

Autumn 2026

We are Demelza

Your local children's hospice.

Welcome to We are Demelza

Discover how, together, we're making a difference for children and families across **our community**.

Our specialist nursing care

For many families with children who have serious or life-limiting conditions, it can be hard to take a break – often their child's needs are too complex for friends or family members to help with childcare.

Demelza's specialist nursing and care team provides day care at our hospices or in a child's own home, meaning families can take a rest, knowing their child is in safe hands and having fun with people that really understand them.

"I've got my mum and my sister and they're so helpful, but because of Zoya's needs I can't just leave Zoya with them. So for a long time it's just been me and her dad. But then you go to Demelza, and it's amazing. Zoya absolutely loves coming in for day care. Sometimes as a mum you wonder what would happen if I'm not there – who's going to look after her the way I can? Now, there isn't anywhere else I would leave Zoya."

Tahira, Zoya's mum

Did you know?

Last year, we provided families with:



Zoya

1,332 community care sessions at home

467 day care sessions

Our charity shops

We get all sorts of donations to our charity shops and sometimes they raise more than anyone could ever imagine.

Earlier this year, a volunteer gave an unusual laughing buddha figurine to Demelza's Herne Bay shop, after clearing out her mother's house.

Stumped by how much to price it at, they got in touch with a local auction house who listed it with a guide price of £50-£100.

Staff and volunteers watched the online auction together and were staggered to see the bids going up and up, before the buddha eventually sold for an amazing £1,000.

Shop manager Sue Smy said: "When it hit £1,000 we just couldn't believe it. It was so nice we were all watching it together. We did a little dance in the back room."

It goes to show you never know what you might find, so if you're having a clear out and think you've got something special, please do consider donating to your local Demelza shop – you never know what might happen! And all the money supports children in your local area.



Did you know?

We've reopened two of our charity shops, **Tonbridge and Sheerness**, as outlet stores, offering local people the chance to get even more of a bargain and giving more donated goods a sustainable future.



Our charity shops sit at the heart of our communities all over Kent, South East London and East Sussex.

Last year, we sold over **1,331,498** items, reducing waste and contributing to a more sustainable retail culture

By declaring Gift Aid, last year, our customers raised over **£317,729** to support local children and families in your area

663,924 local people shopped in our charity stores in 2025/26, discovering pre-loved treasures while helping us raise vital funds

Find your local charity shop or shop online



Our holistic support

We offer a range of therapeutic services and facilities to enhance the quality of life of the children and families we support, helping them enjoy their time together.

Our hydropool

Our hydropool is often one of the only places that children with complex conditions can swim safely and develop their physical skills. Portia, Ezra's mum, explains how the hydropool allows Ezra, who has spinal muscular atrophy and is reliant on his wheelchair, to experience physical independence.

"Ezra loves the pool – swimming is his absolute favourite thing. It's easier for him to move in the pool and he's got floaty suits so he can be more independent and just bob off – he loves it. Being in the pool is more or less the only physio he does, and it's just the best, because when he's supported with his buoyancy suit he can even take steps."

Portia, Ezra's mum

Did you know?

Last year, we provided:

355
sessions in the
hydropool

434
music therapy
sessions

Creative arts therapies

Our creative arts therapies offer space for families and children to explore and process their emotions. Music Therapist Pete shares what it's like to support children and families through some of their most challenging moments.

"Music seems to be the perfect vessel for emotions. When I'm working with young people at end of life, what we try to do is allow the music to hold or contain these big feelings. Endings are difficult, but they're also what make us human. It's because our time is finite that love, joy, laughter and sadness matter so deeply. Music can give us a place to hold all those emotions and create meaning."

Pete, Music Therapist at Demelza



Demelza to open new specialist residential home

Demelza is to expand the support we offer to children with complex conditions by transforming our Hill Farm building into a specialist residential home.

As part of Demelza's long-term planning, we have been looking at how we can make the best use of our resources and strengthen our financial sustainability and we have identified an unmet and growing need for children who require consistent, round-the-clock care in a stable, long-term setting.

The new home will provide long-term care for up to three children who are unable to live with their parents or foster carers – different from the hospice care Demelza is known for but something we have the clinical expertise, compassion and experience to provide.

This new service will be called Oastview by Demelza and is expected to open next year, with its own dedicated staff. It will be funded separately through local authority placements and other funding sources, rather than through the charitable donations that fund most of our work.

Once running costs are covered, the surplus income from Oastview by Demelza will be used to help fund our charitable support and care services.

The additional income from Oastview by Demelza will help strengthen our financial resilience and support our ability to provide care and support to families, both now and in the future.

Demelza's CEO, Lavinia Jarrett, said: "This is an exciting opportunity to build on the expertise that already exists within Demelza and expand the ways in which we support children with complex needs.

"This is just one of the ways we're looking to diversify our income and it will help raise vital funds but we still need your support – we rely on our amazing communities for 84% of our funding.

"Children's hospices are facing increasing financial pressures and we need our incredible supporters now more than ever."



Oastview
by demelza

Expert care in a place to call home

Our support for bereaved families

At Demelza, we provide specialist care for children at end of life and after death, including use of our bereavement suite, where parents can spend more time with their child, create precious memories and say goodbye at their own pace, in a way that's right for them.

We also help families with memory making, including creating personalised memory boxes, ink prints for jewellery and hand and foot casts of a child or the family together – meaning if they wish to, families can create lasting, physical memories to connect them with their child forever.

Our support doesn't end after a child dies. Our bereavement support will continue for as long as families choose to stay in touch with us – we often still see families years and even decades after the death of their child. This can include counselling, creative arts therapies, sibling support and remembrance events, where bereaved families can share experiences and support one another.

We're there for families like Garry's, whose son Ben died at 17 years old after being diagnosed with cancer.

"What Demelza did for us was truly amazing. You don't want to have to go through what we went through, losing your child, but without places like Demelza I am not sure how people would cope. From the night of Ben's passing, keeping him as comfortable as possible and making sure we were still able to see him, to still supporting us years later. We are so grateful."

Garry, Ben's dad

Ben
with dad,
Garry

Did you know?

Last year, we provided specialist nursing care for 57 children at end of life and hosted 41 bereavement events to support bereaved families and provide a quiet, caring space to remember their children.



Fundraising in our community

We've seen incredible support from our community this spring and summer, and we're grateful to everyone who has raised funds, taken part in events or donated. Together, you're helping us provide extraordinary care, while ensuring we can continue supporting families in the future.

This spring, 14 runners represented us in the London Landmarks Half Marathon, six ran the Brighton Marathon, 19 travelled to the Paris Marathon, and a record-breaking 45 people ran for us at the London Marathon. Could you be running for us next year?

Our annual Easter Trail and Craft Fair at Demelza Kent welcomed 800 visitors across two days to explore the Trail and meet the Easter Bunny! Next year we'll be having a new one-day event on Good Friday, so keep an eye out – tickets are expected to sell fast.

More than 2,500 people joined us for Bubble Rush at Mote Park in Maidstone, creating a fantastic day filled with colour, fun and community spirit. Thank you to everyone who took part and braved the heat. We can't wait to see you next year.

We also held our first open garden event at Demelza Kent, where visitors enjoyed our beautiful gardens and took tours of our allotments and growing areas. We're already planning next year's event – if you can open your own garden we'd love to hear from you!

Thanks to the generosity of the Freddie Green and Family Charitable Foundation, Demelza launched its first ever summer match-funding campaign. And thanks to you, our amazing supporters, we've exceeded all expectations!

However you supported us this year, you've made a huge difference and we want to say a huge **thank you!**

Find out how you can support us



Did you know?

84% of our funding comes from our amazing supporters, so we rely on you to keep delivering the care local families need.



Many of our fundraising and family events are supported by our extraordinary volunteers!



We have over 1000 volunteers

who work in our charity shops, at our hospices, running our events, looking after our gardens, driving families... there's a role for everyone at Demelza!

Find out more about volunteering



Our events

Join us at one of our events or take on a challenge to support local children and families!

Run Kent | 4 October 2026

We are excited to be the official charity partner for Run Kent on Sunday 4 October! This is the official Tonbridge Half Marathon, with additional 5km or 10km options.

Kent Downs 50 | 10 October 2026

Take on this stunning challenge across the Kent Downs! Walk, jog, or run your way through the scenic Kent Downs, with 50km, 25km and 10km options.

London Landmarks Half Marathon | 4 April 2027

From iconic cultural hotspots to the city's quirky hidden gems, the 2027 London Landmarks Half Marathon gives runners the chance to explore the capital on a route like no other.

Paris Marathon | 11 April 2027

The Paris Marathon offers an incredible opportunity to experience the beauty, culture, and charm of one of the world's most iconic cities while taking on an unforgettable 26.2 mile challenge.

Hackney Half Marathon | 16 May 2027

Take part in the HOKA Hackney Half Marathon and support your local children's hospice whilst running through the vibrant streets of East London.

Bubble Rush | 19 June 2027

Get ready for a day of foamy, family-friendly fun at Bubble Rush Maidstone, the fun run that's anything but ordinary!

Trek Iceland | 23-27 June 2027

Join Team Demelza for a trek across the stunning land of fire and ice. Experience the diverse and stunning scenery of the unspoilt wilderness.



Sign up and find
more events



**To find out more and
sign up visit:**
demelza.org.uk/events

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