

Care home company 'reindeers' raise vital funds for disability charity



BORN TO RUN. Colleagues at Colten Care's Colten House head office in Ringwood in their running gear and antlers.

Sure-footed colleagues at a Ringwood-based care home company held a reindeer run to raise more than £350 for people with autism and learning disabilities.

Thirteen team members from Colten Care's Colten House head office donned antlers along with their trainers for a 5km circuit around the town, clocking up nearly 70km between them.

The festive dash was in aid of an appeal by the Stable Family Home Trust which provides essential services in Hampshire and Dorset including residential homes, personal development programmes, day services and supported living.

Representatives of Colten's Marketing, Estates, Facilities, Finance and Architecture departments all took part in the run.

One participant, Director of IT & Support Services Andy Keeble, was 'volunteered' to wear a full-body reindeer suit complete with Rudolf-style red nose.

Andy said with a smile: "I didn't mind 'prancing around' Ringwood in my outfit in full view of everyone as it was all for such a great cause."

Based in Bisterne, south of Ringwood, the Stable Family Home Trust was established in 1980 and currently works with more than 120 adults and families.

Tracey Hickford, Corporate & Community Fund Development Officer, said Colten was among several local businesses that together raised £2,200 for what was the Trust's first virtual 'Cheer the Deer' fun run.



Tracey said: "Our day services and funds have been hugely affected by Covid since March 2020 so we are incredibly grateful to all local businesses who support us. A special thank-you goes to Colten Care staff and management for joining forces with us, sporting antlers and noses, and running round Ringwood town."

The deer run for the Trust is the latest in a series of fundraising, charity support and community activities by Colten staff and residents.

The company's 21 care homes in Hampshire, Dorset, West Sussex and Wiltshire, and the Ringwood head office, acted as collection points for donations to local food banks in the run-up to Christmas.

And despite the constraints of having to manage Covid, in-home events and activities have continued to help Children in Need, Macmillan Cancer Support, the Rotary Club's annual shoebox appeal and many other charity initiatives.

Some Colten homes such as Abbey View in Sherborne and St Catherines View in Winchester have donated hundreds of disposable gloves and face masks to nearby churches to help with Covid safety at services during and beyond the festive period.

In a note to St Catherines View, Reverend Mike Gardner, Vicar of St Luke's and St Mark's in Winchester, wrote: "Thank you for your most caring gesture and generosity."