

Your Hospice



30 years of
caring
together
1991 - 2021

News and updates
April 2021

2021 marks three decades of providing compassionate care

inside

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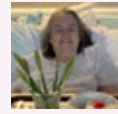
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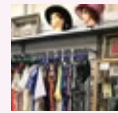
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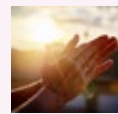
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Your Hospice is your newsletter and we want to hear from you!

Now more than ever we'd like to hear about your experience of our Hospice and the many inspirational ways that you are supporting us. We want to feature your stories and feedback, so please email or call us.

Contact us

Enquiries 01622 792200
enquiries@hokh.co.uk

Fundraising 01622 790195
fundraising@hokh.co.uk

**Heart of Kent Hospice, Preston Hall,
Aylesford, Kent ME20 7PU**

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

At Heart of Kent Hospice, we are very respectful of the personal information you share with us and responsible in how we use it.

GDPR does not just relate to fundraising and marketing information but also incorporates all the personal information that is shared with us, including information from patients and their families, volunteers, colleagues, supporters and suppliers. If you would like to check your details and communication preferences on our records, please do get in touch.

You can opt out at any time or ask to just receive information about specific things by emailing preferences@hokh.co.uk or calling the Fundraising Team on 01622 790195. For a copy of our full privacy statement outlining how all the data collected by the Hospice is stored and used, please visit our website or contact preferences@hokh.co.uk to request a printed copy.

As I welcome you to our latest newsletter, I'm particularly struck by the stories of care, compassion and resilience that we are sharing with you.

You could argue that we regularly like to give our patients, families and colleagues the opportunity to tell you about the difference that Heart of Kent Hospice has made to their lives, but I'm sure you'll agree that the last year has thrown challenges at all of us, which have needed us to dig a little (or a lot) deeper!

As your local Hospice, we are committed to ensuring that we regularly review and adapt to meet the needs of our local community. And despite the pandemic, this remains a key priority. On page nine, Rachel Kidd shares her family's recent experience of losing her father to dementia. Our Dementia Nurse Specialists are continuing to provide invaluable guidance, advice and support remotely, using technology, to help 325 people living with dementia, and their families.

Equally, we are grateful to Brenda who candidly shares the reality of not being able to see family and loved ones during the crisis; on page six you can find out more about the efforts that our Family Liaison Team go to, to welcome and comfort all those who are staying on our Inpatient Unit at the moment.

Of course, all of this is only possible because you, the people of our local community, rallied in support of the Hospice when the closure of our shops and the cancellation of our fundraising events from March 2020 left us facing a shortfall of £1.3m. You were speedy and generous in your response and the success of our Urgent Fundraising Appeal enabled us to concentrate on keeping our patients, families and colleagues safe, without the additional burden of worrying about cash flow to cover salaries and paying the bills in the immediate term. You can read more about your response to our appeal on page 15.

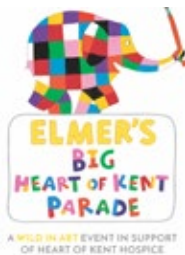
However, getting this far is only one part of the challenge; we are still hugely dependent on fundraising and at the time of writing, our shops remain closed and fundraising events are still very much restricted. Please continue to do whatever you can to secure our future.

Finally, on a personal level, I want to say thank you. After a busy and rewarding six years as Chief Executive of Heart of Kent Hospice, I feel that now is the right time to move on to a new challenge. I am incredibly proud of everything that has been achieved and the impact that the Hospice has on the daily lives of our patients and their loved ones. I feel very privileged to have worked alongside such a dedicated team, who are committed to providing the best compassionate care and I am excited for what the future holds.



With very best wishes

Sarah Pugh
Chief Executive



Elmer's coming to town and bringing some much-needed colour and joy!

We are very excited that there are just a few months to go until Elmer's Big Heart of Kent Parade arrives in Maidstone! Last March we had to take the decision to postpone the Parade for a year, but we're delighted that in this, our 30th anniversary year, Elmer and his friends will be marching onto the streets of our county town on Saturday 19 June until Sunday 22 August. We very much hope that this free outdoor walking trail will provide a much-needed boost to everyone's wellbeing and the local economy.

Why Elmer?

Elmer's Big Heart of Kent Parade is an exciting and high-profile way for us to raise awareness of the Hospice. Many people that need our services don't know about us or know that our support is provided free of charge in the community, in the home and at the Hospice. We also want to dispel some myths that exist around hospice care, so people can see a hospice is not a scary or sad place. Our personalised care and support improves and enhances the comfort, health and happiness of people nearing the end of their lives.

There is a poignant connection to Heart of Kent Hospice, as we all know that elephants never forget. Our Hospice is a place where memories are made and where many people return to remember their loved ones.

Come and join us

We need you to become a Trailmaker!

Do you remember the iconic Games Makers at the London 2012 Olympics? We're looking for our very own Trailmakers to help us deliver this incredible, free, public event for Maidstone!

Volunteering is a great way to give something back to the community - it makes you feel good and you will be making a huge difference to visitors' experience of the trail. The trail will provide a much-needed boost to the local economy, enable residents and visitors to enjoy spending time outside, instil civic pride and showcase all that Maidstone has to offer.

Don't forget to download our Elmer's Big Heart of Kent Parade App! It's free. To find out more, visit www.elmermaidstone.co.uk

Volunteer your time! We're looking for people to cover three-hour shifts during weekdays and weekends across the nine weeks of the trail. Visit www.elmermaidstone.co.uk for more details on being one of our Trailmakers and to apply.



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Official Presenting Partner



So, what have we been up to?

At the start of the pandemic, Elmer was safely placed into hibernation and our plans were put on hold. Over the past six months we have been working behind the scenes with our Official Heritage Partner, Maidstone Borough Council and Official Logistics Partner, Gallagher Group, to plan how the nine-week trail can go ahead in a Covid-secure way.

We can now tell you that...

Elmer will be joined on the trail by lots of his friends - there will be up to 50 individually designed Elmers to find!

We have kept in touch with our Learning Programme schools and community groups. They have finished designing and painting their baby Elmers. Throughout the Parade the adopted baby Elmers will be clustered into herds and can be seen in several indoor venues. After the trail they will have pride of place in their local school or community as a legacy of this event.

Our Elmer artists have been busy creating their uniquely designed Elmer sculptures and they look amazing! Back in January 2020 we were blown away by the incredible range of designs, which came from local artists, as well as national artists. From the 200 designs submitted, you'll see the very best out on the trail!

How do I take part in the trail?

The Parade is open to everyone and we hope as many people as possible will explore all or parts of the fully accessible trail over the summer. It might be that you stumble across an Elmer while you are out and about, or you may decide to plan a visit to see as many as possible or take in a certain route. You'll be able to pick up a copy of a beautifully hand-illustrated map at key town centre locations across Maidstone or use the official Parade app to help you explore.

The free Parade app will be available to download from 19 June. It will show you the location of each Elmer and the herds of baby Elmers, along with information about our official partners, sponsors and artists.

Each Elmer sculpture will have a unique app code. Once you tap the code into your mobile device, it will reveal some exciting rewards for you to download. The printed trail map is a lovely keepsake.

Where will the trail take me?

We've spent lots of time walking and exploring hidden pockets of Maidstone to ensure we deliver a trail that celebrates all that Maidstone has to offer. The trail will reflect the town's history, economic heart and areas of natural beauty. If it's needed over the summer, appropriate social distancing measures can be accommodated at each sculpture. There are three suggested walks within the trail totalling around six miles.

You can do the trail your way - you might want to dip in and out of areas over the nine weeks, spend a weekend completing the trail or if you are feeling very energetic, do it all in a day!

River Walk is a peaceful and beautiful walk along the River Medway. The river path runs from Lockmeadow at one end to Allington Lock at the other. Along the way you can visit the Hermitage Millennium Amphitheatre, Whatman Park, and enjoy the beautiful view of Allington Castle.

Heritage Walk takes in some of our historic and well-known landmarks such as Archbishop's Palace, The Carriage Museum, Gabriel's Hill, Jubilee Square, Royal Star Arcade, Fremlin Arch, Maidstone Museum, Brenchley Gardens and County Hall.

Nature Walk will guide you from the town centre incorporating one of Maidstone's hidden gems - Vinters Valley Nature Reserve. You can enjoy exploring and seeing the many plants and animals that call the nature reserve home. You'll also discover Elmers in the award-winning Mote Park, with its 30-acre lake and mix of grass and woodland.

@elmermaidstone #elmermaidstone



Making memories with our inpatients

We understand that receiving visitors is incredibly valuable to a patient's wellbeing while they are staying in the Hospice. When that's not possible, we go to great lengths to help our patients feel loved.

Brenda Ashby from Maidstone was admitted to the Hospice Inpatient Unit in mid-January for symptom control. Up until then she had been living with cancer at home with her husband Gordon (known to everyone as Tony) and her pets: Toto the dog, Twinkle the cat and Pip the hamster.

"This is the first time we've been separated in nearly 60 years of marriage," Brenda explained. "We really miss each other. We've always done everything together."

As Brenda was staying on our Inpatient Unit for symptom control, under the COVID-19 NHS guidance, she was only able to keep in touch with Tony by phone.



Brenda agreed that her ongoing care would need to be provided in a care home. Again, because of coronavirus, she would not be able to have visitors in the care home either. Understandably, this caused both Brenda and Tony a great deal of distress. *"Tony wants me home, but he wouldn't be able to cope."*

The teams looking after Brenda understood how upsetting this was for her and Tony and wanted to do something to enable them to spend some time together. It was agreed the Hospice would try to arrange a home visit before Brenda would go into the care home, so she could see Tony and her pets for a few hours.

When it was arranged, Brenda said she had mixed emotions as she knew she would have to leave her home and family again: *"I was very excited for a home visit and when I got home it felt like nothing had changed. I had a lovely day, the dog gave me a high five, the cat gave me a kiss and even the hamster came out during daylight! But I did wonder if I'd done the right thing because Tony was very upset as I was leaving again and that made me sad."*

Looking after our patients' emotional and spiritual wellbeing is just as important as their physical wellbeing.

She acknowledged: *"We're doing the right thing about my future care and when he is able to visit, the care home isn't too far away. In the meantime, he has his routine. He cares a lot about the animals, the dog follows him round and he makes a fuss of the cat."*

Brenda is very grateful for her time at the Hospice and for the team's efforts to boost her morale and enable her to see Tony and her pets. In her warmly, self-deprecating way, she said: *"They're doing the best they can with what they've got."*

Since writing this article Brenda has sadly died. We'd like to send our love and thanks to Tony and Brenda's whole family for allowing us to share Brenda's story.

At Heart of Kent Hospice, we put our patients at the heart of their care. If you want to find out more about what Hospice services are available, contact our Hospice Community Team on 01622 792200.

Those who touch our lives stay in our hearts forever



Remembrance and reflection have always played an important part of life here at Heart of Kent Hospice and our annual **Sunflower Appeal** offers the opportunity for us all to join together and pause to remember our loved ones. By dedicating a sunflower in their memory and donating to the Hospice, you are ensuring we can continue to care for our local community with specialist advice and support, making a difference at one of the most difficult times in people's lives.

We had hoped that in our 30th anniversary year, we would be able to invite you to our beautiful Hospice garden to remember your loved ones and be together once again. Unfortunately, this is not possible; therefore, we would like to invite you to join us at our virtual service on **Saturday 12 June at 11:00am**.

You will be able to join us on the Hospice's Facebook page and YouTube channel to share a quiet time of remembrance and reflection with poems and readings led by Sylvia Rothschild our Spiritual Lead. If you are unable to make this time the service will also be available to watch afterwards.

To make a donation in memory of your loved one please call Claire Ashby on **01622 792200 ext 242** who will be able to receive your donation over the telephone.

To find out more about our Sunflower Appeal visit www.hokh.org/support-us/make-a-donation-in-memory/sunflower-appeal

Your donations are already making a difference. You can make them go even further through Gift Aid.

By saying "Yes" to Gift Aid you can help us to provide exceptional care to even more people living with a terminal illness in our local community – at no extra cost to you.

If you are a UK tax payer, you can make every £1 you give – or have given in the past four years – worth 25p more, under the Gift Aid scheme, as it allows us to reclaim tax you have already paid to HM Revenue and Customs on eligible donations. This means that you can make an even bigger difference at no extra cost to you.

We get an extra 25p for every pound donated at **no extra cost!**



Gift Aid makes every £1 you donate worth £1.25, £10 becomes £12.50, £20 becomes £25 and £50 becomes £62.50. It soon adds up!

How to Gift Aid

giftaid it ☒

If you would like to Gift Aid your donations, you can, by:

- ticking the Gift Aid box when you make an online donation via our website.
- downloading our Gift Aid declaration form from www.hokh.org/resources and returning your completed form by emailing it to fundraising@hokh.co.uk or posting it to Gift Aid administration, Heart of Kent Hospice, Preston Hall, Aylesford, Kent ME20 7PU
- calling **01622 792200 ext 245** to make a declaration over the phone.

If you have donated previously, but forgot to Gift Aid – don't worry, you still can. Simply download or request and complete our Gift Aid declaration form and send it back to us. This will allow us to claim Gift Aid on the past four years of your donations.

Once you've made your declaration, please remember to let us know of any changes to your tax status, including changes to your name or address.

Over 30 years of memories

We are extremely proud of reaching this incredible milestone. It's amazing to think that it has been 30 years since Heart of Kent Hospice first opened its doors to local families!

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody that has been instrumental in shaping the Hospice over the past three decades. There

has been incredible devotion and valued support, which has enabled us to care for over 50,000 people – patients, carers and their families.

We've talked to some of our longest serving Hospice colleagues who have shared their memories of the beginning, the changes and why they continue to do what they do.



Meet Karen Murphy, Catering Manager. What it was like in the beginning...

It was a crazy, but exciting time.
My very first job was to ring local

companies and ask them to support us by donating items to get us ready to open. The response was wonderful. The donations could be cartons of orange juice, boxes of coffee and general ingredients. The support from the community was amazing and 30 years on we still get donations to support the kitchen.

I remember walking into the kitchen and being really surprised to find it was not finished. I picked up a brush and painted the store cupboards. It was like moving into a new house – everyone mucked in and helped where

needed. We were a family, everybody knew each other by first names and we were determined to work together to get everything done.

Why I still work at the Hospice...

I always say it's because no one else would have me, but really, it's because no two days are the same. It's a bit like a hotel here, yes, we have a menu, but we cook what our patients want to eat. This is something we have always done and still do. We cater for all our patients' needs, whatever the occasion. We've catered for weddings, christenings and birthdays.

We are still very much a family and the Hospice café is the hub of our home. We get to meet and know everyone. I bake our very popular bread pudding, and patients and their families, colleagues and volunteers can't get enough of it. They all pop in and enjoy a slice!



Meet Amanda Logan, Clinical Nurse Specialist. What it was like in the beginning...

Everything was new. We were a small team of nurses and had a two-week induction prior to the Hospice opening to patients to get to know each other and plan how we were going to work together. It was exciting to be involved in something that I knew was needed and was going to make a difference to the community. The Hospice was, and is today, a happy place and a brilliant place to work.

We grew slowly at first, but as people became more aware of the Hospice and we became more established, our patient numbers increased. When we first opened, we mainly cared for people with cancer and motor neurone disease; now we support anyone with a life-limiting illness.

Why I still work at the Hospice...

One of the things I love about the Hospice is that we are patient and family focussed. We are and always have been here for the patients and their families. We always go that extra mile.



Meet Jackie Pritchard, Clinical Educator. How we have changed...

From the time I joined, we have broken down the barriers to palliative care in our community and people are now more aware of the care we provide and the support we can give. This has been achieved by responding to the needs of our community. We have changed and adapted and most importantly we have listened. We are

constantly reviewing and looking at how we can develop and improve to ensure we can support our community.

Why I still work at the Hospice...

I have been able to grow my knowledge and develop my career since I joined, but most importantly, working at the Hospice allows me to be the nurse I want to be. We care for patients and their families, our focus being 'person-centred care', which means we deliver care that meets the needs of the individual.

Perhaps you or a loved one received our care, or maybe you've given the gift of time as a volunteer, or you have taken part in a fundraising event.

To share your special memory, write to: Jenny Lloyd, Heart of Kent Hospice, Preston Hall, Aylesford, Kent ME20 7PU or email communications@hokh.co.uk

Share your special memory

To help with our anniversary celebrations we want you to share your memories of our Hospice. Whether this is a story, a picture, or a video, we'd love to hear from you during our special year.

Community dementia family care

We're grateful to Rachel Tidd for sharing her story of how the Hospice Dementia Team enabled her father, the respected ophthalmic surgeon, Greg Munton, and his family, to have the end of life he would have wanted.

Dad was already living with vascular dementia when he was diagnosed with cancer. Generally, he was well, and we had only been to the Hospice once – to the Dementia café – and received a couple of home visits, but we knew they were always at the end of the phone if we needed them.

We had been managing for a good 18 months, but around March 2020, Dad started to deteriorate mentally and physically and Mum needed additional support.

We got back in touch with the Hospice and started talking to Tracy, the Head of Hospice Dementia Team. Because of lockdown, we arranged to have video calls so that Tracy could 'see' my dad, and also talk to me, my mum and my brother. I wasn't sure how Dad would react to video calls but thankfully he reacted really well. One time I took the iPad over to Dad so Tracy could assess him and he opened his eyes and started talking directly to her. Dad would occasionally be a little abrupt with Tracy referring to his medical experience but she took it in her stride. She was always very good with him and treated him with the utmost respect.



Tracy Jackson, Head of
Hospice Dementia Team

Tracy was a godsend. She gave me the courage to ask for the things my parents needed, including a hospital bed when Dad could no longer climb the stairs.

On a couple of occasions, Dad was taken into Tunbridge Wells Hospital and Maidstone Hospital where we were only able to visit once. He was so distressed – it was really terrifying for him. He didn't know where he was and at one point he even thought he was in a hotel. When he would become agitated, the hospital would ring us and ask us to talk to him to calm him down. You want to be there for the people you love, but we couldn't because of lockdown.

Again, Tracy helped. We agreed as a family that whenever possible we would keep Dad at home where it was familiar, he was surrounded by family and where he felt safe. So together we created an emergency healthcare plan and shared this with everyone involved in Dad's care.



One time Dad was struggling. He was very withdrawn and had fallen over. My mother called an ambulance and the crew wanted to take him to hospital but I arrived before they could leave and called Tracy. She spoke to the paramedics about my dad's healthcare plan. With this knowledge Dad was treated at home and was able to stay with us.

I feel we were so lucky that we had the support of the Hospice. Even when Dad died, Tracy had prepared us for when he was in the last stages of life and also what we needed to do when he died. Even though I had been a nurse, Tracy didn't assume knowledge and she didn't patronise.

Tracy was at the end of the phone for help, support and advice in Dad's final hours. I was concerned that as his condition deteriorated, we may need additional support. Tracy had said there was a bed at the Hospice if we needed it. Just knowing that was very reassuring.

In the end, I was so glad I was there for Dad and that he had died at home with his family.

Tracy was the first person I called. She repeated the practical things about what we needed to do. She was very calming and told me to go with the flow. I felt because of her support, we were more in control.

The Hospice was always very reassuring and their interventions were always timely and never intrusive. I feel we were so lucky that we had the support of Tracy and the rest of the Hospice Dementia Team. They are the most amazing people.

Thank you

If you or a loved one have been diagnosed with dementia, why not visit our online Dementia café. It's held on the first Saturday of the month between 10:30am – 12:30pm. Please register by noon the day before by calling 01622 792200 ext 204 or emailing enquiries@hokh.co.uk

Volunteer opportunities

Hear from Sylvie Austen why students should think about volunteering!

Sylvie Austen volunteers at our Heart of Kent Hospice shop in Tunbridge Wells. In this interview she tells us how she balances volunteering with her school studies and why she helps out in the shop for a few hours on a Saturday morning.



Sylvie Austen, Shop Volunteer

What made you decide to volunteer?

I was looking for some work experience and I thought that volunteering at a charity shop would be a good opportunity to get some retail experience. I visited the Heart of Kent Hospice shop with my mum and met Sarah, the Manager. She was warm and welcoming. When I asked about volunteering opportunities, she talked me through the options and helped me to sign up.

What do you enjoy about volunteering?

I love speaking to the customers and spending time with the other volunteers in the shop. I have conversations with lots of different people while I am there. I get to meet people I wouldn't necessarily meet normally.

There's a lovely atmosphere in the shop – it's very uplifting. We have music on and there's always dancing! I always leave the shop feeling positive and energised after spending time in there.

Was it easy to settle in?

Everyone is friendly and helpful. The other volunteers and Hospice colleagues made me feel at home straight away. They are very patient and always willing to spend time training me and helping me out.

How much of a time commitment is it?

The Hospice Retail Team is incredibly flexible. You can choose how many hours you volunteer for – it's up to you. I help out for a few hours on a Saturday morning; I can't do more because I am still studying. If I felt this was too much, Sarah would be happy for me to change and do less. My sister also volunteers at the shop for two hours on a Saturday, as part of her Duke of Edinburgh award.

"It was easy to sign up as a volunteer. Sarah asked me some questions and helped me fill in the application form."

What would you say to someone thinking about volunteering?

Definitely do it! I enjoy volunteering at the shop and I wish I could do more. The time I am there just flies by and it's lots of fun. I wasn't expecting to gain as much as I have from volunteering. It's a great experience and you can put it on your CV!



Could you give the gift of time like Sylvie?

Whatever you like doing and however much time you can commit, there's a volunteer role for you.

Volunteering is a fantastic way to enhance your CV, meet new people and learn new skills. If you are between 16 and 18, like Sylvie, you can volunteer in one of our retail shops.

We support the Duke of Edinburgh's award, whether you're doing your Bronze, Silver or Gold award, you can volunteer in several of our retail shops from the age of 14, but on your behalf we will need to apply for a Kent County Council child employment permit.

If you are over 18 you can volunteer in a number of different roles, from patient care and wellbeing to maintenance and shops; from catering and administration to being an ambassador or fundraising.

To find out more, come along to one of our virtual volunteer open events on Zoom:

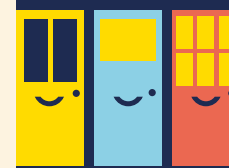
Thursday 22 April 5:30pm
Saturday 8 May 10:00am

From July, we are hoping to run face-to-face events. To find out more information closer to the event, please visit our website:

Friday 2 July 10:00am
Tuesday 14 September 5:30pm
Saturday 9 October 10:00am

To book your place email volunteers@hokh.co.uk

To find out more about the volunteering roles we have available, please visit our website www.hokh.org/support-us/volunteer-for-us or email volunteers@hokh.co.uk



Compassionate
Neighbours
across Maidstone, Tonbridge & Malling

Celebrating a year of our
Compassionate Neighbours project

We're delighted to celebrate the first-year anniversary of our Compassionate Neighbours project and what it has achieved.

The project was launched to tackle social isolation and loneliness for those living with a life-limiting illness or frailty in Maidstone, Tonbridge and Malling and surrounding towns and villages.

Jennie Steer, Compassionate Neighbours Community Engagement Lead for Heart of Kent Hospice said: *"We are thrilled with the success of the project and what we have achieved in our first year. Despite the pandemic, we have been able to adapt and exceed our ambitious target of recruiting and training 50 volunteers. The aim of the project is to connect people and we do this by matching personalities and experiences so that the relationship is mutually beneficial."*

"Our measure of success is not just about the number of matched volunteers. It's the sharing of time, watching friendship grow and the positivity that the project brings."



Jennie Steer, Compassionate Neighbours Community Engagement Lead

During the pandemic support is being given virtually over the phone, by video call and letter writing



Our support is needed now more than ever

To meet the needs of the community, so that no one nearing the end of their life through age or illness feels lonely, Jennie and her team are aiming to recruit and train at least six new volunteers every month. New volunteers will be provided with a full training programme. The online training courses are informal, interactive and give volunteers the opportunity to explore how they can use their compassion and time to help others.

Why I am a Compassionate Neighbour



"Becoming a Compassionate Neighbour gives me so much in return. By committing a couple of hours each week, I have not only made a new friend, but also discovered a network of kindness."

Tina, Compassionate Neighbour



"The project is a great way to give those who may be isolated or lonely some company and friendship. The pandemic has certainly made me more aware of those who are isolated and in need of support. Being a Compassionate Neighbour allows me to play a part, even if just for a couple of hours each week."

James, Compassionate Neighbour

Key achievements since we launched in January 2020

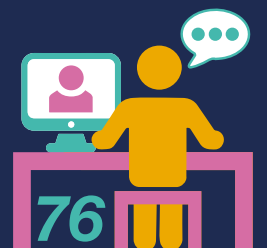
90
referrals received

from a variety of sources, both within the Hospice and externally.



Compassionate Neighbour volunteers improved quality of life

Serving and supporting our community



online training & social events held

Thank you

to all our wonderful Compassionate Neighbours, its funders and everyone who continues to support this project.

We continue to welcome referrals from people in need and from volunteers who are happy to share their time as a Compassionate Neighbour. To find out more, please email cn@hokh.co.uk or call 01622 792200 ext 240.




Between 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020:
We helped
70 patients and their families and carers
to access welfare benefits
totalling an amazing
£206,407.20

Planning for our future selves

According to a variety of legal sources, the past 12 months have seen a surge in Will enquiries. It is completely understandable that the pandemic has focused our minds on our mortality.

Sandra Cayzer, Welfare Adviser from Heart of Kent Hospice acknowledges: *"It can be difficult for us to think about the end of our life and after we're gone, but the coronavirus pandemic has given us an opportunity to do just that."*

But, as well as deciding what we want at the end of our life, we really need to tell someone.

"It's very important that our loved ones know our plans for the future and are in a position to carry them out or to discuss them on our behalf if we are unable to do that for ourselves," explains Sandra. *"For example, where would we want to live if we could no longer live independently? Are there medical treatments we would accept or refuse?"*

Lasting Power of Attorney is a legal document that allows you to appoint one or more 'attorneys' to help you make decisions or who can make them on your behalf. For attorneys, it's a legal undertaking to act in your best interests. There are two elements to Power of Attorney: health and welfare, and property and financial affairs. You can fill in one or both parts, and can appoint different attorneys for each part. You do not need to go through a Solicitor, but you do need to pay to register your Lasting Power of Attorney with the Office of the Public Guardian.

"Power of Attorney gives you more control over what happens to you if you develop an illness or have an accident and cannot make your own decisions," explains Sandra. *"But in order to grant Power of Attorney you have to have mental capacity. Sadly, people often leave it too late and without Power of Attorney it can be very complicated and expensive for loved ones to act for you."*

Sandra adds: *"If you are going to give authority to someone to act on your behalf, then you need to let them know your wishes in advance."*

At the Hospice, we regularly discuss advance care planning with our patients, although anyone can write a Will. It's an opportunity to plan for your future care and support while

you have the capacity to do so. It can cover your thoughts on different types of care, support and treatment, your religious and cultural beliefs, and financial matters. It can even cover whether you prefer showers to baths and your favourite food.

For patients who need help with planning or indeed are struggling with their financial future because of their illness, the Hospice Family Support Team can help. They not only advise on Power of Attorney and advance care planning, but also on what support patients and their dependants and carers may be entitled to such as Attendance Allowance or Personal Independence Payments (neither of which are means tested), or more practical help like arranging for a Blue Badge.

For more information about
Power of Attorney, visit
www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney

In 2020 there was a steep increase in the number of people enquiring about making a Will and Sandra hopes this means more people will go on to have their Will written. *"When it comes to who will receive our estate or who will look after our children when we die, we all make assumptions that are incorrect. For example, a common law spouse has no automatic right to their partner's estate unless they are named in the Will. Likewise, if parents die without appointing guardians for their children, the court will decide on their behalf."*

It can be tempting to go down the lower cost route of a Do-It-Yourself Will, but Sandra says these are the most contested. *"If you have children or assets, it is best to use a solicitor."*

While it has been an incredibly difficult year for all of us and a tragic one for many, the coronavirus pandemic has given us time to reflect on what is important. Planning for the end of life we want and the legacy we want to leave behind, is very much in our own hands.

For one month every year, local solicitors donate their time to creating your Will for you, in return for a suggested donation to the Hospice. If you would like further details on our Make a Will month, please contact Claire Ashby by emailing claire.ashby@hokh.co.uk

If you, or someone you know are facing practical worries, relating to financial security and legal matters, get in touch with our Welfare Advisers by calling 01622 792200 ext 260 or emailing fst@hokh.co.uk

Charity shop news and collections update

Thank you to everyone who has supported our Heart of Kent Hospice shops, in what has been a turbulent year for the retail industry.

The latest Government guidelines have indicated that non-essential shops may re-open on Monday 12 April. If this is the case, we will re-open on this date. In the meantime, our shops remain temporarily closed and our website is regularly updated with the latest arrangements for each shop.

Donations

When we are back open, please call ahead to your local Heart of Kent Hospice shop to book a donation slot. Unfortunately we will be unable to accept any donations that have not been booked in. Anything donated to our charity shops, from books and kitchen equipment to clothes and toys, will need to go into quarantine for 72 hours before it is sorted.

With items you are donating, please think if it is suitable; the easiest way to find out is to ask yourself, *"Would someone I know buy this?"* If the answer is "Yes", we'd love to receive it.

When preparing to bring in your donated items, please can we ask where possible that you clean things in advance, for example put clothes and textiles through the washing machine and wipe down solid surfaces.

Until we open our doors you can still support the Hospice in other ways, including nominating us as your chosen charity if you shop on Amazon – simply go to smile.amazon.co.uk to get started.

We look forward to welcoming you safely back to our shops soon.

Good luck with your 'clear out' and please remember while our shops are closed we can't accept any donations.

Maidstone is home to the first Heart of Kent Hospice pound shop



Our King Street shop is ready to open its doors with a new and exciting 'variety and value' offering. The shop is stocked with unsold items from our other Hospice shops. All the stock is good quality - the items just haven't sold and everything is priced at £1.

The King Street shop is a great, convenient location with good parking facilities, which makes it easier for local people to donate and shop. The new instore '£1' offering aims to encourage and attract new customers to increase sales.

Mark Mickelburgh, Head of Retail for Heart of Kent Hospice said: *"We wanted to do something smart and innovative to sell our unused stock. The concept is based on keeping stocks high and the price low, using the £1 price point as the focus. We are confident the excitement of the high turnover of stock will be welcomed by our existing customers and will entice a lot of new customers in to see us."*

It's time for a clear out

If in the meantime you are thinking it's time for a clear out, but wondering where to start, our Retail Team would like to share with you a few tips they have picked up from sorting donations:

Allocate enough time

Whether you have a room to tidy or a wardrobe, plan enough time to get the job done. There's nothing worse than starting a project and not having enough time to finish it.

Equipment

Before you start, make sure you have everything you are going to need, such as strong bin bags and storage boxes.

Give every item a destination

For each item, ask yourself:

 RECYCLE

 CHARITY

 KEEP

 BIN

Don't get distracted!

As you are sorting, it's very tempting to stop and reminisce. Have a quick look, then make a destination decision (using the above) and carry on.



Eve Allen, King Street £1 Shop Manager

For further updates regarding our shops re-opening and donations, visit our website www.hokh.org/support-us/support-our-shops

Get involved!

From events that will test your fitness and get your adrenalin pumping to family fun, there's something for everyone in our calendar of fundraising events and activities. Whether you decide to walk, run, or take to the skies for us, there are plenty of ways to get involved.

30th anniversary events calendar

30 FOR 30 CHALLENGE

Friday 16 - Monday 19 July

To celebrate our 30th anniversary this year, we would love you to choose a challenge themed around the number 30 and raise £30, £300 or even £3,000! Your challenge really can be anything! We've made some suggestions below, but you can be as creative and innovative as you would like.

To get started as a 30 for 30 challenger, all you need to do is choose your challenge and sign up for free at:

www.hokh.org/support-us/events/30for30

30 for 30 challenge ideas:

- Do 30 handstands
- Do 30 sit-ups
- Run around your garden 30 times
- Cycle 30K
- Eat 30 different types of fruit
- Eat 30 crackers without any water
- Dance for 30 minutes
- Draw 30 pictures
- Get your dog to do 30 tricks
- Run 30K



The Big Jump

To celebrate **Heart of Kent Hospice's 30th anniversary** we're calling for charity challengers to take to the skies!

**30 WING WALKERS
AND 30 SKY DIVERS**

To sign up or find out more visit www.hokh.org

Join our virtual Bluebell Walk Sunday 2 May 2021

Our Bluebell Walk has been a fixture on our events calendar for many years and continues to be one of our most supported and loved events. Although we're unable to walk amongst the bluebells this year, we still want to give our community the chance to come together and unite with us this May. At 10:00am on Sunday 2 May we'll be live streaming a special Bluebell Walk on our Facebook page and YouTube channel, giving you the opportunity to spend time watching and enjoying the beautiful Kentish countryside.

This year in support of our specialist Hospice nurses and doctors we'd like to raise £5,474 through our virtual Bluebell Walk, which could pay for a day of care on our Inpatient Unit.

To find out more visit our website www.hokh.org/support-us/events/bluebellwalk

Community events calendar

Wing Walk Day Saturday 10 July

Join us and be a part of our first Wing Walk event in 2021. Take to the skies for this incredible challenge!

Ultra Challenge - Thames Bridges Trek Saturday 11 September

Setting out from Putney Bridge, walk the 25km route that zigzags across the City of London and soak up the unrivalled views of the skyline.

Open Gardens - Knowle Hill Farm, Ulcombe Sunday 12 September

Explore this stunning two-acre garden with spectacular views over the South Downs. Please book your place in advance by visiting our website.

Ragnar Relay

Saturday 18 - Sunday 19 September

Sign up to be part of a team of 10 running 3-11km legs over a 24-hour period for the Ragnar White Cliffs Relay.

Virtual London Marathon

Sunday 3 October

Run the London Marathon, but from your own front door. Be a part of the biggest London Marathon ever.

Royal Parks Half Marathon

Sunday 10 October

Join the Heart of Kent Hospice team and run this beautiful half marathon event that takes you through the iconic parks of London.



Thank you for being the reason we can care

Heart of Kent Hospice has survived the most challenging year in its history, thanks to the ongoing support of you, our generous and loyal supporters. When we needed you most you were there for us, and for over 900 families, which we are currently supporting.

When we launched our Urgent Fundraising Appeal in April 2020, we were facing the threat of closure. We were forecasting a loss of £1.3m in income due to the cancellation of fundraising events and the closure of our 14 charity shops due to coronavirus.

Your response was extraordinary and thanks to your unwavering support in the past year we have been able to support even more terminally ill people and their families than ever before.

Our urgent appeal raised
£1,182,010
from 4,853 donations

Where donations were gift-aided, we were able to increase the value of donations by an extra
£41,939

Over 60 Charitable Trusts, Parish Councils and other grant giving organisations have helped to improve the lives of patients and their families.

However, it's important to us that our supporters and funders understand that we must continue to carefully manage our finances. We remain hugely dependent on resuming our programme of fundraising events and opening our shops as soon as we can, so fundraising remains an ongoing and crucial challenge.

We simply can't concentrate on the short-term – we must plan for the future and crucially, funding the future. Sadly, we anticipate that demand for our specialist care and advice will only continue to increase, as the repercussions of missed diagnoses and treatments during the pandemic become even more evident. We have already begun to see a significant escalation in referrals from patients who need specialist support.

We are particularly grateful to the Colyer-Fergusson Charitable Trust, for their extraordinary donation of £500,000 to our appeal. This is the largest single donation the Hospice has ever received and, in this our 30th anniversary year, it will help us recover from the far-reaching effects of the pandemic.

We are confident about the future and hopeful that with your continued support Heart of Kent Hospice will continue caring for the next 30 years.

Thank you to all our brilliant supporters who have continued to raise money for us in the most creative ways – you've told us about your:

Garden marathons
Handstand challenge

Head shaves and hair cuts

Treadmill half and full marathons

Danceathons

Indoor three peaks challenge

Virtual bingo and quiz nights

Virtual bake sales

Virtual cycle challenges



Just £1
★ to play ★
& help



Play, make our day and yours!

Play & support us!
Visit
www.hokh.org

Weekly prizes drawn every Friday!

- ★ £1,000 guaranteed winner
- ★ Rollover prize of up to £10,000
- ★ £50 guaranteed winner
- ★ Plus, 20 guaranteed prizes of £10!

Thank you, you're the reason we can care.

Unsold numbers are added to the draw for the rollover prize each week. This prize is won if a sold number is picked, or rolled over if an unsold number is drawn. If unsold numbers are continuously picked, the rollover could build up to an amazing £10,000 jackpot!

Heart of Kent Hospice Promotions Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary of Heart of Kent Hospice, registered charity number 298164. Heart of Kent Hospice Promotions Ltd is licenced and regulated in Great Britain by the Gambling Commission under account number 004711. Our lottery exists for the sole purpose of raising funds to support our work, and all profits from the lottery are donated directly to Heart of Kent Hospice.



Licensed by The Gambling Commission (gamblingcommission.gov.uk).



30 years of
caring
together
1991 - 2021

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