



MERRY CHRISTMAS
— AND —
HAPPY NEW YEAR

THE ABBEYFIELD ANGEL



LIFE AT THE ABBEYFIELD WEY VALLEY SOCIETY



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Christmas always creates a special feel within our homes and the return of our AWVS volunteers is going to make it even more special this year.

6 WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON

We always make the most of life at Abbeyfield Wey Valley Society. Our teams' passion is infectious and, now we are welcoming visitors back, we are able to share the fun with family and friends.

7 SPACE TO GROW - FARNHAM'S COMMUNITY WELLBEING GARDEN

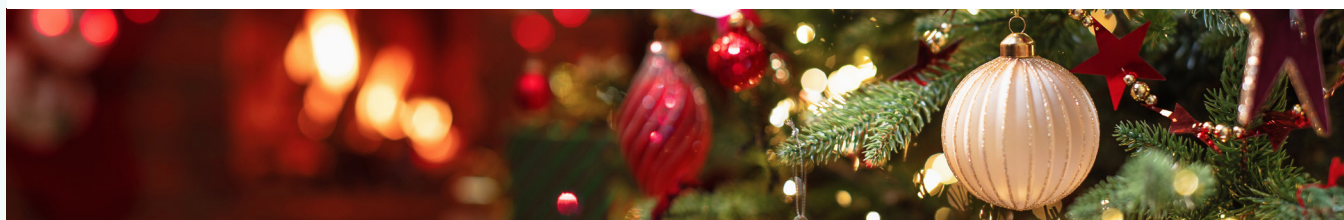
We have close links with our local communities and there are some wonderful people doing wonderful things. This edition we look at Space 2 Grow, a charity in Farnham set up on an acre of land aimed at benefiting the mental wellbeing of the local community.

8 ABBEYFIELD WVS HIDDEN HEROES -

Historically our volunteers have played a really active part in our community. Here we speak with Anne Smith who has been volunteering with the society since 2015 and is so pleased to be getting back into the swing of things.

We also celebrate our resident Margaret Bennett, who has just turned 105, and the rest of the amazing Abbeyfield Wey Valley Society "100 Club"

*Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year from all of us at the Abbeyfield Wey Valley Society
#abbeyfieldangels*



A message from Brian Thomas, our Chair of Trustees



First, I would like to introduce myself as the new Chair of the Board of Trustees, having been Treasurer for eight years, and say a big thank you to Paul Whitlock who has recently relinquished his role as Chair but has agreed to remain as a Trustee. Paul has led the Board through some significant changes that may not be apparent from an everyday working perspective as our principal care homes, Hatch Mill, Wey Valley House and Ridgway Court, continue their good work.

Under his tenure we started a home care business and merged with Abbeyfield Liss and Abbeyfield Guildford, both of them supported sheltered housing organisations, and more recently we have taken the lead in discussions with two other Abbeyfield societies.

These discussions have become necessary for smaller Abbeyfield societies who lack the professional staff to meet current and future demands for care of the elderly principally due to constant changes in regulatory requirements.

Their reliance on voluntary Trustees who no longer want to continue is also a major reason for them approaching AWVS.

As Trustees, we feel frustrated that we have been unable to visit and meet and chat and have lunch with you, but hopefully that will change in the near future when we resume our Trustee visits.

The Trustees really do appreciate the hard work involved and the difficult working conditions that have been necessarily imposed on the staff due to the covid epidemic.

The care home sector is having a uniquely difficult time trying to protect the most vulnerable people and our carers have done an excellent job which the Trustees continue sincerely to appreciate.

It may be a little early, but on behalf of the Trustees I would like to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Brian Thomas

SANTA'S BUSY LITTLE HELPERS

Every year at Abbeyfield Wey Valley, Santa's little helpers AKA Shelley (General Manager) and Louise (Registered Manager at Wey Valley House and Ridgway Court) go searching for goodies to help provide the perfect Christmas.



Santa will be proud of them this year, they have been very efficient and managed to get some lovely new decorations

to bring some magical festive sparkle to all of the homes and plenty of gifts for the residents and carers to share around when the big day arrives.

By the look of the photos, they enjoyed their mini expedition too!



A picture of some of the many things our community have been enjoying



Halloween



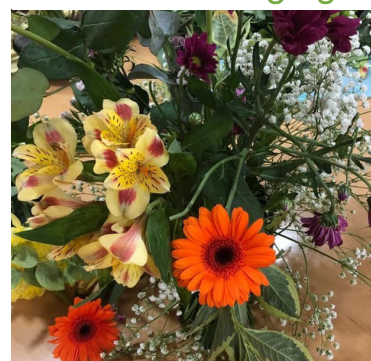
Canal Trips



Sing Alongs



Flower Arranging



Christmas Light Switch on



Arts & Crafts



Cheese & Wine Evenings

Gin Tasting



Christmas is Coming ...

WE'RE STARTING TO FEEL FESTIVE

Farnham started feeling decidedly festive after the recent Christmas light switch-on and, as ever, the team at Abbeyfield Wey Valley Society joined the local community as the start of the festive fun began in earnest.



"Christmas always provides a special feel in our homes " says Louise Aronld, the Registered Manager at both Wey Valley House and Ridgway Court.

This year should be even more special than ever as we now have a little more flexibility in welcoming family and friends back into our community. We certainly plan to enjoy it with a whole host of events and activities planned through out December.

COME AND JOIN THE ABBEYFIELD ANGELS

There are three main reasons why staff love being part of the team at Abbeyfield Wey Valley Society- the same reasons that residents enjoy living here - care, compassion and companionship.

With more people than ever before wanting to work somewhere they're valued, experience a real sense of purpose and genuinely make a difference to people's lives the attraction for carers to join the society is always a great one.

There are, however, another band of heroes, that we have had to survive without over the last year. Our amazing volunteers. Coming from all walks of life, our volunteers, who range from eighteen to eighty provide a vital support to our care teams. They accompany us on trips, help with events, provide

IT communication help for those keeping it touch with family and friends far away and generally enjoy friendships with all the AWVS community.



The AWVS stand at the Guildford Uni volunteers' exhibition

The unique atmosphere and special reward of bringing a smile to residents' faces makes being part of the Abbeyfield Wey Valley Society team of volunteers a truly memorable experience and we are always looking for new recruits to join the team. If you think you would enjoy being involved and would like to start the New Year helping us achieve our vision to improve the lives of older people we would love to hear from you. Just drop our Wellbeing Manager, Tracey, an email to tracey.pollard@abbeyfieldweyvalley.co.uk or call her on 07557 537911.

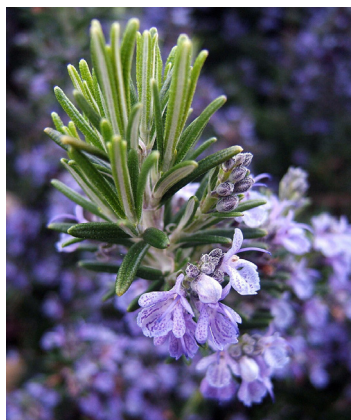


As always, there is plenty to celebrate and enjoy within the Abbeyfield Wey Valley family.



ROSEMARY - A TRADITIONAL WAY TO REVIVE MEMORY

I'm sure like most of us you have noticed how certain smells evoke events in your past or a person you have known?



Maybe it's the smell of bonfire night which reminds you of happy times with your family or the smell of a beautiful flower in your garden – perhaps a herb you have used cooking.

In Shakespeare's time, everyone knew what herbs meant by how they were used. Rosemary was a herb found on the coast that had a reputation for stimulating memory. Greek scholars used it when their memories were beginning to fail apparently.

Maybe rosemary oil could be useful when you've lost your glasses!

FRANK'S TOP GARDENING TIPS

Abbeyfield Wey Valley House resident Frank Rhodes (98) is now a three-time gold award-winning gardener after his latest success in this year's Farnham in Bloom competition.

Frank's rigorous routine of nurturing the hanging baskets tending to the tomatoes and feeding the huge sunflowers have seen the gardens at the Farnham care home blossom over the years, and he has even gained celebrity recognition, winning praise from Alan Titchmarsh for his dedication!

Here are his top tips for gardening success:

1. Use good quality plants and compost to give you the best possible chance.
2. Be consistent with your dead-heading – the plants should be 'clean' with no dead flowers on.
3. Don't over-water them – this kills more plants than anything else!

4. Speak to other gardeners and learn from their experience.

5. Get your timings right – for flowers, aim to plant them no earlier than the end of May.

Thanks Frank – we'll look out for you at next year's Farnham in Bloom!

SHELTERED HOUSE RESIDENTS GETTING OUT

Residents at Roundhay recently enjoyed an afternoon of entertainment with the locally renowned singer Mandy Penney.



They invited some of their family and friends to join them and everyone had a good sing along to plenty of old favourites.

Elsewhere our residents safely embraced the gradual easing of lockdown by spending plenty of time with their loved ones.

Kemnal residents had a day out at the Chocolate Frog tearooms for lunch and followed this with a spot of retail therapy whilst browsing the many independent traders.

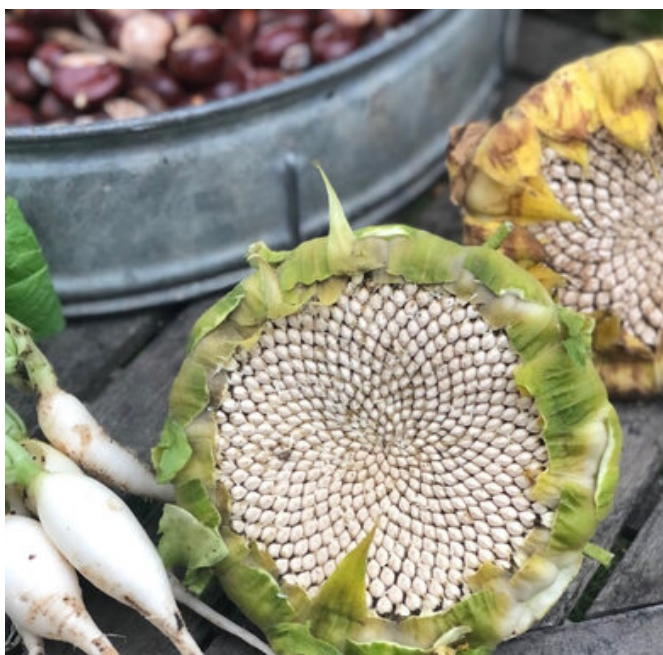


SPACE2GROW

farnham's community wellbeing garden set up to benefit the mental health and wellbeing of our local community through horticulture, conservation and conversation



Space2grow is a mental health and wellbeing charity set up specifically for the benefit of the local community on an acre of land in the middle of Farnham. By supporting the emotional wellbeing of local people, we aim to help those with existing mental health needs and tackle the increasing problem of poor and deteriorating mental health in the local area.



Set up by a Family Psychotherapist with experience of working in the NHS and CAMHS, emphasis is on improving mental health by addressing social isolation with group activities across generational and socio-economic divides taking place in outdoor spaces (and in a big indoor talking shed) for peoples' physical and mental wellbeing.

Activities at Space2grow are centred around the acre of land and the seasons and range from general gardening, specific projects (like creating a pond) to wellbeing activities. Days are split into sessions, each run by a volunteer or paid individual.

This allows us to bring a variety of people onto the acre, offering a diverse range of activities for young and old.

Some of the activities require a referral while others are free to book and join in.

Malcolm Keyser, a resident from Wey Valley House, is a regular at the garden. Attending each week, he enjoys being involved with the various projects throughout the year and can be seen here having a game of conkers!



ABBNEYFIELD WEY VALLEY REMEMBERS

As the nation remembers, some residents braved the weather and joined family and friends attending Farnham's Remembrance service at the War Memorial. Meanwhile others watched the Remembrance Sunday service at the Cenotaph, London, from the warmth of the homes.



Meeting two Abbeyfield Wey Valley Heroes, Margaret Bennet, who has just turned 105, and Anne Smith, who can't wait to be back volunteering regularly to help us all improve the lives of older people.



HAPPY 105TH BIRTHDAY MARGARET



Margaret Bennet, a resident at Wey Valley House since 2016, has just turned 105 !

Margaret enjoys numerous visits from friends and family and everyone at the home celebrated Margaret's fantastic achievement in style last month.

She also has family in New Zealand although the miles certainly don't keep them apart however as they are in regular weekly contact all year round via the wonders of modern technology.

Margaret leads the way in the AWVS "100 Club" and she is followed by Grace and Betty from Hatch Mill , Margaret, Priscilla and Trin from Ridgway Court and Dorothy, who is also part of the community at Wey Valley House. They are all proud owners of a card from Her Majesty.

Huge congratulations Margaret and the rest of the Abbeyfield Wey Valley Society 100 Club. You are all an inspiration to the rest of us at the society !

GREAT TO BE BACK!

Anne worked throughout her career as a teacher, both mainstream and in specialist education. Having spent seventeen years as a Head Teacher at Clayton Brook Primary School near Chorley, she retired in 2010 to move south to be nearer family.

Upon moving into the area, Anne began a part time role working with the Surrey CC as a Contact Supervisor, facilitating contact for children in local authority care, and their families. It was during that time she first began volunteering for Abbeyfield Wey Valley Society.

"My sister, Jane, suggested I join the team of volunteers and I'm so pleased I did. I have met some amazing people and listened to some wonderful life stories whilst enjoying their company on various outings and visits", says Anne. "Sadly, along came COVID and all of the sadness and change that has brought. I've missed the company of both the residents and staff and now can't wait to start the New Year with the volunteering team again!", she continues.

Anne (second from left below) had a smile on her face when she joined us and some of the other Abbeyfield Angels to help run a really successful tombola at the recent Christmas light switch-on. It was great to be back out and about with you again Anne – thanks to you, and all our other amazing volunteers, here's to 2022 !

