



THE ABBEYFIELD ANGEL

LIFE AT THE ABBEYFIELD WEY VALLEY SOCIETY

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As Abbeyfield Wey Valley's reputation for providing quality care in a stimulating and friendly environment continues to grow, so does our family of homes. We welcome the residents and staff of Maitland House in Reading to our community.

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In this edition we talk to Marie from Gently Strong Yoga who has designed a Yoga programme specifically aimed at improving the lives of older people. She shares her twenty-five years of experience with the residents at Maitland House every Tuesday, and the personalised sessions work wonders.



*Welcome to our first edition of the Abbeyfield Angel in 2022
from Shelley Hartley, our General Manager.*



I hope everyone has had a pleasant start to the New Year and that you are all looking forward to the spring and summer months as much as the residents and staff at AWVS are.

We have all had a busy, but very exciting start to the year and it's great to be able to now welcome onboard the residents and staff at Maitland House to our dedicated and fun loving team – we are pleased to have you on board and can't wait to work with you all !

The reputation of the Abbeyfield Wey Valley Society for providing an unrivalled care setting in a wonderful homely and enriching community seems to be growing day-by-day. This is a direct result of our amazing care teams and the dedication and passion they show on a daily basis.

Thank you so much to all our Abbeyfield Angels – you ARE the heart of our Society!

Moving into spring we have the prospect of some nicer weather along with more daylight. We hope you can join us for some of our trips and events we will be sharing with our community over the coming months.

A very important date for your diary is 25th June – the Abbeyfield Angels, volunteers and some residents will be making a “star” appearance in the Farnham Carnival. More updates to come on that, but if you are dab hand at costume making and have some spare time to help us, we would love to hear from you!

Wishing you and your families our best wishes for a safe and healthy couple of months and thank you for taking an interest in reading about the comings and goings at AWVS that make us all so proud to be part of.

See you soon, Shelley x



SPRING IS IN THE AIR

Summer, winter, and autumn may have their fans, but spring is clearly the most loveable of the four seasons. Not convinced? Here are three of the reasons why we at AWVS, think spring is great:

1. We get to explore our lovely gardens again.

Our gardeners, volunteers and some residents are busy tidying the gardens up after the recent storms and its amazing to see the signs of spring appearing daily.



2. We get to put out our hand-made bird boxes.

Seeing and hearing more birds around is good for our health. In 2017, a UK study found that the more birds people could see in their gardens, the better their mental health.

3. We all get to go on our many trips out.



Our trips are often the highlight of our week. Whether it's to the local garden centre, a famous landmark, a trip to the seaside or an afternoon on a narrow boat..we love them !

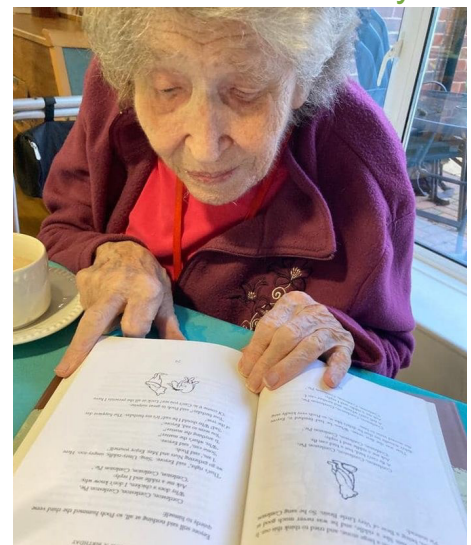


Roll on spring we say !

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



Winnie-the-Pooh Day



Flower Arranging



Australia Day



National Pizza day



Chinese New Year Feast



It's wine O'Clock, Cheers !



AWVS Happenings...

OUR NEW VIRTUAL TABLES -

We were excited to get some new toys in the homes last month. Each home received delivery of a Virtual Table for all the residents to use.

This new technology provides flexible person-centred ways of resident inclusion, and they are certainly helping create even higher engagement levels between the residents and activities teams in a very visual way.



This is having a really positive impact on the residents' wellbeing.

"When we are using the new table, all residents seem to gravitate towards it. Even some of our residents who are normally a little quieter, or more reserved, have become quickly comfortable to give it a go.

It's also great to see two or three residents working together to solve puzzles or answer quiz questions", says Helen Parlett, one of our dedicated activities team.

As the devices are portable and battery powered all residents can enjoy the benefits of the new technology, even if they are confined to bed. We hope it will also aid residents communicating with family and friends outside the home too as they can be used as a giant face time device.

USE IT OR LOSE IT?

The belief that 'exercising' our brains through mentally stimulating activities like puzzles, games and hobbies makes a lot of sense – if we want our brain to stay in peak condition, we should use it.

In fact, one of the theories about reducing or delaying cognitive ageing is referred to as the 'use it or lose it' theory.

Huge thanks go to everyone involved in raising the funds for these wonderful additions to our homes, especially to both the Farnham Round Table and the Farnham Hedgehogs for their generous donation towards one of the machines which help enable our AWVS family to keep mentally fit.

SHARING THE LOVE

Sarah from the Wild Posy Company, a local Farnham based florist, surprised the residents and staff on Valentines Day by donating lots of beautiful red roses to the Abbeyfield Angels and the residents at all our homes.

They were the icing on the cake after a full day of special valentines celebrations at each home.

A lovely gesture from our friends within the local community.

Thank You



Above : Debbie and Trundee from Maitland House, with their lovely flowers.

CONGRATULATIONS LEAH



A huge well done to Leah, one of our chefs at Wey Valley House, who has just passed her Production Chef level 2 catering course with a distinction.

Her talent for cooking is clear to be seen

Leah, pictured left, with her proud manager, Louise.

As always, there is plenty to celebrate and enjoy within the Abbeyfield Wey Valley family, bringing a smile to all our faces.



ABBEYFIELD ANGELS - FIVE TIPS TO BE HAPPY

1. Smile

'When you smile it triggers mood-boosting hormones in the brain. So even if you don't feel happy, put a smile on your face and you may soon start to feel more positive.'

2. Keep busy

'It doesn't matter whether you tidy up the garden, wash the dishes or go for a walk - any activity that helps to break up your routine and gives you a sense of achievement will do the trick.'

3. Talk to someone

'It doesn't matter whether you meet up face to face, talk on the phone, chat online or use Skype, connecting with other people helps to bring you out of yourself.'

4. Help others

'Research shows that helping other people will help to lift your mood. So do a favour for a friend, donate to charity, or volunteer for AWVS.'

5. Live in the moment

'If you're feeling low, try to pay attention to what you can see, hear and feel at the present moment. This will help you to feel calm and hopefully bring you back into emotional balance.'

BRILLIANT BEAVERS

Thanks to the 5th Farnham (Bourne) Beavers who, as part of their badge work, individually hand-painted twelve lovely plant pots and planted an array of flowers which will be blooming this spring.



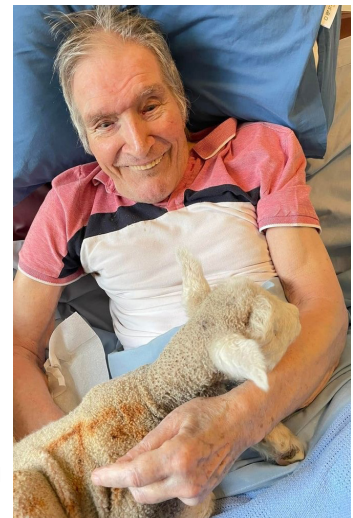
A representative of the Beavers kindly dropped off the results of their labour to our Hatch Mill home and they are now sitting proudly on the patio at the front of the home for all to enjoy.

Great Job Beavers - thanks !

A SURPRISE VISIT FROM SOME FRIENDS

Mill Cottage Farm Experience is a local organisation run by Sarah & Tom Main.

They live on a smallholding near Alton, Hampshire with their extended family which includes Poll Dorset sheep, Golden Guernsey goats, Kune Kune pigs, alpacas and a variety of chickens, ducks, Pilgrim Geese, Norfolk Black Turkeys and lots more, - all looked after by their trusty Cavalier King Charles Spaniels.



Sarah & Tom surprised the communities at our AWVS Farnham care homes recently with a visit from not only them, but all the animals too!

The staff and residents shared stories with them about their experiences in farming, their own pets, and their love for nature.

It was a truly inspiring afternoon and the smiles on the faces of all concerned says it all.



MAITLAND HOUSE



Abbeyfield Wey Valley Society welcomes everyone at Maitland House in Reading into the family.

Abbeyfield Wey Valley Society has been operating for over thirty-five years in and around the Farnham area with Sally Tidy, our CEO having been at the helm for the past thirty years and now ably supported by Shelley Hartley, the General Manager of the Society (who has been with us even longer in varying roles!).

The pair are supported by an experienced and dedicated management team whilst an extremely passionate and knowledgeable Board of Trustees from varying business backgrounds help guide the direction of the Society.

Last year, we were approached by the Trustees at Abbeyfield Reading Society to look into the idea of merging, and assuming the management of their Abbeyfield House home in Reading.



They felt that we had more industry management experience and structure to help move the home forward and release its undoubted potential.

After many months of due diligence, we are excited and proud to say that on 1 February, the Reading Home has now become part of our Abbeyfield Wey Valley Society family.

We welcome all the staff and residents to our community and can't wait to work alongside the excellent care team to introduce the wonderful sense of community that our other homes are so well known for.

The first job was to change the name, so we held a vote inviting all residents and staff at the home to take part – the winning name was Maitland House, and work has already started on an improvement plan that will ensure Maitland House provides a first class home to both live and work within.



We hope it will of course, become synonymous with the amazing sense of community all our AWVS homes provide, and offer the best value high quality care in its local area.

With twenty-eight ensuite rooms, two lounge areas and a well laid out garden with a heated gazebo, there is plenty of work to be done, but our team are more than up for the task! We will keep you updated on the progress in the next edition along with introducing you to some of the great team at Maitland House.



Marie, from Gently Strong Yoga has been working with Yoga for twenty-five years and she clearly proves that getting the most out of your body through yoga, has no age barriers.



YOGA - FOR EVERYONE

My name is Marie Groucott and I run Gentlystrongyoga.

On Tuesday afternoons I run a chair based yoga group for the residents of Maitland House. As a yoga therapist I am highly experienced in using the tools of Yoga to improve people's well being, whatever their age or ability.



I work with many different groups in our community to support their health and particularly in this last year, focusing on supporting and decreasing the effects on our bodies and our minds of living through a pandemic.

In yoga we use simple movements, breathing and guided meditations to increase our confidence and connection to what each individual body can do, here and now.

We have a lot of fun in class and find that it raises peoples energy particularly in that post lunch slump. Everyone is different, and each of us have our own individual challenges, but we come together as a group, continuously surprising ourselves to what we can do.

Using movements to strengthen us, work towards better posture and range of movement, feels good!

There is always a sense of accomplishment and a felling of blowing the cobwebs away at the end of the session. We will often open the doors for a few minutes at the end, whatever the weather, and fill our warmed up bodies and lungs with fresh air and the smells of spring coming.

Practicing yoga can help us to use our bodies to the best of our abilities with a real sense of satisfaction, a safe way to keep moving and feeling stronger.

What is really useful is that there is an emphasis on how we breath and working towards healthy and functional breathing that has a real effect on our energy levels, together with the ability to also relax and sleep well.

Sometimes this involves using simple sounds and hummming together to support this work which can really lift the spirits. We also work to find focus and concentration following my lead through moving meditations and imaginations to keep those brain cells working out too!

It's always a great afternoon well spent helping improve both the body and soul of the Maitland House residents.



gentlystrongyoga