



FOREST CARE

CARING SINCE 1981



Autumn

Newsletter 2025

Welcome to our latest newsletter packed with celebrations, meaningful outreach, cherished lifestories and joyful moments from across our Forest Care community, plus a delicious recipe to try at home. Happy reading!



Memorable Moments & Celebrations

Holly Lodge's Hawaiian Summer Fete

We turned our garden into a tropical paradise for Holly's Hawaiian Summer Fete! With hula vibes, tiki cocktails, and fantastic entertainment, the day was packed with fun. Surrey Jive wowed the crowd with their performance, and a big thank you to Eleanor for her incredible singing! Thanks to our amazing team, generous donors, and everyone who joined us, we raised an incredible £1,040.50 for our Residents' Fund.



Classic Car Event
Our residents and families enjoyed a wonderful visit from classic cars from local groups who came together at Rowan Lodge. Children enjoyed sitting on the vintage Massey Ferguson and listening to the siren of the old police car arriving. There was a delicious BBQ plus tombola, raffle, face painting and singing from a local performer Nina Ayling.



Day trip to Southsea

Rowan residents and staff enjoyed a fabulous day out in Southsea, with coastal walks, garden strolls, and a delicious meal at the Southsea Beach Café. The perfect ending? Ice creams by the sea and smiles all around! A day full of sunshine, laughter, and friendship.



Craft Show at Cedar Lodge!

Cedar residents and families enjoyed a fantastic Crafts-style dog show, with six adorable dogs Mia, Frank, Nabi, Bonnie, Honey, and Bruno competing in fun categories like Waggiest Tail, Cutest Face, Best Trick, and Best in Show. Every dog was a winner, and the joy they brought was priceless. Huge thanks to all the dogs and their humans, we can't wait for the next one!



Arts in Care Homes Day
Cedar joined the national Arts in Care Homes celebration with a vibrant showcase of resident creativity, inspired by nature and filled with colour, expression, and joy.



Pet Therapy

Oak residents shared cuddles with Browells Pet Therapy animals and had fun feeding the piglets - a delightful day of furry friends and new experiences!



Afternoon Tea Week

A week full of delicious treats and joyful moments. Cedar enjoyed homemade sandwiches and scones made by residents Jill, Jenny, Felicity, and Val, stirring up lovely memories. Over at Rowan, residents savoured freshly baked scones, a canal trip, a Sound of Music-themed tea, and a visit to local friends Chloe and Vicar Debbie, sharing tea, cake, and community spirit!

Community Engagement

Macmillan Coffee Morning

Staff, residents, and families across our homes came together for Macmillan's Charity Coffee Morning, raising funds for a great cause through cake, conversation, and community spirit.



Rowan & Elm residents joined the Newnham 900 celebrations on 20th September, marking 900 years of St Nicholas' Church with a joyful day on Newnham Village Green. The event featured historical displays, falconry, a hog roast, and live music - a fantastic day of community, history, and fun!



Rowan residents enjoyed a behind-the-scenes look at the Hospital Radio Basingstoke studio, and even joined live on air for some musical fun!



Elm residents enjoyed a joyful visit from the Caterpillar Music Group, sharing songs with little ones in a heartwarming intergenerational session, followed by a lively singalong at the Let's Sing for Milestones event.

Resident Spotlight

Valerie Denyer at Cedar Lodge



Cedar partnered with care finder Lottie and artist Pie Herring for A Life Full of Colour, a campaign celebrating care home residents through hand-painted portraits. Each painting honours their unique life stories and offers families a meaningful keepsake, while encouraging deeper intergenerational connection. During the painting process, Pie spent time with resident Valerie, learning about her life whilst Valerie's memories were captured on camera. Her portrait was painted on handmade Japanese cedar paper – a homage to our home's name. Valerie was deeply moved, calling it "a once in a lifetime experience."

I was born in 1936 in a two-up, two-down cottage in Farnborough. I went to the local school until I was fifteen, then started working at a local shoe shop, where I stayed for two years before beginning my career in nursing. I trained at Farnham General Hospital; there was no Frimley Park in those days! As student nurses, we were given all the hard and dirty jobs; I hardly saw the outside of the sluice room for my first two months. But it wasn't all work, we did find time for fun. We used to go to the pictures or attend local dances, though we had to get a late pass from Matron and tell her exactly where we were going!

It was at one of those dances that I met Bill, who was in the Parachute Regiment. He became my husband in 1959. We settled into married life, and in 1961, we welcomed our son, Steven. After two years living in Chichester, we returned to Farnborough. I resumed my nursing career at Farnham Hospital, where I worked until I retired at 60.

Retirement brought many joys, especially holidays with Bill. Bournemouth was a particular favourite of ours. I've always loved gardening and reading, and in my younger years, I was quite the little jiver! Rock 'n' roll music is still a big love of mine.

One fond memory from my student nurse days was a holiday to Butlins. Without Matron watching over us, we really let our hair down...dancing, laughing and enjoying a few drinks. It was a wonderful time.

My son and his wife blessed us with four wonderful grandchildren and in time, thirteen great-grandchildren, who have brought us endless joy.

Staff Spotlight & Achievements

Staff Awards

Elm Lodge proudly hosted its first-ever Staff & Resident Awards Ceremony, bringing everyone together for an unforgettable afternoon of live entertainment, thoughtful gifts, and delicious canapés. At Oak and Rowan, we honoured the dedication of our long-serving team members with flowers, vouchers, bubbly, and plenty of cake - a well-deserved celebration of their continued commitment and care.



Zara Gay - Marketing Assistant at Forest Care

My love for the creative industry began when I was 10. My grandad took me to a theme park and we filmed our entire day. It was his way of encouraging me to photograph and capture something I was passionate about. The following day, we spent hours editing the footage together and lost track of time, only stopping when my Nan called us for dinner. I thought, if this could be a job, I'd love it! That memory stayed with me.

At college, I pursued A-Level Photography and a BTEC in Media. COVID cut my college experience short, so I committed time to freelance video editing, often unpaid at first, to build skills and my portfolio. Eventually, I started working with bigger YouTubers and began earning. After a year of freelancing and job applications, I landed a marketing role at a childcare marketing agency, executing photoshoots and managing multiple social media accounts at nurseries and school clubs across the UK.

At one point, I dreamed of being a full-time video editor, but marketing has shown me that I can explore a bit of everything, I love the variety and creativity it brings each day.

At Forest Care, I enjoy a diverse role where no two days are the same. You might see me at our care homes' wonderful events with a camera in hand, capturing special moments for families, as well as creating content for our social media, website and other platforms. So if you spot me, don't forget to send a smile my way!

Outside of work, I enjoy running (I'm currently training for the Brighton Marathon 2026 to raise money for Alzheimer's Research) and bouldering a couple of times a week with my fiancé. I'm a bit of a thrill-seeker and a huge foodie, especially when it comes to Asian cuisine. Over the past three years, I've been lucky enough to travel to seven European countries, experiencing different cultures and cuisines along the way. My next big adventure, though, is a little closer to home as I'm currently in the process of buying my first house!



Congratulations to Rowan's talented gardener, Luke, for winning 'Most Attractive Front Garden' for his own home at September's Hook in Bloom Competition held at Elizabeth Hall. Judges were impressed that for a small garden it was well-organised, well-planted and served the whole family including three hedgehogs. Well done Luke! Your hard work and green thumb have also made Rowan Lodge shine!



Hampshire Care Awards 2025!

A huge congratulations to Oak Lodge, proudly named 'Residential Home of the Year', and to our amazing volunteer Karen Pearn, winner of the 'Care Volunteer Hero' award! We're also incredibly proud of Lisa Lovell, Administrator at Elm Lodge, who was a finalist for the 'Support Superhero' award. These prestigious awards, held on 18th September at the Hilton Hotel in Southampton, celebrate compassion, professionalism, and excellence in care. Well done to everyone involved, we're so proud of you all!

Testimonials

"Every time we see her, she tells us how lucky she is to be in such a lovely home and looked after by such caring people...the care is exceptional."

"Karen is a lovely person and goes 'above and beyond', printing song sheets in very large print so I can join in the choir. Taking me out many times in her sports car - which I love, and to see the roses at Mottisfont."

"On multiple occasions, Lisa has come into work during the night, not because she was asked to, but because she wanted to check on residents she was concerned about. This speaks volumes about her character and heart."



Congratulations to Cedar Lodge for winning this year's 'Love Your Garden' competition with their fantastic "Cedarfest" celebration! Residents created instruments from recycled materials, enjoyed live music, and even hosted a jamming session - bringing the 'Harmony in Nature' theme to life.



Olga's Cherry Pie

Recipe from Chef Olga at Rowan Lodge

Pastry Ingredients: 330g plain flour, 120g cold butter, 3 egg yolks, 70g caster sugar, 50g milk, 1/4 tsp salt, 1 tsp vanilla essence, 1/2 tsp baking powder. **Filling Ingredients:** 800g tinned dark pitted cherries, 120g caster sugar, 25g corn flour

Method: Mix plain flour, sugar, butter, salt and vanilla in a bowl until it resembles breadcrumbs. Add egg yolks and milk and mix until the pastry forms. Wrap the mixture in cling film and rest in the fridge. Heat cherries and sugar in a saucepan. Mix the cornflour with 1 tbsp cold water to create a paste. When the cherries come to the boil, stir in the paste and reduce the heat, the mixture will thicken. Remove from the heat and allow to cool.

Remove pastry from fridge, cut into two pieces and roll out into 30cm discs. Line the base of your pie dish with one disc. Once the filling has cooled, place into the pastry casing. Place the other pastry disc over the filling and crimp together. Brush the top with a beaten egg yolk and dust with granulated sugar. Bake the pie on 160 degrees for 40-45 mins, until golden brown.



Gita & Yintong on #National Friendship Day

Testimonials

"The quality of care has been excellent. Without exception all the staff are wonderful and they are deeply committed to what they do because it comes from the heart and there is a real sense of community amongst them. Nothing is too much trouble for them and they are always proactive in attending to my wife's needs."

"Staff are so caring and so thoughtful, nothing is too much trouble. They are all so supportive. The food is excellent and it's so clean and fresh there. Thank you all at Elm Lodge. The journey is a tough one, but the staff help you through it."

"I have been very impressed with the level of care shown to my mum and the variety of activities she has been encouraged to participate in. The staff have always been ready to help and with a smile. I find it difficult to find any fault with Holly Lodge, and so pleased Mum spent her last few years here."

"I don't think I could think of a nursing home in which my sister would receive better care...The staff are kind and considerate and, importantly, treat her with respect. The home is kept beautifully, clean and attractive and above all, welcoming."

"We feel sure that mum has greatly appreciated her 100th birthday thanks to the Rowan Lodge team and we have very happy memories too, supported by some lovely photos. Our grateful thanks once again to you and all concerned."

Upcoming Events

- 31st Oct: Pumpkin Carving Competition (Holly) & Joanna's 'Wicked' performance (Rowan)
- 10th Nov: Berkshire Birds of Prey (Elm) & D-Day Dollies Concert (Oak) & 'George & Ginger' Concert (Rowan)
- 4th Dec: Festive Fun Day (Cedar)
- 6th Dec: Winter Fete (Holly)
- 7th Dec: Winter Fete (Rowan & Oak)
- 10th Dec: Forest Care's Mince Pie Competition
- 12th Dec: Christmas Market (Cedar)
- 22nd Dec: Penguins! (Holly)