



MERRY CHRISTMAS

As the year draws to a close at Bluebird Care, we are preparing for the festive season. Whilst our dedicated staff members balance their work with preparations for celebrations at home, we, as directors, take this time to reflect on the year, and set our goals for 2024. It's an opportunity to acknowledge the hard work, the commitment, and the compassion of our team and express gratitude to our customers for welcoming us into their lives. Over the past 12 years, we've provided care for over 2000 people across different areas, something we are very proud of.

Our diverse team members, who have joined us from various parts of the world, have become integral to our Bluebird Care Family. As a Dutch foreigner, I've enjoyed learning about different cultures and their Christmas celebrations. I've gathered some wonderful stories from our staff about their traditions, which I'm excited to share with you in this newsletter, as well as, a reflection on some of our favourite moments this year, and our plans for the first quarter of 2024.

May this Christmas bring you moments of joy, love, and togetherness, and we send our best wishes to you for a very Happy New Year.



Hugo & Bernadette Mills
Managing Directors



Christmas Celebrations in Kenya

The celebrations kick off on December 20th, with everyone returning to the village where most grandparents reside. Christmas day is celebrated at the eldest grandmother's house, where the entire family shares a meal. Men roast the meat, and women cook rice.

More than 50 people may come together to share meals and to sing and dance.

On Christmas Day, everyone dresses in their best clothes. Wealthy families may gift their children new clothes and shoes. Festivities continue until around New Year in the villages.

- by Sarah K (New Forest)



Yuletide in the Philippines

In this country, the tradition is to start displaying Christmas decorations from September onwards.

This custom is rooted in the Philippines' Catholic history, dating back to the 300 years of Colonial rule.

Christmas trees and ornaments adorn homes and shops until end of January, marked by the Epiphany.

Spanish words like Pasko, meaning Christmas, are used in Filipino dialects.

The Christmas Eve "Noche Buena" follows midnight mass, featuring delicious food and gift openings. Christmas Day includes church visits and paying respects to elders through "Pagmamano." This is where the younger family members will be gifted often money by their grandparents.



The Polish Christmas Eve

In Poland, the primary Christmas feast is enjoyed on Christmas Eve, referred to as "Kolacja wigilijna" or Christmas Eve supper. A longstanding tradition is that no food is consumed until the first star graces the evening sky! Adding a touch of folklore, the Christmas Spider tale recounts a family unable to afford decorations for their Christmas Tree. To their surprise on Christmas morning, the tree was adorned with strands of silver and gold resembling a spider's web. This story has led to the belief that finding a spider on a Christmas Tree brings good luck.



Last but not least, the Zimbabwean Christmas traditions

For most people, Christmas day starts with a Church service. After the Church service, everyone has a party in their homes and people go from house to house, visiting all of their family and friends on the way !
At every house you have something to eat, exchange presents and enjoy the party. To refuse one's food is impolite. Their special food eaten at Christmas is chicken with rice. Chicken is considered a delicacy in Zimbabwe. Families gift each other food items and sweets.. For all families , it is important to celebrate the birth of Christ and have direct and remote family members together over this special time.



2023 HIGHLIGHTS!

As the New Year fast approaches, we want to reflect on some of our 2023 highlights here at Bluebird Care.



In 2023, we've delighted in hosting customer coffee mornings to support Macmillan, a Royal Tea dance commemorating the King's Coronation, 'Wear it Pink' days in solidarity with Breast Cancer Awareness, and staff BBQs in honour of National Carers Week! We've also engaged in team-building activities with our care staff, including bowling evenings and dinners together.

At Bluebird Care, our community engagement is at the heart of what we do. We want to connect with the various local groups, and we will endeavour to raise funds for the groups so they can continue their great work.. We want to run wellbeing activity groups .in each areas. We will keep you informed of our plans & welcome any suggestions for events or local charities we could work with in 2024.



NEW YEAR, NEW GOALS!

We are excited for the new year & ready to set new goals. Here are just some of the plans, we have in store for the first quarter of 2024..

- **Collaboration with Hope Street (Southampton)** - Hope Street is a local service helping young mothers from disadvantaged backgrounds overcome past trauma and enhance their skills. We strive to collaborate with Hope Street, guiding these women towards careers in care and providing additional training for those aspiring to become Care Assistants.
- **Working with Memory Works (New Forest)** - Memory Works raises awareness of Cognitive Stimulation Therapy (CST) and supports those adapting to dementia in the community. CST aims to engage minds in a friendly group setting. If interested to join any of these groups, let your office team know, as we aim to introduce customers to the benefits of Memory Groups. as well as hoping to set up activities clubs in the community. as well.
- **National Dementia Week May 2024** - We're dedicated to backing Alzheimer's Society's efforts to raise dementia awareness. Our branches will host fundraising customer events for Dementia Week, and we value your input. Let us know if you'd like a coffee and cake morning, or bingo, or even an Tea Dance.
- **Solent Dolphin Boat Trips** - We've partnered with a fantastic Waterside charity providing boat trips for disabled and homebound individuals. They serve over 3,000 passengers annually on about 300 trips. In the New Year, we aim to collaborate with Solent Dolphin, using local events to raise donations and give our customers the chance to experience these exciting boat trips!
- **Upcoming National Days** - In the first quarter of 2024 alone, we aim to highlight some important national days at Bluebird Care & do our bit to support them, including - **World Cancer Day (04/02), Employee Appreciation Day (01/03), International Women's Day (08/03)** and many more!

As noted earlier, your feedback and input is invaluable to us. So if you have any ideas for future events we could run or groups we can support, please let your office team know.

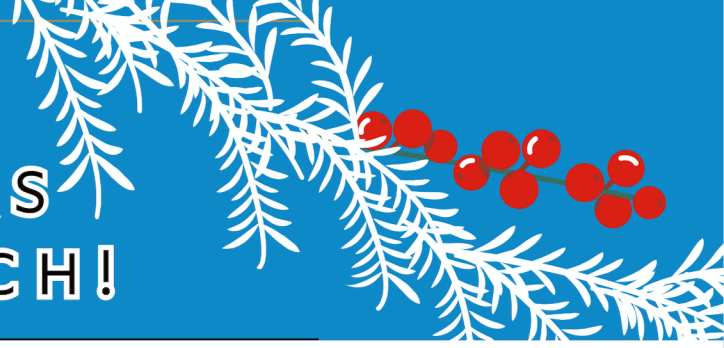


REFER-YOUR-FRIENDS BONUS SCHEME 2024

We are introducing an exciting new program, the Refer a Friend or Family Member Bonus Scheme, exclusively for our valued customers. If you are aware of someone in need of support and you recommend them to us, and they subsequently begin receiving care from Bluebird Care, you'll be eligible for a £50 referral bonus. You can use this bonus to offset your care invoice.

Help us spread the word within your circles and communities!

CHRISTMAS WORDSEARCH!



Joy to the World

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ADVENT
ANGEL
BETHLEHEM
BIRTH
BLESSINGS
CAMELS
FRANKINCENSE

INFANT
JESUS
JOSEPH
MAGI
MANGER
MARY
MIRACLE

MYRRH
NATIVITY
REJOICE
STABLE
STAR
THREE KINGS
WISE MEN

