

Insurance Association donates proceeds

# Gala dinner to

CANCER sufferers will benefit from almost £2,000 donated to a local society as part of the Guernsey International Insurance Association's annual gala dinner.

Chairman Paul Sykes presented the Guernsey Society for Cancer Relief with a cheque for £1,827 following an auction and raffle at the well-attended event.

He had first-hand experience of the support given by the society after his wife, Linda, was diagnosed with breast cancer last year.

Mr Sykes, managing director at Aon Risk Solutions, attended Bulstrode Oncology Unit with her on a regular basis throughout her treatment before she was given the all-clear later that year.

As insurers we are used to responding to loss and catastrophes in people's lives but our response is typically limited to the provision of financial relief.

The society helps people suffering from cancer in their hour of need in many ways, including financial contribution to ease hardship and support treatment. But they also provide a support service that includes complementary therapies for patients and even wigs throughout chemotherapy.'

Mr Sykes said the oncology nurses, led by Karen Leach and supported by Jane Beattie and the administration team, were remarkable. But he felt the volunteers from the society were 'unsung heroes' too.

Keith Bibeard and Mavis Lennon kept our spirits up when my wife underwent treatment. They were there every week busily dispensing meals and refreshments, good cheer and a listening ear to patients.

It was a relief and a revelation to witness Bulstrode House as a unit filled with warmth and positivity rather than fear and distress.'

The Guernsey Society for Cancer Relief was formed in 1983 and spends more than £140,000 a year as part of its work.

As well as coordinating volunteers who help in the unit, the society also provides financial assistance to support and improve

by Nicola Gibbons

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services for patients affected by cancer. It has funds available to help ease some of the financial worries that people affected by cancer may have.

All the society's funds remain in the island and none is spent on administration.

The society can help with:

- Air fares for accompanying relatives when patients go off-island for investigations or treatment.
- Some household bills, such as fuel costs.
- Taxi fares to and from Bulstrode Oncology Unit for patients who have difficulty getting to the unit when having their treatment or blood tests.
- Partial funding of the wigs service.
- Purchasing equipment and furniture for the unit.
- Complementary therapies, including massage, aromatherapy and reflexology.

Bulstrode Oncology Unit is based in phase 5 of the new clinical block and provides day treatment facilities for people affected by cancer.

Staff there work in partnership with the GSCCR to support people affected by cancer and their families.

Mrs Leach, lead nurse for cancer and palliative care, said: 'What the society brings is the heart to the service - it's that personal approach and we wouldn't have the environment we have here without them. It is team work and together that's what makes the difference.'

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GVA chairman Paul Sykes

of auction and raffle to Guernsey Society for Cancer Relief

# help cancer sufferers



Left to right: Bulstrode Oncology Unit administrative assistant Jane Bousshy, Guernsey International Insurance Association chairman Paul Sykes and Karen Leach, lead nurse for cancer and palliative care.

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