



Still Working, Still Caring



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Front cover image: Hospice Nurses
Photo credit: David Bartholomew



AGM

This year the AGM will be run online. It will be held on **Tuesday 8th December at 6.00pm**, via Microsoft Teams. If you would like to join, please contact Amy Dedman, Executive Assistant, on **01892 820552** or **amy.dedman@hospiceintheweald.org.uk**

Receive Hospice News by email

We also send Hospice News by email. If you would like to update your contact preferences to reflect this, please let us know by:

- Adding your email address to the 'sign up to receive our newsletter' link on the homepage of our website hospiceintheweald.org.uk
- Contacting Tor Edwards – Head of Communications, on 01892 820502 or tor.edwards@hospiceintheweald.org.uk

Sending Hospice News by email is more cost effective than posting hard copies, and therefore helps us to make the best possible use of funds to ensure value for money. It also reduces the number of hard copies we print, therefore reducing our impact on the environment.

We are committed to minimising our impact on the environment and so both Hospice News and the plastic it is delivered in are recyclable.

Still Working, Still Caring Rob Woolley, Chief Executive

As the COVID pandemic continues, this edition of Hospice News celebrates our nurses. Without them, and our other nursing staff, we simply could not continue to deliver outstanding care.

Throughout the first and second national lockdowns, and the rest of the pandemic, Hospice in the Weald has continued to care for people living with a terminal illness and those important to them. We will continue to be here, no matter what, for the local people who need us.

In the last six months we have seen more deaths than at any other time in the history of Hospice in the Weald. Our nurses have worked harder than ever during this time. They have donned PPE, been tested for COVID, been at times worried or tired, and busier than they have ever been. Above all, they have showed courage and kindness throughout all of these challenges. They have put people living with a terminal illness and those important to them first, despite all of the additional pressures the pandemic has caused. They have kept smiling no matter what.

We have had to recruit more nurses throughout the pandemic. They are the bedrock of what we do and vital in ensuring every single patient and family member gets the individualised Hospice palliative care they need. However, recruiting more nurses has meant an increase in our costs, at a time when our charity shops are closed and many fundraising events have had to be cancelled.

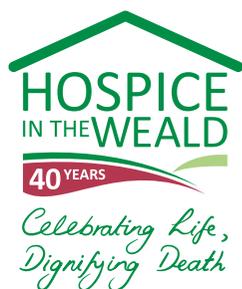


Rob Woolley, CEO

So, in this edition of Hospice News we are launching our Fund a Nurse appeal and we hope that you will get involved in any way that you can. You can read more about this on page 8.

We hear from some of our nurses in this edition. Ben on page 4, and Kerry on page 12. Nurses just like them have kept our Services open despite the impacts of COVID. We will be here, caring for those who need us, for as long as the pandemic lasts and beyond. It is their commitment that makes this possible. You can read more about our response to COVID on page 7.

As we move towards Christmas, we face the possibility that we may not be able to come together with our families and enjoy our own social occasions as we normally would. Despite this and the countless hardships throughout the year, our nurses will be working this Christmas, day and night, as they do every year. They will be here, with a smile, for if ever and when ever your family may need them. Please spare them a thought this Christmas and support our Fund a Nurse appeal if you can.



Hospice in the Weald, Maidstone Road,
Pembury, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 4TA
www.hospiceintheweald.org.uk



Registered Charity No. 280276





Ben's story

Ben with Sarah

Ben began his Hospice in the Weald career as a volunteer nurse. As a student at Canterbury Christchurch University, he was encouraged to volunteer to aid his learning, but he also wanted to make a positive contribution to his local community. One year on, Ben is now a qualified Staff Nurse, working on the In-Patient Ward in Pembury. Here Ben describes what he's learned so far, and how COVID has influenced his experiences.

According to Ben, no day in the life of a Hospice in the Weald nurse is ever exactly the same as the last! He explains how most days involve "spending time and chatting with the patients, which is something I really enjoy. I particularly love to take patients around the Hospice gardens next to the Ward, especially during the warm sunny weather. The gardens are so peaceful and you can really enjoy the sunshine. On a normal day I'd also be liaising with doctors and staff members across the Ward, and the chaplain on a daily basis, to keep them updated on the well-being of the patients. It's all about working together to make sure each patient or family has what they need."

"I really love seeing patients make good use of the Hospice Day Service as well,

where they can take part in many different activities such as creative arts or music. Every person is unique. It's such a shame that Hospice Day Service is closed at the moment due to lockdown, but it will be back open again as soon as possible."

Ben explains he has had a very positive experience working with his fellow nurses and Hospice in the Weald colleagues: "Everyone has always been very welcoming and encouraging, right from the start. There is no such thing as a silly question, and I really enjoy working with my colleagues, including fellow nurses. The team really care about your personal development and are happy to teach and help you in your working journey, which makes such a big difference to you and your experience as a nurse. I've learned so much from my colleagues."

"One patient I particularly remember is a lady called Sarah. You might remember her story, which we shared last year. When I asked Sarah about the things she wished she could do before she became terminally ill, she said she would have liked to have gone to a spa. The whole team pulled together across the Hospice to make that happen for Sarah and her family. The Summer house in the Hospice Gardens was transformed into a wonderful spa!"

"This was a really emotional day for me too. I was so proud to be a part of it, especially when we started to play spa music and all sat together. It was the most emotional I have felt at work, but this was a very rewarding and positive moment in my career as a nurse. The point was to help Sarah's family treasure memories forever, but I will too really. Being able to do that for families is what the Hospice is all about."

"It was particularly special because I also cared for Sarah while training for my student qualification, and she saw me learn, grow and develop in the process. We become quite close to patients if that is what they want – not everyone does. But Sarah was very open. She even sent me a congratulations card when I finally got my qualification. I will never forget this special and emotional moment."

"For Sarah to take the time to congratulate me, when she had so much going on for herself and her family, meant a lot. It's difficult to put into words what it means to work with people with a terminal illness.

When asked what advice he would give to any prospective nurses, or to anyone who is considering working as a nurse at Hospice in the Weald, Ben's response was simple: "Go for it! It's a lovely place to work, with plenty of opportunities for development and a very strong network of support."

Being able to make a positive impact on someone's life, at one of the most difficult times, is such an amazing feeling. Even if those impacts are small, they are so important. I saw that whilst I was volunteering at the Hospice and still doing my training. To learn that so early will shape my nursing career."

"I also feel really proud that we have been here, caring for patients, throughout the COVID pandemic. It's important that people know we are still here for them."

When asked what advice he would give to any prospective nurses, or to anyone who is considering working as a nurse at Hospice in the Weald, Ben's response was simple: "Go for it! It's a lovely place to work, with plenty of opportunities for development and a very strong network of support. There is lots of support from everyone who works here. There are not a lot of places like Hospice in the Weald that will provide this much support for their workforce. Hospice in the Weald staff don't just care for the patients and their families, they care about you as a nurse as well!"

Paul Madden, Care Director at Hospice in the Weald, adds "We are so proud of Ben and all that he has achieved since starting work with us. It's a privilege to help train the nurses of the future, and with nurses like Ben we know that the people in Kent and Sussex living with a terminal illness and those important to them are in good hands, and so is our future." To find out how you can support our nurses through our Fund a Nurse appeal please see page 8.

Light up a Life

The Light up a Life event is a wonderful opportunity to join others in remembering your loved one at Christmas. This year, with all the difficulties that COVID has brought, we know it is as important as ever to take time to celebrate the lives of your loved ones, and to come together to support each other.

We know that people really enjoy our Light up a Life service each year. Your safety is our first priority and so this year we are running the Light up a Life service online. We can all still come together, from the safety of our own homes, to celebrate the lives of loved ones and light a candle in their memory.

The event will be held through our website, at 5.30pm on 5th December. We hope that you will join us in remembering those important to you, in one of the most difficult years we have seen.



Light
UP A
Life

Online Service
5.30pm
5th December
at hospiceintheweald.org.uk

Please contact Elisha Bass, Relationship Fundraising Assistant, on **01892 820533** or Elisha.bass@hospiceintheweald.org.uk for more information.

Outstanding Hospice Care, No Matter What

Hospice in the Weald nurses are still caring for anyone who needs us. If you or your loved one needs Hospice care, be reassured that you will always get that care.



Our Services have remained open throughout the COVID pandemic, with some changes to keep our workforce, patients and those important to them safe. Now, more than ever, it is important that people living with terminal illness get the support they need.

We'll be here for local families for as long as the COVID pandemic lasts, and beyond.

This includes having access to a bed at the Hospice if you or your loved one may need it. We have 25 beds across our In-Patient Ward and Cottage Hospice. We realise that for many families, the idea of care in an in-patient setting during the pandemic seems risky. We want to reassure you that our infection prevention and control measures are robust and effective.

Cottage Hospice has been maintained as a COVID-free site throughout the pandemic, and will continue to be, to ensure patients who need a bed can still access the care they need.

We will care for COVID positive patients on the In-Patient Ward in Pembury, to ensure everyone has access to Hospice palliative care.

The challenges of living with a terminal illness don't stop during a pandemic. We will be here for all who need us, now and in the future.

Our staff and volunteers are still caring, and will ensure each and every person gets the outstanding Hospice palliative Care that is made possible by the generous support of people like you.

Hospice in the Weald has cared for local families facing terminal illness for the last 40 years. This won't stop now.

To access our Services, or find out more about our response to COVID, visit hospiceintheweald.org.uk

Fund a Nurse appeal

Julie remembers her mum, Janet, and shares what a difference Hospice nurses made to her family at the end of Janet's life.

"My Mum was an exceptional woman, she was intelligent, funny, caring and thoughtful, and someone you could always rely on for help and advice. She was also very strong-willed, and wasn't afraid to voice her opinion!

She was a very spiritual woman with a passion for astrology and all things to do with star signs. She studied for many years and was a bit of a specialist in her field. Throughout her life she did astrology charts for all her friends and family, and even the odd celebrity!

When Mum was diagnosed with terminal lung cancer we were totally determined to look after her ourselves. She had other complications too, which made treatment difficult. Mum was as tough as nails but had a heart of gold, and we really thought that us, her family, caring for her at home was the best possible option. Looking back, I was naive as to how quickly her condition would change, and how I could have accepted help earlier.

Having experienced the impacts of terminal illness, and the pressures this can bring, I would recommend to others to be as open minded as possible when it comes to looking after your loved one. For me, the emotional and physical impact was difficult to deal with without support. I wasn't prepared for the effects this would have on me and my family. Mum's needs were beyond what I could possibly deliver.

I would say to anyone in our situation, accept all the help you can get. That's what the Hospice is here for – and what a difference the nurses made to us.



When Mum came to the Hospice I was completely overwhelmed by the atmosphere of the place. The nurses went above and beyond to fulfil all her wishes. It was not like anything I had imagined, it was more like an extension of home, where the wishes of our family were put first.

This year, the Hospice are asking supporters like you to help fund a nurse, to make sure Hospice care is here for families like mine or yours.

Mum loved her food and was a fantastic cook. My son and daughter absolutely loved her homemade chips and desserts. I always remember as a child coming home from school to homemade pies and pasties, they were delicious! She was very generous with her food and we could never walk through the front door without her offering us a cake, some chocolate or a packet of crisps.

Christmas for our family was always all about the food!

We were so impressed when we arrived at the Hospice and Mum was offered something to eat. She really struggled with food at that point in her illness, and on asking the nurses what they had available, they said 'whatever you want'. We were so surprised; they even sourced her favourite ice-cream.

Mum had a great sense of humour, she was sharp; conversation with her was always interesting and she always enjoyed a good debate. We always laughed and saw the funny side of things, even when she was very poorly. This continued at the Hospice and she was able to laugh and joke with the nurses, and they played her favourite music on her iPad.

The care at the Hospice isn't just for the patient, they understand how important close family is too. We were all swept up in the warmth and care of the nurses. They were there for us long before Mum became a patient at the Ward, they helped us navigate through home care, medical treatment and finally admission to the Hospice. They also

guided me through the funeral and paperwork and are still reaching out to us now. They will be there for you the whole way through.

By supporting the Fund a Nurse appeal, you'll help more families get that ongoing support that I experienced from the Hospice nurses. I can't tell you how much it meant to me.

Being a spiritual woman my Mum was very superstitious and one of her special New Year traditions was to leave copper, bread and matchsticks outside our front door to help bring us money, warmth and food into the new year.

In the midst of a global pandemic, we all need those comforts to see the new year in more than ever. Along with Mum's traditions, which I'll be replicating this year, I'll also be supporting the Hospice. They brought my family warmth and care at one of the most difficult times. Ensuring that others also get that care seems a good start to my new year too.

If you can, please join me in supporting the Fund a Nurse appeal and bringing Hospice care to more families who will need it in the coming year."



We have recruited more nurses throughout the pandemic to ensure outstanding Hospice care will always be here for those who need it, now and in the future.

Visit hospiceintheweald.org.uk to hear more from our nurses

Donate to the Fund a Nurse appeal using the donation form attached, or visit hospiceintheweald.org.uk

Step 2: Your Details

Title	First Name
Surname	
Address	
	Postcode
Telephone	
Email	
Date of birth	

If you have supplied your email address please tick here to confirm that you are happy for us to use this to communicate with you.

Thank you for supplying us with your contact details. By choosing to make a donation, we believe you have a Legitimate Interest in hearing more about the work of Hospice in the Weald, and we will use your data to keep you up to date. At any time you can manage your preferences by visiting our website: 'Our Supporter Promise'; by phoning or writing to us using the contact details overleaf.

Step 3: Gift Aid it

Gift Aid is a simple way to increase the value of your donation to Hospice in the Weald, at no extra cost to you. If you are a UK taxpayer, Hospice in the Weald can reclaim the basic rate tax (25%) on your donation. If you donate £20.00 using Gift Aid, this is worth £25.00 to Hospice in the Weald.

giftaid it

Please tick the box and sign below.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Signature	Date
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Please complete these details and send the form to: **Hospice in the Weald, Fundraising Department, Maidstone Road, Pembury, Tunbridge Wells, TN2 4TA** or use the envelope enclosed in this newsletter.

Step 1: Type of Donation

One-off Gift

I wish to make a gift of £20 £35 £50 Other £

Type of card	
Name on card	
Card number	
Start date	Expiry date
Issue number	Security code

(if applicable) (this is the last 3 digits printed on the back of the card on the signature strip)

Regular Gift via Direct Debit

I would like to make a monthly quarterly yearly

donation of: £5 £10 £20 Other £

Paying by Direct Debit helps to keep our costs down and means more of your money goes directly to the Hospice.



Please complete these details

Instruction to your bank or building society to pay by Direct Debit

To the Manager (Bank/building society)

Address

Postcode

Name of account holder

Sort code -- Bank/building society account number

Instructions to your bank or building society
Please pay Hospice in the Weald Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Hospice in the Weald and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my bank/building society.

Signature(s) Date

Banks and building societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions from some types of account

Cheque

I enclose a cheque for £

Please make payable to Hospice in the Weald and attach to this completed form and post to: Fundraising Team, Hospice in the Weald, Maidstone Road, Pembury, Kent, TN2 4TA

Christmas Cards!

This year, sending season's greetings and best wishes for the New Year is more important than ever, and nothing says a heartfelt "Merry Christmas" like receiving a handwritten Christmas card.



That's why we are so excited to be back selling our beautiful Christmas cards for you, your friends and family to enjoy. The best part of all is that every pack you buy will help make a big difference to those in our community who are terminally ill and to those important to them. By buying your Christmas cards from Hospice in the Weald, you'll help local families facing terminal illness get the care they need to share precious moments together.

We have four local scenic card designs to really capture the essence of Christmas in our local community: new this year, Hever Castle in Winter, as well as some newly designed favourites, including Snowy Pantiles, Snow covered Tonbridge Castle and Westerham Snowfall. All painted by hand and brought to you exclusively by Hospice in the Weald.

See a design you love? You can order your favourites today online or use our postal form, so you don't miss out!

Christmas is a precious and special time for families, so please help us spread the word about the importance of supporting your local Hospice and helping to create precious and wonderful moments for our patients and those important to them, this Christmas.

Order your Christmas Cards using the postal order form enclosed, or at hospiceintheweald.org.uk. For more information contact Kieran Draper on 01892 820556 or kieran.draper@hospiceintheweald.org.uk

Stitch a Stocking



The most wonderful time of the year is back and so is our Christmas Stitch a Stocking Campaign!

Arts and crafts lovers, this one is for you... We're asking you to get creative this Christmas and create your very own stockings whether it's knitted, stitched or crocheted. These stockings can be small sized to hang on your Christmas trees or a larger size to fit in lots of candy canes and sweet Christmassy treats! The choice is yours!

Your stockings will be available to buy online on our website and make great gifts and gorgeous decorations for your home.

For more information, see our website where you can also find festive inspiration, patterns and ideas for stitching/sewing your stockings. This year, to remain in line with social distancing rules, please send your stockings in to the Hospice at: **Hospice in the Weald, Maidstone Road, Pembury, Kent TN2 4TA**

We can't wait to see all of your festive stocking creations! For more information please contact Rachael on 01892 820508 or email rachael.heath@hospiceintheweald.org.uk

Things you will need

- 1 pair of needles Suggested size UK8/4mm
- Double knitting yarn
- Ribbon, or similar, to create a loop

Pattern

Cast on 24 stitches
Work 4 rows in K1,P1 rib
Work 18 rows in st-st

Shape heel:

Row 1: K14 sts, turn
Row 2: P4 sts, turn
Row 3: K6 sts, turn
Row 4: P8 sts, turn

Row 5: K10 sts, turn
Row 6: P12 sts, turn
Row 7: K14 sts, turn
Row 8: P16 sts, turn
Row 9: K18 sts, turn
Row 10: P20 sts, turn
Row 11: Knit to the end of the row

Beginning with a P row, work 10 rows in st-st

Shape toe:

Row 1: P2tog 12 times (12 sts left on needle)
Row 2: K2tog 6 times (6 sts left on needle)
Break off yarn, leaving enough to thread through the remaining stitches, pull tight and fasten off. Sew up the side seam and attach ribbon

Visit hospiceintheweald.org.uk for Crochet and Stitching instructions too!



Kerry's Story

Kerry joined the Hospice in 2013, working in Hospice in the Home. Here she shares her experiences of nursing, and what Cottage Hospice means to her.

“For me, coming into work at the Cottage Hospice is like coming home’, says Kerry, ‘I have amazingly supportive colleagues. I’ve been a nurse for 28 years and worked around the world, but there is nowhere quite like Hospice in the Weald.”

Kerry is the Head of Cottage Hospice, the newest of our five Services, where patients are cared for by their loved ones, with the support of staff and volunteers. She explains: “The Family Caregiver model is a little bit different from what people think of when they think about a Hospice, but it’s fantastic. I really believe in the way the Cottage Hospice empowers families and caregivers to give the best possible care to their loved ones, to help

them face a good death. Although people think it’s different, it’s actually what a lot of families want and need. We are meeting the needs of families, giving them the support they need while making sure they are still in control.”

“The Cottage Hospice seeks to be a home from home. There are opportunities to eat with loved ones, for families and carers to share experiences with others and for their loved ones to surround themselves with things that matter from home. This might be their own sheets; it might be a cat or a dog, or, in the case of one recent patient, a pet tortoise or a pony. What is key is that we are just outside the door, to offer as much or as

little help as is needed. Caring for someone is tough, particularly for patients close to the end of life. We are on hand to make sure family caregivers have the support they need. It’s all about empowering people.”

“Many people wish to be cared for at home, but the reality is often difficult; sometimes the space isn’t workable, or people start to feel that they don’t want to leave the memories of their illness in the family home. Cottage Hospice has all the comforts of home, with the support of the Hospice too.”

“We are there to help when needed. It’s 24/7 support, which contrasts with experiences some people have had when needing help at home. Sometimes people can wait a long time for advice from a GP or NHS 111, which can be really distressing.”

“Some people might think that nurses don’t have a place at Cottage Hospice, because family caregivers are empowered to care. For example, we have the Informed Guide. It has been written by our team and is given to everyone who comes to the Cottage Hospice. It provides details on practical matters associated with dying, such as feeding or mouth cleaning, as well as a section for carers on looking after themselves. It has been written by nurses, and nurses are on hand to help with anything. It isn’t traditional hospital Ward nursing, it is far more individual and dignified. But it is the essence of what nursing should be, by my definition.”

“There is a lot of detail about practical matters in the Informed Guide. Nothing prepares you fully for what caring for someone at the end of life is like, but we need to encourage those conversations, where appropriate. It’s a really important part of promoting dignity in death while still celebrating life.”

“For me, coming into work at the Cottage Hospice is like coming home’, says Kerry, ‘I have amazingly supportive colleagues. I’ve been a nurse for 28 years and worked around the world, but there is nowhere quite like Hospice in the Weald.”

“Obviously COVID has brought us challenges, for the Hospice, and for each patient and family individually. But one positive that may have emerged from the pandemic is that as a nation we have inevitably talked more about death. More understanding raises the possibility of better care.”

“Being able to keep Cottage Hospice as a COVID-free site has meant patients have been able to continue to have visitors. We have introduced zones to minimise footfall and maintain social distancing – which is quite easy in a new, big building! Some families had been terrified at the prospect of what they perceived as sending their loved ones away, but the reality was they were extraordinarily grateful that following robust COVID protocols, they were still able to visit.”

“I’ve been a nurse for a long time, and the Hospice has been caring for local people for the last 40 years. Cottage Hospice is a big step in ensuring we are giving people the choice they need today, and in years to come. It’s about dignified death in today’s world.”

Look at all you've done!

We are delighted to be included in the £100k Charity Drop by **Covéa Insurance plc**. Thanks to generous businesses like Covéa Insurance, Hospice in the Weald is able to continue providing vital Hospice care to those who need it, completely free of charge.



#thankyouthursday to **Lucy McIntyre**. Lucy visited the Hospice to perform for patients and visitors on the In-Patient Ward, performing a range of pieces on her flute in the beautiful Hospice gardens.



Our thanks to **High Weald Tours**, who were planning to hold a MG run around some of the lovely Kent & East Sussex countryside. Due to COVID-19 they have been unable to run the event. Their amazing members decided to donate the entry fees to Hospice in the Weald, and have raised a wonderful £1467.

A huge thank you to the **Paddock Wood U3A Craft & Sewing group** who have made over 400 masks and raised a massive £1,200 for Hospice in the Weald. An inspirational lockdown story.

Thank you to **Rose**, a supporter who is just 9 years old. She grew lovely plants and baked treats during lockdown which she sold to friends, family and passers-by, raising a total of £50. Thank you Rose!

Thank you to our dedicated superstar fundraiser **Ellie**, whose latest fundraiser was a cake sale and raffle in memory of her daddy Simon. This socially distanced success raised an amazing £1128.38!



A big thank you shout out to **Sue Bryant**. Whilst Sue has been working hard for the NHS she has managed to keep up with her training for the Ride London bike ride. Sadly the event was postponed, so Sue took matters into her own hands. On Sunday 16th August she donned her cycle gear and completed 51 miles around the beautiful Scottish Countryside. Sue, you're amazing!



Thank you to **Day Lewis Chemist** in Riverhead for organising a local colouring competition whilst in lockdown. Each year they normally hold a bake sale but due to the current climate they decided to hold the colouring competition, raising £310.00. Great thinking!

We'd like to say a huge thank you to **Chipstead Football Club** for hosting an awesome Charity Football tournament in aid of the Hospice, and raising a staggering £700! A successful day for all, with one lucky footballer winning a scooter donated by Parker Scooters UK. Well done to everyone involved in organising such a fantastic event.

Our thanks to **Uckfield Rotary Club** for holding a Silent Auction. They received many generous lots and raised £1200 for Hospice in the Weald. Thank you to the Sussex Mark Benevolent Fund Freemasons, who added another amazing £500 to the total on this day.



For more information about organising your own fundraising contact Kathryn Cracknell on **01892 820 496** or email kathryn.cracknell@hospiceintheweald.org.uk.

Fund a Nurse



**Support the Fund a Nurse appeal
to ensure Hospice palliative care
is there for families who will need it.**

Visit hospiceintheweald.org.uk to donate and leave a message for the Hospice nurses.

For more information contact Rachael Heath, Lead Relationship Fundraising Manager,
on **01892 820533** or rachael.heath@hospiceintheweald.org.uk