

Carers News

Brighton & Hove

Spring 2024



Cover Picture: Young Carer who completed the Brighton and Hove Half Marathon Junior Mile

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A word from our CEO...

Tom Lambert

Dear carers and supporters

We've already started planning for Carers' Week 2024 (save the date it's the 10th – 16th June), which has been led by feedback from carers on previous large events. Your feedback told us you liked one large scale central event - something more celebratory - but also pop-ups in other parts of the city.

The plan for 2024's event is to have one central event at the Open Market on London Road. We last used the Open Market for Carers Week in 2019 and had over 200 carers come along. In addition to the central event, we'll have one pop-up at the Royal Sussex County Hospital to cover the east of Brighton. And we hope also to cover the west and the north of the city as we received feedback that going out to places like, for instance, Whitehawk, was appreciated by carers from that side of the city. Our overall goal is to cover the city with awareness-raising and to celebrate all unpaid carers in the City.

Our work on the Carer-friendly City Strategy continues and we've been lucky enough to talk to Gemma Scambler, Commissioning Manager at Brighton & Hove City Council about next steps. You can read more on page 3.

I'm also excited that we can update you on the expansion of our Book Clubs which we are taking to the new Saltdean Library, you can read more on page 4. And for our young carers, March was a busy month. As part of our Easter holiday activities we are planning another family day at Knockhatch Farm towards the end of the Easter holidays. Last year's visit to Knockhatch was a resounding success with over 90 young carers and family members joining us.

By the time this edition of Carers News comes out, we'll have had the Young Carers Action Day on the 13th March, and the Young Carers Festival on 20th March. You can read more about both these amazing events for young carers on pages 8 & 9.

All the best, Tom.



The Carers Centre works with unpaid family/friend carers who are residents within Brighton and Hove, or caring for someone who lives in Brighton & Hove.

Established in 1988, The Carers Centre for Brighton & Hove is a registered charity (No.1015728) and company limited by guarantee (No.2758481).



Carer friendly City Strategy

We talked to Gemma Scambler, Commissioning Manager at Brighton & Hove City Council to learn more about what's happening with Brighton & Hove's Carer Friendly City Strategy

How did it feel to spend Carers Rights Day with the Carers Centre; with adult and young carers?

My role is around strategy and guidance but to actually be with carers in all their diversity really crystallised how we need to work with carers. I've worked in adult social care for 36 years, and I'm a carer too for a very long time so I have a good understanding of the issues, but the day brought home that it's the voice of the people who use those services that we really need to hear.

What's come out of that day?

Since Carers Rights Day my team and I have been working on a document covering the four pillars of a carer-friendly city: Education, Employment, Social Care and Health and Integration.

Step one is to raise awareness. One out of twelve people in Brighton & Hove is a unpaid carer, of whom a third are providing full-time care. Carers are dropping out of the economy as all too often they're using their own savings. So recognition and understanding of carers is essential. That includes people recognising that they themselves are carers.

Then we need to look at 'reasonable adjustments'. Education of professionals was something that carers raised on Carers Rights Day. Issues like employers' policies, flexible learning, enabling GPs to reach out of their own accord. We need to make carers aware of the support that exists, from carers' leave to the Carer's Card. And of course we cannot forget the provision of good quality services for the cared-for person.

How about the challenges you'll face?

There's going to be challenges along the way. The plan is to have a Carer Friendly City Strategy by Carers' Week in June: sort of a Bill of Rights for Carers.

We used to have very square foreheads from banging our heads against brick walls but I am finding that doorways are wider than they ever have been before. It's an awful time financially in the local authority and the NHS. So we have to make the case that an investment is a way to save.

What should carers take away from this chat?

So my message is, this strategy is not going to sit on a shelf looking pretty. It's going to make a difference.

The Carers Centre aims to provide carers from the age of 6 upwards with all the support they need – and if we can't help directly we will know people who can. Sometimes that support can be emotional. Sometimes carers need practical support.

Our regular meetups and groups (see pages 10 and 11) can at times be the answer – in this issue we are focusing on our Reablement project (see pages 6 & 7)

Adult carers

Alongside our regular groups and meet ups (find out more on pages 10 & 11), we work closely with the **Sussex Carers Partnership**, a collective formed of three charities: The Carers Centre for Brighton & Hove, West Sussex Carers Support and Care for the Carers East Sussex / Hastings Care for Carers. Between us, we cover all of Sussex. We are a partnership of equals: our three CEOs meet regularly to share developments.

Together we generate joint pieces of work, working with carers, which we then share with decision makers such as Brighton & Hove Council. Carers' opinions are always fed back in these reports. We then keep a close eye to make sure that action is being taken.

One piece of work has been around our online Carer Awareness Training which aims to reduce the negative impact of caring on carers' mental health; and we're looking to develop clear pathways for carers to the services and support they need.

There is always more to be done to help unpaid carers get the support and services they need when they need them. One way we make sure that carers are heard is through our Carers Voice Group. This group helps us to research and pass on real people's concerns to the local authority, Sussex NHS and other bodies.

If you are interested in having your voice heard by joining our Carers Voice Group, please email Steve steve.castellari@thecarerscentre.org or call 01273 746222

Young carers

Most of us think of caring as an adult responsibility, be that looking after children or elderly parents. Yet, children as young as six are carers taking on big responsibilities.

Our dedicated Young Carers project supports young people with a caring role from the age of 6-25. Our support is tailored to the needs of individual young carers. We listen to what they are worried about and help them find solutions.

Through our regular youth clubs and activities, we can support them to stop being a carer for a few hours and give them space and the time to unpick the complications of their caring role.

If you know a young carer who is not currently getting support, please call our Young Carers project on 01273 746222 or email young.carers@thecarerscentre.org

Carers groups

We recognise that everyone is different and their caring roles are therefore also different, so we provide appropriate advice, emotional and social support through a variety of carers groups;

- Changes Ahead; for unpaid carers of people with mental health challenges
- Learning Disabilities and Autism; for unpaid carers who help people with learning disabilities and / or autism
- Working carers; for unpaid carers and those seeking to return to work
- Bereaved Carers; for unpaid carers who have experienced bereavement
- LGBTQ+ carers; open to all LGBTQ+ unpaid carers

Find out more about our carers groups and regular meets ups on pages 10 & 11.

Your wellbeing is really important and we have some current and new activities which can support you;

Book clubs expanding to Saltdean

Following the success of our book club at Jubilee Library in Brighton, we are expanding to the new library in Saltdean. Meetings will be held on the 3rd Thursday of each month from 10.30am to 11.30am with an introductory meeting on Thursday 18th April 2024. The group is open to all our carers and new ones too, especially those carers in Saltdean, Rottingdean, Woodingdean and the East of the City.

If you are interested in joining the Saltdean Book Club, please get in touch email events@thecarerscentre.org or call 01273 746222 to express your interest.

Wellbeing walks

Our wellbeing walks are really popular with carers and take place the last Wednesday of every month at a different location across the city. With 15-20 participants it is a great way to have a stroll and a chat with people who 'get it'.

Reablement project

Is where we aim to ignite or re-ignite a carer's interest in something. Our fabulous volunteers are matched with a carer's interest and can go to the carer's house or find somewhere that works for both the carer and volunteer.

Activities we've done range from de-cluttering a flat to joining a local fitness class; supporting a carer in singing with a choir; meditation; bookbinding and dressmaking.

At the moment a carer and a volunteer are putting a mosaic on a table: the volunteer had never tried mosaics but they're working it out together and having a whale of a time.

Amanda (volunteer) and Elizabeth (a carer) met through the Reablement Project.

Amanda:

I'm a coach for a running group for ladies of a certain age, and was inspired by a woman who'd just trained as a Samaritan. I looked on a Volunteer in Brighton website and the Reablement Project caught my eye. They were looking for someone to do sewing and my passion is making things with fabric. After I'd had an interview, given references and gone through a DBS check, Dan explained about the one-to-one sessions, and that I'd be going into someone's house to volunteer with them.

Elizabeth had the enthusiasm to drive our project forward, and driven on by both of us, we made a jacket for her together over our 10-week period. We even made some

stockings for Christmas.

Years of caring can knock your self-confidence. But standing in front of a cutting mat with your rotary cutter and a nice piece of fabric can give you back control. Being able to concentrate and gain a skill is very therapeutic. Carers do need support in the company of somebody who's not judging.



And I really like meeting new people!

Elizabeth: I care for my mother, a strong-minded 95 year old. She lives in sheltered accommodation at the top of my road, and I check in with her daily, and do things like getting her medication changed to blister packs.

I needed a break last year as I had a stress-related illness. I ran into difficulties with my sister and mother when there was a falling out about her Will: to be honest, being a carer is a bloody nightmare. I'm 64, and haven't worked for 20 years with being ill and caring for people. If you're a caring kind of person you just do it. Caring for family just comes from your roots: it's unconditional.

I knew about The Carers Centre through Crossroads in the 90s, but I didn't know I was a carer. You don't really know you are, you just do it, but if you help someone, you're a carer.

I had a carer's assessment. As part of that, they asked whether there was something I'd always wanted to do. "Yes," I said, "I've always wanted to do dressmaking." It took a couple of years because of lockdown then Dan got in touch. I was desperate for company, but had no energy for myself after caring for my mother.

Up came Amanda with a car full of cutting mats, material and so on - she came on her bicycle after that first session - and she'd got a paper pattern with her so we could make a jacket. I felt so looked after - "Here's someone looking after me!" She helped me with the pattern, taught me the names of the stitches; I invested in an ironing board so I could iron the different bits. She's so inventive: if ever there's a problem she'll steer us round it.

We've been out for a coffee twice since the end of our ten weeks (I've been trying to put a zip in a top for four months so it's been doing as well as talking). Reablement is so constructive and satisfying.

If you are interested in any of these activities, please contact our Reablement team lead Dan on 01273 746222 or email volunteer@thecarerscentre.org

March is a busy month for our Young Carers Project;

Young Carers Action Day 13th March 2024

As part of Young Carers' Action Day, the Young Carers Project asked organisations and individuals in the city to show they care and become young carer aware.

The need for the day of action is immense.

For instance, an estimated one million young carers - children and young adults - in the UK are looking after a family member or friend who is ill, disabled or misuses drugs or alcohol. According to some estimates, there are 3,000 young carers in Brighton and Hove.

These young people often do what equates to a full-time unpaid job, looking after someone on top of their education or work.

And research shows how young and young adult carers are significantly less likely to undertake higher education or enter employment than their peers without a caring responsibility.

So, to raise awareness of the pressures placed on young carers and to mark Young Carers Action Day, The Young Carers Project are asking local organisations and individuals to **'show they care by becoming young carer aware'** by completing their free online Carer Awareness training.

Ruth Sullivan, Service Manager at The Carers Centre for Brighton and Hove said;

"It's imperative that more organisations and individuals in Brighton and Hove are young carer aware to enable us to see the step change that's required locally to support them."

For Young Carers Action Day 2024 we are asking organisations and individuals to 'show they care and become young carer aware' by taking our free online Carer Awareness training. This simple action can have a massive impact on how young carers get support in Brighton and Hove."

To take the training please visit: www.carershub.co.uk/awareness-training/

Young Carers Festival

Our wonderful friends from Brighton Council's Healthy Lifestyles Team did an amazing job organising the Young Carers Festival in March.

Issy from our young carers project went to the Festival and had this to say:

'It was brilliant to see children from different schools around the City work together and how excited they were to try new things. They had a busy morning with climbing, tennis and squash. And their feedback was amazing – many said it was great to have the opportunity to try out new things.'

A big thank you to all at the Healthy Lifestyles Team for their ongoing support of young carers.

Easter holiday activities for young carers

Our Young Carers team are putting together an amazing series of events and activities for Young Carers during the Easter holidays.

Alongside our popular annual Knockhatch trip kindly funded by The Alex Roberts Miller Foundation, there will be fitness sessions, workshops as well as a murder mystery weekend at Preston Manor.

Congratulations

We are delighted to congratulate young carer Zak, who completed the Junior Mile as part of the Brighton Half Marathon at the end of February.

Well done from all of us Zak

If you would like to find out more about the Young Carers Project or if you know of a young person who may benefit, please get in touch 01273 746222 or email info@thecarerscentre.org



Monthly Support Groups & Activities

The Carers Centre for Brighton and Hove run regular groups, activities and workshops for carers across the City.



Carers Community Coffee Mornings

Come along to take a break, meet other carers and find out about local support services.

Virtual Weekly Coffee and Chat via Zoom

Every Wednesday Morning, 10.30am—11.30am

Brighton Carers Al Campo Lounge, London Road, Brighton

Every 3rd Tuesday of the month, 10.30am—Midday

Hove Carers One Bread Café, All Saints Church, The Drive, Hove

Every 4th Monday of the month, 10.30am—Midday

Kemptown/East Brighton Carers Cup of Joe Café, 28 St Georges Road, Kemptown,

Every 4th Thursday of the month, 10.30am—Midday



Changes Ahead Meet up

2nd Monday or 2nd Friday of the month alternating, 10.00—midday

Al Campo Lounge, London Road, Brighton

Come and have a cuppa and a chat with us and other carers who are supporters of people with mental health challenges.



Working Carers Peer Support

usually last Monday of the month, 6pm—7.30pm

Al Campo Lounge, London Road, Brighton

Join our friendly group for an early evening cuppa and chat with other working carers, those seeking to return to work and employers.



Bereaved Carers Group

4th Tuesday of every month, 10.30am—12.30pm

Al Campo Lounge, London Road, Brighton

Come along to take a break, meet other carers and find out about local support services



Learning Difficulties and/or Autism Carers Group

Usually last Monday of the month, 3.30pm-4.30pm

Al Campo Lounge, London Road, Brighton

Come along to take a break, meet other carers and find out about local support services

For more information about any of our events or to register your interest please call 01273 977000 or email events@carershub.co.uk

NEW



Reablement Crafternoon

2nd Monday afternoon of the month, 1.30—3.30pm

Brighthelm Centre, North Road, Brighton

Join the Reablement team as we try out a new art or craft each month. Materials and refreshments provided so you can take your creations home.

Regular Activity Groups

Mondays



Tai Chi & Qi Gong

Every Monday, 11.00—midday

You will be guided through light exercise to help your body breathe, stretch and loosen joints, with exercises you can practice on a daily basis for enhanced wellbeing.

Online

Via

ZOOM

Tuesdays



Carers Book Club Jubilee

Every 2nd Tuesday of the month, 10.30—11.30am

Join us in-person each month as we now meet face to face at Jubilee Library.

In-Person

Jubilee Library

Wednesdays



Carers Wellbeing Walking Group

Last Wednesday of the month, 10.30am—midday,

Visiting different places in the city, we enjoy a short walk in beautiful surroundings, followed by a coffee or hot chocolate and a chat.

In-Person

at

Various Locations
across the City

Thursdays



Monthly Meditation Group

Every 3rd Tuesday of the month, 10.30—11.30am

Each month we learn about different types of meditation, the benefits of meditating and how you can include them in your daily life.

Online

Via

ZOOM

On occasion times and dates for groups and activities might need to change. For the latest event and activity information please visit our website www.thecarerscentre.org/events or call us on 01273 977000



8.8% of the local population care for a family member or friend in Brighton & Hove

The Carers Centre is the lead partner in the Carers Hub, a base from which all carer support work is carried out across the City



01273 977000

The Carers Hub is a partnership with the Carers Centre, Alzheimer's Society, Cross Roads Care, B&H City Council and the NHS and is the first point of contact for Carers in the City

