



Help us add some  
festive sparkle to  
the lives of  
older people  
across the UK

# Introduction

Christmas is a time for family, friends, and celebration, but it can also be isolating for those in later life. Having a cup of tea with some friendly faces, taking a day out, or just chatting on the phone during the festive period is a wish come true for many.

This is why we want your help to make a real difference to loneliness in older people this Christmas and grant their Christmas wish with MHA.

Precious wishes is our bible theme for this appeal with the story of Simeon and Anna Luke 2: 22-38. Simeon is an elderly priest who has wished his whole life to see the baby, Jesus. We also meet Anna, an elderly widow who is granted the blessing of seeing Jesus too. Simeon and Anna remind us that sometimes we have to be patient to witness God's plan and that those who trust and have faith in the Lord will be blessed.

"Having the opportunity to sing in a choir again, in front of my family, with all the Christmas trees lit up was like a scene from an old movie. It was magical."

**Eileen, resident at Moorland House Care Home**

MHA want to spread Christmas spirit by granting wishes to a resident or member, wishes can range from taking them on a day trip to their favourite football club, an afternoon tea with someone special or singing with a choir, simply showing them someone cares and wants to share the magic of Christmas.

To see how you can join our appeal and together with your congregation, pray, reflect and support MHA, read onwards.

Thank you for sharing kindness and joy this Christmas helping people live later life well.





## MHA Cromwell House grants residents' wishes

**Angie, Activities Coordinator**  
**MHA Cromwell House, Norwich**

Angie has been working at MHA Cromwell House, Norwich for over three years and is currently the Activities Coordinator. Over the years Angie has got to know each resident well. Through 'Seize the Day' an MHA initiative, Angie is able to arrange outings that allow residents to have new experiences, bring back fond memories or enjoy former past times. Angie has truly become a wish maker for her home and it is only possible thanks to kind donations from people like you.

We interviewed Angie, who tells us a couple of the ways she's been able to make wishes a reality at her care home.

### Eric

Last year Eric chatted to me about his love of cars and that he'd dearly love to experience going to see a cars racing round the track. I got to work organising to making his wish a reality and organised a surprise trip to Snetterton to watch Ferrari Challenge UK in May 2022. The look of amazement when we got to the venue was priceless! Eric loved all the different cars and his absolute favourite was the yellow one you see in the picture.



### Eric said:

It was quite unexpected and a very pleasing experience. I'd been past the track several times in my life, but never was able to go in. I was surprised at quite how big the place was and I liked the fast cars. Something very special, I really enjoyed the day.

## Pauline

A few weeks ago, Pauline and I were having a chat during an activity when she told me about one of her favourite places, Blickling Hall. She desperately wanted to visit again as it had been 20 years since she'd last been, but didn't want to go by herself.

I got to work organising the trip as part of 'Seize the Day' and making her wish come true. In the summer we took Pauline along with a few of the other MHA Cromwell House residents to Blickling Hall.

### Pauline said:

During my time working at Blickling in the 70's, I'd wonder around the gardens and grounds during my lunch break. The Hall holds dear and special memories for me, I'm still friends with the person who interviewed me for the role there! Angie kindly provided us all with a lunch and we were able to wonder around the gardens. It was lovely to be able to share the experience with my neighbours. It brought back many wonderful memories for me.



All this would not be possible without donations towards 'Seize the Day' initiatives. In our home we are fortunate to have the support of a 'Friends of Cromwell House' volunteer group, who support the home including fundraising for our activities. Without further support I'd struggle to be able to make so many wishes come true.



### Angie says:

It's such an amazing feeling helping our residents wishes come true. I am very proud that I'm able to arrange these outings that have a lasting and positive impact upon our residents.



## Prayer



Gracious God, we thank you for the faith of Anna and of Simeon, reminding us of the richness of experience that people in later life can share. Give us grace to listen to one another's stories with open hearts and minds.

We give thanks for the work of MHA. We pray for courage to join our voices with theirs to speak out wherever we see those in later life being ignored or disparaged. We give thanks for the dedication of staff who will be working all through the Christmas season to support those in their care.

We pray for all those who will be missing someone they love this Christmas. As your hands and heart on earth, guide us to those who need us and equip us with compassion and love.

Amen



# Christmas Reflection

*By Kate Le Sueur, Head of Chaplaincy - North*

The Christmas story seems to be all about people who are looked down on by society in one way or another. The shepherds were on the edges of their society – dirty people unable to follow the requirements of the Jewish faith; the wise men – foreigners – coming under suspicion then as much as now; and at the heart of it all, an unmarried couple, pregnant too soon - oh the embarrassment!

As we read on further, past where the nativity plays stop, Luke describes the young family of Mary and Joseph taking their new baby to the temple to present Jesus, their firstborn son, to God. How we read what happens next depends crucially on the culture from which we read it. We meet Anna and Simeon, two people of great faith and great age. Simeon's age is only implied as we're told that he had been waiting a long time to see the Messiah. Anna, we are told clearly, was 84 years old.

For those who heard these stories first as they circulated in the early church, their inclusion in the gospel would come as no surprise. Why wouldn't you take note of the thoughts and words of two people with years of experience, steeped in prayer and worship, sure in faith? For some of us who have grown up in white western culture, it might look a little different. Here, people in later life are often treated as though they are past their sell-by date; a bit of a nuisance; a drain on resources. Luke's celebration of the faith of older people can remind us that we have around us a rich resource of experience in seeking, questioning, praying and believing.

My Christmas wish is that we create spaces and opportunities for everyone to share their faith and doubts. That we can listen lovingly to one another and value the wisdom and experience that can come with age, no matter how old we get.





## Tree of hope

You may have had a Tree of Hope on MHA Sunday as a way of expressing your hopes and prayers for social care and to add your voices to many thousands of others calling for proper reform and funding for social care in the UK.

For Christmas, why not have another Tree of Hope to express your Christmas wishes for yourself, your family, for MHA.

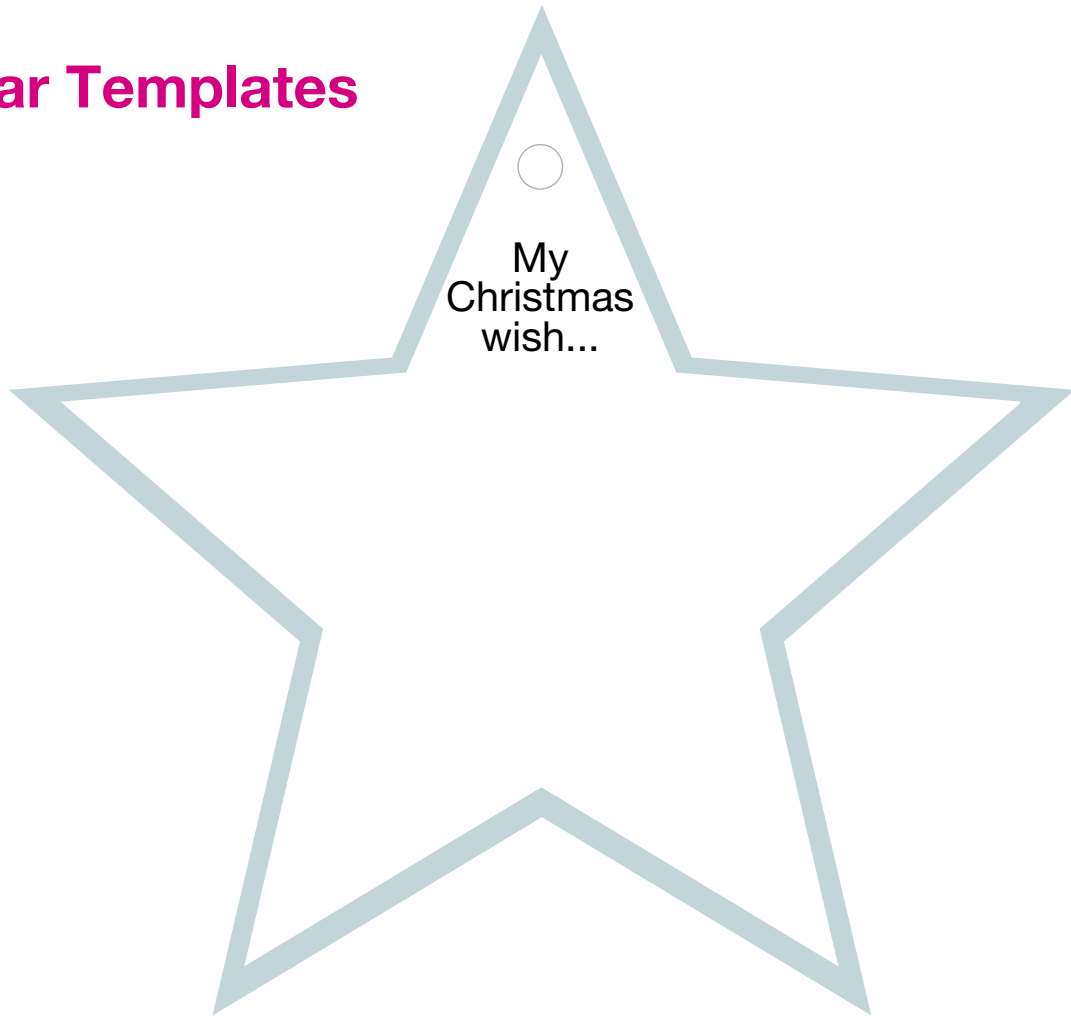
You could use a small Christmas tree or some branches set in oasis (the brown kind for dried flowers) in a pot. Buy or cut out 'baubles' or stars in shiny card, punch a hole and thread some wool or ribbon through to hang up.



Email a picture of your Christmas Tree of Hope to [fundraising@mha.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@mha.org.uk) so that we can share them on social media



## Star Templates

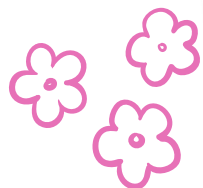
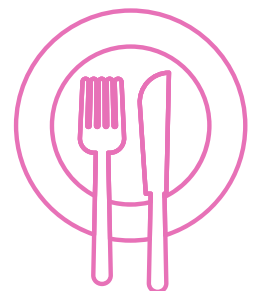
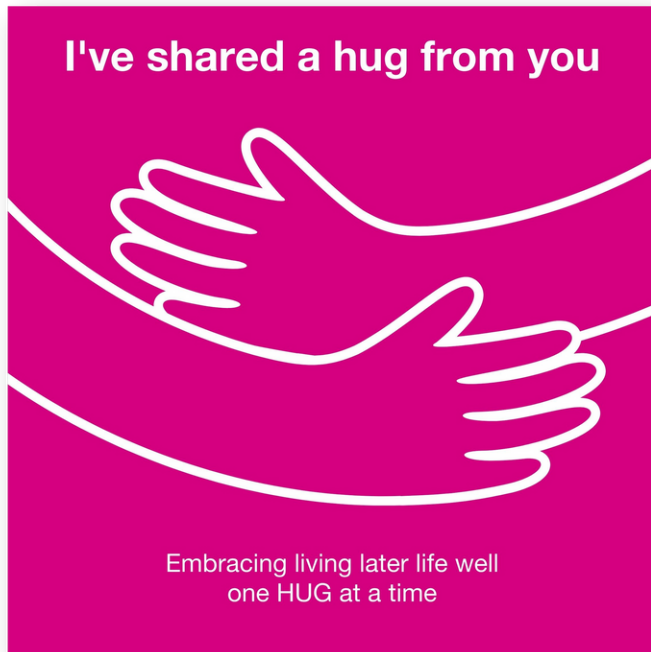




# Other ways to support

## Virtual Gifts

For the first time, MHA have virtual gifts that you can purchase for your friends and family. By purchasing a gift you are doing more than simply donating, you are giving the gift of wellbeing, joy or granting a wish to a person in later life. Gifts range from £7.50 to £200 and be purchased by visiting: [mha.org.uk/christmas](https://mha.org.uk/christmas)



## Christmas Friendship Appeal

Can you or your congregations write an extra Christmas card for our residents to give the gift of friendship? Address the card 'to a friend' and simply send it in the post to the 'Christmas Friendship Appeal', or hand deliver directly to one of our care homes. Go to [mha.org.uk](https://mha.org.uk) to find your nearest care home.



## Become an MHA Rep

We are fortunate enough to have amazing volunteers acting as MHA Reps within churches, circuits and districts who raise awareness of MHA by promoting our campaigns and events and encourage others to support us. If you'd like to apply and find out more about MHA Rep volunteer roles visit: [mha.org.uk/circuitrep](https://mha.org.uk/circuitrep)



Looking to plan something early next year?  
Organise a [Communi-tea party](https://mha.org.uk/teaparty) in support of MHA. Take part on 21 April 2023 or on a date that suits you and the church!

Whether you are considering donating proceeds of one of your after service get tea-gether/coffee morning for MHA or organising a one off event, you can download or order our free online Communi-tea resources by visiting [mha.org.uk/teaparty](https://mha.org.uk/teaparty)

# It's better all tea-gether



## Ways to keep in touch

If you need help or support contact us  
on the details below.

Email: [fundraising@mha.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@mha.org.uk)  
Telephone: 01332 221 641

**Search 'MHA' to find us on social media**



Search MHA Supporters on Facebook to join our supporters community group'  
[facebook.com/groups/2031936296978500](https://facebook.com/groups/2031936296978500)



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