

James Hirons Bi-Annual Report, March 2022

Firstly, a warm welcome to the new residents and staff who have joined us since the beginning of the year. Also, we welcome Barbara Beal, a new member to our Board of Trustees.

Sadly, just as we were excitedly beginning open-up our Care Home to welcome visitors and share Christmas activities together, along came Omicron! Fortunately, three afternoons of tea-parties were able to take place just before new restrictions were again imposed and these were very successful and much enjoyed by our residents, their visitors, families and staff.

The subsequent ease in restrictions in more recent weeks has been welcomed but we still must navigate the balancing of this alongside continuing significant levels of COVID infection across the population. We recognise that our residents, as in all care homes, have had to cope with so much already and we are grateful for their continuing understanding and patience. Our Home Manager, Allan Fairweather, Deputy Manager and staff continue to work very hard to respect and nurture residents' freedoms, rights, and day-to-day quality of life alongside keeping everyone as safe as possible (For a full detailed up-date of our current arrangements relating to the ongoing Pandemic for all residents, visitors, new referrals and staff please 'click' on the Link at the top of the Home Page on our website.)

James Hirons is a charity; it never aims to make profit and has always endeavoured to keep Residents' Fees and annual increases as low as possible, carefully looks after its investments which are all there to support and protect the Home. However, the last two years have seen unprecedented challenges and major increases in our operating cost base and even allowing for income from investments there have been appreciable overall losses in income over expenditure. Therefore, with effect from 1 April 2022, we have reluctantly decided to implement an increase in room rates, details of which are available on our website and from our Home and our Office Manager.

I assure you, however, that the Board will also continue to invest in our services, staff and in the building and its gardens. During the last year we have installed a garden room, replaced soft furnishings, and increased our use of technology, giving residents access to unlimited Wi-Fi, iPads, smart TVs, and their personal choice of music. Although group activities have been impossible throughout the pandemic, the activities coordinator has continued to provide one to one contact daily for each resident, small group activities have recently re-commenced, and everyone is eagerly awaiting the return of outings, group celebrations and visiting entertainers.

James Hirons operates in an increasingly competitive market for recruiting and for retaining the most qualified and dedicated staff and yet these are the people who are crucial to making James Hirons the best it can be. Pay rates in the care sector are traditionally low but we are proud to have recently taken the decision to increase all our staff's pay to a level which more adequately represents their skills and their ongoing dedication. Alongside this, we are maintaining a rolling programme of improvements throughout the Home and continuing to develop our recent initiative that will build-up a programme of improvements aimed at 'making every day a day worth living' and are currently gathering ideas from our staff and residents.

Please note that James Hirons has VACANCIES currently for permanent and respite care. Please contact by telephone in the first instance to have all your initial questions answered around availability, fees etc. You will be offered a speedy appointment with our Home Manager and invited

to meet with him in the Garden Room at the Home. From there you will be able to have a detailed discussion, go through the brochure together, see communal areas through windows and view our extensive gardens. Our Home Manager will also share with you a short video showing available rooms and answer any questions you might have. This video can also be sent to you if you would like to share it and discuss with other family members. If you would like to meet a specific member of staff, for example our Chef or Activities Co-ordinator, this can also be arranged. Our response to hospital / community facility referrals is also speedy and reliable, with our Home Manager undertaking face-to-face visits and assessments of local referrals within 24 hours during weekdays and immediately liaising with family members and professionals.

Please do get in touch if you have any queries and, of course, we always welcome your feedback. Telephone: 01926 422425. Email: info@jameshirons.org.uk

Rose Ruddick,
Chair, James Hirons Board of Trustees