

First parliamentary inquiry into young carers

The first-ever parliamentary inquiry into young carers has revealed a lack of support is having a devastating impact on their life opportunities.

An inquiry by the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Young Carers and Young Adult Carers, supported by national charity Carers Trust, has uncovered alarming evidence showing 15,000 children, including 3,000 aged just five to nine, spend 50 hours or more a week looking after family members because of illness, disability or addiction.

There are an estimated one million young carers in the UK and the time they spend caring can lead to them falling behind at school and damage their life opportunities. Yet, despite mounting evidence showing the impact of their caring role, little has been done to improve support over the years.

The inquiry heard some are being left to cope alone for ten years before being identified, while evidence to the inquiry showed the average waiting time to get support is three years.

The inquiry also heard:

- There are significant waiting lists for assessments and support in some areas with services struggling to meet demand
- Being a young carer has a knock-on effect on school attainment and attendance, with young carers missing 27 school days per year on average
- Young adult carers are substantially (38%) less likely to achieve a university degree than their peers without a caring role
- Young adult carers are less likely to be employed than their peers without a caring role
- Young people with caring responsibilities have a higher prevalence of self-harm. Of children who do self-harm, young carers are twice as likely to attempt to take their own life than non-carers.

The report recommends the urgent introduction of a cross-government national carers strategy, including a properly resourced action plan for young carers and young adult carers. The government should



"BEING A YOUNG CARER, YOU HAVE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN YOUR FUTURE AND THE FUTURE OF THE PERSON YOU CARE FOR."

INQUIRY INTO THE LIFE OPPORTUNITIES OF YOUNG CARERS AND YOUNG ADULT CARERS
NOVEMBER 2023

also work with young carers and young adult carers on immediate plans to improve early identification, increase access to support and reduce the number of young people providing excessive levels of care.

In this edition:

- ➡ New funding for Carer Wellbeing Support
- ➡ How to manage low mood as a carer
- ➡ Lasting power of attorney
- ➡ New Carers Support Group

From our CEO



It is with mixed emotions that I find myself writing this introduction to the Spring edition of Carers News.

As some of you will know, I am stepping down as the CEO of Carers Support Centre and retiring after more than two decades in the voluntary sector. The sadness I feel is tempered by an overwhelming sense of pride as I reflect on the remarkable journey we've undertaken together over the past four years. Leading this organisation has been a privilege, and I am proud of all that our dedicated team has achieved, both during and before my time here.

In the face of some of the most challenging years, our team has consistently risen to every occasion, driven by a shared commitment to providing the very best support for carers. I have been continually impressed by their unwavering resolve and passion for our cause, a spirit that shone particularly brightly during the trying times of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Similarly, we witnessed the coming together of partners across the voluntary and statutory sectors like never before, ensuring that the most vulnerable were supported throughout those dark days.

This has been an extremely difficult decision for me to make but one that has been made slightly easier by the knowledge that I will be leaving behind a charity in good health; an outstanding team, a committed board, a new website, a number of new services, all underpinned by an enduring passion for supporting carers.

As I step back, I am confident that Carers Support Centre will continue to flourish and make a meaningful impact on the lives of carers across Bristol and South Gloucestershire. I extend my deepest gratitude to each and every one of you who has been part of this

journey, and I look forward to following the continued success and growth of the organisation.

As I write this, the Board of Trustees are in the middle of the recruitment process for my successor. Once completed they will communicate to carers and partners via e-bulletins and the website. The new CEO will introduce themselves fully in the next edition of Carers News.

Advocating for investment in the caring economy

I was delighted to see us joining with a number of other partners in endorsing the Bristol Women's Voice campaign, a cause that advocates for investment in the caring economy. As you'll read later, on page 6, Susy Giullari, our Policy Engagement Lead, talks about how this relates to carers.

While our primary focus remains on providing help and support to carers, it's important that we, be that individually or with other partners, also shine a light on those areas where inequalities persist, and support falls short. Our engagement in initiatives like the Bristol Women's Voice campaign exemplifies our commitment to advocating for meaningful change.

By standing together, we amplify our voice and impact, contributing to building a society that values and supports those who dedicate their lives to caring for others.

Perseverance pays off!

We were very disappointed last year to have had to close our counselling and befriending services due to the lack of ongoing funding. Since then, our team has continued working diligently behind the scenes, submitting various funding bids to revive these crucial services.

After a thorough review and strategic remodelling of the services we offer, I am delighted that we have successfully secured funding to launch a new and improved service. Karen Hurley, our Adult Carer Services Manager explains more, on page 3.



Tim Poole



Trustee view

Graham Hunt is the latest addition to our Trustee Board. Here Graham talks about why he joined Carers Support Centre and what caring means to him.

My grandfather was a carer, he just wasn't aware of the name – it was what he did. My cousin is a carer – he does know the name and he, too, does a brilliant job. Each has shown me the commitment, love, stresses and strains that caring involves - that so many carers are experiencing. I admire all carers: I hope you are proud of yourselves because you really should be.

I first became trustee of a carers' charity 35 years ago (SG Crossroads coincidentally also operated from The Vassall Centre), leaving only when business commitments prevented me giving the time and attention it deserved. Since then, in business and outside interests, I've tried to provide some support for carers young and older.

I joined Carers Support Centre as a Trustee in September 2023 to further this commitment, aiming to use business, charity and other experiences to help Carers Support Centre further its mission.

Why Carers Support Centre? I have known of Carers Support Centre for many years and been impressed by what I have heard. It is important that there are people who speak up for carers – Carers Support Centre does. It is important that there is someone that carers can talk to for help, advice and support – Carers Support Centre provides that. It is important that there is somebody to listen – Carers Support Centre listens. But Carers Support Centre does so much more.

The aftermath of Covid, inflation, the economic environment all make life harder for many people, businesses, and charities. Carers Support Centre remains well funded (more is always welcome – there is so much to do!) and well established. I aim to help keep it that way – hopefully to help build it further.

Carers Support Centre has a great team (thanks to all of you for making me feel welcome). Since joining I have been impressed with the sheer range of what Carers Support Centre achieves, the extent of the collective knowledge and experiences and the innovation that has gone into developing the services. I admire the way in which help is provided and for the fact that amongst the serious work the team does they can still create a positive, fun environment.

In my opening paragraph I said carers should be proud of themselves. The Carers Support Centre team should each be proud of themselves as well. I could not have joined a better group of people!

New funding for Carer Wellbeing Support

We recognise the importance of looking after your own physical and mental health as well as those you care for.



From what we hear from carers every day, we know that whilst caring can be rewarding it can often also have a negative impact on people's health and wellbeing. Supporting you to look after and improve your health and wellbeing is something we are really committed and passionate about and is reflected in the services we provide.

Last year we asked for your help in completing a survey about your health and wellbeing and your views on what services should look like, as part of the work we were doing to secure continued funding for our counselling and befriending services. We wanted to say a huge thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the surveys and was involved in follow up focus groups.

With the help of your feedback, we are really excited to announce that we have secured a further three years funding for our **counselling service** and one year's funding to develop a slightly different type of **befriending service** too.

The counselling service will continue to be run remotely via Zoom or phone, although we will also be piloting a small amount of face-to-face counselling too, following your feedback. The service is available to any carer aged 18 and over and details of how to access the service will be shared soon.

Our befriending service will have a slightly different look – this will be for carers aged 50 and over in South Gloucestershire and, in addition to providing befriending support, we will link carers into other community-based support and 'match' carers together when the service ends, for ongoing peer support. The service will start by April and again further details will be shared very soon.

Both our counselling and befriending services will complement our existing Walk and Talk service (see page 15), providing holistic wellbeing support for carers to improve their physical and mental health.

New staff

Dougal Abbott is our new Communications and Fundraising Administrator. He previously worked in marketing and the arts and loves helping others.



Naomi Lock has joined as a Young Carers Support Worker following lots of experience working with children. Naomi has personal experience as a young carer and hopes her experience can help other young carers feel understood.



Lisa Furness Has also just joined the Young Carers team as a sessional worker helping with assessments and activities.

Read more about Naomi and Lisa on page 12.



Noticeboard

Birthday Buses – Free travel during the whole of your birthday month.

If you live in the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority, you will receive free bus travel throughout your birthday month, whether you're planning a birthday adventure, or just need to get to the office

or shops. It's important to apply as soon as possible, at least seven days before the first day of your birthday month, although you can still apply in your birthday month right up to the 15th and get a pass for the rest of that month. [🌐 birthdaybus.co.uk/register](https://www.birthdaybus.co.uk/register)



The Bristol Community Toilet Scheme

Knowing where toilet facilities are located is often a worry for carers when they are planning a trip out with the person they care for. The Bristol City Council Community Toilet Scheme allows members of the public to use the toilet facilities in a range of approved local businesses and other organisations during their opening hours.

This service is made available for free and without any expectation that users will purchase goods or services. There are over 150 toilets available to use across the city. They are toilets that cafes, shops, bars, museums, libraries and others have agreed the public can use without needing to buy anything. Look out for the sign. Never ever be ashamed of asking where the nearest toilet is - we all need them.

For details and a map of public toilets across the city: [🌐 tinyurl.com/4p83v2wu](https://tinyurl.com/4p83v2wu)



Lottery news

Lucky winners

- **Aug** - M Crump, I Bisp, J Quartly, R Whale, D Byrne
- **Sep** - M Crump, J Griffin, L Griffin, R Howes, J Hayes
- **Oct** - S Duffett, M Grace, M Crump, R Hussey, J Hayes
- **Nov** - J Quartly, S Wilson, M Day, M Grace, R Hussey

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](https://tinyurl.com/mw33d45s)

📞 0117 939 2562

Bristol Food Clubs

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

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

To become a member, you must live or work within 15 minutes of a club. No referral to a food club is necessary. You can just go along to your nearest club to complete a very short application form.

Club	Day	Address
Broomhill	Tuesdays 12.30 – 2.30 pm	St Peter's Methodist Church, 170 Allison Rd, Brislington BS4 4NZ
St Pauls	Wednesdays 9.00 – 11.00 am	Children's Centre Family Hub Little Bishop Street, St Paul's BS2 9JF
Redcliffe	Wednesday 1.00 – 2.30 pm	Faithspace, Prewett Street BS1 6PB
Inns Court	Thursday 1.00 – 3.00 pm and Friday 1.30 – 2.30 pm	Community and Family Centre, 1 Marshall Walk, Bristol BS4 1TR
Oldbury Court	Thursday 1.00 – 3.00 pm	Children's Centre Frenchay Rd, Bristol BS16 2QS
Lockleaze	Friday 9.00 – 11.30 am	The Vench Romney Ave, Lockleaze, Bristol BS7 9TB
Speedwell	Friday 12.30 – 2.30 pm	Speedwell Methodist Church, Bristol, BS15 1ES

We appreciate your support

Thank you to everyone who has generously donated funds in the last few months to help support carers including:

- ALF Revenue Fund and Quartet Community Foundation
- Carers Trust
- The Clifford Charity Oxford
- Denman Charitable Trust
- The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust
- Hays Travel Foundation
- The Henry Smith Charity
- John James Bristol Foundation
- St Monica Trust
- St Stephen and St James Trust

Do you care for someone with Multiple Sclerosis?

The MS Society helpline has now reopened.

For advice and support
☎️ **0808 800 8000**.

No one has to face MS alone.



Living after loss

Are you or is someone you know experiencing a bereavement of family, friend or pet? Or a loss such as redundancy, health problems, retirement or relationship breakdown?

Living after Loss is a small friendly group that meets on alternate Friday mornings between 11.00 am and 12.00 noon, in the Parish Room, St Mary's, Fishponds.

For further information please contact Lizzie on
☎️ **0117 965 0856**.

Bristol Parent Carers Wellbeing Grants for parent carers in Bristol

The Disabled Children's Service is again accepting applications for Carer's Wellbeing Grants.

A Carer's Wellbeing Grant is a one-off payment of up to £300. It is for parent carers of disabled children up to 18 living within the Bristol Local Authority.

You can use it to pay for things that improve and support your health and wellbeing, to help you continue caring for a child or young person with a disability.

You can get more information and apply for a Carer's Wellbeing Grant on the Bristol Local Offer website: tinyurl.com/p9ju8pf6



Free fire safety visits

Did you know that you or the person you care for might be entitled to a free Home Fire Safety Visit?

Avon Fire and Rescue offers visits to those who are most vulnerable, such as those who:

- are aged 65 years or over
- have sight and/or hearing loss
- have mobility concerns
- have mental health concerns
- have memory concerns
- are unable to escape unaided if there is a fire
- are a family with children under the age of 5 years.

Find out more and request a visit by calling ☎️ **0117 926 2061** or by visiting tinyurl.com/ycxr7s62



Carers Survey

Carers Trust has published its latest adult carer report based on a survey of over 3,400 unpaid carers.

The survey of unpaid carers from across the UK lays bare how an underfunded and broken social care system is placing unsustainable pressure on unpaid carers who are experiencing significant increases in the amount of time they need to care for sick and disabled relatives.

Even more significantly, the survey highlighted alarming inequalities between different groups of carers as to the level of support they can access. Unpaid carers from ethnic minority and LGB+ communities, as well as older carers and female carers, reported greater difficulty in finding and accessing support.

Read the full report at tinyurl.com/vx6hny2m



Library service for carers

Help is at hand from the Bristol Home Library Service (HLS) for anyone over 18 living in Bristol who is unable to get to their local library for reasons of age, disability or due to their caring responsibilities.

The HLS has DBS-checked volunteers in most parts of the city who will be happy to come around to your house and keep your book pile topped up. They will fetch you a specific book you want or make suggestions.

The free service is offered monthly and most of the volunteers have time to stop for a chat when they visit.

If you'd like to use HLS's service get in contact with Service Manager, Ken Luxton, on ☎ **07714 898 558**

Carers in **South Gloucestershire** should speak to their local library and ask library staff to arrange for a volunteer to visit you.

Supporting Bristol Women's Voice: A Call to Invest in the Caring Economy

We proudly stand with Bristol Women's Voice and their campaign advocating for investment in the caring economy.

Value Caring Economy for Carers

We join an alliance of diverse organisations across Bristol, including Bristol Black Carers, Bristol Women in Business, Bristol Women's Commission, Bristol Women's Voice, Chinese Community Wellbeing Society, Co-Produce Care, March of the Mummies Bristol, West of England for Independent Living and Women's Budget Group.

Amplifying Bristol Women's Voice: The Caring Economy Manifesto

This campaign is a call to action, directed towards employers, the West of England Combined Authority (WECA), Bristol City Council, and national government bodies. This campaign aims to improve life for carers in many vital areas such as public services,

training, skills development, transport, environmental sustainability, and addressing poverty and discrimination.

In the lead-up to the 2024 local and national elections, the campaign champions the voices of women, caregivers, care workers, and those who may require care. We aim to spotlight these critical concerns before policymakers, employers, and health and social care providers by posing fundamental questions:

- What value have you placed on the caring economy?
- Where is care on your priority list for the future?
- What can you do to support a caring economy?
- How will you ensure this commitment becomes a reality?

How You Can Support

Join us in supporting Bristol Women's Voice's campaign:

- Spread Awareness: Share their message on social media and raise awareness.
- Get Involved: Volunteer your time and efforts to contribute to the campaign.

- Stand with Us: Sign up to become a supporter of this transformative movement by visiting bit.ly/3vxPjne.
- Your participation, no matter how small, plays a pivotal role in driving this collective call for change. Together, we can create a society that values and uplifts carers, care workers, and those who may require care.

You can read more about the campaign, and the three manifestos by visiting Bristol Women's Voice website at tinyurl.com/53992brn.

Join us in championing this vital initiative because caring is everybody's business.



#ValueCaringEconomy

For carers



Tell us if your contact details change

To update your contact details, please email @ info@carerssupportcentre.org.uk or call ☎ **0117 939 2562**.

Also, if you can receive this newsletter by email, please let us know, as this helps reduce our costs.

Did you know...?

Bristol Audiology Department's Hearing Impaired Support Scheme carry out home visits to hearing aid wearers within the Bristol NHS area who have limited mobility.

Volunteers can make one-off visits to give practical advice or carry out minor repairs or arrange regular maintenance visits.

You can arrange a home visit by contacting the Bristol Audiology department giving your name, address and telephone number and or email address.

@ audiology.dept@uhbw.nhs.uk

☎ **0117 3425854**

(voice, Typetalk, NGT text relay)

Carers Voice

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



Carers Rights Day 2023

Our carers events provide opportunities for you to meet local decision-makers and have your say, be with other carers, and find out information to help you in your caring role.

One of our main events is on Carers Rights Day, a national campaign to raise awareness about carers and their rights. For Carers Rights Day 2023, we held a hybrid event at the Vassall Centre, attended by 123 people, 93 of whom were carers.

At Carers Support Centre we believe in co-producing, which means bringing carers, professionals supporting carers and local decision makers together to share information, experience and ideas.

The Integrated Care System (NHS) Discharge to Assess transformation programme team were keen to come back and run a 'you said, we did' session at our Carers Rights Day event. On their previous visit, during Carers Week last June, the feedback you gave made them realise that they need to assess impact on carers as well as patients. The team presented their latest in a breakout session which proved to be highly popular with carers.

Bristol and South Gloucestershire Councils ran a workshop to ask your feedback on their self-assessments for the Care Quality Commissions. They were really surprised by the huge interest, and we found that

the room which we allocated to the two workshops was not big enough all those who wanted to attend. We apologise to those that told us they were not able to fully participate as a result, and we will do our best to hire bigger rooms next time!



Equally popular was a workshop by our Hospital Carer Liaison team about hospital support in collaboration with NBT Trust Patience experience team. The workshop included information on the hospital carers charter, Patient Advice and Liaison service and the carers support scheme, all of which carers said that they found extremely useful.

Feedback also showed that one of the main aims of carer events - meeting and socialising with other carers - was met, "It was lovely to have some time for me to relax and enjoy lunch, massage, mindfulness. Good to get some info and support from others."

We know, from previous evaluations, how important physical and mental health is for carers. We were therefore delighted to be able to offer free massages to carers during the day, as well as an online mindfulness group session with Mindful Life, both of which were very well received.

With inclusivity of all carers another key value of Carers Support Centre, we were happy to work with the Chinese Wellbeing Society to provide interpreting in Cantonese during the event. This enabled several Cantonese speaking carers to attend.

Hope to see you all at our next carers event to celebrate Carers Week in June!

CQC quality assurance of adult social care in your area

Carers Voice offers you the opportunity to give your feedback to local and national consultations on proposed plans, regulations, services and policies that affect carers.

Bristol and South Gloucestershire Councils are soon to be assessed by the independent regulator of health and social care in England, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), on the quality of their adult social care.

During the assessments, the CQC will consider evidence including the experiences of adult and young carers. The evidence will be gathered by the CQC through independent interviews, focus groups and surveys both with carers themselves and with organisations that support carers, like us at Carers Support Centre.

This is an excellent opportunity for you to feedback your experience of adult social care to enact change and demand improvement of the quality of social care, including support for carers. You can give your feedback to the CQC directly:

<https://bit.ly/48BL3vg>

You can get help on the phone if it's hard for you to do things online.

03000 616 161

How to manage low mood as a carer

In this blog, our friends at PMAC talk about how carers can avoid and cope with low moods.

Meeting your fundamental needs: prioritising sleep, nutrition, hydration, sunlight and exercise

In the demanding role of a carer, it can be easy to neglect your own needs. It's important to look after your own health and wellbeing - doing so is beneficial for you, and also for those you care for. Ensuring that you meet your fundamental needs - sleep, nutrition, hydration, sunlight, and exercise - can significantly help manage a low mood.

Prioritising sleep is essential as it directly affects your mental and emotional health. Lack of sleep can significantly worsen feelings of stress, anxiety, and depression. Establishing a regular sleep routine that involves going to bed and waking up at the same times each day can help. Create a calm and quiet sleep environment and consider relaxation exercises before bedtime.

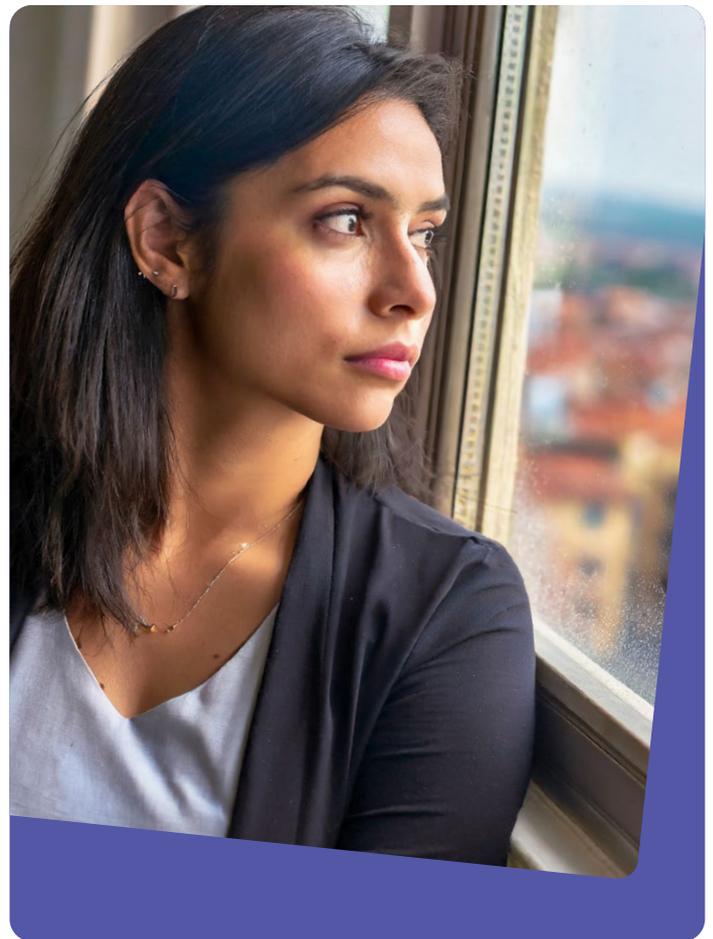
When it comes to nutrition, a balanced diet is key to keeping yourself well. Consuming foods high in vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants (such as blueberries, broccoli, spinach, apples) can boost your mood and energy levels.

Hydration also plays an essential role in maintaining your overall health. Not only does it help with digestion, but it also helps you concentrate and keeps your brain functioning optimally.

Getting regular exposure to sunlight is another essential factor to consider. Sunlight is a natural source of Vitamin D, which can aid in uplifting your mood. Try to spend some time outdoors each day, like a walk in the park.

Last but not least, regular exercise is a powerful mood booster. You don't need to run a marathon or engage in intense workouts. Activities including walking, gardening, or yoga can do wonders to uplift your mood. Exercising can trigger the release of endorphins, what's known as the body's feelgood chemicals, which can reduce feelings of stress and depression.

Remember that as a carer, your wellbeing matters too. Prioritising these fundamental needs is not an act of selfishness, but an essential part of providing the best care possible. By keeping yourself healthy and content, you'll be more equipped to support others.



Journalling for low mood

Journalling - writing your thoughts and feelings down - can be a powerful tool for managing low mood, especially for those caring for others. When immersed in a caring role, it's easy to neglect your own mental wellbeing. Journalling can offer a private, non-judgemental space for you to safely express your emotions and concerns, helping to alleviate the burden of low mood.

To get started, all you will need is a notebook or a digital diary. There's no right or wrong way to journal - what matters is creating a routine that works for you. You may find that you prefer to write in the morning when your mind is fresh, or perhaps in the evening to unwind from the day's challenges.



But what do you write about? People often start by expressing how you're feeling. Are you anxious, overwhelmed, tired? Acknowledging your feelings can be a liberating first step towards managing them. You could find it helpful to write about your daily experiences as a carer. For example, the challenges you face, and the successes you've had, however small they might seem.

Journalling also allows for self-reflection. When looking back on your entries, you can start to recognise patterns in your mood and identify triggers for low mood. By recognising these patterns, you can begin to get a better understanding of your emotional forecast. This can help you implement changes that support your wellbeing.

Lastly, remember that journalling is for you and you alone. Don't worry about spelling, grammar, or making your entries 'readable'. It's a space for you to be honest and unfiltered. It's often through this honesty that people can find clarity, resilience, and a way forward in managing our mental health.

So, why not grab a pen, or open a new document on your computer, and start your journalling journey today? It may prove to be a valuable ally in your pursuit to manage low mood as a carer.

Pleasant Activity Scheduling

Taking care of others, whilst a fulfilling task, can be quite taxing - often leading to a dip in mood or sometimes even burnout. This is why we highly recommend the practice of 'Pleasant Activity Scheduling'. This tool has proven to be exceptionally beneficial in maintaining mental well-being.

Pleasant Activity Scheduling is an evidence-based technique, primarily used in cognitive behavioural therapy. It involves proactively scheduling time for activities that bring joy, relaxation, and satisfaction. This technique is not just about taking a break but about consciously devoting time to things that nourish your emotional well-being.

It's an exercise of self-care, a reminder to pay attention to your own needs amidst the rush of caring for others. It could be as simple as reading a book, taking a walk in the park, practicing yoga, or even savouring a cup of tea in solitude. The key is consistency and making it a part of your routine.

We understand that as a carer, your schedule might already be packed. However, it's essential to remember that caring for yourself is not a luxury but a necessity. It's similar to the safety briefing on flights - you need to secure your own oxygen mask before helping others.

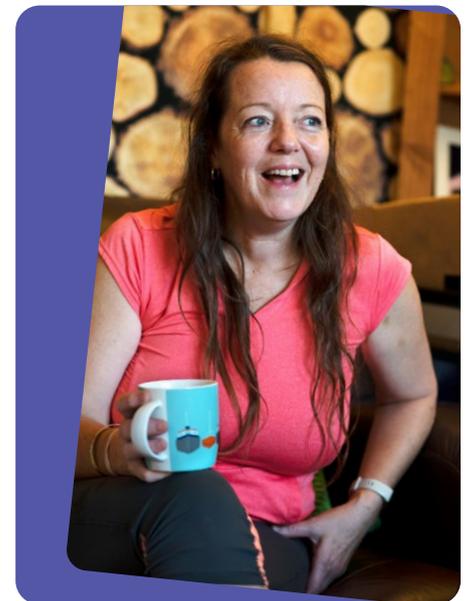
With proper planning and realignment of priorities, this pleasant activity scheduling can become a healthy habit. Not only can it alleviate instances of low mood, but it can also increase resilience, enhance job satisfaction, and improve overall mental health.

It's time to prioritise your wellbeing. A happier carer can provide better care. Remember, even the smallest steps towards self-care can make a significant difference. So why not start scheduling your 'pleasant activities' today?

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.

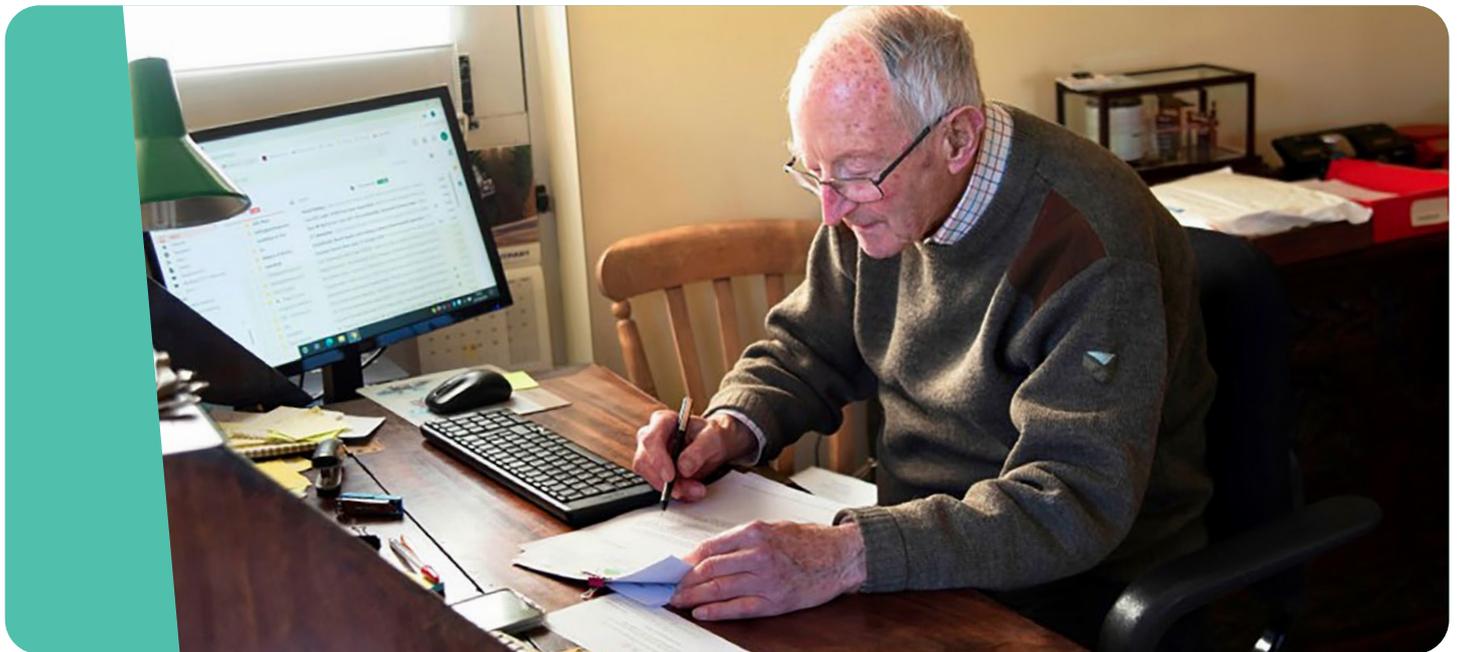
 [pmac.uk](https://www.pmac.uk)

 0330 828 5014



Lasting power of attorney

Having a lasting power of attorney (LPA) set up can be invaluable if someone loses their mental capacity and is unable to make their own decisions anymore.



It can give a person who knows them and who they trust the authority to act on their behalf on issues, such as paying their bills or deciding where they should live.

You might assume if you are a close relative of someone, are married, in a civil partnership, or living with a partner, that you have the right to make important decisions and take over the affairs of that person when they are no longer able to do it themselves.

However, this is not automatically the case and whilst it can be hard and painful to think about these things, it will save a lot of time and anxiety to plan.

All of us should consider who we trust to act in our best interests, should we ever become incapacitated, and how we can give them that legal authority. If there is nothing in place and you can no longer make or communicate your decisions, an official body such as the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) or the Court of Protection may appoint someone to act on your behalf.

Setting up a lasting power of attorney (LPA) is one way of having control over who can make decisions for you and can communicate your wishes and intentions. The person or persons you nominate are called 'attorneys'.

Things to consider:

- There are two types of LPA, one for making finance and property decisions and one for decisions about your health and care. They are applied for on separate forms.
- You can only create an LPA if you have the 'mental capacity' to do so and you haven't been put under any pressure to set it up. Having mental capacity means being able to make your own decisions and understand the consequences of those decisions. You should be given as much help as possible (this is called making reasonable adjustments) to make and communicate a decision before anyone assesses that you lack mental capacity.

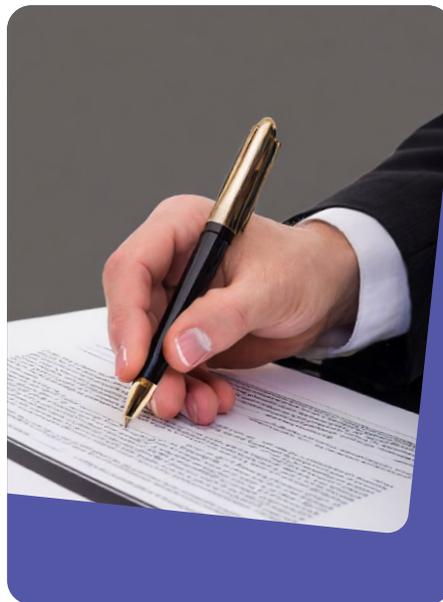
Case study

After her husband died, Pat became anxious about dealing with businesses such as banks, utility providers and the Department of Work and Pensions.

She decided to give power of attorney to her two children so they could deal with these companies on her behalf. But she stipulated that, if she was still able, she would still retain control of her own bank card and receive copies of her bank statements.

Pat and her children found a solicitor who spoke with Pat separately to check her understanding and consent. The solicitor then completed the paperwork according to her wishes.

- Could you fill out the forms yourself or ask someone to help you? Forms can be downloaded from the Office of the Public Guardian (tinyurl.com/ykdyayxp) or ordered by calling **0300 456 0300**. Alternatively, you can set up an LPA using the online service on GOV.UK website. There is step-by-step guidance available.
- It normally costs £82 to register each LPA but you can apply for a reduction if you are on a low income. Paying a solicitor to help with the forms makes the process more expensive but reduces the risk of making any mistakes.
- The LPA form needs to be signed by a 'certificate provider' – this is someone who confirms that you understand what the LPA is and that you haven't been put under any pressure. The certificate provider must either be someone you've known well for at least two years or a professional person, such as a doctor, social worker or solicitor. Certain people aren't allowed to be your certificate provider – including your partner or any other family members.
- An LPA isn't necessarily permanent. You can cancel it at any time while you have mental capacity by writing to your attorney or attorneys and the Office of the Public Guardian and advising them of your decision.



Lasting power of attorney for property and financial affairs

If you create this type of LPA, your attorney can make decisions about things like:

- paying your mortgage and bills
- dealing with pensions and benefits
- arranging repairs to your home or selling your home.

Your attorney will make decisions when you lose mental capacity but you can decide if you want them to take over before then. You can limit their authority by including specific instructions when you set up the LPA.

If, for example, someone goes to the bank for you, tries to change a subscription contract, or phones the Department of Work and Pensions, they are likely to be asked for proof of LPA. Whilst there may be alternative arrangements you can put in place, such as third-party mandate or appointeeship, an LPA is the most comprehensive and well recognised.

Lasting power of attorney for health and care

If you create this type of LPA, your attorney can make decisions about things like:

- where you live
- your medical treatment
- the care and support you receive
- who you have contact with.

Unlike an LPA for financial decisions, your attorney can only use this LPA if you no longer have mental capacity.

For many people, the first time their relative is asked about LPA for health and care, is when they go into hospital. This might be because the patient appears not to be able to make decisions or is too ill to communicate their decisions about treatment and plans for discharge. Without the LPA, close relatives may still be involved in discussions but the professionals will be guided by collective views, rather than what your relatives believe to be your wishes.

Young Carers



Welcome to Naomi and Lisa



Naomi started with us in December 2023

My name is Naomi, I have just started as a Young Carers Support Worker in the Bristol team.

My role is to support young carers and their

families across Bristol and help them gain access to support and services that are appropriate for them. I undertake young carer's assessments, work with young carers one-to-one and support them in group sessions.

I have previous experience working with children, mainly in schools, and also holiday clubs! I was also a young carer so I understand the juggle of managing school and work, maintaining a social life, and fulfilling a care role.

I'm hoping my experience can help other young carers feel understood and know they are not alone. I am so excited to be joining this fantastic team and to meet all the amazing young carers we support.



Lisa started in January 2024

Hi, I'm Lisa, and I've just joined the Young Carers team as a sessional worker helping with assessments and activities.

My background

is in youth, arts and culture and I have previously supported young people working in Creative Youth Network, managed National Citizens Programmes (for 16-19 years) in London, and working as a freelance photographer and events manager. I have also run exhibitions and creative events at the People's Republic of Stokes Croft.

In my spare time I'm an avid rugby fan and support Bristol Bears, made it to the World Cup in Japan in 2019 and spent two months in France following 2012 World Cup!

It's really excited to be joining the brilliant team here and helping with the great work they do.



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

New locality groups

The new young carers groups started running in October, these groups are open to any young carers, they do not have to be registered with us. We are running these in partnership with Creative Youth Network every other week in the following places:

- South Bristol: Every other Tuesdays 5.30-7.30pm at The Gatehouse, Hartcliffe
- North Bristol: Every other Wednesday 5.30-7.30pm at The Vench, Lockleaze
- Central and East Bristol: Every Tuesday 5.30-7.30pm at The Crypt, St Lukes Church, Barton Hill.

If it is difficult to attend due to transport, we can provide some help with this.

In South Gloucestershire we continue to run 13UP club for young carers registered with us at St Nicholas Church, Yate, 1.30-4.30pm on the last Saturday of the month. Over the past year they have taken part in chill out days - walk n talk sessions - arts n crafts - jewellery making - games sessions - first aid.



Helping Laila back into school

Laila* is a 14-year-old young carer who is living with her mother, her 10-year-old brother and her 6-year-old sister. Laila helps to care for her younger sister who has severe, non-verbal autism, epilepsy, hypermobility, learning difficulties and developmental delay; and her mum who suffers with fibromyalgia and mental ill-health.

When our support worker met the family, they were living in a one-bedroom flat that did not meet their needs and were waiting to get more appropriate accommodation through the council. Laila was also not attending school as she was struggling with the family housing situation and supporting her sister and mum.

Laila had become very isolated, she was not socialising, or spending any time at all away from home. As a result, she was missing out on education and becoming more anxious due to her isolation. Laila wanted to get support to help her return to school.

Our support worker was able to support the housing application and raise additional concerns. The housing situation deteriorated

and the family did have to go into emergency accommodation before they were placed into a permanent home in the summer and the family situation significantly improved. There was enough space for Laila and her brother to have their own rooms. This has significantly reduced the impact of the care role on Laila, providing her the space she needed to manage the balance of caring responsibilities.



Our support worker also contacted the school to discuss Laila's difficulties in school; the support she needed and the process for Laila returning. As Laila had not been in school for 6 months she would need to reapply for a place.

Once the family had moved into the permanent home Laila then felt able to engage with one-to-one support. These sessions helped Laila explore what she felt her barriers to education had been, and how she felt she might be able to change things on returning to school. With support Laila wrote a school plan, which she called 'Measures which may help me to manage y10'.

Laila also wrote a school statement, where she reflected on the negative impact of being out of education for so long. She recognised the impact on her mental health and the barriers of not attending school may present to her in the future. Laila also articulated that she needed to take responsibility to engage willingly with school.

Laila's statement was submitted following the application to return to school. In October, Laila heard that the application had been successful. When we told Laila that her application had been successful and she could return to her school, she was overjoyed. She told us she couldn't believe it, and she was so excited.

* Not her real name



Carers Emergency Card

Discount Scheme

As well as being used in an emergency to ensure the safety of the person you care for should something happen to you, the Carers Emergency Card can also be used to access a variety of discounts from businesses in and around Bristol and South Gloucestershire.

Longwell Records in Keynsham is the latest business to offer a discount to Carers Emergency Card holders. They stock new but mainly pre-loved vinyl, some CDs plus a selection of Longwell Records merchandise. They have a great music community and were runner up Best Small Shop UK 2018.

Owner Iain Aitchison says, 'Having been a carer myself, I know how incredibly difficult it can be caring for someone and I hope offering a discount to music lovers will help in some way.' Iain is offering a 10% discount on pre-loved vinyl and merchandise.

🌐 [longwellrecords.com](https://www.longwellrecords.com)

☎️ 07795 472 504

For more information on all discounts visit: 🌐 tinyurl.com/k2d3drz or call CarersLine on ☎️ 0117 965 2200 Please contact:

@ lisas@carerssupportcentre.org.uk if you know any other businesses that would be willing to offer a card discount.



To apply for a card:

Bristol Carers Emergency Card

Apply for this card if the person you care for pays Council Tax to Bristol City Council.

Apply online: 🌐 tinyurl.com/ybtf22bj and choose 'Emergency planning for carers' or call Care Direct at Bristol City Council: ☎️ 0117 922 2700

S. Glos Carers Emergency Card

Apply for this card if the person you care for pays Council Tax to South Gloucestershire Council. Visit: 🌐 tinyurl.com/498x7y8n or call CarersLine here at Carers Support Centre: ☎️ 0117 965 2200

Join our team as a Carers Emergency Card Discount Scheme Volunteer

Are you passionate about making a positive difference to the lives of carers and looking for a fulfilling community-based role? Would you enjoy the satisfaction of achieving your own goals and structure within a project? Would you like to make a meaningful impact?

If you're interested in general promotion, collaborating with local businesses and enabling carers to access valued discounts, this scheme has it all. If you have an engaging personality, strong communication skills, like getting out and about and enjoy speaking to people face to face, this could be the role for you.

Own transport & basic IT skills an advantage. Hours flexible.

If you're interested, please get in touch with Lisa:

☎️ 0117 939 2562

@ volunteering@carerssupportcentre.org.uk



Carers Support Groups

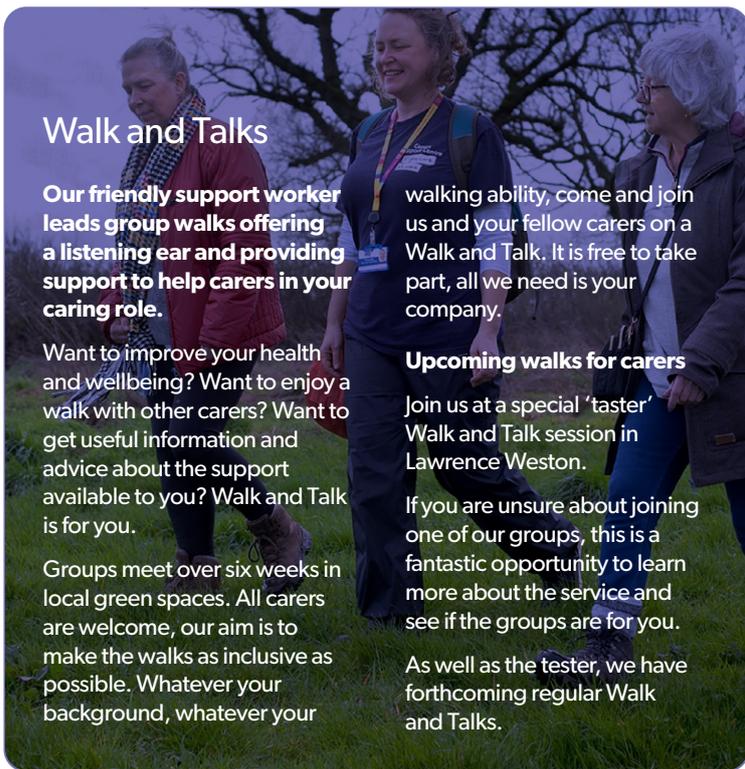
A safe, confidential space to meet with other carers face-to-face and online – to share information and support each other.

Please find details of our Carers Support Groups below. We are currently running a blend of in-person and online groups, to suit your caring situation. The list includes our new Carers Support Group which started in St. George, Bristol on 19 January.

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

📞 0117 965 2200
 @ carersline@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

Group	Venue	Times	March	April	May	June
Online Carers Support Group for Bristol and South Glos	Zoom	1pm – 2.30pm First Thurs	7th	4th	2nd	6th
Brislington Carers Group for carers of someone with dementia	St Peters Church, 170 Allison Road, Brislington, Bristol, BS4 4NZ	10.30am – 12.30pm First Wed	6th	3rd	1st	5th
Lawrence Weston	Lawrence Weston Farm Community Room, Saltmarsh Drive, Bristol, BS11 0NJ	2pm – 4pm Third Thurs	21st	18th	16th	20th
Hartcliffe	Dundry Room, Symes Building, Peterson Avenue, Hartcliffe, BS13 0BE	10am – 12pm Second Thurs	14th	11th	9th	13th
Hanham	Hanham Community Centre, 118-124 High St, Hanham, Bristol, BS15 3EJ	1.30pm – 3.30pm First Tues	5th	2nd	7th	4th
Kingswood	The Park Centre Kingswood, High Street, Bristol, BS15 4AR	2pm – 4pm Second Wed	13th	10th	8th	12th
Downend	Badminton Gardens, Beaufort Road, Bristol, BS16 6FG	2pm – 4pm Fourth Wed	27th	24th	22nd	26th
St George's	Crofts End Church, 1 Crofts End Road, St. George, Bristol, BS5 7UW	1.30pm-3.30pm Third Friday	15th	19th	17th	21st



Walk and Talks

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 walks for carers

Join us at a special 'taster' Walk and Talk session in Lawrence Weston.

If you are unsure about joining one of our groups, this is a fantastic opportunity to learn more about the service and see if the groups are for you.

As well as the tester, we have forthcoming regular Walk and Talks.

One-off Walks

Open to	Location	Date and Time
Carers (Taster session)	Lawrence Weston area	Tuesday 30 April, 1:30-3:00 pm
Carers (to celebrate Pride Month)	TBA	Tuesday 25 June, 6:00-7:30 pm

Walks

Open to	Location	Time	Start date
Carers	Chipping Sodbury	Thursdays 11:00-12:30 pm for 6 weeks	14 March
Carers and their dependents	TBA	Every Wednesday from 11:00-12:30 pm for 6 weeks	17 April
Carers	Lawrence Weston	Every Tuesday from 1:30-3:00 pm for 6 weeks	14 May
Carers in South Bristol	TBA	Every Thursday from 11:00-12:30 pm for 6 weeks	16 May

Next steps

To join in, please contact Stacey Vallis:

📞 07742 291073 @ 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 Spring 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