

Support for our unsung heroes: launch of our new website

Unpaid carers are the backbone of our communities.

You provide essential care to friends and family members who need assistance due to illness, disability, or ageing, but the journey of caregiving can often feel isolating and overwhelming. Recognising this need for support, we have launched a new website specifically aimed at assisting unpaid carers in their day-to-day challenges.

The newly designed website is a comprehensive resource hub tailored to meet the unique needs of unpaid carers. The platform provides a wealth of information, including practical advice, emotional support, and access to vital resources that can ease the burden of caregiving. Whether you are a seasoned carer or just beginning your journey, this website can serve as a valuable ally to contribute to you feeling valued and supported in your role.

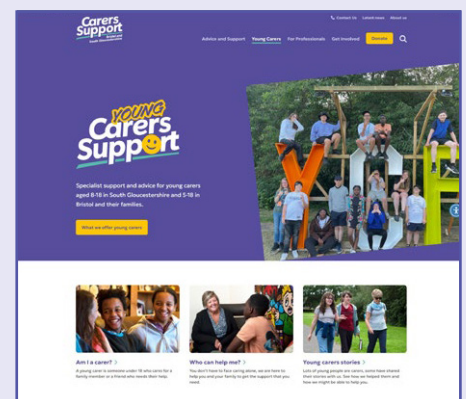
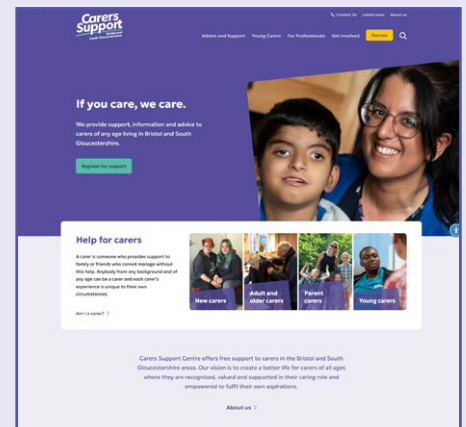
One of the standout features of the website is its user-friendly interface, making it easy for carers of all ages and skill levels to navigate. Visitors will find articles and guides covering a range of topics, from managing stress and finding respite care to understanding legal rights and accessing financial help.

We recognise that every carer's situation is unique, so the website includes personalised tools and resources adapted to meet individual needs. Whether you require information about specific health conditions or tips for balancing work and care responsibilities, the site caters to various scenarios, ensuring no carer feels left behind.

The website also provides information about local events and support networks to help carers engage with others in their community. This connectivity is essential for fostering relationships and promoting mental health, both of which are essential components of the caregiving journey.

The launch of Carers Support's new website is a significant step forward in recognising the invaluable contributions of unpaid carers. It offers support, resources, and a community for those who often work tirelessly behind the scenes. Every carer deserves access to tools that help them thrive; this website is here to ensure they do just that.

Visit the new site at carersbsg.org.uk



In this edition:

- ➡ Ministerial visit to Carers Support
- ➡ Louise's journey as an adopted Black carer
- ➡ Planning accessible day trips and holidays

From our CEO



We are excited to announce our rebranding, including a fresh name and new look, that reflects our commitment to empowering carers in our community. The new brand captures our dedication to providing resources, assistance, and advocacy to those of you who selflessly care for others. By adopting a modern identity we aim to make our support more accessible and recognisable, and ensure that you know you are not alone in your journey.

In conjunction with our new name, Carers Support, we have launched a revamped website (see front page) designed with the user experience in mind. The website features a clean, intuitive layout that makes it easier for carers and external partners alike to navigate our offerings. This online platform is a comprehensive resource hub for carers and professionals working with carers in Bristol and South Gloucestershire. It includes up-to-date information on all aspects of a caring life and important information about our services. We are committed to keeping our community informed and engaged, and the new site is a testament to that commitment.

Our rebranding reflects the evolution of our charity and our continued dedication to your welfare. We will continue to collaborate with external partners to enhance our impact and reach, and to foster a community where carers feel valued and supported.

We are thrilled to announce that we have received a generous grant from the National Lottery to fund and expand our Young Carers Voice project. This exciting opportunity marks a significant milestone in our ongoing mission to support young carers in our community, allowing their voices to be heard and their experiences validated.

Young carers often face unique challenges as they juggle their caregiving responsibilities alongside their education and personal lives. We are therefore immensely grateful to the National Lottery for recognising the importance of this project. This grant will allow us to amplify the voices of young carers, to ensure they are seen, heard and supported, and that they are able to influence decision-makers to improve how services recognise and support young carers. Together, we can make a meaningful difference in their lives, helping them thrive despite the challenges they face daily. We look forward to embarking on this journey and celebrating the resilience and strength of young carers throughout our community.

Carl Tams
Chief Executive



Trustee view

In this first edition of Carers News of the new year, Jen Cheshire, Vice-chair of the Trustee board, reflects on the past year and looks ahead to this year's challenges.

This spring newsletter is an ideal moment to reflect on the challenges we've faced together and the incredible work of Carers Support in supporting unpaid carers across Bristol and South Gloucestershire. Serving as a trustee for the Carers Support is a deeply rewarding role and one that fills me with pride.

In 2023/24 we published through our Impact Report that over 13,000 adult carers and 746 young carers are now registered with us, with 1,552 new carers joining over that year. We delivered over 1,200 Carer's Assessments and provided one-to-one support to 403 carers. Through our adult and young carer services we've helped carers find respite and connection, helping to reduce feelings of isolation and supporting wellbeing. Since our last newsletter we've been recognised with the Silver Dementia Aware Award by the Bristol Dementia Action Alliance, a reflection of our ongoing commitment to inclusivity. On Carers Rights Day we were honoured to welcome Sir Stephen Timms, Minister of State in the Department for Works and Pensions, who discussed with us the vital role of carers and the support services available to them.

While we celebrate these successes, the challenges ahead remain considerable. The demand for support continues to grow and the cost-of-living crisis, alongside gaps in health and social care, weighs heavily on carers. That's why we remain resolute in our mission: "A better life for carers of all ages where they are recognised, valued and supported in their caring role and empowered to fulfil their own aspirations."

If you're inspired by our work and want to make a difference, consider becoming a trustee. You don't need prior board experience—our induction process includes information and training. If you share our passion for supporting carers and believe you can contribute, we'd love to hear from you. We are particularly looking for people with a financial background to fulfil the role of Treasurer.

For more information about the role of Trustee, please visit: bit.ly/42AA0Cf

If you are interested in the Treasurer role, all the information is here: bit.ly/3CuZp5H



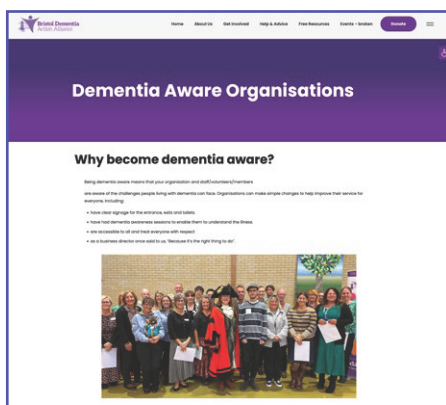
We're proud to be a dementia-aware organisation

We are dedicated to making our services accessible and inclusive for everyone so this recognition reaffirms our commitment to supporting all carers and those they care for.

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Dementia presents profound challenges, not only for those living with it but also for their carers who tirelessly provide love and support. We're always inspired by the resilience of all carers and we are here to continue learning and growing so we can support you better.

To learn more about what it means to be Dementia Aware, visit the Bristol Dementia Action Alliance [website](#).



Welcome!

Newcomers to the Carers Support team



Matthew Jackson - Trustee

I have over 15 years of experience in the creative sector specialising in branding and digital. I am currently Head of Digital and Senior Strategist at Toward, a creative studio specialising in strategic brand and digital development. I have experience of the challenges within the care sector from Toward's continuing work with Social Care Wales (the governing body for social care in Wales) and through family members who have been both carers and cared for. I was born in London and raised just outside of Bristol. I now live in South Wales.



Dami Oyeleye - Southmead Hospital Carers Liaison Worker

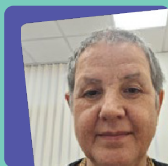
Hi, my full name is Oluwadamilola, but you can call me Dami. My background is in law but I have grown to be passionate about giving back to society. My last work experience was in AWP, Speedwell Centre, as a mental health recovery navigator.



Rachael Quarry - BRI Hospital Carers Liaison Worker

I support carers of patients at the BRI by providing information, addressing their concerns, and facilitating communication with staff to ease discharge and readmission. I also assist hospital staff to ensure they can support carers in my absence.

I'm also a mum with two boys that keep me busy, but when I do I have a bit of time to myself I enjoy cooking whilst listening to the radio. And catching up with friends for a coffee. I also I try to go to yoga once a week to keep my sanity!



Lucy Giles - Adult Carers Service Manager

Hello. My name is Lucy and I am the new Adult Services Manager. I am thrilled to have joined such a wonderful organisation. My role will be to oversee all the services provided for adult carers and to work closely with my team to ensure we continue to provide excellent provision, and to plan and develop services into the future. I come from 30 years of working in social welfare fields with different communities, as a practitioner, manager, and Director, and I have also set up specialist services. I have worked at a local and national level. Outside of work I adore walking my wonderful old one-eyed deaf dog called Elvis and watching independent films.



Hayley Murray - BRI Hospital Carers Liaison Worker

Hello, I am Hayley and most recently I was an Independent Advocate, and I owned a pet care business for 10 years before that. I am dog mad and my favourite thing is going to Yorkshire with my partner and our Labrador, Lemon, to stomp around muddy fields. ;-)



Mark Smyth - Fundraising Manager

Hi, I'm Mark and I lead on the strategic planning and implementation of fundraising activities to support the organisation. In my 20+ year career I've led a diverse range of charities, covering areas such as mental health, music and disability, self-advocacy and woodland residentials for disadvantaged children and young people.

My hobbies include family time, music, songwriting and Swindon Town FC (oops, in Bristol).

Noticeboard

Psychological Support Drop-ins for Carers

St. Peter's Hospice offers weekly drop-in sessions for carers facilitated by a Psychological Therapist. These sessions provide a safe space to discuss the emotional impact of caregiving, burnout, relationship changes, and long-term effects.

In-person sessions:

Wednesdays, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm at the Hospice in Brentry.

Online sessions:

Mondays, 2:00 pm – 3 pm

Fridays, 8:15 am – 8:45 am

Join for peer support, conversation and refreshments. For more details or to sign up, visit stpetershospice.org/carers or call [0117 915 9454](tel:01179159454)



Nationwide Dementia Clinics: Support for Families Affected by Dementia

Dementia UK, in partnership with Nationwide, is offering face-to-face clinics with specialist dementia nurses at local branches. These clinics provide free, confidential appointments for families affected by dementia, offering vital support and guidance.

Appointments cover a range of topics, including:

- Obtaining a diagnosis
- Understanding symptoms and behavioural changes
- Practical caregiving tips
- Exploring home or residential care options
- Emotional support for carers

To book an appointment visit [DementiaUK's website](https://www.dementiauk.org/nationwide)

or call [08006678](tel:08006678), or speak to a Nationwide colleague at your local branch.

Introducing the New Meals on Wheels UK Map

Meals on Wheels UK have compiled a comprehensive resource for locating Meals on Wheels providers across the UK. This free, easy-to-use website allows you to:

- Discover meal options requiring little or no preparation, ensuring users can enjoy nutritious meals daily
- Learn about the benefits of reducing social isolation through regular contact with familiar delivery drivers
- Understand how the service promotes safety, with drivers able to check on wellbeing and alert emergency contacts if needed
- Explore how Meals on Wheels supports independence by helping individuals remain in their own homes and communities for longer

For more information please visit [mealsonwheelsuk.org/map](https://www.mealsonwheelsuk.org/map)

Young at Heart: Coffee Morning for Carers in Hanham

Join Young at Heart, a new coffee morning for over 50s, hosted at The Beacon Café, Hanham every Wednesday from 10.00 am to 12.30 pm.

These groups are brought to you by We Are BS15 and Right at Home and are a great opportunity to enjoy companionship, fun, and laughter. Each week offers cake, refreshments, engaging activities, and entertainment. Qualified carers from Right at Home are available to offer additional support for those who need it.

Once a month these sessions are also joined by one of our Carer Support Officers, providing a valuable opportunity for carers

to connect, share experiences, and enjoy free health and wellbeing activities funded by South Glos Council.

Booking is essential. Please contact Bee at [0117 370 1710](tel:01173701710) or email [@communitybristol@rightathome.co.uk](mailto:communitybristol@rightathome.co.uk) to reserve your spot.



**TRUSTED
STANDARD**

LEVEL 2

NCVO

We're excited to share that we've been awarded the level 2 Trusted Charity Mark!

This is a fantastic recognition of our commitment to providing quality support to carers and those who work with carers in Bristol and South Gloucestershire.

Backed by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), the Trusted Charity Mark is a nationally recognised flexible and outcome-focused quality standard designed to help charities and voluntary organisations work more effectively and efficiently. Through a thorough evaluation process, the Trusted Standard checks how well charities serve their clients. Building on the Level 1 Standard, Level 2 shows that we're dedicated to delivering quality services and constantly looking to improve.

Following hard on the heels of the charity's Silver Dementia Aware Award by the Bristol Dementia Action Alliance, the Level 2 Trusted Charity Mark confirms our dedication to improving our service to carers in Bristol and South Gloucestershire.



Creative Courses for Wellbeing with South Gloucestershire and Stroud College (SGS)

SGS is offering a selection of funded and vocational courses designed to support wellbeing and skill development. These courses provide an excellent opportunity for users to explore creative outlets while enhancing their confidence and personal growth.

Wellbeing Courses:

- Arts for Wellbeing
- Textiles for Wellbeing
- Stained Glass Mosaics
- Art & Nature
- Weaving Fundamentals

Skill Development Courses:

Users can also explore practical courses in digital design, printmaking and sustainable art to learn and develop valuable skills that may open new professional pathways.

Courses are available at various community venues and the Queens Road campus. For more information and to enrol please visit bit.ly/4gyjqGp or call ☎️ **0117 973 6259**.

Community Carers Café at Kingfisher Lodge

Kingfisher Lodge Care Centre is inviting carers to their Community Carers Café, a supportive space for those caring for a loved one, whether at home or in a care setting. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet other carers, share experiences, and enjoy some well-deserved relaxation.

The café is held on the second Tuesday of every month from 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm in the comfortable reception area at Kingfisher Lodge, Chestnut Walk, Saltford, Bristol, BS31 3BG. Enjoy complimentary refreshments, including coffee and cake, while connecting with others in a similar situation.

For more information please call ☎️ **01225 871030**.

Lottery news

Lucky winners

October:

M Grace (x2),
I Bisp, R Whale (x2)

November:

S Watts, M Bennett,
M Palmer, R Merritt,
S Duffett

December:

R Hussey, S Watts, A
Ashley, W Russell,
W Patterson

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/32e92xc8

☎️ **0117 939 2562**

We appreciate your support

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

- The Alchemy Foundation
- Bristol Masons' Charity
- Carers Trust
- Chartered Accountants Livery
- Chatterton Lodge
- The Fulmer Charitable Trust
- Hambrook WI
- The Leonard Laity Stoaite Charitable Trust
- Medlock Charitable Trust
- Moira Lodge of Honour
- National Lottery Community Fund
- The Nisbet Trust
- Royal Clarence Lodge
- Susanna Peake Charitable Trust
- The Thompson Charitable Trust
- Thornbury Rotary Club
- R S Brownless Charitable Trust

Carers Voice

Support for carers to get their voices heard and to influence health and social care provision and the services of Carers Support.

Empowering women carers to achieve food equality

We know that women in caring roles are more likely to experience food insecurity and wider inequalities. With this project we want to empower women carers to access affordable food that they want and choose to eat, as well as food that suits the dietary needs of those they care for.

We will be running three capacity building workshops with women carers to build our understanding of why women carers face a much higher risk of food insecurity. We will try out healthy and affordable cooking, and share tips and information on valuing and making time for your own well-being and food choices. The project will culminate in participants taking our demands for food equality on a lantern parade through the centre of Bristol.

In one session participants will be given food to enjoy at home with their loved ones, in the other sessions each participant will receive a £35 food voucher, and at each session we will eat together.

The first session was on the 10th of February, but we are still looking for women who can take part in both of the remaining sessions on the 3rd and 17th March 2025 at the Vassall Centre, from 10.30 am – 1.30 pm.

This project is run by Carers Support Bristol and South Glos and Bristol Women's Voice, and funded by Feeding Bristol. If you are interested in taking part please contact Susy, Policy Engagement Lead at Carers Support.

Email: [@susyg@carersbsg.org.uk](mailto:susy@carersbsg.org.uk)

Call: [0752 194 5943](tel:07521945943)



Social Security Minister visits to engage with local carers

Sir Stephen Timms, serving as the Minister of State in the Department for Works and Pensions, recently paid a visit to Carers Support to connect with local carers

The main goal of this visit was to set up a direct connection with local carers in order to understand the reality of their lives and the demanding work they do.

During this interactive session Sir Stephen engaged in meaningful discussions with local carers. He acknowledged the hardships they endured and expressed his sincere appreciation for their selfless commitment to caring for others.

The conversation also addressed the monetary concerns carers often face. Various financial topics like Carers Allowance and disability benefits were raised in these discussions. This gave the carers a chance to express their worries and propose enhancements to the existing financial benefits system for carers.

Surveys for carers of people with learning disabilities in South Gloucestershire

If you care for someone with a learning disability in South Gloucestershire your voice matters.

We have four short surveys that give you the chance to share your experiences, challenges, and needs.

The findings are reported directly to the South Glos Learning Disabilities Partnership Board every two months and help to inform decision-makers about the real issues carers face.

The surveys cover the topics of:

- learning disabilities and health
- education and employment
- housing, transport and safety
- personalisation

You can fill in any or all these surveys by visiting the carers voice page on our

[website](#)

Louise's journey as an adopted Black carer

Louise Ndibwirende (she/her) is a TEDx speaker, equality specialist, filmmaker and carer. During Carers Week 2024 Louise posted a video on Instagram about her experience caring for her brother and the things that helped her cope.



We were touched to hear her talk about the validation she received from talking to other carers at our support groups and wanted to hear more, so we reached out to Louise. She responded with this beautiful article in celebration of last October's Black History Month.

I don't think I will really ever get used to being a carer. I have adjusted to the pace, the routine, the recurring events – but not to the deep worry and flickering sinking heart sensation that seems to jump up by surprise in the moments that I least expect it.

The title made me feel quite uneasy for some time, as it did not feel like 'a job' but simply the right and kind thing to do. The alternative – doing nothing – felt unimaginable in my eyes.

One of the most challenging things that I have had to learn is accepting support for my own mental health even though I have had my own therapist for the last few years and being a carer has been at the centre of my sessions.

As a Black transracial adoptee, there is an added layer to my experience as a carer. Through my journey of caring for my brother I have been subjected to the harmful "strong Black Woman" trope by my adoptive family with a heavy expectation of strength and never ending resource of resilience.

There are clear unconscious biases in medical responses and treatment based on the perceived level of pain Black communities can endure. This is damaging to not only the individual who needs care but also the loved ones who are providing the support. Earlier intervention could help many to have access to preventative care and reduce crisis care which comes at an acute cost for all involved.

In addition to preventative measures, it is important to ensure that there is diverse representation across the healthcare field to ensure that there is cultural competency in the decision-making and support offered for carers. This is essential to keeping Black people alive.

Within Black communities there are unwritten rules of carer roles within the family, and though often individuals seem to carry it well, it doesn't mean that the weight isn't unbearable. Acknowledging the human limitation allows space for more compassion, support and systemic change.

During my experience as a carer it often felt like stepping into a parental role, but without any training, guidance or knowledge of how to do the job well – or option to say no. The overwhelming feeling of guilt and weight of holding my brother's life in my hands left me helpless and in a survival state for the whole duration of his care.

My friends were a vital space for support, helping me to understand the complexities of the mental health system and empowering me to not only advocate for my brother but also myself. I often struggled to talk about my experience, as I did not know if it was normal or if I should just quietly ride through the thunderstorm. The challenges of understanding the entry points of the NHS and community care added barriers to my access to the support I needed. Being able to ask the right questions, fill out the forms, and keep tabs of the various teams you are engaging with is a lot for any one person.

I only started accessing Carer Support services later in my journey and I wish I had done so sooner. There is power in knowing that you are not alone, that your emotions are valid, and that life won't always feel so heavy. The saying "a problem shared is a problem halved" is very true. Sharing honestly and authentically about my experience freed me to let go of some of the weight of the responsibility and gave me a little bit of energy back to show up for myself each day.

Being a carer has reconfigured who I am on a cellular level – and affected all aspects of my life. Readjusting to this "new normal" whilst the remainder of my life continues to be the same is a difficult adjustment to settle into.

Something that has helped me with this adjustment is maintaining strict boundaries to protect my peace. This has meant saying no to certain things, choosing to preserve my energy and prioritising my mental health at all costs. This is to ensure self-preservation. I would invite other carers to do the same – as showing up for yourself allows you to better show up for others.

"Acknowledging the human limitation allows space for more compassion, support and systemic change."

People often find themselves in caring positions unexpectedly so it is not something you can prepare for. If I could share a message to my former self at the beginning of my journey, I would say to have more grace with myself, and my best is enough. I would give myself greater permission to experience joy amongst the chaos and to not abandon myself along the way.

Planning accessible day trips and holidays

Planning accessible day trips and holidays for carers and their dependents can be a fulfilling yet sometimes daunting task.



Balancing the needs of everyone involved requires intentional thought and preparation to ensure that the experience is enjoyable and manageable. By considering accessibility, comfort and enjoyment you can plan successful outings catering for your own needs and those of the people you care for.

Understanding individual needs

Before embarking on any trip it's essential to understand the specific needs of both yourself and the people you care for. This involves open communication and discussions about expectations, preferences, and any necessary accommodations. Consider factors such as mobility requirements, dietary restrictions, sensory sensitivities, and any medical conditions that could affect the outing. Encourage dependents to express what they enjoy and what they feel comfortable with to allow for a more tailored experience.

Choosing the right destinations

The destination plays a crucial role in the accessibility of any trip. Look for locations that are known for being inclusive and accommodating. Many attractions, parks, and public spaces are now designed with accessibility in mind, featuring wheelchair ramps, accessible restrooms, and sensory-friendly areas. Websites often provide information about these features so do your research in advance. It might also be beneficial to consider less crowded locations as they can provide a more relaxed atmosphere and easier navigation.

Transportation options

Transportation can be a significant factor in planning a successful trip. It's important to select modes of transport that are accessible to everyone involved. If using public transport, check whether it accommodates wheelchairs or offers priority seating.

For road trips, consider the vehicle's comfort and how to manage longer travel times best. Having a fully equipped vehicle with adaptations or a rental service that provides accessible vehicles can make the journey smoother.

Finding accessible accommodation

When planning an overnight or longer trip, selecting accommodations that cater to accessibility needs is vital. Look for hotels or lodgings that mention their commitment

to accessibility and check for specific features such as roll-in showers, grab bars, or the availability of ADA-compliant rooms. Contacting the accommodation directly can provide clarity on available amenities and ensure that special requests can be met. A comfortable place to stay can significantly enhance the overall experience of the trip.

Planning activities for everyone

Choosing activities that everyone can participate in is crucial for a successful outing. Think about shared interests and look for inclusive activities that suit both the carer and the dependent. Nature trails with accessible pathways, interactive exhibits at museums, and community festivals can all provide enjoyable experiences. When planning the itinerary, flexibility is key. Consider creating a schedule that allows for breaks and downtime to help avoid overwhelming moments, especially if mobility or sensory issues are a concern.

Preparing for the trip

Preparation is the backbone of every successful outing. Assemble a checklist to help ensure nothing is forgotten. Pack essential items such as medications, snacks, water, and comfort items like blankets or fidget tools. It's also useful to consider the weather conditions and plan accordingly with suitable clothing or gear. Including a small first-aid kit and being prepared for emergencies can provide peace of mind for the carer.

Prioritising Self-Care

Amid the planning and preparation it's crucial for carers to prioritise their own self-care. Trips can be physically and emotionally taxing so ensure there are moments for rest within the itinerary. Make sure you take breaks, find time to recharge, and enjoy the experience. Remember your well-being directly affects the enjoyment of the trip for everyone.

In conclusion, planning accessible day trips and holidays for carers and their dependents requires thoughtful consideration and preparation. By understanding the individual needs of all involved, choosing suitable destinations and activities, and prioritizing self-care, carers can create memorable and enjoyable experiences. These outings not only provide a break from the routine but also strengthen bonds, create cherished memories, and enhance the quality of life for both carers and their dependents.



Further information

Accessible is a travel company that provides detailed information you need to work out if a place is going to be accessible to you. [🌐 accessible.co.uk](https://www.accessible.co.uk)

Carers Trust has useful information about holidays for carers [🌐 here](https://www.carers-trust.org.uk).

Tourism For All is your one-stop shop for accessible tourism in the UK. It is a source of holiday and travel information for carers, disabled people and older people. They provide information on accessible accommodation and visitor attractions [🌐 here](https://www.tourismforall.org.uk).

The Brain Charity has produced a very comprehensive guide about holidays that includes information on holiday companies, funding for holidays and insurance [🌐 here](https://www.braincharity.org.uk).


Disabled Holidays is a travel company that offers a selection of accessible holidays from self-catering to all-inclusive deals in the UK and abroad. Most of the accommodation is wheelchair accessible. They can also arrange for the hire of disability equipment at the holiday accommodation [🌐 here](https://www.disabled-holidays.co.uk).

Enable Holidays are a tour operator that offers a range of accommodation suitable for people with limited mobility in various locations both in the UK and [🌐 here](https://www.enableholidays.co.uk) abroad

Dementia Adventure specialise in holidays for people with dementia and their carers, friends or families [🌐 here](https://www.dementiaadventure.co.uk).

Young Carers



YOUNG
Carers
Support 
 Bristol and
 South Gloucestershire



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**

 **carersline@carersbsg.org.uk**

Congratulations to Filton Avenue Primary School and South Gloucestershire and Stroud College, SGS!

We're thrilled to share that Filton Avenue Primary and SGS are the latest recipients of the Young Carers Award for their outstanding efforts in supporting young carers. Their work ensures that students with caring responsibilities don't miss out on their education or the opportunities they deserve.

The Young Carers in Schools Programme is transforming the way schools identify and support young carers, improving attendance, wellbeing, and confidence.

Learn more about how the programme is making a difference on our new website at tinyurl.com/y358sb8e

When can caring responsibilities limit a young carer reaching their full potential?

Young carers undertake a wide range of caring roles that can take up varying amounts of time. On average they care 25hrs/week (Action for Children 2020).

A 2023 survey by Carers Trust found that 51 per cent of young and young adult carers care for 20-49 hours each week. 56 per cent said that the time they spent caring had increased in the past year. There are also lots of positive impacts as young people learn from caring and gain confidence, emotional intelligence, communication skills and organisational skills.

Because caring is often expected, and a normal part of young carers lives, it can be difficult to recognise when the amount of caring is having a detrimental effect on a young carer fulfilling their potential. For families it can feel that they are doing the best they can in the circumstances they find themselves in.

For young carers to get the support they need, South Gloucestershire Council has worked with members of Young Carers Voice to provide guidance so that professionals and families can more easily recognise if the level and type of caring may negatively impact the young carer. The young carers reviewed work undertaken by Sheffield Young Carers and Sheffield University and added their experiences. South Gloucestershire council



will now be using this set of indicators to help identify when caring could be having significant negative impact. These include:

- Undertaking parenting responsibilities
- Keeping own emotions in check
- Undertaking personal care
- Responsibility for medication
- Financial responsibility
- Managing and supporting cared for emotions
- Being the sole carer
- Caring responsibilities over night
- Caring for a long time
- Feeling responsible all the time

Identifying young carers and understanding the scope of their responsibilities is crucial for providing the support they need. Support can be offered by a range of statutory and voluntary agencies and ranges from one-to-one support for the young carer, putting in additional support in the home to reduce the level of caring by the young carer, additional support for the young carer by the school, increased access to a range of respite activities, and access to mental health and well-being support.

Contact the Young Carers Services @ youngc@carersbsg.org.uk or ring 0117 9589980



Young Carers from Bristol and South Gloucestershire join forces with Bath Philharmonia and Ed Davey for festive fundraising song

Young carers from Bristol and South Gloucestershire teamed up with Bath Philharmonia and Ed Davey to record a festive fundraising song.

The project, aimed at raising awareness and support for young carers, highlights their resilience and provides vital resources. The recording session took place at Bath Philharmonia studio, with professional musicians and Liberal Democrats leader, Ed Davey, a carer and advocate.

Joss Tagg, our Young Carers Service Manager, praised the young carers' hard work and dedication. The song, released with national media coverage, supports Bath Philharmonia's community work and Carers Trust, helping local charities provide essential services to young carers.

Carers Support services for you

We offer a range of services and information to help support you in your caring role and improve your wellbeing.



CarersLine

Our 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@carersbsg.org.uk

One-to-one support

We provide tailored one-to-one support based on your individual needs, helping you maintain your caring role and well-being.

Carers Assessments

Help with getting and completing a Carer's Assessment. Carer's Assessments look at how caring affects your life and whether support is needed to manage your caring role and wellbeing.

Carers Emergency Card

Get your free Carers Emergency Card. Carrying the card ensures the safety of the person you care for if something happens to you.

Parent carers (Bristol)

Wellbeing Grant applications and support for you if you have a child under 18 who has disabilities or additional needs.

Carers Support Groups

A safe, confidential space to meet with other carers face-to-face and online – to share information and provide support to each other – more information on page 15.

Carers Liaison Service

Information and support for you in the hospital setting and in GP practices.

Hospitals: We provide help, support and advice to you from admission to discharge as a carer and/or patient.

GP practices: A dedicated team working with you to provide support in GP practices.

Carers Breaks Service

In South Gloucestershire a regular volunteer sitter keeps the looked-after person company so that you can take a break.

Walk and Talk

Our friendly support worker leads group walks, offering a listening ear and providing information to help you in your caring role – more information on page 15

Counselling

We provide professional counsellors to give you a safe, independent and confidential space to talk about your concerns, feel listened to, respected and understood.

Support for Young Carers

We provide specialist support for you if you are aged 8 – 18. This includes one-to-one and family support, young carers groups, activities for young carers to take some time out, short breaks and training.

You can access any of these free services with a call to CarersLine or find out more by visiting our new website [@carersbsg.org.uk](https://www.carersbsg.org.uk)

Featured service - Counselling

We provide professional counsellors for carers to talk about concerns in a safe, confidential space. Our 'talking therapy' includes six weekly sessions via telephone or Zoom. Carers can discuss the impact of their role, such as loneliness or depression, and develop coping strategies. Sessions are not suitable for PTSD or complex mental health issues. Sessions can be challenging and we encourage self-care afterward. Many carers feel more connected, confident, and optimistic.

To be eligible, you must be over 18, live in Bristol or South Gloucestershire, not currently receive mental health support, commit to six weekly sessions, and have a private space. Contact Carersline for more information.

☎ 0117 965 2200 @ carersline@carersbsg.org.uk



Carers Support Groups

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

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

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

☎ 0117 965 2200

@ carersline@carersbsg.org.uk

Groups

Please note that you can only attend a carers group that meets in the same local council area as where you live — Bristol or South Gloucestershire — with the exception of the online group.

Group	Venue	Times	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Hanham	Hanham Community Centre 118-124 High St Hanham, Bristol BS15 3EJ	1:30 – 3:30 pm (First Tuesday)	4	1	6	3
Kingswood	The Park Centre Kingswood High Street, Bristol BS15 4AR	2:00 – 4:00 pm (Second Wednesday)	12	9	14	11
Downend	Badminton Gardens Beaufort Road, Bristol BS16 6FG	2:00 – 4:00 pm (Fourth Wednesday)	26	23	28	25
Online	Zoom	1:30 – 2:30 pm (First Thursday)	6	3	1	5
Hartcliffe	Dundry Room Symes Building, Peterson Avenue, Hartcliffe, BS13 OBE	10:00 am – 12:00 pm (Second Thursday)	13	10	8	12
Lawrence Weston	Lawrence Weston Farm Community Room Saltmarsh Drive, Bristol, BS11 0NJ	2:00 – 4:00 pm (Third Thursday)	20	17	15	19
Brislington (Dementia group)	St. Peters Church 170 Allison Road, Brislington, BS4 4NZ	10:30 am – 12:30 pm (First Wednesday)	5	2	7	4
St. George	Crofts End Church 1 Crofts End Road, St. George, Bristol, BS5 7UW	1:30 – 3:30pm (Third Friday)	21	18	16	20



Walk and Talk

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

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

Groups meet over six weeks in local green spaces. All carers are welcome and 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

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

Open to	Location	Time	First and last walk dates
Carers and their dependants	Bradley Stoke	Every Wednesday from 11:00 am to 12:30 pm	5 March – 9 April

NEXT STEPS

To join in, contact our **Walk and Talk Project Officer**, Stacey Vallis:

☎ 07742 291073

@ staceyv@carersbsg.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.

The best place to start is our website - our online information hub for all things caring and our services at Carers Support. 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.carersbsg.org.uk



You can also contact CarerLine. CarerLine 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@carersbsg.org.uk

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



Donation form Spring 2025

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.

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, FREEPOST (RSSU-EZEA-JLLR) Fishponds, Bristol, BS16 2QQ