

MAYDAY TIMES



New 'Future Proof' Structure For Mayday

"We are approaching a new chapter in Mayday's history.

The changes will allow us to strengthen our position and move forward in an ever-changing and competitive environment."

**Caroline Ward,
Chief Executive**

Following her appointment as Chief Executive earlier this year, Caroline Ward has been overseeing a senior management recruitment drive. Jim Arnold and Lyn Stacey have been appointed to the Board of Trustees with Gordon Armstrong, Jayne Simmons and Lalitha Webb joining the Trust as Visiting Representatives. The trio will provide a link between Schemes and Trustees as well as contributing to the strategic aims of the charity.

Completing the new Management Structure are Stuart Sullivan and Gill Jackson. Stuart, who joins the Trust from Orbit Housing, has been appointed as Head of Operations and Property Services. Gill, a chartered accountant, will take up her post as Head of Corporate Services in September.

Restructuring Programme: Following a detailed independent, financial and operational audit of the charity, Mayday Trust announced a restructuring programme on 12 July 2007. The audit identified that existing staffing structures were no longer appropriate to meet current and future demands.

Commenting on these changes, Caroline Ward said: "Our clients and our capacity to support them are the driving force behind these changes. The welfare of clients will, in line with our core values, remain our strongest priority throughout this process".

New job descriptions have been implemented to reflect the skills, knowledge and competencies required to take the Trust forward. Sitting

alongside this will be an extensive programme of skills and knowledge training, for both management and staff, to develop the calibre of the teams to meet future business needs.

Consultation with staff will run until late August, with completion of the restructuring programme targeted at October 2007.

The overall headcount will not alter dramatically although a limited number of existing roles will not feature in the new structure. Miss Ward said: "It is unfortunate that the necessary changes will lead to some job losses. However, this decision to restructure has not been made lightly and has been in response to changes in our core funding streams".

Following the restructure, the Trust will be better positioned to develop new business, build strategic alliances and enhance the service provision to clients.

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Philip Wins Handbook Competition

Leighton Buzzard resident Philip was awarded £25 worth of gift vouchers after scooping the Residents' Handbook design competition. Philip's design will be used on the front cover of the new handbook.



RESIDENTS HANDBOOK

...giving lives
NEW
direction



**CHANGING LIVES.
CREATING FUTURES.**

Runners-up Edwin, Kay, Sharon, Penny, Simon, Judith and Karen were each awarded gift vouchers worth £5. The handbook, which has been produced by Mayday Trust residents and staff, will also include all seven runner-up designs. Copies will be available to download from our website very soon.

Tell Your Ideas For A Rebranding And Win The CEO For A Day!

Mayday Trust Chief Executive Caroline Ward is so keen to hear your views about our new brand she's offering herself as a prize! Miss Ward has agreed to spend the day at a Mayday Trust scheme, undertaking a variety of activities for staff and clients.

The winning scheme will be asked to submit an itinerary for the day, detailing the CEO's tasks. Activities could vary from running a Group Workshop to manning reception or even preparing a flat ready for a new resident to move in.

Every person who completes the charity's rebranding questionnaire will be invited to vote on which scheme Caroline will visit.

The rebranding, which is scheduled for completion during 2008, will provide a visible display of Mayday Trust's new structure.

Caroline said: "This is a pivotal time for Mayday Trust and a wonderful opportunity to refresh our image. The current restructure will allow the charity to develop into a modern, client focused organisation and we'd like a modern, dynamic image to reflect this."

Completed questionnaires must be returned by Monday 17 September. Copies of the questionnaire are available at www.maydaytrust.org.uk/downloads/Mayday_Trust_Rebranding_Survey.pdf or by telephoning us on 01788 568176.

Spring And Summer Remembered

A poem by
Stephen,
Daventry Scheme



Daffodils gently blowing in Spring sunny haze
Looking forward to Summers never forgotten halcyon days.
Rabbits hopping around with lightness of feet
Never-ending light golden fields of barleycorn and wheat.

Meandering streams which glisten and shine
Aromatic aromas of snowdrops and pine
Woodland bluebells sprinkled and divine.



Picnics with crusty bread, cheese, pickles and wine
Sounds of wood pigeons, wings flapping in the trees
Hay fever sufferers, eyes water they sneeze.

Woodpeckers banging; making new holes
Mares watching over sprightly young foals.
Magpies curious bouncing around
Everywhere listen there's always a sound.



Close your eyes and remember these sights
Because very soon it'll be shorter days, dark early and street lights.

Summer Open Days in Leamington and Leighton Buzzard



Leighton Buzzard Opens to All: Support Worker Sue & client Luke chat to visitors

Mayday Trust's Leamington & Warwick and Leighton Buzzard Schemes defied the dreary weather when they held their Open Days earlier this Summer.

The Leamington event, which took place on Thursday 28 June, even had a short spell of sunshine.

Leighton Buzzard's BBQ followed on Wednesday 18 July. Rain clouds didn't dampen enthusiasm although a few visitors chose the safety of the communal lounge over the gazebo!

Feedback from both events has been positive with Schemes reporting dozens of guests. New links have also developed with other local agencies.

From Humble Beginnings: Two Men With A Vision

The history of Mayday Trust begins with two men who had a desire to improve the plight of homeless ex-offenders, and wouldn't take 'no' for an answer!

During the late 70's Michael Varah (a former Rugby School Master) worked as a Probation Officer in Rugby. Amongst his responsibilities was the Probation Volunteer Group. The Chairman of Volunteers was called Jim Higgins.

Michael noticed the lack of accommodation in Rugby for homeless ex-offenders and those who felt abandoned by society. So, with Jim's help, he set about putting things right. The committed pair spent hours exploring the streets of Rugby to identify a property. They eventually found a suitable house and, with a bit of persuasion, convinced the Housing Department to let them use it.

Michael's daughter, Kate Varah, said: "My father was reminiscing last year over the early days of the Trust. He told me with a twinkle in his eye about how the real challenge was keeping track of residents, who would try every trick in the book to get out of paying the modest rent. On one occasion, he had to shin up a drainpipe and go through a bathroom window to greet a surprised resident and several (unauthorised) friends hidden behind the shower curtain!"

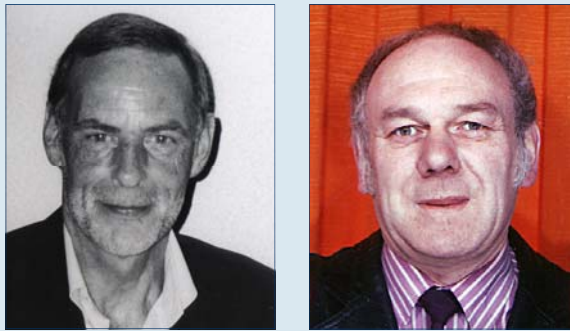
Jim and Michael successfully ran the 'Hostel' - on a shoestring and alongside their day jobs - for almost three years. During this time Michael decided that they needed a permanent solution and started work to achieve this.

The Home Office Probation Department agreed to purchase a property in Rugby. But, following objections from local residents, the project collapsed. Shortly before his death, Michael commented: "In retrospect, this was hardly surprising, but I was a young officer who found it hard to believe that others would not feel as passionately as I did about this lack of provision for a much-neglected group in our community."

Then he resolved to try a different approach, establishing a charity independent of the Probation Service. He submitted an application to the Charity Commission, choosing the name 'Mayday' to symbolise the image of distress and the call for help.

At the same time, Michael sought Trustees to join Jim (appointed Chairman) and himself.

Amongst the original Trustees were Reg Foster and Rona Galliford. Mayday also linked with other third sector colleagues working with vulnerable people, to ensure a solid basis for the fledgling charity.



Founders: Michael Varah (left) & Jim Higgins shared a vision for change

The first house was secured through the help of a Housing Association. They immediately received referrals from Rugby Probation Service and other relevant agencies. Michael added: "We struggled in the early days to raise sufficient funds but, largely through the untiring efforts of Jim and the Trustees, we managed to achieve solid progress and, over a period, link up with other Housing Associations to expand into new areas. The rest, as they say, is history."

Jim Higgins later qualified as a Probation Officer and thereafter played a key role in the Warwickshire Community Service scheme. He died in 2000 at the age of 69.

In 1985 Michael was appointed an Assistant Chief Probation Officer for the West Midlands. In 1988 he moved to Surrey as the youngest Chief Probation Officer in the UK, a post he held until 2004. During this time, he founded another charity, Surrey Springboard, to provide employment and rehabilitation for ex-offenders. Michael died on 2 April 2007, aged 62.

At the time he died, Michael was heavily involved with Samaritans, Victim Support and Surrey Crimestoppers. He was also set to be High Sheriff of Surrey in 2008. His wife Sally and two children, Kate and James, have vowed to continue his legacy through The Michael Varah Memorial Fund www.michaelvarahfund.org

Kate Varah concludes: "Life is measured by thought and action, and not by time. One of the lasting legacies of these two men is Mayday Trust which, almost 30 years on, now supports more than 500 people every year".

"He was so proud of working with Jim to effect real change, and equally delighted with what the Trust has achieved since those early, hand-to-mouth days in the 1970s."

Kate Varah, daughter of Mayday co-founder

Rugby Residents Take Part In Circus Dance Project

Mayday Trust residents from Rugby were invited to take part in a Circus-themed dance project at Rugby Art Gallery & Museum. The dance project, led by Motionhouse dance theatre, began in February and culminated in a public performance on Saturday 17 March.

Deputy Manager Sallie Hillman said: It was a real pleasure to see the residents enjoying themselves. Thanks to Rugby Art Gallery & Museum and Motionhouse for making it happen".

The dance project followed a previous collaboration with the art gallery, with residents participating in an art commissioning activity for the gallery's Made in the Middle exhibition.

Funding from Warwickshire County Council has allowed the two organisations to build on these links by setting up a year-long art group. An exhibition showcasing this work is scheduled for Spring 2008.



Centre Stage: Kay, Simon, Penny, Judith, Robert and Edwin enjoy their circus performance

New Ways To Support Mayday With Recycling Appeal And Justgiving.com

Mayday Trust is constantly looking for new ways to make a positive impact on our environment. To demonstrate its commitment to social responsibility, and to raise much-needed funds to support our work, Mayday Trust has signed up to a national recycling scheme.

This initiative allows participants to recycle old computer cartridges, PDAs and mobile phones using a simple envelope scheme. Each item recycled helps will also generate additional income for the Trust. If you would like to support Mayday Trust through recycling please contact us at

enquiries@maydaytrust.org.uk or telephone 01788 568176 to request your envelopes.

The Trust has also joined justgiving.com to allow our supporters to make simple, secure online donations at the touch of a button. Supporters are also able to design their own mini-site to promote individual fund raising activities.

If you'd like to make a donation, or set up your own fundraising page, please visit www.justgiving.com/maydaytrust or click the 'Make a Donation' button on our website. Thank you.

News In Brief

- maydaytrust.org.uk, is now online. Why not log on and read some of our residents' stories and find out more about our work?
- Leighton Buzzard MP Andrew Selous will join residents at their weekly Lunch Club on Tuesday 18 September.
- Plans are developing for a Trust celebration on May Day 2008. Watch this space or visit www.maydaytrust/news/events for further details.

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Supporting single homeless people

CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER 1035524

