

STORIES FROM STOW



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Directors Welcome

Dear Reader,

We're excited to present the first edition of 'Stories from Stow', our new quarterly newsletter. It's an opportunity to share our latest news among residents, families, staff and the wider Stow Healthcare community. Our thanks go to everyone who contributed stories and to Eve Fynn and Alex Ball at Group Office, who produced this issue.

It's been lovely to see the beginnings of some sort of normality returning to our homes, with visitors enjoying quality time with residents and some trips out starting to take place. We hope to arrange more of these in the coming months.

During twenty months of upheaval, our staff have continued to do a fantastic job and we thank you all. We also thank our residents, families and local healthcare professionals for your understanding and support.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter and we look forward to your comments and contributions.

Best wishes,



Ruth French
Operations Director



Roger Catchpole
Managing Director

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What's New?

They say 'time flies when you're having fun' and this is certainly a phrase used at Stow Healthcare. We cannot believe 2020 marked our tenth anniversary and we are incredibly proud of the journey our group has taken.

Stow Healthcare was founded in 2010 and has since grown from a single care home to a multi-award-winning group of six homes rated 'Good' and 'Outstanding' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and highly recognised within the social care industry. Since the inception of Stow Healthcare, good communication has been at the heart of what our company is about and we're excited to share with you a transformation of our communication channels to help keep you up to date with the latest news and announcements.

The main aim of our newsletter 'Stories from Stow' is to bring you all the latest news and stories from our homes to yours, but most importantly we want to make sure there is something for everyone.

Our new quarterly update includes features such as an education section for our staff with news on the latest training opportunities, as well as 'Residents Corner' where you can hear directly from our residents about their experiences of life in our homes. The quarterly publication of 'Stories from Stow' will continue alongside our regular communications to help keep you up to date on the latest news.

This summer we have also been working hard behind the scenes to bring you a whole new website which not only better reflects us as a group, but will also be a great place to find any up to date information including important details on visiting guidance to our homes.
www.stowhealthcare.co.uk

If you are not already receiving email updates from us, please send your email address and details to enquiries@stowhealthcare.co.uk so that we can add you to our distribution list.

Workforce Development Award Winners - Great British Care Awards 2021

At Stow Healthcare we are thrilled to be celebrating a national win in the Workforce Development category at the Great British Care Awards, presented to us by TOWIE star Mark Wright.

Our Operations Director Ruth French and Operations Manager Alex Ball were stunned to be named winners for the second time, having received it last year at a virtual ceremony due to COVID. The award was given in recognition of their excellent hard work, not only in developing our own 450 staff, but also for the work we do in attracting young people to a career in social care. We have also become a popular destination for graduating nurses.

The judges commented: *"Stow Healthcare use diverse and creative strategies to develop their workforce in all job roles, including their residents' participation in training programmes. They recognise that everyone has skills that can be transferred and learnt by others, to achieve an outstanding standard of care and working environment."*

At Stow Healthcare we are passionate about personal development and helping people grow within our company, and as a National Care Employer of the Year winner, we aim high and want all staff to love their roles and have advice and options to do what they love within our homes!



Operations Director, Ruth French (right) and Operations Manager, Alex Ball (left)

Education

Care Home Assistant Practitioner

Despite the challenges that the pandemic has brought, our staff have continued to pursue personal development opportunities to gain further knowledge and skills to deliver the very best for our residents. This year we have delivered 8 sessions of 3-day induction training to help welcome new staff into the team. We have also seen staff embark on level 2, 3 & 5 diploma qualifications to enhance their Health and Social Care knowledge.

At the beginning of the year, we held our third round of Care Home Assistant Practitioner (CHAP) training to help upskill care staff looking to progress into a clinical support role within the home. The programme involves 10 days of training with our external professional trainers at Training and Assessment in Healthcare which is followed by the completion of portfolio course work and competency assessment before they are formally signed off in their new role.

We would like to say congratulations to the following staff who have now completed their training and coursework and are signed off officially as Care Home Assistant Practitioners.

- Sam Anderson** **Michelle Planton**
- Hayley Gilbert** **Devina Pearson**
- Sophie Groves** **Beth Richardson**
- Rowena Moyes** **Carla Tofts**



Hayley Gilbert & Sophie Groves - Halstead Hall



Michelle Planton - Stowlangtoft Hall

The next CHAPs to the programme will be running this winter and we are very much looking forward to welcoming a new cohort of learners to the programme.

Qualification Success

Congratulations to Chantelle Callaghan at Ford Place who has completed her Level 3 Diploma Qualification in Adult Care this September. Chantelle completed her qualification alongside her regular shifts at Ford Place throughout the pandemic which is an incredible achievement.

Anyone that would like to complete a health and social care qualification or a specialist qualification in subjects such as End of Life or Mental Health, please speak to your home management team who will be happy to assist you.

1-2-1 Key Theme Topic - Mandatory Vaccinations in Social Care

From the 11th November 2021, anyone working in social care will be required to be fully vaccinated with both doses of a COVID 19 vaccination.

This will include professional visitors to our homes such as GPs, hairdressers, dentists, contractors and entertainers. The only exception will be for visiting relatives, residents in our home and anyone who can provide proof of exemption.

We will be using this quarter's staff 1-2-1 supervision topic to support our staff to manage their vaccination status and to set out how will manage the monitoring of visitors to our homes.

If you have any questions about mandatory vaccinations, please speak to the home manager.

Celebration

Stow Heroes

In 2018, Stow Healthcare launched its Long Service Award Scheme to recognise and reward staff for their considerable length of service dedicated to the home and its residents. In the first year alone, we saw staff reaching 10, 15, 20 and even 25 year milestones with us. This year we saw a number of these staff reach their retirement and step back from full-time work with us to enjoy some much-needed rest and relaxation.

We would like to acknowledge and thank the following staff for their service to the residents at Stow Healthcare and wish them a very happy retirement.

- Calla Harrison** ≈ Group Maintenance Manager at Stow Healthcare
- Phyllis Nodding** ≈ Former Registered Nurse & CHAP at Stowlangtoft Hall
- Shirley Talbot** ≈ Head Housekeeper at Stowlangtoft Hall
- Marion Thorpe** ≈ Head Chef at Ford Place Nursing Home
- Maureen Tilbrook** ≈ Registered Nurse at Stowlangtoft Hall
- Jozsef Vass** ≈ Housekeeper at Halstead Hall

Residents and staff gathered to wish their much-loved team members farewell and give thanks for all they have done for the home. Goodbyes are not forever, as Shirley continues to support the domestic team on a bank basis and we welcome Maureen back in a volunteer capacity, armed with stories and smiles for residents- and freshly baked treats for the staff!



Residents and staff at Stowlangtoft Hall thanked Maureen and Shirley for their support

An NHS guide to keeping well this Winter

Tips to staying safe throughout the cold season!

Winter conditions can be seriously bad for our health, especially for people aged 65 or older, and people with long-term conditions such as COPD, bronchitis, emphysema, asthma, diabetes or heart or kidney disease.

Being cold can raise the risk of increased blood pressure, heart attacks and strokes. The cold and damp weather, ice, snow and high winds can all aggravate any existing health problems and make us more vulnerable to respiratory winter illnesses.

But there are lots of things you can do to stay well this winter.

Feeling unwell? Don't wait - get advice from the nurse or senior carer, if you are a resident, or for staff and families visit the nearest pharmacist or call 111

At the first sign of a winter illness, even if it's just a cough or cold, get advice from your caregivers or pharmacist, before it gets more serious. Act quickly. The sooner you get advice, the better. If you are a resident, we can escalate your health concerns to your GP.

Also, don't forget that if you're aged 65 or over, you are eligible for the pneumococcal vaccine, which will help protect you from pneumococcal diseases such as pneumonia.

Keeping warm this Winter

It is important to keep warm in winter – both inside and outdoors. This will help to prevent colds, flu and more serious health problems such as heart attacks, strokes, pneumonia and depression.

- Heat your room or your home to at least 18°C (65°F). You might prefer the room you spend most time in to be slightly warmer.
- Keep your bedroom window closed on winter nights. Breathing cold air can be bad for your health as it increases the risk of chest infections.
- Keep active when you're indoors. Try not to sit still for more than an hour or so.
- Wear several layers of light clothes. Several layers trap warm air better than one bulky layer.

Other helpful winter preparation tips if you are a staff or family member

- The Met Office provides weather forecasts on radio and TV, so listen to these bulletins regularly to keep up to date with the weather.
- Ask your pharmacist what medicines should be in your cabinet to help get you and your family through the winter season.
- Take advantage of financial schemes and discounts to help you pay for heating.
- Look out for other people who may need a bit of extra help over the winter.

Vaccinations and Boosters

Make sure you get your COVID booster

COVID booster jabs will be very important to help you stay safe this winter. Booster vaccine doses will be available on the NHS for people most at risk from COVID-19 who have had a 2nd dose of a vaccine at least 6 months ago.

This includes:

- people aged 50 and over
- people who live and work in care homes
- frontline health and social care workers
- people aged 16 and over with a health condition that puts them at high risk of getting seriously ill from COVID-19
- people aged 16 and over who are a main carer for someone at high risk from COVID-19
- people aged 16 and over who live with someone who is more likely to get infections (such as someone who has HIV, has had a transplant or is having certain treatments for cancer, lupus or rheumatoid arthritis)

All residents in our home who are eligible will be offered the opportunity to have a booster vaccine this autumn. Staff can now book their vaccine online at www.nhs.co.uk

Which COVID-19 vaccine will I get?

Most people will be offered a booster dose of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine or Moderna vaccine. This means your booster dose may be different from the vaccines you had for your 1st and 2nd doses. Some people may be offered a booster dose of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine if they cannot have the Pfizer/BioNTech or Moderna vaccine.

COVID-19 booster and flu vaccine

Most people who can get a COVID-19 booster vaccine are also eligible for the annual flu vaccine. If you are offered both vaccines, it's safe to have them at the same time.

Stow Healthcare Winter Puzzle Trouble




We all love a good puzzle!

Test your knowledge in our winter related wordsearch.


Can you find all of the words?


- Vaccine
- Cold
- Flu
- Virus
- Self-Care
- COVID
- Pneumonia
- Medicine
- Bronchitis
- Health
- Winter



Choose Well


For more information visit: www.nhs.uk/livewell






Self care

Keep a well-stocked medicine and first aid cupboard for minor ailments




Pharmacy

Pharmacists are highly trained professionals who can treat or advise on minor illnesses




NHS 111

Urgent medical help fast, available 24/7




GP Practice

Urgent and routine appointments on weekdays, evenings and weekends



Urgent Care

Call 111



A&E or 999

For life threatening emergencies and serious injuries only

Introducing the Maple Memory Centre



The Maple Memory Centre uses Montessori principles based on procedural learning system. This is the part of our learning that controls repetitive muscle memory such as riding a bike, singing a song, playing an instrument, or baking a cake. The body and mind remember how to do these things, even if we might be a bit rusty at first. Family members living in the Memory Centre are empowered to rediscover their independence and talents with the support of our team of specially trained Homemakers.



For more information or to book an appointment please contact Liz Patrick our Admissions Coordinator on 0333 2419701 liz.patrick@stowhealthcare.co.uk

www.stowhealthcare.co.uk

At Stow Healthcare we have recently been celebrating the opening of a specialist memory care centre at our award-winning home at Brandon Park.

The Maple Memory Centre is a new concept in memory care that supports independence and takes away the 'clinical' feel of a care home, that can cause anxiety in those living with memory loss. Using Montessori principles for memory care, the Maple Memory Centre employs staff who are known as 'Homemakers' who support the family members living there to carry on enjoying the activities they have always done, such as cooking and ironing, but with support.



At a virtual opening ceremony, with keynote speaker Professor Martin Green, the CEO of Care England, we showcased our latest addition, providing an insight to the innovative design that supports people living with memory loss, focusing on getting lighting, space and even colour design right to support people to live safely.

The Memory Centre combines an existing wing of the original home along with a brand new first-floor extension with 25-beds and a safe outdoor space dedicated solely to memory care provision.

Meet our Homemakers

What is a Homemaker?

Our Homemaker role is very special. Different to traditional care home roles, the Homemaker makes our Memory Centre into a real home for the people who live there. The role combines elements of our ancillary teams, including kitchen and housekeeping alongside the duties of a care assistant to create a new and exciting hybrid role. Our Homemakers support family members in the way their own family would at home, keeping their room clean and tidy, and giving



them a reason to get up each morning by engaging them in purposeful and stimulating activities, indoors and outdoors. The team is lead by Star Homemakers who are responsible for the safe admissions, care planning and medication management of our family members as well as providing management support to our Homemakers.

Become a Homemaker today!

Are you looking for an exciting new opportunity to progress your knowledge and experience in care?

Whilst previous qualifications in care will be helpful, it is more important that you are compassionate, considerate and hardworking, and driven by making sure that every day is enjoyable and purposeful for our family members. You do not need to hold previous qualifications as we have devised a bespoke Homemaker training programme for our team to ensure that they have the right skills.

For more information about becoming a Homemaker enquire now at enquiries@brandonpark.co.uk

Stow in Focus

Stow in Bloom 2021 Winners

Stow in Bloom 2021

This summer we held our fourth annual 'Stow in Bloom' competition, to encourage residents, staff and members of the local community to get creative in the garden and contribute to this year's 'Best in Stow' entries!

We know that gardening has a tremendous impact on wellbeing, and being able to spend time outdoors is more important than ever throughout the pandemic. We are delighted that our residents and staff have been so engaged in this year's competition and have come up with new and exciting ideas for entries that just get better year on year.



This year's competition was once again held virtually to safely adhere to COVID 19 restrictions. The judges spent time talking to staff and residents who proudly showed off their hard work and shared memories of the days spent putting the entries together. The winning entries from each home were then taken forward to be judged "Best in Stow". After some extremely difficult decisions and much deliberation, the overall winners were decided. This year Halstead Hall was awarded "Best in Stow" for their incredible efforts including their lovable scarecrows, an enormous sunflower and their Stow in Bloom video which chartered their journey and the involvement of nearly every resident in the home.



It has once again been a wonderful way for staff, residents and families to enjoy all things green and the great outdoors.

Best in Stow Winners 2021

- Best Hanging Basket - Halstead Hall
- Best Wildlife Attraction - Stowlangtoft Hall
- We Grow Together - Melford Court
- Best Miniature Garden - Ford Place
- Tallest Sunflower - Halstead Hall
- Best Garden Artwork - Cedars Place
- Best Floral Arrangement - Brandon Park
- Best Stow in Bloom Story - Halstead Hall
- Best Decorated Vegetable Display - Ford Place
- The Forget-Me-Not-Garden - Stowlangtoft Hall
- The Stow in Bloom Scarecrow - Halstead Hall

Stow in Bloom Colouring with the Community

- Winner Age 6 & Under - Jacob - Stowlangtoft Hall
- Winner Age 7 & Over - Dylan - Brandon Park
- Resident Entry - Beryl - Cedars Place
- Best Volunteer Entry - James - Ford Place

Stow in Bloom Overall Winners 2021 Halstead Hall



Staff Entries

- Winner -
Matthew Peace, Ford Place
- Runners Up -
Shirley Wing, Stowlangtoft Hall
Derek Smith, Cedars Place

Stow in Bloom Runners Up 2021

Ford Place

Residents' Corner



Derek Allen - Resident at Melford Court Care Home

At all of our homes, we love hearing about our residents' hobbies and interests and will always support them to continue to enjoy them.

At Melford Court Care Home, resident Derek Allen has been talking to us about the book group that he runs, sharing his thoughts about "Telegrams and Teacakes" and enjoying a social afternoon with the rest of the book club.

"Telegrams and teacakes" is about a small bakery on the south coast of England in 1942. It's run by a family who help and support each other through good times and bad, with trials and tribulations of wartime life.

Derek Commented:

"I enjoy coming to our book group each week especially being joined by everybody's company. I am a great reader and lover of books.

Soon I will be reading Roald Dahl's short stories by celebrating his birthday this month. Followed in a few weeks with "Rumpole of the Bailey".

Keep an eye out on social media as we launch our winter competition 'Stow in the Snow'.

Industry Recognised Awards 2021

Awards Season 2021

This year we received a record number of award nominations from residents, relatives and colleagues to recognise our fabulous staff teams and individuals who have gone above and beyond over the last 12 months.

As a company, we put forward over seventy nominations for teams and individuals across eleven industry awards.

We are now starting to receive the news of shortlistings and are delighted that this year we have finalist placings at all six of our homes and for Stow Healthcare as a company.

To kick start this year's shortlistings, Stow Healthcare is a finalist in three categories in the 'LaingBuisson Awards', for 'Small Residential Care Provider', 'Managing Excellence', and Operations Director, Ruth French has been shortlisted in the 'Rising Star' Category'.



This is a huge achievement for Stow Healthcare to once again be recognised at the industry's most sought after and prestigious awards.

Leaders in Care Finalists

We are delighted to have made the finals for two categories at this year's Leaders in Care Awards!

'Registered Care Home Manager of the Year' - Heather Choat of Halstead Hall Care Home in Essex, and The Maple Memory Centre at Brandon Park in the 'Care Home Business Initiative of the Year' category.



Heather Choat - Home Manager at Halstead Hall



Run by the Care Home Professional Magazine, these awards honour the care providers who have gone above and beyond in providing an exceptional level of care over the past 12 months.

Although they were not named amongst this year's winners, we are incredibly proud of both Heather and the team at the Maple Memory Centre for their finalist placings. To be recognised amongst some of the industry's top leaders and executives in two categories is a true achievement for our team.

This is one of four management shortlistings at both regional and national awards for Heather Choat this autumn. We wish her the best of luck.

Norfolk Care Awards

Ford Place in Thetford was recognised at this year's Norfolk Care Awards 2021 event in September. This was a live, virtual celebration of frontline social care workers and services across Norfolk to recognise the innovation, collaboration and outstanding leadership that was needed to meet the tough challenges brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Stow Healthcare Operations Director Ruth French was amongst five social care leaders to be showcased in the 'Care Leadership' category for her exceptional contribution and support to her staff throughout the pandemic.

Ford Place's Head Housekeeper Gina Galloway was named runner up in the 'Local Care Hero' category for South Norfolk after being nominated by her colleagues for her exceptional dedication to her residents during the last 18 months, going above and beyond her normal duties as housekeeper, dedicating her own time to run the hairdressing salon for residents when the home was closed to visitors.



Gina Galloway in action at Ford Place

National Finalists

In another bumper year at the National Care Awards we have four finalists who have each made it to the final five in their category.



Care Registered Nurse - Sarah Monk, Stowlangtoft Hall Nursing Home

Care Home Manager - Heather Choat, Halstead Hall Care Home

Care Housekeeper - Gina Galloway, Ford Place Nursing Home

Care Group - Under 10 Settings - Stow Healthcare Group

Our finalists have been busy recording videos for the judging process. Thank you to everyone who supported our finalists and took part in the video.

The winners will be announced at the awards ceremony at the London Hilton Metropole in November.

We will keep you posted! Good Luck Everyone!

Be the first to hear our award updates. Follow us on social media!



@stowhealthcare



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Stow Healthcare Homes' Activities at their best!

At Stow Healthcare, entertaining our residents and providing them with a variety of weekly activities is of great importance to us, however, this can only be achieved with the help of our wonderful activities teams.

Over the past few months our homes have been a hive of activity! Residents have been busy creating arts and crafts, baking, enjoying trips out, live music, Olympic games, internal competitions (Stow in Bloom), and much, much more.

Here is a selection of some of their best bits!

Brandon Park

Brandon Park picked up not just one, but two 'Best in Stow' rosettes at this year's Stow in Bloom competition.

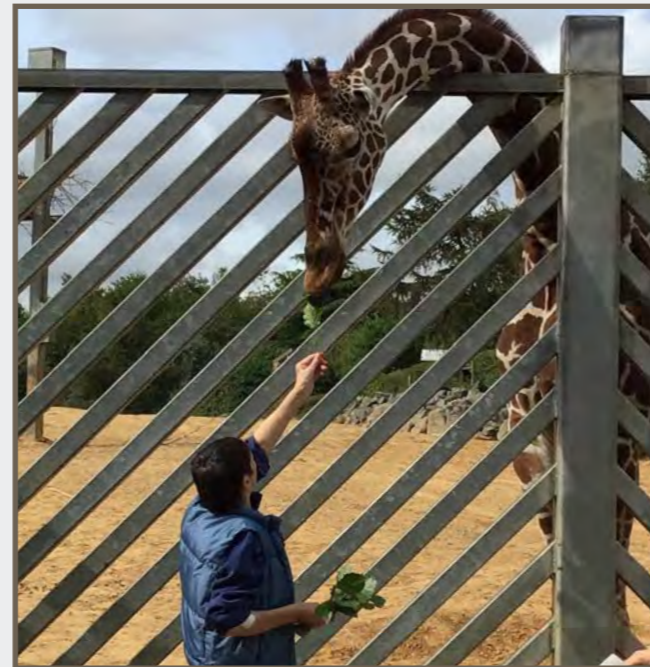
Residents put in a great deal of effort creating some beautiful handmade Wisteria, adding every single petal by hand. They also won the Community Colouring 7+ category with a fantastic entry from Dylan age 10!



Cedars Place

Dreams can come true, and for one resident at Cedars Place recently that really was the case!

When asked by staff to make a wish, Helen said that she wanted to go to Colchester Zoo with her friend Beryl to feed the giraffes, so off to the zoo they went! However, in an aim to make Helen's wish come completely true when they arrived, much to Helen's surprise, she discovered that the activities team had already made contact with the zoo and arranged for



her to go into the giraffe enclosure and feed the animals herself!! After a truly fabulous day, Helen commented: "You see, dreams and wishes really do come true, mine have".

Ford Place

Ford Place has recently introduced a monthly supper club which has been a great success. Residents enjoy getting together chatting and eating delicious food, what's not to love!!



Halstead Hall



The team at Halstead Hall always enjoy a good costume-themed event and it has to be said that they never fail to disappoint.

In September, staff put together a fantastic 'Mad Hatters' tea party for residents and as usual, their costumes were superb; resident Derek also got in on the action and joined the team by dressing up as the rabbit!

Residents thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon's events which included a delicious afternoon tea served on beautiful china crockery, and they also watched 'Alice in Wonderland' the movie.

Melford Court

In June, Melford Court celebrated Pride month by holding a Pride Party!

The theme was based around the 1960s and 1970s and residents enjoyed taking part in lots of singing, dancing and playing instruments along to some great well-known classics.

During the party residents also talked and shared their views on relationships and what love means to them. A great afternoon was had by all!



Stowlangtoft Hall

Everyone at Stowlangtoft Hall felt the well-being benefits when they had a little visit from some beautiful and very friendly miniature donkeys during September.

Donkeys, Pixie and Millie met residents outside in the gardens and also ventured inside to meet some of the residents who were unable to leave their rooms.

The donkeys were brought to the home by local company 'Miniature Donkeys for Wellbeing' who provide their brilliant service throughout Suffolk and Norfolk, and we cannot thank them enough for such a truly heartwarming and wonderful visit.





Coming Soon in our Winter Issue!

Awards Updates

Hear from our awards finalists across the group.

Stow in the Snow

See what our staff and residents have been getting up to with this years competition and the winners will be announced.

Building & Renovations

Step inside our newly renovated lounge at Cedars Place.

Fun and Festivities

We will be sharing news and updates from our homes and the events and activities from the festive season.

Dates for the Diary

Armistice Day Celebrations

From Thursday 11th November 2021 to Sunday 14th November 2021 Remembrance Day events will be happening in all homes across the group to mark Armistice Day.

Stow in the Snow 2021

In the coming months, our homes will be busy with this year's Stow in the Snow preparations, ahead of our judging day on Thursday 9th December.



Winners will be announced at the virtual ceremony on Friday 10th December 2021.

Don't miss it!

If you have an interesting story, news or an announcement that you would like to share in the next edition of Stories from Stow, please send any content to us by Friday 24th December 2021.

enquiries@stowhealthcare.co.uk



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