

INTRODUCTION



And here we are in mid-summer, having 'enjoyed' the country's third heatwave in a relatively short period of time. Thank you for your ongoing hard work considering the additional pressures that the weather has thrust upon us, including working conditions, water issues, and challenges with local traffic.

It continues to be a busy time here at Treetops following the recent clinical restructure designed to best support our modern community hospice strategy. Progress within the three-year strategy is being regularly monitored in Senior Leadership meetings and quarterly Trustee meetings. The Birdsong survey results have been received and carefully digested, helping us shape an action plan that addresses key learnings. We will ensure they are circulated for full transparency.

We have delivered the first internal leadership programme and have set dates for a second cohort in September. Also in October, we will be hosting the first-ever day conference for hospices without beds – bringing together hospices across the UK that deliver palliative and end-of-life care in people's homes.

Our President, Lord Lothian, has re-engaged with us after some time away, and the vast majority of local MPs have now visited Treetops. Our aim continues to be ensuring they are fully informed about the work you so ably deliver and can champion this within their communities. My ongoing thanks for all that you do, both personally and professionally, for Treetops and the care of our patients. We set out to 'craft the future of hospice care', and we are making strong progress against that challenge.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'John Knight'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of 'John' and 'Knight' being capitalized and prominent.

CEO

A portrait of John Knight, the CEO, is positioned in the bottom right corner. He is a middle-aged man with glasses, wearing a dark suit jacket over a light-colored shirt. He is standing in front of a colorful stained glass window with various shades of green, yellow, and orange. The portrait is partially overlaid by a red banner at the bottom of the page.

August 2026



Performance Data

The Senior Leadership Team and I are keen to provide you all with regular updates on how Treetops is performing.

Our intention is to provide you with regular data that will give you a good insight into progress against the strategy and clarity on service provision, financial performance, and other developments, all to give you transparency around our charity.

This data will be included from the next edition of Connected and will be consistent to allow comparison and trends over time.

Team Treetops?

Atkins Search has chosen Treetops as their charity of the year.

They are holding a sponsored walk in September (*which I am taking part in*), and I wondered whether we might raise a team from Treetops to go and walk/support their efforts?

The details are as follows:

Date: Saturday, 12th September 2026

Start: 9:00 am

Meeting point: Edale car park, S33 7ZL

Walk Details

The walk has a halfway point, where you can return to Edale if you'd like to.

If this is of interest to you, then do please let me know, and I can coordinate and arrange shared transport.

It would be lovely for them to see a Treetops crowd (and families) taking part.

CEO

CQC Readiness

How confident are you?

[Click here to fill in our short questionnaire by Monday 31 August](#)



The Care Quality Commission, often called CQC, is the independent regulator of health and social care services in England. Its role is to make sure services provide people with safe, effective, compassionate and high-quality care and to encourage services to keep improving.

CQC monitors providers in several ways. It reviews information from a range of sources, including people who use services, families, staff, notifications, incidents and provider evidence.

When CQC assesses a service, it focuses on five key questions: is the service safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led? These questions help inspectors understand not only whether the right processes are in place, but also what care feels like for the people and families who receive it.

Why we need to be prepared:

Being CQC ready is not about preparing for one inspection day. It is about being able to demonstrate, every day, the quality, safety and compassion of the care we provide. Good preparation helps us feel confident, consistent and open. It also helps us identify where staff may need more support, clearer information or additional training. The short confidence questionnaire is therefore not a test; it is a way of understanding how prepared we feel as a team and what would help us strengthen our readiness.

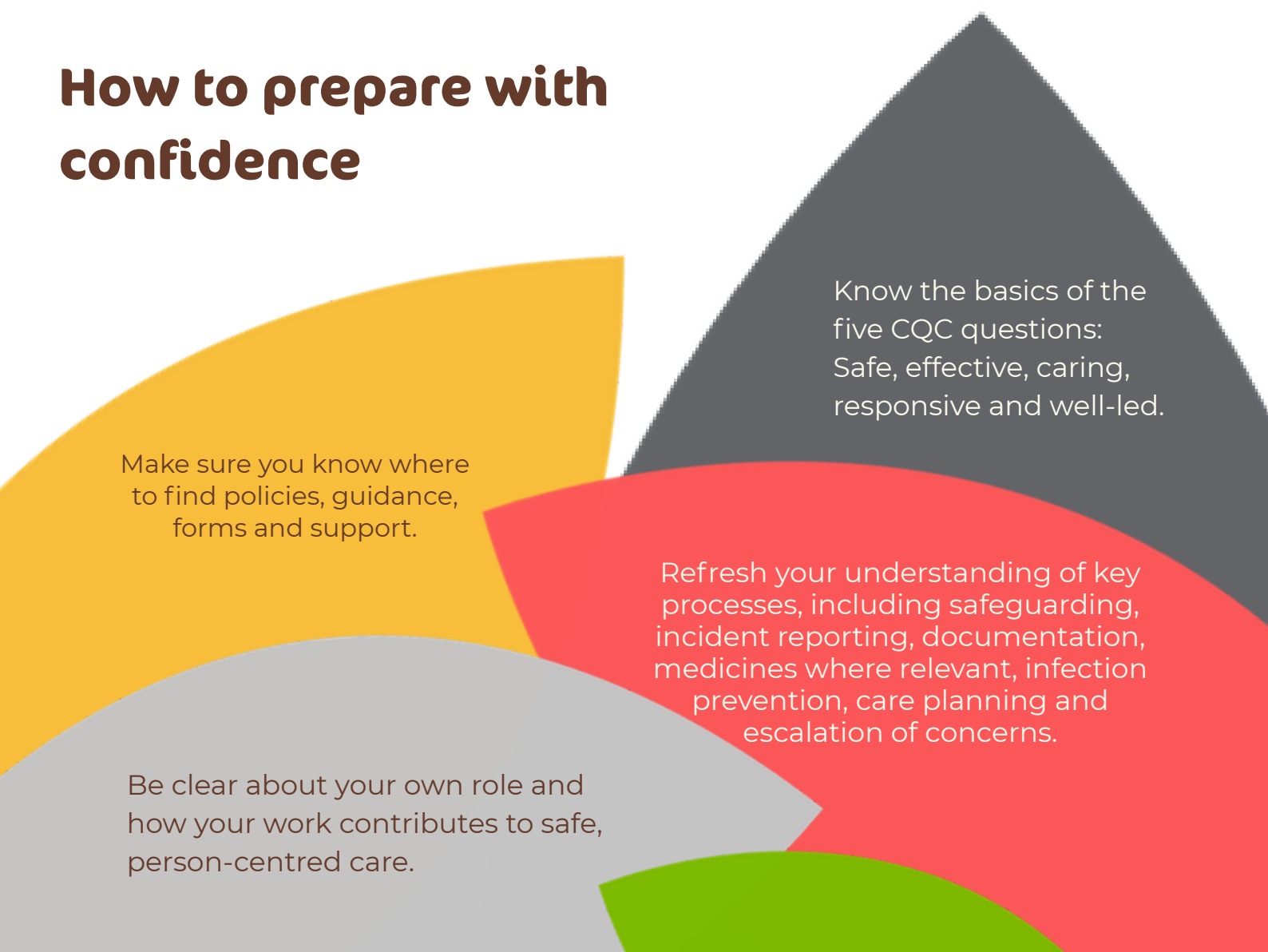
CQC Readiness

What staff can expect if CQC visits

CQC visits may be announced or unannounced. Inspectors should show identification when they arrive. During a visit, they may speak with staff, volunteers, patients and families; observe care and everyday interactions; review records; and ask how we use learning, feedback and governance to keep people safe and improve services. Staff may be asked about their role, how they raise concerns, where they find key policies, how they report incidents, how they support safeguarding, and how care is planned and documented.

Inspectors are not looking for rehearsed answers. They want to understand what really happens in practice. It is absolutely fine to say if you need to check something, look up a policy or ask a colleague. The most important thing is to be honest, professional and focused on the people we support.

How to prepare with confidence



Make sure you know where to find policies, guidance, forms and support.

Know the basics of the five CQC questions: Safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led.

Refresh your understanding of key processes, including safeguarding, incident reporting, documentation, medicines where relevant, infection prevention, care planning and escalation of concerns.

Be clear about your own role and how your work contributes to safe, person-centred care.

CQC Readiness

Talk to your manager if there is anything you feel unsure about or if additional training would help.

Keep records clear, accurate and timely, remembering that good documentation helps demonstrate good care.

Please use the questionnaire honestly so we can target support where it is most needed.

CQC readiness belongs to all of us, wherever you work in Treetops.

Every conversation, every record, every handover and every act of care helps tell the story of who we are and the quality of support we provide. By preparing together, we can welcome inspection with confidence and continue to show the compassionate, safe and responsive care that sits at the heart of our hospice.

To help us understand how prepared we feel as a team, we're inviting everyone to take a moment to reflect on their confidence around CQC readiness.

This isn't a test; it's a temperature check, as your honest response will help us shape the right support, resources and training.

Please complete the questionnaire by Monday 31 August - thank you!

Philippa Shreeve
Director of Clinical Services



Leadership June 2026

Our Leadership Course in June 2026 was an inspiring, energising and highly engaging two-day programme, bringing together 12 colleagues from across Treetops Hospice services. This was the first course for Treetops, led by John, co-facilitated with Wendy and Sharan, and it was a fantastic opportunity for colleagues to step away from their day-to-day roles and invest in their own leadership development.

The course was dynamic, interactive and fun, combining thought-provoking discussions with practical challenges, team activities and opportunities for reflection. Participants embraced the experience with enthusiasm, curiosity and a genuine willingness to trust the process.

Through shared learning and open conversations, colleagues developed deeper insight into themselves and each other, strengthening relationships and building confidence in their leadership abilities aligned to Treetops values.

A real highlight was the collaborative spirit within the group. Participants supported and challenged one another, creating a positive learning environment where ideas could be explored, perspectives shared and learning translated into practical action.

This course marks an important step in supporting Treetops' culture change journey and developing confident, compassionate leaders who role model our values every day.

We look forward to delivering more leadership programmes in the future, continuing to inspire growth, strengthen leadership skills and build a culture where people can thrive, contribute and lead with purpose.

If you are interested in attending a leadership programme, please speak to your line manager and mention this course.

Sharan Harris-Christensen

Head of Clinical Quality and Education

Wendy Hambleton

Director of People and Culture

John Knight

CEO



What does leadership mean to us at Treetops Hospice?

“Motivate and nurture individuals to work towards team and organisational goals”

“Providing an environment in which every individual can learn and contribute to the achievement of the organisations goals whilst making allowances for honest mistakes”

“Treetops Hospice leadership embraces the talent and experience of staff and supports them to develop and grow individually and as an organisation”



Presentation of the Director of Clinical Services Star Award Awarded to two valued individuals within the CES team

Dawn Hull

Therapeutic Services Support Volunteer

Was recently presented the Director of Clinical Services Star Award in recognition of going above and beyond in the support she gives to our service. Dawn is so dedicated in her role that she has become the key person who trains all new support volunteers, showing them the ropes and setting the high standard. Another role Dawn has taken on is filing the clinical notes for some of the senior counsellors, which is a thankless task and very much appreciated.



Luke Boon

Student Counsellor

Was recently also presented the Director of Clinical Services Star Award as an acknowledgement for the dedication and support he has given to our Children's Services. Luke has done two back-to-back 8-week 'M Projects', he also supported our very first 'Forget-me-not' walk event, and although this was a fun event, it was a very long and hot day, and we very much appreciate his commitment.



Clinical Quality and Education Spotlight

Clinical Quality and Education

Under the new structure, our team have become Clinical Quality and Education, and we would like to extend a warm welcome to Jo Magnall and Julie Waite.

RCN (Royal College of Nursing) King's Nursing Cadets

A programme developed to help young people gain skills and knowledge to support them in pursuing a career in nursing, and we're proud to support this by welcoming a young person from the local area to spend two days with us here at the Hospice.

Summer School – Exploring healthcare careers at Treetops Hospice

We're really excited to be hosting our first Summer School on 12-13 August, in partnership with the University of Derby. These two days will offer Year 11/12 students an opportunity to understand more about hospice care and explore different pathways into healthcare careers.



Risley Bereavement Hub – Supporting Our Community

We're delighted to share that Tears to Laughter has now been renamed the Risley Bereavement Hub, reflecting the growing network of Bereavement Hubs being established to provide accessible, compassionate support within local communities.

Held in the Wellbeing Space every Wednesday (10.00am to 12.00pm).
A welcoming and informal environment for people to connect with others, access support, and talk about their experiences of bereavement.
Drop-in service (no referral required).

Clinical Quality and Education Spotlight

We still have spaces for the following workshops/training:

Open to all staff and volunteers:

No Barriers Here - [No Barriers Here © - Treetops Hospice](#)

Last Days Matter - [Last Days Matter - Treetops Hospice](#)

Basic Life Support (Please agree with your line manager before booking)

Resilience Based Reflection

Staff training and education calendar



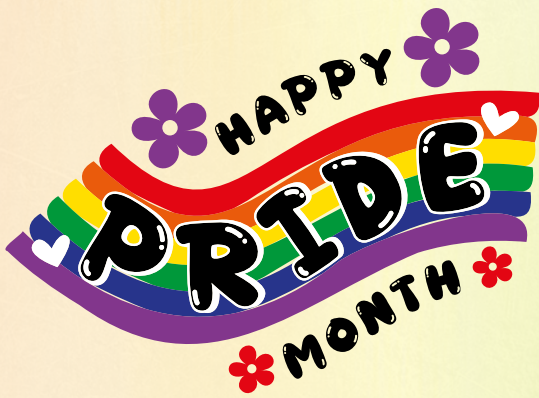
"I felt real fear about talking openly about death and dying... but how can I expect our community to engage with our content and have open conversations if I'm not willing to take that step myself? The impact the training has had on my life has been incredible. Talking about death won't make it happen, but it will quieten the anxiety around it and shape how you choose to live."

Joanne Higgins, No Barriers Here Attendee

Julie Stead

Clinical Education Clerical Assistant





In June we celebrated Pride

Standing with our LGBTQIA+ colleagues, clients, friends and family.

June was International Pride Month, although in Derby it's celebrated in September and, in Belper, the event in the Treetops calendar is in August; there are events year-round to raise awareness and stand together with our LGBTQIA+ community.

LGBTQIA+ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, aromantic/asexual, and other sexual identities. On our EDI (equality, diversity and inclusion) tables in the Cheetham Centre and The Saplings we have explanations of these terms and others, a few books, information about support groups, information about inspirational people in the LGBTQIA + community, things to make and pictures to colour in.

If you would like to know more about the community www.stonewall.org.uk is one of the websites with plenty of resources.

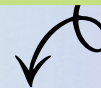
Because humankind is a garden rich in variety with many differences, it can seem confusing when we see all the different flags.

Just like the flags of different countries, each one is important to the people who fly them and understanding what they mean can be really useful when working with clients.

Here are a few of the more widely used flags. How many do you recognise?

There are Rainbow heroes in all walks of life! There is more information about these incredible people on www.popnolly.com LGBT+ Books & Educational Resources | Pop'n'Olly.

Archie, who lives up at The Saplings, has really got into the spirit of Pride and is looking forward to raising awareness!



Jane Hing
Counsellor

Job Shadowing



Have you ever wondered what a colleague's role involves day-to-day?

Our Job Shadowing Programme offers a fantastic opportunity to find out.

Job shadowing allows you to spend time with colleagues in different teams, gaining first-hand insight into their work, responsibilities, and challenges.

Taking part can help you develop new skills, build relationships across departments, and gain a wider appreciation of how different areas work together to achieve our goals. It's also a great way to share knowledge, exchange ideas, and identify opportunities for collaboration and improvement.

We encourage all colleagues to take advantage of this opportunity. By learning from one another, we can strengthen connections, support personal growth, and build an even more collaborative workplace.

The programme is open to everyone, regardless of role or experience. Job shadowing can be a valuable and rewarding experience.

Satisfy your curiosity about another part of the hospice; there is something to be gained from stepping into someone else's shoes for a short time.

REGISTER NOW

Emily Stevenson
Compliance Officer



Job Shadowing

"I chose to shadow a shop manager.

Sandiacre's Vanessa walked me through their whole process from the moment a donation bag is received to it being displayed for sale, stored for later or bagged up for weighing.

There is so much more to running our shops than I ever imagined. Planning for themed window displays, stock refreshing and how this links in with the other shops, and so much more.

The shops were an unknown to me before this visit. It was wonderful to have an insight into Treetops Hospice outside of the main campus.

I'd recommend job shadowing to anyone who wants to meet and understand the wider hospice."

Wendy Spencer - Administrator /
Co-ordinator for Clinical Education



"I spent half a day in one of the Treetops shops, and it was lovely to meet staff that I don't usually come across in my day-to-day role.

It was humbling to see how much work, effort, passion and commitment go into running the shops, and the vital support of volunteers, but also how wonderfully community-based the shops are; it's more than just a charity shop to the local people, and it made me feel proud to say I work for Treetops.

It's a great way to get a deeper understanding of other departments and how we all fit together as an organisation."

Wendy Spencer - Administrator /
Co-ordinator for Clinical Education



Update from Volunteer Services

Go Live

A new chapter is here, where we say goodbye to our volunteer database, which we have had for 10 years and welcome in the new. This time we have one database for our supporters and volunteers alike, which means that we no longer have to update address, email or telephone number changes over more than one database. The reporting/search functionality is very different, and nothing we do will be automatic for a while, so please be patient as we all adapt to the change. I am sure that there will be minor bumps in the road ahead; however, having one database is a huge step forward.

AGM

We will shortly be sending out invites to the AGM, which is held on the first Monday evening in October. Alongside the Trustees report and accounts, we will be delighted to award staff and volunteers with awards for long service. We will be presenting awards to thank those individuals who have reached 15, 20, 25, 30, 35 years of outstanding commitment and dedication to Treetops; a huge congratulations to all. We will look forward to sharing more in the next edition of Connected.

Anna Bown

Volunteer Support Co-ordinator

Why our Tone of Voice Matters

Every day, across Treetops Hospice, we have thousands of conversations. Some happen in our hospice. Some take place in someone's home. Some happen over the till in one of our shops, at an event, through an email, on social media, in a leaflet, or during a quiet moment when someone simply needs to be heard.

And while those conversations may look and feel very different, they all have one thing in common... they shape how people experience Treetops.

That's why our tone of voice matters.

It's not just about where we put a comma, whether we use "we" or "you", or how formal a sentence sounds. It's about something much bigger. It's about making sure that every word we write or say feels unmistakably like Treetops.

Our voice should always be:

- Compassionate
- Positive
- Caring
- Friendly
- Professional

These five qualities are the heart of how we communicate.

Why this matters:

As a hospice, our words carry real weight. A family reading a leaflet may be looking for reassurance. A supporter opening an email may be deciding whether to donate. A patient visiting our website may be taking a brave first step towards asking for help.

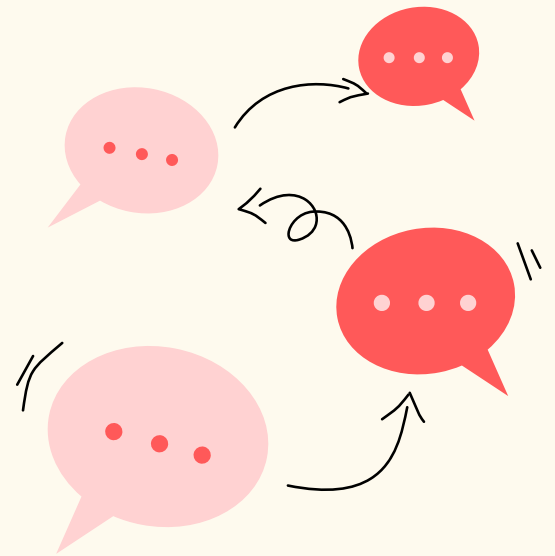
In every case, the way we communicate can help people feel informed, welcomed, valued and supported.

That is why our tone of voice guidance is more than a writing tool. It's a strategic part of how we build trust, grow awareness, strengthen relationships and help more people understand the difference Treetops makes.

Why our Tone of Voice Matters

Our tone of voice is an expression of our brand personality.

That means every piece of communication, whether it is a fundraising appeal, a clinical leaflet, a social media post, a volunteer advert, a shop poster or an event invitation, should feel like it comes from the same organisation.



Of course, we'll flex our tone depending on the situation.

A bereavement support leaflet will naturally feel more gentle and compassionate.

A fundraising event post might be more upbeat and energetic.

A clinical information page may need to feel especially clear, calm and professional.

A thank-you message to supporters should feel warm, personal and positive.

But whatever we're writing, those five ingredients should always be present.

Think of them as our communication recipe. Sometimes we add a little more warmth. Sometimes we turn up the professionalism. Sometimes we lead with compassion. But the flavour should always be Treetops.

Our aim: clarity, consistency and connection.

Good communication helps us do more than sound nice. It helps us deliver our wider ambitions as an organisation.

Why our Tone of Voice Matters

By using a consistent tone of voice, we can:

- Build trust with patients, families, supporters, volunteers, partners and our local communities.
- Make our services easier to understand, so people know how and when to access support.
- Strengthen our brand, helping more people recognise Treetops and what we stand for.
- Increase engagement, whether that means encouraging donations, volunteering, event participation or referrals.
- Show our values in action, not just through what we say, but how we say it.

So, what does Treetops sound like?

It sounds human.

It sounds like we understand that people may be going through difficult, emotional or uncertain times.

It sounds hopeful, but never unrealistic.

Warm, but never over-familiar.

Professional, but never cold.

Clear, but never blunt.

Positive, but never dismissive of someone's experience.

Everyone has a role to play

This guidance is for all of us.

Why our Tone of Voice Matters

You do not need to be in marketing or fundraising to use it.

If you write an email, speak to a supporter, create a presentation or send a letter, you're helping shape the Treetops voice.

Our tone of voice guidance is here to help us write with confidence, consistency and care.

Please use it as a reference whenever you are creating or editing content.

Thank you for helping us bring the Treetops voice to life, one conversation, one message and one carefully chosen word at a time.

[Download your copy of the Tone of Voice guidance](#)



Michael Younger
Head of Marketing





It's that time of year again, and we're putting the call out to all you lovely people to come along and join us to make this year's event the best one yet.

Taking place on Friday 18 September, we'll be lighting up Derby City with sparkles and smiles!

There's lots of ways you can join us this year, from volunteering as a Marshall to doing the 6K or 11K routes. We're offering a discount of 10% for Treetops Staff, their family and friends to sign up for the walk and enjoy the night. Just use the code **MWOFFER26** and follow this link [Moonlight Walk - Treetops Hospice](#)

We wouldn't be able to make any of our events the success that they are without the amazing volunteers, and this year's Moonlight Walk, we'll be looking for lots of wonderful marshals to line the route and cheer on the walkers as they go past. To volunteer, just follow this link [Moonlight Walk Volunteers - Treetops Hospice](#)

This year's walk features a refreshed line-up of entertainment, including choirs, drummers, circus performers and more. The theme is 'country and western', with prizes to be won for best accessories and best team name!

Doors open at 5PM and we'll kick the night off in style with accessory stalls and plenty of entertainment, before the official warm-up ahead of the walks starting at 6.30PM.

So, get those cowboy boots and hats at the ready and come and join us for a fabulous night!

Alicja Sankowski
Relationships Manager- Key Events



New starters

Hi!

Hi, I'm Jess, and I am super happy to have joined the team here at Treetops.

My background is in the Events and Hospitality sector, and I have been lucky enough to live in many different places throughout my career. For the last five years, my partner Matt and I have lived in Liverpool. We moved there for his job but quickly fell in love with the city and spent many nights dancing away in the Cavern Club or soaking up the sun on the Albert Dock.

The birth of my niece, Indie (cue the obsessed Auntie vibes), was the real push for us moving back home and finding this role at Treetops really was the cherry on top of an already exciting move. My priority for my working life is to always have a job that feels fulfilling and that what I do makes a difference, and I am certain that is what I will get here.

I'm a very family-oriented girl and love spending my time with them whenever I can! In my spare time, I love being in the garden and am obsessed with Monty Don! I love to pretend I have a sporty personality, and have pushed myself through two half marathons in the last year, but I much prefer being curled up on the sofa watching Antiques Roadshow!

I have already met a lot of you, but look forward to getting to know you all even more in the months to come!

Jess Munt

Relationships Manager for
Challenge and Community Events



New starters

≡Welcome≡

I recently joined the Community Relationships team at Treetops as Lottery Manager and I am excited to be back in the hospice lottery world!

I have previously worked as Lottery Manager for St Giles Hospice, but I left that role in 2023 due to some personal caring responsibilities and for the last few years I have been working as a part-time Trust fundraiser for a small local mental health charity. I have always felt that my fundraising heart was in hospice lottery fundraising, so it felt like the ideal opportunity for me to be able to return to that role here at Treetops.

A bit more about me...

I live in Alrewas (a lovely village in Staffordshire) with my husband Mark and our scruffy Romanian rescue dog Teo.

I enjoy watching sport and the other 'love of my life' is Aston Villa, so I look forward to a bit of office footie banter when the new season starts!

My favourite places to go on holiday are the Peak District and East Devon for UK dog friendly breaks, and I also enjoy relaxing somewhere on the Mediterranean with a book, sun and sangria. The most interesting place I have visited on holiday was Iceland.

In my spare time I play darts for my local British Legion, I enjoy relaxing at home, listening to music (I am an 80s rock chick at heart!), swimming and countryside dog walks, ideally with a pub lunch thrown in!

If I could travel back in time I would go back to 1993 so I could sit and have a meal and chat with my Dad again before he died.



Alison Jerram

Relationships Manager – Lottery

Stress Management: Choosing How We Show Up



On Friday 24 July, Treetops had the privilege of welcoming Brad Waldron, a world-class speaker and performance coach, to deliver an inspirational workshop on the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People. For an organisation of our size, hosting someone of Brad's calibre was extraordinary. His experience spans global brands, elite teams and high-performance cultures, and the scale of his work is clear from his website: [Brad Waldron](#).

I'll be honest: I arrived at the session stressed, with a mounting task list and that familiar feeling of being behind. Not feeling understood, I was actually close to tears, feeling overwhelmed... Many of us recognise this. As an organisation, we can slip into being reactive and constantly operating in the "urgent and important" space.

With our new [Crafting the Future of Hospice Care](#) strategy, we're more aligned than ever before, especially around our clinical priorities. But alignment alone isn't enough. What we sometimes lack are the habits that help us work effectively, collaboratively and with intention.

Brad's session was a powerful reminder of what those habits look like in practice.

1. Be Proactive

We choose how we show up. We choose our response. Stress often convinces us we don't have agency, but we do.

2. Begin with the end in mind

Seeing the shared endpoint helps us move together, not separately.

3. Put first things first

Not just efficiency — *effectiveness*. Brad challenged us to recognise the difference between urgent and important, and to spend more time in "Zone 2": the planning, strategic, proactive space.



For me, this links directly to developing my role, helping me structure my week with intention rather than reaction.

Stress Management: Choosing How We Show Up



4. Think win-win

Mutual trust. Shared success. Relationship building. It sounds simple, but it **requires** conscious effort.

5. Seek first to understand, then be understood

Empathetic listening is a *skill* and one we all need...

6. Synergy

Recognising the limits of our own experience and valuing differences. We are stronger when we lean into each other's strengths.

7. Sharpen the saw

"If I had six hours to chop down a tree, I'd spend the first four sharpening the axe." To live, to love, to learn, and to leave a legacy. A reminder that rest, reflection and growth are not luxuries; they're essential.

We all need to be investing in ourselves and our loved ones.

Writing to our future selves

One of the most inspiring parts of the session was the idea of writing a letter to your future self, in the tense of achievement.

What do I want to have accomplished in 12 months? How do I want to feel? What legacy do I want to be building?

Hannah and I will be posting these letters to each other next year. It feels like a grounding, hopeful way to stay accountable to the person we want to become.



Stress Management: Choosing How We Show Up

Choosing how we show up

Brad ended by giving each of us an ace playing card, a reminder that aces are high, and we choose how we show up every day.

This workshop wasn't just inspiring; it was bonding.

It gave me clarity, perspective and a renewed commitment to managing my time and stress more intentionally. I left feeling lighter, more focused, and more connected to the habits that will help us thrive individually and collectively.

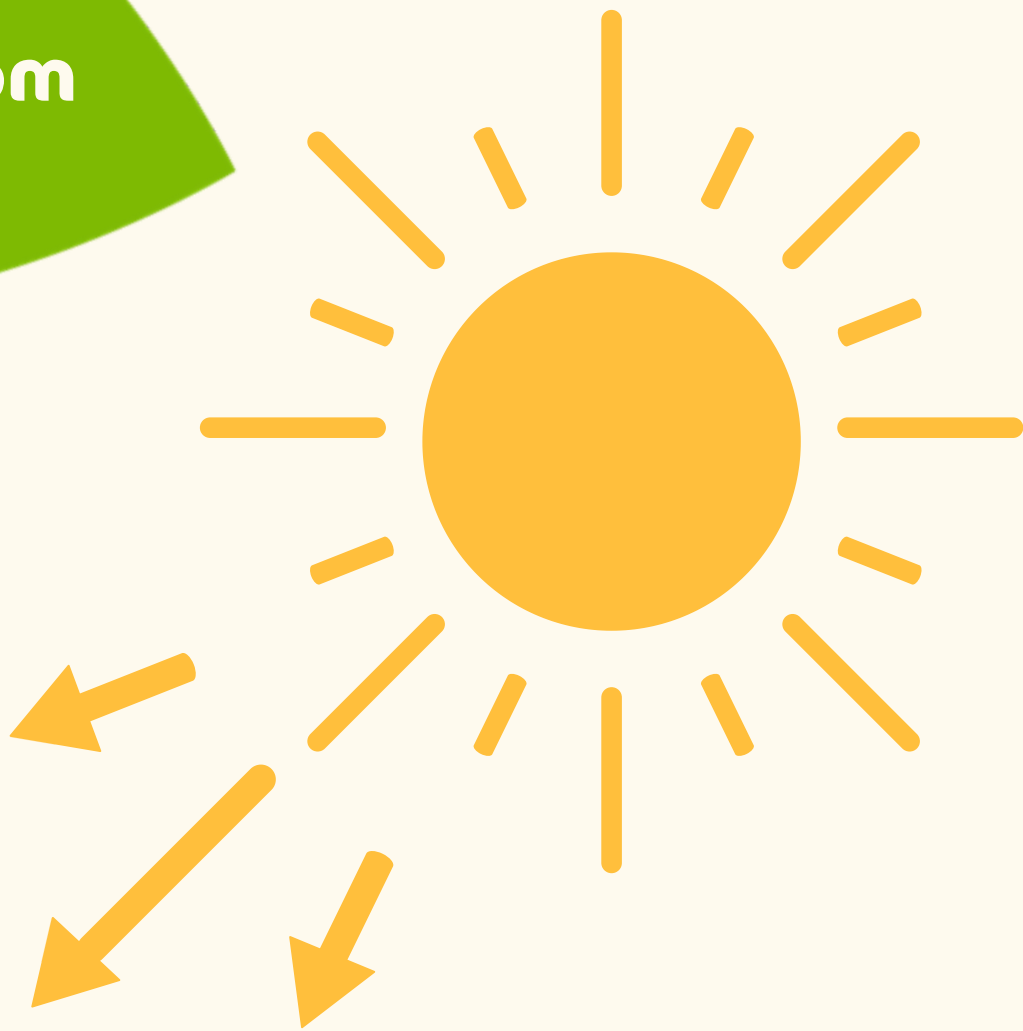
If we want to deliver the best hospice care, we need to take care of ourselves too.

And this session was a powerful step in that direction.



Joanne Higgins
Marketing Officer

An Update from Facilities



Green News!

The meadow may have been making hay whilst the sun shone in July, but the solar power installations have also been doing their part. The main building installation generated 3956kWh of electricity, and the Saplings managed 1394.6kWh.

Building on our success at reducing our energy bills and reducing our carbon footprint, I have the pleasure of announcing that we will be installing solar panels on the Cheetham Centre this month.

Nigel Lamb

Manager of Operations and Compliance-Facilities



How to submit

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

**The next deadline is
Tuesday 22 September**



THANK YOU