



In Sight 2026

Friends of Bristol Eye Hospital raise funds to improve the care and treatment of patients at the hospital that are beyond the budget of the NHS.

Issue No. 44 | 2026

ALMOST £2 MILLION PAID IN GRANTS

Please can you help us get to our target?

We're delighted and excited to announce that we're now just several thousand pounds from reaching our target of £2 million in grants to support the Eye Hospital!

When the charity was founded in 1977, few could have imagined the scale of impact it would have. Our first major milestone was just over 30 years later in 2010 when we achieved £1 million in donations.

Since then, the generosity of our supporters has continued to transform what we are able to do. Thanks to ongoing donations, our support for both patients and staff at the Bristol Eye Hospital has continued to grow, enabling improved care and facilities.

Now, in 2026, we are incredibly proud to be on the brink of another landmark moment with almost £2 million paid in grants

It's a powerful testament to the dedication of all who continue to support us - whether through fundraising, donations, or continued advocacy for the hospital.

With just a little more help, we can cross this milestone together and continue making a lasting difference for eye care in Bristol and beyond.

Terri Agnew, Deputy Divisional Director of Bristol Eye Hospital, said: "Support from the Friends of Bristol Eye Hospital is incredibly important to us. Their generosity directly enhances the experience of our patients and provides valuable support to our staff. Reaching almost £2 million is a remarkable achievement, and we are deeply grateful to everyone who has helped make this possible."

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CHAIRPERSON KAY McCLUSKY'S REPORT



I am delighted, as Chair of Friends of Bristol Eye Hospital, and as a patient, to see that Grants of nearly £2 million have been made since the Friends were founded nearly 50 years ago. In the 10 years since I became a Trustee, I have learned so much about the workings of the hospital; its expertise and high-standing in the nation's eye health, and so being able to raise funds for such an organisation, all through voluntary assistance and at so little cost, is most gratifying.

This edition of In Sight tells of the generosity of so many donors, many of whom have remembered us in their wills, and which include those who have paid regular amounts

for years, or who have made a single donation, most of whom have not sought any publicity for their contribution.

Generous support has also been given by those attending our fundraising events in the past year, namely the Eye-themed quiz night at Frenchay Cricket Club in March, and the wine tasting at the Clifton Club in October.

Raffle prize donations have swelled our coffers, as have the donations of items to be auctioned. This included a much sought-after bottle of rare malt whisky given by Dr Richard Tomiak, which sold for £230!

Some of the grants made this year and items purchased are listed in this publication, and if you are at the hospital, look out for these items and think about the many ways you can donate, so that you can make a contribution to Bristol's much admired eye hospital, its staff and patients. More details can be found in this publication and on our website.

Finally, THANK YOU... On behalf of all the trustees may I say how grateful we are to the many individuals and organisations who have been kind enough to send us donations, leave legacies and help us in so many other ways in the past year.

BRIEF HISTORY OF FRIENDS OF BRISTOL EYE HOSPITAL

The charity was formed in 1977 with a committee of six under the chairmanship of Peter Smith. The aim was to provide support for the hospital in two main areas – amenities for the patients and staff, and medical equipment that was beyond the purse of the NHS.

Early on, Eye Hospital consultants Neil Dallas and Vincent Marmion both mentioned the boost the Friends' support gave to staff morale. In 1980 Christopher Dean Hart said "the facilities the Friends have provided and the resource they represent have meant that the hospital has been able to attract the very best consultants and junior staff to fill vacancies".

In 1994, Consultant Stuart Cook said, "the support the doctors and nurses receive from the Friends enables them to give a standard of service not possible otherwise".

We are delighted that 49 years on, the charity is offering wonderful support to the hospital, and staff continue to show their appreciation for all the charity does to support them.

FUNDRAISING

A very successful quiz night raises over £1,000 for the Friends

A very successful quiz night at Frenchay Cricket Club raised over a £1,000 for the Friends.

We were grateful to two experienced quizmasters, David Baynton and Alex Rossiter, solicitors from Bristol law firm Wards, who devised questions based on the theme of 'eyes'.

The winning team was made up of staff from the eye hospital: Saj Amarakoon, Sarah Horton, James Tithecott, Michael Green and Rachel Healy.

An auction of a signed Bristol Bears rugby shirt and sales of raffle tickets (thanks to all those who donated so many lovely prizes) brought the final takings to £1,164.

Special thanks also to the Frenchay Cricket Club who kindly donated use of their clubhouse and bar without charge.

Another successful wine tasting evening raises £900

A previous wine tasting event had been so successful that the Friends held another in October, again in the prestigious Clifton Club.

Thanks once again to Clifton-based wine merchant DBM wines, whose director Richard Davies hosted the event, enabling those attending to taste a variety of lesser-known but thoroughly enjoyable wines.

Many people had donated prizes for the raffle and we particularly thank Dr Richard Tomiak who donated a rare bottle of vintage whisky, resulting in some exciting bidding amongst those who attended.

'Easy fundraising'.... A new way to support the friends at no cost to you

The Friends are delighted to announce that we have signed up to a new charity support organisation called 'easyfundraising'.

The service is used by hundreds of charities across the UK, so far raising in excess of £65 million.

It is free to use for both the public and charities and all anyone who would like to help support the Friends when they shop they need simply to sign up via the easyfundraising website and app.

Having done that, whenever you shop online with participating retailers, whether through your phone, laptop or tablet, a portion of what you spend will be donated to Friends of Bristol Eye Hospital.

Retailers and other businesses currently supporting the scheme include Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda, John Lewis, Booking.com, Trainline, ebay, Amazon and Argos. The full list of companies working with the scheme is shown on the easyfundraising website, which can be found at <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/>

OUR THANKS

Thanks to Wroughton Vale Rotarians

The Friends have been supported by the Rotary Club of Wroughton for twelve years, and during this time they have raised over £5,000 towards our work helping patients and staff in the Bristol Eye Hospital.

The club, which hold their meetings in the Mendip Spring Golf Club, has a rural catchment area covering nearly a hundred square miles east of Weston-super-Mare.

Thank you to Wroughton Rotarians for your support.



Staff of Clifton Specsavers held sponsored walk to Bath to raise funds for the Friends



Last summer Freya Hargreaves and some of her colleagues at Specsavers in Whiteladies Road, Clifton held a sponsored walk from their Clifton branch to the Specsavers branch in Bath.

We were very grateful for the money they raised which they donated to the Friends.

Thank you also to the Gloucestershire Freemasons who sent us the proceeds from a Christmas raffle.

The Friends thank Barbara Dodd for helping to sponsor the costs of this year's In Sight.

Barbara Dodd has been treated on numerous occasions in the Bristol Eye Hospital and wanted to say 'thank you'.

Thank you to all who ask for donations to the Friends in their memory

We regularly receive donations from the families and friends of people who have died. Whilst we often don't know the particular reason for choosing us, we assume it is usually because the family have been grateful to the Eye Hospital for the help the person received. Some of the donations received in the past year have been from the families of Brian Davis, Gillian Smith, Maurice Parfit and Ciarán Phillips and Sheila Lane.

We also thank Cora Maslen, Peter Masien, Constance Gibson and Hedley Stephens for their generosity in leaving money to us in their wills.

Legacies are one of the most important sources of donations to the Friends

We particularly thank all those who so kindly leave us legacies in their wills. It is a lovely way to say 'thank you' to the hospital and the staff for sight saving treatment received during your life.

A blue circle graphic containing white text.

Over half of the grants we make to the hospital use legacies

Thank you for the many lovely letters and donations we receive each year!

Throughout the year we receive many messages that accompany donations, and whilst we don't have space to print them all, we have highlighted several below that particularly demonstrate the wonderful work the hospital staff do.

One message and wonderful donation came from a patient who wanted us to know she had been 'overwhelmed by the kindness and care of all the staff at the Eye Hospital'.

Another said they 'wanted to say a thank you to all the staff, from those on the reception desk, in the appointments team, technicians, nurses, doctors and consultants, all of whom work together as a great team and treat individuals as individuals, despite having so many patients to see and treat'.

A patient, Stuart Wallace, wrote to tell us that whilst he had been in the waiting area prior to having cataract surgery, he had noticed the television set that the Friends had paid for wasn't working. He made a donation to us, explaining that perhaps it could be used both to cover the television's licence fee as well as the cost of any repair.

Mr Wallace has contacted us since to say he will now not only be making an annual donation to the Friends, but in addition, he has signed up for 'gift aid', which means we receive an additional 25% of all money he donates.

This was a very generous gesture. Hospital management have since looked into why the television wasn't working and are pleased to say the technical problem has been solved!

Mrs Jane Hughes made a donation to the Friends in memory of her late husband Ciarán Phillips. She explained that he had been a long-standing patient of the Uveitis Clinic, whose staff gave expert care to save his sight which he retained until his death.

Some other notable donations we have received in the past year have come from Dudley Bennett, Martyn Brown, Mark Copp, Valerie Davey, John Edwards, Jennifer Jerrold, Celia Rowlands, Angela Smythe, Denise Tandy and Richard Smith.

We take great delight in passing on all the lovely 'thank you' comments we receive to the hospital's staff.

Donations we receive are used to support the excellent work of the eye hospital by purchasing equipment and improving the facilities within the hospital that benefit patients and staff that are beyond the ever-stretched budget of the NHS.

Raise funds for us through sponsorship or other ways

If you have an idea for an event which could raise money for us, please get in touch with the Secretary or Treasurer. And we'll let you know how we can help. Ideas that some fund raisers have used include holding a coffee morning, a quiz or trivia night, bake-offs, dress down days at work, sponsored hikes or bike rides...

We help to pay for medical equipment, facilities, patient comforts, staff resources and generally to support the work of the hospital. We can also help patients or former patients in distress or need.

See on the back page how you can donate to help us help the hospital.

PEOPLE

Welcome to new Trustees

A special welcome to our new trustees – Claire Ellis & Joanna Keaney

We're delighted to welcome Claire Ellis and Joanna Keaney as trustees of Friends of Bristol Eye Hospital.

Claire explained she'd wanted to find a way to say a 'thank you' to the hospital for all the help given to her partner Ian by the staff of the Bristol Eye Hospital.

"Volunteering to become a trustee of the Friends seemed an excellent way to do that and hopefully help others in the future," she explained.

Claire, who works in procurement in Bristol, has previously been the treasurer on the PTA at her daughter's school, so we're sure that her knowledge will be extremely useful in the Friends.

Joanna confessed that she hadn't actually been thinking of being a trustee but whilst volunteering in the Eye Hospital she started chatting with Carole Brooke, the secretary of the Friends, who 'gently persuaded me it would be a wonderful thing to do'.

In addition to becoming a trustee of the Friends, Joanna undertakes a number of other volunteer roles that include helping transport elderly people or those with mobility problems to doctor's surgeries and local hospitals.

As with a number of trustees, both past and present, Joanna is very happy to help the Friends, explaining she was so grateful for the wonderful treatment she received from the doctors and nurses of the hospital following a detached retina.



Goodbye to Sarah Swift and welcome to Terri Agnew

We were sorry to say goodbye to Sarah Swift who after four years of heading up the Bristol Eye Hospital team has been promoted to another senior position within the hospital trust.

We now welcome Terri Agnew, who takes over responsibility for the hospital. Terri has the same enthusiasm for the Friends as Sarah and we welcome her appointment and already enjoy working with her.



Farewell to eye consultant Richard Haynes after 25 years

Richard Haynes came to Bristol Eye Hospital in 2001 as a Consultant specialising in Vitreo-Retinal surgery.

In almost 25 years he has carried out a very large number of successful retinal detachment operations, vitrectomy operations for diabetic retinopathy and sight threatening infections, macula translocations for age-related macular degeneration.

During this time he has trained a whole generation of Vitreo-retinal Fellows who are now themselves established as consultants in the UK and across the world. He has also been active in research and published upwards of 50 scientific papers.

One of his initiatives in the Bristol Eye Hospital was the setting up of the Eyesi virtual reality simulator for training retinal surgeons – before they are let loose on the public!

On the administrative side, he was a very successful Clinical Director in Ophthalmology at a particularly difficult time for the Trust.

As if this was not enough, he is also a keen cyclist, and with sponsored cycling trips such as to John o' Groats he raised money for Friends of Bristol Eye Hospital as well as the Above and Beyond hospital charity.

Richard has also been a key musician in the Bristol Eye Hospital version of the Sex Pistols, playing in many of the hospital's social and celebratory events.

He is now moving to Truro partly for family reasons and to augment the retinal surgery service provided by one of his previous Fellows.

His calm and methodical approach in the clinics has been much appreciated by his many patients, and he will be sorely missed.

We wish him very well. Truro's gain is Bristol's loss!

(The Friends of Bristol Eye Hospital thank fellow consultant Richard Markham for his help in preparing this tribute)

The Bristol Eye Hospital was founded in 1818

–
140 years before the NHS

Around

2,800

people attend the hospital's Outpatients' Department every week

Nearly

600

people visit the Eye Hospital's emergency department each week

–
97% are treated and discharged in under 4 hours

Over

5,000

cataracts and 3,500 other surgical cases were dealt with last year

SOME OF THE MANY GRANTS WE HAVE MADE IN THE PAST YEAR

Vantage Plus LED Indirect Ophthalmoscope

The Friends have paid for two new 'indirect ophthalmoscopes' that are used to gain better imaging of eyes and are particularly important for diagnosing a range of different conditions in children.

The new equipment provides three-dimensional stereoscopic views of the retina through all pupil sizes, making examinations faster and quicker.

One headset was for the paediatric clinic in Weston General Hospital, and the second device will be used in the pre-op assessment unit.



This grant cost
£6,970 for the
two devices

B-Scan Plus Portable Ultrasound Diagnostic Kit

Doctors and nurses of the eye hospital have told the Friends that the new B-Scan Plus portable ultrasound diagnostic kit we paid for has already made a significant difference in their ability to provide timely and accurate diagnoses for patients, particularly in emergency situations.

The B Scan is an essential diagnostic tool, particularly for patients with dense cataracts, vitreous haemorrhage, or trauma where direct visualisation of the posterior segment is not possible. It allows clinicians to assess the internal structures of the eye quickly and accurately, which is crucial for timely diagnosis and treatment, especially in emergency situations.

The new equipment that cost £9,520 replaced an old, faulty and "temperamental" predecessor, and Laura Barber, Ophthalmic Nurse Practitioner at the BEH, said: "We are now fully up and running with this equipment, and the doctors are extremely pleased with its performance."

Laura said that "the Friend's continued support truly enhances the care we can deliver, and we are very grateful for everything you do for us."



West of England & Wales Retinal Surgeons' Conference supported by the Friends

We were happy to help sponsor a conference and annual meeting of retinal surgeons from across the West of England and Wales that was held at the Aerospace Museum at Filton

Johan Keller, a consultant ophthalmic surgeon at the Bristol Eye Hospital and who heads up the Bristol Eye Hospital's retinal surgery team, asked the Friends whether we would be able to help towards some of the costs.

This we were happy to do, as we feel it is important to ensure that the work of the Friends is more widely publicised.

Friends trustee Richard Adams was invited to man a Friends of the Eye Hospital stand at the conference and said that it was a very positive way to let eye surgeons from other hospitals, as well as leading medical industry representatives, know more about the Friends charity and how we support the work of the Bristol Eye Hospital.



New chairs help patients waiting for appointments on Level 1



Patients waiting for appointments in Level 1 of the Eye Hospital are benefiting from new more comfortable chairs that have been funded by the Friends.

Senior staff nurse Emma Sudol had told us that replacements were “desperately needed” as the previous chairs had become so worn and torn that they were no longer comfortable for patients.

The new chairs we funded not only have antimicrobial vinyl covering, making them easier to clean but also have a special ergonomic tub shape that provides an elevated level of comfort and support.

HOW DO FRIENDS OF BRISTOL EYE HOSPITAL HELP?

We provide funds to help the hospital give the best possible service to its patients and assist the work of the staff.

We do this by providing grants for items that the NHS is unable to supply.

These include:

- Highly specialised medical equipment, enabling consultants, surgeons and nurses to use the very latest technology.
- Additional everyday 'tools of the trade' outside of the NHS budget that enable the staff to help more patients.
- Items that make life more comfortable for patients, such as wheelchairs, drinks trolleys, specially adapted adjustable chairs for the elderly or disabled, and even murals and plants to make the environment look and feel more pleasant for patients and staff.
- Improved amenities for staff, such as lockers, kitchen equipment, refurbished staff rooms, for example kitchens and showers and a garden rest area.
- Practical tools to help visually impaired patients live more independently.
- Training courses or medical textbooks for staff, when otherwise the cost would have to be bought from their own pockets.

We only make grants for items that the NHS cannot afford. We give priority to items which:

- Help the hospital to maintain its international reputation as a pioneer in ophthalmic practice;
- Make a big difference to patients with serious conditions; or enable more patients to be treated more quickly and comfortably

Have you thought about donating your eyes?



This year the Bristol Eye Bank is celebrating 40 years of what you later became the NHS Blood and Transplant Eye Banks.

It's thanks to outstanding work done by Professor Armitage and his team in Bristol 40 years ago that, today, we can donate our corneas to give back to patients the ability to see clearly and so improving their quality of life.

However, there remains an urgent need for more people to sign up to give their corneas, and indeed other organs or tissue after their death.

To find out more, and to register and organ and tissue donation decision, visit:

**organdonation.nhs.uk,
call 0300 123 23 or use NHS app.**

A “Thank you to the Friends” – from a member of the nursing staff

We always receive grateful thanks from the hospital’s staff for the items and services we purchase for them, especially as they would be outside of NHS budgets.

Here’s a letter we received from one of the senior nursing staff following a request they made to replace very worn and difficult to use chairs.

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Outpatient Team, I would like to say a massive thank you for the two ophthalmology chairs. We are absolutely delighted to have received them today. These chairs will have a huge impact on our service and will greatly support patient safety, especially when carrying out invasive procedures.

These chairs will not only help staff provide safer and more efficient care but will also allow us to recline patients if they become unwell during treatment.

Once again, thank you very much—your support makes a significant difference to our clinic and to the care we provide for our patients.

Kind regards,

Rowena Mendoza

Rowena Mendoza – Outpatient Sister and Nurse Lead for Intravitreal Injections



Friends of
Bristol Eye Hospital

Friends of Bristol Eye Hospital was started almost 50 years ago with the aim of supporting the hospital, its patients and staff, by raising money to provide grants to purchase equipment and other help that are outside the ever-stretched budget of the NHS.

Current Trustees:

Chair

Kay McCluskey

Secretary

Carole Brooke

(Non-trustee) Treasurer

Jim Duggan

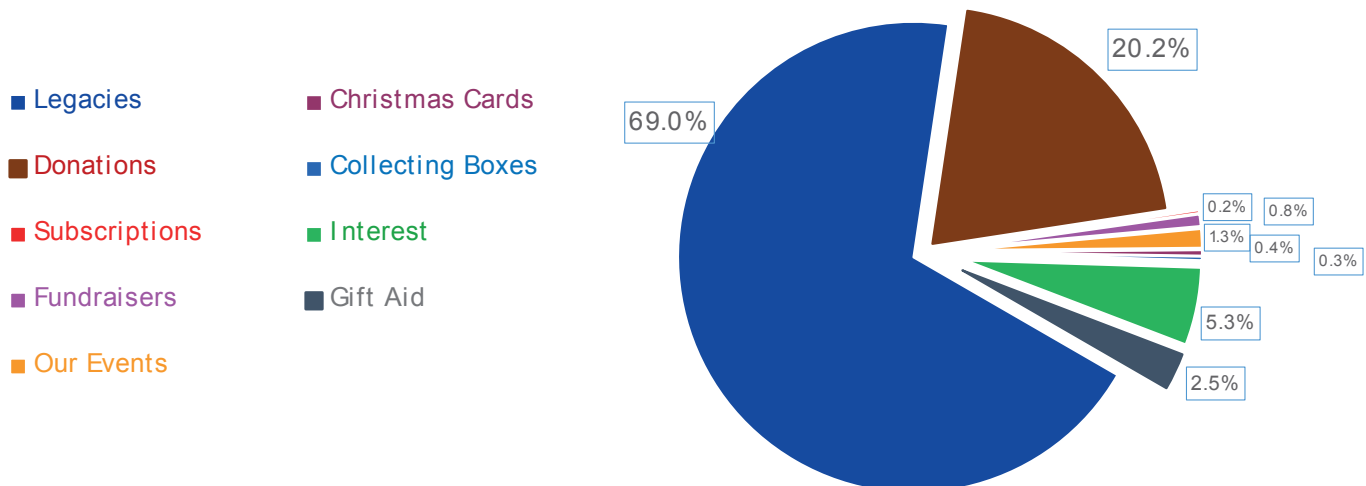
Publicity

Kevin Abbey

Jenny Ward, Richard Adams,
Claire Ellis, Gail Glew,
Joanna Keaney

The trustees are grateful to Melissa Warren, Lona Jawaheer and Terri Agnew who attend our trustee meetings to give advice and support.

Friends of Bristol Eye Hospital sources of income



HOW YOU CAN HELP

There are many ways in which you can help Friends of Bristol Eye Hospital: **These are shown in more detail on our website at www.fbeh.org/support-us**

BECOME A FRIEND

For just £5 a year or a one-off payment of £50
You can find details on our website at
www.fbeh.org/support-us/join-us/

DONATE

ONLINE: Using a credit or debit card or PayPal.

TRANSFER: Directly from your bank account to ours using internet banking

Account name: Friends of Bristol Eye Hospital

Sort code: 08 – 92 – 99

Account no: 67194739

Or by using this QR code which will take you straight to the donation service we use run by Wonderful.

There are no charges whatsoever - we receive the full amounts of your donation, and you will not be asked to pay any additional charges.



Making a donation is quick, easy and secure.

REGULAR DONATIONS: You may use internet banking or instruct your bank to make regular donations (monthly, quarterly or annually) to our bank account as above.

CHEQUES: Payable to Friends of Bristol Eye Hospital. Please email or telephone us for an address.

Please let us know if you have a particular reason for donating (many of our supporters are grateful patients and hospital staff always welcome messages of thanks from patients for their care and treatment).

GIFT AID:

If you pay UK tax, then using Gift Aid, (which costs you nothing more), means for every £1 you give we can claim an extra 25p. Please complete the donation form at www.fbeh.org/support-us/join-us/

Please note - If you are a business, charity or trust fund wishing to donate - or an executor looking to transfer funds from a legacy - please do not pay by this method. Instead, please contact the Treasurer to agree the best method of payment. He can be contacted at - treasurer@fbeh.org

Leaving a Gift for the Friends in your Will

We understand that providing for your family and friends after your death comes first. However, once you have done that, you could help us to continue our work to benefit future patients of the Bristol Eye Hospital.

More than half of our income comes from legacies. Our larger purchases would not have been possible without the generosity of those who have left money to the Friends in their Wills - usually in appreciation of the care they received at the Eye Hospital and because they wished to help others.

Leaving a gift to the Friends, no matter how large or small, helps us to continue to support the Eye Hospital for future generations.

You can download an information leaflet from our website or please contact our Treasurer at treasurer@fbeh.org

Friends Of Bristol Eye Hospital Is A Registered Charity – No. 274349

The charity's registered address is at - Bristol Eye Hospital, Lower Maudlin Street, Bristol BS1 2LX. However, please note that we don't have any physical office, so it is better to contact us by email or by using the phone number 0300 102 4556

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www.fbeh.org