

Healthier Together

Completion of first-of-its-kind NHS stroke rehabilitation facility, offering cutting-edge therapy for Stroke patients



Doncaster Deaf School students help improve hospital care for young patients [p5](#)



Recovering at home – how the Virtual Ward is transforming care at local hospitals [p6](#)



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News for staff, volunteers and members of Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

You're invited to our Annual Members' Meeting

Join us for this year's Annual Members Meeting (AMM), taking place on Tuesday 30 September 2025, from 5pm to 7pm, at the Education Centre, Doncaster Royal Infirmary.

The Annual Members Meeting is an opportunity for colleagues, patients, members of the public and local stakeholders to learn more about Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals and the work we do across our hospitals and services.

During the meeting we will cover:

- A welcome and overview of the year
- Highlights from across our hospitals
- Formal presentation of our Annual Report and Accounts
- Opportunities to ask questions
- An informal exhibition ahead of the meeting, featuring teams and services from across the Trust

Speakers will include:

- Suzy Brain England, Chair of the Board
- Richard Parker, Chief Executive
- Jackie Hammerton, Lead Governor
- Sam Wilde, Chief Finance Officer

Please register your attendance in advance by emailing dbth.comms@nhs.net

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Record-breaking number of Year 8 students attend local healthcare careers events

Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals (DBTH) brought their annual We Care into the Future events to The Dome in Doncaster and Workop College, where nearly 2,000 students had the unique opportunity to engage with a diverse range of professionals across the Trust and key partner organisations.

Now in its seventh year, the We Care into the Future events aim to bridge the gap between the current healthcare workforce and the future generation by educating students about the wide range of careers and opportunities available at DBTH and local partners including higher education providers such as the University of Sheffield, Sheffield Hallam University, Doncaster College and RNN College. The events also welcomed partners from the wider health and social care sector, including RDaSH, Doncaster and Bassetlaw councils, and Home Instead.

Typically, students across England choose their GCSEs in Year 9, which is also when most careers events begin. By targeting Year 8 students, We Care into the Future ensures young people in Doncaster and Bassetlaw gain a comprehensive understanding of the careers in healthcare well in advance, helping them make informed decisions about their GCSEs and future pathways.

This year's events saw the highest number of attendees to date and welcomed several new schools for the first time, many of which have



already committed to returning next year.

Professor Sam Debbage, Director of Education and Research at DBTH, said: "We are incredibly proud of our We Care into the Future events. For many students, these can be the starting point of a whole career.

"Having those conversations early with the right people can really help our young people start to envision their future, and where they see themselves fitting in. At these events, we get to showcase the fantastic opportunities within the Trust and discuss the journey into these roles."

In addition to speaking with stall holders, students had the opportunity to engage with interactive elements at the stalls, such as trying their hand at CPR, testing out physiotherapy equipment, and suiting up in infection control hazmat gear.

Early feedback from students described the events as "amazing", "interesting", "engaging and enjoyable", and "inspiring". Others said it helped them realise there's more jobs than they expected, and that "working for the NHS isn't just being a doctor or nurse – it incorporates many roles that all work together to effectively provide help and support." Some students also shared that they developed a newfound interest in careers within health and social care, such as becoming a nurse and studying medicine.

Stall holders were equally positive in their feedback, highlighting the energy and curiosity of the students. Many praised the organisation of the events, the support provided by DBTH, and the level of engagement from attendees.

Zoe Lintin, Chief People Officer at DBTH, added: "It was fantastic to see how eager the students were to speak with staff – they were extremely independent and took real initiative, which are the very qualities we look for in future job applicants.

"Our colleagues couldn't have been more helpful. Every stall holder was approachable and enthusiastic, answering every question with patience and encouragement – they made the events interactive and interesting for the students."



More information

The Trust would like to thank all sponsors of the events this year. If you'd like to support the next We Care into the Future events, you can make a donation by visiting: <https://dbthcharity.co.uk/we-care-into-the-future/>

Doncaster Deaf School students help improve hospital care for young patients

Children from Doncaster Deaf School took on the role of inspectors during a special visit to Doncaster Royal Infirmary (DRI), offering their unique insights into the paediatric services provided on-site.

Organised by Katie Simpson, Paediatric Planned Care Matron at Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (DBTH), the visit saw four Key Stage 2 pupils tour the Children's Observation Unit and Children's Ward. The group were encouraged to evaluate how welcoming, safe, and inclusive the environment felt from a child's perspective – particularly for those who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Katie was inspired by Walsall Manor Hospitals "Little Voices" project, which she first encountered at the Patient Experience Network National Awards. After learning about the programme, she reached out to Walsall's team, who generously shared their resources and methodology.

Katie shared: "Whilst reaching out to schools, I started to think about improving our SEND provisions. It made me ask how would deaf or hard-of-hearing children experience our wards and what do we need to improve?"

She then contacted Doncaster Deaf



School, who responded enthusiastically and collaborated in organising the visit. The school also offered resources to help DBTH better support communication with deaf children and families.

During their visit, the children gave feedback on key aspects of patient care including how friendly the environment was, whether they felt safe, and if they

believed the ward would listen to and involve them in decisions.

Katie continues: "This type of feedback is invaluable. It helps us understand what really matters to our young patients, especially those with specific communication needs. Their voices will directly shape how we evolve our services."

Plans are now in place to invite older students from the school's Year 11 cohort to review areas serving young adults, helping to ensure smoother transitions to adult care services.

Dr Kelly Mackenzie, Consultant in Public Health at DBTH, said: "This is a fantastic initiative ensuring our children's and young people's voices are being heard. It is particularly important for groups who we know face more challenges accessing our services, so we can understand how to better support them."

"This in turn helps us to deliver our ambition of tackling health inequalities and ensure no one is left behind when it comes to accessing care."

This initiative forms part of DBTH's wider commitment to providing inclusive care, ensuring that every child – no matter their needs – feels seen, heard, and safe in the Trust's hospitals.





Recovering at home – how the Virtual Ward is transforming care at local hospitals

Launched in early 2023, the Virtual Ward is helping more people recover from illness in the comfort of their own homes—while keeping hospital beds free for those who need them most.

This joint initiative between Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals (DBTH) and Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust (RDaSH), allows eligible patients to safely receive hospital-level care at home, supported by daily check-ins and regular visits from nursing teams.

Paul Walker, 81, was admitted to Doncaster Royal Infirmary (DRI) via his GP in July last year with a severe aortic infection. After undergoing triple bypass surgery at a different hospital in November, Paul stayed in DRI for 10 days before being transferred to the Virtual Ward for further recovery.

Over the course of six weeks, nurses visited Paul every other day, checking his observations (blood pressure, temperature, heart rate and so on) and monitoring his recovery.

“That was the second time I was admitted to the Virtual Ward; I was also admitted in July when it all started.

“I stayed on the Virtual Ward then for two months. They took my observations then gave me my infusion.”

Paul also mentioned that he felt he had recovered quicker than if he were to have been in hospital, as he had better quality of sleep at home.

This sentiment is echoed by another patient who experienced the Virtual Ward; 64-year-old Dawn Galvin, who was admitted to DRI last April for cellulitis. After a few days in the hospital, she was transferred to the Virtual Ward for nearly two weeks.

“I had to have IV antibiotics, observations and my dressings changed. At first, the nurses came every day; this reduced to every other day as my condition improved.

“When I was discharged, they said I could ring back any time if I experienced any further issues. I think that being treated at home

helped my recovery. When you’re in hospital you’re surrounded by other sick people and the beeping from equipment – you can’t get a good night’s sleep.

“It also took the pressure off my family when it came to visiting. They didn’t have to worry about visiting times or parking, as they could pop to see me at home.”

Mandy Tyrrell, Virtual Ward Manager at DBTH, said: “Working in healthcare, you must be forward-thinking; this is a holistic approach to care.

Being treated at home can reduce the risks of muscle deconditioning & hospital-acquired infections. With RDaSH, we have successfully cared for over 2,000 patients across 12 specialties so far, with more specialties in the pipeline.

Treatment via the Virtual Ward also leads to less disruption in family life and retention of independence; you’re cared for in the comfort of your own home without the restrictions of being treated in hospital.”

More information

For more information on the Virtual Ward and its implementation, please visit <https://www.dbth.nhs.uk/the-virtual-ward/>

Completion of first-of-its-kind NHS stroke rehabilitation facility, offering cutting-edge therapy for Stroke patients

Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals (DBTH) is proud to announce the completion of a pioneering, state-of-the-art Stroke rehabilitation facility – a first of its kind within the NHS.

The facility, known as 'The Phoenix Therapy Suite', is located within the Fred and Ann Green Rehabilitation Centre, and will further complement the existing support at Montagu Hospital.

Its addition to the Stroke Rehabilitation service sets it apart as a centre of excellence within the region, offering patients a wider range of therapeutic options to enhance physical and cognitive recovery.

The name for the therapy suite was inspired by a metaphor of a brain recovering from a stroke – a phoenix 'rising from the ashes'.

The ability of the brain to adapt by forging new connections is known as neuroplasticity. Following a stroke, or other acquired brain injury, brains can 'rewire' themselves by forming new neural pathways to support restoration and recovery.

Equipped with the latest in stroke therapy technology, the gymnasium hosts seven different 'robotic' devices, which will serve as 'therapy multipliers,' enabling patients to engage in highly focused, intensive therapy sessions under the guidance of expert clinicians.

Among the equipment is a state-of-the-art robotic gait trainer, as well as devices focused on improving upper and lower limb mobility and balance. Many of these systems incorporate gaming elements, helping to motivate and engage patients throughout their journey of recovery.



This facility represents a significant step forward in the care available to local stroke patients – whether they are recovering from a recent stroke or receiving longer-term support. For the first time within the NHS, this level of specialist, technology-supported rehabilitation will be made available to patients previously only found in private healthcare settings.

Dr Peter Anderton, Consultant for the Stroke Rehabilitation Service, said: "This facility has the potential to change lives. It will allow our patients, whether newly recovering or managing longer-term stroke impacts, access to cutting-edge rehabilitation that is usually only available privately. It's a major step forward for our community, ensuring care is accessible and equitable, and it puts Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals at the forefront of NHS Stroke rehabilitation."

This new addition to the Stroke Rehabilitation service is just one of the many ways DBTH

is addressing health inequalities, by creating specialist, localised services that meet the needs of communities who may otherwise face barriers to accessing care and support.

Dr Kelly MacKenzie, Consultant in Public Health at DBTH, said: "This investment is a clear example of how using the latest in therapy technology will improve outcomes for patients that would not otherwise have access to this type of treatment. This helps us to deliver our ambition to ensure that no one is left behind when it comes to accessing care."

The purchase of new gym equipment was made possible thanks to generous funding from the Fred and Ann Green Legacy, along with support from Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals (DBTH) Charity.

Looking ahead, there are exciting plans to further enhance the rehabilitation experience with the creation of a dedicated garden space.

Donations are currently being sought to help bring these plans to life. The project will see the transformation of an existing courtyard into a tranquil garden area, directly connected to the gym. This new space will include a peaceful garden room and harmonious planting, providing a calm and restorative environment where patients can relax and reflect after their therapy sessions, and engage in therapeutic gardening activities.

Dr Peter Anderton said: "There is a now considerable body of scientific evidence supporting the positive impacts on health and wellbeing of spending time in green spaces, and we intend to harness these benefits for our patients. This garden space will make the challenges of a prolonged hospital stay away from family and friends a little easier to navigate."





Community screening clinic helps protect sight in Bentley

A pop-up diabetic eye screening clinic held at Bentley Pavilion has helped 36 local residents take an important step in protecting their vision, with 72 eyes successfully screened for diabetic retinopathy.

Run by the Doncaster and Bassetlaw Diabetic Eye Screening Programme, the clinic focused on people who are less likely to attend their routine screening appointments. These sessions are a vital part of diabetes care, as they can detect early signs of eye damage before symptoms develop, helping to prevent sight loss.

Diabetic eye screening is quick and painless. It involves putting drops in the eyes to widen the pupils, then taking photographs of the back of the eyes (the retina) using a special camera. These images are checked by trained professionals for signs of diabetic retinopathy, a condition caused by high blood sugar levels damaging the small blood vessels in the eye.

The Bentley clinic was carefully planned following an audit of repeat non-attenders in the area. The team identified a high number of missed appointments among patients

registered at four GP practices in the Bentley and Scawthorpe areas, all located within a short distance of Bentley Pavilion. These individuals – many of whom had not attended in several years, with some having missed more than 30 appointments – were personally invited to the clinic.

To support the effort, the team also worked with the local GP surgeries, sharing patient lists so that practices could use behavioural science techniques and trusted messaging from GPs to encourage attendance.

Jemima Beaumont, Failsafe and Engagement Lead for the programme, said: “We were really delighted by the response. Some patients hadn’t been screened in over 10 years, and many told us they were grateful we’d brought the service to them. Several had mobility issues, so having it right on their doorstep made all the difference.”

“We know that access, confidence and awareness all play a role in whether someone attends screening – and we’re trying to tackle those challenges head-on. Every person we saw at Bentley took a positive step for their long-term health, and we’re so grateful to

them for attending and to everyone who helped make the event possible.”

The clinic was hosted in partnership with Boston and Co, who provided the space at Bentley Pavilion. It builds on targeted outreach earlier this year to improve screening uptake in underrepresented communities and forms part of wider work at Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals (DBTH) to improve access to care and reduce health inequalities – a key priority in the Trust’s upcoming organisational strategy.

Zara Jones, Deputy Chief Executive at DBTH, said: “This is exactly the kind of work we want to see more of. Services that come to people, meet them in the right way, and make a lasting difference. As we finalise our Healthier Together strategy, reducing health inequalities and improving access will be central strand of everything we do.”

Anyone with diabetes who is eligible for screening and has received a yellow invitation letter but couldn’t attend the Bentley event can still book an appointment by calling 01302 642596.

More information

For more information on diabetic eye screening, visit: <https://www.dbth.nhs.uk/diabetic-eye-screening/>

Paediatric Dental Surgery Hub launches in Doncaster to enhance children's oral health across South Yorkshire

The South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw Paediatric Elective Surgical Hub Pilot launched on 11 March, providing essential surgical care for children requiring exodontia (tooth extractions). The hub is located at Doncaster and led by specialist consultants in paediatric dentistry from Sheffield.

Developed by the South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw Acute Federation, in collaboration with hospital Trusts across the region, this innovative pilot aims to enhance access to paediatric dental surgery for children across Doncaster, Rotherham, Sheffield, and Barnsley.

Children in South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw have some of the highest levels of tooth decay in the country, leading to children often facing long waiting times for essential dental interventions under general anaesthetic. Research data, compiled before the introduction of the hub, indicated that additional appointments were needed to meet ongoing demand and alleviate waiting

lists which can see some children waiting up to a year for treatment.

The Paediatric Dental Surgery Hub is being piloted as an elective surgery provision to improve dental health for children in the region, to clear the backlog of children and young people waiting for surgery, and to reduce the wait times for dental intervention surgery in the future.

The pilot will run for 12 months, adding much-needed capacity to reduce wait times and to test the regional hub model, which could be implemented permanently in the future. So far, the new hub has treated 100 patients from the South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw area.

The new hub approach to dental care includes specialist assessments within the dental department at Montagu Hospital in Mexborough and Surgical treatment at Doncaster Royal Infirmary, led by consultants in paediatric dentistry from Sheffield Teaching Hospitals.

Mona Agel, Paediatric Dental Consultant at the hub, expressed enthusiasm about

the launch: "We are thrilled to launch this dedicated paediatric surgical hub to serve the children and families of South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw. Good oral health is crucial for a child's overall well-being, and this hub will ensure that children receive the specialist dental care they need in a supportive and friendly environment, and in a timely manner."

The launch of the Paediatric Dental Hub comes as part of a wider initiative to improve overall health services for young patients in the region. The Acute Federation is working alongside hospitals in the region to transform other areas of children's care including; improvements to transition (moving from paediatrics to adult care), virtual wards for paediatrics and improving access to Ear, Nose and Throat services.

Children in Doncaster, Rotherham, Sheffield, and Barnsley who have been referred by their dentist or healthcare provider to their local Trust for tooth extraction, can be transferred to the Hub to access faster assessment and treatment.



'Aspire to Be' helps Kerry back into work

A Doncaster woman who struggled to find employment is now in permanent work at Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals (DBTH) after teaming up with a local specialist employment service.

Kerry Owusu, 38, linked up with Aspire to Be, a specialist employability service managed by Doncaster Deaf Trust, after previously training to be a hairdresser. Despite completing her training, a lack of salon experience made it difficult for her to secure a job, which in turn affected her mental health.

After working with Aspire to Be for four months, Kerry has now found herself a permanent role at DBTH as a Service Assistant.

Aspire to Be offers tailored, sector-specific training for those aged 16-60 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). It aims to build on personal skills and provide opportunities to increase confidence, self-esteem, self-development, and improve health and wellbeing as individuals are supported to achieve employment in various sectors including warehousing, hotels, retail, social care and hospitality as well as healthcare.

The innovative service, which received £465,000 from South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority to develop its provision, is for adults from across South Yorkshire who are Deaf/hearing impaired, neuro diverse or those who have any other communication difficulty helping to make a valuable difference to their lives by developing their skills and supporting them into work.

Kerry said: "I heard about Aspire to Be through the Jobcentre and that they offered training using simulated areas, so I would get hands on experience in one of the industries on offer. I wanted to find the right employment to give me balance and routine so chose the NHS service assistant training using the 'mock' healthcare room which is set up just like a room on a hospital ward to breakdown certain tasks within a job role and explain in detail the different elements involved.

"Coming to Aspire to Be has been fantastic and led me to have a permanent 30 hour a week job with the NHS as a service assistant – cleaning and serving refreshments to patients on the wards. I am now financially stable and even have the opportunity to progress. I love my job as all the staff are very supportive,

flexible and accommodating.

"All my thanks go to the Aspire to Be team who made this possible, I would recommend the service to others who are struggling as they have a range of options that give you choices and the learning methods makes it easier to understand different role expectations and the relationships they have with employers makes it all possible."

Jo Holt, a work instructor at Aspire to Be, said: "Kerry did amazingly well when she was with us so to now be working in the local NHS is a dream come to true for her and we are all so proud of her dedication and hard work. She has since returned to Aspire to Be to provide useful information about the role of a service assistant in the NHS which has been invaluable to help further enhance the NHS training units for our current and future clients.

"Aspire to Be exists to support people just like Kerry and we would welcome enquires from individuals who think this programme may be right for them. We work across a range of sectors including warehousing, hotels, retail, social care and hospitality as well as healthcare so we'd be interested to hear from any organisations in these sectors who would like to find out more."

Zoe Lintin, Chief People Officer at Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals, said: "At DBTH, we are committed to creating opportunities that open doors and help individuals realise their potential.

"Our partnership with Aspire to Be is an inspiring example of how tailored support and collaboration can make a real difference to people's lives."



More information

For more information about Aspire to Be please visit: www.deaf-trust.co.uk/employability/aspire-to-be/ or email: tina.rafferty@cscd.ac.uk

Local Trust brings NHS careers to life for young people with an immersive hospital escape room

As part of the 2025 Doncaster Remake Learning Festival, Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals (DBTH) proudly hosted **Operation: Patient Discharge – A Journey from Ward to Home**, an innovative, escape room-style experience designed to give young people a hands-on insight into careers in the NHS.

Made in collaboration with the Vocational and Communications teams and held at Doncaster Royal Infirmary, the free event welcomed students aged 11 and over to step into the shoes of healthcare professionals, working in teams to solve real-world problems and safely discharge a patient from hospital care.

Groups of six had 60 minutes to complete six interactive puzzle stations, each themed around a key NHS role, from pharmacy and radiology, to healthcare assistant and porter.

Guided by an NHS colleague, participants tackled clinical challenges, cracked codes, and collaborated under pressure in a replica hospital setting.

Professor Sam Debbage, Director for Education



and Research at the Trust, said: "Operation: Patient Discharge was designed to spark curiosity and build awareness of the many

different careers that make up our NHS. We were thrilled by the community's engagement level both online and on the day. They brought energy, enthusiasm, and real problem-solving skills to the task."

The experience began with a briefing from a real NHS nurse, setting the stage for the discharge mission. From there, participants rotated through stations that tested their critical thinking, communication, and teamwork, mirroring the daily demands of a career in the NHS.

The response from participants and families has been overwhelmingly positive, with many commenting on how the session made healthcare roles more relatable, exciting, and accessible.

One parent of a participant shared: "My children thoroughly enjoyed it; the escape room gave a good feel on how working for the NHS is and inspired my daughter who is 13 and wants to go into healthcare."



More information

For more information about future NHS career opportunities at DBTH, please check out our dedicated page: <https://www.dbth.nhs.uk/jointheteam>

Bassetlaw Hospital colleagues receive 500 free meals for NHS's birthday

Radiologists, paramedics and midwives were amongst the Bassetlaw Hospital teams to receive 500 free meals on 3 July in celebration of the NHS's 77th birthday.

As part of the nationwide NHS Big Tea celebrations, the event saw the Rapid Relief Team (RRT) generously provide catering and volunteers throughout, giving colleagues a chance to take a well-earned break and enjoy a free lunch in the sunshine.

From midday, teams queued outside the Rainbow Garden at Bassetlaw Hospital to pick up their meals, which included a burger, crisps, a drink and a piece of fruit.

One Ward Manager at Bassetlaw commented on the event: "Thank you so much for feeding us today, the burgers were absolutely amazing. You guys were fantastic, efficient and working as a team in what must have been a manic few hours for you all."

RRT is an international charity organisation founded in 2013 who offer catering assistance and tangible, rapid, support to charities, government, and emergency services.

Run and funded by members of the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church (PBCC) the RRT has supported numerous causes – from delivering essential aid to communities affected by the conflict in Ukraine, to supplying food and essentials to the homeless, and providing local support during emergencies such as flooding.

One Medical Secretary at Bassetlaw said:



"Thank you. It was lovely to see so many members of staff from different departments enjoying their lunch."

RRT have also supported the Trust's flu vaccination roll-out for staff and will be assisting with the DBTH Charity abseil event later this year.

The event aimed to recognise the hospital's dedicated teams for their tireless efforts caring for patients across Bassetlaw.

Suzy Brain England OBE, Chair of the Board at DBTH, said: "This event was a great way to

bring our colleagues together and recognise the teamwork that defines our NHS.

"I would like to sincerely thank the RRT for offering their time and services for this event."

Suzy, and Chief People Officer at DBTH, Zoe Lintin, attended the event to personally speak colleagues collecting their food.

Jason Hughes, a Team Leader within the RRT, said: "We appreciated the opportunity to provide a full BBQ meal as a way of saying a heartfelt thanks to the staff at the Bassetlaw Hospital.

"It was rewarding to see so many staff enjoying the event. This meal follows successful events already held at the Doncaster Royal Infirmary and Montagu Hospital.

"Many of our volunteers and church members have experienced exceptional care by the staff and its important this is recognised and thanked within the communities we live."

The NHS Big Tea is a national, annual event on the anniversary of the NHS's birthday – 5 July – encouraging supporters to host tea parties and raise funds for their local NHS charity.

One staff nurse at the hospital said of the event: "Thank you to the amazing team of RRT, and everyone behind the scenes, it was a lovely treat and the burgers were delicious."

DBTH Charity is inviting colleagues and the public to share their thoughts and feedback about the charity's work. You can complete a short survey here: <https://dbthcharity.co.uk/your-views-dbth-charity-2/>



More information

To find out more about DBTH Charity, visit: <https://dbthcharity.co.uk/>. To find out more about the Rapid Relief Team, visit: www.rrtglobal.org/gb

Montagu Hospital joins Doncaster Royal Infirmary and Bassetlaw Hospital in winning prestigious Green Flag Award

DBTH is celebrating being awarded the Green Flag Award for the third year in a row – and, for the first time, across all three of its main hospital sites, Doncaster Royal Infirmary, Bassetlaw Hospital and Montagu Hospital in Mexborough.

The Green Flag Award is the international quality mark for parks and green spaces, recognising well-managed and accessible areas that support wellbeing, biodiversity and community engagement. This year, DBTH's gardens are among 2,250 award-winning spaces across the UK.

This year, the Fred and Ann Green Memorial Garden at Montagu Hospital has received the Green Flag status, alongside the previously recognised Rainbow Gardens at Doncaster and Bassetlaw, and the Butterfly Garden at Doncaster Royal Infirmary. These spaces offer patients, visitors, and colleagues places of reflection, respite, and healing throughout the year.

The award is a testament to the care and dedication of DBTH's Estates and Facilities team, whose work ensures these green spaces continue to flourish.

Suzy Brain England OBE, Chair of the Board at DBTH, said: "We are incredibly proud that all three of our hospital sites have now been recognised with this international award. It is an honour that reflects the care and commitment of our Estates and Facilities colleagues, who look after these spaces so beautifully throughout the year.

These spaces are more than just gardens – they



are places of remembrance, healing and peace. From the Rainbow Gardens created during the COVID-19 pandemic, to the Butterfly Garden supporting baby loss awareness, and now the Fred and Ann Green Memorial Garden in Mexborough, each space provides a moment of calm in the heart of our hospitals."

Established during the pandemic in 2020, the Rainbow Gardens at both Doncaster Royal Infirmary and Bassetlaw Hospitals were funded by generous public donations, raising £50,000 in just eight weeks.

The Butterfly Garden at Doncaster Royal Infirmary opened in 2018 during Baby Loss Awareness Week and continues to provide a peaceful, reflective area for those who have

experienced loss.

This year, the Fred and Ann Green Memorial Garden at Montagu Hospital, based at Mexborough, has also been recognised. The garden was funded by the Fred and Ann Green Legacy, a generous bequest from Fred Green, a retired pork butcher from Mexborough, who left £11.5 million to the Trust upon his passing in 1998. It stands as a testament to the Greens' enduring legacy and their commitment to the well-being of the local community, offering a welcome green oasis close to the entrance of the hospital grounds.

Paul Todd MBE, Green Flag Award Scheme Manager, said: "Congratulations to everyone involved at DBTH who have worked tirelessly to ensure that it achieves the high standards required for the Green Flag Award.

"The gardens within DBTH are vital green spaces for our communities to enjoy nature and provide important opportunities for local people and visitors to reap the physical and mental health benefits of green space."

Mathew Gleadall, Operational Director of Estates and Facilities and Sustainability Lead at DBTH, said: "We're incredibly proud to have our gardens secure the Green Flag Award for the third year running, and now across all our main hospital sites.

"These spaces reflect our commitment to creating welcoming environments for our patients and communities and are also key to our wider sustainability ambitions at DBTH. This year alone, we've planted 130 additional trees and continued to develop our memorial spaces that honour those we've lost, while providing comfort for those who remain."



Giving back after cancer – A story of survival, support, and strength

For one Doncaster resident, cancer has touched nearly every part of life. After losing both parents, a sister, and several close relatives to cancer, it became a deeply personal journey for Andrea Butcher in 2017 when she was diagnosed herself with stage four bowel cancer that had spread to her liver and lungs.

What followed was a gruelling period of treatment and surgery, supported by the incredible teams at Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals (DBTH) and the Northern General Hospital in Sheffield. Against the odds, Andrea was officially given the all-clear and discharged in 2024.

Speaking about her experience, Andrea shared: "It was such a relief and an amazing feeling to be given the all clear. The nurses and doctors were amazing – I was so well looked after both during chemotherapy and surgery."

Andrea's professional background has deep roots in the NHS with her last role being the Commissioner for Mental Health and Learning Disability services in Doncaster. Andrea also worked at Doncaster Royal Infirmary and has seen care delivery first-hand.

Now working as a Director at The People



Focused Group – a Doncaster-based community peer support organisation –

Andrea continues to dedicate her time to helping others through shared experience and resilience.

About her work, Andrea said: "As a peer support organisation we are people helping people from all walks of life. We provide a service that offers support through all of life's challenges. We always say that mental health doesn't travel alone which is why we offer support with physical health as well."

In 2023, Andrea's Co-Director, Kelly Thornhill, was also diagnosed with breast cancer. After surgery and treatment, Kelly is now cancer-free, and continues her work supporting the community.

Andrea said: "Many of our peer volunteers and service users have also faced cancer diagnoses. They are true warriors – still standing, still giving, still serving others. They're the definition of cancer champions."

This shared strength has inspired Andrea to give back to the NHS in a bold way, by taking part in a charity abseil, which was held on the site of DBTH – where she and Kelly received life-saving care.

"I think that's why it felt so important and poignant for us to take part in this fundraising.



Fundamentally, the People Focussed Group is about a supportive community and doing something meaningful together felt like the perfect way to use our values to give something back to a cause close to all of us.

Speaking about her decision to take part in the abseil, Andrea said: "When we saw the event advertised, we knew we had to get involved. It felt incredibly meaningful to take on this challenge from the hospital that played such a huge role in my recovery.

"We put together a team to raise money for the Trust, with all proceeds going towards vital cancer equipment. The response has been incredibly moving with an outpouring of support."

"I'm truly grateful to everyone who's donated to the fundraising page. I was surprised and honoured to be asked to share my story. I hope it inspires others—whether they're living with cancer or supporting someone who is—to keep fighting and keep believing."

"Through courage, compassion, and community spirit, the charity abseil was more than just a fundraiser—it's a tribute to survival and a powerful reminder of the impact of the NHS and the strength of those it serves."

The abseil took place in March, with 35 fundraisers descending over 160 feet from a

twin crane at Doncaster Royal Infirmary.

Reflecting on her experience of the abseil, Andrea said: "It was utterly exhilarating. I was frightened all the way through but I absolutely loved it and I would recommend it to anyone.

"I felt bolstered by the fact that we had so many representatives of the People Focussed Group taking part and family and friends to cheer us all on. Some of us were quite scared of heights but we were there for each other."

In total, Andrea and her group raised over £1,000 for the cause which will be invested into improving services for cancer patients.

DBTH Charity supports the Trust to purchase additional items, create new inviting areas or to enhance existing spaces to improve the overall experience patients have during their treatment.

In the Chatsfield Suite, where Andrea was cared for, charitable donations have previously funded a new, comfortable and homely treatment area; a patient garden with serene foliage and seating so patients can undergo their chemotherapy treatment outside if they wish to; a family room which provides a non-clinical and inviting setting for conversations with loved-ones; and entertainment facilities such as televisions which help patients to pass the time during lengthy treatments.



Join one of DBTH Charity's exciting 2025 events

Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals (DBTH) Charity has a packed calendar of exhilarating events in 2025—each one offering the chance to push your limits while raising vital funds for your local hospitals. Here's what's coming up:

The Big DRI Abseil – 20 September 2025

Ready for a different kind of adrenaline rush? Descend 160ft from a twin cage crane at Doncaster Royal Infirmary in this daring fundraising challenge.

Skydives – 19 July & 18 October 2025

Leap from 15,000ft and feel the ultimate thrill of freefall—an unforgettable way to support your local hospitals.

Doncaster 10K – 30 November 2025

Run through the heart of Doncaster as part of Team DBTH Charity. Secure a free place when you raise £150 or more.

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New clinical space opens at Doncaster Royal Infirmary, improving the patient journey

Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals (DBTH) is pleased to announce the opening of the new location for the Discharge Lounge at Doncaster Royal Infirmary (DRI), an essential part of a patient's journey, that supports individuals as they prepare to leave hospital care.

Previously situated to the rear of the hospital site, the Discharge Lounge has now moved to a newly refurbished space within the West Ward Block at DRI, accessed via the Thorne Road entrance. The department welcomed its first patients on Monday 28 July 2025.

The new location offers improved access to transport links, including local bus services and the Park and Ride shuttle, with stops conveniently located on Thorne Road.

For those being collected by car or taxi, a dedicated patient pick-up area is available, alongside parking for community service vehicles transferring patients to ongoing care providers.

A Discharge Lounge is a designated area within larger hospitals such as the DRI that help to improve patient flow by freeing up inpatient beds for patients waiting to be admitted. The facility provides a safe, comfortable space for patients who are clinically ready to leave the hospital while they wait for transfer home or to a community setting.

The new department is a modern, welcoming space which is suited to the



needs of all patients. Having a soothing colour scheme, it has carefully selected decorative murals that depict Doncaster landmarks and local landscapes.

The spaces have been designed with input from clinicians specialising in dementia care, helping patients confidently navigate their surroundings, including a large mural of a bus near the exit, which acts as a visual cue to their onward journey.

Providing both bed and seated areas, the Discharge Lounge is supported by a

dedicated team specialising in the safe and effective transition from hospital to home or onward care.

Sam Sidwell, Head of Patient Flow, said: "The Discharge team is delighted that our patients can benefit from this improved and welcoming environment before they return home or on to further support within the community."

To mark the opening, colleagues from the Discharge Lounge, the Capital Planning project team, and construction partners were joined by Richard Parker OBE, Chief Executive, Denise Smith, Chief Operating Officer, and Suzanne Stubbs, Deputy Chief Operating Officer at DBTH.

Denise said: "This is a fantastic new facility for the Trust, offering patients a more comfortable and supportive environment as they prepare to leave our care."

Dr Kirsty Edmondson-Jones, Director of Infrastructure at DBTH, said: "The completion of this redevelopment at Doncaster Royal Infirmary is an exciting step towards a new era of care at DRI. With the Discharge Lounge now complete, we can continue to enhance our clinical spaces in line with our Healthier Together strategy, ensuring we provide the very best environments for our patients."

The Discharge Lounge is part of a wider £19.8 million investment at Doncaster Royal Infirmary, including the relocation of the Surgical Same Day Emergency Care department next month, and will pave the way for a new, purpose-built state-of-the-art Department of Critical Care.



More information

Find out more about the ways the Trust is improving the places it delivers care on the DBTH website: www.dbth.nhs.uk/improving-our-hospitals



Local Healthcare Support Worker receives Chief Nursing Officer award for compassionate support to grieving families

Lauren Lawton, Child Death Review Key Worker at Doncaster & Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (DBTH), was honoured with a Chief Nursing Officer award on 4 June for her outstanding compassion and dedication in supporting families who have lost a child.

Working in child death review is an emotionally demanding role, but Lauren has embraced it wholeheartedly since the position was introduced at DBTH three and a half years ago. Prior to this, Lauren spent 13 years as a Healthcare Assistant on Ward 32, gaining valuable experience in managing challenging situations with empathy and professionalism.

Lauren's exceptional commitment was recognised by her colleague Katie Simpson, Paediatric Planned Care Matron, who nominated her for the award.

Katie said: "Lauren is a huge support for the families of DBTH who experience the death of their child. She manages to build strong relationships with these families,

supporting them through their grief and in moving forward.

"She goes above and beyond, contacting GPs to ensure parents are getting the support/medications they need and sourcing support for siblings and other family members. Recently, she helped one of our families find a new home and supported them in moving house.

"In addition, Lauren supports the Child Death team behind-the-scenes by feeding back from the families she is supporting to ensure the service is constantly improving and being responsive to our families.

"I am extremely proud of Lauren and her role – the difference she makes to the families of DBTH is incomparable."

Lauren was presented with her award by Victoria Bagshaw, Regional Workforce Lead for Nursing, Midwifery & Allied Health Professionals from NHS England, alongside Karen Jessop, Chief Nurse at DBTH.

Lauren reflected on the recognition: "I am

shocked but very grateful to have been recognised with this achievement.

"It's an honour to support grieving families through their journey; if I can make their heartbreak even the slightest bit easier to navigate, then that's the biggest reward I could ever receive."

Karen Jessop added: "Lauren's incredible compassion exemplifies our commitment to person-centred care, ensuring that everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

"Facing the death of a child is an unimaginable tragedy that no family should face alone. Lauren's role is vital in providing tailored support, helping families navigate the difficult next steps without ever minimizing their grief or imposing a timeline on their healing."

The Chief Nursing Officer Awards recognise the exceptional contributions of nurses, midwives, and healthcare support staff across England. Lauren's recognition reflects DBTH's ongoing commitment to compassionate, high-quality care – particularly in the most sensitive and emotionally challenging circumstances.

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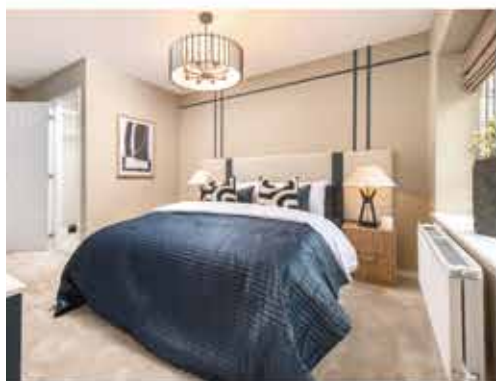


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