

# BelongLife

SUMMER 2021



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## Word from the team

**As we head into summer, Belong Chief Executive, Tracey Stakes, reflects growing positivity around the villages.**

After the year that was, good news is the order of the day and the past quarter has thankfully brought a number of positive changes. The roll-out of Covid-19 vaccines has continued apace and we are delighted that 98% of Belong residents have received at least one dose of the vaccine, with 92% having received both doses. 83% of Belong colleagues have received their first dose and 70% both doses; we are continuing to support our remaining colleagues to access the added protection vaccination provides.

This roll-out, combined with the continued progress along the Government's roadmap, mean that we have been able to resume more activities in the village, both in the Venue and gyms, as well as re-opening the Bistro for dining to residents and tenants.

We are also delighted to have been able to welcome greater numbers of visitors to our villages than has been possible in a long time, and while we look forward to the day when we can return to a more relaxed drop-in policy, the latest changes are nonetheless a welcome step in the right direction.

We continue to keep our focus on wellbeing and ways in which we can mitigate against the potentially negative impacts of Covid-19. To this end Belong at Home has contributed to an academic research project looking at the impacts of Covid-19 for people living with dementia, working with the National Institute for Health Research Greater Manchester Patient Safety Translational Research Centre and looking at the role of technology in providing support. The teams are continuing to offer a range of services supporting people in the community.

We will continue developing exciting collaborations to promote wellbeing in the months ahead, and we hope you will enjoy reading of our residents' latest successes in the pages that follow.

Away from Covid, work has been progressing apace on the development of the next Belong village in Chester. We remain on track for early 2022 opening and are delighted to have taken our first reservations for apartments within the village.

Finally, it is with sadness we announce that our Deputy Chief Executive, Tracy Paine, will be leaving us in August, following 25 years of service. As she prepares to embark on the next phase of her own life and take the time to travel and pursue new opportunities, we pay tribute to Tracy's commitment to the organisation, which has shaped Belong as we know it; we celebrate her many achievements and say goodbye to a friend.

**Tracey Stakes**  
Belong Chief Executive



*Pictured (L-R): Chris Ellison, Seddon project manager;  
Nicola Brooks, Belong Chair of the Board;  
Tracy Paine, Belong deputy chief executive;  
Melanie Saywell, Belong Project Manager;  
Robert Mee DL, High Sheriff of Cheshire;  
Margaret Yorke, former Belong Chair of the Board.*

## High Sheriff of Cheshire celebrates Belong Chester topping out

**The High Sheriff of Cheshire, Robert Mee DL, has celebrated the completion of the main building works at Belong's latest site in Chester, as guest of honour at its topping out ceremony. The village is now one step closer towards its scheduled opening in early 2022.**



On a day of glorious sunshine, Robert Mee DL braved the heights of the £21 million state-of-the-art development to lay the final roof tile alongside former Belong Chair, Margaret Yorke; Belong's deputy chief executive, Tracy Paine, and Chris Ellison, the project manager for the site from contractor, Seddon.

Robert Mee DL has an extensive relationship with the city; in addition to his statutory duties, he is involved with other local charities, including Cheshire Young Carers and the Hospice of the Good Shepherd and has played a significant role working with Cheshire West and Chester Council on the successful regeneration and strategic vision for the town.

Commenting on the landmark step, Robert Mee DL said: "The creation of a Belong village in the heart of the city promises to expand the provision of high quality services for older people in the area, and it was wonderful to have this opportunity to see the rapid progress being made towards completion."

Tracy Paine added: "We are thrilled to have finished the main building work at Belong Chester. We know the village's opening is eagerly anticipated and we look forward to welcoming the community early next year and to being able to support local older people, including those living with dementia and their families."

Located in the heart of the city, adjacent to its historic canal, Belong Chester has been designed by architects, Pozzoni, with contractor Seddon heading up the build. Once open, the village will provide world-leading dementia and nursing care,

with 24-hour support available across six extended family sized households and 23 independent living apartments, the latter now available to purchase or rent.



**For more information and to register interest please contact Belong by emailing [enquiries@belong.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@belong.org.uk) or call 01244 470 570.**

# A Customer's View

Nothing is more important to Belong than our customers, which is why we love hearing about their experiences.

**For this issue, we spoke to Percival 'Percy' Cunningham, 83, resident at Forshaw Household, Belong Warrington.**

**For Percy, as he likes to be known, getting used to the British food palette is still a bit of a challenge, despite having moved here in the 1960s, when he came to visit a friend and see what England was like.**

Having grown up in Spanish Town, close to Jamaica's capital, Percy is more used to setting his tastebuds alight with vibrant Caribbean cuisine, including rich seafood, jerk chicken, colourful fruits and vegetables, and notably, food flavoured using spices, rather than salt. "My favourite dish is ackee and salt fish, with sides of rice and red peas, with lots of spice," he tells us. A popular choice on the island, it is regarded as Jamaica's national dish and is reportedly also loved by the famous Olympic sprinter, and fellow Jamaican, Usain Bolt.

Since he moved to Belong Warrington in October last year, Jo, Sarah and Nicky from the on-site Bistro team have been working hard to recreate some of the former engineer and businessman's favourite dishes. Having temporarily closed due to the pandemic, The Bistro is now welcoming one household each day for breakfast club, which is good news for Percy: "My favourite time of the day has always been breakfast, and so I enjoy going to the breakfast club and trying the cooked dishes; I'm happy to say I'm a big fan of a full English!"

Outside of his foodie endeavours, Percy enjoys village life and being around others. He describes how residents and the staff are "always nice", and he likes his bedroom and the dementia-friendly garden. "I've made friends with Barbara, one of the residents on the household, we get together to play dominoes

several times each week. It's great fun and I really look forward to catching up with her."

Back on the subject of food, more recently Percy was able to reminisce and share his native culinary expertise when he and fellow residents enjoyed a Jamaica-themed day, with maps, arts and crafts activities laid on by Belong Warrington's Experience Day team, and the Bistro provided four delicious Caribbean courses, including a very sticky Jamaican ginger cake. So, what did our resident expert make of the occasion? Percy said: "I really enjoyed the day, the company and the food, although it could've done with a lot more spice." – At least he hasn't said anything about the good old British weather!

**If you would like to contribute to the next 'A Customer's View' column, please pass on your details to a member of staff or email the editor at: [tracy.brookes@belong.org.uk](mailto:tracy.brookes@belong.org.uk)**



## Village News

# Belong Atherton celebrates 10th anniversary in 1920s style



*Pictured: Members of the village team in fancy dress (L-R) Gill Kelly, Front of House Manager; Nicola Johnstone, Support Manager; Christine Thomas, Bistro and Catering Manager; and Rebecca Woodcock, General Manager.*

**R**esidents of Belong Atherton didn't let Covid-19 restrictions stop them marking the village's 10th anniversary in style with 1920s-themed celebrations, shared across households using Facebook Portal video messaging to enable residents to connect with each other safely.

On the day, the village was strewn with Art Deco banners and bunting, colleagues and customers accessorised with feather boas and headpieces to take part in Charleston dance-themed chair-based exercises, led remotely by village exercise instructor, Chantelle Crawley, and each household enjoyed a 1920s-themed buffet and birthday cake. Entertainment, which was screened live in the households, came from Anna Beamont, known as the Golden Age Songbird, who sang classic songs from the roaring 20s to the 1950s. The village team



*Pictured (L-R): Kim Calland, Experience Day Support Worker; Jo Woods, Experience Day Coordinator; and Carol Jepson, Lead Senior Support Worker.*

also created displays of photographs from the ten years since the opening of Belong Atherton.

Commenting on the festivities, Rebecca Woodcock, general manager of Belong Atherton, said: "It was wonderful to look back on shared memories of the past ten

years and see how the community has developed. Although we couldn't celebrate with the wider community as we would have liked, technology meant that we could come together as a village safely, and we're looking forward to welcoming more people to the village as lockdown measures are eased."



## Memory Lane...

**B**elong Crewe Britannia household resident Sheilagh Manning has always been a very active person, enjoying skiing, sailing and a mountaineering career, the zenith of which was arguably summiting Mont Blanc. This disposition towards being active and outdoors has continued since moving to the village last year.

Born into the Grantham family in 1934, Sheilagh grew up in Alderley Edge in Cheshire. The Granthams are well-known in the area and still have a greengrocer in the town. She began rock climbing in her teens, and her nephew Frank says that at a young age, her adventurous nature manifested itself in her exploring the local copper mines.

Sheilagh trained to be a hairdresser after leaving school, and she later met her first husband, Richard, while he was studying to be a dentist in Manchester. The couple moved to London when he established a dental practice there. Together, they continued to enjoy rock climbing. Richard also introduced her to skiing and sailing. They had their own boat, in which they crossed the English Channel on one occasion. Sheilagh met the grade to become a ski instructor although she never put the qualification to use.

### High point

It was through the couple's network of friends that Sheilagh got into mountaineering. Membership of the Manchester Karabiner Club took her as far afield as the Himalayas, where she climbed in the region of Mount Everest, on expeditions sometimes lasting for weeks. She also climbed Europe's highest mountain, Mont Blanc.

During this time, Sheilagh kept company with some of the most illustrious names in an auspicious era for British

mountaineering. She was particularly good friends with Dennis Davis, famous for being the first person to reach the summit of Nuptse (Dennis brought Sheilagh a rock from the top of the mountain, having climbed with him in the early 60s).

Sheilagh and her first husband ultimately separated, but she went on to meet Ray Booty, a British time-trial cyclist, known for becoming the first person to cycle 100 miles in under four hours: considered the cycling equivalent of the four-minute mile. The couple lived together in Derby for over 30 years and married just before Ray's death some six years ago.

### Belong Life

Sheilagh has maintained an active lifestyle since she came to Belong Crewe last year. Her household is right by the garden, where she goes for daily walks, which she also enjoys in the local park and woodland, and she's a frequent visitor to the village's gym, where she cycles for miles on the exercise bike.

She has always been a caring person, and this is evidenced by the concern that she shows for the well-being of fellow residents and her regular offers to help with household tasks. Perhaps unsurprisingly, it transpires that she worked for social services while in Derby.

The village's experience team say that Sheilagh is also known to try any activity. Cathy, the household lead, says that she rarely sits down. "When she does, it's to watch an episode of Fawlty Towers or a detective drama with a cup of tea," she says.

## Residents celebrate gym reopening

**R**esidents living at Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme on Lower Street are defying stereotypes of older people as they celebrate the reopening of the village's specialist gym, which provides personalised one-to-one programmes.

The exercise plans developed by the village's fitness instructor, Georgina Cliff, working in conjunction with health professionals, are designed to enable customers to maintain mobility, prevent falls and manage a range of health conditions, according to individual assessments.

One apartment tenant pleased to see the reopening of the gym is John Yarwood, 77, who was a regular face at the the village's on-site gym facility prior to the pandemic, using exercise to manage a septicaemia infection – also known as sepsis, or blood poisoning – following a knee operation over a decade ago.

Although Georgina had continued to support John to exercise outside his apartment, putting in place a special one-to-one programme to maintain the knee's strength and movement, the fitness fanatic is relieved to be back in the gym and in his element, saying: "It's great to be back on the exercise bike; I can't thank Georgina enough for helping me make the best of the situation – I'm over the moon with how things have gone. And my wife has been a trooper throughout all this, though that might be because she gets some peace and quiet when I'm out of our apartment, exercising!"

Georgina Cliff said: "Exercise really is a key factor in maintaining people's physical and mental health, whatever their age. It really has been a lifeline for John



*Pictured: John Yarwood with Georgina Cliff, Belong Fitness Instructor.*

and we're pleased that we've been able to adapt during Covid and maintain exercise regimes that are vital to people's health. The results have been incredible and it's given John and his wife, Chris, the reassurance they can still enjoy a high quality of life."

## Community Spirit Sends Residents to Infinity... and Beyond!

**Amateur astronomers at Belong Crewe have been exploring the wonders of the universe from the comfort of their village – all thanks to the generosity of local people. The launch of the Astronomy Club was made possible after the people of Crewe donated a telescope and binoculars to the worthy cause.**

The new club aims to ignite Belong residents' senses and indulge their space exploration ambitions through stargazing, arts and crafts, and virtual tours at Jodrell Bank Discovery Centre to visit renowned landmark, The Lovell Telescope. To encourage reminiscence—a proven approach in helping to slow the progression of dementia – residents also enjoy NASA documentaries, topical discussions and sharing personal memories, transporting them back to the space race era.

Expressing her appreciation, Kathryn Farmer, general manager at Belong Crewe, said: "Our Astronomy Club has got off to a great start and it's down to the generosity of our community that our residents have the tools to enjoy learning about outer space".



*Astronomy club member, Ann Black*

# Tracy Paine steps down after 25 years

Here are just a few of her many career highlights in images.

January 2008



Tracy celebrates the official opening of Belong's inaugural village in Macclesfield

May 2009



Tracy behind the wheel of the digger on site at Belong Crewe's turf cutting

November 2011



Tracy is named Healthcare Design Champion of the Year at the Building Better Healthcare Awards

February 2013



Ground breaking ceremony is held for Belong's fifth site in Warrington

June 2013



Formal learning agreement with Royal College of Nurses is one of many initiatives designed to enhance the role of nurses in Belong

May 2019



The Belong Champion Awards celebrate colleagues whose contribution really stands out from the crowd

May 2018



Tracy takes centre stage at the New Vic in Newcastle-under-Lyme, as oral history project culminates in the creation of a new drama

February 2018



A timeline is installed at Belong Morris Feinmann to commemorate the site's Jewish heritage, born out of a partnership with The Feinmann Trust

August 2016



Tracy is a panel member at the 'Grand Designs' Conference in Australia; part of a worldwide tour following her award of a Winston Churchill Research Fellowship

July 2016



Belong's Holocaust memorial garden is showcased at RHS Flower Show Tatton, prior to being relocated to Belong Morris Feinmann

June 2019



Topping out ceremony takes place in Belong Birkdale, set to become our first seaside village

August 2020



Tracy recognises the huge commitment of Belong teams across the organisation during Covid-19

October 2019



A passionate advocate of exercise for older people, Tracy celebrates as Belong Wigan secures a Top Ten place in global Road World for Seniors cycling tournament

June 2021



Topping out at Belong Chester is the latest milestone event at Belong's first city centre location

**T**his summer sees Belong's Deputy Chief Executive step down after 25 years as a member of the organisation's executive team. In this issue, we pay tribute to her quarter century of service and her role as a founder of Belong villages.

As someone who has featured often within *Belong Life*, Tracy Paine has played an instrumental role in pioneering our award-winning village model and revolutionising dementia care in the UK. She was the driving force behind the launch of the first Belong village in 2007 – designed around small households and a vibrant community with amenities and services to support people as their needs change.

Building on its success, Tracy has worked tirelessly to transform the not-for-profit organisation's provision from operating traditional care homes to establishing seven villages, with three more in the pipeline.

And over the past four years as Deputy Chief Executive of Belong, Tracy has continued to push boundaries through new partnerships and initiatives designed to enhance resident wellbeing through exercise, the arts, heritage and the outdoors.

She is highly regarded as a role model within the care sector, regularly contributing to industry publications and events. Nearly 100 organisations visit Belong each year and its 'household' model has been widely adopted elsewhere.

As a registered nurse, she has made an immense contribution to re-envisioning the role of nurses in Belong and to the introduction of the specialist Admiral nurse team, in partnership with Dementia UK. Her legacy will live on in the organisation's values, its culture and, above all, in the dedication of its people.

Tracy's vision is evidenced in quality outcomes: **all Belong villages and services are rated Good or Outstanding by the Care Quality Commission and 43% of its villages hold the Outstanding rating, compared to 4% of nursing homes nationally.**

# Belong at Home Celebrates Four Years at the Top

**B**elong at Home, the home care service provided by Belong, is celebrating being ranked in the top 20 home care groups in the UK for a fourth consecutive year by leading online reviews site Homecare.co.uk, with two of its locations also achieving regional distinctions.

The listing is based on verified customer reviews, with Belong at Home achieving an average review score of 9.8 out of 10 for the past year, placing it amongst the highest rated services in the country.

The Homecare.co.uk Top 20 Home Care Awards 2021 recognise the most recommended domiciliary care providers throughout the UK. A position in the Top 20 Home Care Group category demonstrates that Belong at Home has achieved high ratings for all aspects of its service, including its people, care and support, management, treating customers with dignity, and overall value for money.

In addition to the group award, the Belong at Home service in Warrington was also listed in the Top 20 Home Care Providers in the North West and West. Jo Ball, operations manager for Belong at Home (pictured right), commented on the wins:

**“We’re really proud of our continued success at the Homecare.co.uk Awards. As the results are based on the reviews of our customers, their positive feedback and recognition makes the award win especially pleasing. The Belong at Home team work tirelessly to ensure the highest standards of care for our customers, and they are delighted that their dedication is recognised by the people they support.”**



## Here are just a few customer reviews submitted to Homecare.co.uk

**“In every case, I was treated with respect and good humour. They all make little dishes for me and are always ready to do anything extra. They know their jobs and their responsibilities very well yet had time for personal chats, including celebrating my eighty-fifth birthday. I noted that they are careful not to overlook such things as medication.”**

*George K, Customer (March 2021)*

**“Belong at Home Macclesfield gave valuable assistance to my parents for many years and when my mother died two years ago, they immediately increased their care to look after my father who suffers from dementia.”**

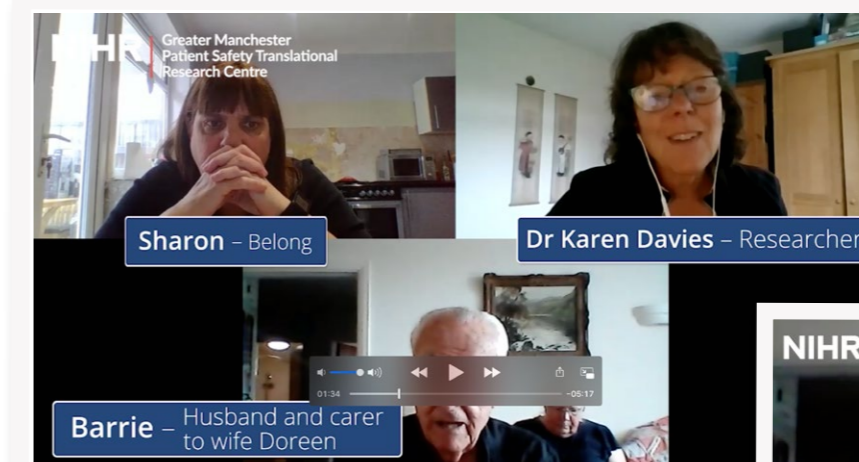
*Mike E, Son of client (March 2021)*

**“All the staff from Belong at Home Wigan are absolutely brilliant! I don’t know what Mum would do without their visits. Mum enjoys them coming and nothing is too much trouble.”**

*Karen B, Daughter of resident (April 2021)*

## Belong at Home contributes to academic dementia research project on impact of Covid-19

**W**orking with the National Institute for Health Research Greater Manchester Patient Safety Translational Research Centre (NIHR GM PSTRC), Belong at Home has contributed to a new study, *Living with dementia during COVID-19*.



The report and video produced highlight the impact of isolation for people living with the early stages of dementia and their carers since the first UK lockdown hit in March 2020. It also looks at the role of technology in providing support and paves the way for further research that will feed into the development of a new app: ‘Hear me now’, designed to assist with supporting older people.

The report is the result of a series of video conversations between researchers and the families and carers of people living with dementia, carried out at the height of the first UK lockdown in 2020 and sourced in conjunction with Belong at Home and a dementia café co-ordinator for The Alzheimer’s Society.

One of these was Belong at Home customer, Barrie, who highlighted the abrupt impact of the need to isolate his vulnerable wife, who has Alzheimer’s and was required to shield: “I emailed all the kids and said stay away!”

Another interviewee, Sue, highlighted the dramatic change in the lives of her previously very social parents, who loved meeting friends, going out and shopping together, Sue revealed: “When COVID arrived, Dad didn’t understand why we couldn’t go out and it had a negative impact

on him, emotionally and physically. He became less mobile and a few times got quite cross as he felt we were stopping him from going out. It affected us all.”

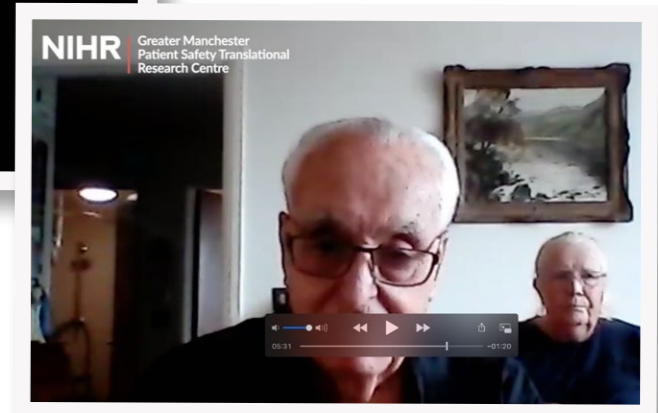
The work reveals how technology could help to overcome some of the hurdles that people living with dementia faced during lockdown. Barrie said: “As a family, we’ve been using WhatsApp for years but this is my first time on Zoom. I’ve had to learn to use it today.”

Joanne Ball, Operations Manager for Belong at Home, added: “The report chimes with our own experience of the impact of the pandemic on the wellbeing of older people, as they have found themselves increasingly isolated over the past 15 months. The loss of physical contact plays a major part in this, as does the significant reduction in social interaction and ‘in person’ experiences.

“Increasingly, people are coming to us for support with wellbeing and companionship, including to help facilitate use of technology as a way of staying connected to the outside world and joining in activities. While it can never replace human interaction, technology will no doubt continue to

play a valuable role in supplementing the support and activities available to older people.”

Professor Caroline Sanders who leads the Patients and Carers theme at the GM PSTRC, said: “When we started this work, we didn’t know how successful video calls would be as a way of communicating with people living with dementia. We learnt that it was possible, but people need support from carers or a family member. The lessons we’ve learnt are now being used so that



previously paused research due to COVID-19 can go ahead.”

The study paused during the pandemic, due to the restrictions, aimed to find out whether an app, Hear Me Now, could improve communication, safety and wellbeing for those with early stage dementia and their carers. In addition to looking at how the work could go ahead, the public engagement work also identified that people who may have a cognitive and/or communication impairment, due to other conditions such as Parkinson’s, may also benefit from the app. Therefore, the research, which is now able to restart, will also include people with other cognitive impairments, so more people could benefit from the app as a result in the future.

The National Institute for Health Research Greater Manchester Patient Safety Translational Research Centre is a partnership between University of Manchester and Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust.

# Living the Values

We speak to colleagues who embody Belong's values in their day-to-day work.



In this issue, we chat with *Lesley Grundy*, who became a support worker at Belong Atherton after beginning her career at the village as a housekeeper. She is known for brightening people's day with a smile, with one customer calling her 'Sparkle'!

## Can you tell us about your background?

I was born and raised in Atherton. After high school, I studied catering at Wigan and Leigh College. I always thought that I might like to work in care, but I didn't know how to get into it, so before working at Belong, I worked in various customer-serving roles in hospitality, in hotels, restaurants and pubs.

I thought starting in the housekeeping team at Belong Atherton would be a great way to see what it was like to work in care. Just being around customers while housekeeping, I got the feel for it and started to build relationships with the customers. It didn't take me long to realise that my true calling was in a caring role.

## What are your work responsibilities?

I support all residents on my household, including undertaking hosting responsibilities, such as preparing meals according to individual requirements and kitchen management, but my main role is providing one-to-one support for one customer on the household.

## What's your favourite thing about working at Belong?

I always feel at home when I walk into work and onto the household. I am always welcomed with smiles by the customers, and that makes me feel very happy.

I am a naturally caring person, and I have cared for close family members in the past. I don't have any children, so being able to provide others with the support that they need is a way of channelling this and gives me a huge sense of fulfilment.

## What has been your most rewarding experience at work?

Building a trusting relationship with my one-to-one customer. We've formed a close bond, and they see me as a best friend.

## How are you progressing in terms of professional development?

I have attained my care certificate and passed qualifications in moving and handling, first aid and dementia awareness. As part of my role involves being a care host, I am highly trained in catering for specific dietary requirements. I am currently training to be able to administer medication.

## Finally, what do you do to unwind after work?

My main hobby is Morris dancing. I have been doing it for 34 years. My biggest achievement is performing at the Blackpool Tower Ballroom, and I am very much looking forward to getting back into it once Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted.

## In the Spotlight: Jackie Green

This issue, we meet Jackie Green, hairdresser at Belong Macclesfield, for whom the pandemic has provided a unique opportunity to try something new and learn from her colleagues.

Jackie joined the Belong Macclesfield team seven years ago when she was appointed as the village's hairdresser. She begins: "I've always loved working with the public, especially older people, so Belong was the perfect role for me."

Though she's known for her upbeat personality, Jackie initially found the Covid-19 restrictions placed on the country, and the village's on-site hair salon, tough. "I was devastated when the salon had to close, but I understood the need," she explains. It was then she turned her hand to housekeeping duties, many of which have been critical to the safety of customers and colleagues since the pandemic began.

On a typical day, Jackie could be found cleaning the main areas of the village, before moving onto the households and later, supporting in the laundry. Cleanliness has always been a priority at Belong and with even more stringent practices now in place, Jackie's help

proved invaluable. "I swapped my hairbrush for a toilet brush and now I'm an expert toilet cleaner!", she laughs. "Wherever I was needed, I was happy to help and it was nice to get to know my colleagues better. The experience really opened my eyes to realise how hard housekeeping is; it has such an important role in our villages."

Back in April, restrictions were eased, meaning all of Belong's hair salons could reopen to residents and apartment tenants, and to facilitate, the salon is cleaned between each customer and Jackie wears full PPE. Each day, one household has been enjoying Jackie's services, with tenants also visiting on their own dedicated day as well. More recently, she's been given the go-ahead to attend to customers who are limited to their beds.

"It's hard work!", Jackie tells us, with



a big smile on her face. "There's a lot of long hair to work with but it's wonderful. I pop customers' favourite songs on the smart speaker and they can enjoy a bit of pampering whilst we catch up — it's like a day out for them and they really appreciate it."

Thinking back to her housekeeping days, Jackie's keeping her options open: "If I'm needed, I don't mind helping the housekeeping team out. The camaraderie is good fun and they got me through a challenging time."

## Volunteer profile

In this feature, we recognise the outstanding contributions of volunteers to the Belong community. This issue, we give our thanks to Sodexo, who spent a day at Belong Macclesfield, helping to prepare the gardens, ready for spring and summer.

**Taking advantage of a gloriously sunny World Earth Day back in April, Belong Macclesfield colleagues were joined by 11 staff from facilities management specialists, Sodexo, who are currently based at AstraZeneca's Macclesfield Campus. The volunteers lent their gardening, DIY and painting skills to spruce up the village's grounds for Belong's residents, apartment tenants and visitors to enjoy.**

Leading her team, Tracy Sykes, Environment, Health and Safety Manager at Sodexo, told us: "Many of our colleagues have family and friends living with dementia and we wanted to give something back to the community."

Together, the volunteers weeded and planted the grounds, then painted the fence, before constructing beautiful houses for birds and bugs, feeders for bees and butterflies and sowed wildflowers, in a bid to encourage more wildlife — all whilst residents enjoyed the bustling outdoor activity from their windows.

Meanwhile, inside the village, Belong colleagues and residents made bird cake and in keeping with the day's theme 'restore our earth', held talks on the importance of nature to climate change.

After a round of hard-earned refreshments supplied by the Bistro, including homemade cakes, chocolate bars and drinks to keep energy levels up, the day



culminated with the judging of a poster competition to promote World Earth Day. Poplar House took first place for their entry depicting Dave Shaw, Lead Nurse, saving the world in goals whilst being cheered on by residents and colleagues.

Belong Macclesfield's Experience Coordinator, Gina Titley, also said: "We're ever so grateful to Sodexo for giving their time, effort and donations toward the gardening project and to help make a difference on World Earth Day — they worked incredibly hard. We look forward to welcoming our friends and the rest of the Macclesfield community to the village for face-to-face visits with our residents again."

# Noticeboard

For further details on these stories and more, from across our villages, follow us on Facebook or Twitter, or visit our news page on our website at [www.belong.org.uk/news](http://www.belong.org.uk/news)

## Local Carers Recognised in the Great North West Care Awards



Pictured: Belong Crewe nominees: (L-R): Marie James (Salon), Sharon Bull (Practice Development Facilitator), Hazel Evans, Dawn Palin (Front of House), Caroline Anthony (Support Manager), Jodie Challinor (Support Worker), Gwenda Francis and Joy Cassidy (Front of House).

Caring colleagues at **Belong Crewe** are celebrating after being shortlisted in no less than 11 categories of the postponed Great North West Care Awards 2020.

Rising to the challenges of Covid-19, members of the village team have been recognised in a range of award categories, including Dignity in Care, the Good Nurse Award, Palliative Care and the Workforce Development Award. Belong is also shortlisted for the Social Care Covid Hero Award, recognising its team's exceptional efforts throughout the pandemic across all its villages and home care services.

The rescheduled Great North West Care Awards 2020 are due to take place in July, with winners going on to compete in the national ceremony in October 2021.



## Letter from Eisenhower

**Belong at Home Crewe** customer, Audrey Close (pictured), remembered her beloved late husband Charles, who was at the D Day Landings on the 6th June 1944, at the tender age of 19.

The Belong at Home Crewe team paid their respects to him and to all the men to whom we owe our freedom.

## Local community helps Morris Feinmann mark Passover

Residents of **Belong Morris Feinmann** marked Passover with help from the local community despite lockdown restrictions.



In the week leading up to Passover, residents had the chance to catch-up with Belong Morris Feinmann chaplain, Rabbi Moshe Perez, via Zoom and the village received a delivery of handmade letters and cards from children at North Cheshire Jewish Primary School.

Seder services, including the singing of traditional songs, were led by volunteers, also via Zoom, residents enjoyed Seder dinner with members of their households, and technology allowed for screenings of performances of Passover music by the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra.

## Intergenerational creations

As part of National Intergenerational Week, residents at **Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme** made their very own 'Ugly Mugs' before being sent to be painted by little friends at local schools St. Mary's Catholic Primary and Blackfriars Academy.

The children did a wonderful job bringing the mugs to life and residents were very happy with the final results. A special thanks goes to Spode for firing the mugs in their kiln — we couldn't have run the project without them.

Pictured L-R: Residents, Irish Thwaites and Sylvia King and (below) the children holding their creations.



## Community Champion brings creativity to Experience Coordinator role

Local community champion, Charlene Frodsham, from Wigan, has joined the team at **Belong Wigan**, taking up the post of experience coordinator and working alongside residents and colleagues to provide a creative programme of meaningful occupation via events, one-to-one and group activities.

Taking a leading role in both these programmes, Charlene is looking forward to getting to know the residents and providing activities to inspire and delight them. She said: "All I want from the role is to make residents happy. I love seeing that sparkle in their eyes. Those little things that make people smile add up and will help support their wellbeing longer term."

## Treats for charity

**Belong Macclesfield** Bistro and Catering Manager, Chloe Thorley, has raised £300 in aid of Dementia UK.

Chloe whipped up delicious treats for selection boxes, including lemon drizzle cake, rocky road, chocolate chip cookies, brownies, and six pieces of vanilla, chocolate malteser and biscotti fudge — all for colleagues to eat guilt-free in the knowledge that they're supporting a worthy cause. Well done Chloe!



## International Nurses Day

**Belong Warrington** celebrated their wonderful nurses by presenting each of them with chocolates, Prosecco and some hand cream to thank them for all of their wonderful hard work on International Nurses Day.

Pictured L-R: General Manager, Claire Bibby; Admiral Nurse, Caroline Clifton; with village Nurses, Denise, Fran and Hayley. Gifts were also presented to Nurses, Sarah, Helen and Lynn who were not available for the photo.



## Half marathon success!

Congratulations to **Belong Atherton** Bistro and Catering Manager, Christine Thomas, and team, on completing their half marathon walk in May. They raised a very impressive £585 for Alzheimer's Society and Dementia Action Week (17th – 23rd May), by walking a total of 13.13 miles! Well done to everyone who took part.

Christine is pictured centre with colleagues (R-L): Gill Kelly, Alison Light, Kim Calland, Lisa Collier and Anne Marie Taylor.

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