

WCS CARE NEWS

Freda Charlton – 102!



Page 3

... and Freda Taylor – 105!



Page 10

Acoustic technology trial proves an instant hit



Page 9



Celebrating love

Page 11

Putting added in our activity programme

Rachel Kenyon, WCS Service Manager explains how further investment in the Oomph! activity programme will benefit even more WCS residents.

Oomph!



At WCS our unwavering focus on a fresh and inspiring activity programme has taken another leap forward as we are delighted to be working with award winning social enterprise Oomph! Wellness to develop activity staff across all our 12 homes through the additional implementation of the Activity Leadership Programme.

As you may already have experienced, we've been working with Oomph! for the past 18 months to bring lively and fun exercise classes into our homes. However, we're increasing our investment in the programme to ensure we're consistently providing a vibrant and diverse range of activities to engage and involve more of our residents. Recognising the importance of the emotional well being as well as the health benefits of the Oomph! exercise classes, we really wanted to expand our existing activity programme.

Training began in March with teams learning best practice in activity planning around individual needs and

also how to best evaluate what works and what doesn't. We've also been focusing training on how to maximise the therapeutic impact of activities so that residents really do get the most from them, plus developing marketing and networking techniques to include the wider community in activities.

"Residents are much happier now that they attend Oomph! sessions."

FOUR WAYS

This additional programme will not only help ensure WCS activities are the best in the industry, but also provides ongoing support to our activity co-ordinators with the provision of a monthly toolkit of original activities, access to a private online support community and the amazing Oomph! newspaper and radio show. We will



Top: Our exercise Co-ordinators receiving their annual refresher training from Oomph!

even have a daily planner to provide inspiration for fresh, new activities every single day for individuals and groups of all sizes.

Our aim is to support our activity co-ordinators to ensure they really enrich lives via interesting and creative activities that reflect the personal interests, abilities and passions of our residents.

You can read more about Oomph! in action in this edition of our newsletter and as always, we welcome any feedback and suggestions.

About **WCS CARE** NEWS

WCS News is one way newcomers to WCS get to know us and a way for everyone else at WCS to share their events, thoughts and ideas.

We try to capture the everyday things that makes life in peoples homes fun, and show off how people carry on enjoying the

things they always have – which are two of the charity's principle values.

WCS News relies on the thoughts and ideas of everybody who stays or works with WCS – so if you have an idea that you'd like to see featured, please get in touch!

About **WCS CARE**

Everyone at WCS Care is signing up to our charity's values, which inform every decision we make.

Our **Charter for People** sets out the basic things that everyone living with us can expect every day.

You can read this and more about our story at wcs-care.co.uk or drop into one of our homes.



Kay Ward Deputy Director of Operations

You can get in touch with WCS Care in the following ways...

- Verbally to any member of staff or to a home's Duty Manager (their name will be displayed in reception),
- via telephone to WCS Head Office (01926 864242),
- by leaving a message on our Chief Executive's hot-line on 01926 856130 or chief.executive@wcs-care.co.uk
- via telephone to the relevant home, these numbers are listed on the back page,
- email (info@wcs-care.co.uk) or the relevant home using the email addresses on the back page,
- via a WCS Comment Card (these are in each home's reception and can be filled in anonymously if you wish, and go directly to Head Office),
- verbally at a Residents' Forum Meeting – ask your Home Manager about when your next meeting is.
- By writing to Customer Service Support using the address on the back page.



Contact WCS News:

Email: s.west@wcs-care.co.uk

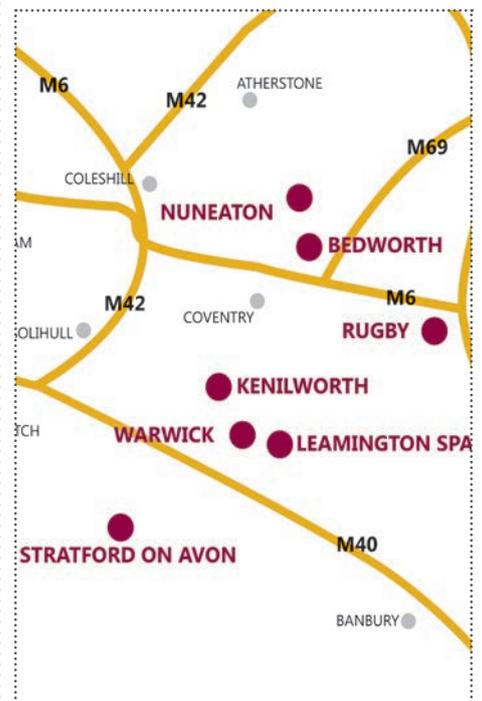
Or call: 01926 864242

See also:

wcs-care.co.uk
Twitter: @WCS_Care
Facebook: /wcscare



Our locations:



Freda's 102nd birthday at Drovers House



102-year-old Freda looks back at her time at 10 Downing Street...

A former employee of 10 Downing Street has marked her 102nd birthday with a party at her home in Drovers House care home in Rugby.

Freda Charlton was born in the north-west in a village called Shotton in 1913. She was the youngest of six children and, after marrying and having two sons Ralph and Colin, she moved to Coventry in 1941, where she worked at GEC.

Afterwards, Freda worked at 10 Downing Street during the era of Harold Wilson in the mid 1970s, and she remembers the former Prime Ministers Christmas parties well.

Freda said: "I've been very lucky in my life and one of the things I was fortunate to be a part of were Mr Wilsons parties during my time at Downing Street. I never spoke to the Prime Minister at length, but I do remember him being a charming individual and popular among many of his staff.

"There were all sorts of interesting people who visited the Prime Ministers home, I remember on one occasion watching the Trooping of the Colour from Downing Streets garden with someone who I later learnt was an Arab prince!"

Freda retired aged 60, worked in a

Top: Freda with her two sons, Ralph and Colin, and Drovers House Activity and Exercise Co-ordinator Morgan Sinclair.

Above: Freda with former Prime Minister Harold Wilson inside Downing Street during a Christmas party.

bakery, and was also the secretary of her local Womens Institute. It seems longevity runs in her family – as Freda's great grandmother lived to 105. Freda puts her good health down to healthy living, and points out that her and her sister, who lived to 100, were the only two of their siblings who were non-smokers.

Her advice to younger generations who wish to stay young is to be active, find a job that they enjoy, and stick at it.

What's life really like in your home?



Volunteers from Age UK have been finding out...

Fairfield and Attleborough Grange are the latest homes to be inspected by Age UK Warwickshire volunteers.

WCS Care's Experts by Experience project with Age UK Warwickshire is thought to be the first of its kind in the country – and has led to a series of changes in people's homes since it began in 2014.

For the project, volunteers are invited to explore all aspects of home life, from atmosphere and cleanliness to mealtimes and culture.

As well as using discreet observations, the Age UK volunteers mingled with people who live at the homes to find out how they felt about their quality of life.

The findings from each visit is then filed in a report which rates things like cleanliness, staff attitude and atmosphere from poor to excellent, along with comments on how each score was derived. Between them, Fairfield and Attleborough Grange scored four 'excellents', four 'goods' and three 'adequates'.

The comments reinforce the message that things like eye contact, calling people by their first name (rather than dear, or duck!), humour, and warm body language are priceless when working in someones home.

Christine Asbury, WCS Care Chief Executive, commented: "We already knew from user feedback that the people who live in WCS homes highly rate the staff who work in their homes, but what this project gives us is feedback from an outsiders perspective.

"Volunteers spoke movingly about WCS staff and the kindness they witnessed as they went about their work; a level of compassion which, as one volunteer described, 'cannot be taught'."



The full reports from Age UK volunteers are available on WCS Care's website.



WCS staff singled out

As in previous reports, staff were singled out for praise by volunteers in the latest inspections. They commented that it was their attitude that was one of the biggest factors when it came to quality of life in care homes.

One of the volunteers said:

"Most of the staff expressed genuine warmth and kindness towards the residents. They had a clear understanding of their likes and dislikes and they responded to individual needs appropriately. The resounding impression I received from the staff was a genuine desire for the residents to feel at home, valued and respected."



Festive frivolities!

...a time to drink, dance and be merry!

WCS homes were festooned with tinsel, twinkling lights and Christmas trees throughout December – setting the stage for some memorable seasonal celebrations.

Cynthia and Edna (main picture) were on hand to help John from Bedworths Salvation Army belt out some Christmas Carols on Drayton Courts piano. Meanwhile, entertainer Kim (top right) was on usual fine form to bring Christmas cheer (and some impromptu karaoke) to people at Fairfield.

Residents at Drayton Court jived to the sound of some live swing numbers (pictured below right and below) at their party; while Drovers House's sizable café area was filled with revellers also enjoying live music.

If you're hosting a celebration that might make a nice picture, let WCS News know by using the contact details on page 2.



A little bit of Oomph! goes a long way at Drayton Court

A 103-year-old former shop-keeper has praised new exercise sessions at Drayton Court after they helped her discover a newfound love of dancing.

Grace Ackerley, who used to help run a shop on the corner of Webb Street in Nuneaton, regularly ditches her wheelchair to dance thanks to special sessions which Drayton Court now hosts with Oomph! – a London-based social enterprise.

Oomph! which stands for 'Our Organisation Makes People Happy' consists of exercise sessions where a party atmosphere is standard. Music is turned up loud, colourful props are used and residents are encouraged to sing and dance through an aerobic routine designed to increase circulation, improve health and above all, make people happy.

Grace, who celebrated her 103rd birthday on January 2, enthused: "My mother wouldn't let me go to dances when I was younger because she disapproved, so now I'm making up for lost time. It's hard not to get swept up in the exercise sessions because everyone enjoys them so much. There's exercise, but also clapping, laughing and singing and everyone there joins in.

"It's been fascinating seeing how much of a change they've made to people. A little bit of exercise can make all the difference."

Teresa Stratham and Gemma Power, Drayton Courts two Exercise and Activity Co-ordinators, host the sessions three times a week after the pair went on an intensive three-day course hosted by Oomph!

Christine Asbury, WCS Chief Executive is delighted with the success of the Oomph! initiative, which was introduced in December 2014. "Oomph! is invigorating for staff, residents and their families too. We are

seeing even more interaction, fun and laughter in our homes, which is a key element of our culture and benefits staff and residents alike. We haven't seen anything in living memory that has created such a positive response from everyone involved in our homes."

"A little bit of exercise can make all the difference."

WCS Operations Director, Ed Russell is keen to see more homes add some Oomph! to their exercise programme and has outlined his top tips to making this a success:

- **Make it regular!** The World Health Organisation recommends 150 minutes of physical activity per week for older adults – over three to five separate sessions. Embed exercise and activities into the daily life of your home and you'll start to see results. Exercise can't be just monthly group sessions sat round in a circle: it has to be spontaneous and frequent involving large and small groups, one-to-ones in residents' rooms, outside during the gardening, at the dining table... The more frequent the better.

- **Make it fun!** The best exercise classes don't just exercise the body: they should aim to create a positive atmosphere that involves staff, residents and family – strengthening relationships and enhancing emotional wellbeing. We use colourful sensory props, popular music and themed imagery that means everyone has a great time and want to come back session after session, meaning they get the long term benefits. Of course, this impacts the wellbeing of staff and family members as well as just the residents!

- **Make it personal!** In order to unlock real engagement you need to understand the individual interests, passions and abilities of the people taking part. No two exercise sessions should be alike: the music selection, props and choreography should be tailored to individual participants. For residents with dementia this is more true than ever. Use exercise classes as a form of reminiscence therapy: don't talk about leg raises and chest presses when you could be taking your residents on a trip to the beach to splash their feet in the water and throw a beach ball.

- **Make it measurable:** With so much talk about evidence-based interventions, regular participation in exercise can show tangible improvements to the functional health quality of life and independence of residents – something the regulators, friends and family and senior management all desperately want to see. We help all of our instructors record key metrics and report on these quarterly.





WCS new head office recruit, Emma Pink shares her experience and observations of the Oomph! effect.

As a new member of the WCS head office admin team, the word 'Oomph!' kept popping up in my day-to-day work. Intrigued and having no idea what it was about, I went on a mission to find out more. Here's what I discovered:

● **Make it safe:** Exercise should be fun, inclusive and inspiring. But it needs to be safe, first and foremost. That means ensuring that all your staff are trained by professionals who can perform adequate risk assessments and understand how to tailor programmes to the specific conditions your residents have. Furthermore, investing in formal training for your staff increases their skills and job satisfaction. 79% of the staff we've trained this year have noted a significant positive impact on their job satisfaction.

A 2015 Oomph! survey found that 95 per cent of residents believed that Oomph! had a positive effect on their health. And participating homes found a 28 per cent reduction in falls and dramatic increases in mobility, wellbeing and independence after the sessions began.

- **Oomph! is an acronym for 'Our Organisation Makes People Happy' – which I've found out is very appropriate**
- **It's all about exercise and not just any exercise, fun exercise with props and music**
- **Exercise classes have been developed specifically for people who have reduced mobility**
- **All our Activity and Exercise Co-ordinators have completed special Oomph! training**
- **On average, 29 Oomph! sessions take place weekly across all 12 of the WCS care homes**
- **Most homes hold up to 3 or more sessions per week**
- **Residents and their families LOVE Oomph!**



Congratulations to Woodside resident, Rose Owen who has been named Runner Up in the Oomph! Factor awards.

Going along to an Oomph! session at Newlands, I was greeted by loud music, multi coloured pom-poms, singing and dancing. But what struck me most of all was the wall-to-wall smiles of residents and staff alike. I watched on in awe as the activity co-ordinator took the residents into the 'YMCA' and confess that by the time the 'Time Warp' blasted through the speakers, I was on my feet; joining in too!

Now when I hear the word 'Oomph!' I just feel joy because I've seen and felt the happiness it brings to our residents. There is no doubt in my mind; everyone needs a bit of Oomph! in their life!

If, at first, you don't succeed...



Sailor Bill asked Mary, a Navy Wren, to marry him moments after he met her at work in 1949.

We can't print what her immediate response was (they did work in the Navy, after all) but Bill was clearly on to something...

After further meetings they fell in love and married a year later on December 23rd 1950 and here they are December marking their 65th Wedding Anniversary in Westlands.

Thank-you and farewell to Nick...



After 23 years' service to WCS Care, Nick Wood, the charity's Director of Finance retired at the end of 2015.

Nick helped deliver huge changes at WCS Care, including the refurbishment of all homes, the installation of modern equipment and fittings and countless other on-going improvements – many of which were only possible because of Nick's expertise and guidance.

...and a warm welcome to Paresh!

Ivy celebrates with arrival of a fifth generation

Drayton Court day care customer, Ivy Stennett celebrated her 96th birthday last month with her family, chocolate and sherry!



Ivy very proudly welcomed the newest addition to her family, beautiful baby Mila her precious great, great granddaughter who is the fifth generation of Stennetts.

The photograph shows 5 generations of her close-knit family consisting of Ivy,

Jacqueline Barter (daughter), Tracey Arnold (granddaughter), Nicole Hill (great granddaughter), and of course baby, Mila Ivy Hill (great, great granddaughter).



WCS Care's new Director of Finance is Paresh Parekh, who began work in October.

Paresh is a qualified Accountant and an experienced Finance

Director with broad experience across the housing, development and retail sectors.

He's responsible for Corporate Governance as well as WCS's overall finances and Finance Strategy, which includes treasury and cash management as well as statutory accounts and business performance.

*Top: Nick with his wife, Gill, a former WCS Senior Care Manager
Above: Paresh, WCS Care's new Director of Finance.*

Innovative technology helps us keep listening

At WCS we're always excited to find new ways to improve the care we can deliver and have recently introduced an innovative new technology to assist our night teams.

A new acoustic listening system is being trialed at Drovers House with a view to installation across all of our homes.

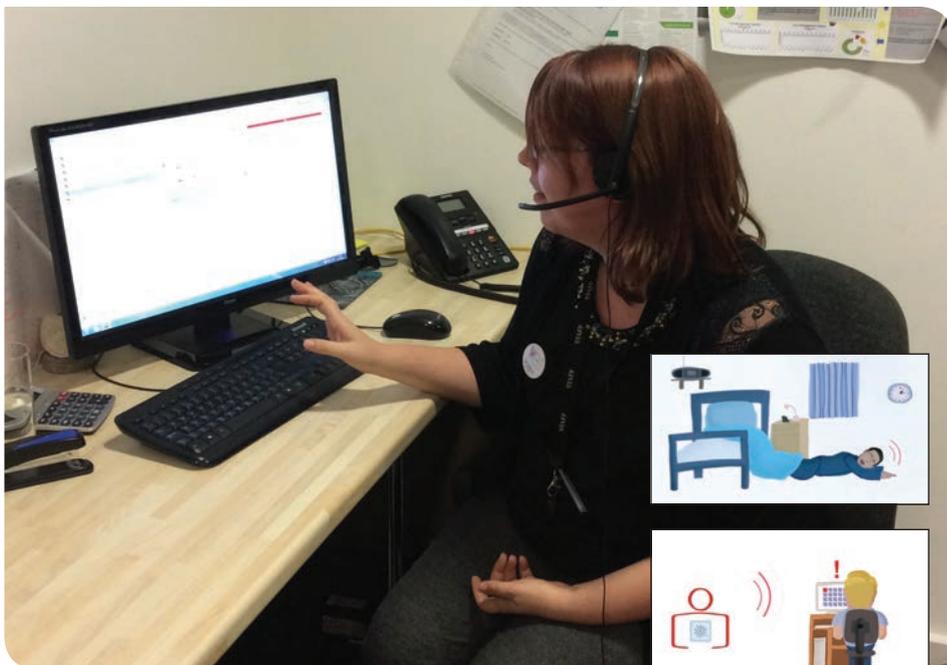
'Acoustic monitoring' non-intrusively listens to sleeping residents and triggers an alert when the sound level in a room exceeds individually set thresholds. This enables staff to respond swiftly to residents in need of care.

Continuous monitoring replaces routine in-room checks so that peacefully sleeping residents are not disturbed every hour by someone knocking on their door and checking in on them. Staff can instead focus on those whose distress has triggered an alert call, which is made to mobile handsets and can be viewed on WCS monitoring screens.

"Acoustic monitoring has been used in the Netherlands for about 25 years and seeing it in action last summer was impressive. Staff there said they wouldn't be without it and could not believe it wasn't standard practice in the UK."

Ed Russell

Staff are able to listen in and talk into the relevant room via the mobile handsets and the monitor screens. The system may also be used during the day to provide more intensive monitoring of those residents' with special needs.



Above: Tara Hutchinson, Care Manager at Drovers House using the acoustic system during the first night

Right: Animations used for staff training



The system in action

Following visits to three care homes in the Netherlands to observe the acoustic monitoring system in action, WCS Operations Director, Ed Russell, explained:

"Carers whom we met in Heeren Loo near Amsterdam have used the system say they feel they are in a better position to gauge a situation than in a traditionally run care home, where the night shift walk round."

"We observed a resident who couldn't use the traditional nurse call buttons, call out in the night for help. The system picked this up instantly, logged the call, and a carer attended almost instantaneously. Typically this sort of situation could get missed if someone was not standing outside the room."

"We saw that the residents information was automatically displayed on a screen when the cry for help came through. The 16-second audio recording was replayed by the member of staff monitoring the screen and a permanent electronic log was automatically kept of the event."

"The team of night carers no longer had to unnecessarily patrol the building knocking on doors every hour and residents in need of attention were reached much faster".

On the first night WCS, the system made a difference:

- A carer was able to promptly respond to a resident who had got out of bed after becoming concerned that her face and hands were dirty
- Staff who would have previously been checking rooms during the night had more spare fun time with residents who were awake. At 11.30pm the hair salon came to life, the lights were on and the barber's pole was turning while a resident enjoyed having her hair washed and set with rollers. At the same time the café was buzzing with 3 other residents who couldn't sleep, while another gentleman was also able to enjoy his favourite past time; watching Only Fools and Horses with a pint
- Another resident was softly calling out for help from his room. Within 60 seconds a staff member was by his side comforting him

Fairfield's Famous Freda Turns 105



Freda Taylor celebrated her 105th birthday earlier this year and following her foray into the limelight last year for not having any grey hairs, wanted to mark the occasion in a more low key way, spending time sharing her stories of her past with fellow Fairfield residents.

Freda Taylor, who is still yet to get a grey hair, was born in Queen Street, Bedworth, on January 7 1911 and has lived at Fairfield care home, since April 2010.

Her vivid memories of historical events are a constant source of fascination for younger generations at Fairfield, and her birthday was another excuse for carers to get her to share details from her interesting life history.

Freda explained: "I think its great that the young people here take such an interest in the past so I never mind talking about it. One of my earliest memories happened over 100 years ago on July 28 1914 on Blackpool beach; I remember overhearing my father telling someone he'd just heard on the radio that we were at war."

Freda was one of seven siblings brought up in Bedworth. She married her husband Gordon before the Second World War broke out and

they had one son, Keith. She spent the war years working for Hinckley Building Society collecting and delivering money between businesses around Bedworth on her bike while Gordon was part of the war effort in the Middle East.

She said: "One memory I have of the Second World War was November 14 1940 – the night Coventry suffered its biggest bombing raid. I had four-year-old Keith with me and my dad drove us in his car from the outskirts of Coventry to relative safety in Bulkington. It was a wicked journey and a night I will never forget. The bangs were horrible and made us all jump."

"My father, who suffered a heart condition, had to ask my brother, Ray, who was a registered conscientious objector, to drive part of the way because the stress was too much for him."

After the war, Freda enjoyed going

man y holidays with her family, going on several luxury cruises to places such as Turkey and Greece, but said her favourite destination of all was Sidmouth in Devon.

Freda said the key to her longevity has been clean living. She added: "I remember my brothers and I being under strict orders from dad not to smoke, and because I looked up to him so much, it was something I never did. I've never been much of a drinker either, so my advice to people would be to follow my dad's advice and look after yourselves."



Celebrating Love



Residents at Attleborough Grange turned their thoughts to love as we take a look at the tradition of Valentine's Day.

Helping to get residents thinking about what love is, staff created a special love tree for residents to hang on their personal thoughts about what love means to them.

"Valentines Day is an obvious time to think about love and what it means to us, and it was really lovely to listen to our residents share their feelings and talk about their own romantic memories." said Louise Goode, Attleborough Grange, Home Manager.

One story in particular made us feel extra romantic, as Margaret Baldwin (aged 84) shared her own romantic love story, which spanned more than 40 years.

Bedworth factory workers, weaver Margaret met supervisor Gerry properly at a work colleagues birthday party. Gerry invited Margaret to dance and thinking how handsome he was, Margaret was delighted to join him.

"Gerry he was not like other men, he didn't smoke, or drink alcohol. In fact, he was a sporty type of man," remembered Margaret.

Immediately 'hitting it off' they chatted about each others hobbies, and amazingly began courting from that day. *"But nobody knew, it was a secret at first,"* Margaret added.

Not too long after at Christmas-time, Gerry asked Margaret to marry him, and though she was shocked, of course she said yes!

They married in church in Bedworth on 16th July 1955, with their reception following at the towns White Lion. The happy couple left for Torquay for their honeymoon that same evening. Margaret and Gerry celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary with their two sons, Craig and Ian at Dudley Castle.

Margaret said what she loves about Gerry the most is how loving and kind he is. *"Gerry always bought me flowers on special occasions."* she finished.

Left: Betty Simpson hangs her heart on the tree of love
Below: Margaret and Gerry Baldwin



"All those happy Memories with Gerry. I miss you"

Margaret Baldwin

"Love is being together"

Pat Cooper



- ♥ With exact origins shrouded in mystery, Valentine's Day contains elements of both Christian and ancient Roman tradition
- ♥ Saint Valentine is a widely recognized third-century Roman saint commemorated on February 14 and associated since the High Middle Ages with a tradition of courtly love
- ♥ Earliest Valentine's messages date back to the 1400s with the oldest known is a poem written in 1415 by Charles, Duke of Orleans to his wife while he was imprisoned in the Tower of London
- ♥ A few years later, King Henry V hired a writer, John Lydgate, to compose a valentine note to Catherine of Valois
- ♥ Hallmark Cards first began production of Valentine's cards in 1913
- ♥ Today, approximately 150 million Valentine's Day cards are exchanged annually

Five minutes with *Laura Blay*

Relief Care Co-ordinator at Westlands

Hi Laura! Please introduce yourself:

I am a Relief Care Co-ordinator at Westlands. I first walked through Westlands doors 4 years ago when I was a lead carer. I am delighted to be continuing my career with WCS where care really is the priority.

So what does a Relief Care Co-ordinator do?

Working alongside the manager, I ensure residents are provided with the best possible care, keeping them safe and happy. I am extremely passionate about my job and helping others is very important to me. I successfully completed NVO Levels 2 & 3 in Health and Social Care, which guided me into work that I thoroughly enjoy and feel suited to.

What's the highlight of your working day?

Having been a carer at Westlands previously, I have had the pleasure of talking to residents about their lives. I still try to make time to sit and listen to residents as they share their many, sometimes colourful, life stories! I'll sometime look through a residents memory album too, its good to remember and respect the vast experiences our residents have enjoyed.

Why are you so passionate about care?

I am part of a big family, one of seven children in fact! I really feel this is a reason care is so important to me, I am



Laura, right, with her mother Christine

the third eldest so not only do I have people to look up to but also have to be a role model to my younger siblings.

I believe that it is important to create a family atmosphere at Westlands and that this plays a key role in ensuring residents stay happy and well.

Wow, it really is a family affair for you isn't it?

Absolutely. I even encouraged my mother – Christine Blay – to apply for a job at Westlands. She is now the cook! I always joke that she has gone from cooking for a large family to an even bigger one!

How about when you're not working?

Being part of a big family means theres always something going on. My claim to fame is that I once took centre stage in a Rugby theatre production of the hit show Joseph. My love of the theatre and musicals is something I have in common with many residents – in fact I know Beryl has a particular fondness for musicals. Beryl said the more music the better and would happily attend a show every day. Thankfully I know she has a few theatre trips coming up, I might try join her!

WCS Care Customer Service Support:

Newlands,
Whites Row,
Kenilworth,
Warwickshire CV8 1HW

T 01926 864242
F 01926 864240
info@wcs-care.co.uk



attleborough@wcs-care.co.uk	024 7638 3543
dewar@wcs-care.co.uk	01788 811724
drayton@wcs-care.co.uk	024 7639 2797
drovers@wcs-care.co.uk	01788 573955
fairfield@wcs-care.co.uk	024 7631 1424
fourways@wcs-care.co.uk	01926 421309
limes@wcs-care.co.uk	01789 267076
millgreen@wcs-care.co.uk	01788 552366
newlands@wcs-care.co.uk	01926 859600
sycamores@wcs-care.co.uk	01926 420964
westlands@wcs-care.co.uk	01788 576604
woodside@wcs-care.co.uk	01926 492508