



Shooting Star
Children's Hospices



Working together
to make a difference
Our impact in 2021-22

About Shooting Star Children's Hospices

Shooting Star Children's Hospices cares for babies, children and young people with life-limiting conditions, and their families, across west London and Surrey.

We support families from diagnosis to end of life and throughout bereavement with a range of nursing, practical, emotional and medical care. **Whether lives are measured in days, weeks, months or years, we're here to make every moment count.** Our bespoke support is free of charge to families and is available 365 days a year.

Christopher's

Overnight care – end of life, planned and emergency respite – is currently provided at Christopher's, as well as a range of therapies. Specialist Paediatric Palliative Care (SPACE) nurses provide expert care and advice in end-of-life care and symptom management to help improve a child's quality of life.

Shooting Star House

Following its temporary closure due to the pandemic, Shooting Star House reopened to families as our Outreach, Therapy and Family Support Centre in August 2021. Families can access bereavement support, counselling, therapies, drop-in sessions, sibling groups, family activity and interactive play sessions, and meet Family Support Workers.



84
new referrals
accepted



612
children with life-limiting
conditions supported

Message from our Chief Executive

Since joining Shooting Star Children's Hospices in September 2021, I have often been asked if it's emotionally difficult working for a hospice. On the contrary, Shooting Star Children's Hospices is one of the most overwhelmingly positive, loving, caring and spirited places I have ever worked.

I stand in sheer admiration of how the organisation, staff, volunteers and families adapted, reshaped and remodelled care during the pandemic in order to keep everyone safe and services running. It is a testament to their passion and resilience, and I feel privileged to have joined such a dedicated team.

The undeniable impact of the pandemic on hospices all over the country threatened to leave many families without support at a time they needed it most. Even today, life continues to be shrouded with uncertainty, particularly for families caring for a child with a vulnerable health condition for whom the threat of COVID-19 is as prominent today as it was a year ago. Amid this uncertainty, we have come together and found ways to make a difference. This impact report outlines what we did, what it took to make it happen and how we continue to improve and make a vital difference to those we help.

As children grow older, there is always a last time – the last time you feed them, the last time you carry them, the last time you tuck them in at night. But when a child's life is expected to be cut short, nothing can be taken for granted. 69 children supported by Shooting Star Children's Hospices sadly died in 2021/22.

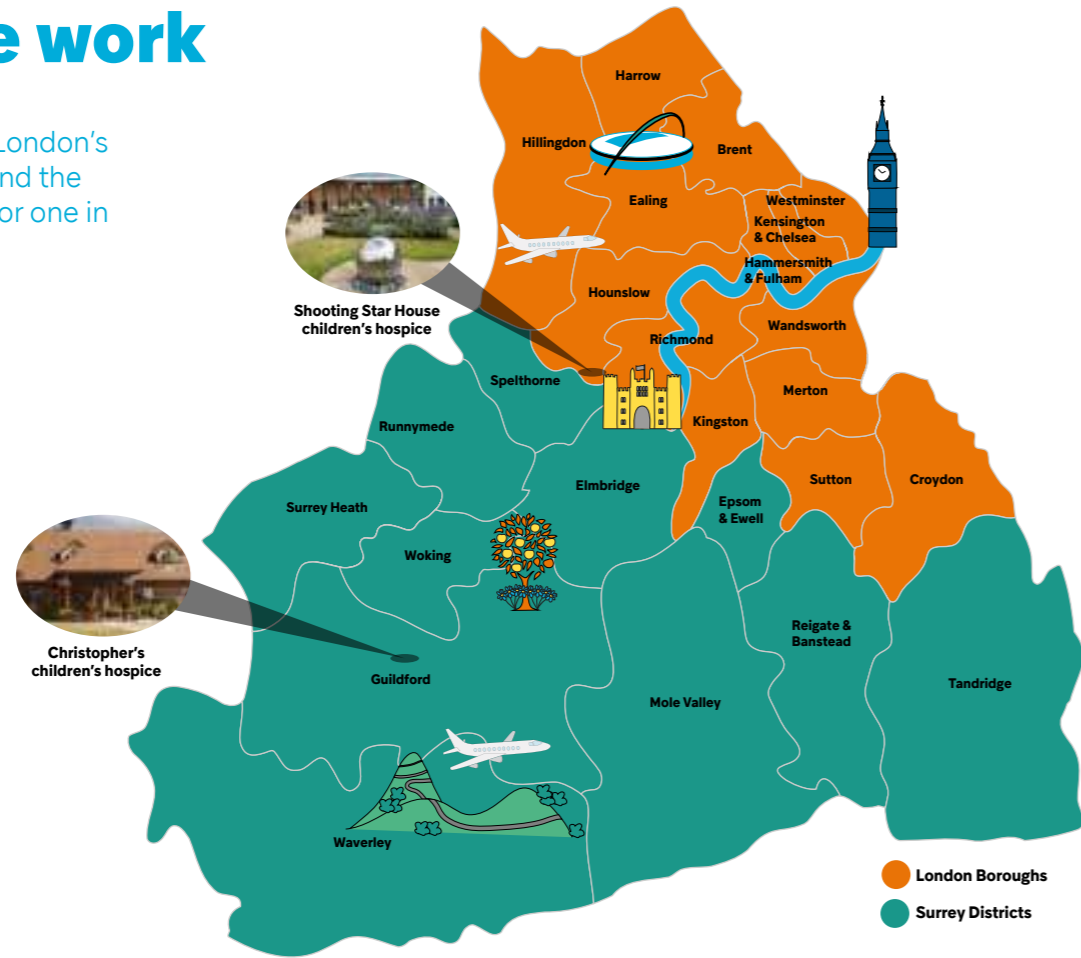
Thanks to your invaluable support, our charity was able to help their families make every moment count – a heartfelt thank you to you all.



Paul Farthing
Chief Executive

Where we work

We are Surrey and west London's only children's hospice and the local children's hospice for one in ten families in England.



Working in partnership

Shooting Star Children's Hospices was one of the only children's hospice services in the south-east to continue to operate 365 days, 24/7 during 2021/22. It is thanks to partnership working with staff, agencies and statutory bodies that we were able to continue to offer this consistency of care to our families.

By building relationships with existing and new referrers and funders we have increased the profile of our work with the aim of reaching more children. We have experienced an 8% increase in referrals since last year and have continued to meet the needs of children and families, which are becoming more complex. We are working hard to ensure we have the specialist skills available to meet these ever-changing needs.

With the creation of our family advisory group, we continuously involve children, young people and families in the development of our programmes, shaping our services and strategy.



Overnight care

Despite COVID-19 safety measures putting pressure on staffing levels, we successfully retained a 24-hour service.

Due to the vulnerability of the children and young people we support, the need for extreme vigilance in how we delivered care continued to be paramount to minimise the risk of COVID-19 and its variants. Even after the rest of the world emerged from lockdown, we maintained restrictions and continued to monitor and adapt to keep the children and young people in our care safe.

Overnight care continued at Christopher's, our hospice in Guildford, where we provided 1,813 nights of respite care over the year. To help as many families as possible, we worked to 100% occupancy, which meant no bed was empty and stays were prioritised according to the severity of need.



Our bereavement suites were in use for **127 nights** (for 24 children and families)



125 nights of emergency respite (to 27 children and families)



355 nights of end-of-life care support (for 11 children and families)



Family Support team had **2,699** face-to-face contacts and **2,321** telephone contacts



689 siblings supported



175 bereaved parents and grandparents, and **256** bereaved siblings supported



Family support and therapies

Following a year of mostly online and virtual therapy sessions, families told us that they wanted to be able to receive therapies face-to-face and have a safe space their child could visit.

On 5 August 2021, Shooting Star House, which temporarily closed due to the pandemic, reopened as our Outreach, Therapy and Family Support Centre, providing a comprehensive range of therapies and specialist clinics. This provided a COVID-safe place for families and carers to visit. It also became increasingly apparent that siblings in particular were struggling with the impact of the pandemic. So, we remodelled our services to increase sibling support by offering monthly socials, therapy and counselling.

Helping to ease symptoms

Our outstanding SPACE (Specialist Paediatric pAlliative CarE) team of specialist nurses offer symptom management and end-of-life care support to help control symptoms during deteriorating health.

During the year, we progressed our work to support families whose baby is unlikely to survive birth or the neonatal period (under 28 days) by working with local hospitals. We set up working groups with Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICU) and Paediatric Intensive Care Units (PICU) at St Peter's Hospital, Chertsey and St George's Hospital, London. These groups jointly review policies and pathways to ensure families have seamless, high-quality care, including guidance and support in managing complex symptoms such as pain, breathlessness and agitation.

By attending NICU and PICU ward rounds, we now help ensure specialist palliative care is available to those who need it, either by providing support directly or training hospital teams.



Our work in the community

Our team of community nurses assess the nursing needs of all children referred to the service and provide care to children, young people and their families in their own homes.

Due to the changing healthcare demands and social complexity needs of the children and families we support, we had to adapt what we offer and how we deliver it. To provide care to children and young people with the highest level of need, we remodelled our offer to give families intervention-based care at home in times of need or crisis.

Working collaboratively with the SPACE team, we ensure responsiveness by having a 'silent rota', ensuring the team is ready to step in immediately, if and when required, for nursing care at home. This service is provided alongside NHS children's community nurses.



"The family could not express their gratitude enough for the support and seamless way Shooting Star Children's Hospices provided services. They were so touched by the various teams who rallied around them as a family and stated that they felt their child was so well cared for. If they had to replay it again, there is absolutely nothing they would change. Thank you again for allowing us to be a part of this phenomenal joined-up working."

Agency nurse



Finn

Finn, who's now 12 years old, collapsed 24 hours after he was born and was rushed to hospital, where he was resuscitated. The lack of oxygen to his brain left him with an extensive brain injury. "Finn being able to stay at the hospice without sounding too dramatic has been the consistent thing that keeps us going. As much as we love him, everybody needs a bit of a break, and it's great for him as well – when he goes, he enjoys it so much. The hydrotherapy pool, the sensory room, it's so well geared up and equipped, and everybody's lovely. You feel confident he's going to have a nice time and have a break, like us. It's a double whammy, he gets spoilt rotten and comes back really happy," said dad, Toby.

Tamaana

Our Family Support team helped 22-year-old Tamaana navigate growing up with a sister who has a life-limiting condition. Her sister, Humairaa, affectionately known as Spud, developed a life-limiting condition from a distressed birth, suffering brain damage and developing cerebral palsy. "One huge but simple thing is just being seen; it's difficult to say, but sometimes it feels like people don't consider that I'm going through what Mum is, coping with life as well. I'm trying to do my exams etc, and I've got pressures – and having Shooting Star Children's Hospices there for me over the years, anytime, has been so amazing," explains Tamaana.



Lottie

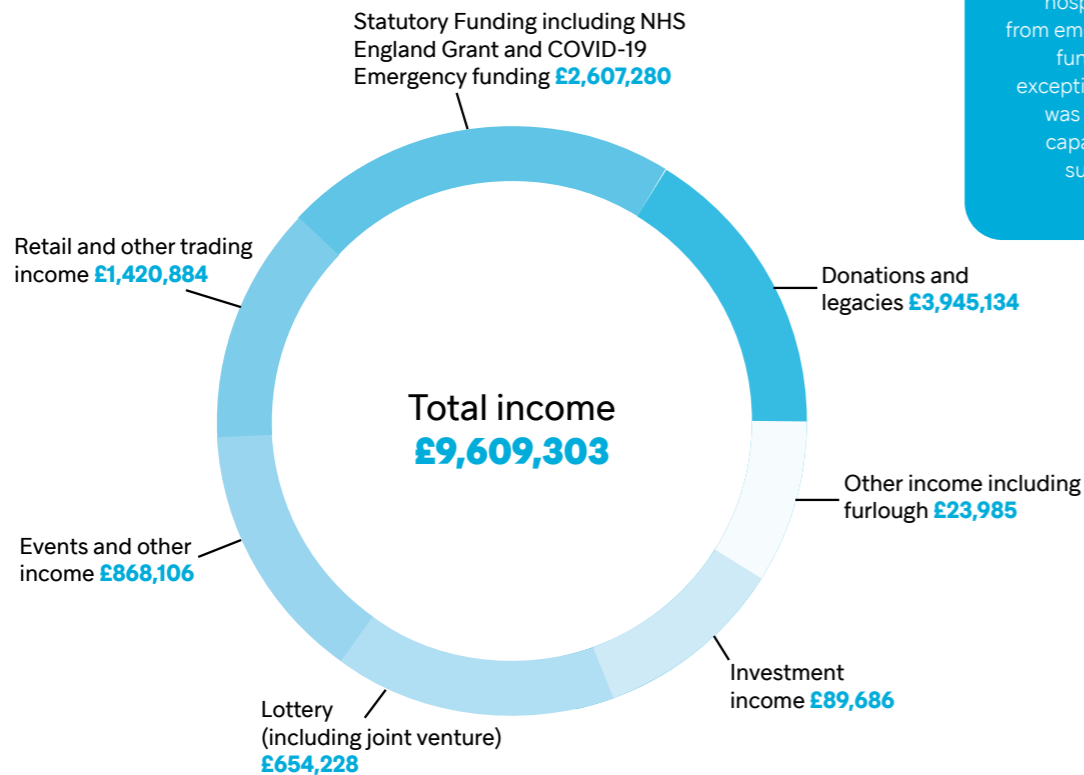
Four-year-old Lottie was born with hypoxic-ischaemic encephalopathy, a brain condition which can cause developmental delay, seizures and cognitive impairment. Her symptoms cause her a lot of pain and discomfort, so she sometimes stays at the hospice for symptom management. Mum, Stacey, said, "Having Lottie away from us is hard, but knowing she is in the best place possible, makes it a lot easier. When Lottie's at home, watching her in pain is heart breaking, but seeing her at the hospice so comfortable and being cared for by the staff as if she was one of their own, well, it's hard to put into words how much we appreciate everything they do for us. I really cannot imagine how we would have got through the last three years without them."

Milan

Six-year-old Milan and his family were supported by our Community Nursing team for nine months last year. Mum, Phoebe, said, "They were supportive through the highs and lows of Milan's final months and helped us make some amazing memories. They also made our wish of Milan being at home possible. They were understanding of our needs as a family as well as Milan's, and they were the only professionals who were there to support us after Milan's death emotionally. Milan was brought to the hospice after he died and used one of the Willow bedrooms; it was a safe space where we could say goodbye. There will never be enough words to fully describe all they have done for us as a family."

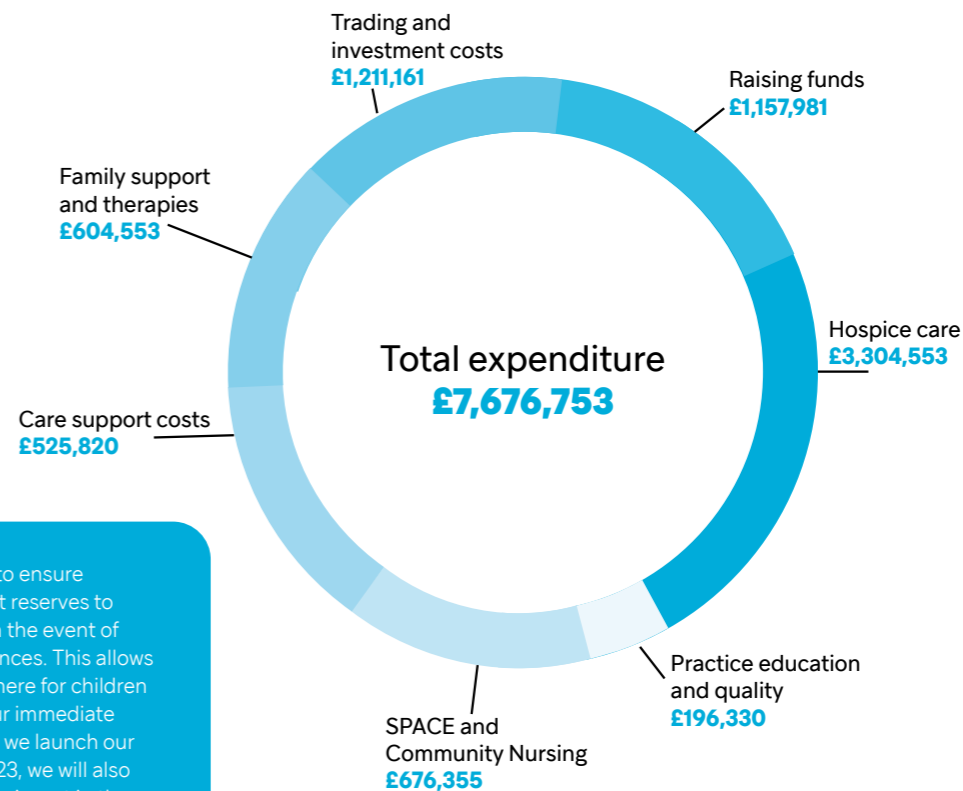


Our income



As per the first year of the pandemic, the entire hospice sector benefited from emergency government funding in 2021/22. This exceptional one-off funding was given to provide bed capacity and community support to people with complex needs.

Our expenditure



As a charity, we need to ensure that we keep sufficient reserves to protect our services in the event of unforeseen circumstances. This allows us to continue to be there for children and families even if our immediate income is affected. As we launch our new strategy in 2022/23, we will also be more able to further invest in the support we provide.

Making a world of difference

Our supporters raised a total of £6.2 million in 2021/22. To the very generous donors, organisations and volunteers who help make our work possible – we are extremely grateful for your support.

What you achieved in 2021/22

- £1.2 million donated by supporters who remembered Shooting Star Children's Hospices with a gift in their will
- Over £1 million raised through major gifts and special events
- £869,138 raised by our local community and challenge events, including our Sunrise Walks, virtual events and the London Marathon
- £649,056 raised by businesses taking part in employee fundraising and partnerships
- £620,867 raised from individual givers
- £347,958 received from charitable trusts and foundations
- £653,486 raised through our weekly lottery
- On average, 41% of donations were gift-aided in our charity shops – the equivalent of £73,000 in extra income
- Over £28k raised from online sales such as eBay
- 701 incredible people registered as a volunteer, with 355 actively volunteering



"This is not an easy challenge. Today is a marathon, and again and again – 184 miles – I am nervous I may not be able to do it, but when I remember that at least I have the choice and those children don't, it drives me to succeed."

In just nine days, Andy, Jason and Justin navigated 180 miles of the Thames Path, raising over £8,000.

Looking ahead

Our mission for Shooting Star Children's Hospices in 2021 was to provide high-quality, safe and effective care, and develop our service in response to the needs of our community. Naturally, our services are evolving and so a new long-term strategy will launch later in the year and will be founded on these five key priorities:

Do better

Be seen as outstanding

Do more

Help more children and families

Grow income

Ensure our work is sustainable

Grow our team

Be proudly chosen by staff and volunteers

Co-create

Build partnerships that add value

The following key objectives for 2022/23, have been developed as part of the new strategy:

- Improve the quality of our care operations, rooted in best practice and the experience of families
- Increase service provision at Shooting Star House and in the community
- Deliver a marketing and influencing programme so referrers and key influencers know about us
- Invest in income programmes to drive growth
- Create a 'One Shooting Star' culture
- Strengthen skills, capabilities, diversity and inclusion of staff and volunteers
- Refresh our non-care operations to ensure compliance and effective IT systems





To read our full annual report and accounts for 2021/22,
please visit shootingstar.org.uk/about-us or scan the QR code.



Shooting Star Children's Hospices

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