**Oral History Transcription - Anita - Alder House**

**Rewind – Leonard Cheshire Disability, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund**

**Filmed** – 2017

**Start of transcription**

[Text on screen: What is your background?]

00:11 [Anita]: I had a lifetime of nursing. I started nursing when I was 17. Worked through orthopeadics, general nursing, midwifery, district nursing and then veered off into residential care.

[Text on screen: When did you start working at Alder House?]

00:36 - 1992. And my first day of contract was 1st August, and it was just after Leonard Cheshire died. I came here as Head of Care and that was the role I held for my entire employment here. When I applied for the job, I hadn't been here. I appl... I phoned up because it was, the job had been advertised in the local paper and I phoned up and they suggested I came up to get an application form. So I drove up here and I drove in the entrance and down the driveway and I looked at the place and said I want to work here. And that I think, you know, it's such a beautiful place. The setting is beautiful and I've never regretted coming here at all.

[Text on screen: How has Alder House changed over the years?]

01:42 - When I first came there were fifteen residents, all of whom needed to use a wheelchair. But now, with it being extended twice, we've now, we're now up to, what are we up to now? 21? 22? I can't remember, but. But that's the biggest way it's changed. The home itself is bigger, and the level of care needed for the residents here has changed as well.

[Text on screen: What are your memories of the residents?]

02:19 - I remember Gwen. Gwen Garrett. She was a lady who had spent the whole of her life in institutional care. She lived in a home, she wasn't on the ground floor, she... the home itself had high walls inside and the windows were high up, and she couldn't see out, so seeing trees and flowers was not part of her world and she was confined to it... it was a ward, so there were several beds in the ward and she was pushed around in a wheelchair, pushed by somebody else. So she only went where somebody else could take her. When she came here, she had her own room, she had patio doors that opened to the garden and she could see trees and grass and flowers, and she was given an electric wheelchair and she could take herself around, where she wanted to go and that gave her that level of independence that she had never experienced in her life. And she was a lovely lady, she really was, and I just, you know, I remember her very well indeed. She.. one year it was coming up to Mother's Day and she decided, it was her idea, she wanted to do a Mother's Day card to all the carers and she wrote this card, and she wrote it to 'All my Mums'.

[Text on screen: How do you feel about your time at Alder House?]

04:16 - It's an important part of my life. I came to work here 25 years ago, so it, it's a big lump and I've got good friends here. Amongst the volunteers, I know some of the staff, not as many as I used to, because they've changed. I know some of the residents, again, not as many as I used to but they're my friends and I can't see me stopping coming.

**End of transcription**