

InFocus

February 2025



St John
Scotland

The newsletter of St John Scotland

A Message from The Prior

I'm pleased to share updates as we begin our work in 2025.

In September, we welcomed Lynn Cleal as our new Chancellor, a key role supporting the Prior and liaising with our Area teams. Lynn brings invaluable experience and enthusiasm, and I'm confident she will make a significant impact as we plan for 2025–2030. Work on this plan is already underway through the Board, Area Chairs, and volunteer input.

The restoration of St John House is progressing well, despite challenges such as asbestos and unexpected structural discoveries. We remain optimistic about completion by April and extend our thanks to all involved in bringing this project to life.

In our Head Office, we were delighted to welcome Cait McLaughlin back to cover communications during Arpana Kirti's maternity leave. Angus Loudon has transitioned to a part-time role as Priory Secretary, overseeing overseas projects, honours, memberships, and ceremonies, alongside his new role as coordinator for the St John International EMEA region. Barri Millar has stepped into the new Chief Operating Officer role, managing operations and serving as the primary point of contact.

Ian Robertson completed his term as Director of Ceremonies on 31st December 2024, with Andrew Smith succeeding him. I'd like to thank Ian and all departing members for their dedication and efforts in ensuring our ceremonies run smoothly.

Finally, I sincerely thank you all for your unwavering dedication to our life-changing services across Scotland and your support for overseas projects, particularly the St John Eye Hospital Group, which continues its work under challenging conditions.

Simon Mackintosh KStJ

Prior



What's in this InFocus newsletter?

News & Updates

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As we begin 2025, I want to thank all St John Scotland volunteers for their dedication and support across our core services. Since the Prior appointed me as Chancellor a few months ago, I have been overwhelmed by the words of encouragement received from many of our volunteers across the St John family in Scotland.

I do not take it for granted, and I am determined not to let you down. Looking forward to our activities through 2025 and beyond, I want to reiterate my determination to continue to build up the foundations and frameworks we need to provide all our volunteers with the necessary platform to deliver and develop our range of services to our local communities with care, compassion, and dare I say it, even with some fun.

Lynn Cleal OBE CStJ
Chancellor



As many of you know, we've experienced several staff changes at HQ in recent months, with the departures of Debbie and Claire. While change can be challenging, it also presents an opportunity to grow and develop a strong new team to better support our Area committees and dedicated volunteers.

We've been actively engaging with national charities such as Chest Heart Stroke Scotland and Marie Curie to collaborate on policy development, while also strengthening ties within our St John

community. Our colleagues in St John Canada and St John Wales have shared valuable insights on communications and social media strategies, and St John Hato Hone New Zealand has generously offered us access to innovative CPR software that could greatly benefit our work in Scotland, and the rollout to CPR awareness nationally.

Additionally, we've been fostering close operational relationships with St John Ambulance England & Wales and St John International in London, reinforcing the collective energy and support within our global community.

We are all eagerly anticipating our return to the newly refurbished St John House, where we will continue working alongside the Areas to expand our core services and align with our new strategic goals.

Barri Millar
Chief Operating Officer

Upcoming Events

- Installation of the Prior, 26th February 2025, *Canongate Kirk, Edinburgh*
- Festival of St John and Annual Investiture, 20th June 2025, *St Ninian's Episcopal Church, Perth*



Patient Transport Update

A heartfelt thank you to our dedicated patient transport drivers and coordinators for their incredible efforts over the past year. Your hard work and commitment have been instrumental in the continued growth of our service, with volunteer numbers increasing year after year to meet rising demand.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to expanding our patient transport services to reach even more people in need. We're excited about the potential expansion of our patient transport service throughout the country in the coming months and years ahead. While still in the early stages, this development could increase the number of Areas offering this vital service - fingers crossed!

Our efforts have not gone unnoticed, with recognition from various NHS Trusts and the Scottish Ambulance Service, who regard our service as an essential support for patients. Most importantly, the patients themselves deeply appreciate the difference the service and our volunteers make in their lives.





St John House Renovations

The ongoing renovations at St John House are progressing well, with exciting improvements being made to enhance the facility to enable staff to support our volunteers and service users.

Recent work has focused on improving accessibility, with upgrades including access ramps to ensure the building is welcoming and inclusive for everyone. Interior refurbishments are also well underway, modernising key spaces to provide a more comfortable and efficient environment for meetings and day-to-day operations.

In addition to these enhancements, efforts are being made to boost energy efficiency, incorporating sustainable solutions that will help reduce running costs and our environmental impact. The project also includes essential safety upgrades, with new fire safety systems and security measures being implemented to meet current regulations.



CPR at The Kelpies

On the 16th of October, we participated in International Restart a Heart Day at The Kelpies in Falkirk. We were joined by Save a Life for Scotland, as well as Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland and local emergency services to provide CPR awareness to visitors to The Kelpies and Helix Park.





Public Access Defibs

It's been an incredibly busy few months for public access defibrillator installations across the country. Installations of new defibs include:

- What Everyone Wants store, Hamilton
- Turnberry Holiday Park, Girvan
- Coylton Community Garden, South Ayrshire
- Masonic Lodge St Molios No. 774, Lamlash, Isle of Arran
- New Abbey, Dumfries
- Apex Hotel Grassmarket, Edinburgh

Pictured above: St John Scotland Ayrshire and Arran volunteers Colin, Brian, Diane and Darren are pictured presenting a public access defibrillator to Lodge St Molios No. 774 in Lamlash, Isle of Arran.

Become a Patient Transport Driver

Volunteers Wanted

Are you ready to make a difference in your local community?

We're looking for volunteer drivers to help transport renal patients to and from hospital for essential treatments. Your time and kindness can provide a lifeline for those who need it most.

To apply, email lisa.dove@stjohnscotland.org.uk

