

MARCH NEWSLETTER 2026

Welcome to our March Newsletter, covering the events of February and seeing what's planned for the month ahead.

Despite the dreadful weather this month, we have remained very busy and enjoyed a wide variety of Activities and events.

Community Afternoon Tea

Entertainment from Ian Jordan – Singer/Musician

Thankfully the rain stopped for a brief period so our friends from the village were able to come and join our Community Afternoon Tea. We also welcomed some residents from the new bungalows along with some of their families, so it really was a community event. Ian Jordan provided some excellent entertainment and there was a great atmosphere with lots of singing.



A family affair...



Ian Jordan entertaining



Residents, friends and family coming together during the Community Afternoon Tea

Keeping Active

During the winter months it is especially important to keep active and our bodies strong. Thankfully, we have regular visits from *Gunni of Kiddleydivey* (who is always amazed at how well everyone engages during her movement and music session) Dean's '*G Fitness*' sessions are also especially popular, and the use of resistance bands and equipment ensures maximum participation (even if some people are a little reluctant!)



A 'Country and Western' theme movement and music session from *Debbie of the Fred Douglas Performing Arts* was brilliant fun. Debbie encouraged dancing and exercising using some excellent props and after a fun-packed hour the residents really did feel like they had a work out!!



Exercising our minds and bodies

Our new sports equipment is proving popular, ad-hoc sessions using footballs, goals and hoops provide exercise, help cognitive skills and provide some healthy competition. We were recently donated some carpet bowls, and these have been given lots of use. Armchair exercise sessions and garden walks also help keep us active.

Aside from physical activity, we understand how important it is to keep the brain active. During the course of a week, residents are engaged in word games, quizzes, word ball, bingo and a new favourite is 'Thoughts and crosses' where residents are encouraged to give the most original written answers to questions. This can be very amusing!

We always try to keep events and notable dates incorporated in our activities, this year Shrove Tuesday and Chinese New Year fell on the same day so we had a Chinese New Year Quiz and pancakes!

Community Engagement:

Communion Service with Father Simon (St. Mary's Church)

As always, we thank Father Simon for taking time to visit and delivering Communion to the residents. This month we received a Candlemass service, which represents the purification of the Virgin Mary occurring 40 days after Christmas. It signifies the end of the Christmas Season and is known as the 'Festival of Lights' where church candles are blessed. Residents enjoyed worshipping together during the service.

As always, we thank Father Simon for spending time with residents after the service, and for seeing residents in their rooms if they are unable to join in the service.

We thank Gwyn for giving her time to play the piano for us during the services.

Services are arranged for the coming months including an 'Easter Songs of Praise' in April.

Intergenerational/Community Activities

Visit from our 'Grandfriends' The Nourished Child

A visit from our young friends always guarantees smiles and happy faces. Residents and the children got very hands-on creating a collage which was later turned into love-heart bunting for Valentines Day. During the session, adults and children enjoyed working together, encouraging and chatting. It was a very enjoyable session. Chef Matt presented everyone with a delicious fairy cake for Valentines .



Kelvedon St. Mary's Primary Academy – Reception Classes Singing their favourite songs

50 young pupils from Kelvedon St. Mary's visited recently and filled the lounges! The children were very excited to come and see us and had been rehearsing hard, ready for the performance. Our residents were delighted by their singing and we look forward to their next visit.



Live Music & Entertainment

Music and entertainment always guarantee to brighten everyone up and this month we needed it more than most! *'The Break Fill Four Band'* kept us entertained with a great selection of songs and music and joining in was encouraged.



Angie performed on the *keyboard* for us and had residents singing and dancing along to her tunes, she is always so cheerful, and everyone looks forward to her visits. Angie celebrates a big Birthday in February, and during a craft session, a small group of residents worked together to make a card for her as well as a 'On this day' display. Angie was really touched by the gesture and was looking forward to celebrating with her friends and family.





Card making in progress...



Angie with her cards

Andy Farrow of *'Andy's Vocals'* livened everyone up during his visit. He performed a wide selection of songs which had everyone singing and tapping their feet. Some residents took to the floor and enjoyed dancing.



Choir Practice

St. Dominic's choir have been warming up their vocal cords and enjoying the opportunity to sing together. Led by Cheryl, Activities Assistant, the residents have chosen a selection of 'Spring' themed tunes which have been very uplifting.

Animal Therapy

'Guide Dogs for the Blind Visit' after the success of their visit last year, we were very happy to welcome Sara and Rick back with two of their recruits. The puppies had grown in size, and confidence, and were very happy to receive lots of attention while the handlers answered lots of questions.

Rick also kindly took one of dogs around on room visits which was very appreciated by those residents who were either unable to attend activities or prefer not to.



Essex Therapy Dog – Poppy

Poppy is always a very welcome visitor; she has a very gentle nature and loves to see everyone. Aside from visiting us, Poppy accompanies her owner, Heather, to work at a school with children with special educational needs where she gives emotional support.

Poppy really is a very special animal, and we thank Heather for giving up her time to visit us.



Person Centred Activities...

Many of our residents are very happy to take part in group activities and like nothing more than a sing along and a lively activity session. However, this isn't for everyone, and we realise how important it is to ensure those quieter residents are given equal attention.

A 'Jigsaw table' has recently been purchased for those residents who like to sit and puzzle in a quieter environment. We also have many residents who like to read. Our 'library' is well stocked for those who wish to take a book and return it after.



Employee of the Month

Katrina Lines, known to us as 'Kat' works as a kitchen assistant cooking breakfasts and some suppers. Kat received four nominations this month from her colleagues and a resident. Kat brings a positive attitude to work; she is always smiling, supportive of her colleagues and lovely with the residents.

These are some of the comments from her nominators: Kat always brings a positive atmosphere and helps out as much as she can. She's always smiling and lovely to all staff and residents. She works very hard. Kat is very friendly, jovial and respects everyone. She always has a smile on her face. Always pleasant, very efficient and friendly. Kat is so lovely with the staff. She is always happy and always willing to help out if needed. She always has a quiz question for the residents.

In other news...

We had an unexpected treat recently when Megan (Team Lead) came to visit with baby Tae. He is such a bonnie baby and appeared to love all the attention! We look forward to seeing them both again soon.



March Birthdays

Many happy returns to Cynthia S and Jean who celebrate their birthdays this month.

MARCH ACTIVITIES

Wed 4 th	2.30pm	In-House Communion Service from Father Simon - St. Mary's Church
Fri 6 th	10.45am	Flower arranging demo & individual floral arrangements with Carol
Mon 9 th	2.30pm	G Fitness
Tues 10 th	2.30pm	Searchlight Re-enactors 1940s Dance Troupe
Wed 11 th	11.00am	'Kiddleydivey' Movement & Music
Fri 13 th	2.30pm	Angie – Playing the Keyboard
<i>Mon 16th – Sun 22nd Nutrition & Hydration Week</i>		
Tues 17 th	2.30pm	Alex Southgate – Singer – St. Patricks Day Performance
Thurs 19 th	2.00pm	Indoor Gardening session
Fri 20 th	2.30pm	'Casual Crooners' Choir performing
Sat 21 st		World Poetry Day
Tues 24 th		Easter Bonnett decorating with children from St. Mary's Primary school
Thurs 26 th	2.30pm	Performance from Roy Lodge
Fri 27 th	2.30pm	Community Afternoon Tea with performance from Angie on the Piano

Daily Activities held in the lounge *Art Club 10.30am Tuesdays*
Please note, unfortunately, Activities can be subject to change