. It never goes away, but being in that room when the lights are switched on means so much.**

"It reinforces my connection to Rob in those moments.

"I feel I can breathe again."



Mary has written a poem about Light Up A Life. Here is an excerpt:

Each of us is here tonight
Going through so many emotions
To honour our loved ones
Keeping their memories burning bright

So, can I simply say, thank you all
Each and every one for sharing this night
I wish you peace
As the lights sparkle on the tree

I can't do much for Rob now
But, what I can do is
Light up his life



Read more about Mary and Rob, including Mary's full poem here www.stoswaldsuk.org/remembering-rob/ or scan the QR code



We will be remembering Rob and all of the other people who have touched our lives at St Oswald's Hospice, by lighting a candle in their memory as part of our Light up a Life event. If you would like to remember someone special by dedicating a light in their memory, you can find out more in the flyer we have enclosed or by visiting www.stoswaldsuk.org/light-up-a-life

Living well with Lymphoedema and Lipodema

At St Oswald's Hospice, we're experts in care – working together and improving lives for the better. That's why our Lymphoedema team were delighted to re-launch a programme aimed at helping those who come to our Lymphoedema Service.

The sessions 'Living Well with Lymphoedema and Lipoedema' started in spring and aim to give our patients practical and useful tips on how to self-manage their condition.

Andrew Stoddart, Lymphoedema Advanced Practitioner, has been part of the team delivering the sessions. He said:

"The classes are designed to give patients the knowledge and skills needed to manage their Lymphoedema and or Lipoedema. This includes advice on skin care, keeping active, movement routines, nutrition, lifestyle changes, lymphatic massage and use of compression garments."

Carolyn, pictured right, who has attended our Lymphoedema Service since April this year, recently came to the sessions. Talking about the impact they've had, she said:

"The Living Well sessions were wonderful. The specialist nurse was so professional – full of knowledge and created an environment of support and understanding. The sessions are helping me to begin to understand my own body and how the conditions are affecting my physical and mental health."

Want to know more about our Lymphoedema Service?

Visit our website at www.stoswaldsuk.org/who-we-care-for/care-for-adults/lymphoedema-service/



Scan the QR code to find out more



Taking shape, brick by brick!

It was an exciting start to the summer as construction started on our new Young Adults Accommodation.

This purpose-built, 2-bedroom accommodation, designed to promote more independence and a smoother transition into adulthood, is greatly needed for young people in our region, as many of them are happily living beyond their expected years due to medical advances.

We're pleased to report that construction is progressing well and we are on track to welcome our first residents in spring next year.



Help us make it a home-from-home

We launched an appeal in the summer to help us furnish and fit out our new accommodation and make a great space for young adults.

If you'd like to find out more about the appeal please just scan this QR code or go to www.stoswaldsuk.org/young-adults-appeal/

P.S. Huge thanks to everyone who has donated already – it really does mean the world.



We're excited about our plans for the future...

Did you know we launched our new Strategy (2023-2027) at the end of 2023? And we're already getting to work on it!

So many people gave us their views, stories and ideas to help us create a strategy, which we're really excited about because it truly reflects what local people need.

It will help us to provide more and better palliative and end of life care, for more people of all ages, in more places.

So what does that mean?

Well, we'll continue to do what we already do – providing outstanding and compassionate care for those who need us...



But this strategy will help bring everything that is wonderful about St Oswald's Hospice to more people, in different ways. So, we'll be looking to build more partnerships (with other healthcare providers for example), we'll work more closely with and in the community, and we'll develop and share our expertise through research and education. To help us continue to do that, we'll ensure our funding is sustainable so we're financially fit for the future.

We're also going to be focussing on further developing 3 care service areas that are really key to our patients and their families and carers:

- **Frailty (helping people to live as well as possible with life-limiting conditions).**
- **Bereavement (supporting bereaved people when and where they need us to).**
- **Transition (developing and campaigning for services for our children as they transition to adulthood).**

So, watch this space for more exciting developments and updates as they happen...

Want to find out more?

Read our Strategy here - www.stoswaldsuk.org/who-we-are/our-vision-and-mission/st-oswalds-hospice-strategy/ or scan the QR code

Portraits with Purpose on show at Newcastle Cathedral

Following the successful launch exhibition of Portraits with Purpose: Continuing Bonds at Newcastle Civic Centre this spring, prints of the 12 poignant portraits will be on display at Newcastle Cathedral from 26th October to 26th November.

In collaboration with St Oswald's Hospice, local artist Leanne Pearce worked with bereaved and pre-bereaved families who have accessed the hospice's bereavement and other care services to create beautiful and emotive portraits of their loved ones.

While the original portraits have been gifted to families, high quality prints of the works will be on display at the Cathedral on Mosley Street in Newcastle this autumn along with the families' stories.





Our Gosforth glow-up!

In August, we revamped our two charity shops on Gosforth High Street, relocating both the main shop and bookshop to larger units just a stone's throw from the Hospice itself.

This means that we can now accept more of your generous donations and sell a greater volume of stand-out second-hand items, including books, vinyl, clothes and toys.

Incredibly, since reopening, both shops have seen record-breaking sales. With 100% of the profits made in-store going directly towards supporting local people with life-limiting conditions, we're so grateful to everyone who has come by to shop, donate and volunteer.

Gosforth Shop: 189 High Street, Gosforth, NE3 1HE.
Bookshop: 181-183 High Street, Gosforth, NE3 1HE.
Both are open Monday to Saturday: 9am – 4.30pm.

Did you know our bookshop sells new titles as well as second-hand ones? Better yet, you can order online! Read our enclosed Christmas catalogue to find out more.



Ouseburn – opening soon

It won't be long until we open the doors to our new unit in Ouseburn Valley! (previously Dallas Carpets). Given Ouseburn's creative community and commitment to sustainability, it's the ideal location for our central retail team.

Located on Ouse Street, our new 14,000-square-foot unit will have a dedicated donation point open to the public six days a week, as well as a multifunctional event space for pop-up shops, fundraising events and so much more!

With construction now complete, we're busy making the space fit for purpose and adding that unmistakable St Oswald's Hospice magic touch.



We'll collect your donations - For free

We can collect your donations straight from your home or workplace for free. Whether your donation is too big to fit in the car, you don't have time to drop to our shops or if you just need your items gone quickly, we can help.

We collect furniture, white goods and multiple bags of smaller items (e.g. clothes, homeware, and books) free of charge, which we then sell in our shops.

To book a collection or for further information, contact retailhelpdesk@stoswaldsuk.org or leave us a voicemail on 0191 246 8123.

The big Car Raffle



Enter at any of our charity shops or on our website here: www.stoswaldsuk.org/big-car-raffle
Winner drawn on Sat 23rd November.

Light up a life

Celebrate the life of a loved one this winter. See enclosed leaflet or visit www.stoswaldsuk.org/light-up-a-life

Christmas Tree-Cycle



Save yourself a trip to the tip and let us recycle your Christmas tree in January. See enclosed Christmas catalogue or visit www.stoswaldsuk.org/get-involved/christmas-treecycle/

Thank you for being part of the St Oswald's Hospice family and supporting patients and their families this year. We hope you enjoyed reading about all the things that have been made possible, thanks to your support.