

Former Cadbury's chocolate factory to become a care home

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Article By: Sue Learner, News Editor

A former Cadbury's chocolate factory in Keynsham is to be turned into a £60m retirement community with 120 assisted living apartments and a 105-bed care home offering a range of specialist care.



Luke Freeman, joint chief executive of the MF Freeman Group and David Williams, chief executive of the St Monica Trust

Bristol-based charity, the St Monica Trust, is behind the development of the iconic red brick buildings, which will include additional office and employment space, as well as retail outlets. Other community facilities may also be included, such as a restaurant, leisure suite, hairdressing salon, pharmacy and GP surgery.

Jacob Rees-Mogg, North East Somerset MP, has called it “excellent news for Keynsham both that the Cadbury's buildings will be retained and that the St Monica Trust will be providing supported living for older people”.

He added: “It is a wonderful charity with a first class infrastructure that will provide a superb service to the community in a symbolically important building.”

David Williams, chief executive of the St Monica Trust, said: “Maintaining the heritage and rich history of such iconic buildings is very important to the Trust. Our founding Cote Lane site is a Grade II listed building and our most recent development at Sandford Station retained all of the site's original railway buildings, which means we have a strong track-record in that respect.”

The St Monica Trust is celebrating its 90th Anniversary this year and the Keynsham site will be the fifth retirement village developed by the charity.

Luke Freeman, joint chief executive of the M F Freeman Group, which specialises in residential and commercial development said: “After purchasing the site last year we are delighted to have obtained planning consent for the redevelopment of these landmark buildings and secured their future beneficial use. Our relationship with the St Monica Trust is based upon sharing our vision of delivering a high quality mixed use scheme, which preserves more of the original buildings and maintains the integrity of the heritage of this iconic site.”

The former Cadbury's factory buildings were constructed in the 1930s and are part of the wider Somerdale development on the site being developed by Taylor Wimpey.

The housebuilder's plans include 700 new homes, plus a new Fry Club and Conference Centre, a new primary school and nursery, shops and sports pitches.

Adrian Slade, Somerdale project director for Taylor Wimpey, said: “We are pleased that the former Cadbury's factory buildings are being brought back into beneficial use. The fact that the St Monica Trust are developing alongside us is an indication of the quality and vision Somerdale offers, whilst providing a valuable facility for the local community, complementing our redevelopment of the wider Somerdale site.”

The retirement community is due to be completed in Spring 2017.