

If you care,
we care.

Carers Support Centre
Bristol & South Gloucestershire

A Network Partner of
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TRUST**

Carers News

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Join us during Carers Week



This year, Carers Week is 5 – 11 June. Carers Week presents an opportunity to raise awareness of caring, highlight the challenges you face and recognise the contribution you make to families and communities throughout the UK. This year's theme is 'Recognising and supporting carers in the community'. Here at Carers Support Centre, we will have a number of events marking this year's Carers Week.



Carers Voice Event

We'll be holding a meeting to which all carers in Bristol and South Gloucestershire are invited.

The focus of the meeting will be about Discharge to Access – discharging people from hospital as soon as clinically possible, and that their needs for care and support are assessed at home or in another community setting **after** discharge are addressed.

Experts speaking on the subject will include:

- Alissa Davies BNSSG Discharge to Assess Transformation program director
- Stephen Beet Bristol City Council, Director of Adult Social Care
- Carol Watson South Glos Council Service Director Commissioning, Performance and Housing
- Tim Poole CEO Carers Support Centre

For those who attend in person, there will be free pampering, lunch and information stalls. You are also welcome to join the special Walk and Talk after the finish of the meeting. We will also be able to reimburse carer's transport and alternative care costs to attend the event.

The date for your diary is Thursday 8 June and we'll continue our policy of getting out and about to meet you by taking the event on the road to the Greenway Centre in Southmead.

If you'd like to join us in person, pre-booking your place is essential, and you can do so by contacting us and giving us the following information:

- Your name, address, telephone number
- Any dietary requirements you may have
- If you want to join the post-meeting Walk and Talk

☎ **0117 958 9902**

✉ comms@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

As it is not possible to bring along the person you care for, you can also join in on Zoom. Please register for Zoom at <http://bit.ly/3KvqnKA> *Contd on page 3*

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CEO Message

I am very pleased to let you know that Carers Support Centre has been successful in our bid for both the Adult and Young Carer contracts in South Gloucestershire.

This outcome, along with our earlier successes in Bristol, means that the bulk of our core funding is now secured for between 3 to 5 years, allowing us to plan for the future with more certainty.

We are delighted that this gives us the opportunity to continue working with unpaid carers of all ages in both Bristol and South Gloucestershire, extending our relationship with you which now stretches back over 25 years.

We are not kidding ourselves that the work ahead of us to help improve your caring lives is anything other than challenging. The world has changed considerably since we were first formed, and the recent indicators are that the lives of unpaid carers are getting more difficult.

We know that the cost-of-living crisis has disproportionately affected carers. And in terms of income to cover the costs of increasing prices, despite the recent rise, Carers Allowance still remains a paltry sum both in comparison with other UK benefits and payments made to unpaid carers in many other countries in Europe. Something we continue to campaign on nationally through our membership of Carers Trust.

And there's no denying that both health and social services, important for most carers, are not in a good place. Many paint the services as being in crisis and disappointingly there was little in the recent budget from the government to address the issues.

Overall, carers are having to do more with less. One of the main results, seen in both national and local polls and in talking to you, is

the detrimental effects on your own health and well-being. This, in turn, can then have a negative effect on your ability to care for others.

With the fixed funding of our contracts and the increasing demand and complexity we are having to deal with, there will be changes in the shape of some of the services we provide to you. However, what won't change is our commitment to support you, not only in your caring role but also to lead a life of your own alongside caring.

The upcoming Carers Week (see front page) gives us the chance to shine a spotlight, both nationally and locally, on the work of unpaid carers which all too often goes unnoticed.

During Carers Week, and beyond, working with our statutory and voluntary sector partners, we'll be doing our best to ensure that carers and the challenges you face remain high on the governments agenda, both nationally and locally.

One of the ways we are doing this is to join Carer Poverty Coalition alongside Carers UK and 90 other organisations. Together we'll be campaigning to end carer poverty. All members of the Coalition find it unacceptable that 44% of adults providing 35+ hours of unpaid care a week face severe financial hardship.

One of the main campaigning aims is to see a benefits system that



better supports people providing high amounts of unpaid care, along with changes to help carers stay in paid work for longer while caring.

Another way we are raising the profile of unpaid carers is through our new photography project, taking pictures of carers and the services that Carers Support Centre supplies, to supply a record of what caring looks like in Bristol and South Gloucestershire. Read more about this project on page 4.

An area that will feel the benefit of the project is the new website, which is currently in the planning stages. The aim of the new website is to provide a better service for you and make it easier for you to engage with us. As a result, your needs are paramount in the design and build and, therefore, consultation with you is embedded into the planning and development stage of the new site.

The new website will bring a number of benefits to carers and our organisation, but rest assured, we will still be providing support to those of you who don't want to or are unable to interact digitally.

Tim Poole, Chief Executive

Contd from front page

Walk and Talk



Usually, Walk and Talks consist of a series of six sessions (see page15) but we're running a one-off special to celebrate Carers Week starting from the Greenway Centre in Southmead following the Carers Voice event (above) at around 1.45 pm on Thursday 8 June.

You don't need to be going to the Carers Voice event to take part in the Walk and Talk, but you do need to book. Contact Walk and Talk Project Officer Stacey Vallis to secure your place:

☎ 07742 291073

✉ StaceyV@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

Carers Group meeting

We run a range of Carers Groups across Bristol and South Gloucestershire (see page15) which give you the chance to meet other carers and to get advice and support in your caring life.

During Carers Week we'll be holding a group session for those in South Bristol on Thursday 8 June 10 am - 12 noon at the Dundry Room, Symes Building, Peterson Avenue, Hartcliffe BS13 0BE.

Newcomers to the group are more than welcome, as are regulars, and group organiser Louise Brown would love to see you there. Give her a call or drop her a line if you'd like to join the group:

☎ 07752 340370

✉ LouiseB@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

Hospital information event

For carers Week we have a special information event at North Bristol NHS Trust on Friday 9 June 10.30 am -12.30 pm

If you have any questions about a stay in hospital for the person you look after, or indeed yourself, do pop along and have a chat.

Call Sam Radford for more details:

☎ 07557 418 692

Whichever way you choose, we look forward to seeing you during Carers Week 2023.

From the Trustees

Volunteering as a trustee at Carers Support Centre (CSC) has been an opportunity to share my skills and experience from a long NHS career. My own personal development has benefitted, and I can take the learning back to the day job. It is also very rewarding to know that I am contributing to the important work carried out by CSC.



We are a mixed group of trustees with various experience: some have had a trustee role before, others not. We encourage people with lived experience of unpaid caring to join our membership, but it is not essential to have this insight. Having personal values that fit with the organisation is important.

Our role is about being strategic, rather than directly operational. However, the staff encourage us to have some insight into how things work at the sharp end, not just strategically, and this produces better links between the Board and the rest of the organisation.

I have been warmly invited to join team meetings and as a volunteer there are events and activities that trustees get involved in. There is a recognition that our time is limited (most have jobs and other commitments) so there is no pressure to take on more than my time commitment allows. I have had the opportunity to work in areas of personal interest that I would never have had otherwise. I am the chair of the Personnel Sub-Committee, I attend the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group and I have contributed to a large piece of organisational development work CSC commissioned.

Although the idea of being 'on the Board' may seem daunting and official, the members are friendly, encouraging and our interactions are informal. We do have an official purpose, but recognising the range of experience and needs, we support each other through it. The Board has a role to make sure the charity and the way it's governed is fit for purpose. We also provide support to the Chief Executive, as a 'critical friend' that includes a level of challenge.

There is a strong drive to do things right, to get the best for the people we serve; the effectiveness of the Board is central to this. It is a commitment but there are many rewards.

Siân Jones

Photo project

We've embarked on a major photography project to illustrate the services that we provide to carers at Carers Support Centre, as well as showing the diverse community that makes up the legion of unpaid carers in Bristol and South Gloucestershire.

This project is nothing without you, so thank you so much to all of you who have given us permission to photograph you. So far, we have pictured carers on Walk and Talks, at Carers Groups meetings and in the office having one-to-ones with Carers Support Centre staff. We hope you like the results, some of which can be seen on this page.

The photos are being taken by Tina Gue, whose excellent work forms part of Invisible Army (www.invisiblearmy.org). Invisible Army's mission is to share the stories of unpaid carers in photographs and short stories to show the challenges and joy carers cope with every day.

If you would like to get involved in our photography project, do contact Laura: ☎ **07519 534 222**
✉ LauraF@carerssupportcentre.org.uk



Photographer, Tina Gue



Carers Group

Working one to one

Help with the Cost-of-Living

Citizens Advice Bristol Cost of Living Advice Assistants are providing face-to-face support in Welcoming Spaces across Bristol.

Cost of Living Advice Assistants can help you:

- Identify possible entitlements to Welfare Benefits or grants
- Carry out a benefit check online
- Review your debts, identify debt emergencies and find regulated debt advice
- Draw up a personal budget, consider your spending and look for ways to reduce your outgoings
- Understand your utility bills, look at cost reductions (such as grants or support schemes) and direct you to information about energy-saving methods
- Get emergency support such as foodbank voucher or energy vouchers



Talk to Cost-of-Living Advice Assistants at these venues:

Shirehampton Methodist Church

24 High St, Shirehampton BS11 0DL
Mondays: 11.00 am to 2.30 pm

Greenway Centre

Doncaster Road BS10 5PY
Mondays: 5.00 pm to 8.00 pm
Tuesdays: 5.00 pm to 8.00 pm

BS3 Community Development

Beauley Rd, Southville BS3 1QG
Tuesdays: 9.00 am to 12.30 pm
Thursdays: 3.30 pm to 6.00 pm

Methodist Church

24 High St, Shirehampton BS11 0DL
Tuesdays: 11.00 am to 2.30 pm

Redcatch

Bristol Broadwalk Redcatch Park, Knowle BS4 2RD
Tuesdays: 12 noon to 1.30 pm

Redcliffe Hub

4 Waring House, Redcliffe BS1 6TB
Tuesdays: 3.00 pm to 5.00 pm

St Werburghs Community Centre

Horley Road BS2 9TJ
Tuesdays: 6.00 pm to 8.00pm

Avonmouth Community Centre

257 Avonmouth Rd, Avonmouth BS11 9EN
Wednesdays: 12.00 noon to 2.00 pm



Can you help?

Dave Howe from Leeds Beckett University is looking for people with experience of community-based cancer care for people with dementia to interview. The research aims to better understand and improve the care and support currently on offer.

If you can help Dave, contact him at [✉ d.howe@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:d.howe@leedsbeckett.ac.uk) or call [☎ 0113 812 4298](tel:01138124298)

Friends Together groups

Carers and their cared for are most welcome at Friends Together - the All Saints Clifton dementia friendly café.

Friends Together takes place in the Randall Room at All Saints Church, Clifton on the first Thursday of every month from 10.00 am to 12.00 pm. Pop along for conversation, support and fun reminiscence activities, plus free refreshments.

All aboard the Music Train

As an unpaid carer you're very welcome at the Music Support Group run by the Soundwell Music Therapy Trust.

This longstanding group offers a unique opportunity to explore sounds and instruments together, whilst providing respite, peer support and support for wellbeing.

It takes place monthly on Fridays, 11.00 am - 12.15 pm at the Scout HQ, 7 Grove Street, Bath, BA2 6PJ. It's free and there can be support with travel costs to attend. Interested? Call Duncan Stagg for a quick chat

📞 **07423 400655** or ✉️ duncan.stagg@soundwell.org.uk

Poo Matters!

Free awareness training for carers in South Gloucestershire on how to recognise and manage constipation in people with a learning disability:

- what can cause or worsen constipation?
- risks of untreated constipation
- the importance of monitoring
- what hinders and what can help?
- how to overcome barriers & reduce risks

For more information and to book, contact Tracy Pouard ✉️ tracy.pouard@nspf.co.uk

Autism Support Blocks

Bristol Autism Support runs special 3- or 6-week support blocks for specific topics. Each session includes a presentation and time for discussion. No diagnosis is needed to join these groups.

Upcoming blocks include:

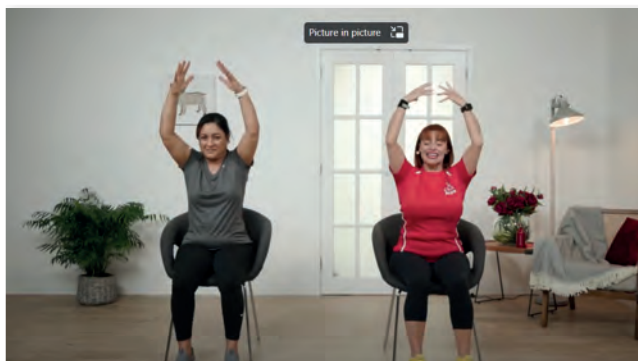
- New to Autism for families of children under 11 – South Bristol. A 6-week course starting on Wednesday 7 June.
- Supporting Distress and Behaviours that Challenge – Online
A 6-week course and discussion group starting on Tuesday 6 June.
- Sensory Processing Differences – Online
A 3-week course and discussion group starting on Monday 5 June.

Find out more and join in at

🌐 www.bristolautismsupport.org/support-blocks or call the Bristol Autism Helpline on 📞 **07835 727394**

Get moving at home

An excellent set of new inclusive activity and wellbeing videos aimed at unpaid carers.



Through the Carers Active project, the Carers UK videos feature real carers alongside professional instructors and have been specially designed for all abilities and for those who aren't able to go to gyms or leisure facilities and would prefer to be active at home whenever they like, and for as long as they like. Access the videos on YouTube at 🌐 <https://bit.ly/41HTktR>

Bristol FOOD Clubs

Just a reminder to Bristol carers of the Family Action Bristol FOOD Clubs that are available to people who live/work in the Bristol area.



Families can join clubs at a cost of £1 a year and once you have joined, you can buy a bag of food items every week worth approximately £10 to £15 for just £3.50.

To become a member, you must live or work within 15 minutes of a club. Find out if there's a club near to you at 🌐 <https://bit.ly/3UvpK6x>

Get connected

North Bristol Advice Centre is running "Bristol Tea and Tech" sessions to help older people get connected in venues across north Bristol.

The new drop-in is suitable for beginners and those with experience who want to update their skills. Volunteers will be on hand to help people to get online, do what is important to them and address concerns about safety and security. The service is free and includes a cuppa and a chat! For more information,

contact Nicola at 📞 **07936 943583**
✉️ nicola@northbristoladvice.org.uk

What would we do without our volunteers?



Our volunteers are an invaluable asset to Carers Support Centre, selflessly dedicating their time, energy, and skills to help others without expecting anything in return.

Like unpaid carers, the work of volunteers can often go unrecognised, but their impact is immeasurable, and we certainly wouldn't be able to do our work so well without the support of volunteers.

Last year alone:

- We received support from 106 volunteers
- Volunteers contributed 1,121 hours to help support carers

Volunteers Week (June 1-7) gives us a chance to recognise the fantastic contribution volunteers make to Carers Support Centre. So, if there are any of our volunteers reading this, and with 53% of our volunteers being carers or former carers it's likely, then it's a big thank you from the bottom of our hearts to you all for all you do for us. It's appreciated.

Volunteers work throughout the charity providing practical support to both carers and staff, from admin in the office to providing respite for carers in South Gloucestershire.

Avril volunteers her mentoring skills to Carers Support Centre, she told us that, 'My volunteering role is an important part of me having a purposeful and enjoyable retirement. It's an opportunity for me to help people. It also enables me to keep refreshed my listening and mentoring skills (by doing the mentoring itself - and also via

the training provided by CSC). In addition, I value the sense of belonging to such a professional organisation where I feel valued.'

Lesley has a couple of volunteering roles here at Carers Support Centre, 'Walking in the rain talking about nature, getting messy with paint, or trying out an unusual musical instrument, these are just some of the activities I've supported as a volunteer with Carers Support Centre. Luckily the rainy days have been few and now that Spring is well and truly here, there's plenty of nature to spot and talk about on the Walk and Talk sessions. I joined this project last Autumn and have thoroughly enjoyed chatting to group members, and together taking in the beauty and calm of nature as a break from routine for an hour or so.

'Supporting Young Carers is much more full on! I've been volunteering with the support team for around five years and thoroughly enjoy helping out on all activities (well maybe not at a theme park!) which provide such valuable respite for the young people. Whether it's a farm residential, painting a big piece of artwork together, or crafting up-cycled jam jars, it's the small pieces of personal information that the young people share which makes the role so rewarding for me.'

Alison volunteers with the Carers Breaks Service, 'I like being a "sitter" as it provides valuable support to both the carer and cared for person. The carer is able



Alison Hughes volunteers with the Carer Sitting Service

to have some "me time". It enables them to have a break from their full-time commitments as a carer for a short while. The cared for person can also benefit from having the company of the "sitter". I find the role rewarding.

'During my sit with my cared for person we chat most of the time with a cup of tea. Sometimes we look through favourite books and magazines which provide many topics of conversation. Occasionally we may watch a bit of television. The time seems to fly by, and I thoroughly enjoy it.'

Avril, Lesley and Alison are just three of the many volunteers that we are indebted to here at Carers Support Centre. It's true to say that we couldn't do it without you. Thank you all.

We are always looking for new volunteers to join our friendly team at Carers Support Centre. If you, or someone you know, would like to meet people, learn new skills, use your spare time in a rewarding way and make a difference to carers' lives, do get in contact with Marilyn Crump, Volunteer Coordinator:

☎ 07840 818 316 ✉ volunteering@carerssupportcentre.org.uk
Marilyn is your contact for volunteering at Carers Support Centre.

Caring when managing your own health conditions

Carers often neglect their own health and well-being as they are so busy caring and thinking about the person they care for. But it is true to say that unless you care for yourself it becomes increasingly difficult to care for others.

Self-care is, therefore, important for all carers, but perhaps more so for those of you who are also managing your own health conditions.

For many, a good way to look after yourself is to have and put into action a self-care plan. This will help you not only manage your conditions but also those of the person you care for.

Self-management is the process of taking control of your health and wellness. It's about learning how to manage your condition so that you can live as full and healthy a life as possible, which includes having enough time, energy and strength to care for others.

Self-management is important because it gives you more control over how you feel, think and act – all of which can help improve your quality of life.

A self-care plan outlines the steps to take to manage your health condition and your caring responsibilities. It is important to take time to keep track of how well those steps are working.

To create a healthy and sustainable caring relationship it is important to have an open dialogue with the person you care for about your needs as well as theirs.

Remember to let support services know you are a carer. Consider registering as a carer with:

- Your GP
- Your local council
- Your local carers service – us at Carers Support Centre!
- Your employer
- Your energy providers - get on Priority Services Register

You may be entitled to new benefits because you are caring. There is a list of local benefit advice centres in our article about the Carer's Credit benefit on page 11.

When creating a self-care plan consider the activities that help you feel physically and mentally well and the restrictions caring puts on you in achieving these, they might include:

- Exercise
- Healthy eating and sleeping habits
- Relaxing

- Meditating
- Setting aside time for yourself
- Working with others to solve problems, with us at Carers Support Centre, for instance
- Asking for help to attend to your care needs, e.g. talking to your local council about equipment and adaptations for your home to make life easier or accessing a care needs assessment to get help with personal/domestic tasks.
- Therapy or counselling.



A good place to start is by asking for help to create a self-care plan. You can do this by contacting us at Carers Support Centre or asking for a Carer's Assessment with the local council. Talking things through with someone else will help you with a self-care plan.

You may also need to build into your plan time for managing domestic tasks, appointments and your own personal care.

But a good plan for someone who has health problems themselves should always take into account the limitations that your condition places on you and the need to not over-exert yourself. Be realistic about what you can and cannot do. For those things you cannot do you may well need to look to your support network to fill the gaps – think about what local statutory and charitable services can do to help, as well as your family and friends.

Some organisations who can help

- Age UK – Bristol - ☎ **0117 929 7537**
- Age UK – South Gloucestershire - ☎ **01454 411707**
- Alzheimer's Society – Bristol - ☎ **0117 961 0693**
- Alzheimer's Society – South Gloucestershire - ☎ **0117 961 0693**
- Bristol and Avon Chinese Women's Group - ☎ **0117 935 1462**
- Bristol After Stroke - ☎ **0117 964 7657**
- Bristol Black Carers - ☎ **0117 379 0084**
- Bristol Mind - information about mental health and local services - ☎ **0117 203 4419**
- Bristol Parkinson's Society - ☎ **0808 800 0303**
- Dhek Bhal support group for carers of South Asian elders - ☎ **0117 9146671**
- Families Also Matter (DH1) – for people caring for someone with a drug and alcohol problem - ☎ **0117 440 0540**
- Headway - improving life after brain injury - ☎ **0808 800 2244**
- Macmillan- any questions about cancer, need support or just someone to talk to - ☎ **0808 808 0000**
- Multiple Sclerosis People's Help - ☎ **01454 418144**
- Rethink Mental Illness Carers Service - ☎ **0117 903 1805**

Wellaware database

The Wellaware database is the single most comprehensive online guide to health, wellbeing and community services and covers the counties of Bristol and South Gloucestershire -

🌐 <https://www.wellaware.org.uk>

Taking breaks from caring

If you are managing your own health conditions and caring, it is even more important to build in time in your plan to take breaks.

Give yourself permission to have time for yourself.

It may be the case that you are able to leave the person you care for, but you feel guilty about taking some time for yourself. Remember, you have needs too. If you are able to do something that you enjoy, it will 'recharge your batteries' and help sustain you in your caring role. Ultimately, both of you will benefit.

First steps to get a break from caring

A good place to start is by having a Carer's Assessment with the local council. Talking things through with someone else will help you with a plan of action. They can help you explore what type of break would suit you best and what options are open to you. If the assessment highlights a clear need for a short break to sustain you in your caring role, the council can offer support in the form of a payment towards the cost of the break.

More information on carers breaks

Bristol City Council -

🌐 www.bristol.gov.uk/residents/social-care-and-health/carers/breaks-for-carers

South Gloucestershire Council - 🌐 <https://bit.ly/41ujUXi>

Regular shorter breaks are good to build into your plan as well, meeting friends, playing sports whatever takes your fancy. But for you to have a break, the person you care for might need someone else to help with their care and support.

Help from friends or family



Sometimes relatives or friends can help out. It can be hard to ask, but often friends and family are happy to help. They may want to offer support but are not sure what is needed. All families are different but consider talking to family members to express how you are feeling and what would help.

Sitting services

At Carers Support Centre, we offer a sitting service for carers in South Gloucestershire. Find out more by reading 'A Day in the Life' article on Carers Breaks Co-ordinator, Maisy Griffiths, on page 14 *Contd on page 10*

10 Wellbeing/Benefits


Contd from page 9

Home Care

Home care is no longer provided directly by the council but by private care agencies on the councils' behalf. You do not need to be referred by the health and social services department of your local council.

You can make arrangements with any of the care agencies on an individual basis. This may suit people who are self-funding or whose needs do not meet the threshold for help from the council.

The same kind of strategies you use to allow time for breaks from caring can be used in your plan for any health appointments if you are managing your own condition as well as caring for others.

Choosing the right care will affect the quality of your life, family life and the person you care for, so it's essential to choose the provider who will give the best all round service for all of your needs. There is a website called Care Choices  www.carechoices.co.uk where you can search for all types of care provision.

Carer's Credit

Carer's Credit is a state benefit that often gets overlooked. This may be because, unlike the main benefit for carers, Carer's Allowance, it is not one where you get immediate payments. More, it is a benefit worth claiming because it can help with future income, particularly the state pension.

One recent caller to CarersLine has just found out the cost of not claiming Carer's Credit when she was entitled to it. She had been caring for her parents (now recently deceased) since 2014 and gave up work to do so. Her circumstances meant she was able to claim Carer's Credit, but she never did so. But now she has reached 66 she is shocked to learn that her pension will be considerably reduced due to her not having enough national insurance credits. This would have been avoided had she claimed Carer's Credit.

What is Carer's Credit?

Carer's Credit is a national insurance credit that helps with gaps in your national insurance record.

Carer's Credit pays class 3 contributions that help protect state pension and bereavement benefits. However, class 3 contributions will not be enough if you ever need to apply for other benefits that have contribution conditions.

I am not paying any national insurance contributions and am worried about my state pension

If you are caring for someone and are not paying national insurance contributions through paid work, your right to a full pension may be at risk. **You do not need to claim Carer's Credit if you get Carer's Allowance as you will be getting your credits paid with this benefit.** You may also be getting credits if you get child benefit for a child under 12 and in some other circumstances.



What if I am not eligible for Carer's Allowance?

If you are not eligible for Carer's Allowance and don't get credits in another way, you can protect your pension rights by claiming Carer's Credit. To claim Carer's Credit, you will need to meet certain criteria.

You can qualify for Carer's Credit if you look after one or more people for a total of 20 hours per week and the person you care for gets one of the following benefits:

- Disability Living Allowance (DLA) middle or high rate care
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP) the daily living component at either rate
- Attendance Allowance or Constant Attendance Allowance
- Armed Forces Independence Payment

If the person you care for does not get one of these benefits, you may still be able to get Carer's Credit. When you apply fill in the care certificate part of the application form and ask a health or social care professional to sign it.

Is there an age limit?

You must be 16 or over and under the state pension age.

How do I claim?

To claim Carer's Credit, you can download the application form from the government website <https://www.gov.uk/carers-credit/how-to-claim>
Or contact the Carers Allowance Unit by calling **0800 731 0297**.

Your Carer's Credit application must normally be received before the end of the tax year following the tax year to which the credits relate.

Further help and advice

If you are unsure whether you are entitled to benefits and where to go for advice, please get in touch with CarersLine. We will point you in the right direction. You can get a benefit check done, through Citizens Advice, to find out what you and the person you care for may be able to claim.

Or your local advice centre may be able to help. As well as offering benefits advice, some advice centres also help with other money matters, including debt and energy advice.

- Citizens Advice (Bristol):
Freephone **0808 278 7957**
- Citizens Advice (South Glos): **0808 278 7947**
- North Bristol Advice Centre (North Bristol and South Gloucestershire) **0117 951 5751**
- North Bristol Advice Centre has launched a new website that makes it easier for carers to access advice services in North Bristol and South Gloucestershire. They offer free and independent welfare benefits and debt advice. Find out more at northbristoladvice.org.uk
- South Bristol Advice Services **0117 985 1122**
- St Paul's Advice Centre (St. Paul's & East Bristol)
0117 955 2981
- Age UK Bristol: **0117 922 5353**
- Age UK S Glos: **01454 411 707**

Carers sessions coming to Bristol



Going shopping at the Galleries? Fancy having a chat to find out what support we offer to carers? Come and see us at the new Healthwatch Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Hub on the middle floor of the Galleries. 10 - 2pm every 4th Tuesday of the month. Next session is 23 May. Even if you don't have questions but you're in the area, pop along, we'd love to see you!

Young Carers in Schools Awards

Congratulations to Bannerman Road Community Academy on achieving Bronze in the Young Carers in Schools Awards delivered locally by Carers Support Centre. Achieving the award shows a real commitment by the school to ensure their students don't miss out on an education because they are young carers.

Are you a carer of a disabled child or adult?

If so, you can use the Disability Grants website to save time finding grants towards disability equipment, holidays, housing, days out and more. Discover what's available nationally and in your local area by visiting www.disability-grants.org

Bereaved and in South Gloucestershire?

Are you experiencing loneliness following the loss of a loved one and live in South Gloucestershire?

You may be interested in joining the Care and Support After Loss group. It meets the first Monday of every month between 9.30 am and 12.00 noon at the Council Offices in Yate.

Barbara, who runs the group, says that all new members will get a warm welcome and can even take a friend along for moral support to begin with. If you're interested, do contact Barbara on

01454 315028

12 Young Carers

Young Carers

We work with young people to help them to feel positive about being a young carer, feel less isolated, reduce inappropriate care, enable them to plan for their future and seek support when they need it. We provide individual and family support, activities, groups and outings.

☎ 0117 958 9980 ✉ youngc@carerssupportcentre.org.uk



Resilience Lab

Resilience Lab is a new initiative for Carers Support Centre's Young Carer's Service (YCS). The YCS team have been trained to deliver the Resilience Lab programme which was designed and developed by Off the Record (OTR), a mental health social movement by and for young people aged 11-25.

Based on the model created by OTR, and adapted for the needs of young carers, Resilience Lab consists of a five session programme of fun, interactive workshops for young carers to work together and with staff to build greater resilience into their lives.

We've been offering Resilience Lab to young carers struggling with low level mental health issues who we work with, aged 13+. Eleven young carers have attended the two programmes we have run so far, exploring how to cope with stress, stay relaxed, discover strengths, reach out to others and keep on top of things when life gets tough.

As a result of Resilience Lab, we saw vast improvements in the mental health and wellbeing of

80% of the young carers who attended. Specifically, evaluation revealed:

- they felt more confident talking with friends and family members regarding any issues they may have.
- 80% reported feeling less stressed.
- 80% felt they had a better understanding of their feelings and why they feel that way.
- 80% felt more confident speaking to a family member or friend relating to issues.
- 60% said they have learnt new techniques to manage stress and pressures.

With the success of the first Young Carer's Resilience Labs, we are looking to provide more. This programme has been funded with the help of the Nisbet Trust, but we need more resources to repeat this highly effective programme. Our most recent annual survey of Bristol and South Gloucestershire's young carers revealed a worrying decline in their mental health and well-being. If you can help, contact Young Carers Service Manager, Joss Tagg

☎ 07843 991989

✉ JossT@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

Students give back to young carers



We'd like to thank students from the Prince's Trust Team programme at City of Bristol College who kindly chose to support young carers as part of their community project.

The group had the chance to choose the cause they were most interested in, and were all extremely passionate about helping young carers who they say give so much of their own time for others. Some of the students are young carers or have previously been young carers themselves. Cameron, 19, said: "We were keen to support the local community and show young carers how much they are valued in their roles."

The group created 20 wellbeing boxes to be given to young carers, filled with a range of items to enjoy including handmade canvasses, sweet treats and jars containing positive quotes and words of affirmation. Each box also came with a handwritten note from the student directly to the young carer. Reema said "We created these baskets to give hope to people who haven't had the best time; they are baskets of hope to thank them for all they do."

Young Carers Action Day 2023

The theme of this year's Young Carers Action Day (YCAD) was "Make time for young carers". To mark the day, Young Carers Voice members made mini vlogs expressing powerful messages to professionals and young carers about making time.

The messages from the Young Carers to professionals included:

- "It's important to listen to us to help us feel valued, listened to and understood and that really helps with the caring we do."
- "Ways you can help us to feel listened to are to stay quiet and wait till we have finished explaining what we're talking about just so that you know all the information and we've said all we have to say before you jump in with your answer."
- "Don't give advice unless the young carer wants it".
- "Don't act like you know everything, no-one knows everything."

Professionals were sent the messages via social media and directly in eNewsletters to teachers, health and social workers, and local politicians and decision makers. We also posted the messages on our YouTube channel where you can still see them.

Our young carers event planned to celebrate YCAD on the 15 March was postponed due to teachers strikes. It will now take place on July 5.



As part of our Easter holiday activities, in partnership with Create Arts we ran four days of painting workshops where young carers tried our different styles of painting and created an amazing frieze of a meadow and all that you can find in it.

Return of our Activity Co-ordinator

Welcome back to Sammie Blanchard our Activity Co-ordinator who has been away on maternity leave for a year. It's great to have her back, she is now organising the activities for May half term and the summer holidays.

Sammie told us, "I am excited to be back after maternity leave and really looking forward to planning fun activities for young carers again."



Young Carers Facebook page to share information with young carers, their families and professionals!



Please 'Like' our page

Young Carers Bristol & South Glos and follow us on Twitter @YoungCarersBSG

Maisy Griffiths, our Carers Breaks Co-ordinator



No two days are the same in this service...

Unpaid carers look after a family member, often all day, every day, with little or no time for themselves. For carers in South Gloucestershire who are unable to leave the person they care for, we offer the 'Carers Breaks Service' (CBS). This service matches a volunteer with a carer and cared-for family, giving the carer a chance to take a break, recharge their battery and do something for themselves.

I start the day with a home assessment. About one week before this visit, I have identified a volunteer and carer who could make a good match. This visit involves meeting the carer and cared-for person in their home to check the environment is safe and suitable for a volunteer, and to find out more about the caring situation. If this visit goes well, then I arrange a match meeting, where the potential volunteer and I visit the carer and cared-for person about one week later to see if the match really could work.

After the home assessment it's time to do some admin! I had a successful match meeting yesterday, so I need to upload some paperwork and schedule in a few check-ins with both the carer and volunteer. Next up I have a telephone review with a volunteer. During this call I will find out how their sit is going, if anything is challenging and if they need any support or training. It turns out this

volunteer would really like some extra information about Parkinson's Disease so we agree I will send them some online information in an email and talk to my manager about arranging a training session for all volunteers.

After lunch it's time to take check on new referrals. I have a couple from colleagues and a couple of self-referrals. I need to do a bit of investigation to work out if the service would be suitable before contacting the carers. This involved reading their record and checking what services they have received from Carers Support Centre before. I see one referral is a rather complex case, so I give the colleague who did the referral a call to talk through the carer's situation. It turns out that they need more support than CBS can offer as the cared-for person actually needs help with personal care. I have to be really mindful of what our volunteers can and can't do (for example we do not ask them to do any lifting or any personal care) to make sure everyone is safe and that the carer can access the service for as long as possible. As the service is unsuitable, I contact the carer and let them know that CBS can't be offered. These are really difficult conversations to have and carers can often be frustrated, so I make sure I am always armed with plenty of alternatives and always remind them that our CarersLine is available.

After popping a few waiting list update letters in the post, I have a catch up with my manager to talk about an upcoming training session we are delivering on maintaining boundaries. We go through the information and decide that an accompanying PowerPoint would be helpful - much to my delight as I have a real soft spot for a presentation! After our catch up I spend a bit of time planning out the slides and working out the best order.

I am coming to the end of my working day, but I just have enough time to follow up some email replies from local community groups who are happy for me to visit their meetings and share information about CBS volunteering opportunities. CBS is such an in-demand service, that we are always looking for volunteers to join our team of sitters to help reduce the waiting list. Looks like one 'knit and natter' group is actually meeting tomorrow at 11am... perfect! I was planning to pull together some data on the sits that are currently taking place tomorrow morning, but I can move that to the afternoon and visit the knitting group instead - you never know who you might meet.

Time to shut down my PC and turn off my work phone as another day comes to an end!

Groups are a great way to get support and connect with other carers. Find a group in your area below, or join our online group from anywhere in Bristol and South Gloucestershire. To join a group call CarersLine on ☎ **0117 965 2200**

Group	Venue	Contact	Times	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT
Online Carers Support Group for Bristol and South Glos	Zoom	Carers Line	13.00 - 14.30 First Thurs	1st	6th	No mtng	7th	5th
Brislington Carers Group for carers of someone with dementia	St Peters Church 170 Allison Road, Brislington, Bristol BS4 4NZ	Carers Line	10.30 -12.30 First Wed	7th	5th	No mtng	6th	4th
Lawrence Weston	Lawrence Weston Farm Community Room, Saltmarsh Drive, Bristol BS11 0NJ	Carers Line	14.00 -16.00 Third Thurs	15th	20th	No mtng	21st	19th
Hartcliffe	Dundry Room, Symes Building, Peterson Avenue, Hartcliffe BS13 0BE	Carers Line	10.00 -12.00 Second Thurs	8th	13th	No mtng	14th	12th
Hanham	Hanham Community Centre 118-124 High St Hanham, Bristol BS15 3EJ	Carers Line	13.30 -15.30 First Tues	6th	4th	No mtng	5th	3rd
Kingswood	The Park Centre Kingswood High Street, Bristol BS15 4AR	Carers Line	14.00 -16.00 Second Wed	14th	12th	No mtng	13th	11th
Downend	Badminton Gardens Beaufort Road, Bristol BS16 6FG	Carers Line	14.00 -16.00 Fourth Wed	28th	26th	No mtng	27th	25th

Walk and Talk



Want to enjoy a walk with other carers? Want to get useful information and advice about the support available to you? Our walk and talk service is for you!

Walk and Talks are designed to improve your health and wellbeing by enjoying a walk with other carers. All our

Walk and Talks are led by one of our friendly support workers who will offer a listening ear and provide information to support you in your caring role.

We have a new walk just for carers starting in June. We are also excited to be hosting a new series of walks for Chinese carers, where Cantonese and Mandarin interpreters will join us for each walk.

Eastville Park – for Chinese carers – Mondays 11:00am-12:30pm, starting 15 May 2023

Cadbury Heath – for carers – Thursdays 11:00am-12:30pm, starting 15 June 2023

We have more Walk and Talk groups starting every month. Some walks are for carers only and others for carers and the people they care for. To find out more about any of our walks, contact Stacey:

✉ walk@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

☎ **07742 291073**

🌐 www.carerssupportcentre.org.uk/our-services/welcome-to-walk-and-talk

How to get help from us

If you are new to caring, you may be feeling overwhelmed and unsure where to start. We can help guide you through the maze of what support is out there. Or it could be that the person you care for is starting to need more care. As things change you may find you have new questions. The place to start for information and advice is our online information hub, available for anyone to access.

If you want to access any of our services, you will need to register with us. All our services are free, and you can register on our website. Or, you can contact

CarersLine our confidential phone and email service. Once you are registered, we will keep you up to date with our Carers News magazine and monthly eNewsletter.

www.carerssupportcentre.org.uk

carersline@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

CarersLine ☎ **0117 965 2200**

Mon–Fri 10–1pm,

Mon – Thur 2pm – 4pm

An answerphone operates outside these hours.



Tell us if your contact details change

To update your contact details, please contact: ✉ info@carerssupportcentre.org.uk ☎ **0117 939 2562**
If you are able to receive this newsletter by email please let us know, as this helps reduce our costs.

Join our lottery

Join our lottery for the chance to win 1 of 5 cash prizes every month. It's just £1 a month for each number, and you'll also be supporting our work with carers!

Visit our website www.carerssupportcentre.org.uk/support-us/lottery/ Or call on ☎ **0117 939 2562**.

Lottery Winners

Jan S Beer, M Pegden, M Parsons, M Price, R Howes

Feb P Edwards, Samuels, E Anthony, A Hart A Northcott, J Quartly

Mar A Linton, A Northcott, P Edwards-Samuels M Hatch, H Hiscox

Apr P Edwards-Samuels, J Goldsmith, P Dart, M Adnams

Thank you

to everyone who has generously donated funds in the last few months to help support carers including: Bristol City Council - Your Holiday Hub, Bristol Phoenix Choir, Bristol Rotary Club, Chatterton Lodge No. 5386, Project Dragonfly, South Gloucestershire Council Holiday Activities Fund, Sunrise Foundation, Society of Merchant Venturers.

Your generous donations help us make life better for local carers. If you pay tax, you can make your donation worth an extra 25p in every £1 by completing the Gift Aid declaration.

Title _____ First Name or initials _____ Surname _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

GIFT AID DECLARATION Please treat the enclosed gift of £ _____ as a Gift Aid donation.

I want to Gift Aid my donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to Carers Support Centre. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year and will boost your donation by 25p for every £1 you donate.

Signature _____ Date _____

If you want to receive our supporter email newsletter please include your email address. You can unsubscribe from this at any time.

Email address _____

Donation form Summer 2023

Please send your donation and this form to: Carers Support Centre, FREEPOST (RSSU-EZEA-JLLR) Fishponds, Bristol, BS16 2QQ

Company number 3377199

Registered charity number 1063226