

December 2021

Newsletter



Message from our Director



Hello to you all. The nights have drawn in and I'm welcoming some cosy nights, wrapping presents and enjoying a glass of baileys when I can! Our office Christmas tree is up, we've treated ourselves to a new tree and pretty blue, silver and glass baubles this year.

We have an exciting 2022 ahead of us as we move in our new offices in LS16. We'll be hosting an official opening in the new year so look out for your personal invitation to this.

We were absolutely delighted with our award wins at the Great British Care Awards 2021, you can find out more about the awards winners in this edition.

Look out for Christmas treats delivered by your Bluebirds this December, just a little thank you for your continued custom, from us to you,

You'll find a customer survey enclosed with this newsletter and a pre-paid envelope. We would be so grateful for your feedback and even though we ask for your feedback at your reviews, we do like to carry out an annual survey to capture our customers views too. Let us know if we're getting right but also let us know if you think there's anything specific we can do better. We very much value your feedback and will let you know what we're doing in response to what you say, in our next newsletter.

I do hope you enjoy this Christmas edition of our newsletter and I wish you all a warm, cosy and safe festive period and a Happy new Year.

Best Wishes,

Sherril

This issue features.....

- Double award success
- Keeping well this winter
- Companionship visits
- Welcoming new Bluebirds
- Christmas biscuits recipe
- Book club
- Supporting local football



Bluebird Care Leeds North Care Assistants In Double Award Success at the Great British Care Awards 2021

Bluebird Care Leeds North had an evening to remember as two of their Care Assistants were named triumphant at the Yorkshire and Humberside Great British Care Awards on Friday 12th November. The Great British Care Awards are a series of regional events throughout the UK that celebrates brilliance across the care sector. Paying tribute to individuals who have demonstrated outstanding excellence within their field, the awards are highly coveted by all within the industry.

Amongst the winners on the night were Care Assistants, Raz Ali and Jo Godfrey. Raz was named victorious for the Care Newcomer Award, an award highlighting the fantastic efforts of an individual new to the care sector. Raz initially joined in May 2021 following recommendation and encouragement by his mother, and fellow award-winning Care Assistant, Rukhsana Ali. Rukhsana was awarded the Home Care Worker award at the 2020 Great British Care Awards. The awards are a touching accolade to this exceptionally caring family.

Since joining Bluebird Care, Raz has flourished in his role. Despite joining amidst the trials and tribulations of COVID-19, He threw himself into his work and has established himself as a key member of the team. Valued highly by both his colleagues, and the customer he supports, his incredible work over the past six months was the decisive factor in his award success. The panel highlighted Raz's attention to detail, noting the countless times he has made his customer feel special, from a candle lit dinner, to taking them on a sunny walk. One judge concluded that they would love if he cared for a member of their family in the same way.

Alongside Raz was winner, Jo Godfrey. A core member at Bluebird Care Leeds North, Jo has been delivering exceptional care and support to customers for over seven years.

In celebration of her continued dedication, compassion, and selflessness towards others, the Care Assistant was named triumphant for the Home Care Worker Award. The judges praised Jo for the extra care she gives to customers, whether it be birthday flowers or surprising them with their favourite biscuits. all whilst ensuring her customers are safe and well cared for in their own homes.

The celebrations did not stop there for Bluebird Care, with another three members of our team receiving high praise on the night.

Read on to hear more about our high commendations...





Winner - The Home Care Worker Award

Congratulations to Joanne Godfrey our amazing Care Assistant for winning the Home Care Worker award at the Great British Care Awards. Many of you will know Joanne who has been a Bluebird since 2014. The judges were so impressed with Joanne and said "Joanne is inspiring and compassionate. It was an absolute pleasure to talk to Joanne and hear about her clients and the extra care she gives to her service users whether it be birthday flowers or surprising them with their favourite biscuits". We are so proud of Joanne for winning this prestigious award and for the great care she gives to our customers.

Pictured Joanne Godfrey, Care Assistant with her prestigious award.



Winner - The Care Newcomer Award

Congratulations to Razwan Ali our Live in Carer for winning the Care Newcomer Award. Raz joined us in July 2021 and has made a huge impact on our customers life since then. The judges said "Raz is so personable and he genuinely cares. Raz goes out of his way to help this customer and give her the best life. Raz gave lots of examples of things he did to make the service user feel special and young. I would love if he cared for a member of my family". Razwan follows in the steps of his mother Rukhsana Ali our Care Assistant who many of you will know. Rukhsana won the Home Care Worker award in 2020 so it is clear that providing exceptional care runs in the family.



Pictured on right above: Razwan Ali, Live in Carer collecting his award on the night.



Highly Commended - The Home Care Registered Manager Award

We are so proud of our leader Sophie Bellwood for achieving a high commendation for the Home Care Registered Manager award. The judges said "Sophie is an incredible mix of joy, passion and team work. A true champion of care, an example for everyone around her and so motivated to excel herself and bring others up". We couldn't agree more. Well done Sophie for doing so well in this highly competitive category.

Pictured: Sophie Bellwood, Highly Commended for the Home Care Registered Manager Award





Highly Commended: The Home Care Coordinator Award

Our very own Claire Maybury also achieved a high commendation in the Home Care Coordinator award. The judges commented that Claire is very patient and has great communication and listening skills. They were impressed with how Claire handles the coordination and planning involved in the role. We are so proud of Claire for not only this amazing achievement but also for her 12 years of service at Bluebird Care. Well done Claire.

Pictured above: Claire Maybury, Highly Commended for the Home Care Coordinator Award



Highly Commended: The Care Employer Award

Sheree Jenman, our Director was also highly commended in the Care Employer Award category. This award celebrates employers' commitment to care and excellent service. Sheree demonstrated considerable acumen, entrepreneurial flair and commitment to the well-being of our team.

Sheree strongly believes the best care is delivered by carers who are well supported and cared for by their employer. The judges were so impressed by Sheree's ability to communicate our company values to them. They felt that our values alone would ensure that we will maintain consistent high-quality performance in the care we deliver. Congratulations to Sheree for this amazing achievement in a highly coveted category.

Pictured: Sheree Jenman & awards presenter, Highly Commended for the Care Employer Award.





Christmas Biscuits Recipe



Ingredients

- 100g/3½oz unsalted butter, softened at room temperature
- 100g/3½oz caster sugar
- 1 free-range egg, lightly beaten
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 275g/10oz plain flour
- **To decorate**
- 400g/14oz icing sugar
- 3-4 tbsp water
- 2-3 drops food colourings
- Edible glitter

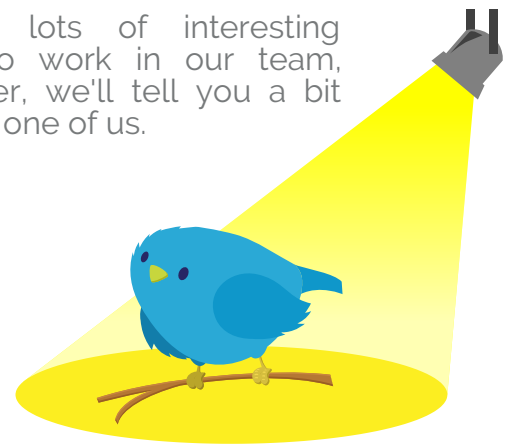
Method

- Preheat the oven to 190C/375F/Gas 5. Line a baking tray with greaseproof paper.
- Cream the butter and sugar together in a bowl until pale, light and fluffy.
- Beat in the egg and vanilla extract, a little at a time, until well combined.
- Stir in the flour until the mixture comes together as a dough.
- Roll the dough out on a lightly floured work surface to a thickness of 1cm/½in.
- Using biscuit cutters or a glass, cut biscuits out of the dough and carefully place onto the baking tray. To make into Christmas tree decorations, carefully make a hole in the top of the biscuit using a straw.
- Bake the biscuits for 8-10 minutes, or until pale golden-brown.
- Set aside to harden for 5 minutes, then cool on a wire rack.
- For the icing, sift the icing sugar into a large mixing bowl and stir in enough water to create a smooth mixture.
- Stir in the food colouring.
- Carefully spread the icing onto the biscuits using a knife and sprinkle over the glitter. Set aside until the icing hardens.

Spotlight on a Bluebird...

There are lots of interesting people who work in our team, each quarter, we'll tell you a bit more about one of us.

Danielle Midgley Care Assistant



I WORK IN CARE BECAUSE...

I want to help and support others who are in need of it. I've always wanted to work in care. It gives me job satisfaction to be able to go home knowing I helped people and made them happy.

OTHER JOBS I'VE HAD... Fast food, retail and management

IN MY SPARE TIME I ENJOY... I love to garden and I teach silversmithing with my Dad on my days off.

I LIKE TO WATCH... Comedies, Sci-Fi, Disney and Dramas.

MY FAVOURITE FILM IS... Mulan.

MY FAVOURITE PLACE TO VISIT IS... Calverley Woods.

AN INTERESTING FACT ABOUT ME IS... I hand-make silver jewelry.

WELCOME

A warm welcome to our newest team members!



Steven Sharrock
Care Assistant



Emma Field
Care Assistant



Safura Naseer
Care Assistant

Keeping well this Winter

Changes to our bodies as we get older mean that cold weather and winter bugs affect us more than they used to. And this winter, we know we'll need to live with coronavirus as well as other respiratory viruses.



What you can do

As we age, our immune systems become weaker and less able to fight off viruses. We gradually lose the muscle mass that helps us keep warm and moving about. And the cold makes health conditions harder to manage – it can even affect our hearts and circulation.

The good news is that there's lots we can do to help keep ourselves well in winter.

Keep Moving

Try not to sit still for more than an hour at a time. Even a little bit of activity now and then can help you maintain strength and mobility. This can be easier said than done. You might well have found that you're not feeling as fit as you did before the coronavirus pandemic started – if so, you're not alone. Lots of us are finding things we used to do less easy.

Eat Well

Spending more time indoors and doing fewer of the things we enjoy means it can be difficult to keep up the motivation to prepare meals. But it's good to try and keep to a routine. The main thing to remember is that it's better to eat a bit of what you fancy – even if it's just a slice of cake – than to eat nothing.

It's a good idea to keep your cupboards stocked with some basics just in case you can't get out to the shops – whether due to illness or bad weather.

Make sure your home is warm enough

Try to heat your home to a steady and comfortable temperature throughout the day. Close the curtains at dusk to help keep heat in. It's a good idea to keep your bedroom window closed at night when the weather is at its coldest.

Stop the spread of germs

As well as getting vaccinated, there are some other simple measures we can take to reduce the spread of illness – which is especially important this year. Regularly washing your hands with soap and water is one of the best ways to stop germs spreading. It's a good idea to keep some antibacterial gel with you when you're out and about too.

Wrap up well and stay stocked up

Wearing plenty of layers is the best way to keep warm in winter. If you're heading out, make sure you take some extra layers, even if you don't need them immediately – the temperature can drop significantly when the sun goes in.

We're here for you this Christmas...

Our Bluebirds are looking forward to supporting you all throughout the festive period. Remember, our team work around the clock 365 days a year so we won't let you down at Christmas. We're still here for you and love spreading a little Christmas cheer at your visits, dressing up in our festive clothing and accessories.

Why not see if you still have the novelty glasses we gifted you last Christmas and surprise your Care Assistant by wearing them when they arrive?



Pictured: Above - Joanne, Care Assistant, Centre - Julie, Care Assistant both ready for care at Christmas. Far right one of our beautiful customers sporting her novelty glassed gifted by Bluebird Care last Christmas

Thank you to those of you who have sent in any advance cancellations over Christmas. Any cancellations received now will be charged in line with our cancellation policy. You can find this in your terms and conditions in your Bluebird Care folder at home. If you need to make any changes to your usual care requirements over the festive period then please call us at the office on 0113 258 9677.

Christmas Gifts Policy



We just wanted to mention that should you want to buy a member of our team a Christmas gift we are only authorised to accept gifts up to the value of £10 in line with our Professional Boundaries Policy. Our Care Assistants are not authorised to accept cash gifts under any circumstances.

Whilst we do appreciate that you may wish to provide a seasonal gift to your carers, please keep in mind the £10 limit and do not feel obliged to provide any gift at all. This policy is in place to safeguard our customers from feeling that they need to provide gifts or additional payment to our colleagues. It also protects the professional integrity of our Bluebirds.

Please do not feel obliged to buy any of us a gift, it's not expected and there is honestly no greater gift than spending time with our lovely customers each day.

Farewell to Áine



We say a fond farewell to Áine this month. Áine is our Recruitment Officer and she is leaving to enjoy some family time over Christmas and then to pursue a career as a HR Manager after achieving her Masters in HR Management last year. Áine has been a wonderful Bluebird and an amazing source of support to our team and new carers. We'll miss her and we wish her well for her next venture.

We're on the move....

We're very excited to be moving office premises early next year. We're moving to office premises in LS16 to suit the needs of our growing team. We also wanted to have more space to host small events and get together for customers, staff and people we work jointly with such as local health professionals. The new space will enable us to offer more social activities for our customers too.



We have a large job on our hands to get it furnished and ready for our team. Once that's done, we'll be hosting an official opening, so look out for your personal invitation in the post!

Pictured above: A sneak peek of one of the rooms in our new office.

New COVID Restrictions

I'm sure most of you will have seen in the news but we now have temporary and precautionary measures to prevent the spread of the new COVID-19 Omicron variant, from Tuesday 30 November 2021. Face coverings will be compulsory in shops and other settings such as banks, post offices and hairdressers, as well as on public transport. Our Care Assistants will continue to wear their Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as normal but we just wanted to make you aware if you have plans out of the house.



Customer Satisfaction Survey



You may have noticed a Customer Survey enclosed with your newsletter this month. Your feedback means everything to us so we would love it if you could complete it and return it using the prepaid envelope.

Alternatively you can ask your Care Assistant to photograph your survey and they can email it to us which will save you having to post it back. Thank you so much for your continued support. We'll update you with any actions and improvements we make in response to your feedback, in the new year.

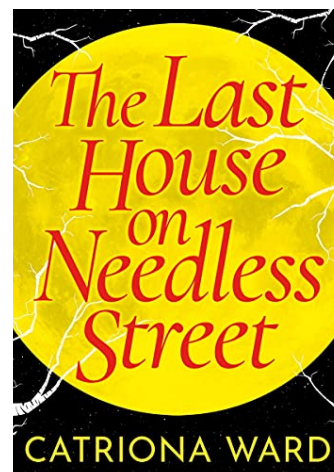
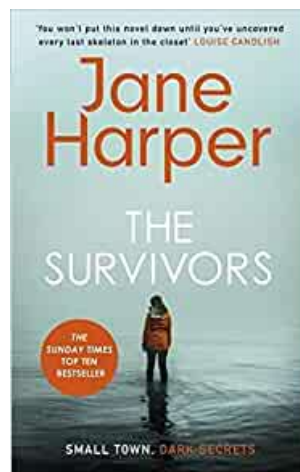
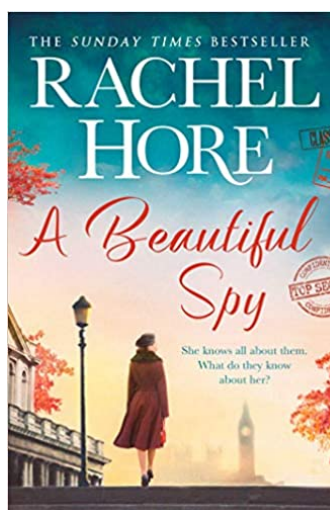
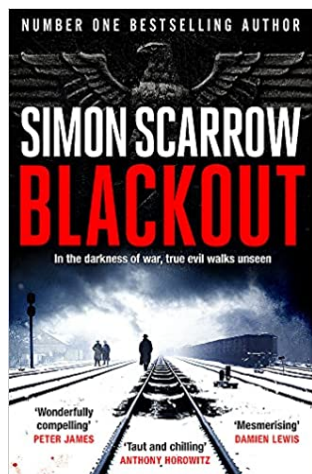
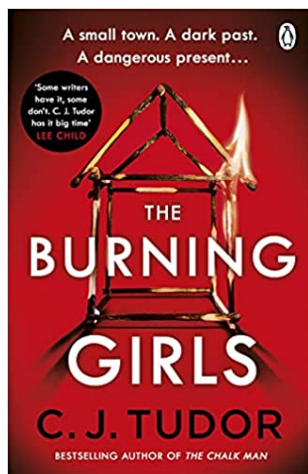
Jenny introduces "Bonnie"



Our lovely Care Assistant, Jenny (pictured above), has a new family member and she's just so cute we had to share a photo with you. Here's Bonnie the little french bulldog. We can't wait to meet Bonnie when she's allow to go out for walks and visit us at the office.

The Richard and Judy Christmas Book Club 2021

Six new titles chosen by our favourite book-loving couple to get us reading.



Would you take a minute to leave us a 5 star review on [homecare.co.uk](https://www.homecare.co.uk)

You may have noticed that our Care Professionals have left you a free-post review card in your home. We would be really grateful if you could take a couple of minutes to complete this card, seal it and post it. If you would like your Care Assistant to post this for you, once you have sealed it, they will be happy to do so. If you use the internet and have an email address, you could leave you review on www.homecare.co.uk/submitreview Thank you in advance!



Congratulations to our new Customer Relations Officer



We are delighted to announce that **Annette Windle** has been promoted to Customer Relations Officer having worked with us as a Care Assistant. Annette has worked for Bluebird Care since July 2021 bringing with her a wealth of experience from her safeguarding roles at schools and the prestigious Opera North. Annette will now be based in the office but will still be seeing you at reviews and home visits. Annette has settled in so well to her new role and is passionate about making a difference.

Companionship Visits

Would you like to get out of the house more and see the beautiful Yorkshire countryside? If the answer is yes, then please let us know as our Care Assistants are happy to accompany you on walks or car journeys during your visit. We just love this photo of our customer enjoying the great outdoors. If you are interested in this service then please call the office on 0113 258 9677 to get this arranged.



We're sponsoring children's grass roots football.

We're proud to be the official sponsors of **Stanningley Albion Juniors Football Club**, a local community football club offering football coaching from age 4 through to senior age.

Bluebird Care Leeds North funds the players kits as it can be difficult for some parents to afford the kits for their children, which can sometimes lead to barriers to children getting involved in team sports.

Many of you will have fond memories of being part of a sports team or club and may still enjoy friendships formed from these types of activities.

Being part of a sports team helps children learn important life skills such as team work and resilience as well as football being lots of fun and keeping them fit. We wish Stanningley Albion Juniors FC the very best of luck this season and look forward to hearing all about their progress.



Photos from our Team Meeting October 2021



Some photos from our team meeting in October, our first face to face meeting since restrictions were lifted! (All team members were Covid tested before the meeting)

We even had a visit from Missy who is our Live in Carer Ann's gorgeous dog.



It was our first face to face meeting since Covid and we loved getting together. We had team training through fun games with fab prizes and even had our own version of the Great British bake off!

