

THE KIRKWOOD SUPPORT LIFE

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# LIFE & TIMES

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SPRING & SUMMER 2023



WHO  
WILL YOU  
**WALK**  
FOR?



# Welcome to our Spring & Summer Newsletter



From Chief Executive  
Michael Crowther

It's amazing to think that, as I sit down to write this introduction, it's been over four months since our Snowdogs Support Life, Kirklees art trail officially came to end. It was an event quite unlike anything we've been involved in before, helping us to reach out to thousands of people across our region. I'd like to say a big thank you to everyone involved for helping to bring this magical campaign to life.

Snowdogs Support Life, Kirklees was a hugely ambitious project, and it took hundreds of people working together to make it possible. 31 amazing artists and 34 schools and youth groups brought our Snowdogs to life. 27 local businesses and partners sponsored a Snowdog or supported us during the trail. And 47 passionate volunteers helped to make sure visitors had a great experience whilst out on the trail!

Tens of thousands of families got involved in the hunt for our Snowdogs during the nine-week trail, visiting new places, enjoying the great outdoors air and discovering amazing works of art in unexpected spaces in towns and villages right across Kirklees. I would like to say a huge thank you to every one of you for being part of it. Whether you helped us to create the amazing works of art, supported us financially or just enjoyed taking part, we hope you had as much fun as we did, and we hope it helped you to learn more about the many ways we support people here in Kirklees.

The art trail has helped us to share the message that we are here for everyone in Kirklees affected by any life limiting illness, as soon as they receive a diagnosis, wherever and whenever they need us. Right now, The Kirkwood are delivering more services across Kirklees than ever before. We're hosting drop-in sessions in local venues and helping people access wellbeing sessions closer to home, making it easier for everyone to get help when they need it. You can find out more about our wellbeing sessions on our website and I would encourage you to help us share this message with anyone you think may benefit from having a chat with our team or attending a session.

*Michael*

Proudly supported by  
our event partner

**syngenta**  
*Bringing plant potential to life*



**THE  
KIRKWOOD  
MEMORY  
WALK**

**SATURDAY  
1ST JULY**

The Kirkwood Memory Walk is back for 2023! It's your chance to do something amazing this Summer in honour of someone special. Bring your friends, family and even the family pooch along and walk for a loved one this July.

### A new venue and start time for 2023

We want the whole of Kirklees to join our walk this Summer, so we've brought the start time forward to 10pm, making it easier for families to take part together!

We've got a brand new venue for 2023 too, with The John Smith's Stadium playing host to this year's walk. Add all this together and it's set to be the same amazing experience, just with a few exciting changes!

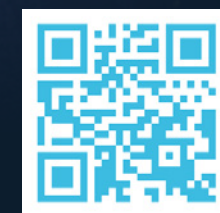
### Don't miss our Early Bird Offer

Be an early bird and sign up soon to take advantage of a very special discount. It's just £10 for adults and £8 for children to register for The Kirkwood Memory Walk during our Early Bird promotion period – but hurry, this offer won't last long! The normal fee is £15 for adults and £12 for children.

### Sign up today

It's easy to sign up for The Kirkwood Memory Walk. You can register yourself and your family and friends online at: [thekirkwood.org.uk/memorywalk](https://thekirkwood.org.uk/memorywalk) (or scan the handy QR Code below). If you'd prefer, you can also register over the phone by calling our friendly Fundraising team on: 01484 557 911

## WHO WILL YOU WALK FOR?



**Sign up at:**  
**[thekirkwood.org.uk/  
memorywalk](https://thekirkwood.org.uk/memorywalk)**

**"I'M WALKING FOR  
MY PATIENTS"**



# Colin's Story

**Here in Kirklees, we provide care and support for people in their own homes, in care homes and on our In-Patient Unit. Our care doesn't stop at our hospice in Dalton.**

When we first made contact with Colin from Huddersfield, he was living with a terminal illness, battling depression, and living in vulnerable housing. Life was difficult. He didn't have a safe space to call home and he wasn't getting the care that he desperately needed. Colin openly admits that if The Kirkwood hadn't been there, things were so bad he had considered suicide.

Colin reflects: "When I found out my cancer was terminal, I asked what the next steps would be, and I was told nothing could be done. It's hard to explain to people who haven't got a long-term illness, but when you have one and then you have other issues going on in your life on top of that, it's like a monsoon, a tidal wave of negativity just hitting you all the time.

"I was in denial, I was drinking a lot of alcohol and taking a lot of drugs as that was the only way I could cope at the time. That went on for four years, it wasn't about feeling sorry for myself, I just didn't know what to do or how to cope. I found it

difficult to contemplate what was happening to me."

Colin admits that although he had heard of us as a charity, he didn't feel that our services were for people like him. However, looking back Colin now feels that The Kirkwood actively saved his life and that the care we provide for him is nothing short of life changing.

"I had heard of The Kirkwood but didn't think it was for people like me when my GP asked me what I felt I needed after I was diagnosed. All I said to him was that I needed something for my acute anxiety and depression, which I have struggled with since birth. That was just enhanced with the news that I had got terminal cancer.

"It was getting harder and harder to cope with everything. When The Kirkwood first helped me, they talked to me like I was a living, breathing human – not just some number on a sheet."

The Kirkwood team were able to help Colin to find a new flat where he now feels comfortable and safe. This has made Colin feel like he can achieve the things that others take for granted. He's now making small steps forward and feels more optimistic about the future.

"When they found this flat for me it was life changing, it's a big thing to say, but it saved my life no doubt about it. I'm not talking from a physical sense but a psychological point of view. I was unfortunately in a care home at one point which I didn't like, there were lots of problems I had in there and I didn't feel comfortable. I can't thank The Kirkwood enough for helping me to find a new home."

The Kirkwood now supports Colin with regular visits and phone calls to check in to see how he is. That frequent contact makes him feel cared for, and he appreciates the communication

with people that care and understand the issues he is dealing with.

"When the staff from The Kirkwood visit me it's great, we have a good chat, and they talk to me about the things that are important to me. There is no stigma or pressure, and they are good listeners. I enjoy the contact I have with The Kirkwood; I see myself as being part of their family, their movement of people. They have helped me enormously and the help and support they provide has helped me to make my life better. Knowing they are there makes me feel more positive, it lifts those dark clouds on my mind, so they don't feel as heavy."

**"When they found this flat for me it was life changing, it's a big thing to say, but it saved my life."**

As well as help and support from The Kirkwood, Colin also has a great relationship with his independent carer and friend, Simon, who he wanted to thank in this article. Colin and Simon see each other pretty much every day and have each other's backs.

We care for people like Colin in the communities they live in. We personalise our care so that our patients can focus on what matters most to them. This involves working with other organisations across Kirklees to achieve the best outcomes for our patients. If you or someone you care for is living with an illness like Colin, **Connect with The Kirkwood on:**

**01484 557 910**

## CONNECT WITH THE KIRKWOOD SERVICE OFFICIALLY LAUNCHES

Whether you need advice on how to cope with a diagnosis, are looking for guidance on which services might be right for you or want to find out about the different ways we can help you and your family, Connect with The Kirkwood makes it easy to get in touch. The brand-new service is open to anyone affected by a life limiting illness – and anyone can reach out for help.

**Connect with The Kirkwood, our brand-new helpline, officially launched on Tuesday 21st March, making it easier for patients, relatives, carers and healthcare professionals to reach out for support at any stage of their illness.**

The dedicated Connect with The Kirkwood team is made up of call navigators, who work alongside experienced doctors, nurses and healthcare professionals to answer queries and requests for help, as well providing guidance and support on a wide range of topics and advising callers about The Kirkwood's range of clinical services on offer.

A dedicated helpline makes it easy for people to get straight through to a member of our team for support. There's also a simple online form anyone can complete to request a call back from one of our team.

Connect with The Kirkwood is open to anyone living with or affected by a life limiting illness. You don't need to have been

referred to The Kirkwood or know about the services we offer in order to get in touch with our team. The only criteria is that the person being referred is living with or has been affected by a life limiting illness.

The Kirkwood's Medical Director, Dr Stephen Oxberry, has played a key role in developing Connect with The Kirkwood and is eager for more people to reach out for our help.

Dr Oxberry said: "We want to make it easier and more straightforward for people here in Kirklees to access the wide range of services offered by The Kirkwood. Connect with The Kirkwood does just that, providing a single point of access for patients, relatives, carers and healthcare professionals.

"The Kirkwood believe that making it simpler to reach out for help is really important when you're living with a life limiting illness, especially for those who might be looking for information or advice from us for the first time.

"Connect with The Kirkwood has been designed with this in

mind. We have spoken to service users, colleagues and healthcare partners to make sure we are developing a service that provides the most benefit.

"We would encourage anyone to call or get in touch with us if they think we might be able to help – even if they're not sure how."

**Connect with The Kirkwood is open to patients, relatives, carers and healthcare professionals.**

Simply call:

**01484 557 910**

or visit:

**thekirkwood.org.uk**

and click the 'Get help' button.

Operating hours:

**Monday to Friday  
8.30am – 6.30pm**

Outside of these times, this helpline is diverted to The Kirkwood's 24/7 Advice Line



# Rita's Story



Rita and her husband, Luigi

**T**he Kirkwood are here for anyone affected by a life limiting illness here in Kirklees, whether you have had a previous connection to us or not. A simple call to our Connect with The Kirkwood helpline could help you to get the support you need.

Rita Rossi reached out to us following the death of her husband, Luigi, who died from Acute Myeloid Leukaemia at the age of 71. In need of support to help her cope with her bereavement, Rita called our advice line after being given the number by her doctor.

Rita felt she needed to talk to someone about Luigi's death, but because he hadn't been cared for by The Kirkwood, she didn't know she could access emotional and psychological support from our team of counsellors. She was surprised to discover that we're here to support anyone affected by a life limiting illness, not just those living with one.

Since discovering the different ways our counselling team can help, Rita has been attending group bereavement sessions, which are helping her to manage her grief and find new ways to cope.

Without the team from The Kirkwood, and the compassionate support from members of her bereavement group, Rita believes she still wouldn't be able to talk about her husband or remember him in the way she is now able to.

"Luigi was diagnosed with AML in August 2020. He was then admitted to hospital. They were fantastic with his care. In March 2021 he went into remission, but by June of that year the cancer had come back. Luigi was able to have further treatment but sadly died on April 15th 2022.

"Whilst we were sorting out the funeral and arrangements, it was all like a whirlwind, and I had no time to think about how I was feeling. I was just focussed on getting things sorted. I was struggling to deal with everything, and my doctor said it might be a good idea to talk to someone. That's when he gave me the number for The Kirkwood's advice line."

When Rita was told about The Kirkwood, she was apprehensive. She wasn't sure how The Kirkwood could help her, because Luigi hadn't been under our care during his illness. However, she made the call and was immediately reassured by a member of our team. By the time June 2022 came around, Rita was ready to attend her first bereavement session.

"I honestly didn't know if I was ready to turn up to my first session, but I went," said Rita. "I didn't know what to expect. Just walking through the doors was hard. But ever since that moment I have felt supported!

"In those early sessions all I did was cry, but I came to realise that crying was okay. It was a release for me – the fact I could talk to people who were having the same feelings and thoughts as me was so important. Those

first sessions helped me get to where I am today. It made me believe I wasn't alone.

Rita moved from our group for those who are newly bereaved to one of our larger group sessions, which she now attends regularly. She feels comforted in the knowledge that The Kirkwood will always be there for her. She knows she will have down days, but believes what The Kirkwood has helped her do is be able to have more honest and open conversations – not just about Luigi, but about death as a topic more generally.

**"I feel now that I have had counselling, I'm able to have more open and honest conversations about death."**

She said: "I feel now that I have had counselling, I'm able to have more open and honest conversations about death. I know that without The Kirkwood I wouldn't be able to speak about all this like I can today. The Kirkwood is a fantastic charity. I thought they just looked after end of life patients – I didn't know about the other services they provide, it's fantastic.

"The team here are so good. They don't rush you, they let you go at your own pace and that's what's great about the group. We are all at different stages and know what each of us is going through.

If you have been affected by a life limiting illness and are struggling or want to talk to The Kirkwood Counselling team, please get in touch with us by calling: **01484 557 910**

## 10 SUNFLOWER MEMORIES

**Celebrate the ones you love this Summer at our 10th Annual Sunflower Memories event. Take in our stunning gardens at the peak of their beauty, surrounded by a sea of yellow Sunflower plaques, all 'planted' in memory of someone special.**

Everyone is welcome to join us in The Kirkwood Gardens on Saturday 22nd July between 11am and 3pm to remember loved ones and celebrate their lives. If you choose to make a dedication as part of our Sunflower Memories Appeal, the name of your loved one will appear on a striking sunflower plaque in the heart of our gardens. At the end of your visit, you can take your plaque home with you as a special reminder for you to plant in your own garden.



**Dedicate a Sunflower at: [thekirkwood.org.uk/sunflowers](https://thekirkwood.org.uk/sunflowers)**

## LEAVING A GIFT IN YOUR WILL COULD BE A LIFELINE FOR LOCAL FAMILIES IN NEED

Just think of all the ways your gift could help The Kirkwood Support Life.

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

Your gift might be a friendly voice at the other end of the phone. It could support a patient to keep doing the things that are important to them. Or it may just help a family to create special memories that they cherish forever.

No matter how large or small, your gift will be the reason patients and families relying on our care are able to make the very most of the time they have left, whatever else is happening in their world.

**To find out more about the difference a Gift in your Will will make, visit: [thekirkwood.org.uk/gift](https://thekirkwood.org.uk/gift)**



# CARE HOMES SIGN GROUNDBREAKING END OF LIFE CARE CHARTER

**W**hen it comes to navigating the often complex care system, we know it can be confusing – especially when you or someone you care about is living with a life limiting condition. For people being supported in a care home or who have a relative or loved one living in a care home, understanding how to access the right care can be even more difficult. That's why The Kirkwood, as part of the Kirklees Palliative Care Partnership, have developed the Kirklees Care Homes Charter.

The Charter aims to explain what people can expect from their care in Kirklees and sets out how organisations are working together to improve the quality of end of life care.

More than just words on paper, the Kirklees Care Homes Charter offers a vision of care that focusses on what matters most to each individual, and twelve Care Homes across Kirklees have already signed up to our vision.

As part of their commitment, the project team are now supporting each of the care homes, who have all nominated members of their teams to become End of Life Champions for their organisation.

As well as taking nominated care home staff through a comprehensive training programme, the project team, led by The Kirkwood's Debs Hanson, will be helping learners to provide evidence about how the charter is being implemented within their care home and the positive impact it is having on their residents' quality of life.

Debs, who is the clinical lead for the Specialist Palliative Care service for Kirklees Care



Homes, is passionate about the difference this project can make.



She said: "We're delighted that so many care homes have already signed up to the Kirklees Care Homes Charter. We are encouraging all the care home teams to embed the principles of the charter in a way that is meaningful and relevant to their care home and the people in their care, so it's slightly different for each organisation."

"Our specialist team will be helping each of the care homes to review their existing processes, procedures and experience in supporting residents with a life limiting illness. We'll also be helping them to identify areas where

they might be able to improve their service to meet the needs of those with life limiting illnesses and focus on improving their quality of life in ways that really matter to them."

The twelve care homes which have already signed up for the pilot charter project are; Eden Court in Birkenshaw, Kenmore and Hartshead Manor in Cleckheaton, Ashworth Grange and Fieldhead Court in Dewsbury, Holme House in Gomersal, Bridgewood House, Colne House, Croftlands, Sycamore Park and Thorpe House in Huddersfield, and Hopton Cottage in Mirfield.

Debs continued: "All of the care homes involved in this project are passionate about improving end of life care for people here in Kirklees. The Kirklees Care Homes Charter is our blueprint and by working together, we can ensure that people with life limiting illnesses receive care that is focussed on what matters most to them at every stage of their illness."

## Nicola qualifies as a Nurse Associate

**Our movement  
is made up of  
amazing local  
people, all united  
behind one  
common purpose  
– to ensure the  
people of Kirklees  
have access to  
the very best end  
of life care.**

**O**ur nurses play an integral part in this work, constantly showing love, kindness and compassion to anyone who needs our help and support. Caring for people with a life limiting illness isn't just a job for our nurses, it's a vocation, and our newly qualified Nurse Associate, Nicola Oates, is proof of this. Having worked with The Kirkwood for the past 12 years, Nicola was ready and determined to take the next step in her career.

Nicola recently passed her Nursing Associate degree at the University of Huddersfield with a distinction. On her journey so far Nicola said: "I have worked in nursing since I was 19, working in a nursing home before going on to work with district nurses. I came to The Kirkwood and



worked as bank staff and liked it so much that when a job came up permanently I applied and have been working with The Kirkwood now for 12 years. When an opportunity came up to study at university towards becoming a Nurse Associate I had to be talked into it. I thought people at my age didn't go to university. However, I have loved it over the last two years. It's been very hard work having to juggle home life, work and studying but it has been so worth it."

Prior to joining The Kirkwood team, Nicola already had a connection to The Kirkwood. In the early 2000s, her dad, David, was cared for and died at the hospice.

"I didn't know how I'd feel at first, I think because I had such a personal connection to The Kirkwood. But I wanted to use my experience and empathy to help other families and patients. Not that you can't do that if you haven't had that previous experience but I just think you understand completely what they are going through."

"The reason I have stayed with The Kirkwood is because I'm passionate about what we do, especially the palliative care side. I think the quality of care that we offer is so high too. It really is a special group of people that work here. The

nurses are so passionate about giving the right care and making people's lives as comfortable as possible in such difficult circumstances. The fact we look after families and loved ones too is very important to me and all my colleagues."

Nicola worked throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and says the hardest thing was patients not being able to see their loved ones.

She said: "It was really hard during the pandemic, it was so difficult when we had to restrict visits to the In-Patient Unit. Thankfully we are moving back to normality now."

Nicola is so grateful for all the help and support from her colleagues whilst studying to become a Nurse Associate.

She says: "I'd just like to say thank you for everyone's constant support. The team has been right behind me, encouraging me even when I thought I couldn't do something. They have been there every step of the way throughout my studies and are still supporting me now in my new role. Ultimately we are a team and work together here. We look out for each other and that's why I love being part of The Kirkwood movement."

**If you'd like to join  
The Kirkwood team  
visit: [thekirkwood.org.uk](http://thekirkwood.org.uk)**



# CHARITY SHOP QUEEN

**H**olmfirth local, Cicely Rae, loves to shop second hand. As well as being kind to the planet, Cicely enjoys finding unique items while supporting her local charity shops.

“Holmfirth has some great charity shops, I love that you basically have one chance to buy the thing that you see, everything is essentially a one off and you’ve got to make your decision that day.

“I have a list of things that I need, and you will find it in a charity shop, you just will, and when you do it’s so much more satisfying than buying things new.

“Our perspective changed when we became parents, it just made us look at the way that we treat the earth and made us really think about the fact our kids are going to be living on this earth longer than us. It really made us switch and think about how we could better protect the planet.

“We’re trying to teach the kids about making good choices for the planet and shopping second hand is a really simple way to show them.

“Whenever we go charity shopping and there’s a toy they like, I think, yes, that’s really good, it’s a plastic toy and we’ve not bought it new.

“I say to the kids if you really want that and it’s your heart’s desire then fair enough, but we already have lots at home so perhaps you could think about donating something back.

“Charity shopping is an easy way to introduce to children the idea that we can do our bit and be kinder to the planet. The idea that there’s already enough stuff that exists for everyone; clothes, toys, books, we just need to go and find it.

“One of my favourite finds is a darning mushroom that I picked up in one of The Kirkwood’s shops. It’s decorative but also has a really practical use too. My brother is a really talented seamstress, he does visible mending and he’s amazing at it. If we can prolong the lives of our clothes and wear them for longer, that’s so much better for the environment.

“I absolutely love looking; the nostalgia of seeing things from when I was a kid, unlocking past memories in your head, it’s amazing. It’s so wild that you can spark bits of your memory through things that you find in charity shops.”

Another of Cicely’s most treasured charity shop purchases is a pair of hand thrown mugs.

“I found these amazing mugs for 50p each and then realised when I got home that they were Chris Jenkins mugs. They’re so special, one of our most treasured possessions. We love his work and already had some in our collection, it’s incredible what you can find in charity shops.”



Above:  
A darning mushroom in Cicely's beautiful home is both practical and decorative

Right:  
A ceramic dog Cicely picked up for £3 to add to her collection



Above:  
Cicely wears a patterned dress and iridescent Converse trainers from The Kirkwood's shop in Holmfirth and a vest she knitted herself using wool purchased from The Kirkwood's shop in Meltham

# THE KIRKWOOD WELCOME TWO NEW SHOPS

**T**he Kirkwood has officially returned to Slaithwaite. Hotly anticipated by the local community following the closure of our original shop on Britannia Lane, on Wednesday 16th November our new shop opened its doors in its brand new home in the heart of the village.

The community of Slaithwaite were invited to join us at our grand opening as The Kirkwood’s Deputy Director of Clinical Services, Jo Keeling, cut the official ribbon in less than desirable weather conditions! With a fresh look and high quality pre-loved items on sale, there is something for everyone at our Carr Lane shop. We hope to see you soon!



After opening to the public back in November 2022, our Slaithwaite shop is thriving and has quickly become the go-to charity shop in the village. Pop in and say hello.

**THE KIRKWOOD SLAITHWAITE SHOP, 9-10 CARR LANE, HD7 5AN**



**THE KIRKWOOD SHOP & DONATION CENTRE – BRADFORD ROAD, HD2 2QZ**

**F**ollowing the successful launch of our Slaithwaite shop last year, our retail team decided it was time for another! This time we chose Bradford Road in Huddersfield, where we’ve created a fabulous new Shop and Donation Centre. Our latest outlet is in a great location, with good parking – meaning you can shop for clothes, furniture and white goods all under one roof.

Famed for her love of fashion and use of pre-loved items to complete her looks, we invited renowned local influencer Monica, from ‘themonicaway.com’, to open our brand new shop. The official ribbon cutting ceremony took place on the most romantic day of the year, Tuesday, 14th February.

Already proving a popular location, our new shop has gone from strength to strength, breaking sales records in its very first week of trading.



# THE KIRKWOOD STORIES

## FOLLOWING MUM'S LEAD

Having first volunteered for the charity when she was just 16, Francesca and her family have a long association with The Kirkwood. Now she is inspiring her four year old daughter, Georgie, to find out more about The Kirkwood's vital work across the whole of Kirklees.



## TEAM SERENITY RAISE £40,000

Since 2017, Team Serenity have raised an amazing £40,000 for The Kirkwood with their various fundraising efforts. As the group hit this major fundraising milestone, we wanted to help them celebrate and highlight the truly wonderful work they do. Thank you Team Serenity!



## NEWSOME PANTHERS

Local rugby league club, Newsome Panthers, paid a visit to The Kirkwood's In-Patient Unit over the festive period. They handed out selection boxes for our patients to enjoy. A huge thank you for their kindness to our patients and their families.



## GREAT NORTH RUNNERS

In 2022, four supporters took on the Great North Run to raise vital funds for The Kirkwood. Our runners raised an amazing total of £8,603, a fantastic achievement! Thank you! If you'd like to run for The Kirkwood this year then please get in touch!



## IN MEMORY OF TONY MARSH

The home of The Kirkwood's Counselling team at Dalton has been refurbished thanks to a generous grant of £21,149 from The Morrisons Foundation. The grant was awarded to us in memory of their much-loved former Morrisons colleague, Tony Marsh. Thank you!



## CELEBRATING VOLUNTEERS

The Kirkwood only exists because of the support of passionate local people, including over 900 dedicated volunteers who donate their time to our cause each year. We recently held a very special afternoon tea to celebrate our longest serving volunteers!



# Geraldine's Story

**We're here to support people across the whole of Kirklees – every step of the way.**



**T**he Kirkwood are here to help anyone living with any form of life limiting illness. Whilst most people are aware that we care for people living with cancer, many don't realise we support patients and families affected by conditions such as heart failure, neurological and chronic lung conditions, and dementia.

Geraldine McCallum, who lives in Golcar, was first put in touch with The Kirkwood by her GP after she was diagnosed with Pulmonary Fibrosis, a condition in which lung tissue becomes damaged and scarred, making it more difficult for the lungs to work properly.

Despite her diagnosis, Geraldine has decided to face her condition head on: "It's a terminal illness, I'm on medication at the moment and it's just about living with the condition," she said. "When you are first diagnosed you only have three to five years to live."

"I was diagnosed in November 2020, and I started going downhill then. Since then, I have had to go for regular tests and have been in hospital twice with bad chest infections. I am now on 24-hour oxygen and have been on that for the past two years."

"I had just retired from work when I was diagnosed. I had all

these plans to travel the world and then it got taken away from me because of this illness – it's very hard to take. I'm still coming to terms with it now really. A lot of people don't understand the condition I have sadly, not much is known about it, there is no cure at the moment."

After Geraldine's GP reached out to The Kirkwood, she received support from our Support & Therapy team and has been given help to better understand how to cope with the symptoms of her condition. "My doctor got in touch with The Kirkwood to see what support they could offer me. I now get regular phone calls and emails from the team at The Kirkwood, which is great. I have been to a couple of their wellbeing sessions about breathlessness and exercising as well."

Like many other local people, Geraldine wasn't aware of all the ways The Kirkwood can help people affected by a life limiting illness or that we are able to help people from the moment they are diagnosed.

"I originally thought The Kirkwood was just there for

end of life care, but it isn't. The number of services they offer really surprised me, as well as the fact they have a 24-hour helpline, which is so good too!

**"I thought The Kirkwood was just there for end of life care, but it isn't."**

"I'm lucky that I have a good supportive network of people around me, but some people don't have that and that is why The Kirkwood is so important. I feel comfortable when talking to The Kirkwood staff, they always pick up the phone and are there when you need them."

Since being diagnosed, Geraldine has gone on to set up her own support network in the Moldgreen area.

She said: "Myself and my friend Debbie have created our own Pulmonary Fibrosis group. There are only six of us at the moment, but we meet up and discuss various things. It's nice to be able to talk to someone who understands what you are coping with. We meet once a month in Moldgreen and we all really enjoy each other's company."





Katherine Browne (left)  
from Huddersfield Mission  
with The Kirkwood's  
Moyra Wilson Grant

## HOW A NEW PARTNERSHIP IS AIMING TO HELP HOMELESS AND VULNERABLE PEOPLE HERE IN KIRKLEES

A new project, led by The Kirkwood's Moyra Wilson Grant, is aiming to help people who are homeless or vulnerable get access to advice and support on a whole range of issues and remove barriers to care.

People experiencing homelessness or who are housing-vulnerable often suffer significant physical and mental health problems, and often face a range of barriers to accessing healthcare services. This inequality is even more pronounced for people with a life limiting illness who may need complex care as they approach the end of their lives.

The Kirkwood are working hard to improve palliative care support for homeless people across Kirklees and, in partnership with Huddersfield Mission, we have launched a

weekly drop-in session at the Mission Cafe on Lord Street.

Moyra Wilson Grant, who is leading the project, is passionate about improving access to care for vulnerable members of our community.

"For a whole host of reasons, people who are experiencing homelessness or are vulnerable often don't engage with healthcare services. Many of the people I meet have health problems, some more complex than others, but most don't have access to the care they need or have difficulty making their voice heard.

"Our aim is to come along and meet people at whatever level they want to be met at. We want to reach people earlier on in their illness and improve their quality of life – in whatever ways are important to them.

"We are passionate about making a positive difference for people who are vulnerable, and we are delighted to be working with the team at Huddersfield Mission to ensure that anyone who needs our help can get it."

Katherine Browne, Pastoral Care Officer for Huddersfield Mission has been amazed by how quickly the project has taken off.

"The outreach programme has been so successful so far.

"Our guys just don't get access to services like this. They don't normally get to see people like Moyra and be able to talk about their finances and the impact their health has on their life, or their family's life. It's made a big difference to people's lives here.

"Our guys live in chaos. You can't pin them down for appointments, but knowing Moyra is here on a Wednesday morning has made it so simple for them. If they need help, they know where Moyra will be.

"For someone who lives a life like they live, that's an absolute godsend, knowing that there is someone who understands them.

"Some of our people don't have family – or anybody. Their burden is often theirs alone, and long time pain or ill health is a huge burden."

"Because of the trust they have with the Mission, if we make links they know we trust that person or organisation and they know they're going to be okay.

"They don't trust authority, or anybody. With the lives they've led, you wouldn't trust people. But the response they've had to Moyra has been amazing."

"One gentleman I spoke to told me he didn't know what he would do without Moyra. That's massive for our guys. It's a big, big thing."

Over the past few months, Moyra has been supporting Manuela, who is currently undergoing tests for an illness which is having a huge impact on both her physical and mental health.

Manuela, who is originally from Germany, has lived in the UK for 12 years and initially sought help from Huddersfield Mission for advice on her bills.

Manuela's illness has had a devastating impact on her life,



Left: Moyra and Manuela at the Huddersfield Mission

left undone. I have other health problems which weren't being dealt with.

"Coming to the Mission has really helped, and just recently, meeting Moyra and her colleagues. I know when I have something I can't solve I can ring Moyra. I know when she is ringing the doctors and telling them what needs to be done they will do it."

If you'd like to read our full interview with Manuela, visit: [thekirkwood.org.uk/manuela](http://thekirkwood.org.uk/manuela)

and having to give up work because of it has left her feeling isolated.

She said: "I don't have family here. I don't have friends here that I can go to. I found that from one day to another I was alone.

"I have been on depression medication since 2018. I changed doctor's twice to try and get better help. The doctor was changing my medication, but everything else has been

The Kirkwood host a weekly drop-in session in partnership with Huddersfield Mission at the Mission Cafe on Lord Street, Huddersfield every Wednesday morning from 9am – 1pm.



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# Are you living with a life limiting illness or supporting someone who is?

We're now delivering sessions in towns and villages across Kirklees. Our wellbeing sessions are designed to support anyone affected by a life limiting illness. Whether you or someone you care for is living with cancer, heart failure, COPD, Motor Neurone Disease or any other life limiting illness – we can help.

Join us at a Drop-In Session, book onto one of our condition specific courses or come along and join The Kirkwood Chorus. Our wellbeing programme is about supporting you to continue doing what makes you happy. You'll discover new ways to cope with an illness, meet new people and get help with your condition when you need it so you can improve your quality of life.



To find out more  
about our wellbeing  
sessions call:  
**01484 557 910**  
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## CHARITY GOLF DAY

**Saturday  
17th June**

Bradley Park  
Golf Club,  
Huddersfield

£140 per team of four

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Chadwick Lawrence  
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## THE KIRKWOOD OPEN GARDENS

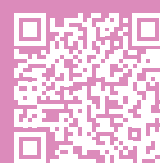
Visit our award winning gardens this June. Wander our meandering paths, peruse our plant stalls and enjoy beautiful home made cakes and treats in a stunning setting.

Why not get involved in a plant hammering workshop in our Art Room or simply come and enjoy the tranquil gardens in the company of friends and family.



JOIN US ON  
JUNE 3RD  
10AM-3PM

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**Web: [thekirkwood.org.uk](http://thekirkwood.org.uk) | Tel: 01484 557 900**