

The Chronicle

St Andrew's, the world's oldest youth club

Spring 2019



150 YEARS

Learning, training and development for Club Members

St Andrew's Club's Youth Development Programme offers learning and training for older Club members who want to gain hands-on work experience. Deputy Club Managers, Adrian, Sarah and Burcin identify members each year, aged 15+ to help as volunteers one evening each week to develop their practical and leadership skills with the intention of progressing to paid youth work. An exciting prospect for the group is the 4-day residential trip in May. This will help the group bond and encourage wellbeing through physical and mental challenges. It will recognise the commitment they are giving to the Club, which will benefit from their learning. Joanna, 16, who is on the Youth Development Programme, introduces some of the Club's recent highlights.



"I have been a member at St Andrew's since I was 5. The Club has always been an inspiring place for me. Last year I started volunteering at Junior Club as I wanted to give back. I hope to become a permanent member of staff soon and learn more skills such as communication and leadership. During my time at St Andrew's, I have taken part in so many activities, all different but all I loved, from stage make-up to snowboarding. St Andrew's has changed my life. I have made many new friends and I am a valuable member of the Club and the community".



Friday Nights returned on 8 February thanks to funds raised and doubled through The Big Give Christmas Challenge. We now have a targeted Club night for younger members aged 8-13! This complements Senior Club which has welcomed 10 graduates from Junior Club this term: all are fully stuck in with life at Senior Club!

[Read our website News for more.](#)

The Grub Club's six-week cooking course is underway. A pro chef focuses on healthy eating, food education, and making meals from scratch. So far, members have mastered making pizza, curry and homemade naan bread, beef tacos and a roast dinner!



Five photography Club members, aged 9-11 created a fundraiser for BBC's Children in Need. The group, who are all learning photography skills with Burcin, invited their families into St Andrew's Club and took their portraits for Christmas cards in return for a donation to BBC Children in Need, raising nearly £100! Two photography groups are back this term.

[Read our website News for more.](#)

Michael, 24, Club member since his early teens and keen gym member, recently had a week's work experience at FGP Systems Ltd, Weymouth. Michael studied Chemical & Process Engineering at university but was finding competition for jobs in the field challenging. He spoke to staff at the Club: *"The staff are so supportive. This is a youth club that takes extra steps to provide opportunities for members".*

The Club arranged this vital experience to help Michael broaden his technical and practical skills – even making aircraft tray tables! Michael now has the tools to help him land his first graduate engineering role. Good luck and thank you to the generous funder who enabled Michael to stay in Weymouth for the week.



Message from the Chair

St Andrew's has been serving local Westminster young people for over 150 years. Every generation has its own challenges. Today, with profound disparities in income, wealth and health throughout the borough, 1 in 3 children in Westminster are living in poverty. Indeed, 14% of our membership live locally in one of the **10% most deprived** neighbourhoods in the country. This has a key detrimental impact on a child's health and wellbeing, both physical and mental. Evidence shows that growing up in poverty increases the likelihood of poor employment and health outcomes. Our trained youth workers are best placed to see when a young person may be exhibiting worrying signs and their strong relationships help intervention. Our core programme of activities contributes to healthy minds, healthy bodies and positive relationships. Our mission is as relevant today as ever: giving to young people of diverse backgrounds a sense of belonging and fun, in a safe and attractive environment, where they develop self-confidence, self-respect and respect for others and, thereby their ability to contribute to society as good citizens. Come and visit us to see for yourself. Thank you." [Elizabeth Cuffy](#)



Be a part of life at St Andrew's

On 13 December, St Stephen's Church, Rochester Row was filled with people eager to experience the festive and musical celebrations of 'Yuletide Comfort & Joy'. From heartfelt performances by the young people of Westminster School of Performing Arts to experiences recounted by a St Andrew's Club member, the evening was a triumph, raising over £2,500 for the Club! Thank you to John and Glynis Billett and to Knight Frank. Save the date for the next Yuletide Comfort and Joy on 5 December.



[Read our website News for more.](#)

Regular gifts are so important to the sustainability of the Club's income. These enable us to plan ongoing positive activities for young people. To be sure of your invitation to our next special evening reception on 27 June 2019 at The Supreme Court, join our family of Regular Givers and donate by standing order. Please contact lucy@standrewsclub if you would like to become a Regular Giver.



Would you like to take on a challenge for St Andrew's Club? We have something for everyone from a place in the 2-mile Swim Serpentine to the iconic Ride London challenge, and much more!

Please contact lucy@standrewsclub if you would like to hear more.



Keep in touch with all the weekly news at St Andrew's by following our social media accounts.

Facebook: [@StAndrewsClubWestminster](#)

Instagram: [st.andrewsclub](#)

Twitter: [@StAndrewsYC](#)

Snapchat: [st.andrewsclub](#)

Youtube: [St Andrew's Club](#)



Thanks to sponsorship by Smith Square Partners, on 1 February, the Club opened its doors for an evening with comedian Jen Brister. Jen was supported by singer-songwriter Amira Adora who has close connections to St Andrew's and grade 6 tap dancing Club members, Joanna, Italia and Antonio who wowed the audience with their skills learnt at the Westminster School of Performing Arts. The evening was a huge success and saw the audience laugh away any New Year Blues. £1,515 was raised. [Read our website News for more.](#)

Interview with Valence Similien, former member, by John Rhodes, trustee

Listening to Valence Similien you quickly realise St Andrew's has been a central part of his life; and that he has been just as important to the Club. The 13 year-old from Battersea started as a successful Saturday footballer in the 1980s. But that was not his only sport. He is the reason Club members can now enjoy the snowboarding he introduced after becoming Paul Whittle's deputy about 10 years later.

"The Club helped me so much." Valence became qualified as a youth worker and coached various sports. You name the sport; he helped make it happen. And for everyone. He started the girls' 5-a-side football; the mum's volleyball evenings; and even helped take the Club to the national finals of 'Unihock' (hockey with fewer bruises). As well as helping to run cricket, volleyball, basketball

Like so many others, Valence also remembers the weekends spent at the Woodrow activity centre near Amersham.

"Everyone looked forward to being 12 and old enough to go. It was like Christmas". He feels different sports and weekends away broadened Club members' ideas about opportunities and their ability to achieve them. It also taught responsibilities and principles. *"People I know say that without the Club, they would still be jumping in and out of windows"*.

Valence says that leaving the Club in 2008 was one of his saddest days. But it was the result of one of the happiest; getting married and moving to Taunton where he lives with his young family. He has continued to be involved with local youth work, but hasn't found a youth club to compare with St Andrew's. *"It's hard, once you've tasted the best"*.

Visit our website News for more of Valence's pictures.

If you are a former member of the Club and would like to share your story of what the Club meant to you, contact us at info@standrewsclub.com.



St Andrew's Club and the local community

Thanks to our partnership with The Society of Motor Manufacturers & Traders (SMMT), the Greenpower Project started again at St Andrew's on 28 February. The 8-week project is dedicated to promoting engineering and technology to young people aged 9-25 where members will build and race their own electric kit car!



Sarah, Deputy Club Manager, has made connections with Churchill Gardens Youth Club. Football matches and involvement in some of the St Andrew's Club programmes are planned to greatly benefit both clubs. **Read our website News for more.**



Congratulations to Club Members Scarlet and Malachi for being invited to the 15-week The Collective Music Programme 2019! This unique programme is designed to support aspiring musicians to develop their talents, produce socially conscious music and have vocal training, lyric writing, music production, and confidence and performance techniques.



St Andrew's Club Needs You!

Looking to give back to the community? Whether its volunteering at Junior Club, helping at football practice or being a boxing coach, St Andrew's has something for you. **Read our website News for more.**

Ways to support St Andrew's Club



Shopping online? Why not use St Andrew's Club's Giving Machine portal? It won't cost you any extra, and St Andrew's Club will receive a donation for everything you buy! Visit <https://www.thegivingmachine.co.uk/causes/st-andrews-club/> and become a giving hero!



Support the future of St Andrew's Club. One way to leave a gift or legacy in your Will to help the next generation of young people, is to the John Scott Fund, a growing fund, established by friends and supporters of the Club, with a particular mission to provide some long term financial security to the Club. Named after a previous President, John Scott gave great support to the Club. **Contact annette@standrewsclub.com for more details.**



Looking for somewhere to hold classes, children's play and sports activities or a meeting? The Club has a large indoor, sprung floor sports hall; a theatre room for drama, meetings or exercise classes; and a smaller studio with mirrored wall. Wi-fi is available throughout. Our recent management review shows prices are still locally competitive; availability is mostly during the day. **Please contact Linda@standrewsclub.com to see if we can help you.**



And don't forget, St Andrew's has a well-equipped gym with changing rooms that are open from 7.30am-9.30pm Monday-Thursday and 7.30am-4.30pm Friday. Use the space to train for a challenge or self-train. We have had to increase our prices to help cover Club costs, but at only £50 for the whole year (September 2019 to August 2020) it is still very much less than you'll find anywhere else!

Thank you to the amazing Leanna who is running the Virgin Money London Marathon this year for St Andrew's Club. Please help Leanna in her fundraising efforts by visiting the **'Fundraise for us'** section of the website where you can read Leanna's fundraising story and make a donation. **Go Leanna!**



Thank you to our supporters

Thank you to all our Trustees, Advisers, Individuals, Corporates, Trusts, Foundations and Livery Companies who help make St Andrew's Club the precious community asset it is today. Please keep supporting us - we couldn't do it without you! Our special thanks for gifts of £5,000 or more received since November 2018 include Strand Parishes Trust, The Westminster Almshouses Foundation and The Dudley & Geoffrey Cox Charitable Trust.



✓ to keep in touch with this precious community asset

"Thank you for being part of our community. Follow the link **'How you would like to hear from us'** on our website <https://www.standrewsclub.com/> to let us know how we can keep in touch with you about the impact of our work".

In the next issue of The Chronicle ...

Goodbye to Paul Whittle, Club Manager for over 35 years. Welcome to the new team.

Review of President's Reception.

Leanna's London Marathon run.

Memories of the Club and members' activities and achievements.

"It can be tough for a young person growing up in South Westminster. Around 700 members depend on us each year in our 'neutral' environment, that isn't part of any one housing estate. Help us give local young people in Westminster the chance to thrive and give back to society through the varied youth programmes at St Andrew's Club – a local charity and the world's oldest youth club, which has been making a priceless contribution to the local community for over 150 years."

Elizabeth Cuffy, Chairman

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