



Abbey Days...



NEWS, VIEWS AND COMMENT FROM ABBEYFIELD BRISTOL & KEYNSHAM SOCIETY | ISSUE TWO WINTER 2020

A day to remember

Remembrance Day is always a special time for residents and team members across our houses and coming together to remember our fallen heroes, after the difficult times we've experienced in 2020, seemed even more important to us all this year.

Remembrance Day has been observed to remember service people who died in the line of duty since the end of the first World War. Not even a global pandemic was going to stop us marking this special day.



When residents were unable to attend services or visit memorials, team members across our Bristol houses were galvanized into action to ensure residents were able to pay their respects.

At Abbeyfield House in Redland, Deputy Manager Kirsty Hale and the team built their own Cenotaph out of cardboard, which took pride of place in the dining room during Remembrance week.

Said Kirsty, "As our wonderful residents were unable to leave the house this year, we thought we'd bring the memorial service to them. Many of the residents wrote notes containing special memories that we left around the "house Cenotaph" along with the paper poppies that we had made". Around our houses, residents were glued to TV sets for the BBC coverage. "We ate Vicky's poppy cakes and had a really lovely morning", continued Kirsty.



Good wishes and thanks from Frances

Well, 2020 has certainly been a challenging year.

Our wonderful residents have adapted amazingly well to 'the new different', keeping busy with activities and events, as you'll read elsewhere in the newsletter. We're so grateful for the ongoing support of families and friends, too.

The fantastic teams in all our houses have managed brilliantly with the changing guidance - I'm so proud of everyone, and would like to say a very heartfelt 'thank you' to each and every one of them.

We're currently planning a lovely festive season to keep spirits up as we chug our way through the cold and grey months. We're also looking forward to 2021 in the hope that vaccines will enable us to live rather more normally. Their development is really



something to celebrate and we will, of course, keep you informed with news about that.

Wishing you all a healthy and happy New Year. Stay safe and stay strong...

Frances x

Frances Stretton, Chief Executive



Meet House Manager Suzanne

We catch up with Suzanne McKenzie, manager of our houses in Redland and Henleaze.

How did you hear about Abbeyfield?

Not a lot of people know that my connection with the charity goes back to my childhood. My father ran the St Andrews Boys Club in Bermondsey and knew Abbeyfield's founder, Richard Carr-Gomm. He was later the President of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, where he met with Mr Carr-Gomm again several times. Abbeyfield used to, and still does, welcome volunteers from the scheme each year.

What did you do before Abbeyfield?

I have a nursing background and also managed a care home. I've been here over 10 years now and have seen so many great changes, including the refurbishment of Abbeyfield houses in Keynsham and Hanham.

Why is Abbeyfield special to you?

Abbeyfield is special because it gives people a new lease of life. Many residents tell me how they used to be lonely living on their own, and in our houses, they get to meet new friends and enjoy companionship once more. Residents also rave about the delicious meals – especially the men!

Welcome to our family

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, we have been delighted to welcome new residents to our houses over the last few months.

Home Farm Way

Mr Harry Sellick
Mr Catherine Kendrick

Keynsham

Mr Ted Hillier
Mrs Margaret Evans
Mrs Lesley Benfield

Kift Lodge

Mr Jack Taylor
Mrs Valerie Pocock
Mrs Pamela Lewis
Mrs Valerie Tyler

Thelma is 90!

We had a very special afternoon at Kift Lodge last month, when Thelma Kitchener celebrated her 90th birthday.

Team members decorated the day room with flowers and balloons, and residents joined in for a special tea party. Thelma has lived at Kift Lodge since 2014 and says she has "enjoyed the care and company" ever since.



"My birthday was AMAZING!" continued Thelma, "I'd planned a big get-together with my family but the 'silent enemy' put paid to that, so to have such a lovely day in my Abbeyfield house meant so much to me! Without the input of the staff, this could not have happened. Thank you".

Happy birthday, Thelma!



Winter wonderland

Our thanks go to Peter and Julie Whitehead, the son and daughter-in-law of Dorothy Whitehead who lives at Abbeyfield House in Redland. Peter and Julie have been hard at work, creating a winter wonderland in the summer house, so all residents and their families can really feel at home during garden visits. Said Deputy House manager Kirsty Hale, "I must say it looks absolutely beautiful. They've transformed the space and done a fantastic job! Thank you from all of us!".



Horticultural Recognition

Abbeyfield House in Keynsham had a very special surprise recently when the Royal Horticultural Society's Britain in Bloom awarded the house a Certificate of Recognition.

Each year, the house takes part in the RHS community Keynsham in Bloom initiative which encourages communities to take pride in gardens and green spaces. Much at Abbeyfield House in Keynsham centres around its delightful garden and the house benefits from the work done by wonderfully-talented volunteers as well as team members and residents, who also help with looking after the garden. Said house manager, Charlene Fleck, "Each year we take part in the Keynsham in Bloom trail. Sadly, it was cancelled this year, but so far, we've created flower and plant displays in umbrellas, a bike and even Bill and Ben (The Flowerpot Men). Residents aren't obliged to help to look after the garden, although many do, and it's there for them all to enjoy".

Winter Fun

Rain and cold certainly don't stop play across our Abbeyfield Houses.

Residents are often entertained with a variety of activities, ranging from quizzes, film evenings, keep fit and craft activities. Lovely photo here of residents at Abbeyfield House in Easter Compton enjoying a painting lesson with talented artist, and team member, Lauren.



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