

Masked tribute to husband who died from rare cancer

Family and friends help raise funds and awareness of Sarcoma UK charity

A MASQUERADE ball was held in Thatcham at the weekend in tribute of a man who died after a four-year battle with cancer.

More than 100 people turned out in their best masks and dress at the Mercure Newbury West Grange Hotel, on the A4, on Saturday evening to raise money for research into sarcoma.

Fifteen people are diagnosed with this rare type of cancer every day in the UK that can appear anywhere in the body, usually in the form of lumps that grow or change.

Matthew Congerton, from Thatcham, died of the disease at the age of 51, in October 2023.

His friends and family have since raised nearly £10,000 for Sarcoma UK, the national bone and soft tissue cancer charity.

His widow Jo Congerton explained how the idea for the ball started. She said: "We were all feeling a little bit sad and wanted to do something positive."

"Sarcoma is just not well-known cancer. We hadn't even heard of it until my husband was diagnosed."

"But since Matthew's diagnosis, and his passing, everybody here knows about sarcoma. And that's what it's all about."

"It's not only raising money. It's about raising awareness of this awful disease."

She added: "My husband was such a positive chap. It was an inconvenience to him, having cancer, but he never let it get in his way. He just carried on with life."

"And we feel that we've got to go on as well and raise as much money as we can."

She added that they hope to host the event again every two years. The next event will be 80s themed.

Speaking at the event, mayor of Thatcham Petra Pemberton added: "It's a lovely event and I've already put my name down and bid for one of the silent auctions. It's such a good cause."

There are more than 100 different types of sarcoma. Symptoms can include lumps, swelling, pain in the bones, stomach pain, sickness, loss of appetite and blood in vomit or stools.

Visit <https://shorturl.at/OWIzY> to read more about the disease.



Daughter Ellie, mayor of Thatcham Petra Pemberton and Matthew's widow Jo Congerton



More than 100 people attended the masquerade ball

Crown court for teen on affray charge

A TEENAGER who carried a large knife and caused an affray in the Broadway in Thatcham has been sent to the crown court for sentence.

Osman Haron appeared in the dock at Reading Magistrates' Court on Friday, May 30.

At this latest hearing the 18-year-old, of Bluecoats, Thatcham, admitted causing affray by using, or threatening, unlawful violence.

Next, he pleaded guilty to having a large, black-handled kitchen knife.

Thirdly, Mr Haron admitted obstructing or resisting a police officer.

All the offences were committed in The Broadway, Thatcham, on May 26.

Finally, Mr Haron admitted assaulting a police officer on duty in Reading on May 27.

District judge Samuel Goozee considered that his own powers of punishment

could be insufficient.

He therefore sent the case to be sentenced by a judge sitting at Reading Crown Court on a date to be fixed.

Haron was meanwhile denied bail and was remanded in custody.

Judge Goozee cited the fact that Haron had previously broken bail conditions and the likely sentence given the nature and seriousness of the offending as reasons to deny bail.

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Police seize another illegal e-scooter

POLICE have seized another illegal e-scooter from the streets.

Officers from Newbury neighbourhood policing team seized the machine from the A4 in Thatcham.

They said they are taking action on the issue because e-scooters have been reported as an issue concerning local residents.

Police advise that it is not currently possible to get insurance for privately-owned e-scooters.

This means it is illegal to use them on the road or in public spaces, such as parks, street pavements, and shopping centres.

Police warn that, if you use a privately-owned e-scooter in public, you risk the vehicle being seized under Sec.165 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 for having no insurance.

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