

3rd April 2025



Dear parents, carers, students and friends of the school,

Lions at Large: Fundraising for Cheltenham and Gloucester Hospitals Trust Big Space Cancer Appeal

Many of us will know of, or perhaps be living with someone who has had, or currently has cancer; perhaps we have had it ourselves or are currently undergoing treatment: that was the case for me in 2022, when I was diagnosed with cancer. I recall my diagnosis well - in a small room at Cheltenham General Hospital, after which I then had to go back into the noisy waiting room, with a lot of other people, perhaps worrying themselves about what the next hour would bring for them, or for their loved ones. For me, I decided to leave the noisy waiting room, and seek refuge in the hospital cafe, where I paid for a coffee for an elderly person, who only



had cash, when the cafe only took a credit or debit card. That cheered me up, knowing that I had achieved, in a small way, something positive for someone unknown to me, but who needed someone's assistance at that point in time. I was lucky that my wife was able to accompany me back to the waiting room, and to the follow up with the consultant - who raised my spirits, by saying that my cancer was curable. Yet, what I would have given to have been able to sit in a quiet space at that moment, perhaps being able to sit with someone who could offer professional support and guidance; unfortunately, and despite the very best efforts and intentions of those in the busy Neck Lump Clinic, that wasn't possible. During my cancer treatment at Cheltenham Oncology Department, there was also a lack of space and privacy for patients like me and for our families to – just be. The care and treatment that I received was exceptional and saved my life of course: I shall always be in the deep debt of the specialist teams at Cheltenham, whose work continues to help support so many people and their families.

In October last year, as you may recall, on one single day - at the miles of miles charity fundraising event led by Mr Hart, in which every single member of the school got involved with - the school raised over £20,000 for two charities - the Cobalt Imaging Centre and the Gloucester and Cheltenham Hospitals Charity: what an incredible achievement.

The Gloucester and Cheltenham Hospitals Trust has just launched a new fundraising appeal - **The Big Space Cancer Appeal** - to raise money for a new Cancer Centre to be based at Cheltenham General



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Hospital. As part of their fundraising effort, there will be a Lions at Large Art Sculpture trail this summer, which will see specially commissioned and sponsored Lion sculptures installed across the Gloucester and Cheltenham area, which visitors can view and follow, encouraging people to walk and visit the area, whilst raising money for the appeal.



The School has decided to get involved, by sponsoring one of the Little Lions. I was fortunate to attend the launch event at Blackfriars some months ago now, where I saw the large and small Lions – they looked fantastic. Last week, Mrs Hargraves collected our lion. A group of talented Year 10 art students, Adelina, Clara, Nadia, Sparsha, Lucy and Holly, under the guidance of Mrs Medcroft, will soon be busy painting our Crypt Lion. The design will feature elements of the natural world that represent sources of support, care and courage. It is a beautiful, reflective and inspiring design and we look forward to seeing our own Crypt decorated Lion on display in the city this summer. Thank you to those Y10 students and Mrs Medcroft for the time and creativity they are devoting to this special project.

Whilst the school's contribution to the appeal by sponsoring one of the Little Lions is great, I hope the school, and its community can do much more to help support this appeal, which will see a new cancer centre built at Cheltenham General Hospital, which will provide that much needed space, privacy and support that our county's cancer patients and their families really do need. At The Royal United Hospital, in Bath, where my brother is a consultant, a new cancer centre has just opened, sponsored by Dyson, and which is helping to transform treatment, recovery and patients' experience: I know that the Big Space Cancer Appeal project can do the same here in Gloucestershire for our communities as well.

Our newly appointed Sixth Form Student Executive Committee are going to organise some fundraising activities to support this campaign in school over the next few months, starting next Friday, 11th April with a **non-uniform day**, where we ask everyone to contribute a suggested minimum of £3 to support this campaign; however, please do give as much as you feel able to on non-uniform day, knowing that all monies raised will go to the **Big Space Cancer Appeal**.

Do see the Big Space Cancer Appeal for more details <https://www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk/charity/big-space/> We also have a Just Giving Page where you can make a donation and include gift aid https://www.justgiving.com/page/cryptschoolions?utm_medium=FR&utm_source=CL

Your support is greatly appreciated by the appeal and everyone associated with it.

Very best wishes,

Nicholas Dyer

Headmaster