

# Sobell Times

THE NEWSLETTER FOR SOBELL HOUSE HOSPICE



Issue 02

Autumn/Winter 2022



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**Caring at the heart of our community**



Photo credit: John Cairns

## Dear friends,

As I write this introduction, the country is in a period of national mourning for Queen Elizabeth II. To lose someone you have loved and respected is, we know, a very hard thing to experience and we know everyone experiences grief in their own individual way. We also know that the death of someone well-known, and who has always been there, can bring up difficult feelings or bring our own grief into painful focus. Here at Sobell House we offer an amazing bereavement service to those who have lost someone under our care, so do get in touch with our team if you need help and support. If you want the chance to remember a special person, do also consider attending our beautiful Lights of Love service on 4 December at the Sheldonian Theatre - find out more on page 9.

We know that the Queen was a keen supporter of hospices – indeed one of her last public engagements was a surprise visit to a new hospice. Here at Sobell House, we help people to live well until they die, just as the Queen was able to. With your ongoing support and the tireless efforts of many like you, we are able to help others to have the chance to live well until they die. Whoever you are, you and your loved ones matter, and we all deserve to be supported and made comfortable as we progress through life and through our own deaths. Thanks to the amazing people who support Sobell House Hospice, we are able to do that – and we want to keep doing it for many more years, for more people, in whatever location they choose to die.

As you read through the newsletter, you will see that we have been busy raising those much-needed funds, and finding new ways to support the work of the hospice. I hope you enjoy reading these updates as much as I do. Thank you, as ever, for your generous support.



*Amelia Foster*

**Amelia Foster**  
Chief Executive



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Photo credit: John Cairns

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# Rainbow of Ribbons

A celebration of **life** and **love**



**On Sunday 21 August, we transformed an ancient red oak tree in Oxford's University Parks into a rainbow of colourful ribbons fluttering in the summer breeze in memory of loved ones.**

Our Rainbow of Ribbons celebration was made all the more special thanks to the people we saw and spoke to on the day. There were tears, laughter, and the display of hundreds of ribbons was a humbling and poignant way to remember loved ones no longer with us.

Thank you so much to everyone who dedicated a ribbon to our Rainbow of Ribbons display – you have raised over £14,000 for our hospice, helping us to continue our care for local families, so we can bring colour and joy to people in their darkest days.



Photo credit: John Cairns



## Food & Wellness

### Introducing our new cookbook!

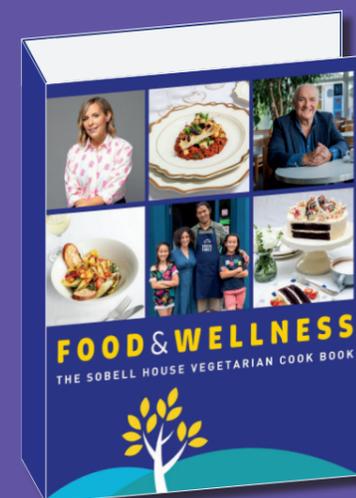
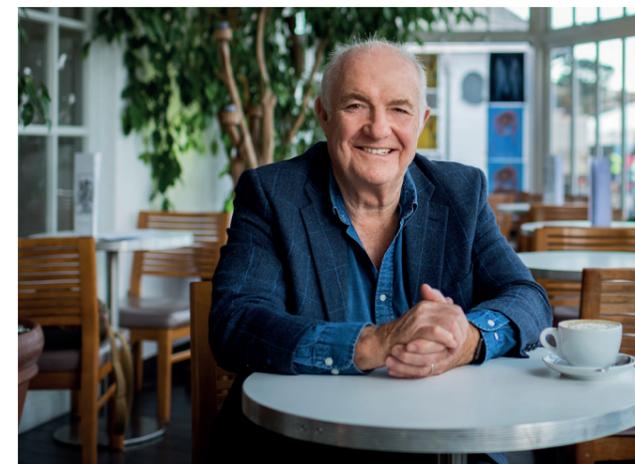


We're delighted to share the news that our latest cookbook, *Food & Wellness*, is now on sale, but before we share more exciting details, we wanted to explain why publishing our second cookbook holds such a special meaning for us.

Food is an everyday necessity, but it holds so much more value than that. It brings people together, is an expression of love, and an important part of any celebration. Here at Sobell House, we see time and time again the important role food plays in hospice care. When a patient's face lights up when they see fish and chips is on the menu – their favourite! – or when they are presented with a cake to celebrate their birthday, surrounded by their nearest and dearest. Thanks to the kind donations we receive, we are able to fund our very own catering service at the hospice, and our catering team provides delicious meals, which make a huge difference to our patients' wellbeing. Even if our patients do not have the appetite for a meal, an ice lolly or a cold drink can bring the same amount of pleasure. It truly is the small things that can make the biggest impact.

*Food & Wellness* is a celebration of food and wellness, featuring delicious vegetarian and vegan recipes from popular local eateries and food businesses for you to try out at home. There are also recipes from some famous faces; Paul Chahidi, Mel Giedroyc, Roger Allam, Rick Stein, Matt Allwright, Huw Edwards and Florence Pugh. We hope it will bring some joy to your kitchen, just as the food from our kitchen brings to our patients.

Thank you so much to IP Asset Partnership and Oxford Economics, our generous sponsors, for ensuring that every cookbook sold will help us to provide our care and support to many more people in Oxfordshire. In fact, every cookbook sold could help us to fund a day's worth of meals and snacks for a patient staying on our inpatient unit.



**Pre-order\* your copy of *Food & Wellness* for £17.50 today!**

Visit [sobellhouse.org/online-shop](https://sobellhouse.org/online-shop) →



Or call **01865 857007** to pre-order your copy over the phone.

\*Expected delivery date is mid-November.



**This ‘day in the life’ diary is written by Kerry Watkinson, who works in our newly established Home Hospice care team as a Patient Care Coordinator.**

**The incredible support we receive through kind donations and inspiring fundraising has helped us to co-fund the Home Hospice service, alongside Macmillan and Social Finance, which has enabled more people to die at home, if they wish to, in comfort and surrounded by their loved ones.**

**We hope you enjoy finding out about Kerry’s role in the team and the important work she does. Please note that this diary was written in June 2022.**

**7:30** I leave my house in the south of the county and drive to Unipart House, which takes 20 minutes this morning. Thank you, traffic!

**7:50** I arrive at the office and greet my colleagues. I switch my computer on and make a coffee. While my computer warms up, it’s a good time to tell you about my team.

I have been working as a Patient Care Coordinator in the Home Hospice team for three months now. The Home Hospice service aims to provide more people with the chance to die at home, if this is their wish, and be cared for in comfort and with great support in place. The service also provides support and respite for families and carers.

**8:00** I check my emails and read through handovers from the previous evening. I then check the Home Hospice team inbox for any referrals we have received. Three referrals have come through today, so I look on the EPR (Electronic Patient Records) system to find out more information about the patients and see if their referral matches our criteria.

All three referrals are suitable for our service, so I add them onto our rota. I then arrange an initial assessment for each patient, which will be carried out by one of our assessors. The initial assessment determines the number of visits a patient requires. We can provide up to four visits a day to help with personal care and other tasks, and we cover the

# A day in the life

whole of Oxfordshire and South Northants. The assessors then create a patient centred care plan, which our patient support workers use to deliver their care and support.

I call the patients and family members to inform them of the time and date of their initial assessment. I then contact our lovely admin team so they can create a patient profile and folder on our computer system.

**9:30** I join a call to discuss the service's capacity and the patients who are joining the service.

**10:00** It's time for another coffee!

**10:10** I complete tomorrow's rotas and decide which patient support workers are covering each round. I then discuss this with the other Patient Coordinator, Janet, who looks after the north of the county, to ensure all rotas are covered. On average, we see 18 patients a day, and we have 24 patient support workers working both full-time and part-time.

**11:30** Time to grab some lunch. The morning always goes by so quickly!

**12:00** I join a call with the wider Home Hospice team to discuss how our patients are getting on. So far, the feedback we have received from patients and their families has been really positive. People have said that they don't know how they would cope without us, and how caring and professional our patient support workers are.

**13:30** It's time to make a home visit. I head off to Summertown in Oxford alongside Maariyah, one of our assessors, to complete an initial assessment at a patient's house. I only carry out initial assessments now and again when we are busy. I enjoy doing them as I love meeting the patient and their families.

Before knocking on the door, we put on our PPE (gloves, apron and mask). The door opens and we introduce ourselves and get shown inside. The first thing we do is log in to our online portal, which stores all patients' care information, so we can complete notes while we are here.

We then explain to the patient and her family how we can support them, and what we do as a service. We also show the family how to empty the patient's catheter as it was only fitted today, and they were unsure how to do it.

Maariyah and I place some 'WendyLett' slide sheets onto the patient's bed. These are designed for easy transfers from sitting and lying positions in order to minimise discomfort. We then reposition the patient on her bed to ensure she is comfortable.

We enjoy a lovely chat with the patient and her daughter, which really does make my day. The patient has an amazing sense of humour and we all laugh a lot.

As we say goodbye, the patient's husband comments that it was so nice to hear his wife laugh and thanks us. It's so heart-warming to know we have made an impact today.

**15:30** Time to head home.

**15:50** Arrive home, where I check my emails for a final time and catch up with Janet before logging off.

I love my job! We are an amazing team and I am so proud to be part of it and what we have achieved since the service launched on 1 April. I can't wait to do it all again tomorrow.

**If you enjoyed this diary, read more like it! →**





Photo credit: John Cairns

## Memory Tree

At Sobell House, we understand the importance of celebrating life, remembering those who are special to us and keeping memories alive. Our Memory Tree, a beautiful artwork installed at the Hospice, encompasses this perfectly.

You are invited to dedicate a bronze, silver, or gold leaf on our Memory Tree in tribute to your loved one. In exchange for your leaf, we ask you to please make a donation, so we can support the people who need our care. By purchasing a leaf and supporting Sobell House, you will help us to ensure that our patients can live life to the fullest and create new memories with their nearest and dearest.

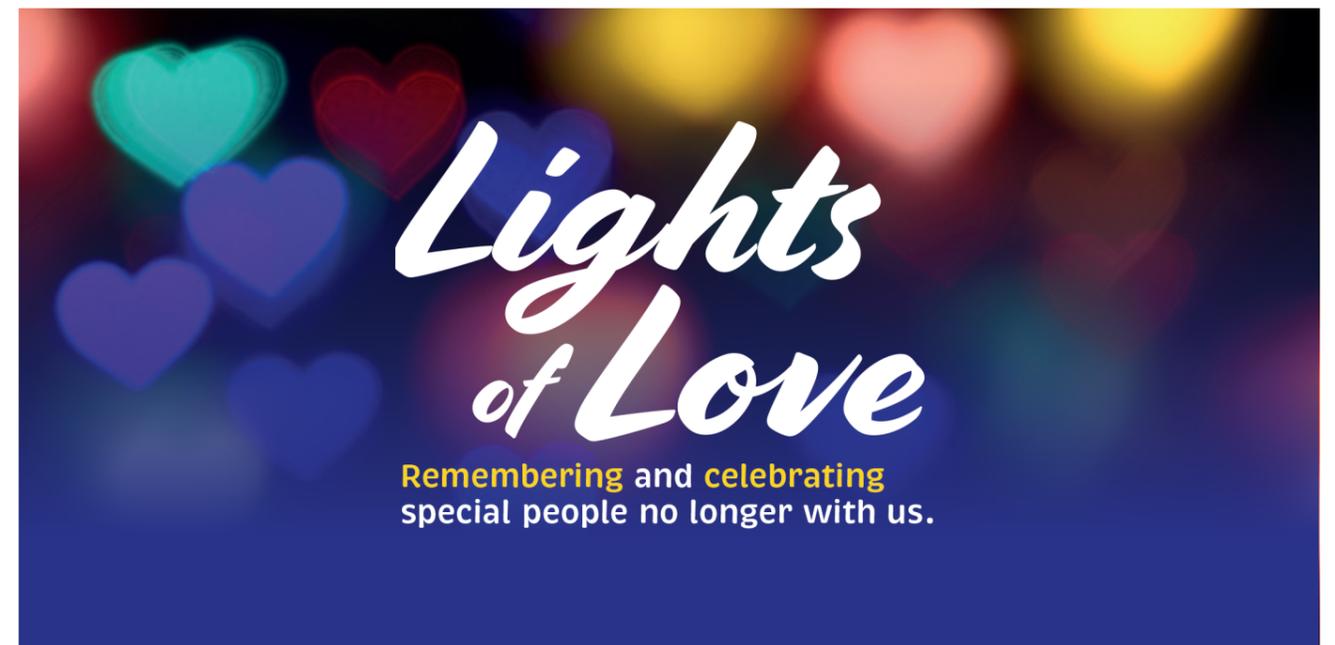
Your chosen leaf will be engraved with a message of your choice. Once it has been engraved and installed, you can book in a visit to see it for yourself. The Memory Tree is located in a bright and peaceful space in the Hospice, near the charity office. On your visit, you can sit with a tea or coffee and take a quiet moment out of your day to reflect on all the lovely memories that you and your loved one shared together.

After one year, you will be offered the chance to renew your leaf, or have it returned to you as a special keepsake. We are also now pleased to be able to offer you the option to donate monthly instead of making a one-off donation if you would prefer.

If you have any questions, please give us a call on 01865 857007.



**Dedicate a leaf**  
[sobellhouse.org/memory-tree](https://sobellhouse.org/memory-tree)



We would like to invite you to our wonderful Lights of Love event this December. This year's event will take place at the beautiful and iconic Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford. After two years of streaming the event online, we can't wait to see all of you, familiar and new, as we come together to remember and celebrate the lives of our loved ones.

### Event details

Address: Sheldonian Theatre, Broad Street, Oxford, OX1 3AZ

Date: Sunday 4 December 2022 | Time: 4-5pm

Lights of Love will include readings, beautiful choir music and shared moments of remembrance, including the lighting of a candle in honour of the wonderful people no longer with us. The service will finish with the illumination of our Christmas tree, with each light glowing as a symbol of somebody special.

This time of year can be particularly difficult for families; memories of holidays past emphasise the absence of people once held dear. Lights of Love gives us all the chance to acknowledge this loss and offers time and space to pay tribute to these special loved ones.

Invitations for Lights of Love will be sent by the end of October. In the meantime, please do save the date, and we very much hope you will be able to join us for a special afternoon.



Photo credit: John Cairns





## Our Hospice Garden Transformation Update

We're delighted to update you on our garden transformation project. Earlier this year, we asked our supporters to donate and help us transform our tired garden into a really lovely space for our patients, visitors, and staff to enjoy for many years to come. Thanks to the overwhelming kindness of our supporters, we raised an incredible £63,000 which means we have been able to kickstart the exciting plans - pictured above.

Work is now progressing, though to the untrained (or indeed any) eye, it might look a little bare right now. Two of the hand-made four pergolas have gone in, and the failed render has been stripped from the walls. The planting beds have been enlarged and five wonderful trees have been chosen to give height, colour and shade. As well as a katsura (burnt sugar) tree, we have selected two crab apples, a semi-evergreen and unusual privet tree, and a fragrant snowbell (*Styrax obassia*).

Next steps are to re-render the walls (one of the colours is excitingly called Jungle Green) and fit the specially-made capping stones to which the trellises will be affixed. Once all the architectural work is done, we can begin the fun part - planting! More updates to follow...



# Myth-busters!

We're here to separate fact from fiction when it comes to hospice care. We want to dispel the myth that hospice care is scary and hospices are morbid and gloomy places to be. In fact, they are full of life! Here are some common misconceptions about Sobell House that we want to change.

### 'Hospice care is only provided at Sobell House'

In fact, most of the people we care for stay at home. If our patients choose to die at home, we do everything possible to ensure they are comfortable and pain-free, and to provide support to their loved ones. We also have a specialist hospital team, working across the Oxford University Hospitals. They provide patients with expert care and offer emotional and practical support.

### 'You go to Sobell House when you're about to die'

This is incorrect and may mean that some people are fearful of receiving care from Sobell House, as they feel as though they're giving up hope. In reality, 30% of people are discharged from Sobell House, and many of our patients receive care at home or as an outpatient. We also have a Living Well service, where patients are offered a personalised eight-week programme, which empowers them to improve their wellbeing and quality of life.

### 'Hospices must be depressing and morbid'

We find that as soon as people walk through our doors, their preconceptions change when they are greeted by smiling faces, laughter, and a warm and welcoming atmosphere. We're proud to have a happy, homely environment for our patients and their loved ones to relax in.



Photo credit: John Cairns

### 'Sobell House only cares for people with cancer'

Although a lot of our patients are living with cancer, this is not the only illness we treat. Our specialist, multi-disciplinary team cares for those who have a diagnosis of any incurable, life-limiting illness, and they are true experts in providing people with the very best palliative and end of life care possible.



Help us spread awareness about what we do by sharing your personal experience of Sobell House. Every story shared helps us show what hospice care is really like.

Please visit [sobellhouse.org/share-your-story](https://sobellhouse.org/share-your-story) →



# Write your Will for free with Sobell House

For most of us, when we look back on our lives, we want to know that we've made a difference in some way, and that what we have achieved in life is not forgotten when we're no longer around. What happens to our money and the things that are most precious to us when we die should not be left to chance. That is why writing a Will is so important.



When writing your Will, making sure your loved ones are provided for should be at the top of your list. However, if Sobell House is one of the causes close to your heart, then please, if you can, remember us in your Will too. Generous gifts of all sizes over the last 45 plus years have helped ensure specialist, compassionate care for thousands of patients and their families. Your legacy will help us to ensure that we can continue to provide the highest standards of hospice care to local people in the future.

This is why we are so delighted to be partnering with expert Will writers, Guardian Angel, to offer you an exclusive opportunity to write, or update, a simple Will for free. You can do it online, over the phone or in-person - whichever way suits you best. We launched the service in September and will be offering it all year round, with no limits on the number of free Wills we can provide. In most cases, writing a Will via Guardian Angel takes around 15-20 minutes, and rest-assured it is safe, legally binding and checked by experts.

## The impact your legacy could have

**£822** could pay for three days of transport for patients and their families across Oxfordshire.

**£1000** could enable several families to receive support from a social worker, including children.

**£3000** could fund five days of care for a patient on our inpatient unit, where they will be cared for with compassion.



# Gifts in Wills help us to care for people like Penny and Greg



"My wife Penny was referred to Sobell House in the late summer of 2016 after a number of treatments in the Churchill Hospital for lung cancer. In all, Penny had three periods in the hospice for assessment and palliative care, together with outpatient consultations, and when at home had regular visits from the community palliative care team. I will always be grateful to everyone at Sobell House – doctors, nursing and care staff, therapists and all the support staff and volunteers – for doing as much as they possibly could to help Penny when she needed it, and to provide comfort and advice. When she went back in to Sobell for her last few days, she knew she was welcomed, reassured and made comfortable. I know she was at peace to be there.

After Penny died I was more than happy to update my Will to include a legacy to the charity to help continue the wonderful care that Sobell House provides into the future. I would encourage anyone to consider leaving a gift in their Will to Sobell House. I've seen first-hand the difference it makes."



Download a free legacy guide and find out more about the free Wills service:



[sobellhouse.org/leave-a-legacy](https://sobellhouse.org/leave-a-legacy)

# Shop with Sobell!

Here's five reasons why you should...

- 1 You'll save money**  
Everything we sell is at a fraction of the retail price, so you'll leave with heavier bags and a heavier wallet!
- 2 The money you spend makes a difference**  
Every pound spent instore helps us to fund our care, so we can be here for the people who need us most.
- 3 You'll be helping the planet**  
Shopping second-hand is a great step towards a more sustainable lifestyle.
- 4 You never know what you might find**  
Everything sold is in excellent condition, and we receive lots of new goods and vintage items too.
- 5 It's fun to thrift**  
There's nothing quite like bagging a bargain or finding a hidden treasure!

## Find your local shop

Visit [sobellhouse.org/shops](https://sobellhouse.org/shops) →



## Volunteers required – can you help?

Without our volunteers, we couldn't keep our ten shops up and running. Volunteering is a fun and worthwhile experience and you only need to commit to a few hours a week. If you can spare any time, we would love to hear from you.

Email [shops@sobellhospice.org](mailto:shops@sobellhospice.org) or pop in to your local shop to find out more.



## Can you spare 30 seconds to help us?

We need your vote so we can win Oxford Bus Company's "Brand the Bus" competition! If we win, we'll have our logo and message proudly displayed on a bus that will be driving on routes all over Oxfordshire. This would be an amazing opportunity for us to raise awareness of our work in the community we care for.

Visit [oxfordbus.co.uk/vote-now](https://oxfordbus.co.uk/vote-now) before 1 November to vote. → We're entry number 24!



**DID YOU KNOW?** Last year, we received an additional £92,431 through the Gift Aid scheme.

## Are you a UK tax payer? Have you made a donation to Sobell House?

If the answer is yes, please tell us if we can claim Gift Aid on your donation, any future donations you make, and any made in the last four years.

### Why we ask for Gift Aid declarations

Gift Aid means we can claim an additional 25p for every £1 you donate, so your gift will make the biggest impact possible. As a charity we are reliant on this income stream to help us fund the many services we provide.

### How to complete a declaration

Please fill out our online form or download a form to send to us by post.

Visit [sobellhouse.org/gift-aid-scheme](https://sobellhouse.org/gift-aid-scheme) →



If you would like to cancel your declaration, update your name or address, or have any queries about the Gift Aid scheme, please contact the charity team on 01865 857007 or [mail@sobellhospice.org](mailto:mail@sobellhospice.org).

### Why we may be in touch

As part of our ongoing fundraising work, we will be reviewing donations given to the charity since 2018 which may be eligible for Gift Aid, but which were given without a Gift Aid declaration. Please note that we will be in touch if this applies to a donation you have made.



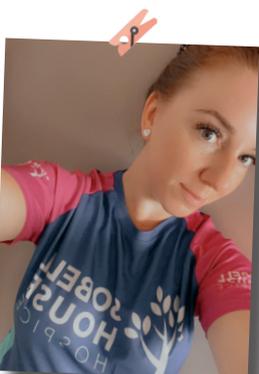
# Good luck, Team Sobell!

Thank you to our amazing Oxford Half runners. You're our hospice heroes!



Are you free on Sunday 16 October between 10am-1pm? Please help cheer on our runners! Call 01865 857007 for more information.

## A huge thank you to our incredible London Marathon runners and Squat Challenge sensations!



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Registered Charity No. 1118646

Company No. 5989017 | Registered in England and Wales  
Registered Office: 30 St Giles, Oxford, OX1 3LE



### Get involved

[sobellhouse.org/get-involved](https://sobellhouse.org/get-involved) →

