Caring Voices NEWSLETTER SPRING 2016

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Caring HOMES
Hello and welcome!

It’s been a while since we produced an edition of Caring Voices and lots has changed in the business meanwhile.

In this issue, we’ve covered colleague news from the last four months - if you joined the Caring Homes family before that we apologise for not being able to include you all in our welcome message. We are, of course, very pleased to have you on board and hope you enjoy working with us.

Caring Voices is the newsletter for all colleagues working in Caring Homes care homes across the UK. We’ve included news on events, hot topics, and features on success stories, plus some fun puzzles and competitions.

Many homes sent us submissions (ok, we coerced you a bit, but thanks to those of you who responded!). If you’d like to be included in the next issue, be sure to get in touch with details of your story. Contact details are on the back cover.

Happy reading!

The Caring Voices editorial team

New colleagues

A warm welcome to all of our new colleagues and new homes. We hope you will enjoy being a part of the Caring Homes care home family.

There are now 3,180 part-time and full-time colleagues employed across 62 care homes from Aberdeen to Taunton, not forgetting our homes on the Isle of Man and Jersey.

Three care homes have recently joined us and we have opened one new home.

Castle View, on the Isle of Man, cares for 66 residents, including those with dementia and physical nursing needs. The home, on the outskirts of Peel on the East side of the island, has fabulous views of Peel Castle. Administrator Helen Williams says: “We are a small group of staff - many of us live close to the home itself. We have many people who were born on the island, and many more who have become Manx citizens. This is a place where everyone looks after each other and everyone feels connected to the local area.”

Our most northerly home, Hawkhill House, has been established for 30 years in an affluent area of Aberdeen. The team comprises both long-serving colleagues and newly recruited members. Home Manager Mel Shearer says: “Hawkhill’s very homely environment is commented on by lots of visitors, as is the range of varied activities we offer and how well-kept our residents look.”

Cotman Lodge and Cotman House became part of Caring Homes in September 2015. The adjacent properties in the small Suffolk town of Felixstowe care for up to 63 people. The home is planning to become more involved with local community groups and even open up its hairdressing salon to the public. They recently held a fundraising event in aid of British Heart Foundation, raising £237.

Newly-built in Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex, Southlands Place is on the site of a former hotel converted to a care home. It opened on 4th February and new residents and colleagues are settling in nicely together.

Put your hands together for...

This is your opportunity to congratulate people on promotions, personal development, professional development and other great accomplishments.

Hats off...

to Marek Tarnawski who has become Deputy Manager at Marchglen, Clackmannshire. He has also completed a course with Stirling University to become a mentor for new students. Marek, who was a charge nurse at the home prior to his promotion, heads up a small mental health unit at the Scottish home.

Congratulations...

to Mel Shearer, Anne Sweeney and Charlie Fraser at Hawkhill House, who have all been promoted. Mel, who became Deputy Manager in March 2015, is now Home Manager following her interview with Caring Homes founder Helena Jefferey and Regional Operations Director Sue Glanz. Anne and Charlie, previously nurses at Hawkhill, are the new Deputy Managers.

Our congratulations... also go to all those who have achieved their Care Certificates, QCF Award for Health and Social Care, and Living in My World Bronze level certificate. We’re proud of you.

Well done...

Cedar House for creating their first newsletter for residents and families in January. It is based on a template provided by central marketing and contained upcoming events, staff news and meeting updates. Anyone wishing to use the template should contact Sarah Scott sscott@caringhomes.org or 01206 832538 in the Marketing Team for support.

Do send us your achievements news for the next issue of Caring Voices. While we may not be able to include everything we receive, we will do our best to recognise as many people as possible for their successes.
A life devoted to calligraphy, pen and ink is still Tom Barnard’s favoured artists’ medium. Born in 1924, Tom was a student at the Royal College of Art in Kensington, graduating as an Associate of the RCA. He specialised in bookbinding and calligraphy and during his career wrote six books on the subject, including Starting Calligraphy and Making Calligraphy Work for You.

Having married Helen in 1946, Tom became a resident artist at an American air base, followed by positions as an art teacher at schools and calligraphic adviser to Osmiroid, the pen company. He worked until the age of 72, moving to the South coast following retirement.

Despite having a stroke in 2013 which severely affected movement on his right side, Tom has recovered enough to resume drawing. He now uses his left hand to create pen and ink drawings and can often be seen sketching in the lounge of The Magna Care Centre, in Wimborne, Dorset.

Seeing the pleasure it gives him, colleagues at Magna encouraged Tom to attend an art club outside the home. Art Group, run in the community room of a local Tesco, is attended by stroke victims of mixed abilities and members try their hand at a variety of techniques from watercolour to collage.

Activities Co-ordinator, Cheryl Teuber says: “Tom is improving all the time. He arrived with us in July 2013 after a three-month stay in hospital. When he first came he couldn’t swallow and could do very little for himself, but now he is able to eat soft food and, with our support, has taught himself to use his left hand. Every week he takes a taxi to Art Group and Stroke Club. Art has helped Tom to express himself as he is unable to speak.”

Recently, Tom produced the pictures (shown) of Guy Fawkes’ trial for a competition run at Magna Tom is no stranger to competition, although not necessarily as retribution. During his working life, he was a judge for the National Schools handwriting competition. He also judged entries in the Koestler Trust Awards, an annual event run by the charity for arts by offenders. Fellow judges included the late Humphrey Littleton.

Dignity in Action
February 1st marked Dignity Action Day, an opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of dignity in care.

Mount Pleasant, our care home providing residential, nursing and specialist dementia care in Burton upon Trent is committed to dignity in care. The home recently won the Learning Category of the Staffordshire Dignity in Care Awards, in recognition of these achievements.

The home is a great model for demonstrating dignity, closely adhering to Dignity in Care’s ten Dignity Do’s:

1. Have a zero tolerance of all forms of abuse.
2. Support people with the same respect you would want for yourself or a member of your family.
3. Treat each person as an individual by offering a personalised service.
4. Enable people to maintain the maximum possible level of independence, choice and control.
5. Listen and support people to express their needs and wants.
6. Respect people’s right to privacy.
7. Ensure people feel able to complain without fear of retribution.
8. Engage with family members and carers as care partners.
9. Assist people to maintain confidence and positive self-esteem.
10. Act to alleviate people’s loneliness and isolation.

Here are just some of the things colleagues in the home do to ensure this ethos is maintained:

• Display ‘zero tolerance to abuse’ posters, have internal and external procedures to report any concerns of abuse and provide a phone line for anonymous reporting.
• Register to follow the dignity challenge with the 10 Dignity Dos instilled through supervisions, daily actions and feedback from residents and families.
• Going out of their way to meet each resident’s needs, and promote independence; for example residents can eat what they want, when they want, they can even make snacks and cakes themselves if they so desire. Regular car plan updates.
• Knock before entering a resident’s room; allow them to choose whether door is locked or unlocked.
• Monthly care review and care plan involves family members; transfer booklet prepared for hospital stays; family and friends welcome for meals and various in-home activities.
• Community outings; matching fellow residents with others with like-minded interests to reduce levels of loneliness; Dementia Café where friends and family can meet up and chat over a coffee – just like they would do in a normal High Street setting.

Spotlight on Abbeycrest
Abbeycrest achieved Good CQC ratings across all categories in its April 2015 inspection.

Almost all of Abbeycrest’s enquiries are generated through word of mouth. These personal recommendations from residents, relatives and friends sharing their experiences of the home, provide such strong endorsement that it is always full. That wasn’t always the case, though. When Marilyn Kimayong became Abbeycrest’s manager in August 2012, there were 42 residents in the 70-room home.

Having worked previously at Hulcott and Huntercombe Hall, both Caring Homes care homes nearby, Marilyn used her good relationships with contacts on the Clinical Commissioning Group and in local hospitals to raise the profile of Abbeycrest among medical professionals. She visited them personally and invited them to visit the home to see the great level of care for themselves, meanwhile developing the rapport between colleagues and residents.

“When people visit, they can see what we do and it creates a lasting impact on them, so they talk to others and our good reputation spreads,” smiles Marilyn. “We’ve also asked residents what activities they would like to do and the themed programme reflects this.”

Each Monday, the flower arrangements created by residents are distributed around the home, while other highlights include animal visits every Thursday, minibus trips three times a week and entertainment plus doughnut and pie tastings at the weekends. The highlight of the week is Sherry Friday, open to residents, relatives and families. “Everyone loves it,” says Marilyn. “A bottle of sherry has become a trolley of alcohol!”

“Everyone loves it. A bottle of sherry has become a trolley of alcohol!”
Dementia awareness at Coxhill Manor

Friends and family members of residents at Coxhill Manor in Surrey are benefitting from a free course based on the Caring Homes My World dementia programme.

The My World programme is currently being rolled out to colleagues across all homes. However in-house trainers Maggie Manning and Sarah Taylor at Coxhill felt that it could also help people whose relatives or friends are living with the condition.

Maggie and Sarah devised a three-part course to provide a better understanding of dementia and how loved ones can be supported. The first session, held in December, was attended by three relatives. A fourth course member was a resident on a respite stay returning home to his wife who had just been diagnosed with dementia. The group explored what dementia is, how it is diagnosed, and the effects it can have on family and friends.

A second session in January covered how to communicate effectively with someone living with dementia. Finally, the group will look at what sort of things we can do physically to support our loved ones, and the positive impact a can-do approach can have. Further courses are planned for the coming months.

Sarah says: “Maggie and I are passionate about dementia training. It has been incredibly rewarding as it gives family members such a brilliant insight. We have learned lots, too, and as a result we are setting up a support group for families.”

I remember when...

“Where do you think you might go, wearing this?”

Activities Co-ordinator, Julie Evans is standing in front of assembled residents in the Reminiscence Room at St Wilfrid’s Hall, with a 1920s pill-box hat on her head.

Dementia awareness at Coxhill Manor

A heated debate, some might say argument, ensues. The hat – and Julie – are doing a great job, triggering memories and conversation.

Appealing to friends, relatives and the local community around Lancaster for donations, Julie created this room on a shoestring budget. Her resourcefulness has transformed it into an inspirational space. Among the vintage items on display, which date from the 1920s to the 1970s, are sewing machines, food tins and clothing.

The room is now in frequent use for quiet family time, private moments, quizzes and, of course, reminiscing.

What is my world?

My World was written by the Dementia Lead for Caring Homes, Michele Saunders, in 2013.

Caring Homes is currently the only care organisation that has its own internal dementia programme accredited by City & Guilds. We currently have 10 regional trainers and 62 in-home trainers of the three-level programme.

Bronze – Living in My World
aimed at everybody, irrespective of position within the company, as everyone will have a moment of connection with a resident

Silver – Understanding My World
aimed at carers and nurses

Gold – Supporting My World
aimed at carers and nurses, focusing on the later stages of dementia
Events and updates from the regions

Activities teams across the regions have been organising inspirational events and outings for residents both at home and out in the community. These are just a few of the highlights - many more are published on the Caring Homes website to give prospective residents and families a glimpse of the fun.

Residents at Mill House in Gloucestershire met Giant African snails, cockroaches, rats, snakes and a lizard recently. The exotic animals were brought in by Karl of Karl’s Creatures, who also entertained the assembled company with stories of his rescue exploits.

Mr Kellogs, a miniature pony, was the ‘mane’ attraction at Knowle Park in Cranleigh when he paid a ‘neighbourly’ visit. Part of the Pony Pals therapy team, the diminutive equine was happy to walk up to residents both in the lounge and in their rooms.

Margaret McNeill became the winner of the Scoonie House annual Christmas card design competition. Her tree design was printed and used as the home’s official card for 2015 and her family also received a gift of 50 cards to send to friends and relatives. Margaret is seen here with her son, granddaughters and great grandson as well as Activities Co-ordinator Wilma MacKenzie.

A right royal street party

Will you be throwing a party for The Queen’s 90th birthday in June? Please let us know what you are up to so we can include pictures and stories on our website. We can also invite local papers to take photos of your event. The marketing department will be producing a pack of suggested activities soon, so watch out for news of this in the weekly In Focus bulletin.
Holding a cakes and coffee morning in aid of Alzheimer’s Society at the local hall in Liss, residents, families and colleagues at East Hill House worked together to make the occasion a great success. They raised awareness for the charity and collected more than £700.

Community tea

Felixstowe Town Mayor, Cllr. Doreen Savage joined in the fun at a fundraising coffee morning at Cotman House and Lodge in aid of the British Heart Foundation on Friday 5th February. The event raised £237 for the BHF’s Wear It. Beat It campaign.

Colleagues dressed in red, while a raffle, wigs, feather boa and photo booth added to the occasion. The delicious array of cakes included a heart-shaped chocolate cake and cupcakes with heart decorations.

Wear It. Beat It

Jumper fun

Re-registration for Lyn

Regional Trainer Lyn Waite is being sponsored by Caring Homes to re-register as a nurse by completing a Return to Nursing Practice programme.

To refresh her clinical skills, Lyn will start attending Bournemouth University and working at Laverstock care home in March for three months. She will then be able to deliver clinical skills training to nurses and carers, particularly internationally-educated colleagues.

Lyn, who qualified as a nurse many years ago has been part of the training team for seven years and was previously Deputy Manager and Manager at East Hill House. She says: “I am looking forward to upskilling people and developing them as individuals to improve services. I have already worked with some international colleagues and it has inspired me to help them make the transition from their own country’s practices to ours. I also hope to learn new things from them as I’m sure they bring valuable experience and skills with them.”

Re-registration for Lyn

Interesting insights

In November we commissioned some market research, called ‘Chosen by customer’, during which seven groups of people who had recently looked into choosing a care home were asked their opinions.

We’ve taken the feedback from these in-depth interviews and are using the insights to shape the information and experience we provide to enquirers. This includes their visit to our website and the brochure they receive as well as any telephone contact and visits to homes.

It was very interesting to hear what can make or break a decision for or against a certain home and what we can do to create the best impression possible at every stage from initial enquiry onwards. What was overwhelmingly clear was that the personal touch is all-important during a visit: a warm welcome, interaction between colleagues and residents and a generally calm and friendly atmosphere. Other factors that visitors actively looked for were a well thought-out menu and activity programme, a good degree of cleanliness, the mood of residents and their general appearance, as well as the level of organisation in a home.

You can only make a first impression once, so let’s all continue to work together to ensure it’s the one that truly reflects the high level of care, dignity and respect that Caring Homes, residents and their families all hold dear.

Laird MacKay, Managing Director
**Dying well**

Susan Flowers, Home Manager of Frethey House in Taunton, describes her close links with the local hospice.

“Frethey House has a long tradition of providing the highest standard of end of life care. Our proximity to the local hospice and the district hospital has enabled us to forge strong links with social workers, discharge liaison staff and community palliative care nurses. We have built on these relationships, which has allowed us to give many people nearing the very end of their lives, a safe caring and reassuring home, so that they can enjoy their last weeks and days with their families and friends. Because we hold the Gold Standards Framework Award for our end of life care, commissioners feel confident in our ability to put the individuals’ wishes first, whether this is the touch of a reflexologist or cuddles with a favourite pet snuggled up on the bed; all whilst knowing that this is backed up by the expertise in managing symptoms according to best practice. We work closely with the support of hospice staff who will always visit and advise if we encounter a problem we can’t solve. Staff form close bonds with our residents and visitors often comment how they feel part of the Frethey House family. Our close knit team is hugely supportive of each other through each death, recognising when a team member is finding it hard and stepping in to help. Our local priest is very involved and will attend at very short notice to support residents if required. Working in partnership with both professionals, families, and others produces the best results. It also helps staff learn by reflecting on the suggestions of others. We are then able to incorporate this learning into our future care to ensure the continuation of our reputation as a provider of gold standard end of life care.”

**Tailored approach**

With support from the care team at East Hill, Debbie has turned her life around.

When Debbie’s family approached East Hill for help, she was struggling to cope with early-onset dementia, and was being considered for sectioning under the Mental Health Act. After a personal visit, Home Manager Samantha Booty and her team collectively decided they could provide Debbie, who is under 60, with tailored support. Close monitoring and personalised care has enabled Debbie to help herself. She now assists with running the Dementia Friends training residents programme and even helps lead the homework club, where children visit the home for homework support. Samantha says: “Debbie is so embedded in life at East Hill that people think she is a member of staff! She is proof that with the right support people can live well with dementia.”

East Hill’s link with a local older person’s mental health psychiatrist has also helped Debbie to improve. Relationships with her relatives are better and she was recently able to spend three days and nights at home with her husband, children and grandchildren. The future looks bright, with plans for her to be supported to stay at home one night a week.

Debbie is proof that with the right support people can live well with dementia.

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**Meet Larry**

...the bearded dragon, a favourite among many at L’Hermitage on Jersey. Larry, who belongs to Gardener / Driver, Jacqui arrived while building work at Jacqui’s house was in progress three years ago. He’s become the centre of attention in reception. Jacqui and Maintenance Officer Lyn’s contribution to the home is much greater than Larry, though. The pair are often going above and beyond their job roles to make sure residents are comfortable. “We all work as a team,” explains Lyn. “If something needs doing we muck in and get it done.”

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**I nominate...**

In this slot, a Home Manager highlights a particular colleague for their outstanding work. Kathryn Abbs tells us about Margaret Ball, Healthcare Assistant at Brooklyn House.

“Margaret is a hard-working and dedicated member of our team. She has a wonderful manner with all of our residents and nothing is ever too much trouble for her. She is one of the kindest, most compassionate people I have ever had the pleasure of working with and this is reflected by the positive comments I receive from residents, relatives and other members of staff. Always smiling, Margaret goes above and beyond the call of duty to ensure our residents have the very best quality of life we can offer them. She is very knowledgeable and experienced and happy to share this knowledge with newer and more junior members of staff who she regularly supports during their induction period.”

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**60 seconds with Karen Ives**

What is your role and how long have you worked for Caring Homes? I’ve been Clinical Lead Nurse at Hulcot in Aylesbury for 18 months, with a career spanning more than 20 years. The majority of this has been spent working in care homes although I’ve also nursed at Luton & Dunstable hospital.

What does your typical day involve? I’m usually the first one people call if someone is poorly, which makes every day different and varied. I could be administering medication one moment, dressing wounds the next or ordering medicines followed by care planning. Sometimes I also do pre-assessments for potential residents.

What do you enjoy most about your job? Definitely getting to know residents and their families and building close relationships. That’s why I like care homes more than hospitals. If you know someone, you can soon tell if something is wrong with them.

What’s the most challenging aspect of your role? Probably prioritising what is most important. There might be one or two nurses on duty on any shift, but everyone wants to see you as we have many residents with nursing needs and we also care for a lot of people at the end of their lives.

We are responsible for nursing the residents and supporting families through their grief.

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**If you weren’t working in care, what would you be doing?**

A high-end estate agent – I’d love to see inside all those gorgeous homes! My husband has always been in this business, although I don’t think we could work together...

What is your favourite film? Pride and Prejudice, the 1995 version with Colin Firth. My daughter is even called Darcy after his character. I got into Jane Austen movies when I looked after a patient with spinal injuries. He had a great collection.
Long service recognition

Many dedicated colleagues have worked at care homes for a significant number of years. We’d like to thank them for their loyalty and hard work.

We know there are many more of you who deserve a mention for your long careers with us. Please send us good quality pictures with descriptions and we’ll try to include two or three in each issue.

St George

Topping the list at St George is Kitchen Assistant Janet Worlock, who has been helping produce meals at St George for 20 years. Close behind her are Hostess Maureen Richard, Barbara Dicker in the Laundry Team and Carer Olive Whiting, each with 18 years at the home.

RGN Hilary Massey has been caring for residents for 16 years, Kitchen Assistant Sally Douglas, 15 years, while Cook Anita Warder, RGN Christine Dando and Senior Maintenance Officer John Stevens have clocked up 14 years apiece.

And that’s not all! RGN Christine Dando and Senior Maintenance Officer John Stevens are currently both on 13 years’ service. Relative newcomers are Carer Cora Hyde and Kitchen Assistant Jean Josham (8 years each), Carer Gloria Starr, Housekeeper Patricia Belcher and Receptionist/Administrator Nicki Green (8 years) and Jan Worlock (here when home opened), Cora Hyde, Gill Hatherell and John Stevens.

Brooklyn House

Kathryn Abbs, Acting Home Manager, says: “I believe having a strong core of stable, experienced staff is one of the things that makes Brooklyn such a special home to work in.”

Debbie Smith, Healthcare assistant, 5 years
Maria Ellwood, Head of Housekeeping, 5 years
Eileen Barnes, Healthcare Assistant, 7 years
Diana Goncalves, Kitchen Assistant, 7 years
Samantha Woods, 10 years
Clara Ramos, Domestic and laundry assistant, 10 years
Ray Fulcher, Volunteer, 10 years +
Michelle Vlijmen, Chef, 11 years
Louise Ward, Chef, 13 years
Linda Brooks, Registered Nurse, 14 years
Pauline Cooper, Laundry assistant, 16 years
Sarah Goodwin, Healthcare assistant, 19 years
Denise Lancaster, Domestic, 20 years
Sue Knight, Healthcare Assistant, 23 years

We regularly receive fabulous feedback from residents, family members and even staff – here are some of our recent favourites.

Christine at Castle View always included my Mum in the activities making her feel secure and loved, taking time to talk to her and feed her, until the day Mum slipped away. Christine was there for her and me every step of the way.

The staff at Garth House are very caring, and nursed my mother back from a serious illness with great skill and dedication. The home is comfortable and well cared for and this gives her great pleasure.

The staff at Sundridge Court are small and homely. The residents and staff have a very good relationship and the overall feel is welcoming and homely. A lovely atmosphere and a safe environment for my parents to be in. Both of them are here.

Holiday savings

Are you planning your annual holiday or a trip away? Choose from over 750 brochures for travel anywhere in the world via personalgroupbenefits.com/chg

You could save 10% when booking a holiday from any ABTA/ATOL tour operator plus special offers from Kuoni, Virgin or Cosmos. Savings can also be made on airport parking.

Recommend a friend

Do you know someone who would like to work for Caring Homes? If we employ a person you refer, there’s a reward of up to £1,000 depending on the job.

We pay £300 for permanent care, support and ancillary roles, £500 for qualified roles and up to £1,000 for priority qualified roles. Half the ‘finder’s fee’ is paid to you when your recommended friend joins, with half after they have successfully completed 6 months’ service.

Call the recruitment team for more details on 01206 224188 or speak to your line manager.
### Vegetables wordsearch

| ASPARAGUS | MUSHROOM |
| AUBERGINE | ONION |
| BEETROOT | NEEPS |
| BROCCOLI | PEAS |
| CABBAGE | PARSNIP |
| CUCUMBER | PEPPER |
| CARROT | POTATO |
| CAULIFLOWER | PUMKIN |
| CELERIAC | RADISH |
| CELERY | RHUBARB |
| COURGETTE | SHALLOT |
| BEANS | SPINACH |
| ARTICHOKE | SWEDE |
| LETTUCE | SWEETCORN |
| LEEK | TOMATO |
| MARROW | TURNIPS |

### Caption competition

Can you come up with a witty remark to caption this photo?

Please send in your entries to voices@caringhomes.org

We’ll share the best ones through In Focus and in the next issue of Caring Voices. Go on…give us a laugh!

### Stories win prizes

Do you have a news story or best practice case study to contribute to Caring Voices?

We are offering a £50 prize of Marks & Spencer vouchers for the best story received, as judged by the Sales & Marketing Director, Mark Sherriff.

### Get in touch...

If there is something you would like to see in Caring Voices, or you would like to contribute an idea or story, please contact us by email voices@caringhomes.org or telephone on 01206 832531.

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