

News

Summer 2020

We're Still Standing!

“You never know what’s round the corner.”

We are living in unprecedented times and the whole World is in turmoil! But still we carry on. Howard House stands tall as the centre piece of our operation and services, it may have been empty during the lockdown but its virtual presence has continued as our staff have worked tirelessly from home doing all they can to support members both old and new. We are rightfully both proud and indebted to them as we are also extremely grateful to the people who have kindly donated to us when there are so many other demands and distractions on time and resources.

As you all probably know Cherry Lodge doesn't receive any Government funding, our shop has been shut for a long period and the majority of our fund raising events cancelled, including our major contributor, “The Summer Soulstice”.

None of us truly knows what the future will be like or what the new “normal” will be. What we do know is that Cherry Lodge will be there for its members and we will meet again!

Of course we need help and inside this issue you will see details of our new raffle and of the brilliant efforts of the Mayor's Appeal which is providing much needed money in this especially difficult time.

We are forever thankful.



Howard House in the spring sunshine

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If you would like to donate or pay by BAC's/credit card, please email tina@cherrylodgecancercare.org.uk for details.

Howard House is currently closed to the public until such time as Government regulations and the safety of our Members allow it to re-open.

RING CHERRY LODGE

A NURSE WILL ANSWER

GET INFORMATION AND SUPPORT!

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

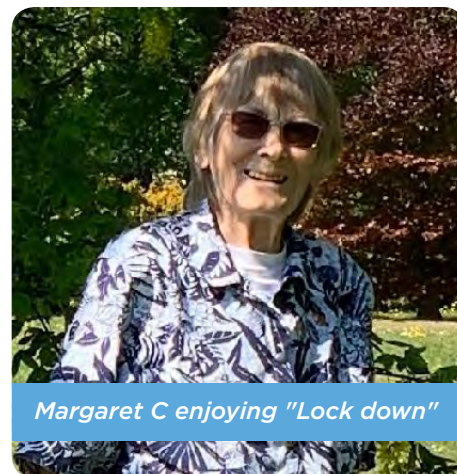
It seems a long time since we could say that in person, rather than over the telephone.

As the pandemic wanes it will be good to get back to some sort of normality, by which time we should all be more hygienic and have tidier houses and gardens.

I would like to pay tribute to the CL staff who have been working non stop from home. They have also been facilitating, with the help of volunteers, food and prescription deliveries. This difficult period is not over yet but CL will do its best to make a phased return to 'business as usual'. Hopefully this will be sooner rather than later.

Meanwhile stay safe and take care.

Dr Margaret Clark



Grand Raffle

This year to make the raffle prizes more flexible and usable we are offering **CASH prizes**.

And as a special treat we are enclosing **2 books of tickets** with this newsletter so you can double your chances of winning **£££££££££££££££££s**.

The Prizes are:

1st Prize £1,000

2nd Prize £500

3rd Prize £250

4th Prize £100

The draw will take place at the end of October 2020.

Tickets and monies should be returned to Howard House: see tickets for details.

Please don't miss your chance to support Cherry Lodge and win one of the fabulous prizes.

Enter to
WIN!

“Cherry Lodge means so much to me ”



By Gemma P



Gemma enjoys CL Xmas Fayre

I was a young mum with 2 children aged 1 and 4 when I first noticed signs of cancer in 2016. My smear test was due anyway so I attended it and the nurse said she couldn't get a clear reading. About a week later I got a letter saying I needed a colposcopy at hospital. I went along very upset because I knew I had cancer. My mum and Dad said I was being silly and the nurse said they only see 6 ladies a year that have cancer and I had nothing to worry about!

A week after the test the doctor confirmed I had cervical cancer. Then everything moved quickly, scans test and a referral to an amazing central London hospital. Fortunately, the cancer hadn't spread, I had an operation to remove the tumour and waited for the pathology results. Good news! The lymph nodes were clear. Bad news I had a rare and aggressive cancer which only affected 15 people a year in the UK. I needed 6 rounds of chemotherapy to keep the cancer at bay. Dr Google told me I would be dead in 18 months. That day I had my first panic attack. My children needed their mother. I got up dusted my self off and did some research. I found a Facebook group of ladies from all over the world with the same cancer, their advice gave me strength and most of all HOPE.

I sailed through the treatment and it honestly wasn't as bad as I thought it was going to be.

I was first referred to Cherry lodge by my nurse at UCH as I desperately needed counselling and it had to be local as I had two children to care for.

It is so important that there are local facilities for people like me.

That's where I discovered Cherry Lodge - my first impression, it was easy to get to and I was greeted by a very friendly receptionist who eased my worries brought on by having cancer at such a young age with two young children.

All I can say is that everyone at Cherry Lodge is so nice, the nurses, volunteers and staff. I first had counselling with Sue which helped me become less anxious in every situation I had to face. Sue gave me tools to handle this. I really felt at ease at these sessions.

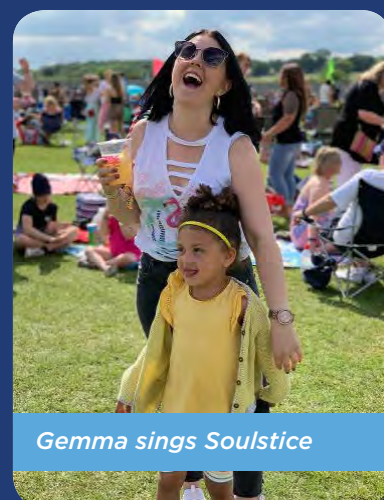
Regular Acupuncture with Ila helped me deal with the chronic hip and back pain due to chemo' and the weekly sessions were a life saver for me.

November 29th 2016 my chemo' was finished and my battle with this beast was over. Fast forward to January 2020 I am currently 3.5 years clear. The one good thing this cancer has given me is the most incredible friends. We go to Vegas every year and I cannot wait for later this year so I can hopefully be reunited with my family.

I was still having Hypnotherapy with Renie until "lockdown". I really looked forward to these sessions, especially our chats where I could really let out my true inner thoughts. I can't wait to resume our sessions.

I attend the Cherry lodge fundraising events as they are so child friendly we loved being a part of "Summer Soulstice", Christmas Fair and Easter Fair, I am able to bring my children and that means a lot to me during this hard time. It is great to socialise and make friends and give something back to Cherry Lodge as it means so much to me.

For me it is vital there is a Cherry Lodge as during my cancer journey I was able to call one of the nurses with any questions and they replied straight away. It is so comforting to know they are there. As for me I now try to carry on with my hobbies which are crafting, baking and the most important one, making memories with my children.



Gemma sings Soulstice

Mindfulness to help us through

by Alessia B

WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

It is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we are doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what is going on around us.

BENEFITS

It offers a path to well-being and effective tools to cope with life's inevitable hurdles; everyone can benefit from it and it is easy to learn.

4 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT MINDFULNESS

- 1** Mindfulness is not a special added activity: as we already have the natural capacity to be present, we only need to enhance this innate quality.
- 2** Anyone can do it: mindfulness practice cultivates universal human qualities and does not require anyone to change their beliefs.
- 3** It is a way of living: mindfulness brings awareness, attentiveness and care into everything we do and it diminishes unnecessary stress.
- 4** It is evidence-based: science and experience demonstrate its positive benefits for our health, happiness, work, and relationships.

A MINDFULNESS PRACTICE TO TEACH YOUR BRAIN RESILIENCE

This exercise engages the technique of self-compassion and is very effective to help ease fear and anxiety, settle into the present moment and be with uncertainty. It brings a gentle acceptance of a difficult experience.

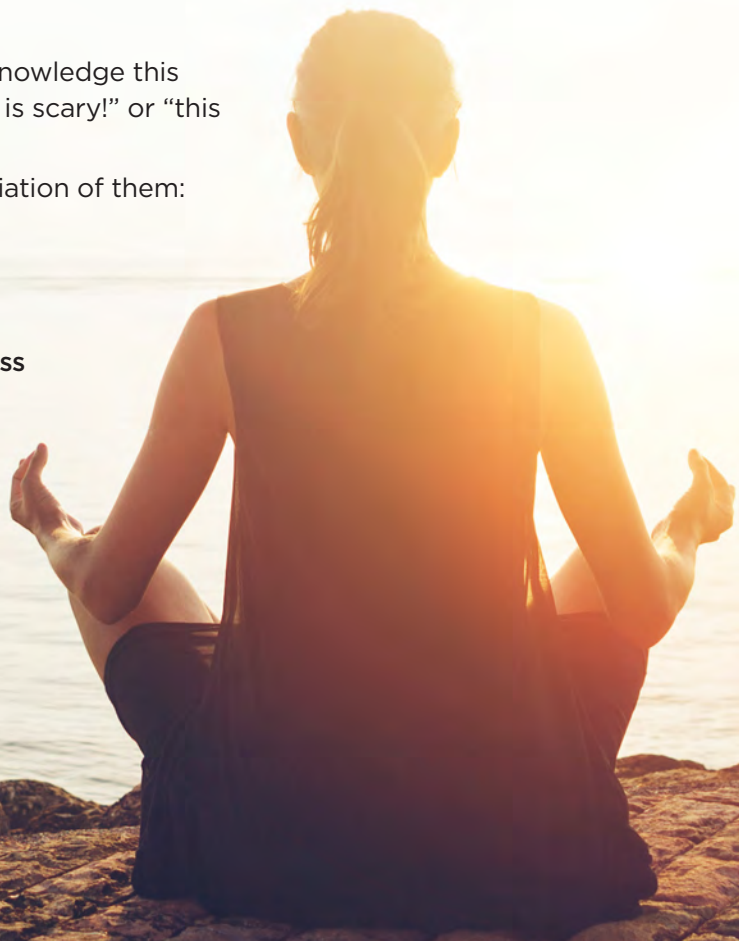
HOW TO DO IT

If you notice a surge of a difficult emotion like contempt, remorse, fear, sadness, anxiety or shame:

- Pause and put your hand on your heart.
- Empathise with your experience - recognise and acknowledge this suffering by saying to yourself: "this is hard!" or "this is scary!" or "this is painful" or something similar.
- Repeat the phrases below to yourself or create a variation of them:
 - **I choose to be kind to myself in this moment.**
 - **I accept this moment exactly as it is.**
 - **I accept myself exactly as I am in this moment.**
 - **I give myself all the care, compassion and kindness I need.**

Continue repeating the above phrases until you can feel an internal shift: the compassion, kindness and care for yourself gradually becoming stronger and more intense than the original negative emotion you had.

- Finally, pause and reflect on your experience and notice if any possibility of wise, appropriate action arises from this.



A BIG THANK YOU

To our **Mayor, Caroline Stock** her fund raising committee and all the volunteers who have worked tirelessly throughout the year to raise much needed funds for Cherry Lodge Cancer Care and Home-Start, Barnet – The Mayor's nominated charities for her year in office.

Over 19 separate events have been held raising £50,000 for the charities to share.

Events have ranged from a Bridge evening to a Diwali tea. Visits to the House of Commons, Battle of Barnet walk, Quiz night, The New Year's Day Parade, afternoon tea and Hadley Wood and many more.



The culmination was a virtual Gala Dinner and Money Can't Buy auction and raffle imaginatively put together despite the Corona virus's attempt to stop it. Prizes included a chance to open Tower Bridge, Lunch at the Old Bailey and Tea for Two at the House of Commons. This event alone raised over £17,000

In these difficult times with donations and event income in short supply the generous actions and resulting monies raised for Cherry Lodge are especially welcome.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Marjory

I am so sorry to read about your recent diagnosis; I can understand what a worrying time this must be for you particularly in view of recent circumstances with the Covid pandemic. I know that the NHS has been working tirelessly to keep vulnerable people as safe as possible and measures have been put in place to try and isolate oncology clinics and treatment areas away from those presenting with Covid 19.

During this time Howard House (Cherry Lodge Cancer Care's centre) has been closed but the staff have been working from home remotely keeping in contact with our members by phone, email, or video link up. The 2 Macmillan cancer information nurses are available to take calls from people who are newly diagnosed, and we can offer information and support over the phone. In these circumstances we are not doing formal assessments, but we will be able to get the relevant details that we need from you over the phone. Our counsellors are also working remotely and have been able to continue to provide that extra support through counselling. We hope to return to Howard House in July, but we will not be able to offer complementary therapies or group activities for the time being.

Please do give us a call on 020 8441 7000 and my colleague Kirsty or I will get back to you and try to give you the support and help you need.

Fiona K

Macmillan Cancer Information Nurse

The Editor
Cherry Lodge Newsletter
Howard House
Barnet
Hertfordshire

Dear CL,

I have just been diagnosed with breast cancer and my first port of call would have been CL. I have heard that you are closed but wondered if any help or support is available that I, as a newcomer, could access as I believe that new people have to be assessed by a nurse first. I am very scared, not just of the cancer but of the virus.

Marjory

Our Services & Approach



"At present only a telephone service is available from the nurses and the counsellors."

As our members will understand and appreciate it is not possible to offer any hands-on or group therapies, including Outreach services at the current time due to the pandemic. This is also to remind members that they can self-refer to the Barnet Macmillan CAB Benefits Adviser on 020 8440 4227.

Our services include:

- ✿ Consultations with Cancer Information Nurses and counselling.
- ✿ Three site-specific evening groups taking place every six weeks. These are for people with lymphoma, ovarian cancer and one for men's cancers. Contact Fiona for more info.
- ✿ A comprehensive Home Visiting Service (Befriending) – delivered across North London and South Hertfordshire. Contact Yvonne on 020 8441 7000.
- ✿ Group Activities – including open discussion and treatment sessions, and tailored exercise classes.
 - Tuesday morning weekly 'drop-ins' from 10 – 12.30pm. Second Tuesday in the month. Kathryn's knitting group 1 pm. First and third Thursdays in the month, evening 'drop-ins' from 6 – 9 pm. There are two exercise classes, Yoga (Fridays 12.30 – 1.30pm) and Chi Gung (Mondays 11.00 – 12.30 pm) at St Marks Church Hall, Potters Road, Barnet, EN5 5HY.
 - Circle Dancing Round the World, with Ingrid. Held on Thursdays 2-3 pm at the Open Door Centre, Christ Church, St Albans Road, Barnet, EN5 4LA. Please contact Fiona or Yvonne for further details.
 - Arts and Crafts Group takes place at Howard House on the last Friday of each month from 10.00 to 12 noon. Please sign up on the noticeboard in CL.
- ✿ Cherry Lodge Singers, Wednesday 3.30 – 5.00pm. No audition necessary. Just turn up, join in and have fun.
- ✿ Healthy living advice sessions throughout the region.
- ✿ Relaxation therapies delivered by qualified volunteers – from medical acupuncture to massage.
- ✿ Carers' Support Group – This group, facilitated by Kirsty Mabb, meets on the second Monday of each month, from 1.30 – 3pm on the third floor Barnet Carers Centre, 303 Ballards Lane, North Finchley, N12 8NP. All welcome.
- ✿ Cornflower Support group, second Tuesday of every month, 7 – 9 pm. Parish Hall, 4 Thirleby Road, Burnt Oak, HA8 OHQ.

If you have any news, thoughts or comments please email me or pass a message on through someone at Howard House - many thanks.

**Grant Whitaker
Editor, CL Newsletter**

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