Introduction

Support Life

The Kirkwood Movement

Social, Economic & Environmental Impact

Why It Matters
In a year dominated by only one story, it’s perhaps inevitable that so too is our first ever Impact Report.

As the success of the COVID-19 vaccine programme begins to offer hope for the future, the coronavirus pandemic continues to loom large in our collective rear-view mirror. This year’s story then is the story of our collective response to an unprecedented year of challenges.

The Kirkwood Impact Report 2020–21 has been produced at the conclusion of a year like no other. A year of constant change and adaptation. Of obstacles and innovation. A year in which our community came together like never before to protect our patients, our workforce and the future of our charity.

This is the story of The Kirkwood movement and how, together, despite everything else happening in the world, we continue to #SupportLife. For everyone affected by any life limiting illness. Every step of the way.
Our support began as a hospice, but today it is a promise: To support the life and legacy of all of those affected by a life limiting illness.

We help those in our care to live well and to make the most of every single day. We make the complex simple by focussing on what’s important. And we support families and loved ones to live on – and live well.

We’re here for local people across our community whenever and wherever they need us, helping to improve their quality of life – in the ways that matter most to them.

Through thick and thin, giant hugs and bottomless mugs, we support life for anyone affected by a life limiting illness here in Kirklees.
SUPPORT LIFE
More than just our mission or our motto, Support Life is our solemn promise and our call to arms. Painted on walls, emblazoned on posters, and written in our hearts, it is our daily reminder that the best way to approach death is through an abundance of life. That’s why no matter how difficult, delicate, or dire the circumstances, The Kirkwood will always do whatever it takes to make life worth living.

Through the thick and the thin, during lockdowns and social restrictions, The Kirkwood have continued Support Life for anyone affected by a life limiting illness here in Kirklees.

Despite the restrictions and challenges posed by COVID-19 this year, we continued to care for the most vulnerable in our community. This is the story of how we continued to make a difference, despite everything else happening in the world.

#SupportLife
We focus on what matters to people. We take time to understand their needs and aspirations. And we work tirelessly to support them to achieve their goals.

1,623

The number of patients supported to maintain their quality of life by The Kirkwood team last year.

+10%
on 2019–20
If and when the time comes, we ensure our patients and their families have access to the very best care. Wherever possible, we help to fulfil their wishes and support their care in the place that they choose.

908

patients were cared for at the very end of life by The Kirkwood.

222

more people were cared for at the very end of life last year than in 2019–20.

834

The number of patients in our care who didn’t die in hospital.

+31% on 2019–20
We know that people’s lives have changed so much in the past year. What matters to them has changed. In turn, we have reacted, all whilst continuing to navigate our way through a global pandemic of unprecedented scale.

COVID-19 had a profound effect on the way we were able to deliver care during 2020–21. With face-to-face visits becoming increasingly difficult, our patients, their families and our workforce embraced new ways to stay in touch.

Despite the restrictions, we continued to care for the most vulnerable patients on our In-Patient Unit and in people’s own homes across Kirklees – because it was the right thing to do.
1,231 new patients were referred to our Community Nurses.

744 home visits were made by our Community Nurses last year, despite COVID-19 restrictions.

950 patients were helped by The Kirkwood’s Community Nurses.

Our Community Nurses facilitated 19,916 telephone and virtual contacts with patients in 2020–21.

Our IMPACT IN YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

Jo Dowson
Community Nurse

+54% on 2019–20
“We’ve made adaptations and we’re continuing to do the job we love, which is supporting patients and their families at home.”

Moyra Wilson-Grant
Community Nurse
The COVID-19 pandemic affected every aspect of our lives in 2020 and 2021. From the way we commute to work to our ability to share a meal with friends and family. And it’s had a drastic impact on The Kirkwood’s ability to provide our core services too.

As the scale of the coronavirus crisis became apparent, we acted decisively, under extreme pressure and without a map to guide us through the uncharted waters of a worldwide pandemic. We made bold decisions to help us protect our patients, protect our workforce and safeguard the future of The Kirkwood.

Under heavy strain, our dedicated teams got creative, spurred on by an urgent need to change if we were to continue helping those in need. At every stage, we tried things we had never done before. We trained our teams in new technologies, created new behaviours and embraced opportunities to uncover fresh solutions.

Farzana Aziz
Care Co-ordinator
19,271 calls were made to our 24/7 Advice Line during the year.

+40% more calls were taken by our clinical teams than in 2019–20.
Care Co-ordination played a vital role in the care of 675 patients at the end of life.

86% of our patients were able to receive care in their preferred place at the very end of life.

Care Co-ordination supported 1,194 patients in the past year, an increase of 98% compared to 2019-20.

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1,760

video calls and virtual sessions were facilitated by our teams to support patients, carers and families.

1,495

COMMUNITY TEAM

169

SUPPORT & THERAPY TEAM

96

COUNSELLING TEAM

VIDEO CALLS AND VIRTUAL CONSULTATIONS

Angela Lloyd Martin
Complementary Therapist
The last year has been the most challenging of The Kirkwood’s now 40-year history. Never before has our care been more important and so needed by local people.

And as our local community struggled to cope with a healthcare system reeling from the impact of COVID-19, never before has our ability to generate the vital funds to support those in need been so compromised.

But The Kirkwood are resilient. We were founded by a group of local people who believed everyone deserved the very best care and support as they approached the end of their life. Passionate local people not prepared to accept the world as it was. Driven by a desire to find a way to make things better.

We are lucky to count thousands of local people as part of The Kirkwood movement. These were the people who were prepared to play their part in making sure the care we offer continues to be here for future generations. With each donation, offer of support or hour volunteered, those who share our values made a huge impact - and showed just how important our charity is to their community.
We are many, we are diverse, and whoever you are and whatever you do, there is a place for you to make a difference in your community.
864 people offered some time in 2020–21, including students, supporters from local businesses and our regular volunteers.

768 regular volunteers helped The Kirkwood Support Life across Kirklees.

42 unique volunteering roles are filled by our 768 regular volunteers, supporting teams in every department across The Kirkwood.

318 employees contributed to the support of those in our care during the year.
members of The Kirkwood movement responded to our Coronavirus Appeal at the start of the pandemic.

donors supported The Kirkwood financially during the year.
When Bill Flook’s pain became difficult to manage at home, The Kirkwood Community Nurse suggested he be admitted to the In-Patient Unit for support with his pain and other symptoms. It was expected that Bill would be able to return home to be with Rita once his pain was under control.

“Unfortunately what happened was Covid,” said Rita. “It meant I could only see my husband for a small bit of time each day. The Kirkwood team were so supportive. The way the nurses looked after Bill was just amazing, but they also supported me. Sometimes they’d take me into a room where it was quiet, and I could just have a few moments to myself. They would explain things to me, I could ask them questions and they would listen. I found that very important and supportive.”

“Bill and I always said ‘Good night, God bless darling’ to one another. I used to ring up, and whichever nurse was on that evening would take the phone to Bill so we could continue to say those words to each other. People have no idea what it’s like on the In-Patient Unit. It’s so welcoming, so friendly. It’s just like one big family.”

“I thought Bill would come home and that he’d just be in for a few days whilst they controlled his pain, however he died in the hospice. Following Bill’s death, Rita reached out for support from our Counselling team, which continues to support her. She also wanted to give something back to The Kirkwood.

“When Bill was diagnosed with Pancreatic cancer, you realise you’re on a journey that you can’t stop. You’ve got to keep going,” said Rita. “The love of other things, like gardening keeps you going - it was something Bill and I had always done together. One of the things I promised Bill was that I would grow from seed and give them to The Kirkwood for other people to enjoy. That kept me motivated throughout the whole of 2020. When I rang the Volunteer team to tell them I had grown these plants, I was asked if I wanted to become a volunteer gardener, and I was thrilled to be asked. I can now keep my promise to Bill going forward and grow my plants every year. I can’t express how it makes me feel that I can keep growing my plants in the garden.”

When Bill Flook was diagnosed with Pancreatic cancer, The Kirkwood were there to support him and his wife. Now, keen gardener Rita is honouring a promise she made to her beloved husband – to grow plants in his memory for others to enjoy.

RITA’S STORY

When Bill Flook was diagnosed with Pancreatic cancer, The Kirkwood were there to support him and his wife. Now, keen gardener Rita is honouring a promise she made to her beloved husband – to grow plants in his memory for others to enjoy.

Rita Flook (second from right), with our team of Gardening Volunteers.

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Rita Flook
The Kirkwood has deep roots here in Kirklees. From our founders to our legion of supporters; from our volunteers to our fun-runners; and from our donors to our employees. Our heart and soul belongs to this community and the people we serve.

More than a charity, an In-Patient Unit or a building in Dalton, The Kirkwood is a movement of people. Joined together by the belief that everyone affected by a life limiting illness deserves the very best care. Care which helps to improve quality of life – for however long that may be.

And as a local institution, we are as passionate about the future of our community as we are about the patients in our care. We all hold a stake in building a brighter future for the people of Kirklees, and we are committed to holding ourselves to the highest standards.

This section of our Impact Report represents The Kirkwood’s fledgling attempt to put into words just some of the ways we give back to our community, support the local economy and try to reduce our impact on the environment. It’s just the start of our journey. One we hope you’ll join us on.
We create ways for people to have a meaningful stake in their community and to help improve it. We give back to those who choose to join us to help them feel good, to improve their prospects and skills and to improve their own quality of life and future opportunities.

Seamus Nash
The Kirkwood Counselling Team
We offer opportunities for volunteers of all ages and from all backgrounds. Our youngest volunteer is just 14 years old, whilst our eldest is 87.

76% of our employees live right here in Kirklees.

The Kirkwood employs people across the charity, in various areas including: clinical, medical, support services, income generation and retail.

108 of the subcontractors and suppliers we used in 2020–2021 were based right here in Kirklees.

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Our shops and Coffee Shop provide job and volunteering opportunities and make a positive impact on their local high streets.
66,959 bags of clothes and other donations were accepted by our shops, reducing waste and creating sustainable lifestyle options for our local community.

120 tonnes of clothes kept from landfill sites - and that doesn’t include items we sell in our shops!

2,824 bags of donations were collected from our supporters through our safe COVID-19 collections.
“On my first few days working with The Kirkwood I could tell it was a fun environment, which very much suited me. I kind of felt very worthwhile, as if for the first time in a long time, I was doing something worthwhile.

“Once I had heard a little about the charity and what they did – the fact that everyone has a story about The Kirkwood in the local area – I felt that I was part of it.

“I initially started working as a volunteer in the Meltham shop. Very quickly the opportunity arose to be a General Assistant. Once the team knew I’d had a fair bit of managerial background, I was encouraged to go for it, and here we are today.

“The actual thought of managing a shop never really occurred to me. It was just a natural progression really. Things seemed to be going my way in that I was appreciated for what I was doing. The shop was doing well and it just seemed very organic, like it was the right thing to do.

“The opportunities made available to me to progress have been really quick, and really good. The Kirkwood have been nothing but good to me. They’ve given me loads of training and made me feel worthwhile. I literally cannot say enough good things about The Kirkwood. For the first time ever, I feel like I am where I belong.

“If anyone is considering becoming a volunteer for The Kirkwood, I would just say ‘go for it’. You never know what’s going to happen.”
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Christian Steel, Shop Manager, Holmfirth
When I was diagnosed with secondary cancer, I didn’t really understand what it meant. Finding out that secondary cancer meant it couldn’t be cured was devastating for me and my family. I try not to let it upset me and I don’t let it interfere with my life, but talking about it, it hits you.

The first support I got from The Kirkwood was help with financial support when I was in hospital. I couldn’t understand what to do, knowing I wouldn’t be able to work anymore. I was absolutely devastated at the fact I would have to lose my job. How would I be able to pay my bills and get on with life? My daughter looked into it and found out The Kirkwood could actually give me some support to help me sort my finances out.

The support that continues to benefit me and my family is the emotional support. That was the hardest thing – how to deal with the emotional side of things. They’re treating the cancer as best they can. They can’t cure it but they’re trying to treat it. But nobody sees the other side. They don’t see what it does to your family.

Through The Kirkwood, we managed to get emotional support for myself and for my husband. My husband suffers depression and he really dropped when he found out I had secondary cancer. I found I was trying to support him as well as looking after myself. Now we can both cope, because we’ve both got that support we need. As a family, I don’t know where we’d be without The Kirkwood.
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Elaine Holroyd (left) and her sister, Carol.
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