



## Support Group Meeting January

At the new venue, Newport Cricket Pavilion



Many thanks to our Secretary, Sharon for organising the evening entitled "Medication, Side Effects and How to Manage them". Here is a report of the evening she has produced.

This was the title of our first meeting of the year at our new venue, Newport Cricket Club.

The aims of the meeting were

- that members realise that they are not alone in overcoming Prostate Cancer and accept support from others
- that, some, including those who have had no treatment but are being monitored, can feel that things could be worse

- to gain some ideas to try to combat side effects

The most common medication/therapies were; surgery, radiotherapy, steroids and hormone therapy.

The most common side effects were; hot flushes, weight gain, breast enlargement, rashes, tiredness, muscle tone loss, migraines, aches and pains, incontinence, erectile dysfunction, diabetes and in many cases anger and depression.

Diet and exercise were possible ways to manage some of the side effects. Tamsulosin and decaf coffee were mentioned as ways to control 'waterworks' problems. CBD oil and sessions with a psychologist were tried to alleviate anxiety and depression.

We look forward to having Fran Alvarez, Senior Pharmacist, later in the year, to inform us further on the subject of medication that can be beneficial to people with Prostate Cancer.

*Sharon Merrick*

## Chairman's Chat

So the shortest month has been crowded with numerous events and issues.

Following my appeal last month, Trustee Gill Evans has offered to take over the role of Treasurer for the Group, with effect from March. Geoff Dolby, our retiring Treasurer, will assist where necessary and examine the annual accounts for the AGM. Many thanks Gill!!

I attended Newport Football Club's Match on Saturday 16th February to receive a donation, the Cancer Awareness Day on Saturday 2nd February and the Lunch event on Wednesday 20th February, more details later. Thanks to Gill for her Trustee of the month article and to Pat Dolby for his contribution. Special mention to Sharon for her effort in organising the January Members' meeting and to the Trustees who have supported the above events this month. Truly a team effort. Talk soon,

*Alan Taylor*

## Screening Tests

In a new policy paper, launched in the European Parliament with support from MEP's by Europa Uomo (European Urological association) it states that the European Parliament and EU member states should ensure that the EU Commissioner consider whether PSA-based screening should be implemented at EU level. At a special event to mark European Prostate Cancer Awareness Day (EPAD) the paper stated "The EU can no longer continue to overlook the most common cause of cancer in men in Europe".

And interestingly a recent screening programme involving 400,000 in North California showed a 64% fall in Prostate Cancer mortality following this screening.

*National Association of Prostate Cancer Support Groups. February 2019*



## Lunch at The Waverley

What a successful lunch this was, due to the attractive menu supplied by Tim of the Waverley Inn, the interesting quizzes supplied by Geoff and Angela, musical background by Alan (no, not me!) and an overwhelming support for the raffle run at the end of the event. Thank you all so much for your support, we filled the Inn with close to 50 present and raised a useful amount towards the support group's funds. Must do it again later in the year.

*Alan Taylor*

## Gynecomastia – Side Effect of Bicalutamide (Casodex) Hormone Treatment

I have been on Bicalutamide (Casodex) for the last 17 months as my only treatment. My PSA has gone down and a scan after 12 months on Bicalutamide showed that the cancer had shrunk considerably.

The only side-effect that I have suffered is Gynecomastia which started to appear after about 6 months. It is not a great problem and I have recently acquired a garment from "Love Running", (a shop in Newport) which compresses the chest and makes me look as flat chested as I was before, when worn under a shirt or sweater.

*Pat Dolby*

Here we are giving details of Trustee's experiences in the treatment of Prostate Cancer so that members of the Group can speak to them if they think that their own case has some relevance.



**Gill Evans**  
(Trustee)

My husband, Tim, was diagnosed with metastatic prostate cancer in July 2017 – about a week after his 71st birthday. He had been suffering prior to this date for a few months with waterworks problems before visiting the doctor. The doctor promptly arranged for a PSA test which came back the next day at 293!! The diagnosis was confirmed very quickly after he had a scan and then a biopsy at St Mary's Hospital.

Tim was given two hormone injections at the outset, followed by monthly injections at St Mary's. Jo and Katie, the Macmillan nurses, looked after him (and me!) very well and were always

ready to offer advice and answer our questions and concerns.

In March 2018 Tim went into St Mary's Hospital for a TURP operation. He should have stayed in for 1 – 2 nights, but due to complications, was there for 8 nights. He missed the "beast from the east" and it was quite eventful for me driving there to visit him!

After having monthly injections since July 2017, Tim's PSA has now levelled out to 0.7 which is a good result. He will continue to have his monthly injections and will be having another PSA test in March. After a blood test in summer 2018, Katie confirmed that there was no sign of the cancer in his bones and that the cancer was under control.

Tim in himself is now quite well. He plays bowls several times a week and we go out on country walks twice a day with our two miniature schnauzers. He does decorating, gardening and all the usual things. He gets a bit tired, but then he is not a young man anymore! I make sure too that he has a good diet, lots of fresh fruit and vegetables and not too much red meat.

*We have realised that all that can be done is to carry on as normal as far as possible and just take each day as it comes and hope for the best.*



## The New 'Daisy Bus'

On Wednesday 21st February, Vice-Chair Peter Hunt was glad to represent the Support Group at a busy and well-attended hand-over function for the splendid new 'Daisy Bus'.

The event took place at the Wessex Cancer premises in Lugley St., where the bus was parked during the afternoon while supporters and guests were able to admire the equipment and seating.

Apart from the various signage and logo's from contributing organisations, there was generous praise and recognition in comments and addresses by Wessex staff and other major benefactors.

The bus has a newly-appointed driver, and should be in commission on the Portsmouth to Q.A.H. run by now. Its service is secure until 2020.

*Peter Hunt*

## Football Event 16th February



We received an invitation from Peter Westhorpe of Newport Football Club to attend a match Newport v Romsey on 16th February. Roger, Geoff and I arrived at 2pm and set up our banners, Man, and display stall. Over 100 people attended and a number inquired about the next PSA testing day, taking Newsletters and outline details of the event in May. Hospitality was provided in the Director's box for us and at half time a £100 cheque was donated to the group. Many thanks to the Club and Peter, sorry about the result of the match!

*Alan Taylor*



## Cancer Awareness Day 2nd February

Held at the Riverside Centre on Saturday 2nd February, Roger and Geoff Troke set up the stall with our Little Man at 10am and were later joined by Roz and Mick Dennison. The location of this event was always going to lead to a limited number of the public making the effort to attend and so it proved, with only single figures making enquiries at our and the other stands. With a change of location and to a weekday I'm sure this would be a more worthy event.

*Alan Taylor*



## Future Events

**Sunday 3rd March:** Health Walk meeting at Bonchurch pond at 2pm lead by Paul Thomason. Weather permitting, see you there.

**Thursday 28th March:** Members' meeting at the County Cricket Club, Newport at 6.15pm. Speaker, Steven Howes, Age UK. How to avoid scammers.

**Thursday 25th April:** IOW Support Group ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: Your chance to have an input into the running of the Group and take part in elections of the Trustees. Refreshments will be provided on the evening together with, by popular demand, another Horse Racing Event. Mark your diaries now.

## Quote – Unquote

The worst part of life is waiting. The best part of life is having something worth waiting for.

You usually have to wait for that which is worth waiting for.