



*Belong* 

Social  
Impact  
2019-20

# Contents

<i>Chair's letter</i>	<b>3</b>
<i>2019/20 in numbers</i>	<b>4</b>
<i>Providing high quality services</i>	<b>5</b>
<i>Celebrating our people</i>	<b>7</b>
<i>Listening to the experts</i>	<b>9</b>
<i>Nursing excellence</i>	<b>10</b>
<i>Promoting wellbeing through exercise</i>	<b>11</b>
<i>Dementia and the arts</i>	<b>12</b>
<i>Intergenerational living</i>	<b>14</b>
<i>New developments</i>	<b>15</b>

# Chair's letter



It has been a privilege to serve as Chair of Belong for the first time in what has been a remarkable year in many ways.

Most importantly, the number of people to benefit from Belong services has continued to increase, as we have steadily grown our communities in the relatively new villages in Didsbury and Newcastle-under-Lyme. This growth looks set to continue, as in spite of some setbacks to the pace of development of the next schemes, Belong remains set to expand its portfolio of villages, with the next developments in Chester and Birkdale due to complete in 2021.

Wellbeing and quality of care have remained central to our vision of vibrant community villages that enable people to lead the lives they choose, with the year seeing a number of exciting developments in these areas. From the creation of new lead posts for nutrition and training to new initiatives to promote exercise, the arts and music in our villages, Belong has continued to explore new opportunities to improve the lives of people living in our communities, and particularly those with dementia.

Belong's model has also continued to attract national and international attention, with over 80 visits from professional organisations interested in the outcomes we are achieving through our approach.

Of course, though, the turn of events at the end of the year has had significant implications for our ability to welcome visitors to Belong, with the outbreak of COVID-19 requiring us to take unprecedented lockdown measures until the pandemic is brought under control.

One positive side of this has been the effectiveness of the smaller household model when it comes to supporting infection control, enabling 'bubbles' of customers and colleagues to be easily delineated and movement across households limited. Equally, we've been overwhelmed by the wonderful support we've seen from people of all ages within our local areas and the generous donations of gifts, letters and pictures for our residents and colleagues. We look forward to the time when we will be able to welcome people back into our villages and return them to vibrant hubs in the heart of our communities.

Until then, we will continue to focus on promoting the wellbeing of the customers at the heart of everything we do in Belong and I must end by paying tribute to all the inspirational colleagues within the organisation for their unswerving dedication in all circumstances. The commitment they have shown over the past year has been truly exceptional. I hope you will enjoy reading more about it.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nicola Brooks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Nicola Brooks**

*Chair of the Board*

# 2019/20 in numbers

2020 was a year overshadowed by the impact of COVID-19, which saw Belong close its villages to members of the public on 16 March. As this came right at the end of the current financial year, there was some effect on figures recorded in the last two months, but the more significant impact will be seen in the next financial year. Overall, Belong was able to continue supporting older people, as seen in a range of indicators:



**830**  
household residents



**343**  
Belong at Home customers



**191**  
apartment tenants



**133**  
Experience Day customers



**97.8%**  
occupancy in Belong households<sup>1</sup>



**63,400**  
hours of home care



**237**  
people accessed Belong's Admiral Nurse service



**4,700**  
Experience Days



**68%**  
self-funding customers



**£1,089**  
per week – average fee rate



**73%**  
of customers living with dementia



**7,900**  
planned events and activities



**32%**  
of customers publicly funded in households



**£655,000**  
amount of household fee subsidy provided by Belong



**38%**  
of household customers received a nursing service



**185,000**  
transactions in bistros and hair salons

<sup>1</sup> Excluding new villages still in the fill-up phase, which averaged 66.4% occupancy

# Providing high quality services

Putting customers at the heart of its service, Belong continues to focus on maintaining quality, with a range of internal and external controls.

This year, the Care Quality Commission inspected six of Belong's 14 registered services and ratings on 31 March 2020 were as follows, with 93% of services rated at least Good and 29% Outstanding:

**Outstanding**

4

**Good**

9

**Requires Improvement**

1



**Belong at Home Crewe retained its Outstanding rating.** 100% of Belong at Home services are rated Good or Outstanding, compared to 89% nationally.



**Four more Belong at Home services were inspected and all achieved Good ratings:** in Didsbury, Macclesfield, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Warrington



**Belong Warrington returned to a GOOD rating in all areas.** The CQC report described how the team showed pride in their work, and highlighted their dedication to providing a range of activities and events that were personally special to residents.

empowering culture, and ensures all team members are clear about their roles. The report also noted that Belong Warrington continually considers how it can enhance their service.

CQC inspectors also drew attention to the village's leadership, describing its management as one that promotes a positive and

Overall, 86% of Belong villages are rated at least Good, including 43% Outstanding, compared nationally to 77% of nursing homes for over 65s being rated at least Good, including 5% Outstanding.



**Driving improvement at Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme:** Less positively, Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme was re-inspected and saw its rating slip from Good to Requires Improvement, with weaknesses in medicine

management and leadership. Naturally, this was very disappointing and while the report noted that Belong has robust policies in place, it was regrettable that these were not being fully implemented at the time of the inspection.

and regular auditing to eliminate errors in the storage, dispensing and administration of medicines.

Accordingly, wide-ranging measures have been implemented to address these issues and ensure a rapid turnaround to bring Newcastle-under-Lyme, in line with the standards of other Belong villages. Immediate actions completed included an audit of all care records and extensive refresher training in all areas of medicine management and record-keeping, as well as the introduction of additional guidance

To oversee the implementation of a detailed action plan, a new clinical governance team has been established at the village, with additional support being provided by the management and central services team, including in the areas of practice development, nursing and leadership. The village retains its 'Good' rating in the three areas of 'Caring', 'Effective' and 'Responsive' and we are working hard to ensure we return the village to a positive rating across all areas as quickly as possible.

## Operational performance indicators

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

	UK average	Belong 2019/20	Outperformance <sup>5</sup>	
Occupancy	88.4% <sup>1</sup>	97.6% <sup>2</sup>	9%	✓
Staff costs per resident per annum	£28,197 <sup>1</sup>	£30,813 <sup>3</sup>	9%	✓
Rota hours per resident	37.0 <sup>4</sup>	44.6	21%	✓
Agency costs % of staff costs	9.7% <sup>1</sup>	7.3%	27%	✓

1. Knight Frank 2019 Care Homes Trading Performance Review (for 2018/19). 2. Excludes the new Belong Morris Feinmann and Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme villages, which are still being filled. 3. Higher staff costs reflect higher rates of pay and a higher staffing ratio, promoting better customer outcomes. 4. LaingBuisson Fair Price Toolkit 2015 for nursing dementia residents including carers, catering and housekeeping staff. 5. Compares Belong's performance to the UK market average.

## UK Top 20 double ranking



The Belong care village group and the organisation’s home care group, Belong at Home, have been ranked in the UK Top 20 by the online review websites: [www.carehome.co.uk](http://www.carehome.co.uk) and [www.homecare.co.uk](http://www.homecare.co.uk) respectively.

The rankings are based on feedback on the quality of our services from customers and their families, which saw Belong villages awarded a 9.7 and Belong at Home 9.9 (out of 10) average score from residents, customers and their relatives across the North West.

“My mum lived at Belong Atherton, within one of the households, for over three years but has recently passed away. Previously, in 2016, her drastic weight loss, anxiety and advancing dementia meant she could no longer live independently and wasn’t expected to live beyond 3 months. Because of the total dedication and dementia care given by the team, Mum thrived and grew stronger until she was a healthy weight. She looked amazing and enjoyed her life in a caring, homely community. We, as a family, cannot praise the staff enough.”

*Published on [carehome.co.uk](http://carehome.co.uk) in December 2019*

“I have already recommended to the GP and other general public. I was so pleased that Belong have set up in this area. The care providers have taken a lot off my shoulders and now I can enjoy time for myself and more time with Mum. It’s lovely to have professional help as an ‘extra pair of eyes’. All the ladies are well organised, caring, polite and punctual. They enabled Mum to settle exceptionally quickly.”

*Published on [homecare.co.uk](http://homecare.co.uk) in June 2019*

## National and international recognition

Belong won a number of prestigious distinctions during the period, including the Best Residential Care Accolade at the LaingBuisson Awards 2019, which recognise the industry’s finest examples of best practice and excellence.



Belong’s innovative provision of care and customer-centric focus saw it distinguished in the ‘smaller organisation’ category for its village household model and sector-leading dementia care. The judging panel praised Belong, saying: “The continued growth of Belong is a positive sign of the innovative and internationally recognised model. The connection with community is strong and the work on LGBT communities shows understanding of how community needs are changing.”

Belong also won the Best Retirement Village Group in North West England at the 4th annual Social Care Awards, hosted by Global Health & Pharma (GHP) and was represented on the global stage at IAHS (International Association of Homes & Services for the Ageing) conference in Toronto, as well as in the UK at the Knight Frank Healthcare Investor Panel.



### Nutrition drive

Over the past year, Belong created the new post of Hospitality and Catering Manager to drive quality in catering, nutrition and hygiene standards within Belong villages. In her first year, Sam Jackson has worked closely with Bistro & Catering Managers to ensure consistent practices across the estate of seven villages and has played a vital role in ensuring food supplies and cleaning guidance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

# Celebrating our people

**As a growing organisation, Belong continues to prioritise investment in its people, enabling it to attract high calibre individuals and support them to build careers in social care, while ensuring high quality support to customers.**

Over the past year, the organisation has also created a new training lead to give further focus on learning and practice development, leading on workforce development planning and funding, providing guidance to the Practice Development Facilitator team and offering on-site support and training.



**1,089**  
number  
of employees



**499**  
number  
of new starters



**16,686**  
number of training  
courses provided



**18**  
training courses per  
employee per annum



## Carolyn Ball

Carolyn Ball joined Belong in an administrative capacity back in 2008, soon after the organisation launched its first village in Macclesfield. At the end of 2019, she was appointed General Manager of Belong Morris Feinmann, following six years in Belong management roles and having been influential in the set-up of both Belong Morris Feinmann and Belong Warrington.

In her own words: “Working your way up really gives you a solid understanding of how the business operates. My career with Belong is testament to the organisation as an employer and the unique village model we have is incredible. It just works.”

And, from Belong’s perspective, there are also important benefits of this approach to people development: “Carolyn’s commitment and determination to grow her Belong career over the past twelve years has created another ‘homegrown’ leader. We’re very proud of Carolyn, her achievement is well-deserved, and we look forward to her building on the success of our Didsbury village,” said Belong Deputy Chief Executive, Tracy Paine.

## External recognition

Over the past year, Belong’s people have also earned the organisation significant recognition in external awards.

- **Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme won the award for Best Large Employer** in the inaugural Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group Awards (NSCG), which applauded its engagement with the local college by providing excellent opportunities for new staff and full-time students to develop their skills, through a range of health & social care apprenticeships.
- **10 students from NSCG completed apprenticeship programmes**, with two going on to join the village team as support workers. The village further offers work experience for business administration students and opportunities for back of house operations.
- **Alison Isherwood, Experience Day Support Worker** and former volunteer at **Belong Atherton**, won the **Outstanding Care Home Staff Award from Wigan Council** as part of their Age Well programme.
- **Cedar Team** from **Belong Wigan** won **Care Team Award** at the **Great North West Care Awards**.
- **Belong Atherton** was recognised in **Wigan and Leigh Hospice’s annual Hospice in Your Care Home Awards**, winning the **Family Nominated Staff Member of the Year** and a **partnership plaque for its on-going engagement with Wigan and Leigh Hospice’s nursing training programme**, which gives nursing home staff the practical skills and knowledge to provide sensitive and compassionate end-of-life and palliative care.

## Champion Awards

Dedicated colleagues were recognised for their achievement of professional qualifications, successes in national award schemes and nominations in the organisation’s fiercely contested Champion Awards. The prestigious ceremony took place at the historic Vale Royal Abbey in Northwich, Cheshire, in May 2019.



*Belong colleagues celebrate with inspirational keynote speaker ‘Big’ Ian Donaghy, a dedicated dementia campaigner*

Over 100 diplomas were awarded in fields such as Health and Social Care, Hospitality and Catering and Business Administration, testament to colleagues’ commitment to making an outstanding contribution to customers and ensuring a high standard of care.

Winners were also announced for the Champion Awards, including categories such as The Innovation Award, the End of Life Care Award and the Dementia Champion of the Year, with an external independent judging panel of social care experts assessing shortlisted candidates.

Tracey Stakes, Chief Executive of Belong, said: “The event was a fabulous celebration, recognising the contribution that everyone makes to bringing to life our vision of supporting older people to live

their own lives through the creation of vibrant village communities. It is a model that has developed with us and, each year, the number of successes and achievements seems to grow and grow.”

The ceremony was made possible thanks to sponsors Aecom, Barons, Birchall Food Service, Care Shop, CPC and Search Healthcare.



## Dream come true for Brian Tansley

**When lifelong Stoke City fan, Brian Tansley moved to Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme, his support workers granted one of his biggest wishes, which was to visit his City’s ground to see his favourite football team play again.**

The day was a dream come true for 81-year-old Brian, who had been a dedicated Potters season ticket holder for over 50 years. And the cherry on the cake was an invitation to meet manager, Nathan Jones and legendary 1970s winger, Terry Conroy, whilst on a private tour of the ground. He also got the chance to visit his personalised brick in the Stoke City Wall, and received a card, together with tickets to the Club’s Delilah’s bar and a signed team shirt.

Fulfilling customers’ aspirations is a big part of Belong’s culture and Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme displays a wish list in The Bistro, encouraging residents to share their biggest dreams, as staff actively seek opportunities to make them come true.

Brian said: “I can’t thank Belong enough for everything they have done, and to the club for being so accommodating. I will never forget this experience.”

Steven Cartlich of Belong, who accompanied Brian to the club, added: “We are thrilled we could make this day happen for Brian. He is the biggest Potters fan I have ever known and it was clear how much it meant to him. We are honoured we were able to make such a special gentlemen’s wish come true.”



# Listening to the experts



**Belong's annual customer satisfaction survey was conducted in the autumn 2019, generating over 300 responses from customers across all services, as well as from relatives. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with an overall recommendation rate of 96%.**

This, together with other feedback mechanisms, such as online reviews, letters and review meetings, gives us valuable insight into the things our customers value and where we can improve, helping us to make positive changes across our services. Areas of focus include communication with relatives, recruitment, exercise, maintenance and environmental practice.

*The number of customers who would recommend Belong is shown below:*



**100%**  
of Belong at Home customers



**100%**  
of Experience Day customers



**96%**  
of Household customers



**95%**  
of Relatives



**91%**  
of Apartment customers



**CASE STUDY**

## Support worker travels the extra miles



**When 88-year-old, Robert Barron expressed that his biggest wish was to travel to Jersey and visit his wife's grave, Deb Wyche, his support worker from Atherton, Belong at Home, accompanied him on a three-day trip to the island, to help fulfil his goal.**

Robert had long been dreaming of paying his respects to his beloved wife Mary once again, after she passed away seven years ago and was buried in her chosen resting place of St Helier, her husband's hometown.

Discovering he wanted to visit Mary's grave, Deb offered to fly with him to St Helier to visit St Saviour Churchyard and put plans in place to enable a special trip to the island.

Robert said: "I am so grateful to Belong at Home for supporting me to visit Mary's grave. It was my biggest wish and I am so pleased to have fulfilled it. Although it rained nearly all weekend, the sun shone down on us for that hour we were at the graveyard – it was truly surreal."

Commenting on making Robert's dream come true, Deb said: "It was an honour to accompany Robert on this special trip to see his wife's grave again. Despite it being an emotional time, we had a wonderful trip. It is very much part of Belong at Home's ethos to identify our customers' wishes and we do the best we can to facilitate them."

# Nursing excellence



**Belong operates a unique nursing model in its village, more akin to community nursing, to enable customers with nursing needs to remain *in situ* in their household rather than moving around the village as their needs change.**

With the success of this model proven over the past decade, Belong nursing teams have continued to expand their specialist expertise and to provide valuable input in upskilling the support teams they work alongside.

## **Creation of trainee nurse associates**

Over the past year, Belong has worked closely with the University of Salford to design a new trainee nurse associate role, with specialist training being provided by the university. The role is designed to provide support workers with the skills to undertake some nursing tasks under the supervision of a trained nurse, and create greater nursing capacity within the villages. Applications have been taken for the first cohort, with the programme due to launch in September 2020.

## **Complex care**

One success story from Belong Wigan saw a resident return home after four months' rehabilitation in the village. His case was particularly remarkable due to the team there having undertaken specialist training in supporting people with spinal injuries to enable him to be discharged safely from hospital, after six months trying to find a suitable care setting able to take on such a complex case. The care the team went on to provide meant he was able to recover and return home to be reunited with his wife, much to the delight of all the family.

## **District nursing provision**

When the outbreak of COVID-19 prompted district nurses to suspend services to village apartment customers, Belong nurses were able to step in and fill this gap, under our existing nursing registration for Belong at Home. This ensured continuity of support to our independent living residents.

## **End-of-life leadership programme pilot**

Belong has also continued to work with the End-of-Life Partnership for ongoing training in palliative care and resources to support Belong nurses, as well as leadership training for frontline leaders.



### CASE STUDY

## Nursing career development



**When adult nursing graduate, Lisa Wynne, undertook an eight-week work placement at Belong Wigan, she was left inspired by the organisation's person-centred approach to care, and upon graduating with an Upper Second Class Honours (2:1) degree, was invited back to pursue a full-time role as a newly-qualified nurse.**

Lisa carried out work experience at the care village during the first year of her BSc honours degree at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN). Commenting on her appointment, she said: "I am thrilled to be joining the Belong team. Social care has long been my passion and I can't think of a better place to live this out than Belong Wigan. I enjoyed every minute of my placement and it feels so good to be back in such a supportive environment that approaches nursing in such a personalised manner."

Lana Welsh, support manager at Belong Wigan commented on the appointment: "Even as a first year student, Lisa's care and compassion really shone through. We are delighted to welcome her back to the team and we hope to offer many more work placement opportunities to student nurses across the community."

Belong Wigan nursing work placements offer the opportunity to acquire experience in specialist feeds, such as PEG\*, and medications, as well as in assisting the multidisciplinary team (MDT). Students also assist the team on the households, which offer 24-hour support, and experience a customer-focused approach to nursing. In her new role, Lisa provides palliative care as well as a full range of nursing duties. The care village offers further work experience to students in the areas of social work, speech and language therapy, foundation degrees, employability skills and from local colleges.

\*Percutaneous Endoscopic Gastrostomy (PEG) is a feeding tube into the stomach as an alternative to receiving nutrients and fluids orally.

# Promoting wellbeing through exercise

**Belong has continued with its focus on promoting exercise in the villages, both through its gyms and exercise on the households, as well as a range of initiatives to engage residents in maintaining their wellbeing through movement.**



One such initiative was the 'Road Worlds for Seniors' competition, which saw 15 Belong residents complete 500km in an international indoor cycling competition and achieve a UK Top Ten spot. The participants were celebrated at an awards ceremony hosted at the village.

Jan Inge Ebbesvik, the president of the competition, opened the ceremony by congratulating the village for making the top 50 in the world, and former GB cyclist Peter Matthews handed out medals to all participants.

The competition took place in the village's state-of-the-art fitness gym, made possible thanks to Ryan Cadman, Belong Wigan gym instructor, who supported participants to ride as many kilometres

as they could on the latest indoor cycle equipment donated by Sport England. Participants explored breath-taking landscapes through an attached screen, enabling riders a selection of over 1,700 virtual routes put together by the event's organiser Motitech.

Resident Susan Winnard, who is registered deaf and 95% blind has been a true inspiration for the village by cycling the equivalent of two whole marathons, seeing her health rapidly improve. She commented: 'I have loved every moment of this competition. Before joining Belong I had a bad fall, but after Ryan's encouragement in the gym and taking part in cycling every day, I feel a lot better and my knee and ankle don't hurt anymore.'

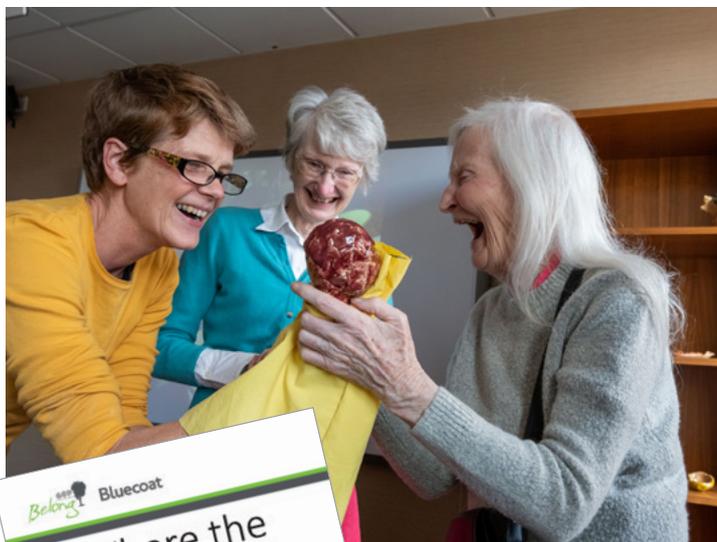
Belong's Ryan Cadman commented: 'This competition has truly brought our customers together as they have worked really hard to reach our target of 500km. The benefits have been visible in all participants, and it has been inspiring to see people who are blind, deaf or have Parkinson's disease still come down every day to cycle and take part. Exercise is a fundamental part of Belong's culture and we are committed to helping people stay active and independent for as long as possible, so taking part in the competition has given us the chance to provide an exciting innovative physical activity for customers as well as a bit of excitement knowing they were competing against counterparts around the world.'

All Belong villages offer rehabilitation facilities in highly-equipped gyms to improve mobility and promote independence for customers.



# Dementia and the arts

Over the past year, Belong has engaged in a number of pioneering arts projects, reaping positive impacts for customers with dementia.



## Bluecoat partnership

A pioneering pilot study exploring the impact of creative workshops on those living with dementia at Belong Crewe proved a huge success, with the findings being evaluated by the Centre for Collaborative Innovation in Dementia at Liverpool John Moores University to assess how the arts can be effectively embedded into other care environments.

The pilot marked the first phase of Belong's unique three-year research project with Liverpool's centre for the contemporary arts, Bluecoat. As part of the collaboration, named 'Where the Arts Belong', Bluecoat commissioned six critically acclaimed artists, with many years of nationally recognised practice between them, to work in 'residency' at the care village. Here,

they engaged residents, family members and support teams in a bespoke six-month art programme, boasting over 70 different workshops ranging from storytelling and sculpture to music and dance.

Evaluation of the residences so far show that these experimental initiatives are improving the lives of the individuals involved, especially those living with dementia. Early results include high participation, enhanced cognitive capacity and an increased sense of community amongst previously isolated individuals.

The resounding success of the first stage of the project was captured at a celebratory event at Belong, with the findings showcased in an impressive art exhibition. These research insights will inform future practice at upcoming state-of-the-art villages in Birkdale and Chester, which will be the first to have permanent staff trained in specialist arts provision.

Laura Yates, Acting Head of Participation at Bluecoat, said: "The artist workshops have had an incredible impact on the residents and their families, providing a valuable tool to unlock memories and aid cognitive function. We look forward to building on these creative initiatives with Belong in the future to further improve the lives of those with dementia."

***The artist workshops have had an incredible impact on the residents***

## Lost memories found in giant mural

**A unique 10-metre-long work of art, produced by a group of people in Newcastle-under-Lyme who live with dementia, went on public display in the town's Belong Heritage Gallery, as part of a ground-breaking therapy to help individuals recover lost memories and improve their wellbeing and lives.**

Critically acclaimed visual artist Jo Löki developed the artwork with participants from Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme as part of the 'Meet Me at Live Age' community programme, which was showcased at the annual Live Age festival led by New Vic Theatre in partnership with Keele University and Age UK North Staffordshire.

Serving as an artistic expression of the memories, stories and lives of residents, the project explored the therapeutic benefits of art as an outlet for older people, as well as immortalising participants' memories in the art installation.



Over four months, customers and colleagues took part in various observational drawing activities including sessions in Belong's garden, visits to Queen Elizabeth Park and activities in the studio. The finished piece, which measures 1.5 by 10 metres, was inspired by the Blue Willow China ceramics and pottery that feature in the Belong Heritage Gallery's Samuel Bell Tea Room, reflecting The Potteries heritage and the stories of participants many of whom worked in the The Potteries industry.

Jo Löki commented: "It was important that the participants at Belong could experience the wellbeing and benefits of drawing and sharing memories, while developing their creative skills. Sharing these oral histories meant that participants

could reflect on their life experiences, and connect with the art mentally as well as physically. One of the most positive effects of the residency was that participants became friends, and so 'A Forest of Memories' became a vehicle for social inclusion."



## Music for dementia

**Music students at Cheshire College South & West celebrated the culmination of a nine-month intergenerational initiative that saw them become music therapists for people living with dementia at Belong Crewe.**

The students, aged 16-19, visited the village twice a week to perform, with sessions tailored to the musical tastes and life experiences of residents and visitors.

To mark the end of the academic year and the success of the project, the musicians performed a celebratory concert for the Belong community at the college, with residents making up VIP guests amongst the audience.

The programme was developed by Belong and Cheshire College South & West, in collaboration with Cheshire East Council (CEC). The aim was to create a musical therapy initiative to support residents with health needs, such as dementia, while promoting interaction between people of different generations within the local community.

Belong Crewe experience coordinator, Natalie Ravenscroft, said: "We've witnessed lots of very positive responses from people attending the performances. Everyone has been more animated and interactive afterwards. People living with dementia who are unable to communicate in other ways have been tapping their feet and singing along, and some have even been dancing. For many, it has brought back lost memories and as a result of conversations prompted by the sessions, we've got to know more about the people we care for.

"The benefits for the students have been evident as well. Apart from counting towards the work experience they have to undertake, they've told us that they are very grateful for the new perspective they've gained by engaging with people with dementia, which they otherwise wouldn't have done."

Commenting on the finale concert, Belong Crewe resident, Brian McLaughlin, said: "I absolutely loved it. The students are very talented, and the song choices were great. Some of the performances, including songs by Doris Day, took me back to some very happy times."

***I absolutely loved it.  
The students are very  
talented...***

# Intergenerational living

Early in 2020, Belong formally established its partnership with early years charity, Ready Generations, with the aim of developing its intergenerational nursery concept. With a successful track record in creating extensive opportunities for intergenerational exchange and experiences, the Belong Nursery vision builds on existing positive practice and aims to take this a step further through a more embedded approach. Together with Ready Generations, a full service level agreement was established and Heads of Terms Agreements have been signed and the following established:

- A joint advisory forum with a clear purpose and terms of reference
- Common values and a shared vision for intergenerational activity
- Agreed priorities and associated performance and outcome measures
- Shared, multi-service staff induction and bespoke, specialised professional development opportunities
- Joint planning, delivery and evaluation of activities
- Active research into direct practice and inquiry-based learning and development



**‘Morris Minors’ at Belong Morris Feinmann village provides the opportunity for residents to roll back the years through fortnightly play sessions with young children and their mums and dads.**

Speaking of the sessions, 89-year-old resident, Margaret Grunfeld, said: “I very much look forward to spending time with the children. It is something that I have missed as I’ve got older, so it is wonderful to have the chance to do this again. The group brings much joy to everyone involved.”

*Morris Minors roll back the years*

**Community was at the heart of the event when Belong Morris Feinman, hosted its first intergenerational ‘Tea and Tales’ session.**

Run in collaboration with PJ Library, a not-for-profit organisation specialising in Jewish books for children, the event saw residents and their grandchildren share stories together in celebration of Rosh Hashanah. Local families and children from North Cheshire Jewish Primary School also attended to enjoy an afternoon filled with storytelling, song and dance.



*Telling Tales is Child’s Play*

# New developments

## ***Chester & Birkdale sites***



**Work is to recommence on Chester’s new £21 million state-of-the-art dementia care village, following the appointment of Seddon Construction to complete the project.**

This follows the setback to the Chester and Birkdale projects when Cheshire contractor, Pochin’s, fell into administration in August 2019. Belong has now entered into a Pre-Contract Services Agreement with Seddon, who has a track record in completing care developments to a high specification and has previously built the Belong village in Wigan, which opened in 2009.

Belong Chester is expected to open in summer 2021 and will provide high-specification accommodation and specialist dementia and nursing support for over 100 people.

A new contractor is being sought for Belong Birkdale.



## ***Belong Wirral***



**Site preparation work is in the process of being completed by Peel Holdings, developers of the Wirral Waters project, prior to completion of the land purchase, and it is anticipated that this will be the tenth Belong village to open.**

## ***Belong Beeston***

Belong was unable to complete its purchase of the land for Belong Beeston due to issues with the provision of utilities to the site that were not resolved within the contractual timescale, rendering it unsuitable. A number of alternative sites for the next Belong villages are being evaluated to replace the Beeston project.

## **Design awards success**

**Belong’s newest village in Newcastle-under-Lyme won the award for Best Care Home Design at the Leaders in Care Awards 2019 and the Best Commercial New Building and Conservation/Refurbishment Project at the local Civic Trust Awards.**

The Bistro at Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme also won Café of the Year in LUX Life Restaurant & Bar Awards 2019 & 2020, while its gardens enjoyed success in the Newcastle-under-Lyme in Bloom Awards 2019.

Belong’s dementia friendly show garden, due to be relocated to Belong Birkdale, was distinguished at the Southport Flower Show 2019 when it won the Brian Aughton Memorial Trophy for ‘best use of plants in a display’ and a large gold medal for the garden overall.



This publication is available in large format on request.

Belong Limited  
Registered Office: Pepper House, Market Street,  
Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 5DQ  
[www.belong.org.uk](http://www.belong.org.uk)

