

STAFF STORY



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Michelle counts the support of her team as the most important factor in putting residents first.

Michelle Gilbey-Mills started her career in mental health as a Bank Project Worker at Sanctuary Supported Living's Witham Mental Health Supported Housing service in 2017, which provides accommodation and support for people with mental health needs. In 2018, she began working at Nickleby Road, a supported housing service for adults with learning disabilities in Chelmsford, and in March 2020, she was promoted to her current role as Local Service Manager.

Leading the team at Nickleby Road means Michelle's job is always varied and interesting, and every day is different from the last. Her key responsibility is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the residents and staff, which has been particularly challenging during the Covid-19 pandemic, as many residents found it hard to understand social-distancing and lockdown rules.

Despite this, Michelle and her team have continued to work with residents to build their self-confidence, achieve their personal goals and increase their life skills – such as cooking, paying bills and maintaining a

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tenancy - with the aim of them moving on to live independently.

Michelle recently celebrated her two-year work anniversary at the service, with residents and staff organising a party in her honour, which included music, pizza, games and a celebration of their favourite lockdown memories.

Michelle said: “It was completely unexpected, it made me quite emotional because when you are in someone’s life every day, you don’t always see or realise what impact you have on that person – this brought it home to me again how important this job is, and how supported housing has the ability to completely turn someone’s life around – and I don’t just mean the residents, working here has changed my life for the better as well.”

She added, “Coming to work at Nickleby Road was a fantastic opportunity for me. I have the best residents and I love interacting with them, discussing their plans for the day. Equally, I have a very committed team - they are passionate about what they do and tackle everything with a positive attitude. Each one of them strives to give their absolute best to help support the residents. It’s also great to know

I also have the support of the Area Service Manager and other Local Service Managers when I need it - we are all there for each other. The residents and my team make me so proud and want to be here every day.”

