ISSUE #02 JANUARY 2025

Quarterly Newsletter

Charity employs first CEO!

"In an exciting development for the charity, to allow us to achieve our aims, in 2024 we decided to ensure the future of Chameleon Buddies by recruiting a Chief Executive Officer. After a robust and open recruitment process, working alongside the Charity Commission, we are delighted to announce that our founder, Gill Castle, has become our first CEO." Chair of the Board, Jenny Gow MBE.

Gill said ***"I'm really proud to be our charity's first employee, and I am looking forward to working alongside our supportive Board to enhance our impactful work empowering women in the UK and Kenya to live a full life with their ostomies. I am extremely passionate about our aims, and am honoured to be given this vital role in taking our charity forward."***

New trustee



We are delighted to introduce our new charity secretary, Garry Armstrong, who has joined the team alongside Chair Jenny Gow, Charlotte Watson and Gill Castle.

Garry has been a long-time supporter of Chameleon Buddies, building on a lifelong friendship with Gill, a fellow schoolmate. He has formalized his commitment by serving as the charity's secretary, playing a key role in its mission.

When he's not spending time with his family, Garry enjoys strength training, with a special passion for strongman competitions and stone lifting. In his free time, you'll likely find him exploring the scenic Scottish countryside, lifting historic stones of strength or even pulling the occasional truck!

We are continuing to restructure our charity, which has grown exponentially since its registration in June 2022. It is incredible what our tiny charity has managed to achieve in such a short space of time, all done in the spare time of the board and volunteers, all of whom are working and the majority with young children.

We are looking forward to growing our charity and welcome Garry into our team as we do so.

In this newsletter you can expect:

Local News

Volunteer Spotlight

Kenya Outreach Week

Mount Kilimanjaro update

Fabulous Fundraisers

Chameleon Buddies outreach programme

I'm Louise, Dansac Territory Manager for the North East.



I'm thrilled to announce that Dansac has sponsored this edition of the newsletter. I wanted to take a moment to say hello and let you know that I'm always here to help you! I'm absolutely delighted to work with Gill and support this amazing charity. Should you need any help or advice around Dansac products, please feel free to contact louise.walton@dansac.com anytime. I look forward to meeting you all soon!

Thank you & best wishes, Lou

dansac

Local News

Berwick Ostomy Group

In November, Gill attended Bobbie Minshull's stoma group along with Liz Hinds. A fun and informative session took place, with lots of questions for Gill about her record breaking Channel solo! The work of our charity fascinated and moved the members. It is a lovely, welcoming and busy group which meets on the third Thursday of the month at the William Elder Building 10am to noon in Berwick. For more information, contact Bobbie on 07714 479 320.

Harton Academy, South Tyneside

In December, Gill was invited to be Special Guest speaker, where she spoke to 500 12-13 year olds about her life with her stoma, and then an informative and chatty session with a group of SEND children. The passing round of stoma bags in the assembly for the children to look at caused quite a stir! A generous donation of £150 from the Academy was then received by way of thanks.

Meeting with MP

We are pleased to announce we have planned a meeting with David Smith MP for North Northumberland in February to discuss support for our Birth Trauma Support Group and the Birth Trauma Report which was released by the Birth Trauma APPG under the previous government.

Global Birth Trauma Alliance with Theo Clarke

The former MP and Chair of the Birth Trauma APPG, Theo Clarke, has established a new Global Birth Trauma Alliance, to campaign for change to improve maternity care in the UK and around the world. Theo says "We need a #MeToo movement for birth trauma." Gill is a member of the Council for the Alliance, which will also look at the issue of traumatic births in Kenya.

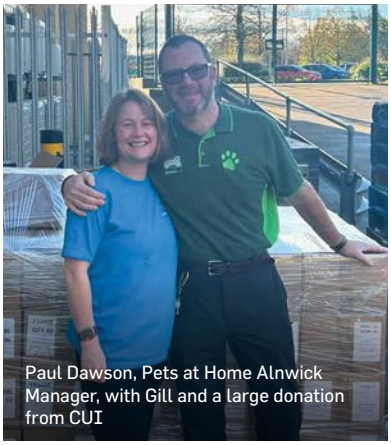
Please visit Theo's website for further details: www.theo-clarke.org.uk/news/theo-clarke-launches-global-birth-trauma-alliance

New drop off points for surplus supplies:

In order to help collect as many items as possible, Clair Wilson and Fiona Belgium of Thompsons Solicitors have reached out to offer their premises, and that of a friend, to act as drop off points:

- **Thompsons Solicitors, House, 27-35 Grainger Street, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 1TH.**
- **City Carpets Durham, 2 Dragonville Court, Gilesgate, Durham, DH1 2YB.**

This is in addition to the current drop off at Pets At Home, Willowburn Avenue, Alnwick, NE66 2JH. Items may also be posted to the latter address only.



Paul Dawson, Pets at Home Alnwick Manager, with Gill and a large donation from CUI

We operate an automated email response system for stoma product enquiries due to the volume of emails we receive in comparison to the small size of our volunteer team. All of the information above is repeated in our email response at supplies.chameleonbuddies@gmail.com.

We are enormously grateful to Clair and Fiona, and all at Thompsons Solicitors, together with City Carpets Durham for offering their facilities as drop off points. Paul Dawson and team at Pets At Home in Alnwick have supported us for the last couple of years - *thank you.*

On January 11th we sorted through 10,000 donated items ready for the next shipment with MK Horizons Cargo.

Local News

Christmas Fairs

We attended several local Christmas fairs in November and December – see our lovely volunteer, Emma Phelan, at the St Paul's School Christmas Fair, where she was selling our handmade bags and baskets.

We will be putting our bags and baskets, all of whom have been made by our ladies in Kenya, onto the website soon!



Stoma Peer Support Group

The Stoma Peer Support Group is the first Thursday of each month, **1-3pm, The Plough Hotel, 24 Bondgate Without, Alnwick, NE66 1TN.**

Pre-booking isn't required, simply turn up! It's a drop-in service so feel free to come and go as you wish. It is open for anyone with a stoma, facing stoma surgery or who is supporting someone with a stoma.

Treasurer wanted!

We are also looking for a new treasurer!

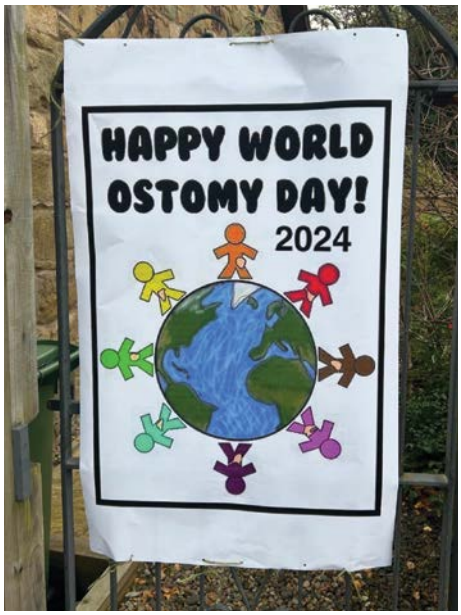
Please contact us at **info@chameleonbuddies.org.uk** for more info.

World Ostomy Day 2024

WOD 2024 fell on our last stoma packing day of the year – a very busy day with lots of volunteers working hard to organise all the supplies ready for the team to take to Kenya the following month.

If you would like to join the volunteer team please email us at info@chameleonbuddies.org.uk







Volunteer Spotlight



Liz Hinds has been a keen and active member of our volunteer group since she first found out about us more than a year ago. When Liz discovered that we were struggling to find space to store all the donated stoma supplies before they were sent to Kenya, she immediately offered the use of her ground floor space. This has been of enormous benefit to the charity, located very conveniently in the centre of Alnwick. Liz has been a regular member of our monthly stoma peer support groups, often taking the lead and welcoming new members with her genuine warmth. As an illeostomate of more than 19 years, Liz's knowledge, guidance and empathy are incredibly highly valued by our peer support groups. On 11th January, for the second time Liz offered to host the stoma supply sorting day, when her house was turned upside down with the vast quantities of supplies and eager volunteers busily sorting through them all. Liz is also part of Team Kili – we cannot wait to see that beaming face at the top of the mountain next October!

Thank you to Liz, and husband Chris Hinds, for their generosity and kind heartedness.

Breaking the taboo



A long overdue podcast into birth trauma, Breaking the Taboo with Theo Clarke was launched on 23rd January 2025, in which she presents the stories and experiences of mothers and fathers from all different backgrounds that show the undiscussed realities of childbirth trauma and poor maternity care. The show will also showcase healthcare professionals and experts to provide practical advice to affected mothers and their families. We are proud that our CEO, Gill, appears on the first episode, alongside Dr Kim Thomas, CEO of the Birth Trauma Association. Gill says "This is the podcast series I have been waiting for, something mothers can listen to in the car, at home or on the go, which will give both information and reassurance to women who have experienced a traumatic birth like me. I wish this had been available to me when I was struggling to find a way through my trauma and I know it will be invaluable as a tool for knowledge and healing". The series is available on all major podcast outlets, link here **www.theo-clarke.org.uk/podcast**

Kenya Outreach Week

November 7-17th 2024

Outreach team

Gill Castle and Nicola Napier
Peer Support Week facilitators

Claire Ryan
Stoma Nurse Specialist and Clinical Lead

Sarah Duke
Stoma Nurse Specialist

Karen Noades
Bladder & Bowel Nurse Specialist

Charlotte Watson
Admin and Peer Support

Our Clinic Trip 2024 – *by Nicola Napier*

Together We Rise

In the heart of Eldoret, this year's Chameleon Buddies' outreach visit focused on helping women to adapt to life after stoma surgery, creating a sense of belonging and building a community. The outreach team arrived in Kenya with a clear mission: to create an environment where women could share their stories, offer each other support, and learn to thrive together.

Through this week there was a theme that shaped every activity and conversation: Pamoja Tunainuka —*"Together We Rise".*

A Legacy of Belonging

Last year, the programme's theme, Bila Siri, Bila Aibu—"No Secrecy, No Shame" - encouraged meaningful conversations and supported the women to confront stigma. Building on that success, the 2024 team aimed to recreate the same sense of belonging but with a fresh perspective.

Before the trip, the team reflected on previous visits where many women had spoken about the struggle of reintegrating into their families and communities after surgery. The message was clear: the greatest strength comes from the support of peers who understand their journey. "We knew it wasn't about us turning up and fixing everything," Charity founder Gill Castle shared. "It was about helping the ladies to grow themselves, creating an opportunity for them to support each other." This became the basis for the week's activities, which were designed to encourage connection, independence and reintegration.

The theme Together We Rise was brought to life with a nod to Maya Angelou's iconic poem Still I Rise. Angelou, a celebrated African American writer and activist, has inspired millions of women around the world with her words of strength and perseverance.

A line from Still I Rise that perfectly captures the spirit of the week:

"Just like moons and like suns, With the certainty of tides, Just like hopes springing high, Still I'll rise."





Kenya Outreach Week

November 7-17th 2024

Building a Safe Space

The week-long peer support sessions were held in a temporary tent erected in the hospital car park. Despite its humble appearance, this tent quickly became a centre of learning, and laughter.

Throughout the week, women were encouraged to share their personal stoma stories - many for the first time. There were many powerful moments as one woman after another opened up about the physical and emotional challenges of surgery and recovery. The atmosphere was one of empathy and understanding, as each participant realised they were not alone.

Alongside storytelling, the sessions covered essential topics such as hydration, nutrition, hygiene, bladder retraining, and managing issues like parastomal skin irritation, hernias, and intimacy. The group also explored delicate subjects such as relationships, pregnancy, and family dynamics after surgery. These discussions were led by facilitators Gill & Nicola, but guided by the women's needs, ensuring the content was both practical and relevant.

Creating together

One highlight of the week was a workshop led by a graduate of the previous year's programme. She taught the others how to make washable sanitary and continence pads—an invaluable skill in a region where access to such supplies can be limited. As the women stitched, the tent buzzed with conversation, laughter, and a sense of shared purpose.

"It was amazing to see how the ladies opened up while working with their hands," charity trustee Charlotte Watson observed. "They were creating something practical and personal, but they were also creating a community."



Mary, previous graduate, choosing the material and then leading the session. Photographed with Charlotte Watson, trustee.



The week was brought to an end with a joyous graduation ceremony that brought to life the essence of *Together We Rise*. The room was filled with singing, dancing, and prayers as the women celebrated their achievements and the friendships they had formed. Certificates were distributed, each one symbolising a milestone in the women's journeys.

For many of these women, the experience of attending the workshop was life-changing. Some had travelled over 10 hours to be there, overcoming significant logistical and financial barriers. Yet, despite these challenges, their overwhelming emotion was gratitude, for the knowledge and resources they gained but more importantly for the connections they made.

Kenya Outreach Week

November 7-17th 2024

The Power of Friendship



The impact of the Chameleon Buddies' outreach programme cannot be overstated. By creating a safe space where women could share their experiences and support one another to adapt to life after stoma surgery with confidence and resilience.

"It's easy to underestimate the power of friendship," peer support volunteer Nicola Napier reflected. "But seeing how these women grew together over the week, from strangers to buddies, was incredibly moving. They left stronger—not because of what we gave them, but because of what they gave each other."

As the 2024 Chameleon Buddies team prepared to leave Eldoret, they carried with them the stories, laughter, and lessons of an unforgettable week.

The Chameleon Buddies mission will continue, but the true legacy of this trip lies in the hands of the women who embraced the theme of *Together We Rise*. With newfound courage and a supportive community, they will undoubtedly rise - together.

Footnote: By contributing to the Chameleon Buddies outreach programme, you can help secure a place for a woman to attend future workshops. Your support provides life-changing opportunities, enabling participants to access essential education, peer support, and resources that empower them to adapt and thrive after stoma surgery. Each donation helps create a space where women can find strength, build community, and rise together.

To learn more or make a donation, please visit **chameleonbuddies.org.uk**

Stories of Impact: Gloria





The team transported a very important piece of equipment to Kenya for one of our youngest project participants, Gloria, but they had to wait until almost the end of the week for the exciting handover to take place.

Gloria is a 17-year-old with spina bifida, who is the surviving twin from conjoined twins, her sister sadly not surviving the separation operation. After her mother abandoned the family, Gloria and her siblings were brought up by her father, who eventually sought help from the Gynocare Hospital. Gloria has been supported with ostomy bags since the Buddies first arrived in Kenya in 2022, and last year she had a one-to-one clinic with Clinical Lead, Claire Ryan. The team noticed that Gloria was in an ill-fitting adult hospital wheelchair, which was too big and unwieldy for Gloria to either manage independently or use comfortably.

Shaun Gash from RGK Wheelchairs offered to send a custom-made wheelchair to Kenya for Gloria, in hot pink and purple, her favourite colours. The Charity were delighted that RGK gave an incredibly generous 50% discount for the wheelchair, with the Buddies then purchasing an additional "Streetjet" electric component, which will turn what is already a fantastic wheelchair into a lightweight, speedy compact one.

Frances, Gloria's father, was invited to the Hospital for the handover ceremony, which Gloria requested was done in front of the 50 women who attended the clinic and peer support week.

Kenya Outreach Week

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Also in attendance was Carol Mabeya, Hospital Director, the nursing team, and the social work team who have been supporting Gloria with her needs for many years. To the tune of "Superwoman", Gloria was wheeled into the tent by her beaming father, whereupon she was presented with her brand-new wheelchair by Gill and the rest of the Buddies team. Pastoress Rose led a blessing of the wheelchair and Gloria, which was a memorable and emotional moment for everyone who was there.

For the rest of the week, the team spotted Gloria whizzing independently around the hospital, taking selfies with her friends, all with an enormous smile on her face. The difference this wheelchair will make to Gloria, as it empowers her to be both independent and comfortable, enabling her to take part in hairdressing training with her peers, is impossible to condense into a few words.

The electric streetjet component is currently on a boat shipment, sent free of charge by Abdul from MK Horizons.

Thank you to all at RGK Wheelchairs and MK Horizons for changing the life of a very special young lady.

Nursing team



During her second visit, Claire Ryan, Specialist Stoma Nurse returned to the GynoCare Hospital, this time as the Clinical Lead for the nursing team, which included a second Stoma Care Specialist Nurse, Sarah Duke and Karen Noades, Bowel and Bladder Specialist Nurse.

The team at the GynoCare Centre, led by Samuel, was eager to learn more about how to support patients in these areas of expertise.

This was the first year the Chameleon Buddies outreach team had explored the unmet continence needs to the ladies. Karen Noades took charge of a fun and engaging practical session for the ladies, explaining the importance of optimal bladder drainage, bladder retraining, and the positive long-term effects of pelvic floor exercises. These sessions are vital as they help participants understand how they can improve their everyday health and prevent complications in the future.

"Helping people feel in control of their bladder health is so rewarding," said Karen Noades. "By teaching the ladies how to retrain their bladders and strengthen their pelvic floor, we can make a real difference to their lives. These techniques are simple but powerful, and they have a lasting impact on their wellbeing."

Specialist Stoma Nurse, Sarah Duke played an important role by leading a session on preventing hernias after surgery. She demonstrated some useful hernia belts, donated by AMI Medical Ltd, and showed the ladies special underwear donated by Vanilla Blush, designed to support their health after surgery. Sarah's session was full of practical advice, making it clear how the right support can help people recover more comfortably.

"After surgery, it's essential to take care of your body and prevent further injury," Sarah explained. "The hernia belts and underwear can make a big difference in recovery, and the ladies were really engaged in learning how to protect themselves from any complications from their stomas further down the line."

Kenya Outreach Week

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Sarah Duke demonstrating how to wear the support belt donated by AMI Medical.

The day also included a session on mucus and discharge, led by Sarah, which flowed seamlessly into Karen's discussion on bladder and bowel care. Both these areas are crucial in the recovery journey, and the ladies learned ways to manage these aspects of their health with confidence.

Finally, Claire oversaw the clinical reviews, where each lady attending the programme had the chance to discuss their stoma care and lifestyle choices. These personal reviews allowed for holistic guidance on how to make positive changes for their future health.

"Every individual is different, and taking time to review their stoma care and overall lifestyle can really help the ladies to reintegrate back into their community," said Claire. "Our work here is about supporting each lady to adapt to life with a stoma and lead a better, healthier life."

This year the team were joined by other people who were keen to share their knowledge, including Hospital Nutritionist, Alddah Onyango, who led a highly entertaining interactive session, combining her wealth of knowledge with her enthusiastic personal delivery – there was a lot of laughter in this session! During her session, there was a lot of animated discussion about how to prevent blockages by avoiding certain foods, and the potential impact of different types of foods on different ostomies.

On the final day, we were joined by Dr Nancy Muyoka, Oncology Nutrition expert, who spoke passionately about the importance of nutrition in the recovery of cancer patients, which was very relevant to our ladies because this year the cohort consisted of many women who suffered fistulas as a result of cancer, leading to their ostomies. Dr Muyoka said "I was honoured to attend this event at Gynocare Hospital. I picked a lot of lessons in matters stoma care that will help me handle my stoma patients better." We look forward to welcoming Dr Muyoka to future events, and thank both Alddah and Dr Mukoya for their invaluable contributions.


Alddah



Kenya Outreach Week

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New Wing development

During our visit last month, Gill met with Hospital Founder and Director, Dr Hillary Mabeya, together with architect Michael and assistant Cornel. On a very windy day at the top of the hospital, the team talked through the design ideas for the proposed new hospital wing, which will be constructed on top of the current 3rd level.

The proposal includes:

- **Large training/ peer support space**
- **Office**
- **Stoma ward x2, each with up to 6 beds**
- **Temperature controlled stoma storage unit**
- **Waiting area**

This is a long process, gathering tenders, quotes, designing plans. It will transform the life not only of the patients at the @gynocarewomens_fistulahospital, but also the staff, who will have a dedicated area for caring for ostomy patients who have been operated on after fistula.

Our Team Kili are training hard to raise funds to build this new wing - Africa's highest peak is looming!

As plans develop we will keep you updated with news. This is an enormous project which we are determined to achieve, with the help of donations and volunteer time.



L-R: Cornel, Michael, Dr Hillary Mabeya



Top of the hospital – site of new proposed wing

Mount Kilimanjaro update

Trekker spotlight – Priteni Horning









"It was at a Women's Adventure Community weekend that I first came across Gill and Chameleon Buddies. She was one of the inspirational speakers opening the weekend's events.

Gill's story and the experiences she shared of some of the women and girls that her charity supports in Africa, completely captivated me. Following her talk, I approached to ask some questions and she continued to tell me about her hatching of a plan to hike Mt Kilimanjaro with a group of women. I got an overwhelming sense that I needed to be a part of that challenge and do what I could to assist.

However, when the places for the trip were released I did not feel in a position to apply, so I held back, but when the announcement was made that the trip was full, I got an awful sinking feeling. I immediately messaged Gill and asked if my name could be placed on a back-up list? She kindly responded to say my name would be first on the list. My desire to support Chameleon Buddies was not that easily sated, so with the approach of my 30th, I decided to do something I had always wanted and set-up a birthday fundraiser for the charity. And because all good things come in threes (or so they say), I decided I should try to achieve something else on my goal's list... a Marathon.

Completing 30 miles on my 30th had a rather nice ring to it though, so I found myself signing up to a 30 mile Ultra Marathon instead, just for the tagline and because what is an extra 4 miles, right!

Although, I won't be choosing a challenge based on a tagline again (please someone hold me to that), I did have the most memorable birthday. The scenery, event organisers and checkpoint volunteers were all epic, as well as the pizza and Reeses chocolate bar that had been packed for special birthday fuel. My elation at the end of the run, was only matched by a message from Gill, three months later, asking if I was still interested in joining the Kili trip. I responded without hesitation. Yes.

Whilst I have no personal or family connection to the cause, my reasons for wishing to join the Chameleon Buddies climb Mt Kilimanjaro challenge are first and foremost, the story of one particular girl in Kenya that made me feel compelled to act. The second is because I feel this challenge holds the same essence, as the adventure I supported back in 2022. It was the first women's hiking relay across the length of the UK, and I spent 2.5 months cycle-supporting and being supported by women. The aim was to support and champion women getting outdoors and on adventures, which I think is so important. I have never climbed a mountain as high as Kili, so while I am excited, I am also rather nervous, but I cannot imagine a better way to do it, than with Chameleon Buddies and the group of women that have come together for this."

Mount Kilimanjaro update

See some image of our intrepid trekkers as they take on their training throughout winter!


Sophie Excell (ileostomy)


Max Redhall (ileostomy). Top of Chrome Hill (dragons back), Peak District



Harriet Green (birth trauma survivor)



Liz Hinds (ileostomy) Pen y Fan, Wales

Fabulous Fundraisers

Jersey swimmers by Jackie Huelin



"Jersey Joy are a group of swimmers who swim all year round in the pool and the sea, no wet suits. We joined a 60 k swimming challenge for the month of November but set ourselves the goal of 150 k with a team of six, five from Jersey and one from Brighton. I had just watched The Stoma Swimmer and was blown away by Gill's enthusiasm and drive and we thought Chameleon Buddies would be a great charity to support. Coincidentally, Gill has visited and trained in Jersey and one of our girls has a niece who has a stoma bag after a horrendous accident. So it seemed that it was meant to be.

We pushed ourselves and passed our goal of 150 k after three weeks reaching 196 k on the morning of 30th November with a chilly sea swim in Jersey which we were very pleased with. Then unbeknown to us, Anna in Brighton decided to go for it and swam 4 k late in the afternoon to make a total of 200 k! We all enjoyed the challenge and raising funds for Chameleon Buddies was a great motivator whilst keeping us all fit."

Thank you to Jackie and her team who raised a wonderful £657.50!

Fabulous Fundraisers

In memory of Hilary Allen

The Highlands School Girls Association raised an incredible **£1000** from their raffle in September, which was instigated by Hilary Allen, a very active member of their community who sadly passed away in November. Hilary and the members of the Association had attended school in Eldoret, and after watching the Stoma Swimmer documentary, Hilary got in touch with Gill to offer her support for the charity.

Several other donations have been granted in Hilary's memory – thank you to everyone who has acted so generously, despite the loss of a clearly well-loved and highly valued lady.

The big hair cut! Cameron Hurley





Thank you to Cameron Jurley who raised an amazing £219.29!





Charlotte and Leo Watson – Alnwick's Halloween House

Charlotte and her husband, Leo, are the owners of the spookiest house in Alnwick - each year putting on an incredible free display to raise money for charity. This year, the couple chose Chameleon Buddies, for whom Charlotte is a trustee.

After braving the elements for 8 nights, in the wind and rain, the Watsons raised an astonishing **£3308.67!**

Christmas card and Secret Santa donations:

Sandra Appleby and Werca's Folk Choir, Mark and Abigail Tate, the Hughes family, Clinicare Nursing Team.

Thank you also to Nicola Dames of Vanilla Blush and Salmaan Makani of AMI Medical for their very generous donations to our ladies during the Peer Support and Clinic Week in Kenya.

Scan QR code to **learn more**



Stoma Skin Soul

How soft convexity changed my life

Victoria Danson, mother, business owner and founder of Crohn's & Colitis Support Lancashire shares her experience of how soft convexity changed her life.

Stoma surgery is life changing on so many levels and I found it really hard to get used to having an ileostomy bag when I first had emergency life saving surgery due to Crohn's Disease 10 years ago, I had an abscess in my small bowel that had been undiagnosed and had 18 inch removed whilst battling sepsis.

At first I suffered with a lot of leaks with my ostomy bag and this massively affected my confidence and restricted the clothes I could wear. I have always been massively into fashion and I would spend hours of my time searching for clothes that I would be comfortable in and that would hide the bag.

Fulfilling my duties as a mother became increasingly difficult as I was having daily leaks and this would increase my anxiety about socialising and I became obsessed with where the toilet was.

Despite this I would still put myself out of my comfort zone and for my son's 5th Birthday I took him to Legoland London. Anticipating leaks, I took plenty of spare bags with me and off we went. The queues for the rides were approximately 90 minutes long as it had not long reopened after Covid and I could see how disappointed his face was every time we had to leave the queue to change my bag then rejoin at the back.

By the 6th leak and one spare bag left I was in sheer panic that the rest of the bags were back at the hotel 20 minutes away and I didn't want to waste any more time on my son's birthday dealing with this issue.

I couldn't relax knowing I only had one spare bag left so I rang a contact I had from Hollister as I knew they had an office in London and within 20 minutes a nurse arrived with a plastic bag full of supplies, it felt like Christmas Day! She said I'm so sorry, I've only got convex, but I didn't care I was happy for the supply of bags.

Prior to this chance meeting I had only used flat bags. The Dansac Novalife TRE™ soft convex ostomy products changed my life! Not only did it allow me to enjoy the day with my son, my confidence has soared in all areas of my life. I can do my job as a hairdresser without worrying I will need to rush to the toilet. I confidently wear tight fitting clothing in the gym without fear of it leaking through my clothes. I can be an active mum with my son without worrying I need to stop our activity due to leaking.

My skin is so much better around my stoma and I can wear my bag for longer so it is better for the environment as I do not have to change it as much. Finding the right bag has massively helped me accept my stoma and support others on the same journey.

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Chameleon Buddies outreach programme

Empowering ostomates in Eldoret, Kenya to adapt to life after stoma surgery





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Chameleon Buddies

Together we can make a difference
Your donations change lives



Thank you for reading

You can help support our ladies from as little as £2/month.

Please visit our website for details:
www.chameleonbuddies.org.uk

Chameleon Buddies