



**Kent and Medway**  
NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust

# volunteer voices

Your news bulletin from KMPT Voluntary services

## Welcome to Volunteer Voices...

This is summer edition of Volunteer Voices. Lots of changes have been happening across the service and we're excited to share some of these changes with you today.

Read on to find out the new team members, update on Webb's garden and news about our new KMPT Charity.



## Introducing our new voluntary services manager

We are delighted to welcome Deniz (Den for short) our new Voluntary Services manager who joined us in May.

"I have been working in the voluntary sector for over six years. I started in the NHS at University College London Hospitals as a volunteer services apprentice and really loved everything to do with volunteering ever since that very moment.

"My biggest passion has always been helping people to excel as individuals and working in the volunteering world has helped me do that. I love working on volunteer events, creating different projects and being on the frontline by meeting people and making sure to be that friendly face in person.

"I am really excited to bring my experience and passion to KMPT."



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## Breathing new life into Webb's

Webb's garden has a team of three maintenance volunteers; Stuart, Martin and James. Jonathan was a fourth member and still is but his role has since changed; Jonathan is now Webb's apprentice garden coordinator.

The team have used their skills and talents to fit a new kitchen in the hut, which was donated a few years ago, when Friends managed the garden. It's sat in the garage until this year, so we are thrilled with their efforts and contribution in making the hut a cleaner and more modern space. Below are the

before and after photos.

The new kitchen will help when we have groups using the garden during the summer, such as mothers and babies from the Mother & Infant Mental Health Service and the Dementia Poetry and Writing Group.

And the team didn't stop at the kitchen - they've also been busy renovating the main gates to Webb's garden. A fantastic job all round!



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## Welcome to our new KMPT charity lead

Mirelle joined earlier this year and has worked in the voluntary sector for over 30 years. She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in helping to support people living with ill mental health to access both NHS and charity mental health services.

Throughout her long career, Mirelle has worked as a Chief Executive Officer and Company Secretary for Kent based charities and been involved in both project management and fundraising for community gardens and play areas to reduce social isolation and improve wellbeing.

"I have a particular interest in creating and maintaining sustainable local areas for wellbeing for all ages to socialise, share skills, knowledge and local produce. As well as general fundraising, one of our first projects is focused on the Webb's spring garden project in Canterbury. This fabulous space is used for lots of therapy sessions, growing its own produce as well as a place to rest, relax and focus on wellbeing.

"Through the charity we are hoping to raise £6,500 to build a new pagoda and improve disabled access for patients, staff and volunteers, whilst carrying on the fabulous work already taking place in the garden."

You will be hearing lots more about KMPT's new charity and how you can get involved over the few months so watch this space.



**Donate to KMPT's new charity now!**

Our wonderful new charity will be launched officially later this year, but you are able to donate now! If you want to donate to the charity or the Webb's garden spring project here are the details:

Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Charitable Fund

Bank name: Nat West  
Sort Code: 607080  
Account number No: 10032711

**Would you like more information about how you can help?**

Email Mirelle at [mirelle.frost@nhs.net](mailto:mirelle.frost@nhs.net) or the charity's administrator at [kmpt.charity@nhs.net](mailto:kmpt.charity@nhs.net).

## Become a KMPT event volunteer

Voluntary services are looking for volunteers who would be interested in organising activities and events to help raise money for our new KMPT charity.

This may include short-term or one-off volunteering opportunities and could include organising quiz nights where your local pub match donations, sponsored runs funded by your employer or a cake party at home with friends.

We plan to be a sociable group who meet monthly to brainstorm ideas between staff, volunteers, friends and family.

If you would like to take part and become of our 'Event team volunteers' then drop us an email to [kmpt.voluntaryservices@nhs.net](mailto:kmpt.voluntaryservices@nhs.net).

A great example of our work with other trusts was during the Pride march last month in Canterbury.



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## It's a family affair!

Welcome to Sue and Ben (mum and son) and their fabulous Pets as Therapy dogs.

Sue has volunteered with KMPT since July 2019, visiting the acute wards at St Martin's with her dogs Grace and Violet. Sue's son Ben has just joined with his French Bulldog Zelda who recently had puppies!

Sue and Ben also support the open days at Webb's garden so that volunteers, staff and patients get the added bonus of some pet therapy as well as chats with Sue and Ben themselves.

We've received some lovely feedback from the wards at St Martin's about the benefits of visiting therapy dogs and volunteers:

"The PAT dog volunteers are always a welcome arrival on Heather ward. Our patients love spending time with the dogs and have always provided good feedback during community meetings. They are particularly beneficial for patients missing pets at home, those with low mood and those living with dementia. We have seen patients who engage very little with others get great joy out of seeing the dogs. It is a great mood lifter (for patients and staff!) and it can really change the atmosphere on the ward."

“Pets as therapy is such a valued intervention here at St Martin’s. The enjoyment and positive impact this has on our service users (and staff!) is lovely to watch. We are very grateful to have two very dedicated volunteers.”



## Claiming your travelling expenses?

We know that fuel prices have increased. In response to this, KMPT has agreed to increase the agenda for change motor vehicle mileage rates by 10p per mile. This will be effective from Friday 1 July 2022.

If you’re a registered, active volunteer who needs to claim travel expenses, please ensure you do this as soon as possible, as any claims that are older than three months can’t be processed.

Send your claims to [kmpt.voluntaryservices@nhs.net](mailto:kmpt.voluntaryservices@nhs.net) or post them to Voluntary Services, St Martin’s Hospital, Eastern & Coastal Area Office, Littlebourne Road, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 1AZ by the last working day of the month.



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## Day out at the Beaney is possible thanks to volunteer driver Pete!

Peter, one of our volunteer drivers helped a group of patients from Heather ward to attend the 'A Place of Safety' exhibition at The Beaney House of Art and Knowledge in Canterbury. The exhibition explores the relationship between mental health, artistic practice and the places that make us feel safe.

Drama therapist, Kate Richardson, had run a project that involved patients on the older adults' wards across KMPT in creating art work that was then displayed as part of the exhibition. She had the idea of being able to take patients to the exhibition and view their own work as well as the other works and exhibits. Peter drove the Woodchurch ward's minibus from Margate to collect staff and patients from Heather ward in Canterbury and then drove them into the City right outside The Beaney.

This all took place during Mental Health Awareness week, which is fabulous and also meant the patients were able to see the exhibition in person and not hear about it second hand. Eight patients visited the exhibition and it was lovely to see them enjoy themselves. It was especially fabulous for Kate to see a couple of patients who had not wanted to join in, initially, but did join in and take part.

Kate and her team send a massive thank you to Peter for driving the minibus and helping to make this a fantastic and successful trip. Peter saved the day as, without his help, transporting the patients would have been a real challenge.



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## Volunteering news roundup

- We're planning a volunteer celebration event, so please keep an eye out in your emails for more information on the date and the location. We really hope you can attend as it means you could meet more volunteers that do what you do but in other locations!
- Our new part-time volunteer coordinator for Dartford is joining in July. Her name is Helen and she has many years of experience working in the volunteering sector and is looking forward to joining.
- We will also be reworking our page on the KMPT website. If you would like to give any feedback or suggestions then please feel free to email [deniz.hassan@nhs.net](mailto:deniz.hassan@nhs.net) as we want it to be as accessible and easy for all to apply to volunteer with us.



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Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust, Farm Villa, Hermitage Lane, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 9PH

We'd love to hear what you think.

If you have any feedback about econnect that you would like to share, please contact the communications team at [kmpt.communications@nhs.net](mailto:kmpt.communications@nhs.net)



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