

Snippets

Edition 9

Bespoke Supportive Tenancies

From the CEO



"There's not enough days in the week for us, pressure is a privilege";

- We are rapidly approaching the 2018 "Annual Audit" again with September year end just around the corner, so please liaise with Marlene and the Accountancy Team closely where needed and required to make this happen, another financial year begins again in October 2018....
- We have now officially "sprinted" over the 1000 tenant mark!! We are now clear as to the complexity that NROSH+ response requires, and the mechanism and reporting strategy required which will create further positive scrutiny and overview from the Regulator.
- Confirmation on some numbers, due to a recent acquisition we are all now part of a circa £75 million asset-based Charity with a circa £13 million turnover that houses 1099 vulnerable adults.
- Our business strategy and goal of being "awesome" at what we do from our time in Fort Augustus has gathered vast momentum and we are more than on track to achieve all we set out to do, however there's a long way to go to achieve the inevitable, further 'away days' leading up to and beyond towards our exciting relaunch in April 2019
- I expect us to have welcomed all our new faces to the team: Tomi, Yvie, Neil, David, Margarita and Leah. Some team members have moved on to pastures new and we wish them all the best with their future endeavours.
- Our exciting plans in relation to part of the "Big Picture" re Blue Sky in early Jan 17 and updates to such will be released separately, we have strong initial momentum from all stakeholders to support this initiative, we are now fully engaged in professional discussions with a close-by Local Authority and relevant potential stakeholders to deliver this ground-breaking prospect.
- New schemes planned for 2018 and beyond are still under discussion and meetings with all stakeholders remain positive, Thorntree Farm in particular has some Open Days planned for the end of August 2018, further details and invitations will be released with definitive dates.

Kevin Appleby

A New Life for the Twins

Whilst I was in Southampton I was introduced to the parents of two ladies who would soon be moving into a property in the area.



Rachel and Clare are identical twins who have lived with their parents all their lives. They are now taking a big step into independent supported living and we're all very excited by the prospect, especially as they are both extremely close and the move has allowed them to stay together and continue with their very active lives.

In anticipation of their moving in, the property has been superbly renovated however the garden was unfortunately a bit bare and barren!



I thought it would make such a difference to their lives to have the garden be a fun and beautiful place, especially as they both enjoy being outside.

Through sensory plants and bright colours, and by using the funds BeST raised from charitable donations, we have been able to transform their garden from a bare patch into a bright oasis! The new garden suits the twins' sunny dispositions much better and gives them the space outdoors to soak up the sun and be themselves.

David Poppitt



An Update From the Captains Deck New Ambition Enterprise!



Though a difficult concept to grasp for some at the time of the announcement I must commend you all on your efforts to date in working towards the New Ambition milestones. It may appear that we have made little progress towards our relaunch, rest assured our journey thus far has been fantastic and improvements in working practices have already been implemented. We are making a tremendous impact daily.

If we look back at where we were operationally when we launched the New Ambition, our achievements to date have been tremendous. Though perhaps small in comparison to expectations, baby steps have and will take us towards D-Day.

Key Milestones

Dress policy, BeST Behaviours, Improved Recruitment Policy/New Starter inductions, Operational Meetings and ongoing Marginal Gains. Based on the previous budget the right people are and will be in place and that is proof the system has improved. The growth of the company will naturally create the need for further resource, this will be a moving feast. Exploration of new office space is under way though the move needs to be right for the business, careful consideration is being afforded to getting this right for our launch. Our fund allocation is also on track!!

We have successfully accrued £140,000k and once again have superseded our target. The deposits have been negotiated on new business ventures and strategizing with our existing funders. An excellent contribution from all those involved to achieve this milestone to date. Well done.

Our specification review is well under way and review of our tenancy is almost complete! How awesome is that! So, I draw your attention again to the steps that are being undertaken

to achieve these successes. Sit back and reflect on how far we have come in a short space of time. This is a crucial part of this launch and it's something we fail to do quite often as we are so busy with the day to day.

Coupled with our New Ambition I am so pleased to say that our Culture has vastly improved over the previous months. It's fantastic to see and feel a buzz about the place again. I do feel a greater sense of comradery within the workplace and this is something that's been lacking for some time. Our afternoon of Soft Cricket was a tremendous day and fun was had by all not to mention the amazing BBQ. The team spirit was fabulous, and I was so pleased to see everyone involved in some way shape or form. Our Pool Competition is well under way and we have a Bespoke Sports Day on 2nd August which looks like it will be great fun. Another wonderful afternoon with a great team. These days are vital to our success and will undoubtedly continue, we have lots in store for you all!

In November Alan Clayton, the mentor of The New Ambition will be joining us for a recap of our journey and to work with our dedicated Design Team alongside his team of professionals. This should be a great day for all and those involved in the process.

The Trustees are also privy to regular updates on the New Ambition and its journey, this is a vital part of the process as they will replicate our behaviours and improve Governance as we move forward. The impact this will have on the organisation will stand us head and shoulders above the rest within our sector as others are heavily failing in this area. An update on progress from the Trustees will be shared in the next edition of Snippets.

So, in summary we are we are exceeding expectations in many areas and should reflect that fact. Give yourselves a huge pat on the back and take stock of our achievements. I am pleased with our journey and you should be too. The important thing is not to lose momentum or focus on the job in hand and strive towards our goals. Let's not be afraid of what the future holds, embrace change together and celebrate our successes.

Keep at it team, we will succeed.

Shelley Hobbs

Lovely Bright Colours at Rookery

As all will be aware, our tenants experience difficulties associated with their condition. Whilst we strive to maintain their accommodation to the highest level, sadly, we have not the funds available to also provide certain aspects that will enhance their lives. There is much clinical evidence of the benefits of sensory gardens to people on the autistic spectrum so I have utilized our charitable status to apply for grants to support this aspect. I have liaised with Karen, Support Manager with the Affinity Trust to contract Garden Zebra to design and complete the work.

One of our properties is Rookery where 3 gentlemen and a lady live.

Roger who was 60 years old in June, enjoys sports especially the Albion football. Roger engages in in-house activities e.g. cooking and baking for himself and his friends and he likes going for walks and to museums and also he is very much into gardening. He particularly likes listening to the news and music of the 1960s.

Tim is 48 years old. He very much likes to go at his own pace and does not like to be rushed. He attends arts and crafts college once weekly, enjoys going to the cinema and to discos and particularly loves going swimming and listening to disco music.

David is 55 years old and enjoys looking at gardens, especially those of a sensory nature with waterfalls. He likes going to the pub for meals out, really gets involved with the disco and week-ends away with changes of scenery. He enjoys going out in his local community for walks and is very keen on listening to Abba music



Tina is 53 years old and enjoys her weekly activity at college (arts and crafts). She also is very keen on walking, swimming, knotting, sweeping the paths and particularly gardening. She can often be found helping to do domestic tasks around the home. She likes going out for meals and visiting her dad and brother and loves talking to people. Tina particularly enjoys baking and watching the soaps.

All the staff and tenants are thrilled with their new garden and it is really exhilarating to see the results of our efforts in enhancing the lives of our tenants.

David Poppitt

Here We Grow Again

We have taken on so many new properties this year, many already occupied or built through some of our partner agencies.

We are proud of all our properties and work hard to make sure they are the very best for our tenants but our latest new build properties in Yorkshire are coming together at great pace and it's time to share these with everyone and explain a little more about how they came to be built and how they will be the absolute best Supported Living projects in the country when they open next year.

The properties share the same county and are less than 100 miles apart and they share the common theme of innovative tenant-focused design and are high-quality buildings, ready to be sustainable, amazing homes for our tenants.

Our Bradford site is set in a quiet suburb and is a brand-new build consisting of 14 apartments and 5 bungalows.

The buildings will be based around a small pond and are separated by a small stream (fenced off for safety).

This small corner of an already developed site will have landscaped communal gardens with paths and lighting between the buildings and with the existing stone wall and trees being utilised in the site.



We have worked closely with stakeholders from inception and already you can see that this approach is working as the buildings come together.

We have incorporated everything our tenants will need into the build including wet-rooms, under-floor heating, rise-and-fall kitchens and strengthened floors/ceilings for hoists.

We are providing the buildings for Bradford Council and we have worked with them and our architect to design homes that will be functional, safe and future-proof.

Regular meetings, sharing of information and a shared goal of creating the best for the tenants has resulted in the best possible project that will be oversubscribed to on completion.

A combination of our insistence to involve all parties and poor weather did mean a slow start, but we are now back on track and are ready for a January handover.

The pictures give an impression of the amount of work going into the build, but the finished scheme will be spectacular as the final stone finish is added to the exterior and the individual units have their own special finishes to make the houses into tenant's homes.

In Hambleton, North Yorkshire we have our second new build but this time we already have existing buildings we will utilise, refurbish and add to.

Thorntree farm really is an idyllic site set in 22 acres of farmland and woodlands.

The existing house will be converted into shared and individual units and the existing barn will become 8 new apartments.

The property is in its own grounds and the view as you drive up the private drive is breath-taking.

The property will be developed with a new care provider JPC who will share their amazing story with us in a later edition of Snippets.

We will begin work on the property in September and will be welcoming our first tenants soon after as we stagger the building work for eventual completion in Spring 2019.

We have already started the major works including new water supplies, drainage and the design of a state-of-the-art eco-friendly biomass boiler to provide heat and hot water.

The finished scheme will be 22 units which, from a few visits and word of mouth, are already being filled.

The site also has its own gardens and grazing fields along with an orchard and cider press.

The scope for developing the land for Supported Living is endless and I urge any of you who have the time to visit to go as no picture or article can do the Farm justice. We will be having open days for the farm at the end of August.

As always, if you want any more information or would like to see plans of the new buildings please feel free to ask either myself, Andy Bate or Ellen and we will be happy to discuss our future homes.

Andy Bowler



My First Trip Out!

On Wednesday 25th July, Myself, Matthew, Ellen, Denise and Casey all took a trip to Visit Barnard, which is now ParkView, and Coleman!

I was feeling very nervous before arriving to both properties, but the staff and tenants made me feel so welcome!

We got to look around each property and see where and how the tenants live. It was so heart-warming, and I left both properties with a huge smile on my face!

It was nice to see the other side of the company and experience it.

Can it be next year already? I want to go again!

Georgia Dawson



Pipeline to Reality

I also went to visit ParkView and Coleman and it was so interesting to see these properties in person, particularly Barnard as this was just an address on the pipeline to me, so to go out and see the tenants happy in their home was amazing and puts it all in perspective!

I love going out and seeing how each tenant has made it more than just a room or a flat!

I look forward to going out to other properties in the future and seeing the difference BeST is making!

Ellen Sherrard

A Brief Guide on Universal Credit in Full Service Areas

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) are currently in the process of rolling out Universal Credit (UC) 'Full Service' across the country, with a deadline of December 2018, which will replace the UC 'Live Service' that was established for new benefit claimants.

What this means for you?

- As most of our tenants already claim some form of benefits, they may not be subject to UC Regulations until the DWP start transferring all remaining existing benefit claimants to the UC 'Full Service' in 2019.
- The transition period is protected which means that if you would lose money because of being moved onto UC, an additional payment will be made to ensure that this does not happen.
- The UC 'Full Service' areas are paperless and instead a personal UC account is used.
- Claimants need to log into their UC account regularly to avoid missing important communications.
- If you do not have access to a computer or the internet, you can use your local Job Centre Plus's customer computers.

Things to Remember

Questions you have need to be entered onto your online journal.

- When your UC claim has been processed, statements will be available online for you to print out. If this is a new claim, you will need to print these out and send a copy of at least the first two statements are sent in to your local housing benefit department.
- If you have an existing UC claim you will need to print out the statements from the month prior to your moving in, the month you're claiming from and the month after.
- When filling in the online UC claim form you need to specify that you are living in 'Supported Accommodation' as otherwise the housing element of your benefits (the benefits which cover your rent) will not be paid to BeST which could lead to you getting into arrears.

I hope that you have found this brief guide helpful.

Please note this article is not intended as a definitive guide on UC. For more information please refer to the official government website or your local Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB).

Patricia Mokhberi

How to Apply for Universal Credit

- New claimants will be required to submit UC claims online and will need an email address, telephone number and bank account (the account number and sort code details are used).
- Each claimant will have their own user account, password, and security questions which will be required to sign in.
- If the person handling your finances is your legal appointee or Court Appointed Deputy, they will organise this on your behalf.
- If you are being assisted to handle your own finances by family, friends or your support workers, you will have to organise this with your current support.
- All correspondence between you (the claimant), and the DWP will be conducted online via your online journal.
- Details of how to arrange your first appointment will be detailed online – a telephone number will be provided so you can arrange an appointment at your nearest Job Centre Plus.
- You will need to provide proof of your identity before you receive UC. This can be done online through 'GOV.UK Verify' or by taking your documents to Job Centre Plus.
- Some documents, which will be identified when you make your claim, will need to be taken to your first appointment at Job Centre Plus even if you have verified your identity online.
- All communications regarding your UC claim and ongoing appointment will be available on your UC account.

What's Happening

Andrew moved into one of our properties last December and has really settled in well and is very proud of his immaculate home. He is starting work next week with the support provider and is also looking for volunteering opportunities.

Karen was our very first tenant in another of our properties. She had been living in a residential care home but has quickly settled in to the community and attends a day service. Karen has recently won a "step up" award from the centre for her achievements there. She has also made friends and has invited our two prospective tenants to her birthday tea.

Jane Beer



Running Up That Hilton

As most of you know, I do quite a lot of running whether it be just a quick blast round Trafford Park or through the neighbouring Lancashire hillside or even through the middle of Delamere Forest (including the lake).

So, when I noticed that The Christie Hospital were advertising a sponsored event that invited everybody of any capacity to run up the entire height of the Hilton Tower in Manchester I signed up immediately.

As part of the entry was to raise a certain amount of money to contribute toward The Christie, I opened the floor to everyone I knew. Thanks to the large number of donations coming from BeST and our external partners, we managed to raise £480.00!

I would like to say a big thank you to everyone and the 'certificate of thanks' is for all of you as I did the easy bit, finishing 20th out of 250 in a time of 5 minutes and 50 seconds.

Cheers guys!

Andy Bate

Meet The Staff

I started working for Lifeways, as a support worker, in January of this year.

I mainly support three ladies; Charlotte, Rachel and Vicky.

I absolutely love supporting them to live life to the fullest, whilst they develop their skills and independence.

As I am dedicated to BeST, Monday-Friday, I often support the ladies on evenings and weekends.

I look forward to the future and to everything each one of them can achieve!

Casey Willis

