

Start of the Court Circular.

Firstly, a welcome message from Cody Aldington, the Design editor.

Once again, it is a huge pleasure to see so much good news. There are some great stories inside which talk of celebrations and social events, historic events and life stories. We also have a new feature, Moving Stories, in which owners share their experiences of moving to their court.

Next, an overview of articles within the Spring 2018 edition.

Articles begin with court news stories which talk of birthdays, anniversaries and some fascinating personal histories. Following this, is our first Moving stories article from Sheila Farrar who talks about her move to St George's Court last year. Moving onto RSL News articles which reveal staff awards, refurbishments and Health and Safety requirements. Following this, Management and Professional matters give recognition for staff efforts and achievements. Next featured is a delicious dairy-free Easter Simnel cake recipe. The Health articles concentrates healthy eating and diet tips and Osborne Court owners showing off their yoga moves. The garden articles are from Gardener Annie at Blake Court and Wendy the Chair of the Garden Committee at Osborne Court. Both articles talk of future plans for their gardens and what to do during Spring. Lastly, we feature a double page spread full of poetry entries to last editions competition and a winner is announced.

Before beginning the articles, there is a new competition to mention. A Limerick competition, for the for the next issue we challenge all the wordsmiths amongst you once more, to come up with a limerick. The theme of the limerick is life at your court. Please send us your entries by the end of June. Good Luck!

Moving on to court news articles from around the courts.

First articles are from last years Christmas celebrations, even though Christmas does seems ages ago now, we felt we had to include these lovely articles of your social events. The articles are titled: Musical delights. The first begins with Gorselands and Tannery Court and is titled, Brass Band visits. The highlight of Gorselands' Christmas celebrations was the visit of a 12 piece Brass Band. The band played Christmas classics giving the opportunity to sing along. Paul O'Brien, Court Manager said, "The sound in our lounge was wonderful and no owner needed a hearing aid!" Abergele's own Beulah Brass Band entertained Tannery Court with wonderful arrangements of traditional and modern pieces.

Next article, from Fullerton and Bowling Green Court is titled, Carols and sing-alongs. At Fullerton Court, owners gathered for a sing-along, led by Jack Nolan with piano accompaniment from John Blackwell's son, Mark. Owners also enjoyed carols from the choir of St Mary's and St Peter's CE Primary School. Bowling Green's Singing Together group enjoyed a special afternoon of Christmas music including Let it Snow (even if it didn't) and Let there be Peace on Earth – ever relevant. A window in the weather allowed the lighting of sparklers, shown in the photo (left) taken by Court Photographer, Mrs Betty Jenkins. Mulled wine and warm mince pies made for a memorable afternoon. Special thanks to Pat Conder, Sue Patel, Judith Sharman and the enthusiastic singers.

Next article, from Tiddington and Pinner Court is titled, a feast of seasonal celebrations. From Christmas choirs to line dancing, an orchestral performance (thanks to Bob Bessell) and evening parties, to a visit from the Mayor, Tiddington owners made sure they had a good time. Mrs Bain and Mrs McCausland, having not previously been involved in Pinner Court's Christmas jumper days, came up with their own special creations to mark the occasion, putting paper napkins to innovative use.

Next article, from Kennet and Priory Court is titled, Social club hosts a great annual Christmas party. Local singing and entertainment group Tuesday Girls kicked things off for Kennet Court, followed by a pantomime performed by owners and written by Duty Manager Laura Webb. After a month of rehearsals, Kennet Court's own version of Aladdin went down a treat. A buffet was served, with a lot of laughter and Christmas spirit all round. While Priory Court owners danced through the holiday season to one of their regular performers.

The next article is from Deerhurst Court and is about an owners account of the Royal Navy. The article is titled, Coastal Forces of the Royal Navy and begins with, When I moved into Deerhurst Court some three and a half years ago I never dreamt that two other apartments out of the total of forty would have associations with the

Coastal Forces of the Royal Navy – Peter Munnoch. For those of you who may never have heard of Coastal Forces, can I give a few details. It was originally formed during the First World War and took part in operations including the attack on Zeebrugge and later in the Baltic against the Russian Communists in 1919 when a VC was won. Re-established in 1939, its small forces had to be built up rapidly so that, after Dunkirk, it could start protecting convoys in the North Sea and the English Channel and then take the war to the other side to attack the German's own convoys. By the end of the war there must have been over 400 motor torpedo boats (MTBs), motor gun boats and 500 motor launches with crews of between eight and thirty, depending on the size. In addition to UK waters, boats served in the Arctic, Norwegian crews going in sometimes horrific conditions across to Norway. Other flotillas were in the Mediterranean, the Far East and providing convoy protection on the West African Coast. Coastal Forces were proud to have fired more torpedoes, with a greater success rate, than the Submarine Service! Another VC was won posthumously during the successful 'Operation Chariot amphibious raid on St Nazaire, at the mouth of the Loire on the French coast. I had joined Coastal Forces early in 1944. As I was a schoolboy evacuee at the beginning of the war, I was still young and served in rescue motor launches and an MTB in the English Channel in 1944 and in motor launches in West Africa in 1945. On moving to Deerhurst Court, I found out that fellow owner Harry Southern had also been a member, having sailed in his 112ft long motor launch across the Indian Ocean from South Africa to Burma to take part in the campaign down the coast of Burma towards Singapore. Later, I discovered that Margaret Frenzel, another of our neighbours here, was the widow of Lt. F.N Frenzel RNVR, the Captain of MTB 295 who had been awarded the cross of the Distinguished Service Order for his exploits. Coastal Forces remained active until the last minesweepers to wear the HM Coastal Forces" cap tally were taken out of reserve in 1968. Anyone feeling they would like further information could contact the Coastal Forces Heritage Trust at the Museum of the Royal Navy, Portsmouth.

Next article is from Tiddington Court and is titled, The Bible in Spain (and Mallorca). When Keith and Mary Harrison (below) visited Hay-on-Wye in the early 1980s, they picked up a small, second hand book, which was to prove remarkably portentous of a future guided by faith. Keith and Mary bought a 1924 edition of George Borrow's autobiographical work 'The Bible in Spain'. It tells of his adventures as a colporteur, selling bibles across Spain from 1835 to 1839. Having travelled on horseback from Lisbon to Madrid, Borrow negotiated with government ministers, including two prime ministers, for permission to print and distribute a Spanish translation of the New Testament. In this he had the support of the British ambassador George Villiers. Borrow then journeyed throughout northern Spain, distributing copies of the New Testament. He went on to print his own translation of St. Luke's Gospel in the Caló language of the Iberian Romani. He also suffered serious bouts of ill health and was briefly imprisoned in Madrid. Writing it on his return to England, the book brought money and recognition for Borrow. It went into six editions in the first year (1843), sold well in the United States and was translated into French and German. It was especially popular in Protestant countries thanks, it is thought, to its combination of evangelical enthusiasm and a romantic, exotic image of the different peoples of Spain. Today, it is valued by historians for its rare eyewitness accounts. Indeed, the description of gypsy life in Prosper Mérimée's 1845 novella Carmen (the source for Bizet's opera) is thought to have drawn on Borrow's work, with which Mérimée is known to have been familiar. Borrow's book raised interest in the work of colporteurs, who distribute religious works, which was a focus of activity for the Bible Society. Shortly after securing their copy of 'The Bible in Spain', Keith and Mary visited Mallorca (the 'j' spelling is apparently an adaptation by the English) and felt a keen sense of calling. At around the same time, Keith had become a member of Gideons International. The following year, he went back to Mallorca, this time with New Testaments and Psalms for the ex-pat community. In 1988, he began distributing tri-lingual copies to hotels on the island and his work stepped up on his retirement from banking in 1993, when Mary also joined Gideons International. Over the following years, Keith and Mary were to meet, on Mallorca, many remarkable people of faith with connections around the world, including Uruguay, America, Cuba and mainland Spain. With their help and, as ever, guided by their faith, Keith and Mary distributed bibles to over 100 hotels. They visited and gave copies to patients in the Son Llatzer hospital and, on gaining entry to the prison in Palma, gave out over 1,000 Spanish language New Testaments, plus English versions to the many British prisoners, most incarcerated for drug-related crimes. Eventually retiring from their work on Mallorca, Keith and Mary, having themselves met 'princes and paupers' whilst helping others to find God, now read Borrow's writings with the fresh eyes of fellow travellers.

Next article, is from Elizabeth Court and it titled, A Wiltshire Childhood. I was born over a century ago in 1916 during the Great War, on the family farm at Alderbury, a little village southeast of Salisbury. I was named Phyllis because my parents liked the name, and Bella after my grandmother. I remained an only child. My mother, who was arthritic, came from Devon. She loved painting and I have several of her pictures which still hang on the walls of my apartment. My father was a Wiltshire man but even so found the dialect of his local farming colleagues hard to understand. The local speech of those days dated back centuries, though has probably disappeared by now. He bought Whatton Farm in Alderbury before the war and was exempt from military service. The nation had to be fed! He was despatched to work at the local mortuary. For ever after he could not stand the smell of lilies. Whenever I smell them at Elizabeth Court, I remember him. I loved farm life. One job was to look after the chickens and collect the eggs. Once we looked after a tame fox which I played with. We had sheep, cattle and cornfields and there were lots of wild flowers. The harvest was very busy. It was such a beautiful place. I remember so vividly an extraordinary day when my father perched me on top of a huge carthorse and we made our way through quiet country lanes and roads to Stonehenge, 18 miles away. There were lots of horses, carts and traps to transport tourists to and from Amesbury and other places. I was both terrified and fascinated, high above everyone – hanging on and looking down! What an experience. I went to school at Alderbury and then to Salisbury High School. I enjoyed painting. Alderbury is described by Charles Dickens in 'Martin Chuzzlewit' with the Pecksniff family and the Blue Dragon Inn. We used to giggle at a man in the village who was a bit uppity, so we nicknamed him Mr Pecksniff. Much has changed, but some of our land remains and is still farmed by a friend who visits and very kindly brings fresh eggs. I came to live with my mother in Salisbury some time after my father died. After my mother died in 1997, I moved to Elizabeth Court when it first opened and have been very happy here. I used to walk across the water meadow opposite and return via Cathedral Close. This was quite a long walk. I still enjoy feeding the ducks by the river and in summer, eating an ice cream in Queen Elizabeth Gardens. I love the old songs and I always attend the sing-songs here in the Court. I shall be ten years older than the Queen on 4th April 2018. At the end of the article this is a photo of Phyllis celebrating her 101st birthday in 2017.

The following articles talk of parties and is appropriately titled, get the party started! There's always an excuse for a party or celebration. Whether it be Burns Night, a St. Valentine's Day meal or Pancake Day – owners enjoy a good social event. Osborne Court celebrated with Scottish music, renditions of Burns' poetry, plenty of haggis, neeps and tatties and whisky. Mr & Mrs Laing looked exquisite in their tartan attire. The good residents of Cathedral Green Court followed suit, with the even more indulgent addition of whisky syllabub for dessert. Not to be outdone, Forum Court performed the ritual addressing and stabbing of the haggis. At Priors Court, being less inclined towards violence, they skipped the stabbing and instead asked Mr Parkin to give a humorous 'Toast to the Lassies'. Wally Newby of Oaktree Court wrote a poem to mark Burns Night, it reads, Rabbie Burns... Rabbie Burns... What is it about this man that earns Such respect? Is it the language or is it the text? Oaktree Court laid on a feast Steak pie, tatties and Haggis, at least That's what the menu promised. A Burns Night Supper True and Honest! In memory of Rabbie Burns The Scottish Poet who inspired the world, And despite the passing years Still captivates and brings the tears To the eyes of those enraptured by his words. Yes that night Oaktree Court felt the effect Wi' tots and nips and staff working hard. While John and Wally, Jack and Janet quoted the words And followed the tradition of this cultural Bard. We even managed to create pure magic When Mike with his wee pipes Piped in the immortal Haggis. Other party celebrations included St. Valentine's Day and Pancake Day. Plenty of courts came over all romantic in celebration of St. Valentine's Day. At Margaret Court the table dressings and much of the food were appropriately amorous as you can see. Similarly, at Cathedral Green, their cuisine extended to passion fruit cheesecake and heart-shaped chocolates, consumed to the sound of recorded love songs and much merriment. Just the day before (Valentine's Day fell on Ash Wednesday this year), Tiddington Court celebrated Pancake Day with, naturally, a great many pancakes.

The following short articles are of activities at the courts. The first one is from Boat Lane Court and is titled, Murder Mystery. A wedding reception set the scene for a Murder Mystery evening at Boat Lane Court. Boat Lane Court owners, Cilla and John Alcock arranged a Murder Mystery evening brilliantly led by a friend of theirs who is a professional actor. Chef John, produced a wonderful wedding evening meal for 35 elegantly attired owners, (bow ties and fascinators were the order of the day). As each course progressed so did the murder and the mystery.

A body appeared in the Hobbies Room. Arsenic was involved, (not in the meal!) and twelve suspect guests were slowly eliminated from enquiries. Eventually, and to great applause, the culprit was exposed: mother of the bride, Jean Bottomley. The next article is from Plymouth Court, titled, Plymouth's quiz night. Owners at Plymouth Court enjoyed a very closely-fought quiz night, won in the end by a team of four directors (and no, it wasn't a fiddle!). A wide range of subjects and interesting questions had been compiled by quizmasters, owners Ros and Thelma. A great time was had by all – even Stephen, who managed to win the wooden spoon for the second month in a row. While at Forum Court, they hosted a Fish and Chip supper. Owners enjoyed a fish and chip supper followed by a presentation from the newly formed Social Group at the court. Activities at Blake Court involve a good 'Knit and 'Knatter' and a game of snooker. Owners at Blake Court meet on Tuesday afternoons for a natter over some knitting. The group are currently knitting woollen chicks to raise money for charity and, by the looks of it are having great fun at the same time! Blake Court snooker players would love to welcome other owners from other courts who would like to join them for a game and some lunch together. Get in quick, Ken Blakemore is getting some practice in! A photo shows Ken playing snooker. While owners at Tiddington Court enjoy magic and music performances. David Fox performed a magic show for owners at Tiddington Court and the evening went with a bang! It was a real privilege to visit Tiddington Court in Stratford-upon-Avon today and perform magic for Jan and her friends. I first met Jan a few years ago at a family event and it is always great to see her and everyone else. John very kindly took photographs. Thank you John, hope to see you all again soon." Said David. Also, singer, Dave Laine entertained all with a Mad March Party'. The Poppy Sisters, Nancy and Rose from Worcester, provided a great evening with wonderful vocals – transporting owners to times gone by.

Next, the articles talk of birthday celebrations at courts around the country. It is appropriately titled, Happy Birthday! Many genuinely modest owners have said that they don't like being the centre of attention, still less "being made a fuss of", even for a significant anniversary. Looking through the photos we receive though, it's impossible not to feel good on seeing the love and kindness of friends, family and neighbours being lavished on one person in a way that we all need, from time to time. So if you are lucky enough to have people who want to make a fuss of you on your birthday, please let them, don't wait for a 'milestone' year and send us the photos! Kathleen Hogan of Blundellsands Classic, celebrated her 90th birthday with owners, friends and staff and food with a vintage theme. Mrs Judith Newton of Burcot Court and owners celebrated her 100th birthday with a cake which suggests a fondness for gambling! Owners of Fullerton Court joined Steve Stephenson and his son Toby to celebrate his 95th birthday. Owners at Fullerton Court also joined Felicity Marks and her (very!) extended family to celebrate her 90th birthday with a delicious tea followed by champagne and cake. At Priory Court, over sixty attended Mrs Garvey's party, bringing gifts, flowers and no fewer than three fabulous birthday cakes, each celebrating a different era of her life and family. Chairman Dan King celebrated his 80th birthday with family, friends and owners at Cathedral Green Court. While, Gerry and friends enjoyed a wonderful afternoon celebrating at Forum Court. Adam played Spanish guitar music to mark Jan Carter's 80th birthday party at Tiddington Court.

Moving on to Court anniversaries, it's not just owner birthdays that get celebrated – many enjoy marking the 'birthday' of their shared home, too. Blake Court really went to town for their 20th anniversary celebrations. Over 60 owners, family, friends and staff enjoyed music, food and wine. Longest resident Mrs Peggy Garner, who moved in the year the court was built was presented with flowers and several members of staff were presented with Long Service Awards (Ann Marie Dodd, Margaret Horne, Lorraine Green, Lisa Lodge, Ruth Chambers, (Isabel McGee and Iris Lee). Court Manager Kate Dennis said the evening was a great success and how proud she was to manage such a wonderful court. Tannery Court celebrated their 10th anniversary, RSL Chairman Bob Bessell was delighted to cut the celebratory cake at Tannery Court. Priory Court celebrated their 19th anniversary, the photo shows Director Mrs Irving blowing out the candles on the birthday cake with Duty Manager Shirly.

The next article is from the new feature, Moving Stories from St George's Court. It is titled, St George's Court welcomes Sheila Farrar. Sheila Farrar, shares her experiences before and after moving into a lovely bungalow at St George's Court. Autumn 2016. Born and bred in Sutton Coldfield (which was Warwickshire until Birmingham took over), I lived in our family home for almost five decades. So when some of my family came for the weekend and said, "Let's look at St George's," I immediately replied, "I am not moving." We had a look though, and saw a very attractive apartment But I still said, "NO!" May 2017. More family came home. "Can we look at St George's? The

others have seen it." As before, I said, "I am not moving, but we can look." This time we looked at a bungalow. I can't explain why, but it felt comfortable and the little garden a possibility. September 2017. I moved into my little bungalow at St George's! After months of 'downsizing', I wondered how it would work out with so few rooms. First night I went to bed and slept like a log. I awoke full of ideas and already loving it! Main bedroom for me, second bedroom: hobby room (essential for my "stuff"). It could also be used as a dining room. Lounge with patio door to see, and go into, my garden. Kitchen big enough for all the equipment and a table and chairs. Bathroom with bath and shower. Oct and Nov 2017. It is a big thing to go into the community lounge for a cup of tea and biscuits with people who all know each other. Where can I sit? Do people have their special places? Actually, it was a friendly experience and I am now a regular, other than when I am out doing things with friends. Living in the same area as my family home means I can carry on with my normal activities, but here there are such lovely activities and so many 'firsts' – poetry reading, crafts, quizzes, games evenings, entertainers – and of course, no need to feel lonely. Dec and Jan 2018. A cleaner comes in once a week. Brilliant – this gives me more time for activities. I still do my own cooking, though the meals I have in the main dining room are excellent. One night my freezer let me down. Instead of worrying all night I called the Duty Manager. No problem. Food that was still frozen was put in a bag and kept in one of the St George's freezers until mine could be fixed. Throughout this time I am taming my garden and putting it to bed for the winter. An added bonus: for a small fee, I receive a key to the cricket ground with its walk through the woods to the millpond. If I don't want to drive, there is a bus stop on Clarence Road to take me to Birmingham or Lichfield. There are also local shops, cafés, takeaways and the fantastic Chennai Indian restaurant. February 2018. Although the décor of my bungalow was in good condition, I have had it redecorated and re-carpeted throughout. Now I can start to hang my paintings and embroideries and put things in their permanent places. After 48 years in my family home, now, this is mine. A new home, a new project... and I love it. The article finishes with a note from RSL titled, Help when you move. If you know of anyone who might be thinking of moving into your court, they might be interested in this new factsheet, available from your Court Manager. As you may know, to help new owners to settle in, RSL will pay for a doubling of the first week of housekeeping assistance, plus up to three hours of handyman assistance and a dining room meal, every day, for the first seven days.

The next articles are within the RSL News section. The first explains the need for mobility scooter insurance. The article is titled, Mobility scooter accidents highlight need for care and for insurance. It begins with: Latest figures from the DoT show a trebling of the number of mobility scooter accidents in the three years to the end of 2016. The total of 260 is still low – around one for every 1,500 users – but these are the more serious incidents and include fourteen deaths. It is thought likely that hundreds of relatively minor incidents go unreported. From a scooter user's point of view, one important finding is that the majority of serious injuries involve scooters toppling over. This suggests that particular care should be taken on steeply sloping pavements and that top loading' with heavy shopping – thus raising the centre of gravity – should be avoided. So far as we are aware, all of the deaths were of scooter users. Many of the injuries, though, were not. Most involve pedestrians being run into. They include several instances of broken legs. This raises the issue of insurance. Insurance is not a legal requirement but, given the liabilities (one person whose leg was broken was awarded £38,000 in damages), it is advisable. A quick internet search suggests that comprehensive cover costs no more than £70 per year. Where does the law stand in all of this? Scooter users do not need to have a license, or pass any sort of test or pay vehicle tax. This does not mean that users can behave irresponsibly. Those who are involved in accidents which arise because, for example, their eyesight is too poor or because they have been drinking alcohol, will be deemed responsible. A really clear and useful guide to mobility scooter laws is given on the Gov.UK website www.gov.uk/mobility-scooters-and-powered-wheelchairs-rules. A few highlights are as follows, Point 1: Class 2 mobility scooters ('invalid carriages') must be limited to 4mph and must not be used on the road. Point 2 Class 3 can be used on pavements at up to 4mph, and on the road at up to 8mph. Point 3: Class 3 scooters must be registered. Point 4: You can't drive on bus lanes, 'cycle only' lanes or motorways. Point 5: All normal parking restrictions apply. Point 6: Scooters shouldn't be left in the way of pedestrians, including wheelchair users. Point 7: You should be able to read a car's registration number from a distance of 40 feet. The next article within RSL News announces a new staff member, it is titled, Sally joins Services Managers team. We are pleased to welcome Sally Culmer on board. Married with three sons, she will join the Services Managers on 23rd April. Sally will be the Services

Manager for Boat Lane, Carrs, Deerhurst, Osborne, Tannery and Tiddington courts. An in-depth handover process over several weeks will ensure a smooth transition. Sally has already started her induction on days off whilst working her notice at her current job – very keen! The next article shows recognition to an RSL staff member, it is titled, Alison Hunt awarded for fabulous work. CEO Richard Sharples presented Alison with a certificate in recognition of her fabulous work helping courts with their interior design. Recent projects include the common parts at Blake, Priory, Marlborough, Minster, Kennet and Emmbrook courts. In the pipeline are Melton, Boat Lane and Cathedral Green. Richard said, “Keeping the common parts fresh and up-to-date is essential to the first impressions gained by potential new owners and their families and thus to apartment resale values”. The next article moves onto health and safety issue and is titled, Full marks at Fullerton for Health & Safety. Fullerton Court along with other courts has recently signed a five year contract with Ellis Whittam Ltd to help with H&S and environmental issues, including acting as the legally required ‘Competent Person’. Setting up the contract with the aid of RSL reduced the annual fee. The first survey was carried out in October 2017. It looked at cleaning, contract management, electrical, fire, food and gas safety, first aid, H&S management, Legionella bacteria, lone working and stress. Overall the results were ‘Excellent’ with no situations requiring ‘immediate action’. Lastly, we have an advert for Bushmead Court to finish the RSL news articles. Visit and stay at Bushmead Court. The directors of Bushmead Court are keen to welcome other owners who would like to visit the area and stay in the guest suite. Bushmead Court is located on the northern side of Luton just off the A6. Close to Luton Airport. Speedy train service to London. Visit Woburn Abbey and Safari Park, Luton Hoo, Whipsnade Zoo, Milton Keynes Theatre. Modest charge includes light breakfast. Please call Court Manager Jane Brundel on 01582 481455 to find out more.

Moving on to Management and Professional matters, the first article is from Pinner Court. The article is titled, Need a new boiler? Electric might be a better option. An owner at Pinner Court was delighted recently with the installation of a new boiler to serve the apartment’s central heating radiators and provide hot water. Nothing unusual about that of course – except that the replacement for the old, problematic gas boiler, was an electric one. Electric boilers have improved significantly of late, making them worth considering as a genuine alternative, not just when gas is not available. At Pinner, legislation changes since the original boiler was fitted required such a complex flue arrangement as to render gas impractical. The electric boiler has no moving parts and, being maintenance free, avoids the cost of an annual service. It’s also quieter, safer, smaller, cheaper to install – and costs around half the price of an equivalent gas boiler. Furthermore, because gas boilers are operated via electronic controls and ignition, they are just as vulnerable to power cuts. Indeed, the only reason we don’t all have them, is running costs. Historically, electric heating has been much more expensive. It still is more costly, but modern insulation and other energy efficiency measures within our homes, and the new boilers, have reduced the difference so much that gas boilers now need to run for many years before they start to become less costly, overall. A fact sheet is available within the downloads page of the website. For further advice, contact Nick Chriscoli, Estates Director at RSL on 01789 292952 or email: nickchriscoli@retirementsecurity.co.uk. Next article from Fullerton Court, is titled Congratulations! Linda Sutcliffe, Court Manager at Fullerton Court, has attained a Level III NVQ Diploma in Health & Social Care. In this initiative of Linda’s, a growing number of staff at Fullerton Court have attained, or are pursuing, National Vocational Qualifications at various levels, with the full support of the board. Next article from Cathedral Green Court, is titled, Thanks received and given. Anglian Water recently presented a beautiful bouquet to Cathedral Green Court (being held in the photo by Court Manager Mark Hitchborn) in thanks for their professional attitude and thoroughness in relation to Legionella compliance actions. The directors at Cathedral Green themselves presented Long Service Awards to eight members of their team, specifically, Mark Hitchborn, Heather Searson, June Anderson, Sharon Mastrangelo, Alan Gordon, Sandra Duffy, Carol Runacres and Sally Farrar. The following article from Saxon also talks of achievements, it is titled, Handyman Achievement. Handyman Mr. Michael Cooper recently completed his P.A.T. (Portable Appliance Testing) course, passing with high grades – beating some professional electricians taking the course alongside him. The three day, City & Guilds 2377 course covered 28 topics, including The nature and effects of electric shock and Law and the scope of relevant legislation. Now that he is qualified, Michael says he is happy to assist other courts in surrounding areas. Saxon Court is planning to offer the PAT services to owners in their own apartments. Next article from Pinner Court is titled, Pinner Court’s Duty Managers go the extra mile for owners. RSL CEO Richard Sharples writes, “I visited Jo at Pinner last week to meet with her duty managers and was absolutely bowled over

when an owner's daughter asked to interrupt our meeting, as she wanted to express her personal thanks for the duty managers for literally going the extra mile during the snow. Duty Managers Julie and Ken both walked to work in the snow. Ken (who is 73) walked for one and a half hours. Julie, who left her home in Halesowen at 6am, walked for two and a half hours – all to get to work!" We hope both Julie and Ken got home safely and with rather less effort. We know that Court Manager Joanne Norman and the owners were most appreciative. The last article within the Management and Professional section is from Gorselands Court and it titled, Duty Manager Wedding. It was with great pleasure that all of us at Gorselands celebrated with one of our duty managers, Lora Hancox (née Spurgeon), on her recent wedding. It was particularly wonderful that Lora took time between the wedding ceremony and reception to visit Gorselands Court to show off her wedding dress – and her new husband, Mark. The owners were touched by this kindness and thought Mark a handsome groom and Lora an exceptionally beautiful bride. The photo shows Lora in a beautiful wedding dress with her husband Mark.

Next we give an Easter recipe of a Dairy-free Simnel cake. The cake serves 8 to 12 portions and takes 2 and half hours to make. The ingredients needed are: 175 grams Vegan spread, 180 grams light brown sugar, 180 grams self raising flour, 3 flax eggs, to make flax eggs: Combine 3 table spoons of ground flax with 9 table spoons of water. Stir and leave the mixture to thicken for 5-10 minutes (or ordinary eggs), 1 tea spoon mixed spice, Pinch of salt, 1 tea spoon baking powder, ½ tea spoon almond essence, 350 grams mixed dried fruit, 50 grams mixed peel, ½ lemon (grated zest only), 500 grams marzipan, 4 table spoon apricot jam. Firstly, number 1: Line an 18 centimetre cake tin, preheat oven to 150 degrees Celsius / gas mark 2. Number 2: Beat spread and sugar until pale and fluffy. Add flour, flax eggs, almond essence, baking powder, salt and mixed spice – whisk until combined. Then add mixed dried fruit, peel and zest and stir into the mixture. Number 3: Spoon half of the mixture into the tin and smooth the top. Take a third of the marzipan, roll it out to 20 centimetres in diameter and place on top of the cake mix in the tin. Add the rest of the cake mixture and smooth the top. Number 4: Bake for 2 hours; insert a skewer in the middle, if comes out clean don't confuse the layer of marzipan in the middle for uncooked cake on the skewer remove, and let it cool. Number 5: Melt apricot jam and brush the top of the cake. Divide remainder of the marzipan in half, roll out to same thickness, and place on top of the cake. Roll the rest into little balls and place around edge of the cake. Number 6: Place the cake under a hot grill for 1-2 minutes, or until the top of the marzipan begins to brown. Enjoy!

Moving onto health articles, Osborne Court show off their yoga moves! Yoga – particularly when practised together – is known to be good for mind, body and spirit. If your court does not have regular yoga classes and you would like to try them, make it known. A group of just 4 or 5 is all that is needed. The second and larger health article talks of a healthy lifestyle of diet and vitamins. It is titled, Vitamins: Taking care when taking supplements. Sales of vitamin pills continue to rise even as evidence against daily use without consulting your doctor, grows. In the United States, the Preventive Services Task Force recommended against daily multivitamins for otherwise healthy individuals. Closer to home, Age UK cautions that supplements can often be unnecessary and goes on to warn that, whilst excess vitamins are usually flushed out of your system by your kidneys, "...they can do more harm than good, especially if you're already taking prescription medication." Are there any supplements that older people on healthy diets should consider? Vitamin D in winter. Vitamin D works with calcium to help maintain bone health. Most comes from safe exposure to the summer sun and from foods like oily fish. Older people tend to get less sun exposure, especially in winter. Age UK suggests that taking a daily vitamin D supplement of 10 micrograms (mcg) should be considered during winter and all year round by those who rarely get outside. The NHS says adults need 700mg of calcium a day. Good sources include milk, cheese, green leafy vegetables and nuts. Do seek medical advice before taking calcium supplements, as taking too much can cause stomach pain and diarrhoea. Vitamin B12. B12 is very necessary (deficiency is linked to anaemia and memory loss) but you don't need much of it and it is found in fortified breakfast cereals, meat and, of course, Marmite. You probably don't need a supplement, but a pill with 2mg or less a day is unlikely to cause any harm. Vitamin C. An antioxidant that helps to fight disease and infections, aids healing and helps the absorption of iron, you should get all the vitamin C you need by eating plenty of fruit and vegetables. Evidence that high doses prevent colds is weak. Iron: be careful! Iron appears to be the supplement which causes doctors the most concern. In part, this is because iron deficiency in patients over 50 can be the first sign of an underlying health problem. This could be masked if you were taking "artificial" supplements. Older adults do not need as much iron and excess amounts can damage the

liver and the brain. Red meat, beans, pulses, wholegrain products, eggs, nuts and seeds, green leafy vegetables and dried fruit are all good sources of iron, though drinking tea or coffee with or shortly after a meal will restrict your iron absorption. Overall, the experts seem to consistently repeat the same mantras: eat a balanced, varied diet and particularly in the summer, try to get outdoors as much as possible, and you should be okay without supplements. With thanks to Age UK. For more information please visit: www.ageuk.org.uk.

Next, is the garden section. Blake Court begins the garden spread with an article from their court gardener Annie, it is titled, Silver-white winters that melt into spring. This is one of gardener Annie's favourite things. Springtime finds Blake Court's gardener, Annie, starting to enjoy the fruits – or, rather, flowers – of her labours earlier in the year and looking forward to the glory days. "A procession which started amid snow with aconites, crocuses, tiny irises and snowdrops has moved on to daffodils, polyanthus and cyclamen. What I'm really looking forward to now is our tulips. We planted so many bulbs and I have high hopes for them." In the meantime, Annie says she needs to catch the snowdrops before they disappear completely, to divide and relocate half of each clump. "You can't find them once they have completely died back," she explains "and the smaller lumps spread faster, creating a carpet of them in just a few years." She also wants to check to see which of the older shrubs harshly cut back earlier in the year, are shooting productively. They include ceanothus, choisya and the early-flowering forsythia. Having been given a chance, those which look like they will fall short of the mark will be for the chop! Amongst the larger shrubs and trees at Blake Court, Annie say the magnolia and the lime tree are always beautiful, as is the cherry. Pride of place, though, tends to go to their Cercis chinensis, the Chinese redbud 'Avondale', which produces a blaze of denselyclustered dark purple-pink flowers in late spring before its leaves appear. She is hoping that, along with all the other plants and lovely spaces which makes up Blake Court's gardens, it will help them win Gold yet again in the Enfield in Bloom competition. Photo shows Annie with the late Mrs Inne Blake receiving the award. The next article from Osborne Court is from Wendy Whiting, Chair of Garden Committee who talks on plans for the year ahead. Current main tasks. One: Removal of invasive and non-flowering shrubs. Two: Fertilise flower beds. Three: Relocation and division of overgrown planting. Lastly four: Moss and weed control. This year our excellent gardener will be adding many sensory plants. Notable for their scent and sometimes texture, these are greatly appreciated by those who are sight impaired. Alongside, deciduous and coniferous shrubs and plants will reflect the seasons, providing year round colour. Open gardens. To support Port Sunlight and promote a clearer understanding of Osborne Court, we shall enter the annual Open Gardens Day. We shall show off the gardens, provide refreshments and, thanks to our communal greenhouse, will be offering for sale plants cultivated by Osborne Court owners.

The final section within the Court Circular is the competition pages. Within this spread we show all poetry entries to last editions competition. We are enormously grateful to all of those who so kindly submitted poems for the rest of us to enjoy. We have had a lovely time reading through them. The first poem from Brian Daubney of Minster Court is called Apocalypse. It reads as follows: Now the trees are springing green, Visions in the heavens are seen; Lofty man goes walking by, Blind to portents in the sky. Busy world goes on the same, Man still plays the waiting game; Horizonwards in distant view, Clouds appear in various hue: First a white with gilded peak, Second, red with razor beak, Third a black in balanced halves, A fourth is decked in death-grey garb. Earthlings at last become aware, Pause and casually declare: 'We must be in for storms today', Smugly then pursue their way. Another poem from Brian is called 80th Birthday and reads as follows: At eighty some new friends I'll name Whose company gives me pleasure; First Arthur Writus I must claim Whose daily calls I treasure. He stays near me where'er I go – We share such happy days – When not aboard my left big toe, He's in some other place. But Will Power is a valiant friend He helps to keep me sane, So when I feel at my wit's end, He cheers me up again. Around me his strong arms I find, And now I am so strengthened 'Gainst Arthur Writus – ever blind To pain he's left unmentioned. Ben Dover will come to my aid When from my hands things slip; Which often happens nowadays (I'm sure I've lost my grip). And, Honour Bright's a real true pal, She keeps me on the straight And narrow path of truth, I shall Follow her till I'm "late". Of all friends, Adam Liberty And his partner Evelyn Tension, Both laugh me out of misery, So they are worth a mention. Mike Aspel spends my dwindling pence And keeps th'accounts in order; And though he needs no recompense, Evelyn? Can I afford 'er? Abel Boddie deserted me – Oh, many years ago; He said I'd lost my energy; That's all too true, I know. But Penny Wise so often says She'll stay through thick and thin And when I'm failing in my ways She'll keep money rolling in. The next poem is from Ann Fox of Osborne

Court and is called That's Music. It reads as follows: Feet tapping, fingers clicking, Swaying and dancing. That's Music. Jazz and blues, rock and pop, Guitars and drums. Alive Music. Sorrowful dirge, mourning lament, Slow march for the dead. Sad Music. Joyous songs, voices raised in praise, Singing united. Shared Music. Serenade to loved one, songs of endearment, Melodies of yearning. Love Music. Magical strings, woodwind and brass, Magnificent orchestra. Classic Music. Mind engaged, heart well filled, All enveloping. That's Music. Crossing all borders, no language barrier, Mankind embraced. By Music. The next poem is from Bryan Willson of Emmbrook Court and is called A Spring Symphony. It reads as follows: I awake early morning in spring I hear the soulful blackbird sing Its first notes since winter's onset and calling others to join his songfest. Next, the sweet song of the robin Then the full-throated thrush joins in. Soon after, pigeons begin cooing No doubt they'll soon be wooing. A jenny wren, it's cadence sweet A cycle-pump tune? It the great-tit. Magpies contribute croaky chatter, While rooks and crows caw and natter. High above, a red kite is shrilling Down below, a woodpecker is drumming. Later, finches and others will combine Their tuneful melodies so to chime. So, the overture is now under way: A symphony for this new spring day. The next poem is from Joyce Lucas of Burcot Court and is called The Learning Curve. It reads as follows: I count myself lucky – I can remember The meadowlands of childhood, The long walks of following the stream, Sailing my leaf boats down the river. The tiddlers and tadpoles in the pond So full of water life. Childhood spent exploring the open spaces, The highland grass top, the bracken covered mountains. Freedom to wander the wide outdoors. The rugged rock, the gentle slopes And the twisting trails made by sheep and past generations. Always aware of the changing seasons: The sprightly step of spring, The lazy warmth of summer, The completion of autumn And the cold cleansing of winter. In my wanderings I learnt to understand The changing seasons, the wonders of nature And the steady ticking of the clock of time. The next poem is from William Lucas of Burcot Court and is called Alone. It reads as follows: My life's companion is gone. I am alone and lonely. I am afraid. I have moved to be near family. They visit often but when gone I am on my own. Everything has changed, The roads, shops, the landscape. I feel lost. Nothing is where it was. Doors, windows, furniture, even the TV. I am confused. My few remaining friends left behind. No more meetings for tea and coffee. I miss them. I attend meals on most days. I speak when spoken to and reply briefly. I am cautious. I attend most events and functions. I mingle and join in the conversation. I enjoy the companionship. I now know their names and talk freely. I am accepted as one of them. I am alone no longer. The next poem is from Barabara Bish of Plymouth Court and is called State of health. It reads as follows: "An' 'ow be you today, me dear?" I pause before reply. My brain is getting slower, A fact I can't deny. "A small twinge here, An ache or two, A nigggle of a pain That come today Then go away And never come again." The next poem is from Brenda Oliver of Minster Court and is called The Leveret. It reads as follows: The wind blows cold across the heath and the lark flies free. No other human shape in sight but you and me. You're way ahead; I wish you'd wait. Did you see, in the field beyond that gate Just two paces into the springing wheat, Not very far from our tramping feet The tiny leveret, crouched and still, Brown fur blending with the brown of the hill. Just one eye gleaming, reflecting the cold sky To indicate the living creature, alone and shy, As we tramped heedless, along the headland track, You at the front, as usual. And me trailing, well back. The next poem is from Margaret Lockwood of Plymouth Court and is called Winter Journey. It reads as follows: Silent and soft, snowflakes fall to the ground Blanching the earth in a blanket of white; Fluttering, falling, they muffle all sound, Carpeting the floor with translucent light. Schools are all closed – hear the children's loud cheers, Snowballing, sliding and chasing their friends; Shovelling snow till a snowman appears, Smiling and jolly, their fun never ends. Temperatures fall and the snow starts to freeze; Cars skid and spin as the road turns to ice; Shoes slip and slide and we fall to our knees; Suddenly nature is not quite so nice! Temperatures rise and the ice starts to thaw; Water is dripping and icicles too; Snowmen have melted and sink to the floor; Brown earth appears with small shoots poking through. It's nearly Spring! The next poem is from Pauline Peacock of Bowling Green Court and is called Me and my H.K.A. It reads as follows: First Voice: You are young and I am old, But when our two lives touch We can smile at one another And that can mean so much. Second voice: I can hear but you are deaf Your pains I only see For as you aged the world has changed Your life's a mystery. First voice: You are young and I am old My world has passed and gone. But smiles are a thread of gold When all is said and done. Both: So when I've said and you have done We smile at one another We say "Goodbye", and "See you soon" And that binds us together. The next poem is from Mr P Mears of Melton Court and is called To you – from a rabbit. It reads as follows: I'm a rabbit, with a bad habit, I stole from your garden, But I've no frig, for my cabbage, So I must beg your

pardon. Don't shoot, when you see "the brute" When I'm running for my life. I've a family of six, I don't steal for kicks Please forgive me, you and your wife. Last year a fox could find no cocks So he watched me, in your garden, And at my hole, he scored a goal He ate two of my children! I'm very sad, but if I had Access to shops and a credit card Like you I'd feel – no need to steal I'd be a rabbit, without a bad habit. The last poem is from Alma Lawler of Tannery Court and is called Life's Voyage. It reads as follows: In The Beginning – somewhere in the deep Of that first intensive glance Lies the seed, asleep about to waken. A voyage to be taken. No questions asked Except surrendering autonomy? Will I be equal to the task? Passion, love is the game now. Together, love, smiles, pleasing. Reveal or ignore. Retreat inside deep walls. Feelings tucked away – Not to be attempted. Slow building taking place Each and every day. Life at times a boulder-strewn beach. Negotiate before the tide overwhelms? Or run ahead to outpace. Serious business now. Ground rules, family, work. Creating, teaching as well as living. No peace, no time to shirk. Energy sapped by giving; A water in the scorching sun. Time stolen – snatched gratefully As two again become one. Parental roles gone; vanished like quicksilver. Welcomed with reservation. Out of touch, a new dance to learn; Disengagement from the known station. A testing of the undertow taking place Exceeds expectation. Tentative touch with base again racing to the rescue Time has been given back, Yet time gathers pace as changes take place. The well-spring taking up the slack. New interests, hobbies in the weaving, With love the constant buffer. The seedling flourished. Leaving each afraid of losing the other Alone – as it was – In The Beginning. We have selected a favourite, largely on the basis that we found it to be so powerfully evocative of something so familiar: a country walk in which one walker wants to march as rapidly and purposefully as possible, whilst the other likes occasionally to stand and stare. We are delighted to announce that RSL has agreed to give a £25 book token to our competition winner. One is on its way to Brenda Oliver at Minster Court

End of the Spring 2018 edition.