

“WE HAD looked at quite a few care homes for our then 96-year-old mother. She was increasingly struggling with living at home and we were very pleased to have found Spring Grove,” writes family member Jeremy Bilder, among a number of lovely tributes we have received recently.

He goes on: “The warm atmosphere was immediately apparent, with cheerful, friendly carers and staff. The smiles and laughter from the residents being entertained in the main lounge added to that feel and we were most impressed with the thought and care taken to provide a daily schedule of activities and entertainment. A copy of the schedule is also emailed each week to relatives, together with a really good, creative and amusing newsletter highlighting the past week’s events.

“The happy environment has been there each of our many visits since our mother moved to Spring Grove. In those two years, she has repeatedly told the family how content she is there, and she is always full of praise for the lovely staff. It is so nice to so often see her and the carers pulling each other’s legs and enjoying a laugh and joke together!”

Thank you, Jeremy, for your kind comments, and we are happy to report that soon we will have more communication channels open so that we can interact even better with our families and prospective new residents. First of all, we are revamping our website with a more modern look and exciting new graphics and pictures.

The website, which we aim to launch at the end of next month, will incorporate video and contain useful information such as activities planners and copies of this newsletter. We are planning to undertake the photography in the first week of September, so photographers will be out and about in the homes, working to capture images of them at their best.

We are also launching Instagram and Twitter accounts – all the better to bring you the latest news and pictures from the homes. Our Facebook page is also flourishing, with lots of pictures and news about Springdene. All these social media channels are essential tools in the armoury of modern communications, and are crucial to spreading the news about the work of Springdene Care Homes.

Our Facebook page can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/Springdene> Please give it a “like” when you have read it. Meanwhile our Twitter and Instagram feeds can be found at @SpringdeneCare and <http://instagam.com/springdenecare> respectively.

We’re delighted to report that our homes continue to be free from cases of Covid-19, thanks to the hard work put in by our staff in infection control, as well as rigorous and regular testing of everyone. Meanwhile, there is a major new development affecting our staff.

The government have decreed that from the autumn, all care home workers must be vaccinated. The new legislation means from November 11 anyone working in a CQC-registered care home in England for residents requiring nursing or personal care must have two doses of a Covid-19 vaccine unless they have a valid medical exemption.

It will apply to all workers employed directly by the care home or care home provider (on a full-time or part-time basis), those employed by an agency and deployed by the care home, and volunteers coming into the care home.

Those entering care homes to do other work, for example healthcare workers, tradespeople, hairdressers and beauticians, and CQC inspectors will also have to follow the new regulations, unless they have a medical exemption.

We’re pleased to say that some 90 per cent of staff have been double jabbed, but there are some who have yet to make their appointments. We’re very much hoping that they will go ahead and stay on board with us.

While we’re all a bit disappointed by the grey August weather, folk have been able to get out to enjoy Stacey-Louise’s beautifully landscaped gardens, exquisite with colour and fragrance. And a huge amount of fun was had by all with the Springdene Olympics – next best to the real thing, everyone agreed.

Folk made their own Olympic torches out of coloured paper, and you’d be amazed at how competitive Team Springdene were, with wheelchair races,

walker races and Zimmer-frame races. The shotput produced some impressive results and the medals (below) were well-deserved. Eirlys is putting the final touches to a video of the events, which we'll post on our Facebook page and on YouTube when it is done.



Cookery has been on the menu, too. For Afternoon Tea Week last week, Steve at Springview led a group baking some delicious scones, while Magda at Spring Lane laid on a delightful spread in the high dependency unit. There was a splendid repast to coincide with Christine Moir's 75th birthday at Spring Grove.

Fans of Indian food got a treat when our chefs rustled up a special meal for Indian Independence Day last Sunday. Mulligatawny soup with samosas was on the menu for starters, followed by Butter Chicken Curry with pilau rice. The meal was polished off authentically with some sweet and delicious Gulab Jamun. Namaste!

We've also been celebrating our lovely residents of the week who are presented with flowers and chocolates as well as being generally pampered. Lilli Segel at Spring Lane is one of the newest additions to the family. She has a rich and incredibly interesting history. She grew up in Berlin and in 1939 at the age of 17

went to Llandudno as a refugee from Nazi Germany, where she worked in a hotel as a general “dogsbody”.

She is a big fan of exercise, attending yoga and Pilates classes for many years and loves music and theatre. She worked for the National Theatre and even very recently was still teaching theatre studies to adult students at the University of London. She likes small, healthy meals and hasn't requested anything special as a treat, but really likes very hot coffee in the morning and tea in the afternoon, so we'll make sure she has it!

At Spring Grove, Ian Willison CBE is another fascinating man, highly intelligent and loves to assist us in performing for most projects we ask him to participate in. Ian was the former head of rare books at the British Library and has led an incredibly interesting life, having been honoured by the Queen – something he is immensely proud of. He likes a Scotch and soda so we'll treat him to that, and has asked for a medium cooked steak with mashed potatoes and lots of red cabbage!

Joan Barnett at Springview is another recent addition to the Springdene family. She likes her own space, but is very keen on doing regular exercise with us in the mornings and walking regularly to keep her legs working. She used to love to travel and went on many trips to Australia and America when she was younger.

Joan worked for National Children's Homes, which she thoroughly enjoyed because the charity's mission was wonderful, and she felt she was helping children. She also worked in a solicitor's office for a long time. Joan has requested some Chinese food for a special meal and a Coca Cola. Well done to all these distinguished folk!

One of the special features of life at Springdene is our **Relatives Support Group**, which is made up of relatives, friends and professionals who have a common purpose – to support one another in their journey through the life-changing process of entering a care home. This applies to both the person joining the home and those nearest to them.

We appreciate just how difficult it is to make the decision to place someone into residential care. We also recognise that it is often more distressing for the relatives and friends than for the person being “re-homed”.

The group is open to anyone who currently has a relative or friend in any of the Springdene Group's homes or has previously had a relative or friend in the

homes. We can also help those wrestling with the decision to place a relative or friend in a home.

The group, which meets on Thursday evenings every four weeks, is professionally facilitated by an experienced dementia specialist nurse. In earlier, non-Covid times, the group would convene face-to-face at Spring Lane over tea and cake but now we meet virtually. We discuss difficulties being faced, hear how others have dealt with similar situations and tap into the experts' opinions on how best to manage issues that are raised. If you would like to join us, then call us at Spring Lane on 020 8815 2000. Meetings are confidential and there is no charge for attending.

If you can't make up your mind, then listen to this endorsement from our company HR Director Adrienne Rosen: "I found moving my father into a retirement home was a very difficult decision. The support group showed me I was not alone. Subsequently, the group has helped me adjust. It is a place where I can be open and where we can laugh and cry. And the tea and cake [in normal times] are delicious!"

Lastly, we hope you will dig deep for our forthcoming raffle to support our new sponsored charity Sepsis UK, which raises money for research into this devastating condition which kills people needlessly. We have some splendid hampers (see below) to be won. Please contact tfazekas@springdene.co.uk if you would like to give. Thanks so much!

