

RESIDENT STORY

“I’VE COME TO REALLY APPRECIATE JUST HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO HAVE A WELCOMING HOME.”



During lockdown, Eleanor Castledon, a Sanctuary Retirement Living resident from Gravesend, discovered that she was stronger and more resilient than she ever realised.

In May 2019, Eleanor moved into her own apartment in the retirement community at Wimborne House, which provides accommodation with communal facilities and onsite care and support for over-55s. Having the care and support team on-hand provided reassurance together with ongoing support with her

recovery from a stroke, including practicing walking again.

Pre-Covid, Eleanor, 74, enjoyed organising regular social activities for other residents at the service, including chair-based exercise sessions and a popular weekly quiz.

Then in March 2020, the country went into a nationwide lockdown and Wimborne House residents, many of whom were vulnerable and shielding, began isolating in their apartments.

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Eleanor said: "The pandemic left me frightened to go out. I was worried about germs and became scared to touch things if I did go out and about."

Eleanor felt anxious watching the news every day. But slowly, she began to feel more determined to hold on to the positives of the situation. She explained: "I suddenly had lots of time at home to watch films that I'd been meaning to see for a while. With the help of the staff here at Wimborne House, I set a routine for myself, using social media to stay in touch with friends and spending time in the communal garden. All the residents here have also received daily wellbeing calls, which have been very reassuring."

Since social distancing restrictions have been put in place, activities at Wimborne have also been adapted for Eleanor and the other residents to enjoy, including the delivery of eye-catching artwork from local schoolchildren and a socially

distanced performance by the London Fanfare Trumpets.

Eleanor added: "My daughter and I are now even closer; we've talked on the phone every day and I've been helping with my grandchildren. We've laughed a lot! I've come to really appreciate just how important it is to have a welcoming home."

Gloria Boakye, Wellbeing and Inclusion Assistant at Wimborne House said: "Eleanor is a bubbly, proactive and engaging resident who has been a great inspiration to many of the residents and getting them involved in our social activities".

