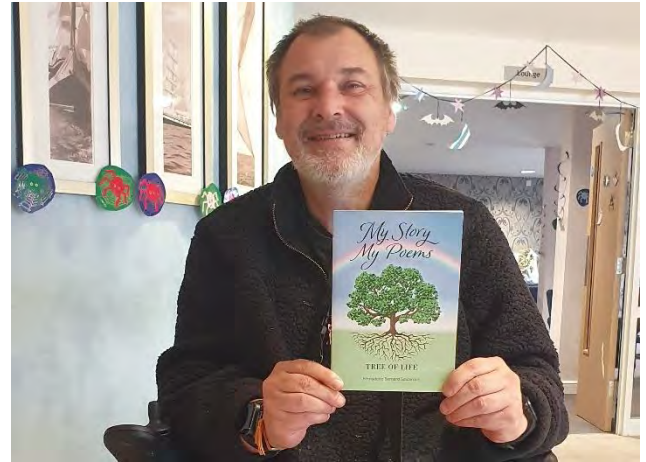


Retirement community resident publishes first anthology in aid of charity

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A retirement community resident and first-time published poet is raising money for charities close to his heart.



Bernadette Soubirious a resident at Sanctuary Supported Living's Whitley Court often spends his spare time writing in private at the retirement community in Paignton, which provides apartments and communal facilities for over 55s or people with long-term care needs.

Bernadette will donate profits from his book titled 'My Story, My Poems, Tree of Life' to Barnados and Great Ormond Street Hospital – two charities which have supported him in both childhood and adulthood.

The book contains raw poems that have been penned to convey aspects of his poor mental health and are expressions of how his feelings, moods, and motivations are at the time of writing. They span from the time he first began writing poetry 15 years ago, to now.

Bernadette, who has lived at Whitley Court since it first opened, said: "There is such a stigma on mental health and the more awareness out there, the better.

I wanted to capture some of the conflicting emotions I've felt over the years, and I'm really pleased to have been published for the first time.

Reading, writing, and listening to poetry is a welcome distraction from things like loneliness, and can help people cope with stress or depression, and lessen symptoms of anxiety. It's a nice opportunity for self-reflection.

You can buy a copy of my poetry anthology directly from Whitley Court on Hayes Road, or Paignton's local Morrisons on Totnes Road for just £5. I'd love to raise as much as I can and give back to Barnados and Great Ormond Street Hospital, both of which are wonderful charities."