

# Compassionate Communities Annual Report

August 2022 – July 2023



Compassionate Communities help communities to support people through death, dying, caring and bereavement

# Project Overview



In August 2022, a Project Lead and Facilitators formed the new Compassionate Communities team, supported by a Palliative Care Consultant and the Director of People. We have worked in partnership with councils, charities, volunteers, community groups, places of worship, St Catherine's Hospice teams and other hospices and organisations, to encourage people to talk more about dying, support people who are bereaved, bust hospice myths and widen the reach of the Hospice across Chorley, South Ribble and Preston.

## Asset-Based Community Development

- Strengthen communities
- Community-led
- Responsive to need
- Partnership approach
- Treasure hunting

## Work Streams

- Talkin' Tables
- Bereavement Cafés
- Living Well Hub
- Compassionate Conversations training
- Last Days Matter training
- Dying Matters Week

## Outcomes

- ✓ Build confidence and resilience in communities to talk about death, dying and support bereaved people
- ✓ Number of people, community groups and volunteers educated
- ✓ Share resources
- ✓ Reach new partners and communities

A person living at home with a life-limiting illness may come into contact with statutory services up to 5% of any day. **“As a community, what can we do to occupy that 95%?”** Prof. Allan Kellehear, Sociologist & founder of the Compassionate Communities (CC) movement.

For more information, please contact [communities@stcatherines.co.uk](mailto:communities@stcatherines.co.uk)  
[www.stcatherines.co.uk/our-care/compassionate-communities](http://www.stcatherines.co.uk/our-care/compassionate-communities)

# Compassionate Communities Toolkit

Strategically, our work streams support outcomes of the Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Partnership's 'Dying Well' priority and NHS England's Ambition 6: Each Community is Prepared to Help (via the 'Big Room'/Central Lancashire End of Life (EoL) Strategy Group) and councils' priorities to reduce social isolation, reduce health inequities and improve residents' quality of life. This sets us up well for partnership work and collaboration. After initial discussions with partners, we realised we needed to develop an education programme and clear offer; a Compassionate Communities Toolkit to deliver the project.

## August 2022 to December 2022 Activity

### Discovery

Learning – Research – Connecting – Networking – Training – Mapping

### Engaging

Build relationships – Staff & Teams – Partners – Other Hospices – Community Leaders – Volunteers

### Strategy and Planning

The Big Idea – Roadmap – Pilots

### Design and Development

CC Toolkit – Comms & Marketing – Finding good practice

### Implementation

Trial – Assess – Review

# Chorley Pilot

In February 2023, we started our work in Chorley, to develop, test out and refine our new toolkit with partners.



Who	Activities	Outcomes	Feedback
St Laurence's Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop bereavement support as part of their new Wellness Hub, with Father Neil Kelley and volunteers</li> <li>Introduced the newly appointed Parish Nurse (0.4FTE) to our Community Nurse Specialist (CNS) team (pictured top right)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launched Chorley Bereavement Café in March, for a six-month pilot</li> <li>Wellness Hub launch in April 2023, with Sir Lindsay Hoyle (MP for Chorley &amp; Speaker of the House of Commons), Dr Sakthi Karunanithi (Director of Public Health, LCC), Bishop Philip North and Dr Lindsey Dickinson (Chorley GP &amp; Associate Medical Director for the Integrated Care Board)</li> <li>In August, handed over the Bereavement Café to two church volunteers and a Hospice volunteer to run</li> </ul>	<p>"It's done me more good coming here today, than seeing my GP."</p> <p>"It's nice being around people who are going through the same thing."</p> <p>"It was great to hear St Catherine's Hospice are going to be working more in the community. It's great that you're going to be more visible."</p>
Chorley Council <i>Social Prescribing and Communities teams</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Met in person</li> <li>Shared aims and signposted to services</li> <li>Helped to promote new Bereavement Café to GP surgeries and clients</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One GP surgery sent targeted texts to patients about the community listening events and Bereavement Café</li> <li>Bust some myths about hospice care and PEOLC (Palliative and End Of Life Care)</li> </ul>	<p>"I thought end of life (EoL) was just the last one to two weeks." (Social Prescriber)</p>
Chorley Together <i>Network to support third sector, facilitated and supported by Chorley Council</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speaker slot at quarterly network (online)</li> <li>Offered free Compassionate Conversations training through the network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivered Compassionate Conversations training to eight volunteers from a range of community groups/non-profits, at Chorley Town Hall, supported by the Council</li> <li>100% strongly agreed they felt more confident to talk about death and dying after, 100% recommended it</li> </ul>	<p>"More listening, less trying to fix things."</p> <p>"Always say something and offers of practical help should be specific not general."</p> <p>"Allow the bereaved person to have silences during conversations."</p>
Community Prevention & Engagement Team, Lancashire & South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Met in person</li> <li>Shared aims and signposted to services</li> <li>Co-produced two listening events about people's needs/wants, also supported/funded by Lancashire County Council (LCC) Community Projects Officer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chorley Bereavement Café was shaped by local people</li> <li>We attend the monthly NHS signposting clinic (online) with multiple partners, promoting hospice services</li> </ul>	

All funded from our finding external resource in our communities and partners





# Community-Led and Sustainable



## Bereavement Cafes

This year, we aim to create, develop and support three new sources of bereavement support. We work with busy community hubs and offer training for volunteers to encourage confidence and ownership. Following a six-month pilot, we aim to hand over the running of the group to volunteers for long-term sustainability.

Bereavement Cafes are a safe and informal space where anyone can come and chat, have a brew and talk to others about their loss, whether their loved one died recently or many years ago.

We are on track to handover two by autumn 2023, and plan at least one new Bereavement Café for Preston shortly after.

Area	Location	Run by	Launched
South Ribble	St Mary's Community Centre, Leyland	Two Hospice volunteers	February
Chorley	St Laurence's Church, Chorley	Two church volunteers and one Hospice volunteer	March
Preston	TBC	TBC	Oct/Nov

All funded from our finding external resource in our communities and partners, and led/supported by volunteers

## Talkin' Tables (Chatty Café Scheme)

This scheme created by befriending charity New Friends For You, began in Chorley in 2021, and has taken the Northwest and beyond by storm; reducing social isolation and loneliness 'one table at a time'. Many attendees are lonely due to loss, so it is also a form of community-based bereavement support.

Our weekly Talkin' Table in the Mill Café launched in January, choosing a time when the café is normally quiet (Tuesday mornings, 10am-11am). In spring, two Hospice volunteers took on running the table. Championed by the caring and compassionate Mill Team and Mill Volunteers, attendance is around 6-12 people a week and most are bereaved. *"Finding this has done me the world of good."*

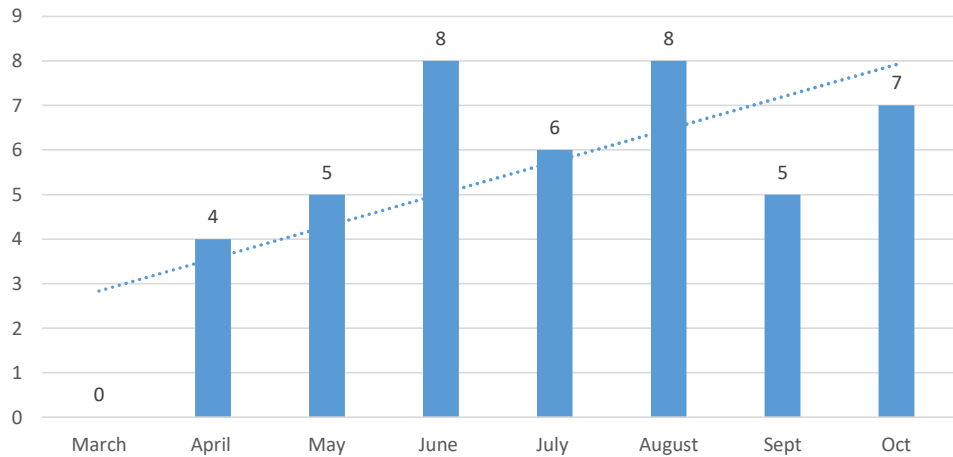


# Living Well Hub: Support and Advice

This monthly drop-in is at our social enterprise, the Mill Café. It offers free financial, legal and wellbeing advice to anyone living with serious illness in Central Lancashire.

- Most are seeking legal or benefits advice
- The vast majority seek advice from two or three Advisors
- Around two thirds of attendees are already engaged with the Hospice
- An increasing number of people are finding out about the Hub from external sources. i.e., in August, 7 of 8 were not known to the Hospice
- Sources include the Support Team (Carers' Group), Outpatients, In-Patient Unit (IPU), Hospice at Home team, CNS team, Hospice Newsletter, the Mill Cafe, a community centre in Leyland, a Mental Health Nurse (saw a poster on GP surgery noticeboard) and Lancashire Carers.

Chart to show number of attendees since face-to-face post-Covid relaunch, from March 2023 until October 2023



*"It's helped me this month and last month. I'm a bit embarrassed that I've been twice. Being face-to-face is great - it makes me feel comfortable and safe."*

Living Well Hub Attendees by Area



Unknown/out of area   Chorley   South Ribble   Preston

*"I'm so glad I came. I was at my wit's end. It's been great to talk to people who understand and can help. I feel less alone with it all."*

Organisations and Professionals who Support the Hub	
*Support available by phone/email	
Birchall Blackburn Solicitors	Hospice Support Team
Citizens Advice Lancashire West	Hospice Support Assistants (CNS Team)
Lancashire Carers	Hospice Knowledge Exchange Volunteer
Age Concern Central Lancashire	The Mill Café
Progress Lifeline	Anne Wray Financial Advisors*
Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service	Department of Work and Pensions*

The Hub is only possible with the generous support of partners giving their time & expertise

# Free Education

## Compassionate Conversations

This two-hour training session is to raise awareness of Compassionate Communities, talk about death and dying, and how best to support bereaved people. It is exclusively for volunteers, community groups and non-profits. To date, it has been delivered in person by two Compassionate Communities Facilitators in situ, in the following locations:

- St Catherine's Hospice volunteers, at the Hospice
- St Saviour's Church, Bamber Bridge
- St Laurence's Church, Chorley
- Chorley Together Network, at Chorley Town Hall

We are very thankful to St Elizabeth Hospice (Ipswich) and St Luke's Hospice (Plymouth), for gifting us this training.



Training	No. trained	% more confident to talk about death and dying	% more confident in bereavement support	% recommend
Last Days Matter	19	100%	N/A	100%
Compassionate Conversations	63	93%	89%	100%

## Last Days Matter

This half day session is open to anyone who wants to learn more about planning for the future, saying goodbye, recognising physical signs of dying and more. It's delivered in person at the Hospice by a Compassionate Communities Facilitator and a Clinical Educator and sessions run monthly.

We are very grateful to St John's Hospice (Lancaster) and North Lancashire Compassionate Communities for gifting us this training to support people without clinical qualifications to help look after their loved ones at home.



# Collaboration and Partnerships



**Partnership work achieves more together with limited resources and time.** We are delighted to work closely with:

- Three local authorities (two borough and one city council)
- Charities
- Community groups
- Places of worship
- Primary Care Networks/GP surgeries
- Social prescribers and social workers
- Public services  
(Lancashire County Council and Lancashire Constabulary)
- NHS Community Prevention Engagement Team
- Two local Health and Wellbeing Partnerships  
(was the Central Lancashire Partnership)
- Central Lancashire EoL Strategy group
- Lancashire Teaching Hospitals Foundation Trust
- Lancashire and South Cumbria Hospices Together

**Networks are fantastic shared spaces to signpost, promote and learn from each other.** We are active members of:

- Chorley Together
- South Ribble Together
- Preston Wellfest Network
- Preston Community Network
- Central Lancashire Bereavement Group Network
- Central Lancashire NHS Signposting Clinic
- Compassionate Communities Hospice Network
- UK Hospice Community Engagement Network Group





# Dying Matters Week May 2023

## Faith Leader Event / Diversity and Equality

16 Faith leaders from a diverse mix of religions and communities (Sikh, Muslim, Anglican, Bahá'í, Quaker, Pagan, hospital chaplaincy, prison service, etc.), were brought together by the Compassionate Communities team, to focus on death, dying and community support. The event included two workshop sessions, a tour of IPU, input from hospice teams (Outpatients, Support Team, CNS team) and networking opportunities. Feedback included:

- “The hospice is very welcoming and bright. Everyone seems very approachable and caring.”
- “I am wowed by the comprehensiveness of hospice care today.”
- “Lots of support options for patients to meet their physical and spiritual needs.”
- “Friendly and supportive to each individual and their needs.”
- “Looking after the patient and the family.”
- “Much longer term than I thought.”
- “An incredible service for those dying and their families.”
- 100% of attendees would like this to be an annual event.

## Launch of Last Days Matter Training

Our Communications Team helped us to raise awareness of this free training open to all, starting from June. Monthly sessions have been fully booked from July onwards.



## CNS team visits Adlington Hospice Shop

Hospice shops are community assets, raising much-needed funds for hospice services. Dedicated staff and volunteers are also sources of support, friendship and kindness. We wanted to trial an engagement opportunity for two local Community Nurse Specialists to answer questions about hospice services and be on hand to have informal discussions with the general public.

# Outcomes and Impact

INCREASING HOSPICE REACH AND MYTH-BUSTING	QUALITY TRAINING INCREASES COMMUNITY CONFIDENCE	DEVELOPING COMMUNITY-LED BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT	INCREASING SUPPORT FOR PARTNERS AND RESIDENTS
Active members of eight local, North West and UK networks, increasing the reach and awareness of Hospice services	[6 weeks after training] "It's helped raise the subject in a casual way to get the conversation started." Last Days Matter (LDM)	Created two new sources of volunteer-run bereavement support in communities	"We found it really helpful. We feel so much better for talking it through it someone." Living Well Hub
"It's all more community-based than I realised. I thought you only worked with inpatients and their families." Faith Leader	"Presentation was very professional with a great relaxing friendly atmosphere. We all felt at ease to ask questions and contribute." LDM	"I feel lifted after talking here today with you all." Chorley Bereavement Café	Formed a new Bereavement Network Group for Central Lancashire. Host and maintain list of local bereavement support
"I thought EoL was just the last one to two weeks." Social Prescriber	Compassionate Conversations education was rated average 5.75, out of possible 1-6 (1 is poor and 6 is excellent, Quarter 2, 2023)	"Talking to other people this afternoon has helped me more than anything else so far." Chorley Bereavement Café	Key contributor to NHS England Ambitions Framework, Ambition 6: Each Community is Prepared to Help

## A huge thank you to all our partners

A Compassionate Communities approach to developing community support and kindness at end of life and in grief, is only possible with the help of community groups, charities, volunteers, places of worship, local authorities, public services, health & social care professionals and St Catherine's Hospice Volunteers and teams (Support Team, Communications, CNS, Hospice at Home, IPU, the Mill Café, Trading, People Team, Outpatients, Community Engagement Team, Education and more).  
Special thanks to Dr Claire Capewell (Palliative Care Consultant) whose guidance, expertise and drive secured funding to create a CC team to deliver the project.

## Appendix 1: Networks and Partnerships

Area	Network	Facilitated by	Aims and overview	No. Members	Meetings
Chorley	Chorley Together Network	Chorley Council Communities team	1.5 hour networking and information sharing session for the third sector and to share support and Council initiatives.	80+	Quarterly online
South Ribble	South Ribble Together	South Ribble Borough Council Communities team	A network that evolved during the pandemic to support the most vulnerable residents in South Ribble. Now providing an opportunity for groups and organisations to share information about services and provide a spotlight on projects and initiatives	110+	Monthly in person
Central Lancashire	NHS Central Signposting Clinic	Central Lancashire Community and Prevention Engagement Team, L&SC NHS Foundation Trust	1 hour information sharing session. People can share information about activities / services, put out calls for help / partnerships or ask for ideas for a specific client and get signposting information	120+	Monthly online
Preston	Preston Community Network	Tony Dawber, Preston Community Network	Represents and supports the voluntary, community and faith sector organisations within the City of Preston	120	Quarterly in person events; weekly e-news
Preston	Preston Wellfest	Rosie Paterson, Lancashire County Council	Health and wellbeing network for Preston. Opportunities for members to learn from one another, share resources and identify any training or support needs. Raise public awareness of issues and the support available	50	Bimonthly meeting in person/online; weekly e-news
Central Lancashire	Central Lancashire Bereavement Group Network	Rolling chair. Reports to Central Lancs Palliative and End of Life Care Strategy Group	To inform strategic direction for the development of bereavement support across Central Lancashire and bring together support services to ensure appropriate support, signposting and advice; encourage collaborative working.	21	Quarterly in person or online
UK	Compassionate Communities Network Meeting	Judy Horne, St Luke's Hospice, Plymouth	Link Compassionate Communities teams in together, to share resources, best practice and peer support. Some are independent bodies; most are based in hospices.	15	Monthly online
UK	UK Hospice Community Engagement Network Group	Lollie Brewer, Cornwall Hospice Care	Link community engagement teams in together in hospices, to share resources, best practice and peer support.	40	Quarterly online

List of example members available on request

**AIM: our ambition is to get the people of Chorley, South Ribble and Preston comfortable with talking about death and dying, then be well supported when bereaved.**

**Need addressed:** Poor palliative and end of life care (PEoLC) and planning impacts families and friends. Not knowing plans/wishes can be stressful and difficult emotionally, as well as challenging for health & care partners, local authorities and community organisations who may end up dealing with a persons affairs that they know little about. Also, people often don't know what to say to someone who is grieving so end up saying nothing at all. We want to breakdown taboos around death and dying, and bust common myths of hospice care.

### Our themes

**1. Talking** - get the people of Chorley, South Ribble and Preston comfortable with talking about death and dying.

**2. Planning** – PEoLC will be personalised with advance care plans (ACPs), raising awareness of the importance wills, power of attorney, preferred place of death, funeral wishes, etc.

**3. Supporting** – peer-led bereavement support for people, their families and carers in our communities.

### Our key actions

1. Host community conversations to raise awareness of talking about and planning for dying with the public; includes training courses Last Days Matters and Compassionate Conversations.  
2. Work with hospice teams to optimise engagement opportunities with the public, to talk about PEoLC, hospice care, death and dying.

1. Offer a free advice service: Living Well Hub.

*MID TO LONG-TERM PLANS – 2024 ONWARDS:*

2. De-medicalise ACPs by encouraging people to complete them in a community setting.  
3. Support Public Health partners to promote PEoLC conversations/ACPs/preferred place of death. E.g. pilot MyWishes.

1. Map bereavement services to improve signposting and access to bereavement support information.  
2. Develop a bereavement cafe for each area, aiming to be sustainable and volunteer-led in the longer term.



### Our delivery plans

Our actions are linked in with the Central Lancashire Partnership's Place-Based 'Dying Matters' work stream, working in partnership with multi-agency teams and networks including borough councils, VCSFE sector, county council and public services. Our anchor institutions can support by providing community venues, assisting promotion and delivery. Our NHS colleagues can provide population health data and support linking to local GPs and the patient records systems. We are also aligned regionally with the L&SC Dying Matters strategy and Hospices Together.

### Knowing how we're doing

**Key measures – increased confidence to talk about death and dying:**

- Number of people having Last Days Matters training
- Number of people having Compassionate Conversations training
- People feel more confident to talk about death/dying/planning

**Key measures – increased bereavement support:**

- People feel more confident to support a bereaved person
- Pilot a bereavement café for 6 months, in all 3 areas