



CANDIDATE PACK FOR NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in Belong and in finding out more about the opportunity of joining our Board as a Non-Executive Director (NED).

Belong is a pioneering and innovative provider of high-quality support, care and accommodation for older people in the North West of England. We are internationally acclaimed for our leading model for dementia care and older people's services as well as our focus on achieving outstanding outcomes. Our values are at the heart of our work and as a not-for-profit provider, we reinvest any surpluses to continuously improve our provision. We are always exploring new opportunities, technologies and ideas that could make life better for those living with us.

Over time, the organisation has transitioned from being a provider of traditional care homes into a pioneer of our innovative care village model, always challenging the norm to remain at the leading edge of the social care sector. Today, we operate a network of eight successful Belong villages, providing a range of options for later life living, from independent apartments through to 24-hour nursing care. Each village is underpinned by a consistent ethos of care and design, offering a similar mix of services, accommodation, facilities and activities. At the same time, each village is unique in character, with a vibrant community of its own, informed by its customers, its staff group, its partnerships and the local area which provides its context. The common thread is our commitment to providing outstanding outcomes for older people and in particular people with dementia, aiming to maximise independence and choice for the most vulnerable in our society.

As a Board, we are continually evolving and reviewing the skills and expertise of our NEDs to ensure that we have strong and effective governance in place. Given the importance of regulatory compliance and our drive for continued excellence, we are keen that our new NED brings a professional background in social care with a deep appreciation of CQC compliance. As well as our main Board, we have a Quality & Safety Committee, and the successful candidate would be expected to sit on this Committee.

Of course, a commitment to our values should be seen as fundamental, as is the ability to make a strategic contribution to our vision of enabling older people to live the lives they choose, ensuring the highest quality experience for our colleagues and customers. We are particularly keen to find people who have led either as a provider or commissioner and who can demonstrate their role in achieving outstanding outcomes. Your insight into the future of social care will be integral to how we develop our future strategy and continue our work as a frontrunner in the sector. Previous non-executive experience is less important than your professional experience within adult social care and of leading teams to achieve success. Your values and experience around designing truly personal services and engaging and involving customers and staff is key.

We are committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive community – a place where we can all 'Belong' and because we believe our Board should reflect this commitment, we particularly welcome interest from people from different backgrounds who can help us to broaden our ethnic and cultural mix and cognitive diversity.

This is an important role within an innovative and forward-looking organisation focused on building positive outcomes. You will find us a rewarding, inclusive and stimulating Board to join and one where your insight, experience and influence will be truly valued. If this sounds like the Board for you, we'd love to hear from you.

Best wishes

Robert Armstrong
Chair

ABOUT BELONG

Belong is a not-for-profit organisation (Community Benefit Society), dedicated to the creation of community villages which provide a range of accommodation and support services both to people living in the villages and in the wider community.

Each aspect of the design and delivery of Belong buildings and services has been carefully thought out to ensure quality of life outcomes for the increasingly frail population of older people, typically over the age of 80. The development of Belong villages was the culmination of many years of research into dementia care, combined with visits to pioneering care settings around the world and pilot projects to trial the 'household' model as a 24-hour care setting. The success and experience of these early trials provided the confidence for a much more ambitious project.

The Belong brand was launched in 2007, with the opening of Belong Macclesfield and since then the organisation has continued to enhance the services, facilities, training and outcomes achieved.

Today, each village offers a mix of independent apartment living, day care, home care, Admiral Nurse service, amenities (such as bistro, hair salon, exercise studio and function rooms) and 24-hour support, including nursing and dementia care.

The organisation has over 30 years' experience as one of the largest providers of care homes in the North West. 93% of our services are rated 'Good' or above by the Care Quality Commission, including 29% rated to be 'Outstanding'. One village is yet to be rated, having opened in July 2022. We are awaiting a reinspection of the one service deemed to require improvement, where the report acknowledged changes in leadership had already been made and improvements evidenced, which the inspector wanted to see sustained and embedded over a period of time before re-assessing the overall village rating. Our carehome.co.uk and homecare.co.uk ratings are consistently high, averaging at 9.8 and 9.9 respectively.

Key objectives that have guided Belong's approach have been:

- Creating a community environment which enables people with dementia to retain choice and independence over as many areas of their lives as possible (moving away from the old, institutionalised models of care).
- Providing holistic support to people as their needs change, from independent living in Belong apartments, domiciliary care to people in the wider community, right through to end-of-life support.
- Creating a living environment which maximises orientation and independence and compensates for disabilities; we have worked with leading architects and garden designers in designing award-winning spaces for older people.
- Ensuring the village is outward-looking and there is a vibrant programme of activities taking place in the centre, which is open to members of the public, encouraging them to make use of village facilities and enjoy opportunities to develop relationships within the Belong community.
- Providing a holistic, person-centred approach to nursing care within the Belong community. The teams are comprised of skilled and competent nurses who are highly trained to The Nursing and Midwifery Council standards and are encouraged to innovate and lead a flexible and proactive approach to supporting the wellbeing and high-quality care of all our customers.
- Recruiting people with values and attitudes that fit with our ethos, developing and training them to achieve exceptional commitment to quality care, in line with Belong values and providing learning and development opportunities through our people policies.
- Working in partnership with other health and social care professionals and agencies to enhance the care and services available.
- Belong's award winning exercise service that has helped improve customers' strength, balance, mobility, memory and overall wellbeing.
- Bringing in expertise from other organisations, such as the Royal College of Nursing, Dementia UK and SCIE (Social Care Institute for Excellence).

This has all combined to create a leading-edge model of care and accommodation, with customers at the heart of the Belong service. Evidence of outcomes can be seen in their feedback through a range of survey, observation and inspection methods, the awards bestowed on Belong and its staff and the high levels of demand experienced for our services, as the reputation of Belong has spread in the North West.

We are committed to creating more Belong villages and making this model of care available to more people, while at the same time continuing to develop and improve on the services we offer.

CUSTOMER FOCUS

We are a values-based organisation and this underpins our approach to recruitment, training and development.

WE PUT CUSTOMERS AT THE HEART OF ALL WE DO

Centre stage at Belong are our customers and everything we do is done with the aim of producing the best outcomes for the people who trust us with their support. Empathy, respect and dignity inform our outlook and ensure we see the person before their condition; who they are over what needs they have.

WE WORK AS ONE TEAM

We prioritise effective team working, where everyone communicates well, knows what's expected of them and feels valued, involved, relaxed and happy.

WE RESPECT ONE ANOTHER

Our culture is based on showing respect and consideration to one another, celebrating each other's successes and those of the team as a whole.

WE ARE HONEST

We aim to be 'true' in our work, both in the sense of being diligent and conscientious and also ready to speak out when something is not right.

Research conducted with Salford University demonstrated that the Belong model achieves and delivers on all our customer commitments. Residents described the freedom to exercise their choice and preferences, to live the way they wanted to live and remain as independent as their health would allow. Opportunities of engaging with planned activities and the Belong facilities, particularly the bistro, provided an environment that encouraged visitors sustaining relationships with family and friends. Residents, if they chose, could live an active lifestyle, with a sense of belonging to a family and wider vibrant community. They described feeling safe, with peace of mind as to the progressive nature of dementia or ill health and frailty, that they would enjoy a home for life, with continuity of care, by kind responsive staff.

ORGANISATIONAL AWARDS INCLUDE

- Health & Wellness Service Award at the Health Investor Seniors Housing Awards (2024)
- Excellence in Retirement Housing Award at the Laing & Buisson Awards (2024)
- Development and Innovation Award in the Third Sector Care Awards (2024)
- Investor in People Gold Award (retained in 2024 and 2020)
- The 'Innovation in Care' Award at the LaingBuisson Awards (2023)
- Number one spot in the Top 20 Home Care groups, awarded to Belong at Home by homecare.co.uk (2023)
- The NAPA Arts in Care Homes Award (2022)
- Innovative Setting of the Year at the Wigan and Leigh Hospice in Your Care Home Awards (2022)
- Creative Arts Award at the Third Sector Care Awards (2021)
- Best Care Provision at the 2021 HealthInvestors Senior Housing Awards (2021) • Social Care Covid Hero Award for efforts during the pandemic.
- Housing with Care Award in the Great North West Care Awards (2020)
- Best Residential Care Provider (Small Organisation) in the LaingBuisson Awards 2019.

PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT

- Belong is a Gold Accredited Investor in People for its approach to looking after and investing in people.
- We have a formal Learning Agreement with the Royal College of Nursing; the Learning Representatives cascade information on the latest research and best practice to colleagues.
- We are part of the National Gold Standards Framework in Care Homes Programme, which aims to improve the quality of care, inter-agency collaboration and support for individuals who wish to die at home.
- A Practice Development Facilitator works across each village to ensure that staff have the skills, confidence and support to deliver best practice, and that core training is up-to-date.
- DH Associates selected Belong as the Apprenticeship Employer of the Year (2024)
- Belong won the Cheshire College South & West Employer of the Year Award at the 2025 Apprenticeship Awards.
- Belong won the Outstanding Contribution to the Development of Apprenticeships (Large Employer) at the Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group Awards.

THE QUALITY OF BELONG TEAM MEMBERS CAN BE SEEN IN NUMEROUS AWARD WINS INCLUDING:

- Most Innovative Staff Member at the Health Investor Seniors Housing Awards (2024)
- Dementia Carer Award at the Great West Midlands Care Awards (2024)
- Care Innovator Award at the Great West Midlands Care Awards (2024)
- Outstanding Contribution to Social Care Award at the Great West Midlands Care Awards (2024)
- Social Care Nurse Award at the Great West Midlands Care Awards (2024)
- Unpaid Carer's Award at the Great British Care Awards (2024)
- Gold Chief Nurse's Award (2024)
- Social Care Nursing Award in the Third Sector Care Awards (2024)
- Outstanding Dignity and Respect in Dementia Care at the Dementia Care Awards (2023)
- The Above and Beyond Community Team Award at the Home Care Stars of Social Care Awards (2023)
- Newcomer of the Year at the Great West Midlands Care Awards (2023)
- Supported Living Manager of the Year at the Great North West Care Awards (2023)
- Dignity Champions of the Year and Support Worker of the Year at the Wigan Palliative and End-of-Life Care Awards (2023)
- Palliative Carer of the Year award at the Great British Care Awards (2022)
- Home Care Worker Award at the Great North West Care Awards (2022)
- Nurse of the Year and Peer Support of the Year awards at the Wigan and Leigh Hospice in Your Care Home Awards (2022)

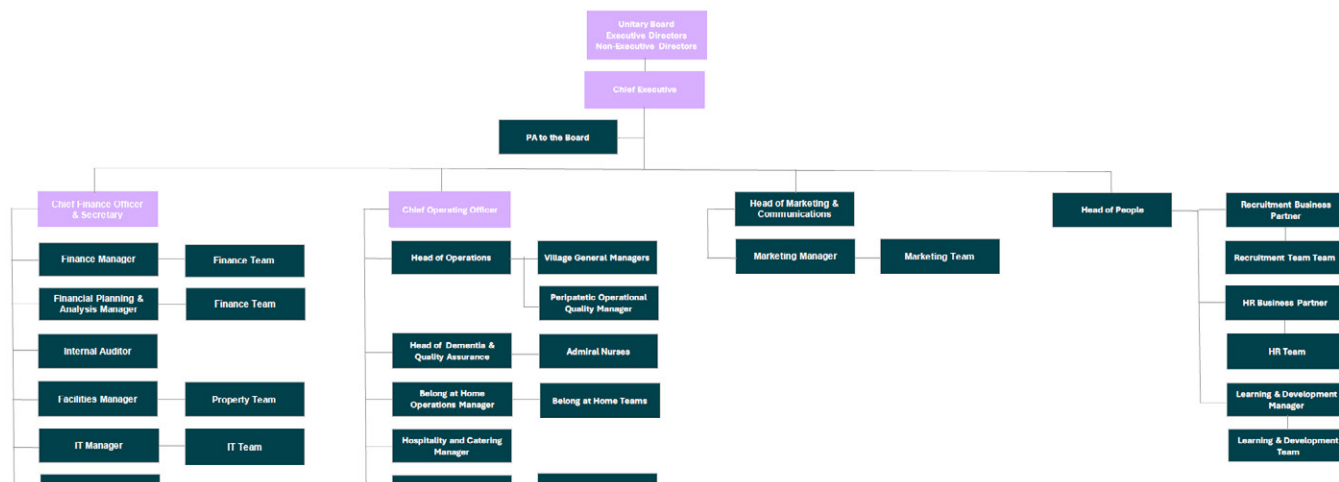
THE BELONG BOARD

Belong operates with a unitary Board, normally comprising three Executive Directors and eight Non-Executive Directors. We seek to ensure a diverse Board and are proud of the range of skills and experience our Directors bring. We have benefitted from an external review in 2020, followed by a development programme which has strengthened our ways of working.

THE FUTURE

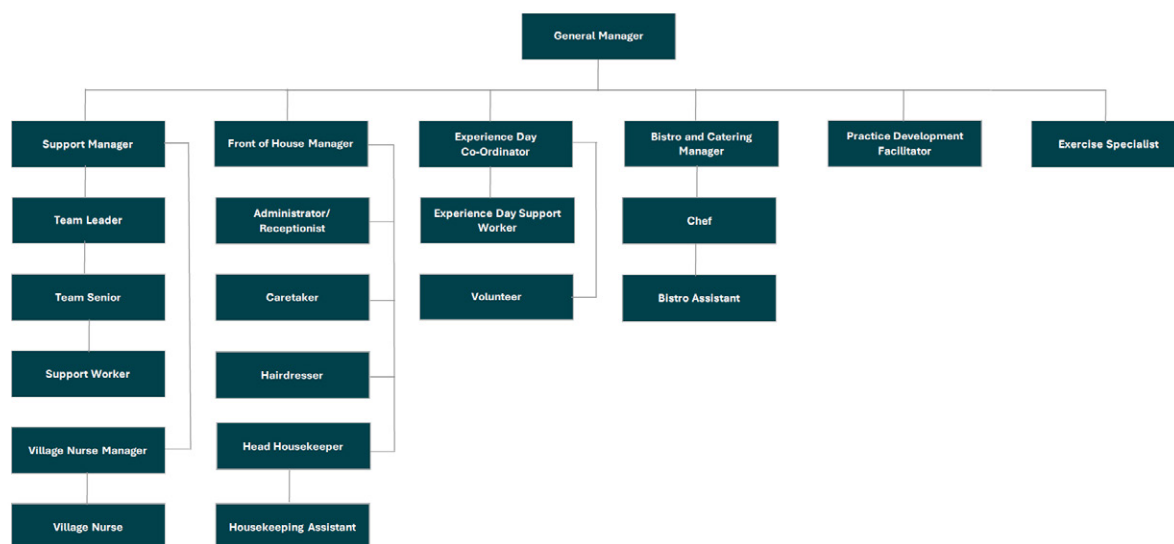
We are ambitious to continue our journey of innovation as we evolve and develop Belong's services and quality approaches, so as to remain at the cutting edge of service provision.

CURRENT BELONG STRUCTURE



BELONG VILLAGE STAFFING STRUCTURE

Each village is managed by a General Manager (GM). All village GMs are accountable to the Head of Operations and have autonomy for the day-to-day operations and management of the village and are supported by a Central Office team.



ROLE DESCRIPTION OF A NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BOARD MEMBER

Non-Executive Director of Belong Limited and Director of Borough Care Services Limited (described below as the Group)

PURPOSE

As a Board we work together to provide leadership, strategic direction and assurance. We empower and motivate our people to be leaders in safe and excellent care and support for older people, whilst maintaining a strong and sustainable business that is forward looking and innovative.

KEY TASKS OF THE BOARD

- Oversee and set the long-term strategic direction of the Group.
- Define and ensure compliance with the Group's values and objectives.
- Ensure effective plans, policies and organisational structures exist.
- Ensure risk and performance is monitored and managed through effective systems of internal control and delegation.
- Appoint, support and appraise the Chief Executive and participate in the recruitment and appointment of other Members of the Executive Team.
- Recruit, appoint and support Non-Executive Board Members.

SPECIFIC DUTIES AND EXPECTATIONS OF BOARD MEMBERS

- Participate in the governance of the Group's business through:
 - Ensuring high standards of care and support for our customers.
 - Providing strategic opinions.
 - Scrutinising and bringing constructive challenge to plans, policies and objectives.
 - Approving financial budgets, receiving and monitoring reports, ensuring appropriate use of resources and that bank covenants are met.
 - Reviewing performance and activity and determining appropriate action.
- Monitor the effectiveness and performance of the Chair and other Board Members by participating in the Board's Appraisal Scheme.
- Devote sufficient time and energy to the Group's business, including preparing for meetings, attending Board, committee and other meetings, conferences and away days and keeping up-to-date with relevant issues by reading and attending briefing/training sessions.
- Register all interests that might have a bearing on the Group's work and declare any potential or actual conflicts of interest as and when they arise.
- To act in the best interests of the Group; to be a guardian of the vision and values of Group and always represent the Group positively to internal and external audiences.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF BELONG LIMITED AND DIRECTOR OF BOROUGH CARE SERVICES LIMITED

- Strategic perception: seeing the “big picture”; putting individual issues/events into context; understanding possible future scenarios.
- Analytical understanding: digging below a headline statistic or a report to identify performance measures or other dimensions of the issue to be addressed.
- Decision making: clear about what is appropriate for a Board to be deciding; able to exercise judgement about when a decision is needed; comfortable making difficult or unpopular decisions, accepting the consensus and supporting Board decisions.
- Interacting with others: listening skills; persuasiveness and influence in a group; sensitive to others’ perspective and values; independent when required to be.
- Achieving results: focused on and able to reconcile/tolerate tensions between business needs and social purpose.
- A good understanding of financial management: ability to read and understand management accounts and identify issues relevant to a Board.
- An awareness of the needs and aspirations of the older population
- Honesty, integrity and independence
- Availability: ability to attend meetings in the day or evening as required
- IT skills: computer literate, regular user of e-mail and internet
- Candidates will come from varied backgrounds and should demonstrate relevant skills at an appropriate level.
- Candidates must qualify as a Fit and Proper Person to act as a Director under the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 and confirm they are not disqualified from acting as a Board Member/Trustee of a company or charity.



TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF APPOINTMENT

APPOINTMENT

Non-Executive Directors are elected for a term of three years, after which they are eligible for re-election. A NED will normally serve no more than three terms, ie nine years.

REMUNERATION

The rules of Belong Limited permit the remuneration of Non-Executive Board Members. The remuneration for a Non-Executive Director is £9,000pa. The typical commitment is equivalent to 3 half days per month.

LOCATION

Board meetings are normally held on rotation around the Villages and Nantwich. Although, Committee meetings are normally held online. Non-Executive Directors are able to claim travel expenses.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Belong aims to be an equal opportunities employer and is determined to ensure that no applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, age, disability, religion, belief, sexual orientation, marital status, or race, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

NOLAN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE

Belong's Board operates according to the seven Nolan Principles of Public Life which are the guiding principles, underpinning all our operations.



HOW TO APPLY

We hope you will consider making an application. If you have questions about the appointment and would find it helpful to have an informal conversation, please contact our advising consultant Juliet.Brown@starfishsearch.com and we will be happy to arrange a call. To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/belong-non-exdir/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A supporting statement that sets out why you are interested in this appointment and the experiences and qualities you believe you can bring in order to be successful in post.

Please ensure you have also completed and submitted the equal opportunities monitoring form. The information you provide will be treated as confidential and used for statistical purposes only. The form will not be treated as part of your application. Please also tell us about any dates when you are not available for interview.

Closing date Friday 20 June 2025

Informal meetings with Starfish Search Early July 2025

Final panel interview event Tuesday, 22 July 2025

