

# Axminster Hospital League of Friends

## Minutes of the Annual Open Meeting

held on

Tuesday 20th May 2025, 6.30 pm in Axminster Heritage Centre

<b>Opening remarks from the Chair</b>	Steve Holt welcomed all and thanked everyone for attending. Steve Holt welcomed the guest speaker, Richard Anderson Health and Social Care Community Services Manager East Devon
<b>Apologies Received</b>	Alistar Forbes, Jill Farrow, Mary Darlow, Bill Sheppard, Bryan Groves, Teresa Denning, Julian Hussey, Petronella Byrde, Jo Gough
<b>Guest Speaker – Richard Anderson</b>	<p><i>"You matter because you are you, and you matter to the end of your life. We will do all we can, not only to help you die peacefully, but also to live until you die."</i> <b>Dame Cicely Saunders</b></p> <p>Richard Anderson introduced himself and outlined his role as Community Services Manager for East Devon and introduced members of his team; David Williams, Community Nurse Team Manager for Seaton, Axminster and Sidmouth, Michaela Board, Team Lead for the Axminster Community Nursing Team, Sara Holway, Lead Nurse for Complex Patients and Palliative Care for Eastern and Northern Devon and Shiobhan Pickering, Manager for the Axe Valley Dementia Team.</p> <p>Richard explained there are some services that are unique to this area of Devon – Axe Valley Dementia Services and the Hospice at Home Services. There is close coordination of care between all the agencies involved with regular weekly meetings between social care, the community matron, Older People's Mental Health, GPs, and representatives from the voluntary sector. Once Hospice at Home is established in Axminster, we will be providing hospice at home and enhanced end of life services across the entire Seaton, Axminster and Sidmouth area.</p> <p>The professional infrastructure around palliative care services has grown within the Royal Devon with new medical consultant roles, nurse consultant roles and Sara's Lead Nurse role. Additionally, the Axminster Community team has gone from strength to strength. Richard recognised the work of Michaela Board, drawing together Urgent Care Response, our community matron team, social care and dementia care, into a very high performing multi-disciplinary team.</p> <p>Richard expressed his opinion that we are on the verge of having some of the best, most comprehensive hospice and dementia services anywhere in the country where everybody who wants the involvement of hospice at the end of life would be offered it. The approach is that the hospice nurses take care of physical pain control and any other medical or psychological issue. They are experts in all</p>

	<p>aspects of the palliative process. The family can then be family – they hold space for the person; they are there to love and comfort whilst the nurse takes care of and co-ordinates any clinical issues.</p> <p>Richard announced that with the generosity of the people of Axminster and the dedicated work of the League of Friends we have now recruited three nurses with very high levels of experience and training.</p> <p>Axminster Hospice at Home will be offering enhanced end of life services integrated with, and based with, the Community Nursing team. It is hoped that the service will continue to grow so that it is a fully functioning 24/7 service, working alongside our community teams in the hospital and in the community and working in partnership with our colleagues in the acute hospital and the palliative care in-patient team from Hospiscare in Wonford.</p> <p>The focus will be on building a gold standard service, providing comfort, dignity, and supporting families in the preferred place of death—usually at home. On average in the country, only 50% of people die in their preferred place of death. In Seaton and Sidmouth, where there is an established Hospice at Home service, that number is an astonishing 98%.</p> <p>Richard explained he had completed an economic analysis of hospice at home services based on the experience of Seaton and Sidmouth. The service saves the costs of acute inpatient admissions which are £556 per day (or £16,680 per month); the average nursing home cost is £6,000 per month. The overall saving of Seaton and Sidmouth in terms of reduced hospital and nursing home placements is £3,500,000 per annum. Some of this is savings to people who pay privately for nursing home beds, so the saving to the public sector is nearly £2.8m.</p> <p>In conclusion, Richard expressed his excitement and anticipation at being able to help build a world class hospice at home service for Axminster and the surrounding area. On behalf of Sara, David, Michaela and the team, Richard expressed his thanks and gratitude to the League of Friends and the people of Axminster for their generous donations of time and money.</p>
<b>Questions from the Floor</b>	No questions from the floor.
<b>Reports Chair – Steve Holt</b>	<p>Steve thanked Richard for the good news about Axminster Hospice at Home.</p> <p>2024 – 25 has seen a step change in the life of the League. Our focus on fundraising and volunteer support has reaped significant benefits. The increased profile of The League of Friends across the community has seen other groups make donations and run events to raise funds for our Hospice at Home service.</p> <p>During the last year there have been some changes to the Trustees. Ann Veit served the League from 2015 until her passing in October</p>

	<p>last year. She was the Honorary Secretary and worked tirelessly to support the League. Her underlying health conditions eventually caught up with her and she is sorely missed as a Trustee, friend and especially in her community of Musbury.</p> <p>After 10 years of Trusteeship, Martin Diplock has decided to step down as a Trustee of the League. Our thanks go to Martin for his unerring support.</p> <p>In November 2024 Karen Churchill agreed to join the Trustees and has brought a direct link into the nursing community and a new vigour to the Trustees. More recently, Delia Driver has joined. Delia has fundraising expertise which will help enormously. Also, Michaela Board, who is a Community Nursing Team Leader, has joined our Trustees, which gives another strong link with the nursing staff.</p> <p>Steve expressed his thanks to all the Trustees for their hard work and stewardship of the charity and to all those attending the meeting, the members and supporters who have helped us reach this milestone.</p>
<b>Treasurer- Christine Cawley</b>	<p><b>Income</b>  Although income has reduced due to a decrease in legacies received, we have still had a steady stream of donations from Members. Our own fundraising efforts have netted us £2455 during 2024. In 2024 we have also received donations from external fund raising:  All Saints COGs- £580  Chardstock Street Fayre- £150  Raffle held at the hospital £1315  Axminster Young Farmers - £1262.59  Musbury Flower Show - £250  BBQ held in the summer at St Marys - £238.05  Castle Inn - £202  The 100 Club is a new fundraiser in 2025 and has 22 members to date.</p> <p><b>Purchases</b>  We have purchased hospital equipment as follows: Community Nursing Bags - £3645  Raizer Chair- £4011</p> <p><b>Bank Balance</b>  The bank balance at today's date is £572,034.02</p>
<b>Manager - Helen Arnold</b>	<p><b>Trustees</b>  There are currently 13 Trustees- Steve Holt ( Chair), Julian Hussey (Vice Chair), Christine Cawley (Treasurer).  Mervyn Symes, Gillie George, Hazel Cross, Margaret Pike, Jeanette Ward, Dr Phil Taylor, Dr Sarah Ellis.  We welcome new Trustees: Karen Churchill, Delia Driver and Michaela Board.</p> <p><b>Membership</b>  Membership numbers remain steady, and we continue to connect with the community with events, visits to community and village groups, the refreshed website, local newsletters, social media and email distribution of our annual Newsletter.</p>

	<p><b>Fundraising</b></p> <p>With the support of the Trustees and volunteers we have held a number of fundraising events. Exeter Male voice choir, Open Farm Sunday, coffee mornings in Axminster, quizzes at Axminster Town Football Club and Axe Vale Show.</p> <p>Michaela Board from our Community nursing team has organised several events including Bingo. Our thanks go to Michaela and Liz and Steve Goff for raising an amazing £1085.</p> <p>Our thanks also to Peter Parshall of Axminster Chamber Choir whose retiring collection at a concert in March made over £1000. And to Devon Truck Show who have pledged £1000 in memory of Richard Lambert.</p> <p>We have also received donations from several bereaved families for which we are very grateful and we have recently launched the League of Friends 100 Club.</p> <p><b>Moving Forward</b></p> <p>We have been invited by Hamish Bengough to provide refreshments at Dennings Down Farm on Open Farm Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> June.</p> <p>We will be at the Axe Vale show on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> June. This year we have a virtual experience. We are grateful to Julian Hussey, East Devon Crematorium and Axminster Memory Cafe for contributing towards the cost of running this event.</p> <p>On the 27/28/and 29 June we will be at the Open Garden at Socks Orchard Smallridge.</p> <p>On Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> July, Mervyn and Jacqui Symes are kindly hosting Afternoon Tea at Great Jackleigh Farm just outside Axminster.</p> <p>We have more events planned for the Autumn including presentations to local community groups about the new end of life care service.</p>
<b>AGM Business</b>	
<b>Minutes of the previous AGM</b>	<p>The minutes of the previous AOM held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024 had been distributed to the Trustees and were available to view on the website. The minutes were agreed as a true record.</p> <p>PROPOSER: Dr Sarah Ellis      SECONDER: Jeanette Ward</p>
<b>To agree the Annual report and Financial Statements</b>	<p>The Annual Report and Financial Statements dated 31/12 /2024</p> <p>PROPOSER: Dr Phil Taylor      SECONDER: Gillie George</p>
<b>Election of Officers</b>	<p>Steve Holt, Julian Hussy and Chrissy Cawley have indicated their willingness to remain as Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer respectively.</p> <p>PROPOSER: Mervyn Symes      SECONDER: Gillie George</p> <p>The terms of our constitution regarding the election of Trustees have been met.</p> <p>Resignation of Martin Diplock</p> <p>Death of Ann Veit</p>

	Election of Karen Churchill Delia Driver Michaela Board  This leaves one Vacancy for a Trustee.
<b>To appoint auditors until the conclusion of the next AGM</b>	Westcotts were appointed as Auditors. PROPOSER: Dr Phil Taylor                  SECONDER: Gillie George
<b>Date of next AGM</b>	Tuesday May 19 <sup>th</sup> 2026 at 6.30pm Bradshaw Rooms, Heritage Centre
<b>Close of Meeting</b>	Steve closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance.