

# BRIARDENE NEWS!

Winter 2025/26 edition!

## A Fun-Filled Start to the Year!

We kicked off the year with a range of fun activities. The New Year was celebrated with a food-themed quiz, followed by hot chocolate and popcorn. Later in January, we marked Burns Night, where everyone enjoyed relaxing colouring activities while dressed in tartan. The atmosphere was set with traditional Scottish music, and to round off the evening, residents enjoyed haggis and Scotch broth for tea.



## Our Home Manager says...

I hope that everyone enjoyed a peaceful and happy Christmas and New Year celebrations.

All the feedback from residents who visited family and friends was very positive. They all had a wonderful time and have shown their fantastic gifts to everyone. All the residents who spent Christmas and New Year with us here at Briardene also had a wonderful time. We have already begun to talk about events, trips and holidays for 2026. Keyworkers will contact you with the plans and updates in due course. We would like to extend a warm welcome to Jessica, our new resident. She spent some time with us over the last few months, spending some weekends as respite and has now become a full-time resident at Briardene. We are all delighted!



**Paulsimon Robinson**

HARROGATE  
**Skills  
4 Living**



# AUTUMN ACTIVITIES!

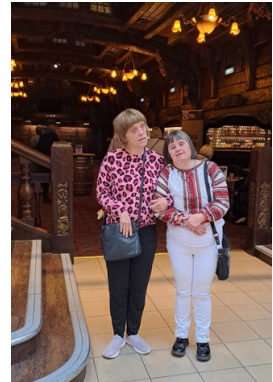
Many of the residents enjoyed outings close to home and some activities can be enjoyed without even leaving Briardene such as stencilling. We enjoyed a visit to Ripon market and a tasty warming drink and sweet treat at our own Harrogate Chocolate Café.

Residents at Briardene always love to celebrate Halloween. It is always a good opportunity for spooky fun, and this year was no exception. There was no shortage of wizards and witches and even a pumpkin pinata! Residents clearly made the most of the food, drink and games associated with this occasion!



## A VISIT TO SCOTLAND!

Emma and Ali went to Scotland's lively and historic Capital city, Edinburgh. They soaked in the sights, shopped and enjoyed eating out, and a highlight of the week was a trip to see the live performance of Wicked!



## A SCARBOROUGH MINI BREAK!

Vicky and Colleen stayed at the superb Sands Luxury Apartments on the sea front on North Bay in Scarborough. They ticked off some of the 'must do' activities in Scarborough, including a trip on the Victorian cliff railway. They also walked in the lovely Peasholm Park, enjoying views over the boating lake and relaxing in the gardens.



# FESTIVE FUN!



As Christmas approached, there were opportunities to design craft activities around the theme. Although we didn't see much real snow, the residents enjoyed making snowmen indoors.

We also enjoyed the annual Harrogate Skills for Living Christmas Party which was a day filled with dancing, games and a visit from Santa!

Another highlight of the Christmas season for many of us is a trip to the Pantomime; Jack and the Beanstalk at Harrogate Theatre did not disappoint!



# AUTUMN TERM FUN AT THE DAY CENTRE!

The autumn term was packed with activities which were enjoyed by all the Briardene residents who attend the Day Centre.

Growing, harvesting then cooking the produce grown in the allotment took time and commitment, with very pleasing and tasty results!

The Autumn/Winter season gives opportunity for some interesting craft activities and our tutors in the Day Centre have been working with Alex, Cecilia, Colleen, Celeste, Emma, Jessica, Karen, Kim and Sally to produce some marvellous creations.

Dan's Rhythm Rebels is a great opportunity to let your hair down and get creative, while Emma, Karen and Kim enjoyed some Healthy Soups and Seasonal Lunches.

A healthy mix of Movement and Relaxation has been popular with Celeste while Kim, Alison and Sally have enjoyed Music, Movies and Broadway!

Kim has worked hard as part of the Newsletter group, whilst Emma has been Out and About in Harrogate with Alex, enjoying the Social Walking Group.



# BLACKPOOL ILLUMINATIONS!

Kim and Sally went to The Bond Hotel in Blackpool; they enjoyed a trip to Madam Tussauds, had afternoon tea at the Tower Ballroom (Keep Dancing!) and had a visit to the Sealife centre. One of the highlights of this holiday was the live entertainment in the hotel each evening.



# WELCOME TO NEW RESIDENT...JESS!

A big, warm welcome Jessica, our newest resident. Jessica's family live on a farm near Ripon and she attends the Harrogate Skills for Living Day Centre. She loves rugby and football and her favourite teams are Leeds Rhinos and Manchester United.

Jess has been enjoying Wednesday Socials at the Day Centre, visiting markets, shops and cafes.



# A NEW TRANSITION GUIDE!

HS4L has a newly published Transitions Guide, aimed at supporting young people with a learning disability and/or autism to navigate the change from childhood to adulthood. Although much of the content is aimed at those between the ages of 15 and 25, there is plenty of information pertinent to adults of all ages. Follow the QR code or visit our website to find out more.



# TOGETHER WE COOK!



Cooking and eating good food is an important part of life at Briardene and the residents enjoy being part of the cooking process as well as the eating. From January 2026, Harrogate Skills for Living launched a new project via their website called 'Together we Cook' to build on this foundation of promoting healthy, affordable and seasonal cooking; it is hoped that all those connected with HS4L will find it useful; 2 new recipes are added every month in both standard and easy read formats.

Follow the QR code to find out more!

## OUR INTERIM CEO SAYS...

As we step into 2026, I want to wish all our friends, families, and partners a wonderful year ahead. Many of you will already know that Hadyn took a well-earned early retirement in October after years of dedicated leadership. We're incredibly grateful for everything he contributed, and I'm honoured to be leading the organisation as Interim CEO for the foreseeable future. It's an exciting challenge, and every time I look back over the activities in this newsletter, I'm reminded of what a brilliant service we continue to run together.

We are delighted to welcome Jess to the Briardene family. She is settling well and making good friends in the home.

Harrogate Skills for Living is also excited to launch our new healthy eating project "Together we Cook", encouraging everyone to build on their culinary skills and enthusiasm as we explore fresh, nutritious ideas together, I'm sure Briardene residents will have fun trialling the healthy, simple and easy read recipes put out each month.

With January's unpredictable weather – and the real possibility of a snowy day – it might just be the perfect excuse to pause with a hot chocolate in hand and take five minutes to enjoy both this newsletter and the attached copy of Believe and Achieve, proudly created by our students, about our students, and for our students at our brilliant day service.



**Julia Moor**