

**ST CATHERINE'S
HOSPICE**

AUTUMN 2021

Matters

DELIVERING MORE CARE THANKS TO YOUR NEW HOSPICE

A NEW HOSPICE WILL PROVIDE
MORE CARE FOR MORE PEOPLE
IN THE FUTURE, P15

KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER

THANKS TO OUR COMMUNITY AND
OUR VOLUNTEERS, WE'VE NEVER SHUT
OUR DOORS TO VISITORS, P4

THE HOSPICE'S HELP IS LIFE CHANGING

LEARN HOW LIFE HAS IMPROVED
FOR ANTHONY AND ARLENE, P6-7

NURSE
IN CHARGE

Ela Visan
Staff Nurse
ST CATHERINE'S
HOSPICE



CONTENTS

At the hospice

- 3 **YOUR DONATIONS ENERGISE ME TO KEEP GOING**

At the hospice

- 4 **KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER**

At the hospice

- 5 **"WE WERE ABLE TO SAY GOODBYE ONE BY ONE" – GEMMA'S EXPERIENCE**

At the hospice

- 6 – 7 **"THE HOSPICE'S HELP IS LIFE CHANGING" – ANTHONY AND ARLENE'S EXPERIENCE**

At the hospice

- 8 **"I DIDN'T BELIEVE A PLACE THAT COULD HELP YOU SO MUCH EXISTED" – MARGARET'S EXPERIENCE**

Caring for our community

- 9 **SHARING OUR END OF LIFE EXPERTISE TO HELP MORE PEOPLE**

At the hospice and at home

- 10 – 11 **"THE HOSPICE SAVED US" – JAN'S EXPERIENCE**

Volunteering

- 12 **"HE'D SING TO ME ON THE PHONE – IT WAS MAGIC" – HANNAH'S EXPERIENCE**

In the community

- 13 **"MY JIGSAW WAS SHATTERED WHEN CAROLINE DIED" – ROBERT'S EXPERIENCE**

Support us

- 14 **YOUR FUNDRAISING HAS NEVER BEEN MORE NEEDED**

Caring for our community





- 15 **LOOKING TO THE FUTURE: DELIVERING MORE CARE THANKS TO YOUR NEW HOSPICE**

Support us

- 16 **SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL HOSPICE TODAY**

St Catherine's Hospice,
Malthouse Road,
Crawley, West Sussex,
RH10 6BH

Telephone: 01293 447361
Email: fundraising@stch.org.uk
www.stch.org.uk

 St Catherine's Hospice Crawley
 @StCHospice
 @stcatherinescrawley
 St Catherine's Hospice
Sussex and Surrey



"So much has changed since our last edition of Matters.

And thank you doesn't seem enough for everything you've done for our patients, our families and our hospice.

The last year and a half has brought difficulties none of us could imagine, but I am so proud of what our community's support has helped us to achieve. Your generosity has helped in so many ways, such as keeping fuel in the tanks of our nurses' cars so they can continue to make essential visits to people in our community.

For me, the hospice is like a second home and family, and you're a big part of that. It's a place that gives me hope and makes me see the whole world with different eyes.

In such dark times, the wonderful things we're able to do because of our local community are heart-warming. Things like help Margaret (p8) enjoy a roast dinner again, and help keep families together (p5, p6-7) at a time it matters most.

During the last year we've all missed connecting with the people we love. We will now value our time with our loved ones in a way, perhaps, we haven't before.

Whilst we can't always give people more time together, we can make sure any time is filled with as much love and connection as possible. Watching people like Jan (p10-11) sit with her Dad listening to music will always fill my heart with happiness. I know memories like that last forever - it's only because of our community's support we can help people to create them.

When bereavement inevitably comes, it's challenging. Robert told us when his wife Caroline died, 'his jigsaw shattered' (p13). I'm so glad that we can be here to help him pick up the pieces.

Many families across the country have been touched by COVID-19 and I'd like to extend heartfelt condolences from everyone at the hospice to any of you who have lost family members, friends or colleagues. If nothing else, COVID-19 continues to show us all the importance of being with our loved ones when they're unwell, and how devastating it can be to experience terminal illness, dying and bereavement with uncertainty about treatments and when we can't be together. Now more than ever it's crucial that we support more people who need hospice care as they face the end of life. I'm thrilled that the building of our new hospice home will commence later this year. This building will mean that we can reach more people in our community than ever before. You can read more on p15.

Every time I receive a thank you from someone, it's really a thank you for you. You are the real heroes because without your support, we wouldn't be able to deliver our care.

No one is born alone, and no one should die alone. Your ongoing support is helping us bring this dream to life."

*With love and gratitude,
Ela Visan, Staff Nurse*

Your donations energise me to keep going



Kate Wells is Lead for Emotional Support and Social Care at our hospice. Thanks to local people's support she helps families living with terminal illness in your community.

"As a palliative care social worker, I advocate for people within the social care system, help them with accessing other services, and provide emotional and 'post-lockdown' support.

Social work is about breaking down barriers and connecting people

Specialists see and treat someone's cancer; other health professionals see and treat their symptoms. I recognise who someone is outside and inside all of that and work with them on what feels most important.

As a result of the pandemic fewer community services have been offering support - consequently, people are struggling more

Almost every conversation I've had with a patient or carer touches on feelings of frustration, anxiety, boredom and loneliness. I've seen people terrified of others bringing the virus into their home, distress at delay in treatments or investigations of new symptoms, loss of incomes, isolation, and uncertainty about being able to see a loved one again.

For caregivers, I've seen guilt that they can't ease their loved one's distress, and the exhaustion of constant care giving, and not knowing who to contact for help.

I do everything I can to support people

One day I can be working with a young family to discuss how they can make memories together, or asking a person's favourite football club to send them something special to help make a last birthday memorable.



"Hearing stories of your personal donations energises me to keep going, and to not stop or slow down because what you allow us to do, in all the small and big ways, really matters."

Another day, I could be talking to a local school to request support for a child. I could then take a call from a bereaved relative saying they don't know where to turn for help with housing, or offer video advice to someone caring for their friend.

Sometimes, I might have to urgently ring social services to ask them to re-assess a lady who has left hospital and been placed in a care home where her husband of 60 years can't visit because he's blind and can't drive, or refer a family to their local food bank.

Other times, I might gently help a carer rebuild their confidence after many months feeling the burden of being the eyes and ears of all professionals during the pandemic.

I work closely with Wellbeing team colleagues

Who support people with all of their emotional, spiritual and welfare needs. The support that people need really varies, but I feel so proud that we're able to meet individual needs for our community - something that's only possible because of community support and donations.

That's what's so amazing about working for a hospice - we're part of our community. Hearing stories of your personal donations energises me to keep going, and to not stop or slow down because what you allow us to do, in all the small and big ways, really matters."



Helen Pointer, volunteer



Heather Roberts, volunteer



Eileen Dunn, volunteer

Keeping families together

Thanks to our local community's support and a crucial team of volunteers, we've been able to keep our hospice doors open throughout the pandemic. This has allowed patients to safely see their essential visitors and kept families together at a time it matters most.

When people arrive at the hospice, our team of friendly screeners take their temperature, complete screening questions, and assist them with Lateral Flow Tests. When these tests return as negative, screeners provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Our volunteer screeners also provide vital emotional support for visitors and help ease the anxieties that a hospice visit might bring.

Eileen Dunn has been volunteering to screen visitors after her normal volunteering role in the hospice kitchen was stopped due to COVID-19. She says, "We're here to create a calm, welcoming atmosphere, to keep things as normal as possible, and to be reassuring and comforting. Our role is all about building a rapport with people."

Each screening shift brings something different, but our team of volunteers are well supported by our receptionists and Front of House teams.

"There's very good interaction and support from staff so we never feel alone or unsupported," explains

Heather Roberts. Heather has been volunteering as a screener after her usual volunteering role in our Living Well Centre was temporarily stopped due to COVID-19.

"By volunteering, I feel I'm doing something worthwhile and continuing to help people. Everyone has a different reason for being at the hospice or visiting, and a different story to tell. I've been humbled by how people cope with such adversity."

"The families and visitors we meet are so inspiring," agrees Helen Pointer who usually volunteers drawing caricature portraits. She's been continuing to do these for patients and relatives via Zoom and has also been volunteering as a screener.

"Once when I was screening, a wife and young children were visiting. I heard one of them ask, 'Will Daddy wake up?' It's so difficult, but we do whatever we can to make things easier and to provide a place where children can be confident and comfortable - I drew a happy little face on a face mask for the child."

Another time a husband whose wife had died at the hospice came back. He couldn't come inside, but we stood in the car park and talked. He felt he could come back to the hospice and be himself."

"People are always so appreciative of what we do and so grateful that they can still visit their loved ones," explains Heather. Eileen adds, "It's very gratifying to know you're making a difference to people." "Every week without fail, we're galvanised by the families and visitors we've met," says Helen.



Between March and May 2021, our screening team safely welcomed 1,558 visitors

"We were able to say goodbye one by one"



Marilyn and Richard



Gemma and her family

Gemma and her family were able to say precious goodbyes to their Mam Marilyn during the coronavirus pandemic. Here Gemma shares more.

"My Mam Marilyn was amazing. Everyone had a kind word to say about her, and for me, my sister and our four older brothers, Mam was our entire world."

Mam met her partner Richard at her church and they fell madly in love. We always took the mickey out of them as they were like teenagers, always holding hands on the sofa, but Richard showed Mam what true love was.

Richard was cared for by St Catherine's in March 2019. At the same time Marilyn suddenly fell very unwell. In hospital, doctors told Gemma and her sister that they'd found a tumour during Marilyn's operation, and there was nothing they could do

"We were told Richard had a couple of days left to live that same day," recalls Gemma.

Gemma and her sister split their time between visiting Richard at the hospice and their Mam in hospital

"Despite how unwell she was, Mam was desperate to see Richard. She was taken to St Catherine's in her hospital bed to say goodbye", explains Gemma. "Richard passed away that evening."

Just 24 hours after losing the love of her life, Mam was told she had terminal cancer."

Marilyn made it clear that as she became less well, she wanted to be at the hospice. In April 2020, she was admitted to St Catherine's wards

"Mam was at the hospice during the coronavirus pandemic," explains Gemma. "And even though nurses and doctors were risking their own lives, they were incredible. They gave Mam beautiful care and us the chance to be by her side. They even helped Mam do Zoom calls, so my brothers, who live up North, could speak with her."

As Mam became more poorly my brothers came down. There were a lot of us who needed to say our goodbyes, and we were all able to say goodbye one by one. When Mam died, my brothers were waiting outside in the car park and a nurse went to speak to them out there. Even with everything that was happening in the world, there was the right level of support, communication and understanding."

To say thank you for the care the hospice gave her Mam and Richard, Gemma and her brother-in-law Dean are running their first London Marathon this year

"Me and Dean both screamed with delight when we found out we'd got a marathon place for St Catherine's", shares Gemma. "Fundraising has given us something positive to focus on in Mam and Richard's memory. On marathon day, we know they'll be with us watching. Richard will be drinking his red wine, Mam will be drinking her tea, and they'll both be eating their beloved Bourbon biscuits!"



"The hospice's help is life changing"

Anthony is under the care of our hospice after being diagnosed with terminal cancer. He's receiving support at home and spent some time on our wards in July last year. Here, he and his wife Arlene, share how thanks to our community's generosity, our hospice has made a life changing difference.

"I had awful vomiting, about 100 times a day and hiccups. Every time something touched my tongue, I was ill. It was hell on earth. I lost lots of water and my kidneys shut down. Things got so bad I collapsed outside the hospital once."

This was the tough reality when Anthony began chemotherapy

"The original idea was to shrink then cut my tumour out" explains Anthony, "but the doctors couldn't do that because the tumour was sticky like jam."

As Anthony continually struggled with vomiting, hiccups and pain he was in and out of hospital

"On the wards, I was surrounded by strange faces. It was scary, and

I couldn't even have a visitor because of COVID. At no point was I told my cancer was terminal until I went for an MRI and was told out of the blue."

For Anthony's wife Arlene, not being able to visit him in hospital affected her wellbeing too

"I wasn't sleeping or eating, and I was crying every day. I was going home to an empty house each evening and I couldn't see my family or have a hug from anyone because of COVID. It was a really tough time."

After another hospital stay doctors recommended that Anthony be put in touch with St Catherine's and hospice nurses started visiting him at home

"They took control of my illness," explains Anthony.

Even with St Catherine's nurses visiting the couple at home, Anthony was still having problems with sickness and hiccups so the team suggested he spend some time in the hospice

"I thought going to a hospice was for someone who was effectively dying, so when you hear the word, you immediately think the worst, that you're on your way out, but I concentrated on what St Catherine's could do to help me," says Anthony.

Arlene had a similar response. *"I thought "Oh my god", and when I told my family they questioned me too, asking "Why is he going*

into a hospice? Is there something you're not telling us?"

"But now we know that when a hospice gets involved in your care, it can keep you stable and help your quality of life," explains Anthony.

Anthony didn't know what to expect from the hospice but describes everything as "top drawer"

"It wasn't like I was a patient. The care was heart touching and more loving. Everything was top drawer, from how the team spoke and treated me through to the different drugs they tried."

Being able to visit Anthony at the hospice despite the coronavirus pandemic made a huge difference to Arlene

"Seeing Anthony brightened my spirits. I felt I had some control, and I always felt safe that I was being looked after, so was Anthony and the other patients, with COVID temperature checks and wearing PPE - that was really reassuring. Sometimes we listened to music on our headphones or watched TV together. Other times I'd go for a walk in the hospice gardens."

One of the biggest things for the couple was how the hospice helped Anthony get the physical symptoms of his illness under control

"In two weeks, St Catherine's got me into a position that other places weren't able to over many months," explains Anthony. "My symptoms are gone, and I've had no more signs of sickness, hiccups or vomiting. It's been life changing."



"The hospice made us feel unique. People genuinely had time for us and made it feel like we were at home. Anthony didn't ever feel like just a cancer patient."

The couple describe the hospice team as "miracle workers" and are "eternally grateful for the help"

"They fully supported Anthony with all of his needs," says Arlene. "They networked with other professionals, and took the time to explain things so we have more understanding about Anthony's medication and the side effects."

"The hospice made us feel unique. People genuinely had time for us and made it feel like we were at home. Anthony didn't ever feel like just a cancer patient."

"That's because you're not just a stat at St Catherine's," says Anthony. "They're light years ahead in how they individually treat you. The nurses bantered with me and I even got offered a beer with my

dinner. Everything made me feel well cared for."

Even though Anthony is back home now the couple feel reassured that if they're ever worried they can call the hospice

"The team have guided me through Anthony's medication," says Arlene, "but I know I can ask questions and ring anytime 24/7."

"The nurses call regularly and check in on me, which is good," adds Anthony, "I don't think I ever go two weeks without someone from St Catherine's ringing."

"Knowing what I know now I'd move the world for St Catherine's," says Arlene. "I can't thank the hospice enough for what they've done for Anthony and me."



Anthony and Arlene on their wedding day earlier this year



Anthony and Gill community nurse

"I didn't believe a place that could help you so much existed"

Because of the generosity of local people, Margaret was able to spend time on our wards to get the symptoms of her illness under control. Here she shares her experience.

"When I was diagnosed with thyroid cancer at East Surrey Hospital the news knocked me for six.

When I was sent home my daughter, Janette, was really worried about me. Nobody could come and visit because of coronavirus and my illness was getting worse. I laid in pain, alone on my bed for four days before I was sent back to hospital. They checked me over and sent me home again but then I started being violently sick. I wasn't even able to eat and drink.

Janette had been speaking to the Welfare Advisor at St Catherine's and she put us in touch with her colleagues. We were told someone would call, but Janette said we needed someone to visit me. I just wanted someone to hold my hand and tell me it would be okay.

A hospice doctor came to see me at home. They took one look at me and said I needed to come into the hospice. I was completely dehydrated.

After eight days here I'm a different woman

I didn't believe a place that could help you so much existed – I feel so safe and happy here.

The doctors and nurses are so patient. They take the time to sit and listen, and answer my questions in plain English. They've tried different things to help me feel better and now my pain is pretty much under control.

All the staff are so attentive – honest to god, I've never known such attentive people. Every morning friendly cleaning staff come in – 'Morning Margaret', 'How are you feeling?' – nobody can do enough for me.



I've even sat in the hospice garden reading my paper. I loved my garden before I got ill and it was lovely to get fresh air.

I can eat food again too

I've enjoyed sorbet, ice cream and hot chocolate, and I even managed my first solid meal again – roast lamb for Sunday lunch. Coming from Yorkshire I couldn't resist, and boy did I enjoy it! I took a picture and sent it to my children saying, 'Look what I'm eating now'. They couldn't believe I was eating again.

I felt so alone until St Catherine's came on the scene, but the hospice has helped so much that thank you doesn't feel enough. Until you need a place like this you don't think about it, but there's no better place to give your money. I've never experienced care, understanding and patience like it – I'll always be grateful."

"I've enjoyed sorbet, ice cream and hot chocolate, and I even managed my first solid meal again – roast lamb for Sunday lunch. Coming from Yorkshire I couldn't resist, and boy did I enjoy it!"



Between March and May 2021, our Catering Team served 2,496 home cooked meals to patients and families

Sharing our end of life expertise to help more people

Community support allows us to share our expertise in end of life care and helping people with terminal illnesses with colleagues from local care homes and hospitals. This means many more local people are able to benefit from our hospice support.



John and Muriel

To help us reach more people in our community, we've been working as part of Sussex Hospices Collaboration, a group of seven Sussex based hospices, on an initiative called Project ECHO Sussex Hospices.

Founded in 2019, Project ECHO was formed to engage with and support Sussex based care home staff to feel more confident in caring for people at the end of life.

It's hoped the initiative could also offer long term efficiencies for health and care systems, for example, local hospitals, by making sure people aren't unnecessarily admitted to hospital, and that there are less ambulance call outs.

Successful training sessions for care home staff have already been held,

and we are delighted that local people are already benefitting.

Our teams also provide support to people facing the end of their life in hospital

When John's wife, Muriel who had Alzheimer's, was taken to a specialist ward at Horsham Hospital, our team helped them. Here John tells us more.

"When Muriel was taken to the Iris ward, a ward at Horsham Hospital, it became clear my wife was near the end of her life. Tanya, a health professional, who was always very kind to Muriel and I, and who had visited us at home, made a phone call to St Catherine's, our local hospice, to ask if she could be transferred there.

Later that afternoon a hospice doctor visited Muriel in hospital. Muriel was

either asleep or unconscious, but the doctor was so gentle with her, and talked to her all the time to explain what she was doing. After her examination the doctor said she was going to have some pain drugs sent to the hospital. She explained that when the drugs arrived two hospice nurses would be there to put in a drip, that would slowly administer pain relief. The nurses were also kind and gentle with her.

The St Catherine's doctor told the hospital that my wife mustn't be moved.

The care Muriel was given was outstanding and the staff were exceptional in every way. Thanks to the hospice, my wife wasn't unnecessarily moved as she approached the end of her life, and she passed away peacefully."



Jan and her Dad Derek

"The hospice saved us"

Jan's Dad Derek was diagnosed with a terminal illness during the first lockdown last year. Thanks to support and donations from local people, our team was able to help and support Jan's family. Here she shares the difference this made.

"My Dad Derek was a popular, family man, but he was very humble, so I don't think he ever realised just how popular he was. Dad had a quiet intelligence. He was very funny and was always laughing. I couldn't have asked for a better Dad."

In April 2020 Derek was told by phone that he advanced lung cancer

"The news came from a consultant he'd never even met, and we were offered no follow-up or support after his diagnosis," recalls Jan.

"I'm not knocking the NHS - I'm a huge supporter of it. I work for a GP surgery myself, but our family felt abandoned and lockdown made everything about Dad's illness a difficult and traumatic process."

Unfortunately, Derek's health deteriorated quickly

"He was taken to hospital by ambulance at least four times and we weren't able to be with him because of COVID," explains Jan. "My brother David was helping my Mum Brenda care for Dad at home, but things were really difficult. Our family desperately needed help and support, but we just didn't know what to do."

That was when Jan looked at St Catherine's website and asked her Dad's GP for a referral

"Soon after the hospice got in touch," says Jan. "Nurses helped sort Dad's medication and gave Mum and David tips on caring for Dad at home

over the phone. They were angels, looking after all of us."

Derek's health continued to deteriorate and after he fell out of bed one night the hospice arranged for a nurse to visit



Brenda and Derek



Derek and Brenda with their grandchildren



Derek with Jan's son Tyler

"Mum told me how a nurse went to Dad, who was in bed, in full PPE. She knelt by the side of his bed and took hold of his hand. She said, "You've been feeling a bit poorly haven't you?" and gently suggested that perhaps Dad might like to go into the hospice. He said yes. Up until that point he'd been resistant, but the nurse was so kind and gentle with him."

Dad going into the hospice was an immense relief for our family - it saved our sanity as it'd been so difficult struggling on alone."

Before her Dad arrived at St Catherine's Jan says she'd heard it was a "lovely place", but she didn't know what to expect

"Everyone was so kind and welcoming. Smiling receptionists asked how we were, and the volunteer screeners who gave us PPE and took our temperatures each time we visited became like friends."

From the day Dad went to St Catherine's, it was just like being enveloped in a hug

The hospice had a homely atmosphere. We took in photos for Dad's room, he had his iPod to play his music, and lots of personal bits and pieces. We felt like we were in a bubble being cared for and we didn't need to worry about anything anymore."

Jan hadn't been able to see her Dad through lockdown because of her work in a doctor's surgery so spending time with him at the hospice was especially precious

"I was so scared Dad would die without me saying goodbye. At the hospice I saw him every day - I could sit with him, hold his hands, help feed him, and listen to his music. I hadn't been able to do that for three months so those last two weeks were so precious. St Catherine's gave me my Dad back."

Jan even has lovely memories of the day her Dad died

"Dad died on a Monday - the 15 June. We'd been taking turns to sit with him, but it was a beautiful summers day. At 1pm your nurses served my Mum, David and me a wonderful lunch in your gardens and told us they'd sit with Dad while we ate it."

We sat out in the garden listening to the birds, chatting and eating lunch knowing Dad was being well looked after. His room looked out onto the garden, and I like to think he was looking out onto the sky. That day was awful because we lost Dad but even then, I still have lovely memories. The hospice really did make Dad's death the best they could. They made the unbearable a little more bearable."



Derek and Brenda



Derek with his son David

"I was so scared Dad would die without me saying goodbye. At the hospice I saw him every day - I could sit with him, hold his hands, help feed him, and listen to his music. I hadn't been able to do that for three months so those last two weeks were so precious. St Catherine's gave me my Dad back."

*"He'd sing to me
on the phone –
It was magic"*

The generosity of our local community means we're able to support people with all of their needs – spiritual, emotional and physical. Hannah Wilson is a volunteer Pastoral Assistant offering people we care for a space to share what's meaningful for them. She tells us more about her volunteering.



"My husband John died at St Catherine's 10 years ago. I was so humbled by the love and support we experienced that I wanted to find a way to give back.

When John was ill, St Catherine's looked after him, me and my daughter. We were offered complementary therapies, and the whole atmosphere at the hospice meant we felt safe, held and loved at such a difficult time.

I started volunteering at the hospice's then Day Hospice but when Lisa, St Catherine's Spiritual Care Lead gave a talk to the patients I thought I'd like to support the work she does, and became a volunteer Pastoral Assistant.

Before coronavirus I'd visit people at home and on the wards but now all my contact is on the telephone.

I'm never quite sure what I'll be presented with when I ring someone, but I'm there to offer a listening ear, to show an interest and to validate people's feelings.

People share their fears and anxieties, joy and interests

Sometimes people talk about facing their mortality and how they feel about that, but whatever people want to discuss, I listen with an open mind.

It's a privilege to be given a window into someone's life

I enjoy making connections and I'm touched by how people, who I've never met, are so willing to share.

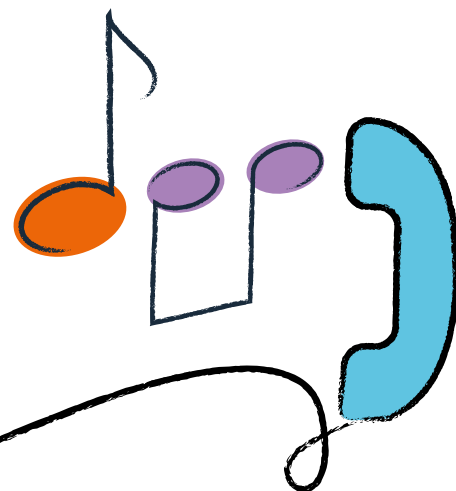
One elderly gentleman was a jazz singer and musician who'd sing to me on the phone. It was magic – pure magic. Our calls gave him an outlet to express himself and his treasured skill, and it was lovely to validate his interests.

Another person talked about the personal cost of caring for a relative and what she had willingly given up to do that. It reminded me of what unsung heroes carers are. Then there was the time a man who was really poorly wanted to talk about some spiritual experiences that he couldn't explain.

Sometimes people just need space to openly cry, or to talk to someone about their loved one if they're recently bereaved. Talking and expressing loss and grief is part of the healing process, and not being able to do that can feel really isolating.

Volunteering with the hospice has given me an appreciation of what I have in my life and an appreciation of the here and now. I don't take anything for granted anymore."

"I was so humbled by the love and support we experienced that I wanted to find a way to give back."



"My jigsaw was shattered when Caroline died"

The support of local people in our community allows us to continue to care for people after their loved one has died. Robert Stone had bereavement counselling after his wife Caroline's death. Here he shares more.

"Caroline had this incredible presence. We were totally different, I'm quite quiet and reserved and Caroline was gregarious, but we were together 37 years.

Caroline first discovered a pain in her chest in January 2019. She had chemotherapy and radiotherapy but in January 2020 her pain came back. By July, cancer had really got her in its grip – she was in incredible pain and distress. We were told Caroline had three months left but, in the end, it was nine days. She died at home on Wednesday 22 July 2020. I was with her holding her hands.

After Caroline died, a few people suggested bereavement counselling

I was assessed by the hospice and started counselling sessions with Liz by telephone. I'd wander around the house as Liz and I chatted. Liz described my bereavement like a jigsaw. My jigsaw was shattered when Caroline died but that jigsaw is completed. My picture's changed so I have to re-create a new jigsaw.

Liz also discussed how bereavement is like a bear hug. There are three options – you can back away, face up to it, or charge into it. It turns out I did the charging, which is unusual, but counselling helped me open up to my bereavement. No matter how much you kick yourself or wonder 'what if?' you did the best that you could, with the time and information that you had.

I never expected counselling to do what it did for me

I was brought up in the era of 'You're a man, you cope' but counselling changed my way of thinking.

Even now I measure every day from Caroline's death

Before I had counselling I found a Valentine's card from Caroline that had the lyrics from the song 'You to me are everything'. Finding that wrecked me and I destroyed the card almost straight away.

At Christmas I found an old Christmas card from Caroline. Opposed to being upset I put it in pride of place on my

mantelpiece. I'll keep it forever now. I think that shows the difference in me pre and post counselling.

I'm still grieving but I'm coping

When Caroline was ill we had a "one day at a time" mantra. It's all we thought of, and all you can do when you're living with someone with a terminal illness. I've been using it since her death as a guiding light – just take one day at a time."

"Liz described my bereavement like a jigsaw. My jigsaw was shattered when Caroline died but that jigsaw is completed. My picture's changed so I have to re-create a new jigsaw."



Your fundraising has never been more needed

It's no secret that the coronavirus pandemic has caused a significant reduction in our fundraising revenue. Last year we were grateful for extra government support but now this has stopped we have less to spend on our hospice services.

We expect it to take time for our finances to recover and there's a big challenge ahead, but with your support, we're ready to face it. The impact of your fundraising is humbling – it makes such a difference to local families in the community all around you.

And your fundraising is needed now more than ever.

What could you do to help support us today?

We're ready to support you with your fundraising! Call our Fundraising Team between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday on 01293 447361, email: fundraising@stch.org.uk or visit: www.stch.org.uk/diy

Here's what other local people have been doing:



10-year-old Dougie Wren cycled from Horsham to Shoreham and back again in memory of his Nanny Chris who spent her final hours at our hospice

Dougie said, "Nanny was wonderful. She did lots for charity and always put others before herself. In her honour I wanted to raise as much money as I could for St Catherine's."

Dougie achieved his goal raising over £1,500!



Karen Woolsey's Dad Peter was cared for by our hospice. Since he passed away, she's been making precious memory bears

"When Dad died, his great-grandchildren struggled with missing him, so I made them memory bears out of his checked shirts and overalls.

I made other bears for family members and as more people heard about them I received orders from friends. For each one **I donate £5 to the hospice. I love knowing the comfort my bears bring.** It's like giving people back a piece of the person they love."



Self-confessed 'muppets' and a home-made raft

Charles Reynolds, Kit Burgess, Bob Blackstock and Ben Perkins paddled from Devizes to Chelsea on a homemade raft made of floorboards and six old agricultural barrels!

They raised £12,000 in memory of Charles's Dad Rob who was at our hospice during the pandemic. Charles said, "If Dad was still here, he'd have been the first to condemn the raft trip as crazy, as well as grab a paddle and join in! We're ecstatic that we managed to raise so much money."



Susan and Steve Wright virtually cycled from Merstham to Paris in memory of Susan's Mum Janet and raised £700

"We'd been planning to take Mum to Paris for her 75th birthday but unfortunately, we never got there. During lockdown, my husband Steve and I cycled 287 miles virtually from Mum's home in Merstham to Paris in her memory. We 'crossed' the finish line in our St Catherine's T-shirts. When we arrived in 'Paris' we celebrated by sitting in the garden and having a glass of fizz!"

Looking to the future: delivering more care thanks to your new hospice

Last year coronavirus paused our dream of a new hospice from which we can deliver more care in the community and on our wards.

Our Board of Trustees know it's vital that our community receive the best possible care as they face the end of life so unanimously approved a revised build programme, which enabled us to reduce costs, earlier this year. Work on our new hospice starts later this autumn.

Our hospice was originally built by a group of local people who recognised that end of life care needed to be better for their family, friends, and neighbours

38 years later, and with a building that is ageing quickly, now is the time to build a new hospice home to provide care for even more people.

Before the pandemic we were only reaching one in three local people – that isn't enough. And more people will need expert hospice care in the future because the pandemic has impacted so many people's health and supporting care services.

So, it's essential we make sure that St Catherine's is here for generations to come

Our current building doesn't allow us to grow and adapt to continue to provide outstanding care. It has limited space for our teams to work together to provide rounded care. Multi bay rooms make it difficult to adhere to necessary infection prevention control measures, and our electrics need costly repair work.

A new hospice will provide more space for us to deliver outpatient, emotional, spiritual and wellbeing activities, meeting all of a person's needs and allow us to provide increased support to people in their own homes across our community

This is important as most people choose to die in their own homes.



For patients on our wards our 24 rooms will offer more privacy. All will have an individual garden and ensuite, and some will have adjoining family sitting rooms.

A thoughtful design

Bill Mackie and Andrew Wates have been providing pro-bono support for our new hospice. Bill has been advising on legal arrangements concerning the land generously gifted by Bill Bridges. Andrew has been sharing his construction knowledge as he chairs our New Build Programme Board.

Bill said, "The new hospice is so much more than bricks and mortar. It represents a fantastic opportunity to take the wonderful work done by St Catherine's to a new level and to reach more of our community. That's why I'm so pleased to be involved."

Andrew added, "Everyone on the New Build Programme Board is committed to delivering an environmentally responsible fit for purpose building, whilst recognising the human needs of future patients."

Thanks to you, we're closer than ever before to helping more people

Together, like our founders before us, we will secure the future of local hospice care and soon be ready to deliver more care in our community.

Thank you for being a part of this very special journey and watch this space for more news soon.

Support your local hospice today

The generosity of people in our community has allowed us to continue to provide vital care and support throughout COVID-19. But there are always more people who need our help. By supporting St Catherine's you're making sure that your local hospice can continue to care for people when it's needed most. Here are some ways you can help local families living with terminal illness today:

Visit our shops across Sussex and Surrey

To bag a bargain or to donate your pre-loved quality items. If you're a UK taxpayer, remember to register for Gift Aid. This allows us to claim an extra 25 per cent on the value of your donations at no extra cost to you. Please call your local shop to check opening times and if they're receiving donations before your visit.

To find your nearest shop please visit:
www.stch.org.uk/shop-locations or call our
Retail team on 01293 583077.

Leave a gift in your will

Everyone should have a will. We've partnered with Bequeathed, a free online will writing service, so it's even easier for you to make or update your will.

Please visit: www.stch.org.uk/gifts-in-wills or call 01293 447361 for more information.

Gifts in wills are vital to our hospice and fund the care of one in four local people. By choosing to leave a gift to St Catherine's you'll be making lives better in your community and making sure that future generations won't have to face death and loss alone.

Every year it costs more than £10 million to run our hospice, and we receive less than a third of our funding from the NHS. We depend on supporters, like you, remembering St Catherine's in your will. Every gift, in every will, makes a difference. **Thank you.**



Make a donation

I would like to give £ _____ (please specify your choice of donation)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

My payment details

☐ I enclose a cheque made payable to St Catherine's Hospice **OR**

☐ Please debit from my MasterCard/Visa card, details below:

Card Number: - - -

Expiry Date: / CVV

Please return this form to: St Catherine's Hospice, Malthouse Road, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 6BH
OR donate by phone: 01293 447361 or online at: www.stch.org.uk/matters2021

St Catherine's Hospice will keep your details safe and secure. More information on how we use your data can be found in our privacy statement here: www.stch.org.uk/privacystatement. By returning this form, you confirm that you are aware of the privacy policy and accept how St Catherine's will handle your information. If you have any questions or if you would like to change how we contact you, please call our Supporter Services team on 01293 447361.

