

# Martha NEWS



Spring 2015



## Clare's story

What a difference a year makes



Pool resources



A marathon effort



Raised voices raise money



# What a difference a year can make . . .

## Clare's story



**Our daughter Clare has been a resident in Martha House, Deal, for just over a year now and this is her story so far.**

I was recently visited by the parents of one of our residents who sadly had been in hospital in London with what was perceived as a difficult medical problem. The drama had started when their daughter was taken into hospital locally. As standard practice we appreciate the communication challenges faced by our residents and so wherever possible we ensure they have a staff member with them at all times.

The parents came to see me because they said that one of our staff had saved their daughter's life. This was because the Support Worker in question had been in the local hospital at the time the medical staff were making decisions. She had been able to contact the parents and inform them so that they knew what to expect and how to deal with subsequent phone calls from the hospital.

A small story but it just reiterated to me how thoughtful and compassionate Martha staff are. I shouldn't be, but I am sometimes amazed at the things they do and how our staff, parents and of course residents, form as fine a family unit as anyone could not only wish for, but really want to join!

**George White**  
CEO Martha Trust

She suffers from Neuro-Behcet's Syndrome, a rare disorder of the immune system and, as a result, she is totally blind and has both physical and learning disabilities; she has very complex care needs. Despite this, Clare responds readily to stimulation by her carers and has a lively sense of humour.

In November 2012, at the age of 38, Clare became a resident in a beautiful new care home in the West Midlands. We thought this would be Clare's 'home for life', but how wrong we were. It became one of the worst years of our lives; our complaints about poor personal and medical care went unheeded. Despite two successive unfavourable CQC reports, things did not improve and it gradually became clear that we had to find somewhere else for Clare to live. Two other families were having major problems too – this meant that a third of the residents eventually had to leave.

In October 2014, whilst we were holidaying with our elder son who lives near Maidstone, we decided to visit Martha Trust. We felt then, and still feel, that this was the right place for Clare; despite the distance, we knew we would have to move.



We can now look back over our (and Clare's) experiences since she became a resident in Deal and we, her parents, became members of the 'Martha Family'. The contrast with her former home could hardly be more marked. Perhaps the most important difference is that the contributions of parental experience to the welfare of the residents and the guidance that they can give to the nurses and carers are fully recognised. The network of channels of communication – family forums, parent representatives and the readiness of staff and managers to listen and to discuss problems as they arise – are in stark contrast to the total lack of co-operation we all endured in her previous home.



Clare is well and happy; over the past year changes have been made to accommodate her complex needs and we see steady progress in developing her skills and interests in a caring and loving environment.

This year has also seen the introduction of the Active Support programme for each resident; this is developing very well and notable achievements are continually being made.

There will always be changes

we would like to see made, and of course shortage of funding is the ongoing obstacle to making the changes we feel would make a difference. These residents have so much to give and deserve the very best that society can provide for them.

As for ourselves, we have become residents of nearby Sandwich, which is a friendly and welcoming town. We feel most privileged and fortunate to be involved in the many activities and interests of Martha Trust. At long last, we feel that Clare's future is secure and that we are beginning to be able to enjoy life once more.

*Sue and Brian*

# MORE THAN JUST A POOL

## In 2009 we were lucky enough to open our new state-of-the-art hydrotherapy pool at Mary House.

Made possible through a successful fundraising campaign, this facility – with its high-tech sound and light system – provides a great way for the people we support to relax and have fun. Those of our residents who enjoy the pool use it several times a week and sessions are eagerly anticipated. There

is always much laughter and splashing and parents are welcome to join in, as being in the water gives them a unique opportunity to have physical contact with their children free from the confines of their wheelchairs.

The physical and emotional benefits of hydrotherapy are well documented and date back to the Ancient Greeks and Romans. As well as the weightlessness and freedom that being in the water provides, hydrotherapy is the perfect way to deliver

physiotherapy for people with profound physical disabilities. It is proven to:

- ◆ Improve flexibility
- ◆ Maintain and strengthen muscles and tendons
- ◆ Allow independent movement for people who are not normally able to do so
- ◆ Provide the opportunity to stand and walk with minimal support
- ◆ Improved functioning of the digestive system

Now we are taking this form of therapy to the next level as we introduce



tailored aquatic therapy into the pool sessions, thanks to the guidance of physiotherapist Vicky. Each person will have their own personal programme based on a full assessment by Vicky and the care team of their physiotherapy needs.

Working together, individual goals will be agreed and support workers will be given the training and guidance to help them carry out the programme.

Vicky will be working in the pool on a 1:1 basis with each resident and their support worker for a minimum of three sessions to develop specific activities. She will then provide regular programme reviews to make sure everyone is getting the most out of their pool sessions.

**But we won't forget the most important thing, just having fun!**

## Virgin London Marathon April 2016

We are pleased to announce that we are now accepting applications to run for Martha in the 2016 Virgin London Marathon. We are looking for keen fundraisers who are up for a personal challenge in aid of a great cause.

If you are interested in running in aid of Martha or know someone who is then you can apply at [www.marthatrust.org.uk/virginlondonmarathon](http://www.marthatrust.org.uk/virginlondonmarathon)

All runners are asked to pledge to raise £1,500 to help us to transform the lives of people with profound disabilities.

2016 will be our fourth year of having gold bond places and our runners in 2015 will put us on course to have raised over £20,000 in just 3 years.



Barney Harrison running in support of Martha at last year's event

## Become a regular donor



At Martha we provide a safe, loving environment with state of the art equipment and highly trained staff. We offer a range of therapies including hydrotherapy pools at each of our homes and activities to encourage the people we support to live life to the full.

All of these things are only made possible by the kind donations we receive each year from our supporters.

At the heart of this are our regular donors. By choosing to support us on a regular basis, no matter how much or how little you feel you are able to give, a regular donation to Martha makes a real difference to the work we do.

To become a regular donor visit [www.marthatrust.org.uk/regulargiving](http://www.marthatrust.org.uk/regulargiving) or complete our regular donor form enclosed with your newsletter.

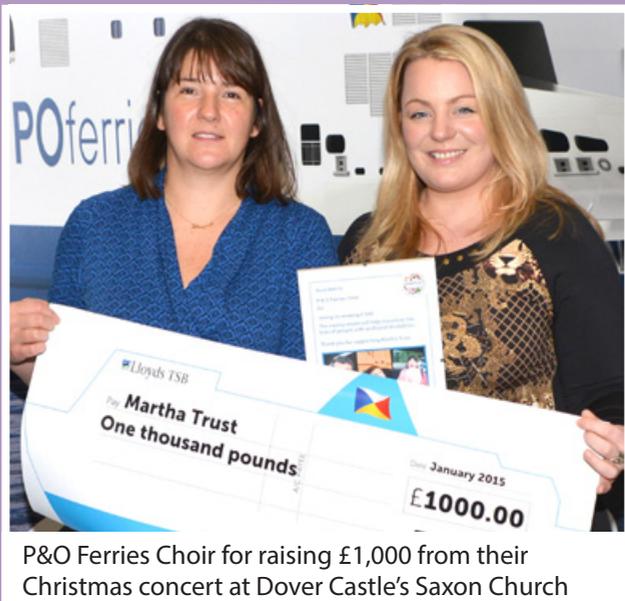
A great big

# "Thank you"

From everyone who lives and works at Martha we would like to say a huge 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:

To all our Monte Carlo Madness participants and their supporters, and our main sponsors – Sota Solutions, Systems Technology, Unipet, Ward and Partners in association with Kent Community Fund and My FerryLink – together you raised over £24,000 in sponsorship

Everyone who bought our raffle tickets, Christmas cards and Light up a Life, helping us to raise £3,000



P&O Ferries Choir for raising £1,000 from their Christmas concert at Dover Castle's Saxon Church



See the difference your donations have made

The dedicated volunteers from St George's Church – in particular Lynne Walton, Ann Price Lyndsay White, Fred and Christine Marsh and Roz and Martin Uden

Waitrose Ashford for selecting Martha as part of their Community Matters Scheme

£350 donation from London Fancy Box Company

Helen and Donald from Mary House for their fundraising activities

Sue Costelloe for donating a beautiful cake for a 'Guess the Weight of the Cake' competition

Barclays for their continued support especially the Canterbury branch for their volunteers and matched funding support of our Wine Tasting event

Thanet Waste for preparing the groundwork free of charge for our new Sensory Garden at Deal

Intercrop for their kind donation of £560 raised through staff fundraising activities

## Diary dates 2015

German Music Festival, Dover	28th March
KM Big Bike Ride, Whitstable	26th April
Golf Day, Deal	30th April
Wine Challenge, Canterbury	12th June
KM Abseil, Folkestone	14th June
KM Dragon Boat Race, Maidstone	5th July
Sandwich Prom, Sandwich	19th July
Westgate Rotary Golf Day	4th September
KM Assault Course, Deal	3rd October
Christmas Fayre, Sandwich	21st 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!

## Contact Martha Trust

**Julie Gayler** Director of Marketing  
07876 246198 – [juliegayler@marthatrust.org.uk](mailto:juliegayler@marthatrust.org.uk)

**Carol Baalham** Fundraising & Marketing Officer  
01304 610448 – [carolbaalham@marthatrust.org.uk](mailto:carolbaalham@marthatrust.org.uk)

**Jessica Messenger** Fundraising & Events Officer  
01304 610448 – [jessicamessenger@marthatrust.org.uk](mailto:jessicamessenger@marthatrust.org.uk)

**Dee Murphy** Fundraising & Events Officer  
01304 610448 – [deemurphy@marthatrust.org.uk](mailto:deemurphy@marthatrust.org.uk)



# Go Bonkers! in Barcelona!

On 12th September we are setting off on another hare-brained journey from Dover to Barcelona. The usual rules apply: cars must cost no more than £200 with full tax and MOT, and we ask each team to pledge to raise £1,500 in sponsorship. We'll organise ferry crossings, accommodation and flights home.



So if you fancy taking part  
visit [www.marthatrust.org.uk/bonkersinbarcelona](http://www.marthatrust.org.uk/bonkersinbarcelona)  
call **01304 610448**  
or email [fundraising@marthatrust.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@marthatrust.org.uk)