



StCHRISTOPHER'S
CREATING BRIGHTER
FUTURES

**Impact
Report
2023**



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We worked with 612 children and young people in 2021-22

All of the stories featured are real, but none of the pictures are of our young people and names have been changed to protect them.

Hello and welcome to St Christopher's!

Our Impact report looks at everything the charity has been doing over the past 12 months and celebrates what children, young people, foster carers and staff have achieved.

St Christopher's has been supporting young people for more than 150 years and helping them to thrive. In this report we will be sharing how we have continued to develop our services to meet the changing and evolving needs of the young people in our care.

We provide quality children's homes, supported accommodation and fostering services, which continue to benefit from our extensive experience, commitment and passion. We have evolved and extended our therapeutic, life skills and educational support in order to help young people reach their full potential and create brighter futures for themselves.

Against a backdrop of continued global economic uncertainty, this hasn't always been easy but we remain steadfast and committed to those in our care.

Life post-pandemic continues to be unpredictable, but as we navigate change, we welcome opportunities to reconnect across the whole organisation and with our wider partners.

This is why we have recently revisited our **'Philosophy of Care'** as the cornerstone of our approach. By reconnecting with our purpose and focussing on children and young people, we are able to care for them better as individuals. We ensure that our practice focusses on their strengths and personalities whilst championing compassionate understanding of their experiences in all that we do.

St Christopher's works alongside our children and young people to support their development, help grow their confidence and reach their full potential. Their welfare and voices are woven into everything we do, including the stories featured in this report.

Via our *"we say it's okay"* co-production approach, we ensure approval directly from them, consulting on how, as care experienced young people, they are represented.

You will also see outlined in the following pages how we have brought to life our current five year strategy and associated achievements against the goals set, whilst we stay mindful of our future plans that build from them.

We are proud of our young people, foster carers and staff. Thank you for taking the time to find out more.



Young people live in our residential services for 29% longer than the national average*

* For 337 days compared to an average of 261 days

Stability and support

The pandemic and post-pandemic periods have been hard for everyone to navigate, but our foster carers and staff have shown their dedication and flexibility, creatively ensuring that young people continued to experience stability, care and opportunities.

“I want to say thank you to all the staff...they have helped me to improve myself.”

Isaiah - Young person

Going the extra mile

Our incredible staff and foster carers continued to go above and beyond, putting the welfare of our children and young people first. This helped to provide consistency and continuity of care throughout the year to deliver new homes and services. As a result, we ensured stability for our young people and guaranteed that all received the support they needed.

“Children’s wishes and feelings are highly prioritised.”

Ofsted

Children and young people looked after by our foster carers have told us that they feel:

“ Safe, happy, supported and part of the family. ”

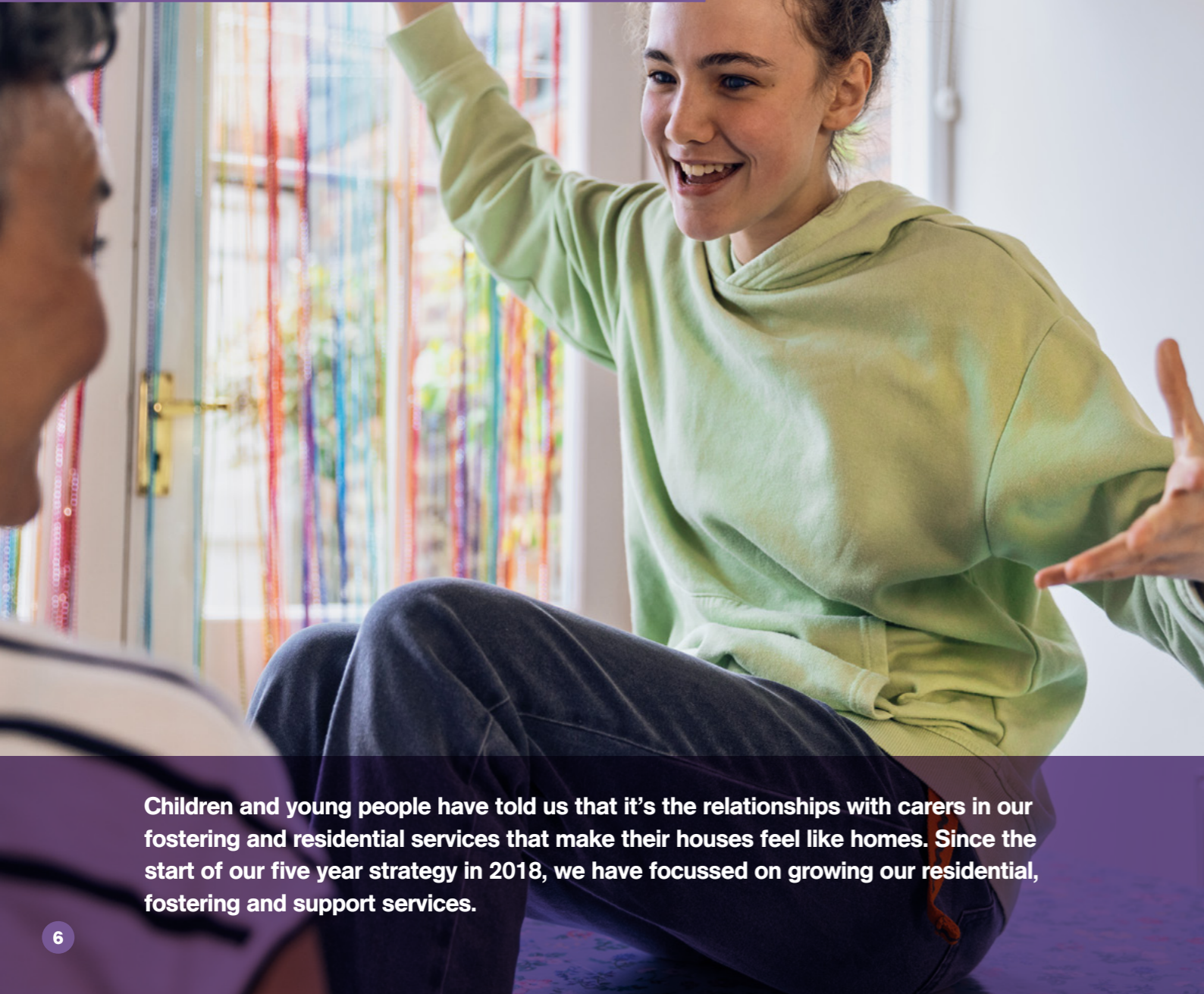
Bringing out the best

Supporting our young people, foster carers and staff in their personal journeys with us is paramount. Marrying our new Philosophy of Care and already embedded social pedagogic skills alongside an ever-evolving therapeutic offering, enables all parties to thrive. Our young people believe that St Christopher’s gives them:

“ the chance to work on being the best version of themselves. ”

Janelle - Young person

▶ Create more excellent homes, fostering and support for children and young people



Children and young people have told us that it's the relationships with carers in our fostering and residential services that make their houses feel like homes. Since the start of our five year strategy in 2018, we have focussed on growing our residential, fostering and support services.

Our achievements

To continue creating brighter futures for the children and young people in our care, we never stand still. We are delighted to outline some key achievements that St Christopher's has launched or evolved since last reported.

We have invested in properties for care leavers on the Isle of Man - to provide a workable solution to supporting their successful independence in the community.



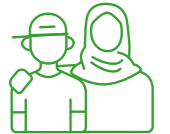
Our established return home interview service for young people, (working with children who have gone missing from home), had an impressive **80% engagement rate**. We are pleased that this contract has been extended, allowing us to keep supporting young people at risk.



Our fostering teams continue to work with **90 local authorities** and have developed bespoke supportive training for our dedicated foster carers.



Our Staying Close project is one of the eight national pilots delivered under the Department for Education's Innovation Programme since 2017. We are working with young people from **24 different local authorities** and we have now achieved 'provider status' and a contract extension.



St Christopher's supported young people to give evidence to the 2022 Independent Care Review in England. You can read about their views and ours [here](#).

We have continued to develop our therapeutic support - in order to directly work with children and young people, with foster families and to support staff so that they can flourish.



In 2023 we are piloting a community-based service for young people that aims to reduce criminalisation by providing an alternative to remand.

“I am proud to work for an organisation, which achieves so many great things while always remaining child centred in our actions and decisions.”

Jonathan Whalley - CEO



Over 82% of our placement endings in 2021-22 were planned*

* Compared to national average of 60%

Successful transitions supporting independence

St Christopher's provides children's homes and supported accommodation across England and the Isle of Man. Offering whole journey services means we can collaborate to make transitions easier for young people. We also provide support to help them fulfil their potential in the world of work, building confidence and skills to help them succeed.

Our Support into Employment (SIE) team was launched in 2019. It is an evidence-based and personalised approach which supports looked after children, care leavers and estranged young people into jobs, education and training.

Often young people who have been looked after experience significant disadvantages and challenges, so looking for work can be overwhelming for many reasons.

The team works creatively to help young people recognise their interests and talents and fulfill their employment aspirations and achieve social and economic inclusion.

Key Statistics

Number of support sessions (Attendance rate)	430 84%
Percentage in education, training and employment	74%

Dan's story:

Dan is estranged from his family and has experienced multiple moves, having lived in both foster homes and a St Christopher's children's home. He now lives in his own rented flat.

He has had struggles with mental health, which had a detrimental impact on his ability to sustain full-time employment and enjoy his young adulthood.

The team helped Dan to consider what kind of jobs would suit his skills, abilities and interests and supported him to find a job and sustainable accommodation. He has also benefited from access to our therapeutic services.

Dan was able to complete a three month work placement at the IOM Government Department of Enterprise. This was arranged through SIE's working relationship with the IOM Job Centre Team. This helped to improve his confidence and employability.

He has since successfully found a job with opportunities for development and career progression. Dan is now in a position where he can plan holidays abroad and feel a sense of achievement and belonging.



Our fostering placements last 55% longer than the national average.*

*For 659 days compared to an average of 426

Fostering success

Our amazing foster carers make a huge difference to the lives of young people they welcome into their families and homes, ensuring that they are able to reach their full potential.

Key statistic

Total number of children cared for in the year **113**

“ Children experience consistency and stability, and most live with their carers long term. More than half of the children live with their brothers and sisters. ”

Ofsted

Our fostering support continues to evolve and innovate, ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all our children, young people and their carers. Our recent highlights include:

- Development of a co-produced internet safety guide to help foster carers support young people to stay safe online.
- Expansion of our Parent and Child placements with more carers approved to take on the 24/7 role of supporting parents with their children together in the home of their foster carer.
- Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy

(PACE) training to empower carers with the skills needed to support children through the complex process of recovery from trauma.

- Commitment to moving towards therapeutic parenting for the fostering service to help with supporting children with the psychological impact of their Covid and lockdown experiences. This work is in conjunction with St Christopher's therapeutic team and has involved bespoke training, the development of a wraparound service for our carers and most recently, the inclusion of art therapy.
- Development of specific support groups for Parent and Child placements.

Nicky, a long standing foster carer with St Christopher's, has this to say about her experience in specifically supporting parent and baby placements:

“ What always amazes me is the transformation of a mum from when they arrive to when it is time to leave. ”

Nicky, Foster Carer

We are privileged to work with inspirational foster carers. If you or someone you know is interested in fostering with St Christopher's find out more [here](#).

▶ Improve emotional wellbeing

Since the start of our five year strategy in 2018 we continued to develop clinical therapeutic input across all our services. This enables young people, carers and staff receive the expert advice and support they need when they need it. Building on our existing strengths in attachment theory and social pedagogy, we have partnered with mental health organisations to develop holistic, empowering relationship-centred ways to improve emotional wellbeing.

Our achievements

Our service across the UK enables St Christopher's to deliver a therapeutic trauma informed model of care and ensure Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE). In the Isle of Man we deliver individually tailored therapeutic support to the children and young people in looked after care, adoption and aftercare.

Across the board, our approach supports children and young people, staff and foster carers where complex individual needs exist, and can take many forms including Music, Art and Play Therapy, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Psychotherapy amongst others.

In keeping with our Philosophy of Care, we support the children and young people in our children's homes, those moving to supported accommodation and young adults leaving the care system - in order to equip them for future well-being success. Our work with educating our foster carers also significantly contributes to positive outcomes in reducing placement breakdowns.

Ensuring our own staff teams are psychologically supported in the work they undertake is also paramount to guard against the impact of vicarious trauma and burnout. We offer reflective practice groups and one to

one sessions, helping them to process thoughts and feelings in relation to their work. This enables them to more effectively support the young people in their care.

Key statistics

1,644 individual therapy sessions for children/young people

333 reflective practice groups attended by our staff

533 one to one reflective practice sessions for staff

85% of our home managers accessed wraparound support

At St Christopher's we continue to innovate around the psychological support we offer. We continue to make headway into new arts-related creative therapy such as music and drama and are creating new partnerships with key bodies such as Anglia Ruskin University.

Following a successful pilot, we are rolling out 'Safe Homes' - a framework of interventions appropriately adapted from the clinical version of 'Safe Wards', developed by the Institute of Psychiatry. We have evolved this to reflect our practice in residential settings, to provide opportunities for reflection and improve our team's resilience in managing complex presentations in support of a Psychologically Informed Environment.



“In diversity there is beauty and there is strength.”

Maya Angelou

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We live in a society with structural inequalities that affect the lives and well-being of individuals and communities. We know that organisations likely mirror the society we are part of, unless we take clear action to be inclusive. This is our commitment at St Christopher’s. A sense of belonging and having opportunities to be your true self and to thrive, are crucial for the wellbeing of our young people, our foster carers, staff and everyone connected with us.


We have therefore been working hard to develop our practices and culture in order to become a truly inclusive charity. Our EDI Group advises leadership on how to improve and celebrate equality, diversity and inclusion. With their guidance and input from colleagues, we have undertaken the following as part of our journey in this space:

1. Creation of a collaboratively compiled three year EDI plan.
2. A new EDI policy that includes care experience and socio-economic backgrounds, in addition to the nine protected characteristics.
3. Dedicated EDI Lead roles in both the UK and Isle of Man.
4. Ensuring equality is woven into the fabric of our overarching Philosophy of Care.

5. Completing an independent race audit, from which actions are already in underway.
6. Using data to understand our current position and where we need to prioritise action, including analysis of our gender and ethnicity pay data with course correction/action in play from findings.
7. Anti-racist training delivered to all managers.
8. Provision for open and honest supported dialogue on matters related to EDI - by virtue of our in house shout out board, where staff can air their views without judgement and Senior Leadership will act on critical learnings.
9. Adoption of the Halo code, the UK’s first Black hair code - in place to ensure no Black employee should have to change their natural or protective hairstyles in order to thrive at work.



Tackling inequality is a long process, but we are committed to taking the steps each day, every year. We look forward to sharing our continued progress.



“ We are thrilled to be able to make a difference and make some children’s dreams come true. ”

Marc Corbett-Weaver - CEO & Artistic Director - The Story of Christmas

How fundraising makes a difference

Our fundraised income helps us to promptly make changes that benefit young people and provide the extras that help them to really thrive and feel cared for.

At St Christopher’s, we are pleased to have been able to develop new partnerships during the year, with 30% of our grants from new funders. In keeping with our Philosophy of Care and supporting the lifelong learning and thriving of our children and young people, we focus our fundraising to have the most significant impact, with income generated by the team securing funding for:

- **Life Skills and Participation** - where our young people benefit from learning new skills and enjoying new experiences.
- **Our Support into Employment** initiative (SIE) on the Isle of Man.
- **The Diamond Fund** - quickly accessible funds to support young people with practical items that help them access education, training and employment as well as funds for joint activities to expand young people’s experiences.
- **Capital refurbishment of our homes**
- **Welcome vouchers** – which enable each child

or young person moving into residential or fostering to buy items for their room to help them personalise their space.

We would like to thank all of the trusts, foundations, companies and individuals who support us. Your donations have a huge impact on the daily lives of the children and young people we care for.

We are grateful to have had support from The Story of Christmas for the last two years. They have raised funds that have enabled us to make some fantastic quality refurbishments across a number of our homes. Young people have enjoyed the opportunity to take part in decisions on the redesigns and love the new look in their homes.

With a number of young people living together, some of our homes get quite a bit of wear and tear - so being able to complete modern high quality and lasting refurbishments is a powerful way to show our young people that they are valued and worthy.

If you are interested in supporting our work, please get in contact, or find out more [here](#).

Promote lifelong learning and thriving

Our staff succeed with some of the most excluded young people through relationship-centred, creative approaches to learning that equip them for life in the world.

Since the start of our five year strategy in 2018, we have continued to collaborate with young people to make each step of their journey to independence easier. We have also invested in training and support for our staff to enhance learning and develop skills promoting growth and career progression.

Our achievements

Long-term relationships with care leavers

Moving on can be exciting, but also scary. We have developed a programme shaped by young people's needs to support them in planning their move. *Staying Close* plans are offered to every young person in the UK that leaves St Christopher's, regardless of the reason for their move. During the last five years, the project has helped young people maintain relationships with those they care about after they leave residential care and expands on our commitment to *Staying Put* arrangements for fostering. This approach fits perfectly with our Philosophy of Care, with the focus being particularly on: building trusted relationships, promoting a consistent and coordinated approach to the support of young people, providing safety, reducing isolation and unlocking their potential.

Key statistics

93% of our young people are in stable housing two years after leaving our care compared to the national average of only 66%

72 AQA qualifications achieved in life skills

Going from strength to strength

- Our See Yourself Succeed team on the Isle of Man has seen a growth in uptake from our under 16 provision, supporting more young people on modified school timetables and with young people who struggle to be in the mainstream school environment.
- Young people engaged with 90% of the See Yourself Succeed support hours offered.
- Alongside our under 16 sessions, we provide 25 hours a week of education and meaningful activities to the young people at Cronk Sollysh Children's Secure Home in the Isle of Man – focussing on functional skills, employability and fitness.
- 97 AQAs achieved in the Isle of Man.
- 59 AQAs achieved in the UK.
- 55 young people supported by our Summervisity programme during the academic holidays.
- Life skills and participation coordinators with our apprentice youth researchers have supported young people and staff to learn together in the face of shared challenges.

“Children are rightly proud of their achievements and value the help and support offered to them by staff.”

Ofsted



“Everyday we are delighted at the progress that young people like Matt make with our support.”

Tracey Walker - Senior Education Support Officer

Enabling young people into self-achievement

Our See Yourself Succeed (SYS) programme in the Isle of Man continues to flourish. The team supports young people living in our children's homes in building positive relationships and offering a nurturing environment for learning.

They have seen success with functional skills qualifications in Maths and English Entry level 3 and level 1, alongside online qualifications in Health & Safety, Equality and Diversity, Food Hygiene and First Aid.

A tally nearing 100 AQA's in region is testament to the hard work undertaken with topics ranging from life and employability skills, fitness, science, personal development, music and outdoor activities.

We are aiming to expand the qualifications we can offer to include the Open Award 'Skills Passport'.

Matt has been supported by St Christopher's Isle of Man. By working together we have been able to help him carve out a pathway to thrive in adulthood. Here is his story.

Matt is now 16 and was first admitted into Cronk Sollysh Children's Secure Home when he was 14.

From his arrival at the secure home, Matt was provided with 25 hours a week of education support by the SYS team.

He had not attended school since he was 11 years old and was not in the habit of engaging in structured education settings. But the team worked creatively to engage him and help him discover his talents and increase his confidence. During his time with us, Matt has thrived and developed many practical skills including gardening and woodwork - even being able to sell furniture to very happy customers. He also found a new enjoyment in playing strategy games and is now a prolific chess player.

Academically, Matt has gained a portfolio of AQA certificates that help to build an impressive CV. His biggest achievement however has been his commitment to work and study on his Maths and English. He initially passed his Entry Level 3 Functional skills - his first introduction to sitting exams, but since continued to work hard and has now achieved his Level 1 in both subjects.

As a result, Matt has gained a place on a pre-apprenticeship course at the University College Isle of Man - as part of a day release on temporary license program organised through Cronk Sollysh.



We delivered 1,364 life skills sessions, building young people's skills at home and in the workplace

Participation and paths to success

At St Christopher's, each young person is treated as an individual. As part of the approach with our Philosophy of Care, bespoke support around life skills and academic functional skills will be tailored to their needs and ambitions. However, we equally never underestimate how group experiences, fun and making memories can also add value and enrich their time with us and beyond.

Our teams carry out life skills sessions across all our homes, including a vast array of topics such as cookery, art, work and careers assistance; emotional management, self-understanding and health workshops, extensive sporting activities, moving home budgeting workshops and internet safety to name but a few.

We focus in on core functional skills and with tutoring and educational support, we positively impact the outcomes of our young people for exams and assessments in English and Maths, helping them to attain recognition for their progress and hard work.

In the UK, our Summervisity programme continues to grow from strength to strength each year and provides added value and enrichment during school/

college holidays - focusing in on subject areas such as art, multi-media studies and current affairs. Similarly our keep in touch days on the Isle of Man equally maintain those connections during school holidays.

Outside of academic studies and skills attainment, we arrange for our young people to enjoy day trips and mini-breaks on an individual or group basis - ensuring they are afforded the same opportunities to that of their peers.

Our aim is to empower our children and young people to see the value in knowledge and learning, as well as social experiences to help support their growth.

Young people have opportunities to explore their passions, talents and interests through our Hickinbotham Awards and Diamond Fund. These provide quick access funds, which young people have used to support training courses, driving lessons, or even start or develop their business ideas.

Everything we offer the children and young people in our care is in order to help them create happy memories and become the best versions of themselves. Helping them to create their own brighter futures.

Meet our leadership



Jonathan Whalley
Chief Executive

I want to begin by expressing my sincere gratitude to our outgoing chairs, Bert O'Donoghue and Caroline Johnson, who have served St Christopher's tirelessly for many years. Similarly, this year we have seen the planned transition of a number of Trustees, all of whom have supported our work and shaped the charity into the strong position we now find ourselves in.

I could not be more delighted to have the opportunity to work with our new chairs, Anne and Roger, who have already very quickly demonstrated their passion for our work, their ability to steer and shape our Trustee Boards and their individual expertise and experience, which will be immeasurably important to us as we move forwards.

“ My hope for the future is to build on what has already been achieved, and do all we can to deliver financial sustainability given the challenges we have to face so we can fulfill an ambition to reach more young people in need of care and provide them with the security, love and means to have bright futures. ”



Roger Phillips
Chair of St Christopher's Isle of Man

“ The Isle of Man can be a place to innovate and test new ideas for improving services for children and young people. ”



Anne Stoneham
Chair of St Christopher's Fellowship

Looking to the future

It is clear that the world is also going through a process of change, and indeed of challenge. Rising costs, countries in conflict and adjustments to a post pandemic Britain will impact our ways of working. What remains constant however is the need for children to have experiences in

which they feel safe, loved and happy, so that they can achieve their full potential.

Our new Philosophy of Care is a statement of our intent. It sets out our unified views of how children and young people should be treated and how we will support

them to thrive. This report reflects the excellent work of our staff in every area of our operations, and demonstrates our commitment to continued excellence in all that we do.



Are you or someone you know considering volunteering as a trustee for St Christopher's?
Find out more [here](#).

Our investment in children and young people

The main areas of expenditure were



Children' Homes
£8,463,000



Semi Independent Services
£3,869,000



Fostering
£3,092,000



Wraparound
£470,000



Education, Life Skills & Participation
£546,000



Return Home Interviews
£143,000



Staying Close
£381,000



Trusted Spaces
£323,000

Last year we spent just under **£18,200,000**



We spent **£291,000** on training staff

Thank you to our partners and supporters

Thank you to the below organisations and individuals for supporting our work.

Corporate Supporters:

- ADF Software
- Barclays
- Manx Telecom
- Microgaming
- The TEAM LEWIS Foundation
- TK Maxx
- Zurich Financial Services Charity Grant

Charitable Trusts and Foundations:

- City Bridge Trust
- Fowler, Smith and Jones
- G D Herbert Charitable Trust
- Gwyneth Forrester Trust
- Hadrian's Charity
- Isle of Man Masonic Charity
- Peacock Charitable Trust
- The Albert Gubay Charitable Foundation
- The Churchill Fellowship
- The Elizabeth Clucas Charitable Trust
- The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
- The Manx Lottery Trust
- The Story of Christmas
- Youth Endowment Fund

Community Groups and Individuals:

- Carol Edwards
- Grove Centre Church
- Anthony and Susan Hickinbotham
- Life in London Trust
- One Kindness Foundation
- Rushen Parish Council
- Tina Roberts

Government Bodies:

- Bedford Borough Council
- Birmingham Children's Trust
- Bracknell Forest Council

- Buckinghamshire Council
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Cardiff County Council
- Care Home Assessment & Rapid Response Team (CHARRT)
- Carol Edwards
- Central Bedfordshire Council
- Commissioning Alliance
- Coventry Council
- The Department for Education
- The Home Office
- Derbyshire County Council
- Dudley Council
- East Sussex County Council
- Essex County Council
- Isle of Man Chamber of Commerce
- Isle of Man Constabulary
- Isle of Man Drug and Alcohol Team
- Isle of Man Foodbank
- Isle of Man Government
- Isle Learn
- Leicester City Council
- Leicestershire County Council
- Lincolnshire County Council
- London Borough of Barking & Dagenham
- London Borough of Barnet
- London Borough of Bexley
- London Borough of Bromley
- London Borough of Camden
- London Borough of Croydon
- London Borough of Ealing
- London Borough of Enfield
- London Borough of Hackney
- London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham
- London Borough of Hillingdon
- London Borough of Hounslow

- London Borough of Lambeth
- London Borough of Lewisham
- London Borough of Newham
- London Borough of Southwark
- London Borough of Sutton
- London Borough of Tower Hamlets
- London Borough of Wandsworth
- Luton Borough Council
- Manchester City Council
- Manx Care
- Peterborough City Council
- Quit4You
- Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
- Sandwell Children's Trust
- Social Pedagogy Professional Association
- Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
- South Gloucestershire Council
- Southend-on-Sea Borough Council
- Staffordshire County Council
- Suffolk County Council
- Swindon Borough Council
- Telford & Wrekin Council
- Thurrock Borough Council
- Tusla Ireland
- Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
- Warwickshire County Council
- Westminster City Council
- Wolverhampton City Council
- Worcestershire County Council

Organisational Partners:

- Achieving for Children
- Alliance for Children in Care and Care Leavers
- Fairer Fostering Partnership
- Housing Matters
- Social Pedagogy Professional Association

StCHRISTOPHER'S **CREATING BRIGHTER** **FUTURES**



Find out more and donate
to support our work by
scanning the above.

Looking for a placement or want to know more about the way we work?
Contact us today:

 www.stchris.org.uk

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 St Christopher's Fellowship

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