

Hello Everyone

The sweet sound of the robin has been such a joy! I'm transported back to my walk home from school with the birds chirping away. No traffic noise except perhaps a cyclist ringing his bell, or the clip-clopping of a rag-and-bone man's horse, or a kindly hello from the old gentleman across the road.

Yes, the robin is most welcome. His trilling almost drowns out the sound of the tractor and the bulldozer behind our house. They leave behind a pathetic sight of pine trees, felled and lying on their sides. Scattered around a vast area of deforestation, they look like crumpled and discarded parasols, unwanted and destined for the dump.

I am cheered up by the autumn colours - the vineyards are particularly beautiful. The golden yellow leaves on the trees become almost transparent as the sun slips down the early evening sky and casts its low shadows onto the path through the forest.

### Autumn Open Meeting

On October 13th a few of us gathered for the Autumn Open Meeting in Perpignan. There were 14 of us and it was an informative and interesting morning.

We heard first from **Maggie** who gave us an update on what's been happening in 2021 and then a brief outline of what we can expect next year. Do have a read of her full report. I've attached a pdf to this Newsletter.

**Penny** brought us up to date with all things "national" including the CSF National Project HOPE (Help to Overcome Problems Effectively). This project, developed by Macmillan with Coventry University, has an element called *Take Control*. This is a single 3 hour workshop that aims to support those living with and after cancer by introducing some essential skills and coping mechanisms. CSF has negotiated a licence to roll this out in France - once Covid restrictions and Brexit visa issues allow.

Penny also spoke of CSF's membership of **ECPC - the European Cancer Patient Coalition** - which, as well as being the voice of cancer patients and their carers on the European stage, runs interesting webinars, the latest coincidentally relating to Palliative Care. For more information on ECPC have a look here: <https://ecpc.org/>

**Doctor Charles Van Oudenhove** opened our eyes to what Palliative Care means in this part of France. He gave an interesting talk and a good discussion followed. There are 2 mobile units operating in Perpignan. The staffing levels are difficult to maintain due to a shortage of trained medical staff but the important thing is that there are 2 teams in the P-O.

**At lunchtime** we all sat round a very large table with lots of space between us. It didn't stop us though from indulging in some very entertaining conversation and the food was excellent. If you weren't able to join us this time, don't worry - we are planning our next Open Meeting for April or May next year. See you then!

### Christmas cards

<https://sud-de-france.cancersupportfrance.org/shop>

<https://cancersupportfrance.org/csf-national-shop>

Both these links take you to our CSF Christmas cards.

If you would like to order, please contact Maggie Longworth ([sud-maggie@cancersupportfrance.org](mailto:sud-maggie@cancersupportfrance.org))

### **Drop Ins**

As these Drop Ins are likely to be inside, please **don't forget your Pass Sanitaire**

**Wednesday 3 November**                      **Pablo's Bar - Céret**                      **10.30**

We look forward to seeing you at Pablo's Bar. Books, coffee and chat.

**Monday 15 November**                      **Laroque**                      **10.30-12**

The Café des Artistes is a great venue for meeting up. If it's cold but not rainy, we can still put the books outside but go inside for our coffee. Wear something warm! If it rains we'll be inside with the books.

There will be masses of books of course so bring your own paperbacks for exchange. You can buy a coffee and take two books. Come for a chat, meet friends or bring family.

Also, Maggie will be bringing **Christmas Cards**

**Wednesday 17 November**                      **Villa Lafabrière Prades**                      **10.15-12**

Please come and join us for coffee, tea and books. Please note, we start at 10.15. The address is 15 Avenue Louis Prat, 66500 Prades.

**Tuesday 2 November**                      **Information Day - An introduction to Active Listening**

Our meeting will be at Argens-Minervois in the Aude. Coffee will be served at 10am and we'll start the meeting at 10.30. A light buffet will be available at lunchtime.

In the morning we will talk about CSF and in the afternoon we will talk about the role of the Active Listener. Maggie will be sending full details of the whole day shortly.

Remember, you don't have to be a CSF member and you can come for the whole day or just for the morning session.

If you are interested, please do come along. Just contact Maggie Longworth ([sud-maggie@cancersupportfrance.org](mailto:sud-maggie@cancersupportfrance.org)) and let her know.

**Please remember** that if anyone is struggling or needing help, the CSF telephone and email helplines are always open. We are there for everyone needing assistance at this time as well as for those affected by cancer. There is also lots of information on our website: <https://cancersupportfrance.org>

Diana Eastaff

