

A Life Shared



**Working with our
contractors to
improve repairs
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Welcome to the A Life Shared

A Life Shared is about the everyday experiences, conversations, and moments that shape life across Abbeyfield. It's a space to share what's happening in our homes, to reflect on what matters to residents, and to recognise the many ways people contribute to their community. Across Abbeyfield, residents get involved in different ways. Some enjoy taking part in conversations online, others prefer face-to-face discussions in their own home, and many simply value the shared moments that come from living alongside others. There isn't one right way to be involved - what matters is that people feel listened to and respected. In this edition, you'll read about Open House events, where residents and colleagues sit down together for honest, in-person conversations; a resident-led workshop at Hampton House that focused on living well together; and everyday moments of community life. You'll also find practical information and updates that we know are important to residents. Whether you like to take an active role or simply enjoy reading about what's happening elsewhere, we hope this magazine feels relevant, welcoming, and reflective of life across Abbeyfield.

If you'd like to find out about the ways to get involved, you can contact the Resident Engagement team at **resident.engagement@abbeyfield.com**. Whether you want to be actively involved or simply have something you'd like to share, we're always happy to hear from residents.

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Meet Lorna Smith - Head of Housing and Care Operations

My name is Lorna Smith, and I'm pleased to introduce myself as the Head of Care & Housing Operations. I'm delighted to be part of the Abbeyfield community.



My role is to support our care homes and housing services to ensure they are safe, welcoming places where residents feel listened to, and well cared for. I work closely with local staff teams to maintain high standards, strong leadership, and a positive, homely environment. I have worked in care for many years and am passionate about kindness, dignity, and respect. Listening to residents and families is central to how we continue to improve.

Repairs: what to expect - and how we're improving things

Repairs are one of the things residents talk to us about most. When something isn't working in your home, you want to know two things: how quickly it will be dealt with, and what's happening behind the scenes to make sure it's done properly.

Over the past year, Abbeyfield has been working to make repairs clearer, more consistent, and better supported by the contractors we work with. This page explains what you can expect - and what we're doing to keep improving.

How repairs are prioritised

Not all repairs are the same, and some need to be dealt with much more quickly than others. To make sure we respond fairly and safely, repairs are grouped into clear categories:

Emergency repairs: These are issues that pose an immediate risk to safety or the building — for example, a total loss of heating or power, a serious leak, lift entrapment, or a fire alarm activation. Emergency repairs are responded to the same day or within 24 hours, depending on the issue.

Urgent repairs: These are problems that don't pose an immediate danger but could cause serious inconvenience or damage if left, such as partial loss of heating or hot water, blocked waste pipes, or minor roof leaks. Urgent repairs are usually completed within 7 days.

Routine repairs: These are everyday repairs that don't involve an immediate risk - for example, a leaking tap, damaged kitchen unit, or replacement appliance. Routine repairs are normally completed within 20 days.

Follow-up visits: Sometimes a contractor can make something safe straight away but needs to return with parts or specialist equipment. These follow-up visits are usually completed within 10 days.

We know waiting can be frustrating, and we'll always aim to keep you informed - especially if something changes or takes longer than expected.

Behind the scenes:

Alongside clearer repair timelines, Abbeyfield also works closely with its repair contractors to raise standards. In November, our main contractors came together for a dedicated forum focused on safety, communication, and putting residents first. Contractors heard directly about Abbeyfield's expectations when working in residents' homes - including clear communication, respectful behaviour, and minimising disruption wherever possible. Senior colleagues and trustees also attended, reinforcing the importance of resident experience.

This work helps ensure repairs are not only completed on time, but carried out with care, consistency, and respect.

Open House Events

Open House Events are a chance for residents and Abbeyfield colleagues to sit down together and have open, honest conversations about what life is like in our homes. They are informal, relaxed sessions, not presentations, not meetings with agendas, but opportunities to listen, share experiences, and talk things through face-to-face.

Alongside Open House Events, Abbeyfield has an established Resident Panel which meets regularly online and plays an important role in helping to shape work across the organisation. The Panel brings together residents from different homes and provides space for more in-depth discussion, without the need to travel. It has been working well and continues to be a key part of how residents are involved.

However, we also know that not everyone wants to take part online, and some residents prefer to talk things through in person, in their own home. Open House Events were introduced to complement the work of the Resident Panel - helping us hear from a wider range of residents in ways that feel comfortable and accessible to them.

One of our most recent Open House Events took place at Ing Royde in November. Around a dozen residents joined the conversation, and the atmosphere was open, thoughtful, and honest. Residents spoke about a range of topics, including the food



Residents from Ing Royde taking part in Open House

service, communication, and resident meetings. These conversations weren't about finding quick fixes on the day, but about sharing experiences and helping us better understand what matters most to residents.

What residents tell us at Open House Events is taken away and considered alongside other feedback we receive, including through the Resident Panel, surveys, and day-to-day conversations. Together, this helps build a clearer picture of what's working well and where we need to focus our attention.

Open House Events will continue across Abbeyfield, with a small number planned each year. If you would be interested in an Open House Event at your home, you can email **resident.engagement@abbeyfield.com** to make an enquiry. While we may not be able to offer an event at every home, we welcome hearing where there is interest.

By combining the ongoing work of the Resident Panel with face-to-face Open House Events, we aim to make sure residents can share their views in ways that suit them - whether that's online or around a table in their own home.

Hampton House: creating a shared promise together

In December, residents at Hampton House took part in a workshop focused on something simple but important: how people want to live together, day to day, in a shared home.

The session was developed in response to a recognised need to strengthen respectful communication, kindness, and community cohesion. Rather than taking a policy-led approach, residents were invited into a relaxed, discussion-based session that explored everyday behaviours, language, and neighbourly relationships.

Through open conversation and light-touch activities, residents reflected on what “living well together” means in practice. The final part of the session brought these ideas together, with residents co-creating a short, values-based statement, the Hampton House Promise, capturing how they want to treat each other, staff, and carers within their home. The wording of the Promise came directly from residents.

It reflects the voice and context of Hampton House and is now displayed in the home as a shared reference point for respect, kindness, and mutual support. What made this work was its local, resident-led approach. The Promise belongs to Hampton House, shaped by the people who live there.

While the Promise itself is unique, the process behind it (bringing residents together to talk openly and agree shared values) may be something other homes would like to explore in their own way.



Residents from Hampton House

This kind of session could sit alongside Open House Events, offering another face-to-face opportunity for residents to shape the culture of their home. If you think something like this could be helpful where you live, why not contact Resident Engagement to start a conversation.

Email resident.engagement@abbeyfield.com to find out more information.

A grand family:

Intergenerational playgroup at Halcyon House

Every week, Halcyon House in Formby welcomes a group of nursery school children into the home, creating a space where different generations can spend time together. The intergenerational playgroup has been running for over a year, after the nursery contacted Activities Coordinator Helena Bradshaw to ask whether the children could visit. What began as a simple idea quickly became something much more.

"The residents were probably more excited than the children at first," Helena says. "Some of the children were a little nervous, but we put out books and toys, and before long they were reading or playing one-to-one with residents." That first visit was so successful that the playgroup has now become a regular part of life at Halcyon House.



Residents and local children enjoying the event together

Every Thursday, residents and children spend an hour together, with activities ranging from Lego and colouring to baking and arts and crafts. Sessions are often themed around national awareness days, giving residents and children the chance to learn from each other. Over time, familiar faces and routines have helped friendships grow.

"Each child tends to gravitate towards the same resident each week," Helena explains, "and they'll often sit together for whatever activity is happening that day."

The children also bring parts of their school life into the home, sharing what they're learning and making seasonal gifts for residents, such as Christmas decorations for their rooms. Birthdays are celebrated together, with homemade cards exchanged, and the children recently joined residents for a Christmas party filled with food and carol singing.

"They call the residents their '**grand-family**'," Helena says, "and it really does feel like a grandparent-grandchild relationship."

For some residents, the weekly visits bring a welcome sense of connection and continuity. For some of the children, it's a chance to build relationships they may not have elsewhere. "Some of our residents don't receive regular family visits, and some of the children don't have grandparents," Helena adds. "Being able to fill that gap, even in a small way, is really important." The Thursday sessions have become something everyone looks forward to, bringing energy, laughter, and shared moments into the home.

"It's lovely to see the smiles on both the children's and residents' faces," Helena says. "Those afternoons bring a lot of joy to everyone involved."

Celebrating 70 years of Abbeyfield

As you may be aware, 2026 marks a very special milestone - 70 years since Abbeyfield was founded.

Abbeyfield's journey over the past seven decades has been shaped by the people at the heart of our communities. Throughout this anniversary year, we'll be sharing stories, memories and moments, and we'd love you to be part of celebrating our past, present and future.



To help capture these memories, we've created a virtual Story Wall, where everyone is welcome to contribute and help tell the story of Abbeyfield's impact over the last 70 years. You can add your contribution here:

<https://padlet.com/Abbeyfield/70thStoryWall>

There will also be a variety of fun activities and friendly competitions taking place throughout the year. More details will be shared by your house and home managers as plans develop.

This celebration is for us all, so please do feel free to suggest any ideas or ways you'd like to celebrate Abbeyfield's 70th anniversary.

Thank you for being part of the Abbeyfield story 💙

Christmas Cheer at Westall House

In the lead-up to Christmas, residents at Westall House received a lovely surprise when pupils from Meads Primary School delivered handmade Christmas cards to the home.

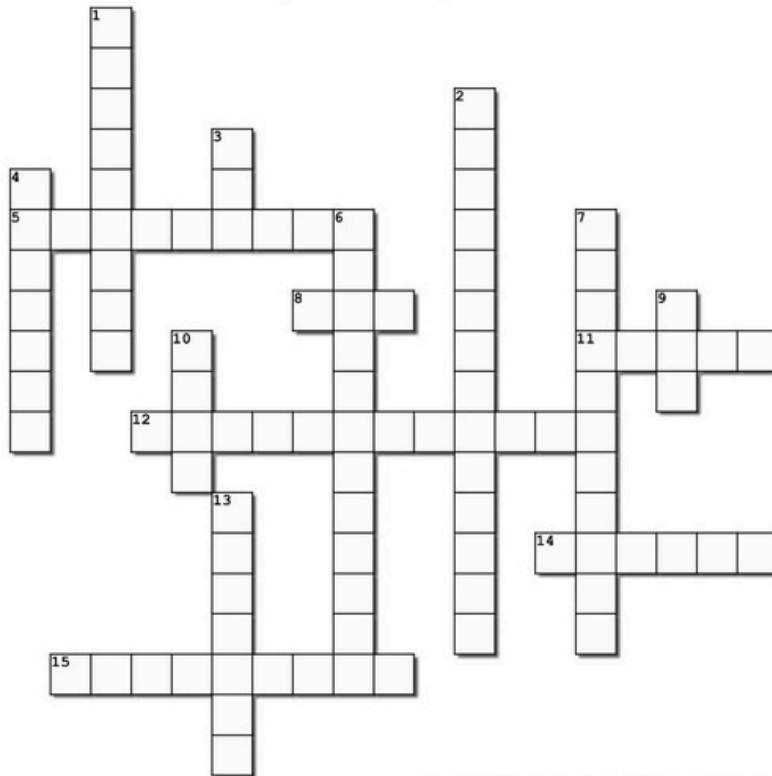
The children took the time to make and hand-deliver the cards, and the gesture was warmly received by residents. As the photos show, these small, thoughtful moments can mean a great deal.

A handwritten card, a few kind words, and a shared smile - simple acts of kindness that reflect the sense of community at the heart of Abbeyfield.



Puzzle Page

Winter Crossword



Answers
Across
1 Snow
3 Ice Rink
7 Yesterday
8 Dog Sledding
9 Hat
10 Hot chocolate
11 Snowboarding
12 Cat
14 Christmas
Down
2 Winter solstice
4 Tempest
5 Hedgehogs
6 Dog
13 Winter
15 Scarf

Across

5. Traditional holiday in late December
8. Common term for a canine
11. Keeps you neck warm in the cold
12. This drink is often enjoyed warm in the winter
14. Cold season often associated with snow
15. Animal that hibernates in the winter

Down

1. The day before today
2. Event on the 21st of December in the Northern Hemisphere
3. Common term for a feline
4. A frozen body of water used for skating
6. Popular winter sport using a board and slopes
7. A popular winter activity that involves traveling on snow with dogs
9. Winter clothing item worn on the head
10. White, frozen precipitation that falls in winter
13. A violent, windy storm

Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

Abbeyfield Word Search



CELEBRATE
HOUSING
WARMTH
SHARED
TRUST
INCLUSION
COMMUNITY
COMPASSION
BELONGING
DIGNITY
CARE
TOGETHER
RESPECT
ABBEEFIELD
FRIENDSHIP
KINDNESS