

Pilgrims matters

News for Pilgrims Hospices supporters

Spring / Summer 2024



Sue shares the importance of a comfortable bed for our patients
Pages 6 & 7



Hosting Rankin photography exhibition

Pages 8 & 9



Jenni's inspirational story

Page 5

Pages 6 & 7





Chair's comment

Dear Pilgrims Friend,

Welcome to the spring / summer 2024 edition of Pilgrims Matters. It is with great pleasure that I extend my warmest greetings to all our supporters and friends who continue to uphold and champion our inspiring local charity, dedicated to providing end-of-life care.

This edition of Pilgrims Matters offers a unique opportunity to connect with our community, share experiences, and celebrate the unwavering support that sustains our mission. I am particularly thrilled to highlight the captivating story of the Rankin photographic exhibition. We were delighted to showcase the #IRemember exhibition featuring poignant portraits captured by the renowned British photographer Rankin. This collaboration, arranged by our CEO Helen with Hospice UK has not only enriched our collective experience but also provided solace and inspiration to those who have been touched by loss. I was particularly pleased to welcome the Sheriff of Canterbury, Tom Mellish when he viewed the exhibition. You can delve deeper into this moving narrative on pages eight and nine.

In our ongoing efforts to ensure the sustainability of our services, we are delighted to introduce a new initiative aimed at diversifying our funding streams. Our training rooms will now be available for rental as managed meeting spaces, offering state-of-the-art facilities to businesses, charities, and the wider community. Your support in spreading the word about this opportunity for collaboration and contribution is invaluable. Further details can be found on page 19.

On page four you can read about updates on the current stage of the development of our Canterbury hospice reflecting our commitment to transparency and progress.

I am very much looking forward to the forthcoming season filled with events and gatherings where we can come together to celebrate our shared commitment and forge new friendships. Your presence at these occasions is deeply appreciated and contributes immeasurably to the spirit of our community.

Thank you for all that you do to support our invaluable work,

Karen Warden

Karen Warden
Chair of the Board of Trustees

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

Contents

News	4
Jenni's story of inspiration	5
Pilgrims Bed Appeal	6
Rankin #IRemember Photography Exhibition	8
Fundraising dates for your diary	10
Honouring our beloved Ann Robertson	12
Kev, Rob & Eddie make the most of Pilgrims therapy groups	13
Pilgrims Hospice Lottery; Busying into spring	14
Join us for Sunflower Memories 2024	15
Enjoy the creativity of our Retail Team	16
Mr Bird's collection takes wings	17
Happy retirement to Nurse Patsy Worthington	18
Open for hire: Pilgrims Education and Training Centre	19



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.

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Kent CT2 8JA
t 01227 459 700/
812612

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Willesborough
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Kent CT9 4AD
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Registered charity no 293968 and as a company in England no 2000560.

A message from our CEO

In this season of renewal, the blossoming flowers seem to echo the spirit of hope and resilience that thrives within our community. It is a time when we gather, not only to celebrate the changing of the seasons but also to reflect on the invaluable support that continues to uphold our mission at Pilgrims Hospices.

As we welcome the vibrant energy of spring, it is with a profound sense of gratitude and appreciation that I extend my warmest greetings to each and every one of you. In this season of renewal, the blossoming flowers seem to echo the spirit of hope and resilience that thrives within our community. It is a time when we gather, not only to celebrate the changing of the seasons but also to reflect on the invaluable support that continues to uphold our mission at Pilgrims Hospices.

I am filled with anticipation as I look forward to reconnecting with our dedicated supporters during the various events and gatherings that mark this time of year and the coming months. It is during these moments that I am reminded of the unwavering commitment and generosity that sustains our efforts in providing compassionate care to those in need.

Within the pages of this magazine, you will find stories that speak to the heart of our charity. From the courageous journeys of our patients to the tireless dedication of our staff, each narrative is a testament to the profound impact of our work across east Kent.

I am particularly proud to highlight our ongoing Bed Appeal, a vital initiative that ensures our patients receive the comfort and care they deserve during their time with us.

Your support in this endeavour is truly invaluable, and I encourage you to explore the ways in which you can contribute to this important cause.

In the midst of our undertakings, we also take a moment to honour the legacy of our founder, Ann Robertson, whose visionary leadership continues to inspire us all. Her remarkable achievements serve as a guiding light as we forge ahead in our mission to provide unparalleled end-of-life care to those in need.

I am continually inspired by the incredible generosity of individuals like Mr. Bird, whose selfless act of kindness has touched the lives of so many. Their stories remind us of the power of compassion and the profound difference it can make in the lives of others.

As we navigate the months ahead, I extend my deepest gratitude to each of you for your unwavering support and dedication to our cause. Your contributions are the cornerstone of our success, and it is because of you that we are able to continue our vital work in the community.

May the coming months be filled with joy, warmth, and moments of profound connection with your loved ones. Together, let us embrace the journey ahead with renewed hope and optimism.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Helen Bennett

Helen Bennett, FCIPD
Chief Executive Officer

We care about your care

From 1st July to 31st December 2023 we received 422 reviews through I want Great Care, this is what **YOU** told us about **YOUR** experience with Pilgrims.

✓ **98.1%**
had a positive
experience with us.

On average we scored
4.88 out of five stars.
★★★★★

Local solicitors support Make a Will Month

For 12 years, local solicitor firms have generously waived their usual fee and volunteered their time to write and review Wills, in exchange for donations to Pilgrims Hospices.

This April, six solicitor firms will be taking part in our Make a Will Month scheme, providing the opportunity for local people to write or review their Will while supporting hospice care.

The longstanding scheme has raised an incredible £200,000 to date, which would simply not be possible without the effort of the participating solicitor firms who continue to show Pilgrims support, year on year.

Six solicitor firms are kindly taking part in this year's Make a Will Month:

Boys & Maughan
Girlings
Pengelly & Rylands
Prospero
Stilwell & Singleton
Whitehead Monckton



"We really are so grateful to all the participating solicitors for volunteering their time so generously to support Pilgrims, and the people of east Kent getting their affairs in order."

Ellie Cane
Individual Giving Manager

How you can get involved

For further information, and solicitor contact details, please visit: pilgrimshospices.org/makeawill, email: giftsinwills@pilgrimshospices.org or contact our Supporter Relations Team on 01227 782062

Canterbury New Build

We started the journey to build a new hospice in Canterbury in 2014. We were approached by Pentland Homes who were very kindly offering to provide land as part of the planned Saxon Fields development in Thanington, for a new, purpose-built hospice in Canterbury, as well as a contribution to construction costs.

You will also know that our existing London Road hospice site is well over 40 years old now and was never purpose built to deliver the modern hospice care that is required today.

During 2021-22, Pilgrims Hospices' Board of Trustees unanimously agreed to accept the generous offer from Pentland Homes which comprised of the freehold title of the land and a £4 million donation and to designate

the donation to a fund which would help finance the building of the new hospice.

Unfortunately since then there have been significant circumstances outside our control which have impacted the proposal and the expected timeline. We are now aware that housing and commercial developments within the Canterbury area are being affected by

concerns about water quality at Stodmarsh Nature Reserve near Canterbury. This has paused planned construction across many parts of east Kent as experts try and find and deliver approaches that will minimise the impact of housing developments on water quality at a number of sites across the UK including the Stodmarsh Nature Reserve.

Sadly, we anticipate that this will delay the new build project further, potentially by up to 2 years and as a result we are currently considering contingency options to refurbish and redevelop elements of the buildings on our London Road site as well as working to unlock the delays at Thanington.

We remain committed to delivering a fit for purpose hospice facility that will provide sustainable hospice care in Canterbury and will keep you updated as things progress.

Pentland donated the freehold title of the land and a £4 million donation



Artist's impression

Jenni's story of inspiration

Jenni Burnes has a touching and inspirational story that highlights her journey with Pilgrims Hospices

Jenni Burnes is 44 years old and a Pilgrims Hospices patient who received care on the ward for pain management. After a spell of treatment and support, she is now at home and being supported by the Pilgrims Wellbeing team at the hospice Therapy Centre. As part of her on-going support, Jenni regularly attends the Time to Create groups.

Jenni shares her home in Hawkinge with her loving husband, Adrian and two adorable spaniel dogs, Bre & Briar. Their journey together has spanned 17 years, including 14 years of marriage. Having recently moved to a home that is better suited to her mobility, Jenni has a newfound independence in their bungalow space, which brings them much happiness.

Jenni's life took a challenging turn when she battled breast cancer, but the good news is she's received the all-clear. Still, she faces the ongoing struggle of dealing with serious health conditions, including cancer, liver disease, and a history of bulimia.

Jenni's experience at Pilgrims Hospices has been eye-opening. She didn't know what to expect, but she discovered a warm and caring community where everyone, from the nurses to the volunteers, made her feel at home.

She formed bonds with other patients and their families and values the family atmosphere at the hospice.

Since moving to their new home and feeling stronger with Pilgrims support, Jenni has embraced healthier lifestyle choices to boost her wellbeing, and it's making a positive difference in her life.

Despite her health challenges, Jenni is determined to live her life fully and

independently. She even takes herself on outings via the local bus, which helps her regain a sense of normality.

Jenni had a diverse work history, including roles at Eurotunnel, a kitchen company, a doctor's surgery, and even as a phlebotomist, which she loved. She told me that she particularly cherished her time working with patients and looks forward to the groups where she feels she can be a support to other service users too.

Jenni stated: "My cousin Lou brings me to the group sessions; it initially helped boost my confidence. She also takes part in the activities and enjoys the company of the group members too. Lou is my rock, and I love her support. I couldn't do this without her."

"At the group sessions, I've developed friendships I would never have expected and enjoyed the creative activities; we often laugh so much, and I really look forward to them."

Jenni's husband, Adrian, has been a pillar of support, and she continues to fight her health battles with resilience. The care

team at Pilgrims has made a significant difference by providing targeted medication, leading to a better quality of life.

Jenni is grateful for the support she has received from Pilgrims and encourages others to put their trust in the hospice's services. She recognises that while life may present challenges, every day brings opportunities to conquer something, no matter how small.

In conclusion, Jenni Burnes' story is a testament to her strength, resilience, and the positive impact of Pilgrims Hospices in her life.



'I've developed friendships I would never have expected'

"Dr. Pia took time to explain to me and my husband how Pilgrims would support my care; Dr. Suman helped with my pain management; and I soon became much stronger than I'd been in quite some time. After a short spell on the hospice ward, I was able to return home and was offered the opportunity to join the Time to Create group once a week to support my wellbeing." Jenni told me.

She said: "My introduction to the group came with a sense of nervousness, as I wasn't sure what to expect and didn't consider myself a creative person. However, I quickly realised the positive impact of my engagement with Pilgrims. The wellbeing groups, especially the "Time to Create" sessions, have become an essential part of my life. I really appreciate the camaraderie, the banter, and the social element of these gatherings, as well as the opportunity to connect with others who understand my journey."

Will you give our patients a good night's sleep?

Pilgrims Hospices has been offering a bed to those in east Kent facing their last days for over 40 years. The journey started with just two beds at the Canterbury Hospice in 1982, and today we offer a bed to over 900 people across the three hospices each year.



We've grown to meet the needs of the community, and been privileged to see that care reflected back in the overwhelming support we have received. It is with this in mind that we are reaching out to you to help us continue the excellent level of care we provide to local people.

We strive to keep our patients as comfortable as possible for those precious days spent in the hospices. They often feel vulnerable when they come here and it's our job to make them feel safe, comfortable and looked after. We can't do this without specialist beds.

Each of our wards have space for 12 beds, offering comfort and safety to around 900 people a year. To make sure patients receive the best possible care, these beds need replacing about every seven years.

Some of the beds we have are over seven years old, and although they've done us proud, they won't last forever. Fixing them is becoming more and more expensive so we will need to replace them. **With your support our patients will sleep easier, and we can continue to care for them safely.**

We urgently need to raise £166,853 to buy 36 new beds. It sounds like a lot, but hospice beds are specialist pieces of equipment, and are essential to the care we provide. Each bed costs £4,212, which includes a mattress that's worth £995. It's a huge amount of money, and we have already received an incredible response to this important appeal. Our first step has been to raise the £83,427 deposit, so we could place the order for these beds, and this is where you can help.

New beds will make a real difference, and these ones are particularly special as they are fully adjustable.

- Bedside controls which patients, their families and our staff can use to help find a comfortable position. They even have a chair function offering greater independence to those unable to leave their bed.
- The beds can be lowered down to the floor, reducing the risk of falls for patients, and allowing our nurses to work safely.
- When paired with specialist floor mats, these beds can be made into doubles, so those precious nights can be spent close together.

- The siderails can be lowered, or removed, so little ones can reach their grandparents for a cuddle.

When you're very ill, the small things really can make a difference. Beds are a huge part of caring for our patients and every day we see how much of an impact a good night's sleep can have for those with life-limiting illnesses.

Please consider making a donation to this important appeal

You can support our appeal by completing and returning the form enclosed, visiting pilgrimshospices.org/bedappeal or calling our friendly Supporter Relations Team on 01227 782062.



Every penny kindly donated will go directly towards replacing our beds at each hospice. In the event that we receive more than needed, the surplus will be used to continue our care. We'll bring you updates on our Bed Appeal throughout the year. **Thank you.**

Including the frame and a new mattress, offering a level of comfort and support our patients need, and deserve. If just 100 people were to give £42 each, you would purchase a bed for one of the hospices.



Sue, one of Pilgrims' Trustees, knows what a difference a comfortable bed can make to those staying in our hospices.

"I have been a Pilgrims Hospices Trustee for over four years, and I feel privileged to be on the Board of a charity whose care and support I have directly experienced.

My mother was diagnosed with cancer at a very young age, and needed the care of the hospice in her final days. I know that one of the things that made her stay in the hospice more restful was her ability to lie comfortably when she was unable to get out of bed. My mother, like so many hospice patients, became very, very thin and therefore a specialist bed and mattress was critical to her comfort in the final few days.

I know the Pilgrims' care teams go to great lengths to support their patients, providing a clean, safe and comfortable environment for those who spend their last days in one of the three inpatient units. That's why it's vital they have the right equipment needed to help them in their work. They need these new beds now to make sure they can continue giving patients the same level of care my mother received.

I'm appealing to you today, to help raise the money needed to fund these vital pieces of equipment, that make such a difference in the lives of those Pilgrims cares for."



Rankin photography exhibition

Timing is everything and thanks to our CEO Helen Bennett, Pilgrims Hospices secured the Rankin #IRemember photographic exhibition for display at our Canterbury site during National Grief Awareness Week 2nd – 8th December 2023.

Rankin, a world-renowned British photographer created the #IRemember exhibition in collaboration with Hospice UK, and consists of a series of 8 portraits of those who have died alongside the people who remember them.

Through sensitive portrayal of the photographs, each accompanied by its own moving and impactful connecting story, people share their unique experiences of grief, and cherished memories of how they wish to remember their loved ones, producing a very poignant, powerful and thought provoking display.

The exhibition was an opportunity to engage in open conversation and explore the intricacies of grief, loss, memories and the different ways people experience grief.

Photography provides an emotional connection across time and space enabling individuals to keep their loved ones alive in memory and ensures that their loved ones are not defined by any debilitating illness that may have led to their death.

The Rankin exhibition was accessible to Pilgrims Hospices users, staff and volunteers. Inspired by the #IRemember exhibition, our Stepping Stones Bereavement Support Services team invited participants of their Canterbury monthly December Bereavement Support Group to bring with them, a photo of the loved one they had lost and provided a space where they could share their own cherished memories with their peers.

The festive period is an extremely difficult time for those who are bereaved irrespective of how long ago the bereavement was.

Many people may avoid talking to bereaved people about the person they have lost purely because they feel uncomfortable, as they do not wish to upset them, we can assure you, talking about them with family and friends, ensuring we use their name, is an important part of the grieving process and it helps keep their memory alive.



Participants of both our Stepping Stones monthly Bereavement Support Group and our Bereavement Walk and Talk Group at Canterbury were given the opportunity to immerse themselves in the #IRemember photographic exhibition which proved to be a great talking point.

If you are looking for support following a bereavement we urge you to contact our Stepping Stones Bereavement Support Services email steppingstone@pilgrimshospices.org or telephone **01227 504127**, Option two for further information. Our groups are accessible to any bereaved adult in east Kent free of charge, and facilitated by our trained bereavement volunteers and currently consist of:

- Monthly Bereavement Support Groups held at our Ashford, Canterbury and Thanet sites
- Weekly Bereavement Support Walk and Talk Groups with picturesque settings:
 - Conningbrook Lake in Ashford
 - Westgate Gardens in Canterbury
 - Pegwell Nature Reserve in Thanet

#BetterTogether was the theme for this year's National Grief Awareness Week and provided the opportunity for Pilgrims Hospices to host a networking event, organised by Annie Hogben, Expert Volunteer Project Lead, capitalising in a the successful event last year. This year's event focused on the challenges we all face providing bereavement services in our local area and how we move forward with collaboration into 2024 as a group.

Pilgrims Hospices was represented by Sophie Van Walwyk, Head of Psychosocial and Bereavement Services, Selina Pryor, Lead Counsellor and Simone Warren, Stepping Stones Bereavement Support Co-ordinator. They were joined by representatives of five fantastic charities from across east Kent who shared with us the details of the amazing work they have been doing over the last year and championed the services they provide to the local community:

- East Kent Baby Memorial Gardens
- Crossroads
- MacMillan
- Holding On Letting Go (HOLG)
- The Compassionate Friends (tcf)

The challenges bereavement support services face, are very similar for us all, with barriers such as funding, training and resources to name but a few. Knowing what resources are currently available, avoiding duplication and identifying underrepresented groups are all important ways forward. Together through collaborative working, we aim to better inform our communities of support available to them, and ensuring a robust signposting service for specific support.



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
- Other

Pilgrims Hospices Cycle Challenge

Sunday 5 May



Get on your bike to explore the beautiful and varied countryside of east Kent alongside 1,200 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 7SR

Registration:
Standard entry: £40 (closes 28 April)

On the day: £50

Sponsorship: As much as you can!

Website: www.pilgrimscyclechallenge.org

London 2 Brighton Challenge

Saturday 25 May

Location: London to Brighton

Registration: Variable depending on chosen distance and funding option

Sponsorship: Various sponsorship options available

Contact: Sophie Howland

RideLondon-Essex 100

Sunday 26 May

Location: London

Registration: Variable depending on chosen distance and funding option

Sponsorship: Various sponsorship options available

Contact: Sophie Howland

Pilgrims Way Challenge

Saturday 15 June



The Pilgrims Way Challenge is back and now back to front! New for 2024, we have reversed (and tweaked) the routes, allowing first-timers and returning participants to enjoy fresh challenges and new vantage points along the way.

Lace up your walking boots, or running shoes, and enjoy the rural beauty of one of England's oldest and least-trodden national trails. Now, starting from the coastal town of Dover, beneath the imposing walls of Dover Castle at Connaught Park, follow the North Downs Way through rolling fields and charming villages to the historic cathedral city of Canterbury. Then, onward via the Pilgrims Way and scenic Stour Valley to finish in the picturesque village of Wye, nestled in the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Location: Dover to Wye

Registration:
Early bird entry: £35 (closes 21 April)
Standard entry: £40 (closes 27 May)
On the day: £50

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

Website: www.pilgrimswaychallenge.org

Sunflower Memories

Saturday 20 July



Dedicate a sunflower to someone you love and join us to celebrate their life at our Sunflower Day on Saturday 20 July. Enjoy refreshments and live music in our hospice gardens, and find your dedicated sunflower memory marker.

Contact: Ellie Plews

Summer Fair, Ashford

Sunday 28 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

The Big Half

Sunday 1 September

Location: London

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

Contact: Sophie Howland

Folkestone Downs Challenge

Saturday 31 August

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 30 June)
Standard entry: £40 (closes 11 August)
On the day: £50

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

Contact: Sophie Howland

Pilgrims Golf day, Canterbury

Friday 13 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

Thames Bridges Trek & Thames Path Ultra Challenge

Saturday 14 September

Location: London

Registration: Variable depending on chosen distance and funding option.

Sponsorship: Various sponsorship options available

Contact: Sophie Howland

Tandem Skydive

Sunday 8 September



Experience an adrenaline-fuelled adventure of a lifetime and take on a tandem skydive for Pilgrims Hospices this Summer. The sky's the limit! Join like-minded Pilgrims supporters all soaring through the sky, ticking something off their bucket list or taking extreme measures to conquer a fear of heights. Free fall from 12,000 ft and experience breath-taking views of the Kent countryside far below as you raise vital funds for hospice care across east Kent.

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

Registration: £40

Sponsorship: Minimum sponsorship of £395

Contact: Sophie Howland

Wing Walking

Sunday 8 September

Take a walk on the wild side for Pilgrims Hospices with our adrenaline-fuelled Wing-Walking challenge. Experience a true sense of freedom as you take to the skies in aid of Pilgrims Hospices. Soar through the air at speeds of up to 120mph strapped to the wing of a Boeing Stearman biplane! You'll take in breath-taking views of the east

Kent countryside from a unique bird's eye perspective, all while raising vital funds for local hospice care.

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

Registration: £40

Sponsorship: Minimum sponsorship of £650

Contact: Sophie Howland

Thanet Colour Run

Sunday 6 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 hundreds of people running, jogging and 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!
01227 782062

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

Honouring the Legacy of Ann Robertson



In memory of Ann Robertson, who died peacefully, aged 89 years, on 7 November, 2023. An extraordinary individual who dedicated her life to providing compassionate care for those in need, we pay tribute to her remarkable achievements as the founder and lifetime President of Pilgrims Hospices.



Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother with Ann Robertson at the opening of Pilgrims Hospice Canterbury

Ann's unwavering commitment and relentless pursuit of excellence have left an indelible mark on the organisation and the countless lives it has touched. Pilgrims Hospices celebrates her lifelong dedication and the profound impact she made in the field of hospice care.

A Visionary Leader

Ann Robertson, a visionary leader, played a pivotal role in shaping the philosophy and direction of hospice care in east Kent. The hospices were the vision of local nurse Ann, who wanted to make a difference for the people within the community facing terminal illness. It has now been more than 40 years since she worked tirelessly to open the first Pilgrims hospice in Canterbury in 1982, drawing on the generous public and business community to help her raise funds to support hospice charity. This was followed by the hospice in Thanet in 1992, and a further facility in Ashford in 2001.

Thanks to her devotion and the help of countless others, today there are over 400 staff and 1150 volunteers who together support thousands of people each year.

With her profound understanding of the importance of holistic care, she spearheaded initiatives that focused not only on physical well-being but also on emotional, spiritual, and psychological support. Ann's tireless efforts ensured that every patient received personalised care that honoured their dignity, autonomy, and individuality.

Advocating for Quality Care

Under Ann's leadership, Pilgrims Hospices emerged as a leading advocate for quality end-of-life care. Recognising the significance of a multidisciplinary approach, she worked tirelessly to integrate the expertise of doctors, nurses, social workers, counsellors, spiritual care leads, therapists, and volunteers, ensuring that patients and their families received well-rounded care.

Her unwavering belief in the power of compassionate companionship and active listening helped establish an environment where comfort and peace prevailed.

Extending the Reach of Hospice Care

Ann's dedication to expanding access to hospice care extended beyond Pilgrims Hospice's walls. She actively collaborated with other organisations, policymakers, and community leaders to raise awareness about the importance of end-of-life care. Through her advocacy, numerous individuals and families found solace during life's most challenging moments, through the services provided by Pilgrims Hospices.

Inspiring and Empowering Others

Ann's vision inspired and empowered those around her. She fostered a culture within Pilgrims Hospices that nurtured innovation, empathy, and kindness. Ann's mentorship, guidance, and encouragement uplifted numerous healthcare providers, volunteers, and staff members to embody the values she held dear.

Leaving a Lasting Legacy

In her lifetime of service, Ann Robertson's imprint on Pilgrims Hospices is immeasurable. Her compassionate leadership and commitment to excellence continue to shape and inspire the organisation. The care and support offered to patients and their families stand as a testament to her enduring legacy.

As we mourn the loss of Ann Robertson, we also celebrate the incredible contributions she made to the field of hospice care. Her unwavering dedication, vision, and kindness will forever be remembered by those whose lives she touched. Ann's legacy serves as a guiding light, motivating us to continue providing compassionate care and upholding the principles so precious to her. May her soul rest in eternal peace, knowing the profound impact she made in the lives of others.

Kev, Rob & Eddie make most of therapy groups

Pilgrims' Wellbeing is free if you live in east Kent and you have been diagnosed with an incurable illness. It aims to enhance your wellbeing – in mind and body.

Pilgrims Hospices Wellbeing groups offer a holistic approach to improving the quality of life for their patients. The groups provide a variety of activities and sessions that aim to enhance both mental and emotional wellbeing. Therapy Group users Kev, Rob and Eddie share their thoughts on the benefits of Pilgrims Wellbeing.

Rob I've been very lucky and blessed with an interesting life. I had my own taxi cab firm in central London, then noticed there was a greater need for ambulance services. I introduced a private ambulance service, which supports the London hospitals including the NHS. I've had an engaging and varied career, and have been fortunate to learn to fly a plane amongst many other fascinating things.

I've been managing my brain cancer diagnosis since May 2022. I had been very fit and healthy until then. I woke up one morning to find myself shuffling, and not really able to pick my feet up. After scans and consultations with the neurological doctor, it was a shock, as there really hadn't been any warning that I was becoming unwell.

Rob who is 67 years of age, said, "My visits to the Pilgrims Therapy Centre keep me feeling very positive, and I enjoy the company of others using the Wellbeing services, and the Pilgrims teams are always there full of positive messages, and useful information about support services, and how to look after myself."

Eddie I was a plumber and have worked in a huge variety of properties for a wide variety of companies and people. We often laugh a lot while we're here at the Therapy Centre, when we're chatting about our life's experiences. I can't express enough how important the groups are, to keep everyone focused on looking after themselves and making the very most of our own skills.

Although I have to keep my meals to quite simple foods, I'm always so well catered for at the group lunches. It's a pleasure to sit and catch up with the group, we talk about our families, what's happening locally, how we're all feeling, what happens next and so much more. But perhaps more than any other thing, we laugh and relax with the Pilgrims care team.

The gentlemen are soon to move on from Pilgrims Hospices Wellbeing Groups, having had support to give them skills and confidence to live life to the full in every moment. With new friendships forged, they hope to continue to meet socially and share their experiences moving forward.

Pilgrims team of nurses, doctors and therapists work together to offer a range of Wellbeing programmes to support patients, their families and friends. Offering services to help people live better at home; these are available through the Wellbeing and Social Programmes held at our Therapy Centres.

By helping to manage symptoms, the care teams can support people to cope with the changes in their lives, giving practical advice, and helping people to think about the future.

Kev When I initially came along to the Wellbeing Groups at Pilgrims, I went home and said to my wife Gwenn, this isn't for me. She persuaded me to give it a little time; I'm so pleased that I did, I have met friendly and interesting people in the groups and enjoyed some of the variety of entertainment and talks that have been provided by the Wellbeing teams.

I discovered that talking and listening to people who are experiencing similar symptoms, and things that I'm experiencing, is really good therapy. I've had a chance to express my feelings in a relaxed and friendly environment.

I was a plumber in my working career, and have met people from all walks of life; here at the Therapy Centre, I've found lots in common with so many people here, and laugh a great deal when we're all together.

We've made great friendships, and will exchange telephone numbers in order to stay in touch; we hope to continue to meet even after our therapy sessions have finished.





Each year Pilgrims Hospices Lottery generates in the region of £1.2 million; to achieve this significant amount, thousands of you have taken part in our weekly draw, bought scratch cards, superdraw draw tickets, gift vouchers and wedding favours, thank you.

We need your help.

We have a big ambition to reach our goal of 25,000 members for 2025 and raise more money for these invaluable services. A single entry is still only £1 per week and you could win up to £20k! To help us reach our target please recommend us to friends and family; they will be very grateful when they win! Join if you are not already a member or if you are did you know you can have more than one entry?

Just speak to your collector or call us at the office. You have read some amazing stories in this edition of Pilgrims Matters, I do hope you feel inspired to make a difference today. Please complete the enclosed leaflet and return it in the envelope provided, call us **01227 379741** or for all of our super Lottery products visit pilgrimshospices.org go to "Get Involved" and click on the Pilgrims Hospices Lottery link.



We have been busy bees, our dedicated team of Lottery Collectors have walked over 3,000 miles and handled over 8000 subscriptions, we have processed over 192,000 payments and signed up 2,600 new entrants this year!

People helping people.

People you know, friends, family, neighbours and people you may never know, people you may never meet. Your membership means a great deal to them. We are all winners though, Lottery membership helps us to continue providing compassionate end of life care to thousands of patients and families each year.

Huge thanks to our many thousands of amazing members and army of helpers who are all totally dedicated to raising funds to keep our services available free of charge to those living with an incurable disease in east Kent.

Lets get to the good part

Excellent news, we have also paid out over £200,000 in prizes from our weekly draw to more than 5,500 lucky winners, more than a quarter of which has been kindly donated back to Pilgrims Hospices. **Thank you, you really do make a difference.**

Would you like to join?

If you are not already a member and would like to join please call **01227 379741** or go to our website www.pilgrimshospiceslottery You too could be on our winners map soon! We will call you by phone if you have a big win.



Our beloved summer remembrance has been a special event for Pilgrims Hospices for over ten years, giving everyone the chance to honour their loved one's memory with a dedicated sunflower marker in one of our hospice gardens. This includes Sarah, who came for the first time last year to celebrate the life of her Dad, Anthony:

"My Dad was a total one off. He had the most amazing sense of humour, loved to be the centre of attention and was ridiculous, in the best way! With my brother and two sisters, we were all so close, but him and I were kindred spirits."

He loved jazz and rock and roll music, and even decided on the music for his own funeral. As I was putting his eulogy together, there was one commonality between everyone's memories: laughter.

Dad had his blood cancer diagnosis in 2014, but beat the odds. It wasn't until he suffered a stroke in March 2022 that he started to deteriorate.

The cruellest part was the stroke took his voice; for such a vivacious character, it was so upsetting.

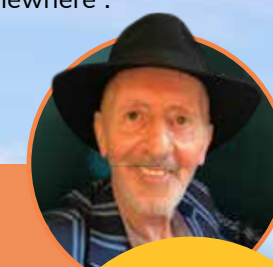
Dad was hesitant to take up the offer of Pilgrims services, but in the end, he knew the hospice was the place he wanted to be. Ultimately, it was his life, his death and his choice, right to the very end.

On arriving at the hospice, we were greeted by staff who were amazing. They immediately sprang into action and got his pain and anxieties under control. It was such an honest, open and safe environment in which Dad and all the family were so supported.

We were so scared and unsure of what to expect, but Pilgrims stayed at our side throughout: a steady and reassuring presence.

Two years on, and I still find it hard to believe that he isn't here. Our family remember Dad at both Trees of Love and Sunflower Memories.

I find such comfort in coming back to the hospice to remember him, and these events are such a wonderful opportunity to do so. I want to keep celebrating him and see his name written somewhere".



To dedicate a sunflower

visit pilgrimshospices.org/sunflowers, email sunflowermemories@pilgrimshospices.org or call our friendly Supporter Relations Team on **01227 782062**. We will write the name of your loved one on your sunflower memory marker, ready to be planted in the hospice garden of your choosing for our Sunflower Days.

**Join us
at our Sunflower
Days on
Saturday 20 July
from 1-4pm**



Hannah shines with sustainable creativity

Pilgrims Hospices is proud to spotlight the remarkable work of Hannah Golding, the window dressing specialist at Pilgrims Hospices Store 50 in Canterbury. Hannah's innovative and sustainable approach to window displays has garnered attention and praise, making her an invaluable asset to the Pilgrims team.

Innovation and Repurposing

Hannah Golding's window displays are renowned for their creativity and innovation. When asked about her inspiration, she shared, "I always try to think about, moving forward, how I can use and reuse some of these pieces in the future, being totally sustainable." A prime example is her Christmas display, which is a take on Widow Twanky from the Marlow Theatre Christmas Pantomime, featuring a repurposed pantomime dame costume made from repurposed or upcycled textiles, cardboard, and plastic bottles, showcasing her unique ability to turn pre-owned items into captivating works of art.

Sustainability Focus

Sustainability is at the heart of Hannah's work. "The windows are so important to our shops. Sustainable Santa was such a success in the window last year; I thought we were on to something here," she explains. By showcasing sustainable items, Hannah not only promotes responsible

consumption but also helps build the brand of the store as a hub for eco-friendly and fashionable finds.

Local Collaboration

Hannah's collaboration with local organisations, like using the pantomime dame costume from a Marlow Theatre production, adds a fascinating touch to her displays. She emphasises the importance of community involvement, stating,

I try to make the most of the space in our small window to create maximum impact on the high street, and the brilliant mannequins we have always help with the theatrics.

Hannah Golding, Pilgrims

"It was wonderful to be donated the costume by the Marlow Theatre; I hope we will be able to work with them on future projects."

Challenges and Solutions

Working with pre-owned items presents challenges, but Hannah navigates them adeptly. She elaborates on the process of creating displays:

"I try to make the most of the space in our small window to create maximum impact on the high street, and the brilliant mannequins we have always help with the theatrics." Her dedication to maintaining quality and visual appeal is evident in every display.

Community Engagement

Hannah ensures her displays resonate with the local community. "We really want our windows to be part of the community," she says. By gauging and incorporating community preferences, especially during festive seasons like Christmas, Hannah makes the store a vibrant and welcoming space.

Long-Term Impact

Beyond aesthetic appeal, Hannah believes her work has a broader impact on raising awareness about sustainable practices and responsible consumption. "Our displays truly strike a chord with our customers, and we are enthusiastic about our ongoing integration into the wider community," she adds.



Store 50, 50 St Peters Street, Canterbury CT1 2BE

Mr Bird's CD collection is flying off Pilgrims Hospices eBay site

10,000 CD's have kindly been donated by Mr Mick Bird from Dover. His amazing music collection, which is in mint condition, has been gifted in memory of his father who was cared for by Pilgrims Hospices.



Mick Bird, a Dover resident, has made a remarkable contribution to Pilgrims Hospices by donating his extensive CD collection. Totalling 10,000 CDs, Mick's collection spans decades of music history and includes various genres, from classic rock to Motown, reflecting his lifelong passion for music. This exceptional gift is a tribute to Mick's late father, who received care from Pilgrims Hospices.

At 72 years old, Mick's decision to donate his cherished collection stems from his desire to give back to the hospices that provided exceptional care to his father. His commitment to Pilgrims is evident not only through this donation but also in his annual tradition of bringing biscuits to the staff in gratitude for their compassionate support.

The CDs, meticulously catalogued by Pilgrims Hospices' E-commerce Manager Jonathan, have already proven to be a hit on the charity's eBay site. Over 1,500 CDs have been sold, raising over £22,000. Among

the collection are rare concert tickets, fetching impressive prices, including tickets for iconic bands like Status Quo, Thin Lizzy, and Fleetwood Mac.

Mick's journey as a collector began when he transitioned from vinyl to CDs, driven by his inability to find certain albums in vinyl format. Over the years, his collection grew with the help of Gatefield Sounds in Whitstable, where he sourced many rare finds. Despite no longer actively collecting, Mick remains connected to his passion for music and his appreciation for the care his father received at Pilgrims.

Expressing his gratitude, Mick emphasises the priceless nature of the care provided by Pilgrims Hospices. For him, sharing his collection with Pilgrims is a meaningful way to honour his father's memory and support the charity's vital work.

"I will be keeping him updated with how much the collection is raising as we continue to list more of his CD's."

Jonathan, Pilgrims

Jonathan, representing Pilgrims Hospices, expresses deep appreciation for Mick's donation, recognising its significant impact on fundraising efforts and the joy it brings to fellow music enthusiasts.

He ensures Mick is kept informed of the ongoing success of his collection on eBay, highlighting the collaborative spirit between donor and charity.

Mick's decision to share his collection while he's still alive reflects his desire to see it bring joy to others and support Pilgrims Hospices immediately. As the CDs continue to find new homes, Mick finds fulfilment in knowing that his beloved collection continues to spread happiness and support a cause close to his heart.

In conclusion, Mick Bird's generous donation exemplifies the spirit of giving and community support that is at the core of Pilgrims Hospices. His story serves as an inspiration, demonstrating the power of individual contributions to make a meaningful difference in the lives of others.



Patsy Worthington retires at 70

A compassionate and dedicated nurse, bidding farewell to her colleagues and friends at Pilgrims Hospices. Her remarkable journey as a palliative specialist nurse at the Canterbury and Ashford Hospices has left an indelible mark on countless patients, their families, and friends.

Before her nursing career, Patsy had a diverse background that included working as an air stewardess and owning her own hairdressing salon. However, she found nursing to be a truly rewarding and fulfilling career, especially in the context of her work with Pilgrims Hospices.

I'm finishing my career with a really positive message for students and nurses who are in training, or thinking of working within palliative care. I've had the most wonderful career, and can only say it has been truly rewarding. Pilgrims has always made me feel to be a valued member of the team, I'm very lucky to have enjoyed such a wonderful and rewarding career.

Patsy's journey into the healthcare field began when she trained as a healthcare assistant. She started with no formal qualifications, working her way up from being a healthcare assistant to becoming a qualified nurse. Her decision to undertake her nurses training was influenced by her husband's illness, which ignited her passion for nursing. She embarked on her nurses training in 2007 at the age of 50, inspired by the district nurses who supported her husband during his illness.

With resolute determination, she pursued her nursing degree at Christchurch University Canterbury, committing herself to caring for the terminally ill. It took three years of hard work and study, and her husband's unwavering support, to

achieve her goal. Pilgrims Hospices also played a vital role in supporting her through this educational journey.

Patsy's pride in her profession is evident as she reflects on her role in providing comfort and solace to terminally ill patients. Her colleagues, Sarah Martins and Kate White, speak

highly of her, acknowledging her understanding of the unique needs and concerns of patients and their families.

One of Patsy's most significant contributions was her mentorship of nursing students who passed through Pilgrims Hospices. She shared her knowledge and wisdom, instilling in them the importance of caring for the person behind the illness. Patsy offers a positive message for future nurses and students considering palliative care. She emphasises the rewarding nature of her career and the value she felt as a member of the Pilgrims Hospices team.

Reflecting on her nursing career, she expresses her willingness to do it all again, despite the challenges that come with age. The COVID-19 pandemic was a particularly challenging period in

I'm so proud when people ask what I do for a living, and I can say I'm a nurse and I'm part of the Pilgrims Hospices care team.

her career. The absence of volunteers, restrictions on visitors, and the emotional toll it took on both patients and healthcare providers, left a deep impact to all it touched.

As Patsy brings her nursing journey to a close, her legacy is immeasurable. The lives she has touched, the comfort she has provided, and the future nurses she has inspired will forever remember her dedication and compassion. Patsy's legacy will be cherished by many.

In her well-deserved retirement, Patsy, her husband, and their faithful dog Popeye, plan to enjoy the peaceful coastal village of Dymchurch. She intends to focus on gardening, walking her dog, and spending quality time with her sisters. She looks forward to celebrating her retirement with her colleagues, knowing that her relationships with them will endure.

Patsy Worthington's dedication to palliative care has left an indelible mark on the lives of countless patients, families, and future nurses.

Her retirement marks the end of a beautiful chapter, but her legacy of compassion, dedication, and love will continue to inspire and guide others for years to come.

The Ann Robertson Centre conference, education and training

Named after Ann Robertson, the esteemed founder of Pilgrims Hospices, The Ann Robertson Centre offers a versatile space that caters to various business needs, informal gatherings, training sessions, interviews, and more. Situated adjacent to the charity's Canterbury hospice on London Road, it is owned and operated by Pilgrims Hospices.

Clinical/Boardroom (First Floor):

Ideal for hands-on demonstrations and practical sessions, this clinical room features a sink and comes fully equipped with a TV and laptop for presentations. It comfortably accommodates up to 10 people.

Conservatory:

Offering a more relaxed atmosphere, the conservatory provides picturesque views of our gardens. It includes a variety of seating options such as soft seating, tables, and chairs, suitable for up to 14 people.

Geoffrey Chaucer Room (Ground Floor) and William Harvey Room (First Floor):

These versatile rooms can seat up to 12 people in boardroom style or up to 20 in theatre style. Each room is equipped with a large flat-screen TV, laptop, projector connections, and air con facilities. The Geoffrey Chaucer room also features a hearing loop.

Charles Dickens Room (First Floor):

The largest of our rooms, it can accommodate up to 30 people in theatre style or 15 in classroom or boardroom styles. It features a large flat-screen TV, hearing loop, laptop, projector connections, and air con facilities.

Reception:

A welcoming area where guests can enjoy refreshments.

Wheelchair Access:

The Ann Robertson Centre is fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010, providing easy wheelchair access throughout the building and a lift to the first floor.

Internet Connection:

Free WIFI access is available throughout the centre.

Parking and Transportation:

Conveniently located within walking distance from the city centre, the centre is easily accessible from major roads and motorways, including the A2. We offer 25 parking spaces for delegates, with additional free on-street parking nearby. The centre is situated three-quarters of a mile from Canterbury West station and one and a quarter miles from Canterbury East station.

The Ann Robertson Centre is furnished with comfort in mind, providing a conducive environment for learning, training, and exchanging ideas. We look forward to hosting your next event and providing a memorable experience for you and your guests.

When you hold your event at The Ann Robertson Centre you are also helping to support the work of the Hospice.

For inquiries and bookings

Please contact our team at:
info@annrobertsoncentre.org
01227 812616

***“When I see his leaf,
it reminds me he is
still with me”***

Raquel shares why her Silver leaf for Ray is so important to her.

Meeting my future-husband, Raymond Charsley, was the luckiest thing that ever happened to me. A chance meeting at our local London Badminton club in 1987 lead to 30 happy years together. His name on the Silver leaf at Thanet is proof for me that the wonderful life we had wasn't all a dream.

On a group trip to watch a Christmas pantomime we got talking and found we had a lot in common. We worked very close by to each other, and I realised how fortunate it was that we met. We spent many happy years together, until sadly, Ray was diagnosed with cancer. We were put in touch with Pilgrims, who supported us through his last months.

We had lots of support from the hospice, including talks helping us get through all the practicalities, which made everything so much easier to understand and manage. He spent his last week in the hospice, and although he was ill, he was still very much himself.

I was so thankful that we were benefitting from the contributions others had made, so when Ray's time came, I knew I wanted to do something to help. It's only a small thing, having my leaf on the Tree for these past several years, but it's the least I can do in return for the care we both received. If I can contribute so someone else can get the support we both valued so much, I know Ray would be pleased.



“When I see his leaf, it reminds me he is still with me, and there is somewhere he will always be. I'm so thankful for everything that Pilgrims does for those at the end of life. Ray was looked after so well, and me too, and I'm so pleased to be able to help others have the same care we did.”



***“The leaves are a symbol
of love, of lives lived, rather
than simply lives lost.”***

Cat Darkins,
Lead Spiritual Care Chaplain



The MemoryTree

A special place to honour your loved one, at the heart of our three hospices in Canterbury, Thanet and Ashford.

In return for a kind donation, we offer three different leaves – Copper, Silver and Gold, as well as special platinum Doves.

To find out more please call: **01227 728066**

Email: Individual.Giving@PilgrimsHospices.org

or visit our website: pilgrimshospices.org/memorytree

A Silver leaf would pay for 12 hours of specialist nursing care in one of our inpatient units, over the course of a year.