

Village Voice



St Monica Trust



From David...

In terms of the 10-year Strategy, we are entering the final year of what we referred to as 'getting the basics right'. I hope our residents are feeling the benefits of this, along with the greater transparency in our communications.

This year will see us planning for the next three-year phase of the Strategy, which will focus on the future aspirations of the St Monica Trust and establishing the steps that will enable us to get there together.

Not wanting to take our eye off the ball, we will, of course, also continue to have the same open and honest conversations with residents about what we need to improve in the present.

As covered in my last update, the different elements of the Charitable Foundation will play a key role over the next phase of the 10-year

Strategy. The recent successful launch event has firmly put the Impact Alliance on the map, and our commitment to encouraging new people to enter the health and social care sector is continuing through the work of the Care Academy.

Meanwhile, our investment in innovation through initiatives like the 100 Good Ideas will see further opportunities for residents to get involved. Not just in shaping the future direction of the Trust, but also in influencing the delivery of care and services for older people at a national level.

The Standards Charter Commitments for 2025 also rightly set a benchmark for the level of service that our residents should expect from us. This is part of our overall commitment to be continuously improving the quality of the care and services we provide.

As we move towards the next phase of the 10-year Strategy, it's amazing to see how far the organisation has come in the last few years. What we have achieved together has put the organisation in a much stronger financial and operational position, following the challenges of the pandemic.

Through the Trust's ground-breaking development of The Chocolate Quarter in 2018 and the continuing work of the Charitable Foundation, there is now a greater

understanding of how integrated communities can benefit older people, whether living in retirement villages or in the wider community.

The development of integrated communities is now very much on the government's and the wider health and social care sector's agenda. It was extremely gratifying for all those involved in The Chocolate Quarter's development to see it featured as a case study in a recent government White Paper, titled *Our Future Homes*.

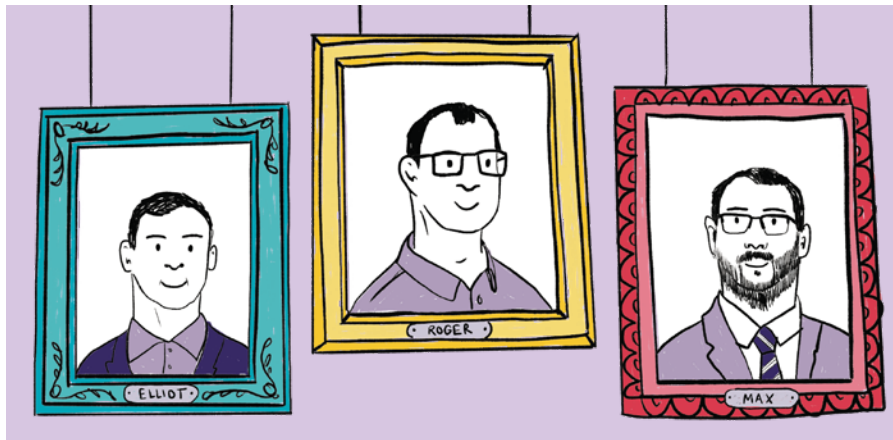
As for the immediate future, I personally am very excited about the planned celebrations to mark the Trust's centenary. We shall be sharing more details about these via your village and care home management teams in the coming weeks.

And as I approach my own significant anniversary with the Trust, whether we are looking back two, five, ten or one hundred years, I hope you share my pride in being part of such an incredible and influential organisation.

Thank you for your continuing support.

Best regards,

David Williams
Chief Executive



New appointments

As we move towards the next phase of the Trust's 10-year Strategy, changes to the Trust's cabinet structure have recently resulted in three new appointments to the Executive Team.

Roger Hayward has been appointed Director of Retirement Villages, Elliot Murray has secured the role of Director of Estates and Capital Development and Max Gilbert is now the Trust's Director of IT.

We're sure many of you will already know Roger Hayward from his time as Village Manager at The Chocolate Quarter and as Head of Retirement Villages. As part of his new directorate, Roger will be responsible for managing the Village Managers, as well as overseeing Residential Property Sales and Catering and Laundry.

Elliot's previous role with the Trust was as Capital Projects Manager. He is a chartered construction manager and has significant experience of managing building projects in residential and care environments.

Max's promotion and the recognition of IT as a directorate in its own right emphasise not only the critical role that IT plays in the day-to-day operations of the Trust, but also the crucial role it will play in the ongoing success of the 10-year Strategy.

The Executive Team has also said 'bon voyage' to Director of Quality and Compliance, Debbie Harris-Brandi, who took the decision to retire at the end of 2024 and move to France. Debbie had been with the Trust since August 2011, joining us firstly as Care Home Manager at John Wills House, and made a very significant contribution to the Trust in all her roles.

We are sure you will join us in wishing Roger, Elliot and Max the very best in their new roles and also expressing our appreciation and best wishes to Debbie and her husband as they settle into their new life in France.

Site improvements 2025

As part of our 10-year Strategy's commitment to improving communications with residents, you should have recently received your village's Site Improvement Plan for 2025.

A large number of capital projects were completed in 2023 and 2024 and, as a result of this, you will notice that there are fewer projects scheduled for 2025. This is because maintenance, repairs and refurbishments will become part of 'business as usual' as the Trust's sites are brought up to date.

However, we are still investing in a significant number of capital projects across the Trust in 2025, making an important contribution to our vision of communities where older people flourish.

As ever, I'm sure you will appreciate that all plans are subject to change and some re-prioritisation may be needed during the year, depending on circumstances. We will, of course, let you know if any major projects need to be rescheduled.

If you have any questions regarding your village's site plan, please contact your village or care home management team.



Alliance of 50 organisations launches charitable programme to end loneliness

The St Monica Trust has joined an alliance of leading organisations aiming to “make loneliness a stranger”.



Professor of Health Psychology at the University of Bath; Carol Watson, Service Director for Commissioning Housing and Partnership at South Gloucestershire Council; Jessica Vallentine, Director of Responsible Business for Business West; Kate Jopling, Policy and Strategy Consultant; and David Williams, Chief Executive of the St Monica Trust.

At the beginning of last year, the St Monica Trust invited a range of people and organisations to a series of ‘think tank’ meetings to explore new ways of working, which led to the creation of the Impact Alliance. The Trust has also committed £500,000 per year to the programme, with the goal of raising a minimum of £1.5 million annually through contributions from partner organisations.

The Impact Alliance is a pioneering initiative bringing together more than 50 diverse organisations to tackle the pressing issue of loneliness and social isolation in the West of England.

By fostering collaboration, sharing expertise and pooling resources, the Impact Alliance aims to deliver significant and sustainable change through funds awarded in Bristol, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire, and Bath and North East Somerset.

A launch event for the Impact Alliance was held at the Bristol Beacon on 3 December, where

“Through the Impact Alliance, we are taking a collaborative approach to tackle deep-rooted issues.”

David Williams

a panel of experts in the fields of business, education, housing, older people and care were interviewed on stage by Jonathan Dimpleby.

The panel included Kay Libby, CEO for Age UK Bristol; Julie Barnett,

David Williams said: “The challenge of making meaningful change within our communities is highly complex and cannot be achieved by a single funder, organisation or sector, and there is a rich history within our region of collaboration between local funders.

“Through the Impact Alliance, we are taking a collaborative approach to tackle deep-rooted issues, developing effective and measurable solutions that leave a greater impact and legacy. This way, we can tackle the causes rather than our individual grants acting as a sticking plaster for societal issues, such as loneliness.”



100 Good Ideas

As we celebrate 100 years since St Monica Trust welcomed its first residents, we are also excited to look ahead and think what the future may bring.

To help us imagine and shape the Trust's future, we need your help. We are asking residents, colleagues, friends and neighbours to come up with 100 Good Ideas to help people live happy, healthy and independent lives as they grow older.

Ideas can be big or small, short-term or long-term, but the key is that they help us think about the future – in our own villages and care homes and beyond. Every resident who submits an idea will be invited to an Innovation Forum at Cote Lane on 27 March 2025.

You can find more details and submit your ideas by visiting www.stmonicastrust.org.uk/100goodideas or emailing us at innovation@stmonicastrust.org.uk.



Launch of residents' IT Helpdesk

We're very pleased to announce an exciting new addition to the support offered by the Trust's IT Team to all residents.

The Residents' IT Helpdesk is a website where you can log an IT ticket when you need help with your devices, such as computers, tablets and mobile phones.

You can access the Residents' IT Helpdesk by going to www.smtresident.co.uk or by scanning the QR code below with the camera on your tablet or mobile phone:



You will then be asked to enter the PIN number 1920 and complete a form giving your contact details and information about your problem. A member of the IT Team will then aim to contact you within two business days of receiving your ticket.

The Resident's IT Helpdesk can help you with:

- using a computer, laptop, mobile, tablet or other IT-related devices;
- troubleshooting common issues with your computer, laptop, mobile, tablet or other IT-related devices;
- connecting to Wi-Fi and setting up things like printers;
- using email, browsing the internet, using mobile apps;
- understanding how to use video calling applications like Zoom or WhatsApp.

The service is unable to:

- provide or sell computer/ electronic devices or software licences to residents;
- perform advanced system repairs such as installing or reinstalling operating systems (Windows, macOS, etc);
- handle, manage or recover personal data;
- fix physically damaged or broken equipment;
- offer any warranty service on computers or equipment.

This service is free and available to both village and care home residents.

You can continue contacting the IT team by calling 0117 949 4211, emailing ITsupport@stmonicastrust.org.uk or attending a drop-in session, if that is what you prefer to do.

The IT Team supports all five of the Trust's sites including both residents and colleagues. This means they will not always be able to attend to your request immediately, but rest assured that they will arrange an appointment with you as soon as they can.

We hope you find this new service a welcome and helpful addition to the current support the Trust provides. If you have any questions, please contact your village or care home management team in the first instance.



“It’s genuinely inspiring to meet her and share memories of her father’s time in the Royal Navy and serving onboard HMS Flying Fox.”

After celebrating with a glass of Prosecco, Margaret said: “My father would’ve been very proud to see me wearing my cap today. ‘That’s my girl,’ he’d say. He was a very, very lovely man.”

Margaret celebrated her 100th birthday on 22 December last year with family, friends, former pupils and staff at Charterhouse.

“Despite not being able to become a Wren, I did eventually warm to teaching and quite enjoyed it. But I’d never have become a teacher if I’d been able to go and serve overseas.”

After moving to Bristol, Margaret lived in her family home in Whitehall for more than 90 years before becoming a resident at the St Monica Trust’s Charterhouse Care Home in June 2022.

Charterhouse Care Home Manager, Gail Stone said: “After hearing how much it would’ve meant to Margaret to have been able to join the Royal Navy, we thought it would be a nice idea to arrange something special as part of her birthday celebrations.

“We can’t thank Warrant Officer, John Morrish and Able Rating, Aaron Hayes enough for coming along today and making Margaret’s dream of wearing a Royal Navy Cap finally come true.”

Margaret’s navy dream comes true as she celebrates 100th birthday

A St Monica Trust care home resident was recently presented with a Naval Cap to mark her 100th birthday and fulfil her lifelong dream.

Despite a successful career in education, former headmistress, Margaret Grey revealed to staff at Charterhouse Care Home that it had always been her dream to follow in her father’s footsteps and join the Royal Navy.

Margaret’s father had joined the Royal Navy at age sixteen and sailed the world on a number of warships as a Chief Petty Officer, before moving to Bristol and working as an electrician on HMS Flying Fox.

Margaret said: “I’d studied my A Levels to join the Women’s Royal Naval Service and become a Wren. I was so looking forward to earning that lovely cap with the white stripe.

“Unfortunately, both my parents became seriously ill, which meant I couldn’t join the navy as I wouldn’t have been able to go overseas and leave them on their own.”

Margaret was presented with the cap by Royal Marines Warrant Officer, John Morrish and Able Rating, Aaron Hayes from the Naval Regional Command Wales and Western England at the care home in Keynsham where she is a resident.

Warrant Officer, Morrish said: “It’s a really great honour to be able to present this Royal Navy Cap to Margaret and chat with her about her wonderful life.



St Monica Trust

Digital warden call technology offers greater peace of mind

The St Monica Trust is once again partnering with Alertacall for the second phase of updating its warden call system.

The first phase involved working with Alertacall to upgrade and install the Housing Proactive system, which included replacing the old telephone-based OKEachDay system with one based on interaction via a digital touchscreen.

With traditional fixed-wiring analogue warden call systems becoming obsolete, the Trust is moving forward with a digital network of advanced alarm base units to provide extensive site-wide coverage.

Combined with personal alarm pendants that can be worn around the neck or on the wrist, residents will experience greater freedom and confidence, knowing that help is accessible whether in their homes, internal communal areas or outdoors in the grounds.

For the Trust's care and support teams, the system introduces a user-friendly mobile phone app that provides instant alerts when an alarm is triggered. The app guides responders to the location of the resident needing assistance,

ensuring swift and efficient support, including the ability for the carer to speak directly to the resident via the panel where the alert was activated.

The Trust's Project Manager, Garry O'Sullivan, said: "The new digital warden call system is currently being piloted at Westbury Fields Retirement Village, with roll-out planned for the Trust's other sites, excluding The Chocolate Quarter, later this year.

"As well as the increased coverage and the greater peace of mind this will give our residents, the other advantage of adopting a digital system is that it will avoid the disruption and additional cost of installing new wiring.

"For residents, it will simply be a case of our installation team replacing the pull-cords and panels in their apartments, and then choosing between a lanyard or wrist strap to replace their current pendant. A full plan of 'making good' will also ensure properties are returned to the required decorative standard."

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