



HAREFIELD TRANSPLANT CLUB NEWSLETTER



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

March 2024

4th–8th – World Transplant Winter Games

May 2024

12th – International nurses day

June 2024

14th – World blood donor day

July 2024

1st–7th – National Transplant Week (encourage people to register as organ donors)

21st–28th – European Transplant Games, Lisbon

August 2024

1st–4th – British Transplant Games, Nottingham (registration now open – [CLICK HERE](#))

September 2024

29th – World Heart Day

October 2024

4th–6th – Annual Celebration event: The Riviera Hotel, Bournemouth

23rd – National lung health day

November 2024

9th – Harefield annual transplant memorial service:

St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church, Harefield



A Word from the



Hello everyone! It seems like just yesterday that I was writing the December edition of this, but here we are in Spring already. Luckily we've had quite a mild winter, and hopefully you've all managed to stay clear of winter bugs as much as possible.

As the days get longer and the sun comes out a bit, I'm looking forward to getting outside more – as a new feature in this Newsletter is 'My Happy Place' I think mine is definitely outside! To me, though, a 'happy place' is more a state of mind – if I'm healthy, doing something I enjoy and with my friends or family, that's a happy place to me.

All of us on the committee are keeping very busy with various projects. One you may have seen, is the webinar series we are collaborating with the hospital on – we recently had over 120 people attend our webinar on "Transplant and the Big C", which will be posted on the trust website soon, and there are several more scheduled for the future, covering dermatology, rejection, mental health and women's health, among other topics. Keep an eye out and we'll try and keep you informed.

We also want to promote the achievements of patients after their transplant in many ways – I know when I was recovering from my transplant it was a great source of both comfort and inspiration to see other transplant patients living their best lives.

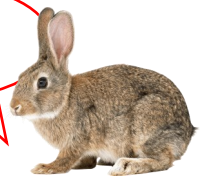
First of all, we have our patients handbook, which we are updating,

and we'd love to have some new patients' stories in there. So, if you think your story could help others, please do consider sharing it with us.

We're also running an appeal for donations to our cabinet that you may have seen it in Transplant Outpatients (under our noticeboard) – we'd love to fill it with memorabilia from our members achievements. These can be medals, photos, certificates or anything that you're proud of (and feel that you could spare for a while). If you'd like to share your story, or would be happy to donate anything, please get in touch with me at chairperson@harefieldhamsters.org.

Finally, 2024 is a landmark year for the Harefield Transplant Club. We'll be giving out our first two 40-year pins to heart transplant recipients Bert Janssen (in June) and Clive Donaghue (in October). It's a fantastic achievement for both of them and we will be celebrating it in some way at our annual celebration event later in the year – The Riviera Hotel, Bournemouth, 4th–6th October.

We really hope you'll be able to join us there. More details will follow in the next few months. Enjoy Springtime!



For the love of music

By Dave Webb

As I recovered in my bed with everything else trying to come back into focus, one thing was clear. I had been given a second chance. My one bite at the fruit of life had been turned into two, thanks to transplant. I was awake and, because of the kindness of a person I will never be able to fully thank, and a team of skilled surgical staff, I was now facing the wonderfully overwhelming task of planning a new future.

As I constructed my mental list of "things I now want to do", it was obvious that there was also a deep desire to carry on doing something that I had been part of for years: playing music. Rock bands, orchestras, pianos, chamber music, violas, or bass guitars, it didn't matter. I pined to pick up an instrument at that moment and make music, like I have done for years before. The only problem was, being in hospital and piano playing are not natural bedfellows (if you pardon the obviously painful pun).

As the recovery days turned into weeks and months, I longed for the day that I could play again. Admittedly, I was preoccupied with this current existence of pill-taking and learning to walk again, but I would listen to music on my phone in my physio "down time" and dream of that day. It is hard to describe but playing an instrument is a very organic experience. It refreshes the mind and fuels the soul. And, unlike the

drugs I was slowly being weaned on-to, not being able to medicate myself with music was leading to withdrawal symptoms.

It was April 2019, and I set a goal to be well enough to play again in the orchestra pit of my school's annual school musical. This year the show was *Chicago*, and it was one that I had always longed to play bass in. Rehearsals wouldn't start until November, so I had a chunk of time to rest and recover before the opening night at the New Wimbledon Theatre.

I left the hospital in the following months and spent the early post-transplant weeks acclimatising to life without the immediate protection of doctors and nurses. Those early days were either a metronomic symphony of phone alarms, reminding me to take all my pills on time, or numerous hospital check-ups to ensure I was growing stronger and more confident with each visit.

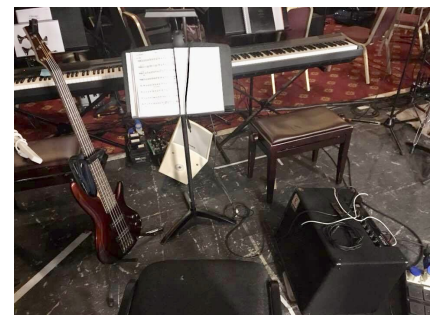
My returning strength eventually allowed me to climb the stairs to the top floor of my house to the musical instruments that dwelled there. I sat at my piano and started to play. As the sound reverberated around the room with every key stroke, I was delighted, like a child being reunited with their favourite toy. Physiotherapy was one thing, music therapy is quite the other.

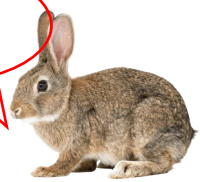
The academic year started but I wasn't recovered enough to start work again. I eventually returned later in the term on a couple of shortened days a week. I was easily exhausted but determined to build up. The stage rehearsals for the musical had been going well, and the first band call wasn't far away.

I took my score home and knew I had to get some individual practice in before that first rehearsal. An immediate problem presented itself. I hadn't accounted for the physical demands of playing an instrument for long sessions.

Tinkering on my piano was one thing, but as my bass guitar weighed down on the strap around my neck and shoulder, I felt the weakness in my newly scarred sternum. I would need lots of short sessions to be able to build up and sustain this amount of playing.

Rehearsals with the whole pit band went well and soon it was opening night. As the theatre lights dimmed, I felt the excitement rise in my chest and the sweat build in my palms as I watched the conductor's baton rise for the first performance. I had made it! That promise I had made to myself all those months ago in that hospital bed had come true – I was playing the musical. Forever grateful to my donor, now it was down to me, the notes, and all that jazz...





My happy place is my local park.

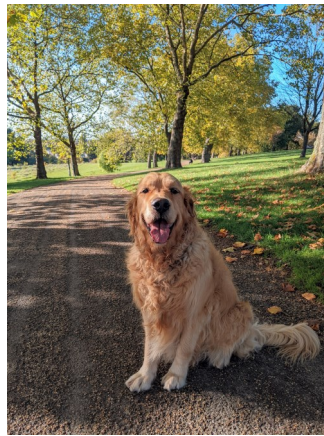
I'm really lucky to have grown up next to a park, which is a rarity in Greater London. Open spaces do so much for both my physical and mental health - when you're in nature, there is a certain stillness that reminds you to slow down, take a deep breath and enjoy the moment.

My local park holds so many memories for me. As a child, I would feed the ducks, play on the swings until it got dark, and beg my parents to stay for just 5 more minutes – please! As I got older and my lung function declined (due to Cystic Fibrosis), I would sometimes be pushed in a wheelchair as it was one of the few places I could easily travel to. It felt great to be outside rather than stuck indoors and feeling limited by what my lungs would allow me to do.

After I had my transplant, at aged 15, I began a slow but steady path to recovery which involved building up my strength through walking. The park really was the best place to do this because there were

fewer people, lots of options for long or shorter routes and I was able to enjoy the fresh air (wearing a high SPF sun-

Even now I enjoy walking as a way of keeping active, though my Golden Retriever, Teddy, would argue that walking is most certainly a way of life!



As time moved on, I moved away from the park - though only briefly, as I was forced to come back home midway through the pandemic for my own safety. It goes without saying how difficult that period of time was but when the lockdown was lifted, the park was the ideal place to reacquaint myself with being outdoors and near other people.

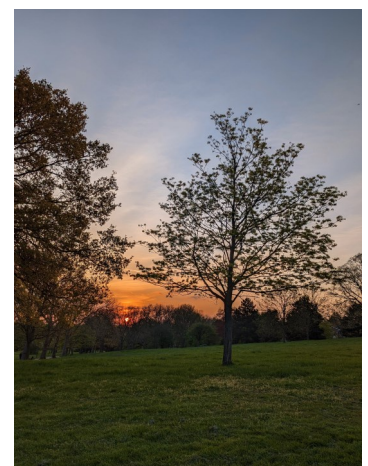
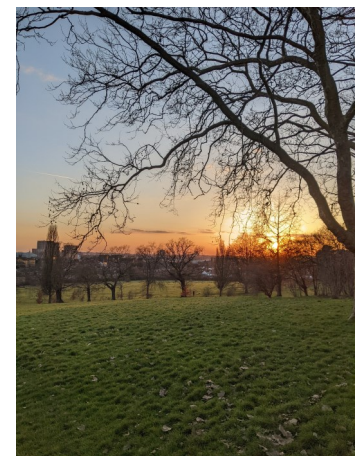
In late 2022, my partner and I decided it was safe enough to find our own place once again and luckily we found somewhere just the other side of the park. We've been happily settled there for a few years now. So much so that, just before Christmas 2022, my partner

proposed to me in the park and I said yes!



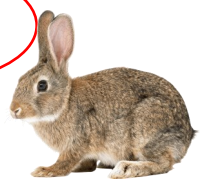
We're getting married in October this year and as we're keeping our celebrations local, we're planning to have some of our wedding photos taken in the park too.

It will be a real 'full circle' moment for me as it's a place I love so much, and where I feel so happy!



My Happy Place
By Paula Cogan





Palma Nova, Mallorca by Lynne

Anywhere by the sea is my happy place. I can watch, listen and taste the sea all day long. This is probably why I have recently taken to Cruising like a duck to water!

My favourite place by the sea though, is Palma Nova, Mallorca.



I first went there in Easter 1995, with my friend Kate, and met my now very dear friend Charlie, who owned a bar in Palma Nova. The following Easter, having had such a good time the year before, Kate and I returned.

In 1997, the number of us travelling that particular Easter was 7 and we stayed in The Tobago for the first time. It had the perfect location, close to the beach, shops, my friend's bar and the nightlife of Magaluf. At Easter it was only starting to get busy, but

we still had lots of fun. This then became a tradition to fly every Good Friday and stay in either The Tobago or a hotel nearby.

Easter visits led to Summer visits, October visits, even a New Year visit in 2003/2004. Any number from 1 (just me) up to 7 travelled each time. Significant birthdays, hen-dos and friendships have all been celebrated in Palma Nova, usually beginning in our friend's bar. Charlie has now sold his bar but this doesn't stop me still going out there as I catch up with him and other friends I've met from the years of visiting. I just smile all the time whilst there as I've got such happy memories.

So when I wanted to go somewhere on my own to celebrate my 2nd Lungversary there was only one place on my list... Even better, The Tobago had recently upgraded to a 4 star hotel, so that was where I stayed.



The Glass Bottom Boat! We knew it's timings, 11am, 1pm, 3pm and 5pm and every year we used to watch it come and go and say 'we'll go on it next year....' We never did! We were always too busy having fun and it was always our excuse to keep going back....



2020 and 2021 are the only 2 years I haven't been to my favourite Happy Place but hopefully I'll keep well and healthy enough to keep going there for years to come.

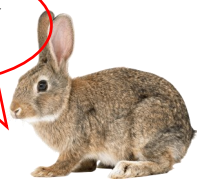
xx



'My Happy Place' is a new feature for each edition of the Newsletter, so please feel free to send a picture and caption or pictures and an article of your Happy Place. Usual address:

editor@harefieldhamsters.org.





An Unsung Hero



Introducing Cyndy Thomas

This delightful lady is 82 years young. She lives fairly locally to Harefield, in Northwood, which is 8 miles away. Every Thursday and Friday, she is in the Transplant Clinic in her voluntary role as a 'Tea Lady', serving free cups of tea, coffee, hot chocolate, squash and biscuits – with a smile! As we all know, a clinic day can be long and a little boring, so this act of kindness can really cheer up your day.

Cyndy has been doing this role for 6 years. She got into helping out after she

accompanied a friend to the hospital and wanted to 'repay' the care and kindness to her friend. She really missed serving the drinks and chatting to patients during Covid and I know lots of us missed her too.

Prior to retirement, Cyndy worked within the film industry, processing films. She made light of the excitement of it all, but I was fascinated when I spoke to her.

When Cyndy is not volunteering at Harefield, she takes part in a variety of hobbies. She loves to walk, especially along the Southbank in London, and swims regularly, too. In addition, she likes to grow and eat vegetables from her own allotment. Cyndy really is an inspirational octogenarian.

She has a daughter, granddaughter, and grandson, and has been persuaded to go on a Cruise with her daughter in June to the Norwegian fjords. This will be her first Cruise. I've not been to the Fjords, but I have just returned from my second Cruise so we had a lovely chat about the delights of cruising.

So, next time you are in clinic, make sure you make the time to say hello to Cyndy and enjoy your 'cuppa of choice'.

By Lynne Ogden



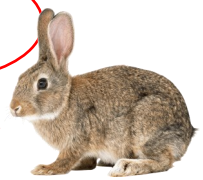
Cyndy's smile uncovered

In our next edition of the newsletter (June), our 'Unsung Hero' will be another delightful lady, Lindsay, from the Transplant Clinic reception – somebody we all know and love.

'An Unsung Hero', is a new feature I've introduced to the Newsletter. I do have a list of people I would like to interview in the future for this feature but if you want to nominate someone, please feel free to email me at editor@harefieldhamsters.org to tell me their name and why you think that they are 'An Unsung Hero'.







Membership 2024

We currently have, as of 24th February, 201 club members.

Anniversary pins

We currently issue anniversary pins for 5,10,15,20,25,30,35 years for both heart and lung as well as heart and lung transplants. This year though, we have the excitement of adding to our pins -40 years Heart pin.

Those within our transplant community who are living for so long after transplant is a testament to the excellent

care we receive at Harefield, but also the determination and strength of the individuals.

Since the last Newsletter in December, 2 members have celebrated very special landmark anniversaries:

Heart

20 years – 1

Lungs

25 years – 1

If you are a member of the club and have been so for at least 2 years you will be eligible for a TX anniversary badge. If you have any questions regarding the anniversary badges or any

questions regarding membership of the club please do not hesitate to get in contact:

membership@harefieldhamsters.org.

Wishing you all continued good health this year and beyond and watch out for a package coming your way if you have a landmark anniversary coming up.

Rob x

Farewell to Janka and Tracey

We're sad to announce that two of our long-standing committee members have decided to step down from their roles on the HTC Committee.

Janka Penther and Tracey Baker have both been part of our committee for many years and have contributed greatly to the club over that time.

Janka did an incredible job as our Chairperson for 6 years, then becoming Vice-Chair, and also holding the Team Manager role for the Club.

Tracey served as a committee member and arranged our Annual Celebration in Bournemouth last year.

We thank them both for their time with us and wish them all the very best. We hope they both remain part of the club and that we'll see them at events in the future.

We will be announcing a replacement for Janka as our Vice-Chair shortly, and Lynne Ogden has kindly agreed to take on the role of organising our Celebration weekend.

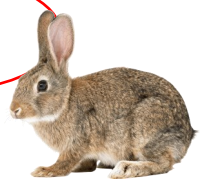


Thank you Janka



Thank you Tracey





Activity page 1

Spring Quiz Questions

- 1) The typical implementation of DST is to set clocks forward by an hour in springtime – what does DST stand for?
- 2) What is the common name of the spring flowering plant narcissus?
- 3) "Is the spring coming?" he said. "What is it like?"... "It is the sun shining on the rain and the rain falling on the sunshine." These are lines from which Frances Hodgson Burnett novel?
- 4) "Younger Than Springtime" is a show tune from which Rodgers and Hammerstein musical?
- 5) "Spring is the time of plans and projects" is a line from which Leo Tolstoy epic novel?
- 6) In 1830, Englishman Edwin Bear Budding was granted the first patent for what device?
- 7) The word for which period of six weeks is a shortened form of an Old English word meaning "spring season"?
- 8) The March equinox, or spring equinox, is better known by what name in the Northern Hemisphere?
- 9) Demonstrating support for environmental protection, which annual event is held on April 22?
- 10) The tulip is a member of what flower family?
- 11) "May brings flocks of pretty lambs, skipping by their fleecy dams" is a verse from "The Garden Year" by Sara Coleridge. What is a 'dam'?
- 12) Appalachian Spring is a 1944 musical composition by which American composer?
- 13) Is it frog spawn or toad spawn which floats in stringy lengths?
- 14) Which Hebrew female name, meaning springlike or fresh, is also the name of a British insurance company?
- 15) Also, often a female name, what is the French word for April?
- 16) In Australia, spring begins on the first day of which month?
- 17) The Rite of Spring is a ballet by which Russian composer?
- 18) Primavera, which is the Italian word for Spring, is also the title of a large panel painting by which Italian Renaissance painter?
- 19) What in Scotland are called syboes and in South Wales, gibbons (pronounced *jibbuns*)?
- 20) Which bird does William Shakespeare associate with Spring in his play *Love's Labour's Lost*, and also mentions its habit of laying its eggs in other birds' nests in *King Lear*?

The answers to this quiz are on

Activity page 2

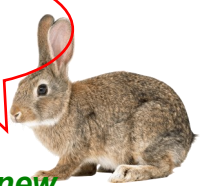
Easter Wordsearch

Words can be found forwards, backwards, upwards, downwards and diagonally.



April	children	Easter	holiday	Sunday
basket	chocolate	eggs	hunt	tradition
bonnet	church	family	nest	tulips
bouquet	daffodil	find	parade	celebration
brunch	decorate	flowers	pastel	ducklings
candy	dinner	fun	peeps	gratitude
carrot	dresses	games	rabbit	gumdrops
chicks	dye	grass	Spring	jelly beans





Activity page 2

Springtime is the perfect time to go for a mindfulness walk as there are so many new beginnings happening before our eyes. So what is a mindfulness walk?

Mindful walking is the practice of bringing present-moment awareness to your surroundings and bodily sensations while walking.

In our daily life, we walk about regularly. Usually, it's to get somewhere. Sometimes our walks are more intentional- we walk to exercise, when we need to clear our heads, or as a form of meditation. Whatever the reason for it, putting one foot in front of the other and moving your physical body through space is an activity you likely do a dozen or more times a day.

Yet, how aware are you while you do it? In other words, is your focus on walking paying attention to how your body feels and what you experience along the way, or is it largely

disconnected from your body and what's going on in the environment around you? Usually it's the latter. So familiar is the activity of walking that we do it on autopilot, without any conscious effort. And this leaves our minds to leave the room, so to speak, and go wherever they want. We might think about our destination and what we'll do once there. We may use the walk to replay a conversation we had, plan for dinner, daydream, or more.

Mindful walking flips the script. Like other mindfulness practices, walking mindfully involves placing your attention on an anchor, such as a sensation, to help keep your mind in the present moment, but pairs it with movement.

And walking provides rich territory to practice mindfulness! Sensation abounds when you walk - from physical sensations, such as changes in your heart rate, the motion of your leg, or the press of your foot into the ground, to the sights, sounds, and smells you encounter along the way. Even the felt sensation of air touching

skin can shift you from the fog of autopilot and make you aware of the present moment.

You can also shift your focus from one anchor to another. For example, you might start your mindful walk focusing on your breath, the steady rhythm of stepping, or how movement feels in your body, and then purposefully turn your attention to any sounds you hear or, if outdoors, how sunlight looks as it comes through the trees. Each time your attention wanders from your chosen anchor, you gently guide it back.

Article extracted from:

[Mindful Walking: Stay Grounded by Walking Mindfully | Mindfulness.com](#)



Maybe after your mindfulness walk, you could have a go at this mindfulness colouring.

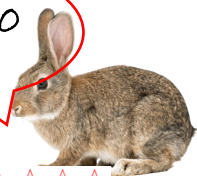


Answers for the quiz

- 1) Daylight saving time
- 2) Daffodil
- 3) The Secret Garden
- 4) South Pacific
- 5) Anna Karenina
- 6) Lent (short version of the Old English word lencen, which means spring season.)
- 7) Mechanical lawn mower (we associate getting out our lawn mowers with Spring!)
- 8) Vernal equinox
- 9) Earth Day
- 10) Lily
- 11) Female Mother Sheep
- 12) Aaron Copland
- 13) Toad spawn
- 14) Aviva
- 15) Avril
- 16) September
- 17) Igor Stravinsky
- 18) Sandro Botticelli
- 19) Spring onions (or scallions)
- 20) Cuckoo

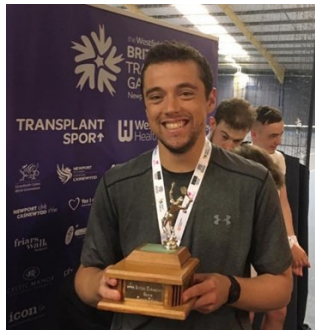
If you would like to contribute to the next Newsletter please send your piece to

editor@harefieldhamsters.org



Harefield Transplant Committee 2023/2024

New Chairperson – Peter Knox



I had a double lung transplant in 2017, due to Cystic Fibrosis, and first started hearing about the Club through the British Transplant Games, which I first attended in 2019. I later became our Team Manager in 2022, becoming Chairperson the following year. I'm passionate about finding ways for us to help all Harefield transplant patients on their journey, and looking into what we can do to improve your experiences. I'm also still our Team Manager – if you have an interest in sport and want to get involved competing with other Transplant patients at any ability level, come along to Nottingham 2024!

Secretary

Douglas Forbes



I had a double lung transplant in August 2013, as a result of CF, and have been a member of the Club since 2015.

I joined the committee at the Bournemouth AGM (2016) and took on the role of Secretary in 2018.

Treasurer

Caroline Rutherford



I'd had an LVAD for about 18 months when I received my last call for a heart in June 2018.

I joined the committee after the 2019 Harefield reunion as I wanted to contribute, when possible, to the fantastic club.

I love sport and am a keen member of the BTG team.

Membership Secretary

Rob Longrigg

I have been a member and supporter of the club since 2005. I had a double lung transplant in October 2003 due to CF. I joined the committee at the AGM in 2015.



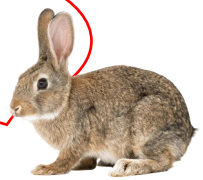
Committee Member

Dawn Bostock

I joined the Committee after the AGM in 2021, having had my double lung transplant (due to CF) in 2008.

I want to help the Club reach out to more people, in particular those who feel isolated and lonely.





Harefield Transplant Committee 2023/2024

Newsletter editor

Lynne Ogden



I'm Lynne, a 55 year old, recently retired Primary School teacher.

I had a double lung transplant in August 2020, during Covid!!!

My route to transplant was not your usual route!!!

I have always been passionate about Sport and very fit and active but in Spring 2016, I developed Rheumatoid Arthritis and Sjorgrens Syndrome. These 2 resulted in Obliterative Bronchilitis and a destruction of my lungs!!! At the time of transplant, my lung function was only 19%!!

3 years on, I'm still on my transplant journey, there have been many lows but also many highs and I will be forever grateful for my donor family.

My aims as a newly appointed Committee member and Editor of the Newsletter are to be able to help where I can and to promote the 'joy' of attending the Transplant Games.

xx

Committee Member

Ana Browne

Hi everyone, my name is Ana



Browne. I had my double lung transplant 3 years ago due to having Cystic Fibrosis.

I have recently joined the Harefield Transplant Club

committee because I want to raise awareness of this group to others who may benefit from being in this strong transplant community like I have.

I attended my 1st Annual Transplant Celebration weekend in September this year and met so many lovely like-minded people who understood my transplant journey. It was lovely to put names to faces finally in a safe friendly environment. Everyone is so kind and caring and it's so reassuring to speak with others about transplant experiences and having that feeling of not being alone.

I've been a member with the HTC for 2 years now and I wish I'd become a member sooner, especially that first year after my transplant when I found everything rather scary and needed to speak with others who had gone through the same as me. Harefield Transplant Club are passionate about helping all transplant patients and their families. They are there to support you throughout the whole transplant journey.

If you haven't become a member of the Harefield Transplant Club already, please join you won't regret it. Hopefully I will see you around in clinic, come and speak to me if you see me.

Committee Member

Paula Cogan

Hi, I am Paula, I received a double lung transplant at great Ormond Street Hospital in 2009, due to Cystic Fibrosis. I chose to move to Harefield hospital for my care when I became an adult. Having been a member of the club for a couple of years, I decided to join the committee because I've seen the fantastic



work that the club does for patients like me and wanted to make my own contribution too.

Committee Member

Clive Donaghue

I had a heart transplant in 1984 and joined the Committee in November 2022.



A big Thank You to all of our committee.

A lot of work goes on behind the scenes to make The Harefield Transplant Club as good as it is.



Royal Brompton and Harefield website: www.rbht.nhs.uk/about/news-events

 **Harefield Transplant Club** www.harefieldhamsters.org

 **@HarefieldTxClub**