

# RMBI NEWS

ISSUE 30  
SPRING/SUMMER  
2024



## The power of poetry

Supporting  
people through  
menopause

A bright  
future for  
outstanding  
Homes

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Rocky the donkey pays surprise visit to Prince George Duke of Kent Court residents

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Resident and painter adds a splash of colour for charity

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Front cover photo: Staff member Ersilia Antohe and resident Pamela Brett bonding at Prince Michael of Kent Court, in Watford.

RMBI News is edited by RMBI Care Co.'s Marketing Team: Gonzalo Mellado and Maricel Foronda.

Send us your comments about this issue or any suggestions for future issues of RMBI News at [marketing@rmbi.org.uk](mailto: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



**Supporting our residents' mental health and wellbeing to help them remain active is crucial to us.**

When a resident arrives at one of our Homes and we carry out a care needs assessment, we also look to build up their life story so we can respond to their wishes. This could be a lifelong ambition or a dream, such as flying in a hot air balloon, a ride on a train or even returning to a childhood town for a visit. For example, one former golf captain wanted to tee off one last time on her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, a wish we ensured was granted.

Supporting residents' dreams and wishes is as vital as the daily activities in our Homes, which this issue looks to celebrate. Our Homes' Activities Coordinators help to identify and support people's hobbies and interests, be it exercise, yoga, cooking and baking, gardening,

arts and crafts, reading or visiting their local communities. Our staff's imaginative approach ensures that our residents also enjoy a wide range of stimulating activities.

Our 16 care homes for older people remain flexible to offer both permanent care and short-term respite stays. Debbie Hollands, our Resident Placements and Contract Manager, will be happy to offer guidance. You can contact her at [dhollands@rmbi.org.uk](mailto:dhollands@rmbi.org.uk).

Thank you to all our readers for your continued support for our charity.

**Mark Lloyd**  
Managing Director

## Your Say\*

"I am impressed by all aspects of care given to my mother. The facilities are very good and all staff show a caring and friendly manner. The activities are exceptionally good."

Son of a resident at Prince Philip Duke of Edinburgh Court, March 2024

"The care is genuine, with my mother-in-law's needs at the heart of every decision that they make for her. The atmosphere within the whole Home is lovely."

Daughter-in-law of a resident at Connaught Court, February 2024

"Amazing care with the nurses and carers at both residential and the nursing side."

Daughter of a resident at Queen Elizabeth Court, December 2023

"As a lifelong gardener, my mother was delighted to pair up with another resident and cultivate a patch of garden where she could grow flowers and spend reflective moments."

Daughter of a resident at Cadogan Court, January 2024

\*Source: [carehome.co.uk](http://carehome.co.uk)



# News in brief



**"Keep yourself busy!  
That's my secret to a  
long life."**

That is the advice from resident Glenys House, who lives at Albert Edward Prince of Wales Court, in Porthcawl. Glenys was born on 13<sup>th</sup> July 1925, only seven years after the end of the First World War. When the Second World War broke out, she joined the RAF as a nurse and tended soldiers that had been prisoners of war in Japan. Glenys will turn 100 in July next year, but she remains active. She remarks: "I've always kept myself busy and I do enjoy walking!"

## Rocky the donkey pays surprise visit to Prince George Duke of Kent Court residents

Residents at Prince George Duke of Kent Court, in Kent, were delighted when Rocky the donkey came to visit. Rocky was led by handler Caroline Edmonds from Second Chance, a sanctuary based in Somerset, all around the Home so that residents could pet and stroke him. They even stopped off at some residents' rooms so that they could be introduced.



## Social media news



Congratulations to Richard Herron, our Clinical Lead at Scarborough Court (Northumberland), who has received his Long Service Award for being with us over the last 5 years. Well done, Richard!



Harry Priestley House care home receives 'Top 20 Award' from Carehome.co.uk.







## Celebrating diversity with food

Inspired by Global Diversity Awareness Month and Black History Month, residents and staff at James Terry Court, in Croydon, have enjoyed a two-day cultural food festival. Residents and staff marked the occasion with a celebration of foods from around the world, including Poland, Slovakia, Portugal, Jamaica, Nigeria and Eritrea, all prepared by staff in the Home's kitchen.

## Residents share wartime experiences during museum visit

Residents at Prince Edward Duke of Kent Court, in Essex, have enjoyed a visit to the Imperial War Museum Duxford, in Cambridgeshire. During the visit, they were able to go to three hangars that featured various aircrafts; there were even mechanics working on planes and residents were able to ask technical questions. Resident Roy Cleaver, 92, served in the RAF and has a good knowledge about planes. He was excited to look around the hangars and proudly wore his RAF hat.



Resident Vera has just got a new dress at The Butterfly Boutique, which provides free clothing items to our residents at Zetland Court, in Bournemouth.



Residents at Barford Court, in Hove, made paper lanterns to celebrate Chinese New Year. "I lived in Hong Kong for three years," says resident Richard. "Every Chinese New Year, I made lanterns like this, so it was nice to make them again!"

# The power of poetry

Since the Epic of Gilgamesh and Homer's Odyssey, poetry has always played a significant role throughout history. It allows us to express our deepest thoughts, unravel difficult emotions and tell the most captivating stories. This is what residents at Shannon Court, in Surrey, are able to experience thanks to the care home's poetry group.

Hosted by Shannon Court's Activities Coordinators, Stephen Chandler and Leah Oliver, residents and staff read poetry of all kinds, from traditional classics like Shakespeare to romantic classics and contemporary poets. After each reading follows a discussion where all attendants share their thoughts, elaborating on the several meanings of the poems and reflecting on their relevance in today's world. This helps them stimulate their brain and enhance their overall sense of wellbeing.



Residents Andrew and Daphne attend Shannon Court's poetry group, hosted by the care home's Activities Coordinators, Stephen Chandler and Leah Oliver.

Commenting on the benefits of Shannon Court's poetry group, resident Daphne says: "Everybody has a story that's triggered by the poems, something they haven't told for a while or even thought about for a long time. That story then triggers memories for others, who then share their own story. This group makes us think, talk and act, and it's

great to have people to chat about these things."

According to research\*, poetry readings open up a space for residents to feel able to discuss their own experiences. In essence, poems serve as a catalyst, encouraging the disclosure of stories. These moments of self-reflection and reminiscence can be valuable

and affirming, mainly because residents are able to share narratives that are important to them. Even residents who do not wish to participate actively can simply listen to the poetry and enjoy its stimulating and calming effect.

Activities Coordinator Stephen Chandler adds: "Our poetry group started some years

\* HEALEY, Joan, HOPKINS, Chris, MCCLIMENS, Alex and PELOW, David (2017). The potential therapeutic benefits of reading poetry to nursing home residents: the road less travelled? Journal of Poetry Therapy, 30 (3), 153-165.



“

Typically, people with dementia have short term memory problems, so they may not be able to remember what they did a short while ago. However, they may well be able to remember things from a long time ago, such as a poem they read 50 years ago at school.

Dr Kevin Harvey, Associate Professor in Sociolinguistics at University of Nottingham

”

ago, and has been a firm and favourite fixture of our activities programme ever since.”

Dr Kevin Harvey, Associate Professor in Sociolinguistics at University of Nottingham, states that one thing that is repeatedly demonstrated through shared reading is that well-known poems that have a regular rhythm and rhyme are very effective.

“They tend to be the kind of poems that are remembered at school, but there may also be something about a regular beat and a chime that galvanises the brain and neural networks,” he says. “Typically, people with dementia have short term memory problems, so they may not be able to remember what they did a short while ago. However, they may well be able to remember things from a long time ago, such as a poem they read 50 years ago at school.”\* ■

## Benefits of poetry reading and discussion for residents' wellbeing

Self-reflection

Self-expression

Catharsis

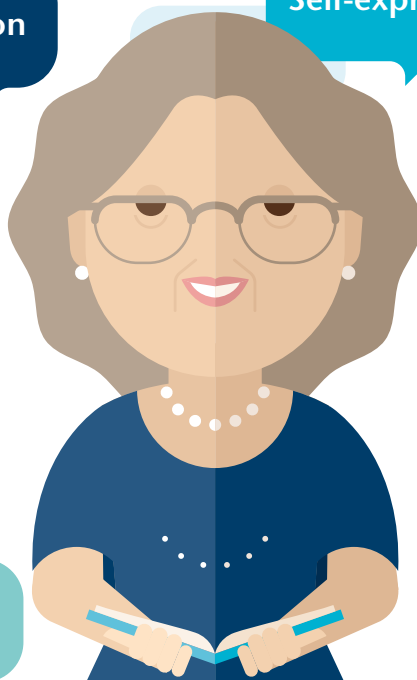
Mindfulness

Connection and community

Stress reduction

Inspiration and hope

Creativity boost



\* myScience (2017, May 15) *Using poetry to bring back memories for people with dementia.*

[www.myscience.uk/news/wire/using\\_poetry\\_to\\_bring\\_back\\_memories\\_for\\_people\\_with\\_dementia-2017-nottingham](http://www.myscience.uk/news/wire/using_poetry_to_bring_back_memories_for_people_with_dementia-2017-nottingham)

# Supporting people through menopause

**RMBI Care Co. has been awarded the Menopause Friendly Accreditation. Established by Henpicked: Menopause in the Workplace, it recognises high standards and proven practices that embrace menopause in the workplace.**

In order to achieve the Menopause Friendly Accreditation, employers are assessed by an independent panel and must demonstrate evidence of their effectiveness in these six key areas: culture, policies and practices, training, engagement, facilities and evaluation.

Two areas that have had the most impact in terms of support are:

- Having a meaningful Menopause Policy, which is supported with Line Manager guidance and training.
- Providing wellbeing baskets, including leaflets, menstruation products, deodorant, moisturiser/skin products targeted for individuals experiencing the menopause, cooling spray, intimate washes and sanitary wipes.

Louise Bateman, Group Human Resources Director, said: “Our staff are our biggest asset, so we are always looking at how we can support their health and wellbeing. Approximately 84% of our workforce is female, many of whom are either currently experiencing menopause or will be in future years. We wanted to create a culture where menopause can be openly discussed and not treated as a taboo subject.” ■



RMBI Care Co. teamed up with Boots to support staff with symptoms of the menopause. Staff at Prince Edward Duke of Kent Court, in Essex, pictured with a skin serum sent by Boots.



# A bright future for outstanding Homes

**RMBI Care Co. is investing £16m to build a new care home on the site of its current Home, Cornwallis Court, which received an 'Outstanding' rating by the Care Quality Commission in August 2023.**

With a sustainable approach in mind, the new care home will be designed and created to meet the changing needs of older people. The latest technologies will be available to support up to 64 people with residential care, nursing and residential dementia care.

The build commences this year and full completion is expected by 2027. Mark LLOYD, Managing Director at RMBI Care Co., says: "We plan to create and build a new care home with modern spaces that evolve with our residents alongside assistive technologies and a personal approach to our care."



## Devonshire Court

In Oadby, Leicester, residents at Devonshire Court are enjoying a new open space at their care home in Oadby. Home Manager Juliet McNeilly says:

"Our balcony area is our newest addition in creating open spaces that can be appreciated by all our residents, especially to socialise and enjoy nature in the warmer months."

Devonshire Court, which is currently rated 'Outstanding' by the Care Quality Commission, supports older people with residential care and residential dementia care. ■



**Above:** Artist's impression of the proposed new-build care home in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk.

**Left:** Assistant Grand Master Steven Varley, Home Manager Juliet McNeilly, Deputy Home Manager Emma Strachan and Peter Kinder from the Leicestershire and Rutland Freemasons, enjoy the winter sun on Devonshire Court's new balcony.

# Mental health support for Freemasons and their families

**The Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF, the Freemasons' charity) is funded entirely by the generosity of Freemasons and their families, and gives back to the community through its Masonic Support programme.**

The Freemasonry community is made up of Freemasons, their children and grandchildren, as well as their widows or partners. Individuals falling under these categories may be eligible for the MCF's grants and services, including access to mental health support.

The MCF collaborates with an external provider to offer mental health support to members of the Freemasonry community – both adults and, since January last year, children aged 5-16. The support is available for those experiencing symptoms of depression, anxiety, stress or any other conditions affecting one's mental wellbeing. The professional support is provided by an independent team of professional counsellors and therapists, who are registered and accredited by the UK Council for Psychotherapy.

Since the service for children and young people was made available, the MCF has received a great deal of positive feedback. A student and grandchild of a Freemason expressed their gratitude for how the support helped them get through a difficult period: "Last year's exam season was incredibly tough for me; with my future university and career riding on those results, the pressure was overwhelming. I was also dealing with family issues at home, which only added to the stress.

The support I received was a lifeline – the counsellor really took the time to listen to my fears and anxieties, and gave me coping tools that I will always be thankful for."

In the last financial year, the MCF awarded over £21,000 to support 28 children and younger people with their mental health. This is only possible thanks to the generosity of Freemasons and their families, who are helping the MCF in its mission to build better lives. ■

In the last financial year, the MCF awarded over £21,000 to support 28 children and young people with their mental health.



For more information and to reach out for support, visit [mcf.org.uk/get-support/mental-health](https://mcf.org.uk/get-support/mental-health) or scan our QR code.





# Resident and painter adds a splash of colour for charity

**Phil Smith, a resident at The Tithebarn, in Liverpool, is passionate about two things: painting and helping people. When Phil celebrated his 75th birthday, he arranged an art exhibition with support from the Home's staff. His goal was to raise money for charity.**



Fellow residents and staff members from The Tithebarn, along with neighbours from the local area, attended the exhibition where a wide selection of his paintings was displayed for visitors to enjoy. From colourful birds to leafy countryside landscapes, his art portrays nature in a vivid way.

Phil sold several paintings, raising a total of £130. He then donated the sum to the British Red Cross. He says: "I saw the news and decided to do something for the people in the Middle East conflict. I'm very happy to be able to give something to the charity at this time."

Despite the success, launching an art exhibition was something he had not even thought about. He explains: "I've given many paintings to fellow residents and have some displayed here at The Tithebarn, but I also wanted them to go to more people who would appreciate them. I call this 'the joy of giving'!" ■



**Above:** Phil's paintings offer a vast array of colourful birds, striking flora and bucolic landscapes.

**Above left:** Resident Phil Smith from The Tithebarn proudly poses with his paintings during the art exhibition.

# 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 180 years and today we support over 1,000 residents across 17 care homes in England and Wales.

Check out  
our promo videos  
at [www.rmbi.org.uk](http://www.rmbi.org.uk)  
to find out more  
about our  
Homes.

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

## RMBI News

Published in April 2024

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Registered Charity No: 1163245

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](http://www.mcf.org.uk)



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