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Major Upgrade for Burlington Lane Convent and Nursing Home

£6 million investment will see transformation of St. Mary's



The new zinc roof will cover the space between existing buildings. Picture: Paul Vick Architects

June 30, 2026

St Mary's Convent and Nursing Home in Burlington Lane is preparing to embark on a major £6 million redevelopment that will reshape the historic care home, with construction on the first phase due to begin in 2026.

The Grade II-listed property has secured planning and listed building consent for an ambitious programme designed by award-winning local practice Paul Vick Architects. The project will unfold in stages, beginning with the creation of 400 square metres of new internal communal space by enclosing underused external and back-of-house areas. Later phases will deliver eight new independent living units set within redesigned landscaped grounds.

The new homes have been designed to meet rigorous low-energy standards, including Passivhaus or AECB levels of performance. High-grade insulation, photovoltaic panels and acoustically separated air-source heat pumps will allow the development to meet Greater London Authority zero-carbon requirements without offsets — a commitment that aligns closely with St Mary's long-standing ethos of care, stewardship and community.

With more than a third of the £6 million target already raised, the convent has now launched a fundraising campaign to support the remaining phases. Demand for St Mary's services remains strong, reflecting its unique blend of heritage and specialist care.

Founded in 1896 by Mary Jones — a pioneering nurse supported by her friend Florence Nightingale — the home has deep roots in the history of British nursing. The Society of St Margaret took over its running in 1910, and today St Mary's continues to offer care within its secluded gardens and historic buildings, tucked beside Old Chiswick and within easy reach of the river and Chiswick House.

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The designs make use of previously underused areas. Picture: Paul Vick Architects

The experience of the Covid-19 pandemic has shaped the design of the new communal courtyards, which will allow the home to manage any future requirements for separation or restricted movement. "Covid was challenging as no new residents were able to come and communal activities effectively stopped due to separation rules, with beds empty and access for staff severely limited. It is a testament to the strength of our community of staff, suppliers, residents, their families and Sister Jennifer's leadership how we got through these times together," said Managing Director Liz Smith, who has served at St Mary's for 26 years — first as Matron and Registered Manager — became Managing Director in 2023. She now works alongside Registered Manager Melissa Layton as the home prepares for its next chapter.

Their leadership comes at a time of rising national demand for care, with the government's white paper *People at the Heart of Care* and the Care Act both calling for higher standards and expanded provision.



View of new independent, low energy living unit. Picture: Paul Vick Architects

St Mary's currently offers 52 full-care rooms and five independent living units. The newly consented eight additional units will be single-storey homes with one or two bedrooms, each with its own kitchen, dining and living space, accessible bathrooms and views over a shared courtyard. Residents will be able to enjoy privacy and independence while remaining close to the dining, community and professional care facilities of the main buildings.

Donations to support the project can be made via the St Mary's website at www.saintmarysconventchiswick.com, or by contacting the office on 020 8994 4641 or office@stmarysnh.co.uk.