

CARERS

News

Spring 2020

Caring in a Crisis

Plus.....

We meet our new working carers lead

We catch up with the Young Carers

And much more...

Brought to you by:



www.carershub.co.uk/news



CARERS News

The Carers Hub is a dedicated website
and phone line for unpaid carers
across Brighton & Hove

Website
carershub.co.uk

Phone
01273 977000

Email
info@carershub.co.uk

Twitter:
@carershub

Facebook:
/brightoncarershub

The Carers Hub is operated and managed
by The Carers Centre for Brighton & Hove
Please contact 01273 746222

Welcome to our **Spring Edition.....**

We bring you a slightly different to usual Carers News this Spring. Unfortunately we are currently in the middle of a global pandemic and have had to cancel and postpone all of our events and in person support work.

We hope you are all doing well at these extraordinary times and hope it will be back to business as usual as soon as possible.

Best wishes
The Carers News Team

Thank you for your interest in our magazine. Carers News is produced by The Carers Centre for Brighton and Hove.

If you are a local carer, support service or anything else carer related and would like to feature in Carers News please get in touch so we can keep the local carer community updated on everything carer related in Brighton and Hove.

For all enquiries please email
info@thecarerscentre.org

For up to date news stories for carers visit
www.carershub.co.uk/news



A word from our CEO...

With Tom Lambert



Dear Carers and Supporters of The Carers Centre,

A warm welcome to the Spring 2020 edition of Carers News. I was hoping to tell you all about our programme of upcoming events but of course, global events have taken precedence. In light of recent Government guidance around Coronavirus (COVID-19) we have made the difficult decision to suspend all Carers Centre group activities and in-person 1:1 sessions until further notice. We will be working with the local authority and partners in the voluntary sector to maintain our Carers Hub support line – **01273 977 000** info@carershub.co.uk so that carers can be provided with up-to-date information.

During this challenging time, we appreciate that many carers will be worried about the health of their family, themselves and about their ability to continue caring. As I write this, most of the Carers Centre Team has had to adjust to home working but have been very busy nevertheless. In addition to responding to incoming Carers Hub enquiries, we are contacting carers in at-risk groups and escalating cases of concern where necessary.

As this situation is unprecedented and evolving, we will do our best to update you whenever we are able. Please continue to refer to www.thecarerscentre.org for useful links and information.

I wish you and your families well and hope that this edition of Carers News brings you some valuable information and reassurance.

Kind regards,
Tom



Do you need a little extra support?

Sign up to our free Priority Services Register

Do you have individual needs or circumstances that mean you'd benefit from a little extra support? You may prefer to be contacted in a certain way. Or perhaps you'd need priority treatment if your water supply was disrupted.

To ensure we always know who needs Priority Services, we keep a register. You could be added to it if you or someone in your household:

- are pensionable age with additional needs such as limited mobility
- have a disability or chronic illness
- have a long-term medical condition
- have difficulty seeing, hearing or communicating

Apply to be added to our register, so we know how best to support you.

To find out more, visit:
southernwater.co.uk/priority-services



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Coronavirus Update

In light of recent Government guidance around Coronavirus (COVID-19) we have made the decision to suspend all Carers Centre group activities and in person 1:1 sessions until further notice.

We will be working with the local authority and partners in the voluntary sector to maintain our Carers Hub support line
01273 977000 or info@carershub.co.uk
so that carers can be provided with up-to-date information and support.

During this challenging time, we appreciate that many carers will be worried about the health of their family, themselves and their ability to continue caring. The local authority will be continuing to provide statements and updates as and when necessary which we will publicise on our websites.

You can keep up to date with these at:
www.carershub.co.uk or www.thecarerscentre.org

We will also be contacting carers in at-risk groups and escalating cases of concern where necessary.

We thank you for your understanding during this period, if you require advice or support, please do not hesitate to get in touch....



www.carershub.co.uk 01273 977000 info@carershub.co.uk

Caring through Coronavirus

At time of going to press, we were all instructed to go into lock down, so as the world wide situation with Corona Virus evolves, it is important to know where you can turn to for support as a carer...

If you are worried that you or someone you look after may be at risk, NHS 111 can offer direct guidance through their online coronavirus helpline. Call 111 if your (or their) symptoms become severe and remember to let them know you are a carer.



The Carers Hub is still available to call on 01273 977000 for all carer related support in Brighton and Hove, please do leave a message if there is no answer as many of our staff are working from home and will call you back at the soonest available opportunity.

Some useful weblinks for more up to date information

To stay up to date with national government advice and procedures visit
www.gov.uk

For information on a more local level visit Brighton & Hove City Council
www.new.brighton-hove.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19

Use this government website to register if you have a medical condition that makes you extremely vulnerable to coronavirus.

If you are not sure whether your medical condition makes you extremely vulnerable, register anyway. You can register yourself or on behalf of someone else.

www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable

Healthwatch Brighton & Hove is regularly updating a useful Frequently Asked Questions document about coronavirus

www.healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk/news/coronavirus-frequently-asked-questions

Useful Carer websites to turn to for advice and support



On our website will be bringing you updates about the current situation concerning Carers in Brighton and Hove. As well as news and all of our usual support. Or you can join us on our social media—go to page 19 to find out more...



www.carersuk.org

The Carers UK website is well worth a visit. Simply type www.carersuk.org into your browser and you will discover information, news, and fantastic advice aimed at carers like you.

At the moment you will also find great information about how to cope with the current Covid19 situation, with up to date news and inspirational stories to good advice about staying well and happy will caring for someone during the current goings on. You can even join forums and talk to carers up and down the country



www.carers.org

The Carers Trust website has a wealth of useful information and advice for carers, along with regular updates about the Coronavirus situation, and forums, where you can chat to other carers online 24 hours a day.



Opportunity to share your experience of being an unpaid carer

Carers Trust are looking for carers to share their stories in the form of a blog or video so they can raise more awareness of what it's really like being an unpaid carer and the impact it can have on your life. The stories will be shared on social media, the carers trust website and can be anonymous if preferred.

If you are interested in working with Carers Trust on sharing your story please email ndillon@carers.org





Carers Reablement Top Tips for Carers in Isolation

While the Carers Centre Reablement Project has had to stop our volunteers meeting with carers for the time being. We would like to encourage you to find time for yourselves each day, whether that is a short walk, a boogie in the kitchen, reading that book you have been meaning to get around to, or picking up a long forgotten hobby. In times such as these a bit of normality can go a long way.....



1. Stay in touch with friends, family and loved ones—utilize modern social media to keep in touch, we highly recommend video chats with relatives... Although a traditional letter or card can go down just as well.
2. Keep up to date with current government advice and guidelines, choose your own way of receiving the information, whether online, by radio or TV, but try not to get bogged down in the 24 hour rolling coverage if you can.
3. Listen to the radio or put some music on—keep your spirits up. Some of the Carers Centre staff have been sharing playlists online so are listening to the same things and every now and again will have a collective boogie in their kitchens.
4. Make sure to get out of the house and get some fresh air, whenever is suitable (within government restrictions). Spring is upon us, the flowers are starting to poke out and the weather is looking a little better.
5. Keep yourself entertained and uplifted.

Why not take this opportunity to try something you have never done before or to pick up an old hobby. Never tried listening to a podcast? Maybe now is your time..... There is a plethora of entertainment online, from movies to TV shows, books and all sorts of websites both useful and otherwise.

However you choose to unwind, make sure you take a little time each day for yourself.....

You can even share how you are keeping yourselves going on our social media channels. (see page 19 for more details).

Dear Diary.....

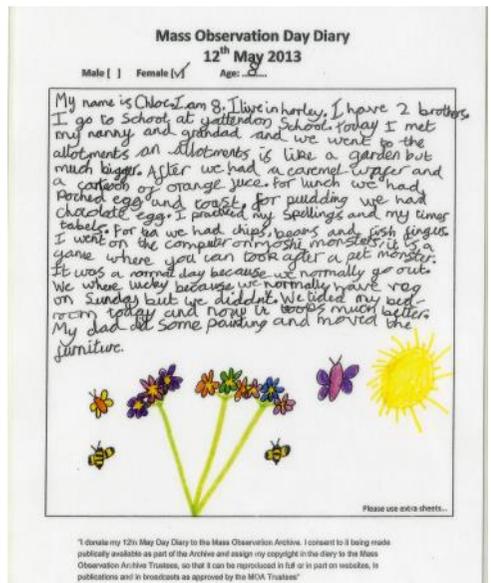
Take part in Mass Observation's Diary Day this May



Readers of this newsletter are invited to leave a written legacy for future generations by recording details of a day in their life as part of a long-standing social history project.

In 1937, Mass Observation called for people from all parts of the UK to record everything they did from when they woke up in the morning to when they went to sleep at night on 12th May. This was the day of George VI's Coronation. The resulting diaries provide a wonderful glimpse into the everyday lives of people across Britain, and have become an invaluable resource for those researching countless aspects of the era.

May 12th 2020 is likely to be quite an ordinary day, but for those researching, the 'ordinary' it can often provide extraordinary results. The Archive is keen to capture the



voices and experiences of those with caring responsibilities.

Write as much as you can about what you do, who you meet, what you talk about, what you eat and drink, what you buy or sell, what you are working on, the places you visit, the people you meet, the things you read, see and hear around you, how you are feeling and of course what you yourself think.

Submitted diaries, which can be typed or handwritten, are retained anonymously with no personal details requested or recorded.

For more information about how to submit your diary for 12 May – which this year falls on a Tuesday – please visit

www.massobs.org.uk/write-for-us/12th-may

You can also get involved on social media by tweeting details of your day #12May20



Creating Safe Spaces to Explore - by Ruth Sullivan

In 2018 Brighton and Hove carried out its biannual Safe and Well at Schools Survey. This is a city wide survey of school pupils, who answer questions about topics such as bullying, health and mental health, feeling safe and secure in school and risk taking behaviour. The statistics from these survey answers, combined with the data about self-identity (Ethnicity, sexuality, gender etc) provide a valuable insight in to the experiences of key communities in Brighton. Young Carers continue to feature highly amongst the population of children who experience the highest levels of bullying, mental health problems and risk taking behaviour in schools but this year we also noticed a strong cross over where Young Carers who also identified as LGBTQI+ were doubly impacted by difficult experiences at school.

As a result of this we applied for some Carers Trust Funding that would allow us to run an activity for LGBTQI+ young carers and their allies. We wanted to create a safe space for these young people to acknowledge not only their caring role, but their identity, or explore if they were unsure.

Coming out, or even openly talking about LGBTQI+ identity can be challenging and scary and we wanted to make sure that the young carers felt supported by having adults around them with lived experience. All staff on the activity identified as LGBTQI+ and we were absolutely delighted to have a wonderful facilitator, photographer and cabaret artist – and local Brightonian – Asher Fynn.

Asher created a great space for the young carers to explore identity through photography. Our first session focused on paparazzi style shots – talking about consent when taking pictures and creating a dialogue. We had a wonderful model in the form of cabaret performer Oberon White and in the second part of the project Asher taught the children how to take performance pictures while Oberon stunned us with their gorgeous singing. The project ended with an exhibition mounted and presented by the young people and they felt so confident that they were asking members of the public to come in and see. It was a huge confidence boost for our young people and they formed fast friendships with other young people who understood. The young carers have asked us to run some more LGBTQI+ workshops in the coming year.

(Photos of the young people have been anonymised due to the nature of the activity)

Half Term Drama Workshop

by Tammy & Lizzie



In the February half term our 8-11 year old young carers enjoyed a 3 day drama workshop organised by Create, a creative arts charity which offer workshops led by professional artists. This was held at the Phoenix Gallery, and so while we were there we could peek in to see artists at work. This workshop gave our young carers the opportunity to have a real break from their caring role, and it was great to see them engaging with all the activities and making friends in this new environment. The first day was about getting to know each other and building confidence by playing some games. We practised different ways of moving in the space as well as using our voices in various ways. We used the second and third days to create small pieces of drama to showcase to our families at the end of the workshop. Thank you to all the families who came to watch and to all our young carers for an energetic and entertaining 3 days!



Half Term Fun for 11-13's by Cheryl

We took a gang of 20 young carers out for the day during February half term. We took over half of Frankie and Bennys where many margarita pizzas, burgers and chips were consumed (apologies to the diners who had gone for a quiet lunch J he-he). We then went on to watch the new release of Sonic the Hedgehog movie starring Jim Carrey at Cineworld. It was a great day out and so good to see new members coming along for the first time. If any of you would ever like to review the movies we go and see please send them in!

Young Carers at the School of Art Brighton University

By Cheryl

On Saturday 29th February Tammy and I took a group of young carers along to try at some Printmaking at the University of Brighton School of Art on Grand parade.

The Student on the printmaking course showed our young people how to create a woodcut and then how to print it using ink and a press. All of the young people had fantastic ideas and created great prints to take home. The second part of the activity which was an introduction to architecture



using architectural Lego sets. We build our own University Campus! It was very inspiring to experience what might be like at art school. The uni students were lovely and remarked on how brilliant our group of young carers were to work with -we already knew that o course;)

Well done to everyone who participated and for being brave enough to come along and have a go.



Young Adult Carers & Teens

with Paula Melis

Well it's been a pretty busy start to the year, and we have enjoyed some successful workshops. Following on from the brilliant wellbeing residential back in the autumn some of the young adult carers attended a workshop on self massage and aromatherapy with the lovely facilitators at Sage Holistics (who offer low cost treatments) we ran 3 one hour workshops, by the end of the day I was so relaxed I actually floated home!! With funding from Quilter – Carers Trust we have been able to offer additional self care sessions to the YACs and they have enjoyed acupuncture, massage and yoga.



Last week a small group of YAC's attended a fab singing for Wellbeing workshop run by Hannah-Rose Tristram who runs the Glow choir in Brighton. Using the lovely St Luke's' Prestonville church (good acoustics apparently!) we all sang some beautiful sounds, it was amazing how quickly we formed a small choir and actually sounded pretty good. Everyone was really buoyant after the activity and a couple of the YAC's are going to go along to the choir as they said it made them feel good.



We also ran a group during half term in partnership with the Hangleton and Knoll project for teens. We used the kitchen at the community centre, and with the skills of Jess from B & H food partnership and Briony (H&K youth worker) we cooked up a storm, producing a yummy and healthy meal of veggie burgers, quinoa salad with halloumi and sweet potato fries. The group learned some new kitchen skills and were able to take home a cookery book to continue learning.



All round a great set of activities for our older young carers.

To contact the Young Carers Project call 01273 746222



Update from the Carers Centre



Carer's Engagement

The last part of 2019 saw a very specific piece of engagement work requested from us. This was to examine the needs of carers of people with physical, neurological and/or sensory disabilities under the age of 70. Examining ways to aid independence and reduce the need for stays in either temporary or permanent care or nursing homes. The reason for being so specific, is that it is known that within Brighton & Hove we have a larger than the national average of people who fall into these categories who may be receiving a care package which is not meeting their needs, including people being placed in care and nursing homes when other options may be better.

During November we hosted Carers Rights Day at the Brighthelm Centre and we also continued with our coffee mornings, including one specifically for carers of people with learning disabilities and/or autism.

Look forward, the Clinical Commissioning Group have asked us to consult on 'Community / Out of Hospital Support', so you may have already seen this survey online. Drop Steve a line to request details steve.castellari@thecarerscentre.org



You said—We recommended

By Steve Castellari— Carer Engagement Lead



The Carer Expert group has added a lot of new members during the last year but due to a number of factors, the scheduled meetings in Dec and Feb had to be postponed. The next meeting will contain a training session for the group on how to best communicate with professionals and planning for the year ahead.

We will also discuss changing the name of the group to Carers Engagement Group. This is because the "Expert" tag might be a little off putting for some people.

The next meeting will aim to be late March or early April, however, if you are interested in joining the group and having more of a say in matters relating to carers in the City, please contact Steve. steve.castellari@thecarerscentre.org

Working Carers & Employers



The role of Working Carers engagement, is now being fulfilled by Steve C. Steve is in the process of setting up meetings with employers across the city to let them know about the Employers for Carers (EFC) scheme and to offer our help and support for employers that want to know what they can and should be doing to support their workers who are carers.

Steve has also set up a monthly out of hours coffee meet up for working carers. The first one of these was held on 29 Jan from 6 to 8 pm and they will be held on the last Wednesday of each month at the same time. Full details of all our coffee meet ups can be found at the back of this booklet.

Any employers wanting to know more about the Employers for Carers scheme, please contact Steve.castellari@thecarerscentre.org



Inclusion Project

Introducing Louisa, our new 'Inclusion and Development Worker' who started in February. Louisa will be working on a 12 month project which aims to extend the reach of Carers Centre and Carers Hub services to more carers from minority groups within the city. This includes;

- Unpaid carers and supporters who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, or Queer+ (LGBTQ+).
- Unpaid carers and supporters who are from a BME background or refugee/migrant background.
- Unpaid carers and supporters from Traveller, Gypsy or Roma backgrounds.

We will be working with local groups and organisations who are already engaged with these communities and looking at ways we can make our existing services as inclusive and culturally relevant as possible.

We will be consulting with carers to hear their views and will be running some social events throughout the year.

From May, Louisa will also be able to offer some additional 1-1 support to carers from these groups.





Meet the Team



This time we meet with Steve Castellari who works at The Carers Centre.

What does a typical day look like for you?

I have three different jobs at present, so it really depends what I have planned but typically I am up about 6.30 and out of the house to get a train about 7.30.

I live just inside the Surrey border, so when I am in the Carers Centre, I get the fast train from Gatwick down to Brighton and then walk along to the office unless I have a morning meeting or an event somewhere else.

I'm normally in the office about 8.45 though you might catch me, fuelling up on caffeine in a coffee shop on the way.

Quite often I will have a meeting with another charity, an employer or the Council, so I'm frequently not in the office for a whole day.

I normally try to finish about 4.45 so I can get a train back about 5.15 but as part of my work for working carers, I also run events in the evenings, so sometimes I am working until 8pm or later.

Can you tell us more about your service?

My work for the Carers Centre is split into 2 different (but related) areas, so it depends what day it is as to what my main work may be.

I am the engagement lead and also the lead for working carers and employers. Engagement tends to involve a lot of reaching out to our carers to find out what they need usually based around a theme, for example, out of hospital care services. The themes we consult on, frequently come from the Clinical Commissioning Group (part of the NHS) but sometimes we are asked to find out information by

another organisation or the Council. I may run a focus group, design an online or paper survey or attend an event to ask questions.

Once information is gathered, it then falls to me to produce a report and feed this back. The reports can be quite long and so quite a lot of my time is spent on these during some periods.

Another way that we engage with carers in the City is by hosting or attending events and on average, I attend about one a month with some of them being large events such as Carers Rights day, Disability Pride or The Carers Festival.

For working carers and employers, I am mainly focused on trying to provide information and support for both these groups and arranging events at employer's premises.

Support for employers includes training on carer awareness for their management and key staff. I also encourage them to consider signing up to the Employers for Carers (EFC) scheme either independently if they are a large employer, or as part of the Council's umbrella scheme if smaller. This scheme provides access to a wealth of information for employers and employees online, relating to the law, support, best practice etc. for employers and carers.

For working carers, I now run an "out of hours" meet up group aimed at looking at the issues not just of caring for someone but also working, seeking to return to

work or perhaps take on a volunteer role. We try to have a guest speaker each month, who can provide information relating to working and caring. This might be someone from the Council, a project that is happening in the city, a lawyer or maybe an employer to talk about their policies relating to their employees who are also carers.

The group meets on the last Wednesday of every month at present though we may look at alternating with Saturday mornings.

What would you advise a carer who is looking after someone?

Always ask for information and help, never feel that you are alone in your situation.

There is a huge amount of information out there whether from charities like us or from the Council or just on the internet. Call the Carers Hub as a starting point or speak to your GP if you are experiencing problems, especially if you feel your health is being affected by caring.

Do you run regular support groups?

Yes, I run the working carers meet up on the last Wednesday of each month, which I mentioned above.

I also run two other groups about once every three months:

Carers of people with Learning Difficulties and/or Autism. We are a small but lively group, who meet in Al Campo Lounge to discuss all aspects of caring for people with LD and/or Autism but also to have a nice cuppa and a friendly chat.

and

Carer Experts. This is a group of carers who have agreed to be more involved in our engagement work, either by providing follow up information to initial consultations, attending focus groups or helping us to understand the in depth issues faced by carers so that we can report back service gaps.

Carer Experts meet at The Carers Centre about 3 or 4 times a year and we offer a training session on one of those meetings

as a sign of our commitment back to them.

You don't have to have years of experience to be part of the group but you do have to be willing to have a say which we can pass back to the Council and CCG.

Tell us about some of the carers you have met whilst working at the Carers Centre/Carers Hub.

So many, it's impossible to mention all the great people I meet who are doing a fabulous and often unnoticed job looking after someone else.

I think in all my time here, everyone I have met has stood out in some way because everyone has a unique story even though we may recognise aspects of it.

What do you like to do when you are not working?

I used to be very sporty and active and even did mountain guiding for a time. I love to surf, snowboard and mountain bike though my opportunities for the first two are very limited these days.

What might someone be surprised to know about you?

I went with Jumbulance as a carer to Lourdes for a week when I was 18 and I am partially sighted in my right eye.

What was the last book you read / movie you watched?

I tend to flit from one book to another but I am currently reading about Norse legends and also The Hurricane Girls which is about the women of the Auxiliary Air Transport in WWII

Last film was Paddington 2 !!!

What 3 words best describe you?

Considerate, Sporty, Talkative.

To find out more about Steve's work or to access any of the support he offers please contact the Carers Hub.

One Minute With...

In our regular feature we hear from The Ageing Well Service in Brighton & Hove who provide free information and advice for older people, their families and carers.



Reduce your risk of having a fall—stay strong, steady and independent

Our bodies change as we get older, which can make it more likely that we'll have a fall and hurt ourselves. But there are lots of things we can do to reduce our risk of falling and to maintain our independence, such as:

- Doing a safety check and making changes to our homes eg removing any items which might be a trip hazard, ensuring lighting is adequate and cleaning up spills
- Having medication checked regularly by a GP or a pharmacist
- Having regular eye tests
- Doing strength and balance exercises to keep us strong and steady on our feet; as we get older our muscle strength and balance reduces, but doing simple exercises designed to improve strength and balance can make a real difference. It's never too late to start!

Where to get help

We can give you a falls prevention information booklet which contains lots of useful information about staying safe at home and when you're out and about.

What to do if you've already had a fall

If you've already had a fall, you should discuss it with your GP so that they can consider possible causes with you and consider whether it's likely to happen again.



The Ageing Well Service can give you information and advice to improve your health and wellbeing, including suggesting local activities and classes to improve your strength and balance.

You can phone them on **01273 322 947**

Events, Activities and Coffee Mornings



We are sorry to say we have made the difficult decision to suspend all Carers Centre group activities and in-person 1:1 sessions until further notice.
(See page 2 for more information.)

We will be back up and running again as soon as possible.
Our CarersHub support line is still open on **01273 977000**

In the meantime, may we suggest: finding us on social media

Join us on Twitter, Facebook and our websites for regular updates about the current situation and how we are addressing it. As well as light relief to keep our Carers going while at home.

You can find us on facebook : facebook.com/TheCarersCentreforBrightonandHove/

Or twitter: @carershub1 or @brightoncarers1

Or visit our website www.carershub.co.uk

Upload your content and share your stories with us.....

Stay in touch Carers of Brighton & Hove...



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