



Norfolk and Suffolk Health and Care Awards 2026

Unsung Hero Award

West Suffolk Blanketeers

West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust

Jennie is recognised for her compassion and dedication in founding and leading the West Suffolk Blanketeers group, a volunteer initiative providing handmade blankets for patients at the end of life. Established in 2019 with support from a palliative care specialist nurse, the group has grown significantly, moving from its original base in a hospital chapel to a larger community venue to accommodate its expanding membership.

The West Suffolk Blanketeers bring together volunteers, staff and individuals with lived experience, including relatives of patients who have previously received blankets. United by a shared purpose, members give their time freely to knit and crochet blankets, offering comfort, warmth and a sense of dignity to patients during their final days. These blankets often become treasured keepsakes for families, providing lasting memories and emotional support during bereavement.

Operating entirely through donations and fundraising, including an annual raffle, the group demonstrates remarkable commitment and sustainability without requiring financial support from the Trust. Their work reflects a deeply person-centred approach, adding a homely and comforting touch to clinical environments at a critical and sensitive time.

Beyond supporting patients and families, the West Suffolk Blanketeers also foster a strong sense of community and wellbeing among members, creating a supportive social network built around kindness and shared experience. Now approaching their seventh anniversary, the group continues to make a meaningful difference to countless individuals.

Through kindness, generosity and sustained commitment, Jennie and the West Suffolk Blanketeers have created a simple yet profoundly impactful initiative, bringing comfort, dignity and human connection to end-of-life care.