



## TE AWA

### Lifecare Village

# TE AWA

## January 2026

# PARTYLINE



### A word from Nikki

I wanted to take a moment to acknowledge that December was an incredibly difficult month for me. The sudden passing of my mum, so close to Christmas, was a heartbreakingly shocking. I would like to sincerely thank all of you for the kindness, love, and support you showed me during that time. Your thoughtful words, hugs, and quiet care meant more than I can express.

January has certainly arrived at full pace, and it has been a busy month around the village. You may have noticed that I am now sporting a rather fashionable moon-boot after discovering I had actually broken my foot! So, I'm taking things a little slower (as much as possible!).

Looking ahead, February is shaping up to be an especially exciting month. Our **Open to the Community Days** will run from 13–15 February, with a Valentine's Day celebration on the Saturday featuring live music in the Woolshed, and our "Beer, Buns and Banter" event for the lads on Sunday.

We'll also be welcoming photographer Craig Brown in early February to take new photos and video for our website and marketing. We would absolutely love for villagers to participate, as we will need "models" to help showcase everyday life at Te Awa – cycling, walking, meeting and greeting, enjoying the putting green, crafting, using the library, or even digging in your veggie plot. It's a wonderful chance to capture the special community spirit we share here.

Thanks – Nikki

## Potato dig day brings fun and fresh harvest



Te Awa Lifecare residents enjoyed a truly unique and entertaining community event recently, with the much-anticipated Potato Dig Day taking place on Sunday 18 January.

The story began back in mid-September, when 40 potato roots were carefully planted into the Te Awa gardens. These mid-to-long-term growing varieties included Agria (white), Desiree, and Cliff Kidney (both red). Over the following months, the crop was lovingly monitored by Chas and a small team of dedicated volunteers, building excitement for the eventual harvest.

Although the weather leading up to the day was far from ideal – wet, windy, and rather unforgiving – Sunday afternoon delivered a welcome change. By 2pm the skies began to clear, and by the 4.30pm kick-off the sun was shining, the wind had eased, and the stage was set.

Around 50 villagers gathered with chairs and a favourite drink in hand, ready to watch the digging begin. For just \$5, residents could purchase a numbered ticket shaped like a potato, giving them their very own "root" to be unearthed – with the variety a surprise. Potatoes were dug up in numerical

order, and the competition was based on size rather than weight, adding plenty of suspense and laughter. The winning potato came in at an impressive 260 grams, claimed by Ted and Dianna, with Malcolm a close second at 255 grams.

Many participants went home with a generous haul, some taking away as much as 3kg of fresh new potatoes. The overall winner also received a special trophy designed by Chas – fittingly in the shape of a potato – along with a bottle of prosecco.

With 21 spot prizes also awarded, most attendees left not only with potatoes but with an extra surprise to enjoy.

It was a wonderful way to spend an afternoon together, celebrating gardening, good humour, and community spirit. A huge thank you goes to Chas and the volunteers who made the event such a success. Plans are already underway for next year, with surplus funds from this year being put toward seed potatoes for another exciting harvest. [>>More photos pg 2](#)

# IN BRIEF:

## Cambridge U3A meeting day change

U3A Cambridge would like to let members know that our regular meetings have now moved from Fridays to Tuesdays. We will still be gathering at our usual venue, The Woolshed, and look forward to welcoming everyone on our new meeting day. We appreciate your support with this change and hope to see you there.

## Property maintenance now underway

We would like to let residents know that there is currently a range of maintenance work taking place around the property, including roof cleaning, spouting, and general upkeep. You may see our team working on ladders, using hoses, and carrying out these tasks over the coming days. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we complete this important work to keep our facilities in great condition.

## Gate entry, night security

Our main gate has now been shifted to its new entry site at 7 Arikirua Lane. For added safety and security, the gate will now be closed each night at 9pm.

If friends or family wish to visit after hours, please phone us on 07 827 6103, and our night staff can open the gate remotely.

Please also note that in the near future, we will be removing the access code previously used for entry without a remote, which will further enhance security. Thank you for your understanding and support.

## Thriving wetlands and new generations

Our wetland areas are truly flourishing, with the planting programme showing wonderful results. We estimate that we have now planted over 30,000 wetland plants across the whole site, creating a thriving natural environment that continues to grow stronger each season.

Alongside this, our resident pheasants have settled in beautifully. Often spotted quietly hiding among the vegetation, they have made the wetlands their home. Even more exciting is the arrival of young pheasants, with new chicks now being born – a heartening sign of new generations taking root in this restored habitat.



## Potato dig day



The trophy



# The Joy of Giving

At Christmas time, we often think about gifts, celebrations, and the joy of receiving. But this year, the residents of Te Awa Lifecare reminded us all that some of the greatest joy comes not from what we get, but from what we give.

In the true spirit of the season, the residents came together with one heartfelt mission: to help others in need. Their efforts resulted in a boot-load full of donated food for the Cambridge Salvation Army - a generous contribution that made a real difference for local families during the holiday period.

When the donation was delivered, staff at the Salvation Army were genuinely overwhelmed. They expressed deep gratitude at the kindness shown, touched not only by the quantity of food, but by the thought and care behind every item.

This act of generosity speaks



volumes about the residents of Te Awa Lifecare. It shows that giving is not limited by age or circumstance - compassion and community spirit have no boundaries. Their donation is a powerful reminder that even small actions, when done together, can create something truly meaningful.

Special thanks to Sheryl Johns, whose

encouragement helped make this generous community effort possible.

Te Awa Lifecare's residents have shown that the greatest gifts aren't always wrapped under a tree. Sometimes, they come in the form of food parcels, generous hearts, and a community looking out for one another, and we couldn't be prouder.

## Christmas party photo booth fun

Our December Christmas Party was a wonderful celebration filled with laughter, festive cheer, and great company.

One of the highlights of the evening was the photo booth kindly provided by MyEventDJ, which proved to be a huge hit with residents, friends, and family. It captured some truly lovely and fun moments throughout the night – including a few photos that even started with a kiss!

The booth gave everyone the chance to take home a special memory from a very joyful occasion.

If you'd like copies, please talk to our Reception team.



## From our Care Centre



## January Highlights in the Care Centre

January has been a slightly quieter month here at Te Awa, with the weather not always playing its part. While the sunshine has been a little scarce, we have still managed to keep our Care Centre residents busy, entertained, and smiling with a wonderful variety of activities throughout the month.

Our days have been filled with crafts, games, gentle exercise sessions, and plenty of opportunities to enjoy time together. Retro movie afternoons have also been a favourite, with a weekly line-up that included classics such as Snow White, Father of the Bride (1991), Big Business, and Chariots of Fire. These have complemented our regular weekly sessions in the cinema, which continue to be a relaxing and enjoyable highlight for many.

Croquet has also proven to be a real hit this month. Whenever the weather has allowed, we've managed to get a few residents out on the course, enjoying the fresh air and friendly competition. It has been lovely to see

everyone so engaged and having fun. Unfortunately, not everything went to plan - our much-anticipated trip to the Lavender Flower Farm had to be cancelled due to the persistent wet weather. However, we were pleased that our visit to Ruakura Strawberry Farm was able to go ahead, and it was certainly worth the wait. The fresh fruit ice cream was a definite highlight and enjoyed by all.

One of the most heartwarming moments this month came from a very special visitor. When your mum is your role model, it's easy to see where inspiration comes from. Erica joined her mum Lei for a day in our Care Centre and absolutely stole the show -

tiny uniform, huge smiles, and so much happiness shared with our residents. It was a beautiful reminder that care, kindness, and connection truly do run in the family. Erica's visit also became our most successful social media post this year, reaching over 5,000 people and receiving 56 reactions.

Looking ahead, February is shaping up to be another busy month. We will be announcing the winner of our Tomato Growing Competition, followed by tomato on toast for morning tea - because nothing beats fresh tomatoes! We also have Valentine's Day activities, Open Days at Te Awa, flower arranging, and even a trip to Waihi Beach planned - never a dull moment!



Scan the QR code for Care Centre calendar