

# SUMMER NEWSLETTER

News from Elizabeth Finn Homes



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## Welcome

Welcome to the summer edition of our Elizabeth Finn Homes newsletter! It is always a delight to share the news from across our homes.

I am struck by the diverse adventures and activities that take place, each reflecting the vibrant life within our community. From trips to the Natural History Museum to the exceptional arts and crafts projects, I find each story inspiring. Marking National Biscuit Day with baking sessions and enjoying celebratory high teas are just a few examples of the joyous moments we all cherish.

It is exciting to share several new staff initiatives designed to uphold our commitment to being an exemplary employer, supporting careers in care. It is these resources that foster a supportive, inclusive environment for all. One of our most significant updates is the introduction of a new family-friendly parental leave policy. Looking to support our staff during such a critical time

in their lives, this policy is a reflection of our dedication to providing a work environment that values and supports the well-being of our employees and their families.

We are currently conducting a pulse survey to gather valuable feedback from our staff, alongside this, we will soon be sharing both a Family and Friends Survey, and in July, we will launch a Residents Survey. These surveys are integral to our ongoing promise to listen to your views, recognise our strengths, and identify any areas for improvement.

Together all these elements share one goal, to continue to deliver outstanding care in homely, supportive environments, where everyone feels welcomed and truly cherished as part of the Elizabeth Finn community.



## 5 minutes with...

### Dianne Giles

#### Regional Human Resources Business Partner

Dianne started her career in human resources 20 years ago with B&Q, working in various roles over a 16-year period before deciding on a change. She then moved to the care sector and in 2023 joined Elizabeth Finn Homes as Regional HR Business Partner.

Her role is to support, guide and coach the Leadership teams offering the very best support and development for their teams.

#### Why did you choose care as a sector to work in?

When I left B&Q I wanted to do something completely different, and an opportunity arose to work for Brighterkind care homes. I was hooked straight away as I felt like I made a real difference to people's lives. Even those small moments interacting with residents makes every minute of my job worth it.

#### What are you most proud of in your career to date?

Within my role I am able to support and coach individuals to progress their careers and sometime push themselves out of their comfort zone. I'm very proud to see so many successes over the years.

#### What has been your biggest challenge?

At times, it's removing the myth of 'HR' – some people think we're only a team you see when you have done something wrong. That's not true! There are so many elements to my role, and most are positive and so I work really hard to remove that barrier and build effective relationships.

#### What would you say to someone wanting to start a career in HR?

Absolutely do it! We are the unsung heroes at times, but the role is so rewarding, and no day is ever the same.

#### What is the biggest issue currently with regards to HR in the care sector?

Employment law updates are frequent, so we need to keep updated and remain legally compliant. Recruitment and retention in the care sector has always been a challenge and we constantly strive to stand out from other providers and be an employer of choice.

#### What is your favourite place to visit?

My family and I love Cyprus, this has become a very special place for us to visit as often as possible. My son and his fiancée are getting married there in September.

#### What would we most likely find you doing when not at work?

Spending time with my two grandchildren, aged eight and nine. They are at such a fun age, and I love making memories with them. I'm very lucky to have such a close bond with them both.

#### Do you have a life philosophy?

Just to try my best in everything I do, and that it's okay to not be okay at times as we are only human.

#### Who do you most admire?

My dad! He made me the person I am today. Sadly, he passed away in 2013 but he never gave up on anything in life. He worked hard to provide for his family and be successful, and he was a fixer of everything! I hope I have done him proud with my life choices now.

#### If you could do any one thing in your life, what would that be?

To take some time out and travel across America. I have already been to the US 21 times but there is so much I haven't seen. I'd love to rent a RV, get on that open road and see where it takes me. To note – I might need a hand parking the RV at times!

## Our CEO out and about



Olivia recently joined Chef Glen at our Eversfield Care Home to serve up some fabulous dishes to our residents – much fun and a very tasty lunch was enjoyed by all.

Earlier in May, Olivia had a very busy day at The Lodge, engaging in some activities with residents and listening to the community choir.



A visit to Rush Court and chance to join the craft session, thank you to residents Mary and Miri for creative direction! Also attending a meeting with the Clinical Care Managers from across the group to talk strategy, values, social purpose and accountability.





## New Family Leave Policy

We are delighted to introduce our new ground-breaking parental leave policy which we hope will influence others in the sector.

According to findings issued by Maternity Action in 2023, 71% of women on maternity leave worry about money. To reduce spending, three-quarters turn their heating off or down and a quarter skip meals.

Today the basic rate statutory maternity pay is just 47% of the National Living wage, in comparison to 2021 when it was 62.5%.

In line with our commitment to being an outstanding employer, and with the full support of charity owners Turn2us, we have launched a progressive parental leave pay policy that aims to provide all our employees who become parents the opportunity to take time to bond with, support, and raise their child during the first year of the child's life, or in the case of adoption, the first year of an employee becoming a parent to the child.

This marks a significant milestone in the care home group's strategic objectives to

provide outstanding and inclusive careers in care, operating as an exemplar employer and indicates a firm commitment to supporting staff as they become new parents.

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## Our Champions

Our workplace champions were established to advocate best practices and promote these standards across Elizabeth Finn Homes. They support staff with ideas and methods to enhance and recognise key areas of staff and resident inclusion, health and wellbeing.

In May, the Cotswold Home Champions hosted a Champions working lunch and showcased some of the areas they are supporting, notably Nutrition & Hydration, Dignity, Falls Prevention and EDIB – Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging.



## UK National Walking Month

Our Rush Court Care Home recently held a successful sponsored walk, raising funds for Turn2us during UK National Walking Month. Residents and staff collectively walked 100 miles by completing laps around the garden.

The event concluded with a lively celebration featuring a saxophonist and afternoon tea. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who participated

and donated to this meaningful event!

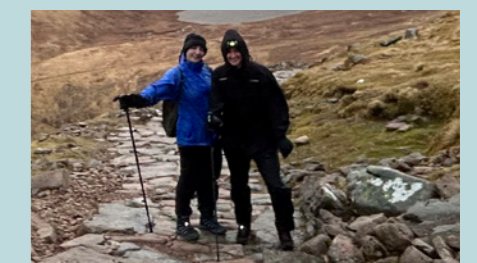
Turn2us is a national charity providing practical help to people who are facing financial insecurity. It's purpose is to offer support to those facing financial shocks and to challenge the systems and perceptions that cause such issues.




## Staff and residents take on fundraising for Turn2us.


Jayne, Executive Assistant, took on a sponsored climb of the UK's highest mountain Ben Nevis with two of her closest friends Shannon and Holly. Despite the 80mph winds, they did not give up. Waking in the middle of the night to avoid the storms, they managed to reach the top and make it back down in an amazing time of only five and half hours.

**"It was a great experience," says Jayne. "Thanks to all your generosity we were able to exceed our fundraising target, with a total of £960 raised for the important work of Turn2us."**






Bring love



Welcome all



Inspire more



Act with purpose

## Pulse Survey

This month we launched our latest staff survey. An opportunity for all our staff to tell us what they think, where we are doing well and what we can improve. Regular feedback from our staff helps guide us in being the best we can be.

We look forward to collating all the comments and incorporating this feedback into our decision making and wider corporate strategies.

## Activities across our Homes

Our residents and staff have been busy with activities and outings which this month included looking back at D-Day. We also celebrate the amazing work of our lovely volunteers.

Some beautiful artwork created by Val and Katie during the decoupage activity at The Lodge.



### National Tea Day

Celebrating National Tea Day with a proper English tea party.



### St Georges Day

Our homes went to town for St George, with special lunch menus, decorations and even our own St George himself made an appearance at Rashwood.



Making flowers for St Georges Day



Celebrating 80 Years since D-Day

### Farnham Birdworld visit

Some of our Merlewood residents recently visited Birdworld in Farnham, seeing some of the 180 species to be found there and enjoying a tour of the gardens. The day ended perfectly with tea and cake at the café on site.



### Merlewood residents at the Natural History Museum



### National Biscuit Day



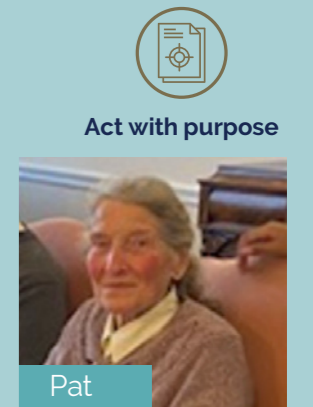
### Thank you to all our wonderful volunteers

Christine has been spending time with our residents at Halliwell for over 25 years and never tires of listening to their stories.

At Merlewood, retired physiotherapist Pat, helps out on our regular trips out and now also runs our weekly coffee morning.



Christine



Pat



Act with purpose



## Spiced orange and ginger biscuits

### Ingredients

- 175g unsalted butter softened
- 85g dark brown sugar
- 1½ tsp ground ginger
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp coarsely ground black pepper
- 1 orange, zested and 3-4 tsp juice
- 225g plain flour
- 50g candied orange peel
- 50g stem ginger chopped into small chunks
- 100g icing sugar

### Method

#### Step 1

Mix the butter and sugar with a wooden spoon. Stir in the spices, lemon zest and flour, then tip in the candied lemon peel and stem ginger and mix into a dough. Divide the dough in two and shape each half into a log about 5cm across. Wrap in cling film, then chill until hardened.

#### Step 2

Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Slice the logs into 1cm-thick rounds,

place on two baking trays lined with baking parchment and bake for 12-15 mins. Leave to fully cool on the tray.

#### Step 3

Mix the lemon juice with the icing sugar to make a thin glaze. Brush over the biscuits and leave to set.

#### Step 4

*Enjoy!*



## International Nurses Day

In celebration of International Nurses Day 2024, our residents and staff celebrated all those in the field of nursing, giving special thanks for everything they do.

Our Eversfield Care Home hosted a special nurses' lunch, bringing together staff members and residents who used to work as nurses. It was a heartwarming tribute to the dedication and compassion of nurses, highlighting the important role they play in the community. Attendees shared

stories, enjoyed a delicious afternoon tea, and celebrated their invaluable contributions to healthcare.

The lunch proved such a success that a new nurses' social group has been formed, providing a social outlet for residents who are ex-nurses (and those who wanted to be nurses!) to connect and reminisce with each other. This is cleverly named as the NHS group – Nurses High tea Society!



## First employee uses Volunteering Leave

Elizabeth Finn's Health & Safety Manager, Steve Andrews, was our first staff member to use our new volunteering leave. The leave allows staff to take 2 days paid volunteering leave a year to support an organisation of their choice. This enabled Steve to take a Friday afternoon off to set up a weekend camp for his local Scout group, of which he is a Leader.

"I love volunteering with the scouts and find seeing the scouts learn new skills very

rewarding. Camps are always exciting times with little sleep! This time the scouts took part in a zip wire, tunnelling, abseiling and learnt axe skills.

Volunteering for my local community is very rewarding and I am delighted that Elizabeth Finn Homes fully support this."



**Inspire more**





## Focus on — Halliwell —

Situated on the outskirts of Tunbridge Wells, a charming town in Kent, Halliwell boasts an enviable location in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, just 30 miles southeast of London.

Originally a private country residence called Laverstock, the house was offered for sale by public auction in March 1951 and purchased by the Worshipful Company of Innholders for conversion into a care home under the management of the charity the Distressed Gentlefolk's Aid Association set up by Elizabeth Finn.

Today, Halliwell offers 64 light, airy bedrooms providing residential and nursing care to the highest of standards in a beautiful, homely environment. Residents enjoy outstanding views across the stunning 78 acres and 6-acre lake of Royal Tunbridge Wells, Dunorlan Park as well as extensive gardens.

The home has recently had a dining room renovation which has included a new Lounge Bar.

Eileen Allison heads up the team at Halliwell, having been there for almost nine years, four as Clinical Care Manager and five as General Manager. Over the years Eileen has added so much to Halliwell, her passion and commitment show in every aspect of the home, from the caring team to the welcoming atmosphere.

"The thing I love most about Halliwell is the feeling of love, peace and calm within the Home that comes from all the team but also our fabulous location and beautiful gardens on the edge of stunning parkland!"

One of the unique aspects of life at Halliwell is its choir, the Wells Singers. Eileen formed the choir in late 2019 knowing that music and singing brought great benefits with regards to wellbeing. She is now Choir Leader.

The choir was instantly popular with the residents and from the outset the main aim was to have fun, sing together and hopefully entertain the rest of the Home and their relatives. They meet once a week for about an hour and a half in the Piano Bar where there is a grand piano, played currently by Stephen Freeman.

The choir follow a chosen theme which can range from Country Music, Songs from Musicals, even Mamma Mia! and always a Christmas special, and spend about three months preparing for each concert.



The most recent event was the "The World Tour 2024" performed to open the new dining room. It focused on a collection of songs from around the world, and the concert video has been viewed over 1000 times on Facebook.

Being part of the choir has huge benefits for the residents, as Eileen puts it: "It is speech therapy, chest physio and a huge endorphin rush all in one session!"

The new Dining Room and Piano Bar is a beautiful space for residents and their families, with a guest table that they can book in advance. A stunning collection of architectural drawings of iconic London landmarks was recently added. Happy Hour Bar sessions commenced in early June, at which Eileen swaps her role of Choir Leader and Home Manager for that of the "Landlady"!



## Update from our gardens

### Celebrating National Gardening Week

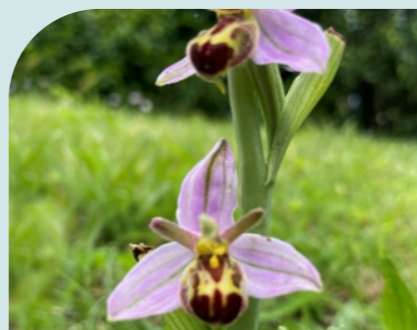
During National Gardening Week, Elizabeth Finn homes proudly celebrated their stunning gardens. Bursting with vibrant flowers and even a rare bee orchid, the gardens are a haven for wildlife, including a melodious nightingale and majestic peacocks.

Our dedicated gardeners do an amazing job, creating and maintaining these beautiful spaces. Residents also enjoy getting their hands dirty, taking part in various gardening activities that bring joy and a sense of accomplishment. The gardens not only enhance the

aesthetic appeal of our homes but also provide a serene and therapeutic environment for all. A heartfelt thank you to everyone involved in keeping our gardens so beautiful.



Meet Dotty, a resident at Rush Court home. Dotty is a very keen gardener and has turned the little patio outside her room into a haven of beautiful blooms. She is out most days looking after her greenery, flowers and tomato plants, which the residents and staff also enjoy.

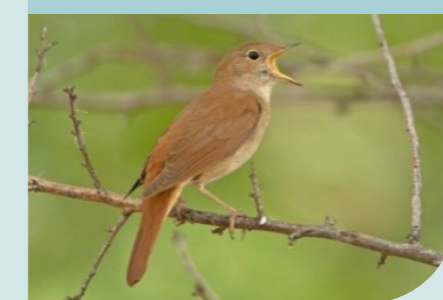


Bee orchids are flowering again at Rush Court. Last year a Rush Court resident identified the orchids growing in the gardens and following careful management by our resident Gardener, Huw Owen, about 20 flowers have returned this year.

The plant is one of the most attractive orchids in the UK, in bloom from late May until July. The flowers resemble a female bee, a strategy which is meant to encourage pollination.

A nightingale has been heard singing at Grove Court this spring. First noted by our Gardener, Paul. Whilst this rare bird can be clearly heard from the home, it could not be spotted, they are very difficult to see as they usually keep hidden.

The nightingale is renowned as one of the loudest and most beautiful singers in the bird world, often singing at night – hence its name. Grove Court feels very lucky to have one in their garden.



# Join us!

We'd love to welcome you to be part of our community.

We may have vacancies for residents or staff at your local Elizabeth Finn home. Get in touch today to arrange a visit or join us for a cup of tea.

## Our portfolio of homes

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### **The Cotswold Home**

Burford, Oxfordshire – Tel: 01993 824225

### **Eversfield**

Reigate, Surrey – Tel: 01737 229899

### **Grove Court**

Woodbridge, Suffolk – Tel: 01394 446500

### **Halliwell**

Tunbridge Wells, Kent – Tel: 01892 525909

### **The Lodge**

Exeter, Devon – Tel: 01392 271663

### **Merlewood**

Virginia Water, Surrey – Tel: 01344 845314

### **Rashwood**

Droitwich, Worcestershire – Tel: 01527 861258

### **Rush Court**

Wallingford, Oxfordshire – Tel: 01491 837223



A wholly-owned subsidiary of the charity Turn2us

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