

News Matters

Spring 2022

Independence Matters *'the life you choose...'*



INSIDE:

We get busy planting over 160 trees for the Queen's Jubilee



Welcome to News Matters

Hello everyone and I hope that this edition of News Matters finds you well and that you all managed to enjoy the beautiful spring weather over the Easter Bank holiday.



We are so lucky to have the different seasons and spring is a time of hope and new beginnings. Nature is so important and it's fantastic to see the saplings being planted for the Queen's Jubilee. It will be lovely to watch them grow over the years.

Well done to colleagues who received iMatter Awards, it was important to finally be able to give the trophies out face to face; we have more to do. Congratulations also to Jason on his 30th blog; amazing achievement!

There are some great articles in here from our Home Support Matters colleagues which really show how much they love the work they do and what great values and attitudes they possess. Rebecca's article is a fascinating insight into her daily work and how the flexibility of a care career really suits the needs of her family 😊.

We have lots of talented customers and it's great to see so many 'crafting and baking activities' as they are such fun, can be done individually or with others and keep the mind active and engaged. Plus the results can be shared and enjoyed with others!

Pleasing to see the impact of our investments within Norfolk Industries and our Community Hubs, which has provided a much needed boost for customers and colleagues after the pandemic years; the future looks brighter.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Stock'.

Sarah Stock, Managing Director

We celebrate Easter

This colourful display was made by customers at our Crossroads Community Hub. They also enjoyed a special Easter bingo accompanied by Simnel cake and plenty of chocolate eggs as prizes... yum yum!



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A W A R D S

Dereham Community Hub Team Managers **Tina Connor-Saunders** and **Shirley Watton** receive their award from Stakeholder Director, Sylvia Barrett-Jones. The duo were nominated for working tirelessly, in exceptionally difficult circumstances, to keep their teams work effectively and flexibly, and the Hub growing and developing, during the pandemic.



Lynn Stephenson Service Manager (Hub Services West) receives her award from Stakeholder Director, Sylvia Barrett-Jones.

Lynn was nominated for supporting the wellbeing of colleagues and customers during the pandemic, providing emotional and physical support that held the teams together during an exceptionally challenging time.

HSM Quality and Compliance Manager **Sally Palin** receives her award from Managing Director, Sarah Stock and Care Delivery Director Su Carver.

Sally was nominated for responding to customer concerns by creating a new feedback system for people using the Norwich Night Rapid Response service.



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Platinum Jubilee tree planting scheme

Customers and colleagues at Dereham Community Hub have taken part in a free tree planting scheme organised by The Woodland Trust.

The scheme is open to any not-for-profit group and is part of The Queen's Green Canopy initiative that encourages people to 'Plant a Tree for the Jubilee'.

The trees are delivered as 20-60cm tall saplings and it is the responsibility of those taking part to plan where they will go, plant and care for them.

The Hub's saplings arrived in December and by mid January they had planted an incredible 163 trees in a mix of native species that include: hazel, silver birch, rowan, hawthorn, blackthorn, wild cherry, dogwood and oak.

A massive well done to all the customers involved in this project. Jonathan, who created the identification labels for the saplings, and especially Lewis, Tom and Oliver who did lots of the planting despite the cold and wet weather.

The scheme is open for applications until the end of 2022 [check it out here](#).



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Seasonally themed fun!

Customers and colleagues at Crossroads Community Hub have kept themselves busy with lots of crafting and edible activities linked to the season.

Everyone enjoyed Chinese New year treats and marked the return of the King's Lynn's Mart with that most remembered of fairground treats - candyfloss.

Valentine's, St David's Day, pancake day and World Book Day were all celebrated. Customers enjoyed traditional toppings on their pancakes (which we're told were too good to share!) and chatted about the part books have played in their lives.

Themed goodies were on offer for St Patrick's Day and the week ended with a game of 'Comic Relief' bowls providing lots of laughter and fun.



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Angelo offers helping hand

HSM colleague Angelo has been praised after going to the aid of a stranger who had fallen and injured himself.

The incident took place in January when Angelo was visiting a customer in Reedham. He spotted the man lying in his garden and immediately went to help, calling for an ambulance, administering first aid and staying with him until help arrived.

The man who was suffering from concussion, hypothermia and a broken ankle has nothing but praise for Angelo. Describing him as “exceptional” and saying he “showed true professionalism and care” and that his “expertise saved me from an even worse outcome”.

Big Garden Birdwatch

Earlier in the year customers took part in the annual RSPB birdwatch which plays an important role in monitoring the bird population in the UK.

Participants included the TAPS wildlife watching group who monitor birds at their Hub on a regular basis and reported they were very excited to see a goldcrest, the UK's smallest bird, in one of the Hub's conifer trees.



Hub receives donation

Crossroads Community Hub had the wonderful fortune of receiving a donation from the local Freemasons lodge who had links to a customer who had attended the service for many years.

The donation was put to good use and provided festive lunches over the Christmas period as well as supporting the long-awaited return of entertainers to the Hub.



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Celebrating Easter at William Day Centre

Colleagues and customers at William Day Centre celebrated Easter with some lovely spring themed craftwork.

They cleverly turned plant pots into beehives decorated with flowers and got busy in the kitchen making and baking Easter themed biscuits.

We hope everyone enjoyed a lovely Easter with lots of treats.



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Celebrating 30 blogs

Customer blogger Jason celebrated writing his 30th blog in March, an amazing feat that was recognised by a certificate from our Managing Director, Sarah Stock.

Jason started blogging for us in 2020 and we are delighted that he continues to contribute on a regular basis. We love to hear about his adventures and this month he had some very special news, having taken part in a production at his local theatre as assistant stage manager.

His role involved making sure the props were in the right place and everyone was ready. He also got to do the sound effects, such as door bells. He told us: "I loved it, everyone was so friendly and I have been asked to go back – but that's for another blog!". We look forward to hearing more in the future.

Follow Jason on our [Facebook page](#) and [website news](#).

A ukulele duet at Harford

Ian from Musical Keys is a regular visitor to Harford Hill and recently came along to play for our customers. One of the instruments he brings along is the ukulele, and it just so happens that colleague Lynda is teaching herself to play! Our picture (right) shows her joining Ian for a duet using a ukulele that has been gifted to the Hub.



Colleagues at Norfolk Industries enjoyed a fish and chip lunch courtesy of Independence Matters festive meal allowance for teams. Yum!

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A Day In The Life

Community Care Worker, Rebecca Marchant is a single mum with three children. Working and finding a job that fits around her family has always been a challenge.



My youngest son has autism and his school can only offer him limited hours during the day. This has an impact on any role I do, however, coming into domiciliary care has changed that for me completely. Here's how my day goes.

I wake up with my children around 6:30 and there's the round robin of showers, getting dressed, finding socks, having breakfast, making packed lunches, and getting everyone in the car ready for drop off.

By 8:50 I'm well on my way to my first customer. My morning visits start with personal care, breakfasts, teas, coffees, toast, and lots of giggles. One of my ladies feels that if she must shower then my legs and feet should too! It's a bit like an extension of home, just with adults and a lot of chatting and laughing.

I like the mornings with the customers the best, I like to think I've set them up happily for the day with a cheery smile and keeping routine for them. I also make beds, assist with dressing, do some light housework, empty a commode or two and make everything clean and tidy.

Part of my role is building relationships with customers. Sometimes it takes a long time to build a good relationship with people.

I try to go above and beyond to make sure people have what they need. I sometimes need to encourage people to take their medication; one lady forgets to do this but I have found if medication comes before a good hearty breakfast then people are very willing to take them.

Another part of my job is to listen. I have a customer who loves to tell me all about her childhood, when she was growing up and where she has travelled in the world, sometimes the stories leave me open mouthed! She might only want a cup of tea, a chat and to tell me about her day, but I love these visits. I love to hear about customers' lives and how they came to be.

As the morning moves into lunchtime, I'll leave to collect my son from school. I take him home, prepare his lunch, and finish any work set by the school. We also have some play therapy we do at home. I get to do some housework and prep dinner before I'm ready to leave to start my evening shift.

I start at 6pm so on the back of tea visits, I'm going out and assisting everyone in getting ready for bed, taking their evening medication, making snacks, drinks and assisting into bed clothing.

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One of my customers sees me coming in at around 9pm and will always offer me that much needed cup of tea. I love that the job isn't just a get in and get out, we can take time to talk and find out how customers are. There is always a laugh and a joke and many a time we are a listening ear for all their worries.

One customer developed a health concern, he was worried about what it could be, but wouldn't speak up about it. I asked if he minded if I called his son and told him and straight away he arranged for the GP to come. It turned out to be a nasty infection that had been worrying him for weeks, but he didn't want to burden anyone. As we built a relationship and he started to trust me, he felt he could tell me, I'm so glad he did as he has been so much happier since the infection has been treated.

My day usually ends around 10pm, sometimes later. I do get asked to do extra customers and I'll always try to fit them into my rota. I hate the thought of someone being stuck and not having any help.

After supporting my last customer, I'll drive home, shower and go straight to bed ready to start again the following day.

This role is far more than just personal care, cleaning, cooking and giving medication. You must have a great affinity for people from all walks of life, because everyone is different and it's a role I highly recommend.

You get the balance of the hours that fit around you and get to meet amazing people in the community every day. Sometimes you even get to make friends with other care workers who support you.

With the freedom to work under my own guidance and time schedule, why wouldn't I love my job. ❤️



E-bike offer makes life easier for colleagues

Home Support Matters is offering field colleagues who are on walking rounds the opportunity to try out an e-bike as an eco-friendly way of reaching more customers more quickly.

Ten e-bikes have been purchased for the scheme and colleagues can apply to have one for an initial six-month trial period, to see if it is of benefit and helps them to work more effectively.

The bikes are fitted with lights and are supplied with a branded hi viz vest, safety helmet and security locks. To date five have been awarded to colleagues in Norwich, Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth, including Isaac Peck (pictured).

The scheme has received positive feedback from colleagues who are enthusiastic about the benefits. By reducing their travel time, the bikes mean they can increase their earning potential by visiting more customers, which is also good for business.

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Model train set to run again in memory of Frank

Colleagues at Rosewood Community Hub have been rebuilding a much-loved model train set owned by customer Frank. They took on the project knowing that it would be a challenge; the whole thing was in a poor state of repair, the electrics needed fixing and a large number of pieces were missing.

To get the project off the ground, colleague Harry posted on Facebook to see if anyone had any spare parts they were willing to donate. He received a lot of feedback and many donations, even driving up to North Walsham to pick up parts. With the electrics sorted, they are now in the process of rebuilding the area surrounding the track. This will take some time but they are enjoying recreating it from scratch.

Frank has been helping with the work and is very much looking forward to seeing the finished project and we hope to let you see pictures of the train set once it is up and running.



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New equipment at Norfolk Industries

We're delighted to have been able to invest in some much needed new equipment that will improve efficiency and increase productivity at our pet bedding factory, Norfolk Industries.

We've invested in a new fork truck (right) as our previous one was rented. We've also purchased a new bandsaw (below). This replaces an old version which needed repairs. The new one is a much bigger and more powerful machine, capable of handling larger reels of paper.

The newest addition to the factory floor is a pallet wrapper. [CLICK HERE TO WATCH IT IN ACTION!](#)



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Vicky's healthy eating success

A huge well done to customer Vicky who started a healthy eating regime during the pandemic and is seeing and feeling a real difference.

Vicky was motivated to lose weight by improving her diet and exercising regularly. She joined a gym where she does Zumba as well as doing aqua aerobics and swimming twice a week. She has a 1:1 tutor who gives lessons in the pool and really enjoys this. She also does a lot of walking at home and goes to Slimming World each week to get weighed. She now keeps a record of her diet by filling in the Slimming World meal plans.

She has done incredibly well and has already achieved her goal of losing weight and is feeling much healthier. Her favourite things to cook are Slimming World roast potatoes (left) and homemade vegetable and ham and pea soups.

Vicky – we admire your dedication, you are an inspiration to us all.

Learning about ancient Egypt

This lovely wall display at Sprowston is an example of the project work our customers have been busy with over the winter months.

The project supported learning about the culture, language and mythology of ancient Egypt covering language, buildings, symbolism and Gods. The display is the culmination of many weeks of work and comprises elements done individually and collaboratively.

At the end of the project everyone took part in a quiz to test their knowledge.



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Wishing Signalong a Happy 30th Birthday

We're committed to making Signalong part of our everyday lives and the team at our Holt Community Hub recently attended Signalong training to improve and develop their skills.

Orders at the Hub's café can now be made using Signalong, giving everyone the chance to practice what they've learnt.

It was also Signalong's 30th birthday this month, so to help them celebrate we put together a video that shows us in action.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)



Baking skills on show

These fantastic carrot cake muffins were made by customers at The Brewery.

Part of our Gateway Assured Learning Programme, The Brewery gives customers the opportunity to learn, develop skills for work (brewing, baking and customer service) and gain accredited qualifications.

What better way to learn than through practical, hands on experience, especially when the results are as yummy as this?

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Recognising our colleagues long service



Chloe Cousins-Cuthbert

Great Yarmouth Field Care Supervisor, Chloe Cousins-Cuthbert, celebrates five years with Home Support Matters.

Chloe joined as a care worker and says she came with nothing but previous experience of caring for loved ones at home. She said:

“Over the five years I have worked with other great care workers and met some amazing clients that I will never forget.

I have since worked my way up to a Field Care Supervisor which I currently am today. I enjoy working in the community and building a rapport with clients and friendships with my work colleagues. Thanks for never giving up on me guys!”

Jo Duale

Jo Duale celebrates an amazing 15 years with Home Support Matters.

She currently works on the Enhanced Home Support Service (EHSS) delivering rapid response support to individuals returning home from hospital or offering preventative care and support to prevent hospital admission.

Due to her length of service and experience within the health care industry, Jo is also a valued mentor and coach for the business.



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New digital tables bring joy

We've been investing in new equipment at our Community Hubs, including these wheelchair accessible, interactive digital tables.

Sprowston Community Hub report theirs has already brought a lot of joy to everyone, customers and colleagues alike, as demonstrated by OG who is using it to play the piano. He loves it!!



Biffy the dog, painted by Brian

Harford Hill customer Brian was a keen artist and since coming to the Hub, colleagues have encouraged him to keep up with his hobby and also provided him with an easel.

Brian is a big fan of rescue dog Biffy, who visits the Hub, and was really keen to paint a portrait of her. What a fabulous result – we love it!



Colleague congratulations!

Congratulations to our latest group of newly-qualified colleagues.

- Maggie Kemp** – Level 2 Adult Care Worker
- Adam Hollings** - Level 3 Lead Adult Care Worker
- Mark Postlethwaite** - Level 3 Lead Adult Care Worker
- Corinne Fulcher** - Level 3 Lead Adult Care Worker
- Sarah Cornwell** - Level 3 Lead Adult Care Worker



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