

I hate cancer. I know that is a ridiculously obvious thing to say because no-one loves cancer. But I despise it. It does nothing but bring hurt, fear, pain and in far too many cases, death. Aylesford lost one of its characters to cancer recently. It was doubly upsetting because he and everyone else thought he had recovered from his initial cancer. But unbeknownst to anyone it had sneakily returned, hidden itself and emerged in its most aggressive form sadly ending his life far too quickly and leaving a devoted family and circle of friends reeling in shock and grief.

I get angry about cancer. It is indiscriminate. I wouldn't wish it on anyone, and no-one would, but why does it pick innocent children. An acquaintance lost her 9 month old child to cancer earlier this year. Why would you pick on a 9 month old child? A baby boy with a whole future ahead of him. I channel my inner Graham Greene just thinking about it.

But this column is not just going to be an emotional rant. I want to do something. Over a thousand people across West Kent will be diagnosed within the next year with cancer and sadly hundreds will die. Some will be preventable cancers which we can all play our part in for the future. Others will not have been preventable but could have been treatable if we had better diagnosis and referrals. This is something I will work with our local Clinical Commissioning Group to deliver – whatever they need I shall support them on.

But finally we need more research. Patients don't always get told about research programmes they could be involved in and that ought to get better. But to do the research they need money. I am plotting some big ideas right now and will share soon but I hope you'll join me in beating this horrible disease.