

Pilgrims matters

News for Pilgrims Hospices supporters

Spring 2023



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Chair's comment

Chair of the Board of Trustees, Karen Warden

Dear Supporter

Welcome to the spring 2023 edition of Pilgrims Matters.

As we see the daffodils brightening the hedgerows and gardens, it draws our minds to warmer days and brighter skies.

Pilgrims Matters gives me a very special opportunity to say thank you once again, for the support you continue to give throughout the year. The Trustees and I are honoured to help steer our much-loved charity towards our goals of a community where people with a terminal illness, and their family and friends, are supported and empowered to live well in mind and body until the very last moment of their life.

The colder months called you to help us with fundraising by joining our Santas on the Run fun run; you warmed our hearts with generous support by dedicating a dove at the Trees of Love memorial services in December, and jointly donated more than £57,000 to have your Christmas trees collected in the Tree Recycling campaign.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I send our heartfelt thanks for your continued support, for hospice care throughout east Kent. The kindness you show through the many ways you support our charity, is paving the way for research, training and the recruitment of more nurses within the community and in our in-patient units. You are helping to enable patients make informed choices and participate in planning their own care. This would not be possible without your support.

There are lots of opportunities to continue to support us, some of which are listed inside (pages 10 & 11) You may wish to dedicate a sunflower to someone special in our Sunflower Memories appeal, take up a Pilgrims lottery subscription, join in on a fun run, marathon, walking or cycling challenge, or be part of a locally organised community event.

These are difficult times but with your help we can really make a difference to our patients and their families. Last year it was such a pleasure to once again be able to attend many of our events, to meet with patients, their families and friends, as well as so many of our volunteers. I'm looking forward to doing so again throughout the coming seasons. It's wonderful and humbling to be among the people who share our belief in compassionate care and fill our hearts with joy; your kindness is immeasurable.

With all good wishes,

Karen

Are you coping with an incurable illness? Find out more about Pilgrims support by calling our Advice Line on **01233 504133**.

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Talk to our team

To contact our Chief Executive or one of our trustees please email eastkent@pilgrimshospices.org or write to our Canterbury address below.

56 London Road,
Canterbury
Kent CT2 8JA
t 01227 459 700/
812612

Hythe Road,
Willesborough
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t 01233 504 100

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Margate
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t 01843 233 920

Registered charity no 293968 and as a company in England no 2000560.

A message from our CEO

Welcome once again to Pilgrims Matters. I'm delighted to have this opportunity to tell supporters, how proud I am to thank you all for being part of the Pilgrims Hospices community. As spring brings us hope and warmth, we move forward with positive thoughts, and our mission to make a difference in the lives of individuals who face difficult times and need our compassion and care.

You are the people who help us make this happen for thousands of people each year across east Kent. Uncertain financial times have not been a barrier to your resolve in finding ways to help us meet the needs of people within your communities, either being cared for by our community teams or on our in-patient wards.

Even more people have become part of Always Caring by supporting us with a monthly donation. With this regular assured income, we can plan care, consistently review, and plan for the future of our charity and those we care for.

In this edition you will see that April is Make a Will Month, when solicitors across east Kent are waiving their fees to write or update Wills. All proceeds will be going directly to providing care, and improving and developing our services. Since 2013 the scheme has raised over £185,000 and helped make a Will for over 1,000 local people. Most definitely an empowering opportunity to ensure you have your own affairs in order, and be safe in the knowledge you are truly making a difference.

A key challenge for us at the moment across both the hospice and wider health and social care sector is the shortage of nursing staff, and we share some insight

into the benefits of becoming part of Pilgrims Hospices team. We would very much love to hear from nurses, and care staff considering roles in palliative care. We have some interesting and engaging roles in an holistic and friendly environment and further information is available on our website.

There's also details on how to take a virtual tour of our hospice sites, myth busting some of those fears of hospice environments. You can view for yourself, our warm and friendly settings, we never want people to feel our hospices are anything less than comforting environments, full of understanding and compassionate care. They help to show that the hospice is a calm and homely environment with a range of facilities; allowing patients and families to make the most of one of the most difficult times in their lives. You can read about this on page 4.

This year Pilgrims celebrates 10 years of Sunflower Memories across all three hospices; you can read how David remembers his wife Sue, who worked for Pilgrims, before receiving our care, and how to be involved with our special date in July on page 5. With your generous support we raised more than £20,000 in 2022. This special event is one close to all of our hearts, here at Pilgrims.



Our fundraising team has been busy planning and preparing events, and challenges for you to support; some dates and ideas can be found on pages 10 and 11. Some are not for the faint hearted, with training required, others to be taken at a more leisurely pace, and enjoyed with families and friends. I thank you all for participating past, present and future!

With care stories, an insight into hospice retail shops, a focus on Pilgrims Lottery, and a glimpse into our customer-facing team, Supporter Relations, we hope you enjoy this spring edition.

Thank you for being part of the Pilgrims Hospices family, your efforts mean patients, their families and friends will continue to be supported with the special care, for which Pilgrims is renowned.

We will continue to do all we can to make sure we're here for everyone who needs our care. Your support is our most valuable asset, thank you.

With very best wishes

Helen Bennett, FCIPD
Chief Executive

We care about your care

During 2022 we received 610 reviews through I Want Great Care, this is what YOU told us about YOUR experience with Pilgrims.

98.4% had a positive experience with us.

On average we scored **4.87** out of five stars.

Pilgrims joins with solicitor firms across east Kent for Make a Will Month scheme

In the UK, nearly 60% of adults do not have a Will. Make your appointment this April, and ensure your wishes will be fulfilled when you're gone.

This year, eight solicitor firms across east Kent are generously giving their time and expertise to write or update Wills, in exchange for donations to Pilgrims Hospices.

This April, solicitors across east Kent are waiving their fees to write or update Wills, with all proceeds going directly towards providing local hospice care. Since its inception in 2013, the scheme has raised over £185,000 for Pilgrims Hospices, and has helped over 1,000 local people make or update their Wills.

Each year the participating firms are invited in to one of the hospices to discuss the upcoming scheme. This year they were joined by Sophie Van Walwyk, Head of Psychosocial &

Wellbeing Services, who gave the solicitors an insight into the vital work the hospice does with their patients in the Therapy Centres.

Sophie said "Part of the vital work we do at the hospice is supporting our patients and their families plan for their death. If you need to make or update your will, there really is no better way to do it, knowing that you'll also be making a huge difference to the lives of so many people who benefit from our care in the most difficult of times."

There are eight solicitor firms taking part in Make a Will Month 2023: Whitehead Monckton – Stilwell & Singleton –

Robinson Allfree – Prospero Solicitors – Mowll & Mowll – Girlings – Gardner Croft – Boys and Maughan.

Visit pilgrimshospices.org/makeawill for further information on suggested donation amounts, and to see a full list of participating solicitor branches.



Take a virtual tour of Pilgrims Hospices

What do you think a hospice looks like? Many people imagine a ward and beds, a space where people spend their last days, but that is just a small part of what they offer.

Our hospices feature beautiful, tranquil landscaped gardens, professional kitchens where fresh meals are prepared daily, family lounges where patients can spend precious moments with their loved ones,

Therapy Centres where we run our popular wellbeing groups, areas for spiritual reflection, and so much more.

Kate White, Head of Nursing, explains how our new virtual tours can be a helpful first step for someone considering coming into one of our hospices, and also for healthcare professionals when referring patients to Pilgrims' services.

"The prospect of coming to a hospice can be daunting, so being able to see what it looks like can help to alleviate that. The virtual tours give people an idea of what to expect when they come to the building, and hopefully to see how the hospice is a home from home with plenty of creature comforts. To be able to view the hospice this way can also save patients and families valuable time when this is most precious.

The tours can also enable healthcare professionals in hospitals and other settings to show patients at the bedside what the hospice looks like, to explain facilities and view the environment before physically entering the hospice. This brings the conversation to life, aids the discussion and may help to lessen the fear of the unknown. They help to show that the hospice is a calm and homely environment with a range of facilities, allowing patients and families to make the best of one of the most difficult times in their lives."

Scan the QR code or visit pilgrimshospices.org/tour to find links to our three virtual tours.



Pilgrims celebrates 10 years of Sunflower Memories across all three hospices

This July, we invite all those across east Kent who have lost a loved one to join us for our Sunflower Days in our hospice gardens.

For ten years, Pilgrims has offered people across east Kent the opportunity to dedicate a sunflower memory marker to someone special, to be planted in our hospice gardens. We then invite them to our Sunflower Days, garden tea parties with music and refreshments, hosted in the grounds of each hospice at Canterbury, Thanet and Ashford.

This year, our Sunflower Days are taking place on **Saturday 22 July from 10am-2pm**, where we welcome you to share your memories with us and each other, and celebrate in the sunshine. And, to celebrate this special anniversary, we will be joined by our Wellbeing team, who will be displaying some of the beautiful sunflower-themed artworks created by patients in our Therapy Centres.

To take part in Sunflower Memories 2023, please complete the enclosed form and return in the FREEPOST envelope provided. We will then write the name of your loved one on a beautiful sunflower memory marker, to be planted in the hospice garden of your choice, creating a vibrant display for you to visit at our Sunflower Days.

For more information visit pilgrimshospices.org/sunflowers, email sunflowermemories@pilgrimshospices.org, or call our friendly Supporter Relations team on **01227 782062**.

This year, David remembers his wife, Sue, who worked for Pilgrims before receiving our care

"My wife Sue was the most amazing, caring and loving lady that I had the privilege to have been allowed to marry, love and share life with for the last 46 amazing years. Sue was very loved by all those who knew her. Not just friends but also she had a deep love for all our nieces and nephews who loved her back.

Sue was a legal secretary for some 27 years, working at many local firms before deciding that the care and nursing profession was her destiny. After working for the East Kent Hospital Trust, she worked in end-of-life care in our community, before joining the Pilgrims Hospices team at Ashford. They were the best years in her life, during which she made many good friends among her patients.

Antiques was Sue's passion, we could sit fifty people down for tea and each person would have a different cup and saucer! She was a very talented lady who could turn her hand to many things from dressmaking, to tending her beloved garden, water colour painting and making many wedding cakes. Sue was a prominent member of our community, involved in everything from fundraising activities, helping lead her local WI group, to helping administer Covid jabs during the pandemic.

Despite her illness, Sue always remained positive and upbeat and never complained, even though I knew she was in pain. I was so lucky to be home and right at her side at the end of her fight. She was my strength, my endurance, my friend and my love.

Sunflower Memories gives me time to reflect and remember Sue at a place she loved so very much while supporting the incredible work carried out at Pilgrims Hospices. Pilgrims meant so much to Sue and that is why I continue to support whenever I can."



Sue on the front cover of Pilgrims Matters 2013

Love your local hospice? Join your local hospice!

Pilgrims Hospices are looking for registered nurses.

Are you, or do you know, a registered nurse who is looking for a new challenge? Pilgrims Hospices are recruiting Band 5 Nurses in east Kent to join our friendly teams to offer patient and family focused end of life support. Our roles are professionally challenging as we support a variety of complex physical and psychological symptoms, and are also personally rewarding as we deliver a high quality service to meet the individual needs and wishes of our service users.

The Roles

Our registered general nurses (RGNs) are responsible for providing a high standard of palliative nursing care which reflects evidence based practice, encompasses patient choice and makes best use of valuable resources. This includes assessing, planning and implementing individualised and effective patient care across a variety of complex physical and psychological symptoms and evaluating the outcome. Our RGNs work closely with other professionals across internal and external multi-disciplinary teams, ensuring the best care for patients whilst on the ward and on discharge.

"The opportunity to work with a supportive and knowledgeable team where a holistic approach is of high importance. Every department of the hospice contributes to the quality of the patient experience. We do our best to look after each other as well as the patients and their families. We have had new team members this year that have enhanced our team. Come on!"

Registered Nurse

The Benefits

The salary for our RGN role is benchmarked against the NHS and is paid at Band 5 and we offer additional enhancements and overtime for unsociable or extra hours.

We offer recent contributors to the NHS pension continued access to the scheme and a group pension scheme for everyone else.

We offer Enhanced Maternity and Paternity pay benchmarked against the NHS and competitive occupational sick pay.

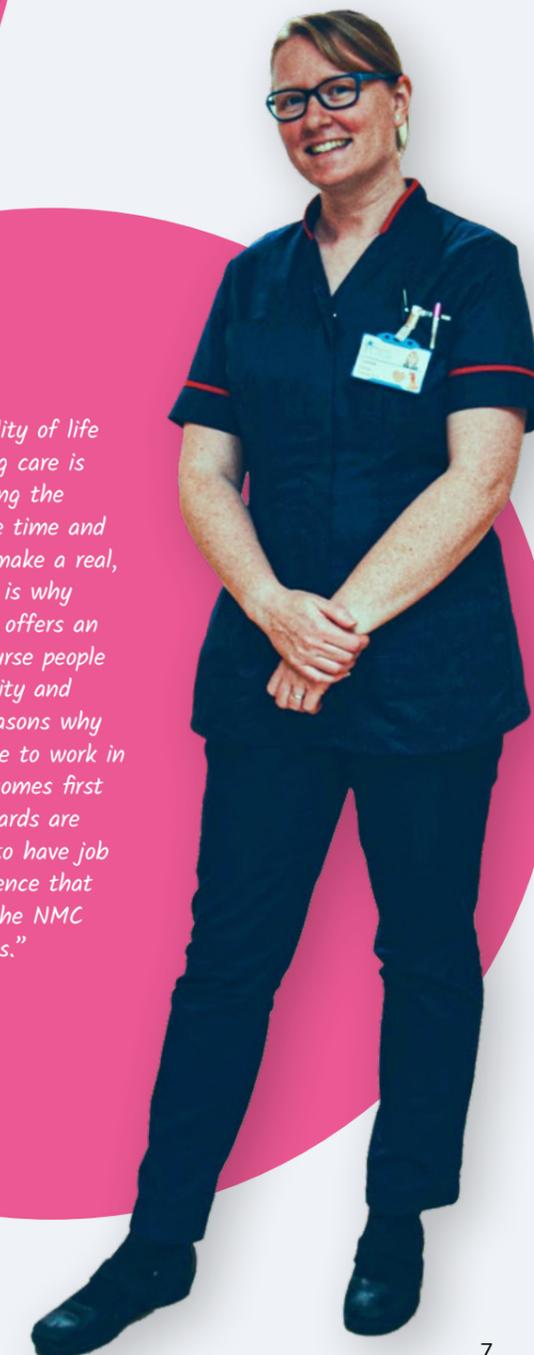
We offer free parking on site and training opportunities supported by a study leave scheme.

To support the wellbeing of our staff we offer a confidential counselling service, access to Mental Health First aiders at work and subsidised meals and free tea and coffee.



"I was inspired to work within the hospice after caring for relatives, I wish to develop my career further in the future. I enjoy working at Pilgrims because I feel I make a difference even if it is just to make a patient smile. The hospice has a great team of staff who all work hard together to provide the top quality of care for our patients. I would recommend working in the hospice if you enjoy caring for others and like making a difference."

Health Care Assistant



"The desire to improve quality of life and deliver excellent nursing care is why you join Pilgrims. Having the satisfaction of giving people time and support and being able to make a real, positive difference to them is why you stay. Pilgrims Hospices offers an excellent environment to nurse people with respect, care and dignity and constantly reaffirms the reasons why I became a nurse. I am able to work in a space where the person comes first and only the highest standards are good enough, enabling me to have job satisfaction and the confidence that I am working in line with the NMC code of conduct at all times."

Registered Nurse

"A highly skilled team of professionals who work closely together in a friendly and relaxed environment, thus enables us as a team to provide patients our full attention resulting in patient and staff satisfaction"

Trainee Advanced Clinical Practitioner

If you, or someone you know, would be interested to find out more please contact HR@pilgrimshospices.org for more information on the role and benefits and how to apply.



Peter:

The word 'hospice' now fills me with joy



When Peter Clampitt from Ashford was diagnosed with lung cancer, he was referred to Pilgrims Hospices. After a short stay in the hospice, Peter was able to return home, where he is now being helped to live well with the assistance of carers, home aids, and Pilgrims' continued support.

He wanted to share his story so that others can learn about the benefits of hospice care.

Peter, a former engineer who worked across the UK and Europe, is originally from Folkestone. He has four children – Nick, Lisa, Emma and Laura – and lives in Ashford with Laura and her two daughters, Lily and Sophia.

Peter was initially admitted to William Harvey Hospital, Ashford. He said:

"I was in a very dark place, the darkest point in my life. Thankfully, the hospital team got me referred to Pilgrims. Death doesn't frighten me, I'm not worried about it, but I did think that a hospice was a place to spend your last days – so when I first went in, I thought I wouldn't be coming out.

"But when I went through the doors, I thought: 'My god, I'm in a palace'. It had an immediate positive effect on me. All the staff have care in their eyes, they just want to look after you. The food is excellent and I had some great conversations with the hospice team; they made me feel really good. Never in all my life have I known people be so kind and caring, they always have smiles on their faces. It's unbelievable."

"It was an exuberant experience; when I left, I felt so bubbly, I was bouncing around like an idiot. All the nurses lined up to give me kisses! It was a pleasure to go into the hospice and have my expectations completely changed. The word 'hospice' now fills me with joy."

Pilgrims helped to get Peter's pain under control and manage his symptoms, and ultimately supported him to return to the comfort of his own home with his family. He continued:

"Each day I spent in the hospice, I felt better and better. Pilgrims arranged care packages for me at home, and also helped to get accessibility aids in place, making it easier for me to do day-to-day things like using the toilet."

Peter is also enjoying monthly reflexology treatments and would like to try out some of Pilgrims' wellbeing groups in the future.

Due to the care Peter is receiving, he and his family are keen to support the charity. His eldest daughter, Lisa, completed the Pilgrims Way Challenge and plans to take part again in 2023. As Peter says: "If everyone helps and does a little bit, it really does make a difference."

He added: "Hospices aren't just somewhere you go at the very end of your life – they can also be a place you go to heal. People need to know that. Sometimes, they can heal you more than a hospital."

"My advice to anyone considering a referral to hospice care is: Take it, it's wonderful. I kept looking at the backs of the Pilgrims nurses to see if they had wings."

Pilgrims Hospices care for thousands of local people each year, free of charge, during the most challenging time in their lives. They offer care and support in people's own homes, in the community and in their inpatient units as well as running a 24-hour advice line.

"It was an exuberant experience; when I left, I felt so bubbly, I was bouncing around like an idiot. All the nurses lined up to give me kisses! It was a pleasure to go into the hospice and have my expectations completely changed. The word 'hospice' now fills me with joy."

Find your stride for Pilgrims

Every year, more than a thousand supporters lace up their walking boots and hike across the beautiful Kent countryside in support of Pilgrims Hospices. Last year alone, more than 36,000 kilometres were hiked for hospice care; the equivalent of walking from Land's End to John o'Groats more than 27 times!

It's nothing new that spending time in the great outdoors, walking and being active, does wonders for our physical health, but it doesn't stop there. Research shows that being outside, particularly in nature has many benefits for our mental wellbeing, self-esteem, and sleep quality too. And it's hard to find a greater backdrop for a wander in nature than the spectacular scenery of Kent; the Garden of England. With all these benefits, it's little wonder why so many choose to join us in June for the Pilgrims Way Challenge, as well as our newest hike in September, the Folkestone Downs Challenge.

Follow in the footsteps of medieval pilgrims

Now in its 5th year, the popular Pilgrims Way Challenge, on Saturday 10th June 2023, invites walkers and runners alike to enjoy the rural beauty of one of England's oldest and least-trodden national trails as they journey along ancient footpaths used by Pilgrims since the Middle Ages.

Starting from the picturesque village of Wye, nestled in the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the route follows the Pilgrims Way, through the scenic Stour Valley, to the historic cathedral city of Canterbury. Then, onward via the North Downs Way to a coastal finish inside the impressive Dover Castle overlooking the English Channel. Along the way, walkers pass through ancient woodland, rolling fields, orchards and charming villages, as well as a few challenging climbs through the undulating geography of Kent.

With 25km, 35km or 55km distances to choose from, it's perfect for people of varying fitness levels and, whether walking or running, the Pilgrims Way between Wye to Dover really has it all.

Find out more at: pilgrimswaychallenge.org



Explore Kent's scenic South coast

In 2022, Pilgrims introduced the Folkestone Downs Challenge, a brand-new hiking event which saw supporters tackle a 36km course, specially designed to showcase the spectacular scenery of Kent's South coast, including breath-taking views over the English Channel, Folkestone and Romney Marsh beyond. It's a unique and challenging route that features a wide variety of landscapes – from canal paths to steep chalk-lined trails, rolling fields to forested walkways, and even the chance to spot some exotic animals as you pass by Port Lympne Safari Park.

The response from participants was amazing, who collectively raised over £48,000 toward patient care and were welcomed back to applause and a well-deserved medal at the vibrant Folkestone Harbour Arm finish.

Following the success of the inaugural hike, we are pleased to announce that the Folkestone Downs Challenge will return for a second year on Saturday 2 September 2023!

Find out more at: folkestonedownschallenge.org

Both of these hospice hikes include the same great level of support, leaving you to concentrate on covering the miles. Entry includes regular rest stops with drinks and snacks, medical support, a fully-signed route, access to our free training app with live position tracking, event t-shirt and finisher's medal.

So, find your stride this year by hiking for Pilgrims Hospices and make a difference for families across east Kent who are facing an incurable illness.

"A fabulous challenging route, great views, great people, helping an incredible organisation – a brilliant day"



Dates for your diary

Whatever your passion or hobby, there's something for everyone to get involved in over the coming months!

Cycling **Running** **Walking/Trekking** **Challenges** **In Memory** **Special**

Pilgrims Hospices Cycle Challenge

Sunday 30 April



Get on your bike to explore the beautiful and varied countryside of east Kent alongside 1,000 cyclists of all abilities.

Ride it your way by choosing one of five ride distances, then celebrate crossing the finish line in our cycling event village.

- The Circuit: 30 miles
- The Classic: 50 miles
- The Challenge: 75 miles
- The Century: 100 miles
- The Epic: 125 miles

Location: All routes start and finish at our event village at the University of Kent, Canterbury CT2 7NZ

Registration:

Standard entry: £35 (closes 23 April)
On the day: £45

Sponsorship: As much as you can!

Contact: www.pilgrimscyclechallenge.org

Jurassic Coast Ultra Challenge

Saturday 13 May

Location: Corfe Castle, Dorset

Registration: Variable depending on chosen distance and funding option

Sponsorship: Various sponsorship options available

Contact: Robert Grew

London 2 Brighton Ultra Challenge

Saturday 27 May

Location: London to Brighton

Registration: Variable depending on chosen distance and funding option

Sponsorship: Various sponsorship options available

Contact: Robert Grew

RideLondon-Essex 100

Sunday 28 May

Location: London

Registration: £40

Sponsorship: A pledge to raise at least £395 in sponsorship

Contact: Robert Grew

Pilgrims Way Challenge

Saturday 10 June



Enjoy the rural beauty of one of England's oldest and least trodden national trails.

Lace up your walking boots or running shoes for a 25km, 35km or 55km hike along the Pilgrims Way to the historic cathedral city of Canterbury and onward to a coastal finish at the impressive Dover Castle. It's the perfect challenge for varying fitness levels, with full event support and a technical t-shirt included with your entry.

Location: Wye to Dover

Registration:

Early bird entry: £35 (closes 16 April)
Standard entry: £40 (closes 4 June)
On the day: £45

Sponsorship: A pledge to raise at least £100 in sponsorship

Contact: www.pilgrimswaychallenge.org

100 Pieces of Art

Saturday 1 July

Location: Anthony Giles Studio, 3 Lombard St, Margate, CT9 1EJ

Contact: Karen Kenward

Tandem Skydiving / Wing Walking

Sunday 16 July and 10 September

Location: Headcorn Airfield, Shenley Road, Headcorn, TN27 9HX

Registration: £40 per person

Sponsorship: Minimum sponsorship of £395 for skydive, or £650 for wing walk

Contact: Robert Grew

London to Paris Bike Ride

19 – 23 July 2023

Location: London, UK to Paris, France

Registration: £125 + £895 self funding with no minimum sponsorship commitment

Sponsorship: Other funding options available

Contact: Robert Grew

Sunflower Memories

Saturday 22 July



Dedicate a sunflower to someone you love and join us to celebrate their life at our Sunflower Day on Saturday 22 July. Enjoy refreshments and live music in our hospice gardens, and find your dedicated sunflower memory marker.

Contact: Ellie Cane

Summer Fair, Ashford

Sunday 30 July

Find a wide range of stalls, games and activities for the whole family. From luxury crafts and hot food, to tombolas and children's games. Not to be missed.

Location: Sandyacres, Sandyhurst Lane, Ashford, TN25 4PE

Registration: Entry is free, donations welcome

Contact: Louise Newman

UK 3 Peaks Challenge

18 – 20 August 2023

Take on the UK's most iconic trekking challenge and conquer the highest peaks in Scotland, England and Wales, all in one weekend!

Location: Fort William, Scotland

Registration: £95 + £430 self funding with no minimum sponsorship commitment

Sponsorship: Other funding options available

Contact: Robert Grew

Canterbury Half Marathon

Monday 28 August

Location: Merton Farm, Canterbury, CT4 7BA

Registration: Charity places: Free with a minimum sponsorship pledge of £100

Contact: Robert Grew

Folkestone Downs Challenge

Saturday 2 September



Hike for Pilgrims and take on a 36km route designed to showcase the very best of Kent's spectacular south coast.

Climb to the height of Kent's famous white cliffs and enjoy breath-taking views

over the English Channel, Folkestone and Romney Marsh beyond as you follow the chalk ridgeline westward. Then, descend through fields and woodland before returning via canal paths and promenade to the vibrant finish line. Entry includes full event support and a technical t-shirt.

Location: Folkestone Harbour Arm, CT20 1QH

Registration:

Early bird entry: £35 (closes 16 July)
Standard entry: £40 (closes 28 August)
On the day: £45

Sponsorship: A pledge to raise at least £100 in sponsorship

Contact:

www.folkestonedownschallenge.org

South Coast Ultra Challenge

Saturday 2 September

Location: Eastbourne

Registration: Variable depending on chosen distance and funding option

Sponsorship: Various sponsorship options available

Contact: Robert Grew

The Big Half, London

Sunday 3 September

Location: London

Registration: Charity places: Free with a minimum sponsorship pledge of £350

Contact: Robert Grew

Thames Bridges Trek & Thames Path Ultra Challenge

Saturday 9 September

Location: London

Registration: Variable depending on chosen distance and funding option

Sponsorship: Various sponsorship options available

Contact: Robert Grew

Pilgrims Golf Day, Canterbury

Friday 15 September

Tee off for Pilgrims this September at one of Kent's top golf courses. Join us for a day on the fairway as you take on this 18-hole course, including breakfast and 2 course dinner.

Location: Canterbury Golf Club, CT1 1TW

Contact: Leila Ilkhan

Thanet Colour Run

Sunday 1 October



This family friendly 5k event is an explosion of colourful fun. Take in amazing coastal views as you run, jog or walk through clouds of brightly coloured powder paint around the route. Gather friends and family to join the energetic atmosphere of up to 1,000 people running, jogging or walking along Thanet's spectacular seafront.

Sponsorship: As much as you can!

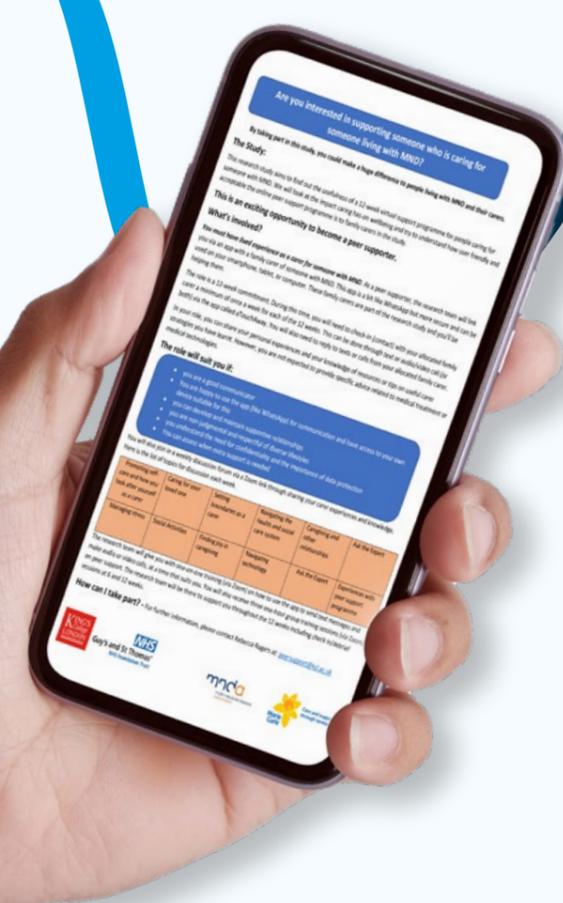
Contact: Karen Kenward

Want to register? Need some help?

If you would like to register your interest in an event, fundraise or help in another way, visit pilgrimshospices.org or email fundraising@pilgrimshospices.org

Got a question? Don't hesitate to contact our friendly team!

Please note: all events will launch on the website closer to the time of the event. Please visit: pilgrimshospices.org/events



Pilgrims Hospices is working with researchers at Kings College London to help identify family caregivers of patients with Motor Neurone disease (MND) who might benefit from regular contact with a peer supporter.

Peer support is the provision of emotional and informational support from people who have experienced the same health problem and have similar characteristics as those receiving support. The peer support is a 12 week programme where the caregiver is having contact with their peer supporter at least once a week online using an easy to use app called ATouchAway, very similar to WhatsApp.

This study, funded by Marie Curie and the MND Association is looking at the impact caring has on wellbeing and trying to understand how user friendly and acceptable the online peer support programme is to family carers in the study. As it is a randomised controlled trial participants are being chosen at random to receive either the programme or their usual support.

Using technology to support caregivers of people with MND



“Talking to a person who has been there, and is able to share their own experiences, offers real hope to individuals who may not have any at that particular point in their life.”

Recipient of peer support

Caregivers might be suitable to take part in the programme if they are:

- 18 or over.
- Caring for someone with MND who is being considered for or receiving assistance for breathing, coughing or receiving feeding via a tube.
- Able to speak and read English.
- Has access to the internet and a computer, tablet or smartphone.

If you would like to find out more about the project contact our Research Facilitator on: **01227 812625** or charlotte.brighden@pilgrimshospices.org

Alternatively you can contact the KCL study team directly at: peersupport@kcl.ac.uk

Tony and Sharon renew wedding vows with the help of Pilgrims Hospices



Tony and Sharon Reed from Ashford were married for 23 years; they had wanted to renew their wedding vows for a long time, but as Sharon says: “Life gets in the way, so we kept putting it on hold.”

When Tony became unwell with cancer and was referred to Pilgrims Hospices in November 2022, he wanted to prioritise the vow renewal to make special, lasting memories with Sharon and their wider family. Thanks to a team effort by Pilgrims’ staff and volunteers, Tony and Sharon’s wishes were fulfilled; they renewed their vows at the Ashford hospice on 16 November 2022.

Sharon first mentioned the vow renewal to Les Rood, a Reception Volunteer, who passed the message to Cat Darkins, Spiritual Care Lead, to get the ball rolling.

Cat said: “It is a privilege to be able to facilitate important life events at the hospice. We aim to keep what is important to the patient at the centre of what we do. We want to be able to help people make special memories and live life as well as possible for as long as possible. Tony and Sharon had been considering a vow renewal for some time, so for the whole of the hospice to help make it happen made it even more special.”

Cat officiated the ceremony, which was attended by the couple’s family and friends, with Tony’s sister and brother-in-law joining via video link from France. The hospice chapel was decorated by volunteers as a surprise for Tony and Sharon, and the catering team provided sandwiches and light refreshments. Volunteer Ginny Taylor arranged flower donations from a local Tesco store. Rodney the PAT dog made a very special guest appearance, and was a great support to Tony as he was saying his vows.

Sharon said: “We were so excited; we chose our outfits and our bouquets were made by friends. Another friend, Hayley,

took photos for us. Tony loved having Rodney there; he was patting away and didn’t stop smiling all day. It was amazing, really beautiful.”

Hannah Sanders, Ward Sister, worked closely with Tony and Sharon and played a vital role in helping to organise their special day. She said: “Providing this opportunity to both Tony and Sharon to renew their vows was a privilege; I saw the love they had for each other and wanted to pull out all the stops to make their wish come true. All the staff were brilliant, and I feel very proud to be a part of such a caring and supportive team.”

Tony had his own room at the hospice complete with a Cuddle Bed, an extra wide and adaptable hospital bed that enables patients to lie next to their loved one. This allowed Sharon to stay over and be close to Tony. They also enjoyed visits from family and friends, including their daughter, Chloe, and grandson, Ethan.

Sharon continued: “After the ceremony, so many people came to Tony’s room for a chat, to ask how we were and see the photos. All the hospice staff and volunteers are amazing, they’re like one big family.”

Tony added: “The whole day made me really, really happy. Other patients and their families saw our ceremony going on and it brought them so much joy, too.

“Everyone at Pilgrims is wonderful. They’re so helpful and just want to do what’s best for you; they listen to your wants and needs and give amazing care. I would tell anyone being offered hospice care to jump at the chance.”

Pilgrims Hospices cares for thousands of local people each year, free of charge, during the most challenging time in their lives. They offer care and support in people’s own homes, in the community and in their inpatient units as well as running a 24-hour advice line.





Broadstairs College student, Jordan Herring is cooking up a storm in Pilgrims Hospices Thanet kitchen. The 22 year old, 2nd year student from Broadstairs, is enjoying undertaking a work placement as part of his Level 2 catering qualification

Jordan said: "I started my work experience in Pilgrims kitchen last year, it's just one day each week but I'm really enjoying it. I love being part of the team, they are all so friendly; I felt immediately welcome from the very first day."

Georgie Braithwaite, Pilgrims Head Chef said: "It's great to have Jordan with us, we are very happy to support him as he learns new skills, and really pleased he feels there are many benefits to learning more about the food requirements of patients here in the hospice.

A cut above your usual work experience!

"Being part of the catering team can be extremely busy and sometimes quite noisy. Jordan has taken everything in his stride and has blended in to our team really well even taking the jokes and kitchen banter with huge smiles.

"He needs to complete 100 hours experience as part of his on-going training, we are delighted to support him on his journey forward.

"Jordan will have the opportunity to chat with patients about their dietary requirements and how their individual needs can be catered for in the hospice kitchen."

Pilgrims has worked with Broadstairs College over a number of years and as part of the on-going training, the students have provided an afternoon high tea, complete with waiting staff and a Christmas dinner for patients and staff. "It's always great to have these lovely treats and we hope the students gain valuable hands-on experience." Georgie added.

Jordan explained: "I think taking the catering qualification at college was a really good decision. It's definitely provided me with plenty of skills that will help me through life.

"The work placement was arranged by Natalie, Broadstairs College Work Placement Office who engages with organisations to match work opportunities to suit people's personality and style. I think she picked a good match for me!

"The placement has helped me to grow in confidence, and I know the placement is helping me to make a difference to the patients, it has a feel good factor, and it's really worthwhile.

"When I'm cooking the time just flies by, there's no one thing that I'm particularly good at, but I'm absolutely enjoying learning lots of new things with the Pilgrims catering team."

Visit pilgrimshospices.org/vacancies if you would like to find out more about current opportunities at Pilgrims Hospices.

"The placement has helped me to grow in confidence, and I know the placement is helping me to make a difference to the patients, it has a feel good factor, and it's really worthwhile."

Jordan Herring



Bouncing into Spring with Pilgrims Lottery



Well Spring has definitely sprung and I am sure we are all looking forward to the longer, lighter days ahead and enjoying the sights and sounds that Spring brings.

It has been another busy year for the Pilgrims Hospices Lottery team and we are on target to raise an incredible £1.2m thanks to your amazing and unwavering generosity and support, thank you.

Some good news for you, we have sent out winners cheques to over 5,500 lucky people in our local community this last year and amongst the many winners we have seen a £15k rollover winner! Our 40th celebratory draw raised nearly £57,000 and we have sold 969 (Nov 2022) scratch cards. You have surprised 131 wedding guests with Pilgrims Hospices wedding favours and gift vouchers and 147 lucky loved ones received our Christmas gift vouchers with 1347 (Feb 2023) of you having taken out additional entries or joined since April 2022. Amazing and all the more impressive in these increasingly difficult times, thank you. It is a real privilege for us to know that we are a part of your lives, celebrations and festivities. Your

support makes such a difference to the lives of many people in the local community; your friends, neighbours, relatives, loved ones could all benefit from our the vital services our wonderful care teams provide because of your kindness. Did you know? A year's Lottery membership could pay for a one to one bereavement counselling, the purchase of a book of 40th celebratory draw tickets helped pay for an in-patient's meals for a day and the Christmas gift vouchers that were bought for loved ones helped provide over 200 pamper sessions for our patients.

How do we raise such a fabulous amount of money? Over £1 million every year! Well, we think one reason could be – whilst many charity lotteries have increased their entry cost we have retained many of our loyal supporters (some joined in 1996 the year Pilgrims Hospices Lottery began) by choosing to keep our weekly entry cost to just £1. You are then able to choose how much you would like to give. For those who aren't aware you can have more than one entry into our weekly draw. Great news for you, you can increase your chances of winning and even better news for us as we raise even more funds to help provide our compassionate care, a real WIN WIN!

How does it work? You ask, well if you aren't already a member of our weekly Lottery draw firstly join using your preferred payment method. A flier is enclosed for postal entries,

or you can join online; or call us, you will receive confirmation and your membership numbers in the post. As soon as your payment is received you are in the draw and will continue to be all the time funds are in your Lottery account. There are 106 guaranteed weekly prizes plus a rollover which has to be won at £20k. You have got to be in it to win it! From then on just sit back and wait for your winning cheques to be mailed out you, no need to claim but if you would like to check, the winning numbers are put on our website every week.

To buy our scratch cards simply go into your local Pilgrims charity shop or Pilgrims Hospice and they are available to buy at the till, you could win £1,000!

For all of our gift vouchers and wedding favours simply call us on **01227 379741** or go onto our website pilgrimshospices.org/lottery where you will also find full T&C's and additional information, don't forget you can join or take out additional entries online too. Please remember you must be 16 years of age or older.

If you would like any more information please do call the Lottery team **01227 379741** or email us Lottery@pilgrimshospices.co.uk We look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes and thank you again for all of your support, we couldn't do it without you.

Shiralee
(Lottery Manager)



The positive impact of Pilgrims Hospices Shops



Step into a new Spring wardrobe with Pilgrims Hospices' Sandwich shop

Pilgrims Hospices cares for thousands of local people each year, free of charge, during the most challenging time in their lives. They offer care and support in people's own homes, in the community and in their inpatient units as well as running a 24-hour advice line.

We now have 31 shops across east Kent where we sell the generous donations we receive, and our shops have many positive impacts.

Firstly, they help to provide the much-needed funds that support the work of the hospices across east Kent. This is, of course, our primary objective, and we are very proud that each year we are able to grow the contribution we make to the hospices. Our shops will have a turnover of over £5m this year, which is a huge help to the hospices.

Each year, we sell around 1.3m items through our shops, many of which would end up in landfill if it wasn't for charity shops. Of course, not everything is fit for sale, so we sell some stock to textile recyclers, who then sort it and sell it on to other countries or recycle it. Each year, we sell over 250 tonnes of 'rag textiles', which would otherwise end up in waste streams.

The shops also form part of their local communities, and are a welcoming place for people to volunteer. Volunteering is cited as having a really positive impact on mental health, as it makes people feel good about what they are doing, provides company and conversation, and offers the chance to learn new skills.

As people move away from fast fashion due to the negative environmental impact it has, sustainable fashion is becoming increasingly popular. Charity shops have always been advocates of sustainable fashion, and more and more people are now much more comfortable buying pre-loved fashion than ever before; 54% of people in the UK are happy to purchase pre-loved or vintage clothing. As the demand for sustainable fashion grows, we are going to need even more stock in our shops!

A recent survey by the organisation WRAP* found that almost half of us buy new clothing at least once per month, and around half of the new garments bought are either never worn or only worn once or twice. This is a shocking statistic, but one that is of particular interest to Pilgrims Retail. The report goes on to say that, on average, each UK adult has 118 items of clothing in their wardrobe, and that 26% of those items have not been worn for over a year, and are likely never to be worn again.

Just imagine how useful those unworn, unloved items of clothing would be to our shops! We could turn them into funds for our hospices.

How about having a declutter for Pilgrims? Our shops would welcome your donations. We especially need items of clothing, small electricals (that are working), toys, household items (ornaments, kitchen goods, dinnerware etc.) and furniture.

Find out more at pilgrimshospices.org/shops

*WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme) is a climate action NGO working around the globe to tackle the causes of the climate crisis and give the planet a sustainable future.



Located at 18 King Street, close to the River Stour in beautiful, historic Sandwich, the town's local Pilgrims Hospices' shop opened to the public in 2008.

The shop held a Brand New with Tags event between 23 February – 2 March 2023, when shoppers were able to purchase new, unworn high street brand items at charity shop prices. These popular events have been running at Pilgrims' shops across east Kent for several years, enabling the local community to bag a bargain whilst raising vital funds for hospice care.

Jenny Byrne works as Area Support Manager across all 31 Pilgrims' shops. Her role is varied, and includes helping to streamline shop operations by moving stock, merchandising and working on specific projects, including the Brand New with Tags events.

The Sandwich shop is managed by Bridie Dodson, a Sandwich local, and Louise Harris from Wingham, who are supported by a dedicated volunteer team including Sandra Culver and Angela Curtis. Both Sandra and Angela's husbands were cared for by Pilgrims; their first-hand experiences inspired them to support the charity.

Angela, a former nurse, midwife and health visitor, said: "What I love about volunteering is seeing regular customers and being part of a team; everyone is supportive and so lovely. I enjoy giving something back, it's so important. I would tell anyone to give it a go; come in and grab a volunteering form, we would love to have you!"

Jenny added: "Thank you to all our kind and generous supporters; you enabled us to put on this fabulous Brand New with Tags event at our Sandwich store."

These are just some of the items and outfits that were available during the event:

- Per Una jacket with Alice Rinaldi silk blend daisy top and Red Herring jeans
BNWT price: Under £45
- Topshop tunic dress
New: £36 / BNWT price: £12
- Pure wrap top
New: £70 / BNWT price: £23.50
- Great Plains black and white embroidered dress
New: £65 / BNWT price: £22
- River Island necklace
New: £16 / BNWT price: £5.50
- Uniqlo ribbed jacket
New: £40 / BNWT price: £13

If you'd like to volunteer in Pilgrims' shops, visit pilgrimshospices.org/shop-volunteers to find out more.



The fine art of looking after our supporters

Pilgrims Hospices' Supporter Relations Team are the listening ears, guiding people through the immensely important journey of making a donation, whether through fundraising, in memory or gifts in Wills.

This team is surprisingly small, consisting of just three dedicated and knowledgeable individuals, whose skills help to make gifting to Pilgrims a warm and memorable experience.

Picking up the telephone to make a donation could be one of the most challenging things to do, especially as this can evoke memories of troubled and sad times. Speaking to a skilled and compassionate member of the team can be the beginning of a long and successful relationship as a supporter, making a difference to people who need care now and into the future.

Hannah Sole, Supporter Relations Manager, has a wealth of almost nine years of experience with the team. She heads up the team who can handle hundreds of calls and enquiries from supporters each month.

Hannah explained: "It's a diverse role, and the team is trained to handle all aspects of the job, therefore any one of us can help with any enquiry."

"We process donations, event registrations, and compile the data for colleagues in order for them to run challenges and fundraisers throughout the year. Last year we processed almost 54,000 donations from our generous supporters. We deal with colleagues across the charity, whether it's financial or supporter and fundraising led. The team mail more than 7,000 letters each year, conveying thanks for donating or registering to get involved."

Recently they've finished support on the Tree Recycling campaign, which raised a staggering £57,000, and are now working on spring and summer campaigns including Cycle Challenge, Pilgrims Way Challenge and will support the In Memory team with Sunflower Memories, by preparing the sunflower markers and mailing supporters.

The team are regularly found volunteering at events. Hannah added: "When we volunteer, it's lovely to meet face to face with some of the people we've spoken to on the phone, they are always heart-warming moments. And, this can really help us to understand more about the people who support Pilgrims, and how we can best help them with our roles within the team."

Toby Frost is the newest of the team with 18 months of Pilgrims experience, he said: "I never get a Monday morning feeling with this job."

"It really is no accident that people come to work for Pilgrims Hospices, my mother-in-law was cared for by the Ashford team, and I'd seen first hand how people have the very best care to support their quality of life until the very end."

"My favourite part of my job is speaking with people about their donations and enquiries; very interesting and emotional sometimes."



However, I'm always rewarded with knowing I'm helping our supporters to do something special and ensuring that Pilgrims continues with our important care. I'm very proud to be part of the team."

Trisha Smith has been a valued member of the team for over three years.

She told us: "I've always been an active fundraiser, supporting charities by taking on challenges and raising funds for important causes. I also have personal experience with Pilgrims Hospices; my Dad died at the Canterbury hospice in 2009. The care we received was very special, thereafter, I became a regular Pilgrims' volunteer, helping at, or taking part in fundraising events."

"I really enjoy my job, helping people with queries regarding donations, listening to their stories, and generally being able to allow them to speak freely about their Pilgrims experiences."

What could appear to be a quite simple day to day role within the charity, is actually a very important cog in the Pilgrims' wheel.

We hope this small insight into our friendly trio, will help you to feel comfortable and able to pick up the phone if you need to, and speak with **your** Supporter Relations Team.



Introducing the Mental Health First Aider role to support Pilgrims' staff and volunteers

Mental Health First Aider

MHFA England

Introducing the Mental Health First Aiders role to support Pilgrims' staff and volunteers

The need for mental health support became prevalent during and after the COVID-19 pandemic; in meetings, it consistently came up that staff were feeling exhausted and had low morale.

Karena Marks, Clinical Business Manager, was already trained as a Mental Health First Aider (MHFA), and she saw there was a gap it could fill within the charity.

We asked staff for expressions of interest in becoming a MHFA; once a team was in place, they completed a two-day training course to gain the tools needed to support their colleagues and our volunteers. The role is now included within our wellbeing strategy.

Karena explains what the role involves and how it is supporting Pilgrims' teams.

All workplaces have a first aider on-site to deal with accidents or injuries. It's just as important to have someone to help people with their mental or emotional wellbeing, too.

Mental ill health is the highest cause of sickness absence, and it can affect anyone. Companies are realising that their employees may be struggling to cope, especially in healthcare professions and within the current cost of living crisis.

High profile, public figures regularly speak out about their own struggles with mental ill health and social media awareness campaigns are growing.

There is a dedicated World Mental Health Day on 10th October each year, too.

We all need to be open about our mental health and willing to create a supportive environment where we can look after each other; this is where the MHFAs come in.

MHFAs are trained to spot the early signs of mental ill health in others. They are a first point of contact and reassurance for people experiencing emotional distress or suffering with mental health problems including stress, anxiety and depression. This interaction could range from having an initial conversation through to supporting the person to get appropriate help. The MHFA role also acts as an advocate for mental health in the workplace, helping to reduce stigma and cultivate positive change. MHFAs work to create an environment where we are all looking after each other.

Our MHFAs are not trained counsellors or therapists, but they provide a confidential and safe place to talk and just 'be'. They take time to listen and give the emotional support needed, without judgement.

They are also trained to assess the risk of self-harm, physical safety or even a risk to life to you or others around you. If there is a serious concern, this is reviewed confidentially and action will be taken to protect you and/or others. MHFAs know how to contact appropriate emergency services, if required.

Many people find that just having a supportive, listening ear and a safe space is all that they need, but our MHFAs are available for continued support, if helpful.

What's next?

- The MHFA role at Pilgrims is constantly evolving; the team meet bi-monthly to discuss how we can ensure everyone is aware that 'we are here if you need us'.
- We are aiming to ensure that the MHFA role is explained as part of our induction for new staff and volunteers, so that new starters know about the support available to them.
- We have branded posters and contact cards that will be shared around Pilgrims' sites, and we're planning a roadshow – we will visit each site to give out the cards and explain what MHFA is, to further embed the support we offer.
- We use relevant apps to ensure we have the latest signposting information to hand when needed.

Daphne shares why she supports Pilgrims after the care her husband, Ron, received

My late husband Ron and I were both in the Civil Service; prison department; Ron was an electrician before he joined the Service so went in as a Trades Officer and worked his way up through the ranks. He always worked and played hard and I was immensely proud of him. He was 89 when he died and we had been married for 68 years.

Whilst Ron was receiving immunotherapy at the Viking centre, he also had help from Pilgrims who provided six sessions, once a week with the Energise group at the Thanet hospice. They got him back into exercising and at the end of six weeks he was considered fit enough to restart at the local gym which he thoroughly enjoyed. When the pandemic stopped him from attending the gym, he bought an exercise bike from the Pilgrims warehouse in Margate and exercised daily in our conservatory.

During his two year course of treatment I was helped by attending the Carers Wellbeing Days. When I first arrived there I was apprehensive but was soon put at ease by the kind and understanding staff. I could exchange views and feelings in a safe environment, spending time with others who were going through the same experiences. I found the Carer Wellbeing Days very helpful, as they gave me the time to relax away from my responsibilities as a carer. I also attended programmes run by the Palliative Specialist Nurses where they gave me information on finance, common symptoms, and nutrition.

“The help and understanding we both received at that frightening and upsetting time was so very much appreciated and is why I continue to support Pilgrims Hospices through Always Caring.”

Become part of Always Caring by supporting us with a monthly donation

With regular, assured income you can help Pilgrims be here Always Caring for our patients and their families every day.

Find out more

Visit:
pilgrimshospices.org/always-caring

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