

## Good things happening in Edale Care Home

“In one way or another,” says the Manager of Edale Care Home, Shaun Brown, “I’ve spent my working life serving and helping people, and I’m still inspired everyday to find ways to make a difference to the people I work with and help look after.”

Not a bad philosophy, and one that’s certainly helped Shaun make a tangible difference at Edale.

Located in the Rangitikei town of Marton, the Edale Care Home is home to 34 residents. Acquired by The Masonic Villages Trust several years ago, it is now the only care home still operating in the region.

That’s because the operating environment for care homes in general has been very challenging financially, Shaun says.

But now, though, Edale is “chock-a-block” and has a waiting list, thanks to the efforts of Shaun and his 45-strong team.

In the 16 months he’s been in the role, he’s focused very much on enhancing “the environment” within and around the facility.

The team has made significant improvements to the residents’ care environment and to the site itself, both around the grounds and inside the rooms.

They found previously under-utilised space on site which they have used to create an extra four rooms, with another

two still a possibility. This adds significantly to potential income streams, helping to make the care home more financially sustainable.

And they have worked hard to build relationships within the community, especially with health providers.

“Marton’s a small place and word gets around quickly,” says Shaun, who travels to work every day from Levin.

“People are seeing the difference we are making and that’s having a real positive impact and means we stay viable.

“And that’s important because we’re a major employer locally, and we’re now seen as a provider of choice and a good community asset.”

Asked about any plans for the future, Shaun says there’s still plenty of potential left to leverage at Edale Care Home.

And with The Masonic Villages Trust’s ongoing commitment to supporting older New Zealanders to continue to “live locally”, he says there’s hopefully even more good things to come in Marton.



Shaun Brown  
Edale Care Manager



# Work progresses at pace at Horowhenua Orchard Park Extension

**Building work proper is now well underway and progressing at pace at the new Orchard Park extension to The Masonic Villages Trust's Levin retirement village.**

The first 22 villas in stage one of the build – a mix of one, two and three-bedroom homes – are being built, with the first four ready for hand-over in mid-March.

A further six villas will be complete at the end of April and the rest will be finished by the end of May.

Project Director, Alan Attack, says building work started in October last year with GJ Gardner Homes as the head contractor. "We are seeing the architectural design features coming to life now as the buildings reach completion.

"We will be ready to roll into stages two and three of the construction later this year. Eventually the new extension will add 100 extra villas to the existing retirement village."

Village Manager, Mary Burnett, and her team of 10 staff are excited to see work progressing so quickly.

"It's a wonderful extension for our retirement community," she says.

"We are all really looking forward to having people start to move into their new homes."

Prospective residents are already putting down deposits on the initial villas under construction and more still have expressed interest as additional stages are built.

Initial planning for this village extension started 10 years ago. The work comes hot on the heels of the opening of the new retirement village in Wainuiomata and the rebuilt Woburn Care facility in Lower Hutt.

These projects are all part of The Masonic Villages Trust's ongoing growth strategy as it seeks to fulfil its mission of providing excellent care and support for New Zealand's older communities.



Orchard Park Aerial View



New Villa



Orchard Park Community Hub



# Welcome to our new member of the team – Stacy the village cart.

Wainuiomata Masonic Retirement Village is set on a beautifully landscaped 4.5 hectare property which includes a village Hub and 80 independent living villas, and is situated within walking distance of the local shops and supermarket. The final stage of the build was completed late 2024, and the journey around the boundary path from the Hub, and back, is 1.25km.

Esther King, Village Manager, says the size and layout of the village keeps their dedicated team of Scott (Maintenance & Grounds) and Tracy (Gardens) very fit and busy.

“So, we are excited to have a new addition to the village team with the arrival of a golf cart! It’s allowing our team to respond more effectively to jobs as we have a large village to care for.

“It’s a real work horse and has helped our team get 40 cubic metres of mulch out this past week.”

Esther wanted to involve residents in naming the new village cart and set up a news story on the Village App, which drew 12 wonderful naming suggestions, including “Carter”, “Manu”, “Village Crawler” and “Beep, Beep”.

Esther chose Scott and Tracy as the judges to pick the winning name, with the box of chocolates going to the winning entry of “Stacy” which was contributed by resident Margaret Hurman who said “It’s an amalgamation of Scott and Tracy”!

With ‘Stacy’ are from left, Village Manager, Esther King, Tracy Poysden, who looks after the village’s gardens, and Scott Matcheson, who manages maintenance and grounds.



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## “It’s a real work horse and has helped our team get 40 cubic metres of mulch out this past week.”

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*From left, Roger and Margaret Hurman (Margaret contributed the winning name entry), Scott Matcheson, Tracy Poysden, and in the front is Shayden Aspinall-Whaanga, who does contract grounds work for the village.*



# Beam me up, Scotty! New smartphone app comes to Masonic retirement villages soon

Our retirement villages in Wainuiomata and Woburn are the first to begin using our new Village Connect smartphone app.

The new app, which we'll roll out to all other villages soon, provides a convenient 'information hub' for residents to keep up to date with what's happening in and around the village.

Wainuiomata Village Manager, Esther King, says more than half of her village's 111 residents are already using the app since it was launched in late January, and she sees this number growing every week.

"We're really excited to be rolling this app out in our village. Most of our residents already use mobile phones so this fits with how they're already living their lives.

"Our village app is all about growing our community – it means more connections amongst residents, as well as increased engagement between residents and our team.

"It's a really visually attractive and easy way for our residents to engage with what matters to them in the village."

The Village Connect app is available for both Android and Apple phones.

Among the many services it offers are:

- The ability to book into all of a village's events, services and recurring activities, see who else is attending and automatically populate your online diary with reminders.
- It can be used to make bookings for all of the village's facilities and rooms and, again, the app adds these reservations to your calendar and serves up reminders.
- Importantly, residents can make maintenance requests using the app and 'chat' about the maintenance requirement through the app.
- It also gives residents instant access to all essential village information, such as staff contacts, village maps and important documents.
- Village staff can use it to notify residents with urgent announcements and alerts, which residents can acknowledge receipt of by using the app.
- Residents can chat with other residents and staff through the individual and group chat functions.
- Groups can be set up with other residents around special interests and hobbies.

Esther says The Masonic Villages Trust took special care to ensure total data security and privacy when choosing the app, which is run by Australian firm Pluss Communities.

She says this was critically important to ensure the app's success, as it needs to not only be easy and attractive to use, but also safe and secure.

Once downloaded the app is password-protected for additional user security and ongoing support is available to residents as they learn to use the app.



Esther King  
Wainuiomata Village Manager

## "More than half of our residents are already using the app."

