

Dementia care for Worcestershire May 2012

Hollywood Actor Opens Pioneering Dementia Care Home in Malvern



A new £3.2m specialist dementia care home, Bradbury Court, was today (9th May) officially opened in Malvern by Hollywood actor Alfred Molina whose daughter Rachel works for the charity Friends of the Elderly.

The Da Vinci Code, Spiderman and Chocolat star toured the pioneering facility which incorporates the very latest research and thinking into facility design for dementia care. He spoke to staff, residents and guests and planted a tree marked with a plaque to commemorate the occasion.

Adjoining their already established Davenham and Perrins residential and nursing homes, the specialist 24 bed home has been built by Friends of the Elderly, a leader in the provision of person-centred care for older people. The home, which started taking residents in early March, has been built in response to figures predicting a 71.3% rise in the number of people with dementia in the West Midlands over the next 20 years[1]. In Worcestershire, the number of people with dementia is proportionately higher than in other areas of the country, and these numbers are projected to increase considerably over the next 15 years as people live longer[2].

Funding for the home was in part made possible by a local Peace of Mind fundraising appeal chaired by Sir Michael Perry which through donations, grants and sponsorship raised over £266,000, with a further £300,000 given by the Bradbury Foundation after which it is named.

Home Manager Charlotte Potter said: "We are delighted to be able to officially open Bradbury Court today and bring a facility like this to Malvern. This has been made possible by so many generous donations for which we are very grateful and we are thrilled to be able to mark the occasion with Alfred Molina.

Our aim for Bradbury Court is to focus on the specific needs and interests of each individual resident enabling them to carry on doing the things they enjoy doing in a safe and comfortable

environment. Bradbury Court is home to our residents and we want to make it feel homely in every way possible. Many people in residential care feel disempowered and lose their sense of purpose and identity. We want to make sure this does not happen.”

Bradbury Court has been built with the latest thinking in design for dementia care, based on research by Stirling University. Colour-coded areas will help residents find their way around. Clever use of glass keeps everything bright and cheerful, reduces residents’ fears of entering a room and attempts to ‘bring the outside indoors’. Different coloured doors to private rooms give a welcoming, less clinical atmosphere and all bedrooms have en suite facilities to give as much independence as possible. There are a variety of communal living spaces to encourage social inclusion, calmness and a sense of security including a café, a leisure area, courtyard gardens and two 1950s-themed rooms which offer familiar environments and encourage reminiscence. Technology is also being used to maximise the attention to care including pressure mats on beds to let staff know if anyone is up during the night and sensor lights which come on automatically when residents walk into toilets and en suites.

Friends of the Elderly is pioneering a new approach at Bradbury Court. ‘Wellbeing Workers’ will provide a holistic approach to care, replacing the task-specific roles - such as ‘Healthcare Assistants’, ‘Domestics’ and ‘Activity Coordinators’ - traditionally performed by different individuals. The new ‘Wellbeing Workers’ will work alongside residents assisting them with all areas of their lives, from helping them engage with activities they want to participate in to performing elements of personal care. This approach is aimed at encouraging residents to be more actively involved in their own care, empowering them to make their own choices about what they want to do and when, which promotes wellbeing and independence.

Jenny Russell, Friends of the Elderly’s Head of West Midlands Region, said: “It is so exciting to be a part of something innovative and to see the outcome of the considerable thought, experience and research behind this project. With the predicted rise in the number of people with dementia in Worcestershire, Bradbury Court underlines our commitment to care for the people of Malvern and the surrounding areas, and meet this increasing need. We are very grateful to the Peace of Mind Appeal fundraising volunteers – and to the people of Malvern and Worcestershire – for their generosity throughout. Relatives will be able to rest assured that residents will be cared for with warmth and individual attention.”

Friends of the Elderly currently provides a full, integrated range of services to older people in Worcestershire including day clubs, home support and residential care. The charity welcomes residents through social services and by private funding.

In 2010, the quality of Friends of the Elderly’s dementia day care in Malvern (at Howbury Lodge) was rated as ‘outstanding’ by the Association for Dementia Studies at the University of Worcester.

[1] National End of Life Care
Intelligence Network, published in late 2010

[2] 2011 NHS Quality and Outcomes
Framework