

The Silver Line

helpline for older people

0800 4 70 80 90

The Silver Line Helpline

Here at Bluebird Care we are promoting The Silver Line Helpline to our customers across the large and rural geographical area we cover.

Founded by Dame Esther Rantzen, The Silver Line is the only free, national and confidential helpline for older



people, available 365-days-a-year, 24-hours-a-day.

Dame Esther said: "Since the death of my husband Desmond Wilcox, I know what it's like to feel lonely – and so I also know what a difference it makes to be able to speak to a friendly voice."

"There is still a stigma to admitting you're lonely, but I believe we should all be honest about our loneliness, so that others can help."

You can call the Silver Line to ask about local services, talk in confidence, get some friendly advice, or simply have a chat.

Sophie Andrews, CEO of The Silver Line said there is an acute issue of loneliness in rural areas.

"Loss of some kind is at the heart of many people's loneliness, obviously that includes issues like the loss of a partner or other loved one; or losing your good health.

"But in rural areas like Shropshire, even the simple loss of your driving licence, or loss of a local bus service, can have a big effect and leave older people isolated in their homes as they can no longer get out and about."

In addition to the 24-hour helpline, services offered by The Silver Line include:

- Silver Line Friends: a weekly chat on the phone with a volunteer Silver Line Friend;
- Silver Letters: an exchange of regular letters and correspondence with a volunteer Silver Line Friend;
- Silver Circles: a regular group call on a range of subjects that interest the callers; and
- Silver Line Connects: help with informing and connecting an older person with national and local services.

Some 68% of calls to the helpline are after 6pm or at weekends when other services for older people are closed. The Silver Line is there when other services aren't.

The charity, which relies entirely on donations to run its helpline and friendship services, recently received its one-millionth call to the helpline since national launch.

To find out more call 0800 470 80 90 or go to www.thesilverline.org.uk



We love hearing from you!

This month one of our customer's sons has written to us all the way from Massachusetts in the USA to thank us for the care we provide for his mother.

"Bluebird does exactly what it says on the packaging...they care. They have provided the highest level of care for my mother for many years

and their staff have 'gone the extra mile' on so many occasions to maintain her quality of life.

"In the end, it's about the people, from the Director Ian Barnes, to the individual carers – they have a passion for doing the right things and doing them right."

Thank you!
Philip Ashcroft



Happy to HELP

If you want to contact us, for any reason, you can find all of our contact information below. So please keep it in a safe place!

Write to us or visit us at:

Bluebird Care Shropshire,
3 The Parade,
Lansdowne Road, Bayston Hill,
Shrewsbury, Shropshire,
SY3 0HT

Email: shropshire@bluebirdcare.co.uk
Website: www.bluebirdcare.co.uk/shropshire

@careShropshire bluebird-care-shropshire

Where's Ted hiding?

Ted, our friendly office bear is hiding in 6 places in this newsletter.

Can YOU find him?



BLUEBIRD CARE Today

www.bluebirdcare.co.uk/shropshire
Care in YOUR Community
CARE BUSINESS OF THE YEAR 2014



News from Bluebird Care
Shropshire | Winter 2017

In this issue: Special focus on long service awards Silver Line helpline for older people We love hearing from you!



Welcome to our first newsletter of 2017 – a special edition showcasing our new long service awards – and you can still find Ted! We're looking forward to the coming year and hope you're all looking forward to ringing in some positive changes.

At the end of 2016 we underwent our inspection by the Care Quality Commission, the independent regulator for health and social care in England. I am pleased that we were highlighted as being 'Good' across the board, meaning we offer safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-lead care.

The report highlighted that ALL of the 13 customers spoken to told inspectors they felt safe and comfortable with our care staff being in their homes.

One customer said: "I feel safe. I feel comfortable with them because I know them". Another said: "They never miss a visit. I am usually sent the same staff member, which I like." We were told that our customers felt staff were 'well matched' to them and they completed the tasks they

needed to at each care call. One person said: "Everyone is marvellous. They do everything they should. They do their job well." And we can't ask for higher praise than that really!

One of the things we pride ourselves on is providing care plans tailored to each individual. The report found that people were treated with "dignity and respect" (our favourite words!) and were encouraged to maintain their independence as much as possible. Customers are supported to identify how they want their care delivered and staff provide it in their preferred way. One customer said: "Someone came and assessed me before

my care started. We talked about what I needed help with and how I wanted this to be done".

Inspectors also spoke to our care staff and one said "Training is good and if I need any specific training I can talk to the registered manager or supervisors about it." We care about our staff and have developed a long service award initiative (which you can read all about inside) and this was also praised. One staff member told inspectors: "We all are very grateful for this and it shows us that we do matter to the senior management team and the company." And they do!

Ian Barnes, Director.



Good old fashioned service

Long Service Awards

Our staff are the lifeblood of our company and we have created several schemes to help our care staff get the best from their employment with us. The latest is our 'Long Service Award', which is given to any carer who has worked for us for a period of 12 months or more.

We have now given nearly 20 awards in the shape of a £150 gift experience of each recipient's choice! We want to thank our care staff for their continued hard work, and help them progress in their career with us through our 'career pathway', with on-going training and support as we aim to promote from within!

We offer a great package with health care and a pension and guaranteed full or part-time hours over shift patterns.

To find out more, call Recruitment Manager, **Ceri Eades, on 01743 874343.**



Zoe Vickers

Zoe has worked for us for three years.

She wanted to become a carer because she enjoys "helping people and the variety of work is always different." She is currently working on her national diploma Level 3 in Health & Social Care in Adults.

"When I make a customer happy, or hear about their life and what they did, it's my favourite part of the job. **Every day makes me happy because I'm making a difference to a customer's life.** I would definitely recommend working for Bluebird Care as it is so rewarding.

"I was really pleased to receive this award and didn't realise the time had gone so fast and I have been here three years!"

Zoe chose a spa day in Chester and she took her mum. They found the experience very relaxing!

Janice Edwards

Janice has worked with us for two and half years.

She became a carer because when her father was poorly she looked after him and he told her she would make a great one.

"I am very keen to start my NVQ 2 and to pursue my career within the care industry. I would definitely recommend care work as it's a worthwhile job and you wouldn't find another job where you change someone's day like you do in care.

"You mean a lot to some people when they see you, a friendly face.

"I felt very pleased to receive this award – it made me feel worthy. I went to the Aberystwyth for a weekend away with my husband, which was very nice and relaxing!"



Lavanya Venkatesh

Lavanya has been with the company for 3 years.

"I've always liked to help people and to think I'm a kind person. Some customers don't have family and the only people who they may see in a day is a care worker so I always make sure I make a difference to someone's day.

"I enjoy helping people on a daily basis. When somebody is vulnerable I can go into their home and change their mood, helping to make their day happy.

"One day I went to a customer I see regularly. She was very distraught because her stair lift was not working and she was on the phone to an engineer. I noticed a switch was off so I turned it on and the stair lift worked! Hoorah! The customer was extremely pleased and wouldn't stop laughing!"

"I felt recognised by my employer receiving this award, and it was very kind gesture."

Lavanya chose to visit Longleat Safari Park with her husband, and two children. "It was just so lovely to spend a great day out with my family."

Mary Tupper

Mary has worked for us for a whopping eight years!

She has been a carer ever since she left school, so is very experienced.

"I love meeting different people and the variety of the job. I was working with a lady who had dementia and we had to wash her legs. I always wondered why she kept looking at my socks, and one day she lifted my socks up and kept looking at them and brought her a big smile every time she looked at them. Little things like that make you realise you are making a difference.

"I felt very excited and valued when I received my award!"

Mary chose to take her daughter on a spa day.



Sarah Adams

Sarah has been with us for five years.

She became a carer because she wanted a change in a career, and a job that was rewarding. It's a career she would recommend to others, particularly at Bluebird Care because they do a "very good job!" She is currently doing a course in mental health awareness alongside her work.

"I enjoy making people smile and making them feel safe. One of the most fulfilling things which has happened for me working at Bluebird Care was when I won a regional award for my care work. **I felt very appreciated and valued when I was given this award."**

Sarah chose a weekend in Blackpool with her partner where they stayed in a lovely hotel.

Amy Archer

Amy has been with the company for two and half years.

She wanted to become a carer simply because she likes caring for people!

"I work with lots of lovely people and I find the job very rewarding.

"I was very happy to receive this award and I went to see Noel Gallagher live in Liverpool with my partner. It was fantastic and I would definitely see him again."

"I want to do further training and I can't imagine myself doing any other job which is this rewarding."



Pamela Howell

Pamela has been a carer with us for two and half years.

"I've always had an interest in people, particularly the elderly, so this suits me well. I love finding out the unexpected about people, and finding out about the lives that they've led. I would like to develop my knowledge in the care sector by attending regular training sessions.

"One customer I work with has dementia, but she always, always remembers my name, which means a lot to me.

"I had a spa day with my daughter and it was ultimate in relaxation! It was a fantastic experience, I would highly recommend it. I was very excited and pleased to have a day just for me and my daughter to spend quality time together.

Other care workers who have received the award include:

Ann Hardman, Justine Russell, Zoe Vickers, Cath Morris, Sam Scott, Kerry Brayne, Karen Guy, Meryl Hughes, Carol Gretton and Wendy Thomas. Among them they chose treats including weekends away in Aberdovey, Aberystwyth and Southport, day trips to Alton Towers, the West Midlands Safari Park and a night at the theatre to see Mama Mia!

A big thanks to our amazing colleagues!