



St Clare Hospice over the years

A complete history of our Hospice



ST CLARE
HOSPICE

Our history

St Clare Hospice has been established for over 18 years, providing care to thousands of people during that time. Initial conversations took place in 1987, where it was decided that a group should be established to investigate the provision of palliative care within West Essex.

The joint planning team was made up of local Councillors, Healthcare Professionals, Business Owners, etc. In 1989 after an extensive period of research the group held a public meeting, chaired by Jo Brennan, a member of the local health authority. The findings showed a clear need for specialist care for those with terminal illness in our local community. A decision was made that evening would change the care of the dying forever.

It was proposed and agreed that a Hospice Service should be established - St Clare Hospice Trust was born. That evening the first donation was presented, a cheque for £5,000 from Essex Radio.

The following year a team of Trustees were appointed and created a constitution and plan for how the Service would function. One of those Trustees, John Carr, raised £100 by placing a pint glass at a local pub. This sum was crucial as the service had to register its name and charity status at the cost of £100.

A grant of £40,000 in 1991 from the Regional Health Authority meant that Trustees were able to employ the first members of staff. Janet Lodge and Stan Wright were appointed with Beryl Cruickshank later in the same year.

It was a busy period with Day Services being opened across the area, including in Harlow at Sumners Farmhouse, Stansted Day Centre, Parsonage Court, Loughton, Jessops Court in Waltham Abbey and Myddleton Place, Saffron Walden. These locations were providing weekly sessions of physical, social, emotional and spiritual care – the first of its kind in this area.

The Day Hospice Care was provided and supported because of the community fundraising at fetes, coffee mornings, jumble sales, etc. An important aspect that continues to ensure St Clare can care today.

In 1992 the growing administrative work was based in the Pinnacles, Harlow, thanks to the generous offer of free office space from a local business. Later that year Trustees discovered a place called Stone Barton, Hastingwood. More and more services were launched as St Clare continued to become the specialist support and care organisations it is today. These new services included free equipment loan, 24/7 Helpline and family support services.

The first “Friends of St Clare” was established in what was becoming a big year for the Hospice.



In 1993 after a long campaign, the Trustees purchased Stone Barton, a beautiful farm house with fantastic potential for development into a Hospice Centre. Requests for volunteers to help to clean, decorate and set up the building were met by the kind community.

From 1993 to 1995 the role of Chairman was passed from Tom Sweetman to Ken Bushel. Diane O'Reilly was appointed Manager of an ever growing Family Support Service. In April of 1995 Harlow Shop opened, creating possibly the biggest charity shop in the country! In the following years Ian Paterson took over as Chairman. The period from 1995 to 1999 was extraordinary as the Hospice dreamt of having a purpose built in-patient unit, launched a capital appeal, built the new part of the Hospice Centre, here in Hastingwood and opened it shortly before the turn of the Millenium. This was made possible in part by the efforts of Gerry Bell, who had created a profitable trading arm of the organisation, including its weekly lottery programme. However, throughout the time leading up to the centre being opened in its full capacity in 1999, it had been the support of the community in donations of time and money, that created St Clare Hospice.

It was the special wish of one day hospice patient to be the first person admitted into IPU (In Patient Unit) a wish that came true and turned out to be one of her last, as she died shortly afterwards.

In February 2000, Brian Hilton was appointed as Chief Executive until passing the role onto Richard Cowie in 2005, Stan Wright, after ten years dedication retired due to ill-health in 2001, Martin Eastel was appointed Chairman in 2004 before Michael Chapman's appointment in February 2006.

In more recent years the Service has continued to grow and develop to meet the needs of some of the 280,000 people in the community St Clare serves every day, free of charge. In 2007 the Hospice Service introduced its independent living team, made up of occupational therapist, physio therapist and therapies assistants. Perhaps the most significant development since opening IPU in 2000 is that St Clare can now reach more people in their homes than ever before and provide the most comprehensive range of treatments on offer to patients with life-limiting illnesses.

St Clare Hospice cares for people with life-limiting illnesses such as cancer, end-stage neurological, cardiac, renal or lung disease.

The Hospice is well sited for easy access adjacent to junction 7 at the M11/A414 interchange.

It costs in excess of £2m per year for St Clare Hospice to provide our high standard of care to patients and their families, throughout West Essex & East Hertfordshire. We receive 30% from the NHS, the rest we have to raise.

St Clare Hospice, Hastingwood Road, Hastingwood,
Essex CM17 9JX.

General Enquiries (01279) 773 700

Fax: (01279) 773 701

24-hour Advice Line: (01279) 773 773

enqs@stclare-hospice.co.uk

www.stclare-hospice.co.uk

October 2008

Company limited by guarantee.
Registered in England and Wales No. 3398955.

Registered Charity No. 1063631.

