



THE FRIENDS OF BLANDFORD COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

Charity No. 800482

Milldown Road, Blandford Forum, Dorset, DT11 7DD

Tel: 01258 450095 (General Office) 01258 451456 (Shops and Fundraising)

www.friendsofblandford.org.uk

Newsletter No. 59

SPRING 2020



As we move in to a New Year and look forwards we would like to take some time to thank all of our members, volunteers, local groups, businesses and organisations

that have supported the charity throughout the last year.

Perhaps you have donated goods to our charity shops, given a prize for an event, given a few hours of your time as a volunteer or perhaps given more than a lot of hours!? Are you a shop customer, regular or occasional? Maybe you are a group or organization that has nominated us as a charity to support or have fundraised on our behalf? As a local business you have given sponsorship or donated a prize to help us in any way you can. Maybe you represent a larger national company and have been able to provide some support on a local level? Of course, there are also those that help with giving their expertise and advice.

Every donation you make helps. Every purchase you make at an event or shop helps. Every raffle ticket you buy, helps. Every prize you are able to give, helps. Every sponsorship you offer, helps. Every bit of advice and guidance you give, helps. Every minute of your time you give, helps. Our very local Charity is proud to be able to rely on so much goodwill and we know that you will all continue to help us truly, as our motto says, "make a difference". We thank each and every one of you most sincerely for your support.

In January we were delighted to invite our volunteers to belated Christmas dinners to thank them all for their efforts throughout the year. As always, the excellent food provided by the Hotel Services Team here in the Hospital went down a treat. The wine flowed and there was lots of laughter as we shared stories, memories and experiences and reflected on what had been achieved throughout the year by our wonderful volunteers.



A special thank you must go to Timothy Medhurst who has been visiting us regularly in Sturminster Newton to help us value our more interesting donated items. As an experienced auctioneer, Tim is a regular antiques expert on TV's Antiques Road Trip but in our Sturminster shop he is happy to be "Our Tim" and the volunteers look forward to his visits. He is pictured here with Mary Clacy, one of our long standing Sturminster volunteers who is responsible for sorting and pricing our Bric a Brac items. Thank you for your time, advice and sharing your expertise Tim! We look forward to seeing you again soon!

Fundraising News...

So that was 2019! Another busy and successful year for our fundraising volunteers who, as always, pulled out all of the stops to ensure the success of all of our events.



Since our Autumn Newsletter in September we have enjoyed a weekend at Sturminster Newton Cheese Festival where our Sturminster Shop team raised £749. We have had a prize bingo at the hospital

in September and in November we took our Christmas Prize bingo to the Royal British Legion Club in Blandford which gave us much more space for nearly 100 players all trying to win one of our festive prizes. The funds raised from bingo throughout the year amounted to £1742 and we couldn't do this without the efforts of our regular bingo caller, Derek Holdeman who has been with us for many years. Thank you Derek!



Once again our Autumn Fair, held at the Corn Exchange in October, was a great success with a net profit of £8047. That event is widely anticipated by local people and they

certainly turned out in force with 1128 passing through the door throughout the morning, and 114 waiting in the initial queue. Our volunteers gave their all over the 2 day effort and are already planning their contributions to the 2020 event!



The year was rounded off with a new event, The Christmas Wreath Making workshop in Child Okeford. This was the brainchild of Trustee Alison Brown and her friends Karen



Knapton and Sue Grant. It proved to be a most entertaining morning and some wonderful wreaths were created. The event was so popular; they have already booked a date to run it again this year on 2nd December.

It certainly was a busy, but most enjoyable, few months for our volunteers. As always, they pulled out all the stops, donned their smiles and made us proud to have them as our front line ambassadors and, proved that, as a team, they are our greatest asset. We thank them all most sincerely.

We now move on to our 2020 schedule. Unfortunately, due to reasons beyond our control, we had to cancel our February bingo but we are determined to make our first bingo of the year on 29th April even better.

As we go to print we are preparing for our Fashion Show and we look forward to sharing news on that with you in our summer update. This will be the last Fashion Show to enable us to focus fully on selling the wonderful garments we are donated in our shops throughout the year.

All the dates for your diary are in the handy cut out and keep box below so we very much hope to see you throughout the year. As always, the Fundraising team thanks you for your ongoing support.

Emma Sisson, Fundraising Co-ordinator, February 2020

Dates for your diary

29 Apr	Bingo	Blandford Royal British Legion Club
3 June	Bingo	Blandford Royal British Legion Club
19 June	Golf Day	Ashley Wood Golf Club
2 Sept	Bingo	Blandford Royal British Legion Club
17 Oct	Autumn Fair	Corn Exchange, Blandford
25 Nov	Xmas Bingo	Blandford Royal British Legion Club
2 Dec	Wreath Making	Child Okeford Village Hall



A message from our Chairman...

As I write this for the Spring Newsletter, it's 2 degrees outside, and a widespread frost. It's hard to think that Spring is just around the corner! As I get ready for the volunteers' post-Christmas dinner I look forward to seeing the faces I saw last year and also hope there are some new faces too. I enjoy talking to the many people who attend these dinners and get other people's insight of what it is like to be a volunteer for the Friends of Blandford Hospital. Some love the company, getting them out of the house for a few hours, giving them a sense of purpose, especially those who live alone. Others feel they want to give something back to the community after a lifetime of working and get a great sense of fulfilment from it. It's a wonderfully run section of the Friends Charity with a 'real family' feel to it, thanks to Emma's fantastic organisational skills. I hope you will encourage people you know to join us. Of course, we must remember and thank the Office team, Sarah, Lisa and Leonne, who are continually supporting our Community Services especially organising the Transport and Befriending Service. If you feel you could help in these areas please do not hesitate to contact the Office Staff, they will be pleased to hear from you.

We have a new member on the Board, Jackie Stayt, who will be well known to some of you, as the ex-Mayor of Blandford. She will take the lead in increasing our membership numbers as we currently have only 850 members and we would like to increase this in order to strengthen the Friends' voice when talking to local authorities. She has some fantastic ideas and has already given a talk to the Women's Institute. She will be very keen to hear from anyone who has some interesting ideas on how we could recruit new members or perhaps would be willing to help with this.

I hope you manage to follow us on Facebook, Emma regularly posts photos of events, volunteers at work and what's coming up. There is a link to the Friends website where you can complete a form to become a volunteer, should you wish to get on board! I am looking forward to the Fashion Show in the Exchange at Sturminster Newton in March, where for another year, I and many other volunteers, will be showing off the outfits from our two shops, along the cat walk. Hope to see you there!

The building of the Musculoskeletal (Physio) Service is underway at the moment and any of you visiting the hospital will be aware that they have sectioned off part of the car park so that the contractor can secure their equipment. We are hoping that the new treatment rooms will be up and running in April this year.

Recently, our Board members along with Matron and Theatre Sister had an interesting meeting with the Ophthalmologist, Mr Goverdhan, about the possibility of the Friends investing in some equipment for the Hospital which would allow patients with certain eye conditions to attend Blandford rather than have to go to Dorchester. The Friends thought it was a fantastic idea and are waiting for a service level agreement (a contract) from the Dorset County Hospital Trust and Dorset HealthCare Trust. This will help to ensure that when this service goes live, it will be sustainable.

We have many events planned for this year and I look forward to seeing some of you during 2020. As always, I thank you all for your ongoing support.

Best Wishes, Steve Cole, Chairman, February 2020



Membership subscriptions

Annual membership subscriptions are due in April. If you have not already done so, please pay your subscription as soon as possible. Please consider paying by Bank Standing Order which will help significantly reduce our administration costs.

Thank you for your continued support

**FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK TO KEEP UP TO DATE WITH
THE FRIENDS OF BLANDFORD HOSPITAL, OUR NEWS, SHOP SPECIAL OFFERS AND EVENTS.**



@friendsblandfordhospital

Shop News...

Our shops continue to be hives of activity every day and both are veritable treasure chests of donated pre-loved goodies. As we go to print, we will be launching our Spring Clothing range and are all very much looking forward to the lighter, brighter colours that go with the longer days and approaching summer season. Every day we add new items to our displays and even if you don't easily see what you are looking for, please ask one of our volunteers to check the stockroom or perhaps the other shop. Our team love to take on a personal shopper role and get a real buzz from finding just the perfect items for our lovely customers!

Last year Charity shops nationwide raised over £295 million. Our shop volunteers certainly made a huge contribution to our fundraising efforts but they do so much



more than raise money. The shops are a community hub, a hive of social activity with a friendly welcome and a great place to share ideas. In this world where we are all trying to recycle, upcycle and be more sustainable we are a great place to start.

Consumers are certainly becoming more aware of the impact of purchasing new on the environment and making a conscious effort to buy more "pre-loved" items. We are so pleased to see our shops busier than ever but we really need you, and all of our supporters, to bring your unwanted goodies and pre-loved treasures to us to help us keep up with demand. We will always do our best to maximise the income from all of your donations and the funds raised will be used to support your local hospital and health related projects throughout the community. If you are unable to drop your donations in to either of our shops, please give me a call on 01258 451456 and I will arrange one of our volunteer van drivers to collect from you.

Charity retail is the largest single volunteer group in the UK with more than 234,000 generous people giving their time in charity shops. We are incredibly proud of our 102 committed volunteers and thank each and every one of them for everything they do to truly make a difference. Some have been with us for 25 years, some just a few weeks but everybody makes a contribution to our shops and fundraising success. Shop volunteering is a very social

activity and many of our team start with us offering just an occasional few hours. However, it is often the case that they have so much fun, and make such good friends, that

they keep asking for more! We are always so grateful for the time they find to do so much to support us in making our shops the success they are. Our Volunteers come from all walks of life, many are retired, perhaps self employed, some are actively seeking employment, and some are "full time parents" giving their time while the children are at school. The range of backgrounds and interests makes for a great team and a real family. Perhaps you might like to consider joining that family? If so, pop in to either of the shops for a chat with the volunteers on duty or give me a call on 01258 451456.

Don't forget to pop in and say hello each time you are in town. You can be assured of a friendly welcome and never know what bargains you might find! We look forward to seeing you soon.

Emma, Fundraising Co-ordinator, February 2020.

Volunteers
do not necessarily
have the time;
they just have the *heart*.

Our shops can be found at:

Innes Court, Sturminster. Tel: **01258 471245**
Open Mon: 0900-1600 Tues-Fri: 1000-1600 Sat: 0930-1230
Barnack Walk, Blandford. Tel: **01258 458390**
Open Mon-Sat: 1000-1600

To arrange a collection of goods for our shops, please call Emma on 01258 451456

STOCK APPEAL

Quality donations of clothing, gifts, bric-a-brac, toys, DVDs, jewellery, hats, portable electrical items, shoes, handbags, household linens and much more are always required in our shops. All monies raised for these items will be used to benefit projects in our local area.



Project Manager's Report...

As I write this update, I have just returned home from the first monthly site meeting with the Trust Project Manager, the design team and the contractor on the MSK / Gym project in the Physiotherapy Department.

The contractor was appointed at the end of last year and we concluded our donation contribution to the overall project cost at £300,000, which enabled the work on site to commence on the 9th December.

First work on site was the removal of the old hydrotherapy pool followed by structural exposure work to enable the engineers to establish the structural steelwork required to support the roof / floor above which was required to enable the walls below to be removed creating the area for the new Physiotherapy Gym.

This stage has now been completed and the new structural steel beam is now on site ready for placing in position. This will enable the blockwork underpinning to be completed, supporting the roof / floor above and all the temporary support structure can then be removed creating the new floor area for the gymnasium.

The completed project consisting of the new physiotherapy gymnasium and three MSK treatment rooms will be handed over by the contractor at the end of March.

Finally, all I can report on our theatre/treatment suite is that Matron and Sister continue to support the Friends with our wish to carry out a refurbishment. I continue to lobby the Trust for support but unfortunately Dorset Healthcare have many more urgent demands on their annual capital programme budget. But rest assured I will continue to push our wishes and hope to be able to give you a further update in our Autumn Newsletter.

Mac McLaughlin, President and Project Manager, February 2019.

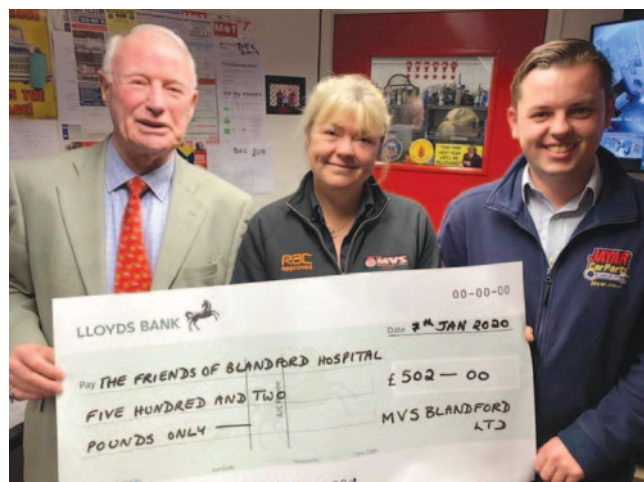
MAKE A FRIEND A FRIEND!

Our members are our best recruiting tool so please continue to spread the word about our charity amongst your family, friends, colleagues and neighbours.

The membership drive is ongoing and we must remember that our organisation becomes stronger as the membership grows.

THANK YOU

Thank you Once again MVS Blandford...



In December MVS Blandford Ltd, along with their colleagues at Jayar Car Parts, donated all bulb replacement monies, along with Customer donations, to the Friends of Blandford Hospital. Our President Mac McLaughlin was delighted to visit them in January and collect a total of £522. We send our most sincere thanks to Tony, Anna and the team at MVS Blandford and of course everybody at Jayar Car Parts too.

Well done Emelia...



Once again in December, The Friends were delighted to award a prize at the Annual Blandford School Presentation evening.

The award is made to the student who has done the most to promote healthy living at the school. Pictured above is the 2019 winner, Emelia Green, receiving her award from our President Mac McLaughlin.



Matron's Update...

A New Year and a new decade have begun, 2020. There certainly has been a lot going on at Blandford Hospital already.

The redesign of the Out-Patient Physiotherapy and Muscle-skeletal department has begun thanks to the support of the Friends alongside NHS funding. This will transform the look of the department and improve the experience for our patients. So please bear with us if you have a physio appointment as there may be some noise whilst this work is being carried out. We are excited about seeing the end result.

Other work that has been carried out within the hospital has been replacing our lighting to LED lighting and we will be having solar panels fitted to the roof, so we are doing our bit to help the environment. New windows are being installed at the front of hospital, so the future of Blandford Community Hospital is looking very positive.

Some of the developments that we might see in this new decade is an upgrade of our Day Surgery Unit and this project is something hopefully the Friends will be able to support, I will keep you updated. I am also keen to do some joint working with our local GPs and really bring together a Blandford 'hub'.

Thank you as always to the Friends of Blandford Hospital who support and fund so many things at the hospital both for patients and staff. They really do make a difference.

Helen Hunt, Hospital Matron, Spring 2020.

How to contact us...

The Friends' Office at the Hospital is usually open from 10am until 4pm, Monday to Friday.

Tel: 01258 450095 (General Enquiries)
01258 451456 (Shops and Fundraising)

Email: dhc.friends.blandford@nhs.net
Website: www.friendsofblandford.org.uk

There is always a lot going on up on Tarrant Ward...

In addition to the excellent care they receive on a daily basis thanks to the Tarrant Ward team, Patients are able to enjoy lots of organised groups and activities all planned by Sharon Munday, The Ward Activity Co-ordinator to make their stay more comfortable and stimulating. A lot of the activities are used to promote memories, help with problem solving and cognition, hand eye co-ordination and concentration. However, primarily it is all about lifting their spirits. Sharon has a team of volunteers that go in to the ward on a daily basis who help out with the planned groups.



Pictured here (left to Right) are Eileen, Sue, Denise and Rachel but they are also helped by Tania, Mary and Max.

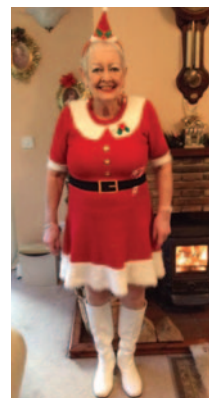
A lot of the equipment used in these groups and individual activities has been funded by the Friends and makes a real difference to the patients stay. The Friends also fund the musical entertainment, newspapers and the gardener to keep the outside space lovely for the patients.

Favourite activities include a Memory Game to promote group interaction and discussion and a memory box to encourage reminiscence and bring back lots of memories.

Patients particularly enjoy the bingo and musical bingo games and especially the prizes they win donated by the volunteers. That competitive spirit also comes out when playing Who Wants to be a Millionaire as they compete for the fake cash!

Activities are also tailored to meet with the seasons and special events in the calendar and this was particularly evident at Christmas when there were a lot of singers visiting the ward and of course a visit by Santa! Ward Volunteer Eileen lost count of the number of festive outfits she pulled out of her wardrobe in the lead up to Christmas.

All of the volunteers give what time they have and thoroughly enjoy their time on the ward. To Quote Eileen "The rewards are greater than any wage packet I have ever earned. Putting a smile on a patients face is just so special."



Community Services and Volunteering with the Friends...

Help us make a difference

And so we start a new decade!

During the last ten years the demands on our service have grown enormously and we are continually striving to use our resources in the most efficient way to meet these changing needs. The year our records were first computerised, some nine years ago, we provided our patients with help getting to 643 medical appointments... in the last calendar year this figure has increased to 1647! We are only able to provide this valuable service due to the work of our volunteers who always amaze us with their dedication and willingness to answer our many requests!

While some of our – ever youthful! – volunteers may have been with us at the start of the past decade, we have been fortunate enough to welcome many more to the team. The majority of these are drivers who take patients to medical appointments. We are also lucky enough to have wonderful minibus drivers who take groups of people shopping and out on social events, escorts who support the passengers on outings, and companions, who visit people who are isolated for friendship and conversation.

We are always keen to meet with potential volunteers and there are no upper or lower limits on the amount of time you have to be able to offer to volunteer for us - it really can be as little as one hour a month! If this sounds like something you would be interested in, please call Lisa or Leonne on 01258 450095 and we will gladly arrange for you to pop in and discuss the services with you - there is nothing we like more than a chat over a cup of tea!

Our volunteers again admirably supported the many social outings we arranged over Christmas and the New Year. Despite some incredibly wet days we took groups into Poole to do that all important Christmas shopping and out for some delicious festive meals (who doesn't love good food and company topped off with sherry and a mince pie?). These and a magical theatre trip ensured we all went into the break feeling suitably Christmassy!

We also started January feeling festive with the opportunity to spend time with the wonderful Community Services volunteer team at our January Christmas dinner. This gives us the opportunity to say a huge and heartfelt THANK YOU to them all in person and for the volunteer team to meet each other too! As I am sure you will see, a good time was had by all.



Now with the looking back done, we are looking forward to swapping wet and grey shopping days for springtime and sunny outings to ice cream farms, garden centres and the coast!

A very happy and healthy new decade to you all!

Leonne Hughes, Transport and Administration Coordinator

Meet The Volunteer....

Name: Barbara Bowley

Occupation: Retired

How long have you been a volunteer:
2 years with the Friends of Blandford Hospital



What does your role involve: Transporting patients to and from hospital or GP appointments

Hobbies and interests: Entertaining my dog, sewing, travelling in Europe and the UK in my campervan, gardening

What is your favourite part of being a volunteer:
Knowing that I can help in the community, meet lots of interesting people and fit all this around my family and personal commitments

Which famous person would be your ideal passenger: Mary Beard

Best song to drive to: Queen – 'Don't stop me now'

The Friends of Blandford Community Hospital

WIMBORNE ROAD, BLANDFORD, DORSET. DT11 9HN
Tel: 01258 452253 www.ashleywoodgolfclub.com



Charity Golf Day

Supporting Projects and Facilities at the Local Hospital

Friday 19th June 2020

18 Hole Team Texas Scramble

Full Handicap

9.00am Shotgun Start

Entry Fee £180:00 Team of 4

Entry Fee Includes;

Coffee & Bacon Roll on Arrival

2 Course Lunch after Round followed by Prize Ceremony

On course challenges both Male & Female

Take on the 18th Hole Challenge (Not included in the entry fee)

Further details from The Friends' Office Telephone 01258 451456

www.friendsofblandford.org.uk

The Friends of Blandford Community Hospital is a Registered Charity Number 800482

PRIZE BINGO



**29th April
3rd June
2nd September
25th November**

Blandford Royal British Legion Club

Doors Open 7.00pm Eyes Down 7.30pm

Autumn Fair

Sat 17th October

The Corn Exchange, Blandford

9.30am-2pm

Join us to support your local community hospital whilst searching through our tempting bargains on offer.

A VARIETY OF STALLS WITH QUALITY GOODS



Another way of showing your support...

Did Santa bring you gifts that were perhaps not to your taste? Maybe you have unopened bottles, chocolates that are not your favourite, or toiletries that don't appeal? We would love to receive any of these items and promise to use them as raffle prizes, tombola prizes or sell them in our shops to raise further funds for the charity.



like us on
facebook



The charity has lots of volunteering opportunities available such as driving clients to medical appointments, driving and escorting on our minibus, offering support in many ways to local residents, working in our charity shops and at our fundraising events and delivering publications to our membership in the local area.

If you have a few hours to give each week and would like to get involved then please call either Lisa, Sarah or Leonne (For Hospital and Community Volunteering) on 01258 450095 or Emma (For Shops and Fundraising Volunteering) on 01258 451456 who will be able to find the ideal volunteering role to suit you and the time you would like to give.