

The Excelcare Plantathon

Wednesday 20th May 2020

Cambridge

Buchan House

With the sun shining down at Buchan House we decided to give our garden space a clean-up and plant some new seeds in our flower beds.

We started by cleaning the surrounding area, sweeping up and removing any stray weeds. Many of the residents living here are keen gardeners, so this was almost second nature to them! They thoroughly enjoyed reconnecting with their hobbies and getting their outdoor space summer-ready!



Before planting the seeds, we prepared the soil by wetting it and sprinkling over some fertilizer, before placing the seeds into starters. Eggs, lemon peel and other household items can be used for this and help to protect the seedlings as they grow. The residents know many of these helpful tips and tricks, so we as the team learned lots in the session too!

After covering the seeds over, we all took a break, spoke about our connected gardening memories, and looked proudly over at what we had achieved together. The residents were all very proud and can't wait to watch as the seeds blossom into beautiful flowers.



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Brook House

At Brook House, we made the most of the sunshine by singing songs together and socialising in the garden. The whole day was full of cheer, with residents sharing their gardening stories and even some of their own top tips with the team members.

After spending some weeks inside, we were all excited to spend some quality time outside and enjoy the outdoor weather. The whole day was full of the cheer and we all look forward to spending more time together, outside in the coming months.



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Etheldred House



It was an exciting day at Etheldred yesterday as we took part in the Excelcare Plantathon. It was a welcome opportunity to enjoy some safe, outdoor fun and give our garden a makeover in the process!

To do this, the residents made some hanging baskets and planted a selection of seeds in them. They are only seedlings at the moment, but hopefully this nice weather continues so that they can bloom in the coming months.

Music was a big part of the day too; the residents put on some

of their favourite songs and sang along together. There was a lively atmosphere around the home and lots of excitement!

In the afternoon, we all cooled off with an ice-cream, delivered by a local supplier. The music from the van brought back many childhood memories and was a well enjoyed treat to finish the day.



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Glennfield

In the morning, we prepared our soil, seed trays and cups ready for the residents to fill and to sow their seeds. We chose to do this inside as it was very hot outside and not a lot of shade or clouds to keep us cool. The residents enjoyed selecting their seeds and filling the trays with help from Sue the Gardener, who was on hand to share her expertise and advice.

While filling their pots, the residents spoke about their favourite plants as well as some of the colourful flowers they used to have in their own gardens.

Once everyone had planted their seeds and covered them with soil, we gave them a good watering and put them outside to grow. The residents are also eagerly awaiting their grass heads to start sprouting, so hopefully this lovely weather continues!



Regional
Winner!



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Primrose Croft

We had a brilliant day taking part in the plantation at Primrose Croft. Not only do we love spending time in the garden, but the summer weather too, so everyone was excited to put their green-fingered skills to the test!

We all worked hard to get the garden ready for the residents, ensuring the fridge was stocked, decorations were hung and all the necessary tools were in place.

The Plantathon was no secret in the community either, so businesses and local people donated seeds, plants and other items for the residents to use. One lady donated some tomato plants to the home, in response to the letters we sent out around Mental Health Awareness Week. It was a lovely gesture and will hopefully find their way into our homemade meals.



In the afternoon, residents enjoyed sharing their gardening stories and discussing their favourite plants. The garden is a social hub in many households, so family events of days gone by and other celebrations were also recalled.

We ended a busy day with a BBQ buffet, prepared by our kitchen team and enjoyed some friendly competition with a musical quiz. Pat surprised everyone by getting most of the answers right! Home Manager Rachael said, "We need to enter you into a music competition!"

We all enjoyed celebrating the Plantathon, especially Mary, who said, "the garden is going to look lovely once all of the flowers are out, what a wonderful day it has been."



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Rheola

At Rheola, we enjoyed potting and planting seeds for the Excelcare Plantathon! We all enjoy spending time outside; and will take any excuse to do some gardening! Using the seeds supplied by our Head Office, we helped each of the residents to pot, plant and sow their own seeds. Some of the residents are talented gardeners so they needed little guidance. We enjoyed sharing connected stories and what our favourite flowers were whilst the pots and plants were filled.

In the afternoon, we enjoyed a group sing along to some of the resident's favourites, before moving inside to cool off.

We'll be keeping a close eye on the seeds here at Rheola and sharing updates as they grow!



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Essex

Goldenley

The residents have been immersed in a tropical garden theme this year after completing a project with our Lifestyle Coordinator, Faith. Together we have been adding colour, plants and painting our outdoor space to get it ready for summer. We have also transformed an indoor area using the tropical theme, so we were all excited to add the finishing touches to the garden!

After hearing about the Plantathon, relatives and local people kindly donated plants and vegetables to help us fill the outdoor space. This certainly kept the residents busy, but we all agreed that using our 'green fingers' was quite therapeutic! We then spent some cooling off under the pergola and sharing connected stories from the day.



Regional Winner!



The tropical garden is now almost complete and after the pots and plants were placed, we added some small blue stones around them to really make our planters stand out! The garden at Goldenley is now looking like a tropical haven. We look forward to hosting more outdoor activities in the coming months and watching the flowers bloom.



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Okeley

Over the last few weeks, we spent a lot of time preparing for the Excelcare Plantathon, to the point where we got so excited we began planting early, it was hard to resist with the lovely weather! So far we have planted runner beans, sweetcorn, onions, tomatoes, a range of herbs, multi-coloured beetroot and lots of radishes!

For the big event, we planted some flower seeds in up-cycled pots; we are keen to encourage bees and butterflies to pollinate our lovely garden spaces. With this in mind we also planted up some of our hanging baskets with plants that were kindly donated to us. We all had so much fun and enjoyed listening to Glenn Miller playing, while sipping on freshly made raspberry milkshakes!

Everyone has really loved spending time in the garden, planning out their allotment with Pippa, our Lifestyle Coordinator, and pouring over the packets of seeds we have had donated by the community. The whole activity has taken our minds off of the lockdown and made the days slip by with many smiles and cheerful conversations!



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Sherrell House

We had a lovely afternoon out in our courtyard in the warm sunshine, planting flower seeds and having a good catch up while enjoying some nice cold drinks to cool us all down!



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Stanley Wilson Lodge

Phew, what a glorious day Wednesday was with temperatures reaching a comfortable 24 degrees! The residents of Stanley Wilson Lodge enjoyed a relaxed afternoon, sporting their hats and sun cream, with their sleeves rolled up and aprons and gloves donned, we all began potting up seeds and plants of all different descriptions.

First, the pots were prepared with the compost, then flower seeds were carefully planted, while runner beans were sown and then placed in the propagator, with plenty of water! Hopefully soon we will see our pots spring to life with fresh shoots!



Some residents decided to put plants we purchased in containers. The bright colours and beautiful smells from them brought a smile to everyone's faces while they sat relaxing and chatting, while sitting in the garden.

It was a lovely afternoon, finished off with some well-deserved cold refreshments!



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Sweyne Court

This Plantathon was extra special to everyone here at Sweyne Court, as we've recently been raising money to re-decorate our back garden, and to build a chicken coop for our baby chicks! We are now coming up to the final days before our big garden reveal, so the Plantathon offered us all a chance to be involved in helping to make the new garden look bright and beautiful! Two of our residents, who are very keen gardeners, offered to come and help with the potting, along with our Lifestyle Coordinators!



Many plants were very kindly donated by our local garden centre, so we used the Plantathon as an opportunity to spend some time in the sunshine, getting all of them potted, we also planted seeds sent to us by our Head Office in our raised flowerbeds! We can't wait to see the final result as they all grow and bloom!



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London

Castlebar

It may not be Summer yet, but this didn't stop us from sprucing up the Castlebar garden! Everyone enjoyed a day outside in our beautiful garden, armed with their pots and compost. Our group of green-fingered residents enjoyed some time in the sunshine while potting some new flowers, and some vegetables including runner beans, tomatoes and onions, which were then placed in our vegetable garden.

We all enjoyed a nice chat during the event; some residents were keen to utilise their years of gardening experience and told stories of the many hours spent in their own gardens in the past. One resident commented on how lovely it is to have lots of wonderful outside space, helping them to feel more in touch with nature as they listen to the birds singing. As we all chatted away, we enjoyed some nice refreshing cold drinks in the sunshine.

Towards the end of the session, everyone was very excited to show off what they had achieved, as some of the group potted up a beautiful Begonia Semperflorens, with green and white leaves, into a basket and posed to have their photos taken!

The afternoon went down very well, with everyone happy to be involved in such a wonderful activity. Gardening truly is an excellent therapeutic activity for older people, as people hold so many fond memories; it was lovely to hear everyone's stories!

Team members and residents alike are all looking forward to tending to the new plants, and watching them grow throughout the coming months, and we are hoping that we can all enjoy some of our home-grown vegetables, too! We also have a beautiful view of the colourful flowers in pride of place on our patio area!



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Park Avenue

We were so lucky to have such amazing weather for our Park Avenue Plantathon and took advantage of this all day!

In the morning, we painted some stones and set them to dry, ready to be added to our plant pots in the afternoon. Many of the residents were able to take part in the Plantathon and helped to pot and water the plants, while others sat back and watched, enjoying some ice cream and watermelon to keep hydrated in the warm weather.



We were so lucky to receive some donations of plants and seeds from families and local shops, which helped us to fill many empty pots and put together some beautiful hanging baskets! Sophie, age 11, is our receptionist's daughter and she made the wonderful cake just for the occasions; it tasted yummy too! We also received donations of cold drinks from families, which were very much appreciated, and much needed in the sunshine! We'd like to extend a thank you to our wonderful maintenance team, who helped to hang our baskets and move the heavy pots around for us!



Regional Winner!

The biggest thank you goes to team members Gladys, Sukhy and Linda for arranging such a fabulous day- You are superheroes and we truly appreciate everything you do for us!



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Queens Oak

Everyone at Queens Oak was so excited to join in with The Excelcare Plantathon! To start off, we all headed out to the garden to start the new project of planting many kinds of vegetables, and it was so wonderful to spend some time together outside in the bright morning sunshine!

We all enjoyed chatting away while getting stuck into our gardening, many of the residents were reminiscing about how they would tend to their gardens in days gone by, and teaching each other different tips and tricks for planting and growing the best vegetables.



Throughout the session everyone cooled off with some icy drinks, before finishing by watering their newly sown seeds; everyone agreed that the morning was fantastic and shared how they are all looking forward to heading into the garden each morning to help water their plants!



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Milton Keynes

Castlemead Court

We spent the Plantathon out on our decking, enjoying the beautiful weather and a few cheeky drinks in the sunshine! Everyone enjoyed chatting away and listening to music as we each planted our seeds. We all managed to enjoy the sunshine, and everyone agreed the event was a success! We are all looking forward to seeing our flowers bloom throughout the year!



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Water Hall

We had a wonderful day at Water Hall with our Plantathon! As we were treated with such lovely weather, we put our sunscreen on, prepared plenty of cold drinks and headed outside to plant geraniums, marigolds, lilies and lots of other colourful bedding plants in pots; all of which are now proudly on display in our garden for all to enjoy!



Everyone had a fantastic time and we look forward to sharing photos with you on our Facebook page so that you can see how the garden blooms throughout summer!

We would like to say a big thank you to Father Steve and everyone at St Frideswide's church for their kind donations towards the event, and also to June, whose mother lives at Water Hall, for her generous donation of plants and compost, your support really helped us to make the day special for all!

