

## Andy's life-giving donation

22 February 2008

A HUTTON Cranswick man's bone marrow has been harvested for use in a life-saving transplant. Specialist Instructional Officer Andy Hind, who works at the Defence School of Transport, Normandy Barracks, Leconfield recently underwent a series of tests to find out if he was compatible with a patient so that he could donate bone marrow by transplant.

The Anthony Nolan Trust operates one of the largest bone marrow registers of lifesaving donors worldwide, and the most successful in the UK. The organisation has helped give thousands of adults and children a new chance of life.

Andy, who lives at Hutton Cranswick, said, "I'd heard about the bone marrow register 14 years ago, following a recruitment drive in my local area.

"The Anthony Nolan Trust is in constant need of people aged 18 to 40 to come forward and volunteer their services.

"Men provide 75 percent of all donations as they tend to be able to provide more stem cells.

"Men are also less likely than women to suffer from anaemia - and they can't be excluded from donating due to pregnancy."

He added: "The procedure begins with giving a blood sample. Volunteers only donate if they are found to share a similar tissue type to a patient needing a potentially lifesaving transplant. That happened in my case.

"After being tested at a place called a 'Histocompatibility Laboratory' at Harley Street in London I was absolutely delighted to be informed that I was compatible with someone who needed a bone marrow transplant.

"When heard that I was a match, I had no doubts about going through with the procedure."

Everything is explained and each donor is appointed a Donor Welfare Officer during and after the donation to ensure that the appropriate level of emotional and physical support is given throughout the process. Andy was eventually called forward and his bone marrow was harvested.

Andy said, "I feel a bit sore, as if I've overdone it at the gym, but what's that against what the bone marrow transplant is going to achieve. I felt very humbled by the experience but at the same time a little proud that I was able to help another human being. There are



thousands throughout the world at any one time in need of finding a suitable bone marrow donor - and becoming a donor gives you the chance to save a life.

"Thousands of patients can't find a suitable match and when you consider that you might be one of those that can help - it's a golden opportunity to do so. You just need to be between 18 and 40 and pass the medical. I've done it - and I'd do it again, without hesitation"