

WCS CARE NEWS

30 Years
1992-2022
caring for people
in Warwickshire

Grand designs

Residents, staff and families officially open the new entrance at Dewar Close

Page 4



Transforming Westlands

Housekeeper Julia and her mum Eve give their verdict on the home's new look

Page 8



D-Day landings

John recounts his memories as a 17-year old new recruit

Page 15



King's birthday honour

A career in care

Ed Russell, Chief Executive, was awarded an OBE in the King's Birthday Honours List, recognising his services to care home residents.



10 years' service

By Adrian Levett

Chair of the Board of Trustees

In an article by *The Guardian*, Woodside Care Village was described as "a place that offers hope," this is testament to what WCS Care is all about pushing boundaries and making a meaningful difference in care. This award is well-deserved recognition of Ed's leadership and the positive change he's brought to residents' lives.

Ed often reflects to me that life is about opportunity – what you do with the time you have – the space between the dates at the start and end of life. He, and the team, have taken and created opportunities that have a lasting impact for residents, both now and for the future.

When hearing about the award, in typical Ed fashion, his response was "I'm just a tenacious so-and-so who wants to inspire future generations. Who knows, one day I might need care myself!"

We've been overwhelmed with messages of congratulations from residents, staff, colleagues, and friends some of which are featured on **page 3**.



Above: Ed receiving his award at Windsor Castle



Let's hand over to the residents to get their thoughts and watch Ed receiving his OBE. Just scan the QR codes to watch the videos.

Resident video



Investiture



From the Editor...

About WCS CARE NEWS

WCS News is one way newcomers to WCS Care get to know us, and also a way for people to share their events, thoughts, and ideas.

We try to capture the everyday things and show how people carry on enjoying the things they've always done, and also have plenty of opportunities to try new experiences.

WCS News is only possible thanks to the thoughts and ideas of everyone who lives or works with WCS Care – so if there's something you'd like to see here, please get in touch.

If you can't wait for the next edition, you can 'like' and share a slice of daily life on our Facebook page as we go through the keyhole – www.facebook.com/wcscare.

About WCS

Did you know that WCS Care is a registered charity? We are really proud of our continuing social impact support and that approximately 250 socially funded people benefit from WCS Care's charitable support every year – leading to a significant annual charitable contribution to Warwickshire residents.

People are at the heart of everything we do, and our ambition is to help make every day well lived for residents; a philosophy that continues to shape us and is the benchmark of the care we provide. We understand that everyone is different and what matters to residents, matters to us.

Your everyday experience of WCS Care should reflect our values – play,

be there, make someone's day, and choose your attitude.

We also believe that the standard we walk past is the standard we accept, so if you see staff walking past something that isn't acceptable or your experience doesn't live up to your expectations, please let us know – your feedback helps us do things differently if we need to.

Ways to get in touch



Talk to any member of the team or to a home's Duty Manager, which is usually displayed on reception



Call WCS Care's Head Office on 01926 864 242 or call the relevant home (numbers are on the back of this newsletter)



Complete a WCS Care Comment Card found in each home's reception (you can fill these in anonymously if you wish – all cards go directly back to Head Office)



Email info@wcs-care.co.uk or the relevant home using the email addresses on the back page



Speak at a Residents' Forum – ask your Home Manager about the next one



Write to our head office team using the address on the back page

If you're really happy, why not leave a review on carehome.co.uk or [Google Review](https://www.google.co.uk/review). If things haven't gone to plan, we have a formal complaints process in place, which is available in your home or on our website.



By Jennie Evans
Head of Communications
and Marketing



Got a story?

Email: news@wcs-care.co.uk

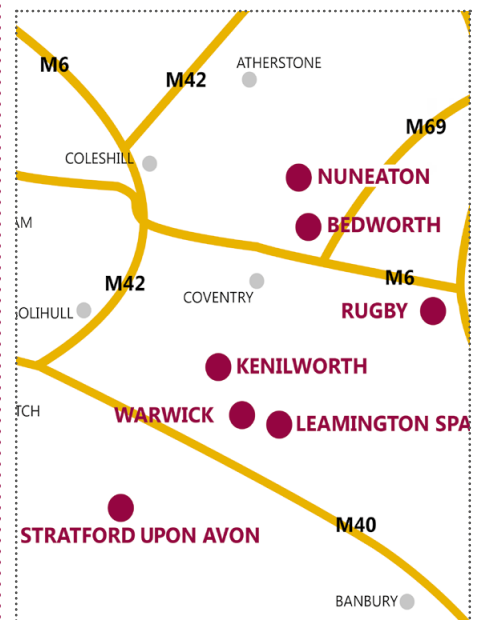
Or call: 01926 864 242

See also:

[wcs-care.co.uk](https://www.wcs-care.co.uk)
Facebook: /wcscare



Find us in Warwickshire:



It's fantastic for you but it's nice for us too!



By Lorraine Herbert

General Manager,
Woodside Care Village

This is what I thought when I heard about Chief Executive, Ed Russell's OBE. Just like Ed all 13 of our Home Managers have been home grown, progressing their career at WCS.

I started out as a carer in 2012, bringing up a family during my time at WCS and my sister, mum, auntie and niece all work at homes across the group. I've worked in four homes and after being Deputy Manager at Woodside Care Village for five years, am proud to now be General Manager.

I've had a front row seat to the innovations that Ed's been recognised for and the difference they've made to residents and the way we work. But also, every month we have a flow of national and international visitors to WCS to experience innovation, building design and a model of care for the future.

As I said to Ed when I heard the announcement, *"what an amazing achievement for not only care and WCS but for you personally. Watching how you have worked tirelessly to improve care through innovation and not be afraid to take risks to improve the lives of not only residents at WCS but across the whole care sector has been nothing short of inspirational!"*

I can't wait to see how the future unfolds and to play my part in it alongside other leaders in the organisation – in fact I've no doubt the next Chief Executive is already working for us.

"Congratulations Sir Ed on your appointment of OBE"

Hilda, Castle Brook



"When Ed comes in he's absolutely wonderful, he sits with people and takes the time. We all get so excited when he comes in."

Ann, Drayton Court



New message

The difference you have made to thousands of residents and staff's lives throughout the many years of your dedication, investigation and asking the question "why" is finally being recognised in a way that is so well-deserved!!

Samantha Stuart
Service Manager



New message

Your vision and commitment to the delivery of person centred care is a constant inspiration, and it is only appropriate that this has been recognised with the award of an OBE.

Professor Vic Rayner OBE
CEO | National Care Forum



Elizabeth Basten, MA Strategic Marketing (She/Her) – 2nd
Founder and CEO of Kiss My Brand Non-Executive Director at WCS
Fantastic news. Changing the world and recognised for it. Congratulations! 🎉

Like · 2 · Reply



Maxine Kavanagh

Truly deserved, congratulations Ed. You must be so proud that your dedication and passion, leading the way for care in the UK, makes a difference to the people who need it. ❤️ 🎉 🌟

7 w Like Reply

Marie Rutter – 3rd+

Associate Director at LEISURE CONCEPTS DESIGN LIMITED

The Leisure Concepts Team couldn't be more delighted, congratulations on the recognition for the innovative work driven by you, and the rest of the dedicated WCS family.

Like · Reply



Satvir Sembhi – 2nd
Learning Mentor

Just Wow!!! What an inspiration you are to so many people out there! I still remember the time we chatted about 20 years ago, inspiring me to become a manager! This accolade is well deserved and I'm so pleased that you have this recognition today, for your continued efforts to improve and enrich the quality of lives.

Like · 2 · Reply

New message

This is a very well-deserved recognition of the remarkable contribution you have made improving outcomes and quality of life for residents of care homes.

Michelle Dyson
Director General for
Adult Social Care
Department of Health and
Social Care

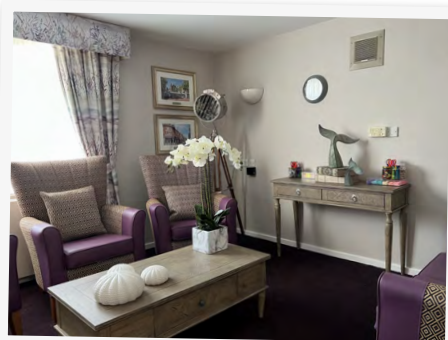
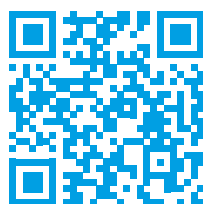


Grand designs at Dewar Close

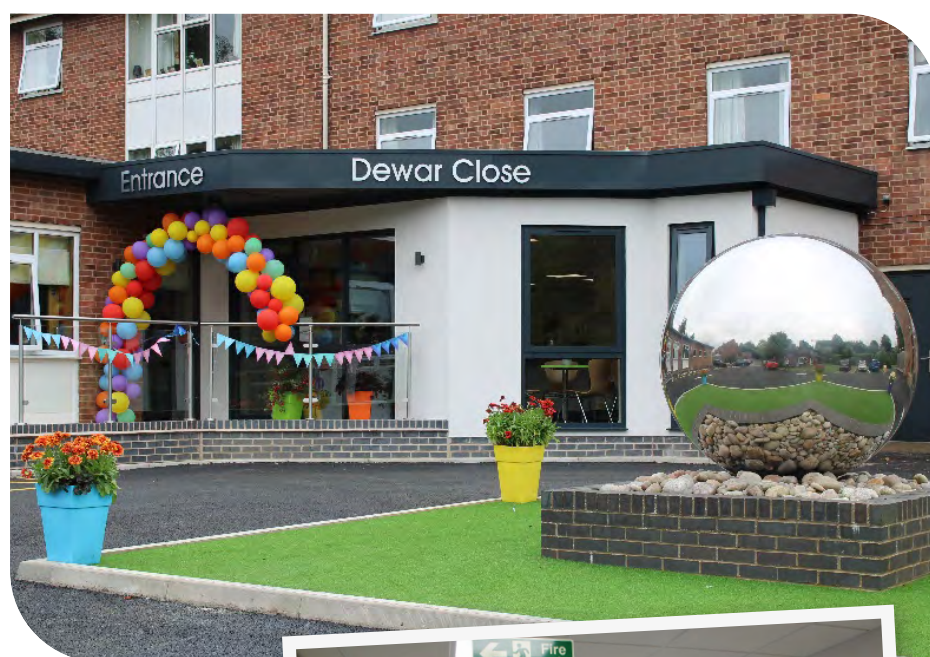
Following the home's refurbishment which introduced the three lifestyle themes: town, country, and classic living, residents and staff at Dewar Close patiently watched the construction of a new entrance, reception and café at their home in Bilton, Rugby.

The ribbon's been cut and it's all now open. You can check out the transformation in our 3-minute timelapse video by scanning the QR code with your mobile phone.

Watch the time-lapse video here...



Above: Town lifestyle quiet lounge



What are the lifestyles?

Country

Reflects familiar rural life, conversations about nature and a countryside environment, agricultural work, farm life, open fields, country pursuits.

Town

Reflects a diverse community life, conversations about living near to local amenities and social activities, local parks and open spaces.

Classic

Reflects conventional life choices, conversations about keeping up appearances, comfortable living and doing things a certain way.



Above: The all new coffee area



New faces and familiar faces in new places



Sam has been promoted to the role of Service Manager, line managing five of our care home managers. Sam's worked for us since 2017, managing Fairfield in Bedworth until 2019 when she commissioned and opened Woodside Care Village.

Sam says she loves helping to create care homes for future mums and dads that are full of fun, laughter and love; creating a care home community where residents and staff can be themselves and that's what inspires her to get up in the morning to come to work.



Lorraine is delighted to have been appointed to the General Manager role after five years as Deputy Home Manager.

Lorraine says she's a carer at heart and she recognises that it takes a special person to work at Woodside Care Village. Her mission is to grow and nurture carers, and treat them with kindness to create a special community where people want to come and live, in a care home that offers hope, and our staff want to stay. Lorraine says she'll be different to Sam, we can be sure of that, but she will continue on her legacy.



Michelle joined the Castle Brook team not long after the home opened six years ago, and first worked as a frontline carer and then as Duty Manager for several years before her promotion.

Michelle is passionate about Castle Brook and the opportunities that the home offers to residents. She says she will help staff bring the home's facilities to life, ensuring everyone can live a life that feels familiar with choice and independence.



Peter had connections to care over the years and is keen to give something back.

With many years' experience of driving coaches and buses, he has joined the Memory Maker team to cover driver annual leave, ensuring the wheels keep turning.



Care College Assessors

Now with over 900 staff and the clear belief that our future managers and leaders are already in our workforce, WCS under Head of Learning and Development Sarah Bedding's leadership, have launched a Care College to help people to study for qualifications and realise their full potential.

Working in partnership with Alan Hester Associates, the Care College is a new approach to delivering care apprenticeships. Mo Rose, Jo Paget, Tamara Jayne and Hannah Palmer have taken up their additional responsibility, as our internal Care College Assessors.

The team have been recruited to assess and coach learners who are working towards care qualifications. They are supporting apprentices to build their portfolio of evidence by observing their practice in the workplace, assessing their

written work, recording discussions on aspects of their role, and developing relationships with managers, other professionals, residents and relatives.

This exciting new role will help build sustainable development programmes, with a positive impact on career development, skills, confidence, retention, and succession planning.

This initiative builds on the successful WCS Management College, launched in late 2020, which is now producing results for Team Leaders and Care Co-ordinators at Level 3 and Registered Managers and Care Managers at Level 5. The College is funded by WCS Care's contribution to the Apprenticeship Levy.



Above: Sarah Bedding with Alan Hester and (L-R sitting) Tamara Jayne, Jo Paget, Hannah Palmer and Mo Rose

News in brief

Opening our doors to BBC Radio 4

WCS opened our doors to journalist **Lara Bullens** to experience everyday life at **Woodside Care Village in Warwick** for a documentary she was making.

BBC Radio 4's programme, "Am I Home? Life In A Dementia Village" available on BBC Sounds, invites us to appreciate the amazing work carers do up and down the country in care homes, day-in, day-out, and to recognise the complexities for carers and families of supporting individuals navigating this challenging condition.

WCS is proud to have taken part to help influence conversations about life in a care home and that they can be places that offer

hope. If you are a carer or have a loved one living with dementia, you're likely to have an intimate understanding of the programme's exploration of caring for people living in care homes.

It prompts us all to reflect on the importance of capturing life stories and creating memory albums and providing comfort by stepping into the reality of the person living with dementia.

You can listen online by scanning the QR code with your phone camera.



Scan to listen



Back to the future at Drovers House

The time capsule we dug up after only 10 years has now been reburied at Drovers House ready for staff in the future to see a glimpse into the past.

This time carers chose to add; a Care Guide and People Guide, recent newsletters, up-to-date photos of all homes, a work polo shirt, touch screen phone and memory sticks loaded with videos that feature technology that wasn't available when the home was built.

The real question though is whether we will manage to leave it in the ground until 2038 which is Drovers House's 25th anniversary.

This was the plan last time but we got too impatient!



Gift of time from the local community

We want to send our thanks to the volunteers from Cemex and Barratt Homes who gave up their time to transform the garden at Westlands.

They constructed new borders and raised flowerbeds, painted fences, laid new stones and filled the space with different plants for residents to enjoy.



Time for a coffee break!

Grab a pen and a cuppa for some well-earned downtime with our Word Winks and Track Word challenges. You'll find the answers to both games on page 14.



Word Winks Say what you see!

HhAaNnDd	when!	close close comfort comfort comfort comfort
1 RATE	RACE CLOCK	MIND
T T T T wink wink	horn horn	ATTACK we're

Track Word

How many words can you find in the square?

Start anywhere and by going from letter to letter – up, down or diagonally – make words of three letters or more.

You may not use the same letter twice in the same word. No plurals or proper nouns.

There is a nine-letter word hidden there too, can you find it?

T	I	G
U	A	N
D	E	M

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Transforming Westlands

Westlands has been transformed as part of our ongoing refurbishment programme, with walls knocked down to open up communal spaces, and households decorated in one of three lifestyles – town, country or classic living. The lifestyles help people to live a life which is more familiar, reducing stress levels, increasing engagement and helping people feel at home.

Julia Stewart, Housekeeper at Westlands said, "It's made a massive difference to residents, staff and families. We now have people moving around the home even more. Residents now use the new spaces to meet with friends in the home and to catch up with family. It has always been a lovely home and the refurbishment has made us even prouder to work here."



Top left: The café

Above: Classic lifestyle lounge and dining room

Right: Country lifestyle bedroom



5 minutes with Julia Stewart Housekeeper at Westlands

We visited Westlands to meet Housekeeper Julia Stewart to find out more about her busy role.

Tell me a little more about yourself

I'm a mum of three, with two still living at home so it's a busy house! I work part-time at Westlands as housekeeper and followed in my mum's footsteps as she did the same job, working here for 13 years.

What interested you in this role in the first place?

Westlands has always been part of our family. When my mum was housekeeper the kids and I would often pop into the home. They got to know the residents and it was just part of their childhood.

Mum retired and another person took over the role. When they left, my mum bumped into a friend who said Westlands were looking for someone to do the job. It's just fitted in with my life well and when the children were younger I could still do the school run.

What does your job involve?

The job has changed over the years. Obviously, it involves cleaning, and infection control is a big focus, especially after Covid. Regulations have changed and we do regular checks to ensure that the home is well maintained both inside and out. I also get to know the residents.

I really enjoy helping residents to feel that Westlands is home. I want people to walk into their room and feel at home.

I help them hang their pictures on the walls and personalise the room with their own belongings so they are comfortable.

What do you enjoy most about your role?

It's the variety and the fact that there are never two days the same. I couldn't work with a better bunch of people. There are five of us in the team, we plan the week together and see what needs to be done. Whatever I suggest they will try and see if it works. They are a great team and are very supportive.

Describe one of your favourite work memories

One of the nicest things though not job related, was during Covid when all of the

staff were struggling, I was able to offer sessions as I'm trained in Reiki. At a time when everyone was really stressed, it was nice to help people.

What do you enjoy doing outside of work?

I like reading and I love being in my garden as I find that helps with my wellbeing. However, at Westlands I focus on the inside of the home and leave the garden to others. It's been nice to see people getting involved in transforming the garden.



Above: Housekeeping runs in the family, Julia and her mum Eve

Eve's verdict on the revamped Westlands

Eve Miller (Julia's mum) hadn't stepped foot in Westlands for years, so Julia was excited to show her the changes.

Eve started as a night carer and then volunteered for Rugby Mind when they were based in the bungalow at Dewar Close. She went on to be the Housekeeper at Westlands from 1998 to 2011 and then retired at 65.

Walking into Westlands with Julia, Eve loved the café area and said "The coffee is lovely! The atmosphere as you walk all around the home is very relaxed and easy-going, it was much stricter in my day!"

Her favourite bit of the home was the lower ground floor decorated in the country lifestyle where the colours, furniture, curtains and the conservatory blew her away. Eve and Julia also enjoyed the pictures and objects in the corridors, which sparked different conversations.

9 years' service

20 years at The Limes...

With a career at WCS that spans 20 years Karen Hall, Home Manager at the Limes, has seen many changes. We went along to chat to Karen about her career, and her latest challenge of steering the home through a refurbishment.

How long have you been at The Limes?

I've been here since May 2004, I came as Care Manager and had worked in another care home for 13 years before that. I have seen so many really good changes which says a lot about the organisation.

All the innovations have just made such a difference and I feel that the residents and staff are at the centre of everything. You feel supported here and we work really well as a team.

Why did you choose a career in care?

I wanted to be a nurse and completed 2 years of my course but stopped when I became pregnant.

I could have gone back to finish my training, but started part-time jobs working in care homes and it worked well with my family and was so flexible. So instead, I worked my way up and enjoyed getting to know the residents and staff. WCS really does give people opportunities to progress in their career.

What are the highlights of working here?

When I became Home Manager in 2009, I felt I could run the home how I wanted to. We have a staff team at The Limes who have been here a long time, and it's great to see people develop in their roles. It makes me happy that I have been part of helping people climb up in their career. I am really fortunate to have a really good team.

What are some of your favourite memories of working here?

We have some real characters at The Limes and it's lovely to spend time with them and see them flourish here. There are so many good memories over the years.

We've had a lot of family celebrations and parties here and have organised lots of themed events. I remember one which was 'a day at the races', inspired by one lady who loved horses and used to own a racehorse. We all dressed up and had lots of things going on.

**Scan to
watch Karen
celebrating
long service
with staff at
The Limes**



Above: Karen Hall, Home Manager

I've met so many wonderful residents and their families over the years. We are very lucky, we have lovely residents and we all genuinely care about them.

Tell us about the refurbishment plans

It's really exciting and I think having an updated décor introducing the lifestyle concepts and the new hair salon will make everyone even prouder of the home. I can't wait to see how The Limes looks when it's all done and getting permission for the café area is the icing on the cake.



Above: Country lifestyle kitchenette



Above: Classic lifestyle lounge



Homes bloom with creativity and team spirit!

The summer of sport has brought so much fun to our homes. With the Euros, Wimbledon, Olympics, Tour de France and the Cricket World Cup, there has been something for everyone to enjoy.

Our Summer in Bloom competition was themed around sports, and our homes really stepped up to the mark.

Congratulations to Newlands who had the best sporting theme. In 2nd place Castle Brook, with Drovers House in Rugby crossing the finish line in 3rd.

For the best summer garden, Woodside Care Village took 1st place! Castle Brook followed closely behind in 2nd, and Sycamores in Leamington Spa finished 3rd.

We've included some of the highlights over the next few pages.



Above: Silver medalists in the Tour de France category

Right: Winners of the best Olympic theme – Alicia Rollason, Home Manager, channels London 2012 with a genuine tracksuit and torch



20
years!
service



Castle Brook



Above: Castle Brook's winning Euros-themed entrance even made it on to Sky Sports for 20 seconds! They also won best football theme amongst other awards

"You can see how the competition has helped everybody do more in their gardens. When you go past the homes, the kerbside appeal is massive."



Kate, General Manager at Castle Brook



Dewar Close



6
years!
service

Left: Keren Salt, Director of Quality and Compliance, and resident Margaret take a spin on the side by side bike inspired by Dewar Close's bronze medal in the Tour de France category

Right: Marian O'Shea, Lifestyle Coach, celebrating Dewar Close winning best greenhouse (it was packed full of tomatoes, lettuce, beetroot and potatoes) and 2nd place in the best edible garden category



3
years!
service

Drayton Court

32
years'
service



Above: Knock out fun with Ed Russell, Chief Executive and resident Beryl celebrating Drayton Court's second place in the 'Other sporting themes' category

Drovers House

Left: Resident Marge gives Keren the grand tour of the Drovers House garden, after winning the best garden lighting award



Four Ways



Right: Four Ways' garden packing a punch this year (non-alcoholic of course!)



Fairfield

16
years'
service

Left: Who needs the Premier League when you've got these superstars?

Maryann Walker, Home Manager and Hannah Palmer, Administrator, get match ready to kick off some serious fun at Fairfield!



15
years'
service

The Limes

29
years'
service

Left: Zofia Jankowska, Lead Carer, shows how her green fingers have worked their magic again as the garden is a riot of color for residents to enjoy



6
years'
service



Mill Green

Left: If dancing was an Olympic sport Mill Green would have won!



Newlands



Right: Newlands celebrate 7 awards including winning best sporting theme and best resident involvement

"It's made us be more creative. Residents and staff all worked together as a team." **Shannon, Wellbeing Co-ordinator at Newlands**

"It's brought our team closer together and we've had so much fun!" **Bonnie, Home Manager at Newlands**



Sycamores

Left: Bronze medal for the best garden—Sycamores team rose to the challenge!



5
years'
service

21
years'
service



18
years'
service

16
years'
service

Westlands

"We wouldn't have been able to do this without our relatives. They've helped us fund projects, they've helped us source all the equipment, they've brought their volunteers in. We've been in touch with the cement works as we have residents who used to work there and they provided us with new furniture. It really has been a community effort." **Emma, Care Manager, Westlands**

"Everybody is proud of the garden now. All of the staff are getting involved." **Tash, Home Manager, Westlands**



Left: Game, set, match! Westlands 'aced' the competition, celebrating 2nd place in the most improved category and third place in best resident involvement

Woodside Care Village

"It is hard work, but it's worth it. Residents love it. Visitors love it. Staff love it. That says it all really doesn't it?" **Chris, Gardener at Woodside Care Village**

"We've had so much fun coming up with ideas for these competitions." **Lorraine, General Manager at Woodside Care Village**



Above: Forget Wimbledon—Sharon and Maxine served up some serious table tennis skills!



Below: An Olympic effort for Woodside Care Village who won best garden for the 4th time

Sticking with the sporting theme, we went along to speak to some of our residents about their sporting memories.

Eric Marsden – professional footballer

Eric, 94 who lived at Fairfield in Bedworth was originally from Bolsover in Derbyshire and after WWII did his National Service in the army.

He started playing football for Winchester City, and it was from there that he was spotted by a Crystal Palace scout and moved to Third Division league football. Eric, a centre forward, made 34 appearances scoring 11 times during his time there.

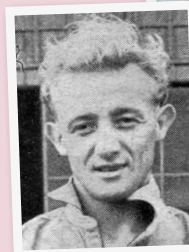
His career continued when he was sold by Crystal Palace to Southend United in 1952 and Eric is now their oldest living player.

An injury stopped his playing days and Eric then earned his living for many years as a Production Manager for Lockheed. Eric still enjoys football, following his local team Coventry City.

He says of his time playing professionally, "It was brilliant to do it. We had good supporters and they used to stop me in the street for autographs. I signed a full contract to play and got paid a few bob at the time. They were happy days and I'm glad I did it."



Above: Eric with a copy of his Southend United home debut programme for the match against Norwich City on 25 October 1952



Left: Eric in his playing days

Jim Toman – football coach

Jim lives at Castle Brook in Kenilworth. He's originally from Belfast and moved to Coventry to find work.

After serving in the merchant navy from the age of 16, following in his father's footsteps, Jim later enjoyed a career driving buses, coaches and taxis in Coventry.

Jim has always been a football fan and supported Coventry City watching matches at the old Highfield Road ground when he could get in for free. He also enjoyed playing for the teams of the companies he worked for, Godiva Bantam coaches and Coventry Corporation and later coached the teams too. He became well known locally, for

his coaching skills and was friends with Coventry City players at the time.

Jim says of his football days, "I'm quite a good footballer and I could've took it up as a living but I wanted something secure. I never played for anything like a city team like Coventry but I knew them and they knew me! I enjoyed coaching the teams I played for."

Jim still loves watching any games he can and enjoyed the Euros watching the England games in a special gazebo set up at Castle Brook.



Above: Jim in his coaching days



Left: Jim with Lifestyle Coach Jeslin Thomas

Journey to net zero



By Paresh Parekh

Director of Finance

'Net zero' – a term you've probably heard but what does it mean – and in particular, what does it mean for WCS?

Net zero is a goal set by the UK and many other countries under the Paris Agreement. The idea is to balance out the greenhouse gases we emit with the amount we can remove from the atmosphere – a bit like paying off a very large and very annoying credit card bill, but instead of interest rates, we've got rising sea levels.

To kick things off, we've worked with environmental consultants to measure what's called our 'carbon baseline'. For those that don't know, that's a way of measuring how much of an impact we're currently having on the planet. The good news? We know where we stand. The challenge? We need to reduce those carbon emissions and get to what we call 'net zero' by 2050.

There are lots of things that are out of our control. We can't change laws, we can't tell governments how to run their countries, and we certainly can't convert all our energy to come from wind, solar, or sea turbines

overnight. But here's the good news: the UK is already a leader in developing these green energies. And if you're wondering what qualifies as green, think of it this way – if it blows, shines, or makes waves, it's in!

We need to figure out how WCS Care can do its part. We'll let the government tackle the big stuff – like stopping coal, converting to green energy, and making sure all our packaging isn't just a puzzle to frustrate us at Christmas! Our focus today is on what we can control to reach our net-zero goal by 2050.

So, we've set ourselves some targets which include 12% of our profits for the planet, now that's something we can all be proud of. Also, 40% of our electricity being homegrown, so instead of paying extra for green energy, we're making it ourselves!

We're also sharing a project idea across all of our homes that was started by Sharon Wooding, Hotel Services Manager at Woodside Care Village, to not automatically wash every towel every day. By doing this, we've worked out we'll save enough water to fill 11,750 baths – which is about the number of baths residents in one of our larger homes take each year. Or, if we lower the tone a bit, that's equivalent to saving 156,000 toilet flushes – which just happens to be the annual flush count at Woodside Care Village!



Above: Solar panels installed at Woodside Care Village in March

And that's not all! By saving on all those washes, we'd also stop about 805 trees' worth of carbon emissions from the washing machines and another 1,366 trees' worth from the combined gas and electric used by our dryers. That's between half and one percent of our total carbon reduction at WCS Care right there – impressive stuff!

We've now set all staff a challenge to come up with more ideas in the same way that Sharon has as they know how we operate day-to-day and where changes can be made. We'll keep you updated on our progress in future issues.



If towels smell like summer rain, please feel free to use again. If they don't smell fantastic, put them in the laundry basket.

Thank you for helping Woodside Care Village do its bit for the environment by reducing water and energy consumption.



Above: Sharon's doing her bit for the environment, one towel at a time

Just for Fun Answers

Word winks answers

- (1) Hand in hand (2) Say when
- (3) Too close for comfort
- (4) First rate (5) Race against the clock
- (6) It crossed my mind
- (7) Forty winks (8) Lock horns
- (9) We're under attack

Track word answers

These are some of the answers that we know about. You may be able to find more.

Amen, Dam, Dame, Dane, Dating, Dean, Den, Due, Eat, Eating, Game, Gauin, Giun, Gained, Gnat, Main, Mad, Man, Mat, Mating, Made, Mane, Mead, Mean, Meat, Men, Name, Named, Nag, Neat, Nit, Tan, Tag, Tame, Tamed, Tin and the nine-letter word is Magnitude.



Amazing life stories

Front row seat to the D-Day landings

John Webb

Imagine being 17 and sailing into battle alongside hundreds of thousands of men determined to defend their country and the free world. John was one of these young men.

This year we celebrated the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings which took place on June 6, 1944 and proved to be a significant turning point in World War II, leading to the liberation of France and the defeat of Germany.

We went along to Woodside Care Village to speak to John, his daughter Linda and granddaughter Amanda, to find out more about his memories of D-Day.

Tell us more about your memories of serving in the Navy at the time of the D-Day landings

I was 17 at the time, but I'd actually lied about my age and signed up with two of my friends from Kenilworth at the age of 16.

I was assigned to the HMS Durban. We sailed up round Scotland and then headed to Poole where she was kept in the harbour for two days due to bad weather while we waited for orders. It was all right on board, we just had to be patient and get ready.

The landings had already started and we followed a French battleship in. 'Jerry' flew overhead and dropped a few bombs. The bottom of the Durban was blown out and it was sunk on purpose to help form an artificial breakwater of three ships. We were taken off in smaller boats and I injured my

leg on the ramp of one of the boats and had to get it seen to.

Where did you go next?

When we were finished in France we came back into Portsmouth and then were taken to Liverpool as we were heading to Singapore – that was a long trip. When we got there I somehow lost my kitbag, but it was returned to me by a member of the military police. It had everything still in it! I did also have some leave there for two weeks and enjoyed that.

Do you have any other memories of the war?

I remember on one of the beaches in France we found a German motorbike and took it for a ride! Also, my younger brother Roy joined up in the Marines before I got home. My dad also did his bit too in the Home Guard. One day when he went up to the lookout post he caught a German who'd parachuted in.

What did you do after the war?

I was originally from Bristol but my family had settled on a farm in Barford near Warwick. When we got demobbed and came home, I went into a pub in Kenilworth and one of the friends that I signed up with was there. I hadn't seen him since the day we'd joined up so it was great to see him again.



Above: John (pictured right) with the friends he signed up with



Above: John with teammates from the entertainment corps, standing on the stage that they built from bits they found to entertain the boys in uniform

Because I'd picked up mechanics as I went along and was good at it, I found work on the Coventry buses and for Oldhams who were a haulage company in Barford.

I got married and had a family. My wife and I went back to France years later as she wanted to see where I'd been in the war. We had a VW Camper and toured round, even meeting the vicar who'd married us in Barford while we were having some food one day at a French restaurant.

Thanks John for talking to us and sharing your memories of this historically important moment in time.



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HMS Durban

HMS Durban was a light cruiser that was first used by the Royal Navy in 1921. She saw service in the Atlantic at the outbreak of the Second World War, and then in the Indian Ocean as part of the navy's Eastern Fleet, protecting British shipping against Japanese attacks.

In November 1943, after a period in reserve, she was chosen as one of the ships to be sunk to provide an artificial breakwater for the temporary port established at Ouistreham. She was scuttled on 9th June 1944 and the wreck now lies 11 metres below the surface off the coast of France.

A Lamb's Tale

By Hilda Batchelor

We are privileged to share this story written by Hilda Batchelor about her memories of World War II. It's printed with kind permission from Hilda's family as Hilda passed away this year but said about her story, "one day someone will want to know."

I was only 19 years old when war was declared in 1939 and was engaged to be married to Jack Smith after a two-year romance.

We had been getting a substantial bottom drawer ready for the time when I would change my name from Hilda Lamb to Hilda Smith. All these items of furniture, bed linen and household pieces were stored in any odd corner or space in my mother's house where I lived with my parents and three sisters and one brother.

In January 1940, Jack was called up for military service and was posted to Newbury, where he trained to be a motor mechanic after which he was sent to London and Nottingham, where I was able to visit him in private billet. We decided that we would arrange to get married on 26th July 1941.

I was working at the GEC factory in

Copsewood, Coventry at this time, as was my father, sister Edna, and her husband Bill. As we were living in one of the houses on the GEC estate, the company had allocated space for us all in their underground air raid shelter. These were not too bad, having toilets and tea-making facilities. Jack was able to get the occasional leave, and we would go dancing or to the pictures or theatre. We had started to get used to the air raid sirens at this time period and would all file along the road to the shelter and meet our neighbours. On one of these raids, Jack's family were bombed out of their house and had to be evacuated to Braunston Village. Many people had by this time been left homeless, but as it had happened to someone so close, we knew now that we were all in this war. The sirens had a new meaning, people going about making a brave show, doing their usual



Above: Hilda celebrating her birthday at Westlands

things, though I'm sure they were as afraid as me.

I was not able to know where Jack was from week to week now, and if there was no mail I worried, but when there was I steeled myself for bad news.

Now that shortages and austerity had arrived, the feeling of togetherness was in the thoughts of most people. We found ourselves exchanging clothing or coupons, queuing for each other and helping our neighbours without thought of any reward. People would wait for hours in a queue and still keep cheerful, giving the front place to any pregnant mother. Of course, the blackout was with us every night and walking along streets was an experience that we now do not think about. Though in all that time in darkness I felt less afraid of walking in the streets than I do now.

We found that we were going to the shelters almost every night now, so my father got or made some sort of trolley so we could all wheel our blankets and personal things and anything of value along the street, meeting other families and all going to our place. We were all afraid but tried not to show it. Someone would start a sing song so the young ones would not think about the bombs which we could hear dropping in the city.

We could hear the drone of the German bombers passing over, and sometimes in the distance a bomb, which we were told was anti-aircraft guns. Some of the men claimed they could tell which was a German aeroplane by the sound of its engines, and with this magical knowledge tried to reassure us that the bombers were going over to another



Above: A wrecked bus stands among a scene of devastation in the centre of Coventry after the major Luftwaffe air raid on the night of 14/15 November 1940 © IWM (H 5593)

target. I think that going to the shelters so often, and not getting proper sleep was beginning to get people down.

However, I had some good news. Jack was coming on leave for a week and would stay with us. It would be a bit crowded, though we thought we could manage as Edna and Bill had moved out into a house not very far away. This left father, mother, Beatrice, Olive, and the twins Edward and Edith and Jack and myself. We spent the day in the house, or visiting friends and neighbours. Both the twins who were only 7 years old, had been rather poorly during the day, so when the dreaded sirens went, mother made a bed up for them under the stairs, nobody wanted to go to the shelter without the rest, so we all sat in the living room, talking and listening. Soon we heard the engine of the bomber getting louder by the second, and it seemed more intense than usual. Talk got round to guessing how many there were, the only result was that there must be hundreds. This proved to be correct giving a new word to our language, 'BLITZ'.

It sounded like thunder now, together with all the crashing, banging, and men shouting at each other with orders and cries of help or advice. I covered my ears with my hands, trying to shut out



Above: Hilda and her husband Jack in the war

the noise, but it was hopeless. We could hear the whistling of the bombs as they fell out of the sky, and then after a couple of seconds the explosion. There seemed to be that many, surely some must be our guns shooting at the bombers.

And then we heard the one that was aimed at us. I don't know how we felt that this was it. Only that all of us in one movement sprang out of the chair and hurled ourselves into the stairs cupboard with the twins, blankets, cushions and all manner of things flying about. At the same time, the bomb landed and it seemed to me that everything was finished, I thought I lost my hearing, everything was silent, nobody spoke as we looked at each other and gradually realised that the miracle was that we were all alright. Then we heard people moving about, trying to get near to our house, calling for Mr and Mrs Lamb. Soon these wardens were with us and lifting us out like babies and ordering everyone to the shelters.

Bombs were still falling on Coventry and fires were burning everywhere, and the terrible noise was again with us. The children were crying, and I was sobbing as we took in the awful sight that greeted us.

It seemed that the whole street was gone together with the factory building opposite, and our house, no13, had the entire front room blown away. We found out later that the bomb had just missed our house, and it was the blast from it that did the damage. We were all running down the street to the shelters, no time to gather any belongings and as we ran we had to throw ourselves onto the ground as bombs were falling all around. We arrived at the shelter, very bruised, frightened, and upset and the twins were in a terrible state, crying and shaking. But with lots of help and a hot drink from other people, we settled down to sit it out.

When at last the all clear sounded, everyone left the shelter and hurried to their homes, or what was left of them, and we saw that our house was on fire, incendiary bombs having been dropped. There was no way to put

What's meant by the term 'bottom drawer'?

A bottom drawer was the term used to denote the gradual accumulation of bedlinen, crockery, cutlery and other household goods that would be useful to a girl when she got married.

The phrase arose in the Victorian era, when the bottom drawer of a chest was not only the largest, but also the least used and least accessible. It could be used to store items that weren't immediately needed.

out the fires as the bomb which had exploded near our house had burst the water mains, and we had to wait for the fire engines to come from Rugby and other districts. We realised that our dog was around somewhere, and then we heard him barking from inside the house. At the back of the house, we could see him under the kitchen table in a very frightened state, but there was no way to get to him because of the raging fire, and though we tried to persuade him to come out, he wouldn't move.

The children were frantic, it all happened so quickly as the ceiling fell down and the whole house was gone in a crash, flames and sparks all over us. Our dog could not be saved. It was heartbreaking as we knew all our family's possessions and my bottom drawer things were lost forever. We were all crying as we moved back into the street where everyone else had gathered, some managing to rescue bits of furniture and clothes before they were all burnt.

It was very moving, each one comforting the other, stressing that we were still alive. A kind neighbour took us into their house and gave us some food and drink; we stayed there until an auntie of mine came for us. We couldn't all stay with her for long because there was not much room. So, when the twins were better, they were evacuated to Braunston, and Beatrice went to live with relations in Wolston.

Relief parcels had been sent from America and my father collected one from the town hall, together with some money that was given to all the bombed out families. This collection of clothes and food, and the few pound notes represented the entire stake in life for my family of seven at that time.

I had no job now as the factory had been completely destroyed, but after some time I was sent to work in a shadow factory in a village near Stratford upon Avon, having to get there first by tram and then on to two train rides. This was in the early morning in the blackout, and then home again in the dark. It was such a long day something over 12 hours, no wonder I was so slim!

Jack and I had lost everything which we had stored in the bombing, and there did not seem to be any way to get compensation, but we had a little money of our own saved, so we used this to buy new wedding clothes, determined to get married on our set date. We did this in style, having a white service in Stoke church, and afterwards a reception in the Co-op hall in Walsgrave. Relations and friends had gathered round and managed to come up with extra food and sweets, and we had a lovely day. Afterwards, we went to spend some time with friends in Whitley who put us up for the rest of Jack's leave, before he went back to Ireland, and I didn't see him for more than six months.

The German air force was bombing all over the county, many cities taking the brunt of the blitz, though it seemed that Coventry had been singled out, the whole of the city centre had been devastated together with the cathedral. People had been killed, their houses bombed and burnt, it was heartbreaking.

We were constantly down air raid shelters, and during the day the town hall was full with people trying to get help. My parents had managed to rent a house near Gosford Green, so all the family were again together, and I had two rooms in it which I started to furnish, ready for when Jack had some more leave.

The war dragged on, everyone doing their bit for the war effort in one way or another, both at home and work. Each day was met with mixed feelings, people not sure what news they would get, afraid of hearing the loss of someone near to them, and constantly dreading more bombing. Fighting was going on all over the world, or so it seemed to me, and gradually better news began to drift into our lives. America had entered the war, and Germany had invaded Russia. The 'second front' was being planned in earnest, this being proved by the number of American troops and equipment that were all over the place. Their huge aeroplanes, some towing gliders, could be seen almost every day in the skies. However, some in the south of the country now had to face Hitler's 'V' weapons, first Doodlebugs and later V2 rockets.

I was expecting my first baby at this time, so I had to leave work, being sent to Stratford for the birth of my daughter, Margaret, and then home to live with my parents. At last, the war ended and that brought all the people into the streets, flags and banners were flying from every building and house, dancing and parties were taking place, though there were some people who had lost loved ones or all their possessions and homes. Jack was on his way home from Egypt after 12 months, and my father made an illuminated sign



Above: Holy Trinity Church rises above a scene of devastation in Coventry following the Luftwaffe air raid on the night of 14/15 November 1940 ©IWM (H 5601)

'Welcome Home Jack' together with all the flags we could get together. What a wonderful time that was. No more bombing, no more war! We did feel good as we had survived it all, ready to start our lives again, though it would be an uphill struggle. My husband got work at Rootes car factory, but it was more than two and a half years before we got our own home. A brand-new steel council house, and to me it was a palace, on a new estate at Canley, it had everything we dreamt of.

Our daughter Margaret had fallen ill with meningitis, and it took all our prayers, and the new wonder drug, penicillin, to get her better. Even so, she was still 2 months in hospital. We now devoted all our energy to making our home the best and most comfortable place we could, the inside being decorated, and the outside planted with roses and shrubs. Then I lost my second baby, we were heartbroken, but we did not give up, determined to live our lives that were spared in the war. Six years later we had another daughter, Linda and two years after that a son Michael. At last, we were a complete family and life was very good even if we did not have much money, we were very happy.

We lived in that house for more than 30 years, and the children married and moved away to their own homes, leaving us with a lot of happy memories. Over the years, things on the estate had changed so much. Gone were the days when almost everyone was a friend or a neighbour, having time to chat or offer help when needed. Now it was everyone for himself, the ruthless, loud uncaring 'job' was taking over. Our street was ruined by the style of people

moving into houses as the better ones were forced to move out, as we were by a terrible family that moved next door. They made our lives hell, breaking down fences destroying gardens and making such noise that we moved into a flat thinking we could not get such neighbours again. It took us a while to settle in but we did in the end, and eventually Jack took early retirement and we started to enjoy ourselves, going on the promised holidays and meeting other people for parties.

Then in June 1978, Jack suddenly died and I was so upset that I was very ill for a long time, even though the children rallied around. My brother Eddie and wife Betty took me on holiday with them to Spain for a month, touring the country in a mobile home. It was a wonderful time, and after only a few days I began to feel better, and with their help and kindness, by the time we got home, my health had improved so much I was ready to face the future. I had all the love and help from Margaret, Linda and Michael and my sons-in-law. They could not do enough for me, trying to make my life easy and happy. But I knew I had to do some things for myself, so I got a full-time job which made me feel more independent getting to know more people at work, and looking after myself. I had a good friend, Stella who lived not far away, and we started to go out enjoying ourselves. It was during this time that I met Roger and my whole life changed again. I didn't think it would feel this way again, but it was so, and better still, all my family loved him too.

Another new life was starting for me, and we planned to get married.



Above: Hilda pictured in her nineties

Margaret and Ken, knowing I was not on my own anymore, went ahead with their plans to emigrate to Australia, and they went with their three children before our wedding. Roger and myself went to visit them in Queensland for four weeks, calling it our honeymoon. We had a smashing time, made more happy seeing the wonderful life the children had got for themselves in that country. We went again two years later for a month's holiday, soaking up the sun, and having fun in the relaxed way that Australians seem to do. My other daughter Linda, George and the children went to live there later, and they have also made a great start to their new way of life. Roger and me went to live in Rugby, and Michael with Lesley and Timothy moved near to us and their closeness and love make up for all those so far away. We are close to Roger's children and grandchildren and it's lovely to be one of them. We often see Eddie and Betty who live in Hinckley, each time seems to be like a mini holiday with their welcome and sense of fun. I am sure that that time in Spain with them put me on the road to a new life.

Whatever happens next, any changes that I am not ready for, I will always remember those six years of war, with so much sadness, parting and illness and then the year Jack died, life changed so suddenly. Then after a while, a new life started for me. All the family are getting on fine, and I am so proud of them and our grandchildren. I thank God for all I have now.

Coventry Blitz

The Coventry Blitz was a series of bombing raids that took place on Coventry during World War Two. By far the most devastating of these attacks occurred on the evening of 14 November 1940. It was the single most concentrated attack on a British city in the Second World War. The aim was to knock out Coventry as a major centre for war production.

Codenamed 'Moonlight Sonata', the raid lasted for 11 hours and involved nearly 500 Luftwaffe bombers, gathered from airfields all over occupied Europe. The Luftwaffe dropped 500 tons of explosives, 30,000 incendiaries and 50 landmines. More than 43,000 homes, just over half the city's housing stock, were damaged or destroyed in the raid.

Don't stop the music!



22
years'
service

By Pearl Mackey

Service Manager



In 2018 Ed Russell, WCS Care's Chief Executive, was invited to visit HammondCare in Australia. Whilst there, he experienced their music on prescription programme and came back asking the question: wouldn't it be nice if we

could have social prescribing of music here?

Fast forward to 2020 and WCS employed our first Community Musician at Woodside Care Village to deliver one-to-one and group music sessions. The role was an instant success and we now have

five Community Musicians who deliver regular music sessions across all of our homes.

Listening to music benefits us individually and collectively, improving physical, mental and emotional health. It releases dopamine, which is known as the 'feel-good' hormone, and creates a feeling of social connectedness. At WCS Care we believe that regular music helps to maintain residents' emotional wellbeing and set out to measure this.

Using Bradford University's dementia mapping tool, I measured the wellbeing of residents before, during and after music sessions at Woodside Care Village in Warwick. The results are clear. Regular music, and by that I mean every 2 to 3 days, helps to maintain and top up emotional wellbeing. If music is less frequent, the benefits start to decline.

So whilst the NHS might not be putting music on prescription, we're going to continue to sing the praises of this simple but effective way of making a positive impact for our residents.



Above: Residents love to play and listen to music

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