

Summer 2026

## In this issue:

Comment from Siân  
NHS advice on end  
of life care **2**

**2** Mental  
Health  
& Wellbeing  
Guide 2026



A little planning now,  
peace of mind later:  
Planning for later life **3**

**4** Specialist Palliative  
Care at York Hospital

My Future Wishes  
Advance Care Plan **4**

**5** The Autumn Project:  
Supporting end of  
life care in hospital

**6** Info about end of life &  
palliative care in York

Acomb Death Café **7**  
and end of life doulas



**St Leonard's Hospice:**

Day in the life ..... **8**

Services available ... **10**

Groups for those with  
life-limiting illness .... **11**

**12** York Bereavement  
Alliance • Bereaved  
Children Support York

**13** What to do when  
someone dies •  
Pastoral, spiritual and  
religious care in hospital

York Carer's Centre:  
Support when your  
caring role ends **13**

**14** Engagement Update  
Healthcare technology

Improving the Local  
Welfare Safety Net **15**

**15** Future of  
Healthwatch

## End of life and palliative care

**In this edition of the Healthwatch York magazine we focus on end of life and palliative care, and the support and services available in York.**

Palliative care is available when you first learn you have a life-limiting (terminal) illness. End of life care is a form of palliative care you receive when you are close to the end of life. It is intended to help you live as well as possible until you die, managing your symptoms, supporting you to express your wishes, and to die with dignity. It should also support your family, carers and other people who are important to you.

Knowing about which services and support are available is vital to making informed decisions about treatment and care. We hope that the information in this magazine is a good starting point.

In York we are very lucky to have **St Leonard's Hospice**. This provides a wide

range of services for those with life-limiting conditions and people reaching the end of life. **Charlotte Hoban**, the *Wellbeing and Outreach lead* at St Leonard's gives us an insight into the work of the hospice in the *'Day in the Life'* piece on page 8.

We share details about the various services available from York Hospital. This includes both in-patient and community services, and the *Autumn Leaf* project, more details on page 5.

We are also delighted to hear from **Lois Britchford**, a Private Client Solicitor from the law firm **Crombie Wilkinson**, based in York. Lois outlines how putting simple plans in place can make life much easier for both you and your loved ones.

**There is support out there. We hope this provides a useful overview, but please get in touch if you need any further information. We will do our best to help.**

## Siân's Comment

**It can be difficult to talk about the end of life. But we will all face it at some point.**

Having early conversations about plans and wishes can spare those you love from having to make tough decisions on your behalf under pressure. That's why this edition of the Healthwatch York Magazine is dedicated to looking at end of life and palliative care services and support.

Whether you wish to be cared for at home, in hospital or in a hospice, there is support available when your time comes. We hope the resources and information we share will help you decide what is right for you and your loved ones.

As usual, we have also included updates on our work, as well as the latest information about the future of Healthwatch.

The Health Bill has finally been published. As expected, it includes plans to abolish Healthwatch England and the local Healthwatch network, including Healthwatch York. We share an update about this on page 15.

Please know that we are still here and will be until at least 31 March 2027, and hopefully beyond. We will continue to work hard to make sure everyone in York has a voice in health and care.

As always, please keep sharing your experiences of health and social care with us, good and bad. It is your way to help shape the future of services in York.



**Siân Balsom**  
Healthwatch York  
Manager

## NHS Advice on end of life care

**A good starting point for reliable information and health advice is always the NHS website. This includes information about end of life care.**

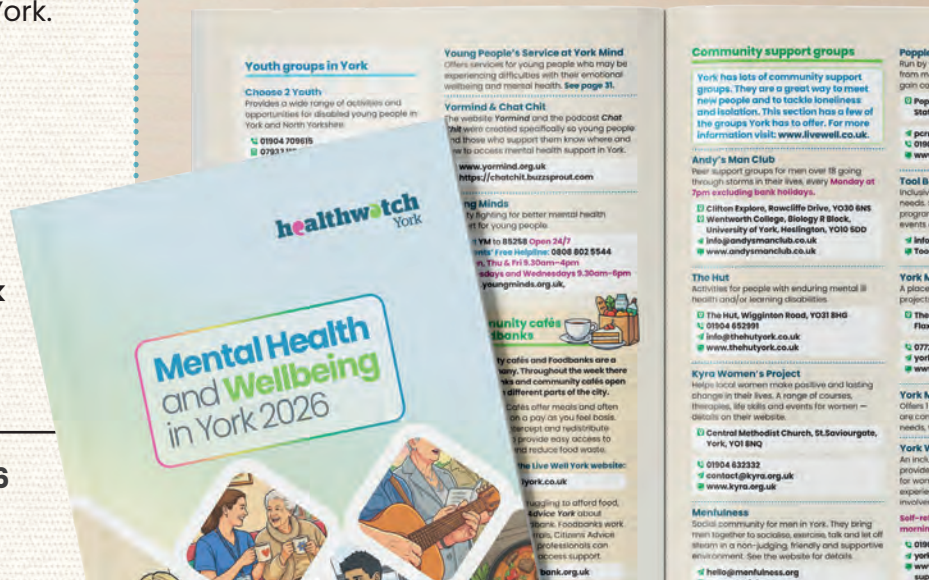
**End of life care information to be found on the NHS website includes:**

- **What end of life care involves:** an introduction to end of life care, what it is, when it starts and who provides it.
- **What to expect from end of life care:** information about the quality of end of life care and what to do if you have any concerns.
- **Where you can have end of life care:** information about where you can have end of life care, including at home, in hospital, in a care home or in a hospice.
- **Planning ahead:** advice about planning end of life care, including how to let people know about the care you want to receive.
- **Your wellbeing:** information to help you manage well during end of life care.

[www.nhs.uk/tests-and-treatments/end-of-life-care](https://www.nhs.uk/tests-and-treatments/end-of-life-care)

## New Mental Health and Wellbeing Guide

**Our new York Mental Health and Wellbeing Guide has been updated and is now available on our website or contact us for paper copies.**



## A little planning now, peace of mind later



**Planning for later life is something many of us put off. It's not always an easy topic, and it's tempting to think it can wait.**

In reality, putting a few simple plans in place can make life much easier down the line—for you and for the people around you.

As a private client solicitor, I help individuals and families with things like making a will and setting up Lasting Powers of Attorney. These might sound like big, complicated steps, but they're often more straightforward than people expect—and having them in place can make a real difference.

### **Making a will**

A will sets out who you would like to inherit your money, property, and personal belongings. Even if you feel you don't have much to leave, a will is still important. It makes sure that what you do have goes where you want it to, rather than being decided by law. It also allows you to choose people you trust to deal with your estate and, if needed, to name guardians for children or dependants.

### **Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPA)**

A Lasting Power of Attorney allows you to choose someone you trust to step in and make decisions if you're unable to.

There are two types: one for property and finances, and one for health and welfare, including decisions about your care. Without this in place, things can become more complicated for families at an already difficult time.

### **Recording your wishes**

You can also record your preferences about medical treatment in advance (sometimes called an Advance Decision or "living will"). Alongside this, having open conversations with your family about how and where you'd like to be cared for can make things much clearer for everyone.

### **Leaving helpful information**

A simple but often overlooked step is making sure your loved ones can find important information when they need it. This could include bank details, insurance, pensions, and digital accounts. It doesn't have to be complicated—just clear and accessible.

### **Your funeral wishes**

Some people choose to set out their wishes for a funeral or memorial. Others go a step further and make arrangements in advance. Either way it can take some of the pressure off family members and give a bit of guidance at a difficult time.

Planning ahead doesn't have to be done all at once, and it doesn't have to feel overwhelming. A few small steps now can make things much clearer and easier in the future.

If you would like support or advice, a legal professional can guide you through the process and help keep things simple.

**Lois Britchford**  
**Private Client Solicitor**  
**Crombie Wilkinson**



# Specialist Palliative Care at York Hospital

**The Specialist Palliative Care Team at York Hospital offers care and support at any stage of a progressive life-limiting illness.**

The care includes the management of symptoms, including pain, as well as emotional and social support throughout the hospital and within the community.

The team includes specialist nurses both at the hospital and in the community, doctors, specialist physiotherapists, occupational therapists and administrative staff.

**They can help you with, or signpost you to:**

- an assessment of your individual needs
- advice on symptom management
- time for you and your family or carers to talk through thoughts and feelings about your illness
- advice about how to access information about benefits, employment etc
- liaising with other teams involved in your care
- helping you to make decisions about the future and the place in which you wish to be cared for

- maximising independence, safety at home and quality of life
- assessments for hospice referrals

→ **The York Hospital Team is available Monday to Friday, 8am – 4pm.**

→ **The York Community Team is available Monday to Sunday, 8.30am – 4.30pm.**

📞 **01904 725835 (office hours)**

✉️ **yhs-tr.PalliativeCareTeam@nhs.net**

**There is a limited service available at weekends and Bank Holidays. For community out of working hours, phone:**

📞 **York Community Nursing team: 01904 721200** or the **GP on 111**

If there are any urgent issues and you cannot get hold of the team, please contact your GP, ward or out of hours service.

🌐 **[www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/our-services/organdonation/a-z-of-services/palliative-care](http://www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/our-services/organdonation/a-z-of-services/palliative-care)**

## My Future Wishes Advance Care Plan

**An advance care plan is a written statement that outlines your preferences, wishes, beliefs and values regarding your future care.**

**There is more information on the NHS website:**

🌐 **[www.nhs.uk/tests-and-treatments/end-of-life-care/planning-ahead/advance-statement](http://www.nhs.uk/tests-and-treatments/end-of-life-care/planning-ahead/advance-statement)**

A template, *'My Future Wishes Advance Care Plan'*, has been developed by health, social care and voluntary sector staff across West Yorkshire ICB, including Dementia Forward. It can be used by anyone, in any area, wanting to record their future care wishes.

The form gives structure to thinking and talking about death. It allows you to express who you are and what is important to you. This will help to make sure that your wishes are taken into consideration when decisions are being made about your future care if you cannot take those decisions yourself.

You can share a part of the form with your GP practice so that they, and the staff involved in your care, are aware of your wishes. The document can be downloaded from the Dementia Forward website here:

🌐 **[www.dementiaforward.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/My\\_future\\_wishes\\_Advance\\_Care\\_Plan\\_May2020.pdf](http://www.dementiaforward.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/My_future_wishes_Advance_Care_Plan_May2020.pdf)**



## The Autumn Project Supporting end of life care in hospital

**The Autumn Project at York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust was established in January 2021 to support patients as they approach the end of life, along with those who are important to them.**

It is being supported by **York & Scarborough Hospitals Charity** which has received donations specifically for the project, including in memory of people's loved ones. The team has also received support for the project from the **Friends of St Monica's Hospital** and the **Friends of the New Selby War Memorial Hospital**.

Led by the Specialist Palliative Care Teams, the project is available across the wards and community inpatient units. With permission, an autumn leaf symbol is placed on the curtain or side room door of a patient nearing the end of life.

This symbol helps all staff recognise that the patient is receiving care in the last days of life so they act with additional sensitivity, understanding, and provide the right support. A cuddle bed is now available in Scarborough Hospital. This has meant that people can share last moments together. This has been supported by donations to the York & Scarborough Hospitals Charity.

“ The symbol helps all staff recognise that the patient is receiving care in the last days of life so they act with additional sensitivity, understanding, and provide the right support. ”

At its heart, the Autumn Project is about kindness, communication, and making sure that no one feels alone at such an important time. It helps staff to be aware that both patients and those important to them may need extra care, time, and compassion.

The Autumn Project encourages patients and those important to them to talk about what matters most to them. This might be around spiritual or religious needs. It might be about the dying person's interests and preferences for things such as their appearance, music, lighting, sleeping position or bed covers. If there are things that are important, no matter how small, then they are important to the health care professionals.

They understand that everyone's experience of dying is unique. Patients and those important to them are encouraged to share what matters most, so care can be shaped around individual wishes and what feels right for them.

**You can contact the hospital and community palliative care teams by phone on the following numbers:**

**York Hospital Specialist Palliative Care Team: 01904 725835**

**York Community Specialist Palliative Care Team: 01904 777770**

**If you would like further information, please access the QR code:**



# Support and information about end of life and palliative care in York

## Planning in advance

Age UK: **Information about planning in advance:** [www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/relationships-family/end-of-life-issues](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/relationships-family/end-of-life-issues)

Marie Curie:

- **Advance care planning information:** [www.mariecurie.org.uk/information/planning-ahead/advance-care-planning](http://www.mariecurie.org.uk/information/planning-ahead/advance-care-planning)
- **Planning Ahead Checklist:** [www.mariecurie.org.uk/document/planning-ahead-checklist](http://www.mariecurie.org.uk/document/planning-ahead-checklist)

Patient Passport: **A way to give health and care professionals information about you to help them provide the right care and treatment:** [www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/health-and-care-passport-plain-english/#what-is-a-health-and-care-passport](http://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/health-and-care-passport-plain-english/#what-is-a-health-and-care-passport)

Resuscitation Council UK: **Information about emergency treatment plans, including the Recommended Summary Plan for Emergency Care and Treatment (ReSPECT) process and Do Not Attempt CPR (DNACPR):** [www.resus.org.uk/professional-library/faqs/faqs-decision-making-cpr](http://www.resus.org.uk/professional-library/faqs/faqs-decision-making-cpr)

St Leonard's Hospice: **Wellbeing Drop In. Every Thursday in the Sunflower Centre 185 Tadcaster Road, York, YO24 1GL. A weekly drop-in for anyone in our community affected by a life-limiting illness to provide listening and support and guidance on planning in advance.**

## Trusted Sources of information

NHS website: **Health information and what to expect from end of life care:** [www.nhs.uk/tests-and-treatments/end-of-life-care/what-to-expect-from-care](http://www.nhs.uk/tests-and-treatments/end-of-life-care/what-to-expect-from-care)

Live Well York: **Directory of services in York:** [www.livewellyork.co.uk/information-and-advice/clinical-health-and-adult-social-care/end-of-life-care](http://www.livewellyork.co.uk/information-and-advice/clinical-health-and-adult-social-care/end-of-life-care)

Marie Curie: **Has published a series of easy read booklets about what happens when someone dies:** [www.mariecurie.org.uk/help/support/publications/easy-reads](http://www.mariecurie.org.uk/help/support/publications/easy-reads)

## Life Limiting Conditions

St Leonard's Hospice: **Runs groups for those with a life limiting condition. See pages 10 and 11.**

- Wellbeing
- MND social drop in
- York heart failure social
- The Breathing Space

Leveson Centre - **for people affected by cancer:** [www.thelevesoncentre.org.uk](http://www.thelevesoncentre.org.uk)

## Specialist condition support online:

### Cancer support:

Macmillan Cancer Support: [www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/treatment/if-you-have-an-advanced-cancer/end-of-life](http://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/treatment/if-you-have-an-advanced-cancer/end-of-life)

### Dementia and end of life planning:

NHS information: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/dementia/living-with-dementia/palliative-care](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/dementia/living-with-dementia/palliative-care)

Dementia UK: [www.dementiauk.org/information-and-support/looking-after-yourself-as-a-carer/end-of-life-care](http://www.dementiauk.org/information-and-support/looking-after-yourself-as-a-carer/end-of-life-care)

Alzheimers Society: **Making decisions about end of life care.**

[www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/help-dementia-care/end-life-care-making-decisions](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/help-dementia-care/end-life-care-making-decisions)

### Heart conditions:

British Heart Foundation: [www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/heart-matters-magazine/wellbeing/end-of-life-care](http://www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/heart-matters-magazine/wellbeing/end-of-life-care)

Huntington's Disease: [www.hda.org.uk/information-and-support/huntingtons-disease/what-is-huntingtons-disease/](http://www.hda.org.uk/information-and-support/huntingtons-disease/what-is-huntingtons-disease/)

Motor Neuron Disease Association: [www.mndassociation.org](http://www.mndassociation.org)

**Multiple Sclerosis:** [www.mssociety.org.uk](http://www.mssociety.org.uk)  
**Parkinson's UK:** <https://localsupport.parkinsons.org.uk/provider/york-branch>  
**Pulmonary Fibrosis:** <https://actionpf.org>  
**Renal Patients National Kidney Federation:** [www.kidney.org.uk/end-of-life-care-for-renal-patients](http://www.kidney.org.uk/end-of-life-care-for-renal-patients)

## Carer's Support

**York Carer's Centre:** See page 13.

**St Leonard's carer support service:** Service providing a break for people caring for a family member or friend. See page 10.

## Practical advice when someone dies

**GOV.UK: Practical advice when someone dies:** [www.gov.uk/when-someone-dies](http://www.gov.uk/when-someone-dies)

**Citizens Advice: What to do after a death:** [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/family/death-and-wills/what-to-do-after-a-death/](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/family/death-and-wills/what-to-do-after-a-death/)

**Age UK: What to do when someone dies:** [www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/money-legal/legal-issues/what-to-do-when-someone-dies](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/money-legal/legal-issues/what-to-do-when-someone-dies)

## Bereavement support

**The Bereavement Alliance: Directory of bereavement support.** See page 12.

**St Leonard's Hospice:**

→ **Living with Grief Course:** [www.stleonardshospice.org.uk/living-with-grief-course](http://www.stleonardshospice.org.uk/living-with-grief-course)

→ **Living with Grief Coffee Mornings:** <https://stleonardshospice.org.uk/living-with-grief-coffee-mornings>

**York Carer's Centre: Bereavement support for carers.** See page 13.

**Child Bereavement UK:** [www.childbereavementuk.org](http://www.childbereavementuk.org)

**Child Bereavement Support:** [cruse.org.uk](http://cruse.org.uk)

Contact us if you want any information printed out or phone numbers for any of the services.

# Acomb Death Café & end of life doulas

**Death is guaranteed for every one of us and yet in our culture, it's a topic that often remains taboo.**

As a result, death and dying tend to be thought of by default as medical events, or as often as not, as failures of medicine. We've lost a cultural understanding of the end of life.

The Death Café movement aims to get people talking about death and dying.

Small groups gather with cake and hot drinks and no agenda other than what each participant brings to the conversation. Attendees consistently describe the events as extremely positive – thought-provoking, warm, and characterised by human connection.

Working alongside medical teams, end of life doulas support dying people with the understanding that ordinary death isn't primarily a medical event. It's an intensely important personal, family, and community event that can be approached intentionally and prepared for with the help of everyone around the dying person.

**If you are interested in attending the Death Café, please get in touch by email:**

✉ [death.cafe@icloud.com](mailto:death.cafe@icloud.com)  
📅 or sign up on Eventbrite: [tinyurl.com/49j695r4](https://tinyurl.com/49j695r4)

**For more information about end of life doulas visit:**

📄 **York end of life doulas website:** [www.eoldoulayork.co.uk](http://www.eoldoulayork.co.uk)

📄 **End of Life Doula UK website:** <https://eol-doula.uk/>

# A day in the life: Charlotte Hoban, Wellbeing and Outreach Lead at St Leonard's Hospice

**St Leonard's Hospice supports people in York and surrounding areas who are living with a life-limiting or terminal illness, as well as those close to them.**

**With services including an inpatient unit, Hospice@Home, bereavement and carer support, and wellbeing services, the Hospice is there from diagnosis onwards.**

**In this feature, Charlotte, Wellbeing and Outreach Lead, shares a glimpse into her day and the impact of the Hospice's growing Wellbeing and Outreach programme.**

St Leonard's  
Hospice



## **What is your role?**

I've worked at the Hospice for eight years across all clinical services, starting as a staff nurse on the Inpatient Unit. For the past two years, I've been the Wellbeing and Outreach Lead, a role created to redesign day services to better support the emotional, social and practical needs of people from the point of diagnosis.

## **I lead three services:**

**Wellbeing and Outreach Service:** we provide social work support, spiritual care, complementary therapy, and support for people's emotional and practical needs, both at the Hospice and in people's homes if they cannot go to us.

**Carer Support Service:** a team of Healthcare Assistants providing respite care, giving informal carers time to attend appointments or take a much-needed break for their own wellbeing.

**Bereavement Service:** offering one-to-one listening support for anyone whose friend or relative has been cared for by the Hospice, alongside a five-week *Living with Grief* programme. This offers information, guidance and peer support for people bereaved within the last two years.



**“ I'm incredibly proud to lead teams who live our Hospice values every day and are deeply committed to supporting the people we serve. ”**

### Can you tell us about a 'normal' day?

I start the day by checking emails, reviewing my caseload and looking at any new referrals. I then meet with the team to agree priorities, before linking in with other service leads to make sure we're supporting people on waiting lists as effectively as possible.

My days vary. Some are focused on case management, while others see me out in the community promoting hospice services or supporting nursing students to learn about end-of-life care. I also work closely with our volunteers who support wellbeing and outreach, as well as spending time visiting patients at home to offer emotional and practical support.

### What is the best part of your job?

The best part of my job is the variety and the chance to shape services that truly meet the needs of our local community. I'm also incredibly proud to lead teams who live our Hospice values every day and are deeply committed to supporting the people we serve.

### What are the frustrations?

Working at the Hospice I see every day how vital specialist palliative and end-of-life care is for our community, yet we receive only a small proportion of our funding from the NHS. This means essential services, from symptom management to emotional and bereavement support, rely heavily on fundraising just to stay open.

Fair funding would recognise hospice care as a core part of the healthcare system. It would give patients and families the stability they deserve and allow us to plan services based on need, not on how much we can raise each year. Everyone should have access to high-quality, compassionate care at the end of their life, and fair funding is key to making that a reality.

### Any other thoughts or advice?

Hospice care is about dignity, comfort and connection, not just in someone's final days, but throughout the whole experience of living with a life-limiting and terminal illness, for them and the people around them.



**Left:** The Hospice's Wellbeing and Outreach team. **Above:** The Hospice's Wellbeing Coordinators. **Below:** Wellbeing Drop-in which takes place every Thursday morning at St Leonard's.

“ I see every day how vital specialist palliative and end-of-life care is for our community, yet we receive only a small proportion of our funding from the NHS. ”



# Services available at St Leonard's Hospice



## In-patient care

The **In-Patient Unit** at the Hospice is a calm and peaceful environment. It is run by a team of doctors, nurses and healthcare assistants specialising in providing compassionate, round-the-clock care for people at the end of their life. They also offer support for many people who need help managing pain and symptoms relating to their illness to improve their quality of life.

## Hospice@Home

**Hospice@Home** is a carer support service which brings the care and support of the Hospice into the comfort of a patient's own home, allowing them to enjoy the last few weeks of their life surrounded by the people and the things they love. The Hospice team of experienced registered nurses and carers provide tailored care, working in partnership with local GPs, district nurses and specialist nurses. Patients and their families also have access to our social workers and the wellbeing and outreach team.

## Carer Support Service

The **Carer Support Service** supports the family, loved ones and those who support people with terminal and life-limiting illnesses. They arrange regular

breaks and respite to carers of people who have been diagnosed with a life-limiting illness. The trained team can spend up to five hours providing support, giving carers the chance to shop, go out for a walk or have a much-needed rest.

## Wellbeing drop-ins

The **wellbeing drop-ins** are for anyone living with a life-limiting illness and those who care for them. Based in the Sunflower Centre at the Hospice, they offer a safe and relaxed environment where you can meet people going through the same experience as you and chat to the team.

**Topics include:** the impact of diagnosis on yourself, friends and family members, health and wellbeing, and planning for the future.

The wellbeing drop-ins take place **every Thursday from 10am to 12,30pm at the Sunflower Centre at St Leonard's**. The support is free, and you do not need a referral or appointment.

Complementary therapies including massage, reflexology and guided visualisations are also available.

## Bereavement support

The **St Leonard's bereavement support team** helps people deal with their grief. The service is free of charge and available to any adult whose friend or relative has been cared for by the Hospice.

If you are an adult who has been bereaved in the past year with no connection to the hospice, you can access the **Living with Grief** programme.

**For more information:**

☎ 01904 777770

🌐 [stleonardshospice.org.uk](http://stleonardshospice.org.uk)

✉ [wellbeing@stleonardshospice.org.uk](mailto:wellbeing@stleonardshospice.org.uk)

📍 185 Tadcaster Road, York, YO24 1GL

## Groups for those diagnosed with a life-limiting illness

If you, or someone you care about, has been diagnosed with a life-limiting illness, St Leonard's can help.

### MND Social drop-in, run in partnership with the MND Association York Group

If you or someone close to you is affected by Motor Neurone Disease, **St Leonard's MND Social drop-in** offers a warm, welcoming space to connect and unwind. Run in partnership with the **MND Association York Group**, it's open to anyone diagnosed with MND, as well as their family and carers. No referral needed, just drop in.

- **St Leonard's Hospice: 2nd Tuesday of the month, 2pm to 4pm**
- **St Leonard's Hospice: 4th Wednesday of the month, 2pm to 4pm**

### York Heart Failure Social

This relaxed social is for anyone who has been diagnosed with heart failure, as well as family and carers.

Each session begins with gentle movement, breathwork and guided relaxation. The focus then shifts to creating a safe and welcoming space to socialise with others who are living with, or affected by, heart failure.

- **St Leonard's Hospice: 2nd Wednesday of the month, 2pm to 3.30pm**



### The Breathing Space

This relaxed group is for anyone living with a life-limiting lung condition such as pulmonary fibrosis, COPD, emphysema or lung cancer, as well as family and carers.

Sessions alternate each month between in-person and online. You're welcome to join either or both.

- **In-person: The Sunflower Centre at St Leonard's Hospice, 1st Wednesday of the month, 2.30pm to 4pm**
- **Online: 1st Wednesday of the month, 2.30pm to 3.30pm**

The group is a chance to share experiences, connect with others, and focus on living well in a safe and supportive space.

Before coming to your first session, please contact St Leonard's on **01904 777770** to tell them you're coming or email:

✉ [wellbeing@stleonardshospice.org.uk](mailto:wellbeing@stleonardshospice.org.uk)

### Wellbeing drop-in

See page 10 for details.

- **Sunflower Centre at St Leonard's Hospice, every Thursday 10am-12.30pm**

St Leonard's  
Hospice



## York Bereavement Alliance: Helping you find the support you need

**York Bereavement Alliance is a city-wide network connecting people in York with local and national bereavement support services.**

It provides an online directory of information to help adults, families, and young people find appropriate guidance and resources.

The directory offers a wealth of information, including local bereavement support, practical advice and support for children and young people. It also provides information about where to find specialist advice, for example, for someone seeking culturally related support.

**You will find the directory on the St Leonard's Hospice website here:**

[www.stleonardshospice.org.uk/york-bereavement-alliance](http://www.stleonardshospice.org.uk/york-bereavement-alliance)

If you can't find what you need or have any questions about the Alliance's work, you can email:

[enquiries@yorkbereavementalliance.org](mailto:enquiries@yorkbereavementalliance.org)

**You can also call or text for advice on:**

**07741 734659.** Messages are checked **Monday to Thursday 12pm - 2pm, except bank holidays**



## Bereaved Children Support York

**Bereaved Children Support York (BCSY) is an organisation offering support to bereaved children, young people and families in York.**

The experience of bereavement can have a huge impact on children and young people, and the grieving process can take time. However, there are things that can help, from talking to people, to meeting others who have been through a similar thing. BCSY exists to help support this process.

BCSY offers monthly drop-in sessions for bereaved children and families on the **first Saturday of the month from 2-4pm at Oaken Grove Community Centre, Reid Park, Haxby, YO32 3QW.** Pop in for as long as you like for peer support, activities and crafts in a relaxed atmosphere.

Everyone grieves differently and BCSY also offer 1 to 1 therapeutic support to those children and young people who need support from outside their family and friends.

BCSY also offers support to the parents of bereaved children. They run a fortnightly group for parents and carers on alternate Wednesday mornings. Please contact them for more details.

**Contact BCSY for more information or to request a referral form for the 1 to 1 support.**


[www.bcsy.org.uk](http://www.bcsy.org.uk)  
[info.bcsy@gmail.com](mailto:info.bcsy@gmail.com)

## Pastoral, spiritual and religious care in hospital

The **Spiritual Care and Chaplaincy team** is available for all patients in hospital and family members, 24 hours a day, regardless of religious beliefs.

The team will support, listen and help talk through anything that is important to you at this time.

**You can contact the hospital chaplaincy team with a non-urgent message on:**

 **01904 725579**

## What to do when someone dies: practical arrangements

**When a person dies, there are a number of practical steps that need to be taken. To help you, there is a checklist provided by the government on the GOV.UK website.**

The checklist takes you through how to register a death, who needs to be informed, arranging a funeral, dealing with benefits, pension and taxes, and bereavement benefits that might be available.

 **[www.gov.uk/after-a-death](http://www.gov.uk/after-a-death)**

## Tell Us Once

**Tell Us Once** is a service that lets you report a death to most government organisations in one go. When you register a death, the registrar will explain the Tell Us Once service.

**They will either:**

- complete the Tell Us Once service with you
- or give you a unique reference number so you can use the service yourself online or by phone

 **[www.gov.uk/after-a-death/organisations-you-need-to-contact-and-tell-us-once](http://www.gov.uk/after-a-death/organisations-you-need-to-contact-and-tell-us-once)**



## York Carer's Centre: Support for when your caring role ends


**Caring for someone can be a significant part of your life. When your caring role comes to an end it can bring many changes and you can experience a range of emotions. There may also be various practical and financial things to consider.**

You can stay registered with York Carer's Centre for another year and continue to access their services, which include:

- 1-to-1 support
- Helping with practicalities
- Counselling service

York Carer's Centre also runs an **Art and Loss group**. This group uses creative writing, art, music and performance to explore feelings of grief and loss. They support all loss experiences, from bereavements to changes in identity, or loss of future plans.

**Details can be found on the website here:**

 **[www.yorkcarerscentre.co.uk/activity/art-and-loss-july](http://www.yorkcarerscentre.co.uk/activity/art-and-loss-july)**

If you want to talk to someone or are finding it hard to know where to turn, contact York Carer's Centre on their free advice line:

 **01904 715490 Wednesday 5pm-8pm** or  
 **[enquiries@yorkcarerscentre.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@yorkcarerscentre.co.uk)**

## Engagement update



**As always, we want to say a big thank you to everyone who has spoken to us or emailed us about their experience of a local health and care service or anyone who has responded to one of our surveys.**

We really appreciate your feedback, which is central to everything we do and is shared to help improve services.

We will continue to get out and about as much as possible to listen to the issues that local people are facing and hear about the services that are working well to support you.

We are always keen to hear about new places to go where we can talk to people who may not know about Healthwatch York. So, if there is somewhere you think we could have a stall or go to talk to people, please let us know.

Or if you want to help us spread the word and hear from more people, also get in touch:

 [healthwatch@yorkcvs.org.uk](mailto:healthwatch@yorkcvs.org.uk)  
 01904 621133

If you want to let us know about your experience, you can find us at:

- **Tang Hall Explore: first Monday of the month, 10am – 12pm**
- **Collective Sharehouse at Clements Hall: alternate first Tuesday (July) and Friday (August) of the month, 9.15 – 10.30am**
- **Haxby Explore: second Monday of the month, 10am – 12pm**
- **York Explore: second Tuesday of the month, 10.30am – 2pm**
- **Spurriergate Centre: second Wednesday of every other month including August, 10.30am – 12.30pm**
- **St Sampson's: second Wednesday of every other month incl. July, 11am – 1pm**
- **Acomb Explore: third Tuesday of the month, 10am – 12pm**
- **Huntington Explore: third Thursday of the month, 2pm – 3.30pm**
- **St Wulstan's Church: fourth Tuesday of the month, 12pm – 1.30pm (not July or August)**
- **York Hospital foyer: fourth Thursday of the month, 10.30am – 2.30pm**
- **Foxwood Community Centre: last Friday of the month, 12pm – 1.30pm**
- **Clifton Explore: last Friday of the month, 2pm – 3.30pm**

## Your views on technology and healthcare


**We have heard from a number of people who struggle with the GP online form, NHS app and more.**

As a result, we have developed an anonymous survey to help us find out more about people's experiences of digital technology in healthcare. We also want to understand what people feel about the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in healthcare.


We have started to hear about AI being used to record consultations and want to

know if you think that's a good idea and how else AI could help, if you think it can.

**Please fill in our survey before 31 August:**

 [www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/DigitalHealth26](http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/DigitalHealth26)

If you would rather have a paper copy of the survey or talk to someone about your experiences and thoughts, let us know.

 [healthwatch@yorkcvs.org.uk](mailto:healthwatch@yorkcvs.org.uk)  
 01904 621133

## Improving the Local Welfare Safety Net in York

Over the past nine months, Healthwatch York has been working in partnership with Lived Insights to facilitate Participatory Action Research alongside a team of community researchers, including individuals with personal, lived experiences of poverty and homelessness.

The report was launched in May at an event at The Belfrey Hall: "**Crisis and Resilience: The Local Welfare Safety Net in York.**"

It was hosted by the **Welfare Benefits Unit** and brought together the Council, residents, policymakers, and researchers, alongside members of the **Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise (VCSE)** sector. The highlight of the day for us was seeing the community researchers stepping up to share their findings.

The report shares practical findings and recommendations that can be adopted by both local and national governments, as well as the wider VCSE sector, which includes:

- **Trauma-Informed Practices:** ensuring support is delivered with empathy and an understanding of past trauma.
- **System Improvements:** streamlining the administrative systems that sit behind a person's everyday interactions with welfare and safety net support.

The complete report, detailing all findings and actionable recommendations for a fairer, more supportive York, is now available on our website.

 [www.healthwatchyork.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchyork.co.uk)

## Future of Healthwatch: Health Bill published

The Health Bill has now been published and its journey through parliament has started. As expected, it proposes the abolition of Healthwatch England and the local Healthwatch network, including Healthwatch York.

MPs debated the Bill for the first time at the scheduled second reading on 1 June. The new Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, James Murray, introduced the Bill and defended plans to move Healthwatch functions into other bodies. More than 20 MPs spoke up to oppose the abolition of Healthwatch or call for the retention of independent voice.

MPs voted for the Bill to move to its committee stage, and this has been timetabled to end by 16 July (just before the parliamentary summer recess).

Reactions so far within the sector have been very supportive of retaining Healthwatch. The **King's Fund** said the Bill "may weaken independent patient voice", the Health Foundation said it could "diminish rather than strengthen" patient voice and the **Nuffield Trust** said "an element of independent scrutiny will be lost". Additionally, **The Patients Association** said it was "deeply concerned" about the end of Healthwatch England.

Please be reassured that we are definitely here and working hard to make sure everyone in York has a voice in health and care, so keep sharing your experiences with us.

**We will be around until 31 March 2027 at the earliest, and we hope to be around beyond that. We will continue to update you as things progress.**

**healthwatch**  
York

# Contact us

## How to get in touch

Pop in and see us at:

Healthwatch York  
15 Priory Street  
YO1 6ET

📞 01904 621133

✉️ [healthwatch@yorkcvs.org.uk](mailto:healthwatch@yorkcvs.org.uk)

## Send us a letter

Healthwatch York  
FREEPOST RTEG-BLES-RRYJ  
15 Priory Street  
YO1 6ET

## Go online

Visit our new more accessible website which includes an E-reader and can translate information into different languages:

🌐 [www.healthwatchyork.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchyork.co.uk)

🐦 **Bluesky:** @healthwatchyork

📘 **Facebook:** @healthwatchyork

📷 **Instagram:** hw\_york

🌐 **LinkedIn:** HealthwatchYork

Healthwatch York is a  
York CVS project.

**healthwatch**  
York