

**EXCELCARE
RANKED NUMBER
ONE CARE
PROVIDER**

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PUZZLES AND GAMES INSIDE!

Included in this issue - wordsearch and riddles! Join in for your chance to win!

Welcome from Sam Manning

Dear Residents, Families and Team Members,

Welcome to our Autumn 2021 Excelcare Voice Newsletter! It has been a busy season at Excelcare, filled with so many smiles and stories, and we are very excited to share them with you in this issue.

As restrictions continue to ease, it has been wonderful to welcome even more people in to visit our care homes. Throughout Autumn our hearts have been touched by reunions and group outings, and we are so grateful to loved ones for their patience and their cooperation as we all navigate this new way of living.

This issue is particularly special as it is team focused; exploring the supercalifragilisticexpialidocious people that work in our care homes, and the unique opportunities to grow and develop that await when you begin a career with us.

Over the last two years, COVID-19 has seen the Excelcare family face a variety of challenges. It has been incredible to see the resilience and determination that everyone has shown in the face of these tough times, rising to the challenges we've faced, and overcoming them with bravery and kindness. Everyone has come together more than ever before to support each other and ensure that every person who lives in our homes has received the best possible care, no matter the circumstances. Though it has been hard, and the road has been bumpy, it has proven that we are, above all, a family who is there for each other, and ready to go above and beyond for the people that we love and care for.

We have been celebrating our teams throughout Autumn through Team Appreciation Week, Long Service Awards, and many sweet treats and gifts. However, we wanted to use this issue of the Excelcare Voice to really shine a light on our heroes across the family and give them the love and attention they deserve each and every day.

The hard work and incredible effort of our team has not gone unnoticed by residents and their families either. We have smiled at every Facebook comment, letter, carehome.co.uk rating and Google review that has expressed gratitude for the work that we've done. We are so thankful for the support of the communities around us; you provide the positivity and light that we need to keep us motivated, even on the toughest days.

With Christmas coming up, I would like to wish everybody in the Excelcare family and beyond a very Merry Christmas. Christmas is the perfect time to come together and appreciate everyone and everything that we have, and I would like to express how grateful we are for the love and support that we have received from our local communities, relatives, and team members this year, and we hope that the Christmas light switch-on marks a celebration of togetherness.

I am delighted to advise, in recognition of our incredible Excelcare-family, for all the exceptional care and support provided under the most difficult circumstances, we are awarding our team members with a special Christmas bonus, which is in addition to the incentives given throughout the pandemic. And whilst such gestures can never come close to expressing all our admiration for our team, it is given with heartfelt thanks for the sacrifices they have made and for being truly inspirational.

We hope that this edition will provide you with a greater insight into the lives of the people who work to keep Excelcare special. So, sit down, grab a cuppa, and enjoy our Autumn edition of the Excelcare Voice.

Sam Manning
Chief Operating Officer



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“ **Alone we can do so little;
together we can do so much.** ”
Helen Keller



Boris Johnson visits Westport Care Home ahead of Social Care announcement

The team and the people living at Westport Care Home were delighted to welcome Prime Minister Boris Johnson, Health Secretary Sajid Javid, and Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak to their home on Tuesday 7th September, ahead of the PM's planned Social Care reformation announcement in the house of parliament.

Everyone at Westport was absolutely delighted when they heard that they were the chosen home for Boris Johnson's visit! They were chosen after being highlighted as a London home of excellence by the PM's office for managing the risk of COVID-19 exceptionally well, in addition to the whole team being 100% vaccinated prior to the requirement made in law.

Upon arrival at the home, the Prime Minister, Health Secretary, and Chancellor of the Exchequer met with Osman Ertosun, Owner of Excelcare and his right-arm woman Sam Manning, COO (Chief Operating Officer) to discuss the impact COVID-19 has had on the care home operations, the importance of an ongoing recognition needed for

the dedicated and caring frontline team members, as well as the need to support care homes with the cost of delivering care.

The Prime Minister and his team then spent time with the people living at Westport, enjoying arts & crafts, Connect4 and general chats about life. One resident was particularly delighted to be able to tell the PM that he is engaged and soon to be wed, of which the PM replied 'I've not long done that too'. This created laughter amongst all and led to further engaging chats and selfies with the special guests, before everyone enjoyed a good sing-song out in the sunshine in the garden.

Kathleen, one of the residents at the home, said she felt very privileged as the PM visited her room by special invitation so that Kathleen could show how homely her bedroom was. While visiting, Kathleen had a chance to chat about how much she enjoys living at Westport, while Boris Johnson listened carefully.

Elbow farewells and waves were given to all by Boris, Sajid and Rishi – leaving



everyone at the home feeling very honoured and delighted to have been the chosen care home for this very special visit.



A South African Surprise at Okeley

Recently, Lifestyle Coordinator Odelia was talking to one of the men living in the home about his life and his interests. As they spoke, he began to reminisce about the good old days, and he mentioned that he used to really enjoy holidays in South Africa.

Odelia, whose hometown is South Africa, found this particularly interesting, and got to work on a special surprise for him. A few days later, she arrived at the home with some homecooked traditional South African dishes for all to enjoy!

Odelia made Bobotie, a classic South African Casserole, Melktert, a South African milk tart dessert, and made sure to make enough for everyone to enjoy! She took these dishes around the home to share with everyone, teaching them about the origins of the dishes as she did so.

The dishes were a big hit and the residents were incredibly happy to sample the delicious meals! Everybody thanked Odelia for the thoughtful gesture, it was truly a reflection of Excelcare's person-centred approach.



Beverley surprises Dorothy with a Bowls viewing in the park

Dorothy lives at Goldenley Care Home in Benfleet and was recently delighted to watch a game of bowls in the park.

A week prior to this, Dorothy was taken on a trip around the park by team member, Beverley and spotted a bowls lawn. Seeing the lawn brought back many happy memories of when Dorothy used to play the game. When she was speaking about the game, her face lit up, so Beverley planned to reach out to the club to see if they would accommodate Dorothy to watch a few games of bowls.

Beverley was determined to make this happen and so, wrote letters to the club asking if they could make this special lady very happy by allowing her to sit

and watch a few games. Before long, the club got back to her saying they would be happy to invite Dorothy along to watch!

When Dorothy heard the news, she was delighted! As a lady who used to play bowls in the local area, she took some pictures along from when she used to play to show members of the club.

Dorothy had a great time watching the matches on the day and speaking with the people playing. As she showed people the photos of when she played, she was surprised to hear members of the club recognised some of the people in the pictures and pointed out to Dorothy that some of them are still



playing today.

Although Dorothy wished she could be playing, she was very happy that she could watch from the side and engage with people who share her love of the sport.

Dorothy had a brilliant day and hopefully, the club invites her back to watch some more games in the future!





Fitzwilliam welcome new furry friends

Fitzwilliam House Care Home in Cambridge recently had some new members join their ever-growing family.

First, they welcomed Molly: a mature King Charles Spaniel owned by Home Manager Claire's mother, who is also a part of the care team at the home. Molly loves to come and visit Fitzwilliam as she always gets spoiled with love and attention.

Molly's favourite thing to do at the home is to sit underneath the resident's armchairs, not only providing comfort for herself, but for the residents as well. She also enjoys sitting in the garden and sunbathing. Usually when people come for garden visits, they can find Molly waiting there, eager to join them.

But Molly doesn't stop there! You can often see her sat by the front door of the home, waiting to see who may enter, where she knows she will get a lot of attention and maybe even a treat or two. Then, she likes to retire upstairs, where she knows she will encounter some willing residents who will lend her a lap to sit on.

Fitzwilliam has also had a few fish join their family as a fish tank was recently donated by a very kind relative of someone living at the home. Beautifully coloured fish and plants were bought for the tank, and the team have been dolling up the tank even further with shells that they have found on their visits to the seaside.

The people living at Fitzwilliam have truly loved being able to watch the fish swim around. Mary has been a real lover, and you will often see her sat comfortably by the fish tank for many hours of the day. It has made a great difference to the residents upstairs as they can clearly see it from their seats.



Hayley's horse wins her first show

Outside of being Home Manager at Okeley Care Home in Essex, Hayley Gibbs has a fun and active hobby... competing in horse showings!

Hayley was incredibly excited as she recently took her baby horse to her first showing, and that excitement only grew when the results came in!

Hayley and her horse came first in their class and then went on to win the championship! This means they have qualified for the sunshine tour at Hickstead showground next year, where Hayley is hoping that they perform just as well.

Neath House bring the sun into Autumn

Neath House Care Home in Milton Keynes decided to bring some sunshine inside the home with an indoor Beach party!

The team and the people living in the home, had lots of fun decorating their café with beach themed decorations and displays, to create a true seaside atmosphere. Then, when the party came around, everybody tucked into some beach themed mocktails, partook in some arts and crafts activities, and even enjoyed a game of bingo!

The team and the residents all got involved, with the team members even donning beach themed fancy dress to honour the occasion. It was a fantastic party filled with lots of smiles and laughter, and the people living at Neath House can't wait for the next one!



Castlemead Court wins MKFM's Doughnut Run!



Castlemead Court received a delicious treat after Lifestyle Coordinator Tracy won the MKFM Doughnut Run!

MKFM, a local radio station in Milton Keynes, runs a competition on one of their shows where local groups in the community have a chance

to win free doughnuts for them and their teams. All they have to do is tell MKFM why they need the doughnuts, and they pick the best reason each day and send round two boxes of Tim Hortons doughnuts!

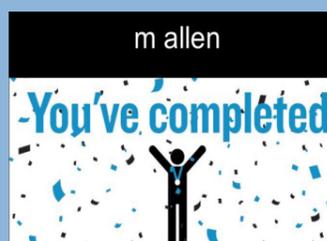
As well as this, they will get to pick the songs that are played that morning on the station.

When Tracy heard about this, she was determined to win the tasty treat for the team and the people living at Castlemead Court. So, Tracy contacted the station and explained why Castlemead Court were the most deserving of the doughnuts.

Tracy was ecstatic when she received an email from the station congratulating her for her win! The station promised Tracy that 24 Tim Horton's doughnuts would be delivered to the home on Thursday 23rd September, and that their song requests would be played at 11:15am on Tuesday 5th October.

Everyone at Castlemead was so excited about the win, and grateful to Tracy for entering them in the first place! It was a delicious way to brighten up a Thursday morning.

Martin marches the month for Prostate Cancer UK



MARCH THE MONTH

Thank you for raising £4595 to help stop prostate cancer being a killer.

Excelcare's Group Purchaser, Martin Allen, recently took on the 'March the Month' challenge. March the Month is a fundraising initiative run by Prostate Cancer UK which encourages people to take 11,000 steps every day in September, and donate the money raised to help beat prostate cancer.

On his fundraising page, Martin wrote "As you may

know, I was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2019. And after choosing to have a course of radiotherapy that was a success, I'm now going to help others and raise as much money as I can."

Martin kept the group updated with his progress throughout the month, sharing his ever-climbing step count and encouraging donations. By the end of September, he had walked an amazing total of 378,140 steps, which equates

to an average of 12,604 steps per day!

His efforts inspired those around him, and Martin walked his way into raising £4595 to help fund prostate cancer research. "Look at what we raised!" Martin said in his final update, "I thank my family, friends, colleagues and suppliers from the bottom of my heart for your support and donations. Thank you so much and remember men, GET TESTED."



Team Appreciation Week 2021!

We celebrated Team Appreciation Week across the Excelcare family from the 23rd to 29th August. Each year, this special event shines a spotlight on our supercalifragilistic team members, and we take the opportunity to thank them for all of the incredible work they do.

This year, each day of the week was dedicated to celebrating a different region in which we operate by sharing gifts, donning a colour of the rainbow, and hosting a rainbow party in each of our care homes.

Thursday was also dedicated to celebrating our long service team members, who were presented with awards for their hard work and long serving dedication to the Excelcare family - be that 10, 15, 20 or 25 years!

Chairman Ozzie Ertosun sent an email to the group, praising their hard work and dedication throughout the pandemic and beyond. In his heartfelt message, he wrote

"I know we have tough days and there will be many more ahead, but we tend to have more good days than bad! It is the good days that make us smile, laugh and feel good about the difference we make, and I look forward to seeing you all play a key part in creating more good days across our family."

Each care home celebrated in their own special way, taking their time to honour and celebrate our amazing teams.

Aliwal Manor Care Home

The team made sure to dress for the occasion in their dedicated colour: orange. They were treated immediately, and presented with doughnuts and goody bags from Ozzie and Sam.

The residents were also asked to say a few words about the team, which they had typed out and attached onto orange hearts. Donna also celebrated working at Aliwal for 22 years!



Brook House Care Home

A Zoom session had been set up in the afternoon so that the team, residents and family members could all join together and celebrate. One by one, relatives thanked the team for looking after their loved ones so well, especially during these extremely challenging times.

Everybody settled down to enjoy a delicious barbeque, and gifts were handed out to members of the team. As well as this, Carer Carole received a Long Service Award for 10 years as part of the Excelcare family.



Buchan House Care Home

Buchan House had plenty to celebrate, with two of their team members receiving Long Service Awards, having been a part of the Excelcare family for 15 and 20 years.

The team made sure to applaud each member as they collected their gifts, letting them know just how loved and appreciated they are. Once the gifts were given out, everybody tucked into a wonderfully prepared buffet, as well as a Romanian coffee and walnut cake, homemade by Home Manager Anca to show her appreciation to her team.

Etheldred House Care Home

The team at Etheldred House arrived at work to see that a picture of every single team member had been pinned up on the wall. Alongside these photos were kind words written by the people living at the home and their family members, which the team took great joy in reading!

A team favourite was a message that read "If we could give you one thing in life it would be the ability to see yourself through our eyes, only then you would realise how special you are."



Fitzwilliam House Care Home

Fitzwilliam House made sure that they decorated the home in advance, ready for a fun day of Team Appreciation.

Home Manager Claire made Ozzie and Sam's gifts extra special by adding personalised gift tags, and tying a bunch of lavender to each one. Each gift tag contained a note from Claire, thanking each individual team member for what they bring to the family.

Glennfield Care Home

The people living at Glennfield ensured that the home looked the part, by decorating their own rainbow coloured bunting. Then, the team members donned all of their orange clothes, coming in during the week in Cambridge's dedicated colour. Many outfits also included masks, headscarves, wigs and much more!

Once they had received their gifts, they were able to tuck into some very delicious cupcakes from Eileen, Chris and Elizabeth. Then, they watched as two members of the team received Long Service Awards, for outstanding dedication to the Excelcare Family.



Hunters Down Care Home

The team at Hunters Down Care Home pulled out all of the stops, decorating the Reception area orange as this was the dedicated colour for the Cambridge region.

Jayne, the Home Manager, went around during the day to personally deliver each team member their gift, and thank them for their dedication and hard work. Then, everyone tucked into takeaway pizza and doughnuts, to congratulate them for their continuous hard work and dedication.



Primrose Croft Care Home

The people living at Primrose Croft Care Home had spent a few weeks and activity sessions working towards Team Appreciation Week.

Residents' families were asked if they would like to donate anything towards Team Appreciation Day in advance, and they were all very generous. Thanks to their amazing donations, each team member received a £20 voucher and a gift from the family members, as a token of gratitude for the work



Rheola Care Home

The team at Rheola Care Home were so surprised when they saw the vast amount of gifts that had been donated by family and friends to show appreciation! These gifts were then shared among the team in a free raffle, which everybody enjoyed.

After the raffle, the team tucked into a beautiful cake that was made by Yvonne's family, which had an Excelcare logo on it and read "Thank you to all the amazing staff at Rheola Care Home". Bince also received a Long Service Award for 10 years of dedication to the Excelcare family.



St Georges Court Care Home

The day kicked off to a sunny start, as the people living at St Georges Court made some large orange sunflowers to display around the home to show their appreciation.

As orange was the dedicated colour for Cambridge, many team members and some of the regional team took to the challenge, showing up to work dressed entirely in orange. In true St Georges style, they all gathered together and referred to themselves as 'The Knights of St George'.



Longfield Care Home

At Longfield, the team collaborated with residents to make their home party ready using a variety of rainbow themed decorations.

The team dressed up in colourful party hats and took a party trolley around the home, whilst playing Bonnie Tyler's popular song, "I need a hero". Residents had a brilliant time partying with the team members and taking the opportunity to unwind.



Stanley Wilson Lodge Care Home

Celebrations took place at Stanley Wilson Lodge Care Home and the Saffron Club Day Centre as team members were handed awards for their long service.

Home Manager, Sue Clayden, Daycare Manager, Debby Jack and Healthcare Assistant, Susan Wilson have shown impressive dedication to the home as they have worked at Stanley Wilson Lodge for 28, 29 and 26 years. With 83 years of care experience between them, they are especially proud of their service and that they are shown continued appreciation by Sam and Ozzie.



St Fillans Care Home

The team at St Fillans celebrated Team Appreciation week with the people they care for, by taking part in games throughout the week with prizes up for grabs. Multicoloured decorations also filled the home, creating a colourful space for their rainbow party.



Sweyne Court Care Home

The team at Sweyne Court Care Home showed appreciation to their colleagues by encouraging members of the team to write positive comments about individuals or teams within the home.

All of these lovely comments were taken and displayed on a notice board so everyone could read them. This filled everyone with joy as reading all of the meaningful comments about themselves and the people they work with filled them with pride and a sense of personal achievement.

The gifts from Chief Operating Officer, Sam Manning and Chairman, Osman 'Ozzie' Ertosun were very well received, and everyone was very grateful! To show how thankful they were, the team each wrote a letter on their rainbow coloured bags to spell out the word 'thankyou'. They posed for a picture together and sent this to Ozzie and Sam to return their appreciation.

Winifred Dell Care Home

At the start of the week, the team at Winifred Dell hosted decoration making activities with the people who live there. Residents helped to make paper chains and bunting together, whilst discussing how much they appreciate the team members who care for them.

On Wednesday, they hosted their Rainbow Party where games were played and sweets, drinks and a large buffet were available. As the day drew to a close, they hosted their own awards ceremony, where gifts and long service achievements were handed out.



Park Avenue Care Home

The team at Park Avenue showed their commitment to team appreciation by all showing up to work in London's dedicated colour: green! At first, they weren't sure that the colour green would suit them all, but in the end they admitted that they all looked fab!

A fun quiz was prepared by Home Manager Gemma, with questions about care, and Park Avenue as a whole. The night team were also given a quiz at 11:30pm and had lots of fun answering each question. In the end, the winners of each quiz were the Rose Suite Team (Cecille, Nicola, Marcia and Rachel) on the day shift and the Peony Suite Team (Robin, Wayne, Seyi and Mazamba) on the night one. When tallying up the points, it was revealed that the night team won overall! As well as this, the team enjoyed a fantastic takeaway the next day, and had a fantastic Rainbow Party at the weekend, complete with music, games, and bright outfits.



Westport Care Home

The team at Westport have worked so hard in general, but particularly during COVID, which has been an incredibly demanding and challenging time. So, the Senior team thought it was very important that they felt appreciated this week, and spent time celebrating the way that they have shone in these challenging times.

They were also excited to present Healthcare Assistant Linda with a Long Service Award, as she has been working at Westport for a grand total of 20 years! The week was incredibly fun and rewarding, and Westport would like to thank Ozzie and Sam for supporting them and making this week special.



Castlemead Court Care Home

At Castlemead Court, they hosted their own spa and wellness day, encouraging colleagues to take some time to unwind, have their nails done and take a seat in the massage chair.

Residents also joined in with the spa experiences and said they felt very relaxed afterwards. The spa day was followed up with tea, refreshments and a good old chat.



The Willows Care Home

The team enjoyed celebrating with their Home Manager, Rob Ashton, as he hosted a celebratory session with the team, in which he gave out gift bags and long service awards.

The home was adorned with colourful rainbow decorations and on Friday, the home hosted a BBQ for the team and all of the people they care for. It was a week full of celebrations, colourful cheer and smiles all around!



Water Hall Care Home

The team at Water Hall enjoyed playing games together and eating some delicious food for their team appreciation day celebrations. It was a lovely day, which was topped off by seeing smiles on the faces of the people they care for.



Homecare

Superhero celebrations were in full swing at Homecare's office this week as they congratulated their team and gave out gifts. There were lots of team members celebrating their long service to the Excelcare family too, with special gifts and awards being handed out to these people.

As the team are usually out of the office, it was great to see them together, celebrating their individual achievements and enjoying some time in each other's company.



Support Office

Celebrations began the second the team members at the Support Office walked into the office, as they were greeted with a rainbow themed reception display.

Waiting for them at reception not only was a rainbow balloon arch, but also a pot of gold, which hosted packs of rainbow cookies that they were invited to take with them to their offices to share with their colleagues.

When they arrived at their desk, they were excited to find rainbow coloured gift bags from Ozzie and Sam, which contained a flask, a chocolate bar, and a gift card thanking them for their hard work behind the scenes.

But the surprises did not stop there! Halfway through the day, everyone received an email from Sam Manning, letting them know that she had bought doughnuts that were now waiting for them at reception!



Support Office style their silliest shirts for Alzheimer's UK

There were lots of laughs at Excelcare's Support Office on Friday 24th September, as the team donned their silly shirts for a good cause!



The team members in the Bromley Office celebrated 'Silly Shirt Day': a day encouraging people to dig out the worst shirts in their wardrobes and sport them for the day, to have a bit of fun and help to raise money for Alzheimer's UK.

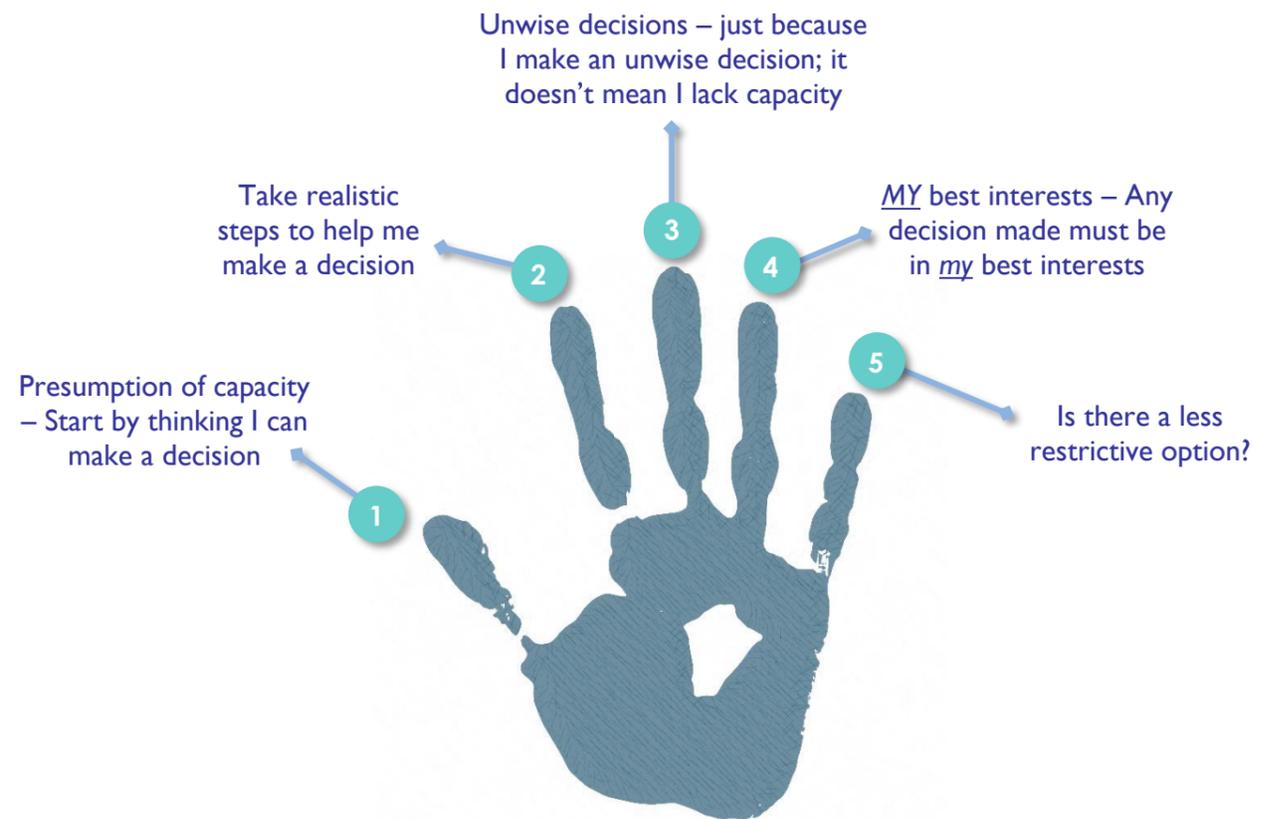
Around the office, there were a variety of pretty awful shirts, from bad florals, to funny prints, to some rather colourful numbers too. People wore their silly shirts with pride; posing for pictures and letting everyone vote on who truly came with the worst shirt of all.

In the end, the prize for worst shirt went to Income and Credit Controller Jonathan, whose brightly coloured shirt, featuring a sloth riding a llama, truly stole the show and had everyone smiling. Jonathan was proud of his win and responded with an email to the Support Office team saying "Thank you very much everyone. I'll be at the pub after work if anyone wants to say hello to Bertie (The Sloth) and Henry (The Llama)."

As a caring company, Alzheimer's UK is a cause close to the hearts of the people who work at the support office, so it's certainly a worthy cause to help raise money for whilst having some fun in the process.



Mental Capacity – the importance of ALWAYS assuming capacity & getting it right!



Mental Capacity Act 2005

Designed to empower and protect those who lack mental capacity

- Presume I have capacity
- Support me to make my own decisions
- Don't assume I lack capacity if my decision seems unwise
- Always act in my best interests
- Choose the least restrictive treatment and care option

M E A U M B R E L L A M H K V
 F D U Z B D L E A V E S L Y G
 O N T V C S C A R E C R O W N
 J M U P D R D B Z A B Z U T Z
 H R M Y O C T O B E R B Q R G
 S A N F R V D I B O C D J E O
 V S L K O E T F E C X K Q E L
 H D P L D R D O N O H R K A D
 S S U F O H A G J N A Z R W E
 C B M G O W O G Z K R W C S N
 A W P R H R E Y E E V Z O U X
 R D K G F Q E E I R E T L N O
 F L I Z E N E S N S S C D S L
 T E N X J L E P T X T E K E V
 Q B S D V L W Q P D I I D T O

Autumn Wordsearch

One of the words listed below does not appear in the wordsearch. Complete the wordsearch and email info@excelcareholdings.com with your name, address and the missing word for the chance to win one of two Amazon giftcards!

SCARECROW
 CONKERS
 HARVEST
 FOGGY
 TREE
 HALLOWEEN
 LEAVES
 SUNSET
 FORAGE
 UMBRELLA
 NATURE
 FOREST
 GOLDEN
 PUMPKIN
 OCTOBER

SCARF
 COLD
 AUTUMN

**ENTER
 TO WIN**

In the spotlight!

The Excelcare family is full of so many amazing and inspiring people, and we would like to shine a light on as many as possible. In this issue we are sharing the stories of some of our exceptional team members and their journeys with Excelcare.



Pearl Ewing: from Lifestyle Coordinator to Regional Lifestyle and Wellbeing Lead for Cambridge

Pearl has worked for Excelcare for seven and a half years and has truly enjoyed her time as part of the Excelcare family.

Pearl began her journey with Excelcare as a Lifestyle Coordinator at Hunters Down Care Home in Huntingdon, Cambridge. She thoroughly enjoyed her time at the home, and looking back on it, she said “Being a Lifestyle Coordinator is such a wonderful job. It’s very rewarding and you really do make a difference to the people living in the care homes. You make so many wonderful friends and it is so special to see the smiles on their faces when they see you, knowing that they are going to have some quality fun together!”

Pearl says that the trick to planning meaningful activities is getting to know each person that lives in the home extremely well, “The more you know each person, the more you are able to implement

activities that they love to do.” Pearl would plan ahead to ensure she was tying in activities happening in the local community, so that the residents still feel a part of it. Through this, Pearl has built strong connections with numerous community organisations.

Two and a half years ago, Pearl was offered the position of Regional Lifestyle and Wellbeing Lead for all 10 Cambridgeshire homes due to her exemplary work as a Lifestyle Coordinator. Now, she regularly visits all of Excelcare’s homes in Cambridge, getting to know the teams and the people living there, where she supports the Lifestyle Coordinators in their roles, whilst still engaging in activities.

A large part of Pearl’s role is showcasing how wonderful the resident’s lives are

in the Cambridgeshire homes through photos, videos and writing stories – it’s one of her favourite things about her role!

Pearl feels that “It is very important for the public to read about the meaningful activities that residents enjoy each day. There is so much negativity out there around care homes, so it feels wonderful when the local papers and magazines print the articles that I send to them, so everyone can see how we stimulate residents with varied activities, keeping them involved in the local community.”

Pearl has seen great successes and opportunities in her role as Cambridge’s Regional Lifestyle and Wellbeing Lead, and we are looking forward to continuing to watch her progress.

Just for fun!

It’s time to put your puzzle skills to the test! Try and answer these riddles below:

1. What goes up but never comes down?
2. I am tall when I’m young, and I’m short when I’m old. What am I?
3. What five letter word becomes shorter when you add 2 letters to it?
4. The more there is, the less you see. What am I?

Find the answers on page 29!



Sam Farrow: Top tips from an award-winning Lifestyle Coordinator

Sam Farrow is an award-winning Lifestyle Coordinator, who has been delighting the people living at St Fillans Care Home in Colchester since arriving at the home 5 years ago.

To get to this point, Sam has had a variety of roles and even lived in Australia for a number of years, so her activity inspiration doesn’t just span from different sectors but also from overseas.

For her innovative ideas and the positive impact these have had on the people living at St Fillans Care Home, in August 2021, Sam won the Care Home Activities Organiser Award for the East of England. This was a huge achievement for Sam and St Fillans, which also highlighted the importance of her role at the home and in the residents’ lives.

When asked about her role as a Lifestyle Coordinator, Sam had the following to say:

Q: What is your favourite part of your role?

A: “Definitely granting the wishes of the people we care for. It fills me with pride to see their smiling faces when we help people to do things they have always wanted to do. One of the community initiatives we get involved with, involves residents

writing down their wishes, and members of the local community help to make them come true. It’s a lovely thing to see and brings lots of joy to the people we care for.”



Q: What changes have you seen in the Lifestyle Coordinator role in the last 5 years?

A: “The main difference is the role of social media. We used to have to come up with fresh ideas or take inspiration from books, but now, there is so much we can learn from social media. TikTok is the latest source of inspiration, as there are many exciting games that we can adapt to make them suit the needs of the people we care for and make for exciting days at St Fillans”

Sam’s top five tips for new Lifestyle Coordinators!

1) Get to know the people you care for and your colleagues

“This involves learning about their lives, hobbies, interests, likes and dislikes. That way you can truly tailor activities to people individual needs and interests. Getting to know your team is important too, as some may have hidden talents that you can use.”

2) Be motivated

“Every day is different and no matter what, you must be motivated to make a positive difference every day.”

3) Be organised

“Being organised is so important. Make basic plans to form your daily and weekly activity templates so that people know what there is on offer and take part in the sessions they are drawn to. You’re always learning, so it’s important to keep your notes updated every time you come across new materials, benefits and the reactions of the people you care for. Keeping your notes updated will help when you’re at meetings, providing updates or organising events.”

4) Get to know the area

“Research resources that are available in your area such as churches, community clubs, charities, entertainers and local business etc. This will help with fundraising events, encourage participation from volunteers and help seek sponsors for special occasions.”

5) Do not rush

“You’ve got a lot to do in your day but try not to rush about or give the appearance of rushing. People who live with dementia can often sense when someone is rushing, and it tends to make them feel anxious. Take time to enjoy the moment, observe your surroundings and take an interest in everyone’s wellbeing, everyday.”

Shilpa: a career in caring

Shilpa originally qualified as a nurse in India, where she studied and passed a four-year Bachelors in Nursing Degree. During her time in India, she worked in a 650-bedded hospital, where she developed her experience and was able to put the knowledge she had gained from her degree into practice. She worked in different areas of the hospital, further developing her nursing experience, before applying for the Overseas Nursing programme to continue her career in the UK.



Shilpa was thrilled to be accepted, and after moving to England, she qualified in 2011. Shortly after, she was welcomed into her new career in nursing at Stanley Wilson Lodge Care Home in Saffron Walden. Shilpa worked as a Registered Nurse in one of the suites at the care home, but before long, she looked into ways she could progress her career within the company.

One of the first programmes Shilpa got involved with was a mentorship programme in 2014. This gave her the opportunity to be a mentor to a student from Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge. Being a mentor allowed Shilpa to share her valuable knowledge and experience with someone during their training, which provided her with a great sense of personal achievement.

Another opportunity offered to Shilpa was a Non-Medical Prescribing course - something she was very keen to accept!

After working hard on the course and securing almost top marks, Shilpa became a qualified Nurse Prescriber.

Further to her academic qualifications, Shilpa volunteered to take part in the Gold Standards Framework course to enhance her knowledge and skills in providing care to a person until the end of their life. Whilst on the course, Shilpa found it helped her to be sensitive in her caring approach and made her feel more empathetic towards the people she cares for and their families, through such a difficult time. Shilpa used what she had learnt on the course and shared it with her colleagues too, ensuring that as a team, they were providing the highest standards of care to the people living at Stanley Wilson Lodge and those closest to them.

Shilpa's progression and lessons learnt also enhanced her clinical knowledge and skills, but in true Excelcare spirit, she continued to look for opportunities to develop. When a course organised by "My Home Life" was offered to Shilpa, she grabbed the opportunity with both hands. This course gave her the chance to develop managerial skills and learn more about people development, as she was keen to look into leadership opportunities within the home.

Shilpa's dedication to learning and commitment to providing the best care for people certainly didn't go unnoticed as since joining Excelcare, she has had a successful journey, achieved a number of promotions and is now a Care Manager at Stanley Wilson Lodge.

"I wish to enlighten all nursing professionals

that you have a great scope of practice, learning opportunities, leadership qualities and complex decision-making abilities in a nursing home setting. It's a career that allows you to become more independent, confident and a leader with great empathy towards residents and colleagues.

I have successfully completed 10 years at Stanley Wilson Lodge and I'm looking forward to many more. When I look back, it has been an amazing and wonderful journey and I am extremely thankful to God, my family, my teachers and Excelcare for helping me come so far. I call Saffron Walden my home because of Stanley Wilson Lodge."

Shilpa is proud of her achievements and is pleased to be in a role that gives her responsibility to ensure the standard of nursing provided meets the high standards set by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Shilpa is highly committed, always goes above and beyond and is constantly trying to improve. Her leadership skills set a high standard to her team and are part of the reason Stanley Wilson Lodge has been rated **OUTSTANDING** in Well-led by the CQC - Shilpa's story certainly shows that if you are willing to take opportunities, just how far you can go!



Introducing...

The Excelcare family is constantly growing and welcoming new team members. Here is a brief introduction to some of the wonderful people who have joined us recently...



Rob Ashton - Home Manager at The Willows

Rob is delighted to have entered a new role as Home Manager at The Willows Care Home in Milton Keynes!

He has been working in Health & Social Care since he was 20, starting his career as an Auxiliary Nurse, and since working with many different client groups in a number of different Health & Social Care settings.

After gaining his NVQ Level 5 Registered Managers Award in 2005, Rob took to managing Care Homes, and has been leading homes ever since. He briefly progressed to become a Regional Operations Director, but soon realised that his true passion was managing homes, and so came to join the team at The Willows as their new Home Manager.

When introducing himself to the friends and family of the people living at The Willows, Rob said "One of my core values is to remain committed in supporting the team to deliver the best possible care, ensuring that people have fulfilled and meaningful lives, stay active and healthy, and continue to stay connected with the people they love."

The Willows are excited to have Rob as part of their family, and we are looking forward to his bright future with Excelcare.



Quiannah - Volunteer at Park Avenue

Quiannah is currently studying Health and Social Care at college and has dreams of one day becoming a nurse, so she decided to volunteer at Park Avenue Care Home in London to gain some valuable experience.

The team and the people living at Park Avenue are so grateful for the work she has been doing, and have watched her translate her passions into helpful skills that greatly contribute to the lives of the people in the home. For example, Quiannah really enjoys music and plays the guitar, ukulele and sings. Because of this, she performed for the whole home at their Team Appreciation Week party, as well as at a vow renewal for two of the residents. She also really enjoys art, so has led some engaging arts and crafts sessions for the residents.

Excelcare sweeps carehome.co.uk awards with triple win

Celebrations were to be had after Excelcare were announced as one of the top 20 large care providers in the UK during their annual team appreciation week!

Leading care home website, carehome.co.uk, recently announced their awards, which recognise the top 20 care homes in each region across the UK, as well as awarding small, medium and large care provider groups nationwide.

The awards are judged based on the feedback and review scores from approved reviews submitted through carehome.co.uk directly by the people living in Excelcare homes and their loved ones. With an average group review score of 9.6 out of 10, Excelcare has proudly secured a spot in the national top 20 for the second year in a row! As well as this, our Park Avenue, Etheldred and Ashlyn care homes also placed within the top 20 in their regions!

The last 15 months have been especially challenging for care providers, who have overcome many challenges through the COVID-19 pandemic. Excelcare are proud to have been recognised within the top 20 large care providers this year, as this showcases an ability to adapt and keep those they care for in good spirits, and as safe as possible! This recent award caused for double the celebrations across the group, as they not only celebrated their own personal success and the achievements of their colleagues, but the achievements of the Excelcare family as a whole.

Sam Manning, Excelcare's Chief Operating Officer, said this in response, "We're delighted to have won a top 20 provider award with carehome.co.uk for the second year running. It is wonderful to see that our dedicated teams have inspired so many residents and their families to leave such kind words as part of their positive reviews."

"I would like to thank each and every member of the Excelcare family; this award comes as a result of the combined efforts of team members at the care homes, their regional leads and the core team at our Support Office. This truly reflects the thought, care and consideration that goes into our work daily, and with the challenges of the last year, it's a welcome cause for celebration!"



Windmill Lodge secure 'GOOD' CQC rating

Windmill Lodge Care Home has continued to deliver excellent levels of service to the people living there, despite the challenges encountered over the last year. This was recently noted during their latest CQC inspection – where the home was inspected and rated GOOD in all domains.

Throughout 2021, the team has had to adapt to new ways of meeting the social needs of everyone benefiting from life in such a supportive environment, where the dedicated team organised different ways of connecting people with their loved ones, whilst keeping everyone safe.

When the CQC recently inspected the

home, they found that the team has been agile and adapted their approach to ensure people were as safe as possible, whilst enjoying a good quality of life.

This is a brilliant achievement for the home and not only highlights the dedication they show to the people they care for, but their ongoing desire to improve the person-centred care they deliver.

Michelle David, Home Manager said "The team are so delighted to finally be credited for all their hard work and dedication. The team are so proud of their achievement and the leadership team are also very proud of what we all have achieved."

"It has been an inspiration to watch the team's determination and hard work; through the most difficult times anybody could have experienced, they have ran to the storm as opposed to running away. Well done team Windmill, you truly are an amazing team," said Louise Bouthemy, London's Regional Operations Director.

The Excelcare family sends a big congratulations to the team at Windmill Lodge for all their hard work in securing this rating.



Excelcare ranked number one provider based on CQC ratings

| Care Monitor, England October 2021 | | | | | | |
|--|-------------|-----------|------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----|
| CQC ratings of care home providers for older people including dementia (by beds) | | | | | | |
| Rank | Δ Sept 2020 | Provider | # homes | % good or outstanding | % not inspected | |
| 1 | ▲ | 6 | Excelcare | 32 | 94% | 0% |
| 2 | ▲ | 2 | MHA | 82 | 91% | 0% |
| 3 | ▲ | - | Sunrise Senior Living | 22 | 91% | 5% |
| 4 | ▼ | -3 | Orders of St John Care Trust | 65 | 91% | 0% |
| 5 | ▼ | -2 | Anchor Hanover | 114 | 90% | 0% |
| 6 | - | New Entry | Sanctuary | 82 | 88% | 0% |
| 7 | ▲ | 1 | Healthcare Homes | 46 | 87% | 0% |
| 8 | ▼ | -2 | Bupa UK Care Services | 118 | 82% | 0% |
| 9 | ▲ | 1 | Care UK | 117 | 82% | 6% |

In October, Excelcare was announced as the number one ranked care provider for older people and people who live with dementia by Care Markets UK.

This report is based on sector analysis by LaingBuisson, who provide market intelligence and data solutions to the healthcare industry. This particular report was ranked via GOOD or OUTSTANDING ratings awarded by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) during their inspections, and this report noted that Excelcare has achieved these ratings in 94% of their homes!

Across the Excelcare family, there has always been a commitment and focus to improving upon the person-centred care we deliver, and a vision to improve CQC ratings across the group. These improvements have included changes to the environment in which care is delivered, making them more attractive and engaging for the people who live in Excelcare homes. There has also been a commitment to improving the catering and hospitality of the people we care for, with many renovations to care suites and better technology being introduced to each of our homes.

Team members from every level have been committed to this vision, from

housekeeping and domestic teams to carers and leaders, with support from central teams. Ensuring the individual is at the heart of everything we do, and their wellbeing is our priority. This group-wide effort has seen a number of improved ratings over the past 12 months and achieving this ranking is an exciting accolade for everyone in the family.

In the same edition, Care Market also published rankings for nursing home providers for those who live with dementia. This list was also ranked via GOOD or OUTSTANDING CQC

ratings and Excelcare achieved an admirable third place.

In response to these outstanding achievements, Excelcare's Chief Operating Officer, Sam Manning said, "I am so proud of the Excelcare family for their collective daily efforts and commitment to improving the care they provide. Especially after the many challenges the health and social care sector has experienced over the last 18 months, seeing Excelcare achieve better CQC ratings and be recognised as a top provider is a momentous and exciting milestone in our journey as a provider."

Sweyne Court secure Beacon Status!

Sweyne Court were absolutely overjoyed when they achieved their Gold Standard Framework Accreditation!

The Gold Standards Framework is a care industry body that awards care homes who demonstrate outstanding end of life care. It's awarded in stages, with platinum being the highest and requires care homes to follow a rigorous process to achieve it. First, they must complete a GSFCH training programme over nine months, then implement this at the home successfully. The final stage is an accreditation process called 'going for gold' - care homes that complete this successfully are awarded a beacon status.

The team are extremely proud to have been awarded this, especially with the group effort that they put into gaining it. Team members Taylor Boul and Laura Ward have worked very hard for three years to attain it, with Lifestyle Coordinator Christina Daniell, who showed the assessor pictures of activities in the home during the final stages.

Individual awards and achievements

It has been a season full of awards and celebrations here at Excelcare, and we are so proud of our family!



Samantha Crawley - Support Office

Shortlisted for Executive of the Year at the 2021 Leaders in Care Awards by Care Home Professional

The Executive of the Year award honours the leaders who have provided inspired leadership on a company and sector-wide level and driven their organisations to achieve great things over the past year.

In Care Home Professional's official announcement, they noted that Samantha's well-deserved nomination was awarded because "Samantha always goes above and beyond her duties as a leader and she has done so even more during the past 12 months. COVID hit the industry hard, and Samantha worked tirelessly to ensure that residents in all her care homes and her team members were as safe as possible and ensured they all had the support they needed. Samantha has, and continues to, make a true difference to others. She puts her heart and soul into delivering quality outcomes to residents, their families and her team of staff – nothing is ever too much trouble for her. Throughout COVID she worked above and beyond, leaving her own family to relocate and care for her Excelcare family. She worked day and night within the care homes to provide care and support to residents and staff members. Samantha knew that the residents and team were anxious about the pandemic and she tried many things to reassure them and put herself on the front line every day as an additional level of support. She brought psychologists in to talk with the residents and team to try and alleviate some of their fears. She liaised with the family and friends of residents regularly as she was all too aware how distressing it was for them not to be able to see their loved ones during such an unfamiliar time. She undertook support calls to help lift morale and gave reassurance at a time when others panicked. She listened when others needed to talk, and she talked when reassurance was sought."

Samantha was honoured to be shortlisted and said, "I cannot believe this honestly I'm totally shocked - I don't know what to say - I did and do what everyone does in care - so many people go above and beyond every day."

Samantha Farrow - St Fillans Care Home

Winner of Regional Activity Organiser of the Year at the Great British Care Awards

Samantha has been a member of the St Fillans family for four years now and was delighted when she received a letter last year, declaring her a finalist for the award.

After receiving this letter, she attended an interview over Zoom with 12 other finalists, before attending the Awards Ceremony in Peterborough Arena in July, to find out the winner. The night was filled with great performances, lots of fun and laughter, and all attendees had a fantastic time. However, the highlight of the night was, of course, when Samantha was announced as the winner.

Samantha still recalls the night vividly and said "I was sitting on the edge of my seat thinking that I definitely hadn't won, and then next thing I knew, my name was announced, and the roof lifted off the arena with cheers from my supportive team members! I was over the moon and feel very proud of what I have achieved."

The team at St Fillans are so proud of Samantha's well-deserved accolades, as are the whole of the Excelcare group!



Annmarie - Etheldred House Care Home

Winner of the WASHCO Love Laundry Awards

There was celebration to be had at Etheldred House Care Home, as Annmarie was declared the winner in the 'individual' category of the WASHCO Love Laundry Awards!

The Love Laundry Awards are dedicated to the people working in care home laundry teams who truly make a difference. WASHCO encouraged care home teams across the country to nominate team members that have gone above and beyond, especially during the pandemic, so they are recognised and rewarded for their efforts. As winner of the 'individual' category, Ann Marie has walked away with a domestic Miele washing machine for Etheldred House's laundry area!

Annmarie has been working at Etheldred House for 13 years now. She currently works fulltime in the laundry team but is known to go far beyond her role due to her caring nature and dedicated work ethic. For her hard work, Annmarie was presented with a bunch of flowers and thank you note by Andrew Seal, Excelcare's Hospitality Lead as a sign appreciation for all she does.

Annmarie was nominated for the WASHCO Love Laundry Awards by Etheldred House's Home Manager Santall Horn. In the nomination, Santall wrote "I frequently find Annmarie in one of the houses during mealtimes where she is assisting someone with their meal. When her shift is done at the end of the day, one would usually see her sitting down chatting with a resident or walking hand in hand with a resident. She also frequently assists her team members with residents living with dementia when they are unsettled. None of this is asked of Annmarie – she does this out of choice. Annmarie's work is always done to the highest standard. She always ensures that all is done before she leaves for the day. She never leaves jobs incomplete. As the manager I have several times found out that when they were short of team members in the housekeeping team, Annmarie has sorted it and came to work the extra shifts. She never complains or leaves it for someone else to sort out, she does it herself. The laundry room is immaculate, and we never receive any complaints about the resident's clothes, or anything related to the laundry. She takes pride in her workspace. Annmarie makes sure she stays up to date with all the information she needs for her job role, whether this may be COSHH requirements or just information about new chemicals. Annmarie leads the housekeeping team in the absence of the Housekeeper and inducts new staff. Annmarie sets an example to all others of not only taking pride in her job in the laundry but to all other care staff too. I am very lucky to have a staff member like Annmarie working at Etheldred House. She deserves this recognition & award."

Charlotte - Fitzwilliam Care Home

Winner of the Cambridgeshire Live Young Heroes Award

The Mayor of Cambridge, Councillor Russ McPherson launched the first Volunteer for Cambridge Awards to celebrate the incredibly community spirit shown during the pandemic. He wanted to recognise people from all walks of life who inspire others with their acts of bravery, determination and selflessness and make Cambridgeshire a better place to live.

When Charlotte was only 17, she volunteered to help the team and people living at Fitzwilliam during the pandemic, whilst also completing her NVQ in Health and Social Care. Charlotte's mother, Amy, also works at Fitzwilliam as the Lifestyle Coordinator, and is extremely proud of her daughter's love and compassion. When a vacancy came up for a Healthcare Assistant at the home, Charlotte applied, and the rest is history.

The ceremony took place on Tuesday 21st September at St Barnaba's Church in Cambridge, and the team were thrilled when they learnt that Charlotte had won! It was well deserved as Charlotte is a dedicated young woman, who is destined to go far. Charlotte is a huge asset to Fitzwilliam House, and the team have no doubts that she will do very well in her chosen career path.



Milestones and Memories

It has been a season of amazing milestones and memories across the Excelcare family, from engagements to new family members to special birthdays and more! Here is a summary of some of the amazing moments we have shared.

Val & Steve say I do - again - after 47 years of marriage! Living with dementia doesn't get in the way of true love!

"Whilst this journey is not how we planned it, we always said that one day we would renew our wedding vows."

Steve lives with dementia and asked for a helping hand from his daughter during one of her visits to see him at Park Avenue Care Home. As he expressed what he would like to say, she wrote down a special note to his wife, Val. The note was printed into a beautiful card, which was thoughtfully delivered along with a bright bouquet of flowers to an unsuspecting Val, less than 24 hours before they would come together to say 'I do' once again.

The note continued, "Whilst I may not be who I once was, and my memory won't enable me to truly express my love for you, I just wanted to let you know that I love you more than I did from the start – and I'll love you forever, with all my heart!"



Val was thrilled to be surprised by this special invitation "I can't stop reading the message from Steve," said Val. "Each time I do, I get a lump in my throat."

The date was set for Tuesday 24th August 2021, 47 years to the day since Val and Steve first tied the knot on

their wedding day. Val and Steve are blessed to have a wonderful family with five beautiful daughters, Jo, Sam, Vicki, Carly & Terri, and their eleven wonderful grandchildren.

A family's journey with dementia is rarely easy – it often presents an emotional, unknown and sometimes challenging time of change. As dedicated carers, the team at Park Avenue understand that when someone is diagnosed with dementia, it does not only affect the person with the diagnosis, but also impacts the lives of the whole family. With this in mind, it is important that every person living in the home, along with their loved ones, receive loving care and support, as they experience their journey with dementia in partnership with the care home team.

After some time being supported at home, Steve moved into Park Avenue in October 2020, and Val was registered as his essential carer so that she was able to provide the same loving touches she would when she was caring for him in their own home. Steve had always been so well looked after by his wife and his five girls – he's never had to lay his clothes out for the next day – that's always been a labour of love for Val, and she continues to do this whilst supporting at Park Avenue.

"We encourage family and friends to play an active role in the care & support of their loved ones," explained Gemma Weldon, Home Manager of Park Avenue. "Our dedicated team are fully qualified to provide information and

support to help with the challenges that people living with dementia can face. We will always be available to help families to support their loved ones in the best possible way."



With these values at heart, Gemma and her team at Park Avenue were proud to have the opportunity to host such a special and memorable day for Val, Steve, and their closest family. Thorough risk assessments were put in place to ensure everyone was kept as safe as possible, including the use of appropriate PPE and each person involved completing an LFD test on the morning of the event. Of course, the event was hosted in the beautiful garden to ensure social distancing and allow for plenty of fresh air.

The sun shone through the clouds on Park Avenue as the team busied themselves preparing for the special event - making sure every little detail was perfect. They had even arranged for a beautiful lilac fascinator to be presented to Val before the ceremony!

The traditional gemstone for a 47th wedding anniversary is Amethyst, and Park Avenue's beautiful, landscaped

garden had been dressed in shades of purple, lavender & lilac to suit the theme. It was a truly magical sight; the garden had been lovingly decorated with an impressive flower wall, vibrant blooms and garlands, colourful balloons, all topped off with a beautifully presented wedding cake. When Steve was asked what his favourite cake was – he immediately said 'carrot' and to his delight he was told that the beautifully iced wedding cake was in fact a carrot cake!

Val beamed as she walked with her grandson Alfie, and they entered the garden to such a spectacular scene. Val was greeted by her closest family, with Elvis Presley's 'Can't help falling in love with you' being sung and played on guitar beautifully by one of Park Avenue's nurse's daughters, Quiannah, who also volunteers at the home. Val made her way to greet Steve, as they prepared to recite their vows in matching 'Hubby' and 'Wifey' t-shirts.



Samantha Crawley, Excelcare's Director of Care Quality & Transformation, had been invited by the family to act as a celebrant for the occasion and conduct a short ceremony. "Good relationships never stop growing. Like fine wine, they get better with age. Val, Steve, you have now been married 47 years and through all the years of your journey together, you have come together today, so that you could renew your vow and commitment of love for each other." Samantha continued, "Although football and pigeon racing were great loves of Steve's – they were never going to beat his love for his wife Val, affectionately known to Steve as 'Little Legs'."

As with all of the people who live at Park Avenue, we make it our mission to know and understand every resident and their families. We spent time with

Steve and his family, getting to know all about his interests, preferences, and life story, as part of his plan of care. Samantha had worked in partnership with the team and the family, ensuring that the reading included personal touches, so that Val and Steve could relive these special moments from their life together, through their ceremony.

The happy couple shared their vows, and Steve shed a happy tear as he said, "I do, I do." Val placed her hand on Steve's ring, as she spoke loving words, before her granddaughter, Bailey, presented her with a beautiful Amethyst ring from Steve. Samantha continued, "Let these rings serve as the symbol of your everlasting love and commitment to each other, and may they also serve as a sign of continually making beautiful memories."

Samantha turned to Val and Steve's family "Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my honour to present to you, once again as husband and wife: Mr and Mrs Dunn." Everyone clapped and cheered for the wonderful couple. There was not a dry eye in the audience as Rod Stewart's 'Have I told you lately that I love you' played in the background and Val, Steve, and their closest family shared an emotional and memorable moment together.

With the ceremony concluded, the cake was cut for everyone to enjoy, and lilac balloons were released into the sky by the happy couples' grandchildren. To everyone's delight, an ice cream van rang its chimes to welcome them into the car park to enjoy a cold treat. The Park Avenue team and residents were also invited to enjoy an ice cream to celebrate this joyous occasion, and to thank them for all the special effort they had put into the big day and the use of their scenic garden for such a special event.



As the celebrations drew to an end, and the family headed home, Home Manager Gemma shared some kind words with the happy couple, "We would like to share our congratulations and warmest wishes to you for the renewal of your vows! You are both dear to us and we are thrilled to be a part of this special day, as you reconfirm your love for each other." After an unforgettable and emotional day, Val shared her feelings, "I am overwhelmed by the love and care shown today. It has been so special, and the lovely memories we created will remain with me forever. As I was leaving Steve (after a special 47th wedding anniversary together), he took my hand and said, 'I love you'. Due to Steve's dementia, these words are often hard for him to say, so they always mean so much to me. Today they meant even more."

"Although I am not a part of the team, I feel as though I am – I'm always made to feel welcome by Gemma and the inspirational people who work at Park Avenue. I cannot put into words how special it was to create new memories with my dearest Steve, this is just another example of how the team go above and beyond – I am so grateful!"

On behalf of Excelcare, we would like to share our congratulations to Val and Steve! Thank you for sharing your declaration of love with us.



Castlemead Court welcome new members to the family

There has been plenty of celebration underway at Castlemead Court Care Home in Milton Keynes recently, as the team at the home have welcomed not one, but three babies!

The first baby was Orla Grace, born on 24th June to two Team Leaders at the home! Her mother, Mary, is Team Leader for Castlemead's Poppy Group, and her father, Sean, is Team Leader for Daisy Group. The two met at Castlemead and have now welcomed Orla Grace as their fifth child.

The second baby, Chimazam, was born on 25th June, also to two members of the Castlemead Court team! Chimazam's dad, AkA, is a Registered General Nurse on Holly Group, and his mum, Chioma, is a Healthcare Assistant on Poppy Group. Chimazam is their first child and has been very long awaited and hoped for, so the whole team was so emotional when he was born and are so excited for the two of them to experience parenthood together.

The third baby was born on 1st August to Zahira, the Team Leader on Holly Unit. She is Zahira's fourth daughter, and her children have been very excited to meet their new sister Aliza.

Congratulations to all the new parents at Castlemead Court Care Home, the home wishes you the best of luck on this journey!



Priya says 'I do' during a sunset stroll in Caister-On-Sea

On a beach in Caister-on-Sea in September, Priya, a HR Assistant at Central Support got engaged to her partner, Neel.

Priya has been a part of the Excelcare family since December 2017 and supports homes and team members around the group with their HR practices.

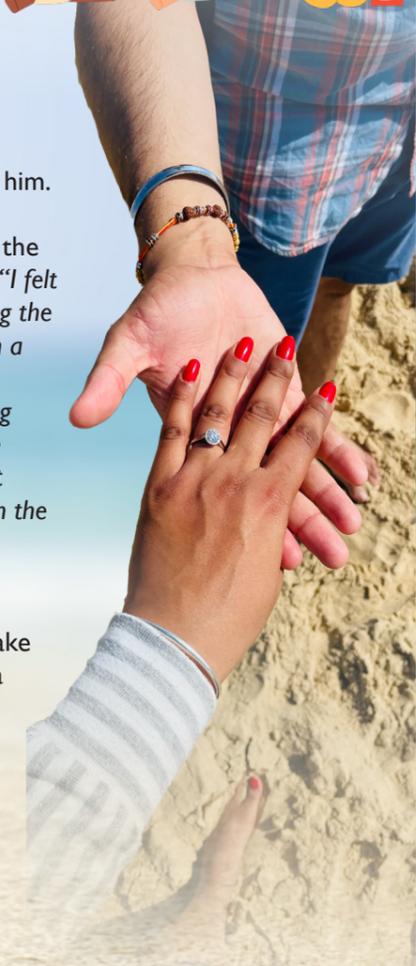
In September, she took some much-needed time off for a short break in Caister-on Sea. During the week, whilst taking a stroll along California Beach, her partner got down on

one knee and asked Priya to marry him.

Priya was shocked and delighted at the same time, but of course, said yes! "I felt ecstatic knowing that I will be spending the rest of my life with someone with such a beautiful soul. It was very emotional and exciting, and my brain was running 100 miles per hour. I am ready to ride every wave of life with him. I could not have found anyone better and bring on the celebrations in 2022," said Priya.

The happy couple are now busy planning their wedding which will take place next year and certainly have a bright future ahead of them.

Congratulations to Priya and Neel on their engagement, we wish them a long and happy future together!



Matilda turns 70 at Sweyne Court

Matilda, a Healthcare Assistant at Sweyne Court Care Home in Essex, was due to turn 70 during her annual leave, but her team members still wanted to celebrate. So, they all worked together to plan a surprise party for her on her last shift, to properly celebrate the milestone!

First, they ensured that Matilda was assigned jobs to do on the first floor, giving them ample time to decorate the lower dining room with banners, balloons and bunting. Chef Dee and Kitchen Assistant Josh prepared a birthday cake and finger buffet for the team and the people living at the home, and the team organised a collection so they could get Matilda a gift card, a bottle of gin, some chocolates and a large '70' badge.

The team slowly brought residents to the dining room, ensuring that they did not raise suspicion. Then, when everyone was gathered, they called Matilda downstairs to the lower floor dining room.

Matilda was very emotional, and it took a few minutes to compose herself whilst everyone sang 'Happy Birthday'. Once she had settled, she made a short speech thanking everyone, in which she shared that Sweyne Court is her life and she has never had a better birthday. After her speech, Matilda was presented with a blossoming bouquet of flowers, and everyone enjoyed the music and buffet. It was a wonderful afternoon for everyone involved, and a birthday that Matilda will never forget.



Sidney turns 80 at Water Hall

Sidney has been a part of the Water Hall family for just over five years now and has grown very close to the team and the people living at the home.

Recently, however, Sidney was taken ill, and the team were worried that he wouldn't be with them for his 80th birthday. But Sidney showed everyone just how strong he is, bouncing back better than ever, ready for his 80th birthday celebrations at the home!

Sidney was joined on the day by his wife and his daughter, who visited the home with an amazing cake, and some presents for him to open. As well as this, he received video messages from his family members who were scattered around the world, which made the day even more special. His smile grew even bigger with every message he received! It was a wonderful day for both Sidney and the team, and the team are already planning the next special birthday!

Angela turns 60 at the Support Office

Angie, who works at Excelcare's Support Office recently celebrated a milestone birthday as she turned 60.

Her team surprised her with birthday balloons and decorations on her desk to kick start her day. She was then accompanied by Excelcare CEO, Ozzie, for a bite to eat at lunchtime, where she found her team and friends waiting at the table to surprise her.



Queens Oak celebrate a family victory

Tameka was overjoyed to let her team members at Queens Oak Care Home know that her daughter, Decora Harriot, has been accepted into the University of Cambridge to study English Literature. Everybody at Queens Oak was so excited for Tameka when they found out, and even more excited for her daughter, who is about to embark on this brand-new adventure.

Whilst talking about it, Tameka was so filled with pride from her daughter's achievement. Tameka said "I am so happy for her and excited for this next chapter. This is where she has wanted to go ever since she was a little child, and I am so glad that her dream is becoming a reality."

Tameka sang her daughters praises, noting that she has always been a very studious child, and has really taken to the world of academia. Decora Harriot received an impressive 10 A*s in her GCSE's and represented her school twice academically at competitions in Belgium. Her family are so proud of how hard she has worked over the years and thrilled that it has paid off with this University acceptance.

The team at Queens Oak can't wait to see what Decora Harriot achieves at Cambridge and look forward to further updates from Tameka!



TELL US ABOUT YOUR CARE HOME HEROES
WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING OUT FOR OUR NEXT
SET OF SUPERHEROES!
IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO NOMINATE A MEMBER
OF THE EXCELCARE FAMILY TO BE FEATURED IN
OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER, PLEASE GET IN TOUCH!
EMAIL INFO@EXCELCAREHOLDINGS.COM WITH
THEIR NAME AND WHY YOU SEE THEM AS A HERO!

Superhero Shoutouts - Team Appreciation Week Edition

As part of Team Appreciation Week, we emailed a form to everyone in the company, asking them to share the name of someone special who works for the Excelcare family, and why they are a 'hero'. Some lovely comments were shared all around, bringing smiles to the much-deserved recipients!

to Lily Weatherly

from Sarah Lawton-Murray

"All through COVID, this young lady has organised and managed the resident and employee vaccinations. She has taken on board all the visits, managing the LFTs, agreements, all paperwork, daily cleaning all with a smile on her face. She works diligently and professionally. She undertakes all that is given to her and at times with very little appreciation. She goes above and beyond what is expected of her. A very lovely young woman."

to Valentyno Babych

from Carol Graham

"I am shouting out Valentyno for her hard work, loyalty and dedication to her job"

to Kelly Edmunds

from Rob Ashton

"Kelly has been a real support and inspiration for the team over the last 6 months, during a real period of change and uncertainty."

to Faith Jones

from Jacky Flood

"Faith is our Lifestyle Coordinator. She is loved by the residents and you can tell by their faces when she comes in the room how she is making a difference to them. She brings joy and laughter into everyone's day by her upbeat happy personality and helps everyone get through what is sometimes a difficult day."

to Anna Seternus

from Shilpa Eapen

"Anna is a very caring and kind team member. She will go above and beyond for the happiness of her residents. She is truly an inspiration to the team. She is always positive and never unhappy about anything the Manager requests of her. Anna is always available to help be it day or night. She is very flexible and never complains about anything. She believes in trust and being positive in life. A very happy bubbly person who creates a friendly atmosphere and tries to keep the place nice and positive."

to Linda Lewis

from Jacky Flood

"Linda supported Goldenley whilst we were awaiting a new Manager. She has been here to support and advise the team and myself. She has been amazing."

to Vanessa Dodd

from Louise Jones

"She puts up with me and is the most amazing person for keeping me grounded. She is dedicated and hardworking and has been for many many years whilst still managing to be a very caring and lovely lady and friend."

to Gale Hills

from Sarah Lawton-Murray

"Gale works at Regional Office supporting the various homes within the MK area. She is a great asset to the company as she provides back up when a member of the admin team is away due to illness or holiday. She is also very knowledgeable, helpful and nothing is too much trouble when you are stuck. She has a fantastic sense of humour and I wish that she could be cloned. She is one of the forgotten heroes as she is not based in one home. She deserves to be recognised for all her hard work and is definitely my hero!"

to Melba Herrera

from Shilpa Eapen

"Melba is extremely hardworking and passionate about caring. She has a heart of gold and she is such an inspiration to the team. Always walks an extra mile to help the residents. In spite of being a carer for a very close family member who is at palliative care stage in her own house, she never has unplanned absences. Melba is always pleasant, kind and compassionate. Very dedicated to the residents and respectful to the Team Leaders and colleagues. Always there to help."

to Yesenia Arboleda

from Shilpa Eapen

"Yesenia joined the company only 1.5 years ago but has taken the suite that is allocated to her to a very high standard. She is a very dedicated and knowledgeable team leader who works above and beyond to help her team and residents. Yesenia is very respectful to the managers and will admit and accept any mistakes and takes constructive criticism very positively. She is a role model. Yeseni works very well under pressure. She will guide her team and will participate actively in the care of residents prioritising the time and needs of the residents in her suite. She is indeed a role model and deserves a huge clap for all her hard work, especially during the pandemic."

to Kim Beeny

from Jacky Flood

"Kim was supporting Goldenley for a while in absence of our own administrator. She was always accomodating and cheerful and nothing was too much trouble. We thank you Kim."

to Sassy Thalasingham

from Shilpa Eapen

"Sassy cooks the best food that all residents enjoy. He tries to please everyone by listening and delivering quality food."

to Tewande Feirtigun

from Carol Graham

"She portrays herself as a role model, I feel I can go to her if I need any help regarding anything on Aplys"

to Aimee Barnes

from Jacky Flood

"Aimee supported Goldenley whilst awaiting the start of a new administrator. Nothing was too much trouble and she was able to deal with queries and was a real asset. Thank you."

Many of the relatives of the people living in our homes also took Team Appreciation Week as the perfect opportunity to thank the teams with gifts and words of praise. One relative at Park Avenue, however, went one step further, deciding to write a letter to Excelcare's Chairman, Osman Ertosun.

Dear Osman,

According to Gemma Weldon it has recently been Team Appreciation Week. We as relatives of residents at Park Avenue Care Home were invited to write in or take other action to thank the team. I'm writing to you as Gemma would be the first person I would highlight for recognition. It reflects well on you to have Home Managers of her quality. I'm a great believer that stars recruit stars and mediocre managers recruit people who will not show up.

It's hard to do a full team appreciation at this time, as these days (Because of COVID) we get to deal with so few of your team. Nowadays we only see the folk who handle visits; Stacey and Laurisse, but they are both great and go above and beyond. Stacey treats everyone so well and Laurisse's bubbly nature is very positive. The last person to highlight is Yamini on the front desk, who is so efficient and welcoming. Nothing is too much trouble for her, she's a lovely and dynamic can-do person.

In closing, I want to say thank you to the team at Park Avenue, seen and unseen, for all they do.

Yours sincerely,
Alistair Mackenzie



Community Updates

The homes across the Excelcare family love getting involved in their local communities. Here are some of the ways in which our homes have gotten involved recently.

Excelcare's Blue Light flasks are a huge success

We are so grateful for all of the emergency service workers that come into our homes, and our teams wanted to show them just how much we appreciate them. So, across the family, we have started handing out Excelcare branded reusable flasks to emergency services, inviting them to come in and refill these flasks with a free hot drink of their choice whenever they are in the area.

In a recent weekly newsletter, Castlemead Court Care Home in Milton Keynes wrote:

"We are saying a big THANK YOU to our emergency services workers and providing free refills for hot drinks as a special thanks from Castlemead. We know how busy they can be and sometimes it's impossible to get a drink or a bite to eat, but it is so important to stay fuelled and hydrated! So, we have put together snack boxes as well for any essential worker on shift who is passing through for them to help themselves- cheers!"

And Katy Hughes, Home Manager of Glennfield Care Home in Cambridge, said:

"We had three paramedics come to the home recently and I caught them on their way out to say thank you. I gave them each a travel mug and explained that they are refillable any time, as well as a little bag of sweets. In response, they said 'Oh, you're the nice home who gives out nice stuff, we've heard about you!"

We are so glad that people have been enjoying our small gesture of kindness. It is our little way of showing our appreciation for the hard work that emergency service workers have done over these last two years.



Colour me in!

Take some time to relax and unwind as you colour in this piece of artwork!

This issue's colouring sheet is inspired by World Mental Health Day, which takes place on the 10th October every Autumn.

We encourage you to spread this message of kindness and share your artwork with us using the hashtag **#ExcelcareVoiceAutumn** or emailing **info@excelcareholdings.com**



Water Hall Care Home open a new cafe

Recently, Water Hall Care Home in Milton Keynes have been working to create a new space for the people living in the home to socialise with their friends, family and the people living in their sister care homes in Milton Keynes. Now, after much anticipation, the space is open!

The first lucky person to benefit from Water Hall's new café space was Jean, who was able to see her family in it. Her family joined her in the café on a Saturday afternoon to celebrate her 100th birthday, making it a momentous opening indeed!

Jean had a wonderful birthday, starting with a special visit from the home's hairdresser Sharon, followed by flowers, presents, music and even prosecco! The celebration was the perfect event to kick off the use of the new café, and the home are looking forward to all the memories they will make in their new space.



A poem of gratitude

After sending a message of hope and appreciation out to the Excelcare family via email, COO Sam Manning received an email from Santall, the Home Manager of Etheldred House Care Home. Santall's mum had sent her a poem of gratitude, that she believed may touch the hearts of the people that work in our homes.

*Your job is the dream of the unemployed
Your house is the dream of the homeless
Your smile is the dream of the depressed
Your health is the dream of those who are sick
Beautiful things happen when you distance
yourself from negativity
And always remember you are loved and
have so much to be grateful for*



We welcome you to our Dementia Support Webinars

Once a month, we welcome relatives, team members, and the general public to join us virtually to discuss their experiences alongside people who live with Dementia.

These webinars, hosted by Samantha Crawley (Director of Care Quality and Transformation) and Ann-Marie Harmer (Dementia Care Lead) have become a safe space for many, where they can come together and share their experiences with people who understand their perspective, and may have experienced similar.

To get involved with future webinars, please contact your local Excelcare home, or follow our Facebook page at facebook.com/excelcareuk.

Just for fun! - Riddle answers

Well done for attempting this issue's riddles! Take a look at the answers below to see how you did:

1) YOUR AGE

2) A CANDLE

3) SHORT

4) DARKNESS

Until next time!



6 excellent reasons to choose Excelcare



Something for everyone

Our varied activities and events plan includes daily activities chosen by the people who live here, and provide the perfect opportunity to socialise and discover new hobbies!



A home from home

Throughout our home, everyone is welcome to spend time relaxing, socialising or enjoying watching some films. We also welcome you to make your own room homely by bringing any personal possessions with you.



We love wellbeing

We understand the importance of keeping well and active. Our schedule, mealtimes and environment are each carefully and expertly designed with comfort and happiness in mind.



Connecting through technology

People are also able to keep in regular contact with their friends and family by telephone, or video calls on our dedicated wellbeing tablets.



Our dedicated team

Our friendly and welcoming team are on hand to support you 24 hours a day. We also benefit from regular visits from our local GP's, District Nurses and Primary Care Teams.



We're here for you

We are proud to provide care that is as individual as each person who lives here. We speak to everyone to find out their likes, dislikes and interests, to find the best way to support everyone.

THANK YOU!

Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter! We would love for you to send us your feedback, or any suggestions you have for the next issue which will be released for Christmas 2021.

To get in touch please send an email to info@excelcareholdings.com.



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