

Leaving a Gift in your Will



Help shape the future
of children who will
die prematurely


Helen & Douglas House
your local children's hospice

Tillie baking with
play specialist,
Chloe



Welcome

Thank you for considering leaving a gift in your Will to Helen & Douglas House – these very special gifts are vital to the support we give local families.

When a child is terminally ill, we help make this desperately difficult time just a little easier for children and their families.



In a comforting cocoon of care, we provide 24-hour medical, emotional and practical support, helping families create happy memories in the last years, weeks, or days they have left together. As a charity, we rely almost entirely on donations, and gifts of any size make a big difference to the support we can give our families.

The gifts people kindly leave in Wills are essential, funding 1 in 5 of the children we care for, so thank you for considering a gift in your Will. In this brochure, you'll hear from some of the families we've been able to help, because of these gifts.

Thank you so much for taking an interest in gifts in Wills.

Alex Hegenbarth
Senior Legacy Manager

Your Legacy will help make every moment count

A gift kindly left in a Will is a very special and unique way of giving. Your gifts not only help Helen & Douglas House continue their specialist care today, but also long into the future. Sadly, there will always be more children and families who need us, but it is because of supporters like you, past and present, that we can keep making every moment count.

Through the generosity of leaving a gift in your Will, your legacy can ensure that the children with life-limiting or terminal illnesses that come through our doors, today and in the future, can be cared for.

Every gift will make a difference, helping to create special moments and memories for children and their families at Helen & Douglas House as they navigate some of the most difficult days of their lives. Thank you for wanting to find out more about the impact your gift can make.

Felix, pictured below, is enjoying a visit from a pony. Animal sessions offer a soothing distraction, easing symptoms while helping children open up, gain confidence, and strengthen motor skills.



Martha's House

When Sophie and Ed's first baby, Martha, was born in a critical condition the couple were thrown into the unthinkable. After spending 5 days in the Special Care Baby Unit at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford, Martha passed away in their arms.

That evening they were transferred to Helen & Douglas House, where they were looked after as a family for a few peaceful days, giving them the chance to spend precious time together and to say goodbye.

Sophie said: "Being in such a comfortable but protected environment we could come to terms with what had happened, but at the same time she was still there. It was incredibly comforting to sit there quietly and be able to chat to her and hold her and just get used to it. I think if we hadn't had that it would be such a sudden end. We would have come home without a baby and that would have been it. That transition was so valuable."

Ed said: "One day unexpectedly you might get knocked over by a wave and you won't see it coming and when you do you will be so grateful that there is a place like Helen & Douglas House in your home city. For me it has turned a sad story into a week of sheer happiness. So it has given me nothing but happy memories of my time with Martha. Coming here made us feel like two parents with a daughter."

Now, every weekend, with their two young children they take a walk past Helen & Douglas House - taking a moment to smile and wave to what they have named 'Martha's House'.



"We will forever treasure the extra time we were able to spend with Martha thanks to this wonderful place"

Why I'm leaving a gift in my will

1 in 5

children are supported by gifts in Wills

76-year-old Roger Neill is leaving his estate to Helen & Douglas House in his Will. Roger was sadly diagnosed with colon cancer in January 2024 and, after declining surgery, was given a prognosis of around two years.

Following his diagnosis, Roger began putting his affairs in order and contacted a solicitor to write a new Will. Roger decided to make Helen & Douglas House his sole beneficiary.

Roger believes strongly in the importance of the children's hospice movement. And he wants to play his part in helping children who are seriously unwell, and their families, to live life to the full.

£6m

It costs £6m to keep the service running every year

"When you get to 76, you realise how lucky you are and how different life is for many people. I see children who are suffering with life-limiting conditions and the anxiety etched on their parents' faces shows immediately how hard life is for them. It's really sobering.

I want Helen & Douglas House to make a difference, not me. It's impossible to predict the future, but if you need to support more children down the line, my legacy will help you do that.

90%

of our funding comes from legacies, fundraising and trading

I hope my gift will enable Helen & Douglas House to do what is best for the children immediately. I don't want you to have to spend years fundraising before you can act.

I hope my gift can help make the lives of these children and parents easier. I want them to enjoy their time together, right to the very end. Every child's death should be a good one."

All gifts generously left in a Will, no matter how big or small, will make a huge difference to more children in the future.



Our services

Gifts in Wills will ensure our range of services can continue for years to come.

These are just some of the ways we can support families and how your gift can make a real difference.

Supportive stays at the hospice

As well as reviewing the children's medical and nursing needs, we give parents a much-needed break from 24/7 care, to help improve their well-being and mental health.

Symptom control & pain management stays

Helping relieve children's symptoms and pain, often preventing a hospital stay.

Specialist support at home

Providing families with specialist paediatric palliative support in their own homes, with 24/7 access to help and advice, 365 days a year.

End-of-life care

Supporting the whole family through incredibly sad and difficult times at the end of their child's life and helping them make precious memories.

Stay and play days

Providing a chance for families to enjoy whole day play sessions with other families facing similar challenges.



"I have chosen to leave a gift in my Will as a thank you for the superlative care, physical, emotional and respite, that Helen House gave to our daughter, Beatrice, and our family for six years. I hope that a gift to Helen & Douglas House will help them to continue giving their incomparable and compassionate care to other life-limited children and their families."

Joanna Swindells Carr

Siblings support

Providing support to siblings to help them discuss their fears and emotions via one-to-one sessions and group activities.

Transition to adult care

Preparing 13-18 year olds and their parents for leaving children's services to start adult care.

Social worker support

Offering emotional, social and practical support and advocacy to families to help them navigate their child's care.

Bereavement support

Supporting the whole family after the loss of a child, through one-to-one and group support.



Our promise to you

We respect that the decision to leave a gift in your Will is special and personal, and you will want to consider this decision in your own time. To reassure you about the personal gift you are considering leaving, we make the following promises:

- **We promise to use your gift wisely.**
- **We will not put any pressure on you to give a gift in your Will – it is entirely your decision.**
- **We will always respect your privacy as we appreciate your Will is a personal matter.**
- **We will provide the opportunity for you to stay connected with the work you have pledged to support through your legacy.**
- **We fully understand that personal circumstances change and there might be a time when you need to make changes to your Will.**

We would be delighted to show you in person how invaluable leaving a gift in your Will could be. Please get in touch to arrange a visit at the hospice.



"Our experience with Helen & Douglas House has been nothing but spectacular. Everyone has been so kind and supportive, not just to Finley, but to all our family. The hospice has been a lifeline in our journey with Finley."

Michaela and Finley (pictured)



"I don't know how we would have survived without Helen & Douglas House. We were showered with love and after weeks of worry and care shifts at Roman's bedside in hospital, we were cared for as a whole family. It is a safe haven from the hideous time we were going through."

Wendy, Roman's grandmother

We're here to help

To discuss leaving a legacy in more detail,
please get in touch by calling 01865 799150
or emailing legacy@helenanddouglas.org.uk.

"Coming to Helen House has made all the difference in the world to Josh and us as a family. Josh loves it there, but more than that, by helping us as parents and giving us respite, advice and emotional support and medical guidance, we are so much better able to care for Josh."

Clare, Josh's Mum

Registered charity number 1085951
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The logo for Helen & Douglas House, featuring a cluster of colorful hearts (red, orange, yellow, and blue) above the text 'Helen & Douglas House' in a script font, with 'your local children's hospice' in a sans-serif font below it.

Helen & Douglas House
your local children's hospice