



A future free from the
fear of bowel disease

CELEBRATE LIFE CELEBRATE A LIFE

Stories from Supporters of St Mark's Hospital Foundation

CELEBRATE LIFE

Celebration fundraising is the practice of donating or asking friends, family, and colleagues to donate to a charitable cause in lieu of traditional gifts for a special occasion. It allows people to mark occasions like birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, health milestones, and retirements in a meaningful way while supporting a charity.



CELEBRATE A LIFE

Memorial fundraising is the practice of donating or asking friends and family to donate to a charitable cause in memory of a loved one. This allows people to keep their loved one's legacy alive by contributing to a cause they were passionate about.





St Mark's Hospital Foundation funds ground-breaking research, education, and innovation at St Mark's, the UK's specialist national bowel hospital. Alongside our world-renowned clinical colleagues, we are dedicated to achieving our vision of a future free from the fear of bowel disease.

But we cannot do this alone.

In these pages, you will read accounts from St Mark's patients, their family members, and communities. We are incredibly grateful for their dedication to St Mark's and their decision to celebrate their special occasion, important event, or the life of their loved one by donating to St Mark's Hospital Foundation.

We hope their stories inspire you to celebrate your important moments and the people you cherish while helping to improve clinical care and quality of life for people with complex, and rare, bowel diseases.

LOOKING BACK WITH GRATITUDE:

JALPA'S STORY

As a young adult in 2018, Jalpa was diagnosed with bowel cancer, becoming one of the increasing number of people under the age of 50 to be affected by the disease. She was one of the first patients to undergo robotic surgery for bowel cancer at St Mark's Hospital under the care of experienced robotic surgeon, Mr Danilo Miskovic.



This revolutionary technology, which was acquired with support from the Foundation's donors, combined with the expertise of St Mark's clinicians, allowed her to recover quickly after surgery and return to normal life after only eight weeks. She has remained cancer free for the last five years.

To mark the occasion of her five-year post-surgery screening and to celebrate her continued health, Jalpa and her husband, Ron, gave a generous donation to St Mark's Hospital Foundation.

"The speed from diagnosis to treatment made a huge difference to my recovery, allowing me to focus on getting better while still being there for my family. Most importantly, because of the care and support I received, I have been able to continue watching my children grow and flourish; something I will always be deeply grateful for.

Reaching my five-year milestone was incredibly emotional for us as a family. Making a donation to St Mark's Hospital Foundation felt like one of the ways to say thank you and contribute to the vital ongoing research, ultimately helping other patients receive the same outstanding care, love, and support." - Jalpa



"Because of the care and support I received, I have been able to continue watching my children grow."

JALPA

WITH HOPE FOR A NEW BEGINNING: **DAVID'S STORY**



"I also know how tirelessly the doctors, nurses, and staff work, so I had to give something back."

DAVID

In 2025, David underwent a hemorrhoidectomy at a hospital in Hungary where he was living at the time. Unfortunately, the surgery caused him to develop an anal fistula—an abnormal and extremely painful tube-like channel within the body. David shared that he felt lost and alone as he navigated the pain of his condition with little support from his original surgeon.

David joined an online support group where he learned about St Mark's Hospital and was soon under the care of consultant colorectal surgeon, Mr Phil Tozer. Shortly after becoming a St Mark's patient, David donated to St Mark's Hospital Foundation to celebrate his improved medical care and renewed hope for the future.

"Having gone through this fistula journey, I can truly say that it has given me a new outlook on life. I noticed every time I went into St Mark's how many people were suffering from some form of bowel disease, and I felt like I wanted to put some money to good use and help those less fortunate than myself. I also know how tirelessly the doctors, nurses, and staff work, so I had to give something back. I was in a position where I could help, and I'm glad I donated." - David



Want to make a difference for patients like David and Jalpa?

Celebrate your own health milestone or help make someone else's a reality by donating to support research, education, and innovation at St Mark's Hospital.

A BIRTHDAY BENEFIT:

NATALIE'S STORY

Facing an advanced stage 4 cancer diagnosis, Natalie was referred to the care of consultant surgeon, Mr Ian Jenkins, in the Complex Cancer Clinic at St Mark's Hospital for radical pelvic exenteration surgery. Ever since, Natalie has been determined to give back to the hospital that saved her life and has raised an incredible amount for the Foundation.

In 2026, Natalie celebrated her birthday by continuing her support for St Mark's. She encouraged her friends, family, and Instagram followers to 'buy her a virtual drink or a coffee' by donating the cost to her fundraiser for St Mark's Hospital Foundation.

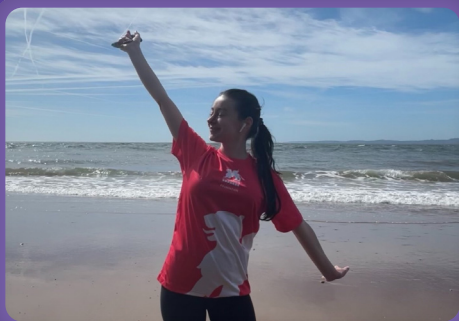
"I always feel emotional around my birthday. My 36th birthday was nearly my last one, and yet here I am, still here... Obviously you reflect on what it has taken to be here, the sacrifices made, the pain endured, but mostly just complete gratitude."

NATALIE



St Mark's Hospital Foundation Fundraising Hub

We are excited to announce the launch of our brand-new fundraising hub! Find tips for organising a successful event, how-to guides for setting up a JustGiving page and Facebook fundraiser, and information on St Mark's Hospital to share with your networks—all in one place on our website.



BRINGING THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER FOR CHARITY:

DIANE'S STORY

"I therefore had no doubt in my mind that I had to give back to this amazing hospital."

DIANE



Throughout the year, the residents and businesses of Ruislip Manor come together to celebrate their community and give back. As a local business owner, Diane mobilises a group of her family and friends every year to participate in the annual Ruislip Manor summer fun day and raise money for charity.

Diagnosed with colon cancer in April 2026, Diane credits the care she received from consultant colorectal complex cancer surgeon, Mr Toby Pring, and his team, with saving her life. She chose to profess her gratitude and celebrate her improved health with her loved ones by raising money for St Mark's Hospital Foundation at the annual community fun day and Ruislip Manor Christmas event.

"Mr Pring and the St Marks team saved my life when I was rushed into A&E with agonising unexplained stomach cramps. They quickly diagnosed me with bowel cancer and operated to remove the stage 2 tumour, saving my life. I therefore had no doubt in my mind that I had to give back to this amazing hospital so they can continue the good work and save many more lives!" - Diane

Need physical fundraising materials?

We can lend you collection tins, tablecloths and standing banners and provide information leaflets and more. Email: info@stmarkshospitalfoundation.org.uk to arrange collection.

BEGINNING A MARRIAGE BY GIVING BACK:

VICKY & SIMON'S STORY



"I've seen how vital our service is to families living with inherited cancer risk."

VICKY

Vicky is a nurse consultant focusing on hereditary gastrointestinal cancer syndromes in the St Mark's Centre for Familial Intestinal Cancer, where she has worked for more than ten years. The specialist unit ensures prompt diagnosis and provides lifelong care to patients with genetic conditions associated with bowel cancer, such as polyposis syndromes and Lynch Syndrome, or from a family at high risk of bowel cancers.

As Vicky and her fiancé, Simon, started planning their wedding, they felt it was important to begin their married life by making a difference for others. In place of traditional gifts, they asked their family and friends to instead donate to St Mark's Hospital Foundation.

"Through my work at St Mark's, I've seen how vital our service is to families living with inherited cancer risk. Our wedding felt like the perfect moment not only to celebrate our own future, but to honour and support the life-saving work that changes so many others" - Vicky

CELEBRATING A LIFE: IN MEMORY OF ALEC

***"We both enjoyed travelling all over the world
- all thanks to St Mark's Hospital."***

JOAN

Alec suffered with severe ulcerative colitis, a form of Inflammatory Bowel Disease, for many years and was referred to St Mark's Hospital in 1989. There, he underwent ileoanal pouch surgery, a procedure pioneered by St Mark's surgeons, Sir Alan Parks and Professor John Nicholls, in the 1970s.

The successful surgery and lifelong care Alec received at St Mark's Hospital, enabled him to do what he loved, to travel the world, and to spend a long and happy life with his wife, Joan. Alec passed away peacefully in 2024 at the age of 89.

At the funeral, Joan asked family and friends to celebrate Alec's memory by making donations to St Mark's Hospital Foundation in order to recognise the hospital that made such a difference throughout his life.

"Due to the excellent work performed by Professor John Nicholls and his team in 1989, Alec's ileoanal pouch was a success story, having served him well for 34 years. Indeed, so successful we both enjoyed travelling all over the world - all thanks to St Mark's Hospital." - Joan



CELEBRATING A LIFE:

IN MEMORY OF PRASHANT

"Prashant's wishes were to continue supporting St Mark's, and a number of other charities related to bowel cancer, in any way possible."

THE JETHWA FAMILY



Prashant, or Prash as he was known to his family and friends since childhood, was a kind, generous and high-achieving person. In 2022, his life and his family's lives were upended by his unexpected bowel cancer diagnosis. Prashant became a patient of St Mark's Hospital under the care of Mr Ian Jenkins and the Complex Cancer Team.

Tragically, Prashant passed away from his cancer in 2024 at the age of 35. To honour one of his final wishes, his family asked, in lieu of flowers, that donations be made in Prashant's name to his chosen charities, including St Mark's Hospital Foundation.

The family set up a memorial page using the online platform, MuchLoved, where loved ones can leave messages, share memories, and fundraise as a tribute to Prashant. His family and friends have revisited the page on Christmas and on Prashant's birthday each year and have continued to honour his memory by giving to the charities that meant the most to him in his final days.

"Growing up close to St Mark's, we knew it was a centre for excellence for bowel health; however, we never would have imagined we would be utilising their services in this way. From the outset, the team at St Mark's were attentive, caring and sympathetic towards Prashant and our whole family. That is why Prashant's wishes were to continue supporting St Mark's, and a number of other charities related to bowel cancer, in any way possible. He would want their exemplary work and support of patients like him to continue."

- The Jethwa Family

A Celebration or Memorial donation or event is a meaningful way to mark a special occasion, a health victory or the life of a loved one, and by dedicating it to St Mark's Hospital Foundation, you are contributing essential funds for our work to create a future free from the fear of bowel disease.

We are deeply grateful to our supporters who have given back in this way. We know this decision is deeply personal, and we are honoured to be a part of your important moments.

There are many ways you can get involved and support St Mark's, including:

- Making a one-off or regular donation
- Organising a fundraiser
- Spreading the word about bowel disease and the impact of St Mark's Hospital
- Participating in an employer support scheme
- Leaving a gift in your will
- Taking part in a challenge event



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e-newsletter



Charity number 1140930