

**ST CATHERINE'S
HOSPICE**

SPRING/SUMMER 2018

Matters

**CARING
FOR FRIENDS**

It's a privilege to help
my own friends, p6

MICHELLE'S STORY

The hospice honestly
saved us, p3

FULL CIRCLE APPEAL

So no one has to face death
and loss alone, p4



CONTENTS

Patient's Story

3 MICHELLE'S STORY

Latest News

4 FULL CIRCLE APPEAL

At the hospice

5 HELPING MORE PEOPLE AT OUR NEW HOSPICE

At the Hospice

6 CARING FOR FRIENDS

Relative's Story

7 CAROLINE AND COLIN'S STORY

In Your Community

8 COMMUNITY CARE

9 DORINDA'S STORY

10 NEW REDHILL SHOP OPENS ITS DOORS

Relative's Story




11 JAMES'S STORY

Support Us

12 SUPPORT ST CATHERINE'S HOSPICE TODAY

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"Welcome to the Spring edition of Matters, St Catherine's Hospice supporter magazine that keeps you up to date with hospice news and shows you how your support makes a difference to local terminally ill people and their family and friends."

I'm Terry O'Leary, Chair of Trustees. In 2014 my wife Jenny was cared for by St Catherine's. The care we experienced then moved me so greatly that I felt compelled to volunteer my time and skills.

People often think hospices are a place where people go to die, but they're much more than that. They're a place where families, like mine, make the most of their remaining time together, and prepare in the best way possible for a future apart. That's exactly what Michelle (opposite) and her family were able to do during her time at the hospice.

During the most difficult times St Catherine's helps people find joy. On p7 sister and brother, Caroline Walker and Colin Martin, share how they remember laughter not sadness as the defining emotion from their time here.

Helping people to carry on living and to do the things they love, in spite of their illness, wasn't something I ever expected St Catherine's to be able to help with before Jenny came under their care. But that's exactly what Claire Lawson and our team of therapists do for local people. Read more about their vital work on p8.

On p4 I share news of a new fundraising appeal that will help us provide care for more local people. A lot of this care is given in the community all around us. On p9, Dorinda, a volunteer support worker, shares more about her role offering emotional support to people in the comfort and safety of their own homes.

Everything you read about is only made possible thanks to your generous support. My wife and family have been on the receiving end of your generosity. It helped make an impossibly difficult time for us slightly easier. For that, I will always be eternally grateful.

Thank you for supporting St Catherine's and local people in your community."

Terry O'Leary, Chair of Trustees



My wife, Jenny ▲



Me and my wife Jenny ▲



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"The hospice honestly saved us."



Michelle's Story

Michelle Rivers talked to us about how your support helped her and her family face up to her illness and plan for the future during her time at the hospice.

"I was diagnosed with bladder cancer last July. Just five months later, I discovered it was terminal. It all happened so quickly; I didn't want to die. When St Catherine's Hospice was first mentioned, I said 'no' and refused to think about coming here. I was scared, and thought if I came to the hospice, I wouldn't leave again.

St Catherine's understood my fears

Their nurses started to visit me at home. My pain was awful so they suggested things to help me manage it but it soon became too hard. It was so bad I was crying out in the night, which was causing a lot of stress and worry for my children. My 19 year old daughter had become one of my carers and it was distressing for her as well as for my 15 and 10 year old sons. They shouldn't have had to see their Mum like that in their own home.

It was my Mum who said, 'enough's enough', and insisted I come to St Catherine's for more specialised care. I was terrified, but I knew I had to do it for my family.

In a hospital, you're just a patient but in a hospice, you're a person

I've been so surprised by my experience here; it's nothing like I thought it would be. Every single person is so friendly and my care is completely tailored to me; I have a laugh with the nurses and even get to have cuddles with the therapy cat when he comes to visit!

When I was at home, I couldn't talk about the fact that I was dying

Whenever anyone mentioned death I'd literally cover my ears and block it out. Since coming to St Catherine's, I've been able to talk more openly with my family about what's going to happen. I've made arrangements for my funeral and planned who will care for my three children. The hospice has given me confidence and made me feel more comfortable to face these things.

The biggest impact my stay here has had is on my family

It's brought us closer together at a challenging time and helped my children relax. At home, my 15 year

old son couldn't talk to me about what was happening, and would often shut himself away, but now he looks forward to visiting me and is back to his old, cheeky self! My youngest has been so touched by the care I've received that he's signed up to fundraise for the hospice. I'm so proud of him.

When I came to St Catherine's I was in such a bad place. I couldn't face up to what was happening but with the hospice's care and emotional support, I've been able to address my illness and think about the future."

For every family like Michelle's, there are two other families struggling to cope with terminal illness alone - **Your support can change that.**

Full Circle Appeal

"35 years ago St Catherine's Hospice was founded by local people who wanted to transform care at the end of life for others in their community. Thanks to the generosity and support of readers like you, we have gone on to offer expert physical and emotional care to terminally ill local people and their families when life comes full circle.

Last year alone, we cared for around 2,000 people. But for every person we currently help there are two others we can't. That means two in three terminally ill people in our community are being left to manage their illness without hospice support. It means people are being left to face death and dying alone, and it means families are being left to care for loved ones without expert support. And it's happening all around us.

Things need to change. That is why we are launching the Full Circle Appeal, to raise £20 million so no one has to face death and loss alone. Everyone in our community deserves the best possible care. With your support, we want to make sure they get it.

I have seen firsthand how St Catherine's makes sure that local people aren't left alone. For two days I accompanied a senior nurse and a doctor as they met new patients in our community. One person had a newborn baby, another had a young school age family and a third person lived alone. One of them knew they were dying, another didn't, and a third was in denial. But all felt bewildered, anxious and overwhelmed by their illness. They were feelings I remember my wife Jenny and I experiencing, as we began to process her diagnosis.

Across those two days, I watched as the nurse and doctor sensitively and professionally comforted these patients and relatives at the most distressing point of their lives, something which is only made possible thanks to your support.

Now, we need to do more. We need to make sure our children, grandchildren, neighbours and friends will have hospice care in the future. We have already started to invest in our community's future care with a new larger hospice at Pease Pottage which will help us reach more people. You can read more in the enclosed insert.

We know our appeal is ambitious but it's vital because right now we're not helping enough people. For every one of your neighbours, colleagues, friends or family we help, there are two others we don't. That's too many people left alone towards the end of their lives.

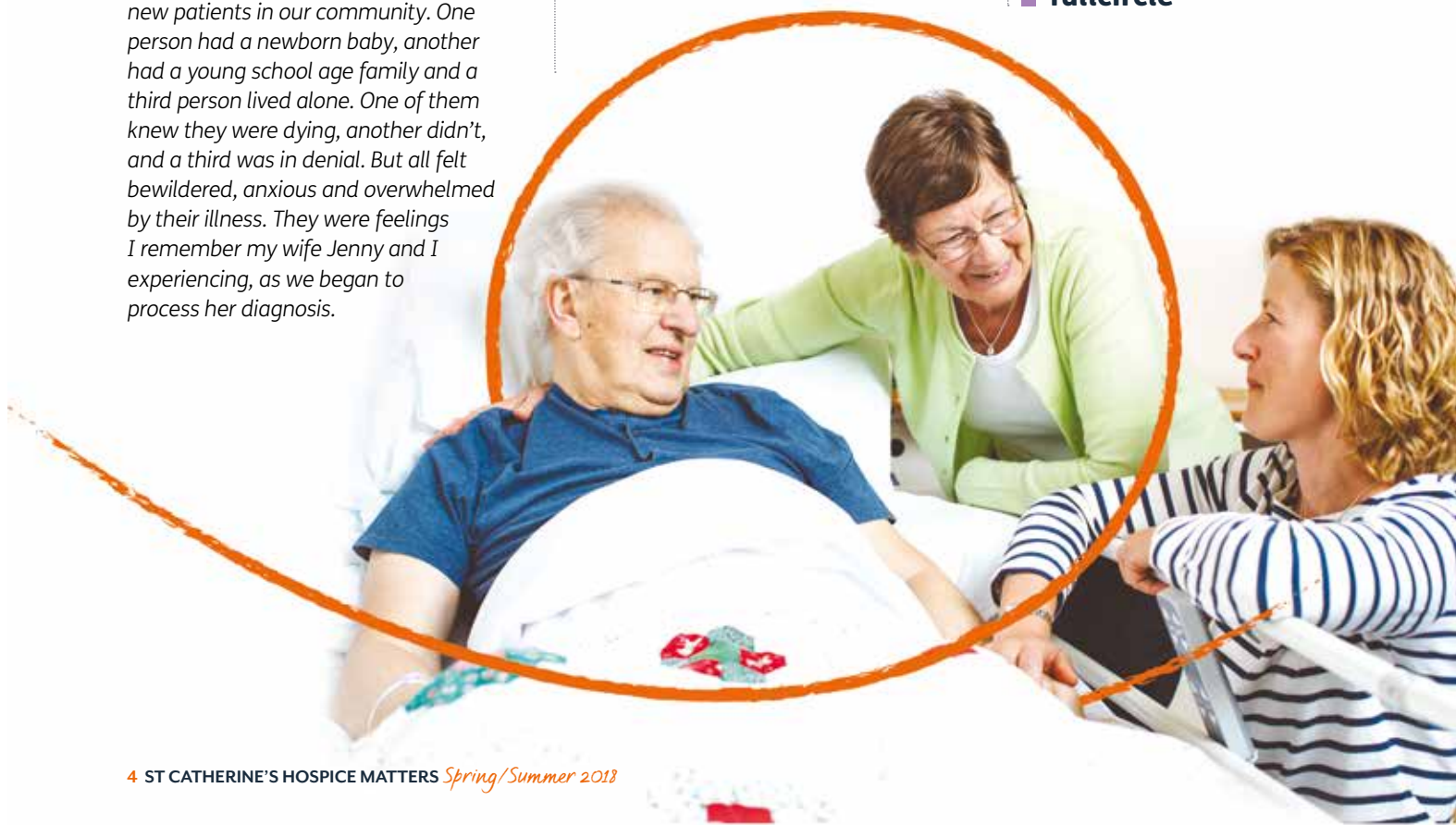
At St Catherine's we say we'll be there for everyone when life comes full circle. But we're not there - yet. We need to raise £20 million so we can be. I'm confident, with your support, we will. With your help we'll keep working until no one faces death and loss alone. That's what I want for people in our community and I hope you want the same."



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With your help we'll keep working until no one faces death and loss alone.”

For more information visit: www.stch.org.uk/fullcircle



Helping more people at our new hospice

Val Smith is a Nursing Assistant on our wards. She started working here six months after St Catherine's Hospice first opened its doors 35 years ago. Here, Val tells us more.

"I remember the opening of the hospice being a time of great excitement mixed with slight trepidation. A hospice was something brand new for our community. And it was a new challenge for me personally too.

The hospice was founded by a group of local people who felt that terminally ill people in their community weren't getting the expert care they needed, and deserved, when they were dying. Instead of ignoring the problem, the group took action. They raised money and built a hospice to make sure that people would get better care in the future.

Thanks to that group, I've learnt things about humanity and care that I couldn't have learnt elsewhere. And thanks to your ongoing support, I've been here for the last 35 years to give many local people as peaceful a death as possible.

We now need to stand on our founders' shoulders and invest in the future care of our community. And we need to do this by showing the same courage they did as we fundraise for a bigger hospice at Pease Pottage.

A bigger hospice is vital. Today more people than ever before are being referred to us but we can't help everyone. Currently, two in three



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A bigger hospice is vital. Today more people than ever before are being referred to us but we can't help them all.

people in our community are being left alone to manage terminal illness and all the challenges that brings. And that's something I find very upsetting. I became a nursing assistant to help people, not to leave them without support. It's an issue that affects us all because it's happening to people in our local area.

With our new hospice it's reassuring to know that in future fewer people will have to manage alone. We're born surrounded by love, our deaths should be the same. In the enclosed insert, you can read more about our new hospice. The hospice has been thoughtfully considered in conjunction with patients, relatives and nursing colleagues. Their input helps me feel confident that we'll be able to provide more care to more people at the hospice and in people's own homes in the community around us.

St Catherine's is so much more than a building. It's a way of caring and it's a community. You and the support you give are very much a part of that."

We hope you'll continue to be a part of our St Catherine's community by supporting us as we launch our Full Circle Appeal and look forward to our exciting future at Pease Pottage. Colleagues like Val couldn't provide care without you.



Caring for Friends

As a nurse here at the hospice, Caroline Collins cares for people in your community. It's possible she's even cared for someone you know. Here, she explains what it's like caring for people she knows personally.

"All of us probably have a slightly different persona for work and for our private lives. But what happens when those two areas of our lives cross over?"

I'm a hospice nurse in my own community

So caring for those I know personally is inevitable. In recent years my colleagues and I have nursed people who are either our own friends, or related to people we know. They've even been previous colleagues. It's been hard. There's no doubt about that.

I became a nurse because I knew I had something to share with others

I share it with everyone I care for. Even when I don't know people personally, they often live in the same community as me. We may even share neighbours, friends or other connections. They're 'our people', the people we all care about, and my colleagues and I do all we can to provide them with the care they deserve - care that's made even more special by the fact it's provided and funded by the generosity of people like you.

Apart from the obvious issues surrounding a person's privacy, dignity and right to confidentiality, there's also a significant emotional aspect involved in delivering unbiased care to all of those we support; each person deserves and needs our equal time and attention. But this isn't the biggest challenge for me.

When caring for someone I know our relationship shifts slightly

It becomes more intimate and I become more vulnerable. There've been times when I've felt a metaphorical rug being tugged from beneath my feet and I've had to pause, take stock and regain perspective on the job in hand.

A colleague recently sketched a beautiful picture which summed up how it feels to be a witness to often tragic circumstances. Her drawing showed a family in sadness as they surrounded a loved one's bed. In the foreground was a nurse standing in the doorway, watching over them, unnoticed. The difference when the person I care for (or their family

member) is a friend is that it takes a greater effort for me to remain at the door.

I'm fortunate to have a fabulous team around me

And we support each other. It may be that we swap wards to allow us head-space when things get tough, or colleagues may simply and quietly come alongside. We're there for our patients and one another. We help each other as we know that, as much as we may wish we could cure people, our care is about improving the quality of a person's life; however short it may be.

Overwhelmingly it's an absolute privilege to help people who matter to me, who I know from my life outside the hospice. To be trusted by my own friends to use my skills to help them as their life ends is a very special thing."

Colin and Caroline's Story

Thanks to your donations, we've been able to provide expert care to our local community for 35 years. As we look towards a future where we help even more people, Caroline Walker and Colin Martin share how the hospice cared for their parents.

"Our Dad, George, received end of life care at St Catherine's Hospice in September 1985. He was amongst the hospice's first patients. Our Mum, Trudi, received the same care before she passed away at the hospice in December 2016.

When you think about a hospice you think of fear and sadness

But although things were tinged with sadness, laughter is the defining emotion we remember from our time at St Catherine's. During Mum's stay, we laughed more together as a family than we'd probably done the entire year before.

Nothing was ever too much trouble

Everyone, from the cleaners to the chefs, the medical staff to the volunteers, were professional, compassionate and approachable. We were (and most importantly, Dad and Mum were) treated as individuals, and we were always told the truth. Mum felt safe at St Catherine's, and the way the staff listened to her and every other patient, acting upon their fears, needs and requests, was absolutely selfless.

Staff indulged Mum's sweet tooth

The chef frequently visited to discuss the latest cake on offer or to ask Mum what dessert she'd like. The physio team also worked to keep Mum mobile and she used to happily walk to the hospice coffee shop to see what cake was available! One evening we even set up camp in there to have a family meal. We also enjoyed a tippie from the drinks trolley together. Likewise, in 1985, Dad's fondness for a tippie was met when the hospice arranged for the local brewery to bring his favourite beer in a keg!

The medical team's honesty was so refreshing and helpful

It meant we didn't worry unnecessarily and the way they took time to answer our questions and concerns about Mum was a huge comfort. Even when they were breaking bad news they always did it compassionately.

As Mum became less well the team kept us updated and when the time came made sure we could be there. They made things as comfortable and as easy as possible. Their compassion made a massive difference.

St Catherine's removed much of our stress and feelings of helplessness

Without the hospice, things would have been much more distressing. Our parents wouldn't have had the personalised care they deserved and we wouldn't have had the invaluable support. Both Mum and Dad may have had only weeks to live, but at St Catherine's they were treated with respect and dignity, things which were of great importance to them both.

Dad and Mum were cared for 31 years apart

But with St Catherine's ambitious new hospice and Full Circle Appeal it's reassuring to know that another 30 years from now, more local people will experience what our parents did: peaceful and dignified deaths.

St Catherine's dedicated and caring staff went way beyond the call of duty

They made sure that Mum and Dad's final weeks, although many years apart, were filled with family, friends, laughter and love. We can't thank them enough."



George and Trudi Martin ▲



Colin, Trudi and Caroline ▲





Community care

Your support helps our Therapies team care for people in the comfort of their homes across Sussex and Surrey. Claire Lawson, who heads up the team, explains more about this vital work.

"The majority of the work my team and I do is in the community with local people who've chosen to die at home. A lot of our work involves looking at day-to-day tasks that many people take for granted before they get ill, things like getting washed and dressed, cooking meals, going to the toilet or visiting family and friends. We explore how we can adapt these in someone's home as their illness progresses.

We do our best to enhance someone's quality of life

We're there to make sure they live as well as they can, for as long as they can. Everyone we look after is different but feeling panicked about their illness is common. Lots of people feel a loss of control and wonder why me? But we educate them about breathing to help them relax. Breathing is one of the best things they can do to help themselves when panic sets in.

We also use subtle equipment to help people stay independent and dignified. For example, some people have difficulty

undoing and doing up buttons so we look at small aids to help them. Things like that are really important as they allow people to have privacy despite their illness.

We help people's carers too. Carers can often feel lonely and one man told me it feels like he's in no man's land. He knows his partner won't survive but while things move around them, they're not going anywhere. By chatting through his feelings we helped him adapt to the different future he and his partner now have.

I also discuss practical decisions with people

I talk with them about the changes their illness might cause and discuss practical things, like what room they'd like to die in, what direction they'd like to be facing and if there's anything important they should look at. Those conversations mean I can, wherever possible, make sure someone's wishes are met. I also offer support to carers and family members about the reality of someone

they love dying at home. I talk to them about the impact of a loved one dying in one of their rooms at home, and how that might feel afterwards. I often ask people if they'll keep the room the same or if they plan to re-decorate or change furniture around.

It's an honour to work with people when they're dying

As a team we've done work I'm really proud of. And I include you in that team because our work is only made possible through your donations. That's something that makes our work even more special.

We've helped people get their confidence back

When you see people start to wear make up again or to go out for teas or coffees with friends it's really rewarding. We reinforce to people that yes, you're terminally ill, and yes you're dying but we can, and we will, work with you to get you the best quality of life in the time that's left."

Dorinda's Story

At St Catherine's Hospice more than 1,000 volunteers donate their time to support our work. Dorinda Gossage has volunteered as a Support Visitor for five years, visiting people who know they're going to die or who are bereaved, in their own homes. Here she shares more about her role.

"I've always been someone who has cared for people"

So becoming a Support Visitor was an extension of that. I walk beside people and offer them a safe place to open up without any judgement or prejudice. I always remember that people are the same person they always were, it just so happens that they or a loved one now have an illness.

At St Catherine's we don't treat people as if all that matters is that they're going to die. We teach people how to live and remind them that life can still be fulfilling even with a terminal illness.

I don't give advice. I'm just there to listen

When I first visit people, naturally, they're nervous but with encouragement they're usually glad to open up. I talk with people about good things in their lives as well as about things that are worrying them. Often people don't want to talk to their family and friends

about their worries, because they don't want to upset them but people can be more honest with me as I'm a stranger.

Generally, people find it hard to talk about death and bereavement

And everyone responds in different ways. Sometimes people tell me they're feeling angry, whilst other people describe feeling numb or sad. One lady I visited had a partner who was dying. She confided in me that she was struggling to cope and was worried she'd have a nervous breakdown. My listening helped her to normalise and work through her feelings. Another gentleman used our time together to talk about his funeral plans. This brought him comfort as he knew his family wouldn't be left to guess his wishes or make decisions at a difficult time.

Many of the bereaved people I visit talk about feeling guilty that they weren't there when their loved one died. They obsess over the person's death and how it happened but I remind them that everything they did for, and with,

the person during their life is the important thing. Sometimes helping people to refocus on all the different times they were there for someone, before and during their illness, allows them to experience a natural sense of rebalancing between one moment and a lifetime of moments. This can often ease their feelings of guilt.

It's a privilege to volunteer

I'm proud to work with St Catherine's and I've learnt so much from the Patient and Family Support Team. Their training is first rate and they're really supportive. St Catherine's is a wonderful place and volunteering here has allowed me to grow personally. I'm a better listener and I don't judge people now. Volunteering is the best thing I've ever done.

There's still more to do though

There's always a waiting list for our Support Visitor service and as soon as our sessions with someone finish we start visiting someone new. We provide people with extra support when it's needed most and I wonder who people turn to without us.

Nobody should face death and dying alone. We all have a responsibility to make sure they don't. I do my bit by volunteering, and by supporting St Catherine's Full Circle Appeal, you can help too. Thank you."





New Redhill shop opens its doors

Our shops are a crucial part of our community. They're the public face of the hospice on the High Street and a way for us to meet many of our supporters in person and raise vital funds. We have 16 shops throughout our community from Billingshurst to Oxted, and Dorking to Haywards Heath.

Last month we were excited to open the doors of our brand new shop in Redhill. This is a vital area for us and one where many of our patients come from.

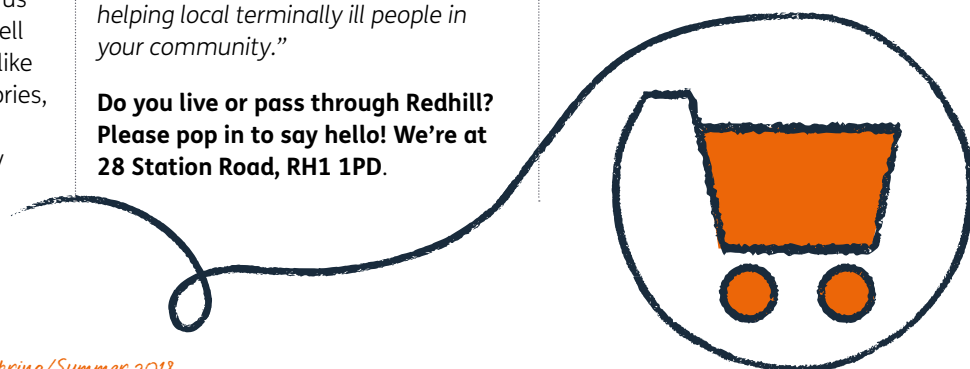
Our new shop is in a central location close to Redhill train station, the town's market and other popular retailers, bringing us new opportunities to invite more people through our doors.

The larger space has also allowed us to expand the goods we sell. As well as traditional charity shop goods, like clothing, books and home accessories, we're proud to be the only charity shop in Redhill selling good quality furniture at bargain prices.

Wayne Stepney, Retail Development Manager at St Catherine's said, "Visiting our shops is a simple way for you to support the hospice. If you're having a spring clear out, please consider donating your good quality items to us or if you're looking for a bargain please come and see us. We're proud of the high-quality goods on sale in our shops and we're grateful to all our generous donors. Whether you shop with us or donate goods, you're doing something great. You're directly helping local terminally ill people in your community."

**Do you live or pass through Redhill?
Please pop in to say hello! We're at
28 Station Road, RH1 1PD.**

In 2016- 2017 your support resulted in more than 32,000 sales being processed by volunteers in our Sussex and Surrey charity shops.



James's Story

James Russell shares how St Catherine's Hospice cared for his mother, Lee, and how he and his family have continued to support the hospice since.

"In 2011, Mum was diagnosed with breast cancer and in April 2016 was given the devastating news that there was no more viable treatment. That's when St Catherine's first came into my family's life. Community nurses visited Mum at home before she was admitted to the hospice in August 2016.

During the journey to St Catherine's, Mum was scared, in pain and barely conscious. When she and Dad arrived, they were shown to a room with open patio doors, looking out onto a beautiful garden. Dad remembers Mum sitting up and smiling. She told him, "I like it here, I feel safe... I don't want to go home." I like to think that was Mum relaxing, knowing we'd all be looked after.

At St Catherine's, Mum had everything she needed and the exceptional nursing team were always right by her side. She enjoyed sitting in the garden with the sun on her face, the daily drinks trolley, and eating sorbet to soothe her throat. She even saw my daughter Roxanne stand for the first time at the hospice.

In the evenings, I'd often leave Mum and Dad sitting peacefully in the hospice garden. Mum would always wave as I left and that image of her, sitting happy and contented, will never leave me. For me that would

have been a perfect goodbye. As it happened, on Monday 22 August 2016, Mum slipped away in her room. In that moment, my whole world changed but still the love and care from St Catherine's team continued. They looked after our whole family and made sure we were aware of the support available.

Since then life has had its ups and downs. I've had a year of firsts without Mum and I think I'll always be learning how to come to terms with her loss. She was the rock that created our strong family unit.

In Mum's memory my family and I have raised money for the hospice. I shared Mum's story at last year's Tree of Light service and Dad shared it in a Christmas appeal which some of you might have received. As part of this, posters with Mum's picture went up across the local area. When I first saw her face smiling out at me it was a strange but positive thing, it's like her legacy. Mum wanted us to repay the love and care the hospice gave her but through her story she's managed to do that herself.

A St Catherine's Much Loved tribute page, set up to remember Mum, has also been a brilliant grieving and fundraising tool. It's given me a way to let Mum know she's always in my thoughts and a place to post messages to her. She'll always be a part of everything I do.

Before Mum became ill, I'd never thought about a hospice or what it did, but without St Catherine's things would have been very different. Mum would have remained scared and in pain. Instead she enjoyed sitting in the hospice garden and spending time with her family who she loved very much.

I recently spoke at the appeal launch for the new hospice about the difference St Catherine's made to Mum and our family. A bigger hospice is going to be life-changing for the community and it's exciting that in the future more local people will be helped in the way Mum was.

Please don't wait until you or someone you love needs the hospice to offer it your support. Support it now and help other Mums and sons make the most of the time they have together. Those precious memories last forever."



Support St Catherine's Hospice today

Thanks to your generosity, we're able to provide people with the care you've been reading about. We know you care about your family, friends, neighbours, and your community, so here are some things you can do today to help them when they need it the most.

Raise money

There are more ways to support your local hospice than you might realise. You could encourage your employer to get behind a cause at the heart of your community, give a monthly donation via our hospice Lottery, or take on one of our charity challenges. Alternatively, perhaps you could host your own event? Whatever you do, you'll be helping raise money to care for local terminally ill people in your community and making a huge difference at a difficult time.

Volunteer with us

Could you give a little of your time to help someone whose time is limited? Join more than 1,000 people in your community who already give their time and skills to help make our expert care exceptional. From serving tea on our wards, to turning shop donations into vital funds, or cheering on supporters to a finish line, we'll work with you to find your perfect role.

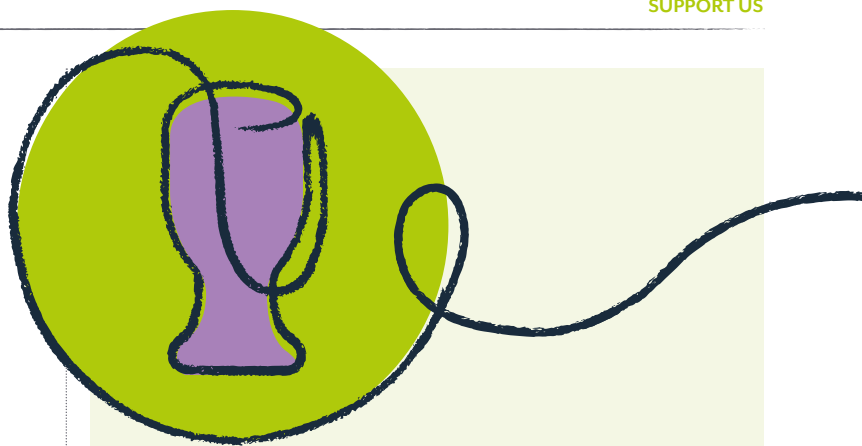
Leave a gift in your will

Did you know the care we give to one in four local people is funded thanks to gifts people leave us in their wills? It really is the greatest gift you can give.

As you'll have read inside, our larger hospice at Pease Pottage will help us be there to provide expert care to more local people for many years to come. Remembering St Catherine's in your will is a simple way for you to provide care to future generations and make sure that no-one dies alone, ever again.

Together, we can do it. With your donation or time we can reach everyone who needs our care. We can make sure nobody in West Sussex and Surrey has to face death and loss alone.

If you would like to find out more about helping St Catherine's please contact the Fundraising Team on: **01293 447361** or visit: **www.stch.org.uk/support-us**



You can donate today

Your gift of £15 could allow more people to enjoy a tipple from the drinks trolley and their favourite food like Lee did (p11)

A regular donation of £20 could help more patients and their families talk to a Support Visitor like Dorinda (p9) in the comfort of their own homes

Your gift of £50 could provide an hour of tailored nursing care to people like Michelle (p3)

Your gift of £100 could help someone stay independent at home for longer with the support of Claire and our Therapies team (p8).