

Carers News

Issue 17
Summer 2015
FREE





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carers
service**

Carers News is part of The Cornwall Carers Service

a partnership between Cornwall Rural Community Charity,
Age UK Cornwall and Disability Cornwall & Isles of Scilly



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Hello and welcome to the summer edition of Carers News, lets hope we will remember it as a sunny one!

Among the articles in this edition, is a feature on the celebrations which took place across the county for Carers Week in June. We would like to express our thanks and best wishes to everyone who helped to make this week so special.

This year is a very important one for all of us involved with the Cornwall Carers Service, as the contract will be brought to an end in March 2016. Cornwall Council will reissue a new contract and the partner organisations who have been working together to deliver services to you so far, along with some new ones, hope to carry on delivering the contract again if successful.

Over the years we have been producing this publication, we've been delighted to receive articles, poems, photos and letters from our readers, and we would now like to invite you to share your stories with us about your experience of The Cornwall Carers Service. It doesn't matter if it's good or bad, as any feedback will help us to demonstrate the impact our service has had on the many carers we have collectively supported. You can do this by:

Post or email: please see the addresses below.

Online survey: www.surveymonkey.com/s/CornwallCarersService

We appreciate any comments you give and look forward to hearing from you.

Our best wishes, **The Carers News Team**

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Carers News

is designed and printed by
Headland Printers, Penzance
www.headlandprinters.co.uk

Published by Disability Cornwall
& Isles of Scilly



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Cornwall Carers Service is supported by



Kernow Clinical Commissioning Group



carers week 2015



Members of the Cornwall Carers Service team at the 'Connecting Carers' event

What a fantastic week we had in June to celebrate National Carers Week. The theme this year was 'Building Carer Friendly Communities' which highlighted the value of the contribution carers make to society and put a spotlight on what communities and services can do better to recognise the needs of carers. The Cornwall Carers Service team was out and about all over the county linking up with different businesses and organisations who worked with us to make it a week to remember.

Thank you to everyone who helped to make Carers Week in Cornwall the best one yet!



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We are grateful to these Cornish attractions that kindly opened their doors, free of charge for the whole week, to carers and the person they care for.



With thanks to Rhonda Seymour



With thanks to Richard and Sandra Ball



With thanks to Emily Felton

Pencarrow

With thanks to Tracey Davies



With thanks to Peter and Judith Hewitt



With thanks to Amy Glover



With thanks to Louise Connell



TREMENHEERE
Sculpture Gardens

With thanks to Jane Martin and Ali



A few snapshots of some Carers News readers enjoying their hospitality

Building Carer Friendly Communities

Did you know...

Over 20,000 people have been directly supported by the Cornwall Carers Service Support Workers

63,000 people in Cornwall provide unpaid care and support to people living with health conditions or disabilities

A week of activities and events concluded with an engaging event, 'Connecting Carers' at the Regal Cinema in Redruth. Speakers included; 'Knickers in the Fridge' author Jane Grierson, with a light hearted account of her experience of her mother living with Alzheimer's, and Stuart Cohen, Carers Commissioner at Cornwall Council, who provided delegates the opportunity to hear other people's experiences and to ask relevant questions.

Thank you

Sainsbury's in Truro, Helston, Bude & Newquay for being extremely welcoming.

The Core Fitness and Wellbeing Centre in Falmouth for hosting free classes

Truro Satellite Rotary Club for all their help to put on a 'Pamperthon'.

Whole Again Communities for holding a SOUPer event in Penzance and providing a delicious lunch.

Macmillan for inviting the Cornwall Carers Service team to share their bus tour.

Memory Café in Launceston for organising an afternoon cream tea.

The Newquay Forum Members for putting on a great carpet bowls event.

Promas for supporting us all throughout the week.

And finally to all of you who attended, supported, or was involved in one of the many Carers Week event.





**Cornwall
Mobility**

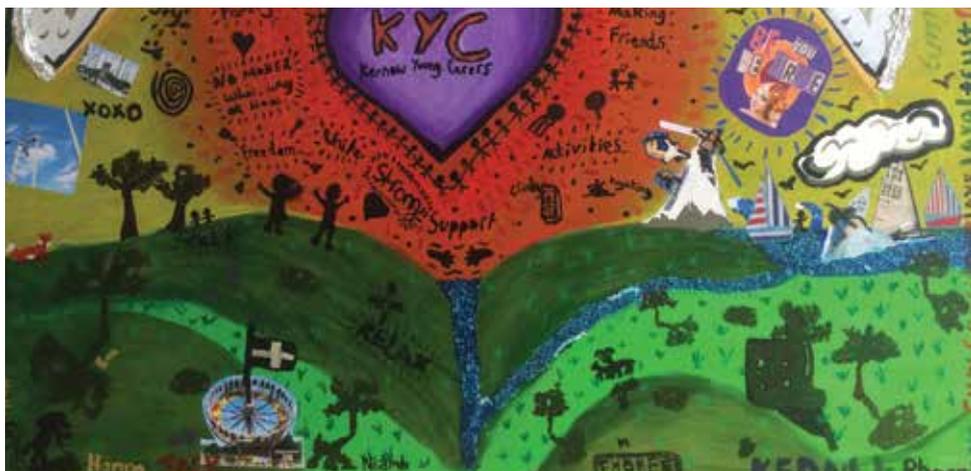
Find your freedom, live your life



- Driving assessment services and tuition
- Vehicle adaptations fitting and maintenance
- Independent Living assessments
- Mobility equipment supply, advice and hire
- Service, repair and maintenance workshops

Cornwall Mobility is a charitable company based on the Treliske Royal Cornwall Hospital campus.

North Buildings, Royal Cornwall Hospital, Truro, TR1 3LQ
01872 254920 info@cornwallmobility.co.uk
cornwallmobility.co.uk



Action for Children funded 10 young carers to participate in an art workshop with the artist, Cosmic

The Kernow Young Carers Service is for young people aged from 5 – 18 years who care for someone at home

Action for Children run Kernow Young Carers and their aim is to make the caring role more positive. They offer support in a broad range of areas, including information & advice, activities, trips & short breaks, school groups, training & educational sessions, advocacy, local young carers' groups and forums.

Groups in schools and colleges can help young carers to know where they can go for support when thinking about moving on to employment, apprenticeships, or further education. Every week during term time, different groups and drop-in sessions are held at various schools and colleges throughout the county. During the holidays, there is a programme of activities.

When young people first register with Kernow Young Carers, they are given special cards to let staff in schools &

colleges, GP surgeries or hospitals know they care for someone at home. 'Crisis packs' are available and contain useful information if someone else is needed to look after the young carer in an emergency.

A team of volunteers offer one-to-one support and mentoring for cooking & healthy eating, shopping on a budget, interview skills and attending local activities.

A Transition Group supports young adults aged 16+ and a Reference Group made up of young carers meet each month to help Action for Children plan the service currently on offer.

If you would like to know more about Kernow Young Carers and how they may be able to help you and your family, then please use the contact details below.

www.kernowyoungcarers.org.uk

Facebook: kernow young carers

Twitter: @kernowcarers

☎ 01872 321486

Shared Lives is a way of providing accommodation, care and support for adults. It's a mainstream service provided in Cornwall and Devon by [Shared Lives South West](#).

Shared Lives services are provided in the family homes of specially trained carers, which means they are flexible, highly personalised and can be tailored very closely to the needs and interests of each individual.

Long-term, short-term and day-only services are offered and used by: people with learning disabilities, mental health issues, parents with a learning disability and people with needs related to older age, including dementia.

But what does this look like in practice?

Ticket to ride by Will

Will lives with Debbie and Mark as part of Shared Lives

"When Shared Lives asked me what things I enjoyed and were important to my happiness, I said I would love to be busy, active and would like to live as part of a family. Now I live with Mark and Debbie and have been able to get involved in many hobbies.

Mark let me help him in the workshop working on motorbikes and teaching me basic skills. I became interested in motorbikes, how they work, how to fix



Will and Debbie

Shared Lives long-term services



Will on test day

them and, after a spell of riding pillion, I wanted to learn how to ride them too. Mark taught me how to ride safely, while Debbie taught me road signs and the rules of the road. Once my confidence had grown and my skills developed, they supported me to apply for my Compulsory Basic Training (CBT) which I passed!

I am now in my second year at college doing a motor vehicle maintenance course, it's great to prove to everyone and to myself that I can do it."

“Fun, outings and family time”

Lin has a weekend break with Anna every fortnight

Anna says:

“The people who come and stay with us quickly become part of the family: we all enjoy doing things together - walks, outings, even crabbing! I really enjoy helping them develop their independent living skills and we have lots of fun together, so it’s good for the children too.”

Lin says that Shared Lives means, “Fun, outings and family time.”



Shared Lives short-break services

Anna and Lin enjoying a day out in Falmouth

Home-from-home accommodation, care and support

Shared Lives services are provided in the family homes of our carefully selected, trained and experienced Shared Lives carers.



We support adults with learning disabilities, people with mental health issues and people with needs related to older age.

Our services are based around the interests and abilities of each person we support.

Our carers come from all walks of life, but what they all have in common is their experience, knowledge and passion for care.



If caring means more to you than just a job we need to hear from you.

As well as being paid to work at home, our carers receive excellent ongoing training and support.

Your personal approach and caring experience (paid or unpaid) are more important to us than formal qualifications.

Find out more at www.sharedlivesw.org.uk or call 01209 891888

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THE PENWITH 5



Last April a five mile race took place to raise money for local charities and community groups. Organised by the Penwith Community Development Trust (PCDT) and licenced by UK Athletics, the event saw over 60 runners taking part.

The Penwith 5 race was started by Colonel Edward Bolitho OBE, The Lord-Lieutenant of Cornwall, in the Wharfside car park in Penzance and took the runners on a scenic route to Marazion, along the cycle path and back again. The race was won by Jason Pascoe, assisted by his dog Happy, and closely followed by Emma Stepto. They received their trophies from the Mayor of Marazion, Derek Laity.

Many of the runners were taking part to raise money for local charities and community groups. Carey Pascoe from PCDT took part to raise money for Friendline, a new telephone befriending service for West Cornwall, which provides company for people over 50 years old who are feeling lonely and isolated. She said: "I work in the community sector, so I know the difficulties being faced by organisations due to funding cuts. There is a real need for a service like Friendline,

so I'm pleased to be raising money for a good cause and doing something I enjoy at the same time."

Alice Newman raised £500 for St Piran's Hall in Goldsithney. Lizi Morse, Michael Mules & Simon Blackburn from Newlyn Art Gallery and the Exchange, took part to fund free art classes for children and young people. Michael is a wheelchair user but actually walked most of the route.

Following the success of the race, the Penwith 5 is set to become an annual event. If you want to know more about how you could be involved next year, please contact Jodi Strick.

 **01736 334683**

 **Jodi.strick@pcdt.org.uk**



Lizi Morse, Michael Mules & Simon Blackburn

NO NEED TO BE A VICTIM

Carers News was pleased to be asked by Cornwall Trading Standards to help raise awareness of the variety of modern day 'scams' and to do our bit to ensure less of us become a victim of one

Many of us are used to receiving junk mail through our letter boxes or being pestered by telephone sales calls, but are often unaware of the massive 'scam' industry, which exploits a huge number of us and often when we're at our most vulnerable. The Government estimates UK consumers lose over £3.5 billion to scams each year.

People can become a victim for a whole host of reasons however, those who feel lonely or isolated are often likely to be the most vulnerable. They can be targeted by phone calls or letters (often from so called 'clairvoyants'), who gradually build a relationship with the person, promising big money prizes are on the horizon, provided you keep sending them money to 'ensure your good luck'. In the worst cases, they even turn the victim against family and friends in order that they become dependent on regular contact with the scammer.

Those of us who may be struggling financially often get caught up in a wide variety of prize draw or lottery scams.

Letters and emails for example, suggest you may have some unclaimed prize money which you can only release by sending a small administration fee.

An increasing number of people are getting caught by online scams. Some of the most recent ones reported to Trading Standards start from 'pop-up advertisements', which appear on web pages and social media sites. They offer a free trial of face creams or weight loss pills for example, but actually sign you up for a direct debit and then keep taking money from your bank on a monthly basis. The majority are based outside of the UK and are therefore out of reach of our law enforcement agencies, making them difficult to stop.

More worryingly are the scams tailored to the individual; to the point the scammers may even have a certain amount of background knowledge as to money which you may have lost in the past. They share information about victims between themselves, use it to contact people who have been a previous victim and



promise they will recover their money, for an upfront fee of course. Cornwall Trading Standards has dealt with a number of cases in the last year, where individuals lost tens of thousands of pounds to promises made to recover monies lost in time-share scams from 10 years ago. The money was requested in small amounts and sent by Western Union or through Ukash vouchers. Nothing was ever received back by the consumers.

Many people are secretive about money they have lost to scams, sometimes through embarrassment, or because they've been befriended by the scammers, or simply because they're not even aware they've been scammed. Everyone needs to be vigilant for friends, family or those we care for to ensure victims do not suffer in silence.

Some points to consider:

- ▶ The more you respond to junk mail, emails or telephone scams, the more likely you are to receive even more. Scammers are sophisticated operators and share their lists of names and addresses with others. If you stop responding, the amount received will slowly reduce.
- ▶ Call Blockers are a great way to stop unwanted or nuisance telephone calls and most can be set-up with different levels of security to meet particular needs. Some call blockers allow friends, families & carers the option of restricting or monitoring calls remotely online. Only buy from trusted sources. The Trading Standards Institute recommend TrueCall and CPR Call Blocker as being particularly effective.
- ▶ Paying money upfront to receive a prize

means it's never going to be a genuine offer. Most lottery and prize draw scams ask you to send money in order to claim your prize. If you've been lucky enough to win £250,000 from a foreign lottery, why would you need to send a £100 admin fee?

- ▶ Scammers can pretend to be from your bank or possibly the police. Banks, building societies and the police will never ask you to give your bank account details or PIN numbers over the phone or by email. If you think you may have inadvertently given out this information, contact your bank or building society immediately.
- ▶ Be wary of any 'free trials', particularly if you have to give your bank details. Offering a free trial is a common marketing tactic and often used by scammers to get you to sign up to an ongoing direct debit. They then continue to take money from your account every month.

If you have concerns that you or someone you know has been a repeat victim of scams, please report the matter to the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline, who can provide confidential advice and assistance. If further support is required, they will refer the matter to Trading Standards.

 **03454 040506**



ON YOUR MARKS, GET SET...GO!

It's that time of year when we can all get out and about a bit more. So, if you are feeling motivated to be more active, meet new people or learn new skills, or perhaps if you're looking for something to keep your child busy this summer, then the following accessible clubs and opportunities are here for you, thanks to their work with the Cornwall Sports Partnership.



Kernow **Boccia** Club at Truro College.

Contact James Lynham: desmond-26@hotmail.co.uk

Goal Ball at the Draceana Centre, Falmouth.

Contact Megan Price: myf.price1@btinternet.com

Golf at clubs county wide.

Contact Simon Wood: cornwallcdo@hotmail.co.uk

Sailing at Mylor Harbour.

Contact Tracey Boyne: info@mylorsailingschool.co.uk

Powerchair Football at Truro Leisure Centre.

Contact Tom Roberts: robertstomd@gmail.com

Special Olympics Cornwall

Contact Steve Hillman: shillman@cornwall.gov.uk

Wheelchair Badminton at Liskeard leisure centre.

Contact Claire Reed: claire_reed@btconnect.com

Wheelchair Basketball at Truro College

Contact Andy Care: andy1970c@live.co.uk

Wheelchair Fencing at Truro Fencing Club.

Contact Matt Hill: matthewhill_is@hotmail.com

Wheelchair Rugby at Truro College.

Contact Chris Perkins: chris.cr1950@talktalk.net

Wheelchair Tennis at the Heron Tennis Centre, Newquay.

Contact Paul Roberts: herontennis@aol.com

Wheelchair Track Racing at Par Running Track.

Contact Ben Oliver: benede757@gmail.com

Steve Hillman works for the Cornwall Sports Partnership and is the county's Sports Inclusion Officer. You can contact him if you have any additional queries, general enquiries or don't have access to the internet.

☎ 01872 323344

☎ 07837 311539

www.cornwallsportspartnership.co.uk



All meetings are held from 1–3pm unless advised below. Travel and car parking expenses will be considered to enable carers to attend their local forum.

Liskeard

Liskerret Community
Centre
Varley Lane
Liskeard PL14 4AP

**Wednesday
4 November 2015**

Redruth

Redruth Community
Centre
Chapel Street
Redruth TR15 1AN

**Tuesday
29 September &
15 December 2015**

Newquay

Newquay Disabled Centre
Tolcarne Road
Newquay TR7 2NQ

**Monday
21 September &
7 December 2015**

Truro

Conference Room
Truro Health Park
Infirmary Hill
Truro TR1 2JA

**Thursday
22 October 2015
1.30 – 3.30 pm**

Falmouth

Emmanuel Baptist Church
Western Terrace
Falmouth TR11 4QJ

**Tuesday
22 September &
8 December 2015**

St Austell

Committee Room
One Stop Shop
Cornwall Council
39 Penwinnick Road
St Austell PL25 5DR

**Friday
2 October 2015**

Penzance

Board Room
One Stop Shop
Cornwall Council, St Clare
Penzance TR18 4UJ

**Thursday
3 September &
26 November 2015
2 – 4pm**

Wadebridge

Cornerstone
Wadebridge Methodist
Church, Trevanion Road
Wadebridge PL27 7NY

**Tuesday
13 October 2015**

Helston

The Ceremony Room
One Stop Shop
Isaac House, Tyacke Rd
Helston TR13 8RR

**Thursday
12 November 2015
2 – 4pm**

Please contact Sylvia Johnston or Chris Watkin for further information

 sylvia.johnston@cornwallrcc.org.uk or chris.watkin@cornwallrcc.org.uk

 01872 243531

TEA BREAK



Aim for greater heights



Rest and relax



Stay out of trouble



Smile



Teamwork

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

- Across**
- Book genre (7)
 - Fiery monster (6)
 - Small stone (6)
 - Woolly jumpers, socks, etc. (8)
 - Price (4)
 - Chemical symbol for gold (2)
 - Stay in a tent (4)
 - Heathrow, for example (7)
 - Go to see (5)
 - Scramble, as a secret message (6)
 - Nobleman (4)
 - Style or vogue (5)
 - Female relative (4)

- Down**
- Corn (5)
 - Storm centre (3)
 - Musical group (4)
 - Wait (5)
 - Poem (3)
 - Writing implement (3)
 - Diver's outfit (7)
 - Fortune-telling cards (5)
 - Radio channel (7)
 - Sign of the zodiac (9)
 - Strange sighting in the sky (3)
 - Bucket (4)
 - Salad green (6)
 - Fortified building (5)
 - Chemical symbol for radium (2)

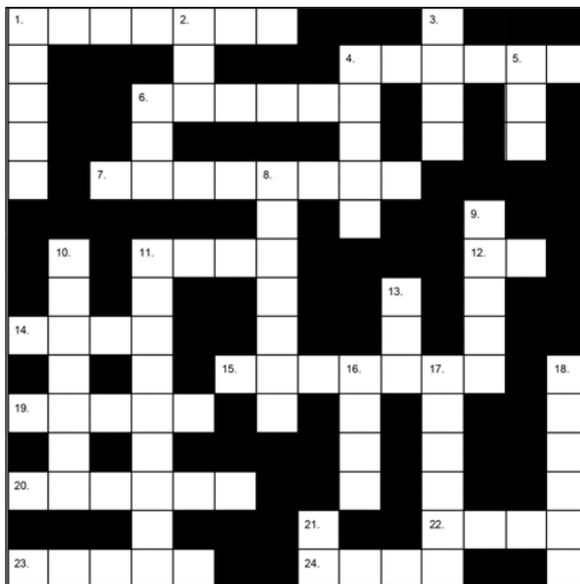
Sudoku

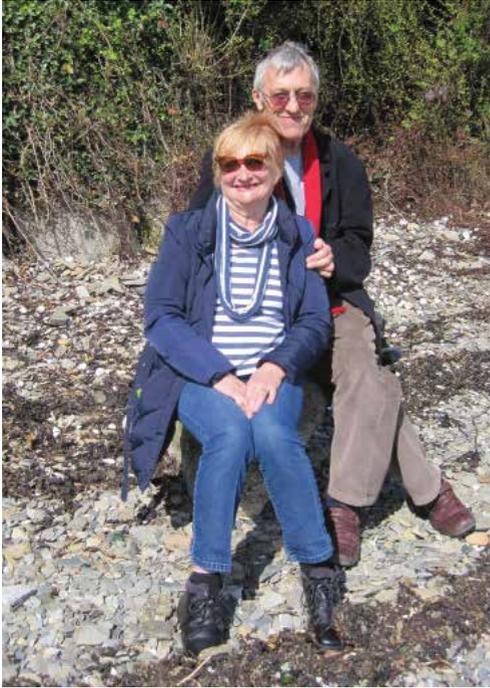
An elderly couple just learned how to send text messages on their mobile phones. The wife was a romantic type and her husband, more of a no-nonsense guy. One afternoon the wife went out to meet a friend for coffee and decided to send her husband a romantic text. She wrote:

"If you are sleeping, send me your dreams, if you're laughing, send me your smile. If you're eating, send me a bite, or drinking, send me a sip. If you are crying, send me your tears. I love you."

The husband text back, "I'm on the toilet.... please advise."

Crossword





Beryl tells Carers News how her caring role began and how important she found her local support group to be

When my husband, Nick, was diagnosed with motor neurone disease, we didn't really believe it, but then he lost the ability to use his right arm and then his left, so we began to accept it. Unfortunately I became ill with flu and ended up in Treliske for 12 days with a suspected heart attack, but eventually I was diagnosed with coronary sepsis. When I came out, we realised how weak Nick had become.

I had been given a phone number by an Occupational Therapist (OT) to ring for help with home equipment, but was

Puzzle answers

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

Sudoku

- Down**
- 1. Maize
 - 2. Eye
 - 3. Band
 - 4. Delay
 - 5. Ode
 - 6. Pen
 - 8. Wetsuit
 - 9. Tarot
 - 10. Station
 - 11. Capricorn
 - 13. UFO
 - 16. Pall
 - 17. Rocket
 - 18. Castle
 - 21. Ra

Crossword

- Across**
- 1. Mystery
 - 4. Dragon
 - 6. Pebble
 - 7. Knitwear
 - 11. Cost
 - 12. Au
 - 14. Camp
 - 15. Airport
 - 19. Visit
 - 20. Enclave
 - 22. Earl
 - 23. Trend
 - 24. Aunt

told all help is means tested and there was a three month waiting list for an assessment anyway. We decided to get a builder to adapt our bathroom ourselves and buy a stair-lift. We did eventually get chairs and hoists, but mostly when it was too late as the disease progressed so fast. Nick was always reluctant to make a fuss and we didn't even have any doctor or nurse visit us for quite a while. When a district nurse did come, she was very good and arranged for a 'sitter' each week so I could go out. There didn't seem to be any joined up care or information, because apart from her, nobody official knew we existed, it seemed as if we had slipped through a net.

I decided to get some help with cleaning the house so I could spend all my time looking after Nick. As my back is problematic, the nurse set up a morning care visit with an agency, but they were not allowed to lift and we had to wait for a hoist. The carers were brilliant though and did lift Nick if no one was looking. There was no overall care plan, just lots of different bits like the OT and social care. We didn't know what help there was, who to ask or who to talk to. We got by with treats, like DVDs, fish & chips and Indian takeaways, a bit like being a student again! Our home became our whole world and we felt fortunate to have a lovely upstairs lounge overlooking the river.

A friend suggested I attend her carers' group to have an afternoon out and although it sounded daunting, I went along. When I opened the door, I was

met with a wall of human kindness and started to cry. Someone came over to me and asked if I wanted a tea or a coffee and I realised that apart from the hospital, I hadn't had a drink made for me for weeks!

The talk we had was interesting and made me think how I hadn't really thought about our terribly sad situation. At the end, we had the refreshments, which was the first thing I had been given for ages and again I had to choke the tears back. Who didn't need a carers' group?

I couldn't talk at the group for the first few months and realised I had lost my confidence when outside of the house. Attending the group began to feel like a two hour holiday with interesting speakers and nobody talking about illness or who they were caring for, it was just time out with very kind people.

Nick died a year after diagnosis, while asleep at home. He slipped away after we'd had ice cream and grapes and Stephen Fry in bed, well Stephen Fry on the radio that is! I wouldn't have had it any other way. It was hard work and it's an evil disease, but we were in it together and loved each other more and more and I'm proud to have been his carer.

The Support Group had suggested I apply for a carer's grant, which I used to purchase National Trust membership for both of us. I've now started to volunteer at the Trust's Glendurgan Gardens, thanks to a reference from the Support Group Coordinator. I also volunteer at a foodbank once a month, inspired by a talk we had earlier in the year. It's all helped me in so many ways. I often say it helped to save my life and I really mean it.



Life can be unpredictable, but no one should go hungry because they lose their job or become homeless due to illness. The Welfare State was created in 1948 to prevent this, but over 60 years later, we see all too often, people who need support from benefits being ignored, misrepresented or blamed for their situation.

'Who Benefits?' is a broad coalition of charity, community and faith organisations who wanted to change common media misrepresentations of people entitled to help from welfare benefits. They gave a voice to the millions of people who have been supported by benefits at some point in their lives. The 'Who Benefits?' website shares the stories of the people who need help, shows why they need it and the difference that it makes.

'Who Benefits?' believed politicians should do more to listen and focus on the real reasons people are struggling, like low wages, high living costs and the housing crisis. The campaign ran from 2013 – 2015 and you can download the report 'Telling the real story of benefits', from the website. The aim of the campaign was to show how we all benefit when support is there for those who need it.

www.whobenefits.org.uk

The Hall for Cornwall (HFC) is inviting community leaders to come forward and nominate their group to enjoy a free first time visit to see a show. The scheme is open to community groups with members of any age who have never been to HFC before. All you need to do is contact the Hall and they will arrange for your group to go and see a show of your choice, subject to availability. There's no catch. All that's asked in return is that you share your views on how HFC can help more people to come and see its shows. Your feedback is important.



The Hall For Cornwall is able to offer this opportunity thanks to the generous support of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, whose funding allows their Community Club to not only help bring groups to see shows, but to also offer a range of exciting opportunities, such as free workshops and backstage tours.

To find out more about this project and to discuss if your group is eligible, please contact the HFC Community Club Coordinators, Liz or Rachael.

☎ 01872 262843

📧 lizw@hallforcornwall.org.uk or rachaelp@hallforcornwall.org.uk

Event volunteers

Attending events around the county is vital for the Cornwall Carers Service to publicise what it does and to reach more carers, and we could often do with a little extra help. We are all too aware of how people who care for others often have little free time, but if you did have the odd few hours now and again, we would be delighted to hear from you. When somebody new to the service approaches our information stand, we know how valuable it is for them to meet another carer first.

☎ **01872 266383**

💻 **carers.admin@cornwallrcc.org.uk**



For over 20 years Shallal has championed inclusive arts for all people, whatever their age, background or ability. Based in Penzance, Shallal celebrates diversity, ability and community through providing opportunities in dance, movement, theatre and related arts. Participants include people with down's syndrome, alzheimer's disease and mental health issues, and are aged from 15 – 83 years.

Devised and led by its members, projects tackle barriers to inclusion through supporting people to have a voice and to value and share their talents. The company also has a Community Outreach programme offering regular dance and theatre workshops in Redruth, Helston and Falmouth.

☎ **07856 426150**

www.shallal.org.uk

Singing as one

The Alzheimer's Society run weekly 'Singing For The Brain' sessions, a fun and stimulating social activity for people in the early to moderate stages of dementia and their carers. It works by promoting communication through singing and can help with articulation, concentration, focus and motivation, but is also beneficial and enjoyable for families and carers.

The sessions are relaxed and friendly. Led by a trained leader, they comprise a varied programme of vocal, rhythmic & gentle exercise and dance, along with songs from different eras and styles and there is always time for a chat and a cup of tea.

Penzance Every Monday 2 – 4pm (except bank holidays)

Landithey Hall, Church road, Madron, Penzance TR20 8SW

Truro Every Tuesday 2 – 4pm

All Saints Church Hall, Highertown, Truro TR1 3LD

More information is available from the Truro office. ☎ **01872 277963**



Carer Support Groups

There are many carer support groups in Cornwall, including several dedicated to specific health conditions or disabilities. All provide great opportunities for carers to get together, share experiences and support each other, and there is always room for more people. The main support groups meet monthly in Bodmin, Bude, Callington, Camborne, Carnon Downs, Helston, Liskeard, Mullion & Constantine, Newquay, Penzance, Saltash, St Austell, Truro & Wadebridge, and usually from 2 – 4pm, but not always, so please check.

If you require further details about any Carer Support Group or you are a new carer who wishes to attend a group, please call our helpline for the next date and venue.



It has been suggested that it would be good to have more 'interest specific' carer support groups and the Carers Service is keen to know what you think of this idea. There is already a Carers Colour Group for art and painting, but how about one for walking perhaps? Please let us know what you think and if there is any particular group you may be interested in joining.

☎ **01872 266383** 📧 carers.admin@cornwallrcc.org.uk

Your carers service, working with others to support you



**cornwall
carers
service**

The Cornwall Carers Service is pleased to be working with colleagues at the Plymouth Carers Hub to improve the support available through Derriford Hospital. This will mean that no matter where people live, the services for their area will be clearly and consistently advertised and available. The Royal Cornwall Hospital Trust (Treliske) is also developing their support for carers with the introduction of a designated 'Passport'. A lot of good work is happening which builds on the foundations established over the last four years and it's great to see these seedlings start to bear fruit.

CarerSmart



Several of you contacted Carers

News about the online offer we featured in the last edition called CarerSmart, where members can benefit from a wide range of offers such as cash-back from high street retailers. You pointed out that not everyone has access to the internet, raising the issue that not everyone can benefit from this offer. We have since been in touch with the company to see what, if any adjustment, they were prepared to make. They said: "Carers who have no access to the internet can now call **0844 8004361** and obtain information of all non-internet based benefits available."

So well done to each of you for raising this issue and we hope, after our intervention, everyone can now benefit in some way.



Your letters your questions your say

Dear Carers News

Re: Constant assessments causing distress

There is a trend affecting carers up and down the UK, causing them huge distress, inflicting unnecessary mental and physical harm and needlessly taking up precious time.

Job centres are routinely calling people who have been unpaid carers for their loved ones over many years into offices for interviews for work. This includes carers whose partners have dementia, individuals with learning disabilities and/or autistic conditions, severe & unchanging mental health illness and so on. No one is excluded from the harassment and illogicality of a broken system which should be protecting and supporting these families.

One example of many is of Atos calling in a carer with the person they care for (who has down's syndrome) for further assessment. Having a disabled son with a genetic condition recorded and documented over a lifetime, left the carer understandably angry, frustrated and questioning the need for this procedure again. A simple phone call to check that circumstances remain unchanged would have sufficed. The motivation for repeat assessments and/or interviews for long-term, unchanging conditions appear to be borne solely out of profit and serve no other purpose.

In damaging the relationship with the carer, the DWP is inflicting needless harm to the person being cared for and in turn, increasing impacts on other professional organisations these families may be in contact with, such as social services, care centres, support workers etc.

Is this productive? Do carers now need to spend precious and valuable time pleading for help from politicians to stop this misuse of public money when they already save the public purse billions of pounds?

Can our own Carers Partnership Board in Cornwall please investigate and make enquiries into how many carers and the people they care for are being affected by this pointless practice and lobby for it to stop as soon as possible?

Margaret West

Response from the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP)

Regarding repeat assessments for Employment Support Allowance customers: the medical services contractor (formerly Atos) makes a decision about how long an ESA award is for and when to review it. The purpose of the review is to ensure the customer is getting the correct level of support. In some circumstances their condition may have deteriorated and so should be moved from the Work Related Group to the Support Group. In others, customers have been able to better manage their condition over time and as a result may wish to take steps towards finding work.

There are some circumstances where the medical services contractor can complete the assessment based on existing information already held by the DWP. The medical services contractor responsible for providing Work Capability Assessments, in relation to ESA and IB reassessments, changed from Atos to the Centre for Health & Disability Assessments in March this year.

Regarding carers being asked to attend a Jobcentre interview, these are carers who are in receipt of Income Support. They will be invited to a Work Focused Interview when they make their new claim, with the purpose being to explain the services the Jobcentre can offer and to look at the possibility of moving towards work should the carer wish to do so.

The Jobcentre will contact the carer again after three years to make the same offer and explain the support available as the person's circumstances may have changed. Jobcentre Plus wants to ensure all customers are aware and able to access support to move towards working.

The DWP Operational Stakeholder forum looks nationally at DWP products and services and welcomes your thoughts and concerns. Please use the email address below.

It provides a channel through which DWP works in partnership with partner organisations at a national level. We recognise that customer representative organisations have expert knowledge about the needs of DWP customers and the role of the team is to build a positive relationship with national stakeholders so this knowledge can be fed through to DWP operational colleagues.

Cheryl Ward

**Senior European and Partnership Manager for Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly
Department for Work & Pensions**

 **OPERATIONAL.STAKEHOLDERS
@DWP.GSI.GOV.UK**

SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH NEUROLOGICAL CONDITIONS



The Neurological Rehabilitation Service provides support, information and signposting to individuals in Cornwall affected by a long term neurological condition. Two Neurology Care Advisors provide non-clinical advice and support to patients, their families and carers. Mary Eason supports residents in Mid and West Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly and Bernadette Murray covers North and East Cornwall.

The service supports people with acquired and progressive neurological conditions such as: brain injury, ataxia, cerebral palsy, dystonia, fibromyalgia, guillan barré syndrome, huntington's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, myasthenia gravis, parkinson's disease, peripheral neuropathy, spina bifida and spinal cord injury among other neurological conditions.

The Neurology Care Advisors work closely with Health and Social Care professionals and other organisations to help ensure continuity of care and support. They provide information, advice and support by assisting people to navigate their way through the

range of available services and by being a single point of contact.

The Advisors operate monthly drop-in advice sessions in St Austell and Hayle, which they hope to extend to other outlying areas. They also hold regular support group meetings for people with spinal cord injuries, offering presentations from guest speakers and an informal setting to meet other people with similar conditions.

Mary Eason said: "Patients living with neurological conditions have complex health needs and there is no one stop shop to meet those needs. Our role, through giving advice and information is to help signpost people through the NHS community to the most appropriate services. We always aim to support them in remaining as independent as possible, for as long as possible and to live well."

The Neurological Rehabilitation Service is available five days a week Monday to Friday with an answer phone service available out of hours:

☎ 01209 318106

✉ neurorehab@cornwall.nhs.uk



Supporting you to grow and develop your potential

Promas delivers training and development opportunities to unpaid carers across the county.

Caring for Carers is a three day course and is for any carer.

Penzance 22 – 24 September.

Caring for Dementia Carers is a two day course for people looking after someone with dementia.

Bude 15 & 16 October.

Pencil This In is a two day course for people caring for someone experiencing mental ill health.

St Austell 20 & 21 October 2015

Truro 26 & 27 January 2016

Mentoring & Coaching Project is aimed at carers who feel 'stuck' and need to focus on areas of their lives which will enable them to develop and move forward. It consists of three hours every two weeks with four sessions in total. Groups are no bigger than four people. This course is currently held in Penzance and Truro, but there will be more dates and locations in due course.

To book your place or to obtain further details:

☎ 01736 339226 ☎ 07775 756454

✉ info@promas.co.uk www.promas.co.uk

Preparing for Change is a two day course for anyone who is looking after a relative or friend living with dementia and wants to explore the possibility and options of long-term care. It's also suitable for relatives who have been through the process of a loved one moving in to long-term care.

Truro 9 & 10 September

Bodmin 4 & 5 November

More dates and locations to come, but please book this one through Memory Matters CIC.

☎ 01752 692264

✉ hello@memorymatterssw.co.uk

