

Love is in the Fare

We decided to base our lunch on the theme of Valentine's Day we all got together and shared our ideas to make this a special day. Cameron used his poetic skills to create our invitation:

*"Roses are red,
Violets are blue,*

Accounts are putting on a valentine's lunch for you"

Holly was the creative inspiration behind the Pulled pork which was so tender it fell off the bone and was succulent to eat. Cath excited us with her homemade coleslaw which was hand grated finely and complimented the whole lunch. Marlene, Lewis and I created the red and pink themed decorations to inspire the room. Marlene even wore red and pink shoes. We would like to thank everyone who came along and shared our lunch and to those who commented by expressing it was the BEST lunch so far!

Nareene Fletchman

Apprenticeship Ambassador

As well as having apprentices with-in the Charity, we at BeST also have 2 apprenticeship ambassadors.

What is an apprentice ambassador? An apprenticeship ambassador is literally what it says on the tin, someone who has been an apprentice, been through an apprenticeship and helps others understand what an apprenticeship is and what it's like being an apprentice, whilst also raising awareness for apprenticeships.

What does an apprenticeship ambassador do? The events that I have attended can be anything from visiting schools talking about my experience, get them to sign up to the national apprenticeship website and search for an apprenticeship that interest them or see what's out there ready for their school leaving date. Going to careers fairs and talking with school kids and parents about again my experience, see what's of interest to the kid and see if there is an apprenticeship out there for them. Going doing activities in the school holidays when the kids are in the local towns and communities and engage with them through various ways and speak afterwards about apprenticeships. Doing presentations surrounding your journey and what happened to you as an apprentice whilst also doing a Q & A with any questions they have, usually do

Since I've Been Here

During my time working for BeST I have learnt various skills from both the departments I have worked with. This in turn has bolstered the skills I have learnt so far, as well as helping my understanding of the company as a whole. In Maintenance I built a rapport with our contractors and the support staff which developed my understanding of the service that we provide and the scope of what BeST are trying to achieve. Since I have been in the Housing Team I have seen a different side of the company and have developed an

appreciation of the relationships we build with our tenants. This has also enabled me to learn what processes we carry out on behalf of our tenants, including administration and the duty of care required. I feel in the 2 years I have worked for BeST I have been fortunate to experience a full view of the services we provide for our tenants and what the whole team are trying to achieve. I'm looking forward to what we accomplish over the coming year and beyond!

Adrian Evans

*The Apprentice,
You're Hired!*

Ellen



I began working at BeST in mid July 2016 as the Facilities Administrator Apprentice in the HR and Admin team. Although I am still in the process of completing my apprenticeship in Level 2 Business Administration, my skill set and knowledge has expanded greatly during my time here at BeST. Throughout the past 7 months spent with the company I have had the chance to experience bits and pieces from a few of the different departments, which has given me a better understanding of how the company works as a whole. There are always opportunities for development teamed with continuous support from BeST. I am looking forward to not only completing my apprenticeship and progressing my career but also seeing BeST progress and grow even more.

Ellen Sherrard

you drive and what car, and how much do you get paid! – My answer is usually not enough

I have more recently been going into the schools in the Salford area and talking to the students about the advantages of an apprenticeship and my journey through an apprenticeship, and then helping them sign up to the national apprenticeship website and helping them get an idea of what roles are out there and what is needed from themselves to apply for the roles. One thing I'm looking at with the local council is getting the school leavers to apply for some roles and go through the application and interview process with myself, other ambassadors, and other apprentices in the Salford area to help build interview experience for the school leavers and personal development in that area for ourselves also.

Cameron Furlong



From the CEO



With 2017 well underway we have started the year extremely positively on lots of fronts, a bullet point update below;

- The external "Annual Audit" is largely complete, we need to congratulate Marlene and our Accountancy Team for their hard work on this and I am sure I can thank all on their behalf for the support from relevant team members who have assisted in this necessary and quite arduous task.
- Next is NROSH+ due end May and we are still researching as to whether we can challenge the HCA reporting mechanism against numbers owned and numbers managed, Steve and Marlene (in particular) enjoy NROSH+ so we need to support both and all who are involved in that wonderful task.!!
- Confirmation on some numbers, we are all now part of a circa £30 million asset based Charity with a circa £8 million turnover that houses vulnerable adults.
- The target of 1 a day every day set at our strategy event in January last year gave us a target of housing 249 new tenants. We have provided housing solutions for 268 vulnerable adults during the 12 month period to 20 January 2017 one year on from the strategy day that's 19 (7.5%) ahead of the target. Well done and thank you to each and every one of you for all of your efforts.
- Obviously I expect us to have welcomed our new faces to the team: Jane Beer and Helen Bolton!
- We released our exciting plans in relation to the Big Picture in early Jan and updates to such have been released separately, we have strong initial momentum from all stakeholders to support this initiative.
- Many thanks to Casey who has ran an extremely successful Health and Wellbeing program, I hope all have done well, I seemed to have gained some muscle mass particularly around my midriff area instead of losing weight, apparently my stomach is even stronger than it was 3 months ago
- Lastly, don't ever challenge Andrew Bate to online Scrabble, you will lose!

Kevin Appleby

Snippets

Edition 5

A Joy For The Senses!

BeST Housing have carried out some work within the Stanley Road properties and created an amazing sensory garden for all the tenants across the Stanley Road properties to enjoy. Alex from Loftus Gardens spent a week at the end of January 2017 at the property revitalising the garden as you can see in the pictures below.

Day 1

This is how the garden looked when Alex arrived on Monday morning:
Nigel: "Don't like the garden as it is. Gonna look good!"



Day 3

This is how the garden looked half way through the week:



Sarah: "Alex has worked really hard and the garden is starting to look great!"



Day 5

The garden is complete and it looks stunning. Plants will be planted in the Spring.
Jane: "When I look through the window the tree is beautiful"

The sensory garden will give huge benefits for the majority of the service users who live there. The sensory garden will help to reduce anxiety, provide people with the opportunities to engage in their preferred methods of sensory stimulation and enhance and improve their quality of life by offering experiences to them that assist greatly in helping them make better sense of the world around them. Jane and Nigel can't wait for the warm weather so they can make full use of the garden and organise activities. They will be able to sit next to the raised planters and touch and smell all the various plants and shrubs that will be planted. Alex will attend again in the spring and more will be planted. Thank you to all Staff at Stanley Road who were happy to help and paint the garden. Bright colours have been used to add colour to the garden but also used as a visual stimulation.

Laura-Jane Mangan

A New Voyage

BeST have recently started work with a new Care Provider called Voyage Care. Voyage are a nationwide Care provider with an excellent reputation and we are very pleased to be their preferred Housing Provider. I have spent several weeks looking at the properties, all of which will be assets to our growing portfolio. It has been great to get out of the office and meet tenants and families introducing them to BeST's ideals which have been universally welcomed.

Many of the properties are on the South of England where we are now building a substantial base of properties, luckily we have recently employed Jane who will be another asset and give us a strong Housing Management base in the South. It was good to meet our new tenants and their families and, along with the Support Staff, appreciated the efforts made by BeST to reassure them the change in Landlord would be a seamless transition leading to Housing improvements and more tenant involvement.

I will shortly be back out visiting Voyage properties in the Midlands and the North which I'm looking forward to a great deal. It is always good to get out to our Properties and see the differences Supported Living makes to our tenants. It's also good to meet new care providers and very encouraging that they have been recommended to work with BeST. It's a credit to all our hard work that our reputation for quality Housing has spread throughout the country. We plan to take on 33 Voyage properties before June with the possibility of many more in the future, from what I have seen so far I can see this being a prosperous and successful partnership. Thanks to all the team for helping to create this opportunity for Best and especially to Ellen who has organised my road trips with military precision!

Andy Bowler

BeST's Hunt for the Most Beautiful Christmas Tree

It was quite a mild winter in December 2016 and we didn't see much snow, but this didn't stop our tenant's going all out for Christmas. This year, BeST held its first Christmas tree competition. We had quite a few entries and were awestruck at some of the wonderful submissions we received. We took a lot of effort discussing and voting to pick out a winner and the runners up as everyone made such a wonderful effort.

1st Place - Skipton Place



1st Place - Skipton Place
Skipton Place went above and beyond for their Christmas Tree entry. Emily, Jo and Laurance (pictured) hand-designed their

Christmas tree decorations all around their favourite thing- Disney! Jo and Emily even dressed up to show off their efforts. A big congratulations to Skipton who's picture will be the face of our Christmas Card in 2017.

2nd Place - Rookery Road We just loved this picture of Tim from Rookery Road and his beautiful Christmas tree.



2nd - Rookery Road

3rd Place - Sunningdale Finally, Sunningdale took third place for this beautiful tree submission.

Look out for our Skipton tenants on your Christmas Card this year, and we hope even more of you will participate in our Christmas Tree competition 2017!

Matthew Fay



3rd - Sunningdale

Home Visits

Just before Christmas I was given a great opportunity to spend a day with one of our Housing Officers to visit properties and meet tenants. Being 6 months into my role as Facilities Administrator Apprentice I was excited to finally go and see first-hand how BeST are changing people's lives by providing quality homes for people with support needs.

Matthew, one of our Housing Officers, took me out to Northern area of his patch where we visited properties in Leeds. During the visit I got to spend time with both staff and tenants, seeing both sides which gave me a deeper insight to what supported living actually involves. It was so interesting to visit both shared accommodation and a communal block of independent flats but the best part for me was seeing how all the tenants had personalised their own space and made it a home and the positive work BeST has done for these tenants.

Ellen Sherrard



Congratulations!

I would like to take the time to personally congratulate our apprentice Holly Millington on passing her AAT level 3 and getting started on her AAT level 4. Holly's attitude and development throughout has been outstanding and through passing her AAT level 3 has had an internal promotion to Accounts Assistant! Well done Holly! Also a congratulations to Nareene Fletchman on her transition from the M-team to the A-team and picking up the job (and the phone!) of Credit Controller, and to Jane Beer who is our newest Housing Officer!

Cameron Furlong and Phillipa Bevin

Profit and Cash: The Hollywood Glamour

When we talk about profit and cash it's very easy to get them mixed up. Mainly this is because a lot of Hollywood films show a profit as a splurge purchase on a Lamborghini, a yacht or even a tropical island! Sadly, this isn't the case. The main problem with the Hollywood formula is that it translates profit figures directly into figures in the bank. However, the truth is that profit figures are what you have left over, after a sum you have calculated for a period of time, on paper, and cash is real pound notes in the bank, and is shown in separate figures and not in the rules for profit below:

1. you have to show all the money you know you should be receiving in the period and prove it

2. you have to show all the money you know you should be paying out in the period and prove it

If you have less money coming in than being paid out, then it is a loss in the rules for profit. If that happened in the bank you would be overdrawn or bankrupt. The basic distinction is that profit is what you are expecting and cash is what you actually have. Say you're going on a night out and you know how much you're going to spend on taxis, drinks and food. You can make an estimate of how much money you would have left over the next day to buy lunch, but this may not be what you will actually have to pay with.

For example: you could have £100 for the night out and food tomorrow. You know you're going to spend £30 on transport, about £30 on drinks and maybe £10 on food if you're hungry. This should mean that you have £30 to spend on your lunch the next day - a very nice meal! However, on the night out, there was a cover charge of £10 each for the bar and your friend had no cash so you had to pay for her, she said she'll pay you back tomorrow. So now for your lunch the next day you have £10 in your wallet, and the hope that your friend will transfer you the £10 owed to make it up to £20 before you go out so you can have a drink as well!

You can't put your profit in your pocket because it's a figure on paper of what should really happen. Cash however is real.

Paws for Thought



Happy Birthday, Eric!

It was Eric's Birthday on the 6th February!

He was treated to a fabulous steak dinner, a wonderful velvet collar and lead with diamante bones, new bones, new rain coat and best of all he was let off the lead for the first time in Blackleach Country Park!

He had a whale of a time, running free through the woods, jumping in muddy puddles and getting up to mischief. Getting him back on his lead was another matter! Of course he needed a bath after his run, so he was a pampered pooch for the day!

He's doing well at school though he did have his first incident last week over some doggy treats - he was bullied by a bigger dog and came off worst for wear! Of course I promptly addressed the issue with the head teacher!

Other than that he's up to mischief and being his usual self!



Shelley Hobbs

Lifeshare

This Christmas having found myself with a couple of weeks of holidays remaining I decided to do something for someone else and chose to help out at the Lifeshare Project in Manchester. Lifeshare is a voluntary organization that are trying to bring an end to homelessness and help vulnerable adults that find themselves in crisis. I had the pleasure of meeting many different people from varying backgrounds and carried out multiple tasks including building a Christmas tree and putting up decorations (which most of you will be amazed by!), selecting essential clothing and even providing one 75 year-old gentleman with his first leather jacket which was met with great emotion and supplying one visitor with a wedding dress which I have no idea what he was going to use it for. I even donated my Play Station and arranged a gaming area where the visitors (and myself) enjoyed a few games of FIFA, table tennis and countless games of poker. Fortunately while arranging the clothing store I came across a Man Utd shirt which was quickly dispatched to avoid any unnecessary pain to unsuspecting visitors. I'm looking at doing further days with Lifeshare over the next year and so I await my next rewarding challenge.

Wellness at Work

We are 5 weeks into our wellness challenge and I think I can say, EVERYONE has been making some effort to create healthier habits and carry out a healthier lifestyle. Just like many others, after Christmas and the New Year we had all indulged a little too much and piled on few extra pounds, and so we decided to do a wellness challenge. Hannah came up with the name BeST's Belly Busters and then we have BeST abs. Everyone is making a change and the positivity is amazing! Everyone is always discussing their food / fitness and sharing tips and advice. I am very excited to see who the winners are and for what the future holds... BeST Wellness is here to stay!

Casey Willis