HospiceUK

2025 Hospice Technology Maturity Report

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Foreword

Gavin Mcdonald, CEO, Social Sync

Hospices sit at the heart of our communities. They show people dignity, care and humanity at the hardest moments of life. So when this Hospice Technology Maturity Report lays out the challenges the sector faces, it's not a criticism. It's a reminder of the weight hospices carry, and how much more they could do with the right tools and support.

What stands out in these findings is a sector that knows what it wants from digital, but doesn't always have the time, skills or connected systems to get there. Teams are stretched. Data sits in different places. Progress can be slow and uneven. Anyone who has worked in fundraising or operations will recognise that picture immediately.

Yet there's a real sense of momentum too. Hospices are planning more confidently, investing where they can, and trying to build digital infrastructure that matches the quality of the care they provide. It's honest, patient work. It deserves recognition.

At Social Sync, we sponsored this report because we believe technology should lighten the load, not add to it. Good systems free teams to focus on people. Good data helps supporters feel seen. And good journeys remove friction so communities can give in the way they want to. None of this is about shiny innovation for its own sake, it's about strengthening the human relationships that make hospice care possible.

The sector is ready for steady, meaningful change. Not a grand leap, but practical steps that make daily work easier and the supporter experience better. Our hope is that this report gives hospice leaders clarity, confidence and a sense of shared direction.

You're not doing this alone. And with the right partnerships, digital can become less of a burden and more of a silent enabler in the background, helping you continue the extraordinary work you already do.

Gavin

Executive summary

Digital technology that underpins the efficient and effective use of resources is crucial to ensuring hospice sustainability. Technology is continually evolving, bringing tremendous opportunities as well as challenges.

Hospice UK aims to support hospices to access digital technologies and skills to streamline and strengthen their ways of working. We are doing this by building a community of people interested in hospice technology to share, learn and move forwards together. The Hospice UK Technology Maturity Assessment is a survey that helps hospices to understand their current position on their digital transformation journey. This report summarises our findings from 2025.

Hospice UK conducted its first Technology Maturity Assessment survey of members in 2024. Our 2025 survey reveals continued efforts by hospices to advance their digital maturity despite a challenging operating environment. We deliberately asked similar questions in 2025, so that progress could be compared over time. This year's key themes continued to be strategic leadership, resources, digital skills, and the implementation of technology change projects.

All hospices are at different stages in their digital transformation journeys. This year's report is encouraging, with signs of progress in many areas. Overall, there are a higher proportion of hospices in more advanced stages of digital maturity than last year. However, challenges such as budget constraints, skills gaps, and managing change persist.

This report benefits three main groups within our community:

- Hospices will learn how they compare to other hospice members, which can help with planning and prioritisation. In addition to this summary report, participating hospices receive a bespoke report showing their position compared with others.
- Hospice UK will use the insights to support members with digital transformation including providing relevant content for our Hospice Technology Leaders Network and the Hospice UK website.
- Technology suppliers will be able to offer the sector more tailored services.

Key findings and recommendations

Our key findings show that hospices:

- Are more likely to have a technology plan now than in 2024, although only half of plans are regularly reviewed by senior managers or the Board;
- Are more likely to be investing in digital improvements this year, with 79% making use of the NHS England Capital Grant funding for technology projects;
- Remain focused on building solid digital foundations, including moving to the cloud and integrating systems, with cyber security a top priority. AI is higher on the agenda this year;
- Find digital skills development to be a stubborn challenge;
- With larger budgets and larger teams are not necessarily more digitally advanced.

We recommend that all hospices:

Develop and regularly review technology plans

Create a plan with clear, measurable goals and ensure the plan is reviewed regularly at Board or Senior Management level to drive progress and maintain oversight.

Work collaboratively to develop skills

Sharing resources and best practice with other hospices regionally or nationally may help overcome the stubborn challenge of digital skills development.

Recruit with digital in mind

Increase the expectations for digital skills in job descriptions and during recruitment, then provide comprehensive IT induction and ongoing training for all colleagues and volunteers to build confidence and capability.

Engage with suppliers

Proactive engagement with technology suppliers may lead to better integration between systems that are widely used in the sector. Improved integration increases operational efficiency and reduces data silos.

Strengthen change management

Consider introducing dedicated project or change management roles to support digital transformation. Effective change management is essential for delivering technology projects on time and within scope.

Acknowledgements

Hospice UK would like to thank SocialSync.io for their generous support of this report.

We thank all the hospices who participated in the Technology Maturity Assessment in 2025 and in 2024.

We also thank members of the Hospice UK Technology Leaders Network, for providing their perspectives and context to our initial findings.

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Methodology

Summary

The Technology Maturity Assessment is a bespoke survey tool that hospices can use to understand their current position and set priorities for the future.

The Hospice UK Technology Maturity Assessment has been co-designed with member hospices and is tailored to the questions most regularly asked by members. It also considers topics covered in other, widely available, maturity assessments. The survey leans towards questions around infrastructure and systems, rather than websites, online services or data.

The survey collected insights on strategic alignment of technology initiatives. It collected information about current systems, resources and structures that enable hospices to compare and contrast their approach to others in the sector. The survey also gathered subjective and contextual information about technology adoption priorities, challenges and opportunities.

The survey was distributed to senior managers of Hospice UK member hospices during the summer of 2025. Hospices gain best value from the Assessment when colleagues from across the organisation come together to discuss and debate the answers to the questions. Such discussion is, in itself, a useful planning and prioritising exercise for the hospice. In-depth knowledge of the operational IT environment was needed to answer some questions such as technologies in use and numbers of users. Responses were analysed to identify trends, challenges, and opportunities. The survey questions were grouped into themes to facilitate analysis.

Response rate

There are 209 members of Hospice UK (as of October 2025):

- 64 hospices (31% of the total) took part in the survey this year, compared to 73 (35%) in 2024.
- 34 hospices (16%) took part in both years.

Considerations

The participation rate means we cannot draw clear conclusions or make confident assumptions for the sector as a whole. It is possible that those that participated were more actively engaged with technology projects and discussions, which could skew the results to suggest that all hospices are further forward than they are. However, the quantitative survey data supports the qualitative information we gather from speaking with member hospices regularly.

In terms of representation, we had a slightly higher response rate from the largest hospices ('Over £8m') and a slightly lower response rate from the smallest hospices ('Under £2m'). This means that larger hospices are over-represented and smaller hospices are under-represented in the data.

Overall, the response rate and representation were expected. They are, perhaps, reflective of the capacity issues that hospices face in being able to engage with activities beyond 'the day job'. Engaging with a technology assessment survey is likely to be particularly challenging for those with fewer in-house technical staff members.

Hospice profiles

Summary

Hospices vary significantly in size and structure. This section outlines the organisational characteristics of participating hospices and helps to set the context for findings throughout this report.

Throughout this report, our analysis uses two main dimensions for comparison purposes:

- Stage of maturity – A self-declared, subjective indication of the level of digital maturity in one of four categories: 'Curious', 'Starting Out', 'Advancing' and 'Advanced', with 'Curious' being the lowest and 'Advanced' being the highest.

- Size of hospice – A measure of the level of financial expenditure of each hospice, in one of four groupings: 'Under £2million', 'Over £2m, under £5m', 'Over £5m, under £8m', 'Over £8m'. 'Smaller' hospices are those with lower expenditure, with 'Larger' hospices being those with the higher expenditures.

Analysis

As a single high-level indicator of digital maturity, hospices were asked to self-assess their current stage of digital maturity.

- 5% said they were 'Curious' – the lowest level of maturity.

- 9% said they were 'Starting out'.

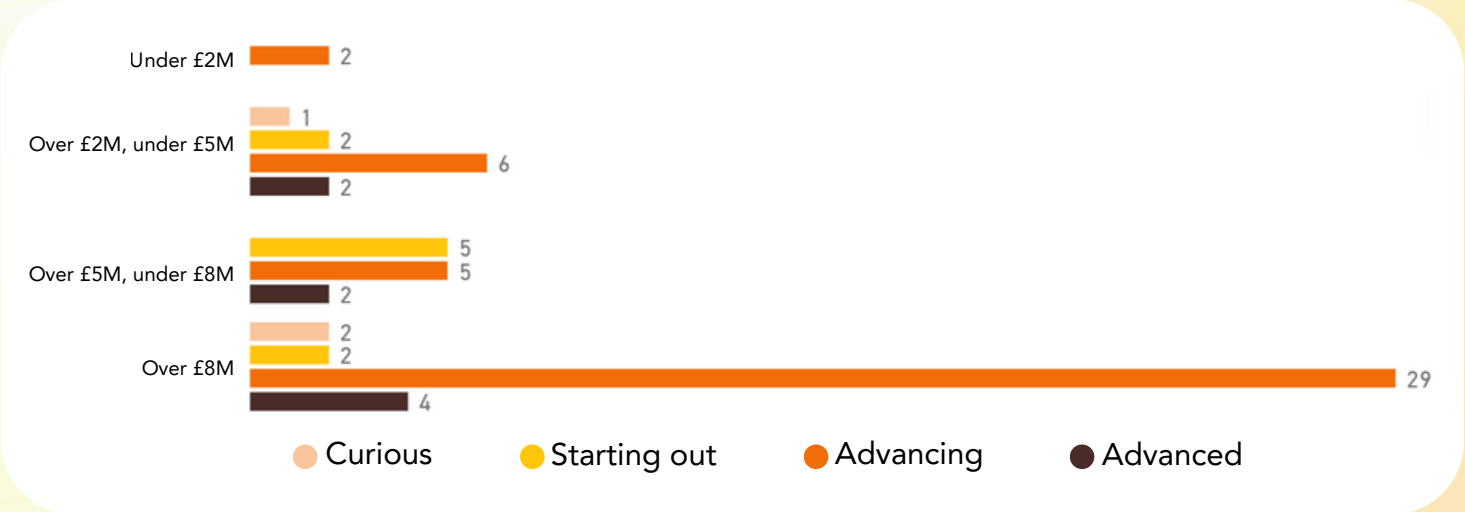
- 68% said they were 'Advancing'.

- 13% said they were 'Advanced' – the highest level of maturity.

This represents a shift towards higher levels of digital maturity compared to 2024, where 4% were 'Curious', 32% 'Starting out', 55% 'Advancing' and 10% 'Advanced'.

Looking at the stage of maturity by hospice size (based on expenditure value), 'Advancing' is most common stage of maturity in all sizes of hospice. Larger hospices are more likely to be at the 'Advancing' stage of maturity.

Stage and hospice size (expenditure)



Most participating hospices were in the largest expenditure category (Over £8m), making up 37 out of the 64 (58%). Geographically, there are more hospices in England than Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and therefore the number of participants was higher in England. Within England, some regions had much lower levels of participation than others, which potentially skews regional differences.

In 2024, we compared the Hospice Technology Maturity Assessment findings to the charity sector as a whole[1]. We found that hospices were slightly behind other charities in their digital transformation journeys, for example:

- Other charities were further ahead than hospices in migrating to the cloud (60% of hospices compared to 70% of charities).
- Hospices were focused on integrating business systems to improve operational efficiency, which other charities were more likely to have completed this process (64% of hospices compared to 50% of charities).
- Hospices lagged behind charities in planning to incorporate AI and machine learning (43% of hospices compared to 60% of charities).

However, there were positives with a similar proportion of hospices and other charities focusing on cyber security improvements, improving websites and digital supporter journeys. Hospices were slightly ahead of other charities in their focus on leveraging data for informed decision making (79% of hospices compared to 65% of charities).

The increase in self-assessed digital maturity levels could be considered a proxy indicator of the confidence and optimism that hospices have in their overall approach to technology. The feeling of moving forward suggests that hospices believe they are improving, and have a good understanding of their direction. There remains a focus on establishing solid foundations, such as security, modernising infrastructure, and integrating systems.

Strategy and leadership

Summary

This section explores hospices' strategic approaches to technology, including leadership, planning and priority areas. The data highlights the importance of having a clear plan and reviewing it regularly.

Analysis

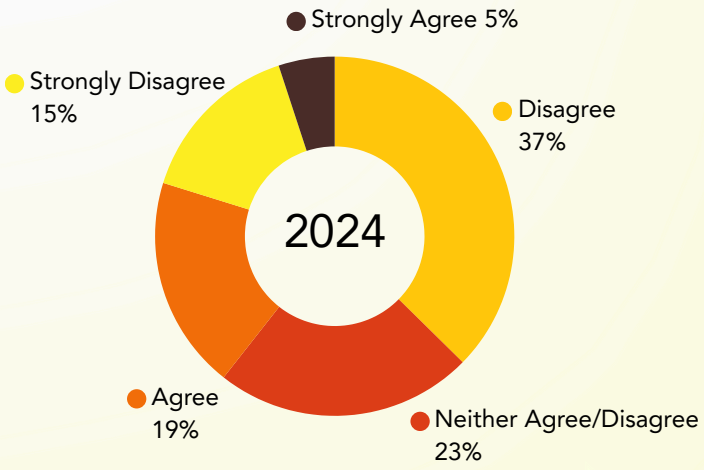
Leadership was an area highlighted for improvement in our 2024 report[2]. In 2025, 81% of hospices say that their leaders understand how technology can improve what the organisation does, and 76% of hospices say that digital is a higher priority now than in the last year, which is a 15% increase from 2024.

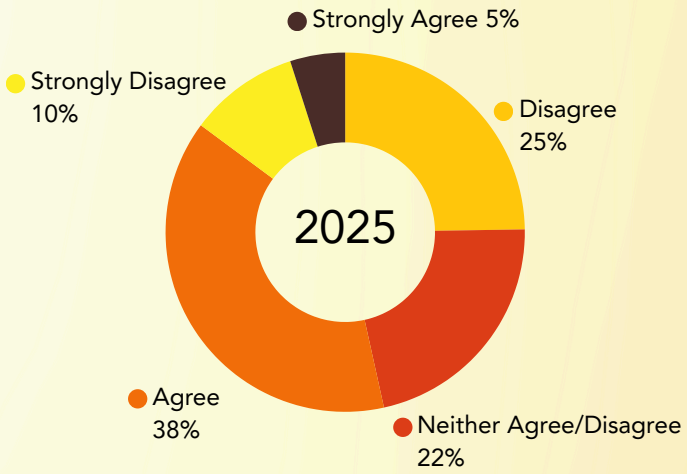
Despite digital being more of a priority and leaders understanding how technology can improve their work, less than half of hospices (43%) have a clearly documented plan for technology with defined, measurable goals, which is well understood by everyone. More advanced and larger hospices are more likely to have a plan.

This is a considerable improvement from 23% in 2024, but the lack of a clear plan correlates directly to a lower level of maturity. Compounding the challenge, only half of hospices with a plan review their technology plans regularly at Board (48%) or Senior Management level (51%). These figures are unchanged since 2024. Again, more advanced and larger hospices are more likely to be reviewing their plans regularly.

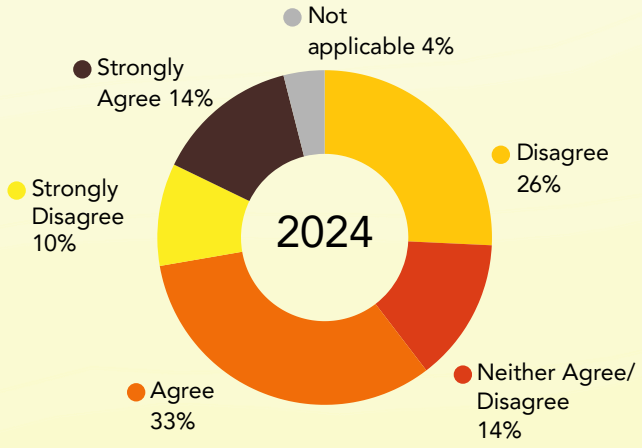
Adding a regular review, perhaps every six months, to a Board or Senior Management meeting would show leadership support for digital transformation whilst also providing oversight to help with prioritisation and resourcing.

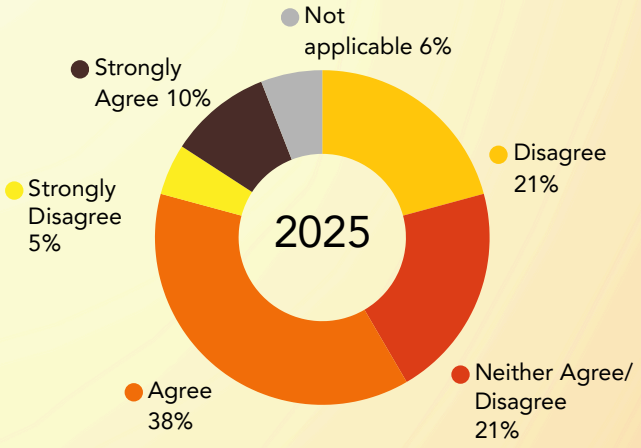
We have a clearly documented strategy/plan for technology with defines, measurable goals, which is well understood by everyone in the organisation.





We review our technology strategy/plan at Board/Committee level regularly.

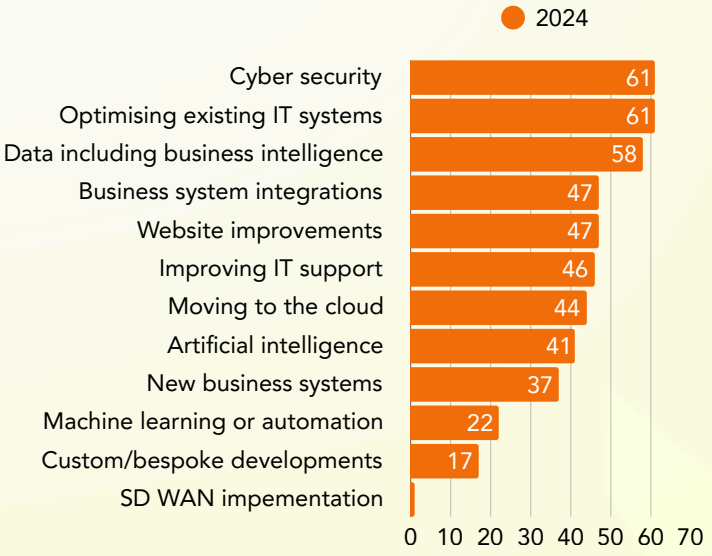


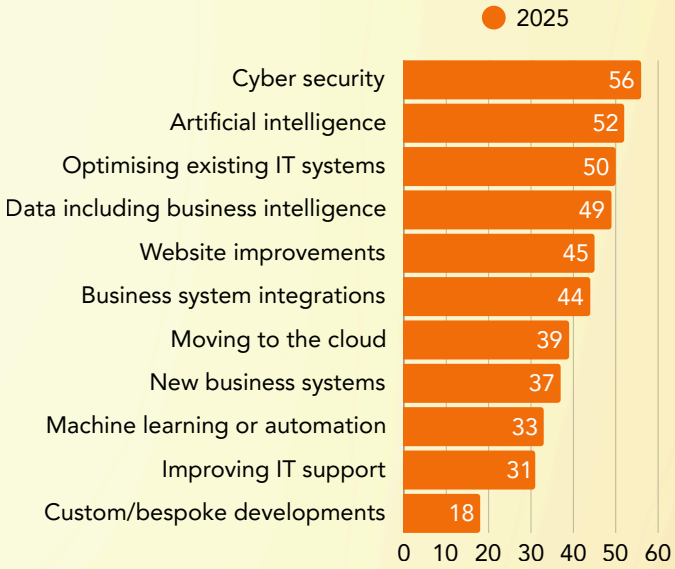


Hospices are planning improvements in a broad range of areas, and 57% feel they have a clear understanding of their current technology position. Cyber security continues to be the top priority for hospices future plans in 2025, as it was in 2024. When considering which departments are most in need of investment, patient care (or service delivery) is the main focus for most hospices.

AI is a much higher priority than in 2024, but is perhaps being seen as the next step for many hospices who are still working on optimising their current systems, making the most of their data, improving websites and integrations. However, only 29% of hospices feel they have adequate resources to support their technology plans, which is slightly lower than in 2024.

Which of these are included in your future technology strategy/plans?





Effective change management is a challenge for hospices. Our survey found that 75% of hospices do not have project management resources dedicated to their digital transformation projects. This supports our findings from speaking to hospices, where change facilitation roles such as Project Manager, Business Analyst, System/Solution Architect, Change or Transition Managers are rarely found in our sector. It is often the technically focused IT team that are tasked with delivering the change, perhaps supported by a trainer.

Despite what appears to be a gap, 79% of hospices mostly or usually find their technology projects deliver the expected scope, on time and on budget.

Considering all the priority areas collectively shows a sector prioritising risk management and trying to get current systems to work well. This focus on establishing good foundations will be essential for a future which uses technology and data to gain strategic benefits such as efficiency, effectiveness and innovation. Arguably, these focus areas are typical of organisations at the 'Advancing' stage of digital maturity, where 68% of hospices consider themselves to be at.

Resources and budget

Summary

This section examines technology expenditure in more detail, exploring technology team sizes, budgets and investment priorities. The data highlights the importance of tailoring digital plans based on capacity and resource availability.

Analysis

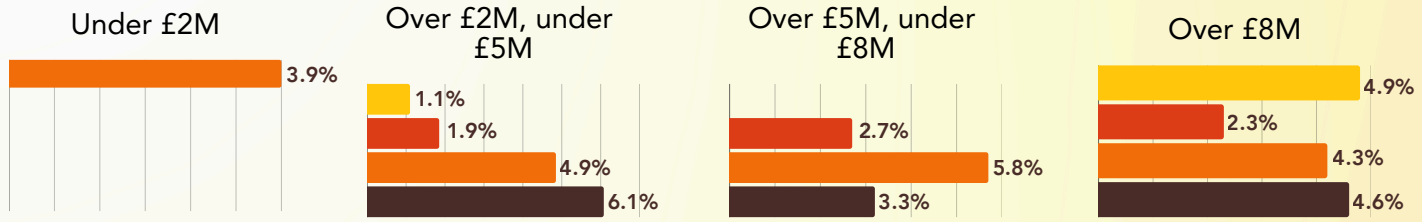
Larger hospices employ larger teams. The largest hospices (Over £8m) employ an average of eight full time equivalent employees (FTE) directly in technology roles, compared to three FTE in the 'Over £5m, under £8m' category, one FTE in the 'Over £2m, under £5m' category and zero FTE in the smallest hospices. Most hospices outsource some of their IT services, and this suggests that the smallest hospices are most reliant on third-party suppliers. From talking to smaller hospices, we know that many non-specialists are tasked with overseeing IT as part of their role in operations, facilities, or finance.

More digitally mature hospices also employ larger teams. Those at the 'Advanced' stage employ an average of seven FTE directly in digital roles, reducing to six FTE at 'Advancing', two FTE at 'Starting out', and three FTE at the 'Curious' stage.

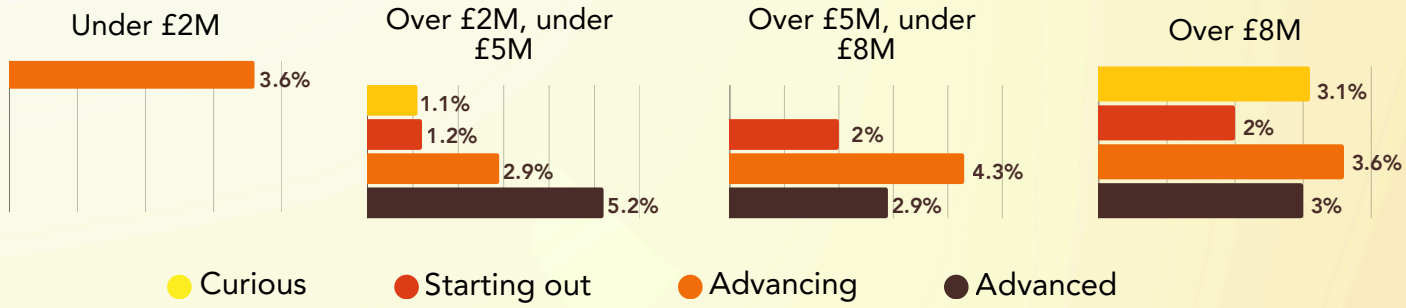
The ratio of technology budgets to the overall hospice size suggests that those at lower levels of maturity are spending less in percentage terms, than those at more advanced stages, regardless of the overall hospice size. 'Advancing' and 'Advanced' hospices are spending more than 4% of their total expenditure, compared with 2% for those at 'Curious' or 'Starting Out' stages. Interestingly, larger hospices at the 'Curious' stage are spending almost 5% of their total expenditure, which is slightly more than larger hospices at 'Advanced' or 'Advancing' stages.

Considering budgets alongside the size of internal digital teams suggests that larger budgets and larger teams don't necessarily mean a more advanced level of digital maturity. This finding requires deeper exploration to understand, because it suggests that there are opportunities to improve digital maturity without necessarily spending more.

Total tech budget to total expenditure ratio

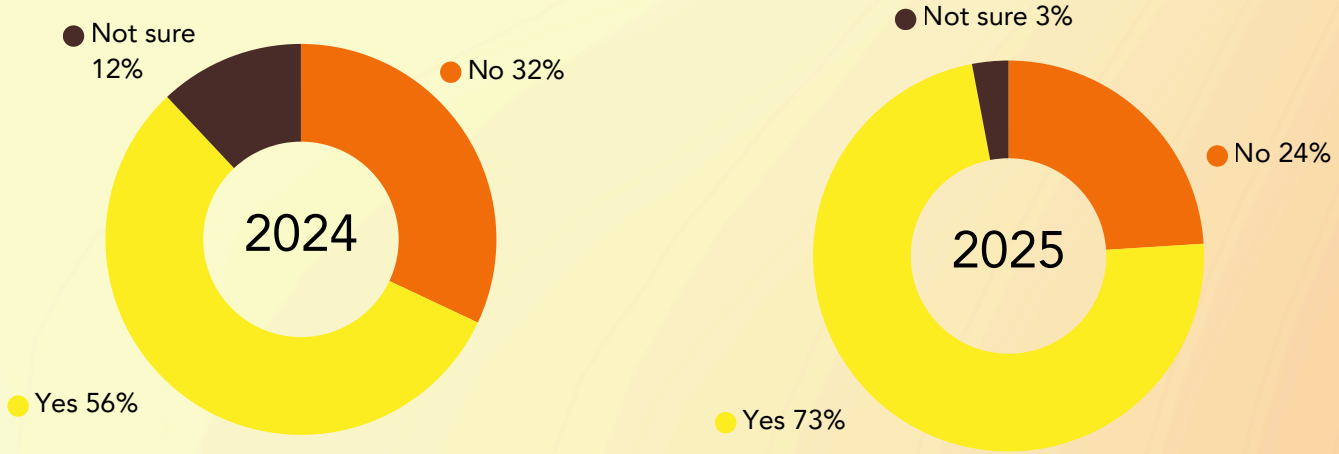


Total tech budget to total expenditure ratio



Budget allocation trends reveal a growing awareness of the need for sustained investment in technology. However, many hospices still face constraints that limit their ability to implement strategic initiatives. It was encouraging to find that 79% of hospices were investing some of the NHS England capital funding first announced by the UK Government in late 2024[3].

We are investing more money into technology improvements this year than inprevious years (in addition to inflationary increase)



Technical expertise

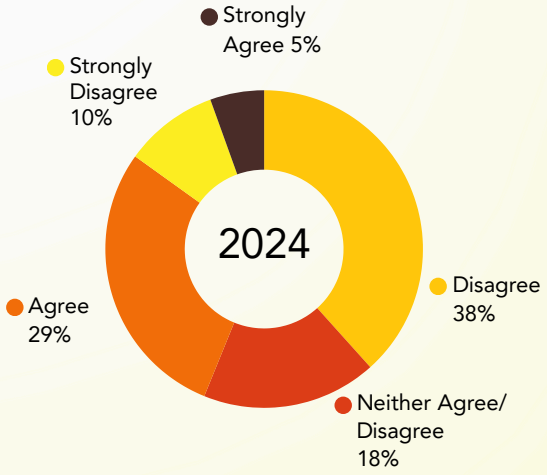
Summary

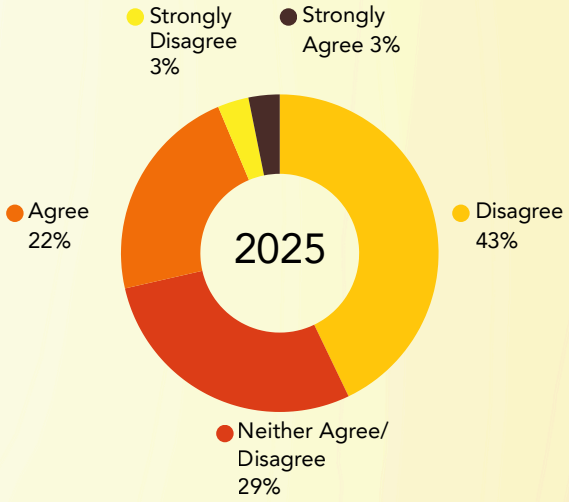
This section considers the skills and capabilities required for improved digital maturity. Our findings show some complexities around digital skills development, with a variety of initiatives needed to address the challenges.

Analysis

Hospices often see digital skills as an area for improvement, despite most having some kind of learning and development offer in place. Almost half of hospices (46%) do not feel they have the right skills and capabilities to maximise their use of technology, which is slightly lower than in 2024. Those hospices that are more advanced are more likely to feel they have the skills, but there was no pattern in the data for larger or smaller hospices, suggesting that budget in itself is not a factor when it comes to skills.

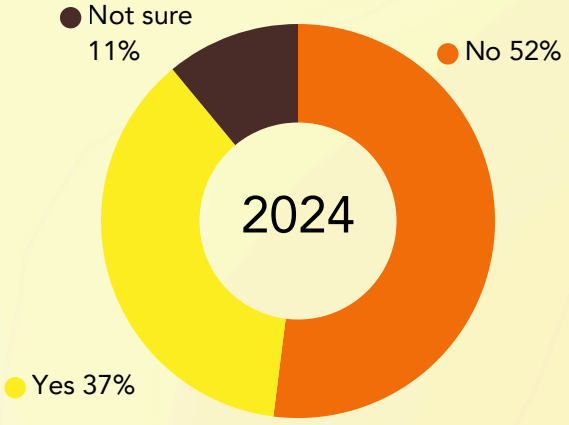
We have the right skills and capabilities to maximise our use of technology

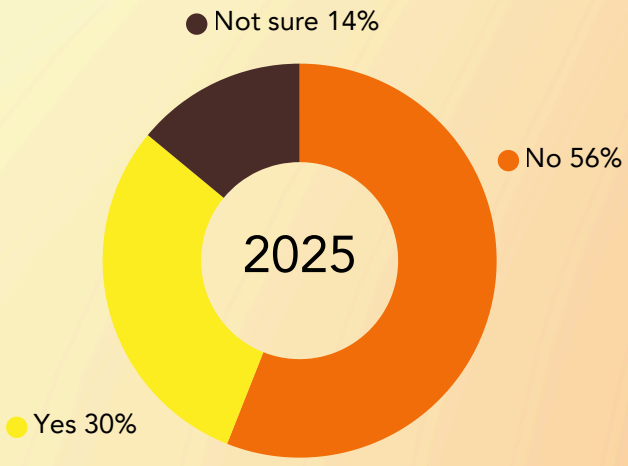




Only 13% of hospices agree that their colleagues and volunteers are confident users of technology, with 57% disagreeing. These proportions are identical in 2025 compared to 2024. Less than half of hospices (40%) expect new recruits in all roles to have strong technology skills, which is a slight increase from 36% in 2024. Almost two-thirds (65%) of hospices carry out an IT induction to show new recruits how to use the tools needed for their job. There was no clear pattern relating to either the hospice's stage of digital maturity or size in these findings. Less than a third (30%) of hospices give their key staff enough time to participate in technology projects, with more advanced hospices more likely to give time.

Do you make sure key internal staff have enough time to participate in IT projects (e.g. by allocating additional resources for day to day tasks)?





Developing digital skills remains a stubborn challenge for the sector, and on the surface there seems to be a lack of progress. But, this is a complex area. Many hospices are investing in skills development programmes, and there are other influencing factors, including the current state of the hospice's systems and infrastructure. The fact that technology is ever evolving makes it difficult to maintain up-to-date skills.

Our findings suggest a number of areas for consideration. Hospices could increase the expectation for new recruits to have strong digital skills, perhaps by including this in job descriptions and adverts, and assessing skills during recruitment. As technology becomes increasingly embedded in everyday life, we can expect colleagues and volunteers to bring improved skills and confidence with technology to work. Hospices are likely to continue to invest in digital skills development programmes, although this could be offered more widely, including providing access to learning at induction. Giving time for colleagues to participate in IT projects, particularly training, but perhaps also testing or solution design, would build familiarity and confidence. Building the confidence to engage with any technology may be as important as training colleagues in how to use specific systems.

There are, of course, many challenges to making these improvements, from capacity and funding challenges to the overall attractiveness of the hospice sector to prospective employees. A collaborative approach with groups of hospices regionally or nationally, perhaps with support from third-parties may provide opportunities to collectively tackle this persistent challenge.

Reflecting the focus on risk management and compliance, 90% of hospices are providing colleagues and volunteers with regular data protection and information security training. Just over half of hospices (53%) hold a cyber security accreditation such as Cyber Essentials[4].

Where hospices have in-house technical resources, they are more likely to be investing in regular training to maintain those skills if they are at a more advanced stage of digital maturity regardless of hospice size. Technical roles in our sector could be attractive to potential employees if they can expect regular training and development.

Current IT landscape

Summary

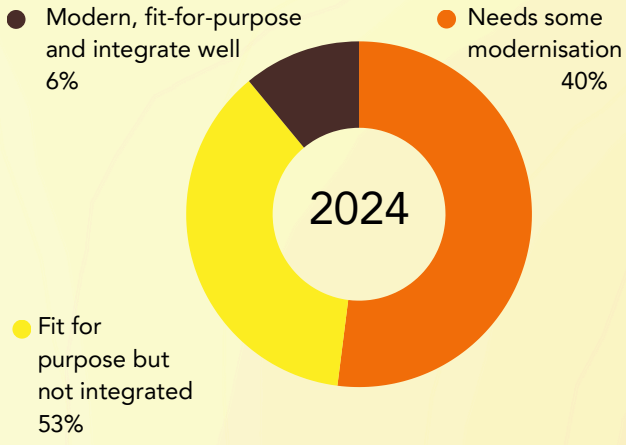
This section provides information about which systems are in use within the sector (Finance, CRM, Retail, Patient Management, HR etc.). Having access to this information may be helpful for hospices when considering their future technology roadmap.

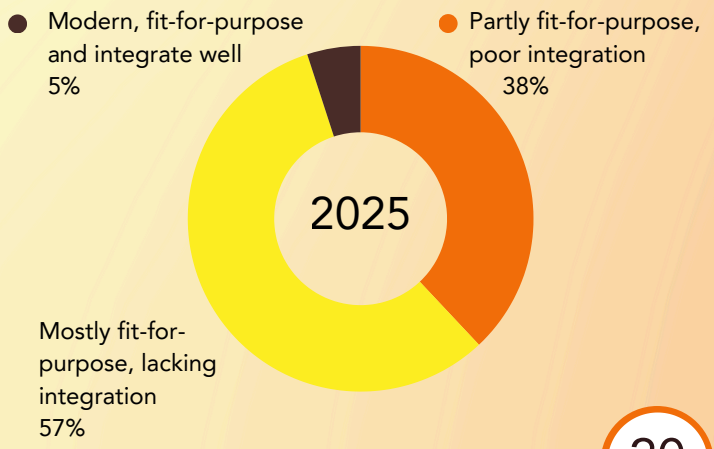
Analysis - Business Systems

The actual systems in use by hospices have not changed significantly since 2024. This suggests a stable market, though there are signs of products used in other sectors being adopted by hospices.

Hospices were asked for an overall assessment of their business systems. Over half (57%) said they were 'mostly fit for purpose, though lacking integration', and 38% said they were 'partly fit for purpose with poor integration'. Just 5% said their systems were 'fit for purpose and integrated well'. More advanced hospices were more likely to say that their systems were fit for purpose. Integration often requires in-house colleagues to work with multiple providers to establish, test and maintain integrations, which is challenging with small in-house teams. Integration is an area where suppliers could add significant value to the hospice sector.

Overall, which statement describes your business database systems? (E.g. CRM, Finance, HR, Patient Management, Retail)





There are few options for patient management solutions, and the need to interact with NHS or other health providers often leads hospices towards a particular solution. SystmOne is the most widely used solution, followed by EMIS, with The Care Database (developed by a children's hospice) being adopted by a small but growing number of hospices, mostly children's hospices. Whilst hospices are often frustrated by their current systems, there is little real competition beyond these providers. Hospices are relatively small compared to other healthcare organisations which use these solutions , meaning that hospices can feel overlooked when it comes to developments or innovations within the systems that could benefit them.

The most commonly used Finance system is Sage, which more than half of hospices use. Microsoft Business Central is more likely to be used by larger hospices and those at a more advanced level of technological maturity, though it is still much lower than Sage usage. Behind these are Exchequer, IRIS, Xero and Access Financials/Dimensions.

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is a much more competitive space, with no system used significantly more than others. The main CRM systems in use are Donorfy, Beacon, Access Charity CRM, Microsoft Dynamics, and to a slightly lesser extent Salesforce and Raiser's Edge/NXT. Most hospices continue to rely on spreadsheets, and many consider products such as Mailchimp vital to their interactions with supporters.

There is a good level of competition with retail systems, where the most widely used are Kudos, Cybertill, Chariot and Eproductive. Although small, our survey data shows a move towards tools more commonly associated with online retail such as Shopify.

Human resource information systems (HRIS) are another competitive area. The main systems in use by hospices are IRIS Cascade, CIPHR, and Access Select/People HR, although there are many more in this space. The survey data shows that HRIS are often complemented with learning and development solutions such as Bluestream and rostering tools such as Bright. However, from our discussions with hospices, we know that many hospices find rostering a particularly challenging area and often resort to spreadsheets.

One other business systems area of note is compliance and governance where the most widely used tool is Vantage.

Analysis - Infrastructure

The underlying infrastructure position is positive, with 86% of hospices saying their infrastructure is fit for purpose or mostly fit for purpose. Whilst 'Advanced' hospices are more likely to say their infrastructure is fit for purpose (63% of 'Advanced'), less than a third (29%) of larger hospices said this. Again, this suggests that the larger budgets available to larger hospices do not necessarily lead to a better quality of IT implementation.

All hospices are moving towards using cloud infrastructure, rather than maintaining their own, with 77% either fully or mostly cloud based, with some legacy systems 'on-premise' (operating on physical servers at the hospice or hosted in a data centre). This has not changed significantly since 2024, perhaps suggesting that those legacy 'on-premise' systems are more challenging to move to the cloud.

Microsoft 365 is used by nearly all hospices, with only one hospice reporting use of Google Workspace. Some hospices are using slightly older versions of Microsoft Office, with legacy versions of back-office services such as Microsoft Exchange email. Most hospices are using Microsoft SharePoint and OneDrive for their file storage as they adopt cloud services.

Appendix – Connect and reflect

A selection of resources and support for hospices.

Hospice UK Technology Leaders Network

A community of people leading technology initiatives or operations in hospices.
A tailored report is produced for each hospice that participated in the Technology Maturity Assessment survey, showing their exact position compared to other participating hospices. Further details, including data sets, are made available via the Hospice UK Technology Leaders Network.

The Network hosts an annual conference bringing together hospice leaders and colleagues from across end-of-life care sector who are actively seeking tech solutions to better serve patients and families.

Hospice UK. Innovation hub

Support, development opportunities, resources, guidance and access to networks and communities for people working in palliative and end of life care.

Hospice UK. 2024 hospice technology maturity survey report.

Hospice UK. Technology and digital developments

An overview of resources to support our members in thinking strategically about technological development and sharing learning.

Footnotes

[1] **Hospice UK.** Hospice technology maturity survey: how does the hospice sector compare to other charities?. [Online] Hospice UK. Available at: https://www.hospiceuk.org/innovation-hub/support-for-your-role/non-clinical-resources/tech-maturity

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[3] **Department of Health & Social Care.** Biggest investment into hospices in a generation. [Press release] 2024 Dec 19. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/biggest-investment-into-hospices-in-a-generation

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