

NEWS

Social distancing penguins star in new video

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When the Covid-19 pandemic began, staff at Old Milton Road, one of Sanctuary Supported Living's supported housing with care services in New Milton, initially struggled with how to help residents with learning disabilities understand social distancing.

However, the inventive team then created cardboard cut-out penguins, based on residents' favourite film 'The Penguins of Madagascar', so that residents would follow their catchphrase 'just smile and wave' when greeting people, instead of hugging them. The penguins, which they named Smiley and Wavy, have since become firm favourites with residents, and have featured in a variety of socially distanced activities, videos and artistic projects.



Their latest project is two videos featuring Smiley and Wavy (and their new chicks Happy and Clappy) wearing masks when out and about in their local area. These videos have been designed to help residents feel comfortable both when wearing a mask and when they meet someone else who is wearing one.

Alison Notman, Local Service Manager Old Milton Road said, "Smiley and Wavy have been very busy recently, helping residents to understand the new social distancing rules as lockdown is lifted, including starring in two new videos about wearing masks to help prevent the spread of the virus. It could be quite scary for someone with learning disabilities to see someone wearing a mask, or to have to wear one themselves, if they didn't understand why - so I'm really glad that we have Smiley and Wavy on-hand to help residents feel more comfortable."