

The incredible Lucy Collett and her family are truly part of the #CransleyCrew. They participate in many of the Cransley Hospice Trust events, including our very first Starlight Walk, and they fundraise for hospice care in our community at every opportunity. Lucy shares with us how Cransley Hospice has made such a deep impact on their family and why she feels that giving back to the charity is so important.



Lucy's beloved Mum, Valda, was an in-patient in Cransley Hospice in 2019.

"My mum was diagnosed with a rare skin cancer in April 2019. It quickly became clear there was no treatment available and we were told my mum had around three months to live by May. The following months were very difficult, and for some of the time my mum was in reasonable health and it was unbelievable to think of what was ahead of us.



"As the illness worsened, we desperately searched for help and support. We felt we were very 'on our own' and did not know where to turn. By mid-August, my mum was so unwell we called an ambulance and she was admitted to our local general hospital. Despite the hospital staff's best efforts, we were often fighting for adequate care. Medications were often missed which resulted in unnecessary pain and distress, and we spent quite some time on triage wards with little privacy or calm.

"A couple of weeks later, a bed became available at Cransley Hospice. My mum was in desperate need of specialist end of life care by this point, but the thought of moving to a hospice seemed scary. With a huge mix of emotions, my mum made the move in early September.

"As I made the journey in to visit after her transfer, I had no idea what to expect. What I found was my mum comfortable and smiling for the first time in many weeks. She immediately felt like she was finally in the right place and could relax. Very quickly we found we could also relax and finally hand over the responsibility for her care to the experts with confidence. Cransley was a place of calm we could be together as a family, safe in the knowledge my mum was in the best hands possible. It was an enormous relief to all of us after spending the last few months in the wilderness.

"The staff at the hospice were beyond amazing. We felt supported as an entire family unit, during the worst experience of our lives. Somehow the staff always knew when to give privacy, when to crack a joke, when to take over and just how to be there in the darkest of days.

"The care Cransley Hospice gave to our family was truly the only shining light of positivity throughout our whole experience. As a family we will be forever grateful and in their debt".

Sadly, that was not the last time that the family would rely on the support of Cransley Hospice to care for a loved one who was leaving us too soon, as Lucy's cousin Martine was also treated by the hospice team during the final weeks of her battle with cervical cancer in April 2020.

As Lucy and her cousin Coleen were very close to Martine, having been an inseparable trio as young children, they were so relieved that she was able to be cared for by Cransley Hospice, as they knew she would be in the best possible hands, to ease her discomfort and to support her immediate family.

Since her experience with the care provided at Cransley Hospice, Lucy and her family have been on a mission to give something back to the charity! Lucy told us:

“I am always keen to join any events or fundraising I can to show appreciation for their care and to maintain an essential service to our community. Until a loved one needs a hospice, it is impossible to understate how important this caring support is.

“My children have undertaken a sponsored step count in memory of their Granny, I have donated pub quiz winnings to Cransley and we and many members of the family play the Hospice Lottery to ensure regular income to the hospice. I can’t imagine there being a time when we are not on the lookout for ways to support in any way we can. The fundraising team at Cransley are always coming up with new events and initiatives to get involved with!”

We are incredibly proud to hear that Cransley Hospice was able to provide much needed care and support to Lucy’s loved ones when they needed it the most – and the fundraising team will remain eternally grateful for everything the family continue to do, in order to ensure that more families like their own, are able to access free, outstanding, compassionate hospice care in our County. Thank you Lucy, you are a star!

In loving memory of Valda McClafferty – 11.09.55 – 05.09.19