

the Caring LIGHT

ISSUE 3 | OCTOBER 2026

TRUSTEES SEE BCHT'S CARE IN ACTION

Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust's (BCHT) August Trustee visit celebrated three years of compassionate home palliative care and opened new possibilities for partnership, education and service development.

From 15 to 22 August, Professor Philip Hopkins, Fr Gus O'Reilly, Dr Amanda Harlow, and Carmel Hopkins visited Bethlehem and Jerusalem. Coordinated by BCHT CEO Rasha Shamieh, their itinerary spanned patient visits, staff meetings, a study day, and discussions with prospective partners and Church leaders.





The heart of the trip was accompanying clinical teams into patients' homes. Over two days, Fr Gus and Amanda visited ten patients, witnessing first-hand how BCHT's nurses address physical, emotional, social, and spiritual needs. In a touching moment, one bereaved family presented the office with two handmade mosaics in gratitude for the care their father received – a moving symbol of the nearly **5,500 home visits** completed during the service's first three years.

Looking forward, a well-attended study day showcased BCHT's potential to lead palliative-care education across Palestine.

New collaborations with Bethlehem Bible College and the Shepherd Society will help provide patients with meals and practical aid, while support from Dr Hani Abul Hawar will enhance medical review and prescribing.

High-level meetings with Cardinal Pizzaballa and Fra Francesco Ielpo, Custos of the Holy Land, brought warm recognition of BCHT's work, with the Custos offering to visit staff and patients in person.

Despite ongoing economic hardship, movement restrictions, and lost tourism in Bethlehem, the Trustees returned home deeply grateful to all supporters and fully determined to secure the resources needed to sustain and grow this vital service.



Philip Hopkins
Chair of Trustees

Bethlehem Care & Hospice Trust is a registered charity in England and Wales (1158406) and Scotland (SC048752)

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A NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH BETHLEHEM BIBLE COLLEGE

BCHT and the Shepherd Society are bringing together clinical care and practical support for families facing serious illness.

During the visit, the Trustees toured Bethlehem Bible College and met Shireen, Director of the Shepherd Society. They discussed the pressures facing local families and the College's wide range of community projects.

The resulting partnership will help identify and refer people who may benefit from BCHT's home palliative-care service. The Shepherd Society may also provide meals for selected patients, help with medicines and facilitate access to artificial limbs.

This practical assistance complements the clinical care provided by BCHT's nurses. A patient's wellbeing can be affected as much by food insecurity, the cost of medicines or the strain upon a family as by the illness itself. Working together will allow both organisations to respond more effectively while using their different strengths.

The College's media centre and conference facilities also offer possibilities for sharing patient and staff stories, professional education and a future palliative-care conference. BCHT looks forward to developing a partnership rooted in a shared commitment to serve people in need.

> "We look forward to building this partnership and to what we can accomplish together in the spirit of compassion, service, and hope, as we work together to serve the people of Bethlehem and strengthen our community. "

Shireen Awwad
Director of the Shepherd Society



Philip Hopkins
Chair of Trustees



L to R: Fr Gus O'Reilly, Shireen Awwad (Director, Shepherd Society), Carmel Hopkins, Phil Hopkins, Rev Dr Jack Sara (President, Bethlehem Bible College) & Rasha Shamieh

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easyfundraising

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How to get involved

1. Download the easyfundraising app
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3. See retailers donate whenever you shop

Join our lottery for as little as £1 per week for your chance to £25,000



GivingLottery is an exciting weekly lottery that raises money for good causes in the UK. 40p in every £1 goes straight back to the Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust.

Play our lottery and support good causes in the UK - it's that simple!

GivingLottery
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SPONSOR A NURSE

Supporting Those Who Care Every Day

For the past year, our Sponsor a Nurse campaign has been raising awareness of the vital role our nursing team plays within Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust. We are deeply grateful to the many supporters who already give regularly to our work, helping us continue to provide compassionate care to patients and families when it is needed most.

Our nurses are the heart of our hospice, providing skilled, compassionate care when patients and families need it most. From managing symptoms to offering a listening ear, their impact is immeasurable.

By Sponsoring a Nurse, you aren't just funding an individual; you are sustaining our entire team. Regular donations – of any size – provide the essential equipment, training, and resources our nurses need to deliver dignified care as costs continue to rise.

How your support helps:

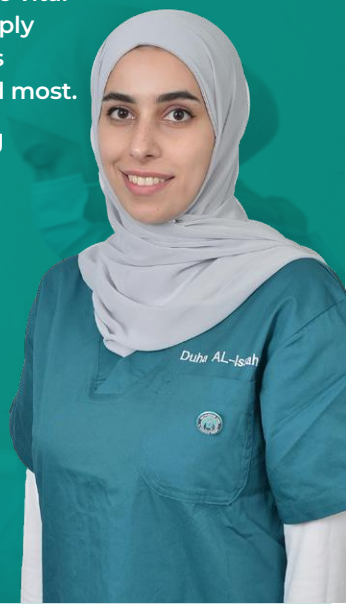
STABILITY: Monthly gifts help us plan for the future.

FOCUS: Your generosity ensures nurses can focus entirely on their patients.

IMPACT: Even a few pounds each month sustains extraordinary care.

Please consider joining our Sponsor a Nurse campaign. Together, we can ensure no one faces life's biggest challenges alone.

Sign up today!



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A MOUNTAIN OF GRATITUDE

Here at Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust, we want to extend a massive thank you to the fantastic staff at St Nicholas Catholic High School for their incredible effort completing the gruelling Yorkshire 3 Peaks Challenge!

Swapping the classroom for the trail, their determination, teamwork, and great spirits were nothing short of inspiring. We were deeply honoured to be selected as one of four beneficiary charities, alongside **Pseudomyxoma Survivor**, **Parkinson's UK**, and **St Luke's Cheshire Hospice Furniture Warehouse**.

Thanks to their incredible hard work and the generous support of everyone who donated via Givewheel, the team raised a **staggering total of over £4,000!**

To every staff member who took on the peaks and everyone who contributed: thank you. Every contribution directly helps us and our partner charities continue our vital work in the community.

You are a true beacon of the Caring Light!



MANCHESTER MARATHON MAN

Patrick signed up for the Manchester Marathon after a bit of friendly coaxing – and perhaps to prove he wasn't a coward!

Unsure which charity to support, everything clicked after a conversation with Trustee and Founder Joe McNally about the Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust. The Trust's work providing palliative care in Palestine deeply resonated with Patrick, both as a Catholic honouring the birthplace of Christ and as someone who cherished the memory of his own grandparents and the importance of end-of-life dignity.

After months of training, Patrick felt ready. The first 30 kilometres went smoothly, but severe cramps soon turned the final stretch into a battle. Remembering the patients and families relying on the Hospice kept him moving forward step by step.



Patrick Roache, President of Manchester University Catholic Students running the Manchester Marathon in support of the Bethlehem care and Hospice Trust raising a magnificent £606.

Crossing the finish line brought relief, pride, and a firm decision not to run anywhere again anytime soon! What started as a friendly dare became a deeply meaningful achievement, knowing every kilometre raised vital support to bring comfort, compassion and care to those in need.

Thank you Patrick



Joe McNally
Founder & President

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CHURCH LEADERS AFFIRM OUR MISSION



L to R: Rasha Shamieh, Dr Amanda Harlow, Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Phil Hopkins and Fr Gus O'Reilly.

Meetings in Jerusalem brought strong encouragement for a service caring for people according to need and building bridges across communities.

The visiting group was honoured to meet His Beatitude Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, and Fra Francesco Ielpo, Custos of the Holy Land.

The Trustees described the development of Palestine's first licensed home palliative-care service, the dedication of its staff and BCHT's aspiration to become a centre of excellence in care and education. They explained that the service is offered according to need, bringing compassionate care to patients and families across Bethlehem's communities.

Both leaders expressed warm appreciation of the mission. The Custos quickly recognised its value and offered to make an official visit to the BCHT office, meet the staff and, where appropriate and with consent, visit Christian patients or families. The Franciscan community in Bethlehem has also confirmed its continuing practical support for BCHT's office beside St Catherine's Church.

The meetings took place amid acute economic hardship and uncertainty. They were an important reminder that BCHT's work is both a healthcare mission and a sign of hope: Christians serving their neighbours and strengthening the community through practical love.



Philip Hopkins
Chair of Trustees

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HALLAM BETHLEHEM CHARITY BALL HITS NEW HEIGHTS



The 2025 Hallam Bethlehem Charity Ball at Sheffield's Crowne Plaza Royal Victoria was an outstanding success, raising over £13,000 for at-home palliative care in Bethlehem.

Guests enjoyed fine dining, a raffle, and live music from local cover band **The Grand Plan**, who generously performed for free. A live video link with Fr Rami in Bethlehem and an address by Vice Chairman Fr Gus O'Reilly highlighted the essential, compassionate work of hospice nurses providing end-of-life care in challenging circumstances. The evening also featured a trial of the Givergy digital auction, which added extra excitement and contributed to the record total.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who attended, volunteered, donated prizes, or organized the event. Your generosity directly enables our nurses to bring medical assistance, comfort, and dignity to families in Bethlehem.







Joe McNally
Founder & President



IN MEMORY

In loving memory of Donal Farrell, a native of Toomevara and Nenagh, who passed away from lung cancer at age 50. Donal was a cherished humanitarian, deeply loved by his immediate and extended family.

In honour of his faith in the Holy Spirit, his generosity, and his compassion for those facing difficult times – and in gratitude for the excellent community palliative care he received in Ireland – a gift is given to support others in need of palliative care.



Manchester Students

BAKING A DIFFERENCE

A **massive thank you** to Emma, Jowan, Patrick, Stephanie, and Siôned! After a deliciously successful cake sale, the team wrapped up the day having raised **£190 for the Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust**. Every slice sold helps provide vital pain relief and compassionate end-of-life care for individuals facing terminal illness in Bethlehem.

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INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

Heartfelt Thanks to Our Friends in Valencia!

Compassion knows no borders. We are profoundly grateful to Fr Rutgers and the parish community of Iglesia De San Juan Del Hospital in Valencia, Spain, for their extraordinary dedication and kindness.

Working together through local parish initiatives, Fr Rutgers and his parishioners have raised a **wonderful €800** to date in support of our hospice services. Their ongoing dedication is a beautiful reminder of the power of global community – ensuring that patients receive dignity, comfort, and essential palliative care when they need it most. To Fr Rutgers and everyone in Valencia who has contributed, organized, or offered prayers: **¡Muchas gracias! Your continued generosity truly reaches across borders to transform lives.**





Joe McNally
Founder & President



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A GIFT THAT TELLS A STORY

Early in the Trustee visit, the group joined BCHT staff at a reception with the family of a patient who had recently died. His relatives spoke warmly about the nurses and recalled how much he had looked forward to their visits. Their support had made a difference not only to him but to the whole family.

The family welcomed the visitors and staff with generous hospitality. Later in the week, the patient's sons came to the BCHT office carrying two mosaics, one depicting Christ and the other St Charbel. Their gifts were a deeply moving expression of thanks and will remain in the office as a reminder of the relationships formed through the service.

Bereavement does not erase the connection between a family and those who have cared for them. For BCHT's team, the mosaics represent both a particular person and family and the many households that have entrusted the service with their care during its first three years.





Bethlehem gave the world a precious and enduring gift...

GIVE BACK
TO BETHLEHEM
THIS CHRISTMAS

No one should face the end of life in pain – especially not in Bethlehem.

www.bcandht.org

DONATE TO OUR CHRISTMAS APPEAL TODAY!

Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

IAHPC Member of the International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care

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