www.alkionides.org

ALKIONIDES UK CHARITY

Registered Charity No: 1205188

President's AGM Report- 4 July 2026

This year I celebrated my milestone birthday with my family, and the Alkionides UK teams, my extended family. I look back to 30 years of Alkionides and a path that brings back so many memories of great friendships, close community, challenges to bring change to help our patients, as well as great sadness when things don't go to plan. I know that we must focus on what is worthwhile and to do our utmost to achieve our goals towards working for the public benefit, the relief of poverty and financial hardship and to bring some halcyon days (Αλκυονίδες μέρες) to people going through difficult times. The work of the charity is in capable hands, with a stronger team this year, all members contributing with their own strengths and a big heart.

Alkionides UK 'Nest'news:

Our 'Nest Team' of 14 dedicated volunteers make sure that the patients are cared for from the minute they arrive. They welcome them and provide everything they need at the house. If required, they accompany and visit them at hospitals as well as provide help with translation. We have a registered, Greek speaking taxi driver who meets them at the airports. For low-income families we also cover transport to hospital appointments. We provide cleaning services, free internet, Cypriot TV, as well as shopping for household essentials.

The Directors and Trustees take full responsibility when we need to look at compliance and legal matters, council regulations, complaints and safety issues.

Last year our 'Nest' accommodated 43 families, including seven long-term:

- A 60-year-old who underwent two liver transplant operations in a few days and had a six-month recovery period in intensive care. We are delighted that he has now been able to return to his home in Cyprus to meet his new grandson, although he experienced complications and was admitted in the Nicosia General hospital. We keep in touch with his family.
- A 25-year-old patient who had a transplant as a baby, came twice with his mum and stayed for six months while receiving complicated treatment at Kings College hospital, where coordinator Mrs Aphroditi Pavlou sees to all the patients' needs.
- Our volunteers visited Cypriot patients at the Cleveland clinic. One was a young adult, a victim of a motorbike accident who became paraplegic. He will need

long rehabilitation. A doctor, whose wife was hit by a car, vowed to work towards building a rehabilitation centre on his return to Cyprus. Another lady, stayed in intensive care for six months until they could operate. Father Pavlos from the Archbishopric visited regularly, offering prayers and comfort. Another devoted wife visited her husband daily for seven months, while she despaired at the inability to discover the virus that had infected him.

- A 35-year-old, father of two young children, was sent with his brother to Stanmore Orthopaedic hospital for a complex back operation. He had been hit by a car while delivering food on his motor bike. We provided financial and moral support during these long months.

When the day comes for patients to go back home, it is a very emotional experience for patients and their families, but also for our volunteers who devote so much time looking after them throughout their ordeal. We are very grateful to all the doctors and hospital staff. We are proud of top liver transplant surgeon, Dr Stephanos Pericleous from Cyprus, at the Royal Free Hospital, whom we honoured recently.

Alkionides Birmingham & Midlands:

Trustees and Directors, Liliana Malla and Helen Vasiliou, continue to organise outings funded by the Keith Coombs Trust, since 2019. Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) join our volunteers with their families and carers and have great fun together. They share their stories over lunch (often sponsored by Mr K. Akathiotis) and many have become friends over the years. Last summer they had the opportunity to visit Drayton Manor Resort, followed by a festive Christmas trip to Winter Wonderland.

Thanks to our sponsors, we are able to also support these families financially at Christmas and Easter, as well as some individuals in the community who are struggling to make ends meet. Recently we helped a divorced Cypriot mother of two young children by refurbishing a council flat that was in a terrible condition.

Sponsors and philanthropists, Mr and Mrs J. Koumi, organise a wonderful evening at the Estia in Birmingham every year. An event organised for the community by energetic and passionate volunteers, the ‘Rebetiki Vradia’ in November, inspires everyone to dance and sing while enjoying delicious home food and contributing generously towards charitable causes.

London events:

- We are very proud of Anna Nicholsby Baker, who braved the cold September Serpentine lake in London to swim two miles for Alkionides UK.
- His excellency, our Patron, the High Commissioner Dr Kyriacos Kouros and his wife Mrs Vasiliki Kinani Kourou, joined us for a crisp 10K sponsored walk in Hyde Park 'from Palace to Palace', on the 26 October. We walked from Kensington palace to Buckingham Palace and were treated to a champagne luncheon by our sponsors, Mr and Mrs N. Hambi of the Windermere Hotel, Victoria. The event brought together committee members, patients, volunteers and students and helped us raise a respectable sum. Ambassador, Katerina Mina soprano, walked with us and presented some of the certificates with Mrs Kourou.
- Christmas carols at the 'Nest' in December was a very festive affair with guests of honour Mr and Mrs A. Kakouris, former Cyprus High Commissioner in the U.K who had inaugurated our new home the year before. Patients and committee members had baked traditional cookies which sold quickly. Along with our honourable guests, singers included Ambassador Katerina Mina, Eugenie Papadopoulos, Sue Kittalides, the Pittalis sisters, Mrs Maria Papalouca and Marilena Ioannidou. A gifted and inspiring band! Our young patient Andreas, a professional singer and guitar player who is losing his sight, entertained us with Greek songs. Johny Pittalis designed a beautiful kingfisher poster for our 'Nest' and the design will be used for Christmas cards next year.
- Our Patrons, The High Commissioner Dr Kyriacos Kourou and his wife Mrs Vasiliki Kinani Kourou, hosted a beautiful 'Summer Evening' in their garden, on June 18, to help us fundraise towards our Scholarship Fund.

Student Grants: A committee was set up with Marina Antoniou, Tatiana der Avedissian, Miria Pittalis and Angelos Athanassiades to interview applicants studying in the UK for undergraduate and Masters degrees, who come from low-income families. With the generosity of our sponsors, we were able to sponsor seven students this year, including one of our patients who made us very proud by achieving a 2.1 in Computing at Westminster University and is now pursuing his Master's degree in AI at the prestigious University of Warwick. He is always present at our events ready to help and has created our new website in his little spare time: www.alkionides.org

In 2025-26, students included: one who is completing her studies in Ballet & Dance, two law students and our AI brilliant student. The committee has approved three more students for 2026/27 studying Maths, Chemical engineering and Law. The Xenophon Protopapas Foundation will fund one of our students throughout her/his studies. We are very grateful.

Community support:

With the invaluable help of His Eminence, Archbishop Nikitas, we were able to send Christmas and Easter vouchers to low-income families. Several of our members are involved with the Cypriot community and the directors are looking into how best we can support different projects that will benefit groups of people in organised activities. Committee members, Dr Rebecca Hadjiosif, Maro Athanasiou and Dr Serafim Kiriakides, recently observed a music session entertaining people with dementia (Dementia Club UK) in Barnet and the committee decided to cover the cost to fund some of these sessions for a month. We also cover speech therapy for a young autistic child.

- If you know of families with SEND children or students who are struggling, please contact us on www. alkionides.org

Everyone on the team is very much appreciated and everyone contributes in their own way:

Trustees & Directors: Marie Nicholsby, (president), Tatiana der Avedissian (co-president), Dr Rebecca Hatjiosif, Liliana Malla and Helen Vasiliou (Birmingham & Midlands), Nicholas Nicolaides (compliance), Angelos Athanassiades (Grants), Dr Alan Nicholsby (Consultant) and David Nicholsby (Financial Adviser).

Committee : Eugenie Papadopoulos (co-president), Sue Kittalides, Maro Athanasiou, Lena Pilavaki, Dr Serafim Kiriakides, Linda Kyriacou (data and membership), Monica Kourtoumbelidou (media), Marina Antoniou (Grants), Miria Pittalis (Secretary), Marilena Ioannidou, Stella Dinenis, Maro Chrysostomou, Maria Papalouca.

Nest Team: Maro Athanasiou, Sue Kittalides, Dr Rebecca Hatjiosif, Dr Serafim Kyriakides, Linda & Thotos Kyriacou, Sylvia Hambi, Mary Quin Pittalis, Chris & Lena Pilavaki, Maria Papalouca, Alan & Marie Nicholsby, Marilena Ioannidou and Maria Zenonos.

We are indebted to our Sponsors: CAPITAL GROUP, THE A. G. LEVENTIS FOUNDATION, THE REO STAKIS CHARITABLE FOUNDATION, ALKIONIDES CYPRUS and ALKIONIDES BIRMINGHAM & MIDLANDS, Mr & Mrs J. KOUMI, J. K. PITTALIS, H.E. ARCHBISHOP NIKITAS & THE NPT TRUST, THE XENOPHON PROTOPAPAS FOUNDATION, THE CHRISTOS LAZARI FOUNDATION, P. POLYVIOU and other members and friends who help in many different ways.

'Nest' room Sponsors who contribute £100 a month or more: 2025-26:

Mr & Mrs P. Haberis, Mr J. Pittalis, Marios Papadopoulos (triathlete), David Nicholsby (triathlete), In memory of beloved Trustee Mr Akis Ioannides, Famagusta Hotel.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING ALKIONIDES UK. CONSIDER BECOMING SUSTAINING MEMBERS. SPONSOR ONE OF OUR ROOMS AT THE 'NEST'.