



Gort Cancer Support

Supporting People affected by Cancer

DECEMBER 2021, ISSUE 5



*Happy Christmas
&
A Safe Healthy New Year!*
from all in Hollyblue House



Hollyblue House

2021 has been another rollercoaster of a year for Gort Cancer Support. Keeping abreast of the changing requirements for safe practice, whilst ensuring that people affected by cancer could avail of the best possible support services was an epic challenge.

Sadly we are seeing an increase in demand for our services, but we continue to increase the range of services and activities on offer and look forward with positivity to the year ahead.



'Shear our Sully'

As we all know Gort Cancer Support receives no state funding and relies completely on grants, donations and fund-raising efforts by the community. We have always been blessed by the generosity of the people of South Galway and North Clare, but this generosity reached new heights with the Shear Our Sully campaign which kicked-off in July 2021.

John Sullivan is a legend around Gort. He's always been at the heart of the community, but following a number of health scares, coupled with the Covid-19 pandemic, John had retreated back from the public eye in recent times. Ever the showman however, he was not going to simply re-emerge - he decided he was going to do it in style and in the process raise funds for Gort Cancer Support.



He gathered a troop of merry men and women and set about a fundraising campaign the likes of which South Galway has never before seen. An initial target of €20,000 was quickly reached and there were rumours he wouldn't be happy until he hit €50,000! Donations were coming not just from South Galway, but from all over Ireland and beyond.

John and his team worked endlessly with many follow-up phone calls and 'gentle' nudges. Many businesses in South Galway contributed to the cause by running their own campaigns and adding to Sully's pot. By the end of the summer the Shear Our Sully campaign had raised a whopping €75,000! But it didn't end there.

We are delighted to reveal that the funds raised for Gort Cancer Support for the Shear Our Sully campaign is fast approaching

€100,000 !!!

We cannot express how grateful we are to John and his team for this extraordinary campaign and to the people of South Galway and beyond who contributed. As most people will know Gort Cancer Support purchased our adjoining building in 2019. This expansion enabled us to have the space to safely provide support during the Covid-19 pandemic. It has also allowed us to increase the services we are able to offer and the number of people that we are able to support.

We are delighted to say that the money raised from the Shear Our Sully campaign will greatly reduce the mortgage on Hollyblue House. We cannot emphasise how much this means to Gort Cancer Support and the positive impact it will have on the Support Centre and the services available to the people of South Galway and North Clare.



AGM

Gort Cancer Support held its AGM on the 5th October in Sullivan's Hotel, Gort. Our chairperson David Kelly began the meeting by welcoming everyone. This was followed by the Financial Report from Gerry O'Donnell of O'Donnell, Keane & Co, the secretary's report from Maura Leonard and finally the Chairperson's report from David. Election of Committee members saw the 2020 committee reelected and the meeting was closed with the chairperson concluding that it had been a 'difficult, interesting and rewarding year'.



Marie Keating Foundation Mobile Unit

We were delighted to welcome the Marie Keating Foundation Mobile Information Unit to our Support Centre on the 20th October. Elisha Molyneaux, their Community Information Nurse, was available all day to answer any questions regarding cancer awareness.

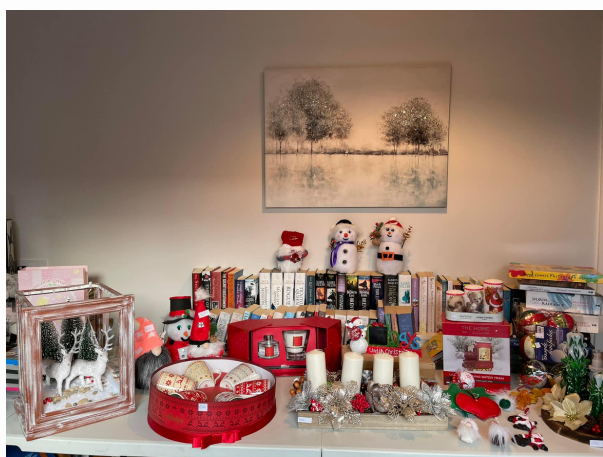


Knitting & Stitching

Our Thursday morning Knitting & Stitching Group have been very productive over the past number of weeks. Their creativity is outstanding, producing everything from Christmas Gonks, Santas and Snowmen to beautiful Christmas wreaths.

The group kindly donated a number of items to our Christmas Pop Up Shop for which we are very grateful. This amazing hand-knitted Santa was the star of the show!

We really appreciate the time, effort & skill involved in creating these fantastic handmade pieces.



Pop Up Shop

We held our Christmas Pop-up Shop over the weekend of 27th and 28th November.

With the great range of Christmas gifts and decorations, there were loads of bargains to be had and something to suit everybody's budget.

We had five very happy winners of our Pop Up Raffle.

Goodbye Sinead

24th November was a sad day in Hollyblue House as we said 'Goodbye & Good Luck' to Sinead Murphy as she finished her time with us. Sinead worked at Hollyblue since 2019 and always went above & beyond what was expected of her. The number of extra hours she gave to our Support Centre on a weekly basis is evidence of her commitment and dedication. Her cheerful presence and welcoming manner will be missed by all who met her in our centre. We wish Sinead every success and happiness for the future.



Charity Impact Award

The Charity Impact Awards returned for their fifth year in 2021, celebrating the work of charities, community groups and voluntary organisations that have changed Ireland for the better.

The past eighteen months has shown Ireland the irreplaceable role that charities, social enterprises, and community and voluntary groups play in society. They provide a vast range of services, supports, and opportunities to our communities, and have been a lifeline for many during the Covid-19 crisis

As this was our first time to enter, we were absolutely thrilled to have been shortlisted in the small organisation category.

Congratulations also to the four other shortlisted organisations in our category and huge congrats to the winners, Lifeline Inishowen.



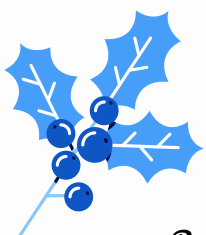
Fundraising

We would like to express a huge THANK YOU to each and every one of our supporters who took the time to fundraise for us this year. 2021 proved again to be a very difficult year for the Charity sector with the lockdowns and restrictions preventing many of our traditional fundraising options from going ahead.

However this did not stop the wonderful people of South Galway/North Clare from coming up with new and fun ways to raise much needed money for Gort Cancer Support. We've had everything from haircuts to bike rides, livestock to sea swims, tea parties to cake sales, walks, runs and hikes! Every cent raised goes towards providing vital services for people in our area who need it most.

And finally ...

It is important to acknowledge that this has again been a demanding year for all of us. Some of us have grappled with grief and illness, while many struggled with uncertainty and a changing work environment. Hopefully, this has been made more bearable by the knowledge that you are not alone, you are part of a community.



*"Be the reason someone smiles.
Be the reason someone feels loved and believes in the goodness in people."*

— Roy T. Bennett

