

Carers News

Issue 96 | Autumn 2024

FREE | £1.50 when sold



Walk and Talk boost



We are delighted to have been awarded National Lottery funding to support our work with you.

As per our bid, we will use the money to further our Walk and Talk service for local carers. On Walk and Talks our friendly support worker leads group walks, offering a listening ear and providing information to help in a caring role.

Walk and Talk was developed with the triple aims of:

- improving your physical and mental health
- decreasing isolation
- increasing your knowledge about help available to support you in your caring role

Walk and Talk has been supporting carers to increase their physical activity, improve their mental health and develop peer support for the last two years and 65% of carers who come on a walk continue walking with other carers when that support ends.

The new funding from The National Lottery Community Fund, which distributes money raised by National Lottery players for good causes and is the largest community funder in the UK, will see more walks for specific carer groups and increase the areas where the walks occur.

Our CEO, Carl Tams, commented: "We're delighted that The National Lottery Community Fund has recognised our work in this way. Now, thanks to National Lottery players we can continue and expand our highly impactful Walk and Talk service for carers in Bristol and South Gloucestershire. This is important because the service helps carers improve their mental and physical health and well-being and helps disperse the sense of isolation many carers can feel when looking after their loved ones."

You can see the first new Walk and Talks made possible by The National Lottery Community Fund on page 15

In this edition:

- ➔ Depression and anxiety in carers
- ➔ Carers guide to staying warm in winter
- ➔ Employment support

If you care,
we care.

Carers Support Centre
Bristol & South Gloucestershire

A Network Partner of
CARERS TRUST

☎ CarersLine: 0117 965 2200

🌐 carerssupportcentre.org.uk

✉ carersline@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

The Vassall Centre, Gill Ave, Fishponds, BS16 2QQ

Registered charity number 1063226

Company number 3377199

From our CEO



It was great to meet so many of you at Caring Matters – our Carers Week event – at BAWA in June.

Almost 150 carers attended, making it the highest attendance for an event of this type we have run. While the feedback that we received was generally very positive, there were a few suggestions about how we can make things even better and we hope to apply these learnings to our Carers Rights Day get together in November.

As its name suggests, the emphasis of this event will be your rights as a carer. We'll have speakers from the local councils, as well as tapping into the expertise of our team here at Carers Support Centre to help you know your rights. There will also be stalls for you to check out from some of the major suppliers of services for carers in Bristol and South Gloucestershire. Along with a light lunch for that all important networking with your fellow carers, it promises to be an informative day. There are more details and information about signing up for your free place on page 7.

It's great news that we have been able to secure the immediate future of our Walk and Talk programme with a grant from the National Lottery Community Fund. We're proud of the work done by the Walk and Talk team over its first two years and very happy with the response from you about the programme. All our Walks have been fully booked and the feedback from the walkers and talkers has been uniformly positive.

Well done to the bid team for securing this funding. This follows on from funding secured to support our Counselling, and Befriending and Connection services earlier in the year and rest assured that we've got a lot more irons in the fire to provide further and improved services for you.

Another project coming to fruition is our new website. We're hoping that this will be up and running early in the new year and will provide you with a one-stop shop for all the information you need on your caring journey.

Our recent Impact Report for 2023/2024 highlights the challenges faced by carers due to the rising cost of living and the lack of supportive health and social services. The report also showcases our strategic efforts to address these critical issues. If you would like a copy of our newest Impact Report, please visit our website or contact CarersLine.

Keep well.

Carl Tams
Chief Executive



Trustee view

Trustees...what are you all about?

In this article, trustee Sian Jones writes about the role that trustees play in running your charity.

Charity governance is the way a charitable organisation is managed and overseen. At its core are the trustees, who play a crucial role in ensuring the charity operates effectively, ethically, and in line with its mission and legal requirements.

Think of trustees as the guardians or stewards of the charity's mission and resources. Their main job is to make sure the charity stays true to its purpose and uses its funds and assets wisely. They are behind the scenes, working to ensure everything runs smoothly so the charity can focus on helping those in need.

Trustees have several key responsibilities. Firstly, they're responsible for setting the charity's strategic direction. This involves deciding on the charity's goals and how it will achieve them. It's like plotting a course on a map, deciding where the charity wants to go and how it will get there.

Secondly, trustees are tasked with overseeing the charity's finances. They ensure that funds are used responsibly, and that the charity stays financially stable. This includes approving budgets, monitoring spending, and reviewing financial reports. Working with the organisation's skilled finance team they make sure the charity's money is put to good use.

Additionally, trustees have a duty to ensure the charity follows relevant laws and regulations. This means staying up-to-date with legal requirements, such as filing annual reports and meeting charitable objectives. They act as the charity's legal guardians, ensuring it stays on the right side of the law.

Overall, trustees are the backbone of charity governance. Their role is vital in ensuring charities operate with integrity, accountability, and effectiveness. Without trustees to guide and oversee them, charities would struggle to fulfil their missions and make a positive impact on the world.

Celebrating our Carers Breaks Volunteers

Our Carers Breaks Service in South Gloucestershire is a free service which gives family carers some time to themselves by providing a regular sit of two to three hours (usually weekly or fortnightly) with a volunteer.



break, we find that the person the volunteer sits with can benefit too. Having someone else spend time in a comfortable and familiar environment has helped build up confidence and support new hobbies.

All the sits are different, reflecting the range of health conditions and personalities of our service users. We have some sits where the volunteer and cared-for person play games together, including Scrabble and backgammon, which we hear can get a little competitive!

Some other sits are full of chit chatter, putting the world to rights and reminiscing about the past. As we match based on geography, we find that many of our sits reminisce and share memories about local history and landmarks. Some sits are just simply company – possibly watching some classic films together or catching up on the latest episode of a TV programme.

How to contact us

If you would like to find out more about becoming a CBS volunteer, please contact **Maisy Jefferies** our CBS Co-ordinator.

📞 **0117 937 5622**

✉️ cbs@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

Our fantastic volunteers come from a range of backgrounds – some have worked in health and social care, others have had experience caring for family members and some simply wanted to help others.

Many carers use this time to meet friends, go shopping or attend a fitness class. This service can be the only chance they get to take a break from their caring responsibilities, giving them an important opportunity to recharge their batteries. While the main purpose of the service is to give carers a

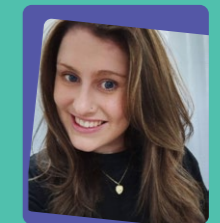
Welcome



Tracey Close - Interim Young Carers Manager

Hi, I'm Tracey Close, the interim operational manager for the Young Carers Service. I'm

covering for Joss Tagg while she focuses on development projects. With a background in social work, particularly in safeguarding, I returned to work after caring for my husband. I love collaborating with our young people and staff. Outside of work, I enjoy walking my dog, escaping to the countryside or to festivals in my campervan, and enjoying theatre with friends (not all at the same time!).



Holly Abraham - Young Carers Keyworker

Hi, I'm Holly, and I've just joined the South Gloucestershire Young Carers team. I've worked with

children and young people for over 12 years, most recently as an SEMH Teaching Assistant and Pastoral Mentor in schools. I'm passionate about supporting positive mental health and am currently studying to become a Play Therapist alongside my role here. In my spare time, I enjoy writing music, painting, and caring for my houseplants.



Belinda Daiday - Admin & Operational Support (Adult Team)

Hello, I'm Belinda, part of the Admin & Operational Support team. I have first-hand experience of caring which is how I learned

of the amazing work that Carers Support Centre does. I love helping different groups of people and learning about different cultures and languages.



Alice Lancaster - Admin Assistant

My name is Alice and I'm helping with the admin for the office, mostly posting out forms and processing them when they come back in, doing the post and generally helping out with

what's needed around the office. I'm also a qualified medical herbalist, and before having my son, who's now 6, I used to help organise a festival and do catering for festivals, weddings and retreats.

Noticeboard

Are you up to date with your Carers Emergency Card?

The Carers Emergency Card ensures the safety of the person you care for should something happen to you. It is free to apply for.

If you already have a Carers Emergency Card, it is very important that you keep the Emergency Call Centre up to date with any changes.

If any contacts, addresses, phone numbers, keysafe numbers, or cared-for's needs have changed or you wish to cancel the card, please update these directly with the Emergency Call Centre.

South Gloucestershire card holders:

Call the number on the front of your card OR send us an [email](#). Carers are advised to put URGENT CARERS CARD UPDATE SOUTH GLOS in the email subject line & include their name, card number, postcode & telephone number in the body of the text.

Bristol card holders:

Call the number on the front of your card

To apply for a Carers Emergency Card: Visit our [website](#) Or:

- If the person you care for pays Council Tax to South Gloucestershire Council call our CarersLine on ☎ **0117 965 2200**
- If the person you care for pays Council Tax to Bristol City Council call Care Direct at Bristol City Council ☎ **0117 922 2700**



Lottery news

Lucky winners

April - M Grace, D Byrne, J Hayes, M Bennett, A J Hart

May - M M Day, C Cryer, A Linton, J Hayes, M Crump

June - A Linton, R C Whale, C Cryer, M Hatch, J Cox

July - L Woods, C Peat, I Bisp, M O'Connell, J Trott

Join our lottery

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

🌐 tinyurl.com/mw33d45s

☎ **0117 939 2562**

Support groups for people with mental health issues

Changes Bristol host weekly support meetings throughout Bristol and online where they provide support for adults suffering from mental distress.

People who attend the meetings will receive encouragement, support and guidance with their struggles. If you are not comfortable with participating or talking in front of the group, then you are welcome to just come along and see how the meetings work. Many of their groups are open to everyone, but they also have groups for specific demographics, for example men, women, men of colour, women of colour and LGBTQIA+.

For more information, call

☎ **0117 941 1123**

🌐 changesbristol.org.uk/support



Caring for a loved one can feel lonely, especially if you're caring for someone on your own.

St Peter's Hospice is here to support unpaid carers of those living with an incurable illness. They understand that caring for a loved one who is very unwell can impact upon the people around you, practically, emotionally, and financially.

They have a Carers Support Line, operated by their Social Work team for practical and emotional support and advice on accessing the services you need, or if you simply want someone to talk to. They'll explore how to make things a little more manageable so that you're not alone when caring for a loved one.

Their Carers Support line is available 10 am – 4 pm, Monday – Friday on

☎ **0117 915 9450**

Many people find taking care of a loved one to be a rewarding time in their lives, but it can also be emotionally draining and exhausting. The weekly drop-in sessions offer an opportunity to explore the psychological challenges of your caring role with a Psychological Therapist. Sessions provide space to talk through the stresses of caregiving and how you might better support yourself.

Sessions are available both online and face-to-face, at the Hospice in Brenty. Visit:

🌐 stpetershospice.org/carers

You don't need to be caring for someone who has been referred to the Hospice to use their support line or drop-in sessions.

Are you caring for someone post-stroke?

You may want to join Bristol After Stroke's monthly support meetings. Gain insights from fellow carers, enhance self-care skills, and engage with stroke healthcare professionals. Whether you're actively taking part or prefer to listen, these sessions offer valuable connections and knowledge.

Bristol After Stroke

🌐 bristolafterstroke.org.uk



Helpline Service for Women

It's not always easy to ask for help but we would encourage you to not suffer in silence.

Womankind's telephone and webchat helpline offers emotional and mental health support for women and girls aged 16+ on any issue including anxiety, depression, grief, relationships, violence, or abuse.

Telephone Helpline Opening Hours

Mon 10am-12noon / 1pm-3pm / 8pm-10pm

Tue 10am-12noon / 8pm-10pm

Wed & Thu 10am-12noon / 1pm-3pm

Fri 10am-12noon

☎ **0345 4582914** or

☎ **0117 9166461**

🌐 womankindbristol.org.uk

click Live Chat to access the webchat.



Virtual Buddying befriending service

Sense's free virtual buddying service carefully matches anyone over the age of 5 with a disability to a volunteer with similar interests.

The project pairs individuals with a virtual buddy for a weekly call, either online or over the phone. While some matches prefer casual social chats, others enjoy building skills together, such as cooking or playing musical instruments.

Olivia loves Bethany to pieces and says they're best friends

Sam, whose daughter Olivia is a virtual buddy

🌐 tinyurl.com/2utxr56e

@ info@sense.org.uk



Deaf Dementia Club

Deaf Dementia Club is a monthly peer support group in Clifton for deaf people with dementia and their carers.

This is an opportunity to get support and socialise in a friendly relaxed environment with refreshments.

All sessions take place on Monday from 11:30-1:30 pm at Pavey House, Waterloo Street, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 4BT.

The dates for the next sessions are: 21st October 18th November 16th December 20th January 17th February 17th March.

For more info, call

☎ **0117 9398653**

Or contact

@ office@dfd.org.uk

WERN Village Agents

Village Agents link people in rural areas with advice and support services for independent living.

This service is now available in the rural areas of South Gloucestershire providing:

- A free confidential service
- One to one support
- Access to information and support
- Signposting to professionals as appropriate
- Promoting health and wellbeing
- Help to maintain independence

Village Agents can help with:

- Transport to medical appointments
- Financial concerns
- Claiming of benefits Help with mobility
- Support for Carers
- Fire Safety Checks
- Befriending
- Social isolation
- Advice on unwanted callers and scams
- Volunteering

To make an enquiry please phone Project Manager Tina Huckle-Mills on:

☎ 07502 641 805
@ tina@wern.org.uk

Support for Carers of Individuals Living with Chronic Pain or Fatigue

Are you supporting someone aged 18+ who lives with chronic pain or fatigue?

North Bristol NHS Trust's Pain Management and M.E./CFS Services offer an online rolling support group for carers. This group provides a space to discuss challenges, support each other, and focus on self-care.

These groups take place from 1:30- 3:00 pm on the 1st and 3rd Friday of every month.

Sessions are held online via zoom. Help with Zoom access is available upon request.

For enquiries or to register

@ painmanagementcentre@nbt.nhs.uk
☎ 0117 414 7357
(provide your name, email, or phone number)



Mindfulness for Carers Courses

When you're so concerned with caring for someone else, you can forget to care for yourself. Mindful Life's "Mindfulness for Carers" courses, are designed to support carers with practical mindfulness strategies to help you cope with your caring role. These free online courses consist of weekly 1.15-hour sessions over four weeks.

The next course is in November with sessions taking place at 2:30-3:45pm on the 4th 11th 18th and 25th.

The course has been designed to help you to:

- Make space/ time for yourself, and feel less run down and fatigued

- Work toward improving your best sleep pattern/habits
- Improve your emotional wellbeing and learn coping strategies
- Feel less isolated and more supported
- Strengthen your resilience and work toward keeping a hopeful outlook

Upon completion, participants are invited to join weekly 30-minute meditation sessions on Tuesday afternoons and Wednesday evenings.

@ themindfullife.co.uk
@ info@themindfullife.co.uk



Carers Voice and Engagement

We are committed to enabling carers to increase local decision makers' understanding of the issues they face, and to influence the development of local strategies, policies and procedures.



Carers Rep for Carers Week

During Carers Week, Amanda Threfall, volunteer with Carers Support Centre and former carer, talked to BBC Radio Bristol and featured on their website.

Amanda spoke to BBC Radio Bristol's John Darvall for Carers Week. During their beautiful talk, they discussed the impact of caring on Amanda's life, the importance of reaching out, and how Carers Support Centre helped her.

Following the on-air chat, Amanda featured in an article on the BBC website, which if you have internet access, you can find at [tinyurl.com/mucezd3x](https://www.bbc.com/news/health-68234567)

Thank you, Amanda, for representing carers and Carers Support Centre so well during Carers Week.



You're invited to our free Carers Rights Day event

Following on from the success of Caring Matters, our Carers Week event in June, we are delighted to announce our next get together, this time marking Carers Rights Day.

The date for your diary is Wednesday 20 November and we'll once again be at BAWA Health and Leisure, 589 Southmead Rd, Bristol, England, BS34 7RG between 9.30 am and 3.30 pm.

As part of the day, we will hear from our CEO, Carl, our Policy Engagement team and carer reps. We are hoping to be joined by the local HealthWatch team and we'll have workshops from representatives of Bristol and South Gloucestershire Councils, as well as a session on carers' rights from our team.

We'll also be offering opportunities to visit information stalls provided by organisations providing help and advice for local carers, as well as a networking light lunch.

In the afternoon there will be the chance to join in with one of our famous Walk and Talks or join a creative session with our friends at Invisible Army on their Carers Strike Art Project – if you were to strike, what would be written on your placard?

All the places at Caring Matters were taken up well in advance of the event, so you are recommended to book your place at our Carers Rights Day event as soon as possible.

Book your place by contacting us and giving us the following information:

- Your name
- Your address
- Your telephone number
- Any dietary requirements you may have

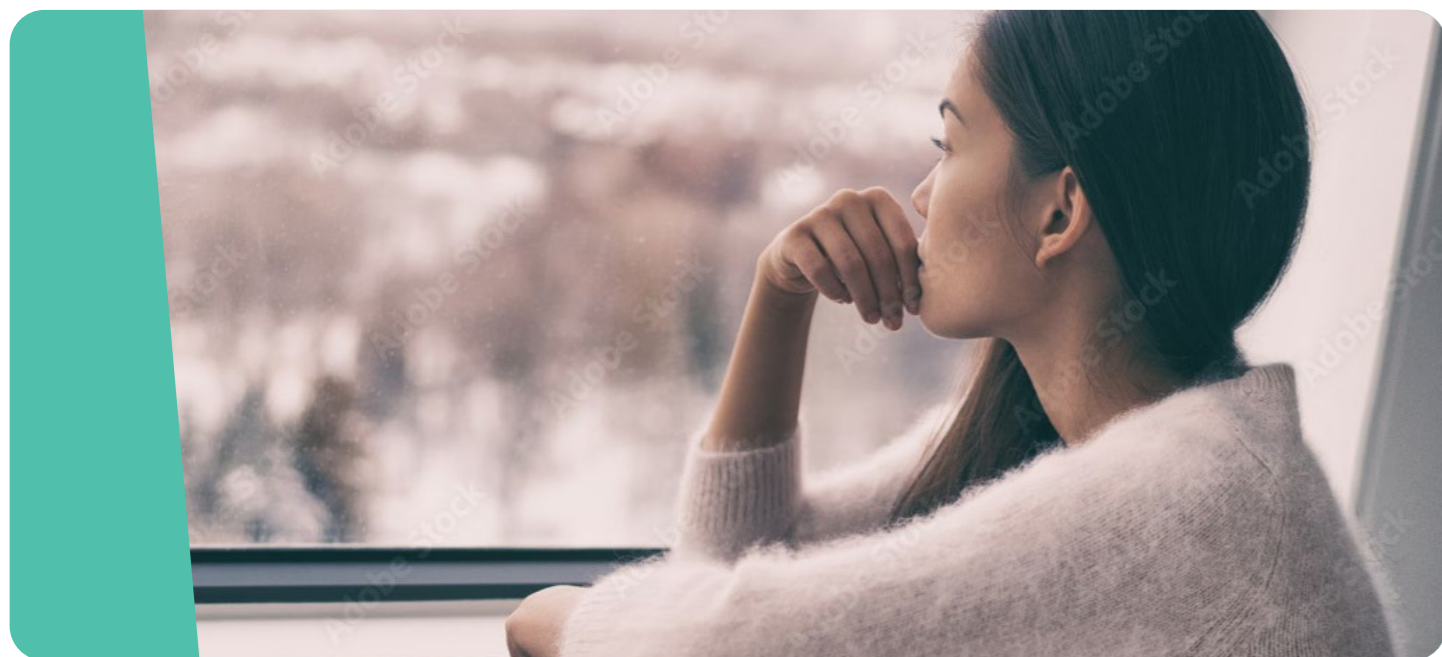
☎ 0117 958 9902
@ comms@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

You can also book online:

@ bit.ly/47dzOJF

Depression and anxiety in carers

In this article, our friends at PMAC talk about depression and anxiety, why carers can be particularly prone to them and how carers can manage those twin threats to their mental health.



What is depression?

Depression is a serious mental health condition that, for many, feels like a dark shadow that follows them around, weighing them down. When it strikes, it casts a heavy veil over thoughts, emotions, and actions with relentless determination. It's not just a fleeting moment of sadness or a passing mood; it's an all-consuming feeling of despair that grips on tightly, refusing to let go.

As days blur into weeks and months, its presence looms large and taints every facet of life. Simple tasks become Herculean feats, joy evaporates, and purpose dissipates into thin air.

Depression presents differently in individuals; some exhibit constant sadness. They may cry more easily and find difficulty in smiling. The pleasure they once found in hobbies and social events may dissipate. In contrast, others may appear irritable or withdrawn. They could be quicker to anger or find the smallest of things more irritating than they once would have. Others retreat into solitude. They may feel neither anger, sadness, nor joy but numb instead. In the most severe cases, suicidal thoughts may present themselves.

Recognising the signs of depression, however faint, is the first step towards reclaiming the light that depression seeks to extinguish.

What is anxiety?

Anxiety is an entirely human and natural response to perceived threats.

While it has many negative connotations, anxiety is a crucial human emotion that plays a massive role in keeping us safe. To lose it altogether would be disastrous. However, for many people, especially carers, anxiety becomes more than a normal emotion. It becomes a serious disorder that genuinely impacts their quality of life.

These disorders lead to excessive worry, fear, and nervousness, altering emotional processing and behaviour, often accompanied by physical symptoms.

Anxiety varies from person to person, with symptoms like a racing heart, shortness of breath, intrusive thoughts, and insomnia. Restlessness, difficulty concentrating, and constant unease are common, alongside physical signs such as headaches and muscle tension.

For carers, these symptoms might feel acutely heightened due to the added pressure and responsibility of caring for someone else.

Why are carers at risk of experiencing depression and anxiety?

Caring for someone, whether a loved one or a friend, is a profoundly compassionate act burdened with physical and emotional challenges. The toll it takes on carers is profound, often plunging them into a whirlpool of stress, loneliness, and anxiety. Carers must manage stress appropriately to reduce the risk of burnout and other conditions.

First and foremost, the isolation that often goes with the caregiving role casts a heavy cloud. The persistent dedication can strip away opportunities for social connection, often leaving carers feeling alone. This isolation becomes fertile ground for anxiety and depression to take root and flourish.

Moreover, the burden of responsibility weighs heavily on carers' shoulders. Navigating the complex needs of another, especially when they are unwell or incapacitated, takes a tremendous toll. The ceaseless worry and emotional turmoil chip away at their resilience, paving the path towards anxiety disorders and depression.

Carers must manage stress appropriately to reduce the risk of burnout and other conditions

There is also a tendency for carers to prioritise the needs of their loved ones above their own. This selflessness often comes at a steep cost – compromised physical health, exhaustion, and a shortage of time for self-nurturing activities essential for mental well-being. The guilt that goes with any attempt at self-care only serves to deepen their emotional distress.

Adding fuel to the fire is the spectre of financial strain. Many carers are forced to reduce their work hours or forsake employment altogether to fulfil their caregiving duties, plunging them into a financial predicament. This instability becomes a catalyst for anxiety and depression.

Strategies to help carers manage their mental well-being

Carers must acknowledge these risks and take proactive measures to safeguard their mental health.

Seeking professional help, nurturing a robust support network, and carving out moments for self-care are all vital strategies in mitigating and managing depression and anxiety.

Physical activity

Embracing regular physical activity emerges as a great way to find relief. Simple exercises like a brisk walk or a brief yoga session can help diminish some of the anxiety's grip, reducing both the mental and physical symptoms it brings. Yoga and Pilates are great ways to improve breathing and slow a racing heart.

Self-care

Self-care is one of the most important things you can implement into your daily routine. Whether it entails reading a book, relaxing in a soothing bath, or heading out on a brisk stroll around the block, these small pauses offer precious opportunities for rejuvenation.

Mindfulness

Practising mindfulness and meditation can help reduce feelings of unease and worry. Even a few minutes of mindfulness daily can help your mental well-being. An array of apps and online platforms are available to support and guide caregivers through these practices.

Carers shoulder a heavy load but don't have to bear it alone

Community support

Seeking solace in the community becomes a cornerstone of resilience. Connecting with fellow caregivers through local gatherings or online support groups can help relieve anxiety through shared understanding and communal strength.

Physical Health

When caring for others, it's easy to forget about yourself, but carers must focus on their own health as well. Nourishing the body with a balanced diet, embracing regular exercise, and holding a consistent sleep schedule is critical when it comes to fighting off the symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Professional Support

Seeking professional support should never be underestimated or forgotten. Therapists and counsellors specialising in caregiver stress offer invaluable tools and insights to help relieve not only the symptoms of anxiety but the root cause as well.

Remember, it's not a sign of weakness to ask for help. Carers shoulder a heavy load but don't have to bear it alone.

PMAC is a UK-based organisation of mental health and wellbeing trainers providing workplace training to businesses in the UK, helping to create a healthier and more productive working environment.

Carers' guide to staying warm in winter

Winter brings a unique set of obstacles for carers which can make your role even more challenging.



Maybe the greatest challenge the cold weather brings is the need to turn up the heating, leading to a rise in utility bills. When you are juggling responsibilities with financial constraints, this added cost can lead to significant financial stress.

Help with your bills

There are three different heating benefits which could help carers with their heating bills during winter:

- Warm Home Discount Scheme
- Cold Weather Payment
- Winter Fuel Payments

Each has their own eligibility criteria.

Warm Home Discount Scheme

The Warm Home Discount Scheme is a one-off £150 discount off your electricity bill. If you're eligible, your electricity supplier will apply the discount to your bill. The money is not paid to you.

You may be able to get the discount on your gas bill instead if your supplier provides you with both gas and electricity and you're eligible. Contact your supplier to find out.

You qualify if you either:

- get the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit
- are on a low income and have high energy costs

The discount will not affect your Cold Weather Payment or Winter Fuel Payment.

Cold Weather Payments

£25 for each seven-day period of very cold weather (0°C or below) between 1 November 2024 and 31 March 2025. It is automatically paid to eligible recipients.

You may receive Cold Weather Payments if you get:

- Pension Credit
- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Universal Credit
- Support for Mortgage Interest

Winter Fuel Payments

Following the recent government announcement, around 10 million pensioners will no longer get winter fuel payments to help them with bills at the coldest time of year.

From winter 2024, they will only go to pensioners born before 23 September 1958, who get:

- Pension Credit
- Universal Credit
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income Support

If you are eligible, you'll normally get the Winter Fuel Payment automatically.

About 850,000 households who are eligible to receive pension credit do not claim it, according to figures released by the Department for Work and Pensions last year.

You could be eligible if you are above state pension age and have an income of less than £218.15 a week, or less than £332.95 as a joint weekly income with your partner. Savings are also taken into account.

Disabled people, those caring for someone, and those with housing costs could be eligible despite these factors.

Energy saving tips from Warm and Well

Warm and Well is a service which offers free, local energy efficiency advice to households across Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire.

Here are some of Warm and Well's Top Tips for saving energy in the home.

Programme your heating

Make sure you have a programmable thermostat and are using it! If you're not sure how to do this, you should be able to find manuals for most thermostats online or ask the Warm and Well energy advisors to help.

Turn down your thermostat

Turning down your heating by just one degree could cut your heating bill by up to 10%. Avoid using plug-in heaters, if possible, they are expensive to run.

Turn things off

Get into the habit of turning off appliances and lighting that you're not using. Turn lights off when you go out of the room or during the day and don't leave appliances like bathroom extractor fans on for long periods as they use a lot of energy.

Use low-energy lightbulbs

Replacing your lightbulbs with low-energy equivalents can make a huge difference to your energy bill. LEDs can use 90% less energy than standard lightbulbs.

Shrink your bills, not your clothes

Ninety percent of a washing machine's energy is spent heating the water, so wash your clothes at 30-40°C instead. This will help look after your clothes for longer and save you money.

Save in the kitchen

Boiling only as much water as you need and using a bowl to wash up instead of running dishes under the tap can save both energy and water.

Insulate your hot water tank

If your home has a hot water cylinder you can insulate the tank to keep your water warm for longer.

Keep the heat in and the cold out

Insulation is one of the best ways of saving energy. Draft-proof your home whenever you can feel cold spots. Warm and Well can often help fund this.

Check your tariff

If you haven't checked your tariff in a while, then compare gas and electricity prices to make sure you're on the cheapest tariff for you.

Speak to Warm and Well

There is often grant funding available to help you make your home more energy efficient, including installing boilers, insulation and central or low-carbon heating. Speak to an Energy Advisor on 0800 500 3076, where you can also arrange for a free home visit to look at specific ways you can save energy at home.

www.warmandwell.co.uk

Please note, Warm and Well services cover households in Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire only.

In Bristol, a great source of help and advice about energy is the Centre for Sustainable Energy, they will also give advice to carers living in South Gloucestershire.

☎ 0800 082 2234
 @ home.energy@cse.org.uk
 🌐 www.cse.org.uk

Further help and advice

Local sources of help and advice

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 Gloucestershire):
☎ **0808 278 7947**
- North Bristol Advice Centre (North Bristol and South Gloucestershire):
☎ **0117 951 5751**
- 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 Gloucestershire:
☎ **01454 411 707**

CarersLine

If you are unsure where to go for further advice, please get in touch with CarersLine. We will point you in the right direction.

CarersLine is open:

Monday to Friday: 10 am – 1 pm

Monday to Thursday: 2 pm – 4 pm

(Closed on Bank Holidays)

☎ **0117 965 2200**
 🌐 carersline@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

An answerphone operates outside of these hours and your call will be returned when the helpline next opens.

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

Young Carer's support groups

Young people with caring responsibilities have all the challenges of being young, with all the responsibilities of being an adult, and they are often left to face these alone.

As many as 1 in 5 children and young people are young carers in the UK. A young carer might support someone who has a disability, a long-term illness, or a problem with alcohol or drugs. Without this help, they would struggle or not be able to cope. Being a young carer can make young people feel good about themselves and proud of the useful skills they learn. However, many young carers do not see themselves as carers and miss getting the help and support they often so desperately need and deserve.

Young carers take on caring responsibilities not just occasionally, but as part of their everyday lives, often over an extended period of time. This means they often miss opportunities that other children have, to play, learn and be young. Many struggle educationally with being able to focus on school whilst overwhelmed by other worries or can be bullied for being 'different'. They can become isolated, with no relief from the pressures at home, with 1 in 3 young carers saying that caring makes them feel stressed.

To help our young carers we offer locality groups across the City of Bristol and a 13 Up Saturday group in South Gloucestershire, to allow young carers time out, to have some fun and share some of their worries with people in similar situations. The groups offer a safe space where young carers can relax and chat with youth workers. We run three Young Carers youth clubs (age 11 to 19) across Bristol in partnership with Creative Youth Network (CYN) and depending on where young carers live there may be a session locally that you can join. We also offer a monthly 13 plus Saturday club (age 12 and a half to 18 years old) in Yate. All of these are all free and we have food available, as well as craft materials and we sometimes organise free trips.

Details of all our Young Carers Support Groups can be found on our website at bit.ly/3EbcXeS

No Wrong Doors for Young Carers in South Gloucestershire

Young Carers are still very hidden in South Gloucestershire, based on national evidence of 1 in 12 young people being a young carer we would expect there to be several thousand. We have 350 young carers registered in South Gloucestershire and results of the national schools census 2024 shows that schools in the authority have found 379. The local authority has no means of knowing from their own systems how many young carers they have identified.

A new major development in South Gloucestershire Council has been launched, involving Children's and Adult Social Care and Public Health. They are committing through a joint protocol (designed by Carers Trust) to work together locally- adopting a whole system, whole council, whole family approach to identifying and providing support for young carers and their families. This is being achieved by working across systems, in partnership with health and our Young Carers Service and will ensure the local authority follows their legislative duties towards young carers.

No Wrong Doors approach means that:

- The primary responsibility for responding to the needs of young carers and young adult carers, and ensuring an appropriate assessment is completed, rests with the service responsible for assessing the person they support - rather than depending on the age of the carer.
- Practitioners across Adult Social Care, Children's Services and health settings working with individuals with care and support needs and their families, have an equally important role in identifying potential young carers at the earliest opportunity.
- The starting point should be to assess the needs of the adult or child who needs care and support, and then see what remaining needs for support a young carer in the family has.
- The presence of a young carer in the family will always constitute an appearance of need and should trigger either an assessment, or the offer of an assessment, to the person needing care.

We are working closely with the local authority on the next steps that include:

- Producing guidance for professionals on identification and assessment of need
- Training for professionals

Members of Young Carers Voice and one of the Young Ambassadors in the Council are also involved using their lived experience to inform the developments. They will also be involved in delivery of the training.



Volunteers needed

We are also looking for volunteers to help support our Young Carers Support Groups - offering support on a fortnightly or monthly basis according to location. As well as helping others, volunteering has been shown to improve volunteers' wellbeing too. It's human nature to feel good after helping someone out. Volunteering can also help you gain valuable new skills and experiences and boost your confidence. Our project is looking for volunteers to attend groups and activities with young carers under the supervision of paid staff. We are looking for volunteers to support activities regularly and occasionally.

If you can help, contact: ☎ 0111 939 2562 or email: @ youngc@carerssupportcentre.org.uk



The transformation of our Young Carers' Garden

A big thank you to Network Plus and Bristol Water for making big improvements to our young carers garden.

The garden is a space for young carers to relax, socialise and enjoy freshly cooked food, all while getting some respite from their caring responsibilities. Our staff also use it for wellbeing events. However, over the years, it has slowly fallen into disrepair.

With the help of Bristol Water, the Network Plus team volunteered several days of their own time to make this garden a beautiful and inviting space for young carers and staff.

Their work included the removal of weeds, cleaning paths and paving, painting the benches and sheds and donating a fabulous new pizza oven and barbeque.

Four young carers have already tested the space and pizza oven and given it a big seal of approval!



We very much appreciate the Network Plus team for breathing new life into this space and giving young carers a fresh, peaceful place to unwind.

Employment support in Bristol and South Gloucestershire

Do you need help getting into or back into work? Are you feeling overwhelmed thinking about job searching whilst caring? Are you considering whether you want to develop more skills and confidence to help you search for work?

There is support available whether you live in Bristol or South Gloucestershire to help you achieve your goals, through several different programmes:

Bristol

Pioneer is a DWP-funded initiative, delivered by Seetec across the South West, designed to help people facing added barriers to employment into work. If you are a carer or a former carer then you will qualify for Pioneer Support.

When someone joins Pioneer, they are paired with an employability advisor who will collaborate with them to create a personalised plan, designed around their unique goals and needs, to help them find work. Support is available for up to 15 months and every other week, although not everyone will need this level of support.

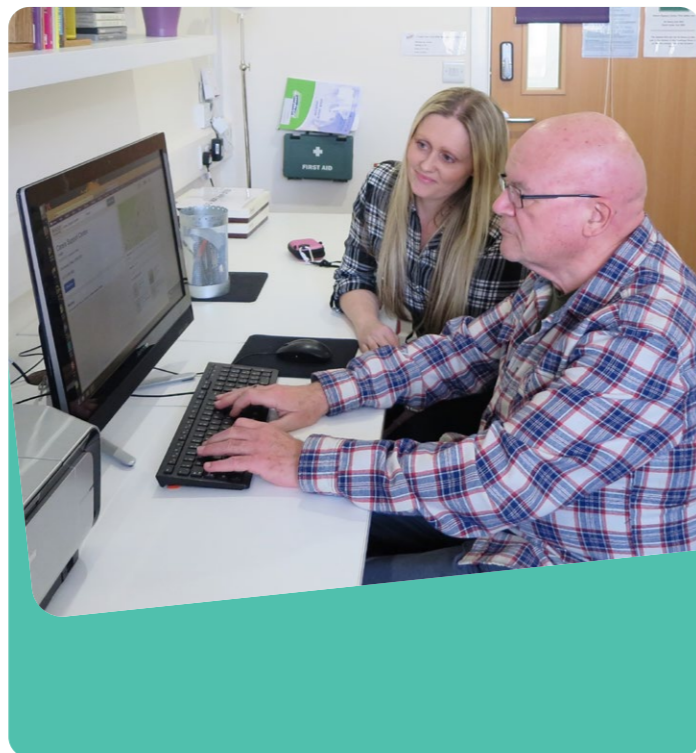
Advisors help refine or develop CVs, navigate job listings, and can refer people into skills training or coaching to build confidence in interviews and the workplace. Additionally, people can get travel costs covered to attend meetings, training, interviews, plus any specialist equipment needed to start work.

Seetec is encouraging carers to contact them as soon as possible. You can self-refer via pioneer@seetecpluss.co.uk, or visit tinyurl.com/2s36meer - and someone will get in touch as soon as possible to go over the referral process.

One Front Door is part of Bristol City Council's Employment Support team and also offer similar support to the Pioneer Programme. You can contact them on 0117 922 3440 or email them at [@onefrontdoor@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:onefrontdoor@bristol.gov.uk) Further information about One Front Door can be found at onefrontdoor.org.uk

South Gloucestershire

For carers living in South Gloucestershire there is also support available through Skills Connect South Gloucestershire. They have 5 different support programmes which can be accessed through one direct referral to Skills Connect. Someone from the Skills Connect team will discuss your needs and give you to the most appropriate programme. They offer similar 1:1 support, training and coaching to the Pioneer Programme and One Front Door in Bristol. To find out more please contact them at [01454 864613](tel:01454864613) or skillsconnect.org.uk



Carers Support Groups

A safe, confidential space to meet with other carers face-to-face and online – to share information and support each other.

Groups are a great way to connect with other carers, share knowledge and give each other support. Please find details of our carers groups below. We are currently running a blend of in-person and online groups, to suit your caring situation.

If you have not attended a group before and would like to, please contact CarersLine:

[0117 965 2200](tel:01179652200)
[@carersline@carerssupportcentre.org.uk](mailto:carersline@carerssupportcentre.org.uk)

Groups

Please note you are only able to attend a carers group which meets in the same local council area as where you live, Bristol or South Gloucestershire.

Group	Venue	Times	Oct	Nov	Dec
Hanham	Hanham Community Centre 118-124 High St Hanham, Bristol BS15 3EJ	1:30 – 3:30 pm (First Tuesday)	1	5	3*
Kingswood	The Park Centre Kingswood High Street, Bristol BS15 4AR	2:00 – 4:00 pm (Second Wednesday)	9	13	11*
Downend	Badminton Gardens Beaufort Road, Bristol BS16 6FG	2:00 – 4:00 pm (Fourth Wednesday)	23	27	11*
Online	Zoom	1:30 – 2:30 pm (First Thursday)	3	7	5
Hartcliffe	Dundry Room Symes Building, Peterson Avenue, Hartcliffe, BS13 0BE	10:00 am – 12:00 pm (Second Thursday)	10	14	12
Lawrence Weston	Lawrence Weston Farm Community Room Saltmarsh Drive, Bristol, BS11 0NJ	2:00 – 4:00 pm (Third Thursday)	17	21	19
Brislington (Dementia group)	St. Peters Church 170 Allison Road, Brislington, BS4 4NZ	10:30 am – 12:30 pm (First Wednesday)	2	6	4
St. George	Crofts End Church 1 Crofts End Road, St. George, Bristol, BS5 7UW	1:30 – 3:30pm (Third Friday)	18	15	20

*Festive payable booked event, requires payment asap

Walk and Talk

Our friendly support worker leads group walks offering a listening ear and providing support to help carers in your caring role.

Want to improve your health and wellbeing? Want to enjoy a walk with other carers? Want to get useful information and advice about the support available to you? Walk and Talk is for you.

Groups meet over six weeks in local green spaces. All carers are welcome, our aim is to make the walks as inclusive as possible. Whatever your background, whatever your walking ability, come and join us and your fellow carers on a Walk and Talk.

It is free to take part, all we need is your company.

Upcoming Walk and Talks

Here are our current weekly walks, which continue for six sessions.

Open to	Location	Time	Start/end date
Carers only	Kingswood	Every Monday from 11:00 am to 12:30 pm	16 September – 21 October
Carers only	Willsbridge Mill	Every Tuesday from 11:00 am to 12:30 pm	29 October – 3 December
Carers only	Kings Weston	Every Wednesday from 10.00 to 12.00 pm	6 November – 11 December

NEXT STEPS

To join in, please contact Stacey Vallis:

[07742 291073](tel:07742291073)
[@staceyv@carerssupportcentre.org.uk](mailto:staceyv@carerssupportcentre.org.uk)

How to get help from us

Whatever your caring needs, we are here to help, to guide you through the maze of support and information out there. We also provide a range of services to help improve your caring life.

Best place to start is our website - our online information hub for all things caring and our services at Carers Support Centre. The website is also the easiest way to register with us which will give you access to our services. All our services are free.

www.carerssupportcentre.org.uk



Or you can contact CarersLine. CarersLine is a confidential phone and email information and support service for carers in Bristol and South Gloucestershire for you to ask questions or talk about any concerns about your caring role.

Monday to Friday:
10 am – 1 pm

Monday to Thursday:
2 pm – 4 pm
(Closed on Bank Holidays)

0117 965 2200

[@carersline@carerssupportcentre.org.uk](mailto:carersline@carerssupportcentre.org.uk)

An answerphone operates outside of these hours and your call will be returned when the helpline next opens.



Donation form Autumn 2024

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 _____

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