

# Farleigh Hospice

## Peer Networks' Journey

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### Background

Farleigh Hospice is a registered charity, based in Chelmsford, Essex, which provides hospice care to people affected by life-limiting illnesses across mid Essex. The organisation also has a chain of retail stores across the county.

[www.farleighhospice.org](http://www.farleighhospice.org)

With approximately 44% of the annual running costs being funded by the local NHS, the hospice relies on the support and goodwill of the local mid Essex community to contribute to the over £16,500 it costs to provide the services each day.

Having a team of 800+ volunteers, meant that the Global Pandemic had a major effect on the availability of volunteers during lockdown. As non-essential retail was closed, all 30 of the retail staff were furloughed. With a major decline in income from both retail and donations, the hospice faced significantly increased costs to purchase Covid-safe PPE and additional cleaning services. Notwithstanding, there was an increase in service users (residents) altogether having a major impact on cashflow.

### How Peer Networks helped

Debbie De Boltz is Fundraising Manager and manages a team to bring in income from members of the public and the private sector, to sustain sources to deliver the hospice care, free of charge. Debbie felt that joining Peer Networks would give her insight into the pressures faced by other businesses (and potentially those that might donate to Farleigh). Through Peer Networks, Debbie was able to identify problems that potential private sector supporters were facing. She discovered that like Farleigh, they also had teams working remotely, staff challenges with mental health, juggling home school and other family members working from home.

Some Peer Networks members' businesses are entering teams for the Farleigh golf day and participating in the £50 challenge.

"The presentation on mental health in the workplace was extremely useful and we want to roll it out to all our staff both clinical and non-clinical."

## Farleigh Hospice (Debbie De Boltz) says:

"Peer Networks is not just about what you can learn outwardly, but you also learn an awful lot about yourself. The presentation we had from the Olympic gold medal rower was so inspiring – it helped me understand that my approach is just as good as anyone else's.

Peer Networks empowers you to consider "what can I possibly change about the way I operate?". It was a really refreshing opportunity to liaise with other businesspeople."

## How Peer Networks can help your business

**Learn from your peers:** Find solutions to the real issues your business is facing by working with other local business leaders facing similar challenges.

**All it takes is your time:** Peer Networks is a completely free programme, all it takes is a few hours of your time each month. You can join virtual sessions from the comfort of your home or office.

**Varied delivery, real results:** Activities take place in structured, small-group sessions, led by a skilled professional facilitator to make sure you see real

results in return for the investment of your time. You will also benefit from access to 1:1 mentoring, coaching or advice depending on the support you need.

**Non-competitive:** Peer Networks brings together business leaders working collaboratively to find solutions to common problems. You will not be placed in a group with any competitors, so you can share your expertise and benefit from others.

For more information about Peer Networks, visit

[www.peernetworks.co.uk](http://www.peernetworks.co.uk)

## Peer Networks is powered by the BEST Growth Hub

The BEST Growth Hub offers free, impartial advice to help Essex-based businesses grow.

At the BEST Growth Hub, we help our clients make smarter decisions centred around the four key components of running a business:

planning | growing | solving | adapting

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