

ST GEORGE THE MARTYR CHARITY SPRING NEWSLETTER 2024



CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

Dear Members

This is my last letter to you as your Chair of Trustees. I have done five years and there comes the time to pass on the baton. I am not going away and will remain as a Trustee while continuing my other roles as a Councillor in the City of London and becoming next year's Master of the Worshipful Company of Glaziers – Southwark's own City livery company.

My fellow Trustees and I spent a day last year thinking about what we do well, and what we can do better. We recognised that the personal service – what we call 'pastoral care' – is what makes St George the Martyr different from the other great charities we have in North Southwark and Bermondsey. Adding Cath to the team gives us additional capacity to support Philippa in the amazing work she does.

Every year we have our party at Brick Lane Music Hall ("Carry On Down Canning Town" as I call it!) and I have had great reports of yet another great day out. Once again, we had members from Southwark Charities alongside us, and everyone had a brilliant time. Along with trips to Frozen and Mrs Doubtfire we have already started a great new year of events and activities for you, our Members, to enjoy and the future programme of trips, events and holidays in 2024 looks amazing.

The service our Charity performs is unique in our area – the legacy of many benefactors who left our Charity monies or land in their wills centuries ago. Although what we do has changed, and will continue to change, we address a clear need in our local area to support people.

Much of what we do is done quietly, in the background, lending a helping hand to people who are outside of the systems of care that were put in place in the 20th Century. Even though we now have State Pensions, the NHS and social welfare systems, under the surface the need to alleviate poverty, loneliness and distress continues.

St George the Martyr Charity has been doing all of this since 1584, and together with our sister charities like the Surrey Dispensary helping people with medical needs since the 1790s, we continue to fulfil those hidden needs - we plan to be here going forwards meeting whatever those future needs will be.

I have been honoured to serve as your Chairman for the past five years, and I believe we are in a better place than ever to serve you, our Members, going forwards. I wish you all well.

Alderman Tim McNally, Chairman of the Trustees

CLERK'S COMMENTS

We have a very packed newsletter this time, and we want to include as many photos as possible from Brick Lane Music Hall. Therefore, I'm going to limit my 'comments' this time to just thanking three members - Kelly, Pat and Terrance - for giving up a day of their time in November to help us with the recruitment of the new Visitor, Cath.

Also, because we now have two Visitors, you will now be seeing much less of me on our trips and holidays. I am, of course, quite sad about this as I won't have the chance to meet all you lovely people so often. I'm sure you'll all miss me too (!), but that will be more than compensated by having Cath with you. Enjoy the trips!

Andy Murphy, Clerk

VISITOR'S VIEWS

It was lovely to see many people at Brick Lane Music Hall and 'Frozen' the other week. It looked as if you all enjoyed yourself. We are looking forward to seeing members at the upcoming theatre trip to Mrs Doubtfire and the spring events that we have organised. It will be nice to be able to get out and about again now we are over the winter.

Please note that if you have put your name down for theatre tickets, please contact us if you haven't received one and want to check whether you have been allocated one or not. We have just had a situation where a ticket for 'Frozen' arrived in the post the day after the show! We are aware that the postal service can be very poor so please text/email or phone should you wish to have confirmation. It was a shame for the member and a shame that the ticket wasn't used so please do check.

As you will see we have a new member of staff Cath who has introduced herself in this newsletter. It is a pleasure to welcome her to our small team (previously of two, now three). Some of you were able to meet her at Brick Lane Music Hall and/or during home visits over the past few weeks. She is looking forward to getting to know you all and we will be able to utilise her significant knowledge and expertise for the benefit of our members.

Just to remind you all that we still have our mobile hairdressing service for those that are housebound. It is provided by Sue White who will visit members in their own homes. Should you be interested in the service please contact myself or Cath. There is no charge for this service for full or associate members.

Philippa van Os and Cath Collins, Visitors

WELCOME, CATH!

Hello everyone, my name is Cath Collins, and I am a new Visitor for the Charity, working alongside Philippa, and I started on 6th February. I grew up in South London and went to school at the Elephant and Castle. I am from a mixed background with a Londoner mum and an Irish dad. I am very proud of my London and Irish roots and enjoy talking to people about where they are from.



My background is working in mental health, mainly with the families and carers of people with long term mental health difficulties. I have worked in the NHS, local councils and for other charities, including Southwark Mind and the South London and Maudsley NHS Trust. My interest in mental health stemmed from my own personal experience of mental ill health. I am glad now that people are a bit more open about how they feel and their mental health and there seems to be less shame and embarrassment about it.

When not working I enjoy the weekly ParkRun/Walk at Southwark Park (please ask me about it if interested!), I sing in a choir and follow the best South London football club there is! I don't have children but have plenty of cousins etc who make up for it! My partner Kieron and I are trying to get fit as we are finding it difficult to shift the weight the older we get.

I am really excited about this new job and have enjoyed the last few weeks; I have met some members and shadowed the excellent Philippa who

is showing me the ropes. I look forward to meeting many of you at events and trips or through home visits.

My working days are Tuesday to Thursday from 10-6pm. If you would like to contact me my mobile is 07903 292526 or you can email me at: cath@stgeorge1584.org.uk.

FAREWELL, IAN!

As we say 'hello' to our new Visitor, we say 'farewell' to one of our long-standing Trustee Board members.

Ian Duncan joined the Board fifteen years ago, when he was a partner at the Mackintosh Duncan legal partnership in Borough High Street.

He continued his Trusteeship after leaving that partnership and then into his retirement.

He said:

"My many years as a Trustee of St George the Martyr Charity have been very happy and rewarding. Without the Charity I doubt I would ever have had the pleasure of Brick Lane Music Hall. An experience not to be missed!"



"It has been a privilege for me to serve as a Trustee for a Charity that helps to improve the lives of so many in Southwark. However, I have now had the pleasure of experiencing three Clerks and it is time for me to stand down."

Ian was presented with a bottle of malt whisky at the end of the Board meeting on 13th March.





ALARM PENDANTS



Several members have recently had serious falls or illnesses that have left them on the floor at home, unable to get up or summon help. We would advise you all to consider having an alarm pendant, especially if you live alone. It does involve some costs, but you should really make it a priority, if you can. We have done some research and identified some options and information for you.

Telecare

An alarm pendant which is worn around the neck or on the wrist. If you need help you can press a button and help will arrive quickly.

Depending on your situation Southwark Council may be able to assist you in installing an alarm or Telecare equipment. You may need an assessment from the specialist Telecare Team. Stand-alone equipment is available free-of-charge, but you may have to contribute towards the cost of monitored alarms. The maximum weekly charge is £5.75 (approximately £23 a month).

To talk to someone at the Council about having a Telecare alarm, call 0207 525 3324 (press option 1 and then press option 3). They are providing digital options to all new customers. You can also call Telecare directly on 0800 180 8540. Packages start at £13.99 if you have a landline and £24 a month for a digital plan.

The UK phone network is being upgraded to digital towards the end of 2024 and will at some point cancel your analogue phone line so there may be benefits in going for a digital plan initially.



Careline 365

The Careline alarm consists of two parts – a Base Unit and a Careline pendant worn around the wrist or neck. In short, when the user needs help, they simply press the red button on the pendant – in moments, help is on its way.

The Careline pendant is waterproof and can be used in the bath and shower. The system can also be used in the garden, with a range of up to 100 metres. The

standard alarm works using your existing landline telephone connection. They also offer options for those without a landline.

When the alarm is activated, it dials out to Careline's 24/7 Care Team who answer the call almost immediately. The Care Team will then talk to the alarm user over a loudspeaker and arrange the appropriate help if it is required. Prices range from £16.99 to £24.99 a month. Phone 0800 010 8777 for advice.

Age UK Personal alarms

Age UK's Digital Personal Alarm

works like a mobile phone. You do not need a telephone landline and the base unit only needs to be plugged into a power socket. There are no phone bills or extra data charges as everything is included in the subscription cost.

- Simply press the button on your lightweight pendant to connect to the UK-based Emergency Resolution Centre – no phone numbers to remember.
- Your call will be answered in seconds – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Emergency Resolution Centre will automatically know who and where you are, and whether to call your chosen contacts or the emergency services.
- The Emergency Resolution Centre can help with any emergency day or night, including falls, cold callers, fires or if you feel unwell or are distressed.
- Tel: 0800 011 3846 Prices start at £19.99 a month.



Green Doctors in Southwark

The Green Doctors are expert energy advisors who provide advice and support for Londoners; helping you stay warm and save money on your home energy bills.

The Green Doctors can come and see you at home to see how you are using energy, how to best save on it and offer money saving tips to you and freebies. To find out more, phone **0300 365 3005**, leave them a short message and they will call you back.

GREEN DOCTOR FREE TELEPHONE ADVICE
Practical energy advice to help save you money and keep you warm & well at home.

SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

We have arranged some social opportunities, which we hope you'll enjoy. Please use the form provided to request a place on any of these opportunities. **Please add your e-mail address if you have one.**



Please bear in mind that trips may be over-subscribed, so we may not be able to meet every request. All opportunities are **free-of-charge** for Full and Associate Members of the Charity (this is most of you), and anyone accompanying them as a carer. However, there may be a charge for Honorary Members, based on the actual cost to the Charity.

- **Kentish Lady Boat Cruise, Maidstone, Wednesday 15th May**



A coach will take you to/from the departure point in Maidstone. The Kentish Lady cruises upriver through Farleigh Lock and onwards under Farleigh, Barming and Teston bridges, turning at Teston Lock for the return journey. Whilst sailing you can enjoy a complimentary lunch of Fish & Chips, plus a tea, coffee or water as well as a selection of fresh fruit. The boat is fully accessible, and this trip is better

suited for members with mobility impairments. The price for Honorary Members is £35 (all other members go for free).

- **Sissinghurst Castle, Thursday 23rd May**

Sissinghurst Castle garden was created by Vita Sackville-West and Harold Nicolson who transformed the ruins of this Elizabethan mansion and gardens in the 1930s. The castle tower dating from the 16th century is virtually all that remains of the grand Manor House. People come from all over the world to see the Garden which is administered by the National Trust. The trip will include lunch and return coach travel. The price for Honorary Members is £35 (all other members go for free).



- **A day at the seaside, Wednesday 3rd July.**

This trip will comprise coach transport to and from a well-known seaside resort (destination to be confirmed). Members will be dropped off/picked up, with time to spend in town or on the beach independently. The maximum number of places is 100. The price for Honorary Members is £10 (all others go free).

Short break:

- **Monday 8th to Friday 12th July, Warner's Resort at Sinah Warren, Hayling Island, Hampshire**

The break includes coach travel to/from the hotel, breakfast and evening meals, daytime excursions and activities, and evening entertainment. The maximum number of places is 47 (cost for Honorary Members: £519)

This will be our only break in 2024. This means it is highly unlikely that we will be able to provide a place for everyone that wants to. Top priority will be given to:

- Members who have limited social circles and/or no local family networks.
- Members who have not been on holiday in recent years - whether with the Charity, family/friends, with other groups, or independently – and who have little or no prospect of doing so in the foreseeable future.
- Members with mental/emotional or physical health conditions that make it difficult for them to go on holiday independently.
- Members who live in particularly difficult situations, for example in respect of their housing circumstances or family responsibilities.

After that, it will be a case of picking names out of a hat. It's important to stress that we don't operate a 'rota' system, whereby everyone eventually gets a holiday at some point, on the basis that it is their 'turn'. Some people may get holidays more frequently than others because their needs are greater.



Also, the Charity has relatively little control over the mix of rooms (single, twin, double) provided and their relative accessibility for people with mobility impairment. Therefore, it is possible that, on some holidays, a lower priority member may end up getting a space while a high priority member will not, just because we have been given more of a certain type of room.

We are planning to do the initial allocation of places for the summer break by early May and will let you know then if you have been successful, or if you are on the waiting list.

SOUTHBANK CENTRE

Get ready to feel the reggae rhythm at this **free** monthly meet-up and daytime dance that's guaranteed to get all ages moving and grooving.

Come along to meet friends old and new, shake a leg and immerse yourself in the infectious energy of reggae music.

Simmer Down takes place in the following locations throughout the year:

Queen Elizabeth Hall Foyer:

- Friday 29 March 'Good Friday Family Special', 1pm to 6pm
- Friday 26 April, 1.30pm – 3.30pm

The Clore Ballroom, Level 2, Royal Festival Hall (all 1.30pm – 3.30pm):

- Friday 17 May
- Friday 28 June
- Friday 13 September
- Friday 25 October
- Friday 8 November
- Friday 6 December.

Riverside Terrace, Level 2:

- Friday 26 July, 1.30pm – 3.30pm



ST GEORGE THE MARTYR CHARITY

66 NEWCOMEN STREET, LONDON, SE1 1YT

TELEPHONE: 020 7407 2994

MOBILE: 07967 770652

WWW.STGEORGETHEMARTYRCHARITY.ORG.UK