



SUMMER 2025

ON YOUR BIKE

EVERYONE'S INVITED!



New knit and natter group have it all stitched up

Paradise sets sail on an exciting new adventure

Speaking up: The new project giving everyone a voice

Welcome

Hello and welcome to the summer edition of Paradise News!

It's been a busy and vibrant few months since our winter update and we're excited to share all that's been happening. There's been a real buzz about the place thanks to the introduction of several new activity groups, each one offering fresh opportunities for creativity, self-expression and building confidence.

One of the highlights has been our photography group, whose stunning work has already made a big impact. The group has produced a beautiful calendar showcasing portraits of people living at Paradise and scenic shots taken around our grounds. It's been a wonderful way to see the world through each other's eyes and everyone involved should feel very proud. You can read more about the group on pages 12 and 13.

'Thank you to everyone who makes Paradise House such a warm and friendly place to live.'

We've also introduced the Voices Project; an inspiring initiative focused on listening. It's all about giving people the chance to talk about what matters most to them – what they enjoy, how they wish to live and how we can support those choices. It's been an empowering experience so far and we're looking forward to seeing it evolve.

Evenings at Paradise have taken on a new rhythm, thanks to our music group which gives people the space to explore sound and movement. Whether it's a steady

beat or a full blown jam session, it's been great to see everyone enjoying the freedom to make music in their own way.

Meanwhile, our Community Skills Group has been getting out and about with a focus on using public transport and navigating the wider world with confidence. People are growing in independence and discovering new places – and showing us all what's possible when the right support is in place.

We hope you enjoy reading about all these exciting developments and more in this issue. We'll be back with further news in 2026.



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Bluebells and Ballot Boxes

Everyone at Paradise House had the chance to take part in the recent local elections, with staff on hand to support people in casting their vote.

Afterwards, people living at Paradise – accompanied by Chloe Hubbard (Adult Activities Co-ordinator) and Holly Cooper (Social Work student) – made the most of the spring sunshine with a peaceful walk through a nearby bluebell wood, rounded off with a refreshing drink.

Alison Hurlock (Joint Registered Manager) said it was an empowering moment for many and a reminder that everyone's voice matters. "It's really important that people living at Paradise know their vote counts and that they have the chance to get involved in the world around them," she added.





ALL THAT JAZZ

FESTIVAL FUN FOR PARADISE

People living at Paradise joined the crowds at this year's Cheltenham Jazz Festival for a brilliant afternoon of live music, sunshine and picnic treats.

Accompanied by Chloe Hubbard (Adult Activities Co-ordinator) and Mark Stanley (Senior Adult Support Worker), everyone enjoyed soaking up the sounds of jazz, soul and blues performed in the beautiful surroundings of Montpellier Gardens.

A delicious lunch was shared while listening to the music and watching the performances. There were lots of smiles and plenty of toe-tapping as people relaxed and enjoyed the afternoon.

"Cheltenham Jazz Festival is always a popular event and this visit was no exception," said Chloe. "It was a lovely reminder of how special shared outings like these can be – not just for the music but for the sense of togetherness they bring."





On the Buses

Building Confidence Beyond Paradise





Catching a bus, ordering a drink, borrowing a library book – small steps that have added up to big progress for three people living at Paradise House this Spring.

Shelley, Maxine and Anna have been taking part in a community skills group led by Occupational Therapy placement student Georgia Taylor.

During her three month posting, Georgia – who is studying at the University of Gloucestershire as part of its first ever OT degree cohort – has worked closely with the trio to build confidence and independence beyond Paradise.

Each week, the group has travelled by bus into Stroud, learning how to find a stop, use a pass and recognise landmarks along the way. Once in town, the focus turned to real-world skills – ordering food and drinks in cafés, paying for items and chatting to members of the public.

“I wanted to support people to access the places and things they’d like to do outside Paradise,” Georgia

explained. “They were especially keen to use the library and it was lovely to see how proud they were using their new skills in that space.”

Throughout the sessions, Georgia has role modelled everyday social cues such as body language, eye contact and polite conversation – skills that will help the group navigate interactions with confidence in the future. Longer term, they hope to use trains and travel further afield to Gloucester and Cheltenham.

Before finishing her placement, Georgia created personalised workbooks so the group can continue building their skills and tracking progress. Goals include identifying a bus stop, getting on and off safely, recognising landmarks and using a bus pass independently. One ambition the group is working towards is being able to do their personal shopping in Stroud on their own.

‘One ambition the group is working towards is being able to do their personal shopping in Stroud on their own.’

“For Shelley, Anna and Maxine, accessing the local community is really important,” said Georgia. “I hope the community skills group gives them the tools to keep building on what we’ve started together.”

This has been Georgia’s first time working with adults with learning disabilities. Previous placements on her course have included GP surgeries, children’s services and the Stroke Rehabilitation Unit and the Neurology Centre at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital.

She admitted to feeling a little unsure about her Paradise placement before starting the role. “I was apprehensive because I hadn’t done anything quite like this before. But the welcome I had from both staff and residents was amazing. I’ve felt completely supported.”

For Georgia, one of the most rewarding parts of her time at Paradise has been the pace. “It’s so different to a hospital setting. You can take your time here and get to know people properly. It’s been amazing to be in someone’s home, eating lunch together, having real conversations.”

On her final day people living at Paradise presented Georgia with handmade gifts as a thank you. “It was so touching. They’ve been so inquisitive about me and made me feel so welcome,” Georgia said. “This has been such a meaningful and rewarding placement. I’ll always remember it.”





STEADY STEPS

Strength and Balance sessions make a difference

Navigating the Paradise House site can be a challenge – with its slopes, varied surfaces and long pathways, good balance and mobility are essential. That's why new strength and balance sessions, led by Clinical Specialist Occupational Therapist Dean Powell, are proving so valuable.

Held in the bright and airy Oak and Pine House lounge, the sessions are small – usually three people at a time – and run in 10-week blocks. They're already having a positive impact with participants becoming steadier on their feet, more confident and showing noticeable improvements in mobility.

"We're focusing on all the muscles that are needed to support us in our mobility," Dean explains. "We start with the toes and work our way up – ankles, calves, quads and core – using both chair-based and standing exercises and gentle squats. It's all about building strength, improving coordination and developing confidence."

Dean is supported in the sessions by Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinator Rebecca Alder, a former nurse who has a strong rapport with the people who live at Paradise. The pair work closely with community physiotherapists who assess participants and help tailor support to individual needs.

This group-based approach, with clear verbal and visual guidance from Dean and Rebecca, is helping people meet the everyday challenges of the Paradise site with greater ease and safety.

Dean joined Paradise House in autumn last year and brings more than 20 years' experience as an Occupational Therapist throughout the South West. His career has had a strong mental health focus and

has involved in-patient rehabilitation, palliative care and most recently lecturing in occupational therapy at the University of Gloucestershire.

Paradise House has strong links with both the University of Gloucestershire and UWE Bristol, with student OTs regularly coming on placement. Dean oversees their development and supports them in their work. "It's a really rewarding part of the job," he says. "The students bring enthusiasm and fresh ideas and it's great for them to learn in such a dynamic, person-centred environment."

Alongside the strength and balance sessions, Dean is also supporting the Paradise Voices group, helping people identify and work towards personal goals that improve their quality of life. He's also further developing the Community Skills group which focuses on building confidence in practical, everyday tasks and community participation.

"The people who live here are so warm and welcoming and the staff are really motivated to keep developing what's on offer," adds Dean. "It's a brilliant team and a great place to work. Everyone is invested in the Trust's vision of compassionate, personalised care and creating a home where people can live fulfilling lives."



DRUMMING UP FUN

A new way to connect at Paradise

There's a new beat at Paradise House and it's bringing people together in wonderful ways!

Senior Clinical Therapy Assistant Adam Cook has recently started a music group and it's already proving to be a big hit with people living at Paradise.

The group is all about self-expression, building social connections, and boosting confidence as well as having fun. Each session begins with a simple drumming exercise where everyone calls out their name between beats. This warm-up sets the tone for the session and helps everyone feel included and ready to take part.

"It's all about having fun and feeling free to express yourself," says Adam. "We start with something simple like calling out names but even that builds confidence. It's great to see people getting more comfortable with their own voice."

"It's great to see people getting more comfortable with their own voice."

From there, the group moves into different musical exercises, including "Follow the Leader" where each person gets a turn leading a rhythm while others follow. Another favourite is "Conducting" where participants point at each other to prompt a drumbeat.

"These exercises really encourage self-expression," Adam explains. "Taking a turn to lead helps build confidence and following others strengthens co-operation. I always listen for where each person can match my rhythm and adapt so everyone feels included."

Creativity is at the heart of the group and Adam encourages everyone to experiment with the

instruments. Some people tap the drum with their nail, knock it like a door, or even call out their name through the base. More recently, new instruments like lyres, large sounding bowls and a guitar have been added to the mix.

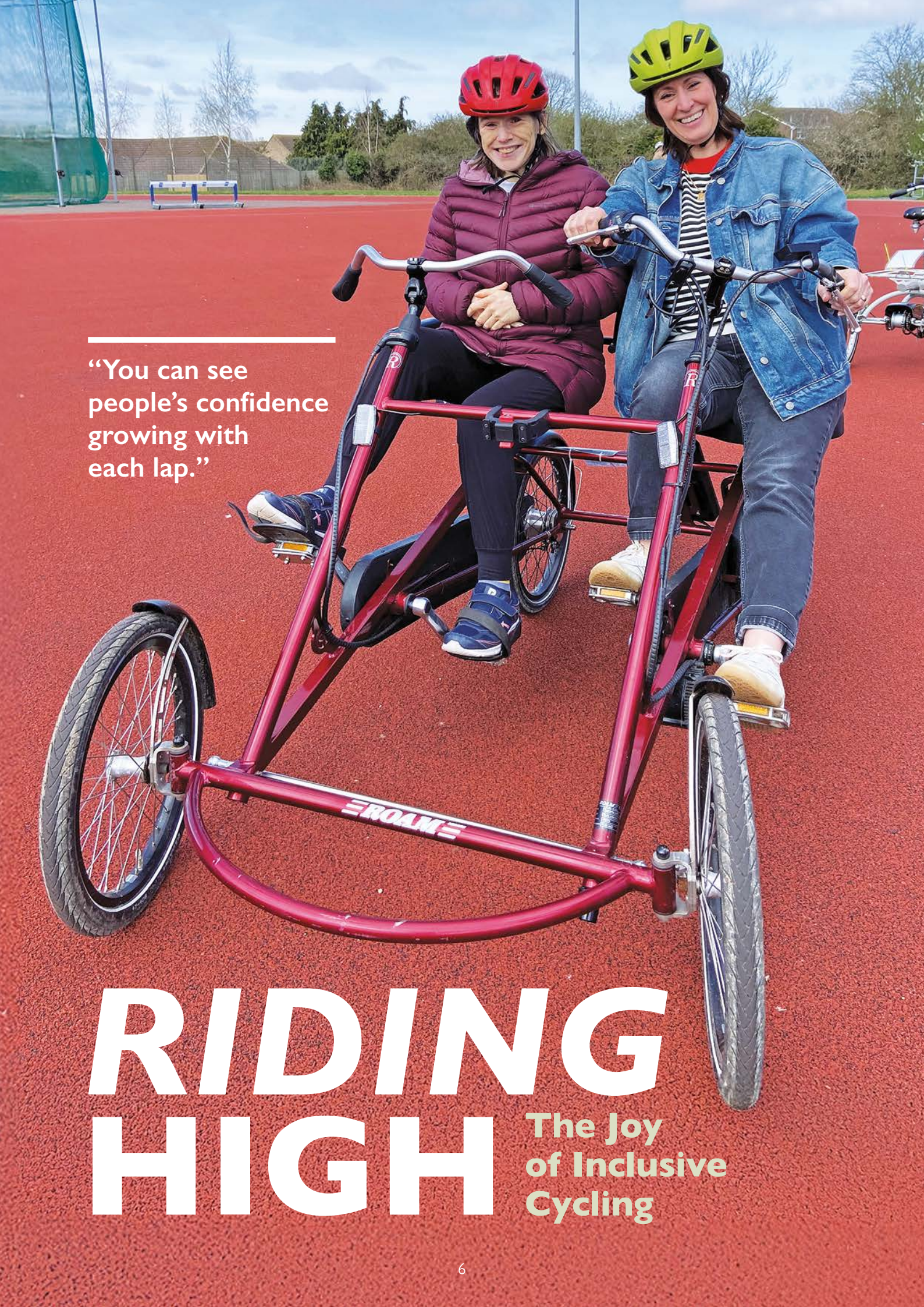
While the group is about freedom and exploration, Adam has set some simple boundaries around noise levels and taking care of the instruments. Beyond that, anything goes. Towards the end of the session, the group comes together to create a harmonious piece before moving on to the next exercise.

Some have already made great progress with regulars developing their skills as time goes on. Adam gives a special mention to Jenny for her creative playing, Maxine for her enthusiasm, Donna for her memory of complex rhythms and Mel for the fun she brings to every session.

"I've been really impressed with how much people are picking up rhythms and remembering them from week to week," Adam says. "Some have even replicated patterns in later sessions and it's amazing to see that progression."

With up to half a dozen people in some of the larger sessions, the music group is off to a fantastic start. Adam also offers one-to-one sessions for those who prefer an individual experience. We can't wait to see where the rhythm takes everyone next!





“You can see people’s confidence growing with each lap.”

RIDING HIGH

The Joy of Inclusive Cycling



There's nothing quite like the thrill of cycling – the sense of movement, the rush of fresh air and the freedom to ride at your own pace!

For a group from Paradise House, taking part in Gloucestershire Wheels for All sessions has become a weekly highlight offering not just exercise but a real boost in confidence and happiness.

Run by Get Wheels Going (GWG), the project brings disabled and non-disabled people together to enjoy cycling in a supportive, inclusive environment.

“The feeling of being in control of the bike, mastering balance, and moving at their own pace gives everyone a real sense of achievement...”

Sessions take place at Blackridge Athletics Track, where riders including Freya, Harvey, Oliver, Kirsteen, Laurance, Heather, Isabel, Carl, Lucy and Donna, can take to the

smooth, flat circuit on a fantastic range of specially adapted bikes.

Trikes, tandem trikes, companion trikes, hand cycles, companion hand cycles, quad bikes, side-by-side bikes, wheelchair bikes and wheelchair transporters are all on offer so everyone can find the perfect fit to get pedalling.

Paradise Adult Activities Co-ordinator Skan Alpan has seen first-hand the positive impact of the sessions. “The feeling of being in control of the bike, mastering balance, and moving at their own pace gives everyone a real sense of achievement,” he says. “You can see people’s confidence growing with each lap.”

But it’s not just about the cycling itself. The sessions provide a brilliant opportunity to socialise, meet others and simply enjoy being outdoors. “The fresh air in their faces, the movement, and the buzz from exercise all combine to create a fantastic sense of freedom and happiness,” Skan adds.

So, here’s to more laps and more laughs for the Paradise pedallers – ride, smile, repeat!



Let the Paradise takes to the Water

Sails Fly



Nine people living at Paradise House have set sail on an exciting new adventure!

Isabel, Lucy, Carl, Laurence, Maxine, Donna, Oliver, Freya and Jenny are all taking part in Royal Yachting Association (RYA) Sailability Courses at South Cerney Sailing Club.

The national RYA Sailability programme is designed to open up the world of sailing to people with disabilities. Each week, the group travels to the peaceful waters of South Cerney, where they are paired with one-to-one instructors and supported to learn at their own pace.

With course books in hand and lifejackets securely fastened, they have begun learning the ropes – from basic sailing skills and water safety, to steering and wind awareness.

The courses are structured to be fully inclusive, adaptable to individual needs and packed with opportunities to grow in confidence, independence and teamwork. “There’s something very freeing about being out on the water,” says Tash Martin, Adult Activities Manager and Therapy Coordinator at Paradise. “It’s not just about sailing – it’s about building confidence and trying something totally new.”

Each participant is working toward RYA Sailability awards, progressing through entry, bronze, silver, and gold levels depending on how quickly they move through the course. And for those who really take to sailing, there’s even the opportunity to take part in races later in the year.

**‘Beyond the technical skills,
the sessions offer a powerful
social boost.’**

Beyond the technical skills, the sessions offer a powerful social boost. Tash added: “It’s become a real highlight of the week. Everyone is enjoying being part of a wider sailing community, having fun together and sharing achievements on the water.”

The programme continues through to October and there’s a definite sense that this is just the beginning of a new passion for many of the Paradise crew.





Green-fingered adventures at **ROCOCO GARDEN!**



A community outreach gardening programme at the Painswick Rococo Garden has opened up fresh learning opportunities for people living at Paradise.

Freya, Rachel, Eric, Charlotte, Maxine, Laurence, Melanie, Lucy, Oliver, Harvey, Donna, Carl and Shelley are all taking part in weekly visits to the UK's only complete surviving Rococo garden.

They work alongside Lisa – the garden's dedicated community outreach gardener – who supports people with learning disabilities and neurodivergent people from across Gloucestershire to get hands on with all kinds of horticultural work.

The group has already got stuck into a weeding project in the kitchen garden and are keen to learn more. Other activities on offer include leaf clearing, pruning and potting plants.

"Everyone is really enthusiastic," says Paradise Adult Activities Co-ordinator Martin Shannon. "They're learning to use proper tools and techniques and the best part is the sense of pride that comes with it."

On other days the group takes part in wellbeing walks around the site taking in its breathtaking views across the valley. "The route winds down towards the maze which is always a highlight," says Martin. "Everyone loves going into the maze and watching each other try to find their way out!"

Looking ahead, the keen gardeners hope to take on even more practical green projects including woodland activities such as charcoal making.

"It's wonderful to see how much everyone gets from being outdoors, learning, and being part of the wider community," says Martin. "There's something really special about Rococo Garden. It's peaceful, beautiful, and the people we support always come away in a great mood."





BUILDING A CLOSE-KNIT COMMUNITY ONE STITCH AT A TIME!

A brand new creative group has started at Paradise House and it's already stitching people together.

The Knit and Natter group, run by Occupational Therapist Faye Longley alongside Social Work student Holly Cooper, is welcoming people of all skill levels to pick up some yarn and get involved.

Faye, who enjoys crocheting herself, was inspired to start the group after a New Year trip to Devon where she spotted colourful "yarn bombing" displays in a seaside town. Seeing how the knitted and crocheted decorations brightened up the space, she realised this was something she could bring back to Paradise.

"I've always found crocheting really therapeutic," says Faye. It's a great way to relax and I thought it could be a fun and social activity for people here too."

The group welcomes knitters, crocheters, and complete beginners. Faye can crochet but not knit—yet! She's already enlisted Hils, who lives at Paradise, to teach her so she'll soon be learning alongside everyone else. In return, she's happy to show anyone who wants to learn how to crochet.

Paradise Knit and Natter group's first project is simple: making colourful squares, whether knitted or crocheted, which will then be joined together for a

display on-site. There's also been talk of linking up with a community project, creating hats or blankets for a local hospital baby unit.

"There's no pressure to attend every week or stay for the whole session," says Faye. "People might even choose to knit or crochet in their own time and that's fine too. It's all about doing what feels comfortable."

Beyond the creative side, the group offers plenty of other benefits. Faye believes crocheting and knitting can be calming and having something to focus on with their hands might make it easier for some people to chat and connect with others.

"Sometimes, just having something in common can make all the difference," she explains. "It gives people something to talk about, helps ease anxiety and lets everyone feel part of a shared project."

With more than a dozen people already interested, the Knit and Natter group is being split into two sessions, giving everyone plenty of space to work at their own pace. Whether people choose to craft in a group or in their own time, Faye and Holly hope this will be just the start of something creative, relaxing and fun at Paradise.





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FRAMING PARADISE

THE 2025 CALENDAR AND THE PHOTOGRAPHERS WHO MADE IT HAPPEN!

For the photography group at Paradise House, capturing the world through a lens is about more than just taking pictures – it’s about creativity, self-expression and seeing familiar surroundings in a new way.

Over the past year, the group’s dedicated team of photographers has been working closely with Adult Activities Co-ordinator Chloe Hubbard developing their skills in composition, lighting and visual storytelling.

Their efforts have culminated in the 2025 Paradise Calendar – a collaborative project showcasing a selection of stunning images taken in and around the Paradise community.

“The calendar was a real labour of love,” says Chloe, whose passion for portrait photography aligned perfectly with the project. “It brought together so many skills we’ve been developing. People have really grown in confidence and artistic flair and it shows in the final pictures.”

From Donna’s wonderful image of Paradise’s resident horse Shelby to the community-focused photography of Heather and Carl, each page of the calendar reflects the group’s hard work and individual perspectives. Chloe captured the portrait photographs while regulars Shelly, Maxine, Hils, Anna and Isabel brought creativity and focus to their roles behind the camera. They also played an important part in shaping the final image selection.

When the finished calendars were distributed – one for every person living at Paradise and for every office on site – there was a real sense of pride. “The calendar was a perfect example of how photography allows us to see the world through each other’s eyes,” Chloe explains. “People put so much effort into the whole process – not just taking

the photos, but also selecting, editing and even laminating each calendar by hand.”

To date, the group’s sessions have explored a wide range of photography skills, from mastering camera settings to experimenting with composition, lighting and storytelling through pictures. “We’ve done some really fun experiments,” Chloe says. “Playing with daylight versus artificial lighting, creating silhouettes and seeing how different techniques can transform an image. Watching everyone apply these skills in their own way is just brilliant.”

Beyond the technical elements, the group also aims to foster confidence and independence. Holding a camera brings with it a sense of responsibility, and Chloe has been struck by the care and focus each participant shows when they step into “photographer mode.”

“It’s not just about taking photography, it’s about self-expression, teamwork and finding joy in capturing the world around us,” she says. “One of the most rewarding things about working with the group has been seeing people recognise their own talent.”

With the calendar now complete, the Paradise photographers are looking ahead to new creative challenges – some of which may take them further afield. Whether working indoors or out in the wider community, their focus will remain the same: developing skills, building confidence and enjoying the process along the way!

“People have really grown in confidence and artistic flair and it shows in the final pictures.”



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SPEAKING UP

VOICES PROJECT HELPS PEOPLE TO SHAPE THEIR FUTURE

A new face has been working closely with people living at Paradise helping them share their thoughts, ambitions, and preferences in a way that truly reflects who they are.

Eddie Agyemang, a BSc Social Work student from the University of Gloucestershire, is completing a 100-day placement at Paradise House where he's launched a Voices project – an initiative designed to give people the opportunity to express what they enjoy, what they would love to do in the future, and how they want to live their lives.

Initially, Eddie considered running small group sessions across Paradise but he quickly realised that one-on-one conversations worked much better. Meeting individually with people has given him the chance to really listen – whether it's about dream holidays, favourite meals, or aspirations like cooking independently. Many people also talk about activities they already love such as attending the Kingfisher Treasure Seekers' Disco in Gloucester or volunteering in the Sue Ryder charity shop in Stroud.

Alongside his Voices work, Eddie is also assessing the skills of people living at Paradise, identifying strengths and areas where support can help build greater independence in areas such as managing money and other life skills.

He's also been helping to run one-to-one online safety sessions, particularly geared towards younger people who use social media and websites on a regular basis.

This is Eddie's first experience working with adults with special needs and he's found it hugely rewarding. "It's given me a whole new perspective," he says. "There's so much individuality, so many different personalities and ambitions here. This placement has really reinforced how important it is to listen to what people want for themselves."

“What’s been amazing to see is just how much joy there is here...”

For the Voices project, Eddie works under the guidance of Occupational Therapist Faye Longley. Everything he learns from his sessions is shared with Paradise Therapy Manager Tash Martin and uploaded to a dedicated SharePoint site. This means staff – especially new team members – can quickly get to know each person's likes, dislikes and what they're passionate about.

“What's been amazing to see is just how much joy there is here,” says Eddie. “I think there's often an assumption that having a disability makes life constantly difficult, but that's not the reality I see at Paradise. There's a lot of happiness, friendship and enthusiasm!”



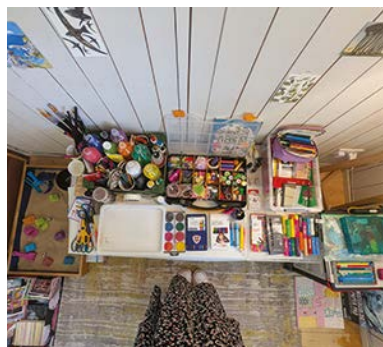


“It’s given me a whole new perspective...”



MEGAN'S ART THERAPY

PROVIDES A SPACE TO CREATE, REFLECT AND GROW



Art therapy has become a valued part of life at Paradise House, offering people living there a calm, creative space to explore feelings, build confidence and express themselves in their own way.

Since the beginning of the year, Student Art Psychotherapist Megan Leggett – on placement from the University of South Wales – has been running one-to-one sessions that combine artmaking with gentle therapeutic support.

Art therapy is defined by the British Association of Art Therapists as “a form of psychotherapy that uses visual and tactile media as a means of self-expression and communication.” It supports people of all ages and abilities to explore complex emotions and develop self-awareness in a safe, supported way. At Paradise House, Megan has embraced this approach wholeheartedly.

“In each session, I aim to establish an environment where the people living at Paradise feel at ease and in control,” Megan explains. “They have the autonomy to select the materials used, decide if music will be played throughout the session, and decide on what to talk about. The space is theirs and I’m present to offer support.”

The therapy sessions take place in one of the Paradise therapy huts that Megan has transformed into a welcoming haven. Soft cushions, fairy lights, calming music and pictures on the walls make the environment feel safe, warm and personal. “I wanted the space to feel like it belongs to the people who use it,” she says. “Changing the atmosphere of the hut with pictures and lighting has felt important in establishing a calm, special environment.”

Megan provides an impressive range of materials to suit different needs, moods and styles of expression. Traditional art supplies like pens, pencils, and paints sit alongside more unusual options including stickers, blow pens, 3D flowers, collage, stamps and textured fabrics. There are also sensory tools – essential oils, fidget toys, pebbles, bells and soft items – as well as books that explore emotions and artistic techniques.

“The process of making and sensory exploration is as powerful as what’s made,” Megan explains. “Whether it’s drawing or creating a vibrant collage, it’s about being present and finding meaning in the process and final piece.”

The sessions are designed not only to help manage emotional challenges but also to celebrate creativity and individual strengths. People living at Paradise are encouraged to follow their own ideas, express their thoughts visually, or simply enjoy the sensory experience of working with different materials.

“What’s struck me the most is how creative and expressive everyone is,” Megan says. “It’s been a huge pleasure to work alongside the people living here. I’ve learned so much from them about communication, resilience and how powerful art can be as a shared language.”

Megan’s time at Paradise has been both personally and professionally meaningful. “Getting to know everyone and seeing how they respond to the sessions has been fantastic,” she adds. “I feel really honoured to have been part of their journey and to witness how they use art in such individual and powerful ways.”



In each edition of the newsletter, we take great pleasure in introducing you to one of the people living at Paradise. This time, it's the turn of Oliver from Tobias Cottage!

Meet Oliver

skilled rider, swimmer and Isle of Wight enthusiast



Oliver moved to Paradise House in 2022, settling into life there with the same quiet confidence and good humour that those who know him best have come to love.

Now 31, he's known for his thoughtful nature, love of routine and playfulness – not to mention his famous sweet tooth.

Whether he's heading out for a swim, planning his next trip to the Isle of Wight, or simply enjoying a biscuit (or two) with a cup of tea, Oliver brings calm, kindness and a touch of mischief to daily life at Tobias Cottage.

"Oliver is meticulous in how he does things, and he takes pride in doing them himself," says Adult Support Worker Will Cheatle. "He'll often let you know – politely but firmly – if you're doing something for him that he's more than capable of doing himself."

That independent streak runs through many aspects of Oliver's life. An experienced horse rider, he's been taking lessons since childhood and now rides his own horse, Harry, at Tumpy Green Equestrian Centre in Dursley.

He's also a skilled swimmer, enjoys long walks and thrives on routine. He prefers life to be steady and predictable, with clear plans and a quiet environment. Loud noises and unexpected changes aren't his favourite things, nor are off-lead dogs getting too close – but he navigates the world around him with patience and cheerfulness.

Tobias Housekeeper Tereasa Roche describes Oliver as "a happy man who is lovely company." She says he's especially fond of the Isle of Wight, a place he visits regularly with his family. His bedroom calendar often

features a countdown to his next trip. "One of the highlight of these visits is going on the log flume at Blackgang Chine," Tereasa adds.

At home with his parents, Frances and Louis, who live in Budleigh Salterton near Exmouth, Oliver enjoys cooking with his mum and long beach walks with his dad, usually rounded off with an ice cream. Frances and Louis, who visit frequently, have another passion of their own: training guide dogs for the blind. Their current trainee, Jude, and another dog, Trixie, keep the household lively.

"Oliver is polite, warm-hearted and full of mischief in the best way," Will says. "He has a quiet, playful sense of humour and he's always ready with a giggle when teasing his friends or the staff."

That playfulness is best seen with his closest friends – Harvey, his longtime pal from William Morris College which they both attended prior to moving to Paradise, and Donna, Jade and Jonathan, with whom he has a natural camaraderie.

But if there's one thing that truly defines Oliver, it's his kindness. Though a man of few words, his warmth and sunny disposition make him someone people enjoy being around. Whether he's on a peaceful ride with Harry, looking forward to his next Isle of Wight adventure, or simply savouring a biscuit (or two), Oliver is living life in his own way and loving it.



“An experienced horse rider, he’s been taking lessons since childhood and now **rides his own horse.**”



LOVE IS IN THE AIR

AT THE VALENTINE'S DAY DISCO!

Paradise House was feeling the love this February as everyone came together for the much-anticipated annual Valentine's Day disco.

Heart-shaped decorations – many made by people living at Paradise – together with an impressive array of fairy lights transformed the Coach House space into a romantic wonderland.

**'Same time next year?
We wouldn't miss it!'**

As usual, the music was in expert hands thanks to Novalis Trust electrician and part-time DJ Mark Osgood. Mark swapped sockets for sound decks and treated everyone to a fantastic mix of classic love songs and party anthems that kept the dancefloor packed.

Thanks to everyone who helped support the event and of course to DJ Mark for bringing the beats. Same time next year? We wouldn't miss it!



Paradise goes to the Farm!

A group from Paradise had a wonderful day out this spring visiting Cotswold Farm Park – better known to some as “Adam’s Farm” from the television programme Countryfile.

Inside the petting barn, there were smiles all round as everyone enjoyed meeting and gently stroking a variety of animals including rabbits, hamsters, guinea pigs, chickens, ducklings and tiny baby chicks.

As it was the middle of lambing season, there was an extra-special treat for the visitors. “We were very lucky to see lambs just a few minutes old, as well as others who were just a week or so into their new lives,” said Skan Alpan (Paradise Adult Activities Co-ordinator).

Out in the paddocks, the fun continued as everyone got the chance to feed a wide range of animals – from goats and sheep to pigs and ponies, both Shetland and full-sized.

“The Highland cattle and old spot piglets were especially popular,” added Skan. “They came running up for food and were more than happy to be stroked and patted while they ate. It was a hands-on day full of unforgettable animal encounters.”



TAKING THE HIGH ROAD IN SOMERSET



Donna, Jade, Harvey, Carl and Laurence took the high road – quite literally – on a recent trip to Somerset, starting with the dramatic climb up Porlock Hill, the UK’s steepest A-road with gradients approaching 25 per cent.

The first stop was Tropiquaria Zoo in Watchet, where the group explored the reptile hall, aquarium, and outdoor enclosures, before heading into the nocturnal house to spot some of its more elusive inhabitants, including the rarely seen kinkajou.

Later, they visited Minehead’s Blue Anchor Beach for a walk along the shore and some time in the amusements, rounding off the day with a few games and plenty of sea air.

After a packed itinerary, everyone made their way back to Paradise House with tired feet and plenty to talk about.

