

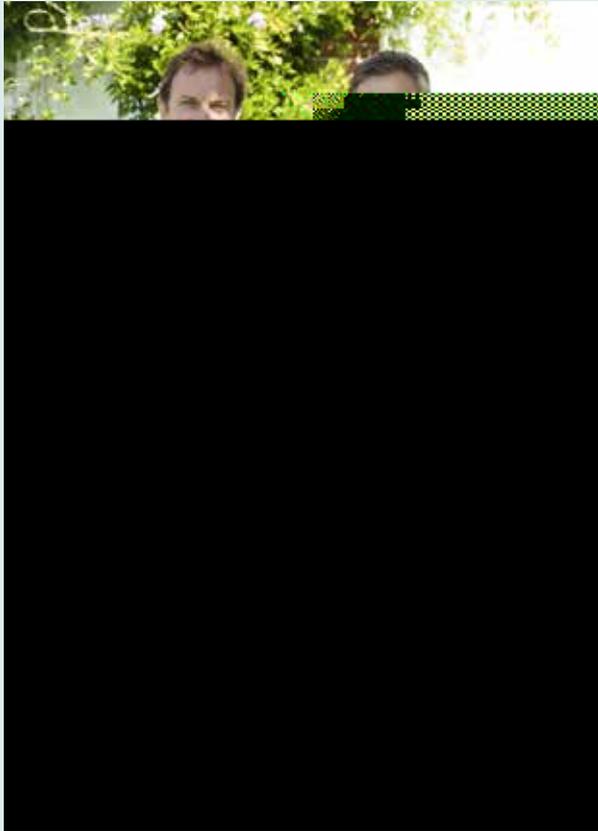


house & home

Birtley
House

The Birtley House Group Newsletter, Spring 2018

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The Whalley family

Welcome...

With just a short time to go until the start of what will be the 10th Sculpture Garden to be held at Birtley House, we are all hopeful for some fine and dry weather so that our residents and their families can enjoy this wonderful event when the gardens at Birtley come alive.

Since the last edition of our newsletter was published we have endured a cold and sometimes snowy winter, and it was at these times that my thoughts were for the elderly and infirm in their homes who can sometimes find it virtually impossible to venture out and are therefore even more isolated from their communities than normal. Elsewhere in this edition of House & Home Simon explains his innovative concept of the 'Virtual Care home' which could have real benefits for those who feel distanced from their community and goes to show what a crucial part companionship plays

in the needs of our residents. Most people who call to enquire at a nursing home for the first time on behalf of a relative or friend do so because something has happened that makes continuing at home untenable for that individual. Medical advances and the rise in the number of Home Care companies means that people are generally moving into nursing homes later than they did and with more medical issues. However, families nowadays tend to be more dispersed geographically and close-knit communities are less common. Sadly, this means that more elderly people are spending time feeling isolated and unable to be part of a normal social life. Here at Birtley House we put a great deal of effort into providing our residents with choices and options that enable them to live a vibrant life, or at least as much of one as they want. Making friends and companions that might help them through days when they may be less well is an essential part of the care and compassion that we foster here. We can even give people a chance to experience this quality of life through our 'Day Club' which is often a good way to dip a toe in the water and see what a good care home is really like. Do get in touch with us if anyone you know in the local community might like to experience some of this via our Day Club.

It looks like spring has finally arrived now, so we've all got our fingers crossed for some fine weather for this year's sculpture exhibition.

Frank Whalley, Managing Director



The Virtual *Care Home*

We, together with colleagues in the public and private sectors, are working to develop the concept of a 'Virtual Care Home'. Through this we aim to help facilitate cost-effective integration of health and care for older people whilst also ensuring that appropriate and person-centred care is maintained at all times. We are currently planning an initial pilot project to help build evidence for the most effective mechanisms for delivery.

Our key objectives are:

- To help get people out of hospital sooner
- To manage care to reduce unnecessary admissions to hospital
- To help older patients go/stay home in a fully supported way
- To prevent re-admission to hospital
- To save money for hospitals and use local health resources more appropriately
- To pool funds from Local Authority and NHS (funding to follow patient and be appropriately targeted to better manage resources)
- Use of technology to improve information flow, reduce overheads and provide better access and communication for all parties but especially for patient well-being and interaction

In order to make this work the Care Home and Hospital need to provide/plan the route for patients to step down into a place more appropriate for their needs as soon as possible. Step-Down means continued involvement of the Medical Consultants and Geriatricians but the process is largely designed to help people back into society with regular clinics etc. outside the

hospital environment. When patients are ready to go home their use of a domiciliary service by a third party is often essential and it needs to be fully interactive with the Care Home or other Step Down facility at both the Medical Level – i.e. proactive engagement of GPs – and the Social Level so that the people supported feel that they still belong and are not isolated. They can continue to enjoy social activities provided by the Care Home via a Day Club basis and have the opportunity to interact with their friends in the Care Home by Skype or similar social media.

The domiciliary service will need to be alert to any changes in the condition of the person supported. This might also be picked up at Day Club so that if their condition deteriorates, it can be identified early and treated in the Care Home (rather than having to go back into hospital) for treatment, at lower room cost, much smaller admission costs, less risk of cross-infection and a more sociable environment leading to faster recovery and return home again.

We hope to be able to start a pilot project on this later this year.



Busy bees at Birtley House



It has been a very busy few months at Birtley House and we've all enjoyed every minute of it.

Vimla, our CLN, Alisa, our Night Sister and Staff Nurse Manisha, all attended a wound care training course in London in keeping with our aim of ensuring that all nurses receive training on a rotational basis. By doing this, we ensure that our entire team is kept up to date with ever changing research, policies and guidelines.

We will be attending the Care Home Research Network conference in London on 17th May, which is related to best practice in care homes and enables us to keep up to date with past research and any changes we need to be aware

of in order to continue delivering the very best care at Birtley House.

Anca, one of our staff nurses, attended a syringe driver course at The Princess Alice Hospice and really enjoyed learning about the very latest in this area. All nurses will be attending further courses at Princess Alice.

As Deputy Manager, my aim is to empower all RGNs and carers within their continual professional development, as I feel that leading a team does not happen from the front but by supporting them from behind the scenes. This in turn allows all staff to grow, develop and become more knowledgeable in all that they do.

Our carers are currently working to complete their 15 standards for care, which must be done by all carers. We also have many carers working on their NVQ at levels 3 and 5.

Nursing and care is a continually changing environment and we must keep ourselves informed on these changes. My vision for the team is to grow, expand and provide support to one another – three factors that are of huge benefit to our residents.

I am working very closely with Emma Abrew, who has been a tower of strength during a challenging but very rewarding time, and we have interviewed several people to join us at Birtley House with a view to expanding the team.

Birtley House has a unique feel, something that has been noted by the potential new team

members that Emma and I have interviewed. Retaining this feeling whilst bringing in new visions, new ideas and working towards maintaining a balance of keeping the old with the new is a priority for us and one that I know is achievable.

Rudo will now return to day shifts, which I am thrilled about, but will work the occasional night as well. She has a wonderful approach to life and I know that all the residents will be happy that she has returned and that her positive attitude will spread. A belated 'Happy Birthday' to young Jeremiah, Rudo's son, who turned one earlier this year.

Manisha and Helen both passed their mentorship so we now have five staff nurses who are qualified mentors, which means we will continue to welcome nursing students in for placement. In fact, we have a first year student called Emily starting on 23rd April, who will be with us for eight weeks. We enjoy having students with us as it keeps us on our toes.

Paddy and Smolly will both stay with us on bank, which I am thrilled about as they both bring positive energy and a vast amount of support and knowledge to the entire team.

Our carer, Lauren, left us on 1st May to begin her maternity leave, so we wish her the very best of luck and look forward to a visit from the new arrival.

Care supervisor Michaela became engaged to her lovely partner Steven and he took her all the way to Edinburgh to propose. I am proud to say that I, along with Lisa Cadec and Sarah Mills, have been asked to be bridesmaids at her wedding, however as it's not until 2020 - and as that is the year I hit 50 - I have to say she may be the only bride with a bridesmaid pushing a Zimmer frame down the aisle!

Welcome back to Debbie Napper, who was with us previously as a carer and loved the place so much that she has come back to the Birtley family.

On a personal note I cannot believe that I have a daughter, Rebecca, who turns 26 this year and also qualifies as a hairdresser after four long years of training - and can you believe that is longer than I trained to be a nurse! Who would have thought a cut and colour would take such training! My youngest daughter, Aimee, has taken a year out from her studies in design and has been working as a seamstress in a bridal shop stitching on thousands of sequins and gems. She will hopefully pick up her studies at Glasgow later this year. My eldest son has been lucky enough to get as far as an interview at the Royal Conservatoire in Glasgow for acting, so please keep your fingers crossed as I rather fancy walking down the red carpet with him one day. Last but not least, the baby of the family, Callum, is entering his exam period and finishes school this year. I am over the moon that I will never have to buy another school uniform or worry about a clean PE kit ever again!

I would like to say a massive thanks to all the team for their dedication and hard work and I am proud to be part of that team. I look forward to new things, new teams and new learnings, all whilst being able to stay in a place that is very dear to my heart.

Thank you all.

Michelle and the nursing/care team



Highlights of the year so far...



David Shaw won Mikey in the lucky name game



Auld Lang Syne was sung enthusiastically by everyone!



Residents puzzling this out!



Burns Night 'afternoon' was another excuse for a party, shared with a group of youngsters from the Cook & Grow Group, who are part of the Halow group who help in the Gardens. This group had made some excellent shortbread which they handed round to everyone. Deputy Matron Michelle Hutchison donated the Haggis which came by special delivery from Scotland!



Once an artist, always an artist - Jill Perkins always enjoys the Art Afternoons.

FEBRUARY

Chinese New Year & the Year Of The Dog - colourful, interesting and wonderful participation by many of our Residents. **Mary Grigalis** admiring a Chinese Tea Set and "**Gee**" **Russell** showed us her stunning red & gold Chinese jacket which was greatly admired.



We were delighted to welcome 11 young music students from St Catherine's School in Bramley, organised by **Matthew Greenfield**. The girls played the cello, violin and sang, and after this delightful recital, the girls chatted happily with the Residents.



MARCH

Helen Hughes celebrated her 90th birthday with Birtley House friends.



Each with their own individuality, the Spring flower arrangements was a very successful and tranquil activity. Winners were **Eileen Dewey, Patricia Lewis & Michael Jenkins**.

Not forgetting St David's Day, the Book Club was titled "**Wales and the Welsh**", followed the next day with film called The Big Miracle, featuring whales! In recognition of St. Patrick's Day, we enjoyed an Irish themed supper.

With daily activities taking place, this is only a snapshot of all that we do. We aim to include activities that are interesting, fun, stimulating, and with plenty of variety. Thank you to all the team for assisting with the planning and implementation of these activities and to our Residents for participating so well. We all look forward to a fun-filled Spring.

Caroline Whalley



Old classics are still the best

Julien Sumner, the son of Birtley House resident Barbara Sumner, has been dealing in the sale of classic cars for over 30 years, and during that time has seen some enormous changes in the classic car market. Julien runs his eponymous dealership from a local showroom, and recently talked to us about some of the highlights of working in this fascinating industry.

Birtley House: Tell us about your background and how you came to be a classic car dealer?

Like many young boys, my early motoring ambition and excitement was forged with my father – he had a V12 Jaguar in the 70's and I was always egging him on to nudge 100mph on the A3. That wonderful feeling of speed has never left me and certainly directly led me into the motor industry at the Jack Barclay dealership, selling the charismatic Alfa Romeo marque and almost immediately as a side line, old MG's & Land Rovers, which has fuelled a lifelong passion for classic motor cars.

Birtley House: Are there any car sales that stand out for you from your time at Jack Barclay?

Obviously my first sale was an important landmark for me and I was fortunate to meet some very interesting people whilst at Jack Barclay, but certainly it was a later purchase of a new 1990 Roll-Royce Silver Spirit by a family in Essex that was memorable. By their own admission, they were 'ordinary' people but this Rolls-Royce was sheer testament to their hard

work and determination in building a successful local business and a Rolls-Royce was, to them, the epitome of success. I arrived to a street party with the whole extended family, who lived and worked together, to celebrate the Rolls-Royce's delivery and ended up staying the night!

Birtley House: What is it about classic cars that so appeals to you?

If we are talking about cars over 50 years old, then invariably it's their individuality and simplicity coupled with elegant designs plus that wonderful mechanical noise and smell that sadly cannot be easily replicated nowadays.

Birtley House: You must have met some interesting characters over the years?

Yes, lots, but one individual stands out from the crowd. It was back in 1991 and again whilst at Jack Barclay, when I sold a 1964 Rolls-Royce Phantom 5 James Young bodied Limousine to a Japanese business man for £435,000. At the time it was the

most expensive Phantom 5 ever sold. It became apparent this chap had bought a hugely expensive Van Gogh at Christies the previous day for something approaching £5 million and was on the hunt for something special in which to be driven around Tokyo. Rather amusingly it turned out he was a senior Japanese Triad and although one 'tough cookie' and covered in tattoos, he was probably just 5'2 ft tall and utterly charming - memorably we had to lower the back seat so his feet could touch the floor! He had a penchant for good single malts, so I was dispatched to Thomas Goode in South Audley Street to purchase some rather expensive Baccarat crystal for the Phantom's rear cocktail requisites. Bizarrely, the car was latterly impounded by Japanese customs on its arrival at Osaka docks, as its rear opening suicide doors were considered illegal in Japan! I understand he simply flexed his tattooed biceps and the car was ultimately allowed in!

Birtley House: What's the rarest car you've ever sold?

I have been fortunate to sell many rare and significant cars but for sheer outright rarity, it was a 1965 Frua bodied Jaguar S Type, only ONE ever made and very fortunately I now own it.

Birtley House: Classic cars are now seen as a viable investment alongside wines, art or property – have you got any tips for would-be investors?

Buy where possible under the radar and the very best you can afford which will not necessarily be the most expensive.....and always ask me!

Birtley House: Of all the cars you've sold, if you could keep only one for yourself which would it be?

A 1955 Bristol 404 (see photo) I had been pursuing one for 3 years and managed to purchase it at the beginning of last year. It was the actual 1955 Brussels Motor Show Car and one of just 53 built. Sadly following a policy of 'everything is for sale', it went to a new keeper in December but it was truly a very special car to own and drive.

Birtley House: Is there any car that you've always wanted to sell but have yet to do so?

In the last two months I've sold a beautifully restored 1968 Porsche 911TR (one of just four

RHD cars built) for nearly £1million to a private UK collector plus a completely original 1989 Citroen 2CV with just 6,000 miles from new to a gentleman in Ireland for his wife's birthday, the best of both ends of the spectrum....so then honestly no, I love the variation afforded me by my exciting job.

Birtley House: If you could fast forward another 30 years, what cars of today will be the absolute pearls?

Rather a long winded response here, but an important subject.....

Sadly, with current manufacturing techniques and the application in abundance of computers and electrical control units (ECU's) in all cars nowadays, its questionable if any of today's motor cars will be around in thirty years. Sadly, they will be just too expensive to restore/ recommission - our throwaway society twinned with the global appetite for unrelenting change won't help either, it's doubtful to my mind than anything will have a life expectancy of more than 15 years.

Menacing clouds are on the horizon for all traditional combustion engines, as the UK Government announced plans to ban the sale of new cars powered by petrol or diesel by 2040 and other countries I am sure will follow.

That said, one hopes governments will listen to rational arguments as classic cars represent a way of life, a world of thousands of clubs, thousands of meets and millions of enthusiasts worldwide.

Plus, it's widely accepted that emissions from historic vehicles are a statistical irrelevance, certainly small enough to be far outweighed by the cultural and economic contribution of the historic vehicle movement.

I am enormously hopeful of a future where classic & historic vehicles can happily co-exist on public roads with modern electric and autonomous cars, giving freedom of choice to individuals.

Julien Sumner, Fine Motor Cars

www.juliensumner.com
07788 865 700

Birtley House welcomes *third generation resident*

One Surrey resident has shown a commitment to the phrase 'keeping it in the family' after becoming the first ever third generation member of a lineage to join Birtley House.

Richard Wells, 85, from Godalming, also claims to be the only member of his ancestry to have walked out of the Guildford care home 'on two legs' after returning home from a respite visit at the start of the year.

Mr Wells, who underwent a programme of physiotherapy during his stay, maintains that it is Birtley House's family ethos and team of friendly staff that made him decide to follow in both his parent's footsteps, as well as those of his grandmother, and stay with us.

Lady Elsie Smith, Mr Wells' grandmother, attended Birtley House until she passed away, aged 97-and-a-half, in 1983. His mother, Lorna Wells, also lived at Birtley House until 2002 following a short stay by his father in 1991.

On continuing the path set by his grandmother over 40 years ago, Mr Wells comments: "Although Birtley House has grown so much

bigger over the years, it has been very clever at preserving a family atmosphere, which is supported by a team of people who are all extremely friendly, kind and efficient. I have no doubt that I will see the Birtley House team again, however in the meantime I shall continue to enjoy living at home for as long as possible and, of course, Bridge, which is one of my favourite pastimes."

Simon Whalley, Chairman at Birtley House, adds: "It's very encouraging to know that Birtley House's personable approach to care has stood the test of time and that Mr Wells' family, like my own, has left an imprint on Birtley House. Myself and my family, the grandson and great-grandsons of the founder, still actively run the home with strong support from other members of the family. After almost nine decades, the emphasis on 'family' is still at the very core of what we do and I have no doubt that this will remain the case for generations to come."



Mr Wells' grandparents



Mr Wells' mother

...and it isn't just residents spanning the generations at Birtley House

Tanya Gough, who joined Birtley House In February, became the third generation of one family to work with us – alongside her mother, Claire Gough, and grandmother, Janet Gourlay.

Tanya, who is currently a daytime carer, follows in the footsteps of her grandmother, who joined Birtley House last November as a night carer and her mother, a lead carer, who has been with Birtley House for almost six years.

Claire, who has been doing an outstanding job since the day she joined us, has been working in care for 15 years and continues to demonstrate a relentless commitment to providing the very best levels of support for our residents.

On working alongside her family, Claire comments: "Working with my mum is no different to working with any other member of the team. We're all very close-knit and we all need to do the best job possible. The only thing I can't do is call her Janet without getting that look that only your mum can give you when you're in trouble!"

"I love my job, particularly the palliative care aspect, and I still feel as enthused as the first day I started working in care. I still really enjoy getting very involved."

Tanya, who has been inspired by her mum's selfless support for other people – something that has always been in the family since her sister, Hannah, was born with learning difficulties - is now studying for an NVQ in childcare.

Frank Whalley, Managing Director at Birtley House, adds: "We're delighted to welcome the Goughs and the Gourlays, all of whom are an asset to Birtley House and who put care at the centre of what they do."

The residents, all of whom hold family values in high regard, have been extremely welcoming of Tanya and Janet, and as a family business that has been in operation for several generations, family values are also very important to us. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank them for their hard work and to wish Tanya every success with her NVQ."



Janet, Claire and Tanya

A development at Birtley Brook

If anyone has been for a walk recently up the track behind the nursing home they may have noticed some building activity at Birtley Brook. Originally built for my uncle Nigel and his family in the late 1970s, the house was subsequently used as staff accommodation but has been unoccupied for the past few years. While it fell into more and more of a state of general disrepair – in particular the roof and windows were problem areas – we explored many different options for its best use, such as a specialist dementia unit, new Mews-style flats and even as a B&B guest house. Although we had planning permission (via

Permitted Development rules) to increase the size of the building, none of these ideas could be shown to be properly viable.

Then, a year or so ago, Sinead and myself discussed with the rest of the family the idea of us selling our house in Ewhurst and using the funds to develop Birtley Brook as a family home for us. Moving on-site will, hopefully, mean that Birtley has even more of a ‘family-run’ feel, and having our children, Feargus and Joseph, grow up here is very special to me. There is a huge amount of work needed to be done at Birtley Brook as it was in a very tired state indeed, and we are extending the rear of the building as well as over the garage. We’re hopeful that the work will be finished by the autumn, but as anyone who has ever done

any building work will tell you, it pays to be patient, so we’re not holding our breath!

Frank Whalley



Harrison Catering

Harrison Catering Services is delighted to be chosen as the catering partner at Birtley House. We are an award winning, independent, family-owned business with a straightforward approach: to preparing fresh food each day from delicious and high quality ingredients. Harrison Catering is conscious of its responsibilities as an organisation and uses British free-range eggs and British sourced meat and poultry. We also have Red Tractor accreditation

providing assurance that food is responsibly sourced.

This ethos complements the environment at Birtley House and Simon Wheatley, Catering Manager, is looking forward to creating some delectable dishes for you. Simon has an established background in catering and comes with a wealth of over 20 years of experience. Having worked as head chef in some prestigious locations he understands customer needs and is enthusiastic about engaging with residents so he can create their favourite foods.

Simon enthuses “Harrison Catering prides itself in using locally sourced ingredients and the kitchen gardens at Birtley House will enable us to use plenty of home grown produce. The gardens provide an excellent opportunity to work in line with the seasons and we will work closely with the gardeners when menu planning to incorporate a wide

variety of herbs, fruit and vegetables into the dishes. This will result in maximum benefit to residents.”

Broccoli, peas and beans and summer fruits will be planted and in the herb garden flat leaf parsley has been sown for garnishing as well as chives for flavouring. In the summer months orchard fruits will be picked to make chutneys, pickles and jams and freshly baked bread will be made with different vegetables to create some interesting colours, tastes and textures. Harrison Catering will be creating interesting and colourful displays in the Orangery and working with Caroline Whalley to organise themed evenings for the residents, helping make the dining experience even more enjoyable.

Simon is very keen to get to know the friends and families of everyone at Birtley House, so please feel free to say hello next time you visit.



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AN INVITATION TO THE SURREY HILLS SCULPTURE GARDEN

Now in its 10th year at Birtley House,
the Surrey Hills Sculpture Garden is **the largest
ephemeral sculpture event in Surrey** and
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150
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JOIN US IN CELEBRATING LOCAL ARTISTS AND THE SURREY HILLS

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Maintenance

Those of you with keen eyesight may spot the increase in stains in the ceiling of the Main Hall. These have been due to a number of separate incidents of water leaking in the loft over the last few years. In recent weeks, we have significantly re-arranged the plumbing in the loft in order to reduce the risk of further leaks and in preparation for an exciting and substantial

re-decoration of the Main Hall itself. This has not been done since the 1950s and given that the original flock wallpaper is somewhat of a feature of Birtley, we have decided to replace it like-for-like (as far as possible). As we intend to improve the Reception Hall at the same time, and re-lay the problematic parquet flooring, there will inevitably be some significant disruption to routines for a number of weeks, but we will keep everything safe and as convenient for everyone as possible during the works.

We intend for the finished result to be a better lit and more uplifting Main Hall with improved seating for anyone 'waiting' in this area. We also intend to create a more modern and functional Reception area alongside the ever-popular fireplace. You may have already noticed that we replaced two panels in the Reception Hall door with glass giving a potentially uninterrupted view from the Rose Garden through to the Crab Apple tree at the top of the drive and we hope to complete this work before the fruit falls from said tree!



Garden Report Spring 2018

What feels like months of rain, drizzle, frosts and of course the 'Beast from the East', finally seem to have come to an end and as I write this, the 3rd week of April looks like it might provide some warmth and a little break from the relentless wet weather we've been having. Any mention of hose pipe bans this year will be met with a puzzled expression.

Out in the garden we've used the bad weather to our advantage and all those little corners that get missed during the busy months have been tidied and placed under control. The yard has been cleared and the first batch of homemade compost was used to mulch some of the beds at the end of the garden orchard as well as some of the empty beds in the kitchen garden. The old tunnel has been cleared and will hopefully be re-covered so we can utilise this valuable space for further propagation. Old cold frames have been weeded and are being used to stand down excess plants transplanted from around the formal gardens and early veg seedlings of peas, broccoli and beetroot are being hardened off ready to be planted out.

Halow (supporting young people aged 16-35 with learning difficulties), have continued to do a great job of helping in the management of the kitchen

garden. Early seeds were sown and are nearly ready to go out. Broad beans have been the first plants to be planted out and face the elements. So far they've stood up to the inclement conditions and are looking good for a successful crop. Frames have been erected for Runner and French Beans. And the first crop of rhubarb and purple sprouting broccoli is already making its way into the kitchen. *Halow* are also keen to plant some grape vines and the old pumpkin beds have been cleared and levelled in anticipation. It may be a few years until we can enjoy Birtley's own wine, but good things come to those who wait.

In collaboration with new head chef Simon Wheatland we have planned what will be grown this season and the hope is we can get the balance between utilising the space we have to grow a wide variety of seasonal fruit and veg

but also minimise some of the labour involved in managing them. Weed suppressing biodegradable material around the extended season crops and succession planting of short term crops will lessen time needed to look after them and also enable us to grow more by reusing the beds throughout the season.

Out in the formal gardens a new sleeper edge has been installed along the orchard side of the long walk. The bed in the middle of the island has been replanted and reshaped. A lot of the borders have had a generous layer of mulch added to suppress the weeds and retain moisture. And the shrub border has had some plants thinned out and new ones added to fill up the gaps. The last of the perennials have been cut back and staking has been installed to ensure some nice upright growth.

In the parkland Sam has been clearing the ha-ha of all ivy that has been covering the stonework and the excess growth that has accumulated over the years at the base of the wall. Hopefully this will allow the water to flow more freely and help with the land drainage problem we have around the pond. In the woods we will expect to see

our annual carpet of bluebells in May, definitely worth the journey for anyone able to see them.

Upcoming work will be adding to the existing planting to fill in the gaps in the long walk to add more height and structure. The blueberries that have out-grown their current location will be moved to a more suitable site, a temporary fence will be put up around some of the Yew hedges to help deal with the ongoing rabbit problem and plans are being assessed to extend the paths making access around the gardens easier. And with the gardens open for the sculpture exhibition it'll be all systems go with edging, weeding and mowing to ensure that the gardens look at their peak not only for that but the whole of the summer so they can be enjoyed by the residents and their families.

After a long hard winter it'll be nice to finally get some decent weather, hopefully it won't be too hot though or I'll soon be praying for rain again.

Best wishes to all, we hope you all get a chance to enjoy the gardens here at Birtley House.

Matt Miller



Staff News

Welcome to the Birtley Team

Anca Herlo (Staff Nurse); Emma Godden (Care Assistant, weekends); Paddy Drain (Bank Staff Nurse); Joanna Cozens (full time Care Assistant); Lisa Spenser (full time Care Assistant); Tanya Gough (full time Care Assistant); Jo Evans (Accounts Assistant) and Felicity Bell (PA to the Board).

Moving on to pastures new

We said farewell to Karen Williams, Registered Manager, who has left Birtley to pursue an exciting new opportunity. We wish Karen the best of luck with her new endeavours and thank her for all her hard work during the 7 years she worked at Birtley. We are delighted that Michelle Hutchison has taken a new role of 'Head of Nursing' and has stepped into the role of day to day management of Birtley House, whilst the board look to recruit a new Registered Manager.

Arron Mills (Bank Care Assistant) has left to concentrate on his college studies. We also said goodbye to Amparo Romero (Senior Bank Care Assistant) and Eva Zabluda (Care Assistant) and Allannah Wilds (Care Assistant). Farewell to Janet Hall (Internal Communications & Digital Marketing Manager), also to Gill Benhassoune (Group Accounts Assistant & Administration Manager) who has decided to retire after over 10 years' service to Birtley. We wish everyone well for the future, and we thank them for all they did while with us.

Promotions

For the duration of Nikki Beaumont Williams' maternity leave, Lisa Cadec has been promoted to Lead Care Assistant, whilst Paige Ogburn has stepped up into Lisa's role of Senior Care Assistant, so congratulations to both of them.

Birtley Babies

Congratulations to Nikki and Michael Beaumont-Williams on the birth of their son Mason.

A poem written by the group at a Poetry Workshop at Birtley:

Life!

Smile, life's too short to cry.

I often stop and wonder,
'Why?'

Help will come if we believe.

Laugh!

Let's join the birds and fly -

Soaring high above the earth,

Feeling free and full of joy

Life!

Is for living now.

The next edition will be Summer 2018.

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Birtley

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