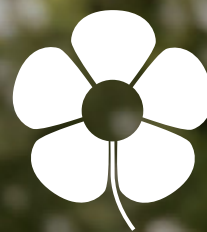


Your Hospice



**Heart
of Kent
Hospice**

October 2025



SPONSOR A HOSPICE NURSE
Give them the time to care

In this edition

- 3 A warm welcome from Ann-Marie
- 4 Your future hospice
- 5 Edwina and David's incredible legacy
- 6 Is hospice care more than you think?
- 8 Remembering Major Alan O'Hagan
- 9 The power of remembrance
- 10 Sponsor a hospice nurse
- 12 Retail volunteering goes full circle
- 13 Retail news
- 14 Community spirit
- 15 What's on

Get in touch and share your story

We would love to hear about your experience with our hospice and the many ways in which you support us. You can get in touch to leave your feedback and share your stories using the details below.

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

hokh.org/feedback

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

At Heart of Kent Hospice, we take data privacy very seriously and are fully compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). We respect the personal information you share with us and are responsible in how we use it. If you wish to change your communication preferences or unsubscribe from our communications, you can do so at any time by emailing us at preferences@hokh.co.uk or by calling our Fundraising Team on 01622 790195. To learn more about how we collect, store and use your data, please visit our website or contact us at preferences@hokh.co.uk to request a printed copy of our full privacy statement.

Your donations are already making a difference.

Gift Aid can make them go even further!



Here's how to Gift Aid your donations:

- tick the Gift Aid box when you make an online donation via our website.
- download our Gift Aid declaration form at: hokh.org/giftaid return your completed form by emailing it to: fundraising@hokh.co.uk or return by post to: Gift Aid Administration, Heart of Kent Hospice, Preston Hall, Aylesford, Kent, ME20 7PU.
- call: 01622 790195 to make a declaration over the phone.

If you have donated previously, but didn't Gift Aid, don't worry, you still can. Simply 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.



One Monday morning in July, I sat for the first time in the Chief Executive's chair. It took me a while to get over the feeling that I was trespassing in Rachel's office!

I know you will want to join me in thanking Rachel Street for her commitment and dedication to the hospice. She loved meeting patients, families and supporters, and they loved meeting her.

Rachel instilled an ambition throughout the hospice to keep on learning and improving. I am eager to build on this and for us to achieve more for the people under our care and their loved ones. My colleagues and our volunteers are the backbone of this organisation, and I am committed to ensuring that the hospice remains a working environment where people can thrive.

Having led the Income Generation Team for the past ten years, I am keenly aware that our biggest challenge is to secure sustainable funding. It can be difficult to express how impactful and powerful every donation is, but we are deeply indebted to you. You are the loyal and passionate people who enable our care to happen.

Last year we received significant financial donations from charitable trusts and local businesses, but 95% of all the donations we received came from individual supporters and community groups. You also supported your hospice by donating pre-loved items to our 14 charity shops and making the tills ring nearly 250,000 times.

20% of our total income last year came from the government. The continuing effort to negotiate for more government funding is a big priority, as it is for hospices across the UK.

Welcome to this issue of Your Hospice.

Thank you for deciding to open it and I hope you will feel inspired to read on.

During my time as Interim Chief Executive I want to help the hospice build on its reputation for outstanding care. We will continue to develop strong relationships with local healthcare providers and other community stakeholders who care about the future of this organisation.

I will also be working on the various plans and preparations for the new hospice. You can read an update about that on page four, and on page five you can read about a transformational gift in a Will from very dear friends of the hospice.

My colleagues and I are privileged to be the current stewards of a wonderful organisation which was founded by our community, for our community. Thank you for holding Heart of Kent Hospice so dear.

Warmest wishes,

Ann-Marie Kelly, Interim Chief Executive

P.S. I am also thrilled to announce that in September, the hospice won the **Charity of the Year** award at the Kent Charity Awards, as well as being a finalist in the **Large Charity Award**. Lyndsey Stukalov-Stone, Head of the Family Support Team, also received the **Judges' Special Recognition Award for Ingenuity** for her book *Precious Time*, which offers pre-bereavement support to children and families. These awards recognise the hard work, commitment and compassion of our skilled colleagues and volunteers. We hope it reassures you too that every pound you donate to Heart of Kent Hospice makes a meaningful impact, because none of it would be possible without you. We're excited for the new opportunities winning this award will bring.

Your future hospice

You may like to hear how things are progressing with the relocation of the hospice. Since we received the news that outline planning permission had been granted, we've visited other new hospices and have been inspired by beautiful designs and exceptional facilities. Colleagues who have experience of day-to-day working at the hospice have also helped to refine the internal designs. Our focus is on making the best possible use of the new space and ensuring it meets the needs of the community for generations to come.

A full planning application has been submitted, and we are anticipating a response in the Autumn. The application is live on the Maidstone Borough Council planning portal <https://pa.midkent.gov.uk/online-applications/> and the reference is: 25/502125/REM

Now the priority is to secure financial support to fund the project. The full costs are likely to be in the region of £18.5m and a significant legacy, which you can read about on the opposite page, has given a strong start to the fundraising. The outstanding fundraising target is £12m and we plan to talk to charitable trusts, companies and some private individuals before we make an appeal to the wider public. Of course, the hospice's services must continue to run meanwhile, and as always, this will be thanks to you and your kindness.

 Erica Snow, Head of Capital Campaign
 01622 792200 ext 367
 futurehospice@hokh.co.uk



Why do we need to move to a new location?

The need for a new purpose-built hospice grows each week. The existing hospice building, which was fit for purpose when it opened in 1991, is limited and there's no room for expansion because it's constrained by the boundaries of the site.

Our care spans an area of 226 miles and over 266,000 people. Soon there will be more older people living in our catchment area. People are living longer with terminal illnesses - and often with more than one diagnosis. The new hospice will be equipped to cope with the increasing demands for palliative and end-of-life care in our community; our existing hospice wouldn't be. Your hospice will form part of a new development in Linton near Coxheath, which is near the centre of our catchment area.

Designed to be bright and welcoming, the new building will offer a therapeutic environment for patients and their loved ones. It will also be more environmentally sustainable and cost-effective than our current site. We hope the new hospice will become a true community hub - a space for care, connection, celebration, and support.

Thank you to everyone who has already shown interest and supported our plans at this pivotal moment in Heart of Kent Hospice's history. If you would like to know more or find out how you could get involved, we'd be delighted to hear from you.

Edwina and David Bicker left 75% of their estate to Heart of Kent Hospice in their Wills - a total of around £3 million.

Sandra Still is a joint executor of Edwina and David's Will alongside Gill Turner Tucker solicitors. Thanks to her agreement, this transformational gift will become the lead donation for the future hospice at Greensand Place. It's the springboard for the fundraising campaign to come.

Sandra told us about the friendship she and her husband Roger shared with Edwina and David:

"The four of us first met in 1980 at the Willington Players amateur dramatics group and we hit it off immediately.

"We holidayed together at least once a year and always spent Christmas and New Year together. None of us had children or close families.

"People would say we were just like 'The Good Life'. David and Edwina were Jerry and Margot, and Roger and I were Tom and Barbara. We showed them how to have fun. Edwina was an elegant and imposing figure, but I taught her how to eat chips out of the wrapper!

"Edwina began her working life as a Domestic Science teacher, but her headmistress saw her potential and encouraged her to study law.

"Her training was completed at Gill Turner Tucker, where she later became a senior partner and then a District Judge. She specialised in family law and was respected for her thoughtful and fair approach.

"In 2008 she became the first woman president of the Association of District Judges.

"Edwina was involved in fundraising for the hospice before it opened and was one of its first Trustees. After she retired, she became a volunteer. She felt a deep attachment to the hospice.

"When she became ill in 2017 it was all very sudden. She could have gone into the hospice, but she had a private room in the hospital and she was comfortable there. Edwina told the staff that I was her sister so I could visit her 24/7. David would sit and hold her hand while I talked about all the fun we'd had together.

"My husband Roger died in March 2020 and because we were in lockdown, David became my bubble. It felt cathartic to talk with him about our shared memories. Last year David was typically matter-of-fact about his own cancer diagnosis and asked me to arrange his funeral.

"Now I'm the last one standing and I feel robbed, to be honest.

"The legacy was Edwina's idea and David reflected her wishes in his Will. I don't think they knew how wealthy they were, so they would be over the moon to know what an impact their gift would have. It's fitting that Edwina was involved in the development of the current hospice, and now she will play a significant part in the new one, too."



We thank Sandra for taking the time to share her story of friendship, and for executing the wishes of Edwina and David. 5

Shining a spotlight on the work of hospices across the UK. Because hospice care may be more than you think.

On the Inpatient Unit, in the community, and in people's homes across Maidstone and surrounding areas, we look after people who need palliative and end-of-life care day in, day out. Our teams work tirelessly to make sure that those people are comfortable and can live well in the time they have left.

Each year our Community Services Team help thousands of people at the end of their lives live well in your community – letting many people be where they want to be, in the place they love most: their own home.

In the 24/25 year, our Hospice Community Services Team:

CONDUCTED
1,843
home visits

CARED FOR
2,153
LOCAL PEOPLE

RECEIVED
1,115
REFERRALS



FACILITATED
23,474
TELEPHONE INTERACTIONS

SUPPORTED
68%
OF DEATHS
at the person's home



Dr Georgina Parker (Dr George) is the Hospice's Lead Palliative Care Consultant.



"It's my job to support hospice patients who are living at home or elsewhere in the community."

"If a patient has complex symptoms or complicated medical regimes are needed, that's when my colleagues in the Hospice Community Services Team will ask me to get involved."

"In urgent situations, I can prescribe medication myself, whilst keeping the patient's GP up to speed. I can also arrange for investigations such as a CT scan or a blood test at the hospital. I'm lucky to have established relationships with local GPs and consultants in the hospital, so I can email them directly and get a speedy response."

"One gentleman I visited at his home was completely dependent on a ventilator. He couldn't breathe at all without it, but it was incredibly uncomfortable and he couldn't move or eat or talk properly. He wanted to stop the ventilation but was afraid of dying a painful and distressing death. He had a wonderful team of District Nurses who looked after him, but they were also concerned about the consequences for him without the ventilator."

"I reassured the gentleman and the District Nurses that medication could help manage any symptoms he might get as he died. He decided that was what he wanted and so he spent the last few hours of his life without a ventilator - comfortable and with dignity in his own familiar surroundings."

"Afterwards, we did a debrief education session with the District Nurses and the Home Treatment Team. So, when another patient wanted to come off his ventilator, they felt empowered to facilitate it themselves."

Dr George tells us more about the hospice's role in training and education.

"I have set up a community of practice where GP representatives from the surgeries in our catchment area meet regularly to discuss a topic related to palliative care. The GPs and their patients benefit from this knowledge sharing, but it also makes it easier for us to contact each other if we need to."

"We always have one or two trainee doctors working with us on the Inpatient Unit. They come for three months as part of their two-year foundation training."

Our care reaches further than you may think, through our training and education initiatives.

Dr Mihir Gajre has just completed the final placement of his two-year foundation training at the hospice.

"When I started my placement here, I didn't really know anything about hospices. It's been quite eye-opening to see how we can still make a big difference for people at the end of their lives."

"Patients may be in pain when they arrive here, but with the right medication they can be feeling a lot more comfortable within an hour. It's so rewarding to see that, and how their families can get to spend time with them when they're comfortable."

"I was surprised how busy it is here, and I didn't realise that we could take people in to sort out their symptoms and then get them home again with a long-term holistic plan."

"I've learnt how much attention to detail is required to get the medication right for each individual. I also feel better equipped to talk with patients and their loved ones, especially around the more difficult conversations."

"It's been an amazing learning environment because everyone is so supportive here. They've really put effort into training me."

"The best advice I'll take from here is the importance of seeing a patient as a whole person and not just a diagnosis."

"They do six placements before they can be fully registered, and the hospice is one of the options."

"It's great to be able to influence doctors at that very early stage in their career. It means that whatever they choose to specialise in, they've learnt something about looking after people who are approaching the end of their lives. Perhaps more importantly, they've learnt to recognise when someone is dying and that it may be time to talk to that person about their wishes."



Our Education Team

In addition to our student placements, our Education Team offer specialist palliative care training sessions to carers and other healthcare professionals. Topics covered include holistic symptom management, effective communication at end of life, bereavement and self-care.

In the 24/25 year, they welcomed attendees from across Kent and the South East, including individuals from 14 care homes, and reached nationally via online courses. By offering this training, we can expand the reach of our care throughout the community as the attendees share their knowledge with their teams."

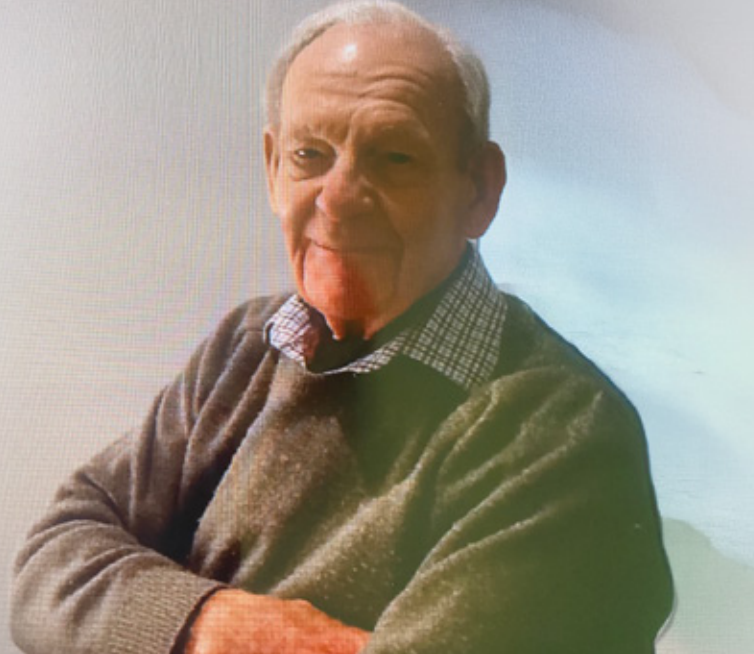


All figures quoted are from the 24/25 financial year.

Learn more about our education and training at hokh.org/learn-with-us or get in touch with the team education@hokh.co.uk

Remembering Major Alan O'Hagan who left the hospice a gift in his Will

Alan died on 30 April 2024 at the age of 99. His son Simon was touched to be asked to share some fond memories of his father with you.



"My father was a man of immense warmth and charm who befriended people from all walks of life.

"His service as a Royal Engineer was notable for acts of great bravery. But he was the least militaristic soldier you could ever meet and a profound believer in the Army's peace-keeping role.

"He was a devoted family man to me and my late brother, David. He always encouraged us in anything we were enthusiastic about. He had a terrific sense of fun and we spent many happy family holidays in Pembrokeshire. I can picture him now, leading the way into the sea and surfing the breakers.

"He was an extraordinarily gifted pianist. He only had to hear a tune once and he could play it. He played in Army jazz bands and his musical heroes were Oscar Peterson and Stéphane Grappelli.

"Full of energy, he always needed a goal to work towards. When he was 70, he decided to walk the 186-mile-long Pembrokeshire coastal path.

"He wanted to make the walk a charity endeavour and would probably have chosen to fundraise for his beloved Royal British Legion. But then he visited a friend in Heart of Kent Hospice and was deeply impressed by the people there and the work they were doing.

"He completed the walk in two weeks and raised **£2,000** for the hospice. My parents were enormously sociable

people, and all their friends would have rallied round to sponsor him.

"Then ten years later, my mother Heather spent her final weeks in the hospice. She died in June 2005, having just turned 80.

"The hospice became an important place for my father at that time. He spent every day at my mother's bedside and was with her the night she died, which meant so much to him. It was the best possible way, under the circumstances, that my mother could have come to the end of her life.

"Last year, my father went into the hospice for the last three weeks of his life. He could not have received better care and kindness anywhere else. His wonderful partner Jenny (who lost her husband around the same time as my mother died) visited him often. As did I and my father's grandson Tom. The hospice team made every single visit special.

"My father's last gift to the hospice was his thank you for looking after my mother. When he wrote his Will, he wouldn't have known that the hospice would be there for him too, but I know that's exactly where he hoped to end his days."

Huge thanks to Simon for telling us about his wonderful father and why he chose to leave the hospice a gift in his Will.



You too can choose to leave a legacy of compassionate care for future generations.

To find out more, please visit
hokh.org/giftsinwills

The power of remembrance. Why we gather to honour those we've lost.

In this feature, Sylvia Rothchild, Spiritual Care Lead, reflects on the importance of taking time to remember and to honour those who have died. She explores how moments of remembrance can help us navigate the journey of grief, offering spaces to connect, reflect, and find comfort in the shared experience of loss.



Grieving is a journey, though it has no fixed destination. It is a process during which we might at different times cry uncontrollably or be dry-eyed, feel numb or experience a volcano of different emotions, feel broken into pieces or held tightly together. We can feel very alone, as if we've parachuted into another universe, seeing life going on around us but as if through a glass, darkly.

Grieving is a normal human response to loss. We have loved and been loved, been rooted in relationships which helped to define us and explain us to ourselves. All things that are disrupted when we are bereaved. And the journey of grief is one in which we remember and make sense of the past, which brings us back to ourselves in our new reality.

Remembering is a huge part of grieving. It is the putting together of what has happened – literally "re-membering" – the collecting and joining together parts of the past to make a workable present.

Memory is a bridge, reaching across time and space, helping us to heal and grow resilient in the face of our loss. Remembrance is a means to celebrate the life

that is ended, to pay tribute, and to experience again the bitter-sweetness of our continuing love, even while the person has gone from us. Thucydides wrote that we weave ourselves into the lives of others, and it is in their memories that we continue to live. Remembering brings comfort and solace.

We offer opportunities throughout the year for people to come together, reflect, and remember those they love – whether or not they have a direct connection to the hospice. These moments of remembrance bring comfort, connection, and hope to many in our community.

But we can only make this possible with your support. From our Remembrance Tree in the Hospice Garden Room, to our annual remembrance events; Light up a Life at Mote Hall, and our uplifting Sunflower event at The Friars. Each gathering is only made possible thanks to the generosity of people like you.

By donating today, you can help us continue offering these special spaces and experiences where grief can be shared and memories honoured. Together, we can ensure that no one has to navigate loss alone.

LIGHT UP A LIFE

Appeal and remembrance event



Sunday 7 December
4:00pm



Mote Hall
Maidstone Leisure Centre
ME15 7RN

Dedicate a donation in memory of your loved one to our Light up a Life appeal. Help our hospice team bring compassionate care and comfort to those who need us this festive season.

Make your donation and reserve your place at Mote Hall online at hokh.org/lual or by calling our Fundraising Team on **01622 790195**

SPONSOR YOUR Heart of Kent Hospice NURSES

Julie Lucas became Head of the Inpatient Unit (IPU) in April. She joined the team eight years ago as a senior staff nurse and has worked in palliative care since 2008. Julie answered some questions about her role and experience of leading the IPU.

What do you want to bring to your job as Head of IPU?

"I'm lucky to have the most enthusiastic, supportive and brilliant team. I want to be a good role-model for them - inspiring, innovative and there for them. I hope to be bold, in the sense that I won't avoid something just because it's difficult."

How would you describe the job of a hospice IPU nurse?

"We can have such a positive and powerful impact when patients and their loved ones are going through some of the worst experiences of their lives. We can hopefully take that burden from them a little and make it more bearable."

"Our work is dynamic and challenging. We're dealing with specialist medication that requires careful consideration and calculation. We also need to be able to react quickly to changing situations: one minute we can be dealing with an urgent medical issue, and the next we can be sitting quietly with a family who's loved one is about to die."

"We can help to make inspirational things happen. I remember one patient who didn't want a big funeral or for people to be sad. We helped to arrange the most fantastic party for her in the hospice garden and moved her bed outside. Her friends and family came, and they brought guitars and everyone sang songs together. It made her so happy."



What plans do you have for the IPU?

"Our hospice care is rated 'Outstanding' by the Care Quality Commission and of course, I want to ensure we maintain those standards. But we never stand still here. There are always things to learn and new ideas to try as we strive to achieve a truly exceptional service."

"For example, we're looking at ways to improve the process for nurses to handover to their colleagues. It's important that they continue to share with each other the essential information about the patients in their care. But it's also important that they finish their shifts on time, to allow them time to rest and recuperate."

"We're also looking at ways to make IPU a more inviting and informative environment and ways to work more collaboratively with other colleagues in the hospice."

What else is important to you apart from your job?

"This job teaches you about the importance of grabbing life now. My husband and I are blessed with two fantastic children and two grandchildren who give me a great deal of joy. I love being outside - I love my garden and trips to the seaside. These are the things that feed my soul and help me to do my job to the best of my ability."

When someone doesn't have long to live, every moment counts. Please choose to make those moments as good as they can possibly be. Your kindness means so much.

Here, two nurses share with you what it's like to work on the hospice Inpatient Unit.

Julia, Senior Registered Nurse

What is special about being a hospice nurse?

"When I worked in a hospital, I would often end my shift with the feeling that I hadn't been able to give a patient enough time."

"Here in the hospice, although we have really busy days, we can give people more time. Recently, a lady needed her pain brought under control, and that's the specialist side of our work. But she also needed a bit of a hospice hug. She hadn't been able to have a bath or wash her hair for ages, and we helped her to do that. Just that simple thing made such a difference to her, because we all feel more human when we're relaxed and clean, don't we?"



How does it feel to care for someone at the end of life?

"The end of life is an important stage in all our lives. It may sound corny, but it really is a privilege to be with a person at that time. There was a gentleman who was dying late one night and I just sat with him quietly and held his hand. His family were unable to be there, but they were so grateful to know that I'd been present and that he didn't die alone."

"Of course, there are days when you have to get on with the job despite feeling emotional about something that's happened here. But I've been at the hospice for 13 years, so I think that says it all, really."

Emily, Registered Nurse

How do you help to make people feel comfortable and safe?

"I love to find out what music people like because if we put that on, it can help to make things feel more normal for them, especially if we're all singing along too!"

"One gentleman used sign language to communicate, and I know a little from when I was at school. He was astonished when I said 'Good morning' in sign language and asked if he had any pain anywhere. He said I was an angel, which was so lovely."

How do you make a difference to families?

"It's wonderful to see the change in a relative when they've been caring for someone at home and I've helped to lift their worries away. There was one lady who was beyond stressed after caring for her Mum. Soon after arriving at the hospice she said, 'Thank you. I've never seen Mum so relaxed. I can finally be her daughter again.'"

Speaking of the care she received on our Inpatient Unit, Ruth Spencer said

"The thing that impressed me most about the hospice is the kindness. To begin with I found it emotionally overwhelming because of the intensity of the loving care that was shown to me. The hospice is one of the most beautiful places on earth."

Please choose to sponsor a Heart of Kent Hospice nurse today. Be the reason they can care for people like Ruth.

☎ 01622 790195

🖱 hokh.org/sponsoranurse

**SPONSOR YOUR
NURSE TODAY**

Retail volunteering goes full circle.

Joey, and his mum Lucy, talk about his recent work experience at our Parkwood charity shop in honour of his grandmother, Lynette, who volunteered there for many years.

Tell us about your work experience role and what you've been doing so far this week?

Joey: "This week I've been on the tills and out the back, estimating prices on things and figuring out where things go, how to label them and using the label gun. Scanning and pressing the buttons on the till is quite fun!"

What are you hoping to learn this week?

Joey: "I'm hoping to learn how to estimate things well and get an idea of how retail works. At the end of the day, I feel happy I've just done my best."

You've got a bit of a special link to this shop can you tell me a bit about that?

Joey: "So when I was younger, I used to always come here with my nana; she used to volunteer here and it's always been such a special place to me. Unfortunately, she died in 2020. I got the message from my school saying you need to do work experience, and I immediately thought to come and do it here."

"It's very nice here because of all the memories and how everyone is so kind."

What do you think your nana would think about you being here this week?

Joey: "I think Nana would be very happy that I'm here."



What was Lynette like as a person?

Joey: "She was a really nice person, she always made friends everywhere she went. Just a very sweet lady."

Lucy: "When the store opened, my mum started volunteering here and formed great friendships. She always worked in retail, so she really loved helping the customers. She'd always be singing around the store and I'd pop up with the boys to visit. There's a desk and a chair in the back, and even though she's not here, that's Nana's chair."

"She was called 'silly nana' by my boys and that was the title that she gave herself so everyone would say 'silly nana' but her name was Lynette."

"It was kind of a full circle – because Heart of Kent Hospice is where she ended up after she became poorly. She had given back by volunteering at the hospice, and then the hospice was able to support both my mum and my family when she died."

"So it was lovely when Joey came home and said that for work experience that he wanted to volunteer here."

When Lynette became ill what was the biggest challenge for her and how did that affect you as her family?

Lucy: "So out of the blue, my mum had quite a bad stroke during the pandemic. At the hospital, we only had an hour a day and unfortunately the boys weren't able to visit. After a couple of months when there wasn't any improvement, I rang the hospice."

When she started receiving the hospice's care, who helped and what did they do?

Lucy: "She was only on the Inpatient Unit for three days, but that three days care for my mum, and for me and my brother, was so much better in terms of the time and the attention that any of us had received at the hospital. Having a dedicated team who you know care about the individual and take time for even the simple things like asking if you would like a cup of tea, make it special."

"Heart of Kent Hospice, and particularly the Parkwood store, hold a really special place for us." – Lucy

"They did a handprint and they made us two copies. My mum's favourite colour was pink, so it's on a pink ribbon and the handprint comes round so it's almost like she's giving you a hug. The items that went with her to the hospice, such as her jewellery, were all packaged up in glittery pink boxes and it was just a personal detail, done with personal care and personal attention."

"Our situation was extra unique because mum's sister had passed away at the hospice a few days before. They said they never had siblings at the hospice before. She was a very, very special and unique lady right until the end, when she was as comfortable, relaxed and in as much peace as she could be."

What do you think is the most surprising thing about the hospice?

Lucy: "For me, at the hospice, I found it just so immeasurably different to the hospital treatment. I don't think people can give enough back to Heart of Kent Hospice. Everybody would want that treatment over anything else."

"The Parkwood shop is just such a part of the community here, it offers so much variety and considering it's only been here since 2016, it's great to see how so many people rely on it."

What would you say to any other young people who are thinking of volunteering for the hospice?

Joey: "If you have the chance to help out, help. Places like this are going to close because they are running out of people to help and these places are so amazing because all the money goes to Heart of Kent Hospice. So if you can help, help."

Lucy: "I'm just really proud of Joey and I'm so touched that he picked the Parkwood shop because of my mum. It's like a little bit of nana is coming back."



Volunteering offers so much more than giving back. It's a chance to gain new skills, build confidence and make friends.

If you are interested in joining our fun and friendly retail team please contact our People Services Team:

- hokh.org/volunteering
- 01622 792200
- volunteering@hokh.co.uk

Borough Green Village Hall

We're delighted to continue our regular village hall flash sales in Borough Green. Pick up a bargain and grab yourself a real find with most items just £1!

£1
FLASH
SALES

Visit hokh.org/events for the latest sale dates

E-commerce volunteers urgently needed

If you enjoy buying and selling on online platforms such as eBay and Vinted, we have the perfect volunteer opportunity for you.

Our retail team is looking for volunteers with great ideas to create inspiring listings to showcase our pre-loved goods. If you are interested in this role, simply visit hokh.org/volunteering

Our beautiful 2025 Christmas cards are available now!

Get ready for the holiday season with our brand-new collection of Christmas cards! Choose from a variety of festive designs available in packs of 10 with envelopes included. Buy now from any of our shops or online at hokh.org/christmascards.



Just a reminder, the deadline for posting Christmas cards by Second Class to UK addresses is **Monday 18 December**.

Our Heart of Kent Hospice lottery ticket is the perfect stocking filler!

Why not give those you love a Heart of Kent Hospice lottery ticket? You can buy a single ticket from your local Heart of Kent Hospice shop for just £1. When you buy a single ticket you are entered into our normal weekly lottery and have the chance to win weekly cash prizes, with a jackpot of **£1,000**, all whilst supporting your hospice.



Community spirit

“The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.” – Coretta Scott King



Over the past 18 months, the small village of Offham has come together in support of much-loved resident Fiona Lloyd-Williams and Heart of Kent Hospice. We cared for Fiona since her brain tumour diagnosis in April 2024 and sadly, she died on 4 April 2025.

Speaking about the care Fiona received, her husband Peter said “The hospice were utterly amazing. As Fiona’s needs changed, sometimes quite rapidly, they jumped in. And to be honest, without that, I don’t know what we would have done.”

One night in the Kings Arms, the seed of an idea was planted to fundraise for the hospice. Matthew Scullion, Owner of the Kings Arms said “Hearing devastating news of someone that was so loved in the village, we wanted to do anything we could to support her, the family and the hospice.”

Recalling that Fiona had been to see Calendar Girls, they were inspired to recreate their own men’s version. Matthew recalls that “The first night everyone there were all keen, but a fair few pints had been had by then. After that, it was hard to get people involved. But as soon as the first photos were done, loads more people came along to get involved. It was absolutely brilliant fun; we had the best laugh taking the photos.”

Peter commented “Amazingly everyone followed through, and they have gone off the shelves. They’ve ended up in Sydney, Dubai, Prague, all over the world!”



The calendar was not the only fundraiser to take off in support of Fiona. Rab, who had been growing his hair for over 5 years, shaved it all off in the King’s Arms and local Vicar, Jim, took on a 10k Winter Run.

During the summer, King’s Arms barmaids Gabi and Saffi braved a **Wing Walk challenge**. They said “We’re doing it with Fiona firmly in our hearts” and upon landing, Saffi exclaimed “It was great! I’d definitely tell other people to just do it!”



In September, Fiona and Peter’s neighbour Janette cycled **300 miles**, crossing four countries during a four-day fundraising adventure, from Offham to Amsterdam.

The extraordinary efforts of Fiona’s friends and family have collectively fundraised over **£6,500** for our hospice, with a further **£4,935** donated directly in her memory. We cannot thank them enough for their incredible generosity and kindness.

“The sums raised are beyond all expectations; it shows how much the hospice, Fiona and Peter have impacted villagers.”
- Paul Turner, Calendar Photographer

“So many people out there want to help when people go through tough situations. So, if you’ve got a gem of an idea to raise money, float it out there and hopefully you’ll find people willing to jump on board and go with it.”
- Peter Lloyd-Williams

If you have been inspired and would like to find out more about fundraising for the hospice, visit hokh.org/fundraising or email our team at fundraising@hokh.co.uk.



Festive activities for all!

Join us for some wonderful events this season and support your hospice at the same time. From all of us at Heart of Kent Hospice, we wish you a very happy festive season.



LIGHT UP A LIFE

7 December, 4:00pm-5:00pm,
Mote Hall, Maidstone Leisure Centre,
ME15 7RN

With a heart-warming mixture of readings, music and poetry. This non-religious service is a touching tribute to those no longer with us. A perfect opportunity to gather with loved ones for a moment of remembrance during the busy festive season.

Reserve your free space and dedicate a donation in memory of a loved one at hokh.org/lual

Compassionate Café

10:30am-12pm, third Thursday of the month.
Matestone Coffee and Tea House, High Street,
Maidstone, ME14 1TG

Our Compassionate Café is a space for members of our community who are affected by any type of loss or loneliness and would like to meet others and make friends in a warm and welcoming space.

No need to book, just drop in on the day.



CHRISTMAS CONCERT

7 December, 6:00pm-7:30pm,
Mote Hall, Maidstone Leisure Centre, ME15 7RN

Join us for a magical candlelit concert that will immerse you in the festive spirit. The event will feature special guests and friends of Heart of Kent Hospice and be filled with festive cheer.

ChristmasTree RECYCLING



Are you planning on getting a real Christmas tree this year? Once the New Year arrives, you’ll have to dispose of your tree, but don’t worry – we can help you recycle it.

Our dedicated volunteers will collect your real spruce, fir or pine trees on the **9, 10 and 11 January** – right from your front gate or driveway. This convenient service means you won’t have to endure the cold and we only ask for a suggested donation of **£15 per tree**. Help the environment as well as those in your community that need our support.

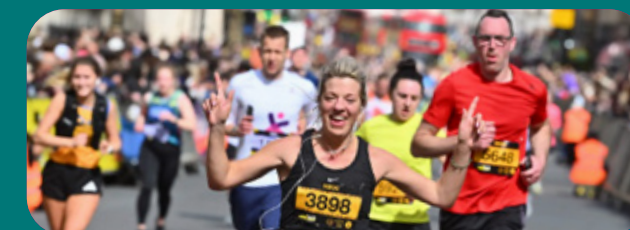
Book now at hokh.org/treerecycling
We collect, we recycle, you relax!

2026 EVENTS



12 April
2026

See the sights and support our hospice with the London Landmarks Half Marathon!



The event is not your average half marathon – from cultural landmarks and heritage to the city’s quirky and hidden secrets, runners get to explore the capital on a route like no other!

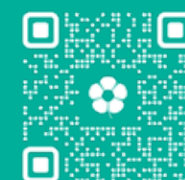
If you’re interested, please contact our Challenges Team at challenges@hokh.co.uk

BLUEBELL WALK

Sunday 3 May 2026

Our annual Bluebell Walk is a picturesque, leisurely six-mile ramble through the stunning bluebells and enchanting woodland.

Sign up today at hokh.org/bluebell



To book a place or to find out more about any of our hospice events, please visit hokh.org/events



Heart
of Kent
Hospice

THIS IS HOSPICE CARE

It's easing pain and bringing comfort, care
for those dying and for those around them.

Find out more about making a Will today and
help hospice care live on for all, for now, forever.

hokh.org/giftsinwills

