

South East Cancer Help Centre

# Annual Review

April 2021 - April 2022



*Helping people cope  
with cancer*





# CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

This year has seen improvements in our ability to provide our services to those affected by cancer. Although Covid-19 and variants continued during 2021 with the usual precautions being taken, the Centre has continued to offer its services during these restrictions every weekday from 9.00am to 1.00pm. Initially this was limited to providing a range of remote support for various groups and individual members using Zoom.

In September face-to-face sessions re-started, in addition to the remote support, and now included counselling and a range of complementary therapies. In February 2022 the Centre began to open for some full days and from May opened 5 full days per week. Over the 12 months there were 1331 individual one-to-one remote and face-to-face counselling or therapy sessions provided to our members.

As the CUH Macmillan services were closed during the 12 months together with the Croydon Wellness Centre, SECHC was not required to provide any staff during this period.

Although fundraising has proved difficult this year, we have been engaging with local shops and businesses who have supported various fundraising initiatives. This included a very successful fashion show sponsored by the Surrey National golf club and attended by a dozen models wearing a range of Lucinda's designer collections from around the world and achieving around £9,500 in donations to the Centre.

We will continue working in collaboration with GP hubs, Social Prescribing Boards, the council and other likeminded 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 worked so hard this year, 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.



# 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 GPs and their hubs, hospital staff, health boards and localities programmes, 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



# TESTIMONIAL

When I first had my breast cancer diagnosis confirmed, it was a shot to the heart. My practical side did kick in swiftly and I contacted the SECHC on leaving the hospital. I had driven past the centre and seen their advertising for many years.

My first contact with the SECHC was a telephone call with Jennifer who, having obtained some brief details, recommended my telephoning the breast cancer support group leader, Mina. After a conversation with her, I decided I would look to the SECHC to support me with a holistic approach to my care, alongside the medical.

I was diagnosed during the height of lockdown and the SECHC's services were limited but I was able to start counselling by telephone with Maddie and distance reiki with Yvonne. Once things started to open up again, I had facials with Tereza; reflexology with Wendy; and massage with Justyna. I was pleased to have been able to benefit from these therapists so early on before surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy. There is so much knowledge and information at the centre that I found relevant and up to date. Later on, I had haircuts with Michele who has immense experience with new hair growth post cancer treatments. I briefly dipped my toes into the online Tai Chi and yoga.

Once my main medical treatments had ended, I enrolled in the Loss Recovery Programme with Joan. These insightful sessions have aided completeness on past relationships and experiences. They have provided the tools for moving forward and being able to deal with any future issues which may arise emotionally, especially those connected to a cancer diagnosis.

My husband also joined the SECHC as he was already dealing with his father's pancreatic cancer diagnosis at the time of mine. He benefitted from counselling via Zoom with Frances and I believe it was a relief for him to be able to communicate with someone outside of our family and friendship group.

The centre is a welcoming place that has a plethora of information; complementary therapies and support. I recommend taking a look at the centre's website; Facebook page; Instagram or contacting them direct if you are affected by cancer whether it's yourself going through treatment or a loved one. I am immensely grateful to the SECHC which has helped me cope through this difficult time and continues to support me and my family.

**Margaret Finnegan**



Margaret Finnegan



A photograph showing the back of a man's head and shoulders as he sits across from a woman. The woman is blurred in the background, wearing a teal top and holding a white folder. The image is set against a dark background with teal and purple vertical bars on the sides.

# COUNSELLING AND SUPPORT 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 can talk to a counsellor over the phone or video.

## **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.

## **Loss Recovery Programme**

Our programme is available to assist anyone who has experienced a loss, helping bring new meaning to life.

## **Monthly Cancer Support Groups**

Available for: Bowel; Breast; Ovarian and Prostate cancer patients and their families. Our groups provide mutual support and the opportunity to talk to those similarly affected.

# ONE-TO-ONE THERAPIES

## **Aromatherapy**

Therapeutic, calming massage with essential oils to help reduce tension.

## **Beauty Therapies**

A range of beauty treatments including manicures, pedicures and facials to help improve self-esteem.

## **Emotional Freedom Technique**

EFT is a technique taught to help release blocked energy to reduce the effects of stress and anxiety.

## **Hair Advice**

Practical support, care of wigs and advice on scarf-tying and hair regrowth.

## **Hypnotherapy**

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

## **Massage**

Structured or therapeutic touch designed to relax and relieve muscle pain and tension.

## **Reflexology**

A form of foot massage on specific points on the feet to relieve a range of symptoms. Reiki releases energy flow to help relax, reduce stress and support the body's healing processes.



# GROUP THERAPIES AND ACTIVITIES

## **Arts & Crafts**

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

## **Gentle (seated) Yoga**

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

## **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 Friday Club**

Friday Club 10.00 - 12.00 followed by homemade soup lunch.

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

1st Friday of month: Crafts with Davina

2nd Friday of month: Gentle exercise and relaxation

3rd Friday of month: Cinema Club

4th Friday of month: This and That

5th Friday of month: Games/Poetry/etc

## **Workshops**

We regularly hold workshops on a variety of subjects and activities, such as skincare, Joyful Spirit and nutrition.

## **Yoga**

Breathing exercises, movement and relaxation to create holistic harmony.



# Working with the Macmillan Information Centre at Croydon University Hospital

The South East Cancer Help Centre doesn't just offer therapies and counselling at its base in Purley, it offers vital support at the Croydon University Hospital.

This greatly cuts down on the distance some people need to travel to an appointment. Some of these appointments may also be scheduled to fit in with members' hospital appointments.

The free charitable offer of 6 sessions means that the Cancer Centre service is accessible to all, from all demographics.

Referrals for therapies spans across all cancer sites. From Breast, Gynae, Urology, Bowel Cancer, Upper GI Cancers and Lung Cancers, our Psychological support team has also referred patients.

When patients are unable to attend, the therapist will seek out patients on the ward who may have been admitted over the weekend, to offer therapies.

Palliative care patients and end of life patients face huge challenges but the therapies on offer make a huge impact during the last days of a patient's life, and something carers and loved ones cherish.

The therapies team have supported patients on site at Croydon University Hospital for a number of



years, offering massage and reflexology, supporting patients throughout their cancer trajectory.

Cancer affects many people and families in different ways. The complementary therapies offered allows patients to escape even just for a short while from the routine of chemotherapy appointments, follow up appointments, scans and other routines as a result of cancer.

Patient engagement into this service allows them to explore other options of support, with offers of patient support groups on site in Purley, further developing bonds with people going through similar journeys.

This support has been invaluable to patients. Unfortunately, the Covid 19 Pandemic bought this to an abrupt end, with cancer patients unable to receive the extra support from the South East Cancer Help Centre for 2 years. Thankfully in 2022 we were able to recommence the complementary therapies. Now, the service is as popular as ever, supporting our patients once again.

**Baljit Vohra-Gill, Macmillan Lead Cancer Nurse**



## Lee Townsend

**Macmillan Engagement Lead – Pan London**

In July I was privileged to have attended the Prostate Cancer Support Group meeting at the South East Cancer Help Centre in Purley.

It was incredible to witness so many men openly sharing their experiences in such an amazingly welcoming and warm environment filled with humour and genuine support. The facilitators helped to create a positive atmosphere within the room by doing a fantastic job of managing the banter, concerns and advice being shared throughout the meeting while allowing the discussions to flow in a very inclusive and engaging way.

It was heart-warming to witness the satisfaction each member gained from being in such a supportive space.

I look forward to visiting again; until then, I will continue highlighting the group to other men living with prostate cancer.



# FOCUS ON THERAPIES... MASSAGE

The main philosophy of massage therapy embraces the concept of "aiding the ability of the body to heal itself".

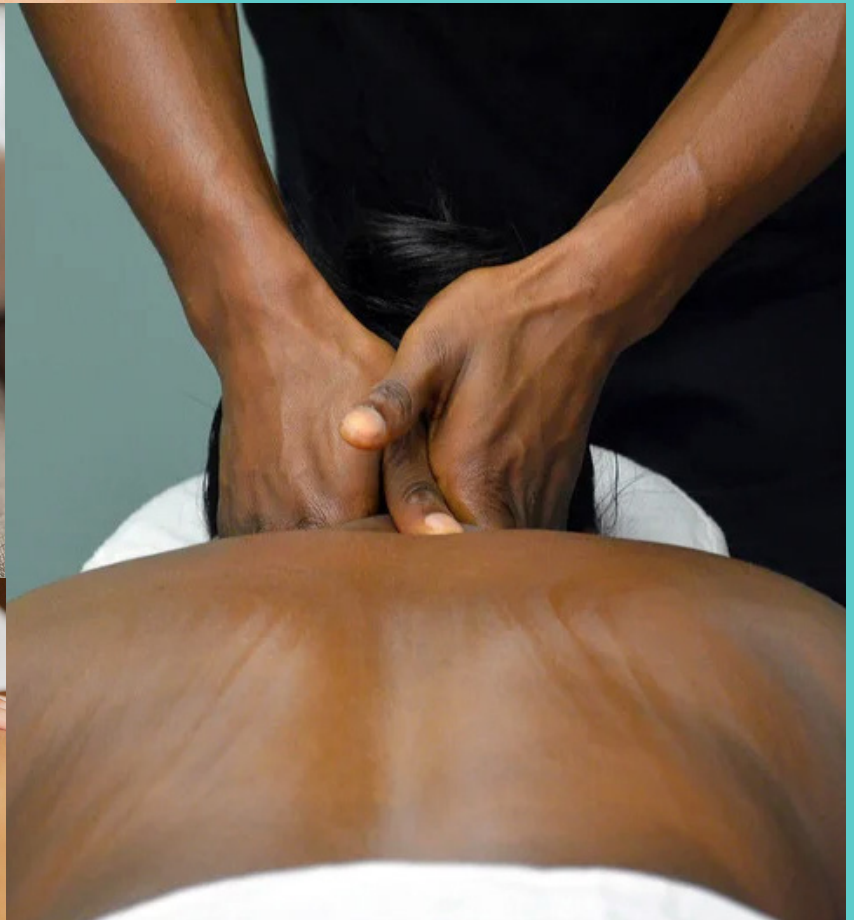
It is a manipulation of the soft tissue by using variety of techniques.

Massage has many benefits, both physical and psychological. It works on many levels, and it is the unique way in which it combines the various benefits to suit the individual that makes it such a versatile and effective treatment method.



It stimulates the release of endorphins, the body's natural painkillers. It improves sleep, blood circulation, mobility, flexibility, lymph flow, supply of oxygen, the immune system, skin elasticity, drainage of waste and toxins, digestive disorders and posture.

It reduces anxiety and stress, ageing, chronic fatigue, migraines and headaches, muscle tension, scar tissue, soreness, inflammation, build-up of cellulite, oedema and fluid retention. It promotes healing and wellbeing.



# SUPPORT GROUPS

Our monthly support groups provide cancer patients and their families with mutual support and the opportunity to talk to those similarly affected

## Prostate Cancer Support Group

The prostate support group met only on Zoom between April 2021 and August 2021. A small core of around twelve men joined these but others were either unable or reluctant, feeling that these online meetings were too impersonal. This dozen or so kept the group ticking over, but the situation was far from ideal.

The Centre decided to trial a face-to-face meeting in September 2021, observing the sanitising and social distancing criteria. An amazing 21 attended that first meeting in person and were delighted to be back. So many had their treatments put on hold, causing worry and stress and were relieved to find they weren't alone. The meetings felt very normal again, averaging around 25 men each month. It is not always the same ones who attend, and they come for information on treatments available and share tips on managing side effects.

Since last April, twenty new men have joined looking for support, some still struggling with their diagnosis and finding it difficult to decide on the best treatment for their situation. Within the group they get a variety of outcomes both good and bad, completely unbiased and learn that the most important thing is to not be rushed into a decision.

Too few doctors are completely honest about possible side effects which in some cases may be life changing!

A huge asset to our group is facilitator Chris Lewis who attends every month and supports both me and the men and happily takes up issues they sometimes have. We are all delighted to be able to be meeting in person again and the strength of the group shows in the camaraderie, humour and empathy they show for each other.

Attending a place where you can discuss absolutely anything without judgement and feeling you are not alone is why support groups are so important.

[terry.garrigan@sechc.org.uk](mailto:terry.garrigan@sechc.org.uk)

## Ovarian Cancer Support Group

In the last year, our meetings have continued on a regular basis. We have continued to meet with a combination of virtual and in-person meetings.

In the Summer of 2021 we held a number of outdoor meetings. Over the winter period 2021/2022, many meetings were held virtually.

[adele.sewell@sechc.org.uk](mailto:adele.sewell@sechc.org.uk)

## Bowel Cancer Support Group

The group continues to flourish with meetings on the first Wednesday of every month between 7pm and 9pm. Following Covid, it was a joy to be able to meet in person again at the Centre and we've also continued these in person meetings on Zoom for those unable to attend the Centre, so allowing members to join in from wherever they are in the UK and even on holiday abroad!

We've formed closer links with Bowel Cancer UK as a result of Catherine Winsor, Director of Services, giving us an update on how they can help, support and work with the Group for the benefit of patients and their families.

Speakers during the year have included:

- Professor Gina Brown, Consultant Radiologist and Professor in Gastrointestinal Imaging at the Royal Marsden Hospital and Imperial College, talking about the past, present and future of imaging and the treatment of bowel cancer.
- Dr Linda Wedlake, the Royal Marsden Hospital and Dr Barbara Engel, Programme Director in Dietetics at Surrey University talking about diet.
- Dr Tom Ingham, Clinical Psychologist, Croydon University Hospital, talking about anxiety.

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](mailto:John.amos@sechc.org.uk)

## Breast Cancer Support Group

The last two years have been very sad with the pandemic. We tried to hold zoom meetings, but we found that the people who were previously happy to come to the group in person, were reluctant to participate online.

Our first face-to-face meeting was on October 19th 2021, with fewer attendees than we're used to, but a great comfort for a very new client who needed support and was very grateful and now comes regularly.

The next was in March 2022 and we had a Tai Chi practice class. We had no meeting in April because of Easter. We met once again in May 2022. The next meeting was in September and we invited a personal trainer to give us advice on how to change our lifestyle and build our immune system with exercise, diet, and meditation. We are looking forward to building up the group still further as we continue to recover from the pandemic disruption.

[mina.shah@sechc.org.uk](mailto:mina.shah@sechc.org.uk)





# VOLUNTEER TESTIMONIALS

*"I joined the Receptionists Team at the South East Cancer Help Centre in January. Although the use of technology was daunting at first, I soon settled into my role. With the help and support of the two coordinators, I was able to perform my various tasks. The Centre is such a friendly and happy place to be. I have really enjoyed meeting the different people who come to work and use the facilities it offers.*

*In a small way I feel that I am helping others by arranging new appointments, answering queries and by generally being welcoming when people arrive. In a very small way, I hope I am making a difference to our local community."*

**Margaret Liddiard**

*"Being a receptionist at the South East Cancer Help Centre is a privilege not a chore.*

*It can take someone courage to call the centre for the first time when they may be upset, frightened, or just need a friendly voice. We aim to be that calming voice at the end of the phone.*

*Being part of the team makes me proud, knowing we are making a difference to people's well-being."*

**Shirley Steele**

*"Since I began volunteering on reception a good while ago it has always been a pleasure to start a shift and see what the day brings.*

*The Covid shutdown was a blow to clients and volunteers alike and, as we have gradually worked back towards full reopening, one of the biggest pleasures has been to catch up with returning clients and learn how they managed through the last two years.*

*It is great to be back."*

**Jill Manns**

*"I have been volunteering at the Centre for some years.*

*Meeting our clients in Reception has been inspirational and working with my colleagues a joy. I feel in a small way, I can contribute to providing a welcome and positive experience to everyone visiting our Centre."*

**Agnes Maxwell**





# COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING

Whilst this has been another difficult year for Community Fundraising, we are so grateful to everyone who has supported us through the challenges of the pandemic and the economic downturn.

Thank you to everyone who has donated to the Centre or collected on our behalf. Without your generous support we would be unable to keep on helping those affected by cancer in the local community.

Our heartfelt thanks to all those who have sadly died and left us legacies in their wills or who requested gifts to be made to the Centre in their memory. These kind donations mean that we can continue to offer our services to more people in the future.

A big thank you to Linda Smith, Lucinda's Boutique and everyone involved with the autumn Fashion Show in September last year. The Surrey National Golf Club kindly provided the function room and

Hannah and Kim from Bolt Burdon and Kemp ran the raffle. This event was a great success, with ticket sales, raffle and donations amounting to almost £10,000 for the Centre. It was such a fun evening, with some very beautiful models strutting their stuff on the catwalk. Unfortunately, some events we had planned last year had to be cancelled due to Covid so we were delighted that the Fashion Show was able to go ahead safely.

Special thanks must go to Diane's Hairdressers for their superb hair styling and make up for the show and for their innovative Covid-safe approach to fundraising with their online raffle which raised over £1,000.

Massive thanks to all our supporters who braved the hot coals for the Fire Walk pictured below. What an amazing experience!

Well done and our enormous thanks to the Old Walcountians who raised a phenomenal amount by taking part in the 100 Km Ultra Challenge

London 2 Brighton Walk in May raising well over £4,000.

Even with some COVID restrictions in place we still made a colourful splash with Paint Purley Purple, and several local schools and businesses also fundraised for us. The Guerrilla Knitting Project led by volunteer Davina continued to make a bold annual impact on Purley Town Centre to raise awareness of the Centre. Thank you very much to everyone who got involved.





# CHARITABLE TRUST INCOME

We faced another extremely challenging year as Covid continued to influence this income stream. A number of trusts either suspended their giving due to lack of funds or were nervous of a downturn in the economic climate. Some preferred to support charities that faced severe pressure on their services due to the pandemic.

However, we were delighted to receive a number of donations from long-term supporters to support the re-opening of the Centre and a generous grant to support our breast cancer patients.

Charitable Trust income faces another uncertain year, but we will be maintaining our relationships with those trusts that are unable to donate at present and will concentrate our efforts on researching new supporters.

We should like to thank those trusts that have been able to help us through another difficult year. The kindness of their trustees is so very much appreciated.



Fashion Showgirls (L-R): Natalie Myers, Claire Pratley, Show Host Julia Roberts and Linda Smith.

# FINANCES

The year ended 31st March 2022 continued to be severely impacted by the Covid pandemic. Though we were able to re-open our main Centre in Purley albeit on a reduced basis, our activity at Croydon University Hospital and the new Wellness Centre in Central Croydon remained closed. We also continued to offer limited services to members either by telephone counselling or through on-line group sessions, though these declined as we were able to commence in-house services in the Centre.

Our membership has declined as the inflow of new patients fell sharply reflecting the lack of appointments at, and referrals from, the local hospitals, together with the curtailment of services we were able to offer. In recent months however, this decline has started to reverse, and we expect to see a significant rise in the coming year.

Our income totalled £192,952 (2020/21: £232,825) and our expenditure was £198,769 (2020/21: £180,275) resulting in a deficit for the year of £5,817 compared to a surplus for the previous year of £52,550. However, without the receipt of £48,000 in legacies, the deficit for the year would have been much greater.

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. In the year under review, apart from our income from legacies, income from all these sources declined markedly, mainly due to a lack of fundraising events caused by the pandemic restrictions and a fall in donations from organisations and Charitable Trusts. 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 82% (2021: 83%) of the total cost. This includes payments for our administrative staff, fees paid to therapists, counsellors and group leaders for the services they provide and the general running costs of the Purley Centre as well as outings and other events. The remaining 18% cost comprises fundraising salaries and governance. Overall, expenditure was higher in the current year due to the re-opening of the Centre in September 2021 thereby increasing the running costs of the facility.

The Centre is now almost back to full capacity, being open on five days during the week. Saturday services will also be restored as the level of demand picks up during this coming year. Our services at Croydon University Hospital have also re-commenced in the last couple of months and we are hoping to start again at the Wellness Centre in Croydon in the near future. We remain committed to maintain and expand the overall level of our services, where beneficial to our members, but the year ahead will be challenging due to concerns regarding the level of income we are able to achieve.

## Financial performance over the year to 31 March 2022

- Total income £192,957
- Net deficit £ 5,817
- Expenditure £198,769

### Where the money has come from:

Donations and gifts – Individuals	17%
Organisations	12%
Gifts in kind	26%
Government grants	
Events income	9%
Membership subscriptions	5%
Membership contributions	5%
Legacies	25%
Interest & investment income	1%

### How the money was spent:

Direct costs	35%
Premises	25%
Other support costs	22%
Fundraising costs	16%
Governance	2%



# TRUSTEES AND STAFF

## PATRONS

Sir Richard Ottaway

Mr Gary Das, MS, FRCS, FRCSUrol (retired)

The Rt Hon Chris Philp MP

## 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

*\* These Trustees are also Members of the Executive Committee*

## STAFF

Kate Pawlowicz, Part-time Centre Coordinator

Natalie Myers, Part-time Centre Coordinator

Liz French, Part-time Fundraiser

Catherine Evans, Part-time Fundraising Administrator

## PATIENT REPRESENTATIVE

John Amos



Kate Pawlowicz



Natalie Myers



Liz French



Catherine Evans

# CONTACT THE CENTRE

South East Cancer Help Centre  
2 Purley Road  
(Tesco Development)  
Purley  
Surrey  
CR8 2HA



020 8668 0974



info@sechc.org.uk



www.sechc.org.uk



Facebook: secancerhelp



Twitter: @secancerhelp



Instagram: @sechc\_purley

Registered Charity Number: 1011509

## Purley Centre Opening Hours

Weekdays 9.00am – 5.00pm  
Tuesdays 9.00am – 8.00pm  
Saturdays 9.00am – 1.00pm

