How Simon Jenkins discovered the many different ways The Kirkwood can help

After three years away, we're pulling out all the stops to make this year's walk our biggest ever

Paying tribute to the pioneering spirit that helped to build The Kirkwood movement
Welcome to our Spring & Summer Newsletter

From Chief Executive Michael Crowther

As I write this piece for our latest Newsletter, we are on the eve of a very special anniversary for The Kirkwood. Friday, 18th March 2022 marks exactly 35 years since The Kirkwood’s In-Patient Unit in Dalton was officially opened to care for local people right across Kirklees affected by life limiting illnesses.

Our official opening back in 1987 was the culmination of over six years of hard work by a group of passionate campaigners. Not satisfied with the lack of care provision for people approaching the end of their lives and determined to change the status quo, a small band of local activists, led by David Stocks and Dr Alan Barlow, rallied a movement of people around their cause. Thousands came together to make the dream of a hospice for Kirklees a reality.

Raising funds to build our first In-Patient Unit at Dalton was a labour of love, and a powerful symbol of what The Kirkwood can achieve when we work together with one goal. Even now, 35 years since we welcomed the first patient into our care, we continue to take inspiration from those who came before us.

Today, The Kirkwood is not ‘just a building’, an In-Patient Unit or place of care. Our services reach like branches throughout our community. Our care is offered in people’s own homes, in care homes and in towns and villages across our diverse community. We certainly look a little different, but our mission remains the same today as it was for those whose vision helped to found our charity; to provide the very best care for anyone affected by any life limiting illness, every step of the way.

In these troubled and unpredictable times, I am prouder than ever to lead The Kirkwood and represent this truly unique movement. Our movement is made up of clinical and medical professionals, patients, carers and families, employees, volunteers and supporters. And together, I know we will continue to be there for all those who need our help for the next 35 years and beyond.

Lace up for a walk to remember at: thekirkwood.org.uk/mmw or call: 01484 557 911

The Midnight Memory Walk is kindly supported by:

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In 2020, The Kirkwood launched a refreshed identity and set ambitious goals for the future. Over the next ten years we want to become the ‘go to charity’ for anyone affected by a life limiting illness in Kirklees. To do this we need to reach out to more local people and raise awareness of who we are and what we do. Our Retail team are a vital part of that ambition, and they are working hard to develop new income streams so that the funds are in place to care for more people here in Kirklees, now and in the future.

The Kirkwood’s online sales activity has grown massively over the past two years. As the COVID-19 pandemic led to shutters going down on high street shops for months at a time, many people turned to online shopping. And The Kirkwood’s online sales team has worked hard to develop an exciting shopping experience.

Before the pandemic began, The Kirkwood had four eBay team members and one online store with 500 followers. Over the last two years, the team has grown to 14 members, and we now have two shops with over 5,000 followers. It’s been an incredible growth for the fledgling eBay team, which has seen sales more than triple since 2020.

The Kirkwood have invested and grown our offering over the past two years, recently expanding into listing furniture online, which is proving to be another popular addition to our service. Each member of our online team brings a specialist area of knowledge, whether it be sports memorabilia, clothing,电气s, pottery, art or jewellery.

“It’s a big team effort and wouldn’t have been possible without support from across the charity, particularly from our retail colleagues and supporters,” says Online Sales Manager, Gary Stancliffe.

“We’ve had some amazing donations over the past year, which have raised significant money to support The Kirkwood’s works.”

The number of items that have been donated is truly breathtaking. Donations have included unique Lego sets, which have raised over £2,000, a signed limited edition Killer Queen book that sold for £465, and a rare Panini 1970 World Cup sticker book, which sold for over £1,200.

Last year, The Kirkwood also launched a new online shop with e-commerce platform, Shopify. Sarah Britton, from The Kirkwood, has been delighted with the results so far. She says: “Updating our identity has opened up lots of opportunities for us to develop our digital presence. In Autumn last year we launched a brand new online shop. After a successful start, we see lots of opportunities for us to grow our e-commerce offering, including limited edition collections and merchandise to help our supporters stand out from the crowd.”

A WARM WELCOME TO THE KIRKWOOD MOVEMENT FOR ANDREA

Andrea Hynd, who has recently been volunteering in our Huddersfield shop, joined us all the way from Germany on a four-month sabbatical.

Andrea, 60, is a palliative care nurse back home, a role she has been in for the last 11 years. Since 2014, she has headed up the District Nursing service in her local area.

Being a palliative care nurse, Andrea has a strong understanding of the care The Kirkwood offer and how important our services are to the people of Kirklees.

On her time with The Kirkwood, Andrea said: “I have a full-time job in Germany organising district nursing care. Last year I applied to my employer to take a sabbatical and from October to the end of November I came over to England to volunteer with The Kirkwood. I wanted to take a break from my job, recharge my batteries, relax a little bit and learn something new.

“I didn’t want to just stay around and do nothing, I wanted to do something useful and learn new things. My experience as a palliative care nurse made me want to work with an organisation that did something similar. However, I wanted to work in a different department, so that is why I applied to work in the charity shop in Huddersfield.

“I helped out in the shop and the team welcomed me very well, they were a great bunch of people. There is so much work to be done here and the charity keeps striving to be better which is great.

“I enjoy the charity shop idea. It’s not something we really have in Germany. They once tried it in the village I live in, but it never really took off. They brought the idea over from the UK but it just didn’t work in the area, which really surprised me.

“When you talk to people who have either been cared for by The Kirkwood, volunteer or work with the charity, you get an understanding of what it means to people in this area. They want to give something back to a great charity that helps hundreds of local people.

A WARM WELCOME TO THE KIRKWOOD MOVEMENT FOR ANDREA

The Kirkwood are proud to work with people from right across Kirklees, and we’re always delighted to meet new people from further afield too.

“A would like to do some more volunteering over here, and I would love to return to work with The Kirkwood as I have enjoyed my time at the charity so much.

“I would like to say a big thank you to everyone who works for the charity and to those who have given me this opportunity.”

We’d like to thank Andrea for her hard work and wish her all the best for the future.

WANT TO LEARN NEW SKILLS AND MEET NEW PEOPLE?

We’re always on the lookout for volunteers in our shops. We have roles and hours to suit everyone. To find out more visit:

thekirkwood.org.uk/volunteering

Discover our eBay Store at:

thekirkwood.org.uk/ebay

Shop with us online at:

thekirkwood.org.uk/shop

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Nothing symbolises Summer quite like the sunflower, and our Sunflower Memories Appeal, now in its ninth year, is a beautiful way to celebrate the memory of your loved ones with friends, family, and fellow supporters.

We’re delighted to be able to welcome you back to our gardens this July as part of our Sunflower Memories Appeal. We hope you’ll join us to celebrate your loved ones, past and present, in a touching tribute to their lives.

With warmer weather just around the corner, we are already looking forward to the event, which will take place on Sunday, 24th July.

Join us in The Kirkwood Gardens on Sunday, 24th July

CELEBRATE THE PEOPLE YOU LOVE THIS SUMMER

Nothing symbolises Summer quite like the sunflower, and our Sunflower Memories Appeal, now in its ninth year, is a beautiful way to celebrate the memory of your loved ones with friends, family, and fellow supporters.

It’s easy to take part. Simply visit our website and make a dedication online.

When you make a dedication as part of our Sunflower Memories Appeal, the name of your special person will be handwritten on a striking sunflower plaque and ‘planted’ in The Kirkwood gardens for you to discover on the day. At the end of your visit, you can take your sunflower home with you as a special reminder of your loved one.

The Sunflower Memories Appeal is an important date in our diary. With your support we can continue to be there for anyone affected by a life-limiting illness, every step of the way.

When Kevin Parker was seriously ill, The Kirkwood stepped in and helped him to get back to living his life.

Kevin Parker, from Huddersfield, has received help with symptom management from The Kirkwood. After two stays on our In-Patient Unit, Kevin, 60, is now back at home enjoying his life.

Kevin was having problems with his heart and from that, other problems arose which eventually left him unable to properly communicate or move. He had issues with his stomach, kidneys and his legs. After a stay on our In-Patient Unit Kevin began to feel much more comfortable and is grateful to our nurses for their outstanding care.

Having been cared for in hospital, Kevin’s first stay on our In-Patient Unit was at the end of July 2021. When he arrived, his mobility was seriously compromised. Unable to eat or talk, Kevin feared for his life. After another short stay back in hospital, Kevin was admitted to our care once again in the middle of August and stayed on our In-Patient Unit for five weeks.

On his care, Kevin explained: “I was initially being cared for in hospital, but I was really struggling. My brother said to me, ‘Kevin, you need to get transferred to The Kirkwood’ – and I was then transferred to The Kirkwood. Once my condition started to improve, I got a better understanding of the care I had received and how many people are involved with The Kirkwood, including both employees and volunteers. "I was always laughing and joking with everyone, you couldn’t feel negative or down, they were great and kept my spirits up."

“The care I received from The Kirkwood compared to what I received in hospital was just so different. The Kirkwood nurses found new ways to help me to take my medicine, adding it to my food, whereas in hospital they had expected me to swallow tablets which I found very difficult. I struggled to eat anything there, but I never had a problem when in The Kirkwood’s care.”

Kevin was extremely appreciative of the care he received from The Kirkwood nurses and says that he simply wouldn’t be here without their hard work, dedication and kindness.

He said: “I will forever be grateful to The Kirkwood nurses and everyone who works there. If it hadn’t been for them, I just wouldn’t have made it.

Kevin was for the whole time in hospital, but I was always laughing and joking with everyone, you couldn’t feel negative or down, they were great and kept my spirits up.”

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He said: “I will forever be grateful to The Kirkwood nurses and everyone who works there. If it hadn’t been for them, I just wouldn’t have made it. They were professional and caring and they became like friends in the end.

“When I left The Kirkwood In-Patient Unit I said to the nurses it was them that helped save my life – and they said that it was all down to me. "I know I can speak to anyone from The Kirkwood at any point, and if anyone ever asked me where they should go to get support and care, I always tell them The Kirkwood. There is nowhere better."

If you’re struggling to keep control you can call our 24/7 Advice Line on: 01484 557 910
We began as a hospice but today we are a movement. A growing, thriving, unstoppable community of passionate local people who believe that everyone deserves the very best care.

Since the day we began, we've strived to make a difference to the people in our communities. Whether we're raising spirits, raising funds or raising the standard of care for our patients, our work makes a positive impact on every single person we reach. And while our hospice remains the physical base of our activity, the majority of our work happens outside of it, rippling outwards in a wave of support, right across Kirklees.

To celebrate our 35th year, we'll be taking a look back through the history of our movement and sharing our ambitions for the future. The Kirkwood was born out of a rich history, not as a place where people were cared for at the end of their lives, but as a community of people working together. Our mission remains the same today as it was in 1987. And we know where we've come from is as important as where we're going.

35 years after the official ribbon was cut, that original pioneering spirit is still at the heart of everything we do. Our movement won't stop working, advocating, lobbying, raising money, volunteering, donating and caring until everyone affected by a life limiting illness has the care they deserve.

If you'd like to share your memories, photos or moments of The Kirkwood in our 35th year, please email: marketing@thekirkwood.org.uk or call Steven Downes on: 01484 557 900

The original Huddersfield Hospice Appeal Fund letter:

If you'd like to keep up with all the latest news from Snowdogs HQ and access exclusive content, sign up to our mailing list at: www.snowdogskirklees.org.uk

SNOWDOGS SUPPORT LIFE, KIRKLEES

For eight whole weeks this September and October, our towns and villages will come to life as a pack of dazzlingly decorated Snowdog sculptures bound into Kirklees. It's all part of a spectacular free event for everyone to enjoy. Are you ready to join the fun?

Based on The Snowman™ and The Snowdog, the classic animated story by Raymond Briggs, Snowdogs Support Life, Kirklees will bring the magic of the Snowdog character to life through an extraordinary public art trail this September and October.

It's free for everyone, with thirty uniquely designed Snowdogs (and thirty-five mini sculptures designed by local children) to discover across Kirklees.

If you'd like to keep up with all the latest news from Snowdogs, you'll get the chance to build brand awareness, engage with your key customers and stakeholders, and be part of a cultural campaign which brings people together from far and wide. Sound amazing? Discover more at: www.snowdogskirklees.org.uk/sponsors

BUDDY PAYS A VISIT TO LOCAL SCHOOLS

Buddy must be the friendliest Snowdog pup in town. As kids and teachers were counting down to February Half-Term, our Snowdog pup was busy bounding around, meeting lots of new friends at schools across Kirklees.

On his travels, Buddy visited: St Patricks, Fixby Junior & Infant School, High Bank First School & Early Years Unit, Pivot Academy and Co-Op Academy Smithies Moor (and it wasn't just the kids who were excited to see Buddy).

If your school or youth group wants to join the pack, there's still time to adopt your very own Snowdog pup. A limited number of sculptures are still available, so get in touch today to sign up! For more information visit: www.snowdogskirklees.org.uk/sponsors

Our founders David Stocks and Dr. Alan Barlow. Our charity was formed by honest, hard-working people who wanted a better future for people in our local community. Raising funds to build The Kirkwood's first In-Patient Unit at Dalton was a labour of love, and a powerful symbol of what we can achieve when we work together.

In the archives, we've been inspired by the achievements of those who came before us. From the honesty and integrity of the first appeal letter, to the hand-made, personally dedicated cornerstone, laid by our founders David Stocks and Dr. Alan Barlow. Our charity was formed by honest, hard-working people who wanted a better future for people in our local community. Raising funds to build The Kirkwood's first In-Patient Unit at Dalton was a labour of love, and a powerful symbol of what we can achieve when we work together.

Our hospitality is as important as where we're going. The majority of our work happens outside of it, rippling outwards in a wave of support, right across Kirklees.

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Follow us on social media @SnowdogKirklees

Join our mailing list at: www.snowdogskirklees.org.uk
JOSIE’S STORY

Sales from our shops across Kirklees help us to continue to provide care for local people. Here Josie shares her love for our Denby Dale shop.

Josie has been a frequent visitor to our Denby Dale shop and Coffee Shop for many years, building strong friendships with our shop team over the decades.

With no previous experience of The Kirkwood prior to her first visit, Josie discovered our Denby Dale shop whilst fulfilling her grandmotherly duties, browsing the local shops on her frequent school runs.

Josie says: “It’s one of my favourite shops, the window display is always adorned with such lovely items.

Following her very first visit, Josie became a regular, buying all sorts of items, from clothes to toys. As her grandchildren have grown older, Josie has remained a firm supporter of our shop. Telling of her secret shopper missions set by her daughter, Josie explains: “My daughter is a teacher at Birkby Infants. When she’s given her classroom, they refurbish them at the end of the school year to get the rooms ready for a new class.

“One of her themes was ‘natural’, so all the decorations had to be hessian, cork or wood. I found most of the items at the Denby Dale shop, and the children in her class loved the wooden cars, animals and toys.”

No stranger to grief and loss, Josie’s first husband and her grandson, Josh, died of cancer. Now remarried, Josie’s second husband is living with dementia. She cares for him alongside the team at his residential home, where she visits him often.

Josie and her family have supported a number of local charities and cancer charities over the years, completing a lot of fundraising efforts in memory of their loved ones.

When asked what her favourite thing is about our Denby Dale shop, Josie says: “We enjoy it, looking around, having a bit of banter with the ladies, it’s just fun. “It’s an exceptionally good shop, always beautifully set out, and the people who work there are so lovely.”

You can be sure of a warm welcome from our friendly team at all of The Kirkwood shops across Kirklees. To find your nearest, visit: thekirkwood.org.uk/shops

Bring your friends, family or colleagues together to help The Kirkwood Support Life in your local community. Whether you hold a coffee morning, get your friends round for cocktails or host a games night in the back garden, your Get Together will help The Kirkwood Nurses in your local area provide vital care for patients in their own homes when they need it most.

Find out more and download your free Get Together fundraising pack at: thekirkwood.org.uk/gettogether

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It’s time to enjoy life again and get back outdoors – and we’ve got some great challenge events on the horizon. Whether you’re a mountain conqueror, an adventurous outdoors family or a thrill-seeking adrenaline junkie, we’ve got you covered.

Suit up, grab your gear and reach speeds of up to 120mph this May as you jump from 15,000ft at The Kirkwood Skydive. Get off the beaten track and take in the most beautiful landscapes God’s own country has to offer as you take on the Yorkshire Three Peaks or our family friendly One Peak Challenge. Run marathons, cycle through Europe or do it your way!

Our friendly Fundraising team will be happy to answer any questions you might have and offer support as you lace, suit or boot up for The Kirkwood this year.

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**The Kirkwood Stories**

**OUR BATLEY & BIRSTALL GROUP**
One of our longest running fundraising campaigns takes place every year and is organised by our amazing Batley & Birstall Support Group. The group knit super-cute Easter chicks, which go on sale in venues across Kirklees, raising thousands of pounds every single year!

**SINGING FOR THE KIRKWOOD**
Jon and Ann Coombs, from Crosland Moor, along with their good friends Dezzi Dee and Sarah Jay, have raised an astonishing €16,500 for The Kirkwood. They kept their online singing events going throughout the many lockdowns, culminating in an amazing live event in Golcar.

**J.P. WILD**
A local building firm with a big heart decided against sending Christmas gifts to clients this year, instead making a generous donation of £2,500 to The Kirkwood. J.P. Wild’s Stewart Ross, who is a supporter of The Kirkwood, nominated us to receive this wonderful donation.

**THE BIG K LOTTERY**
Founded all the way back in 2000, The Kirkwood’s Big K Lottery has raised millions of pounds to support patients and families affected by life limiting illnesses across Kirklees. Dawn Walker, Lottery Manager, says: “I would like to say a huge thank you to all of our players.”

**TRAVELLERS REST**
Jan Shotton and her fantastic team at The Travellers Rest in Upper Hopton, Mirfield, have raised over £4,000 for The Kirkwood since 2018. They’ve held various events over the past few years, including music festivals, a casino night and even Christmas markets.

**JEANETTE MARSH**
Jeanette has hosted ‘The Annual Anthony Marsh Christmas Tribute Trail’ for a number of years in loving memory of her husband, Tony. Tony was cared for by The Kirkwood nurses on our In-Patient Unit. Jeanette has since raised thousands of pounds for The Kirkwood.

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**Yorkshire Three Peaks**

**Pen-y-ghent One Peak Challenge**

**Skydive**
From 15,000ft
CHARITY GOLF DAY BOOSTS WOODSOME HALL’S FUNDRAISING EFFORTS

Last September, Woodsome Hall Golf Club held their annual Charity Golf Day in aid of The Kirkwood. Sponsored by illustrious car maker, Rolls Royce, the event proved a huge success, raising an incredible £22,298 on the day.

The event was part of Sue Gillespie and Richard Hirst’s fundraising efforts as current Club Captains, and takes the total raised for The Kirkwood to an incredible £22,298 to date. September’s Charity Golf Day was the flagship event in a fundraising calendar which has also included Captain’s Days, one off fundraisers and even a 100 Holes in 24 Hours challenge.

We’d like to thank all the teams, bidders, buyers, and donors who helped to make September’s Charity Golf Day possible.

On behalf of The Kirkwood, we’d like to say a huge thank you to Sue Gillespie and Richard Hirst, all the event organisers at Woodsome Hall Golf Club and everyone who has supported our efforts. We’d also like thank all the teams, bidders, buyers, and donors who helped to make the Charity Golf Day, and each of the other events over past year, such a huge success.

JUST THINK OF ALL THE WAYS YOUR GIFT COULD HELP

If you choose to add The Kirkwood to your will, your gift will become a lifeline for local families in need. You’ll help to improve their quality of life in ways that really matter and help families to get the support they need – when and where they need it.

Your gift might be a friendly voice at the other end of the phone. It could help to build a patient’s confidence so they can continue to do the things that are important to them. Or it might help a family to pick up the pieces and learn to smile again.

No matter how large or small, your gift will be the reason those in our care are able to make the very most of the time they have left.

Find out more at: thekirkwood.org.uk/gift

Simon’s Story

It was only when Simon Jenkins started to access The Kirkwood’s services he found out the true extent of how we can help.

Simon Jenkins, has been living with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) for the last 30 years. He has been accessing services delivered by The Kirkwood for the past two years and has recently joined our local community hub sessions.

Simon’s condition has made life and work difficult. However, in recent times he has been able to access a dedicated MS nurse and support from The Kirkwood. Simon has attended our Support & Therapy sessions and says: “I went to a session in Meltham to get more information and meet more people who were suffering with MS. I wanted to get an idea of how they coped with it. We swapped stories and spoke about how we all cope with MS. I found it very informative, welcoming and socially appealing to speak with like minded people who suffer with the same condition I do.”

When Simon was diagnosed with MS in the early 1990s, there wasn’t the same amount of support as there is today. After suffering a relapse, Simon was able to return to work, however, having been a plasterer all his life he didn’t know if he would be able to return to that job.

Simon says: “Thinking back now, there was nothing like the help there is today. The Kirkwood weren’t offering this type of support back then, and there wasn’t an MS nurse. All the hospital could say to me was I have MS, and it won’t kill me, it’ll just make me disabled. Work was big boot in my life when I was diagnosed. The biggest thing was I had two young kids to support, and I wasn’t earning money.

“I am a very active person; I have looked after animals all my life and so to be diagnosed and not be able to do the things I love was difficult.

Simon worked as a plasterer right up until his last relapse four years ago.

He added: “I made an appointment at the doctors, and they said I should go see my MS nurse. I asked what one of those was, and that’s when I was able to meet with one. I then came along to one of The Kirkwood’s sessions.”

Since Simon has started to access our services he has learnt much more about the charity, and is impressed with how The Kirkwood have updated our identity to highlight that we’re more than just a building and hospice.

He said: “I didn’t know much about The Kirkwood and all the services they offer. I was surprised to find out how much help The Kirkwood could be, whether it was the MS sessions they run, the online services or financial advice.

“I’ve been really impressed with The Kirkwood’s re-brand. I have a friend who still calls it a hospice and I keep telling him it’s much more than that and that’s why they call it The Kirkwood.

“The Kirkwood, for me, is so important. It’s a brilliant service that helps people across Kirklees.”

Support & Therapy in the Community

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, our Support & Therapy team have delivered a range of virtual support and wellbeing sessions via Zoom, helping patients to stay in touch with The Kirkwood and access support during what has been a very challenging time.

Following the easing of restrictions, the team are now beginning to deliver information sessions out in the community.

Working with GP surgeries across Kirklees, we’ve already offered sessions for people affected by a range of life limiting illnesses in Holmfirth, Slaidburn, Meltham and the Spen Valley.

We are now working with healthcare colleagues across Kirklees to find new ways to deliver sessions at the heart of our patients’ communities.

Our ambition is to improve accessibility to our services across Kirklees so we can reach more people who need our support – closer to where they live and work.

Find out more at: thekirkwood.org.uk
Our shops are in urgent need of donations to help us Support Life in your community. It’s really easy to donate at any of our shops – and you’ll be amazed how much good your pre-loved items can do!

Have you fallen out of love with that dress you bought last Summer? Not interested in the book you got for Christmas? They might just make someone else’s day!

Whether you’re having a Spring clean or making room for something new, please donate your pre-loved items to one of The Kirkwood shops. Your generosity will make a massive difference for those who rely on our support.

Find your nearest shop at: thekirkwood.org.uk/shops or call: 01484 557 917