

The Pilgrims' MAGAZINE

SUMMER 2021



In this issue:

SOCIAL CARE REFORM

Lighting the way by following Christ

KEEPING CALM, CARRYING ON

Community spirit in the pandemic

WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS

Reaching older people
through church

**PILGRIMS'
FRIEND
SOCIETY**



Pilgrims' Friend Society exists to provide excellent care and support for older people, inspiring and encouraging them to live fulfilled lives in their later years. Rooted in the Christian faith, Pilgrims' Friend Society is committed to creating Christian communities in residential care homes and independent living housing schemes in England and Scotland.

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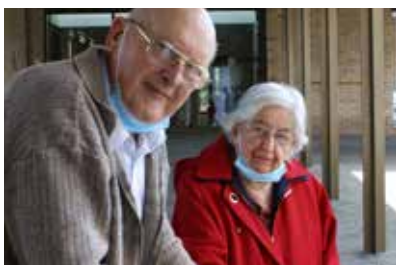
Song of Songs 2:12a



☎ Looking to contact our homes and schemes?
✉ See back cover for details
📍

News round-up

Stories from across our homes and housing schemes



Visits out are now possible. Barry and Jean at Evington Home, Leicester, were very glad to be heading out for their first visit with their nephew.



Opening the doors

With lockdown easing, we've been working hard to adapt to swiftly changing Government guidance, ensuring valuable visits take place. From early March, those living in our homes were allowed one nominated close contact visitor, which was then increased to two. From 17th May, our homes could have five nominated visitors, with a maximum of two visiting on any given day. Those visiting must test negative for Covid-19 on arrival and are equipped with PPE.

Shirley lives at Luff House, our home in Walton-on-the-Naze, and enjoyed a long-awaited close contact visit from her daughter Hayley. "Having that physical interaction was so special," says Hayley. "Our first close contact visit actually took place a year to the day after the last time I'd been able to visit and hold hands."

Helen, who works on our Marketing and Communications team, joined Pilgrims' Friend Society during the Spring 2020 lockdown. She was thrilled to be able to finally visit Evington in May 2021, say 'hello', and sample a spot of baking from the family members.



Fun, games and Royal celebrations

Crazy golf, tin can alley and beanbag darts... These were just some of the activities our family members at Leonora Home, Chippenham, enjoyed as the home competed in the Virtual Senior Games, Wiltshire, alongside other care homes in the area. Well done to everyone!



At Emmaus House in Harrogate, our family members were treated to a regal afternoon tea in honour of the Queen's Birthday. Cake stands were piled high with dainty sandwiches and a selection of mouth-watering cakes. Several family members dressed up for the occasion with sparkling crowns and there was even an appearance from a very special guest (well sort of!).

Over at Bethany Christian Home in Plymouth, our family members exercised their creative talents with a morning of watercolour painting. Painting is a popular past-time with many of those who live with us - turn to page 23 to read about Maureen's passion for painting.

Celebrating Easter

Our homes and schemes celebrated Easter in a host of ways. Milward House in Tunbridge Wells explored the Jewish Passover and its significance in the light of Jesus. Framland, Wantage donned cheerful Easter bonnets and tucked into Easter treats. Royd Court, Mirfield, held an Easter exhibition, with those living in the flats creating artworks, crafts, poetry and more for the display.



In other news...

This year, we've moved our Prayer Week from June to 12th-18th September, when we hope it will be possible for groups to gather and pray face-to-face. Stay tuned for further details.

Timothy Agbenike has joined Luff House in Walton-on-the-Naze as Registered Manager and we welcome new Activities and Community Events Facilitators Charlotte Parrot (Shottermill House, Haslemere) and

Sarah Parkinson (Finborough Court, Great Finborough). In our head office, Harry Burke has joined us as Purchase Ledger Assistant.

At Strathclyde House, Skelmorlie, Christine Roy-Chowdhury has started as Assistant Scheme Manager. The Clyde Kitchen at Strathclyde House has now reopened, with Ursula McAuslan taking the role as Café Manager. Follow on Facebook @theclydekitchen

For more great stories, follow us on social media:

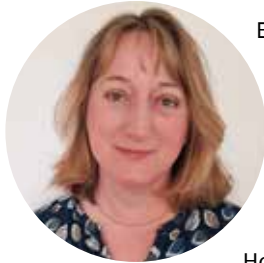
- @PilgrimsFS
- @PilgrimsFS
- @pilgrimsfriend

Caught by the vision for care

As we prepare to open the doors of Middlefields House, our brand-new care home in Chippenham, we caught up with the two Managers who will lead the home

WORDS: Louise Morse

Emma Hughes – Registered Care Manager



Emma came to us from a nursing background that included almost 10 years as Senior Sister at Burrswood, the famous Christian hospital in Tunbridge Wells. In 2011, attracted by the strong spiritual values of Pilgrims' Friend Society, she joined as Nurse Manager of Milward House, our home in Tunbridge Wells. After 18 months, she moved to Devon to be the Registered Manager of Bethany Christian Home in Plymouth. Now, after almost eight years, Emma has moved to Chippenham to become Registered Care Manager at Middlefields House. She retains her nursing registration.

Asked if she found the move from 24-bed Bethany to the new 48-bed home daunting, Emma said, "Not at all, I am very much at peace about it. Unlike hospitals that are built for the convenience of the medical staff and their work, Middlefields House has been designed for its residents. Although it is a big building, having four households for 12 people means each person will feel they belong to part of the family, not just one in a crowd."

"It's important because our work is all about people. We build warm, loving relationships and I have very fond memories of residents and staff at Bethany," says Emma.

"Middlefields House is a big enterprise, and the management structure is different. I'm looking forward to being part of this fantastic team."

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) describes the role of Registered Care Manager as a pivotal leadership role, saying, '...leadership must be rooted in strong values, and based on a clear, shared understanding that it involves accountability for whatever is done in the name of care.'

"Nothing could be stronger than our shared Christian values," says Emma.

Emma would love you to pray:

- That God will guide all the decisions we make, big or small, and that the care we give will give glory to God

Chris Boyes – General Manager



Chris Boyes' career has been in housing management, most recently with Anchor Hanover, a large housing association with accommodation for older people. He managed a series of area teams responsible for repairs and safety. "My role was basically keeping people healthy and reasonably happy in their homes," he says.

Earlier this year he decided to look for something that was different and challenging, where he could use the skills he had developed, but most importantly, where he would be really serving the Lord. Living in Trowbridge, Wiltshire, he was interested in the job in Chippenham but only mildly, until he read about Pilgrims' Friend Society's vision for Middlefields House.

Chris says, "It struck a chord with me. I've done a lot of work over the years in community development in housing and [with the design of four households] could see immediately the value of having a smaller-scale, family approach. It is so completely different and more positive than the stereotype of a large home with lots of people sitting around a big room – to me, it seemed more genuine family."

"What also attracted me was the opportunity to do something with the wider community, to link with churches and other bodies around. It could break down some of the barriers between older people 'out there' and older people in the care home."

"If I'd had any doubts, they vanished during the application process and the interview. We started with reading the Word and prayer – such a contrast to years of secular meetings. What comes over from those who work with Pilgrims' Friend Society is that this is a calling, a vocation."

"Middlefields House is a lovely building, with beautiful rooms, and we will put the heart into it – the love and care."

Chris would love you to pray:

- For wisdom and strength as the work of preparation goes on
- That the Middlefields team would grow together in vision and purpose



Find out more about Middlefields House:
www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/middlefields

The ACE team

WORDS – Alexandra Davis



Our team of Activities and Community Engagement (ACE) Facilitators are on a mission to get volunteers into our homes and support older people out into the community

Pilgrims' Friend Society care homes have always been ably supported by teams of volunteers. Whether through visiting, leading services, holding fundraisers, or running prayer meetings, our homes have been so blessed over the years by the love, care, and support of volunteers.

In recent years we've been building on this legacy with our Activities and Community Engagement Programme which we're rolling out across the Society's homes. The Programme is a new approach to recruiting volunteers and connecting with the wider community and at the heart of the Programme are our ACE Facilitators: dedicated members of the staff team who recruit and oversee our volunteers, and connect with the local community, especially through the local church.

Providing homes for older people which are warm, friendly, and stimulating is a central part of our mission at Pilgrims' Friend Society, and we know that volunteers are essential to making this happen. Volunteers help create an atmosphere of fun and creativity, working with those who live in the homes to build activities around their interests and hobbies. Some of those who live with us have spent much of their lives cultivating gardens, so green-fingered activities are essential! For others, memories of holidays at the seaside are brought to life with special activity days. And, we hope before too long, that trips out to favourite haunts will be back on the schedule!

Over the years we've been blessed by so many volunteers who have used their skills and gifting in Christian ministry in our homes. Michael and Sylvia Elliot (pictured directly above) have been volunteering at Milward House for 14 years. Before the pandemic closed the home to visitors, Michael and Sylvia would visit those who lived in the home, chatting with them and getting to know them. Michael would also lead services, which are a central part of the

life of the home that volunteers are invaluable to. Even over the last year when volunteering in the homes has been more limited, volunteers like Michael have continued to bless our older people through leading sessions over Zoom!

At Pilgrims' Friend Society, our vision isn't just about what's going on inside our homes and schemes, it's also about older people in the wider community. That's why our ACE team also reach out to the local community, equipping and resourcing others to support older people living independently. We especially want to help the local church to reach older people and help to tackle loneliness and isolation, as well as bring the good news of Jesus to those who haven't yet heard it.

Our ACE Team:

- Milward House – Susan Schibli
- Bethany Christian Home – Sam Everett
- Florence House – Shannon Masango
- Evington Home – Andrea Louis
- Shottermill House – Charlotte Parrot
- Finborough Court – Sarah Parkinson

Coming soon to:

- Middlefields House
- Framland

The ACE Programme is headed up by Jane Trimarco, one of our Operations Managers, and Mandy Smith, Scheme Manager at Pilgrim Gardens and Carey Gardens.

Get involved

Volunteer Michael Elliot says:

"Volunteering is very satisfying work. If you have a burden from the Lord to volunteer, pray about it and listen to what others do."

Our ACE Facilitators are always on the lookout for more volunteers. Whatever your background, and whatever time you have to give, we'd love to hear from you.

 www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/volunteer

 info@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk

 0300 303 1403

Don't live near a Pilgrims' Friend Society care home? Maybe you could become a Church Champion with Faith in Later Life instead, read more on pages 28-29.

Pilgrim Gardens: A community in pandemic

Mandy Smith, Scheme Manager at Pilgrim Gardens, Leicester, looks back at how the community have been supporting each other over the past year



A community bereft

As the news of the pandemic became known to us back in March 2020, there were mixed feelings about what this would mean for us as a community. Some of our number were given the immediate instruction to 'shield', some were uncertain of what they needed to do, and some adamant that this wasn't going to affect them. Whatever our initial reaction, the pandemic certainly has had a huge impact on us as a community. It seemed that overnight we stopped. We stopped our devotions together, our afternoon tea and fellowship, our singing, our exercise class, our games afternoons, our visitors. With so many things restricted, we started to look at the possibilities – what could we do?

A community blessed

We always had a lot of support from the local churches, and as we had lost so much through the pandemic, some of these local supporters contacted me asking if there was any way in which they could help. After some discussion, we set up some open-air prayer and praise sessions. These were such a blessing. Local church leaders brought their musical families with them to lead us in praise, and the Word of God. As we were also very blessed by the weather, we would finish these services with ice-cream. I remember one day that we had set aside to spend worshipping God outside. I invited three speakers to speak to us throughout the day. At the end of the third session, the Aaronic Blessing was sung over us. God's presence and favour was tangible. One said that he, "felt God fill the space above us like the shekinah glory". Many of our number commented afterwards of how God had truly ministered to them.

A community in prayer

We continued throughout most of 2020 without any Covid-19 cases, and then one of our number caught it in the hospital in December. This brought a great challenge to us, as we could not visit and bring back news for prayer. In January 2021, two more caught the virus, Ralph and Maureen – Ralph became particularly poorly with it, in his words, "my speech was slurred, my face was red, I was close to death, as I found out later". News of them was sparse. As a community we were anxious for them and we missed them, but we learnt to pray with little information, trusting them into God's great care. God's care is indeed great and all three are now able to tell their own story; albeit at a distance of six feet outdoors or over the telephone.

A community prepared

There did not seem to be any routine in who the vaccinations were offered to, when or why. This caused an amount of frustration and fear as some were being chased up for the vaccine when others were asked to wait. In early January, I received an email from the surgery asking if they could set up a clinic at Pilgrim Gardens to vaccinate those not yet vaccinated. There was a great sense of celebration on that day in late January when 25 of our number received their first vaccine. With the easing of the restrictions, many are now asking if we can have devotions again, if we can fellowship together again over a cup of tea, if we can sing in the sunshine again. Although it is tempting to say, "let's pick up community again" I really understand that community never stopped here at Pilgrim Gardens, it just changed to encompass the changing situation around us.



A community for you?

If you think community living in a Christian housing scheme could be for you and you would like more information on living at Pilgrim Gardens please contact Mandy Smith on

✉ pilgrim.gardens@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk

☎ 0300 303 8455

🌐 www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/pilgrim-gardens



A shining light in social care

As the social care sector faces a funding crisis, Stephen Hammersley, Chief Executive of Pilgrims' Friend Society, explores the role our organisation can play as an example of best practice



“Praise God for Edith, thank you for her service and thank you that she will now bless our family” was how the manager of one of our care homes prayed for Edith as she moved into our home. That is how older people are seen by us and should be treated: valued and esteemed and as a blessing to others, with what they have to offer being celebrated, rather than what they can no longer do taking centre stage. As Psalm 92 tells us, the godly ‘will still produce fruit’ in old age, remaining ‘vital and green’.

This biblical view of older people is the light that needs to shine out from Christian people at a time when we as a nation are facing a mounting crisis in the provision of social care.

A growing need

As our aging population increases, so does the number of people needing care. Currently, there are over 5.4 million people in the UK who are aged over 75 and 1.6 million who are over 85. The over-85s are the fastest growing age group, set to double to 3.2 million by mid-2041.



At the same time, more people are needing care. According to a report from The King's Fund in February 2021, Government funding to local authorities has lagged badly and total spending by local authorities on adult social care was only a little more in real terms in 2019/20 than in 2010/11 despite massively increasing demand, and fewer people are receiving publicly funded care. According to a report by Age Concern, there are 1.4 million older people right now who do not have access to the care and support they need. The Competition and Markets Authority report that government is not paying the full costs of the care that older people need. As a nation, we are edging ever more deeply into a social care crisis.

When I served at Tearfund, there were two main ways we categorised disasters. There were ‘sudden on-set’ disasters, like tidal waves or earthquakes, which required a fast response. Then there were ‘slow on-set’ disasters, like failed rains which led to failed crops and, eventually, to famine. For slow on-set disasters, the goal was always to take action in the early stages. Fail to do so, and catastrophic disaster would creep up and overwhelm you by degrees.

The situation we as a nation find ourselves in with regard to our provision of social care for older people can be compared to a slow on-set disaster. Disaster and crisis will come when we are not adequately funding the care of older people who can't afford to pay for their own care when they need help.

Social care reform?

Rather than making use of the time we have to adjust and plan for a good future, successive governments have kicked the can down the road. On his first day in office, Boris Johnson stood outside number 10 Downing Street and promised: “We will fix the crisis in social care once and for all.” And yet in the

Queen's Speech in early May, social care reform got barely a mention, with no plans of substance forthcoming.

This was hugely disappointing, although perhaps not entirely unexpected. Indeed, every Prime Minister over the past 20 years has sensed the on-set of a slowly building crisis and made a pledge to reform social care, and then seemingly baulked when faced with magnitude and complexity of the task. As Christians, we need to pray that this promised reform comes to fruition.



Because really, there is no other acceptable option. As the events of the past year have revealed, neglecting the social care sector leads to devastating consequences. The relative lack of priority given to adult social care was at least partly why there was poor provision of PPE to care homes in the early stages of the pandemic; why people who were Covid-positive were discharged from hospitals to care homes; and why guidance for care homes was often late.

The challenges that the system presents to care providers like us are stark. If people can pay, they do. If they cannot pay, we either refuse admission or take what the Local Authority provides (which doesn't cover the full cost) and subsidise the rest which means that we are under pressure to find the money we need to develop our work.

Honouring older people

At Pilgrims' Friend Society we will always be dedicated to caring for people in a way that honours them, despite challenging circumstances. For our organisation, our motivation springs from the biblical belief that we have a duty to care for God's precious older people and to celebrate their gifts and to let them bless us. In Psalm 71:9 the Psalmist pleads, 'Do not cast me off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength is spent.'

Through our approach to care, The Way We Care, we get to know each person as an individual, understanding their life history and taking into account their wishes and preferences. We recognise each person as a spiritual being and support them to keep walking with the Lord and we too in turn are encouraged by what they have to offer. Through our Renewal Programme (see p. 6-7), we're making sure we are equipped to provide excellent care for older people far into the future.

My prayer, though, is that we become part of something bigger as everyone sees God's purposes for older people shining brightly through the work of Pilgrims' Friend Society as we value and esteem those who live with us. And God willing those in government will see that too and will set the right priorities and provide adequate resources so that excellent provision becomes the norm for everyone.

'Do not cast me off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength is spent'

Psalm 71:9

Partnership and support

We hope too, that through working in partnership with others, that light will shine even more brightly still. We're pleased to stand in solidarity with other Christian care providers like Key Change, Mission Care and The Salvation Army. We work alongside our sister charity Faith in Later Life to champion the needs of older people.

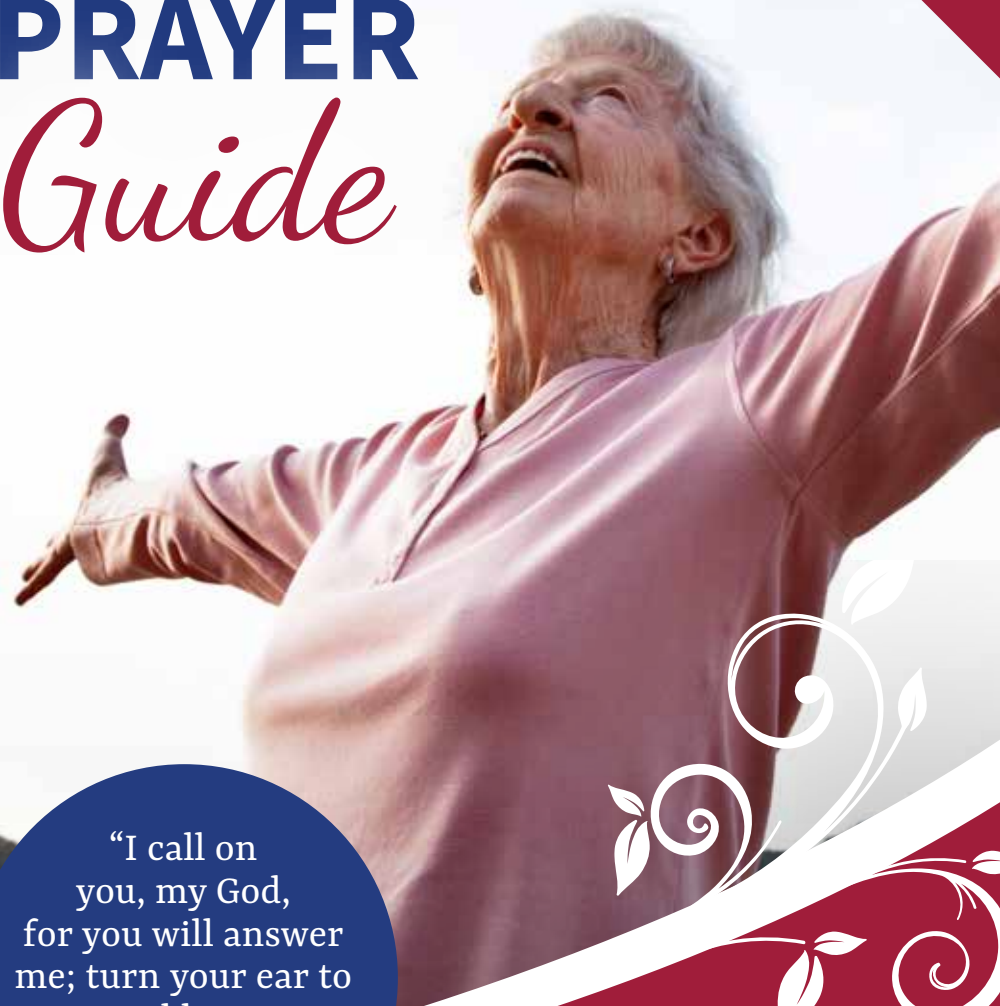
And because we accept people based on need rather than whether the funding package covers our costs, the support of those who are able to give financially makes a huge difference to us. If you think you can give help us, please fill out the Giving Form at the back of this magazine.

Older people will need our care. As Christians, let's ensure that we are there to meet their needs, and at the same time blaze a trail for social care reform. We'd love to welcome more supporters as we grow and develop our work and shine a light for how God designed things to be. If you know someone who would be interested in receiving our magazine please do share your copy.



Did you know...? As well as giving via the Giving Form you can also give online at: www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/give

DAILY PRAYER Guide



"I call on you, my God, for you will answer me; turn your ear to me and hear my prayer."

Psalm 17:6

PULL OUT AND KEEP

Summer 2021

How you can pray for our work

PILGRIMS' FRIEND SOCIETY



Thank YOU

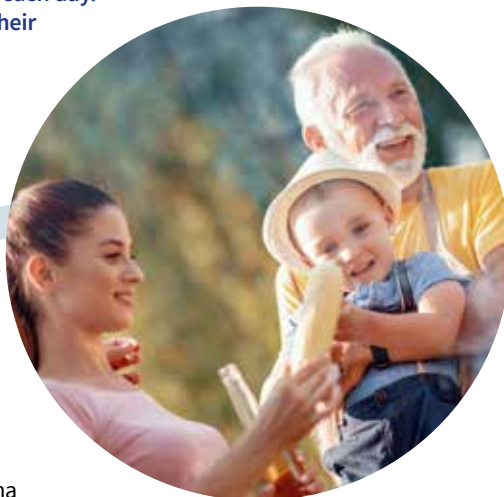
for being a part of the Pilgrims' Friend Society family as we join together in prayer.

Each morning members of the Pilgrims' Friend Society staff and trustee team meet together on Zoom to pray. We all acknowledge the importance of this over the last year or so as God has guided and comforted us through the pandemic. Knowing that many others pray for our work regularly is a great encouragement.

Now that we seem to be past the worst of the pandemic, we reflect with confidence on that great promise from Psalm 23:

“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me...” – Psalm 23:4

Here's how you can be praying to support our work each day. We've listed our homes and housing schemes and their Managers, as well as the other teams and projects that make up the work of Pilgrims' Friend Society.



Sundays



Bethany Christian Home, Plymouth

– Benhilda Shambare (interim)

Emmaus House, Harrogate

– Christina Medway-Steel

Carey Gardens, Kirby Muxloe

– Mandy Smith



Those living in our homes and schemes

Thank God for those who make their home with us. Pray that they would know God with them each day.



Care teams

Thank God for our incredible care teams and all they've given. Pray for strength and inspiration as they continue in their important work.

Mondays



Evington Home, Leicester

– Jeanette Davis and Richard Cowlshaw

Dorothea Court, Bedford

– Evelyn Bissell

Finborough Court Housing

– Sylvia Humm



Our catering, maintenance, and administration teams

Thank God for our brilliant support teams. Pray that they would be full of joy as they serve our communities.



Our resources (see more on pp.24-25)

Pray that our resources would find a wide audience. Pray for Louise Morse as she trains and speaks, particularly on dementia.



Tuesdays



Finborough Court, Great Finborough

– Rachel Fishburne and Jonathan Dorrington

Pilgrim Gardens, Leicester

– Mandy Smith



Activities and Community Engagement Facilitators (see more on pp.8-9)

Thank God for our ACE Facilitators. Pray that they would find new volunteers and connect with others who are passionate about care for older people.



Renewal Programme (see more on pp.6-7)

Thank God for Middlefields House and plans for opening this summer. Pray for the team, and for guidance for the next part of the Programme.

Wednesdays



Florence House, Peterborough

– Georgina Lansdell (interim)

Royd Court, Mirfield

– Vicki Miller



The Operations Team overseeing our homes and schemes

Thank God for our Operations Managers. Pray for energy and inspiration as they support our teams in the homes and schemes.



Church and community engagement

Thank God for the churches which support our work. Pray for more opportunities to connect with local churches over the coming months.



Thursdays



Framland, Wantage – Beth Kneale

Pilgrim Care at Royd Court, Mirfield – Abi Jessop



Our Finance, HR, and Communications teams

Thank God for those who work in our central support teams. Pray as they begin to return to some office-based working and keep developing processes and procedures.



Our IT project

Pray for our ongoing technology project, that training and roll outs of new equipment and programmes would help our work grow.

Fridays



Leonora Home, Chippenham – Gaie Marshall

Strathclyde House, Skelmorlie – Ruth Broomhall



Volunteers

Thank God for all our volunteers. Pray that they would be encouraged in the support they provide and find new ways to volunteer this year.



Giving

Thank God for His ongoing provision. Pray that He would prompt more people to connect with our work and give financially to support older people.

Saturdays



Luff House, Walton-on-the-Naze – Timothy Agbenike and Sharon Rowley

Milward House, Tunbridge Wells – Annabelle Purdie

Shottermill House, Haslemere – Babi Dixon and Mike Beere



Directors and trustees

Thank God for the leadership team. Pray for insight and wisdom as they discern the way forward for the organisation.



Families and relatives

Pray for those whose loved ones live with us. Pray that they would enjoy more time together as visiting becomes easier.

Louise ANSWERS



Louise Morse is a writer and speaker for Pilgrims' Friend Society. She is also a Christian counsellor and cognitive behavioural therapist. Each issue, she offers advice on how to approach challenging issues

Q “My aunt, who used to be really sociable, is now very withdrawn, even though lockdown restrictions are now easing. How can I help her?”

A I'm hearing about many older people who are reluctant to go out again, even to church. It isn't surprising: for the last year we've been fed a media diet of warnings and fearsome statistics. Many are saying that they are more comfortable staying in; having their medical prescriptions and groceries delivered and watching church services online rather than venturing out.

The isolation of the last year has affected us all, say brain experts, and we are all experiencing a 'cognitive fog'. In other words, we're not thinking clearly: we lose sight of the facts and our sense of perspective.

If your aunt is afraid of catching Covid, she will need empathy and reassurance. Explain that it's perfectly reasonable to be nervous,

but that the signs are now that the worst is over. Most vulnerable people have been vaccinated, probably including your aunt, so she also has that extra protection. But often fear doesn't give way to reason, so ask her to remember the times that God has protected or rescued her from disturbing times (or tribulations, as the Bible puts it) during her life. The longer one lives the more examples there are! Listen as she describes those times and see her resilience grow. Ask, 'Has God changed? Is He less able now?'

But if it is because your aunt is comfortable as she is, you could tell her that science shows that interacting with others protects us from dementia. Also God says that we are to love our neighbours as ourselves and to build one another up. Something as simple as her smile may heal someone's heart.



MORE WAYS TO PRAY: Our monthly Family News email contains all our latest prayer updates, plus details of happenings from across the organisation. Sign up online at: www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/keep-in-touch



Find out more about Louise's work and publications on our website: www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/louise-morse

Life stories: Pam, Carey Gardens



Having lived in Kirby Muxloe, Leicestershire most of her life, Pam, 86 feels right at home at Carey Gardens, our independent living scheme located in the village. It's the perfect place from which to enjoy her favourite hobby – fly-fishing

WORDS: Helen McKay-Ferguson

Pam's love of fishing has its roots in childhood. "We used to go to Barmouth in North Wales for our holidays and my father would go fly-fishing for salmon. My sister and I went with him – I absolutely loved it."

As an adult, Pam always had a hankering to learn fly-fishing herself, but it was only at the age of 70 that she finally realised her ambition. She made enquiries at the nearby Thornton Reservoir, where there was a local fishing guide, Ifor Jones. "I said, 'Do you teach old ladies?' He took me for my first lesson. It was hard standing on the pontoon casting off. But I was determined. Ifor said afterwards that he realised that I wasn't going to be easily put off."

It's fair to say she was hooked. These days Pam's favourite way to fish is from a boat and she mostly catches trout. "Out on the water it's just so peaceful watching the birds and other wildlife," she says. Other of her favourite fishing spots include Draycote Water in Warwickshire and Eyebrook in Rutland.

Pam always takes at least one companion with her, with two of the most frequent being fellow fisherwomen Linda and Carolyn. "Linda used to go fishing with her husband.

When he died, Ifor pointed her in my direction – I felt ever so proud. Similarly, Carolyn was a widow keen to learn fishing and Ifor suggested I show her the ropes."

One summer Linda and Pam went on a fishing trip to Scotland, staying at the magnificent Tigh Mor castle in the Trossachs. The ladies picked up some top fishing tips from Morris Meikle, a local 'ghillie' – a Scots word for a fishing or hunting guide. Morris promised the ladies that if they came back next year he would take them salmon fishing. And so they returned, this time with Carolyn too.

"When you go salmon fishing you have to keep throwing the line and spinning it round. It was so much fun. I even caught a salmon!" says Pam.

Pam's fellow residents at Carey Gardens are often the beneficiaries of her adroit fishing skills. In normal times the scheme has a monthly Friday night dinner, with Pam's freshly-caught trout gracing the table. It's a social event that everyone hopes will return as lockdown eases.



Pam has lived in Leicestershire all her life. She was born on 23rd August 1934, a year and a day after her older sister Mary. Her early childhood was spent in the village of Great Glen, where her family lived in a cottage, Rose Cottage. "Over the wall it was just pure fields, which was wonderful as a child."

Her father was the church bell ringer and her mother was in the Mothers' Union. "We loved going to church," says Pam. "I remember it so vividly. There was a beautiful brass eagle lectern at the front which I liked looking at." Every week Pam and her sister went to Sunday School. "I loved hearing all the stories at Sunday School – I loved a good story then, and I still do now."

When Pam was 15, the family moved to Kirby Muxloe on account of their father's job with

the water department. One of the first things the family did on moving to the village was go to the local Anglican church, St Bartholomew's. "We knew we would find friends and people there," says Pam. Her father volunteered as a bellringer and quickly found himself promoted to captain of the bells.

On leaving school Pam got a job at the main telephone exchange in Leicester. "There were several of us who were Christian. We got a little group together and met during our dinner break on a Wednesday."

In 1956, she married Rod whom she knew from school. Coincidentally, they shared a birthday, although Rod was a year older. They had two sons, Ian and Simon. The family moved into a house on Church Road in Kirby Muxloe, the roof of which Pam can see from her window at Carey Gardens. Rod worked for a shoe waste company before becoming a driver for Walkers crisps.



think about moving into Carey Gardens, which had recently been built by Kirby Muxloe Free Church. "I realised a time was coming when I would be better off living with others than on my own," she says.

When a flat became vacant, she went to look around. "As soon as I walked in, I knew that I would be happy here. It's the best thing I ever did. I think a lot of people don't

make the decision to move early enough. It's lovely because we're all together but still separate. You're not duty-bound to join in with all the 'escapades' but at the same time it's lots of fun. As well as Friday night socials, we also usually have coffee mornings twice a week and regular visiting speakers."

Sadly, her son Ian passed away in 2011 and a few years later in 2018 Pam lost her sister Mary to breast cancer. "I can't tell you how much I miss her, but it was her time. We were so lucky to have each other. We always shared our families with each other. Now, more than ever, her daughter Shirley is like a daughter to me and her children see me as a grandma."

The community of Carey Gardens and Kirby Muxloe has been a strong support, especially during the pandemic. St Bartholomew's has been able to open for private prayer. As life has slowly been returning to normal, Pam has enjoyed getting back on the water. "The first day was very emotional," she says. "The sun was warm on the water, the birds were out, and the people walking around were so happy. Everything felt so much better."

Sadly, tragedy struck when Pam was in her early fifties. One day, Rod came home complaining of a pain in his shoulder. When the pain didn't go away, he went to the doctor, thinking it was probably rheumatism. However, it was discovered that he had myeloma, a type of cancer of the bone marrow.

"At that time in my life I needed my faith more than ever," says Pam. Giving up her job as a telephonist, Pam nursed Rod at home. Rod eventually went into LOROS, a local hospice, where he passed away in 1989. "Then it was the three of us," says Pam.

Not long after, her sister Mary's husband also died. "We'd always been so close, and now we were able to support each other through grief," says Pam. "We did everything together, including going on holiday. We had some lovely cruises all over the world."

A turning point came for Pam when, shortly after taking up fly-fishing, she fell and broke her ankle. The accident prompted her to

All things bright and beautiful

Maureen, 84, moved to Milward House, our home in Tunbridge Wells, in September 2020. Here, she's been inspired to pursue her passion for painting, capturing the world around her with a palette of glowing colours



"I'd like people to look at my paintings and think what a good artist God is. He definitely understands light!

I've enjoyed painting since I was a child. When I was about 12, I painted a large picture of some roses floating. It was thought to be quite good.

Once I had my children, Michael and Anne, it was difficult to find time to paint. Later, I joined an art class in town. The teacher had lots of photos and we'd choose one to paint. He'd demonstrate a different technique each week and by watching I

built up lots of different skills.

I love to paint the natural world. I once went on holiday to Glynhir Mansion in Carmarthenshire. Every day I'd take my sketchbook and paint something different in the gardens. At the end of the two weeks, we had an art exhibition.

On one occasion I visited Sissinghurst Castle. In front of the chapel there was a grove of magnolia trees in full flower. I thought, "I've got to paint that!". The painting now hangs on my bedroom wall at Milward House."

Since moving to Milward, Maureen has been busy with her brush...



"This lake scene is from a card someone sent me. The water turned out rather well."



"This painting is of my garden at home, painted from a photograph. I just love the colours."



"This is the view from the dining room window at Milward House. There are lovely daffodils growing outside."

"I think God is like a sower sowing seeds into all our different flower beds. You can decide which seed you'd like to water. I'd definitely recommend giving painting a go. It's very satisfying when it turns out right. To gain your confidence, you could always start with one of those colouring books where there's space to add your own details."

God's Word in God's World

Ruth Ranger explains what led to the creation of *God's Word in God's World*, a photobook with Bible verses designed to encourage spiritual reflection

During the first lockdown of Covid-19 last year, I wasn't able to visit my Dad at Leonora Home, Pilgrims' Friend Society's care home in Chippenham. I wanted to find a way to help him in his walk with God, knowing that the usual interactions he'd have might be halted for a while.

I began searching online for a suitable picture book with brief Bible texts as his Alzheimer's Disease had advanced to a stage where he was struggling to read his Bible alone. Nothing seemed to fit the bill so I designed my own photobook using a website and free to use online images. Dad seemed to enjoy it, as did other residents at the home, and staff were complimentary. So Pilgrims' Friend Society decided to produce an official version.

Called *God's Word in God's World*, it is a glossy hardback book of colourful photos from nature with short Bible passages mixed in rather than separated on a different page, where they could be missed. The words are in



giant print to make them easier to read. The pages are of thicker paper to make them easier to turn and the book is A5 landscape format to make it easier to hold. I was also keen that the term 'dementia' is not mentioned so that anyone can use it.

Photos and Bible verses have been chosen to prompt memories as well as to be eye-catching. This makes the book useful for starting conversations and for reminiscing. For example, the peacock on the front cover was chosen not just for its beautiful, vibrant colours but also because it is linked to a family anecdote for my Dad which is explained in the book's foreword. My own favourite Bible verse, Psalm 118:14 is also included!

The mixture of images of flora, fauna and landscapes means that the reader will find something to which they are particularly drawn. A variety of carefully chosen Bible translations will help to ease understanding.

The photobook can be used alone and with others of all ages. It can also be used by churches to support their community members, or as a gift for those moving away or into a care home.

We hope this photobook will be a lovely treat for anyone at whatever stage of life and spiritual growth.

Resources

Our resources are organised around three areas: Dementia, Growing Older Together, Discipleship and Evangelism. This issue we're recommending:



DEMENTIA Dementia Information Pack Louise Morse, £12

Our updated Dementia Information Pack contains a series of leaflets on different aspects of dementia, including diagnosis, caring and managing challenging behaviour, and caring for the caregiver. Louise Morse says, "When dementia comes into your life you need all the information you can get – but you don't have time to read a book about it. This pack provides swift information on a broad range of aspects of dementia, including the essential Christian element."



GROWING OLDER TOGETHER Worshipping together Louise Morse, £8

These are devotions with a difference. Instead of listening passively, seniors are invited to share their thoughts and experiences. These reflections and prayers have been written with older residents in housing or care in mind, but they would work equally well with older people in small fellowship groups or even one-to-one with family in their own homes.



DISCIPLESHIP & EVANGELISM Coping with Grief and Loss Louise Morse, £3

Written within a Christian context, this booklet looks at the impact of grief and loss and explores key stepping stones to help the reader navigate the tricky waters of bereavement. The aim of the booklet is to give an understanding of what grief is, how it affects us, and how we can live through it.



God's Word in God's World, priced £8.99, is available now.



For our full list of resources
and to order online, visit:

www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/resources

Alternatively, ☎ 0300 303 1403



A day in the life of... Vanessa Large, Hummingbird

WORDS: Kaela Dutton

Vanessa is a Hummingbird at Finborough Court, our home in Suffolk. In this role, she provides emotional, spiritual, and practical support to those living with dementia



7.30am

Vanessa wakes up and feeds her cat, Cleopatra, and her degus – a type of small rodent. She then has breakfast with her husband. On her drive to work she takes time to thank the Lord and soak in the beautiful countryside, which inspires and humbles her.

9am

Vanessa arrives at Finborough Court and begins her working day, leaving all her troubles and worries at the door, starting the day with a smile and an uplifted spirit.

After she changes into her work dress, she greets everybody with a bounce in her step. Once in the lounge/dining area she plays relaxing music and greets family members individually, asking if they would like a cup of tea, and assists those who need help with their breakfast.

9.30am

She then visits family members in their rooms, to catch up and listen to their concerns, water their plants and, on occasion, read Bible passages.

10.45am

Vanessa organises a service. She prepares a prayer, chooses a hymn and Bible reading, and asks family members for their contributions. The service begins and is played over the speakers so that those in their rooms can listen.

11.30am

While writing up her progress notes, Vanessa enjoys a cup of tea.

11.50am

Alongside the care team, Vanessa assists with giving out drinks and serving lunch, making sure everybody is okay. She lends a hand with those who need a little extra help eating or cutting up their meals.

1pm

Vanessa sits down to eat her lunch quietly, taking time to reflect on her morning and what family members have said, and how she can improve their everyday life and make their day better.

1.30pm

After lunch she helps everyone back to their rooms, or the lounge. At this point she visits those who she did not get a chance to catch up with earlier in the day. Again, she sits with them reading the Bible, praying, and bringing them comfort and company.

2pm

If the weather is nice Vanessa takes family members out for a walk, or in a wheelchair to the village. She might set up a game, such as beetle drive.

2.30pm

When there is some quiet time in the afternoon Vanessa writes her progress notes.

3pm

Meeting new family members is always a delight; Vanessa helps them complete a 'This is me' form which gives staff an insight into the new family member, their family, previous employment, hobbies, and denomination. The form really helps build a rapport and gain a deeper understanding of the whole person.

After work

She loves walking, birdwatching and enjoying the great outdoors. Nature is such a joy to her and she loves being able to share her love of wildlife with young people in her role as a Girl Guide Assistant Leader.

Being part of her church community is very important to Vanessa. She used to sing in the church choir and hopes to go back to singing when Covid restrictions ease. She also enjoys flower arranging at church.



Could you come and work for us?



For all the latest jobs, see:
www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/jobs



Vanessa's Favourite Hymn The Lord Bless You and Keep You by John Rutter
Proudest Achievement Adopting two boys after adoption training, and her wonderful granddaughter who keeps her very busy.

Vanessa's Favourite Bible Verse "Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them; let all the trees of the forest sing for joy." Psalm 96:12



Championing older people

Carl Knightly, Chief Executive of our sister charity Faith in Later Life, shares how the organisation is equipping church members to serve older people through its Church Champion network



In the knowledge that there is an army of Christian volunteers across some 40,000 churches in the UK, and a significant need to reach older people in the community, Faith in Later Life created a community of 'Church Champions', a network to support Christians engaged with older people in their local area. And it has been a blessing to see this community grow, to almost 400 Church Champions (so far) at corresponding churches, all being supported by the work and resources of Faith in Later Life.

Faith in Later Life was launched in 2017 with a mission to inspire and equip Christians to 'reach, serve and empower' older people everywhere through the local church, encouraging older Christians and reaching older people with the good news of the Lord Jesus. We do this through our website and resources, our national directory of church activities, and our growing community of Church Champions, equipping and encouraging them in their gospel impact in their local communities.

One of our Church Champion community, Rhi Cross, based at Hope Church Winchester, shared how she has felt supported by Faith in Later Life as she started a new older people's ministry at her church. She says,

“ I felt alone, I didn't know what I was doing. Becoming a Church Champion was an ideal way to link up with other people, a community of people with the same vision and passion.”

As we know, the Covid-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on many older people. Being unable to meet up in person for much of the last year, whether in church, community groups or in our own homes, has meant older people have been even more vulnerable to isolation and loneliness. But this has provided an opportunity and challenge to reach out into our communities.

At Christmas and Easter, Faith in Later Life produced seasonal postcards with Bible

verses on the front and encouraged our nationwide Church Champion community to use them to reach out to older people in their local communities. We praise God that as a result over 5,000 people were reached with a gospel message from a local Christian!

Rhi Cross was particularly helped by our Easter Postcard campaign, as she found it hard coming up with new ideas for outreach and said it would have been a lot of work for her to do on her own. She explained that the personal nature of the postcards was tailored to her audience and that being provided with them as a Church Champion was a huge help to her.

As well as regularly sharing our resources and ideas with our Church Champion community, we host a monthly equipping session, currently over Zoom, during which we reflect on a topic, such as dementia or evangelism, and how to practically apply this in ministry. We regularly have guest speakers who share their experiences and advice. It is also an opportunity for Church Champions to

share their thoughts and encouragements. It was wonderful on one occasion to hear from Pippa Cramer, Seniors and Pastoral Minister at Holy Trinity Claygate (and co-founder of the Daily Hope telephone line) on how she and her team have continued to support older people in her community, throughout the pandemic.

Joining together in this ministry is a real blessing. We sow the seeds and then wait on the Lord. An older lady who received one of our Christmas postcards from a Church Champion said simply this,

“ Thank you for my postcard which was lovely, I appreciated not being forgotten at Christmas.”

This year we want to grow our Church Champion community to 700, as we seek to share the love and good news of Jesus across the nation. Could you join us? For more information visit

www.faithinlaterlife.org
churchchampions@faithinlaterlife.org

Resource picks

Faith in Later Life offers a wealth of free resources to equip those seeking to serve older people. You can find links to the following at

www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/resources/faith-in-later-life

1. Guidance for Christian faith organisations in the support and value of older people
2. Book Extract Finishing Well: A God's eye view of ageing - Revd Ian Knox
3. Make a Meal of it – a guide to hosting a community event



 Find out more about our unique approach to care, The Way We Care: www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/the-way-we-care

Residents' stories: ROY

Having worked as a cartographical surveyor and then a youth leader, Roy, now 85, has spent his life helping others find their way. He is now a much-loved member of our community at Luff House, Walton-on-the-Naze

Born in Sevenoaks in 1935, Roy moved to Tunbridge Wells as a baby. As a boy, he was fascinated with maps and loved being outdoors. After school, he signed up to the army to train as a cartologist and was sent to Egypt, where he spent three years making maps with the Royal Engineers. "It was an adventurous time," says his daughter Rowena. "Dad told me stories of how they had to clean their plates with sand."

On returning to England Roy was employed by the Ordnance Survey. "He enjoyed the work but it was not without its stresses – he used to have to climb over garden fences to get measurements," says Rowena. In 1964 his supervisor commented on his high standard of work, noting also 'he has a very pleasant manner and this enables him to enjoy the best of relations with his colleagues.'

Having a natural affinity with young people, after several years Roy decided to retrain as a youth worker.

In 1966 he married Mary Christine, who he knew through St John's. The family lived at Harlow, then moved to Clacton in 1968, the same year Rowena was born. Roy was employed by Essex County Council as a community education officer. "Dad was able to bring out the best in young people," says Rowena. "If you thought you could walk ten miles he'd say, 'why not do 15?' He had a lovely, gentle way of being both challenging and encouraging."

In his role, Roy organised trips for the Essex Youth Orchestra. "One year he took a trip to Russia. It was minus 40 degrees and some of the wooden instruments started splitting in the cold," says Rowena. He was also in charge

of The Princes' Trust and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, with many young people benefiting from his expert map training.

Church was always important. "When I was growing up we were always the last to leave any event," says Rowena. "Dad had to make sure all the chairs had been stacked, that all the floors had been swept. He was a perfectionist, but in a supportive way. He'd be the first to ask, 'what can I do to help?'"

Sadly, Mary Christine died from cancer in 1987. Roy later got remarried to Sue who had also lost her husband and who he knew through his work with the council.

After retiring, Roy dedicated his talents to an ambitious church restoration project. St John's in Great Clacton, listed in the Domesday Book, had been declared unsafe and forced to close in 1986. Thanks to Roy's management of the project, the church was able to open again after 16 years.

A few years ago Roy started to wonder if he might be showing signs of Alzheimer's Disease. "His father had suffered

from the disease and he recognised the symptoms in himself," says Rowena.

"Coming to terms with the diagnosis was very difficult for him," says Sue. "He is an incredibly talented and capable man and he knew what lay ahead. At the same time he was very brave, making sure his Will and everything was sorted."

Sue cared for Roy at home until he needed to move into a care home. The family chose Luff House, where they knew his faith would be supported. "The staff show him such affection. I made a book of his favourite Bible verses and every week they go through it with him," says Rowena. "They know how important his faith is to him."

Roy loves white tigers, and as a special gift one of the staff gave him a giant white tiger. Around the home, Roy's is a very gentle and calming presence. "The staff tell me that at dinner time, he won't start eating until everyone at the table has been served, even if it's ice cream," says Rowena, "That's Dad all over. He is such a gentleman."

Gift
FORM
...CONTINUED



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I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year, it is my responsibility to pay the difference. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p in every £1 that I give.

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I would like to receive Pilgrims' Friend Society's monthly Family News email, containing updates about the charity's work and ways to pray.

Please return this form to Pilgrims' Friend Society in the pre-paid envelope supplied



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Commencing from (date) / / and thereafter every month/quarter/year (*delete as appropriate*) until further notice.

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I enclose a cheque payable to 'Pilgrims' Friend Society'

Please charge my debit/credit card as follows: Visa Mastercard

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CONTINUES OVERLEAF...

Contact details

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-  **Leonora Home, CHIPPENHAM**
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-  **Middlefields House, CHIPPENHAM**
0300 303 8471
middlefieldshouse@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk
-  **Finborough Court, GREAT FINBOROUGH**
0300 303 1450
finborough@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk
-  **Emmaus House, HARROGATE**
0300 303 8450
emmaushouse@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk
-  **Shottermill House, HASLEMERE**
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shottermill@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk
-  **Carey Gardens, KIRBY MUXLOE**
0300 303 8455
carey.gardens@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk
-  **Evington Home, LEICESTER**
0300 303 1455
evington@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk
-  **Pilgrim Gardens, LEICESTER**
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pilgrim.gardens@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk

-  **Royd Court, MIRFIELD**
0300 303 1480
roydcourt@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk
-  **Pilgrim Care (Home care services at Royd Court)**
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pilgrim.care@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk
-  **Florence House, PETERBOROUGH**
0300 303 8445
florencehouse@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk
-  **Bethany Christian Home, PLYMOUTH**
0300 303 8440
bethanyhome@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk
-  **Strathclyde House, SCOTLAND**
01475 522 525
enquiries@strathclydehouse.org.uk
-  **Milward House, TUNBRIDGE WELLS**
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-  **Luff House, WALTON-ON-THE-NAZE**
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-  **Framland, WANTAGE**
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