

# Avery Life



Welcome to the July issue of Avery Life, now a monthly update of all the latest from Avery and our leading care homes. It's a new format, but still with all the usual stories from around our communities, as well as updates about how we continue to deliver our first-class care in these challenging times.

Last issue's Spot The Deliberate Mistake was on the back page where the word 'department' was misspelt. This was quickly spotted by Jan Daniels, whose father is a resident at Derby Heights Care Home, so some of his favourite barley sugar sweets are on the way to him! Try and find this issue's mistake and contact us at [marketing@averyhealthcare.co.uk](mailto:marketing@averyhealthcare.co.uk).

As you may know, Avery also operates the Hawthorns senior independent living communities, and it's great to see that we are keeping residents healthy and well to a good age there too, as evidenced by Mr Anthony Watts at the Eastbourne community who recently celebrated his century! Happy 100th Birthday Sir!

## SHOW YOUR SUPPORT ARMED FORCES DAY

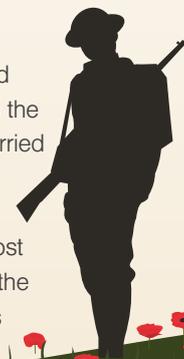
On Saturday 27th June, our homes celebrated Armed Forces Day with music, laughter, and great food. This countrywide event commemorates and shows support for those who have served, are still serving, and remembers those who have not returned.

Avery are proud to have many staff members and residents who represent all sectors of service. From the Men's and Women's Royal Air Force, the Royal Artillery, Women's Royal Army Corps, Royal Navy, Grenadier Guards, Royal Signals, and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, they all have fantastic stories to share.

Residents at Acacia Lodge and Hinckley House hosted tea parties with lots of delicious treats, whilst John Matthews and John Powell from Albion Court reminisced about their time in uniform.

John Matthews served in the Royal Marines, visiting Hong Kong and Borneo, and was very proud of his green beret; he especially enjoyed ceremonial events where they dressed in white uniforms and looked very smart. John Powell was an Army driving instructor and spent time in Aiden and Libya. He instructed all grades of staff in the Army, teaching them to drive amphibian vehicles, but was forced to stand down after five years after a motorcycle accident. Both men said it was important to hold Armed Forces Day to remember their colleagues who had fallen. Beverley Aldridge, Home Manager of Albion Court, said, "Our residents always enjoy Armed Forces Day, and our staff like listening to the residents' stories about their time in the services."

Former service personnel in the staff and residents at Crispin Court all agreed that Armed Forces Day is a wonderful tradition, as it allows the country to celebrate the diverse work that is carried out by our servicemen and women. Ken Lunn, a resident from Crispin Court, who served with the Royal Artillery, agrees, "It's a significant boost of morale to all serving personnel, as it shows the individual gratitude and support from members of the public."





Sharon Winfield | Chief Operating Officer

**I am excited to share with you a further update on how we are successfully managing the coronavirus pandemic. We continue to see reassuring outcomes for testing results, and I am pleased to report that across the Avery group, we are now mostly virus-free for both staff and residents! Despite the media portrayal of the sector, our care homes are now some of the very safest places to live and work.**

The way to control the spread of the virus is through continual mass testing, so I am also pleased to confirm that we are one of just six providers nationwide who have been chosen to pilot a Government testing programme, commencing 6th July 2020. This testing period of four weeks will include residents and staff on week 1, then staff every week for a further three weeks.

Our garden visits have enabled residents to re-connect with their loved ones, and we are now working on an internal visiting protocol, in anticipation of further Government guidance; as soon as we can safely offer internal visits, we will let everyone know. We are also working hard to re-instate resident in-house services within social distance guidelines, for areas such as lounges and dining rooms, and visiting entertainers and hairdressers. As soon as we can restore these services within the 'new normal' circumstances for the benefit of the residents, we will.

**Thank you again for your patience, support and understanding, and I trust that you will keep safe and well.**

## Diamond Couple Sparkle!



**Having built and shared a lifetime of memories and events with family and friends, we are always delighted to welcome couples to reside in our care homes. With this, comes the joy of being able to celebrate some significant landmark anniversaries for some of our long-wed couples.**

A shining example of enduring love was celebrated at Newcross Care Home recently for one couple, Janet and Thomas Wright, to mark their diamond wedding anniversary.

Janet and Thomas first met 70 years ago when they both worked in the same office at an engineering firm, where they would enjoy a flirtatious laugh and a joke together. A fantastic friendship soon blossomed, and Thomas eventually asked Janet out on a date.

Having married on 18th June 1960, the loved-up couple soon had two beautiful children, Susan and Paul, and credit caring for one another as their secret to a life-long marriage. Thomas said, "It is very important to be loving to each other and to be with someone who understands you. It is important to realise what you have and to think of each other every day."

Staff at Newcross helped the couple commemorate their important milestone with a romantic meal for two, complete with petals scattered on the dining table. The pair decorated a cupcake for one another exchanged gifts, and read cards sent to the home from family and friends.

*We wish you both many more happy years together from all of us at Avery!*



## OUR STARS ROLL OUT THE STRIPES!

**Star Activities and Well-being Co-ordinator, Kay Bullock from Avalon Court in Coventry, gathered research and information from residents and formed two socially-distanced parties to celebrate the USA's Independence Day on 4th July.**



"Independence Day is a favoured day on the events calendar here at Avalon Court. With some former Americans in our community, it's a day for celebration for our friends across the pond, and this year was no exception," said Kay.



Resident Arthur Davis, who lived in America for over 50 years, explained why this remains important to him. "This day is traditionally celebrated with family and friends; people have barbecues, and there are parades and live bands. The 4th July 1776 was a key moment in American history, recognised by many as the birthday of the USA as we now know it."

Kay added, "Our lovely residents always enjoy a variety of activities on this day. Each socially-distanced group was full of laughter, and amongst the activities, they enjoyed a general knowledge quiz. We all had a lot of fun. Yeehah!"

# Nice to See You... To See You, Nice!



**“A lovely reunion, with lovely weather, on a lovely day, and a lovely smile.**

**Nothing else sums it up.” That was the unanimous response to the introduction of our garden visits.**

Aided by sunny weather, our care homes countrywide have opened to families again with the introduction of garden visits. Whilst ensuring everyone’s safety with strict protocols, these reunions for residents have been welcomed with open (distanced) arms.

Birchwood Grange and Aire View were two such homes, reuniting residents with their loved ones at long last, in an emotional moment for all involved. Family visiting residents at Aire View offered thanks and praise to the staff for making the visits possible, and for keeping everyone’s spirits up during these challenging times. Helen Abbott, Head of Well-being at Birchwood Grange, spoke about a moving reunion for a resident living with dementia.

“One lady found it very difficult to understand why her family, who used to visit daily, had stopped coming. Whilst we continued to facilitate communication virtually through FaceTime, she was confused, and her distress was visible. The day we took her to meet her two daughters was heart-warming. The moment the French doors opened, it brought tears, the most amazing smile to her face and a sparkle to her eyes. Her head lifted, she spoke clearly, and her whole demeanour brightened.

I know every one of my residents personally, and throughout this time, I have shared in their sadness and joys. To see them reunited after so many months was incredibly special.

As part of our commitment to the residents’ continued well-being, we will ensure that these visits can happen as often as possible.”



## In This Together!

**It is lovely to see both residents and staff showing their appreciation for one other in various ways.**

The residents at the Hawthorns in Aldridge call the staff their ‘Avery Angels’ and have painted pebbles with kind messages, to say thank you for being looked after and entertained throughout the lockdown. Resident Sheila Hopkins said, “The pebbles are a little thank you gift for all the staff, day and night, for keeping us safe, clean and COVID free. It was also a lovely way of

showing our appreciation through an art activity.”

Bourn View held an Appreciation Award Ceremony to celebrate their residents’ resilience and strength shown during these challenging months.

Led by Rosie Bushell, Well-Being and Activities Co-ordinator, staff awarded every resident with a personalised certificate and trophy. Deputy Manager Marie Accison commented, “The awards ceremony was a magical event. It was lovely to see the residents feeling so appreciated.”



## Become a Virtual Dementia Friend!



**Avery has long championed the work of Dementia Friends, an Alzheimer’s Society initiative dedicated to helping people to understand and address the issues surrounding dementia care. Many of our homes have staff trained as Dementia Friends Champions, who run awareness sessions for families and friends of our residents. These Champions have already created over 1,000 new Dementia Friends, and hope to create many more.**

Heather Perkins, Dementia Support Advisor for Avery, said, “Taking the time to become a Dementia Friend supports an individual to gain an understanding of a person living with dementia. It helps to change attitudes, as well as break down stigmas and misconceptions. With understanding and support, it is possible to still live well with dementia.”

The current restrictions surrounding Coronavirus mean we cannot currently offer these valuable face-to-face sessions.

However, until we can, you can still become a Dementia Friend through an on-line video and completing your details at

[www.dementiafriends.org.uk](http://www.dementiafriends.org.uk)



