Congratulations to the 60 hardy souls who braved floods, mud and A14 roadworks to reach the Hallmark Hotel for this year’s AGM and Celebration lunch! Hopefully, by next year the road will all be landscaped and complete. The speakers were Marie (Specialist Nurse in Organ Donation) and Mr. Andy Butler, both of whom explained what goes on before your new liver is offered to you, how sensitively the donor family are approached and how the risks have been minimised by the Organox liver perfusion machine. Good wishes were received from both our President and Vice President, neither of whom were able to be with us, and Sir Roy Calne generously donated one of his paintings to be auctioned in aid of ALTA’s funds. This raised the respectable sum of £200 which, considering the auction was sprung on everyone without warning, was an excellent result. Entertainment was provided by Lucy Bunce, harpist, who also plays in the Chapel at Addenbrooke’s.
David Hyde took the opportunity to say that he was standing down as Chairman after this meeting in favour of someone rather younger, Brian Dean, who he was confident would no doubt come up with some fresh ideas and continue to keep ALTA on a steady course for the future.

THE LIFE OF BRIAN IN NEWPORT

Brian Dean

Following a successful liver transplant in 2017 and a steady recovery, I felt the time had come to challenge myself and compete in the 2019 Westfield Health British Transplant games held in Newport in July. My only recent sporting activity was bowls and I was pleased to read that it was one of many sports available. Having duly completed the medical questionnaire, countersigned by my consultant, as being fit to compete, I submitted my application and was subsequently accepted as a member of the Addenbrooke’s Transplant Team.

Upon my arrival at Newport on Thursday 25th July, I checked into the student accommodation, which was spacious, neat and extremely comfortable. A group of competitors had already arrived and were competing in their respective events. We all congregated at the Rodney Stadium on Thursday evening for the opening ceremony. As I was the ‘new boy’ on the block I had the honour of carrying the Addenbrooke’s banner and leading the team into the stadium. To look around and see the hundreds of local people and supporters cheering and applauding as we negotiated the perimeter of the stadium was an experience I will never forget. After the other 34 adult transplant teams and the teams of children aged from 5-17 had entered the stadium, the final group to enter were the Family Donor Network, a group of proud and dedicated people who had been party to a member of their family providing the
‘gift of life’. At that moment everyone in the stadium stood as one and applauded as they circumnavigated the stadium. Many a tear was shed, me included. Everyone departed to prepare for their up and coming events, the bowls competition being on the Saturday. There had been 46 people entered in the event. A round robin was arranged and a series of 3 games were played in each group, the winner of the group progressing to the quarter final. Having won 2 of the 3 games, I came a close second, losing the one game to the eventual silver medallist, so all in all I felt I had competed well and now look forward to the 2020 games in Coventry. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the celebration evening on the Sunday but Addenbrooke’s finished overall third of all the 35 competing teams - a fantastic achievement. (1st Kings Adults 84 points, 2nd Royal Papworth 80 points, 3rd Addenbrookes 78 points)

The overall experience was tremendous, I was warmly welcomed by my fellow competitors from both Addenbrooke’s and other competing teams, together with the people of Newport who made us feel most welcome throughout the four days. I would encourage all transplant recipients to consider participating in the transplant games. It is not about winning but taking part, for everyone to see the importance of becoming a donor, as the individual who has provided the gift of life to another continues to live. Recovery is tough but regular exercise helps boost energy levels, increases strength and helps prevent common post-transplant complications such as high blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Looking forward to seeing more liver recipients competing at Coventry in 2020. Visit www.atgt.co.uk for further details.

TRANSPLANT CRICKET
Originally known as Great Britain Transplant Cricket Club, the club was established in 2004 following a challenge set by the Australians at the World Transplant Games. The club was re branded to England and Wales Transplant Cricket in 2018. England and Wales Transplant Cricket is a representative side for cricketers who have received life-saving and life-changing organ, tissue and stem cell transplants. We are all celebrating our “second innings” – a reminder of the generosity of our donors, be they friends, family or complete strangers who offered a new chance for life. Think of it as a life-saving Umpires Decision Review System!

We welcome all adults over the age of 16 who have received an organ, tissue or stem cell transplant plus those awaiting a transplant and dialysis patients. As well as providing an opportunity for transplantees to take part in the sport of cricket, we also aim to promote our belief in the importance of donation and the transformative impact it can have, not just for the recipient, but also for all those around them. We are all to
to give everyone access to a game within reach. We aim to spread the message of organ donation within the local cricketing community and beyond at each of our fixtures.

During the 2018 season we played against county disability D40 teams in Wales, Hampshire and Yorkshire. We also arrange fixtures against our players’ club sides which make for interesting rivalry and enforces the sense of community within our players’ own club. One of our key rivalries is against our Australian counterparts, Transplant Cricket Lucky Stars, who we have played in 4 series since 2004, the most recent in 2017 when Australia toured England. The two sides compete for the David Hookes Memorial Shield in memory of the former Australian Test batsman who has become a symbol for donation following his tragic early death and donation of his own organs.

England and Wales Transplant Cricket is a community which involves family and friends as well as transplantees. This community feel helps transplant recipients and family and friends deal with life post-transplant, sharing stories and developing friendships that last a lifetime. We encourage family and friends to attend all fixtures and club events. Social meals are arranged around games, these meals are a great chance for everyone involved in the club to socialise and enjoy the friendly club atmosphere.  

**FINALLY…**

Do we have your latest contact details? Please remember to notify us if you move.

ALTA is an independent charity reg. no. 1115971 and receives no funds from ACT.