

ACG Newsletter

January - March 2024

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Enriching Lives

stepping into 2024

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A Message From Your Senior Management Team

Reflecting on what we have achieved in the past year and how far we have come as an organisation, we should be really proud. As we move into 2024, we should all be full of positivity and optimistic about building on the foundations we have built.

One of our more significant achievements in 2023 was gaining a level 1 Green Mark accreditation across all homes. Congratulations to all of you who have contributed towards making Autograph a more sustainable workplace and environment.

Throughout 2024 we will be asking for your ideas on how we can strive to make Autograph a great place to work and working together we will hopefully implement your ideas. Please do not be afraid to share your thoughts and ideas.

There are exciting things coming up with staff development opportunities, whether this is becoming a champion in your home, additional courses tailored to your role or becoming a mental health first aider. We value your wellbeing and want to provide training for staff who want to improve the working environment for everyone and support their mental health.

This year we would like to enhance our focus on wellbeing, staff development and on building one strong, healthy team across the whole of Autograph Care. We would welcome any improvement or change ideas you might have, so that we can continue to develop and grow as an organisation and as a place where we can all thrive and achieve both our Company and personal aspirations.

Look out for new information boards in your staff rooms, opportunities for growth and development and star of the month.

People are and will always be at the heart of everything we do and without you, our colleagues, we have no business. If we are to be successful in delivering our mission of "Enriching Lives" then we all have to play our part.

Thank you for all the hard work in 2023, we appreciate each and every one of our employees for the dedication and care that they give to our homes, residents and families.

And finally, let's not lose sight of our core values :- Caring, Respect, Integrity, Teamwork and let's try to ensure that these values are reflected in all of our actions, words and behaviours.

Best wishes to everyone for a safe, healthy, happy and successful 2024.

A New Year, New Updates



WELCOMING OUR MD

CHRIS STORR RESUMED THE ROLE OF MANAGING DIRECTOR, WE ARE VERY EXCITED FOR CHRIS TO LEAD AUTOGRAPH TOWARDS A GREAT 2024! SEE PAGE 10 FOR A SPOTLIGHT ON CHRIS.



CHRISTMAS LIGHT WINNER

THE WINNER OF THE CHRISTMAS LIGHT COMPETITION 2023 WAS...
STONESWOOD RESIDENTIAL HOME.

CONGRATULATIONS AND THANK YOU TO ALL THE STAFF AT STONESWOOD!



STAR OF THE MONTH

AS OF JANUARY 2024 WE WILL BE REINTRODUCING THE STAR OF THE MONTH SCHEME. EACH MONTH THE STARS YOU VOTE FOR WILL BE DISPLAYED THROUGHOUT THE HOME AND IN YOUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER.



Christmas at Autograph Care

Residents, families and local communities enjoyed seeing all of our amazing light displays in each of our homes this Christmas. All the staff made a huge effort to make Christmas extra special this year and we are extremely appreciative to all of you for the care and joy brought to the homes this December.

INWOOD HOUSE

Our New Years Resolution is:

To make every Friday a Chocolate Cake Day

What's New at Inwood

- Inwood start a new Daycare Service
- We have been working closely with the local Community & Schools
- Grab & Go with Nurses, GP's and other local professionals.



Upcoming in 2024!

- 4th January—Braille Alphabet & Trivia Day
- 15th January—Brew Monday & Martin Luther King Jr Day
- 25th January—Irish Coffee & Burns Night
- 27th January—Chocolate Cake Day

INWOOD HOUSE

Christmas at Inwood House



monson

CARE HOME

Our New Years Resolution is:

To drive positivity throughout the home, completing more day trips and excursions with our staff team.

Monson Days Out

This December we have had lots of fun going on day trips with the residents!



Upcoming in 2024!

- 3rd January—Carols from the West End
- 11th January—Explore York
- 15th January—Musical Bingo & Coffee Shop Outing
- 22nd January—Gentlemen's visit to Bomber Command.
- 29th January—Go to the Theatre

monson CARE HOME

Christmas at Monson





Our New Years Resolution is:

Working on a more positive attitude and better communication within the team at Stoneswood using methods such as team building activities!

A Visit From Santa

Santa came to visit the Stoneswood residents this year!



Upcoming in 2024!

- Oriental Buffet Evening
- 16th January—Word Search Day
- 18th January—Winnie the Pooh Day
- 25th January—Burns Night

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Christmas at Stoneswood



WALTON MANOR

Our New Years Resolution is:

To work well together and communicate effectively as a team.

A Private Performance from Santa's Helper



Upcoming in 2024!

- 5th January—
National Bird
Day and Pet
Therapy
 - 7th January—
Make your own
Pizza
 - 9th January—
Let's Dance
 - 19th January—
Dolly Parton's
Birthday
Karaoke
- And Much More...

Christmas at Walton Manor



A Spotlight on Chris Storr

Managing Director



Why do you choose to work in care?

Care chose me rather than the other way round, but having had a taste of the satisfaction that delivery of care to the elderly can provide, it is a sector that I am keen to remain involved with and if I can in any small way help resolve the challenges that the social care sector currently faces then I will consider it a job well done.

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Enriching Lives

Can you tell us about your journey before Autograph?

My career to date has been primarily in finance and general management within multi-site leisure/retail/hospitality businesses and in either Financial Controller or Finance Director roles.

The organisations that I have worked for and that have shaped my experience include Center Parcs, Pontins, Megabowl, Crown Sports plc, LA Fitness and Xercise4less. For nearly a decade whilst my children were of school age and therefore working from home, I ran my own consultancy business providing part-time finance director/accountancy and advisory services to companies that could not justify the employment of a full-time senior finance resource.

My most significant clients during this time were Derby House Ltd (Equestrian retailer), Evans Concrete Products Ltd (concrete manufacturer) for whom I worked with the owner to deliver a business disposal and the Kinpurnie Estate where I worked with a high net-worth individual to diversify the operation of a 5,400 acre fishing, shooting and agricultural estate and Castle in Scotland.

A Spotlight on Chris Storr

Managing Director

What makes you want to come to work every day?

The feeling that I can help the Autograph team deliver its purpose of enriching the lives of our colleagues, residents and families.

How do you maintain a healthy work, life balance?

The honest answer is that I don't always manage to get the balance right, but when I am not working and I am not with my family, you will invariably find me playing cricket, coaching young cricketers, playing golf or watching (sadly no longer playing) Rugby.

Sport has always been an important part of my life and runs through my family, with my wife being an avid supporter, my son being involved in the Business and Administration side of cricket and my daughter being a practising Sports & Exercise Psychologist.

What was one of the biggest lessons you learnt in your career?

You are only ever as good as the team that you work with.

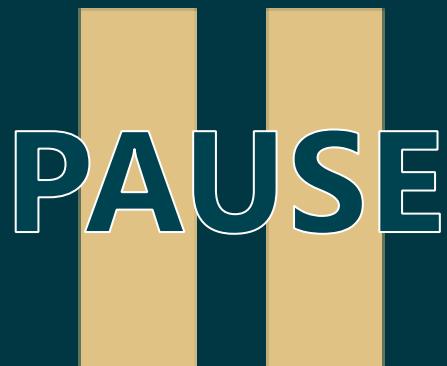
Can you tell us what the Autograph Values mean to you?

Quite simply, people are at the heart of everything we do and if we care for our people be they colleagues, residents, families, suppliers or any other stakeholders, then the commercial side of our business will look after itself.



A Positive Start to the New Year

Now, before we jump straight in to 2024, let's take a moment to pause...



**Starting
2024 the
right way**



January can often be a difficult time as it is, with finances tight from Christmas, some of the shortest, coldest days of the year and summer way off in the distance. So it's important to keep this in mind before embarking on a complete life overhaul after the festive season.

If you're looking to start the new year in a positive way, we've got some tips to help.



Time for a de-clutter?

Living and working in a cleaner space can reduce stress and improve wellbeing. Research shows that having a clean, organised space can help you feel in control.



Make time for you

Life's demands can be pressing with busy schedules and lofty to-do lists. So you must make looking after yourself and tending to your needs a priority. By making time for yourself, you can slow down and avoid burnout. It can be as simple as a walk, a bath or reading a book. Make time for some self-focus with something you enjoy.

Get your body moving

There's a huge body of research that highlights the positive impact exercise has on mental health. Exercise reduces anxiety, depression and negative moods by improving self-esteem and cognitive functioning. You don't have to take on a tough workout schedule to feel the benefits, even small amounts of exercise can improve your mental and physical health. So try to move your body in ways that you enjoy, find what works for you.



Set realistic goals

Setting yourself goals to work towards gives you direction and focus. Setting these intentions in stone helps motivate you towards the place you want to be. It could be a big or small goal. Once you start working towards these goals, you'll feel a sense of achievement and accomplishment.

What Is Blue Monday? Let's Get The Facts Straight

Let's start by announcing that the entire concept of Blue Monday is a myth!

Now take a deep breath and relax as we unravel how this 'blue day' came about.



We're thought to be susceptible to feeling blue because the weather's cold, we're back at work, we've got to make up the money spent at Christmas and we're feeling guilty for already breaking New Year's resolutions.

But what's the truth?

In fact, this day was simply thought up in 2004 by Cliff Arnal, a psychologist, when he created the 'January blues' for Sky Travel, who went on to use this as a PR stunt to promote winter deals.



The New, 'Blue' Monday

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Enriching Lives

Brew Monday with
Samaritans



Pink
Monday

Think Pink with
Pink Ribbon

★★★
**MARTIN LUTHER
KING JR. DAY**

15th January -
celebrating Martin
Luther King Jr.



'Blue Monday'
Social Walk

Free social walk at
Gunby Estate in
Lincolnshire



Multicoloured Monday
with Mind Leeds and
York

A Spotlight on Nikki Ayliff Operations Director & Lead Mental Health First Aider



Why do you choose to work in care?

Because I love it, care is all I have ever done. I enjoy it immensely and it gives me satisfaction and pleasure. It's a difficult job, but delivering great care to those who truly need it, leaves me a great sense of pride.

What makes you want to come to work every day?

The team that I work with and that I have the opportunity to influence positive change and make a positive contribution to the care sector.

I may not deliver care on a daily basis anymore but we are striving to be a provider who delivers great care to both our residents and our staff.

Can you tell us about your journey before Autograph?

At 14 years old, I started a work experience in a school for children with disabilities and it inspired me so at 16 I began a placement at a daycare centre for adults with learning disabilities, it was a YTS placement (Youth Training Scheme) and I loved it.

I continued to work in care and have done since I was 16 years old, working and progressing throughout learning disability services, mental health services, domiciliary care and now residential care.

I haven't done anything else except 6 weeks in a Jeans shop and I quickly returned to care realising it was what I was meant to do.

What was one of the biggest lessons you learnt in your career?

Not to be afraid to say you don't know something, not to be afraid to ask for help and to have faith in your own abilities.

A Spotlight on Nikki Ayliff Operations Director & Lead Mental Health First Aider

How do you maintain a healthy work, life balance?

Since I discovered exercise, that has helped me. Making sure that I take some time for me whether that means going for a walk or reading a book. I have to remind myself that it is okay to have some time for you.

I guess it is finding what works for you and not feeling guilty about taking time out to do it.

What do you do to de-stress after a long work day?

Drink? No but seriously, I find exercising a good stress relief, taking a bit of time to acknowledge that it's been a tough day and trying to do something that makes me laugh, it isn't always possible but when it works, it puts a positive end on a difficult day.

Whether it's talk to a friend or go to the gym, it alters my mentality for the day.

If you are interested in becoming a Mental Health First Aider, please contact hr@autographcare.co.uk

Why did you become a mental health first aider?

I have been touched in my family by some serious mental health issues and I have also worked in mental health services. For me, it is about being able to say 'I'm here' and being available if people need help. It also allows me to have some understanding and knowledge to help people in my personal life also.

I think that if you can offer support to someone confidently because you've had training, that can affect somebody's life which is a very powerful thing.

Can you tell us what the Autograph Values mean to you?

I think that they embody everything that we are trying to do as an Organisation. They are not just values for our People but for everything within Autograph Care.

Your Employee Assistance Programme



As an Autograph Care Group employee, you are entitled to all the services offered by our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP).

The service is completely confidential and includes:

- My Healthy Advantage app (also online)
- Wellbeing videos
- Mini Health Checks
- 4-week self-help programmes
- 6 structured face-to-face counselling sessions per year
- Any financial, legal, domestic, or medical information (not employment law) for personal reasons only
- Covers immediate family members living at home (16- to 24-year-olds dependants too) they would get 6 sessions of telephone counselling in a year and 24-hour telephone support.
- 24/7/365 in the moment support, private and confidential.
- 24/7 crisis assistance telephone support (either straightaway counsellor support or in 24 hours)

Contact your line manager or hr@autographcare.co.uk

Dates for your Diary

January 2024

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
1 <i>Dry January, Veganuary</i>	2	3	4 <i>World Braille Day</i>	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13 <i>Mayayana New Year</i>	14
15 <i>Brew Monday, Blue Monday</i>	16	17	18	19	20	21 <i>World Religion Day</i>
22 <i>Cervical Cancer Prevention Wk</i>	23	24	25 <i>Burns Night Thaipusam</i>	26	27 <i>Holocaust Memorial Day</i>	28 <i>Data Privacy Day</i>
29	30 <i>National Storytelling Week</i>	31				

February 2024

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
			1 <i>LGBT History Month</i>	2 <i>Time to Talk Day</i>	3	4 <i>World Cancer Day</i>
5 <i>Children's Mental Health Week, Race Equality Week</i>	6	7 <i>Send a Card to a Friend Day</i>	8	9 <i>Welsh Music Day, National Pizza Day</i>	10 <i>Chinese New Year</i>	11 <i>Day of Women and Girls in Science</i>
12	13 <i>Epilepsy Day, Shrove Tuesday</i>	14 <i>Valentine's Day, International Book Giving Day</i>	15	16	17 <i>Random acts of Kindness Day</i>	18
19 <i>Eating Disorder Awareness Week</i>	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29			

Dates for your Diary

March 2024

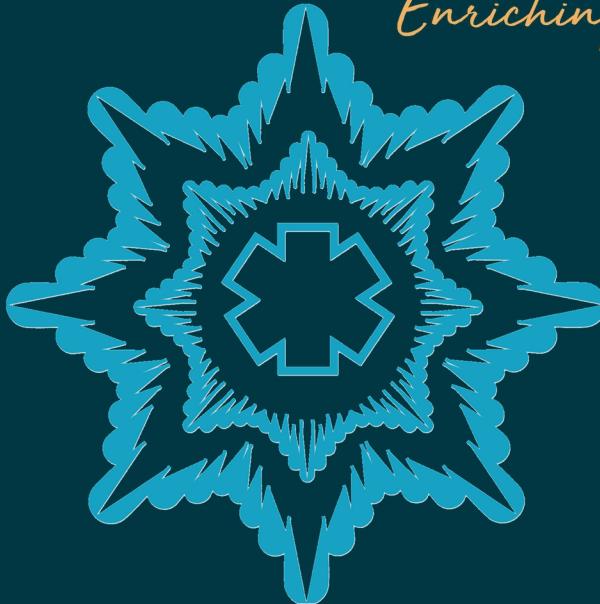
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
				1 St David's Day, Marie Curie Daffodil Appeal	2	3 World Hearing Day, No More Week
4 <i>Endometriosis Awareness Week</i>	5 <i>St Piran's Day</i>	6 <i>National Careers Week</i>	7	8 <i>International Women's Day</i>	9	10 <i>Mothering Sunday</i>
11 <i>Nutrition and Hydration Week</i>	12	13 National No Smoking Day MS Awareness Week	14	15 <i>World Sleep Day</i>	16 <i>Disabled Access Day</i>	17 <i>St Patricks Day, Red Nose Day</i>
18 <i>Global Recycling Day</i>	19	20 <i>Oral health Day, Spring Equinox, Day of Happiness</i>	21 <i>World Down Syndrome Day, International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination</i>	22	23	24
25	26 <i>Purple Day—Raising awareness of Epilepsy</i>	27 <i>World Autism Awareness Week</i>	28 <i>Wear A Hat Day - for brain tumour research</i>	29 <i>Good Friday</i>	30 <i>World Bipolar Day</i>	31 <i>International Transgender Day of Visibility, Easter Sunday</i>

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The next issue of the Autograph Care newsletter will be looking at Women's Health & Menopause.

If you would like to tell us your story, please contact Jenny Martin at hr@autographcare.co.uk

BLUE LIGHT CARD



We are delighted to announce that as part of our ongoing commitment to help with the cost-of-living crisis, we are offering all colleagues the option to have the blue light card*.

The blue light card offers a range of discounts on everyday essentials, including food shopping.

To take part, you will need to register online at [Blue Light Card Registration](#) (due to site permissions required we are unable to register for this on your behalf).

The cost for 2 years membership is £4.99, which we will reimburse into your pay.

We hope you find this benefit useful and that it helps towards everyday costs.

Any questions, please contact the HR team at
hr@autographcare.co.uk

* After successfully completing and passing your contractual probation period

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Enriching Lives

Has a staff member gone the extra mile?

Did they assist you during a difficult time?

Are they a staff member who represents the Autograph Values?

Vote for your Star

Voting is open for all Employees, Residents and Families!

STAR OF THE MONTH

Voting Closes,
the Last Friday of
every Month!

Final Decision will be
made by the Home
Manager