Blythe House

Bulletin 2020







Volunteer welcome – Karan Bradley, creative art and community volunteer

'Hello, I'm Karan, and I've been volunteering my time at Blythe House since 2010 in a number of roles including at Whaley Bridge shop, in the creative arts department of the Living Well service, and as a community volunteer, heading out to provide support in patient's homes across the High Peak and Hope Valley.

'The atmosphere at Blythe House is warm and welcoming. From the time you step over the threshold, to meeting staff, volunteers and patients, there is warmth, care, knowledge and understanding. This ethos is experienced beyond Blythe House and throughout its extended services in the community. As a volunteer who has worked in many different parts of the hospice, including the Community Volunteer programme, I can say with experience that this feeling pervades throughout. There is a professional and meticulous strive for excellence in all that we do, and person-centred care is at the heart of everything.

'Over the years, I have met many people who have accessed Blythe House services; I have been fortunate to get to know some of them well, and see the transformation that people go through during their time here. As patients overcome any initial concerns, they begin to relax and look forward to their visits. In the art area, people arrive and often say: "I can't do art" and then in the coming weeks produce something amazing! I think this is due to the fact that there is no pressure, just the enjoyment of doing something different, for themselves, in a safe and caring environment. Friendships are made and there is humour and warmth.

'During my time as a volunteer there have been many changes and additions to the services offered, as well as to the building itself, which has adapted and grown to accommodate new services, including the Information and Support Centre, and Hospice at Home service. With the addition of the Community Volunteer programme in 2018, which supports Hospice at Home, our services continue to grow and adapt to the needs of the people in our community.

The Hospice celebrated its 30th anniversary throughout 2019 and there are plans to improve areas within the building in 2020, which will make for an even better space for us to deliver services.

'Blythe House is fortunate to have the wholehearted support of the community. Many have had some experience of our services, through friends or relations, and many more are just keen to support their local hospice. Some do amazing things to raise money and some give their time to volunteer. There is something for everyone. You can be involved as much or as little as you choose, whether helping at events, fundraising or volunteering in one of the many available roles. Whatever you do, knowing that you are contributing to and supporting such an important and worthwhile service is both satisfying and rewarding.

'I hope you enjoy reading the *Blythe House Bulletin*, and seeing for yourself the fantastic work that goes on at the hospice. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.'

To access community volunteer support or to find out more about volunteering: Call: 01298 816990; Email: volunteering@blythehouse.co.uk

Chief executive welcome from Janet Dunphy



As we look forward to our fourth decade in operation, we have successes to commemorate and constant improvement to aim for.

Our staff and our volunteers here at Blythe House are our greatest resource and the annual Bird Song staff satisfaction survey 2019 again shows that the hospice has the highest score of all participants (available to read on the website). Demand for our services continues to grow, but unfortunately, at the same time, core funding from the government seems to shrink.

Our doors remain open thanks to the overwhelming generosity and kindness of our community; we simply could not function without the funds raised from our supporters across the local area, who host events, give donations and gifts in kind, take on challenges and buy things in our hospice shops. On behalf of everyone here at Blythe House, I would

like to pass on my sincere gratitude for your ongoing support.

As the needs of our community rise and NHS funds decrease, we have to take stock and ensure that we are spending your money on local people who need it most, and that we are providing care in the most effective way possible. It will be exciting throughout 2020, as we consult and engage everyone to improve where we can, and help even more people. Like all hospices, we will be carefully assessing whether our services are still working efficiently and whether we need to modernise in some areas.

You will know that hospice care is not just about cancer and we want to make sure that we offer palliative care to everyone who needs it, and extend our support for families and carers. External factors will influence how we deliver our services and will of course impose change on our organisation; the shift from less hospital care to more community care, more information being available online, and people having more complex needs.

Volunteers are the reason we are here and the only reason that we can continue to provide any services, and volunteering is a choice, of what people do with their precious time and skills. Sincere thanks to all of you who have chosen to give your time to Blythe House; you are the reason that we have a future.

To all our volunteers and supporters, passion has led us here and together we will go further. We need you more than ever, thank you for helping us to be there.

#**GoBlue**for BlytheHouse

Could you GoBlue to help support your local hospice in March 2020?



We are inviting everyone across our local community to #GoBlueForBlytheHouse throughout March!

Anyone can get involved - including schoolchildren, students, work colleagues, and members of the public - who can choose any day throughout March 2020 to wear blue and donate to Blythe House.

As well as dressing up in blue, local businesses and other organisations might like to get involved by decorating shop windows or office space. People may also have bigger ideas to organise an event like a blue coffee morning or blue-themed party!

If 450 people took part in **Go Blue For Blythe House** donating just £1 each, the funds raised

would pay for three nights of care for someone who wishes to remain at home at the end of their life.

Freya and Ethan Cawthorn-Morris are set to get involved, alongside their friends at Chapelen-le-Frith C of E VC Primary School. Their mum, **Charlotte Cawthorn** began attending Blythe House in 2018, following her breast cancer diagnosis.

Freya, 11, and Ethan, 7, (below left with Charlotte) said: 'Blythe House has helped our mum, and us too, over the past couple of years, and we all enjoy the time that we spend there.'

Colleagues at **Nestlé Waters UK** on Waterswallows Lane in Buxton (below right) are also getting together to support the appeal.



Find out more and request a fundraising pack to get involved by calling: 01298 815 388 or emailing: fundraising@blythehouse.co.uk

Five minutes with – Tim Mourne, Chairman of Trustees

Tim Mourne has been Chairman of the Blythe House Board of Trustees since February 2014, giving his time to guide the future of hospice care in the High Peak, Hope Valley and beyond.

Blythe House Hospicecare trustees are volunteers and ensure the proper governance of our charity. They offer invaluable advice and expertise, and they each give significant amounts of time each year to support the hospice.

What does your role involve?

There are many aspects to my role as Chairman including providing direction and leadership, setting agendas and chairing trustee meetings, as well as keeping in regular contact with Janet, the hospice CEO. Alongside the more 'traditional' roles of a board chairman, I feel it is important to head out and about as much as possible to meet Blythe House volunteers and supporters, which for me is a very rewarding aspect of my role. I enjoy attending fundraising events and cheque presentations to personally thank local people for their ongoing support of Blythe House, as we simply would not be here without them and I want everyone to feel a part of the hospice family. I see myself as an ambassador of Blythe House and love to champion the cause.

Why did you choose to become a trustee?

As a High Peak resident and business owner, I was well aware of Blythe House and the work that it did, and I would regularly support the hospice by sponsoring events. Following the expansion of the hospice's charity shops across the High Peak, there was a vacancy for a

volunteer retail board member to provide financial support to the shops. My background is in finance and I knew that I could utilise my expertise to help such a good, local cause. After around 12 months in this role, the hospice's former Chairman, Bill Preece, said that he was set to retire and enquired if I might consider the vacant chairperson position, which I did and took up in February 2014.

What's the best thing about being a Blythe House trustee?

It is hard to put into words or to pick one particular thing to answer this question as I genuinely enjoy overseeing all the incredible services that we deliver to support local patients and their families. I was especially proud to oversee the launch of the Hospice at Home service in 2016, alongside Janet. When Reverend Betty Packham first founded Blythe House Hospicecare, it was her dream to be able to provide care to people in the comfort of their own home, so to see that dream become a reality was very special.

In the last five years, the hospice has undergone an exciting transformation from being a very small, local hospice to becoming a highly respected hospice regionally, and key partner in setting the agenda for palliative and end of life care at a county level. I am proud to work alongside the dozens of people who've made this possible including staff, volunteers and supporters. Being Chairman is a great honour and privilege, because of the amazing work and spirit that makes Blythe House such an important and special place for so many in our community.



Tell us about your career

I graduated from the University of Manchester with a degree in Mathematics and began my career as an accountant with a city practice, qualifying as a Chartered Certified Accountant in 2002. I worked for a number of firms as an auditor and accountant to the SME/OMB sector (small to medium sized enterprises and owner-managed businesses). During my career I have advised a range of clients across building, engineering, transport, retail, IT and education. I've acted for dentists, doctors, musicians, barristers and farmers to name just a few. After that, I worked in the Manchester office of

a now Top 10 firm where I specialised in corporate tax and corporate finance. I set up my own practice, based in the High Peak, in 2006.

What do you enjoy outside of work?

I am very actively involved in community life in my hometown of Whaley Bridge. I am currently Chairman of the Whaley Bridge Carnival Committee, and enjoy volunteering my time at other annual events including Bonfire and Christmas celebrations. I also enjoy travelling, particularly in the USA, gardening and reading.

Reaching more people in the heart of our community

We are here for anyone across the High Peak, Hope Valley and areas of the Derbyshire Dales, Staffordshire Moorlands and Cheshire who is affected by cancer or another life-limiting illness.

Throughout 2019, we estimate to have provided more than 19,000 hours of care through our services including Hospice at Home, Living Well, support groups, counselling and bereavement support to patients from: Alstonfield, Bakewell, Birch Vale, Burbage, Buxton, Buxworth, Castleton, Chapel-en-le-Frith, Chinley, Combs, Disley, Dove Holes, Earl Sterndale, Edale, Fairfield, Furness Vale, Glossop, Hadfield, Harpur Hill, Hayfield, Hope Valley, Kettleshulme, Longnor, New Mills, Newtown, Padfield, Peak Dale, Rowarth, Taddington, Taxal, Tideswell, Tunstead Milton, Whaley Bridge and Wormhill.



Louise Eyre started to attend Blythe House's Living Well service in August 2018, after her diagnosis with fibrotic cryptogenic organising pneumonia. The very rare form of lung disease causes inflammation and scarring of the lungs, obstructing the airways making it very difficult to breathe. Louise, who's from Chapel-en-le-Frith, said: 'I have been able to get involved in art therapy, Tai Chi and have reiki [a complementary therapy]. All of these things have helped me to stop thinking about my illness all of the time.

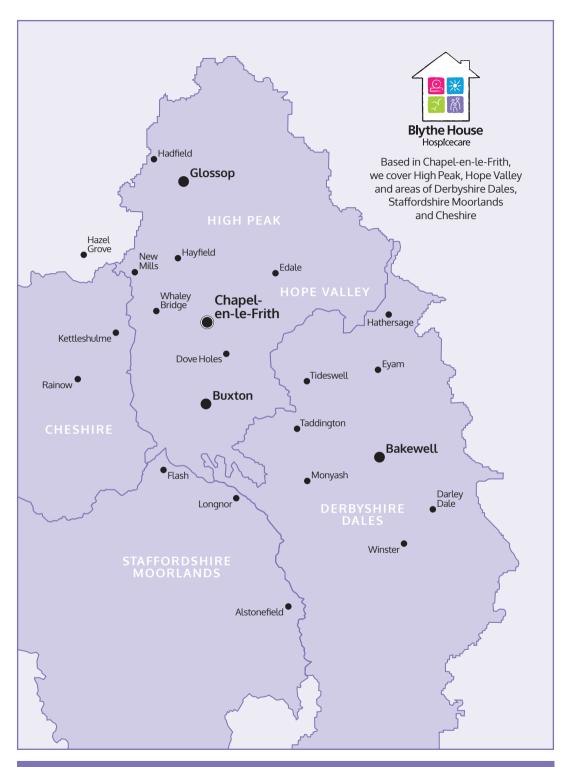
'I have gained more confidence in dealing with my illness and I have accepted that I am not going to get better. I have been helped in so many ways by staff and other patients, and have been given valued advice about how to manage my life as it is.'



Keith Bolton was on the trip of a lifetime with his wife of 44 years **Margaret**, when she started to feel unwell, and it was later confirmed that Margaret had a very aggressive, terminal brain tumour. Once home, following treatments and surgeries at several local hospitals, Margaret accessed Blythe House services before she very sadly died in January 2019.

Keith, from Glossop, said: 'Life would have been very different during Margaret's illness had we not had the care and services from Blythe House; it would have been incredibly tough. I am so thankful that we were able to access support for ten months and that Margaret got to enjoy attending the Living Well service at the hospice, and that she was so well looked after at home by the Hospice at Home healthcare assistants. I will never forget the care and compassion of everyone from Blythe House; what a wonderful team of people.'

Read more stories from our patients and their families via our website: www.blythehousehospice. org.uk/category/our-stories/



Members of our team often head out across the community to give presentations to local organisations. If you are a member of a group and would like to find out more about having a Blythe House representative give a talk or attend an event, email: communications@blythehouse.co.uk.

Volunteering at Blythe House: 'You really feel like you are making a difference...'

Without our dedicated team of over 270 volunteers, Blythe House simply could not open its doors every day.

We are incredibly grateful to the friendly and committed bunch, who collectively give almost 600 hours of their time to the hospice every single week. Support from our volunteers from all walks of life means that we can spend the maximum amount of money directly on care and services for local patients and their families.

Anyone over the age of 16 can volunteer at Blythe House, supporting the hospice in three key areas: patient services, retail and fundraising. Roles include: bag packer; befriender; catering assistant; collection box coordinator; collections and deliveries assistant; community volunteer; complementary therapist; counsellor; creative art supporter; driver; event supporter; gardener; information centre support; reception cover; and retail assistant.

College student



Emily Efstathiou (above right, with her nan and mum) undertook work experience at the hospice during her Business Studies course at Buxton College. The 18-year-old explained: 'I had heard about Blythe House from people who had raised

funds for the charity, and I found out more about the hospice and the services it provides when my nan was referred to the Living Well service. It made her feel at home visiting the hospice every week as every single staff member and volunteer is so kind, and she made plenty of friends with the other patients.

'The thing I have enjoyed the most about being here is meeting so many new people including the staff, volunteers and the patients, and hearing about everyone's lives and reasons for supporting the charity; it has been truly inspirational. Hearing what everyone does to help make the organisation the best it can be, it is incredible!'

University student



Tom Craig, from Hayfield, volunteered in the hospice's Living Well service during his summer holidays from The University of Manchester. The 22-year-old commented: 'I have spoken to so many interesting people, and it has been an incredibly inspiring experience. I would completely recommend Blythe House to anybody that is considering volunteering here. Just being somebody who a patient can talk to about some of the difficulties that they are facing, or simply a chat about a random topic, or helping to clean the teacups at the end of the day, it is worth volunteering here simply because you can really feel like you are making a difference.'

Working full-time

Hayfield resident, Jasmyn Walton gives her time to support the hospice's weekend fundraising events like the Glow Twilight Walk and Jingle Bell Jog, in roles including marshalling and registration of participants. She said: 'When I volunteered I went along with a few of my friends, which was great for the organisers as they had more helpers, but this also meant I spent time with my friends whilst contributing to the community. I enjoyed the good feeling I got after volunteering at the Glow Walk - it was such a positive and successful event it made me feel great that I could be even a small part of it. The friendly Blythe House team will be very grateful for any time you can give them. You will feel great after helping others - I am already looking forward to volunteering at the next event with the hospice!'





Retired

John Baker is one of the hospice's community volunteers, which sees him head out across the local area to provide support in the homes of patients, their families and carers. The Taddington resident explained: 'I have supported a patient by ensuring her husband had some respite, taking him shopping and for a coffee and a cheeky cake for just two hours each week. Simply listening and offering a different environment for a couple of hours can and does make a massive difference within a difficult situation'



If you would like to find out more about volunteering at Blythe House, we would be delighted to hear from you! You can do so by:

- Visiting: https://blythehousehospice.org.uk/volunteer-for-us/
- Dropping into the hospice anytime between 11am and 1pm on the second Monday of every month.
- Emailing: volunteering@blythehouse.co.uk
- Calling: 01298 815 388

Retail revolution

The local support of our four hospice shops in Buxton, Chapel-en-le-Frith, New Mills and Whaley Bridge continues to grow at an amazing rate. The shops and the hospice's two online eBay stores saw a record-breaking year in 2019, reaching sales of £445k (compared to £389k in 2018).

The soar in sales is certainly in part down to the fantastic quality of items that are donated by local supporters. We are incredibly thankful to everyone who donates to, visits and buys from the shops - showcasing everything from books and CDs, to clothing, toys and furniture - as well as the online sites selling retro, vintage and collectable items.

The hospice's retail sector brings in almost half of the funding needed to keep care and services

free for local patients, carers and their families. The NHS provides just 21% of the hospice's resources.

Betty Moll has volunteered at Blythe House charity shops since 2009, after she relocated to the High Peak from Peterborough with her husband Tony (who is also a hospice volunteer). The Chapel-en-le-Frith resident said: 'I work in the sorting room, looking through all of the donations that come through the door. It is exciting as you never quite know what you're going to find.

'If you have just moved into the local area and you're looking to meet new people and make friends, volunteering for Blythe House is a great way to do so. It is a worthy role and I know that I'm giving something back to support a local hospice.'





It is a bit of a family affair for **Alex Clark** (pictured above right, alongside mum Brenda, middle, and auntie Hilary, left). Alex, her parents, auntie, husband, daughters and niece, all support Blythe House Hospicecare by giving their time to volunteer at charity shops, and host stalls at local external events like Buxton's Dickensian Market.

Alex, who is from Buxton, said: 'I love volunteering at the shop and hosting stalls in the local community as it's so nice to meet and chat to customers. The same people come to see you every week - we get regular customers who like to ask your opinion of what they look like in clothes that they are trying on!

'Volunteering for Blythe House is really good fun and sociable, everyone is so friendly. You can see the results here and you really know that you're doing something to help.' Laurence Carr has voluntarily managed the hospice's antiques and collectibles eBay site since 2008, raising over £120,000 for patient care and services in that time! He also takes time to write a regular 'hospice treasure hunter' blog which is showcased on our website, keeping readers up to date with details of items that are being sold on the online shop.

Whaley Bridge resident, Laurence explained: 'It has been a rewarding and extraordinarily interesting task to find hidden treasures amongst donated items, value them and sell them on online auction sites. I hope the blog will be interesting and informative for our volunteers, staff, patients and anyone else with an interest in finding hidden treasures.'

To read Laurence's blog - and see other volunteer stories - please visit our website: https://blythehousehospice.org.uk/category/volunteering/



Find out more about our shops, including opening times and items that we can and cannot accept:

https://blythehousehospice.org.uk/our-shops/

Community support continues to boost hospice services

Did you know that we receive only 21% of our funding to keep the hospice open from the NHS? The other 79% is raised through fundraising including events like our annual Glow Twilight Walk and Jingle Bell Jog; community supporters; appeals like Sunflower Memories Appeal and Light up a Life; trusts, grants, and gifts in Wills.

We need to raise £3,800 per day to ensure we can continue to provide free care and services to local people with cancer and other life-limiting illnesses, as well as their families and carers.

Community fundraising

We very much appreciate our supporters across the local community who continue to fundraise for the hospice by getting involved with a whole range of exciting tasks including:

Hosting events

- Having one of our collection pots or houses on display in shops and businesses
- Taking on challenges
- Making items to sell including Christmas and Easter knitting amongst lots of other gorgeous things

Julie Fletcher, who has secondary breast cancer, started to attend Blythe House's Living Well service in 2019. The Buxton resident held a party in a barn to celebrate her 50th birthday - raising over £9,000 for the hospice. She said: 'I try to live a normal life as possible and recently Blythe House has helped me through some of the most difficult times of my life. I wanted to do something worthwhile to celebrate my big 5-0 and raise vital funds for a place very close to my heart and many in the community. We had a fantastic night, made even better by the fact so much money was raised for Blythe House. I'd like to thank everybody who helped to make a dream become reality.'



Smiths of Marple hosted a free day trip to Countryfile Live in Yorkshire for patients, volunteers and staff in August 2019



A team from Cemex in Dove Holes volunteered their time to spruce up the hospice's gardens and grounds in July 2019

Support from local businesses

We are immensely grateful for the products and services that local companies, organisations and self-employed individuals continue to donate to support Blythe House.

During 2019, the kindness of local businesses and service providers saved Blythe House approximately £25,000, enabling this money to be spent directly on patient care. Support includes providing products or services free of charge; donating items, time and prizes;

sponsoring events; hosting fundraising events, and involving employees in supporting hospice care.

Our thanks go to local volunteers Iain Klieve and David King who have taken many of the photos throughout this newsletter.

To find out more about how you could support the hospice by fundraising or organising your own event, email:

fundraising@blythehouse.co.uk

Why I love my job

We asked three members of our dedicated staff team to try to sum up what Blythe House means to them and why they love working here.

Alistair Rogerson is our Business Services Manager, responsible in part for overseeing the supervision of our team of over 285 volunteers, as well as our retail and fundraising teams.

He has been a member of the team since June 2019, and said: 'The thing I enjoy most about my role is meeting people from so many different walks of life who kindly spare their time to support Blythe House. Many of our volunteers have been giving their time for decades, which shows their dedication to the hospice and how much it means to them. Seeing friendly faces and so much passion for the cause every day really adds to Blythe House's warm

and supportive atmosphere and I am so grateful to work alongside such a committed bunch.

'I am also a member of the hospice's senior management team - working alongside colleagues to support Janet in her role as CEO and making informed decisions about the daily running of the hospice. I enjoy having some input into ensuring the hospice is the best place for staff and volunteers to work and to provide patients with the highest standards of care. Blythe is a very special local place with a fantastic history and it's a pleasure to be a part of the team.

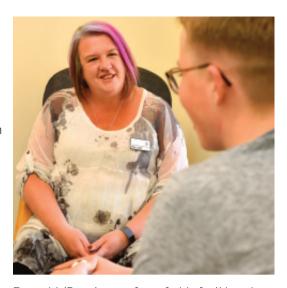
'Prior to coming to Blythe, I worked in the NHS for over ten years and provided support to volunteers and vulnerable people at a local charity. Outside of work, I volunteer my time for the Chapel Mobile Physiotherapy service and am a keen walker.'



Senior Nurse, Karen Clayton has been a member of our Living Well service team since 2014. She said: 'My job here at Blythe House enables me to use my skills to care for people who are living with life-limiting conditions in a truly holistic way. I have time to listen compassionately to their concerns and help them address a wide variety of problems, providing them with therapeutic interventions if needed such as physiotherapy, complementary therapy, mindful compassion and counselling. It is such a privilege to be part of a process, which enables people to start to flourish again. Sometimes we help people and their families make plans for the end of their lives and put services in place to help them to be cared for in the way that they choose. I feel I have reached the job I was always meant to have! I love the work I do and feel lucky to work at Blythe House with such a fabulous, caring and professional team.'



Children and Young People's Counsellor, Rachel Leech has offered counselling to children impacted by bereavement, or those who have a relative with a life-limiting illness, here at Blythe House since 2011. Ray also provides support and guidance to parents, carers, schools and other professionals regarding how to talk about death and life-limiting illness, and how to support their children.



Ray said: 'People are often afraid of talking about death and dying but we work with people who are going through this. They have no choice, it can feel very lonely, especially for children and young people who suddenly have a very different reality to many of their peers. They know that their parent or grandparent is dying, or they've picked up on hushed conversations and what they think they've overheard becomes an uncertain secret that they can't share. School life is impacted, anxiety of death or being away from home increases. Some children become unruly at school and are labelled or judged because of their behaviour. Some children go quieter and retreat within themselves. We work to help reduce isolation and support families to talk about illness and death so that children have age appropriate information.

'The counselling for the children offers a space for them to make sense of a sudden death or a relative's illness through the medium of play, creativity, or talking. We sit with and talk about death, fears, memories, and joy. Some children come to play, which is therapeutic in itself. A space away from death for a short time. It's such an honour to see young people who, through the work, find their own ways of grieving and coping. Often the parent or relative that has died becomes an embedded part of their internal world.'

Reception revamp



We are delighted to be working alongside national charity, CRASH to see Blythe House's reception, porch and accessible bathrooms undergo a major transformation, to ensure they are more user-friendly for all our visitors.

CRASH, a practical charity that assists homelessness and hospice charities with

construction related projects, has very kindly donated £30,000 to the revamp, with the remaining costs coming from trusts and grants applied for by our fundraising team. We envisage the work will be complete by spring 2020; for regular updates on the revamp, please keep up to date via our website and social media.









Blythe House Hospicecare

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