



# WINTER 2023 NEWSLETTER

- The Best Day Ever
- Our Trustees
- The History of Francis House



**FRANCIS HOUSE**  
**CHILDREN'S HOSPICE**  
Registered Charity No. 328659

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# WELCOME TO OUR FAMILY



**Francis House marks its thirty second birthday in November and in those thirty-two years we have seen many changes. Even so, unlike many of the children's hospices we have enjoyed stability in the many people who have dedicated large periods of their careers to the care of the young people and their families.**

This month we will see the retirements of Bernie Witherington our play specialist for 24 years, and Carol Hewitt who has kept the gardens looking nice since the year 2000.

Francis House is run by a Trust and the governance of the Trust is in the hands of our Trustees, here again we are seeing significant retirements. Mr Martin Lochery has served on the Board since the inception of the charity in 1990, he retired in October along with Mr Christopher Roberts a Trustee since 1992 and chairman of the Board since 2014. Both of these Trustees have been

very active members of the Finance and Management committee. The financial stability that we enjoy and that allows us to constantly expand and develop serving more and more families, owes a lot to their steady guidance and expertise.

In order to document the history so far, we have commissioned author Andy Buckley to write the story of the first thirty years. The book is titled 'A Worthwhile Error' a phrase used by Sister Aloysius in an interview for the BBC. The change in so many lives families, volunteers, staff, and trustees has proved that embarking on this journey has been

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**

totally worthwhile even though the financial road has been a bit 'bumpy'.

We hope that everyone reading the book will be proud of the part that they have played in making Francis House what it is today and we wish these long serving people every happiness in their retirement.

... and so to the future, the work does not stop here as more and more families come through the doors, new people join the staff and our many supporters find ever more imaginative ways of raising funds,

**To all of you the families  
send a huge thank you.**

*David*

The board of trustees at Francis House





## BEST DAY EVER

**On a beautiful day in July, a service was held at Francis House to celebrate the marriage of Fiona Ferguson and Emmett Stapleton.**

Close friends, family members and Francis House staff joined the happy couple in celebrating their special day.

Fiona's daughter Elizabeth (20) has been receiving respite care at Francis House for 19 years. As a young adult, she now lives at no 92, a residential home for young people

with life-limiting conditions and complex needs.

Revd David Ireland officiated at the service in the hospice chapel where years before he had baptised Elizabeth and her brother James. David remarked: "It was nice to be able to perform the marriage



ceremony in the chapel at Francis House rather than some of the sadder services”.

Fiona explained why she wanted Francis House to be the venue for such an important day.

“When Elizabeth was a child we used to go to Francis House as a family with her brothers Edward and James. It was nice to have a break and spend time with the boys but also to be able to check in on Elizabeth. The care at Francis House is about the whole family and the boys enjoyed attending the Seasons sibling support group.

“The children were baptised here and I just had this feeling that I wanted to get married at Francis House. There is a strong bond, a deep connection with the hospice. It was very fitting, the timing was perfect and David was just as excited as me!

“Elizabeth has settled into the new house with her new friends. The staff are so supportive and in the run up to the wedding they took Elizabeth shopping for a new outfit. I didn’t know what she’d be wearing, they even did her hair and make-up to make her look her best. They took care of everything and brought her to Francis House along with some of her friends.

“Emmett has got to know Francis House and the connection we have from the early days when we needed support. We were made to feel so comfortable, everybody’s needs were met, my mum used a wheelchair but she was able to walk me down the aisle. The whole day was so relaxed and everything that I wanted. We feel part of the family of Francis House, it was our best day ever.”





**FRANCIS HOUSE**  
**CHILDREN'S HOSPICE**

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# Be part of Francis House

Work for us



Raise awareness



Make a referral  
Support us



Take part in our events



Volunteer for us



[www.francishouse.org.uk](http://www.francishouse.org.uk)

Telephone 0161 434 4118



Donate to us



# KEEP ON RUNNING

AJBell greatmanchester run



The AJ Bell Great Manchester Run – the North West’s most popular running event – returns on Sunday 26th May 2024. Running the fast and flat city centre route, you’ll be racing past some of the most famous Manchester landmarks, spurred on by the crowd and incredible atmosphere.

We are looking for athletes of all abilities to take part, and are offering discounted places of £35 for the 10k and £40 for the half marathon. Why not get the children involved with the Junior and Mini runs. Find out more and sign up online at [www.francishouse.org.uk/great-manchester-run](http://www.francishouse.org.uk/great-manchester-run)

## GO MARTYN!

Martyn Cassidy is running 50 races in a single year as he approaches his 50th birthday. From couch potato to running hero, Martyn is tackling a mixture of road and trail runs covering a range of distances between 5k and Half Marathon. For his 46/50 race he’ll be lining up at the Great Manchester Run and so far has raised an incredible £900 for Francis House.



“I want to see what I’m capable of if I push myself just a little bit more. I’m feeling fitter and healthier, and the races give me something exciting to look forward to each weekend,”  
*Martyn.*

# OUR TRUSTEES



Chris Roberts

## Chris Roberts retires after thirty-one years as a Trustee and nine years as Chair

A dozen Trustees are charged with governing and directing how Francis House Children's Hospice is managed and run. The role is entirely voluntary, with time and expertise given freely to benefit the children and their families.

It was on the 28th February 1992 that Chris Roberts attended his first meeting as a Trustee – a matter of months after the first family was welcomed through the doors.

As a chartered accountant in the early 1990s, Chris was visiting Wardley Hall, the Bishop of Salford's residence and the finance office for the Diocese of Salford, when Father Thomas Mulheran, told him that the Bishop was looking for an accountant to join the Trustees at Francis House and

was requesting volunteers. Unable to refuse, Chris has served on the main Trustee body and the finance sub committee since its inception.

Chris quickly became part of the fabric of Francis House and took over as Chair in 2014 following the retirement of Robin Wood CBE.

In the last decade, the Trustees have overseen a period of significant growth with the development of two residential properties 463 and No 92 providing a place of permanent residence for young people with life-limiting or life-threatening conditions.

The ground-breaking projects in Didsbury and Heaton Moor, operated by Francis House Families



Ltd, offer a comfortable and supportive living environment to a dozen young people.

Chris and Martin Lochery stood down as Trustees on October 5 with Jane Kempler taking over the role of Chair.

Chris said: "It has been an honour and a privilege to be involved at Francis House. The devotion of the staff to the young people and their parents is inspirational to say the least.

"My first impression of Francis House was walking into the

reception to see a young girl running with a long tube attached to an oxygen tank – that was Kirsty Howard whose spirit and enjoyment in life embodied much of what Francis House is about.

"When I joined the Trustees, Sister Aloysius was running the hospice and sister was a true force of nature to whom nothing was impossible and let little stand in her way.

"In more recent years the development of Francis Lodge and the residential accommodation has proved to be an outstanding

*continued >>*



**Chris Roberts and Martin Lochery each served as Trustees for more than 30 years**

project. Once more this is largely down to the vision and hard work of David Ireland and his team.

“When we began with our mission for people with a short life expectancy, most youngsters were dying before they got into their late teens. Due to medical advances, they’re living much longer and Francis House continues to look after them. That’s something I’m very proud of.”

Martin Lochery was appointed as a Trustee in March 1991. Martin was the head teacher of St John Vianney, a school on Didsbury Road, Stockport, for pupils with learning difficulties and complex needs.

Like Chris, Martin was ‘recruited’ by Father Tom and met Sister Aloysius.

Martin said: “I became involved with meeting some of the families and the difficulties they faced were off the scale in comparison to my school life. You had parents who had children who were capable of very little and yet they were evoking so much love from these families who were having such a tough time. It was an amazing experience to feel that you could do a little something to help.”

David Ireland, chief executive of Francis House said: “Francis House has benefited so much from the guidance and leadership of Chris and Martin. Whatever the situation

I have personally relied on their wise advice and unerring support and will miss having them on the end of the telephone particularly in the difficult times, I’m sure that Sister Aloysius felt the same way. We wish them long and healthy retirements and look forward to the next phase of our history as we move forward with Jane as Chair.”

Jane Kempler said: **“I would like to thank Chris for his many years as a Trustee and Chair and for guiding me into this role.”**

**Jane Kempler**  
**Chair of Trustees**



### **Our Trustees**

Jane Kempler (Chair),  
Eamonn O’Neal,  
Judith Amosi-Khodadad,  
Dr Susan Kirk, Dr Susan O’Halloran,  
Charles Ledigo, Vijay Srivastava,  
Dr Andrew Taylor, Aysa Rangrez,  
Rev Joseph Carney,  
Dr Edward Gasiorowski.

# CHRISTMAS CRACKERS

**Kick start your festive fundraising with our events and ideas**

## **Festival of Trees**

**28th October to 3rd December**

Fancy a Christmas tree with a difference? There's a wide selection of stunning trees packed full of goodies, hampers and vouchers from sponsors including Manchester United, Manchester City, Tesco, Morrisons and Beaverbrooks all up for grabs to the highest bidder at Quayside MediaCityUK. Magical Christmas merchandise is also on sale in our festive pop up shop until 10th Dec.

[www.festivaloftrees.co.uk](http://www.festivaloftrees.co.uk)



## **A Christmas Story**

**Friday 8th December**

Join us and our performers and VIP guests for this beautiful candlelit event at St Elisabeth's Church, Reddish, for a fantastic evening of festive celebration which truly reflects the magical atmosphere of Christmas. Book your tickets for this free event

[www.francishouse.org.uk/christmas-story-service](http://www.francishouse.org.uk/christmas-story-service), or call **Susie** on **07931 642409**

## **Christmas Helpers**

Help Francis House this festive season by throwing a jolly fundraising event. Host a festive raffle or staff Christmas Jumper Day. Grab the mic and sing your heart out at a Carol-oke or hold a Festive Bake Off to collect some cheerful donations. Work off the excesses and put your best foot forward in 2024 by signing up to

[www.francishouse.org.uk/winter-wander](http://www.francishouse.org.uk/winter-wander)





# THE HISTORY OF FRANCIS HOUSE

**A Worthwhile Error is the fascinating rich history of Francis House Children's Hospice, one of Manchester's most loved charities, brought to life in a stunning new 208 page hardcover book.**

"A worthwhile error" ... the phrase used by Sister Aloysius FMSJ to describe Francis House.

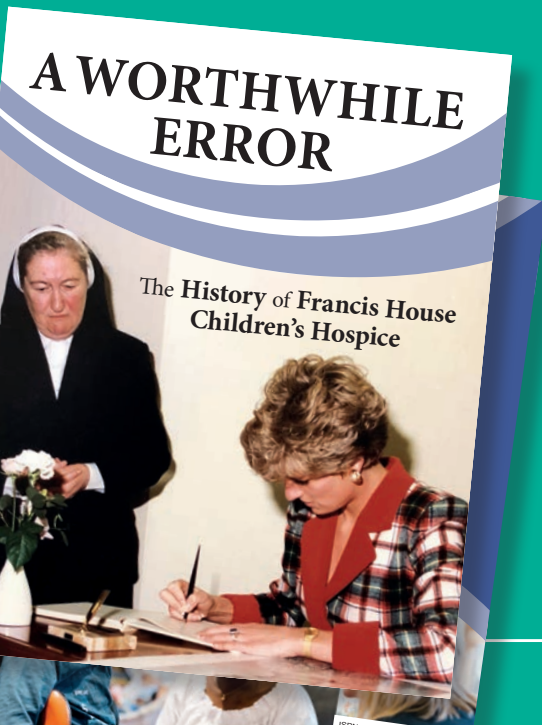
An admission that technically it was a mistake to commit to building a children's hospice without sufficient funds in place. But morally it was exactly the right thing to do, and it was certainly worthwhile. Sister Aloysius saw to that.

Andy Buckley is a Manchester-based author, journalist and broadcaster with a passion for storytelling. The focus of much of his writing in the last 15 years has been on supporting the charity sector.

"It has been a privilege to write the foreword to this extraordinary book. It has allowed me to reflect on over 30 years that have flown by. To appreciate what Francis House has achieved. It is a remarkable organisation." Sir Warren Smith KCVO KSTJ JP

'A Worthwhile Error - The History of Francis House Children's Hospice' is available for £19.95 (plus postage and packing) by calling the hospice on 0161 434 4118 or from [www.francishouse.org.uk/online-shop](http://www.francishouse.org.uk/online-shop)

By purchasing this book, you are helping Francis House to continue to provide a lifeline to hundreds of local children, young people and their families.



**Donate at [francishouse.org.uk/donate](https://www.francishouse.org.uk/donate)**  
**Scan QR code to donate →**



## **I want to help the families of Francis House**

Here is my gift of:

☐ £10   ☐ £30   ☐ £50   ☐ other £

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

Title.....First Name .....Last 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 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](mailto: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](https://www.francishouse.org.uk/donate) or call 0161 443 2200**

Registered Charity No. 328659

# MAKE A REGULAR DONATION

To continue to provide our services we need to raise 4.7 million pounds each year to keep our services going. 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  
Virgin Money, 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

Francis House is a lifeline to more than 600 families from across the North West. When life is short it needs to be of the highest quality and that's what Francis House does best.



David Bar Mitzvah  
fundraising  
10k challenge  
**£2,368**



Reddish Angling  
Club 24 hour  
Fish-A-Thon  
**£2,600**



Barratt Homes,  
Manchester Annual  
Golf Day and Dinner  
**£21,407**



Portman Recruitment  
Peak District Challenge  
**£2,375**



Classic Ibiza  
merchandise sales  
**£2,100**



Texere Publishing  
SEPTEMBER challenge  
**£816**

# EVENTS 2023/2024

2023	
Festival of Christmas Trees at Quayside MediaCityUK	28th Oct until 10th Dec
Let's Party Christmas Ball at Concorde Conference Centre-	1st December 7pm
A Christmas Story at St Elisabeth's Reddish	8th December 7.30pm
Memory Lights Service at East Didsbury Methodist Church	13th December 7pm
2024	
Winter Wander	Throughout January
Easter Chick Appeal	January – March
Adidas Manchester Marathon	14th April
Justin Moorhouse comedy show at Altrincham Garrick Theatre	20th April
TCS London Marathon	21st April
Francis House Open Day	22nd April
Tour de Manc	5th May
AJ Bell Great Manchester Run	26th May
Cheshire 3 Peaks Challenge	23rd June
Peak District Ultra Challenge	6th & 7th July

To find out the latest information or to take part in any of these events contact the fundraising team on **0161 443 2200** or email [fundraising@francishouse.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@francishouse.org.uk) or visit [www.francishouse.org.uk/get-involved/events](http://www.francishouse.org.uk/get-involved/events)

## STOP PRESS!

It's never too early to think about Easter and our knitting and crochet patterns for chicks and bunnies are now available for you to start getting crafty for our hugely popular Knitted Chick Appeal. We need to receive your cute creations by February 26th 2024. Visit [www.francishouse.org.uk/easter-knit-a-chick-appeal](http://www.francishouse.org.uk/easter-knit-a-chick-appeal)

## Newsletter 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](mailto:rachael.taylor@francishouse.org.uk) and ask to be removed. Visit our website to subscribe to our monthly supporter newsletter via email and view our newsletters online [www.francishouse.org.uk/news/newsletters/](http://www.francishouse.org.uk/news/newsletters/)



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[www.francishouse.org.uk](http://www.francishouse.org.uk)