

# Village Voice



St Monica Trust



## From David...

Taking the first quarter of 2024 as a snapshot of the Trust's 10-year Strategy, it's pleasing to see the amount of progress made in successfully establishing the basic standards of our services and delivering what residents should expect from their village and care home environments.

We've also invested heavily in technology – nothing futuristic, just the normal technology that all organisations have to invest in to ensure they have the proper operational controls in place. The Trust's new financial system, HR system and payroll system have all contributed to giving us greater control in how the organisation is managed on a day-to-day basis.

Having better control of expenditure and a firm platform to build upon means that we can not only continue investing in the right places and providing better services, we can also invest in creating new services.

That's why we're looking at innovation to get the organisation thinking about

how we develop new services to help deliver the Trust's vision of creating communities where older people flourish. It's really important that we start to plan how we can best achieve that vision and how we can energise communities to look after older people throughout the later stages of their lives. The appointment of Paul Tisdale as Director of Innovation will be central to this.

Getting the basics right is also about having those open and honest conversations – not just with residents, but also with the Trust's colleagues – to establish how we can improve and offer more as an organisation. The catering review is part of this ongoing process, and understanding what people

*“Getting the basics right is also about having those open and honest conversations”*

want, and what their expectations are, is vital to achieving this. It's very important that we're brave enough to acknowledge that perhaps the organisation isn't providing what it should, in terms of the level of choice or the environment we have in place –and equally important that we do something about it.

The catering review is about improving our services, bringing them in line with other offerings in the care sector and meeting the needs of a changing demographic. The world is constantly changing around us – and with it, people's expectations of where,

when and how they want to meet and eat. Establishing village hubs is a big part of addressing this and an important element of our 10-year Strategy.

As much as some things must change, the renovation of Cote Lane's magnificent chapel organ is a timely reminder of the wonderful cyclical nature of history – in that the same firm that originally transferred the organ from the Wills family home and installed it in the chapel, is responsible for restoring it more than a century later.

This highly complex and intricate project shows that we are as committed to preserving the Trust's heritage as we are to planning the charity's future. In taking the

essence of what the Trust's founders wanted the charity to achieve and reinterpreting this for the modern world, we will ensure that we stay firmly connected to our roots and true to our founders' wishes.

Thank you for your continued support.

Best regards,

David Williams  
Chief Executive

## Director of Innovation appointed

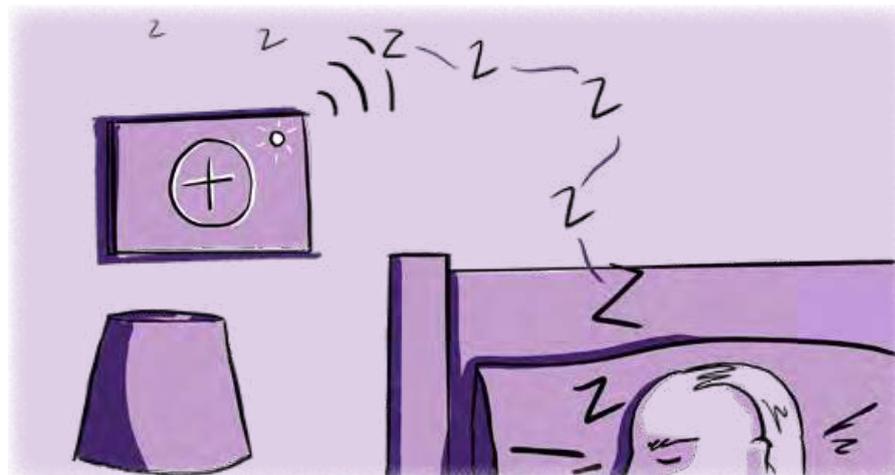
With the St Monica Trust's commitment to innovation playing such an important part in the 10-year Strategy, we are pleased to welcome Paul Tisdale as the new Director of Innovation.

Paul joins the Trust with nearly two decades of corporate experience, having led major global commercial relationships, business transformation projects and innovation programmes for multinational food company, Danone.

Paul is passionate about the impact that innovation can have. He believes that good innovation is about identifying a need, creating opportunities and improving people's lives. Paul is looking forward to leading innovation at the Trust and working closely with colleagues and residents to enable us to all be innovators.



We're sure you will join us in welcoming Paul and wishing him all the very best for his new role at the St Monica Trust.



## Trial 'sounds out' acoustic monitoring's potential

One of the exciting new projects to come out of the St Monica Trust's commitment to innovation is the installation of acoustic monitoring systems in the Trust's care homes.

Acoustic monitoring relies on sound to alert a central hub that something is happening within the care home. Carers are alerted to potential movement and can swiftly check on residents to ensure their safety. Without the need for regular intrusive nighttime checks, care home residents can wake up feeling well-rested, making their time in the care home much more enjoyable.

The technology is currently being successfully trialled at two of the Trust's care homes: Charterhouse at The Chocolate Quarter and The Russets at Sandford Station. At the end of last year a conference was held to hear feedback from care home colleagues who have been involved in the trial, as well as members of the Public Intelligence team from Denmark who shadowed the night shift at The Russets and Charterhouse to see the technology in action.

Project Lead and Director of Care, Sara Naylor-Wild, said: "The whole purpose of the trial was to learn, make changes and create something that works for a successful long-term roll-out of the technology across all of the Trust's care homes. The openness of colleagues giving their honest feedback has really helped us with this and evidence of how acoustic monitoring is benefiting residents was very apparent.

"I'd like to thank all those who have taken part in the trial and colleagues from other care homes who have also got involved. I am especially grateful for the way residents and loved ones have helped us learn from the trial and improve how acoustic monitoring works on the ground. We look forward to continue working with residents and colleagues to listen and learn, as we strive to make acoustic monitoring and other future innovations in the Trust a success."



## Village hubs to offer café-style experience

**We're pleased to let you know that the Trust is proposing to redevelop its catering services later this year to offer a new café-style experience for village residents. This will be integral to establishing village hubs as the beating heart of each of our communities and will facilitate greater connection, contribution and choice.**

Establishing village hubs in all of our retirement villages is one of the Trust's key commitments in our 10-year Strategy. Village hubs will be vibrant locations where residents can access key village services and also eat, drink and socialise with friends and loved ones.

Offering this exciting new café service will mean changes to the Trust's menus – with a range of new foods available, including ciabattas, paninis, sandwiches, cakes and pastries, salads, quiches, sausage rolls, jacket potatoes, hot and cold drinks.

Daily hot specials will also be available, similar to the hot main meals that are currently served, and will include favourites such as roast dinners and fish and chips. Residents will receive a discount on the advertised prices.

There will also be a significant investment in the décor of the cafés. To give you more flexibility, there will be no need to book for a particular sitting. Our new café-style restaurants will be open longer hours – typically 10am to 3pm, but this will expand further if there

*“This means residents will enjoy improved food quality, more consistency, higher nutritional values and greater flexibility”*

is demand. They will provide a great location to meet with friends and family and perhaps enjoy breakfast as well as lunch, snacks and afternoon

tea. Please note there will be no change at The Chocolate Quarter, where B Block already provides a café service.

We are also planning to make changes to our care home catering service later this year. Feedback has indicated the need for a more flexible food service, so we plan to extend the amount and range of food provided by an external partner.

This means residents will enjoy improved food quality, more consistency, higher nutritional values – and greater flexibility, which means more choice on what and when you eat. You will be able to choose to have your main meal of the day at lunchtime or in the evening.

Importantly, we will be able to offer you a more personalised catering service, including for those who need modified diets. Snacks, sandwiches, soup etc will continue to be available outside of meal times as now.

We would like you and your loved ones to be fully involved in the taste testing and menu design for both the village cafés and the new care home service and we will be gathering your feedback both before and after the changes are implemented in the summer. Please watch out for further details from your care home and village management teams on this and invitations to the taste testing sessions.



## Cheers, Drive!

**Y**ou know how it is – you wait ages for one new minibus to arrive and then two come along at once! It's been 'all change' with the Trust's fleet of minibuses following the arrival of two brand-new Renault Master LWB minibuses.

Residents and the Trust's team of dedicated minibus drivers have been singing the praises of the new vehicles, highlighting the smoother drive, rear sunroof, sliding side windows, LED lighting, non-manual tail lifts and side steps for easier access to the vehicles. The drivers have also appreciated the inclusion of reversing cameras for manoeuvring in supermarket car parks. Both vehicles also offer greater fuel efficiency over their predecessors and meet Euro 6 emission standards.

The two new 13-seater minibuses have been allocated to Cote Lane and Westbury Fields, which are the sites with the highest demand from residents for minibus transport. The arrival of the new minibus at Cote Lane has released the site's previous minibus to replace the old one at Monica Wills House. The old Monica Wills House minibus will now become the Trust's 'spare' to offer extra capacity for special occasions or to be used when the other vehicles in the fleet are being serviced.

## Organ Restoration project

**We're sure Cote Lane residents and visitors to the Trust's founding site will be familiar with St Augustine's Chapel's magnificent organ.**

Dating back to the 1890s, the organ was built by master organ builder, "Father" Henry Willis and originally installed at the Barley Wood home of the Trust's founders, Henry and Monica Wills. Following the completion of the Cote Lane Chapel in 1926, the organ was then relocated to Cote Lane and installed in its current location.

To preserve the chapel organ's use for future generations, the Trust has commissioned a full restoration by a team of professional organ builders from Harrison & Harrison Ltd, with the support of professional organ advisor, Dr William McVicker. In one of life's coincidences it was Harrison & Harrison Ltd who originally relocated the organ from Barley Wood to St Augustine's Chapel nearly 100 years ago.

In March this year the organ was dismantled and transported to Harrison & Harrison's workshop in Durham for the restoration work to begin. It is hoped that the work will be completed and the organ welcomed home to the chapel with a concert of rededication in early 2025.

Head of Well-being and Resident Engagement, Wendy Hodsdon, said: "We feel privileged to be the custodians of such a prominent musical instrument. It is part of the St Monica Trust story and has a place in our wider national heritage too. We want to keep it working for another 100 years in order to widen opportunities for it to be enjoyed by future generations of organists and organ enthusiasts."

*You can follow the progress of the restoration work on the Trust's social channels, as well as on Harrison & Harrison's website and Facebook page:*

[www.harrisonorgans.com](http://www.harrisonorgans.com)  
[facebook.com/HarrisonOrganBuilders/](https://facebook.com/HarrisonOrganBuilders/)



## Trust's £14k enhancement funding helps makes homes habitable for over-50s in crisis

**The Improving Homes and Well-being Service (IHWS) is a partnership between Age UK South Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire Council, with the St Monica Trust's Charitable Impact Team providing £14,000 in enhancement funding.**

Led by Improving Homes and Well-being Coordinators, Sarah and Martin, the IHWS provides free help to homeowners over the age of 50 to remain safe, well and comfortable in their own homes for as long as possible. The service supports homeowners whose properties or gardens are falling into disrepair as a result of underlying issues, such as hoarding, learning difficulties, mobility problems or mental health.

Sarah said: "When Nichola was referred to the IHWS by her social worker, she had no mains water, no hot water and no heating. She was having to walk through two inches of water each day and the walls of her

house were covered with thick black mould, some of which had collapsed due to the damp conditions.

"Nichola had been alone for many years with no friends or family, and was in a desperate way since the flood in her home eleven months ago. When we found her she had been relying on bottled water to drink, wash and flush each day. Whereas we always hope to help an older person remain in their home, this wasn't possible in Nichola's case as the water damage to her house had made it uninhabitable."

With the help of two volunteers, Sarah and Martin removed eight vans

of waste from Nichola's house. They then helped her pack her remaining belongings and move into sheltered accommodation.

Nichola has now sold her house and is looking for somewhere to buy locally. She said: "Once I was out of that environment, it didn't take me long to feel more like my old self. Martin and Sarah have changed my life. If it wasn't for them I would still be in that situation. They have taken me off the wrong path, put me back on the right one and I can't speak highly enough of what they have done for me."

The St Monica Trust's Charitable Giving Lead, Catherine Robinson, said: "Often, statutory agencies aren't getting access to or can't engage with older people that have effectively fallen through the gaps in our society, so their problems aren't being addressed. By providing Age UK South Gloucestershire with a grant for IHWS, the team can immediately access funds to address an urgent crisis.

"At the core, we're supporting older people to have choice, and for this project, we're helping people have agency over where they choose to live. Not only is the project making someone's home habitable again, Martin and Sarah are building a trusting relationship with the homeowner and they're able to signpost the people they support to agencies that can help address any underlying issues that may be affecting their well-being, bringing longer-lasting change."



St Monica Trust

## Trust's care services recognised with prestigious team award

**The St Monica Trust's care home and domiciliary care colleagues have been recognised with the Chief Nurse Adult Social Care Team Award.**

The Chief Nurse Adult Social Care Awards were set up to recognise the outstanding contributions made by social care workers and nurses in England. The award was presented in a virtual ceremony by the Government's Chief Nurse for Social Care, Deborah Sturdy.

Deborah said: "Your award is a richly and rightly deserved recognition for all that you do and of your progressive thinking about how you deliver care and support for your residents. Individuals like you really do make a difference to people's lives every single day and I'm delighted to be able to celebrate that with you."

The 'team' award was a new category added for 2023 to celebrate group achievements up and down the country. It recognises the enormous



range of skills, expertise and compassion modern adult social care teams deliver every day of the year.

The St Monica Trust's Director of Care, Sara Naylor-Wild, said: "Thank you to Deborah and the board who reviewed all the nominations and we're very grateful to receive this prestigious award. It's recognition of the Trust's 'one team' approach and how everybody contributes to the delivery of outstanding care in our care homes and retirement villages.

"The collaborative working seen every day between the care teams across the Trust's care homes and retirement villages is testimony to their ongoing dedication and commitment to creating communities where older people flourish."

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