

Thirty years of celebratory achievements: May 1995 to date!

Upon reflection in the new year, I reminisced on many memorable events that occurred throughout 2024. Apart from politics, the NHS shortage situation and the recent NHS 10-year plan (NHS England, 2025) constantly being in the news, it's been another busy year with so much going on and so many changes taking place within the Leg Club network. This year, we celebrate 30 years since the first Leg Club opened their doors offering the local community a novel psychosocial approach to addressing lower-limb care within the rural community of Suffolk.

It was important that work the Foundation performs is not glamorous or emotive, but the benefits our Leg Clubs bring to the people they reach are obvious to anyone who has been to one. Hence, I would like to thank everyone for their invaluable support in promoting the mission of the Foundation to profile the social Leg Club model and work with organisations to establish Leg Clubs within the communities they serve.

Leg Club model operating in a healthcare sector such as ours that is constantly and rapidly evolving is an achievement that I am particularly proud of. However, with the increased exposure of the Leg Club model comes the increased need to demonstrate its effectiveness and in 2023/4 the Foundation focused on producing evidence in outcomes, wellbeing and cost effectiveness. This has only been achieved through the great work of a fellow board member Dr. Neil McIntyre, commitment and dedication of the Leg Club clinical teams, volunteers and training of data by our PA Lynn Bullock.

Despite 30 years dispelling myths about the psychosocial Leg Club model, there remains a barrier where misinformation or misconceptions often hold clinical teams back from seeking advice and support while embracing change within today's society. Often, it is only the personal experience of a lower-limb problem and social isolation that makes people aware of the Leg Club model. In today's information-driven world, it's easy to fall prey to health myths and misconceptions, hence it's essential to separate fact from fiction to enable clinicians to make informed decisions regarding care. Most importantly, Leg Clubs are community owned and funded by donations and community support, ensuring access for everyone and

the integrated model can help to facilitate 'neighbourhood' working as highlighted in the NHS ten Year Plan. By integrating both elements, health and social care the Leg Club model creates a comprehensive approach to care that truly supports the whole person.

So, as a Foundation we are duty bound to raise awareness of what we can do to bring about attitudinal change to misunderstandings about the services provided and the benefits to Leg Club teams, members and volunteers. We could not have achieved so much without the support of our clinical colleagues, volunteers, patrons, ambassadors, Leg Club Industry Partners (LCIP), supportive friends and journal publishers who have embraced the health and social approach to person-centred care. Integral to the progress and success of the Leg Clubs I don't think it is an exaggeration to say that each Leg Club team (clinical and volunteers) have been inspirational and achieved so much in helping people improve their quality of life. Just as gratifying is seeing members of their Leg Club experience companionship and become once again fully integrated into their communities, thereby given new meanings and wellbeing to their lives.

A personal acknowledgment to my colleague Lynn Bullock who has been a pillar of support and progression to the Foundation and Leg Club community since 2005

It is with immense gratitude and affection that I pay tribute to Lynn, who has been my personal assistant since the formation and status of the Lindsay Leg Club Foundation charity in 2005 (CRN111259), on her retirement

Lynn has not only been an invaluable support to all involved in the Leg Clubs but a genuine partner in the growth of our charity. Over the years, we have worked side by side, facing challenges, celebrating successes and sharing a few tears along the way, as well as developing the Leg Club network and community into what it has become today.

Her dedication, hard work and unwavering loyalty and commitment have been at the heart of every milestone we've reached together. Through countless hours of putting up with my bossiness, ensuring the Leg Club Industry Partners (LCIP) received agendas and minutes, Lynn also organised the Foundation board's venues, and she has been instrumental in



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ensuring the Leg Club vision set out in 1995 came to life.

Over the past 20 years, her exceptional work ethic and compassion when taking calls from the public to visiting Leg Clubs, along with her remarkable ability to balance so many responsibilities was always undertaken with kindness and professionalism. Together, we've not only helped developed the charity, but I will be forever grateful for her partnership, loyalty and dedication.

Her work has had a profound impact on the lives of whom Lynn met over the years and she truly enjoyed visiting the Leg Clubs and engaging with the volunteers, members and clinical teams. Beyond the responsibilities of the job, she offered a level of care and commitment that has had a profound impact on many.

Every year, Lynn has dedicated her personal time to support me regarding the annual Leg Club conference with expert ability to handle the demands of organising hotels, invitations and liaising with speakers, ensuring the LCIP members were kept informed throughout. Each year, she achieved this with a hugely warm and approachable demeanour, which is truly something special.

But what makes Lynn truly unique is the personal touch she brought to the role as she always takes the time to understand and support the needs of every individual she meets, ensuring that they feel valued and heard.

The Leg Club Foundation formed in 2005 has flourished because of Lynn's hard work and dedication and she is a truly exceptional part of our Leg Club community.

We will forever be grateful for Lynn's time, her loyalty, support and friendship she has given over the past 20 years. We hope you join us in wishing her a very happy retirement.

References

NHS England (2025) *Creating a New 10-Year Health Plan*. Leeds: NHS England. Available at: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-term-plan/> (accessed at: 13.03.2025)

