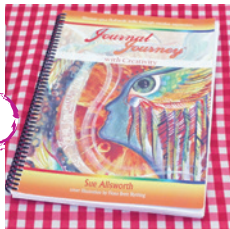


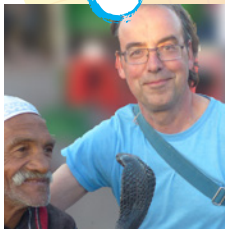
WHAT'S NEW



FEATURED MEMBER



FEATURED THERAPY



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In touch

NEWS

AUTUMN 2019

“ It has been another productive few months for KMSTC. Just for starters, our successful Glitter Run raised a whopping **£10,870** which exceeded expectations. We had over 230 walkers, runners, strollers, and wheelers participate, and received lots of support from the wider community. In addition to the funds raised, it created a buzz on social media and in the press.

The team have been profile-raising and engaging with the wider community for the benefit of the Centre. New community links have been forged including Canterbury Christ Church University, University of Kent, The King's School, Simon Langton Boys' School, Ladies of Leisure, and a number of local Gyms including Energie Fitness, and local businesses including Ashford Cattle Market who have selected us as their charity of the year. As ever, we are incredibly grateful for the generosity shown by our wonderful supporters.

We have also been flying the KMSTC flag and advocating for the MS community within the



medical arena. Karen and I were recently invited to participate in East Kent's NHS Neuro Rehabilitation Service Stakeholder Workshop. We were also invited to the 10th Kent Regional Brain Injury Symposium. It is great that we are invited to participate at these events, to have a voice and a place at the table, not only to raise the profile of the Centre, but also to ensure that the needs of the MS Community are heard at regional discussions.

As the festive season approaches, a timely reminder that the Centre exists to support our MS Community. Contributions towards therapies are suggested and voluntary for our MS Members. It is really important to everyone at KMSTC that MS Members take full advantage of what is on offer here at our wonderful centre and are not hampered by any challenge – financial or otherwise.

Wishing you the very best greetings of the season.

Keziah

Keziah Cunningham, CEO



Pamper Day

As a way of introducing people with MS to all that KMSTC can offer a **Pamper Day** was held on 28 September.

I think we can safely say that a great time was had by all! We had a full house and it was so nice to see people relaxing, chatting together and exchanging contact details. It was a great way to bring people together whilst introducing them to the many benefits of our wonderful Centre.

Our amazing team of volunteers, pictured opposite, provided a delicious, healthy lunch and the group were entertained during lunch by local three-piece band 'Honoured', also pictured opposite. Lead singer and Centre member, **Naomi Honour**, said "When Karen asked our band to play some music during lunch for the KMSTC Pamper Day, we jumped at the chance to help out. We thought it was a great idea for the Centre to host a pamper day, especially



for people who were new to the Centre. It was a great opportunity to show what the therapy Centre has to offer".

Thank you to KMSTC's therapy team who helped ensure everyone was thoroughly pampered!

Thanks also to the following wonderful therapists who volunteered their time and skills so generously on the day: **Sahra Frazer** for the amazing paraffin wax heat treatments she provided – these were extremely popular! Sahra has been a qualified Beauty Therapist for 24 years and has owned her own business since 2000. The treatments Sahra provides in her private clinic vary from waxing, manicures, pedicures to massage slimming treatments and many different types of facials. Sahra creates her own skin/hair care specifically based on her client's requirements. Her products do not contain any parabens or sulphites and are enriched with aromatherapy/essential oils making the products bespoke to each



Our volunteers



Honoured

individual. Sahra said “When I heard the Centre was looking for therapists to volunteer their skills and expertise at a Pamper Day for people with MS I jumped at the chance to get involved. It was my first time at the Centre and I was amazed at what is regularly on offer to help those with MS, in both body and mind. The support the Centre employees and volunteers provide is truly heart warming and beyond impressive. I felt privileged to be a part of the Centre for a short time”

Thanks also to Beauty Therapist **Amy Halford** for providing facial waxing and manicures, to **Liu Hui** for her manicures and nail art and to **Natalie Jemmet** for her barbering skills. Natalie said “I work on the neuro rehabilitation unit at Kent and Canterbury Hospital and I’d heard such great things about the Centre through my work there. I feel lucky that I had the opportunity to help out at the Pamper Day as I got to see that great work for myself. I’m a mobile barber and my focus is on people who may have some difficulty getting to a barber’s shop. The Centre is such a bright calming space – the staff are so kind, friendly and attentive”

We met some lovely people on the day, many of whom have now become members of KMSTC, and we look forward to supporting each and every one of you!



Journaling with Lyndsey

Journaling, it is the ‘purposeful and intentional use of reflective writing to further mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health and wellness.’ Journaling can be used to increase awareness and insight, promote change and growth, and further develop a persons’ sense of self. Through various creative activities, a journaling coach will guide a person towards his or her goals. The act of being creative can relieve tension and can bring clarity to the issue at hand.

KMSTC Member, Jill Tompkins is currently participating in a Journaling course at KMSTC lead by our very own Lyndsey Dilla and here’s what she had to say about it,

“I thoroughly enjoyed the taster session so I decided to take up the course. It made me think about my life and I think the course will enable me to make the changes that I feel are right for me at this time. Lyndsey puts everyone at ease and makes the sessions interesting by a variety of tasks.”

If you’re interested in joining a future course, please express your interest to Reception so that we can gauge numbers.



We’d love to know what you think

Every two years we conduct a survey of our members about the services and support offered by the Centre. The 2017 Survey helped to highlight areas that we could change for the better, which therapies were most valued by our members and the various ways you prefer to be kept up to date on all Centre activities.

To find out more and to complete the 2019 survey, visit our website:
<https://kentmstc.org.uk/kmstc-members-survey-2019/>

FEATURED THERAPY



In the three years since **Juli Stewart** joined KMSTC, she tells us members have found Acupuncture helpful and seen improvement in numbness, tingling, cramp, fatigue, depression, anxiety, rashes, back pain, sciatica, neck and shoulder pain, knee pain, hip pain, neuralgia, migraines, sleep, night sweats, cycle issues and bowel and bladder function.

Acupuncture heals the body by stimulating specific points which improve circulation by dilating the blood vessels. This circulates oxygen more efficiently around the body, which results in decreasing inflammation, stimulating the release of endorphins and encephalons – both of which have pain-relieving properties and improve immune function.

Some members will leave their first treatment feeling better, for others a symptom has lessened by the next day. Others don't see a difference until their fourth or fifth session.

In an Acupuncture session, Juli will ask about any symptoms you are experiencing, how you are feeling in yourself and look at your tongue and take your pulse on both wrists. Ultra-fine needles are gently inserted, often in your arms and legs. Members often don't realise how many needles she has put in! You may experience slight aching, heaviness, tingling or electric sensation traveling along your arm or leg. If any discomfort is experienced, it is usually mild. The needles usually remain in for 20 minutes, during which time you can listen to quiet music or a relaxation CD. Overall, your treatment should be enjoyable and relaxing.

Everyone responds to Acupuncture slightly differently, so a course of treatment is recommended initially (usually once a week

Acupuncture is very relaxing. It doesn't hurt, as the needles are so fine. I would recommend anyone to give it a whirl.

Sandy, member

over four to six weeks) in which time you will know if the therapy is beneficial for you. After achieving results, many people come in once every four weeks for maintenance. Juli will discuss this with you.

Juli has been working in the Health Sector now, for twenty-eight years and practising Acupuncture since 1998.

KMSTC Member, Sandy, says, "Acupuncture has helped me no end, mainly with my migraines. I had been having preventative medicine, but after sessions with Juli, I no longer need the medicine and have also lost the weight that they made me gain.

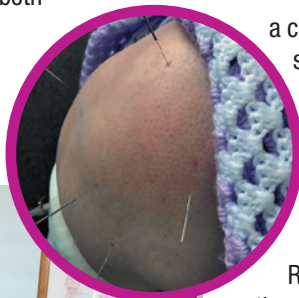
Acupuncture is very relaxing. It doesn't hurt, as the needles are so fine. I would recommend anyone to give it a whirl. I enjoyed my sessions very much and it's so nice to be free of medication and migraines, after many years of suffering".

Another member, Henrietta, says, "I was pleased to find both Acupuncture and Reflexology were available when I joined KMSTC. My Acupuncture sessions with Juli improved my mood and helped with cycle issues. The pain and inflammation in both my knees went after a few treatments so I was able to exercise again."

One of Juli's most frequent visitors is Mrs Rita Turner. She is the first to admit that she had low expectations of achieving any kind of pain relief. She arrived in her wheelchair, suffering from typical MS muscle spasms in both knees and sharp pain in her right knee. She also suffered with raging headaches due to a neck problem caused by whiplash many years prior. Juli put needles in for both symptoms and Rita noticed a change by the next day. Initially her pain relief did not last more than

I love coming for Acupuncture with Juli and look forward to it every week. I rarely have neck ache now, it stops my knees aching and Juli is a lovely, caring person.

Rita Turner

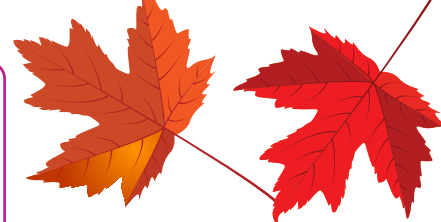


a couple of days but with further treatment she suffered far less. She found it hard to believe! Her headaches subsided as her neck relaxed and she was able to move it again without stiffness or pain. Both knees were far less painful too.

Rita enjoys her sessions immensely as they provide her with a quiet relaxing time while being treated.

"I love coming for Acupuncture with Juli and look forward to it every week. I rarely have neck ache now, it stops my knees aching and Juli is a lovely, caring person."

Originally from Deal, Juli moved north to attend Hull University, graduating with a BA (Hons). She studied Aromatherapy at The London School of Aromatherapy and then Acupuncture, gaining a Licentiate from the College of Traditional Acupuncture, Royal Leamington Spa.



She spent ten years in Central Scotland, where she lectured at Clackmannan College and moving slowly southwards, worked as a clinical supervisor for York Acupuncture College. Throughout this time she set up and established Acupuncture Clinics in each place she lived.

Finally returning to Deal in 2009 to spend time with her father, she moved to Canterbury so her daughter could attend Simon Langton Grammar School and joined KMSTC in October 2016.

"Everyone at the centre was so welcoming when I joined. I've had the pleasure of working with some lovely members, volunteers and staff, many who have since become friends. My passion is listening to the members stories and providing the best possible treatment to help their individual issues."

Juli would love the opportunity to work with you. Acupuncture appointments are available for KMSTC Members with Juli on Friday each week or with our other Acupuncturist Julia on a Monday.

Sessions can be booked at Reception.



FUNDRAISING NEWS



Members supporting fundraising – Kathryn Vera Cruz with halloween basket

We are so lucky to have the support of so many amazing members!

Many of our members get involved in fundraising which is driven by their passion for KMSTC.

Members **Kathryn Vera-Cruz** and **Karen Hill** are two such members. Kathryn and Karen make a great team – Karen is famous for her delicious baked goodies and Kathryn has a knack for getting friends and family on board to support KMSTC and encourages others to fundraise on our behalf too! Kathy is never short of a hamper or two! On special occasions such as Valentine's Day, Easter, Halloween and Christmas Kathy puts the most beautiful hampers together which are raffled at the Centre. The ladies have hosted afternoon teas and coffee mornings in their own homes with the majority of the goodies being baked by Karen. They're both keen to raise awareness of the Centre and have spoken to groups explaining the importance of KMSTC to those with MS. Kathy said "My husband Tony and I have been coming to the Centre since 2016, shortly after his diagnosis of MS. Tony gets a great deal of benefit from the therapies and support available. The Centre is an integral part of our lives now, and both of us have made some very good friends here – it's like an extended family providing a relaxed environment where we can discuss any issues or concerns that we have with people who understand the pressures of living with MS"

Thank you to the Anchor Inn at Wingham – what a team!



If you're passing through Wingham be sure to pop in and say hello to Michelle and Kevin – we have it on good authority that the atmosphere is wonderful, the food is delicious and the bands they have are always really popular!

KMSTC was delighted to receive a cheque for **£1,322** from Landlord and Landlady Kevin and Michelle Abbott along with staff and customers at the Anchor Inn at Wingham.

Each year the pub chooses two local charities to support and, as several regulars at the Anchor have MS, the team were very aware of the difference the Centre makes.

The money was raised in a variety of ways between August 2018 to 2019 including: sweepstakes, lottery bonus ball, poker nights, conker competition, bat and trap and pétanque pairs competition, garden boot fairs, garden cinema show, children's games day, Christmas raffle, carol service and quiz nights to name but a few.

MS Support Manager, Karen Middlemiss, pictured above with Landlady Michelle Abbott and fundraisers David Ivatt and Cliff Meader said, "It was great to meet the team and hear all about how they encourage customers to get involved with their fundraising."

Have you thought about Counselling?

“Having some sessions with Avril the Centre’s Counsellor, was probably the best thing my husband and I did. I hadn’t realised I was carrying so much baggage and worry on my shoulders about my MS and how it was affecting me until I started to talk and express myself. I now feel so much lighter and happier. I also hadn’t realised how much my MS was affecting my husband – he had never really talked to anyone about his feelings, until we saw Avril. We now feel we can do this MS journey together as a couple and without the unnecessary concerns and worries that MS throws at us.

My final words would be ‘it’s definitely good to talk!’” KMSTC Member

“On diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis you are overwhelmed with information in the form of leaflets and booklets etc. I was so overwhelmed I read next to none of them, my knowledge of MS had gone from nothing before diagnosis to next to nothing. Using the counselling service at the Centre just after diagnosis was the best thing I did and I would whole heartedly recommend to anyone newly diagnosed.”
Christian Rolfe, KMSTC Member

Counselling is a service that is provided free to our members and their close family who have been affected by a diagnosis of MS.

Counselling provides a setting where confidentiality is respected and where you can be supported in clarifying what is important to you in your life through an exploration of feelings, thoughts and meaning particular to you. A new diagnosis or making life changing decisions such as leaving your working life are just some of the situations brought to counselling. Effective counselling employs active listening and empathic responding to attempt to enable you to work towards a resolution to your concerns.

Humanistic Counselling is non-directive and respects the autonomy of the individual and their innate ability to find their own solutions.

KMSTC’s counselling service is available to any member, not just those who are newly diagnosed.

If you would like to learn more about counselling and how it could help you and your family, please speak to Reception to make an initial appointment or contact MS Support Manager Karen Middlemiss in confidence kmiddlemiss@kentmstc.org or 01227 470 876.

Meet Avril Hooker

KMSTC counsellor



I am a qualified Person Centred/ Humanistic counsellor working with people with MS for some 12 years and through my previous career have a working knowledge of concerns around social care. I find my role challenging at times, but I am aware that I am also constantly learning about how courageously people deal with very immense difficulties in their lives and the effect this can have on their close relationships.

Could you be an APS Therapist?

Action Potential Simulation (APS) is a drug-free therapy promoting pain relief and healing that has given great results for many KMSTC Members. It is a simple therapy that involves the application of small electrodes that pass a micro-current through the body, stimulating nerves and creating an increase of specific neurohormones such as melatonin and leucine enkephalin reducing anxiety, pain, and aiding sleep.

We are keen to recruit and train a number of new APS Therapists so we can deliver even more sessions of this useful treatment. If you could spare a few hours a week as a Volunteer Therapist, or would like to know more please get in touch with MS Support Manager Karen Middlemiss on 01227 470 876 or kmiddlemiss@kentmstc.org

Inundated with radio and television interest and attention

It has been an extremely busy summer for Robotic research team at K&C Hospital.

Not only have they been working intensively on their clinical research into balance using a robotic exoskeleton, but they have had a lot of interest from regional and national media, keen to learn about this pioneering trial.

Rapper 4 Robotic Research Trial Update!

On 6 September, **Karen Saunders**, Consultant Clinical & Research Neuro-physiotherapist, and **Dr Mohammed Sakel**, Principal Investigator and East Kent Hospitals Neuro-rehabilitation Director, were invited onto ITV's This Morning



Karen Saunders and Dr Mohammed Sakel.

with **Eamonn Holmes** and **Ruth Langsford**, to explain a little about their research and demonstrate a trial exercise with a wonderful participant, **Steve**, who travelled over 100 miles to take part in the trial.

Despite the high summer temperatures, which particularly affected his strength and balance, Steve was able to achieve his personal goal of being able to walk his daughter down the aisle at her wedding in August after taking part in the trial. The show had over 1 million viewers and prompted much interest in the project.

In quick succession KMTV interviewed KMSTC MS Support Manager, **Karen Middlemiss**, along with Dr Sakel, Meridian ITV interviewed another MS participant along with the research team and The Times published a heart-warming story <http://bit.ly/rapper4article>

Karen Saunders & Dr Sakel are delighted that so many regional and national groups and organisations have shown interest and supported the trial. The BBC South East broadcast is now viewable on VIMEO <https://vimeo.com/360310750>

KMSTC Member, Denise Bottle is excited to be taking part in the trial...



Denise Bottle, KMSTC member

MS Support Manager Karen Middlemiss caught up with Denise to hear

about her experience of the trial so far.

"I read an article about the trial in the Centre's newsletter and thought it sounded really interesting," explained Denise, "I contacted Karen Saunders and she invited me to Kent and Canterbury Hospital to see if I met the trial criteria. I had to walk eight metres to be eligible then I was measured up to see if 'Rex' would fit me.

After carefully measuring me and setting 'Rex' up, it was time for me to get in. It was a snug fit and I had to wiggle a bit to get further inside the machine. Karen strapped me in then

checked and double-checked that everything was as it should be. Karen operated the joystick and 'Rex' stood up. It felt very strange as I've become accustomed to using my arms a lot when trying to stand since my MS has progressed, but 'Rex' got me up with very little effort from me. Karen assured me that everything was in alignment and I felt very safe.



Karen Middlemiss, Karen Saunders, Steve & Dr Sakel

It felt great: I stood for about 10 minutes absolutely pain free! Karen sat me back down using the joystick to operate 'Rex' and she released all the straps.

Of 20 people enrolled in the trial I'm participant number 19! I'm really looking forward to making a start in November and excited about the prospect of walking and exercising in the robot! It will be a wonderful way to help people who are in wheelchairs to stand up and be mobile once again. I think it might be good for wheelchair users who have recurring urinary tract infections by standing up so that the urine doesn't sit in the bladder (that's only my opinion!)

Dr Sakel said he is hoping to present results in seminars in America and UK where he hopes to get some support so that one device can be donated to KMSTC. I feel really privileged to be taking part in this exciting trial".

Say hello
to Tracey
Blackman,
Travel Counsellor



As an independent franchisee, I have the freedom to work in the way that suits me and my clients, but with the back-up of a first-rate support service that is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. If one of my clients has the slightest problem or concern, they know that someone is on hand to help them.”

I have developed a real love for booking accessible travel for people with varying degrees of disability.

Tracey Blackman, Travel Counsellor

After 24 years at Thomas Cook, **Tracey Blackman** decided to specialise, becoming a Travel Counsellor, and for the last two years she has made regular visits to KMSTC to help our Members feel secure that they will be well looked after while they're away.

“I have developed a real love for booking accessible travel for people with varying degrees of disability. Everything from ensuring accessible hotel rooms, airport transfers to specialist insurance and assistance end-to-end if required,” explains Tracey, “I don't leave anything to chance either. I phone hotels, airports and taxi services. I get it in writing to make absolutely certain that ramps, lifts, or whatever is needed, will be in place and that people understand what's required of them.

Tracey has helped people to book some amazing trips, including a first-time trip to New York for a stroke victim who had been left feeling very low by his health issues, “New York was a dream destination for him, but his confidence was at an all-time low and his family were also feeling very concerned about the strain such a visit would place on them. It was such a pleasure to be able to reassure him that New York is a very accessible destination. Restaurants, hotels and visitor attractions invariably offer support for those with mobility difficulties and there is a good range of accessible transport. They even booked a hire car and explored the country a little further afield. It was the trip of a lifetime!”

So, what are the most popular holidays for those seeking an accessible option?

“River cruises can be challenging as the boats always have stairs to negotiate, but Ocean Cruises are a different proposition – they are wheelchair friendly, afford easy access to all

the onboard facilities and are a lovely way to take in the sights all over the world. There's no packing and unpacking between destinations, food and entertainment is within easy reach – it's no surprise that Ocean Cruises are the 'go to' option for KMSTC members.”

Tracey's knowledge is encyclopaedic – and she takes enormous pride in really looking after her customers for no more than the cost of a high street travel agent. Indeed, she once discovered that the hotel that she had booked a couple of clients into had closed – the couple were mid-flight to their destination at the time. So, while they were in the air, Tracey found alternative accommodation and re-arranged the transfers so that it was all ready for the moment they landed. How's that for personal service?

Tracey is in the Centre on a monthly basis and all are welcome to have a chat about travel plans. Outside of her visits, feel free to email **tracey.blackman@travelcounsellors.com**.



Watercolours for Beginners

These sessions are proving to be extremely popular with our members. Some beautiful pieces of artwork have been created and these will be exhibited at the Centre in the near future!

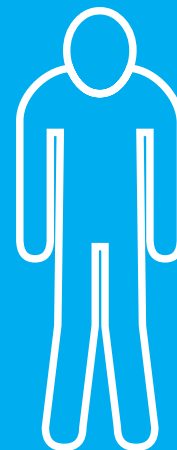
The next class will take place on 27 November 1.30-3.30pm. Places are free and all materials are provided. Pre-booking is essential by contacting Reception.

Fatigue Management Information Session

Following the success of our **Fatigue Management Information** session with **Nikki Guck**, Extended Scope Physiotherapist in MS, another session will be held on Thursday 27 February 2020 at 1.45-2.45pm.

Ninety-seven percent of MS patients experience fatigue, and this can have a huge impact on quality of life. Many people describe fatigue as being their most difficult symptom to cope with.

Please join us for this session and learn some top tips on how to manage fatigue. Places must be pre booked at Reception on 01227 470 876.



Calling all Bookworms – KMSTC First Ever Book Club!

Associate Member and former Occupational Therapist, **Lucy Hart**, has very kindly offered to run a Book Club at KMSTC for all members!

Lucy said “I experienced huge benefit from High Dose Oxygen Therapy and I’d really like to give something back to say thank you for all the support I received during a very difficult period”. The first Book Club meeting will be on Wednesday 4 December 2.00-3.00pm and will meet monthly thereafter. The first book the group will be reading is ‘The 100 Year Old Man Who Climbed Out of the Window and Disappeared’ by Jonas Jonasson. The books will be provided where possible. Book Club members will be encouraged to bring their suggestions for future reading along to the Book Club.

Places are free but must be pre booked by calling Reception on 01227 470 876.

KMSTC NEWS



The meetings take place every other month and Robert has kindly agreed to run 2 meetings in January – Tuesday 15 and Wednesday 16 to enable those who attend the Centre on different days to take part.

KMSTC's Carers Meet Up

We are delighted to report that our first ever Carers' Meet Up session held at KMSTC was a huge success!

Lots of useful information was exchanged and those who attended found it very worthwhile. Member Robert Moon who is carer to his wife Anne came up with the idea of getting carers together to discuss various topics of interest and value. If you are new to a caring role or have been a carer for some time, please do feel free to drop in and join the group. Some of those who attended the first meeting said:

"I found the recent carers meeting useful and it was really good to meet and speak to others in a position similar to my own"

"It would be good to talk about and have someone go over the more practical things that can help us in our role as carers, but I think I'm getting a lot out of just talking with the rest of the group. It's good to know I'm not the only one out there"

"The meeting provided me with food for thought and actually made me feel that there are others in a worse position than me, both financially and in terms of health"



Are you new to KMSTC and would like to meet other members?

We know that stepping through the doors of any well-established organisation, including KMSTC, for the first few times can feel a little bit daunting.

We sometimes get the feeling that everyone knows each other apart from us! Not all of us are confident enough to sit ourselves down among a group of people and introduce ourselves. If this sounds like you, or, if you're a member who would like to extend a warm friendly welcome to other members then please do come along to our **New Member Meet Up** on Wednesday 11 January from 12.00-2.00pm. Whether you're newly diagnosed with MS or have a longer-term diagnosis, if you're new to KMSTC or still feel like a newbie after some time then why not join us?

Just let Reception know you will be coming on 01227 470 876.

Support for those with hidden disabilities rolled out at UK Airports

A new lanyard for passengers with hidden disabilities, first introduced at Gatwick Airport, is set to be rolled out to other UK airports following a successful trial over the summer.

The number of passengers with hidden disabilities requesting assistance at Gatwick Airport has risen by 47% year-on-

year since the launch of the voluntary lanyard as passengers and their families feel more confident about flying or requesting assistance at the airport.

The introduction of a distinctive sunflower lanyard for passengers with hidden disabilities enables travellers to discreetly identify themselves to staff to ensure tailored help and support can be offered throughout their journey.

If you are wearing the lanyard, staff should recognise it and understand that you have a hidden disability and that you may need a little extra help or time. However, they will not know what your particular disability is, or what challenges and issues you may face. If you have specific requirements, just ask a member of staff for help.

To pick up a lanyard at Gatwick, go to one of the assistance reception areas where staff will be happy to give you a lanyard, even if you haven't requested one in advance.



Nails by Laura Deveson

Following requests from some of our members we are delighted to announce that we have a nail technician visiting the Centre every other Saturday. **Laura Deveson** provides manicures and pedicures with gel nails.

Laura's Price List:

- Gel Nails – £15
- Gel Toes – £20
- Gel Removal + Gel Reapplication – £20
- Manicure – £10
- Pedicure – £15

Dates available:
Saturdays 3, 7, 13, 21 December

Bookings should be made at Reception.



FEATURED MEMBER

Gary Marsh



Hello everyone!

New member, **Gary Marsh**, shares his experiences of life with MS and what KMSTC means to him.



It was while working as an Economics and Business Teacher and Head of Department at a school in Folkestone that Gary first realised something wasn't right. He felt he was struggling with his heavy workload and started to notice problems with balance, numbness and a loss of strength in his limbs. By the time he visited his GP, Gary was already pretty convinced he had MS. When he presented his Doctor with his conclusions, he was swiftly booked for an MRI.

"On reflection, I think I'd been suffering with benign MS from the early 90s, including symptoms like optic neuritis, which seems to be a common first sign. When the diagnosis finally came in 2012 it was a

I have tried a number of therapies and find that Oxygen Therapy is the most helpful. But, for me, the sense of belonging is the most important thing.

Gary Marsh, member



tremendous relief: finally I had an explanation," says Gary, "I retired in 2014 and have spent the last five years satisfying my thirst for travel and adventure. I have toured a variety of countries in Africa and Asia including Kenya, Morocco and Vietnam. For charity I have jumped out of a plane, been white-water rafting in Scotland and sailed aboard the yacht Oceans of Hope from Barcelona to Portsmouth as part of a circumnavigation to raise awareness of the importance of us 'Warriors' overcoming personal challenges."

Gary found out about Kent MS Therapy Centre through his local YUMS group but initially put off the idea of making a visit, "When I finally made the trip to Canterbury, I wondered why I'd waited. The welcome, the friendships and the company of others who understand my illness is invaluable. I am certain that just being part of the Centre community is slowing down the progression of the disease. I have tried a number of therapies and find that Oxygen Therapy is the most helpful. But, for me, the sense of belonging is the most important thing".

Gary certainly hasn't let the grass grow under his feet since retiring, in fact he's written a book about his exploits called *Carpe Diem*, which can be downloaded from Amazon.

"I have four, now adult, children who have encouraged me to be an activist, supporting climate change protests and recently I joined Extinction Rebellion Disabled Rebels. I spent January living on a commune in India where my son is a director of a reforestation programme demonstrating that we can all happily live together by taking a different path! I returned with memories of the joy of community living so finding KMSTC can only be described as 'serendipity' due to the numerous similarities. Everyone is made to feel immediately welcome by the warm and dedicated staff and amazing members. Meeting so many brave warriors together with their warm and selfless carers has been wonderful and sobering. Discussing health issues in an open and non-judgemental way has been so refreshing and uplifting."

Gary is a regular visitor to the Centre, do introduce yourself to him and have a chat. As Gary would say, carpe diem!



Have you been prescribed Disease Modifying Therapies and willing to share your experience with others considering them?

For some, making the decision to take **Disease Modifying Therapies** can feel somewhat overwhelming, if not a little daunting.

Trying to sift your way through the mountain of information to enable you to make an informed decision on your preferred choice is not always easy. Having to weigh up the risks versus the benefits can be a stressful process for some. We often meet members who are offered DMTs who would like to connect with others on similar therapies.

If you're on DMTs and you would be willing to chat to others about your experience, then please let MS Support Manager, Karen Middlemiss, know by email at kmiddlemiss@kentmstc.org or by calling 01227 470 876



Trouble Gripping? Look what we have!

If you have problems with a poor grip, please feel free to try our **Active Hands** gripping gloves which are currently kept in the gym. Using the Active Hands gloves enables members to have a more secure grip on the rims of wheelchairs for example, on the Centre's multi gym and other pieces of equipment. Member, **Martin Lawrie** has tried it out on the multi gym and is very impressed – he's now able to complete his exercises more effectively without his hand slipping off the bar.

A Warm Welcome to Bev Callaghan

Please extend a warm welcome to the lovely Bev Callaghan who joined KMSTC in August as Trusts and Foundations Fundraiser.

Bev, who works part-time from Tuesdays to Fridays has joined the fundraising team to help deliver KMSTC's target of over £150,000 a year secured from charitable trusts and foundations.



Building on previous successes we've enjoyed in attracting funding from organisations such as The Roger De Haan Charitable Trust, The Childwick Trust and the People's Postcode Lottery, to name but a few, Bev brings substantial experience in the whole process of identifying potential funders, preparing applications and then providing ongoing 'stewardship' of the funding to ensure that KMSTC gets best value for money and, just as importantly, can demonstrate the real value donations make to our members.

"The Trustees identified that in order to make KMSTC more sustainable, we needed to focus our effort on the untapped potential that exists with local, regional and national trusts and foundations, and that's where I come in", explains Bev. "My job starts with researching potential funders and matching their funding priorities with our own needs, in other words,

There's quite a knack to explaining things with clarity without losing the passion that we all share for the work of our charity.

Bev Callaghan

filtering the long list of funders down to those most likely to support us."

"Many funders are happy to support specific projects, activities or therapies, but we also need to work with those who will support our core costs – keeping the lights on and the bills paid."

"Writing a strong funding application is quite an undertaking and demands knowledge of everything from the experiences of our members through to accounting and finance, monitoring project delivery and submitting evaluation reports to demonstrate the impact of our funders' contributions."

"I always laugh when an application form says, 'Tell us about your project in no more than 100 words' and I look at my four-sides of A4 project briefing!" smiles Bev. "There's quite a knack to explaining things with clarity without losing the passion that we all share for the work of our charity."

Bev joins us after a varied career which includes experience of community development work where she cut her teeth on writing funding bids in partnership with small community projects. After moving to Kent and getting married in 1995, Bev changed direction and took a professional qualification in Personnel,

where she worked in both the charity and public sectors, before moving into her first role as a trust fundraiser for local charity, Porchlight.

A keen walker, Bev is a member of the local Ramblers group and often leads walks through our beautiful countryside. She also walks the two miles to work at KMSTC most days. Her husband, Alan, is now retired, and Bev tells us that she relishes her Mondays at home annoying him! We're sure that's not really the case though!

How can members help Bev?

Apart from saying hello next time you're at the Centre, Bev is very keen to hear your stories of how KMSTC has helped you. From specific case studies on the value of particular therapies, through to the power of the KMSTC community – the support, friendship and help that everyone offers so freely. Also, if any members, supporters or friends of the Centre have any contacts at local charitable trusts and would be willing to introduce Bev, that could be tremendously beneficial. You can drop Bev a line via email bcallaghan@kentmstc.org.



I got a real sense of satisfaction being able to volunteer at such a wonderful organisation that makes such a difference to people's lives.

Paul Sequenza, Wickes employee

Wickes, Ashford – Thank You!

You may have seen the article about the oxygen therapy chamber refurbishment in the Summer edition of In Touch, thanks to a generous donation by **The Mark Benevolent Fund**.

To complete the look, Wickes in Ashford very generously donated a brand-new sink, worktop, taps, cupboards and splashback! This replaces the old sink which looked

very industrial. Wickes employee and friend of KMSTC Paul Sequenza very kindly gave up his time on his days off along with his friend Julian to install all the items. The new sink and surround look extremely smart and modern and we've had excellent feedback from our Members, chamber users and oxygen chamber operators.

Paul said, "When MS Support Manager Karen Middlemiss asked me if Wickes could support the Centre I spoke to Clare, our Store Manager, who didn't hesitate to arrange it with our Area Manager. It was such a pleasure to arrange this donation and to be a part of the installation. It was great to meet some of the Centre members and volunteers who looked after Julian and I with several cups of tea. I got a real sense of satisfaction being able to volunteer at such a wonderful organisation that makes such a difference to people's lives".

FUNDRAISING NEWS



Daredevil pensioner takes to the skies

Taking to the skies to do a charity tandem skydive is not everyone's first choice of a fundraiser but for Centre member, **Chris Pinn**, it was an item on his bucket list that just had to be done.

Not content with volunteering at supermarket collections, Chris who is 75 and has MS, decided to jump into the skies at Headcorn Airfield to raise money for the Centre he regularly uses.

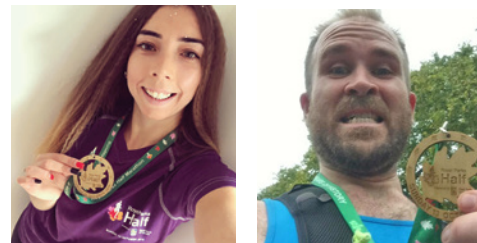
As Chris himself said: "When I saw two people do the tandem skydive last year, I thought that I should give it a go! What a way to raise much-needed funds for the Kent MS Therapy Centre."

Chris raised **£555** to help fund the many therapies offered at the Centre such as High Dose Oxygen Therapy, a weekly highlight of his.

"All the staff from top to bottom are so pleasant and will always go out of their way to be of assistance. The surroundings of the Centre also seem to give a lift to visitors, everyone in a different stage of MS, as they are always cheerfully going about their activity."

Royal Parks Half Marathon

We're so happy to announce that our TEAM KMSTC runners who took on the Royal Parks Half Marathon in October have already raised more than **£2,700** for our charity with more to come! We had 6 runners take to the streets of London as sadly four participants had to pull out due to injury or other personal circumstances. The remaining individuals who all completed the 13.1 mile race were: Alicia Lilley, Hayley Turrell, Amber Ainsworth, Naomi Honour, Kate Bosley and Benjamin Newell.





New Outdoor Shed

We'd like to thank the **Chartway Group** and **Steton Hoarding and Fencing** for donating and installing a brand new shed to house gardening equipment, including our mower. We think it looks great and are extremely grateful for this generous gift.

School's fundraising brings in the pounds!



We are absolutely delighted to have received a donation for **£1,610.15** from **The King's School, Canterbury** after their students took part in a range of fundraising activities in aid of our Centre. Activities included a swimming gala, collection boxes for loose change and other sundry donations. A huge thank you to all those involved for raising this fantastic amount.



We're passionate about
fulfilling
residents' **lives**

Our new Ashford care home,
Montfort Manor is now open.

To find out more about living
at Montfort Manor, call us on
01233 884677 or email
cheryl.shorter@careuk.com

Montfort Manor care home
Kennington Road, Willesborough,
Ashford, Kent TN24 0YS (Sat nav. TN24 0LZ)
careuk.com/montfort-manor



Join us for this year's

Christmas Ball

There's still time to book your tickets for our annual Christmas Ball which takes place at Broome Park Hotel, Barham on Saturday 7 December.

It promises to be a wonderful evening and is the perfect way to get into the Christmas spirit. Guests will enjoy a welcome drink on arrival, three-course meal, live music, raffle, auction and plenty of other fun.

Find out more and to book your ticket or table:

<https://kentmstc.org.uk/event/christmas-ball-2>

Trust donations

Our fundraising successes continue! A huge thank you to the following trusts and foundations for their most generous support of our work:

- In September, **Henry Smith Charity** awarded us a grant of **£7,500** towards oxygen therapy. The charity was set up in 1628 by a City of London businessman and is one of the UK's largest (as well as one of the oldest) independent grant makers.
- In May we applied to **Kent Community Foundation's** 'Vulnerable Adults' themed fund for a grant towards our hydrotherapy services: we are delighted to say that

The Lawson Endowment for Kent awarded us **£4,000** as a result of our application.

- We have also recently been awarded **£800** from **Saga Charitable Trust** towards our physiotherapy and hydrotherapy services.
- Many thanks also to local funder **The Community of the Presentation Trust** for their kind donation of **£2,000** towards our running costs.



Member **Lyndsey Dilla** is always looking for opportunities to raise funds for the Centre since being diagnosed with MS.

Lyndsey has been growing her hair for some time now and has decided to seek sponsorship to have 10 inches of her long lustrous locks cut off! This will take place at the Christmas Bingo Night on 13 December. If you would like to sponsor Lyndsey please use the form on Reception.

Fancy taking on a running challenge in 2020?

We currently have charity places available for the **Vitality Big Half Marathon** which takes place in London on Sunday 1 March 2020 and the **Brighton Marathon** on Sunday 19 April 2020. If you're interested in securing one of these places and raising sponsorship for our charity, please contact Moira in the fundraising team on mmitchell@kentmstc.org or 01227 200793.



A night of bingo goes down a storm

In September, the Centre's new Social Committee, held their first event – a **Bingo Night** – and it's fair to say, it went down an absolute treat!

A huge thank you to **David, Sheila, Lyndsey** and **Louise** for organising the event, and to **Anthea** for making the delicious food which everyone enjoyed so much!

A brilliant amount of money was raised totalling **£613.35** and lots of fun was had by members, families and friends. The Committee's next social event will be an extra special **Christmas Bingo Night**, which is scheduled to take place on Friday 13 December. Christmas fancy dress

is strongly encouraged, so do start planning your favourite festive outfits!

To book your ticket contact Reception or Sarah/Vicky in the fundraising office.



Glitter Run
raises
£10,870
for KMSTC!



Well what can we say – apart from **a huge thank you** to all the ‘sparkly’ runners who attended our first ever Glitter Run at the University of Kent, Canterbury in October.

The fundraising team had an amazing time, the runners came out in force and the rain even stayed away. Plus, we raised an amazing **£10,870** from this, our first ever mass participation event, so we couldn’t have been any happier.

It was such a great, fun event and from the feedback we’ve had so far, it seems everyone had a blast and would like us to repeat it again next year. So, the good news is, we’ve secured Sunday 11 October 2020, same venue at the University of Kent!

Thanks again for ensuring our **Making Glitter Strides** for MS event was such a success. We are truly grateful to our volunteers, the participants and to the companies that sponsored an aspect of the day. They were:

- HRGO
- Fitzgerald Jewellers
- Furley Page Solicitors
- Chandelier Bar Event Company
- Girling Solicitors
- St Edmund’s School
- Ashford International Hotel
- Chimera Climbing
- Canterbury Lions Club
- Wingham Well Spring

Dates for your diary...

Stay up-to-date by checking our website and Facebook pages for information, as new events are added all the time.



VITALITY BIG HALF MARATHON

Sunday 1 March 2020
Tower Bridge, London

We have charity places up for grabs!

- Dedicated support and encouragement to keep you motivated
- A fundraising pack including sponsorship form

*Participants taking part are required to raise £250 for KMSTC.
Contact Moira at mmitchell@kentmstc.org requesting an application form*



Free KMSTC
technical
running
vest

BRIGHTON MARATHON

Sunday 19 April 2020
Brighton

Exciting running event
in one of Britain's
most vibrant cities.

Everyone taking
part for KMSTC is
required to raise £500
in sponsorship for
our charity.



Free KMSTC
technical
running
vest



Monday 25 May 2020
St James' Park
London

The 10 km race starts
on The Mall and finishes
opposite Buckingham
Palace.

Everyone taking part for
KMSTC is required to
raise £150 in
sponsorship for
our charity.

Free KMSTC
technical
running
vest

NIGHTRIDER 2020



Saturday 6 June 2020
Olympic Park, London

This fun filled charity cycle ride is about
taking on the challenge and seeing the
sights – it's not a race and it's not timed.

Participants are required to raise £175
for KMSTC.

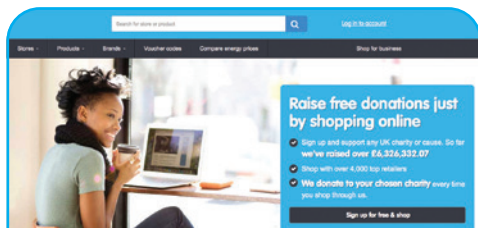
CHARITY GOLF DAY



Friday 3 July 2020

Broome Park Golf Course, Canterbury
Swing into action for a great cause on
this beautiful golf course overlooking the
wonderful Grade 1 listed Jacobean Mansion
House. Teams of four players.

- Bacon rolls/tea and coffee
- 18 holes of golf
- One-course lunch
- Prizes, charity raffle and auction



Shop online and help us for free

If you shop online, please think about making purchases through www.giveasyoulive.com. It has thousands of stores, including most of the high street names. It doesn't cost you a penny more, and your chosen charity gets a percentage of what you spend. So far, £2,713.98 has been raised for the KMSTC this way and we have 137 supporters.



It costs just under £600k a year to keep our Centre running. Every penny counts – can you help?

How to donate:

Online: Go to www.justgiving.com/Kentmstc (or visit directly from our website by clicking the 'Donate' button).

You can also donate in other ways:

- Send us a cheque
- Give As You Live
- Join our Lottery
- Volunteering
- Via Ebay when selling an item
- Donating goods to our charity shop
- Leave us a legacy
- Savoo

If you're a UK tax payer, make sure to Gift Aid your donation.

See kentmstc.org.uk/fundraising/donate-to-kmstc for more information.



Get in touch with KMSTC

Find us at: Bradbury House, Merton Lane North Canterbury, Kent CT4 7DZ

Call us: 01227 470876

Email us: info@kentmstc.org

Kent MS Therapy Centre is open:

Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm
Saturday, 8am to 1pm.

facebook.com/KentMSTherapyCentre

twitter.com/KentMSTC

www.instagram.com/kentmstherapy

Kent MS Therapy Centre is a registered charity.
Registered charity number: 801382
Registered company number: 2339750

Chair of Trustees: Sharon Wilding

Patron: Rob Key

Please add our email addresses to your contact list so our emails don't get trapped in your spam filter.

Data protection – *Please rest assured that any contact information we have for you is held in the strictest confidence. We do not sell or share your details with anyone.*