

ESSEX LIFE



Name:

Dr Mark Shirran

How old are you?

I'm 32

Tell us about your family

My parents Ros and Andy are both retired and still live in the same house in Middlesex where I grew up. I have a sister Emma who recently got married to Akhil, with celebrations spread over several weeks!

Where do you live?

Brentwood

How long have you lived there?

Just over 6 months, ever since I started my job with the Essex & Herts Air Ambulance. I had been living in the Gold Coast in Australia for the last 5 years, but moved back to the UK specifically for the job.

What do you like about where you live?

It's a great little town, with some nice places to eat and drink, plus it's an easy commute to work and also into London.

What do you do for a living?

I'm an emergency doctor, working full-time on HEMS (Helicopter Emergency Medical Service) for the next 18 months.

What do you love about your job?

There's so much! I love working as a member of a highly-skilled team of paramedics, pilots and other doctors. I really enjoy the variety of the job – at the start of the shift we have no idea what we are going to have to deal with that day – anything from a car crash to a heart attack. Working on the streets and fields of Essex is totally different to the safe surroundings of a resuscitation room and consequently it's often a lot more challenging. It can also be quite rewarding as we can have a much greater impact on the care of sick patients by getting to and treating them earlier in their illness or after an accident.

What has been the proudest moment in your career so far?

Helping my mum beat cancer. I was in my first year as a newly qualified doctor when my mum was diagnosed with chronic myeloid leukaemia. Her specialist wanted her to go on the standard treatment at the time, but that only gave an average survival of 5 years. So I researched the recent medical literature and found a novel treatment that sounded very promising. I got her referred to the Hammersmith Hospital where she started the revolutionary treatment shortly afterwards. Next year we will be celebrating her ten year anniversary of being in remission!

Where do you see yourself in five years time?

Settled with a family and working as a consultant emergency/pre-hospital physician, hopefully still flying regular shifts with HEMS!

How do you relax?

I like to go abroad whenever I can – it's a big planet and there are so many places still to visit...

Do you have any hidden talents?

I can't cook to save my life, except on Valentine's Day that is, when I can bake a mean chocolate cake!

What is your worst habit?

My fiancée says I have trouble admitting to her when I'm wrong - but I disagree.

Which five guests would you invite to a dinner party and why?

It would be a bit of a mix... Nelson Mandela and Paul Rusesabagina (his story is featured in 'Hotel Rwanda') have both showed amazing courage and compassion in the face of evil. And then I'd want Beyonce to entertain us, with 'Del-Boy' and 'Rodders' to give us a bloody good laugh.

What is your favourite song or piece of music and why?

'Your Song' by Elton John is one of my favourites. Listening to this after attending a particularly traumatic car crash where a whole family got wiped out helped me to come to terms with just how precious life is and also how cruel it can be.

Where are the best views to be had in Essex?

I'm biased but I don't think you can beat the views from up in the air! One of the perks of working on HEMS is getting a birds-eye view of our wonderful county.

Describe Essex in one sentence

Unique!

What is your favourite town in Essex and why?

Southend - because I have some great memories of spending time there when I was a medical student attached to the hospital.

Who or what is the greatest love of your life?

My fiancée Jo. We're getting married next year and are currently in the midst of planning it all.