

HospiceMatters

SPRING / SUMMER 2022

NEWS AND STORIES FROM ROWCROFT HOSPICE

Celebrating 40 years

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS
1982-2022

**INSIDE
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FUNDRAISERS
SARAH'S 40 YEARS
OF DEVOTION**



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Welcome

Welcome to the 40th anniversary special edition of *Hospice Matters* magazine, proudly sharing news and stories from Rowcroft Hospice.



With this year marking Rowcroft's 40th anniversary, we're celebrating the wonderful care that we've provided to the South Devon

community over four decades.

From small beginnings in 1982, we now deliver specialist care to more than 2000 people with life-limiting illnesses across South Devon each year. Our success in caring for tens of thousands of people has only been possible because of the incredible support of our brilliant community who have funded the majority of our care, helping us in so many ways, including through donations, legacies, fundraising events and activities, shopping online and in our local stores and cafes, playing our lottery and of course volunteering.

"Our anniversary year is a special time to thank everyone in our community including all our past and current supporters, staff and volunteers, and to celebrate all the remarkable things that we've achieved together."

We'd like to thank you – our amazing supporters – for helping to steer us through our 40-year journey. We know that with you by our side, we can look to the future with hope and optimism as we continue to expand and enhance our care to meet the diverse needs of our community for the next 40 years and beyond.

Mark Hawkins
CEO, Rowcroft Hospice

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Keep in touch @RowcroftHospice 'Rowcroft Hospice' @RowcroftHospice

blog: rowcrofthospice.org.uk/blog **email:** info@rowcrofthospice.org.uk

Rowcroft Hospice, Avenue Road, Torquay TQ2 5LS, Registered Charity No: 282723 © 2022 Rowcroft Hospice.

Hospice news

News in brief from around Rowcroft

Win big in our lottery!

As this is such a momentous year for Rowcroft and our community, we have some amazing prizes lined up for you in Rowcroft's lottery! You can play our lottery for as little as £1 per week, and there's the chance of winning some jaw-dropping cash prizes: £1000 every Friday, and a twice-yearly superdraw prize of up to £4000. The first superdraw of the year will take place on our birthday – Wednesday 4 May. All profits go to support the hospice so please don't delay – sign up to the lottery today, and help care for families in your local community. See: www.rowcrofthospice.org.uk/lottery



'40 Years of Care' photo exhibition

With this year marking Rowcroft's 40th anniversary, we're creating a stunning photo exhibition to celebrate the lives of all the amazing people who have been cared for by the hospice since we opened in 1982. If you'd like your loved one to be featured in our '40 Years of Care' photo exhibition, then please send us your photo by Easter and visit the exhibition between 30 April and 8 May 2022 (9am to 5pm) at Rainbow House in the grounds of the hospice. Find out more at: www.rowcrofthospice.org.uk/40yearsofcare



Make a Will Week: 16–20 May

During Rowcroft's Make a Will Week, you can make or update your Will, with local participating solicitors waiving their fee in return for a donation to the hospice. If you're considering leaving a gift to Rowcroft in your Will, then please take a look at Rowcroft's Legacy Guide that provides all the practical information you need. To request your free Legacy Guide, please contact Rebecca Cogger, Rowcroft's In-Memory Giving and Legacies Manager, on 01803 217405 or email rebecca.cogger@rowcrofthospice.org.uk

Thank you for supporting our Hospice at Home Appeal

It's a year since we launched our Hospice at Home Appeal to raise funds to expand our end-of-life care across South Devon. Thanks to your amazing support, we've been able to recruit new nurses and healthcare assistants and we're delighted to be caring for hundreds more patients and their families each year.



Angelina is one of our wonderful new Hospice at Home nurses. She says: "I am proud to be part of a team that is passionate about making a difference for every patient and family that we care for. The 24-hour care provided by the Rowcroft team ensures that patients and families do not feel alone at this difficult and stressful time in their life journey."



40 years of Rowcroft Hospice

Ella Rowcroft bestowed the main house and part of the Pilmuir estate to care for the local community in 1941. The building was used as a maternity unit in the Second World War, and subsequently a convalescent home and nursing home. But it wasn't until the early 1980s that the community decided that what they really needed was a hospice. Here we take a brief look at some of the key events that have shaped Rowcroft's history.

1981

The Torquay Lions Club announced that one of its major projects was to set up a local hospice.



1982



On 4 May, Rowcroft Hospice opened and three patients were admitted. The first branch of the Friends of Rowcroft fundraising group was born.

1983

The final ward was completed in April giving the Inpatient Unit a total of 18 beds. Rowcroft celebrated its opening on 24 July with TV presenter David Dimbleby.



1984



Rowcroft opened its first shop in Torquay.

1991

A stone was laid by Richard Brinsley, founding Chair of Rowcroft Hospice, for the extension to the main house to create an additional ward and a single room downstairs.



Mid-1990s



Rowcroft began to take its care out into the community and established a team of Community Nurse Specialists, later becoming a multi-professional team including other health and social care experts.

2012



Rowcroft opened its first tearoom in Churston, and expanded further into hospitality in 2019 with the launch of Ella's Café Lounge in Chelston and Ella's Mobile Café.

2011

Rowcroft's Hospice at Home service expanded to provide 24/7 hour care, supporting patients in their last two weeks of life at home across South Devon.



2006



Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Gloucester visited the hospice and officially opened Melody Corner, a raised level garden created for patients.

2004–2005

Rowcroft launched its education programme, offering training in palliative and end-of-life care to local health and social care professionals across the region.



1999–2000



Rowcroft ran its first weekly lottery draw.

Rowcroft began selling pre-loved stock online on eBay.

Rainbow House was used for Rowcroft's day services and Rowcroft began offering the complementary therapies of aromatherapy and relaxation techniques, plus art therapy and music therapy.



2019



Rowcroft introduces a new model of nursing with 'superfluid' nurses who work flexibly across all clinical teams to ensure we can always be there when needed.

2020

The hospice develops a spiritual space known as 'The Sanctuary' to support people of all faiths and none across our community.



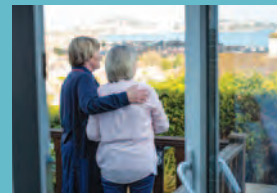
2020



Owing to a generous legacy, Rowcroft was finally able to purchase the estate, enabling the hospice to ensure its sustainability into the future. Also in 2020, Rowcroft set up Ella's Vintage Online.

2021

Expansion of Hospice at Home team to support patients and their families at home, particularly pertinent during the pandemic.



2021



Devon Farm Kitchen was launched to generate additional income for the hospice by delivering 'deliciously satisfying' frozen meals to people's homes across South Devon.

2022

Rowcroft celebrates 40 years and looks to expand and enhance its care.



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Goodies galore in-store

News from Rowcroft's shops

As we celebrate Rowcroft's 40th anniversary, Rowcroft's shops across South Devon are brimming with fabulous treats, including special anniversary products as well as a gorgeous selection of sustainable clothing and accessories, homeware, books and so much more.



To mark our special birthday, we have collaborated with Torquay-based company Sea Arch Drinks to offer a non-alcoholic spirit that's perfect for gin lovers! Inspired by the local coastline, the spirit has been carefully crafted using traditional distillation techniques, and is bursting with flavour from a blend of 12 complex natural botanicals with the alcohol gently removed to create a pick-me-up that is both refreshing and sophisticated. With all profits going to care for patients with life-limiting illnesses, the spirit is available in-store or online at www.rowcrofthospice.org.uk/40years.



Rowcroft has also partnered with Tubs Cottage Candles of Kingsteignton to offer bespoke handmade candles. Produced exclusively for Rowcroft's 40th anniversary, the luxury sustainable candles in lavender or lemongrass are lovingly handcrafted from the natural ingredient of soy wax – which is sourced in the UK. Available in pretty green or blue glass containers, the candles make a truly unique and special gift, with all profits going to support the hospice.

Our 40th anniversary pin badges are also now on sale in our shops. And keep a look out for Rowcroft's special edition South Devon Monopoly set that is coming in September!

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Sarah's 40 years of devotion to Rowcroft

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"I like to think I give the best I can"

◀ Senior Healthcare Assistant Sarah Matthews has devoted 40 years of her life to caring for patients and families at Rowcroft Hospice.

Sarah Matthews of Torquay began her journey with Rowcroft when we opened in 1982. She was just 16 years old and affectionately known as 'The Child' by Rowcroft staff. Four decades on and Sarah is still working at the hospice, still giving her all to her patients and families, and still smiling.

"I joined the hospice as a volunteer," said Sarah. "My main role was making the teas and coffees for patients, and I also ironed all the nurses' cotton aprons which were starched white.

"Two years later and I was offered a job at the hospice as a full-time auxiliary nurse. The hospice was so different in those days – we didn't offer the complex care that we do today. I would also say we're a much more specialist unit now. We have people coming in for highly complex care and this may include a wide range of specialist medical procedures such as blood transfusions, which we didn't do in the early days.

"I've always enjoyed my role, helping to make life easier for my patients. The part I like best is spending time with my patients because I really love talking to people. Everyone's got a story to tell, and I love hearing all about people's lives – it's fascinating!"



Fabulous fundraisers

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS
1982-2022



When Rowcroft first opened its doors back in 1982, there was only enough money in the pot for the hospice to stay open for three months. As we celebrate our 40th anniversary, we look back in awe and admiration at the sheer perseverance and determination of so many people whose remarkable fundraising work has enabled the hospice to not only stay open but to develop the fabulous services that we are so proud of today.

Rowcroft is indebted to so many wonderful groups, organisations, clubs, businesses and individuals who have supported the hospice over the last 40 years.

"The Friends of Rowcroft and all our other fundraising groups have been absolutely amazing," says Debbi Shotton, Rowcroft's Community Fundraiser. "People have moved mountains to raise crucial funds for the hospice, doing whatever it takes – from organising coffee mornings and raffles through to conquering astonishing feats like rowing across the Atlantic, skydiving, wing-walking and having their heads shaved! We're so grateful to everyone for their astounding support which has enabled us to care for our patients and families for all these years."



Rowcroft Hospice Corporate Club

We are looking for 40 incredible businesses to help us celebrate our 40th anniversary by joining our Rowcroft Hospice Corporate Club and aiming to collectively raise £40,000 to help us continue to provide care for those living with life-limiting illnesses.

By joining the club for our 40th anniversary year and pledging to raise or donate a minimum of £1,000 during 2022/23, your business will help Rowcroft Hospice now and in the future. This is a great opportunity to engage your staff in team-building and fun activities such as quiz nights, bake-offs, sponsored sporting challenges or social events! For further information or to get involved, please contact Alison on alison.upton@rowcrofthospice.org.uk or 01803 210835.

40 years backed by brilliant businesses

We're so grateful to all the hundreds of wonderful local businesses who have gone above and beyond for Rowcroft over the last 40 years by donating their services, expertise, products, time and funds.

The local housebuilding company Baker Estates is one such business among many that has gone to extraordinary lengths to support the hospice over the years.

Annie Williams, Head of Sales at Baker Estates, said: "We are determined to continue to support Rowcroft. Many of our staff have experience of or know people who have benefited from the wonderful work that Rowcroft provides – it is a vital charity within our community."



▲ Annie Williams from Baker Estates delivers a fantastic £15,000 to Rowcroft's CEO Mark Hawkins, raised through fundraising activities such as running the Ox challenge, cycle rides, and a charity golf day. Baker Estates continues to sponsor the cost of two of Rowcroft's vans that are vital in collecting donations of furniture and white goods from people's homes to sell in Rowcroft's shops.

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Blossoming over 40 years

Since Rowcroft's small beginnings in 1982, the hospice has developed into South Devon's leading provider of end-of-life care. We've expanded to reach more patients; we've developed new services to provide a holistic approach that puts patients' choices at the very heart of everything we do; and we've evolved and adapted in response to the rapidly changing healthcare landscape and the growing needs of our local community.

Rowcroft's Director of Care and Strategy Dr Gill Horne said: "Our achievements over four decades include: providing expert care to thousands of patients in our Inpatient Unit; setting up and delivering our revered Hospice at Home service that each year provides specialist care to around 500 people in their last two weeks of life at home; the development of our exceptional community services that include specialist nursing, complementary therapy, music therapy, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, social work, bereavement support and spiritual care; and the launch of our award-winning education programme that offers online and face-to-face specialist training to health and social care professionals across South Devon and beyond."



"I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported us through our incredible 40-year journey."

"It is only because of the remarkable perseverance, dedication and phenomenal hard work of thousands of staff and volunteers, and because of the incredible generosity and support from our local community, that Rowcroft has been able to go from strength to strength over four decades, and we hope that this continues long into the future."

Meadow of memories

Sowing the seeds of love

This spring, dedicate a wildflower in our Meadow of Memories as a poignant way of remembering and celebrating the life of someone you love and miss. Your flower will be in full bloom by July, and you're welcome to visit the beautiful hospice gardens at any time to view the amazing glory of our stunning wildflower meadow. You're also warmly invited to attend our wonderful Meadow of Memories celebration on Sunday 10 July.

When dedicating a flower in memory, you are invited to make a donation to the hospice. Your donation will make such a difference in helping us to care for people at a time when they need us most and enabling patients to make every day the best day possible.

For further information and to dedicate a flower in memory, see: www.rowcrofthospice.org.uk/meadow



“ This year I will be dedicating a poppy for John, as a poppy was synonymous for him as he was so proud of those who had served and given their lives for others. It is also a very tall flower and that was my husband, not just tall in stature but also as a very proud man.

The hospice enabled me to spend treasured time with John in those last few weeks. John highly valued the Rowcroft team and I can't thank them enough for the wonderful care and attention they gave him whilst ensuring he kept his dignity which was so important to him. ”



▲ Michelle Martin and her husband John, who was cared for by the hospice before he passed away.

Our volunteer beekeepers

We're so grateful to all our amazing volunteer beekeepers for their expert work in looking after the bees that thrive in our wildflower meadow and in our 25 hives in Rowcroft's gardens. Keeping our beehives flourishing is not only a passion of our beekeeping team, but also a great income stream for the hospice. In 2021, the proceeds from the harvested honey raised around £3000!

Bees play such an important part in maintaining our planet because they are vital in pollinating the food we need to survive and the trees and flowers that form important habitats for wildlife. With our busy beekeepers now in their eighth year

of looking after Rowcroft's bees, the team is currently seeking more volunteers, so if you think you'd get a buzz from beekeeping, please email volunteering@rowcrofthospice.org.uk or call 01803 210852.

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Happy birthday Devon Farm Kitchen!



Devon Farm Kitchen is celebrating a highly successful first year of delivering deliciously satisfying handmade frozen meals to people's homes across South Devon. Launched in April 2021 with the sole purpose of raising funds for the hospice, the social enterprise has gone from strength to strength, to date delivering over 17,000 meals that have been lovingly crafted from the very best locally sourced ingredients.

▲ Lamb loin chop is one of Devon Farm Kitchen's delicious gluten-free dishes.



"We're delighted that our meals are proving so popular with customers across the region," says Joe Bradshaw, Manager of Devon Farm Kitchen. "To cope with demand we've recently doubled our delivery area to include Kingsbridge, Okehampton, Tavistock, Salcombe and the outlying villages towards Plymouth and Exeter. We've also increased our range by launching three new gluten-free dishes in response to customers' suggestions. Our new dishes include: Lancashire hotpot; venison pie; and liver, bacon and onions."

To find out more about Devon Farm Kitchen and to order your meals, please go to www.devonfarmkitchen.co.uk or telephone 01803 217477.

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Making a heart-breaking time more bearable

We often hear it said how Rowcroft's care teams focus on the person, not the patient. Here Donna Hawkins explains how Rowcroft's care teams did just that for her dad, Mark, before he passed away from cancer last year in Rowcroft's Inpatient Unit.

"Dad was first and foremost a loving family man and husband. We all thought the world of him. When we found out he had cancer, it felt like the rug had been pulled out from under us all.

"There couldn't have been a worse time to be hit with this – it was right in the middle of the pandemic. There were so many rules that meant we couldn't all be together or support him in the way that we would have liked.

"Dad received care and support from Rowcroft at home, and later at the

hospice. He relied heavily on the care, advice and support that they gave him, and they provided reassurance to the whole family. The nurses and care teams were phenomenal, I can't put it into words. They respected his choices all the time and they kept him in control of his care. Nobody treated him like a patient; they treated him like a gentleman who needed some help. The care they gave was personal, they got to know him as the person he was, and they enabled him to keep his dignity, and to die with dignity."



▲ Donna, with her dad Mark

"All of our family are so grateful we had Rowcroft – they couldn't take the cancer away, but they made a heart-breaking time more bearable, more respectful and made dad's last months more comfortable and less scary."



Clinical Nurse Specialist Tracey Hurley is a member of the team who, along with Dr Sarah Human and the

Rowcroft team, supported Mark and his family. Dr Sarah said:

"It is lovely to hear from Donna about the care we were able to provide for her father, Mark. It is important to us to know about people's experiences of our services and very humbling to read Donna's words.

"We hope, in palliative care, to provide truly holistic care that encompasses the physical, emotional, spiritual and social needs of our patients. I believe we were able to do this for Mark and his family. They were supported by our hospice community team, with input from our specialist nurses, doctors, complementary therapists, occupational and physiotherapists, social workers and bereavement team. Mark was also cared for by our Inpatient Unit team during periods of admission to the hospice, including when he passed away. My clinical nurse specialist colleague, Tracey, played a key role throughout in supporting Mark and his family. She was able to weave together all the different threads of his care, linking in with his GP and hospital specialists too, so that the support we gave was tailor-made for him."

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Enhancing and expanding our care



As Rowcroft looks ahead to the next 40 years, we know that we need to adapt and expand our care in order to continue to meet the growing and changing needs of our local community.

According to the Torbay Strategy for Housing in Later Life, it is estimated that by 2035, the area will have a 370 shortfall in nursing beds. Our recent community survey also showed that there are real concerns around the lack of elderly care provision, especially for those with dementia. We're therefore exploring ways in which we can expand our care to assist our local community further, including helping to plug the dementia care gap, as well as helping to introduce more multi-generational connections and recreational activities for older people. Subject to planning approval and funding, we are consulting on plans that include: the refurbishment of the main hospice building to support a remodelled Inpatient Unit; a new nursing home; and assisted living accommodation.

"We are incredibly proud to care for our South Devon community"

"We want to ensure that our specialist care is available to everyone who needs us in the future," says Rowcroft's CEO Mark Hawkins. "Offering some exciting new services to our community will help generate additional income so that we can provide care to more of our community for the next 40 years."

We're still in the early stages of thinking and modelling, and we've carried out a series of public consultation events to gather local views and feedback, with the plans available to view at: www.rowcroftcare.org.uk



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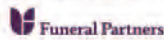
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There's no stopping our Education Team!



Over recent months, our education experts have been working flat out, assisting in our Inpatient Unit during staffing shortages and continuing to run their renowned online training for healthcare professionals.

"We're thrilled that many new health and social professionals have joined our online teaching workshops and courses, some from outside Rowcroft's area," says Kerry Macnish, Rowcroft's Head of Education.

"We will continue to promote openness about death and dying, offering honest, useful, and sensitive workshops about planning in advance, decision-making and communication skills, grief, symptom relief and care. We can contribute learning and insights that increase the confidence of others to transform relationships for those receiving care in our community."

For further information about our education programme, please see: www.rowcrofthospice.org.uk/education



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Get involved!

To celebrate our 40th anniversary year, we have an exciting programme of activities planned. For further information about any of the events listed below, please visit our website at www.rowcrofthospice.org.uk or call our Fundraising Team on 01803 217450.

Throughout spring and summer

OPEN GARDENS

Our generous fundraising community is hosting a wonderful season of Open Gardens throughout spring and summer, with people across South Devon raising funds for Rowcroft by opening their own beautiful gardens for you to enjoy. We're also holding a series of Open Garden Days at the hospice, where you can opt for a guided tour of our stunning grounds taking in our glorious meadow, tranquil gardens, woodland and even our beehives. You'll also have the chance to explore at leisure, listen to fascinating guest speakers and live music, and enjoy delicious refreshments in our marquee café.



April/May

30 April–8 May 40 YEARS OF CARE PHOTO EXHIBITION

We'd love you to visit our stunning '40 Years of Care' photo exhibition that will celebrate the lives of all the people who have been cared for by the hospice since we first opened in 1982. The exhibition is open 9am till 5pm at Rainbow House in the grounds of the hospice and will include displays about the history of Rowcroft.



4 May IT'S OUR 40TH BIRTHDAY!

We'll be celebrating throughout May with a programme of events.



16–22 May

Make a Will Week

During Rowcroft's Make a Will Week, local participating solicitors will waive their entire Will-making fee in return for a donation to the hospice.



June

26 June TORBAY 10K and HALF MARATHON

Join Team Rowcroft and claim your FREE place to run the Torbay Half Marathon or 10K on behalf of the hospice. The traffic-free route takes in stunning coastal views of Torbay.



July

2 July THE SLEEP WALK

Join us for a fabulous 'night at the movies' as we sprinkle some Hollywood magic across Torbay in our five- or ten-mile sponsored night walk. Open to all for our 40th anniversary year!



10 July MEADOW OF MEMORIES

Dedicate a flower in the Meadow in Memory to honour and remember a loved one who was cared for by the hospice, and join our special celebration on Sunday 10 July.



16 July SKY DIVE

An exhilarating freefall combined with the peace and tranquillity of the parachute ride makes tandem skydiving an experience you will never forget. Alternative date available of 8 October.

August

6 August WINGWALK

Taking to the skies on the wings of a 1940s Boeing Stearman biplane, you will be teamed up with an experienced display pilot who will take you on a ten-minute journey of a lifetime!



September

RIDE – YOUR WAY

Join our popular cycling event in your own way throughout September. Take on our challenging Haytor route or one of your own creation.



Our superstar volunteers

For Rowcroft's 40 years, our wonderful volunteers have been pivotal to the smooth running of the hospice. They have supported Rowcroft in so many ways, from working in our shops and cafes to helping at the hospice itself and in our offices, gardens and at our fundraising events. We'd like to say an extra special thank you to all our amazing volunteers who have given their time, hard work and expertise during Rowcroft's 40 years.

Judith Jones is one of our volunteer superstars, who first stepped into the hospice in 1981 and since then has scrubbed, washed, starched, ironed, served thousands upon thousands of cups of tea and coffee, and generally worked her socks off during her four decades with Rowcroft Hospice! We're super proud of this amazing lady who refers to herself as our very own "trolley dolly" as she welcomes people to the hospice in the best way possible – with a simple cuppa or two!

Judith said: "At one point I worked in the laundry as I really like ironing (unlike most people!). We had to starch all of the nurses' white aprons to keep them looking clean. When the laundry moved offsite, I decided that I wanted to have more contact with the patients again. So I became a hospitality volunteer – a trolley dolly! And that's what I'm still doing now! I think the patients really appreciate the cups of tea and coffee. Sometimes I used to arrange the flowers too; it's lovely to have the floral displays around the hospice."

"I still really enjoy the volunteering here, as I did when I started years ago, and I've made so many fantastic friends along the way."



spring / summer 2022 • HOSPICE MATTERS



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