

Welcome to
Heanton Nursing Home's
Edition 7 2026 Newsletter

EXCELLENCE * PEOPLE-DRIVEN * INTEGRITY * COMPASSION



newsletter

EDITION 7 2026

EDITION 7

Welcome!

This quarter has seen extreme heat waves, ice cream galore, and countless hours spent outside. I think this needs to be headline news; however, ALL SCAFFOLDING IS DOWN! Yes, finally, we have completed all the roofing and structural works to the building. We also achieved this without having to shut down an entire house for an extended time, the main reason for such long delays in the project.

Exmoor garden is now the focus of our fundraising efforts from major events, as we begin enjoying this reclaimed space. Our plan is to have a garden full of colour and smells for the ladies within the house to enjoy tending and arranging. Many relaxed sunny days have already been spent in the space or simply sitting watching the world go by and birds sing.

I also want to say a huge thank you to the team, who planned a spur-of-the-moment BBQ to enjoy the glorious weather, and presented me with some beautiful flowers and a cake to congratulate me on a long-awaited pregnancy announcement. The love and support Luke and I have received from the team have really driven home the family meaning of Heanton and Evolve. For those of you who I haven't shared the news with yet, I am having a little girl! I cannot wait to become a mum and know that with the support of the amazing team here at Heanton, I will be starting this new chapter of my journey with support and love. We hope you enjoy reading this edition of our newsletter.

Abi, Registered Manager



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Dates & Feedback

St Christopher's School Reunion

Over 50 students from St Christopher's School came back to Heanton for a reunion. The school was located at Heanton for many years, after the building had been used as a hotel and to house military soldiers during the D-Day training on Braunton Burrows.

Some of the former students reminisced around the building, while others shared their stories from their time here. A photo was then re-created in the grounds before enjoying refreshments from our catering team. Heanton provided all the cakes and drinks, with a donation box for our Exmoor Garden project. An amazing £65 was raised, with huge thanks to the students of St. Christopher's School.

Our building truly has some amazing history, which we are continuing to learn about. If you have any information or memories, please do share them with us!



Heanton in the Community

At Heanton, we are much more than a nursing home- we are an active part of our local community. We believe that maintaining connections, pursuing hobbies, and spending time doing the things that bring joy and purpose are essential to wellbeing.

We encourage and support family members to remain involved in community life, whether that means attending local events, enjoying favourite pastimes, volunteering, meeting friends, or simply spending time in familiar places. Staying connected to the wider community helps maintain independence, confidence, and a sense of belonging.

By working together with families, local groups, and community organisations, we create opportunities for meaningful experiences that enrich lives and ensure that Heanton remains a place where people continue to live life to the fullest.



Team Time

As members of the care team, we spend our days supporting the wellbeing of others, but it's just as important that we take care of ourselves. Providing high-quality care requires energy, patience, compassion, and resilience, all of which can be affected when we don't take time to rest and recharge.

Annual leave is an important part of self-care and helps prevent fatigue and burnout. We strongly recommend that team members book periods of annual leave at least every 12 weeks, particularly if they are working a high number of shifts or additional hours. Taking regular breaks away from work can improve wellbeing, reduce stress, and help you return feeling refreshed and motivated.

Please also remember not to leave holiday requests until the last minute. Planning and booking leave in advance gives you the best chance of securing the dates you want and helps us ensure safe staffing levels for everyone. Looking after yourself isn't a luxury—it's an essential part of being able to continue providing excellent care to those who depend on us. A well-rested team is a healthier, happier, and more effective team.



Well done to our team members who threw themselves out of a perfectly functioning plane to raise money for Dementia UK. The charity skydive raised a huge £4502! Months of planning saw the 11 brave team members and supporters leap from 15,000 feet reaching speeds of 125mph. Well done everyone and thank you for all the donations.



Meet the Entertainer

Meet Ralph! (and Gemma).

Ralph is a stunning border collie that works with Pets for Therapy and we are very lucky to see him every few weeks here at Heanton. He loves to spend time with our family members and the team, giving cuddles, loves and the cutest eyes!

Ralph was invited for our family members, but many team members get just as much from his visits. Care is incredibly rewarding, but comes with the tough days as well. So whether he is bringing joy and laughter or a quiet moment of affection and comfort, Ralph seems to know exactly what each person he encounters needs from him.

Ralph's visits have created some beautiful moments for so many already, from family members who are missing their own pets, to those who simply love animals. He brings companionship, interaction and familiarity. All while getting a bunch of attention and cuddles which he LOVES!

Gemma, Ralph's owner (aka personal assistant, transport, chef and walkies co-ordinator), said that she didn't think about therapy work when she got Ralph. The role was suggested by his trainer during puppy classes, so she began to look into it. Heanton was their first placement and they were both excited to get the call that someone in their area was looking for a therapy dog. Even during the trial visit it was obvious to everyone that Ralph was a perfect fit. He sat quietly for our more vulnerable family members who wanted to stroke him, and gave giggles and joy to our more active family members by nuzzling and wagging his WHOLE body.

Let the team know if your loved one had a special dog in their life and would benefit from Ralph coming to say hello. The team can also talk about their dog day to day and share activities that will bring connection and meaning.



Events at Heanton

Alongside our school reunion, we have had summer BBQs, Hawaiian shirt day and our annual cultural day where the team dress traditionally and share their cultures foods and more. We even watched the solar eclipse through special glasses and had themed crafts and decorations. Ella took her pop-up ice cream stand around to keep the cool during the heatwave.



Sleep Support

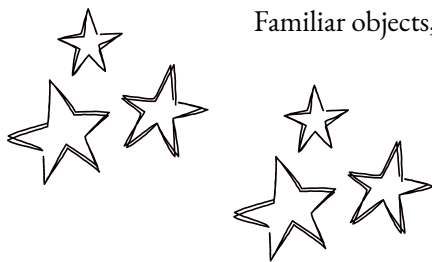
A good night's sleep can make a big difference to our family members. Unfortunately, changes in the brain caused by dementia can affect the body's natural sleep-wake cycle, making it harder to settle at night or stay asleep. This can lead to tiredness, confusion, and increased anxiety during the day.



zzzzzz

Creating a calm, comfortable bedroom can also make a real difference. Keeping the room quiet, at a comfortable temperature, and using soft lighting in the evening can help someone feel more relaxed.

Familiar objects, such as favourite blankets or family photos, may also provide reassurance.



As shown in the photos, we've created an environment designed to encourage better sleep. The ceiling projector displays gentle moving lights, providing a soothing visual focus that can help reduce anxiety and create relaxation before bedtime. Alongside this, a lavender infuser fills the room with a calming scent, while peaceful background music plays. The low, warm lighting helps signal that it's time to wind down, avoiding the harsh brightness that can be unsettling in the evening. Together, these simple sensory features create a space that supports a restful bedtime routine and can improve overall wellbeing.

The WIK Game: Test Your Knowledge

Think you know care inside and out? Prove it!

Learning doesn't have to feel like learning, and that idea began during a family game night when Shrien and Eve saw how much fun everyone was having while playing a trivia card game. It sparked a thought - why not create something just as enjoyable for social care?

From that spark of inspiration, Evolve's WIK board game was born. WIK (world of inescapable knowledge) covers six areas for those working in care. It's a great way to continue testing your knowledge while enjoying a little friendly competition!

We have all played the WIK game during our training days at the Evolve Care Academy, with some of you walking away with cash prizes of up to £100! Now available on Moodle so you can regularly test your knowledge and beat your last score!

The leaderboard is where it gets competitive. Shrien and Eve created the game, but they are no longer top the leaderboard, let's keep it that way! Bravo to Kayleigh Gibbons, who is currently Heanton's highest scorer as we go to print. Well done, Kayleigh!



Blue Light Discount £

Did you know that working in social care means you're eligible for a Blue Light Card? For £4.99, the card gives you two years' access to thousands of discounts across more than 13,000 retailers, including Jet2Holidays, Nike, Apple, Schuh and Hotels.com.

Whether you're planning a holiday, treating yourself to something new, heading out for a meal or simply doing the weekly shop, download the app and see what's up for grabs! Members can also access ticket ballots and launches for gigs, festivals, sporting events and attractions.



Register now at www.bluelightcard.co.uk or scan the QR code.





12/11/2026
Church Service - Remembrance

14/10/2026, 28/10/2026, 11/11/2026
& 25/11/2026
Chair Zumba!

03/10/2026 & 30/10/2026
Pets for Therapy Visit

26/10/2026 & 16/11/2026
Ruth Bateman Art sessions

Upcoming Dates for your Diary

04/11/2026
Quarterly Relatives meeting

December 2026
Christmas dates to come!

Your Feedback

"Thank you so much for making us all so welcome yesterday and for the amazing cakes and friendly welcome."

"An appreciation gift from my family to the BEST MANAGER EVER!!!"

"The care, comfort and warmth you showed dad was just brilliant."

"We appreciate so much what you did for us and won't forget it."

"I really wanted to be in my last shift so that I could meet you personally and hug you for the love and support you have given me...
...thank you for everything. As I have told you before, you were, you are and I know you will be the best manager."

"Very polite, very homely!"

"Amazing home, amazing staff and love the residents feel free to mingle. Brilliant!"

"We couldn't have asked for a more wonderful group of people to look after him. You made mum and all of our family welcome (and mum fed!)"

Thank you for reading, we hope to see you soon!