

# AveryTalk



Hello, and welcome to the February edition of Avery Talk. This month, you can read about how our homes raised awareness of the importance of Dignity in Care as we celebrated Dignity Action Day. You can also hear from residents at Ashurst Mews and Brentwood Arches, who delighted in the sound of the bagpipes on Burns Night.

As Director of Marketing and Communications, I am pleased to introduce this issue of Avery Talk to share with you a little about the launch of our new visions and values and how they will be successfully rolled out. Our values underpin everything we do at Avery, which is why they were chosen with input from home managers and the senior leadership team at our recent 'Better Together' conference. Implementing our OneFamily values is underway, with communications and support materials encompassing Avery, Avery Collection, Hawthorns, operations support functions and group support centre.

We are delighted to announce that our new vision and values are:

**Values:** Caring, Supportive, Honest, Respectful and Accountable

**Vision:** Avery Healthcare offers exceptional care and experience, whilst establishing ourselves as the preferred choice for both residents and employees, creating meaningful lives together.

**Sadie Deveraux, Director of Marketing and Communications**

## Saxon Royale

An afternoon of glitz and glamour unfolded at Saxon Manor on Wednesday 31st January, as they celebrated their official grand opening. The home was transformed into a casino wonderland, creating an exclusive setting for this special occasion. Residents of the newly opened community embraced the theme wholeheartedly, dressing in elegant black tie attire as they immersed themselves in a variety of thrilling casino games. From the spin of the roulette wheel to the strategic moves in blackjack, the 'Saxon Royale' offered an unforgettable experience for all. The crowd was captivated by the mesmerising performances of magicians and live singers, who added an extra touch of enchantment to the celebration.

In attendance at the ceremony, special guests Sophie Etheridge from Adaptive Athletes and The Mayor of Godmanchester, Alan Hooker, had the privilege of cutting the ribbon and a beautiful casino-themed cake to declare the home as officially open. Sophie said, "I had the honour of opening Godmanchester's newest care home, which provided a platform to connect with our friendly neighbours and speak about our community and the impact it can have, not just in the swimming community but also in and around Godmanchester, a community that now includes a care home that welcomes the staff and residents of the new home warmly."



# Aye, it's Burns Night

Our homes embraced the spirit of the Highlands for their Burns Night celebrations on the 25th of January, honouring Scotland's most iconic poet, Robert Burns. His most well-known poems include, 'To a Mouse', 'Address to a Haggis', and the traditional New Year's anthem, 'Auld Lang Syne', which is still sung across the world today.

Residents at Brentwood Arches indulged themselves in traditional Scottish cuisine, enjoying haggis, neeps, and tatties washed down with a refreshing glass of Irn Bru or Scotch Whisky. Resident Maureen said, "I can't remember the last time I heard the bagpipes! It was a very entertaining afternoon."

Over at Ashurst Mews, residents donned their best tartan and tested themselves on their knowledge of Scotland, whilst enjoying front-row seats for musician Rod, the Northampton Piper. The day was filled with Scottish pride and tradition that was nostalgic for many.



## A Room with a View

Knowle Gate has recently unveiled its newly refurbished Garden Room; this refurbished visitor pod offers a seamless blend of outdoor charm and indoor comfort. Crafted with their green-thumbed residents in mind, they can now relish the serene garden ambience. The Garden Room is thoughtfully equipped with a new coffee machine for a warm brew, tempting biscuits to savour and snug blankets for cooler moments. Ready for enjoyment, this space invites residents to bask in the tranquillity of nature while cocooned in warmth. Staff and residents are looking forward to using this space over the coming months.

## IT'S A BIRDIE!

A flock of our homes joined in with the celebrations of National Bird Day on the 5th of January to support with raising awareness about the value of birds in our ecosystem. Hundreds of residents took to their gardens, armed with binoculars, for a spot of enjoyable birdwatching to discover which species they could find. Of course, the quintessential British Wood Pigeon came out as number one!

Getting creative, residents of Birchmere Mews crafted a beautiful memorial devoted to the winged animals, which is now proudly displayed in the home for guests to observe on their visits. Albion Court also got involved by trying their hand at building some amazing birdhouses for their garden, which have proven to become a popular feeding destination, attracting a variety of species to their home.

Bird expert Simon, a resident at Knowle Gate, delivered an insightful seminar on everything birds for the rest of his community. His broad knowledge has earned him the newly proclaimed name of 'David Attenborough', and has got everyone thinking about the critical impacts the environment has endured, which has resulted in huge effects on how our birds live and what we can do to support their existence. The community have thoroughly enjoyed learning about the topic which had everyone on a 'constant' birdwatch, excited to see what they can find throughout the year.



## Medal of Honour

We are proud to celebrate and mark the achievements of our residents who have led extraordinary lives before residing with us. We understand that everyone has a story to tell, and sometimes, the most amazing stories come from a life well lived.

One such story is from Rivermere resident, Ray Porter, who joined the Army as a soldier in 1951 and was shipped to Christmas Island in 1958, where he spent 355 days living through nuclear test explosions, including the second H-bomb test and four smaller atom bomb tests.

Over 65 years later, Ray was awarded for his service in a ceremony hosted by Cllr James Lark and The Mayor of Tonbridge and Malling, where he was presented with the Nuclear Test Veteran's Medal. Speaking of his experience, Ray said, "You must remember that in 1950s Britain, almost no one went abroad. But with the Army, I went to all sorts of places. I was part of the Forward Operating Squad and was in charge of the power station that generated the power for the Royal Air Force radar site." Despite the dangers he faced, Ray looks back on his service days with nostalgia.



# Avalon Court's Drama Divas

When Kay Stone, Well-being and Activities Co-ordinator at Avalon Court, began her role almost seven years ago, she discovered many residents had a keen interest in drama. Kay established the 'Drama Divas', teaching a variety of acting, movement and physical theatre techniques each Wednesday, encouraging residents to add their own creative flair.

Each year, the group rehearse and perform their own productions; this year was 'Oliver'. Sadly, Avalon Court have lost some very special residents who formed part of the drama group. After switching characters and learning new lines and acting techniques, the group decided to dedicate their play to the late Ned O'Neil, Shelia Cresswell, Jean O'Brien and Peter Cochrane.

This year's performance was a huge success and the audience thoroughly enjoyed themselves, commenting on how incredible it was to see residents perform and showcase their skills. Resident Dudley, who played Mr Brownlow, explained, "I had so much fun and made sure I performed well for my dear friend Ned, who would be so proud of me." Speaking of the day, Kay said, "I am so very proud of the Drama Divas and the staff team for their commitment, hard work and dedication. The talent and creativity of our residents shone through in their performance. We are looking forward to starting work on our next play – Peter Pan!"

## Resident Jean's Wish

Jean has resided at Avalon Court for two years, moving to the home after losing her beloved husband, Bernard. Jean has many visitors, one of whom is her longest friend, Ray Terry, an ex-Korean war veteran who served alongside Jean's late husband.

During one of Terry's visits on Armistice Day, Jean said she would like to find Bernard's army cap, as it was lost before she moved to Avalon Court. Senior Carer Fay, mentioned this to Home Trainer Phil, who is also an army veteran. To Jean's delight, Phil obtained a replacement cap and gave it to her at Christmas. Jean explained, "I'm most grateful to Ray, Fay and Phil for making my wish come true. It is a most special gesture."



# Avery Healthcare Celebrates Dignity Action Day

Avery's care homes participated in Dignity Action Day on the 1st of February, led by the National Dignity Council. The campaign, a charity promoting dignity and respect in UK care services, inspired collective efforts at Avery. Derby Heights commenced the day with a heartwarming 'Digni-Tea' party, sparking meaningful conversations, fostering unity and understanding diverse perspectives, but also bridging gaps in beliefs and religions. Clare Court's unique approach involved a 'Digni-Tree' encouraging reflections on the significance of dignity through leaf inscriptions. Meanwhile, at Spencer House, staff and residents committed to the ten 'Dignity Do's,' earning the proud title of Dignity Champions and exemplifying dedication to a flourishing culture of dignity and respect. These endeavours underscore the collective efforts of residents and staff across our homes in championing dignity as a fundamental aspect of compassionate care.



## Pie-licious Celebrations

On the 23rd of January, residents of Avonmere celebrated National Pie Day by participating in a delightful culinary venture. Using a pie maker, they made a delectable, stewed steak pie that emerged with professional finesse, earning a stellar 11 out of 11 from Senior Carer, Karen. The day's lunch menu featured pies for every course, a testament to Neil and the culinary teams' dedication. Birchmere Mews also held a pie quiz, adding a fun twist to the day, while Hanford Court celebrated with a beautiful spread for lunch. The day they had echoed the sentiment that pies are a comforting winter essential!





**John & Lesley**  
**Bagshot Gardens**  
 40<sup>th</sup> Ruby Anniversary, 7<sup>th</sup> January



**Lore**  
**Elton House**  
 104<sup>th</sup> Birthday, 7<sup>th</sup> January



**Muriel**  
**Frogнал House**  
 104<sup>th</sup> Birthday, 14<sup>th</sup> January



**Betty**  
**Eastbourne Gardens**  
 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday, 14<sup>th</sup> January



**Doreen**  
**Avalon Court**  
 101<sup>st</sup> Birthday, 16<sup>th</sup> January



**Helen**  
**Abbey Court**  
 106<sup>th</sup> Birthday, 20<sup>th</sup> January



**Burnice**  
**Milton Court**  
 101<sup>st</sup> Birthday, 26<sup>th</sup> January



**Doreen**  
**Brentwood Arches**  
 101<sup>st</sup> Birthday, 28<sup>th</sup> January



**Jill & David**  
**Wandsworth Common**  
 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, 29<sup>th</sup> January

We are **#OneFamily**

January's staff well-being initiative saw teams across our homes throw their own 'pizza parties'. Those at Avery Park grabbed a slice of the action, enjoying a selection of delicious pizzas alongside residents. Staff members at Acer Court joined in the fun as they went head-to-head in their own pizza-making competition. Carer, Hannah, stole the show and was pleased to be crowned winner.

At Acacia Lodge, Housekeeper, Wendy was delighted to be recognised as Employee of the Month, whilst staff and residents at Acacia Mews warmly welcomed local Blue Light professionals to the home for a delicious breakfast prepared by the culinary team. The Hatfield Fire Service commented on how welcoming the staff team were and took the opportunity to chat with residents.



**PHOTO OF THE MONTH**

Resident Marjorie and Well-being & Activities Assistant Natasha enjoying a game of bowling.

**Camberley Woods**  
**Care Home**

For any queries, comments or to submit articles, please contact [marketing@averyhealthcare.co.uk](mailto:marketing@averyhealthcare.co.uk)

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