



# NEWS

## Moving to a care home

Read Jenny's and her son Deane's stories

Pages 6 and 7



## Celebrating staff success

Staff across our homes celebrate their recent leadership and management qualifications

Pages 16 and 17



## Better nights, better days

Launch of our centralised acoustic monitoring hub

Page 18



# Proud of our profession

34 years' service



By Ed Russell



Chief Executive



Above: The Support Services team celebrating Investors in People Platinum accreditation

**W**e hear far too often that the care home sector is in crisis, which does no one any favours and simply demoralises the people who show up day after day to give outstanding care. Yes, funding needs sorting out, but the sector itself is not broken. Far from it.

**W**hat you see in WCS's care homes is what social care actually looks like – innovation, pride, and people doing their absolute best for those who live with us.

There is so much untapped potential for health and care to work together, and for a proper preventative agenda that keeps people well in the first place.

Our residents and families tell us that moving into a care home is a positive life choice. None of us plan for it, but when it is the right decision it brings independence back, puts support around families, and opens the door to a good life. See **pages 6 and 7** to read Jenny and Deane's story from a mother and son's perspective.

For us achieving Investors in People Platinum, earned by only five percent of organisations, is not just a celebration of WCS Care, it shines a light on the whole care sector, showing how skilled and deeply human this work is.

The following pages are what truly powers WCS Care, the residents' stories and the pride and passion of our staff. On **page 3** is what some of them had to say about working here, and why they choose to stay and grow with us.

# From the Editor...

## About WCS CARES 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 everyday life and show how people carry on enjoying the things they've always done, as

## About WCS

**WCS Care is a care home provider and a registered charity. We are proud of the positive social impact we make across Warwickshire, with around 250 people who are socially funded benefitting from our charitable support every year. This creates a significant annual contribution, helping people access high quality, compassionate care.**

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

well as having 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.

**Find out more about daily life in our homes on Facebook [wcscare](https://www.facebook.com/wcscare) and Instagram [wcs\\_care](https://www.instagram.com/wcs_care/).**



**By Jennie Evans**

Head of Communications and Marketing



## Got a story?

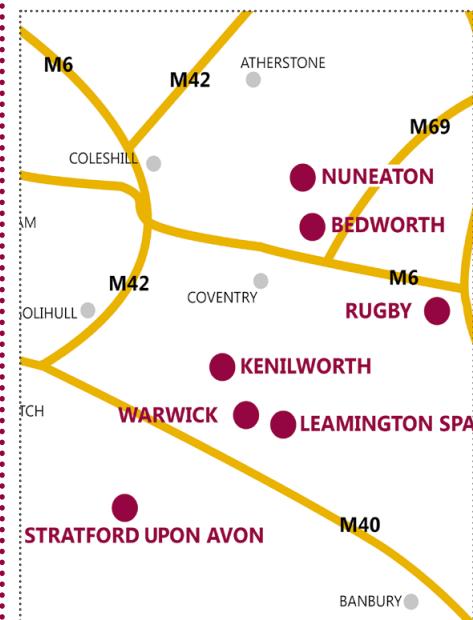
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**Or call:** 01926 864 242

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

## Find us in Warwickshire:



## 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](mailto: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](https://www.carehome.co.uk) or [Google Review](https://www.google.com). 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.

# Look who's caring...

## the people behind the care

We asked some of our staff what they think about working at WCS and why they choose to stay and grow with us. Here's what they said...

“

I love it here, especially the residents and their stories and being here to support them. Each one touches your heart”

Amanda, Carer,  
Drayton Court



Above: Amanda with Ed Russell and Home Manager, Mel Davies.

15 years' service



“Despite falling into care as I saw it as a stepping stone, once I started, I never looked back. At WCS Care, I started working nights to fit around family commitments and then progressed my career working in different roles at several WCS homes. For me, the best bit about the job is supporting residents to live life their way, and I enjoy thinking outside the box to make it happen.”

Emma, Home Manager Westlands

13 years' service

“

I started working in the laundry and have progressed now to Care Manager. My favourite part of the job is spending time with residents and having fun!”

Alice, Care Manager  
Provers  
House

10 years' service



Right: Alice with General Manager Joe Maskell

“

Working here is rewarding”

Christine, Housekeeper and  
Laundress, Attleborough Grange



Above: Christine with Ed Russell and Home Manager, Anne Myles

5 years' service

“

“

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Emma, Home Manager Westlands

5 years' service

“

To do this job, you've got to want to care. As long as you love the residents, it's the right career for you.”

Calum, Caterer, Fairfield



5 years' service



Above: Tony with Home Manager Mel Davies

“

This is the best job I've ever had. I love working with and talking to the residents. This is my job now, I'm never going anywhere else, you're stuck with me”

Tony, carer,  
Drayton Court

15 years' service

“

When I first started I was a relief carer and I worked my way up to Care Co-ordinator. Now I'm Housekeeper. I love doing the room checks most as I get to see all of the residents and can sit and chat to them.”

Aimee,  
Housekeeper,  
The Limes

Right: Aimee with Home Manager Karen



15 years' service

# Thank you and farewell to Adrian Levett, Chair of the Board



By Jennie Evans

Head of Communications and Marketing

**W**e'd like to say a heartfelt thank you to Adrian Levett, who has recently stepped down as Chair of the WCS Board after many years of dedicated service.

Adrian first came across WCS Care when both his parents lived in one of our care homes. He, along with all of our Board of Trustees, gave his time unpaid as a volunteer to support the charity's work.

During his time on the Board, Adrian has played a key role in some of our most significant moments – from the development and opening of Castle



Above: The Castle Brook residents and team shared tea with Adrian on his farewell tour of the homes

Brook and Woodside Care Village, to the refurbishment of our older homes and the purchase of Southfields.

He has guided us through a change in Chief Executive, supported our

merger with Deafinitely Independent, and helped shape the exciting plans for Attleborough Care Village.

Adrian also oversaw the successful completion of one five-year strategy and the introduction of the one that will carry us confidently towards 2030.

We're incredibly grateful for Adrian's steady leadership, thoughtful insight and genuine care for residents and staff alike. His contribution has left a lasting mark on WCS, and we wish him every happiness for the future – with our warmest thanks for all he has done.



Above: Attleborough Grange thanked Adrian with messages and cupcakes

Left:  
Adrian Levett



Above: The Castle Brook residents and team shared tea with Adrian on his farewell tour of the homes

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**On retirement, Adrian said, he'd miss the people he worked with most of all. Not the responsibilities he had – those ended at the right time for him – but the people.**

# Lighting the way

## at WCS Care

**M**ost of us feel brighter on sunny days and struggle a bit when it's gloomy outside. That's because light plays a big part in how awake, alert, or sleepy we feel.

**T**hat's where circadian lighting comes in. It's designed to follow the body's natural rhythm, our internal clock, by using bright, cool light during the day and softer, warmer light in the evening. This helps the body know when it's time to be active and when it's time to rest. Getting this balance right supports better sleep, mood, and wellbeing, especially for people living with dementia.

We installed circadian lighting in our newest home, Woodside Care Village, when it was built, but installing it in existing, older homes is a different story. Rewiring would mean major disruption and huge costs, so finding a simpler, affordable way to bring these benefits to everyone became our goal.

Working with lighting designers, manufacturers and researchers from Oxford University, we developed a retrofit system that could be fitted quickly and safely, without the need for extensive rewiring.

### Bringing light to Sycamores

In November 2024, we installed the new system at Sycamores in Leamington Spa.

**Below:** Lighting experts John Bullock and Dr Shelley James with Ed Russell WCS Care's Chief Executive



Using Bluetooth controls and wireless switches, we replaced the old fittings with energy-efficient LEDs that automatically adjust brightness and colour, from bright daylight tones in the morning to warm candlelight in the evening.

To see what difference it made, we used Dementia Care Mapping™, an observation method from Bradford University that tracks residents' mood and engagement. The results were striking:

- **Daytime sleeping** dropped by 58%
- **Interaction** increased by 470%
- **Negative mood** fell by 94%



**Above:** Comparison photos of one of the corridors at Sycamores



**Above:** Middle floor (circadian) and top floor (non-circadian) evening comparison

Residents who had been withdrawn were suddenly more engaged and alert. One resident who had six falls in the previous year had none in the first five months after installation. And the lighting has also reduced sundowning, the confusion and agitation that often happens in the late afternoon and evening. By adjusting gradually, residents feel calmer and more settled.

Staff have noted fewer incidents and a better atmosphere since the lights changed. One carer said: *"I feel more relaxed on evening shifts... the whole place feels calm."* While others have noted that residents who previously didn't socialise are now spending more time in the lounge engaging with activities and other people. Relatives notice the difference too. The environmental transformation is not just visual, it's relational.

### Looking ahead

Following the success at Sycamores, we've now installed the system at Fairfield and plan to roll it out across all our homes, so more residents can experience the same benefits.

It doesn't replace time outdoors, but it helps fill the gap, supporting healthier sleep, better mood, and a brighter atmosphere for everyone.

# Moving to a care home – A new chapter

**M**oving into a care home is not an easy decision. It often means letting go of familiar routines, long held independence and the place where so many memories were made.

For Jenny and her family, it was one of the hardest decisions they had ever faced, but one that now feels absolutely right. Jenny has now lived at Castle Brook in Kenilworth for over a year.

Ed Russell, WCS Care's Chief Executive, sat down and chatted with Jenny and her son Deane about how the move has changed life for the better.



Above: Britt and Deane visiting Jenny at Castle Brook

## Mum's story – Jenny

**O**riginally from Yorkshire, I've lived most of my adult life in Harbury. It was where my husband Colin and I brought up our family and where we built a home.

We were there for more than 50 years. Colin's work took us around the country and abroad, and we travelled widely together.

When Colin died a few years ago, I was determined to stay in our home. It held so many memories, and I wanted to carry on as I always had. For a while, I managed well enough and continued to meet friends and enjoyed being involved with the local church. But gradually, things began to change. When I stopped driving, I found I could walk into the village but couldn't always manage the walk back, someone had to help me. Even small things, like carrying a bottle of milk, became difficult.

I began having falls and fainting spells. I would wake up on the floor, trying to reach the phone. By the afternoon, I was often too tired to cook and sometimes did not bother at all. I knew something had to change.

I came to Castle Brook at first for a short stay. I packed very little and fully expected to return home once I felt stronger. I remember climbing into

the bed on my first night and feeling a sense of relief. When I caught a bug, I was so ill and I couldn't believe the care I got.

Deciding to stay permanently was hard. I could no longer live the life I wanted at home. I felt lonely because I couldn't get to all my meetings and to see friends for coffee. I thought it's awful to walk away from my life. All that life I've given up. And then I thought, well, what life? I couldn't do it.

One of my favourite things now is walking out to the nearby common. I call it my cathedral. The trees meet overhead, there is water running alongside the path and wildlife all around.

Leaving my old life behind was hard, but it's been absolutely lovely to come here, be looked after, be taken out, be shown different places on the memory trips. I enjoy meeting with other people and always have company and a sense of belonging.

*Once I made the decision, that was it, I was going to go forward and have a new way of going on, a new life. I wasn't going to be sitting miserable and waste every day. I wanted to live every day.*

Since then, I've had the best summer of my life. I've been out on trips, seen new places and enjoyed making friends. I celebrated my birthday with everyone here surrounded by flowers, cake and good company. I even found romance, which I never expected, and it brought companionship and laughter.



Above: Jenny and husband Colin starting out in life up North

# Son's story – Deane

**M**um had always been independent, and after my dad died, she was determined to stay in the house they had shared for so many years.

At first, she managed, but gradually things became more difficult. She started fainting, often early in the morning, and had a number of falls. I knew the neighbours were doing their best, but I remember thinking they cannot keep rescuing someone at five in the morning. I live two hours away so couldn't get there quickly to help and my sister Britt works in a school so it is very, very difficult to get out of class.

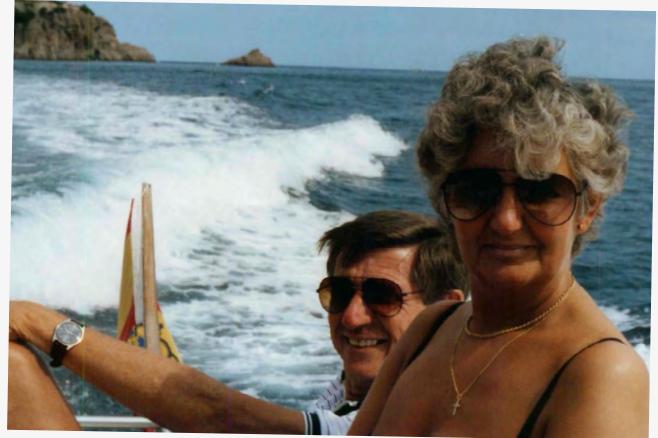
**Mum has never been a burden to me. But when you care about people you worry.**

The turning point came when, with Christmas coming up, my wife and I had plans to go away. Mum's health was deteriorating, she was fainting more and I realised I just couldn't go away, I'd be so worried. All I could think about was the possibility of her lying on the floor, unable to reach the phone. At that time, I was worried that she might not make it.

A friend suggested trying respite care. It felt like a sensible, temporary step. We packed lightly, expecting it to be short term. Mum thought she would recover and come home again. But almost immediately, I felt a shift. For the first time in a long while, I knew she was somewhere safe. If something happened, there would be someone there straight away.

It's been a massive weight off my shoulders as I know that mum is safe and looked after. The love and the care haven't changed for me at all, but I now know I don't have to always be that primary call because the care home do that. I know that if

**Right:**  
Jenny and husband  
Colin travelling



they need to phone a doctor, if they need to phone a nurse, or if mum just needs help with something, they'll be there first. The staff have just been brilliant.

Now, when I visit, mum looks so much healthier. She is eating properly again. She is walking more. She looks stronger and more like herself. Watching her

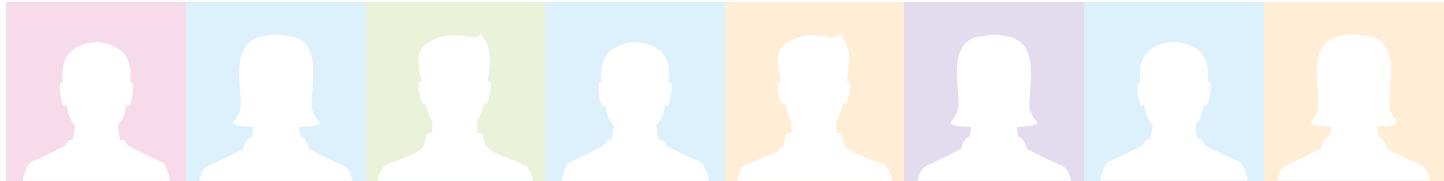
settle in, make friends and regain confidence completely changed how I felt about the decision. It felt like not just a new chapter, but a whole new book for her.

Yes, it's a big change, and I could see mum struggled with it. But very quickly we knew she'd made the right decision.



**Above left:** Jenny doing her laundry at Castle Brook

**Above right:** Jenny's birthday party



# New faces in familiar places

**W**e've had lots of exciting changes recently – some new faces joining us and some familiar ones stepping into new roles. Here's a quick round-up...

## Chair of the Board

**W**e're delighted that Jayne Matthews, who joined our Board back in 2019, has stepped into the role of Chair.

Jayne became a trustee to contribute to the care of others, and brings her risk management experience to support the charity to take considered risks in order to remain innovative.



## Finance team

A warm welcome to **Jay Rasiah**, our new Head of Finance. With over 20 years' experience, and first-hand experience caring for his mum, Jay knows finance is about people as much as numbers.



We're also joined by **Charlene Wood**, our new Management Accountant. With 20 years in finance, including 16 in the care sector, Charlene's all about making sure the figures support people to live life well.



## Innovation in care

**S**arah King, is our new Acoustic Monitoring Night Manager.

Sarah's leading the UK's first centralised hub, helping night teams respond quickly when residents need support while letting others enjoy a peaceful night's sleep.

Read more about the hub on page 18.



## Care and facilities

After more than 20 years with WCS, **Rachel Guest** is now Service Manager for Castle Brook, Drovers House and Woodside Care Village. Rachel's a people person and brings her love of caring to everything she does.

**Tash Stevens**, formerly Home Manager at Westlands, and **Mel Davies**, formerly Home Manager at Drayton Court, have both been promoted to Support Manager. They will each support several of our homes, working alongside our current Support Manager, Trish.

Both Tash and Mel bring a wealth of experience to their new roles, along with a real passion for putting residents needs first.

**Phill Jones** has joined us as Property Operations Co-ordinator. From working with his dad in plumbing to facilities management, Phill takes pride in keeping things running smoothly and enjoys a chat along the way.

Rachel Guest



Mel Davies



Phill Jones



Tash Stevens



## Team changes in the homes

At Castle Brook, congratulations to **Rue Ndabalime** on her promotion to Deputy Home Manager. Rue is passionate about making sure every resident feels at home and valued.

At Drovers House, **Joe Maskell** has stepped into the General Manager role, with **Tilly Biddle** becoming Deputy Manager. Between them they have 24 years of experience across our homes. While Tilly is on maternity leave, **Susan Wills** is covering the role, with eight years of service within WCS Care.

Over at Attleborough Grange, **Anne Myles** has been appointed Home Manager, bringing strong leadership experience following the refurbishment at Dewar Close.

We are also pleased to welcome **Emma Lingard** as Home Manager at Westlands. Emma joined WCS Care in 2012 and has progressed through several roles, always focused on helping residents to live life their way.

At Drayton Court, **Aimee Shaw** is now Home Manager, having started as an apprentice back in 2009. Finally, **Jo Paget** has built a career at WCS Care and is the new Home Manager at Mill Green.

Rue Ndabalime



Anne Myles



Joe Maskell



Tilly Biddle



Susan Wills



Emma Lingard



Aimee Shaw



Jo Paget



# Best in bloom and GLOOM

Our "Halloween Spectacular" celebrated the spookiest homes and gardens across WCS Care with award categories that included, 'Wicked Window Wonders', 'Garden of Ghouls', 'Resident involvement' and the coveted 'Best Halloween Entrance' and 'WCS Pumpkin Cup' which are both decided by a public vote.

[Watch the full video](#)



Attleborough Grange



Left, below and right: Pumpkin power pays off for Attleborough Grange who won the Pumpkin Cup with their entry



Castle Brook



Above and right: Cobwebs, cackles and creepy characters at Castle Brook

Left, below and right: Runners up in the 'Best Halloween Entrance' category

Drayton Court



Dewar Close

Right:  
The  
'Creepiest  
Corridor'  
crown went  
to Dewar  
Close



Drovers House



Below: Resident Marj  
stealing the show as a  
wicked witch



Above: 'Garden of Ghouls' and 'Resident Involvement' winners. Well done Drovers House!

The Limes



Left and below:  
A cauldron full of teamwork  
took the 'Team Spirit' prize



Four Ways



Above and below: A sweep of spooky  
success for Four Ways winning the  
'Eco-friendly Frights', 'Haunted  
Household', 'Spirit of Halloween'  
and 'Best Entrance' awards and  
'Halloween Spectacular' trophy



Above: Resident Bob joined  
in the fun!



Fairfield



Above and right: A frightfully fun  
mix of pumpkins, zombies and  
ghostly guests at Fairfield

## Mill Green



Left, above and right:  
Winners of the 'Wicked Window Wonders' award

## Newlands



Above and right: Pumpkins,  
witches and skeletons bringing  
spooky fun to Newlands

## Sycamores



Left, below and right:  
Spiders, witches and demons  
bringing the chills to Sycamores

## Westlands



Above and right: Westlands – where witches  
cackle, cobwebs cling and pumpkins glow

## Woodside Care Village



Left, below and right: No tricks just treats, for  
Woodside Care Village who were runners up in  
several categories

# Double gold for our green-fingered teams

**I**n a blooming brilliant result, both Four Ways and Sycamores have struck gold in this year's Leamington in Bloom awards.

Our teams were invited to a special reception hosted by The Mayor of Leamington, Cllr Ruggy Singh, at the Royal Spa Centre to celebrate their success.

At the event, Royal Leamington Spa Town Council thanked everyone involved for their hard work and community spirit which contributed to Leamington scooping gold for the eighth year running in the Heart of England in Bloom competition.

Well done to everyone in the homes for all of their hard work!



6 years' service



Above: Home Manager Olu and resident Bob collect their awards

## Making memories on the move

**O**ur Memory Maker minibuses offer regular trips taking residents from all homes and their families to local destinations of their choice.

Whether it's a favourite pub, café, or somewhere completely new, there's always something to look forward to.

Recent outings have included visits to museums, zoos, and garden centres to look at the Halloween and Christmas decorations.



Clockwise from left to right: A pub lunch, a day out at the Sea Life centre, a visit to the Black Country Living Museum and a trip to a garden centre to see the decorations

# A way with words

**A**t Castle Brook in Kenilworth, a shared love of poetry is bringing residents together, thanks to Jim, whose wife Brenda lives at the home.

**B**renda, a former Warwickshire Poet Laureate, has always loved poetry. Nearly two years ago, Jim started a small group for residents who enjoyed reading or writing verse. It's now grown to around 15 regular members, including Brenda.

Jim said, "As Brenda is a poet, poetry has always been important to us. When I started visiting Castle Brook, Carol the Lifestyle Coach and I decided to see if anyone else might enjoy it too. We found that poems with a good rhyme and rhythm were the most

popular – as well as the shorter, more humorous ones. Before long, residents were recalling verses from their childhoods, and that often led to lovely reminiscences about school days, family holidays and seaside trips."

When Jeslin, the home's other Lifestyle Coach, joined Castle Brook, she also got involved. With encouragement, residents grew more confident, reading their favourite poems aloud and even writing their own. "The poetry club is something really special," said Jeslin. "It's simple but meaningful as poetry

brings back so many childhood and school memories, and residents love sharing poems that have touched them over the years."

Jim recently gathered residents' work into a booklet called Sand and Pebbles, inspired by one of Brenda's poems about her grandson handing her a pebble on the beach - a small reminder to find joy in life's simple treasures.

The poetry group continues to meet regularly, and another booklet of poetry and prose is planned.



Above: Jim reading to the poetry group

## Sand and pebbles...

**C**astle Brook resident Jenny wrote the postscript below for "Sand and Pebbles" with Lifestyle Coach Jeslin, and it sums up what the sessions mean to residents.

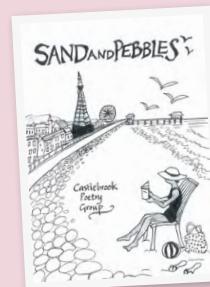
**A**t Castle Brook Care Home, something truly special blossomed on Crenel floor – a space filled with residents who once led classrooms, wrote lesson plans, and inspired young minds. Among them was Brenda, a former teacher with a quiet love for writing poems. Her husband, Jim, often visited and saw the spark poetry still ignited in her. Wanting to share that joy, Jim offered to lead a poetry reading session for the residents.

With the gentle guidance of Jim, Jeslin and Carol, a simple poetry reading gradually transformed into something more meaningful – a fully-fledged poetry club. What began as an occasional reading became a cherished tradition held every other Saturday. Residents started bringing

their own poems, many written years ago, others newly inspired. They shared childhood rhymes, school verses, and heartfelt pieces tied to their life stories.

The Crenel floor – home to many former teachers, headmistresses, and academics – was the perfect setting. The club became a space of reflection, creativity, and connection. It wasn't just about poetry; it was about memory, identity, and belonging. Jim wove music, themes, and culture into each session, drawing out even the quietest voices in the room.

This club proved especially powerful for our residents living with dementia. Familiar rhymes and gentle verses often unlocked long-forgotten memories, allowing them to reconnect with parts of



Above: Jeslin and Jenny

2 years' service

themselves and share stories they hadn't spoken about in years. The room often filled with laughter, tears, and warmth – a testament to the healing power of words.

What began as a quiet idea on one floor has grown into a beautiful legacy – proof that poetry still has the power to bring people together, spark memories, and touch the heart.

Because sometimes, it only takes a few lines of verse to open a world of connection.

# Your views, our future

## Resident and relative survey results 2025

**T**hank you to everyone who took the time to respond to our resident and relative survey. In total we received 302 responses and your feedback really does shape what we do.

**A**s before, we kept things simple, asking just three questions to give you the chance to share your views in your own words:

- What should we start doing?
- What should we stop doing?
- What should we keep doing?

### Summary of results

The average rating across the group was **9.8 out of 10** when asked how likely you were to recommend your home as a good place to live. That's something we're proud of – but we also know there's always room to improve.

You told us how much you value more **trips out and activities at home** – so our *Memory Maker* minibuses are busy taking residents and families to favourite

local spots, while our five Community Musicians continue to bring homes alive with group sessions, one-to-ones and seasonal themed tours across all of our homes.

**Mealtimes matter too.** Thanks to our partnership with *apetito*, we're offering more choice, flexibility and safe catering



for a wide range of needs. Breakfast clubs are also expanding, giving residents a cheerful and sociable start to the day.

We also heard your concerns about **lost clothing**. This is an ongoing challenge, but we're testing solutions to make things easier, more practical and resident friendly.

**"We've read every response, and we're using what you've told us to shape our plans for the future. Our focus is on small improvements that make a big difference – always striving to make our homes the very best places to live and work."**

**Keren Salt**

Director of Quality and Compliance



**Reports are available to read in the home**

## Time for a coffee break!

Grab a pen and a cuppa for some well-earned downtime with our **Three Cheers!** and **Puzzling Proverbs** challenges. You'll find the answers to both games on page 18.



### Three Cheers! Complete the sets of three...

- 1 Peter, Paul and .....
- 2 The good, the bad and the .....
- 3 Ear, nose and .....
- 4 Huey, Dewey and .....
- 5 Ready, steady .....
- 6 Earth, wind and .....
- 7 Morning, noon and .....
- 8 Work, rest and .....
- 9 Gold, silver and .....
- 10 Solid, liquid and .....

Total score

### Puzzling Proverbs Complete the popular proverbs...

- 1 Where there's a will .....
- 2 There is more than one way .....
- 3 Give him an inch .....
- 4 Seeing is .....
- 5 Never look a gift horse .....
- 6 Like Father .....
- 7 Love makes the .....
- 8 You can't tell a book .....
- 9 Beggars can't be .....
- 10 A bird in the hand .....

Total score

# Celebrating staff success

**B**uilding on the success of our Management College which has seen more than 20 staff members gain leadership and management qualifications, we launched our Care College, in late 2023.

The College helps people to study for qualifications and realise their full potential, and we're already seeing and feeling the impact it's having across our homes.

Thank you to everyone who has supported this initiative so far, especially our training provider, Alan Hester Associates, and our Care College team who have supported 24 learners to achieve their qualifications with 40 more well on the way.

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



By Sarah Bedding

Head of Learning and Development



At this year's leadership conference we celebrated the following staff members and their achievements:



## Attleborough Grange

### Level 2 Diploma in Adult Care:

- Jina Martin
- Terina Paton

### Level 3 Diploma in Lead Adult Care:

- Danielle Gettings
- Charlie Gettings



## Castle Brook

### Level 2 Diploma in Adult Care:

- Jacinta Agbo

### Level 3 Diploma in Lead Adult Care:

- Zoe Wilkinson

### Level 3 Diploma in Leadership and Management:

- Natalia Gumbo
- Samantha McColl



## Dewar Close

### Level 2 Diploma in Adult Care:

- Aimee Dallinger
- Hannah Downes
- Hannah Bryans

### Level 3 Diploma in Lead Adult Care:

- Leah Smith



## Drayton Court

### Level 3 Diploma in Lead Adult Care:

- Anthony Warrington
- Jane Moss



## Fairfield

### Level 2 Diploma in Adult Care:

- Amy Taylor
- Katie Mellors
- Calum Mclellan
- Abbie Ritchie
- Chelsea Bassett
- Landon Delaney



### Level 3 Diploma in Leadership and Management:

- Anne Jeacock
- Adele Walker
- Nicola Frisby



## Drovers House

### Level 2 Diploma in Adult Care:

- Lisa Foster
- Uzma Sajjad

## Four Ways

### Level 2 Diploma in Adult Care:

- Tayla Wilshire
- John Soden



## Sycamores

### Level 3 Diploma in Leadership and Management:

- Rajwinder Kaur
- Sunita Kumari

### Level 2 Diploma in Adult Care:

- Beant Kaur



## Woodside Care Village

### Level 3 Diploma in Leadership and Management:

- John Clague

### Level 3 Diploma in Lead Adult Care:

- Peter Odufu
- Olivia Richards
- Richard Katimba

# Better nights, better days

**W**e are the first care home provider in the UK to launch a centralised acoustic monitoring hub, providing night-time care across four homes in different towns. Covering 266 beds, the system will expand to a fifth home this year before being rolled out across all of our homes in time.

**W**e first introduced acoustic monitoring in 2016 and have now built on earlier pilots to create this new central hub. Instead of hourly door-knocking, a long-standing practice in many care homes which disturbs sleep, the system discreetly listens for unusual sounds at night and alerts staff only when help may be needed. This means residents are supported quickly when required but not disturbed unnecessarily.

## The benefits for residents

Uninterrupted sleep means people are more rested, less likely to fall, and more active during the day. In one home, falls at night reduced by 34% in the first year of using acoustic monitoring. Looking at falls during both day and night, the reduction was 55%. With the addition of cameras (used only with consent), falls have dropped even further.



Above: The launch of our acoustic monitoring hub

This improvement doesn't just benefit residents – it also reduces ambulance call-outs and hospital admissions, easing pressure on the NHS.

## Support for staff

Centralising the system gives night staff extra reassurance. The hub provides a clear picture of what happens overnight, helping managers plan care and making staff feel part of a wider team.

Ed Russell, Chief Executive of WCS Care, said: "We've just been quietly getting on with this for a while now, and the impact has honestly been remarkable. I've seen first-hand how night care can be

transformed, not just for residents who finally get proper sleep and dignity, but for staff who feel supported and part of something bigger.

When I first saw centralised acoustic monitoring in the Netherlands, I felt embarrassed about the gulf in night care here in the UK. It became a bit of a mission for me to change that, and now to see it working across our homes, with one hub making things even more professional and effective, is a game-changer. We're proud of what it's done for people's lives, and we're always happy to share it with others who want to see it for themselves."

## Hitting the top 20 mark again

In 2025 we were recognised again as a Top 20 Mid-size Care Home Group by [carehome.co.uk](https://carehome.co.uk).

Customers have given WCS Care a rating of 9.8 out of 10.

Leave a review on [carehome.co.uk](https://carehome.co.uk)



9.8

## Just for Fun Answers

### Quiz time

(1) Mary	(5) Go	(9) Bronze
(2) Ugly	(6) Fire	(10) Gas
(3) Throat	(7) Night	
(4) Louie	(8) Play	

### Proverbs

- (1) Where there's a will – there's a way
- (2) There is more than one way – to skin a cat
- (3) Give him an inch – and he will take a mile
- (4) Seeing is – believing
- (5) Never look a gift horse – in the mouth
- (6) Like Father – like son
- (7) Love makes the – world go round
- (8) You can't tell a book – by its cover
- (9) Beggars can't be – choosers
- (10) A bird in the hand – is worth two in the bush

# Refurbishment updates

## A fresh new look at The Limes

**R**esidents at The Limes care home in Stratford-upon-Avon are enjoying a new café and updated communal areas, following a major refurbishment to enhance daily life at the home.

The home has benefitted from a brand new hair salon, lounges decorated in our lifestyles (town, country, or classical living), upgraded ensuite wetrooms, and a new patio all of which is part of a wider refurbishment programme across all of our 13 homes.

The highlight is the new café, which has quickly become a favourite spot

for residents and families to relax together, share a cuppa, or celebrate special moments.

The ribbon was officially cut by Adrian Levett, marking one of his final acts as Chair of WCS Care's Board of Trustees. Adrian said:

*"I'm incredibly proud of the improvements we've made to our homes. Opening the new entrance and café at The Limes marks the final step in a significant investment programme that has modernised our older buildings, ensuring they are welcoming and comfortable for residents for years to come."*

Home Manager Karen Hall is already planning lots of events to make the most of the new space. She said:



Above: Adrian Levett cuts the ribbon with resident David

*"The café and hair salon have brought something new to daily life and we have enjoyed welcoming people into our home, with social events bringing the community together."*



Above: The new café



Above: The new hair salon

## Building the future of Fairfield

**D**evelopment work at Fairfield care home is well underway where a new care cottage, called Fair Cottage, will add an additional 10 ensuite bedrooms with their own lounge, dining area and kitchen.

Below: Fair Cottage with a sneak peak into the new kitchen



Above: The plaza decorated for Christmas

In addition, there will be a new high-street style launderette, and café, adding to the recently developed outside covered central plaza, which gives existing residents and their families a space to sit and relax undercover. Fair Cottage will use the latest design principles and innovations, including circadian lighting and acoustic monitoring. It is expected to open this spring.

# Peace of Mind

**S**taff at WCS Care now have access to support from a Dementia Consultant, Samantha Major, through our dedicated Peace of Mind service.

**T**he service provides expert advice and tailored strategies for staff who are caring for someone who is living with dementia and experiencing changes in behaviour that are impacting their care and causing distress to themselves or others.

**We sat down with Samantha Major to ask a few questions about her role and the new Peace of Mind service.**

**Hi Samantha, tell us a little bit about yourself and your background.**

I'm Samantha Major, Dementia Consultant and Duty Manager. Which sounds impressive, but really means people ring me at two in the morning when everything's gone a bit pear-shaped.

**I've worked in dementia care for over 20 years and while I've got a PhD, most of what I know came from real life, not textbooks. Dementia doesn't follow the rules, and neither do people.**

**Can you tell us what the Peace of Mind service does?**

Peace of Mind supports people living with dementia who experience high levels of distress or complex behaviours. For too long there's been a gap where families and staff are left firefighting and medication becomes the default. This service focuses on understanding the person and giving staff practical, person-centred strategies that actually work day to day.

**Why is this kind of service so important?**

Because behaviour is communication. When we stop asking "what's wrong with them?" and start asking "what are they trying to tell us?", everything shifts. It's better for residents, carers and families, and it gives staff confidence rather than leaving them feeling overwhelmed.

**Can you share an example of the impact?**

Absolutely. In one home, a resident became very distressed at mealtimes



Above: Samantha Major

and during personal care. By reducing background noise, decluttering the space and introducing comforting sensory items like a rummage box and a weighted 'Hug Me' doll, her anxiety reduced and everyday routines became calmer and safer for everyone involved.

In another case, a resident's distress always increased after family visits. Staff recognised this wasn't aggression, but grief and separation anxiety.

With consistent reassurance, access to quiet spaces and familiar voices, what had been hours of pacing and upset reduced to just minutes. That changed the rhythm of the whole day.

**Any final thoughts?**

None of this works without our carers. They're the ones who turn ideas into real change. We might not change the whole world, but we can absolutely change the world of the person in front of us. And that's what really matters.

## Get in touch:

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