



Hospice News

Spring/Summer 2026



Making memories with my daughter



Charity shopping secrets | Pg. 7



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Fun, laughter and care | Pg. 14

Welcome to Hospice News!

About Hospice News

Thanks for picking up our first Hospice News of 2026! In this edition, discover the latest about our ongoing Shaping our Future project, learn more about our services and how they continue to support our community, hear directly from the people benefiting from the Hospice's support, and preview our highly anticipated fundraising events coming up this year. As always, we thank you for your continued support. The kindness and generosity you show each year enables us to provide much-needed care for the people who need us most, and their loved ones.

Josh Puttock

Communications Manager



Front Cover image: Beth, who is supported by the Hospice, with her daughter, Willow.

Maidstone Road, Pembury,
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www.hospiceintheweald.org.uk



Registered Charity No. 280276

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Contact the fundraising team, on **01892 820 533**, or email fundraising@hospiceintheweald.org.uk

For article or story suggestions, please contact joshua.puttock@hospiceintheweald.org.uk



Welcome from our Chief Executive

Delivering high-quality, compassionate care for everyone who needs us is at the heart of Hospice in the Weald and ensuring that we can continue to do this in the years ahead is one of my most important responsibilities as Chief Executive.

Your generosity plays a vital role in making this possible. Every act of support strengthens our ability to provide expert care across all our services. From support in people's own homes to our Living Well services, counselling, Children and Young People's Services, and our In-patient care, your involvement helps ensure that anyone facing a life-limiting illness receives the right care at the right time.

Across the organisation, we are continuing to invest in improvements to our Pembury building so that the people we support can rely on modern, welcoming, and safe environments. You can read more about 'Shaping our Future' on **pages 8-11**.

We have also launched a **community engagement survey** to understand what matters most to you and to hear your views.

This is an important opportunity to shape the future of hospice care in your community as we begin developing our new strategy. **Access the survey via the QR code:**



While the national conversation about Hospice funding highlights many challenges, we are focused on what we can do together to sustain and strengthen our services. Recent increases in national insurance have significantly increased our staffing costs, and new Government support is currently limited to capital projects rather than the day-to-day care that patients and families depend on. This makes the support of our community more important than ever.

Rather than dwell on the challenge, I invite you to stand with us. Whether through **regular donations, one off gifts, events, leaving a gift in your Will, supporting our shops, volunteering, or involving your workplace**, every action helps create steady, meaningful impact.

If you already support us, thank you. If you're considering it, our fundraising team is ready to help you take the first step on **01892 820 533** or at fundraising@hospiceintheweald.org.uk.

No one should face a life-limiting illness alone. Together, we can ensure the compassion, dignity and expert care of Hospice in the Weald reaches everyone in our community.

Nick



Making memories with my daughter: Beth's story

Whether it's having fun building cuddly keepsakes or taking a trip to see Highland cattle, 27-year-old Beth is determined to make the most of every moment with her young daughter Willow.

"The best thing I have ever done is become a mum," said Beth, who is receiving Hospice support after being told last August that her colorectal cancer had spread. "Willow's just amazing. We have such a wonderful relationship; we have funny inside jokes and little songs. I think the absolute world of her."

With support from the Living Well team, Beth and Willow have spent treasured time creating hand casts and recording voice messages placed in teddy bears.

"We both built a bear. I have a Highland cow. If I press his hoof, I can hear Willow's voice say, "Love you, Mummy."



Beth with her cuddly Highland cow

Read me when you need me

Beth has created a special book 'Read me when you need me' filled with personal messages for Willow.

"I've tried to share my little tips and tricks as if I could have been sitting down talking to her," she explained. "I hope she'll be able to keep them forever, and on those days when she wants to know 'what mum loved about me', she can flick to that page."



Special bond: Beth and Willow at Disneyland

"We are so, so lucky. I would not be as mentally in a good place, or physically in a good place, if I was anywhere other than the Hospice."



The pair on a trip organised by the Hospice to visit a herd of Highland cattle - Beth's favourite animals - at Roundoak Farm

Good place mentally and physically

Beth also spent time on the in-patient ward for pain and symptom management.

"Of course, I never saw myself at 27 ever needing the Hospice's help. I knew they existed but didn't know they did more than end-of-life care. They've helped me get my symptoms under better control, so I can go back home with my family.

Reflecting on her illness, Beth said: "I thought it was something treatable, but later I found out that wasn't the case. It's been a mix of emotions, but I've always been so positive in this journey. I think it's the only way you can get through it, really."

Now back at home with her husband and daughter, Beth continues to cherish her time with Willow.

"She is my proudest achievement. Nothing will ever top being Willow's mum."



Scan here to watch Beth's story

A deep bond with my dad: Amanda's story



Amanda with her dad, Murray

Amanda's dad, Murray, was a kind, generous and thoughtful man. His glass was always half-full, and his family meant everything to him.

Here, Amanda shares what hospice care and support meant to her family at the end of her dad's life, and the significance of taking part in Moonlight Walk in his memory.

"I've always been a bit of a daddy's girl, and my dad used to always answer the phone saying: 'Hello, light of my life'. When I went to the house, he would always be there, ready for a hug. He loved my mum to pieces, and we loved going down to the beach, having long walks with the dogs. He was a great family man, and we used to go away on superb holidays.

"Being so health conscious throughout his life, the pancreatic cancer diagnosis hit him hard. When he was sadly taken for the worse, the people at the Hospice were always there, ready to help us.

"My dad would have a hot chocolate in the reception area before going to reflexology, and all the people were just so lovely to him. Nothing was a no, and it was all done with so much dignity.

"At the end of his life, they would wheel my dad out in his bed just so he could see the sunshine in the garden."

"It was amazing to be able to give something back at Moonlight Walk; we felt we were part of a bigger thing than just our family. It was incredible seeing so many different people dressed up and all there for one purpose, being there to raise as much awareness and money as possible for Hospice in the Weald.



Amanda's family at Moonlight Walk

"It didn't matter how silly we all looked; it was just about being there collectively with everybody. My family and I will be doing it again this year."

Scan here to register for Moonlight Walk



Designer Briony shares her secrets to second-hand style

Quarter finalist on the BBC's Interior Design Masters, Briony Ace has built a reputation for her earthy, organic style and love of second-hand.

The interior designer finds many pre-loved gems in the Hospice's charity shops, with items becoming special pieces in her own and client's homes – even featuring on TV and in magazines.

"I love shopping at Hospice in the Weald," said mum of two Briony. "It's always been a stand-out for affordable, well priced items and raises funds for such a great cause. My favourites are the Oxted and Tunbridge Wells branches. I'm a regular – I love the ladies there!"

"There are so many incredible pieces. I can't resist candlesticks, vintage pine, oak, brassware and crockery. For me a brass candlestick is a little piece of joy."



Briony's top tips

- 1 Start small, use an item you fall in love with as inspiration.
- 2 Set yourself a challenge – what can you buy for a tenner?
- 3 Look for quality – solid wood, real brass, anything with patina.
- 4 Be open to upcycling – consider sanding, waxing, or painting.
- 5 Don't fear imperfection; perfectly imperfect is often best.



Green and white vintage crockery and cutlery from the Hospice (credit: Ideal Home Magazine)



Briony arranging a wooden mirror in her Week 3 design for Interior Design Masters

Briony used a mirror from one of our shops (pictured) when competing in 2025's Design Masters series hosted by Alan Carr, while bargain vintage crockery and cutlery were highlights of her Christmas table in an Ideal Home Magazine feature.

"More people want to shop sustainably. The advantage of second-hand is getting quality at a bargain price. It makes creating a home more accessible to people who might otherwise feel it's something they could never achieve."



Shaping our Future: Creating the best care in the best environment

Our latest update

We are excited that work is now progressing to create a new in-patient ward and Living Well area in our Pembury building. The transformation will ensure the Hospice is able deliver outstanding care in the best possible environment for years to come.



Ashdown room visual



In-patient care

All in-patient care is now being offered from our site in Five Ashes while work is underway at Pembury.



Counselling and Support

The same support is available from the team's temporary new base at Hawkwell Business Centre.



Living Well

Programmed activities are continuing to run at Pembury and have temporarily moved to the lower ground floor.



Five Ashes

Our site in Five Ashes has extended its palliative care to support patients with more complex health needs.

Here, Collin, a patient at Five Ashes, shares what the site means to him.

Collin, 83, a grandfather of five and retired police sergeant, was admitted to the Hospice after being referred from hospital.

He said: "I was having terrible dreams before, but since being here, I'm starting to sleep better. It's beautiful here."

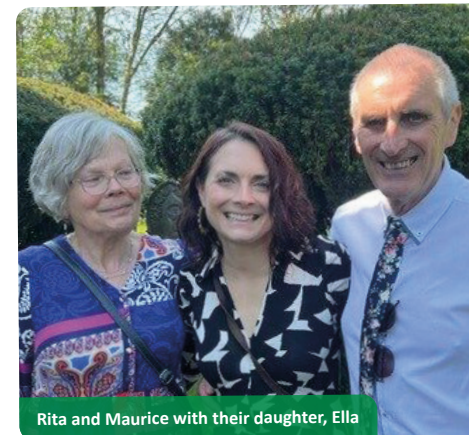
"The care I have experienced is fantastic. The staff are brilliant, nothing is too much. They take time to listen."

Collin

Pembury: A transformation shaped by our Hospice community

Our patients, families, staff and volunteers have helped to shape the Pembury building's refurbishment during workshop sessions with the design team KKE Architects and Elaine Lewis Designs. Here, they share how it felt to be a key part of the design process.

"If you are in a lovely environment, you know you are valued," said Maurice, 70, whose daughter Ella, 39, a gardener, was cared for by the Hospice, advocated for nature to be a focal point of the designs to honour her memory. "To see how nature and the gardens are being incorporated into the designs is wonderful."



Rita and Maurice with their daughter, Ella

"The hospice gardens were very important to Ella, and to us as a family. We spent a lot of time in the gardens. Ella memorised the route, so she could remember every plant when she was no longer able to go outside.

"The design team listened and incorporated things that might seem small but make a world of difference."

Maurice

"The new designs are welcoming to everyone, no matter your age, and show a place you would be happy to stay in at any time. If Ella had seen them, she would have thought 'that's the place for me'", he said.

During the workshop sessions Kirsty, whose 20-year-old son Jack was cared for by the Hospice, was able to ensure the in-patient ward's new corridor will be transformed into a lighter, brighter and more welcoming space.

Kirsty said: "A lot of people are scared of the Hospice, and I don't think people should be. A hospice should reflect the love that's on the ward."



Kirsty with her son, Jack

The new designs at a glance

A word from our designers

KKE Architects and Elaine Lewis Designs are bringing our Hospice community's vision for the future to life.

Specialist hospice interior designer, Elaine Lewis said: "The aim is to create a light, calm, warm space. These rooms are people's homes for a time; they deserve to feel special. We want them to feel supported, safe and uplifted, surrounded by light and nature."



Edenbridge bedroom visual

Living Well

Under the transformation plans, new adjustable-height, foldable tables, ideal for arts and crafts, and an acoustic room divide, will enable the Living Well area to be easily adapted to accommodate multiple activities.

Rooms for treatment and consultations are being redesigned to be both tranquil and practical for multipurpose use.

The designs include a feature fireplace, panelling, and surrounding seating to create a more cosy, homely feel.

Modern banquette seating, café-style pendant lighting, and more tables and grouped armchairs are being added to maximise the space, along with a redesigned self-service refreshment area to allow for plenty of room for conversations, coffee and cake.



Living Well visual

If you provide beautiful spaces for patients and relatives, as soon as they walk in, they know that somebody's given it thought, and that they're being cared for.

Phil Kavanagh

Director at KKE Architects

A more spacious and inviting gym is also being constructed with glazed screening and the Living Well office is being relocated to place staff right at the heart of the space.

Sarah, who has multiple sclerosis (MS) and uses the Hospice's Living Well Centre, is one of several patients who provided feedback to help shape the refurbishment plans.



Sitting room visual

Pembury

Upgrades to our Pembury building will include a new-look inpatient ward, redesigned visitor areas, and refurbished spiritual care rooms.

Each bedroom and en-suite will be modernised to meet patients' needs, while flexible lighting and clever layouts will create a calm, homely atmosphere. Thoughtful touches include the addition of desks, giving visitors the opportunity to work from the Hospice and spend more time with their loved one. Guest bedrooms are also being transformed into sanctuaries for families to unwind in.

What's next?

Work is expected to be completed by the end of this year. We will continue to offer our compassionate care throughout. We look forward to bringing you more details in the next edition. In the meantime, see the latest developments via our website and social media updates.

For me, right from the start, it was very clear that it was about living the best life that you could and these new plans embrace that.

Sarah



Bayhem guest room visual

Scan here for latest updates!



Fundraising opportunities in 2026

A new year means new calendar event opportunities at Hospice in the Weald! Whether you're aiming for the sky with a dive like no other, or looking to soak up some of the best gardens in the area this summer, there's plenty of opportunities for you to enjoy 2026 and support the Hospice.

May

Remembering those we love at Meadow of Memories



Visit **Meadow of Memories** at two beautiful locations from 2nd – 17th May and discover the display of steel daisies, each one dedicated in memory of a loved one. At **Chartwell**, set against the backdrop of the family home of Winston Churchill, and at **Scotney Castle**, where the Meadow sits before the enchanting castle. **Donations can be made via our website**, where you will also find information on the **Remembrance Gatherings** taking place at both locations on 17th May.

An exciting season of Open Gardens

April - September

Running from **April until September**, we're delighted to invite you to discover some of **Kent and Sussex's best-kept secret gardens**, each with its own distinctive charm. Thanks to your incredible support, **last year's programme raised over £30,000 for the Hospice** - a truly fantastic achievement. **Visit the website to find out more.**



June

Shine at Moonlight Walk this June



Join us on **Saturday 27th June** for an evening filled with **reflection, celebration, and community spirit**. Our **Moonlight Walk** is a unique opportunity to remember and celebrate a loved one, and with **4 mile, 8 mile, and 13 mile routes** to choose from there's a distance for everyone. Whether you **take part solo or gather a team**, you'll enjoy a **lively atmosphere** with **refreshments and entertainment** along the way. **Sign-up on the website.**

July

The thrill of the open sky

Feel the rush of freefall as you **take on a tandem skydive in support of Hospice in the Weald**. Secured to a fully qualified instructor, you'll step from the aircraft, plunge through open sky at speed, then drift gently back to earth with breathtaking views below. It's an **unforgettable challenge** and a **powerful way to support care** for patients and their loved ones. **More details can be found on our website.**



September

Celebrating 20 Years of Hospice Run



Hospice Run will be back **this September** for its **20th Anniversary!** Our **half marathon, 10k and 5k routes** will be returning, alongside an exciting **better-than-ever event village**. Expect **live music, DJs, a wide variety of food and drink options and entertainment** through the day. **All entry fees and fundraising income go directly to supporting the Hospice**. If you'd like to **get involved** but not participate in the run, **we need more than 100 volunteers** on the day. Keep an eye on our website for more details about the event.

February

Can you conquer the Sahara?

Join us for an **unforgettable 4-day trek** through the stunning **Sahara Desert** from the **4th until 9th February 2027**.

With the **High Atlas Mountains** as your backdrop, you'll **summit the majestic Chigaga Dunes**, the **highest in the Sahara**, and witness a **sunrise like no other**. Trek across **stunning landscapes** and sleep **under the stars** on this **adventure of a lifetime**. **Find more information on our website.**



Find more information about our events via our website or email fundraising@hospiceintheweald.org.uk



Family support and laughter for Oliver



Hayley, Children's Healthcare Assistant, visiting Oliver at home

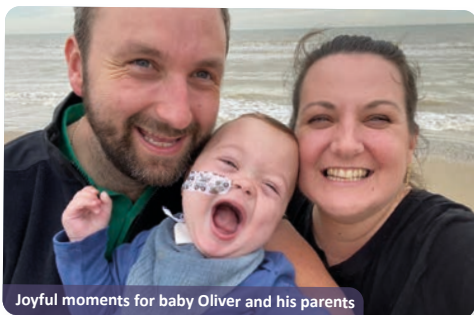
Two-year-old Oliver receives support from Hospice in the Weald for Children and loves books, playing with anything that has wheels - and he adores messy play. Here, Oliver's mum, Charlotte, shares his story and explains the impact support has on the whole family, whilst enabling Oliver to thrive and be a child.

"Oliver was born two months early and was diagnosed with tracheomalacia, which means that a part of his windpipe, the upper trachea, is floppy. That created issues with his breathing. When Oliver started receiving support from the children's team, they were reassuring and right from day one, he loved the sessions.

"They got to know him so well, and every single week, they bring out a completely different selection of things for him to do."

"They have transformed things for me, too. Oliver requires around-the-clock supervision and monitoring. He can't be left alone, even when sleeping. When the ladies are here, I can do bits and bobs that I can't ordinarily do and even catch up on some sleep. It also helps with doing things that I enjoy and catching up on 'Oliver admin'.

"Oliver is unable to attend nursery currently, but when the ladies visit, it sets up a sort of nursery environment. It really helps his social development, and it's made such a positive impact on all of us as a family.



Joyful moments for baby Oliver and his parents

"When I show Oliver pictures of the Hospice ladies, he gets really excited, the doorbell rings, and he's running to the door; he's so happy to see them."

"Initially, I had all the same reservations as many people do when they hear about hospice care. But it's not that way at all. It's 100% about having a positive impact on your child and respite for mums, dads, and guardians. It's just invaluable, and we're so grateful to everyone for their support."

A quick guide to referrals



Who can benefit from our care?

At Hospice in the Weald, we know that the earlier patients are referred to us the better, and the more help and support we can give. We support people with life-limiting or life-threatening conditions at any point in their illness.

A referral could mean access to services within your community - helping you to live well, emotional support, and complementary therapies. Hospice care is not just inpatient care; our team can help someone from the moment they are diagnosed.



Who can make a referral?

While a lot of referrals are through doctors, anyone can make a referral to the Hospice. Whether it is for someone you know or for yourself, do get in touch. Making a referral is easy, it can be done online or over the phone and will be handled by our Hospice Outreach Service.



Helpful referral criteria

We want the process to be as smooth as possible for everybody, so it is worth noting some important things when it comes to referrals at the Hospice.

- To access all our services, the person being referred must be registered to a GP and live in our catchment area (covering Kent and East Sussex).
- A person in need of inpatient care in the final weeks and days of their lives does not necessarily need to live or have a GP in our catchment area.
- If you are unsure if the person can benefit from our care or not, please make the referral and our clinical admin team will help.

Get in touch

Find out more about referrals, fill in a referral form or get in touch today by visiting our website. You can also call us on 01892 820 515 between 8am - 5.30pm.



Service spotlight

Hospice support in your own home

Every day, members of the Hospice's dedicated Outreach Team visit homes across the community, providing specialist advice and support.

Whether someone is living at home, in a care home, or with family, they are there to help people living with a life-limiting illness and those who have specialist palliative care needs.

To ensure care is coordinated, they work closely with a patient's GP, (who remains the patient's primary care provider), hospitals, district nurses and other healthcare professionals.



Tracey's family was supported by the team when caring for father-in-law John after a diagnosis of stage 4 pancreatic cancer.

"With the shock of the diagnosis, we felt lost and didn't know which way to turn," said Tracey. "Thankfully, we were put in touch with the Outreach service. The nurse we spoke to had a kind, frank discussion with us. It really helped us to cope at such a difficult time and come to terms with what was happening."

Denise O'Malley, Head of Hospice Outreach, said: "The majority of the Hospice's patients are cared for in the community. There is a wealth of expertise in the team, with specialist nurses, physiotherapists and counsellors, who are all there to care for each person's needs. Our aim is to offer reassurance, dignity and compassionate care."

What we offer



Emotional and practical support for patients and relatives



Access to a palliative social worker to help with emotional and other needs



Support with benefits and finances



Outpatient clinics



Telephone support, when a home visit isn't needed



Signposting to other support services

To find out more, visit hospiceintheweald.org.uk or call 01892 820 500

Volunteering: Feel the impact

For many people, volunteering at Hospice in the Weald begins with a simple desire to help but often becomes one of the most meaningful experiences of their lives. Volunteering here isn't just about giving time; it's about offering kindness, comfort and connection at a moment when it matters most.



How you can help

Hospice volunteers support patients and families in countless ways, from sitting and talking with someone who wants company, to offering reassurance to relatives, or helping behind the scenes. The best volunteers are those who are patient, kind, and passionate about helping others. People who understand how powerful it can be to simply be there for someone.

Volunteering roles are varied, and there's a place for everyone. Some volunteers prefer patient facing roles, offering companionship or supporting families. Others find their strengths in non clinical roles such as gardening, helping in our cafés, or supporting our charity shops – perfect for those who want to contribute but may feel less comfortable in clinical settings. What all roles share is a commitment to kindness and to making people feel less alone.



Finding a role for you



Join our volunteer community!

Whether you can spare a few hours a month or would like to commit more regularly, there's a role waiting for you during an exciting year for the Hospice. As we continue to support our community during Shaping our Future [see pages 8-11] there really is no better time to get involved.

Find out more at hospiceintheweald.org.uk/join-our-team to start your volunteering journey

Inspirational support

Every little bit of support helps patients and their loved ones at Hospice in the Weald make the most of the precious time they have left for living. A huge thank you to those who have chosen to volunteer and fundraise in support of those who need it most, including the incredible people on these pages.

A big thank you to Rebecca Watts and Georgina Hallworth, who walked 22 miles from Yatton to Cheddar Gorge in memory of Rebecca's sister, Catherine. Through this impressive challenge they've raised **£2,440.46!**



Rebecca Watts & Georgina Hallworth

Huge thanks to Barry, Will and all the brilliant teams at Knocker & Foskett and The Restoration. Their golf day raised an incredible **£1,420!** What a great way to combine fundraising whilst having fun with friends and colleagues.



Knocker & Foskett & The Restoration

Gillian Davis has been holding recitals in support of the Hospice since 2008 in memory of her husband, Richard Beattie Davis. Gillian set herself a target to raise **£20,000** in twenty years, which she exceeded this year! We are truly thankful for her dedicated support and would also like to thank the committed musicians and supporters who have contributed to this brilliant milestone.

Gillian Davis



Nicky Buckingham

We are so grateful to Nicky Buckingham who donated all the proceeds from her stall at our Christmas Market held back in November, where she raised a fantastic **£1,500**. Thank you, Nicky, for your dedicated support over the years, raising a total of **£7,500!** A big congratulations also on receiving a British Empire Award earlier last year.



Elliott Berry

Thank you to Elliott Berry who set himself a massive challenge - completing a mighty 50km ultra in memory of his grandad. Elliott ran an entire circuit of Lake Windermere, and through this impressive achievement raised **£1,192.50!**

Willmott Dixon

A shout out to Holly, Scott and the amazing team at Willmott Dixon. They have been transforming some of our retail shops as part of their Willmott Dixon Foundation Trainee Challenge. Thanks to their hard work and generosity, we have already received many positive comments from shop visitors enjoying the new look. They also hosted a Clash for Care Charity Football Tournament and a Wine Tasting Evening. The amount raised from this, combined with the gift-in-kind labour and materials for our shops, equates to a total of **£28,228.45!**



Jack Akehurst

Our deepest gratitude to Jack Akehurst at the 1709 Tattoo shop in Edenbridge and to all the tattooists that supported their charity day. Jack renamed his tattoo shop 1709 after his sister Jemma's date of birth. Jemma was cared for at the Hospice. The event raised a huge **£6,142** and we really appreciate the generosity and hard work of everyone involved!



Our volunteers

Thank you to our wonderful volunteers and local businesses who have **supported our fundraising events** over the past few months - from cheering Hospice Run participants over the finish line, to welcoming families at Light Up a Life and Carols at Christmas, running stalls at our Christmas Market, and helping collect Christmas trees through our recycling scheme. Your time, energy and generosity make these events possible.



Moonlight WALK

Join us for a night of walking,
music, memories and glitter as we
light up the streets of Sevenoaks!

Saturday 27th June | Starting at Sevenoaks Rugby Club



Scan here to register or contact our
fundraising team on 01892 820 533 or
fundraising@hospiceintheweald.org.uk