

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
25 April 2022

Hallmark Play Garden to unite and delight



Children will be begging their parents to visit older relatives this autumn thanks to a pioneering partnership between Hallmark Care Homes Foundation and London Play. The play charity will be unveiling what is hoped to be the first of many ‘Play Gardens’ at multi-award-winning care provider, Hallmark’s newest care home Midford Manor, when it opens in Bath later this year.

Announced to coincide with [Global Intergenerational Week](#), the Play Garden will offer a perfect setting for children and older people to come together in joy following more than two

years of the Covid-19 pandemic. Shaped by future care home residents and local children, the design of the garden will be inspired in part by memories of residents' own childhood play experiences. Children will also be involved, with a "Design Your Own Playground" competition for schools running throughout this spring.

Older people's reminiscences will be captured in an illustrated 'Book of Midford Manor Play Memories', to be housed within the play structure for older residents to read to younger visitors to the play garden.

It is hoped that the Midford Manor Play Garden will be the first of many such play gardens to feature in care homes across the country – bringing wide-ranging benefits to young and old alike. It is widely accepted that children who regularly mix with older people see improvements to their language development, reading and social skills, while older people are less likely to suffer loneliness and will experience better physical and mental health.

"Every future Play Garden will have the imprint of childhoods past while offering a new generation a place to create their own play memories, in the company of their much-loved older family members."

Paul Hocker, director, London Play

Stephen Burke, CEO of Hallmark Foundation said:

"We are delighted to fund London Play to create the country's first Play Garden. It will promote intergenerational interaction in the new care home and encourage a family friendly environment where children will love visiting their older relatives. It's a win-win for all generations and we hope it will encourage other care homes to use their outdoor space creatively."

General Manager of Midford Manor Care Home, Carol Britton said:

"A Play Garden will be invaluable to our residents and their families, it will encourage families to come more often and the visit will be a more pleasant and enjoyable one. We are delighted that Hallmark are pushing the boundaries and raising the bar and that we will have the opportunity to add a new and exciting level of innovative engagement to and with our local community. Making care homes accessible and inviting for all generations is absolutely imperative."

For more information about this initiative please contact:

Paul Hocker, director London Play: paul@londonplay.org.uk

Stephen Burke, CEO Hallmark Foundation stephen.burke@hgf.org.uk

Notes to the editor

1. London Play is a small charity that strives to ensure that every child in London has the freedom and opportunity to play outside every day, near where they live. We promote children's right to play, campaign for more and improved out-of-school play services for London's 1.8m children and young people, and support play providers in the capital. We also directly provide more play opportunities for children by supporting groups to develop play streets, building nature play areas and running events.
2. Hallmark Care Homes Foundation was registered as an independent charitable foundation in 2020, founded by Avnish Goyal, Executive Chairman of Hallmark Care Homes. The charity aims to create a Britain where everyone can age well by investing in the future of care. The Hallmark Foundation's funding priorities are ageing well, improving the quality of care, and supporting and developing the care workforce. The foundation backs a wide range of charities and coalitions. Visit www.hallmarkfoundation.org.uk/ and contact stephen.burke@hgf.org.uk
3. Hallmark is an established, family-run care provider that has three CQC rated 'Outstanding' homes. It provides residential, nursing and dementia care to 1,200 residents across 19 locations in England and Wales and has won 100 awards over the last 25 years including 'Residential Care Provider' at the 2021 Health Investor, National Care and Leaders in Care Awards ceremonies. Midford Manor is scheduled to open its doors to its first residents this autumn. The new £16m, 80 bed home will provide residential, nursing and dementia care. Facilities will include a café, a state-of-the-art cinema, a luxurious hairdressing salon and therapy room. In addition to spacious bedrooms with full en-suites, the home will have 15 exclusive suites, a wellness room, a specialist dementia community as well as an abundance of outdoor space on all floors. For further information visit www.hallmarkcarehomes.co.uk or contact verity.prentice@hallmarkcarehomes.co.uk
4. Global Intergenerational Week is an initiative, now in its third year, which aims to inspire individuals, groups, organisations, local/national government, and NGOs to fully embrace intergenerational practice, connecting people of all ages especially the younger and older generations. <https://generationsworkingtogether.org/global-intergenerational-week>
5. Ways to support London Play? [Donate](#). Purchase our unique Play 52 cards. Support us while you shop through [Give as you Live](#) or Amazon Smiles.
6. Thanks to all our funders which in addition to Hallmark include the Garfield Weston Foundation, the Mayor of London, The National Lottery Community Fund, The Royal Parks, Worshipful Company of Playing Card Makers and Trust for London.

www.londonplay.org.uk

phone: 0203 384 8510 - email: info@londonplay.org.uk

Patrons: Michael Rosen, Simon Hughes, Lord Smith of Finsbury, Jon Snow, Stephen Studd, Polly Toynbee
Company limited by guarantee, registered in England no. 4055882. Registered charity no. 1104731.