



SPRING 2021 NEWSLETTER

- Maria's walk for Hasan
- 30th Anniversary feature
- Competition time

A growing family

Francis House Family Trust
Registered Charity Number 328659



WELCOME TO OUR FAMILY



Spring is making itself known (as I write this the crocus are providing the first bit of colour outside my window) and there is the promise of new beginnings as we begin to plan our way out of the COVID-19 lockdown.

At Francis House over 90% of the staff together with all the young people at 463 have been vaccinated and we are carrying out PCR and lateral flow tests twice weekly. Sharon our Registered Manager has prepared her plan for re-opening normal services. We hope that planned respite will start to happen towards the end of April. Emergency respite and end of life care will continue. Francis House and Francis Lodge will return to normal and as soon as restaurants and pubs open, we will invite whole families to book respite. Seasons, Shining Stars and Parent Support Groups will recommence – with vaccinations and lateral flow testing we know that we can do these things safely – the summer does not seem so far away.

Francis House has provided a lifeline for so many families during this crisis and we have been able to do this because of the tremendous support that we have received as a result of the genuine concern of our loyal and

committed supporters. The Care team and skeleton support staff have all worked hard to keep our doors open and I am so proud of the way that they have given of themselves tirelessly in a very difficult situation.

Sadly, in March we have more retirements. Carmel Holland, who has managed reception since we opened will retire and Peter Forster our Fundraising Office Manager for the last twelve years will leave us. From the Care team we will say goodbye to Linda Flowers – Clinical Lead together with Dawn Geddes and Kim Higgins. These three have a combined service of 50 years on the Care team (Dawn has been with us for 24 years!). As we say goodbye and thank you to these people who have been such an important part of the Francis House story, we also welcome new staff onto the team. Ann (formerly a volunteer), Saskia and Lesley have joined the Care team and Lucy, Melanie and Karen have started work at 463.

Life does not stand still, and spring reminds us that as the things of the past become memories, new life and new growth bring hope for the future. We are always able to look forward, with confidence, knowing that Francis House is more than a few buildings and a group of staff - it is a catalyst for love and concern for others. Our combined work - the work of staff and supporters makes the world a much better place. So, thank you everyone for your part in this tremendous venture that has grown during the last 30 years and continues to grow spreading goodwill and love throughout the North West.

Psalm 127 begins with the words...
 "Unless the Lord builds the house,
 those who build it labour in vain."

Francis House is a testimony to the adage that "faith can move mountains" and if you are reading this you are probably an important part of God's work here.

David

HOW TO CONTACT US

Francis House Children's Hospice,
 390 Parrswood Road,
 Didsbury, Manchester, M20 5NA

Hospice tel: 0161 434 4118
 Fundraising tel: 0161 443 2200

Goodbye and thank you



MARIA'S WALK FOR HASAN



12-year-old Maria Mahmood wanted to do something truly special for the place that gave her the 'best' times with her brother Hasan.

When Francis House asked its supporters to take on a walking challenge to help raise funds, kind-hearted Maria was among the first to sign up and has raised a staggering £3,363.

Maria's mum Sumaira, her dad Ansar, dogs Daisy and Lucy and family friend Nick, walked a distance of eight miles covering a circular route from Lymm Village in 3 hours and 40 minutes.

"With this walk Maria really pushed her boundaries to make a difference to other families with special needs children, so that they too can make the most of the time they've got together and make precious memories," said Sumaira.

Hasan was born in 2004 with Lissencephaly, a neurological condition affecting his development

that caused reduced muscle tone, partial blindness and epilepsy. He was non-verbal but could say 'mum'.

A neurologist referred the family to Francis House in 2019 and Maria and Hasan settled immediately into the 'home from home' environment.

Sumaira said: "On my first respite stay at Francis House, I felt that the staff took their caring responsibility very seriously. I was relaxed because I felt that Hasan was in safe caring and professional hands. He was a happy and social boy and loved the one-to-one attention, using his long eye lashes to flirt with the nurses."

"I saw Maria feeling comfortable with other siblings who have disabled brothers or sisters. I could see the confidence in her face when she realised that she was not the only child whose brother could not

walk or play with her, and that it was normal to feel the way she was feeling.”

“She loved staying there with her brother and it gave me a peace of mind that no other place did. I remember saying to myself ‘Francis House - where have you been all my life?’”

During the pandemic last year, the hospice team remained in constant telephone contact with families who were shielding. Sumaira accepted the offer of respite following a number of exhausting sleepless nights at home. Initially concerned about Hasan having to stay in his room - part of the hospice’s Covid-19 protection measures – she was reassured when she saw the fun he was having with the care team.

Later diagnosed with cardiomyopathy, Hasan died at home in his sleep in July 2020, one month before his sixteenth birthday.

“Maria used to avoid the places that triggered her memories of Hasan. But now she looks forward to meeting up at Francis House with the other children when the sibling support sessions are up and running.”



COMPETITION TIME

Take part in our Virtual Chick Hunt - no matter where you live!

Running throughout April, our annual Easter fundraiser has been turned into a fun online game and quiz.

Visit our website before the end of April and put your hunting skills to the test. Use the interactive map to explore the streets of Didsbury village and track down 20 chicks 'virtually perched' in shops, cafes and businesses within the vicinity of the hospice.

Discover all the fascinating facts about Francis House and test your memory in the multiple-choice quiz. To join the hunt a £3 entry fee applies, and not



only will you be helping to raise much-needed funds for the hospice you could also be in with the chance of winning an exciting prize!

Thank you to our Chick Hunt sponsors Towers Manchester - good luck and happy hunting!
francishouse.org.uk/chick-hunt

Virtual Knit Off

If you enjoy knitting and would like to share your favourite knitted or crocheted makes, then we have just the competition for you! Upload your photos for the Francis House Virtual Knit Off when the contest opens on 1st July. With four categories to choose from there is something for everyone's skill level and if you are lucky enough to be shortlisted your family and friends can vote for you in an exciting knit off final!



To join in the fun visit
www.francishouse.org.uk/knitoff

KEEP ON RUNNING



Have you ever dreamt of running in one of the biggest one-day charity fundraising events in the world?

We could make that dream come true as we have a charity place up for grabs for the 2021 Virgin Money London Marathon.

Billed as the most popular marathon on the planet, the event takes place on Sunday 3rd October. If you are interested in joining 50,000 participants taking on the traditional course from London's Blackheath to The Mall we'd love to hear from you.



Closer to home, we have discounted charity places available for the Great Manchester Run.

The North West's most popular running event and the biggest 10km run in Europe.

For an event fee of £30 for the 10k route and £35 for the Half Marathon, you will also receive a Francis House t-shirt and a warm welcome in the Charity Village. In return we ask that you try to raise a minimum of £50 in sponsorship to help support the children and families of Francis House. Sign up now for an unforgettable day on Sunday 26th September.

Contact our fundraising team on 0161 443 2200 or sign up online by visiting the Events page at [francishouse.org.uk](https://www.francishouse.org.uk)

Join #TeamFrancisHouse

30 YEARS OF FRANCIS HOUSE

At the end of 2021 we will be celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the opening of Francis House. Your continued support has enabled us to expand and develop our services, reaching more children and families than we ever could have imagined possible!



2006

Kirsty Howard born with an exceptionally rare condition with her heart back to front, raises £5 million to secure the future of Francis House.



2010

A four-bed house close to the hospice, becomes the forerunner for a £3.5 million building extension for teenagers and young adults. Gill Bevin becomes the Registered Manager.

1990

Rainbow Family Trust set up as a charity by Sister Aloysius and Father Thomas Mulheran who were concerned about the lack of palliative care for the families of children with a short life expectancy.



1991

The former convent on Parrswood Road is converted into a seven bedroomed children's hospice. Francis House was opened on 25th November 1991 by Diana, Princess of Wales.



2009

Emotional support service starts providing support to young people with life-limiting conditions who due to medical advances are living longer. Margaret Hickie retires as the Head of Care.





2014

Francis House doubles in size with the opening of Francis Lodge. Supporters including Mr Mohamed Al-Fayed, staff, young people and families celebrate a new era in the life of the Hospice.



2020

Gill Bevin retires after 18 years at Francis House. Sharon Doodson becomes Registered Manager and only the third Director of Care to be appointed in the history of the Hospice.

2012

Sister Aloysius the founder of Francis House dies in August aged 85 years. Construction work on the seven-bedroom extension begins. The Rainbow Family Trust changes its name to Francis House Family Trust.



2016

Francis House celebrates 25 years. The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge officially opened Francis Lodge. 463 opens providing a place of permanent residence for young people with life-limiting conditions.



2021

30th Anniversary of the opening of Francis House!

Thank you for making the last 30 years possible – with your help we look forward to the next 30.



30TH ANNIVERSARY

SPECIAL FEATURE

Thirty years ago, when word spread about the opening of a local children's hospice, countless people set to work fundraising.



We recognise the enormous contribution so many of you made back then and to illustrate the incredible outpouring of love in those early years we wanted to tell you about the fundraising efforts of two women – Moira Rossiter and Vera Kennedy - who helped to put Francis House on the map.

In 1990, Shaunagh Carroll (nee Ward) was the first person employed by the charity and she worked with Francis House founder Sister Aloysius and Sister Austin from the garage on the site of the hospice.

Shaunagh recalled: “As word got out in the local communities that there were children in need of a hospice it was like lighting a fuse. I remember Sister Aloysius opening the post and the letters of help from people keen to get on board.”

This included friends Moira and Vera who became regular visitors

to the hospice. Moira set to work organising a successful fundraising committee of Cheshire ladies, who called on their long list of contacts for support.

“Moira was great fun and kick started the fundraising with hard work and drive. She was a determined lady who got things done and brought in a lot of money, undoubtedly raising the profile of the hospice,” added Shaunagh.

Vera Kennedy, wife of John Kennedy CBE, KSG, DL founder of John Kennedy Civil Engineering and generous supporter of charitable causes; worked tirelessly behind the scenes organising exceptional fundraising events including ladies' lunches, fashion shows, golf events and perhaps most memorable of all the Lord Mayor's Rainbow Ball.

From 1990 to 1993, the gala event was the hottest ticket in town. Hosted by television's chat show

couple Richard Madeley and Judy Finnigan, guests flocked to the Piccadilly Hotel in the city centre. Manchester Airport sponsored the Ball and raffle prizes including flights to far flung destinations were readily donated by all the major airlines.

Brenda Bouker (nee Winstanley) was a committee member and worked for Moira's husband Bill as a bookkeeper at 1st National Locksmiths in Portland Street.

Brenda said: "We had so many donations from wonderful people wanting to help. Vera spent long hours on the phone asking people to buy raffle tickets and Moira was out three nights a week fundraising. The generosity was fantastic, it was an incredible time."

Moira and Vera also helped to set up a charity shop in Didsbury and Sir Alex Ferguson made two of his young football stars - including a seventeen-year-old Ryan Giggs - available to attend fundraising events.

Over a three-year period, Moira and Vera and their supporters helped to raise more than £250,000 - an incredible achievement.

We would like to thank the families of Moira and Vera and the thousands of people from across the north west that did so much for Francis House during that time.

From 1990 to 1993, the gala event was the hottest ticket in town.



Vera Kennedy, TV's Richard & Judy and Moira Rossiter.

ONLINE

FUNDRAISERS

facebook

Are you on Facebook?

Last year Facebook Fundraisers generated more than £16,000 for Francis House and best of all, we don't pay any fees on money raised through Facebook. If you are not able to celebrate with friends and family this year, then why not use this opportunity to do something special and set up a birthday fundraiser.

Visit [**facebook.com/fund/FrancisHouseChildrensHospice**](https://facebook.com/fund/FrancisHouseChildrensHospice)

smile.amazon.co.uk

Amazon Smile

If you shop through Amazon, you can place an order through [**amazon.smile.co.uk**](https://smile.amazon.co.uk) instead and Amazon will make a donation to Francis House. AmazonSmile will donate 0.5% of the net purchase (exc. VAT, returns and shipping fees) of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases and at no extra cost to you whatsoever! Select Francis House Family Trust (our Registered Charity name) when you visit [**smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/328659-0**](https://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/328659-0)



Local Community Fund

If you live in Wythenshawe, Northenden or Didsbury, Francis House is linked to Co-op food stores or funeral branches in your area. Become a Co-op member (join for £1 to earn rewards) and choose Francis House as your cause to support when you buy selected products and services. To find out more visit [**membership.coop.co.uk/causes/53280**](https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/53280)



ONLINE

Website shop

For a range of Francis House branded clothing and accessories visit our online shop. From beanie hats and running vests to knitted chicks there is plenty to choose from. If you have any suggestions for items that you would like us to stock and think they will sell in large quantities, then give our fundraising office a call. Click [**franchishouse.org.uk/get-involved/shop**](https://franchishouse.org.uk/get-involved/shop)

WWW.FRANCISHOUSE.ORG.UK/DONATE

Help us to continue caring for local families

I want to help the families of Francis House

Here is my gift of:

☐ £10 ☐ £25 ☐ £50 ☐ other £

I enclose a cheque made payable to **Francis House Family Trust**

Title.....First NameLast Name

Address.....

.....Postcode.....

Telephone Number..... Email Address.....



Gift Aid

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

giftaid it

I would like Francis House Family Trust to treat as Gift Aid Donations

☐ This donation

☐ All donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years

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

Signature.....Date.....

Keep in Touch

Your support is vital and we look forward to keeping in touch with you by post, sharing our news, activities and appeals.

Would you like to receive our monthly supporter emails too?

☐ Yes, I am happy to hear from you by email. Email address.....

If you do not wish to receive information by post, or wish to change how we get in touch, please contact rachael.taylor@francishouse.org.uk or call 0161 443 2200.

THANK YOU

Please return this form with your donation to:

Francis House Family Trust, Francis House Children's Hospice,
390 Parrswood Road, Didsbury, Manchester M20 5NA

To donate online go to www.francishouse.org.uk/donate or call 0161 443 2200

MAKE A REGULAR DONATION

To continue to provide our services we need to raise 4.7 million pounds per year to keep Francis House and Lodge operating.

Become a regular giver and make an ongoing difference to the lives of the families that we support. By completing this form, your regular donation will enable us to plan for future needs. If you are a UK taxpayer, please also sign and return the Gift Aid Declaration.

STANDING ORDER

The Manager
Bank/BSoc Address
.....
Account Name
Account Number
Sort Code

Please pay: Francis House Family Trust
Yorkshire Bank, 45-50 Market Street
Manchester M1 1PW
Account Number 68170373
Sort Code 05-05-73

The sum of £
Commencing on
and thereafter on each succeeding
Ending on
Name
Address
.....
Signature
Date

Please return to Carole Fletcher, Francis House
Children's Hospice, 390 Parrswood Road,
Didsbury, Manchester M20 5NA
Registered Charity No. 328659

GIFT AID DECLARATION

Name of Charity
Details of Donor: Title
Forename(s)
Surname
Address
.....
Postcode
Email

I wish the charity to treat: (please tick as appropriate)
☐ The enclosed donation of £
☐ All donations I make in the future or
have made in the past 4 years

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

Please let us know if you:

- Want to cancel this declaration
- Change your name or home address
- No longer pay sufficient tax on your
income and or capital gains

Signed
Date

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

If you are one of our REGULAR DONORS
Thank you for your continued support -
we are truly grateful.



Mike and Carol
Christmas fundraiser
£1,135



Nicola Williams
Ladies Section
Bramhall Park Golf Club
£2,750



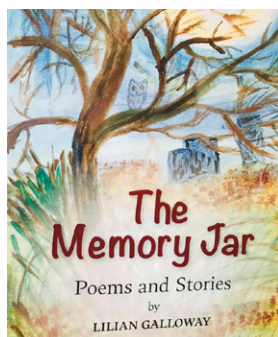
Weightmans
Charity of the Year
Lapland Walk
£900+



Knutsford Golf Club
Ladies competition
£240



Reddish Angling Club
24-hour fishathon
£1,508



Lilian Galloway
Book sales
£721

CHESHIRE THREE PEAKS CHALLENGE



TAKE A HIKE!

Our Cheshire Three Peaks Challenge is BACK for 2021. Join us on Sunday 27 June at Tegg's Nose Visitor Centre in Macclesfield for a choice of two scenic but strenuous routes.

The challenge, which will be fully compliant with social distancing measures, offers a perfect opportunity to safely enjoy the great outdoors after so many months of staying inside!

Choose between:



Challenge Route

Conquer three of Cheshire's highest peaks on the demanding 13.6 mile route, covering steep terrain over magnificent scenery.

£20pp / FREE for under 16s



Family Trail

All ages and abilities can enjoy this 6.5 mile ramble through the countryside, whilst optionally solving clues and scavenging for items along the way.

£15pp / FREE for under 16s

Both routes are clearly marked with flags and supported by checkpoints – no navigational skills required!

Sign up now

Registration fees include T-shirt, refreshments at checkpoints, route guides and full support (+ lunch included on challenge route).

[francishouse.org.uk/cheshire-three-peaks-challenge](https://www.francishouse.org.uk/cheshire-three-peaks-challenge)

or call Rachel on 0161 443 2200

Mailing List

If you no longer wish to receive a copy of the newsletter through the post, please call the fundraising office on 0161 443 2200 or email rachael.taylor@francishouse.org.uk to be removed from the mailing list. Our newsletters are available to view online www.francishouse.org.uk/news/newsletters/



@FrancisHouseCH



FrancisHouseChildrensHospice



www.francishouse.org.uk