

# COLTEN Chronicle

www.ColtenCare.co.uk

Summer 2017

## And now with the news from the South...

*Linden House resident Pearl Durrant takes to the BBC South Today presenter's chair*

But what did Pearl do next?

Not content with sitting in the TV presenter's chair on a recent studio tour, Pearl has gone on to make her musical debut at a lunchtime concert at Bournemouth University.

Turn to pg 5 to find out more...



## Nominate your Colten Champion

**It's time to celebrate the wide range of contributions that go into our success as both a provider of elderly care and a company that builds and designs amazing care home facilities.**

We're launching our very first internal awards programme, Colten Champions, to recognise those team members across the Colten group who consistently deliver above and beyond expectations.

Colten Champions can be self-nominated or put forward for the honour by colleagues, residents or relatives. As well as individuals, the awards will

recognise groups of colleagues, homes and departments.

Elaine Farrer, Operations Director, said: "It's all about recognising and rewarding the great things that people do as individuals and One Team within Colten day in day out. We will have categories designed for all roles across Colten Care and Colten Developments. There are, of course, many regional and national awards that we can enter, and we will continue to do this, but we want to create our first ever internal awards too."

Details of the Colten Champions categories will be issued ahead of a

nomination process, which will open in the autumn of 2017.

Finalists will be invited to a glittering, all-expenses-paid awards ceremony in spring 2018, when the winners are announced.

Elaine added: "For now, please start thinking of anyone you think deserves recognition for going the extra mile. Who knows, it could be you!"

 More information

**For more information, visit [www.colten.co.uk/champions](http://www.colten.co.uk/champions)**

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**COLTEN CARE**  
*'Cherishing You'*

Mark  
Aitchison,  
Chief  
Executive,  
Colten Care



## Living well on the journey of life

Welcome to our summer 2017 edition which is a bumper, 12-pager. We've so much news to share with you we realised we needed more space!

A number of the stories this time round show how we are helping our residents, with differing care needs, to live well.

We believe that what sets us apart from other providers is that you can have confidence in our care capability at every stage, from short-stay, residential and nursing care through to specialist dementia and end-of-life care.

It's our investment in nursing and clinical expertise that enables us to offer this reassurance. Strengthening our nursing credentials, I am delighted to announce that we have recently been accepted as part of the national Living Well to the Very End programme – a collaborative programme between NHS England and The Point of Care Foundation.

The stories here offer some examples of our capability along the care journey. You can read how we have enabled a Linden House resident with dementia to try her hand at violin for the first time in her life, and how an amazing Dutch innovation in cognitive care is wowing residents at Fernhill and The Aldbury.

At every stage, of course, a huge amount of hard work and dedication is given by our brilliant team. That's why we're launching our own in-house awards, the Colten Champions, to reward and recognise their input, whatever department they work in. I encourage you to think of people you'd like to nominate.

I hope you enjoy the **Chronicle**. You can receive more information on individual homes by joining the mailing list for our quarterly community newsletters. Please speak with your Home Manager, or send an email to [marketing@ColtenCare.co.uk](mailto:marketing@ColtenCare.co.uk) and we will add you to the list. If you have any feedback on the **Chronicle**, please tell us at [ContactUs@ColtenCare.co.uk](mailto:ContactUs@ColtenCare.co.uk)

# Record breakers!



**A busy and imaginative year of charity events, led by our residents and staff, has raised a record-breaking £40,000 for good causes.**

The huge total compares with around £32,000 collected in the previous 12 months.

A wide range of charities – local, national and international – have been helped under our policy of linking activities programmes with community fundraising.

In the most successful single initiative, our three Lymington homes came together for BBC Children in Need, raising more than £8,200 in the space of a fortnight. Residents and team members took

part in a stationary bike challenge, while a photo competition prompted people to send in snaps of one of our minibuses, decorated Pudsey-style, going out and about.

Activities Manager Jo London said: "Our residents and team members really value being part of the community and doing their bit for worthy causes. Our activities organisers, social carers and other team members enable residents to contribute directly in meaningful ways, such as making arts and crafts to sell at fundraising fetes and taking part in sponsored activities.

"Well done to everyone for an absolutely brilliant, record-breaking 12 months."

## Residents' cross-country pursuit

Residents from several homes enjoyed a trip out to the Portman Horse Trials at the Rushmore Estate on the Dorset-Wiltshire border.

The parties had a champagne welcome at a VIP marquee, picnic lunches, cream teas and close-up viewing positions for the cross country, show jumping and dressage competitions.

The Trials help world-class riders prepare for international events such as Badminton and Burghley, while giving less experienced challengers a taste of competition. Among those taking part was Olympian William Fox-Pitt, who won an award we sponsored.



Marketing Manager Chris Golding, left, presents an award to William Fox-Pitt



# Art deco theme for new home

**Construction work is under way on the site of our next care home, due to open in Poole in autumn 2018.**

Bourne House will be an art deco-themed building offering residential and nursing care, with 68 bedrooms, all en suite.

Among the features will be a large rooftop garden with views over the Bourne stream

and Bourne Valley nature reserve. To the rear and sides will be gardens leading into a slope of mature woodland, with the chance to spot badgers and other wildlife.

Some of the bedrooms will have larger door openings, enabling residents in nursing beds to access the gardens. As well as residents' rooms, there will be two guest bedrooms.

The site was previously the headquarters of the Dorset Fire Authority and is located at Langside Avenue near Poole's border with Bournemouth. We gained official planning approval for our care home proposal in 2016.

Once complete, the home will help to meet a growing demand for high-quality care provision in Poole,

Bournemouth and the wider region.

Mark Aitchison, Chief Executive, said: "Bourne House will be a statement building in a beautiful art deco style, offering the highest standards of accommodation and latest facilities for care. The home will become an integral, long-term part of the local community care landscape."

# Overseas apprentices gain care insight

Swiss and German apprentices have gained a valuable insight into the UK care industry during placements with us.

Four apprentices spent varying periods here under a partnership with the student guardianship programme, UK Guardians.

Director Helen Herridge said: "Both Switzerland and Germany have excellent apprenticeship programmes and actively encourage their apprentices to study overseas by funding their trips.

"The opportunity to come to Britain, to see how some of the very best care homes operate and to share best practice, is a real benefit to everyone involved."

During her two weeks at Avon Reach, Dominique Hodel shadowed nursing staff, met new residents and helped to



Dominique Hodel, seated, at Avon Reach with (l-r) Nathalie Casillo and Andrea Turtschi from her training centre, UK Guardians director Helen Herridge, Colten Care care co-ordinator Lisa Hawes and Home Manager Ruth Wildman.

chaperone an outing to the beach, as well as trying yoga.

Helen added: "Dominique was able to refine her already great English and she formed some lovely relationships

with staff and residents at the home.

"She found the whole experience amazing and was returning home to her studies having enjoyed a very rewarding placement."



# This year's Carnival is set to be Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious!

## We've chosen a Mary Poppins theme for our involvement in this summer's Lymington Carnival.

Residents, relatives and staff from four of our homes will be dressing up as characters from the much loved-film musical.

Belmore Lodge resident Mary Young – sharing Mary Poppins' first name – said she was looking forward to appearing as the unorthodox nanny and meeting any Dick Van Dyke-style Berts.

Janie Pearman, Home Manager and parade leader at last year's sport-themed Carnival, said: "The Carnival is a fantastic community event



At the Lymington Carnival launch at Belmore Lodge are, from left: Martin Ward and Ian Duncan from the Lions Club; Home Manager Janie Pearman; resident Mary Young; Cllr Anne Corbridge, Deputy Mayor of Lymington, and James Brushwood of the Lymington Sports Association, hosts of the Carnival fete.

that creates a real buzz. We all enjoy preparing for it by making costumes and decorations to wear on the day. This year it will be a case of 'spit spot, off we go' and 'the job's a game' as Dame Julie Andrews said so memorably in the film."

Colten Care is headline sponsor of the popular community day, run by the Lions Club of Lymington and Brockenhurst, for the fourth year running.

The overall Carnival theme – 100 Years of Music, reflecting

the Lions' centenary this year – prompted a discussion among residents and staff about favourite all-time musicals, with Mary Poppins an obvious choice.

On Carnival day, Sunday, 16th July, our minibuses will call at Court Lodge,

Linden House and Belmore Lodge in Lymington, plus Woodpeckers in Brockenhurst, to collect residents.

Those who simply want to watch the procession will have exclusive use of a raised verge by the Town Hall so they can sit in comfort, sample cakes and refreshments, and view the proceedings close up.

## Musical 'premiere' is on song

Residents from three of our homes were treated to a VIP musical 'premiere' at Ringwood Parish Church.

Parties from Fernhill in Ferndown, The Aldbury in Poole and Brook View in West Moors attended the dress rehearsal of an Aurum Vocale concert ahead of a public performance on the same evening.

After a reception of champagne with strawberries and cream, residents listened enraptured as performers from well-known ensembles including the Gabrieli Consort, Monteverdi Choir and the BBC Singers performed works by Byrd, Tallis, Vaughan-Williams and Britten.

Karen Grant A'Court, Fernhill Activities Organiser, said: "Sitting in the church



listening to all those beautiful voices was an absolute treat for us all and many people who attended are still talking about it. Our residents adore music, especially when it is sung live and they often respond very emotionally to it.

"To be given the opportunity to hear the singers perform before anyone else was a real privilege."

The concert was promoted and staged by The Friends of Ringwood Parish Church with our support.



**Watch the video**

Visit [www.YouTube.com/ColtenCare](http://www.YouTube.com/ColtenCare)



Pearl Durrant with Linden House Activities Organiser Fiona Pritchard

**A resident at our Lymington dementia care home has learned the basics of violin and joined in at a live concert with a community music group.**

Pearl Durrant, 85, who has never played a musical instrument before, only began practising with

Bournemouth University's BUDDY orchestra in January this year.

Led by three professional musicians, the group involves 20 players who are living with dementia at home or attending day centres, and their carers.

Pearl, the only member who

# Pearl adds another string to her bow

lives in full-time residential care, has been accompanied by Linden House Activities Organiser Fiona Pritchard to and from the group's weekly practices.

The culmination so far has been a one-hour lunchtime public concert at the University's Poole House atrium.

Pieces included Ravel's Bolero and the theme tunes from Jaws, The Archers and Desert Island Discs.

Pearl, a former nurse, said: "I really enjoyed it. It was great fun."

Fiona said: "We spoke with Pearl and her family about getting involved with the group because, although she

hasn't played an instrument before, she does love music. She was happy to give the violin a go. When we drive back from the practices, I've noticed she is reminiscing more, talking about her parents, husband and other memories. The experience of playing seems to enhance her thought processes."

The concert came just weeks after Pearl joined residents and team members from three of our homes on a tour of the BBC's Southampton studios. The visit was a thank-you for the homes' Children in Need fundraising. During the tour, Pearl took the chance to sit in the BBC South Today presenter's chair.

## Creative workshop is catalyst for discussion

Residents from Fernhill, our dementia care home in Longham, Dorset, enjoyed a creative day out in the historic Hampshire village of Buckler's Hard.

They took part in a hands-on workshop devised especially for them and led by artist-in-residence Helen Snell.

Using laser-cut plywood stencils for frames, they designed their own spectacles taking inspiration from the surrounding New Forest landscape and their own memories.

Helen said: "They came up with a whole range of images that were inserted into the frames including free-hand



drawings of scenery and people's faces. It was a real catalyst for discussion about how they see past and present."

Karen Grant A'Court, Activities Organiser at

Fernhill, said: "Arts and crafts are a very important element in how we care for our residents and today, thanks to Helen's expertise as an artist and teacher, we all had the chance to be creative."

 **Watch the video**  
Visit [www.YouTube.com/ColtenCare](http://www.YouTube.com/ColtenCare)

# Dementia friendly

*If dementia is something that affects you, your family or a close friend, and you feel you could do with some help, come and talk to us. Here we explain a little about how we support people to overcome the challenges dementia can bring.*

## Admiral Nurse Kay is on board

**In all our care homes, we keep residents at the heart of everything we do – but it is in our dementia-specific settings, and the wider communities they serve, where our recently appointed Admiral Nurse Kay Gibson is being especially effective.**

With a role created in partnership with Dementia UK, Admiral Nurses are all experienced, professional nurses with a dedicated focus on dementia.

And we are one of the first private sector care home providers in the whole country to offer one as part of our dementia care services.

To put into context just how important Kay's appointment is for us, there are more than 650,000 registered nurses in the UK but only 180 Admiral Nurses, and most of them are in the NHS.

Since she joined us in autumn 2016, Kay has seen more and more community contacts coming to her for help and advice on dementia.

Kay said: "You don't need to be a relative of a Colten Care resident to come and speak to me. A large part of my role is to reach out to individuals and families in the wider community who are affected by dementia."

There is a chance to see Kay in person at regular drop-in sessions at our two Dorset dementia care homes. These are from 11 am to 1pm on the second and fourth Thursdays in the month at The Aldbury in Poole and Fernhill in Longham respectively.

We have also created a website – [www.ColtenCare.co.uk/admiral-nurse](http://www.ColtenCare.co.uk/admiral-nurse) – where you can ask Kay questions online.



Admiral Nurse Kay Gibson, left, at an arts and crafts session involving Fernhill residents

### On target: 80% of all our staff are now Dementia Friends

**Our dementia care strategy passed a significant milestone in spring 2017. We achieved a challenging target set two years ago to have 80% of our entire 1,800-strong staff attending information sessions and becoming Dementia Friends.**

**It's not only clinical professionals who have taken part, but everyone from kitchen staff to gardeners and housekeepers.**

**The sessions, run in partnership with the Alzheimer's Society, are also offered to residents, relatives and community contacts at all 20 of our homes.**

**We want this educational focus to reassure families and carers who come into our homes that we will always support greater understanding of dementia and the care and respect of those living with it.**

# – every day



## It's magic!

Residents at Fernhill and The Aldbury have begun experiencing a Dutch innovation in cognitive care.

Tovertafel, or 'magic table', comprises a

box mounted on a ceiling hook that can be placed above any ordinary table.

Inside is a high-quality projector with sensors that detect the movements of hands and arms of those sitting below.

Colourful images respond instantly to participants' reactions, creating a highly

engaging opportunity for individual or group play.

It's an ideal way to elicit sensations, relaxation and reminiscence in people with dementia and is being increasingly recognised as effective by clinical care experts.



## Congratulations to Meg for second national award

Meg Austin, a Healthcare Assistant at The Aldbury, has won The Dignity in Care Award at the Great British Care Awards, her second national award in successive years.

Nominated by colleagues and residents' relatives, she was presented with her latest award at a ceremony at Birmingham's ICC attended by 900 fellow care professionals from across Britain.

In their citation, judges praised

Meg's work on several initiatives she has led or been involved with at The Aldbury. They include a multicultural day held every other month designed to celebrate the diversity of staff, a 'dignity focus group' and a wish tree where families can suggest days out and other experiences for their loved ones at the home.

The judges wrote: "Meg proves to be a true champion of dignity and an inspiration to the lives she touches."

# Café culture

**What could be better than sitting back in sumptuous comfort and enjoying afternoon tea or morning coffee with friends and family?**

Café culture is proving increasingly popular at Colten Care as we continue our busy refurbishment programme of lounges and other communal areas.

A series of homes have seen improvement work completed in recent months, offering fresh, well-appointed café surroundings for gentle, relaxing social occasions at any time of day.

The newly installed Mayor of Christchurch, Cllr Nick Geary, was guest of honour as Avon Reach launched a weekly community café following its latest lounge refurbishment.

After three months of work, the ground floor room has been transformed into a beach-themed café space, with sofas and tables and an outdoor terrace alongside Stanpit, the main route down to Mudeford quay.

"We've opened up our lovely new café to local people, perhaps friends who know us or just passers-by, every Friday morning," Home Manager Ruth Wildman said at the launch. "People are welcome to drop in and enjoy teas, coffees and homemade pastries and cakes with us.

"It offers great company for everyone and a fantastic way for our residents to



The new Avon Reach café and (inset, top) enjoying coffee on the terrace

stay connected to the local community. Those who don't receive many visitors themselves or who don't go out so much can share in the gentle sociability of a friendly café atmosphere right here in the home."

In line with Mudeford's heritage as a fishing village, the café has pictures and cushion designs featuring boats, coral, shells and other marine and maritime elements.

Ruth added: "We're just a stone's throw from the quay and, on sunny days, sitting and having a drink at one of the terrace tables is a wonderful way to appreciate the invigorating benefits of the fresh sea air."

Resident Doreen Priddle, who has lived at Avon Reach for three years and enjoys helping out in the home's garden, said: "The new café is a beautiful room with clever designs and I think people will love to pop in here."



Launch (l-r): Ruth Wildman, Avon Reach Home Manager; The Mayor of Christchurch, Cllr Nick Geary; Avon Reach resident Doreen Priddle; and visitor Caroline Vandereele.



Visiting in his first week as Mayor, Cllr Geary said: "This is a great idea. Anything that embraces the community in this way I wholeheartedly support."

Also attending the first morning was visitor Caroline Vandereele who does voluntary work at Avon Reach. She said: "The café really is an uplifting space. It's refreshing, clean and spacious."

The Avon Reach community café is open from 10.30am to 11.30am every Friday morning.

**On average, 700 cups of freshly-ground, batch-roasted coffee are enjoyed across our 20 homes every day. That's 35 cups at each home.**



# Double celebration at Wellington Grange

**A party to mark the first birthday of Wellington Grange turned into a double celebration after it was named among the top care homes in the South East.**

The Chichester home was one of just 20 from a field of 3,118 in the region to receive 9.9 out of a maximum ten on the independent site Carehome.co.uk.

The rating is based on actual reviews from residents, friends and relatives.

Claire Gibson, Home Manager, hailed the result as testament to her staff's hard work, adding: "We couldn't have asked for a better present to celebrate our first birthday."

Chichester Mayor Cllr Peter Budge, who officially opened the home in 2016, was guest of honour at an anniversary garden party.

He said: "Colten Care enriched Chichester by opening Wellington Grange and the home has been a great addition to the city.

"I have been very impressed by Colten Care's charitable works and also support for the community in so many ways, from sponsoring Chichester Rugby Club to their involvement with the Chichester Festival Theatre."



**Watch the video**

**We've produced a short film of Wellington Grange residents visiting Chichester Rugby Club. The contact with the club has been of particular interest to resident Josie Allman as she worked behind the bar there in the late 1960s. To watch our film, visit [www.YouTube.com/coltencare](http://www.YouTube.com/coltencare)**



Wellington Grange resident Josie Allman tries on some rugby headgear at Chichester Rugby Club.



Chichester Mayor Cllr Peter Budge with home manager Clare Gibson (left of Cllr Budge), staff and residents at the garden party (inset).



## A cracking Easter at Braemar Lodge

Our Salisbury care home Braemar Lodge hatched a plan to celebrate Easter by hosting the birth of some fluffy chicks.

After an idea by Colten Companion Jo Hanson, staff arranged for a heated incubator with embryo eggs to take centre stage in the home's garden lounge.

Residents, relatives and visitors were transfixed as, one by one, the eggs hatched over the course of four days with, eventually, ten chicks welcomed into the world.

Sylvie Rodulson, Activity Organiser, said: "It was the most magical time and our residents were totally fascinated.

"They were like midwives."

The chicks have now all gone to good homes, either free range farms locally, or to people who have existing hen flocks.



Resident Betty Kerslake cradles one of the chicks.

QUESTIONS  
20  
QUESTIONS

Our three Operations Managers Linda Brownlie, Jacky Sylvester and new recruit Martin Corrigan provide support and leadership to our Home Managers and teams, ensuring they are empowered to deliver the highest standards of care for our residents. Here we catch up with Martin shortly after he joined us in May 2017.

**Name:** Martin Corrigan

**Age:** 53

**Job title and brief description of role:** Operations Manager. My priority is to support the team in my homes to give excellent care to each of our residents every day.

I have responsibility for our four homes in west Dorset, two in Winchester and Wellington Grange in Chichester. My role is to help the team in each of my homes to be as good as they can be and strive for excellence in everything they do. I am also here for our residents and relatives to help them with any questions and support them in finding the answers.

**Career history:** I have a great deal of care home experience, having been a



general manager and regional manager at other providers. I have been involved in the commissioning of several new builds, as well as managing a portfolio of

homes across the south coast.

**Interests:** I like to keep fit by running, cycling and scootering. However, my body disagrees with me and I am injured a lot!

**Q:** Who was your first childhood hero?

**A:** Joe Corrigan, who was the goalkeeper for my favourite football team, Manchester City. I was delighted that he had the same surname as me.

**Q:** What would be your ideal holiday?

**A:** A beach holiday, sat on a sun lounger with a drink in my hand and a good book.

**Q:** What are you superstitious about?

**A:** Nothing.

**Q:** Who would you most like to be trapped in a lift with?

**A:** Nelson Mandela...I would like to ask him how he was able not to hate those who imprisoned him for 27 years and forgave them instead.

**Q:** Who do you most admire?

**A:** My mum and dad...they brought up five kids in six years and did an amazing job with all of us.

**Q:** What car do you drive?

**A:** A Peugeot 307. It is a bit of a girl's car, but the top comes down, so it helps me get a tan on my bald head.

**Q:** What makes you angry?

**A:** Cruelty to others.

**Q:** What is your favourite smell?

**A:** freshly cut grass.

**Q:** Cats or dogs?

**A:** Cats. We have a cat called Misty, who was poorly looked after and rescued by the RSPCA before she came to live with us.

**Q:** What is the first thing you do when you wake up in the morning?

**A:** I make my wife a cup of tea, followed by porridge and a cup of coffee...honest!

**Q:** What is your earliest memory?

**A:** Playing doctors and nurses with my youngest sister.

**Q:** Which TV/radio programme do you try never to miss?

**A:** Coronation Street – I am from Manchester, so it reminds me of where I am from and I love the humour in it.

**Q:** What is the best thing about your role?

**A:** Getting to know so many residents and hearing about the amazing things

they have done in their lives.

**Q:** ...And what is the worst?

**A:** The travel and being stuck in traffic.

**Q:** What would be your desert island luxury?

**A:** My mobile phone....I couldn't live without it.

**Q:** What do you wish you were good at?

**A:** DIY...I am useless.

**Q:** What has been the crowning moment in your life to date?

**A:** Marrying my wife on the beach at Bournemouth last year.

**Q:** What is your favourite meal?

**A:** Curry.

**Q:** What would be your dream job?

**A:** I have just got my dream job. I have wanted to work for Colten Care for a while and was delighted when I was successful in my application.

**Q:** If you could bring something extinct back to life what would it be?

**A:** A dinosaur, just to see how big they really were.

# Saying thank you – with cake

**Our hard-working nurses enjoyed a little pampering on a special celebration day in May.**

All 20 of our homes marked Nurses' Day with cakes, thank-you cards and even written certificates of recognition.

Held internationally, Nurses' Day is timed to coincide with the anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale, the famous 'Lady with the Lamp'. Born in 1820, she is often cited as the founder of modern nursing.

At Kingfishers in New Milton, residents and team members gathered for afternoon tea and a homemade cake baked by our chefs.

Its medically-themed decoration featured a stethoscope, pills coming out

of a tub and a traditional nurses' red-cross badge.

In her speech of welcome, Home Manager Beata Brzozowska, an experienced nurse herself, said: "Like Florence Nightingale, today's nurses dedicate their lives to looking after people. We want all our nurses to know that we and our residents value the work they do every single day.

"Nurses are amazing people and Nurses' Day is an ideal chance to recognise them for their hard work, passion and commitment."

Among those receiving certificates of recognition was Clinical Lead Zoe Mills, who moved to Colten Care from a hospital ward environment.

Zoe said: "Working in a care home is very different to a



**CAKE TIME.** Home Manager Beata Brzozowska, standing left, with nurses at Kingfishers and their medically-themed cake.

hospital because it's much easier to get to know the residents very well. They

deserve the very best of care and that's what we aim to provide."

## Fairness in fees

Our Chief Executive has reiterated our approach to fairness in how fees are charged, after a parliamentary report highlighted fragility and unfairness in the care market nationally.

Mark Aitchison said he agreed with the MPs' call for a more sustainable funding solution to meet the country's care needs, given that many care providers were shown to be regularly 'topping up' local authority fees with payments from people who fund their own care.

But he said Colten Care did not operate any such subsidisation policy as it was unfair to those who had planned for and saved towards their care costs in later life.

Mark said: "We fundamentally disagree with the principle of residents funding other residents' care needs. At Colten Care, you can be totally confident that all of your fees are charged in respect of your own individual care."

**To read the report, visit [tinyurl.com/mpeabve](http://tinyurl.com/mpeabve)**

## Your bright idea could make life better for all – and win you £100

More room under residents' sinks, a new approach to staff induction and a tea bag-themed card, designed to capture shared moments – three ideas being progressed by our newly-formed innovation group.

It involves representatives from across the business coming together to evaluate suggestions from team members on how to make life better for residents, families and colleagues.

The group, meeting quarterly, is offering £100 to anyone sending through an idea that is taken up. The aim is to nurture a culture of innovation across all our activities.

At the first meeting in April, participants agreed to take forward the following suggestions:

- Clear more space under sinks in residents' bathrooms so that wheelchairs and commodes can

be moved closer in. This will help some of our residents to undertake more of their own personal care.

- Produce a short 'walk around' film introducing Colten House and the managers and staff based there. Invite all new recruits to visit the building and watch the film as part of their induction.
- Create a tea bag-themed card to encourage staff to have a cup of tea with a resident. The shared moments can then be captured in writing with the card, put in a papier mache teapot in the home and used as a prompt for conversation in times to come.

**If you have an idea you'd like to suggest to the group, please send it to [Sam Newman](mailto:goodideas@ColtenCare.co.uk) at [goodideas@ColtenCare.co.uk](mailto:goodideas@ColtenCare.co.uk) or [innovation@ColtenCare.co.uk](mailto:innovation@ColtenCare.co.uk)**

# Putting people's minds at rest on care choices

The journey into care can understandably be an emotive, difficult experience and the choice of care home is a big decision that plays a pivotal role.

Providing peace of mind to individuals and families during this time is the main focus of our Senior Customer Advisors (SCAs). We've recently appointed three new members of the advisory team based at Colten House, whose role is to complement and take pressure off in-home advisors.

Hollie-Mae Clarke, Helen Lacey and Deborah Davies work alongside Alison Titheridge and report to the Operations Managers for their respective areas.

Helen, who was previously an in-home advisor at both Kingfishers and Woodpeckers in the New Forest, said: "We are the first point of contact

for prospective residents and relatives when they are looking to take that step towards a home. We support families, hand-hold them and provide information to them on that customer journey. We aim to ask all the relevant questions about their care needs and circumstances so we can find the best home for them. After the initial contact, we'll co-ordinate viewings at one or more of our homes and continue to advise them.

"We are seeing an increase in referrals from our website and the independent care home review site Carehome.co.uk," explained Helen. "At the same time, enquirers can be prompted by word-of-mouth, promotional marketing and PR campaigns, and external home signage."

From July 2017, web and



Here to help (l-r): Hollie-Mae Clarke, Helen Lacey and Deborah Davies

phone enquiries from prospective families to all 20 of our homes will be routed to the SCAs. The team have a rota covering evenings and weekends, as well as normal office hours.

Hollie, who has six years' experience in care home client relations, said: "If you are trying to find a home for a loved one, your anxiety would go through the roof if you believed all the media horror

stories. We aim to provide factual, accurate information and put your mind at rest."

Deborah, a former Ofsted inspector, added: "Our goal is to support the customer journey and make it as seamless as possible. We can be a shoulder to cry on but above all, it's about making sure people feel supported and have all the information they need to make the right choice."

## Building on a successful career

A qualified building professional, new recruit Chris Adams has worked on the essential maintenance of everything from museums to monuments and lifeboat stations to schools.

Born and brought up in Oxford, the 55-year-old started out as a carpenter and worked his way up to be a contracts manager.

A move into consulting saw Chris work for the multinational building services firm WS Atkins. He has also been property manager at the top Oxford boarding school, St Edward's, and facilities manager at the David Chipperfield-designed River and Rowing Museum in Henley-on-Thames.

After a move to Poole ten years ago, Chris achieved senior positions in estates management, surveying and infrastructure management for the RNLI. Under his charge at one time were 350 built assets across the UK and Ireland. Latterly, Chris held

management responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of the lifeboat charity's buildings in Scotland, Ireland and the north of England.

Chris can cite extensive career experience in restoration work on historic monuments in his native city. One project featured a stone structure dating back to the 1500s.

He has joined Colten Care as one of our three Regional Facilities Managers, covering any maintenance issue involving the structure and fabric of our buildings – a role which involves the contrast of looking after purely modern, purpose-built homes.

"For me, these are very new buildings," explained Chris, who line manages a team of three maintenance people. "The condition of all the homes is impressive, as is the commitment of staff. My role is to maintain six specific homes and ensure they conform to all statutory and regulatory requirements,



as well as Colten Care's own standards."

Chris's homes are Canford Chase and The Aldbury in Poole, Avon Cliff in Bournemouth, Avon Reach in Mudeford, Amberwood House in Ferndown, and Kingfishers in New Milton.

Chris, who is married with two sons, said: "When I was doing my research for a new job, Colten Care looked like a quality organisation offering a diversity of roles in facilities management. I'm delighted to have joined. The important goals for me in the job are efficiency and service at all times."