



Social Impact Report 2025-26



A values-based,
not-for-profit
organisation



BELONG
VILLAGES



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Front cover image:

In June 2025, Silver Pride, the annual celebration of LGBTQ+ life and culture, made a welcome return to Belong Crewe. See page 20 for more.



Introduction

Every older person deserves the opportunity to live with purpose, independence and connection. At Belong, we are redefining what's possible by bringing together services, housing and community in our unique village model, creating places where people can continue to live the lives they choose. Central to this vision is ensuring that customers and colleagues have a genuine voice in shaping how we deliver and continually improve our services.

A key priority is achieving outstanding outcomes for people living with dementia by challenging traditional approaches to care. Through evidence-based design, we create environments that maximise independence, support orientation and promote wellbeing, empowering people to live fulfilling lives while remaining connected to those around them.

Each year, we measure the difference we make by assessing outcomes for those who live with us alongside our wider contribution to the communities we serve. This social impact report reviews our progress against the six strategic themes set out in Belong's three-year strategy: highest quality services, investment in our people, social value, co-production, growth and digital transformation.

Our impact is explored through a range of measures, including health and wellbeing, people development, community connection, employment, economic contribution, sustainability and innovation. Together, these demonstrate how Belong creates lasting value for individuals, families, colleagues and communities.

This report reflects both the progress we have made and the opportunities that lie ahead. While we are proud of what has been achieved, we know there is always more to do. By continuing to listen, learn and work collaboratively with customers, colleagues, partners and local communities, we will keep building on our impact and redefining what's possible for older people.

Chair's Report



This review of 2025/26 brings together the many ways in which Belong continues to make a positive difference to the lives of those who use our services, live in our communities, work with us and connect with our villages.

Increasingly, people's journeys with Belong begin in the wider community, supported by the strength and quality of our Belong at Home domiciliary care service. During the year, Belong at Home was once again recognised as a UK Top 20 home care provider, achieving an average rating of 9.7 on [homecare.co.uk](https://www.homecare.co.uk). In our annual customer satisfaction survey, 99% of home care customers said they would recommend the service.

We were particularly proud that Belong at Home Wigan and Southport received an 'Outstanding' rating from the Care Quality Commission. This was especially significant in a year in which we expanded our presence in Southport, opening a home care hub ahead of the launch of Belong Birkdale later this year, and registered a new home care service in Chester.

There was also external recognition of the impact we have on the lives of those living in Belong apartments. Winning the coveted 'Operator of the Year' award at the HealthInvestor Senior Housing Awards 2025 was a wonderful endorsement of the quality of our apartment living offer. It also built on our move last year to achieve ARCO membership, using the quality framework of the Association of Retirement Community Operators to help us continue raising standards across our services.

Our commitment to quality was equally evident in our household services. Belong achieved the [carehome.co.uk](https://www.carehome.co.uk) Top 20 Award, with an average review rating of 9.8. This came in the same year that Belong Wigan was named among the Top 5 UK care homes by carefinder Lottie, and two villages received prestigious recognition for nursing excellence.

Belong Atherton's nursing team received the Chief Nurse Outstanding Contribution to Adult Social Care Award, while Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme's nursing team won Care Home Team of the Year in the regional heats of the Great British Care Awards. We were also pleased to see continued recognition for the quality of end-of-life care, with Gold Standards Framework accreditations awarded to three villages: Atherton, Macclesfield and Wigan.

At the heart of all these achievements are our people. It was therefore encouraging to see colleague engagement increase in our annual colleague survey. Over the past year, there has

also been a renewed focus on co-production, ensuring colleagues and customers have a stronger voice in shaping the services we provide.

This commitment has been reflected in the launch of new values statements, initiatives to strengthen colleague recognition, and an increased emphasis on wellbeing resources and support, including ongoing development of the uMatter portal.

However, it is in the day-to-day commitment of colleagues that we see Belong's values most powerfully brought to life. Whether helping residents fulfil long-held dreams or learning British Sign Language to communicate with a resident who had lost their hearing, these acts of kindness, compassion and dedication show the true measure of our impact.

On a personal note, being involved in the judging of the Belong Champion Awards gave me the opportunity to see many of these examples up close. As always, it was a truly humbling and inspiring experience.

As I look back on my first year as Chair of the Belong Board, I feel immensely proud of what has been achieved and deeply inspired by the difference Belong makes to people's lives every day. Our impact is seen not only in awards, accreditations and quality ratings, but in the relationships, opportunities and moments of joy created across our villages and community services.

Looking ahead, we prepare for the launch of Belong Birkdale later this year and new village projects beyond this. Throughout, our continued emphasis on research, innovation, social value and sustainability will help us extend our reach, strengthen our impact and continue improving lives in the communities we serve.



Tony Bristlin FCA, FCMA, MBA
Chair of the Belong Board

The Belong Model

Belong operates an innovative care village model, which enables us to provide a wide range of services, and to support people both in our villages and far beyond. Greater than the sum of their parts, our village communities offer a proposition that is unmatched in terms of the depth, breadth and accessibility of opportunities that we create.

Household living

At the heart of Belong's model is the household living concept where 24-hour care is provided to people in a small, homely environment with an extended family feel. Residential, dementia and nursing care are all provided in this context, but in a way that feels very different to a traditional care home.



Amongst these differences is the holistic approach to assessments and placements, taking into account people's interests and preferences, as well as their needs, and using this to determine the most suitable household. This is made possible by the blended approach to household make-up, whereby people with a range of needs can live together, and a philosophy of meeting people's needs 'in situ' so that we don't need to move people when their needs change.

Apartment living

For those who do not need 24-hour care but are looking for the opportunity to be part of a vibrant community, with the reassurance of on-site care services should these be needed in the future, there is the option of independent apartment living within the same village community. Residents are able to opt between rent, purchase or shared ownership and between one or two-bedroom apartments, all located within the same community.



Village centre

All residents, whether in apartments or households, have access to a village centre with a range of amenities, such as a bistro, hair salon, function rooms and specialist gym, and to a vibrant programme of events and experiences. For household residents, use of the vast majority of facilities is included within care fees (the hair salon being the one exception), while apartment residents enjoy discounted access to all facilities.



Community services

For those living in the wider community, Belong is able to provide support through its registered domiciliary service, Belong at Home, and/or welcome people into the village to take advantage of its Experience Days (specialist day care) service. All village centre amenities are open to the public, who are also invited to join in its events programme, providing a way to gradually get a feel for village life.



Key benefits of the Belong model are:



Sustained investment in the environment, facilities and people, due to Belong's not-for-profit status enabling surpluses to be reinvested back into our services



Continuum of care provided, with 'best-in-class' services from home care, day care, apartment living and 24-hour care, right through to nursing, dementia and end-of-life care



A specialist gym and qualified exercise specialist in every village means every household resident has a personalised exercise programme designed around their needs and abilities



The village centre is open to the public, offering the wider community access to a range of facilities, such as a bistro, hair salon, therapy room and specialist gym



The small household model offers a homely environment that maximises choices and independence and is linked to better outcomes for people living with dementia



Belong operates an Admiral Nurse service in conjunction with Dementia UK, making specialist dementia support available to people with a dementia diagnosis and their families



Belong is an active member of the Association of Retirement Community Operators and the National Care Forum, signalling its commitment to upholding the highest standards

CASE STUDY

Couple Reunited After Personalised Exercise Journey

Chris Bougourd, an 80-year-old resident of Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme, who was told by medical professionals she would never walk again, regained her independence and returned



to live with her husband after embarking on a tailored exercise programme at the village.

Chris, who previously enjoyed playing tennis, bowls and swimming, saw her life change overnight after developing severe complications from surgery for cancer, including sepsis, which resulted in a period in intensive care.

After spending time in other care settings, and with Chris no longer able to live at home, the couple moved to Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme. This allowed them to remain close to each other as Mike could live in an independent living apartment while Chris could receive the care she needed on one of the village's households for people requiring 24-hour support.

Despite being told at a rehabilitation hospital that she would never walk again, the couple refused to give up hope.

Upon moving to the village, Chris began a personalised recovery programme of regular functional strength and mobility exercises facilitated by the village's on-site gym and exercise specialist, focusing on walking with increasingly reduced support to get her first standing and then moving around.

After the first month, Chris was able to spend much of her time in the couple's apartment, returning to the household only at night. Four months later, she moved out of the 24-hour care environment entirely to live with Mike.

Reflecting on the journey, Mike said: "The support has been tremendous throughout the whole village. We can't fault them. Support workers on the household were fabulous in adapting to support Chris to move to and from the apartment. The physiotherapy had a transformative effect on Chris's quality of life. We are both very grateful to them."

Julie Whittingham-Jones, exercise specialist at Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme, added: "Chris is a very determined lady, and we are delighted by her progress. Her commitment to attending personalised exercise sessions twice a week in the Belong gym is helping her to regain her strength, balance and mobility. She is truly inspirational."

"The support has been tremendous throughout the whole village..."

2025/26: A snapshot

The figures below give an idea of the scale of Belong's operations. As a not-for-profit organisation, the true measure of our impact is found, not in numbers, but in the difference we make to people's lives and in the outcomes we achieve for our residents. A flavour of this can be found in the pages which follow.

	Belong 2024/25	Belong 2025/26
 Number of household residents ¹	849	839
 Number of Belong at Home customers	369	373
 Number of hours of home care	66,762	64,956
 Number of apartment tenants	227	217
 Number of Experience Days provided	4,603	4,758
 Number of people who accessed Belong's Admiral Nurse service ²	377	236
 Number of community groups regularly accessing our villages	138	109
 Percentage of household customers living with dementia	78%	68%
 Percentage of customers receiving a nursing service	39%	40%
 Average household customer age	86	86
 Occupancy in Belong households ³	96.4%	95.6%
 Average fee rate per week	£1,541	£1,664
 Percentage of self-funding customers	65%	66%
 Percentage of customers publicly funded in households	35%	34%
 Number of household residents subsidised ⁴	34	33
 Number of new job roles created	37	19
 Number of volunteers	12	28
 Total number of employees	1,381	1,383

¹The number of residents fluctuates according to the length of stay; for example a lower number of respite customers may cause this figure to drop without adversely affecting occupancy.

²There was a temporary reduction in the availability of this valued service due to the need for a short-term redeployment of resources.

³Average UK Nursing Home occupancy in 2025 was 89.5% according to the Knight Frank Care Homes Trading Performance Review 2025.

⁴Refers to the number of people who were previously privately funded and are now publicly funded, either due to a change in health or financial circumstances, with Belong being committed to enabling residents to remain with the organisation where this occurs.



Highest Quality Services

Empowering People to Live Their Best Lives

Belong's primary goal is to provide high quality services that lead to better outcomes for the people living with us. Our model is about challenging long established norms and delivering innovative and better ways to support people with dementia and all older people. Quality is measured in a wide range of ways, including performance against the regulatory framework, customer satisfaction

Care Quality Commission Ratings

- ✓ 87% of inspected services are rated **Good or above**
- ✓ 33% of inspected services are rated **Outstanding**
- ✓ Three villages (**Belong Atherton, Belong Crewe and Belong Wigan**) are rated **Outstanding**.
- ✓ Two home care services (**Belong Crewe and Belong at Home Wigan and Southport**) are rated **Outstanding**

33% of inspected services rated
OUTSTANDING

54% of inspected services rated
GOOD

The rating for **Belong at Home Wigan and Southport** was awarded following an inspection between 12 March – 1 April 2026, which found the service to be Outstanding in the areas of Caring, Well-led and Overall, with Good ratings for Effective, Safe and Responsive. This was particularly pleasing as it followed the expansion of the service to the Southport area, indicating a solid quality focus, ahead of the opening of our new village in Birkdale, Southport, due to launch late 2026.

Belong at Home Chester was registered as a new service and is awaiting its first inspection.

Belong has two Requires Improvement ratings. One is a historic rating for **Belong Warrington** dating back to 2022. There has been significant transformation under new leadership since this date and we are awaiting reinspection. The village continues to generate strong family reviews and recently attained the coveted 10 out of 10 rating on carehome.co.uk.

In January 2026, **Belong Chester** was rated Requires Improvement, following an initial 'Good' rating in 2025. Significant progress has been made against the ensuing action plan and the local authority has since upgraded its status following improvements evidenced. We expect CQC to reinspect in autumn 2026.

Leadership and vision



A key appointment made during the year was the promotion of Rebecca Woodcock to the post of Chief Operating Officer. Previously group operations manager, Rebecca is a highly experienced leader who has worked for the organisation for over 20 years including in the roles of general manager and registered manager at the group's Atherton and Wigan villages, respectively, where she played an instrumental role in supporting the attainment of CQC Outstanding ratings.

Customer reviews



Independently verified customer reviews on **carehome.co.uk** and **homecare.co.uk** continue to show resoundingly positive feedback on Belong's services. In 2026, Belong was ranked in the **Top 20 care home groups across the UK** based on customer reviews, while **Belong Wigan** was listed

in the **Top 20 care homes in the North West**, with a perfect **10 out of 10 rating**.

Belong at Home was also ranked in the **Top 20 home care groups across the UK** based on customer reviews on homecare.co.uk.

9.8 Average review score
on carehome.co.uk

9.7 Average review score
on homecare.co.uk

Alison J (Niece of Resident)
published on 16 March 2026

"My auntie moved into Belong March 24. The care team made her so very welcome and she loved her time here. Her carers 'loved' and cared for her with such dignity, they couldn't do enough for her and us as a family. They went above and beyond what I could only hope for. I would highly recommend Belong and all the staff as you'll be in safe hands if you come here!"

CH (Daughter of Customer)
published on 6 May 2026

"Belong at Home have been excellent at caring for my father. They have been very attentive to his needs. The carers were always punctual and went that extra mile if needed. They were also great at communicating back to myself. Many thanks."

Lottie award wins



In June 2025, Belong was named three times in the UK's Top 100 care homes 2025, with its Atherton, Crewe, and Wigan villages all picking up accolades, and Belong Wigan named in the Top 5.

The Lottie Awards celebrate care homes across the country that demonstrate exceptional commitment to residents, families, and staff. Lottie's team conducted a comprehensive, data-driven review of thousands of homes, assessing key criteria that matter most to families, including CQC ratings, team wellbeing, and resident feedback.

'Gold Standard' end-of-life care



November 2025 saw three Belong villages reaccredited with the Gold Standards Framework Quality Hallmark Award, demonstrating the highest standards and best practice in end-of-life care for its customers.

The framework is designed to ensure that people live well before they die and die well in the place and manner of their choosing. Belong Atherton, Belong Macclesfield, and Belong Wigan received praise from assessors for highly personalised end-of-life care plans and extensive physical and emotional support offered to residents and their families, as well as colleagues.

Wellbeing outcomes



Spending time outdoors is important to many of our customers and we continue to invest in ensuring our gardens and balconies are easily accessible to residents and are beautiful spaces where nature can be enjoyed.

Over the past year, both Newcastle-under-Lyme and Macclesfield received garden makeovers, and residents at all villages enjoy access to a range of beautiful outdoor spaces, often supported by extensive community volunteer involvement.

Beyond our villages



Last year, we invested in two minibuses operating across our villages to help facilitate regular outings for our residents, with popular destinations including garden centres, theatres, shopping centres and seaside resorts. We've also been known just to pop out for a local drive and enjoy the views!

Our Awards

Belong was again recognised in a range of high-profile awards across the year. Some of these can be found below.



**HealthInvestor
Senior Housing Awards 2025
Operator of the Year
Belong Villages**



**Chief Nurse
Adult Social Care
Team Award 2025
Belong Atherton
Nurse Team**



**Wigan Borough Palliative &
End-of-Life Care Awards
Care Setting of the Year
Belong Atherton**



**Wigan Borough Palliative &
End-of-Life Care Award
Nurse of the Year
Paul Woodcock
Village Nurse Manager
Belong Atherton**



**Great North West Care Awards
Social Care Nurse Award
Paul Woodcock
Village Nurse Manager
Belong Atherton**



**Great North West Care Awards
Care Home Chef Award
Sarah Scott
Belong Warrington
*Also commended
in the national finals***



**Great West Midlands
Care Awards
Care Home Team of the Year
Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme
Nurse Team**



**Great West Midlands
Care Awards
Innovation Award
Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme**



**Great West Midlands
Care Awards
*Unpaid Carer
of the Year*
Volunteer
Yasmin Platt**



Best People for Best Services

Elevating our Team

We want to be the first choice employer in every area in which we operate. We aim to provide the very best training, coaching and development and to provide the optimum colleague experience via ongoing support for wellbeing, recognition and remuneration.



Belong is a 'Gold' level Investor in People, signalling its commitment to reward, recognition and investment in its workforce.

In 2025/26, we maintained our commitment to paying all colleagues at the rate of the Real Living Wage or above, again increasing the minimum hourly rate in Belong by 5% to £12.60 per hour from April 2025, applying to all colleagues regardless of age.

Progress was also made in driving the employee experience over the year, with a further reduction in the staff turnover rate. This has helped drive consistent, quality care for customers, as well as greater employee satisfaction.

Colleague survey results

The 2025 colleague survey showed significant increases in colleague engagement across a range of measures, including an increased response rate of 71% of colleagues, up from 50% in 2024. The overall employee voice score was 92%. We continue to score highly in the following areas:

I know what is expected of me at work	I feel we look after our residents to a high standard	I feel I am given the right level of training to perform my role	I feel that I work as part of a good team where my colleagues and I support each other
2024 4.34	2024 4.23	2024 4.06	2024 4.06
2025 4.36	2025 4.29	2025 4.10	2025 4.07

Colleague survey result scores out of 5

Training and development

Belong invests heavily in people's learning, providing extensive training and development opportunities and employing a practice development facilitator in every village, a role which ensures local coaching and mentoring beyond course content.

Number of colleagues promoted within the organisation:	Number of training courses completed:	Average number of training courses per person:
54	46,408	34

Dementia-friendly training facility



Belong worked with Cheshire College – South & West to launch a dementia-friendly training facility at its Crewe campus.

Designed to mirror a real Belong household, the Alexandra Suite provides a highly realistic environment for Belong colleagues to develop practical skills, confidence, and person-centred approaches in care.

The Alexandra Suite marks a major step in Cheshire College's commitment to industry-led education and raising standards in dementia care training.

Champion Awards



Belong once again recognised the exceptional talent of its colleagues at its annual Champion Awards.

Thirteen accolades were handed out to colleagues and volunteers at a ceremony at Manchester Hall.

Winners from across the organisation's villages and Belong at Home teams collected special

handmade ceramic trophies designed by Belong Wigan resident, Brian Cherrington, making the awards especially meaningful for winners.

The winners were determined by a panel of independent judges, including industry experts and Belong customers.

Amongst the winners at the Champion Awards was Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme apartment tenant, Eileen Allman (*pictured right*), who was named Volunteer of the Year for her contribution to village life.



Wellbeing

It goes without saying that social care is highly challenging work, requiring huge reserves of energy and emotional resilience to be able to support people in the later stages of life.

Promoting wellbeing is therefore a major strand of our people strategy and in the past year, we continued our work to strengthen the resources and support available to our people. This included increasing our offering of sector-leading benefits through our EAP (Employee Assistance Programme) scheme, which includes 24-hour access to an online GP service, access to free counselling sessions, financial advice and a range of courses. It forms just one part of our wider uMatter portal which signposts a range of wellbeing resources and initiatives.



The Big Belong Walk saw over 30 Belong hikers head to the Peak District for a circular walk, taking in the spectacular Cheedale Stepping Stones.

Inclusive approach



Compassionate carers at Belong Warrington took on the challenge of learning British Sign Language (BSL) to support older people who are hard of hearing.

Prompted by the imminent arrival of a new resident who could only communicate via Sign Language, colleagues enrolled on their entry level BSL certification under the tuition of Warrington & Vale Royal College. The course was tailored specially to meet the aim of being able to communicate with and assist residents who are hard of hearing to enjoy everything Belong life has to offer.

Giving People a Voice

Listening, Co-production and Advocacy

A key part of Belong's vision is that we empower our customers to shape their communities. We believe that people live their best lives when they feel heard, respected and are able to influence the world around them, and, over the past year, we continued to increase and strengthen opportunities for people to get involved.

We have regular forums for household residents, apartment tenants and relatives, as well as combined village committees; feedback is shared via minutes and village newsletters. Other mechanisms include suggestion boxes, feedback via cards and sign-in tablets, and of course the annual customer satisfaction survey. We also hold regular 'Meet the Manager' events to give people opportunities to speak to our team in a more informal, in-person setting, offering valuable opportunities for relationship-building.

Customer satisfaction survey 2025

RECOMMENDATION RATE	
2024	96.4%
2025	96.7%

There was a further increase in the number of customers who would recommend Belong. The overall recommendation rate across residents, relatives and customers of our community services was **96.7%**, up from 96.4% last year. **92% of customers feel that they are able to shape their Belong community.** This was the first time we asked this question and it is a score we look to build on.

What our customers like about Belong



The Belong village model, including the household environment and the ability to access village facilities such as a bistro, gym and hair salon.



Kind, respectful and caring colleagues, who go above and beyond, building strong relationships with residents and contribute to high-quality care.



Strong communication means that colleagues listen, respond, and keep families informed, while residents feel known, valued and included.



Resident-led

The ethos underpinning village living is that residents are able to live their own lives, at their own pace, in their own way.

Resident preferences shape our activities programmes, the places we visit and the community groups we work with.

Harnessing talent

We look for opportunities to use residents' talents in meaningful ways and there are numerous examples of this.

For example, each year we run competitions for residents to design the Belong Christmas card and also the winners' trophies which are handed out at our annual Champion Awards ceremony. Residents also volunteer in a range of ways, including running clubs and gardening.



Brian Cherrington
of Belong Wigan and
Josephine Moorhouse of
Belong Crewe



Customer experiences

Chester resident, singer, and 'grandfriend' Doreen Barnes had the adventure of a lifetime with a trip to Buckingham Palace to mingle with Their Majesties the King and Queen, thanks to her dedication to the development of the city's children.

The 89-year-old made her way to the capital from her home, Belong Chester, to represent the Sankofa Songsters, the villages' intergenerational choir featuring fellow residents, children, and other members of the wider community.

Joining her at the palace were choir lead, Amanda Wrigley, volunteer pianist, Pete Legge, and singer Hollie McDiarmid. The invitation came after the choir performed at last year's Royal Carols: Together at Christmas ceremony, the annual event hosted at Westminster Abbey by Catherine, Princess of Wales.

Co-production

Belong's new values statements were the output of months of consultation with all our stakeholders.

These included customers, relatives and colleagues participating in a series of focus groups around our locations.



Making Dreams Come True

Another important element of customer voice is ensuring that resident wishes come to life and we seek to enable this at every opportunity.



Sometimes this can be enabling a final wish, such as Belong Macclesfield resident, Lynn Bostock, for whom we facilitated a trip to Peak Wildlife Zoo for an encounter with red pandas or Tony Mannerings, who

was delighted at a visit from the Macclesfield Lambretta Club and the chance to relive his Mod years as the iconic Vespa scooters turned up at the village. At Crewe, we created a Namaste room, picking up on the need for a more relaxed, sensory space for residents approaching end-of-life.

We have also organised a whole host of experiences and opportunities in the villages, informed by residents. These range from animal visits to intergenerational opportunities and from Tai Chi to Japanese dance.



(Above) Paul Heaton at Belong Atherton with a Harris's Hawk owl.



(Above right) The Namaste room has seen hugely positive effects for people living with dementia at Belong Crewe.

(Right) Belong Chester resident, Maggie Darby, enjoys Tai Chi tuition under Maria Yuen of Ji Siu Chi Chuan



Social Values and Sustainability *Making our Mark*

Belong is committed to making a positive contribution to the communities in which we operate and creating opportunities to strengthen connection and sustainability. Designed to integrate with the wider community, our villages are open to the public and create a range of opportunities that add social value.

We welcome volunteers and work closely with colleges to create work placement and apprenticeship opportunities, offering career pathways for people of all ages. Over the past year, we launched a new recruitment drive for volunteers, welcoming more than 40 new volunteers across the organisation. We have also successfully partnered with local training providers to offer placements to people with learning disabilities, who have made significant contributions to our communities.

We work with over 100 community partners across eight locations, including with schools, nurseries, musicians, artists, museums, theatres, places of interest, heritage organisations and much more. Some highlights from the past year include:

Morris Feinmann Book Buddies

Belong Morris Feinmann worked with neighbouring Moor Allerton Preparatory School to launch 'Book Buddies', whereby any of the 100 older people living in Belong Morris Feinmann can sign up to be paired with a primary school pupil and support them with a weekly reading practice session.

Young and old alike enjoy the delights of this opportunity for shared reading and intergenerational friendships, while older people appreciate the sense of purpose that it brings and children take the opportunity to inquire about the past and many other topics. In turn, it serves to challenge stereotypes associated with old age whilst helping combat loneliness. Resident Pauline loves the sessions: "I think it's fantastic. The children learn from us, and we certainly learn from them."



Crewe's Silver Pride

Since 2018, Belong Crewe has hosted an annual Silver Pride event, working in partnership with Body Positive and Silver Rainbows. A flamboyant affair, the event includes street dance, a catwalk, stalls, face painting and refreshments. Attended by a wide range of community partners, the event is a celebration of inclusivity and serves as a reminder that Belong was designed to be a place where everyone feels they belong.





Digital Enhancing Lives with Technology



Using technology to strengthen operations, relationships and care in Belong is core to our strategy. We use a range of alert and monitoring systems in our households and apartments to enable us to observe discreetly, provide alerts and, where needed, emergency response.

More recently, we have invested in new care planning software for Belong

at Home, migrating to the Birdie platform to enable full visibility of care planning and more efficient management of visits.

We have also implemented a new payroll system, enhancing our HR management and rota planning capabilities.

Looking ahead, we are piloting AI Systems in a range of areas, including creating efficiency savings and improving access to Belong's services out-of-hours.

Virtual reality trial



Belong took part in a year-long research project, working with academics at Keele University to give residents access to global-travel experiences via virtual reality.

From breathtaking Scottish Highlands to charming Cornish coastline, stunning Alpine lakes and far-flung Thai temples, residents at Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme were able to fulfill their wanderlust wishlists from the comfort of home.

Community services



As we prepare for the opening of the Belong Birkdale care village, the past year saw us launch a home care branch in Southport, operating from a new hub on Eastbank Street.

Led by Team Leader Debbie Moore, Belong at Home Southport supports customers in the community and runs regular and highly valued dementia drop-ins in conjunction with a member of Belong's dementia specialist Admiral Nurse team.

In the same year, Belong at Home registered a new service in Chester and continues to expand its reach to serve people in its local communities.

New village countdown



Progress continues apace at Belong Birkdale and the village is expected to open late 2026. Following the same blueprint as other villages, it includes a mix of independent living apartments, 24-hour care households and a range of facilities open to the wider community. These include a bistro, specialist gym, hair salon and function rooms hosting a vibrant events programme.

Looking ahead



Work is now underway to select the next Belong village locations and we are actively evaluating new sites to enable us to launch up to four more villages over the next ten years.

In 2025 and 2026 we issued retail charity bonds, raising over £50 million. Both releases were oversubscribed and show the strength of demand for our model and the benefits it brings to those able to access Belong services, whether in the village itself or the surrounding community.



Belong is a not-for-profit organisation with over twenty years' experience in providing outstanding care. As a not-for-profit, any surplus is reinvested into its award-winning services, people and facilities.

Belong Limited is a Registered Society under the Co-operative and Communities Benefit Societies Act 2014, registered number 27346R.

Belong Limited is registered in England and Wales at Pepper House, Market Street, Nantwich, Cheshire, CW5 5DQ.

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