



the olive tree

supporting you through cancer

OLIVE TREE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

Annual Review - 2019/20

Registered charity No. 1157386

The Olive Tree Cancer Support Centre, Crawley Hospital,
West Green Drive, Crawley, West Sussex RH11 7DH



Social media links: [Webpage](#) [Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) [Twitter](#) [LinkedIn](#) [YouTube channel](#)

Olive Tree Cancer Support Group

The Olive Tree is a welcoming and trusted ‘safe place’ for its cancer patient community and for their loved ones, offering reassurance and relaxation at times of most need. Its empathetic and supportive team provide valued services, help and key understandings that enable and empower patients to meet challenges throughout their cancer journey.”

The charitable object of the Olive Tree Cancer Support Group is to **relieve the physical or emotional distress of persons with cancer and their partners, families, friends and carers of such persons through the provision of services.**

The Olive Tree operates from its Support Centre in Crawley and has an Information Hub in Horsham.

In 2019/2020 the Centre, despite the restrictions placed upon us due to the Covid-19 pandemic, provided services to more than 200 people including new 158 patients and carers. In the reporting year, the Olive Tree provided services to 16% of new cancer patients in Crawley but to only 3% in Horsham (see table below)

Our users come from many local areas beyond the town boundary, including Horley, Burgess Hill, Haywards Heath and East Grinstead. As such, it is estimated that we are potentially accessible by a total population of almost 500,000 people.

Supportive services

- we are a self-funded, independent charity, and our therapies and services complement the medical support that is given to cancer patients by the NHS. We do not

offer any medical treatments or advice.

- We had 1,853 centre visits in 2019/2020 (fall by 42% on prior year of 3,215 due to pandemic) with an average of 270 per month pre-lockdown.
- Complementary therapy is the most popular reason for a visit (39%), followed by counselling (17%).
- Our workshops are very popular, and we ran 20 during the year.

Area	New users at the Olive Tree 2019/20	New cancer cases (as of Feb 2020) ¹	Total area population (2019) ²
Crawley	44	530	112,410
Horsham	83	1,400	143,790
Other	31		
Total	158	1,930	256,200

¹ <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/cancer-info/cancerstats/local-cancer-statistics>

² Sussex Community Foundation Insight reports, October 2020



2020 User Satisfaction Survey

In February 2020 we conducted a new user satisfaction survey. Over 96% of respondents scored the quality of their treatment as excellent (the remaining 4% scored it as good).

“ *This is a wonderful service and I for one would have been lost without you. Always a kind word and good advice/ treatments*

“ *I find the Olive Tree a very comfortable environment where I can relax with people in a similar situation and try different therapies*

Impact of Covid-19

- In March 2020 we were forced to drastically review our operations to meet UK government guidance and restrictions. The Centre in Crawley was made Covid-19 secure and we remained open welcoming 55 new users from March to August 2020.
- New ways of working were agreed and swiftly implemented.
- Services were transferred to phone and online video platforms (Skype and Zoom) as appropriate. Overall, we provided 43 sessions of remote support between April and July 2020.
- Our Crawley centre remained open for wig fitting on a strict self-service appointment basis. The staff and volunteers also helped with shopping and medication pick-up for some of our patients.
- Our Horsham services were constrained by lockdown restrictions but throughout the pandemic the phone was manned during office hours.

I am extraordinarily grateful for the Olive Tree's support and care over the many years since my original diagnosis: it feels like having an entire football stadium full of support! I haven't felt this any less during the pandemic. I have taken part in several online meetings of the particular support group that I am a member of. It was amazing how quickly the technology ceased to be a barrier and we were quickly back to our normal friendly chatting, sharing our experiences and catching up with how we had adapted to the 'new normal', and the

changes to our treatment during lockdown. It was great to see everyone at least on a screen and see how we were all doing - and share little glimpses of gardens. The technology meant that one of our members who is usually at work and unable to make it to the meetings was able to join us in her lunch hour, so an added bonus. Like everyone, I am so looking forward to a post Covid-19 world, but it's great that that wonderful support remains very much available, even in a different format.

KR, Patient. July 2020



Achievements and performance

2019/2020 YEAR in NUMBERS

We are delighted to present our key data covering the usage of the centre

User engagement



1,853

centre visits
(3,215 prior year). Fall by
42% due to Covid-19

New user profile



158

new users welcomed by
the Olive Tree

Donors, fundraising and impact of donations



17

major grants and donations
(value £600-£5k each) received

Staff and Volunteers



3 part-time staff at
Crawley

2 full-time staff at
Horsham
(2 staff working during
lockdown)



270 visits per month
pre-pandemic

39 visits per month during
pandemic (April-July)



17

different cancer types



562

JustGiving donations (increase
by 59% on PY)



66 volunteers

(29 have been at the OT
over 5 years)



10

different types of services
provided



64% of users

Are over 50 years old



96%

of respondents from 2019/20
user satisfaction survey rated
the quality of their treatment
at the centre as



4

Awards and nominations
received in 2019/2020

Excellent

For further information and detail please see
our Annual Report 2019/2020

From Our Chairman, Graham Nicoll



Our priority continues to be to support our service users, both existing and new.

In March 2020, we undertook a major initiative to ensure we continued to offer significant levels of support to members during the time of the pandemic, adhering to government guidelines. The feedback from users over this period has been extremely positive. On behalf of the Trustees, I would like to thank our staff and volunteers for their amazing work.

We rely on donations, legacies and grants for our income. Despite the challenges raised by COVID-19, we have managed to sustain our income through the concerted efforts of our supporters and staff, in addition to receiving a significant bequest. This total funding in combination with strong financial management has allowed the Olive Tree to end the year in a financially robust and sustainable position.

We anticipate, as restrictions are removed, that demand for our services and support will grow further and so will focus our efforts to ensure we are ready by increasing the services offered.

Our Centres are open to everybody regardless of background. In addition to expanding what we do, we will undertake new initiatives looking at who we reach, particularly focusing on minority ethnic and underprivileged communities.

We are currently planning further expansion in Horsham by opening a new Support Centre to make it easier for those new and existing cancer patients who live closer to Horsham to benefit from our expert care services.

Funding these increases in capacity represents a huge challenge that we are determined to meet. We are confident of doing so given the amazing commitment and generosity of our supporters, both existing and new, to whom we will always be indebted.