

WINTER NEWSLETTER

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Home Focus

The Cotswold Home

Hello from our Chief Executive

As I reflect on the final months of last year, I'm filled with joy and gratitude for the warmth that filled our homes.

The "Go Orange" campaign supporting Turnzus highlighted our shared commitment to those facing financial insecurity. Thank you all for your tireless enthusiasm—your efforts truly make a difference.

The festive season brought our community together beautifully. My Christmas began with a wonderful talk on traditions at Halliwell, followed by a harpist at The Cotswold Home and delicious mince pies at Rush Court, all setting the tone for

carol concerts, musical recitals, wreath-making, tree decorating, and more. Every home glowed with festive cheer, with countless trees adorned in stunning style.

Most striking to me has been the love and warmth throughout our homes, reflecting our values perfectly. This newsletter captures that spirit, thanks to incredible photos of your efforts and an inspiring article from Louise about the dedication of our social engagement teams.



As we welcome 2025, I look forward to spring's transformations as we continue to live and work in places of beauty, purpose, and joy.

Warmly,

Olivia Curno,
Chief Executive

Our CEO out and about



In December Olivia joined the senior management team for a Forum Day and Annual Review, looking back on the key issues and achievements of 2024. A time for some team bonding and catching up.



Olivia visited Grove Court to celebrate the Go Orange fundraising activities and in December she spent some time at Halliwell, chatting to residents about Christmas traditions. She also visited The Cotswold Home to enjoy a harpist and mince pies at Rush Court.

Parental Leave Policy in practice

Millie and Jessica are enjoying their parental leave with their new baby boys, supported by our new policy that offers enhanced peace of mind and improved pay. We're proud to foster a workplace that values family and provides the support our team needs during this special time.



5 minutes with...

Louise Barrett

Social Events Lead

Louise began her career in the health care sector at a young age, starting out as a care assistant at just 17. This experience helped progress her passion for helping others and led to a deeper understanding of working in a health care environment.

A few years later Louise achieved a NVQ Level 2 in Health and Social Care, followed by a Level 3 Diploma in the Health and Social Care Pathway. At this time she joined the team at Rush Court in the role of Senior Care Assistant.

Eight years later Louise was prompted to seek a new direction and took on a social events role. Over two years down the line, Louise is loving her place in the care team having found a passion for enhancing the social well-being of others and continuing her commitment to making a positive impact to the lives of our residents at Rush court.

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

Growing up, I had always envisioned a career that involved working with people. I am compassionate in helping others and the joy it brings seeing a smile on a resident's face because of something I have said or done for them, is very rewarding.

What has been your biggest challenge?

Stepping into the role of the Social Events Lead shortly after lockdown restrictions were lifted presented some challenges.

I needed to encourage residents to rediscover the joys of being together and socialising again, many had grown accustomed to the solitude of their rooms from having to isolate during covid.

I also had to reinvigorate the social networks with our community, rebuilding relationships lost during the pandemic.

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

Embracing the challenges I took on as Social Events Lead has been rewarding and transformative. In particular, following Covid I was able to help the return to normality for our staff and residents, rebuilding a sense of belonging and friendship which was very important for us all.

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

Having worked in the health care industry for over 20 years, I would say that it is a very rewarding job and gives you fulfilment seeing the residents happy. Take the opportunity to develop your skills by doing the relevant training and NVQs offered as this will help you to progress in your career.

What is your favourite place to visit?

Having been to many places around the world, my favourite destination has to be Jamaica, it's a beautiful place with white sandy beaches and turquoise sea.



The people are so warm and friendly, they really make you feel welcomed and at home.

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

Spending time with my family is an important part of my life, and nothing brings me more joy than taking my son to his football matches at the weekend. I like going to Zumba classes, they allow me to unwind and keep fit. Otherwise, you will find me nestled comfortably on the sofa, with a blanket engrossed in a crossword or enjoying a good movie. Whether it's family time or personal pursuits, these moments are essential to me.

Do you have a life philosophy?

To live my life the best that I can and do the best that I can to help others.

Who do you most admire?

I admire my sister the most, she has been my inspiration all my life. With a ten-year gap between us, she has been like a mother figure to me. We have both been through a lot health wise and she is always there for me when I need her.

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

I have been fortunate to do most of things that I have wanted to do in life, I would however like to touch an Orca but generally I would just like to live a happy healthy life with my family.

World Kindness Day

November 13th was World Kindness Day and we celebrated this across our homes in many different ways. It provided the opportunity to reflect on our value – **Bring Love**: we're always here for each other, giving and receiving meaning through warmth, kindness



and compassion, treating everybody with loving care and keeping everyone's happiness close to heart.

We know that kindness improves individual and collective wellbeing, and that participating in acts of kindness helps establish kindness as a core value and a social norm. It has a ripple effect, bringing positive feelings to a wider group, one person's kindness can make the day brighter for many others.



Overall, being kind improves mental wellbeing, encourages others to follow suit and can lead to an environment where kindness is celebrated, valued, and naturally expected. Something we aim for across our homes.

Kelly Lockwood General Manager



Kelly joined Grove Court in January 2021, as the Home Administrator. "The home had the best reputation locally with good values and ethics. I had a voice, my ideas were listened to, and I was allowed to make positive change," says Kelly.

After the home manager retired, Kelly was asked to apply for the role of General Manager. Two years on and Kelly is so proud of her achievements. "This isn't a job, it truly is my "work family", she says. "I love what I do and feel privileged to run this beautiful Home and to support Turn2us in doing so."

Elena Filipescu Unit Manager



Elena is a passionate Registered General Nurse with a decade of experience in care. She joined the team at The Cotswold Home, in September 2023, being promoted to Unit Manager at the end of 2024.

"From the outset, I was very impressed with the values promoted by the company, this helped me to put into practice my medical knowledge and to promote person-centred care. Elizabeth Finn Homes gives opportunities for development and I am proud to be part of the team!"

Chloe Timmins Business Support Assistant



I began my journey with the company in 2018 as a Food Service Assistant at Eversfield and since then I have progressed to the role of Business Support Assistant. I recently completed my NVQ in Level 3 Business Administration, achieving a distinction. I felt fully supported throughout the course and very proud of my result.

Our homes Go Orange

in support of Challenge Poverty Week

October brought Challenge Poverty Week and as part of our commitment to supporting the work of Turn2us, we got up to all sorts of things, all involving the colour orange!



The highlight of the week was Thursday, 17th October, designated as International Day for Eradicating Poverty, when our Go Orange campaign came into its own with our chefs providing an orange-themed menu of delicious dishes and everyone was encouraged to wear something orange. Orange-themed fundraising activities were enjoyed, including an Orange Raffle, Orange Bake Sale, Orange themed-quiz and Orange-related crafts.

Tree planting

We are delighted to have been donated 12,000 tree saplings from the Woodland Trust. We had many volunteers attend to help with the big plant in October at our Grove Court home. The trees, which consist of several species including hawthorn, dogwood, wild cherry, silver birch, rowan and hazel will be a haven for wildlife and create a beautiful walkway and glade for our future generations of residents.



We can't wait to monitor their progress and see them grow.

Founders Day

We're thrilled to announce our first **Founders Day** on Monday, 5 May 2025. Celebrating the rich heritage we share with our partner charity, Turn2us, this will include celebrations and opportunities to fundraise in support of their work across the week.

Adding an exciting twist to this fundraising is Sonia Evans, Social Engagement Lead at The Cotswold Home and Steve Parish, Maintenance Manager at Rush Court who are bravely taking on a skydive for Turn2us on Sunday 4 May.

"My stomach is doing somersaults at the thought of jumping out of a plane, but wow what an incredible experience and for such a worthy cause. Turn2us provide vital support for those in financial difficulties," Sonia told us.



There are still opportunities to join Sonia and Steve – if you know anyone who fancies an unforgettable experience – this could be the moment! Visit www.turn2us.org.uk/skydive for more information.

There will be ways for everyone to get involved across the week and more information will follow. Let's make this Founders Day truly unforgettable!

Turn2us winter appeal

This winter Turn2us are running its winter appeal to help bring warmth and joy to those in need.

"My name is Matt, and I'm a recently trained teacher living with my wife and two young children. Despite having a 'good job' soaring living costs left us struggling to provide the

basics. We were forced to make tough choices.

"Thankfully, with Turn2us' help, we made it through. By accessing their services we gained breathing space financially and the confidence to cope with the hardship...without Turn2us, our situation could have been much worse."

Last winter, our partner charity Turn2us, received over 2,500 requests for support for essential items like boilers, cookers, and furniture – items that turn a house into a home.

This winter, our support will help many more families, offering them a fair start in 2025. Scan the QR to donate.

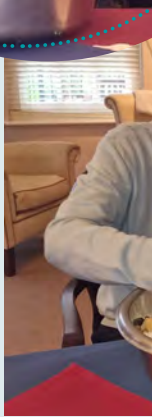


Seasonal activities at our Homes

Christmas and New Year saw our homes transformed into hives of activity starting with Stir Up Sunday in November when Christmas cake preparations began, followed by wreath making, Christmas fairs, decorations, lights and lots of music, both from our own music groups and visiting choirs.

Fabulous food was enjoyed throughout December with a traditional Christmas lunch served up by our catering teams.

Here is just a snapshot of what we got up to!





Award finalists



We were thrilled to have been selected as finalists for no less than four categories in the Caring UK Awards 2024. Our glamorous team were out in force at the awards dinner held in Leicester on December 5th.

The awards celebrate excellence and achievement in the care industry and we were shortlisted in the following categories: Community Involvement, Catering Team, Best Outdoor Environment and Care Employer of the Year.

Art from the heart

Val is a resident at The Lodge in Exeter, where she has found a new passion for drawing.

Art has brought Val much happiness and has become a cherished part of her daily routine.

Prior to Christmas she created some Christmas card designs that featured in our own Elizabeth Finn card packs.

Talking about her designs, Val commented: "The squirrel featured on one of my cards visits me regularly and I have fondly named him Harold. I didn't paint much before coming to The Lodge, but I decided I could not sit around and do nothing, so I joined in the class and I haven't looked back."

Val is also a musician and the benefits of remaining creative are many. Engaging in artistic activities can boost cognitive function, reduce stress, and improve overall happiness.

We celebrate creativity in all its forms, knowing that it enriches the lives of our residents and fosters a sense of belonging and joy. Val's beautiful artwork is a testament to the enjoyment of creativity at any age.



Our new nursing wing at Eversfield is open!

In November we welcomed the first residents to the new nursing wing at our Eversfield home in Reigate. We now have 16 beautifully furnished nursing rooms located in a purpose-built extension attached to the main care home.

Welcoming two new directors to our team

Meet James Hamilton Operations Director



James joined us in late 2024, having worked in the care sector for nearly 20 years. Over this time, he has worked across nursing, residential, dementia, learning disability, autism, and complex injury and

has a proven track record of delivering quality and profitability across this wide range of care settings.

Meet Peter Norgate Director of People



Peter also joined Elizabeth Finn Homes' Leadership Team at the end of 2024, bringing a wealth of experience and a proven track record in human resource management and organisational development.

Passionate about fostering inclusive careers, Peter is focused on aligning opportunities with our values: Bring Love, Welcome All, Inspire More, and Act with Purpose.

The Golden Heart Awards



We are delighted to announce our new employee reward programme, the Elizabeth Finn Homes Golden Hearts Awards.



This new initiative is designed to recognise and celebrate our exceptional people and is linked to our core values of Bring Love, Welcome All, Inspire More, and Act with Purpose.

The annual awards aim to reinforce and recognise these behaviours, to reward

actions and behaviours we stand for and seek to achieve every day.

Look out for more information in the coming weeks. It promises to be a very special event highlighting the amazing work of all our employees.

If you are interested in joining our Elizabeth Finn Homes family, we'd love to hear from you: recruitment@elizabethfinn.co.uk

Bombay Potato, Lentil & Spinach Curry – Serves 6

Ingredients

- 700g Red potatoes washed
- 300g Large Spanish onions
- 150g Bag of baby spinach
- 100g Red split lentils
- 2 tsp Medium madras curry powder
- 1 Large clove of garlic
- 400ml Coconut milk
- 400ml Double cream
- 100g Unsalted butter
- 480g Easy cook basmati rice
- 150g Button mushrooms
- 1 tsp Garam Masala
- 3 or 4 Whole cloves
- Salt/Pepper
- ¼ of a Red chilli
- Olive oil
- Vegetable stock cube
- 5g Fresh coriander
- 1 tsp Ground turmeric
- ½ tsp Ground cumin
- Naan bread and mango chutney to serve

Method

Step 1 Soak the red lentils in water for a minimum of 2 hours, drain and set aside.

Step 2 Wash, peel and chop the potatoes into cubes and cook until slightly softened, drain and set aside.

Step 3 In a saucepan heat the butter and add 2 finely sliced onions and chopped garlic, cook until soft, add the madras curry powder, cumin, finely diced red chilli, the potatoes and half of the turmeric and fry for 3 mins, set aside.

Step 4 Add the coconut milk, double cream, red lentils and washed chopped spinach, simmer and reduce until thickened.

Step 5 In a separate saucepan fry 1 finely diced onion and mushrooms in a little oil until softened, add the garam masala, remaining turmeric and cloves and fry for a further 3 mins to allow the flavour to release from the spices.

Step 6 Add the washed basmati rice and cover in the remaining vegetable stock (around a fingertip above the rice) simmer until liquid has reduced then remove from the heat, place a saucepan lid on top and set aside to continue to cook.

Serve the curry and rice with a lightly baked naan bread and mango chutney.

Garnish with chopped coriander



Introducing The Cotswold Home

Our lovely Cotswold Home is located in Bradwell Village, near the town of Burford in the heart of the Cotswolds.



This purpose built home follows the customary Cotswold style, with pale stone walls and slate roof complimenting the traditional limestone used for construction in this beautiful part of southern England.

The home itself sits in Bradwell Village, a private development built on the grounds of an old military hospital two miles out of Burford centre. The village is very much a community of its own, made up of around 150 homes and a village hall with our care home at its heart.

The home is built around a lovely courtyard full of nature and colour. There are 51 ensuite bedrooms offering residential and nursing care on a permanent or short stay basis. Extensive gardens surround the home including an Orchard Garden which was re-worked in 2023 with the addition of raised beds, bulbs and plants.

The outdoor spaces all have level wheelchair access so that everyone can enjoy the fresh air and changing seasons.

There are plenty of places for our residents to sit and relax whatever the weather. In summer the outdoor terrace area, which runs along one side of the courtyard, is the perfect place for a cup of tea and a chat and indoors we have several comfortable lounge areas. For a bit of quiet time,

the library holds a large selection of books along with the daily papers and a selection of board games.

As with all our homes, restaurant-style dining is a feature of life at the Cotswold Home, where the open-plan dining room looks out on to the courtyard. Its fully licensed bar is a lively spot to meet pre and post dinner.

Community is very much a part of daily life at The Cotswold Home. Staff and residents are regularly involved with events at the village hall and locals take a keen interest in what is happening in the home. There is a very active social calendar with entertainment and outings, a fabulous Arts & Crafts room, a popular Rummy Club and Scrabble afternoons.

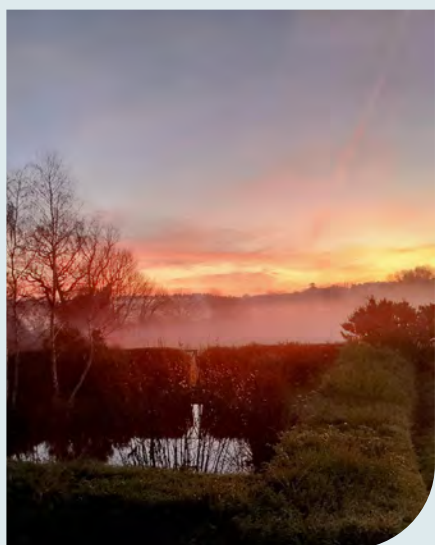
There is also a Residents Food Committee with opportunity to discuss menu options, and preferences. The group greatly influence the seasonal menus and can



request favourite dishes, such as Friday Fish and Chips and a weekly roast.

Within walking distance of the Cotswold Home is the Cotswold Wildlife Park, home to over 260 species of animals. Nearby Burford is a picture-postcard Cotswold village with a lovely high street and buildings dating back to the 16th century.

Our own Winter Wonderlands



We are very lucky that our homes have the most amazing outdoor spaces, some with acres of gardens and grounds and even an orchard or two. Our gardeners and maintenance teams do a fabulous job keeping them in pristine condition all year round.

Despite the winter weather, there is still much to do in the garden and indeed much to look at for our residents. Our resident gardener at **Rashwood**, **Paul**, gives us his tips and thoughts on preparing the garden for winter and beyond.

"Winter provides a good opportunity for a tidy up and

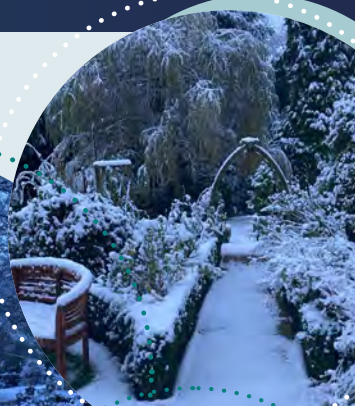
a clean of the outdoor areas so that they will be ready to flourish in the Spring.

Start by taking a good look at the whole garden. This time of year, you can see any gaps in planting and where you might want to add more colour or variety.

Tidy up and cut back, re-edge lawns and trim hedges and bushes and get stuck in with the mulching.

Mulch can be made up of natural elements, fallen leaves, plant debris as well as other items such as manure or cardboard. Mulch covers the soil to help feed and aid good soil structure, adding moisture and suppressing weeds.

Bulb planting is another job for this time of year. Spring bulbs provide early nectar and pollen for wildlife as well as adding spectacular colour and scent. Many bulbs are perennial and will come back each year, you can supplement these with new plantings. Tubs, borders and even grassed areas are suitable for bulbs.



The gardens attract wildlife at all times of year and we consider this in our planting and garden preparation. Berries and fruit not only add colour and substance to the gardens but provide much-needed sustenance for the birds. A lot of our foliage is also used for wreath making in December, something our residents really enjoy.

And finally, it is essential that we keep up with paved and gravel areas, whatever the weather. These access areas get damaged over the year and winter brings snow, ice and bad weather that can make them unsafe. Work to repair and clean these areas is constant.

Winter at Halliwell

Even as winter settles in, Halliwell's gardens remain a vibrant source of joy and tranquillity. Our residents are treated to fabulous views right from their windows, the cold winter air bringing a serene stillness to the landscape. There's always plenty of life to look out for, deer, foxes, squirrels, and a variety of birds are frequent visitors.

The residents take great pleasure in feeding the birds, and our pond continues to draw the attention of a heron, which visits regularly, much to everyone's delight. Even in the colder months, our cyclamen are still in bloom, their vibrant colours a welcome contrast to the winter landscape.

For many, these views are a source of comfort and happiness, offering a connection to nature and the changing seasons.



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

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

Elizabeth Finn Homes Ltd

33-39 Bowling Green Lane, London, EC1R 0BJ
T: 020 8834 9200 E: enquiries@elizabethfinn.co.uk

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www.elizabethfinn.co.uk