Could you be a Champion?

Caring Voices

Winter 2017

Celebrating industry success

Toddlers visit care homes

Colleague fundraising fun!
Our cover picture shows Dormy House resident Inge getting to know toddler group member Josh and his little brother.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO
Paul Jeffery

2017 has been a busy and successful year for Caring Homes. Our newest home Kingsclear, in Camberley, has officially opened and Riverside Place, in Ware, is on target to open in the Spring. Many of our homes have been praised by the CQC in their latest inspections with Good ratings.

I am extremely proud that Caring Homes won the Laing Buisson award for Personalisation in November. This was a new category for 2017 and illustrates the importance we place on making every residents’ life the way they would want it to be. Congratulations also go to East Hill House for winning Best Dementia Care Home in the 8th National Dementia Care Awards and to Liviu Crisan for winning Carer of the Year in the National Care Awards.

Sadly, we experienced a major fire at Forth Bay in August although all colleagues and residents were successfully evacuated. Forth Bay remains closed and we are working hard towards reopening in 2018. All our colleagues in Scotland have supported each other during this difficult time and deserve praise and recognition for their professionalism. As ever, the health and wellbeing of our residents has been our number one priority and this has remained at the highest standard throughout.

Our successful group conference earlier this year saw colleagues from Consensus and Caring Homes come together to discuss best practice and our in-house awards recognised some of our very best colleagues throughout the business. At conference we forged an official link with the Care Workers Charity and this relationship is set to flourish in 2018. For more information see pages 4 and 5.

Looking forward to 2018 I am sure it will be another busy and exciting year for all of us at Caring Homes as our operational changes and new faces slot into place and we welcome a new managing director following Laid MacKay’s departure.

I sincerely hope you will all enjoy your seasonal celebrations, both throughout our care homes and in your own homes with friends and families.

It just remains for me to take this opportunity to thank each of you for your contribution to Caring Homes this year and to wish all colleagues a happy and peaceful Christmas.

Paul Jeffery

NEWS AND AWARDS

Hat trick of top awards
Caring Homes

Caring Homes is delighted to have won three top industry awards in recent weeks – a reflection of the excellent work carried out by all colleagues across our homes.

Win 1
East Hill House has been awarded Best Dementia Care Home at the National Dementia Care Awards 2017.

East Hill House in Liss, Hampshire is managed by Samantha Booty, who leads an exceptional team providing residential and dementia care for up to 32 residents.

Inclusivity is a cornerstone of East Hill’s ethos. The team are passionate about spreading this ethos to the wider community by joining up with the people of Liss to make it more dementia friendly.

Win 2
Caring Homes won the Personalisation Award at the LaingBuisson Awards.

This award recognises excellence in personalisation of care, demonstrating choice and control for all adults and older people whatever their needs or care setting.

In their 12th year, the LaingBuisson Awards has become the Oscars of healthcare and social care, celebrating success across the sector.

This year the event was their biggest ever with finalists chosen by judges from over 350 nominations.

Win 3
Rendlesham Care Centre carer Liviu Crisan was named Carer of the Year 2017 at the 19th National Care Awards.

Well-led by relatives, residents and families alike this represents a significant achievement as Liviu fought off stiff competition to be deservedly recognised.

Liviu, who has been working at Rendlesham Care Centre since 2014 gets to know every resident on an individual basis, often shops for them in his own time and is planning to take one elderly gentleman on holiday next year.

All the families on the unit he works on look for him if there is something they need and he shows an abundance of patience and generosity of spirit with everyone he works with.

After receiving his award Liviu said: “I am delighted to win this award for doing a job which I truly love. I am learning all the time from the people around me, I care from the heart and am delighted to be able to make a difference to people’s lives.”

Kingsclear officially opened
Kingsclear by Caring Homes was officially opened with guests from the community sharing a festive afternoon to mark the occasion and £1,400 being made in charitable donations.

Surrey Heath Deputy Mayor Dan Adams cut the opening ribbon along with Caring Homes founding director Helena Jeffery and Kingsclear’s first resident Karen Mathers and her husband Phil. More than 200 guests attended the event including representatives from four local charities - Camberley Rotary, St Mary’s Nursery, Camberley Care Trust and the Stroke Association – which all received a charitable donation to mark the opening of the new home and the building of lasting relationships with the community.

Helena said; “It is wonderful to see everyone here to celebrate the opening of the new Kingsclear. This home has always had a reputation for good care, which will continue as well as the excellent engagement with the Camberley community.”

Guests enjoyed festive food and drink plus music from Camberley and District Silver Band.

Picture Caption - Top
Surrey Heath Deputy Mayor Dan Adams cuts the official opening ribbon along with Home Manager Diane Stone, Kingsclear’s first resident Karen Mathers and her husband Phil.

Picture Caption - Left
Cllr Nick Standley (top) officially opens Kingsclear, in Camberley, with the help of Mayor Diane Stone (right).

Topping out ceremony
Riverside Place, Ware

The final trim was secured on the roof of our new luxury care home in Ware as part of a traditional topping out ceremony to mark the latest milestone at the development.

Deputy Mayor of Ware Cllr Nick Standley helped to secure the final elements of the roof at Riverside Place by Caring Homes, along with Caring Homes founding director Helena Jeffery, architect John Bell, representatives from building contractors Dalton Homes and other Caring Homes colleagues.

Riverside Place, Plaxton Way, overlooks the River Lea and is a 72 bed purpose-built home designed to meet existing and future demand for residential, nursing and dementia care in the picturesque Hertfordshire town.

Cllr Standley who is also chairman of the Ware Town Council Planning Committee, was given a tour of the building before going up to the roof. He was impressed with the design of Riverside Place, commenting: “The design is impressive and I really like the roof slope, a flat roof is one of the things we particularly don’t like.

“Ware is a wonderful town and Riverside Place is in a good location for a care home here, we wish Caring Homes every success.”
The rainy day fund for everyday heroes

Did you know, you are among some two million care workers in the UK, contributing one of Britain’s largest workforces, doing an amazing job, caring for some of the most vulnerable people in our society?

As a part of this large workforce you will be familiar with early starts, long hours and mentally draining work, which are all part and parcel of the job. You may be aware that as a result, it’s all too easy for illness, or other unforeseen circumstances, to take their toll and push some beyond their financial limits.

There are around 3,000 benevolent funds of all shapes and sizes across the UK, supporting people from all manner of working backgrounds, such as the police, fire fighters, pharmacists and mechanics when they fall into financial difficulties.

But until 2009 there was nothing to support the care sector, that’s where the Care Workers Charity (CWC) comes in.

Caring Homes Group is delighted to pledge support to the Care Workers Charity as the work which the charity does in supporting current, former and retired care workers is invaluable in the sector.

“The people our colleagues support on a daily basis rely on them to be there and it is reassuring to know that the Care Workers Charity exists to provide help for care workers who may need it.”

In order to support the charity we will be asking for colleagues to become involved as ‘Champions’ across Consensus and Caring Homes. Keep reading to learn how you can volunteer and play a key role in supporting colleagues and the wider community to become aware of the benefits available and lead the way in raising the funds for this worthy charity.

We’re looking for Champions

What is a Champion?

Champions will be our eyes and ears on the ground. They lead on fundraising in their local community, raising the profile of the Care Workers Charity and sign posting care/support workers experiencing hardship to their grants.

Being a Champion is great, you will get to become part of a huge network of supporters across all kinds of care providers and suppliers who are supporting to spread CWC’s message.

Those who volunteer your time will be assisted with support from CWC’s engagement team. Champions will be invited to attend regional annual conferences and given additional training, these new skills will help each volunteer to be amazing Champions and empower you to take additional skills back to the work place.

Here’s an example of how a grant can help

Esmé, 61, is as a support worker and has been a care worker since 2012. Esmé went through a rough patch in her life, when she was forced to sell her house after being made redundant and was out of work for a year. The move from her home to rented accommodation was tough on Esmé, and the process left her without many basic items; she had previously been able to rely upon. She was left with just the bare minimum in her new accommodation, most of which was loaned by her daughter, a member of Esmé’s church helped her apply to the Care Workers Charity for assistance. The member of her church who supported the application confirmed Esmé had next to nothing in her flat and it would make a real difference to her life if someone was able to help.

Caroline Fleat, a care worker, shares below why she chose to become a champion

What inspired you to become a Champion?

I was inspired to be a Champion as I thought it was an amazing opportunity, I was immediately engaged in the cause and started building a great relationship with my engagement manager.

What has been the highlight of being a Champion for you?

I have loved encouraging everyone to take part and get involved with the fundraising events we have held for the charity. I have also enjoyed feeling empowered enough to tell everyone about a charity that supports us as carers.

Why would you recommend someone else should become a Champion?

I would recommend anyone becoming a Champion because it’s a really worthwhile charity which helps to highlight the importance of carers in residential life. In my home it has also allowed people to feel like they can support those who support them.

Why are we keen to support through the creation of Champions?

The purpose of the CWC is to provide benevolent grants to those who have worked within the UK care profession in a registered domiciliary, residential care, day centre or supported living services as defined by CQC, CSSIW or SCRC.

They can help with many unexpected financial situations including, the financial impact of someone close to you dying, sudden illness or injury, sudden change in living circumstance, sudden loss of income or a relationship break down.

If you think you or someone else could benefit from their support, head now to their website to find the grant criteria and complete an application form:

https://www.thecareworkerscharity.org.uk/
Toddler group brings smiles and joy at Dormy House

Dormy House Toddler Group is going from strength to strength, backing up all the research which indicates that intergenerational projects are beneficial to both older people, including those living with dementia, and to children.

Carla Cashley, Activities Co-ordinator at Dormy House in Sunningdale, launched the toddler group in August as she used to take her grandson, George into another care home she previously worked at and witnessed the positive effects and change of behaviour in the residents.

Bonds have quickly formed with the children and their parents growing residents with big smiles and the occasional hug while the residents eagerly wait for the little ones to arrive.

She said; “It has been a huge success, quite overwhelming to be honest. Every session has been positive and you can really see the changes in the residents when the children are here.”

Resident Anne, who used to be a nurse in London, has attended every session and always reads a story to the toddlers.

“It is my favourite activity,” said Anne, who dressed up as a witch for Halloween and read stories about Meg and Mog – a witch and her cat. “The children are just lovely and it is such fun to spend time with them.”

Other residents who regularly attend the sessions include Phyllis who loves to watch the children and likes to join in with the nursery rhymes and Maureen, resident living with dementia who has never had children but loves to play with them and will spend the whole of the session playing ball or bricks.

Bracknell mum Emily brings her daughter Liana, one, to the group.

“It is a brilliant idea, a really good social activity and the care home residents really seem to enjoy it. The interaction between the generations is lovely to watch – there is no judgement from children this young.”

Grandmother Pam brings Sophia, 18 months, to the group after seeing it praised on social media.

“I saw it advertised and thought it sounded like a great idea, fantastic for both the old and the young people taking part.” We donated some toys to help out.

“My own mother used to be in a home and we were free to be ourselves.”

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Mums and tots morning Mill House

Victoria Parry, Activities co-ordinator at Mill House, has successfully been bringing children and the residents and how happy it made the residents. We thought that it would give our residents an opportunity to spend time having spontaneous fun in an unstructured environment where they would be completely free to be themselves.

Mill House volunteer Wendy is connected with a local church and as part of that she was aware that there was a regular get together of the local mums and the organiser for them to visit Mill House on one of their scheduled meeting days.

The room immediately lit up with the smiles of the residents as our visitors entered. The children straight away took to interacting with the residents by showing them the toys that they had brought with them. We also did a sing along session as one of the mums played the piano for us, the residents loved the children singing to them and copied the actions that the mums and children were doing to the music.

Victoria added; “It was extremely rewarding and lovely for me to see how well the session had worked. It truly shows me what a positive and enriching experience it was for everyone involved and we made some truly wonderful memories, we definitely intend to do this again.”

Inset, top, Mixed residents Maureen playing with a Dormy House toddler group member and, below, resident Marie with Dormy House Activities Co-ordinator Carla and her grandson George.

Working with youngsters, Knowle Park

Activities Co-ordinator Lydia Froud said; “I am in talks with a local nursery school who are hoping to come up and join us for some morning arts and crafts in the new year and take part in some music and Oomph sessions which will be a lot of fun.”

“I love the intergenerational connections we have started to build. We already have regular Wednesday visits from the children aged between 14 and 17 from Cranleigh School who play games, bring food and visit our bed bound residents to provide company and a person to talk too.”

“We have also had the Duke of Kent School visiting twice this term with a tea party of homemade cakes and a choir. We even had students playing their own music, one pianist and one guitarist who sang for us too! The residents are loving it and really engaging well with younger generations.”
Artist Annie finds happiness through painting

Annie came to live at Whittington House in January after collapsing in her home due to several mini strokes, which resulted in various stays in hospital. Annie and her family decided to trial Whittington House for respite care.

Annie really struggled with leaving her home, especially her beautiful garden and the loss of her independence. Her mobility is limited and she requires assistance for her daily needs. This has had a profound effect on Annie’s mental health and confidence.

Throughout her life Annie has enjoyed studying, teaching and selling art. She was inspired by her garden to paint botanical pieces, which she was encouraged to show at a local art exhibition.

Whittington House Activities Coordinators Jo and Jenny have worked with Annie since she arrived at the care home.

“In the early days it became increasingly more challenging to engage with Annie without her becoming withdrawn and depressed,” they explained. “She spoke fondly about her time as an artist and an art teacher as well as constantly reminisced about her home – in particular her garden which she spent hours tending to.

“We would regularly speak to Annie about her paintings but Annie would become upset having left them all behind at home. We discussed this with her family and they soon brought in a selection of Annie’s framed artwork to decorate her room.”

Annie was encouraged to display her paintings on her walls in her room. This made her environment more relaxing and homely. She was also encouraged to start painting again and Annie now very proudly discusses her artwork and paints again on a daily basis.

Studies have shown that increased use of the arts in healthcare over the last 20 years has resulted in a number of health benefits, including reduction in blood pressure, heart rate and perception of pain. It has also shown to improve communication skills, self- esteem and behavioural changes.

Engaging in creative activities can help to honour our residents’ life stories, and preserve their sense of self and show them what they are capable of.

“Annie was particularly impressed with a collection of paintings he had in a book,” said Activities Coordinator Jo.

“Simon was happy to talk to Annie about how he had drawn a certain plant and what medium he used. Annie was enthralled and happily chatted away about her artwork too.

“Simon was great and he certainly could draw a crowd as we were joined by a group of school children. Annie soon got involved with the children and gave an impromptu art lesson, even drawing in a child’s exercise book.”

Birthday fun at museum

A special trip to Nature in Art Gallery and Museum in Twigworth was organised earlier this year to celebrate Annie’s birthday.

Nature in Art is the world’s first museum dedicated exclusively to fine, decorative and applied art inspired by nature. This gave the residents a variety of mediums and subjects to draw. The outside sculptures were of great interest. A large tree made from metal and coloured glass leaves especially caught their eye.

Along with other Whittington House residents Annie enjoyed a rest stop in the café and spent a while chatting with artist in residence Simon Williams, who specialises in Botanical and Natural History Illustration.

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“This is absolutely wonderful.” said Activities Coordinator Jo.

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Celebrating life in our homes

A ROUND-UP OF SOME OF THE EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES WHICH HAVE BEEN TAKING PLACE ACROSS THE REGIONS

Royal family theme
Sanford House
Sanford House achieved a ‘first’ for a care home in the area by taking part in the community carnival parade. The team, along with residents and relatives, worked hard to decorate their bus on a Royal Family theme with bunting, balloons and a crown on the top. The team all wore royal family masks and had been practising their royal wave in preparation for the event.

Caretaker manager Joan Auton, who wears a Queen Elizabeth mask, said: “It was a fantastic event and a real achievement for our team involved and really enjoying to get so many of our residents involved and really enjoying themselves.”

Wild West birthday
Belmont House
Cowboy hats and checked shirts were the order of the day at Belmont House Nursing Home in Surrey as they celebrated a year of providing first-class nursing care to the local community with a Wild West themed party.

Home Manager Arthur Tanare said it has been a busy first year for the home and everyone had enjoyed celebrating with the local community. The event at the Worcester Road home welcomed about 75 guests who shared a BBQ and were entertained by Smokey Joe, who got people dancing and singing.

Ferfoot residents pimp their zimmers
Ferfoot care home in Chippenham following a Pimp My Zimmer campaign. Residents have enjoyed transforming their frames into colourful works of art with knitted covers, personal items, fairy lights, scarves and flowers.

Personalised themes have included the seaside, knitting, military aircraft and many more. The competition has involved many members of the care team from hospitality colleagues and healthcare assistants to managers and administration colleagues. The winner, Head Housekeeper Marion Carter, was presented with a case of Prosecco.

Floral project results in colourful display
Knowle Park residents Donna, Pamela and Anne have been watching and helping the flowers grow for the whole Summer and Autumn season. The project came to fruition as they cut and arranged them by themselves and had a lovely walk to do it all, choosing colours to group together to go in different rooms at the home.

A century of music
Kippington
Hennie, resident of Kippington Nursing Home, had her 101st birthday celebrated in style with an event dubbed ‘A Century of Music’.

Kippington Manager Eileen Calabuig welcomed the Mayor of Sevenoaks, Cllr Maxine Chakowa who attended in full official robes, and the event looked back at the great variety of musical styles that Hennie has seen pass through the 20th Century and beyond.

Meanwhile Brooklyn House resident Olive reached her 100th birthday and celebrated in style. Surrounded by her family and balloons, she enjoyed a day of relaxing and opening cards and presents in the morning and afternoon tea with her birthday cake and a very special delivery of her telegram and birthday wishes from the Queen.

Tate Britain welcomed into Home of Compassion
As part of our Talkative Tuesday monthly event, Tate Britain were delighted to welcome Tate Britain to give a presentation. Held in our Priory 1st Floor dining room, Marcus, who has been a curator at the Tate for over 15 years, wowed the 30-strong audience with his depth of knowledge and sparkling wit. Amongst the audience were representatives from local charities, church communities, day centres plus residents and their families.

Life’s a ball
Galsworthy House
Residents, families and friends of Galsworthy House were joined by members of the local community for a Victorian Ball dedicated to past elegance at our home in Kington-upon-Thames.

It was also a chance to say thank you to our residents, their relatives and friends for their support and to help celebrate our fantastic refurbishment which has recently taken place.

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Christmas card avalanche
Knowle Park

At Knowle Park there will be a Christmas Card avalanche from school children thanks to a project organised by Activities Co-ordinator Lydia Proud.

Lydia is working with local schools to create as many cards as possible for their students to send to residents. Homemade Christmas cards, letters, poems and pictures are welcomed with four schools on board helping us to reach our goal of at least four extra cards per resident!

There’s also lots of exciting theatre and music happening, with a trip to the local pantomime in Guilford, a travelling and very experienced care home based (whirlwind set and music) company providing us with a Musical Pantomime before the New Year and entertainment all over Christmas with visiting animals, theme days and festive fun.

At Ferfoot Care Home there was to be a fun Christmas Pantomime – Mother Goose - and some local alpacas coming in to visit – Oh yes there were.

At Sanford House residents were visiting the Fakenham Christmas Tree Festival to see the seasonal lights as well as having their own Christmas party and a church service. There will be traditional Christmas cards at Sanford House on Christmas Eve and friends and family are welcome to join their loved ones for Christmas Day.

Traditional handbell ringers will be visiting Cohill Manor before Christmas to play for the residents and there will also be a Christmas singalong promising all the festive favourites.

East Hill House were inviting in the public along with residents and relatives for a Christmas Fayre last week. Lots of opportunities to get some Christmas gifts promised, as was the meeting point to Santa.

At Sanford House residents were visiting the fairground rides such as the traditional carousel.

Ferfoot Care Home welcomed four soldiers from the 27th Regiment RLC to speak to residents who had served in the armed forces. The soldiers took a break from their regular duties to pay a visit to the home.

Resident veterans were delighted to swap stories and memories about their different experiences.

Colleagues were even more pleased with the lovely cake with residents to sit at the front of the building and admire the tranquil new rockery - including Beauty and Beast film tableaux

St Georges

Film night was accompanied by a beautiful tableau at St Georges care home when residents settled in to watch Beauty and the Beast on the big screen.

The items – including Beauty and Beast costumes as well as the rose in the glass case – were put together by activities coordinator Helen Valcu-Blake and provided anachronistic talking point as the film event was enjoyed by all.

Castle View completes tranquil new rockery

Residents at Castle View Nursing Home are thrilled with the new rockery which was opened recently in Peel.

The project was an initiative by Peel Neighbourhood policeman Darren Lisabe, Castle View manager John Aldar and by Community Impact Team Leader at the Children’s Centre, David Gibbon.

The rockery is inviable to Castle View, it gives the opportunity for residents to sit at the front of the building and admire the tranquil countryside views and the rockery plants, of course.

Jigsaw fun for Frances

Activities co-ordinator Lucy and resident Frances spent four days cracking this 580 piece Cadbury inspired puzzle. Frances was incredibly proud to have finished it!

Three turns on the carousel

Thuellin was the favoured destination for outings from Sanford House this year, with not one, but three trips to the popular local attraction, giving as many residents as we could the chance to go.

All had the chance to see the world’s largest collection of steam engines and organs, and hear Robert Wolfe, one of the world’s leading theatre organists, play the mighty Warfizer. Also on display were tang rued rides such as the traditional carousel.

Army visitors share cake and experiences

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Lancaster Bomber mechanic Nellie takes trip down memory lane

L’Hermitage care home resident Nellie made part of the Lancaster Bomber (code: LK 631) and memories rushed back when she saw one of the last remaining examples fly over the Jersey sky.

Born in Leeds, Nellie moved to Jersey with her husband, Herbert, in the early 1970s and worked in the kitchens at St George’s School on the island. But a young woman she didn’t work on the Lancaster Bomber not long after war broke out.

“We had to do work at the back of dinner when it was still dark outside,” said Nellie with a smile. “But I took two different buses to get to the factory. Every day, I would have to wear working clothes – overalls.

“I looked like a man all day and was a lady in the evening,” Nellie explained. One of her tasks was to fill capsules with cordite, a replacement for gunpowder.

Nellie’s youngest daughter, Cynthia, only realised what her mum did during the war many years after. She explained: “She used to talk about going ‘to the factory and wearing protective suits, but we only realised the connection later on.

There was so much secrecy surrounding it that she never really said what she was working on.”

Nellie’s face lit up this year when she saw one of the last Lancaster bombers in the Jersey sky during the air display. “It was fantastic! It was a wonderful display,” she said. “I would have loved to be in the plane.”

In 1944, Nellie had her first daughter, Andrea. By that time, the war was coming to an end and construction of planes was ending. Nellie dedicated herself to raising her daughter, who was soon joined by a little sister, Cynthia.

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Sadly Nellie, now a grandmother of six, was soon joined by a little sister, Cynthia.

Being childless, Lakshmi turned to Goddess Parvati, who was not convinced her child would be looked after properly by Lakshmi. But Lakshmi assured her that if she could adopt Ganesha, she would ensure him all the happiness the world could offer, if anyone wanted to pray to him, they had to pray to Ganesha first.

This reaffirms the Hindu belief that wealth cannot be obtained without acquiring knowledge and intelligence first - wise words indeed.

At the Home of Compassion we decided to celebrate the Hindu festival Diwali, also known as Deepavali. From the middle of October through to the middle of November, Hindus spend five days honouring Lakshmi the God of Fertility and Prosperity. This is done by dressing up in finery clothes, swapping sweets with close friends and family and throwing a good party with fireworks to boot.

The residents certainly embraced the ethos of the event. Putting on their finest clothes for an Indian feast designed, cooked and served by our Hospitality Manager, Manish with fireworks preceding the food - including an amazing paneri butter masala and a delicious daal with naan bread.

The dessert, semiya payasam, appeared to be a Far Eastern version of our traditional rice pudding, being a nutty aromatic comfort dish made with vermicelli noodles.

Over dinner Manish told us the tale of how this festival promotes good over evil and light over dark. Before you worth the daal dish, you must pray to Lord Ganesha first. The order is vitally important. Lakshmi was a wealthy and powerful woman and her husband Lord Vishnu did not like how this affected her. Because he thought it made her big headed, so he devised a plan to inform her that the world be incomplete without the blessing of a child.

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At the Home of Compassion we decided to celebrate the Hindu festival Diwali, also known as Deepavali. From the middle of October through to the middle of November, Hindus spend five days honouring Lakshmi the God of Fertility and Prosperity. This is done by dressing up in finery clothes, swapping sweets with close friends and family and throwing a good party with fireworks to boot.

The residents certainly embraced the ethos of the event. Putting on their finest clothes for an Indian feast designed, cooked and served by our Hospitality Manager, Manish with fireworks preceding the food - including an amazing paneri butter masala and a delicious daal with naan bread.

The dessert, semiya payasam, appeared to be a Far Eastern version of our traditional rice pudding, being a nutty aromatic comfort dish made with vermicelli noodles.

Over dinner Manish told us the tale of how this festival promotes good over evil and light over dark. Before you worth the daal dish, you must pray to Lord Ganesha first. The order is vitally important. Lakshmi was a wealthy and powerful woman and her husband Lord Vishnu did not like how this affected her. Because he thought it made her big headed, so he devised a plan to inform her that the world be incomplete without the blessing of a child.

Being childless, Lakshmi turned to Goddess Parvati, who was not convinced her child would be looked after properly by Lakshmi. But Lakshmi assured her that if she could adopt Ganesha, she would ensure him all the happiness the world could offer, if anyone wanted to pray to him, they had to pray to Ganesha first.

This reaffirms the Hindu belief that wealth cannot be obtained without acquiring knowledge and intelligence first - wise words indeed.
Our homes are praised in their CQC reports

This issue congratulations go to our teams at Claydon House, Cranmer Court, Deer Park View, Galsworthy House, Guysfield, Oak Manor, The Pines and Wytham House who have all received a good overall rating in their latest CQC report.

Some lovely comments were made to the inspection teams from colleagues, residents and relatives at every home. As Caring Voices went to print we were waiting for the results from inspections at Bradbury House, Molkah House, Southlands Place, Hulst and St Georges.

Deer Park View

Residents and their relatives were very positive about the home. One person said; "The staff are brilliant, they all want to help and nothing is too much trouble." Another added; "Staff are all lovely, they are dedicated and I'm very happy here."

Cranmer

Staff were praised with one relative saying; "They are my friends, I'm much older than most of them, they are like my children, they look after me well."

Oak Manor

The care team were praised. One resident said; "The staff are genuinely good. You can talk to them and ask them anything. I have become quite good friends with some of them." A relative added; "They are very caring. If my relative becomes upset someone will be with them immediately. They never talk down to them."

Galsworthy

"Staff have the skills, experience and a good understanding of how to meet peoples' needs. The knowledge staff had of people as individuals gave them the opportunity to care for residents in the most effective way." states.

Wytham House

Staff told the inspectors they worked well as a team and felt valued. One said; "There is a friendly and happy atmosphere, I got a good sense of achievement at the end of the day."

Guysfield

Residents told the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspectors that the care team were skilled in meeting people’s needs. “Staff are all good, they know what they are doing,” said one. Another added; “The staff are lovely, they’re very good and kind.” Inspectors praised the team as being attentive, patient and for knowing people well.

The ABC End of Life programme is a two-day course designed to increase the confidence and ability of nursing and care home colleagues to support residents who require end of their life care.

Janie Landon and Caroline Smith, End of Life Care Educators were invited to speak by Guysfield Care Home Manager Pawel Michalewicz at the Journey to Outstanding meeting forum at the home – an opportunity for family members to discuss any concerns with the management.

Caroline Smith and Janie Landon said; “We were pleased to be asked as guest speakers to educate family members about End of Life Care. We sensitively talked about Advanced Care Planning, the last year of life, signs of dying and other related topics. This lead to a very encouraging open discussion and people came away feeling very positive.”

The aim of the talk was to inform family members what to expect, and to make them feel comfortable about having difficult conversations about dying matter. Participants particularly, found the aspect about ‘eating and drinking at end of life’ informative. The End of Life education sessions have been delivered to nursing and care homes across North and East Herts.

Guysfield Care Home manager Pawel Michalewicz said; “We received very positive feedback from colleagues as well as relatives after meeting Caroline and Janie. It gave all of us extra confidence to discuss such sensitive subjects as End Of Life care.

“Also provided relatives with an additional form of support. I truly believe that this is a great project and we will continue to work together to support families and residents in Guysfield Care Home.”

Guysfield Care Home is situated in the conservation village of Willian, Hertfordshire and provides both short and long term care packages to elderly people.

Guysfield Care Home opens the discussion about dying matters

Colleagues at Guysfield Care Home in Letchworth have completed an end of life care programme in conjunction with Garden House Hospice Care.

Latham Lodge involved in national research into falls prevention

Latham Lodge is currently taking part in a three-year research study with The University of Nottingham, NHS Solent NHS Trust and Falls in Care Homes (FinCH) into helping elderly people stop falling over.

Sharon Simpson and Jo Taylor pictured inset below from NHS Solent Research Team are working with colleagues at Latham Lodge with 24 of the 36 residents at the home signed up to take part in the study, which is a brilliant level of uptake. The pair have been asking questions and collecting information from our residents and colleagues at Latham Lodge.

The care home is one of 66 homes nationally taking part in the study which will involve 13,089 residents. The research is being organised by the University of Nottingham, in conjunction withNorwich Clinical Trials Unit and is being funded by the National Institute for Health Research.

Falls lead to broken limbs, bruises and people generally feeling afraid. Sadly falls do happen in care homes as well as among elderly people living in their own homes and the aim of the research is to try and understand why and how they happen.

Latham Lodge Home manager Sylvia Morse-Carter explained; “I think we were approached by the research team as we had previously been involved in some SMART research in 2016 and we are delighted to be taking part in any research that can help improve the quality of life for our residents.

This latest study began in October. The research nurses are currently doing the consent documentation and when they have everything in place the data will go off to Norwich and a decision will be made as to whether we will receive the specialist training or not. It is a randomised control study with some of the homes taking part carrying on as normal and others using a Falls prevention tool and training.”

“This will dictate the next step – so would we be chosen to use the FinCH tool if we get randomised then the Solent Trust will allocate a Falls Lead to deliver the FallCH (guide to action in care homes) training and we will liaise with our own Falls Lead,” added Sylvia.

The proposed study will compare falls rates in homes where staff are trained to use the new treatment and those chosen to take part at all care at Latham Lodge will be given special training.
AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Plenty of awards, St Georges

Colleagues at St Georges have been awarded with long service awards and Living in My World certificates.

Home manager Terry Ford was proud to present SHO Keith Searle, Activities Co-ordinator Helen Vassal and receptionist Judith Foley with their Living in My World certificates and badges which they are now wearing with pride at the Bristol home.

Terry added that three colleagues are also the proud recipients of long service awards. Anita Foster, assistant chef, has been at the home for 16 yrs. She is a lovely character who focuses on the resident’s experience and will always go the extra mile. Sally Douglas is one of our kitchen assistants who has completed the ‘Living in My World’ dementia training. Sally is happy to have completed this training and wears her badge with pride. Karen Walls is one of our domestic assistants who has now been with us for 10 yrs, Karen is always happy to help and is looking forward to the extra holiday.

Doreen celebrates
30 years, Walstead Place

Caring Homes Senior Care Assistant Doreen Knight has spent a lifetime caring for others at Walstead Place in Haywards Heath and has celebrated 30 years in the role.

Doreen, who is described by Home Manager Jacqueline Ferguson as ‘the epitome of what a carer in 2017 should be’ first started working at Walstead Place in 1987. At that time her children were school aged so she commenced work in the field of older person’s care last year in order to give them the time they needed. Doreen was recognised for her outstanding achievements at the Caring Homes Group Recognition Awards 2017.

Doreen combines her care role with activities. Doreen also acts as a mentor to junior colleagues, having trained as a ‘buddy’, having trained as a ‘buddy’, having trained as a ‘buddy’, and helping out in a variety of departments throughout the home.

Jacquie said; “I came here as manager in 2010, so have known Doreen just over seven years. I would say that Doreen is the epitome of what a carer in 2017 should be – conscientious, kind, committed to her residents and the job in hand”

Doreen was recognised for her outstanding work in the field of older person’s care last year winning the Care Home Worker Award from Well Suited Partners in Care and she was National Care Awards Caree of the Year 2016. She was also given special recognition for her achievements, at the Caring Homes Group Recognition Awards 2017.

Doreen combines her care role with activities at Walstead Place, working alongside the other activities co-ordinators developing an exceptional activity programme. She has also developed a passion for dementia care and has been instrumental in developing dementia activities. Doreen also acts as a mentor to junior colleagues, having trained as a ‘buddy’, passing on her knowledge and expertise to the benefit of the residents at Walstead Place.

Exceptional Mentor, Forth Bay

Forth Bay colleague Nicky Tumbut has been named an exceptional mentor for her work at the home by Forth Bay and the University of Stirling. Mentors are voted for by any 3rd year students who they have mentored while they have been on placement with Caring Homes. Nicky was presented with her award at a special ceremony in November.

Regional Manager for Scotland Jackie Morrison added; “A fantastic achievement – so very well done.”

The Pines care home strikes
platinum for quality care

The Pines has been recognised with a major national award – for the second time. Our Wandsworth home is among just 60 homes from across England to win a Quality Hallmark Award again, three years after receiving the prestigious honour from the National Gold Standards Framework (GFS) Centre, the UK’s largest provider of training in end of life care.

Home manager Paul Sheath said; “We are delighted to have retained this award. It recognises the hard work every member of the Pines family puts in every day to ensure all our residents get the best possible care right up to the end of their lives and beyond” by satisfying the team of expert assessors who visited the home that they were still meeting the necessary 20 quality standards, ranging from leadership and support to dignity and respect. The Pines has proved that it has embedded all the elements necessary for good care for all of its residents right up until the end of their lives. Homes that demonstrate that their credential for the second time are recognised with the Platinum award.

GFS Quality Hallmark Awards are presented to homes that demonstrate real improvement in the quality of care they provide. Many have the number of their residents dying in hospital as well as taking crisis hospital admissions, leading to greater satisfaction for families, residents and staff and significant cost savings for the NHS.

Coppice Lea care home also achieved the Quality Hallmark Award from the National Gold Standards Framework (GFS) Centre, the UK’s largest provider of training in end of life care for health and social professionals. Staff from the home were presented with the award at a special ceremony in London on 29 September.

Forth Bay prepares for
the festive season

Forth Bay Care Home in Scotland experienced a significant fire back in August which led to the full evacuation of all residents and colleagues. We are very pleased to confirm that everyone was safely evacuated.

Our residents were all quickly settled into alternative accommodation and we are delighted to report that 27 residents have settled into the Scottish Mines Convalescent Trust accommodation at Blair Castle, just outside Crieff.

This move brings both residents, relatives and colleagues back closer to Forth Bay, and no longer facing a long commute and we are extremely grateful to the Scottish Mines Convalescent Trust for making Blair Castle available to us. A further 17 residents are living at Glenbervie Care Home in Larbert.

Forth Bay home manager Fiona Day said; “We are happy that our residents and colleagues are all settled into Glenbervie and Blair Castle now that it is the winter months. Families are visiting much more regularly.

“My team have been amazing and did not complain about having to travel two hours a day to get to Alan McCrae when some of residents were living there initially.

“We would like to sincerely thank our dedicated teams for their brilliant work since the fire in ensuring all our residents continue to get the best care possible. We are extremely proud of their continued professionalism, support and dedication.

“The residents have also been so resilient: I guess they are the generation that survived the Blitz.”

Forth Bay itself remains closed and the fire damaged side was due to be demolished starting at the end of November. Caring Homes are fully committed to re-instating Forth Bay and a project team is working to organise this. Other parts of the home will be repaired and refurbished before re-opening.

“We are overwhelmed and thankful for the continued support shown by our local community since the fire and our team have been out delivering messages of thanks personally to businesses and individuals who have helped us,” said Fiona.

“We have lots of parties and events planned for over the festive season and look forward to making it a jolly time for all.”

Celebrating excellence and long service, Scotland

Team members from Caring Homes’ seven Scottish care homes gathered together at Marchglen Care Centre in Fishcross, for the company’s Scottish Recognition Awards.

Colleagues, residents and relatives were asked to nominate across nine categories: Nurse of the Year, Nurse Newcomer, Care & Support, Care Newcomer, Meaningful Activities, Nutrition/Eating Well, Management/Leadership, Specialist Adult Care and Support Services.

Scotland Regional Manager for Caring Homes Jackie Morrison said; “These awards give us the opportunity to celebrate excellence in Scotland and the high calibre of the homes and colleagues we have working here. Everyone who was nominated deserve a special mention, as do all of those who have put in 10, 15, or 20 years’ service with us.”

More than 30 long service awards for 10, 15 and 20 years were also presented at the awards event by

Great Colleagues from Overseas

At Caring Homes we often recruit high quality nurses from overseas, outside of the European Union. These nurses are registered in their own country and have already completed their IELTS (English Language assessment) and their 1st test of competence the CBT (computer based test) prior to arriving in the UK. On arrival they start to prepare for the OSCE (objective structured clinical examination).

Clinical Recruitment Manager, Jane Johnson explained, “The OSCE is a scenario based exam which nurses need to successfully pass to become joined with the NMC.

Q: How are we supporting our new recruits?

A: We have an Auntie in Ipswich and wanted to be close, I requested to be placed in Rendlesham as I set the right attitude this helped. It's tricky as the setting and trained as a midwife as well as a general nurse.

Q: When did you arrive in the UK?

A: 12th Nov 2016

Q: How have you found the UK?

A: It's quite stressful but I remained focussed and polished.

Q: Did you pass the 1st attempt at passing the OSCE?

A: No I failed the 1st time but passed the 2nd time.

Q: What was the difference and why do you think you passed the 2nd time?

A: In one of the techniques workforce is very close to their hearts due to the number of hours and sleep is just an option. The number of hours and temperatures well below zero.

Q: Where did you work before and qualify in your own country?

A: Zimbabwe, previously worked in a hospital and trained as a midwife as well as a general nurse.

Q: Was this the 1st attempt of competence the CBT?

A: Yes it's a timed scenario plus someone is observing you which makes it more stressful.

Q: How was the OSCE, did you find it stressful?

A: It is quite stressful but I remained focussed and polished.

Q: How have you found the UK?

A: It's quite stressful but I remained focussed and polished.

Q: How did you support your OSCE preparation?

A: I went to the Royal Surgery Hospital to complete an OSCE preparation course.

Q: Did the home support you?

A: To support me but it's tricky as the OSCE is set up to reflect a hospital and working in a care home makes it hard to practice the techniques.

Q: How have you found the UK?

A: I expected to be placed in Rendlesham as I had an Auntie in Ipswich and wanted to be near. I have moved my family here and my children are attending school and trying to get used to the cold weather

Q: How did you prepare for your OSCE?

A: I went to the Royal Surgery Hospital to complete an OSCE preparation course.

Q: Did the home support you?

A: To support me but it's tricky as the OSCE is set up to reflect a hospital and working in a care home makes it hard to practice the techniques.

Q: How have you found the UK?

A: It's been a culture shock and the nursing environment is very different. I had passed my IELTS and had a good understanding of English but still need to concentrate to understand the accents and adapt my skills.

Q: Have you joined the local church and made some new friends there?

A: Yes we try to get involved in fundraising activities and are looking forward to the event becoming an annual tradition."
And these are the winners from our past editions in 2017.

This adorable Spring goat is bleating "I'm only kidding. I can't really fly."
The winner was Liza Morgan, Activities Co-ordinator at Wytham House.

And for Summer one beach lover is saying "I think Doris thought I was serious when I sang earlier Oh I Do Like to Sink Beside the Seaside!"
The winner was Laurence Painter, Employee Integration Co-ordinator at Bradbury House, Head Office.

Christmas wordsearch

Try this Christmas Word Scramble

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Get in touch
Caring Voices is your magazine so if there is something you would like to see featured in it please get in touch and we will see what we can do. Contact us by email voices@caringhomes.org or call 01206 832531

Caption competition
Can you come up with a caption for this festive photo?

What are these cats thinking? Go on… give us a laugh and whoever gets the greatest giggle in the office will win £25 Marks and Spencer Vouchers. Send your entries to voices@caringhomes.org and we will share the best ones in the next edition.

Christmas wordsearch answers:

BELLS / POINSETTIA / CANDLE / GINGERBREAD / WREATH / CAROLS / REINDEER / STOCKING / COOKIES / EGGNOG / SLEIGH / ELVES / PRESENTS / GARLAND / MISTLETOE / GIFT / HOLIDAY / ANGEL / NOEL / ORNAMENTS / DECEMBER / SNOWMAN / CANDY CANE / TINSEL