

RMBI

NEWS

ISSUE 26
SPRING/SUMMER
2022



The huge pawtential of pet therapy

Friendly alpacas
bring joy to residents

Transforming our
Homes to support
people living
with dementia



Kind Supportive Trusted

Caring is our way of life

www.rmbi.org.uk



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“I came to Prince Michael of Kent Court when I was 17. The love of the job just got completely under my skin! Then, I was promoted to Shift Leader, which I enjoyed for many years.

“When you care for people, you don’t ever feel like you’re doing a day’s work. That’s a complete privilege.”

Nina Stephens, Deputy Home Manager at Prince Michael of Kent Court, in Watford.

Do you share our values of **Kind**, **Supportive** and **Trusted**?

Can you help make a difference, add value and meaning to the lives of older people in your community?

Visit www.rmbi.org.uk/careers or scan our QR code to check out our latest job vacancies.



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Front cover photo:
Resident Patricia Neville strokes a bunny at Prince George Duke of Kent Court, in Chislehurst.

Send us your comments about this issue or any suggestions for future issues of RMBI News at marketing@rmbi.org.uk or write to us at RMBI News Team, 60 Great Queen Street, London WC2B 5AZ



A message from Mark LLOYD, MD



RMBC Care Co. has weathered the storm of the pandemic with resilience and now we are seeing a return to normality in our Homes.

Ensuring the safety and security of our residents and staff has been our top priority over the past two years. Our staff teams have gone the extra mile in providing excellent care, and the support of our residents, families and Associations of Friends has been tremendous. Perhaps, the greatest return to normality is being able to resume family visits to see their loved ones in our Homes. We look towards the future with optimism.

Major themes that have emerged quite rightly include a greater awareness around mental health and wellbeing. This edition of **RMBC News** features the clear benefits pet and animal therapy brings to many of our residents.

We look forward to finally opening our new care home in Berkshire in September 2022, which represents the first new build for our charity in over a decade. The new Home will be specifically tailored to meet the needs of up to 45 people with nursing and residential dementia care; it will offer an environment that has been carefully designed to support our residents' changing needs.

Our 17 care homes for older people remain flexible to offer both permanent care and short term respite stays. Debbie Hollands, our Resident Placements Manager, will be happy to offer guidance. You can contact her at dhollands@rmbi.org.uk.

Thank you to all our readers for your continued support for RMBC Care Co.

Mark LLOYD, Managing Director

Your say*

"My mother has completely changed in a positive way since becoming a resident. The care, support, respect, interaction, cleanliness and food are excellent."

Daughter of resident at Prince Edward Duke of Kent Court, October 2021

"I have nothing but praise and respect for the way all the staff cared for my mother and made her feel so special."

Son of resident at Shannon Court, March 2022

"Everyone has been so helpful and kind. Nothing is too much trouble."

Respite resident at Devonshire Court, January 2022

"My partner has been in this lovely home for over six years. She could not be in a better home."

Partner of a resident at Zetland Court, January 2022



*Source: carehome.co.uk

News in brief



Sporty resident promotes women's fitness to celebrate Women's History Month

Pamela Brett is one of the most active residents at Prince Michael of Kent Court, in Watford. At age 90, keeping fit is just as important to her as ever before. To honour Women's History Month in March, Pam encouraged women to prioritise 'keeping fit' to support their mental and physical wellbeing. She reveals: "When I cycle, I often play a YouTube video, which takes me along scenic views of the Cotswolds. It really helps with motivation!"

World famous magician and resident celebrates 100th birthday

Mark Raffles, a resident at Queen Elizabeth Court, in Llandudno, celebrated his 100th birthday. As a magician, Mark became a regular on our TV screens during the 60s, 70s and 80s, appearing on popular variety shows with his famous pickpocket act under the stage name of Ray St Clair. Mark is both a past President of The International Brotherhood of Magicians and a life member and past President of the Blackpool Magicians Club. He is also a Life Member of the Invisible Lodge in the U.S.A.



Social media updates



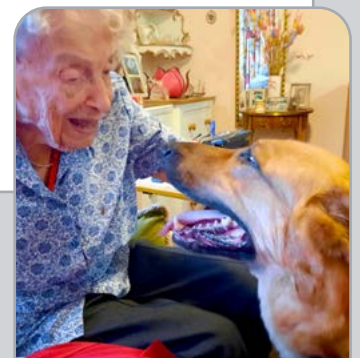
RMBC Care Co. January 24

Our residents at Barford Court, in Hove, celebrated National Cheese Lovers' Day with an appetising selection of cheese, crackers and Buck's Fizz. They do know how to 'cheese' the day!



RMBC Care Co. March 16

In honour of Crufts, our staff at Cornwallis Court, in Suffolk, surprised residents by bringing in their own dogs to work.





Harry Priestley House residents celebrate British Pie Week

As a nation, it is estimated we each eat around 36 pies a year on average. Most of us can't resist a homemade pie and, to mark British Pie Week from 7-13 March, residents at Harry Priestley House, in Doncaster, made their favourite pie recipes. Staff members at the care home organised a baking session, where some of the residents shared their favourite recipes and made mince and onion pies, cheese and onion pies, and apple pies for those who fancied a sweet treat.

Feathered friends visit Cadogan Court

Residents at Cadogan Court, in Exeter, were visited by Echo, the European Eagle owl; Chestnut, the Tawny owl; and Barley, the Barn owl. Kyler Rogers, Activities Coordinator, said: "We wanted to do something new and fun for our residents, so we invited these beautiful creatures to our Home." One resident who was especially delighted was Paula Anderson. She said: "It was a lovely visit as we got to hold and stroke these beautiful birds. They certainly put a smile on everyone's faces!"



RMBC Care Co. February 16

Our residents at Connaught Court, in York, accepted the challenge to make traditional lanterns to mark the final day of the Chinese New Year celebration.



RMBC Care Co. February 18

Many thanks to The Friends of James Terry Court for spoiling our residents at James Terry Court, in Croydon, with flowers and chocolates!



The huge pawtential of pet therapy



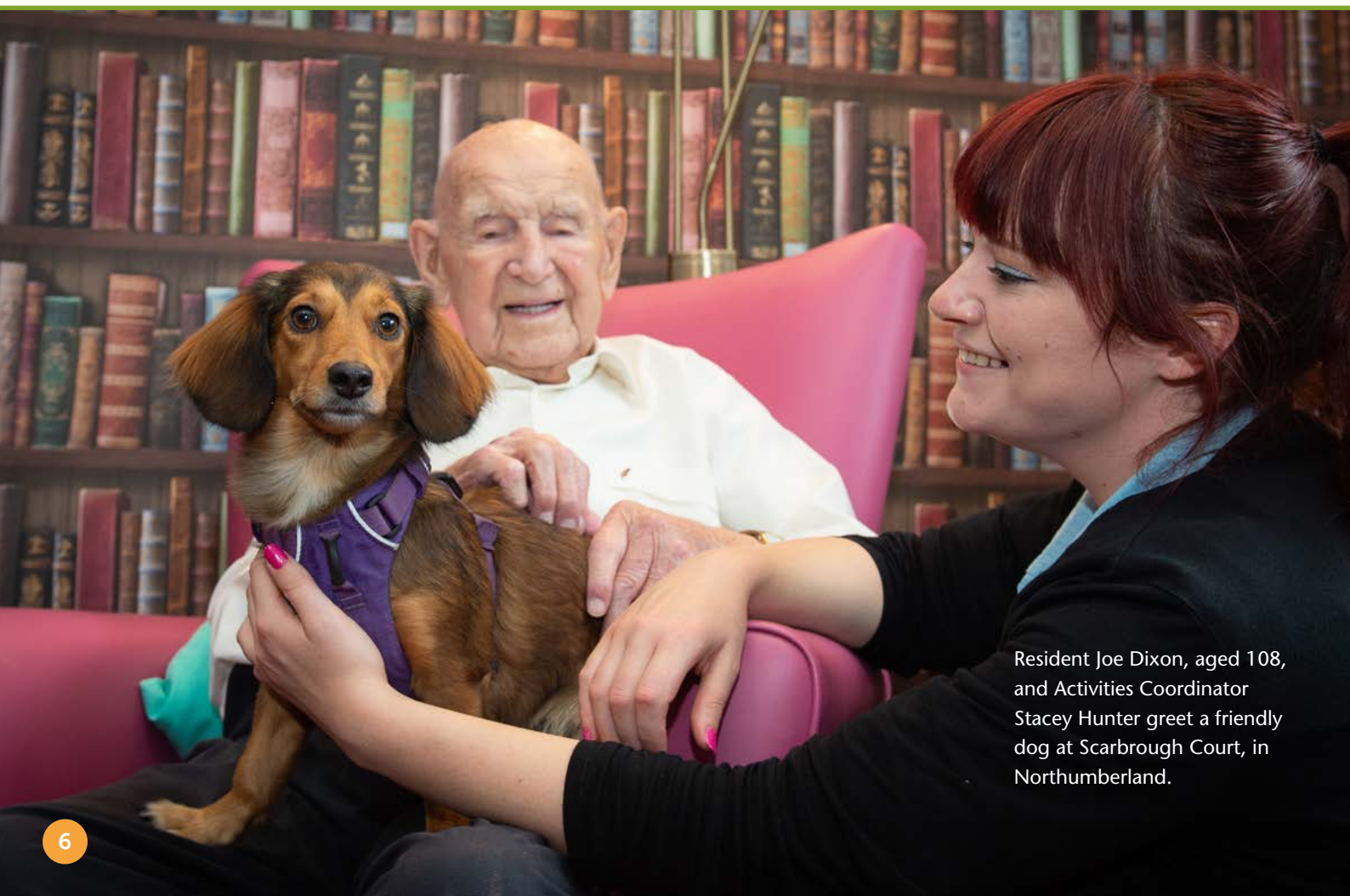
Our Homes welcome animals for therapeutic purposes. Pets bring joy and a sense of calm to our residents while benefitting their mental health and wellbeing.



Research has found that petting an animal promotes the release of serotonin, prolactin and oxytocin, all hormones that can play a part in elevating moods. According to Dr Christine Rhodes, lecturer in Health and

Social Care at the University of Derby, interaction with pets is associated with decreased depression and increased socialisation. Following a pet therapy session she conducted with university staff in 2018,

attendees used words such as “healing”, “soul-soothing” and “blissful” to describe their experience with two terrier dogs. Similarly, our staff teams in RMBI Care Co. Homes have observed similar benefits on our residents.

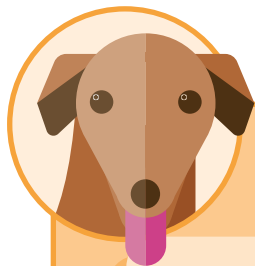


Resident Joe Dixon, aged 108, and Activities Coordinator Stacey Hunter greet a friendly dog at Scarborough Court, in Northumberland.

Leftt: Resident Pauline Smith enjoys petting a toy dog at Cadogan Court, in Exeter.

Right: Resident Noreen Gubbins, 101, with her furry friend at Devonshire Court, in Leicester.

“Therapy pets give them companionship. Some of our residents have lived with animals all their lives, so the comfort and happiness these animals bring them is something special,” says Stacey Hunter, Activities Coordinator at Scarborough Court, in Northumberland. “Our Home has had many animals through the doors,” says Stacey Hunter, “from dogs and cats to reptiles, spiders and foxes. The most popular were the miniature horses.” ■



Benefits of animal therapy*

For physical health

- Relax more during exercise.
- Diminishes overall physical pain.
- Breathing slows in those who are anxious.
- Lowers blood pressure and improves cardiovascular health.

For mental health

- Reduces loneliness.
- Increases mental stimulation.
- Can provide an escape or happy distraction.
- Lowers anxiety and helps people relax.

*Source: UCLA Health



Friendly alpacas bring joy to residents

Residents at Lord Harris Court, in Berkshire, enjoyed a friendly visit from Truffle and George, two alpacas that soon became very popular in the care home.

The residents were delighted to meet the affectionate animals, who were happy to be petted and stroked. Antonia Brown, the Home's Trainer, led the alpacas around and introduced them to the residents. Taking part in this activity, 91 year old resident Edna Staines said: "They are so nice and well behaved. One of them ate out of my hand!"

Deane Robinson, Activities Coordinator at Lord Harris Court, said: "One of our residents was so delighted that she cried with joy! Everyone who met the animals, both residents and staff, fell in love with them."

The Activities Coordinator reflected on the importance of this activity for residents. She said: "The residents were able to get very close and feel the alpacas' breath and touch their shaggy hair. This was a particularly joyful experience for residents with visual problems."

The Home welcomes animals for therapeutic purposes, as they not only bring joy and a sense of calm to the residents, but also benefit their health by boosting their activity levels, reducing stress and combating

loneliness. This activity was arranged in collaboration with Mortimer Alpacas, a local business in Berkshire that owns alpacas for people to enjoy outdoors. ■



Left: Residents John, 95, and Sybil Bird, 93, assisted by Lord Harris Court's Trainer, Antonia Brown, greet and stroke the alpaca affectionately.

Below: Resident Edna Staines, aged 91, feeds one of the alpacas a tasty carrot.

“

The alpacas brought bliss to our residents, which is fantastic for their mental health and wellbeing.

Deane Robinson, Activities Coordinator at Lord Harris Court

”

Residents and staff celebrate Dog Show

Residents and staff at Albert Edward Prince of Wales Court, in Porthcawl, joined forces to launch their first Dog Show at the Home.

The staff brought in their pets, who competed in a range of different categories, including fastest retriever, temptation alley, egg and spoon, and musical hoops. The winners and all participants received rosettes and certificates at the end.

The Home's Dog Show judges were 85 year old resident Mollie Gould and 90 year old resident Dylis Waddington, with the support of Gillian Thatchell, member of Therapy Dogs Nationwide. Dylis Waddington, who always had dogs and keeps treats for any dogs that come to Albert Edward Prince of Wales Court, said: "It has been a marvellous experience. It was so lovely to see my friends, the dogs! I can't wait until the next time."

Mandy Kilpatrick, Activities Coordinator at the Home, agreed with Dylis and added: "The Dog Show has been a great success and we've been thrilled with everyone that took part in it, both dogs and their owners. Indeed it's been an amusing and fabulous afternoon, and the residents loved it!"

The staff at Albert Edward Prince of Wales Court are fully aware of the benefits that pets can provide to their residents. Activities Coordinator Mandy Kilpatrick said: "A lot of our residents at Albert Edward Prince of Wales Court had pets before moving in, and they have fond memories attached to dogs. It's also a good way of helping them to remember." ■



Above: Residents Dylis Waddington (left) and Mollie Gould (right), who became the Dog Show judges, keep count of the scores for every category.

Below: From left to right, Anne-Marie Taylor, Carer; Kim Hooper, Carer; Teresa Picton, Deputy Home Manager; Simon Roberts, Facilities Manager; and Kim Pearsall, Housekeeper. In the background, resident Colin Griffiths enjoys watching the competition.



A helping paw

Below: A Canine Partners assistance dog helps a person with mobility difficulties to remove her shoes.

For people with a disability that might affect their sight, mobility, hearing and more, an assistance dog can be a lifeline – which is why there are thousands of them in the UK providing comfort, practical support and companionship to those who need it.



The Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF, the Freemasons' charity) has given £30,000 to Sussex-based charity Canine Partners, which is transforming the lives of more than 200 people with disabilities over the age of 50 through their specially trained assistance dogs. Not only do these dogs make day-to-day life easier by helping with household jobs – they also provide a sense of security and friendship.

The grant is funding three months of assessment, training and after care, so that older

people with disabilities can form a partnership with a dog that is perfectly tailored to meet their needs.

During the pandemic, social distancing meant delivery drivers, who could normally help those with limited mobility by carrying in their shopping, could no longer provide this type of support. For one lady, her Canine Partners assistance dog was retrained to fetch a washing basket, put the shopping bags in and push it into the kitchen where she could unpack.

Amazingly, the dogs are also trained to offer support in emergency situations; if a client falls from a wheelchair, the dog can operate the emergency alarm, open the door to allow a third party to enter, as well as provide blankets, pillows and a mobile phone.

Whilst the dogs' practical assistance is a lifeline for many, the company of a canine friend can be incredibly rewarding, whilst the additional responsibility of looking after their new pal allows a person to form a daily routine and exercise regularly. ■

Learn more about the MCF's impact in your local community:

access mcf.org.uk/impact/our-work-in-your-community or scan the QR code below.



The MCF is dedicated to helping young people achieve their potential despite the barriers they may face. Get in touch to find out more about eligibility and the support they provide:
0800 035 60 90
help@mcf.org.uk
www.mcf.org.uk



Transforming our Homes to support people living with dementia

RMBI Care Co. has invested £250,000 to transform Prince George Duke of Kent Court to enhance the environment for people living with dementia.

The care home in Chislehurst, which currently supports up to 73 residents, refurbished part of its first floor to create a 'house model' dementia environment. The new area can support 19 residents with dementia. It has an open lounge and a dining room, creating a central point for residents to go to for socialising, relaxing, or to enjoy different activities.

By working closely with the residents and understanding

their interests, other spaces created to support them include a country kitchen, sensory zone and technology zone. An 'outside inside' area has also been designed to bring the 'outdoors indoors', from the wall décor to the furniture and by introducing animals.

RMBI Care Co. has also invested £500,000 to increase the number of people with dementia that Queen Elizabeth Court can support, from



seven to 19. The care home in Llandudno, North Wales, now has four new distinct 'Houses', each having a 'home from home' feeling, which is vital for the wellbeing of residents with dementia. ■



Above: Resident Patricia Neville with staff member Sylwia Miry, stroking one of the bunnies that now live in the new Dementia Support House at Prince George Duke of Kent Court, in Chislehurst, for residents to enjoy and care for.

Left: The country kitchen in the new dementia environment.

Find your local RMBI Care Co. Home

At RMBI Care Co., we provide residential care, nursing and residential dementia support to older Freemasons, their families and people in the wider community.

We have been caring for older people for over **170 years** and today we support over **1,000 residents** across **18 care homes** in England and Wales.

Check out our promo videos at www.rmbi.org.uk to find out more about our Homes.

- 1** Albert Edward Prince of Wales Court, Bridgend
Tel: 01656 785 311
- 2** Barford Court, Hove
Tel: 01273 777 736
- 3** Cadogan Court, Exeter
Tel: 01392 251 436
- 4** Connaught Court, York
Tel: 01904 626 238
- 5** Cornwallis Court, Suffolk
Tel: 01284 768 028
- 6** Devonshire Court, Leicester
Tel: 01162 714 171
- 7** Ecclesholme, Manchester
Tel: 01617 889 517
- 8** James Terry Court, Croydon
Tel: 020 8688 1745
- 9** Lord Harris Court, Berkshire
Tel: 01189 787 496
- 10** Prince Edward Duke of Kent Court, Essex
Tel: 01376 345534
- 11** Prince George Duke of Kent Court, Kent
Tel: 020 8467 0081
- 12** Prince Michael Of Kent Court, Watford
Tel: 01923 234 780
- 13** Queen Elizabeth Court, Llandudno
Tel: 01492 877 276
- 14** Scarbrough Court, Northumberland
Tel: 01670 712 215
- 15** Shannon Court, Surrey
Tel: 01428 604 833
- 16** The Tithebarn, Liverpool
Tel: 0151 924 3683
- 17** Zetland Court, Bournemouth
Tel: 01202 769 169
- 18** Harry Priestley House, Doncaster
Residential care for adults with learning disabilities.
Tel: 01405 814 777

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Company No: 1293566

RMBI Care Co. is part of the Masonic Charitable Foundation – Funded entirely through the generosity of Freemasons, their friends and families, the Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF) builds better lives by encouraging opportunity, promoting independence and improving wellbeing. For more information, please visit: www.mcf.org.uk



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