

IN TOUCH

The Kent MS Therapy Centre's Quarterly Newsletter



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OF LONDON

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EMILY AND KATIE

MEET OUR MEMBERS -
GLEN LAWSON

YORKSHIRE 3 PEAKS

Hi from Heidi!



I am delighted to be writing my first article for the newsletter as CEO of the Centre. As I said at the AGM, it is an honour to have been asked to lead the Centre and one that I will truly embrace. The Centre very quickly became my second home when I joined the Fundraising Team in November 2021 and I can honestly say that I have never looked back. I know that Spencer's departure has been difficult for many members and staff and that it has caused some worry and uncertainty.

Please be assured that I intend to continue building on our firm foundations that Spencer put in place, taking care of the Centre and the charity with member's interests at the heart. Thank you to all of you that have warmly welcomed me in to the new role, it has been much appreciated and I look forward to working together as we move forwards.

I am really pleased to have been able to welcome new members of staff in October. It has been fantastic to rebuild the physiotherapy team, now led by Clare Triggs, with the addition of Emily Whyard and Katie Carroll. Chris Betts and Caroline Lyons are working closely with the team and Nikki Guck will be returning to us before the end of the year. I look forward to seeing the team take shape and developing the physiotherapy provision for the benefit of you all.

Many of you have been taking part in various challenge events such as the Yorkshire 3 Peaks and Royal Parks Half Marathon since the summer, working hard to raise money for the Centre. Thank you to all of you that take part in these events for us – we really are very grateful. I am now starting to think about taking on a big challenge for 2024 – watch this space!

Hopefully many of you have had the opportunity to have a look at the new upstairs space at the Centre. We are now officially open for business! I am sure you will agree that it has been a transformation. I would like to thank the Kent Social Enterprise Loan Fund, administered by Kent Community Foundation, for providing us with financial assistance for this development. It will make a huge difference to the operations of the Centre.

I would like to sign off by congratulating our members Catherine and Benedict on the recent announcement of their engagement. We are all delighted for you and wish you the very best as you look to the future together.

As always, thanks to all of you for your continued support for the Centre. We are fortunate to have so many wonderful members and supporters.





Team KMSTC take on Yorkshire 3 Peaks

A group of eight travelled to Yorkshire to take on the Yorkshire 3 Peaks at the end of September to raise funds for the Kent MS Therapy Centre. The team completed the challenge in eleven and a half hours, they walked **24 miles** (38.6km) and climbed 1,585m (5,200ft) of ascent. The team consisted of the charity CEO Heidi Coleman, her 15-year-old daughter and 74-year-old father as well as the Chair of Trustees of the charity James Limmer who was celebrating his birthday on the day. Completing the team was the charity's Fundraising and Communications Officer Mia Bernthal, her partner Andy, and brother and sister team Rosie and Jack Eastwood. The total raised is over an amazing **£5,000** including gift aid.

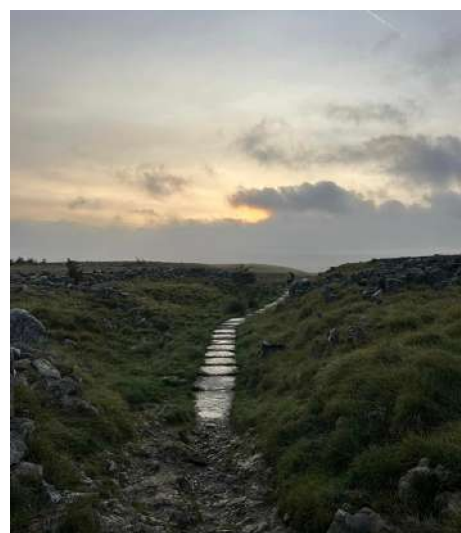
Starting bright and early at 6.30am, led by Mountain Leader Danny Crump, the team set off from Horton-in-Ribblesdale to climb Ingleborough. This took them in the opposite direction to hundreds of other intrepid charity walkers, so they spent the day almost alone in the countryside.

After refreshing at the first checkpoint after the first peak, the real challenge started for the team as the clouds lifted and they could see second peak (Whernside) and just how high they had to climb. On the descent, they crossed paths with all of the other walkers as it was the halfway point. The final checkpoint was at the beautiful Ribbleshead Viaduct and the team refueled ready to take on the mammoth ten mile walk to the final peak.

Dressed for the weather as the rain started around midday to dampen spirits, the team kept motivated in the knowledge that they just had one last peak (Pen-y-Ghent) to climb. This was by far the hardest ascent of the day due to fatigue but they all succeeded and reached Horton-in-Ribblesdale to finish at around 6pm.

CEO of Kent MS Therapy Centre Heidi Coleman says:

"Thank you to all those who took part and supported the team for the Yorkshire 3 Peaks Challenge. It was a great day and challenged us all. We didn't get much of a view on any summit; the weather was not kind and the majority was walked in the rain. Utterly brutal at times! It was a wonderful day and great to experience the challenge with good people. It's amazing what can be achieved when you set yourself a target! Thank you to everyone that generously donated and to the team of walkers - you were fantastic!"



FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

Disability Assist **supports adults in Kent who are living with a physical disability or disabling long-term health condition.** We offer a wide range of services with the aim of helping you to live as independently as possible, with the control to live the life you choose.

Our support team have lived experience of health conditions and we really are “experts by experience” as we understand the challenges of living life with a disability. We can talk through any issues that you would like support with, as often as you need. Here are some of the areas we can help with:

Information, guidance and advice

We can provide information on a range of topics, including knowledge the support that is available in Kent, how to access services, advice on wheelchairs and other aids and equipment, accessible transport and housing, recruiting personal assistants and much more.



Benefits support

We provide guidance on the main benefits and schemes for disabled people, such as Personal Independent Payments, Employment and Support Allowance, Attendance Allowance and Access to Work so that you can access resources to help you live more independently.

When it comes to benefits, we can assist with form-filling, help with preparation for assessments, as well as the tribunal process.

Peer support

When we are going through difficulties, it can often be useful to speak to someone who can offer help through an unbiased opinion. Our advisors have lived experience of disability, so we are able to support other disabled people with knowledge and understanding of how to overcome daily obstacles.

Advocacy

We can support people to understand their rights when it comes to health and social welfare. We help them to express their views, wishes and needs to ensure they are involved when decisions need to be made.

You can find more information on our website, www.disabilityassist.org.uk, including self-help guides to help with some of the most common queries. You can also follow us on social media and sign up to our monthly e-newsletter, which is packed full of the latest news and information which may be of interest to you. Alternatively, you can call us on **01233 633187** or email info@disabilityassist.org.uk.

Get in touch with us today to find out how we can help you.



Christmas Market

Saturday 18 November | 10am - 2pm

KMSTC, Merton Lane North, CT4 7DZ



FREE ENTRY

Craft stalls
Tombola
Refreshments
Live music
Charity shop
White elephant
Wine or water



Featuring a giant
inflatable snow
globe



Raffle for tickets
to opening night
of Aladdin Panto
at the Marlowe!

Fascinating night at the Tower of London

We were so delighted to invite a group of guests including members, corporate supporters, volunteers, family and friends to the Tower of London on the evening of 18 November. Andy Merry, who is one of the Yeoman Warders (otherwise known as Beefeaters), lives with MS and comes from Kent. He very kindly invited KMSTC to hold an evening at the Tower.

Despite extremely heavy traffic in Canterbury that held back our coach, followed by heavy rain in London, we all thoroughly enjoyed ourselves.



Andy gave us a fascinating tour of the Tower and its long history. We learnt some very interesting facts. Did you know the 20th Century holds the record for being the deadliest century for executions at the Tower? The term Beefeater likely originated from the monarchs of the past allowing the Yeoman Warders to eat their scraps. Finally, there have been more people who have gone to space than have been a Yeoman Warder.

The history of the Tower is full of gruesome facts and remains steeped in tradition.



Our group was also given the opportunity to watch the Ceremony of the Keys, a tradition that has happened every single night, without fail for over 700 years.

We finished the evening enjoying a drink or two in the Beefeaters' private pub within the Tower grounds, which was full of interesting artefacts.

What a brilliant opportunity to have been given and we are so grateful to Andy Merry and his colleagues, family and friends for hosting the evening for our guests.



Member Voice

Your chance to get involved in shaping the future of Kent MS Therapy Centre.

Would you like an opportunity to share your views on how the Kent MS Therapy Centre is run? Here is your opportunity! We are setting up **focus groups** to discuss a range of important developments and issues that affect you, the members.



Focus groups will involve members, staff, volunteers, carers and trustees as appropriate. We think that focus groups are a good method of finding out what people think about important ideas, developments and proposals.

The first focus groups will be on the following themes:

Membership and Contributions Model

Reviewing Kent MS Therapy Centre's membership and therapy contributions model and fees

KMSTC - an Integrated Neuro Centre for the future?

How should we work with others to ensure a sustainable future for KMSTC

KMSTC Leadership

Your expectations of our charity's Board and senior management

Each group will **meet twice**, and the meetings will last approximately **90 minutes**. The findings from the focus groups will be used – alongside wider member surveys, open forums etc. - to inform the charity's decision-making and to make changes and improvements to the way we operate.

How to get involved

We are looking for volunteers from our membership to join these groups. We anticipate that there will be a lot of interest and so each group is limited to approximately seven members (a mixture of MS and non-MS members). To ensure that as many people as possible can get involved we will also limit each volunteer's involvement to one of the above focus groups. Only current KMSTC members are eligible to participate.

Please email memberinvolvement@kentmstc.org with your name, whether you are an MS or Associate/Associate Family Member and giving your first and second preferences for the focus group you would like to join.

Trusts and Foundations

We have received some wonderful grants over the last few months, supporting the therapies and activities that help so many members.

We would like to say thank you to the following trusts and foundations who have supported our running costs in the third quarter of 2023 (July – September):

- **The Frank Brake Charitable Trust**
- **The Loveday Charitable Trust**
- **The Edward Gostling Foundation**



We also say thank you to the following trusts and foundations who have awarded grants for specific activities, including complementary therapies, physio- and hydrotherapy services and the development of our Wachter Suite during the same period:

- **Kent Community Foundation - Kent Social Enterprise Loan Fund**
- **Kent Community Foundation – Vulnerable Adults Priority Areas Route**
- **The Henry Smith Charity**
- **The James Tudor Foundation**



How could oxygen therapy help you?

Oxygen therapy has many health benefits, such as cell growth and regeneration, detoxification, immune support, new capillary growth and improved neurological function. It reduces inflammation and also promotes the creation of new blood vessels, which enables continued healing, even after the treatment has finished. It also stimulates the production of stem cells from bone marrow and neurologic tissue.

Oxygen therapy can help people living with a range of neurological and other medical conditions. It can help to relieve symptoms associated with conditions such as multiple sclerosis, stroke, Parkinson's, dementia, diabetes, cancer, heart disease, fibromyalgia and, increasingly, long Covid. It can also help to speed up recovery from infections, burns, wounds, broken bones and sports injuries.

For more information about Oxygen Therapy, please contact Reception on 01227 470876 or info@kentmstc.org



Glorious day of golf!

We held a second golf day on Friday 27 October at Westgate and Birchington Golf Club thanks to Max Andrews from **TMS Estate Agents** who helped us to put the event on.

The day raised an incredible **£4,500** thanks to the 75 golfers who came along to support us.

Despite heavy downpours in the morning whilst everyone was enjoying their breakfast rolls and buying Mulligans, the weather cleared up for a lovely sunny round of golf in the afternoon.

Later in the day, once the golf was finished, our guests joined us back in the clubhouse for a delicious meal. Dave Fulton, Sky Sports Presenter and former Kent Cricketer, hosted the proceedings for us. He led the golfers in a game of Heads and Tails which always goes down very well, especially for the winner!

Following speeches from Max Andrews and our CEO Heidi Coleman that gave the golfers more information about our charity and what their donations would be supporting, we held our auction. This raised **£1,645** alone and this was thanks to generous donations from Kololi resort, Kent Cricket, Fort Road Hotel, North Foreland Golf Club as well as Polar Helicopters and Quince.

During dessert, the trophies which had been kindly donated by Richard from **City Awards** in Chartham, were given out to the teams coming in first to third place. The losing team won a pair of KMSTC socks each too! There were also prizes given for Nearest the Pin and the Longest Drive.

We would like to say a huge thank you to all of our supporters on the day including our hole sponsors **Broadstairs Carpets** and **Canterbury Property Maintenance**. We look forward to our next Golf Day!



Coffee Mornings



2024



Saturday 27 January
Saturday 24 February

Saturday 23 March

Saturday 27 April

Saturday 25 May

more dates to follow...

from 10am to 12pm

Bacon rolls, hot drinks, cake!

Mince Pies and Christmas Songs

Join us in the social area
at the Centre for a
Christmas get together
with mince pies,
refreshments and
Christmas music.

Members, staff,
supporters all welcome.

Friday 15 December
from 2pm

Big Give Christmas Challenge 2023

Tuesday 28 Nov - Tuesday 5 Dec

This year, our target is £7,500
which will go towards our physio
and hydrotherapy services.

If you donate to our page during
the dates above, your donation
will be doubled!

**Keep your eyes
peeled for our
campaign!**



Our Charity of the Year partnerships

We are proud to have been named as **Canterbury Rugby Football Club** and **Kreston Reeves** Charity of the Year. Working with local organisations is a great way to raise awareness for the Centre and connect with local networks.

The Centre's volunteers have been visiting Canterbury RFC's home matches and circulating collection pots among the generous fans. This has sparked interesting conversations about the Centre and the fantastic work that we do. This has been an exciting way to strengthen our relationship with our neighbours and create new opportunities moving forwards.



Heidi and Bev recently went to the Kreston Reeves offices in Canterbury to tell the team there more about the work that we do here at the Centre. The team there thoughtfully sent a large selection of energy bars to those taking part in the Yorkshire 3 Peaks Challenge, helping the team's spirit to mount the final peak! We are also very happy to be welcoming many of the staff from Kreston Reeves to our Annual Christmas Ball this year; we look forward to dancing the night away together and the forthcoming year of our partnership.

Do you know a group who might be interested in developing a partnership with the Kent MS Therapy Centre? Working with the Centre is a great way to strengthen spirit, passion and commitment at your business while establishing yourself as socially responsible and creating positive engagement with new audiences. We would love to talk with anyone interested in supporting the Centre to create a tailor made partnership that works for you.

Contact Nancy at nancyreed@kentmstc.org or 07553 015439.

Benefits for you and your organisation when you choose to support the Kent MS Therapy Centre:

- Promote to a new audience while allowing you to share your businesses values and priorities.
- Generate team spirit by holding a challenge event or events day; we are happy to help organise these events too.
- Motivate your staff to collaborate while raising funds by adopting us as your Charity of the Year.
- Integrate with the Centre's community by hosting a team meeting in our newly renovated board room.

My MS Journey

Hi, **I am Glen**. You may have seen me about the Centre, going into the gym or using hydrotherapy. I have been coming since June 2022. It was recommended by my MS Nurse who said “They will give you plenty of help and **I’ve heard they are a lovely bunch**”. **How right she was.**

I was born in 1966 in Wandsworth over the top of a butcher’s shop in Garrett Lane. My parents soon got us out of the big smoke, and moved us to pastures green in the countryside: a small village called Cliffe, where my grandfather opened a butcher’s shop, and my father was a butcher too. Life plodded along until age 16 where I left school and I became the 5th generation of butchers in my family. We opened our shop in a little village called Hoo in Rochester.

I did this until I was about 35 and then I wanted a change as I was getting cold and starting to feel pains here and there. I became a driving instructor. I was going to the doctors a lot to find out what was wrong. Doctors and specialists kept saying “You might have this, or this”.



We went on a family holiday to the USA and Canada with my wife and our two children along with my parents. We drove from Toronto across to the Niagara Falls. I couldn’t walk, my back was in pain, my legs had stopped working. But after

about four or five days, they came back to life. There were lots of little things going wrong with me, I was falling over lots and still going to the doctors.

Life changes all the time. My wife and I decided we wanted different things, so after 20 years of marriage, we split and after a while my life went a different way. I met the new love of my life, my wife and what a lovely lady she is. We married in 2016.



I was still falling. One time I fell into the middle of a main road. I had to ring my wife indoors to come and help and stop traffic from hitting me. An ambulance was passing and they stopped and helped me to my feet. Still the doctors said “Let’s try this and this”. But nothing made me feel better, I was getting really fed up by now and getting no answers. So I decided I would go private and pay to see a neurologist. I made sure to write everything down that was wrong with me and what had been happening. Straight away **he asked if I’d ever been given an MRI scan**. I had, but not for my head, so he arranged an urgent MRI through the NHS.

I went back to this doctor and he said “Have you ever heard of MS?” I had but didn’t know anything about it.

He replied **"I'm sorry to say that you have MS"**.

On my MRI I had five lesions on top of my brain and three down my spinal cord near my neck. Together we worked out that I'd probably had MS since I was around 27. **I will never forget that day**, 2nd October 2019 diagnosed by Dr Jonathan Chan.

However, I'm not one to worry and thought to myself, "Well, I have it there isn't any going back so I just have to embrace it and get on with it." Life is too short. Don't waste it, I say. I am so glad I found KMSTC.

Some of you may know **I have just raised £1,000 for the Centre and also £1,000 for the MS Society**. We had a Ladies weekend with a Gala dinner. I was President and my good wife (Elaine) was my Lady. I sat in my wheelchair and gave a speech, felt nervous about doing it. I want to enjoy my life and I'd love to think of something else to raise money for KMSTC as I think it is so great.

You give me a reason to get up and get on with my life, instead of sitting down, doing nothing and getting worse.

More Fantastic Fundraisers!

Ann-Marie, David and Olly Holmes recently ran the Royal Parks Half Marathon and it was wonderful to see Ann-Marie wearing her medal when she came to work on the Monday. Together, the three of them raised over £2,000!

Supporters Izzy and Alice took on the Manchester Half Marathon raising £730 and Roy Skinner rode the London to Brighton bike ride and raised £750. Becky Warman also raised money for us via the Canterbury Rugby Club and has chosen to support us for the 2024 London Marathon.

These events have raised **£10,000** for the Centre in just two months!



I had a really good time, despite being a bit ill. It was a great atmosphere, the crowds took me round. Thanks to everyone who donated!



DAVID AND OLLY



IZZY AND ALICE



ROY

If you'd like to take on a challenge in 2024, or know someone who does, please contact Mia at mbernthal@kentmstc.org

Welcome to our new staff



Nancy

What a fabulous reception I have received since joining the Kent MS Therapy Centre as Corporate and Community Fundraiser. Thank you!

I have the pleasure of working with members and volunteers to grow our relationship with the local community and local businesses.

I love nature and the outdoors so you will often find me out in the Centre's garden and Rob had promised me a trip on the sit on mower!

I can be found upstairs in the newly renovated fundraising office or on nancyreed@kentmstc.org

New physios

We also hope many of you have met with our two new physio staff, Katie and Emily who will be working alongside Clare Triggs to deliver physiotherapy and hydrotherapy sessions for our members.



Kent MS Information Day
Wednesday 13 December
Orida Hotel, Maidstone
10am - 3pm

Free to attend but you do need to register that you are going. Lunch and all refreshments included. Joined by Dr Anisha Doshi and MS Society Research Officer Dr Katie Askew.

[Click to register](#)



We were so pleased to welcome the ladies from Beginners 2 Runners Canterbury to our Coffee Morning on Saturday. The group held a quiz night in aid of our Centre and raised an amazing £640. Thank you so much and it was lovely to meet you!



**KMSTC is a registered charity. Registered charity number 801382.
Registered company number 2339750.**

Chair of Trustees: James Limmer

Trustees: Jill Tompkins, Adam Cleur, Bali Padda, Lee Ellis, Ingrid Neitsch, Patrick Connolly, David Bailey

Chief Executive Officer: Heidi Coleman

Patron: Rob Key

FIND US AT

Kent MS Therapy Centre, Bradbury
House, Merton Lane North,
Canterbury, Kent, CT4 7DZ

GET IN TOUCH

Call us: 01227 470876

Email us: info@kentmstc.org

OPENING HOURS

Monday - Friday: 8.30am - 5pm

Open Tuesday and Thursday until 7pm

Saturday: 8.30am - 1pm

Sunday: Closed

www.kentmstc.org.uk



Kent MS Therapy
Centre (KMSTC)



kentmsttherapy



KentMSTC



Kent MS Therapy
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