

I'm delighted to welcome the month of May—lush, green, and full of promise, with summer just beginning to make itself known. There's a real sense of warmth in the air, and after a wonderfully busy April, it feels like the perfect time to reflect and share our highlights with you.

We began the month with a lovely change of scenery, gathering for afternoon tea at Merrymead Tea Rooms while our usual meeting place at Christchurch was in use. It turned out to be a real treat—delicious cakes, savoury sandwiches, and of course, freshly baked scones with clotted cream. A lively debate followed: do you prefer your scone the Cornish way or the Devon way? It seems the Devon method (cream first, then jam) was the clear favourite... and Anna was very pleased about that! Keep an eye out as you read—Anna may be hiding somewhere in her birthday hat!



Amy from Kinder Essex once again led a beautiful walk at Warley, treating us to stunning scenery and great company. And naturally, no walk would be complete without a well-earned visit to the pub afterwards!





A very special highlight this month was celebrating Pat from our Brentwood New Era group turning an incredible 99 years young. It was such a joy to mark this wonderful milestone together—joined by Graham—and to share in such a warm and memorable occasion.

Meanwhile, some of our New Era members have been enjoying a mini holiday around York, and it certainly looks like they are having a fantastic time. From exploring charming local areas like Harrogate to enjoying a touch of luxury with afternoon tea at Bettys, it's been a trip filled with smiles, laughter, and well-deserved relaxation.



Back home, creativity was in full flow during our pottery painting session at Barleylands Craft Village. There were some truly impressive artistic efforts on display, along with plenty of laughter along the way. We rounded off the day with tea and sandwiches at the Tiptree café—always a favourite. I'm looking forward to sharing the finished creations with you in our next newsletter!



As always, Bennetts have been actively involved in supporting our local community. Anna has been out and about with the Brentwood Connect Bus, meeting with wonderful local partners and members of the public. These regular gatherings are a fantastic way to stay connected, share news, and strengthen the support around us.



Some of the Bennetts team also attended the SAIF (Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors) meeting, where we reflected on the importance of the professional standards and code of conduct, we proudly uphold. Being part of SAIF is something we value deeply, and further details can always be found on our website for anyone who wishes to learn more.



We were also honoured to welcome back our dear friend and grief counsellor, Dr Bill Webster, who travelled from Canada to spend time with our community. During his visit, he led two sessions of The Unwelcome Journey, sharing thoughtful insights into the grieving process along with three practical strategies to help guide individuals towards healing and hope. Both sessions were warmly received and well attended, and we are always so grateful for the compassion and understanding he brings.



Upcoming Dates for Your Diary:

Health and Wellbeing Event – 8th May, from 10am, outside The Bay Tree Centre, Brentwood. I'll be there handing out free ice cream, so please do come and say hello!

Brentwood New Era – 13th May, 1:30pm at Christchurch. We'll be joined by the Lemon Curd Lady, with opportunities to sample and purchase her delicious treats.

Billericay New Era – 20th May, 2:30pm at The Human Café.

As always, thank you for being such a valued part of our New Era community. Here's to a bright, joyful, and sunshine-filled May.

Warmest wishes,
Jane, Anna, Tina and Bridget x