Autumn/Winter 2026
Charity no. 1074906

care for the carers
East Sussex

CareLine

The FREE magazine for unpaid carers in East Sussex



In this issue:

- Carers Rights
- Keep warm and well
- Carers Voices
- Delicious recipe
- Plus more!



Funded by East Sussex County Council
FUNDED BY NHS
A Network Partner of CARERS TRUST

Someone you know is a carer... but do they know it yet?

Carers RIGHTS DAY

Thursday 19 November 2026 is Carers Rights Day – the national campaign that brings organisations together to help carers know their rights and find out how to get the support they are entitled to.

The aim this year is to help people recognise sooner that they are a carer. It can take a long time for some, and often people never consider themselves to be a carer, simply being someone's partner, parent, family member, friend or neighbour. But they could be missing out on the support and rights available.

As a carer, you have rights which may help you access services, look after your health and wellbeing or could provide vital information and support in looking after your partner, family member or friend.

Find out what you're entitled to and help others do the same. Feel confident asking for what you need and challenge things when your rights are not being met.

From talking to friends, family and neighbours about caring, to championing better carer identification in our workplaces and services, we can all help people to recognise their caring role sooner. You can help spread the word using our resources at www.cftc.org.uk/CRD26

Find out more on pages 8-9.

Seasonal vaccines

Who is eligible?

COVID-19

- Residents in a care home for older adults
- All adults aged 75 years and over
- Persons aged 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed

nhs.uk/bookcovid

NHS
Surrey and Sussex

Free flu vaccine

- Anyone who is pregnant
- Children aged 2 to 3 years, school-aged children (Reception to Year 11) and children with certain long-term health conditions
- Adults aged 65 or over
- Adults aged 18 to 64 with certain long-term health conditions
- Main carers for an older or disabled person, or if you receive a carer's allowance
- People living with someone who has a weakened immune system
- People experiencing homelessness or staying in a homeless hostel or night shelter
- Frontline health and social care workers

nhs.uk/bookflu



Jennifer Twist

Welcome

to the latest issue of Careline, the magazine for everyone in East Sussex who cares for a relative, friend or neighbour who couldn't manage without your support.

In this issue, we're shining a light on carers' rights and carers' voices. We're taking time to reflect on what you told us over the summer, and as we look ahead to the winter months, we're planning further opportunities to hear from you.

Care for the Carers has proudly supported carers in East Sussex for 37 years. We are deeply grateful to everyone who makes our work possible.

We are also indebted to our wonderful volunteers for the amazing help they offer. Care for the Carers volunteers make a huge impact on the lives of local carers, through support offered within the counselling service, young carers' activities, making calls and conversations with the most isolated carers and helping carers access support available to them as Carers Champions. We share our heartfelt thanks, along with more stories about the impact volunteers make, on page 4.

Much of what we do is made possible through the statutory funded Carers Centre. The current contract, delivered by Care for the Carers since October 2019, runs until March 2028. East Sussex County Council, together with NHS Surrey and Sussex, has now begun the recommissioning process, and carers are being actively involved in co-designing the future service.

Alongside this Care for the Carers will be running seven local engagement sessions in January and February 2027. I hope to meet many of you there. Your voices fundamentally shape the services our charity provides, and your feedback directly influences our fundraising and the additional support we can offer through grants, donations, community contributions and corporate sponsorship. We are deeply grateful to everyone who makes our work possible.

As we head into winter, we are delighted to share a range of carers' events and activities, along with seasonal tips and information that we hope will be both helpful and uplifting.

With warm wishes for the winter season.



Jennifer Twist, Chief Executive

Contents

Carers Rights Day	2
News in Brief	4
Autumn recipe	5
Winter Warm and Well	6
Carers Rights	8
Events	10
Carers Survey	11

care for the carers
East Sussex

NEWS

Celebrating our volunteers!

In September, we held our Volunteer Celebration at the local carers centre in Uckfield, to recognise those who kindly give their time to help us support carers across East Sussex. The event gives volunteers the chance to meet, learn more about our charity's work, access training and be recognised and thanked for their support and commitment to carers. Jennifer Twist, our Chief Executive, thanked the volunteers for the incredible contribution every one of them makes to carers. As well as showing our appreciation to our wonderful volunteer team, we asked them to share their volunteer journeys which we will continue to gather over the coming months – so watch this space!



If you are interested in joining our team of volunteers or would like to find out more about the roles we have, please contact nicolam@cftc.org.uk. Our volunteer team helps us to reach more carers, highlighted by these interesting statistics and feedback from carers.

100%

Felt very satisfied with their volunteer experience at Care for the Carers

100%

Felt the quality of support received was very good

100%

Would recommend volunteering with Care for the Carers

Our volunteers give over 12,900 hours of their time annually to support unpaid carers and our work

THAT EQUATES TO ROUGHLY £233,298 IF THOSE HOURS WERE DELIVERED BY PAID STAFF

OUR CARERS IN TOUCH PROJECT INVOLVES PHONE CALLS MADE TO CARERS BY A TEAM OF VOLUNTEERS.

CARERS FEEDBACK:

'A LIFELINE FOR ISOLATED CARERS, YOU PROVIDED PRACTICAL & HANDS ON HELP. I VALUED AND APPRECIATED THE SUPPORT. THIS WAS INVALUABLE TO ME DURING AN EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TIME. THANK YOU'.

'AS I SPEND A LOT OF TIME ON MY OWN, IT IS GOOD TO HAVE A FRIENDLY PERSON TO CHAT TO'.

Thank you!

Once again, this summer we asked you to help give young carers a break by donating to our appeal. Your response was amazing, donating an incredible £3336. Thank you to everyone who donated.



LOOK OUT FOR OUR NEW WEBSITE COMING WITHIN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS!

CARROT, TOMATO AND LENTIL SOUP

A very easy to make, inexpensive and versatile soup using everyday ingredients. The soup is a great vehicle for other flavours. It is very nourishing and a complete meal with carbohydrates, vegetables and protein rich lentils. It takes 25 minutes on the stove or 15 minutes in an electric pressure cooker. You can make it in bulk and freeze it.

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons cooking oil of choice
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 onion, chopped
- 3 large carrots, diced into roughly 2cm cubes
- 4 medium tomatoes, chopped or a 400g tin of plum tomatoes
- 1 litre premade vegetable stock
- 1 cup red lentils, rinsed
- salt and pepper to taste

Makes 4 portions

Method:

Heat the oil in a medium saucepan on medium heat. Once heated, add the onions and cook for a few minutes before adding the garlic and chopped carrots. Cook for another few minutes and then add the chopped tomatoes, stock and lentils and simmer for about 20 minutes, or until the lentils and carrots are tender. Blend until smooth and add salt and pepper to taste.

VARIATIONS:



Immune boost - For an immune boosting Asian variation, just before you serve, take out one cup of soup and blend together with a tablespoon of raw, grated ginger and one clove of chopped raw garlic. Return this to the soup, re-blend & season to taste. Serve with some shredded spring onions and some soy sauce.

Thai soup - Fry a tablespoon of green curry paste in a little coconut oil and add it together with a cup of light coconut milk to the soup. Top this with fresh coriander and sliced chilli.

Indian twist - Add ½ cup of cream and finish off with a Tarka or spiced oil – to do this, heat a tablespoon of oil or gee and add a teaspoon each of cumin, coriander and mustard seeds. Cook this until the seeds start to pop and then add a teaspoon each of chopped garlic and chilli which only need a moment in the pan. Add the hot oil and spices to the soup and top with lots of chopped coriander.

Keep warm and well this winter

During the Autumn, we often appreciate the changes in the natural world when we are out and about, but understandably thoughts turn to the changing weather and how to stay warm and well over the winter.



You may worry about the cost of heating your home, and how to keep yourself and those you care for warm and safe. Here we share some advice about how to stay warm and well this winter.

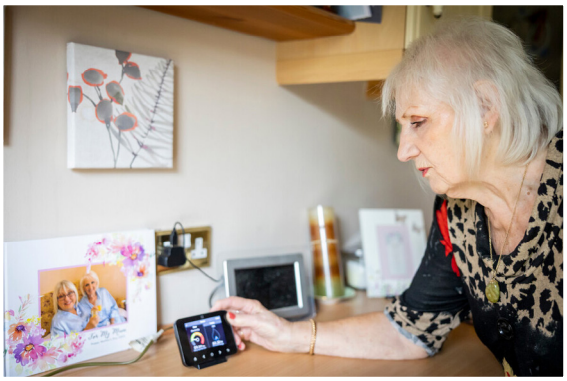
Firstly, it's important to note that keeping yourself and your home warm is important for your health, and it's recommended you heat it to at least 18ºC in the rooms that you regularly use. Find out where you can get support in the panel below.

Keep Warm

- Be prepared for cold weather - have food in and make sure you have enough medicine.
- Keep active and move about the house each hour if you can.
- Wearing several layers of thinner clothing can keep you warmer than one thicker layer.
- Have hot drinks and meals.
- Use hot water bottles or electric blankets (not together) to keep your body warm – don't just save them for bed time.
- Get heating and cooking appliances serviced.
- Sign up to the Priority Services Register for extra help from your energy or water company – see more below.
- Check the weather forecast and the news so you can plan to keep yourself and others safe during periods of cold weather.

Keep Well

- Stock up on food and medicines before cold weather.
- Take up the offer of COVID and flu vaccinations.
- Maintain good hand hygiene
- Keep an eye out for damp and mould. You can find information from the Energy Saving Trust on how to avoid and get rid of the problem. You can also contact the Warm Home Service for advice.



Information in this article has been provided by
East Sussex County Council's Warm East Sussex

You can contact the Warm Home Check Service for advice and support.
Visit **www.warmeastsussex.org.uk**, text WARM to 80011, or call **0800 464 7307**.

Speak to your GP, pharmacist, carer or key worker for advice, or call us at Care for the Carers on **01323 738390** or visit **www.cftc.org.uk**.

Winter Warmer Events

This Winter we are hosting a series of FREE Winter Warmer events to help you and those you look after to stay warm and well over the colder months.

- Collect a free heated throw and further energy efficiency and home safety goodies
- Chat with other carers over a warm drink and tasty refreshments
- Talk to our carer support team
- Meet partners like Energise Sussex Coast and East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, and much more



Dates and locations

For more information, keep an eye on our social media or please contact Mark Townsend, Communities Team Leader, marktownsend@cftc.org.uk or call 01323 738390.

Join us at our Christmas Fair 2026!

Come and celebrate Christmas with Care for the Carers, buy gifts and decorations (or treat yourself to something), visit our elves in the Secret Santa room, enter our fabulous raffle and enjoy delicious refreshments.

There's so much to enjoy with a mix of stalls from local artists, small businesses and crafty carers, activities, prizes and a festive atmosphere.

Entry: FREE, just drop in
Saturday 12th December, 11am – 3pm
Quaker Meeting House, Friars Walk, Lewes BN7 2LE

Know your rights

19 November 2026



If you are caring for someone who could not manage without your help, you have certain protections in law, mainly through the Care Act 2014. Taking some time to understand these rights can help you to feel empowered in your caring role.

These rights are there to support you and you may find that they can make a big difference.

What rights do I have as a carer?

- Right to have your needs assessed in a **Carers Assessment** – see more on the next page.
- **Financial entitlements** such as benefits checks.
- You can **ask your GP practice to identify you as a carer** on your patient record. Caring can take its toll on your health and so it's helpful for your GP to know about any extra pressures you are facing that might have an impact on your physical health or emotional wellbeing. Your surgery will be able to offer free vaccinations and you may have priority access to some support such as health checks and in some cases, more flexible appointments.
- You can ask at the Reception in your GP practice to be added to the Carers Register or use a template letter – phone us to request a copy. If you and the person you care for are registered at different GP practices, let both surgeries know so both records are updated.
- You have a right to request a **free flu jab** (if you are the main carer for an older, disabled, or vulnerable person, or if you receive Carer's Allowance).
- If you are a carer and the person you care for is being **discharged from hospital**, the hospital must identify and consult with you, where possible. Please do your best to let hospital staff know that you are a carer and that you have this right.
- The right to request **flexible working** from day one in a job.
- Reasonable time off in emergencies related to a dependant.
- In 2024 the Carer's Leave Act became law – giving employees juggling work with unpaid care the legal right to up to five days unpaid leave per annum, which are vital to working carers. Some employers go a step further and offer this as paid leave.

Your right to a carers assessment

Perhaps one of the most impactful of your rights as a carer, is the right to have your needs taken into account. Getting a carer's assessment could be the first step to gaining vital support. It's your chance to discuss the help you need as a carer.

Don't be put off by the word 'assessment'. This is not a test but a chance to let your local council know how your caring responsibilities affect you physically and emotionally. They will use the assessment to find out what support you need, whether you're willing or able to carry on caring, what you want to achieve in your daily life and whether you qualify for help.

You can have a carers assessment if you are over 18 and provide regular unpaid care for someone, no matter how much or what sort of care.

How do I request a carers assessment?
You can request an assessment directly from Adult Social Care, by phoning 0345 60 80 191, or you can contact us and we can make a referral for you. You can also ask for an annual review of your assessment.

How can I prepare for it?
Along with details of your GP, your contact details and those of the person you are caring for, it is useful to have a think in advance about what sort of care you provide (e.g. emotional support, managing finances, keeping someone safe from harm), and how your caring role affects your life. Consider what your needs are right now and what your needs might be in future including if you cannot continue, or need a break from, your caring responsibilities. You could write a list of things that you are no longer able to do or find hard because of caring, such as working, studying, cleaning your home, exercising, socialising, or maintaining a hobby.

During the assessment
Be as honest and open as you can. If you put on a brave face or play down the impact and difficulties of your caring role, you could miss out on vital information and support.

What happens afterwards?
The council will work out whether your needs are eligible for support. If so, they will create a support plan for you. They might provide you with care and support directly or provide it to the person you care for.

If you're not eligible for support, the council must still give you information and advice on where you can go for help.

Remember you can come to Care for the Carers for support at any time if you care for someone - no problem is too small.

You can find out more information about you rights on our website at
www.cftc.org.uk/resources-for-carers/what-are-my-rights
or contact us on 01323 738390

Events

Christmas Wreath Making, Wednesday 16 December, 2.30 - 4.30pm or 6 - 8pm, Bale House, Fairlight, Hastings Country Park Visitor Centre, TN35 4AD. No experience needed. Join us for Christmas Wreath making sessions with artist Rachel Grimes. Take your wreath home! No experience needed. Festive refreshments included.

People in Nature
From March, Care for the Carers will offer a range of nature based creative activities for adult and young carers in Hastings Country Park and in Ticehurst. To express your interest in attending a session, please e-mail info@cftc.org.uk with subject 'People in Nature List' or call us.

At Isabel Blackman Centre, Winding Street, Old Town, Hastings...
- Pop in for a free hot drink and snack in the café on the 4th Friday each month, 10am – 12pm. You can also book a hand massage between 10.30am and 12.30pm.
- If you are over 50, access a free exercise class. You can be joined by the person you care for, every Wednesday, 3-4pm. Contact the centre with enquiries and to book 01424 235535.

At Victoria Pavilion, Uckfield...
Mindful Crafty Tuesdays, 3rd Tuesday each month, 1.30 – 3pm. Fun, free creative sessions with local artist Amber Bailey. Meet other carers and make something you can be proud of! Materials and refreshments included. Book by contacting Hannah at info@cftc.org.uk or call 01323 738390.

Join Association of Carers at their carers' café sessions...
With a range of guest speakers and relaxing, creative or social activities to enjoy with the person you care for.
Bexhill - 2nd Monday each month, 1-3pm, Pebsham Community Hub, Seabourne Road, Bexhill, TN40 2SW.
Carers Café in Newhaven - Tuesday 1 December seasonal celebration, then 1st Tuesday each month, 11am - 1pm, Newhaven Enterprise Centre.
Stretch and Relax – online via MS Teams, 3rd Thursday each month, 2.30-3.30pm. Contact AoC for the Teams link.
Hastings Dance Café - last Wednesday of the month, 1.30-3.30pm, Tesco Extra Community Room, Church Wood Road, St Leonards.
For more information contact: 01424 722309 info@associationofcarers.org.uk

DISC Dementia Support groups
A safe space to talk about your role as a carer and to gain information and support. No need to book a place, you are welcome to just go along!

- Eastbourne – 1st Tuesday: 10.30am–12 noon, Faraday House, BN22 9BH.
- Seaford – 2nd Tuesday: 10–11.30am, Crossway Church, BN25 1NP.
- Uckfield – 2nd Wednesday: 10.30am–12 noon, Civic Centre, Oakleaf Room, TN22 1AE.
- St Leonards – 2nd Friday: 11am–12 noon, Office 11, Robsack Centre, TN38 9TW.
- Lewes – 3rd Monday: 10–11am, Subud Centre, BN7 2DS.
- Battle – 3rd Tuesday: 10.30–11.30am, Battle Baptist Church, TN33 0EG.
- Rye – 3rd Wednesday: 10–11.30am, Tilling Green Community Centre, TN31 7BE.
- Bexhill – 4th Wednesday: 11.15am–12.15pm, Pebsham Community Centre, TN40 2SW.
- Crowborough – 4th Monday: 10.30am–12 noon, Oasis Church, TN6 1AS.
- Hailsham – 4th Tuesday: 10.30–11.30am, James West Community Centre, BN27 3FY.

Contact: www.discdementiasupport.org

Carers Voices
- Your views shaping future services for carers

Thank you to all the carers who completed our Annual Survey this summer. We had 111 responses. Here we share a few of the findings...

90% of carers feel that the information, advice and guidance we provide has helped, and for almost 70% it helped remain in the caring role. For 83%, advice is available when you need it. We heard from carers who always (6%) or sometimes (29%) need to access our help outside of usual office hours – we are working on developing alternative options for this in 2027.

We heard that wellbeing and social activities have helped you remain in your caring role and have made a difference to your wellbeing Having a break, making time for yourself and knowing support is available when you need it are very important. For carers who have family close by, their support is essential.

"One to one service is amazing, and it is great to have help to access grants. You have helped me keep my sanity."

"I'm at the start of my carers journey but have had nothing but support and encouragement from everyone, thank you x."

It is also great to hear that local and specialist services that we fund, like DISC Dementia Support and Carers O'Clock are making a real difference in carers' lives.

The impact of caring

A third of carers who shared how caring affects them mentioned the inability to take time out to have a break from caring, running on low, with impact on sleep and general wellbeing. Some carers spoke about losing their own identity at times. The lack of understanding among friends and professionals is an issue for many. But many shared the positive impact peer support had on them and credit friendships made through carers activities and groups as highlights of becoming a carer. 90% of carers often or sometimes feel positive about their caring role.

Influence how services can adapt to meet your needs

The current Carers Centre contract delivered by Care for the Carers ends in March 2028. East Sussex County Council are recommissioning jointly with NHS Surrey and Sussex and are involving carers in the co-design process.

Care for the Carers will run five independent sessions with carers in January and February, one in each borough and district, and two on-line (evening and weekend). We want to discuss what our charity should provide to assist you in your caring role from 2027 onwards.

To join the session call us on 01323 738390 or email info@cftc.org.uk

The East Sussex Carers Card

View the full directory of hundreds of services, local businesses, retail and leisure attractions at:

www.cftc.org.uk/carerscard 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 free carers card...

- **Identifies you as a carer in an emergency**
- **Gives you the option to connect to a back-up respite plan**
- **Acts as a discount card**



Discounts for carers

You can have a carers card with or without an emergency respite plan.

To find out more call 01323 738390, or visit www.cftc.org.uk/ carerscard

This card is also available to parent carers.

Parking at Eastbourne DGH and Hastings Conquest
You will pay no more than £2.20 per visit with your Carers Card.
Show your card at the parking office (kiosk) prior to departing to get the discount, as closing times are 8pm (weekdays) and 6pm (weekend).

Shine Yoga Elite Lux Studios, 19 Station Street, Eastbourne BN21 4RG
Mobile: 07942 866159 Email: shineyoga.uk@outlook.com
Website: www.shineyoga.uk
Providing Yoga and Yin Yoga Classes weekly, practicing encouraging flexibility, positive mental health, inner calm and building confidence. One-to-one and private bookings. **10% Discount to all carers and Blue Light workers.**

Soul Haven 23 Mill Drove, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 5AB
Tel: 07761 374093 Email: chris@soulhaven.co.uk
Website: www.soulhaven.co.uk
I offer Reiki treatments and training and Flower Essence Consultations to support carers with the many emotions and challenges they face. **15% discount on Reiki treatments, 35% discount on Level 1 Reiki training, 20% discount on Flower Essence Consultation.**

NAT20 Gaming 1 Market Square, High Street, Hailsham, East Sussex, BN27 1AQ
Tel: 01323 620 070 Instagram: @nat20gamingcom Facebook: Nat20Gaming

Tabletop gaming shop and hub offer a range of games sessions. We are inclusive and accessible, and run a programme of sessions for groups including: Autistic Friendly session (14-21 yrs), SEND, 12-16yrs, D&D, Over 30's, LGBTIA+.

Price per game session: £1.50 for under 16's, £3.50 for 16+. 10% off all purchases in the shop (show your card before purchase).

Send a Smile Gifting Limited
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If you no longer wish to receive Careline please let us know on 01323 738390, email info@cftc.org.uk or write to us at FREEPOST RUHH-UCBK-KBAE, Faraday House, 1 Faraday Close, Eastbourne, BN22 9BH.