



Social Impact

2018-19



	<i>Chair's letter</i>	3
	<i>An award-winning model</i>	4
	<i>What a difference a year makes</i>	5
	<i>Focus on quality</i>	6
	<i>What our customers say</i>	7
	<i>Evidence-led</i>	8
	<i>People at the heart of our service</i>	9
	<i>Driving dementia standards</i>	10
	<i>Caring about end-of-life</i>	12
	<i>Enriching lives through heritage and the arts</i>	14
	<i>Active lifestyles</i>	16
	<i>A growing service</i>	18
	<i>Putting back into the community</i>	19

Chair's letter



The ambition to improve outcomes for older people underpins Belong's operation and the past year has seen the organisation continue to work towards evaluating and evidencing the benefits of the Belong model on quality of life, not least through its work with the University of Salford (see page 8).

Older people are being supported to lead active lives within our vibrant village communities through a range of innovative partnerships and initiatives, including exercise, activity, arts and heritage.

Moreover, customers at every stage of their journey report enjoying independence, choices, caring relationships and peace of mind whilst living in Belong.

Clear evidence of the quality and innovation behind Belong's services can be seen in independent indicators ranging from awards won to ratings earned. In particular, we were delighted to see Belong Wigan judged 'Outstanding' by the Care Quality Commission, meaning that three out of seven villages now hold this distinction, compared to around 4% of nursing homes nationally.

Furthermore, supported by funding raised through Belong's first retail charity bond, the organisation has continued to invest in expanding its services, with two more villages now well underway in Birkdale and Chester and planning permission acquired for further sites in the Wirral and Beeston, Nottingham.

As I prepare to stand down after nine years as a member of Belong's Board of Directors, I reflect with pride on what has been achieved to date, secure in the knowledge that the organisation will continue impacting positively on people's lives as it brings its services to new areas.

Our aim is to continue extending access to high quality services for older people, in particular those living with dementia, and to continue to find new ways of promoting, enhancing and evidencing wellbeing as we move forward.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R.A. Hoyle".

Roger A. Hoyle
Chair of the Board

An award-winning model

Belong is a not-for-profit organisation, specialising in supporting people with dementia, and investing in advancing, improving and expanding the impact and reach of its services.

Each Belong village is designed to maximise choice, independence and opportunities for older people, whatever their needs. Focusing on individual wishes and aspirations, rather than the limitations of their condition, Belong provides a range of services to support people as their needs change and to enable them to lead active lives in vibrant communities.



The wider community

Amenities in the Belong village centre include bistro, hair salon, gym, therapy room, library and function rooms. These, along with the events programme, are open to the wider community and also provide the setting for Belong's Experience Day Club (specialist day care service). Belong also provides a registered home care service (Belong at Home) to support those living in their own homes in the local area.

Sector leadership

Belong's innovation and outcomes have been recognised through a number of awards over the past year. These are showcased throughout this report and cover a range of areas, including the exercise service, activity provision, apartment schemes, catering provision, people development and end-of-life care.



What a difference a year makes

True to its commitment to providing a 'home for life', Belong supported customers in a number of ways in 2018/19, achieving the following impacts.



783
people living in
24-hour care
households



198
people living
independently
in apartments



368
customers of the
Belong at Home
domiciliary care service



130
customers of
Belong's specialist
day care service



143
more people
supported by Belong
than in previous year



71,764
hours
of home care
provided



20%
growth in support hours
provided by
Belong at Home



180,000
transactions
in bistros and
hair salons



274
people
accessed Belong's
Admiral Nurse service



74%
of customers
living with
dementia



31%
of customers
publicly funded
in households



£764,000
the amount of
household fee subsidy
provided by Belong



4,532
days of
specialist day care
provided



7,400
planned
events and
activities



70%
of customers
with an exercise
programme



85
years old
- average age of people
using Belong services

Focus on quality

Belong is committed to providing high quality services and outcomes to all its customers and regularly evaluates its progress in a range of ways to drive continuous improvements. Independent, external audits are carried out by the Care Quality Commission through its inspection and rating regime. 3 out of 7 or 43% of Belong villages are rated 'Outstanding', compared to 4% of care homes with nursing which hold this rating nationally.



In the past year, Belong Wigan became the third Belong village to secure the coveted 'OUTSTANDING' rating.



CQC Chief Executive Ian Trenholm praised best practice on a visit to Belong Atherton, also rated 'OUTSTANDING'.

Belong Morris Feinmann celebrated its first anniversary with a 'GOOD' rating following its first inspection since opening, while Belong at Home maintained its 'GOOD' rating in both Wigan and Atherton.

Belong Warrington was also inspected during the year and found to require improvement, with gaps found in some procedures. Changes were immediately effected to address the inspectors' feedback. Encouragingly, the CQC report nonetheless highlighted many positive findings and examples of best practice, particularly in relation to the direct provision of quality care and Belong is building on these, aiming to turn around this rating at the earliest opportunity.

CQC Ratings

Results are for all Belong villages and Belong at Home services on 31 March 2019. Four services had not been inspected by this date, two of which have since been rated 'GOOD'.



Operational performance indicators

High occupancy and income enabled Belong to fund higher staffing ratios compared to the average UK nursing home.

	UK average	Belong 2018/19	Outperformance	
Occupancy	89.1% ¹	97.6%	+10%	
Staff costs per resident per annum	£23,575 ¹	£30,704 ²	+30%	
Rota hours per resident	37.0 ³	44.6	+21%	
Agency costs % of staff costs	10.0% ⁴	6.9%	+31%	

1. Knight Frank 2018 Care Homes Trading Performance Review (for 2017/18).

2. Higher staff costs reflect higher rates of pay and a higher staffing ratio, promoting better customer outcomes.

3. LaingBuisson Fair Price Toolkit 2015 for nursing dementia residents including carers, catering and housekeeping staff.

4. Christie & Co Adult Social Care Report 2018 Elderly Care Average.

What our customers say

Each year, Belong surveys customers, relatives and professionals to gain feedback on all services.

The headlines are overwhelmingly positive and the survey also provides detailed insights into our strengths and areas where people feel improvements could be made. These 'Listening to the Experts' reports are published and available in each village. The group findings are reported below.

97%

of customers would recommend Belong across all villages and services

98%

agree or strongly agree Belong's people are kind, caring and respectful

92%

agree or strongly agree that they have opportunities to take part in activity and exercise

95%

agree or strongly agree that Belong is a safe place to live

91%

agree or strongly agree that staff are skilled and knowledgeable

79%

agree or strongly agree that they are actively involved in the Belong village community*

*excludes Belong at Home customers

Verified customer reviews

Belong continues to be positively rated on independent review websites and Belong Wigan was listed in the North West's Top 20 Care Homes for the second year running in the carehome.co.uk awards 2019.

9.7

average score on



"It sometimes appears that the home is slightly overstaffed but this is obviously intentional - it means that the staff are not rushed off their feet and have time to spend with residents and really care for them." Review of Belong Morris Feinmann, May 2019

"My mother was a resident at Belong in Platt Bridge for 18 months or so, until her recent death. During her time at Belong, she was well looked after. But more than that, the care staff on Willow household demonstrated genuine care and affection for her. A care home needs to have a high standard of facilities and activities, and Belong Wigan does have those; but it lives or dies on the quality and capability of its care team. The team on Willow Household, who cared for Mum, were first class in my opinion." Review from March 2019

9.6

average score on



"I cannot recommend Belong at Home highly enough. Throughout the time they have provided care for my mother, they have approached it in a professional, caring and collaborative manner. The staff are friendly, caring and very switched on to my mother's needs. The management has proven to be very focused and flexible in their approach, even when the Local Authority has made life difficult for all concerned, resulting in a gold service for my mum and the family. Belong go out of their way to treat my mother with dignity and respect, recognising that a bespoke service is often called for in dementia patients." Review from homecare.co.uk, November 2018

Evidence-led

In 2019, the University of Salford produced their final report following a three-year action research project investigating the impact of the Belong model on effectiveness of service delivery, customer quality of life, staff satisfaction and the wider community.

The findings pointed to clear evidence that the Belong model delivers on its commitments. Customers described having freedom to exercise choice and preferences, to live the way they want to and remain independent, reinforcing the success that the Belong model brings to supporting people to live 'Your Life, Your Pace, Your Way'.



University of
Salford
MANCHESTER

"Most apartment customers perceived a natural progression into a household as their independence reduced. One apartment customer went and sat on the households for company when feeling a 'bit off' or he went to enjoy an activity. They could observe how people were cared for and it gave reassurance that they would be looked after too."

"I thought I was sort of at the end of the road, which it is, but they don't make me feel like that. They do make me feel as if I'm here to live, and I can't quite see why I should die... real life goes on when you're here. It doesn't stop, which I think is probably one of the most important things. I love it."

"It's 'Belong', that's how it is isn't it? Family wise, it's our family - and I'm part of the family and that's how I like it."

"The facilities at Belong encourage the outside community in but also provide an environment that promotes and encourages visitors sustaining and encouraging relationships between the customer, their family and friends."

"... the smaller household model helped make it feel more comfortable, not overcrowded, relatives conferred that the clean modern environment and smaller household rooms made the space more homely."

"What raised the quality of life of customers was being cared for by very kind and caring staff."

People at the heart of our service

Belong is a values-based organisation and invests extensively in developing and rewarding its people. In recognition of this, it won the Investor in People Award 2018 for Excellence in the Third Sector.



1,013

number of employees

389

number of new starters

15,000

number of training courses provided

15

training courses per employee per annum

High quality training is key to driving standards and continuous improvement within Belong and the organisation regularly looks to innovate within its training delivery. This has ranged from use of the Cognisco online tool to assess the effectiveness of training interventions to new customer service initiatives and the launch of a partnership with Oomph to drive a 'whole-team' approach to activity and wellbeing.

Local awards also attest to the strength of Belong's partnerships and their impact on promoting training success. These include:



Belong Wigan's Lynne Ascroft recognised as Health & Social Care Apprentice of the Year 2019 in the Cheshire College South & West Awards



Outstanding Support for Apprenticeship Training in the Newcastle-under-Lyme College Awards 2019 won by Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme

CASE STUDY: CAREER DEVELOPMENT



Belong offers excellent professional development opportunities and promotes a 'grow your own' ethos to nurturing leadership within teams. Recently promoted from Lead Nurse to Support Manager at Belong Atherton, Nicola Johnstone is the registered manager for the CQC Outstanding-rated village, having developed her skills and knowledge over 15 years.

She joined the organisation prior to the launch of Belong villages in 2003, working as a Domestic Assistant in one of its Warrington care homes. She then completed qualifications in health and social care, progressing to Care Assistant, Senior Carer then Care Team Leader.

In 2008, she embarked on nurse training alongside her work, meaning she was qualified by the time Belong Atherton opened in 2011 and was recruited as one of its first nurses.

As Lead Nurse, Nicola led Belong Atherton to achieve the Gold Standard Framework for care at end-of-life, most recently achieving a platinum rating. She has showcased best practice to audiences at the National End-of-life Conference and is a learning

representative for the Royal College of Nursing, ensuring she keeps up-to-date with latest developments and cascades these to her colleagues.

Nicola also completed the 'Future Nurse Leaders in Social Care' training, run by Skills for Care and the Burdett Trust for Nursing, contributing her project to NHS England's Atlas of Shared Learning.

She is highly regarded by her peers and local professionals, including GPs, hospice professionals and the team at Wigan Infirmary. She works alongside multidisciplinary teams to improve palliative care in the care home setting and reduce the number of unsafe hospital discharges.

Highlights of her time with Belong include being invited to Buckingham Palace to meet HRH Prince Charles for her outstanding contribution to frontline nursing, winning a Great North West Care Award for End-of-Life Care and Nurse of the Year at the Wigan and Leigh Hospice Awards.

"The happy people in Belong make relatives want to come and visit."

"The care is above a 10. It's smashing."

"The staff are well trained, they wouldn't take them on if they weren't!"

Driving dementia standards

All team members, whatever their role in the village, receive comprehensive two-day training in supporting people with dementia, provided by Belong's inspirational and award-winning dementia trainers.

Each village also has a dedicated Practice Development Facilitator who works alongside Belong's specialist dementia trainer in coaching staff, and there are dementia champions at each location.

This expertise extends to supporting people throughout their journey with dementia, and is a key feature of all Belong services, from home care and day care, through to 24-hour support and end-of-life care.

Belong evaluates the impact of its dementia training using Cognisco's powerful online learning tool. This tests employees' knowledge, competence and confidence in supporting people with dementia through a series of scenarios, enabling understanding of development needs and targeted solutions for knowledge, confidence and practice.

It also identifies any gaps between skills and confidence and uses a traffic light system to identify where support is most urgently needed. Following relevant interventions, colleagues re-take the assessment, with the average score improving from 74% in test 1 to 81% in test 2.

"A strong recommendation from a colleague led to my initially exploring the Experience Days at Belong Macclesfield for my wife with advancing dementia. The positive experience convinced the family that this care home would fulfil our aspirations for a safe and caring end-of-life home. Then a 5-month hospitalisation followed in a dementia assessment unit before my wife transferred to Holly House in Belong Macclesfield. The staff were simply outstanding in their empathy, patience, care and sensitivity, displaying a clear understanding and experience of the care required for such patients."

Review from carehome.co.uk, Jan 2019

CASE STUDY: ADMIRAL NURSE .



Jackie Dow reflects on her mother Maureen's journey with dementia and how Belong have supported the family.

Living in Suffolk at the time, Maureen was diagnosed with vascular dementia in 2012, aged 69. As her care requirements became greater, and her daughter Jackie was increasingly making the 200-mile journey from her home in Cheshire to care for her mother, the decision was made for Maureen to move closer to her family. Jackie explains:

"I was coming to terms emotionally with how dementia was affecting my mother while going through the challenge of arranging care with social services. That was when we discovered Belong. We went to visit Belong Crewe and found out that she could live independently in an apartment while receiving care from Belong's home care service, Belong at Home. We could instantly see mum living there."

Jackie was also introduced to Belong Admiral Nurse, Caroline Clifton. Belong's free Admiral Nurse service, in partnership with Dementia UK, provides mental health nurses specialising in dementia care to support people who have been diagnosed with dementia, as well as their family members and carers.

SERVICE

"Caroline provided all-round support from our first contact with Belong. Not only did she determine exactly what care my mum required, she helped us secure the right level of financial support for this. This included arranging assessments by occupational therapists and attending meetings with social services. She also advised us on how dementia might affect our family. This was all done with the utmost professionalism and compassion. It was an invaluable lifeline at a really stressful time."



Caroline Clifton

As an apartment tenant at Belong Crewe, Maureen lived independently at the village while receiving support from Belong at Home.

"The impact on my mum was huge. She went from being relatively isolated to having lots of friends. We got to know the staff personally and to trust them completely, which was very important. They always kept me informed. Unlike other home care services, they also took mum on trips out and encouraged her to take part in activities at the village. It was good to know she was having a good time."

Having been diagnosed with Alzheimer's and requiring full-time care, Maureen relocated to Duke household at Belong Crewe in 2017. Jackie comments that the continuity of care during this time, down to maintaining the same support workers during the transition and replicating the décor in her apartment, made a real difference to her mum's wellbeing.

Maureen continues to live her life to the full at Belong Crewe. She now prefers activities in small groups or one-to-one, including singing with support workers. As a lifelong swimmer, she particularly enjoys attending weekly dementia-friendly swimming sessions, and Jackie says weekly hair appointments and massages at the village's on-site salon have a therapeutic effect for her mother.

Jackie's family still benefits from Belong's Admiral Nurse service.

"Caroline is always the first person I turn to when I need advice about my mum's care. She's become a friend to me, and mum loves her. She is incredibly knowledgeable about dementia, so she knows exactly what do if there is a change in my mum and helps me approach big decisions about her care objectively while being there for emotional support and guidance."

Expanding the Admiral Nurse service

Belong's Admiral Nurses work closely with our trainers to provide advice on best practice in supporting people living with dementia and the organisation has expanded its Admiral Nurse service over the past year.

In 2018, Belong appointed a second Admiral Nurse, as part of its ongoing partnership with Dementia UK.

The team is supporting the growing number of Belong residents and customers across its locations, along with their family members and carers.

Admiral Nurses are mental health nurses that specialise in dementia care. By working collaboratively with other professionals, they seek to improve the quality of life for people affected by dementia, helping them to live positively with the condition and develop skills to improve communication and maintain relationships.



Dementia UK, a charity that works in partnership with NHS providers and commissioners, social care authorities and voluntary sector organisations, is responsible for upholding the standards of Admiral Nurses nationwide, and supports the work of Admiral Nurses at Belong villages.

10
Top Tips
for supporting people with dementia

Belong
Your life, your pace, your way.

Dementia UK
Helping families face dementia

Belong's Admiral Nurse team provides resources, counselling and specialist support to people with dementia, their families and careers.

Caring about end-of-life

Palliative care has remained an important focus, with Belong villages achieving accreditation in national frameworks dedicated to driving quality in the end-of-life support provided to older people and their families.

GSF Triple Platinum



In 2019, three Belong villages – Atherton, Crewe and Wigan – received the highest possible national accreditation for end-of-life care provision, being awarded ‘Platinum’ status by the Gold Standards Framework (GSF) Centre: the UK organisation responsible for maintaining quality standards in end-of-life care.

Inspectors praised the personalised end-of-life care plans in place and observed the extensive social, physical and emotional support offered to residents and their families. The positive impact of Belong’s move to electronic care records to monitor individual cases was also highlighted.

Hospice Awards



Belong Atherton celebrated three wins at the Hospice in Your Care Home Awards 2019, organised by Wigan and Leigh Hospice to recognise high-quality end-of-life care provided by local care workers.

Six Steps



Belong Morris Feinmann also received the national ‘Six Steps’ end-of-life accreditation, which is underpinned by the National End-of-Life Care Strategy and supports care homes to achieve measures set out by the Department of Health Quality Markers for care homes and the CQC Essential Standards of Quality and Safety. It looks at organisational culture as well as the skills and knowledge base of staff.

Great British Care Award



Belong Morris Feinmann’s Karan Shingler received national recognition when she won the Palliative Care Award at the finals of the Great British Care Awards.

Judges praised her passion, professionalism and drive, and her commitment to continuously improving standards of care for those on end-of-life pathways.

Life-changing sensory equipment



Belong Atherton was centre stage at the National Hospice Conference 2019, when it was invited to present its pioneering work introducing multi-sensory equipment, which is providing stimulation to those unable to engage in usual activities.

The innovation allows Belong to transform any room into a therapeutic environment for people receiving end-of-life care, or those living with dementia, anxiety or depression.

The new equipment combines a bubble column, projector, fibre-optics, aromatherapy diffuser and audio station and is being positioned in bedrooms for residents who are physically restricted and unable to engage in other activities within the village.

Its impact has been immediate, engaging residents across the village households. There have also been remarkable results, including one resident who had been unresponsive to most stimuli previously, yet was able to hold her husband's hand and speak his name for the first time in eight years.

When a person was placed on the end-of-life care pathway, a butterfly symbol on the front page of the PCS would alert all staff. The activity coordinator told us they would immediately visit this person to ensure their last wishes could be kept: "If I see [the butterfly] I make it my job to spend time with them."

They told us that staff would ensure people's comfort, sitting and holding hands, attending to need and told us of one person who wanted their nails painted, others for whom staff had sung hymns. They told us that last rites were arranged for those who wanted it, and where a person with no faith had expressed their terror, they managed to arrange for a member of the living faith church to console and provide counsel and support at very short notice.

Wigan and Leigh Hospice had delivered training to staff in symptom management for people at the end of their lives. We saw numerous compliments and thank you notes sent by relatives of people who had passed away at Belong care village, commending the service and staff for their support. One read, "All the nurses were exceptional My [relative] couldn't have had a more dignified end to her life. You should all be so proud. We can never thank you enough."

Each year on Christmas Eve the service arranged a 'Tree of Light' ceremony for people to share memories of those people who had passed away. Their relatives would be invited back to a ceremony of remembrance. We were told that this was a very moving occasion.

Excerpt from Belong Wigan CQC Report, March 2019 Inspection

Enriching lives - through heritage and the



Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme celebrated its first anniversary with a RICS Community Benefit Award.

The care village claimed the prize in the 2019 Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) West Midlands Awards, which recognise the most innovative projects in the region and their impact on local communities.

The village incorporates a listed and much loved 17th century building, known locally as Maxims, which has now been restored as the Belong Heritage Gallery, thanks to a £1.8 million grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The vibrant community venue is attracting local people through a unique cultural facility and, importantly, providing a valuable resource to engage people with dementia.

It includes spaces such as Samuel Bell's Tea Room, the Old Pomona Inn, Reminiscence Lounge, Maxims memories installation and an arts and crafts room.



The Lord-Lieutenant of Staffordshire, Ian Dudson CBE, officially opened Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme in November 2018

"I quote Mum directly: 'I love it here, I feel like I am living again'. She is never ignored. Her needs are always attended to promptly. The food is excellent and the facilities are amazing, meeting as many people's needs as I can imagine."
carehome.co.uk review, March 2019

"You have to walk in to this place to truly realise how good it is. Hidden away are lovely tea rooms, clean communal lounges, even a free jukebox. Staff are friendly too."
Facebook review, January 2019

"Brilliant afternoon at the Dignity in Care event, thank you to everyone involved, you made us feel very welcome. The students from Newcastle-under-Lyme College also worked hard making sure everyone had what they wanted."
Facebook review from Shared Lives Stoke Team, February 2019

Ground-breaking arts partnership launched



In 2019, Belong launched a partnership with Liverpool's centre for the contemporary arts, Bluecoat, engaging in a unique three-year research project to explore how the arts can improve the lives of those with dementia.



arts

Key success factors included:



Successful collaboration with local museums to create exhibits and memory boxes



Intergenerational appeal, with over 100 school children visiting and completing the children's trail



A vibrant programme of events and activities, with over 15 events per week and over 700 in the first year



Extensive input from the local community through the Maxims Memories oral history project and community drama



Over 185 'day club' sessions engaging people with dementia in gallery activities



The village's popular bistro enjoys a 5* rating on Tripadvisor and Facebook and won Café of the Year in LUX Life Restaurant & Bar Awards 2019

The 'Where the Arts Belong' collaboration has seen six critically acclaimed artists take up residency at Belong Crewe to engage customers and staff in an array of creative workshops, including storytelling, sculpture, painting, music, film, crafts and dance.



The work produced will result in exhibitions in local galleries and the findings will be used to create a framework for embedding the arts effectively into new care environments. This research will inform practice at Belong's upcoming village in Birkdale, which will be the first Belong village to have permanent staff trained in specialist arts provision.

"For 45 minutes [they] collaborated on making models of a large sunflower and a pond with vegetation and ducks. [She] was absorbed and her mood was calm and joyful. She had enjoyed the process and seemed pleased with the results. Household support staff expressed great surprise at Mrs E engaging so deeply and for so long with the activity."
From case studies gathered by Bluecoat, May 2019

Active lifestyles



Belong's commitment to improving outcomes through exercise was recognised when it won the Innovative Quality Outcomes Award at the prestigious 3rd Sector Care Awards 2018.

The award, which celebrates the use of innovation to achieve life-changing results, was tribute to Belong's advanced approach to helping its customers stay active and healthy.

Its specialist, personalised exercise programmes and the implementation of state-of-the-art SilverFit equipment, which uses gaming and virtual reality to engage older people in exercise for longer, contributed to this success and these measures are transforming the lives of Belong customers, improving mobility, strength, stamina and balance.



Lead Exercise Instructor appointed

Belong recruited personal trainer and sports massage therapist, Anthony Harley, to lead on stepping up Belong's exercise programmes, appointing him Lead Exercise Instructor, with responsibility for the organisation's fitness and rehabilitation programmes.

A former gym instructor and also a former head of Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council's GP Exercise Referral and Cardiac Rehabilitation Programme, he will support Belong's team of fitness instructors across all villages.

CASE STUDY: REHABILITATION THROUGH EXERCISE



From wheelchair to ballroom by 100th birthday

May Choraffa's days on the dance floor looked like they were over when a serious hip injury left her in a wheelchair, but thanks to a remarkable rehabilitation programme at Belong Wigan, the 'Strictly' fan was back on her feet, and waltzing again for her 100th birthday.

The lifelong ballroom dancer began her recovery at the village after a hip impairment left her unable to walk. Determined to regain her mobility, she embarked upon a rehabilitation journey at Belong's gym, with the help of specialist fitness instructors and state-of-the-art facilities, such as SilverFit virtual reality equipment, used to develop core muscles.

One year on, May had said goodbye to her wheelchair and was strong enough to walk with just the help of a frame.

The success of her rehabilitation at Belong Wigan has been acknowledged by the NHS Leading Change, Adding Value framework as an example of best practice in this field. In a published case study, the village has been recognised for identifying the importance of the exercise instructor role in supporting the mobility and independence of residents in a dementia care setting.

Growing Old Disgracefully



Belong Crewe resident, John Harvey was awarded the 'Growing Old Disgracefully' prize at the fifth annual National Activity Providers Association (NAPA) Gala.

He was nominated for his active contribution to village life and his daring fundraiser riding the world's fastest zip wire at 88-years old!

Double Gold



Also recognised at the NAPA Awards was Caroline Newton, Lead Senior Support Worker at Belong Atherton, who won 'Best Carer who Contributes to Activity Provision'.

She was described as someone who "makes dreams come true" for residents at the village, and her commitment to this goal included arranging for one Atherton resident to fulfil her ambition to sing with a brass band, which she did in front of over 100 people including Mayor of Manchester Andy Burnham.

Officially a happier place!



Experience Co-ordinator at Belong Crewe, Natalie Ravenscroft, was recognised as one of 50 people making Britain a happier place in The Independent's Happy List 2018.

She was shortlisted for her work organising events at the village, including Crewe's first ever Silver Pride event which celebrated LGBT culture for members of the community over the age of 55. Her nomination described how: "Natalie and her team created a fun, stigma-busting space for people to feel comfortable expressing who they are."

Independent living



Residents of Belong's apartments gave the thumbs up to independent living in the village when they voted in the EAC National Housing for Older People Awards.

There were two wins for the organisation: Gold for Belong Crewe's Princess Court Apartments and Bronze for Belong Macclesfield's Maple Court Apartments.



A growing service

Belong Birkdale

Belong's first care village by the sea is set to open in 2020.

The 'topping out' ceremony was led by Sefton Councillor, Paul Cummins, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, and celebrated the laying of the final tile as the main building works concluded and the focus moved to fit-out.



Belong Chester

The Chester build is also underway, due to open later in the same year.

Chester MP Chris Matheson marked the first milestone in the build with the laying of the foundation stone at the £15.7 million state-of-the-art care village development in the city.



Belong Beeston

Planning permission was granted for the development of a £15 million care village in Beeston, Nottinghamshire.

Purchase of the former Myford's factory site in Wilmot Lane is set to be completed before it is transformed into a state-of-the-art care village.



Belong Wirral

Plans for Belong Wirral were approved as part of the £4.5bn Wirral Waters regeneration masterplan.

The £15 million care village will help to establish a new city neighbourhood as part of Peel Land and Property's redevelopment of the 500-acre site, which sits on the banks of the Mersey. It will be Belong's tallest care village as a six-storey development at East Float Docks.



Putting back into the community

Sustainability



Reduce



Re-use



Recycle

Belong is committed to minimising its impact on the environment through a three-pronged strategy.

One example of this is the donation of computing equipment that is no longer needed. This is collected by the “Community Recycling Consortium” charity, which uses the recycling of electronic and electrical equipment as a vehicle for the training and employment of people with mental health issues or physical disabilities who might, otherwise, not have an opportunity to access adult training courses or employment.

Fundraising

Belong people have raised thousands of pounds over the past year, both to fund additional equipment for Belong villages and to support charities in line with our objectives, such as the Alzheimer’s Society.

Examples include Belong people completing the Coast to Coast cycle challenge, climbing Snowdon, shaving off their hair and hosting cake sales, fayres and a host of other events.

Our teams also have strong community links and are supported in their fundraising by stakeholders, including local churches, businesses, retailers and leisure facilities.

During the course of the year, £46,000 was raised in fundraising income and an additional £22,000 received in donations. Over £1,600 was raised by Belong team members for local and national charities.



Belong Macclesfield team members prepare to take on the coast-to-coast cycle challenge.

Special needs apprenticeships

Belong is committed to developing a diverse workforce and creating opportunities for local people. One example of this is a programme launched at Belong Warrington, offering special educational needs internships.

Students participating in the scheme benefit from improved life chances and greater workplace opportunities as a result of the scheme.



Sadie, 18, who attends Green Lane Community Special School in Woolston, and 20-year-old Adam, a student of Warrington and Vale Royal College, are both undertaking the ‘supported internship’, a government initiative designed to help young people with learning difficulties or disabilities gain the skills and experience needed to achieve full-time employment.

Belong Warrington is a chosen employer for the programme and has been working alongside local schools and colleges since 2017 to provide students with personalised and meaningful placements, whether in care or in facilities such as the hair salon.

Stephen Capper of Green Lane Community Special School, commented: “Belong understands the employment problems faced by young people with special educational needs and really embraces the programme to provide students with sought after work experience and training.”

This publication is available in large format on request.

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