



L I V E

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2017
ISSUE:1

Independence Homes

Complex care.
Made simple.



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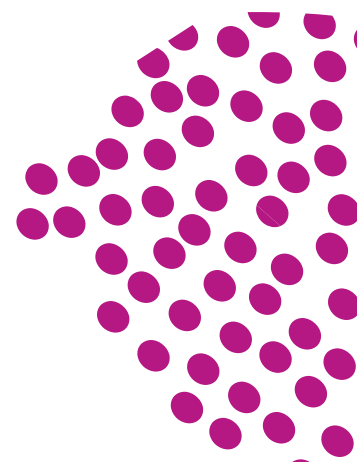
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NEWS

‘OUTSTANDING’

We are delighted to announce that we have been awarded the overall rating of ‘Outstanding’ by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), across all of our Supported Living services.

This is a rare accolade indeed. Our quality of care provision put us in the top two percent of all adult providers in the UK.

The two areas of regulated activity to receive ‘Outstanding’ were: ‘Effective’ and ‘Well-led.’

‘The provider was focused on continual development and evolution in line with industry best practice.’
CQC

When looking at whether a service is ‘Effective’, CQC studies whether it achieves good outcomes and helps maintain a good quality of life for the individuals it supports.

CQC commented that we: ‘...consistently applied knowledge of the Mental Capacity Act 2005’, to support people to make choices and live their lives as they wished.’ CQC also stated that we had: ‘...excellent systems in place to ensure that staff worked effectively together as a team to meet people’s holistic needs’.

In the category of being, ‘Well-led’, we received recognition for ‘strong leadership’, ‘highly motivated staff’ and ‘robust quality assurance systems’.

CQC awarded us ‘Good’ in the three other areas it assesses; ‘Safe’, ‘Caring’ and ‘Responsive’.

We are all incredibly proud of our achievement. However, we are as passionate as ever in our drive to continuous improvement. We are developing new plans to maintain and deliver ‘Outstanding’ throughout every area and every service.

click to read full report



NEW ALARM SYSTEM

We are happy to inform you that we are upgrading our alarm systems within the services.

When purchasing our original alarms, over a decade ago, we were looking for a system which combined monitored sensors and a pager. This would provide an extra safety-net for people at risk of sudden unexpected death in epilepsy (SUDEP) and be an alternative to the 24-hour support which required a staff member to keep watch as the person slept. As

such, it would allow our Service Users greater privacy and independence.

Since that time, technology has moved on and our understanding of SUDEP has grown. Upgrading our alarms means we can further improve safety for Independence Homes residents.



WOODLAND COURT OPENS

Building started in 2015 for our newest supported living service, Woodland Court, on the site of an old Marie Curie hospice in Harestone Drive. Plans were ambitious. The former hospice had been empty since Cancer Care Trust transferred its end-of-life services to St.Catherine’s in West Sussex, in 2009. The building suffered theft of pipes and subsequent flooding so needed to be demolished.

The site provided an ideal location for the requirements of a new supported living accommodation. Designed and built purposely for people with complex health needs and physical disabilities; it is the perfect setting, leafy, quiet and peaceful grounds but still conveniently close to a town and local amenities.

It took eighteen months longer than planned for building completion. More detail on this can be found in

the Question and Answer article with Managing Director, John Macleod, on pages 8 and 9.

Woodland Court opened its doors on 26th July 2017. The new Managers, Mitchell Smith and Natalie Smith, bring their wealth of experience from Liberty Court. At the time of writing this article, 14 of 36 beds have already been filled, with four more residents funded to move in imminently.

It is lovely to see the service filling up with so many wonderful individuals. We hope everyone enjoys living there.



The new system enables us to increase our responsiveness by speeding up maintenance, adjustments and error fixes. The units are also neater and sturdier – it is claimed, they can withstand being thrown, dropped and hurled through a window (we are hoping this won’t be put to the test!).

We have received positive feedback from Woodland Court, where Service Users are already benefiting from the new alarms. There is a particular appreciation of the longer periods of uninterrupted sleep – the

result of reduced false alarms.

The new equipment is manufactured by Alert-it Care Alarms, a company we have worked with successfully for over ten years.

Installation, across all services, is scheduled to commence week beginning 27th November 2017, and we estimate it will take approximately two weeks to complete.

For more information on our new alarms, please feel free to have a look at [Alert-it’s website](#).

EVENTS

Sports Day 19th May 2017



Anniversary Party for those who have been supported for ten years or more. 10th August 2017



Cranley Gardens Carnival BBQ -23rd June 2017



IH Summer Party 23rd July 2017



Upcoming Events

Shadow Puppet Workshop

Run by Beth Warnock from
The Little Angel Theatre.
8th November 2017

'Outstanding' Celebrations

30th November 2017

Pantomime

6:30pm 7th December 2017
2:30pm and 6:30pm 8th December 2017

Service User Christmas Party

14th December 2017

Pantomime tickets are now available to purchase.
Please click to email
Kate Hardcastle:
khardcastle@independencehomes.co.uk

PICTURE BOARD



LK shows an example of her great coursework for her ASDAN certificate in 'Making Pictures'



The Service User Art Exhibition at Croydon Clock Tower



Summer's Day Bike Ride



Service User Board meeting



Day out at the Top Gear track and a 'meet and greet' with The Stig



Day out to Harry Potter World

FEATURES

Q&A WITH JOHN MACLEOD

What was your mission at the outset of Independence Homes?

J: The mission is, and has always been, to do the best job for a specialist group of people. When we set-out we didn't want to do anything in general care, such as with the elderly, as there were already people doing this quite well. What was obvious then, and is somewhat better now, is there was nothing for young adults who are disabled.

These people are energetic, full of life, with so much that the world can offer them and lots they can offer the world in return. We wanted to cater to them.

What do you believe are the things that make IH such a success?

J: Firstly it depends on how you measure success. If we agree that success is lots of people living a life they wouldn't otherwise have, or a huge number of people accomplishing things they didn't think they would be able to do, then these are the things that make us a true success.

I am as proud of the number of jobs I have created as of anything we have been able to do for our Service Users.

One thing that helps make IH a success is the dedicated and passionate people who work here – those who can take the rough with the smooth – everything else follows from that.

Woodland Court has recently opened, but it hasn't all been smooth sailing. Were you ever worried about its completion?

J: No, it hasn't been smooth sailing. The original builders managed to get so far through such a bad job that we needed to step-in and take down almost all the work they had done. Every single brick, window, all the steelwork and some of the drainage had to be taken down and rebuilt. Costing an extra 18 months in development.

I was never worried about finishing; we had recently finished a major refurbishment with Thomas (Facilities Manager) and Dave (Site Manager). We worked so well together that I knew we had the people and the experience to do it ourselves.

How do you choose new locations for services?

J: All our service locations, from our first (Cranley Gardens) to our most recent (Woodland Court), have been selected using the same philosophy. We choose areas which have opportunities for Service Users – High Streets, bus-stops and shops. As well as being easy to get to for the people who work there.

It would have been much easier and cheaper to buy properties on the coast, but that's not what we are about.

What do you consider to be your responsibility as the business owner?

J: What occupies my mind the most is ensuring my colleagues have everything they need to fulfil their roles successfully. This has a huge amount of elements to it. On the same day, I can find myself discussing subjects as varied as staff training, to the materials that make a pathway.

Ultimately everything we do and everything we stand for is my responsibility and there is no-one else to turn to if things go wrong. Fortunately the people I share those responsibilities with are amazing.

What advice would you give to someone opening a company in the adult social care sector today?

J: Honestly? Don't do it.

The reality of the care system today is that you are being squeezed in between ever tightening funding streams on one side and rising costs on the other. You have to really want to do it and be willing to take on that pressure.

What do you consider to be your biggest accomplishments in the last 20 years?

J: Three main accomplishments:

1. The hundreds of jobs that have been created.
 2. Enabling the people with disabilities, that we support, to attain the individual achievements they have.
 3. The systems we have developed.
- When we came into the sector it was badly organised and badly regulated. The refining of our systems has literally taken thousands of man hours. Every word in every document and every task has been carefully thought out.

What has been your biggest disappointment?

J: I wish I could have found a way to retain more staff and Service Users on our journey.

How do you see the future for Independence Homes?

J: I think we are a very confident organisation and well regarded (IH was awarded an 'Outstanding' rating by CQC, across the Supported Living services). However, I certainly don't think we have fulfilled our potential yet.

The next few years will see us looking after people with more complex needs, but making it look even smoother than we do now. In fact, that was the inspiration for our new strap line; Complex care. Made simple.

Thank you, John for allowing me to interview you and for finally relenting to pose for the picture! Can we end with just one more question, which word describes you best?

J: Driven – always!



DIARY OF A SERVICE USER



I was looking forward to moving to Woodland Court, but I found the wait difficult as I was so excited. There were lots of rumours going round IH that the move would be soon. Then finally I moved in to my new flat. The move was good but it was frustrating having to move all of my things.

The move took a lot of stress off me. When I was at Liberty Court for a year I tried sharing but sharing just isn't my comfort zone, and I found working around a flatmate really difficult. I'm a lot more relaxed and stress-free since the move.

I like baking and now I can bake whenever I want. One evening after I had been to the pub in town I came home and decided I wanted to bake a cake then, so I did! The next day I took it

Coming up in issue two

The 2017 Parent Survey has recently been completed and we will be publishing the results in the next issue.

in to head office, where I do admin work each week, so everyone could enjoy it.

Earlier in the year I had a week away in Yorkshire with my family. It was nice because we did a couple of National Trust and English Heritage sites. The weather alternated, one day sunny and the next day wet and windy. We saw a couple of deer and lots of rabbits and one hare. I



spotted a stag with a deer and a bird of prey when we were on the road to Helmsley.

One day we took the steam and coal train up to

Whitby and on the way back Dad fell asleep. I took lots of photos, some of him and some of places we visited with his parents. Where we stayed was really quiet. There were the five of us and only two other people.

At the moment it's quiet at Woodland Court. It's really nice to be able to spread out more. There is a lot of space inside Woodland Court and outside, and it's nice and bright.

I'm also doing things like watching DVDs. It feels homely. The wait was long but good to get to Woodland in the end.

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