

CARING & SHARING

Stories from Stow



 Spirit of Stow
Awards 2024
CONGRATULATIONS
SELINA SUTTON
WINNER
Supporting Star Award
Presented at the Spirit of Stow Awards 11th July 2024

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Directors' Welcome

Dear Reader,

It has been a tremendously exciting summer and early autumn across our homes. Every one of our eight lovely homes hosted big summer events, welcoming their families and our community to celebrate the great things that happen in social care. Many residents have been heavily involved in preparations or manning stalls on the day – thank you to everyone who has contributed so much. Each home is now busy moving on to autumn activities, and homes are looking beautiful. We were proud to celebrate our staff at our July Spirit of Stow Awards, which saw some very worthy winners hold trophies aloft to recognise the contribution they have made – whichever department they belong to. We don't just celebrate the winners though, we also celebrate all the staff who were nominated (we received 160+ nominations in total)!

Finally, I wanted to take the opportunity to thank our lovely colleague Eve Fynn, who created and shaped this magazine, and who will be starting a new exciting role in another sector soon. Thank you Eve for everything you have brought to Stow Healthcare!

Best wishes,



Ruth French

Ruth French
Operations Director



Roger Catchpole

Roger Catchpole
Managing Director

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Residents' Corner

This edition of residents' corner comes from Enid and her owls at Brandon Park. Enid has always had a love of art and has drawn many pictures throughout her life. The team at Brandon have been encouraging Enid to put pen to paper once again and Enid has created her own army of 'Enid's Owls'. These fantastic owls are all hand-drawn by Enid. From 'Owl at the Seaside' in her bright pink bikini, to 'Space Owl' in his space helmet, each owl has their own story, characteristics and charm.



A selection of Enid's fabulous owl merchandise

Not only has Enid had her own gallery at Brandon Park displaying her owl creations, the team at the home have also supported her to create her own range of Owl merchandise, including tea towels, coasters, aprons, tote bags, and even a 2025 calendar. Enid ran her own stall at the Brandon Park summer fete selling her creations with funds going towards the home's fundraising for the Alzheimer's Society. Staff wore Enid's designs as t-shirts to show their support.



Industry colleagues enjoying Enid's owl designs

Enid's merchandise even reached a national audience at The Care Show in Birmingham where Stow Healthcare's senior team shared their merchandise at the national conference with industry colleagues purchasing their own piece of Enid's Owl merchandise!

So far Enid and the team at Brandon Park have raised over £1000 for the Alzheimer's Society through donations at their summer fete and support for Ruby's skydive which was covered in our last newsletter.

Enid's merchandise, including 2025 calendars, is still available for a small donation to the Alzheimer's Society from the team at Brandon Park, please speak to a member of the home management team at any of our homes if you would like to get your hands on a copy.



The talented Enid at the Brandon Park summer fete

A huge congratulations to Enid for all of her fundraising efforts! A well-deserved feature in this edition of residents' corner.

Resident Activities this Season

Brandon Park and the Maple Memory Centre

The team at Brandon Park would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who supported their sensational summer fete this year. The team raised over £2300 for their resident fund, plus an additional £1000 for the Alzheimer's Society. What an incredible achievement!



Cedars Place

At Cedars Place residents found rock painting an incredibly enjoyable exercise. Everyone was very keen to produce their own designs and felt confident enough to go it alone by not following the rock painting book instructions. The end result was fantastic!



Ford Place



On Friday 4th October, Ford Place celebrated 'World Animal Day' with a very enjoyable visit from 'Michelle's Animal Petting Party'. She took a variety of animals to visit the home, including dogs, a cat, a chicken, a tortoise, a guinea pig, a rabbit and a hamster. All residents enjoyed the contact with the animals and the cuddles they got to have with them.

Halstead Hall



It was a fun and creative initiative to take the seaside to the residents of Halstead Hall. Paddling pools were filled with sand and water which provided a great sensory experience for residents and everyone dressed up for the occasion. Some entertainment finished off the experience, followed by the obligatory ice cream.

Manson House

Residents at Manson House took part in their very own Olympics. Events featured new sports such as cup-stacking, frisbee, wellie throwing, and duster sprint, as well as slow-motion table tennis. Everyone had lots of fun and laughs together, and medals were awarded to all residents who took part.



Melford Court

In the summer, Melford Court held a cheese and wine afternoon to help raise money for their activities fund. It was lovely to see residents with their family and friends, some meeting for the first time and getting to know each other. A quiz took place and all enjoyed tasting various cheeses and indulging in some delicious homemade cheese scones.



Horkesley Manor and the Aspen Memory Centre



Two ladies from Horkesley Manor recently went on a little trip to a local summer fayre. They had pictures taken with a vintage VW campervan and a huge tractor and got to appreciate some of the outdoor displays that were put up by the community. They also enjoyed some lovely weather, music, and an incredible atmosphere. The residents are hopeful to enjoy many more trips like this in the future.

Stowlangtoft Hall



Residents at Stowlangtoft Hall recently enjoyed an afternoon making some lovely flowers out of cupcake cases. They couldn't imagine at first how this was going to be possible, but were very proud of their creations.

Staff Celebration Stories

My Stow Healthcare Journey, by Velu Sivakumar

Tuesday, 2nd May 2023, turned out to be a pivotal day in my life, even though I didn't realise it at the time. It all began when I met Ruth French, the Director of Stow Healthcare, at my Healthcare college in Sri Lanka. I was deeply impressed by Ruth's explanation of Stow's achievements, vision, and focus. One question dominated my mind: Would I get an opportunity to work for them? The answer came swiftly—yes! I started work in August 2023, along with three other Sri Lankan friends (Eran, Ishan, and Suchi). Excitement and happiness filled me, my wife and three children with joy. However, I was also a bit anxious about my first overseas job in the United Kingdom, with its new culture, people, and places.

On 15th August 2023, we landed in the beautiful country of England. I was amazed by the care shown by Stow Healthcare colleagues as we settled into our accommodation. We were shown around one of Stow's homes and it was the first time I witnessed outstanding care provided to vulnerable people by qualified nurses and carers, using advanced technologies. Ruth emphasised the company's focus on key values and the importance of our contribution to achieving them.

We started our journey at Horkesley Manor for two weeks, where Judith (Home Manager) and other staff helped us understand our job roles. After two weeks, I was assigned to Cedars Place in Halstead. Ruth took us around Halstead, showing us various locations, including cricket clubs, which caught my attention since cricket is my favourite game!



I have since been working in Cedars Place. It has been a unique place in terms of providing care and safety for vulnerable residents, ensuring their well-being, holding meetings with residents to understand their issues, addressing their health concerns, communicating with their families, and maintaining wonderful relationships. Since starting at Cedars, I've learned new things every day and strive to provide quality care for residents, which was the key reason I was nominated as a finalist in the Growth & Development Award Category for the Spirit of Stow Annual Awards 2024. Although I didn't win, being a finalist was a proud moment and an amazing experience during my first year in the UK.

I have also had the chance to get to know my local community better, being selected to play my favourite game of cricket with Earls Colne Cricket Club; thanks to Mr. Pat Kerry (Chairman) and Mr. David (Captain of Earls Colne CC-1st XI) for their continuous support in including me in their 1st XI! They provided all the necessary cricket equipment at no cost. I took 7 wickets in my first match and became a key bowler for their side. Playing for this team has helped me socialise with different people and integrate into the local culture, making my time in the UK even more enjoyable.

I am deeply grateful to Director, Ruth French for giving me this wonderful opportunity, and my mentor, Michelle French at Cedars Place for her leadership and support. She recognized my skills and knowledge, and is always encouraging and motivating me to achieve my tasks, contributing significantly to my growth and development, as have so many of my colleagues.

Baby Congratulations



Congratulations to Brandon Park's Deputy Manager Megan, and her partner Charlie who have welcomed baby Ava to the family.

Ava was born in September weighing 6lb 2oz. Both mum and baby are doing well and have already made multiple visits to Brandon Park so that Ava can properly meet the residents at the home. We look forward to welcoming them back for more visits as we head towards the festive season. Congratulations Megan and Charlie and a big 'hello' to beautiful baby Ava.

Carol Angell continues to support Jan and the team whilst Megan is on maternity leave. Megan will be back at Brandon Park during the second half of 2025.

Sarah's Smiling Success

A year on from the Care Quality Commission's (CQC) updated Smiling Matters: Oral Health in Care Homes progress report, oral healthcare continues to be a big focus with the CQC, particularly around treatment for residents in care homes.

The team at Cedars Place in Halstead, Essex have partnered with The Essex Dental Clinic in Earls Colne who are part of a pilot project to improve oral health within the community. The dentist team have made regular visits to Cedars Place reviewing oral assessments of residents and to carry out simple oral treatments and escalating referrals where these cannot be done onsite.

Cedars Place carer, Sarah Scott has been working as the home's oral health champion, supporting the dental clinic visits, completing the assessments that are reviewed by the dentist and generally promoting the benefits of good oral healthcare within the home.

The team from the clinic at Earls Colne have been particularly impressed with Sarah's commitment to the project and have praised the improvement they have seen at the home.

Sarah was invited to the Oral Health Ambassadors Day in September which included representatives from well-known oral healthcare brands including Oral B, Colgate, Fixodent and Oralieve. At the event, Sarah was presented with the 'Dental Ambassador of the Year Award' for her continued commitment and involvement in the pilot project at Cedars Place.

We would like to say a huge congratulations to Sarah for her commitment and hard work to the project and the oral healthcare of the residents at Cedars Place!



Spirit of Stow Awards 2024



The fabulous 2024 Spirit of Stow Awards Winners

The Spirit of Stow Awards are now a firm fixture in the calendar returning for the third time this July. Our annual in-house awards ceremony shines a light on all of the fantastic work that goes on across our group and celebrates our staff who make each day special for our residents.

The event returned to the Athenaeum in Bury St Edmunds for a night of celebration hosted by compere Steve Walls, who also hosts the Great British Care Awards. These awards are unique to Stow Healthcare and incorporate the 'spirit' and 'ethos' of all things Stow Healthcare which are carefully aligned to the award categories.

This year we introduced the 'Supporting Star Award'; which recognises those who support in the background from maintenance, administration to ancillary staff and group office, they help our homes run smoothly. This was in addition to returning categories such as the 'Outstanding Care Award' and the 'True Commitment Award' which received over 50 nominations across these two categories alone.

Twenty-four finalists were shortlisted across eight categories in the spring, they were then invited to an interview with our external judges who decided on our winners.

A huge thank you to our 2024 Spirit of Stow judges:

Rachael Dittich - Training & Assessment in Healthcare
Christine Futter MBE - Norfolk Care Association
Alan Fry - The Outstanding Society
Zoe Fry, OBE - The Outstanding Society
Claire Gilbert - Care Consultant
Daniel Joy - Suffolk County Council
Theresa Lawrence - Essex County Council
Charlie Lezzard - Care England
Julie Martin - Formerly Suffolk County Council
Dawn Parsons - The University of Suffolk
Lizi Price - Training & Assessment in Healthcare
Fraser Rickatson - Care England
Karl Taber - Suffolk County Council

The Winners of the Spirit of Stow Awards 2024

The Outstanding Care Award Aleksandar Zivkovic - Horkesley Manor



"Aleksandar is a true inspiration to the adult social care sector. His colleagues and residents clearly respect and admire him, and we were incredibly impressed by the examples Aleksandar shared of his compassionate care. We are thrilled for the sector that Alec decided to change his profession—he is truly an amazing person".

The Community Involvement Award Activities Team at Brandon Park



"It was a tough competition, but the enthusiasm from the team shone through in all their answers. The work they do to help bring the residents, staff and so many different parts of the community together was incredible, and a true testament to the hard work and efforts of the activities team".

The True Commitment Award Lisa Grimshaw - Halstead Hall



"Lisa is the winner of the True Commitment Award because she is a natural talent! Her colleagues feel that she is a loyal and dedicated member of the team at Halstead Hall, she is a pleasure to work with but above all the judges loved how Lisa was able to show a natural understanding of people's feelings and residents living with dementia".

Supporting Star Award Selina Sutton - Stowlangtoft Hall



"Selina is a dedicated individual who strives to create a welcoming environment for all, including staff, residents, and their families. Her commitment to going above and beyond for others is evident in her willingness to offer help and support whenever needed. Selina is a trusted source of guidance and support for all those around her. A true supporting star".

Spirit of Stow Awards Continued...

The Growth & Development Award Sarah Murray - Stowlangtoft Hall



"The judges chose Sarah as their winner based on Sarah's own admission that she had no traditional links to nursing having come from a farming background. Since starting at Stowlangtoft, fresh out of University, Sarah feels that society currently holds a negative view of nursing, so it is an honour for these awards to recognise the hard work, passion, and high standards of care such practitioners strive to provide daily".

The Unsung Hero Award Fred Le Brun - Stowlangtoft Hall



"Fred has shown the impact of his kindness on others, he touches the lives of residents through his genuine acts of kindness. He helps residents feel valued, to feel part of a caring community, to feel included, to feel loved".

The Star of the Night Award Juliet Ndungu - Horkesley Manor



"Juliet demonstrated a passion for her own self-development but more importantly how this would impact her colleagues and then go on to impact the care given to the residents. As Juliet said 'nursing is not just about giving meds' Juliet's smile and approach is a shining example of how night time workers can remain positive and influence excellent care at night time. She is the Angel of the Night".

The Stow Healthcare Team Award Halstead Hall Kitchen Team



"The team were able to demonstrate their brilliant team spirit and how by working together, complementing each other's strengths, and adapting to challenges they have and built a strong team in the process. They have gone above and beyond supporting residents, offering choice, being involved in activities, and putting the individuals at Halstead Hall at the centre of all they do".

The Catherine Catchpole Outstanding Achievement Award Michelle French - Cedars Place



"Michelle French embodies the Spirit of Stow. She is the first to acknowledge how difficult she has found being a leader, but she has learnt from leaders around her and beyond the home and continues to try and improve her skills.

Her passion for her residents burns as brightly as the strawberries she has been cultivating with the residents, as she drove forward plans for raised beds to improve their quality of life and sense of purpose. Supporting one terminally ill resident to enjoy Christmas at the start of December and then helping them celebrate again 3 weeks later is truly everything Stow stands for".

Here are a selection of photos from the night!



Spirit of Stow Awards Photos of the Night



Photos continued



Stow in the Snow 2024

CATEGORIES ANNOUNCED!!!

- 'Deck the Halls'
- The Festive Food Category
- Best Festive Dress
- The Resident Involvement Award
- A Jolly 'Handmade' Holiday
- Best Christmas Card
- Best Festive Photograph
- The Staff Involvement Award

*New Community Competition for 2024 :-
Design your own Christmas Jumper*

**Judging will take place in December
more details coming soon!!
Good Luck**

*****Best Decorated Christmas Tree***
will be judged by members of the public on Facebook**



Industry Award Success for Stow Healthcare

Award Shortlistings for 2024

Following our Spirit of Stow Award nominations, we have been delighted to be able to submit so many individuals and teams for external awards this year.

In 2024, we have received over thirty shortlistings across nine industry events with shortlisted finalists represented across all eight of our homes.

The first awards night of 2024 was the Norfolk Care Awards held at Sprowston Manor Hotel in July where the nursing team at Ford Place were highly commended in the Nursing in Social Care category.

Stow Healthcare Group has been recognised with several company shortlistings including 'Excellence in Small Residential Care' at the prestigious LaingBuisson Awards, as well as recognition for the senior management team in the 2024 Care Home Professional Powerlist. Below is a list of shortlistings at some of this years key awards events.

Updates on the events will be shared on our social media channels so you can stay up to date with the latest news.

East of England Care Awards – Milton Keynes Dons Stadium - 1st November 2024

Finalist- Brandon Park Activities Team- The Activity Organiser Award

Finalist- Sarah Murray, Stowlangtoft Hall- The Social Care Nurses Award

Finalist- Corrinne Collis, Halstead Hall- The Dementia Carer Award

Finalist- Halstead Hall, The Dignity in Care Award

Finalist- Ford Place Team, Care Home Team Award

Finalist- Aleksandar Zivkovic, Horkesley Manor, The Care Newcomer Award

Finalist- Stow Healthcare Group, Care Employer, 3 R's, Co-Production & Care Innovator Award



National Care Awards - ExCel London - 29th November 2024

Finalist- Corrinne Collis, Halstead Hall, Carer of the Year

Finalist- Michelle French, Cedars Place, Nurse of the Year

Finalist- Matthew Scarlett, Halstead Hall, Deputy Manager of the Year

Finalist- Melford Court Care Home, Dignity & Respect Care Home of the Year

Finalist- Stow Healthcare, Care Group of the Year (Medium)

Caring UK Awards - Leicester - 5th December 2024

Finalist- Stow Healthcare Decaf Project, Best Initiative Care Award

Finalist- Stow Healthcare, Care Employer Award

Finalist- Halstead Hall, Management Team of the Year

Finalist- Manson House, Care Home of the Year

Finalist- Brandon Park, Excellence in Innovation and Dementia Award

An overflowing cup of success for decaf

Since its publication in April, Stow Healthcare's 'Decaf Project' in partnership with Care England and University Hospitals Leicester, has gone from strength to strength. There has been a huge interest in the project both locally and nationally with care providers across the UK taking up the challenge to switch to decaffeinated drinks.

We have been really pleased to hear feedback from other organisations who have made the change and seen positive results. This project is making waves on a national level and was recently mentioned by Lord Hunt in the House of Lords when he said *"Leaders in the sector are already championing a wealth of innovative solutions from everyday innovations such as decaffeination and that principle that helps to reduce falls"*. The decaf project is shortlisted across seven awards in 2024, including three categories at the

Nursing Times Awards; Care of Older People, Continence Promotion in Care & HRH The King's Award for Integrated Approaches to Care. The project picked up its first trophy at the Suffolk and North East Essex ICB Can Do Health Awards in the Innovation in Health Category which is a huge accomplishment.



The Bereavement Cafe at Stowlangtoft Hall



The Bereavement Cafe

Weekly drop-in group at Stowlangtoft Hall



Everyone Welcome

Thursday mornings 10am - midday

Stowlangtoft Hall, Kiln Lane, Stowlangtoft, IP31 3JY

Losing a loved one can turn your world upside down but talking about it can help. The Bereavement Cafe at Stowlangtoft Hall is a weekly drop-in group for anyone who has experienced bereavement.



Call us: 01359 230216
enquiries@stowlangtoftHall.co.uk
www.stowhealthcare.co.uk

Manson House



Premium, high quality residential care

Located at the heart of the historic market town of Bury St Edmunds, Manson House Care Home offers premium care in newly refurbished en-suite bedrooms.

This stunning 31 bed care home provides beautifully landscaped gardens and is accessible to all local amenities. Since joining the Stow Healthcare family in 2022, the home has undergone extensive refurbishment of a number of bedrooms, including two premium suites and a wonderful library.

For high-quality residential and respite care for those over the age of 65, please contact our admissions team.

For more information or to book an appointment for Manson House, or any of our Suffolk, Norfolk and Essex homes, please contact us at 0333 2419707 or email: admissions@stowhealthcare.co.uk



Virtual Wards

At Stow Healthcare we are proud to be at the forefront of care innovations that improve the lives of our residents. For the last six months, Stow Healthcare has been working with the team at West Suffolk Hospital to pilot their virtual ward project with residents in Care Homes.

The virtual ward service allows patients to get the care they need at home, safely and conveniently, rather than being admitted to hospital. Once referred, care home residents receive monitoring technology that measures vital signs (such as blood pressure, heart rate and oxygen levels) without them needing to leave the care home. Residents then receive care from the hospital team through home visits and remote monitoring with support from our staff at the care home.



This project started at Brandon Park, Stowlangtoft Hall and Melford Court Nursing Homes with the view to being rolled out at other homes in the future. Since joining the project our homes are now able to prevent a number of hospital admissions from our care homes by supporting eligible residents to be admitted on to the 'Virtual Ward'. Virtual wards have already been experienced by several residents being discharged from hospital early, but this pilot prevents residents from having to go into the hospital initially. This has many advantages including avoiding risk of infection and the disorientation that a hospital stay can bring.

We would like to thank all of the virtual ward team at West Suffolk Hospital in particular Dr Vivian Yiu and Dr Kelvin Bengston who have joined recent meetings to talk directly to relatives about the impact of the trial and take questions on the project. We would also like to thank Helen Hill, Stow Healthcare's Head of Care and Compliance, who has been leading on this project. If you have any questions about the virtual ward project, please contact us at: enquiries@stowhealthcare.co.uk

Virtual Ward Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Does someone need to come to you for an initial assessment or can that also be done remotely with the nursing home and GP?

A: Our teams will refer residents to the virtual ward, they will then visit to assess and plan the remote care.

Q: How does the virtual ward work for someone who has advanced dementia?

A: The virtual ward team have looked after a number of people with advanced dementia. Patients have not appeared to be worried by the wearable technology as this generally looks like a watch, it is also advantageous as a hospital stay can often be disorientating for those living with dementia.

Q: How many people can be monitored on the virtual ward?

A: Currently there is capacity for 40 people on Virtual Ward. West Suffolk Hospital is looking to increase this in future if this pilot is a success. This includes people in their own homes in the community, not solely in care home settings.

Q: What is the average length of stay on the virtual ward?

A: The average length of stay on the virtual ward is 7-9 days depending on the condition being treated. This is usually short-term illnesses and infections.

Q: How do you incorporate the nurses at the home in this treatment?

A: Our nursing staff will continue to use their skills and knowledge, they are all very excited about contributing to health care in their environments

Q: Do you link/work with the 2 local hospices and their community-based teams?

A: We work closely with our local hospices and have a palliative care consultant who is part of the virtual ward team.



Fun in the Fall - Word Search

B	H	R	A	N	I	H	K	S	E	F
I	O	J	F	O	G	A	Q	U	P	F
X	T	N	G	N	I	L	O	W	U	P
R	C	J	F	Q	M	L	I	T	M	H
U	H	K	T	I	B	O	C	D	P	K
T	O	R	K	U	R	W	O	R	K	Y
S	C	O	M	P	Z	E	S	A	I	D
C	O	W	T	F	A	E	Y	M	N	E
K	L	E	N	S	L	N	O	N	G	I
H	A	R	V	E	S	T	B	V	S	F
U	T	I	A	U	T	U	M	N	A	L
D	E	F	N	R	W	A	C	P	K	J

It's Puzzle Time!

Test your knowledge!

Which autumnal word from the list below, does NOT feature in our word search?

Harvest
Pumpkin
Fireplace
Bonfire
Autumnal

Cosy
Fog
Halloween
Firework
Hot Chocolate

If you have an interesting story, news or an announcement that you would like to share in the next edition of Caring & Sharing, please email us at enquiries@stowhealthcare.co.uk



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www.stowhealthcare.co.uk



STOW HEALTHCARE GROUP

The Brew House, Stowlangtoft,
Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP31 3JY

0333 2419707
enquiries@stowhealthcare.co.uk