



# Gort Cancer Support

*Supporting People affected by Cancer*

MARCH 2026

ISSUE 22

## Welcome to the Spring edition of our quarterly newsletter.

As we step into the brighter days of spring, we are reminded of the warmth, resilience and generosity that define our community. This season brings a sense of renewal and hope, feelings that are reflected each day in the kindness we see at Hollyblue House. We are deeply grateful for the financial support that allows us to continue walking alongside those who need us, offering care, comfort and connection in meaningful ways.

As our days grow brighter, so too does our gratitude for everyone who helps make Hollyblue House a place of compassion and belonging for all. With that spirit of togetherness in mind, we are delighted to begin this update by sharing one of our most uplifting community events.

### **Wear Blue for Hollyblue 27<sup>th</sup> April - 1<sup>st</sup> May**

This spring, we invite our community to take part in our **“Wear Blue for Hollyblue” Fundraiser**, a simple, uplifting way to show solidarity with those affected by a cancer diagnosis while coming together in a spirit of kindness and connection.

Whether it's a splash of blue, a full outfit, a badge or your own creative twist, wearing blue is a meaningful symbol of hope and shared support. Schools, workplaces, clubs and individuals are warmly encouraged to get involved in whatever way suits them best.

You can take part by hosting a small event, organising a coffee morning at your workplace or joining us for our own Coffee Morning on **Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May**, where you can enjoy a fabulous array of tasty treats and a lovely opportunity to gather as a community.

We look forward to seeing your shades of blue and we would be delighted to receive any photos you're happy to share. Thank you for helping us bring comfort, connection and care to our community.



## Mindfulness & Meditation

Our Drop-In Mindfulness Sessions return on 13th April, led by Hilary Smyth (RGN, MSc). These gentle practices support emotional balance, calm and stress relief. All levels are welcome.

## Yoga for Gentle Movement

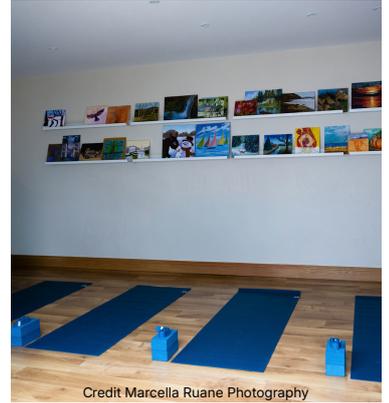
Yoga with Carol Casey resumes on Wednesday, 22nd April. Carol's supportive, restorative classes help improve mobility, ease tension and encourage relaxation.

## Tai Chi

Tai Chi continues every Friday at 11am, offering slow, flowing movements to enhance balance, reduce stress and support overall wellbeing. Suitable for all abilities.

## Chair Yoga

Chair Yoga takes place every Monday at 2pm, providing accessible, low-impact movement to support flexibility, mobility and ease of breathing in a comfortable, supported setting.



Credit Marcella Ruane Photography



## Tuesday Afternoon Art Classes

Led by local artist Mavis Gormally, these relaxed weekly classes offer a creative outlet for expression, confidence and calm. All materials provided; open to anyone affected by cancer.



## Friday Afternoon Arts & Crafts Group

A friendly, informal space to unwind, chat and enjoy simple creative projects.

No crafting experience needed, just drop in and enjoy the company.

## Upcoming Talks & Group Support

Our monthly Peer Support Group continues, with a Nutrition Talk planned for May to share practical guidance on nourishing the body during and after treatment.

Our next Look Good Feel Better workshop takes place on 20th April, offering skincare tips, pampering and social connection in a relaxed group setting.

## Counselling & Emotional Support

Our counselling team is available for anyone living with, recovering from or affected by cancer, including those who have been bereaved. Daytime, evening and online appointments are offered to accommodate individual needs.

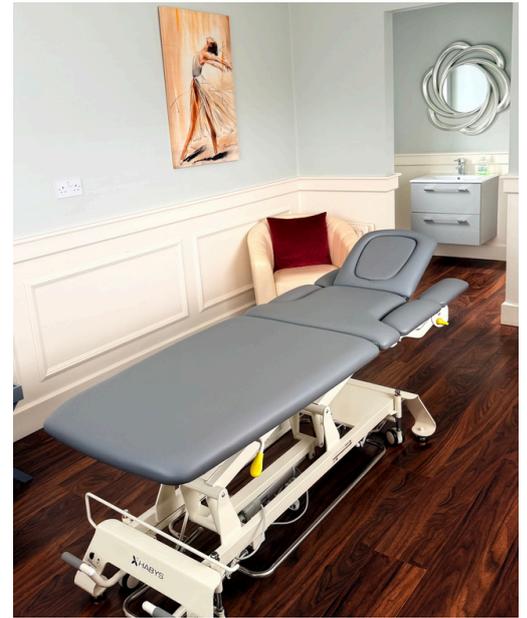
## Complementary Therapies

We continue to offer a range of gentle, restorative therapies designed to support relaxation and wellbeing.

Reflexology remains one of our most valued services. We welcome Allyson Whiriskey to our therapy team, working alongside Anne Loughrey to provide appointments on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Oncology Massage with Anne offers safe, adapted techniques to promote comfort and reduce anxiety during and after treatment.

Acupuncture with Fiona McDonagh supports relief from symptoms such as nausea, fatigue, pain and stress, offering a gentle approach to restoring balance.



## Volunteering at Gort Cancer Support



When a close friend was diagnosed with cancer, it reminded me of the comfort and peace I had found as a patient in a cancer support centre. Hospitals, doctor's offices, oncology departments, etc. all had their necessary and life-saving place in my own cancer journey. However, what kept me going emotionally was the difference between those sterile environments and the warm, welcoming atmosphere of a cancer support centre.

Volunteers are the backbone of these centres; without them many centres wouldn't be open. It is important to support 'local' for all kinds of reasons but especially when it comes to patients and their families in our own community.

So, I decided to give something back and volunteered at Gort Cancer Support. The cosy, relaxed atmosphere of the centre and its staff make the two hours per week pass quickly.

While I expected that the time would be spent 'meeting and greeting' those affected by cancer, helped by making a cuppa and preparing rooms for Arts and Crafts, Tai Chi, Cancer Survive and Thrive and other programmes, I wasn't expecting how this little block of time in my week would fill my heart with such pride and joy.

Thank you Mary and colleagues for giving me this opportunity to help those in our community affected by cancer.

*Marion Cox  
February 2026*

## Share Your Memories: Celebrating 20 Years of Gort Cancer Support (2007–2027)

As we look ahead to celebrating 20 years of Gort Cancer Support in 2027, we are beginning to gather the stories that shaped our journey. Over the past two decades, countless moments of compassion, courage and community have filled the centre and we would love to honour them as part of our anniversary celebrations.

If you have a memory connected to the centre, a special moment, an event, a kind gesture or a meaningful experience, we would be delighted to include it. Photos, short stories and personal reflections are all warmly welcomed.

Please send any contributions to **info@gortcancersupport.ie**, or contact us at **086 172 4500** if you would like to share a memory or learn more.

Every photo, every story and every reflection helps us tell the story of our community and the incredible people who have shaped Gort Cancer Support over the past 20 years. Thank you for being part of our history and our future.



## In Memory of Our Dear Colleague, Mary Mahon

This spring, we take a moment to honour and remember our much-loved colleague Mary Mahon, who passed away suddenly in January. Mary was an integral part of our team here at Hollyblue House, generously sharing her creativity, talent and warmth through the Arts and Crafts sessions she facilitated each Friday.



Her kindness, patience and quiet encouragement created a space where people felt welcome, supported and inspired. Mary had a wonderful ability to bring out the best in others and her dedication to the centre was felt in every thoughtful project she prepared and every gentle conversation she shared.

Her absence on Fridays is deeply felt by all of us who had the privilege of knowing her. Mary brought not only expertise and artistry to our community but also a spirit of generosity that will long be remembered.

We hold her family, friends and all who loved her in our thoughts and we remain grateful for the lasting impact she made here at Hollyblue House.