

# Martha NEWS



Autumn 2015



## The joy of music

A language everyone can share



The courtyard blossoms



Christmas is coming . . .



Fundraising can be fun!



I recently had a visit from a very dear and wise friend of over 30 years standing. 23 years ago her husband was unwell for a few weeks with what was initially thought to be flu and then meningitis. Sadly the end result is that he has been in a variety of homes and is now in the home for Neuro-disability in London and, like a number of our residents, lacks capacity and has very little communication.

During her stay my friend asked to visit Martha and she told me that she just loved our homes. I reflected on this for some time. I think quite rightly we work with regulators, local authorities, hospitals and many different bodies in an effort to constantly improve the lives of our residents, but if all this is not done with the right heart then it is not worthwhile. My wise friend, after experiencing the care industry for over quarter of a century will have seen that at Martha we have that heart.

**George White**  
CEO Martha Trust

# Together we make a family

The courtyard at Mary House is a wonderful outside space with the ever popular ability swing centre stage and the chickens happily clucking in their coup in the corner. Although on a fine day laughter and giggling can often be heard as the residents enjoy their turn on the swing, there has always been something missing to make the experience of being outside special.

That was until Aaron Hosannah and his colleagues arrived with their spray cans and completely transformed the courtyard wall into a stunning country landscape, featuring some of our residents' favourite animals.

Aaron is a talented graffiti artist who was born in the UK but grew up in New York. Since his return to England Aaron has been delivering graffiti commissions, working for companies such as Red Bull and Samsung. He also delivers workshops for various organisations, including local schools.

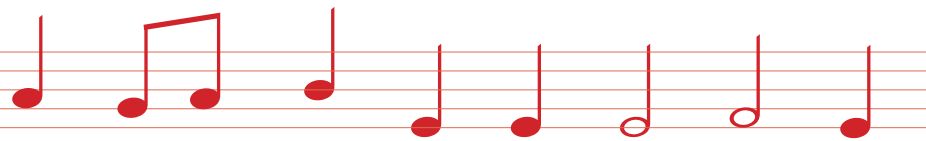
Now Mary House is benefitting from the talents of Aaron and his team with a project entitled 'My Life, My World'. Over a period of several weeks, residents and staff at Mary House have watched as once plain and uninspiring spaces have been transformed, starting with white primer and building to vivid scenes that bring beautiful landscapes into the home.

Whilst the mural in the courtyard transports us to the rolling English countryside, time spent in the hydrotherapy pool is now against the backdrop of a beautiful beach complete with Hastings pier, beach huts and an ice cream van.

It has been an absolute pleasure to welcome Aaron and his team to Mary House. They have shown great sensitivity to our home environment and a real understanding of what would inspire both the residents and staff. Their art has created a real buzz and we are delighted with the results of their hard work.



# Music is our language



**On the completion of my 11+ exam the various bets between some of my family members led to me being in the very fortunate position of having £150 to my name.**

Ten years old, with the most money I could ever remember having, I decided on buying a set of DJ equipment until my Dad managed to convince me otherwise. I remember my utter disappointment of arriving home with my new guitar. I felt like my golden opportunity to become a DJ superstar had been dashed.

Very soon after this tragic day an event took place which was to revolutionise my thoughts towards the guitar and music as a whole forevermore. As we all sat round as a family and watched the video taken of my sister Charlotte's

music therapy session my world was suddenly turned upside down. A monumental shift had taken place in my mind.

Charlotte was 13 years old at the time of this video being recorded. Up until then I had witnessed many negative manifestations of her Rett Syndrome, including regular tonic-clonic seizures, self harm, sleepless nights full of tears and crying. No matter how much love we as a family projected onto Charlotte it often proved not enough to resolve her mountain of frustrations. When my younger brother Daniel was asked as a child if he could wish for anything in the world, his reply was simply, "I wish I could understand Charlotte's language".

Well in music I had now found a language with which I could converse and console my sister in a way I had never been able to achieve before. With the guitar being such a portable instrument it enabled me to perch on the floor and practice with my sister right by my side. She still is my favourite person to play music to as I love watching for her seemingly endless array of responses to its emotive sounds. I have no doubts in my mind that these shared musical journeys took our relationship to new heights as she taught me how musical experiences can transcend words and

instead take us straight to the heart of emotional response such as laughter, tears and dance.

Before long my fascination with music led me to volunteer at her school where our Mum also worked. She helped me organise concerts for the pupils as well as accompanying the music therapist in her one to one

*Charlotte has lived at Martha in Frances House since 2006*



sessions. I began to see how music could reach out to anyone no matter what disability they may have. I took these experiences with me to University and ended up using music therapy as the main topic for my final dissertation.

Life after university has involved teaching in special needs education, performing in various care homes, busking across the UK and Europe as well as now being a full time professional musician. In my mind all of this has stemmed from lessons Charlotte has taught me and continues to teach me. An ironic recent development is that she now regularly goes out clubbing and

dancing all night along to the DJ's mixes – maybe I should have got the DJ decks I so wished for after all?

To sum all of this up I truly believe music is our first language as humans and is the reason why it can communicate emotional messages to anybody regardless of nationality or level of cognitive ability. I chose not to use the term 'disabled' in that last sentence as people are only disabled if barriers disable them from doing or experiencing things.

Music is truly an enabler. It enables us to communicate without barriers, to express ourselves in ways that words cannot and thus produces a relationship that is forever in blossom between my sister and me.

*Thomas Abrahams*



# Martha Golf Day

The Martha Trust Golf day in association with John Shepherd was a fantastic success raising over £6,500.



Despite a dubious forecast, the weather held all day with the heavens finally opening after the last golfer left the course.

We would like to congratulate all the winning teams and thank – our committee who gave up their time to help us put together the event, our sponsors Kreston Reeves, Hutchings Timber

and Barclays, and everyone who took part, not least Walmer & Kingsdown Golf Club for the amazing venue and John Shepherd for hosting such a great event.



Around 70 people joined us on the night and we raised just over £3,200 for Martha! Wine Master Clive Barlow from Press Wine Services did a great job trying to instil knowledge about wine to our guests and musician Thomas Abrahams really set the tone for the evening.



# Sandwich Prom

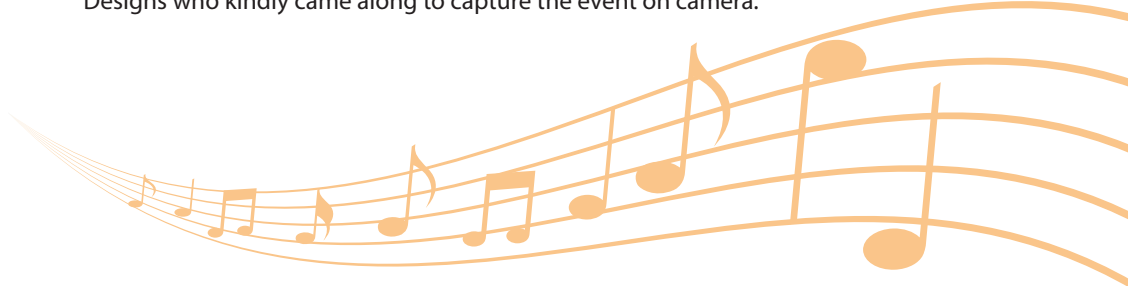
Glorious sunshine greeted guests joining in the fun at the Sandwich Prom held at the magnificent Salutation Gardens. There was a diverse line up of local musicians, including P&O Ferries Choir, Steve Aiston, The Victory Wartime Band and tribute act – Meetloaf who was joined by Steph & Dom for a surprise duet.



The event was a sell out and thanks to the generosity of everyone who came on the day and our kind sponsors – Discovery Park, A Pearson Growers, Puma Generators and East Kent Plumbing & Heating Solutions, it raised over £9,000 towards the work of Martha.



Special thanks also to Steph & Dom and all their team for giving up so much of their time and letting us use their home and for their continued support, and Alan Langley of Dover Designs who kindly came along to capture the event on camera.



# How to support Martha this Christmas

## Christmas Cards

We have two packs of assorted Christmas cards available this year each costing £3.25 per pack.

### Christmas Designs

packs of 16 (four cards of each design)

They come in four designs based on popular Christmas icons – Holly Berry Wreath, Figgy Pudding, Little Tree and Robins Perch.

Individual card dimensions  
100mm x 100mm



## Christmas Carols

packs of 20 (five cards of each design)

This pack comprises of four designs depicting well-known carols, While Shepherds Watched, Once in Royal David's City, Little Town of Bethlehem, We Three Kings

Individual card dimensions  
75mm x 105mm

To purchase Christmas cards please complete the Christmas Card order form or order online at [www.marthatrust.org.uk/shop](http://www.marthatrust.org.uk/shop) or call 01304 610448.

## Light Up a Life

### ... and make a donation to Martha this Christmas

Personalise a Light Up A Life star with a message to celebrate someone close to you, and we'll hang it on one of our Christmas trees.

To Light Up a Life please complete a Light Up A Life order form or donate online at [www.marthatrust.org.uk/lightupalife](http://www.marthatrust.org.uk/lightupalife) or call 01304 610448.

A big "Thank you" to all those who have supported our Light Up a Life campaign; since it started five years ago it has raised over £5,000.

£5,000 could pay for an ability swing for the residents to enjoy in the garden or for a new hoist for the homes.

## Countdown to Christmas at the Martha Trust Christmas Fayre

We're holding our Christmas Fayre at the magnificent Guildhall in Sandwich on Saturday 21 November 2015.

There'll be a huge array of seasonal treats, gift ideas, arts and crafts and Martha Trust goodies plus a chance to meet the man himself, Father Christmas.

Come along and browse the stalls, enjoy a cup of coffee and some homemade cake and sing along to your favourite Christmas Carols as we get you in the mood for Christmas.

**However you choose to support Martha this Christmas it will help to transform the lives of people with profound disabilities.**

## Christmas raffle

We have some fantastic prizes this year, tickets cost £1 each and are available individually or in a book of five; it's a great way to support Martha this Christmas. Encourage friends, family and colleagues to buy tickets too.

To purchase tickets please complete the stubs of the ones enclosed with the newsletter and send them along with payment by cheque to:

Martha Trust  
Homestead Lane  
Hacklinge  
Kent  
CT14 0PG

or call our fundraising team on 01304 610448 or email [fundraising@marthatrust.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@marthatrust.org.uk)



A great big

# "Thank you"

From everyone who lives and works at Martha we would like to say a great big Thank you for all the support you have given us in the past six months and here are just a few of the people we would like to thank:

Our great team of runners who represented Martha in the 2015 Virgin London Marathon, consisting of Colin, Ellen, Jeff, Simon and Stephen. They not only gave up their time to train and run for us they also raised an incredible £17,437 in the process!

George Sutcliffe for raising £450 through his annual coffee morning.

Canterbury and District Roundtable no 234 – for raising £3,000 for Martha through various fundraising events including a Ball at Leeds Castle and Fireworks display at Merton Farm.



The team of volunteers from Hastings Direct who have spent a day in the garden at Mary House, weeding, tidying and cutting back.

Persimmon Homes who gave a £1,000 to our Holidays at Home.

Maidstone Freemasons, Bearsted for raising £610

Alan Langley for his camera skills in helping to capture life at Martha and supporting our fundraising events.

Miles and Barr estate agents who entered a team in the KM Dragon Boat race raising £640 for Martha.



Sir Roger Manwoods school for making us their Charity of the Year and raising £576 for us to date through their DoFE students taking on a 50 mile bike challenge.



Dover Fire Station presented Martha with a cheque for £400 in May, money they raised in the run up to Christmas through carol singing and collections in Dover. In total they raised £8,000 for good causes.

Everyone who voted for Martha in Dover Express Heart of the Community Awards, Sainsbury's Local Charity of the Year and Nationwide's Community Match scheme.

## Diary dates 2016

German Music Festival	12th March
Golf Day	April
Sandwich Prom	17th July
Rome or Bust	3-6th September
Golf Day	October
Christmas Fayre	November

To find out more about our events or to book online visit [www.marthatrust.org.uk/events](http://www.marthatrust.org.uk/events) call **01304 610448** or email [fundraising@marthatrust.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@marthatrust.org.uk)

## Martha News online

We keep our production costs to an absolute minimum, but you could help us save even more money by signing up to our newsletter by email.

Simply email us at [fundraising@marthatrust.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@marthatrust.org.uk) quoting 'Martha News' in the subject line.

You will then receive your newsletter in pdf format, so it won't even clog up your inbox!

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FRSB *give with confidence*



# Music 4 Martha

Music is able to cross all boundaries and connect people regardless of language or level of disability, and is an important therapy we use at Martha. So that's why we are launching Music 4 Martha.

We want to encourage you to bring friends, family and colleagues together through music in aid of Martha. Whether it's supporting one of our organised music events in 2016 or holding one of your own from a carol service, concert or to a vinyl night.



To find out more about Music 4 Martha and how to get involved visit [www.marthatrust.org.uk/music4martha](http://www.marthatrust.org.uk/music4martha)



Our seven intrepid teams made it back from Barcelona, and have raised over £25,000 in sponsorship to date.

A huge thank you to all of the participants and their families and friends for helping us raise such a significant amount towards supporting people with profound disabilities.

The support of our main sponsors DFDS Seaways, Kent Community Foundation in association with Ward and Partners, Sota, Systems Technology and Unipet ensures as much of the teams' sponsorship as possible goes towards the work we do.