



# house & home

The Birtley House Group Newsletter, Winter 2014

## Reassurance in a changing landscape

Winter brings the Care industry many challenges - whether we get a repeat of last year's storm-lashed season with power cuts and burst rivers or something colder with periods of ice and snow, this is the time of year that many vulnerable elderly people fear the worst. The Home Care sector has seen a huge expansion in recent years as people look to remain for as long as possible in their own homes, but if a care worker is delayed due to adverse weather conditions this can potentially have very serious repercussions.

At Birtley House, we know that whatever weather we experience this winter, our residents will not be affected. The generator will continue to provide electricity should there be a power cut, and our on-site staff accommodation means that there will always be some staff whose commute is not affected. In essence, the uncertainty that comes from continuing to remain in one's home is eliminated, which is why we often have people come to us for extended 'holidays' over the winter months.

But as we approach 2015 there is also another uncertainty facing the Care industry, namely the UK Elections in May. Without a doubt, this will mean some changes to the way that both the Health and Social Care sectors are organised, but how this will affect nursing

homes is not yet known. Of course, dramatic changes are unlikely to be made overnight, but the future landscape of Care will surely be altered in some way.

Birtley House has weathered many of these political and organisational storms over the years, and while we have had to adapt in order to remain fully compliant, we have also sought to always remain true to our original ethos of providing the highest level of care with the best possible lifestyle. To be able to provide this service whilst also remaining wholly independent and not part of a larger company is becoming increasingly rare, but we feel that to reduce our standards would not be acceptable. This is why we only employ the highest calibre of staff (and we are delighted that we have had some wonderful new staff join us in the past few months).

Whatever we may face in the near future, whether it is challenging winter weather or changing industry requirements, the residents at Birtley House can remain reassured that their safety, care requirements and quality of life will not be affected.

**Frank Whalley**  
Director





## From Matron's desk

As I write this, the end of 2014 is nearly here and I have to say I am looking forward to another Christmas at Birtley with carols and mulled wine. There is always such a lovely atmosphere that it would be hard not to enjoy it, and it's always lovely to see so many of our residents' families as they visit during the festive period.

We are delighted to welcome to Birtley Steve Morton, our new Head of Kitchen. Steve comes to us with a wealth of experience as Head Chef in other healthcare establishments, and he is looking forward to meeting you all and bringing new ideas to Birtley.

We have also had a good number of new care staff recently join our team: Sarah, Michaela, Thembe, Claire, Reggie and Rosa are all settling in and I hope they have a fantastic first Christmas at Birtley.

We are very pleased that Carol Fulker has been promoted to Care Supervisor and she joins Lisa and Dawn as our trio of most senior carers. Another recent promotion is Raj who, we are delighted to announce, has become a Senior Carer. Many congratulations to both of them. I will continue to look to increase the numbers in the nursing team, and have recruited a new nurse called Theresa who will have started by the time you read this. She will be working full time on day shifts and we are most excited about her joining us and becoming part of the Birtley team.

I'm sure you have noticed that the Maintenance team are constantly hard at work refurbishing rooms and bathrooms around the building, and I am most grateful to them for

their clean and speedy work. The upkeep and upgrading necessary in an old building like this is an ever present demand and I thank all our residents for their patience while essential work is done.

The Gold Standard Framework team are due to visit us in March to ensure we are continuing to maintain standards, and the nursing department will be working hard to be ready for this. We have really felt the benefit of the additional GSF training during this past year, and we hope that the residents, especially those more poorly ones, have felt the same. Amber, Bea and I will be heading this up and we would like, as always, to involve our residents and so will be asking for opinions on various issues. Our information leaflets are all being updated, so please feel free to take one from Reception if you are interested.

We are also looking at how we value staff and have introduced a scheme where they can be recognised for going the extra mile and really demonstrate the ethos of Birtley, so if you have anyone you wish to nominate please let me know, either tell me when you see me or you can ring me on 303, or send me a note.

On the Birtley baby front, we have two more staff members expecting babies, Nikki and Katarina are both expecting in the New Year, and we wish them all the best. We are also delighted to welcome back Staff Nurse Orsi who is returning to work following the birth of baby Milan.

**Karen Williams**



# Introducing our Counsellor Amber Turnell

It has been 20 months since I joined the team at Birtley House as the Counsellor/ Supervision Officer.

My role has evolved over that time as it was evident that there was a need for residents and their families to have a confidential “ear” to explore their feelings. I also support Matron and staff by facilitating at meetings, encouraging understanding and good dialogue, especially within our diverse multi-cultural team. So, my role is a varied one; ensuring the residents, and their families have appropriate psychological support should they need it, whilst also supporting our staff.

I have found the Whalley family and Matron very unique in their forward thinking of having this role that caters for the emotional welfare of residents and staff. The feedback I have received thus far has been very positive.

Holistic care is a high priority, working within the Multi -Disciplinary team which includes Matron, Directors, Staff Nurses, Carers, Housekeeping, Complementary Therapy, Maintenance, Physiotherapy, and last but not least Activities.

I am part of the Gold Standards Framework (GSF) Team and we continue to work towards delivering a good standard of care to the residents right through to the end of life. We meet regularly and also have a bigger GSF meeting twice a month to discuss each residents’ needs and to work in their best interest, to ensure they have continuity of care.

Most residents (no matter how much they enjoy the beautiful home and surroundings) find change difficult. Supporting residents through some of their feelings, concerns and losses during and after the transition from home is important and can help with the “settling in” process. Change can be hard for many, and having strategies to cope through these changes in life and circumstances can help immensely. Finding the meaning to life and having purpose sometimes evades many in this transition.

This time of the year can be difficult, as we lose the hours of natural light and adjust to the dark and cold heading into the winter. Most people tend to reflect on what trials have ensued approaching the end of the year, and mood can be low. This is very “normal” at this time of the year. Christmas approaching also brings a mixture of emotions as many residents and staff have a parallel process, in that for a number of reasons they are not all able to be with their nearest and dearest. By just being aware and caring for each other, this will help immensely during the festive season.

It is important to take care of ourselves especially during these weeks, ensuring whenever we can to:

- Go outside when the weather is fine, natural light is important as it triggers endorphins that lift our mood
- Avoid eating too many sweet, sugary foods as this has an impact, by creating “high and low” mood swings as the body craves more sugar
- Talk to someone close you can trust, if you are having a difficult day and get the support
- Plan to do something each month that YOU enjoy, tell someone what it is you would like and see if it is achievable. Put it in the diary and “MAKE IT HAPPEN”
- Breathing is a natural body response but when we have worrying thoughts, Good Controlled Breathing is key to helping relieve Stress, Anxiety and Tension
- We can become a “Prisoner to Our Thoughts” but we have control by managing these:
  - In 5 Slow Deep Breaths, counting the fingers on one hand as you do this, Breathe IN... and slowly ...exhale OUT, focus on the air coming into your nostrils and blowing out through your mouth. Visualise the worry leaving your body with each OUT breath. Practice makes Perfect! Let me know if you need help in practicing this technique.

Best wishes to all our residents, their families and our staff.

**Amber Turnell**

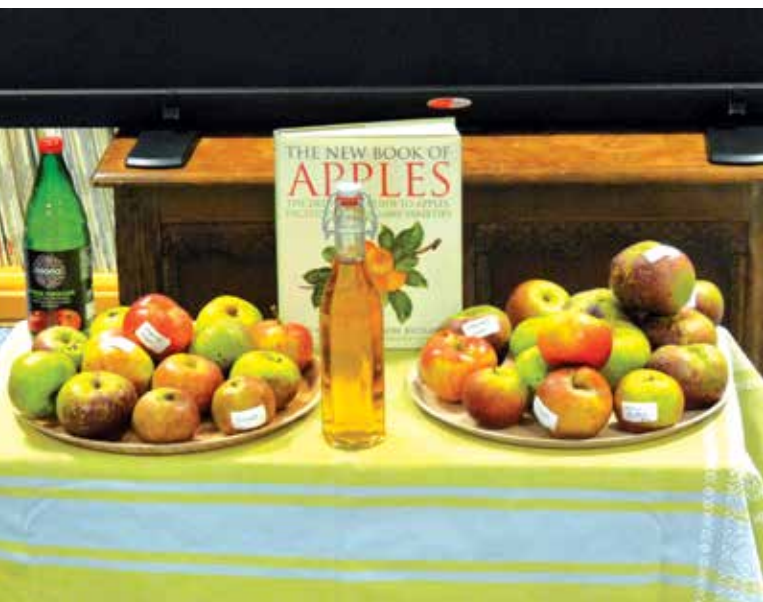


# Life in Activities

## What Are Friends For?

From time to time we in the Activities department receive very welcome offers of help in the form of "doing an activity". These offers may come from relatives, friends of residents, or members of staff, and we are always delighted to find a mutually agreeable date in order to fit this into the programme. This was particularly noticeable during October, beginning on the first day of the month, with Jill Perkins' daughter, Sherry McKelvie giving a talk with slides on Ugandan birds and wildlife. Sherry is a very accomplished photographer and as she lives in Uganda, she really does know her subject. Her photographs were wonderful and we were extremely grateful to Sherry for doing this for us.

Our next guest, Derek Goode, is a friend of one of our residents, Jean Donaldson. Derek is extremely knowledgeable on the subject of Bonsai trees - a new subject here. He brought in several of his precious examples, some he has grown himself. Everyone was fascinated to see them and to hear about the care required to maintain these miniature trees.



A few days later, Tim Whalley brought us all up-to-date on the progress of the cider apple orchard here at Birtley with photos showing the planting of the first trees almost 4 years ago, to the first crop and then the processing of the apples, and finally to the bottling of the first 350 bottles of Birtley Gold this year. Everyone

was of course keen to taste the cider which was much enjoyed by all but a few! Being a dry, still cider, those who prefer a sweet cider were not so convinced! Everyone commented on the attractive bottle that has been selected for this product, and the talk stimulated lots of questions which Tim answered and the theme continued into teatime with a delicious apple cake which Rachel (chef) had thoughtfully made for us.

Later in the month, Donald Woodhams put together an arrangement of music entitled "Tunes of our Time with a Bit of Jazz" This selection of recorded music was greatly enjoyed by many residents who were encouraged to name the tunes, bands or vocalists. Donald Woodhams is well-known to us at Birtley as he tends a small area in the secret garden in memory of his late wife who was a very popular resident here. Don, his son Jeffrey and his daughter Sally, helped with the original planting of the cider apple trees, and they continue to help with the apple picking each year. They are also faithful visitors to our annual Sculpture Exhibition and the Wood Fair.

Our regular monthly friends continue to contribute enormously to the Activities we offer here, namely, Ann Enticknap who manages to come up with new and interesting themes for the Book Club which is always well attended, as well as carefully selecting films which will be of interest for the Saturday Cinema and she will show two films a month during the winter months.

Our Pat Dog Theo and Pat Cat Qweenie continue to be very popular visitors here and there are messages from both in this newsletter. Different forms of exercise are very beneficial, so as well as our regular exercise routine, Jean Rawlings takes the Armchair Yoga and Charles Townsend takes the T'ai Chi class (21 residents participated in the November class). Music is still one of the most favoured activities, and each month we welcome Kevin Jacot here for a wonderful hour of his musical talents and a happy sing-along with some of the staff. The Birtley Choir is definitely improving!





We are regularly welcoming new friends to Birtley attending our Day Club which is a very flexible arrangement between us and the visitor. To spend part of a day here, sometimes including an appointment with the hairdresser, or manicurist or having a massage, followed by lunch in the Orangery, then the afternoon activity and tea, can bring much-needed companionship to the visitor or a safe haven for a carer needing a day to themselves perhaps.

Lastly, I must thank Carol and Tina for all their support and hard work combined with imagination, without which the Activities would not be nearly so much fun! We will endeavour to make sure the winter months ahead are filled with fun and laughter in this department!

**Caroline Whalley**

**p.s. Update On Shoeboxes**

A very BIG thank you to everyone who supported us in this years' Shoebox Appeal for Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child. With generous donations of money and gifts we have been able to fill 40 boxes towards Bramley's target of 100 boxes for 2014.



# A Christmas message from Qweenie the PAT cat

"I can't believe it is over a year since I wrote my last piece in your newsletter! Time goes by so quickly when you are busy washing and sleeping! I am constantly making new friends at Birtley House and they all seem to enjoy it when I sit on their laps and they stroke me and chat to my Mummy!

We come once a month at tea time (usually on a Monday) and firstly see quite a few residents in the Activities Room and afterwards visit people in their own rooms or in the small sitting room. We sometimes get some odd looks when people notice me being carried around tucked in under

my Mummy's arm but I think most people have got to know me now.

We are usually there for a couple of hours and afterwards I can't wait to get home and curl up asleep for the rest of the evening (after I have eaten my reward of Dentabits!) as all that socialising is very tiring for a small cat!

I (and Sue) wish you all a very Happy Christmas and look forward to continuing our visits in 2015".

**With love from Qweenie x**

## Theo's Christmas message 2014



### "Theo's 'Santa' Paws"

Hello  
My dear friends!

Now it is the festive season  
A time for love and joy  
But I never need a reason  
To be your very special boy

I love it when I see you smile  
Stroke me or pat my head  
I can sit beside you for a while  
Though sometimes you are in bed

My Birtley friends are so very dear  
For I am your PAT Dog Theo  
The best present I can bring you here  
Is to wag my tail and sit near you

I wish you Happy Christmas and New Year  
As I walk in through your doors  
And the best present when I appear  
Is to be your doggie friend - with 'Santa' Paws

Wishing you a Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New Year

With love from  
**Theo x**





# Mews News

Birtley Mews is a small and friendly community, consisting of eight two-bedroomed supported living flats. The flats are deceptively spacious and look out onto farmland offering wonderful views. We recently welcomed Mrs Brenda Slade to Flat 1 where she has settled in well and is gradually getting to know all that Birtley offers.

Our weekly sherry party is always a sociable occasion enjoyed by everyone and is a good time for Mews residents to catch up and talk about the weekly events. The residents also organise regular coffee mornings in their own flats, which are thoroughly enjoyed, whether hosting or attending!

All the hours of external decoration at the front and back of the Mews have paid off: Martin Carey has done a great job and it looks wonderful. The addition of the pane of glass on the top corridor to act as a wind break makes a huge difference to the residents living in the top flats. The dining room has had a makeover as well and looks fresher, and the dresser and serving area look much improved after a coat of varnish.

The Saturday afternoon 'Knit and Natter' sessions held twice a month in our dining room, are well attended. Mrs Weir made some beautiful mittens for the shoeboxes recently filled in Activities for Operation Christmas

Child for the charity Samaritan's Purse. There is probably a bit more nattering than knitting, but the aim is to have a social time with friends. Newcomers are always warmly welcomed and, of course, afternoon tea is served.

The Mews residents attend many of the Activities laid on and everyone enjoyed the talk by Tim on the development of Birtley Cider; which they found very interesting.

Although we will miss Magda while she is on maternity leave, we are all thrilled for her and Wojciech with the safe arrival of their baby son Matthew and we are delighted to welcome Katalin Vass (who is still on the Housekeeping team) to cover Magda's Warden duties in her absence. Katalin has picked up the daily routine of the Mews very quickly and by all accounts, she loves the job and getting to know this area of the business.

In fact, all of the Birtley Mews Wardens: Barbara, Jeni, Jo-Jo, Jenny and now Katalin, thoroughly enjoy their role as companions to the Mews residents.

We all look forward to a happy and healthy 2015.

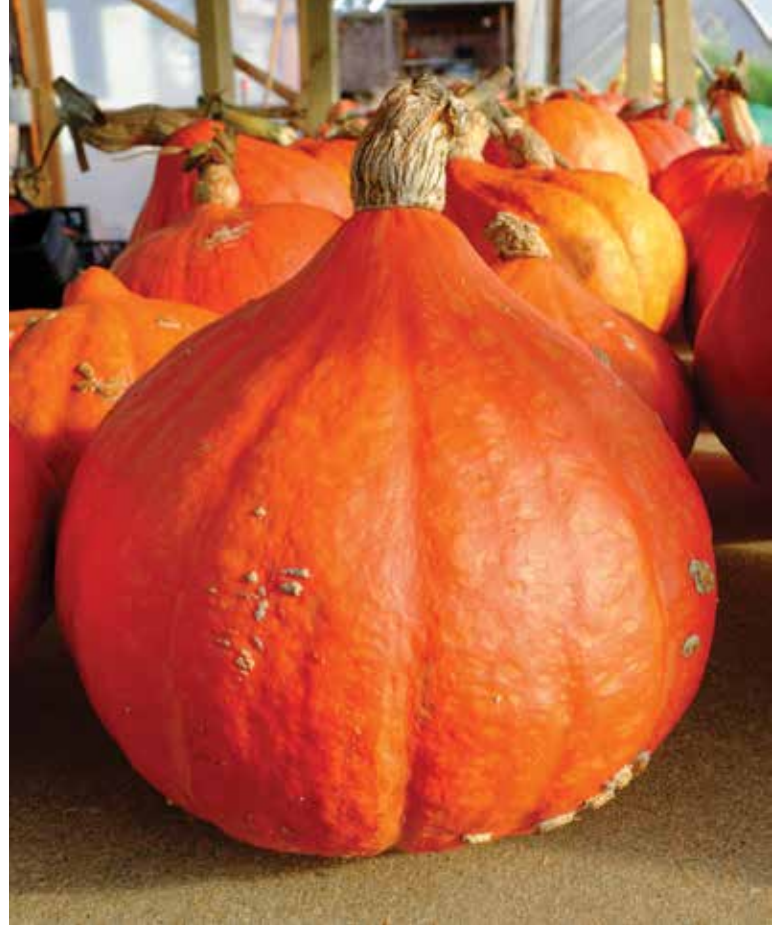
**JoJo Beard**, *Mews Warden*



# Garden Views

## Winter 2014

A rainy start to October sent us scuttling indoors to thumb through some brightly illustrated seed catalogues depicting perfect and entirely blemish free veg. Among them and now on our hit list to grow this year for next are a gorgeously squat, orange-striped and sweetly fleshed Asian squash that make a fabulous frittata, a lip-tingling rainbow-coloured chilli developed by the University of New Mexico, parsnips that go by the name of 'Duchess', two varieties of mini carrot, three of cauliflower including the green, fractal-looking one with pointy florets 'Romanesco', a petite sweetcorn 'Minipop', and an array of culinary herbs including Genovese Basil 'Atom', which is perfect for pesto and by special request, a sweet Thai variety which I confess to never having used, let-alone grown. Impulsive maybe, but who could possibly resist the promise of 'Honey Bubble' tomatoes, dangling in thick trusses from the vine? We shall grow them in among the medley of other heritage, beefsteak and pomodorino tomatoes. The choice is frankly overwhelming, with over 190 varieties of tomato in a single catalogue in every shade, shape and taste. The polytunnel will be busy indeed!



I am writing this article as the first WRAGS (Work & Retrain as a Gardener Scheme) apprentice or trainee gardener here at Birtley and you will have a fresh trainee in your midst every year: as I move on having completed my year, another trainee moves in. WRAGS are the training branch of the WFGA (Women's Farm & Garden Association) and do a fine job placing people who want to get hands on, no messing, experience in horticulture in wonderful environments like Birtley House.

Established in 1899 the WFGA formed to help women train in all land-related matters. Such was the success of the organisation it became the Government funded Women's Land Army, providing vital agricultural labour during the First & Second World Wars and 115 years on and WFGA is still going strong.

Young and tender is the name of the game for 2015 here at Kitchen Garden HQ plus, as I mentioned, a good sprinkling of intriguing varieties you wouldn't expect to find in your supermarket trolley. The second crop of Birtley apples are pressed and in tanks in the cider shed, bubbling steadily away.

Succulent Birtley Saddleback pork, crisp baby veg, all washed down with a richly refreshing glass of Birtley Gold. Thank Heaven for early October rain.

**Roz London**  
WRAGS Trainee



# Birtley Cider

## the story continues...



With sales of the 2013 harvested Birtley cider (Birtley Gold #2) going well and the 2014 harvest in and fermenting, we are looking ahead and have taken some of the unbottled 2013 to the new Silent Pool distillery for distillation into a cider brandy.

This distillery is a very exciting new facility for the Surrey Hills and will be producing a Surrey

Hills Gin (using Birtley Honey in the mix!); whisky and brandy.

Our cider brandy will mature in cask for a couple of years, so don't be in too much of a rush to sample it!

**Simon Whalley**



# Birtley Brook Estates

It's been a brilliant year so far and this year's sunshine has provided an abundance of food for the flora and fauna in the woods.

The only consequence of all this hot weather was a brief, but very damaging crisis in the lake, where the intensity of the constant sunshine caused several trout to die, due to lack of oxygen. Trout need well oxygenated water, unlike many other species of fish such as the Koi Carp, which are found in the smaller garden pond by the house.

One interesting observation from a recent corporate day was that Golden Orfe (a very popular goldfish pond species) were spotted in the shallows of the lake basking in the sunshine – but how did they get there? Very often wading birds which spend a lot of time standing in weeds and margins of lakes, get fish eggs stuck to their legs as they look for food. The bird will then move onto another lake where it will unknowingly deposit those eggs into the water. When we consider that Birtley had 60 Canada geese on the lake last summer it is no surprise that we have had some alien species turning up.

## Woodlands

The annual coppicing and replanting is about to take place in the woods, which for many is a great excuse just to be outside on those cold frosty mornings. Taking part in coppicing is an activity that man has actively pursued for thousands of years.

Any good straight hazel will be brought up to the house to be used as bean/pea sticks and the rest will either be put into firewood bags or

turned into charcoal. We will be planting any cleared areas with predominately sweet chestnut as it has a variety of uses.

The pigs are still working their way through the woods. Next year we are again looking at increasing the numbers to make an even bigger impact on the Himalayan balsam, Bamboo and Bracken.

## Work experience Students

This is an ongoing enterprise between Birtley House and Merrist Wood College and students participating in the Countryside Management Course, which I myself did several years ago. The students are required to do 300 hours as part of a work placement scheme which gets them out there in the industry and they are marked on their enthusiasm, attendance, punctuality, knowledge, and ability over that period of time

This year we have 3 new students so you might see Harry Chase, Kim Doughty and Jamie Dyer on site on Mondays, participating in activities such as loading up the Land Rover for a day's coppicing in the woods. All have great enthusiasm and a keenness to get on with the woodland management and daily animal duties of our Saddleback pigs and American Buff geese.

## Birtley Junior Rangers

This year was the first official kids club at Birtley House. The days were a fantastic success even if they were a little exhausting (on my part at least)!



The children were all local, some of whom were brought in by mums and dads working at Birtley. The feedback has been positive enough to make us continue with the club and expand it so that we can invite more than just the 5 children. Your lazy August afternoons may occasionally be filled with the happy laughter of ravenous raspberry munching. The children seemed extremely happy to take part in this activity, knowing that for every punnet they

picked for Birtley, they got to sell another one to their mums and dads.

Feel free to ask for any upcoming dates for any of your young, inquisitive and enthusiastic relatives.

**Theo Tramblinas**  
*Birtley Ranger*



## Surrey Hills Enterprises

Surrey Hills Enterprises is a Community Interest Company set up to support the exceptional work of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty through brand development, marketing & promotion, events & projects and educational programmes. The CIC is 50% owned by Birtley Brook Estates with the remaining shares held by Surrey County Council, on behalf of the Surrey Hills AONB.

The profits made by Surrey Hills Enterprises will be put back into the community of the AONB via the management plan, which pledges to enhance, preserve and protect the landscape.

To ensure that this plan is fully delivered, Surrey Hills Enterprises aims to bring together a range of independent companies through a membership scheme and provide a marketing platform to raise awareness of the unique local character of businesses in the area, influenced by the AONB.

By becoming a member of Surrey Hills Enterprises, businesses have access to a range of benefits including use of the Surrey Hills logo which will appeal to discerning customers concerned with the provenance of the goods they buy. In addition to featuring in the online directory on the Surrey Hills website, due to relaunch in January 2015, member companies will also be included in PR and marketing opportunities under the 'Surrey Hills' banner, whilst gaining access to the established social media network.

Surrey Hills Enterprises currently run a National Wood Fuel Conference and the very popular Wood Fair which this year brought approximately 5,000 to Birtley House to enjoy its unique setting and 'all that's good about wood!' Plans to extend the events portfolio for

2015 are now well underway and will provide further opportunities for both local business and the community.

To raise awareness of the Surrey Hills AONB and Enterprises, a poster campaign is about to launch on the North Downs network as far as Reading. We are very pleased to have Tim, of Birtley Brook Estates, featuring on one of the posters.

**Carol Hornsby-Smith**  
*Marketing Manager, Surrey Hills Enterprises*

### Surrey Hills Wood Fair

The fifth Surrey Hills Wood Fair was held on 4th/5th October in the Birtley grounds. Set-up of the 102 Exhibitors went smoothly in the sunshine on the Friday, however Saturday dawned with not so much promise and the rain came and went during the day. It didn't appear to dampen the spirits of the members of public, along with countless dogs on leads, who arrived to participate in demonstrations, bug hunts, horse & cart rides plus live music in the beer tent, which made the inclement weather so much easier to deal with!

Sunday was warm and sunny with blue skies and a queue of people were waiting to come through the gates at 10am. All of the Exhibitors reported good sales and much interest and there were lines of people waiting at the food & drink outlets all day for sustenance. A total of approximately 5,000 people visited the Event and the Birtley grounds looked spectacular. Birtley shared a stand with Surrey Beekeepers and sold home-made produce including cider, honey, redcurrant jelly and damson jam, all of which proved very popular.





## Golden Years Festival

This celebratory event took place in the Birtley Parkland on a glorious day in September. Now in its third year, this free event attracted 150 attendees from Day Centres and Care Homes across Surrey. The day included workshops, performances and demonstrations in dance, music, art and craft which had been specifically designed for older adults, and included a buffet lunch.

Central to the event was a labyrinth which had been designed by local artist Caroline Jackman, who marked out the intricate paths several weeks before the event. Our gardening team were then responsible for carefully feeding, watering and mowing the paths of this grass labyrinth to ensure that the design was visible on the day. The walls of the labyrinth

were marked out with metal stakes with long sections of finger knitting and crochet strung out between them. This knitting and crochet was made both in advance, and on the day, by the attendees. A dance, which had been choreographed by dancer Rosie Heafford, was performed in the labyrinth and all attendees were then invited to walk around the labyrinth while performing the dance movements they had learnt earlier in the day. Joining in with this dance were the Mayor of Waverley, Cllr Liz Wheatley (pictured below right), and her husband Mike, who spent the whole day at the event and said that they thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Sadly, the labyrinth had to be mown over in time for the Surrey Hills Wood Fair, but we hope that Birtley will construct a permanent structure in due course.





## Macmillan Coffee Morning

At the end of September, Birtley joined in with the 'Biggest Coffee Morning in the World' which is held annually in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support. Our event was very well attended, even though we had stiff competition from other local Macmillan coffee mornings being held on the same day. The visitors, residents and staff especially enjoyed the amazing array of homemade cakes and biscuits which had been produced by our Kitchen team.

To raise funds, in addition to the £3 entrance fee, there was a Tombola which was stocked with gifts generously donated by Birtley Suppliers and Birtley staff. Mrs Coe sold her handmade cards while Mrs Scrase sold cards which she had bought but never used. In addition, Birtley staff had been asked to make cakes, jams and chutneys to sell on our own produce stall. We raised a magnificent £646 during the morning, of which an amazing £128 was raised by the Birtley staff Produce Stall. Well Done Birtley!



## Legal Advice at Birtley House

Special thanks go to Sally Ashford, Legal Director of Charles Russell's Private Wealth team who joined us for an afternoon in September. Sally kindly offered to answer questions from residents, their families and Birtley staff on any legal issues.

Sally left some very useful information sheets explaining about Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) which are written in an easy to understand Question and Answer format. An LPA gives another individual the legal authority to look after your property and financial affairs, or health and welfare, should you lose your capacity or simply be unable to do so. This is not only relevant to the elderly but to younger people too and as such, it's something which we should all have in place. If you would like one of these information sheets, please email [janet@birtleyhouse.co.uk](mailto:janet@birtleyhouse.co.uk) or ask at Reception.

## Seminars for Doctors and Dentists at Birtley House

The first in a series of seminars, organised by Nuffield Hospitals for Doctors and Dentists, was held at Birtley in September.

The evening started with a glass of wine in the Drawing Room, followed by a delicious buffet supper in the Orangery, which had been prepared by our chefs. The 16 Dentists then enjoyed a lively and informative meeting with guest speakers: Professor Piet Haers, Maxillofacial Surgeon; Karen Potter, Consultant Radiologist; and Barry Chandler from IDT Dental products who are specialists in dental implant software and a compact version of regular CT scanners, which are ideally suited for dental practices.

The attendees were all very impressed with the 'Birtley House Welcome' and unanimously agreed that the supper was the best they had ever had at any similar seminar evenings.

**Janet Hall**, Marketing Manager

### Dates for your Diary in 2015

#### The Sculpture Garden:

Saturday 2nd – Sunday 31st May

#### Rare Plant Fair:

Sunday June 14th



# Celebrating 100 years

Birtley resident, Mrs Norah Cade was born in Sri Lanka, then known as Ceylon, in 1914 and moved to England when she was 13. While she was studying she met and became engaged to Dick, whose family lived in Ceylon. Dick went to work in Ceylon in 1938 and, following the outbreak of war in 1939, Norah knew she'd have to catch one of the last boats back to Ceylon, otherwise her marriage would have to be postponed indefinitely. Norah managed to catch that boat and married Dick in 1940. Their son David was born in 1942 but they were unable to return to England until after the war ended. Norah and Dick moved back to England in the late 1960s and lived in Lyme Regis. Dick died in 1998 and, five years ago, Norah moved to Birtley to be closer to David and his wife Julia who live in Guildford.

Norah celebrated her 100th birthday on 21st October in style with David, Julia, 28

residents, numerous staff and the Mayor of Waverley, Cllr Liz Wheatley, along with her husband Mike. The all-important card from the Queen was on show, beautifully displayed in a frame

The Activities team had transformed the activities room into a traditional tea room - complete with embroidered lace white tablecloths, vintage china and celebratory napkins, banners and balloons. The dainty cakes and sandwiches, which had been beautifully prepared by the chefs, were displayed on traditional cake stands. A glass of champagne for everyone and a slice of birthday cake completed the feast.

This was Mrs Cade's second party as all her family, including four great grandchildren, had joined her on the previous Saturday for a birthday tea.



# A Christmas message

One of the privileges of Parish Ministry for me is the people I meet and coming into Birtley House regularly is always a joy, as I find such an open friendly welcome. It reminds me of going to see my Great Granny, especially when I was big enough to ride there on my bicycle, which is many years ago as I am now Granny to three girls myself. Many of the residents are often gathering in the activities room for the 'event' of the day and it is tempting to stay with them.

Often I have a particular resident to visit, or if not, I am quickly drawn into one of the residents' rooms to chat or sit quietly with them.

The turning of the seasons is of course a regular part of my life of worship and the seasons are always obvious as I walk to the House passing lake and trees, birds and flowers, each time different; at present this year's wonderful autumn colours are gradually blowing away, the swifts are long gone and the tiny pink cyclamen 'Coum' seem to be lasting longer than usual. I am reminded that Harvest is over and all is gathered in, the Cider is made, the honey is gathered and Advent is imminent.

I think this is perhaps my favourite time of year; I love the expectation of Advent. Once again looking forward in hope to the coming of the Christ Child, God made flesh and living among us. We will make the Advent Ring to count off the weeks to Christmas, each of us will put in our piece of greenery; maybe we will make Christingles to highlight the work of the Children's Society. There will be things to plan and the Tree will be brought in and stood in the Hall in splendour, decorated for all to see. By then it will be time for our annual Carol Concert – always a splendid occasion; and then on Christmas Eve we will gather for our Christmas Communion Service in the afternoon. All are welcome and indeed at any or all of our monthly Communion Services, as we like to welcome our many friends.

May I wish you a peaceful and blessed Christmas.

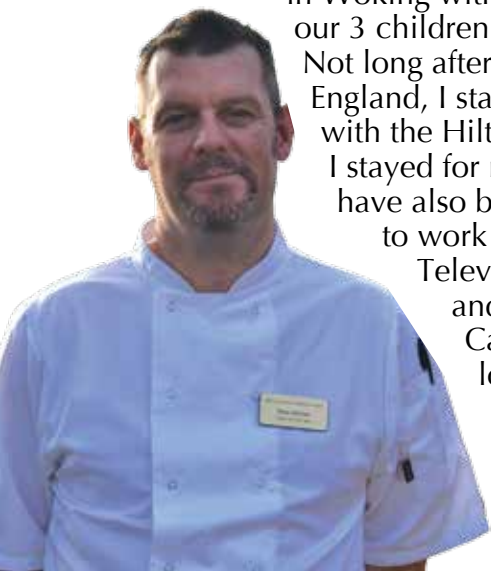
**Tricia Hislop**  
*Chaplain*



## Introducing the Head of Kitchen – Steve Morton

My name is Steve Morton and I have recently been lucky enough to be invited to take up the newly appointed post of Head of Kitchen.

I am originally from Paisley in Scotland and 28 years ago I came down to England for a week's holiday and decided to stay. I now live in Woking with my wife Sian, and our 3 children Lily, Kitty and Jem. Not long after my move to England, I started working with the Hilton Group where I stayed for many years and I have also been lucky enough to work in Formula 1, Television, Theatre and Royal Events Catering as well as local hotels and restaurants.



For the last 13 years I have predominantly worked within the care catering sector, working with homeless and children's charities and hospitals, but I seem to have found my niche within the elderly care sector where I feel most at home. To date, I have worked with Whiteley Village Trust, Elizabeth Finn Homes, Jewish Care and Sunrise Senior Living.

I am excited with the prospect of all the fresh produce grown on the Estate and I hope to be able to, along with the rest of the catering team, come up with different seasonal dishes to tempt you with. I am really looking forward to getting to know everybody better, so if you see me around, please stop me for a chat and let me know about your favourite (or not favourite) dishes, something you tried once and maybe fancy trying again or even just about the weather!

**Steve Morton**



# Staff News

## Starters and leavers

There are several new faces at Birtley House, and the following have joined the Birtley team since the beginning of September:

Joining Karen's team as Care Assistants: Michael McDougall (who originally started at Birtley as a Housekeeping Assistant), Francesca Quaranta (Bank), Thembi Willow, Rosa Dollerson, Michaela Pollard, Sarah Mills, Bonita Mubaiwa (Bank) and Roseline Gowere while Meltrin Castaneda has joined as a Staff Nurse (Bank).

We were delighted to welcome back Julia Clarke from her retirement. She is once again working as a Menu & Dining Room Assistant (Bank).

Steve Morton has been appointed as 'Head of Kitchen', which is an exciting new role at Birtley.

Best of luck to the following who have moved on to pastures new:

Staff Nurses: Sarah Carroll and Sue Barrett and Care Assistants: Deborah Napper (night) and Kathleen Cowey.

## Birtley Babies

The four Birtley Bumps were mentioned in the last newsletter and we are delighted to announce that all those babies have now arrived: Vimla's daughter, Richa, arrived in August, whilst in September Orsi & James' son, Milan, and Mildred's daughter, Emily, were born. In mid-November, just in time for this newsletter, Magda and Wojciech's baby son Matthew was born. Many congratulations to them all.

## Promotions and role changes

Many Congratulations on their recent promotions to: Carole Fulker, Care Supervisor, and Raj Navaradnaskinkam, Senior Care Assistant.

For the past year, Rachel Richards while working as PA to Simon has also helped me with the Marketing and Events e.g. producing this newsletter. I'm delighted to announce that she has now formally changed her role to Marketing Assistant. Bernadette Burroughs will increase her hours to encompass the PA to Simon role.

**Janet Hall**  
*Marketing Manager*

## News from Birtley House

**The next edition of House & Home will be Spring 2015.** In the interim, you can keep up to date with all the latest news from Birtley House on our blog: [www.birtleyhouse.co.uk/blog](http://www.birtleyhouse.co.uk/blog)

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*Birtley House*