

CarersNews

The newsletter of CarersMK

Autumn/Winter 2019



Thank you!

Big thank you to all of our supporters who have fundraised, volunteered, and helped to raise awareness of Carers MK!

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AGM
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Save the date!
Carers MK AGM

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Did you know you can transfer the flu virus to someone you look after?



Don't wait until winter to get your flu jab

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Personal reflection from a young adult carer

WIN

A LUXURY HAMPER!

See page 3 for details



Meet the team

Chief Executive

Stephen Archibald

Operations Manager

Kirstie O'Sullivan

Adult Carers Service Manager

Sue Bowering

Young Carers Service Manager

Sally Mansi

Fundraising Trusts Manager

Paul Catton

Fundraising Co-ordinator

North Bucks & Milton Keynes

Beth Sawyers

Communications

Holly England-Archibald

Adult Carers Team

Angela Doherty

Debby Hulmes

Alison McGee

Christine Straughan

Sue Robinson

Young Carers Team

Sue Ackerley

Bryony Gibbens

Rhonda Adamu

Hospital Support Worker

Hayley Edwards

Parent Participation

Co-ordinator

Rachael Sherratt-Smith

PACA Administrator

Chris Merriman

CarersMK

Carers MK

Margaret Powell House
439 Midsummer Boulevard
Central Milton Keynes
MK9 3BN

Tel: 01908 231703

Email:

mail@carersmiltonkeynes.org

Reg Charity No. 1116804

Company Reg No. 05577393

Foreword by the Chief Executive



Welcome to the Autumn/Winter 2019 issue of Carers News.

In this issue, you'll find lots of useful information including our Support Group Diary on page 8-9 and Training and Workshops on page 10-11. There are two health articles in this issue; 'Advanced Care Planning' which talks about the importance of planning for the future allowing the person you care for to make decisions about their future care, and 'Don't Wait Until Winter To Get Your Flu Jab' with information explaining why it is important for carers to get a flu vaccination to prevent you from contracting the virus and making you too unwell to care for your loved one and potentially passing on the infection.

Save the date! Carers MK's AGM will be held on Wednesday 16th October 2019, 10.30am – 12.30pm at Margaret Powell House, 439 Midsummer Boulevard, Central Milton Keynes, MK9 3BN. Contact us on **01908 231703** to book a place.

In this issue we have published the results of our recent carers survey and what we plan to do to address those areas of our service which can be improved in light of the findings.

A big thank to everyone who has fundraised for us. We are really grateful for your support which helps us to carry on providing our vital work.

I am also very pleased to announce that Carers MK has recently joined a new Partnership Framework Agreement with MK Council and MK Clinical Commissioning Group. Together over the next five to seven years we will develop and improve services for carers locally.

Would you like to win a luxury hamper? Enter our competition on page 3 and see how many autumn leaves you can spot throughout the newsletter – good luck!

Stephen Archibald

**Chief Executive Carers MK
and Carers Bucks**

stephen.archibald@carersbucks.org

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Young Carers MK News

News from CarersMK



News from the Hospital

Vicky Burns is the new lead Dementia Nurse at Milton Keynes Hospital. Available Monday to Friday, she can support patients, carers and anyone living with dementia or delirium by giving practical advice, information and signpost to other services. Carers MK has always had a good relationship with the Dementia team and we look forward to working closely with Vicky.

To speak to Vicky whilst in hospital, please ask Carers MK's Hospital Support Worker Hayley Edwards on 01908 231703 or ask your nurse to refer you.

AGM

CARERS MK | 2019

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 16th October 2019
10.30am – 12.30pm

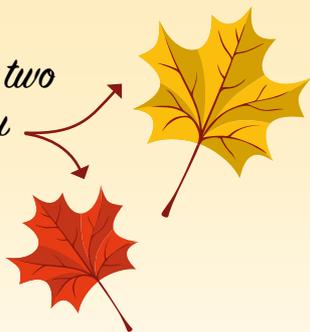
Carers MK AGM is being held in the Conference Suite at Margaret Powell House, 439 Midsummer Boulevard, Central Milton Keynes, MK9 3BN.

We welcome attendance from carers and professionals. To confirm your attendance please contact us on **01908 231703** or mail@carersmiltonkeynes.org

Carers MK Autumn Competition!

Tell us how many autumn leaves you can find in this newsletter and be in with a chance to win a Luxury Hamper!

Here are two to get you started!



AUTUMN COMPETITION

Answer _____

Name _____

Address _____

Tel _____

Email _____

Fill in the form, cut it out and post it to **Autumn Competition, Carers MK, Margaret Powell House, 439 Midsummer Boulevard, Central Milton Keynes, MK9 3BN.**

Alternatively you can tell us your answer online at carersmiltonkeynes.org/autumn-competition

All entries must be received by 5pm on 18/10/19. Winner will be notified on 28/10/19. See online for full T&Cs.

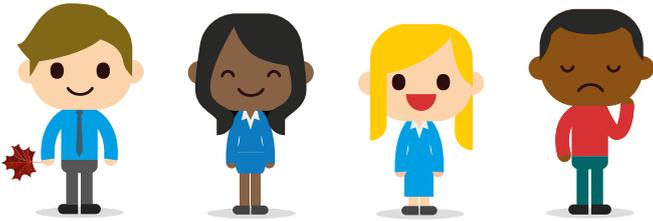


Carers Survey

Analysis & conclusions of Carers MK's Annual Carers Survey



Our annual carers survey was sent out by email to two and a half thousand of the adult and parent carers we support. Not surprisingly we found that we got the biggest response from carers who had accessed our service recently and those who had received an enhanced service from us.



Among the overall conclusions we can draw from the survey is that the majority of carers who replied are coping quite well. However, there is **a significant minority who find that caring has a negative impact on their life** and things are very difficult for them.

THREE QUARTERS of carers reported that they were managing their physical health very or quite well. However, a quarter reported that they were not managing their physical health very well. Carers MK has focussed on support for carers in health settings and carers' health over the past couple of years and the survey response confirms that this is still what we should do. The results for physical health are mirrored with mental health where a quarter of carers reported that they were not managing their mental health very well. This underlines the need for the counselling service we provide which was accessed by a quarter of carers who responded.



Satisfaction levels with the services provided by Carers MK were very high (86%) which is consistent with last year's results and fits with our monthly satisfaction surveys which consistently show satisfaction levels about 90%. Given that we have more carers referred to us than ever before it is pleasing to see that the satisfactions levels remain high.

Nearly three quarters of carers reported that they had registered as a carer with their GP, this is about half as many again as last year. This is probably a reflection of the fact that we have had a big push on getting carers to register. A quarter reported that they were well supported by their GP but a quarter reported that they were not. Carers MK is putting a lot of effort into getting GP practices to recognise and support their patients who are carers and this is something we will continue to do.



Nearly eight out of ten carers reported that they have the skills they need to manage the health condition of the person they care for. However, this leaves over twenty percent who say they don't have the skills they need to look after the person they care for. Carers MK will review where the gaps are and see if there are common areas that we might be able to address.



More than half of carers reported that they COULD NOT balance their caring role and having time for themselves. This is less than last year but confirms what carers tell us when they contact us for support, particularly those with a heavy caring role.

FOUR OUT OF TEN carers reported that they did not know where to go to for advice on legal matters which is less than the previous year. Carers MK is currently exploring what we can do to ensure that expert advice is available to carers, whether one-to-one or in groups covering common topics.

Nearly a quarter of carers reported that they COULD NOT manage day-to-day tasks. Carers MK will explore what the common themes might be and review what we could do to address them.





Parents and Carers Alliance MK



PACA Mark Awarded to Circus Starr!

We are delighted to announce that we have awarded our third PACA Mark award to Circus Starr, an accessible touring circus. The award is for being especially helpful and accommodating to families and young people with disabilities, and offering a rewarding and special place to visit.

Circus Starr said they were thrilled to receive their award and look forward to returning to Milton Keynes in October.

circus-starr.org.uk
01260 288690
f /CircusStarr
info@circus-starr.org.uk



What Matters to You?

PACA recently carried out a survey with our members to ask them "what matters to them". So far, **the three things that matters most are:**

1. My children to be happy, safe, fulfilled and a future to look forward to.

2. Having the right support.

3. Not to fight all the time.

Parents also said:

- Access to advice at different stages in the journey.
- Having somewhere to take my ASD child without being judged or looked down on if he has a meltdown.
- Sleep!
- Finding a carer who is happy to have my son once a month.
- Being able to have a break from the constant stress.
- After school/weekend clubs my child can attend.
- Workshops how to manage difficult behaviour – with practical tips.
- My child gets the help he deserves.
- Understanding in the school environment.

Let us know "what matters to you". Our survey is still open so please visit [surveymonkey.co.uk/r/WhatMatters2me](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/WhatMatters2me) We will use the information gathered from the survey to inform and influence the Council in our meetings with them. If you would like us to send you a paper copy, please contact us on **01908 257828**.



Save the Date! MK SEND Information Day, Saturday 1st February 2020

9.15am-3.30pm. The Ridgeway Centre, Wolverton

- Workshops for parents
- Activities for children/young people with SEND
- Information stands
- Refreshments/lunch provided
- Free crèche

Contact PACA for more information:

01908 257828 pacamk.org
f /ParentsandCarersAllianceMK

OR:

MK SEND IAS
01908 254518
milton-keynes.gov.uk/mksendias
f /MKSENDIAS



Would You Like to Join PACA?

It's quick and easy to sign up via our new online membership form: pacamk.org/become-a-paca-member or contact us on **01908 257828** and we'll send you a form by post.

Please note: that if you are registered with Carers MK, you also need to register with PACA. Although we are based in the same office, we are a separate organisation.



Would You Like to Be a Parent Rep for PACA?

PACA is looking for parents who can share their skills and knowledge to improve local services.

The role of a parent rep is to inform decision makers about the experiences of parent carers and to ensure that their views are heard. We offer support and training and reimburse expenses.

Please contact us if you are interested or see our website for more information: pacamk.org/parent-representatives



Advanced Care Planning



Unless people know what is important to somebody they will not be able to take their wishes into account in relation to their future care and management.

Planning ahead allows a person to make known their wishes about future care and have some control over the decision-making process, allowing people to have control of their lives. Developing an individualised advance care plan, whilst a person is still physically able to communicate and has the cognitive abilities to do so, can enable some of their concerns and potential needs and treatment options to be identified, discussed and managed, pre-empting

potential crises. This can help ensure choices and preferences for care in the future, including at the end of life, can be discussed and documented, putting the person at the centre of this.

Advance care planning can be used to let others know about the individual's preferred choices in all aspects of care. It should be a voluntary process by which a person with mental capacity is enabled to identify their wishes, to provide information in future when the person may be unable to make their wishes known.

Having an advance care plan has been shown to reduce the level of stress, anxiety and depression that family members experience in their caring role and can help prevent future crises.

“Planning your care in Advance” was developed by the Milton Keynes Joint Palliative Care Group to help with advance care planning. The document provides a framework and allows all of a person's plans, both practical and health-related, to be recorded in a single place. It supports the provision of quality, personalised, end of life care.

More information and the document can be downloaded from the Willen Hospice website willen-hospice.org.uk/how-we-care/advance-care-planning

Anna Kent

Neurological Conditions Clinical Specialist
Central and North West London
NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL)



Don't wait until winter for the flu jab.

Did you know you can transfer the flu virus to someone you look after?

The flu vaccination is available every year on the NHS to help protect adults and children at risk of flu and its complications.

Flu can be unpleasant, but if you are otherwise healthy it will usually clear up on its own within a week.

However, flu can be more severe in certain people, such as:

- anyone aged 65 and over
- pregnant women
- children and adults with an underlying health condition (such as long-term heart or respiratory disease)
- children and adults with weakened immune systems

Anyone in these risk groups is more likely to develop potentially serious complications of flu, such as pneumonia (a lung infection), so it's recommended that they have a flu vaccine every year to help protect them.

Free Flu Jabs

Carers are entitled to a free flu jab from their GP if they are providing unpaid care to family or friends, or in receipt of the Carer's Allowance for looking after vulnerable adults or children.

Catch it-Bin it-Kill it

Remember to stop the spread of germs – use a tissue and wash your hands thoroughly.

Support Group **Diary & Workshops**

Support Groups

Olney Support Group Olney Centre	1st Thursday of the month 2pm-3.30pm	5th September, 3rd October, 7th November, 5th December, No group in January, 6th February, 5th March
Great Linford Support Group Great Linford Parish Council Offices	2nd Wednesday of the month 2pm-3.30pm	11th September, 9th October, 13th November, 11th December, 8th January, 12th February, 11th March
Hanslope Support Group Hanslope Church	4th Wednesday of the month 10.30am-12.30pm	25th September, 23rd October, 27th November, No group in December, 22nd January, 26th February, 25th March
Autism Support Group (for carers of someone 16+ with Autism)	1st Tuesday of the month 1pm-2.30pm	3rd September, 1st October, 5th November, 3rd December, 7th January, 4th February, 3rd March
Mental Health Evening Support Group	1st Wednesday of the month 6pm-7.30pm	4th September, 2nd October, 6th November, 4th December, No group in January, 5th February, 4th March
Friends and Family Mental Health Group (Personality Disorder)	Last Wednesday of the month 6pm-7.30pm	25th September, 30th October, 27th November, 18th December, 29th January, 26th February, 25th March
Parent Carer Group	3rd Monday of the month 10.30am-12pm	16th September, 21st October, 18th November, 16th December, 20th January, 17th February, 16th March
Former Carers	2nd Thursday of the month 1.30pm-3pm	12th September, 10th October, 14th November, 12th December, 9th January, 13th February, 12th March
Parkinson's Support Group	1st Wednesday of the month 2pm-3.30pm	4th September, 2nd October, 6th November, 4th December, No group in January, 5th February, 4th March
MS Support Group	Mondays on the following dates: 2pm-3.30pm	2nd September, 7th October, 18th November, 23rd December, 10th February, 23rd March
Dementia Support Group	2nd Tuesday of the month 1pm-2.30pm	10th September, 8th October, 12th November, 10th December, 14th January, 11th February, 10th March.

Relaxation

Reflexology or Indian Head Massage	Monthly on Fridays	By appointment only
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For carers attending the Carers MK offices in Margaret Powell House

Our offices are located on the third floor and, under normal circumstances, there is lift access. Please be aware that in the event of a fire evacuation it is not permitted to use the lifts and you will need to exit the building via the stairs. If you have any difficulties managing stairs then please contact us as soon as possible.

Social Groups

Writing Group



2nd Wednesday
of the month
10.30am-12pm

11th September, 9th October,
13th November, 11th December,
8th January, 12th February, 11th March

Luxury Afternoon Tea

Dobbies Garden Centre,
Watling Street, Bletchley, MK17 9JH

1pm-3.30pm

14th November

Carers Christmas Party

Lovat Hall, Newport Pagnell,
MK16 0EJ

12pm-2.30pm

7th December

Workshops and Training

First Aid Awareness

The Quaker Centre, Downhead Park
MK15 9BH

Mondays

9th September – 10am-12.30pm
9th December – 1.30pm-4pm
9th March – 10am-12.30pm

Manual Handling (Back Care)

The Quaker Centre, Downhead Park
MK15 9BH

Mondays

9th September – 1.30pm-4pm
9th December – 10am-12.30pm
9th March – 1.30pm-4pm

Managing Stress Workshop

Tuesdays
10am-12pm

17th September, 21st January
17th March

6 Week Sewing Workshop

Fridays
12pm-2pm

13th September – 18th October

Craft Workshop

Fridays
10am-12pm

25th October, 29th November,
17th January, 20th March

Q&A Legal Advice Session

Second Friday
morning of
each month

By appointment only

Craft Workshop: Festival of Light

10am-12pm

28th October

Nutrition Workshop: Stay Healthy With Nutrition in the New Year

10am-12pm

5th December

Flower Arranging Workshop

10am-12pm

18th February



Please note: All activities are at Margaret Powell House unless otherwise stated.

You need to book a place on our workshops, activities and training sessions. If you have booked but unable to attend please contact us on 01908 231703 or mail@carersmiltonkeynes.org so that we are able to offer your place to another carer.

Don't forget to visit our website at carersmiltonkeynes.org or 'Like' our Facebook page to receive the latest information on forthcoming events, news and vacancies.

We regularly send out email reminders to carers about our training sessions, activities and events – using email means we can do this quickly and cheaply.

If you would like to be kept up to date in this way please make sure we have your current email address – email us at mail@carersmiltonkeynes.org

If you wish to attend any activities you can call us on 01908 231703 or email mail@carersmiltonkeynes.org

Workshops & Training



Christmas Craft Workshop

Return of the popular Christmas craft workshop from 2018, come and make some Christmas decorations – bead wreaths/sequin Christmas trees and Victorian decorations.

Date/Time:

Friday 29th November, 10am – 12pm



Craft Workshop Session: Design a Shopping Bag

Come along and design a shopping bag in celebration of Chinese New Year.



Date/Time:

Friday 17th January 2020, 10am – 12pm



Craft Workshop: Design a Mug

Come along and design a mug while having a coffee and chat with other carers.

Date/Time:

Friday 20th March 2020, 10am – 12pm



First Aid Awareness

The course will start with a brief introduction where the attendees will be asked to briefly explain who they care for and the types of challenges that they face. This will allow the tutor to tailor the session to best meet their needs.

- How to deal with an unconscious adult or child
- How to deal with a person who is choking – including the technique for dealing with wheelchair users
- How to manage a major bleed
- How to deal with seizures/convulsions
- An overview of Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (video and tutor demonstration)

Dates/Times:

9th September, 10am – 12.30pm

9th December, 1.30pm – 4pm

9th March 2020, 10am – 12.30pm

Courses will be delivered by Guardian, at The Quaker Centre, 1 Oakley Gardens, Downhead Park, Milton Keynes, MK15 9BH.



Manual Handling (Back Care)

The course will start with a brief introduction where the attendees will be asked to briefly explain who they care for and the types of challenges that they face. This will allow the tutor to tailor the session to best meet their needs.

Compulsory elements

- Care plans and communication with the patient
- “Power Posture” and a practical exercise

Mix and match sessions

(depending on the needs of the attendees)

- Sitting to standing/standing to sitting
- Walking with frame or stick
- Assisted walking
- Laying to sitting
- Use of wheelchairs
- Equipment
 - Slide sheets
 - Glide cushions
 - Turning seats etc.



Dates/Times:

9th September, 1.30pm – 4pm

9th December, 10am – 12.30pm

9th March 2020, 1.30pm – 4pm

Courses will be delivered by Guardian, at The Quaker Centre, 1 Oakley Gardens, Downhead Park, Milton Keynes, MK15 9BH.



Flower Arranging Workshop

I'm Jeanette and I have just set up my own flower business working from home in Newport Pagnell. It is called Jeanette's Flower Displays. I am working with Carers MK to offer classes to others who may share my passion for flowers. The aim of the class is to be able to escape into a beautiful world of smells and textures and produce something to take home and show off.

Date/Time:

Tuesday 18th February 2020, 10am – 12pm

Please contact Carers MK on 01908 231703 or mail@carersmiltonkeynes.org to book a place. Please note spaces are limited.





Luxury Afternoon Tea

Finger sandwiches, savoury vol-au-vents, mini cakes (Battenberg, chocolate brownie and lime cheesecake), homemade scones with jam and clotted cream plus a pot of tea or filter coffee.

We are extremely grateful to the Masonic Centenary Fund for donating the funds to enable this lovely afternoon to take place.

Book your place by contacting our offices on 01908 231703. Places are limited.

Please be advised that this afternoon is for carers only and the carer will need to make their own way to the venue as transport is not provided.

Photos will be taken on the day and a consent form will be sent to you for completion upon booking.

Date/Time:

Thursday 14th November, 1.00pm
Dobbies Garden Centre, Watling Street,
Bletchley, Milton Keynes.



Craft Workshop: Festival of Light

Come along and make a light decoration in celebration of the Festival of Light.

Date/Time:

Monday 28th October, 10am – 12pm



Managing Stress Workshop

10am – 12pm

Learn how to identify sources of stress and ways to manage it. Explore ways of avoiding unnecessary stress by learning to say 'no', taking control of your environment, avoiding the 'hot' topics, setting realistic goals, focusing on the positive and learning to forgive.

Dates:

Tuesday 17th September
Tuesday 21st January 2020
Tuesday 17th March 2020



Craft Workshop – Button Crafts

Come and design cards/pictures from buttons see what designs you can come up with.

Date/Time:

Friday 25th October, 10am – 12pm



6 week Sewing Workshop

12pm – 2pm

Our sewing workshops run for 6 weeks and are a great way to learn something new or to develop skills that you already have.

These workshops are always popular and numbers are restricted, so if you have not been before and would like to book you place, please give us a call on 01908 231703 or email us on mail@carersmiltonkeynes.org

Dates:

13th September – 18th October (weekly)



Nutrition Workshop: Stay Healthy With Nutrition in the New Year

In this relaxed and friendly workshop with Felicia Jones of stresslessliving.co.uk we'll be looking at what foods we can eat that will help us to stay healthy with nutrition in 2020. To book a place, please contact 01908 231703 or mail@carersmiltonkeynes.org

Date/Time:

Thursday 5th December, 10am – 12pm



Talk to Tollers – Legal Advice Clinic

(by appointment only)

Do you have a burning question about Wills or Powers of Attorney? Want to know more about care funding or how best to protect vulnerable loved ones? Would you like to be able to support your vulnerable loved ones by managing their finances for them? Tollers Solicitors are on hand to listen and advise on your circumstances at a free and private 1:1 advice meeting at Margaret Powell House.

Tollers specialise in law for the vulnerable and for the elderly and can advise on issues such as Deputyships, Powers of Attorney, Mental Capacity, Care Funding, Wills, Trusts and Probate. Make the most of this opportunity to access free legal advice.

Appointments will be on the second Friday of each month starting from Friday 13th September.

There are 5 appointment slots and all slots are for 20 minutes each. The first appointment will be 9.30am and the final appointment will be at 10.50am.

If you would like to book an appointment, please call us on 01908 231703 or email us: mail@carersmiltonkeynes.org

Autumn Puzzle Page

See back of magazine for all puzzle answers



L X V W B H H E D G E H O G W
 L W P U O G A E S E V A E L O
 A W O E J R C R Q W H M R Y L
 W L F S G I C B V B Q D E Q L
 H J E O D N X E X E G D E R E
 L K P U G U A E R N S V Y D Y
 N L O I T G H R R A I T N X L
 S U I A C T Y M O Z C A G F A
 S S L E R R I U Q S L S P A N
 G R K E F A F S U D A O U B O
 T Q E W V X U N O U Z T M R S
 O S L I M F R O J Z U K P O A
 M A P L E O W X Y M S L K W E
 O C V X C G E O N H N R I N S
 G K L A J E W F Q B J Q N M P

- Acorn
- Autumn
- Brown
- Deciduous
- Foggy
- Fox
- Harvest
- Hedgehog
- Leaves
- Maple
- Orange
- Owl
- Pumpkin
- Red
- Scarecrow
- Seasonal
- Squirrels
- Trees
- Woodland
- Yellow

Word Ladder

Make your way from TREE to FALL by changing just one letter on each step, making a new word.

T R E E

□ □ □ □

Costs nothing

□ □ □ □

To worry

□ □ □ □

Something to walk on

□ □ □ □

Craft material made of matted fibres

□ □ □ □

Knocked down

F A L L

					7	5		
7			1				4	
5						2		
		1	3	9				8
3			7	8	6			4
8				4	1	7		
		8						9
	5				3			1
		4	6					

Fundraising Thank You Wall

Thank You

Carers MK is one of Global's Make Some Noise Campaign's Charity of the Year! Throughout the year, Global (who own radio stations such as Heart, Capital and Classic) will be helping to raise money and awareness for small charities around the UK.

Carers MK will be working closely with Global, starting with a Social Media Training Day at Global HQ in London and recorded interviews with our staff and young carers.

Keep an eye out on our website and social media for more information and how you can help raise money for Carers MK.



£1,364

Santander nominated Carers MK to benefit from the Dress Down Day. As part of this they also invited us to come along and hold a bake sale, samosa sale and a raffle. Thank you to everyone who helped raise £1,364 on the day. Thank you to Craig for organising the Dress Down Day and inviting Carers MK to come along, and thank you to Craig and Jordan from Santander for helping us on the day.



£170

Thank you Shirley for raising £170 at the Jalori Quiz Night



£15,000

A huge thank you to the Masonic Charitable Foundation for the award of £15,000. This is gratefully received as this grant will help Carers MK to continue providing vital support to unpaid carers in Milton Keynes and increase and improve the support given to older carers, specifically carers aged 75 and older.



£205

Thank you to Parkside Medical Centre for raising £205 for Carers MK at your Charity Variety Evening!

Young Carers MK News



Youth Club



As youth club is divided by school year groups we will update all members and move them to different groups accordingly for the start of the new school year in September. Don't worry we will tell you the group that your child is in and for some of you this may involve changing days but it will be a great chance to meet more people and make new friends. Some of you will have no change. Look out for the emails and letters from the end of July and you will still receive a text reminder before your youth club date.

More update emails and letters will be sent out to update our database and renew youth club consent in September – please return these so we can ensure we have all your correct information.

A reminder to all that youth club is a social event for your child and we would love to see them there. If you do not have a valid consent form you will not get a reminder for club. If you need a new form just ask! Your child does not have to attend every session every time but rather as and when they want to. If transport is stopping your child from going to club then please let us know, we are very low on volunteer drivers but will always help where we can and we will rotate transport so if we cannot help on one date for club we should be able to help on the next date.

Sibshop



During the May Half Term, we ran our Sibshop for ASD and ADHD. These workshops are available in the Young Carers service to support children and young people caring for a sibling with an ASD or ADHD diagnosis. During the workshop, we explore and share what these diagnoses look like, and, more importantly, how they differ from one person to the next. It was brilliant to hear young carers discussing openly about their experiences and learning from one another and the activities that we had prepared. Our primary school group particularly enjoyed fizzing up their water bottles and spraying them everywhere!



Volunteers

Do you know anyone that can give their time to provide transport for youth clubs and/or help run activities at club? We have a limited number of volunteers and therefore cannot always help those that need transport. Everyone who becomes a volunteer will need to go through a volunteer registration process which involves completing a DBS check and obtaining references. Please contact our office on **01908 231703** for further information on becoming a volunteer for Young Carers MK.



Staff Changes

Some of you may have felt some disruption lately with clubs cancelled, we apologise. The Young Carers team are going through a change with staff moving about in different roles and we are sadly saying goodbye to Debbie. Debbie will very much be missed within the team and I am sure by many of you that have been fortunate to meet her and receive her support. We wish Debbie all the happiness in her journey forward.

The rest of the team are working hard to ease as much disruption as we can and we will try to deliver the best service that we can. We would ask for your patience while the change happens and if in doubt or if you have any questions – contact us!

Boni Tea Party



Boni is the current Miss Divine, which is a pageant contest empowering women. Boni has done a lot of local work within Milton Keynes to support other charities, including us! Boni invited six young carers on a shopping day and afternoon tea experience at Chicheley Hall. The whole experience was incredible, the young carers expressed how it was the best day of their life and wanted to do it all over again. We want to thank Boni for choosing our charity to work with, it truly was an incredible experience which our young carers will cherish!



Quote of the Quarter

“Smiling is a wonderful way to get a boost of happiness. The next time life presents you with a challenging situation, take a deep breath and smile.”

Morris Pratt
The Secret of Positive Thinking

School Drop Ins

If your child is moving onto secondary school going into year 7, please be aware that the Young Carers team do school drop ins to all secondary schools (mainstream) within MK. The drop ins are done within school at an agreed time and students are then permitted to see a support worker for approximately 10 minutes just to chat about how they are feeling and any issues they want to discuss. If you wish your child to be seen at a school drop in, please contact our office on **01908 231703** and we will add them to the list.

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Cadbury World Activity

The young carers enjoyed their trip to Cadbury World where they learnt about the Quaker ethics of the Cadbury family and how the Bournville Village came to be built, travel back in time to the recreation of Victorian Bull Street where the Cadbury business began and find out how popular Cadbury brands are made, including Creme Egg, Buttons and Roses.



The young carers had fun learning how Cadbury chocolate was made as one the chocolatiers guided them through the traditional chocolate making technique of tempering. The young carers had a go for themselves and practiced their piping skills at the demonstration tables.

The young carers experienced the 4D cinema experience which allowed them to ride the Crunchie rollercoaster and dive into liquid Cadbury Dairy Milk and got the opportunity to step in one of the Beanmobiles and enjoy a gentle ride through a chocolate wonderland full of familiar characters.



A personal reflection from a young adult carer

Hi, my name is Terri, I am 22 years old. I became part of adult carers in 2014/2015 as I am my Mum's carer and I have been caring for my Mum for about four years.

Before I was a carer I was working but I had a work injury which meant I couldn't work anymore so I decided to be my Mum's full time carer. At that time I didn't want to leave the house and spent most of my time just sitting in my room. I was feeling that I wouldn't be able to do anything else apart from care for my Mum.

Then I was told about the new Young Adult Carers service and Debbie came out to explain it to me and my Mum, and I joined. I spoke to the support worker and told her that I would love to do my Level 3 in childcare, she said she would speak to college and see if that's a possibility. Then we went to college to meet a lady who told me about the course and said unless I could do my English and Maths again I wouldn't get on the course. My support worker asked about other ways as she knew I would struggle with Maths and English as I have a mild learning disability. College said I could do the course if I had a placement that would be willing to take me on.

My support worker contact Slated Row, which is a special school, as I really wanted to work with disabled children. They invited us in for an interview and I have been working there since July 2018 for three days a week while I get my qualification.

Since I started doing my Level 3 work at college, I feel less anxious as I am getting out of the house more. I am enjoying what I am doing, I feel happier and my confidence has grown. Since I started talking regularly to my support worker during my one-to-one sessions I have realised that it is good to talk and now I can talk to others about how I feel. Before I felt closed off and didn't trust anyone.

I am hoping that I will pass my Level 3 and go on to do a Level 4 and continue my career journey in a special school setting. My caring role has decreased because now I am out doing what I love and Mum has a social worker who is trying to help us sort out more appropriate housing.

Working through my problems with my support worker has meant that I can now live a normal life and achieve my goals and care for my Mum with help.



CarersMK

Dedicated to supporting carers

01908 231703
mail@carersmiltonkeynes.org

Margaret Powell House
439 Midsummer Boulevard
Central Milton Keynes
MK9 3BN

Carers MK: carersmiltonkeynes.org
Young Carers MK: youngcarersmk.org

Registered Charity No. 1116804; Company Registration No. 05577393

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Word ladder: TREE > free > fret > feet > felt > fell > FALL