

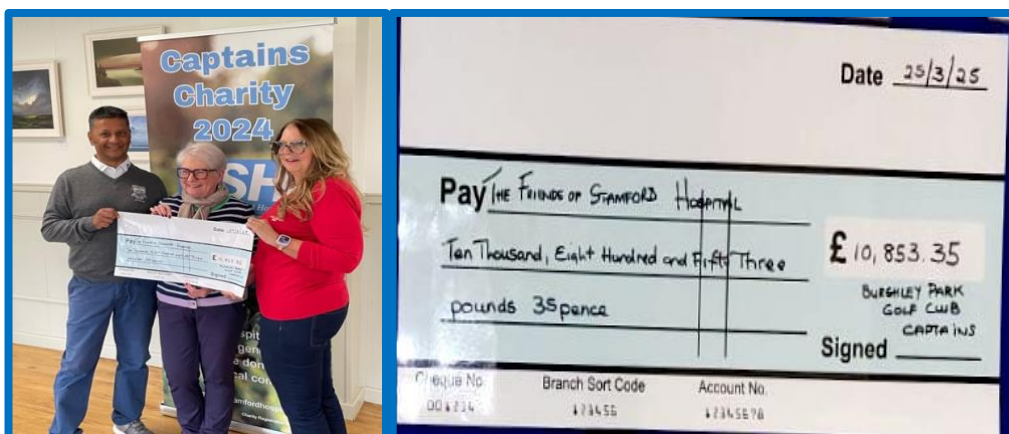
SPRING NEWSLETTER 2025

Welcome to our Spring Newsletter, we hope you are well and enjoying the lovely spring weather.

The past year for the Friends has been quiet from a funding perspective. We have to rely on requests coming through from the Trust's Charity Projects Team and not directly from departments, as we have done in the past. Our only purchases in the last 12 months have been a television for the coffee shop and a paediatric wheelchair! We did have two requests for items which were far too expensive for our funds at the time (£128,000!).



However, in the last month we have received a magnificent donation from the Captains of Burghley Park Golf Club. Following fund raising during their year of office, we received a cheque for £10,853.35. We have also received Gift Aid on this donation making a total of £13,566. I am sure you will agree this is a terrific achievement for which we are very grateful.



We are currently working with the project team for the new Day Treatment Centre to identify items suitable for us to purchase and donate. Items we have agreed to so far include comfortable seating for the staff rest room – the original plans only provided dining chairs. We felt the staff deserved a chance to relax properly during breaks. There are also discussions ongoing as to how best to spend the golf club donation. We continue to raise very healthy sums from our book sales.

Now on to more difficult matters. Since the Covid lockdowns, the way the Trust has provided services at Stamford, and all other sites, has changed considerably. Management teams are based at Peterborough and contact with ourselves is made through the North West Anglia Hospitals Charity. This formal charity was set up to amalgamate and administer the 33 individual charities set up across the Trust over a number of years. The NWA Hospitals Charity has a dedicated Project Manager and Stakeholder Engagement Officer, along with

celebrity endorsement from Craig Revel Horwood, official branding and a constantly visible advertising programme. Any request for funds from the Friends is channelled through the Hospitals Charity and this inevitably results in delays. Charitable funding of items and equipment within the Trust is, quite rightly, monitored and scrutinised for need, sustainability and value for money. Also whether the items are “must haves”, which should be provided by the Trust, or whether they are “over and above” extras which would be very nice to have if funds were available. This is usually where the Friends come in.

The Trustees of the Friends have been in post for many years. Some are ex-NHS staff, medical and otherwise, and some professionals with skills applicable to running a small charity like ours, eg accountancy. We are all getting older! We have tried in the last four years to recruit younger members to our committee as we feel we lack the knowledge and energy for intense application of social media posting, publicity and, to a certain extent, fund raising events. Gone are the days of the hospital summer fete!

In its heyday Stamford Hospital had departments for maternity, a medical ward, surgical wards, a children's ward, care of the elderly wards at St George's hospital, a casualty department, pathology lab and a very busy outpatient department. It had its own kitchen, laundry and nursing and medical staff accommodation – even a swimming pool and netball court! It was a busy and thriving asset to Stamford. Many folks in the town were born at the hospital, had relatives or friends who worked at the hospital and the stories about treatment and visits still surface regularly on local history websites. Younger people living in the town now have little knowledge of the history of the hospital and no real connection to its past. People treated at Stamford Hospital can come from any part of the catchment area for the Trust – which is very wide – and they have no reason to support a charity local to Stamford.

Taking all these factors into consideration, after much soul searching and lengthy discussion, the committee has taken the decision to disband the charity. This decision has not been taken lightly. The Friends were formed in 1963, just 15 years after the inception of the NHS, and have constantly supported the hospital and staff over the last 62 years. In the past 25 years the Friends have spent over £350,000 providing equipment, furniture etc for the benefit of patients and hospital staff.

We intend to hold our final AGM on Wednesday 18 June, 2025 at 7pm in the Education Centre at Stamford Hospital. This will also be a celebration of the work of the Friends and its supporters over the years.

We hope that you will be able to join us this final time. We will be providing refreshments (food and drink) so would like you to let us know if you will be attending. Please reply to the email that sent you this newsletter.

We still have funding projects in the pipeline and intend to use all funds currently held before the charity is officially wound up. This may take a little time, so we will let you have updates in the coming months as to what is happening.

We would ask that you cancel any Standing Orders to the Friends before 30 June.

This has been a very difficult Newsletter to write but I hope you will agree we have given it our best shot! We know the Hospital Charity will continue to fund projects across the Trust and should you wish to donate at any time (including the continuation of current monthly/annual Standing Orders), you can request that the donation be used for items at Stamford Hospital. You can do this by contacting the Hospital's Charity Project Manager, Philip Fearn – email philip.fearn@nhs.net.

We all look forward to seeing you on 18 June.

Best wishes

Kay Hircock – Chair/Secretary