



We are very grateful to the Nineveh Charitable Trust for their generous grant of £1,000, received in 13th December 2019. We can confirm that this grant has been restricted to the cost of running our Social and Therapeutic Horticulture (STH) programme and has now been spent in full.

STH is part of our 'Living Well' strategy, aimed at helping people living with a terminal illness to make the most of life, through therapies which increase their wellbeing, quality of life, and resilience.

In January 2020 the STH schedule for the year began to unfold with a series of sessions carefully designed to achieve optimum outcomes demonstrating improved quality of life and wellbeing. Unfortunately due to the Coronavirus Pandemic we had to stop group holding group sessions in March whilst we reviewed how the STH programme could be carried out in accordance with local procedures and following all Government and internal guidelines.

STH During the Covid-19 Pandemic

- For a small number of patients we arranged for a 'doorstep delivery' of a planter with plants that had been grown up from seeds. The seeds were sown by the patients during a 'Therapies Through Nature' session held in early 2020. The response was very positive, with several patients sending in photographs. One relative, whose mother had sadly died, expressed appreciation of receiving the planter or the plants her mother had sown during the Therapies through Nature session.
- Our therapists were in regular contact with patients and encouraged them to make use of their outdoor space and build upon what they had learnt in the group sessions. Several patients continued to work with their family members to create areas in their own gardens which they could enjoy.
- As restrictions changed we were able to restart sessions (with adjustments) during the summer months. Whilst were unable to hold group sessions er were able to pilot 1:1 sessions with out-patients. During these sessions we encouraged both the patient and carer to participate and feedback was very positive.
- We were also able to hold a small amount of 1:1 Sessions on the In-Patient Unit and feedback from both the patient and nursing staff was very positive.

Outcome measurements for patients who have attended a STH or Therapies Through Nature session consistently indicate a lowering of distress, with participants measuring their own wellbeing both before and after sessions.

Verbatim comments from attendees include:

- *'Forgot my backache. Pain –it's gone. Release. The pain has gone.'*
- *'It's taken the aches away. The aches have disappeared.'*
- *'O I feel so much happier...this table – so beautiful'*
- *'Lovely' Fairly incredible- so much more relaxed and happy*
- *'Incredible' I came here an emotional wreck-that's true...I knew coming here would change things- thank you so much – I am quite different. I thought I was dying...at the end, but now – so different. Thank you. This will change my life for ever.'*



We are hopeful that we will be able to restart the group STH sessions later this year subject to Government guideline.



Thank you for your support with this project, from all of us at Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice Care.