



SUMMER 2017 NEWSLETTER

I can't believe that we are now at the end of June, it seems like only yesterday I was writing the last Newsletter. Over the last 6 months, we have seen our membership increase to over 80 ladies - which is fantastic! Thank you, as ever, for all your contributions at our monthly meetings and on our Facebook Group; you really do make a difference and it is wonderful to see how supporting and encouraging we are of each other. Thank you to Jo for your continuing work on our Facebook Group; this is a vital part of our support network as you all appreciate. Thank you also for updating our Website on a regular basis. I must thank KIMS for hosting our last six monthly meetings and also the Abode Hotel in Canterbury. I especially want to thank Suzannah Fitzgerald (once again) for all her time and effort she puts into our group, particularly with helping to set up and run the Canterbury meetings. We would be lost without you! Natalie Gawler has kindly volunteered to help Suzannah run these meetings – thank you!

The following are a few highlights of what we've accomplished for the first half of this year:-

- 6 support meetings have been organised for West Kent (average of 13 women attending)
- 3 support meetings have been organised for East Kent (average of 6 women attending)
- success with our second Macmillan 'start-up' grant application for our East Kent meetings (press release to be issued by Macmillan Cancer in the near future)
- A group of us went up John Lewis for a personal bra fitting evening in March, which was great fun and very helpful to us all
- Anita Ralph, from 'The Medicine Tree' in West Malling, attended with one of her colleagues to give us an insight into the benefits of herbal medicine – it was fascinating!
- Two East Grinstead Breast Reconstruction Nurse Specialists came to our May meeting, and gave us a very informative and interesting talk
- Sent out 13 hospital 'goodie bags' to our members that have had surgery over the last 6 months. I have been very touched by the lovely comments I have received by the ladies receiving them
- I have written a Constitution (basic guidelines for our group to follow on recommendation by Macmillan Cancer)
- Formed a Committee (Jo Considine, Suzanne Cockaday and I so far) – please do let us know if you would like to join and help us plan future activities/attend community events, etc.

What we have planned for the rest of 2017

- A couple of members and I are attending the Guy's BRCA Family Update Day with our BRCA Kent banner and leaflets on 6 July (Show & Tell volunteers needed)
- Confirmed dates for monthly support group meetings for both East and West Kent (please see our Facebook Page for dates)
- Another John Lewis Bra Fitting at Bluewater (TBC – possibly early 2018)
- Continue to encourage our BRCA Buddy system to grow – matching-up members
- Continue to send out our hospital goodie bags
- Natalie has kindly produced a 'draft letter' aimed at newly diagnosed East Kent ladies, to help increase numbers at our Canterbury meetings
- Xmas Drinks at KIMS on 18 December – both groups (possible minibus for East Kent ladies)!

Please do continue to give us suggestions on how we can improve our support.

Thank you again everyone and have a great summer!

Liz x

*Next meetings - **11 September** at KIMS and **26 September** at The Abode Hotel*

29/06/17