

# NEWTON HERALD



## REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR HELPS CHARITY SPREAD CHRISTMAS CHEER

**We gave back to the community via East Renfrewshire Good Causes.**

Residents and staff did their bit to ensure local people didn't go hungry this Christmas – by making a reverse advent calendar donation to a nearby food bank.

An empty hamper was set up next to the Newton House Christmas tree where people could leave food items and products for the charity drive.

As well as our generous residents and staff, relatives and other visitors were also invited to add to the collection before we donated it to charity East Renfrewshire Good Causes ahead of the festive celebrations.

"We're lucky to be part of a wonderful community here in East Renfrewshire, and we wanted to give something back," says David Holbrook, our Community Relations Lead. "Christmas is a time to count your blessings and to do something to help those less fortunate than yourself. It was great to have a practical charity initiative that everybody could get behind."

The concept of the reverse advent calendar is simple but effective. You donate one item each day instead of receiving a gift or sweet yourself.

We began the charity drive on Wednesday 20th November to ensure we could get the 24 days of donations to the food bank ahead of Christmas Day.

We were delighted to be able to hand over many more than 24 items to the food bank, thanks to the support of residents, staff and visitors.

"It's heartbreaking to think of people having no Christmas dinner to look forward to or struggling to feed themselves when it's so cold outside," says resident Doreen Martin. "Christmas is a time when you should look at how you can help others. It was wonderful to discover that we could do something practical and effective for local people going through tough times."

East Renfrewshire Good Causes is a charity set up by Newton Mearns local Russell Macmillan and donates gift bundles to people in need in the area at their store.

If you'd like to learn more, head over to [www.ergoodcauses.co.uk](http://www.ergoodcauses.co.uk).



## "NEW PARTNERSHIPS MAKING NEW FRIENDS ACROSS THE GENERATIONS"

**Home Manager Helen Hendrie  
looks forward to a busy year ahead.**

Happy New Year! I hope the start of 2020 is full of positivity for you. At Newton House, we're channelling all the new decade excitement into planning for the next few months ahead.

It might be cold and dark in January, but from the heart of our cosy home, my brilliant team are planting the seeds of the plans that will blossom later in the year.

We're setting up exciting new partnerships with charities and local groups, making new friends across the generations and thinking about creative ways to make the most of our outdoor space.

Let's just say our residents are going to have busier social lives in 2020 than their teenage relatives!

It's heart-warming for me to see how much visitors enjoy spending time with our residents, no matter what age they are.

Our Christmas celebrations allowed us to make magical memories with two nursery groups – and we gave them an introduction to some real-life reindeer!

So, we start the roaring 20s with happy hearts and lots of enthusiasm for what's ahead. Please drop in and join in the fun.

**Helen Hendrie**  
Home Manager

# TOP STORIES FROM TEAM NEWTON!

A look back at what we've been up to this winter.



## BOOK LOVERS UNITE

We're thrilled to be launching a new social group at Newton House this Spring called Reading Friends.

UK charities Re-engage and The Reading Agency have partnered to create this intergenerational programme that uses books and reading to spark conversations. We'll begin the group with a 'getting to know you' tea party where residents, visitors and volunteers can spend time discussing the books they love and socialising together.

From there, group members can recommend books to read, share newspaper and magazine articles and be inspired by the written word to start meaningful conversations.

"Books can be a wonderful way for people across generations to find common ground through the stories they love," says Lisa McTaggart, Development Officer for Re-engage. "The programme was devised so we could help bring together older people suffering from loneliness and isolation with volunteers for regular social activities.

"It's fantastic to be able to host this Reading Friends group at Newton House and invite residents and local people to join in with the fun."



## SPRING INTO ACTION

There are exciting plans afoot for Newton's gardens this year as we explore new ways to boost health with horticulture.

Having made contact with therapeutic gardening charity Trellis Scotland, Regional Community Relations Lead David Holbrook is aiming to make impactful changes to our grounds.

"I'm excited to work with Trellis to discover new ways to use our outdoor space," explains David. "Their experts will come and complete an audit of the gardens before advising us on the potential projects we could start. I'm really looking forward to hearing their ideas."

Gardening is a wonderful hobby to get people outdoors and moving more. Research has also shown that people living with dementia can enjoy significant wellbeing benefits by spending time in sensory gardens designed to provide visual and olfactory stimulation.

"We're also interested in learning more about growing our own vegetables and opportunities for any keen gardeners here to get involved," explains David. "We want to encourage residents to become a part of our gardening projects too, so it's going to be a real team activity."





## SWING TIME

We were proud to support local charity Golf In Society this winter – by donating a bench for players to rest on during their rounds.

Founder Antony Blackburn runs regular golf events for people living with dementia who want to continue to enjoy the sport at Mearns Castle Golf Academy.

One challenge facing the golfers was the walk between the driving range where they began sessions and the putting green.

So, the Newton House team decided to get a bench for players to sit after the walk and while they are waiting to take a shot.

Now, instead of dragging chairs from the clubhouse along with them, there's a seat ready for the Golf In Society groups to rest on.

"We're very grateful to Newton House for this generous donation," says Antony. "The bench will get plenty of use - community support like this means a lot to us."



## JOIN US!

We're continuing with our commitment to deepen the understanding of dementia – so 2020 is kicking off with a special community event. Our 'Understanding Dementia' day takes place on January 29th and speaker Nicola Kennedy from Alzheimer Scotland will join our staff to provide information and advice to visitors.

The public are invited to join relatives of residents to learn more about living with dementia and how they can help people to overcome the challenges they face.



## CHRISTMAS MAGIC

Our annual Christmas family day was extra special this year – as we welcomed real-life reindeers to the home.

Residents, their loved ones and staff were joined by children from Kirktonholme Mearnswood Nursery for the festive event.

As well as taking part in traditional carol singing and eating delicious Christmas food, everyone was thrilled to meet the reindeers. They were brought in to visit by local animal company, Ayrshire Reindeer.

"There's nothing like seeing real Rudolfs to get you in the mood for Christmas," smiles Homemaker Cathy Armstrong. "It was so cute to see the look on the children's faces when they first saw the reindeers and then got to stroke them. It reminded us all how magical this time of year is when you are little."



## GETTING CRAFTY

We were delighted to forge new friendships with children at Orchard Park nursery this winter – as they joined us for special crafting sessions.

The nursery asked if they could begin visiting residents and doing activities together, and we were happy to oblige.

One recent crafting morning took place in our cosy café where the group spent time making Christmas cards for loved ones. Our residents enjoyed helping the children bring their ideas to life as the Christmas crafting session got going.

"There was a wonderful buzz in the room, the kids were so enthusiastic, and it was great to spend time with them," shares resident Isobel Powrie. "It was so sweet to see their creations and how proud they were of what they'd achieved."





## DJ ERIC HITS THE DECKS!

There aren't many care homes that can say they have their own in-house DJ. But thanks to resident Eric Dobson, Newton House is one of the lucky few.

The 60-year-old music lover let staff know about his skills on the decks from the day he moved into the home. So, Wellbeing & Lifestyle Coach Tom Horwood joined forces with Eric's family to ensure he could keep enjoying his favourite hobby.

"Eric and his loved ones were really pleased when I asked them if they wanted to bring all his DJ equipment to Newton," shares Tom. "He's got over 1,000 records, decks and even a light box. They thought it would be too much to keep here, but I assured them we'd find room for it all."

When the kit arrived, Eric supervised Tom in setting up the DJ equipment and soon got back in the groove. Spending time playing tracks and taking requests brings great joy to Eric, who is used to doing sets for appreciative audiences.

"I could spend hours with my records and playing all kinds of music," enthuses Eric. "It's been lovely to set everything up here and also that so many of the other residents enjoy coming to listen to me play. I've got a

massive selection of tunes, so I can usually find something for everyone."

During the Christmas period, Eric's talents were in demand as he provided the soundtrack to many of the home's celebrations. Tom says that his musical hobby is also a great way to boost Eric's wellbeing.

"As our youngest and most active resident, Eric needs things to keep him busy and happy," explains Tom. "Whenever there's an opportunity, I ask him if he wants to go and spend some time on the decks. We head over to the room and look through the records and find new stuff to play. It really helps keep a great atmosphere in the home and it brings a great deal of joy to the other residents, who often ask if he's playing today."

Visitors to our events can expect to hear plenty from Eric after his success during the festive period. He's already been lined up to bring the tunes to other home occasions.

"It makes Eric feel less like a resident and more like part of the Newton team, which he loves," smiles Tom. "That's great for us all!"

## DATES FOR THE DIARY

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2pm**  
Understand Dementia Event with Alzheimer Scotland.

#### TBC

Community Football Memories Group  
Community Gardening Group  
Community Reading Friends Group with Re-engage

### REGULAR COMMUNITY EVENTS

**Tuesday 10:30am – 12pm**  
(third Tuesday of the month)  
Music for the Mind

**Thursdays 11am – 1pm** (weekly)  
Paths For All Community Walk & Café

**Thursday 2pm – 3:30pm**  
(fourth Thursday of the month)  
Macular Support Café

**Friday 2pm – 4pm**  
(first Friday of the month)  
Community Dementia Friendly Cinema.