

# COLTEN Chronicle

www.ColtenCare.co.uk

Winter 2020

## 'Best care in the best place'

*Our Covid response wins praise from both residents and their relatives*

**Our careful, responsive approach to the management of the coronavirus risk continues to gain heartfelt praise from residents and relatives.**

Even before the UK first went into lockdown, we had made vital decisions

about infection control, admissions procedures and visiting. As time has gone by, we have been doing everything we can to ensure residents stay safe, staff are protected and families receive accurate and timely communications.

We were quick to implement regular testing of staff and residents and since the summer we have operated a Covid-safe visiting protocol that has brought reassurance to families.

The upshot is that living and working in our care homes remains stimulating and enjoyable.

Ken Vivian, 94, a resident at Brook View in West Moors, Dorset, since June 2020, said: "I was on my own at home when the virus came. When I moved to Brook View I had to self-isolate for a fortnight, but it meant I would then have the opportunity to meet with people, have a laugh and make friends. Before, I had no-one to talk to, now I have everybody to talk to. I've become very happy here."

Ken's feelings are echoed by Mavis Quincey who recently came to our Outstanding-rated Ferndown home Amberwood House to recuperate after an operation. "All the staff are lovely," said Mavis. "They are very considerate and helpful. I do believe the home is a safe haven. We've all been tested and checked, and they have put in lots of measures on things like PPE and distancing. I have made some very nice friends and I would definitely recommend the home to others. There is a real sense of community."

Relatives have also praised our approach. Sarah Russell, whose mother lives at another of our Outstanding-rated homes, Linden House in Lymington, says: "The nursing and care team look after her really well. We have regular updates and conversations, and work together to make sure mum feels safe and well cared for. We wouldn't have mum anywhere else than Linden House – it's the best care in the best place."

### Naval salute marks Duncan's centenary



Staff at Wellington Grange in Chichester helped stage a 100th birthday surprise for resident and former Royal Navy officer Captain Duncan Knight. After a trumpet salute by members of the Royal Marines band, he was presented with a letter of congratulations from the First Sea Lord, Admiral Tony Radakin. Duncan said: "I was invited to go

outside to 'see something happening', but I had no idea it was going to be anything like that. It was an excellent surprise that left me feeling very honoured and emotional." According to HM Naval Base Portsmouth, Duncan is believed to be the sole remaining Royal Navy officer to have served throughout the whole of World War II.

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We continue to be champions for charities, despite the lockdowns.



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Residents from all our homes take part in our second blooming lovely produce show.



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This little curly-top now helps keep Colten in the public eye.

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

Mark Aitchison,  
Chief Executive,  
Colten Care



## Our homes are safe havens

Welcome to our winter 2020 edition. Here we aim to share something of the reality of care home life during these extraordinary times, not the relentless negativity portrayed in sections of the national media.

While no-one can eliminate risk completely, our homes remain reassuring havens where residents live safely and happily, and our team pursue excellence in the delivery of care. We have been able to draw on our extensive clinical expertise and care experience to enable us to offer visiting both via screens and in rooms for as long as they have been allowed. We have pushed the guideline boundaries – in a safe way.

At the risk of sounding arrogant, there are care homes and there are Colten Care homes! This **Chronicle** justifies that statement. My fellow Directors and I are incredibly proud of all our staff, they are truly One Team.

We have such a positive, upbeat message to share. Residents continue to enjoy fulfilling and meaningful experiences and activities, many of which would not be immediately available to people living on their own and struggling with isolation or loneliness.

Despite the pandemic, our homes have seen residents spending the happiest of times with each other. Examples include making Christmas gifts, taking part in the Macmillan coffee morning and Children in Need appeals, and growing plants and vegetables for our wonderful in-house produce show. There have been magical musical moments through a radio-style 'request show' in which families sent in song dedications accompanied by personal messages and memories. The response has been amazing.

Careful infection control measures have meant we have been able to co-ordinate Covid-safe visits from families. These have given residents the opportunity to share in precious moments such as seeing a granddaughter on her wedding day, and receiving a 90th birthday visit from a daughter living hundreds of miles away.

We also highlight our support for food banks operating in the communities we serve. One consequence of the lockdowns has been that many food banks have seen a drop in donations while need has increased. We therefore decided to do our bit by enabling people to deposit items at our homes and head office which we then give to the food banks for distribution to their clients. This is a great way to support many vulnerable families during the pandemic.

I hope you enjoy your winter 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).

# Helping hand for people in crisis

**We have teamed up with local food banks to help families and individuals in desperate need this winter.**

Donors have been dropping off food in collection boxes at all 21 of our homes and at our head office in Ringwood.

The donations are distributed to food banks battling to meet a surge in demand from families facing financial hardship and food poverty. We are also donating food directly ourselves and have invited our suppliers to do the same. The first to come on board was the wholesaler Bidfood, which is contributing a range of tinned and dry foods.

Our Hotel Services Manager Fergus Davitt said: "We thank all those suppliers who are supporting us in our food bank initiative. Together we can really make a difference to the lives of families in the communities around our homes."

Oliver Stanley, chairman of the Lymington-based New Forest Basics Bank, said: "We are bowled over and very grateful to Colten Care for their support. They are such a well-known and



**SUPPORTING FAMILIES:** With the collection box at our head office in Ringwood are Chief Executive Mark Aitchison, left, and Fergus Davitt, Hotel Services Manager.

respected name in and around Lymington and we're thrilled they have joined forces with us.

"We're currently working with around 100 families a week, providing them with enough food to see them through."

The Trussell Trust, another of the food bank networks we are supporting, recently released a report about the impact of coronavirus on the use of food banks nationally. It showed families with children had been hardest hit by food poverty.

The Trust forecasts a 61% increase in demand this winter, with six emergency parcels needing to be given out every minute across the UK.

Items most requested by food banks include tinned fruit, tinned meat, cereal, soup, pasta, washing-up liquid, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes and pet food. Donations must be in-date and non-perishable.

## Wartime recipes re-imagined for the modern lockdown era

Residents at Linden House in Lymington rekindled personal memories of life during wartime to contribute ideas for a forthcoming community cookbook.

It followed a request for

handwritten recipe suggestions to interest younger people and families stuck for culinary inspiration during lockdown.

An initiative of the Sway-based arts charity SpudWorks, the



Pictured above are Joan Lakeman, left, and Val Collinge, who were among the many residents at Kingfishers in New Milton, to support the Rotary Club's shoebox appeal.



'Pudsey' (above, right) with Bourne View residents Helen Morris and Philip Godden and, left and right, staff members Brian Ramsey and Paul Wookey.



## Marion cruises to a happy birthday voyage

'Intrepid travellers' at Abbots Barton in Winchester enjoyed a week-long European odyssey for a resident's birthday treat.

Marion Stevens told us her wish was to go on a cruise when she turned 70. In response, we staged five days of themed activities for everyone at the home, highlighting the food, music and culture of France, Spain, Italy, Greece and Denmark.

We decorated the home with national flags and bunting, taking in a new look each day as the 'tour' progressed.

Clinical Lead Joby Varghese played the role of 'ship's captain', greeting Marion and her fellow 'passengers' each morning, explaining the itinerary for the day and sharing information about each country.

Marion said: "I loved the whole week, especially my birthday. I thank everyone who put in the hard work to make it happen. It was great that other residents were involved and enjoyed it too."

Companionship Team Leader Kirsty Sawyer said: "We wanted to make Marion feel special all week and as we couldn't take her on a cruise elsewhere, we decided to bring the cruise to her."

# Charity begins at home(s)

**We continue to support charities and good causes despite coronavirus restrictions.**

As well as raising a cuppa at the Macmillan World's Biggest Coffee Morning, residents enjoyed a gentle contest to find a secret 'Golden Cup Cake' containing a layer of edible gold leaf through the middle. Chefs at each of our homes prepared the disguised treats as part of the array of cakes and pastries they made and served at the annual charity fundraiser.

Residents who 'found the gold' were entered into a draw to win £250 worth of shopping vouchers, with Colten Care donating the same amount to Macmillan on their behalf. As well as the cup cake contest, Macmillan fun included many individual initiatives by team members, including a leg wax and head shave. Overall, the homes and our Ringwood head office, raised more than £2,000 for the appeal.

Our residents also filled 240 shoeboxes with handmade Christmas gifts for the Rotary Club's annual bid to help disadvantaged children in parts of Eastern Europe. It was a record haul despite Covid, making the

whole logistical exercise of collecting, packing and sanitising the items and boxes more complex than usual.

Our efforts drew praise from Neal Curtis, International Committee Chair at Boscombe and Southbourne Rotary Club, who said: "The support we have received from Colten Care residents and staff has been tremendous. We have already collected more boxes than ever before. What could have been a very disappointing year will actually be a bumper year, giving so much pleasure to hundreds of underprivileged children. Thank you to Colten Care for your wonderful support notwithstanding the difficult circumstances."

In a third recent charity initiative, we once again supported Children in Need with homes staging cake sales, teddy bear games, raffles, duck races and other fun activities. Wearing a Pudsey Bear onesie, Bourne View's Companionship Team Leader Karen Grant A' Court said: "Children in Need is always a great chance for residents and colleagues to dress up, enjoy themselves and join in to support a worthy cause."



Jonathan Oldfield of spudWorks

book aims to connect generations by sharing thoughts about what it is like to cook in times of uncertainty.

One of the Linden recipes is for chicken soup with dumplings, known as kreplach, a favourite in Jewish households around the world.

Another is for a 'wartime

Christmas fruit cake', complete with cold strained tea, a slug of brandy or rum, and warmed black treacle.

Jonathan Oldfield, the book's creator, said: "We want to pass on recipe ideas from older people in the community that may be taken up by the younger generations, for example families with young

children, during this strange and socially distanced time. We hope the book will become a culinary 'time capsule' of Sway and the New Forest during the pandemic."

The book, entitled 'Using Dried Eggs: The Lockdown Cookbook' is set to go on display to the community at spudWorks.



# How our gard

From cute carrots to beautiful beans, and radiant roses to delightful daffs, a bumper crop of entries energised our second annual produce show.

**Residents at all our homes took part in our second produce show, planting and tending the growth of a dizzying array of fruit, veg, flowers and shrubs.**

Working with our gardeners and Companions, residents spent many happy and relaxing hours embracing the outdoors to complete their entries.

As well as produce growing, they made and decorated garden baskets, recycled spare items and materials as planters, built wildlife havens, painted pictures, did creative writing and baked garden-themed cakes.

To beat the challenges of Covid, entries were photographed, logged and uploaded to a central image library for judging rather than being physically presented.

Our Poole dementia care home The Aldbury triumphed as overall winner with Braemar Lodge in Salisbury and Lymington dementia home Linden House both runners-up.

Pip Smith, a resident at The Aldbury, said: "It's great that we won, as we all helped. We had great fun getting stuck into all the projects for each category. The garden is my favourite place. It's where we spent most time on our entries, and Brett, the gardener, had us belly laughing with jokes throughout each activity."

Tracey Aldin, The Aldbury Home Manager, said: "Everyone worked so hard on this. The residents thoroughly enjoyed taking part in various activities to produce the final results. A huge thank-you goes to the Companionship team for their dedication and hard work."



1: Residents and staff at The Aldbury in Poole celebrate winning this year's produce show.

2: Resident Beryl with flowers grown in The Aldbury garden.

3: Sharing a laugh during a garden-themed bake off at Braemar Lodge in Salisbury is resident Betty Winter.

4: Resident Lesley at Court Lodge in Lymington with lettuces she planted.

# ens grow!



**CORNUCOPIA:** With a garden basket of fruit, veg and flowers at Braemar Lodge are resident Iris Stowell and gardener Lesley King.

Charles Hubberstey, our Head Gardener, said: "While Covid restrictions meant it was more difficult to keep track of individual homes' progress, and of course meant we had to rejig our judging process, I would say the quality, imagination and breadth of thinking behind this year's entries even surpassed 2019.

"There was some very creative artistry on display from residents who clearly have many skills. Covid certainly didn't dampen the creativity. On the contrary, blessed with some glorious spring and summer weather, residents really got into this with good humour and bags of energy. It just goes to show that care homes can offer a real rejuvenation of activity and fun that wouldn't necessarily be possible for older people living on their own.

"Another fantastic thing about this year's show was that both the

winner and one of the runners-up are dedicated dementia care homes. It's fair to say that many of our residents, and perhaps especially those in dementia care, have found our gardens to be sanctuaries of peace and freedom during lockdown.

"Gardening and being among the joys of nature, from the riot of colour you see in flowering plants to the sound of birdsong and bees, is widely accepted as being a tonic for the body and mind. We asked each home to create a scrapbook about how they had put their entries together and every one is a testament to the fun people had."

 **Watch the video**

**We made a film of our second produce show which you can watch on our YouTube channel – [www.YouTube.com/ColtenCare](http://www.YouTube.com/ColtenCare)**



**SAFE REUNION.** Liz Thompson, right, celebrates her 90th birthday in her bedroom at Castle View with her daughter, Sarah Burnett, who travelled all the way from Edinburgh. The half-hour visit took place in line with policies on physical distancing and use of PPE.

## Sarah travels the length of Britain for her mother's 90th birthday

Our Dorchester home Castle View hosted a Covid-safe, half-hour visit from a resident's daughter who made an astounding 860-mile round-trip to wish her mum a happy 90th birthday.

Sarah Burnett travelled from Edinburgh to see Liz Thompson before the second lockdown was announced in Scotland and England.

The visit was the first time the pair had been together in months and was held fully in line with the home's safe-visiting procedures.

Sarah said: "The staff at Castle View have been genuinely caring all the way through lockdown and were so lovely about helping to make this happen. I can't thank them enough."

Liz, a former English teacher and a keen classical pianist, said: "I had decided not to make a fuss about my 90th and had assumed no-one was coming, so it was great to see Sarah. It was a real surprise when she told me she was going to make the trip. She came a long way for such a short time."

Sue Goodwin, Companionship Team Member, said: "The saying goes that you should keep the company of those who would travel hours to spend only one with you. This was certainly the case for Liz and Sarah.

"It was a privilege to host Sarah's visit from the other end of the country and enable the pair of them to see each other again in safety and with joy and laughter. It was such a special occasion."

QUESTIONS  
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QUESTIONS

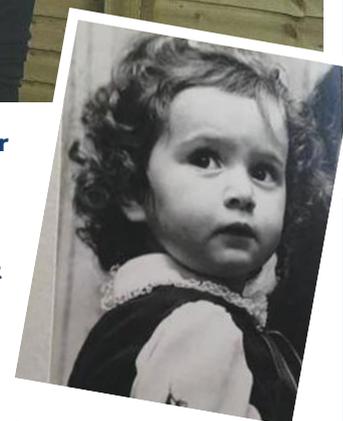
Our busy Colten House-based Marketing team is responsible for a wide range of activities and initiatives to support our 21 homes, along with Colten Care brand marketing and promotion, both offline and online.

Activities include developing our overall

brand positioning and presence at a strategic level, devising and staging promotional events and campaigns, and producing and distributing electronic and print publications.

The team works across all our digital platforms, including the Colten Care website, individual home microsites and email marketing resources. A key aspect of Marketing is measuring engagement through Google Analytics, alongside the responses to targeted advertising and campaigns. Keeping our digital presence competitive and stimulating means we can nurture and maintain occupancy levels.

Head of Marketing Natalie Alexander has more than 30 years' experience in advertising, marketing and PR. She has worked for many agencies and was previously a



marketing manager for another south coast-based care home group. Natalie has worked on many national and European marketing accounts at account director level. This has involved presenting, managing, planning and delivering multiple strategies and campaigns for both UK and European markets.

Here we catch up with Natalie to find out a little more about her.

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

**A:** Gene Kelly.

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

**A:** This year ...anywhere hot.

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

**A:** Magpies.

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

**A:** No-one. I'm scared of lifts so never use them.

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

**A:** My dad. He has found the perfect mix of being my best friend but a dad when I need him to be.

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

**A:** Just bought a new car after 7 years of previous one – a Nissan Juke.

**Q:** Cats or dogs?

**A:** Cats.

**Q:** What makes you angry?

**A:** People who are rude and disrespectful to shop workers/waiting staff, service providers etc; oh, and people who eat with their mouth open – instant hackles up!

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

**A:** Freshly brewed coffee.

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

**A:** Watch the news headlines to make sure the world didn't end while I was asleep and I've still got to get up for work.

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

**A:** My dad (a drummer) and his musician friends always making a racket, jamming in our dining room on a Sunday morning.

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

**A:** Gogglebox.

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

**A:** Seeing a campaign go from strategy, to brainstorm, to creative concepts, to the finalised campaign in place.

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

**A:** I couldn't possibly say.

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

**A:** A nice chilled bottle (case preferably) of white Rioja.

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

**A:** Drawing.

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

**A:** Ooh, tricky, but I guess one was being driven round Daytona in Florida in a Nascar racing car at 200 miles an hour. Just amazing and I would do it again tomorrow.

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

**A:** This is a tricky one too – so many, but I'd say anything that someone else cooks for me as I don't cook.

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

**A:** Running an animal rescue centre in Spain.

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

**A:** Any animal that has become extinct due to humans' bad behaviour and treatment.

# Grandad gets to toast the bride despite lockdown

**A pair of newlyweds made a cross-country dash from Somerset to Court Lodge in Lymington so the bride's grandfather could share in their joy despite lockdown.**

Covid restrictions meant Graham Burley wasn't able to attend the marriage ceremony itself.

To make up for it, granddaughter Alex decided to bring a flavour of the celebrations direct to him.

Donning her white wedding dress once again, Alex travelled with groom Phillip Pearce to see Graham for what was an emotional visit all round.

Taking advantage of our safe-visiting policy, the visitors were able to see and talk to Graham through a Perspex screen in the home's entrance.

Graham said: "It was emotional and I did shed a few tears. It meant so much to me to get to see Alex in the beautiful white wedding dress she wore on her special day."

Alex said: "We really wanted him to feel included in our wedding so we dressed up and, thanks to Court Lodge, were able to have champagne and cake with him. It was incredibly special to visit him."



**FELICITATIONS:** Resident Graham Burley joins granddaughter Alex and her new husband Phillip for a glass of bubbly at Court Lodge.

## Request show prompts musical memories

Families of residents shared the gift of music with their loved ones through a personalised 'request show'.

More than 100 relatives responded to an invite to send in radio-style listeners' dedications, an idea put forward by Fiona Pritchard, our Music & Arts Partner.

After gathering the requests, Fiona arranged one-to-one time with each resident so she could play their particular song or piece of music on an iPad and read out the personal message from their family.

From Bing Crosby to the Bee Gees, Chopin to Chattanooga Choo Choo, the requests included classical nocturnes, jazz standards, pop hits and rock and roll favourites.

Fiona said: "Our roving request show provided each resident with a most marvellous journey down memory lane. The moments when they heard me read out the dedication, saying why the music held special meaning for the family, and then hearing it played just for them, were just magical.



**THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC:** Residents react to the dedications sent in to the 'request show' by their families.

"It was a joy to see residents smiling, joining in with songs, tapping their feet in time, and reflecting on what the music means to them. Music has a positive effect on our well-being. It stimulates our emotions and motivation, and because it's non-verbal, it's accessible to everyone."

Ena Potter, who lives at Bourne View in Poole, enjoyed a request for Rod Stewart's hit 'Sailing', sent in by her daughter Liz. "It was lovely," said Ena. "We used to love to hear that song when we were going down to Cornwall

on holiday. We would all sing away to it. I think even the dog knew it!"

Elsewhere, Pete Jordan requested 'When the Saints Go Marching In' for his mother Marigold, who lives at Linden House in Lymington. Watching her response on a video clip, Pete said: "It's absolutely wonderful. My mum's face is a picture of happiness."



**Watch the video**

**A short film of the request show is on our YouTube channel – [www.YouTube.com/ColtenCare](http://www.YouTube.com/ColtenCare)**

# Juliana has designs on new interiors career

Juliana Clark is making a career change within Colten Care, moving to the post of Assistant Interior Designer.

She has been a familiar face since joining us as a Healthcare Assistant at Brook View in 2004.

Juliana progressed to Senior Healthcare Assistant and Infection Control Lead before moving to an administration role and then to Customer Services.

She was most recently a Customer Services Advisor at our Poole homes The Aldbury and Canford Chase.

In a gap year exploring other avenues, Juliana studied for and gained an



Interior Design Diploma with the National Design Academy in Nottingham, a mixture of distance and in-studio learning.

"Interior design has always interested me," says Juliana, whose whole career

in elderly people's care goes back 30 years. "My new role is an opportunity to create beautiful environments that are pleasing to our residents and that enable them to live well.

"I love being able to help people. The role is a mixture of helping to create aesthetically lovely design and ensuring the design environment contributes to the overall quality of care. I'm still caring and supporting people, just doing it in a different way.

"I'm grateful that Colten Care see this as a prime example of retraining within the company and applying new skills for the

benefit of our residents."

Based at Colten House in Ringwood alongside fellow Interior Design team members Georgina Colwell and Wendi Batchelor, Juliana will work across different homes.

One of her most immediate projects has been to help create and decorate the 'winter wonderlands' at our homes, featuring Christmas trees, grottos and other seasonal touches.

Juliana is married with three children and lives in Ferndown. Outside work, her interests are gardening, landscaping, photography and travel.

# Supporting role

Julie Jones, newly appointed Operations Manager for our New Forest homes, says she is proud to have joined 'the best provider in the south'.

A former cardiothoracic nurse, Julie has worked at a senior level in domiciliary care and residential services and was recently an interim Home Manager.

Having registered with a recruitment agency, she was delighted when the opportunity with us came up.

"I was sitting with my dementia lead looking at a brochure for Bourne View in Poole," she recalls. "I said, 'This is what we are striving for, Colten's reputation precedes them. They are the best provider in the south'. On the same day I got a call from a recruiter saying I had been invited to interview for the Operations Manager job."

After the interview, Elaine Farrer, our Operations Director, phoned the same night to offer her the job. "I was over the moon," says Julie.

Speaking to the **Chronicle** in her fifth week in post, Julie describes her induction as 'superb', adding: "I've been given the time to go round every department, visit the homes to meet people and get to know Colten House. There is a lot to learn, with many new systems and processes, and of course it's always difficult being the new girl settling in, but I have the feeling I am getting to grips with it."

Julie is one of three Operations Managers across our 21 homes, along with Jacky Sylvester and Peter Doyle, all reporting directly to Elaine. "Everyone is so supportive," says Julie.



"Elaine, Jacky and Peter have all been really helpful and full of advice if I've had a question."

Defining her role, Julie says: "I am here to support the Home Managers and help them be the best they can be. I have been in the hot seat so I know what it's like. It's so reassuring to know you can talk things through with someone at a senior operational level. We're all striving to be outstanding and I'm there to help so everyone can move forward."

Julie trained to be an RGN in her home county of Sussex

and has also worked in London, Surrey and Hampshire. Her career has varied from a field care supervisor for a domiciliary care provider to, more recently, a regional operations manager for a family-owned business of care homes. She was covering 2,500 miles a month and living in hotels across the UK, hence the attraction of a much more localised role with us.

A mother-of-three, Julie did once switch career roles completely, working with her husband to set up and run a private hire aviation business, based at Northolt in London.

Now living in Blandford, Dorset, Julie says one of her main interests is organising events for the whole family, not least the annual skiing holiday. "It's often a big logistical exercise, but also a lovely opportunity to bring everyone together," she says.