



SUPPORTING  
BRIDGWATER  
HOSPITALS  
SINCE  
1955

# NEWSLETTER

## February 2025

The League of Friends would like to wish a very belated

**Healthy, Peaceful and Joyous New Year**

to all our supporters and to everyone who has contributed to and benefitted from our charitable work in the hospital.

### **In This Issue.....**

- *The Anniversary Garden—celebrating 10 years since the founding of the hospital*
- *Judith Allen—60 Years Service to The League of Friends*
- *Our Fundraising Activities*
- *Other Activities in the Hospital*
- *New Equipment Funded by the League of Friends*
- *A New Way of Donating to Our Charity*
- *Membership of the League of Friends*

Web: [www.bridgwaterhospitalleagueoffriends.org](http://www.bridgwaterhospitalleagueoffriends.org)

Email: [info@bridgwaterhospitalleagueoffriends.org](mailto:info@bridgwaterhospitalleagueoffriends.org)



# THE ANNIVERSARY GARDEN

To mark the 10th anniversary of the opening of Bridgwater Community Hospital, Norma Coombes, the matron at that time, initiated the idea that a first floor terrace garden would be an appropriate way of celebrating the event. In mid-2024, Norma, landscape designers, constructors and plantsmen all came together to design and construct the garden.

With generous donations, including one from the residents of Willow Court, the garden was finally finished in November and on 6th December was officially opened by the Mayor of Bridgwater Cllr Jacqui Solomon.

Following the opening, the League of Friends ran a fund-raising coffee morning in the reception area.





# Judith Allen

On 28th January 2025, our President, Judith Allen, notched up 60 years membership of the League of Friends. This amazing achievement was celebrated at a surprise lunch attended by members of the League past and present and representatives of the NHS Trust. She was presented with a certificate and bouquets from both the League and the NHS Trust and a celebration cake.



Joint Chairman Mary Porter presenting the Certificate of Service to Judith



The Cake!



Joint Chairman Carole Taylor presenting a bouquet to Judith

During her 60 years of service, Judith has held all the key posts in the League of Friends.

Secretary 1967– 1973

Vice-Chairman 1988–1991

Chairman 1991–2016

President 2016– to date

She has supported all three former hospitals in Bridgwater and since 2014, the new Community Hospital in Bower Lane.

In 2005 she was awarded the Dorset and Somerset NHS Trust 'Unsung Heroes' award and in 2006, in recognition of her dedication and leadership and also in acknowledging the contribution made by the League of Friends she was awarded the 'Bridgwater Cup' by the Major.



Former Matron Norma Coombes and staff member Lynne Kilfoyle present a bouquet on behalf of the NHS Trust

Judith, a well known former teacher at St Margaret's Independent School where she taught for over 30 years, is also president of St John's Ambulance Cadets in Bridgwater. She has been involved with the organisation for the past 40 years and In 2010 was made a '**Sister of the Order of St John**' in recognition of her service to the charity.



# FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

The League of Friends continues to raise funds in as many ways as possible for the benefit of the hospital. Here are a few of the activities we have run in the past year.

## OUR REGULAR STALL IN THE HOSPITAL RECEPTION.

On the third Wednesday of every month we sell craft and handicraft items, cards, jewellery and home-made cakes. During the run-up to Christmas we also sell Christmas themed articles and our own charity Christmas cards



## WEMBDON VILLAGE FETE.

On the August Bank Holiday we set up shop on the green in Wembdon selling our wares and books and an information board about our activities.

## SYDENHAM HOUSE.

Just before Christmas we were asked to set up the stall for the benefit of residents of Sydenham House



## COLLECTION BOXES AND BOOKS.

Our collection boxes (over 50 in Bridgwater businesses), and the hospital book-cases continue to be a good source of income for the League and we are grateful for every donation we receive.





# OTHER ACTIVITIES

On 18th December, two of our members were invited to judge the **'Inter-Departmental Christmas Decoration Competition'**

Tina Gardener and Ros Weaver duly obliged enjoying an afternoon visiting departments, talking to members of staff and making the final decision to award the prize cake to the District Nurses for their Yuletide efforts!





## RECENT PURCHASES

Some of the fitness and rehabilitation equipment given to the Physiotherapy Department Gymnasium which was made possible by generous donations from the public .



During the past 12 months, equipment and support to the hospital in excess of **£25,603.60** has been provided by the League of Friends

## A NEW WAY OF DONATING TO OUR CHARITY

You can now make a donation to the League of Friends through 'Just Giving' by scanning this QR code with your smart device.

Every penny we raise goes towards improving the lives of patients, staff and visitors to the hospital.





# **MEMBERSHIP OF THE LEAGUE OF FRIENDS**

The League of Friends has supported Bridgwater hospitals for the past 70 years.

In recent times we have found it very difficult to recruit new members either as volunteer 'Friends' or as 'Committee Members'. Our numbers are slowly dwindling, and the future of the League is a little precarious. We are just about managing with the few people we do have but need to recruit new members to ensure the future of this worthwhile organisation.

The Committee meets once per month in the hospital to plan fund-raising activities and to consider the allocation of funding to projects and improvements in the hospital.

'Friends' do not normally need to attend committee meetings. They are volunteers who are willing to give some time to helping the League in its activities – there is no other commitment other than time!

If you feel you might be able to give a couple of hours per month to help us in our support of the patients and staff of the hospital then please volunteer and join our ranks.

You can get more information by contacting our Chairperson Carole Taylor on 01278 321078 or by email at [carole.cude@gmail.com](mailto:carole.cude@gmail.com)



## **WE LOSE OUR SECRETARY**

In July our long-serving secretary Chrissie Laws left us for the sunnier climes of Devon. We wish her and her husband Mike all the very best for the future.

**AS YET WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO FIND A NEW SECRETARY!**