

The Candlelighter

Supporting the families of children with cancer

Autumn/Winter 2025



September is Childhood Cancer Awareness Month

Harper's family talk about the impact cancer has had on their lives

Issue 86

Get involved with Candlelighters' 50th Birthday! **Meet our new Family Wellbeing Practitioner.** Help us raise up to £100,000 in the Big Give Christmas Challenge 2025!

Contents

- 3 Thanks to you
- 4 Childhood Cancer Awareness Month
Harper's Story
- 6 Champ's Pantry wins award
Spotlight on our new role:
Family Wellbeing Practitioner
- 7 Donations in memory
- 8 Big Give
Candlelighters Family Christmas Party
- 9 Meet Team Clarkey Boy
- 10 Celebrating you
- 11 Candlelighters turns 50!

Candlelighters AGM

The Candlelighters Annual General Meeting will take place on 8th October, 6pm at The Square. You are very welcome to come along. You can attend the meeting in person or join online via Microsoft Teams.

Attendance is strictly RSVP.

Please email lucy.fletcher@candlelighters.org.uk or call 0113 887 8333 by 19th September.



Welcome to our Autumn/Winter 2025 Newsletter!

The last few months have brought some truly special moments for Candlelighters, and we're so excited to share them with you.

We're especially thrilled to share that our former Chair of Trustees, Stephen Redman, has been awarded an MBE for his outstanding service to families of children with cancer. Stephen has been a vital part of Candlelighters for over 20 years, and this recognition is so well deserved. We were also blown away to receive the Charitable Excellence Award at the Yorkshire Choice Awards – a huge honour.



In this edition, you'll hear from families like Harper's, and learn how initiatives like Champ's Pantry and our Family Wellbeing Practitioner role are helping us offer even more practical and emotional support when it's needed most.

We're also looking ahead to some exciting moments: the Big Give Christmas Challenge, our magical Christmas Party, and a very special milestone, Candlelighters turns 50 next year!

Thank you, as always, for being part of our incredible community. Your support makes everything you read in this newsletter possible.

With heartfelt thanks,

Emily

Candlelighters CEO

Thanks to you

Your generous support enables our team to be there to make the everyday of living with cancer a little more bearable. Here are some of the ways you've helped us to do that recently...

Easter crafting

We got creative with bunny painting, bonnet making and filling the wards with colour and joy. We also delivered plenty of Easter treats and chocolate eggs to help make the celebrations extra special.



Super sibling residential

35 children enjoyed a fun-filled weekend at Lineham Farm, with animal visits, den building, hammocks, and campfires. These special weekends help siblings relax, connect, and feel supported by others who understand their journey.



Summer Dad's Group

Over the Summer we held a Dad's group at Leeds Golf Centre. 12 Dads came together for a game of foot golf. It was wonderful to see a great mix of fathers, from families recently diagnosed to those 8 years post treatment, sharing fun, laughs and supporting each other.

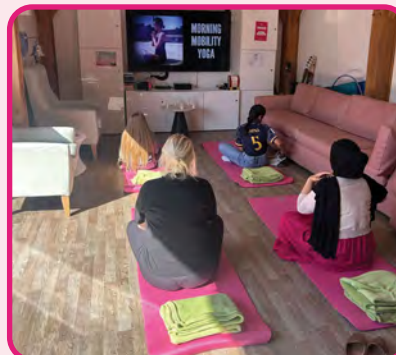
Pink It Up Pie Splat

Our flagship fundraising campaign brought pink-themed joy to the hospital, including a messy pie splat event! Patients splatted our senior team, with CEO Emily bravely facing a pie of custard, beans, Wotsits, tuna juice, and egg mayo.



Yoga at the Hospital

We hosted a peaceful yoga session at the Pavilion, giving families a rare chance to unwind. Guided by a calming instructor, it offered a safe space to breathe, stretch, ease tension, and focus on their own wellbeing.



Family Fun Day

In July, we held a Family Fun Day at Kirkstall Abbey! It was a chance for children and their families to get together and have some fun in the sunshine. Over 100 family members attended and the day was complete with outdoor games, face painting and ice creams!

Thank you!

Your support ensures families do not have to go through the devastation of a childhood cancer diagnosis alone. Donate to provide vital support for families.

Click [here](#) to donate.

Childhood Cancer Awareness Month

September is Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, a time to recognise the impact cancer has on children and their families across the world.

We raise awareness of childhood cancer all year, but in September we shine an even brighter light. It's our chance to spotlight the realities children face and share the ways we're helping families through their toughest times.

To understand why this month matters so much, meet Harper - a brave five-year-old whose family's world was turned upside down by a diagnosis they never expected.

Harper's story:

Abi and Anthony live in Bradford with their two children, Harper and Oscar. Aged just three years old, Harper was diagnosed with a rare tumour. Abi shares their story...

"We spent five months not knowing what was wrong with Harper, endless tests and procedures with no answers. The moment we got the diagnosis was the moment our lives changed forever.

Harper was diagnosed with a really rare and aggressive tumour, and we found out she would need chemotherapy every week for the next six months, which was just the start of our journey.

Things move so quickly and you get thrown into a world that you're not prepared for, there's no guidebook for how to navigate it as every family's journey is so different.

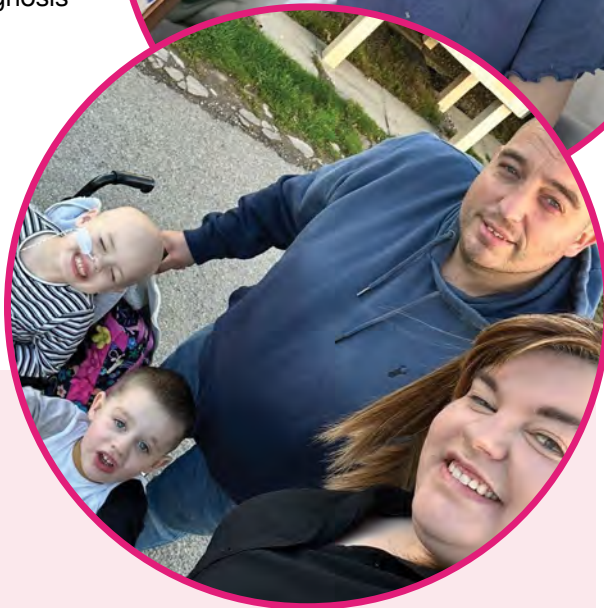
It took a big toll on each of us. Your whole life changes, every day routines go completely out of the window. Harper is so strong, most days stronger than us, she's incredible. But as parents, it was really hard to watch our little girl go from confident and bubbly to so scared and isolated.

Candlelighters has been there every single step of the way. From the moment we were told Harper's diagnosis, they were waiting with open arms.

Having the Family Support Workers on the ward has really helped us through. Things like a cup of tea and a chat might seem small to someone who hasn't been through it, but it's so important when you are in this isolated and lonely bubble – they make you feel secure and safe when everything is so uncertain. They're great with Harper too, she loves arts and crafts, so they bring stickers and play dough and sit with her for a while which keeps her happy and entertained.

I've also had access to Candlelighters talking therapy, and I can't express how much it helped.

As Harper's mum, I struggled to cope with her treatment and also felt guilty about being away from Oscar, who was only two. We had amazing support, but when the door closed, it was a lot to process.



Those early days were dark, and having a safe space to talk made all the difference. It helped me accept what was happening and reminded me that we were doing our best, and that was enough.

As a family, we've also loved attending Candlelighters events like the Family Fun Day at Sherburn Aero Club in 2024. When your child is on treatment, chances to feel like a normal family are rare. There was no talk of cancer, just fun. Harper even flew in a plane for the first time and loved it! Being able to enjoy that without financial stress was special. I spent the first year of Harper's treatment off work and going down to a one income household brought its own pressures.

We're nearly two years in, and our journey has been very up and down. We don't know how long it will last. Living with that uncertainty is tricky, it's a rollercoaster no one can prepare you for and you can only truly understand when you're in it.



But it's showed us how strong we are as a family, everything we can get through and it's brought us closer. Most days Harper is stronger than we are, she gets us through it and is doing amazingly – we just need to keep strong for her.

I don't think we'll ever be able to thank Candlelighters enough for everything they have been able to do for us, and all the families they touch. We have received so much support, which wouldn't be possible if not for people fundraising and giving all they can. You don't realise the impact of what that little bit of help can do until you're on the receiving end of it.



Join us this Childhood Cancer Awareness Month to make lives better for children like Harper. To get your CCAM badge and help provide vital support to families, visit candlelighters.org.uk/shop



Champ's Pantry wins award!

A big highlight last year was the launch of Champ's Pantry, a free food service for families with a child in hospital for cancer treatment.

When you're spending long days on the ward, sorting out meals can be just one more thing to worry about. Between emotional stress and rising costs, finding something quick, healthy and affordable isn't always easy. That's where Champ's Pantry comes in, stocked with dried goods, fruit, snacks and ready meals that parents can grab and go, free of charge.

The idea started as a small pilot but has now become a key part of our support services. And we're proud to say it's also won national recognition!

Our trustees picked up the Challenge to Change Award at the Charity Governance Awards, celebrating the difference Champ's Pantry is making for families facing some of their toughest days.

You can read more about the award here:

<https://www.charitygovernanceawards.co.uk/short-list/candlelighters>



Spotlight on our new role: Family Wellbeing Practitioner

We're thrilled to share that Ryan, previously one of our dedicated Family Support Workers, has stepped into a new role as our Family Wellbeing Practitioner.

This new position reflects the additional support Ryan can now provide following the completion of his counselling training. It marks an important step forward in how we support families, allowing us to offer more in-depth emotional and psychological care.

Ryan will continue to be based at both the hospital and The Square, working closely with families. In his new role, he'll also be offering individual counselling for family members aged 16 and over, helping to ensure they receive the compassionate, expert support they need during challenging times.



"Hi I'm Ryan! Some of you may know me from my family support role at the hospital. Now that I am a qualified therapist, I will be offering 1-to-1 counselling sessions at The Square, online or over the phone for ages 16 and over. My therapy style is a blend of person-centred counselling and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and I am experienced in the world of children's oncology. I am also leading on Dad's groups, so if you are a Dad wanting to connect with like minded people, then be sure to sign up for those down the line."

Donations in memory

From January 2025 to June 2025



Donations in memory are so precious. Whoever your donation remembers, we thank you for this very special way of showing your support.

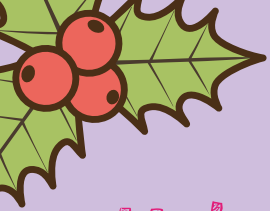
Abbass.....£30.00
Aidan Wray.....£900.00
Alan Stockwell.....£150.11
Alayna Kamran.....£37.50
Alfie Musgrave.....£150.00
Alison Stewart.....£640.00
Archie Vaughan.....£1,126.59
Barry Coker.....£20,000.00
Belle Ellis.....£25.00
Benjamin Ramsay.....£1,206.43
Benjamin Restall.....£2,818.75
Beryl Openshaw.....£850.00
Billy Pilotille.....£106.58
Blake Mark Holdsworth.....£1,194.38
Bob Roberts.....£200.00
Bridie McMullen.....£112.50
Bryn Craven.....£625.00
Cammi Denby.....£493.33
Caroline Blair.....£17.85
Cayde Boon.....£1,346.25
Chris & Chloe Smith.....£944.35
Chris Loftus & Kevin Speight.....£88,270.76
Christine Butterfield.....£373.50
Christopher Chapman.....£60.32
Collette Rhodes.....£152.54
Daisy Morton.....£5,890.00
Daniel Bayes.....£350.00
Daniel Davies-Riand.....£14,272.22
Daniel Jackson.....£132.50
Daniel Oliver.....£25.00
David Coopland.....£36,000.00
Dayle Brayshaw.....£367.50
Donna.....£26.25
Donna Cockill.....£169.00
Dorothy Millar.....£32.81
Eirik Kjellstad.....£15.00
Elizabeth Hatton.....£62.50
Ella Crann.....£152.50
Ella Halliday.....£87.50
Elle Reese.....£6.56
Elsie Ward.....£36.10
Emilia Stephenson.....£65.63
Emma Cockshaw.....£35.00
Eric Artis.....£62.50
Faye Hemingway.....£196.88
Finley Bailey.....£250.00
Freya Grace Lewis.....£512.50

George Harker.....£35.00
George Wade.....£197.69
Gerald White.....£1,085.00
Hannah Collins.....£200.00
Harrison Hartley.....£231.50
Harrison Torr.....£12.50
Harry Buckley.....£459.38
Helen Frampton.....£50.00
Helen Ward.....£1,050.00
Hughie Wilson Eyles
& Graham Nash.....£2,480.01
Iain Hutton.....£20,562.50
Isla Greenwood.....£37.50
J Auty.....£39.38
Jack Gales.....£145.00
Jack Johnson.....£5,444.25
Jack Kirmond.....£1,400.00
Jack Ounsworth.....£30.00
Jack Roberts.....£1,250.00
Jacob Ullah.....£275.00
Jaiden Worrall.....£5.00
James Brook.....£109.38
James Harbert.....£62.50
Janet Clarkson.....£158.00
Jean Gillett.....£31.25
Jean Kennett.....£75.00
Jemma Louise Coyles.....£62.50
Joan Jackson.....£325.00
Joseph Hird.....£484.49
Joseph Mayman.....£305.46
Joshua Kinnear.....£30.00
Joshua Lennox Jones.....£62.50
Judith Cunday.....£12.50
Kathleen Adcock.....£145.00
Kenneth Chapman.....£81.25
Kieran Robert Duffy.....£10.00
Laura Hart.....£2,698.26
Laura Loftus.....£15.00
Lauren Kisby.....£975.00
Lauren Young.....£270.00
Leia Goldthorpe.....£1,205.20
Leila Siraj.....£72.50
Leonard Sawdon.....£400.00
Lewis Mangham.....£15.00
Lewis Maung.....£229.25
Liz Wilson.....£231.00
Lucy Moore.....£220.50

Lynn Frampton.....£50.00
Lynn Mooney.....£140.00
Margaret Elizabeth Webster.....£2,500.00
Marie Thirlway.....£179.61
Mark Butterfield.....£2,095.55
Martin Wilks.....£90.00
Mary Carlin.....£65.63
Mathew Bower.....£62.50
Maxwell Richard Swift.....£300.00
Megan Bell-Walker.....£256.25
Melanie Laffey.....£1,608.45
Mike Sayer.....£1,137.50
Neil Holmes.....£862.50
Nicholas Gill.....£200.00
Norman Garratt.....£293.10
Olivia Arnold.....£830.34
Paris Sloan.....£318.75
Paris Somma.....£522.00
Patricia Lamb.....£31.25
Peter Brook.....£143.75
Peter Woodmansey.....£582.10
Phoebe Laycock.....£3,994.88
Rebecca Varney.....£18.78
Rhian Barber.....£137.50
River.....£12.50
Robin Atkinson.....£2,512.50
Rodney Victor Hudson.....£125.00
Ronnie Walker.....£17.50
Rory James Welsh.....£714.50
Rosanna Gould.....£218.75
Runa Nandi.....£125.00
Sadie Clifford.....£65.98
Sarah Louise Potter.....£31.25
Scott Newell.....£157.50
Sebastian Smith.....£415.00
Shaun David Markey.....£962.80
Sheila Wolstenholme.....£260.50
Sienna Shield.....£72.50
Skye Louise Sutcliffe.....£378.25
Sylvia Elliott.....£100.00
Sylvie.....£32.81
Thomas Cammack.....£163.00
Thomas Hudson.....£150.00
Timothy Lloyd Wray.....£1,369.00
Tracey Loveday.....£375.60
William (Billy) Webb.....£600.00
Zoe Kilby.....£71.96

In Spring 2026, we'll be holding our Candlelighters Day of Memories, a special afternoon for families to remember, reflect, and celebrate the lives of children who have sadly died from cancer.

With poems, candle lighting, and shared moments, it's a day for the whole family to honour their loved one. Keep an eye out for more details on Facebook and in our next newsletter.



Christmas Challenge

BigGive

Help us raise up to £100K in the Big Give Christmas Challenge

After the incredible success of last year's Big Give Christmas Challenge, we're excited to announce that we'll be joining the campaign again this year as our 2025 Christmas appeal.

Thanks to your amazing support in 2024, we raised over £40,000, helping to fund festive activities, gifts, and magical moments for children with cancer and their families. This year, we're aiming even higher, with a target of £100,000.

Reaching this target will mean we can create moments that matter for children with cancer and their families over the Christmas period. It will fund our front-line Family Support Workers who provide vital emotional care, festive joy, and critical help - lighting the way through families' darkest times.

We're incredibly grateful to our generous match fund pledgers who will double donations made during the Big Give week:

AllCall Group, Bright Blue Foods, Grantside, PJ Staffing, Stephen O'Brien, The NEDs and LGT Wealth Management.

The campaign runs for just seven days this Christmas between **2nd – 9th December**, so save the date and watch this space for updates on how you can take part and help us reach our biggest target yet!



Save the Date: Candlelighters Family Christmas Party 2025

We're thrilled to announce that this year's Candlelighters Family Christmas Party will be held once again at Bradford Cedar Court on **Sunday 14th December 2025!**

Join us for an afternoon full of festive fun and Christmas magic for families affected by childhood cancer – whether currently on treatment, post-treatment, or bereaved.

To attend, please RSVP by Friday 14th November 2025 by scanning the QR code below and completing the online registration form.

Places are limited (around 300) due to venue capacity, and priority will be given to families who have never attended before. The event is for patients, siblings, and parents/guardians only, with a maximum of two adults per household.



We can't wait to celebrate the season with you!

Click [here](#) to register for the family Christmas party.



Meet Team Clarkey Boy

On 4th January 2025, just three days before Clarke's first birthday, his world changed forever. Clarke was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukaemia (AML), something no family ever imagines hearing.

On his birthday, instead of celebrating, his parents were holding his hand in intensive care after he suffered a seizure. Clarke spent almost 6 gruelling months in hospital, filled with chemotherapy, blood and platelet transfusions, painful side effects, infections, and isolation rooms.

His mum Kegan explains: "He's faced everything with a strength that's hard to put into words. We are so incredibly proud of him."

"Through all of this, Candlelighters have been by our side. They've provided us with accommodation close to the hospital, so we could stay near Clarke. They've supported our wellbeing with therapy and emotional support when things felt overwhelming.

They've brought joy to the ward, with activities that help children still be children, even in the darkest times."

Candlelighters Teams are fundraising groups made up of family, friends and local communities all with a common goal, to raise funds, awareness and support. We have been blown away by everything Team Clarkey Boy have achieved so far...

The family have a close connection to Wakefield Trinity Rugby League Club, where Clarke's grandad Daryl, is Head Coach. In June, the club held a fundraiser for Candlelighters during their Super League contest with Leigh Leopards.

In a very special family moment, ahead of kick off, the two teams were led out by Daryl and Kegan, with a smiling Clarke wearing a superhero cape, and his sister Reeva.



The players wore special shirts, with the 'Team Clarkey Boy' logo on, for the match, which were auctioned off to raise money for Candlelighters, while bucket collections took place.

And during Pink It Up Week, Team Clarkey Boy organised a competition on their local high

street, where shops turned their window displays pink to raise money for Candlelighters.

So far, Team Clarkey Boy has raised an incredible £39,544. We can't wait to hear what they do next...

If you would be interested in forming a Candlelighters Team, take a look at our website: candlelighters.org.uk/form-a-candlelighters-team



"We've set up Team Clarkey Boy to raise money for Candlelighters, to give back to the people who have held us up when we could barely stand."

Celebrating YOU



▲ **Little Learners Nursery** raised an incredible £2,821 during Pink It Up week. They held a raffle, several bake sales and even let the children splat the nursery staff with eggs, flour and iced water!

▼ **Leeds-based PJ Staffing has joined Club Candlelighters, raising over £10,000 this year!** During Pink It Up Week, they raised £7,000 by lighting up city landmarks, partnering with bars, and hosting fun fundraising events!



▼ **Seven year old Amelia took on the Leeds Mini & Junior Race,** having been inspired by her Dad's Rob Burrow Leeds Marathon Fundraising, and raised an amazing £1,588.



▼ **The family and friends of Christopher Loftus and Kevin Speight,** who were tragically killed whilst watching their beloved Leeds United nearly 25 years ago, held a special remembrance event in April at The Centenary Pavilion.



Nearly 1,000 people came together, raising an incredible £83,171 for Candlelighters, bringing their total to over **£230,000** raised to date.



▲ **Apollo Cloud has joined Club Candlelighters as a Rocket!** Their incredible pledge of £10,000 a year for three years includes the gift of a brand-new phone system, complete with a bespoke pink handset made just for The Square.



▲ **After Candlelighters supported their family, Dale (one of our dedicated trustees) and Scott** asked for donations in lieu of wedding gifts when they got married in April, raising a fantastic £1,500.

▼ **Cutwel, a Yorkshire-based national tools supplier, has raised over £15,000 for Candlelighters** and is continuing the partnership! Now Club Candlelighters Rockets, they've pledged to raise £10,000 a year.



Thank you so much to all of our wonderful fundraisers who have helped us provide vital support for children and their families. Want to do some of your own fundraising? View our Fundraising Pack here: candlelighters.org.uk/fundraising-resources or email info@candlelighters.org.uk for help!

Our Incredible Total Warrior Volunteers!

A big thank you to everyone that volunteered at the event, and a special shoutout goes to **Team Bag Drop** (AKA Massey, Smith, Morris & Friends), who return year after year to take on the hectic baggage tent, and absolutely smash it every time! Big thanks also go to **PJ Staffing** for providing a brilliant team of litter

pickers who kept the site spotless throughout the event. Thanks to the dedication, energy, and hard work of every single volunteer, we're thrilled to announce that **Total Warrior has donated an incredible £2,875 to us!** Thank you for making a difference and being part of something truly special.

Could you give your time to support Candlelighters? Find out more about volunteering on our website: candlelighters.org.uk/volunteer

Candlelighters is turning 50!

Next year marks a huge milestone for us as we celebrate 50 years of supporting children with cancer and their families.

We'll be planning lots of special things to mark the occasion, and we'd love for you to be part of it.

Whether you're a former patient, a family we've supported, a volunteer, fundraiser, or staff member, if Candlelighters has been part of your life at any point over the last 50 years, we'd love to hear your stories.

Send us your memories at marketing@candlelighters.org.uk and stay tuned for all the exciting things we've got planned for 2026!





Give a child a future

For nearly 50 years, Candlelighters has supported Yorkshire children and families facing cancer – ensuring children with cancer can have the chance of a better life.

A gift in your Will can ensure our teams are there for a child with much-needed comfort, to provide families with precious time together through holidays and special experiences. It will fund dedicated research that will save lives, reduce suffering and bring hope to children and their families.

Change the future for a child with cancer.

Leave a gift in your Will to Candlelighters.

Visit candlelighters.org.uk/gifts-in-wills

Candlelighters

Supporting the families of children with cancer

For family support, please call 0113 887 8333

To make a donation you can give online, call 0113 887 8333, or please send a cheque to the address below.

-  CandlelightersTrust
-  candlelightersyorkshire
-  CandlelightersT
-  Candlelighters Trust

candlelighters.org.uk

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