



ACORN CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

Overview

The financial year of 2023-24 has seen the Acorn Cancer Support Group make further progress in the charity's recovery from the Covid pandemic period. In meeting our core function of providing emotional and social support for cancer patients and their carers in our local areas of Huntingdon, Ramsey and St Ives, we continue to play an important role in patients', their carers' and their family's, path to recovery.

We further aim to ensure that the widest possible public awareness of our services is maintained, and look to continue to work with other local, and national agencies, in delivering these activities. Our regular monthly meetings in Huntingdon, Ramsey and St Ives deliver a choice of complimentary therapy sessions, delivered by professional therapists and at no charge to our members. Take-up for these sessions remains encouragingly high, and a more detailed look at these activities is given further into this report.

Therapist sessions are only part of the story, and the social interaction provided by our meetings, together with a lunch, is also highly regarded by our membership. A monthly Film Club is well supported and a regular programme of activities is operated throughout the year. Over the twelve month period of this report our members have enjoyed three Ladybird boat outings and lunches, garden parties, theatre trips, as well as the more formal events of our 25th Anniversary celebration lunch and the Christmas lunch. Such events and more, will be planned again for the coming year.

Membership

We continue to seek to grow our membership, and thanks to our hard-working core of volunteers, we possess the resources to accommodate further intakes. Our meeting facilities at the Parish Hall, Bury; The Neurotherapy Centre in Huntingdon, and the Methodist Church Hall in St Ives, are all able to cope with increased numbers. A more detailed look at Acorn membership shows the following headline information.

	Year 2022-23	Year 2023-24	Difference
Total Attendance at Group Meetings	685	795	110
Comprising:- Patients and carers	428	459	31
Volunteers / Guests	186	243	57
Therapists	71	93	22
Group Events			
Film Club	140	193	53
25 th Anniversary Lunch		86	
Christmas Lunch	74	73	-1
Boat Trips	42	63	21
Theatre Trip/Garden Parties/Lunches		77	

The Acorn Cancer Support Group is administered by a Board of Trustees, comprising six members, with further Trustees being sought. The Board of Trustees is supported by trained volunteer Team Leaders, as well as a number of specialised volunteers in roles such as HR and social media.

Therapists

Individual relaxation sessions are provided by highly qualified and experienced complementary therapists, who offer relaxation sessions in aromatherapy, reflexology, massage and Reiki. Seated exercise sessions are also provided on a group basis, with individual advice for members, also being available. Therapies delivered this financial year are summarised as follows:

Therapies	Year 2022-23	Year 2023-24	Difference
Individual relaxation therapies.	160	168	8
Collective Creative Visualisation	29	0	-29
Seated Exercise	333	595	262

Our Funders

The Acorn Cancer Support Group is entirely funded by donations and we very much would like to acknowledge and thank the following organisations, groups and individuals who have supported us this year with funding. Being an entirely volunteer-run organisation, all funds received are spent directly to the benefit of our members and the Group, and are essential for the continuation of the Group services.

Donors for the year 2023-24 include Macmillan Cancer Support; The Huntingdon Freemens' Trust; St Ives Rotary Club; Magic Little Grants; Localgiving; The People's Post Code Lottery; Ramsey Hospital Charity Shop; Janet Church Interiors and individual donations and bequeaths from our therapists, members and friends of Acorn.

Going Forward

All the activities contained within this yearly report are essential for us to meet our objectives to alleviate anxiety or distress through mutual support, relaxation therapy and seated exercise, and to show members through social interactions with others, that despite a diagnosis of cancer, they can still have a good quality of life. The Acorn Cancer Support Group will continue its innovative approach to achieving these aims.

A priority is to attract those newly diagnosed and affected by cancer, and who we have not been able to help so far. A recent upgrade of our public relations materials and social media activities, we believe, will enable us to get our message out to many more members of our community who are coming to terms with their diagnosis, and dealing with the impact that cancer has on not just their lives, but on their family, friends and carers, as well.

Alan Ward
Secretary

On Behalf of the Trustees of the Acorn Cancer Support Group
06.04.24

[Welcome to The Acorn Cancer Support Group - The Acorn Cancer Support Group
\(\[acornsupportgroup.org.uk\]\(https://www.acornsupportgroup.org.uk\)\)](https://www.acornsupportgroup.org.uk)