

Written by Sabina Green, Wellbeing Coordinator

Happy New Year Readers!

As we welcome January, we're delighted to reflect on the busy and joyful months of November and December. The festive season brought an abundance of special moments, amazing events and heartfelt memories for residents, friends, families and staff. We hope this newsletter captures some of the highlights that made the end of the year so spectacular.

Oh yes we did!



Residents enjoyed a truly magical afternoon with a visit to the Redgrave Theatre to watch the *Sleeping Beauty* pantomime. From the moment the curtains rose, the theatre was filled with laughter and a wonderful sense of excitement. Residents were able to reminisce, share stories and enjoy time together in a lively and engaging setting. Many spoke fondly of past theatre visits, whilst others were delighted experience the joy of pantomime once again. The colourful costumes, hilarious songs and audience participation brought plenty of laughter and a touch of fairytale magic, leaving everyone in high spirits.



Here's some happy trip attendees all aboard our fabulous minibus!

A Christmas Carol



Residents enjoyed another delightful festive outing to the Redgrave Theatre to watch *A Christmas Carol*, beautifully performed by the talented cast from Bristol Old Vic Theatre School. The production was truly magical, with an incredible set, captivating performances and a wonderful adaptation of Charles Dickens' much loved classic. It was a very special experience and the perfect way to celebrate the season.

Merchants Hall Outing



We were delighted to accept an invitation to a festive afternoon tea at The Merchants Hall. Residents thoroughly enjoyed an impressive selection of seasonal food and drinks, served in the stunning historical building. The afternoon was made even more special by the heartfelt carol singing from local schoolchildren. There was plenty of laughter as residents joined in with festive cracker pulling, and everyone was touched by the thoughtful cards and gifts kindly given by the children.

The Mount Without Social Club



We shared a lovely afternoon out at The Mount Without Social Club. The outing was filled with great company, lively cabaret entertainment and a delicious selection of cakes sandwiches and prosecco, all enjoyed in a beautiful historical building with a welcoming atmosphere.

Pinch pots



Residents appreciated a gentle and rewarding art therapy session, creating their very own pinch pots from clay. Working with clay proved to be wonderfully therapeutic, with the slow repetitive movements supporting residents to feel calm and focused. This was a lovely reminder of how creative activities can support wellbeing, encourage self-expression and bring moments of calm to our day.

Community Engagement

Community engagement is a priority for the Wellbeing Team and we recognise how important meaningful connections are for the residents' happiness. Building relationships beyond the home helps residents stay connected to the wider world and brings fresh energy, conversation and shared experiences into daily life. Wellbeing Coordinator, Sabina, has been busy inviting a variety of volunteers, local societies, entertainers and community organisations into the home. These visits have created opportunities for residents to meet new people, share stories, learn new things and enjoy activities supported by those who have generously given their time.

Carols with the Cubs



The best way to spread Christmas cheer, is singing loud for all to hear... We were delighted to welcome a local Cubs group into our home for a very special visit, where they kindly sang Christmas carols for us. The sound of young voices filled the room and instantly created a joyful and festive atmosphere.

Nursery Visits



Residents have been enjoying regular visits from young children at a local nursery; the sound of children's laughter and chatter brings a wonderful sense of warmth and energy into the home, and residents absolutely love seeing their smiling faces. The visits focus on intergenerational play, singing, and spending quality time together, and it's a pleasure to witness the joy across generations. For Remembrance Day, the children made a particularly touching visit when they brought their own homemade poppies to gift to residents, and this thoughtful gesture was appreciated beyond words. On this visit, the children also joined residents for arts and crafts, working side by side to create artwork and enjoy time together.



Choir Performances

The past month has been filled with uplifting performances from a wonderful range of visiting professionals and volunteers. We were especially delighted to welcome two fantastic choirs, The Westbury Singers and The Henbury Singers, who visited to sing for our residents and share some much-loved festive cheer.



Bristol Drama Society

We were delighted to welcome a local drama society into our home for a gentle and engaging poetry reading session. The group shared a thoughtful and creative selection of poems, which were beautifully read and greatly enjoyed by the residents.



Bristol Scrap Store



We enjoyed a truly wonderful afternoon with Bristol Scrap Store, a Bristol-based charity that rescues scrap and business waste and gives it new life. They joined us to host a vibrant and creative workshop, where residents had great fun experimenting with powder paints before designing their own beautiful stained glass windows. Bristol Scrap Store were also incredibly generous, gifting the home a huge box of craft materials for future activities. We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to them for their kindness and for helping to make the afternoon so memorable.

University of Bristol Swing Dance Society



What a lovely evening we shared with the University of Bristol Swing Dance Society, who lit up the dance floor and encouraged residents to join in.

Ruby Lilly Dance Company



We were honoured to invite the immensely talented students from the incredible Ruby Lilly Dance Company in to perform for the residents, and we were all absolutely wowed. What a joy to watch the young award winning dancers light up the room. Their energy, passion and professionalism were truly inspiring, and residents loved every moment. Ruby Lilly Dance Company is currently fundraising to get their amazing dancers to Florida, so please get in touch with them directly if you would like to sponsor them.

The Epicurean String Quartet



We were delighted to welcome a professional string quartet for an magnificent musical performance. The talented musicians treated residents to an incredible set list featuring works by famous and much loved composers. The performance created a calm and reflective atmosphere, and many residents were deeply moved by the beauty of the music, which sparked memories, with some residents closing their eyes to fully absorb the experience.



Bristol University Symphonia Society

The talented students from Bristol University Symphonia Orchestral Society visited to perform beautiful music, ranging from world-famous classical pieces to much-loved festive favourites. This filled the home with joy and magic, and it was a truly uplifting afternoon enjoyed by all.



A Cappella Society

The University of Bristol A Cappella Society had everyone singing and tapping their feet, as the talented students harmonised and used their voices as instruments. What a show!

Paint pals



We were delighted to welcome our wonderful Paint Pals, the talented young artists from Redmaids High School, for a truly special creative session. The students shared their beautiful illustrations and brought generations together one brushstroke at a time, working side by side with residents to bring their art to life using watercolour.

Retired professionals

We are most grateful to the various kind retired professionals who volunteered their own time to come in to play music for us; here's a photo of Volunteer, Clare, who came in to play piano and sing to us. Nothing more festive than an afternoon round the piano!



Mrs Claus Came to Town!

Residents were delighted to welcome Mrs Claus to our home for a truly spectacular Christmas concert. The wonderful performance had residents singing along, smiling from ear to ear and even dancing in their seats as the festive spirit filled the room.



Ballet Bristol



Ballet Bristol brought in the beauty and magic of classical ballet into our home. The residents were absolutely delighted by the graceful performance which featured parts of the worlds most famous ballets. The ballerinas touched so many hearts and created such a special experience for everyone.

Dream Come True



As part of the homes One Wish Project, we are delighted to have made a dream come true for resident, Brenda, a talented gold medal award winning ballroom dancer. We invited the wonderful dancers from Bristol University Latin & Ballroom Dance Society to perform, and the smiles said it all. The experience filled the home with excitement, nostalgia, and pure happiness. These moments make a huge impact, giving residents a chance to reminisce and reconnect with the passions that shaped their lives. We couldn't be more grateful to the talented dancers who volunteered their time. Brenda and all her fellow residents were so thrilled!

Flourish Dance



Our recent Seated Dance & Movement class was extra special. A huge thank you to our wonderful dance instructor, Lauren from Flourish Dance, who looked fabulous dressed as Mrs Claus. She led a fun, festive session that encouraged gentle movement and helped support coordination.

Elf Day



On Elf Day, little elves were causing mischief around the homes and spreading Christmas cheer, whilst raising money for the Alzheimer's Society; this is a charity close to all our hearts raising vital funds for people living with dementia.

No Crumbs Left Behind!



There's been plenty of baking therapy over the festive period and it's been fantastic to have members of our care team join in with all the fun. Here residents are making their very own mini ginger puddings topped with butterscotch sauce. We can confirm they were absolutely delicious!

Diwali



Residents joined to celebrate light, love and togetherness, whilst also making their very own Nankhatai, delicious traditional Indian Cardamon biscuits. This was very heartwarming.

Animal Therapy



We've loved welcoming our therapy dogs, Poppy and Daisy, who have been visiting residents for animal therapy sessions. Their gentle nature and friendly cuddles have brought comfort and plenty of happy moments to everyone they met. Poppy even wore a special Christmas costume!

White Christmas



On Christmas Eve, staff came together to put on a special festive play for everyone, with our very own version of White Christmas! This was a rather silly occasion as we had no time for a rehearsal, but a wonderful example of teamwork and the extra care staff show to help make the festive period a special time for everyone.

Christmas Day & Boxing Day Cheese Tasting

Thank you to all staff who worked on Christmas Day and Boxing Day! Residents enjoyed a truly special Christmas Day filled with warmth and togetherness. It was especially lovely to welcome family members who joined us for lunch, making the day feel even more meaningful and festive. The dedicated kitchen team worked incredibly hard to prepare an excellent Christmas spread, serving a delicious meal that was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. The dining room looked beautiful, with tables laid to create a festive and welcoming atmosphere, and the home was filled with Christmas cheer as residents enjoyed the merry atmosphere. Each resident was also given personalised gifts from Santa Clause. The festivities continued on Boxing Day, when residents enjoyed a delightful cheese tasting session. There was a huge variety of cheeses and chutneys on offer, giving everyone the opportunity to sample new flavours and enjoy a relaxed and sociable afternoon together.

New Year's Day celebrations



The Wellbeing Team gathered residents for a special slideshow of photos & videos of the beautiful times we have shared together in 2025, so we could reflect and reminisce together. As you can see, New Years Day was awfully merry occasion, but we can confirm that no drinking was straight from the bottle! Happy New Year from all of us in Katherine House & Griffith's House. We would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to everyone who has supported us and joined in our events and activities with such enthusiasm and joy. To the incredible staff, the wonderfully supportive families, and most of all the amazing residents, thank you for your kindness, care and laughter. You've made the past year truly special. Here's to the fabulous year we've shared and many happy moments ahead. Cheers!

Don't forget you can follow us on social media for regular photos & updates.

**Thanks for reading,
The Wellbeing Team
Sabina, Oliver & Tamzin**



@cotecharity1



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