

Bon Voyage! South East care group sets sail on epic virtual world cruise

Residents became passengers at a South East care group as it left its virtual port to embark on a six-month world cruise – offering its residents the holiday of a lifetime despite the pandemic.

With passports at the ready and sun and sangria in mind, residents at all 13 of Nellsar's homes across Kent, Surrey and Essex began their grand voyage in Hong Kong, to coincide with Chinese New Year.

A welcome distraction to the current lockdown, residents enjoyed Chinese themed activities, decorations, music, cuisine, costumes, quizzes, and films from the comfort of their armchairs.

Dubbed 'Around the World with Nellsar Cruises', the virtual ship will dock at a different country each month with upcoming destinations including India, Spain, Italy, France and the Caribbean, before returning to the UK in August.

Residents and staff at Nellsar's Meyer House Care Centre, in Erith, Kent, Lukestone Care Centre, in Maidstone, and Princess Christian Care Centre, near Woking, were just a handful of homes that embraced the sun-soaked adventure.

Even Nellsar's Managing Director, Martin Barrett, got involved in the fun, becoming captain of the cruise liner and sending a video to all the homes, in full costume, encouraging everyone to put their feet up and have some fun.

Viv Stead, Recreation and Well-being Manager at Nellsar, said: "Our residents and staff have been dreaming of escaping the lockdown and visiting far flung destinations, so we thought why not take them there! Let's face it, it's been a long haul for everyone, and we all need a break and some well-deserved sunshine and fun. Our virtual cruise offers no pressure or rules, just a bit of sunny distraction."

"Our first stop in Hong Kong was a great success. Everyone embraced the Chinese culture and we had so much fun across our homes. 2021 is the year of the Ox and is associated with dependability, strength, diligence, and determination – which we believe encapsulates the social care sector over the last 12 months, so it tied in nicely."

She continued: "We're getting the relatives involved too, by exchanging postcards and photos as we make our way around the globe. It's a great way to help our residents reminisce, with many of them being very well travelled and willing to share their globetrotting adventures. Ultimately, we just want to have a bit of fun after an exhausting year and what better way to do that than with an all-inclusive world cruise – it's armchair travel in luxury!"

With the cruise liner already making its way to India, where it will dock on Wednesday, March 10th, residents have been reflecting on their recent trip to Hong Kong.

Iris Smith, an 84-year-old resident at Nellsar's Woodstock Residential Care Centre, said: "I enjoyed setting sail on the virtual cruise and celebrating Chinese New Year, as I lived in Hong Kong for two years with my husband. I love the people and their way of life, and I enjoyed talking about my time there to the staff and fellow residents."

While fellow Woodstock resident, 90-year-old Charles Hunter, added: "I was looking forward to being the captain of our cruise ship all week! It was great fun."

Built on strong foundations, the family-run Nellsar care group has worked hard to build the trusted reputation of its homes and prides itself on being approachable, accountable and 'hands-on' in its relationships with the families it supports.

For more information on Nellsar and its homes, please visit www.nellsar.com.

Ends

About Nellsar

Nellsar is a family-run group of 13 Care Homes throughout Kent, Essex and Surrey. Built on strong foundations, Nellsar has worked hard to build the trusted reputation of its Homes and prides itself on being approachable, accountable and 'hands-on' in its relationships with the families it supports.