Yorkshire Cancer Community

November 2026 Edition

VOICE

The voice of those affected by cancer in Yorkshire and The Humber

www.yorkshirecancercommunity.co.uk

Welcome to the November edition of the VOICE Newsletter

The clocks may have changed and the nights are drawing in, but for the team at YCC we're as busy as ever.

This month we bid farewell to our trustee and Cancer SMART champion Ric Myers as he takes a well-earned retirement. We share Karen's inspirational story to raise awareness of pancreatic cancer and introduce our brand-new website page supporting the LGBTQ+ community. We bring you news of Macmillan's Money and More service and explore the phenomena of "cancer ghosting" including tips on how to cope if it happens to you, and how to avoid becoming a cancer ghost. We update you on the new Sir Robert Ogden Macmillan Cancer Centre that has opened its doors in October, and introduce our brand-new leaflet, raising awareness of cancer signs and symptoms and the importance of an early diagnosis. We share details of a new video series helping people cope with menopause after breast cancer, introduce you to Emileen Trust, a charity offering micro-grants to support people with primary brain cancer, and bring you news of Trustee and Cancer SMART Champion Bev's recent trip to London to take part in research exploring bringing cancer care closer to home, plus lots more.

We hope you enjoy our latest edition.
Best wishes
Sarah, Clare, Jess and Lauren

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Your Stories

Wishing Ric Myers well in his retirement

As our longest-serving Trustee and first-ever Cancer SMART Champion, Ric Myers, retires from his volunteer roles at Yorkshire Cancer Community, we take the chance to reflect on the positive impact he has had on our Charity and say thank you.

Current Manager, Sarah Mitchell, said, **"Ric has been a key part of our Charity, ensuring lived experience remains at the heart of all we do. He will certainly be missed**"

Whether bringing his past managerial experience to our Trustee Board, or spreading the Cancer SMART message across Yorkshire following his own lung cancer diagnosis in 2016, Ric has made a positive difference to the lives of many.

Jill Long, our former Manager is grateful for his 'endless patience and encouragement' in his role as Trustee. She said, **"I always felt well supported and blessed to call him my friend."**

"I wish him a wonderful, well-earned retirement from Yorkshire Cancer Community. The Charity is so much richer for his involvement. Thank you Ric"

Former Chair, Dr Stewart Manning (pictured with Ric) says his favourite memories of his time at YCC all feature Ric. He added, **"We had some fantastic experiences delivering the Cancer Smart presentation as a Double Act at a wide variety of venues in West Yorkshire."**

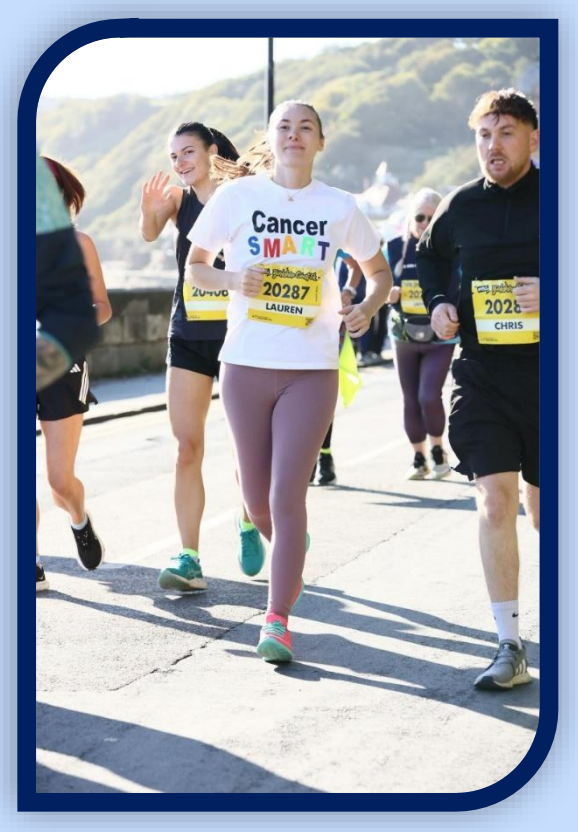
"For those old enough to remember, we were likened to a latter day 'Morecombe and Wise'. Ric and I will continue to be friends, and we hope to meet up regularly to reminisce on the *Good Old Days* "

Our Finance and Admin Officer, Clare Lockwood, remembers this 'double-act' fondly, describing working with Ric over recent years as **"a real pleasure"**.

Both Lauren Cross, our Cancer SMART Project Lead and Sue Hartup, our current Chair, are grateful to Ric for his support when they first started volunteering with YCC. Sue added**, "He has been a rock ever since. His unwavering enthusiasm, advice, experience & support combined with a quiet but cracking sense of humour, has been invaluable and I cannot thank him enough".**

Ric's work with YCC is recognised and appreciated beyond our Charity. Jason Pawluk, Managing Director of West Yorkshire and Harrogate Cancer Alliance, had this to say**, "I would like to acknowledge the outstanding contribution that Ric has provided to Yorkshire Cancer Community over the years. As a powerful, but kind, advocate, he has used his own adversity and experience of cancer as a force for good, helping us to improve the experiences of future patients who will use cancer services across our system. We have been grateful for his dedication, his guidance, and his willingness to offer his time to help us keep the voice of the patient grounded in the work that we do. We will miss his involvement, but his legacy of supporting Yorkshire Cancer Community into the blossoming organisation it is becoming will continue – we are sure that his great work will be continued by the other Trustees and supporters of the charity. Thank you for keeping us grounded in what matters the most."**

From all of us at Yorkshire Cancer Community and beyond, thank you for your time, commitment and passion for making a real difference to the lives of so many. Enjoy your well-earned retirement Ric.



Lauren's fundraiser

She did it!! Our Cancer SMART project lead Lauren has completed her challenge – The Yorkshire Coast 5K Challenge around Scarborough – raising an incredible £321 of unrestricted funds for Yorkshire Cancer Community. Every penny raised helps us to help and support people in our local community who are affected by cancer.

Lauren will be the first to say, she isn't a runner. So, to take on and train for a running challenge when you're already juggling a full-time job, plus having a young child and a baby to look after is no mean feat.

It's not too late to donate. If you would like to help Lauren to reach her £400 goal, here's the donation link **https://www.gofundme.com/f/yorkshire-cancer-community-coast-5k-challenge**

Well done Lauren, we're so proud of you!

Karen's Story

It's pancreatic cancer awareness month, so to help raise awareness of this terrible disease, we're sharing Karen's story of hope and inspiration.

Know your body and be aware of any changes that are unusual for you – that's the message from Karen Stead as she recalls being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer many years ago.

Karen Stead, pancreatic cancer survivor

Back in 2010, she had been feeling 'pretty rubbish' and feeling sickly, severe abdominal pains that kept her awake at night, were described by her GP as indigestion. She was told that changes to bowel habits were likely to be an irritable bowel and it was not until her eyes had turned yellow that Karen was referred for an ultrasound scan and blood tests.

It took four visits within six months, but Karen's fears were confirmed when tests and an MRI scan suggested a blockage in her pancreas.

Her surgeon performed a Whipple's Procedure – a major operation used to remove tumours in the head or neck of the pancreas, where the cancer hasn't spread beyond the pancreas, followed by a trial of chemotherapy.

For Karen, wife, Mum of three and Nanny to three grandsons, that wasn't the end of the story. She will need to take PERT (pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy) for the rest of her life – which replaces the natural enzymes her pancreas would make to help digest food.

Karen has yearly consultations and some days she feels low with fatigue or stomach cramps, and still suffers from neuropathy in her fingers and toes, but she looks back and thinks she was lucky to get diagnosed when she did.

"If I hadn't developed jaundice, my tumour could have continued to grow, and it could have been too late for surgery," she told me, which is too often the case for many people.

Pancreatic cancer survival

According to Pancreatic Cancer UK, pancreatic cancer is the deadliest common cancer, with the lowest survival of all common cancers.

70% of patients do not receive any active treatment, including surgery, chemo or radiotherapy and only 10% of people with pancreatic cancer will receive potentially curative surgery.

44% of people with pancreatic cancer are diagnosed when they present at A & E as an emergency, where the one-year survival is only 11.9%.

More than half of pancreatic cancer patients will die within 3 months of diagnosis, and only 1% live for ten years after diagnosis.

"Pancreatic cancer is a silent killer. There are recognised symptoms out there, but it's not often picked up early enough," said Karen.

Karen volunteers for Pancreatic Cancer UK and serves on their Patient & Carer Board.

She takes every opportunity she can to raise awareness and has featured on regional and national radio and TV programmes and been instrumental in getting public buildings lit with purple lights during November (Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month).

Panpals Patient Group

Karen has also received an award from Pancreatic Cancer UK for her work supporting others through her **Panpals Yorkshire Patient Group** which she set up in partnership with a Leeds Clinical Nurse Specialist in 2014.

The group came about because she felt there was a gap in knowledge and support for pancreatic cancer patients. They meet about 6 weekly but also support people online or in one to one meet ups.

If you have been affected by pancreatic cancer and are interested in joining PanPals patient group, email **panpalsyorks@yahoo.co.uk** to enquire about meetings or to ask about their friendly support.

Karen is a member of the West Yorkshire & Harrogate Cancer Alliance Community Panel and has enjoyed volunteering at Wakefield Hospice since 1990. She is also involved with the ongoing National Pancreatic Audit, part of the National Cancer Audits which provide transparent and timely feedback to hospitals about their practices and outcomes of cancer care, identify opportunities for improvement of cancer care, and support hospitals to conduct quality-improvement initiatives.

"I continue to be well overall with the odd day where my insides are not happy, but then tomorrow's another day. I know how fortunate I am as I am often reminded when I lose another friend to the disease and see the effect it had on their family.

My advice is to enjoy the good days and make the most of the not so good days and embrace the extra time we have been given," she added.

For Karen's full story go to: **https://www.pancreaticcancer.org.uk/real-life-stories/karen-2/**

For more information on pancreatic cancer, including signs and symptoms how to reduce your risk and where to find help and support, visit the pancreatic cancer page of our website at **https://www.yorkshirecancercommunity.co.uk/pancreatic-cancer/**

Bringing Cancer Care Closer to Home: A Volunteer's Experience

How can cancer care become more joined-up, accessible and responsive to the needs of the people receiving it?

This was the question at the heart of the **National Neighbourhood Cancer Care Simulation**, held in London on 29 and 30 September 2026.

The two-day event brought together people living with and affected by cancer, healthcare professionals, community organisations and system leaders to explore how cancer care and support could be organised more effectively around people's lives, priorities and communities. Co-hosted by **DAC Beachcroft, RM Partners, Macmillan Cancer Support and PPL**, the simulation aimed to test how neighbourhood-based cancer care could work in practice and identify opportunities to improve the cancer care pathway.

The focus was about more than simply bringing treatment closer to home. It was also about exploring how different services could work together more effectively, improve communication and empower people to have greater involvement in decisions about their care and support.

Yorkshire Cancer Community was approached to see whether any of its volunteers would be interested in taking part. Our Trustee and Cancer SMART Champion Bev was accepted and spent two days participating in the simulation, bringing her perspective and personal experience to discussions about what cancer care looks and feels like from the patient's point of view.

Here, she shares her experience of the simulation, the opportunities for more joined-up support, and why listening to the individual needs of people living with cancer is so important.

Stepping into a Resident's Shoes

The simulation took place in a large building transformed into a makeshift village, with different services represented to reflect the support someone living with cancer might need. Approximately 80 professionals from a range of healthcare and support services took part, working through realistic scenarios to explore how organisations could collaborate more effectively.

My role was to portray Pearline Williams, a woman of Caribbean heritage living with myeloma, a type of blood cancer. Although she was still receiving treatment, she was also taking responsibility for caring for her grandchildren and neglecting her own needs.

She had not told her family or friends about her diagnosis, meaning she was missing out on valuable support. She was also experiencing financial difficulties but felt too proud to apply for additional

Our Trustee Bev, who became character Pearline Williams, a grandmother with myeloma blood cancer in the simulation, held in London

benefits. On top of this, she was living in council accommodation affected by damp.

Taking on this role provided an opportunity to explore how the challenges people face outside their cancer treatment can have a significant impact on their wellbeing, and how professionals can work together to identify and address these wider needs.

Making Support More Joined Up

One of the features of the simulation was a simulated NHS App, which allowed people playing residents and carers to view their care and support information in one place. This included appointments, messages, prescriptions, monitoring, assessments and their cancer care plan.

I thoroughly enjoyed using the app, as all my appointments were in one place. During an appointment with a doctor, an appointment was arranged with Citizens Advice to help with benefits and access to a food bank. This was then added to the app.

I could see how this approach could make things much easier for patients, helping them keep track of appointments and understand what support was available without having to navigate lots of separate services.

However, one challenge would be ensuring that people who are not confident using digital technology, or those without a smartphone, could still access the support they need.

Another important point raised during the simulation was that patients do not want to keep repeating the same information every time they visit a different specialist. Having relevant information available in one place could make the experience easier for patients and help professionals provide more coordinated care.

Listening to Lived Experience

The two days were intense, but I met many residents and professionals who were interested in exploring new ways of working.

Having supported a family member myself, I felt I was able to represent my role well and share some important considerations with the professionals involved.

One of the points I raised was that bringing services closer to home may not suit everyone. For some people, particularly those living in smaller communities, accessing local services could raise concerns about privacy and confidentiality. They may prefer to keep their diagnosis private or feel uncomfortable receiving care in familiar surroundings.

I was reminded of something my sister once said. I had mentioned that a friend was asking how she was coping, and I remember my sister saying, “My name is not cancer.”

She wanted to be Shirley and not be identified by her illness. I had not fully appreciated how she felt, and there were days when she simply did not want to be reminded of her cancer.

This experience stayed with me throughout the simulation. It reinforced how important it is to listen to people, understand their individual circumstances and recognise that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to cancer care.

Putting People at the Heart of Cancer Care

The simulation provided an opportunity for residents, healthcare professionals and other organisations to explore how services could work together more effectively to support people living with cancer.

For me, it was a valuable reminder that cancer care is about much more than treatment alone. Financial pressures, housing, caring responsibilities, emotional wellbeing, privacy and access to support can all affect someone's experience.

Bringing services closer to home and improving communication between professionals could make a real difference, but these changes must also reflect what matters to each individual.

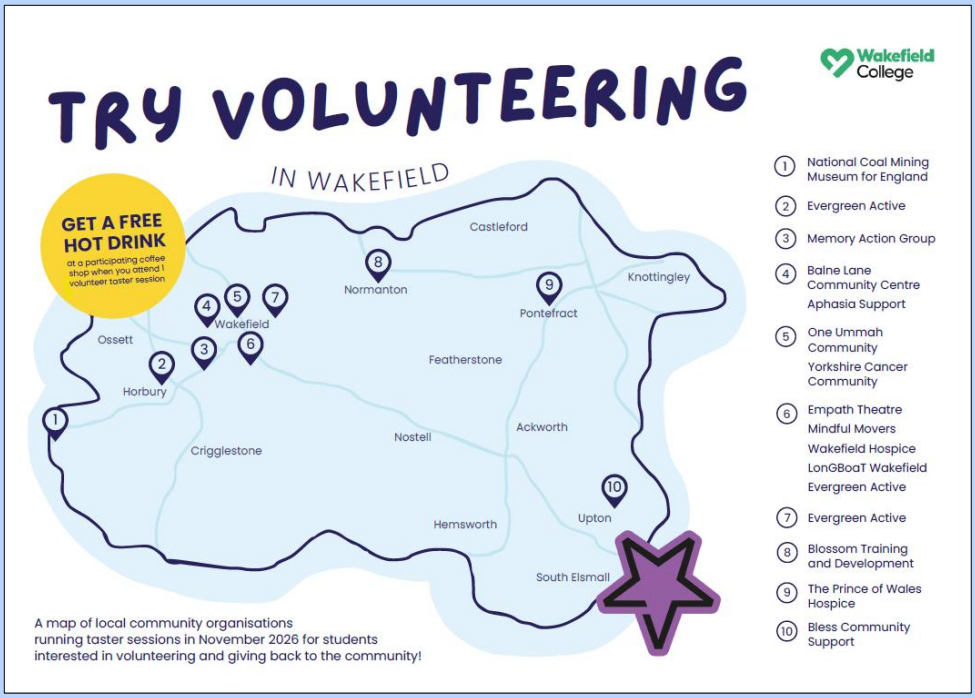
By listening to people with lived experience and involving them in conversations about the future of cancer care, we can help ensure that services are shaped around people's needs, preferences and circumstances.

At Yorkshire Cancer Community, we know how important it is that the voices of people affected by cancer are heard. Opportunities like this allow our volunteers to share their perspectives and help inform conversations about how cancer services could better meet the needs of the people who use them.

Fancy volunteering with us?

If you would like to find out more about our volunteering opportunities, we're holding three volunteer taster sessions this month.

Have a go at setting up our mock information stall or running a creative awareness session for other attendees to see how we engage in our communities. You'll be able to meet some of our volunteers and find out more about our work.



A map of local community organisations running taster sessions in November 2026 for students interested in volunteering and giving back to the community!

When: -

- **Tues 17 November – 1pm to 4pm**
- **Weds 18 November – 9am to 12pm**
- **Thur 19 November – 10am to 3pm**

Where: -

Sessions will be held at our registered office – **NOVA Wakefield District Ltd, 11 Upper York Street, Wakefield WF1 3 LQ**.

If you would like to get involved, contact Sarah on **07931 532253** or email **sarah@yorkshirecancercommunity.co.uk**

Supporting the LGBTQ+ community

Research has shown that if you're a member of the LGBTQ+ community, you may experience inequalities to the cancer care you receive, including access to screening, diagnosis, clinical care, communications and your overall experience on your cancer journey. These inequalities lead to lower screening rates and later-stage diagnosis, which in turn leads to less treatment options and worse overall outcomes.

We're raising awareness of the issues faced by the LGBTQ+ community and have introduced a new page of our website to help and support you, with advice and support, plus information about charities, support groups and organisations that offer help specifically to you. You can find our new page here https://www.yorkshirecancercommunity.co.uk/lgbtq_plus/

What are the barriers to screening?

Breast and cervical screening save lives by detecting cancer early, before symptoms are noticeable. However, if you are transgender (a person whose gender identity differs from the sex they were registered at birth) or non-binary (a person whose gender identity doesn't fit into the binary male or female category) you may have extra things to consider.

Screening appointments for cervical and breast screening are automatically sent out if you are registered as female with your GP surgery. If you are transgender or non-binary, this may mean that you aren't automatically invited for screening that you are eligible for, or you might receive invitations to screening that you are not eligible for. If this is the case, you can contact your GP and ask to "opt in" if you are registered as male but you have a cervix and / or breasts, or you can ask to be taken off the list is you are registered as female but don't have a cervix. If you have been taking feminising hormones and have grown breast tissue you would be eligible for breast screening.

Other considerations

Some other barriers to screening or cancer care might be gendered clinics and waiting rooms or worry that your gender registered at birth will be disclosed. Body dysphoria (a feeling of distress or discomfort when your gender identity doesn't match that which you were registered at birth) might make you feel uncomfortable checking your breasts or testicles for lumps or changes. We advise you to speak to the clinic beforehand to discuss any concerns. They may be able to help by timing your appointments to when people of all genders are in the waiting room, or when it's quieter. You can take a friend with you for support, or you could ask your GP or gender identity clinic about clinics who specialise in health services specifically for transgender or non-binary people such as the Leeds Trans & Non Binary Sexual Health Clinic held at Yorkshire MESMAC, in Leeds city centre. Call Leeds MESMAC on 0113 244 4209 or email leeds@mesmac.co.uk to book an appointment. You can visit their website at **https://mesmac.co.uk/areas/leeds**

HPV Vaccination

The HPV vaccination protects against the human papillomavirus (HPV) which causes nearly all cervical cancer cases. It also causes 90% of anal cancers, 63% of penile cancers, 70% of oropharyngeal (head and neck / throat) cancers, 69% of vulval cancers and 75% of vaginal cancers. So it's important to have the vaccine if you are eligible.

It's offered to children aged 12-13, young adults aged 24 and under who missed getting the vaccination as a child, and men who have sex with men aged 45 and under. Speak to your GP, sexual health clinic or HIV clinic to book in.

Resources for GP's and Healthcare Staff

GPs and other healthcare staff supporting trans and non-gender-conforming patients need to understand key aspects of cancer screening, hormone-related risks, administrative records, and patient communication to ensure equitable and safe care. Studies have shown many trans patients avoid or delay treatment due to fear of transphobia, being misgendered, or lack of knowledge of trans bodies and the effects of hormones or gender-affirming surgeries.

We have added a Trans Guide, produced by Pride in Practice to our website. This guide provides information to GPs to ensure you are able to support your trans patients, and also information for trans patients so that you know what rights you have and what support should be available to you.

Queer Bits

Queer Bits is an inclusive LGBTQ+ cancer awareness campaign run by The Brunswick Centre as part of its Well Proud initiative in Calderdale and Kirklees.

It was developed by Caroline "Caz" Morreale after her own experience with breast cancer and the barriers she faced as a lesbian accessing healthcare. It encourages LGBTQ+ individuals to self-check, recognise symptoms, and attend routine cancer screenings. The campaign centres cancer screening and awareness around body parts rather than gender labels, covering breast/chest and cervical screening, as well as testicular, prostate, and anal cancer awareness. The campaign aims to tackle healthcare barriers like discrimination, stigma, gender dysphoria, and the stress of repeatedly coming out to medical staff, which often leads to delayed diagnosis and worse outcomes. This fantastic campaign won the Pride in Diversity Inclusive Healthcare Initiative Award 2026. To find out more about Queer Bits click on their logo on our new website page https://www.yorkshirecancercommunity.co.uk/lgbtq_plus/

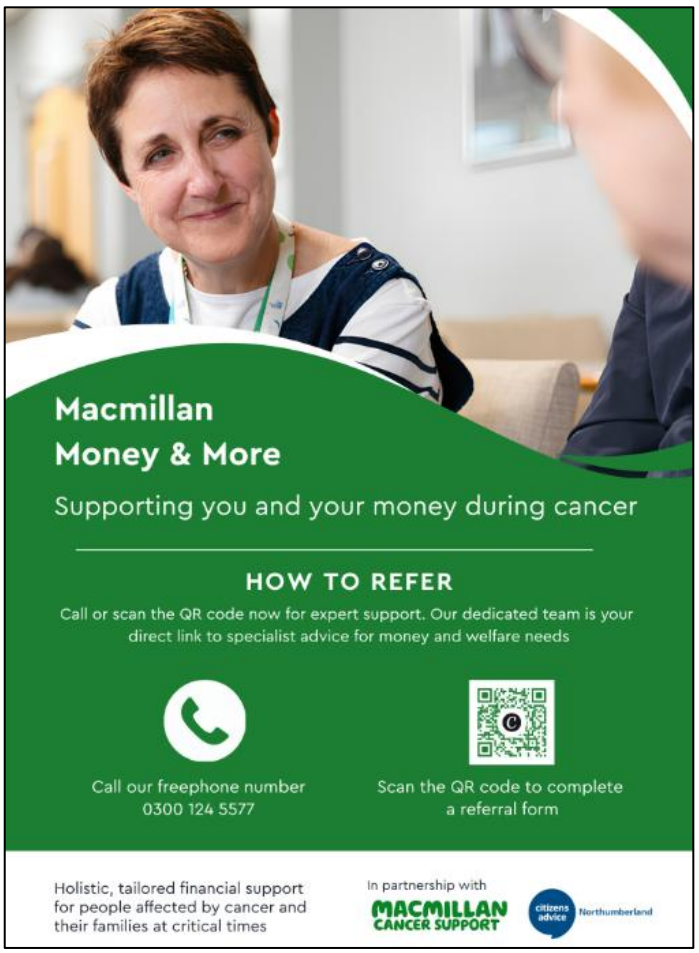
Rainbow Cuppa

Caz, creator of Queer Bits, is looking for people to join a new monthly LGBTQ+ cancer social group. Please email Caz at caroline@thebrunswickcentre.org.uk for more information.

News

New Service - Macmillan Money & More

Cancer can disrupt your whole life, and no one's experience of cancer is the same. Many are left navigating complex financial pressures, rising living costs, and systems that are difficult to access or understand. For those already facing the greatest barriers, these pressures can be even harder to overcome.



Macmillan Money & More is a new UK-wide approach to making sure people can get not just advice about their money, but all the joined-up help they need to help them manage the different pressures cancer is creating in their lives.

Macmillan, Money & More is about offering guidance where it is needed most and developing local advice services that are shaped and led by communities themselves. They are working with local partners in communities in every part of the UK to provide easier-to-understand practical information and advice where it is needed the most.

Over the next three years, Macmillan are working with 12 regional partner organisations to build local networks of support across the UK. By working with organisations that understand their communities best, they are making it easier for people to access advice and feel supported by trusted organisations rooted in their community.

Macmillan, Money & More, will be open and accessible to anyone affected by cancer in their local area.

In our region, our regional partner organisation is Citizens Advice Northumbria.

Delivered alongside Macmillan Cancer Support, the Macmillan Money and More Service offers free, confidential and tailored financial advice. The specialist team can help you:

- **Find out what welfare benefits you are entitled to and help you claim them.**
- **Access one-off grants for things like energy bills or travel costs to the hospital.**
- **Get help managing debts and navigating money worries during treatment.**

For help and advice from the Macmillan Money and More Service, simply telephone the freephone number 0300 124 5577 or complete the online referral form at https://referrals.citizensadvice.org.uk/users/sign_in

Getting expert advice is straightforward. You can self-refer or refer a family member today.

Cancer Ghosting

A cancer diagnosis can be a lonely and isolating experience. But just when you need support the most, you may experience "cancer ghosting" where people who you would normally look to for support take a step back or disappear from your life altogether. It's a very common problem, with around 75% of people surveyed saying they had experience of this after a cancer diagnosis.

Why does this happen?

The reasons cancer ghosting happens are many, and it's not usually malicious. Here we explore the potential reasons why.

- People may be anxious about saying the wrong thing or are not sure how to behave around you
- They may assume you want to be left alone or need time to rest
- They may think you will be busy with appointments and treatment or that other people are already supporting you, so they are not needed
- They may be incredibly sad and upset about your diagnosis and be afraid of getting upset in front of you, or find cancer a hard topic to cope with

How to cope if you are cancer ghosted

It can feel incredibly hurtful and take an emotional toll to have a close friend or family member withdraw support when you need them the most. If you have been diagnosed with cancer, there is help available to find the words to reach out to your family and friends for support. Macmillan's Talking About Cancer booklet has tips on how to speak about your diagnosis including understanding the reactions of others here **https://bit.ly/4yRzM67** You could try including them in your treatment by asking for chaperones to attend appointments with you or setting up a group chat with your friends and family with updates. Keeping the lines of communication open can really help.

You could also see what support groups there are in your community. It can really help to speak to people who know what you are going through. We have a dedicated support page where you can find support local to you with our interactive map. You can find it here **https://www.yorkshirecancercommunity.co.uk/support-groups/**

How to avoid becoming a cancer ghost

If you have a loved one who is living with a cancer diagnosis, here's how to avoid becoming a cancer ghost.

- Keep in regular contact – don't be worried about saying the wrong thing. Be there to listen.
- Keep trying – the person may not want help straight away, but keep trying. Everyone deals with a diagnosis differently, but just because they don't need support right now, they might later
- Make specific offers of help – instead of saying "if there's anything I can do, just ask", you could say "I'm making lasagne tonight, can I bring some for you to try?" or "I'm going to the supermarket, do you want me to bring you anything?"
- Only offer support that you can genuinely fulfil.

Emileen Trust

This family-run Trust was set up in memory of loved ones, one of whom was diagnosed with glioblastoma in 2023, and all funds are raised by family and friends.

It aims to make a big difference through small acts of kindness, offering micro-grants of up to £250 for people with a primary brain cancer diagnosis living in the Northeast and North, East and West Yorkshire

The grants can be used for any purpose that cannot be met by statutory services (social care or the NHS), such as: costs of fuel or parking for hospital trips, or anything to make a person more comfortable such as clothing, special pillows or bedding, a magazine subscription or a record player to sing along to.

The Trust welcomes referrals from professionals, charities and community and support groups, and individuals should be referred using the webform at the link below:

https://www.theemileentrust.co.uk/contact-us/

Please provide a few details about the individual such as their diagnosis, where they live and what the request is for, alongside contact details for the referrer and (with permission and where appropriate) contact details for the individual who you are making the request for.

It would be great to know if any of our Yorkshire Cancer Community contacts do apply successfully for a micro-grant, so please let us know by emailing **sarah@yorkshirecancercommunity.co.uk**

You can find out more about this wonderful Trust and its amazing work here:

https://www.theemileentrust.co.uk/about-us/

EMILEEN TRUST

Managing menopause after breast cancer

Hundreds of thousands of breast cancer survivors struggle with treatment-induced menopause. That's why Menopause and Cancer have created an expert-led video series where, one topic at a time, people can learn to understand their symptoms, find reliable answers and feel more empowered to take an active role in their health and wellbeing.

Managing Menopause After Breast Cancer is a free, 10-part video series bringing together leading specialists to explore the challenges of menopause during and after breast cancer treatment.

From understanding symptoms to navigating treatment options, each conversation offers practical, evidence-informed guidance that patients can access in their own time.

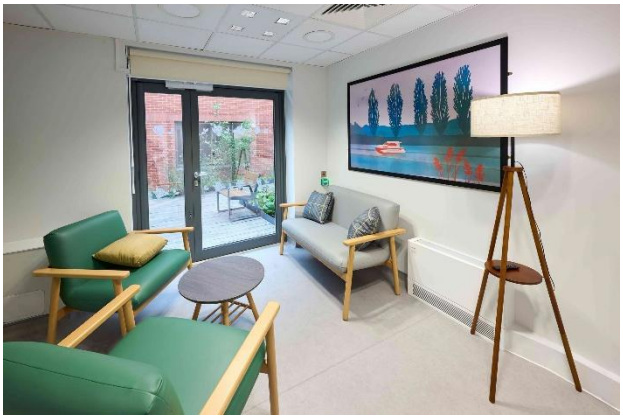
To watch, go to **https://menopauseandcancer.org/managing-menopause-after-breast-cancer/** or follow the link on our breast cancer website **https://www.yorkshirecancercommunity.co.uk/breast-cancer/**

The Sir Robert Ogden Macmillan Cancer Care Centre opens

The newly redeveloped centre at York Hospital opened its doors in October and has started to receive its first patients

In our July edition of VOICE we told you how King Charles III had visited the centre and met patients involved in its design, spoken with cancer specialists and planted a Macmillan rose in the garden area. The centre is now open and will be supporting people from across York, Scarborough and the wider rural and coastal communities.

This fantastic space has been co-designed by cancer patients, families and people with lived experience of cancer, to ensure that it offers a welcoming, inclusive and supportive environment. Every detail has been considered, from the services it provides, to the furnishings, colour schemes and artwork, to ensure it is a calm welcoming space designed around the needs and experiences of people affected by cancer.



The £2.4 million development was funded by Macmillan Cancer Support through public donations, including support from Lady Ogden and the Sir Robert Ogden Charitable Foundation, York and Scarborough Hospitals Charity and the NHS trust.

The Centre offers drop-in support Monday to Friday from 8am to 4.30pm.

What have we been up to?

Cancer SMART out and about in October!

October has been a busy month for Cancer SMART, with Lauren and our Champions attending a number of community events across West Yorkshire, helping to raise awareness, share information and encourage people to be more Cancer SMART.

Here's a little round-up of where we've been:

6 October – Millat-e-Islamia, Bradford: Cancer SMART Project Lead Lauren attended their NHS Health Check event, sharing cancer awareness information and resources with the local community.

21 October – Shantona Women's Centre, Harehills, Leeds: Lauren attended a Community Breast Cancer Awareness event as part of Leeds Involving People's Early Action on Cancer Pilot, helping to raise awareness of breast cancer and the importance of recognising changes.

Representatives from the NHS attended the NHS Health Check event at Millat-e-Islamia, raising awareness of bowel cancer screening

21 October - Women's Interfaith Group in Ravensthorpe, Dewsbury: Cancer SMART Champion and trustee Julie spoke to around 15 women from a diverse range of backgrounds. The session covered the importance of being body aware as we get older, understanding screening age ranges and knowing how to continue accessing breast and bowel screening. There were also some really valuable conversations about recognising changes, keeping a journal to understand what's normal for you and how to talk to your GP about any symptoms.

23 October - Rida Girls High School in Dewsbury: Our Champion Mariam delivered a cancer awareness talk to two different classes. With approximately 30 girls in each class, that's around 60 young people reached! Mariam was also representing another charity she volunteers with, **Guiding Hands**, and was able to share lots of additional information and resources. There were plenty of questions and discussions, and the girls were particularly intrigued by the 'Know Your Lemons' demonstration!

27 October – Pink Chai Breast Cancer Awareness Event, Huddersfield: Cancer SMART Champion Bev attended the Pink Chai Breast Cancer Awareness event at Hudawi Cultural Centre in Huddersfield, hosted by The Lipstick Project.

Bev said she thoroughly enjoyed the event, speaking to around 15 people about cancer awareness and the importance of breast screening. The event was also a great opportunity for networking with other support organisations and from this event has been invited to another awareness event which will be raising awareness of prostate cancer, diabetes and sickle cell disease, which all disproportionately affect the Black community. Watch out for more details on our socials.

Bev is pictured with The Lipstick Project manager Nusrat Bibi

28 October – MHA Winter Wellbeing Event, St Andrew's Community Centre, Beeston, Leeds: Lauren attended with Cancer SMART awareness stall, giving people the opportunity to find out more and pick up useful information. Our over 70s leaflet got lots of positive feedback and Beeston Primary Care Network (PCN) would like lots of them to share in their GP surgeries!

A big thank you to Mariam, Julie and Bev for continuing to spread the Cancer SMART message and helping more people feel confident about looking after their health!

Lauren speaking to a member of the public at the MHA event

What's coming up in November?

Our Cancer SMART Champions have another busy month ahead, with lots more opportunities to get out into the community, share information and raise awareness!

4 November – Ravensthorpe Community Centre: Our Champion Julie will be attending to chat with local people and share Cancer SMART information. Do come along and say hello. We'd love to see you!

12 November – Project Colt Monthly Wellbeing Day, Elland, Halifax: Cancer SMART Champion Sally will be attending with our awareness stall, sharing information and helping people learn more about being Cancer SMART.

19 November – Carers Count Event, Batley Library: A few of our Cancer SMART Champions will be joining NHS West Yorkshire and Harrogate Cancer Alliance to share a stall at this event.

Introducing our new leaflet hoping to raise awareness of the importance of catching cancer early and knowing the signs and symptoms to look out for. This double-sided leaflet has gone to print, so get in touch if you would like some to pass on and help us spread this important message far and wide.

The best protection is early detection

WITH CANCER, AN EARLY DIAGNOSIS MEANS MORE TREATMENT OPTIONS

Early diagnosis

If you catch cancer early, it is small

If not caught early, it gets bigger and can spread

Late diagnosis

How you can increase your chances of an early diagnosis

- Be aware of your own body - know YOUR normal
- Check for changes regularly
- Take part in well-person screening when invited
- See your GP if you notice anything unusual and persistent

Yorkshire Cancer Community

Charity No. 1185838

Know YOUR Normal

BE AWARE OF YOUR BODY SO YOU CAN RECOGNISE ANY CHANGES QUICKLY

SEE YOUR GP IF YOU EXPERIENCE ANY NEW, UNUSUAL OR PERSISTENT CHANGES

Lumps or swellings

Pain

Feeling tired

Changes in weight

Fever / infections / night sweats

Sores or ulcers / unexplained bruising

Feeling breathless

Cough / hoarse voice

Difficulty chewing or swallowing

Heartburn / indigestion

Breast, chest or nipple changes

Unusual moles / skin changes

Trouble peeing

Changes in toilet habits

Blood in poo / pee / semen / spit or vomit

Bleeding between periods / after menopause or heavier periods

Yorkshire Cancer Community

Charity No. 1185838

What We're Working On & Opportunities to Get Involved

Development and testing of a screening tool to identify need for support for people who have had a cancer diagnosis

University of Southampton

Researchers: Dr Jane Frankland, Dr Nicola Andrews, Dr David Wright

Funder: Wessex Cancer Alliance

Researchers from University of Southampton are inviting individuals who have had a cancer diagnosis to participate in this short online survey as part of their work to develop a brief screening tool that can be used in clinical practice. The aim of the screening tool is to rapidly and accurately tailor the care provided to the individual person with cancer. They have developed version one of the screening questions and need to test these to check they are working well.

Further details can be found in the Information Sheet attached via a link in the survey introduction. They would be grateful if you would complete the survey which they anticipate will take 10 to 15 minutes. You can do this by clicking on the link:

https://southampton.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9RiNLODJVmhthWK

Lunch & Learn: Menopause & Cancer

19th November 12 – 1pm

Speaker: Lisa Spivey - West Yorkshire & Harrogate Cancer Alliance

This free Lunch & Learn will provide an overview of the impact of cancer treatment on menopause and quality of life and explore the emerging work across West Yorkshire & Harrogate Cancer Alliance to better support people living with and beyond cancer.

Lisa will present what patients are telling the Cancer Alliance team about their experiences, the current gaps and variation in support, and how menopause can fall between oncology, primary care and specialist services.

The session will also highlight the developing work across West Yorkshire & Harrogate, including opportunities for integrated support, education, physical activity, psychological and wellbeing interventions, and how we can work differently across clinical and community services to improve survivorship and quality of life.

To register for Lunch & Learn: Menopause and Cancer (West Yorkshire & Harrogate Cancer Alliance), click on the link: **https://bit.ly/47DLIgS**

Patient VIEW Panel meeting
22nd October 2026

We recently held an online Patient VIEW meeting featuring two presentations that invited feedback from people with lived experience of cancer.
Lisa Spivey, Living With and Beyond Cancer Project Manager at the West Yorkshire & Harrogate Cancer Alliance, presented on the NHSE Physical Activity & Cancer Plan Brief.
Dr Jane Clark, Lead Consultant Clinical Psychologist at Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, spoke to the panel about the Delivery of Psychological Services in Psycho-oncology, Cancer and Palliative Care Guidance.
Both speakers were keen to hear the panel's perspectives, helping ensure that the experiences and insights of people affected by cancer can inform their work and shape future projects.

Not Part of Patient VIEW Yet? Join Us.

Have you been affected by cancer, whether through your own experience, caring for someone, or supporting a family member? We'd love you to consider joining Patient VIEW.

Our panel brings the voices of people affected by cancer directly into research, helping universities, researchers and healthcare organisations understand what matters to patients and families. We're growing our panel to make it more connected and diverse, ensuring that a wider range of experiences can help shape research and improve cancer care across the UK.

You can get involved in a way that works for you. Nothing is compulsory, and you can contribute as often as your time and circumstances allow. Some university workshops also offer reimbursement for your time.

Most importantly, your experience and perspective can help influence research and make a real difference to the future of cancer care.

Interested in joining us? Get in touch with Jess at **jess@yorkshirecancercommunity.co.uk** to find out more.

Patient

V Voices from around the region

I Including all points of view

E Exchanging practical ideas

W Working together

Upcoming events

Here's what we have coming up this month.

Mon 2 Nov – Stall at Westbourne Green Community Hospital, Bradford BD8 8RA at 10am – 4pm.

Wed 4 Nov – YCC Community Hub, The Art House, Drury Lane, Wakefield WF1 2TE at 2pm – 3.30pm.

Wed 4 Nov – Health event at Ravensthorpe Community Centre, Dewsbury WF13 3AR at 10am – 2pm.

Thu 12 Nov – YCC Community Hub Lost Property Coffee Shop and Kitchen, 15 Byram Street, Huddersfield HD1 1DR at 1pm – 2.30pm.

Thu 12 Nov – Monthly wellbeing day at Project Colt with the Liver Buddies, Bridgefield Mills, Elland Bridge, Elland HX5 0SQ at 10am – 2.30pm.

Wed 18 Nov – Support Group Leaders Network online meeting – 2pm to 3.30pm. Contact Sarah Mitchell on **sarah@yorkshirecancercommunity.co.uk** for the link.

Thu 19 Nov – Lunch & Learn: Menopause and Cancer at 12pm – 1pm – online. To register, use link: **https://bit.ly/47DLIgS**

Thu 19 Nov – Community event – International Men's Day, Harehills Lane Baptist Church, Leeds LS8 4HE. Time TBC.

Thu 19 Nov – Carers Count event, Batley Library, 14 Market Place, Batley WF17 5DA at 10.30am – 12pm.

Sun 29 Nov – Wakefield Women's Wellbeing event, hosted by Crafty Creatives CIC – Parkside Methodist Church Hall, Leeds Road, Outwood WF1 2PN at 2pm – 4pm.

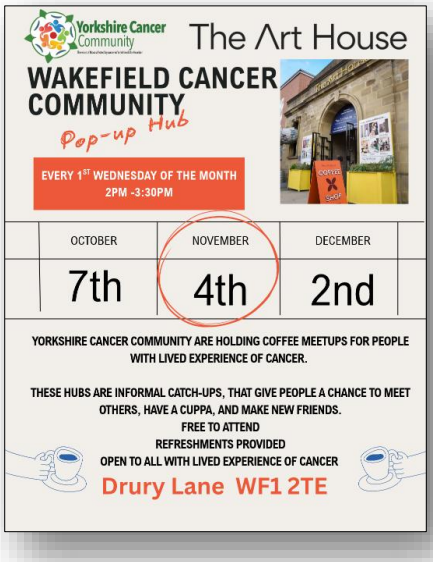
Watch out for our social media posts too to keep up to date on what we've got coming up.

@YorkshireCancerCommunity

@yorkshirecancercommunity

@yorkshire-cancer-community

@yorkshirecancercommunity



YCC Community Hubs - Wakefield

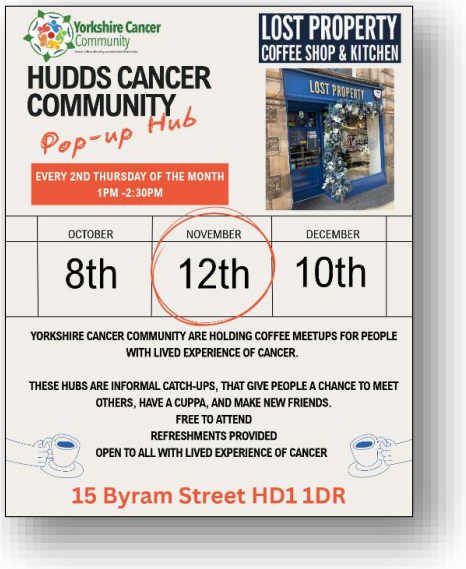
Our Wakefield Community Hub "Wellbeing Wednesdays in Wakefield" will be held on 4 November from 2pm to 3.30pm at The Art House, Drury Lane, Wakefield WF1 2TE.

Our monthly get togethers are the ideal opportunity for our volunteers, Cancer SMART Champions, Patient VIEW members, support group leaders and anyone else to come along to talk, connect and share ideas over a cuppa in a relaxed environment. Want to get involved with volunteering with us and want to know more? We'd love to meet you for a chat! Why not pop along?

YCC Community Hubs - Huddersfield

Our Huddersfield Community Hub will be held on Thursday 12 November from 1pm to 2.30pm at Lost Property Coffee Shop and Kitchen, 15 Byram Street, Huddersfield HD1 1DR.

If you're local to Huddersfield, we think this is the perfect spot for a get together. Pop along to meet fellow volunteers, chat, and share ideas in a social setting. If you're new to YCC but want to know about volunteering, pop along too. We have lots of opportunities you might want to get involved in. Hope to see you there.



Cancer Support Group Leaders Network Meeting

Do you lead a cancer support group? Thinking about starting one and looking for advice? Either way, we'd love you to join our Support Group Leaders Network.

Connect with other group leaders, share experiences, and gain practical advice from experts to help your group thrive.

Our network meetings cover topics such as:

- **Attracting and engaging new members**
- **Promoting your group in the community**
- **Finding inspiring speakers and activity ideas**
- **Fundraising tips and best practice**
- **Sharing challenges, successes and ideas with fellow leaders**
- **Safeguarding**

Whether you're an experienced group leader or just getting started, our network offers a friendly, supportive space to learn, connect and grow.
Join us and be part of a community supporting those affected by cancer.

Our Support Group Leaders Network meetings are every two months and are online via zoom, so just grab a cuppa and join us. It's a great opportunity to learn from others, or to share your knowledge.
If you want to know more, our next group is meeting on Wednesday 18 November at 2pm – 3.30pm.
Contact Sarah on **sarah@yorkshirecancercommunity.co.uk** for a joining link. We'd love to see you there.

Tits Up
SUPPORT NETWORK
Standing Together, Whatever Comes.
Our First Meet Up!
WEDNESDAY
18TH NOVEMBER 2026
4PM TO 5PM
CLOSED TO GENERAL PUBLIC
SHORES DINER
WITHERNSEA
A friendly and welcoming meet up for Breast Cancer fighters
Whether you have been through it, are going through it, or are just recently diagnosed — you are not alone.
SUPPORT
UNDERSTANDING
FRIENDSHIP
HOPE
Support
Chat
Friendship
Hope
Come along for a cuppa, a chat and a supportive community.

ProjectColt
Changing lives for good
MONTHLY WELLBEING DAY
Join us for our Monthly Wellbeing Day, bringing together local organisations offering health checks, advice, support and information to help you look after your health and wellbeing.
Thursday
12th November 2026
10:00am – 2:30pm
Drop in at any time
Project Colt
Bridgefield Mills,
Elland Bridge, Elland,
HX5 0SQ
LIVER BUDDIES
deLIVERing CARE
FREE LIVER HEALTH CHECKS & SCANS
The Community Liver Health Checks Team will be joining us with their mobile clinic, offering free liver health checks and scans for eligible people.
No appointments needed
First come, first served
Please avoid eating for 3 hours before a scan (water is fine)
Wear separate tops and bottoms (e.g. T-shirt and trousers or a skirt)
family action
LifeSkills
ADVICE, SUPPORT AND OPPORTUNITIES
Come along and meet the Family Action Life Skills team, offering free, friendly advice and support to help you:
Develop your financial skills
Build your confidence
Grow your social network
Achieve your work related goals
The team will be available during the event from 11:00am – 1:00pm.
Yorkshire Cancer Community
Yorkshire's leading cancer charity
CANCER SMART AWARENESS
Yorkshire Cancer Community will be joining us with a Cancer SMART awareness stall, sharing important information to help you:
Recognise cancer signs and symptoms
The importance of screening and early diagnosis
How to reduce your risk
Make positive lifestyle choices for your health
Come along, meet the teams, pick up useful information and discover the support available in your community.
Everyone Welcome!

The Ladies Real Monty 2026

Ladies in Pink, based in Cayton, near Scarborough, are passionate about raising breast cancer awareness and funds for charities supporting those affected by cancer.

On Friday 27th November 2026, they're hosting The Ladies Real Monty at Parkdean Resorts, Cayton Bay, Scarborough — a special evening of entertainment, courage and solidarity, raising funds for three amazing charities - Breast Cancer Now, Yorkshire Cancer Research and Saint Catherine's Hospice in Scarborough. This will be performed in front of over 600 people.

This adults only show starts at 7pm until 1am. Tickets are only £15 each, and includes raffle entry. Tickets are available at **https://ladiesinpink.co.uk/event/the-ladies-real-monty/** or you can email ladiesinpink23@gmail.com or tel 07884 551836 for enquiries.

This is set to be an unforgettable night out so book now to avoid disappointment.

Breast Cancer NOW are hosting a 'Speakers Live webinar' in November on **Breast cancer in men**. Taking place on **Tuesday 3rd November at 7pm**, the session will focus on raising awareness of breast cancer in men, acknowledging the potential challenges and concerns around the diagnosis of breast cancer from a male perspective and providing an overview of the specific support available for men to access during and after treatment.

They will be joined by Richard Galloway, who is a moderator and a valued member of Men's virtual meet up (Men's VMU) charity, offering support and connection to men affected by breast cancer. Richard was diagnosed with breast cancer and had a mastectomy in January 2016. Individuals can book themselves on to the webinar here **https://bit.ly/4zwpFnY**.

Join Wakefield Hospice & The Prince of Wales Hospice for a day of conversation and collaboration as part of Interfaith Week 2026

Monday 09 November, 11:00-15:00

St Swithun's Centre, Arncliffe Road, Wakefield, WF1 4RR

Bringing together faith leaders, community organisations, healthcare professionals, charities and local residents, this free event will explore how we can build more compassionate and inclusive communities, tackle the question "what does a good death look like to me" whilst aiming to improve support for people approaching the end of life and those experiencing bereavement.

The day will feature inspiring talks from faith leaders and guest speakers, interactive workshops, opportunities to network, exhibition stalls and a complimentary lunch prepared by WH Kitchen.

Key themes for the day will include:
- What does a good death look like to me?
- How can we build more compassionate and inclusive communities?
- How can we better support people approaching the end of life and those experiencing bereavement?

Running order:
11:00 - Introductions
11:15 - Guest Speakers from different faith backgrounds "What does a good death look like to me"
12:15 - Panel Questions
12:45 - Free networking lunch and stalls
13:30 - Guest speaker
13:50 - Table Activities
14:50 - Conclude

This is a FREE to attend event but we request those interested in attending to book their place so we are able to manage the catering needs. Please share with your contacts in the communities to join us for an amazing day.

Book your free tickets here: www.bit.ly/interfaithweek2026

Carers Count

CARERS RIGHTS DAY

Join us for carers rights day 2026 to learn about carers rights, entitlement and available support including assessments, advocacy, benefits and various other services in Kirklees.

Thursday 19th November from 10.30am - 12.30pm
Batley Library, 14 Market Place WF17 5DA

Thursday 19th November from 1pm - 3pm
Cleckheaton Library, Whitcliffe Road BD19 3DX

For more information, please contact Carers Count:

Call us on 0300 012 0231 or email us at info@carerscount.org.uk

Carers Count Kirklees is a service run and facilitated by Cloverleaf Advocacy Company no: 3790911. Charity Reg no 1097608.

Cloverleaf Advocacy Celebrating 30 years

Health & Wellbeing

RouteWays

RCCL Ravensthorpe Community Centre

Healthy Working Life

West Yorkshire Combined Authority

Tracy Brabin Mayor of West Yorkshire

HEALTH EVENT

Healthy Working Lives information & support

Ravensthorpe Community Centre
WF13 3AR

Wednesday 4th November 2026
10am-2pm

FREE EVENT • FREE REFRESHMENTS

Mehndi & hand massage

Locala Liver Buddies
Liver screening & hepatitis C checks

Information stalls including:

- Locala services
- CGL
- Carers Count
- PCAN
- Police contact point
- Kirklees Wellness Services
- Community Plus
- Health Watch
- Move More Ravensthorpe
- KAL
- Community Champions
- Vaccination information
- Pregnancy & child development
- And more!

International Men's Day 2026

The Early Action on Cancer Pilot

Small Steps, Better Health

Thurs 19th November 2026

1.30pm-4.30pm

Harehills Lane Baptist Church, LS8 4HE

- Men's health and cancer awareness information
- Free creative activities
- Community stalls and local support
- Refreshments and snacks
- Opportunities to share your views

Connect, create & take a small step towards better health

FREE ENTRY ~ DROP IN EVERYONE WELCOME

0113 237 4508
info@leedsinvolvement.org.uk

Health Innovation Yorkshire & Humber | NHS West Yorkshire and Harrogate Cancer Alliance | LEEDS involving people

Cancer Awareness

Gastric (Stomach) Cancer Awareness Month

Gastric / stomach cancer is quite rare, but the risk of developing it increases as we get older. It is more common in men than women.

Symptoms include: -

- Heartburn or indigestion that doesn't go away
- Pain or discomfort in the tummy area
- Loss of appetite
- Feeling full after only eating a small amount
- Unexplained weight loss
  Other symptoms can be feeling or being sick, difficulty swallowing, excessive burping, black poo, or feeling tired, weak and breathless.

For more information on stomach cancer, including charities, support groups and life stories, you can visit our website page at **https://www.yorkshirecancercommunity.co.uk/oesophageal-and-stomach-cancer/**

Lung Cancer Awareness Month

Lung cancer is one of the most common and serious types of cancer. More than 43,000 people are diagnosed in the UK each year. It mainly affects older people, and those who smoke, but it can affect anyone.

There are usually no symptoms in the early stages, but later symptoms include: -

- A persistent cough
- Coughing up blood
- Repeated chest infections
- Persistent breathlessness
- Unexplained tiredness or weight loss
- An ache or pain when breathing or coughing
- Chest or shoulder pain

If you experience any of these symptoms, you should speak to your GP.

Treatment depends on the type of lung cancer, how far it has spread, and your general health. It may be surgery, radiotherapy or chemotherapy. Sometimes targeted therapies are used to slow the spread of lung cancer, but they cannot cure it completely.

For more information on lung cancer, including how to reduce your risk, details of the new targeted lung screening programme, where to find support and inspiring life stories, you can visit the lung cancer section of our website **https://www.yorkshirecancercommunity.co.uk/lung-cancer/**

Mouth Cancer Action Month

Mouth cancer, or oral cancer as it is sometimes known, can affect any part of the mouth, including the gums, tongue, inside of the cheek, roof of your mouth or lips.
Although anyone can get mouth cancer, it is most common in older people and those who smoke or chew tobacco, drink alcohol or use sunbeds or sun exposure.

Symptoms include: -

- A mouth ulcer that lasts more than 3 weeks
- A red or white patch inside your mouth
- A lump inside your mouth or on your lip
- Pain inside your mouth
- Difficulty swallowing
- Difficulty speaking or a hoarse voice
- A lump in your neck or throat
- Losing weight without trying

If you have any of these symptoms, see your GP. Your dentist will also be able to help you with ulcers, lumps, patches or pain in your mouth.

These symptoms are very common though, so may not necessarily be due to oral cancer. However, it is important to get them checked as if it is cancer, the earlier it is found, the easier it is to treat.

If you would like further information on mouth cancer, visit **https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/head-and-neck-cancer/mouth-cancer**

You can also visit our website page **https://www.yorkshirecancercommunity.co.uk/head-neck-cancer/**

Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month

Your pancreas is a small organ that sits close to your stomach, gallbladder and liver. It helps you digest your food and makes hormones such as insulin.
Anyone can get pancreatic cancer, but you are more likely to get it if you are over 65, have chronic pancreatitis or there's a history of pancreatic cancer in your family. It can also be linked to lifestyle, so making changes such as losing weight if you're overweight, cutting down on red or processed meat (eg ham, bacon, salami), cutting down on alcohol and stopping smoking can all help to reduce your risk.

Symptoms include: -

- Yellowing skin or whites of eyes (jaundice)
- Itchy skin, darker pee, paler poo
- Losing weight without trying to
- Feeling tired and having no energy
- High temperature, feeling hot or shivery

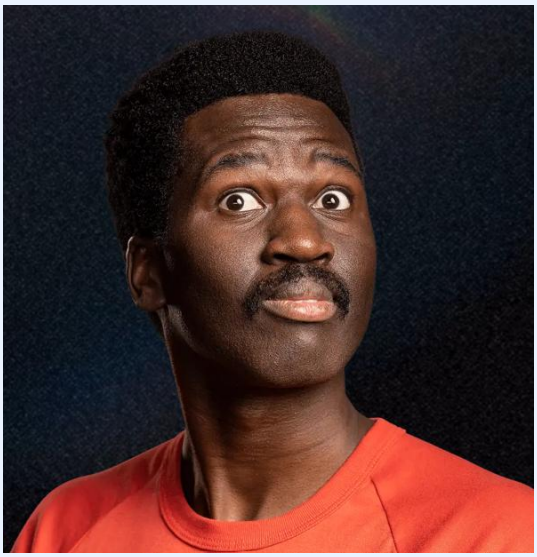
- Feeling or being sick
- Diarrhoea or constipation, or other changes in your poo
- Tummy or back pain, which may feel worse when eating or lying down, but better when leaning forward.
- Feeling bloated, or other symptoms of indigestion.

Some of these symptoms are common and could be due to other things, but please see your GP to rule out pancreatic cancer, as the earlier it is diagnosed, the more favourable the outcome.

For more information and support, visit the pancreatic cancer page of our website - **https://www.yorkshirecancercommunity.co.uk/pancreatic-cancer/**

Movember – Changing the face of men's health

Movember is a mens health charity, who aim to address the global crisis of mens health. Men die an average of 4.5 years earlier than women, and for many their deaths are preventable. Movember aims to tackle three main causes of early death in men – **suicide, prostate cancer and testicular cancer**. Movember fund projects all over the world, engaging men where they are to understand what works best and to accelerate change. They aim to fundamentally change the way men in need are treated and supported.



Their most well-known fundraising effort takes place in November, when you will suddenly start to see moustaches where there wasn't a moustache before!

The Order of Mo is a fundraising initiative where those who are able to grow a moustache do so to raise funds for this worthwhile cause. This attention grabbing action can spark important conversations, so get involved if you can, here's the link for more info **https://uk.movember.com/support-us/grow**

However, if you're not able to grow a moustache, there are other ways you can get involved. You could host a Mo-Ment, which is a great excuse for a party! So if you've got people you've been meaning to catch up with, or a get-together is long overdue, why not sign up to host a Mo-Ment and raise funds for mens health at the same time? **https://uk.movember.com/support-us/host**

There's lots of other fundraising ideas on the Movember website, here **https://uk.movember.com/**