



beechwood

Supporting those affected by cancer and other life-limiting illnesses

Spring
2021

INFOCUS

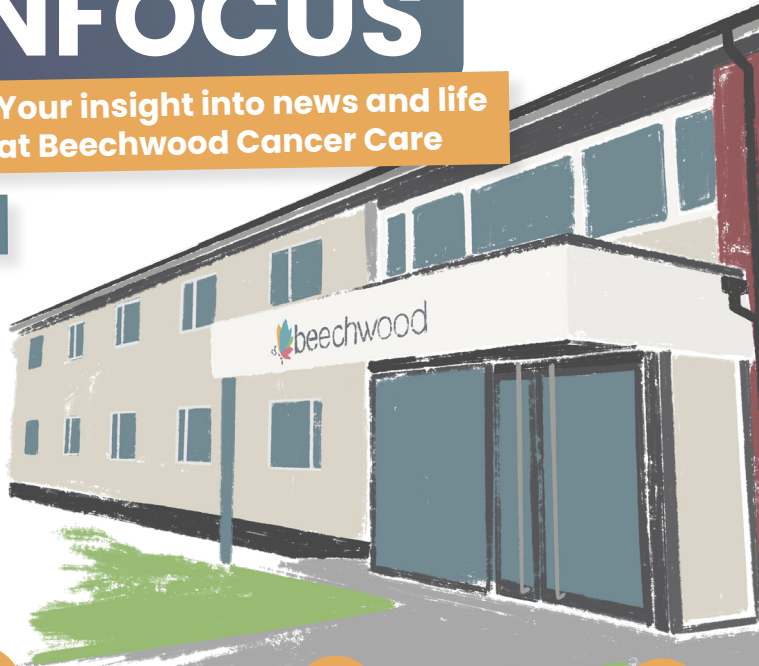
Your insight into news and life
at Beechwood Cancer Care

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Meet the Team

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Welcome

A message from Linda Steggles, CEO



Firstly, and most importantly, I would like to begin by saying a huge **'Thank You'** to our volunteers, staff, trustees, patrons and everyone who has supported Beechwood throughout this last year. The pandemic has been an incredibly challenging time for everyone, and Beechwood has worked hard to adjust and adapt so we can continue to provide our main services to those who need them.

Last year marked our 30th anniversary but the celebrations we'd planned had to be put on hold.... However, it was a wonderful end to the year to find that with the help of our amazing supporters, we achieved our **'30 for 30'** appeal of raising an amazing £30,000 in our 30th year; the generosity of local businesses and individuals never ceases to amaze me.

The pandemic has impacted on many plans; however, we still have good news to share, and it hasn't stopped us sharing some fabulous fundraising stories in this newsletter!

In January, we welcomed 2021 with optimism and hope, despite the ongoing restrictions; we keep hold of that optimism as Spring arrives and look forward to the rest of the year bringing more stable and positive circumstances for everyone.



We are pleased to say many of the Beechwood team have now received their Covid vaccinations, thanks to local health partners for helping us achieve that; it is vitally important to keep our staff as safe as possible and they were very grateful to have access to the vaccine in such a timely manner.

Finally, we hope to see you all again soon and that the full range of Beechwood's services can resume in a safe and steady way. In the meantime, stay safe, take care, and thank you all for your ongoing support.



Covid-19 update

Beechwood is still...

- Accepting professional and self-referrals
- Our Centre is open for clients who prefer face-to-face appointments
- Providing telephone counselling support for those who are unable or prefer not to travel to the Centre at this time
- Providing support to those who have recently been bereaved due to Covid-19



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If you would like to make a referral for yourself, or on behalf of somebody else, please visit www.beechwoodcancercare.org.uk call 0161 476 0384 or email clinical@beechwoodcancercare.co.uk

Good News

John Stevenson awarded an MBE!



Amazing news... Our Chairman, John Stevenson has been recognised for his support to Beechwood with an MBE in the 2021 New Year Honours list.

"This is very well deserved and I'm sure you'll all join me in offering John our sincere congratulations and thanks for all he's done and continues to do for Beechwood Cancer Care. As you are aware, John has supported Beechwood for many years and is the driving force behind many successful fundraising events – his dedication and passion for what we do is unwavering and for this, the Charity is eternally grateful."

Linda Steggles CEO

Our '30 for 30 years' appeal – £30,000 raised!

An incredible amount of money has been raised for Beechwood by many of our loyal corporate supporters!

Our much-anticipated annual comedy event, Man@Manchester, was unable to take place – but this didn't stop our loyal attendees from contributing towards our 30th anniversary target, by raising a whopping £30,000.

Thank you so much!

This fantastic support and huge amount of money will make a massive difference to Beechwood's patients and others who need our support. We are in awe at such amazing generosity and kindness, when many are facing their own business and personal challenges.

Special thanks to all those involved in this appeal and to our Chairman, John Stevenson for reaching out to our Man@Manchester supporters.

Beechwood DIY SOS



A massive thank you to **Jodie Gregson** who put in a successful bid for us to receive funding from the **NatWest Group** for a 'DIY SOS' make over for one of our rooms in the Centre. The Property Services NWG Team run a DIY SOS Campaign partnering with Go Green Managed Services annually where they raise money selling recycled surplus furniture from branches to donate to local charities and communities. The room that was known as the 'Patient Lounge' has been transformed into a haven of tranquillity and will now be known as the 'Relaxation Room'. This lovely room will be used for Mindfulness, Hypnotherapy and client relaxation.

Jodie reached out to us in memory of her close family friend, Jane Bollen who was a client at Beechwood, and had sadly, recently passed away.

The room looks fantastic and we can barely wait until Beechwood clients can begin using it!

"I am delighted we were able to support the refurbishment of this space in creating the 'Relaxation Room' and creating a dedicated space for these therapies and sessions. Beechwood provided Jane with so much support at such a difficult time and she always spoke so fondly of her time there, the people she met and the strength they provided her during this time. Thank you so much for all that you do". – Jodie Gregson.

Stockport County FC

Stockport County FC and their supporters have raised a whopping £6,535 by holding a prize draw to raise funds for Beechwood, following their FA Cup match against West Ham. Lucky winners won a range of collectable items from the match including framed and signed embroidered shirts, signed match balls and signed match day programmes. **Thank you!**



Thank You

Mulbury Donations

Despite it being quieter in the Centre over recent months, those who have visited may have noticed a few exciting changes as we have undertaken some much-needed refurbishments. Not only have we created a new Relaxation Room, but we have also improved the look and feel of other areas of the Centre – thanks to the generosity of Mulbury!

We were delighted when local housing developing company, Mulbury, kindly donated the contents of one of its show homes!

Beechwood's mission is to provide care and support to those who are going through extremely difficult emotional and health circumstances and it is a huge priority for us that our clients are welcomed in a safe, comfortable and calm environment.

Thank you Mulbury for your continuous support to Beechwood.

Beds, wardrobes and mattresses have been auctioned off and sold online to raise extra funds

Some of the furnishings have been given a new home in our family counselling rooms



The donated furniture has enabled us to update and modernise the 'Hub' so that our clients can sit in a modern and relaxed area



Deb Foden & AkzoNobel

Special thanks to **Deb Foden** for nominating Beechwood as the receiver of a £1000 donation funded by **AkzoNobel**. Deb completed the funding application in memory of her close friend Juliet Kershaw, who was a client at Beechwood. This money will go towards resources needed for 'Sand Therapy' a method used by our fabulous family support team. The children (and team!) are looking forward to using the new resources.

Messy Play Sponsors 2021



Thank you to the team at **Essential Insurance** for being our first **Messy Play Sponsors!** This generous sponsorship will provide us with Messy Play resources which will help the children at Beechwood to express, learn and develop during challenging times in their lives.



Did you know...

Messy Play helps children develop their ability to manage change, build their resilience and feel how much fun it can be to not always know what is happening next, as there is no pressure to produce an end product. This can be a great confidence and self-esteem boost for children and the physical act of squeezing, stirring, squashing and pouring can help to regulate the children during times of such uncertainty.



If you or your business would like to follow Essential Insurance's lead and be a sponsor of one of our services, please contact finance@beechwoodcancercare.co.uk

Fundraising News

We are always immensely overwhelmed by the continuous support and generous contributions we receive, even despite of the challenging circumstances we have all faced this past year. A huge **'Thank You'** to everyone who has donated, raised awareness and fundraised in aid of Beechwood. Here are just some of the many wonderful fundraising stories from the recent months...

Gill and Andy's Run for Mum

In January 2019, Gill and Andy received some devastating news. Their mum, Sandra Shirres, had been diagnosed with bowel cancer. After the diagnosis came major surgery and gruelling chemotherapy. "Throughout all of it and despite suffering almost every side effect going, mum carried on smiling and looking out for others, doing what she did best."



Sadly, there was more bad news to come. Later that year, Sandra was diagnosed with a brain tumour and the family had to say goodbye to a beloved mother and grandmother. Gill explains why Beechwood is so important to her, "Beechwood has been a fantastic support to me, both with the counselling I have received and the complementary therapies. This in turn has helped me to support my four-year-old daughter with her grief, which has by far been the hardest thing to deal with since the passing of our mum."



The family have raised funds together to help others who need our services too. "We want to give something back in return for the support we have received. So, my brother and I, together with my nephew and two nieces in a jogger buggy, ran 5km around Poynton Pool to raise essential funds. It was a very emotional day!"

In total, Gill and Andy raised over £1000 for Beechwood, which greatly exceeds the £300 target they had set themselves!



Thank you Gill and Andy!

Nathan's Challenge



Nathan Sutton shares with us his fundraising story, and the reason he chose to raise money for Beechwood.



When I was 18 (2013), my mum had Stage 4 Lymph Node cancer. My mum has always been a strong woman and despite all the odds being stacked against her, she managed to battle the illness off in just over 8 months.

Still to this day, I can remember the suffering my mum went through when she had chemo. I have an image burned into my head of her coming to a university open day with me and pushing her own wheelchair up a hill to keep her stable.

One of the main reasons my mum got through chemo, was thanks to the support offered to her from Beechwood. She undertook a course of reflexology through Beechwood and throughout her treatment, this gave her a sense of escapism that kept her mentally strong and helped her to battle the cancer.

Fast forward 7 years and despite me living in a different part of the country to my mum (she is in Stockport and I am in sunny Swindon) I am still very aware of the support Beechwood offered my mum and how much she values the charity. So, I decided to do something to help.

At first, I was going to do 'Stoptober', but I thought that I could do better. So, I decided to tag along running 100km to the stopping drinking challenge.

Initially I thought I'd be lucky if I raised £100, but thanks to the support of my friends, family and members of Swindon Hockey Club, I managed to raise over £550.

The challenge got tough towards the end. The hardest part was probably going out for food with my girlfriend or friends and having to sit there with a pint of Diet Coke whilst they got drunk! The running also got rough towards the end and my legs began to ache quite a bit.

It was 100% worth it though. I hope the money raised can be used to support someone going through cancer treatment in the same way Beechwood helped my mum. I really don't think she would be here without the support of Beechwood.



"I really don't think she would be here without the support of Beechwood."

Thank you Nathan!

Joanne's Journey

Nathans's mum, Joanne Sutton, also shares her story, telling us how Beechwood helped her through her journey.



At the age of 47, I was diagnosed with Stage 4 Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma.

My youngest child was only 8 and I could not bear the thought of him growing up without his mum. Thoughts engulfed my mind. Crazy little thoughts like – would his high school uniform fit him properly? What about his prom suit when he leaves school? What would he do if he got into trouble? Would he miss me?



"I kept strong, put on my armour, had a brave face, said things like I can beat this"



My other two boys were much older and theirs is a very different story as they both handled the situation in their own unique way.

My husband was a rock, there for me night and day. We probably talked more during that time than any other time in our 30-year marriage.

Close friends and family pulled out all the stops providing love and support to all of us, and through all this I kept strong, put on my armour, had a brave face, said things like 'I can beat this'. I even called myself a 'Warrior Princess'. All the things you do to protect the ones you love.



Thank heaven for Beechwood. When I was there, I could drop the act, cry my heart out, talk about my worries, even the silly ones without having to pretend that everything would be OK.

The visits to Beechwood gave me routine, something to focus on and they allowed me to be me. Sometimes I curled up on a chair wrapped in a blanket and fell asleep.

What I looked forward to most of all were the therapies. They helped me to turn my brain off, stop thinking, start relaxing. I enjoyed the feeling of massage. I was able to recharge before putting my armour back on and facing the battle again.

I cannot thank Beechwood enough for the care and support they gave me. I was allowed to realise that **it's OK not to be OK**. I could let my mind be free of thoughts for a while and I truly believe that this helped me to find my strength to fight the cancer.

I'm one of the lucky ones. I have won my battle, although the scars are still there not just on me but on my children, family, and friends. We all in our own way want to support Beechwood whenever we can so that they are able to help and support the next Warrior Prince or Princess.



"It's OK not to be OK"

"I cannot thank Beechwood enough"



If you, or someone you know may need our support, please call us on 0161 476 0384, or visit our website www.beechwoodcancercare.org.uk

Drive Through Drop-Offs

Our drive through drop-offs have been a massive success!

With queues down the street, we received thousands of bags of donations generously given to us by people from all over the North West.

A massive thank you to everyone who donated!

Our staff and volunteers wore PPE and maintained social distancing whilst collecting the donations, and visitors did not even need to leave their car!

We would like to say a special thank you to the volunteers who helped us during these events, many who had been furloughed during this period, yet had kindly given their time to help Beechwood.



"Wonderfully organised and everyone's safety was a priority. Marianna and Linda rocking the PPE like extras from NCIS!" – **Drive and Drop Donor.**

Festival of Lights



"The video was so lovely to watch! Just what we needed after the year we've had. Really makes you appreciate what Beechwood do for the community even during these tough times. Thank you to everyone for your hard work. You've made such a difference!"
– **Beechwood Supporter.**

Our Festival of Lights was another annual event that couldn't be held last December due to Covid-19 restrictions. This is a very special remembrance service in the Beechwood calendar, and we couldn't let restrictions prevent us from finding a way to remember those no longer with us. Instead, we held an in-house staff service and captured elements of this on a short but meaningful video via our social media.

Candles were lit in the Beechwood garden in memory of those we have lost, and the video gave the opportunity for loved ones to remember and reflect.

We hope that we can once again hold the usual service for everyone in the Beechwood garden this Christmas, 2021.

Meet our Patron...

Gaynor Morgan

Gaynor is a radio presenter and magazine columnist living in Cheshire. She hosts her **'Mid Morning Radio Show'**, weekdays 10am – 1pm on www.travel.radio and hosts a weekly Saturday night show on **Radio Wirral**. Gaynor also writes a monthly magazine column, **'Gaynor's Social Scene'** for **INCheshire** and **Prestbury Living Magazines**.

How did you first hear about Beechwood?

I knew about Beechwood through a friend of mine, Sandie Nelson who unfortunately lost her husband to cancer. She had always talked about how much Beechwood had helped him especially towards the end of his journey. Sadly, we then lost Sandie a few years ago, also to cancer, so when I had the opportunity to help raise money for Beechwood, I was delighted to! I was then asked to be a patron which I was very proud to accept.



Why did you want to become a Beechwood Patron?

I lost my mum to cancer in 2003 which was devastating, and my family went through a very hard time for a number of years, especially my son who was 12 at the time. I wish I had known about somewhere like Beechwood who could have hugely helped us through a very tough time. It was a very easy 'YES' when I was asked to become a patron.

What do you find rewarding about being a patron of Beechwood?

I find all charity fundraising rewarding. To give back, if you can, is just so important to me - I always said if I ever won the lottery, I'd give most of it back to charity. There's no greater feeling than giving back.

"I think on the whole, the British people are truly amazing, from selfless volunteers and those who fundraise, we are as a nation amazing at pulling together especially in times of need to help those who need our support. Keep up the good work!"

Teaming up with friends Tricia Penrose, and Steve Norman from Spandau Ballet, Gaynor released a charity single covering 'You to Me Are Everything' by The Real Thing, produced by Pete Hammond.

The song is available on all major platforms to download and all funds raised go to Beechwood Cancer Care Centre, Breast Cancer Now and The Roy Castle Lung Foundation.

uk.virginmoneygiving.com/GaynorMorgan3



Meet our Longest Serving Volunteer...

Janet Shaw

Janet is one of our amazing Beechwood Volunteers who has been dedicating her time here for **over 30 years** - an incredible achievement! Here, Janet talks to us about her time at Beechwood.

How were you introduced to Beechwood?

My introduction to Beechwood began when I attended a social function and met someone who was selling small teddy bears for the charity. As both my parents had been diagnosed with cancer, I was very interested in finding out more about Beechwood.

In January 1991, I attended my first volunteers meeting and immediately enjoyed the experience and decided to join the group of volunteers. We met at the Centre on the first Monday of every month at 7pm. At this time, the clients stayed at Beechwood 5 days a week in rooms upstairs which later changed to day appointments. The Volunteers Group then became 'The Time and Talent Group' with the same regular monthly meetings to discuss all aspects of helping Beechwood.

What experiences have you had as a volunteer?

People can volunteer for different roles within the charity, mine was to concentrate on fundraising. This included bag packing at supermarkets, collections at Santa's Sleigh, fashion shows, fayres at the Centre, outside events and giving talks at various institutions who were donating to Beechwood. In 1999, my husband Mike became part of the Fundraising Team and used his talent for singing to raise funds. His band, 'SHAWFIRE', includes our sons Jon and Chris and together, with Mike's many solo performances, they have raised thousands of pounds for Beechwood. These events also gave me the opportunity to speak to the audience and make them aware of the services the charity has to offer. Fundraising was so important, especially when Beechwood was struggling financially (many years ago), which led the Volunteer Team to form the S.O.B Group (Save Our Beechwood). Fortunately, this crisis passed, and the Centre was able to continue supporting clients whilst also buying the premises. In 2015 the Volunteer Team were recognised when we were awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Services.



What changes have happened during your time at Beechwood?

There have been many changes at Beechwood over the years. The foyer has been reconstructed and many areas refurbished. The building has grown with two extensions which has provided valuable extra space helping clients and their families. There has also been changes in staff, volunteers and the shops, but the ethos of Beechwood has never changed; the most important part has always been to care for the clients on every level of their need.

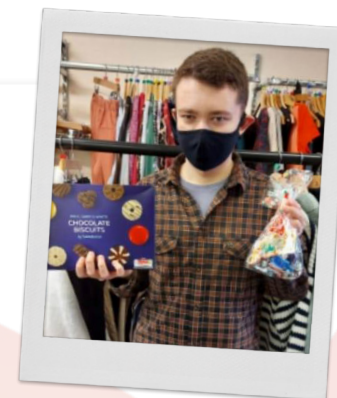
Why did you become a volunteer?

I became a volunteer at Beechwood because I wanted to raise not only funds but also awareness of the wonderful work done at the charity. I hope this will continue and thrive for many years to come.

Thank you!

We are extremely lucky to have such amazing and kind-hearted members of the community who are always happy to give up their time to support Beechwood.

Our Retail Volunteer Team have been kept on their toes throughout the pandemic with the opening and closing of our Woodley, Heald Green and Chelford Grove shops throughout the year. They have continued to adapt and adhere to restrictions with the same enthusiasm as ever... and always with a smile on their faces!



We would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their continuous support, kindness, and efforts.

We would also like to thank those helping us behind the scenes. This includes our incredible Admin Volunteers, eBay Volunteers, and Creative-flair Volunteers.

We are always immensely grateful for your support and look forward to welcoming you back to Beechwood now restrictions are being eased.



If you are interested in following in Janet's footsteps and becoming a volunteer for Beechwood, please call 0161 476 0384 or contact volunteering@beechwoodcancercare.co.uk.

What's New?

Mindfulness sessions

Throughout lockdown, our Mindfulness sessions have taken place via Zoom with the lovely Sarah. These sessions have been a huge hit with our clients! In April, we will also be starting socially distanced group Mindfulness sessions in our new Relaxation Room. Here, Sarah talks to us about the sessions and what to expect.

What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness brings attention to where you are. You can take a pause from the future, disconnect from the past and be in the moment, without judgement, whilst cultivating kindness and self-compassion.

How will it benefit me?

You will learn how you can apply Mindfulness, kindness and other key concepts in a way that really makes a difference in your life. Find your calm, relax your mind and sooth charged thoughts. The sessions will boost your wellbeing and bring peace and calm using your breath and body as your anchor.



Some of the Beechwood Team had the chance to experience the Mindfulness sessions for themselves!



What can I expect?

There will be an introduction to Mindfulness, running for 4 weeks every Tuesday at 1pm. We will be bringing in a variety of key concepts from the 8-week Mindfulness for Stress course. You will learn to connect with your breath, learn a new skill, then grab your blanket and make yourself really comfortable for a guided Mindfulness meditation.

Session feedback

I found the session a valuable experience, especially during times like now where the world seems to be a bit crazy! The online session was a completely safe space and I believe doing the session from my own home increased my comfort levels. The exercises that Sarah guided the group through gave me the opportunity to take a step back and reconnect with myself, my senses and my surroundings.



Hypnotherapy sessions

We know just how much relaxation benefits those who are unwell, caring or bereaved and our Hypnotherapy sessions are receiving terrific feedback! Stephanie Newton, our wonderful Hypnotherapist, transports you to a place of tranquillity in her therapeutic sessions.

What is Hypnotherapy?

Hypnotherapy allows you to go into a relaxed state, helping your mind to process situations and deal with any negative emotions that you might be experiencing.

"10 out of 10. The room and therapist were excellent."

How will it benefit me?

You can experience many beneficial effects as it is known to improve sleep, give you the ability to relax, help you be less distracted by thoughts and overall give you a general sense of wellbeing.

"I have anxiety but have felt more positive thanks to the activities and help I have received."

"I found it very helpful for relaxation and sleep. The recordings for sleep have helped and I was able to enjoy the sessions as a result."

What can I expect?

You can expect to experience a safe, confident hypnosis session that will instil relaxation and a sense of inner calm.



If you are a client at Beechwood and would like to join any of these sessions, please ask your counsellor for more information or contact us on enquiries@beechwoodcancercare.co.uk

Meet the Team

Sally Bell

When did you first come to Beechwood?

I volunteered in 2013 as part of a creative therapy course. I wanted to find somewhere where I could work creatively with children and young people and got in contact with Beechwood as I knew there was a family service available. In July 2015 I was offered a job as a family counsellor within the Family Team at Beechwood, supporting children, young people, parents and guardians through illness or bereavement within the family.

What was your experience before Beechwood?

I worked as a social worker in Manchester for 7 years, as well as previous residential social work. I then trained as a counsellor so that I could work with adults as well as children and young people. I am also trained as a musician and play the violin and piano. I worked for 8 years part-time in a specialist support school doing music lessons and activities with the children.

What methods of support are provided to children and young people?

The support we provide varies depending on their age, their circumstances and who they are.

With primary school aged children, the counselling is much more creative in nature and can involve games, Lego, sand therapy, role play and craft activities, using lots of different materials and creative resources. We allow the children to explore the room and lead the way through non-directive play, as well as introducing some structured activities that suit the circumstances of the child.

With young people and teenagers, many are open to doing art, drawing, painting and craft activities that look into their feelings and emotions in different ways. There are also many coping strategies and exercises that we explore with them for dealing with anxieties and managing anger. A lot of the older children do like to just sit and talk.

How do you support those affected by illness and bereavement?

In the context of illness, we look at the relationship the child has to the person who is ill, how it has impacted the family and what changes have been made within the family.



We also very much look at their emotions and feelings and do all of this through our creative and play activities.

Most of our bereavement support is account of a life-limiting illness such as cancer; however, we also support bereavements due to sudden death or traumatic circumstances, which differentiates us from the adult team. There are also specific activities we do in relation to grief, such as the memory jar. The exercises and activities initiate discussions and encourages children to open up.

Most of our work is mainly individual one-to-ones with the children and young people, however I enjoy working at Beechwood as it is very much a family orientated service. Beechwood offers the opportunity to speak to and support parents, whereas at a lot of other children's support services I have worked at, you generally just see the child and have very little contact with the parent or guardian.

I personally think it's very helpful to work alongside them, as illness and bereavement circumstances happen within the context of the family. The parents and guardians are fully involved with the support whilst we still maintain confidentiality with the young person or child. Being able to talk to the parent and guardian throughout gives us scope into how their child is coping at school and at home and if they are seeing an improvement in their child's behaviour and wellbeing.

What do you find rewarding about your role at Beechwood?

There are not many other places that offer children and family support quite like Beechwood. Our charity is a lot more informal and there is always a warm welcoming feeling when people walk in. The children seem to love the space and it gives them a specifically private place where they can come out of school and have time to focus on themselves. I really enjoy being able work creatively and using creative activities to explore emotions. I like the dynamic of being able to work with the whole family, which again is an advantage of Beechwood's support. However, the most rewarding aspect is being able to be a part of their journey, seeing them rebuild their lives and seeing them become a bit more whole again when their world is falling apart.



You can sponsor one of our 'Worry Monsters' for only £10!

Our Family Support is dependent entirely on your donations. If you would like to donate to help us continue caring for families, children and young people, please visit our website or contact finance@beechwoodcancercare.co.uk

Fundraise For Us

For over 30 years, Beechwood has relied on the generosity of our wonderful supporters to help raise the **£4,000 per day** that is needed to keep the Centre and its services running.

As Covid-19 has restricted the ability to hold events and fundraise in the usual ways, Beechwood needs your help now more than ever! There are still plenty of opportunities to raise some much-needed funds for Beechwood, including active challenges, sweepstakes and more...

Take on our new **#beechtobeach** challenge!

Our #beechtobeach challenge is a great way to get active for a good cause!

Travel the distance between our Centre (SK3 8LS) and a beach of your choice by walking, running, cycling or even on your exercise bike in the comfort of your own home!



We have a variety of fundraising tools to help you complete the challenge. To receive yours, please email fundraising@beechwoodcancercare.co.uk



If you are completing any exciting fundraising challenges for Beechwood, or if you would like to find out how you can fundraise for us, please contact fundraising@beechwoodcancercare.co.uk