



Bluebird Care Lancaster
& South Lakeland

Newsletter No 10

November 2021

Autumn is a wonderful time of year, especially when the sun shines on the leaves, as it is right now. Lots of people say it is their favourite time. One of the highlights for me is when the clocks go back and we get Halloween and Bonfire Night in quick succession.



This year we had our first post-Covid social event on 6th November, intentionally to watch the brilliant Castle Fireworks which got cancelled due to high winds. So instead, we set up a campfire and indoor party room at our

Willow Mill offices and it was a great success. Over 50 staff and their families came along, the biggest numbers we've had yet. We had sparklers, marshmallow toasting, face painting and lots of yummy food and drink.

Allison's campfire stew was to die for! It was so lovely to see everyone mingling and laughing and enjoying just being together.



We are happy to help with pick ups and drop offs



CUSTOMERS CHRISTMAS

AFTERNOON TEA 14th
December 2 – 4 pm

Our annual open house is ON again this year. We warmly welcome all our customers and their relatives/loved ones to join us for a festive afternoon tea. As well as refreshments, there will be plenty of chairs and space for everyone and we'll transform the office into a cosy winter snug. **Please can you let us know** if you plan to come so we can get the catering right. Call, email or write. Contact details at the bottom of this Newsletter.

CARE OVER CHRISTMAS

We have now sent out letters to all customers asking what care is required over the holiday season and advising on which days bank holiday rates will apply. Do please let us know as soon as you can, so we can plan. If you have any questions or haven't seen the letter we sent, do please just call the office.



STAFFING NEWS

It's been a while since our last newsletter, plus we've had a number of changes here, so we thought it a good idea to update you on the team.

Registered Manager – Allison Freedman

Some of our new carers – Helen, Katreena, Simone, Fiona, Deborah

Senior Carers – Jana Cayeux and Amanda Taylor

Coordinator – Jess Hyde. Jess is your first point of contact regarding your rotas and which carers you have.

Deputy Care Manager – Rachel Turner. Rachel has just taken this post on and is your first point of contact regarding your care needs and updating changes to your care plan.

Supervisor – TBC we are due to interview for this position very shortly

Live-in Care Manager – Paula Lievens. Paula has moved on from our domiciliary care service to managing our growing Live-in Care service. People are increasingly going for this option as an alternative to residential care home.

Accounts Assistant - Sarah Thistlethwaite. Among other things, Sarah handles our invoices and makes sure we are always accurate

Recruitment and Marketing Officer – Andrea Palamountain. Andrea has joined us from Beaumont College in Lancaster, primarily to make sure we're recruiting the best people to work for us.

SPOTLIGHT ON..... JANINE!

What's it like being a carer at Bluebird Care? This feature on our Janine will shed some light.

Originally from Bristol, Janine joined us in 2016.



Janine has been loved and appreciated by countless of our customers during her time here. She always gives her very best and never lets anyone down.

I've been working for Bluebird Care for..... 6 years I've stuck it so long because I absolutely love it.

Before working here, I've worked in hotels, restaurants and Customer

Service. I managed Pizza Hut in Lancaster for 9 years

I'm a carer because..... *when I was a young woman, I had an ambition to be a midwife. But I became a single mum at a young age which put me under pressure to bring money in rather than study. By 2015 I decided was right again to explore my interest in caring and so I applied to Bluebird. 6 years on I'm still here, loving what I do.*

I love my job because..... *I'm meeting new and interesting people all the time and they all have their own stories to tell. My customers all feel like one big family to me. I get a lot of satisfaction from knowing I am helping someone and that they appreciate what I'm doing. Well, 99% of people appreciate it!*

My best moment in the job..... *happened quite recently. I was at a*

customer who has advanced dementia. I'd had a difficult few days having lost an earring from a pair I'd bought using money left to me by my late Dad. When I walked through the door, this customer came straight to me and said "This is yours isn't it?" It was the earring! I must have dropped it when I visited her 3 days prior. There had been other carers visited after me but this customer, despite her condition, had remembered that the earring was mine. That moment of lucidity was very special to witness.

A typical working day for me would go like this: I get up at **5.45am**. We get our rotas delivered electronically from Jess on a Thursday for the following week, so I get chance beforehand to see who I've got and check on my phone app how my customers are all doing. Sometimes there have been changes to

someone's medication or their state of health and I need to know this information before I go in so I'm well prepared to give the best I can.

What can be challenging is when changes are made last minute to my schedule. Mostly, this is due to sickness. We work as a team, so of course between us we have to cover the schedule of the person who is off sick. But it can be hard and upsetting for our customers when late changes are made. We just have to manage the situation as best we can.

7am visit to a lady in her late 80s who is deaf and blind. She needs help to get out of bed, washed and dressed and medications. I then drive to a gentleman for a 2 carer visit due to him having very limited mobility as well as dementia. We use special equipment to help transfer him. He is such a

character with a great sense of humour and I really enjoy my time there. Lately, he's been mimicking my Bristol accent. Its hilarious.

Next, I drive into town to pick up a prescription for an elderly lady who doesn't leave her house. I give her companionship as well as support with the usual tasks of daily living. Her moods can swing up and down, which we know isn't her fault, we also know that underneath it all she appreciates our help, so if there's any rudeness flung my way, I just let it wash over and I focus on talking about the positives.

1pm Time for a short break. I like to have yoghurt and granola followed by iced coffee in my car.

1.45pm Next I'm off to another lady with dementia, but who also had a stroke lost use of her legs. She also needs support with transferring

from bed to chair etc. and has a catheter bag which requires changing and managing. She's a lovely person to spend time around. As well as help from us, she gets lots of support from her large family. I'm so impressed by how many children she has.

4pm *I have a visit to a younger customer, who was unfortunate to develop a physical disability. He still has children living at home, so I help with housework, preparing meals, shopping and some physiotherapy support*

5.30pm *My last visit of the day! This person was living with his mum but she went into a care home due to dementia. I help with meal preparation and taking the dogs out for a walk as he has a physically degenerative condition. Even though my help is practical, we always make sure to sit*

down and enjoy a natter together. Its fun.

6pm FINISHED! *I'm exhausted by this point but glad of having done a good day's work. When I get home, mum will have prepared a nice meal and then all I need to do is sit down and relax. Bliss.....*

CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENT



We are reinstating our achievement awards for staff after a long stretch without. Recognising and celebrating the efforts people make is so important, although also challenging when the workforce is dispersed in the community. So, **we want you** to let us know when one of our staff has done something

exceptional? This will help inform our selection. Just give us a call, email or pop a message in the post.

FINAL WORD

As many of you know, our limited company is called The Little Wren Ltd. Proportionate to its size, the wren has the loudest song of any British bird? Also, according to Greek legend, the wren became the king of birds by hiding on the eagle's back and thus succeeding in flying higher in the sky than the eagle. I wonder if this relates to us in any way??!



Claire xxx

