



# our house

newsletter february 2010

**Featured in this issue:**



## Go Red





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**Richard House**  
London's First Children's Hospice



## Chief Executive's Message

**Happy New Year! 2010 is here and it is 10 years since we first started offering care and support to children, young people and their families. This year will be a time to celebrate as we look back and see how far we have come, and look forward as we face a challenging but exciting future. We are planning a series of events throughout the year to celebrate and mark this anniversary.**

As one of the highlights of our anniversary year, I am thrilled that HRH the Countess of Wessex has agreed to visit Richard House in June.

In June 2000 we launched our home care service (The Diana team). Today, the Diana team remains based at Richard House, managed by NHS Newham, Community Care Services. In 2010 we are looking to pilot a home based short break service in two other boroughs, Tower Hamlets and Barking & Dagenham.

As we finalise our plans for 2010/2011, we are looking to increase the range of services, including home based short breaks and a day care play scheme for holiday periods. We are also investigating how we can expand our family support service, matched to the needs expressed by families who currently or potentially could benefit from our support. With the ongoing support we receive from statutory funding (mainly from the NHS), this means we should be increasing those services that the state are not required to provide, using our voluntary income to achieve this.

I was delighted to receive a visit to Richard House by Phil Hope MP, Secretary of State for Care Services, in December 2009. Mr Hope was moved by what he experienced from his visit, and wrote a personal thank you note.

He told me how: "I was a little overwhelmed by the experience... I was very moved by the staff commitment and I think about what I saw a lot."

In November 2009, I once again visited the Belarusian Children's Hospice Service, alongside other supporters of the hospice, to celebrate their 15th anniversary. Following that visit, I was thrilled to be asked by Anna Garchakova, the Hospice Director and Daryl Hardman, Chair of the UK based Friends of the Belarusian Children's Hospice service, if I would join their Advisory Board and Council. I am looking forward to this unique challenge, as we aim to look at the strategic direction of this much needed service.

I am pleased to report that, despite the continued economic situation, our income, broadly speaking, is holding up. We hope to reach our year-end target in March. Then of course, we need to start afresh with the next financial year starting in April!

2010 looks like it will be an exciting year as we celebrate 10 years of Richard House Children's Hospice. I hope we will see you at one or more of our various anniversary events.

As always, thank you so much for your continued support.

**Peter Ellis**  
Chief Executive



## Richard House – 10th Anniversary

**This year represents a significant milestone in the history of Richard House. Back in June 2000, the hospice began homecare services for the first time – and now 10 years on, to mark the anniversary, Richard House is planning a wide range of events to celebrate its achievements and to map out the way ahead.**

For the children, there is a Valentine's Day Disco, an Oscars event – putting the spotlight on the wonderful films they have produced – a sibling weekend away and a trip to the seaside.

There will also be several roadshows across London to showcase the hospice's work, an inaugural annual conference for stakeholders to input their thoughts on the future of Richard House, and a growing number of vodcasts and podcasts on the website – watch out for the birth of RHTV.

Then there's the 10 Bridges Walk planned for late May, the photo week in April, a World Cup screening in July and the food week in October – among many other events. More details will be revealed on the website in the weeks ahead.

The hospice was the vision of Anthea Hare. She was influenced by a professional insight as a paediatric nurse, but equally as important was the experience of growing up with her brother Richard who was severely

disabled. Richard died as a young adult from profound and multiple disabilities.

"I'm so proud of what the hospice has achieved" she said. "It took years and years to plan and there were some very big lows on the way to its completion. I remember vividly the moment when we first started offering services – it was such a big break through."

Since then Richard House has helped thousands of children and their families.

Peter Ellis, the current chief executive of Richard House, joined the hospice in 1999 and he remembers the first bricks being laid at the hospice's Beckton site.

"It was an emotional moment, but I look back now and am amazed about how far we have come. But there's still so much we can do. We want to turn Richard House into a centre of excellence and a hub for palliative care in London and provide the best we can for the people that matter the most – the families and children who use our free services."





## Hospice set for outreach pilot



**Richard House is dedicated to improving its care services through innovative projects that are family focused and holistic. For a long time, Richard House has wanted to develop an Outreach Short Break Service to provide carers and families of life limited children with respite care in their own homes. And from this month, it will be running a three-month pilot offering this service to eight families in Barking and Dagenham and Tower Hamlets.**

Often both the child and their family would rather be at home and supported with additional care than receive respite care via the traditional residential break model. Both the Department of Health's 2008 report *Better Care, Better Lives* and the *Aiming High For Disabled Children* highlighted that families increasingly want greater choice over where their child is cared for, would like services closer to home, and ones that meet the whole family's needs, and so Richard House is delighted to be pioneering this service.

Vivienne Oram, director of care at Richard House, said: "This is a really exciting opportunity for the care team at Richard House. We have

recognised that many of our families would love to receive support in their own homes from dedicated staff who really know and understand their children's needs."

The Outreach Short Break service will be available from 8am-8pm every day except Sunday from January until the end of March 2010 and families can choose between one and two four-hour Short Break sessions per week. There will also be the option of running the sessions back to back. As the Richard House carer or nurse will be responsible for meeting all the child's care needs, including feeding, personal care and play, parents will be able to have time away from the home to rest in total peace of mind. The child will also benefit from interacting with someone new, having a break from their parents/carers and having some fun along the way.

All children involved in the initial pilot have been assessed to determine whether they will require a nurse or carer. A full risk assessment in relation to lone working and the suitability of the home environment to deliver care has also been undertaken for every family.

After the pilot ends in March a full evaluation will be carried out.

Vivienne added: "We are hoping that this new service will be well received and evaluated and that we will be able to secure additional resources to ensure that it is able to continue."

Meanwhile, Richard House is on the look out for experienced nurses. If you are interested in joining the care staff, can help publicise the recruitment drive, or simply know someone who might be interested – please get in touch. Full details are on the Richard House website [www.richardhouse.org.uk](http://www.richardhouse.org.uk).

words by Clair Whitefield



## Christmas smiles light up Richard House



**The Christmas period has been a busy time for the children, families and nurses at Richard House. First there was the visit from West Ham United, with players Rob Green, Jonathan Spector, Fabio Daprela, Herita Ilunga, Manuel Da Costa, and manager Gianfranco Zola popping in to give presents to the children.**

A few days later, existing patron and England star Joe Cole spent several hours entertaining children, families and Richard House staff. Joe is also pencilled in for several more visits in 2010, including a possible cooking session with some of the children and their siblings.

But perhaps one of the highlights of the festive season was the weekend visit to the children and families of Richard House in early December by Santa himself.

On the Saturday, Richard House played host to an under-12s party. Entertainer JO JO Travelling kicked off proceedings.



Songs, stories, magic, games and balloon modelling was just the start of the party fun. Following JO JO Travelling's act, the kids visited Santa in his spectacular grotto. They also enjoyed a variety of arts and crafts and had their face painted.

The next day the over-12s party carried on the festivities but with a twist for the young adults as they were able to enjoy the delights of a mocktail bar. Shaken but not stirred, they were able to party the night away with the help of a DJ and a visit from newly signed girl group SHIIKANE and Justin TimberLIKE who belted out karaoke hits with the youngsters.

A week later, Richard House opened its doors to the local community for the Spirit of Christmas. Over 100 people joined in with carols and songs from local choirs and celebrity acts.

A candlelit procession from the Ascension Church kicked off the proceedings for the evening. Local choirs including the Harmony Choir from New Vic College, the Waters of Life Gospel Choir and the Scouts from Ascension Church also performed at the moving service.

SHIIKANE were then joined on stage by X Factor 2007 finalist Sean Rumsey. There was a reading from hospice supporter Hayley Mac, the reigning Miss Galaxy International, who is also currently crowned Miss Essex and Miss UK.



## McTurks 'joy' as pioneering project takes off

**Delivering the services that meet the real needs of the families in our local community is what Richard House exists to do and in 2009, the hospice pioneered a long-term ventilation service allowing children to leave hospital and return home.**

Watching their daughter Josie in hospital, parents Emma and Peter McTurk wanted to make sure their little girl could return to their loving family home as soon as possible.

Until she was six months old, Josie was like any other happy, healthy child but then Emma noticed there was something wrong.

This led the McTurks, from Essex, on a distressing journey involving numerous visits to their GP and local hospital as well as long stays in a specialist London hospital, without receiving a conclusive diagnosis as to what their daughter was suffering from.

"Currently Josie's condition is undiagnosed," said Emma, 31. "But her condition has resulted in her having a neuromuscular disorder."

This disorder affects both Josie's



neural and muscular tissue which affects her respiratory system and she has to use a Long Term Ventilation system to help her breathe.

Emma said: "For nearly six months Josie spent 95 per cent of her time on an Intensive Care Unit and we desperately wanted her home in order





to improve her quality of life. A hospital ward is no place for a child and once we learned that there was no more the hospital could currently do for Josie we wanted to take her home. However to do this we needed a special care plan to be put in place.”

This plan was a transition to home package co-ordinated by the McTurks’ local Primary Care Trust (PCT). It would address all of Josie’s care needs ensuring that she had nursing support 24 hours a day at home from a team who her parents were confident could care for their daughter.

Although delivering this plan may appear straightforward, in reality while the child is being cared for in hospital the PCT is under no pressure to instigate the transition which means many children are left in hospital with some never returning home.

However to ensure that as many children as possible do go home, Richard House has put this into operation to allow families to stay at the hospice while their PCT prepares the transition plan. This usually takes three months.

“Life is very different for us now” said Emma. “Josie’s quality of life has improved immensely. She has much more stimuli and has been encouraged to start moving again. The colourful environment and attentive staff at Richard House has brought her so much and to see her open her eyes and wriggle about is a joy.

“At Richard House we can be a family. I stay in one of the family flats and at the weekend my eldest daughter Niamh, 2, and my husband Peter, 35, join me. All four of us can have meals together, walk the grounds, play games and do what other families do. Friends and relatives visit for coffee and our kids play together at the hospice as if they were at home.

“We were even able to have a first birthday party at the hospice for



Josie, a landmark occasion, as at times we were unsure she would make it.”

During Josie’s stay at Richard House Emma and Peter were able to meet the nurses who would eventually provide her home care.

“Richard House has allowed us to move one step closer to achieving our goal of bringing Josie home. To imagine what life would be like without the hospice is hard because Josie has developed so much here and we have been able to be together as a family.

“It’s unbelievable that only one other hospice in England provides

this service when it’s so desperately needed. If we could have received these services at our local hospice rather than having to travel, it would have alleviated some of the strain and meant we could spend more time together as a family. But Richard House has been brilliant. The transition service is vital and it really does enhance the quality of life for children who have long-term ventilation needs.

“It’s also nice to know that this service will always be here for us in the future and we will always have the support of Richard House.”

*words by Kelly Dove  
and Clair Whitefield*

To find out more about Richard House’s Long Term Ventilation Service and Emma and Josie’s story please visit [www.richardhouse.org.uk](http://www.richardhouse.org.uk) to view their video.

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*“Richard House has brought our daughter so much and to see her open her eyes and wriggle about is a joy”.*





## Volunteer Vera leaves her worldly goods to the hospice

**It is with great sadness that Richard House learnt of the passing away of Vera Moar on 14 September.**

As one of the longest-serving volunteers for Richard House, Vera was highly regarded and respected by customers, volunteers and staff alike at the shop in Dagenham Heathway.

As a volunteer for 10 years, Vera experienced various changes that were undertaken by Richard House which have ultimately helped to shape the hospice into the organisation it is today. Not only present for the opening of the Hospice, Vera was always helping with fundraising events and especially enjoyed volunteer parties at the West Ham Supporters Club; she even attended last year's event despite illness at the time.

As well as devoting her time to the hospice, Vera wanted to help the organisation even if she wasn't going to physically see the effects; touchingly one of her final requests was for all of her belongings to be donated to Richard House and subsequently sold on through the hospice shops.

Mark O'Brien, head of retail for Richard House, said: "Our thoughts go out to Vera's family at this difficult time, but we would like to publish this word of thanks for all of her support and help since the opening of the hospice, her final wishes for the hospice indicate just how thoughtful and considerate this lady was; her actions and dedication cause her to become a figure of inspiration for us and our supporters."

*words by Alice Attwood*

## Volunteer for Richard House

There is a wide range of ways in which you can volunteer to help Richard House Children's Hospice – and they can take as little as a few minutes.

At present, Richard House has an urgent need for the following positions:

- Volunteer photographers: There is a wide range of events at Richard House and the hospice needs the best people to help capture those moments.
- Bucket collectors: Each month, bucket shakers are out in force in the local community trying to help raise much-needed funds.
- Community liaison officers: Richard House needs people to visit GP surgeries and health locations to help raise awareness of the hospice.
- Gardener: Are you prepared to get your hands dirty? Richard House needs help in making sure our gardens remain pristine.
- Box collector: There are a number of Richard House collection boxes out in the community and the hospice needs people to help bring them in at regular intervals.
- Press office assistant: 2010 promises to be a busy year for Richard House and the press office needs help in composing press releases and writing articles.
- Shop assistants: Richard House has seven charity shops spread out across North and East London. The hospice needs help in making sure these run smoothly.

A growing number of volunteer opportunities require CRB checks.

For more comprehensive details of these opportunities please visit our website, [www.richardhouse.org.uk](http://www.richardhouse.org.uk) or call **Alex South** on **020 7540 0237**.



# Richard House 10th Annual Ball



**Revellers at the 10th Richard House Annual Ball helped to raise an astounding £121,000 for the hospice at the glamorous event held at The Brewery in central London at the start of November. Some 400 guests and celebrity supporters turned out for the glittering, birthday party themed celebration.**

A limited edition signed and framed Diego Maradona shirt and a private party at Karen Millen were among the more eye-catching items that went under the hammer. And there were also superb lots donated by West Ham United and Richard House patrons, including Joe Cole.

However, the evening's top-earner and star lot was a painting of Richard House (pictured right) by renowned artist Marialuisa Marino, best known for her portraits of the Queen, the Queen Mum and Nelson Mandela, that raised £9,250.



The presence of hospice celebrity supporter Hayley Mac, better known as Miss Galaxy International, and Joe Cole's wife, Carly, added extra glamour to the event.

Members of the hospice's Young Adults Group (YAG) also attended the Ball for the first time and their moving testimonies made a lasting impression on everyone there.

YAG member Harjinder Singh, from Forest Gate, was joined on stage by senior nurse Neil Williamson, who set up the group two years ago, to introduce a short film showing what the group gets up to and the huge difference it has made to all the young

people who use it.

Afterwards, Harjinder, 22, said: "The Young Adults Group has enabled us to explore areas of our life that may have been impracticable or nearly impossible before. Things that other people might take for granted – like all going to the pub, the theatre and even on holiday without our parents present.

"We all had a wonderful time at the Ball and got to meet so many supporters and donors who we were able to say thank you to for helping us to gain our freedom and independence."

A night of glorious entertainment followed which lasted until 1am with the live band enticing guests to take to the floor in a dance spectacular that could rival Strictly.

Andrew Butler, part of the Events Team who organised the night, said: "The Ball proved yet again to be a highlight of the Richard House calendar and I would like to thank everyone who attended or donated gifts, time and energy to making the night such a spectacular success. Without their generosity, Richard House would not be here to support young people like Harjinder who gain so much from the care and services we offer."

*words by Clair Whitefield*





## Tate & Lyle's 15 years of support

Tate & Lyle, the Docklands based sugar company committed to Fairtrade sugar, have supported Richard House for over 15 years, making them one of our most loyal, long-term corporate supporters.

Located very close to Richard House, their support first began back in the mid 90s, before Richard House had even been built, and has been instrumental ever since. As well as helping to fund the building of Richard House, their long-term support has made a huge difference to the effective planning, delivery and development of our services for children and their families.

In total, Tate & Lyle has raised over £160,000 for Richard House, through generous corporate donations that have helped to fund vital costs, such as funding a Play and Care Worker.

Tate & Lyle employees have also been brilliant. Simon Gifford the Group's retired Finance Director, continues to be a trustee and other employees have undertaken a whole host of fantastic fundraising activities, from Iron Man Glenn Clarke to team challenges, Payroll Giving and attending our Annual Ball.

# Time to GO RED

Over the next few weeks, Richard House will be encouraging residents from across the capital and into the Home Counties to GO RED to support the hospice.

The huge awareness raising initiative is the brainchild of the hospice's fundraising team and will hopefully add a bit of fun to people's lives in the build up to Valentine's Day.

A selection of ideas on how to GO RED and a few examples of how people have already GONE RED are available on the GO RED website [www.richardhouse.org/go-red](http://www.richardhouse.org/go-red)

Michelle Finn, Richard House's new events manager, explained: "There is no real limit to how people can GO RED. They could hold a red food party, wear red or create something

red – it's about having fun, being imaginative, and get sponsored for doing it. But the easiest way is to buy a Richard House three heart pin badge.

"Our hope is that the wider community will take it up and help promote Richard House."

The badge is available for a suggested donation of £1 through a direct link on the website.

So far several groups have already pledged to GO RED. Most notably the Olympic Development Authority, Galleon's Reach Shopping Centre in Beckton and West Ham United. Meanwhile, at the time of going to press celebrity supporter Joe Cole was preparing a special video to help promote the project.

The website for GO RED was designed free of charge by The Partners and put together by The Sowerby Group.





## Three Peaks Challenge



Last autumn a number of teams embarked on the Three Peaks Challenge in aid of Richard House – among them was the Richard House Highlanders, a team made up of staff and volunteers from the hospice.

The Challenge was to climb the highest mountains in Scotland, England and Wales in 24 hours. The Highlanders – Tracy Buckland, Stewart Birnie, Navdeep Johal, Neil Williamson, Lisa Buckland, Graham Micklejohn, Gary Birnie, Elena Sale, Lee McAuliffe and Joyce Birnie – set themselves a target of £5,000. In the end they raised just shy of £6,000.

Tracy Buckland, a respite and palliative care nurse, said: “It was exhausting, exhilarating and nerve racking. But despite the blood, sweat

and tears the feeling of reaching the highest points in Scotland, England and Wales in aid of Richard House and its children was a truly humbling and overwhelming experience.”

Navdeep Johal, Richard House human resources officer, added: “It’s not just about being fit, you need to be mentally strong as well. There were very challenging times and I had to keep reminding myself why I was doing it. It was an amazing feeling when we completed Snowdon.”

This year Richard House is running its second big challenge event, this time navigating 24 Lakeland peaks over a 24 hour period. To find out more contact **Michelle Finn**, Richard House’s Events Manager, on [michellef@richardhouse.org.uk](mailto:michellef@richardhouse.org.uk) or call **020 7540 0221**.

## Fundraising Round-Up



Richard House’s inaugural Dribblethon raised £20,000 for the hospice and also reached out to a number of new contacts – including a number of dancing troupes, golf clubs and several big businesses. Watch out for Dribbleton 2010 in July.

City traders, BGC Partners, made big bucks for Richard House Children’s Hospice on Friday 11 September as part of their annual

charity day. The hospice was one of a selected few chosen to be a beneficiary of the day.

The Canary Wharf-based company hold a charity day each year to commemorate the 658 members of staff they lost in the terrorist attack on the Twin Towers in New York on 11 September 2001.

The money raised on the trading floor during the day from their offices around the world is donated to a variety of causes.

Richard House’s Wishing Stars took off this Christmas with around 10,000 being sent out to schools and businesses across the capital – a three-fold increase on 2008.



Each star is given away for a small donation to the hospice. Plans are already being put in place to extend the scheme even further this year.

A special thank you to Eastbury and Cumberland Secondary schools for their fantastic fundraising efforts over the last term.

Santas on the Run also proved to be a huge success. Of the 300 Santas taking part in the 2km race down the South Bank, 174 ran on behalf of Richard House, raising around £7,000 beating the target of £5,000.



Meanwhile, the Beckton shopping centre Gallions Reach has adopted Richard House as their long-term charity.



## Events

This year promises to be a busy one for Richard House. Keep an eye on our website for all the latest details. Below are some of the highlights.

### GO RED!

**Up to 14 February**

Wear a red dress, hold a red wine tasting evening or simply buy a red pin badge. Whatever it is make sure the colour is red and you are raising money for Richard House.

[www.richardhouse.org/go-red](http://www.richardhouse.org/go-red)

### Make a Will Week

**25-29 January**

Richard House Children's Hospice and a number of local solicitors have joined together to offer residents the chance to have a standard Will written free of charge. Call **Karen Duncan** on **020 7540 0226** for more details.

### Richard House Roadshow

**6 February**

**Stratford Shopping Centre**

Richard House staff will be present to reach out to the local community to promote GO RED. Call **Kelly Dove** on **020 7540 0212** for more details.

### Richard House Inaugural Annual Conference

**19 March - Canary Wharf**

As part of Richard House's 10th anniversary year, the hospice will be holding its first annual conference and will be looking forward to the next 10 years. Call **Niall Couper** on **020 7540 0252** for more details.

### 10 Bridge Walk

**23 May - Central London**

Richard House will be holding its first ever Bridge Walk this summer. Get sponsored as we cross 10 bridges to mark the hospice's 10th anniversary. Call **Andrew Butler** on **020 7540 0204**.

To enquire about any of the events listed call Andy on 020 7540 0204, email [events@richardhouse.org.uk](mailto:events@richardhouse.org.uk) or visit our website: [www.richardhouse.org.uk/support-us/events/](http://www.richardhouse.org.uk/support-us/events/)

## Donate your unwanted Christmas presents

**Christmas has come and gone and no doubt some of you have been left with presents that – let's be diplomatic here – have not quite reached expectations. But fear not, there is a way to put them to good use.**

Your unwanted jumper, the third alarm clock, or even your lavender scented candles could not only be the 'perfect' gift for someone you don't know, but by donating them you could help generate some much needed funds for Richard House.

Rather than throwing them out to make way for new presents that you don't really want either, why not give them the chance of an extended life with someone else? By donating your unwanted presents you are able to de-clutter and Richard House has more ways through which it can raise funds to continue doing the wonderful work they do everyday.

You can donate your unwanted gifts to Richard House by popping into any of the hospice's seven charity shops, which are scattered across East and North London, dropping them off at the hospice itself or by contacting the head of retail **Mark O'Brien** on [marko@richardhouse.org.uk](mailto:marko@richardhouse.org.uk) or calling **020 7540 0232**.

*words by Alice Attwood*

