

Value privacy and dignity for all

Wherever you live within the Belong community and however much support the person with dementia needs, our dedicated and trained support teams will ensure that they and their families' right to privacy is protected and that the support provided is reliable and respects the individual's wishes for their care.

'Home' is regarded as a safe haven, a place to retreat to from the outside world and a place of comfort and security. With this in mind, Belong has designed the village schemes to ensure that those who choose to live within one of the apartments or specialist households are afforded the same privacy and security. We therefore understand when a person wishes to remain 'at home' or wants to spend time in the privacy of their apartment or room within a household.

Our support teams will endeavour to support the wishes of the person with dementia, so long as doing so is considered in their best interest and maintains their health and well-being, and that of the family members who are our partners in supporting them. Belong can apply sensitive and unobtrusive technology that maximises privacy, minimises unnecessary intrusion, but quickly alerts us when our support and assistance is required.

The personalisation of household bedrooms is encouraged so that the person with dementia is surrounded by familiar things that resonate with memories, bring pleasure and give rise to a sense of security that comes from feeling this is where you belong. We respect the person's room as their 'home' and this is where care is centred, with the communal living area of the household and the central village facilities as their world, where the person with dementia is enticed because they are worthwhile places to be.

“Home’ is regarded as a safe haven, a place to retreat to from the outside world and a place of comfort and security”



Our Approach to Dementia Care



For further information about Belong's approach to dementia care please visit our website.

Alternatively, to arrange a personal tour of a Belong village please contact us free on:

0800 032 2266
www.belong.org.uk



Our approach to dementia care

“It is only by truly seeing and knowing the individual that we can recognise and respond to their needs.”

The Belong village is here to help the person with dementia to remain part of the community in which they feel a sense of belonging.

We achieve this by providing bespoke person-centred care and a flexible portfolio of services that can respond to the needs of the person with dementia in a way that will maintain and enhance lifestyle and well-being.

Our Belong team members share a clear and positive vision for the care and support they provide, based on the Belong brand values and on understanding the needs of the person with dementia.



Person centred



Person and communication maintained

We recognise that many factors influence the course and experience of dementia, not least the influence of the care and support that staff provide to enhance well being and individual autonomy for the person with dementia.

Our approach places emphasis on seeing and knowing the person first – because it is only by truly seeing and knowing the individual that we can recognise and respond to their needs.

Our trained support teams understand that the abilities of the person with dementia can fluctuate from day to day so they observe for subtle changes and work flexibly to adjust the level of support needed at any one time. By only stepping in when required, they can help individuals to hold onto their remaining abilities for longer.

All forms of behaviour are viewed as meaningful communication responses from the person with dementia and our support teams seek to understand what individuals are feeling and experiencing, and use this knowledge to inform and direct the support they provide.

Crucially important is the relationships we develop with relatives and others and the mutual support and benefits this provides in helping to maintain the individual's sense of self, and of being valued as a person. By listening, accepting and understanding the past and present experience of the person with dementia, we can help to divert their attention to more comforting thoughts or activity to alleviate any distress and enhance well-being.

Supportive and empowering



Preserving continuity

People feel secure and experience a sense of belonging

The familiarity and sense of safety, security and belonging that the feeling of 'being at home' provides is created by the skilled companionship of our dedicated support teams and the facilities that the small scale domestic household environment offers. The discreet and sensitive use of technology and the open plan design of the households mean that the person with dementia can see and be seen which assists orientation and reduces stress and isolation, because support staff are always available to guide and reassure.

Staff, residents and families work together to create purpose and meaning to the day

The involvement of family and friends as partners in supporting the person with dementia is actively encouraged as part of our 'shared care' philosophy and their involvement is sought in developing a life plan that will meet the individual's needs. Activities are incorporated into the plan to ensure the person with dementia is occupied in ways that are meaningful to them and provide a sense of purpose to their day.

“Support staff are always available to guide and reassure”

Everyone has access to human companionship and the opportunity to develop friendships

Designated support workers foster a relationship with the person with dementia and their relatives (or others significant to them) in a spirit of friendship, and become known and recognised as a trusted companion. Their skilled companionship provides reliable help with maintaining important relationships and links with the past and ensures that each individual has the opportunity and support to make new friends and to participate as an active member of the Belong community.

People are free to make decisions and choices

Belong provides a range of housing, with care and support options to meet different needs and lifestyle preferences. The person with dementia may be supported 'at home', in one of the village apartments or in one of our specialist care households, within the village.

The needs of all members of the Belong community are paramount and therefore the focus of the care and support provided. We recognise the person as being the 'expert', because they know and can tell or show us how their dementia is impacting on them. Our support teams have been trained to listen to the views of the person with dementia and through their interactions and observations, interpret and respect their needs, wishes and preferences.

Involvement and meaningful relationships with others





Genuine and creative encounters

Honest, spontaneous and fun

At first the world for the person with dementia may seem chaotic and threatening and dominated by intense emotion. However, our support teams are carefully selected for their ability to operate from their creative as well as their professional side and to recognise the potential for creativity in the person with dementia and to tap into their sense of humour.

Our support teams understand, so are flexible and inventive when confronted by the unexpected twists and turns of dementia. Music, singing, dancing, drama and comedy happen spontaneously. Every day objects are given new functions and take on magical qualities as the individual's stories unfold.

We make humour the cornerstone of the home and get the whole family involved. The fulfilling, heart-warming and often highly amusing journey that we travel with the person with dementia and their relatives is a prized and valued gift to us all.

Caring and sharing

The person with dementia is no different than any other human being in having a need to feel that their contribution to life has value to others. Our approach emphasises the importance of providing opportunities and support to enable individuals to give care and support to others as well as receive. We also recognise relatives as 'expert' partners in the care and encourage their involvement in all aspects of the services Belong provides, to feel part of the Belong community and to participate in village life.



Active and independent lifestyles

Whether 'at home' within the community that Belong serves, living in a Belong village apartment, or within a specialist household, our dedicated and trained support teams not only recognise the importance of enabling the person with dementia to retain their interests and abilities for as long as possible, they believe that everyone has the potential for acquiring new skills and pursuing new interests. Our rehabilitative approach supports this and has successfully enabled individuals to regain skills that were thought to be lost to dementia.

Wherever 'home' is, the environment provides opportunities for the person with dementia to be supported to engage in those everyday domestic activities that are familiar and have been part of their everyday life. This might involve making tea, baking, potting and watering plants, dusting and polishing, staking the garden bench, shopping, having a house party to entertain friends and family, or feeding the cat!

Our specialist households have been designed specifically to support the person with dementia. The open plan design aids orientation and the minimal corridors reduce stress and promote mobility. Décor and furnishings have been carefully considered to minimise confusion and sensitive technology and visual cues have been discreetly installed to assist way finding and maximise personal control.

Be yourself

Understanding a person's past history is crucial to providing person-centred care and support for the person with dementia. The support worker, as a trusted Belong companion, will gather information from the person and

others significant to them so that a life plan can be drawn up that will help other members of the team to maintain the person's identity and feeling of self worth. As the person and their families share their stories, so our understanding of the person grows. Knowing who the person is, their personality, preferred routines, likes, dislikes, previous roles, hobbies, interests, cherished possessions, life experiences and achievements, help provide clues as to the interventions that are required to maintain identity and enhance well-being.

Holistic environments with pets, plants and children

Knowing what is important to the person with dementia enables our support teams and 'friends' of Belong to provide support that encourages individuals to continue to engage in outdoor pursuits, care for their pets and to maintain relationships with younger members of their family and the community.

We recognise the therapeutic benefits that can be derived from nurturing plants and having contact with animals. Our Belong villages provide a safe, accessible and secure garden that offers all members of the Belong community a range of things to do, see and smell. Life within the Belong village actively encourages and supports younger people to participate in organised activities alongside the person with dementia.



Enhance self worth and maintain identity

Enabling and restorative