

# KEMP Hospice Butterfly Release 2023

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Can I donate for more than one butterfly?**

Yes, you can donate for more than one butterfly, you will be required to make another donation for each butterfly.

### **Do I need to attend the Butterfly release?**

Though we'd like everyone to be there to share in the beautiful occasion and to release their own butterfly, if you can't make it please let us know and our team will release your butterfly for you.

### **Do I get free access to Bodenham Arboretum?**

With thanks to Bodenham Arboretum, they have kindly donated one free entry per butterfly. Friends and family who would like to attend the Butterfly release, will be required to pay the entry fee. You are free to spend the whole day there and enjoy the grounds and facilities. Alternatively you can donate for more than one butterfly, so each person in your group can release their own butterfly.

### **What happens if it rains?**

The timings are subject to weather conditions, and for the welfare of the butterflies we will wait for any rain to stop before we go ahead with the release. Please note, umbrellas should not be used at any time whilst the release is taking place.

### **Where will the butterflies be released?**

They will be released at the beautiful Bodenham Arboretum, with 200 being released at any one time. If we have more than 200 to release, we will have to designate areas to release the butterflies, to protect the existing wildlife and allow the butterflies to be released safely and responsibly.

### **Can I release my butterfly at home?**

No, for the welfare of the butterflies, KEMP Hospice will receive and care for the butterflies 24 hours prior to the release. All butterflies will be released together in an environment that is safe and suitable for them to thrive.

### **What kind of butterflies can I have for a release?**

KEMP currently only offer painted lady (*Vanessa cardui*) butterflies for release.

### **What colour will the butterflies be?**

Painted Lady butterflies are orange/pink with black and white markings.

### **Why can't I have different kinds of butterflies?**

We have carefully selected this species for the following reasons: The painted lady is a migratory species. They are native to Southern Europe and North Africa and fly up through Europe to the UK. This means that they occur naturally in the wild, here in the UK, during the summer months. Our provider does not offer other British species which might affect the gene pools of local butterfly populations or species which might be considered to be pest species. The painted lady lays its eggs on thistles or nettles and its caterpillars won't eat vegetable crops.

### **What are the release boxes like?**

The release boxes are designed to enable the butterflies to roost (sleep) during transit, without sustaining unnecessary wing damage. They are triangular in shape and creamy white in colour. They are easy to open at the desired moment, simply by popping off the elastic band at the top.

### **Can I release butterflies if it's raining?**

As you would with your photographs, should it rain on the day, we will wait until the rain stops before carrying out the release. If it is raining or dark, the butterflies will naturally be sleepy. KEMP Hospice will keep the butterflies somewhere cool and safe until there is a break in the weather.

### **What is the pink stain sometimes seen in the release boxes after the butterfly has been released?**

This is nothing of concern, it is butterfly waste and not blood. It is perfectly normal.

### **What if I am unable to attend or I am late?**

If you are unable to attend, please let KEMP Hospice know. A member of staff will release your butterfly on your behalf on the day. Due to the welfare of the butterflies, they will be released at a specific time and all together.

### **What is the impact of releasing the butterflies to the local environment?**

The Painted Lady Butterfly is a native, migratory butterfly and their caterpillars feed on thistle and nettle plants, both of which are available nearby. The butterflies have all been responsibly sourced from a registered UK breeder. The ecological impact of the release has been assessed in conjunction with the Arboretum and deemed safe.

### **Have you considered the welfare of the butterflies?**

The welfare of the butterflies has been an absolute priority. All the butterflies are bred, by a UK registered breeder and their emergence as adult butterflies is timed so that all the butterflies for release are fresh adults, up to a week old, but generally only a couple of days as an adult. Butterflies generally live for 4-6 weeks giving them time after release, to feed, mate (if they haven't already done so) and lay eggs and behave perfectly naturally.

**If you would like to discuss anything further please contact the Fundraising Team on 01562 756066 or email [fundraising@kemphospice.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@kemphospice.org.uk)**