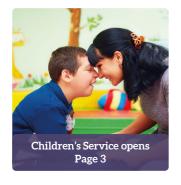


# Hospice News



Following in Grandad's footsteps







Update from our Chief Executive Page 3 Page 2 Introduction

## Contents

Executive	3
Introducing: Hospice in the Weald for Children	4
'I come home uplifted' - Patsy's story	6
New in East Sussex	7
In perfect harmony	8
Following in Malcolm's footsteps	10
Remembrance Ribbons	11
Helping to make ends meet	12
It's never too early to	13
Coming together for Sarah	14
Moonlight Walk	15
Dive into a new challenge	16
We want to work with you!	17
Look at all you've done -	18

We also send Hospice News by email. If you would prefer to receive Hospice News in this way, or wish to change or update the way we contact you, please do let us know by:

- Adding your email address to the 'sign up to receive our newsletter' link on our website, hospiceintheweald.org.uk
- Contacting the **Fundraising Team**, on 01892 820 533, or by emailing fundraising@hospiceintheweald.org.uk

## Welcome to

# **Hospice News!**

Spring is finally here, along with the latest edition of Hospice News. We hope it makes an interesting read and helps to give you a better understanding of our work and the vital role of our valued supporters.

In each issue we also share the personal experiences of those cared for and supported by the Hospice. We are truly grateful to everyone who so generously shares their story; there is no better way to help others understand the difference Hospice care can make for patients and their loved ones.

If you would like to share your own story or have a suggestion for an article for us to include in a future edition, please do let us know.

Thank you for supporting Hospice in the Weald.

#### **Sue Massey**

Communications & PR Manager Sue.Massey@hospiceintheweald.org.uk

Front Cover image: Kayla, pictured with her grandad Malcolm, is supporting Remembrance Ribbons this spring.

Maidstone Road, Pembury, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 4TA



#### www.hospiceintheweald.org.uk Registered Charity No. 280276

## Update from our

## **Chief Executive**

Welcome to the first of two editions of Hospice News you'll see this year.

As I write this update, our teams are busy preparing for another exciting year ahead. We have been delivering Hospice care to adults and their loved ones for over 42 years and 2023 marks the first year that we will be supporting children with lifelimiting and life-threatening conditions and their families. As demand for children's palliative services continues to grow, we are so pleased to now be able to offer families home visits, and emotional and practical support.

Thank you for helping to make this possible. Hospice in the Weald now truly does provide care and support to everyone living with a terminal illness or life-limiting condition, across Kent and East Sussex.

On p8-9 you can discover how the joy of music has helped patients express their feelings, continue things they love and, in some cases, learn new skills. Patients make new friends, and reach new goals. Facing a terminal illness doesn't mean you can't have fun and learn something new. We believe in giving people the opportunity to live life how they wish.

Lisa, one of our Fundraising managers, along with daughter Kayla, talks about the care her father received and **how she helps his memory to live on** by following in his footsteps to support more patients and families like hers, who need Hospice care. Find out more on **p10-11**.



I am also looking forward to our array of fundraising and supporter events this year which include a whole host of runs, races, and challenges. Our first major event of the year sees the return of a supporterfavourite, our Moonlight Walk. Josh and his family poignantly talk about why it's so important for them to remember their mum by taking part with hundreds of others all walking to celebrate life and raise vital funds. Read more on p14-15.

I hope you will join us for one of our events this year or consider supporting our Remembrance Ribbons appeal this spring. Whatever way you choose to support patients and their loved ones, thank you from all of us at Hospice in the Weald.





It's official! Hospice in the Weald for Children is now up and running with home visits underway for children and their families.

Our specialist team is getting to know amazing children with life-threatening and life limiting illness and their families in our community as they aim to ease the strain on family life.

Whether it's help with nursing care, emotional support such as counselling and bereavement therapy, or practical support from our trained volunteers, the team is here for the whole family, including siblings. We also want to ensure children can be children, so our staff are equipped with specialist and sensory toys and activities to help each child have fun and make memories.

"We're delighted that Hospice in the Weald for Children is now officially underway and our fantastic team are out and about with home visits, offering emotional and practical support and making a real difference to the lives of children and their families."

**Nick Farthing - Chief Executive** 

You can enquire about accessing our care by clicking Care for Children on our website, by calling 01892 820 515 or email care@hospiceintheweald.org.uk

Hospice in the Weald for Children is powered by friendly and experienced staff and volunteers who have big smiles, and fun and games up their sleeves.

Our Children's Service Team



#### **Tracy - Head of Service**

"As a paediatric nurse for the last 20 years I have worked in a variety of roles and settings. It is my job to support the amazing team and to work collaboratively with other providers in the area so we can deliver the best care to children - and I still get to meet families too."



#### Jess - Children's Support Worker

"I've been working with children for 12 years, mainly in educational and early years settings. Messy play is my favourite – if we're all having fun, it doesn't matter how much mess we're making. You can't take yourself too seriously – I'm often told that with me, every day is a musical!"



#### Fiona - Lead Children's Nurse

"I have been a paediatric nurse for 25 years, working in children's palliative care for the past 10 years. I am passionate about working in partnership and providing the best possible care for children and their families. It's important to be able to engage with children on all levels, ensuring they feel safe and secure with you and most importantly being able to put a smile on their face."



#### Laura - Children's Support Worker

"I enjoy working with children and their families, making a difference to their lives, no matter how big or small — I have spent much of my career working with children in a variety of different settings. Sensory play is one of the best parts, introducing music, light, smells and touch to play."

## 'I come home ever so uplifted' - Patsy's Story

Patsy, a mother of two and grandmother of two, who is living with a terminal illness, explains how she is enjoying a new-found confidence after attending Living Well at the Hospice and the huge difference it has made to her life.

"When they invited me to Living Well, I sat thinking, 'Should I?' But my husband encouraged me, and it's really opened my eyes to what's out there. Now, well, I come home afterwards ever so uplifted.

"It's really not like you think. It's more like a club – and not just for the elderly. You're not alone."

Patsy has tried her hand at a whole variety of crafts including beadwork, recently making friendship bracelets and pottery. "They say my pots are really rustic," she laughs. She also has relaxation and reflexology: "I find it hard to sleep at night, so the movements help with my breathing."

"I talk to a therapist too, that's where I can say things I would never say to my family and know it's not going to be repeated. You can say anything. Your true feelings."

The biggest change, she says, is that it has given her back a sense of purpose in life.

"I felt I was just a burden. I felt helpless but didn't want to talk about it. I now feel I've got something to live for."



Patsy (furthest right) and her family

"I like to be thought of as useful. At Living Well, if someone wants to know how to crochet or make dolls I know I can show them."

Patsy has recently returned to a warm welcome at Living Well after receiving care on the In-Patient Ward. "It was like being a long-lost friend. I missed it because, apart from anything else, we laugh a lot.

"My main goal now is to help others. I was stuck at home with no one to talk to. I've changed. If I am in a group now and I see someone sitting in the corner, not talking, I'll go and get them. Talking and sharing makes you feel better. It's helped me an awful, awful lot."





Patients and loved ones can now also enjoy the benefits of Living Well in Five Ashes, East Sussex. Complementary therapies and relaxation sessions were introduced at our Cottage Hospice last November and the Living Well team is looking forward to working with community groups and local services as they roll out more activities this year.

This is part of wider changes at Cottage Hospice where a more flexible approach to providing care is being introduced.



#### Kerry Norman, Head of In-Patient Care, explains:

"Families who have used Cottage Hospice to care for loved ones in a home from home environment with the reassurance that help is just beyond the door, have found it truly life changing. The communal, relaxed spaces offer a unique opportunity for families to share experiences, thoughts and fears.

"To give more people the chance to enjoy this special environment Cottage Hospice is becoming nurse led. We are developing a team to care for patients who may not have family to look after them but do not need the complex care offered at our Pembury site. We are also planning to support those who want to die at home, by working with them and their loved ones to gain skills and confidence to stay at home for longer."

To find out more about Living Well, visit hospiceintheweald.org.uk or contact Steph Hall - Head of Living Well, on 01892 820 509 or Stephanie.Hall@hospiceintheweald.org.uk

For more information about Cottage Hospice visit our website, call 01435 512 500 or email Kerry.Norman@hospiceintheweald.org.uk

## In perfect harmony



Hospice in the Weald has been offering music therapy for many years now. Part of Living Well, music is high on the agenda when it comes to both patients and carers alike, presenting opportunities for creative expression, connection and improved well-being.

#### A fun, creative way to reach new goals

"Before being diagnosed with cancer I was a keen cyclist and volunteered for the Hospice. I didn't realise that one day, I would need the help of the Hospice myself. My doctor advised me to stop cycling to avoid injury, so I joined the choir

and musical expression group. When I was young, I played guitar. I've always had a passion for music - my wife, Jackie and I enjoy singing. It's an opportunity to have fun, make friends and reach new goals. I'm developing skills and giving myself a creative output – just the interaction with others helps me to feel better." Stuart

Hannah Bruce began working at the Hospice in 2016 as a Creative Musician. She has gone from strength to strength, masterminding interactive music groups and creating an eclectic musical programme that includes song writing, poetry, performances and a choir. She also recently completed a threeyear Music Therapy Master's Degree from the University of Roehampton.

"Music has always been a passion for me and to be able to share this with Hospice patients and friends and family is such a pleasure," says Hannah.

#### "Music has the power to transform people's mood and is an incredible form of therapy.

The thing I love about music is that it is so diverse and emotive. It's something everyone can participate in, even complete beginners or those who don't think that they can sing or play an instrument can take part. To foster joy and connection through music is a privilege and I'm thrilled to be utilising my Master's to expand the programme."





Music therapy is a clinical practice that offers a safe space where patients and therapist can use music to explore thoughts, feelings, and emotions. It's designed to improve overall wellbeing and quality of life.

Hannah explains: "Through music, I find many ways to help patients with therapeutic goals, legacy work and memory projects. With further neurological training, I hope to support those with more physical needs by working with the Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy Team.



People can come to relax, make friends and tap into their creativity. There's nothing more rewarding than knowing our music sessions are providing inspiration, giving joy and supporting patients and loved ones when they need it most".



#### The choir has brought back my confidence

"I found that after Richard, my husband, passed away, my life went on, but my social life was a little quiet. I became a Hospice volunteer, helping whenever I could and was delighted to hear that the Hospice was starting a choir. I enjoy the choir so much.

I've met new people and made friends and it's brought back my confidence. It's such a happy place, even for those dealing with bereavement. We have many events to raise funds such as carol services and Light up a Life. I'm very proud to be part of the choir and we welcome anyone." Frances

For more information about the range of musical activities on offer, please visit the Living Well section of the website or contact Hannah Bruce - Creative Musician, on 01892 820 558, or Hannah.Bruce@hospiceintheweald.org.uk

Travelling and taking on new challenges was one of Malcolm Pilbeam's many passions in life. Malcolm was supported by the Hospice when he was diagnosed with a brain tumour and passed away on our ward in 2017. Here, Malcolm's daughter Lisa, a Relationship Fundraising Manager at the Hospice, and her daughter Kayla, explain what the Hospice means to them and how his adventurous spirit lives on.

"All of us who work in Fundraising are passionate about the Hospice," says Lisa.
"But I have a special reason to spur me on. I started at the Hospice last spring, supporting those taking on fundraising challenges.

Dad was passionate about exploring new places. We all loved our family holidays and he enjoyed trips taking on challenges, like the Inca trail in Peru, the Three Peaks Challenge and Seven Sisters closer to home.

Dad would be so proud that I now work for the Hospice, encouraging others to push themselves to try something new, just as he did." - Lisa

Lisa's eldest daughter Kayla, aged 13, shares how she likes to remember her grandad and support the Hospice.



"I still like to visit the Quiet Room, light a candle and think about Grandad."

"I made a book to write down memories of Grandad and still write letters to him on the special days he can't be with us. Last year Nanny and I did Moonlight Walk together. It was lovely spending time with Nanny doing something to remember Grandad and support the Hospice, so it can help families like ours."

"I am supporting the Hospice this spring by hanging a Remembrance Ribbon in memory of my Grandad. Please add a ribbon for your loved one too." "I'm very proud of my mum; through her work she's able to help other families like ours.

My grandad was funny, kind and strong. The Hospice looked after him when he was poorly. I liked the Quiet Room. It was calm and safe, a place to forget my worries and where I coloured butterflies. We created a collage of family photos for Grandad's room. The staff were really nice to me, my little sister Chloe and our cousins Amber, Daisy and Jack.



"Before every West Ham game, we remember Grandad, by seeing his name on the wall."

## Remembrance Ribbon

Dedicate a Remembrance Ribbon to your loved one. Colourful ribbons will be hung from trees in a collective show of remembrance from 29<sup>th</sup> April - 30<sup>th</sup> June.

To dedicate a ribbon please return the form on the letter with Hospice News or visit hospiceintheweald.org.uk.

View the ribbons at a Remembrance Gathering at one of our Hospice Gardens on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> May: **10.30am**, Cottage Hospice, Five Ashes TN20 6HY. **3.00pm**, Hospice in the Weald, Pembury TN2 4TA.

Cost of living rises have seen the Hospice hearing from more people than ever needing financial welfare information and support. Here Kerry Berry, our Benefits Support Coordinator, explains how we help patients and families get the support they are entitled to so that they can focus on what really matters.

"Over the years we have helped many families to understand the financial support available to them," says Kerry, who with a team of trained volunteers, aims to ease the burden.

"Approximately twothirds of households
affected by terminal
illness will experience
financial strain. People
can suddenly find
themselves on reduced
income or facing extra
expenses at a time when
they have so many
other things to cope
with."



Helping to make ends meet

As more households feel the squeeze, the team is busier than ever.

"For example, one lady

wanted to know if she's eligible for benefits as she can no longer work, and household bills have shot up. Just today we heard from a man asking where he can get help with transport costs as he is struggling to get to medical appointments due to higher fuel prices."

Dealing with financial issues can feel overwhelming, but Kerry says help is at hand.

"The first thing we can do is assess your circumstances. We help with applications to local and national charities



or can refer on to one of the community services we work with. We can also help with practical issues like disabled parking badges."

Almost half of those caring for someone at the end of life say they struggle financially, so the team helps carers find out which benefits they could access too.

Kerry adds: "We are here at any stage of a patient's care. We know it can be difficult to ask for help, but money problems don't go away, so the sooner someone gets in touch, the sooner we can help."



Our team are here to help.

Call us on

01892 820 515

## It's never too early to...

Talking about death, dying and loss is never easy. Here at Hospice in the Weald, we want to change this by helping everyone in our community to have more open and honest conversations about end-of-life matters.

That's why we have launched an online campaign to help everyone better prepare for death.





'It's never too early to...' is a series of three, monthly instalments featuring top tips and video interviews with experts designed to help us all start 'that conversation'.

The first on 'getting your affairs in order' includes tips on the practical aspects of leaving your family, estate and legacies in good order to make things as easy as possible when you are gone. The next two focus on how to 'communicate your wishes' and 'plan your own funeral'.



Jane Pantony, the Hospice's Head of Counselling and Support, said: "We plan so much around births and weddings, so why don't we plan more around our deaths? Making sure you and your family are prepared could not be more important. We hope our new campaign will encourage more people to talk and plan ahead to make informed choices about something that is one of the only certainties in life."

This is part of wider work being developed by the Hospice to help all in our community be better prepared for when the inevitable comes, including looking at how we may be able to help schools.

Along with backing a recent petition calling for Parliament to consider including bereavement lessons as part of the national curriculum, we are developing resources for local schools to encourage more open conversations about grief and are working with local organisations on bereavement support training for schools.

Check out the series on our website and by following us on social media.

For more information contact Jane Pantony - Head of Counselling and Support on 01892 820 525 or Jane.Pantony@hospiceinthweald.org.uk

When the Davies family decided they wanted to give back to the Hospice that cared for their beloved mum and wife Sarah, Moonlight Walk seemed the ideal opportunity. Here they explain just how special the event was and how they continue to celebrate the life of the woman at the heart of their family.

"We knew we'd wear something bright when we did Moonlight Walk in memory of Mum, and the rainbow tutus seemed perfect - even the men were happy to wear them," laughs Leah, one of Sarah's daughters, who with other family members wanted to reflect her mum's love of life as they took part in Moonlight Walk for the first time last year.

"We couldn't believe it at the start when we saw the rainbow above us in the sky," says Josh, Sarah's son. "It was an unusual purple sky too - purple was Mum's favourite colour. We just knew she was watching."





"It was tiring but we wanted to make that effort together. When we put our stars on the memory wall, it became very emotional."

Martin, Sarah's husband.

Sarah was cared for at the Hospice in Pembury before her death in August 2021, aged just 57. The family are still processing her loss but find comfort in happy memories.

"Mum was loving, kind, warm," says Josh. "She supported me throughout school and supported me when I came out, she was there for the whole thing, she was just great."

Martin adds: "She was the life and soul. When I met her, she had two girls and I was so proud when we had Josh and Libie too. She loved her grandchildren, was happy and jolly, but often put on a brave face."

"She was the best. I don't think many could have coped like she did," adds Libie, Sarah's youngest daughter.

"Mum was really, really special," explains Leah. "She was hilarious. I could talk to her about anything. What I most miss is feeling 'safe', feeling 'home'. I always talk to my daughter Orla about Nanny."

When Sarah was admitted to the Hospice, the family was by her side. Josh explains: "The staff were brilliant and put mum in a big room, so all her friends and family could visit. We spent many years looking after Mum before she came to the Hospice, so it was nice to be able to let others take on the care and just spend time with her."

"I couldn't imagine doing it any other way than at the Hospice," Libie adds. Martin agrees: "The level of care and diligence was above and beyond. It meant everything to be together."

The family found comfort by organising a celebration of Sarah's life on the anniversary



of her death. "It felt like the right thing - a remembrance and celebration," explains Martin.

They are taking part in Moonlight Walk again this year and are planning to surpass last year's outfits.

"I'd definitely encourage others to do it," says Martin. "It's so important to share that experience, it helps knowing everyone is there for a wife, a mum, a dad, someone they've lost."

"It was such good fun, we are doing it again," says Josh. "If Mum had seen us all dressed up, she'd have laughed. She'd have loved to be there in her tutu as well!"

## Sparkle and glow this summer at



Join the Davies family and hundreds of others on Saturday 17th June to light up the streets of Sevenoaks and Knole Park, to remember someone special, share memories and make new ones.

Walk the classic eight miles, challenge yourself to our new 13-mile route or ease in with a four-mile walk before enjoying a glass of bubbly at the finish line.

Setting off en-route at 6pm, every step you take and every pound you raise will support those living with a terminal or life limiting illness.

Sign up via our website for your Moonlight Walk T-shirt and dedication star or contact fundraising@hospiceintheweald.org.uk or 01892 820 533.

## Dive into a new Challenge for 2023

2023 brings new and exciting challenges for Hospice in the Weald, added to our favourites from years gone by. To kick off the events season, we see our #TeamWeald runners aim to complete the iconic London Marathon, Brighton Marathon, and London Landmarks Half Marathon – let us know if you'd like to reserve a space for 2024.



Dive into a new challenge for 2023



Our first overseas event of the season is the iconic **London to Paris Bike Ride**, taking in 330 miles of rolling countryside between the two capital cities. With meals and vehicle support included, choose from rides in July or September.

If you want to get the blood pumping closer to home, why not sign up for our **Skydive day** in Maidstone on 15<sup>th</sup> July. Will you take the 10,000ft plunge out of your comfort zone, through the Kent skies and experience a rush like no other, whilst raising vital funds for Hospice in the Weald?



## We want to work with you!

Hospice in the Weald is actively looking to develop new relationships with local businesses. Working together we want to form a mutually beneficial relationship which adds value to your business and supports patients and their loved ones in the community.





Exciting ways your business could support us include: entering a team in our events, such as Moonlight Walk or Hospice Run; taking on a challenge, hosting a coffee morning, bake sale or quiz; sponsoring one of our headline events; volunteering at our Cottage Hospice or lending a hand in our gardens or at one of our events; donating a raffle prize and much more.

In return, we will engage your employees and help you demonstrate your commitment to your local community.

#### A special shout-out to some of our 2022 business partners:

- Thank you to Watson and Price Tree Services, Amazon, Aztec Group South East Ltd,
   Zenith Textiles, Wells Transport Services, and Omni Recycling for supporting us with
   our Tree Removal service this year, whether through chipping trees, collecting them,
   sponsorship, or disposing of the chippings. We raised £22,000, collecting over 1,000
   trees if yours was one of them, thank you for supporting Hospice in the Weald.
- Thank you to Savills who kindly sponsored our Hospice Run and Moonlight Walk.
- Thank you to Plumbase for entering a team in our Hospice Run.
- Thank you to ABMV Ltd Chartered Accountants for completing their virtual walk of 2,299,171 steps in a month and raising a total of £705.



Find out more and sign up on our website or contact fundraising@hospiceintheweald.org.uk or 01892 820 533.

If you work for a local business and want to discuss how you can partner with Hospice in the Weald, get in touch via fundraising@hospiceintheweald.org.uk or 01892 820 533.

## Thanks for all your incredible support

Thanks to those mentioned here and every one of our other many supporters for your incredible support this year!



We are enormously grateful to **Barratt** David Wilson Homes, Kent for spending a day volunteering at our Cottage Hospice. The team spent the day hard at work both inside the building with paint brushes in hand, decorating and beautifully dressing two guest rooms, and outside maintaining the Hospice gardens.

Look at all you've done - thank you!

A big thank you to Hospice in the Weald Ambassador Glen Goodall and the Royal **Tunbridge Wells Orpheus Male Voice Choir,** who raised over £2,000 at their annual concert, at St Peter & St Paul's Church, Tonbridge. They were joined by **Arianna** Rebecca Firth, Yoko Misumi and Hilden **Grange Prep School Choir** who treated the audience to a delightful selection of music.





We would like to extend thanks to the members of Kent Region Porsche Club (GB) for generously supporting Hospice in the Weald as their chosen charity. They have raised an incredible £1,700 through a variety of club activities including a Christmas club night dinner and raffle.

Thanks to David Stevens who, with the support of Hospice Vice President Martin Dace and Horsmonden Social Club, organised a breakfast to raise £1,000 for the Hospice. Together with Tim Coyne, Neil Rigby, all were inspired by Marion, who featured in our last edition of Hospice News.

Thank you to Pippin's Farm on Maidstone Road (and all our neighbours in Pembury and Five Ashes) who supported us by offering their land for event parking and Christmas tree recycling.



Thank you to the **Tunbridge** Wells Fly Fishing Society for raising £400 through their bank fishing competition, "The Reg Littlechild Trophy". This annual memorial cup is held in memory of their late member Reg Littlechild, who was a keen supporter of the Hospice.



Shout out to the Breeze Club for a wonderful donation of £25,000. They held three Golf Days in 2022 with proceeds being split between three charities; we are incredibly grateful to have been nominated.

Thanks to the talented **Emily Wright** for raising over £800 by holding a concert and creating online videos playing the piano. Emily and other young musicians from Sevenoaks School also delighted patients and staff when they visited to give live performances at Hospice in Pembury in February. Hear Emily's beautiful renditions by searching for her on YouTube.





Thank you to all our knitters, for the wonderful knitted creations that make Knit-a-Chick a success! We're also 'egg-stremely' grateful to everyone who donated chocolate eggs that are 'winging' their way to our wonderful supporters.

Huge thanks to all our volunteers who gave their time to help in our offices and at our events in 2022. Your help is so important and your hard work does not go unseen! If you would like to volunteer this year, please get in touch on 01892 820533 or fundraising@hospiceintheweald.org.uk

