

NEWSLETTER

Kilbryde Hospice Volunteer View

Autumn 2025



BEHIND THE DOORS

OUR volunteers play a major part of everything that Kilbryde Hospice does. While there is a 'front-line' which deals with aspects such as fundraising, can collections, Kafe and retail, there are almost as many who work quietly in the background.

In this issue of Volunteer Newsletter we have spoken to some of the staff and volunteers who carry out these vitally important roles which ensure the smooth running of Kilbryde and, ultimately, help provide five-star caring for patients and families.

ISSUE 5

WELCOME TO THE 6th EDITION OF YOUR REGULAR NEWSLETTER. IT IS FOR YOU - THE KILBRYDE HOSPICE TEAM OF VOLUNTEERS. WE HOPE YOU ENJOY IT. PLEASE SEND US YOUR NEWS AND PICS FOR THE NEXT EDITION.



Meet Louise McGown

LOUISE has been Corporate Services Manager at the hospice since May after deciding on a considerable change of direction in her career.

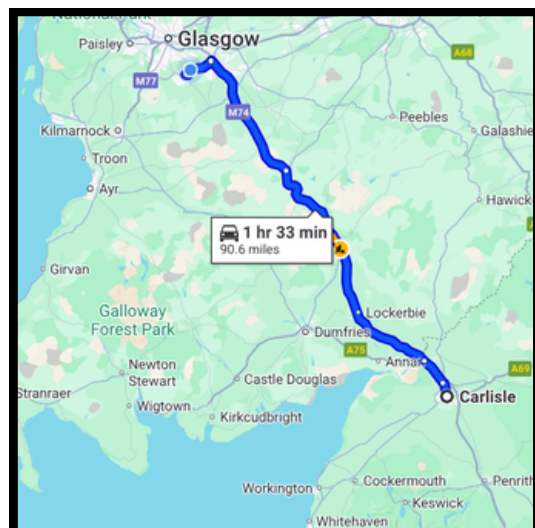
She describes her new responsibilities as 'huge' as she makes sure everything runs smoothly, down to checking that the water is safe and numerous other tasks.

She said: "I couldn't do the job I do without the staff and volunteers here - we are so lucky to have such amazing people.

"Ultimately it is to get families and patients the best possible care. I want this to be the best hospice there is."

LOUISE: Her full story is on Page 2

KILBRYDE WILL BE BEST



BORDER CROSSING: Louise has taken the High Road to settle here, in the West of Scotland

Volunteer Praise

SINCE coming to Kilbryde Hospice, Louise has been impressed by the volunteers here which she ‘can’t believe how lucky we are. Even having been here for just a few months, the people are incredible.’

“Although a lot of the people are local, there are others who travel here and this place could not run the way it does without them.

“We are very fortunate to have them,” she added.

LOUISE said: “I previously lived in Carlisle, my whole family are there, before moving to Scotland 12-and-a-half years ago...and I haven’t lost my accent!

“Working in the funeral business I started at the bottom, driving the ambulances as well as facilitating the Coroners’ Contract for Cumbria, including police work in relation to sudden deaths. When I moved here I became a driver with George S Munns in Rutherglen.

“From there I went on to be funeral director at Johnathan Harvey’s so I’ve been on every stepping stone, from team leader - booking all the funerals, caring for the deceased’s families and more. I went from ambulance driver, to arranging funerals then conducting them.”

An obvious connection with Louise’s two careers is dealing with bereavement, albeit she feels that she has taken a little step-back from her previous upfront role.

She added: “When I was team leader I was office-based in arranging one funeral but at Kilbryde I am in charge of the building, making sure everything is done right as every department, large or small, is doing a fabulous job for the people downstairs who are looking after the patients.

“Probably the hardest challenge that I have faced is that funerals have a quick turnover where everything moves at a fast pace. At Kilbryde we are trying to make an impact over a longer period of time.

“In some ways I have had to really slow myself down and think ‘what is our strategy?’ and how are we going to make a difference to the people of South Lanarkshire. But my face isn’t going to be out there like Gordon, who everyone knows, but a lot of people don’t realise that there is a lot of things going on that they might not be aware of.

“But my job is about making sure the water is safe, that the heating is working properly, that the Kafe is running smoothly. I have a whole lot of different departments here. But they could not be without the staff and volunteers in each one.

“Everyone’s goal, including myself, is to be as professional as they can be and for Kilbryde to be the best hospice there is.”

ABOVE AND BEYOND IN IPU

It is very much a team effort in the In-patient Unit as clinical staff are helped by the volunteers who perform tasks which contribute greatly to the care given to patients and their families.

While the volunteers may not take part in the direct personal care of patients, they are very much involved in supplementing the work that the clinical, and other, staff carry out.

Among the range of responsibilities that they have are serving meals to patients; serving tea to visitors; ensuring that the hospitality trolley is kept clean and stocked up; changing the water in the flowers; making sure that towels, sheets, aprons and gloves are all stocked up.

Another, arguably the most important task that they undertake is chatting to patients and their families and showing relatives the facilities available in the unit.

Volunteer Frank Miller said: “In essence we are there to try and contribute to making sure that the patients have the best experience that they can have during whatever time they have with us.

“Every patient that we have is treated as a unique person and, for us, it is a privilege to contribute in a small way to making sure that patients and their families are dignified and comfortable in what is a fairly relaxed and caring environment.”

Over and above the clinical care given, it is important that other aspects such as hospitality and cleaning are dealt with, therefore everyone, including the volunteers, has a part to play.

Feedback indicates that the IPU has a ‘positive environment’...people, including patients, laugh a lot, which is not to take away from the seriousness of the circumstances that patients are in.



IPU WARD: Designed with care

Volunteers play their part in creating happy memories, which may not be something associated with hospice care, but they go very much out their way to treat each patient as an individual.

To maintain standards, the volunteers meet on a regular basis when they discuss every aspect of their voluntary work in the unit.

What are their interests? What food do they like?...things like that help immensely which families appreciate. Some people are apprehensive coming in for the first time and the personal touch is invaluable.

Overwhelming opinion is that the happy environment that the volunteers contribute to, completely changes people’s perspective of hospice end-of-life-care.

Patients often make unexpectedly huge progress as a result of the care they get, such as a man in his 90s who was admitted for what was thought would be ‘end-of-life’ care.

However, he thrived in the unit and recovered to such an extent that he was deemed well enough to be transferred to a care home, but his health was improving so much that he was allowed home...he told relatives: “I never liked that nursing home anyway!”

Behind the scenes at Kilbryde Hospice Part 1



MEET THE IPU VOLUNTEER TEAM

MOIRA TAYLOR (first left) : I started volunteering when I was at secondary school, helping children with special needs which led me to my try and work as an occupational therapist.

However, I did not have the necessary qualifications so I joined the Clydesdale Bank and was there for 10 years and is where I met my husband.

-We married, had three children, and I became a stay-at-home mum for 13 years before going back to working with special needs children.

I did this for five very challenging years and then my dream job came up within occupational therapy at the old Southern General Hospital.

When it became the Queen Elizabeth Hospital I did not like the new environment and decided to retire - I had loved my job and did not want to give up my patient contact.

So that is when I became a volunteer in Kilbryde Kafe as well as patient transport for day services and when the in-patient unit opened I joined alongside Frank [Miller].

FIONA FOTHERINGHAM (first right) : I lost my husband when I was very young so the only work I could do was during school hours, such as cleaning people's houses which I did for a number of years.

At some point, I collected insurance for a leading company and then my son set me up in an ironing business from the house which I carried out for several years.

After that, I noticed an advert in the East Kilbride News looking for volunteers at Kilbryde Hospice, so I came along to an evening event and signed myself up.

At the beginning the IPU was not taking on any volunteers, so I worked in the Kafe and day services until the volunteer team was set up and I joined...I couldn't tell you how many years ago!

ANNETTE SMITH (second right) : After I lost my husband to asbestos-related illness, I joined Clydeside Action on Asbestos as a volunteer for several years, ending up a chairperson.

I had been a Merchandising Manager with Mars Confectionary which took me from Skye to Lochgilphead and, prior to that, I was a Medical Secretary at Glasgow Royal Infirmary.

As chair of the charity, that also involved travelling throughout the country with the Senior Welfare Rights Officer. I was with them for 10 years but then began to look for another job.

I spoke to a Nursing Director that I knew and she suggested that I apply to the hospice, so I came to Kilbryde one Saturday and have now been here for six years.

Originally I started in day reception and then COVID struck and everything changed. When I started back it was on reception of the IPU until that role ended.

After that I worked as a volunteer in the IPU wards, which I have done ever since.

FRANK MILLER (second left): My first involvement as a volunteer was as a university student organising visits to housebound students and a geriatric unit at Southern General Hospital.

I was also involved in running holiday camps for children from Northern Ireland during The Troubles, from both sides of the divide as well as a year-long youth group for those in deprived areas.

Following that, I was a social worker for 15 years before a change in career to become a computer programmer and business analyst for social care organisations.

When I retired in September 2015 I was looking to get back into voluntary work and was aware of Kilbryde Hospice and the work it was doing. I started in 2016 and - much against my better judgement - I was asked to work in IT! I did that for over a year, then drove the mini-bus before getting involved in the IPU in 2018.

Behind the scenes at Kilbryde Hospice Part 2

VOLUNTEER IPU CLINICAL AUDITOR

Helen Wales

MY mother-in-law was one of the first patients in Prince and Princess of Wales Hospice so, as a family, we have been hospice-orientated for many, many years.

Meanwhile, my husband was an East Kilbride Rotarian. The club took a great interest in the early years for the potential of Kilbryde Hospice and became very involved in fundraising.

Having started volunteering in May 2016, I have been able to tie-in with my senior role in Hairmyres where I was a Senior Theatre Sister.

My volunteer role is audit, casting my critical eye over all hospice departments as I have this critical eye and see things and a clinical audit covers all sorts of things - the world revolves round audit and people are scared of it.

But, from an audit, you find out if you are getting it right or wrong and if you can do better. It's a really useful tool and we do a lot of audit across the whole organisation.

A lot of what I do is numerical, working off templates in effect. For the IPU I do two audits every month as well as audits for Day Services and Clan for Infection Control.

I am also a Secret Shopper - which is the worst kept secret! - although people don't know what I am going to be doing. From a nursing perspective quality documentation indicates quality care. There are certain things in the profession that we need to be good at and have to measure.

HIS (Healthcare Improvement Scotland) has a broad reaching umbrella and our organisation is open to an inspection at any time, so I do two similar 'mock audits' every year.

This is not to show anybody up, rather that if we can pick up on something that we are not doing well which we can concentrate on. HIS's template can change on an annual basis, due to changes in legislation for example, which impacts on what we do.

Infection Control templates also set out standards of housekeeping, hygiene, cleanliness and control of infection in the hospice environment...are uniforms being worn correctly?...are cleaning schedules up to date?

I am completely impartial other than I am passionate about Kilbryde - it's not that I am looking for things out of badness.

I undertake surveys of post-discharge, Kickstart, Day Services, Clan and Complementary Therapy. Feedback from patients, family members, carers, bereaved relatives and friends is also crucial so we can assess if we are providing a meaningful service, if patients are getting what they need out of it and if the hospice is getting value for money.

I now help out with fundraising as and when I can. Along with my husband, we marshalled at Stride and I have helped out at fayres, markets and many other events.



HELEN'S TIMELINE

- My nursing career started in Edinburgh at the Royal Hospital for Sick Children in 1976.
- In 1979 I went down to London for a 6 month course in Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) Nursing.
- On returning to Edinburgh I went to Edinburgh City Hospital where I stayed for 18 months in ENT theatres.
- Glasgow Western Infirmary was my next destination, in October 1981, to do my RGN training and subsequently staffed there in theatres until 1986.
- In the interim, in June 1985, I met my husband-to-be, we were engaged in that October and married in August 1986.
- Husband Barclay's family business was based in EK, so it made sense to set up home here.
- I started at Hairmyres Hospital on Easter Monday 1986 as a Staff Nurse.
- Hairmyres and NHS Lanarkshire gave me so many varied opportunities, a happy career and finishing up as a Senior Theatre Sister, a role I had for more than 20 years.
- I retired from my Senior role on Hogmanay 2012, then returned as a part-time Bank Staff Nurse until hanging up my scrubs in October 2023.
- During my years at Hairmyres I worked with Mr John Richards, Consultant Surgeon, and occasionally with Dr Hosnay Yosef, who coincidentally was my mum's Oncologist.
- I had been wanting a volunteer role but unsure where or what before a chance meeting with the abovementioned in Hairmyres coffee shop. They encouraged me to think about Kilbryde Hospice and I guess the rest is history!

Teddy's Travels

At the airport



At Parc Guel



Visiting Hospital Paul - 600 year old hospital in Barcelona



Bags all packed



Barca Bear and a friend in the sun



OUR BEAR IN BARCELONA
Hospice Chaplain Thomas kindly added our well-travelled teddy to his entourage when he and his family holidayed in the Catalonia capital

ARE YOU GOING LOCO DOWN IN ACOPOLCO ?
HEADING FOR HONOLULU OR HELENSBURGH ?
HAVING A BREAK IN BARCELONA OR BALLATER ?
Take Teddy with you, take some photos and send them to volunteering@kilbrydehospice.org.uk for the next edition of your newsletter

VOLUNTEER THANK-YOU EVENT PICTURE SPECIAL



MY JOURNEY

In this feature, your Volunteer Newsletter will tell the story of a staff member or volunteer as they retrace their career path



A memorable, and somewhat surreal, moment happened when Siné was hanging up a chemo bag while on duty as a nursing manager in the Arab Emirates...she went into labour! Daughter Iman, now aged 19, was born followed by a mere 42 days of statutory maternity leave for the new mum.

We asked Siné MacDonald, a Compassionate Lanarkshire (CLAN) Co-ordinator about her journey
“I worked in Guildford and the surrounding area for 25 years, having looked after children in a private house in that area.

I did various jobs such as training, staff nurse, sister and manager of out-patient services before moving to a private company, delivering chemotherapy to patients in their homes in the south coast area of England and London.

I enjoyed it but felt that I needed a change and it was suggested by the same lady who had encouraged me into nursing that I should work in the Arab Emirates.

I applied, was accepted and eventually was nursing manager for two 34-bedded wards for about two years before moving over to the breast care centre, working for another couple of years before I decided to come back home.

“After a spell in occupational therapy on my return, which I didn’t really fancy, I applied to Kilbryde Hospice, was accepted...and the rest is history!”

Competition Time

This quiz is just for fun!
Test your knowledge or
have fun Googling
the answers



Staying on a musical
theme , have a go at
our Top 10 quiz



1. What country are Abba from?
2. Name all four members of The Beatles ?
3. Which year was the Live Aid concert?
4. And which group played the first song ?
5. Who played at both Wembley and Philadelphia on that iconic day?
6. Which musical film gave us the hit ‘You’re the One That I Want’, among others?
7. They were originally called The Brothers Gibb...what’s their name now?
8. What makes ‘the medicine go down’ in the classic movie, Mary Poppins?
9. Back in the day he was Thin White Duke...who is he?
10. Who sang Hotel California ?



See question one

NAME THAT TUNE !



“I’ll buy you a diamond ring my friend
If it makes you feel alright”



“When I was young I’d listen to the
radio waiting for my favourite songs”



“There’s a man I meet, walks up our street
He’s a worker for the council, has been 20 years”



“It’s a little bit funny, this feeling inside
I’m not one of those who can easily hide”



“Loving you isn’t the right thing to do
How can I ever change things that I feel”

CLUE: The answers are alphabetical order (without ‘T’
for ‘THE’... so from the top - B...C...D...E...F



TAKE A T-SHIRT

As our loveable tearaway TEDDY's diary is getting a tad busy, this is a shout-out to our volunteers to pack a hospice t-shirt when you go on your holiday...take two minutes of your time, snap a picture of yourself or fellow traveller with an interesting background (VERY IMPORTANT!) for a future edition of the newsletter.

At Disneyland Paris

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Sept
6

HAMILTON MARKETS - 1 volunteer from 10am to noon
1 volunteer from noon to 2pm
1 volunteer from 2pm to 4pm

Sept
6

TINTO HILL CLIMB from 8pm to 3pm

Need a few volunteers to help at bottom of the hill and to marshall the route

Oct
4

HAMILTON MARKETS - 1 volunteer from 10am to noon
1 volunteer from noon to 2pm
1 volunteer from 2pm to 4pm

Oct
26

MAGICAL MYSTEKAL MARKET - 2 volunteers from 10am to 1pm
2 volunteers from 1pm to 4pm
(at Holiday Inn, East Kilbride)

Nov
1

HAMILTON MARKETS - 1 volunteer from 10am to noon
1 volunteer from 2pm to 4pm

Nov
15

HAMILTON MARKETS - 1 volunteer from 10am to noon
1 volunteer from 2pm to 4pm

Nov
22

HAMILTON MARKETS - 1 volunteer from 10am to noon
1 volunteer from 2pm to 4pm

Dec
6

CHRISTMAS PARTY - NIGHT (at Eglinton Arms, Eaglesham) - 2 volunteers from 6pm to approximately 11pm