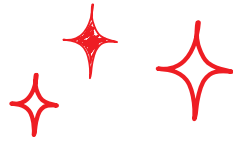




NOAH'S ARK
children's hospice



Winter 2025/Spring 2026

MOMENTS THAT MATTER

Issue No. 7



Montell Hear how
our support has grown
with his family

Staff make
a splash

Our bereavement
support evolves

A volunteer's journey
with Noah's Ark

noahsarkhospice.org.uk



At Noah's Ark we are privileged to receive generous Marketing and Communications pro-bono support from industry-leading organisations.

Thank you for enabling us to tell our stories to more people. Together we can help more babies, children and young people, and their families make the most of every day.



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THE **10** GROUP

&
projectsgroup
we know what makes you tick

welcome aboard!

the seventh issue of our
Noah's Ark Newsletter – Moments That Matter

Welcome to the latest edition of **Moments That Matter**, Noah's Ark's bi-annual newsletter.

For babies, children, and young people with life-limiting or life-threatening conditions, and their families, every moment together is precious. As a children's hospice it is our mission to help families make the most of every day, through care that grows and adapts alongside them.

In this issue, we **celebrate growth** – in the children we support, the services we provide, and the incredible community that makes our work possible.

We're proud to share the **story of Montell and his family**, who've been part of the Noah's Ark community for over 12 years. Their journey shows how our holistic approach evolves as children and families grow, offering consistent care, connection, and trust through every stage.

You'll also meet **Dean, our Music Therapist**, who helps parents on neonatal intensive care units bond with their babies.

We're inspired every day by how our **wider community gets involved**. Staff have taken on swims, half marathons and even a 100km trek to raise funds. A Noah's Ark parent recently laced up her trainers for the Royal Parks Half Marathon too.

And our **amazing volunteers continue to step up in new ways** – like Lisa, who began helping in our garden and now also lends vital support to our fundraising team.

Everything we do is made possible by you. Whether you've donated, volunteered or simply shared our stories – thank you. Your support helps us continue growing alongside families, every step of the way.



Meet Montell and his family...

Twelve-year-old Montell has been supported by Noah's Ark since he was just three months old.

Born with Hydrocephalus, a condition that causes excess fluid in the brain, Montell has complex needs and requires specialist care.

Montell's parents, **Nadine** and **Glenbert**, along with his sisters Myala, Mellyta-May and Melisha, are all supported by Noah's Ark too.

"When Montell was born we were told that his life expectancy was three hours," says Nadine. "We weren't sure what was going to happen," Glenbert adds, "but we have a son, and we just had to keep going forward."

Support From Noah's Ark

The family was introduced to Noah's Ark through a referral early in Montell's life. At first they weren't sure what to expect.

"It was difficult for us to understand what that meant – taking that step," explains Nadine. "But we had the most welcoming meeting with some amazing staff, and we knew it was the right decision."

"It was like a weight taken off your shoulders," says Glenbert. "The support was amazing."

Over the years, Noah's Ark has become an extension of their family. "They made us feel normal. They made us think that life could be OK," says Nadine.

"The confidence that they brought, that's what we loved," Glenbert adds.



Meeting other families in similar situations has also brought comfort and connection.

"It was reassuring to meet other families," shares Nadine. "Noah's Ark makes you feel like they are part of your family. When our family grew, their support grew. Montell's sisters are also supported by Noah's Ark through the sibling groups."

The whole family has found joy in their time at The Ark, including Montell's favourite activities.

"My children love coming to Noah's Ark," says Glenbert, "for us they've brought bright light into the situation that we were dealt, we love what they do for us. Montell's favourite



"We're just so happy to have been a part of this journey with Noah's Ark."

Nadine and Glenbert



time at Noah's Ark is when he sleeps over and uses the hydrotherapy pool," says Nadine. "He loves baths and water but that's not something we can do at home. He lights up when we come to The Ark, you can see in his body language that he feels free, calm, and happy."

him. You could feel the love in that room; it was really special for us."



Noah's Ark has also provided a space for parents to find connection and community. "Noah's Ark has provided a wonderful community for me," says Glenbert. "They've put together a dad's group and we go out to have a good chat – it feels good to go somewhere where others understand."

"Just life changing"

For Nadine, the support has also been transformative. "When you're concerned or worried and you don't know who to turn to, you make that phone call to Noah's Ark and they find a way. They find a way to help you understand the situation and overcome it. That is just life changing for us and there aren't enough thank yous in the world. They give families like ours a chance and there aren't a lot of chances out there when you have a disabled child."

The final words belong to Glenbert: "We can do everything at Noah's Ark; there is nothing that is exempt from us and we're just so happy to have been a part of this journey with Noah's Ark."



Montell and his family meet Tottenham Hotspur's James Maddison

A memorable moment

One especially memorable moment for the family was a recent Prom event, organised by Noah's Ark as part of their memory making support.

"Luckily the Prom fell around Montell's birthday and for me it is one of the memories that I'll cherish for the rest of my life," says Glenbert. "That moment was just so special," adds Nadine. "Montell felt so happy and had all his friends and sisters around

You can read their full story on our website at: noahsarkhospice.org.uk/news-and-stories/montells-story



With kind thanks to Nadine, Glenbert, Montell, Myala, Mellyta-May and Melisha for sharing their story.

FROM That MOMENT 2025

Together, we did it! From That Moment Appeal Smashes £1 Million Target

Thanks to your incredible generosity, our fourth From That Moment autumn appeal has raised over £1,062,000, surpassing our ambitious £1 million target!

Every penny will help cover the £7 million needed this year to keep Noah's Ark running – providing vital care for children and their families across North Central London.

This incredible milestone was reached during our 36-hour giving window, which ended at 10pm on Monday 13th October. And because of our generous backers, every donation made during the campaign was doubled; doubling the impact for families in need. Over 2,000 supporters came together to make this happen. Thank you for being part of this powerful show of community spirit and compassion.

Highlights from the Campaign

Step-tember: 90 Miles Their Way

Our first-ever virtual fundraising challenge saw hundreds of supporters commit to walking, running or cycling 90 miles in September. Despite rain and sore feet, spirits were high.



Itohan, who cycled from London to Brighton, said: "Noah's Ark's compassionate care during the most difficult times is deeply inspiring. Knowing every donation was doubled made every mile worth it."

Corporate Champions: Walking 9-5

Our award-winning partner Payen launched their walking challenge as part of the campaign, combining fundraising with fitness and fun. CEO Richard Smith shared: "Partnering with Noah's Ark is one of the most meaningful things we do. Every employee got involved, and it's become a highlight of our year."

A big thank you also to Cynergy and MiHomes for joining the challenge!



Glitz and Giving

Back for a second year, our Glitz and Giving event was a sparkling success. Radio DJ and charity ambassador Melvin Odom kept the party going, and one lucky guest went home with a one-carat diamond courtesy of V-Jewellers. Melvin said: "It was an honour to return. The crowd's generosity makes a real difference to families supported by Noah's Ark."



Fundraising Fun

Our supporters got creative too: Our Creative Therapy Team hosted Singing for the Soul, an uplifting community workshop. Students and staff at London Brookes College (left) hosted a Wear Red Day and the Student Council organised a fundraising bake sale in aid of Noah's Ark.



Spreading the word

Over 60 dedicated Champions helped share the campaign during the final 36 hours, bringing it to a wide audience and helping us cross the finish line in style. We were also thrilled to receive support from celebrity friends including Sophie Rundle, Sarah Parish, Rankin, and Melvin Odom – as well as from our partner, Tottenham Hotspur, with messages from Bethany England and James Maddison encouraging donations.



Thank you

To our generous backers: thank you for doubling every donation and making this milestone possible. To everyone who gave, shared, walked, baked, sang, or danced: your support has made a real difference. And to the brave families who shared their stories – thank you. It's our privilege to walk beside you. Together, we've done something truly remarkable. We can be there from that moment.



"All we've known is Noah's Ark"



Mimi's Story

Noah's Ark Children's Hospice has supported Selina and her daughter Mireya (affectionately known as Mimi), aged 8, since March 2018.

Mimi has an undiagnosed respiratory condition and global developmental delay. At just eight months old, she had a tracheostomy fitted.



Selina recalls how they first connected with Noah's Ark: "We were in St Mary's Hospital as Mimi had respiratory distress due to her airway closing.

"On the PICU (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit), I met one of the paediatric nurses, who had a joint role with Noah's Ark, and she referred us to our Family Link Worker, Maria. She came to visit us at St Mary's and since then we've been part of the Noah's Ark family."

Selina describes the support she's received: "The support has been the most important thing for

me. Especially from Maria, our Family Link Worker, our Specialist Carer, Michelle, and Vikki, our Play Specialist. It's been a really good support network."

A massive help

With respite stays at The Ark and regular visits from Michelle, Selina was able to rest, study, and spend time with her younger daughter, Anaiah, aged 5. "Michelle would come and bath Mimi and put her to bed or do an activity. Mimi couldn't be left on her own... I would literally go for a sleep if we hadn't slept much the night before, which was a massive help."

At one point, doctors considered a major operation



to reconstruct Mimi's airway. "I thought, let's just wait. As she grows up, maybe she won't need a big operation – and she didn't." Recently, Mimi had her tracheostomy removed; a life-changing milestone. "We've been waiting for that moment for a long time. She was happy before, but now she's even happier."

“ Ever since the tracheostomy came out, she hasn't stopped singing. ”

Her speech has also improved. "Now, when Mimi comes home from school, she says she wants to take her shoes off herself... Her speech is much clearer now... but if it's not coming out clearly, we can always use Makaton or an iPad."

Maria has always been there

Mimi loves singing – especially Frozen, Michael Jackson and Whitney Houston – painting, and collecting rubber ducks. "Ever since the tracheostomy came out, she hasn't stopped



singing." As Mimi continues to thrive, the family will soon say goodbye to Noah's Ark. "Michelle has been amazing, I'm probably going to cry when she goes. And Maria has always been there when I needed someone to talk to, offering support and advice."



Selina recently qualified as a nurse after three years of training. "It was really, really difficult. I literally used to think, how can I actually do this? I still don't know how I've done it to be honest. Michelle was a big help; when she would come, I was able to work on an essay."

Now, Selina hopes to become a paediatric nurse, working with children like Mimi on the NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit), specialising in ENT (Ears, Nose and Throat). "I've been through that pain, and it would have been nice to talk to someone who had been through it. I just feel like I want to give back."

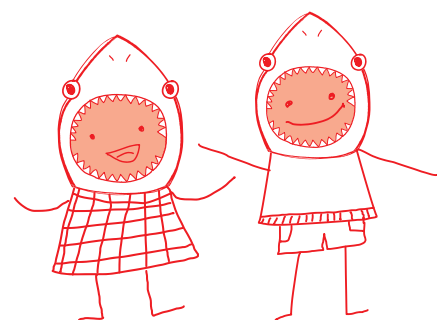
"It's been a long journey. All we know is Noah's Ark. It will feel weird, but there are other children that need them now."

With kind thanks to Selina and Mimi for sharing their story. You can read their full story on our website at: noahsarkhospice.org.uk/news-and-stories



Staff make a splash for Noah's Ark!

A huge **well done** to our amazing Team Noah swimmers who took on this year's **Swim Serpentine** challenge to raise vital funds for Noah's Ark.



Dr Su Laurent and Janette Atkins, two of the twelve Team Noah swimmers

The team of 12 individually took on up to two laps of the iconic Serpentine Lake in London's Hyde Park: a real test of endurance and determination.

Among them were three of our own incredible staff members: **Dr Su Laurent**, Associate Medical Director; **Teresa Ferguson**, People Manager; and **Janette Atkins**, Nurse Consultant.

Their dedication is a brilliant reminder of how our team go above and beyond, not just in

their roles at Noah's Ark, but whenever there's a chance to make a meaningful difference.

Teresa, our People Manager, shared what the challenge meant to her: "Being part of Noah's Ark means so much to me, so taking on a swimming challenge to support the hospice felt really special.

"It was amazing to combine something I love with raising vital funds for a cause so close to my heart. As a charity that relies on public donations for 75% of our

"We're so proud of our staff who go above and beyond to support Noah's Ark, not just through their work, but in their own time too.

Taking on a personal challenge shows incredible dedication, and it means the world to us. Seeing staff and fundraisers come together like this is amazing.

Every fundraiser helps us continue to provide vital care for children who are seriously unwell, and their families – we simply couldn't do it without this kind of support.



Tony Cucchiara,
Noah's Ark Supporter
Engagement Officer

income, every pound makes a difference, and I'm proud to have played a small part in that."

The fundraising formed part of our annual From That Moment campaign, where donations made between 1st September and 13th October were match-funded, meaning their efforts had double the impact.

In total, the swim team raised

over **£20,000** making a real splash in support of our work.

Tony Cucchiara, our Supporter Engagement Officer, was there to cheer the whole team on.

A heartfelt thank you to Su, Teresa, Janette, and all our Team Noah swimmers – and to every supporter who helps us be there from that moment.



Teresa and Team Noah fundraising for From That Moment

Dan Goes the Distance (Again) for Noah's Ark



Thanks to his dedication, and the generosity of our supporters, Dan raised over £750!

After crossing the finish line at the Royal Parks Half Marathon last year, our Volunteering Development Manager, Dan Smith, hasn't slowed down. This September, he laced up his trainers once again, this time for the Battersea Half Marathon to raise vital funds for Noah's Ark.

Dan says: "Running a half marathon was always a 'someday' goal. Working here has given me the inspiration to make it happen. Seeing the care and dedication of our staff and volunteers, and the joy our teams bring to the children we support, motivates me every step of the way."

Moments of joy

Training for a half marathon is no small feat, and Dan admits the journey hasn't always been easy. But when the going gets tough, he finds strength in the cause that drives him. "Every run is a reminder of why we do what we do," he says. "It's about giving children moments of joy and experiences they might not otherwise have."

Congratulations, Dan, on not only completing another half marathon but also making such a meaningful impact for the babies, children, and young people we support.

And a big **thank you** to all our fundraisers who continue to inspire us every day by taking on challenges in support of Noah's Ark.

Find out more about taking on a challenge event for Noah's Ark on our website at:
noahsarkhospice.org.uk/support-us/fundraising/challenge-events



Fun at The Ark!

We help babies, children and young people who are seriously unwell make the most of every day. There's always plenty of fun going on at The Ark and we love welcoming families through our doors.

Festival Fun at Noah Fest 2025

This summer, Noah Fest returned to The Ark, bringing with it all the colour and creativity of a summer festival, right on our doorstep.

The day was filled with excitement as children took part in hands-on crafts and enjoyed everything from mini golf and inflatables to getting a close-up look at some incredible supercars. There were flower crowns, festival vibes, and smiles all around.

A safe, welcoming environment

For many families, days like Noah Fest offer a rare opportunity to try something new, connect with others, and enjoy a day out in a safe, welcoming environment.

These moments of joy and connection stay with families long after the music fades; and we're proud to be able to offer them, thanks to the generosity of our supporters and the dedication of our staff and volunteers.



A Night to Remember: Prom at The Ark

At Noah's Ark, we believe every child and young person deserves the chance to celebrate life's big moments, and this summer, we were proud to host our very first **Noah's Ark Prom**.

The Ark was filled with music, joy, and celebration as families came together for an unforgettable evening. With a DJ, live saxophonist, dance floor, photo booth, and plenty of sparkle, the Prom had all the magic and excitement of a classic celebration – and more!

We turn 'can't do' into 'can do'

For many of the young people we support, Prom is a milestone that might otherwise be out of reach. But at Noah's Ark, we turn 'can't do' into 'can do.' When a child or parent shares a wish, we do all we can to make it happen.

As one team member put it: "The Ark is often filled with laughter, and Prom was no exception. At Noah's Ark, we're here to celebrate milestones, to create moments of joy, and to capture the essence of what it is to be a family."

The Prom was more than just a party, it was a space where young people could express themselves, feel special, and enjoy an experience they'll treasure. With the support of our Care Team and volunteers, families were able to relax and make memories that will last a lifetime.



“...we're here to celebrate milestones, to create moments of joy, and to capture the essence of what it is to be a family.”



Fun at The Ark!



We believe in supporting the whole family. Organising group activities for parents, grandparents and carers is important to us. We know how energising spending quality time with other adults can be; a chance to meet up, enjoy a little distraction and make connections with people who understand.

Pampering Parents

Manicures, massages, make-up... it may not be the first thing that comes to mind when you think of a children's hospice. But at Noah's Ark, they're exactly the kinds of activities we provide as part of our holistic approach to care.

Our **Parents and Carers Group** came to The Ark for a day of pampering and relaxation. It was a chance for parents to take a break, unwind, and focus on their own well-being; something many rarely get time for.

The group is run by our Family Activities Team, who organise free activities not just for children, but for the whole family. Days like this are one of the ways we provide support, so parents have time to recharge, enjoy themselves, and feel looked after too.



A big **thank you** to the following for helping to make this event possible:

Toni and Guy (Barnet), Medik8, Lush and Sujus Holistic. Yoga with **Bansi. Caterina** and **Olivia** for massages. **Viola, Lucy** and **Jo** for Reflexology. Plus facials by **Rachel** and makeup by **Jo**.



A Wild Day Out at the Zoo

At Noah's Ark, we're all about creating moments of joy and our recent trip to Hertfordshire Zoo was just that, a day full of adventure, excitement, and unforgettable memories.

Led by our Family Activities and Specialist Care Teams, a group of children enjoyed a special day out, exploring the zoo and discovering wild animals of all shapes and sizes. No visit would be complete without a trip to the zoo shop, where each child chose a cuddly companion to take home – a perfect reminder of a magical day spent together.



Outings like these offer so much more than a change of scenery. They give children the chance to relax, share joyful experiences, and make lasting memories – all made possible by the dedication of our Care Team and the support of our fundraising community.



A Weekend to Remember

Our Sibling Group recently had a wonderful weekend away at JCA Adventure's Condover Hall, a fantastic adventure centre set in the lovely Shropshire countryside.

The trip was bursting with exciting activities; from climbing walls and high ropes to lake adventures and team games. The children challenged themselves, tried new things, and, most of all, shared lots of laughs together.

Sibling trips like this are an important part of our Family Activities service. They give siblings the chance to step away from daily routines and spend time with others who understand their experiences, whilst enjoying a well-deserved break filled with adventure – making memories that will last a lifetime.



Supporting Families Through Grief

Growing Our Bereavement Services

At Noah's Ark, we know that the death of a child changes everything.

Our dedicated Bereavement Support Team is here to help families navigate the days, weeks, months, and years that follow – offering care, support, and connection every step of the way.

In 2024/25, we:

- Supported **120** families through their bereavement journeys.
- Provided over **1,035** hours of counselling and creative therapy.
- Hosted **58** events for bereaved families – double the number we ran last year.



Our Bereavement Support Manager, Carys Williams, shares:

“Everything we do is shaped by listening to the needs of our bereaved families. We work together to ensure the support we offer is tailored and meaningful, and that's helped us grow our services in ways that we're proud of.”

A New Dedicated Space

One of the most significant changes was the opening of our new bereavement counselling suite, The Cabin, in May 2024.

Nestled in the peaceful grounds of The Ark, The Cabin offers a private, welcoming space for families to receive support away from areas that may hold painful memories.

“Some families found it difficult to return to The Ark, especially if the child received care, died here or came for care after death,” Carys explains. “The Cabin was built with that in mind; to give families a separate, yet connected, environment.”



Developing Services

In autumn 2024, we asked families what else they needed, and they told us.

From this, new peer support groups and activities were developed, bringing families together in ways that feel safe and meaningful.

Thanks to the collaboration between our Bereavement, Creative Therapies, and Specialist Play teams, families can now access a growing number of tailored events and activities, including:

- A weekly creative group for bereaved parents.
- A monthly grandparents group.
- A mixed media group for older bereaved siblings.
- Sunshine Siblings – our new weekly stay and play group, facilitated by a bereaved Mum, for bereaved parents with a pre-school sibling.

Our amazing volunteers are also playing a bigger role than ever. Some are now receiving extra training to support at bereavement events, helping us offer even more care to the families who need it.

'Exploring Together' workshops

And, in response to the need for deeper conversations around loss, we've launched a new series of 'Exploring Together' workshops. These sessions bring together families whose child died under similar circumstances, offering the opportunity for group reflection and sharing. We've already held several workshops this year, with more planned for 2026.

“We're incredibly proud of everything our Bereavement Team has achieved,” says Carys. “And we're committed to keep growing and adapting, so we can continue to walk alongside families in the way they need us most.”

Find out more about our Bereavement Support at:
noahsarkhospice.org.uk/services/bereavement-support



GCSE Success to university dream

Meet Nasif

We last caught up with Nasif in 2023 when he achieved an incredible 13 GCSEs.

This summer, he's continued his academic success with three A-levels: an A* in Geography, an A in Religious Studies, and a B in English Literature. Now aged 20, he's heading to University College London to study Geography.

Nasif has Mitochondrial Neurogastrointestinal Encephalomyopathy (MNGIE), which causes extreme pain, fatigue, and gastrointestinal issues, and led to a liver transplant. We began supporting Nasif in 2022, supporting him to access his right to an education and reach this impressive milestone.

"I like learning the subjects, but when it comes to doing independent work, I do have to focus on it a lot more and put my mind to it," he says. "I'm not able to start working a 9-5 job like a usual person. So... the only option was to work hard in my studies."

It took my mind off all my troubles

Nasif believes education should be accessible to all: "Everyone deserves a chance to study further if they want to." He adds, "Because of my illness, I've realised that my options have become really limited. So, I've put all my energy, all my focus, into my intelligence and discipline. I was off school in Year 11 for about a year... just sitting on the sofa looking at a wall all day," he recalls. "But once I started revising... it took my mind off all my troubles."

"My teachers told me I wasn't required to do homework... everything I've achieved has been self-discipline," he says. "I've had people call my potential 'wasted'... so I carried on with my studies out of spite."



“...I've put all my energy, all my focus, into my intelligence and discipline.”

"My family are really proud... I'm proud too." He credits Jo, his Family Link Worker: "She's been a really big help... school thought I should just give up."

Jo Isaacs, Noah's Ark's Family Link Team Manager, says: "Our job is to ensure young people like Nasif are seen, heard – and not forgotten."

Nasif is excited for university, and ready to prove a few more people wrong. We wish him every success.

You can read Nasif's full story on our website at: noahsarkhospice.org.uk/news-and-stories/nasif-a-level-success-leads-to-university



Highly Commended Campaign Film

From That Moment 2024 was honoured at this year's Third Sector Awards, where the campaign film – created pro bono by The 10 Group – received the Highly Commended Trophy for Best Charity Film on 12th September.



The film features Elaine and her daughter Willow, age 7, who we have supported since Willow was 18 months old.

The film documents Elaine's journey through the hopefulness of pregnancy to the fear and uncertainty that followed when she realised that Willow had a serious health condition.

The beautiful film features a moving poem by Charlie Brogan – a writer and poet based in London – and is voiced by Dr Kathryn Mannix, a retired palliative care doctor and a powerful advocate for better understanding of death and

dying. Dr Mannix is also a successful author, having written 'With the End in Mind: How to Live and Die Well' and more recently, 'Listen: How to Find the Words for Tender Conversations.'

"An amazing experience"

Elaine says: "We were delighted to be asked to be part of the film, it was an amazing experience and a memory that we will treasure. I wanted to take part as I want to give something back to Noah's Ark Children's Hospice for all the

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Noah's Ark
Children's Hospice
From That Moment 2024



support and joy they've given us but also to raise awareness of Willow's condition, Type 2 Spinal Muscular Atrophy."

Our CEO, Sophie Andrews OBE, adds: "I'm so proud that our 2024 'From That Moment' film has won the Highly Commended Trophy at the Third Sector Awards in the Best Large Charity Film category."

"The film is a truly impactful piece that captures the moment that changed a family's life forever, and its recognition is a testament to the quality of our campaign film."



With kind thanks to Elaine and Willow for allowing us to share their story.

Neonatal Music Therapy



Meet Dean: Neonatal Music Therapist



For the past two years, Dean Wood has been using the power of music to support babies and their families on the Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICU) at Great Ormond Street Hospital, University College London Hospital, and Barnet Hospital as part of his role as a Music Therapist at Noah's Ark Children's Hospice.

Dean first discovered Music Therapy while studying music over ten years ago.

"I worked in a concert venue that rented space to a Music Therapy charity. They needed a musician to help run the clinic, so I got involved," he says.

"I spent time with the therapist and met families using the service. I didn't think at the time it was what I wanted to do, but it stuck with me. After a few career changes, and some soul searching, I realised this was exactly what I wanted to do."

Dean explains what makes music so meaningful: "For me, it's about connection, collaboration, and being creative."



"I took what was important for me about music and combined it with something that could have a profound impact on people's lives."

Finding connection through music: Dean's work on the NICU

Dean provides Music Therapy for babies and their families in NICU settings, bringing something uniquely gentle and supportive into a high-stress medical environment. "It's a positive, non-threatening intervention," he says. "It can help babies relax and regulate, which supports their brain development. And for parents, it offers comfort and a way to feel more present."

Dean emphasises that sound and music play a key role in how babies connect with the world. "Babies start to hear in the womb as early as 22-24 weeks. By the third trimester, they can recognise familiar voices and react to music. That connection

to sound begins early and continues throughout life."

Parents with babies on the NICU can experience a loss of parental identity and feel sidelined as medical professionals step in to care for their baby. Music Therapy can ease these feelings by offering a way for the parents to bond with their baby.

"Their voice is always their baby's favourite sound," Dean says.

"Sometimes I help by improvising melodies or lullabies if they're not sure where to start. But my goal is for families to feel confident using music themselves, even between sessions."

Dean works closely with hospital teams and appreciates the impact

of Noah's Ark's involvement. "It gives families a sense of familiarity. If their baby goes on to use the hospice's services, that connection is already there. For some families, Music Therapy is their first introduction to Noah's Ark."

Dean believes Music Therapy should be available on every NICU. "It supports babies, empowers parents, and fosters connection. It's simple but profound, and every family deserves access to it."



You can read Dean's full story on our website at: noahsarkhospice.org.uk/news-and-stories



From Gardening to Fundraising

Lisa's Journey



How Volunteer Roles Grow and Evolve at Noah's Ark

At Noah's Ark Children's Hospice, volunteers are an essential part of the team, bringing their time, talents, and compassion to a wide range of roles.

One of the most inspiring things about our volunteer community is how those roles can evolve and grow over time - just like Lisa's.

Lisa began volunteering at Noah's Ark almost three years ago, shortly after making a big life change.

"I had just left a corporate job and retrained as a gardener," she shares. "I was looking for a local place where I could use my new skills - when I came for a tour of The Ark, I was completely blown away. I knew straight away that I wanted to be involved."

Lisa started out as a Gardening Volunteer, helping to care for the peaceful green spaces that surround The Ark. But her role didn't stay rooted there for long. "One day, I was at an event, and someone

suggested I might enjoy helping in the charity office too," Lisa recalls. "I decided to give it a go, and now I mainly volunteer with the Fundraising Team, supporting them with admin tasks. I still help in the gardens too, especially on corporate volunteering days. It's lovely to combine both my skills."

"...when I came for a tour of The Ark, I was completely blown away. I knew straight away that I wanted to be involved."

Lisa now plays a key role in co-ordinating visiting corporate groups who volunteer in the gardens. "I really enjoy meeting people from so many different companies. A lot of them don't know much about gardening, so I guide them through the day."

What she values most, though, is the chance to contribute in varied and meaningful ways. "It keeps my brain active and gives me the chance to do all sorts of things I wouldn't normally get to do. It's such a lovely environment and I really look forward to my time here."

Lisa says that her proudest moments are often the simplest: "Just being able to support the team with tasks that would otherwise take up a lot of their time; it gives me a real sense of achievement."

"I still help in the gardens too, especially on corporate volunteering days. It's lovely to combine both my skills."

Her connection with Noah's Ark extends beyond her volunteering shifts. "I live nearby, and my neighbours often see me coming and going from The Ark. They always ask about what I do there, and it gives me a great chance to spread the word about all the amazing work happening here."

A Growing Journey

Lisa's journey is a beautiful example of how volunteering isn't always a fixed path, sometimes it branches out in unexpected directions. As our Volunteering Development Manager, Dan explains:



"Volunteering isn't always a fixed path, sometimes it branches out in unexpected directions."

"It's wonderful to see how volunteers like Lisa grow into their roles and discover new ways to contribute. We always try to support volunteers in finding what brings them joy and purpose."

"Whether it's using a long-standing skill or trying something brand new, our volunteers are constantly evolving, and that's something we truly celebrate at Noah's Ark."

Interested in Volunteering?

Whether you're green-thumbed like Lisa, great with admin, or simply looking to give back, we're always looking for volunteers and would love to hear from you. However much time you can give, you can make a huge difference to Noah's Ark.

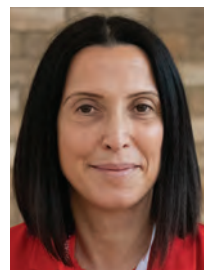
Visit noahsarkhospice.org.uk/volunteering to find out more.



meet the Team



My name is Maria and I'm a Family Link Worker at Noah's Ark



Maria is one of Noah's Ark's dedicated Family Link Workers and has recently achieved a significant personal milestone – qualifying as a **Level 4 Counselling Practitioner**.

Having worked in education and support roles for many years, Maria says gaining a formal counselling qualification felt like the natural next step.

"I put it off because at the time my kids were younger, and then one year turned into two, two then turned into five, then ten years later I had done nothing with it. I knew it was foolish not to finish so I started looking into how I'd go about it and managed to find a course that would accept me after a ten-year gap."

“It's changed my life. I feel like I see things so differently now..”

Returning to studying wasn't easy. "I thought I was out of my depth," Maria admits, "but then I realised that I was doing the role anyway, so in some respects I was ahead of them."

Balancing work, study, and life was a challenge. "The qualification requires you to have 100 hours of practice, plus supervision, plus your own



personal therapy, plus the work. And I just thought, how am I going to do that with a full-time job? There were times where I thought, I can't do it – but I did."

Maria credits her team at Noah's Ark for their support: "I'm surrounded by people that have done nothing but champion and cheerlead for me."

Reflecting on the impact of her training, Maria says: "It was never about me practicing, it was always about enhancing my work at Noah's Ark. I look back and I can see that without the training, I wouldn't have handled things the way I did. It's changed my life. I feel like I see

things so differently now." Maria reflects on how her training has deepened her ability to support families: "I feel like I can sit more with uncomfortable things. I'm happy to sit in silence. I feel like it gave me a strength that was probably already there."

Well done, Maria – what an incredible achievement!

You can find out more about our Family Link service at: noahsarkhospice.org.uk/services/family-link



FUNDRAISING NEWS

A Parent Supporting Noah's Ark

Elaine Laces Up her Trainers for Noah's Ark

Noah's Ark has been supporting Elaine and her daughter Willow, aged 7, since Willow was 18 months old and diagnosed with Type 2 Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA).

On Sunday 12th October, Elaine, her sister Eleanor and her best friend Sarah took on the Royal Parks Half Marathon – all to raise vital funds for Noah's Ark Children's Hospice.



Reflecting on the race, Elaine says: "It was a challenge! I ran the London Marathon 18 years ago, but I'm not really a runner. The last three or four miles were especially hard – but I finished!"

Elaine's says of her team mates running experience: "Sarah does a lot of Parkruns but had never run this far before. Eleanor completed Couch to 5k, so this was a huge step up for her too."

Slowly building up the distance

Finding time to train around busy lives was no easy feat. "We had a WhatsApp group to keep each other motivated, but it was tricky; most runners follow a strict plan, and that just wasn't possible for us. I trained when I could, usually on my treadmill at home, slowly building up the distance."

Despite the physical test, the event was a memorable one. Elaine adds: "The atmosphere on the day was incredible. Afterwards, we headed to the 'Little Village' where there were



“We wanted to give something back, not just for us, but for all the other children and families Noah's Ark supports.”

food stalls and entertainment, and then I went home to snuggle up with Willow."

When asked why she chose to run for Noah's Ark, Elaine didn't hesitate: "Noah's Ark has done so much for us, not just for Willow, but for our whole family. The events, the days out, the support, it's all just amazing. We wanted to give something back, not just for us, but for all the other children and families Noah's Ark supports."

Elaine and Willow featured in our 2024 From That Moment campaign film, which was recently awarded Highly Commended for Best Large Charity Film at the prestigious Third Sector Awards. **Read more on page 19.**



Fundraising round-up

Providing expert, compassionate palliative care requires highly skilled staff and specialist equipment – both of which come at a significant cost.

It takes £7.1 million each year to run our services. With over 75% of our income coming from fundraising, we must raise more than £4.8 million this year through voluntary donations. We rely on the incredible generosity of our community to make this possible.

Our community
is stronger
with you in it

LEADING BY EXAMPLE:

Tony Tackles 100km Trek for Noah's Ark

At Noah's Ark, we're proud to support our incredible community of fundraisers, but this year, one of our own took on a gruelling challenge to walk the talk, quite literally.

In May, our Supporter Engagement Officer, Tony Cucchiara laced up his walking boots for a monumental test of endurance: the **London 2 Brighton Ultra Challenge** – a 100km trek spanning from Richmond-upon-Thames to Brighton Racecourse.

A staggering 142,925 steps

Setting off at 7:30am on Saturday 24th May, Tony powered through the day and night, arriving in Brighton on Sunday morning, after 27 hours and 49 minutes on foot, without a wink of sleep. The journey totalled a staggering 142,925 steps.

Reflecting on the experience, Tony says: "I spend so much of



“It was tougher than I imagined, but every step reminded me why we do this.”

my time supporting our amazing fundraisers – it felt right to put myself in their shoes, quite literally. It was tougher than I imagined, but every step reminded me why we do this. I thought about the

families Noah's Ark supports and the difference we can make when we push ourselves beyond our comfort zones.”

Tony's inspiring effort adds to

what has already been a phenomenal year for Team Noah in 2025. Our challenge participants have shown outstanding commitment, raising vital funds in courageous ways:

- **Battersea Park Half Marathon:** kicked off the year in January – Alara Bir took on her very first challenge event, raising a fantastic £561.
- **London Landmarks Half Marathon:** 3 runners raised an amazing £3,385.
- **London Marathon My Way:** our first-ever virtual participant, Jonas Arnaud, completed the challenge all the way from Malta, raising £518!
- **Tough Mudder:** 8 brave participants, led by Sam Cain, raised an impressive £806.
- **National 3 Peaks Challenge:** Led by Christian Cornell, this group of terrific trekkers raised £3,694.
- **Team Noah Skydive:** 9 fearless skydivers raised an incredible £9,222 – 7 of these jumped on our dedicated skydive day in June.
- **New Forest Half Marathon:** our first-time participants Frank Cunnane and Nick Johnson smashed their target with £13,271 raised, thanks to match funding as part of our From That Moment fundraising campaign.
- **Corporate Relay – London & Manchester:** 5 teams from Cynergy Bank ran 5k relay races, raising a combined total of £2,070.
- **London, Brighton and Paris Marathons:** a group of 12 runners have completed all 3 marathons raising a total of £30,288!



If our Supporter Engagement Officer can tackle 100km without sleep, what could you achieve for Noah's Ark? Whether it's a skydive, a trek, or a 5k, there's a challenge for everyone.

Join Team Noah and make every mile matter!

You can find out more about organised challenge events on our website or call our team on 020 8449 8877.



Looking Ahead...

And our 2026 events calendar is already shaping up!

- **Team Noah Skydive** – Saturday 20 June (to mark Children's Hospice Week). Places are now available.
- **The Big Half** – September. Register your interest soon – the 2025 event sold out in record time.
- **Royal Parks Half Marathon** – October. Pre-register your interest now – places will be available very soon and sold out in record time last year!

Fundraising in the Community

Our **Community Team** work with groups in our local community – scouting, schools, clubs, religious and social groups – to help spread the word about what we do and how we support children who are seriously unwell and their families.

Quiz Night Sparks Community Spirit

The Noah's Ark community came together, as **Reed Recruitment** hosted a lively quiz night in Enfield in support of Noah's Ark.

The event brought together local businesses, quiz enthusiasts, and supporters for an evening full of fun and friendly competition.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of local businesses, prizes were donated by Reed, McMullen & Sons Ltd, David Lloyd Clubs, Jetset Flights Limited, Laboratory Spa & Health Clubs, and Nu Vending, helping to make the night even more special for attendees.

Full of energy and laughter

Zehra, Area Manager at Reed Recruitment, said: "We set out to bring the community together while raising funds for an incredibly worthy cause, and the response was just amazing. The event was full of energy and laughter but knowing it was all in support of Noah's Ark Children's Hospice made it truly meaningful. It was a fantastic night that showed the power of community spirit and the difference we can make when we come together."

Huge thanks to the team – Zehra, Zaynab, Opanin, Maria, Sharandeep, Rakhee, Mia and Michael – who organised the event and raised £3,117!

We're so grateful to Reed Recruitment and all the local businesses who contributed to the event's success. It's this kind of community support that makes the work of Noah's Ark possible – helping us continue to be there for children and families when they need it most.



“It was a fantastic night that showed the power of community spirit and the difference we can make when we come together.”



Joyful Voices: The Return of our Winter Concert

We're thrilled to announce that on Monday 8th December, our much-loved winter concert is making a heartwarming return with the help of five primary schools!

This special fundraising event will bring together the talents of five primary school choirs and the beautiful voices of two professional singers, Katie and Tom – parents of Leia, who is supported by Noah's Ark Children's Hospice. Plus, special guest, renowned opera singer Carly Paoli.



The vocalists promise a programme of festive favourites and moving melodies, making the evening a true celebration of joy, community, and the power of music.

Joyful Voices, at Allum Manor Hall in Elstree, promises to be an unforgettable evening that lifts spirits and raises vital funds for children and families supported by Noah's Ark. **Visit our website or follow us on social media to find out more.**

To find out more contact: the Community Team on 020 8449 8877 or email community@noahsarkhospice.org.uk

At Noah's Ark Children's Hospice, we know how important it is to remember those we have loved and lost.

A Star to Remember

This winter, we invite you to honour the life of someone special by **dedicating a star** on our **A Star to Remember** tribute wall.

Our Supporter Engagement Officer, **Amelia Williamson** (right) shares: "We created A Star to Remember as a space where people can

honour the memory of someone special in a meaningful and lasting way. Grief is deeply personal, but remembrance can bring us together. Our virtual tribute wall allows families, friends, and supporters to share messages,



photos, and memories – and, in doing so, to celebrate the lives of those they've loved and lost.

At the same time, each dedication helps raise vital funds so that we can continue supporting children with life-limiting or life-threatening conditions and their families. Every star is a tribute, and every donation helps light the way forward for others."

Dedicating a star is simple. Just visit our website to create and personalise your online tribute – leave a heartfelt message, upload a photo, or share a cherished memory. In return, we kindly ask for a small donation to help us continue supporting children who are seriously unwell, and their families, now and in the years to come.

Create A Star to Remember

Scan the QR code or visit noahsarkhospice.memorypage.org/astartoremember to dedicate your star today. If you would like to talk to us about in memory donations or leaving a gift to Noah's Ark in your Will, please contact the Supporter Engagement Team on 020 8449 8877 or email: giftinwills@noahsarkhospice.org.uk



Scaling New Heights for Noah's Ark

Thank You, Taylor Wimpey North Thames!



On 5th September, a determined team from **Taylor Wimpey North Thames** took on the epic **National Three Peaks Challenge** – climbing the highest mountains in Scotland (Ben Nevis), England (Scafell Pike) and Wales (Mount Snowdon).

This gruelling 37km trek included over 10,000 feet of elevation gain and tested their stamina, strength, and spirit. The challenge was part of our annual From That Moment matched-giving campaign, and thanks to their incredible efforts, the team has already raised an amazing £21,802 for Noah's Ark!

And that's not all. Taylor Wimpey also raised an

incredible £50,000 at their recent charity golf day, bringing even more vital funds to support babies, children, and young people with life-threatening or life-limiting conditions.

Ben Smith, Production Director at Taylor Wimpey, shares: "Supporting Noah's Ark Children's Hospice has given us the opportunity to make a meaningful difference for children and families when they need it most. From hosting our annual golf day, to our incredible colleagues who conquered the National Three Peaks Challenge, we're proud to play our part in helping such an inspiring charity continue its vital work."

To everyone who laced up their hiking boots, picked up a golf club, or donated – thank you. Your dedication and generosity are helping to bring comfort, joy, and support to families when they need it most.

We warmly welcome new corporate partners. If you or your company are interested, please contact our Corporate Partnership team on **020 8449 8877** or email: corporatepartnerships@noahsarkhospice.org.uk



For one generous couple, **Steve and Liane Hornsey**, living over 5,000 miles away in Los Angeles, their journey with Noah's Ark Children's Hospice began in the most unexpected of ways – through the radio.

Why One Family Thousands of Miles Away is Supporting Noah's Ark

"We heard Becky (Head of Philanthropy at Noah's Ark, inset) on Radio 5 Live making an appeal," Steve recalls. "We live in Los Angeles but, as Londoners, we frequently listen to UK radio. We felt an instant connection and knew immediately that we should donate to such a worthy cause."

That moment of connection was deeply personal. Years earlier, their daughter had been diagnosed with cancer. Though she recovered, the experience left a lasting impact. "The overwhelming agony of the diagnosis and the terror in our soul has never really left us. So, compassion and empathy for all involved with Noah's Ark lies deep within us."

Their involvement has grown far beyond that first donation. Since retiring, they have established a grant-making fund, allowing them to support specific services at Noah's Ark and develop close relationships with members of the Fundraising Team.

Genuinely committed

"As our dialogue with the staff has evolved, we've come to think of the people, especially Becky, as friends. It's no longer a simple donation to a worthy cause. We feel genuinely committed to ongoing support."

One moment that particularly stands out was when government policy changes severely impacted the sustainability of our funding. "Sadly, the government's failure to exempt Noah's Ark from increased National Insurance stands out. To that end, we added additional funds this year to offset some of the increase and plan to continue this as needed."

Despite living far away, their commitment is unwavering, fuelled by regular updates from our Fundraising Team and a shared belief in the



importance of making a difference. "We know that Noah's Ark exists to provide some underpinning when families are challenged in the most difficult situations. Being involved has enabled us to witness many positive moments and emotions."

Every penny counts

To those considering supporting the hospice for the first time, their message is simple and heartfelt: "Helping a child is surely embedded in everyone's heart. Every penny counts, and this facility can't survive without our collective help."

Their parting thought serves as a rallying call to the wider community: "If there is even a slight chance that we can make the life of a child and their family a little brighter, we should rally to do so – and do so frequently, and with love."

At Noah's Ark, we are incredibly grateful for every donor, near or far, who shares our belief that every child's life should be filled with care, comfort, and dignity.

If you'd like to explore how you or your organisation can support Noah's Ark, we'd love to talk. Please contact the Philanthropy Team on **020 8449 8877** or email: philanthropy@noahsarkhospice.org.uk





NOAH'S ARK

children's hospice

join our community



Providing a children's hospice and palliative care is costly. With over 75% of our income coming from fundraising, we rely on the generosity of our community.

It takes a whole community to make our work happen. Without our supporters we couldn't be there for the children and families we care for and that's why we would be delighted to have you on board. Whether you:

- donate any amount, however big or small
- take part in a fundraising activity
- organise a fundraising event
- ask your school or community group to support us
- take on a challenge event with Team Noah
- or even get your company involved...

...we'd love to hear from you.

Our community is stronger with you in it.

www.noahsarkhospice.org.uk/support-us
fundraising@noahsarkhospice.org.uk

The Ark, Byng Road, Barnet EN5 4NP | 020 8449 8877 | noahsarkhospice.org.uk



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