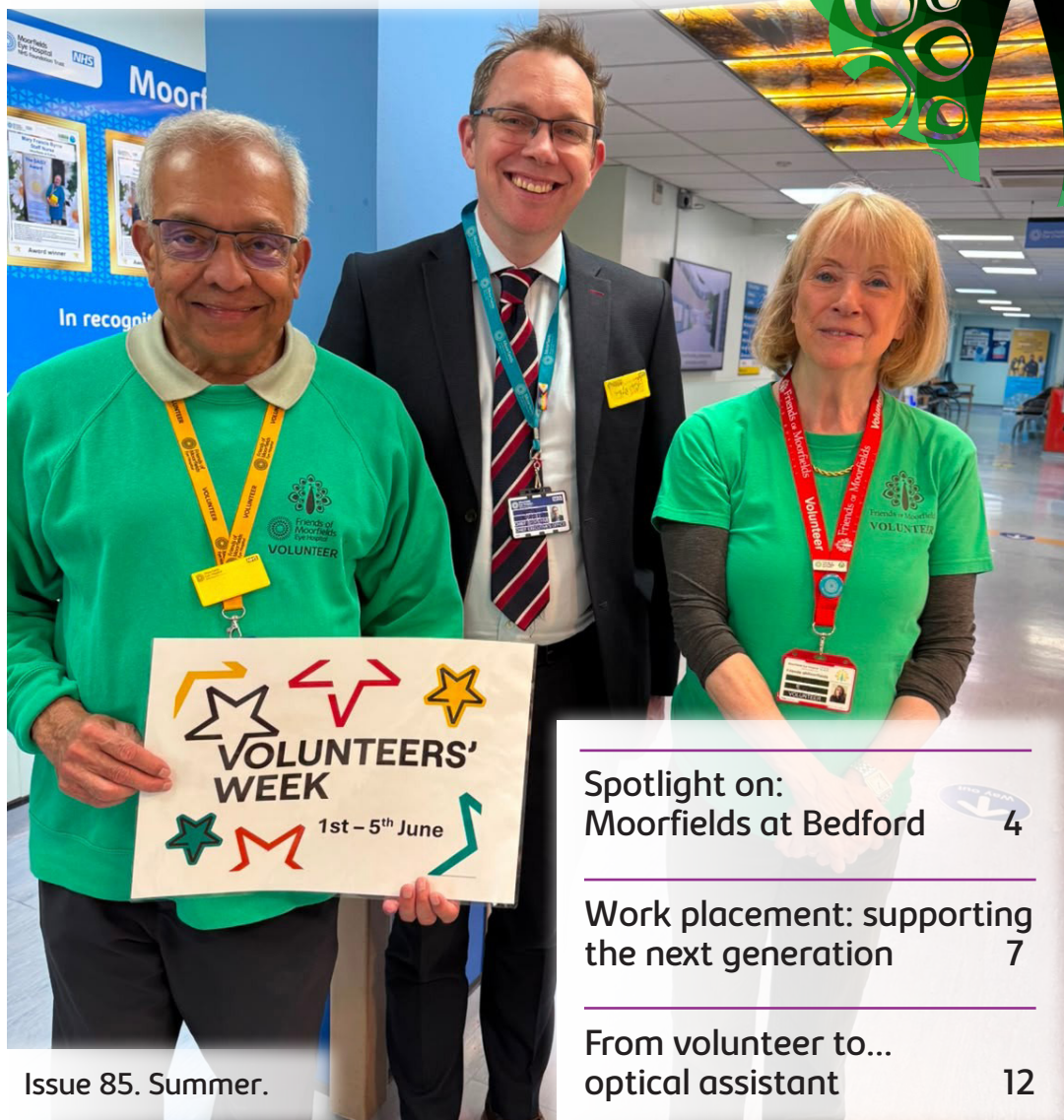




Friends of
Moorfields
Eye Hospital

Peacock

The Friends of Moorfields Magazine



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A note from our chairman

During the recent Volunteers' Week I was reminded of how often I have been asked to explain why I think our volunteers are amongst the best on the planet. In truth there is no easy answer. 'They're caring and compassionate' is often my response to which my questioners often respond: 'so what, lots of volunteers have those qualities'. They regularly go 'above and beyond'. 'Ok, but what else' has sometimes been the retort. I could have added 'they share a common purpose; they support not only our patients and professional staff but each other. They ask for nothing in return simply the opportunity to support our patients and their families at a time of stress'.

It is, perhaps, this final point that really makes our volunteers special. In five years of meeting up with them at various events or at one of our hubs I have always been struck by what I can only describe as the X factor.

That intangible something you know is there but, nonetheless, is hard to identify. That 'something' that consistently exists amongst the group. That camaraderie. The respect they have for each other. The satisfaction they gain from helping others; from reflecting on a job well done.

Our volunteers come from all corners of the globe; they range in age from their teens to their 90s; they come from diverse backgrounds but they have the same strong thread that runs through them all. They are good people that are 'doing their bit' to make the world just that little bit better for their fellow human beings. Need I say more? I am unbelievably proud to be associated with them.

Tim Hutchings
Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Friends of Moorfields



Updates at Friends

Our volunteer support team has changed over the past few months. Here is a little reminder of who does what!



From left to right: Natalia, Sue, Parul and Lila

Natalia is the manager of the trust-wide delivery of the volunteer service. She also manages the handholding, buddy teams and Volunteer to Career projects.

Sue manages training and volunteer support for City Road, as well as the Phone Support list from Monday to Wednesday.

Parul heads up network recruitment and supports our network volunteers. She is also the AAP contact for the Duke of Edinburgh.

Lila has been at Moorfields for 14 years and recently joined Friends. She looks after volunteer administration, timetables and recruitment, plus Phone Support list on Thursdays and Fridays.



Please copy **all of us** into your emails for a quicker response!

We also want to extend a very warm welcome to the lovely **Anisha**, who is supporting Nathania as **finance administrator** with all things finance for two days a week.

Spotlight on...

Moorfields at Bedford

Despite being a smaller site, Moorfields at Bedford offers patients a wide range of outpatient clinics, complex surgery and a diagnostics hub. Staff describe our volunteers at this site as part of the fabric of Moorfields, but in return, volunteering also gives something back to them: a very special community.

Because they cover different shifts and don't see each other during volunteering, our Bedford volunteers organise a coffee morning every month. We joined them in April and chatted about why they volunteer at Moorfields and what it's like to be part of the Bedford crew.

“After I retired as a nurse, volunteering was my way to come back to the Moorfields family. I have been on both sides of the system: as a nurse it was my responsibility to deliver the best possible treatment and service, but as a volunteer, my sole purpose is looking after the patient. I love being able to help staff focus on delivering an excellent service because they don't have to worry about who looks after the patient.” - **Moira**

“I started volunteering after the amazing treatment I received at Moorfields myself and have been involved in clinic and admin support here at Bedford for many years. It's nice to be able to support on different things.” - **Gaynor**



We are recruiting!

Would you like to join the lovely volunteer team in Bedford? Contact Parul (p.patel71@nhs.net)

“What's really special is that Moorfields is very communal. Everyone is respectful and generous about learning from each other. When you go into theatre, you have any

culture in the world, working together in the same room as one. It's really wonderful to be part of this team.” - **Adrian**

“The handholding role is something incredible, especially because holding someone's hand is not something that comes naturally to all patients. When people are anxious, I put them at ease by saying: 'Look at it like I am a friend'. Jan Kuszlewicz was my inspiration - I want to follow his ethos of giving: I'm happy when I see patients are happy.” - **Andrew**

“What I love about volunteering at Moorfields is the team spirit. The medical staff truly appreciate the role volunteers play in helping patients feel calmer and taking the time to sit down with them. The staff are incredible and always put the patient first, so they understand how spending time with patients is very much needed.” - **Naomi**

A special thank you to the wonderful Pauline who is taking a break from volunteering. We can't wait to welcome you back!



Hear from a volunteer



Volunteering is usually seen as a way to give back. But research shows that 77% of volunteers report that volunteering improves their mental health and wellbeing.*

We often get staff at Moorfields who want to volunteer with us, for exactly that reason.

“I’ve been working at Moorfields since 2018 – now through Medirest – and I just really enjoy being part of the Moorfields family.

Many people ask me: ‘Kiki, how do you do this volunteering on top of having such a full-on job?’ But volunteering is something that comes easy to me.

“When you really want to do something, it’s not hard at all. If anything, volunteering gives me more energy.”

I love having conversations with different people and putting a smile on someone’s face; whether that’s registering patients in A&E, serving customers in the Friends of Moorfields shop or taking patients to and from their clinic.”

- Kiki



* Time Well Spent: A national survey on the volunteer experience | NCVO

Work experience: supporting the next generation

Almost 42% of our volunteer force is made up of people under the age of 25, and our Volunteer to Career programme gives them an invaluable experience at a world-class centre of excellence for eye care, research and education. But not everyone is able to commit to 6 months of volunteering.

We sat down to chat with Nimita, the newly appointed Youth Engagement Manager at Friends, about how we’re going to support even more young people through our work experience programme.

To start things off, can you tell us a bit about the programme?

The work experience programme is a short, 1-2 week programme to give young people between 16 to 19 years old a taster of the opportunities in healthcare, and in particular in eye health. It replaces the work experience programme currently run by Moorfields Eye Hospital.

Their days will consist of 2-3 hour slots with different departments, and their experiences will range from shadowing a clinic, department or volunteer at work, to attending presenta-



tions/events or group work with medical students, to activities such as research tests in electrophysiology.

We are working closely with Moorfields Eye Hospital, UCL Institute of Ophthalmology, NIHR Moorfields Biomedical Research Centre and the Young Person's Advisory Group (YPAG) to offer students a varied experience.

The Friends normally focus on patient experience. Why are we introducing a work experience programme? And why now?

With the move to Moorfields and UCL Centre for Eye Health in mind, we have an incredible opportunity to find new ways to support communities, including students in our area and beyond.

I've got two teenagers myself and I've seen them and their friends struggle with career choices. Even if they know which direction they want to go in, they don't know about all the opportunities out there. And if they do, they can't find work experience. There are so many closed doors.

"It's tough for young people out there. At Moorfields, we have the chance to change this for the healthcare sector."

The work experience programme might not have an instant impact on patient experience, but it will have a direct impact in the long term. We need good staff. What better place to start looking for future colleagues than amongst young people embarking on their career journeys.

"There's a certain buzz around Moorfields. People are kind. And it's a place where you can grow beyond the role you are hired for."



At the age of 16 to 19, students are taking decisions that lay the foundations of their career path, so it's a critical age to scout for talent and show them what Moorfields can offer them.



How are staff getting involved in the programme?

Our colleagues are busy. The programme is designed to avoid adding anything extra to their plates. There is no preparation or curriculum design required.

Students are shadowing staff at work, taking part in existing research projects, and coming along to planned talks, group work and events.

Simply observing patient interactions and being immersed in a healthcare environment is already an invaluable experience.

What is your vision for the programme in the long term?

That's simple: watching students become part of the Moorfields family. It would be amazing to see people go into eye care and perhaps even volunteer with us!

We want to scale the programme. I've been approached by many colleagues about opportunities for their children or a young person they know. We currently don't have the capacity to take on everyone, but as more departments sign up, we can host more students. If work experience isn't quite right, Friends can be an entry point to connect students with YPAG initiatives or to get them to consider studying at the UCL Institute of Ophthalmology. In the long term, we also intend to expand the programme beyond the focus on medical students.

"Everyone has a skill and you don't need to be a medical specialist: Moorfields is for everyone."

Participants will get the word out to students who might not have considered Moorfields and the programme, and through this increase our reach. This will hopefully further increase the demand for the programme and allow us to expand the service to different sites.

Celebrating volunteers' week

In June, we celebrated all of our amazing volunteers across our sites!

This year, we chose the theme of community, because that is what our volunteers represent to Moorfields.

There was music, there was cake and we asked staff at Moorfields to tell us what your support means to them. We were so happy to celebrate with so many of you and hope you enjoyed the week!



Scan the QR code to watch the staff video online



Scan the QR code for more pictures

From handholder to... optical assistant



At Friends, we want volunteering to be something that gives back to our volunteers too. It leads to new friendships. It leads to new skills. And sometimes it supports a career path. Our former volunteers Jovancy and Parul went on this journey together.

Parul got a job with us at Friends of Moorfields and a placement in counselling at Moorfields Eye Hospital. Jovancy kickstarted her career in eye care. We caught

up with her to see how she was getting on.

What made you want to volunteer at Moorfields and how was your experience?

My mother is a healthcare assistant at Moorfields Private, so I've always been fascinated by eye health. I started volunteering with Friends when I was doing my degree in Biomedical Sciences. I did that for three years and tried a wide range of different roles.

“Our lives are so digital now, and the experience with Friends of Moorfields is all about human connection.”

I love talking to people and knowing you are making a difference to someone's experience is really rewarding. But it also works the other way around: coming to the hospital helped take my mind off things.

What skills or experiences do you feel were the most valuable to you and your career progression?

When you are guiding patients around the hospital, you have very casual conversations, but when I became a handholder, I had to adjust a little.

When you are talking to a patient who is about to go into surgery, you are there for a very specific purpose. They rely on you in a different way.

I was paired up with Parul for my training as a handholder, and she helped me get out of my comfort zone. After that, I really started enjoying it.

There's nothing quite like when a patient grabs your hand and you help them feel at ease. I also loved watching the operations. You get to stand right next to the surgeon, which is not an experience you expect to get from a volunteering role.

How did volunteering help you land your job?

I went on to become an optical assistant at Vision Express in November last year. This role involved pre-screening and a lot of customer service, including fitting glasses, which felt like a natural step after volunteering in an eye hospital.

“Being able to speak about the breadth and depth of my experience as a volunteer at Moorfields is what got me the job.”

I want to continue with my studies, as my passion lies in the clinical world. I also plan on returning to volunteering – and who knows, one day I might end up at Moorfields!

Volunteer spotlight

Moorfields Eye Hospital's reputation as a medical, research and teaching hospital precedes it. When you set foot in the main site, you can feel its over 200 years of history, but how much do we know about our other sites? Our volunteer Stephen's curiosity led to a journey in time!

Following an incredible research effort, Stephen approached the Newham Heritage Service and went above and beyond to gather more details and pictures of the site where Moorfields is now based. His research has now been framed for patients to read up whilst they are waiting. We're proud that Moorfields has been and continues to be part of the continuous development of London.



The build of Bow Bridge in 1100 paves the way for Stratford's uptick in trade. The area's wealth is further increased by Stratford Langthorne Abbey.

Stratford's industrial boom, during which companies like Tate & Lyle, Coke Company and Gas Light establish themselves in the area.

The Broadway turns Stratford into a renowned shopper's paradise. It transforms into the beating heart of the 2012 Olympics with the completion of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

Moorfields at Stratford opens its doors in 2023 and continues to expand eye care services to patients in the area.

Thank you!

The work we do wouldn't be possible without people like you. Whether you make a one-off donation or give regularly, your contribution helps us do more to support the patients and staff at Moorfields. Thank you!

Running for Friends

Thank you to the wonderful Sam, who ran 10K for us in Hyde Park and raised £850!

Sam had a central retinal vein occlusion during labour, which meant she had to undergo diagnosis at Moorfields during COVID.



Her treatment of anti-VEGF injections lasted three years, and our volunteers provided emotional support to her every time she had to come to the hospital for procedures alone and wasn't able to bring her baby with her.

Gigs for Friends

Our volunteer Ian recently organised two jazz gigs and raised several hundred pounds for Friends. Audiences were treated to afternoons filled with music, good coffee and food.

Thank you Ian and the band for all the support, bringing people together and the wonderful music!





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