

“My job as a Hospice at Home nurse has led me to meet lots of interesting and special people and has taken me to a variety of homes.

However, I think all of these were eclipsed in 2012 when I was asked to look after a gentleman who wished to die at home – in his shed.

I have to admit to some trepidation at the prospect. My imagination ran wild...a shed! How could it work and how could I possibly look after someone until their death within what I perceived to be the ‘confines’ of a wooden shed?

I duly headed out on my first night and walked down the garden path...

Wow! The shed was no ordinary shed, but three separate sheds all joined together. It was obvious this was a place for spending time in because it had a desk, CD player, a kettle, mugs, even a toaster and all around the room there were instruments – guitars of various sizes, a saxophone and many others.

I found my patient settled in a small but perfectly adequate bed by a large window and door overlooking the garden, from where he could also see the house.

This was no shed – it was a fully-insulated, high-ceilinged room that was light and airy but warm and cosy too. There was muted lighting and scented candles, French jazz playing on the CD and taking pride of place was a full-sized homemade model railway.

It was obvious this was a well-loved, well-used space – somewhere he had come every day to either listen to music, watch a film on his full-sized TV or ‘jam’ with his mates into the small hours of the morning.

No wonder he wanted to stay put...and that’s what he did. He stayed in his shed, with family and friends coming and going, listening to music, his train going around on its tracks with the sound of the brook at the end of the garden trickling away. He talked a little and slept a lot.

He died very peacefully there a week later, with the lights of his railway, his music and candles and with his wonderful family around him.”

Lynda Edwards, Hospice at Home nurse

