

Welcome to the first ever edition of the KRBS Informer, a newsletter to let you know what Kent Reliance is doing in the community. We take environmental issues seriously at the Society, and our staff have developed a great relationship with some local and national charities through fund raising activities and support. I hope you enjoy reading our newsletter.

Mike Lazenby, Chief Executive.

KRBS becomes "Carbon Neutral"

On 22 October 2007, the Society officially achieved carbon neutral status. We have developed a good relationship with the Carbon Neutral Company, full details can be obtained on our website at krbs.com. October also saw the launch of our Green mortgage which offers an additional loan to our existing borrowers to assist them in financing improvements required to increase the energy efficiency of their homes.



In order to offset resources used in producing our newsletter we have planted ten trees through the Carbon Neutral Company.

The Kent Walking Bus Scheme

The Society has sponsored a number of walking bus schemes for Kent schools. The Walking Bus charity encourages pupils and parents to walk to school and leave the car at home. This is not only healthy exercise but good for the environment, with parents reducing the use of their cars and therefore their carbon emissions while helping ease congestion on the roads too. A lot of the walkers from our schools say that it is more fun to walk to school with their friends than travel by car.

KRBS staff are often participating in outside fund raising activities such as abseils, zip wires, fun runs etc. Gemma Shaw (pictured) and other KRBS staff abseiled in Maidstone, Kent for a local Stroke Association charity.



Photograph courtesy of Piers Morgan, Medway News.

SOS Village, India

Our main overseas charity is SOS children's village, which cares for over 60,000 orphaned and abandoned children in over 123 countries around the world. In particular we take special interest in the SOS village based in Bangalore as this is where our subsidiary company, Easiprocess is based.

The Society offers financial and practical support to the Village and in February KRBS staff had a 'wear something WOW' day where staff were encouraged to wear elaborate or themed clothing, with proceeds going to the SOS charity.

Age Concern

Kent Reliance staff have undertaken various decorating projects over the last year. A disused room at the Age Concern centre in Gillingham was transformed into an exercise room. Gentle exercise for the elderly helps to increase mobility and avoid falls.

Spadework

Spadework in Offham, Kent is an organisation that offers training and support for young adults with learning difficulties. The Society has offered both financial support and took time to decorate the cafe at the site which will hopefully result in more visitors to the organisation.

Macmillan Cancer Care Trust

The offices of Macmillan Cancer Care Trust in Maidstone were in desperate need of re-decoration. The organisation is raising funds for a chemotherapy unit at Medway Maritime Hospital. Currently cancer patients have to travel long distances for this often exhausting treatment. The new unit will also have provision for relatives to be with the patients while undertaking their treatment. Macmillan Cancer Trust simply did not have the funds available for decorating, so the Society stepped in by supplying the necessary materials, and decorating the hall and meeting room on their behalf. Their hardworking staff are now able to work in a clean and pleasant environment.

Sport Relief

On 16 March a team of Kent Reliance staff participated in the Sport Relief run a mile event at Chatham Maritime and raised a fantastic £520.

The Big Sleep Out

Seven members of our staff spent the night sleeping in cardboard boxes for the Country's biggest sleep out, which took place on Saturday 26 January at the Riverside in Chatham. It was attended by Terry Waite, the patron of the charity Emmaus, which offers a home and work for the homeless. Almost £1,000 was raised by our willing team and as an added bonus the Society won the award for the "most unusual box design".



Gillingham Football Club

In May 2007 we became the main sponsor of our local football team, Gillingham Football Club. This has given us a great opportunity to work with them on various projects in the local community and extend this support to community projects in India. We invited a group of 60 local children to attend the club's training ground to participate in training exercises with some of the players. The children were given an insight into the diet of the players encouraging commitment to both healthy eating and more exercise.

The sponsorship has also allowed us to supply complimentary match tickets to local emergency services, such as fire fighters, paramedics, police officers and health service staff in recognition of the services that they provide in the community 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Young adults with learning difficulties and children from local schools have also benefited from complimentary tickets.

Be a part of 'building' our on-line services

On 19 May, Kent Reliance will be launching a pilot service which will allow investors to view their account details on-line. We are looking for 100 members to volunteer to test the service for us: initially this will be account balances only. Those who sign up will be expected to provide feedback on the functionality of the prototype to help us launch the service to everyone. If you are interested in signing up to the pilot service please e-mail us at mfg@krbs.com