

Join Us

If you enjoy theatre, why not join us and benefit from membership:

- ✓ Half price personal tickets for Questors productions*
- ✓ Discounted Guest tickets when you bring friends to Questors productions*
- ✓ Children's FREE tickets†
- ✓ Opportunities to be actively involved in our productions
- ✓ Opportunity to audition to join our company of actors
- ✓ Exclusive or discounted training courses
- ✓ Access to *iQ* – the members-only website: members.questors.org.uk
- ✓ Receive a full-colour members' magazine three times a year
- ✓ Access to exclusive news on *iQ* and email newsletter
- ✓ Receive the regular programme leaflet
- ✓ Membership of The Grapevine Club
- ✓ Special invitations, events and offers not available to the public
- ✓ Ticket reservation facility (conditions apply)
- ✓ Voting rights in the company

*Reduced prices exclude certain events. †Under 18, excludes certain events, maximum four per event. Must be collected at the performance and accompanied by the member.

Getting the most from your membership

We have a wide range of opportunities for you to become actively involved front-of-house or backstage. Volunteer help is always needed for selling programmes or stewarding, and training is provided if you'd like to work in Box Office with our computerised system. To meet members in a social setting, volunteer to help behind the Grapevine bar. Backstage staff including stage managers, prop makers, set builders, sound and lighting designers and operators, painters, wardrobe and costume and set designers are always welcomed; whatever your skills, we'll find a place for you. We also have courses for those wishing to direct.

The Questors has a high standard of acting and, to maintain this, everyone wanting to act must first take an audition. These are held every month – call the Theatre Office for details of forthcoming auditions.

The Questors Youth Theatre – QYT

Our Youth Theatre, QYT, runs weekly drama classes for all ages from 6 to 18. Younger groups meet on Saturday mornings and older ages at weekday teatime. There's often a waiting list for membership, so put your name down now! Details are online at questors.org.uk/qyt.

Cover Image: Elaine Hagan

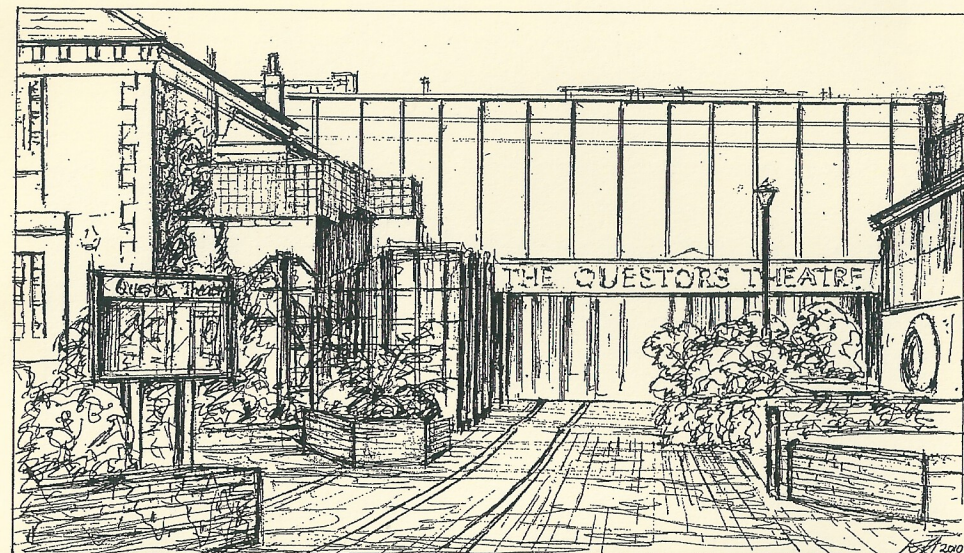
The Questors Theatre
Box Office: 020 8567 5184
Email: enquiries@questors.org.uk

Programme: Nigel Bamford

12 Mattock Lane, Ealing, W5 5BQ
Theatre Office: 020 8567 0011
Registered Charity No. 207516



Questors, Ealing's Theatre



SWEET CHARITY

by Neil Simon, Cy Coleman and Dorothy Fields

The Studio

21 April – 6 May 2017



Vintage Tearoom at The Questors

Come and relax in our vintage tearoom during your busy day.

Open Tuesday to Sunday, 11:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Serving light lunches and delicious cakes with a pot of tea or coffee, all using vintage china.

Also open before and during the interval of Judi Dench Playhouse evening and matinee performances, serving tea and coffee to take away, ice cream and a selection of cold drinks.

See teadarling.co.uk for more information about Tea Darling.

The Grapevine Bar

The Grapevine is our friendly club bar open to Members and Friends of The Questors Theatre and their guests, as well as audience members on show nights.

The club is open seven nights a week and Sunday lunchtimes, and is managed and staffed entirely by volunteers.

We are the proud holders of a Cask Marque award for the quality of our real ales, we appear in the 2017 edition of The Good Beer Guide and we are **CAMRA West Middlesex Club of the Year**. A choice of at least three real ales is usually available, including Fuller's London Pride. We also provide a range of draught lagers and ciders, as well as wines and spirits – all at very reasonable prices.

Opening Hours:

7:00 pm – 11:00 pm (10:30 pm close on Sundays)

Sunday lunchtime: midday – 2:30 pm

See questors.org.uk/grapevine for more details

The Tearoom and Grapevine both accept payments by card
(contactless only).

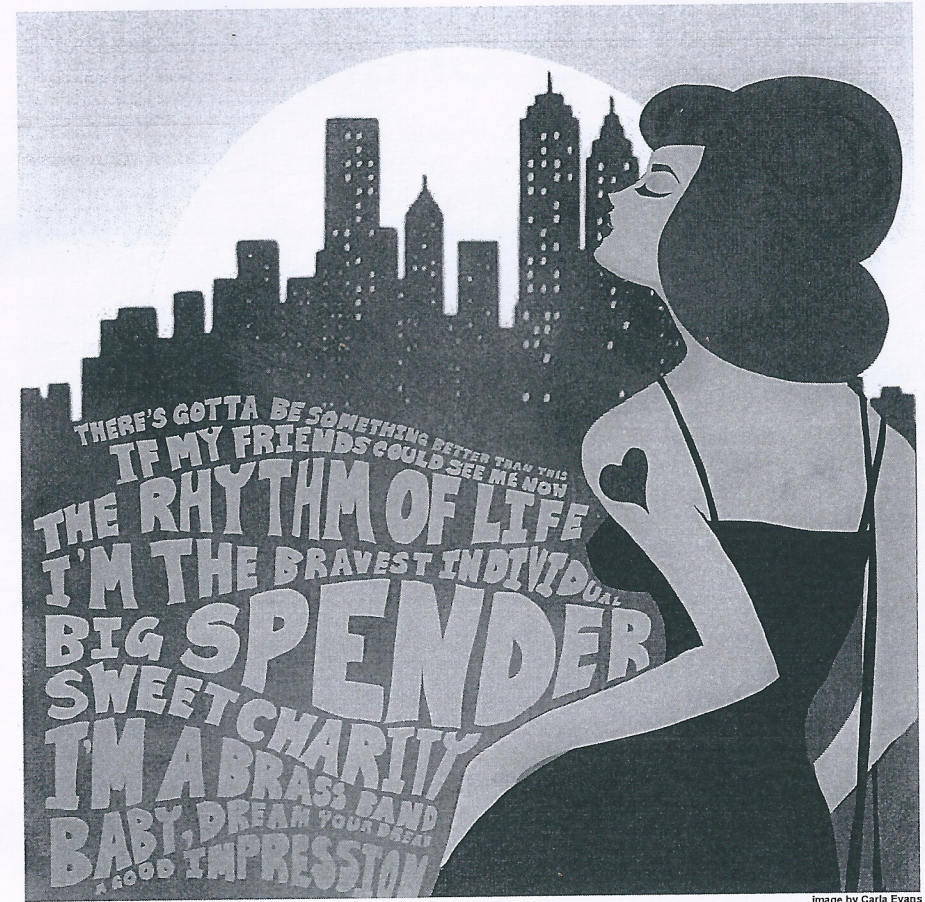


image by Carla Evans

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Sweet Charity

The 1960s were an exciting time for Musical Theatre, reflecting the major changes in social attitudes that were sweeping the USA and Europe. Alongside feel-good shows in the tradition of the Golden Age of Cole Porter, the Gershwins and Jerome Kern such as *Hello Dolly!* and *Oliver!*, the genre also evolved in the direction set by *West Side Story* (1957), tackling darker or more socially conscious themes. Even Rodgers and Hammerstein got in on the act with *The Sound of Music* (1959), set against the Nazi Anschluss with Austria, while Kander and Ebb's *Cabaret* (1966) examined the decline of the Weimar Republic and the rise of Nazism. In some ways it really was 'Springtime for Hitler', as depicted by Mel Brooks in the film *The Producers*. The 60s revolution in musicals was complete with the full-frontal nudity of *Hair* (1968) and the alleged blasphemy of *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1970). So much for tap dancing chorus girls with the sequinned remnants of an ostrich's bottom on their heads, musical theatre had 'grown a pair'.

Sweet Charity was part of this trend. Book writer Neil Simon, composer Cy Coleman and lyricist Dorothy Fields drew inspiration from Federico Fellini's film *Nights of Cabiria* about an actual prostitute with a heart of gold, although they took a tamer approach. *Sweet Charity* offered 1960s theatre goers a musical that's kind of about the sex industry, but not really. Charity Hope Valentine – ironic forenames, surely, at a time when charity was in short supply, and Kennedy's death and the Vietnam War had killed a lot of hope – identifies her career to the police as 'social consultant' at the Fandango Ballroom, but 'dance hall hostess' or 'taxi dancer' are the terms she and her colleagues use to describe their profession, hinting that it could be a gateway to prostitution but never really explicitly acknowledging it. Indeed, Charity's concern that she might be considered a woman of loose morals is such that she agonises about telling her new boyfriend Oscar about her line of work, but eventually summons the courage to tell him that she really is just a hooper, not a hooker.

As with many shows of the period, indeed any period, what seemed revolutionary and new then runs the risk of appearing out-dated and possibly ill-considered. Staging *Sweet Charity* today, it was clear that certain well-intentioned attempts to highlight the racial tensions brewing in New York City, following the lead of *West Side Story*, would simply appear inappropriate. Thankfully, the need to combine multiple characters in our version allowed us to skirt neatly round one such landmine. However, the sexual politics of the piece remain problematic. Charity is written as a hopeless romantic with lousy judgment who becomes aware that being a doormat for men is not a good life or career choice, but ultimately ends up

the victim of men's prejudices or neuroses. In such scenes, as well as the emotionally honest finale, *Sweet Charity* hints at the social stigma of working in the sex industry and the difficulties of getting out of it – or a profession that's viewed with similar disdain. The show's most famous song, "Big Spender", is the closest we get to a traditional female chorus line number but it felt important to honour the intention, revealed by Bob Fosse's original choreography, not to over-sexualise the women or portray them as willing dupes in an exploitative system, but to point up their attitude to the men who pay for their time by highlighting the sarcasm of the lyric with a look of bored contempt.

Ultimately, for me, this show is about friendship, human frailty and dignity in the face of adversity. I believe the story's heart lies in the comradeship shown by the women who work at the Fandango. They have dreams of a better life, demonstrated in the numbers "There's Gotta Be Something Better Than This" and "Baby, Dream Your Dream" but in the first, their enthusiasm is squashed by Herman reminding them of the reality of their position, and in the second by their own realisation that, no matter what course their lives take, men aren't going to change. In the finale, we see Charity come full circle and are left to wonder whether she will repeat the patterns of her past or break them, but we are left knowing that, whatever happens, she has the support of the community of the friends she has at the Fandango.

Russell Fleet, Director

Next at The Questors

PYGMALION

by Bernard Shaw

5 – 13 May 2017

The Judi Dench Playhouse

Henry Higgins makes a bet that he can transform a cockney flower-seller, Eliza Doolittle, into a woman as poised and well-spoken as a duchess. A sharp and provocative satire of the rigid British class system and a commentary on women's independence.

THE LAST OF THE HAUSSMANS

by Stephen Beresford

2 – 10 June 2017

The Judi Dench Playhouse

Outrageous aging hippy Judy Haussman brings her family together in her dilapidated art deco house on the Devon coast, with chaotic results. All-day drinking, infatuations and long-held resentments result in emotional dysfunctionality and physical chaos.



SWEET CHARITY

Book by Neil Simon, Music by Cy Coleman, Lyrics by Dorothy Fields

Based on an original screenplay by Federico Fellini, Tullio Pinelli and Ennio Flaiano

Performances are given by arrangement with MusicScope and Stage Musicals Ltd of New York

First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 21 April 2017

CAST

in order of appearance

Charity Hope Valentine	Alexandria Wright
Helene	Tessa Ellis
Nickie	Eve Billett
Carmen/Ensemble	Lindsey Preston
Rosie/Ursula/Ensemble	Paula Kaanders
Frenchy/Betsy/Ensemble	Tara Smyth
Elaine/Alice/Ensemble	Katy Bond
Herman	Robert Vass
Marvin/Ensemble	James Dodd
Vittorio Vidal	Jerome Kennedy
Manfred/Ensemble	Benedikt Ströher
Oscar Lindquist	Joel Dyer
Daddy Brubeck	Jerome Kennedy

BAND

Keyboard 1	Chris Ma
Keyboard 2	Erica Gundersen / Errol Hui
Drums	Peter Rayner

The performance lasts approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes including a 15-minute interval.

PRODUCTION

Director	Russell Fleet
Musical Director	Chris Ma
Set Designer	Bron Blake
Costume Designers	Jenny Richardson, Holly Merrick, Jennie Yates
Lighting Designer	Francois Langton
Sound Designer	Christopher Smith
Choreographers	Sara Page, Bryony Williams
Burlesque Advisor	Charlotte Greer
Production Manager	Jane Arnold-Forster
Deputy Stage Manager	Sarah Clopet
Assistant Stage Managers	Dani Beckett, Harriet Parsonage
Properties	Rebecca Maynard
Wardrobe Assistant	Sue Peckitt
Projections	Terry Mummery
Lighting Operator	Terry Mummery, Andrew Whadcoat
Set Realisation Lead	Doug King
Set Realisation Team	Sue Collins, Geoff Moore, John Owens, Steve Souchon, Rob Willin
Photographer	Carla Evans
Videographer	Joe Foster
Marketing Assistant	Tim Pemberton
Thanks to	Toby Burbidge, Bernd Gauweiler, Anne Gilmour, Richard Mead, Jon Webster

Please turn off all mobile phones and similar electronic devices.
The use of cameras, video cameras and recording equipment is strictly prohibited.
Thank you.

Musical Numbers

Act 1

Overture	Band
You Should See Yourself	Charity
Big Spender	Hostesses of the Fandango Ballroom
Charity's Soliloquy	Charity
Rich Man's Frug	Patrons of the Pompeii Club
If My Friends Could See Me Now	Charity
Too Many Tomorrows	Vittorio
There's Gotta Be Something Better Than This	Nickie, Helene, Charity
Bravest Individual	Charity and Oscar

Act 2

Entr'acte	Band
Rhythm of Life	Daddy Brubeck and his acolytes
Baby, Dream Your Dream	Nickie and Helene
Sweet Charity	Oscar
Where Am I Going?	Charity
I'm a Brass Band	Charity and staff of Barney's
I Love To Cry At Weddings	Herman and Fandango staff and patrons
Finale	Band

Biographies

Eve Billett – Nickie

Eve is studying Musical Theatre at the London College of Music. Previous credits include Mary in *Be My Baby* and Alex in *Jigsaws* with the Tredegar Thespian Players. She has also performed in *The Pirates of Penzance* (Coleg Gwent Crosskeys) and *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Tredegar Operatic Society). *Sweet Charity* is Eve's first production with The Questors.

Katy Bond – Elaine / Alice / Ensemble

Katy was last seen at The Questors graduating from Student Group 63 in 2010, where she performed in *The Accrington Pals* and *The Libertine*. During her hiatus she has performed as a burlesque artiste at multiple venues across London. She is thrilled to be making her return to The Questors.

James Dodd – Marvin / Ensemble

James is currently finishing a foundation year at the London College of Music before beginning his degree in Musical Theatre at Trinity Laban. Recent credits include Mungojerry in *Cats* (CODYS Productions) and for Priestley College, Paul in *A Chorus Line* and McQueen in *Urinetown*. James is very excited to be joining The Questors for *Sweet Charity*.

Joel Dyer – Oscar Lindquist

Joel trained with Student Group 63 and at RADA. Questors credits include *Peter Pan*, *The Accrington Pals*, *The Libertine*, *Rent*, *Ladies Down Under*, *Yerma*, *After October*, *ENRON*, *Box and Cox* and *The Pride*. Credits elsewhere include *Sleeping Dogs*, *The Lichfield Mysteries*, *Saucy Jack* and *The Space Vixens*, *Jack and the Beanstalk* and *Sinbad*.

Tessa Ellis – Helene

Tessa studied musical theatre at KSA Performing Arts School. Since arriving from New Zealand, Tessa's credits include Ensemble in *Corbyn the Musical* at Waterloo East Theatre, Ethel Peas in *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (Phoenix Players) and Bunty Mainwaring in *The Vortex* (Malvern Theatre Company). *Sweet Charity* is her first production with The Questors.

Paula Kaanders – Rosie / Ursula / Ensemble

Paula works as a research assistant at University College London. UK credits include Ensemble in *Spamalot* (Cambridge Theatre Company). She also played Little Sally in *Urinetown* and Magenta in *The Rocky Horror Show* in student productions in Utrecht, the Netherlands. *Sweet Charity* is her first production with The Questors.

Jerome Kennedy – Vittorio Vidal / Daddy Brubeck

A veteran performer and director, Jerome joined The Questors in 2011, where he has appeared in *Annie*, *The School of Night*, *Dracula – Fangs of Destiny*, *Have I None* and *Sunburnt Ears*.

Lindsey Preston – Carmen / Ensemble

Soprano Lindsey studied classical voice at the prestigious Guildhall of Music and Drama in London. Credits there include Emmie in Britten's *Albert Herring* and Dorothee in Massenet's *Cendrillon*. Since graduation, she has performed as a vocal artist on a six-month world tour on the *Silver Shadow* cruise liner. *Sweet Charity* is her first production at The Questors.

Tara Smyth – Frenchy / Betsy / Ensemble

Tara is a Performing Arts graduate. Credits while studying include The Model in David Hare's *The Blue Room* and Molly the Horse in *Animal Farm*. Tara has appeared in various short films and TV shows including *The Royals* and music videos such as Fat Boy Slim's *Eat, Sleep, Rave, Repeat*. *Sweet Charity* is her first production with The Questors.

Benedikt Ströher – Manfred / Ensemble

Benedikt is studying Musical Theatre at the London College of Music. Previous credits: for Staatstheater Kassel, Der Graf in *Oh! Tell O!*, Revolution Leader in *A.I.D.A Activation* and Ensemble in *Lost Violet – an electric opera*; for Ballettschule Doutreval, Lead Dancer in *Tanzmomente 9, 10 and 11*. *Sweet Charity* is his first production with The Questors.

Robert Vass – Herman

Robert has been performing with The Questors for over 10 years. He has played Beadle Bamford (*Sweeney Todd*), the Baker (*Into the Woods*), Harry (*Company*) and Cogsworth the clock (*Beauty and the Beast*). Recent roles include Frank Strang in *Equus*, Mr Boo in *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice* and Ugly Sister Beryl in *Cinderella*. He is also a production photographer.

Alexandria Wright – Charity Hope Valentine

Alexandria, currently studying at London College of Music in her second year, is thrilled to be bringing the role of Charity Hope Valentine to life in her first production at The Questors. Her previous roles include: Kristine from *A Chorus Line* and Mary Sunshine from *Chicago*, both performed with DCMT.

Bron Blake – Set Designer

An active member of The Questors since the early 1970s, Bron has been designing sets since 2004. Productions include *Vincent in Brixton*, *The Seagull*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Broken Glass*, *Doctor Faustus*, *The School of Night*, *Betrayal*, *Be My Baby*, *Rope*, *The Master Builder*, *The Village Bike*, *Twelfth Night* and *Measure for Measure*.

Russell Fleet – Director

Russell trained as an actor in the 1990s and joined The Questors in 2006. He has since taken on other roles, notably Stage Manager and Sound Designer, and most recently Director. This is his first musical, following *The Lying Kind* and *Boeing-Boeing*. He holds an MA (Actor Training and Coaching) from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.

Learning through plays?

BA (Hons) Theatre Production (Design and Management)

Gain theoretical and practical experience whilst working backstage on shows at both **The Questors** and in the **London College of Music**.

This two-year accelerated course covers a wide range of theatre-related skills; including stage management, stage technology (lighting and sound) and design.

Apply now to start **September 2017**

 uwl.ac.uk/questors

 john.davey@uwl.ac.uk



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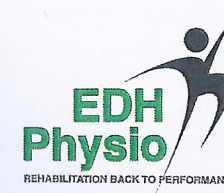
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Francois Langton – Lighting Designer

Francois is a freelance lighting designer with a variety of experience across theatre, opera, dance and live music. Recent shows include *La Traviata*, *Madame Butterfly* and *Don Giovanni* for Regents Opera; *After the Fall*, *A Little Night Music*, *Grimm Tales* and *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase* for The Questors; and *The Mikado* and *La Belle Helene* for Julian Light Opera.

Chris Ma – Musical Director

Chris is a musician, teacher and musical director. He studied as a classical pianist at the Royal Academy of Music and later as a collaborative pianist at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama with a special focus on Musical Theatre. Others current/future musical projects include *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *The Color Purple* and *Crazy For You*. He works regularly in several drama schools when he is not in the theatre.

Sara Page – Choreographer

This is Sara's third choreography role at The Questors after *Cinderella* and *The Country Wife*. She acted in *4.48 Psychosis*, *Office Song*, *The Crucible* and *A Little Night Music*. Sara is co-artistic director of Trip The Light, a dance and physical theatre company which created *Not Goodbye* for Qestival II. She is currently studying Advanced Theatre Practice.

Jenny Richardson – Costume Designer

After many years working in stage management, props and set design, Jenny enjoyed a change of direction in costume design, recently for *Equus*, *All My Sons*, *The Lying Kind*, *The Cripple of Inishmaan*, *Don't Dress for Dinner*, *Measure for Measure* and *Scarborough*. Jenny can also be found working in Box Office, and is frequently in demand as an upholsterer.

Christopher Smith – Sound Designer

Chris has been a sound designer for The Questors for the last four years, after picking up an interest in it at school and university, as well as working with Amanda Redman's ATS. Chris works in sound for TV for the BBC, Sky and ITV.

Bryony Williams – Choreographer

Bryony is a Dance/Movement Teacher and Choreographer with wide experience in both Eastern and Western movement disciplines. She is currently working at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and London College of Music with singing, acting, music theatre and music students. She also runs a cross generational dance research company, SpiralArts.

Jennie Yates – Costume Designer

Since joining The Questors in 2000, Jennie has worked on numerous productions, and is now Head of the Costume Department. The shows she has worked on are too numerous to list, but the most recent are *The Wonderful World of Dissocia*, *Arms and the Man*, *Dick Whittington & His Cat*, *Grimm Tales*, *Dead White Males* and *Improbable Fiction*.

Become a BEQUESTOR

This season, The Questors, Ealing's theatre, is presenting 18 productions – old and modern classics, challenging recent drama, comedies and our great annual Panto. This is a tremendous undertaking for our members, many of whom have demanding full time jobs. Everyone appearing on stage, and working unseen in our creative and technical teams, gives their hard work and dedication out of love of theatre. You're reading this because live theatre means a great deal to you too.



Ealing and West London would be a lesser place without The Questors at its heart. And local children and young people would be deprived of opportunities without the Questors Academy, which provides classes for over five hundred children and teenagers every week. But we receive no public funding.

Please consider making a donation to help us continue to make our huge contribution to the cultural life of the capital. You may prefer to do this while you are alive. Or you may prefer to leave a legacy in your will (or in a codicil if you have already made a will).

No gift is too small to help and any gift, either while you are alive or in your will, attracts tax relief. You can find a Gift Aid form and an example of simple forms of legacy on our website at questors.org.uk/giving.

Your donation or legacy may be anonymous if you wish, or The Questors may acknowledge your generosity publicly – every gift of £1000 or more will be commemorated on the donor board in the foyer.

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The Trustees of The Questors, which is a charity, will ensure that your gift is put to the best possible use. But if you wish to allocate it to a particular purpose, or would like any further information, please feel free to speak in confidence to Andrea Bath, our Executive Director, on 020 8567 0011.