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Care for the Carers

Telephone: 01323 738390 Email: info@cftc.org.uk
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We were excited to celebrate national Carers Week, from 6th to 12th June 2022, recognising the vital contribution made by the UK's 10.58 million unpaid carers, over 69,000 in East Sussex.

This year's focus was *'Making Caring Visible, Valued and Supported'*. We were celebrating the amazing carers in East Sussex, thanking you for everything you do, and holding events where carers could connect with each other and unwind.

It has been great to see many staff and volunteers at events throughout the week, and very positive to have had such a good response from carers and partners, both in terms of attending community events and to our social media campaign.



Carers took part in mental health walks, celebrated at their support groups with cakes and festive food, enjoyed outings including our very popular afternoon teas, attended training and information sessions in person and on-line, took part in cooking lessons, community events and activities across many local organisations.

We also celebrated the opening of our centre in Uckfield and a private view and opening of the Carers Photography Exhibition at The Conquest Hospital in Hastings. What a celebratory and activity packed week across East Sussex.



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Do you have a few hours you would like to share?

We are looking for volunteers to support our work with carers. There is a variety of roles available including supporting our young carers activities, providing a listening ear to carers over the phone and joining us at community events to raise awareness.

If you are interested please chat to our Volunteer Coordinator Suzanne, email suzannec@cftc.org.uk or call **07874 885018**



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Front cover large image by Amanda Holmes from 'Seeing Carers: a carers photography project'

Welcome to this edition of

CareLine

Welcome to the Autumn edition of CareLine, the magazine for everyone who cares for a relative, friend or neighbour in East Sussex who couldn't manage without your help.



Jennifer Twist

In this edition, we reflect on a successful Carers Week, which saw the launch of our new local carers centre in Uckfield and the Private View of Carers Photography Exhibition at the Conquest Hospital in Hastings, amongst many other memorable celebrations. We are highlighting the work of our long term partner – Robin Van Creveld, who many of you know as the Community Chef and including a recipe for Harvest Piccalilli (one not to be missed!)

We are sharing more about what you told us through our Annual Carers Survey, which is a crucial part of our process of listening to carers across East Sussex and it directly guides our support for you; thank you for taking part. I would like to extend a further invitation for you to join us for focus groups this Autumn, to share your experiences of the cost of living crisis, which will better enable us to work with partners to help carers.

This leads me to Carers Rights Day which takes place on Thursday 24th November which is such a pivotal moment in the year for the whole community to recognise the crucial role that carers undertake, and to seek to understand the reality of caring today. I'd like to say a special thank you to Rebecca Fuller for sharing her experiences as a carer with us.

With best wishes,

Jennifer Twist, Chief Executive

Brand new carers centre for Uckfield

In June Care for the Carers celebrated the opening of a brand new local centre to support all unpaid carers, from all age groups and communities in Uckfield and surrounding areas. During the launch event 25 carers and 18 supporters joined the Mayor of Uckfield - Cllr Jackie Love, Care for the Carers Chair of Trustees - Dr Neil Churchill OBE and Chief Executive - Jennifer Twist.

Based at the Victoria Pavilion and co-located with Sussex Support Service, minutes from Uckfield High street, the centre will offer a diverse range of services to help local carers, including information and advice sessions, networking, activities, counselling, young carers clubs and much more.



Why not come along and see the new centre for yourself? There is a friendly and informal Carers Information and Advice Group on the 3rd Tuesday of each month from 1-3pm.

Opening of the Isabel Blackman Centre in Hastings



Isabel Blackman Centre (IBC) joined the Hastings Old Town Carnival celebrations in July, providing an exciting taste of what will be on offer at the new over 50s leisure and wellbeing centre.

Care for the Carers are delighted to have a presence at the new IBC and look forward to offering services from the centre including counselling, clinics and drop-ins and developing our offer for carers in Hastings.

Our local carers centres are generously supported through funding from the National Lottery Community Fund.

Proud to support Pride

Care for the Carers staff and volunteers (see small front cover image) met with supporters and carers at Princes Park in Eastbourne during the Pride celebrations on Saturday 23rd July. Thank you to everyone we spoke to and for helping us to raise money for the charity by taking part in the 'Play Your Cards Right' game.

The Care for the Carers AGM 2022

This will be held on Wednesday 16th November 2022, 1.30-4pm. Full details will be published on our website cftc.org.uk or please phone [01323 738390](tel:01323738390)

Cooking for Carers

For the last year and a half, Community Chef - Robin Van Creveld, have been running a full programme of cookery courses and workshops. The carers have absolutely loved the experience of cooking, learning and eating together. Robin, the chef, said, *"It is so rewarding for us to see carers grow in confidence and skills, and forging new friendships within the groups"*.

There are three courses coming up in Lewes, including Man with a Pan, Baking for Wellbeing, and Batch Cook & Save. You can visit bit.ly/cookingforcarers for more information and to book.

Cooking for Carers on tour!

Community Chef will be taking Cooking for Carers work on the road, visiting carers groups across the county and doing small cookery demonstrations. If you are part of a carers support group and would like Robin to come along and do a cookery demonstration, please get in touch.

Email:

office@communitychef.org.uk

Or call:

07766 526217

HARVEST PICCALILLI

Making your own relishes, chutneys and preserves is easy, fun and will save you money. This piccalilli can be made with most vegetables, but I like a combination of cauliflower, green beans, courgettes and small onions or shallots.

Makes approximately 3 x 500g jars

1. Cut the vegetables into small, even bite-sized pieces. Place in a large bowl and sprinkle with the salt. Mix well, cover the bowl with a tea towel and leave in a cool place for 24 hours, then rinse the veg with cold water and drain thoroughly.

2. Blend the cornflour, turmeric, mustard powder, mustard seeds, cumin and coriander to a smooth paste with a little of the vinegar. Put the rest of the vinegar into a saucepan with the sugar and honey and bring to the boil.

3. Pour a little of the hot vinegar over the blended spice paste, stir well and return to the pan. Bring gently to the boil. Boil for 3–4 minutes to allow the spices to release their flavours into the thickening sauce.

4. Remove the pan from the heat and carefully fold the well-drained vegetables into the hot, spicy sauce. Pack the pickle into warm, sterilised jars and seal immediately with vinegar-proof lids. Leave for 4–6 weeks before opening. Use within a year.



1kg washed and peeled vegetables
50g fine salt
30g cornflour
10g ground turmeric
10g English mustard powder
15g yellow mustard seeds
1 tsp crushed cumin seeds
1 tsp crushed coriander seeds
600ml cider vinegar
150g granulated sugar
50g honey



**COMMUNITY
CHEF** *good food for all*



Carers give their feedback

Earlier this year, we asked you to complete our annual survey and share your opinions and experiences.

What you said

- 88% carers reported that support we provide is helpful
- 86% of carers said that our support is available when you need it
- 89% said Care for the Carers respects you
- 80% of carers said that overall you are satisfied with Care for the Carers

"Your advice is invaluable and helpful. Carry on as you are!"

"You provide excellent communications and information,"

"A massive thank you for the lovely activities I have taken part in."

The survey reflected on the challenges that carers continue experiencing, with 99% of you saying that you feel stressed, 92% feeling alone or isolated and feel that your wellbeing has been affected as a result of the caring role, with 85% reporting this for physical health. This remains the same as during the pandemic.

Not surprisingly, we also found that 85% of carers have issues with finances, which has increased dramatically since 2021.

Support needed by carers

Carers said the support they need the most is someone to talk to ("*listening ear when I need it the most*"), respite and activities to take time for yourself, financial assistance, timely support, information and advice and opportunities to meet with other carers.

Carers are telling us that the ability to take time out from the caring role is crucial and needed even more so since the pandemic.

Some of the barriers to accessing it include lack of information on what you are entitled to and what's available, and lack of finance. What is available does not seem to respond to all the levels or types of respite needed.

Access to respite decreased since 2021, with 10% of carers having accessed it, while 34% had not but would have liked to.

Other feedback

Carers also made suggestions for support that would help, but is not currently available. Respite continued to be mentioned, as well as: help at home, activities and support for working carers, mental health and wellbeing support. Carers shared you would like to see our charity provide more timely advice and information, regular contact, advocate and campaign on carers issues, and lobby and support social care and health systems to develop better help for carers. More services for parent carers and working carers were also sought after.

Thank you for taking part. Feedback from the survey is guiding Care for the Carers plans for the next couple of years. We will also share your views with our partner organisations supporting carers.

Carers voices

Carers have opportunities to give feedback about services and debate the issues that affect you at our Annual Carers Voices Conference, through the annual survey and Carers Voices Focus Groups (with cost of living groups coming up in September - [more on page 11](#)). Find out more: www.cftc.org.uk/carers-voices-network or call us: [01323 738390](tel:01323738390). We are here for all carers, so if you are experiencing difficulties, need support or would like to connect with other carers, please do get in touch.

Carers speak out on key issues

Each year Care for the Carers holds an **Annual Carers Voices Conference**, which is free to attend for unpaid carers.

This year we took what felt like a bold decision, to host an in-person event in Uckfield, being one of the first local charities to do so since the pandemic. We received very positive feedback, with a number of carers sharing how much it meant to them to be able to meet face to face with other carers and professionals. We were joined by Emily Holzhausen OBE,



Director of Policy and Public Affairs at Carers UK (one of the country's foremost experts on carers' issues), Tamsin Peart, Strategic Commissioning Manager at ESCC, Care for the Carers Chief Executive, Jennifer Twist and Chair, Neil Churchill OBE.

The event was followed by online workshops and debates throughout the week (14th-18th March).

Total attendance across all the events saw 51 carers, 13 voluntary and community sector professionals and 13 public sector practitioners take part. Four new carers joined the Carers Voices network as a result of attending the conference week. We captured a breadth of views on carers' experiences, adding to feedback from regular carers groups, young carers and parent carers.

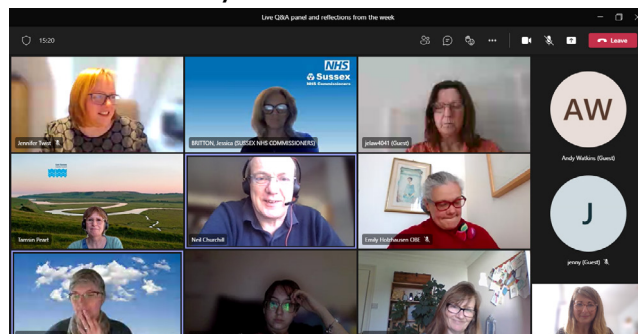
Key themes emerging from the carers voices work this year are:

- Carers continue to experience difficulties with being recognised as a carer at their GP surgeries and in hospitals.

- Access to primary care remains one of the main challenges.
- Lack of support with hospital discharge remains a common experience.
- Carers struggle to access relevant information about support when they need it from health and social care, and the information shared is often inconsistent.

"Carers are exhausted fighting a broken system."

- Mental health – many carers reported huge stress levels, continued loneliness resulting from caring during the pandemic and a limited support.
- Respite and taking a break - carers are telling us that ability to take time out from your caring role is crucial and needed even more so since the pandemic.
- Access to support groups and social activities (face to face and on-line) remains a key desire.



- Many carers particularly value peer support groups and, connecting with other carers.
- Carers continue to say recognition and acknowledgement remains low.
- Increase in Carers Allowance is a priority for a number of carers.

"Keep reminding those in power that we exist!"

We are using the feedback and evidence you shared with us to work with partners in the statutory and voluntary sector, to influence the services and bring about change.

Events

Day Trip to Battle Abbey

Friday 14th October 2022, 11:00am

We're inviting unpaid carers to join us to look round this famous historic site followed by free lunch in the café. Contact Hannah Taylor at Care for the Carers to book hannaht@cftc.org.uk or call [01323 738390](tel:01323 738390)

Free Leisure Vouchers to use in Hastings

Carers, we want to help support your wellbeing during these challenging times. If you would like to receive a voucher for a meal out, spa treatment voucher or a gym pass, please get in touch with Hannah Taylor (as above).

Carers WRAP (Wellbeing Recovery Action Planning) courses

Start date - 28th September 2022 for 6 weeks. Day & time - Wednesday, 10am to 1pm. Venue - Victoria Pavilion, Uckfield. If required there is an opportunity for the person you care for to be in the same building whilst you attend this course.

Starting on 14th November 2022 for 6 weeks, Monday, 1pm to 3pm, Online - via Zoom. To find out more and book contact Coastal Wellbeing on [07507 734 370](tel:07507 734 370) (Molly), molly@coastalwellbeing.co.uk or [07598 323 254](tel:07598 323 254) (Lucy), lucy@coastalwellbeing.co.uk.

CrISP Carer Information and Support Programme

The workshops cover information and support regarding understanding how dementia progresses and living with change.

Wednesday 28th September, 5th and 12th October, 1.30-3.30pm at the Conqueror Hall, Kingsmere, Eastbourne. For details or to book contact the Alzheimer's Society on [01273 726266](tel:01273 726266) or email brighton@alzheimers.org.uk.

Activities for Severe Mental Health Project carers

Trip to Lewes Castle & Museum and Anne of Cleves House, plus lunch.

Sunday 18th September, 10:30am-2:30pm.

Meet at 10:30am outside the front entrance of Lewes train station. Walk to Lewes Castle & Museum to explore. Then we'll have lunch in a local café (venue to be decided). After that we'll visit Anne of Cleves House. Care for the Carers will pay for entrance fees, food and drink. Email richardp@cftc.org.uk or telephone [01323 738390](tel:01323 738390).

Uckfield Walking Group with café stop

Sunday 23rd October, 10:30am-12:30pm. Meet at 10:30am outside The Picture House cinema. A leisurely walk around Uckfield, through West Park Nature Reserve if weather permits, followed by a free soft drink and snack at Hartfields café or Mojave café on Uckfield High Street. Please contact Richard (as above) for details or to book.

Crowborough Walking Group with café stop

Sunday 20th November, 10:30am-12:30pm. Meet at 10:30am by the Sir Arthur Conan Doyle statue outside the Constitutional Club. A leisurely (albeit hilly) walk, followed by a soft drink and snack at Costa on the High Street. If you would prefer not to walk, you can meet us in the café only at 12 noon. Please contact Richard (as above) for details or to book.

Carer Experience - Rebecca Fuller

Rebecca Fuller is a public speaker and writer, promoting understanding about wellbeing, dementia and support for carers, you can read more on www.rebeccafuller.co.uk. Rebecca is a former carer for her mum and she shared her story with Care for the Carers

I was at university when I felt the full force of caring for my mum. She had struggled with mental illness and autistic spectrum disorder throughout my life; however, it was at this point that she had her worst emotional breakdown and the role reversal truly began. I became mum to my mum.



Caring for her consisted of trying to fulfil a continuous need. She needed to hear my voice, gain my reassurance and for me to guide her through her hourly struggles. I received desperate phone calls from her daily, I took her to endless appointments with health professionals, social workers, housing officers. In the majority of appointments no one listened to how truly traumatising the situation had become and other times they just shrugged and said the prognosis would not improve.

Acceptance of her condition and acknowledging my own grief has been beyond challenging. But we made it through. After moving her into three different properties within a year, she currently resides within an assisted housing facility and is getting on better. Some days I am desperately sad that I haven't been able to help mum more, other times there is the overbearing guilt. Then other days, I feel overwhelmed with frustration at the anger and destructive behaviour constantly aimed in my direction.

What has helped?

In one of the many appointments with social workers, somebody must have noticed the pain in my face and offered me a Carer's Assessment. This was the first time my role had been acknowledged and it made such a difference. The assessment went smoothly, and I really embraced the hour-long appointment where I was able to express the reality of my experience. The person carrying out the assessment shared such strong empathy and gained a real grasp on my experience, which was hugely validating. I can honestly say that conversation changed my life.

My advice

My strongest piece of advice for others in similar positions is, please know that you are not alone and that you are doing your best, even though it may not feel that way! There are support services for carers available and they can be so helpful. Supporting someone with a long-term condition is so unbelievably tough and I truly believe in ensuring that you look after yourself as much as you can, especially when you encounter those really challenging times.



If you are a carer and would like to know more about getting a Carer's Assessment, or other support available to you, please contact Care for the Carers on [01323 738390](tel:01323738390) or info@cftc.org.uk, we are here to help so that no one is left to care alone.



Carers Rights Day on Thursday 24th November 2022 is all about ensuring that carers understand their rights and are able to access the support that is available as soon as it is needed.

Carer's Assessment

All carers are entitled to a Carer's Assessment, to look at your caring role and how it affects your life and wellbeing. You can request a reassessment after a year, or sooner if your circumstances have changed. You can complete a Self-Assessment online - www.eastsussex.gov.uk/socialcare/carers/assessment or ask Adult Social Care to complete one with you by contacting East Sussex County Council's Health and Social Care Connect on [0345 608 0191](tel:03456080191).

If you'd like to speak to someone for further support and help, you can also call Care for the Carers Hub on [01323 738 390](tel:01323738390).



Financial entitlements

Carers are amongst those who are really feeling the pinch as living costs rise. Find out about the benefits that you and the person you care for are entitled to.



Hastings Representation and Advice Centre (HARC) provides a full benefit check and support service for carers across East Sussex. They can help with budgeting, access to unclaimed benefits and, if required, challenge benefit decisions. They also assist with other cost of living help, such as the Household Support Fund, including making applications on carer's behalf. For those in need, this can include vouchers for supermarket food, warm clothing, bedding, gas, electric, water and some other essential costs.

Your local Citizens Advice Bureau can also offer support with benefit claims, money management, debt advice and sources of financial assistance.

Energy costs help

HARC work closely with Energise Sussex Coast (ESC) and are able to refer directly for assistance with free energy advice, to help bring down the cost of energy and water bills. ESC will look at accessing government grants for energy efficiency measures such as draft proofing and insulation and help carers apply for the Warm Home Discount.

Every year, Carers Rights Day helps us:

- Ensure carers are aware of their rights
- Let carers know where to get help and support
- Raise awareness of the needs of carers

Read our Guide to Carers Rights for more information
bit.ly/CarersRightsCFTC



To contact HARC, visit The Advice and Community Hub, Renaissance House, London Road, St Leonards on Sea, TN37 6AN or telephone Benefits Helpline: [0333 344 0681](tel:03333440681) or the Advice Line: [01424 428375](tel:01424428375). Information is also available online: www.harcuk.com.

Citizens Advice - General Advice Freephone: [0800 144 8848](tel:08001448848), or CAB Consumer Helpline: [0808 223 1133](tel:08082231133), www.citizensadvice.org.uk.

Online Resources

Turn2Us, a national charity providing practical help to people who are struggling financially, has two new pages filled with practical advice and information on what cost of living support is available and extra help for 2022 with the energy schemes. Please visit bit.ly/Turn2UsCostOfLiving and bit.ly/Turn2UsEnergy2022

Tell Care for the Carers how the cost of living crisis is impacting on you and those you care for by joining one of our carers focus groups.

- Tuesday 13th September at the Victoria Pavilion, New Town, Uckfield 1.30-3.30pm (refreshments and cakes will be provided and cost of transport reimbursed)
- Friday 16th September 11.00am-12.30pm online
- Wednesday 21st September 7.30-8.30pm online

To book visit www.cftc.org.uk or phone **01323 738390**

Carers who are working

Carers juggling caring with paid work have the right to request flexible working, time off in emergencies and parental leave. The Employment Rights Act 1996 gives all employees the right to take a 'reasonable' amount of time off work to deal with an emergency involving a dependant. It is at the discretion of the employer whether time off is paid or unpaid.

Flexible working

If you are an employee with 26 weeks' continuous employment at the time you make an application, you have the right to request flexible working. You also have the right not to be discriminated against because you have made the request.

Before asking, think about what would work best for you and about the ways it would impact positively on your ability to do your job and perhaps suggest a trial period. Your employer does not have to grant your request to flexible working, however they must consider it and give a reason if they refuse it.

The East Sussex Carers Card

The card has three functions:

- Identifies you as a carer in an emergency
- Emergency respite plan
- A discount card

View the full directory of hundreds of services, local businesses, retail and leisure attractions at:
www.cftc.org.uk/get-a-carers-card or call 01323 738390.
See the latest offers below. Check full details, terms and conditions on the website directory, or get in touch with us.

The White Rock Hotel, Hastings **NEW!**

1-10 White Rock, Hastings, TN34 1JU

Tel: [01424 422240](tel:01424422240) Email: info@thewhiterockhotel.com

Website: www.thewhiterockhotel.com



Modern comfortable rooms, 24 hour reception, food and drink available all day and room service at no extra charge. **5% discount on room bookings for more than 2 nights when booking direct.** Subject to restrictions, (please ask). **Make the hotel aware you have a carers card when booking and show at check-in.**

The Sovereign Centre - SEN friendly fun sessions **NEW!** from May 22

Royal Parade, Eastbourne, BN22 7LQ

Tel: [01323 73882](tel:0132373882) Email: eastbourneleisure@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk

Website: www.eastbourneleisure.co.uk



Carers Card offer - 10% off casual entry fees for the gym or swimming pool. New SEN friendly fun pool session - first Saturday of every month (term time only) for 09:30 session which is the first of the day: www.eastbourneleisure.co.uk/sen
Disabled users can book tickets at the reduced rate and this includes the space for a carer free.

Hastings Contemporary

Rock-a-Nore Road, Hastings, TN34 3DW

Tel: [01424 728377](tel:01424728377) Email: info@hastingscontemporary.org

Website: www.hastingscontemporary.org

Championing modern and contemporary art through an ambitious programme of temporary exhibitions. The gallery sits among Hastings famous net huts, overlooking the beach. Opening hours: Wednesday to Sunday & Bank Holidays 11am-5pm. **One free adult entry with a Carers Card (valid for visits with or without the person you care for).**



Photo credit: Pete Jones

With an East Sussex Carers Card you can set up a CRESS (Carers Respite Emergency Support Service) plan as part of your carer's assessment. Care for the Carers can help you to set up a CRESS plan if you do not want a carer's assessment.

Discounts for carers

If you do not wish to put an emergency plan in place but would still like to benefit from discounts for carers, apply for a Carers Card directly from Care for the Carers: **Call [01323 738390](tel:01323738390), or visit www.cftc.org.uk/get-a-carers-card**

Show or mention the Carers Card with all offers and discounts. See terms.

This card is also available to parent carers. Please note: older versions of the emergency alert card are still valid to be used for Carers Card discounts.

You can get hospital parking for £1.70 at the Conquest Hospital, Hastings, and Eastbourne District General Hospital by showing your Carers Card.



Contact us

Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone

Email

Please complete. Post to Care for the Carers,
FREEPOST RTAC-GURC-XUJC Highlight House, 8 St Leonards Road, Eastbourne, BN21 3UH

I am a carer:

- ☐ Send me future editions of **CareLine** via email instead of post
- ☐ Send me **CareLine** by post
- ☐ Update my address
- ☐ Contact me about the help available
- ☐ I would like to be part of the **Carers Voices network**

I am no longer a carer:

- ☐ Reason _____
- ☐ Unsubscribe me from **CareLine**
- ☐ Send me the **"After Caring"** booklet