

force matters



1,128

New clients registering for FORCE support



1,273

Complementary therapy and acupuncture sessions

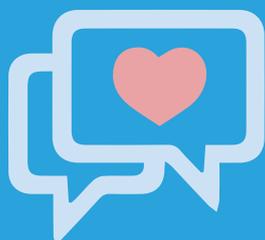
£1.5M

£1.5 million claimed in benefits for **452** clients



38

New volunteers recruited



2,156

Counselling appointments

Never needed so much



162

Visits by RD&E oncology staff for reflective practice



332

Clients assessed by our physio team



1,071

Nurse-led information appointments



332

Client support calls



115

People helped by wig fitting or hair loss services

What's inside

Our Patron	4
Outreach update	5
Research news	6 - 7
Get Active with FORCE	8 - 9
Volunteering	10 - 11
A fond farewell	12
Creative response	13
Moving Forward	14 - 15
Group success	16
The beauty of change	17
Finance in focus	18
Fundraising stories and pictures	19-27

Time to take a fresh look at what we do



By Meriel Fishwick
FORCE Chief Executive

“FORCE sees the person. They saw who I really was and not what cancer was doing all around me”

And this is how it should be for everyone who walks into the FORCE Cancer Support Centre.

We've learnt so much over the course of the pandemic and experienced previously unthinkable difficulties and trials. However, we know instinctively when we read feedback like this, that we shouldn't change what we do.

We must now focus our efforts on 'how we do it' starting with how we recover our income levels to avoid cutting back on vital support. It's also time to take a fresh look at how FORCE:

- reaches everyone needing support
- supports people whose treatment or prognosis has been affected by the pandemic
- helps people to live well with secondary cancer
- restarts outreach services
- improves access to support and education programmes
- shares knowledge and expertise with other organisations
- works more closely with others to improve services for our beneficiaries

This edition of FORCE matters looks at how we are beginning to address these questions and the new ways we are approaching the delivery of some of our services such as the Moving Forward programme. You will also read about further developments in our Physio and Exercise programme thanks to the secondment of Becky Bailey in September 2021.

It was very good news to hear that our Patron, Dr Nigel Acheson, has been appointed as Chief Medical Officer for the new Devon Integrated Care System. Nigel is incredibly supportive of our work and he shares his thoughts on how charities such as FORCE can play a key role in new NHS cancer care plans.

No amount of thanks will ever feel enough to recognise the contribution Sarah Daniels has made to the success of FORCE during her 14 years at the helm of our fundraising and income generation team. In this newsletter, Sarah talks about the personal tragedy which led to her resignation from her role as Head of Income Generation. We wish Sarah the best of everything with her future plans, but it's great to know she is still in the wings, working with us on The Nello and grant applications.

I hope you enjoy this edition of FORCE Matters and that it reinforces how crucial it is to step up our income generation to give FORCE services the future that patients and their families deserve.

As we continued to feel the impact of the pandemic throughout the past year, FORCE still offered unparalleled support to local people affected by cancer, made possible by the backing of the communities we serve. The figures on our front cover are just a few of the year's noteworthy numbers. ●



Force Matters is the newsletter of FORCE Cancer Charity. Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this issue. While every effort is made to ensure accuracy at the time of going to print, please accept our sincere apologies for any errors or omissions.

Editor: Trina Lake
Design: TRG Design, Exeter
Printing: Brightsea Print, Exeter
Published: SPRING 2022

FORCE Cancer Charity
Corner House, Barrack Road, Exeter EX2 5DW
Open: 9:30am - 4:30pm Monday to Friday

Patient support:
☎ 01392 406151 @ support@forcecancercharity.co.uk

Fundraising:
☎ 01392 402875 @ forcecfr@forcecancercharity.co.uk

FORCE Charity Shop
73 Fore Street, Heavitree, Exeter EX1 2RN
☎ 01392 271652

Open: 10:30am - 4:00pm Monday to Saturday

Chairman: Dr Anne Hong
Registered Charity No: 1140676
Registered Company No: 07529991

If you no longer wish to receive our FORCE Matters magazine you can let us know at any time by calling us on 01392 402875 or emailing supporter.relations@forcecancercharity.co.uk. If you would prefer to receive the magazine via email we would be happy to amend your preferences. Supporters of FORCE are incredibly important to us. Further details of how we comply with General Data Protection Regulations can be found on our website: www.forcecancercharity.co.uk/privacy

CHANGE IS INEVITABLE ... STEADY HANDS ESSENTIAL

The chairman's report is always my opportunity to pay tribute and express my heartfelt gratitude to all you remarkable people who make FORCE such an amazing, formidable and effective force for the benefit of all affected by cancer locally.

We are still open, as we have been throughout the pandemic! We are still available, accessible and delivering greatly needed lifelines, practical, psychological and emotional support and services to patients, carers, families, partners, healthcare professionals, one another, in times of stress and distress, times of laughter, times of quiet, times for listening – safely - whether face to face, telephone, video call, Zoom group, WhatsApp etc.

This is even more important now and will be for some time to come, as we grapple with the ongoing impact of the pandemic on our lives and activities, our Centre and shop teams, supporters, friends, fundraisers and trustees.

Yes, “change is inevitable” and FORCE has been flexible, sensitive, adapting to the changing working and social environment, our clients’ needs and ways of meeting those needs. At the same time, stable, steady hands at the helm have been essential in navigating us through troubled, uncertain waters, so special thanks to our management team for maintaining services, team spirit and morale, caring for and supporting each other through difficult times in spite of staff shortages and to our trustees who give generously of their time, skills, expertise and wisdom, contributing to committee work and supporting teams to ensure FORCE’s recovery, restructuring and sustainability plan is fit for purpose and delivered.

In 1984, a project called HOPE (Home Oncology Programme

Exeter) provided an innovative and practical programme, enabling patients to live with cancer and its treatment. From this, FORCE was born and has evolved far beyond its original vision. Today, it still has a unique profile of local service provision and partnerships, with the same message of hope.

2022 is FORCE’s 35th anniversary – join us and join in our celebration of gratitude for all those who were and are an integral part of FORCE, making us who and what we are – bringing hope and a human, compassionate touch at the point of need.

I pay tribute to our loyal generation of traditional supporters who helped shape FORCE, bringing us to where we are today and encourage you to continue helping to shape our future, working alongside a new generation of enthusiasts and supporters who bring new skills, ideas, commitment, tools and are savvy of today’s fast-paced, technologically-connected society.

Even in these challenging times, while much still needs to be done to regain ground, there are encouraging, very positive signs as your continued generosity, donations, efforts in raising much needed funds and awareness of FORCE’s mission, bear fruit. Yes, it is spring, bringing new shoots, new vision, new growth, new fruit. Join us ... stay with us on this exciting journey!

Thank you, all ... as always, it is with gratitude, humility, pride and a deep sense of privilege to be part of the FORCE family.

Anne
Dr Anne Hong
Chairman, Trustees of FORCE ●



LEGACIES ARE KEY to FORCE’s long-term survival. People who leave us a gift in their Will are investing in the future of our charity, ensuring we’ll be here to support the people they care about for years to come.

We understand that family and others close to you will come first when it comes to writing your Will. You want to help them when you’re not around to – we get that.

FORCE also relies on people who want to protect our mission, to continue offering the best possible support for people in our community dealing with cancer, face to face

and close to home.

Remembering FORCE in your Will can do that. Gifts include a percentage or share of whatever you leave behind (residuary gift), a lump sum (pecuniary gift) or something like artwork, your car, jewellery, property, stocks and shares (specific gift).

We were lucky enough to receive a generous inheritance from a supporter in East Devon because they thought so highly of FORCE and our work. The items pictured are just some of the items left to us. Selling them will provide vital things that will

enable us to run our essential services.

FORCE is here for anyone locally affected by cancer when they most need help.

If cancer has touched your life, or someone you care about, then please consider saying thank you by leaving a gift in your Will.

Make hope your legacy.

For further information on leaving a gift to FORCE in your Will, contact Olly Watts on **01392 406150** or via email at **olly.watts@forcecancercharity.co.uk**



Charities can play key role in new NHS cancer care plans

FORCE Patron Nigel Acheson has thrown his support behind our charity's plans for recovery after two years of constraints on our services and fundraising.

Our strategy to build a sustainable future post pandemic will dovetail with an overhaul of NHS care.

New Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) will bring together NHS, local authority and third sector bodies to take on responsibility for the resources and health of an area.

Due to launch this summer, the aim is to deliver better, more integrated care for patients.

Dr Acheson is the new Chief Medical Officer in the Devon Integrated Care System.

With his long-standing association with the charity, he explains to FORCE Matters how we are well placed to continue playing a vital role in support of local cancer patients.

"I was a gynaecological oncologist in Exeter and my patients benefitted hugely after and before their surgery from coming to FORCE for support for both themselves and their families.

"Due to that experience, when I became Regional Medical Director for NHS England for five years, I was privileged to be invited to be one of the trustees of the charity and I was delighted to do so and saw the amazing work that FORCE has done and continues to do, growing that support,

that holistic, person-centred approach to supporting people and their families through the cancer journey.

"During my work for the Care Quality Commission as one of the Deputy Chief Inspectors of Hospitals and over the course of the pandemic I know that there has been very variable support available for people as they go through that cancer journey.

"One of the things as Patron of this charity that I've been able to see is the way that we have adapted almost seamlessly to the

challenges that the pandemic has produced.

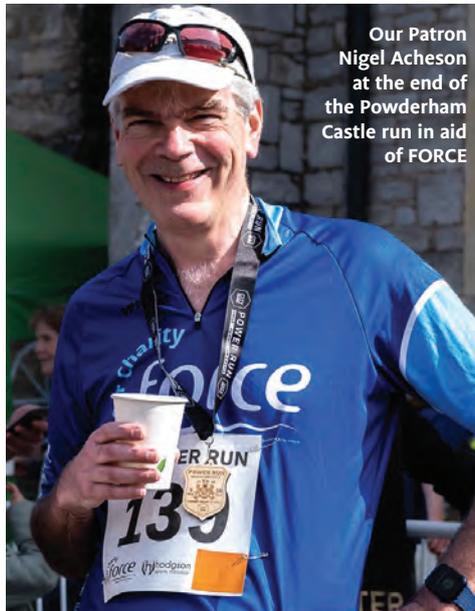
"We've gone online, produced all sorts of guidance and support offerings for people, restrained as we have been by face-to-face contact during the pandemic.

"But now that we're beginning to come out of that phase, we have learned from what's gone on in other stages of the pandemic which is to use peer support volunteers more and more to boost our ability to support people and their families through cancer over this period, which has been extremely difficult for them.

"Colleagues at FORCE have shown agility to be able to continue to offer that support and now take it forward in a new direction, which will hopefully benefit more and more people over the coming years. I'm incredibly proud to be part of that.

"We know that as from 2022 the new Integrated Care Systems are going to be founded on a principle of What Matters To Me and there is no question in my mind that the work of colleagues at FORCE is absolutely founded on that principle of what matters to people who are going through that journey together with their families.

"That is one of the things that FORCE will be able to provide with additional funding in order to sustain our journey and become one of the key parts of support for people and their families as they go through the cancer journeys of the future." ●



Our Patron
Nigel Acheson
at the end of
the Powderham
Castle run in aid
of FORCE

FORCE Podcast all set for Season 2

FORCE has made an encouraging foray into the growing world of podcasting.

The latest estimate suggests that 21 million people in the United Kingdom are regular podcast listeners with audiences growing steadily.

That figure is set to hit 28 million by 2026.

Podcasts are a great way to share news, information and insights in an easily accessible way.

We recorded 10 episodes for our first season of the FORCE Podcast on a variety of topics

and we're all set to start recording Season 2.

But don't worry if you missed the first series. All episodes are available on our website - forcecancercharity.co.uk/audio/ - or you can listen via other platforms like Apple Podcasts, Spotify and Google.

The most popular instalments featured people who have used FORCE and benefitted from our services.

We're always keen to hear from anyone who has a story to tell about how FORCE has helped them deal with a cancer diagnosis. ●



If you would like to take part in the FORCE Podcast and share your experience or you'd like to know a little more about how to get involved, email trina.lake@forcecancercharity.co.uk

Commitment to get our services back wherever we can

Recovery and sustainability - two words at the forefront of FORCE's plan to emerge from the pandemic and stride into a positive new future.

Those plans include a relaunch of our community services, severely restricted since Spring 2020.

We have submitted funding applications to finance an ambitious strategy to reach more people in more communities in Devon.

We are working closely with our colleagues at the RD&E to establish how best we can offer our services in hospitals outside Exeter.

"We are keen to explore all available options as part of our commitment to get our services back out wherever we can," said FORCE Chief Executive Meriel Fishwick.

The aim is to set aside one day a week

initially, with a range of options for anyone dealing with a cancer diagnosis.

If we cannot commit staff for a full day away from Exeter, people will be able to drop into our outreach centres and use the phones and computers there to connect with our information team.

We also plan to introduce group support and education programmes in outreach – the highly successful Moving Forward sessions for patients at the end of treatment and the pioneering Living with Cancer as a Chronic Disease group.

Our complementary therapists will deliver hands-on treatment and our oncology physiotherapists and exercise professionals are expanding their programme of cancer rehabilitation.

Physios Louise Ballagher and Becky Bailey are already conducting clinics in Ottery St Mary and introducing specialist groups for men and breast cancer patients alongside the community exercise programmes on offer (see more on Pages 8 and 9).

All of our plans are dependent on successful bids for grants and hopes for National Lottery funding as well as growing back our corporate and community fundraising activities, so crucial to our recovery.

Underpinning everything is the support of our volunteers.

Although the pandemic has meant that outreach services have been intermittent, including the delivery of chemotherapy by RD&E nurses, FORCE volunteers have always answered the call to action. ●



FORCE SUPPORT INVOLVED TO ASPIRING RESEARCHERS

The careers of two more young cancer researchers at the University of Exeter have been enhanced by support from FORCE.

Medical Sciences student Rahmaneh Moosavi is benefitting from an £18,000 grant from FORCE towards her tuition fees and research costs.

Evyn Wassell is the 2020/2021 recipient of the Dr Chris Giles Rowland Bursary. The award, established by FORCE in memory of our charity's co-founder, gives £1,500 to BSc Medical Sciences students at the University to support the cost of a Professional Training Year (PTY) linked to oncology.

Rahmaneh studied genetics at undergraduate level and a master's degree in cellular pathology, which included a thesis that focused on cancer.

"Although there have been vast increases in knowledge of the disease and treatment has improved radically, many types of cancer still do not have promising treatments with no side effects," she explained to FORCE Matters.

"Bearing in mind that these advances occurred through scientific research, I was very keen to be a part of this and to have my own impact, no matter how small.

"This led me to undertake the MPhil project at the University of Exeter, which has only been possible thanks to your generous support."

Rahmaneh chose Exeter because it is one of the leading universities in Medical and Biomedical studies with a great record of collaboration, which makes the research environment even more dynamic.

Under the supervision of Dr Jacqueline Whatmore, she has been working on how breast cancer cells spread to the brain to form secondary tumours, focussing on techniques to improve her research skills and attending seminars and webinars to stay updated and receive new ideas towards the project.

"Your gift deducted a big portion of my international student tuition fee and my research materials," said Rahmaneh, a keen swimmer and water polo player who would like to run her own research laboratory one day.

"Without your help it wouldn't be possible for me to continue my research on cancer science at the University of Exeter with the most professional expert team on the breast to brain cancer metastasis.

"As someone who has seen the suffering of individuals with cancer first hand and lost my close young cousin due to the brain metastasis and by considering that there are sorrowfully more numerous valuable human beings suffering and being lost to the same condition, I am more dedicated than ever to this research as I seek to have an impact on finding better therapeutic strategies by understanding the disease mechanism and its progression in these patients.

"Your help makes a valuable change to both scientists and patients by generating progress in this area of research within years. This can only be achieved with supporters like you.

"I'm deeply grateful for this and endeavour to do the best I can to achieve research outcomes which will enable us to provide the best



Rahmaneh Moosavi

possible medical care."

Exeter's reputation as a world leader in research also drew Evyn to the city and a family history of hereditary disease fired her passion for genetics.

That passion led her to follow in the footsteps of previous bursary students by using her professional training year to study with Professor David Parkinson at the University of Plymouth.

She has been involved in research into the development of tumours of the nervous system.

"The bursary enabled me to be solely focused on my project throughout multiple lockdowns as I did not have to worry about finding or maintaining a part time job," said Evyn.

"This allowed me to fully devote myself to my project. I was also able to take advantage of opportunities to work on other projects that were ongoing within the lab.

"This broadened my skillset further and allowed me to explore different aspects of research outside of my own primary project.

"It also allowed me to pay for a membership to the British Neuro-Oncology Society as well as fund my place to attend and present my findings at their online 2021 conference.

"This was an incredible experience and an amazing opportunity to

VALUABLE RESEARCHERS



ALI ASHBY is the newest member of our oncology support specialist team. A qualified therapeutic counsellor for over 20 years, she joined FORCE in November and works at our Support and Information Centre two days a week.

Ali had just completed a return to nursing course at the RD&E when the opportunity to join FORCE came up and she recognised that she could use her skills most effectively as part of the oncology support team.

“This is where I want to be, working with cancer patients and their families,” she said. “It was important to be able to work in a setting where people don’t have to pay. FORCE offers a way of being able to reach more people in need of support.

“Working here has been more than I could have hoped for - being part of such a supportive team throughout the organisation and feeling that everyone is working to the same aim.

“I really enjoy the fact that we aren’t focussing only on patients but offering support for families who are also going through the experience of a diagnosis and living with cancer.

“It is a privilege to be alongside people facing the challenges that cancer so often brings.”

Ali’s professional life has focussed on counselling and complementary therapy work. Having trained as a counsellor, she went on to qualify as a kinesiology practitioner and combined counselling and kinesiology in her practice for many years, alongside teaching kinesiology to budding practitioners to professional level.

Kinesiology involves testing muscles to assess and address imbalances within the body, which may be affecting the person’s health and wellbeing.

“I have specialised in working with people who are dealing with trauma and stress, including cancer, in my practice,” said Ali, who had explored a return to nursing as a way of bringing her therapeutic skills into the NHS.

After a year on the wards during COVID she had a real sense of what people were having to deal with and wanted to harness this experience within a therapeutic setting.

“Being here at FORCE offers the perfect opportunity to use my counselling skills to the full. It feels like I am part of something that makes a difference,” she said.

Ali, who was born in Devon and moved back to the county 20 years ago, splits her professional life between working at FORCE and running a private counselling & kinesiology practice.

And when she’s not working, she loves forest, woodland or moorland walking, and body boarding when the surf allows – passions she shares with her daughter, who is just finishing her degree at Bristol University. ●



Evyn Wassell

develop professional scientific communication skills and witness the forefront of neuro-oncological research and how it can merge with, and inform, clinical guidelines and treatments.

“The confidence, experience and skills I have gained from this once in a lifetime opportunity have truly helped me decide that research is for me.

“Working as part of a team within a professional research lab allowed me to realise that I really enjoy working to answer new questions and to further scientific understanding.

I feel that I am a lot more secure than my peers in the career I want to follow and that I have the knowledge and experience to make me stand out from other candidates as I apply for graduate roles.

“My plan is to spend a year in a genetics lab within the NHS to gain some experience in diagnostics and compare with my year in research on placement. Then I will focus on whichever I feel allows me to make the biggest difference in improving people’s quality of life.”

Away from the lab, Evyn winds down by reading and crocheting and burns off nervous energy by powerlifting.

“I am so grateful for the opportunity given to me by FORCE through the Dr Christopher Giles Rowland Bursary and cannot say thank you enough for enabling me to make the most of my placement year.” ●



More opportunities to get active with FORCE

Our **GET ACTIVE WITH FORCE** programme is emerging from the limitations of COVID bigger and hopefully better than ever before.

The charity's specialist oncology physiotherapists, Louise Ballagher and Becky Bailey, are building on the already successful package of services available for cancer patients.

Louise, Becky and their team of exercise experts have provided support and advice throughout the pandemic, online or by phone if face-to-face contact was impossible.

Most of those virtual sessions are now being offered in person and there are even more opportunities for patients to access

simple physical activity that can reduce many of the side effects of cancer treatment and the risk of recurrence.

Louise and Becky offer free, one-to-one assessments at our Exeter Support Centre and in clinics at community hubs for anyone who receives a cancer diagnosis.

They provide individualised advice and exercise programmes, tailored specifically to each person's needs and refer them to qualified cancer rehabilitation exercise professionals in gyms and leisure centre across Devon.

Patients are offered a subsidised gym programme that includes two visits a week for eight weeks and assessments at the start

and finish.

Those centres are in Exmouth, Honiton, Ottery St Mary, Axminster, Seaton, Crediton, Cullompton, Tiverton, Okehampton and the Riverside and Isca Centres in Exeter.

We are also setting up new groups for men and breast cancer patients plus a rolling programme of gentle exercise at the Isca Centre in Summer Lane, Exeter with no limit on how many times a patient can attend sessions.

For anyone who can't or prefers not to attend a group, Nick Paynter offers a class on Zoom twice a week.

The **MEN-ONLY GROUP** will be open to prostate cancer patients initially and will also be held at the Isca Centre.

It will be run by Rob Amor, a Level 4 instructor in cancer rehabilitation, the standard qualification for exercise professionals working with FORCE.

The project is also supported by Graham Small, Fitness Manager for Exeter Leisure, who said: "I have worked alongside FORCE and Lou for a number of years now, prescribing exercise for cancer patients and also helping to facilitate different classes at our Exeter Leisure Centres.

"FORCE are an absolutely brilliant charity that helps so many people. At Exeter Leisure we are very proud to help them in some way. The Isca Centre has proven to be an ideal facility to host FORCE classes and gym based sessions, as the centre is fully equipped with everything we need and has a real community feel to it.

"Helping and hosting projects like this are very important to us at Exeter Leisure as we are very passionate about exercise referral. I look forward to continuing our work with FORCE and playing a part in helping this fantastic charity."



Graham Small

The group for **BREAST CANCER PATIENTS** will be held at the FORCE Support Centre.

It will run for four weeks, promoting upper body recovery and reducing the risk of lymphoedema.

FORCE is also relaunching **YOGA** sessions at our Support Centre, initially for patients who will be offered six free face-to-face sessions in a group of no more than six.

And there are plans to restart the popular **WALKING GROUP** on Exeter Quay.

“All of these groups offer people the chance to be with others in similar situations. There is a great motivation in attending a group and the benefits of peer support cannot be underestimated,” said Louise.

“We also recognise the importance of exercise for rebuilding confidence, improving your mood and your stamina and getting back to normal activities,” added Becky.

For more information on any of the FORCE exercise programmes, get in touch with Louise or Becky on **01392 403094** or email **physio@forcecancercharity.co.uk**



Meet Wendy Reynolds, our new yoga instructor. She tells us how yoga has changed her life and what she aims to offer local cancer patients taking part in free groups provided by FORCE.



“I **TEACH YOGA** through my business, Yoga in the Garden. It all came about around seven years ago when I was working as a radiographer in radiotherapy and also carried out my 500 Hour Yoga Teacher Training.

At the time I was working in Torbay, but have worked in radiotherapy departments in Exeter, Maidstone, North Wales and Melbourne. It was a happy 15-year career, but the demands of family life as a military spouse with two young children made it tricky for me to continue with the ever-changing NHS.

I had been practising yoga myself for a few years at this point and fell in love with the practice, not just from a physical point of view (my body feels stronger, more flexible and generally healthier) but for mental wellbeing. Yoga is my time to focus on me! This links in with why I want to teach those affected by cancer.

From my previous career, I have seen first-hand how patients have very little control of their treatment, their side effects, their symptoms. But by practising yoga I want to share with people how to take back that control in a very gentle way and to give them an hour a week just for themselves.

We will explore calming and even energising breathing techniques. Each class will be tailored to the individuals present and their physical and mobility levels. One size definitely does not fit all! We will be given a safe environment to relax, away from the medical noise of the hospital.

I would really like to share with people how accessible yoga should be. There is definitely no requirement to touch your toes, stand on your head, look amazing in the latest bum-sculpting leggings, wear flowers in your hair or any of those other stigmas surrounding yoga. Of course, if you have the leggings and a headstand is your happy place, then my job is to support you and include you and you are most welcome too!

Each class will be light-hearted - I never take my practice too seriously - with opportunities to chat if that's what people want. It will be a safe space where people can wear what they like without judgment, take rests when they like without judgment and reconnect to parts of themselves they may have neglected.

I really hope that my background knowledge of cancer and its treatment along with my recent specific Yoga for Cancer training can be the link to bringing me full circle to supporting cancer patients again and I hope that this may be the start of a journey into a regular yoga practice even after treatment for many.

I have always known what a wonderful role FORCE plays in the wellbeing of cancer patients in Exeter and am honoured to be a part of that role now.” ●

Volunteers making a MASSIVE DIFFERENCE

FORCE snack bar stalwarts Jackie Sercombe and Barbara Rusbridge are celebrating 10 years of volunteering at the RD&E Oncology Centre refreshment hub.

Jackie became aware that there was a snack bar in the oncology department when husband Christopher was having radiotherapy treatment.

At that time, it was being run by the WRVS and a shortage of volunteers meant it wasn't always open.

From behind the counter Catherine Askew, who still volunteers there for FORCE, suggested Jackie might like to join her.

It didn't take her long to decide – she signed up the very next day and by the time she had been through an induction process, the snack bar had been taken over by FORCE.

"I can't quite believe it's been 10 years," said Jackie, who has always worked the Tuesday afternoon slot.

"It's much more than just serving a cup of tea or coffee. We're a friendly face for people who might be nervous or worried coming into the hospital and we're someone to chat to if they want.

"COVID restrictions have made things difficult, but we've been there whenever we can.

"Patients have had to come in on their own so us being there with a smiley face has helped."

She's retiring from her job at Mills Bakery in Clyst St Mary this spring but luckily for FORCE, she has no plans to give up her snack bar duties.

"Come and be a volunteer," she urged. "It's a friendly atmosphere and everyone really appreciates what you do. We see people right through their treatment, we're there if they need someone to talk to at difficult times and we're there to share the good moments too."

She also directs people to the FORCE Centre where she found sanctuary when her husband was ill.

"I went to the Centre for a coffee and discovered how fantastic FORCE is. That's why I keep volunteering, doing anything I can to help. They do so much for so many people and it's all local. You know where your money is going and the good it is doing."

She works hard to make people feel relaxed



Jackie Sercombe receives her 10-year service badge from FORCE Volunteer Manager Heather Taylor

when they arrive, including reassuring one patient that it was ok to bring his own deckchair because it was more comfortable for him!

Barbara started as a snack bar volunteer in September 2012 and has been coming each Thursday ever since.



She was introduced to FORCE when she was diagnosed with cancer and her nurse specialist brought her to our Support Centre.

The experience clearly made a lasting impression. Five years later, when retirement after 20 years in the RD&E pathology lab loomed and she was looking for volunteering opportunities, Barbara returned to FORCE.

"I have really enjoyed it," she said. "I felt it was giving back something to FORCE for everything they had given me."

Jackie and Barbara share a passion for supporting cancer patients and their families at a vulnerable time.

"We are there to provide that human touch. Sometimes people don't want or feel able to unburden themselves to busy nurses but we are there to listen, to let them know what's available at FORCE and reassure them that they shouldn't be afraid to ask for help.

"Being a snack bar volunteer isn't just about making tea but offering a cuppa, a bar of chocolate and a friendly chat can make a real difference to patients and the people there to support them." ●

FORCE Volunteer Manager Heather Taylor pays tribute to the resilience of our volunteering team.

OUR VOLUNTEERS HAVE continued to be a massive help to FORCE, patients and visitors every step of the way during the last two years. They have been so patient and understanding and have taken to the many changes and different ways we have had to do things at different times.

All areas of volunteering have been hugely affected with many changes along the way including taking a lateral flow test before coming in, wearing facemasks constantly and ensuring that all areas are wiped down at regular intervals. We have also had to stand down volunteers when infection rates have increased. It's been a very stop/start time for all of them.

For many weeks during the pandemic, our shop volunteers were sanitising baskets and checking that no more than 10 people were inside at any one time. We had a limited number of volunteers on duty due to social distancing measures. This meant that they were unable to put out new stock continually and the whole process of sorting, steaming and tagging items could not be done as normal.

Our snack bar was closed for some time, but we are now able to open much more frequently although not fully every weekday. We are extremely thankful to those volunteers who have continued to

come and to those who have been willing to start volunteering there.

The chemotherapy nurses continue to be supported by FORCE volunteers at Ottery St Mary and on Cherrybrook ward at the RD&E. Our volunteers are a huge help in taking pressure off by offering refreshments to those having treatment.

Amid all of this, our fantastic team of gardeners have kept the outside area at FORCE looking its very best for those using the Centre.

The fact that we have been able to carry on functioning in the very best way we can with whatever measures and procedures that have been in place throughout this time is due in no small part to our volunteers, who we simply cannot do without.

All the staff at FORCE and everyone who uses our services will join me in thanking our volunteers and letting them know just how much we value each and every one of them. ●

If you would like to join our volunteering team, please contact Heather Taylor on **01392 406154** or email heather.taylor@forcecancercharity.co.uk. There's lots more information on our website - forcecancercharity.co.uk/volunteer/



IN EARLY APRIL the newly-formed Devon and Exeter Supporters Group for Acoustic Neuroma brain tumour patients held its first meeting at FORCE. This rare, benign tumour causes deafness, balance problems and can grow to interfere with other parts of the brain. On average only two in every 100,000 people are affected but steady progress is helping to reduce this figure.

The meeting was organised by David Cante, a FORCE Vice Patron, who was diagnosed with the condition four years ago.

The valued assistance from FORCE CEO Meriel Fishwick and contacts within the British Acoustic Neuroma Association made the occasion both enjoyable and helpful.

David Cante said: "It was clear that members had suffered the isolation of dealing with their neuromas, as it is a rare disorder, and the interference of Covid - not good times. Members soon discovered the values derived from group support meetings and time just flew by."

good listener,
 empathy,
 immense
 knowledge,
 dedication,
 miracle worker,
 amazing,
 huge personality,
 forceful,
 bubbly,
 invaluable,
 highly skilled,
 generous,
 above and beyond,
 one in a million,
 a life lived
 to the full,
 indomitable,
 sense of humour,
 joyous

These words are just a small selection of the terms used to describe our dear friend and colleague Anne Hansell, who died on February 1.

Anne was one of the most experienced and respected physiotherapists, not only in this area but far beyond with a wealth of knowledge gathered from 50 years in practice.

She was first and foremost a beloved wife to Adrian for 47 years, mother to Jez and Mark and grandmother to Finn, Emilia, Luke and Elliot.

But she had a second family of thousands who felt care and compassion – and occasional pain – from their time as her clients.

The announcement of her death contained a perfect description of why her loss will be so sorely felt by her many patients “... who will strangely miss the discomfort of her steely physiotherapist’s fingers and lack of subtlety in telling them what needed to be done.”

She gained local, national and international recognition as a specialist in musculoskeletal physiotherapy and brought those skills to the support of FORCE’s oncology physios, Louise Ballagher and Becky Bailey.

She had volunteered her time for free since 2017, taking referrals from FORCE for the more complex musculoskeletal patient problems. She often saw people within 24 hours, saving them a potentially long wait for treatment on the NHS.

“Anne would assess and advise on musculoskeletal issues that might hamper recovery,” said Louise. “It left us free to concentrate on a patient’s general rehabilitation. She was so generous with her time and often went above and beyond with regular calls to people to see how they were doing.

“I described her to patients as a wee, bubbly Australian with a tell-it-like-it-is approach, which extended to reminding them quite forcefully that FORCE is a charity!

“She also supported our education programme for Level 4 cancer rehab fitness instructors with teaching sessions and she treated staff for their aches and pains too. She has left a great legacy and the fact that her death has affected us so much is a tribute to Anne.”

Becky echoed those sentiments and added: “She was such a great support to us. We knew we just had to pick up the phone and she would be there to offer advice and suggestions. We’re going to miss her so much.”

Anne’s work with and empathy for those patients referred to her by FORCE was informed by her own cancer diagnosis. She made little of it, but it gave her an acute understanding of their needs and they loved her for it. ●



“Anne Hansell was small in stature but huge in personality! She wasted no time during her consultations! The second I arrived she started gentle exercises, asking questions all the time. Then, suddenly, she said “This might surprise you.” and yanked my leg very firmly. The pain went. She said relief would be temporary but it did the trick and was never so painful again. It was a privilege to meet her and am sure many others feel the same.”

Helen Whitehead

“I had known Anne many years ago and it was a delight to reconnect with her at the end of last year. She hadn’t changed a bit! The years seemed to have made no difference at all. Anne filled any room she was in. She chivvied me along, encouraged me and was carefully and thoughtfully working out a programme for me when she so tragically died. She was completely professional at all times, working for the best for her patients. I miss her lively, indomitable personality, her sense of humour and her irreverence. Time spent with Anne was a joy, despite the rigours she put me through! I miss her so very much.”

Dorothy Armstrong

Creative response to bereavement support

Our free bereavement support service aims to help people deal with the grief that follows a death from cancer.

FORCE's experienced counselling team can be there to listen and help provide strategies to support those who have lost a partner through the emotional upheaval that bereavement can bring.

People react to grief in different ways. Some work creatively with their grief as specialist bereavement counsellor Gerry Gillespie explains.

"One person wrote a poem about the support and help they received from FORCE at a really difficult time. The support helped them to start to see things with a different perspective.

"Their poem sums up everything FORCE does to support people from diagnosis to the loss of a loved one.

"Our support doesn't create instant solutions to how we are feeling but having a supportive environment and someone to really listen can help guide you through a really tough time." ●

There is more information about the FORCE bereavement service on our website: forcecancercharity.co.uk/supporting-you/bereavement

To find out more, you can contact our counselling and support team on 01392 406168 or 01392 406169 or email support@forcecancercharity.co.uk

*When life is very challenging
And there's much you need to say,
That's the time you need a guide
To help you on your way*

*A guide to help you find a path
When life's mountains loom ahead,
A guide to help you keep on track
When the unsaid must be said*

*A guide to help you navigate
Through old memories filled with pain
A guide to help you through your loss
To help you to retain*

Your sense of self

*This sense of self that's under threat
When your loss is so severe,
A sense of self that's disappeared
With the shedding of every tear*

*This path is rocky, never straight –
Goes up and then descends,
Goes round and round those mountains
As its tortuous path it wends*

*So having a guide is crucial,
To enable you to say
You will survive this challenge,
As they will help you on your way
Back to your sense of self*

*So to every guide you find in life
Give thanks for what they give
When accompanying you along the path,
To enable you to live
Once more free from inner pain*

Creating this beautiful bowl provided a way to channel grief for a lady, who was helped by the FORCE bereavement service. She used the Japanese art of Kintsugi to produce a lasting reminder of love lost. Kintsugi is the art of mending broken pottery and putting the pieces back together with a precious metal like gold to make them stronger even in their brokenness. Dating back to the 1400s, kintsugi embraces unique flaws and imperfections, highlighting any damage as a part of the design. The scars and brokenness show the pain and suffering but they also show the will to survive and can become something beautiful and stronger.



AS WE EMERGED from lockdown we tentatively piloted a face-to-face art group in our Support Centre. It had run successfully via Zoom but we were aware that clients were keen to meet in person. Even though we have a lovely airy space to spread out COVID restrictions meant we had to keep the group to six, half the size of pre pandemic sessions.

It went really well and we had great feedback from those who attended. They had the chance to try mosaic-making, painting, felting and to meet and chat together. We have carried on a rolling programme now and it's wonderful to see the work produced. Our thanks to Lucy, James and Jess, the artists who take the group.



Key endorsement of forward-thinking programme

FORCE's Moving Forward programme is designed for patients who have finished treatment within the last year. The free, six-week course helps people adjust to life after treatment – a time when fewer appointments and less regular contact with the hospital can feel like a safety net has been removed. FORCE trustee and GP DR SALLY KIDNER is using her time and skill to support cancer patients as part of the programme. She reflects on the positive experience and endorses our role-specific volunteer scheme.

Why did you get involved in the Moving Forward programme?

I'd been a trustee of FORCE for more than five years, but I'd had a nagging feeling that I did not have the expertise to contribute fully to the Board discussions and decisions. I had been keen for some time to find a way to contribute more to the charity's work and, in particular, to support the staff. Meriel and I had talked about volunteer roles for those professionals who might have the time to join in and, after COVID, this seemed an ideal way to get more involved. As a GP, I had always wanted more time with patients to talk about how they were managing in a more holistic way than just *'When is your next appointment?'* or *'What specific worries do you have at the moment?'*

What was your role within the group?

I was a co-facilitator with the lead oncology support specialist (Emma Ellis) - she had designed the course and run it many times before. It was a privilege to be working alongside someone with such experience and skill.

What was your experience of the group?

I had no preconceptions about taking part in facilitating the programme and found myself inspired by the whole process. I was particularly struck by the power of group work and the wonderful environment and sense of care which it communicates. I'd acknowledge that I felt daunted initially - but I felt very welcomed as a newcomer, for which I am very grateful.

Were you surprised by anything?

I think that my main surprise was how well and how quickly the individuals in the group developed relationships through the six weeks and how important this seemed to be for them. People often talk about the loneliness of a cancer diagnosis and the sense of being



abandoned once treatment is finished. The participants came with very different experiences but these shared difficulties were obvious and, I think, propelled them to work effectively and make strong connections with each other. This was wonderful to witness.

As well as these connections, I saw how the participants learned a bit about the psychological processes which underpinned how they may have been feeling. I hope this insight and information will aid them in looking after their health and wellbeing - alongside their exposure to suggested coping strategies.

What did you get from it?

I had been nervous about taking on such a role - I was uncertain about whether my experience and expertise would match what was needed. It was challenging, but hugely rewarding, particularly because we were re-connecting with the group each week and getting a sense of continuing care.

Why do you think these groups are important?

I have already talked about the problems of isolation and abandonment that can accompany a diagnosis of cancer. It was a

delight through the six weeks of the course to hear the chatter when the members got together before a session. The discussion during the breaks got steadily louder, more confident and was interspersed with humour and laughter. All this emphasised to me the importance of the opportunity which the group provides for a safe space to explore and share experiences. The members hoped to keep in touch, building on this shared identity.

Would you encourage other clinicians to get involved?

I would certainly encourage others to get involved. It is a wonderful environment to work in, with a sense of reward and purpose. I'd say it was one of the most rewarding personal and professional experiences I've had in recent years - it's been a real privilege to have been involved.

What qualities do you think someone running the Moving Forward and other groups need?

Some experience of group work would definitely be an asset, while listening skills and an understanding of the cancer journey for patients would add to the rewards of helping to run a group.

How do you feel about doing other groups, Moving Forward or Living with Cancer as a Chronic Disease?

I would be really keen to help with other groups. My sense is that they are a very important part of what FORCE has to offer, especially with the ever-increasing number of people looking to return to their changed lives after cancer treatment. Helping them in whatever way possible to navigate this journey is hugely rewarding for those involved. With budgets tight and pressures ever present within many of the health services, supporting FORCE to achieve this and offer what they can, is definitely a priority. ●



Karen found the FORCE Moving Forward a positive experience. An academic at the University of Exeter with one child at primary school and another at secondary, she was diagnosed with breast cancer in her late 40s in May 2019. She had surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy. She was aware of FORCE from the volunteers serving refreshments when she was having chemo and had visited our Support Centre with family for a cup of tea. She was also seen by our specialist oncology physiotherapist Louise Ballagher after post op problems with her arm and shoulder.

The Moving Forward course provides the time and space and the right people to start to make sense of the impact of cancer on your life.

The diagnosis and what follows is such a massive and sudden shock to your whole world and everyday life; the swift move to treatment is intensive, terrifying/horrifying and also very protracted and the whole experience creates an array of uncertainties (things that you took for granted, you no longer can).

It's also hard to process what is happening and its impacts, at the time; you are waiting for news, dealing with symptoms, trying to maintain a semblance of normality. So, for a considerable period of time the various bits of your life are thrown into some chaos.

For me, the FORCE Moving Forward course helped me to think about and process these ripple effects, to accept that these parts of my life were not going to look exactly as they were before (and that's ok) and also to be a bit more at ease with what has happened.

I think Moving Forward is exactly the right title for the programme and captures perfectly the purpose for those taking part. My view is that anyone who has is at the end of cancer treatment (and potentially some time after the treatment) would find this a really valuable part of the recovery process. ●

A COURSE TO HELP YOU COPE WITH STRESS AND ANXIETY



By Emma Ellis
Oncology Support Specialist

FORCE has always tried to offer a range of tailored support for various needs and comfort levels.

We recognise that, at times, one-to-one support with an oncology support specialist or an information nurse is essential.

There are circumstances where group sessions serve a need that individual help cannot satisfy. As mentioned in this magazine we have support groups designed with a particular focus, such as life after cancer and its treatments (Moving Forward) or Living with Cancer as a Chronic Disease with an opportunity to talk and explore with people who have a shared understanding.

The Relaxation and Anxiety Management course is an education programme, open to patients and those living alongside someone with a diagnosis of cancer.

We know that stress and anxiety are natural human responses, triggered for various reasons with cancer one of the more difficult to live with.

FORCE Oncology Support Specialist Emma Ellis said: "We know that stress and anxiety can start even before a diagnosis of cancer. For some, there are warning signs that something is not right, causing stress levels to rise so that anxiety is already high before receiving the news about their cancer.

"Naturally, levels can remain this way for a prolonged period through treatment and the time after the treatment finishes. Many are surprised that adjusting to life after cancer can still cause anxiety and, of course, for those who receive a secondary diagnosis of cancer.

"Our Relaxation and Anxiety Management course is designed to help people understand what stress and anxiety is and to look at individual ways of managing when levels become too high and untenable.

"I am often struck by how the simple techniques we teach on this course make big differences to people. The course is packed with a variety of relaxation and anxiety management techniques. If you go away and just use two or three of them and they work, they can make a real difference. I have witnessed many times the most simple suggestions enable a significant change."

FORCE's four-week programme will be running throughout the year dependant on demand. For more information or to register, please call the Oncology Support Team on 01392 406168 or the Information Team on 01392 406151

We look forward to welcoming you. ●

Visit our website for anxiety management self-help resources
forcecancercharity.co.uk/supporting-you/mindfulness-and-relaxation/

Learning to live with incurable cancer

FORCE is running support groups face to face again, including a course on living with incurable cancer that is set to become part of our core support in future.

We have run one pilot so far with a second group starting in July. We plan to run these regularly throughout the year.

“We are aware there is limited support for people who are living much longer with incurable cancer where they can talk openly how this is for them,” said FORCE oncology support specialist Emma Barker.

“This at times can at time be a very lonely place. Meeting others that share a similar situation can be really helpful with living in a

world of uncertainty.”

The course is a psycho-educational and support group. There are plenty of opportunities to discuss concerns, fears and hopes. It is two hours a week for five weeks.

“During the pilot, we were able to talk about sensitive subjects, conversations that may be difficult to have with friends or family,” said Emma.

“However, there was laughter within the group, which was important and helpful. It’s great to hear this particular group have stayed in contact and continue to support each other.” ●

Week 1

INTRODUCTION

The first session is a gentle introduction to the programme and what it hopes to offer. The aim of the programme is to provide tools to cope with living day to day with cancer and the uncertainty that this brings.

Week 2

MANAGING THE PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF TREATMENT

This session looks at resources to help with the physical effects of cancer and its treatment. This includes resources for managing fatigue, nutritional guidance, support for managing side-effects and help with sleep.

Week 3

MANAGING ANXIETY, STRESS AND UNCERTAINTY

This session includes resources to help manage anxiety and uncertainty about the future. These include practical tools which can be used day to day and to offer a greater understanding of what may help manage uncertainty.

Week 4

RELATIONSHIPS AND PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

Living with cancer can naturally put pressure on relationships. This session helps to reflect on how relationships may have been impacted and how good communication can help in restoring balance. It also looks at your feelings around mortality and some of the practical steps you can take to ensure things are put in place.

Week 5

HOPE: WHAT DOES LIVING WELL LOOK LIKE

The course aims to identify each person’s needs, offer them a chance to prioritise, notice and accept change and gather the resources needed. We explore what provides hope for the future with a focus on living as well as possible.

RACHEL STEWART JOINED the pilot group and shared her thoughts on what a positive experience it has been.

“I was diagnosed with secondary breast cancer in February 2021 and attended a fantastic programme of sessions designed specifically for people with stage 4 cancer. For us, the need is to learn to live with cancer.

I found the course really helpful. We tackled some big worries and topics in a good, open and sensitive way. As a small group it was really well led by the FORCE team, unpicking our feelings, finding common ground and developing strategies to help us. Often, despite the topic, there was such good humour in the room as we recognised our similarities and supported one another. The sessions were at a good pace and a real focus to the week when I needed it the most.

The fact it was face to face was invaluable. Following on from the course we have stayed close as a group and also regularly meet up for a catch-up for tea, cake, chat and laughs.

I would recommend the programme to anyone in my situation.”



THE BEAUTY OF RESPONDING TO NEED

Face to face pampering sessions for cancer patients may have been put on hold during the pandemic but that didn't stop FORCE and the Look Good Feel Better charity.

We teamed up to offer online groups during the 17 months that LGFB suspended their in-person service between March 2020 and August 2021.

Virtual groups on Zoom for patients using FORCE proved a big hit. They were particularly helpful for anyone needing a later start time due to work commitments or school run duties and those for whom travel to Exeter could be problematic. The virtual sessions proved so popular that we will continue to offer them every six months.

Look Good Feel Better is a free, one-off demonstration that teaches men and women how to manage some of the visible side-effects of their cancer treatment in a practical and positive way.

Specially trained beauty consultants provide practical and effective support for people being treated for any type of cancer.

There is always a FORCE representative at the workshops, which introduce simple skincare and make-up skills in an informative, lively and fun way.



Everyone receives a goody bag of premium beauty products.

Things have changed due to COVID – the LGFB consultants are no longer allowed to touch clients and social distancing means a reduction in the number of places available per session.

LGFB, which is an independent charity, also has a shortage of volunteers.

Between December 2020 and March 2022, we have held:

- 12 face-to-face sessions
- 4 closed virtual sessions
- 2 one-to-one sessions for under 16s ●

For more details on our Look Good Feel Better service or to book a session, contact Shelley Boulton on **01392 408535**



The feedback we get shows how much these sessions are appreciated

I found the small group number worked very well as it felt more intimate and people seemed confident to speak up, as did I. The tutorial was fabulous, with tips for skincare and make-up application that were relevant to those of us going through treatment, but also advice to take forward generally, which was also really useful. I certainly didn't feel that I missed out at all by attending virtually; in fact, it was helpful to be able to access it from home.

I absolutely loved the session. I was slightly anxious that day because I knew I would be shaving my head that evening due to hair loss and wasn't sure how I would feel, but that workshop gave me such a boost. I also went straight to FORCE that afternoon to collect the goody bag (as I wasn't sure how confident I'd feel going out after I'd taken my hair off!), and Shelley was so kind. She spent time chatting and showing me various head coverings. A day that I'd been quietly dreading actually turned out to be one of my most positive days since diagnosis and was such a boost to my confidence. Thank you!

It was very informative. Helped me with how I felt about losing my eyelashes and how to do make up to not make it look so harsh. Also picked up some great tips. More than met my expectations. Was a brilliant session. Session leaders very helpful and informative. They both really helped me. Really enjoyed the session. It was amazing to feel normal again and come away feeling good about myself, which I haven't in a long time. Thank you so much to you both.

I learnt some new techniques on how to apply foundation and how to look after my skin. It exceeded my expectations. The products donated are lovely and I came away with great tips!

On the right road to recovery



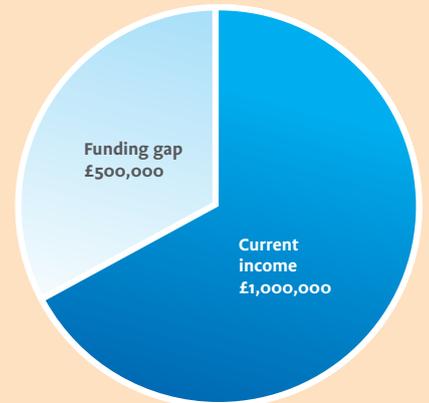
By Julia Pitts,
FORCE Chief Finance Officer

We're still here. We're still supporting local people whose lives have been turned upside down by cancer. We're still planning an exciting new future. It's been a tough couple of years for all of us but FORCE is on the road to recovery thanks to being resilient, resourceful and resolute. Despite the significant impact of the pandemic on all our lives, we have focused on developing our services to ensure support is available for those most in need. And as we emerge from the pandemic, we are working towards making everything we do sustainable. We are adapting our services to meet the future needs of those affected by cancer and investing to rebuild our fundraising team so we can focus on opportunities to grow our income and return to the strong financial position that we were in before COVID. There's no denying it's been a challenging period for fundraising. We're so grateful to every individual, group and company that has supported us through the tough times. Grants and a number of exceptional donations helped to mitigate a drop in income in the first year of the pandemic to March 31, 2021. There are signs of the green shoots of recovery with an exciting number of events in the calendar, improving legacy notifications and encouraging responses to grant applications. It's a welcome revival of our traditional income streams but we're not out of the woods yet. Draft results for 2022 highlight the relatively low level of legacy

income and an anticipated reduction in grants compared with 2021 when we received emergency COVID funding from the National Lottery Community Fund and other organisations.

During 2022, we have maintained the substantial cost savings made in 2021. However, the continuing challenges for income generation have resulted in a deficit of just under £300k for 2021/22.

To run our existing core services and re-establish our support in FORCE@ locations, we need to raise over £1.5m a year. Based on results for 2021/22 and a prudent budget for 2022/23, current income is around £1m so we need to raise an additional £500k per annum.



We're still standing thanks to all our supporters who helped us ride the COVID rollercoaster! We appreciate the squeeze on everyone's purse at the moment but hope that you can continue to support our plans for the future, whether that's financially, volunteering your time, holding or attending events or leaving a gift in your will.

FORCE truly has never been needed so much and has never needed YOU so much so thank you all! ●

GOOD LUCK TO our super supporter Lindsey Trimmer as she aims to raise £15,000 in 2022 to mark 15 years of fundraising for FORCE.

She has a variety of events planned across the year. It started with a bucket collection at Honiton Tesco in April followed by a double header at Cadhay on June 2. The glorious gardens of the Tudor manor house near Ottery St Mary will host a family event with activities for children in the morning followed by an afternoon tea, street party style with music from The Hummingbirds, a close harmony trio that deliver delicious tunes from vintage to very modern. The event will be a celebration of the Queen's Jubilee and FORCE's 35th anniversary She will then have a stand at the Crash Box and Classic Car Club's Historic Vehicle Gathering at Powderham Castle on July 8-9.



Local band Under the Radar will be playing at Talaton Parish Hall on September 10 and Lindsey's busy schedule then features a tea dance with the close harmonies of the

Liberty Sisters at Budleigh Salterton on October 9. She'll also be involved in the FORCE Santa Cycle on November 19 with other events planned but not yet confirmed.

Lindsey, pictured with husband Chris, said: "This isn't about me! It's about the amazing people around me - my family, friends and the community in and around Talaton and Ottery St. Mary. They have been so supportive throughout the 15 years and I honestly couldn't have done the fundraising without them. So I say a big THANK YOU to them all.

"FORCE is a fantastic charity that we are so lucky to have on our doorstep and I am lucky to be a part of it. Baking cakes and talking for England is easy - going through cancer is the tough task. That's why I plan to continue to support FORCE." ●

Golden hour for donations to our shop

Donations are the lifeblood of our charity shop in Heavitree. Without the amazing generosity of our supporters, who continue to keep us supplied with quality items, our fabulous shop simply wouldn't survive.

Apart from FORCE merchandise, everything we sell there has been donated. Because we now have fewer people to process donations – staff and volunteers – we have introduced a golden hour each day when people can drop off their contributions. Our donation bay on the Regents Square side of the shop is open Monday to Saturday from 10:30-11:30am.

“By restricting the time to that hour each day, we can also guarantee that there will be space for drop-offs,” said shop manager Anna Heard. “We'd like to thank our supporters for their response to these adjustments. They have been fantastic.



“If those times don't work for you, please call the shop on 01392 271652 and we'll always try to do our best to sort something out for you. We love your donations so please keep them coming and don't forget to sign a Gift Aid form if you're a UK taxpayer because we can claim an extra 25 pence in every pound we make from your donation!

“We are so grateful to everyone who has continued to donate to FORCE and all our brilliant customers for their support plus of course our amazing staff and volunteers. Together they make it all possible.”

The other option for donating to our shop is to book a pick-up. Dan, our man with a van, is collecting donations again, Tuesday to Saturday by appointment.

“There can be a wait of two to three weeks before we can get to you as we have only one driver so plan your clear-out for when you know we can come,” said Anna.

Clothes and bric-a-brac remain our top sellers and we are also keen to receive things that sell well online including vinyl records – especially rock and pop, 80s and indy – and photography equipment with vintage cameras and equipment selling particularly well on eBay. ●

Goods we are able to accept

- ✓ **Electrical:** small items like kettles, toasters, stereos, keyboards. No large white goods.
- ✓ **Bric-a-brac:** ornaments, toiletry sets, pots, pans, bakeware, crockery, cutlery etc.
- ✓ **Linen:** clean curtains, bedlinen, cushion covers, duvets, wool, thread, buttons etc.
- ✓ **DVDs:** box sets, thrillers, children's etc but NO VHS tapes please.
- ✓ **Clothes & accessories:** men's & ladies' clothing, jewellery, shoes, bags and hats.
- ✓ **Children's Room:** toys with CE marks, puzzles, games, books etc.
- ✓ **Records & CDs:** unscratched CDs in cases and vinyl records from any era.
- ✓ **Books:** thrillers, romance, science fiction, fantasy, horror, educational, cookery etc.

Goods we are unable to accept

- ✗ Please don't leave items **outside the Shop** when we're closed.
- ✗ **Dirty laundry**
- ✗ **Damaged or broken items** that might prove dangerous
- ✗ Upholstered **furniture** that does NOT have fire labels; large items like sofas and wardrobes that need more than one person to carry them, bunk beds, wall units, organs and pianos; flat pack kits or anything needing to be assembled
- ✗ **Large electrical items** such as televisions and washing machines
- ✗ **Vacuum cleaners**
- ✗ **Gas appliances** of any type
- ✗ **Bicycles in poor condition**
- ✗ **Carpets**
- ✗ Toys **without CE marks**; children's **car seats** and **cots**
- ✗ **Sports and safety equipment** like crash helmets, bike helmets and safety harnesses; **tents**
- ✗ **Cassette tapes** and **VHS video tapes**
- ✗ **Personal appliances** such as shavers, foot spas (unless unused & in the original, sealed box)
- ✗ **Medication** including vitamins, perishable goods, food and drink
- ✗ **Weapons** – knives, swords, guns and ammunition (including replica guns)



THE SKY'S THE LIMIT FOR ANNIVERSARY JUMPERS

FORCE celebrates its 35th anniversary this year and to mark the milestone we have a team taking part in a skydive over East Devon.

The tandem jump from 15,000 feet will take place at Dunkeswell on May 27. Supporters from a variety of backgrounds have signed up including former and current FORCE staff and contractors.

Among them is FORCE Volunteer Manager **Heather Taylor**.

"I knew it was always something I wanted to do but the opportunity had never come my way – well – not like this!

"I did give it some serious thought and of course the obvious questions jumped into my head – would I really go through with it or bottle it at the last moment? Will I love it or hate it? What does 15,000ft look like when you're looking down and not up? And the most obvious one – what if the parachute doesn't open?"

"Thankfully, I've not had my own experience of a cancer diagnosis, but I can only imagine that it must feel a bit like going into free fall, hoping for a smooth landing and needing a parachute to help you through the scary time that having cancer can feel like.

"Every day at FORCE we see patients who need the "parachute" that FORCE is. I would love to raise as much money as possible for FORCE because it really is vital that we are here for those who need the support we can offer.

"Also, the fact that I don't have to physically train to fall out of an aeroplane helps! I can only imagine that my eyes will be closed and my mouth will be wide open and screaming. I already feel sorry for whoever will be attached to my back!"

FORCE Information Nurse **Judy Gent** is also on the team.

"A skydive was never really on my list of things to do, however, when I found out that FORCE was aiming to do it to celebrate their 35th anniversary I thought 'Why not?' It's an opportunity too good to miss and I think I may live to regret it. Everyone has been so kind to

sponsor me so I've got to do it now."

Joining them is former Head of Income Generation **Sarah Daniels**.

"I have always wanted to do this and the opportunity to have fun and raise vital funds for FORCE is perfect. After the incredibly difficult challenges that 2021 threw at me, I wanted to give something back to the place and people that have been a big part of my life. This seems the perfect opportunity - flying high as they say."

They'll line up alongside businessman **Trevor Olding**.

"I have decided to do take part to help raise money for the wonderful work that FORCE Cancer Charity do in Exeter and the surrounding area for those who have been diagnosed with cancer and their family and friends. The work that the staff and many volunteers do is amazing.

"I have been working with FORCE as a freelance software developer for a number of years and it never ceases to amaze me the amount of compassion shown to those who use their services at what is a very difficult time for them.

"My company has agreed to match the first £1,000 of donations. Oh... and I have a bit of a fear of heights too - so jumping out of a plane at 15,000 feet will be interesting!" ●



Trevor Olding

You can sponsor the FORCE 35th anniversary skydive at www.justgiving.com/fundraising/35thskydive

And if you fancy joining the jumpers, there's still a chance.

Full details of how to get involved are on our website -

forcecancercharity.co.uk/events-calendar/35th-anniversary-skydive/

Justin looking forward to Classics debut



Classics Galore! is back for 2022. Exeter's very own Last Night of the Proms will be held at the University of Exeter Great Hall on Saturday November 12.

Classics was established in 2007 and held every two years until the pandemic forced the postponement of last year's event. But it's all systems go for this autumn.

Billed as one of Exeter's biggest and best-loved indoor musical extravaganzas, the previous seven concerts have raised more than £110,000 for FORCE.

More than 200 top musicians and singers - a full orchestra, a brass band and two choral societies - will perform a variety of light classical favourites and rousing singalongs.

Soprano Cheryl Enever, who has worked with the BBC singers, the Royal Opera House and sung for for royalty, is the soloist for the latest concert.

And there's a new compère for the show. Popular local broadcaster Justin Leigh will be Master of Ceremonies and he can't wait to make his Classics debut.

"I am delighted and honoured to be the compère for this year's Classics Galore! It's such a prestigious and much loved event and I know it is a highlight of the year for many music lovers across the South West," said the former BBC Spotlight presenter.

"I first found out about it when one of my wife's friends, who is on the organising committee, asked if I would like to be the host. Although I was aware of the event and knew its reputation for superb music, I have never been. So I am looking forward to my first visit.

"Like most families, we have lost loved ones to cancer. My mum lost her battle with breast cancer more than 20 years ago and ever since I have tried to help organisations that support those living with the disease and their families. I know from experience how distressing it is to see someone dealing with cancer and how valuable it is to have support from organisations such as FORCE Cancer Charity.

"The Classics Galore! concert is a wonderful way to support the vital work of FORCE Cancer Charity, enjoying the best music while helping such a worthwhile cause.

"I am really looking forward to discovering more about the plans as we get closer to November and to welcoming the audience on the night."

Classics Galore! was established by former Exeter policeman Dick Passmore and his wife, Posy. The 2019 event was particularly poignant following Dick's death earlier that year. Everyone involved was determined to make it a special night in his memory by reaching his goal of raising a total of £100,000 for FORCE.

The Passmores' well established formula for a successful night

remains, including pre-concert dining at The Terrace Bar of the Great Hall from 5pm. Reservations are not necessary.

Shuttle buses between the Great Hall and the main A and B car parks will also be provided for concert patrons from 5pm to 11pm. ●

Tickets for Classics Galore! 2022 will go on sale on Friday July 1, priced between £12 and £28. They will be available at <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/classics-galore-exeter>

Tickets available from 1st July

In aid of **FORCE** FORCE Cancer Charity

CLASSICS GALORE!
classicsgalore.co.uk

An evening of light popular classical music with a PROMS style finale
Your compère for the evening is former BBC SPOTLIGHT and BBC Radio presenter:

JUSTIN LEIGH
with soloist:
Cheryl Enever (Soprano)

featuring:

The Classics Galore! Symphony Orchestra
SW Comms Band

Ottery St Mary Choral Society
Members of St David's Players

Tickets available from 1st July online: [ticketsource.co.uk/classics-galore-exeter](https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/classics-galore-exeter)

SATURDAY 12TH NOVEMBER 2022
7.30pm
UNIVERSITY OF EXETER GREAT HALL

Poster design: 19269 www.halo-creative.co.uk

We're in good company

As the world of business emerges from the restrictive environment that the pandemic imposed, a number of local firms have stepped up to support FORCE at a time when we've never needed their help so much. Here are just a few of the companies who have chosen us as their charity of the year, telling their stories in their own words.

RGB RECRUITMENT is a specialist recruitment consultancy to the construction and property sector. For more than 20 years RGB have proudly serviced the South West, Wales, Midlands and the South Coast, gaining an enviable reputation as the recruiter of choice for many of the UK most prestigious construction, property and engineering companies.

When we listened to Olly Watts speak about the amazing work that FORCE do at last year's Building Forum event in Plymouth we were all very moved and came away feeling inspired to help. After the event, our charity committee were all in agreement that we wanted to support FORCE as our chosen charity of 2022, so we got in touch to formally introduce ourselves and to see how we could help. Olly kindly invited us to visit FORCE's purpose built Cancer Support and Information Centre, where we were able to witness first-hand the incredible work FORCE does and the difference this makes to people affected by cancer in our local area.

On a more personal note, FORCE is particularly close to the heart of one of our charity committee members as her mum was previously diagnosed with cancer and the whole family benefited massively from FORCE's services. When we asked her to tell us a bit more about her experience this is what she said:

"FORCE is a charity so close to my

heart and I can't speak highly enough of the valuable work they do in the Community.

"My Mum was diagnosed with Stage 3 breast cancer back in the Summer of 2017, the night before her wedding.

"As a family we were devastated, with no idea where to start and FORCE offered a safe space and sanctuary for us whilst she was receiving treatment.

"Nothing about the Centre is depressing, it's a place of warmth and acceptance for anyone in need.

"The staff guided my Mum through making life changing decisions, as well as providing support with tackling situations nobody can prepare you for, like where to buy a wig, counselling and personal training post treatment.

"Overall, the Centre offered us a lifeline of support in the darkest of times all thanks to their staff and wonderful volunteers."

We have lots of exciting ideas for

fundraising events this year! First on the agenda was a Quiz & Curry night at Exeter City's St James Park. This event also included a raffle with some fantastic prizes kindly donated



by local businesses including The Pig, Pink Moon, Raceworld and Exeter Chiefs. Other ideas still in the early planning stages include a rounders tournament, fashion show and murder mystery evening!

One of our committee members ran the Cardiff Half Marathon and raised more than £200 for FORCE. We are also encouraging members of our team to get involved in some of the events that FORCE have lined up this year, whether that's participating to raise money or volunteering as a helper.

RGB's mission statement is to have a positive impact on careers, companies and community. To be in a position to do this on a local level is especially important to us and a real privilege. Social value is at the heart of what we do and to be able to see our endeavours benefit the local community is fantastic.

SERVICES DESIGN SOLUTION (SDS) are building services consulting engineers, constantly evolving their practices to meet changes in legislation and adopt technical advances, ensuring they offer the most sustainable designs possible.

The core value of our business is to support local charities, so supporting FORCE aligns with this. It is an extremely worthy cause given that many of us have been touched by cancer in some way, either personally or through friends/family.

We held a Charity Night at Raceworld, Woodbury Salterton with many local businesses around the Exeter area, raising vital funds for



FORCE by means of business donations and a raffle.

We'll be attending the EX2 Electrical Charity Ball in aid of FORCE at Sandy Park, Exeter

We are also supporting and sponsoring the Classics Galore! concert in November at the University of Exeter Great Hall.

SDS donates 1% of turnover to support well-being projects and charities within our local communities. Our social value

commitment has been embedded in our organisation since we began trading in 2004 and is an integral part of our strategic business plan, focusing on where our business is best placed to help.

EX2 ELECTRICAL specialise in providing electrical engineering solutions to commercial, industrial, healthcare and education markets throughout the South West. The company provides the complete solution from design through to installation and maintenance, focusing on utilising the latest technology to reduce energy costs and carbon footprint. The business is built around its people, employing highly qualified and experienced professional engineering staff and operatives. This together with an ability to deliver complex and often logistically challenging projects and obsession for quality has helped them develop a reputation that sets them apart from their competitors.

We decided to support FORCE as either directly or indirectly we all know someone who has been affected by cancer. Given the amazing work that the charity does and has continued to do in these testing times, we felt that FORCE was more than a deserving charity and the rightful beneficiary of the



proceeds of our Charity Ball.

We will be hosting a black-tie event at Sandy Park on Friday May 27. We will have a local band playing, a three-course meal and will be holding a raffle.

As an Exeter based business employing local people and engaging with a local supply

chain and customers, we felt that it is only right that those that may need the support of FORCE in the future help to support a worthwhile local charity.

We are looking forward to being able to support FORCE on their 35th anniversary which coincides with our 10-year anniversary.



Newton St Cyres Charity Breakfast



Paul Edworthy
100 miles in 30 days challenge



Good Vibes Gym 10k Run



Burrows Family fundraising



Exeter to Ipswich cycling challenge



Calendar Girls



Mince Pies for Cancer



Colyton Big Breakfast pink tombola



Ford Family Cream Tea



Cafe on the Heale
Easter Raffle



Exeter Foundation collection

Sarah speaks from the heart

Sarah Daniels has stepped down from her role as Head of Income Generation at FORCE after the death of her husband. In a typically open and honest account, she shares her moving story and highlights the importance of the support FORCE offers and the vital need to raise funds to maintain our services.

In the small hours of Wednesday 9th June 2021 my wonderful husband, Mark, died from a very rare hepatic angiosarcoma (cancer of the lining of the blood vessels).

It had lain undetected for nearly six months. After a fourth biopsy we got the dreadful news you never want to hear.

The diagnosis was confirmed at our first appointment with an oncology consultant. He and the cancer nurse specialist took us straight into the family room, a peaceful non-clinical setting so I pretty much knew that our worst fears were confirmed. They are words I will never forget, a conversation we never wanted to be part of.

I don't talk in public about the weeks that followed. They are far too personal and painful and an experience I never expected to go through, especially not in my 40s and Mark in his early 50s.

By May, Mark's condition had deteriorated dramatically and his consultant wrote to us. His words will always remain poignant to me – 'Mark's mind is still intact and active, but his body unwilling.' My only hope is that Mark was always aware of me talking to him and telling him how loved he was and what a difference he had made in my world and that of his friends and family.

So why am I prepared to share my story today? Not because I want you to know what I, or more importantly Mark, went through, but for the opportunity to share how lucky I was to have had 12 years with a loyal, caring, loving man who was not only my husband but my best friend. And how lucky I still am to have an incredible family, friends and colleagues supporting me.

The loss is enormous and each day throws up different challenges. Mark was a focused man and he wanted me to go on and live life, grab the opportunities he had not and find a new norm and a new definition of happiness. This in itself reminds me daily of the selfless man I miss so much.

So how do you move on, move forward? It's different for every person. Mark encouraged me to not regress or stand still. Some days that is easier than others. Only you know what feels right and when it feels right.

So, what can I say that might help? Well, turning to people who can offer a different kind of support is incredibly useful. Friends and

colleagues at FORCE have, without probably even realising it, given me words, space, time and an awareness that they are there for me whenever I need it. They have allowed me simply to be me.

I have worked at FORCE for 14 years. The whole team went through this journey with Mark and I and it has affected every one of them. They will never know how



grateful I am for their love and support.

What could I give in return for the help the charity gave me? It was very clear immediately that I should set up a tribute fund in Mark's memory. It was simple and I created an online page in minutes. There is so much to do when organising a funeral but this was important to get right. Mark's family and mine, our friends and colleagues showed their love for Mark by donating just under £7,400. For me this was a huge accolade to a wonderful man and my way of saying thank you to FORCE.

Mark managed his last few weeks with dignity, peacefulness and acceptance. So that is how I now focus my life. I will always cherish what went before. I have to accept what has happened and I am grateful for the love we got to share.

I not only want to pay tribute to my wonderful husband today but to say thank you to FORCE for the best years of my working life and to all who know me, have been there for me and hold FORCE as close to your hearts as I do.

2008 seems a long time ago. I arrived at FORCE fresh faced and definitely bushy haired, if you remember any of the hairstyles! It's been a pleasure, never a chore, with a huge amount of laughter along the way.

I met Mark at the Nello in 2009 – my first one at the helm – and we married in 2011. This year, June 26, will most likely be my last Nello.

For all of us, these past two years have been challenging, at times emotional, difficult and just odd. But now we need to focus on the future, all find our new norms and work with it.

FORCE has adapted to the change and has never been needed so much. They can only fulfil that need if we all continue to support them so please, if you can, dig deep and raise funds for FORCE. Set up a monthly direct debit, take part in an event, consider leaving a gift in your will – it really will make a difference to that next person, that next family who needs support today, tomorrow and in the future. ●



force cancer charity

The Nello

Sponsored by **bikesbed** PINARELLO

Sunday 26th June 2022

Choice of rides: 100 miles or 55 miles
Start & finish at Topsham Rugby Club

BOOK YOUR PLACE NOW!
www.forcecancercharity.co.uk

The Nello 2022 is fast approaching and there's plenty of time to enter and train for the big event on Sunday June 26.

THE RIDE IS now in its 23rd year but it was actually 25 years ago that the late Nello Ghezzi and Marc Millon, our ride founder, pedalled from Topsham to Venice to raise funds and awareness about the importance of funding cancer support.

Since then, The Nello – with 100 or 55 mile options - has raised nearly £1.5 million for FORCE, thanks to patients, families, supporters and keen cyclists taking part in our annual charity ride.

Event organiser Sarah Daniels said: "We've had to make The Nello virtual for the last two years but this year will be real and while FORCE has never been needed so much by our beneficiaries, we've also never needed you so much so that we can support those facing a cancer diagnosis in our area."

"The impact of the pandemic on cancer patients is well documented. Clinical services are under significant pressure. The psychological and emotional fallout from delayed treatment or late diagnosis as a result of COVID-19 is emerging and poses significant challenges. It means

the demand for our services increases week on week.

"Money raised from The Nello can play a significant part in helping FORCE support people in our community. So please sign up today. Join the team on the start line and help raise awareness and funds for FORCE on Sunday June 26."

REMEMBER...

- **Everyone is welcome.**
- **Any sort of bike is permitted. We are aware of the growing trend in electric bikes and we have no problem with Nello cyclists using one. It's all about taking part.**
- **Spectators are welcome on the course and at Topsham Rugby Club to see off our cyclists and welcome them home.**

Enter at <https://forcecancercharity.co.uk/events-calendar/the-nello-2022/>



FRIENDS of FORCE

DESPITE ONGOING RESTRICTIONS making it difficult for the usual fundraising events to go ahead, our fabulous Friends of FORCE groups have still been working incredibly hard over the last year. Since last May, FoF events and events that our groups have supported in their respective areas have raised more than £21,000 – just brilliant!

Now more than ever, we are hugely grateful to our Friends of FORCE for their continued support and for championing the work of our charity in the communities that we support. Thank you.



Crediton
Coffee Morning



Exeter
Christmas
Fayre



Kenton at the
Power Run



Bratton Clovelly
Coffee Morning



Honiton Tesco
Collection



Axe Valley
Coffee Morning



Honiton Christmas Market

The Jack still our trump card

Our friends at the Jack in the Green continue to offer unwavering support for FORCE.

Landlord Paul Parnell and wife Judy, a FORCE volunteer since 2015, are celebrating 30 years at the Rockbeare gastropub in 2022.

They're also marking FORCE's 35th anniversary with various events and promotions throughout the year.

Paul explained: "It's important to us that support stays local and goes to people who need it. FORCE is very dear to us. We've had friends who have needed to use the charity's services. We always feel it's really important to give back, which is what we do."

The Jack has teamed up with Courtney's Drinks from Whimple to sell Taste the FORCE cider at the pub throughout the year with 10p from every pint coming to our charity.

On Thursday June 2, the first day of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebration bank holiday weekend, they're co-hosting a fun-packed programme of events.

- The day begins with a family fun run, 5k and 10k race at Cranbrook Country Park, supported by Otter Brewery and Taylor Wimpey.
- Derek the Otter, a popular half-time entertainer at Exeter Chiefs, is taking part in the fun run.
- The 2k family run will start at 9:30am and costs £2 to enter but children can take part for free.



- The 5k runners (£10 entry fee) will go off at 10am and the 10k (£15 entry fee) begins at 11am.
- You can enter at <https://cranbrookrunningclub.co.uk/>
- After the running is done, everyone is welcome back at The Jack in the Green from 1pm for music, a barbecue and a bar hosted by Courtney's Cider.

On September 8, as part of the second annual Taste East Devon Festival, local suppliers and producers are donating the ingredients for what should be a very special

night at the Jack.

Paul and his team are putting on a spectacular five-course dinner with wine specially selected to complement each dish. The cost is £95 to include canapes and a glass of champagne on arrival with half of the proceeds to FORCE and the rest to the Sidmouth Rugby Club women's teams, also sponsored by the Jack in the Green.

"Even though we've had a tough couple of years we still feel it's important to support people in need," said Paul.



Autumn Storm



Honiton Lions



Okehampton Lions Great Devon Breakfast



Keegan Butterworth headshave



Paul Giblin Garden Sketches Exhibition



Holly Pratt and Josie Tarran

THE GREEN LANTERN

A WILD RUNNING EVENT



Half Marathon

Sunday 19th June 2022



PRESENTS...

CRANBROOK COUNTRY PARK JUBILEE CELEBRATION

FAMILY FUN RUN, 5KM & 10KM

BANK HOLIDAY THURS 2ND JUNE

FAMILY FUN RUN (FEAT. DEREK THE OTTER) (09:30)
 5Km (10:00)
 10Km (11:00)

BACK TO THE JACK (FROM 13:00) BBQ, COURTNEY'S CIDER BAR, MUSIC & AWARD CEREMONY. ALL WELCOME.

ENTER AT CRANBROOKRUNNINGCLUB.CO.UK - ALSO AVAILABLE AT THE JACK IN THE GREEN & CAFE @143

CHARITY EVENT SUPPORTING FORCE CANCER CHARITY








main sponsor



delivered straight to your workplace!

FORCE'S TRULY SCRUMPTIOUS FUNDRAISER

Thursday 7th July 2022

Order ONLINE today
FORCECANCERCHARITY.CO.UK
 or call 01392 406150

Orders to be placed by
 Friday 24th June 2022




Sponsored by




The Nello

Sunday 26th June 2022



Choice of rides: 100 miles or 55 miles
 Start & finish at Topsham Rugby Club

For further information contact:
 Tel: 01392 402875
 Email: forcefr@forcecancercharity.co.uk
 FORCE Cancer Charity,
 Corner House, Barrack Road,
 Exeter EX2 5DW

BOOK YOUR PLACE NOW!
 Go to www.forcecancercharity.co.uk

Santa Cycle and cruise

Saturday 19th November 2022



Topsham

Exmouth