

South East Cancer Help Centre

Helping people cope with cancer



Annual Review

April 2020-March 2021



**Talk to us –
we're here
to help**





CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

Last year during the Covid-19 pandemic our activities were severely disrupted as we were unable to offer our many usual face-to-face activities. With the help of our staff, volunteers and therapists, we remained open and did manage to provide many remote therapies mostly by Zoom during this difficult period. This has enabled our members affected by cancer to receive the essential therapies they have come to depend upon.

Unsurprisingly, new membership numbers have dropped during this period due to concerns over Covid-19 infection rates and the well-publicised NHS backlog in identifying new patients with cancer. However, as we move towards 2022, we are now open for face-to-face appointments and new members are joining.

The Centre's outreach services, provided to Croydon University Hospital and to the BME Forum Wellness Centre located in the Whitgift Centre, have not been required since March 2020 as both facilities closed due to Covid-19 and thus far only the Wellness Centre has recently re-opened.

However, as we move forward, we are always ready to provide therapies and support to residents from the North and South of Croydon and those referred to us by other cancer services including St George's Hospital, Maggie's at The Royal Marsden and others.

Although regular fundraising has been very difficult, our financial position has remained strong, mostly due to government support and the commitment of our loyal supporters.

It is so important that we continue working in collaboration with GP hubs, Social Prescribing Boards, the council and other like-minded organisations, together with engaging with all groups within the borough's diverse community, faith groups, BAME groups and those socially isolated to encourage awareness and the use of our services.

I would like to thank all my trustee colleagues and staff together with volunteers and therapists who have all shown tremendous resilience and dedication during the pandemic, together with a continuing commitment to our vision. Also, our many thanks to Tesco who provide our accommodation at Purely rent free and also support us in many other ways during the year.

Jennifer Mollett, Chairman



OUR MISSION

- To help as many people as possible with, or affected by, cancer cope with their situation by providing them with a range of high-quality support services including: complementary therapies, counselling, support groups and other therapeutic activities, in a caring, friendly and supportive environment
- To ensure that as many who might need our support know about us and are encouraged to contact us and benefit from all the help we can provide

OUR VALUES

- The welfare of our members is our paramount consideration and this reflects itself in everything we do. As a progressive organisation we will always develop and adapt to the needs of our members
- We are inclusive, everyone is welcome and nobody is discriminated against
- We treat everyone with dignity and their views and choices are respected
- We aim for the highest standards in everything we do; our therapies and counselling are delivered by professionally qualified practitioners
- We maintain confidentiality at all times

OUR KEY OBJECTIVES:

- To offer an unrivalled service to our area and increase the number of members we attract and are able to support
- To develop and improve the range of services and support we offer
- To extend the reach of our services
- To develop and support staff and volunteers through training where required to ensure our services operate to the highest standards
- To achieve and prudently manage the income necessary to achieve these objectives

OUR PLANS

- To review, develop and improve the range of services offered at our Purley Centre, Croydon University Hospital and the Croydon Wellness Centre
- To align our services with the area's diverse community
- To increase our out-reach services and capability
- To engage with all GP's and their hubs, hospital staff, CCG Boards, SW London Partnership, SLAM, Healthwatch, Croydon Carers Centre, Social Prescribing Boards and all major health partners to improve their knowledge of our activities and support for patients
- To work in collaboration with like-minded organisations, including Macmillan, Maggie's, St Christopher's Hospice, Duffus Cancer Foundation and Penny Brohn
- To upgrade the Centre and its supporting infrastructure, including IT, to improve our efficiency and service to members
- To attract adequate funding by working closely with all existing sources. To develop new and sound relationships with business and the community
- To maintain an effective marketing, public relations and social media programme to support our activities and build awareness of the Centre and its work

CHRIS PHILP MP, Patron

Someone is diagnosed with cancer every two minutes, meaning the South East Cancer Help Centre's services have never been more vital. I'm sure, like you, there are people on our minds who have tragically been diagnosed with this awful disease. I am therefore incredibly pleased that the SECHC has once again been an excellent help to people affected by cancer, in what has been a particularly challenging year.

I was delighted that they were able to stay open during the pandemic, providing welcome relief, counselling, and support to countless people. SECHC took many of their services online and are now seeing more of their face-to-face therapies return. Whether online or in person, the highly qualified counsellors & therapists are always ready to help anyone in need. I am incredibly proud of the professionalism and compassion shown through SECHC's work, particularly through their tireless volunteers.

As we head into the next year, I look forward to seeing the SECHC grow and expand its range of services offered. They continue to engage with Croydon University Hospital, Croydon Wellness Centre, GPs, and NHS Boards.

The SECHC is reliant on the donations of its supporters, so I would like to extend my deep thanks to all of you for continuing to give generously and partnering with us. I could not think of a more worthy cause to champion.



MEMBERS' TRIBUTE

to the staff and volunteers of the Help Centre

DUNCAN WILSON

Joining the centre in 2015 was one of my best decisions and undoubtedly made an enormous difference to my recovery from bowel cancer. I had the benefit of counselling from one of their very professional team which helped me deal with the present and restructure my future. A nutritionist analysed my diet and regulated my food intake to make sure my energy levels had a chance to build up.

The most helpful was the Bowel Cancer Support Group which took me and my wife on a journey of support, explanation, knowledge, reassurance and fun. I realised that what I was experiencing was not unique and had been the experience of other members of the group. I am so grateful for the confidential sharing of views and thoughts about not just the physical but also the emotional impact of the disease. The culture was one of sharing every and all experiences for the mutual benefit of the attendees.



Another group I joined was Mindfulness and this was fascinating. It was difficult to grasp the concepts at first, but we were expertly guided by our patient teacher and it soon became second nature. In fact, I found myself slightly embarrassed one day when during a period of meditation I was so relaxed that I fell asleep.

I also bravely attended a drama group which was very challenging especially when taken outside my comfort zone by playing a Shakespearian character – great fun and the group was run by a very talented drama teacher.

The SEHC is an organisation that is truly steeped in its Mission of helping as many people as possible with or affected by cancer in a safe and supportive environment. I will be eternally grateful for their services and I will continue to support SEHC and especially the Bowel Cancer support group in all their endeavours.

PETER ATKINSON

I was told about the Prostate Cancer Support Group by a Macmillan nurse in 2017 when I was first diagnosed as having prostate cancer. I didn't think that I needed such a group as I believed that I was a straightforward case. It was only after my prostatectomy that I learnt that my cancer was very aggressive and had spread outside the prostate. This caused me some concern. I joined SEHC and started to attend the monthly meetings of the PCSG early in 2018. With a very capable leader in Terry Garrigan and about 30 men attending, I gained lots of information which was very helpful to me during hormone therapy, radiotherapy and some disconcerting urological problems which persist to this day.



I also took advantage of some of the treatments offered to members at the Centre and I currently attend the helpful Relaxation classes led by Ann-Claire Noat on Zoom. The PCSG has also moved on to Zoom and works well.

I have two or three sessions a week on Zoom with a personal trainer who specialises in exercise for those suffering from cancer and neurological disease. I believe that the big improvement in my fitness will help me to delay or prevent the recurrence of my cancer.

All in all, I have benefitted greatly from joining SEHC and, in particular, attending meetings of the PCSG."

ONE TO ONE SERVICES

Talking Therapies (counselling)

We offer a safe, confidential and non-judgemental place to help Members explore issues which are troubling them. Those unable to come to the Centre due to illness or inaccessibility can talk to a counsellor over the phone or video.

We also offer:

Young Persons Talking Therapy (over 12 years of age)

Provides an opportunity for young people to meet a counsellor on their own, to share and resolve issues that arise as a result of cancer. These sessions are arranged with parental consent.

Aromatherapy Massage

Aromatherapy treats mind and body together. The scent of the essential oils used can have a powerful effect on the emotions, whilst the oils' chemistry affects the body: soothing and comforting aches, pains and imbalance.

Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT)

EFT (or tapping) is a self-help technique taught to help release blocked energy and so reduce the effects of stress and anxiety. It is easy to learn and easy to apply; it involves tapping near the end points of energy meridians located on your hands and face. The tapping process is done in order to reduce physical tension and promote a deeper mind-body connection.

Hairdressing

Practical support including haircuts and styles for your own hair, as well as clipper cutting, shaping and care of wigs. Ask for advice on scarf-tying and hair regrowth.

Hypnotherapy

Uses a state of deep relaxation and positive suggestion to enable changes to thinking and behaviour.

Manicures and Pedicures

These will not only leave your nails beautifully shaped and perfectly polished, but they are also a great way to relax and unwind.

Massage Therapy

Massage is a natural way to help you relax and cope with stress. Studies show that it can help to reduce symptoms such as pain, nausea, anxiety and fatigue.

Nutritional Therapy

A visit to the nutritionist is an opportunity to find out which foods are best for you to improve energy, reduce symptoms, cope with treatment, and help reduce the chances of a recurrence.

Reflexology

A specialised form of foot massage using gentle pressure on specific points on the feet to relieve a range of symptoms.

Reiki

A gentle non-contact technique which releases energy flow to help relax, reduce stress and support the body's healing processes.

Wellbeing Facial

A deluxe facial using skin-friendly cleansing, soothing and hydrating products combined with a relaxing massage to encourage blood flow and oxygen to the underlying facial muscles.

ADAPTING TO COVID

It was important to the Centre that we continued to support our members as much as possible throughout the pandemic. We moved our counselling services from face-to-face to online and telephone and our group therapies, Tai Chi, Pilates, Yoga and Guided Relaxation, adapted and moved to Zoom. Our aim was to ensure that our services were accessible and provided support during an isolating time.

GROUP ACTIVITIES

Arts & Crafts

A very popular and social programme catering for a variety of interests, followed by a social lunch.

Drama

An opportunity to have fun and become someone else for a while!

Gentle (seated) Yoga

Seated Yoga makes this gentle exercise accessible to everyone including those with limited mobility or health issues.

Joyful Spirit

In a supportive and uplifting environment, you will have the opportunity to learn and explore various techniques for relaxation, meditation and healing. Through guided meditations and other creative and light-hearted exercises, you will be encouraged to listen to your inner self, thus promoting confidence and personal growth.

Meditation and Relaxation

Group courses to learn how to face stressful situations calmly and promote a peaceful mind.

Mindfulness

Helps us to find peace and calm in the midst of our challenges. The classes are structured so that they are suitable for everyone, whether you're a complete beginner, have a committed daily practice or if you feel you are somewhere in between.

Pilates

Our Pilates classes are aimed at giving you the time to breathe, stretch and strengthen in a fun, relaxed and encouraging environment.

Singing

Learn how your whole body works together to produce beautiful sounds and how people can work together to create beautiful harmonies in these fun group singing sessions.

Tai Chi

Gentle flowing movements to strengthen the body, relax the mind and lift the spirit. Suitable for everyone, whatever age or fitness level.

The Tuesday Club

Tuesday Club 10.00 - 12.30 followed by homemade soup lunch.

A small, friendly social group on a Tuesday morning where you can enjoy a chat over coffee, planned activities and a monthly cinema club followed by a homemade soup lunch.

1st Tuesday of month:	Crafts with Davina
2nd Tuesday of month:	Gentle exercise and relaxation
3rd Tuesday of month:	Cinema Club
4th Tuesday of month:	This and That
5th Tuesday of month:	Games/Poetry/etc

Yoga

Breathing exercises, movement and relaxation to create holistic harmony.



FOCUS ON THERAPIES

TAI CHI

The Chinese exercise system of Tai Chi Chuan was developed 500 years ago. Based on the Daoist principles of balance and harmony, Tai Chi's gentle flowing movements and natural breathing, have evolved into one of the most effective exercise routines.

Tai Chi develops stamina, strength and flexibility and its healing power helps people with heart and circulation problems, arthritis and muscular injuries. It also enhances the immune system.



Tai Chi is ideal in rebuilding health and relieving stress. The tensions that are so common today, and especially when recovering from illness, are released. This allows the body to perform as it should; breathing deepens and circulation, digestion, posture and balance improve.

As it is a weight-bearing exercise it helps maintain bone density and can check the on-set of osteoporosis. Recent research has shown a marked reduction in the number of falls in older people. During lockdown Zoom classes have been very popular.

RICHARD ANTONOWICZ
Tai Chi instructor

REIKI

Reiki is a non-contact energy healing technique that promotes relaxation, stress and anxiety reduction, and symptom relief to improve overall health and well-being.

The Reiki practitioner uses their hands to deliver energy, to improve the flow and balance of the body's energy to support healing.

Studies have shown that Reiki can lower a person's resting heart rate and blood



pressure. It can also ease pain and depression and boost quality of life and self-esteem in people with long-term health conditions. During the pandemic we offered distant Reiki sessions online.

It was great to hear very positive feedback. People reported a sense of deep relaxation, reduction in aches and pains, breathing deeper, better sleep and a general feeling of well-being and positivity.

Reiki has no religious doctrine and is accepted by people from all backgrounds and belief systems.

YVONNE DUBI
Reiki practitioner

YOGA

Yoga is an ancient practice that originated in India. It connects the mind and body through breath, movement and meditation.

Yoga is suitable for everybody, requiring only a willingness to take part. It is very adaptable, and a chair yoga class is also available if you find it difficult to get on and off the floor.

The gentle movements help to regain, improve and maintain a range of movement in the joints. They improve flexibility, strength



and stamina, and encourage the healthy functioning of all the body's organs and systems. Breathing exercises help release tension, relieve anxiety and restore balance and peace of mind -- all of which help to manage the strong emotions that accompany a life-changing illness. Improved respiration also enhances all physiological functions. Yoga can enhance our overall quality of life, and support and sustain us on the journey towards health and wholeness.

During the pandemic classes took place online.

GAIL DAVIES
Yoga Teacher

MONTHLY CANCER SUPPORT GROUPS

Bowel cancer support group

The group meets on the first Wednesday of every month between 7 pm and 9 pm. Coronavirus has made meeting difficult and so monthly emails kept members in touch until October, when we started monthly Zoom meetings. These proved very popular both with members and speakers with up to 18 joining in. One of our members even joined from their holiday in Turkey!

Speakers joining us on Zoom included:

- Jo Turner - Banton, Macmillan Colorectal Nurse Consultant, Croydon University Hospital (CUH) giving a Q&A session
- Debbie Moody and Carol Althorp - Colorectal Nurse Specialists in Stoma Care, CUH, talking about their services
- Lisa Dryden - Colorectal Nurse Specialist, CUH giving an update on care during the pandemic

We also have meetings without speakers to give more time for mutual support and to talk freely, informally and in confidence about issues affecting us.

john.amos@sechc.org.uk

Ovarian Cancer Support Group

As soon as it became clear that it would no longer be possible for the Ovarian Cancer Support Group to meet in person we moved to the virtual setting via Zoom.

The group has continued to thrive and has met every month via Zoom. We have also kept in regular touch via our WhatsApp group. Minor training was provided to members who were unfamiliar with Zoom and WhatsApp and they are now confident users. We sadly lost a few members to ovarian cancer during the last year and attended funerals via Zoom. We also welcomed new members during the last year and have continued to support each other using these online methods.

adele.sewell@sechc.org.uk

Prostate Cancer Support Group

The Prostate Support Group held monthly meetings by zoom from June 2020 to August 2021. Numbers were greatly reduced but it allowed those who wanted to keep in touch the ability to do so.

Due to my own fortnightly zoom meetings organised by Prostate Cancer UK (PC UK), I was able to converse with over forty other prostate groups to see how they were coping and to share information and good practice procedures. This enabled me to send my group links to join their meetings and some interesting webinars. For those unable or not happy with virtual meetings, contact was kept by telephone and email.

Group members were encouraged to join other Zoom activities put on by the Centre such as Yoga and Tai Chi.

terry.garrigan@sechc.org.uk

Breast Cancer Support Group

Breast Cancer Support: The group meets on the third Tuesday of each month, between 6.30pm and 8.30pm. We have had interesting speakers giving advice. We had a speaker giving hair care advice during and after chemotherapy. And expert advice on choosing and fitting of mastectomy bras and swimwear. We have also had a workshop for mindfulness and benefits during cancer journey. On a lighter side, we have had a lovely evening of Scottish Dancing with a combination of exercise and rhythm to the music, and lots of laughter.

mina.shah@sechc.org.uk

COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING

The past year was extremely challenging for Community Fundraising as all our events, including our very successful Paint Purley Purple Campaign, had to be cancelled. After the Centre went into lockdown in March 2020 we launched an Urgent Appeal on Virgin Giving as we knew how badly our income would be affected. We are absolutely indebted to all our members, volunteers and supporters who raised a staggering £15,000!

So many people helped, including:

Nathan Mollett, who put together his own 100km run – two-and-a-half marathons. He set out at 6:30am, passing the first 42km in four hours. He sailed through the next 20km, entering Battersea Park. But Nathan says things started to go downhill at 70km. He'd lost his phone and the weather turned nasty

He said: "The Thames towpath was flooded at Mortlake so I had to divert and figure out how to re-join it at Kew. After 75km I plodded on towards Kingston at a very slow pace. Everything was hurting. The last 15km was murder. I'm pretty sure I was hallucinating, and the conditions turned bad with heavy rain and hail. At the end, I just collapsed and slept on the grass for 20 minutes."

Nathan completed his run in 11 hours, 40 minutes and was greeted by son Sebastian. He raised an amazing £9,895.

During lockdown many members relied on telephone counselling as our activities moved online. London Solicitors Bolt Burden Kemp supported this with £3,000 sponsorship. Kim Alexander and Hannah Travis from BBK, pictured, then organised a Zoom PPP Quiz with the firm putting up prizes of £150. The Quiz itself raised £332 and the two winners generously donated their prizes to SECHC.

Sanderstead councillors also donated £3,000 and Caterham Parish Council donated £1,000.

Lack of space prevents us from mentioning all those who fundraised for us but your support is very much appreciated.

CHARITABLE TRUST INCOME

This year was particularly difficult. A number of trusts suspended their charitable giving due to Covid-related financial uncertainty and some switched allegiance to pandemic-related charities.

However, we were fortunate to secure funding from the Charities Aid Foundation to support our Telephone Counselling Service.

Thankfully, a number of wonderful supporters were able to keep faith with us and we received funding to support breast cancer patients, our Counselling Service at the Wellness Centre in Croydon and our Telephone Counselling Service.

We were also indebted to Chris Philp MP who put our name forward to a Charitable Trust that inquired about local causes to support which resulted in a £2,000 grant.

Charitable Trust income is vital to the operation of the Centre and we thank all those trusts that came to our aid during such a tough year.



FINANCES

The year ended 31st March 2021 was severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Our main Centre at Purley remained closed throughout the financial year under review and our activity at Croydon University Hospital and the new Wellness Centre in Central Croydon also had to cease. However, we were able to offer limited services to members either by telephone counselling or through on-line group sessions.

Due to this disruption, the results for the year show an untypical outcome in that income declined but expenditure declined even more when compared with the previous year due to the lack of activity. Our income totalled £232,825 (2019/20: £241,464) and our expenditure was £180,275 (2019/20: £260,762) resulting in a surplus for the year of £52,550 compared to a deficit for the previous year of £19,298.

The Centre traditionally relies entirely on donations, legacies, fundraising income and the support of its members to provide its services with, usually, no funds coming from central Government. However, this year we were not able to take on any significant number of new members nor to carry out any fundraising activities other than individual events taken on by supporters. The shortfall was offset to a large extent by a government grant established to support charities affected by Covid and the reassessment of our gift in kind due to our premises being provided free by Tesco plc. A breakdown of our Income is given in the table below.

Our main item of expenditure is on direct costs for our charitable activities and accounted for approximately 83% (2020 :76%) of the total cost. This includes payments for our administrative staff, fees paid to therapists, counsellors and group leaders for the services they provide, the general running costs of the Purley Centre as well as outings and other events. The remaining 17% cost comprises fundraising salaries and governance. Overall, costs were generally much lower in the current year due to the reasons given in the first paragraph above.

The Centre is committed to maintain and expand, where beneficial to its members, its overall level of services and the partial re-opening of the Centre in September 2021 will help us get back towards normal levels of activity. However, we do not expect this to fully happen until after spring 2022 at the earliest. The financial position of the Centre is satisfactory, having again strengthened during this past year.

Financial performance over the year to 31 March 2021

Total income	£232,825	Net Surplus	£ 52,550	Expenditure	£180,275
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Where the money has come from:

Donations and gifts – Individuals	22%
– Organisations	25%
Gifts in kind	22%
Government grants	11%
Events income	7%
Membership subscriptions	5%
Membership contributions	6%
Legacies	1%
Interest & investment income	1%

How the money was spent:

Direct costs	40%
Premises	28%
Other support costs	15%
Fundraising costs	15%
Governance	2%

These figures are taken from the audited Financial Statements of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2021.

The Annual Report and Financial Statements is available on request.

TRUSTEES AND STAFF

Patrons

Sir Richard Ottaway
Mr Gary Das MS, FRCS, FRCSUrol (retired)
Chris Philp MP

Staff

Natalie Myers	Part-time Administrator
Kate Pawlowicz	Part-time Administrator
Liz French	Part-time Fundraiser
Soonah Weeden	Part-time Receptionist

Patient Representative

John Amos

Trustees

Mrs Jennifer Mollett* (Chair)
Cllr Yvette Hopley* (Vice Chair)
Mr David Mollett* (Company Secretary)
Mr Peter W J Mills* (Treasurer)
Mrs Catherine Rees*
Mr Antonio Barranco
Mr Michael Tubbs
Mr Richard Waller
Mrs Zahura Sultana Hossain

**These trustees are also members of the Executive Committee*



South East Cancer Help Centre

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facebook.com/secancerhelp

twitter.com/secancerhelp

Registered Charity Number: 1011509

Purley Centre

Weekdays 9 am – 5 pm

Tuesdays 9 am – 8 pm

Saturdays 9 am – 1 pm

Wellness Centre

Wednesdays 9 am – 3 pm