For supporters and friends of North Devon Hospice

being there for all the family

Ella and Molly open our new shop

Mike’s uplifting story,
Page 2

Christmas party in July,
page 9

Look at our new calendar,
page 10
10 Questions with...Chief Executive, Stephen Roberts

Stephen was Commercial Director with North Devon Hospice for several years before he stepped up to the role of Chief Executive earlier this year.

1. What word do you love?
Yes.

2. Who was your childhood hero?
It was my father. He was in the army and I just thought he was amazing!

3. Where is your favourite place in the world?
Ballyvaughan in Ireland, which overlooks Galway Bay. My family are from there and it’s where I proposed to my wife Sophia.

4. Who are the 3 people you’d invite for dinner?
Brian O’Driscoll, Queen Elizabeth 1st and Michael McIntyre.

5. What has been the proudest moment of your working life?
Genuinely, it was becoming Chief Executive of North Devon Hospice. Very few people in any career get the opportunity to lead an organisation that is so respected and full of passion.

6. What was the first thing you did when you became Chief Executive?
It was to start one-to-ones with all the staff. This enabled me to share my vision for the hospice but more importantly get to know everyone’s own personal perspectives.

7. What is the most important thing for the hospice to keep doing?
Putting the patient and their families first. The moment we do not do that we are not fulfilling why we are all here.

8. What are the biggest challenges facing North Devon Hospice?
Raising the awareness within the community of North Devon about the care we provide and how much support we need. We are only here because of the local community and, as such, our relationship with both individuals, as well as local organisations, has to remain sacrosanct. Sustaining our income from gifts in wills is also vital.

9. How will North Devon Hospice change to meet the needs of the future?
This will be driven by the future needs of our patients and their families, and we will only know this by ensuring that we listen to them while making sure our relationships with GPs and Commissioners are also as close as possible.

10. What will our hospice services look like in 10 years time?
I envisage a greater demand for our care and for that care to be increasingly provided closer to people’s homes.
Making it count...
Mike Sweetman’s illness doesn’t stop him making the most of life

“It was Christmas Eve when the doctor phoned to tell me that my blood test results indicated I had cancer. He said he knew the timing was awful, but that he simply had to tell me the news as soon as possible, which I totally understood.

“And so, it was in March of 2013 that I first came to North Devon Hospice. In my working life I had been involved with the ambulance service, arranging suitable transport for patients to wherever it was they were being cared for. So I was aware of hospice care, but that didn’t stop me feeling slightly apprehensive walking through the doors for my first visit. I shouldn’t have been worried though, because from the moment I walked through those doors I felt great comfort and was made to feel at ease.

“The word I use that sums it up best is ‘inclusion’. Everybody at the hospice makes you feel included and not at all isolated in your illness. I attend the weekly ‘It’s Friday’ drop-in session, and here I’ve made some great friends. Of course they are in the same boat as me, facing a serious illness, but we chat about all sorts of things and it is very informal and relaxed.

“The same is true of the patients’ groups which I have attended. It is a safe sanctuary to talk about anything and everything we need to.

“Another practical way in which the hospice has helped me is by providing Complementary Therapies. I had an issue with my neck that a volunteer therapist was able to sort out for me and I was extremely grateful. Seeing her every week and chatting away meant we also became firm friends; yet another way in which the hospice is ‘inclusive’.

“I’ve been a supporter of North Devon Hospice for a long time so I know what a good cause it is. But it’s only when you come to experience it first hand that you realise what an amazing place it is. That is why I do as much as I can to help out.

“I’m determined not to let my illness get in the way of living my normal life. So I try to help out with fundraising activities whenever I can. I almost feel like it is a personal mission to spread the word about the hospice, so everybody knows what an incredible difference they make to local people - including me - in helping to cope with life-limiting conditions. While I have a long way to go on my own journey, I feel content knowing the hospice will be there every step of the way.”
Hospice to Home Service 1st Anniversary

Our Hospice to Home service had its 1st Anniversary this July. This essential service means that we have been able to provide round the clock care at home for our patients during the last days of their life. For most people who choose to be at home in the final days, they along with their family and friends need specialised support to make it possible. During the last year we’ve supported over 120 families to spend their final days at home together. All 120 patients had expressed that this is where they wanted to be. We are incredibly proud as on review of this service, 70% of these patients would have otherwise been admitted to hospital if it wasn’t for the Hospice to Home service.

In this last year we managed to support 100% of our patients who wanted to die at home, helping them all to be cared for in the place of their choosing.

2014 marks our 30th Anniversary!

30 years of hospice care in North Devon is a momentous occasion and one that we hope to celebrate with the whole community.

In 1984 (after three years of hard work by local fundraisers) Wynne Withers was appointed as our very first hospice nurse. From humble beginnings in a small terraced house in Barnstaple, the hospice has grown to meet the needs of our patients across this large rural area. Today we offer so many more services to many more patients and families, but the majority of our care is still provided in people’s own homes, as was the vision of our founders some 30 years ago.

Something to share?

Marking our 30th Anniversary with the entire community is important to us because so many of you have helped us get to where we are today. You may have a memory that you’d like to tell us about? Maybe you helped to raise funds for one of our first nurses or our Bedded Unit? If you have a story you’d like to tell to help us mark our 30th Anniversary, please get in touch with Leo Cooper on 01271 344216 or email leocooper@northdevonhospice.org.uk

www.northdevonhospice.org.uk · being there for all the family
New Braunton shop opened by sisters

North Devon Hospice is pleased to have opened a new shop in Braunton. The premises was under two feet of water during last December’s floods, but has been completely transformed into a stylish and popular shop.

The official opening was performed by Ella and Molly Mawson from Ilfracombe. Just before Christmas, the 17 and 15 year old sisters lost their Mum to cancer. She was cared for by the hospice and the family also received help from our Supportive Care team. Ella said: “When me and Molly were asked to do the official opening of the Braunton hospice shop we were really pleased. The work the hospice does, not just for adults but for young people as well, is amazing. Mum received the best possible care and we’ll always be grateful for that. Somehow, with their kindness and cheerfulness they managed to transform what could have been a place of sadness into a place of safety and support for the whole family.”

Our shops can only function and raise much needed funds with the support of the local community. If you have any items that you would like to donate, they would be most appreciated. From clothing to books, and from homeware to antiques, any quality items can help us raise money to continue supporting local people, just like the Mawson family. Visit our new shop at 8 Caen Street, Braunton, EX33 2JS

The work the hospice does, not just for adults but for young people as well, is amazing

Last year we won a national competition to install solar panels on the roof of the hospice. 12 months on and we are delighted to report that they have saved the charity over £10,000 in energy costs! Wow!

We welcomed Charlotte Emery (C) as our new Bedded Unit Team Leader this Autumn. Emma Migliari (R) and Keely Dempsey (L) have also been appointed in the roles of Team Leaders for our Community Clinical Nurse Specialists. These key people will help further improve our excellent services to patients and families.
Please help us
Make a donation

We can all take things for granted, and often do.

I want to share my personal experience of the hospice. Despite having worked here for the last 15 years, it is only when something happens within your own family that the love and support offered by this wonderful charity becomes truly apparent.

That is why I am asking you to support us this year, to help us support others who need our vital care.

In August of this year my Mum died at the hospice. She was my inspiration. She meant the world to me, and she still does. 16 years ago she was diagnosed with breast cancer and was given 6 months to live. She had chemotherapy, radiotherapy and operations. She fought for the sake of our family to beat cancer.

Our hospice provided support throughout her treatments, including Day Hospice, home visits, patient counselling groups and Complementary Therapies for both Mum and Dad. Most recently our dedicated Bedded Unit team took her under their very capable wing when we as a family could no longer look after Mum at home safely. She loved our hospice as well as the wonderful staff and volunteers who cared for her. She found it an inspiration and it gave her the strength she needed to face the tough times.

I took it for granted that Mum would beat cancer. In a way she did. But throughout the many years of treatments it was

Please donate...

By post
Please return cheques made payable to North Devon Hospice to: North Devon Hospice, Deer Park, Newport, Barnstaple, North Devon, EX32 0HU

www.northdevonhospice.org.uk  ·  being there for all the family
to help others
in this Christmas

our hospice that provided the sanctuary and safety net for us all to live each day to the full. I cannot imagine what we would have done without the care, compassion, love and professionalism of our hospice services.

I hope you will be able to make a donation to us so we can care for families like mine and countless others across North Devon. Please don’t take our hospice for granted, we need your help to help others.

Ali Hunt,
Head of Fundraising

£10
could help us to transport patients who need care and support from the hospice over the Christmas period

£25
could provide different types of emotional support for children whose parents have a life-limiting illness

£50
could help one of our Community Nurse Specialists provide care for someone in their own home one day this Christmas

Over the phone
Donate over the phone by calling Ali on 01271 347206

Online
Donate online at www.northdevonhospice.org.uk

being there for all the family · www.northdevonhospice.org.uk 6
Hospice Lottery celebrates 15 years

Having started in 1998 with just over 1,000 members, North Devon Hospice’s Lottery Club has gone from strength to strength, celebrating its 15th birthday this summer with more than 10,000 members playing each week. In those years, it has proved to be a vital source of income for the charity, as well as making hundreds of local people happy, thanks to the weekly £1,000 top prize.

Hospice patient, Mike Sweetman, pressed the button for the 15th anniversary lottery draw at a special celebration at the hospice. He said: “Six months ago I walked through the doors of the hospice as a patient, frightened and isolated. But they helped dispel my fears, made me realise I was not alone and gave me great comfort. None of this would be possible without the efforts of those who help raise funds and the hospice lottery is a vital part of this. I’d like to thank you on behalf of myself and my fellow patients.”

Hospice Lottery Manager, Mike Penny, said: “I’d like to thank every single member who has played our lottery down the years, as well as the army of volunteers and collectors who make it all possible. You have all helped make a difference to countless local patients and families.”

To join North Devon Hospice’s Lottery Club for just £1 a week, please call Mike Penny on 01271 347217. Find out about Lottery Gift Vouchers on page 10.
Is it a bird? Is it a plane? It’s our skydiving superheroes!

Lucy Skinner, Beth Kelso and Vicki Bowers (L to R) took to the skies earlier this year to raise money for us. They parachuted from 15,000ft dressed as Power Rangers as part of our Superhero Skydive event.

Beth is the Complementary Therapy Team Leader at the hospice, providing relaxing treatments to patients and carers, while Lucy and Vicki volunteer as hairdressers for the monthly Look Good, Feel Great sessions.

Lucy said “At the Look Good, Feel Great sessions we help patients to feel better about the way they look, which is especially important when they are coping with a serious illness. Just having the opportunity to have a proper cut and style of their hair can give people a real spring in their step.”

Beth Kelso praised the work that Lucy and Vicki do at the hospice. “Things like the Look Good, Feel Great sessions are really important to our patients. When we are looking our best on the outside, it makes a huge difference to how we feel on the inside,” she said.

The three ladies raised well over £2,000 for their Superhero Skydive, every penny of which will go towards helping those who need the kind of support that only the hospice can offer.

Did you know?
The youngest person supported by North Devon Hospice last year was just 6 years old.

Did you know?
We delivered 705 complementary therapy sessions last year. We have an amazing team of skilled volunteers who offer treatments including massage, aromatherapy and reflexology. These are available (to help ease stress and tension) to all patients and their main carer.

Did you know?
You can raise money for North Devon Hospice by donating your old mobile phone. Just drop it in to any of our shops and we will receive a donation when recycling it.
Christmas in July

Christmas is always a special time of year, so here at North Devon Hospice we thought, why wait until December? This summer we continued a fond tradition of having ‘Christmas in July’ whereby patients, families, supporters, volunteers and staff descend on Deer Park for a sumptuous Christmas dinner. As well as turkey and all the trimmings, there were festive decorations, mince pies and enough good cheer to make you think it was Christmas itself.

Donna Warlow, Head of Facilities at North Devon Hospice, said, “When you’ve got a catering team as amazing as ours, it would be a shame to have Christmas just once a year! Everyone absolutely loved their roast turkey dinner, and they thought it was a great idea to bring a bit of festive cheer into the middle of the summer. The place was packed full of people mixing together and enjoying some seasonal celebrations, even if it was 25 degrees outside!”

A patient who attends the regular ‘It’s Friday’ drop-in sessions at North Devon Hospice said “I thought it was a wonderful occasion. The food was terrific and all the staff had gone to such an effort to make it feel Christmassy. Some would say it’s a bit off-the-wall but we loved it and it was great to get in to the Christmas spirit!”
New calendar showcases local area and local talent

North Devon Hospice’s very own calendar is on sale in all our shops and features beautiful large photographs from around our area. These stunning images have all been kindly donated by local photographers. The whole calendar reminds us what a wonderful area we live in, and will help raise vital funds for the hospice. At just £2.95 it is an absolute bargain, and the perfect Christmas present for anyone who loves North Devon. Pick up your calendar today from any of our hospice shops, or by calling 01271 342792.

Save the dates!

The dates for Nightwalk 2014 have been announced as 17th & 31st May. Our popular ladies-only night time walks will be even bigger next year, so get the dates in your diary or visit www.nightwalk.co.uk to sign up!

ManTrek 2014

Following the amazing response to this year’s inaugural event, we’re also pleased to announce the date of Man Trek, our men only walk along the Tarka Trail. Join us on Sunday 9th March for a walk followed by a free pint, pasty and 6 Nations Rugby! Visit www.mantrek.co.uk.

Lottery Gift Vouchers

The gift that genuinely keeps on giving. Not only will buying one help the hospice provide our essential services, the recipient will stand a chance of winning up to £1,000 in prize money every week! The perfect present. Visit www.northdevonhospice.org.uk for more details.

Business backing the hospice

It’s not just fun runners and skydivers who make it possible for us to provide our essential services. The support of local businesses is also vital and comes in a number of ways. We are delighted that Elm Property is the latest company to come up with a novel way of helping their local hospice, giving a donation of up to £100 for every new letting. Company director, Rupert Hambley, said: “We feel that ‘home’ is very much at the heart of what the hospice does for patients and families. We are delighted to support such a well-loved local charity.” For more details visit elmproperty.co.uk.

If you would like to find out about how your company can benefit from a relationship with North Devon Hospice, please contact Stephen Roberts, our Chief Executive, on 01271 344248.
Buy your 2014 Hospice Calendar

A selection of beautiful North Devon scenes captured by local photographers

£2.95

Available from all North Devon Hospice Shops