

StCHRISTOPHER'S
CREATING BRIGHTER
FUTURES



impact report 2018

Isle of Man



We worked with 983 children and young people across all of St Christopher's in 2017-18

Thank you to the young people, staff, carers and families for helping with our Impact Report. The photographs do not match the stories and the stories are real but we have changed the names.

Welcome to our Impact Report

Hi! Welcome to the Impact Report for the year of 2018!

My name is Ash and I live at St Christopher's. If you don't know who they are, let me tell you. They run children's homes, semi-independent homes, a secure care home, support services for leaving care and education and therapy, and lots of other things in the Isle of Man. They also run lots of different services in the UK to help young people in care.

I have a pretty unique point of view of the system as I myself am a young person in care on the Isle of Man. I think that the last year has been such a huge success for us as an organisation because such exciting changes and improvements are happening all the time.

The steps St Christopher's are taking in having a system that involves staff and young people equally are brilliant. I have never been so involved in big decisions and I feel as though young people's voices have never been more heard. With the same amount of work and effort I think we can take even greater steps to carry this on next year and beyond.

The wonderful staff who work for St Christopher's are among the best people I've ever met. Aftercare, residential, management, and everyone in between are achieving so much and everyone has so much to be proud of. The number of lives that have changed thanks to this charity is staggering and together we can carry this on into the brightest future possible.

I am so proud to be part of such a wonderful network of such inspiring people and I can't imagine where I would be without the relationships I've made here. Things seem to be getting more positive every day.

This report will tell you some of the things we've been doing on the Isle of Man and how the staff help St Christopher's do more things in the UK too. Please enjoy our highlights from the past year and I hope you're proud too!

Thank you for the work you put in every day.

Ashton, young person



They make me feel confident to say no. Before I would go along with stuff because I felt like I needed to. Then I got comfy in the home and didn't need to do that stuff."

Luke, young person

A whole community approach

St Christopher's has provided services for children and young people in the Isle of Man for 14 years. In this time we have established strong relationships with key agencies so that young people receive the expert care and support they deserve.

Children and young people are very visible in the community. We want to get things right so that they can connect, integrate and feel part of something wider, despite not always having family support.

When Melissa moved in with us, she was skipping school, going missing and had signs of post-traumatic stress disorder. Because of her past experiences Melissa felt unable to trust our staff, meaning their relationships could not progress to a point where she wanted to open up and let them help.

But whilst Melissa was settling in and getting to know staff, we still needed to keep her safe. So St Christopher's established a multi-agency forum alongside the police, her social worker and education representatives. Bringing these people together once a week meant that everyone involved in Melissa's care was aware of what was going on in her life. From this partnership we developed an approach that respected Melissa's independence

whilst she was out and about and showed her that we trusted her. We took time to explain our risk-planning to Melissa's family so that they were confident in our work and supported our decisions.

"Risk taking is challenging to minimise and requires a lot of resources. However the weekly multi-agency forums, recent harbouring notices and better understanding of Melissa's life have made a huge difference to her safety."

Steve Taylor, Head of Children's Residential Services

Once Melissa had the time to build relationships with staff, she felt more secure and able to understand the risks around her – she was ready to leave her past behind and move forward. She started to engage with substance misuse services, socialised in new places and applied for jobs. Melissa even went to her school prom, and it was brilliant to see her joining in with her friends on a milestone event.

By having a strong partnership with the Isle of Man Government, we made sure Melissa received the highest standard of support – and we do this for every single child and young person.



93% of young people living in all St Christopher's 16+ homes scored highly as having good pro-social skills – meaning they have resilience and know how to build relationships

Putting attachment theory into practice



We have worked closely with experts at Middlesex University's Centre for Abuse and Trauma Studies (CATS) for more than ten years on bespoke tools that help us get to know every young person, understand them, and put plans in place to show them they are safe and cared for.

Attachment Style Interviews (ASI) assess how a young person builds relationships with family, friends or St Christopher's staff, whilst the Q Pack is a set of questionnaires measuring how young people feel about themselves and their skills. From these answers we tailor our care plans to boost young people's confidence and grow their independence, and we conduct follow up assessments to track the impact of our work.

Q Pack results show that young people in our residential services **experienced fewer negative life events** after living with St Christopher's for a year or more. Because of our thoughtful planning, they were **25% more comfortable confiding in staff** when things went wrong.

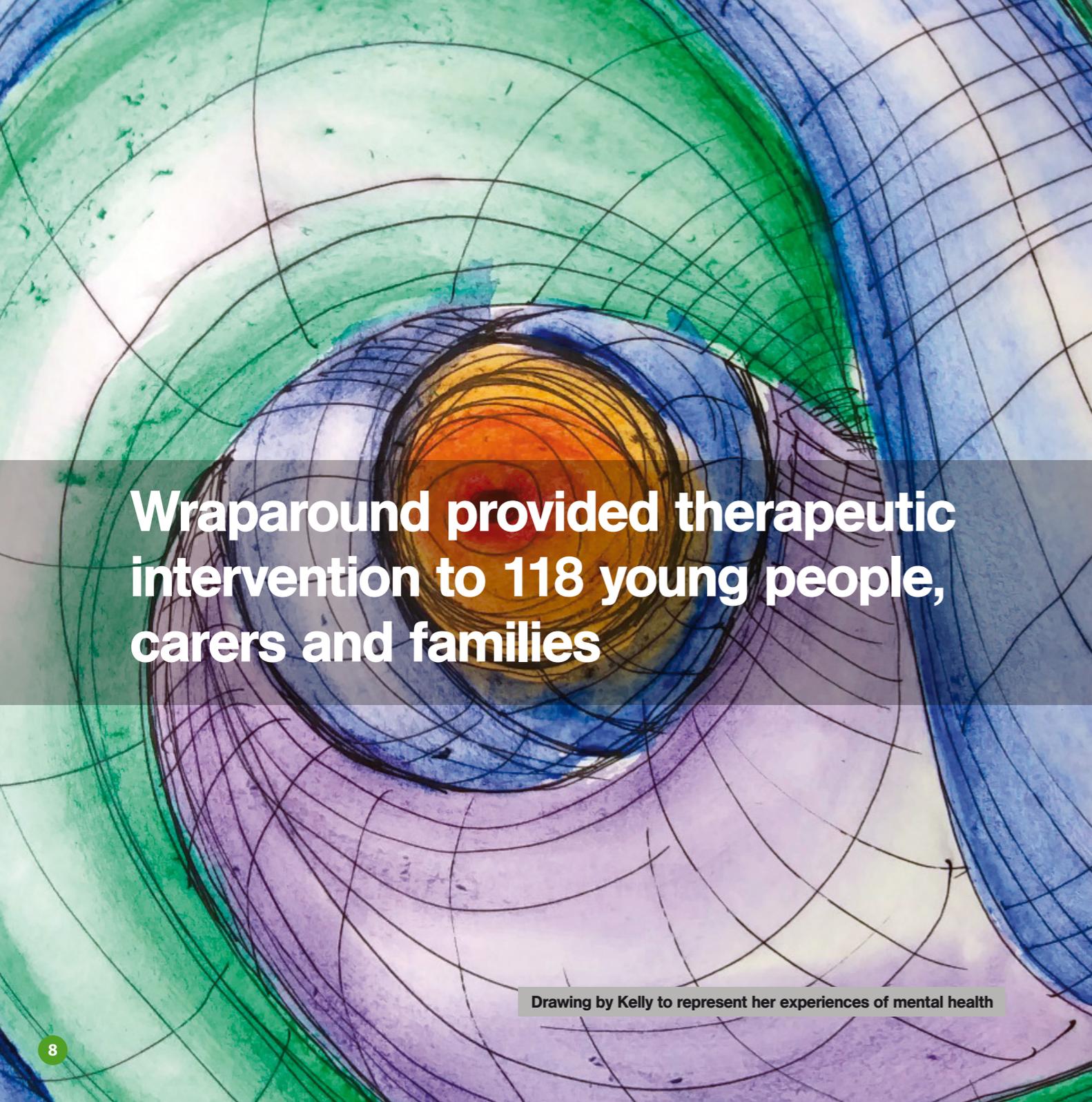
These tools evidence how our understanding of attachment helps to rewire young people's approach to relationships. But they also give us a starting point for talking to young people about their behaviours, without judgment or criticism.

Meghan was reluctant to spend time with a new manager and staff team at her home and her Q Pack showed that she had a really good relationship with someone who had recently stopped working there. She felt really down because it felt like a repeat of her experiences in care – people going back on their promises and leaving her feeling alone.

The team couldn't promise that staff wouldn't leave Meghan's home, but they could manage her expectations. She had an 'anxious avoidant' attachment style: a high need for company with a fear of rejection and separation. From this they came up with ways of addressing Meghan's anxiety, like developing her confidence so she felt brave enough to try tasks on her own. Their efforts showed her that there were other people who cared about her and were interested in her life, so she began to engage with them. She started to feel more comfortable around new people and open to building relationships.

Without Q Pack, staff would not have understood Meghan's experiences. Thanks to their creativity and flexibility, Meghan began to build respectful relationships with staff and other young people in her home, which contributed to reducing her missing episodes.

Please get in touch for the full ASI and Q Pack data.



Wraparound provided therapeutic intervention to 118 young people, carers and families

Drawing by Kelly to represent her experiences of mental health

Integrating therapeutic support



It is a really exciting time for St Christopher's Wraparound team. The service has been growing their vital therapeutic intervention to children, young people, families and carers. Now, a ground-breaking new project is launching to support the Isle of Man Safeguarding Board to assess and reduce the impact of neglect.

Wraparound's work has resulted in a **45% decrease in symptoms** for young people, meaning they are less anxious or depressed and better equipped to manage their emotions. Their dynamic and flexible approach enabled them to **allocate all referrals within three weeks**, so people received support in an appropriate timeframe. By growing their use of ASI to include children and adults, as well as young people, they are demonstrating how our expertise in attachment theory can be put into real life practice.

Due to these successes, the Isle of Man Government expanded the multi-disciplinary team to increase their capacity. Now, Wraparound can offer a range of therapeutic inputs to a wider range of people, including new support to reduce the number of adoption placement breakdowns.

But this isn't the only development – the team are developing new ways of working that will improve support

for families and young people. In partnership with CATS, a multi-disciplinary team of police, teachers, community health workers, social workers and St Christopher's staff are being trained to use two new tools examining neglect, care and parenting. Firstly, the Childhood Experience of Care and Abuse for Practitioners (CECA.P) will collate and analyse information on cold or critical parenting, neglect and psychological abuse. Secondly, the Parenting Role Interview (PRI) will collect information on parents' relationships with their children. This research means neglect is identified earlier on and support services can be put in place sooner, which has been made possible by St Christopher's existing relationship with CATS.

"I am delighted to be expanding our work with CATS by taking part in this project. It is an excellent way for academics and practitioners to work together and achieve a real difference to the lives of children and young people."

Ron Giddens, Chief Executive

Wraparound's expertise is helping to develop mental health and wellbeing intervention in St Christopher's UK services too. The team's successes mean we can implement effective therapeutic models that could change hundreds of children and young people's lives.



**Young people across
St Christopher's achieved
548 AQA certificates**

Tailored educational support

Education is a vital part of any young person's development. Not only can they gain qualifications for the future, it's also a chance to connect with others and build self-belief. For children in care it can be the one thing that has remained stable in their lives – teachers, lessons and friendships stay the same, despite the other chaos going on around them.

Our specialist Education team use our social pedagogic approach: they get to know young people, then come up with projects based around their interests so they are more likely to engage. This could be anything from gardening to sport, or even thrilling outdoor pursuits like surfing or abseiling. These adrenalin-fuelled challenges take young people out of their comfort zone and, with staff by their side, they realise that they can conquer new things and reach their goals – even if it seems scary to begin with!

This approach applies to their work with care leavers accessing our Aftercare service too. Last year the team supported young people to **achieve or work towards 18 Functional Skills qualifications**, so that they could begin their futures on a more equal footing to their peers.

But it isn't just with our Education team that young people are supported to grow and thrive through learning. Staff in our residential children's homes take their young people's

rights to education seriously and encourage their attendance, advocating for specialist provisions where required.

“I wouldn't have got my Functional Skills Maths, I wouldn't have had the support to get onto the media course at college – I wouldn't be where I am today. This goes right back to when I was about eleven or twelve years old and they have been there for me, nagging me and encouraging me to make the most of what I can do all the way through. Today I am living in my own place, working and set up for the future.”

Daniel, young person

Staff's knowledge has helped to develop our education offer across St Christopher's. In 2018 we opened our first residential school over in the UK for young people who are disengaged with mainstream education. By being creative and giving young people more power over their curriculum, they build self-esteem, confidence and resilience – all the important skills that we want them to have as they move into adulthood.

“They come to my parents evening, so I am like everyone else and then they find out what I do and tell my social worker and the rest of the staff. They make me feel proud.”

Max, young person



By 2023 we aim to ensure our young people make up 5% of our workforce

Apprenticeships

There are significant gaps between the achievements of care leavers and their peers. Although 15% of all 19 year olds are not in education, employment or training, this leaps to 41% for care experienced young people.

St Christopher's wants to change this. So, we decided to explore ways of supporting young people into work and training to help them kick-start their careers. We recruited three apprentices to work across our two central offices on the Isle of Man and in the UK, helping them learn about administration, HR and IT.

“Over the last year working with St Christopher’s I have gained valuable experience in the work environment that I might not have been able to get elsewhere. It’s a great opportunity and I would recommend the scheme to anyone looking to further their careers.”

Daniel, apprentice

Initially we put in practical support to ensure they could attend college and achieve qualifications alongside their real-life work experience. Then we realised that entering

the world of work is a big change and that we could be helping our apprentices in other ways so they felt settled and confident in their job.

“While working as an apprentice with St Christopher’s I have learnt a great deal, which I otherwise would not have had the opportunity to do. I am also grateful for how welcoming and understanding they have been, which has helped my confidence.”

Shannon, apprentice

This is just the start: as part of our organisational strategy, we are committed to sustaining lifelong learning and thriving for the young people we work with. To make sure this happens we are reaching out to community businesses on the Isle of Man to find further opportunities for our children and young people. Thank you to all of the organisations who have made this possible.

“It has been very rewarding working with our two apprentices, helping them grow in confidence and gain essential skills to help them start their careers. I can’t wait to see how they progress.”

Clare, staff member



70% of young people cared for were on remand and 30% were custodial placements

A social pedagogic approach to secure care

Our secure care home, Cronk Sollysh, has been challenging historical attitudes to secure accommodation. Our staff aim to keep young people at the centre of their practice in order to grow their self-belief and prepare them to reintegrate with the community.

This is where social pedagogy gives staff the theories to base their practice on. We focus on building genuine relationships with young people so that they feel safe to open up and try new things that will realign their lives.

“Once you get to know staff, you know what their motives are, you know what to expect, you can believe that they are going to help you not just tell you what you need to do.”

Tyler, young person

It starts with our **Community Intervention Service**, supporting young people who are drawn to risky or offending behaviours. Staff help young people learn useful skills and build positive friendships through peer mentoring, mediation and team building projects. They are given opportunities to spend time with their peers in the team’s Community Room through planned

sessions that provide opportunities for young people to act as ambassadors. By giving the ambassadors ownership over the sessions and empowering them to take charge, they are more invested in making them work for themselves and the other attendees. This shows them the value that they can bring to society through positive behaviour and moves them away from criminal behaviour.

Preventative work means relationships are already in place if a young person has to move into secure. Staff use what they know to tailor each young person’s care plan and incentive levels to achieve the best outcomes. Where possible, a young person’s key worker moves with them to their next placement to make sure it is a smooth transition and supports their reintegration back into the community.

Staff also think carefully about the words they use – instead of focusing on the negative consequences of behaviour, they highlight the positives. Showing a young person what **can** and **will** happen, as opposed to what is not allowed, directs their thoughts to the things they can achieve and sets them up to have a more positive outlook for the future.



Missing episodes
were reduced by
32%
over the last year

Finding solutions

One of St Christopher's key values is to be flexible – and nowhere is this more apparent than in the collaborative relationships we have developed with different agencies.

In 2008, local police and politicians were concerned about the disproportionate number of young people going missing from care. A vast amount of police time and resource was spent responding to these incidents – so **Streetwise** was born and runs as and when required, particularly during TT fortnight.

At this time St Christopher's staff are available throughout the night to respond to missing reports, actively search for young people, and take them home without lectures or questioning. Results were noticeable from the very beginning – **numbers of young people going missing drastically decreased** and there was reduced strain on children's homes and the police as they knew a dedicated team were taking the lead.

From the success of Streetwise, St Christopher's and the police had built a collaborative relationship that continues to have a positive impact for children and young people. Our staff train new police recruits about life in care, the

challenges our young people face, and the difficulties when someone goes missing. Recruits responded positively, so the session has become part of their training curriculum and builds good relationships with officers from the moment they join the Constabulary.

"I feel like people accept me for who I am. They don't judge me, but they help me be more myself."

Tammi, young person

St Christopher's and the police also hold monthly Intel sessions to develop constructive solutions to problems that impact the wider community. One key improvement has been waiting until the daytime to conduct Return Home Interviews, instead of asking young people to complete them during the middle of the night after they have been found. They are more comfortable opening up about why they went missing and have time to reflect on what happened.

Investing time in these relationships has changed the way children in care are supported. There is greater understanding of their experiences, less judgement of young people's actions, and they know people are looking out for them.



Young people
attended
90%
of planned key
work sessions

Making memories – from the old to the new

Before coming into care, our children and young people might have missed out on experiences their peers take for granted – simple things like going for a meal, taking up a hobby or going on holiday. This impacts self-esteem and can make young people feel nervous to try new things, so they end up missing out even more. We believe these experiences are essential to a young person's development, so we look for ways to make them happen.

Adam reluctantly moved out from living with his foster family into one of our semi-independent homes. He struggled to settle down, which was made worse by the long, tiring commute he faced to sixth form and his part-time job.

The team could see how much the travel was impacting Adam's wellbeing, so they arranged for his Personal Advisor from the Aftercare team to give him lifts there and back. This gave them time to work through his feelings about moving into the home. Everything was getting on track as Adam aced his mock exams, applied to university and won an award at school for his contributions to Manx Politics.

Then there was another bump in the road – the landlord wanted the building back, so it was time for the semi-independent home to relocate to pastures new. Staff were worried that Adam would be upset or angry about having to move house again, so they reassured him that they would all support each other and make sure his studies remained unaffected. Because he saw how the team helped him through a difficult time before, he trusted their promises and took the news well. He stayed self-motivated with his schoolwork and staff made sure he had time to concentrate on revising for his A Levels.

“Since the day we moved into the new house Adam has blossomed and is thriving. Rather than at the old home, which he felt had been imposed upon him, the fresh start has enabled him to feel fully involved.”

Lisa, home manager

Since then, Adam has received brilliant exam results and is getting ready for student life at his chosen university. He knows he is able to manage any changes that crop up in his life and that he is ready for the future.



87%
of young people
accessing
Aftercare were
in employment,
education
or training,
or engaged
in other
meaningful use
of time

Support for care leavers

Leaving care is often described as “falling off the edge of a cliff of support”. Young people move on from children’s homes whilst they are still teenagers, whereas their peers frequently live with parents into their twenties or thirties.

Managing all the challenges of adulthood without a safety net if things go wrong isn't easy. Care leavers told us they felt isolated, overwhelmed and unable to cope; a disproportionate amount of care leavers are homeless, in prison or experience mental health problems. For Isle of Man care leavers, our Aftercare team are there to help.

The drop-in centre has been a lifeline for many young people going it alone for the first time, whether they need help finding a job, cooking lessons or doing their laundry. Support continues until they feel confident to be fully independent.

“They help me set my own targets but then they keep helping me with the bits I need to do to achieve them. It feels like a real achievement, like climbing a mountain, because they help you realise everything you do to get there.”

Lily, young person

Becky came onto the team's radar due to concerns that her boyfriend, a suspected drug dealer, was giving her dangerous substances. After a while, she left her partner and moved into her own flat, but was evicted because of noise complaints. She did not want to engage with the Aftercare team and was experiencing serious problems with drugs and alcohol. Then, when Becky moved back in with her mum, she found out she was pregnant.

At this point Becky wanted to get her life in order for the sake of the baby. The team helped Becky move into her own flat, where she thrived, and she cut out negative influences from her life. During her pregnancy she looked after herself and attended every appointment to make sure the baby was doing well.

Once the baby arrived, St Christopher's offered Becky the chance to move into an independent house as a single occupant. She has grown in leaps and bounds and enjoys life as a new mum – she is in a stable relationship with no substance issues and has the Aftercare team and her family to help overcome any challenges.

Becky has benefitted from all of Aftercare's help and is always happy to see members of the team. Although she still needs occasional support managing her finances, she is registered for a commissioners house and planning a positive future.



I don't know where I would be without St Christopher's. It is like a family. Staff, I know they are staff but it is real. They do stuff with me and when I leave here I will call them my friends."

Anna, young person

St Christopher's expertise

St Christopher's also provides children's services in the UK. Since 1870 we have worked with young people from a range of backgrounds, with all different experiences. We share learning and develop best practice across all our services and regions so that every young person, no matter which one of our teams they work with, will receive the same standard of care and specialist support.

Our UK services include:

- Residential **children's homes** and **16+ services** supporting children and young people who cannot live with their own families. We empower young people to recognise their own potential and prepare them for transitioning to independence.
- Our **foster homes** for children aged 0-18. Our foster carers enjoy working with a charity that always puts children first. Thanks to our in-depth training programme our foster carers can provide therapeutic placements, parent and child placements to help new mothers learn essential parenting skills, and sibling group placements.
- Specialist children's home for girls at risk of **child**

sexual exploitation and other community threats. The home was piloted with support from the Department for Education (DfE) and is at the forefront of developing a new model of practice for addressing CSE.

- Return Home Interviews for young people who have gone missing from home, school or care. Conducted by our **Runaways team** in a number of London boroughs, we have worked with a number of County Lines cases; this is when gangs exploit young people to sell drugs in rural areas of the UK. Our expertise in this area has been recognised by the BBC and other national media outlets.
- A co-produced **Staying Close** pilot built around maintaining relationships between young people leaving residential care and the people who are important to them. Care leavers take control over their future and decide what life skills training they need and how much support they want. This is supported by the DfE and our local authority partners.

More information about all of our services can be found at www.stchris.org.im

Creating more brighter futures

St Christopher's strategy for 2018-2023 has three key aims: to have **more excellent homes, fostering and support; improved emotional wellbeing for staff and young people; and lifelong learning and thriving to support young people well into the future.** Ash, who lives in one of our homes, sat down with Chief Executive Ron Giddens and Trustee Jane Poole-Wilson to discover what this strategy means for young people in our services.

Would you say this has been the best year so far at St Christopher's?

R: We have accomplished so many wonderful things, like hiring apprentices and expanding the Wraparound service. Involving young people is increasingly key and we would love to involve them more in our Council of Trustees.

What do you hope to see from St Christopher's in the next year?

J: I would love to see more stable accommodation for young people when they leave care, as well as hearing their voices even more in our work.

R: As I am retiring in Autumn, I plan to give the new CEO all the help they need for the transition so that the work we do and services we provide can continue to develop, grow and strengthen.

How do you think staff can bond better with young people?

J: Aiming to keep a strong set of staff gives relationships more time to grow. Even as a parent you have to understand what works for one child might not work for the other, so tailoring care to each individual young person's needs is crucial. Training around the impact of trauma is key to understanding and increasing staff's confidence to address it.

How important is supporting care leavers?

J: I'm very proud of the Aftercare drop-in centre and we definitely still have further to go with it. I certainly didn't feel like an adult at 18, so our young people shouldn't be forced to either.

R: Families don't stop supporting their children after their 18th birthday so we should be no different. We need to create this level of support for children in care – people are slowly starting to recognise this, which is a great victory.

How do St Christopher's and the Isle of Man work together?

R: The Isle of Man has been a shining star for St Christopher's over the last 14 years. We have brilliant partnerships with other Manx services and we have great teams of committed staff. I am so pleased we have been able to work with the Government and hope it continues for a long time.



Ron Giddens
Ron Giddens, Chief Executive



Jane Poole-Wilson
Jane Poole-Wilson, Trustee

Finances

Over the year St Christopher's has spent just over

£16,000,000

supporting children and young people
in the UK and Isle of Man

The main areas of expenditure were:



We spent **£300,000** training staff

Thank you to everyone who supported our work

The work set out in this report and the differences made are only possible because of the support we receive from a wide range of organisations and individuals. Our staff and young people support a number of charities and initiatives on the Isle of Man, whether through fundraising, training or partnership working. Young people also complete work placements that give them valuable experience for the future, without which they would not be able to secure employment and work towards a brighter future. Thank you to every one we have worked with including:

- Adoption UK
- Ballapaws
- Barclays Bank
- Bemahague School
- Cancer Research
- Centre for Abuse and Trauma Studies, Middlesex University
- Housing Matters
- ICM Group
- Isle Learn
- Isle of Man Children's Centre Fostering Service
- Isle of Man Constabulary
- Isle of Man Drug and Alcohol Team
- Isle of Man Foodbank
- Isle of Man Government
- Isle of Man Post Office
- IT Works
- John Muir Trust
- Living Hope Church
- Lonan Church
- Manx National Heritage
- Parville Estate
- Praxis
- Ramsey Grammar School
- School Nursing Service
- St Ninian's High School
- University College Isle of Man
- Youth Arts Centre

StCHRISTOPHER'S CREATING BRIGHTER FUTURES

"We say it's okay"

This report has been approved by St Christopher's young people.

Looking for a placement or want to know more about the way we work?
Contact us today:

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 St Christopher's Fellowship

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