



Building a children's hospice service for Berkshire and beyond...

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## **Charity building Berkshire's children's hospice welcomes support from Duchess of Cambridge**

Alexander Devine Children's Hospice Service has welcomed The Duchess of Cambridge's support for children's hospices.

Fiona Devine, co-founder and CEO of the charity, said: "It's wonderful to have Her Royal Highness, The Duchess of Cambridge's support for children's hospices, especially in Children's Hospice week, and given that this is such a significant time for us as our capital campaign to build Berkshire's children's hospice moves forward."

In a statement supporting Children's Hospice Week released today (June 19) The Duchess of Cambridge, patron of East Anglia's Children's Hospices (EACH), said: "Around the clock support is crucial for children receiving palliative care. They and their families often need help every hour of every day, both in hospices and at home. As Patron of EACH, I have seen first-hand this remarkable and varied work and just how vital the support of staff and volunteers can be to the families of children with life limiting conditions. It has been wonderful to see the fantastic public support for Children's Hospice Week over the last few days. Please continue supporting your local children's hospice in whatever way you can."

Fiona added: "The growing number of children we are supporting through life-limiting and life-threatening conditions, to end of life, in Berkshire shows just how urgent the need is for a children's hospice in the county where the Duchess of Cambridge and Prince William grew up."

Fiona and John Devine, from Windsor, set up this local charity, named after their son, Alexander, who died aged 8 from a brain tumour. During the four years that Alexander was ill they realised the desperate need for specialist children's palliative care in Berkshire and the additional pressure families are put under without a central point of expertise, respite and care. The charity's emphasis is on providing care and support in the families' own community.

Four years ago Alexander Devine Children's Hospice Service launched Alexander's Nurses, who provide respite care in the home and other community settings as well as supporting families in an emergency, providing continuity of care and the reassuring presence of a trusted, familiar face, and an Alexander's Carer.

As well as raising money to provide the Alexander's Care Team the charity needs to raise £5m to build the first hospice for children in this area. We have the site – at Woodlands Park, near Maidenhead – we have planning permission and we hope to start building this autumn.

There are more than 600 families in Berkshire with a child with a life-limiting or life-threatening condition and at present the nearest children's hospice is either in Oxford or Winchester. As you can imagine, the distance and practicalities of travelling with a very sick child are an extra burden on families, causing even more disruption to the lives of children, their siblings and relatives.

For more information on how you can help Alexander Devine Children's Hospice Service continue its vital work, please call 0845 055 8276, email [fundraising@alexanderdevine.org](mailto:fundraising@alexanderdevine.org) or visit [www.alexanderdevine.org](http://www.alexanderdevine.org)

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**Patrons: Sir Michael Parkinson CBE, Rt Hon Theresa May MP**

**Dr Sanjiv Mata, Mr Nick Parkinson, Dr Andrew Boon Bsc MD FRCP FRCPCH DCP, Dr P J Sebire, Air Marshal Ian Macfadyen CB OBE**

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