

Merger of Hospice at Home Volunteers

MERGER OF HOSPICE AT HOME VOLUNTEERS (LUTON) WITH KEECH HOSPICE CARE

A social event was held to celebrate the merger of Hospice at Home Volunteers with Keech Hospice Care on the evening of Tuesday 10 August 2010. The occasion, held at Keech Hospice Care, was attended by staff and volunteers of both charities and included some people involved in the founding of the Hospice at Home Volunteers service.

Those present heard three short presentations depicting the Past, Present and Future of the organisation before retiring to enjoy some light refreshments and a chance to catch up with old acquaintances.

Robert Barker, the Chairman of Hospice at Home Volunteers, began the evening with a warm welcome and introduction to the evening followed by a rather interesting history of the organisation given by the Vice Chairman, Anthony Musgrove. Elaine Foster, Lead Co-ordinator, described the current position of Hospice at Home Volunteers. She explained that they now have a fantastic group of 65 generous and dedicated Volunteers, currently supporting 64 clients, and announced that Hospice at Home volunteers is proud and privileged to have supported 1436 clients throughout the 21 years. Elaine commented: "We could not provide the important care that we do without the generous and committed support of our volunteers".

Mike Keel, the Deputy Chief Executive Officer of Keech Hospice, explained how delighted the hospice was to receive a request for the two charities to merge from the HHV trustees. He went on to formally welcomed the staff and volunteers into the organisation and gave a brief outline of where Hospice at Home will fit into the services of Keech Hospice Care and the exciting opportunities that lay ahead. "It seemed so obvious and natural for us to join the two organisations" said Mike "especially in these times of economic uncertainty when our services are needed more – the voluntary sector needs to work together to make sure families and clients continue to receive this wonderful service, while making sure we are as cost efficient as possible".

Hospice at Home Volunteers has been operating in the local community offering support to those living with life limiting illness and has grown at a steady pace over the years as the service has become more widely known. The Trustees made a decision to merge the service with Keech Hospice when the vote passed in favour of the proposed merger at an Extra General Meeting in May earlier this year as it became apparent that in order for the service to continue in their development, the resources of a larger organisation would offer up these opportunities. Over the past 10 years, the two organisations have worked very closely together with many of the same client group and as Hospice at Home as occupied an office based at Keech Hospice so the relationship has also developed steadily over this time. The supportive service will continue in exactly the same way, volunteers will be recruited, trained and supported by the Volunteers Co-ordinators, clients will be referred as they have done from within the hospice and by the Community Staff and the intention is to be able to offer the service to more of those in our local community who require some extra support.

HHV receive significant support from Luton PCT and Local Authority and are delighted that these two organisations have supported the merger and are committed to continuing their support in the new arrangement.

Visit <http://www.keech.org.uk/hhv> for further information.