



## Double joy for Pendine Park



Mario Kreft, Lorraine McKeown, Tracey Evans, Headteacher John Kenworthy and pupils Ashleigh Craven and Chelsey Ainsley.

Pendine Park is celebrating a prestigious awards double and our partnership with a high school is being hailed as a blueprint for the rest of Wales.

We came out on top in two categories at the prestigious Social Care Accolades in Cardiff.

One was for our long-standing relationship with the town's St Joseph's Catholic and Anglican High School and their support for the Health and Social Care GCSE course.

Another partnership with Conwy County Borough Council's Social Services Provider Unit also scooped a top honour.

Pendine Park's Teaching Care Centre has developed a course to help local authority staff change from providing care in residential homes to looking after people in their own homes.

Last year the partnership with St Joseph's School helped them gain top marks from a team of Estyn inspectors.

Pupils come to the Teaching Care Centre for modules on various aspects of social care and they go on placements to two of our care

homes, Gwern Alyn and Hillbury, which are directly opposite the school.

The Care Council for Wales, which organises the awards, has now asked Pendine Park to attend special Best Practice workshops to tell other care organisations about what they do so their methods can be used as a template.

Pendine Park proprietor Mario Kreft said: "It's just absolutely incredible that we won two awards which are ranked as the most prestigious in Wales, recognising the very best of social care."

"I just hope that it is an inspiration to many other organisations to link with their local schools and to support them in the way that we have and I think social care will be better for it."

"Social care is one of the most challenging areas of work and being awarded this sort of accolade gives us the motivation and the confidence to aspire to do even more in the future."

For his part, headteacher John Kenworthy is "absolutely delighted" with the additional recognition of the **continued page 2**



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Social Care Accolades.

He said: "Our pupils can get practical experience for what I think is a very valuable and worthwhile cause and the practical experience they get gives them that little extra something.

"That's reflected in the fabulous examination results they get year on year. They are children of mixed abilities but they all get two GCSEs - it's a 100 per cent pass rate in that examination which is fantastic.

"It has that vocational element which means it's more practical and based in the real world of work.

"They get practical experience in the subject that they're studying and they can go out and learn things like lifting and health and safety and that kind of thing and so much so it does inspire them to take it up at a higher level at college"

"I know that Mario Kreft has this notion of creating centres of excellence and that's something that really appeals to me because our school motto is excellence in education."

Two of the pupils, Chelsey Ainsley, 15, and Ashleigh Craven, 14, attended the ceremony in Cardiff.

Chelsey said: "I enjoy learning about caring and health and I enjoy writing the course work. It's fun and It's more practical than other subjects because you get to go over to the care home and I enjoy seeing the elderly people. It's really amazing."

Ashleigh Craven, 14, was equally enthusiastic and added: "I like working with elderly people because I don't really have an elderly family. I really enjoy it."

Tracey Evans, the Manager of the Pendine Park Teaching Care Centre, said: "It was lovely that Chelsey and Ashleigh could be on stage to receive the award with us at the ceremony. It made me feel very proud.

The second part of the awards double was the partnership with Conwy County Borough Council.

Ms Evans explained: "We work very closely with local councils in providing training and care.

"In this instance, we were approached by the council to develop a programme for residential care staff with excellent skills who are now moving to community care.

"The purpose is to adapt the skills of the care staff to meet the needs of people coming under the wing of the Extra Care housing project.

"The next step is that we have been asked by the Care Council for Wales to attend sharing best practice workshops where we're going to talk about the two projects and how other places can take things forward."

*"We work very closely with local councils in providing training and care"*

# WWII h Spitfire after fr soldiers



Above: Tracey Evans at Plas-y-Llan in Llanfairfechan with staff member Joanne Robinson and resident Annie Williams

Right: At the Social Care Accolades in Cardiff



# Heroine Sister still looking online

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Soldiers on the frontline in Afghanistan will be receiving morale boosting "gifts from home" thanks to a campaign launched by two heroes from different generations.

Staff and residents of Pendine Park are sending goodie boxes with special treats to the squaddies in Helmand Province.

The campaign was inspired by Private Neil Carrington who has just become engaged to the daughter of Ann Chapman, the manager of our Cae Bryn Care Home.

Just before he returned for the second half of his tour of duty in Afghanistan, Neil and his new fiancée Sarah popped in to Pendine Park to say thanks.

During the visit, Neil met one of their most remarkable residents, 93 year old Margaret Ellis who served as a nurse amid the carnage of Northern France during the early part of the Second World War 70 years ago.

She was nicknamed Sister Spitfire by German Prisoners of War because of her forthright attitude and indomitable spirit.

Ann Chapman came up with the idea after hearing that while the parcels sent by her daughter, Sarah, to Neil were going down a treat many of his colleagues on the frontline were not receiving any gifts from home.

Ann said: "Sarah was sending boxes to Neil every day with little goodies you know, crisps, shower gel, toothpaste,

packs of cards, travel games - just anything that she thought he might like.

"But there are so many of these soldiers out there that are on the front line and they don't get anything and according to Neil they look devastated.

"As soon as I heard that I thought we can do something at Pendine Park to help these lads.

A builder by trade, Neil, aged 40, is a private in the Territorial Army, the 3rd battalion of the Royal Welsh based in Wrexham and was due to return to Afghanistan the following day.

Neil was delighted to have the opportunity to meet Sister Spitfire and the rest of the supporters at Pendine Park before he left.

He said: "What the people at Pendine Park are doing is lovely. The boxes are a big morale boost, because you're obviously living off rations every day."

Mrs Ellis aka Sister Spitfire knows about the importance of maintaining morale and she had words of encouragement for Neil when they met.

She said: "Neil is a fine young man and I wish him and his colleagues all the best in Afghanistan.

"I hope the boxes that we are sending from Pendine Park are going to help make their time there just a little bit easier."

# Life through the lens

Talented photographers from Pendine Park are staging their first ever exhibition.

The “remarkable and striking” images are the work of our residents and staff and the show was held at the main site in Summerhill Road to coincide with Social Care Week.

It is the brainchild of our artist in residence, Sarah Edwards, who has been running art classes, both in groups and one-to-one sessions, for 13 years.

She established the photography club a year ago and it’s proved hugely popular with residents.

The exhibition, Life through a Lens, will feature 30 photographs capturing the four seasons at Pendine Park.

Four of the images will be chosen to feature on postcards and notelets that will be sold to raise money for the pioneering collaboration with the world-famous Hallé orchestra.

Earlier this year, a series of creative music workshops conducted by the Hallé culminated in a “magical and moving” performance by residents.

The long term commitment of Pendine Park and Sarah Edwards to the arts was recognised at the annual Arts & Business Cymru Awards when they were presented with their Sustainability Award.

According to Sarah, choosing the pictures for the exhibitions was one of the most difficult jobs she’s ever had to do.

She said: “It was almost impossible because I had thousands and thousands of excellent photographs to choose from. It was tough.

“The residents have had a lot of enjoyment from taking these photos and have a real sense of achievement. It empowers them and boosts their sense of self-worth.”

“They’ve looked beyond the usual and they’ve come up with some real fantastic images that they are so proud of and we just wanted to honour and celebrate that.

“The arts in general, and photography in particular, touches people and lets them unleash their creativity.

“It’s mood enhancing and can take your thoughts away from your problems. It’s inspirational to see what somebody can achieve if they put their mind to it. That sense of achievement is priceless.

“It’s hugely important to retain your self esteem when you’re in a nursing home environment. It’s vital for yourself as a person to retain your dignity.”

One of the club’s members, resident Paul Williams, explained that the photography has brought a new dimension into his life.

He said: “It’s been fantastic. I never thought I’d get into photography until Sarah invited me – and then I got really into it.

“There is a lot of pleasure from taking pictures plus you get outside and meet people. It really is good and Sarah does a fantastic job.

“I think that having the exhibition is brilliant because people will be able to see what you can do even if you’re in a



wheelchair. It makes me feel proud.

One of the region’s best known photographers, Mike Dean, from the Eye Imagery agency, was mightily impressed with the pictures.

He said: “I have judged lots of photographic competitions and they are up there with the best, they are very high class pictures.

“They are nicely composed, nicely exposed and a lot of thought has gone into them. There are some very striking images and I could very happily have one of them on my wall at home.”

Mr Malcolm Crosbie, the husband of one of the residents, is so enthralled by the contribution of the arts at Pendine Park that he is contributing £500 towards the Hallé project.

His wife, Audrey, 81, who has Alzheimer’s disease and suffers from arthritis, has been a resident at Pendine Park for the past two years.

# is pretty as a picture



*Main picture: Artist in residence Sarah Edwards with Malcolm Crosbie*

*Left: Resident Paul Williams*

*Below: Malcolm Crosbie with his wife Audrey*

Mr Crosbie said: Alzheimer's is such a difficult disease to understand but Audrey is very happy here – some days are better than others.

"I am happy that I have found such a wonderful place and I don't think I could have done better – although obviously I'd prefer to have her at home. I think it's a wonderful place and I can't speak too highly of it.

"The contribution of the arts is very important here. Sarah has been wonderful and so has Gerry Humphreys, the activities co-ordinator.

"This project is like Topsy, it's grown. I thought it would be nice to have some cards that we could use to raise money for the Hallé project.

"I am very excited. It's gone beyond my expectations and my donation will be to support the music project.

"Music certainly is a stimulation and it reaches into people's souls, he added"



# Bodlondeb building work begins



Work has started on the new centre for excellence for people with Alzheimer's Disease.

The state of the art centre is being built by Rofft Developments at the main Pendine Park site in Summerhill Road.

Planning permission was given last year by Wrexham County Borough Council.

The number of people suffering from dementia is increasing and in Wrexham alone the number of sufferers aged 75 and over is expected to increase by 60 per cent between now and 2021.

The new centre, to be called Bodlondeb (place of contentment), will look after 64 people with dementia who need day care, respite care or residential services.

It will be divided into eight small, family-like units so that the residents receive as much individual care and attention as possible while benefiting from the back-up of a larger organisation.

Pendine Park proprietor Mario Kreft said it would enable us to develop our existing services.

He said: "There is a huge and growing need for services to care for people with dementia - both in the community and first class residential care facilities.

We already run one of the most specialist dementia units in Wales and this will enable us to develop our services.

"It is much needed. There is no question we need more facilities both in the community and in care homes and within the NHS for people with dementia.

"As well as being a centre of excellence in relation to the services we provide, we also want Bodlondeb to be a centre for learning and training through our Teaching Care Centre.

"Effectively, we will have a number of small care homes within a single entity with the ethos and design being informed by research that shows this is the best way to provide the facilities.

"Although it's 64 beds in addition to our existing 44 dementia beds, Bodlondeb is going to be based on very small units embracing the latest design with high levels of technology.

"The units will be individually tailored to suit the needs of the residents in terms of dependency and gender

"We're going to ensure that the very latest thinking and research informs the services that we provide at Bodlondeb so that we hopefully become the benchmark for best practise.

"As well as being a major centre for the region, we hope that Bodlondeb will be one of the leading centres in the UK for the development and training of staff."

## Charity thanks fund-raisers and top TV newsreader

When newsreader John Suchet spoke of his heartache in trying to cope with his wife's Alzheimer's Disease he did all carers a great favour by helping to raise the profile of the illness.

The more people become aware of Alzheimer's the better, not only for the sake of the sufferers but also to help appreciate the massive strain it places on their relatives and loved ones.

Over the past three years Denise Clutton from Rhostyllen has seen a rapid deterioration in the condition of her brother Stephen Austin who is fortunate to be receiving expert care and attention from Pendine Park.

Stephen, a former factory worker, moved into the home soon after being diagnosed with Alzheimer's three years ago when his wife and family could not cope. He is now only 56.

"His condition is worsening all the time and he doesn't even recognize me now," said Denise, pinpointing one of the most upsetting aspects of the illness.

"He recently became a grandfather for the first time but doesn't understand who the baby is," she added. "He also doesn't talk any more, but I don't know whether that's because he can't or won't."

Denise's daughter Stacey Sutton is a care practitioner at the Gwern Alyn Care Home in Wrexham, which is part Pendine Park.

Some of the residents there suffer from Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia, and that is why Stacey's colleagues and home manager Cindy Clutton decided to organize a fundraising event in aid of the Wrexham and District branch of the Alzheimer's Disease Society.

A charity night at Bersham Sports and Social Club, featuring karaoke, a disco, auction and cabaret, raised £660.

Mario Kreft, the proprietor of Pendine Park, has matched the amount so the total being presented to branch chairman Dilli Cooper was £1,320.

The Society supports the relatives of Alzheimer's patients, who are invariably under continuous physical and mental strain, by



*Dilli Cooper receiving the Cheque for £663.32p from Gwern Alyn Manager Cindy Clutton and resident Alma Thomas.*

arranging outings and other breaks.

"Our aim is to enable carers to have at least one day out each month, and the money we raise helps us to do that.

"That is why we are so very, very grateful for this cheque," said Dilli, who became involved with the society when her best friend's brother was diagnosed with the illness at the age of 40.

"Most people have tended to think of Alzheimer's patients being elderly but more and more young people are being affected, and it can affect people in different ways," she said.

"There is no doubt that by John Suchet and author Terry Pratchett talking about it they are helping to raise awareness of it and the difficulties it can cause," she added.

Mario added: "The Alzheimer's Society does a wonderful job, funding research and providing information and support for families and is an extremely worthy recipient of the proceeds of this fantastic fund-raising effort."

# New drive for excellence in care

A ground-breaking agreement between Pendine Park and a university has been reached to drive up standards in the health and caring professions.

According to Glyndŵr University, they were particularly keen to hook up with us because we have a track record for innovation and excellence.

The two organisations signed a Memorandum of Understanding to build on the informal links that have developed between them in recent years.

It will enable Health and Social Care students to go on placements to Pendine Park with staff from the care organisation going in the opposite direction to study at the University.

The Memorandum is believed to be the first formal agreement of its type in Wales.

Professor Kate Sullivan, a Pro Vice Chancellor at the University, said: "The MOU will enable us to work together more formally than we have done in the past.

"Students from the University will be able to go to Pendine Park for placements and staff at Pendine Park will be able to access modules, programmes and courses here.

"For us at the university, it is important to work with partners in practice – the real world of practice is extremely important for our students.

"We also know of the value of Pendine Park and the excellence that is there – and how important it is for us to be linked into an organisation with such a reputation.

"Pendine Park are very keen on innovation and they strive for excellence in everything they do and that has been recognized nationally in the awards that they have won.

"We know that if our students go to Pendine Park they will experience the best of care – and that's what we wanted to have.

"The demands for social care are increasing and it's not just the elderly. Pendine Park also has excellent facilities for younger people with head injuries.

Pendine Park proprietor Mario Kreft said it was an important and memorable day.

He added: "The Memorandum of Understanding is the culmination of many discussions and I am delighted we have a formal structure to move forward and we are looking forward to working closely with Glyndŵr University in future.

"We strive for high standards and this arrangement will help to sustain and improve our practice in future.

"This initiative is very much about building quality into the system for the future, it's about trying to raise the awareness about how important the caring professions are and I hope this is going to be a very important step in that journey.



## Historic agreement protects the vulnerable

A historic agreement will protect the interests of vulnerable people across Wales.

The deal between care providers and local authorities is the first of its kind in the UK.

The Memorandum of Understanding was signed at a special ceremony in Cardiff in the presence of Gwenda Thomas AM, Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services in the Welsh Assembly Government.

It was brokered by Care Forum Wales, the leading professional association for all independent sector care providers in Wales, the Welsh Local Government Association and the Association of Directors of Social Services Cymru.

Also signed up to it are two major UK-wide professional bodies, the Registered Nursing Homes Association and the UK Home Care Association.

Pendine Park proprietor Mario Kreft, the Honorary Chief Executive of Care Forum Wales, played a central role in securing the Memorandum of Understanding.

He said: "This is the first time this has happened in the UK and I think it demonstrates the forward thinking of partnership working in Wales.

"The Memorandum of Understanding is essential to ensure that we can provide very responsive, high quality services to vulnerable people throughout Wales.

# A day in the life....

## Martin Brand

**Martin Brand is 32 and father of Charlotte, nine, and seven-year-old Owen. He's also a care practitioner with Independent Living Options at Pendine Park. He works mainly with 23-year old Alex Williams who has autism**

I normally get up about 7.45am and put the kettle on. Then I give the kids another 10 minutes before getting them up. They're usually very good and don't need much encouragement. Two or three times a week, after toast and cereal, I get them to school although occasionally I take them earlier for breakfast club. In my previous job as a production manager at a local plastics' firm I couldn't do that as my shifts started earlier.

I became a carer in April after being made redundant and really enjoy the work. My wife Ceri has worked for Independent Living Options (ILO), which is part of the Pendine Park care organisation, for eight years and my mum is a nurse so caring is there in the family. I thought it would mostly be looking after people in wheelchairs but it isn't like that. I help people who are capable of a lot to foster their own independence and that's what I really love about the job.

I've been working with Alex from the start and really enjoy it. We get out and about to the bowling alley at Eagles Meadow, Chester Zoo, the Blue Planet Aquarium and places like that. Alex really likes to be active.

At first I felt really guilty about being paid to do something that was so enjoyable but I kept reminding myself that somebody would do it so why not me? It's not exactly relaxing, I do have to keep an eye out for the unexpected, but it is a lot of fun. There's no personal care other than zipping up his coat.

Alex loves the zoo, especially the monkeys and the elephants – and I like those too.

Alex and I are very comfortable with each other and he's really come out of himself since April, but I know that there are others in his situation who do not have his opportunities

We go swimming on Tuesdays and Fridays and to the Haulfan Day Centre in Wrexham for drama on Fridays.

Alex loves water. His mum says he will stay in the bath for three hours if he can.

When we go to the Blue Planet Centre he loves walking in the underwater tunnel with the sharks swimming overhead. He will go very quiet and then he pretends to be shark and suddenly jumps on me which usually makes me jump and bang my head on the tunnel!

I get home around 4.20pm after telling Alex's parents what he's done during the day and start making the tea while my wife picks up the children. I don't mind cooking and we have a telly in the kitchen so I usually watch Friends or Two and a Half men. I like my comedies.

