



Hello Everyone,

Since our last newsletter in early July, lots has been happening across the charity. Both Phoenix and The Portland Guest House have reopened, and the Garden Project is in full swing!

We have welcomed a new Patron: Dame Janet Trotter (OBE DBE CVO), and celebrated April's 20th Anniversary with the charity.

As always for more information about anything connected with the charity please do contact us at Phoenix **01242 511237** or visit our website: www.stvsandstgs.co.uk

The Garden Project

Our Garden Project has been thoroughly enjoyed over the last few months, with all sorts of new and exciting activities taking place! We have spent a lot of time developing our living skills, by cooking and baking with our home grown ingredients – everything from stir fry's and soups to apple cakes and hedgerow jams. In September we held a socially distanced outdoor cinema night, everyone enjoyed Fantastic Mr Fox, with popcorn and toasted marshmallows from the bonfire. On the wet days, we have sheltered in the polytunnel building a large bug hotel and few bird feeders with recycled wood, twigs, leaves and rope which was found in the garden and vinyl records as roofs. We have made a small set of shelves for one of our kitchens and a new sign for the entrance to Well Close House has been made, and put up. Pumpkins have been carved and the garden has been cleared and prepped for new plants.



In October, an orienteering trip to Cleeve Hill was organised, and we spent the day learning to read a map and compass to direct us across the common and to a beautiful abandoned barn, where we stopped for tea and cake, before foraging for Sloe Berries to add to our hedgerow jam back at the Garden Project! We had lots of fun exploring our local countryside, the views from Cleeve were really spectacular and whilst our legs were tired on the way back, we were all beaming ear to ear.

In late September we had a camping and bushcraft night. We pitched our own tent, built our own campfire and cooked refried beans with potatoes, before enjoying toasted marshmallows and warming up ready for bed by the campfire! It got a bit chilly in the night, but we slept through waking up the next morning for breakfast before going home.

In the midst of all that, we have even found time to go and clear up the gardens of some of our other supported living properties, clearing fallen leaves, cutting back bushes and buddleia, pulling up weeds and cutting the grass.

Phoenix has reopened!



Since our last newsletter in July, Phoenix has reopened – working on reduced days and numbers has allowed us to really catch up and socialise whilst remaining safe following social distancing. We have really enjoyed being back and have spent a lot of time in our kitchen, cakes, crumbles and curries have been cooked and eaten and we are now working on designing our very own recipe book.

Since reopening, we have been rummaging through our fabric stores and picking out our favourite patterns, prints and block colours to turn into face masks, which are now for sale. We have a great time making masks, and whilst we don't want to get ahead of ourselves, we did discover a Christmassy print fabric stashed away in our craft room!

We have even managed to organise a few socially distance birthday celebrations and a Halloween Party - we made our own Halloween Hoopla and piñatas for and cooked a spooktacular lunch of sausage rolls, hot dogs, and much more.

At phoenix we have also decided to open our sensory room to parents with young children, advertised on social media –we are now the talk of the town, with many parents booking in each week! It's great to meet new people and share our wonderful facilities, lots of children come out with rosy cheeks and big smiles after an exciting yet relaxing hour in the sensory room.

Our Home Care team have worked incredibly hard throughout the last few months, to ensure all of our services users have been kept safe. We have been able to get back to RDA at the Race Course, for weekly riding lessons and tea with the ponies, which, as always, is being thoroughly enjoyed. A few of us are also joining in at the Garden Project, where we found our passion for baking and have continued to bake at home. Over at Vincent Court we held our Halloween Party, with games, dancing and fa-boo-lous costumes and make up.



The Portland Guest House

Since the 4th July we have reopened our social enterprise to the public. Our students have returned and are working hard to support Sam and Corinna to get the rooms ready for guests, cook breakfast and deep clean after check outs. We are currently looking at getting our own course accredited, or enrolling onto an NVQ programme – as this is the next step of our venture as we hope to have our students working towards recognised qualifications over the next few months. We have had a few busy weeks with lots of bookings, and many last minute bookings for weekend getaways and staycations, all of our guests have been wonderful and many have left lovely reviews on our website, booking.com and TripAdvisor!

Staff News

Congratulations to our wonderful CEO April, who celebrated 20 years with the charity in September!

We also congratulate Simon on the birth of his daughter and wish the whole family well at this special time.



Dame Janet Trotter

OBE DBE CVO

We would like to welcome our new Patron to St Vincent's and St George's Association, Dame Janet Trotter (OBE DBE CVO). Among her many achievements, Dame Janet, helped found the University of Gloucestershire in 2001 and served as founding Vice-Chancellor and Principal until 2006. Dame Janet has also held a number of posts within the NHS, including as Chair of the Gloucestershire Hospitals Foundation Trust and is involved with several local charities, particularly the Nelson Trust. In 2010, she was appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Gloucestershire and was Her Majesty's representative in the county carrying out ceremonial activities and overseeing many royal visits to the county, acting on behalf of the Queen to promote excellence in business and the voluntary sectors and in supporting civil society. She retired from this role in 2018. She received an OBE in 1991, a DBE 10 years later and a CVO in 2018.

We are very excited to have Dame Janet Trotter as our new patron and look forward to what the future brings.

Cheltenham's Three Peaks Challenge



On Saturday 6th September, Cheltenham's Three Peaks Challenge took place. We had a fantastic day, with 270 people take part! A huge thank you to our brilliant volunteers who were stationed at each checkpoint (Crickely, Leckhampton, Line over Woods and Cleeve) to cheer on our runners and walkers. After a difficult year, change in dates and uncertainty if the event could go ahead, we are pleased to say that this event raised an incredible £4719.34 for the charity!

Sam's year of running

In other fundraising news, Sam (the Manager of our Social Enterprise) has signed up to run 156 miles, to fundraise for the charity! This incredible challenge will take place during 2021 across 4 marathons: Brighton Marathon Weekend, Trail Pursuit Half marathon, Race to the Tower and the Great North Run before finishing in October at the London Marathon. Training has officially begun, with early morning runs at Cleeve and quick 5ks throughout Cheltenham. Sam hopes to raise over £2000 for the charity, and plans on hosting lots of mini fundraisers throughout the next year. To keep up to date with his progress or to sponsor him, please visit his [Virgin Money Giving Page!](#)

