

# Strategic Impact Report

For the year ended 31 March 2025



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# Strategic Impact Report

## Welcome

Lifelites is the only charity dedicated to providing cutting-edge assistive technology to empower children with life-limiting conditions and those living with medical complexity to communicate, connect, and engage with the world around them in new and exciting ways, sometimes for the very first time.

### Every moment matters

Across the UK, an estimated 99,000 children live with life-limiting and life-threatening conditions – a number expected to rise sharply by 2030. Life for children and their families can be shaped by complexity and uncertainty. As a result, we know that families are determined to make every moment count.

So even though their lives may be short, children are children first and foremost – their childhoods should still be filled with connection, joy, and belonging.

### Children's palliative care – meeting rising demand with innovation

Front line children's palliative care services are seeing demand and complexity increase year on year. Not only are more children needing care, but many are living longer with complex conditions that require highly specialised and resource-intensive support.

Despite these pressures, dedicated care teams continue to prioritise the children and families who need them most. Their commitment ensures that young people facing the most difficult challenges still have the chance to experience joy, connection, and comfort.

Lifelites plays a critical role in enabling this. By harnessing the power of assistive technology, we help these vital services to deliver higher quality care, opening doors to communication, creativity, and play that would otherwise remain closed.

And we are determined to do more.

## 25 years of changing lives

2025 marks our 25th anniversary. For a quarter of a century, Lifelites has been empowering children and young people living with complexity through innovative technology that brings creativity, connection, and joy.

In the past year alone, we reached more than **14,500 children** – in family homes, hospices and community settings. We forged new partnerships, including with The Joshua Tree, which supports children affected by cancer in the North-West.

We are unique. We are trusted. And we are ready to do more.

## Children's hospices and beyond

Our technology breaks down barriers – giving children the chance to play, communicate, learn, and connect with those they love. These are not luxuries. They are fundamental to childhood.

Despite our growing reach, many of the 99,000 children who could benefit from our support still don't have access to this life-changing technology.





That's why in October 2024 we launched **Lifelites 25** – the boldest programme in our history. As the centrepiece of our strategy and anniversary celebrations, Lifelites 25 is a once-in-a-generation investment in children's palliative care. Its aim: to dramatically expand our reach and bring assistive technology to more children, in more settings, than ever before.

Applications for support from over 20 organisations poured in – from specialist schools, respite centres, children's cancer services, and NHS teams. In March 2025, the first seven partner organisations were selected, and installations began in the summer.

### **Raising our profile**

Alongside this service expansion, we've made great strides in raising awareness. Our work was featured on **ITV News** and in the **Mirror newspaper**, bringing national attention to the transformative role technology can play for children with complex conditions. These stories have helped amplify the voices of the families we serve – and sparked new ideas, partnerships, and support.

### **Celebrating Lisa Shattock, Trustee**

In June, we were deeply saddened by the death of Lifelites Trustee, Lisa Shattock, who had served on the Board since May 2022.

Lisa brought exceptional marketing and communications expertise to Lifelites, joining us at a pivotal time as we developed a new strategy, rebranded the organisation, and raised our ambition to reach more children with life-limiting conditions. Her insight, strategic thinking and constructive challenge has left a lasting impact on the direction of our work.

## Building momentum

Our vision is simple but powerful: **every child with a life-limiting condition should be able to engage and interact with the people they love and enjoy the world they live in.**

We are grateful to all those people and organisations over the years who have contributed to our journey. We would not be here without our founders in Freemasonry, who have continued their support throughout.

Looking ahead, we're preparing to launch **Phase 2** of Lifelites 25, with a new round of applications opening in Autumn 2025. We're also developing **Lifelites Learning** – our new multi-channel training platform – and progressing discovery work for a **Family Hub**, to bring our expertise directly to children and families.

But to realise this vision, we must go further, faster. And we can't do it alone.

Fundraising remains a challenge, and now more than ever, we need both new and existing supporters to stand with us. Whether you choose to give, fundraise, volunteer, or share our story, your support can help bring connection and joy to a child who needs it most.

We hope this report leaves you inspired – and invites you to be part of something truly extraordinary.



**Rob Lightfoot**  
Chief Executive



**Tony Harvey**  
Chair of Trustees



# Vision, Mission & Values

## VISION

We believe every child with a life-limiting condition, should be able to engage and interact with the people they love and enjoy the world they live in.

## MISSION

We harness innovative technology to empower all children and young people with life-limiting conditions, along with their families, to experience unforgettable moments of creativity, connection and joy.

## VALUES



### Dynamic

We constantly evolve to respond to the changing needs of our children, families and partners, adapting our approach and using our expertise to maximise our impact.



### Inclusive

We look beyond the traditional, obvious and familiar to remove barriers that prevent children and families from connecting, playing and expressing themselves. We partner with and recruit people based on their merits and alignment to our goals.



### Collaborative

We bring together and collaborate with diverse people and organisations that share a common passion for our vision, believing that combining resources improves outcomes for all.



### Empowering

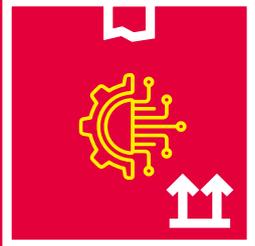
We believe everyone has an innate desire to play, create and communicate. Our services empower children, their families, our partners and our team to discover and reach their full potential.



### Innovative

We constantly seek new ways to achieve our vision, serve children in need and their families, develop our team and build our relationships with our partners.

# 2024/25 at glance



**16** packages of new technology.



**58** children's palliative care partners across Britain and Ireland.



**303** children's palliative care staff trained.



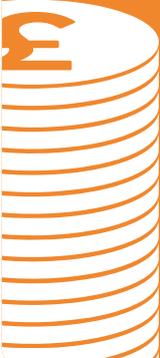
**2,302** hours worth of training delivered.



**14,576** children and young people accessing support.



**10,545** miles travelled to deliver installations and training.



**£847,000** worth of new equipment, training and technical support.

# Quality

Central to our strategy is the ambition to deliver the highest quality services providing maximum impact for our service partners, children and their families.

Our technology helps children:

- **Communicate and connect** with family and carers
- **Engage with the world** independently and meaningfully
- **Strengthen family bonds** through shared play and experiences

Based on 2024/25 monitoring data from 51 of our 56 partners, it is evident that Lifelites' support has delivered life-changing outcomes for the children and families we support.

## Improvement in emotional wellbeing

96% say children experience improved emotional wellbeing.



## Increased independence

98% report greater independence.



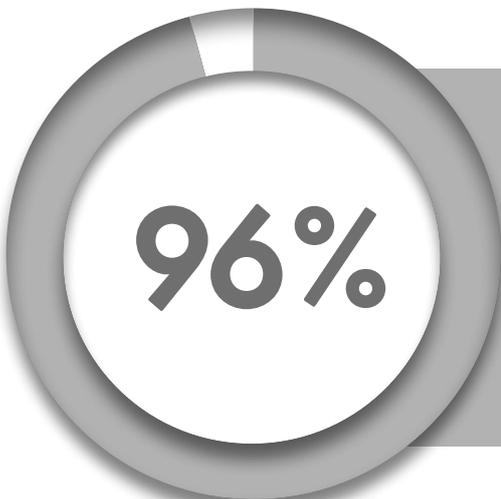
### More resilient families

96% see stronger family relationships.



### Reduction in social isolation

98% observe reduced isolation.



### Enhancement of communication

96% note better communication, especially for non-verbal children.

**“Lifelites technology is Savannah’s way of communicating. It has honestly brought the best out in her and makes her so much more determined to communicate and have fun with us.”**

Jayde, Savannah’s mum





# Gemma and Talia family story

Gemma is the mum of seven year old Talia, a vibrant, cheeky, all-action child who has used Lifelites technology at Alexander Devine Children's Hospice for the past five years.

**“ We’ve been using Lifelites technology since Talia was born!”** says Gemma “It’s one of my first memories of her.”

Talia has CHARGE syndrome, a complex and rare genetic disorder which affects multiple systems in the body.

**“** Talia is profoundly deaf, she is peg fed, doesn't follow verbal instructions and requires 24/7 care but she manages the technology really well.” says Gemma as she watches her daughter dash around on the interactive Magic Carpet with her brother.

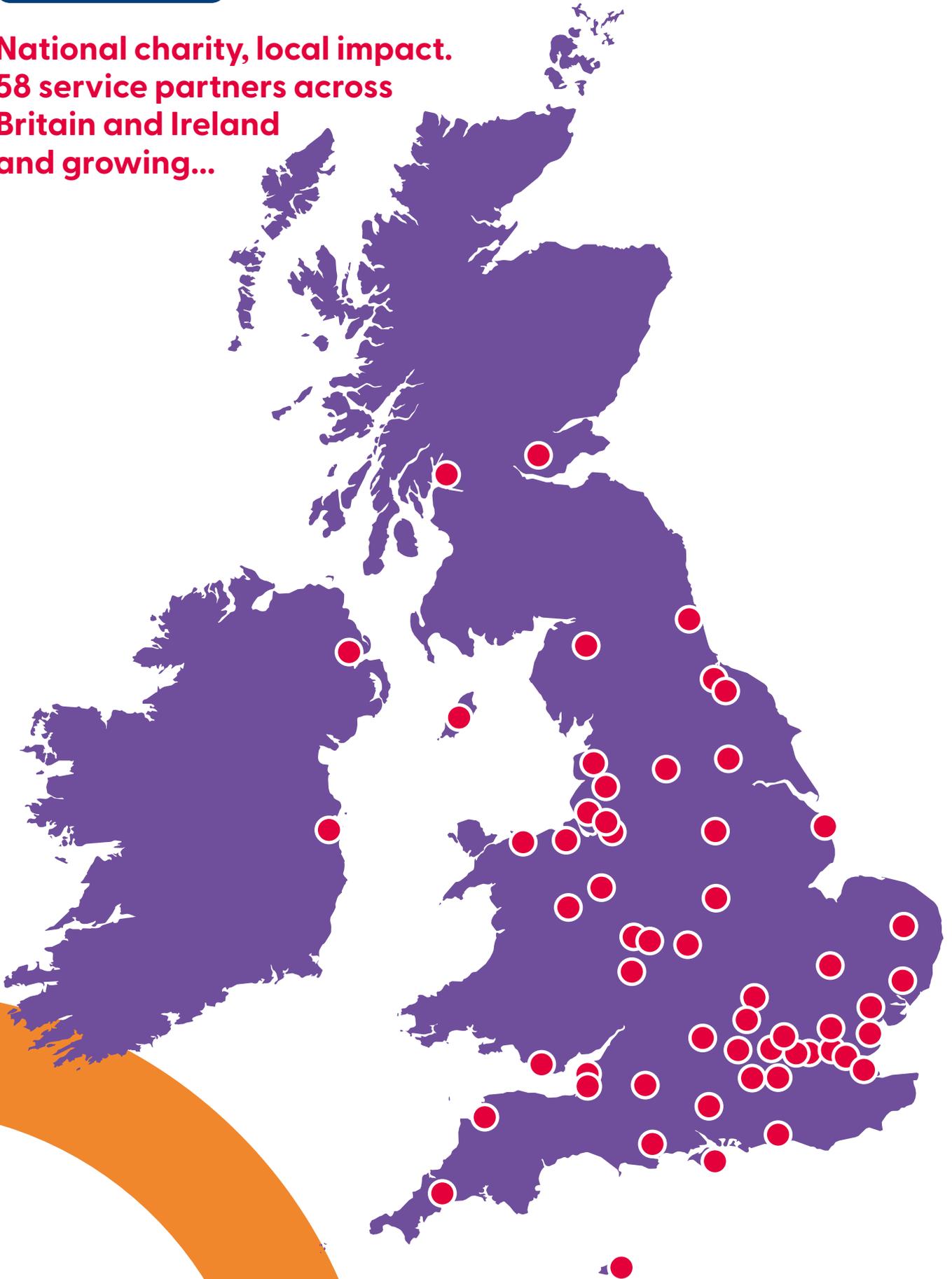
**“** The beauty of the Magic Carpet is that there's so many options. She likes to navigate between the many, many games on there but her favourite is the football, which she loves to play with her two older brothers. It's a good way for them to communicate and work together.”

As Talia gets older, her use of Lifelites technology has advanced, giving her more independence and opportunities to learn.

**“** We've noticed recently that she likes the Tilt and Touch Table. She really likes the games on there, and I've just noticed today that she's been playing matching pairs. It's pushing her abilities.”

# Access

**National charity, local impact.  
58 service partners across  
Britain and Ireland  
and growing...**



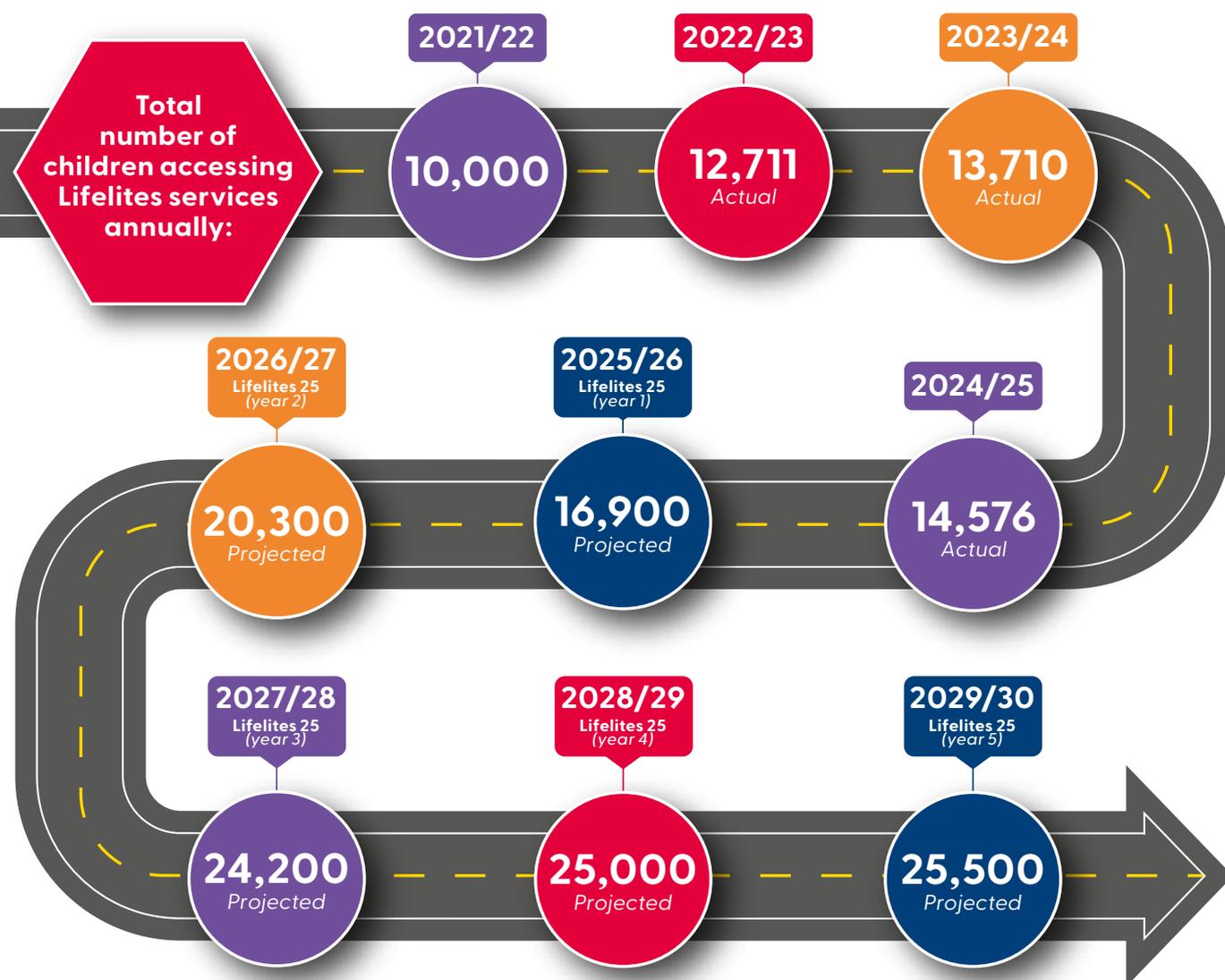
## Proven delivery model: Efficient, scalable, trusted

Last year we supported **58 children's palliative care services**, reaching over **14,500 children**.

In a sector under pressure from increased demand and reduced resources, Lifelites is determined to enhance and grow our services to increase access to our life-changing technology and unique expertise.

By 2030, we aim to:

- **Double our reach** to support over **25,000 children annually**
- **Expand beyond hospices** to include specialist schools, respite centres, and home-based services
- **Launch Lifelites Learning**, a new training platform for professionals and families
- **Introduce a Family Support Hub**, giving carers direct access to tools, knowledge, and advice.



# Lifelites 25

## Reaching new communities, changing more lives

In Autumn 2024, Lifelites launched our most ambitious programme to date – **Lifelites 25** – designed to expand our reach beyond hospices and bring assistive technology to more children with life-limiting conditions, wherever they are.

After a rigorous application process, **10 inspiring projects** were shortlisted. From 10 March, the public cast more than **4,500 verified votes**, selecting **three winning projects**. A further **four organisations** were chosen by our independent panel for their innovation, reach, and impact.

Tracy Rennie, Lifelites Trustee & Chair of the Lifelites 25 Committee, said:

**“ It wasn’t easy choosing from ten great projects but we are delighted that the four chosen, along with 3 voted by the public, will help us to achieve our aspiration to reach more children wherever they may be – at home, school, hospital or short break settings as well as hospices.**

**Children are children first and foremost and these innovative and exciting projects will enable even more children to play, connect and have joyful experiences with those special to them – their brothers, sisters, parents, wider family and their friends.”**

With installations commencing in May 2025, together, the selected organisations represent a powerful step forward in our mission to ensure **more children, in more places**, can access the joy, connection, and opportunity that inclusive technology brings.



## The seven Community Project winners

### Voted by the Public:

- **St Elizabeth Hospice (Zest), Ipswich** – Supporting young adults transitioning from children’s to adult care.
- **Swings and Smiles, Berkshire** – Creating inclusive play opportunities for children with disabilities.
- **Rainbow Hub, Lancashire** – Delivering specialist support and therapy for children with physical disabilities.

### Selected by the Lifelites 25 Committee:

- **Ryegate House, Sheffield** – Providing short breaks and assessment for children with neurological conditions.
- **St Ann’s School, London** – A specialist school supporting pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties.
- **Grace Kelly Childhood Cancer Trust, Worcestershire** – Helping children with cancer stay connected to school and friends through AV1 robots and iPads.
  - **OmniMusic, Greater Manchester** – Bringing accessible music technology to children with profound disabilities.

EJ Trivett, CEO of OmniMusic, said:

“OmniMusic are delighted to receive this fantastic support of assistive music technology from Lifelites. These specialist instruments will enable us to reach more children and young people with profound disabilities and life-limiting conditions across Greater Manchester; ensuring that they too get to make their mark on Manchester’s music legacy.”

The launch of Lifelites 25 marks a bold new chapter. With more phases ahead, and more communities to support, **we are only just beginning.**

# Side by Side: The power of collaboration

With the addition of our new Lifelites 25 projects, we will now partner 65 children's hospices and other care and education services across Britain and Ireland to deliver tailored packages of equipment, expert training, and four years of ongoing support - completely free of charge.

Children's palliative care services are under growing pressure. Hospices are facing critical staff shortages. Specialist teams are stretched thin. And while medical advances mean some children are living longer, this brings a new complexity - longer, more intensive care needs that many services are not equipped to meet.

Over the last 12 months Lifelites has worked **side by side with every children's hospice** and a growing number of other services to harness the incredible power of assistive technology to improve the lives of children, young people and their families.

Collaboration is at our core and we have been proud to serve the children's palliative care sector, enhancing the care and support our partners provide.

Our impact is evidenced not only through powerful monitoring data but feedback from our partners, children and families.

Together, we can bring connection, communication, and joy to thousands more children because every child should have the chance to live as fully as possible.



“The Cosmo switches have been very well received by a wide range of children. One example; we used the switches for a large group of young people with vast spectrum of abilities. The musical switch app joined everyone socially. To find a piece of equipment which suits everyone has been previously has been very difficult.”

Little Havens Children's Hospice

“The support from Lifelites has always been exceptional. The response time to any questions we've had has been very quick.”

Charlton Farm,  
Children's Hospice  
South West

“Lifelites has benefitted every day life here at the hospice. We have been able to give children a sense of independence and empowerment from your training us and allowing us to have some amazing equipment. You go above and beyond to ensure that we as staff are happy and make us go away confident and excited to use new equipment.”

Claire House Children's  
Hospice

“I cannot express enough how amazing having Lifelites in our little hospices life has made such an amazing impact...absolutely awesome.”

Butterwick Children's Hospice

“Lifelites technology has greatly enhanced the care we offer at Noah's Ark Children's Hospice, providing our teams with accessible, engaging tools that support communication, play, and sensory experiences for children with complex needs.”

Noah's Ark Children's Hospice

“Using Eyegaze, our children who are non-verbal have been able to communicate with us... this is incredible as the things they tell us are absolutely amazing.”

Butterwick Children's Hospice

# 2024-25 Performance - Strategy enablers

## Income

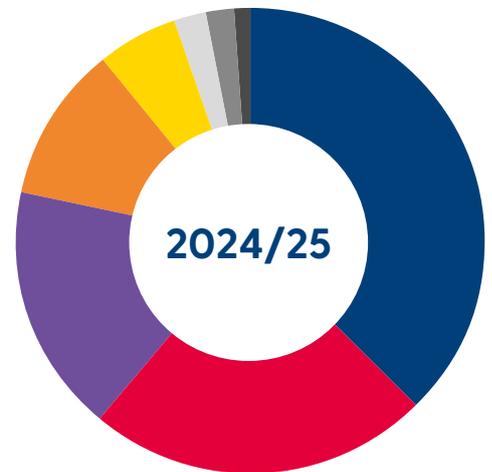
Income from fundraising in the year increased on 2023/24 performance but fell short of the target we had set. The conditions for fundraising became even more challenging, with competition fierce and seismic changes in the funding landscape.

Despite our growth being slower than projected, we remain optimistic about the long-term income diversification programme which is at the heart of our strategy.

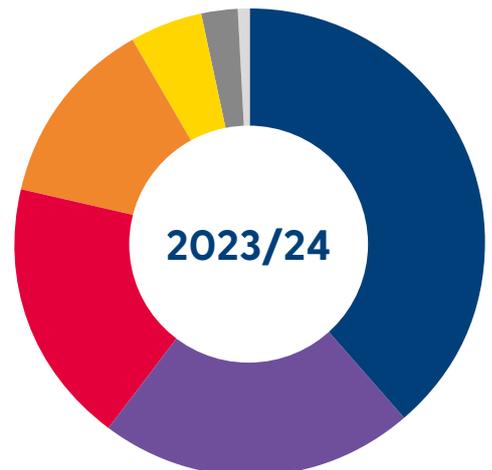
## Thank you

**We are incredibly grateful to all the new and existing supporters who chose to provide funding for Lifelites in the year. We recognise that competition for funding is fierce, whether you are an individual or an organisation. Without your support our service achievements would not be possible and we are privileged to stand alongside supporters who are as passionate about delivering our ambitious Vision for the future as we are.**

Income source	2024/25
Charitable Trusts	202,000
Community inc. Freemasonry	127,000
Investment income	92,000
Corporate	57,000
Individual Giving	31,000
Events	12,000
Gift-in-Kind	10,000
Legacies	5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>536,000</b>



Income source	2023/24
Charitable Trusts	190,000
Investment income	107,000
Community inc. Freemasonry	91,000
Corporate	64,000
Individual Giving	24,000
Gift-in-Kind	12,000
Events	4,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>492,000</b>





## Expenditure

During the year, despite the challenging fundraising climate the Charity honoured all its funding commitments to our children’s palliative care partners. The deficit between income and expenditure increased but this was planned. The planned deficit is set to continue throughout the period of the strategy as our long-standing reserves are re-structured and invested to cover the financial impact of risks to which the Charity is exposed, provide sufficient funds to safeguard against the volatility of key income streams, to honour the Charity’s short-term commitments to its partners, to invest in income sustainability and to deliver the key objectives of our strategy.

Expenditure Source	2024/25	2023/24
Equipment, installation and technical support	471,000	349,000
Partner support and service management	376,000	259,000
Generating income	314,000	185,000
Investment management	20,000	20,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,181,000</b>	<b>813,000</b>

## Awareness & Influence

Brand performance within the year was a major success with Lifelites' national media profile increasing substantially. The Charity was featured on ITV news and in the Mirror newspapers, along with a large number of features in industry and regional media. Performance of our new website and social channels grew significantly across the year through leverage of the Lifelites 25 programme and our 25 Voices series.





## Governance

The governance of the Charity is now on a more stable footing following a comprehensive review and action plan in 2023/24. Within the year, the Board created a new committee to oversee the development and delivery of the Lifelites 25 programme. A further governance review is planned for 2025/26, which will identify additional best practice benchmarks and opportunities to develop Lifelites' governance further.

## People

During the year we recruited talent to services, fundraising and communications teams, all of whom have added significant value to our experienced team. Our first staff survey gave high satisfaction score with all staff reporting their pride in working for Lifelites and 88% recommending Lifelites as a great place to work. Some areas for improvement around cross-departmental communication were identified and a series of team workshops and internal communications activities were implemented to improve collaboration. A second survey was launched in June 2025 with results due to be reviewed in July.

# Future plans

## Celebrating Lifelites at 25

Our 25th anniversary programme will continue in earnest with installations of the latest sensory and assistive technology to commence for our seven newest partners in Summer 2025. We will be launching **Phase 2 of Lifelites 25**, inviting new applications from qualifying children's palliative care services from Autumn 2025.

We're also developing **Lifelites Learning**, our brand new multi-channel training programme designed to empower care professionals, educators, and families with the confidence and skills to make the most of assistive technology for children and their families. Through expert-led workshops, on-demand digital resources, and hands-on support, Lifelites Learning will ensure that our life-changing technology doesn't just reach more children – it's used in ways that truly transform their lives.



We are also progressing discovery work for a **Family Hub**, a new digital initiative in development, designed to bring our expertise directly to families of children with life-limiting conditions. It will offer accessible, family-friendly guidance on using assistive technology at home – including tutorials, tips, and personalised support – helping parents and carers discover new ways for their children to play, communicate, and connect.

## Building a Sustainable Future

Increasing brand awareness and diversifying our income are central pillars of Lifelites' long-term strategy.

To achieve our ambition of reaching more children we must scale and broaden our funding base. This year, we are continuing to invest in our **income diversification programme**, with a particular focus on developing high-impact **philanthropy, legacy, corporate**, and **individual giving** streams.

We are also enhancing our approach to **donor recognition and retention**, ensuring supporters at every level feel valued, inspired, and connected to our Mission. Our **Christmas Appeal** will play a pivotal role in engaging new donors, while the launch of **25 Voices** – a campaign sharing powerful stories from those whose lives have been touched by our work – will bring our impact to life and deepen emotional engagement.

Our **25th anniversary** provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to celebrate what we've achieved, invite more people into our community, and build a lasting sense of belonging and belief in our future.

We recognise that long-term, sustainable income growth requires time, resource and focused investment. That's why our Trustees have established a **designated fund** to support this work – enabling strategic investment in **brand awareness, income diversification, relationship management**, and the long-term sustainability of Lifelites.





## Lifelites

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