

# Devon Carers

You Care, We Care  
Summer 2023

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Save Paper, Save the Environment

Receive your copy of the magazine by email: contact **03456 434 435** also available online **[www.devoncarers.org.uk](http://www.devoncarers.org.uk)**

**[www.devoncarers.org.uk](http://www.devoncarers.org.uk)**  
**03456 434 435**



# Welcome to the Devon Carers magazine!

For those of you new to Devon Carers, we support unpaid carers to maintain their health, wellbeing, and independence by providing the information and advice they need in their caring role.

Our free support services for adults caring for people 18 years plus include:

**Helpline:** open from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday, and 9am to 1pm Saturday where you can talk to our advisors during these hours **03456 434 435**.

**Webchat:** with our Helpline during our opening hours by clicking on the 'ask' button on **www.devoncarers.org.uk** Outside of these hours, automated answers will appear, which may answer your question, if not leave your email address and our Helpline will answer your query during opening hours.

The Helpline is not able to offer medical advice. For the latest NHS information and advice visit: **www.nhs.uk**

If you become unwell and are worried about looking after the person you care for, contact Care Direct **0345 1551 007**.

**Website:** with up to date information and guidance for unpaid carers: **www.devoncarers.org.uk**

**Peer Support:** If you haven't already accessed our Peer Support, now is the time to contact us, visit: **https://devoncarers.org.uk/support/peer-support/** or call our Helpline **03456 434 435**.

**Carers Skills Workshops:** We offer online and face-to-face sessions, view them in this magazine or visit:

Online workshops: **https://www.devoncarers.org.uk/support/training/online-training/**

Face-to-face workshops: **https://devoncarers.org.uk/support/training/face-to-face-training/**

**Health and Wellbeing Checks/Reviews (Carers Assessments):** will be carried out over the telephone where possible. We will only make home visits where this is essential, AND an individual risk assessment shows this is safe for carers and staff to do so. During any essential visits, we will observe social distancing, face-covering and hand sanitising rules.

**Please note:** Services are provided on behalf of Devon County Council; if you do not want your information recorded on their systems, please inform our Helpline **03456 434 435**.

We apologise if you have recently informed us of no longer being a carer and have still received this magazine. We are in the process of working through our deletions and appreciate your patience. All information correct at time of going to press.

We would love your thoughts on our new-look magazine!  
Email us at: **online@devoncarers.org.uk**



# Seaton to become first carer friendly town in Devon

Seaton, a small seaside town in East Devon, warmly welcomed members of our Community Engagement Team during March as we worked with the town to become carer friendly.

The Carer Friendly Devon scheme is delivered by Devon Carers to encourage local businesses and organisations to value the role of unpaid carers in their community. The scheme enables them to consider what they can do to support and make life a little easier for carers whilst using their services.

Sally, a carer for her husband is looking forward to benefiting from the scheme, commented *"It's such a fabulous idea. I will be able to use local shops knowing that they are more aware of the needs of carers and will feel far more supported and understood."*

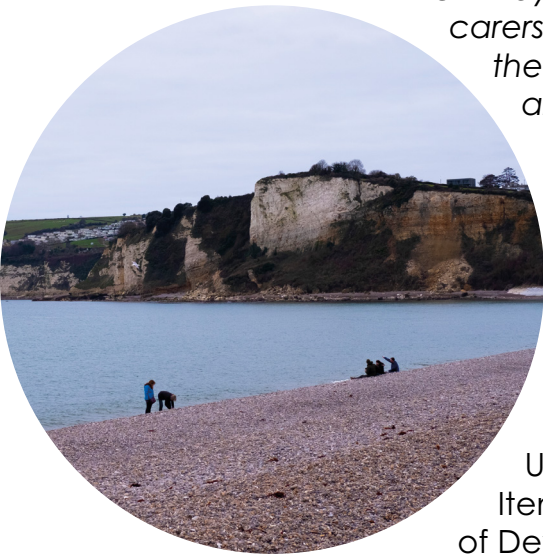
Businesses and organisations were enthusiastic to hear about the benefits of being carer friendly; from offering a quiet time to shop, maybe providing a chair for the cared for person while their carer shops, an understanding of the needs of carers whilst using their services, to possible discounts or reduced/free entry to attractions, to name but a few.

We were encouraged by so many organisations who were keen to become involved. Jo Hemery, Deputy Clerk for Seaton Town Council, commented *"We are delighted to sign up as a Carer Friendly Devon organisation. Unpaid carers make a huge contribution to those they support, as well as the communities in which they live. We will support carers in Seaton by promoting the advice and services that are available to them via our social media platforms and website and ensuring that printed information is accessible to them in the Council's office."*

Other businesses and organisations who also signed up include: Seaton Tramway, Seaton Library (Libraries Unlimited), Seaton Post Office, Itemdrop, Mandy's Must Haves, Taste of Devon Butchers, the Owl and Pyramid Bookshop, Barista Fourteen, R.E.D.S with many more in the process of joining us.

We'd also like to say a big thank you to the local venues who enabled us to hold information stands throughout our time in Seaton and to help us raise awareness of the challenging role that unpaid carers carry out. These include Seaton Town Council, Seaton Library, Tesco Seaton and Re-Store Waffle Café Seaton.

**Do you own a business, organisation, venue or attraction which would like to become part of our Carer Friendly Devon scheme? For more information visit:**  
<https://devoncarers.org.uk/community/carers-friendly-devon/carers-friendly-communities/>



# Help us to raise awareness

## Carers Week 5th-11th June

Carers Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring, highlight the challenges unpaid carers face and recognise the contribution they make to families and communities throughout the UK. It also helps people who don't see themselves as having caring responsibilities to identify as carers and access much-needed support.

This year's theme is '**Recognising and supporting carers in the community.**' We are asking everyone to help us raise awareness of carers and to thank them for the invaluable role they carry out.

We are pleased to announce that we will be joined by several organisations this year and we will be running our ever-popular 'Mile with a smile' campaign again.

One of these organisations is Libraries Unlimited, which delivers libraries across Devon and Torbay. Colin Bray - Service Development Manager Health & Well Being - commented "We are committed to supporting carers with their everyday needs. Whether this is finding the right information or book, attending one of our events and simply having somewhere friendly to go, we welcome all carers."

He continued "In Carers Week we will be raising awareness of the critical role carers play in supporting others. Several of our libraries will host Devon Carers stands for people to access information about their free services. We will also be promoting books which highlight carers and their important role."

Many of our other Carer Friendly Devon supporters will also be taking part by offering discounts or free incentives to enable carers to take a break from caring.

These include the National Trust Estates who have kindly agreed to host our information stands, where we invite everyone to pop along to chat with us, enjoy a walk around their breathtaking grounds or maybe join us for a picnic!

Paula Clarke - National Trust Volunteering & Community Manager - Dartmoor - commented "We've been working in partnership with Devon Carers for over three years, providing carers with some well-deserved time out in beautiful surroundings and ensuring our staff and volunteers access carer awareness training. Castle Drogo has also become a Carer Friendly Devon Supporter, which values carers visiting the property and estate, as well as supporting staff and volunteers who are carers. We are very pleased that many of our venues are taking part in Carers Week this year and are offering free entry for carers on our special event days."

**National Trust Carers Week event days: Please bring your Devon Carers ID card for free entry.**

Location	Day/Date
Killerton Estate	Monday 5th June 10am to 4.30pm (house opens at 11am)
Parke	Tuesday 6th June 9.30am to 12.30pm
Knightshayes	Tuesday 6th June 10am to 4.30pm
Castle Drogo	Wednesday 7th June 10am to 4.30pm
Lydford Gorge	Thursday 8th June 1pm to 4.30pm
Al La Ronde	Friday 9th June 10.30am to 3.30pm





Carers will also be able to enjoy one of Devon's top attractions by travelling through part of East Devon on Seaton Tramway.

Nicola Stone - Seaton Tramway Director and Learning, Activity & Interpretation Manager - commented "We are delighted to take part in Carers Week where we will be offering a special day for carers on Friday 9th June. By presenting their Devon Carers ID card they will be issued with a free Explorer Ticket for unlimited travel all day on Seaton Tramway. We hope to enable carers to enjoy some 'me time' on our heritage-style trams, as they enjoy travelling through Seaton Wetlands and alongside the beautiful River Axe Estuary."

Our 'Mile with a smile' campaign also returns this year with even more people wanting to participate. We ask everyone to walk, roll, stroll or jog a mile to contribute to our aim of 350 miles, the total perimeter of Devon! With people taking a photo of themselves smiling on their mile and sharing them on social media by tagging **#milewithasmile**, we hope to raise awareness of carers throughout Devon.

One of our new organisations keen to ensure carers can take time out by enjoying the countryside includes Wild East Devon. Amelia Davies - Engagement & Participation Officer told us "We are very pleased to be able to support Carers Week, we have even created some carer friendly routes! The first is at Seaton Wetlands which is a wheelchair friendly route, where you can stroll and roll while enjoying fantastic views over Blackhole Marsh. The second is on slightly rougher terrain at Trinity Hill Nature Reserve, where you will be treated to a walk with stunning views over Axminster. We have also created visual routes on the Relive App to enable you to plan ahead!"

Many organisations who were involved last year are also participating again. Westbank

Community Health & Care's Walking

for Health Coordinator Claire Ridge commented "As a Devon-based charity this is a campaign close to our hearts, so we are very happy to be supporting 'Mile with a smile' again! We provide free, guided walks across Exeter, Mid-Devon and Westbank areas and we meet many people in varying stages of their caring journey. We often refer people to Devon Carers and it is so uplifting to hear how helpful their services are."

We will also be holding free information and advice stands at various locations throughout Devon so pop along to chat with us. They include; John Lewis in Exeter, Trago Mills, Newton Abbot, North Devon Hospital and libraries across Devon including; Newton Abbot, Okehampton, Sidmouth, Torrington and Tiverton with more joining us soon!

We'd love to see your photos! Tag **#milewithasmile** on social media with your miles travelled (we even have gifs so do add them!) or email them to **online@devoncarers.org.uk**  
**By sending us your photo you are giving us permission to use it in our promotion of our campaign on social media, website and in our magazine.**

Alternatively, you can just let us know how many miles you have completed without sending a photo by emailing **online@devoncarers.org.uk**

**For updates on our Carers Week events, please follow our social media and visit <https://devoncarers.org.uk/community/carers-week/> or call our Helpline 03456 434 435.**



# Cost of living top tips

Carers UK stated in their Heading for Crisis: caught between caring and rising costs report\* carers were 'having to dip into their savings, use credit cards, and cut back on essentials to keep the person they care for warm and healthy.' With '1 in 6 unpaid carers in debt as a result of their caring role and their financial situation, increasing to 2 in 5 for unpaid carers in receipt of Carers Allowance' it is more important than ever to follow top tips to help ease the pressure.

**We hope that you will find the following tips helpful:**



**Low-cost, healthy meals:** Many cheaper 'value' meals include higher levels of salt and sugar than is healthy. Cut the cost of shopping by buying fruit and vegetables in season or frozen alternatives. Avoid waste by using leftovers for different meals, such as soup, frittatas, or pasta bakes. For more ideas visit the British Heart Foundation - Heart Matters: <http://ow.ly/e09k50Nxonc>



**Maximise your income:** Are you accessing all of the finances you might be entitled to as a carer? Visit the Government's website for helpful information and to check what benefits you might be eligible for: <https://www.gov.uk/browse/benefits/help-for-carers>



**Minimise your outgoings:** Are you paying for something that you no longer use such as gym membership or tv on-demand subscriptions? Move to a cheaper supplier who provides the same service (remember to factor in any cancellation charges) such as insurance, loans, credit cards, mobile phone bills etc.



**Do you know there are broadband social tariffs?:** These reduced tariffs are available for people who receive mean-tested state benefits but varies between providers. For more information visit: <http://ow.ly/z95X50NCnTy>



**Struggling to pay for energy, water, food or other essential items?:** If you pay your council tax to Devon County Council visit their website on how to access the Household Support Fund and other cost saving ideas <https://www.devon.gov.uk/cost-of-living/>

For more cost of living tips visit: <https://devoncarers.org.uk/information-and-advice/handling-my-finances/help-with-the-cost-of-living-crisis/>

\*Carers UK Head for Crisis report: [https://www.carersuk.org/media/q33ba3ae/heading-for-crisis\\_1-3.pdf](https://www.carersuk.org/media/q33ba3ae/heading-for-crisis_1-3.pdf)



**Our first Caring Out Loud podcast is available now!**

The second episode will be online mid-May, to listen to them visit: <https://podfollow.com/caring-out-loud>



# Carers stories

## Volunteering brings smiles all round

Volunteers are the backbone of many charitable organisations and that's certainly true of Devon Carers where volunteers provide a huge variety of support. But what motivates someone to volunteer? For Kate Williamson, it was the knowledge and awareness of how much Devon Carers had helped her mother when she became a full-time unpaid carer for Kate's stepfather after he had a serious stroke.

*"Mum received a lot of information and support from Devon Carers and went on to become an active member of the local carers support group herself. After my stepfather died they became even more important to her, giving her a purpose as a volunteer."*

She continued *"Sadly, mum herself became poorly and had problems with her vision and I began to spend more time looking after her as her primary carer, helping her to live independently until her death in autumn 2019."*

*"It took me a while to come to terms with it all, but when I did, I decided I wanted to volunteer for a charity that had a personal connection and whose aims I could relate to."*

Kate contacted Devon Carers through a website which advertised volunteering roles. After speaking to the Volunteering team to discuss the roles available, she signed up as a Telephone Support Volunteer. She received induction training and completed relevant courses that helped prepare her for the role. This involves calling carers to offer a listening ear and advising them of the support services Devon Carers and other organisations can offer.

She commented *"I was a bit anxious about taking on this role, but it's been a positive, friendly experience. Devon Carers make you feel valued as a volunteer and part of the team. The role is flexible on timing and there's no pressure to commit to more than you feel able. Their whole ethos is that of a caring community and that applies to how they look after their volunteers, everyone is warm and considerate."*

*"Although it is still early days in my volunteering role, the carers I've spoken to value the opportunity to talk to someone not directly involved. I've found it rewarding being able to offer support to other people, especially having similar shared experiences as a carer."*

*"It's uplifting to feel I'm now using skills and knowledge that I gained at what was often a stressful and sad time to a positive effect."*

*"As a volunteer, you can acquire new skills which might help in your personal life, to take on another volunteering role, or go back into the workplace. Shortly I'll be attending Fire Safety and Equality workshops, useful things to learn and know."*

And with Kate's mum being her motivation for becoming a volunteer, it's a connection that she's sure her mum would approve of.

*"I was uncertain at first about how I'd cope, but I've gained in confidence from it," said Kate. "Now when I'm chatting to carers it gives me an inward smile knowing that mum would be pleased and proud of how I'm helping others like she did."*

**Kate was interviewed by fellow carer Jo Earlam.**

**If you are interested in finding out more about the various volunteering roles with Devon Carers email [volunteering@devoncarers.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@devoncarers.org.uk) for an informal chat with our Volunteering team.**



# Carers Skills Workshops



Carers have told us that training is very beneficial to supporting them in their caring role. We have devised a series of online, real-time and face-to-face Carers Skills Workshops, where you can learn in the comfort of your own home, or in a Covid-secure venue.

It is essential to book your place. No booking is guaranteed until you have received confirmation from our training team.

To find out more about the workshop content, please visit: For live, online sessions: <https://www.devoncarers.org.uk/support/training/online-training/> For face-to-face sessions: <https://www.devoncarers.org.uk/support/training/face-to-face-training/>

To book your place or if you have any queries about our workshops email: [training@devoncarers.org.uk](mailto:training@devoncarers.org.uk) with the workshop name, date, your name and date of birth. Please do not contact the venue.

## KEY:



Live, online  
Zoom  
workshops



Face-to-face  
workshops at  
a venue

## Combining single parenthood & being an unpaid carer

Being a single parent and an unpaid carer can present its own unique set of challenges. In this live, real-time zoom session we will:

- Identify the personal challenges you face
- Discuss strategies and tips with other carers, to help manage and potentially improve these challenges

Wednesday 19th July

10.30am to 12.30pm

Online on Zoom

## How to use your I.T devices

Do you have a tablet or laptop that you would like to use, but lack the confidence to do so? In this small group workshop you will receive individual tutored support, to help you use your device more confidently. In this face-to-face session we will:

- Allow you to bring your own IT device and discover how to use it to communicate with friends and family (through email or video call) or to search the internet
- Explore the topic that you want to be able to master, for example; online shopping

Tuesday 6th June

10.00am to 12.00pm

Exeter CoLab, Wat Tyler House, 3 King William Street, Exeter, EX4 6PD

Tuesday 18th July

11.00am to 1.00pm

The Courtenay Centre, Kingsteignton Road, Newton Abbot, TQ12 2QA



### Basic first aid skills



Caring for someone can be a worry if the person you care for suddenly becomes ill or has an accident. This practical and interactive session will focus on life threatening conditions. In this face-to-face session we will:

- Inform you of how to safely approach a scene
- Complete a casualty assessment, place someone in the recovery position and understand why we do it
- Perform CPR and treat a choking casualty safely
- Discuss common injuries; bleeds, fractures and burns
- Give you time to ask Q&A's

Thursday 25th May	1.30pm to 3.30pm	TASS, The Anchorage Centre, Chapel Street, Tavistock, PL19 8AG
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### Managing challenging behaviour for carers dealing with mood disorders



Dealing with the mental and emotional changes in the person you care for can be the most challenging aspect of your caring role.

In this live, real-time Zoom or face-to-face session we will:

- Give you the opportunity to meet others experiencing similar issues
- Discuss ways of coping
- Look at how your own wellbeing can be supported or improved



Wednesday 31st May	10.30am to 12.30pm	Online on Zoom
Tuesday 27th June		Online on Zoom
Friday 14th July		Manor Hotel, The Beacon, Exmouth, EX8 2AG

### Caring at a distance



You do not have to live with someone to be an unpaid carer! You might support a neighbour, regularly take someone shopping, or live in another county and phone them every day, if this enables a person to continue living independently, you are an unpaid carer. In this live, real time Zoom session we will:

- Talk about the services available from Devon Carers
- Discuss the problems you might face whilst providing support
- Look at the solutions to help you continue caring
- Discuss what to do when the support you give is no longer enough

**\*NEW COURSE\***

Thursday 1st June	10.00am to 12.00pm	Online on Zoom
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### Looking after you; looking after your relationship



Are you getting your relationship 5-a-day? This two-part workshop will explore the changing nature of carers' relationships; with the cared for, family and friends.

In this live, real-time Zoom session we will:

- Look at relationships over time, an ever-changing situation
- Discuss communication vs connection - mistakes we make
- Chat about family history and how you relate
- Manage conflict, crisis, change and forgiveness
- Look at loneliness within a relationship
- Plan for an uncertain future and going forward

Tuesday 4th July (part 1)	10.30am to 12.30pm	Online on Zoom
Tuesday 11th July (part 2)		

### Sleep workshop



Do you have trouble sleeping? This workshop will enable you look at improving the quality of your sleep patterns to chat through related issues with other carers.

In this face-to-face session we will:

- Encourage informal discussions to identify sleep problems
- Find solutions that carers need to get a good night's sleep

Wednesday 7th June	11.00am to 1.00pm	The Alice Cross Centre, 1-3 Bitton Park Road, Teignmouth, TQ14 9BT
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### Thoughts, feelings & challenges



Have you ever given yourself the time to sit and think about your thoughts and feelings on being a carer? In this face-to-face session we will:

- Give you space to talk about your thoughts and feelings
- Explore the challenges you face and look at strategies to help you manage them

Wednesday 14th June	2.00pm to 4.00pm	Crediton Congregational Church, High Street, Crediton, EX17 3LF
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### Managing stress



Caring can be rewarding but also stressful at the same time. We will look at stress, its causes, symptoms, and a variety of ways of limiting its effect. We will use techniques to find methods that work for you. In this live, real-time Zoom or face-to-face session we will:

- Discuss stress, its symptoms and how it affects us
- Develop an understanding of mindfulness and resilience
- Equip you with coping strategies to help you manage stress
- Identify the point when further assistance may be needed
- Discuss what further support and advice is available if you are feeling overly stressed



Thursday 15th June	10.30am to 12.30pm	Exeter CoLab, Wat Tyler House, King William Street, Exeter, EX4 6PD
Wednesday 28th June	2.00pm to 4.00pm	Online on Zoom

### Dementia – when the bathroom becomes a battlefield



If you care for someone with dementia, personal care can become a challenge. In this live, real-time Zoom session we will:

- Chat about clothes which are easier to get dressed in
- Discuss pain, discomfort and the fear those with dementia may feel
- Talk about the importance of language and routine
- Look at easier ways to clean teeth and shave
- Talk about Agnosia - not recognising faces

Friday 16th June	10.30am to 12.00pm	Online on Zoom
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### Unpaid carers & the menopause



Caring for others can be stressful but with the added mental and physical pressures of the menopause, it can make coping even more challenging.

In this live, real-time Zoom session we will:

- Talk about menopausal issues you are experiencing
- Discuss strategies to cope with these issues and how this will enable you to cope with your caring role

Wednesday 21st June	10.30am to 12.30pm	Online on Zoom
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## Assertiveness

Would you like to become more assertive in how you communicate with people? This workshop will give you practical skills to help you become more assertive.

In this face-to-face session we will:

- Help you understand why we communicate the way we do
- Eliminate resentment in your communication
- Give you practical skills to speak out and how to deal with confrontational people
- Help you to eliminate the need for others' approval
- Discuss how to take control of your life choices
- Set boundaries without confrontation or guilt



Monday 19th June

1.30pm to 4.00pm

Honiton Methodist Church, Chapel Street,  
Honiton, EX14 1EU

## How to cope as a carer

Would you like to learn some strategies on how to cope as a carer?

In this live, two-part real-time Zoom session we will:

- **Part 1** - Look at self-care including eating, exercise, sleep, alcohol and smoking. Advice on being organised, rewarding yourself and taking time out (and not to feel guilty about it)
- Chat about using NHS services effectively and other sources of practical help
- **Part 2** - Coping mentally and emotionally discussing feelings of guilt, resentment, anger, loneliness, loss (of the person you were and the future you were hoping for). Accepting help (not just saying I am fine) and advice on managing unhelpful suggestions, when you are busy contending with a caring role

**\*NEW COURSE\***

Monday 19th June (part 1)

10.30am to 12.00pm

Online on Zoom

Monday 3rd July (part 2)



## Looking at our feelings as carers

Carer's lives are punctuated with challenges and issues. Some changes will be welcome, but others need adjusting to, and may lead to feelings associated with grief.

In this face to face session we will:

- Look at pre-grieving/grief and adapting to change
- Discuss that grief is not always about death and dying. It also occurs when life changes – both expected and unexpected

**\*NEW COURSE\***

Thursday 22nd June

11.00am to 1.00pm

TASS, The Anchorage Centre, Chapel Street,  
Tavistock, PL19 8AG



## Looking at the challenges of caring for a parent who has dementia

Are you an unpaid carer of a parent that has dementia, and are you experiencing particular difficulties and problems? In this live real-time Zoom session we will:

- Identify the issues you are personally facing caring for a parent with dementia
- Discuss strategies and solutions with other carers to help you resolve these difficulties

Wednesday 5th July

6.00pm to 8.00pm

Online on Zoom



## First aid Q&A

Learning basic first aid is essential to give you the confidence to act in a practical and safe way, should a medical emergency arise.

In this live, real-time Zoom session we will:

- Offer a Q&A session for first aid related questions
- Guide you in dealing with emergency/first aid situations and making effective decisions

Wednesday 2nd August

10.30am to 12.00pm

Online on Zoom



# News and info

## Ensure your views are heard on the future of Carer Support Services

**Devon County Council are facing huge financial challenges and it needs to achieve the best possible outcome for the money it spends on Adult Social Care Services.**

Devon County Council stated "The County Council recognises the importance of unpaid carers and values highly the contribution you make. You are at the heart of our new strategy, and we will continue to invest significantly in your support." They continued "But these challenging times mean we must review every single area of its work to ensure that resources are being used as effectively as possible. We will listen carefully to the views of unpaid carers, the people they support and the wider public to ensure that we focus our available resources to achieve greatest impact."

"We will focus on what we should prioritise, under our contract with Devon Carers and in our wider 'Carer Offer' for adult carers of adults."

To read more information about the proposed Consultation visit:

**<https://devoncarers.org.uk/consultation/>**

The consultation on the future of Carer Support Services ends on **Wednesday 17th May 2023.**

Responses to the consultation can still be provided, if received by **Wednesday 17th May**, via the Have Your Say section on the Devon County Council website at: **[www.devon.gov.uk/haveyoursay](http://www.devon.gov.uk/haveyoursay)** or by email at: **[Carersconsultation@devon.gov.uk](mailto:Carersconsultation@devon.gov.uk)** or via post to either:

**Carers Consultation Team  
Devon County Council  
Floor 1 Annexe County Hall  
Topsham Road  
Exeter  
Devon  
EX2 4QD**

**Freepost RRYT-SASA-HZXZ (Carers Consultation)  
Devon Carers Second Class post  
Westbank HLC  
Farm House Rise  
Exminster  
Exeter  
EX6 8AT**

After this point Devon County Council will consider and analyse the responses and amend and/or finalise the proposals. It is currently intended that the decisions will be taken at Cabinet in July, after which the decisions made in relation to the proposals will be published.

The final decision will be based on the requirements of the County Council's Strategic Aims, the completed Equality Impact Assessments and other factors as well as the outcome of this consultation process. The decisions will be published on the Devon County Council website: **[www.devon.gov.uk](http://www.devon.gov.uk)** and a link will also be provided to this on the Devon Carers website: **[www.devoncarers.org.uk](http://www.devoncarers.org.uk)**

## Time for You – volunteer sitting service

Time For You is our sitting service which enables unpaid carers to take a break from their caring role by supplying a volunteer to provide companionship for a couple of hours to the person they care for. Similar to a face-to-face befriending scheme, it gives carers the opportunity to take some time out for themselves to meet friends for a coffee, make that appointment they've not been able to fit in, or just to re-charge at home knowing the person they care for is being looked after.

Time For You works with voluntary sector groups and organisations and is funded by Devon County Council. It has been running across parts of Devon for the past four years, initially as part of a pilot scheme. We provide a service between 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday, for those carers who live with the person they support. Volunteers can visit, for one to three hours at a time and tailor the activities to the interests of the person they are visiting.

The project has been wonderful at connecting people within local communities and forging long lasting friendships between volunteers and the people that they visit.

For carers, knowing that they have regular, sometimes scheduled breaks, means that they can confidently take time out.

We will be expanding the service to cover eight new areas, including a new partnership with



Seachange, a volunteer organisation, to provide our service in Budleigh Salterton and along the coast to Exmouth.

We are also thrilled to confirm that Age Concern Barnstaple, who have been partnered with Time For You since its inception, will be expanding their already successful scheme to cover the whole of North Devon. Initially they will be focusing on South Molton, which was an area identified as needing this service.

In addition to this Devon Carers will be opening six new areas, with their own volunteer teams, so that we will be able to reach areas where there are no existing voluntary organisations we can partner with.

This is a very exciting development for the project and one that we feel will help us support many more carers across Devon in the future.

We will be opening services in:

**Axminster, Seaton, Crediton, Exeter, Ivybridge, Newton Abbot and Tiverton**

**If you would like more information on becoming a volunteer or to be referred to our Time For You service, please email: [TFY@devoncarers.org.uk](mailto:TFY@devoncarers.org.uk) or call our Helpline 03456 434 435.**



## Health and Social Care Training and Education



### New online Employability Skills for Unpaid Carers course

The Health and Social Care Skills Accelerator Programme (HSSAP) are offering unpaid carers 18 years+ registered with Devon Carers an opportunity to learn new skills to help support those who are looking to return to work.

The course will take place online on Zoom and will look at:

- Introduction to the basic skills needed to work in a team in a work context.
- Understanding how employability can be affected by your mindset, focusing on the qualities sought by employers.
- Knowing the key issues when handling data in the place of work.
- Why processes and procedures are needed and used in the place of work.
- Covering how teams work, recognising your own strengths in contributing to a team and the contributions of others and understanding team goals.
- Understanding customer needs within different straight forward contexts

They are offering two course dates: **Thursdays: 11th May, 18th May, 25th May, 1st June** or **Wednesdays: 7th June, 14th June, 21st June, 28th June. Both courses will run 10am to 2pm.**

If you would like more information about the course or to register your interest to attend, please email [HSSAP@petroc.ac.uk](mailto:HSSAP@petroc.ac.uk)

To find out about other courses offered by the HSSAP programme visit: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/providerengagementnetwork/workforce-development/health-and-social-care-skills-accelerator-programme/>

For the latest Health and Social Care Training and Education visit [devon.cc/hssap](https://devon.cc/hssap) and sign up at [devon.cc/hssaptraining](https://devon.cc/hssaptraining)



# Health and wellbeing

## Recognising and celebrating our volunteers

**Volunteers Week 1st-7th June** is an annual celebration of the fantastic contribution volunteers make to local communities. It is a time when we thank them for their commitment and recognise the impact they contribute to the lives of those in need of their support, including unpaid carers.

We are so grateful to all of our volunteers who have generously offered so much of their time and commitment. Our wonderful team of volunteers come from all backgrounds including; young adults adding experience to their CVs, students volunteering alongside their studies, those complementing their work life by helping others in their spare time, retired people offering their experience, the unemployed looking to develop new skills and also carers looking to help others, as they know first-hand how beneficial peer support can be.

One of our volunteers, Millie, a young adult volunteering whilst studying at university, commented *"As a Telephone Support Volunteer, it's so fulfilling to bond and connect with each carer. You really feel like you're making a difference to their day, even if it's just a little bit. I wanted to volunteer to give something back to these incredible, selfless people."*

Our volunteer roles are varied and can be personalised depending on how much time they can offer. This can range from micro-volunteering; where they might only have a few moments to share our social media posts, or if they can offer a couple of hours a month they can provide online or face-to-face volunteering by joining our peer support groups. If they can spare more time they can join us as Carer Ambassadors to help shape the future of carers services, or they might prefer to provide telephone support, giving companionship to our carers, a role which our current volunteers have found very rewarding.

Antonia is one such volunteer who enjoys helping and supporting carers, she commented *"My time with Devon Carers has been insightful, educational and filled with heartfelt emotion. I offer support calls to carers and have learnt about the issues they face, the complexities around personal issues and barriers to caring for someone while trying to maintain independence and resilience. I balance my time volunteering around my work as an Assistant Psychologist, and I find the two complement one another very well and it is so rewarding."*

**If you would like to know more about volunteering and the various roles available, email [volunteering@devoncarers.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@devoncarers.org.uk) to arrange an informal chat with our Volunteering team.**

**Time spent by  
our incredible  
volunteers (April  
22 to March 23):**



**211**

**hours of carer  
telephone support**



**249**

**hours  
participating  
in peer  
support groups**



**9,644**

**total hours volunteered by  
Carers Ambassadors**



**106**

**carers supported by  
telephone volunteers**



# Have you got a spare 5 minutes to shape future healthcare?

Carer Annette Allinson and Exeter University Researcher Beccy Summers chat about their invaluable involvement in University of Exeter projects, which help to shape the future of healthcare.

Annette explains the research which they work on together. "I belong to PenPEG, which is the Patient Engagement Group, at the University of Exeter. We work on PPIE - which is Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement. You are probably thinking - what on earth does that mean? That's what I thought when I first heard it!"

She continued "It means I share my experience as an unpaid carer with the researchers, to ensure their projects are meaningful to other carers, patients and the public. I don't have a university education, but I don't need one, they are more interested in my lived experience."

Chatting to Annette, Beccy asked "Caring for someone can be very demanding, what would you say to other carers thinking about taking part, for example, how much of your time does it take up and what are the benefits?"

Annette commented "You can commit as much or as little as you like. From 5-10 minutes to comment on research ideas, or if you have 30 minutes, you can join small online meetings to help shape early research. This ensures the researchers are asking the right questions in their surveys."

She continued "Or you can be involved in more in-depth research projects, which can last several months. I've been involved where I attend a short meeting every couple of weeks and answer a few questions via email. I work at a time which is convenient for me and I've even mastered using Zoom!"

Annette explained "The benefits include the excellent support network from the other carers, patients, and public who are part of PenPEG too. We meet regularly to learn from each other's experiences. We are also supported by the university research team and are always reimbursed for our time. One of the biggest benefits is that our contribution is valued as it is helping to shape future health and social care services".

**It's brilliant to see  
the impact that my  
input has!**

"PPIE is thoroughly rewarding and entirely flexible around your life and caring responsibilities."

She commented "I would recommend to any fellow carer to get involved. You just need to ask yourself - do you have a spare 5 minutes to make sure carers have a voice in shaping the future of healthcare?"

**If you're interested in finding out more, please contact Beccy Summers:  
[r.l.summers@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:r.l.summers@exeter.ac.uk)**



## Are you looking to meet and chat with other carers?

Why not join one of our friendly Peer Support groups (online and face-to-face) where carers mutually support each other practically and emotionally by sharing knowledge and experiences. To express your interest to attend any of these groups call our Helpline on **03456 434 435** who will refer you to our Peer Support team. For any queries once you have registered for the service, please email: **peer.support@devoncarers.org.uk**. All places need to be booked in advance with our Peer Support team. We are constantly adding new locations and dates, so please look out for our latest updates on social media, email and letters in the post.

### Face-to-face Peer Support Groups

Please find below towns where the groups take place to see which is most convenient to you. Once you have spoken to the Peer Support team, they will send you updates on dates, times and venue addresses.

**May:** Barnstaple / Budleigh Salterton / Crediton / Dawlish / Exeter / Ivybridge / Ilfracombe / Newton Abbot / Okehampton / Totnes

**June:** Crediton / Exeter / Okehampton / Silverton / Teignmouth / Totnes / Torrington / Neurodiverse Carers - Exeter

**July:** Barnstaple / Crediton / Dawlish / Exeter / Exmouth / Newton Abbot / Okehampton / South Molton / Totnes

**August:** Bideford / Crediton / Newton Abbot / Teignmouth / Totnes

### Online Zoom Peer Support Groups

Please find below dates and times when these online groups take place to see which is most convenient to you. Once you have spoken to the Peer Support team, they will send you updates on availability.

<b>Games Night</b>	Tuesday	02/05, 16/05, 20/06, 04/07, 18/07, 01/08, 15/08	7.30pm - 9.00pm
<b>Autism Group</b>	Wednesday	03/05, 14/06, 05/07, 02/08	10.30am - 12.00pm
<b>Dementia Group</b>	Monday	15/05, 12/06, 10/07, 07/08	10.30am - 12.00pm
<b>Mental Health Group</b>	Wednesday	24/05, 28/06, 26/07, 23/08	12.00pm - 1.00pm
<b>Male Carers</b>	Wednesday	10/05, 14/06, 12/07, 09/08	2.00pm - 3.30pm
<b>Craft Group</b>	Thursday	11/05, 15/06, 13/07, 10/08	11.00am - 12.00pm
	Tuesday	23/05, 27/06, 25/07, 22/08	7.30pm - 9.00pm
<b>Parent with Dementia Group</b>	Thursday	18/05, 22/06, 20/07, 17/08	7.30pm - 9.00pm
<b>Open Group</b>	Thursday	25/05, 29/06, 27/07, 24/08	10.30am - 12.00pm
<b>Living Room Disco</b>	Thursday	04/05, 01/06, 06/07, 03/08	7.30pm - 9.30pm
<b>LGBTQ+</b>	Monday	22/05, 26/06, 24/07, 21/08	10.00am - 11.00am
<b>Mental Health (evening group)</b>	Tuesday	09/05, 13/06, 11/07, 08/08	7.30pm - 9.00pm

**www.devoncarers.org.uk | 03456 434 435**

Please call **t: 03456 434 435** or **e: info@devoncarers.org.uk** for more information or if you would like to contribute to a future magazine. This magazine is made from FSC certified paper and printed using vegetable inks. Published by Westbank Community Health and Care: Registered Charity No 1119541 Company limited by guarantee Registered in England No 6243811. Devon Carers, Westbank, Farm House Rise, Exminster, Exeter, EX6 8AT.