

St Luke's Hospice, Sheffield

Refreshing Staff Perspective

[St Luke's Hospice](#) is a proud Project Choice partner in Sheffield, and hosted 6 Interns in just one term in both their charity shop, eBay service and distribution centre.

St Luke's is a charity that provides care and support to people over 18 with a terminal illness. They have over 200 employees and over 700 volunteers that work across their services and retail charity shops. All the proceeds and donations to the charity go towards running in patient care for people with both long term and short term health care needs.

St Luke's took their first placement Interns in September 2021, and Leah Smith, Volunteer Coordinator at St Luke's explained. "What drew us to the programme was the support that Project Choice gives to the interns. We want to be able to support people with additional needs, but we know that our service can be busy so it was so great to know that the extra support is there if we and the intern needed it. The 'job coach' role was music to our ears."



Project Choice are able to provide Job Coaches for interns who require additional support whilst in placement, to give interns a sense of security if they struggle with anxiety or task understanding, but to also ensure that substantive staff at the placement are able to continue to do their own role and day to day running of the business is not effected.

At St Luke's, interns complete tasks like sorting items, pricing, stocking and managing shelves and customer service. The store managers commented *'It's so rewarding to see the young interns change and grow with confidence – often when they start, some interns would only speak when spoken to and would not go out onto the shop floor, and several weeks in - they are talking to customers and getting more involved! It's improved our own customer service to start from scratch with the interns, and given us a refreshed perspective'*

"St Luke's cannot run our shops without our volunteers and any support is helpful. With Interns coming in 4 days a week, they get the experience, grow and uphold our values and behind the scenes, the shop cannot run without them."

Leah Smith stated that they are so grateful for Project Choice and that other businesses should *"Just try it. The help, the growth and the support from Project Choice is all worth it."*