

The Daffodil

Summer 2026

'It's Behind You!' How Panto brought a touch of Christmas magic to our homes



Reflecting on the eventful festive season, one of the real highlights across our homes was the wonderful pantomime performances brought to us by **Tickled Pink Productions**. With performances of **Cinderella** and the **Christmas Spectacular** at all three homes, residents, staff and visiting families were treated to something truly special.

The performances were full of energy, laughter and plenty of familiar songs, creating a warm and joyful atmosphere in each home. What made the experience even more memorable was the interactive nature of the shows, our residents were encouraged to join in, sing along, and be part of the story.



It was heartwarming to see so many smiling faces and hear the sound of laughter filling the homes.

Tickled Pink Productions was established in 2002 as a one-off tour but it was so popular that they have carried on ever since, now performing shows & entertainment all over the country to over 3500 care homes.

These evenings truly exemplified what makes the care so special at Springdene, with the residents, relatives and staff interacting with performers, and everyone having a tremendous time.

Inside: The Times calling • An Ode to our Staff • Carving out new skills with Odile • Bringing generations together through story • The Sole Question • Creating homes for the future • Special Days and much more...

A Letter from the CEO



Dear Residents and Families,

As the weather warms up and we look forward to the Summer months, I am pleased to release the second edition of the relaunched Daffodil Newsletter, the official newsletter of Springdene Care Homes. This edition encapsulates everything that has been going on in the homes over the last six months, and it has been very busy period indeed.

From the **Christmas Festival** at Spring Lane, to the **Fish & Chips Quiz Supper** at Springview, or **resin art with Odile**, we ensure the residents are at the centre of everything we do. We are continually working to grow our community and engage with the many amazing people and projects outside of the homes.

If you would like to stay connected in between editions of this newsletter, please follow our pages on Facebook and Instagram where you can see everything the residents are getting up to as they happen.

Warm regards,



Theodore Powell, CEO.



Springdene Care Homes



springdenecare

Avni Arrives

We were delighted to welcome our new **Group Catering Manager, Avni**, into the Springdene family at the start of the year. Bringing a wealth of experience in catering and the care sector, he has already shown great creativity and talent. His passion for top quality gourmet food and the overall resident experience is making a real difference across our homes. If you were lucky, you will have tasted his food at the Employee Appreciation Days, summer barbecues and North London Hospice Cheque presentation.



NLH Cheque presentation

Our Christmas Festival last December at Spring Lane was full of festive cheer, bringing warmth and joy into the home. The festival, in aid of North London Hospice, brought our community together, including relatives, friends and visitors from Muswell Hill, for a wonderful cause. Thanks to everyone's generosity, we raised an incredible **£1,269** for the charity. We organised a special cheque presentation a few months later to celebrate the achievement. We are hoping this is the start of a lasting relationship with a charity who do amazing work supporting the community.



“ When a journalist from The Sunday Times called and asked if I could shed some light on the challenges that care homes are facing in the current climate, and to share the story of a family business, I thought that is right up our street,” says **Theodore Powell**, Springdene CEO.

The resulting article, published in the **Money** segment, focused on the ever-growing financial pressures facing the care sector, including rising costs and the increasing challenges of delivering high-quality care in a highly competitive environment. Importantly, it also highlighted what it means to run a family business in social care, where the residents and their care come first.

Since the article was published, Theodore has spoken with a number of senior leaders across social care, all of whom shared the same reaction. **“They all tell me that they could have said exactly the same thing as me. They are facing the same issues,”** he explains.

While the pressures are real and widely felt, the conversations that followed reinforced a strong sense of unity across the sector. Family-run providers, in particular, continue to navigate these challenges with resilience, creativity and a deep commitment to residents and staff alike.

We were proud to contribute to a national conversation that affects so many, and to share a perspective rooted in honesty and family values. Above all, the experience reaffirmed our belief that even in challenging times, care built on compassion, trust and togetherness truly matters.

March 22, 2026

MONEY

1,000 DEALS DISAPPEAR: WHAT THE WAR IS DOING TO MORTGAGES PAGE 10

BUT MY ENERGY STOCKS ARE KEEPING ME SAFE IAN COWIE PAGE 12

‘Our family firm has run care homes for 57 years. It’s never been tougher’

Higher national insurance and wages are harming businesses – and putting up prices for anyone needing care, finds Mary Donner

Our costs keep going up but the local authority pays the same as a decade ago
Theodore Powell

John and Gerald Powell opened the first Springdene care home for the elderly in west London in 1969. About 10 years later, their grandson, Theodore Powell, is the chief executive of the company – the third generation to be running the family business.

Mr. Powell, 38, said: “My grandfather was a GP and he saw the care homes at the time, which he said were Dickensian, and he wanted to offer something better.”

Springdene now has three homes in Hampstead, Muswell Hill and Ealing, with a total of 240 rooms. Generations of the same family have lived in its homes, which have survived such challenges as the winter of discontent in the late 1970s, the 2008 financial crash, Brexit and the constant rise in national insurance.

But in future, as with so many independent care homes, looks uncertain. This year care homes fees rose an average of 10 per cent, according to the companies’ own calculations. Prices have risen across the board, but the real sting comes from higher national insurance.

Last year employees’ national insurance contributions went up from 12.5 per cent to 14 per cent, and the threshold at which they have to start making contributions fell from £2,000 to £1,000. Combined with an increase in the minimum wage, it could add another £100,000 to the company’s annual national insurance bill, which is £1.5 million in extra wage costs according to the Bedford Trust, a health care think tank.

Martin Green, the chief executive of the charity Care England, said: “In the past 18 months we have seen significant cost increases, many of which have been directly placed on the sector by government actions.”

Care homes are passing some of the higher costs on to residents in a bid to balance the books. Springdene will increase its weekly fees in April, from £1,100 to £1,150.

“It’s not clear if there is a future for the care sector,” Powell said. “My grandfather, before I was born, died in 2012, but his grandfather, when he died in 1940, was a ‘social worker’ – in other words, he was a care home owner. It was a family business, and it was a very different time. It was a time when the care sector was seen as a noble profession and it was not clear if there is a future for it.”

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“We try really hard to pay our staff as well as we possibly can, but giving them more of a raise is becoming a real stretch. I think these policies have the right intention, but they’re misplaced. It’s not increasing costs because of employees’ greed or anything like that.”

Springdene pays the London living wage of £11.50 an hour, which is about £28,000 a year based on a 37.5-hour week. This has increased about 10 per cent over the past year, which will add another £10,000 a year to the company’s costs.

Mr. Powell is making a loss on some residents who are funded by the local authority. While rates for private residents start at £1,100 a week, local authority rates are between £1,000 and £1,100 a week, regardless of the level of care required.

“The council uses its purchasing power to negotiate lower prices than those paying for their own care, and the amount paid is often not enough to cover the actual cost of care,” he said.

“Local authorities don’t recognise that different residents have different needs. Whether or not someone is in a wheel chair, needing hoisting, needing help with feeding, dementia, they will give us the same amount of money as for someone who is totally fit and well,” Powell said.

“Ten years ago our price difference between self-funding and local authority funding was about 10 to 20 per cent, but the disparity now is huge. Local care costs keep increasing but the local authority pay the same as they did a decade ago.”

At most costs, only those with assets worth less than £23,250 qualify for state-funded care in a residential or nursing home, and this includes the value of their main property.

Some of Springdene’s residents were self-funded before they came out of money, but an application to the local authority can take up to a year. Powell said that during this time Springdene continued to support them without payment. He added: “I’m entirely committed to this business and to the ethos that my grandparents created. There’s a great need and with the right support there could be a future, but there needs to be a credible plan for how the sector, and people’s care, is going to be funded.”

‘I’VE SEEN FOUR HOMES CLOSE IN THE PAST TWO YEARS’
Kris Northwood’s daughter Lindsey Clark, a GP practice manager, bought The Cobble care home in Wymondley, near the doctors from her surgery in 2008. Northwood managed the 20-bed home.

In February last year she joined some 3,000 workers from the care sector to demonstrate in Westminster against the rise in national insurance contributions, which cost The Cobble £60,000 last year.

“We want to close, but the way things are going, many visitors will,” Northwood said. “I’ve seen four independent care homes in our area close in the past two years.”

The Cobble is breaking even, but its wage bill has gone up 10 per cent over the past three years, while its income is up only 1 per cent.

The home charges self-funded residents the same as the local authority rates, which £250 a week, going up to £260 a week in April.

The average in the West Midlands is £215 a week, and the north-west is determined to keep the cost affordable. She said: “Nobody seems to care, politicians are never in this situation if they don’t know. We shouldn’t be in a situation like this.”

She added: “I’ve been in this sector since 1980. I’ve seen after reports of exactly what’s wrong. The problem isn’t a lack of understanding, it’s a lack of action.”

HOW TO PAY FOR CARE
It is generally advised to budget about £100,000 a year for care costs in the last three years of your life. But an elderly person could face a bill of nearly £1 million by the time they need care. Early financial planning is essential to avoid a scenario where care costs rapidly deplete your estate.

For those with their own care, or others effectively subsidising those who are covered by the local authority, a self-funded resident pays £270 more each month than a council-funded resident.

As it is hard to know how many years of care you may need, an immediate needs assessment can provide a guaranteed monthly payment for care fees for the rest of your life. If payments are made direct to the care home, so are not liable to income tax, and you can get a policy that increases each year as the fees rise.

However, the upfront cost is high – typically in the tens of thousands of pounds – and you may get back only a few pence in your final year.

If costs have risen beyond health care, they could be covered by NHS continuing healthcare. It costs £60,000 per year of care, and is available for people with long-term health conditions, but it is not means tested, so assets are not taken into account when deciding if someone qualifies. However, there is no guarantee of funding for standard social care, with only about 20 per cent of applications successful in England.

Many people fail to make arrangements because they cannot imagine themselves needing support. In reality, the move into care is often triggered by sudden events like a fall, a stroke, or a dementia diagnosis rather than a gradual decline. Take a “trial retirement” to assess how your pension and property could be used to fund care in your old age.

Johanna Noble Money Editor

Even if you don't believe in marriage, just put a ring on it

A friend of mine has been with her other half for more than 30 decades. They have built a life together. Just like any married couple – with one big difference. They haven’t actually made it down the aisle.

They’re not alone in shunning marriage. There are 6.5 million people cohabiting but not married or in a civil partnership, according to the Office for National Statistics. Less than half of adults are married, compared with 70 per cent in 1972.

Some might say marriage is an old-fashioned institution and that you don’t have to tie the knot to have a happy, healthy relationship. Whatever your belief, it’s down to personal opinion. But from a financial perspective not getting married can have huge repercussions, not just for your children tax.

The tax office offers far more protection to married couples than to those who live together.

There is so much to be gained from a common law spouse. Change could be on the horizon – the government has launched a review into cohabitation law – but as things stand, if you’re not married you’re seen as strangers. And this is a shame, because if you die, your partner will be treated as a stranger for all your assets.

Even when you think you have taken the right steps to protect each other, it might not be enough. Many pension schemes have terms and conditions which state that only a spouse can inherit a beneficiary. If you have a beneficiary, you will have to leave your partner out of the will.

Not being married could mean your partner’s inheritance is split 50/50 with your family’s. If you are married or in a civil partnership, your partner will inherit everything – your home, assets – will be treated as your spouse for inheritance tax. You can also inherit unused inheritance tax allowances from a spouse or civil partner.

Everyone has a “nil-rate” allowance of £100,000 and there is an additional residence nil-rate band of £175,000 if the estate is worth less than £2 million. If you include a main home left to a child, grandchild or stepchild, this means that one person can leave a £1,175,000 house of their own, and another can leave a £175,000 house of their own, and the total inheritance tax will be zero.

If you are not married or in a civil partnership when your partner dies, you will have to pay inheritance tax on the value of their estate. If their estate is worth more than £250,000, but only you are left with a hefty tax bill, the inheritance tax will be levied on your partner’s estate. If you have been married, you will have to pay inheritance tax on the value of your partner’s estate. If you have been married, you will have to pay inheritance tax on the value of your partner’s estate.

For those who want about £150,000 of their own, it really doesn’t have to be expensive. You can get a notice of marriage, a simple register office ceremony and a marriage certificate for the same.

£150

What you could pay for a ring

Even £150 – probably not far off what you would pay for a ring – can be a small price to pay for a ring. It can be a small price to pay for a ring. It can be a small price to pay for a ring.

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An Ode to our Staff: Employee Appreciation Day



Our homes are built on strong family values, and at the heart of that family are our incredible staff. Over the past year, their commitment, kindness and dedication have made a real difference every single day, and our annual **Employee Appreciation Day** was a small way of saying a very big thank you.

Celebrated across all three homes, the day was filled with joy, laughter and a real sense of togetherness. All of the different teams came together to enjoy good food and entertainment, creating a joyous and uplifting atmosphere. There were prizes to be won, smiles all round, and plenty of moments to pause and appreciate just how much is achieved through teamwork and care.

It was wonderful to see colleagues enjoying time together, reflecting the supportive and close-knit culture we're so proud of. The day was more than just celebration, it was about recognising the hard work, compassion and professionalism shown by our staff throughout the year.

To each and every member of our team: thank you for everything you do. You truly are the heart of our homes.



The team at Spring Grove



THANK YOU



The team at Spring Lane



The team at Springview

Carving out new skills with Odile



Over the past six months, our **Artist in Residence, Odile**, has once again been inspiring residents across our homes, bringing creativity, colour and connection into everyday life. These sessions have become much-anticipated across our homes, offering residents the chance to explore new skills and express themselves in a relaxed and welcoming setting.

Recently, residents have been creating beautiful resin coasters, using flowers carefully dried from our own gardens. Each piece is completely unique and permanently captures a little piece of our outdoor spaces within. Alongside this, residents have also been enjoying lino cut printing, discovering the satisfaction of designing, carving and producing their own prints.

What has been especially wonderful to see is how these projects are encouraging more residents than ever to get involved. Whether trying something new or rediscovering a long-held interest, the sessions are attracting growing numbers and creating a real buzz.

Seeing residents discovering new skills, many of whom previously did not interact with other residents or activities, really epitomises what makes our Springdene Care Home communities so special.



Bringing generations together through story



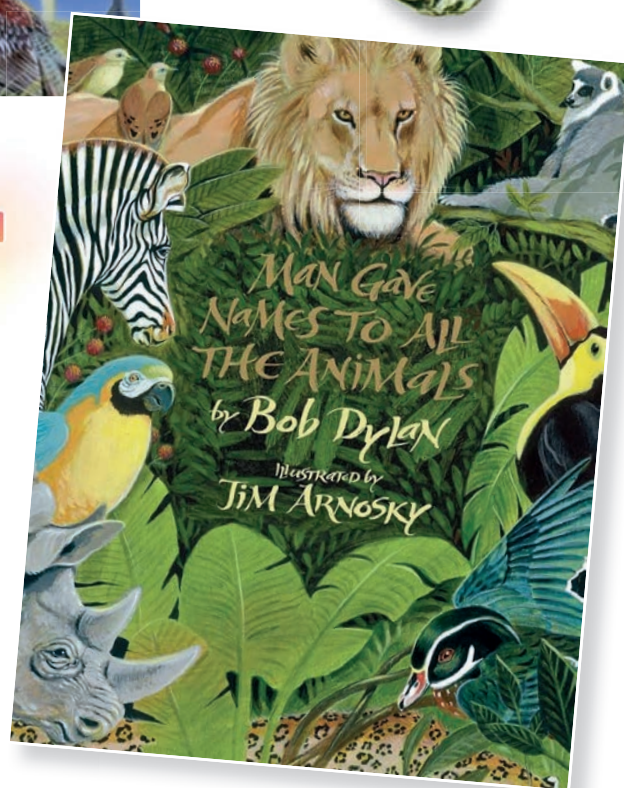
To mark **Global Intergenerational Week**, our residents took part in a truly special project that celebrated connection, creativity and shared storytelling.

**Global
Intergenerational
Week 2025**

Residents took turns reading Bob Dylan's 'Man Gave Names To All The Animals', each lending their own voice and personality to the poem. What began as a simple story reading quickly became a shared experience filled with smiles, laughter and thoughtful moments.

Organised by **Robert Speker**, our Group Engagement and Wellbeing Manager, the recordings were then edited into a video, capturing not just the words of the poem, but the warmth and individuality of each reader. The finished piece is a wonderful reminder of the power of storytelling to bring people together across generations.

Global Intergenerational Week is an annual campaign started by **Generations Working Together** that



highlights intergenerational practise and celebrates the value and power of intergenerational relationships.

Organisations across the UK take part in inspiring events, with a different theme each day.

It was a lovely way to mark the week and another example of how shared experiences continue to enrich life across our homes.

The Sole Question at Springview

Our annual **Fish & Chips Quiz Supper** proved once again to be a firm favourite at Springview, bringing residents, relatives and staff together for an evening of fun, friendly competition and very tasty food, all in aid of **RNLI Tower Bridge**.

The quiz, organised by **Kathy** and mastered by **Dominic**, was brilliantly challenging, sparking plenty of discussion, laughter and teamwork around the tables. Paired with classic fish and chips, it made for a relaxed and thoroughly enjoyable evening that everyone could take part in and appreciate. That said, there must always be a winner, and this year first Plaice, and the special Fish & Chips trophy, went to **Susan's Squad**.

A number of canine cheerleaders joined the evening and were handsomely rewarded with fish & chips portions 'saved for later', under the tables.

Thanks to the generosity of everyone involved, we're delighted to share that £780 was raised for this important charity. It was heart-warming to see such enthusiasm and support for a cause that means so much to so many.

Events like these reflect the strong sense of community across our homes, where coming together for a good cause is just as important as having fun along the way. We are already looking ahead to our **Summer Festival on 19th July**, where we hope to raise even more money for charity.



Chinese New Year Celebrations



Chinese New Year was a vibrant and much-anticipated celebration across all three of our homes, offering residents a wonderful opportunity to experience a rich and colourful culture that may have been new to many.



We were delighted to welcome the **Islington Chinese Association**, whose visit brought the celebration to life. Residents thoroughly enjoyed the traditional lion and dragon dances, as well as the impressive sword, fan and martial arts displays. The performances were both captivating and interactive, creating a lively atmosphere and sparking plenty of conversation and curiosity.



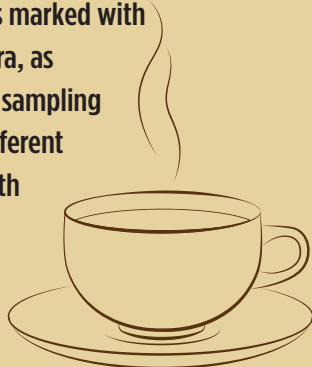
Alongside the entertainment, our wonderful catering teams prepared a delicious Chinese meal for residents to enjoy, adding another layer to the experience and giving everyone a chance to explore new flavours together. These shared moments around the table were just as meaningful as the performances themselves.



What made these events so special was the sense of discovery through celebration of an amazing culture in the most fun and enjoyable way possible, something that we aspire to achieve across our homes every day.

National Tea Day

National Tea Day is set to become a favourite in our homes, where tea is truly a daily staple. This year, the day was marked with a little something extra, as residents enjoyed tea sampling and learned about different varieties, bringing both comfort and curiosity to a well-loved tradition.



Creating homes for the future



Our programme of refurbishment continues to move forward at pace, with significant investment across our homes to ensure our environments remain welcoming, comfortable and fit for the future.

These improvements focus on creating beautiful, thoughtfully designed bedrooms, modern wet-rooms, and inviting communal spaces where people can relax and spend time together. Each development is carefully considered, balancing practicality with the warmth and familiarity that make our homes feel truly special.

We're particularly excited to be introducing new shared spaces at **Springview**, including a library and a cinema area, offering even more opportunities for residents to enjoy quiet moments, social activities and shared experiences.

As a family business, we see these investments as part of our long-term commitment to providing the very best environment for those in our care. It's about creating spaces that not only meet today's needs, but will continue to support future generations of residents.

We look forward to seeing these spaces come to life and be used and enjoyed by everyone.



A Musical Treat

We were delighted to welcome **Crescendo School of Music and Art**, who gave a wonderful performance for our residents. Their talent and enthusiasm created a warm and uplifting atmosphere, with music bringing everyone together. It was a lovely occasion, once again showcasing the benefits of intergenerational experiences, enjoyed by all throughout our homes.



Investing in a sustainable future at Springview

We're pleased to share that solar panels have recently been installed at **Springview**, marking an important step in our ongoing commitment to sustainability and responsible care.

Like many care providers, we've felt the impact of rising energy costs over the past few years, particularly due to the wider geopolitical events, of which we are all familiar. As a home that operates around the clock, energy use is a significant part of daily life, from keeping residents warm and comfortable to running essential services safely and reliably.

By investing in solar energy, we're taking a practical and forward-thinking approach to help offset these costs while also reducing our environmental impact. It's a positive step that supports both financial sustainability and our responsibility to future generations.

This project reflects our long-term commitment as a family business: making thoughtful decisions that protect the quality of care we provide, while adapting sensibly to the challenges around us.

We're proud of this development at Springview and will continue to look for ways to improve how we care for our residents, our homes, and the wider world around us. Let us hope for more sunny days to come!



Celebrating National Scrabble Day

For **National Scrabble Day**, residents came together to enjoy a friendly game or two, sharing smiles, laughter and a little healthy competition. The creativity didn't stop there as residents also designed their own words and names in decorative frames, creating personal keepsakes to be proudly displayed. Look out for them distributed around the homes when you come to visit!



Celebrating Special Days



St David's Day



St David's Day was a lovely celebration across our homes, with residents enjoying a taste of Wales through traditional food and drink. The day also included an informative session and music, creating a relaxed and engaging atmosphere that brought people together in celebration and shared experience.



International Women's Day

International Women's Day gave us a chance to recognise the extraordinary role women play in care, both as dedicated staff and as loving relatives. Their compassion, strength and quiet resilience support our residents every day. The day gave us a moment to reflect and say thank you for the care, time and kindness they give so generously.

St Patrick's Day Celebrations



St Patrick's Day was marked with wonderful celebrations across all three homes. We enjoyed lively performances from The Brooks Academy of Irish Dancing and Ella Brown, alongside a delicious Irish-themed meal prepared by our kitchens. With a touch of Guinness and plenty of smiles, it was a truly joyful day for all.

