

## Sandra

In our last newsletter, we featured the story of Sandra, a resident at Avondale care home for older people with a history of homelessness, addiction and mental health problems. In August, Sandra sadly passed away.

The staff at Avondale will miss Sandra very much, but are so glad that they were able to improve her quality of life and help Sandra enjoy her last few months.

You can see the video that Sandra helped us to make about life at Avondale on our website, [www.ssj.org.uk](http://www.ssj.org.uk).



Sandra during her time at Avondale

## Work finished at Avondale

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and staff were thrilled by the new-look building. 'The new facilities have made such a difference', said Karen, a member of staff at Avondale. 'The whole place feels brighter and more cheerful.'

'We have a resident who is completely blind, and we've been able to move her into the new bedroom with the en-suite which makes things so much easier for her. Now that she has her own en-suite, and a bedroom just off the main day room, she is able to get around more easily and independently.'

We have been able to complete the project thanks to investment from The Social Enterprise Investment Fund (SEIF) and The Dunhill Medical Trust. The completion of the building work would also not have been possible without our supporters, as their donations really helped to get the project off the ground.

**On behalf of all the residents and staff at Avondale, we'd like to say a big thank you to you all for your support!**

## Do you have any old clothes and textiles that you no longer need?

We are now partnering with Rag Bag to recycle old textiles and clothing. We would be thrilled if you could donate any **old clothes, shoes, bags, ties, belts, soft toys, blankets, towels and bed linen.**

All textiles will be sorted by Rag Bag and reused or recycled to raise money for The Society of St James.

You can show your support for homeless and vulnerable people in Southampton and Hampshire by dropping off your old textiles in our Textile Bank, which you can find in the car park at Jamie's Computers (Unit 33, Mount Pleasant Industrial Estate, Southampton SO17 0SP.)

Please note that we are not able to accept duvets, carpets, rugs, or soiled or wet clothing.

## Take a trip to The Lounge...

...and get a fantastic discount! We're teaming up with The Lounge, a great new Craft Café Bar based in Bedford Place, Southampton.

The Lounge offers delicious, locally sourced and fairtrade drinks, snacks, and homemade cakes in a warm, welcoming and homely environment. They also hold an amazing range of craft workshops for beginners and experienced crafters. And they're open till 8—the perfect place to pop in for an after-work drink or bite to eat!

They are very kindly offering a 10% discount on food and drinks for all members of The Society of St James. Or, if you're feeling generous, you can pay full price and The Lounge will pass on 10% of your bill as a donation to us.

**If you're interested in becoming a member of the Society of St James, just fill out the 'Membership' section on the enclosed donations form.**



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the society of  
**st James**  
believing in your future

# opening doors

The newsletter of the Society of St James

Autumn 2011

## Welcome to the all-new Avondale!

*Thanks to your support, the building work is finally completed at Avondale Residential Care Home*

**This summer, we celebrated an amazing transformation.** All year, building work has been going on at Avondale, and now the renovations are finally complete.

Avondale provides a home to a real mixture of people. Some have general elderly care needs, while others need more specialist care due to mental health problems and alcohol dependency. Without Avondale, many would find it hard to find a care home which could meet their complex needs.

The completed renovations will ensure that Avondale can be the best home possible for our residents.

The old kitchen has been turned into a comfortable new bedroom with en-suite bathroom. An extension now houses a large, beautifully designed and fully equipped commercial kitchen. The day room, which was dark and cramped before, has been extended and fitted with skylights, creating a light, airy space.

At the opening ceremony, it was clear that all of Avondale's residents



One of Avondale's residents, Win, and Operations Manager Jane Smith cut the ribbon to officially open the new facilities

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## Nick's story

*Your support means that our drugs services can help people to overcome addiction and give something back*

**Nick was just 13 when he started taking drugs.** His addiction dominated his life for the next 21 years, and he turned to crime to fund it.

Things changed when Nick got a court order sentencing him to take part in the Society

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a warm bed

a safe home

support and encouragement

hope for the future

because of you

### Nick's story

*(Continued from front page)*

of St James' drug rehabilitation programme. He made the most of the opportunity for a fresh start. Nick gave up drugs altogether, and then got involved with our Bridge2Volunteering programme, which gives ex-drug users the chance to support others to overcome their addictions.



Nick has given up drugs and turned his life around

"I'm quite a people person," Nick explains, "and I just enjoy giving something back. Because for many years I took a lot."

Nick also supported the Society of St James by running the Great South Run to raise money for us. Even though he didn't get round to doing any training, he completed the course in under two hours: "I did it with faith, I suppose!"

The future is now looking bright for Nick. He has received an award from the Mayor for the time that he has put in with Bridge2Volunteering, and he has gone on to study at college where he received the student of the year award.

Overcoming so many years of addiction is a huge challenge. But Nick's story shows how, with the right support and lots of hard work, someone can transform their life.

Do you want to help more people like Nick? You can donate to our drugs services today by ticking the appropriate box on your enclosed donations form.

### Breaking the cycle of drug use and crime

3 months ago we set up a new house in Southampton to help people leaving prison to make a fresh start.

Our house gives them somewhere to live, and the support that they need to give up drugs and stop re-offending.

It is still early days for this project, but we are already seeing signs of success. Our residents have been sticking to their substitute prescriptions and there have been no new arrests, which for a group of such prolific offenders is a real achievement.

### Other news

- The Society of St James has just been awarded Investors In People Silver accreditation. This recognises our commitment to making the most of our staff, and continuously improving our performance.
- The deadline is fast approaching to design a logo for our Skinny Steve campaign—for more information, visit [www.facebook.com/SkinnySteve.TakeNotice](http://www.facebook.com/SkinnySteve.TakeNotice).
- The Society of St James' AGM will be held on the 13th October at the Matthew Le Tissier Suite, St Mary's Stadium, Southampton, starting at 12.00 noon. Please call Barbara on 023 8063 4596 if you would like to attend.

### Rocky Taylor wants you to Remember a Charity

*Could you think about leaving a gift to charity in your will?*

Nobody knows the importance of having a will more than a stuntman. That's why Rocky Taylor is helping Remember a Charity to raise awareness of the importance of charitable gifts in wills.

To do this Rocky, 64, is performing some of the biggest stunts in his career. He's already recreated the stunt that almost killed him in 1985 (after making sure that his loved ones and favourite charities were taken care of in his will, should anything have gone wrong.)

After you've made sure that friends and family are provided for in your will, maybe you would like to consider leaving a donation to The Society of St James. You will be leaving a lasting legacy which will improve the lives of homeless and vulnerable people in Southampton and the surrounding area for years to come.

Rocky's second death-defying stunt will take place in Remember a Charity week, which runs from the 13<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> September. Visit Remember a Charity's Facebook page for the latest: [www.facebook.com/rememberacharity](http://www.facebook.com/rememberacharity).

If you are interested in finding out more about leaving a gift to St James in your will, just tick the appropriate box on your enclosed donations form.



Rocky Taylor going to extreme lengths to promote charitable gifts in wills!

### Jamie's Computers IT Amnesty at Asda Chandler's Ford

*Thank you to all who made it a huge success!*

On a sunny Saturday in July, Jamie's Computers partnered with Asda in Chandler's Ford to hold an IT Amnesty.

The day was a great success. Lots of generous members of the public turned up with old IT equipment, and we collected 41 laptops, 52 monitors, 105 base units, 42 printers, 13 scanners, 1 server and a mountain of cable which we can also make good use of.



Loading up the Jamie's van with IT equipment

All of the equipment was sorted through and either recycled or refurbished and sold on to raise money for the Society of St James.

Thank you to Asda for hosting the IT Amnesty, and to all who donated their old IT!

### An award for Jamie's Computers

Exciting news—our computer recycling Social Enterprise has been awarded a Green Apple Award in recognition of our positive impact on the environment.

We will be presented with our trophy at the House of Commons in November.

