



TE AWA
Lifecare Village

TE AWA February 2026 PARTYLINE



A word from Nikki

February may be the shortest month on the calendar, but it has certainly packed a punch here at Te Awa Lifecare.

We were delighted to welcome Craig Brown, our photographer, who has been onsite capturing fresh photos and video footage for our website. It's important that what people see online truly reflects the warmth, vibrancy and quality of life within our village.

In preparation for our Open Days (13–15 February), there was plenty happening at the front entrance. The new concrete pathway was completed, trees were planted, grass seed was spread (may need to be re-spread thanks to the weekend rain!), and a new seat was installed. The lighting to be added will be the final touch. The Open Days themselves were a great success. Thank you to the villagers who so warmly welcomed visitors. We had some genuine enquiries, along with a few “punters” who came to enjoy the café’s Valentine’s Dessert and our Boys’ Banter Beer and Burger event.

Village dinners continue to impress – Friday’s T-bone steak was a standout – and Tracy’s organised trips, including the Auckland Botanic Gardens (with Raglan next on the list), are always eagerly anticipated.

Our annual resident and staff survey has now been distributed. This is your opportunity to have your say, suggest improvements, and recognise the incredible staff who make Te Awa such a special place.

Life is never dull in a retirement village – it’s vibrant, full, and certainly keeps us all on our toes! **Nikki**



Lights, camera...Te Awa!

For a couple of days recently, Te Awa Lifecare had a touch of Hollywood about it as photographer and videographer Craig Brown arrived to capture the life that happens behind our gates.

The mission? To showcase the real heart of Te Awa – our villagers, residents, care teams, gardeners and support staff – in action. From morning walks and bike rides to yoga sessions and coffee on the deck, Craig followed the action with camera in hand. He also slipped into toolbox meetings with housekeeping and nurses, quietly filming the teamwork and dedication that keeps everything running smoothly.

What our residents may not have realised when they kindly agreed to take part was that movie-making involves a little repetition. “Take one... take two... take three!” became a familiar refrain as scenes were filmed again (and sometimes again!) to get just the right shot. Every movement was carefully scheduled on a colour-coded spreadsheet, with timings to be adhered to – showbiz waits for no one! A huge thank you to everyone who embraced their inner movie star, arrived on cue and even brought wardrobe changes to keep things fresh. Your enthusiasm made it fun, and we can’t wait to see the stunning results on screen.

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Event snapshot



A trip to the Auckland Botanical Gardens by a number of our Villagers. Thanks Tracy for organising.



Residents enjoyed a fascinating historical walk around Cambridge, uncovering stories, landmarks and little-known gems from the town's past. With Elizabeth from the Cambridge Museum sharing her wonderful knowledge and storytelling, local history truly came to life – right on our own doorstep.



The new footpath at the entrance to Te Awa completed in time for Open Day. The seat is now installed, and grass seed has been laid.



Residents making the most of a 'rare' fine afternoon to enjoy a leisurely game of croquet on the front lawn of Arnold House.



Adventurers Terry, Meryl, Margaret, Martyn, Jenny, John, Chris, Kevin and Helen



Watching the installation of a new rail car to replace broken down car

Dale, our guide

Rail tracks, tunnels and tall tales - a Forgotten World Adventure

Nine adventurous villagers swapped routine for rail tracks at the beginning of February, setting off on the unforgettable Forgotten World Adventure from Taumarunui to the self-proclaimed Republic of Whangamōmona.

After driving down and enjoying a night at the Forgotten World Motel, the group began their full-day guided rail cart journey the next morning. Travelling 82km along historic railway lines in four- and six-seater carts, they passed through breathtaking scenery – dramatic landscapes, pristine native bush and spiritual rivers that make the Ruapehu region one of New Zealand's premium off-the-beaten-track destinations.

A highlight early in the day was morning tea at Matiere Hall: a cuppa accompanied by a delicious mumble slice from Midge's Home Baking and classic Anzac biscuits (with a few extra treats purchased for the journey ahead).

The adventure included 21 hand-cut tunnels, the longest stretching an impressive 1.5km. In one tunnel, the group stopped, switched off the lights and experienced complete darkness – so black you couldn't see your hand in front of your face. There was also a moment of unexpected excitement

when one rail cart required replacing, prompting a swift delivery of a new cart down the line from Taumarunui.

The journey was made even richer by their guide, Dale, whose knowledge of local history and geology – and background as a teacher – kept everyone thoroughly engaged.

Arriving in Whangamōmona, the group stayed at the iconic Whangamōmona Hotel, enjoying warm country hospitality and a very generous dinner. They also stopped opposite the historic Ōhura Jail to take in its character and hear a little of the fascinating history of the old town, where the former jail has now been transformed into boutique accommodation.

By all accounts, it was a spectacular trip filled with laughter, learning and a touch of adventure.

Next on the horizon? Perhaps a Coromandel fishing charter – if you're keen, have a chat to John and Jenny from Villa 35.



The very important pheasant of Villa 27



There's a new resident at Te Awa... and she's feathered, focused and fiercely committed to her real estate choice.

A clever little pheasant has decided that Villa 27's dahlia pot is the perfect nursery suite. Tucked safely beneath the leafy canopy, she has laid an impressive 11 eggs and now spends most of her day perched proudly on her floral throne.

Hidden cleverly by the dahlia leaves, she's practically invisible – unless you know where to look. Like clockwork, she takes a well-earned break around 11am each day, confidently stepping out for an hour or so, clearly trusting that her precious cargo is safe in this premium garden location.

Residents are thoroughly amused by their unexpected guest, keeping a respectful distance while eagerly awaiting any tiny arrivals.

It seems Villa 27 now offers not only beautiful blooms... but boutique bird accommodation too!

INTRODUCING

Leonie Godfrey

Gardener



If you've ever admired the beautifully maintained gardens at Te Awa Lifecare, you've already experienced the dedication of Leonie Godfrey. For the past three and a half years, Leonie has been part of the gardening team, bringing skill, pride and a genuine love of the outdoors to the Village every day.

Leonie's connection to the land began in Ratahi in the Manawatū-Whanganui district, where she grew up on her family's 1,000-acre sheep and beef farm. Alongside livestock, the farm produced market crops – mainly carrots and potatoes – for local and international export. Leonie worked as a tractor driver, developing a strong work ethic and practical knowledge from an early age. Her love for flowers later blossomed into growing lisianthus for export, an achievement that even included fulfilling an order for the White House in the United States.

Before joining Te Awa, Leonie spent six years running operations at Amber Garden Centre, further strengthening her horticultural expertise. Leonie moved to Cambridge with her partner Grant, who took up a role with Fonterra. Today, she says there's "never a dull moment" at Te Awa and gains great satisfaction from completing a job and seeing everything looking sharp and tidy. She often admires the Village gardens when driving past, proud of what she has helped create.

A self-described "structured garden kind of girl," Leonie draws inspiration from leading Australian garden designer Andrew Stark, renowned for blending beauty with functionality. She enjoys attending garden events to gather fresh ideas, many of which she shares with her dad while helping develop his garden back in Ratahi – regular visits that also include deliveries of her homemade plum jam.

Leonie treasures the daily smiles, waves and conversations with residents, especially those in care. She believes Te Awa has a calming, homely magic – and she's proud to help it flourish.

Bumper crop

Our walnut tree is absolutely groaning under the weight of fruit this year – branches heavy and promising a bumper crop when they begin to tumble down from late March through

to mid-May. Harvesters, get in line! It might pay to have your buckets (and best walnut-cracking skills) at the ready – we suspect it's going to be a very nutty season indeed.



From our Care Centre



A month of creativity, kindness and colour in Care

February may be the shortest month of the year, but there has been nothing short about the activity and energy in our Care Centre! While the weather has certainly kept us guessing – with more grey skies than golden sunshine – it hasn't dampened spirits. If anything, it has simply encouraged more creativity indoors and plenty of laughter along the way.

Arts and crafts have been a highlight this month. In preparation for Valentine's Day, residents put their artistic flair to work crafting beautiful hearts adorned with sparkling diamantes. There was glitter, glue and plenty of concentration involved – and the end results were stunning. Of course, no Valentine's celebration would be complete without something sweet, so cookies were baked and enjoyed together over a special morning tea in Care. It was a lovely

opportunity to gather, share stories and celebrate friendship.

With dahlias in full bloom, we've also made the most of the season by creating vibrant flower arrangements. Their bold colours have brightened our lounges and lifted everyone's mood – a cheerful reminder that summer is still with us.

For those keen to get outdoors between showers, croquet provided a chance to stretch the legs and enjoy some friendly competition. It's always wonderful to see residents encouraging one another (and perhaps celebrating the occasional well-aimed shot!).

February 17 marked Random Acts of Kindness Day, and kindness was certainly felt throughout the Centre when thoughtful "Pocket Hugs" appeared in residents' mailboxes. Small gestures can make a big

difference, and there were many smiles as these little surprises were discovered.

One particularly popular morning involved making infused sugars – and judging by the enthusiastic taste-testing, we may have uncovered a few sweet teeth among us!

We also enjoyed a trip to Centreplace Mall in Hamilton, and at the time of writing, a trip to Waihi Beach is also on the calendar, adding a refreshing seaside outing to an already full month.

And we're not slowing down! March promises butterfly windmill making, St Patrick's celebrations, Easter crafts and so much more – all part of the vibrant life we enjoy every day here at Te Awa.

Scan the QR code for Care Centre calendar

