

Autumn 2011



# The Willowbrook. Community Newsletter



## Lancashire carers who go the extra mile



*Pampering and partying...*

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*104 years young!*

*Page 6*



*Award win is 'stunning'*

*Page 2*



## Welcome to the Autumn edition of the Willowbrook community newsletter.

As you will see it has been an eventful few months for all of us, and that looks set to continue.

In recent weeks, I've had the chance to chat to a few of you, and I know that you enjoy finding out what we've been up to, and possibly catching a glimpse of yourself within these pages.

We are always looking for volunteers to get involved and give us a little insight into their lives – so if you have something to share, let us know.

Can I also take this chance to thank our fantastic team of carers and office-based staff for the superb level of support and dedication they have shown to Willowbrook and our customers.

*Elaine*

*It's the little things...*

I really enjoy seeing my regulars Tracy and Nicola. They're brilliant.

Mr Cougill

## Elaine's awesome award win

In a glittering ceremony held at Blackpool's Tower Ballroom, the Be Inspired Business Awards (BIBAs) honoured our managing director Elaine Brady with the 'Businesswoman of the Year' accolade.

There was stiff competition for the award, but the judges felt Elaine was all that a woman in business should be and more.

"I was utterly stunned and in shock when they announced my name. All the team were cheering and clapping around me but I couldn't move.



"It is absolutely unbelievable. I have put everything I have into creating a business I can be proud of. All Willowbrook's employees want to do the best for our customers, and to be recognised for that is very humbling," said Elaine.

## » Milena's charity efforts

**One of our Hyndburn carers has been treading the pavements, raising oodles of cash for MacMillan.**

Milena Smith, who is a keen runner, was sponsored £150 by friends, family and colleagues to complete a 5km run. Not only that, but she also beat her personal best with a time of just under 30 minutes.



## » Thrill-seeking Andy

**Andy Johnson, a 38-year-old carer from Hyndburn, bungee-jumped his way to raising £80 for Royal Blackburn Hospital's Intensive Care Unit.**

He enjoyed the first 147ft jump so much, he went back for another go, and completed a mid-air somersault in the process. What's next Andy? A parachute jump?

## Carers gain exclusive accreditation

**Willowbrook has put a team of carers through a unique course provided by MacMillan.**

They have successfully completed the cancer charity's palliative care programme which not only deals with caring for end-of-life patients, but also covers bereavement and supporting the patient's family.

Theresa Swan, our training and development manager, said: "There is a growing demand for this service, but very few carers in the country hold this level of qualification.

"We want Willowbrook to be seen as the most dedicated and comprehensive of care providers, so it was important that we undertook the Macmillan training."



## Have a bonza time Alicia!

**It was with great sadness that we bid a fond farewell to Alicia Walker at the end of September after almost 10 years of loyal service to Willowbrook.**

Alicia joined the Company in 2002 as a Care Worker. Her skills and talents were obvious from the beginning and she was promoted first to Supervisor, moving quickly to more senior positions.

Alicia eventually became a Registered Manager and held key positions of management, culminating in her launching a new Branch of Willowbrook in Fylde and Wyre and setting up the beginnings of a new service for elderly people in the community.

After much reflection, Alicia and her husband Ian decided to take the enormous step of emigration to Australia, where Alicia already has family.

We wish her all the very best for the future and every happiness down under!



*It's the little things...*

The day café is a brilliant idea. Mum always remembers her bingo pen!

*Mr Rigby*



## Carer of the quarter

Having worked with Willowbrook for almost two years, Vicky O'Brien has been named 'Carer of the quarter' for the dedication and respect she shows to her customers.

She is generous in helping people outside her working hours, and has been incredibly helpful to one customer in particular.

"I just try and do my best by all my customers, but it really is great to be recognised for it," said Vicky.

Much deserved Vicky!

# » Cakes, crafts and lots of chats:

## Willowbrook's Day Café

Our customers have been forging new friendships, sharing stories and generally having a whale of a time at our newly launched day cafés. Following a successful stint at Oswaldtwistle Mills, the cafés are now held every Friday afternoon at Willowbrook's office in Oswaldtwistle.

Elaine Brady, managing director of Willowbrook Home Care said: "We wanted to help our customers and other elderly people experience the community spirit they were so used to earlier in their lives. Some find it incredibly difficult to leave their home, which makes socialising and enjoying the company of others almost impossible.

"Everyone who has attended has said how much they had enjoyed getting to know each other. It's become a highlight of the week, and we very much enjoy holding the sessions at our office!"

There are a whole host of activities on offer including board games, crafts, colouring, pampering treatments and even the chance to get to grips with a hi-tech Wii console.

But what seems to be proving most popular are the home made cakes and scones. Very tasty indeed!



Alan Drew, 64, said:

*"It's great to have somewhere to go and have a bit of fun. The Wii was a new experience and you can't say no to the cakes."*



### Some of the attendees at a recent session created this poem:

Friday afternoon used to be so sad and blue,  
 Until I came to Willowbrook and there met  
 all of you!  
 Dominoes and scones, carrot cake and tea,  
 Come along on Fridays and then you will see -  
 Lots of chats and sing-alongs, tonnes of  
 creative fun,  
 A hand massage, a pampered hour and lovely  
 nails all done!

By Ethel, Margaret L, Dorothy, Norman, Alice B,  
 Joan, Alice T and Margaret C.

Anne McManus, 82, said:

*"I met a lot of lovely people and had my nails done. The cakes were beautiful, and it's been a while since I played dominoes so I really enjoyed that."*



## In the papers...

You may have spotted Willowbrook appearing in your local newspaper recently. The whole world seems to want to know what we, and you, have been up to. It's great to see the work we do being recognised by the press. Keep your eyes out for more mentions of Willowbrook soon...



# Ho! Ho! Ho!

## It's our Christmas do...

Save the date: 10th December – as that will be when we all have a merry time at the Willowbrook staff Christmas party. It'll be held at Enfield Cricket Club on Dill Hall Lane in Accrington, from 7.30pm onwards.

We will celebrate carer's achievements throughout the year, and there will be a lovely buffet for everyone to tuck in to. Well, we may as well start the festive season as we mean to go on...

We'll also be holding a Christmas party for all our customers on December the 9th at our head offices in Oswaldtwistle – if you wish to attend, ask your carer.



## Carers! Sign up now for next year's training

At Willowbrook, we always want to encourage our staff to gain new skills that will help them to offer the best care possible. Our training schedule for next year has now been finalised by Theresa Swan, our training and development manager. If you see a course that you feel you, and your customers, could benefit from – speak to your supervisor or contact head office to book on. Look forward to seeing you there.

### Training Schedule 2012

#### January

12th Dementia care  
19th & 26th MacMillan palliative

#### February

2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd MacMillan palliative

#### March

8th, 15th Common induction standards  
22nd Dementia care – implementing strategy

#### April

5th Catheter and stoma care  
12th Medication, nutrition and swallowing difficulties  
19th Diabetes and epilepsy

#### May

3rd, Customer service training - going the extra mile  
10th, 17th, 24th MacMillan palliative

#### June

14th, 21st, 28th MacMillan palliative

#### September

13th, 20th Common induction standards

#### October

11th Dementia care - implementing strategy  
25th Medication, nutrition and swallowing difficulties

#### November

8th Catheter and stoma care  
15th Diabetes and epilepsy

#### December

6th Dementia care

## Jayne's Autumn Advice

As the days darken earlier, and winter weather approaches, our General Manager Jayne Brooks rounds-up her best bits of awesome advice for carers and customers alike.

This time of the year is always a concern for our customers, because weather conditions are temperamental to say the least, fuel bills tend to increase and they find it harder to get out and about. Our carers do a great job in keeping customers safe, warm and healthy through the colder and darker months, but hopefully these small snippets of advice will ensure we are doing all we can.



### Carers:

- Read through the Winter car checklist – it'll keep you on the road.
- For carers that use public transport to get to customers, Travelwise gives up-to-date information on what services are running on 0871 200 22 33. And for those that walk, wrap up warm and wear your wellies!
- A handy torch can be a lifesaver – and there's less need to eat a lot of carrots so you can see in the dark!
- When you reach the customer, do make sure they are comfortable, and if it is icy outside their front door, consider salting a path for them.

### Customers:

- Keep your radiators on low to prevent pipes freezing.
- Wrap up well and keep warm. You can always ask your carer to fill a flask with a warm drink or some soup.
- Keep all doors and windows closed to keep heat in.
- Ask your carer to leave you some snacks, it'll be their pleasure!
- Give your carer time just in case the weather is bad, but don't hesitate to ring us for advice if you are concerned.

*It's the little things...*

You do a great job on checking on mum.  
Thank goodness we have caring people like you.

*Yvonne Parkinson*

## Winter car checklist

- Add **anti-freeze** to your radiator. Your manual will usually tell you what type to use.
- Replace damaged **wiper blades**, front and rear.
- Top up your windscreen washer reservoir with anti-freeze **screen wash**.
- Let your car run at the beginning and end of a journey for a while, to ensure a healthy **battery**.
- Check your **tyres** - a tread depth of at least 2mm is essential in poor weather conditions.
- Check your **lights** are all working and flashing as they should
- Make sure that your **brakes** are working properly. Look for rust, listen for squeaks and, if in doubt, take it to a garage.
- Check your car's **oil level** frequently in the winter and top it up whenever necessary to avoid damage.



## Amazing Alice: She's a wonderwoman!

**Aged 104, Alice Horn has seen more than her fair share of excitement and achievements during her life time.**

The Willowbrook customer is renowned in her home town of Oswaldtwistle, and many want to know the wonderwoman's secret to a long and happy life.

"I've been really active all my life. Even when I became wheelchair bound at 50 years of age, I still kept up with my sport because I loved it," said Alice.

Born in Alloa, Scotland, Alice was struck down with polio at the age of three. Throughout her life she has racked up a whole host of sporting medals in a huge variety of sports, from javelin, to bowls, to swimming.

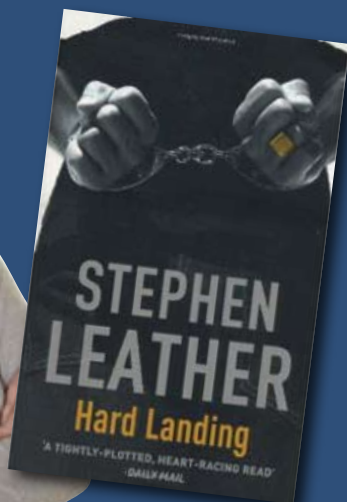


Alice has also spent much of her later life raising money for the charities she has taken to her heart, including the Blind Society. This dedication to causes and her incredible story also led to Alice being named as an Honorary Freeman of the Borough of Hyndburn by the council.

## BOOK REVIEW

**Lindsey Dean, our finance manager, is the definition of a book worm in her spare time, reading hundreds of books in her time. Here she gives her verdict on the Stephen Leather thriller 'Hard Landing'.**

"I usually love any book with mystery, crime or murder in it, but this had me hooked right from the start. The story centres around a drugs baron who is held in a top security prison. The big twist comes somewhere in the middle of the book, but I don't want to give it away. Safe to say – not everyone is as they may first appear! I'd certainly recommend the book – it's un-put-downable."



## FILM REVIEW

**Kirk House resident Bill Stollin takes us through his favourite film of all time; the 1952 John Wayne classic 'The Quiet Man'.**

"This is such an epic romantic comedy, and takes me back to my more youthful days. I am a fan of a lot of John Wayne's films, but this one is definitely my favourite. I really enjoy the fist fight between John Wayne and his love interests brother. It is quite a funny moment in the film. I'd recommend this film for anyone who enjoys watching movies, because it is a classic."

# TOP TIPS...

## ...ON SAVING MONEY AND KEEPING WARM!

**Making your money go further is something everyone looks to do - but with the rising cost of the food shop, fuel bills and other necessities when budgets are already extremely tight for the elderly in particular, we wanted to offer some ideas on cuttings costs.**

### Discounts

We're all aware of the free bus travel scheme offered to senior citizens by the Department of Transport, but a variety of shops, cafes and attractions offer similar discount schemes that are well worth making use of. Just asking the question "do you offer a discount to senior citizens at all?" could save you a considerable sum.

### Check charges

If you receive lots of bills through the post and aren't sure what you are being charged for, ask the company to explain, or indeed, get a family member to double-check you are getting exactly what you are paying for. Often, companies may presume your situation, when actually informing them of the reality may see your bills slashed.

### Shop on a full stomach

We are all partial to a treat or two, and you should certainly enjoy the finer things in life as often as your wallet or purse will allow, but if we're hungry when we do the weekly food shop, we will buy more! So have a good meal beforehand, and you will buy what you need, not what you want - which will save money for the treats you really want!

With some of you facing up to £100 less from the government to help with fuel bills following the last Budget, here's some advice on how to conserve heat in your home and save - with the added benefit of you having to wear fewer layers.

### Set the right temperature

Turning your thermostat down by just one degree can save you 6% on your heating bills - around £30 a year. You might not even notice the difference, but your bank balance will!

### Keep fit and healthy

Luckily, we've got some tips on the next page on nutrition, which will also help you fight those pesky winter flu and cold bugs. If you can get out and about, or even do a little bit of housework, it'll help you keep warmer than sitting still for long periods of time. But if you do feel like getting energetic, make sure you don't strain or injure yourself.

### Wrap up at night

Many people forget the importance of keeping warm in bed. You don't need to keep your heating on all night though. Just set it to come on about half an hour before you get up, and wear bedclothes and woolly socks. You could also use a hot water bottle!

### Keep windows closed and curtains drawn

With many radiators placed right underneath windows, if your heating is on and your windows open, you're using fuel without getting any benefit. Stop the heat escaping!

And of course, speak to your carer if you are feeling cold or need some help with putting the above advice into practice. We'll always help in any way we can!



## » WIN! A £50 grocery shopping trip!

The winner of this edition's competition will be treated to a £50 shopping trip to their favourite grocery store - allowing you to get your weekly essentials shop, all on us! Maybe you can get yourself a little treat on top too...

Here's the question:

**Which acting legend starred in the 1952 film 'The Quiet Man'?** (Tip: The answer is on page 6)

Answer: .....

Name: ..... Contact: .....

Send your entry to: Willowbrook Homecare, 188-190 Union Road, Oswaldtwistle, Lancashire, BB1 5EG.

### Our Summer edition winners...



...were Mr and Mrs Trickett of Aspen Lane, Oswaldtwistle. Congratulations! We hope you enjoyed your hamper.



## Our maintenance team hits the road!



If you have seen a Willowbrook branded van out and about lately, we will probably have been on the way to help our customers with the little household duties they can't quite manage without a bit of a helping hand.

They will help with everything from changing a light bulb to putting up a curtain pole. If you have any problems with your electricity and plumbing, or troublesome structural issues, Willowbrook will use their links with local tradesmen to get the best quote from a reliable source. On-going work, such as routine gardening, can also be completed by the maintenance team at a very competitive rate. Please don't hesitate to call head office on 01254 390 347 if there is ever anything we can do.

# Willowbrook's web wonders...

Our new website is proving a real hit, and we are always looking to bring new and exciting dimensions to it. If you've got access to a computer don't forget to keep checking our news and blogs section to get all the latest goings on.

Our latest addition is a fantastic little video, depicting a day in the life of one of our carers. Linda Fisher did a great job letting people see what we get up to on a daily basis and the customers that took part were all absolute stars too. To see the video go to: [www.willowbrookhomecare.com](http://www.willowbrookhomecare.com) and click on the news tab at the top of the page.



## Shirley's take on a hearty cabbage bake

Our Client and Staff Coordinator Shirley Moyce has offered up her favourite recipe for this newsletter edition. She says: *"This dish goes down great with my grandchildren as it is a good way for them to eat veg and enjoy them, I have been making it for years – it's really simple!"*

### Ingredients:

Cabbage/Spring Green Leaves  
Smokey Bacon  
Leak  
Mushrooms  
Mixed Peppers (optional)  
Sliced Potato (optional)  
Cheese Sauce (packet mix)  
Grated Cheese  
Plain Crisps

Part boil cabbage and sliced potato, drain well. Cook bacon and cut into small pieces. Lightly fry leaks, mushrooms and peppers in a little butter and drain well.

Make the cheese sauce, crush the crisps and mix with the grated cheese (this will be for the topping).

In an oven proof dish, grease the bottom and sides.

Layer the cabbage, bacon, leaks and mushrooms, then add the potato with a little cheese sauce after each layer.

Finish with potato on top with the remaining cheese sauce, cover with grated cheese and crisps.

Put on the middle shelf at 180° for about 15 minutes. Finish off under the grill until crisp and brown.

Serve with crusty or garlic bread.

'You can add as much or as little as you like, taste as good served the next day or you can freeze for a later date.

**If you have any suggestions for the next issue, or anything you want to know more about do let us know. Call us on 01254 390347 or speak to your carer. We'll look forward to hearing from you!**

