



The Uplands at Oxon

Carey takes on new challenges at Uplands



Carey Bloomer has been appointed as Clinical Lead Nurse

We are really thrilled to announce that our senior management team has been bolstered with the appointment of Carey Bloomer as Clinical Lead Nurse.

Having previously been Unit Manager on Meole, Carey's new role sees her overseeing the residents' clinical welfare from admission through to discharge. She is also liaising with doctors and, importantly, families.

Carey said: "I am already enjoying the challenge!

"I get great job satisfaction from working with residents and staff alike."

Carey, who is 47 and lives near Wolverhampton, has just started working for her Leadership and Management Award which she is hoping to get in April.

She is also a member of the Continence Association, representing nursing and care homes.

The care sector appears to run in the Bloomer family - daughter Ruth is also a popular care assistant here who has taken to the job "like a duck to water," according to her mother.



Long-serving Jan Downes has taken on the position of Lead Nurse for our Meole unit

Degree student taking the lead

We are also delighted to welcome Jan Downes to the position of Lead Nurse for the Meole unit.

Jan, who has worked at the Uplands since the new building was launched, was part of the team which opened up Dorrington.

"I took on this role in October and I am really enjoying it," said Jan.

"I am also doing a degree in clinical practice which I am hoping to finish in the summer."

Jan lives in Condoover with husband Todd who works with autistic children and is a manager at Cruckton School.

A keen euphonium player, Jan is also part of the Wem Jubilee Band which is playing here on December 6th (see page 3).

It's full steam ahead with our dementia unit project

SUPPORT GROUP SUCCESS

A real success story has emerged from the Dorrington dementia unit.

In August Sue Williams, Dementia Lead Nurse, and Carey Bloomer, now Clinical Lead Nurse, set up Friends of the Uplands - an important and worthwhile initiative.

Friends of the Uplands is a group of residents' families who meet on a monthly basis and provide mutual support.

Sue said: "While they may come to us for advice, the families manage the group themselves - and the response has been fantastic."

Green light for our plan

We can now officially announce . . . it's all systems go! The Uplands at Oxon has been given the go-ahead to build its pioneering dementia day care unit - a ground-breaking project not only for the home, but also Shrewsbury and Shropshire.

The building work is going out for tender this month and we are very much hoping to be able to use a local company.

Around 10 jobs - for full-time nurses and carers - will be created which is further positive news.

There will also be the added employment of the architects and builders.

Although it is impossible to make any guarantees, we are expecting that the centre, which will sit next to the existing nursing home, will be up and running by next summer.

The Uplands' Managing Director, Mandy Thorn, said: "We are really looking forward to providing a specialist day

unit which will be unique to the county.

"It will be a stand-alone bungalow with opportunities for arts and crafts as well as kitchen and bathing facilities. The unit will also have its own dedicated garden area for clients to use.

"We have done a great deal of research and spoken to a lot of people, and we see this being a really important facility which will be of huge benefit to both dementia sufferers and their families.

"It will provide another choice for all those families facing difficult decisions about what care is appropriate in the earlier stages of dementia-related illnesses."



Operations Manager Nick Horncastle takes a look at the plans for the new dementia unit which could be up and running next summer

That's music to your ears

Probably not before time, we have introduced a new system to The Uplands at Oxon which allows people to telephone through to specific wards in the evening.

In the past it has not been easy for families or friends to ring through to a resident after reception has closed, something we acknowledge and are happy to have put right.

This new system is operational between 5pm and 9pm on week days, and throughout the weekend. We believe that it is working very well but we would also appreciate any feedback from residents, their families, or staff.

And on the subject of telephones, we have received some unexpected words of congratulations from several quarters . . . for changing our holding music!

A time to remember loved ones



The Rev Mary Fernside with one of the special hymn books

In October a very special service was held at the Uplands in memory of all the residents who have stayed here in the last two and a half years and are no longer with us.

Our chaplain, the Rev Mary Fernside, presided over the service and said that several special hymn books printed have been bought by relatives of those who have passed away.

There are more available for those who wish to remember their loved ones.

Mary added: "It was extremely well attended and was a very emotional occasion for both relatives and staff.

"But I think it was also comforting for those who attended.

"Around 90 residents have passed away since the Uplands has been based here and they are all remembered fondly.

"I am sure it will be an annual event."

All the latest news from the nursing team and residents



Yes, it's nearly that time of year again!

Time flies! It hardly seems any time at all since we were celebrating last year's Christmas, but the festive season is upon us once more and we're making every effort to ensure that it will be one to remember for all.

Here are a few things to bear in mind over the next few weeks . . .

You will see from the enclosed form that a family member wishing to attend the Christmas dinner is asked to fill in their meal preferences.

We would be grateful if the filled-in forms could be returned to catering manager Nikki Burton by December 10th.



The ever excellent Wem Jubilee Band will be paying the Uplands a traditional pre-Christmas visit on December 6th. They will be performing carols in the Dorrington unit for about an hour after entertaining at the Severn Hospice's Tree of Light.

On December 13th all our residents, staff, relatives and friends are welcome to attend a Christmas carols singalong which will be held in the dining room at 3.30pm.

Light refreshments will be served afterwards.



A reminder to all staff who are able to attend: December 14th is the date of this year's Christmas staff party.

The celebrations will be taking place at The Peach Tree next to the Abbey in Abbey Foregate, and all are welcome for what is always an enjoyable evening.



On December 17th we will be pleased to welcome back Eva Long Productions who are returning to the Uplands to perform Winter Wonderland - their musical Christmas show.

Residents and staff thoroughly enjoyed the group's visit in October and this one-hour performance should be a fun and festive occasion.



Our Uplands Employee of the Month

In each newsletter we will be meeting the Uplands' Employee of the Month, as chosen by residents, their families and staff. The first award, presented in September, goes to . . .

NAME: Josh Barnett

AGE: 19

WHERE DO YOU LIVE?
Wellington

FAVOURITE FOOD:
Fish and chips

FAVOURITE SPORT:
Motorcross

FAVOURITE MUSIC:
Drum and bass

FAVOURITE FILM:
Pirates of the Caribbean

POSITION AT THE UPLANDS: Care Assistant, Dorrington Unit

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING HERE?
11 months

HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE JOB?
My Auntie Sandra (Huss - who works here)!

HE SAYS: Half my family is in care work and I just thought I would give it a go because I didn't have a clue what to do a year ago. It's been excellent - the best job I could have hoped for. I appreciate being able to work with people who have dementia and helping them as they come to the end of their life. It has become more and more rewarding as I've got into it. I have made a lot of friends here and in December I am starting my NVQ which I am really looking forward to.

THEY SAY: When Josh came to us he was very shy and unsure of what he was doing. He has matured into a very nice young man who is liked by everyone, staff and residents alike. Nothing is too much trouble for Josh and he always goes the extra mile. (Carey Bloomer)



Award winner - Care Assistant Josh Barnett



Office manager Dawn gets set to say 'I do'

Plans for winter wedding after a sunny proposal

On December 5th staff and residents at the Uplands will be happily raising a glass (or cuppa!) to Dawn Pearce.

Our popular office manager will be tying the knot with her boyfriend of the last five years, Rob Bowland.

The happy event is taking place at Haughton Hall, near Shifnal, and we wish the couple all the very best for the future.

Dawn, who lives in Telford, said: "Rob proposed when we were in Portugal at one of

our favourite bars . . . and I thought he was joking!

"I was slightly tiddly but he wasn't – it was a wonderful moment."

We will try not to get too jealous because just when it will no doubt be cold and wet here, Dawn and Rob will be enjoying a luxurious honeymoon in India, Sri Lanka and Dubai.

Dawn joined the team at the Uplands two years ago in November 2007.

Prior to coming to Bicton Heath, she was with Tarmac for two years, and before that at Nightingales.



Some essential reading for Uplands bride-to-be Dawn Pearce

Harvest celebrations

This year's Harvest Festival was another huge success - a great deal of food was collected and much fun was had in the process.

The Harvest Festival campaign is spearheaded by Head of Care on Dorrington, Sandra Huss, and this is the second year it has taken place.

Everyone in both Dorrington and Meole units - residents and their families - collected food for the Ark charity for the homeless which is based opposite Shrewsbury railway station.

Half a dozen baskets of food were collected for Ark and we can confidently say that this will now be an annual event.



Residents and staff helped collect harvest goodies for charity

It's hello, farewell and some hard studying!

We are delighted to be welcoming various members of staff back to the Uplands as well as several new ones.

Alison Sacré is coming back this month to the Cory Unit and Faye Hodgson is returning to Gough after maternity leave and giving birth to little Chloe (congratulations Faye!).

There will be several new faces at the Uplands by Christmas, including Claire Meredith (Gough), Emily Marr (Meole) and Aneta Sitariska who will be working nights. We very much look forward to having them aboard.

We will be sad to say goodbye to Hannah Scholes (Gough) who is leaving us at Christmas to do a Masters degree in art therapy – and we wish her very well for the future.

It seems that we always have staff going through training courses of some description. Jan Downes is continuing her degree in mental health and congratulations to Jade Matravers who has recently completed a three-week MAPA trainers course.