

2016 Annual Review

Introduction

This, our second year of the Group's existence, has seen us continue the activities of our first year but, more importantly, to develop further in the area of raising awareness of both prostate cancer and our Group's presence in Milton Keynes and surrounding areas. This has been done through (1) awareness presentations to both male and mixed groups (2) attendance at PSA blood test events set up by Buckinghamshire Freemasons and (3) setting up our own PSA blood test event in association with the Graham Fulford Charitable Trust. More details are given in the Events section of this review and Appendix B.

Meetings

We have continued to hold regular Group meetings at Shenley Wood Village mainly in the evening but also in the afternoon. We propose to continue this practice in 2017.

We have enjoyed talks from a variety of speakers who complement their presentations with question and answer sessions. A list of speakers is provided in Appendix A.

The meetings are used also to advise members of future events and fund raising activities. Refreshments are provided and a prize raffle held.

Your committee has met regularly through the year, also at Shenley Wood Village. Any Group member is welcome to attend these meetings and contribute if they wish. Meeting dates are shown on our website. As part of our co-operation with the Bedford support group some of their members attended on 10th May. Booking of dates for 2017 is in hand both for general and committee meetings and details can be seen on our website.

Events

In 2016 MKPCS has attended and participated in a wider range of events. These are listed in Appendix B.

Both committee and general members have attended and contributed in these events. We are always keen to welcome volunteers to assist at events even if only to reduce the load on the 'few'!

The key event for the Group this year was the PSA blood test event held in October at the Bletchley Masonic Centre. We are grateful to the Masons for providing their facilities free of charge. We are grateful too to the Graham Fulford Charitable Trust.

Graham and his team did a great job on the day and provided quick feedback to those participating. Of the 73 men who attended four received 'red' letters.

Overall the event was considered a success and we plan to carry out further PSA blood test events in 2017. Funding for the event was provided by grants from the MK Community Fund and Tackle. We were fortunate in that the Aylesbury Group had offered to underwrite our costs should we be unable to raise sufficient funds. In fact this was not necessary but we are very grateful to Brian Cole and his committee for providing their support.

Another new and successful event in 2016 was our quiz held in July at the Abbey Hill golf club. In addition to our own members we welcomed teams from both the Aylesbury and Bedford groups. Particular thanks are due to Christiana Lewis for arranging both the venue and refreshments as well persuading her friend, Carol Wyatt, to produce the questions and act as quiz mistress on the night. Thank you Carol.

This year we have given five awareness presentations. These are valuable events in that they create awareness of both prostate cancer and the existence of our Group and the support it can provide. We will continue to offer these presentations in 2017 and welcome suggestions as to suitable audience groups. In September MKPCS featured in a TV programme filmed by the Canadian TV current affairs channel W5. Their main focus was the Medical Detection Dogs at Great Horwood but they filmed part of our September meeting and interviewed David Tomlinson.

Fund Raising and Finance

Fund raising is required to provide the money we need to (a) pay for our meeting venues and refreshments, production of publicity and information material, stationery (b) setting up and operating our website (c) buying the items that help us publicise our presence at events –Fund raising activity has the added benefit of raising awareness of MKPCS and its purpose.

Money raised in the year to end of September 2016 was approximately £4677 made up as follows:

Grants - £2000 – MK Community Fund and Tackle

Donations - £1780 – John Lewis, Waitrose and Members

Meeting raffles - £395 – MK Community Fund (car raffle) and meeting raffles

Quiz - £421

Misc. - £81

Expenditure in the year to end September 2016 was approximately £880 made up as follows;

Capital - £100 – Hi-viz vests

Meetings - £308 - room hire, refreshments, speakers' expenses;

Quiz night - £215

Website - £75

Donation - £50 – Medical Detection Dogs

Misc. - £132

NB. The cost of the October PSA Blood Test event will appear in the 2016/17 accounts.

Full details are available for inspection if required.

Our bank account set up in November 2014 with the Metro Bank, Midsummer Arcade branch, continues in use. There has been no change to the nominated signatories – Martin Bell, David Buckley and David Tomlinson.

MKPCS is participating again in the MK Community Fund car raffle. Tickets are still available and will be on sale at our AGM. The raffle draw will take place in February 2017.

This year fund raising has been focussed on (1) the day to day operations of the Group and (2) setting up the PSA blood test event held in October.

We have heard recently that Tackle, in 2017, will no longer receive funding from PCUK. While Tackle has said that it does not wish that local groups donate money which they otherwise need for local operations they would be very grateful for any donations forthcoming. Your committee has considered this and believes that we should aim to make a donation to Tackle in 2017 and therefore allow for it in our fund raising activities.

Information and Publicity

The MKPCS website –www.prostatemk.org- continues to be developed. Credit for this goes to David Buckley. The website lets people know of the Group's existence and aims. In addition it provides information of news and upcoming events.

An important section of the website contains members' prostate stories describing their personal experiences and outcomes. These stories allow others to perhaps recognise similarities with their own situation and gain from that accordingly. We welcome people to come forward and let us have their personal stories to share. If you are happy to do this then please contact a member of the committee – we can assist with the drafting of the story if that would help.

We maintain stocks of the two leaflets that we produced last year. In addition we hold stocks of a variety of excellent booklets and pamphlets produced by PCUK and Macmillan which we make available at Group meetings and other events that we attend. Also, we receive copies of 'Prostate Matters' news sheet produced by Tackle. These are made available at all Group meetings.

The Committee

The current committee is made up as follows; Martin Bell, Chairman; Maria Buckley, Secretary; David Tomlinson, Treasurer; David Buckley and Christiana Lewis. Ivan Hackman was a member until October when he resigned. The committee has met at regular intervals through the year. Meeting minutes have been recorded, agreed and certified according to the requirements of the constitution.

Particular thanks are due to Maria Buckley for her work as Secretary and David Tomlinson for his careful management of our accounts.

Several people have provided particular assistance to the committee during the year; they are Ted and Pam Skone, Jack Piggott, George Conchie, Fitz Lawson and Sam Younan. We thank them for their help. Thanks also to other members that have assisted at events.

The committee will stand down at the AGM on 12th December, 2016. Nominations for a new committee for 2017 will be invited. The designation of particular roles within the committee will be agreed by those nominated.

We must stress the need for more members to come forward to join the committee. The workload is not too onerous but the present committee feel strongly that the current load is being shared by too few. Please come forward and offer your help; we need your support if the Group is to continue to flourish – it's a very worthwhile cause.

Appendix A – Guest Speakers 2016

Meeting 15th February – Mr Jim Webster; bees and their health benefits. Alan Flook; experience of prostate cancer treatment.

Meeting 11th April – Professor Robert Thomas: lifestyle and prostate cancer.

Meeting 13th June – Stephanie Jones, Relate; coping with sexual difficulties caused by cancer and its treatment.

Meeting 26th September – Glenda Logsdail, consultant radiologist and Emma Draper, radiotherapist: talking about their work at Northampton Hospital.

Meeting 7th November – Dr John Slippe-Quartey GP talking about criteria for referrals and Sally Siddique talking about Penny Brohn Cancer Services.

Appendix B – Events 2016

16th March 2016 – Awareness presentation to MK Men in Sheds.

2nd April 2016 – Awareness presentation to MK Caribbean Community

18th May 2016 – Attendance at Tackle AGM London

18th May 2016 – Wellbeing event in Shenley Wood Village

25th July 2016 – Quiz night at Abbey Hill Golf Club

7th August 2016 – Attended Freemason's PSA blood test event at Masonic Centre, Bletchley

27th August 2016 – Attended Freemason's PSA blood test event at Bell Hotel, Winslow

6th October 2016 – Healthwatch; health and social care event central MK

14th October 2016 – Awareness presentation Buckingham Golf Club

23rd October 2016 – MKPCS PSA blood test event at Masonic Centre, Bletchley

14th November 2016 – Awareness presentation to MK Central Rotary Club

19th November 2016 – Awareness presentation to Friends of the Caribbean

11th May, 12th July, 14th September, 9th November – Attendance at bi-monthly meetings of the MK Cancer Patient Partnership