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Media Release

Turf Cutting ceremony marks the start of new build

To mark the start of the major building works for the RNHRD and Therapies Centre, an official turf cutting ceremony was held at the Royal United Hospitals (RUH) Bath NHS Foundation Trust.

The RNHRD and Therapies Centre, costing c£16m to build, will house many of the services currently located at the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases (RNHRD) and in the RUH, namely rheumatology, therapies and pain management services.

Benefactors Andrew and Christina Brownsword have pledged up to £1m to match every pound donated to a Forever Friends Appeal £2m campaign towards the cost of the new building. Today they made the first cut into the ground with David Snell, Operations Manager from Kier Construction, Brian Stables, Trust Chairman, and Ed Jackson, rugby star and ambassador for the Forever Friends Therapies campaign, to get construction work underway.

Andrew Brownsword said:

“Seeing this building work commence is a special moment. My family and I are delighted to be supporting this important project which will benefit so many people in our local community. We hope our gift of £1m towards the Centre will provide the best care for patients and will encourage others who are in a position to give, to support this wonderful hospital too.”

Other donors including representatives from Santander, who have chosen the Appeal as their charity of the year, Bath Rugby players and staff from Kier Construction joined RUH staff at the turf cutting ceremony.

Brian Stables, Trust Chairman, RUH said:

“The start of the construction work marks a key milestone for the Trust. This building will make a major impact on the services the hospital can provide to some 25,000 people each year. It has been designed in conjunction with patients, staff and architects, and will include a large hydrotherapy pool, a specialist gym and rehabilitation equipment, and a biologics treatment space to support treatment, recovery, wellbeing and the management of long-term conditions.

“It’s an amazingly generous gesture made by the Brownsword Charitable Foundation and we would very much welcome help from the public to achieve our target of raising £2m.”

The RNHRD and Therapies Centre is being built close to the main entrance of the RUH and will be predominately an outpatient centre providing treatment, care and education for patients to recover from episodes of illness or injury, or to manage their long-term condition.

Ed Jackson, former Bath rugby player said:



“As a spinal injury patient, I have learned just how important the environment is to wellbeing and recovery, having spent so much time lying down and staring at the ceiling, and unable to leave the hospital setting. Therapeutic environments, calming surroundings and mental stimulation are hugely beneficial. Staff at the RUH do an amazing job, and I believe that they should be supported by working in the right environments to help them to deliver the best level of care too.

We need the public’s support to help raise the funds needed to build this innovative and therapeutic new centre. If you can support the campaign, please visit the Appeal’s website to find out more.”

David Snell, Operations Manager, Kier Construction said:

“We’re delighted to be working with the Trust on such a unique building which will serve people of all ages and needs.

“You won’t see much for the next few months with all the work being concentrated at ground level and the building’s foundations. But after the New Year you’ll see some big changes as the walls start to go up. That’s when you’ll see the new Centre is very much a reality.”

Once building work is completed on the RNHRD and Therapies Centre and services moved, the construction of the new Cancer Centre will begin which is part of the major redevelopment programme to make the RUH fit for the future.

Ends

Photos attached (from left to right) David Snell, Kier Construction, Andrew Brownsword, Brian Stables, RUH Trust Chairman, Ed Jackson, former Bath Rugby player.

Other photos include The Forever Friends Appeal mascot and Group photo with RUH staff, Kier construction staff, Donors, Supporters, Corporate partners Santandar.

For more information contact Rebecca Hedges, Marketing and Communications Officer on 01225 826282 or email: Rebecca.hedges@nhs.net

Notes to Editor:

About The Forever Friends Appeal

- The Forever Friends Appeal is the principal fundraising charity for the Royal United Hospitals, Bath. As well as fundraising for major campaigns, we raise funds for the hospital’s wards and departments to pay for state-of-the-art medical equipment and facilities, research and innovations, staff training and the creation of welcoming and highly beneficial healing environments for our patients and their families. Each year we invest in projects that go above and beyond what the NHS can provide
- For more information about the Appeal visit: www.foreverfriendsappeal.co.uk

About Ed Jackson

- Ed is an English former professional rugby union player who played for a number of sides in England and Wales as a Number 8.
- Having fractured and dislocated some of his vertebrae and shattered the disc between them, his spinal cord was impacted and partially crushed, resulting in damage, swelling and spinal shock.
- Despite the severeness of his injury, Ed is making a positive recovery.

RNHRD and Therapies Centre Campaign

- The Forever Friends Appeal is raising a minimum of £2 million towards this £16 million project in association with the RNHRD Charitable Fund – with the Brownsword Charitable Foundation



challenging the public to back the appeal by generously promising to match every pound donated up to the level of £1 million. For more information about the RNHRD and Therapies Centre campaign visit: www.foreverfriendsappeal.co.uk/rnhrd-therapies-centre

- The RNHRD and Therapies Centre will bring together the RUH's rheumatology, therapies and a number of pain management services which are currently provided at the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases' (RNHRD) Mineral Water Hospital site – also known as The Min. The new RNHRD and Therapies Centre will be a purpose-built outpatient facility and will include a new hydrotherapy pool, a gym, a therapeutic garden and clinical areas to improve patient experience, providing the treatment, care and education for patients to recover from episodes of illness or injury, or to manage their long-term condition.

About the Royal United Hospitals, Bath

- The Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust provides acute treatment and care for a catchment population of around 500,000 people in Bath, and the surrounding towns and villages in North East Somerset and Western Wiltshire. The hospital provides healthcare to the population served by four Clinical Commissioning Groups: Bath & North East Somerset CCG, Wiltshire CCG, Somerset CCG and South Gloucestershire CCG.
- The Trust provides 565 beds and a comprehensive range of acute services including medicine and surgery, services for women and children, accident and emergency services, and diagnostic and clinical support services.
- In 2015 The Royal United Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust was acquired the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases (RNHRD) NHS Foundation Trust. The RNHRD treats patients from across the country offering services in rheumatology, chronic pain and chronic fatigue syndrome/ME.
- The RUH is changing - we have an exciting programme of redevelopment underway transforming our site and further improving the services we provide. For more details visit: www.ruh.nhs.uk/about/fit_for_the_future
- For more information about the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust visit: www.ruh.nhs.uk

