

Bluebird Care

Community Newsletter

November 2021

What have we been up to over the last six months?..

Read all about our news and events!



































In this issue: Read about the ground breaking 'Virtual Dementia Training Bus'. Live-in Care real life stories, Employee Survey Responses, and 60 seconds with Madam Mayor!



Welcome

Welcome to our incredibly colourful Christmas and end of year community newsletter.

As another year reaches the festive season, it is always nice to reflect on the events and achievements of recent months. 2021 has been another rollercoaster year for the whole community and in particular Health and Social Care. Some type of normality has returned in the shadow of Coronavirus, but the vaccine rollout has been hugely successful and is without doubt, helping protect us all from further consequences.

Our newsletter this autumn is full of pictures and examples of the wonderful work our care teams carry out daily, looking after both the community and each other whilst delivering an exemplary care service every day of the year. Our staff team are an incredible group of people, not only hard working and dedicated to the care of our customers, they regularly sacrifice their own time to support all types of local charities and good causes, always done in the best of spirits, with plenty of smiley faces. I cannot begin to explain, as the Directors of Bluebird Care, how proud we are of the work, commitment, and generosity this fantastic group of people display, day in, day out.

There are many highlights to enjoy as you flick through the pages, each Bluebird Care office has its own chapter. It gives you a real insight to the varied backgrounds and professionalism of our staff, highlighting the length of time many of our team have been with us, and how committed they are, regardless of job role or title.

One of our groups highlights this year was the move to our new premises in central Chelmsford. We were fortunate enough to have invited the Madam Mayor of Chelmsford, Councillor, Jude Deakin to complete the formalities of the opening ceremony, to which she willingly joined us in celebration, with tea and a chat, sharing with us she once worked in the social care sector and had a very thorough knowledge of it.

It is well publicised that recruitment in all industries is currently facing a huge challenge, with the healthcare sector being at the sharp end. Our staff survey results were carried out to help ensure we are doing our very best to recruit, retain and recognise the very best professionals looking for career in care. You will also be aware of the increase in our prices for next year, these being implemented to ensure we are amongst the best paying employers in our sector.

Welcome

Training was another area that featured highly on the staff survey. I would like to make a special mention to our training Manager Debra who has worked tirelessly on a comprehensive and detailed list of induction, refresher, and specialist training programmes for the benefit of all.

As well as our fantastic care and office teams there are many unsung heroes in the background at Bluebird Care and a special Christmas mention to them as well, Lucy and Mary-Ann managing the ever popular and growing live in care team, Victoria, and her very hard-working finance team. The person who has put in all the work for this publication and made a massive impact on the events and functions we all enjoy, Sharon. I would also like to take the opportunity to recognise and thank Natasha for all her help in managing and ensuring our offices are all safe and CQC compliant.

Everyone should now have had an invite to a Christmas function, we are really looking forward to facilitating these again this year, following restrictions due to Covid last Christmas. The teams are putting in a lot of preparation for these events, and I'm convinced you will have a very enjoyable time. I would like to thank all the customers that have written letters or emails of thanks and gratitude for the services of our staff, I know they truly appreciate this and feel privileged to support you and your loved ones.

I would like to add the thanks and recognition of the management and Directors of Bluebird Care for the amazing work all of you do. Many of you will be juggling your family, friends and other commitments. Thank you for putting the service at the heart of all you do, we are truly grateful. I'm sure 2022 will be eventful and enjoyable. As always, we are incredibly proud of how our care services have helped people, and the difference it makes to the lives of many vulnerable individuals. We would like to thank you all for your ongoing hard work and commitment and wish all our Bluebird Care family, including customers, employees and all their loved ones, a very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy 2022.



Best Wishes Kevin and Tracey McCormack.

Mid Essex

Chelmsford & Maldon

So, what have Mid Essex been up over the last few months?

It was a great pleasure to welcome <u>Madam Mayor of Chelmsford</u> to officially open our new Mid Essex office on 8th June 2021.







A themed beach party was held for our customers, staff and their families on 17 August 2021

















Service Awards for our amazing Bluebird Care staff.















Over the last few months, our wonderful team have shown their support for various awareness days and worked 'above and beyond' their call of duty. Please visit our website for more information on our events and awards

Mid Essex

Chelmsford & Maldon



Our Mid Essex team raised £700 for Havens Hospice and we won best fancy dress award!



One of our lovely customers had tickets for the 'National Television Awards' at the O2 arena and took our wonderful Office Manager Angela





BREAST CANCER NOW The research & care charity









Mid Essex

Chelmsford & Maldon





Hi my name is Paul Zediu, I have been part of the Bluebird Care Mid Essex team since 2017 and became a senior member the following year. As I like to challenge myself, I enrolled onto the QCF level 3 in Adult Social Care, which I passed with a Merit in 2020, Bluebird Care funded this course as they wanted to support my career. I'm passionate about delivering person centred care to all our customers. A "Thank you for everything you do for me", coming from them, gives me great fulfilment. I have two daughters who enjoy baking and when I am at home, we make various sweet dishes, they are going to great cooks when their older! As a senior carer, for me it is all about making a difference to people's lives and having fun whilst I do it.

After working an afternoon shift, I remember how I had made, *'Heidi laugh', and making *'Beryl' her favourite lunch', and I listened to *'Normans' war stories', he tells them with great passion! When I think about what I had achieved and how many smiles I had made, this makes me feel great about myself. (*Please note the names in this story have been changed to protect their identities.)

Bluebird Care Mid Essex is incredibly family orientated, I guess because they are a family run business and understand you have a life outside work, Last year, they organised a zoom party for the staff's children right at the start of the pandemic. Most of us with children felt isolated, we played a 'Treasure Hunt, 'Simon Says' and 'Pin the Beak on the Bluebird', all from the comfort of our home. As the restrictions lifted, Bluebird Care organised an 'Easter Egg Hunt' at our local park, the children absolutely loved the fun, and coming up, and we had organised a beach party with lots of games for our customers, staff and families, then there's Christmas coming!

Essex West

Here is what our Essex West team have been up....
Staff and Families 'Picnic in the Park' on 5th August 2021













Brentwood Family Fun Day - 27 August 2021











Essex West



From service awards, to birthday wishes







Some well-deserved time out with a team building dinner and drink!















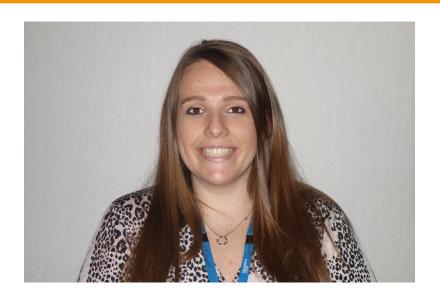








Essex West





I have built over 12 years of experience in the Social Care industry, working within residential and "at home" environments. I also have a passion for supporting and volunteering and have also spent numerous years volunteering for Age UK's befriending service. I was keen to gain as much experience in this industry and chose to work at Bluebird Care Essex West as a home care assistant in 2012.

Whilst working and being a mum to 3 young children, I was also studying towards a BSC (Hons) Health and Social Care. In 2016, I graduated with a first-class honour, and I was offered a promotion to the Care Support Supervisor - a position I was very proud to accept. Through knowledge gained through further distance learning such as falls prevention, dementia awareness, managing behaviour that challenges and many others, I am confident in my approach of supporting all our customers.

It is my responsibility to ensure the customers' needs are met safely and to also ensure their independence is promoted. I am keen to advocate the 'customer' approach so that person centred care is delivered and consistently promoted. Each 'customer' is put first by telling us how they need to be supported, ultimately putting them in control. To achieve this, I get to know our customer's and their life history, then incorporate this into their care plan. I also continue to maintain care plans, review the support we provide regularly and auditing other records for compliance.

My passion in this industry is supporting those living or involved with dementia and the prevention of falls in the older generation. I use the life history work, I gather at assessment stage, to ensure care is meeting the individual needs of our customer's, this enables me to direct the care workers in ways they can adapt their approach when needed. I have also launched, within our office, falls monitoring. This is enabling our team to monitor trends and identify risks or hazards that contribute to falls. Ultimately, it is my aim to ensure all those at risk of falling are safeguarded as much as possible to enable them to continue live a high quality of life.

I often work multidisciplinary with other Health and Social Care professionals to ensure the wellbeing and safety of customers is promoted at all levels and this provides me with a great deal of job satisfaction. I can go home each day, knowing my job role, no matter how little my actions may be, positively influences the lives of others.

Clem - Office Manager

Redbridge, Harlow and Epping

























Our home care assistants and live-in care assistants were invited into our office to collect a pamper pack each and congratulated on all their amazing hard work throughout the year and







Bluebird Care Monthly Awards for outstanding contribution and always going 'above and beyond' their call of duty

Redbridge, Harlow and Epping

Looking forward to meeting baby Jones!



















October was 'Black History Month' and it has been celebrated across the UK for more than 30 years





Redbridge, Harlow and Epping





Tracey McCormack - Director, presented Theresa with flowers

I have been a home care assistant with Bluebird Care Redbridge, Epping and Harlow 10 years this October! I remember the day I got the position; I was walking down the hill towards Woodford Station when I got the call, I had only just left the office! I didn't really think about becoming a carer at first as I wasn't really sure what I wanted to do, I had worked in a children's home for a while, but my Mum and Auntie are both Nurses so subconsciously it was always there. I saw the Bluebird Care advert and thought I would go for it; I saw a ping on my phone inviting me to an interview the next day, I have never looked back.

This job is so rewarding, and I get great satisfaction. My customers are always so happy to see me, you feel you are making a difference to their lives, making them feel good and to always be there for them. It is a tough role at points, but it is the most rewarding career..

I am a Mother of 3 and a Grandmother of 1, I am very close to my children and Grandson. I make sure I call my Grandson every day, checking up on how he is. I also love to cook, I enjoy making jams and pickles, my kitchen is the life of my home. When I am home, I must catch 'Tipping Point', its nice to relax and watch, my customers watch it too so I can always discuss it with them.

One of favourite memories is cooking with one of my customers, he was an amazing man, he started with Bluebird Care Redbridge, Epping and Harlow as he had sadly lost his wife and needed extra support, he had such a lovely outlook on life, we used to chat about lots of different things while prepping and cooking his dinner. I had been lucky enough to have been his carer for 4 years.

I think Bluebird care Redbridge, Epping and Harlow is one of the best home care providers, they care about their customers and staff. Everything is to the T, from their customer/staff events to their day-to-day working. I feel so smart in my Bluebird Care uniform and am so proud to be a part of this amazing team. **Theresa Halyes - Home Care Assistant**

Southend and Rochford

Congratulations - Charlotte, or completing the <u>#raceforlife2021</u> We all at Bluebird Care are so proud of you!





Southend Halloween Parade 2021



Team Building Event

In order to keep our staff morale up and enjoy team building, we put two dates in the diary in the hope it would suit availability. We went to Caddy Golf Night, lots of laughter and a deserved time out to have fun!



Congratulations 'Brodie' on starting your maternity leave

Enjoy every single second of being a new parent. We all here wish you all the best and look forward to meeting your new born baby girl!



Southend and Rochford

The ethos of Montessori is; The more you do it, the better you get! And The more you do for us, the more you steal from us!

We have recently been lucky enough to take part in the Montessori Training for Aged Care. This training turns upside down what we all think about care for individuals who have been diagnosed with Dementia. It is commonly believed that most people suffering with dementia lose the skills and abilities to carry out general day to day tasks. By using the Montessori Method, we will be able to support individuals to look after themselves and be able to live independently for longer. Montessori teaches us that this is not always the case, it works on the basis that even if you are 4, 40 or 104 years old we all still need a reason to get out of bed every day.

People with Dementia need meaningful activities and engagement to maintain their self-esteem and independence. Traditional care creates excess disability. Excess disability is the disability that has been created from not allowing those with dementia to carry out their own daily tasks and routines independently. It comes from where we do everything for them and therefore, they lose those remaining abilities. We do these things to make their lives easier but essentially by taking over and taking away the opportunities to keep busy we are robbing them of their lifelong skills and habits that they have learnt over many years. The care we provide for your loved ones needs to be tailored to each person individually.

Montessori teaches us that we must focus on the things around the person. This includes the Prepared Environment and the Dignity of Risk.

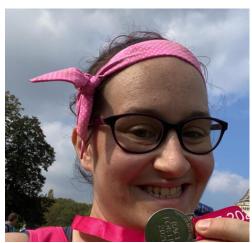
Facts show that people with Dementia, that live alone, live longer! This is because any behaviours that they may have do not have an affect those around them. Those that live with family may find that their behaviours can have an impact on their family life.

The environment around someone living with Dementia should be so that we are enabling them to maintain as much independence as possible. This can be created through a variety of ways including, signs and prompts around the home. Focused meaningful activities such as folding laundry, flower arranging, toolboxes, or helping to make a cup of tea. By including them in these activities and ensuring that are taking part, in their care, their way, helps to enforce their dignity of risk.

The dignity of risk is when an individual has skills for an activity, that they have done for a lifetime, such as ironing, cooking etc. being taken away. This may be because we feel it is too dangerous for them or we believe they no longer know how to do it. Using the Montessori methods, we can help to keep those skills, to regain lost skills and to continue to be as independent as possible.

Southend and Rochford





I joined Bluebird Care Southend as a home care assistant in January 2018. At first I wasn't sure if care was for me but I was soon won around. At the time I had my young daughter she was only 7 at the time but I also had my step children and 2 foster children, and needed to find something that worked around my family.

In October 2019 I decided to go from part time to go full time. I still had my youngest daughter at home and my oldest foster son but I was sure I was able to make it work (somehow) with the help of my partner and the older children. That same year I was promoted to Lead Home Care Assistant. Then in April 2021 I was then promoted again to Senior Home Care Assistant. I have since completed my NVQ level 3 in Health and Social Care. In my time with Bluebird Care Southend, I have welcomed another foster child into our lives who lets say had a very troubled past but she now lives independently in her own little flat with her partner. I have welcomed many grandchildren (11 currently with another 2 on the way) from my step children and foster children. This job has meant I have been able to spend time seeing the children and grandchildren grow up. It's not a job anymore it's a lifestyle choice.

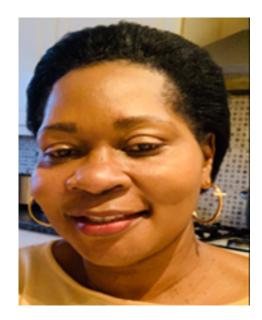
If someone had told me before I joined Bluebird Care Southend that I would have found the job for me I would have laughed but I really have found my calling. The sense of achievement when assisted the service users and providing them with person centred care they deserve is amazing. I've had such a fulfilling time.

I have completed all my training including first aid, NVQ level 3, online courses and even face to face training (before COVID of course) and am constantly looking for more ways to promote my learning while on the job, all of these courses was funded fully by Bluebird Care Southend. I was a complete beginner when I first joined Bluebird Care Southend, I had no experience with care in any setting previously and I was so nervous that it wouldn't work, but here I am over 3 years later, 2 promotions and an amazing team standing beside me!

Live-in Care



Here are some of our amazing Live-in care team members









Live-in Care

Judith - Live in Care Supervisor



It is not just about their physical needs, but also their emotional needs too.

Judith joined Bluebird Care in July 2021 and has worked in the care sector for 15 years. The first seven years, Judith worked in domiciliary care as a carer then went onto working in a residential care home, which she loved and completed her level 3 and lots of dementia training. Judith then went on to work for an agency at a nursing home, which was hard work, but she learnt a lot, however she preferred the one-on-one care, so went self-employed and became a private live-in carer, and now Judith is our Supervisor, a role which she brings a wealth of knowledge too.

One of Judith's friends called Michelle who has been a nurse for 22 years, inspired her to get into care, which Judith thought she wouldn't enjoy, but clearly 15 years on, she found her niche.

One of the reasons that Judith enjoys being a live-in carer is, although sometimes urgency is required, it's much more relaxed and centred around their support, to build a closer bond with the customer, it is a two-way street, as much as Judith enjoys the one on one, the customer gets to build a bond with her too. Judith explained that being a live-in carer is like living at home with your nan or grandad.

Wiping bums and making tea is not what it is all about, it's dealing with a customer's everyday living, supporting them to stay in their own home, supporting their emotions, making their quality of life better and allowing them to live independently. I believe also, the companionship is the most important element, sitting and talking with them, ensuring they are not lonely. It is not just about their physical needs, but also their emotional needs too.

Live-in Care

Szabina Safa - Live- in Carer





Szabina grew up in Hungary and graduated as a mental health nurse, which specialises in looking after your physical, emotional, and social needs, so you could say Szabina was born to care! She is a very caring, thoughtful person, it is her blood. With 20+ years of experience, Szabina always delivers outstanding care!

In 2016, Szabina moved to England and started as a live-in carer on 23rd December. You could say Szabina was the perfect Christmas present to Bluebird Care. Christmas is the most magical time, and for Szabina, the perfect time to join a customer and their family. Supporting a care package is more than just looking after a person, it is joining a family and having an amazing supportive network and with her charming caring ways, Szabina decorated and filled the home with festive decorations.

Szabina loves to cook, it is her hobby, her favourite dish to prepare is a Hungarian soup, which she was taught to make by her mum. If Szabina was to tell you who inspires her, it would be her mother. Szabina's mum was a highly experienced, professional women with many hats, not only was she qualified as a pharmacist assistant, librarian, and psychologist, she was also a teacher and taught, biology, history, and geography. She has since retired and rightly so, what an amazing woman. It is no wonder why Szabina is as lovely, kind, caring and thoughtful as she is.

Being a live-in carer for Szabina is hugely rewarding and enjoyable, you get to know your customer inside out, getting up each morning living your own live alongside a customer is like supporting a family member. Sometimes, it can feel a bit isolated only because you can't do everything you would if you were in your own home, but to be honest, Szabina, said in her own words, "wouldn't be anywhere else".

Virtual Dementia Bus





I would like to share with you my experience of the virtual dementia bus.

Firstly, the group and I, all completed a health check form, ensuring what we were about to experience was safe for us, this experience was going to give an intense insight into someone living with Dementia.

Firstly, it is important that people who work with Dementia, must smile to give a sense of positivity. However, once my experience started on the bus, I was introduced to 'John' the **Train2Care trainer**, who was very abrupt, borderline rude and I genuinely felt uncomfortable, but as you read, you will know why.... During the whole experience, I was made to feel like I had been stripped of my purpose, through accessories, I couldn't hear properly nor see clearly, I was made to wear uncomfortable shoes and was given instructions by the trainer that I couldn't understand. It was an isolating and a scary experience, I couldn't communicate mentally or physically, this was the trainers aim. John later informed us, he was acting at the beginning to give me the full experience as people with dementia are often treated with a lack of patience, John was truly a lovely guy!

Have you heard of 'shuffling gait', This condition affects all types of mobility and balance issues which unfortunately contributes frequent falls. A scientific resolution to reduce these issues, is to wear velcro white trainers with a memory foam sole.

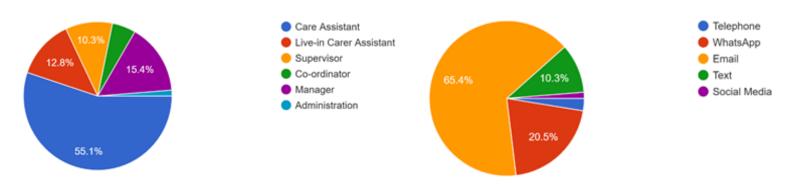
Did you know, Dementia kills more women than cancer? However this research does not include individuals living with undiagnosed dementia. Also, it's a proven fact that someone with Dementia is stimulated by the colour red. To use a red plate will increase their food take by 25%, as well as eating red food such as red cabbage, cranberry juice rather orange juice.

Without giving anymore away about this unique, each person that is in contact with anyone with Dementia, I would suggest they should experience this amazing training

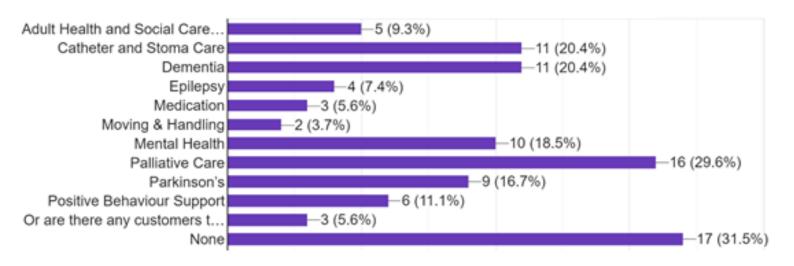
Employee Questionnaire

Thank you for returning your completed survey - here's a snap shot of some of the feedback

We sent out to 196 staff members, received 78 Responses. The national average for an employee survey response is 30%, we got 39.8%!!



What training or information would you benefit from?



Employee Questionnaire

What inspired you to work within Adult Social Care? Ranking with the highest most popular reply...

- 1.Helping others
- 2.I have worked in adult care for the past 4 years. I first joined care after leaving hospitality and wanted a challenge.
- 3. Previous family care
- 4.I like to look after the elderly and it is very rewarding
- 5. Enjoy caring for people and very rewarding job.

Is there something(s) that your local Bluebird Care is doing well? Ranking with the highest most popular reply...

- 1.Training
- 2. Welcoming, friendly and accommodating
- 3. Happy welcoming atmosphere.
- 4. Ensuring their customers and employees are kept up to date with all changes.
- 5. Always friendly and welcoming

66

In your own words...

- As a whole the company has improved greatly in the recent years and support is stronger than ever.
- We have grown and built to an amazing level and I look forward to our continue growth and camaraderie.
- We are renowned for being one of the best companies in the area, with the
 hospital, social workers and other companies suggesting to potential new
 customers to come to us as a company of extremely high level care, and we will
 work our hardest to ensure that it stays like that.
- I love my job the office staff and carers are all great to work with
- Thank you Bluebird Care for helping me to rebuild my self-confidence and all the support you have given me and continue to give
- Very proud to be a Bluebird Carer.
- I have really enjoyed training



The management team are still looking into implementing some of your positive suggestions for 2022!

In House Training

From the recent survey that many of you completed and returned (for which, thank you[®]) some interesting points were made in connection with training and learning. To address these briefly:

- 1. Palliative care not available yet but hope to put it in place next year, linking in with local hospices
- 2. Catheter and stoma care you will be trained when needed for a specific customer by your designated branch, train the trainer.
- 3. Dementia care there is an in-house update course available now which covers a lot of information, however, I recommend additional services should you wish.
- 4. Mental health we are planning a course around mental health to be available next year.
- 5. Parkinsons Disease again, training will be available when needed for a specific customer. Managers have recently attended an awareness course.
- 6. Positive Behaviour Support this is covered in the Dementia update course, however I am excited to be developing this further in 2022.

I am so pleased that so many people want to progress their knowledge in various topics. I would encourage you to do your own research by visiting various website. For example the Alzheimer's UK and Dementia UK charities have lots of really useful information that you can access without charge. Please contact me when you discover something new. Perhaps I can share it in training so that all carers, managers and most importantly customers, can benefit from this knowledge.

Yearly in-house update courses are now in place so I hope to see you all at some point either over a Zoom meeting or face to face. The only updates that need to be done face to face are the CPR, medication and dementia. All updates are interactive taking the form of questions and answers and general discussions around a particular topic. Any real life situations you have come across bring another element to the discussion and when we can share and discuss we can all learn. Have a think about your experiences in connection to an

update and then we can discuss.

Debra Goaté Training Manager

Chrismas 2021

We are looking forward to seeing you at our staff and customer Christmas's parties





Please may we ask our customers, where possible, to find your own transport. We are very limited, but will help where possible.







We will be holding staff parties across all our regional offices, contact your local office to confirm the details!



Benefits

Blue Light Card – Only for employees of the healthcare sector, **YOU!** If you have not already got your card, why not? **Step 1** Download App, **Step 2** Complete registration **Step 3** - Pay £4.99 for annual membership and save online with thousands of retailers! There are hundreds of deals for **BLACK FRIDAY!!**



Once you have completed your 3 month probation, you can forward your receipt to victoriacleaver@bluebirdcare.co.uk for a refund from our directors





Care Worker Tax Rebate

If you would like to <u>claim back</u> on petrol, uniform and more, please register your interest and we will contact you in April 2022. <u>victoriacleaver@bluebirdcare.co.uk</u>



Kwik Fit is offering FREE Health checks to **ALL** our Bluebird Care staff. Please call to book your appointment and allow 45 minutes to complete the checks. Please provide your ID badge on arrival.. We have contact numbers for all garages taking part, please email your location for more details essexmarketing@blubeirdcare.co.uk



Staff Healthcare Benefit Scheme

step 1 Download App wpa.org.ukstep 2 Login with customer No.step 3 Make your claim

Please contact Victoria Cleaver if you need a copy for customer number,

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Call 0800 915 8083

Well being and Health Information Telephone Counselling Debt and Money support

60 seconds with.....

Madam Mayor of Chelmsford..



Was it your goal to be Mayor?

"It never occurred to me to be Mayor! I've had all sorts of jobs, I was a care worker, I ran an account department, logistics, recruitment, anything I could turn my skills to that enabled me to pay the mortgage!"

Who inspires you?

"There are a lot of people I admire, but I was so happy when President Obama and the First Lady went into the white house I found them to be inspirational, I recently read Mrs Obama's book, which I found great. Also, my late mother, she was a strong lady, she lived in the era when there was a clear divide between women, and men she was a strong, fiesty lady".

Mandatory Vaccinations?

"I don't believe in compulsory vaccinations, it restricts the market even more and sounds like 1984, it should be a personal choice. If you choose a career in healthcare, you are required or least adhere to have certain vaccinations."

A Day in the Life of Madam Mayor

"Yesterday my day started with a few zoom meetings, then I was out and about to my 1st visit to a local primary school, that raised about £400 for their school, to help enhance their learning experience, and to fix a leaky roof! I then officially opened a new building for one of my chosen charities 'Sanctus' which is a lifeline for the vulnerable and homeless in the city of Chelmsford, providing a shelter from the cold with the aim of preventing loneliness for a vulnerable group within the community. I then was chauffeured to Anglia Ruskin University for the honorary graduation ceremonies, I didn't get home until 9.30pm, this position is certainly not a 9 to 5 job! Most of my engagements are relatively easy, officially opening and talking to the community, but some of my other engagements are formal and a longer, which I must be on my best behaviour! However, some are solemn, such as the passing of Prince Philips' memorial service, it was quite emotional and 'Remembrance Day'. Most recently was the 'Knife Angel' campaign, which is sweeping the nation, and currently resided in Chelmsford Central Park".

Thank you Madam Mayor for your time.



