



HEAR, HEAR!

Residents at **Castle Farm** and **The Grove** care homes in Newcastle upon Tyne have been all ears recently, thanks to the installation of a new piece of technology.



Residents are now able to fully engage in activities such as seated exercise classes

The innovative equipment comes from Symphony Sound, who specialise in providing pioneering acoustic technology tailored to care homes and other older people’s housing schemes, to help residents overcome the challenges posed by hearing impairments.

Symphony Sound’s Roger Room Kit is a fully inclusive solution to hearing problems. Unlike traditional hearing loops, the system is designed for people with and without hearing aids. Those without, or with hearing aids without a loop function, can listen in through neckloop

receivers and specially designed headphones that connect to a microphone used by whoever is speaking. Additionally, the room speaker works in tandem to help to clarify and project the sound – which is beneficial for all, even those without a hearing impairment!

The kit is also very portable, allowing both Castle Farm and The Grove to share it between them and use it in a variety of rooms and settings.

Continued on page 5 ➔

3

Looking ahead to our 70th anniversary

6

MPs visit us for Starts at Home Day

8

Abbeyfield Ripon celebrates 50 years

10

New courtyard at Halcyon House

GET STUFFED!

Abbeyfield Living Society services were invited to enter an autumn competition by making scarecrows. There were different takes on the traditional garden mainstay from houses and homes around the country, with some choosing to make a celebrity doppelganger, whilst others went for a more conventional design.

The judges awarded first, second and third place, and there was one other notable mention.

First place – Westall House, Horsted Keynes

Westall House residents chose a truly inventive design based around the 'elderly crossing' road sign, with two scarecrows who made their way around the home. One of them even managed to have a go on the climbing frame in the outdoor play area – you can watch in the hilarious video on [Facebook!](#)



Westall House

Second place – Abbeyfield House, Bramhall

Residents in Bramhall enjoyed depicting the late Queen Elizabeth II for their scarecrow. Here she is complete with patriotic bunting, a cup of tea and, of course, she wouldn't be the Queen without her corgis!



Abbeyfield House, Bramhall

Third place – Abbeyfield House, New Malden

New Malden submitted two scarecrows, who they named Sam Straw and Hayley Harvest. Sam is described as "a fun-loving scarecrow who loves hay," and a mean old spider has taken up residence on Hayley! They both do a great job though protecting the sunflowers, and they look am-hay-zing!



Abbeyfield House, New Malden

Honourable mention – Abbeyfield Court, Southampton

While an outdoor scarecrow did not appear at Abbeyfield Court, residents had fun creating these excellent miniature indoor versions.

Congratulations to all the winners, and thanks to everyone who took the time to take part.



Abbeyfield Court

NEW MALDEN CULTURE WEEK

Around the world in five days

From Ukraine to Uganda, residents at Abbeyfield House, New Malden, were introduced to a range of food and traditions as part of their Culture Week.

The initiative was created by activities coordinator Jay Ward, to celebrate the diverse staff team from 15 different countries.

11 nations were 'visited' over the five days – Ghana, Jamaica and Ukraine on day one; England, Romania and India on day two; the Philippines, Singapore and China on day three; Uganda and Portugal on day four; and the final day was dedicated to celebrating the identities and national pride of all the staff.

The week touched upon the culture and heritage of each country, with each member of staff able to share their unique perspective.

Carlos, who is a maintenance operative at the home, said, "Life in the UK has brought many changes and opportunities, but Portugal will always be a part of me.

"It's in the rhythm of my memories, in the taste of a dish that reminds me of home, and in the quiet longing for a slower, sunnier pace of life."



The residents tried new food every day

CARROT CAKE AND COMMUNITY

MAKE MAYOR'S VISIT 'A DELIGHT'

The all three independent living houses at the Abbeyfield Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead Society were visited by the Mayor of Dacorum, Cllr Catherine McArevey.

Cllr McArevey was specially interested in the care that the residents receive and the impact of the service on the residents' wellbeing. She is passionate about reducing social isolation and was please to see a community in action.

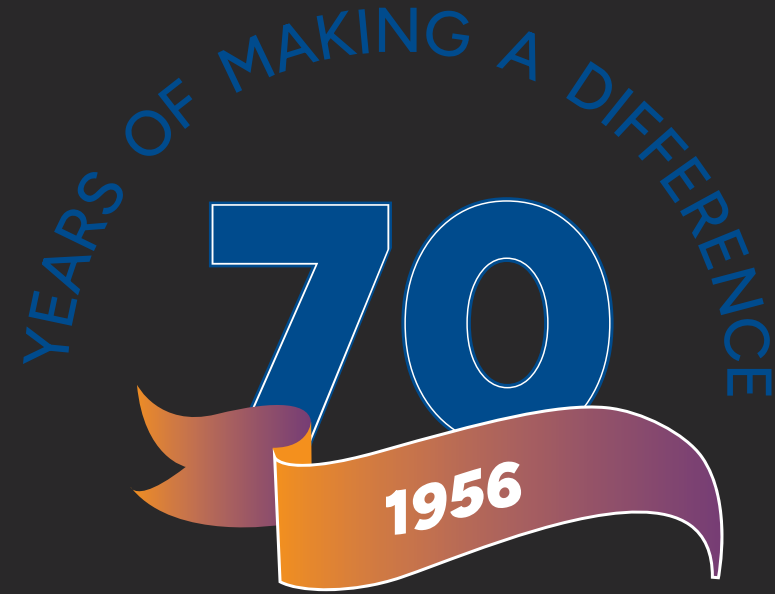
The Mayor said, "What a lovely community Abbeyfield has in Dacorum.

"It was a delight to hear stories from the residents, and I was impressed at how independent they remain and how much they enjoy remaining active members of the wider community."

She added, "The reality hit that I am also not far from being eligible to move in... but, as there were a few mischievous residents (and staff), I am fairly confident I would have a great time!"



The Mayor with residents and staff



CELEBRATING 70 YEARS OF ABBEYFIELD

Next year marks an incredible milestone – 70 years since Abbeyfield was founded. What began as a single house in southeast London has grown into an international family of homes and communities across 10 countries worldwide.

Telling our story

As our 70th anniversary approaches, we'll be reflecting on the journey that brought us here and honouring the many ways in which Abbeyfield has touched the lives of residents, staff, volunteers and countless others in our communities over the decades.

Support from our communities

To make 2026 as special and memorable a year as possible, we are staying true to our founding values and looking to people in the communities surrounding our houses and homes to help support us.

What we are looking for

We are reaching out to local companies who might like to support their nearby Abbeyfield with their celebration events and activities. Many businesses are keen to give back to their communities in a variety of ways – from offering donations for a specific event or house, to volunteering their time. Their staff might get involved by helping to run a special activity, or by lending a hand with DIY jobs in the house or garden.

How you can help

If you know of any local companies, or someone who works for a business that

might be able to support Abbeyfield and help make a special difference in our 70th anniversary year, please get in touch at voice@abbeyfield.com or speak to your house or home manager.

What's coming up

There will be plenty of opportunities to get involved in our 70th anniversary celebrations throughout the year, and we can't wait to share this momentous occasion with you.

Keep an eye out for more details in the next edition of The Voice!



The new pub provides a good atmosphere for enjoying a pint



Attention to detail and a bright decor make the Abbeyfield Arms an ideal meeting place

SPIRITS HIGH AT WESTFIELD HOUSE

Anyone visiting Westfield House will be able to watch the big match with a pint in hand, raise a toast to a special occasion, or simply enjoy a coffee with friends, thanks to the opening of their new on-site pub, the Abbeyfield Arms.

Staff at the house, which is operated by the Abbeyfield Loughborough Society, decided that an old quiet room could be better used as a space that encouraged conversation, given the sociable nature of their residents.

Sports fans are catered for with a darts board, snooker table and TV for showing live events, and there is space for residents to enjoy a meal or drink with their guests away from the hubbub of the dining room.

With games such as dominoes, and even a pub quiz, the Abbeyfield Arms also has the power to take

residents back to the days of enjoying a pint with friends – such as Norman, who recalled fondly the time when he ordered a round of drinks not realising someone had snuck a ladies' earring in his ear, and then received a lot of funny looks from the bar staff and the other punters!

A lick of paint and some new furniture was all that was needed to transform the room, with maintenance staff Paul and Gary putting in the hours. Funding came from the sale of leftover lunches sold to staff and an anonymous benefactor who has donated to the home in the past.

Resident David said that he's looking forward to catching a game on the TV and playing a round of darts.

Jane added, "It's lovely to have a change of scenery and be able to have a G&T with my husband, Geoff, while doing a quiz."

For those who missed the quiet space where the pub now stands, a new sensory area was created elsewhere in the home, ensuring that residents have the best of both worlds at their fingertips.

STAFF CELEBRATED FOR LONG SERVICE

It's a well-known fact that all staff at Abbeyfield houses and homes are amazing, going above and beyond to ensure residents can enjoy their autumn years to the full. However, there are also those who deserve special recognition, having given a huge number of years caring for older people.

Julie (third from left) celebrating Christmas with the residents at Westbury



The families of staff members Kevin, Brian, Julie, Sally, Mary and Catherine – who have racked up an incredible 143 years with Abbeyfield between them at Hill House in Honiton – were invited to a special celebratory barbecue with Pimm's in the sun. The event was also tinged with sadness, as they bade a fond farewell to their wonderful chef, Paul, who is retiring.

Julie said, "It was lovely to be appreciated by Abbeyfield. The BBQ was a really nice way of celebrating together, and the little touches of games and arts and crafts for the children to participate in made it extra special."

Meanwhile, at Abbeyfield House in Westbury, residents and staff celebrated the career of their housekeeper, Julie, who has spent 20



Hill House staff with their long service awards

years caring for the residents. Having started her career in retail, she joined Abbeyfield as a kitchen assistant and was offered the housekeeping position 18 months later. Since then, she has also introduced other members of her family to the house, encouraging her daughter and granddaughters to volunteer.

She said, "I always get on really well with the residents. I enjoy listening to all their tales and I've definitely heard some good life stories over the last 20 years. I've been really lucky to work with two amazing housekeepers and a few great general assistants, and we work as a team, and that's what's made my job so enjoyable."



HEAR, HEAR (CONTINUED FROM COVER)

The Abbeyfield Northumbria Society, which operates both homes, raised funds for the Roger Room Kit through a series of coffee mornings, sponsored events and a few generous donations. Following the quick installation process and training for staff, it instantly had a huge impact on residents' experiences, as activities coordinator at The Grove, Erin Hope-Hume, explains.

"We have been using the system for several activities, from quizzes, to presentations, dominoes, bingo and even arts and crafts," she says.

"Residents have become more involved, and some have started attending events they would not previously have attended due to hearing difficulties."

"The system has great potential, and we hope that we will be able to use it more in the future more for one-to-ones and family or professional visits."

The residents themselves are clearly feeling the benefits.

One resident at The Grove, Liz, said that the new system gave her hope that further improvements and developments in technology may, in future, make difficulties participating in activities due to hearing impairments a thing of the past. Being able to hear clearly and join in, she added, "makes you feel part of the community."

The advantages have not just been felt by those with hearing impairments – other residents have enjoyed welcoming people to different activities who would otherwise have been excluded, saying that they feel the home is now a more inclusive community where they can share more experiences.

The Grove resident Barbara remarked, "It's been wonderful to watch other residents, who normally struggle with hearing difficulties, being able to hear properly and participate in activities and conversation."

Erin continues, "We have one resident at The Grove, Jenny, who is very hard of hearing and would have avoided many activities and group settings in the past because of this."

"Since we started using the system, she has been coming along regularly and interacting at group events, including attending talks and presentations."

"Her scores at the weekly quiz, and those of other residents too, have shot up due to their ability to participate so much more."

Erin is also keen to stress the upside of the Roger Room Kit for staff as well.

"It has huge benefits for the wellbeing of the staff team, as it means they are not having to shout to be heard," she says.

Other staff who have used it have been similarly complimentary. Helen Angel, Erin's counterpart activities coordinator at Castle Farm, said, "The first time we used it during a board games session, the change was immediately apparent."

"The dining room is a large, busy space with constant background noise from the kitchen and staff moving in and out. Despite this, the interaction between the residents was much smoother – we no longer had to raise our voices or repeat instructions as often."

"We also trialled the system during a residents' meeting, and the improvement in communication was striking. Instead of brief 'yes' or 'no' answers, residents offered more detailed feedback and responses, demonstrating its ability to facilitate a deeper level of engagement."

Symphony Sound Director, Pritesh Nathwani, added, "Our mission is to transform everyday living for older people by improving the listening environment."

"To date, we've supported over 500 people in care homes across the UK, helping to reduce feelings of isolation and make group activities more inclusive through innovative sound technology."

Abbeyfield Northumbria are hoping to be able to soon purchase additional kits for their other houses and homes, helping more residents to experience the benefits.

The kit is perfect for enhancing residents' experiences of shared activities and games



The equipment is state-of-the-art and perfectly adept at supporting the hard of hearing



No more repeating or shouting - staff can now communicate much more easily with residents



Residents can choose to either listen through headphones or a lanyard



The kit is fully portable and comes in a handy case

INTERACTION THROUGH INNOVATION

Innovative technology, when used appropriately, can have a huge effect in older people's housing and care. While not a replacement for face-to-face conversation, it could enhance communication and help staff to provide more meaningful support for their residents. Technology is advancing so quickly nowadays, and the beneficial effects of the Roger Room Kit are beyond what many residents at Castle Farm and The Grove could have ever imagined.



ABBAYFIELD HOUSES VISITED BY MPs FOR STARTS AT HOME DAY

Residents at Abbeyfield Living Society (ALS) sheltered housing schemes around the country were visited by their local MPs to mark Starts at Home Day, an annual event that highlights and celebrates the value of sheltered (or supported) housing, while raising awareness and building political support for the future of the sector in the UK.



Chris Webb MP at Harrowside House, Blackpool



John Glen MP at Boldre House and Macgregor House, Salisbury



Ian Sollom MP at Girtton Green, Cambridge



Hamish Falconer MP at Abbeyfield House, Lincoln



Jonathan Hinder MP at Abbeyfield House, Barnoldswick

17 sheltered housing schemes and independent living complexes were visited by their local MPs during August, September and October: Abbeyfield House in Lincoln, Harrowside House in Blackpool, Girtton Green in Cambridge, Abbeyfield House in Barnoldswick, Carnarvon House in Nottingham, Bolton House and Proctor House in Bolton-le-Sands, Tamar House in Gosport, Boldre House and Macgregor House in Salisbury, Woodlands in Swanage, Hampton House in Solihull, Abbeyfield House in Beaminster, Abbeyfield House in Ulverston, Woodlands in Skipton, Riverhill in Corbridge, and Abbeyfield House in Cockermouth.

The visits provided residents with an opportunity to meet their local MP and share how their quality of life has improved since moving into an Abbeyfield sheltered housing property. MPs were given a tour of the facilities and spoke with both residents and staff. Staff members also discussed the benefits of working for Abbeyfield and

the wider challenges currently facing the sheltered housing sector.

Tamar House was visited by Gosport MP Dame Caroline Dinenage. She said, *"It was a pleasure to visit Tamar House, a service that plays a vital role in supporting older people in our community. Speaking with residents, it was clear they feel safe, supported and empowered to maintain their independence in a warm and welcoming environment."*

"The strong sense of community, fostered through social opportunities and connections with the local area, highlights just how important sheltered housing is in today's society."

"In my conversations with staff, the challenges facing sheltered housing providers were made clear. I look forward to exploring how I can support organisations like Abbeyfield to ensure they can continue delivering high-quality services in Gosport and across the country."

Dame Caroline's comments were echoed by many of the other visiting MPs, and several especially enjoyed the opportunity to engage with the residents and hear the real-life stories of older people who they represent in the House of Commons.

Abbeyfield's participation in Starts at Home Day reflects our continued commitment to engage in politically aligned activity and public affairs. We are an active contributor to the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Housing and Care for Older People and proudly sponsored its 2024 inquiry into the regeneration of outdated sheltered housing – focusing on how schemes can be modernised to meet 21st century expectations. Working alongside organisations such as the National Housing Federation and National Care Forum, Abbeyfield seeks to influence government policy and advocate on behalf of our residents.



South Korea celebrations at Macgregor House and Boldre House



The Old Vicarage won Abbeyfield on Tour with their celebration of all things French, complete with this buffet magnifique

THE GREAT GETAWAY – ABBAYFIELD ON TOUR

This summer, Abbeyfield homes set off to a mission to prove you don't need a passport to see the world.

For the Abbeyfield on Tour competition, Abbeyfield Living Society (ALS) houses and homes were randomly assigned a different country to celebrate, with the aim of bringing a culture to life through food, music, and activities to create the most memorable experience.

The tour kicked off with a trip to the Caribbean at Hampton House. The air was filled with lively music, laughter, and the mouth-watering aromas of beautiful Caribbean food. It was a day that perfectly captured the feeling of a tropical getaway, with happy faces all around.

The next destination was Brazil, with a "Brazil-iant" carnival of flavours at Abbeyfield House in New Malden. The kitchen prepared a delicious Brazilian feast, including chicken stroganoff, vegetable stew, and a variety of sides and desserts. It was a genuine celebration of culture, food, and great company.

A delicious visit to Sweden followed at Abbeyfield Winnersh. While meatballs were on the menu, the real star was the incredible Smörgåstårter, a savoury Swedish sandwich cake. It was a new and exciting treat for many residents and the perfect way to share a special moment together.

The tour continued with a taste of South Korea in Salisbury. Residents at MacGregor House and Boldre House came together for a special-themed coffee morning, complete with tasty Korean biscuits and snacks. It was a fantastic morning of trying something new and enjoying each other's company.

Abbeyfield Court in Southampton experienced a little bit of Greece, with the residents were treated to a delicious Greek meal, complete with traditional music and decorations they made themselves in their craft club. The smiles in the photos say it all and it was a wonderful day of creativity and camaraderie.



Greece was the word at Abbeyfield Court, where residents enjoyed moussaka with olive bread

On the other side of town, residents at Abbeyfield House in Southampton were taken to Canada in an armchair adventure, with a delicious spread of Canadian favourites, including classic buttermilk pancakes, butter tarts, and maple-infused pastries. It was the perfect way to experience a different culture and conclude the tour.

The competition was fierce, with each house going above and beyond to make their event special. But in the end, there could only be one winner, and The Old Vicarage were crowned the champions of Abbeyfield on Tour for their magnificent French-themed meal and wonderful celebration of "joie de vivre." The kitchen team put on a magnificent French-themed meal that was nothing short of a Michelin Star trip to Paris.



GROVE HOUSE CELEBRATES VOLUNTEERS 22 YEARS ON

Grove House in Ilkley, managed by Abbeyfield The Dales Society, organised a special celebratory tea party to recognise the key team of people who were instrumental in the re-opening of Grove House in 2003, after it had been left empty for a few years. The contributions of the late Shannon Houlston and Brian Whittaker, and Ian Hepworth – who is now the Society’s Secretary – were acknowledged for their efforts bringing many people together to raise funds, develop plans and refurbish the house.

The Deputy Lieutenant for West Yorkshire, Vicky Reynolds, unveiled a plaque alongside Ian, who then gave a brief history of how the project unfolded. Also in attendance were the Society’s trustees, former trustees, residents, and members of staff who were working for Abbeyfield at the time.



A plaque was unveiled to recognise those who had made a special contribution to the re-opening of Grove House



Past and previous residents, staff and trustees were invited



Special guest Vicky Reynolds, The Deputy Lieutenant for West Yorkshire, joined the celebrations

ABBAYFIELD RIPON: 50 YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP

Trustees, residents, staff and friends enjoyed the garden party



In September, Abbeyfield House in Ripon celebrated its 50th anniversary in style, with a garden party for residents and staff, attended by, among others, local councillor Julieann Martin-Long. Also in attendance was John Richmond BEM, who, as the then-youngest ever Mayor of Ripon, presided over the opening of Abbeyfield House on 24th September 1975.

“The project to create the Abbeyfield Ripon Society was very much a local one,” says trustee James Ward.

“It was conceived by people from the local area. The whole community got involved, with the Ripon Lions Club and students from the Ripon and York College helping to decorate the rooms.”

Minutes from the early years recall some

rather unusual events, including the fitting of a pig breeder’s lamp in a bedroom to provide extra heat, and the residents’ participation, alongside the rest of Abbeyfield, in the successful world-record attempt to knit the world’s longest scarf, which measured a whopping 18 miles!

At the garden party, Chair of Trustees, Sue Nichols, summed up the Abbeyfield ethos perfectly when she said, “Abbeyfield Ripon is not a care home, but we are a home and we



A yummy spread



Chair of Abbeyfield Ripon, Sue Nichols and John Richmond BEM, former Mayor of Ripon

do care,” adding that “50 years is an amazing achievement, and we owe that longevity to the many past trustees and staff members who we are so happy to welcome back to celebrate with us today.”

Councillor Julieann Martin-Long echoed Sue’s words, praising both Abbeyfield’s ethos of helping to maintain older people’s independence and the warm and welcoming environment at the house.



HELPING RESIDENTS GET ONLINE AT HOPE BANK VIEW

You may recall from our summer edition that residents at Hope Bank View in Sunderland were taking part in a digital skills course run by AbilityNet – a UK charity that helps older people feel more confident using technology.

The sessions were delivered by Helen McGuigan, a brilliant trainer who created a welcoming and relaxed atmosphere for learning. The programme was sponsored by BT, so there was no cost to Abbeyfield or the residents.

There were three sessions, one per week over three weeks, based on the following topics:

- **Week 1: How to stay safe online – including spotting scams and protecting your information.**
- **Week 2: Using email and messaging apps to stay in touch with family and friends.**
- **Week 3: Discovering online entertainment like catch-up TV, music, games and more.**

Helen also offered one-to-one support for residents who had specific questions – from using tablets and phones, to managing passwords and settings.

The residents were keen to learn and soon picked up a few useful skills.

For example, Charles sent an email to his daughter during the session.

“She’ll be very surprised to get an email from me!” he said.

It was a proud moment, and a perfect reminder of how small steps with technology can make a big difference in staying connected.



Charles is delighted to be able to send emails to his family

Want something like this where you live?

AbilityNet sessions and support are available to all Abbeyfield residents. If you think digital skills training would be helpful in your house, please speak to your house or care home manager.

Even if a course isn’t running near you right now, free one-to-one support is still available. This is delivered by trained AbilityNet volunteers, either in your home or in a shared space – and it’s completely free.

Whether you’re new to technology or just want a little help using your device, support is available at your own pace.

To request support or learn more, call AbilityNet on 0300 180 0028 or visit www.abilitynet.org.uk. Please ask a member of your house or home staff for help getting in touch if necessary.

SUN SHINES AS MAYOR OPENS NEW COURTYARD AT HALCYON HOUSE

Residents, staff, family, friends and community supporters gathered at Halcyon House to celebrate the opening of a newly improved courtyard and new residents’ gardening club area.

Halcyon House’s manager, AnnMarie Roberts, explained, “Our courtyard was in need of an update – the shrubbery had become very dense in one area, and the aluminium gazebo had started to look aged. The staff team and I, supported financially by the Halcyon House Trust Committee, started to make plans to design a better and more usable space for all to enjoy.

“We employed a local landscape gardener, and together we came up with an exciting and vibrant design that incorporated all our residents’ needs and many of their ideas.”

The whole project, which took several weeks to complete, saw the courtyard fitted with a large all-weather beautiful timber gazebo, decorative stones, shrubbery and gabion walls filled with pebbles and bedding plants. The pond was also reconstructed to allow the residents to see more of the fish. Ceramic and terracotta pots with plants were added throughout the courtyard, which was finished off with outside lighting, vibrant hanging baskets and a very colourful and stylish aluminium resident peacock, whose name will be decided by a competition for residents and relatives.

The residents, AnnMarie said, were “completely thrilled” by the designs, and many were keen to try it out before the official opening, playing board games, entertaining guests or just relaxing under the gazebo. Green-fingered residents have started growing their own produce in the new and full-accessible gardening club area, which is covered by the second gazebo.

The new area is perfect for playing a few board games



The official opening was conducted by Madam Mayor Councillor June Burns at a special afternoon tea event.

“What better way,” AnnMarie continued, “to celebrate these exciting new parts of the residents’ home than a strawberry tea with Pimm’s and lemonade, surrounded by family, friends, the Halcyon House Trust Committee and supporters from our local community. We were also delighted that our special guest, Madam Mayor, was able to attend and cut the ribbon.”

On entering Halcyon House, the Mayor commented on how colourful and welcoming the gardens to the front of the house were. She commended the gazebo and courtyard area, was impressed with the achievements of the gardening club, and wished all the residents and staff good luck for the future.

Also in attendance at the event were several fire fighters from the local station. Although they had to leave shortly after the ribbon cutting as they were on duty, they were thanked for their support with a selection of strawberry scones to take away.

Reverend Anne Taylor, who attended representing St Peter’s Church in Formby, said, “It is wonderful that the residents have such a useable space to be able to create their gardens. It’s impressive to see what they have done so far, and they have great plans for the future of these areas.”

Halcyon House resident, Stephen Jones, added, “I love to sit in the courtyard garden and read my Kindle, and I very much enjoy attending the gardening club.

Halcyon House’s activities coordinator, Helena Bradshaw, remarked, “The residents are excited to continue to work on the new area.



The residents have been busy growing their own fruit and veg

“They have already planted up a lot of our other outdoor areas, and the new patio is a wonderful space for members of the gardening club to continue growing their own fruit and vegetables, alongside the flowers that attract bees and other garden-friendly insects.”

As well as a new activities space, the rejuvenated courtyard creates more opportunities for the residents to engage further with their local community.

Helena continued, “Our planned ‘cozy choir’ events, involving guest singers from St Peter’s and school choirs, are already a popular idea with our residents.

“A local ukelele band, whose music our residents have enjoyed many times before, will also be asked to perform under the lights for us, which I am sure will be a memorable evening for all.

“The sunshine, the company, the surroundings, and especially the Pimm’s and our strawberry afternoon tea, made for a very successful event, which was enjoyed by everyone who attended.”

PUZZLE PAGE

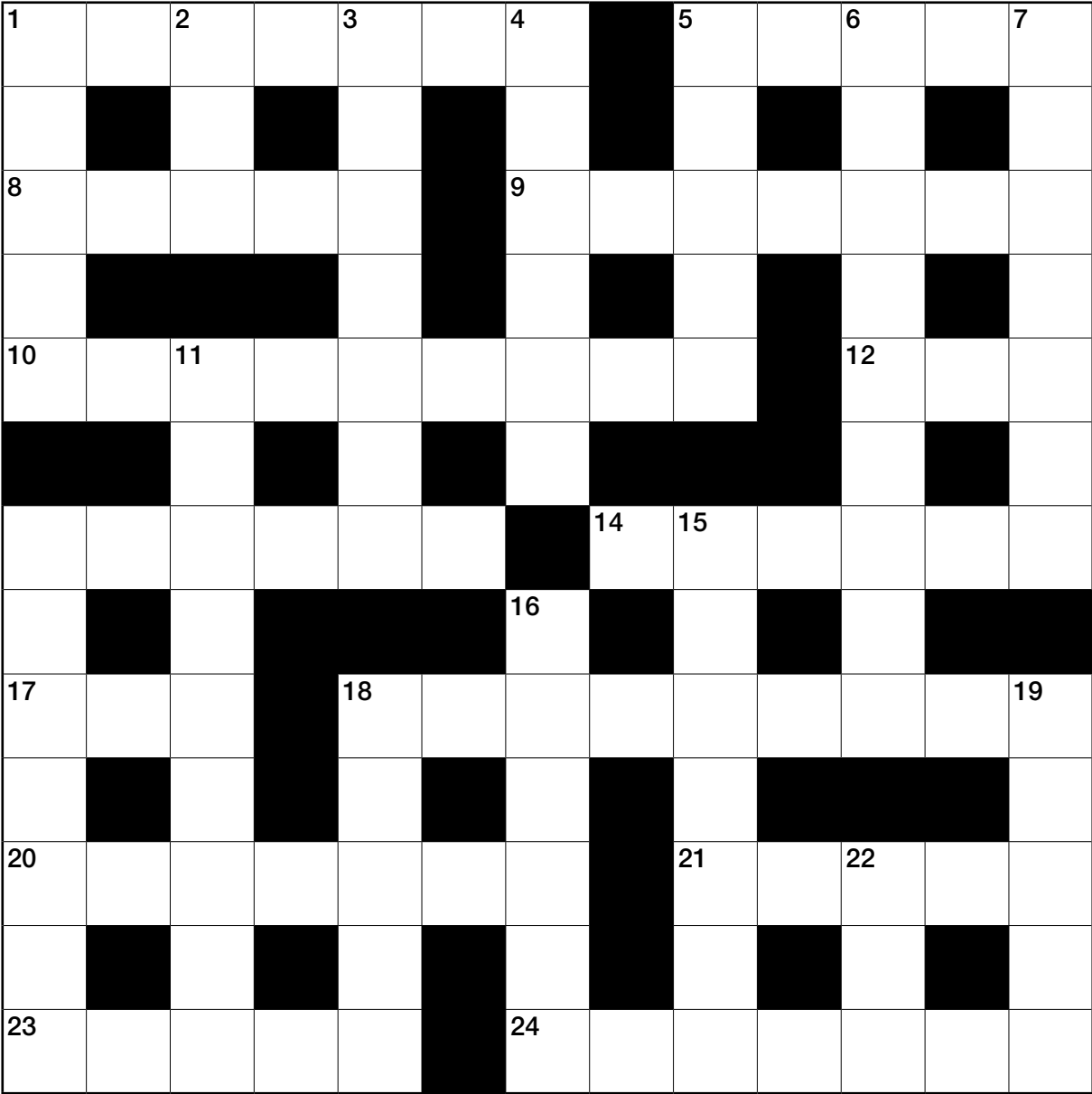
CROSSWORD

Across

- 1 Caribbean island nation (7)
- 5 Attack on all sides (5)
- 8 Bet (5)
- 9 Not broadcast (7)
- 10 Equine bred for speed (9)
- 12 Number of pints in a quart (3)
- 13 Courage, guts (6)
- 14 Marsh plants; hurries (6)
- 17 Jamaican music genre (3)
- 18 Italian restaurant (9)
- 20 Remote areas of Australia (7)
- 21 Knotty growth on a tree (5)
- 23 Of specialised interest (5)
- 24 Altogether, wholly (7)

Down

- 1 Arbour (5)
- 2 Selfishly monopolise (3)
- 3 Arrange (facts or troops, eg) (7)
- 4 Piazza (6)
- 5 Produce a loud noise (5)
- 6 Conveyance for an injured or wounded person (9)
- 7 Dull, tiresome (7)
- 11 Allowing the release of repressed emotion (9)
- 13 Large wind instrument (7)
- 15 Tense, on edge (7)
- 16 Illegal enterprise (6)
- 18 Track down (5)
- 19 Combination of metals (5)
- 22 Sharply pointed tool (3)



SUDOKU: MEDIUM

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

SUDOKU: HARD

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

60 SECONDS WITH YVONNE WRAY

We spoke to Yvonne Wray, a Housekeeper at Carnarvon House in Nottingham, about her career at Abbeyfield and what she enjoys about her role.



Yvonne Wray

How did you come to work at Carnarvon House?

The role as a housekeeper at a sheltered housing scheme for older people was a change in direction for me. I initially trained as a chef and then, after having my two sons, worked at a primary school for 15 years. It was the opportunity to go back to cooking that was the draw for me, and seeing the residents enjoying their food and smiling when you see them in the morning is what makes the job worthwhile. I also enjoy the challenges the role brings sometimes, and I have been here going on nine years now.

What does a typical working day look like for you?

Everyday is different! The only thing that is the same is cooking for the residents, but you can also be solving problems, retuning TVs, helping residents with word searches and crosswords, reassuring them, listening to their stories, and just being there to help any way you can.

Which part of your job do you most enjoy and what are the biggest challenges in your role?

I enjoy the cooking and spending time with the residents and going around to see them in the morning. The challenging side of the job is when they are not well or had a fall and there is nothing you can physically do to help them. Don't get me wrong, you can be there for them and reassure them as much as possible until

help arrives, but sometimes you just feel a bit helpless. The families of the residents are all lovely when we need to contact them about anything as they know we have their best interests at heart.

What stand-out memories do you have from your time at Abbeyfield?

When I started working at Carnarvon House, one of our residents was turning 107 when she got her card from the Queen she asked if I wanted to open it with her. It was the fourth card she had received from the Queen, and as we opened it together she looked at it and read inside, and then remarked it was a lovely photo but she prefers the Queen without a hat on, which made me smile! She also loved watching snooker – when the World Championships were on and I was going in to work, I always checked the scores from the night before as she would always fall asleep before it had finished.

Another great memory is of one of our residents turning 100 last year. I had the pleasure of making her cake and doing a buffet for the residents and her family, and everyone had a great time.

What are the most important qualities for a housekeeper at Abbeyfield?

Understanding, empathy, a caring nature and a good sense of humour, being good at cooking wholesome food and baking cakes, and doing you best for each and every resident. I always say that the residents have invited me into their home to cook for them. It is not my place of work, but their home, and I respect that.

What are you looking forward to coming up over the next few months at Carnarvon House?

Christmas is always special – not just the day itself, but the lead up to it when we invite family and friends for our Christmas gathering and take the residents out.

On Christmas day I have the pleasure of cooking Christmas lunch for anyone who doesn't go to visit their family, or who wants the family to join them at Carnarvon House. With bells on my shoes, Santa hat on and a Christmas jumper, it's always a fun day!



Abbeyfield England
Portland House, Belmont Business Park
Durham, DH1 1TW

Registered Charity No. 1213760
Company No.14411261

Abbeyfield Living Society
Hampton House,17-19 Hampton Lane
Solihull, B91 2QT

Registered Charity No. 200719
Company No. 574816

Tel: 01727 857536
Email: voice@abbeyfield.com

The Voice is produced in partnership with Abbeyfield England and Abbeyfield Living Society.

Want more stories?

If you'd like to find out more about what's going on at our services around the country, take a look at our blog at www.abbeyfieldengland.com/blog, or follow us on social media – details at the top of page 11.

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

A	L	L	A	T	O	T	E	H	C	H	N
O	W	H	E	C	I	C	I	O			
L	R	G	N	A	R	L	B	A	C	K	O
L							R	C	I	R	S
A							T	R	A	T	O
	E						P	R			A
S							R	U	S	H	E
U	C						E	A	A		
O							T	W			
I							R	A			
D							A	N	A	I	R
E							L	T			
T							B	E	S	E	T

MEDIUM

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

HARD

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