

INTRODUCTION



It is such a pleasure to be writing this brief introduction to our Connected newsletter, especially as I find myself about to complete six months here at Treetops.

I am immensely grateful to everyone, staff and volunteers, for the care, support and warmth that has been shown to me during this time. I cannot say that strongly enough – thank you!

Treetops is a charity that has achieved so much for so many in our community across more than four decades. Yet there is always more that we can achieve together. Our common denominator is the care that we provide for patients and their families all of which is underpinned by a multitude of other dedicated people working to make that possible. Every role adds value.

I once read an article that said, “when everything else is removed, it will be the strength of your relationships and quality of your communication that count for most”. I have seen this to be true time and again, and it remains a vital factor in our success as a leading local charity. Seeing and respecting what each and everyone of us does towards the common cause is, and will always be essential. Take time to build your relationships internally and communicate with colleagues at all levels.

My thanks to you personally for all that you continue to contribute to Treetops and patient care, we are fortunate to be doing work that adds so much value to people’s lives.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Knight". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

CEO

A portrait of John Knight, the CEO, wearing glasses and a dark suit jacket over a white shirt. He is positioned in the bottom right corner of the page, with a colorful stained glass window visible behind him. The background of the page features a large yellow shape at the top left and a red shape at the bottom left.

April 2026



I can only give you highlights in this limited word article however key milestones include:

- Strengthening our clinical workforce capability and capacity
- Working towards a 24/7 model of care provision
- Influencing the provision of better care through education
- Further consolidating our presence as a centre of excellence in trauma-informed therapy.

Having highly skilled specialist clinical team members undoubtedly requires us to generate greater funding, both statutory and voluntary. Shaping ambitious bids to trusts, developing more events, opening the hospice grounds to the public, speaking to high-net-worth donors and successful local corporate businesses, taking care of those who already donate will all help to generate increased and essential funding.

We all have a role to play in this ambitious journey, made possible through mutual respect, professional curiosity, support and the energy to make new things happen no matter which team you work within.

This month is significant; however, it is just month one of a much longer journey that will ultimately lead to helping more patients have a 'good death' in the place they call home.

Treetops Hospice Three-Year Strategy “Crafting The Future of Hospice Care”

Our new strategy will be launched to the public during the week beginning April 13.

It is about the growth of patient service delivery out in our community coupled with the ongoing promotion of excellence in trauma-informed therapies and the continued march towards leading in palliative care education.

Our ambition is to be the UK's leading presence in non-bedded hospice care and to influence thinking about what the future of hospice care might look like. To achieve that we need to be able to demonstrate patient stories and service metrics that show our progress.

Demonstrating a positive 'impact' upon patients will not only fulfil the charity's mission but it will also attract attention and an increasing desire from funders to be involved with us. Money really does follow good work.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Knight". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'J' and 'K'.

CEO

An Update from Therapeutic Services



Sarah
Cundill

The Therapeutic Services Team recently had an Away Day in Long Eaton, where the focus was on team building. All 13 of us were able to attend, and it was a chance to reconnect with those we don't see often and spend time learning about ourselves and each other.

We were visited by John in the morning, who took us through some team-building activities involving a large cane and some coloured carpet tiles! The two tasks had us reflecting on how we communicate with each other when completing tasks and gave us more awareness about where our blind spots to working effectively were.

The next part of our day focused on a Myers-Briggs style assessment of each of our personalities, leading to greater insight into individual strengths and abilities. The specific form of the test we did assigned us all an animal with supposedly similar characteristics to ourselves, and we then tried to work out which other animals we had in the team.

We also had fun looking at pictures of ourselves as children and trying to guess who was who!

For the last part of the day, Phil came and spent some time with us going through the new strategy. It was helpful to hear more on this and reflect on the shift in focus for the organisation.

It was an enjoyable day and helpful to take a bit of time out to think about what is working well in the way we function and communicate as well as how things could be improved.

Sarah Cundill

Deputy Therapeutic Services Manager



Service Update

The Complementary Therapy Team continues to make strong progress with the [CYP research project](#), which remains a key focus for us this spring.

Our adult therapy rooms are still undergoing renovation, and we are excited to be receiving some new massage couches.

Our adult referrals are currently on hold due to the service reaching full capacity.

This pause will remain in place until the end of May, when the situation will be reviewed. We will update all relevant services once there is further information.



Essential Oil Spotlight: Sandalwood (*Santalum album*)

Sandalwood essential oil is distilled from the wood and roots of *Santalum album*, also known as East Indian sandalwood—one of the most valuable and respected trees in the world. Its warm, grounding aroma has been used globally for centuries, and it remains a staple in complementary therapy.

Therapeutic Profile

Balancing • Decongestant • Circulatory • Diuretic • Hepatic • Hormonal • Relaxant • General tonic • Sexual tonic •

Key Therapeutic Benefits

Sandalwood is widely recognised for its balancing and restorative effects on both body and mind.

Its properties include:

- Support for the nervous system, promoting calm and emotional balance
- Gentle decongestant effects for the respiratory system
- Support for the excretory system and detoxification
- Soothing action on dry, irritated, or eczema-prone skin
- Hormonal regulation, particularly useful for menstrual-related discomfort
- General tonic effects, promoting overall wellbeing
- Traditional use as a sexual tonic



Sarah Upton

Complementary Therapy

The Education and Development Team

Sharan Harris-Christensen



Alison Hembrow



Julie Stead



Wendy Spencer



Laura Slack



Faye Thrasivoulou

Update: Our team are looking forward to going out and experiencing work in Treetops shops in the coming months.

An Update from Education and Development



Upcoming Training

The following courses are available to staff and volunteers.
For more information or to book onto any training, please email:
Education@treetopshospice.org.uk

**Freedom to
Speak Up**

Open to the
public

**No Barriers
Here**

Open to the
public

**Last Days
Matter**

**Basic Life
Support**

**Resilience-Based
Reflection**

Please share



Open to the
public

**End-of-life
care
Mythbusting
Webinar**

Reminder to all managers

Please book a place on our
[Advanced Communications
Skills Training course](#)



Wendy
Hambleton

Welcome Wendy!

I'm delighted to be joining Treetops Hospice as Director of People & Culture. I'm an experienced HR Director, having spent over a decade running my own consultancy, supporting organisations to strengthen leadership, shape culture, and navigate both growth and change. At the heart of my work is helping create environments where people feel valued and able to do their best work.

What particularly drew me to Treetops was the ambition set out in the three-year strategy. It's a clear and thoughtful plan that recognises both the opportunities and challenges ahead, and I'm excited to be part of the team delivering it. Ensuring we have the right people, leadership capability and culture in place will be key to making that ambition a reality.

Treetops' purpose and impact in the community make this work even more meaningful, and I'm proud to be joining an organisation making such a difference.

I'm passionate about developing leaders, building inclusive and supportive cultures, and creating the conditions where people can thrive. I'm really looking forward to getting to know colleagues and volunteers across Treetops, listening and learning, and building on the strong foundations already in place.

Wendy Hambleton

Director of People and Culture

An Update from Volunteer Services

AGM/Long Service Awards

Our annual AGM was held on Monday 6 October.

John Knight, Chief Executive Officer, welcomed everyone to the meeting on his first day, and Colin Glynn, Trustee, presided over the formal business of the AGM.

The following were long service awards for staff and volunteers.



Anna Bown

5
YEARS

Gillian Dann – Beeston
Andrew Miles – Duffield
Christine Atkins – Heanor
Penny Byrne – Oakwood
Karl Hudson – Gardener
Pamela Ward – Oakwood
Jasmine Outten - Marketing
Officer & Designer

10
YEARS

Michele Burge – Wellbeing
Helena Pitter – Wellbeing
Jenny Brown – Heanor
Shaun Bryne – I.T. manager
Anne Rees – Melbourne
Dr Maelie Swanick – Trustee
Fiona Palmer – Cook
Jackie Pickard – Long Eaton

15
YEARS

Sandra Chamberlin -
Reception

20
YEARS

Sarah Butcher - Lead Gardening
Kim Kimberley - Befriender
Graham Porter - Retail driver

25
YEARS

Pauline Mercer - Kitchen

We would like to thank all our
awardees for their long service.

Their commitment and dedication
to Treetops are commendable, and
we congratulate them on their long
service awards.

Anna Bown

Volunteer Services



A View from the Grounds



Spring has sprung!

Treetops is now a riot of colour thanks to the warm sunshine, with crocus, daffodils, hellebores, primulas, cyclamen, cherry blossom, and anemone blanda all vying for the gold medal!

The gardening volunteers are keeping busy with lots of Spring jobs, tidying and weeding, sowing seeds in the greenhouse, pruning roses, and dividing the snowdrops.



Do watch out for Dave, who will soon be keeping Dierdre company under the lime tree!

The new workshop is taking shape, with the roof soon to be put on. It's going to be an excellent place to do the many jobs that need protection from the rain.



The gardeners are having a plant stall at the Easter Egg Hunt, with Rachel's jams, jellies and marmalade!

Greeting Cards and knitted chicks (with their hidden crème egg) are now on sale from Reception.

Thanks to some local supermarkets for donating the eggs; all the money raised goes to Treetops!



Rachel Hobbs

Volunteer Gardener

Marketing Team

“This small team, who won’t be seen by the majority of people who access the hospice, are an essential part of the energetic engine room of Treetops.”
– **Suzanne Khalid, Trustee (2026)**

As a team, our role is to champion the Treetops story and ensure our community understands the impact of the hospice. Everything we do is designed to support colleagues across the organisation and help you reach the people who need us most.

Our goals as the Marketing Team are to:

Raise awareness of Treetops across central and southern Derbyshire

Share the impact of our services within the region

Educate and inform the public about Treetops and what hospice care truly means

Support every team across the organisation with their marketing needs

Marketing Team

Marketing covers a wide range of skills, and we want to use them to help you achieve your goals.

That support might look like social media posts, website updates, emails to stakeholders, PR, family stories, printed materials, branding, supporter care, and much more.

Because we act as an “in-house agency” for the whole organisation, we need to prioritise work fairly and plan. To help us do this, we ask that a [Marketing Request Form](#) is completed for all projects, events, or campaigns. This ensures we have the information we need, can schedule work effectively, and can deliver the best possible results for you. If you'd like advice, support, or guidance on anything marketing- or branding-related, please pop up to the marketing office.

We're always happy to chat and help you shape your ideas.

Marketing Team



Michael
Younger



Head of
Marketing

Hannah
Woods



PR and Content
Lead

Kerri Jameson



Digital Lead

TBC



CRM and
Supporter Care
Lead

Joanne
Higgins



Marketing Officer

Jasmine
Oутten



Marketing Officer
and Designer

Legacy and In Memory

Jo Musson

Relationships
Manager for Legacy
and In Memory



In January, we welcomed some of our Memory Tree supporters to Treetops for drinks and cake and to update them on news from our Community Relationship team and Ali Jordan, our Wellbeing Manager.

Frances from 'Rose Beyond The Wall Funerals' joined us and gave a reflective talk on memories.

A couple of weeks later we welcomed some of our legacy pledgers for an afternoon of chat and cake!

The format was very similar to the previous event but this time we welcomed Colin Glynn one of our Trustee's who spoke about his reasons for becoming a Trustee and what the role entails, and Rebecca Bostock spoke all things financial.

The feedback from both events was positive with the supporters saying they enjoyed the events and found them very informative. Thanks to everyone who helped to make these events a success, and it was great to be able to thank these supporters in person for their ongoing support.

Upcoming we have a Wills Talk on Monday April 27th at 12.30pm and on Wednesday May 6th we are holding a Wills Clinic. Both events are open to volunteers and staff please contact Jo Musson for more information or to book onto the events.



An Update from Facilities



We have a great deal of activity going on at our main site here in Risley and we wanted to let everyone know of some of the exciting developments. Most of the funding for the current refurbishment and improvement work has come from what the government has allocated to hospices that can only be used for infrastructure and not for running our services.

Firstly works are underway to supply power to the meadow for events such as Light Up A Life, which will be changing this year and we'll be lighting up the big lime tree in the middle of the meadow.

Secondly the Cheetham Centre, which was built in 2014, is having a much needed refurbishment. The lighting has been upgraded to make it more appropriate for the counselling environment, noise reduction measures have been put into place and the counselling and Complimentary Therapy rooms are having a long awaited makeover, including new furnishings and redecoration.

The entrance drive to the hospice has deteriorated quite badly over time, not giving the best welcome to visitors and service users, so the worst area has been dug out and re-laid and should now last for years to come.

New access control measures are being put in place on all three of our Risley buildings, including an electronic lock on our main building front door that will secure the building when Reception isn't being staffed, facial recognition of staff and volunteers to unlock some doors and the ability to control the intruder alarms and building access remotely. The new measures will enhance our on-site safety and security generally and enable much safer lone working.



Nigel Lamb

Manager of
Operations and
Compliance-Facilities



Nigel Lamb

Add to your
calendar

Submission deadlines

Tuesday 19 May
Tuesday 21 July

Tuesday 22 September
Tuesday 24 November

How to submit

Submit your article and images/videos by emailing connected@treetops.org.uk



THANK YOU