

Alder Hey Childrens Hospital Liverpool

Ann and I are from Liverpool which makes Alder Hey Childrens Hospital a special place for us and so we looked forward to our visit to the Alder Hey Children's Charity in March to find out how the new hospital was taking shape. For more than 100 years Alder Hey has delivered some impressive pioneering work in paediatrics and has always set a wonderful standard in caring for children.



Although held in great affection by so many people in Liverpool and beyond there is no way of getting away from the fact that the existing hospital looks like a Victorian workhouse and is not fit for the demands of the 21st century. For many years the vision has been to

replace the hospital with a truly modern facility that will transform the experience for children and their parents and help doctors, nurses and support staff to deliver an even higher standard of medical care. That vision has become a reality and the new hospital, over 10 years in the planning, will be handed over in June and be fully operational by the end of the year. The passion of everybody involved from the builders, architects and technicians through to the medical staff and, of course, to the children and parents is infectious. It makes you want to be part of this wonderful dream and contribute, no matter how small, to making the new hospital the very best it can be for all those children both now and in the future who will need its care and expertise.

It is no surprise that although there are significant grants to cover the construction work, many of the things that are needed can only be delivered if we all dig deep and make a contribution to the £30m charity fund set up to meet the shortfall. This fund will be used to cover the cost of many things most of which are essential rather than "nice-to-haves". There is a



commitment to equip the hospital with the very best kit with such things as state of the art operating theatre technology, specialist beds and research and development facilities. But it is much more than kit, it's also about creating a different environment and atmosphere. Children going into hospital creates its own emotional ride for all the families involved and the idea is to reduce the stress by making the surroundings and experience more home-like and to introduce some fun.

The enthusiasm engulfing the new hospital does not stop with the medical teams or the children or their parents, it embraces everybody involved. We were very

impressed by the attitude of all the people directly engaged in the construction of the new hospital. Time and again they told us that this is not just another project but something so important that it will be viewed as the highlight of their careers and this from men and women with long experience in the industry. "This is not just a job it's personal" - and that message is tangible and very special.

Alder Hey Children's Charity has embraced the fund raising challenge with energy, creativity and great determination. To date the Charity has had pledged or donated over half of the target £30m.



We have been speaking to the Charity for some months and over the last few years have made some personal donations but now is the time for our Foundation to get involved. Our visit to meet the Charity team in March was to explore how our Foundation could help. We met Clare, Louise and Jess who explained what was happening, what was needed and how they were meeting the challenge. We were privileged to have a full tour of the site and see how it will function. Even at this unfinished stage it is truly impressive.

The Charity team are passionate people focused on making the new hospital a success and delivering the fund raising target - special people. We came away inspired by what we heard and saw and determined to support this magnificent project. We are thinking about a number of opportunities such as fully furnishing a single occupancy bedroom with audio-visual technology, specialist extendable bed and parent sofa bed to allow mum or dad to stay over.

It seems that the fund raising bug has been grasped by most people associated with the new hospital including the Charity team, the builders and medical staff as well as parents and children who have received care from Alder Hey. They are running marathons, going to the races, climbing mountains, arranging events, selling scarves and so much more.

It's all very exciting and if you want to know more please go to their website www.alderheycharity.com. There are many ways to get involved and remember no donation is too small. Be part of this wonderful community of friends that are making the new Alder Hey Childrens Hospital a reality - stunning, breath taking and vital in caring for our children. Don't miss this opportunity to be involved it's too important.