

## Marking a Milestone



### Nikki's Column

I think we can all agree it's a relief to see the back of January! With the hope of lockdown restrictions easing and Spring on the horizon there is certainly plenty to look forward to – most notably for us, the start of the long-awaited redevelopment of our skills centre in Barham.

In the next few weeks work will get underway in earnest – the culmination of six years of planning and a gargantuan fundraising effort that has brought in over £1.5 million in grants and donations from members of the public, companies and other charitable bodies. This is a truly remarkable achievement for a charity our size.

We still have a way to go to reach the total we need, but it will be fantastic to make a start on the three new buildings that will transform the skills centre into an attractive environment offering flexible, environmentally-friendly spaces for students old and new.

Sadly the pandemic means we can't hold the ground-breaking event we'd planned to thank everyone who has supported the skills centre appeal, but until we can all get together safely we will be sharing milestones in the build in the newsletter and on The Fifth Trust website.

Some other positive news to share – we have decided to reopen the garden centre on Saturdays from 10am-4pm, in addition to weekdays 11am-3pm. Following the Government's coronavirus review on 22 February, we should be in a clearer position to make plans for the café too.

Carry on staying safe!

**Nikki Marley,**  
Chief Executive Officer

## Raffle Is A Winner!

We are delighted to announce that, despite the lockdown, our New Year raffle raised a fantastic £450!



*Student John C with some of the prizes for our raffle*

Student John C from Valley House drew the winning tickets for prizes which included a three-course prosecco dinner for two at The Ambrette, £20 vouchers for the garden centre and café, sweet treats and toiletries. Every penny that we fundraise helps us provide the best possible experience and opportunities for our students with learning disabilities, so from all of us to all the local businesses who donated prizes and to all of you who bought tickets - an enormous thank you!

## Cheers To Wine Offer!

Buy five bottles of our Elham Valley Vineyard wine and get a sixth free! Choose any combination of our sparkling white and rosé and still white wine and we will give you an additional bottle of the lowest priced in your selection.

- 2019 Seyval Blanc dry white - £15
- Sparkling white - £25
- Blanc de noirs - £27.50
- Sparkling rosé - £30

Email [cafe@fifthtrust.co.uk](mailto:cafe@fifthtrust.co.uk), confirming you are over 18, to order and to discuss collection or delivery options. This offer ends on 28 February 2021. Terms and conditions apply.



  
vineyard café  
**CLOSED**  
until  
further notice

  
vineyard  
garden centre  
**OPEN**  
Monday -Friday 11am - 3pm  
Saturday 10am-4pm

  
vineyard logs  
**kentlogsales.co.uk**  
**01227 831052**  
Delivery available  
Price on request



## Meet The Trustees

**Suzanne  
O'Brien**

*Suzanne O'Brien has been Chair of our Board of Trustees since January 2019. A qualified accountant and tax consultant, she has extensive senior leadership and non-executive director experience. She is a part-time Lecturer at Canterbury Christ Church University.*

### **Why did you want to become a trustee of The Fifth Trust?**

I met a couple of the trustees and loved their enthusiasm, and I could see how competent and committed the staff were – the students are family to them.

Learning disabilities was new to me, but I wanted to be involved because The Fifth Trust asks big questions about what it is to be human and what society has to provide to make the world a better place for everyone. As for what I bring, anyone who knows me would say I am a person who sees the bigger picture and gets things done!

### **What is your role as Chair?**

To support the team and to create an environment where everyone can flourish and where together we are stronger. I want us to look to the future, to ensure we are here for as long as there is a need for our excellent provision.

### **What are you most looking forward to in 2021?**

Having our students back on site! It's wonderful that we have been able to continue our services online – and reach a bigger audience – but it will be so good to see them in person again. I can't wait for our garden centre and café to get back to normal opening too, as we recognise how important it is as a charity to help ourselves through our social enterprises.

Of course I'm delighted that our skills centre redevelopment is finally getting underway after so much hard work and planning, creating the amazing amenities our students and staff deserve. It's going to be an exciting year!

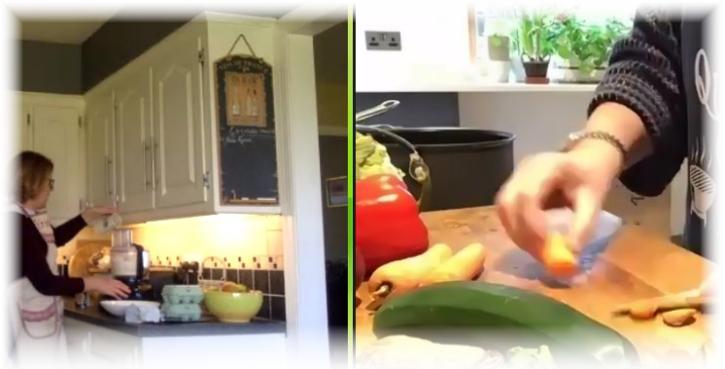
## Battle Of The Cooks!

In The Fifth Trust Online version of the popular TV cookery show Ready Steady Cook, students give our very own celebrity chefs Elizabeth and Mads a weekly cook-off challenge.

When it was Valley House's turn, residents tasked them with creating a vegetarian feast. In just one hour, Mads demonstrated how to create a sumptuous spread including cauliflower and cumin soup, crispy cabbage with chilli seasoning, and courgette and pepper frittata, while over in her kitchen, Elizabeth rustled up a moreish mezze of cauliflower fritters, red pepper humus, and spicy pasties.

On this occasion, students voted Mads the winner with nine green pepper votes to Elizabeth's eight red peppers.

The cooks' challenge is just one of a menu of online sessions students can join every week day, which may also include exercise and dance classes, arts and crafts, karaoke, story time and chat club.



*Both our cooks in action in our weekly cook off challenge*

## Love Is In The Air

Cupid was kept busy at the garden centre in the run-up to Valentine's Day.

We had plenty of love tokens on sale including beautiful potted rose plants in various colours – a much longer-lasting token than a bunch of cut flowers! – our own sparkling wine and sweet and savoury treats.

Mothering Sunday on 14 March is the next special celebration on the calendar, so keep an eye on The Fifth Trust Vineyard Garden Centre and Café Facebook page for some more lovely gift ideas from us.