



# With you, for you

SPRING 2024

Better Care  
Together  
Awards

MEMBERSHIP NEWSLETTER

PAGE  
8-9



Second birthday for  
Community Assessment  
Treatment Unit  
**PAGE 4**



New Community  
Hospital due to open  
**PAGE 10**



Green NHS plans in  
the spotlight  
**PAGE 12**



New Cataract  
Microscope at  
Tewkesbury  
**PAGE 6**



# Welcome

Welcome to our first edition of 2024, in which we're delighted to present the winners of our Better Care Together awards and exciting news on the opening of the new Community Hospital for the Forest of Dean. This is the culmination of several years of work and has involved a huge range of people across the Trust.

Service improvements are always a welcome addition, so it's a pleasure to be able to include details of new cutting-edge technology at Tewkesbury Community Hospital.

With heavy heart we say goodbye to Chair Ingrid Barker, who has been at GHC from the beginning and chaired one of its constituent Trusts from 2011 up to the merger in 2019. She's recalled the opening line of the NHS Constitution at many events over the years, which says 'The NHS belongs to the people'.

And with that in mind, if you're interested in having a say in how the Trust is run, please take a look at the update from our Governors on page 14.

## Get in touch

We welcome your ideas, thoughts and suggestions. If you would prefer to get your newsletter by email, please let us know. Please contact the communications team:

 **0300 421 7146**  
 **GHC.comms@ghc.nhs.uk**

## NEW CHAIR SELECTED FOR TRUST

Graham Russell was selected by the Trust's Council of Governors following a competitive process. He will take his place as Chair following the departure of current Chair, Ingrid Barker, who finishes her term of office at the end of April.



Lead Governor Chris Witham said: "We knew that finding a suitable replacement for Ingrid would be a very tough job but we are delighted to have selected Graham, who is our current Vice Chair and has been a Non-Executive Director with the Trust since its formation in 2019. He was previously a Non-Executive Director with Gloucestershire Care Services NHS Trust from 2016 to 2019.

"Graham not only has extensive NHS experience, he also has great experience in working with our system partners and in voluntary and community sector organisations. He has a particular interest in partnership working and in supporting large scale change to improve the lives of people in disadvantaged communities. Graham will be a very committed and values-led Chair and we are delighted to have appointed him to the role."

Graham Russell said: "**Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust is an amazing organisation with fantastic colleagues delivering excellent services. However, we also face challenges and these offer opportunities for transformation. I very much welcome the opportunity to lead the organisation to make the most of these opportunities and look forward to working with colleagues across the Trust and our partners both in the NHS and the wider system in the years ahead.**"

# MONTPELLIER ALLOTMENT HOSTS COUNTRYFILE STAR



**Our therapeutic allotment received a special visit in March from farmer and BBC 'Countryfile' presenter Adam Henson, who dropped in to officially open the site's newly-constructed cabin and workshop.**

The purpose-built building is the latest addition to the site on Horton Road in Gloucester, which has been transformed in recent years, thanks to the efforts of service users and colleagues at Montpellier Low Secure Unit.

Before cutting the ribbon to officially open the new cabin, Adam received a tour from Senior Occupational Therapist Victoria Woodruff and service user Roger – both key members of the project team.

Victoria said: **"We were delighted and truly honoured to welcome Adam to officially open our fantastic new cabin and workshop.**

**"I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who came along to celebrate the opening with us. I would also like to take this opportunity to recognise the huge contribution of our service users, experts**

**by experience, carers, staff and all of the support staff around us, who have made this project the success that it is."**

Since the redevelopment project began in late 2021, the site has benefitted from:

- the introduction of wheelchair and improved access by relocation of the entrance and the introduction of level pathways
- refurbishment of the existing greenhouses
- the planting of additional raised beds
- the installation of a wildlife pond with levelled viewing platform
- the installation of a Koi Carp pond
- construction of a bird aviary, housing quails and finches
- establishment of a nature reserve, utilising existing woodland and the introduction of native trees and vegetation
- demolition of the existing chicken coop and the relocation of the hens to a free-range paddock.

There are also areas to grow and cultivate produce, which is used in cookery programmes.

# SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF CATU



**Our Community Assessment and Treatment Unit (CATU) held a Tea Party in March to mark two years since they first opened the doors at Tewkesbury Hospital.**

Since that time, it has provided assessment and treatment for people referred by Rapid Response, South West Ambulance Service Trust, Homeward Assessment Team at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital and Cheltenham General Hospital and local GPs, for patients whose needs can be met in a less acute environment. The benefits for the patient are preventing acute admissions and reducing the length of stay.

The CATU aims to complete a comprehensive assessment and begin treatment, before determining the appropriate onward pathway within 10 days of admission.

Ideally this is to return patients to their usual place of residence with or without support, however, it may be to step down to one of our community hospital beds for ongoing medical/nursing care and rehab.

CATU Trainee Advanced Clinical Practitioner Sally Russell explained they have developed the service over the past two years.

She said: **“The whole team on Abbey View Ward, where CATU is based, are proud of how far we have come over the past two years. We have all grown as a team both professionally and personally. We are delighted to have made a success of CATU, and like any new service, it is work in progress and CATU is continually evolving.”**

# Outreach team helps people know their numbers

Our Community Outreach Vaccination and Health team joined Gloucestershire's Healthy Lifestyles Service onboard the One Gloucestershire Information Bus earlier this year, as part of the 'Know Your Numbers' campaign.

The team toured Gloucestershire offering people simple health checks and chatting to them about elements of their lifestyle such as smoking, diet and exercise.

Onagh Wilson, Clinical Lead, Community Outreach Vaccination and Health team, said: **"Having a simple health check and being aware of key stats like your blood pressure is a good first step in thinking about your health and making changes to improve your wellbeing."**



Dr Graham Mennie, local GP and Clinical Lead and Chair, Circulatory Clinical Programme Group, NHS Gloucestershire added: **"High blood pressure is a major cause of heart attacks and stroke. Around one in three adults have high blood pressure, but many don't realise it because it often doesn't have any symptoms until it's too late."**

**"That's why it's so important to take the time to find out your numbers and start making healthy lifestyle changes."**

## WINDRUSH TWIDDLE MITTS

Patients and colleagues at Cirencester Hospital were thrilled and very grateful to receive fabulous twiddle mitts from talented knitter Margaret from Bradley Stoke, Bristol.

Jo Beames, Admin Team Lead and Volunteer Supervisor at Cirencester Hospital, said: **"I would like to say a massive thank you to Margaret on behalf of all my colleagues and the patients at Cirencester Hospital for this very generous and thoughtful gift. The twiddle mitts are absolutely beautiful - Margaret, you are very talented."**



**"Twiddle mitts provide meaningful activities for individuals living with dementia. They are calming and help to relieve stress. They are also great for sensory therapy by keeping patients' hands busy in a productive and positive way."**

# STATE OF THE ART CATARACT MICROSCOPE AT TEWKESBURY HOSPITAL



Patients in Tewkesbury and the surrounding areas are benefitting from a state-of-the-art cataract microscope, thanks to a generous donation from patients through the Gloucestershire Eye Therapy Trust with Cheltenham and Gloucester Hospitals Charity.

The countywide Ophthalmology Cataract Service is provided in partnership with Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust at Cheltenham General and at Tewkesbury Hospital.

Tewkesbury Hospital Theatre Manager James Willetts said:

**"This new technology is much more advanced with improved quality of image which enables us to see every detail and this is replicated on the integral screen. This further supports our skilled team to work more effectively and offers an even better outcome for our patients now and in the future and we are so grateful for this generous donation."**

Mr Will Dean, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon and Specialty Director and Lead for Cataract Surgery added:

**"Together we perform well over 2,000 cataract operations every year and this is set to increase significantly. We are the only service in the county to offer a full and comprehensive service for everyone, no matter the severity of the cataract or type of anaesthetic needed and we provide supervised training opportunities for the next generation of eye surgeons."**

**"The new microscope is state-of-the-art and provides a fantastic addition to the incredible facilities and surgical team at Tewkesbury Hospital and will undoubtedly benefit eye surgery patients for many years to come."**

On formally presenting the microscope, Chair of the Gloucestershire Eye Therapy Trust and retired Tewkesbury GP, Dr Andrew Crowther said:

**"I'm delighted that this new hospital has its own theatre and can continue to provide eye cataract surgery. We were very happy to be able to fund this very important piece of equipment."**

# Physiotherapy in the Forest



Physiotherapists Tomas Bullock and Cerys Watcyns are running popular ESCAPE-pain exercise sessions in Lydney and Cinderford in the Forest of Dean.

ESCAPE-pain stands for Enabling Self-management and Coping with Arthritic Pain using Exercise. It's a group rehabilitation programme for people with chronic joint pain.

Tom said: **"The aim is to empower patients to control and manage their pain rather than the pain controlling or managing them. This is achieved through education and getting the patients to appreciate the effectiveness of simple exercise.**

**"The course comprises ten sessions over five weeks for an hour each session. By the end we hope that participants feel confident to manage their symptoms long-term, which means better quality of life and less time off work."**

Tom runs the Back ESCAPE-pain course at the Freedom Leisure Centre in Lydney, while Cerys offers the Hip and Knee ESCAPE-pain course mainly at the Freedom Leisure Centre in Cinderford.

The pair alternate in offering the hip and knee course in Lydney.

Most participants are over 40 and most sessions are patient-led. Both Tom and Cerys have noticed that the sessions really help with confidence, as Tom explains:

**"People don't realise what they can achieve – whether it is back arthritic pain or hip and knee arthritic pain, some people can feel quite isolated. Showing them what they are capable of makes a huge difference."**

Cerys adds: **"I had a lady in one of my groups who said she'd never come to the gym, she struggled to get on the spin bike in the first session and she didn't really want to come back, but by the end of it she was so grateful and she thanked me for giving her that confidence to try different things."**

Sue Hillier is a former District Nurse and was referred by her GP to the Trust's Physiotherapy team.

She said: **"I have noticed a big difference; as someone who doesn't like exercise, this is something I will take forward. I am now thinking of joining the arthritis class run by the Leisure Centre."**

# Better Care Together awards – **THE WINNERS!**



**More than 135 colleagues gathered to celebrate our Better Care Together awards at Hatherley Manor Hotel, with winners crowned in eight categories.**

The occasion was a chance to celebrate the wide range of teams and services nominated and the contribution of colleagues, volunteers and Experts by Experience across the Trust.

In each of the eight categories there were three teams or individuals shortlisted, then there were also a number of 'Special Recognition' awards presented for those colleagues nominated who narrowly missed being shortlisted.

Trust Chair, Ingrid Barker, reflected on the tough job the judging panel had, adding: **"We had 171 nominations in total and I would have loved to have been able to invite everyone nominated to celebrate with us today."**

Chief Executive Douglas Blair, presenting the awards for the first time, added: **"While receiving a certificate and a trophy is a great reward, it's hearing the words of the colleagues and service users who nominated you that will really stay with you and I've personally found it very uplifting to hear the nominations. We're proud of everyone in the Trust all of the time but especially as we celebrate today."**





**Making a Difference**

**Winner:** Brad Watkins, Matron, Charlton Lane Hospital

**Shortlisted:** Amber Coulter, Social Worker, Children's Services

Katie Overs and Jo Richards, GRiP team

**Always Improving**

**Winners:** Gloucester ICT Community Nursing leads

**Shortlisted:** Children and Young People's Speech and Language Service  
Young Minds Matter, CAMHS

**Respectful and Kind**

**Winner:** Susan Lee, Physiotherapist, Pelvic Health

**Shortlisted:** Nicki Malecki, Community Support Worker  
Stroud Community Dental Nurses

**Working Together**

**Winner:** Community Dental Service

**Shortlisted:** Community Diabetes Team  
GHC Service Desk

**Tackling Inequalities**

**Winner:** Health Visitors, Gloucester and Tewkesbury

**Shortlisted:** Elizabeth Browne, Health Visitor, Cheltenham

**Rising Star**

**Winner:** Sam Smith, Expert by Experience

**Shortlisted:** Ben Adams, Estates and Facilities  
Jessica Gane, Operational Manager, Placements Team

**Outstanding Achievement**

**Winner:** Andy Webb, Criminal Justice Liaison

**Shortlisted:** Christopher Taylor, Estates Contracting and Supplies Manager  
Sally Powell, Learning Disability Nurse, CYP Service

**Sustainability**

**Winner:** Bedside menu ordering system, countywide

**Special recognition:** New Forest of Dean Community Hospital.

# Final preparations to move into new Forest of Dean hospital



**The Trust is delighted to announce that work on the new Forest of Dean Community Hospital is nearly complete and final plans are in place for moving teams and services into the building.**

The new hospital includes a 24-bed inpatient ward, Minor Injuries and Illness Unit (MIIU), diagnostics including x-ray and ultrasound, therapies and outpatient departments and a specialist dental service.

We expect to start moving teams into the building, in Steam Mills Road in Cinderford, from Monday 22 April. Moves are being phased over a period of four weeks, starting with inpatients and dentistry and finishing with the Minor Injuries and Illness Unit and Complex Leg Wound Service.

The MIIU will continue to operate at Lydney until it moves. This is currently planned for the week of May 13.

Douglas Blair, chief executive at the Trust, said: **“We’re nearly there! Moving services into a wonderful new hospital is an exciting time and I know colleagues now just want to be in there and working.**

**“We’re helping colleagues familiarise themselves with the new building at the moment, and I’m aware that moving services will be hard work and take some time to get used to.**

**“I hope the public will be considerate with our colleagues while we work through this process. There will be some disruption, but we’ll keep that to a minimum, and hope everyone appreciates the new hospital when it starts helping the Forest of Dean community.”**

Parking at the hospital will be free for staff and visitors and the MIIU opening hours will be 8am to 8pm - the same as other units across the county.

# Positive picture from Staff Survey results

**Our Trust's Staff Survey results were released in March and reflected the positive outlook of colleagues working for the organisation**

Chief Executive Douglas Blair said: **"Overall, we have had an improved response rate and the results we can compare showed improvements in many areas. We also continue to compare favourably to other, similar Trusts, which is very encouraging.**

**"However, we still have some way to go and the results highlighted areas that we'd like to work on in the coming year. Those include health and wellbeing, support for internationally educated nurses and flexible working.**

**"It's extremely positive to see that so many colleagues chose to take part in the survey this year as everyone's contribution is vital to make our Trust a great place to work."**

The response rate for the Staff Survey at the Trust was at 58%, up from 55% last year and 53% in 2021. Results from the survey are grouped into 'Themes' based on the NHS People Promise and used to generate a score from 1 to 10 in each. Our Trust was equal or better than the average for Mental Health, Learning Disability and Community Trusts in every theme.

We also saw a year-on-year decrease in the number of colleagues looking for a job outside the Trust and an increase in the number of colleagues who would recommend the Trust as a place to work.

# SEND Inspection report published

**Services to support children in Gloucestershire with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and their families are heading in the right direction but still need to improve further, according to Ofsted's latest report.**

Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspectors recognised the range of improvements made by Gloucestershire's Local Area Partnership, whilst also highlighting the need to do more to make sure experiences and outcomes are more consistent for all children and young people with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities).

The partnership, which is a joint responsibility of Gloucestershire County Council and NHS Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board, was inspected by Ofsted and the CQC between 11 December and 15 December 2023. The report was published in March.



**Gloucestershire Talking Therapies**

**From Let's Talk to NHS Talking Therapies: new name, same service**

**Not feeling like yourself lately? We can help.**

**0800 073 2200**

[www.letstalkglos.nhs.uk](http://www.letstalkglos.nhs.uk)



**for anxiety and depression**

Service provided by Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust

# SUSTAINABILITY IN HEALTHCARE PLANNING AT FOREST GREEN



**Our Developing Sustainability in Healthcare event saw around 90 colleagues gather at Forest Green Rovers, in Nailsworth.**

They heard presentations from Dane Vince, Director of Projects at Forest Green, Nicky Philpott, Deputy Director of the Greener NHS Team, Rosie Hilton from the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare and Professor Arran Stibbe, from the University of Gloucestershire.

The messages ranged from optimism and positivity about what could be achieved through collective action, alongside starker warnings about the scale of the pressing ecological problems facing the planet. Here is a tiny sample of the huge range of ideas presented throughout the day.

**Nicky Philpott, Deputy Director of the Greener NHS Team said:**

**“We have a responsibility to act on the knowledge that climate change is impacting the health of our patients.**

**It’s going to take every single one of us to do this. We all have to look at what we can do to support decarbonisation.”**

**Professor Arran Stibbe, University of Gloucestershire said:**

**“We need a new national health story which aligns health with sustainability. The NHS cannot just be there to pick up the pieces as the environment we live in becomes more pathogenic.”**

**Rosie Hillson, Sustainability Analyst, Centre for Sustainable Healthcare said:**

**“The four principles of sustainable clinical practice can be summarised as: Prevention, Patient self-care, lean service delivery, low-carbon alternatives.”**

The day also featured a range of breakout sessions looking for opportunities to reduce healthcare waste, promote greener travel, benefit from preventative healthcare and the role of the NHS as a major institution within the wider community.

# Fifth anniversary of Stroke Unit



The Specialist Stroke Rehabilitation Unit team was joined by commissioners, League of Friends, volunteers, Board members and colleagues to mark the fifth anniversary of the Unit at The Vale Community Hospital in Dursley.

A special cake baked by expert cake-maker and Staff Nurse Nicky Clifford featured images of the full team on the ward and Deputy Facilities Manager Warren shared cakes with the team and patients on behalf of facilities colleagues.

Therapy Lead, Stroke and Rehabilitation Angela Dodd, said: **“Over 730 patients have been through the Stroke Unit, the majority**

**of whom were discharged to their own homes often with ongoing support from the Early Supported Discharge team for Stroke.**

**“As with all new projects there was a lot of planning and preparation involved. New staff roles, training of staff new to Stroke, adaptations to the building, equipment. Not unsurprisingly, our biggest challenge was COVID which struck approximately one year after opening.**

**“Our daily challenge now is to maintain flow of patients through the stroke pathway, optimising opportunity for all to receive the best rehabilitation possible.”**

## PHONE NUMBER CHANGES DUE TO TELEPHONY UPGRADE

Work is ongoing to upgrade the telephone network across the Trust, which has been based on two systems since the merger. We're working towards having 0300 numbers for all our sites, instead of a mix of 0300 numbers and sites with area codes based on their location.

In March, sites in Gloucester switched from (01452) numbers to 0300 numbers and Cheltenham numbers were updated in April. Old numbers will continue to work for some time as we have call forwarding in place.

If you have any old Gloucester numbers saved or stored please check the website for new numbers. [www.ghc.nhs.uk](http://www.ghc.nhs.uk)

# Update from the Council of Governors

**A driving force behind our Trust is the active involvement of members of the public, patients and staff through our Council of Governors.**

Our governors represent the views and interests of Trust members, and work alongside the Trust's Board of Directors to help local communities and colleagues have a greater say in the strategic direction of the Trust, and how services are developed and delivered.

Our Council is made up of 13 Public Governors (representing the borough and district areas of Gloucestershire), seven Staff Governors representing our colleagues, and four Appointed Governors who are representatives from the local authority and partner organisations.

## What we do

Governors have an important role, including:

- Questioning the Non-Executive Directors

- Appointing the Trust Chair and the Non-Executive Directors
- Approving the appraisal process for the Chair and Non-Executive Directors
- Commenting on the Board's strategic direction and annual planning
- Approving major transactions such as acquisitions, mergers or large tenders.

## Council of Governor Meetings

The Trust holds up to six Council of Governor meetings during the year. Check our website for further details.

## Get in touch

Further details of our Governors and the constituencies they represent, can be found on our website at **[www.ghc.nhs.uk](http://www.ghc.nhs.uk)**. You can contact our Governors at any time by e-mailing: **[members@ghc.nhs.uk](mailto:members@ghc.nhs.uk)**.

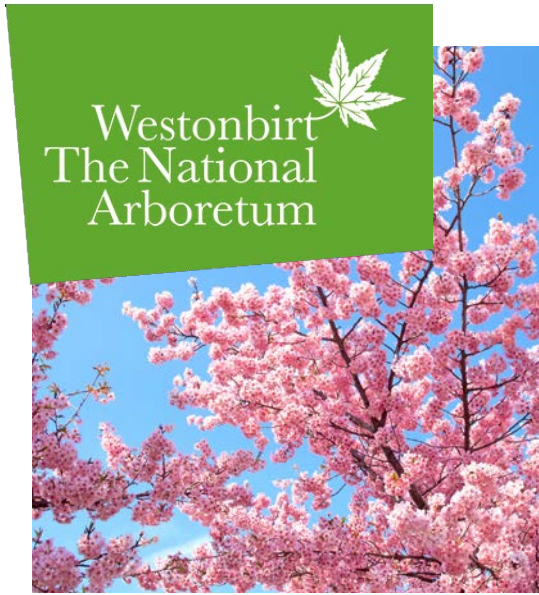
If you would like to know more about the role of the Governor or to express an interest in standing as a Governor yourself, do get in touch by emailing **[anna.hilditch@ghc.nhs.uk](mailto:anna.hilditch@ghc.nhs.uk)**.

## WEBSITE FOR ADHD AND AUTISM

**Gloucestershire parents and carers who may be considering accessing an autism or ADHD assessment for their child can now access a new website which offers guidance and recommended resources.**

The website aims to provide valuable information for families at the point when differences are first identified, offering advice, guidance and strategies to parents and carers.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinators (SENDCoS) have worked together with parents, carers and NHS colleagues to develop the website for Gloucestershire. The website is also designed to give those considering an assessment a greater understanding of the process that takes place and how they can approach this conversation with professionals. The website can be found at Support a child's neurodiversity- Gloucestershire (**[support-child-neurodiversity- southwest.nhs.uk](http://support-child-neurodiversity-southwest.nhs.uk)**)



Westonbirt, the National Arboretum, has kindly donated two adult and two children's tickets valid until January 2025.

The beautiful gardens are home to 2,500 different tree species from across the globe as well as five national tree collections, making them one of the most important plant collections in the world.

**For a chance to win the tickets, please send your details to [GHC.comms@ghc.nhs.uk](mailto:GHC.comms@ghc.nhs.uk) or write to Communications Team, Edward Jenner Court, Brockworth, Gloucester, GL3 4AW including your contact details. A winner will be drawn at random after the closing date.**

**The closing date for this competition is Friday 21 June 2024.**



## Kedgeree with a kick

SERVES 4 PEOPLE	PREP 15 MINUTES	COOK 15 MINUTES
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### Ingredients

- 300g easy-cook white or brown rice
- 4 eggs
- 200g skinless cod fillet (or pollock), cut into chunks
- 120g skinless smoked haddock fillet, cut into chunks
- 120g skinless salmon fillet, cut into chunks
- 2 tsp curry powder
- 150g frozen peas, thawed
- 2 tablespoon fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 pinch ground black pepper

### Note:

Look out for ready-prepared plain fish pie mix from the fresh fish counter – also sold pre-packed – to save some money.

### Method

1. Cook the rice in boiling water until tender, according to packet instructions. At the same time, hard-boil the eggs for 10 minutes.
2. Put the chunks of fish into a large frying pan and add a little water. Heat and simmer for 3 to 4 minutes until the fish is opaque. Drain.
3. Shell the eggs and quarter them. Drain the rice and add it to the fish with the curry powder, peas and parsley. Heat, stirring gently, for 2 to 3 minutes. Season with black pepper and serve, topped with the eggs.

### Information:

Another time, use frozen mixed vegetables instead of peas.

**For more healthy recipes visit:**  
[www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes](http://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes)



# Final word



**Ingrid Barker, Trust chair since its formation, and previous chair of Gloucestershire Care Services since 2011, is stepping down this month. Here are some final thoughts from her!**

## **What have been the highlights of working in the NHS?**

The highlight has always been when I can see I've made a real difference for the people we serve. So co-producing the first commissioning efforts in the country with service users ('Purchasing for People'), and re-providing the old psychiatric and learning disabilities institutions with community services co-designed with people who use them, both stand out.

More recently. I'm really proud of the way we undertook the merger and I've put heart and soul into the new Forest Hospital for over a decade so seeing that finally open in my last month as Trust chair is pretty amazing!

## **What will you miss the most? And least**

The people! I've been a NED and Chair in Gloucestershire from almost 18 years, so I've built up a lot of networks and relationships that matter a lot to me. I will REALLY miss you all! The thing I will miss least is fruitlessly hunting for the one and only elusive NHS corporate tea spoon! No matter where you go in the NHS you can never find one at coffee time.

## **How many animals do you own and what are they?**

We have a small farm so there are quite a few animals around. I own two horses and a

pony - all grey and they are large, medium and small, like a set of Russian dolls. My four chickens have kept some of you in eggs over the years! The current girls are called Pie (as in magpie - she's black and white), Slippers (feathery feet), Lavender and Goldie. I also have two feral cats. Oh, and a part time flock of sheep! Last year we hand-reared two orphan lambs named Mint and Sauce.

## **Who would be your ideal dinner guests?**

My main agenda would be not to have to do the cooking myself so probably Yotam Ottolenghi would have to be there! My five others would be the women from my book club. I've known them all for years.

They are funny, curious, diverse in background and outlook. Best of all, we always have a really good laugh at the absurdities of life and look after one another when things are a bit grim..

## **What book would you recommend to your younger self and why?**

A couple of years ago I trained as a coach and read a book called 'Learned Optimism' by Martin Seligman. It was life changing! I've often had a tendency to be 'glass half empty' and this book has really helped me to change my mental habits to have a sunnier outlook.

