



demelza

extraordinary care for extraordinary children



Demelza Choir:
lifting voices
and lifting
hearts

Volunteer news

Winter edition

January 2024

Dear Volunteers,

Welcome to our winter volunteer news.

As 2024 begins, I cannot help but feel we are entering a new era for Demelza. We have come so far in the past 25 years, and we are now entering our next 25 years. So much has changed, but one thing remains the same and that is the mark that each and every member of Team Demelza, employees and volunteers alike, leaves upon this organisation. Every contribution has made us what we are today, strengthening the foundation from which this new era grows from.

In April, we will be entering the third year of our five-year strategy, and we have so much to show for your vision and hard work already. I cannot name every one of our successes as there have been so many, but in short:

- We have reached more children and families, with more on our caseload and more bookings and hours of care delivered compared to the previous year.
- We ran a showcase pop-up shop as part of Charity Super.Mkt in 2023, have recently opened two new shops, and are continuing to grow our retail income and public profile in a steady and sustainable way.

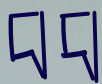
- We have a wide range of new and updated digital infrastructure and facilities to better support our teams to deliver their services.
- We are reaching a larger audience than ever before, with our highest levels of reach and engagement across social media.
- We have more supporters than ever before and are sustainably growing fundraising and lottery income.
- We are investing in nurse and healthcare assistant recruitment campaigns and growing and developing skills and expertise in our workforce
- We are working more collaboratively and effectively than ever before, both internally and with other organisations, leading the way for other children's hospices nationally.

This is all down to you, Team Demelza, and it is truly amazing. In every story in this newsletter, I hope you can take pride in knowing that, either directly or indirectly, you have made these stories possible.

Thank you.



Lavinia Jarrett , CEO



Volunteering with Demelza showed me that, even after a bit of a break and just being 'mum' for a while, I can still learn new things and take on new responsibilities.



Pictured:
Voluntary Services
Administrator, Jo

Volunteer story

Volunteering for Demelza can be a great opportunity to ease back into the workforce if you have taken a break, and to develop new skills you'd never considered before. Jo shared with us how volunteering for Demelza sparked her to consider a new career she hadn't considered previously!

"I'd never considered admin work before COVID-19," says Jo. "I was a nursery nurse for many years, and after that I took up photography – mainly portraits, photographing couples, families, and even pets! The pandemic sadly put a stop to that."

Coming out of the pandemic, Jo was eager to try volunteering with Demelza to get back into the workplace. "I needed something to fill my time while I looked for work, and I'd always wanted to volunteer anyway – it's a nice opportunity to give something back. Finally, I had the time to do it."

Jo's volunteering role saw her join Demelza's marketing and comms team, supporting our internal communications. In her varied role she helped prepare

and proofread newsletters, added subtitles to our internal videos, added posts to our volunteer Facebook groups, and managed general admin.

Rebecca, Demelza Internal Communications Manager, said: "Having worked across several different charities, I've really come to value the support that volunteers can offer. Jo was able to take on tasks that were valuable but very time-consuming. She was a huge help not only in getting those tasks done but also in enabling me to focus on other projects, essentially doubling the gift of her time!"

Eventually, Jo decided she'd like to work for Demelza. "Partly I just needed to develop some confidence. Volunteering with

Demelza showed me that, even after a bit of a break and just being 'mum' for a while, I can still learn new things and take on new responsibilities. That support and confidence gave me the push I needed to apply for the Voluntary Services Administrator role.

"I almost couldn't believe it when they phoned to say I'd got the job! But I'm really pleased I was successful, and I already see the impact of what I do in my new role – it's great that I'm part of new volunteers' journeys as I've been there myself. It's nice to see new volunteers around the hospice after I've helped to advertise their role and helped get them on board, it feels like it's come full circle."



Demelza Choir

Although Demelza has held several standalone choir sessions in previous years, our regular choir for employees, volunteers and families was launched in February 2023, with the arrival of Music Therapist, Kelly Fraser.

"I have been fortunate enough to lead choirs in a variety of different settings throughout my career and I couldn't wait to begin the Demelza Choir. From its conception, our choir offer has been shaped entirely by the collective voice of our members. It is a joy to hold space for such an incredibly courageous and creative group of people and my honour to be of service to them. A wonderful sense of community is blossoming, and I am so excited for the adventures we will embark upon in the coming year," says Kelly.

With around 20 members, the choir has already performed at family and fundraising events to support the charity, but for the members of the choir, the experience is much more than just an opportunity to perform. In a recent survey, 100% of respondents said that they felt the choir had improved their

wellbeing, confidence and social connection.

"The choir has been a really positive experience for me this year. I was initially nervous about singing in a group setting as I haven't done so for a long time, but Kelly has created such an incredible safe space to come together and be part of something meaningful without any pressure or expectations. No matter how tense or stressed I feel, walking into choir and seeing all the other members, taking a moment to reconnect with my breath, and adding my voice to some really powerful music always leaves me feeling happier and more comfortable in myself," says Oliver, a Demelza employee.

Members of families that Demelza support have also benefited from their time as part of the choir too: "I really enjoy coming to choir,



Pictured: Sam,
Demelza family
member



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Oliver Spencer, Marketing and Communications Storytelling Officer

it’s my ‘me time’ away from work and busy home life. Kelly is so uplifting, encouraging and makes us all feel involved,” says Lorraine. “It took a while for me to be persuaded to come along, as I knew singing really was not my forte, but I am so happy and grateful that I did. To sing together as part of a group is pretty special, I enjoy it so much, and (I think) my singing has improved too.” Writes another family member, Maggie.

Collette, who has volunteered with Demelza for more than five years now, also greatly enjoys taking part in the choir: “Obviously being part of Demelza choir enables me to sing, which I love but everybody is so friendly there’s also the added social aspect which is great. Kelly is an absolute joy and takes everybody’s feelings into consideration.”

“It’s so wonderful to see Kelly take this concept and really grow it and bring the choir to life.” Says Victoria Swan, Demelza’s Creative Therapies Lead. “We’ve always focused on providing opportunities to make music with the babies, children and young people who access Demelza. But as adults, we need to participate in music too and opportunities like the choir enable this. Singing really improves our wellbeing and increases feelings of happiness. It requires deep, controlled breathing which benefits us, it calms our body and mind, it promotes good heart and lung health, and improves our concentration. 40 minutes of singing together has been shown to reduce our stress hormones, our cortisol levels, and these are replaced with our feel-good hormones, our endorphins.”



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Ditch it for Demelza

**Set yourself
a challenge**

**Break a habit
over 40 days
and donate to
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14 February to 28 March

demelza.org.uk/ditch-it



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Find out more



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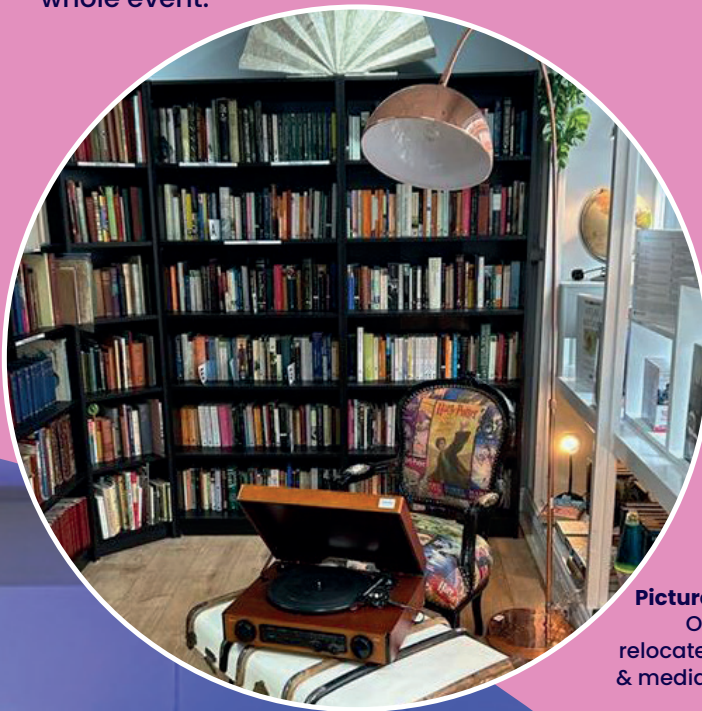
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Retail update

The last quarter of 2023 has seen great opportunities for retail; coming away from a hugely successful collaborative pop-up shop at Bluewater with Wayne Hemmingway's Charity SuperMkt initiative and straight into the launch of two brand new Demelza charity shops for early 2024.

We were delighted to be asked to be part of Charity SuperMkt; a collection of charities coming together to host an array of pop-up shops, proving that second hand is far from second best! We were one of the few regional charities invited, and our retail teams pulled out the stops to showcase a vibrant,

stunning space packed with thrifty treasures for thousands of Bluewater shoppers. We were fortunate to gain local news coverage, influential social media support, and great feedback from other charities which, alongside the hard work from our retail leads, helped us to be the most successful pop-up from the whole event.



Picture above:
Our newly
relocated books
& media store in
Hythe





New stores

New Orpington shop

Demelza is delighted to be opening a new shop in Orpington on 31 January! This shop will be one of our larger stores, offering incredible deals on fashion, homeware, books, furniture and more. It's a great opportunity to expand Demelza's presence in South East London and raise awareness of both the great shopping experience that Demelza can offer, as well as raising awareness of our services in the area.

on Earl Street on 5 February. This will be a boutique store, offering high-quality goods and a luxury feel for shoppers wanting top-brand items for a smaller price and smaller environmental impact.

Volunteers needed

Both new stores are currently looking for volunteers. More information and how you can apply to be part of #TeamDemelza can be found on our website: demelza.org.uk/support-us/volunteer

our lease. Our team has been exploring suitable locations so we can continue to offer you the best retail experience we can. We will update you as soon as we have more information. In the meantime, please support us by continuing to shop and donate as normal. For more information on your nearest shop, please go to: **Demelza.org.uk/shop/our-charity-shops**. Thank you for your support – we couldn't do what we do without you!

New Maidstone shop – Earl Street

In complement to our current offer in Maidstone of the Royal Star Arcade shop, we will also be opening a new shop

Maidstone distribution centre

You may be aware that we will be moving our Maidstone distribution centre from its current premises in Sandling Road, following the end of

Volunteer here



Demelza Nurse awarded title of Queen's Nurse

We are delighted that Jenna, who has been a Demelza East Sussex community nurse for 17 years, has been awarded the prestigious title of 'Queen's Nurse' by community nursing charity The Queen's Nursing Institute! Attending the ceremony in December 2023, Jenna received her official award from Dame Elizabeth Anionwu, The Queen's Nursing Institute Vice President (pictured).

The Queen's Nurse programme brings together community nurses to develop their professional skills and deliver outstanding patient care, and only individuals who demonstrate the highest

level of commitment in their community are eligible for the title.

Nurses who hold the title benefit from developmental workshops, bursaries, networking opportunities, and a shared professional identity. Jenna works from Demelza's community hub in St Leonards and has been a Demelza East Sussex community nurse for 17 years, having been inspired by her sister, who has a complex health condition, to join the nursing profession.

Congratulations Jenna on this outstanding achievement!





Demelza colleagues' SEL 15th anniversary celebration café

**Wednesday 21 February 2024
11am – Midday , Training room
Demelza South East London
For employees and volunteers**

Join CEO, Lavinia Jarrett, for a cup of tea and a slice of cake as we come together for a casual celebration of the 15th anniversary of Demelza's South East London site. We would love to see you there!

Making magical memories at Demelza

It is not always possible for children and young people with serious and life-limiting illnesses to easily pop to a local festive grotto or party as they can often be inaccessible. The Demelza team made it possible for many families to take part in the magic of the festive period in Kent, South East London and East Sussex by hosting our own festive gatherings for families complete with treats and crafts, visits to Father Christmas, presents and light trails!

Well done to all our amazing colleagues – employees and volunteers – for helping to create special memories for our Demelza families this winter.



Pictured: SEL Nursing and Care team





Festive Cafés

It was lovely to see so many of you at our four Demelza colleagues' festive cafes this winter. Whilst the teas, coffees, mince pies and cakes were all well received, the best part of these events is always the opportunity to come together as employees and volunteers, have a natter and spread festive cheer. We loved some of the brilliant festive jumpers sported too!







Pictured above:

Volunteers Dave Turner & Cathy Gundry

Demelza wins at Kent Charity Awards 2023

It was a very proud moment for Demelza to accept two finalist nominations in Use of Volunteers and Large Charity categories at the Kent Charity Awards in September 2023.

Volunteer, Cathy Gundry, was a finalist in the Volunteer of the Year Award, and Demelza won the large charity category award!

A massive well done and thank you to all our volunteers who have helped to secure this recognition for Demelza – and in the year of our 25th anniversary no less!

Volunteers: update your emergency contact info

Does Demelza have your up-to-date emergency contact details?

To update, email volunteering@demelza.org.uk or call the voluntary services team on **01795 845170**.



Eminent researchers visit Demelza South East London

Demelza were delighted to be able to welcome Professor Lorna Fraser and Dr Bethan Page of King's College University to present their findings as part of recent research into the health of parents, carers and siblings of children diagnosed with life-limiting illnesses.

Their research indicates that on average, parents and carers of children diagnosed with life-limiting illnesses can suffer worse ill-health than those without.

Lavinia Jarrett, CEO, was delighted with the visit, saying:

"It was wonderful to have children's palliative care 'royalty', Professor Lorna Fraser, and her colleague Dr Page, visit Demelza and present to the team at our fantastic South East London hospice. Thanks to everyone in SEL for making Lorna so welcome.

We hope to take part in Lorna's next research project. I know Lorna was really encouraged by the outstanding professionalism she saw and the overwhelming desire in the room and online to improve our work in any way we can. It's rather nice to have the evidence to help us do just that!"



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Hop along to our Easter Egg Hunt

Tickets: £5 Child, £2 Adult
(Prize for every child included)

Stalls, children's activities,
refreshments and more

Tickets must be pre-booked at:
demelza.org.uk/easter



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29 March**



**At
Demelza
Kent**



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Registered Charity No. 1039651

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**Limited
Spaces**

Alice in Wonderland Ball

Demelza was delighted to be able to offer the opportunity to our volunteers to attend our Alice in Wonderland Ball in September 2023. 20 lucky volunteers were able to enjoy donated places at this beautiful evening at the De Vere Hotel near Covent Garden. The evening was hosted by Absolute Radio Presenter, Dave Berry in the stunning De Vere Grand Connaught Rooms, Convent Garden, and saw the audience entertained by the only magician to win Britain's Got Talent, Richard Jones.

Guests also enjoyed a three-course dinner, a heartfelt speech from Demelza parent Laurence, a live auction from Bargain Hunt's Charles Hanson and floor-filler anthems from Fake Tan Band.

A huge thank you to our sponsor LGT Wealth Management, who made this possible and to our guests whose generosity helped to raise an incredible £115,000!



Dates for the Diary

February

FREDIE focus: What is a family?' (marriage, civil partnership, maternity/paternity)

- 1 Time to Talk Day
- 4 World Cancer Day
- 5 Children's Mental Health Awareness Week
- 5 Earl Street, Maidstone shop opening
- 7 Clinical Learning Circle: an overview of Demelza's clinical services 2023
- 14 Start of Ditch It for Demelza
- 17 Random Acts of Kindness Day
- 21 Demelza Colleagues' SEL 15th anniversary celebration café
- 24 Emotional Health Day
- 28 Start of Eating Disorder Awareness week

March

FREDIE focus: Islam

- 1 Employee Appreciation Day
- 8 International Women's Day & Children's Mental Health Awareness Week
- 11 Start of Ramadan (Islam) and Nutrition and Hydration Week
- 12 My Whole Self Day
- 15 World Sleep Day
- 18 Neurodiversity Celebration Week
- 20 International Happiness Day
- 25 Holi (Hinduism)
- 29 Demelza Easter egg hunt (Kent)
- 31 International Day of Transgender Visibility

April

FREDIE focus: Judaism

- 1 Easter Monday (Christianity), start of Autism Awareness Month and World Stress Awareness Month
- 7 World Health Day
- 10 Draw date for Demelza's Big Raffle and Eid-al-Fitr (Islam)
- 13 Annual bucket collection at Millwall FC
- 21 TCS London Marathon
- 25 On Your Feet Britain
- 28 World Health and Safety at Work Day
- 29 Maternity Mental Health Awareness Week

May

FREDIE focus: Buddhism

- 1 National Walking Month
- 8 Women's Health Week
- 12 Bubble Rush, Deal (Kent)
- 13 Mental Health Awareness Week and Learning at Work Week
- 16 Corporate Miles in May event (SEL)
- 18 Jurassic Coast Challenge
- 19 Demelza Skydive
- 21 World Meditation Day
- 23 Vesak (Buddhism)
- 25 London 2 Brighton Challenge
- 26 Ride London 2024

@demelzacharity



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Find out more at:

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