

Christmas 2022 at The Family Haven



Christmas is always a busy time for us and this year was no different. This year the party days were held over two days with the clients and their children attending on their specific days. The clients spent their morning playing bingo and pass the parcel which was a new experience for many of them. They were also given the opportunity to buy raffle tickets and everyone won at least one prize. The children's main presents, the clients present and also a hamper for each of the families of goodies donated by Nadia Magdenovic and Lianne from the Mears Group, presents from a family member of two of our trustees and staff at Imjim Barracks were given out before lunch.

Lunch as usual was amazing! A turkey roast with all the trimmings was expertly cooked by Katren and served to the clients by Lucy (Centre Manager) and Gail (Family Support).



The children were able to attend a special party day during the festive period. We held two days for the parties to ensure all were catered for. On both days we had similar arts and crafts set up to entice their imaginations. Children came dressed in their best party attire, with some preferring to wear our dressing up to join in the fun. The staff shared lots of music and dancing along with face painting to help everyone feel a part of the festivities. There were lots of activity stations with calendars, Christmas cards, biscuit decorating and cake making set up around the rooms, with lots of stimulating physical activities that kept everyone involved and entertained.

The children really did enjoy their Christmas roast dinner, they ate everything! Light Christmas music in the background, happy laughs and a full team of wonderful staff to help them enjoy their experience, we are certain it will now become one of their Family Haven best memories.



After lunch the clients collected their child one by one and took them to see Santa in his grotto where the Elf and Santa really did make them feel very special. The children seemed to enjoy this experience and were very pleased with the gift they received from Santa.

After such a busy day the families were ready to go home, laden with armfuls of presents and tired happy children.



**Helping vulnerable families
to a brighter future
since 1988**

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The Family Haven
A company limited by
Guarantee
Registered Charity No
1088622

31 Spa Road, Gloucester
GL1 1UY
Telephone: 01452 422971

E-mail:
info@thefamilyhaven.com

www.thefamilyhaven.com

Christmas Trip to Cattle Country Tuesday 13th December 2022



Our coach driver was ready and waiting to take us on our way.

We set off just in the nick of time to get to the cattle country car park where two elves were waiting for us. The children waited in a huge barn, where they could climb into the big red sleigh and play and have photos taken. As we waited to see Santa we were able to watch the rabbits hopping around their pen, we saw some little goats who were very friendly, next to them and a little bit bigger were the Shetland ponies, then a bit bigger again were the donkeys.



The last animals we saw before the Elves took us to Santa were the fluffy, feathery chickens.

The children went in with their mummy's to see Santa and were given a special present.

After Santa there were some more animal pens to see, the ducks and the deer!



Once we were back at the main park there was lots to do, with two big play barns with climbing frames and slides (which were very steep) and ball pits. There was a lovely campfire in front of the first play barn, an elf was helping children to toast giant marshmallows, it smelt so good! After the play barn we walked along the side of the big wooden castle and outdoor play area. We were so lucky that it wasn't raining (or snowing), it was cold but sunny, so we could explore everywhere.

As we walked further along to the entrance we passed another play barn and then saw a sign for the "Elf workshop" it was lovely and warm with picnic tables set up with buckets of magic oats for children to make their own reindeer food, there were buckets of "magical midnight stardust", "Fly Faster Oats", "nibble of night vision magic", "chimney locator crunch", and "snowflakes from the north pole" The children were helped by the Elf to scoop the magic reindeer food into bags to take home for Santa's reindeer on Christmas eve. In the same room, children could write letters to Santa and post them in the magic post box. Lots of our children wrote letters and drew pictures for Santa. We had a very busy day. We met back at the coach at 2.30pm which was nice and warm as it was starting to get cold. We arrived back at the Haven having had a lovely day in the winter sunshine.



Thank you to everyone for making Christmas special for our families

Thank you NRA Roofing & Flooring Services LTD, Colin Ebenezer and Morgan Sindall Construction Infrastructure for donating selection boxes. A big thank you from everyone at The Family Haven to Zurich Community Trust and Zurich Insurance UK for helping to make Christmas that extra bit special for our families this year. Lyndsey, Dani and Teona took part in the Zurich Community Trust festive challenge to provide shopping for a lunch for the two Christmas parties. Debbie Irving and Julia Yates delivered wonderful presents and wrapped all of the gifts ready for Father Christmas to hand out to the children. Massive thanks also to Superdry Design Department who spent the day at The Family Haven decorating Santa's Grotto, wrapping presents and making up gift packs. Thank you Erin Brooks, Amy Hall, Mollie Pike, Flo Maas, Phillipa Capewell, and Christina Maynes.

We would like to put on record a huge **THANK YOU** to all the companies, groups and individuals who donated this Christmas, we were so lucky once again especially with the cost of living going up and yet you all came to help us and our families. We received new toys for the children, lovely gifts for the parents, food and lots of treats for the families. There are too many people to mention individually so we won't even try. Your generosity and caring touches our hearts. Because of all of you we were able to give our families a Happy Christmas and were able to help them through the cost of living increases. Also a huge **THANK YOU** to our Volunteers who gave their time to help us out during our party days. We can't thank you all enough.

Personal Development and Maintenance Project



The clients have been busy with a range of activities recently. The ladies from Knit and Natter continued to come until Christmas to help with the clients knitting and crochet projects. The clients have really enjoyed their company and learnt a lot. They have also been making draft excluders after a visit from Suehaila from Severn Wye Energy Agency. These could be used to help reduce the amount of heat lost in a room.



The clients have also been making paper stars and curtain ring decorations and sewing Christmas tree garlands to decorate the clients lounge for Christmas. One of the most appreciated sessions run was on how to read the washing labels on clothes and also the information on detergent bottles. Many of the clients admitted they didn't know what the symbols meant and had subsequently damaged clothes because they had been washed at the wrong temperature or tumbled dried for example. The clients were extremely grateful for the washing detergent package they were given.



All of the sessions run are designed to help the clients with their day to day lives whether that's by improving their mental health, saving them money, saving them time or by keeping them and their family safe.

Prosser Knowles renew their Corporate Partnership



We're delighted to announce that Prosser Knowles have renewed their corporate partnership with The Family Haven for another year so that they can continue to help vulnerable families in the Gloucestershire area.

Prosser Knowles have been a wonderful support in the last year, helping to raise much needed funds and raising awareness of the work we do.



In addition to the recently agreed funding of £5000, they have supported our work by helping with the following:

- supplied Advent Calendars in December for the children
- hosted a Christmas Jumper day
- organised a 'Beat the Pro Event' as part of an annual golf day with financial advisors Jon and Alex challenging the clients to beat them. Everyone made a donation to enter the competition
- raised money through taking part in challenge events. Jonathon Bissett, a financial advisor at Prosser Knowles, took part in the Great North swim. Laura Evans and Rachel Robb took part in a sponsored skydive in September
- organised a cake sale in Easter
- supported the charity at Colesbourne Gardens by hosting the tea rooms. The team will be helping at the event again in February
- donated additional funds, including an individual donation from Dale Gough, a Director at Prosser Knowles. In addition, they also donated additional monies left over from an Apprentice building day.

We're very grateful for the continued support and look forward to working together in 2023 to help more vulnerable families in Gloucestershire.

You'll find more information about Prosser Knowles on their www.prosserknowles.co.uk

Visit from Suhaila from Severn Wye Energy Agency

Suhaila paid a visit and after the initial introduction and brief outline of her role she explained to the clients some of the many ways she could support them.

Suhaila mentioned the various grants and schemes which are available if you are in fuel poverty or in debt to any of the fuel companies. She discussed how she can arrange home visits with the clients where she can telephone the fuel companies on their behalf and suggest payment plans, new contracts, and sometimes write off the debts all together.

She then gave the clients lots of different ideas on how they can reduce their bills by doing simple things like only filling the kettle with as much water as you need and washing clothes on a 30° wash rather than a hotter temp. She gave estimates on how much money could be saved which greatly interested the clients.

The clients asked lots of questions and Suhaila was able to give them advice and arranged home visits with most of them. She explained that whilst visiting them she would be able to check all their electrical appliances to see if they were being used correctly and ways of reducing costs.

One of the clients requested support with her bills and explained the difficulties she was having. Suhaila was able to reassure her and arranged to visit. This put her mind at rest and reduced her stress.

The clients were very grateful for all the help and advice given and also for the free energy saving lightbulbs and leaflets in their home language.

Thank you to everyone for supporting us

Thank you to all of our wonderful friends and supporters for donating to our Aviva Crowdfunding page. We have been overwhelmed by your support and would like to thank everyone who have supported our project, helping us to raise a wonderful total of £10,018!

With your help, we can deliver the practical and emotional support families in crisis need. This includes personal development classes, covering a wide range of topics, including financial advice, information regarding benefits, English classes and help with CV's and training.

We can also provide healthy eating sessions that concentrate on basic advice for our families, by giving them a better understanding of what constitutes a healthy diet, how in practical terms they can provide nutritious meals for themselves and their children, with little effort and cost.

Thanks again for making a difference. Your support is much appreciated and will help us support the many families who need our service.

We will keep you updated on how the money has made a difference in our next newsletter.

Leave a Legacy



Imagine the difference you can make

Did you know that legacies are a vital source of income for charities? To find out more about leaving a gift in your will we have a page on our website with information we hope is useful:

www.thefamilyhaven.com/how-you-can-help/leave-a-legacy/

When you "Leave a Legacy",
you're enriching the lives
of other people and
supporting and sustaining
charitable work for
future generations

Why become a Friend? As a Friend of The Family Haven, you will be supporting the Trustees and staff in helping provide the services our families so desperately need. Your regular subscriptions and offers of voluntary help are invaluable and support us in delivering our aims.

Call 01452 422971 for an application form or

**Download it from
<http://bit.ly/YtnESd>**



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