HVMN Chair Report 2026

Since the last AGM in March 2025, I have stepped into the role of Chair following the departure of our previous Interim Chair, Jennifer Bird, who remains an active and valued member of the committee.

Taking on this position—particularly as someone relatively new and still learning the ways of a new country—has been both a challenge and a privilege. It has been a genuine pleasure to work alongside such a wonderful, creative, and generous committee.

Please find below the Chair's Report for the past year.

Acknowledgement of Contribution

The Executive team continues to be an exceptional group of individuals who give their time, energy, and expertise to advance the work of the organisation and support our members across the UK. Their commitment—offered voluntarily alongside their professional and personal responsibilities—is both generous and vital. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to each of them for their dedication over the past year. Quite simply, the organisation would not be what it is today without their continued efforts.

Our Regional Representatives also deserve special recognition. Through their coordination and leadership, they create opportunities for members to connect, collaborate, and support one another at a local level. Their work strengthens the sense of community at the heart of our organisation. Thank you for all that you have contributed over the past year.

Executive Team Membership

The Executive Committee is made up of 11 members: Felicia Sabartinelli, Jennifer Bird, Steve Bond, Su Bennett, Maria Cuthbert, Ian Turnbull, Stacey Towler, Phil McGraa, Susan Freeman, Faith Hojeer, and Dan Smith.

This year, we will sadly see Maria Cuthbert step down from the committee after serving ____ years. Maria has been an integral member of the committee and a passionate advocate for our Scotland region. Maria, thank you for your many years of dedicated service—you will be greatly missed.

Since the last AGM, we have been delighted to welcome Susan Freeman, Faith Hojeer, and Dan Smith to the committee, and we look forward to continuing to work with them in the year ahead.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the entire committee for their tireless contribution to HVMN. Each member brings professionalism, enthusiasm, and a deep sense of commitment to our work. Together, they ensure we represent not only our members, but also the wider communities we serve. The committee brings a

wealth of knowledge and experience, alongside a shared ambition to shape and grow HVMN for many years to come.

We currently have vacancies on the Executive Committee, as our constitution allows for up to 12 members. We warmly welcome expressions of interest from any members who would like to contribute and join the committee.

Conference

Over the past year, the committee has had many thoughtful discussions about how best to represent the diverse voices and roles within hospice and palliative volunteer management—ensuring we offer something meaningful for all. With this in mind, we hope you enjoyed this year's varied programme of workshops and speakers, covering topics such as Retail & Fundraising, Patient Support, Bereavement, and General Administration and Role Support.

HVMN remains firmly committed to supporting its members and recognises the significant funding challenges faced by hospices across the UK. For this reason, our conference is delivered on a not-for-profit basis and is typically subsidised by our sponsors. This allows us to keep attendance costs as low as possible, enabling members to take part at a fraction of the cost of comparable events.

We have seen a slight decrease in attendance this year, which is perhaps unsurprising given the current climate, including sector-wide redundancies, the merging of roles across organisations, and ongoing budget constraints. Despite these challenges, we remain committed to delivering an engaging and relevant programme each year, and we want to reassure you that we actively listen to and value your feedback.

For those who may be interested in contributing to our 2027 conference, we would warmly welcome workshop submissions—please speak to a member of the committee to find out more.

Strategic Links

Our committee continues to build and strengthen connections with partner organisations, with the aim of deepening relationships, advocating for the vital impact of our volunteers, and raising the profile of hospices across the wider charity sector and beyond. We are also exploring new ways to provide additional support and resources to our members. As part of this, we have introduced a programme of ongoing online educational workshops, including the Autism & Wellbeing sessions delivered in January and February, with further sessions planned for May and June in partnership with the Council for Certification in Volunteer Administration (CCVA).

We are also delighted to welcome Hospice UK and the Charity Retail Association as our keynote speakers for this year's conference. We look forward to continuing to strengthen these important relationships, while also building new connections across the sector.

Other Member Benefits

We recognise the importance of regional meetings in connecting members and strengthening our network, and we will continue to support and encourage these opportunities.

We also intend to:

- Continue to organise and deliver online training sessions that are accessible to all members and included within membership
- Continue to develop and share our regular newsletter
- Enhance and update our website to become a more valuable and practical resource for members

The more members who are able to contribute to this work, the more we can achieve together. We warmly encourage anyone interested in getting involved to speak with us—whether or not you are able to commit to joining the Executive Committee.

Felicia Sabartinelli
Chair
March 2026