

AveryTalk



Welcome to the February issue of Avery Talk. We have kicked off the year in great spirits and with great positivity, and I'm sure you will enjoy reading what our residents have been getting up to of late; Burns Night celebrations, National Hat Day, pamper days and learning morse code, to name a few!

Avery as a group has some exciting projects already underway for 2022, including the opening of two new homes this spring, Hampstead Court in St Johns Wood and Greensand House in Redhill. Both will offer residential, dementia, and respite care, and I would like to extend a warm welcome to their home managers, Tom Parry and Amanda Gunner.

Following new Government guidance, we will soon be announcing some further positive changes to our visiting policy. As soon as we have confirmed details from them, we will communicate to all as quickly as possible. In the meantime, I continue to urge staff, residents, and relatives to get the Covid-19 booster vaccine.

This month, we are commencing a Radar pilot, a new quality and compliance platform in 12 of our care homes. This platform will be a 'one-stop shop' to manage incidents, QI data, significant events, audits and action plans, and a central source of policies and alerts. The system will allow us to input and analyse data more efficiently. Following the pilot and subsequent changes, the system will be rolled out across the group.

And finally, 2022 will see the launch of a new staff well-being strategy, including improved staff communication and engagement. Full details and a range of support material and communications will follow soon.

Birchwood Grange Takes the Double at the Vegetarian for Life Awards



This year marks the sixth Vegetarian for Life Awards for Excellence in Care Catering, and the team at Birchwood Grange, stole the show!

Champa Misty, Vegetarian Chef at the home, won the coveted Vegetarian Care Chef of the Year award. Announced by television and radio presenter, Jasmine Harman, she said, "Our winner is really going the extra mile to make their vegan and veggie residents excited about dinner time. She leads with a smile, a love for cooking and an abundance of positivity. Throughout the challenges of the pandemic, Champa and her team have shown positivity and a can-do attitude to make the meals and service as beautiful, authentic and flavoursome as possible."

Delighted with her recognition, Champa commented, "Many of my traditional recipes have been passed down through generations of my family. I love to cook them for our residents, and I am thrilled that they are being rewarded in this way."

The Birchwood Grange culinary team were also awarded The Beulah Charity Trust Special Recognition Award to top off the day. The award goes to a special someone (or team) who strives to make the UK better for older vegans and vegetarians.

Announced by comedian, actor, writer Dave Spikey, Dave said, "This year's winner has strived to make its care establishment a better place for vegans and vegetarians. The winner caters to the Indian / Asian community and boasts one of only a handful of vegetarian care kitchens in the country. For 23 years, its head chef has taken great pride in producing Gujarati cuisine, assisted by three valuable team members."

Led by Head Chef Champa and Kitchen Manager Juan Lopez, the Birchwood Grange team daily provides traditional international dishes daily. They have a real passion for food, actively encourage vegetarian choices and support their teams with a hands-on approach.



It's in the Diary

Kicking off their well-being activities for the new year was Bourn View with an arts and crafts session. A group of creative residents got hands-on with a personalised diary activity that saw more glitter and sequins than a disco ball. Previously at the home, scrapbooks have been made for all residents, which have been a great hit. However, looking for something new, the home decided they would create a personalised diary this year instead.

The idea emerged when sadly, resident Betty Marlow lost her best friend. It allows her and her fellow residents to express their feelings within their personal diaries. Speaking of the activity, Well-being Co-ordinator Rosie said, "This has been our favourite personalised activity to do, as seeing the impact it has on Betty melts our hearts. We aim for all our residents' personalised diaries to give them the same opportunity to express their thoughts and opinions on paper."



RELAXATION IN PAMPER PALACE

There is nothing quite like treating yourself to a relaxing pamper session, and on the 17th of January, the ladies from Bourn View experienced just that. Creating the perfect atmosphere for a calm relaxing treatment, the Bourn View Well-being team brought the spa to the home. Named 'Pamper Palace', the team decorated the Well-being Office with candles and everything pink, which helped create a cosy and more intimate atmosphere for their residents to truly relax and unwind whilst connecting to staff and one another on a more personal level.

The session included rejuvenating face masks and moisturisation, relaxing arm massages and revitalising foot soaks. Glowing from her treatment, resident Sheila Potter mentioned, "I love all the fuss which is being made of me, and these treatments are so relaxing they're sending me off to sleep!"



Aye it's Burns Night Already!

We brought the Highlands of Scotland to our homes to celebrate Burns Night on 25th January. Burns Night first originated in 1801 to celebrate Scotland's most iconic poet, Robert Burns. Born in Ayr, Burns produced many well-known poems and songs, including the traditional New Year's anthem, 'Auld Lang Syne', which is still sung across the world today.

Our homes were decorated in a sea of blue and white, and the Saltire was proudly displayed throughout our communities as they joined in with numerous themed activities. Residents at Avery Park were entertained by the wonderful singer Fiona Harrison who performed a set of traditional Scottish songs. Paying tribute to Robert Burns, Glenmoor House staff and residents, accompanied by local bagpipe artists, read out some of his popular poems, including 'Address to a Haggis', written of his admiration of the grub. Not getting away *Scot free*, residents at Loxley Park spent the afternoon participating in a Scottish themed quiz and put their best accents to the test as they learnt common phrases, all of course, whilst sporting their finest kilts. And how can you not celebrate the day with a wee dram or two as residents at Seagrave House and Acer House raised a glass of Scotch whisky for the occasion.



Praising our Staff Online



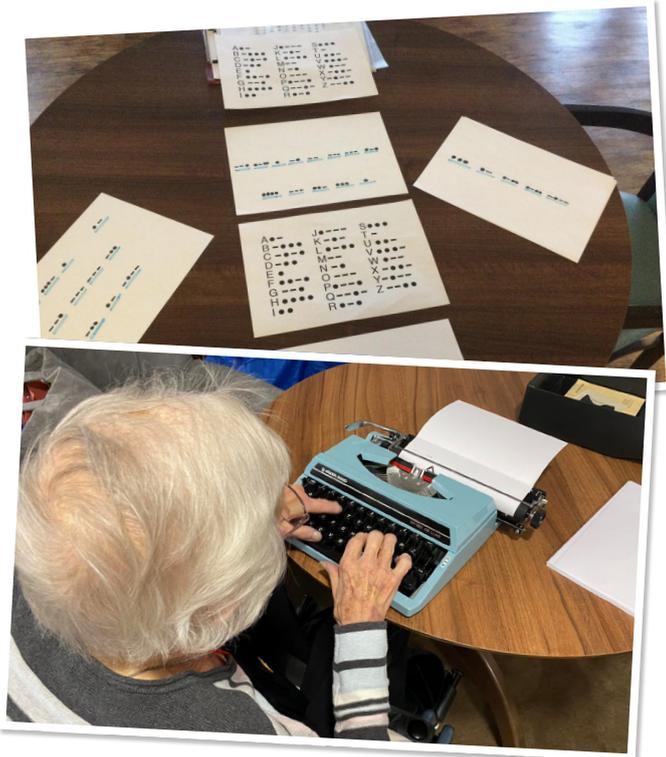
During the last year, our homes have been delighted to receive an overwhelming number of positive reviews across Carehome.co.uk. Our staff value your kind words and feedback. It helps to motivate, boost confidence, and show appreciation to our staff teams, resulting in exceptional levels of care.

Although the initial purpose of Carehome.co.uk is to promote our services, it is undoubtedly one of the most significant websites for our staff, as each home has its own review section. Residents and their loved ones are welcome to leave their feedback about the home and the staff team. If you would like to leave a review for a care home, please ask a staff member for a Carehome.co.uk review card. It only takes 5 minutes to complete, and your feedback is valuable.

Communications Through Time

8th January marked World Typing Day and the perfect opportunity for one resident, a former typist, to show off her skills that she hadn't used since the early 90s. Rowan Court residents made use of a traditional typewriter and a laptop to compare technologies and enjoyed reminiscing about a time before the laptop when it wasn't so easy to backspace if you had made a mistake!

Glenmoor House residents went back in time to learn about morse code. The code, named after Samuel Morse, one of the inventors of the telegraph, is a method used in telecommunication to encode text characters as standardised sequences of two different signal durations, dots and dashes (or dits and dahs). Residents enjoyed learning about the universal sign of distress, dot, dot, dash, dash (SOS), how to write their names and short messages to their loved ones, which were posted on the home's Facebook page.



Hats Off to You!

At Avery, we love an excuse to dress up and celebrate national themed celebrations. National Hat Day, which took place on the 14th of January, gave several of our homes the chance to dust off their berets, bowlers, and even sombreros. Putting their thinking caps on to find a different way to celebrate the day was a group of residents from Acacia Lodge. They spent time designing personalised cut-out hats and had fun re-creating one of their fond memories from a trip to the Portland Museum some years ago. Well-being Co-ordinator Lynda Kelly explained, "Whilst on our trip, we remembered that residents got the chance to try on all sorts of hats from different eras. Some very silly, of course, and the group burst out in hysterics whilst trying them on."

There were some very questionable headwear choices at Aran Court as a *hattrick* of residents joined in the fun by donning flat caps, Rastafarian and cowboy hats for the day, but *hats off to them*. They looked great! The day was *topped off* by residents laughing and singing songs all about hats.



Stepping Up for the Alzheimer's Society

Avery staff regularly don their hiking boots, cycle wear and running shoes to support causes close to their hearts. Rivermere Deputy Manager Agnes is doing the same this month with a half marathon to raise funds for the Alzheimer's Society.

"I started running just over a year ago. First for fun, only short distances, but as months passed, the distances increased. I eventually found myself running half marathon distances on occasions, so I thought it would be a great achievement to run an actual half marathon race! Running on behalf of those living with dementia was never in question. It's a great cause and makes my race even more meaningful." Says Agnes.

If you would like to support Agnes with a donation, please visit her JustGiving page at <https://bit.ly/34hNQx9>



Celebrate Good Times: Milestones at Avery



Ida
Alder House

100th Birthday,
4th January



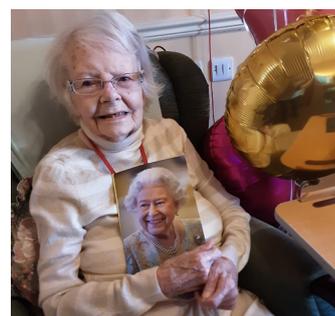
Betty & Kenneth
Bourn View

75th Wedding Anniversary,
9th January



Helen
Abbey Court

104th Birthday,
20th January



Nora
Hanford Court

107th Birthday,
21st January

Photo of the Month: February 2022

Resident Dorothy Nash and Well-being Co-Ordinator Kay Bullock at Avalon Court Care Home.



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