



St Monica Trust

Village Voice



From David...

With the conclusion of the latest phase of the Resident Voice programme, it gives me great pleasure to welcome all our care home residents and their loved ones to the third edition of *Village Voice*. The aim of this publication is to keep residents updated on all that is happening at an organisational level around the Trust and sharing information about the issues you've told us are important to you.

I've really enjoyed hearing your thoughts at the recent Strategy Roadshows, which were put together to bring residents up to date on the improvements that are happening on their respective sites now and in 2024. It's really useful to have a mechanism in place where we can talk through any potential issues affecting residents and address them before they arise, rather than after.

Included in this issue of *Village Voice* is part two of the financial summary. It shows a breakdown of how the Trust's capital investment and one-off investments are being allocated. In total, more than £20 million has been released from the Trust's Endowment Fund over the next three years.

Some of the investment will be in infrastructure projects, which you may not notice as much as the bigger building projects, but all residents will feel the benefit of this investment.

I hope you are also beginning to feel the benefit from the increased level of communication between residents and the Trust. Moving forward, the three Cs of Connection, Contribution and Choice will be at the heart of the Trust's external and internal communications.

Connection is about the importance for different generations to interact in a way that's meaningful. It has to be about more than bringing in a

children's choir in to sing to residents. Our aim is to create environments and services where people have the opportunity to develop meaningful relationships across different generations. This could involve building relationships with colleges, universities and other local institutions to share experiences and learnings.

Contribution is about what you have told us about not wanting to feel disempowered by living in a retirement village or a care home. This is your village, your care home, and you've told us that you want to contribute to your environment in a way that is meaningful to you. We've always had an amazing volunteer programme within the Trust,

and residents have asked us why they can't be volunteers within their own sites and the wider community. We're really keen on expanding our residents' volunteering programme and want to utilise your skills and knowledge to benefit not only where you live, but the wider community as well.

Choice is about expanding service choice, making sure that if we say "no" to one thing, then there are other options that can be explored. For example, the Trust is currently benchmarking itself against other providers and reviewing our services to ensure that what we provide for residents is in line with your expectations.

"In total, more than £20 million has been released from the Trust's Endowment Fund over the next three years"

Moving forward, these three Cs will permeate everything that the Trust does. They will be in our branding, in our objectives for colleagues, how we describe the Trust's purpose, how we pursue innovation and how we gather information through initiatives like Resident Voice.

These are exciting times and, as always, thank you for your continued support.

Best regards,

David Williams
Chief Executive



Enriching Lives Service reunites Stephen with foster mum

It's almost sixty years since Ann first set eyes on Stephen. He was four years old and living in Downend Children's Home, having had a difficult start in life with his birth mother.

Ann began fostering Stephen on a short-term basis, taking him to her home every Sunday for trips out to the countryside and a traditional roast dinner with her family. After moving to a bigger house, the family made the decision to foster Stephen full-time and he moved into Ann's home, "becoming one of her three children."

After four very happy years, Stephen returned to his birth mother and attended a boarding school in North Somerset. In the following years, Stephen would occasionally visit Ann and her family, until a serious accident affected his memory and he lost contact with them altogether.

And there the story might have ended, had it not been for a member

of the Care and Support Team at Westbury Fields Retirement Village where Stephen lives.

Senior Support Worker Julia Jones is part of St Monica Trust's Enriching Lives Service. Where Care and Support traditionally focus on personal care needs, the Enriching Lives Service is about spending one-on-one time with residents and helping them pursue their interests.

It was during one of Julia's twice-weekly visits that Stephen showed her a picture of where he used to live with his foster mum, Ann.

Julia takes up the story: "I used to live close to Coalpit Heath and recognised the farmhouse in the

picture, so we decided to drive up there and have a look on my next visit. I knew the person who lived next door to Stephen's foster mum and asked her who lived there."

With Stephen's foster mum now located and happy to be reunited with him, Julia drove Stephen to Ann's house a couple of weeks later with a huge bouquet of flowers.

Ann says: "When I opened Julia's letter I was so pleased. It was just joyful to know Stephen was okay and that we could see him again. We had big hug on doorstep. It was wonderful. I was overjoyed."

Julia said: "I was really pleased for Stephen. It was obvious that Ann was happy, but he doesn't always show emotion, so I asked him how he felt when he got back and he said: 'Thank you so much. This has really made me happy.'

"For me it was a great privilege to be able to support Stephen to reconnect with Ann. The best thing about my role is that most residents don't see me as doing a job, they see me as a friend and that is what I really love."

The Trust's Enriching Lives Service has now been expanded to cover all of the Trust's sites. If you would like to learn more about the Enriching Lives Service or discuss how it could help you, please email julia.jones@stmonicastrust.org.uk or call 0117 377 3848.

New Residential Services Leads appointed

We're sure you'll join us in sending a warm St Monica Trust 'welcome' to all the newly appointed Residential Services Team Leaders. This is a brand-new role created to manage the portering, concierge and housekeeping teams for each village, and provide residents with a single point of contact when they need assistance.

The four Residential Services Team Leaders appointed by the Trust are:

Derek Grunshaw – Cote Lane and Monica Wills House

Dan Stone – The Chocolate Quarter and Monica Wills House

Nolan Barrs – Sandford Station

Dave Parkhouse – Westbury Fields

The Residential Team Leader role for Monica Wills House will be shared between:

Derek Grunshaw – responsible for the Portering Team

Dan Stone – will be running the Housekeeping Team



Volunteer Programme

Each year, the St Monica Trust's Volunteer Opinion Survey gathers feedback from more than one hundred of the Trust's dedicated team of volunteers. Sharing their experiences as a volunteer through the survey enables the Volunteering Team to enhance the vital contribution volunteers make to residents' lives in the Trust's villages and care homes.

Head of Well-being and Resident Engagement, Wendy Hodsdon, said: "Volunteers play such an important role in delivering the Trust's new purpose of creating communities where older people flourish, through the three Cs of Connection, Contribution and Choice.

"Through the feedback we received, our volunteers told us they want to be actively involved in this element of the strategy, and for their volunteering role to have a positive impact on the lives of our residents and the communities in which they live.

"In response, over the next few years, our Volunteer Programme will develop in line with the three Cs, and we have already begun to extend and refresh volunteer roles across the whole organisation. For example, new Gardening Volunteers and Digital Support Volunteers have recently joined the Gardening and IT teams at The Chocolate Quarter and Cote Lane.

"Residents have also told us that they want to feel valued and useful and would like more opportunities to contribute to their own communities. To that end, we are now busy working on a Resident Volunteer Plan, which will create even more opportunities for residents to contribute to their communities in new and interesting ways."

Wendy would like to say a huge "thank you" to all of the Trust's volunteers, as well as to our residents.

If you would like to find out more about the Trust's Volunteer Programme, please contact:

Lianne Vill, Volunteer Co-ordinator for Cote Lane and Westbury Fields
lianne.vill@stmonicastrust.org.uk
07817 063311

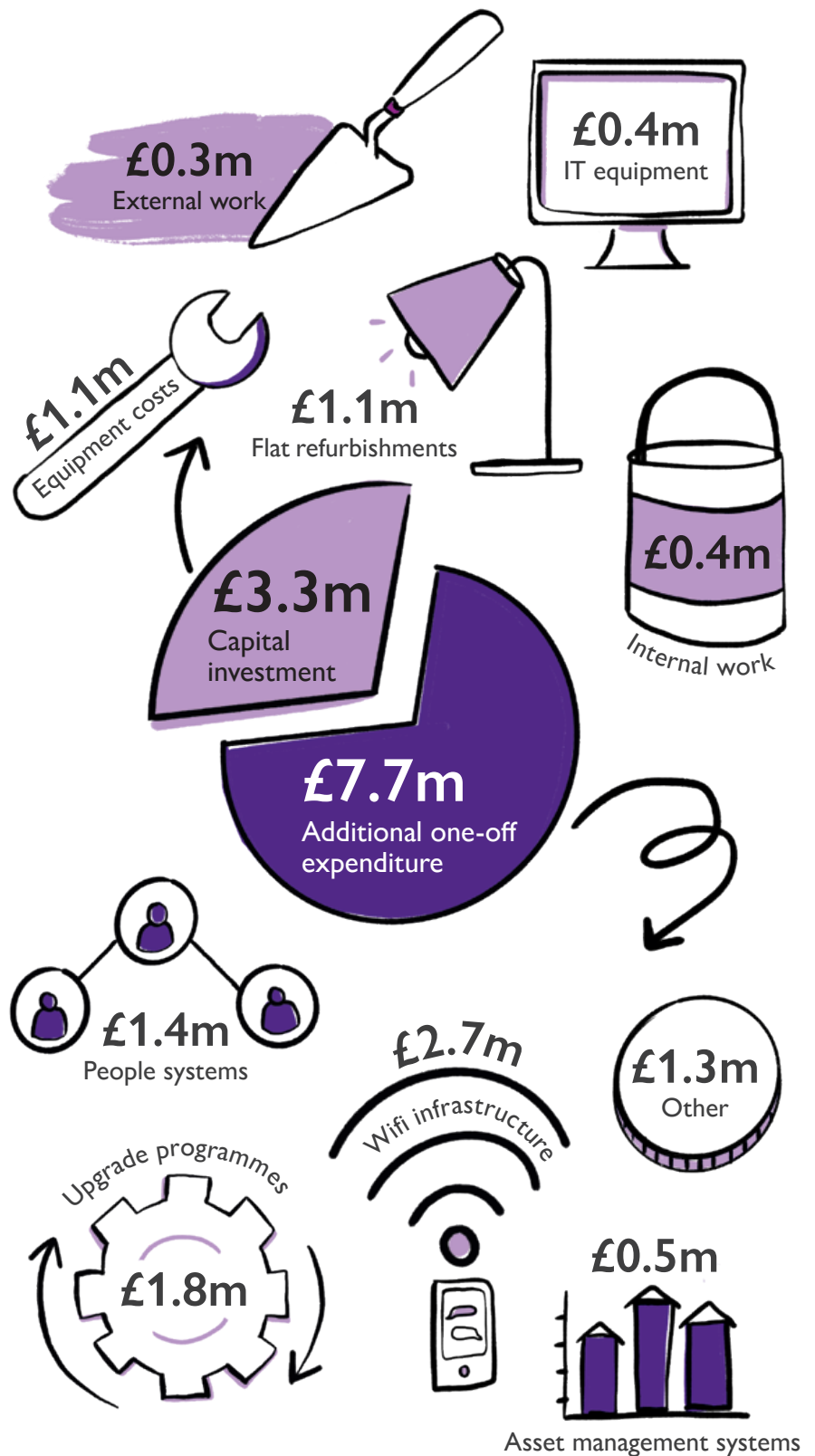
Heather James, Volunteer Co-ordinator for The Chocolate Quarter, Sandford Station, Monica Wills House
heather.james@stmonicastrust.org.uk
07875 406891

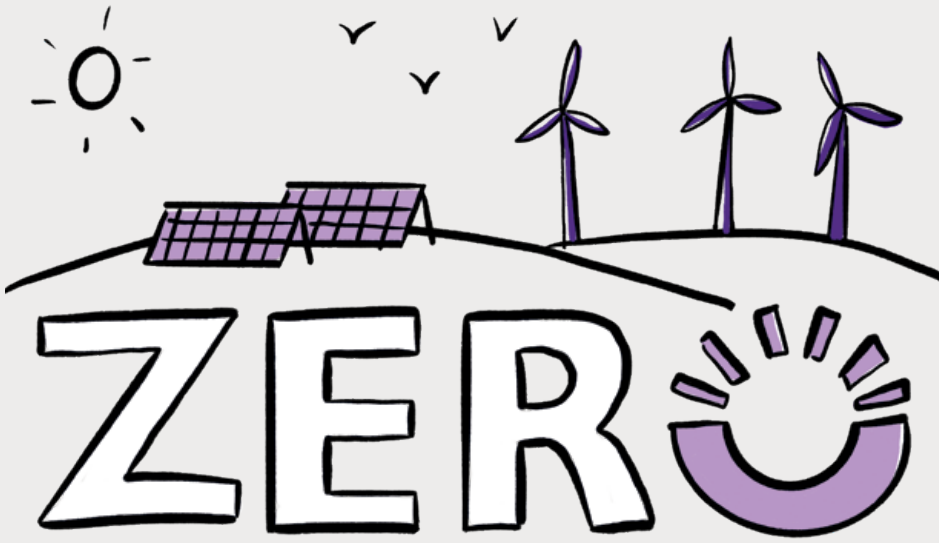
Financial Summary

Part two

As promised in Issue Two of *Village Voice*, the following infographics show how the St Monica Trust's planned capital investment of £3.3 million and the £7.7 million of additional funds for one-off investments are being spent in 2023.

In total, more than £20 million of additional funds for one-off investments from the St Monica Trust's endowment fund have been approved by Trustees. These additional funds will be invested in the Trust's underlying infrastructure and IT systems over several years and we will, of course, be sharing details with residents of any future spend.





Assistant Chaplain appointed

Welcome to the Reverend Geoff Waters who joins the Trust as a part-time Assistant Chaplain. Although largely based at Cote Lane, where he will support the Chaplain in providing pastoral and spiritual support for the community, a significant part of Geoff's role will include providing additional cover across the whole of the Trust, when required.



Geoff brings varied experience that includes several years teaching physics in a boys' school prior to ordination in the Church of England, since when he has ministered in different roles in parish and residential communities. He is married to Louise and they have two almost-grown-up daughters.

Geoff looks forward to meeting as many residents as possible as he makes his way around the villages over the coming months.

Planet Mark

A key element of the St Monica Trust's 10-year Strategy is for the charity to make a commitment to environmental sustainability, and the Trust has recently achieved the first important milestone on its journey to reach Carbon Net Zero by securing Planet Mark Business Certification.

The Planet Mark Business Certification is an internationally recognised sustainability certification that supports organisations to radically reduce carbon emissions and work towards the global transition to Net Zero.

The Trust's Sustainability Manager, Mark Thomas, said: "We have measured our carbon footprint and, as an organisation, we are committed to reducing our carbon emissions, have a positive impact on the planet and society and play

our role in ensuring there is a sustainable future for all.

"Going forward, as we aim for Net Zero, everyone at the Trust will continue to play an important role in our sustainability commitment. Our Planet Mark certification provides us with a baseline from which we can move forward with our strategy to be a Net Zero organisation – something which I know is of great interest both to residents and to St Monica Trust colleagues."

Having achieved Planet Mark Business Certification, the Trust's Exec Team have also signed off on Planet Mark producing a Net Zero Strategy for organising and carrying out an Energy Savings Opportunities Audit. Mark Thomas said: "We can also confirm that, from 1 May 2024, the Trust's new electricity supplier will be Stroud-based Ecotricity, whose 100% green electricity is generated from the wind, sun and the sea."



St Monica Trust



Village Improvement Workshops

When we asked what the St Monica Trust should focus on as part of the development of its 10-year Strategy, the most common response was “get the basics right”. With that in mind, a series of Resident Workshops were recently held across the Trust to hear what residents felt were the priorities for improving their communities.

Head of Retirement Villages, Roger Hayward, said: “It was wonderful to see so many residents contributing to the workshops and some very interesting conversations were had – often with a great deal of commonality between the sites with regards to the areas of focus for the Trust.

“It was particularly rewarding to hear that residents felt the Village

Hub concept was a welcome shift in ensuring that their ease of access to all the key services in their villages was improved. Following on from this was a request replicated across most of the Trust’s sites to open up their reception areas and make them more welcoming and accessible to both residents and guests. This will now be put forward for consideration in the Capital Improvements Plan for the coming year.”

Roger would like to pass on his thanks to all those residents who attended the workshops. A summary of the suggestions raised by residents at the workshops for potential site improvements has been created for each village. If you have not yet received a copy, please contact your Village Management Team.



RESIDENT VOICE

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