

**If you care,
we care.**

The Carers' Support Centre
Bristol & South Gloucestershire

Carers News

Issue 61 • Spring 2013

FREE!
£1.50 when sold

Centre of excellence for volunteering

The Carers' Support Centre has been recognised for its excellent volunteer team and support. Volunteers Manager, Amy Flood was invited to attend a Carers Trust conference in London to give a presentation on the amazing work of our volunteer team.

Along with Jaine Rubin (volunteer) Amy showcased our volunteer projects and how we approach recruiting, training and supporting volunteers. The presentation was very well received and Volunteer Coordinators from other Centres had lots of questions.

Amy said "I was very proud to be invited to the conference and to have the achievements of our volunteers recognised. I couldn't have a better job!"



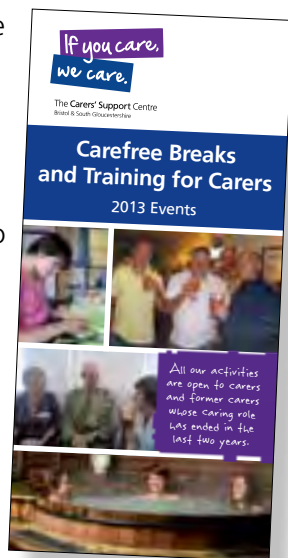
Maggie, Jo and Ken are 3 of our 170 plus volunteers who all give their time and enthusiasm so generously. Thank you!

Carefree Breaks

Do you need a break? Everyone needs a change and some time off occasionally, whether for an hour, a day or longer. This is especially important for carers. With spring on the way, why not schedule some 'me time' to recharge your batteries?

Both Bristol and South Gloucestershire councils are encouraging carers to do something for themselves by having a carer's assessment. You may be eligible for a one-off payment from your council which you can use to pay for one of our breaks. Read more about this on page 8.

We have some lovely events planned over the next few months to help you relax, get together with other carers or learn something new. From relaxation sessions and complementary therapies, to craft sessions and a digital photography course. See diary page 16 for details.



New Carers Time service coming this April

This new Bristol service will create regular breaks for carers by providing company for the person they look after. This will run as a chargeable service, but we won't make a profit, as all the funds will help towards running it. If you use the service, you may be able to get help with the cost.

At The Carers' Support Centre we have 10 years' experience of carefully matching companions, so that carers can take a break knowing the person they look after has some good company.

If you want to find out more please contact Ruth Somerset.

☎ 0117 958 9908

✉ ruths@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

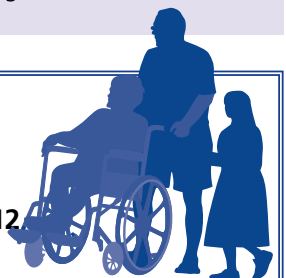
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2 Message from the CEO

Welcome to the spring edition of Carers News.

After an external assessment in November last year by the Charities Evaluation Service, I am very pleased to announce that the Carers' Support Centre has been recommended for PQASSO Quality Mark (Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations) Level 2, the highest level available for charities in the UK.

This process covered all aspects of our organisation, from governance to service delivery and monitoring outcomes and is the leading quality standard developed for the charity sector.

We embarked on this 'journey' not just to get the award; we wanted to ensure that we have effective and efficient organisational systems in place. I am certain that the process will allow us to deliver a better quality of service to carers. It will also give us greater credibility and legitimacy with funders and will result in better communication among staff, trustees and volunteers.

In addition to this, in March we are being assessed by Carers Trust on our service delivery. If we are successful with this we will be awarded 'centre of excellence' status.

Included in this mailing is our annual survey asking for your comments. We want to know what you think of the services we provide, whether you think we can make any improvements and whether there is a service you would like us to provide that would help you in your caring role. We would be very grateful if you could find time to fill in the survey. When you return the survey, as a way of saying thank you, we will enter you into a prize draw for a meal for 2 at the Avon Gorge Hotel.

Public sector funding

You will no doubt be aware that there continue to be reductions in public sector funding with on average 1.7% cuts across local authorities in England. In Bristol we attended a budget consultation and made the case for the need to protect services for both adult and young carers.

In fact the latest census figures show that the number of carers in Bristol and South Glos has increased to 13.5% and 14.7% of the population respectively. This is higher than the national average which shows that 10% of the population are carers, the same percentage as in 2001.

There are now 40,738 carers in Bristol, an increase of 4,794, and 27,639 in South Glos, an increase of 3,547. Of these carers, there are 9,176 in Bristol and 5,384 in South Glos who provide care for more than 50 hours per week.

We suspect the actual figures are probably far higher than those reported in the census though, as there are still many people who do not recognise, or identify themselves as carers.

National fundraising partnership to support young adult carers

Carers Trust launched their national fundraising partnership with the Co-operative at the end of January. In Bristol, the launch was marked with an event at the Westbury on Trym branch. To get fundraising activities 'rock 'n' rolling', members of staff dressed up as Elvis, rocking around the clock, to represent carers who need to be on call 24/7.

Nationally, Co-operative staff aim to raise £5 million to support young adult carers. The money will be used to tackle feelings of isolation and provide desperately needed breaks, information, advice and support for 14-25 year-olds facing the challenge of caring.

This partnership presents a great opportunity and we are looking forward to working locally with the Co-operative over the coming year. Locally we already have a great partnership with Co-operative Legal Services.

And finally, we have decided to reduce the number of issues of Carers News down to 3 per year, so that we can allocate staff time and resources to other services. We hope this won't affect the quality of the service we provide. You can get an overview of all aspects of our work by reading our latest annual review for 2012. It is available on our website. Or if you would like a printed version please contact CarersLine.

Keith Sinclair

Chief Executive



How was your hospital experience?

When the person you care for is in hospital, it can be a very confusing and worrying time. Decisions may be made very quickly and there can be a whole host of people involved. You may even be told different things by different people. However, if you get clear information and help, it makes all the difference. We would like to know what your hospital experience has been.

Our acute team work in hospitals supporting carers, acting as advocates and helping to ensure the discharge process goes smoothly to prevent readmission through carers being unable to cope. They also attend patient experience groups, where they can feed back your views and experiences to senior practitioners and executives within the Trust. The more carers who tell us what their hospital experience has been, the more potential there is for improving services for all carers.

If you've got something to feed back, contact Anna Phillips.

☎ **07557 418692**

✉ anna.phillips@nbt.nhs.uk

If you would like to work directly with UH Bristol to improve their services to patients and carers then find out about becoming a Carer Governor by going to www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/FTelection. Alternatively contact Maria Fox, Membership Manager:

☎ **0117 342 3763**

✉ foundationtrust@uhbristol.nhs.uk

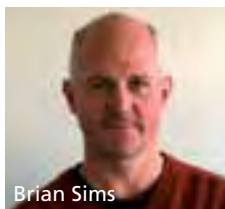
New trustees

Brian Sims has joined us as a new trustee and Jackie Husher-Burnell has rejoined us after a spell away.

Brian is a self-employed consultant offering technical and business advice to printers and industry bodies. He is also a qualified mediator, who helps to resolve commercial disputes, and works with insurance companies, solicitors and banks when they need expert witness services for claims or court proceedings.

We are sure his business experience will help make the organisation more robust. He is already working on implementing health and safety procedures and giving guidance on business continuity.

We're pleased to welcome Jackie back as a trustee. She was on the board for 7 years, as a former carer, and then spent a year away in Crewe. She's now "very pleased to be back" and commented that "it's just like coming home". She feels that the organisation has changed a lot whilst she has been away, particularly with the development of the Social Enterprise and Carers Holidays and while that's a necessary thing in our current funding climate, she wants to ensure that the organisation remains 'carer led' and continues to provide the support that carers want and need.



Brian Sims



Jackie Husher-Burnell

New staff

Emma Ryan has joined us as Health Team and Policy Manager. Emma has moved to Bristol from London, where she spent the last few years working at the Department of Health; a great place to get to grips with national health and care policy. Before that, she was working for community organisations in Ethiopia and Guatemala designing and evaluating health programmes. She said: "I am already inspired by the work and dedication of the team at the Carers' Support Centre and I'm really keen to get stuck in to the exciting work we have ahead of us!"

Karen Hurley has joined us as the Acute Trusts Team Manager, covering Michelle Doubtfire's maternity leave. She is responsible for developing the carers' strategies within University Hospitals Bristol (UHB) and North Bristol Trusts and for managing the caseworkers at the BRI, Frenchay and Southmead Hospitals. She has a lot of experience to bring to the team, having previously worked at UHB along with 14 years experience of working in the acute hospital sector.

And we welcome Beth Shedden and Stephanie Meek who have joined us as social work students on placement until June.

Emma Ryan

☎ **0117 958 9901**

✉ emmar@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

Karen Hurley

☎ **07825 299112**

✉ karenh@carerssupportcentre.org.uk



Karen

Emma

Carers Holidays

We started taking bookings for 2013 Carers Holidays in December, and have already had a good number of enquiries. Look out for our prices leaflet enclosed with this magazine and book now to make sure you don't miss out – last summer season was nearly a complete sell-out!

We provide good value holidays for carers and their families at holiday homes in Torbay and the Cotswolds. The holiday homes, located on Hoburne sites, are well equipped with good site facilities, free access to on-site entertainment and great local tourist attractions.

Accommodation is offered on a 2 and 3 bed basis with the 2 bed holiday homes offering accessible accommodation.

We want carers to have as relaxed a holiday as possible and we're working with local organisations who can provide carers with practical services. This could include getting a family member dressed or out of bed, or providing a sitting service while you have a few hours off.

Some comments from carers who took a holiday with us last year:

"The accommodation was excellent and the beautiful, quiet surroundings and wildlife was very calming."

"Excellent value for money. Smoothly executed."

For bookings and further information:

☎ 0117 965 2365

✉ info@carersolidays.org.uk

🌐 www.carersolidays.org.uk



EighteenPlus

EighteenPlus is a group for young adult carers aged 18-25 and is run by volunteer co-ordinators with help from The Carers' Support Centre.

EighteenPlus organises fun monthly get-togethers and some of the members met HRH Princess Anne at Butlins in Minehead, at an event run by Carers Trust.

In February, Carina, one of the co-ordinators, attended a seminar in London on improving access to education and training for young adult carers. The event was organised by NIACE and Carers Trust. Carina said:

"It was really good! 5 young adult carers spoke about their experiences of accessing education and employment, proving that it is possible with the right support. I have come away with lots of information which could help other young adult carers."

EighteenPlus always welcomes new members and if you'd like to get involved, you can find the group on Facebook by searching for EighteenPlus Young-Adult Carers-Group or contact Ruth Garner.

☎ 0117 937 5620

✉ ruthg@carerssupportcentre.org.uk



EighteenPlus members met HRH Princess Anne, a patron of Carers Trust.

We're on facebook and twitter. You can now follow the Carers' Support Centre on Facebook and twitter. Just go to our website to follow the links. We'll be using Facebook and twitter to publicise events and training courses.



Did you know that every day at least 6,000 people in the UK start caring?

Prepared to Care? is the theme of this year's Carer's Week campaign. It will focus on how the UK's current carer population is coping, how effectively Government is supporting the growing numbers of carers, and whether the wider population is prepared for future caring responsibilities.

Carers Week, organised by Carers Trust and 7 other national organisations, takes place from Monday 10 to Sunday 16 June 2013. Locally, we'll be raising awareness of carers' issues and encouraging people to contact us to find out what support is available.

Watch out for more details about Carers Week on our website.

What does the future hold?



Bristol Parent Carers Participation Event 2013

We are pleased to announce our annual participation event is taking place on: Wednesday 6 March, 9.45am – 2.30pm Greenway Centre, Southmead, Bristol BS10 5PY

Our event is open to all parent carers and associated professionals in the Bristol area and aims to:

- Help identify the key issues that affect parent carers
- Explain how parent carers and service providers working together can make changes for the better
- Inform parent carers of the service improvements that participation has brought about over the last year
- Help parent carers steer the direction of future service changes.

With our theme 'What does the future hold?' we will also look at 'personalisation' and how it will affect you. We will explore what person-centred planning and personal budgets might mean for you.

There will be a selection of presentations and discussion groups to take part in, information stalls, therapy treatments for that bit of relaxation, the chance to talk to other parents facing similar issues and professionals providing services. Plus, you can enjoy a nice lunch whilst helping to shape the future!

We look forward to seeing many parent carers there, so please book your FREE place now, either by phone or online:

☎ **0117 937 5623** BookingsLine
 🌐 www.bristolparentcarers.org.uk

Monthly parent carer support meetings

One year on and these friendly parent support meetings have proved very successful, enjoyable and supportive for parent carers. They offer a chance to chat, relax and have some 'me' time. All newcomers are made very welcome, so please don't hesitate to come along. Travel and childcare costs can be reimbursed (please bring receipts). See page 14 for forthcoming meetings.

For further information about Bristol Parent Carers:

☎ **0845 642 0124** (local rate)
 📧 info@bristolparentcarers.org.uk
 🌐 www.bristolparentcarers.org.uk

South Glos Parents and Carers (SGPC)



SGPC is the local parent participation forum in South Gloucestershire for families who have children with additional needs or a disability. SGPC aims to improve services by listening to parents views and experiences and feeding back to service providers through its parent representatives.

Parent Sensory Workshop 18 March 2013

This workshop is aimed at those caring for children with a range of conditions from autism to ADHD, DCD (developmental co-ordination disorder, which is sometimes referred to as dyspraxia), Downs Syndrome and other low muscle tone conditions. This workshop will not be suitable for carers of children with cerebral palsy.

The trainer will look at over and under-sensitivity, relating it to co-ordination and to concentration and anxiety, as well as explaining how this impacts on daily life and what to do about it. The aim is that you will go away with more confidence about improving your child's concentration or lessening their anxiety as well as gaining support by meeting other parents.



Special educational needs and disability fayre

13 and 27 June BAWA

BAWA, 589 Southmead Road, Filton BS34 7RG

SGPC will be holding a special educational needs and disability fayre full of stalls where you can pick up information and network.

Monthly coffee mornings

And don't forget SGPC's monthly coffee mornings at the Bristol and Bath Science Park in Emersons Green. These are usually on the last Wednesday in the month from 10am – 12 (see diary page 16).

To find out more about SGPC or any of these events:

📧 parents@sglosparentsandcarers.org.uk
 🌐 www.sglosparentsandcarers.org.uk

Balancing work and caring

Given the stresses and strains that can result from balancing work and caring, it is unsurprising that 1 in 5 carers give up work to care full time. Businesses can all too easily lose experienced staff, as most carers fall into the 45-64 age bracket at the peak of their careers. With the number of carers in the UK set to grow from 6 million to 9 million in the next 30 years, this is an issue none of us can afford to ignore.

We believe carers should have choices about work. And that it is important that those carers who want to work, and are able to do so, get the right support.

We also believe there are business benefits to supporting working carers. Far from compromising business objectives, research by Employers for Carers shows that using a flexible working approach achieves impressive business results.

Using a flexible approach attracts and retains staff. It reduces stress, sick leave and recruitment and training costs. It increases resilience and productivity, improves service delivery, produces cost savings, improves people management and increases staff morale.

Organisations that have introduced flexible working, special leave arrangements and workplace support for carers have judged them a success. Their message is – it makes business sense to care for carers.

Evidence shows being flexible can reduce staff turnover and absence, thereby cutting employment costs. The evidence from employers themselves shows that it is rarely abused and increases loyalty and commitment.

Flexibility need not result in a huge upheaval in work, little changes or a supportive culture can go a long way. It can mean so much to those looking to juggle different roles. The peace of mind that is generated, knowing their caring needs can be met, means that working carers can be more relaxed at work and able to concentrate more fully.

University of Bristol gives workplace support

Good employers provide workplace support for carers in addition to flexible working. This can include setting up an in-house networking group, providing information and training, and developing carers policies.

Gill Deacon, our training development officer, is working with the University of Bristol to deliver a series of workshops to employees who are carers. The first workshop was on maintaining good health, helping employees make sure that they look after themselves properly. Gill was able to deliver the workshop on the premises and packed a lot of information into a 2-hour session. Some of the comments from participants:

“Very helpful and important session.”

“Was nice to just talk and brainstorm with like minded people.”

“Good ideas and opportunity to talk.”

“I’m more aware of looking after my health.”

Gill is now working with the university on further workshops to cover issues such as carers rights and resources, and stress management.

Kimberley Wooster, the Equality and Diversity Administrator, said: “The session led by Gill had a nice relaxed atmosphere and was beneficial to all who came along. The university will definitely be arranging more sessions for our staff in the future”.

Are you, or do you know an employer, who would like to support their staff with training around carers issues?

Contact Gill Deacon on:

☎ **0117 958 9988**

✉ gilld@carerssupportcentre.org.uk



©bexymay43

Free courses for carers

We know it can be difficult to find the time to attend training, but carers who come on our courses really value the difference it makes to their daily lives. We're offering the following free training over the coming months. See diary on page 16 for dates.

Caring for Those in the Later Stages of Life is a 5 week course, one afternoon per week in Patchway. Carers will have the opportunity to discuss issues specifically relevant to caring for someone in the later stages of life, including resources and dealing with loss and change.

Understanding Dementia is a 4 week course, one morning per week at the Carers' Support Centre. Topics include coping strategies, stress management, and communication and engagement skills.

Caring with Confidence is a 5 week, half day per week course in Horfield. This is an ideal course for carers new to their caring situation or those wanting more information about resources for carers, stress management, and communication skills.

One day courses for carers in South Glos

Effective Communication – assertiveness, dealing with professionals and how to communicate effectively.

Managing Finances – budgeting, benefits, council tax and resources.

Cooking for Health – prepare and share a healthy lunch, top tips and recipes for healthy eating.

See page 16 for dates. To book a place on a training course, call our BookingsLine on **0117 937 5623**



"It's nice to know that other people understand your situation and I've learned so much. I wish I could keep going forever!"

Council tax discount – do you qualify as a carer?

You may know that people on a low income can get money off their council tax bill. But did you know that carers in some circumstances qualify for a discount regardless of their income?

In the same way that children are not included when counting the number of people in a household for council tax purposes, so some carers and some disabled people are not counted either.

A person who has a severe mental impairment (like a learning difficulty, severe mental illness or dementia) **and** is entitled to certain disability benefits will be **disregarded** for the purposes of council tax.

A carer will also be disregarded for council tax purposes if all the following apply:

- You care for an adult
- The adult you care for is someone other than your husband, wife or partner
- You live with the person you care for
- You provide at least 35 hours of care a week
- The adult you care for gets the highest rate of Disability Living Allowance or higher rate of Attendance Allowance.

So if a person with a severe mental impairment and a carer meeting the above criteria live together in a house, neither would be counted and the house would be viewed as an 'empty' property, thereby qualifying for a 50% discount on their council tax bill.

You don't have to be receiving Carers Allowance to get this discount. If there is more than one carer in the property, each carer can be included as long as both meet the conditions.

Council tax rules are complicated so it is worth seeking expert help. Phone CarersLine to find out where your nearest adviser is.

James and Jeanette both care for more than 35 hours a week for their adult son who has a learning difficulty. After reading an article about it, James went to the council and secured the 50% discount he was entitled to. He and his wife do not count for council tax as they are both carers and his son does not count because of his learning difficulty. Therefore the house is treated as 'empty'. What's more, with the help of Carers UK, he successfully claimed for a backdated repayment of several thousand pounds!

Sonia is married to Jack who has a diagnosis of dementia and gets Attendance Allowance. Jack is not counted for council tax purposes but Sonia doesn't meet the criteria for a carer to be disregarded. Nevertheless, the house is treated as having a single occupant and so they will get 25% off their council tax bill.

Carers Breaks money

In 2010 the Government allocated an extra £400m over four years (2011-2015) to provide breaks for carers. This funding was given to Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) with the requirement that they publish plans and budgets on how they are using the money to benefit carers.

Research by Carers Trust in its report *Carers Breaks on the Brink?* shows that Bristol PCT is one of the few PCTs which is meeting these requirements whilst many others have consistently failed to show how they are using that money.

Locally NHS Bristol and Bristol City Council have come together to improve support for carers. A jointly funded team has been established which takes a new approach to reach carers who have found it difficult to get help from the council or NHS before. This Integrated Carers Team works with partner agencies to assist carers, often in the form of a small budget to pay for something which will make caring a little easier.

Support for carers in Bristol GP surgeries

Bristol PCT has also awarded funding from the same 'carers breaks money' for the Carers' Support Centre's health team to work with GP surgeries. Our GP link workers are helping surgeries to identify and support carers of all ages and parent carers. And they are helping carers to access funding to help them with their caring role. This is through having a carer's simple assessment which could result in a one-off payment.

Who qualifies for a carer's simple assessment?

Carers simple assessments are for carers, including young carers and parent carers, who:

- live in Bristol or have a Bristol GP
- are not currently getting community care services
- have previously been told they don't qualify for support
- feel that caring is affecting their health and well-being
- need support to continue their caring role into the future.

What sort of things can carers get help with?

Anything that will give the carer a break, such as:

- having a short break or holiday
- complementary therapies
- joining a gym, taking up a hobby or doing a course
- buying equipment that makes caring easier eg a tumble dryer or assistive technology
- buying a service that makes caring easier eg driving lessons or a sitting service (when there is no personal care required).



Carers of all ages have requested a wide variety of things which will give them a break, including a bicycle, swimming lessons, a magazine subscription, and a weekend away.

For example, Charlotte, a young carer aged 17, was successful in applying for membership at her local cinema so she can watch unlimited movies all year. She also received cinema vouchers so she can take a friend or buy herself a snack. Charlotte said "It gives me the chance to be by myself, or treat a friend. I can't wait!"

Bill, who cares for his wife, asked for help with paying for an annual swimming pass. He said "It might not seem much but it really does make a difference. Having the pass makes me go swimming, and having that regular break away does me the world of good."

"Sitting down with the link worker was very helpful. After years of nothing; there was someone listening to me."



How do I get a carer's simple assessment?

Ask your doctor to refer you to your Carers Support Centre GP link worker. Or, phone CarersLine who can make the referral for you.

How long will the assessment take?

A confidential appointment will be offered to you. The assessment usually takes 1 hour, but every situation is different so it may take longer.

What will I be asked?

The carer's simple assessment provides an opportunity for carers to talk about their circumstances and give information about:

- the person they care for
- the care they provide
- the effect being a carer has on them
- what would help them.

Where will the assessment take place?

It may take place in your GP surgery, in your own home, or in another place agreed with you.

Additional information and support

It is vital that carers get the information they need as early as possible in their 'caring journey'. To make sure you are getting all the help and support you are entitled to, when you have your assessment, your link worker will also:

- discuss with you whether you would benefit from a referral to health and social care or another support service
- help you join your GPs carers register
- ensure you and the person you care for are getting some of the key benefits you are entitled to
- link you to appropriate emotional support
- ensure you have an emergency plan in place in case something happens to you
- advise you about support to stay in, or return to, work.

To find out more about simple assessments contact CarersLine.

Why should I tell my surgery that I am a carer?

Once your GP surgery knows that you are a carer they should add your details to their carers register. If you are not sure whether you are registered as a carer, ask at your surgery's reception. Once you are registered as a carer this will show up on your medical notes and those of the person you care for. Being on the carers register may entitle you to some of the following services and support:

- a free flu vaccination
- priority appointments for yourself and the person you care for
- access to information about organisations that can offer you support, advice and assistance
- access to a simple carers assessment or other community care services.

"It makes such a difference now that everyone in the surgery knows us both. They understand that Dennis can be difficult if he's having a bad day and will talk to me about it and involve me. Sometimes as a carer you can feel like you don't matter or you're a bit invisible. But I feel like they really care about me too".

Sylvia

Using flu clinics to reach out to carers

This winter we have been attending as many flu clinics at GP surgeries as possible. Many carers attended the clinics with the person they care for; but many didn't know about the Carers' Support Centre or about the help that may be available to them. This has been a good way for us to give out information to carers who are not currently being supported with any services.

We attended clinics throughout the local area and identified 237 carers not previously in contact with any support services. We were able to help these carers with information about support available to them, including the emergency card scheme.



We have produced a new handy pocket-sized leaflet for health and social care professionals. It contains useful information on where to refer carers for help. The leaflet will be widely distributed through hospitals and GP surgeries by our health team.



Fun at the Panto!

Christmas can be a particularly tough time for young carers.

While their friends are out having fun, the daily routine for young carers never lets up. However, this year, thanks to funding from Grant Thornton and Memery Crystal, we've been able to treat some young carers, giving them a break from their heavy responsibilities. It meant we could take a group to Aladdin, this year's panto at the Hippodrome; and Jolidays students could take a group ten pin bowling. Fantastic!



Gert Grub

This *Gert Lush Winter Grub* cookbook offers a great selection of recipes to keep you warm and well-fed. It's been produced by Grant Thornton, with all money raised going to young carers. Choose from quick and easy tasty snacks, hearty casseroles, mouth-watering cakes, puddings and lots more: it's a handy addition to your cookery bookshelf. To order your copy contact Pip Bowater at Grant Thornton.

0117 305 7793

pip.bowater@uk.gt.com

Price £5, including postage and packing.

Young Carers Voice

During the Easter holidays 20 young carers from across Bristol will be taking part in an exciting residential consultation event, being co-ordinated by Youth Links. One of the key aims of the three-day event is to ensure that young carers have their say in shaping children's services to suit their needs.



The young people will work on a presentation that they'll deliver to a range of professionals, policy makers and decision-makers. It will include ideas of how, when and where services could be delivered and how local and city-wide provision could work together. We're sure that the young carers will bring a strong voice to this unique consultation process.

In addition, at one of their spring meetings, Young Carers Voice are hoping to meet the elected mayor, George Ferguson. He has responsibility for Children and Young People's Services and the young carers are keen to let him know about issues that affect them.

Young Carers Voice members have already had a visit from The Rt. Hon Lord Mayor of Bristol, Councillor Peter Main. They learned about his role and range of duties and, in exchange, young carers showed him their DVD and shared their experiences of caring.

Funding for breaks for young carers in Bristol

You might have heard about the Integrated Carers Team; a new service giving help to carers for breaks from caring. Young carers who live in Bristol, or have a Bristol GP, can apply for funds too! Please talk to your school to ask if they can apply for a carer's simple assessment on your behalf, or if you aren't in school, you can contact Ruth on **0117 937 5620** for more information. Also, see the article on page 8.

Sign up for Fun Day

Our annual Fun Day will be on Saturday 16th March and we hope to see all our young carers there, enjoying the activities and having a well deserved break. Please look out for your invitation and return your reply forms ASAP to secure your place!

If you have any ideas for articles or information that would help you, please contact ruthg@carerssupportcentre.org.uk



Spotlight on...

Unique Voice is a Bristol-based theatre company and educational provider which creates performances and workshops exploring social issues which affect young people today.



They are working with us on an exciting project to raise awareness of young carers within education. They have created a school production called 'A Day in the Life of Me'. It explores the contrast between a young carer's daily routine, with its stresses and conflicts, and that of other young people.

Krystal Keeley from **Unique Voice**, explained:

"Drama is a really good way of speaking to children on their level and it's a good platform for raising and discussing difficult issues. We're really proud to be working to raise awareness of young carers in schools."

This spring, they will be working with 2 schools in Bristol and 2 schools in South Gloucestershire, to showcase their work. We are confident that the schools will be bowled away by the performance and they will recognise its value to both pupils and staff.

We are hoping to find funding to be able to take the production into more local schools throughout the area. If you think your local school would be interested to find out more, or if you know a Parents Association which might be able to help raise funds for a performance, please do get in touch!

The best art sessions in the WORLD

"When I went to the young Carers art club I had the time of my life learning new ways of drawing cartoons and even how to spray paint!! I made loads of new friends that I will never forget!! It helped me find the artist within me and even boosted my confidence. I was glad to come away from life at home!!"

Ellie



'13' Up Club

Calling all young carers aged 13+ in the South Glos area. We meet once a month at St Nicholas Youth Centre in Yate, 1.30pm – 4.30pm, usually the last Saturday of the month. If you're interested please contact Carol.

0117 958 9979 carolc@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

You can find out lots more about us on our website!

Big changes to day services in Bristol

After a period of consultation, Bristol City Council has made a decision about the future of its day services for older people, people with a physical and sensory impairment and people with a learning difficulty. Starting in April, all 7 day centres will close **in their existing form** over a period of 18 months.

The 350 people currently attending the day centres will each have an assessment with a social worker from a newly-formed review team. This will determine what future support and activity is most appropriate based on the needs and wishes of the individual. At the same time, carers will be offered an assessment of their needs.

A new range of day services is being developed to replace the day centres.

- Three of the existing centres will be refurbished and called 'hubs'. Sited in Southmead, Knowle and St George, the hubs will cater for those with very high support needs.
- Those who are not eligible for a place at a 'hub', or who would prefer, could choose to go along to an independent community based service and/or might use a personal budget to employ a support worker for a set number of hours per week.
- A further option for people who can get around independently will be to attend a drop-in centre for social and personal development activities.
- There will be support for people to look at employment opportunities.

There are big changes coming up in the provision of these services in Bristol and the prospect of such enormous change is worrying for many who use these services. Carers are particularly concerned about the quality and safety of some of the replacement services and how this will be monitored.

One carer, whose daughter attends a local day centre, is afraid that she will not be offered a place at a hub. He doesn't believe a new service provider will fully understand his daughter's health needs.

He also fears that she will get less hours of service and will miss the stimulation of the day centre. He adds "and I will have to make yet more adjustments because my daughter will be at home more".

He is most disappointed to think that his daughter will lose touch with people she has known for many years, saying "The staff know her so well and she has friends at the centre going back 20 years".

This carer is not alone in being worried about the future and feeling helpless in influencing what is going to happen. Our advice to carers is to **prepare well** for the assessments so you can make the most of the opportunity to say what you need from any future service.

For users of the service (or on their behalf):

- think about what you want to get out of life
- what help will you need to achieve that
- what is important to you – friendships, having a role?

For carers:

- what is important to you as a carer – keeping your job, maintaining your own friendships and social life, time out from caring

- are there things about the proposed changes that still worry you?
- document how many hours of support you give in a 24 hour day.

Sam Radford at The Carers' Support Centre can offer you independent advice, advocacy and support through the assessment process. If you are affected by these changes and would like to talk to her, Sam will be holding surgeries or you can ask her to visit you. See dates on page 14 for Carers Advocacy Surgeries.

For an appointment, contact Sam Radford, Carer Support Officer:

☎ 0117 958 9970

✉ samr@carerssupportcentre.org.uk



Sam (right) can give advice and support through the assessment process.

Thanks to everyone who has made such great fundraising efforts on our behalf.

We really appreciate every single donation we get – from raising money through sponsorship, donations at weddings and collections in memory, to people who give regularly and those who organise special events. We'll be using this page to showcase some of your fundraising activities.

Thanks also to the growing number of organisations that support our work including: Yate Choral Society £300, Markel £230, Thornbury Church Council £50, Grant Thornton £1000, Yate dental surgery £200, New Lights Hotel £250.

Teasing and testing

The Avon Gorge Hotel hosted a quiz night early in the year. The event raised almost £600 and was a hugely enjoyable evening, with the Butcombe Brewery team storming home in the lead. At the event, Guillaume Lesage, Hotel Manager, made a surprise announcement that they will be supporting us again as their charity of the year for 2013 – for the third year running! What a great way to start our fundraising year.

Rag Week Fun

Redcliffe Sixth Form holds an annual event to raise money for charity during Rag Week. Toby Hanson-Iles, one of the Sixth Form senior students said: "This year we chose to raise money for Carers' Support Centre and specifically young carers in Bristol. We chose to support this charity as we believe that it has a link with some of our fellow students who have used the centre for help and support. The week was a great laugh and we hope that the £500 we raised can help young people enjoy their youth."

They organised a series of fun events including a sponge the senior student/teacher, a cross-dressing day, and an abseil from the roof of the Sixth Form building. So, a big 'well done' to them!



Amy Flood, our Volunteer Co-ordinator, organised a great evening of entertainment to raise funds for the counselling service. She took on running the event in her own time and was overwhelmed by the number of staff, family and friends who took part in the talent show. Here's a picture of Phoebe and Cordelia who helped raise a winning £900.



TLT exceeds £10,000 target!

National law firm TLT has raised over £10,000 choosing us as their charity of the year 2012. Throughout the year TLT's employees were busy raising funds for our vital CarersLine service and to develop support services for young carers. And what a successful year it has been!

A team of 11 TLT employees organised a wide range of events, including yoga classes, a cheese and wine tasting night, various dress down days, a Christmas fayre, themed quizzes and a Zumbathon. Sian Davies from TLT reported that "selling home-made chocolate truffles was a great money spinner!"

So a huge thanks to the TLT team and everyone involved in supporting us!

Lottery
100 winners
 NOV B Carter, L. Woods, E Edwards
 DEC S Darke, R. Gibbons, J Haskins
 JAN A Chillcott, L Holmes, S Roberts

14 Guide to Carers Group Meetings

Group	Venue	Monthly Meeting Dates				
		TIMES	Mar	April	May	June
CALLINGTON ROAD First Wednesday	The Coppice, Callington Road Hospital, Brislington	10.30 –12.30	6th	3rd	1st	5th
DOWNEND Fourth Wednesday	Badminton Gardens, Beaufort Road, BS16 6FG	2–4	27th	24th	22nd	26th
FORMER CARERS GROUP 1 Various days	Vassall Centre, Gill Ave, Fishponds	2–4	Call CarersLine for details			
FORMER CARERS GROUP 2 Various days	St Mary's Church, Shirehampton	12–2	Call CarersLine for details			
HANHAM First Tuesday	Hanham Folk Centre, High Street, Hanham	1.30 –3.30	5th	2nd	7th	4th
HARTCLIFFE First Thursday	@Symes Building, near Morrisons, Hartcliffe	10–12	7th	4th	2nd	6th
LAWRENCE WESTON Third Thursday	Ridingleaze House, Ridingleaze, Lawrence Weston	2–4	21st	18th	16th	20th
LEARNING DIFFICULTY CARER SUPPORT GROUP	The Carers' Support Centre		Call CarersLine for details			
MENTAL HEALTH	This group is currently under review.		Call CarersLine for details			
PARENT CARER GROUP Second Monday	Barton Hill Settlement	10.30 –12.30	11th	8th	13th	TBA
PATCHWAY Third Tuesday	Callicroft House, Patchway Council Offices, Rodway Road	1.30 –3.30	19th	16th	21st	18th

Carers Support Programme



FREE training delivered to carers by a registered nurse for St John Ambulance.

**The next courses at
The Carers' Support Centre:**
27 March, 3, 10, 17 April, 25 June, 2, 9, 16 July
10 am – 2 pm. Lunch provided.

Contact Judith Goldsmith for booking/more information
☎ 0117 978 6050 ✉ Judith.goldsmith@avon.sja.org.uk

Complementary therapies

Relieve tension and stress with reflexology, Indian head massage or reiki with therapist Sue Morgan.

30 minute sessions £12 9.30–4pm
2nd Weds and 3rd Tues of every month at
The Carers' Support Centre

Contact BookingsLine ☎ 0117 937 5623

Drop-in sessions

Carers Support Officers are available in community and health settings across Bristol and South Glos. They can provide emotional support and advise on the services and help that you may be entitled to. To find your nearest drop-in just check our website or ring CarersLine for dates. In some cases you may need to request an appointment.

Carers Advocacy Surgeries

These surgeries are for carers of an adult with a learning difficulty.

Weds 27 March 10 – 12.30

New Horizons, 92 Eastwood Road, Broomhill BS4 4RS

Weds 24 April 10 – 12.30

Lanercost Centre, Lanercost Road,
Southmead BS10 6HZ

Weds 22 May 10 – 12.30

St George Day Service, (City Academy),
Russell Town Avenue, Redfield BS5 9JH

Weds 26 June 10 – 12.30

New Horizons, 92 Eastwood Road, Broomhill BS4 4RS
Please book an appointment by ringing Sam Radford on
0117 958 9970 or BookingsLine.

Groups run independently These carers' support groups are not facilitated by The Carers' Support Centre. This is not a comprehensive list. Please ring the contact given for more information and to check details.

GROUPS IN SOUTH GLOS

	Location	Venue	When	Contact
ALL CARERS	Patchway	Patchway Fire Station, Rodway Road	Every Wednesday each week 7 – 9pm	Joy on 0117 961 5279
	Emersons Green	Mill House, Emersons Green Way	1st Thursday 2 – 4pm	Sue Jaques ☎ 01454 868267
	Staple Hill	Library, Broad Street	2nd Monday 2.30 – 4.00 pm	
	Frampton Cotterell	Frome Valley Medical Centre	Last Friday 1 – 3pm	
	Thornbury	The Chantry	1st Friday 1 – 3 pm	Penny Snow ☎ 07763 192812
	Yate	Yate Library, Large Meeting Room	1st Tuesday 10 – 12am	Cathy Truman ☎ 07979 896064
TAKE A BREAK CARERS GROUP	Coalpit Heath	Zion Church Woodend Road	2nd Wednesday 2pm – 4pm	The church office on ☎ 01454 776618
DEMENTIA	Kingswood	Alzheimer's Society Office, International House	3rd Wednesday evening	Contact Alzheimer's Society ☎ 0117 961 0693
	Kingswood	The Park Centre	2nd Monday Afternoon	
	Filton	Filton, St Andrew's Methodist Church	2nd Wednesday Afternoon	
	Thornbury	The Chantry	3rd Tuesday afternoon	
	Yate	Poole Court	2nd Monday Afternoon	
MENTAL HEALTH	Filton	Upper Horfield, Community Trust, Eden Grove	1st Wednesday 6.30 – 8.30pm	Mo Dymond ☎ 07584 167612
	Yate	Yate Library	3rd Tuesday 2 – 4pm	
	Kingswood	Kingswood United Church, Moravian Rd	2nd Monday 10.30 – 12.30am	
BLACK, ASIAN AND OTHER MINORITY	Kingswood	Various	Last Wednesday of the month 11am – 12.30pm	Dhek Bhal ☎ 0117 914 6671

GROUPS IN BRISTOL

Henleaze <i>All carers</i>	Bradbury Hall, Waterford Road, Henleaze BS9 4BT	2nd and 4th Thurs of every month 10–12pm	Monica Rudstone 0117 942 6095
BME Carers Support Meeting <i>Black and minority ethnic carers</i>	Wellspring Healthy Living Centre, Barton Hill	Tuesdays – phone for details	Bristol Black Carers Hazel Brittan 0117 314 4666
Hengrove <i>Mental health carers</i>	Willow Room, Petherton Resource Centre, 3 Petherton Road, Hengrove	3rd Wed of each month 6.30–8pm	Margaret Price (Rethink) 0117 903 1803 Suzanne Gerrish 01275 796 280
Grove Road <i>Mental health carers</i>	Currently held at Grove Road Day Hospital, 12 Grove Rd, BS6 6JJ New venue to be confirmed	1st Thurs of each month from 7–8.30pm	Margaret Price (Rethink) 0117 903 1803
Rethink <i>Mental Health Carers art group</i>	Gloucester House, Southmead Hospital	Twice a month on Tues 3.30–6pm	Marilyn Miller 0117 323 5807
Siblings Support Group <i>Carers who have brothers and sisters affected by mental illness</i>	Ring for details	Ring for details	rethinksiblingsbristol@gmail.com or 07542 706 502
Fromeside <i>Carers of those in secure services (mental health)</i>	Fromeside, Blackberry Hill, Stapleton	Last Wed of the month 7–8.30pm	Margaret Price (Rethink) 0117 903 1803
Westbury on Trym <i>Dementia carers</i>	Ring for details	Once a month on a Monday	Sally Cavill (Alzheimers Society) 0117 961 0693
Whitchurch Carers Group <i>For all carers in the area</i>	Whitchurch Health Centre, Armada Way, BS14 0SU	2nd Monday of the month 10–12pm	Leah 01275 835625
Headway Bristol Carers Group <i>Carers of those with traumatic or acquired head injury</i>	Headway Centre, Frenchay Hospital BS16 1EH	1st Tues of the month 7–9pm	0117 340 3771

Diary dates

All activities MUST be booked in advance. Make a booking through our website, or **0117 937 5623** or bookingsline@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

Date & Time	Event/Activity	Venue
Mon 25 Feb – Mon 25 March (5 week course) 1–3.30pm	Caring for Those in the Later Stages of Life – 5 week training course (see page 7). FREE	Community Safety Centre, Patchway
Weds 27 Feb 10–2.30pm	Make and Take Crafts £10 includes materials	Bradbury Hall, Henleaze
Thurs 7 March 2–3.30pm	Home based relaxation class – gentle movement and breathing £6	Cleeve Hill Farm, Downend
Thurs 7 March 10.30–3pm	Effective Communication – Training workshop for South Gos carers only (see page 7). FREE	Armstrong Hall, Thornbury
Tues 12 March 10.30–3pm	Managing Finances for Carers – Training workshop for South Gos carers only (see page 7). FREE	Community Safety Centre, Yate
Tues 19 March 10.30–2.30pm	Steam and Soak Relaxation Day £12 plus other optional costs	Bristol Marriott Royal Hotel
Weds 20 March 10.30–3pm	Cooking for Health – South Gos carers only. £5 includes lunch	Vassall Centre, Fishponds
10 April 10.45–2pm	Bristol Carers' Open Meeting See enclosed flyer for details and booking.	Vassall Centre, Fishponds
Fri 12 April – Fri 3 May (4 week course) 10.30–1pm	Understanding Dementia for Carers – 4 week training course (see page 7). FREE	Carers' Support Centre, Fishponds
13 April 10–3.30pm	Celebrating Carers 2 – For carers in South Gos. This event is being organised by South Gos Council. See enclosed flyer for details and booking.	UWE Exhibition and Conference Centre
Fridays 19 April (5 week course) 2 – 4.30pm	Digital Photography – Get the best from your digital camera and use the latest computer programmes. Leave with a bound portfolio of your work. £95 including all materials	Vassall Centre, Fishponds
Mon 22 April 10.30 – 3.30pm	Relaxation Day – Meet other carers and experience quality time for yourself. Take part in gentle relaxing activities. Enjoy a complementary therapy and lunch. £30	Avon Gorge Hotel, Clifton
Weds 15 & 22 May; 5 19, 26 June 12.30–3pm	Caring with Confidence – 5 week training course (see page 7). FREE	Memorial Stadium, Horfield

Closure Dates – 29th March – Good Friday, 31st March – Easter Monday, 6th May – May Day, w27th May – Whit Monday/Late Spring bank holiday

The Carers' Support Centre

Many carers do not consider themselves to be a carer – they are just looking after someone who needs help and getting on with what needs to be done. In order to care safely and in good health, carers need information, support, respect and recognition. The Carers' Support Centre provides a confidential carers' support line, a team of carer support officers, and a variety of workshops, training and events.

To find out more about our services or for information and advice call our CarersLine.

✉ carersline@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

☎ **0117 965 2200**

Opening times

Mon–Thurs 10–1pm and 2–4pm Fri 10–1pm

An answerphone operates outside these hours

To find out more about our events see our website or contact BookingsLine

☎ **0117 937 5623**

✉ bookingsline@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

🌐 www.carerssupportcentre.org.uk



If you are able to receive this newsletter by email please let us know, as this helps reduce our costs. ✉ info@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

The Carers' Support Centre,
The Vassall Centre, Gill Ave,
Fishponds, BS16 2QQ

Registered charity number 1063226