

# Are you or a loved one considering a care home?

Here at Wellburn Care Homes, we're first for luxury and comfort. All of which means your kind of home.

We also understand that finding the right care home for you or a loved one can be difficult. But with our expert staff on hand to guide you every step of the way, we'll take all the pressure off and help you make the right choice.

Follow us:  
f @WellburnCare



And we'll have a home right on your doorstep.

With 14 homes covering all four corners of the North East, why not discover what a Wellburn Care home could offer you or your loved one.

*Your kind of home*

Watch our videos and discover more about our homes at:  
[wellburncare.co.uk/our-homes](https://wellburncare.co.uk/our-homes)

Or call our New Care enquiry team on:  
**0191 694 1052**



The  
**WellburnPost**

Issue 23 | Winter 2021/22

The free quarterly from Wellburn Care Homes





# A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS



A huge thank you to all of our staff, residents and their families and loved ones, for all of your support, dedication and patience over the last year.

From us all at Wellburn, have a very Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

wellburncare.co.uk

## Editor's Letter

Here at Wellburn, we're proud of our diversity and we believe inclusivity makes us all better people. We strongly condemn all forms of racism and discrimination. We stand together in solidarity.



### 4 New campaign

Discover the story behind our new, exciting 'Festive Box Drop' campaign.

### 16 Things to do

We offer up some ideas of places to explore across our region, over the festive season.

### 18 A perfect Christmas

→ Rest easy as we bring you some top tips on how to create the perfect Christmas.

### 6 12 days of Bliss'mas

→ We look at an alternative, kinder and more blissful way to approach advent.



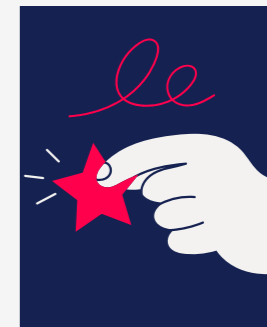
### 28 Family dish

↑ These quick and easy festive yummy treats will make the perfect Christmas nibbles.



### 11 Happiness & wellbeing

Our 365 section is full of hints and tips to improve your happiness and wellbeing.



### 30 Book club

↑ We offer up four great books that make the perfect festive reading, in our book club.

A very warm welcome to issue #23, our winter edition. Our winter issue is packed full of exciting, topical and festive content.

We take a look at our exciting new 'Festive Box Drop' campaign, that aims to give something back to our local communities and hand deliver special Christmas hampers to someone who might need a little cheering up. (pg 4).

Our Chairman Rachel Beckett brings us her regular Agenda piece, as she takes time out to reflect on the year and look forward to 2022 (pg 5).

We look at an alternative, kinder and more blissful way to approach adverts, with our 12 days of Bliss'mas feature. (pg 6).

Our 365 section delivers lots of hints and tips on maintaining our happiness and wellbeing over the winter months and we take a look at the importance of relaxing.

For those who love getting out and about, we offer up some ideas of places to explore across our region,

this Christmas, with lots of places to soak in the festive fun. (pg 16).

In our second feature, 'Create the perfect Christmas', we offer lots of tips and hints on how to create the perfect Christmas, from dinner and gifting, to tips on how to make our festive holidays a little more planet friendly. (pg 18).

We also bring you a yummy festive recipe from our Family Dish recipe card collection. (pg 28).

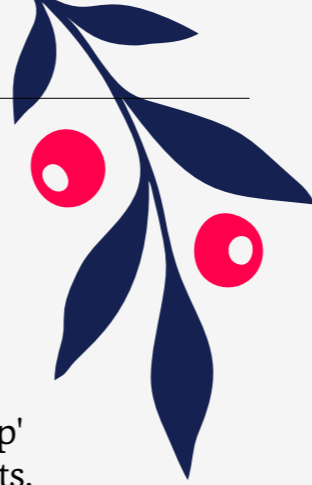
And we offer up four great books that make the perfect festive reading, in our book club. (pg 30).

We'd also like to take this opportunity to wish all of our readers a heartfelt Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, from both of us and all of our staff and residents here at Wellburn.

Isobel & Sara x

Isobel Moran & Sara Nigohosyan

# Campaign



Over the Christmas period we're launching our new 'Festive Box Drop' campaign, and we're asking everyone out there to nominate recipients.



After a tough year for all of us, this Christmas, we're helping to spread festive cheer by launching Wellburn's 'Festive Box Drop initiative'. To help give back to our local communities, we'll be sending out small tokens of love in the form of a Christmas hamper for those who would particularly appreciate the gift of giving at this time of year. For those individuals who may be struggling – maybe they're elderly or alone this Christmas or maybe the winter holidays are a difficult time of year for them. Whatever the reason, we believe that nobody should go without this Christmas.

That's why our 'Festive Box Drop' initiative is encouraging local communities to come together and provide hope and festive cheer to those who might need a little extra this Christmas and over the festive period.

Last Christmas, we teamed up with Apetito to give out a week's supply of Christmassy

**"We wanted to give something back to our communities this Christmas."**

Wiltshire Farm Foods Meals to someone who needed a bit of extra support getting nutritious hot meals. The project was a huge success, so this year, we're repeating the gesture of goodwill again, but a little different this time round.

Each of our 14 care homes will receive a number of Wellburn Christmas hampers. Inside, each hamper is packed full of Christmas goodies – chocolates, biscuits, mini-Christmas puddings, jams & marmalades, Christmas crackers, baubles, mini hand creams and more!

We'll then be taking in nominations across each of our homes' Facebook pages from people in the local community, nominating someone who they think deserves a festive hamper this Christmas. Each of our homes will then choose a selection of their Facebook nominees and deliver their festive Christmas hampers right to their nominations doors.

Whoever gets one of our festive hampers this Christmas, we hope you enjoy it and it brings a smile to your face. And here's to a New Year in which peace, love, goodwill and good health can prosper! Merry Christmas from us all at Wellburn x

# Agenda



In our regular Agenda column, Wellburn's Executive Chairman, Rachel Beckett, offers her views and thoughts from the inside.



As I write this just before we go to press, our house is still without electricity after feeling the full brunt of storm Arwen. I'm sure we're not alone in our experience, with houses across the region suffering the same problems. But of course in the grand scheme of things all will be fine, and a few days without power is something we'll just have to muddle through. But it has given me cause for reflection and appreciation.

As we enter the winter months, keeping all 14 of our care homes fully operational, throughout the worst of what the often treacherous North East weather can sometimes throw at us, is a 24 hour a day, 7 days a week challenge.

Often carers, and rightly so, take centre stage when discussions are held around care, but without the invaluable support staff around them, the homes wouldn't be able to function. Gardens need to be kept in good working order, our maintenance teams go into overdrive to make sure access is always there for staff and visitors to our homes.

At Wellburn, we know just how much joy the season can bring to our residents, with festive fun and lots of Christmas events planned, but it's a real double edged sword for me and my team, making sure the winter weather doesn't disrupt our daily routines. Whether it be food deliveries to our kitchens, minibuses for daytrips or general maintenance of our buildings. Ensuring the smooth running of our services is a major priority and something we plan for logistically months in advance.

During the worst of last years snow fall, some of our staff were left stranded at

**"It's hard not to overanalyse, and perhaps it's best not to. Just go with the flow and enjoy every moment of it."**

home, but the spirit and resilience of my staff, never ceases to amaze me. Without a second thought, those with 4x4's mobilised themselves and organised a pick up service for staff in need. Another example of the strength and depth of the teamwork here at Wellburn.

It's this unwavering support and camaraderie that brings me as Chairman of the company great comfort. Knowing that whatever the elements and whatever the weather, through good planning and unrivalled spirit throughout the entire company, we'll face whatever the elements throw at us.

On the other side of the double edged sword, it's such a wonderful time of the year across all of our homes. Festive plans are in full swing and the atmosphere is electric. Already the Christmas trees and decorations are in place. It's always a special time of the year for our residents and staff, but after the last 18 months, I'm left in no doubt,

that this festive period promises to be just a little different, just a little more special than normal. I suspect it's going to be a period of celebration, not only because it's Christmas, but a moment where we can all relax a little and really enjoy the build up and all that entails. Maybe because of the fact we weren't able to do a lot of the normal activities last year, makes this year that much more special.

It's hard not to overanalyse, and perhaps it's best not to. Just go with the flow and enjoy every moment of it.

As Chairman, it just fills me with so much joy to see how happy and festive my staff and our residents are. Moments of joy have been in short supply over the last 18 months and now I feel it's time to allow those good feelings the space they deserve.

Almost as if we're riding a wave of pure optimism, which I fully intend to harness and carry forward into the New Year.

I really do feel honoured when I reflect back on just how much my staff have gone through over these dreadful months and each and everyone of them deserves a fantastic Christmas full of fun and happiness.

In some small way, I hope the company wide staff Christmas bonuses I've authorised, will prove to be the cherry on the cake this Christmas. I can't remember a Christmas when I've felt like each and every one of the staff deserved it more than now.

So we go into the festive period full of cheer and we'll carry it on into 2022, which fills me with hope that it will be a good one. I'll finish this off on a high, and wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and prosperous New Year. ■



# Twelve days of Bliss'mas

→ By Sara Nigohosyan

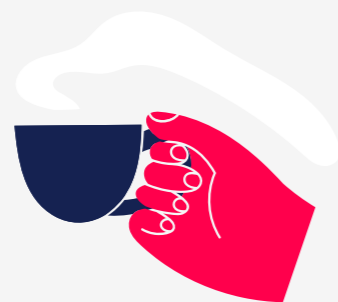
As the 12 days of Christmas nears, we look at an alternative, more kinder and blissful way to approach our days of advent. Taking time out to show love to ourselves and to those around us, one day at a time.



## 25th

### Find the right note

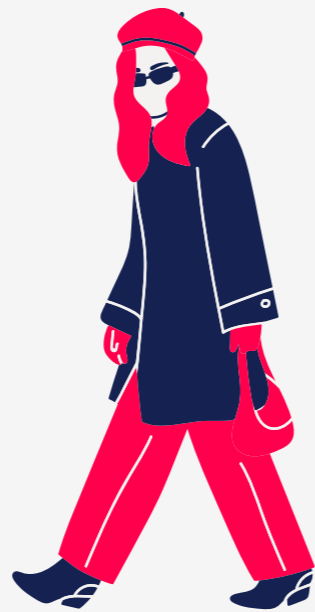
Write a loved one a note, to let them know how much you love and appreciate them. Making sure people know how much they mean to you, will make them feel good and improve their sense of connection with you.



## 26th

### Take some time out

Why not visit that nice coffee shop or somewhere else you've been meaning to visit for a while, but never got around to it. Allowing yourself some valuable time out and treating yourself to something yummy, is no less than you deserve - sometimes a little simple pleasure on our own is bliss.



## 27th

### Just thinking about you

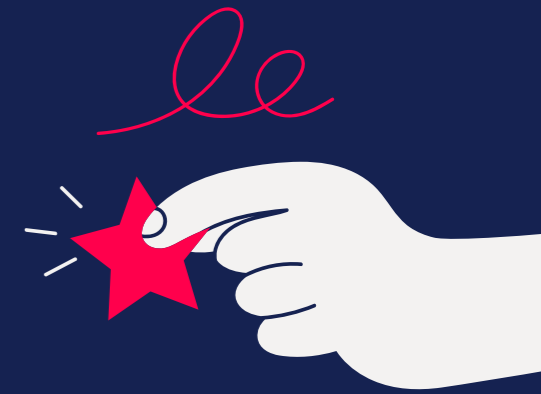
We've all done this - we're out and about and we see something that reminds us of a loved one. But how many times do we let them know it happened. It's always nice to know someone is thinking about you.



## 29th

### Saved by the bell

Call a family member you haven't spoken to in a while. We live in a busy world and it's sometimes easy to neglect the ones we love the most. Pick up the phone and let them know you're thinking of them.



## 28th

### A novel approach

Give yourself a break and take time to yourself to read that book you've been meaning to pick up for a while. Allow yourself to get absorbed and lost in another world - surely that's the best part of reading after all.



## 30th

### Pay it forward

We all love a compliment, and we all know how good it can make us feel. Pay one forward and give a random stranger a compliment today. It might be as simple as a 'have a lovely day' or perhaps you compliment them on their appearance.

## 31st

### New ears eve

Today, why not try listening to a new artist. It's so easy to stick to music you already enjoy, but how nice does it feel when you find someone new that you enjoy listening to? Even better, if you find someone new that you like, why not tell your friends about them and share the discovery.

## 1st

### Start the year green

Try to go waste-free for the entire day. Refuse that plastic bag at the corner shop, or avoid making too much food and creating food waste. Caring for ourselves, and our loved ones is important, but let's also take care of our planet. And 2022 is teeing up to be the year we all make a change.

## 2nd

### A toast to that

They say breakfast is the most important part of the day, but how many times do we either rush it, or worse still skip it? Treat yourself this morning, maybe even try something different. It's scientifically proven that breakfast is not only good for your body, but essential for your wellbeing.



## 4th

### Doing a great job

As most of us are heading back into work for the New Year, let's show our love to our colleagues. Perhaps tell your employer about a colleague you think has been doing well - it's great to be able to appreciate others' work, but it's also a much-needed confidence booster for them.



## 3rd

### Charity doesn't begin at home

Amongst all the festivities, it's easy to forget that Christmas for some has been the total opposite. Homelessness and poverty are just some of the problems charities help tackle. Why not donate today.



## 5th

### Note to self

This final one is all about doing something nice for your future self. Write a nice note to yourself, then hide it somewhere you don't often look. It's cheesy but it's going to feel so nice finding it at some point in the future.



# Arts & crafts

Sometimes it's the homemade approach that can make a Christmas present extra special. We get all crafty with two fabulous and cost effective festive gifts.



## Lindt Christmas Wreath

### ↓ Materials needed

Lindt Lindor Milk Chocolate Truffles  
12-20" wire wreath frame/or coathanger  
Floral Wire  
Clippers  
Seasonal winter foliage (we've used spruce, cedar, juniper and boxwood)  
Berries (we've used pepper berries, but holly is nice too!)  
Red or Gold Ribbon  
Ribbon bow

### ↓ Method

**Step 1.** Gather all the materials and lay them out on a large, flat surface.



**Step 2.** Assemble the wreath by taking pieces of cut foliage and tying them with the wire to frame. Follow the natural curve of the branches.



**Step 3.** Continue layering pieces in the same direction, tying tightly. Exposed wire will get covered as you go.

**Step 4.** When you have come all the way around, simply tie wire ends tightly to one another. Cut the wire and do a few extra twists to secure.



**Step 5.** Cover any visible wire by using small stems. Now it's time to add all of the decorative elements to the wreath.



**Step 6.** String the Lindor truffles through the wreath and wire in lace. Add the bow and secure with floral wire. All done and time to admire your work.



## Gingerbread Christmas Decorations

### ↓ Ingredients

350g/12oz plain flour, plus extra for rolling out  
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda  
2 tsp ground ginger  
1 tsp ground cinnamon  
125g/4½oz butter  
175g/6oz light soft brown sugar  
1 free-range egg  
4 tbsp golden syrup

### ↓ For the decoration

Writing icing  
Cake decorations  
Ribbon or string for ties  
Gift box

### ↓ Method

**Step 1.** Sift together the flour, bicarbonate of soda, ginger and cinnamon and pour into the bowl of a food processor. Add the butter and blend until the mix looks like breadcrumbs. Stir in the sugar.

**Step 2.** Lightly beat the egg and golden syrup together, add to the food processor and pulse until the mixture clumps together. Tip the dough out, knead briefly until smooth, wrap in cling film and leave to chill in the fridge for 15 minutes.

**Step 3.** Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4. Line 2 baking trays with greaseproof paper.

**Step 4.** Roll the dough out to a 0.5cm/¼in thickness on a lightly floured surface. Using cutters, cut out the gingerbread men shapes and place on the baking tray, leaving a gap between them. For decorations, use a skewer to make a small hole in the top of each biscuit.

**Step 5.** Bake for 12-15 minutes, or until lightly golden-brown. Leave on the tray for 10 minutes and then move to a wire rack to finish cooling. When cooled, decorate with the writing icing and cake decorations.

**Step 6.** Tie ribbon or string through the hole to finish off your tree decoration gift.





# Gifting



Chestnuts roasting on an open fire, and lots and lots of lovely presents under the Christmas tree. We bring you some inspired Christmas gifting ideas.



## The Chocolate Fizz Collection

↑ **By Hotel Chocolat**

The perfect gift set for those people you don't know what to get! It has everything a person needs around the holidays - chocolates, sweets, and drinks!

£29.50

hotelchocolat.com



## Internet famous alarm clock

↑ **By Szelam**

Okay, what can't this clock do? It's an alarm clock, a mirror, and a charger. Long story short—it's the perfect present for anyone. Ideal as a modern desk or wall clock, this multifunctional alarm clock can be put upright, flat or hung up on the wall - just choose how you'd like it!

£27.00

amazon.co.uk

## Personalised Wireless Charge Station

↓ **By Vida Vida**

This wireless charging pad recharges your phone by simply placing it on top. And because it comes with a personalised message, it'll make the perfect unique Christmas present for those who can't live without their phones.

£45.00

notonthehighstreet.com



## Bamboo Bathtub Tray

↓ **By Dozyant**

Give the gift of relaxation this season with this bamboo bathtub essential. The wooden bath tray table features extending sides, a reading rack, tablet holder, cellphone tray and wine glass holder! Now your giftee can read a book, sip wine, and ponder life's meaning all whilst enjoying a bubble bath.

£43.00

amazon.co.uk



## Joy Wellness Journal

↑ **By Papier**

Start 2022 off putting yourself and your wellbeing at the top of the list. This Wellness Journal encourages you to start and finish each day with a fresh mindset.

£24.99

papier.com



## Aerolatte To Go Handheld Milk Frother

↑ **By Lakeland**

Tis the season for making the best homemade coffees - and this handheld stainless steel milk frother is here to get you that barista quality you crave. The perfect gift to create rich, creamy, frothed milk for coffees, hot chocolates, milkshakes and it can even whip up fluffy meringues!

£10.99

lakeland.co.uk

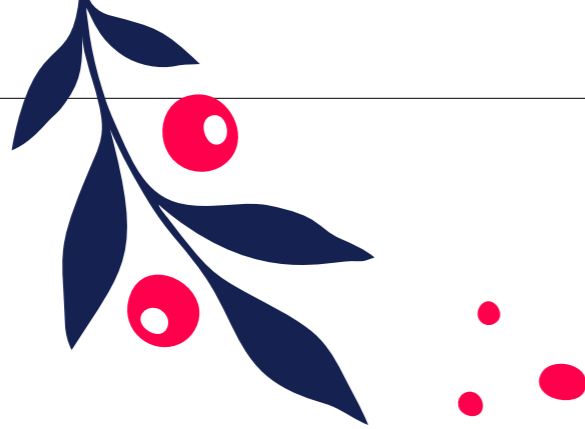
# Inside →

Coping with Christmas · Ways to relax · Happy shopping

# 365

Full of useful hints and tips to improve your happiness & wellbeing





To keep up to date with what's going on across all of our homes, visit:  
[→ wellburncare.co.uk/life](https://wellburncare.co.uk/life)

**For some, the festive period can be lonely, and for others it can all feel a little overwhelming. But there's plenty we can do to help our own and others' wellbeing.**



The festive season is eagerly anticipated, filled with beautiful lights, festive decorations and delicious food.

Yet Christmas can also be a reminder of loneliness for some. And for others, being around people and lots of family over the Christmas period can feel overwhelming. There's lots of different ways to cope with challenges arising over the Christmas period. We've put together some useful hints and tips to look after your wellbeing over the festive period.

### Take a break

If you find your stress levels rising at any point during the Christmas period, it's important to take a time out. This can be anything to help you relax and unwind; taking a short walk, listening to music or going out to grab a coffee. If you have a lot of responsibilities over the festive season, it's important to plan and make time for yourself. Saying no can be hard if you're feeling the pressure from others, but don't be afraid to set limits as this is crucial for your own wellbeing.

### Family time

It's important to be realistic when it comes to family gatherings and what you can expect from them. Often, for people who don't see each other regularly or aren't used to spending lots of time together, the expectation that the festive season is 'family time' can put added pressure on already strained relationships. If possible, be realistic on what to expect from the time and certain family members, and find ways to shorten family experiences that might create an anxious or negative mood.

### Loneliness

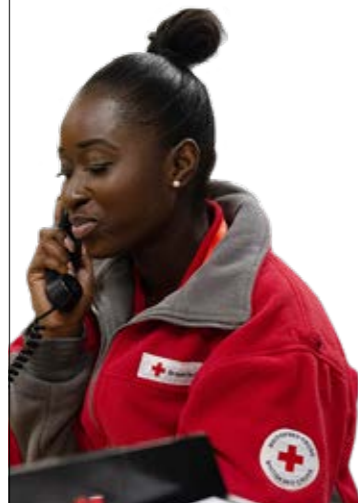
↑ There are lots of reasons why someone might feel alone at Christmas. For most, Christmas will mean family togetherness and social interactions, but for people who don't have this, their sense of loneliness will inevitably be heightened. Throughout the year loneliness affects millions of people, but each and every one of us can play a part in combatting this. Reaching out to someone who you know will be alone, or volunteering is a great way to start.

### Help is always at hand

← If you or someone you know is feeling lonely this Christmas, it's important to know that help is at hand. There are some things we can all do to help. Focussing on activities will help - whether it's something as simple as going for a walk on Christmas day, enjoying favourite festive foods or having a bubble bath - it's important to do things or activities that make you or someone you know feel good. Volunteer to help others - use

your free time over Christmas to help others in need. This will not only give you structure to your day, but can be very fulfilling to give back to the community especially at this time of the year. For more quantifiable help, you can always reach out to a loved one or a mental health charity.

**Red Cross support line offers free and confidential support Call 0808 196 3651 (10am-6pm daily)**



## Ways to relax

Christmas is undoubtedly a busy time of the year for all of us. It can at times feel hectic and a little overwhelming, so it's important to make sure we're balancing it all with the right amount of relaxation time. Life in our homes is no different, so our teams work

together with our residents to make sure the balance is there. Relaxation also encourages positive thinking, concentration, improved memory and decision making, so we caught up with some familiar faces to find out how they go about it.



**I think it's essential for everyone, including our residents, to find some relaxing time over the Christmas period."**



### Residents view

← **Margaret Laidlaw**  
Garden House

I find listening to music helps me to relax a lot. I love listening to all types of music, but one of my favourites is Daniel O'Donnell. Listening to him whilst getting my nails painted is my perfect thing ever. I find it very calming and quite therapeutic actually. Daniel O'Donnell also reminds me of my husband, Danny."

### A word from one of our Lifestyle Coordinators

↓ **Gary Ganley**  
Whorlton Grange

I think it's essential for our residents to have relaxing activities over the Christmas period. Our residents can at times become over-stimulated with Christmas activities and festive events around the home, in addition to outdoor visits from family members. I plan activities centred around relaxation throughout the month, which gives our residents some much needed time out and calm. It's about finding the right balance."

### Manager's view

↓ **Lee Dale**  
Manager - St George's

"Relaxing is essential for both my staff and our residents. Just taking time out to read a book, or doing some arts and crafts. Anything that helps us unwind and take five, is important."





# 365



From technology to gifting, there's a lot of things out there that can help improve our happiness and wellbeing this winter. Here are some of the best.

## 5 Minute Therapy

← By Sarah Crosby

Crosby's 5 Minute Therapy book combines charming illustrations with useful, careful messages that provide bits of comfort throughout the day. Although in small portions, the impact is large: issues around attachment, boundaries, self-talk, and many others, are touched on.

£14.99

[penguin.co.uk](http://penguin.co.uk)

## Breeze: Mood tracker, diary

← By Basenji Apps

Understand yourself better and notice your emotional patterns through Breeze's mood tracker logs. Statistics on how your mood and emotions are responding to your surroundings, courses on mental health, and personality tests, are all things the app offers. It's simple to use and has beautiful graphics, which draw you back in daily.

Free (with In-App purchases)

[apps.apple.com](https://apps.apple.com)



## SAD Lamp

↑ By Gemoor

As we see the sun much less in winter and the weather seems much more unbearable, our internal body clocks may end up being disrupted. We also get less vitamin D, and as a result our serotonin levels can drop dramatically, resulting in Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). Also known as seasonal depression, this is now an issue that is being addressed by many, and has led to the SAD Lamp's creation - light therapy can help reduce the SAD symptoms and boost your mood.

£29.99

[Amazon.co.uk](https://amazon.co.uk)

## Multi - Vegan Multivitamin

↓ By Form Nutrition

Getting the right nutrients can become a difficult self-care task when you have a busy lifestyle, but it's important to make sure we don't neglect our bodies and brains. Getting all the daily goodness we need through supplements is a quick, healthy and proven way, to nourish us physically and mentally.

£19

[formnutrition.com](http://formnutrition.com)



# Need mental health support and don't know where to start?

## Start here

Whatever you're facing, you don't have to face it alone.

Mind Infoline 0300 123 3393

Text: 85463

9am – 6pm Monday to Friday

[info@mind.org.uk](mailto:info@mind.org.uk)

[mind.org.uk](http://mind.org.uk)





# Things to do

For those who want to get out and enjoy the fresh air this winter, there's plenty of festive family fun around. We've picked out some of the highlights on offer.



## ↑ Edinburgh Christmas Markets

Princes Street Gardens & George Street  
20 November - 4 January

A bit further up North over the border, but well worth the effort, lies one of the most popular Christmas Markets in the UK - the Edinburgh Christmas Market. Undoubtedly worth the journey, in the very heart of the Scottish capital, the market stalls and entertainment points will be sure to submerge you into the Christmas mood. From food to handmade products and gifts, the stalls cater to every type of shopper. There's also paid attractions, such as rides and funfair attractions, which makes it a perfect destination for a day of shopping and festive fun.

**For more information, visit:**  
[edinburghchristmas.com](http://edinburghchristmas.com)



## ↑ Sparkly Christmas Gin Tastings

Cowper Lane, York  
6 November - 20 December

York Gin are running tastings throughout December, where you can learn about the history of their six types of gin and get to try each one. Sessions are lively and social, starting with a welcome cocktail and ending with a G&T. A perfect shopping interlude.

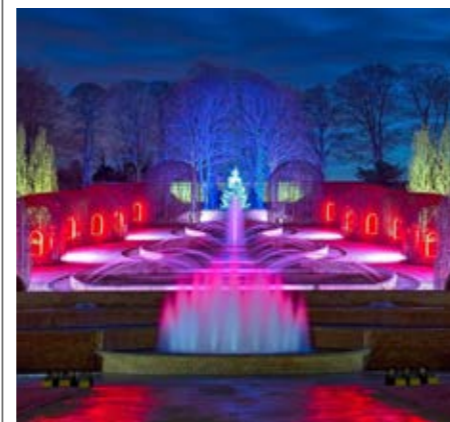
**For more information, visit:**  
[yorkgin.com](http://yorkgin.com)

## ↓ Alnwick Garden Christmas festivities

Alnwick, Northumberland  
29 November - 2 January

This winter, Alnwick Garden is the home of an abundance of festive activities, and there are so many events worth visiting. From their beautiful light trail, to their festive afternoon tea, to their family Christmas visits, with a Santa's grotto and Christmas shopping at the Pinery, a visit is a must.

**For more information, visit:**  
[alnwickgarden.com/Christmas](http://alnwickgarden.com/Christmas)



## → Ice skating rinks

Times Square, Newcastle  
13 November - 9 January

The much-loved, open-air ice skating rink in Newcastle is back for another year of festive fun! Open in the Life Centre since the 13th of November, this place is perfect to visit with family, friends, on a date, or even skating solo. A lovely way to have fun while staying active during the cold winter days. Tickets for timed slots can be purchased online in advance of your visit. Some slots will be kept free for walk-ups - but booking is advised.

**For more information, visit:**  
[life.org.uk/events/ice-skating](http://life.org.uk/events/ice-skating)



## ↓ Hadrian's tipi Christmas pop up bar

Stack, Pilgrim Street, Newcastle  
24 October - 31 December

Located in the heart of Newcastle, this winter pop-up retreat is the perfect stop off. Inside you'll find a warm log fire, cosy snug seating areas that welcome families, groups and dog owners alike. A large, well-stocked bar of hot & cold drinks and a friendly, festive atmosphere, makes this a must visit.

**For more information, visit:**  
[hadrianstipi.com](http://hadrianstipi.com)



## → Christmas in Narnia

Castle Howard, York  
13 November - 2 January

'Christmas at Castle Howard' is collaborating with 'The Project Studio' to bring a magical outdoor lights and sounds show, transforming the castle and its gardens into a captivating Winter Wonderland. A visit will take you on a magical festive journey like no other.

**For more information, visit:**  
[castlehoward.co.uk](http://castlehoward.co.uk)







### **The people around you**

On Christmas, the people you surround yourself with can often impact your holiday experience even more than your surroundings themselves. They can form and mould your environment, and even your mood.

Traditionally, Christmas is spent with family. A wonderful way to catch up with loved ones you haven't seen in a while over a homely meal and gift-giving. However, making Christmas a bit different should not be off-putting, even though keeping traditions is important to many.

If one knows that they would be happy surrounded by people beyond their family,

such as friends, colleagues, etc, why not celebrate with them?

More than 8 million adults in the UK are expected to be alone during this festive period, and some of them might be just those people that you would like to be surrounded with.

So, this Christmas, consider inviting someone over who you normally wouldn't think to invite - the lovely elderly neighbour that always says 'hi', the colleague that won't be travelling home for Christmas, or that old friend you bumped into recently - let's make Christmas even more special for each other this year. →

→ **By Isobel Moran**

# **Create the perfect Christmas.**

From the food to family, Christmas can vary over the years. Striving for better roast potatoes or worrying everyone is content. Rest easy, as we bring you some top tips on how to create the perfect Christmas.



#### ← Tips for A Festive Feast

The secret to the perfect Christmas dinner is about proper planning, smart shopping, and staying calm on the big day. To help you create a delicious stress-free feast this year, we've put together some Christmas dinner top tips.

Seasoning can often make all the difference - from a bland meal to one full of flavour. So rather than seasoning your Christmas dinner once it's out of the oven, make sure to salt it gently as you go, as this will help build layers of flavour and depth.

Good ingredients matter so much that the most important cooking decisions are made in the supermarket! However, supermarkets aren't the most reliable for fresh fruit and veg, so try and shop at the local farmers market for your Christmas dinner if you can. Regardless of which bird you're choosing to roast on Christmas day (if any), there are a few rules to follow for it to turn out just right.

- Brining your meat in a salt and water solution before cooking will tenderise the meat and also keep it nice and juicy as it absorbs some of the liquid.
- Trussing is another key step in a Christmas roast, as tying the bird up will help it cook evenly.
- Next, applying fat over the bird's exterior will help to keep it nice and crispy - this can be goose fat, butter, or olive oil. During the cooking process, make sure to baste the bird regularly with the liquid that has accumulated in the roasting tray to add even more flavour.
- The final step is often neglected but is equally as important as the others - resting. Once out of the oven, rest the meat under foil to retain extra moisture before serving.

When it comes to gravy, people care! Make the most of your roasting tray this Christmas, by straining the veg and meat juices off once cooked and adding to your gravy for extra flavour.

And don't forget, the freezer is your friend. You can make a lot of Christmas sides and sauces in advance to save you the stress of making them on Christmas morning. Prepare your cranberry and bread sauce a month in advance if you have to. Pigs in blankets and stuffing can also be made in advance and frozen, too!

## "The secret to the perfect Christmas dinner is about planning, smart shopping and staying calm on the big day."

And if you're opting for a vegan Christmas dinner this year, there are loads of options too. For the main event, why not consider a wellington using a filling of mushroom duxelles and pea protein - high in antioxidants and 100% vegan. Alternatively, if you like tofu as a meat substitute, try a balsamic caramelised onion or slow cooker maple herb 'Tofurky'! Or if you want to embrace the power of veg, try a stuffed squash recipe or vegan lentil nut 'meatloaf'.

#### Tips for gift wrapping like a pro

Wrapping up all the Christmas gifts you've carefully picked out can not only be expensive but time consuming too as you try to wrap awkward shaped presents as neatly as possible. That's why we've put together some savvy top hacks from US-based lifestyle blogger 'Kallie Branciforte' to make your Christmas wrapping a whole lot easier!

#### Tip 1:

Wrap diagonally to use less paper. If it looks like you're running out of wrapping paper or just want to save some money using less wrapping paper, place your gift diagonally in the middle of the paper and pull up the sides to cover each side of the box.

#### Tip 2:

Make a gift bag out of wrapping paper. If you don't have a gift bag to hand or you don't want to fork out for one - you can make your own! Start by cutting enough wrapping paper to cover the gift. Fold in each side and use double-sided tape to stick together. Next create 2 triangle shapes which will then fold together to form a base, securing together



**Below:** Creating the perfect Christmas dinner takes time, planning and staying calm on the day.

**Right:** Wrapping like a pro can take a little longer, but the results are worth it.

**Far right:** Picture perfect decorated Christmas tree (As shown on our cover.)

**Far right below:** An FSC certified Christmas tree farmer, plants trees for the future.



with tape. Stand it up, then place your item inside the bag and fold it over the top. You can then either tape the top closed or poke 2 holes in the top.

#### Tip 3:

Using double-sided sticky tape instead of Sellotape can make the world of difference when it comes to making your wrapping look neater. Place your double-sided sticky tape on the inside of your seams so you don't have any tape exposed.

#### Tip 4:

Make a jewellery box out of a toilet paper tube! This is perfect for small gifts such as jewellery or earrings. To start, fold in the corners of the tube to create flaps that close in to create a box. Wrap a piece of paper around the centre of the box and finish off with a bow!

#### Tip 5:

Use an old Pringles container as a gift box! Wash the entire thing out, then wrap



the whole thing in some wrapping paper, secured with glue or tape. Perfect for gifting items such as nail polishes, lipsticks or small posters and prints. Then, glue a bow onto the top of the lid to add the finishing touches!

#### A more sustainable Christmas

From buying second hand to picking out the Christmas tree, there's lots of ways to show your loved ones and the planet a little love this Christmas.

Whether you're choosing a real or fake tree this Christmas, you can make sure to shop wisely. If you're sourcing a real tree, look out FSC Certification that will confirm that your tree has been sourced sustainably. And whenever you choose to dispose of your tree, take it to your local tip where it will eventually be turned into something new.

There's so much we can do and not all of it means changing your Christmas drastically. For more tips on how to make your festive period a little more eco friendly, visit: [realhomes.com/advice/10-tips-for-an-eco-friendly-christmas](https://realhomes.com/advice/10-tips-for-an-eco-friendly-christmas) →





**Left:** A resident enjoying our Christmas day lunch.  
**Below:** Our Lifestyle Coordinators getting into full festive swing.  
**Bottom:** Our carers consider our residents as extended family.



**← Surrounded by love**

Now that we've given you some top tips on how to build your perfect Christmas at home, here's a bit about how we build the perfect Christmas here at Wellburn.

This year has been like no other, but one thing is for sure - our staff will once again be pulling out all the stops to make this Christmas a very special one for our residents. It's important for us all to understand that Christmas can be a difficult time for some of our residents who can't spend Christmas with or get in contact with family or loved ones. That's why we make a huge effort to involve all residents to get them in the Christmas spirit. We've got lots of exciting activities planned for both our residents and staff, so we're going to tell you just how our residents like to celebrate Christmas across all 14 of our care homes.

Our dedicated Lifestyle Coordinators across all our homes make sure there's an activity for everyone to enjoy. Alongside festive themed baking, decorating, and singalongs this Christmas, our homes are

taking part in the '12 days of Christmas', where they'll be celebrating different days such as Christmas jumper day, national gingerbread house day and Christmas quizzes to get us all in the Christmas spirit. There's some activities for staff, too, like a Christmas pudding bake off alongside a nativity scene competition in which all the homes will compete against each other to win a prize!

For our carers at Wellburn, our residents are just like extended family to them, meaning they're surrounded by love and happiness not only during the festive period but all year round. Each year, our staff spend quality time with our residents on Christmas day, helping them get in touch with their loved ones and making sure they have a special day to remember.

We'd like to say thank you to all of our staff and care workers across the country who'll be swapping Christmas at home for their uniforms and heading off to work to care for those who need it most this Christmas.

**"As always, our staff will be pulling out all the stops, to make this a very special Christmas for all of our residents."**

And although Christmas is an extra special time of the year, care workers are present all year round 24/7 to deliver the best possible care and enrich the lives of our residents. To find out what we're up to at Wellburn at any time of the year, visit Wellburn Care Homes on Facebook and @wellburncare on Instagram for all the latest news, activities and goings on. ■



# Life

f @wellburncare

To keep up to date with what's going on across all of our homes, visit:

[→ wellburncare.co.uk/life](https://www.wellburncare.co.uk/life)

**24**  
**Out and About**

We take a look at what our residents have been getting up to in and around our homes.

**26**  
**Latest News**

We catch up on all the latest news and goings on from all fourteen of our care homes.

**29**  
**Active Mind**

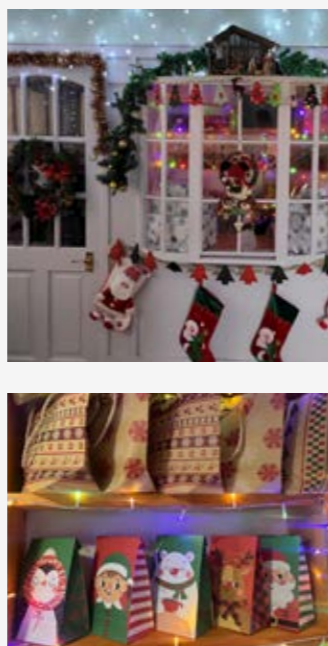
Keeping our brain active is vital, so our Mind page is packed full of brain teasers and puzzles.

**30**  
**Book Club**

We review four festive books to enjoy this Christmas, in the latest edition of our Bookclub.



Our team of Lifestyle Coordinators plan tailored activities across all of our homes, from day trips to creative days. Here's a selection of recent highlights.



## A festive transformation

### ↓ Riverhead Hall

Our Riverhead Hall home recently set about transforming a little corner of their home into a magical Christmas sweet shop! Crafted by Riverhead's handyman, they then decorated the outside with all sorts of Christmassy lights, stockings, decorations, tinsel and of course, a Christmas wreath. Attention then turned to the interior, which has been transformed into a Christmas wonderland full of festive parcels, bags and jars of sweets for the residents to give to their grandchildren! Each and every resident and member of our staff love the transformation and it really is talk of the town over there. Such a wonderful idea and well done to everyone involved in the project. Absolutely brilliant!

To keep up to date with what's going on across all of our homes, visit:  
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## Lest we forget

### ↓ Whorlton Grange

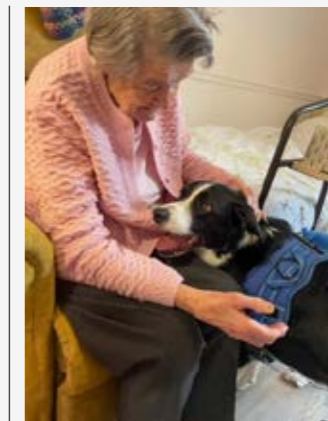
To commemorate remembrance Sunday, residents and staff at our Whorlton Grange home decided to show their love and support, with some remembrance day arts and crafts. They created some amazing pieces of artwork and drawings using symbolic red poppies, with some spectacularly beautiful results. A fitting way to pay tribute and remember our fallen heroes.



## A festive day out in Skelton

### ↑ St Catherine's

We're now heading into the magical Christmas period, and what better way to get the residents at our St Catherine's home in the mood, than a lovely trip to Skelton Garden Centre. They particularly enjoyed the new Christmas section, but the usual drinks, sandwiches, cakes and good old chat never fails to hit the mark. Lots of great conversation and laughs made for a lovely day out all round, with the residents returning in particularly festive spirits.



## Good boy Louise

### → Wellburn House

The Wellbeing of our staff and residents is our top priority over here at Wellburn. And when it comes to mental stimulation, one of the activities we know is scientifically proven to deliver huge positive benefits, is animal therapy. Which is why we always love a visit from our furry friends. Therapy dog Louise recently paid a visit to our Wellburn House home and the impact was instant - smiles on everyone's faces, cuddles and lots of happy residents.

## Spooky celebrations as our homes go all out for Halloween

### ↓ Whorlton Grange

Before our homes started preparing for the Christmas season, they had some spooky business to take care of. Our annual Spooky Celebrations night was back on after sadly being cancelled last year due to COVID. All 14 of our homes took part, each with their own take on the Spooky theme. One of our homes in particular went

all out - residents and staff at our Whorlton Grange home really embraced the event and made such a fabulous effort. They hosted their own costume party! There was an amazing array of pumpkins, mummies, and Frankenstein's monsters. Thanks to all of our homes, but a special mention to Whorlton Grange. Spooktastic!

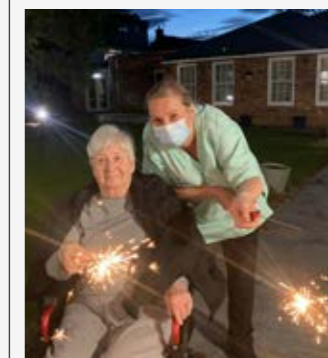


## Tea and cakes - the full works

### → Craghall

One activity that everyone loves are day trips! To the coast, to different markets, to cosy little coffee shops - they elevate our mood and make days fun and exciting. Residents over at our Craghall home recently enjoyed a lovely trip out to the popular Dean and Daniela cafe. One of the residents favourites, due in part to just how friendly and warm the staff are. The residents always enjoy their visits and are welcomed with open arms. Of course the hot drinks and delicious selection of pies and cakes have absolutely nothing to do with it...

To keep up to date with what's going on across all of our homes, visit:  
→ [wellburncare.co.uk/life](https://wellburncare.co.uk/life)

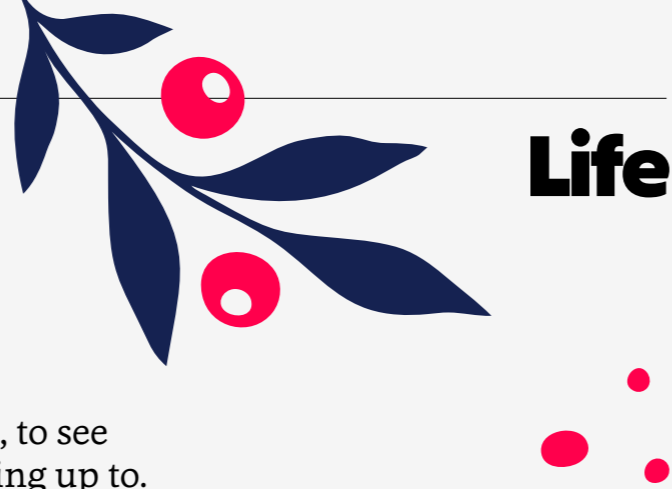


## Bonfire night celebrations

### ↑ Rosevale

An evening full of lights, fireworks, sparklers, and sparkly - the Rosevale bonfire night! Over at our Rosevale home, residents had a wonderful evening on Guy Fawkes night. The staff worked extremely hard to make sure it was a night to remember. After the last year, it's just so nice to be able to have nights like these again.





We catch up with all fourteen of our homes, to see what our residents and staff have been getting up to.



## Festive Box Drop nominations

### ↑ Community news

This Christmas, we're excited to announce that we're launching our 'Festive Box Drop' initiative. We're opening up nominations on social media, so that people can pop on and nominate someone they think might appreciate a bit of extra love this Christmas. That love will be in the form of a Christmas hamper - which if successful, will be hand delivered to the nominees house. The Christmas hampers will be packed full of

festive treats and small gifts to make someone special smile this Christmas. To nominate, simply pop onto our main social channels or visit one of our homes' Facebook pages to enter. Each of our homes will also then be selecting 7 shortlisted nominees to receive one of our fantastic Wellburn main Christmas hampers. So pop on, get nominating and put a smile on a family member or a loved one's face this Christmas.

## Special birthday celebrations

### → Resident news

In November, our Eighton Lodge home wished two very special ladies a huge Happy Birthday. It was double celebrations as residents Dolly Dixon and Cathy Scurlfield turned 90 and 102 respectively. It was a day of fun, laughter and both Dolly and Cathy were treated to a fabulous time. A huge Happy Birthday from all of us girls. A lot of candles to blow out!



## Dreams really do come true

### ↓ Resident news

We're always asking our residents if they have any dreams they would like us to help make happen, and if we can, we will. 93 year old resident Lita, from our Eighton Lodge home, had her dreams come true recently. We took her down to Three Lane Ends Farm to ride a horse! Lita created such a stir, they're already asking when she'll be back. Amazing stuff!



## Gender reveal and it's a boy

### → Home news

Darren Hicks, one of our night time carers at our Rosevale Care home is expecting his first child. Darren thought it would be fun to hold a 'guess the gender' competition amongst staff and residents. Staff member Joanne Muir guessed right - a boy, and was picked out of the hat, winning a bottle of Prosecco. Huge congratulations to Darren and his wife.



## Wedding bells

### ↑ Resident news

Over at our Wellburn House home, one of our residents, Una, had a very special visit. Una sadly missed out on her granddaughter's wedding in September, because of COVID restrictions. So as a surprise her granddaughter and family decided to bring the wedding celebrations to her, so she could relive the day she missed. They all dressed up and enjoyed cake and even champagne. Una was over the moon. What a day!

## Volunteer projects

### → Staff news

In the New Year, we're going to be rolling out a brand new volunteer initiative for our staff. Participation will be voluntary, but we're hoping lots of us get involved. We've already started speaking to our local connections, but if you or someone you know needs help with a project or an initiative, we'd love to hear from you. [marketing@wellburncare.co.uk](mailto:marketing@wellburncare.co.uk)



## Pretty 'great' in pink

### ↑ Staff news

In recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness month in October, many of our staff across all of our 14 homes, held 'Wear it Pink' days. The 'Wear it Pink' campaign is held each year to raise awareness and help further our understanding of breast cancer. As well as our staff, some of our residents also got involved, enjoying pink themed tea parties. The best way to combat breast cancer is to diagnose it early, which means greater awareness is hugely important - to learn more visit: [breastcancer.org](http://breastcancer.org)



## Spots and spots of fun

### ↑ Resident news

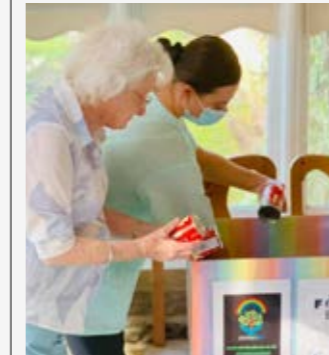
Over at our Grimston Court home, Lifestyle Coordinator Tara hosted a Pudsey themed 'Open Garden' to raise money for Children in Need. She set about creating a treasure hunt around the home's grounds, with a map and clues to help search for Pudsey's made by our residents! Tara's hard work paid off and the day was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended.

## Inspired, humbled and extremely happy to play a small part

### ↓ Home news

Our Whorlton Grange home wanted to show the gift of giving isn't just for Christmas. They're supporting the fantastic team at CDW Food Bank, who run a vital and hugely important service in the local community, by becoming a drop off point

for food bank donations. CDW Food Bank's humbling mission is to end hunger in outer West Newcastle, envisioning a community where everyone is able to obtain enough nutritious food to be able to support the health and wellbeing of themselves and their families. Whorlton Grange has been accepting donations since 1st November, with staff and residents only too aware that this time of year can be financially difficult for many. So any and all donations are being greatly received and appreciated. To donate, simply pop down to Whorlton Grange - For more info visit: [cdwfoodbank.co.uk](http://cdwfoodbank.co.uk)



## Spooky Scarecrow competition sees a wizardly winner

### ↑ Home news

Our homes love competing against one another, so it was no surprise when our latest challenge landed on their doorsteps, that they all embraced it with enthusiasm. Our annual Spooky Scarecrow competition set the ball rolling and each and every home set about making their own entries. Staff and residents unleashed their creative streaks and put hours

of work into each scarecrow. We were seriously impressed with all the home's efforts, with some truly spooky entries, but there had to be one winner which was our Heatherdale home! Their fantastic Harry Potter themed scarecrow creation received hundreds of likes on Facebook - and we agreed. A well deserved winner, and well done to all of our homes. Until next time.

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1	8	3	2	5	7	9	6	7
5	9	1	7	3	6	7	8	2
6	4	8	2	7	6	3	1	5
8	9	2	6	7	1	4	8	3
3	5	9	2	6	7	1	4	8
1	2	8	4	9	5	7	6	3
7	6	4	1	8	3	5	2	9
6	4	5	3	7	9	8	1	2
8	7	2	5	1	6	9	3	4
9	3	1	8	2	4	6	5	7



Picture Quiz - Clockwise:  
1 Arthur Christmas - James McAvoy  
2 Jingle Jangle - Forest Whitaker  
3 Elf - Will Ferrell  
4 Trading Places - Eddie Murphy  
5 Bad Santa - Billy Bob Thornton  
6 Die Hard - Bruce Willis



# Family dish Life

Family run Wellburn, share some of their favourite recipes to share, make and enjoy with your family.

**These quick and easy festive gingerbread cookies make the perfect Christmas nibbles.**



## Festive Gingerbread

**Serves: 45 cookies (approx)**  
**Prep time: 25 mins**  
**Cook time: 10 mins**

### ↓ Ingredients

- 3 ¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon ground ginger
- ¾ teaspoon baking soda
- ¾ teaspoon ground cloves
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup unsalted butter, softened to room temperature
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- 1 large egg
- ½ cup unsulfured molasses
- 1 ½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- optional toppings: simple icing (see below), red hots, sprinkles, etc.

### ↓ For the icing

- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 2–3 tablespoons milk
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract

### Method for icing

(To make the icing, whisk all ingredients together in a mixing bowl until smooth. If your icing is too thin, add in a little more powdered sugar. If your icing is too thick, add in a tiny bit of milk.)



This festive seasonal delight is from our Family Dish Recipe card collection.

### ↓ Method

In a large mixing bowl, whisk together flour, cinnamon, ginger, baking soda, cloves, salt and nutmeg. Set aside.

Using a mixer, beat the butter and sugar together for 2 minutes on until light and fluffy. Add in egg, molasses and vanilla, and beat until combined. Gradually add the flour mixture until just combined.

Divide the dough into two equal portions, and form them each into a ball. Then gently use your hands to flatten each ball into a 1-inch thick disk, wrap tightly in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 1 hour.

Heat the oven to 180°C and line a baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside.

Unwrap the dough and place it on a large, lightly-floured hard surface. Using a floured rolling pin, roll the dough evenly until it is approximately 4mm thick. Then use your favourite cookie cutters to cut out your desired shapes. Transfer to parchment-covered baking sheets.

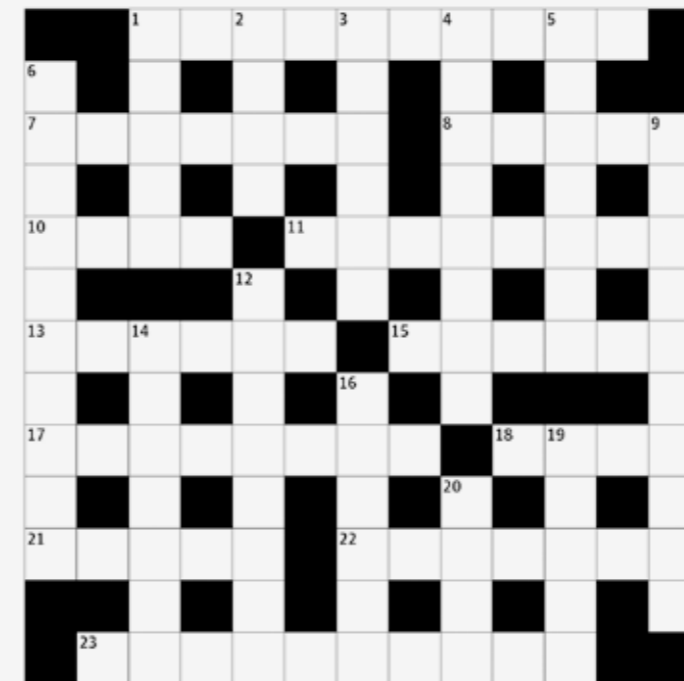
Bake for 8 to 10 minutes, or until the cookies are crisp around the edges and on top. Remove from oven and let cool for 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to finish cooling.

Once the cookies have cooled, decorate them as desired with the icing and toppings if desired. Serve immediately or store in a sealed container for up to 4 days.

# Mind Life

Keeping our brain active has a hugely positive impact on our health and wellbeing. All answers on page 27.

## Crossword



### Across

- 1 Engrossing thriller of a book (4-6)
- 7 Cattle thief who makes a noise? (7)
- 8 Rough – brusque (5)
- 10 Extensive (4)
- 11 Place for a quick bite (5,3)
- 13 Do something with abandon (3,3)
- 15 Stick (to) (6)
- 17 Partridge or pheasant? (4,4)
- 18 Flat circular shape (4)
- 21 Rot(5)
- 22 One of nine in an alley (7)
- 23 Keen fan (10)

### Down

- 1 Strikes an attitude (5)
- 2 Substantial gap (4)
- 3 Crowd (6)
- 4 Oliver Cromwell, for instance (8)
- 5 Calm (7)
- 6 Advantages enjoyed by certain groups (10)
- 9 Rather unlikely (3-7)
- 12 Definitely not on the side of the angels (8)
- 14 Leisure (4,3)

## Sudoku

			2		6			
				6	9	3		
4			7		8	1		
6	1		3				9	
2						6		
3		2	7			4		
1	3		4			7		
8	7	6						
	6		5					

Fill the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9. Use the notes column if needed.

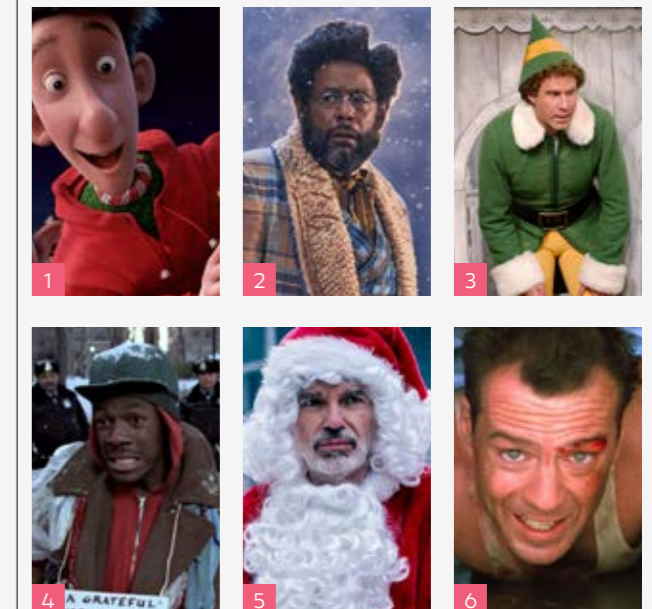
### ← Answers

You'll find the solution to this and all the other puzzles on page 27.

## Notes

## Picture quiz

Six Christmas classics, but can you name the films and the main actor who played the lead role too?

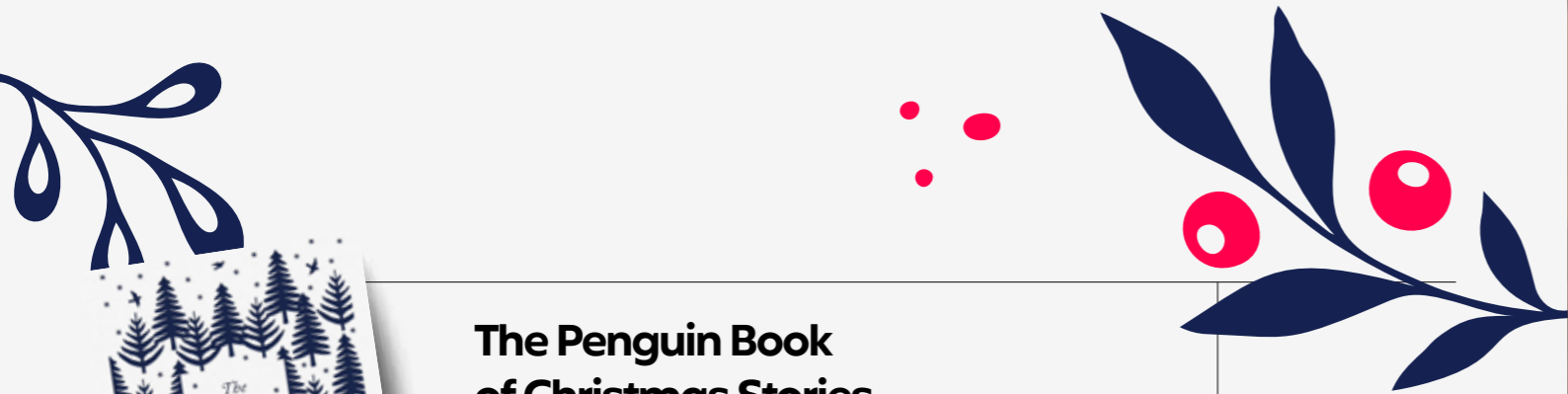




# Bookclub

Life

We offer up four great festive reads that make the perfect reading, over the cold winter nights. Enjoy and Merry Christmas.



## The Penguin Book of Christmas Stories

← Edited by Jessica Harrison

A collection of some of the most magical, moving, chilling and surprising Christmas stories from around the world. Taking us from frozen Nordic woods to glittering Paris, a New York speakeasy to an English country house, bustling Lagos to midnight mass in Rio,

and even outer space. With classic tales from writers including Hans Christian Andersen, Shirley Jackson, Dylan Thomas, Saki and Chekhov, as well as little-known treasures such as Italo Calvino's wry sideways look at Christmas, this is the perfect festive reading.



## Seven Days of Us

↑ by Francesca Hornak

Hornak's joyful, sharply observed and life-affirming story about being quarantined with your loved ones, is an absolute joy. It's touching, funny, emotionally intelligent from the first to the last page. A pure pleasure from beginning to end.

## The Christmas Escape

↓ by Sarah Morgan

A story set over the Christmas period, this novel is absolutely stunning, with gorgeous characters and even more gorgeous locations. A novel that will provide you with an exquisite escape - the perfect Christmas read to get you in the festive mood.



## Always, in December

↑ by Emily Stone

Heartbreaking, life-affirming and truly unforgettable. Stone's *Always, in December* is the timeless, stay-up-all-night festive love story, that you'll find hard to put down once you start reading. This is a love story everyone will be talking about this year.



Our Lifestyle Coordinators run Bookclubs in all of our homes. Residents take part by either reading or listening to a selection of books, often from this page, and discussing their experiences together.

All books are available for you to buy at: [waterstones.com](http://waterstones.com)

# For lonely older people, Christmas can seem like just another day

## Help Age UK be there all year round

Find out more [www.ageuk.org.uk/noone](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/noone)



  
Age UK  
Love later life