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a new normal

Community Magazine 2020

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Welcome to the VOICE, written at the end of a twelve month period few of us want to repeat. Some things in the year behind still make me shudder and a few ahead make me anxious. So I'll just focus on the positives in the year.

The high point for me has been the flexibility and adaptability all our hospice teams have shown both when our beds closed and during COVID. Front and centre of that was the way our clinical team worked together to create an extended Hospice at Home team to support patients in their own homes when our beds shut. When COVID arrived they just donned their masks and continued with business as usual. As always all they wanted was to make sure patients and families felt safe and had their needs met.

Despite this sadly we know that life was trickier for a few people when our beds were shut. That reinforced for us that we HAD to get those beds open and with a push we did that by mid-April.

During the closure we did building alterations to improve the environment and planned a huge opening party so YOU could see those changes. But sad to say COVID cancelled that party.

So rather than inviting people in, we've ended up sending people home to work! The Government's furlough scheme kindly paid salaries of those who couldn't work, including staff from café, shops, warehouse and fundraising. We're grateful to staff for doing this. Some staff worked from home and a small handful stayed on site alongside the clinical teams to



keep things running. Four beds were reopened and alongside that a much bigger Hospice at Home team.

Meanwhile our Living Well Centre opened up as a Support Hub in Barrow delivering food, medicine and emotional support to those self-isolating across Barrow for the first 6 weeks until Age UK and BCC were able to take this over.

Until the end of July the Government paid hospices a grant to cover the care fundraising usually pays for. However from the end of July, when Government support stopped our shops, café and warehouse were back in the game and needing to make ends meet. It's unlikely we'll meet this year's costs.

I tell you this to set the scene for us including a slightly bigger ask on Raffle tickets this year. We're suggesting £15 worth of tickets rather than the usual £10. We hope you don't think it's too cheeky of us but we wanted to offer a simple way for those who want to, and can afford to, help us make it to the end of the year in the black. But we understand COVID has been hard for all of us so please don't feel an obligation to buy more tickets. If you can spare a little more we will use it well. There's an option to become one of our Regular Givers too in case you prefer that.

So onward and upward into the next year. Who knows what it will bring. As always winter's coming (where did I hear that before) and we will still keep making that difference. Take care and stay safe.

Val Stangoe

Our Care

– Inpatient Unit



Kate Davison faced a very different start to her new role at the hospice – here is her story

March 30th 2020 - first day at my new job as Integrated Team Sister for the hospice In-Patient Unit and Hospice at Home service.

- Uniform nicely pressed – tick
- Comfortable shoes – tick
- New pen – tick
- Trusty old fob watch – tick
- Covid Pandemic – not entirely sure I was prepared for that on Day 1!

Starting my new position at St Mary's Hospice in the midst of a pandemic was interesting, challenging, humbling and inspiring.

Interesting and challenging

Getting to know new people is something I enjoy and I was really looking forward to meeting the clinical team. I was fortunate to meet most of them during a Big Team meeting day where we made plans for the re-opening of the hospice and how we were going to invite the local community to an Open Day. However, these plans had to change and we re-opened the In-Patient Unit sooner than planned to meet demand. There was also the challenge of not being able to meet the wider hospice team, as many staff were working from home. Not one to be deterred, I carried on and took any opportunity I could to email or phone people to get to know them. I have only just got the hang of Zoom/Microsoft Teams - that has probably been one of my biggest personal challenges!

Humbling and inspiring

Throughout the pandemic we followed Government and Public Health England guidance – things changed very quickly and at times it was a struggle to keep up to date on latest guidance. However, no matter what changed, what had to be introduced and how quickly we had to act, the hospice responded as a whole. Not once did anyone lose sight of why we are here. Our focus is always the patient and those important to them, and for that I have been humbled and inspired – I am truly part of something very special here at the hospice.

In-Patient Unit

In April we re-opened our In-Patient Unit for people from the local community who need palliative and end of life care, and the beds have been very well used in this time. Whilst the unit was closed to admissions we have taken the opportunity to refurbish, supported by a very generous grant from the Co-op community. This helped us to create a Family/Visitor Kitchen and a new welcoming reception area. We also redecorated all the patient rooms, improved the external access to some rooms and put up new blinds and curtains. A finishing touch was a very kind donation of bedding from a family who had experienced hospice care the previous year – thank you very much.

Unfortunately we were unable to open our doors for you to visit us prior to the In-Patient Unit re-opening but here are some pictures to show you how fresh it is looking:



Our wonderful new medical team started in April and have settled in so well. We have specialist palliative consultant support 3 times a week via video-call, as well as having access to a consultant out of hours and at weekends. This system provides very good, accessible and robust support for clinical decision making about patient care and treatment.

Janet was a patient in the In-Patient Unit this year, having been encouraged to come in to the hospice for some symptom management by her Community Specialist Palliative Nurse and GP. Janet explained that the hospice clinical team were able to go through a variety of issues she was having and dealt with them all. They were able to trial and sort all her medication which was also very helpful, as was a visit from the Lymphedema nurse. **“It was wonderful and they couldn't do any more. The food was marvellous”**. Janet says she would definitely recommend the hospice to others in a similar situation, requiring symptom management. She was apprehensive at first but really glad she came.

Thank you to the Albert Hunt Trust for funding some of our salary costs for the new medical team.

Our Care

– Hospice At Home



Hospice at Home staff (pre-COVID-19)

When the In-Patient Unit temporarily closed in September 2019, all of those nurses and health care assistants who usually supported our beds worked within our Hospice at Home service or Living Well team. As a result we were able to provide more care in the community, supporting our NHS Community Nursing and Community Specialist Palliative Care Nursing colleagues.

Because our staff worked flexibly we were able to provide Day Respite Care for family carers to enable them to get out for a few hours, to an appointment or to meet up with friends, or just go for a walk. We were also able to provide more Night Sits to enable a family carer to get a good night's sleep.

A key aim of Hospice at Home is to support patients to die at home if that is their wish, and sustain their family carers.

As one family carer commented: "From the first instance Hospice at Home came

into our lives I can honestly say that their service, compassion and care was second to none. They listened, acted upon and cared for our every need. They helped keep us safe throughout the COVID-19, always covering up and we appreciate them for that. I will continue to support them in my husband's memory. I kept my husband at home until his journey ended and for that I will be forever grateful to the girls for helping us to achieve it".

If a family wishes, the Hospice at Home team will stay when a person is dying and will also provide support in the immediate period following a death:

"From the moment St Mary's Hospice got in touch with me, I felt a weight had been taken off. They made this sad time so much better for all of us. I just couldn't have done it without them.

I would highly recommend their services to anyone else who is going through a sad time caring for a dying relative. Even after my grandad passed away they

came to see us. Excellent work from you all. You do a great job".

Some patients are cared for at home and then come into the In-Patient Unit for symptom management or for care at the end of their life, if that is their choice. Stewart's condition deteriorated to the point that he needed more care than was possible at home. His wife, Pauline, explained what a big relief this was for her – "I can be his wife! Off-loading responsibility for a while has helped me to relax knowing all Stewart's needs were being met. We both feel nurtured and protected. For Stewart, a cocoon, for Pauline, a life boat! A very high standard of care provided by a highly trained compassionate, caring group of professional people".

Thank you to the Sir John Fisher Foundation for funding contributions to Hospice At Home, one pre COVID-19, and one from their special round of COVID-19 funding support.



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Our Care – Living Well

Louisa Warner, our palliative Occupational Therapist (OT), joined us at the beginning of 2020 and is a very valuable additional to our clinical team.

Occupational Therapy plays an important role in palliative care, enabling and supporting people to live as independently as possible. Louisa works together with patients to identify their personal goals and to look at the activities which are important and most meaningful to them. She can advise on different techniques or methods to use, and on how to adapt or re-arrange environment so it is more suitable to a patient's needs. This can help people to manage every-day life more easily whilst living with symptoms such as fatigue, breathlessness and anxiety. For patients in the In-Patient Unit, Louisa can offer practice or trial of activities or equipment before being discharged home.

Prior to COVID-19, Louisa worked alongside other therapists, nurses,

health care assistants and volunteers to provide a range of group and individual therapies, including our Day Hospice and Living Well Programme. One person to benefit from the 12-week Day Hospice was Cora.

Cora had lost her husband and Mum and was then diagnosed with cancer and was having a hard time. She feels that the Day Hospice really helped her get through this difficult time and take her mind off things. mCora was able to talk to others in similar situations which she found very beneficial. She made lots of friends who she still keeps in touch with.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Living Well Team has had to work in different ways to maintain contact and support for patients. Louisa, our OT, has adapted the Living Well Programme, which helps people to manage their symptoms, achieve their goals and improve their quality of life. She takes this programme out to individuals in their own homes, or via

telephone support and through a closed Facebook site, through which she can deliver self-help videos.



George and his daughter feel it is really helpful to have a professional from the hospice to support him to manage his illness. George feels like he is “always moving forward” and has targets to reach each week. He likes that he is included in any plan, not being told what to do. He “looks forward to every visit” and enjoys the social side as well as his achievements. George feels that because of the COVID pandemic his social engagement was virtually non-existent and taking part in the programme has given him focus. Louisa arranged for equipment to be delivered to help George get in and out of bed, a new wheelchair and advice around bathroom adaptations. George's main goal was to be able to mobilise down the road using his sticks which he managed to achieve by week 2 of the programme!

With support from funding from The National Lottery, Sir Jules Thorn Trust COVID-19 Hospice Fund, and the Frieda Scott Trust.





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Our Care – Family and Bereavement Support Service

Throughout the Coronavirus pandemic our Family and Bereavement support service has been committed to adapting the service in every way we can to provide the support that so many people in our community required.

As a team we saw how tough regulations, such as social distancing rules and visiting restrictions, made it harder for people to face and deal with loss. For many people it has been so distressing to be unable to comfort their loved one in their dying moments. This distress was repeated when they had to minimise or cancel the planned funeral. It's been really difficult for people not to be able to mourn or grieve their loved ones the ways we normally do.

Although we couldn't provide face to face support during the height of the pandemic for safety reasons we increased our telephone support and also our digital support through Facebook and by running a weekly zoom café so people could come together and feel less alone. As one member of the online group said:

"In these strange times I have been so grateful to read posts, have the group support and someone at the end of a message or phone line. So important to know you aren't alone"

Sheree and Terry share their experiences:

Sheree's story: "I lost my beloved partner just when we'd been about to start a new life together in Barrow after moving here from Spain. I arrived here first expecting George to follow, but sadly he died suddenly. As you can imagine I was in a very emotional dark place. One day when I managed to go to town I went



into the St Mary's Hospice charity shop; a lovely lady there suggested I contacted the Family Support service. I took her advice and very hesitantly I called them. I wasn't sure they would accept me due to George not having hospice care.

Making that phone call was the best thing I did. I was seen weekly at home by a lovely lady who gave me the chance to cry, be angry and express all my emotions without making me feel I was being judged in anyway. Also the constant reassurance she gave me that what I was experiencing was 'normal' and not to be frightened.

This support gave me the strength to get my life in some type of order and my family were relieved and pleased that I had found St Mary's.

During my support I was also able to join some of the wonderful groups that are run by the team. I have grown in confidence. I have also become a volunteer and help in the local charity shop where my journey began.

What would you say to someone thinking of accessing the service?

Don't hesitate. This service is so helpful. I would urge anyone out there who is struggling at all with your grief and loss to give St Mary's a call. The Bereavement

team are so welcoming and supportive and have enabled me to start my new journey and look forward.

Terry's story: "My wife Pat was sadly diagnosed with stage 4 bowel cancer. Our Macmillan Nurse suggested St Mary's Hospice Family Support team may be able to help. It became apparent that all our family could access help from the team.

The support we accessed was on a one to one basis; this meant that we could all discuss all sorts of issues. These meetings gave us all strength and confidence to give Pat the best care we could.



Just talking to someone who understood our feelings was pure relief at times. We all came away refreshed and at times relieved.

St Mary's staff are professional, caring, 'real' people. They care about our wellbeing. You may feel you are strong enough to cope with major life problems, but there will be a time when you think "I just cannot cope". The Family Support team are there to get you through those times. Do not be too proud to ask for help.

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How we responded to COVID



Graham Jowett, Chair of Trustees of the hospice, commented: “Just think – an unprecedented difficult and potentially catastrophic year and through it all St Mary’s has stood tall. A new medical model, innovative practices, one of the best teams one could wish for, a number of prestigious regional and now a national award and two royal visits. An up and down year but on the whole a positive one. We’d like to thank all our supporters for never losing faith in us.”

Background

Our In-Patient Unit was temporarily closed to admissions in September 2019 due to a shortage of medical staff. We were just getting ready to reopen those beds in April 2020 when the COVID pandemic started in March 2020. As soon as our new doctors started in April it was all systems go to get those bed open and providing palliative care beds for our community once more.



How did we respond to COVID-19?

The job we were allocated locally was to make our beds available for people who did not have COVID. We were asked to look after those needing symptom management or care at the end of life. COVID meant many people didn’t want to come into the hospice and be around other people, so we started by re-opening 4 beds and kept a larger team of nurses



working in the community. These nurses worked with community and specialist nursing teams and together they provided essential care to people in their own homes. Later we opened 6 beds on the In-Patient Unit.

Working with Age UK, we set up a Community Response Hub at our Living Well Centre in Barrow, supporting people who needed advice or practical support due to having to self-isolate. After 6 weeks we handed over the reins for this to the Council.

Our teams learnt a lot of new language about different types of face masks and other PPE, “Zoom” and “Teams”, and, like

everyone, we learned more about COVID-19 and its impact.

We were a part of a Morecambe Bay-wide group of health and social care organisations who met weekly (virtually) to share information and work together to organise palliative care and bereavement support. Working like this made a real difference to services across the Bay.

Our 2 Advanced Nurse

Practitioners worked in Furness General Hospital for 6 weeks as part of a team of Specialist Palliative Nurses providing 7/7 support for the wards.

When a local care home was affected by the pandemic and had staff shortages we provided an overnight team for 4 nights. This meant their residents could stay safely in their own beds.

On the strength of our work responding to the pandemic, we have secured additional funding which has been put to good use.

How we responded to COVID

Our bereavement team had 40% more people ask for support after being bereaved. This increase was due to COVID as well as other conditions. We also supported other organisations' staff who were impacted personally by the additional loss and bereavement they were supporting. We adapted this service to use telephone and video-calls instead of face to face. This kept the team of staff and volunteers safe so they could keep working throughout.

Our virtual Remembrance and Reflection Services let people come together to remember loved ones in a supportive environment. We videoed these services for social media and they were viewed by many people across our patch.

Education is really important in such a difficult time and our education team trained staff from the mental health wards in Barrow and Kendal allowing them to improve their skills and knowledge about end of life care and palliative symptom management. We also trained nurses from nursing homes in procedures at the end of life.

Because many of the people using our services are vulnerable due to illness we worked to increase our ability to reach out through our group therapy services. We developed a different way of providing support, through social media, self-management videos and telephone support.

Jo Blake, Head of Clinical Care & Education: *"The staff were phenomenal! They showed such a great team spirit and "can-do" attitude in very challenging*



circumstances. Everyone worked together, looked after each other and worked hard to make sure that patients and families continued to receive the very best palliative care and bereavement support".

Val Stangoe, CEO, said, *"I have never been prouder of our clinical team. Under Jo's leadership they twisted and turned to make sure that despite COVID they kept meeting the needs of patients, families and colleagues."*





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Living Well Centre Update



St Mary's Living Well Centre in Barrow opened in November 2018 for people living with any advancing illness and those who have been bereaved with the aim of promoting independence and self-management of illness while encouraging friendship and fun. The activity timetable includes singing, gentle exercise, arts and crafts and time to meet for coffee and a chat. By the end of the first year around 250 people were using the building each month.

The partnership allows groups like Carry on Breathing, the Dementia Hub, St Mary's Hospice and the Neurological Alliance to run their own activities knowing that strong links with partners allow easy signposting and referral to others with expertise for specific need.

This partnership model came in for a lot of attention nationally in Autumn 2019 by winning the North West Business Awards



Living Well Programme on Zoom

Charity of the Year Award again in Winter 2019 with a national Hospice UK award and finally with the national Charity Governance Award 'Improving Impact for organisations with more than 26 staff'. A brilliant year from start to finish that came about because of passionate partners working together. On top of that a survey showed building users felt their increased knowledge helped them better manage their health condition and activities in the building contributed to feelings of well-being and connectedness.

Then just as we were starting to develop plans to support more people in year two, COVID hit!

Face to face activity stopped in early March 2020 to protect those using our services, our staff and volunteers. A phone line was set up to provide access to groceries, medicines and emotional support for those who had self-isolated. Food, toiletries and treats were kindly donated by local businesses with our fantastic hospice warehouse team taking on the delivery role. A real team effort! When our beds reopened around 6 weeks after lockdown we handed management of



Receiving donations at Barrow Hub March 2020

the phone line to Age UK and the Barrow Borough Council so our clinical staff could return to supporting patients in our beds and their families.

And now several months later here we all stand in our new world. Services have been adapted to provide support through Zoom meetings, telephone or home visits and we're doing our best to help people stay active, safe and well. We're regularly reviewing when face to face meetings might be safe again as we know social isolation is having a huge emotional impact. The first activity we've started with our partners Active Cumbria is Walking for Health which leaves the Living Well Centre every Monday morning at 10.30am.

Local health partners Morecambe Bay CCG said 'We greatly value the St Mary's Hospice Living Well Centre, which is an asset to the community and allows essential work to take place. The centre gives local communities the chance to access multiple sources of health and wellbeing support and since it has been opened up to local groups, encourages integrated partnership working with vital initiatives such as the Barrow Dementia Hub.'

We have received funding from the Hadfield Trust for mobility equipment and are currently receiving more funding from the Co-op Local Community Fund. The Co-op Fund supports local projects that shoppers care about, and our supporters' shopping has enabled us to receive this funding for mobility equipment ready for use as the centre re-opens.

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Back to Business

Not even a global pandemic can dampen the enthusiasm of team Retail and Hospitality and following 3 months of closure we are back serving our customers and looking forward to new beginnings and Christmas!

"I couldn't be more proud of the team for embracing the changes we have made to ensure we are providing a safe place to shop and eat. Thank you to all of our customers and donors for making our return so easy and for keeping Covid Safe with mask wearing, social distancing, safe donating and advance booking." Caroline, Head of Retail and Hospitality

New beginnings

After 20 years on Dalton Road in Barrow, our town centre shop has moved to exciting new premises on Portland Walk with a brand new look but still with the same low prices. Re:love by St Mary's Hospice brings you a fresh and funky shopping experience right in the heart of Barrow. We have been very fortunate in securing a great property with a wonderfully charitable landlord that supports St Mary's Hospice, meaning we're actually saving a big pot of money by moving into these fantastic premises! Great for residents of Barrow-in-Furness and great for St Mary's Hospice, saving money on premises means more money to spend on patient care, it's a win all round!







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Volunteers needed now!

Do you have a few hours to spare each week and are fit and mobile and like to be kept busy?

If you want to join a fun team and help raise funds for the Hospice, simply call

into your favourite local shop or the Orangery Café to find out more! If you are raring to go then complete the application form on our website and we will be glad to welcome you on board.



More than a Thank you....

It's hard to express our gratitude to each and every one who chooses to support St Mary's. Whether it's through donating every month, throwing yourself out of a plane or choosing to hold an event, it ALL adds up and it all makes a difference. Although we can't thank everyone on this page we would like to share a snapshot of thank you's.

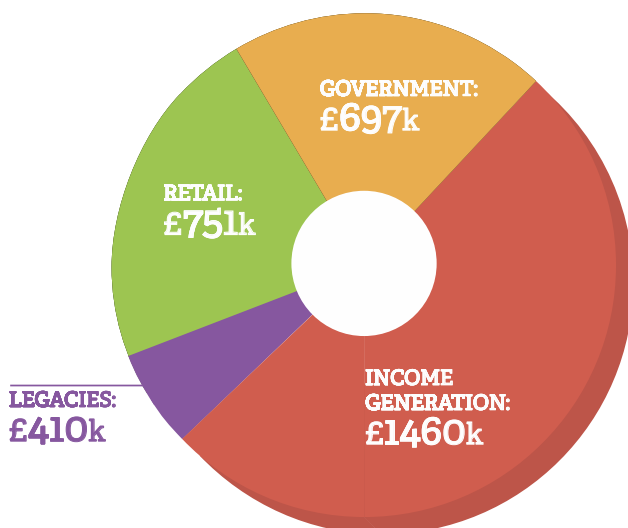


How are we funded?

St Mary's Hospice was born to serve our community, often in great times of need. As this edition demonstrates, we offer a wide range of services, wider than most people know but we often get asked "where does our money come from?" Below shows where our funds came from during our last financial year.



2019-20: ST MARY'S INCOME



April 2019 – March 2020

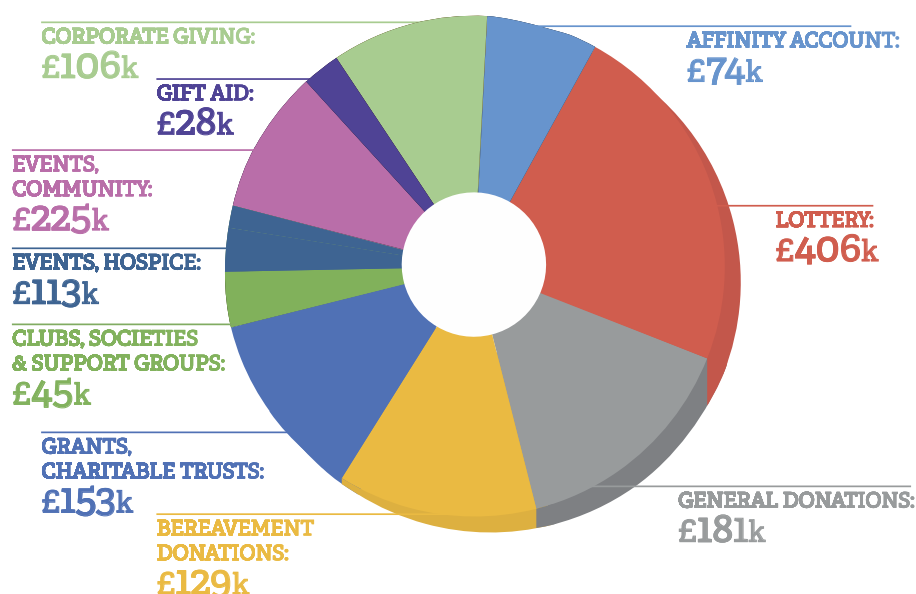
The slice of the pie called 'Income Generation' is basically YOU. There are many ways people give and it all adds up.....

COVID-19 has inevitably reshaped many of our income streams. For instance:-



Although it is still early days to have a true understanding of how COVID-19 will impact St Mary's financially, we are certain that we will ride this storm and what the last few months have shown us is that we have the best community whose love and support never dwindles and for that we are humbled and shall be forever grateful #strongertogether

2019-20: INCOME GENERATION



“we have the best community whose love and support never dwindles and for that we are humbled and shall be forever grateful #strongertogether”

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More than just a building

On page 23 we talked a little about how COVID-19 has impacted St Mary's financially. Going forward we are trying to navigate a new path that provides as much security as possible in these very uncertain times.

One income stream that provides this is by supporters choosing to make a small donation monthly as it allows us to predict very accurately what should be coming to us over a set period of time. If you are able and would like to support us in this way then we have included a form for you to fill in and send back. We would also like to take this opportunity to share how your monthly donation would make an impact to our community.



St Mary's Hospice

“Your regular donation will help us keep being SO MUCH MORE THAN four walls”

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Thank you to Orsted for continued sponsorship of St Mary's Fundraising Activity



St Mary's Hospice

“The nursing staff treated mum like the individual that she was. They not only cared for mum, but looked after us as a family too, making us all feel at home.”

Hannah, hospice supporter and daughter of patient Shirley

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“It is so special visiting Armley where home has been made a difference at a time when loved ones can feel so lost and lonely, and to see the relief when they realise they will be supported.”

Solving, Hospice at Home nurse

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“These last days were so calm and peaceful that I had no fear for myself or Patrick, he simply fell asleep with my arms around him. St Mary's Hospice gave us that wonderful gift.”

Helen, hospice supporter and wife of patient Patrick

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“We were in the darkest of times as a family, but these hospice people would consistently arrive and be glad to ensure we knew they were there for us all the time after.”

Garren, hospice supporter and daughter of patient Alan

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“I am not cured, but I am. Away from the pain, depression, my mental health or sleep problems during the night, I came to the Living Well course and I feel I gained my confidence and trust in the Living Well course.”

Grant, Living Well attendee

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A regular gift is a simple and convenient way to support St Mary's Hospice. A regular income helps us to plan for the future with confidence.

Please fill in the whole form using a ball point pen and send it to:
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Blencathra in the dark!

Helen Carlson, Head of Fundraising: *"Our community have gone the extra mile in so many ways, including our sponsors Ørsted who help make our amazing events possible. Every year St Mary's have a huge mountain to climb in terms of raising the £3.5 million to keep our doors open to those who need us most. Ørsted, have yet again helped us climb this mountain and despite so many events being cancelled due to COVID-19, they have honoured their pledge and donated a staggering £20,000. We couldn't do it without you, thank you!"*



One of the highlights of our events calendar at St Mary's has to be our ever popular night treks, and this year even a global pandemic could not stop our supporters.

Originally scheduled for June but postponed to September the appetite for this trip only grew. On a dark and chilly morning our amazing team of trekkers set off at 4.30am to scale Blencathra in the dark. With two different routes to the summit we offered a walk to suit all fitness levels, guided by the extremely professional team at Lakeland Mountain Guides. Unfortunately this year Mother Nature

decided that we would not have the opportunity to witness a super summit sunrise, but the rain never put our group off celebrating at 2850ft with a glass of fizz, in fact they reported that the weather added to a heightened sense of achievement at the finish.

Mel Dixon, Events Manager – "Every year I am in awe of the walkers who trek during the night for us, but this year I came away feeling a huge sense of pride as not only was the trek tough, but coupled with the grim weather conditions this made for a huge challenge, so thank you from everyone at St Mary's your support ensures that

we can continue our vital work within our local community." If you would be interested in joining us next June for Scafell at Night then register your interest by emailing our Events Manager Mel Dixon at melissa.dixon@stmaryshospice.org.uk, be quick as places are limited and they sell out year on year!

"Apart from the exhilaration of achieving the climb, the team spirit and inclusivity I felt was fabulous. I will be very happy to come along again in 2021! You were fantastic in bringing us all together!"



Volunteering Update

Well how can one autumn be so different to another? Last year we were celebrating how volunteers had helped us for 30 years and how we had more people than ever volunteering. This year has been challenging for both staff and volunteers alike but together we are making some headway to a 'new normal'.



Some volunteers have still been able to fulfil their role over the phone and have never been more needed. We have had to adjust to new ways of working and when volunteers have come back they have had to go through all the 'safety stuff' that has been put in place. Our volunteers have been so patient and understanding and all they want to do is get back to help us.

Volunteers are back on our reception which is lovely to see. The shops, warehouse and café are back in business and many volunteers have returned with renewed vigour and enthusiasm, some however have decided to retire so we are short of helpers and that has a knock on effect to the hours we can operate and ultimately how much money we can make. We need new volunteers to get us back to full speed to help secure our future.

Donating time makes all the difference. To find out more about volunteering please visit our website, email our team via volunteering@stmaryshospice.org.uk and follow us on social media.



A POEM

"Return to St Mary's"

*My fourth week back at St Mary's today
- Surely it can't be 4 months I was away
To come back I didn't need asking twice*

To see everyone was so very nice

*Catherine's safety induction was very comprehensive
So there's no need to worry if feeling apprehensive
The new screen at reception make me feel secure
So very helpful if you are feeling unsure*

*Steven and Jack in the garden – some things never change even
if other things do still feel a little strange
The grounds look stunning in today's sunshine
but even look stunning when it rains in the summertime*

*The In Patient Unit is open once more
It's lovely to see visitors come through the door
I was nervous when I arrived back the very first day
- Now though it feels like I've never been away*

*The Orangery too has re-opened it's doors
Clare and her team worked so hard for that cause
Coffee and cake – such a treat
A lovely place for friends and family to meet*

*By all the staff I feel so appreciated
I'm so glad that to come back I haven't waited
If you are not ready to return don't worry
There's plenty of time so really no hurry*

By Helen Braithwaite – Reception Volunteer, 29/7/20

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