

# WINTER NEWSLETTER



BALKERNE  
GARDENS  
TRUST

*Individualised Support and Care*

December 2021

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### BOARD UPDATE

We would like to thank our Board for their time and support which they have given freely and generously to the Trust throughout 2021. We are sorry to be losing Sue Laidler, who stepped down from the Board in October after completing a nine-year term as Trustee and very much hope she will return after taking a year's break.

### COVID-19

A big thank you again to all our staff who are now fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

You will be aware that the Government recently announced measures to reduce the spread of the new COVID-19 variant, Omicron, making face coverings compulsory again in shops and other settings such as banks, post offices, hairdressers and on public transport.

We must all remain vigilant and continue observing the guidance around PPE and handwashing to protect ourselves and others.

## CEO/DIRECTORS

It's hard to believe that this is our last Newsletter of the year, so as we charge towards Christmas 2021, please do take five minutes to enjoy this festive edition, maybe even over a mince pie or two?

## STAFF REWARDS

The Trust has received funding from Essex County Council which we will be using in a number of ways to reward our staff over the forthcoming months. Please refer to the posters displayed in your service or speak to your manager for more information about these rewards.

## WELCOME!

A very warm welcome to all the new staff, who have joined the Trust over the past few months. At Freda Gunton Lodge we are delighted to welcome, Jane Bass, Gemma Seymour, Charlie Wilton and at Cheviot, Emijli Petrauskiene, Janet Stimson, Susan Barry and Agnieszka Alcani to Sheltered Housing.

## TRAINING

Congratulations to all our staff for embracing the new online training which we introduced earlier this year. We know this has presented some challenges along the way, but staff have coped well and have remained up to date with mandatory training.

If you are having any difficulties accessing training, please do not hesitate to seek support from your manager.

A special congratulations to Kristie Cann at FGL, who finished her QCF level 2 in record time.

## CONGRATULATIONS

We are delighted to announce that Sylwia Szwarc has been appointed as the new Care At Home manager. Sylwia has developed a wealth of knowledge of the service, its staff and customers during her two-year's as the CAH Deputy Manager.

We are also delighted that Jackie Johnston will be our new Sheltered Housing Manager. Jackie will commence her new role on 31st January 2022.

# SERVICE NEWS

## CHEVIOT

Everyone has been rehearsing for the Christmas pantomime 'Cinderella', which will premiere for 'one day and one day only' on 22nd December. Undoubtedly, there will be some stars in the making, and residents are looking forward to the performance, "oh no they're not!"



Cheviot residents received a fantastic donation from the ReThink partnership in the shape of a SMART Table! It has nearly 50 different apps offering numerous interactions and activities for residents to enjoy, such as Word Search, which you can see from this photo proved very popular!

On behalf of the Board, Michelle, Sam and I, we would like to say a huge thank you to all our staff for their hard work throughout 2021 and wish you and your families a very Happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year.

## FREDA GUNTON LODGE

Residents enjoyed a cooking lesson from Jill Chapman, who provided them with a 'virtual tour' of Austria, explaining the different customs with Christmas food and traditions. The residents immensely enjoyed making Stollen and 'Vanillekipferl' biscuits.

FGL has many festive plans for this month, including staff fancy dress on the 14th December (as you can see from the photo below) and the residents Christmas party on 17th December. They have also invited relatives to join them in the back garden for a glass of mulled wine on 23rd December.



## SHELTERED HOUSING



We are very sorry to see Anne-Marie, our Sheltered Housing Manager, retire later this month after a long career with the Trust, spanning 23 years. Anne-Marie started as a care assistant (and yes,

that is what the staff were called in sheltered housing then!) and progressed to a senior carer in 2001 and Deputy Manager in 2003. In 2003 Anne-Marie became our Sheltered Housing Manager and was instrumental in driving the 'Supporting People Agenda' in 2005, when she was recognised and thanked for her 'inspirational leadership' in transforming the culture of Sheltered Housing. Some of Anne-Marie's other achievements have included devising and undertaking Annual Health and Safety Audits across the Trust and introducing the much-loved annual 'Tenants' Holiday'.

Anne-Marie will be sorely missed by the tenants and her colleagues alike, and we wish her all the very best in her next chapter.

On behalf of  
**Carrie, Michelle and Sam**  
we would like to wish you all a very.....



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