

# CHAIR Q&A

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CHAIR OF ST JAMES HOSPITAL  
FOUNDATION



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## **How did you find out about the Chair opportunity? Why did you decide to go forward for the role?**

I was contacted by Boardmatch to enquire if I were interested in St James' Hospital Foundation and in particular that the role of Chair was coming up. I decided to take the role after meeting the outgoing Chair and getting assurances that he and three other retiring Board members would stay for 6-12 months to allow me to get to know the charity and help me on the journey.

## **How did you find the transition “diving” into the Chair role?**

Thankfully, I did not find the transition difficult as I recruited a very strong board and had held previous roles of Chairs of various organisations in the legal world and in sports club committees. I also had an excellent new Board who were a terrific support system.

## **Did you undertake any training?**

I attended at least one all day training course – organised by Boardmatch in Goodbody Stockbrokers; and given my job, I have access to all legal governance requirements for Board members and Chairs. I also undertook some ad hoc training with other known board Chairs and Board members. Finally, we have undertaken Director Governance training within the Board since I have joined it.

### **What piece of advice did you get as a Chair that was key in your role?**

Ensure you have a hard-working board, who will support you and divide up the work. Also do not be afraid if you are not always saying the thing that everyone wants to hear, as Chair you must be sure to give clear and strong guidance to the Board and executive team. Also remember you are not supposed to know everything and be able to solve all the issues, that is what the Board and key executives are there to support you in doing.

### **What has been the positive aspects to the role?**

Picking a great Charity, and a great institution in St James Hospital. Ensuring that I have good people around me and a good support network.

### **Has there been any challenges?**

Of course, every job and every role carry challenges, and if it does not, my guess is you are not doing the job properly. I think the takeaway, is to consider and deliberate all issues, do not shy away but also do not make rash decisions and consult with the rest of the board and then act!