

# Connect

Residents' newsletter

April 2015



## FEATURING:

**Your stories**

**Puzzles**

**Fundraising plans**

**Board member and**

**staff corners**

**St Martins**  
PARTNERS IN MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY

# Hello

## Welcome to this spring edition of Connect.

Thank you to **Andrijs, Emmanuel and Carlos** for contributing articles. Reading your stories was uplifting.

They made me proud to be part of the hard work residents put in to bring about remarkable change and recovery. I would encourage all residents to support one another in what is a difficult but extremely worthwhile journey.

I'd also like to thank all St Martins staff for your excellent work. In this issue there is an interview with James, one of our managers, who talks about the trust, loyalty and togetherness staff value at St Martins. Speaking of togetherness, I hope you enjoy reading about Catherine's achievements, both on our board of management and in her wider life.

As always, I welcome any feedback or questions from you.

### John Thompson, Chief Executive

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## Fundraising

### Support residents' football team.

St Martins are fundraising to help support a number of initiatives. Residents have requested football kit and training sessions to develop their football team. We are also applying for funds to support residents into employment schemes.

Look out for exciting developments regarding fundraising for more projects, in the months ahead.



# Because we care

## James Crockart on 14 years working for St Martins.

**I joined St Martins on 25 June, 2001. I'd arrived in London 10 days earlier with a bit of cash in my back pocket and a rucksack. Now I'm the manager of Wilton Villas. I've been manager for 7 years. Time flies.**

On day 1 at St Martins I met Stuart, who is now the Deputy Manager at New North Road. I remember going to the boating lake at Ally Pally with Stuart after work, looking at the best view of London and thinking, actually it's not that bad here.

On day 2 Stuart told me I was now the Activities Coordinator. It was great. I organised over 200 activities including boxing, music nights, trips around London and a memorable holiday to Centre Parcs. There was more money to do things then. One of the best things was that residents showed me London. They told me about their favourite places and then took me there. I didn't have a clue about the city. But I learned loads from them.

In 2003 I helped open a new project in Bruce Grove. It was hard work. It was January and I got snowed in with a couple of colleagues. We'd work from 8am to 10pm setting everything up. I also helped open St Martins' project in Caledonian Road and managed it alongside two other services before becoming manager at Wilton Villas.

This is a challenging job, but I wouldn't change it. A lot of people have worked at St Martins for as long, or longer than I have. We stay because at the end of the day, we care. St Martins inspires loyalty, trust and a sense of togetherness. I can't imagine working anywhere else now.



# Runaway Success



## Emmanuel tells Connect about joining the top 20 sprinters.

**On 1 January 2015 I achieved my 'PB' or personal best in the 60m sprint. My time was 8.47 seconds. This takes me into the top 20 British sprinters in the 60m event. And it's only 1.73 seconds behind the time recorded by British champion Dwain Chambers recently in Moscow, who belongs to the same athletics club as me.**

I first discovered my talent when I was 15. I was at school in West Sussex and my talent was spotted. You've got to put a lot of hard work and training in. For me it hasn't been easy. I've had injuries and long breaks when I wasn't running at all. I spent some time in Nigeria when I wasn't running. When I came back to London I had malaria. When I was well enough to run again I ripped my Achilles tendon and was out again for a while.

I've been lucky to have had some good coaches. One said to me, "When you're running, run relaxed. Your time will come when you'll run fast." My current coach told me it takes ten years to become an athlete. He worked with Linford Christie who didn't become a world champion until he was 33.

Another great bit of advice someone gave me was, "If you don't try, you won't know." That's inspired me to keep trying to do my best. And I hope it will inspire others too.

# Live for yourself, not your body

## Andrejs' reasons to be cheerful.

I've been with St Martins a couple of months. I've lived in lots of hostels, always moving around. Before that I was on the street for a year. It's tough being homeless in winter. I had a big beard, dirty trousers and I was unwell. I'd been drinking vodka since I was thirteen, so I had problems with alcoholism and mental health.

My mind is clearer now. I can think better, speak better. Exercise is very helpful. Start with walking, then running. Eat normal, healthy food. Read books. Do sport. If I could teach one thing to people it would be this: live for yourself, not your body. By this I mean, don't just give in to things you want. Concentrate on your spiritual needs.

I used to spend my life rushing after money. But that was a mistake. It makes you vulnerable. People can play you like a chess piece when you go chasing money. It is better to do small things. Follow the good path. Make small steps. Understand how you feel. Think about your spiritual life.

I feel so much better now. You have to make little steps one thing at a time. I have hope again. What makes me hopeful is keeping busy. I've done a carpentry course. I volunteer for Cancer Research UK. And I'm applying to do more carpentry. The course starts in September. I think if you do courses and you do voluntary work, it helps you to get a job and also to be happy.

**“Exercise is very helpful. Start with walking, then running. Eat normal, healthy food. Read books. Do sport.”**



# Board Member corner

## Catherine Cox brings insight to the board.

Hello! I'm Catherine Cox and have been a board member since 2007. I am also an ex service user, having been housed by St Martins at their Vivian Comma project for a year. I found the service supportive and with my will to live independently, I moved on within the year.

My decision to join the board came from wanting to give something back to St Martins by contributing my understanding of residents and their needs. After serving a couple of years on the board I played a key role in helping a service user to move on. He is now living an independent life in his own flat, and I felt that I had realised my potential as a board member.

As an ex service user my main concern is the residents of our projects. Sometimes I have the best understanding of their needs, activities and how the service is received. I am also in a good position to answer any questions that may be brought to the board regarding residents' health and safety and/or quality of care.

I very much enjoy my role, which can be challenging. St Martins gave me the confidence to maintain this role and develop. Since joining the board I have qualified to Level 3 as a nursery school teacher.

My main love is painting. I went to Kingsway art college and have just had my 5th exhibition at Lauderdale House, Highgate. It was a great success and fuelled my passion for painting even more. If you have a talent for art or music, keep working with them. The world is your oyster!



**St Martins**

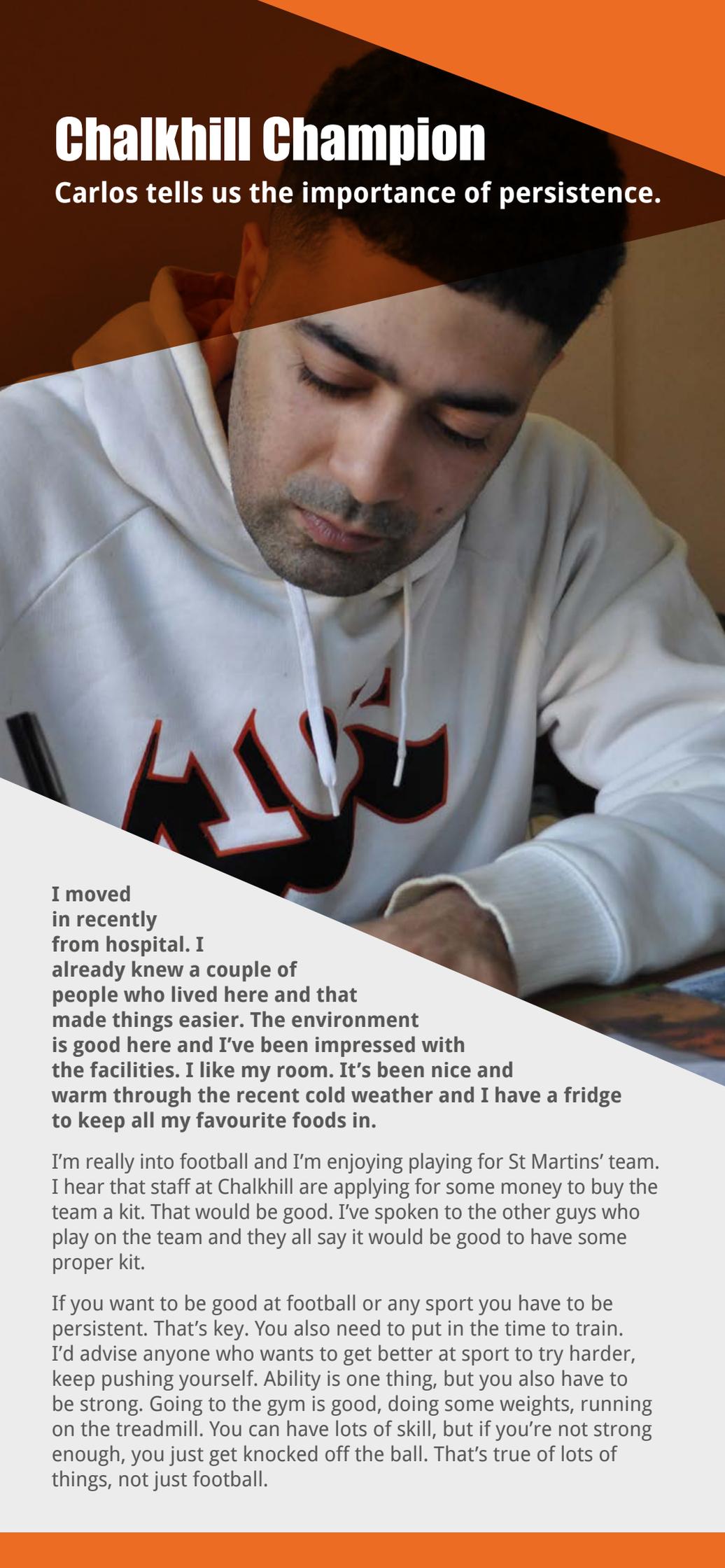
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# Chalkhill Champion

Carlos tells us the importance of persistence.



**I moved in recently from hospital. I already knew a couple of people who lived here and that made things easier. The environment is good here and I've been impressed with the facilities. I like my room. It's been nice and warm through the recent cold weather and I have a fridge to keep all my favourite foods in.**

I'm really into football and I'm enjoying playing for St Martins' team. I hear that staff at Chalkhill are applying for some money to buy the team a kit. That would be good. I've spoken to the other guys who play on the team and they all say it would be good to have some proper kit.

If you want to be good at football or any sport you have to be persistent. That's key. You also need to put in the time to train. I'd advise anyone who wants to get better at sport to try harder, keep pushing yourself. Ability is one thing, but you also have to be strong. Going to the gym is good, doing some weights, running on the treadmill. You can have lots of skill, but if you're not strong enough, you just get knocked off the ball. That's true of lots of things, not just football.

# Puzzles

## Sudoku

Each column and each row needs to include the numbers 1-9

|   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 1 | 7 | 8 | 3 |   |
| 4 | 3 | 2 |   | 9 |   |
| 1 |   |   |   |   | 6 |
|   | 8 | 6 | 3 | 5 |   |
| 3 |   |   |   |   | 4 |
|   | 6 | 7 | 9 | 2 |   |
| 9 |   |   |   |   | 2 |
|   | 8 | 9 | 1 | 6 |   |
|   | 1 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 5 |

|   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 1 | 7 | 8 | 3 |   |
| 4 | 3 | 2 |   | 9 |   |
| 1 |   |   |   |   | 6 |
|   | 8 | 6 | 3 | 5 |   |
| 3 |   |   |   |   | 4 |
|   | 6 | 7 | 9 | 2 |   |
| 9 |   |   |   |   | 2 |
|   | 8 | 9 | 1 | 6 |   |
|   | 1 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 5 |

## Spot the difference

There are 15 differences. Can you spot at least 10?

