



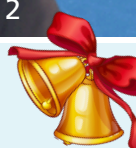
Pulse magazine

December
2024

Preparing for winter - see page 2



Welcome!



Well, here we are..... even though the tinsel has been in the shops since September, it still feels like Christmas is creeping slowly upon us. The TV specials are being advertised, the hope of snow prevails, the fear of over-eating looms and yet away from all that, with excitement, we all hope to have some down time and to create great memories with friends and family.

The Trust enters the festive period well prepared; we will look after all our patients, and we will do our utmost to make any service they call upon is as smooth and as efficient as possible of course. This is a tough time of year for many in our community outside our services, and so we will also try and help those in need where we can.

To all our members, Governors and supporters, I wanted to acknowledge how we have appreciated your support and help throughout the year, we couldn't do what we do without you.

For my last comment, I would like to make it personal. To my colleagues across every corner of the Trust – just Thank you! I have been honoured and proud to part of the Royal Berkshire team and what I see you doing for our patients every day is amazing! More than anything else, I hope you get the support you need over the festive period to make everything happen as it should AND that each of you also has a time to relax and enjoy the festive period yourself.

From me to you all, from the depths of my heart, I wish you all a very happy Christmas and my very best wishes for 2025.

Enjoy reading this edition of Pulse!

Graham Sims, Chair of the Trust



In this edition



2. [Governor Elections 2024](#)
3. [Preparing for winter](#)
3. [Christmas Gift Tree appeal](#)
4. [New cutting-edge diagnostic equipment at WBCH](#)
5. [Listen to the Royal Berks Charity Christmas concert!](#)
6. [Thank you to our volunteers](#)
7. [Congratulations Meet PEET team](#)
7. [Meet our new trainee therapy dogs](#)
8. [Chief Executive recognised](#)
9. [Organ Donations – Stephen's story](#)
9. [Accessing our website in 100 different languages](#)
10. [Meet Joshua Wilson Staff Governor](#)
11. [Discounts? Did you know?](#)
11. [Get involved and have your say](#)
11. [Meet your Council of Governors](#)
12. [Thinking about an NHS career?](#)
12. [Work Experience and Placements](#)

Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust

Notification of Governor Elections



We have launched the elections to fill the current posts on the Council of Governors of the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust.

Our Council of Governors is the voice of the people we serve, and it helps set our priorities and plays a key role in the shaping of future services, based on our members' views.

Each governor has a constituency and is committed to talking to local people to make sure your voices and opinions on the Trust are heard. The Trust's Constitution sets out the principles of how the Council of Governors is governed.

If you are interested in being involved, find out more about what it means to be a governor and apply to stand in this year's elections on [our website](#) or check out our '[Become a Governor](#)' booklet.

To be eligible to be a governor you must be a member of the constituency you wish to stand for and be 16 or over. To register as a member visit our [membership page](#) or to find out more please contact Caroline Lynch, Trust Secretary, on 0118 322 5335.

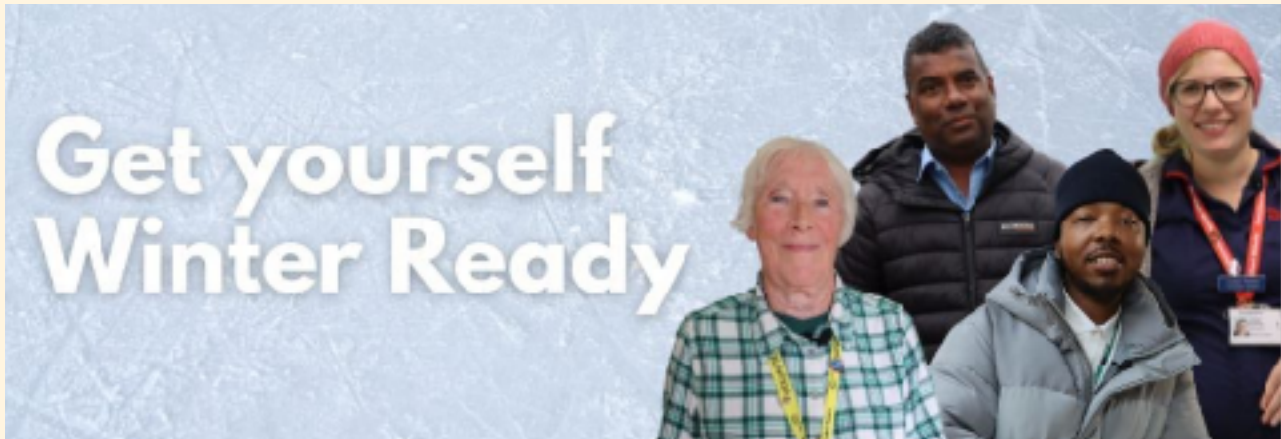
The elections are open for the following terms and constituencies:

- Public Governor, Reading – 1 x 3 years
- Public Governor, Reading – 1 x 1 year
- Public Governor, East Berkshire & Borders – 1 x 2 years

To submit your nomination, visit: [Election to the Council of Governors](#).

The election deadline for the return of completed nomination forms is Monday 13 January 2025 at 5pm.

Preparing for winter



The NHS is asking the public to do their bit to help their local NHS services during this busy winter period of seasonal illnesses such as cold and flu, that put increased pressure on our GP surgeries, hospitals and community health services:

- Use [NHS 111](#) for advice on appropriate service for their needs
- Registering to a GP surgery and continuing to contact their GP for health advice
- Getting vaccinated for eligible vaccines, such as: flu, Covid-19 and RSV
- Stocking-up on over the counter medication
- Looking after vulnerable family members, friends and neighbours
- Collecting prescriptions in time for weekends and upcoming bank holidays

It's also vital that you use the correct NHS services for your condition as this will help us to keep our Emergency Department for medical emergencies only, so we can help those most in need.

You can visit the '[Winter Ready](#)' campaign page on the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust's website for more information.

Christmas Gift Tree appeal

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who kindly donated a present to ensure that every patient staying in Royal Berkshire Hospital receives a gift on Christmas Day! We have hit our goal and received a record-breaking 1,200 gifts to give to patients staying in hospital over Christmas.

This will make a huge difference to the many people spending the Christmas period in the hospital, who may not have family or friends visiting them.

Earlier in the month, our Junior Carers wrapped donated gifts and delivered them to those who are staying in hospital.



New cutting-edge diagnostic equipment at WBCH

The Trust has opened its newly expanded radiology facilities at West Berkshire Community Hospital, which feature advanced diagnostic technologies including a Mammography Unit, DEXA scanner and two new Ultrasound suites. Adding these new facilities will enable faster diagnosis for a variety of conditions, including breast cancers and osteoporosis.

This major new upgrade has been made possible by significant financial investment from the Community Diagnostic CDC Programme NHS England, West Berkshire Community Hospital League of Friends, and a local Charity.

These state-of-the-art diagnostic scanners use the latest to perform a range of imaging techniques with far more accurate and faster diagnoses, meaning we are able to see more patients.



The new radiology equipment includes:

- Mammography: A tool used for breast imaging to detect early diagnosis of breast cancer
- Bone density DEXA scanner: A precise scanner with the ability to measure bone density, helping to detect osteoporosis and other bone-related conditions
- Ultra sound scanner: A non-invasive imaging tool helping to detect a variety of conditions

Helen Atkins, Lead Radiographer at West Berkshire Community Hospital said 'These new facilities are absolutely fantastic. Alongside our existing imaging facilities, these state-of-the-art scanners will allow us to image more patients closer to home. Not only are these facilities lovely to work in, but they also much more comfortable for our patients.'

Dom Hardy, Chief Operating Officer said 'It's very exciting to see the new radiology facilities in action. This upgrade will not only improve the care to our patients but will also mean we are able to offer more services locally in West Berkshire. We must give a huge thank you to the two charities (League of Friends and a local charity) and the Community Diagnostic CDC Programme NHS England for making this a reality with a significant financial investment.'

Listen to the Royal Berks Charity Christmas Concert!



You don't need to be in the hospital to enjoy the sounds of Hospital Radio Reading (HRR) this festive season! There are plenty of ways to tune in and listen live to our special Christmas broadcast — all you need is an internet connection:

Visit Hospital Radio Reading Website

Head to www.hrreading.org.uk (or just Google "Hospital Radio Reading"). Click the Listen Live button (the triangular "play" symbol at the top right), which will guide you to the broadcast.

Tune In Radio App

If you use the TuneIn app, simply search for Hospital Radio Reading. We're also available on Sound Garden for app users.

Smart Speakers

At home? Just ask your smart speaker (like Alexa) to "Play Hospital Radio Reading," and you're good to go!

Direct Link

For quick access, click here to start listening now: [Direct Link to HRR](#)

Don't miss the festive magic of our Christmas concert on HRR at 8pm on Christmas Day and 8am on Boxing Day!

Thank you to our volunteers



The Trust marked International Volunteers Day on 5 December by celebrating the impact that the volunteers play in enhancing patient care and ensuring the smooth running of hospital services.

A team of 306 volunteers gave 31,824 hours last year to help support staff and enhance services for patients and visitors in our hospitals across Berkshire West.

Our volunteers assist in a wide range of areas including greeting patients and visitors, transporting patients on our hospital buggies, providing support to patients as compassionate companions, helping teams with administration duties, and pharmacy store runners.

They also help run projects, like the Medical Museum and Hospital Radio Reading.

Hospital Radio Reading has been broadcasting since 1957, providing entertainment to patients and visitors at the Royal Berkshire Hospital. The station is run entirely by volunteers, who broadcast live and pre-recorded shows each hour of every day.

Gerard Rocks, Chairman and Volunteer of Hospital Radio Reading said 'Hospital Radio has an important role to play in helping to keep the patients occupied. When we are chatting to patients to find out about their favourite music so we can feature it in a request programme, sometimes we are the only visitor they've had that day. It works on two levels, the face to face contact and a friendly virtual voice in the afternoons.'

Allen Sinclair, BBC South Today presenter said: 'I've seen the difference it makes, I've spoken to people who feel better for having somebody from Hospital Radio Reading to cheer them up and take them out of themselves for five minutes.'

Sharon Herring, Associate Chief Nurse said 'Our volunteers are at the heart of the hospital. Not only do they help us support our staff in providing outstanding care to our patients, but they also help provide the personal touches that makes patients' stay in hospital more comfortable'.

Congratulations to our Meet PEET team

Congratulations to our Meet PEET team who won the Empowering Communities Through Education for Health and Wellbeing Award 2024 at the Community Awards last week.

Our Meet PEET team provide health information, guidance and health checks to local people across our community. Over the past year they provided more than 2,000 health checks to local people.

Also, well done to Nusrat, one of our Patient Leaders who was awarded for her work with domestic abuse.



Meet our new trainee therapy dogs!

We recently welcomed two very special new recruits to the Trust, Fergus and Toffee, our Trainee Therapy Dogs.

Fergus and Toffee had their 'induction' earlier recently and visited the Royal Berkshire Hospital to build-up their confidence and make them feel comfortable in a hospital environment.



Once they are happy, the intention for them is to visit wards across the hospital to meet patients and staff with the aim of improving patient experience.

Chief Executive recognised with honorary degree from the University of Reading

Steve McManus has been recognised for his contributions towards healthcare and the Berkshire community after receiving an honorary degree from the University of Reading.

Steve has been Chief Executive Officer of the Trust since 2017 and his career in the NHS has spanned 37 years. He received the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Science in a ceremony earlier this month.



Since joining, Steve has been instrumental in establishing formal links between the University of Reading and the hospital to help improve patient care and clinical excellence.

The Health Innovation Partnership (formally the Joint Academic Board) was established to expand on the existing collaboration between the Royal Berkshire Foundation Trust and the University of Reading, and has:

- seen the launch of a joint Physician Associate programme
- established 10 University Departments of Excellence within the hospital
- shared teaching and learning resources – including the recently opened Clinical Simulation and Training Suite
- begun a pipeline of research that will directly benefit patients.

Professor Parveen Yaqoob, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University of Reading, presented Steve with his honorary degree, saying: “Steve is an exemplary and compassionate leader and an unwavering advocate for continuous improvement. He embodies the belief that there is always room for progress, always a way to serve patients better, and always an opportunity to elevate the team and the organisation as a whole.

“Steve has been a driving force in the partnership between the University and the hospital trust. His vision has helped create a learning environment that is truly greater than the sum of its parts. This commitment to education reflects his own lifelong love of learning. He thoroughly deserves this honorary degree.”

Steve McManus said: “I am hugely humbled and endlessly thankful for receiving this degree from the University of Reading. The honour is not for myself but for our amazing staff and volunteers at Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust, and our partners at the University.

“Our two organisations have already been able to achieve so much together through the Health Innovation Partnership, and I know moving forwards there is so much more we can do to support our staff, our patients and our community.”

Organ Donations – Stephen’s story

Hearing about organ donations this year gave us the chance to hear from some amazing people, such as Stephen, a life-long Reading resident who sadly died at the Royal Berkshire Hospital in 2021.



In this short video, his sisters Deb and Helen tell us about their pride for the lives their brother saved after he passed away.



Find out more about organ donation at: [OrganDonation.NHS.UK](https://www.OrganDonation.NHS.UK)

Accessing our website in 100 different languages

Did you know that you can read [our website](#) in 100 different languages?

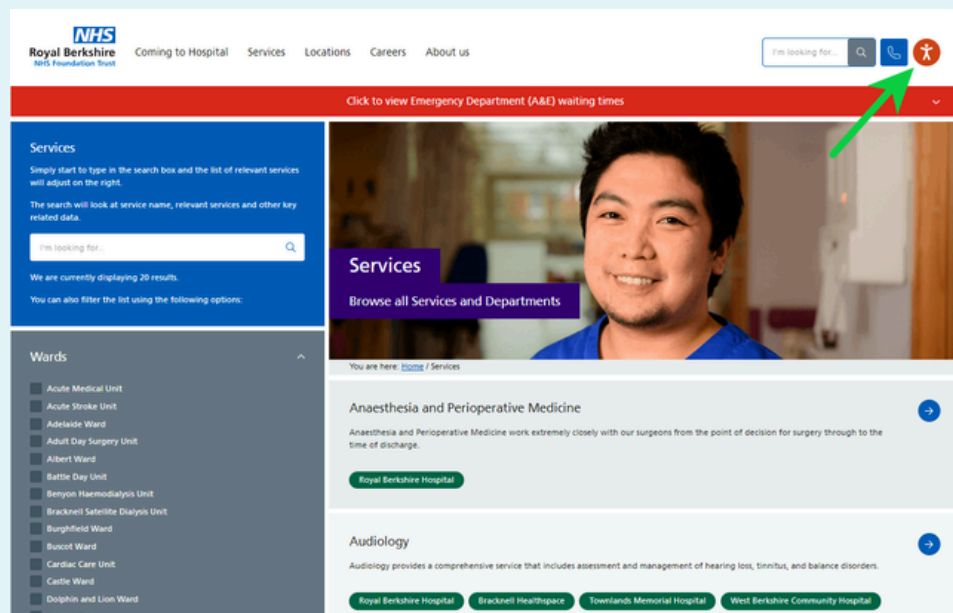
The Reachdeck tool translates our website and [patient leaflets](#) (while viewing them online) into 100 languages and adds accessibility support such as:

- text-to-speech functionality
- text magnification to enlarge text and read it aloud
- screen masking to allow neurodiverse audiences to reduce distractions, by reading one passage at a time
- a webpage simplifier to reduce sensory stimulation for people with Autism
- a picture dictionary to display word meaning through illustration

Reachdeck is available in the top right hand corner of the website.

Click on the red icon to open the Reachdeck toolbar.

For more information, watch [Reachdeck's short demonstration video](#)



Governor article: Joshua Wilson, Staff Governor

Hi everyone, my name is Joshua Wilson and I am a Staff Governor for the Trust representing Allied Health Professional/Additional Professional Scientific & Technical.

I am the newest Governor on the block. Recently appointed (weeks – not months) and I am humbled to address you in this article.

As this calendar year draws to a close, I am mindful that many of us have experienced life changing situations and whilst some of us will be only too happy to see the back of 2024; some of us will face 2025 with a high degree of anxiety, uncertainty and many unanswered questions.



I'm told you would like to know a little about me. In simple terms, I am just a Josh. An ordinary guy who is the senior pastor for an apostolic church called Spiritual Care which is the home of Bethel United Football Club who play in the Thames Valley Churches Football League. I have a commercial print-management background having worked 30+ years in the industry, before I started being employed by the church. I have done much training with the Methodist Church of Britain and also serve as a Thames Valley Police Chaplain.

My roots are in Reading, born in Tilehurst, I have lived locally all my life. My partner of days (otherwise known as my wife), Diane is a school teacher and together we have two adult children. I am very active in the community and can often be found at the Wellness Centre, where Bethel Football Club are based in the RG30 area.

I am a keen trombonist and play bass trombone for the Salvation Army Reading central branch. Music is a passion, so don't be surprised if you catch me singing on a choir somewhere. Between me and you – it occasionally happens on the wards. Shout out to the RBH Staff Choir – Choir for All, who continue to make great music everywhere they go.

Did you know that we are currently holding elections for our Council of Governors? On the Council we are the voice of the people we serve, and it helps set our priorities and plays a key role in the shaping of future services, based on your views. I really encourage you to take a look at the [Governor Elections article](#) to find out how to complete a nomination represent your constituency and join us in making sure everyone's voice heard.

Finally, as I wish you all a wonderful Christmas, a healthy, prosperous and happy New Year, may I take this opportunity to thank all my colleagues who work tirelessly making sure that miracles happen every day in Trust, particularly those individuals who we all see, but hardly anyone knows the names of. Thank you. The Trust would not function properly without you, all you do and all you are. Thank you.

Stay blessed and I hope you enjoy this month's magazine!

Pastor Josh Wilson

Staff Governor: Allied Health Professional/Additional Professional Scientific & Technical

Discounts? Did you know?

healthservice discounts

As a member of the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust you are eligible to amazing Health Service Discounts to save money on holidays, electrical goods, meals, goods, meals, days out and more!

To register, please contact us for a letter of eligibility; follow this link [Register | NHS Discounts | Health Service Discounts](#), select Foundation Trust Member and upload your letter.

Don't forget to let us know what amazing discounts you get so we can share them! Check out some of this month's exclusive discounts:

- [Perfumes & Gift Sets from The Fragrance Shop](#) – up to 60% off + extra 15% NHS Discount
- [Virgin Experience Days](#) – 20% NHS Discount
- [Northern Trains from Northern Rail](#) – 25% NHS Discount
- [Sports Fashion from Footasylum](#) – 10% NHS Discount
- [Women's Fashion from Seasalt Cornwall](#) – 20% NHS Discount
- [The White Company Vouchers](#) – 5% NHS Discount
- [TUI Holidays for Heroes from TUI](#) – Up to £100 NHS Discount
- [Jet2holidays Discounts](#) – Save up to £400 + £50 NHS Discount

Get involved and have your say

Open Meetings

Why not come along to one of our upcoming open meetings: find the details and agendas on our trust website page: [Open meetings | Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust](#)

- **Board of Directors – 9am, Wednesday 29 January 2025**
Seminar Room, Trust Education Centre, Royal Berkshire Hospital
- **Membership Committee – 5.30pm, Tuesday 11 February 2025**
Video conference call (email: foundation.trust@royalberkshire.nhs.uk for more details)
- **Council of Governors – 5pm, Wednesday 26 February 2025**
Seminar Room, Trust Education Centre, Royal Berkshire Hospital

Meet your Council of Governors

Find a full list of your Council of Governors on the trust website:

[Council of Governors | Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust](#).

Become a member

Sign up family and friends to become a member via our online form to receive our latest updates, shape how hospital services are delivered and be eligible to receive our NHS discounts.

Get in touch with the team: Foundation.trust@royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Thinking about a career in the NHS?

If you would like to join our team we are always looking for talented staff with a commitment to providing the best patient care.

View our live job vacancies on our website: [RBFT work with us](#)

Are you interested in work experience & placements?

The Trust is committed to supporting young people and adults looking to pursue a career in healthcare. We offer clinical and non-clinical placements at set times across the academic year.

Work experience is for people who are interested in an NHS career. Shadowing our teams, you will have the opportunity to see first-hand what is involved in the job role you are considering. It also helps to give an understanding of the attitudes, behaviours and values that are expected in a healthcare setting.

For more information please visit our website: [Work Experience and Placements](#)



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Pulse Magazine is written and produced by the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust Communications Team.

If you would like to have an article included or have any feedback just let us know at Communications@royalberkshire.nhs.uk