



Press Release

Immediate Release

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### **Tabley House Wins National Gardening Competition**

A NURSING home in Knutsford has been announced as the winner of a national gardening competition after its green fingered residents and staff produced a sensory and memory garden for all to enjoy.

The Cygnet in Bloom awards, in their inaugural year, were organised by Cygnet Social Care and gave all of its 67 social care services the opportunity to redevelop their garden areas and outdoor spaces.

Three regional winners were announced before Tabley House, on Tabley Lane, Knutsford, was awarded the coveted top accolade of national winner. The nursing home was awarded a £500 prize to spend on developing the garden area further.

Gareth Williams, CEO of Cygnet Social Care, explained: "When we launched Cygnet in Bloom back in June, we encouraged the services to use whatever outdoor space they have, to not just enhance and improve the outside area of their services, but to also create a garden that tells a story.

"We wanted both staff and residents to work together on a fun and engaging activity and to take pleasure in being outdoors with nature. Whether they considered themselves to be green-fingered or a complete novice, we wanted everyone to put on their gardening gloves, take up their trowel and give it a go.

"I have been genuinely thrilled by the effort everyone has gone to in embracing this challenge. The creativity and inspiration the teams have shown, to repurpose, upcycle and grow from seed in just one month has been truly magical.

"It's been a real joy to go through all of the entries, photos, videos and presentations. It was almost impossible to choose our winners, and I really hope everyone who took part enjoyed the experience as much as I and the operations directors enjoyed looking at all the entries.

Talking about the Tabley House entry, Gareth added: "Tabley's sensory garden has everything that you could wish for.

"Colour, vibrancy, wind chimes, a solar panel water feature, a range of fragrant planting, a herb garden and most importantly a memory garden, where residents are able to customise their own pebbles to record their own special memory.

"The team and residents at Tabley should be very proud of their achievements."

Tabley's garden was already home to a memory tree, planted by the team a few years ago in memory of a staff member who died from cancer.

Spurred on by the Cygnet in Bloom Challenge, residents, staff and family members all came together to share their ideas for the new "sensory and memory" garden.

The old flower bed is now an accessible place for all Tabley residents, their family and friends to enjoy, no matter their mobility status.

Tabley House manager Karen Lynskey said: "The aim of our sensory space is to stimulate residents to use all their senses to gain a positive, interactive and fun experience.

"We have used bright and vivid colours, along with reflective surfaces to make the zones stand out from afar, including solar lighting for the evenings.

"The wind chimes in the trees, the solar-panel water feature, and the natural sounds of the Tabley grounds make for a relaxing atmosphere. We also have a range of fragrant planting from lavender to lemongrass."

Once the herb garden has been established, the team plan to use the herbs in the kitchen to enhance the flavours of the resident's meals. There are lots of different textures across each section, from the coarseness of the sand and shells within the seaside area to the smooth reflective surfaces of the sphere zone, the natural feel of the plants and the water feature.

In addition, residents have created a memory garden zone, in which they customise their own pebbles to record their own special memory. They can also use the trees to hang personalised memories such as notes, spheres, lights and memory catchers. The team have created comfortable seating areas around the sensory zone which is surrounded by seasonal flowers.

Karen added: "When a resident passes, we would like to invite family members to write a name or message on a pebble, placing it in the Remembrance Garden. They can, if they wish, light a candle and staff on duty will be with them in support and to pay our respects.

"We would like to thank Gareth and the team for the opportunity to develop our Sensory and Memory Garden even further and make it a vibrant place for all to enjoy."

The Remembrance section will be officially opened by three female residents who have all lost their spouses at Tabley within recent months.

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**Notes to Editors:**

For more information, please contact Gemma Attew, External Communications Manager, on [gemmaattew@cygnethealth.co.uk](mailto:gemmaattew@cygnethealth.co.uk) or 07718 244811.