

## A SHINING LIGHT - JANET'S TORCH-BEARING EXPERIENCE

As Olympic fever grips the country for Paris 2024, Sandwood care home resident Janet McCulley, 84, recalls her experience of participating in the torch relay for the London 2012 Games, and the inspiring story of how she was selected as a torchbearer.

I was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease around 18 years ago. I lived with my husband in Nottingham, and there were some nearby exercise classes designed for people with Parkinson's and other mobility issues, which I found very helpful.

I would also volunteer on a help desk for Parkinson's UK, the national organisation supporting people with the disorder and their carers, as I was still very able at the time. I have always enjoyed volunteering, and I used to run youth clubs when my children were little.

When my husband and I retired to Bude in 2009, I was dismayed to find that no mobility classes for people like me existed there – so I thought, why not start them up myself! I applied to the Big Lottery Fund and was awarded £5,000. I established a charity in January 2010, and named it Exercising for Mobility.

We started with just seven members and four volunteers, and I was the Chair of Trustees. However, word about us spread and the numbers grew rapidly, and within weeks we had over 100 people attending the free sessions. I then managed to apply for an £80,000 grant, which kept us going for five years. We won four Volunteer Cornwall awards, which helped us to apply for a subsequent five-year grant of £205,000, and the sessions had a good reputation, so were regularly recommended by healthcare professionals to people with mobility issues.

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Janet carried the torch proudly, cheered on by her family and friends

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Phil Mead House partner with Tesco



# WELCOME

I hope this issue of the Voice finds you well and that you are enjoying the summer.

Our cover story for this edition features a timely piece, given that Olympic season has arrived. If you would like to take a short break from cheering on Team GB, I would encourage you to read Sandwood resident Janet's recollection of her charity work and experience of being a torchbearer for the 2012 Games. It is a welcome reminder of how we can all make a difference to the lives of others, and that the hard work of volunteers seldom goes unnoticed or unrewarded.

I hope you enjoyed Abbeyfield Week in June, our annual celebration of all that is great about our houses and homes. The photos in the centrefold showcase many of the parties and events that took place (although there were too many to show them all!). There are also articles about garden redevelopments, community partnerships and our latest competition results, plus more stories from inspirational residents and volunteers, and an update on our National Residents' Panel's work on digital inclusion.

Finally, I have two pieces of good news to update you on. First, I am delighted to announce that His Majesty King Charles has decided to retain his Patronage of Abbeyfield. This is a prestigious honour for us, and you can read more about it on this page, above and to the right.

Second, an Abbeyfield-sponsored inquiry from the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Housing and Care for Older People has recently published its report on the regeneration of sheltered housing. This is a great milestone for Abbeyfield, and we hope that the report's recommendations will be taken on board by the Government Task Force on Older People's Housing to ensure that policy reflects the needs of our residents and millions more older people nationwide.

You can read more about the APPG's work, and extended versions of some of the stories in this edition of the Voice, on our website at [www.abbeyfield.com/blog](http://www.abbeyfield.com/blog).

I hope you enjoy the rest of your summer.

Wish best wishes,

**Paul Tennant**

CEO, Abbeyfield Living Society

Follow Paul on X @CEO\_Abbeyfield

# A ROYAL ENDORSEMENT FOR ABBEYFIELD

We are delighted to announce that His Majesty King Charles III will continue his Patronage of Abbeyfield. The news follows a comprehensive review of more than a thousand Royal Patronages conducted by the Royal Household after the King's Accession in September 2022.

Having been our Patron since 1979, His Majesty visited many Abbeyfield services whilst he was the Prince of Wales, always taking the time to speak to residents and to thank staff and volunteers for their incredible efforts.

He also lent his insignia to our Royal Patron's Awards, presented annually to a select few staff and volunteers who have made an outstanding contribution to our organisation.

King Charles has a deep appreciation of our work and the mission of our founder, Richard Carr-Gomm. He has demonstrated that he understands



the value of Abbeyfield's housing and care services for our residents, and the significance of our focus on retaining one's sense of independence, making new friendships and remaining a part of one's community in later life.

We are grateful for his ongoing support.

# TAUNTON LUNCH CLUB CONTINUES TO BUILD ON ITS SUCCESS



A community lunch club at Northfield Court, a sheltered housing scheme run by the Abbeyfield East Devon Society, has received high praise from a local professional, after welcoming local older people to join their residents for a two-course lunch, drinks and quality conversation.

As reported previously in the Voice (Spring 2023), the lunch club provides an invaluable opportunity for socialising and forging new relationships, and is run by the House Manager, Sam Corrie.

Claire Reece, who works for the Somerset NHS Trust, recently accompanied a gentleman named John to the Northfield Court lunchtime club to support him on his first social outing in many years.

She said, "From the moment we arrived, we were warmly welcomed by Sam, who immediately put John at ease. We settled into the communal lounge, where we had the pleasure of chatting with friendly residents. Their kindness and genuine interest in getting to know John made him feel both comfortable and welcome.

"Lunch itself was absolutely delicious, a highlight of our visit. Beyond the meal, the two hours we spent at Northfield Court had a profound positive impact on John's world. It was the first time in a long while that he engaged in conversation and shared laughter. The experience has already shown a significant improvement in his mental health, and he is eagerly anticipating returning to the lunchtime club next week.

"Given how well the visit went, I have a strong suspicion that John will become a regular visitor at Northfield Court's lunchtime club. It's wonderful to see the positive difference this welcoming environment has made in his life."

# ANN'S WEAVING IS AN OUTLET FOR CREATIVITY

Ann Ruel, 95, a resident at Girton Green independent living complex in Cambridge, has a passion for weaving. With her work having been exhibited locally and some pieces sold, she spoke to us about her hobby and how it provides an escape from everyday life.



When I took up weaving it became a passionate hobby of mine, which it has been now for about 20 years.

When I consider what to make, I tend to look at pictures for inspiration, and to reproduce parts of pictures that I have seen.

I have completed 10 smaller tapestries on this basis, and another that was probably over a metre wide, based on a birthday card I bought when I was on holiday. It is cut and mounted in three strips, but the design goes right across the piece, with gaps where the strips are separated.

Colour is the biggest motivator for me, and what I love about tapestry weaving is that it is an expressive art form, very much

like painting. As long as you have access to plenty of different coloured threads, you can paint a picture.

If you say you are a poet or a painter, people think you are very artistic, whereas weavers are just seen as doing something that is practical. That is true, of course, but people don't necessarily realise there is also a very creative side to it. However, I don't call myself an artist – I'm a craftswoman.

**“Weaving is an expressive art form with a very creative side to it”**

My latest project, that I am just starting now, is a bit different. I have bought a set of watercolour pencils and I intend to make my own design, which I will then use to create the tapestry. I'm not sure yet how it will go!



## FREE DIGITAL TRAINING FOR RESIDENTS NOW AVAILABLE

Digital inclusion is about enabling individuals to participate fully in society, the economy and democracy. It aims to bridge the digital divide, ensuring that everyone can benefit from the opportunities provided by the digital age, regardless of their socioeconomic status, geographic location, age, gender, or ability.

At Abbeyfield, we want to support the digital inclusion of all our residents. To this aim we are installing Wi-Fi available to residents in all our services.

Our National Residents' Panel are also keen to help improve the digital inclusion of our

residents and have been looking at what we can do to help achieve this.

The Panel recommended that Abbeyfield signs up to The National Digital Inclusion Network, which is part of The Good Things Foundation ([www.goodthingsfoundation.org](http://www.goodthingsfoundation.org)), a national charity with a manifesto to bridge the digital divide.

As members of the Network, all Abbeyfield Living Society residents can now access Learn My Way training from The Good Things Foundation. This is free bite-sized training for new digital learners and those who want to

refresh their skills.

To access the training, go to [www.learnmyway.com](http://www.learnmyway.com). Registration is very simple and, when prompted, tick the box to say you are being supported by an online centre. When it asks for the name or number of the centre you can simply type 'Abbeyfield' or our hub number, which is 9007630.

If you would like more information about our National Residents' Panel or the National Digital Inclusion Network, please email [resident.engagement@abbeyfield.com](mailto:resident.engagement@abbeyfield.com).



## ➔ A SHINING LIGHT – JANET’S TORCH-BEARING EXPERIENCE (CONTINUED FROM COVER)

Although I don't run Exercising for Mobility anymore, I do keep in touch with people there and I'm proud to say it is still going strong. We have around 270 members now, attending five classes per week. We still receive regular awards from the Lottery and other grant-awarding bodies, we run other activities including coach trips and days out, and we even give out our own awards to people who attend a lot of our classes.

I was nominated as a Torchbearer for London 2012 by Parkinson's UK because of Exercising for Mobility, and also my fundraising efforts, which totalled over £1 million. The Olympic Committee chose me as one of the 8,000 people to take part in the relay, of which 2,000 had done charitable work (the other 6,000 were from sports clubs or were athletes).

The letter arrived in the post, and it was a complete surprise, as they hadn't told me I had been nominated. The Committee sent me a white tracksuit which I had to wear, and we were asked to buy a pair of white shoes. I found out that the relay would begin at Land's End, so I would be one of the first people to carry the torch in the UK, on the very first day!

They took a few of us out on a minibus and dropped us off at various points along the route – I was based near the Eden Project.

We were told we would light our torch from the previous person's torch, and then pass on the flame to the next person. They were a little concerned for me because I had Parkinson's and the torch was quite heavy. I don't remember the exact distance, it was quite a walk, but I managed not to drop it!

There was a lot of support along the route. Two coachloads of people from Exercising for Mobility came to cheer me on and my family all came too. There were also a lot of news cameras, probably because it was the first leg. It was a very exciting day, and we all had a meal at a nearby restaurant afterwards.

I was allowed to keep my torch – though I had to pay £200 for it – and it's displayed on a stand in my son's office at the moment.

My husband was diagnosed with vascular dementia in 2018. We moved back to Nottingham to be near my son, but I was my husband's main carer for a few years. However, I found it difficult to cope as both his dementia and my Parkinson's got worse, and my doctor said it was not right that someone in my condition was caring for him, so we moved into a home. We had been married for 63 years when he sadly passed away.

I came to live at Sandwood nearly two years ago and I try to get involved in a few of the



Janet (front row, centre) at a charity event organised by Exercising for Mobility in 2012

activities here. They recently started a playgroup where children from the local community come along to. It is absolutely my cup of tea, given my teaching background, and I even ran something similar at Exercising for Mobility, called 'Bridging the Gap'.

I think it's important to join in with the exercise classes and keep mobile as much as I can. I enjoy sitting out in the garden when the weather allows, and it's a good alternative to my room when my three children and their families come to visit. I am also keenly following the Olympics on TV and cheering on Team GB from my armchair!

# ROO ACHIEVES BEST IN SHOW AT WESTALL HOUSE DOG SHOW

A Golden Retriever called Roo has taken the title of 'Best in Show' at a dog show held at Westall House.

The show, which was the brainchild of activities coordinator Lynn Mayfield, brought together the residents, their families, staff, volunteers and their canine companions to compete for a variety of different awards.

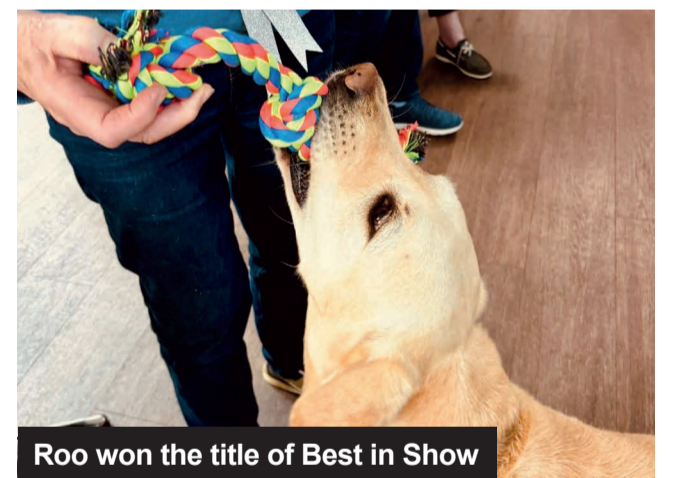
Parading in front of the watchful and impartial eye of renowned dog trainer Debbie Mullen, the beloved pets vied for titles including 'Waggiest Tail', 'Precious Pup', 'Golden Oldie', and even 'Dog That Looks Most Like Its Owner'.

Those attending the show were served Pimm's and lemonade and a card games stall was also operated, while younger

visitors enjoyed an arts and crafts session. A raffle was held in aid of the local Young Carers group in Burgess Hill, which the home regularly supports.

Resident Janet Hewitt said, "It was a wonderful event for the whole family. My daughter and two of my great-grandchildren came, and my great-granddaughter was thrilled to win the cuddly toy in the 'Guess the name of the cuddly puppy' competition! They want to come again next year!"

Lynn said, "Our residents like to get engaged in all sorts of activities and events, and they love it when animals – especially dogs – come to visit us. This was a great opportunity to bring many of their favourite dogs together in one place for a fun event."



Roo won the title of Best in Show



The dogs were very well behaved and happy to be stroked by residents and younger visitors

# OUR SPRING COMPETITION WINNERS

A few months ago, we launched a competition where we asked our residents to submit their best artwork based on the theme of springtime. We had dozens of entries, and our independent judges had a difficult decision to make to select the winners. Here are the results.



## Best individual artwork

The award for best individual artwork went to Tony Price, a resident at Girton Green in Cambridge. His watercolour of a mother owl and her owlets captured the essence of spring, the renewal of life and the cute baby animals that the season brings.



## Best group artwork

The residents of the Rosemary Wing at Westall House put together this beautiful spring wreath made from recycled materials, adding an environmentally friendly aspect to their entry. They also used teacups to create a lovely flower display (and we're sure they were moved from in front of the fire door after the photo was taken!).



## Best model making

We had two fantastic 3-D entries that the judges couldn't choose between, so they were awarded as joint winners in this category.

Mary Smith, a resident at Abbeyfield House in Sherborne, knitted this amazing farmyard scene. The judges especially liked the baby chicks, and the cotton wool clouds in the sky and colourful daffodils completed all the elements of a delightful spring day on the farm.



On the other side of the country, at Hope Bank View in Sunderland, the residents clubbed together to produce this lovely spring garden, encapsulating all their favourite things about springtime. Highlights included the duck pond and the washing line.



# ABBNEYFIELD WEEK



We had a great time celebrating Abbeyfield Week in June, with many houses and homes putting on special events and inviting people and organisations from their local community to join in the fun. Here are some of the highlights, and you can see plenty more on our social media channels.





**Captions**

**1a and b:** Hope Bank View got out the red, white and blue for their party, and the wine was free-flowing.

**2a and b:** The Firs complex and Sandwood care home joined forces for a Tiki party with Hawaiian mocktails and banana splits.

**3a, b and c:** Abbeyfield House in Havant, Tamar House and Privett Farm House were assisted by some young volunteers for their open event, and showed off some of their best dance moves.

**4a and b:** The residents at Hill House enjoyed a fish 'n' chips supper and were treated to some musical entertainment.

**5a and b:** Abbeyfield Winnersh held a jumble and antiques sale, which was popular with people from the local area, to raise money for their residents' activity fund.

**6a and b:** The local pre-school visited Speedwell Court for some playtime with the residents, who were also joined by people from the local community for their weekly singing group.

**7a and b:** Abbeyfield House in New Malden combined their celebrations with Pride

Month and their Pets as Therapy dog, Misty, got dressed up too.

**8a and b:** People from Burnham Court's wide community network joined the residents for an afternoon tea, where they were serenaded by some young musicians.

**9a and b:** Phil Mead House were joined by the local NHS dental team at their oral care fun day for an Abbeyfield Week event with a difference.

**10a and b:** Westall House had a jam-packed activities schedule including balloon tennis, biscuit decorating, a bingo bonanza, a drum fit session, painting and musical entertainment.



# MAKING HAY

We spoke to Maud Shire, a resident at Hill House, about her two-and-a-half years spent in the Women's Land Army during the Second World War.

Maud originally tried to sign up when she was 16, but had to wait a year before she was old enough. She was accepted after passing an interview and the medical with flying colours.

"My mother wasn't too happy," she recalls. "She had suffered with her health and had relied on me to essentially bring up my younger siblings, so she would have preferred me to stay.

"I was extremely excited when I learnt I was going to become a Land Girl, but also quite nervous. First my uniform arrived: a green jumper, gaiters, stockings, a hat, brown brogues, dungarees, a polo shirt and a pair of wellies."

Maud then travelled from her home in Blackburn, Lancashire, to Whimble in Devon, where she underwent two weeks of intensive farm training alongside other Land Girls.

"I remember we stayed at a huge Georgian house. I thought it looked very grand indeed. It was a nice place to live and included a games room with a table tennis table and a dart board, and I was sharing a bedroom with five other girls in bunk beds. My roommates and I decided immediately to pool all our makeup – one of them came from a very wealthy family so we were only too happy



Maud at 30

to have access to her far more expensive cosmetics!"

After completing her training, Maud was sent to a dairy farm in Upottery, and she soon found that the accommodation left a lot to be desired.

She remembers, "I heard a scuttering behind me on my first night. I lit my candle and saw mice crawling all over my pillow. My room was above the dairy and there were holes everywhere for them to get in. I remember spending the night trying to kill them with one of my wellies."

The farm had 30 cows, all of which needed to be milked by hand. Maud seemed to get along with all the cows, but one in particular was her favourite, which everyone on the farm came to call 'Maud's cow'.

"Every day she would hang back at the gate next to me whilst the others filed through into the milking parlour," she recounts. "I was very upset when I found out that she was going to be sold. I begged Mr Edwards, the farmer, to keep her, but unfortunately it was a done deal."

However, Maud was not so enamoured with all the animals. One bull, named William, was particularly terrifying. He was a huge Devon Red and Maud had the unenviable job of letting him out of his shed where he was tethered, so that he could drink from the trough in the courtyard.

"He would charge out of the shed," she says, "heading straight for the gate at the far end of the field, and he would rip it off its hinges on a regular basis. While he was drinking, I would climb the ladder to the top level of the shed as I didn't want to be anywhere near him. When he was done, he would come in snorting and scraping his feet as though he was about to charge. Even Mr Edwards was scared of him, and I was very happy when he decided to sell him too!"

Mr Edwards replaced William with a much younger 15-month-old bull, which he brought home with the local hauler after having been gone all day.

She recalls, "It was obvious to both me and Mrs Edwards that they had both had quite a lot to drink, so it was up to us to help them manoeuvre this new bull into its shed, with only candles and storm lamps to see where



Maud with her book

we were going. He kept leaping up into the air kicking out his back legs, and it was very funny to watch two grown men chase around the field after him!"

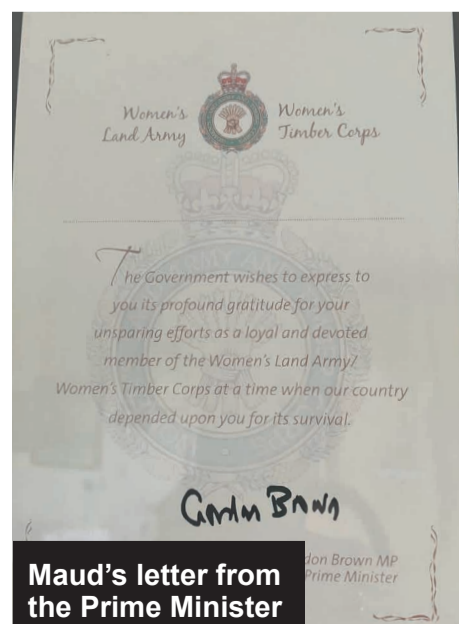
One of Maud's favourite times of the year was hay making day. "Mrs Edwards would put on a great spread," she recalls, "with lots of food and plenty of cider.

"I'm not a big drinker but I did overindulge myself a bit one evening and had a bit too much to drink. Mrs Edwards gave me the lamp off her bicycle, as opposed to my usual candle, so I could see where I was going when I went to bed, but I spent most of the night trying to blow it out and cursing under my breath when it wouldn't extinguish!"

Maud eventually left her job as a Land Girl to get married, though she did return to the farm for a while when Mr Edwards was taken ill and needed someone with experience to help.

Many years afterwards, Maud wrote a book about her experiences, called *A Country War: Memoirs of Land Girl*, published in 2007 under the name Micky Mitchell, which she was known as at the time.

In 2008, she received a letter from Prime Minister Gordon Brown, which read: *The Government wishes to express to you its profound gratitude for your unsparing efforts as a loyal and devoted member of the Women's Land Army/Women's Timber Corps at a time when our country depended on you for its survival.*



Maud's letter from the Prime Minister

Gordon Brown MP  
Prime Minister



# CHAS IS ONE OF THE 'SURVIVAL GENERATION'



Chas with his wife, Joan, and son, Paul

Albert 'Chas' Clegg, a former Commando in the Royal Marines, has celebrated turning 106 years old with a tea party with family and friends at Abbeyfield Winnersh.

Chas was joined in the home's summer house by four generations of his family, his fellow residents and staff, where chef Joanna Tokar put on a great spread and served up a delicious birthday cake.

Chas has led a remarkable life and had many adventures in the military, including a few lucky escapes, along with an accomplished career in accounts, a happy marriage and a large family.

Chas joined the Marines at 17 years of age, serving on the HMS London. When the Second World War broke out, Chas was transferred to the HMS Frobisher on the English south coast, when he regularly had to take shelter from the constant German shelling after the invasion of France.

Chas was married to Joan in Portsmouth in 1940, but was shortly recalled to military duty after they spent only a few weeks together as newlyweds. They were to remain apart for over three years subsequently and, tragically, their wedding photographs were destroyed in the Portsmouth blitz.

Chas had several other narrow escapes whilst serving in the Marines. Whilst in Crete in 1941, following the German invasion, he was targeted by a dive bomber and blown off his motorbike. He also managed to avoid being hit in the midst of continuous bombing during a 50-mile trek through the mountains, eventually reaching the coast in time for

evacuation to Egypt.

Although selected for officer training, Chas left the army before commission, for a career in accounts. After retiring in 1968, he enjoyed travelling the world with Joan and delighted in the company of their son, Paul, and four other generations of his family.

Joan passed away at the age of 102, after 79 years of happy marriage. After living briefly with his son and in his own flat for a short while, Chas eventually settled at Abbeyfield Winnersh. Having subsequently battled through pneumonia and COVID, he is held in high esteem by everyone at the home and is a fantastic ambassador for the 'Survival Generation'.

Nowadays, Chas still enjoys a good chat and loves his food – whether it's some chocolate, a good cup of tea or a full English breakfast! He especially likes it when people bring in dogs to visit, whether it's their own pets or for the home's regular Pets as Therapy sessions.

Abbeyfield Winnersh activities coordinator, Charlotte Richardson, said, "Chas is much loved and a huge presence here. I'm so glad he enjoyed this amazing milestone with us. All our staff here helped make his birthday special and it was a pleasure speaking to his family and learning more about his amazing life."



Chas still enjoys a good chat and a joke



Chas was joined by four generations of his family to celebrate his birthday



# 'EVERY LITTLE HELPS' – TESCO PARTNERSHIP WITH PHIL MEAD HOUSE HELPS RESIDENTS

Phil Mead House held a Euro-theme tea party in July with cakes and raffle prizes donated by Tesco, as the result of a successful partnership between the home and its local stores in Walsgrave.

The partnership began when Phil Mead House's activities coordinator, Hetty Francis, approached Tesco Community

Champions, Melissa Hazell and Jayne Pepper, for prizes for the home's 2023 Christmas raffle. Since then, Tesco has supplied the home with a whole host of donations, including Easter eggs and hot cross buns at Easter, flowers for the residents' rooms and plants for the garden. An additional benefit has been Tesco's excellent links with local

childminders and toddler groups, whom Hetty has invited in for weekly stay and play sessions. "Our residents love interacting with the kids," says manager Lesley Costello, "and we can see significant improvements in their mood and general wellbeing as a result." The children were invited to the tea party, and there were also

appearances from some alpacas, which delighted residents and guests alike.

Melissa says, "Phil Mead House is certainly one of the more vibrant care homes we have visited and it has been especially lovely to see the residents get to know the children who come in and enjoy their time together."

## NEW MALDEN MARKS PRIDE MONTH WITH FOUR-LEGGED FRIEND



Jay, Misty and her handler were proud to fly the rainbow flag

Abbeyfield House in New Malden chose to combine their Abbeyfield Week with a special event to mark Pride month, an annual and inclusive celebration of the history and achievements of the LGBTQ+ community. The care home celebrated the fact that Abbeyfield supports LGBTQ+ employees and residents, and values equality and diversity.

Abbeyfield House held an afternoon tea to mark the

occasion, accompanied by live music, and were joined by Pets as Therapy dog, Misty.

Activities coordinator Jay Ward said, "Equality and diversity is very important in a workplace. Being able to be yourself is one of the main reasons I am able to come to work and carry out my role efficiently. I am so glad that Abbeyfield as a company not only allows you to be yourself, but also encourages it."



Special cakes were prepared to promote LGBTQ+ pride

## ABBNEYFIELD BELFAST COMPLETES GARDEN RENOVATION TO THE DELIGHT OF RESIDENTS



The new garden is a sensory paradise

The Abbeyfield Belfast Society (ABS) has celebrated the renovation of the garden at Bell Rotary House sheltered housing scheme in East Belfast.

The house, which is home to 19 residents, was awarded £54,800 following a successful application to the Wolfson Foundation. This, along with a generous bequest from a previous resident, enabled the transformation of the garden into an outdoor space that is more suitable for its residents, some of whom

are living with sensory, mobility and memory impairments.

Following the re-opening of the garden one resident, Joanie, could not contain her delight. She said, "I just think the garden is wonderful! I enjoy socialising in the seating areas, and I can't wait to show off the garden to my friends when they visit me next week."

ABS Chief Executive, Niki Molloy, said, "This project has created an inviting and



Residents John and Irvine enjoying the new seating



The raised vegetable bed provides plenty of colour

accessible outdoor space and summerhouse for everyone, enabling our residents to be more active, improving their mental and physical wellbeing.

"We worked closely with our residents to collate their opinions and ensure that they all felt a sense of ownership of this project. We were very excited to be able to raise the necessary funding to bring their vision to reality, and we are absolutely thrilled with the result."

# PUZZLE PAGE

## CROSSWORD

**Across**

- 1 French red wine (8)
- 5 Star, in Pirates of the Caribbean, b.1963 (4)
- 9 Bishops' formal headdress (5)
- 10 Solicit votes (7)
- 11 Person noteworthy for only a single achievement (3-5,4)
- 13 Small beetle with an elongated snout (6)
- 14 Refreshing summer drink (3,3)
- 17 Using logical reasoning (12)
- 20 7-to 10-year-old girl guider (7)
- 21 Resort city of south-east Florida (5)
- 22 December holiday time (abbr) (4)
- 23 Wearing one's birthday suit (informal) (8)

**Down**

- 1 Boring documents that one is required to read (4)
- 2 Entourage (7)
- 3 Thrilling (12)
- 4 Poor raggedly dressed city child (6)
- 6 Muse of erotic poetry (5)
- 7 Feline (informal) (8)
- 8 Entertainer who performs dance routines with a python or boa constrictor (5,7)
- 12 Very hot place to be confined in - so tax web (anag) (8)
- 15 Cultivation of land for raising crops (7)
- 16 Mum (6)
- 18 Fragrance (5)
- 19 Temporary living quarters (4)

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# 60 SECONDS WITH KAREN BARRETT

Housing Manager at Hale Court

**How long have you been working for Abbeyfield, what roles have you held, and when did you take on your current role?**

I have been working at Abbeyfield for eight years. I started as the administrator for Hale Court, which quickly changed to a Senior Administrator role covering five services. Then, in early 2020, during the COVID pandemic, I took over as manager temporarily. I enjoyed this so much that I agreed to do it permanently.

**What was it that first attracted you to Abbeyfield as an organisation?**

I previously worked as a Learning & Development Manager, based in London but covering all of England and Wales. After going on maternity leave, I decided that I needed a better work-life balance. I saw the administrator job advertised locally and as Abbeyfield was a trusted name I applied for the job. Being a 'people' person, I wanted something where there was plenty of interaction, and Abbeyfield's reputation of providing a great service for their residents fulfilled the brief.

**What is a typical day for you?**

No two days are the same – which is part of the fun of the role!

**What, in your opinion, are the most important qualities in a housing manager?**

Flexibility, the ability to provide a high-quality resident-centred service, and to be authentic.



**What is the best part of your job?**

Our wonderful residents. As a team we work with our residents, family and friends to make Hale Court a happy home to live and work in.

**What are the biggest challenges that you face?**

Time bandits! At present there are a lot of things 'stealing' my time, which prevent me from spending as much time with our residents

as I would like. Hopefully we will be through this period soon and this will change.

**What are you most looking forward to at Hale Court over the coming months?**

Some good weather! Everyone at Hale Court enjoys spending time in our garden. We are hoping to have Pimms and snacks out there for the Olympics Closing Ceremony!



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## PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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

1	2	6	4	3	7	5	9	8			
9	4	3	6	5	8	1	2	7			
7	8	5	2	1	9	3	4	6			
8	6	7	3	9	2	4	5	1			
3	9	4	5	7	1	8	6	2			
5	1	2	8	4	6	7	3	9			
6	5	1	7	2	4	9	8	3			
2	3	9	1	8	5	6	7	4			
4	7	8	9	6	3	2	1	5			

1	9	2	7	8	4	5	6	3			
5	3	7	6	2	9	8	4	1			
4	8	6	1	5	3	9	7	2			
9	1	5	3	4	8	7	2	6			
6	4	8	9	7	2	1	3	5			
7	2	3	5	1	6	4	9	8			
2	6	1	4	9	5	3	8	7			
3	5	9	8	6	7	2	1	4			
8	7	4	2	3	1	6	5	9			