



You Care, We Care

Summer 2024



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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

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://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**

Stunning quilt created by Peer Support Craft Group

Our Peer Support Craft Group - under the guidance of staff at A la Ronde, National Trust in Exmouth - has recently used their artistic talents to create a fantastic handmade quilt!

Carers from the group, together with their cared-for persons, friends, and relatives enjoyed an afternoon at A la Ronde recently for the private unveiling of the finished artwork. It was a lovely event, with National Trust staff on hand to conduct tours of the house for everyone attending.

Our carers, like Sue, were delighted to be involved in the project. She said, "Making the quilt has been fun and I have found A la Ronde and its left-field, creative buildings so inspiring, but I have also found inspiration from the other carers' personal stories and varied craft skills."

Another member of the group, Karen, commented: "Getting out of the house and meeting up with like-minded people is not always possible as unpaid carers, so being part of the Peer Support Craft Group for this exciting project and sharing ideas, resources, and advice, face-to-face, was just amazing. To try out new skills and make new friends whilst talking about the difficulties we face daily, was so uplifting."

She continued: "We all followed the same brief, but it was interesting how we used so many differing materials and mediums. Recognising the different aspects of A la Ronde, which inspired each finished piece, was the icing on the cake and seeing the completed quilt will be a memory to treasure."

Jane, another unpaid carer also, really enjoyed the celebration event, "A rare day out for my husband and I - he uses a power wheelchair and it is usually so hard to gain access. We were made to feel so welcome, enjoyed seeing the finished quilt, and then had a lovely tour of the ground floor of the house too! The National Trust staff are so knowledgeable and helpful."

Karen, Senior Programming and Partnerships Officer at A la Ronde commented "We are so pleased to be involved in running these craft workshops for members of the Peer Support project, creating a quilt to be displayed at the house. Keeping alive a tradition of crafting that's part of the spirit of A la Ronde, the workshops are an opportunity for carers to connect. The creativity and artistry has gone beyond all expectations; and it has been an absolute privilege and pleasure to be involved with this inspirational group."

We would like to thank Karen and Arran, Visitor Experience Officer, from the National Trust team for being so welcoming, and for their expert guidance. Initiatives like this enable carers not only to reduce social isolation but also to take a break from their caring roles, which is so important.

The quilt will be displayed from April until August at A la Ronde for people to view it.

We have plans for more future projects such as this one, would you be interested in joining us?

For information on our Peer Support Craft Group or any of our other groups, please email: peer.support@devoncarers.org.uk or call our Helpline: 03456 434 435.



Putting Carers Week on the map in Devon!

Carers Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of the invaluable role which unpaid carers carry out throughout the UK. It aims to highlight the challenges they face and to recognise the contribution they make to families and their communities. By raising awareness across Devon, we aim to help those who do not recognise themselves as unpaid carers to do so and enable them to access much-needed support.

The theme for Carers Week, which takes place **10th – 16th June**, is **'Putting Carers on the Map.'**

During Carers Week we are holding awareness-raising and information events across Devon to help carers access services to support them in their caring role. These are kindly being supported by some of our Carer Friendly Devon partners.

 One of these includes Seaton Tramway, a spokesperson for the narrow-gauge heritage trams in East Devon commented: *"We are delighted to support unpaid carers by offering free tram travel throughout Carers Week. Carers don't need to accompany the person they care for to obtain their free Explorer ticket, just visit either Seaton and Colyton station and show your Carers Passport/ID card."*

Free days out with the National Trust

We are also kindly supported by the National Trust again who are offering free days out to visit their estates to carers who show their Carers Passport/ID card on specified days (see table below) along with a drink voucher for a free hot/cold drink*. Paula Clarke, Dartmoor Volunteering and Community Manager - National Trust, commented *"We are delighted to be part of Carers Week again this year. It is such an amazing opportunity for us to be involved by providing support and respite for our caring community"*.

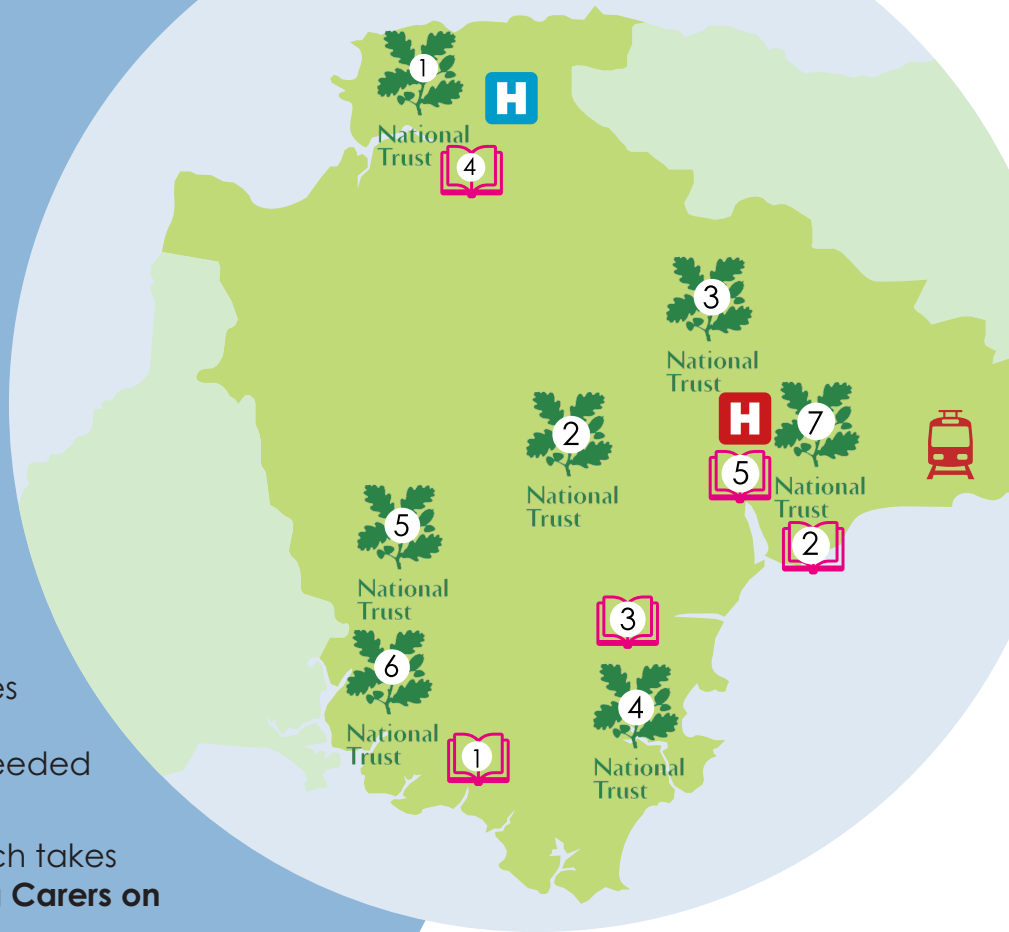
*1 hot/cold drink per voucher to the maximum value of £4 and must not include alcohol.

Some National Trust properties close to the public in adverse weather conditions such as high winds, please check the National Trust website / social media prior to visiting. Offer is also open to the cared-for person.

Key	NT Property	Location	Carers Day	Time
1	Arlington Court	Barnstaple, EX31 4LP	Mon 10th June	11am - 3.30pm
2	Castle Drogo	Drewsteignton, Exeter, EX6 6PB	Mon 10th June	10am - 4pm
3	Killerton House	Broadclyst, Exeter, EX5 3LE	Wed 12th June	10am - 4pm
4	Greenway**	Greenway Rd, Galmpton, TQ5 0ES	Thu 13th June	10.30am - 3.30pm
5	Lydford Gorge	Okehampton, EX20 4BH	Thu 13th June	10.30am - 3.30pm
6	Buckland Abbey	Buckland Monachorum, Yelverton, PL20 6EZ	Fri 14th June	10.30am - 3pm
7	A la Ronde	Summer Ln, Exmouth, EX8 5BD	Sat 15th June	10.30am - 3.30pm

** Parking is limited and needs to be pre-booked in advance visit:

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/devon/greenway/booking-your-visit-to-greenway>



Pop along for a cuppa and a chat

Libraries Unlimited have kindly welcomed us to join them to offer Carer Connection Hubs where we will be holding information stands. Whether you are just starting out on your carer journey or have been one for a long time, why not pop along to chat with us and other carers about how we can support you, over a hot refreshment!

Key	Library	Location	Carers Connection Hub	Time
1	Ivybridge Library	Erme Ct, Leonards Rd, Ivybridge, PL21 0SZ	Mon 10th June	1pm - 3pm
2	Exmouth Library	40 Exeter Rd, Exmouth, EX8 1PS	Mon 10th June	10am - 12pm
3	Newton Abbot Library	Passmore Edwards Centre, Market St, Newton Abbot, TQ12 2RJ	Wed 12th June	10am - 12pm
4	Barnstaple Library	Tuly St, Barnstaple, EX31 1EL	Thu 13th June	1.30pm - 3.30pm
5	Exeter Library	Castle St, Exeter, EX4 3PQ	Thu 13th June	1pm - 3pm

Not able to attend our events, why not join us online?

We appreciate that not everyone will be able to visit us at our events, so why not join us on one of our online Virtual Hubs where you can chat with other carers and also ask us about our services. Please email your interest with your first and last name to peer.support@devoncarers.org.uk and we will send you an invitation link closer to the date.

Online	Location	Carers Connection Hub	Time
Virtual Hub	Zoom	Thu 13th June	7pm - 8.30pm
Virtual Hub	Zoom	Sat 15th June	10.30am - 12pm

Navigate - a Devon money advice charity - are inviting carers to access an online money matters webinar during Carers Week. They support carers and their cared-for who might struggle to access mainstream ie online, telephone or appointments where you have to travel, with money and debt advice. To join the webinar email your first and last name with an email address you are happy for them contact you on to: awareness@devoncarers.org.uk and Navigate will send you login details to access their pre-recorded webinar during Carers Week, so you can watch it at a time convenient to you.

We will also be holding pop-up information stands at the Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital and North Devon District Hospital, where you can chat with us about our services.

Key	Hospital	Location	Carers Info Stand	Time
	North Devon District Hospital	Raleigh Heights, Barnstaple EX31 4JB	Tue 11th June	10am – 4pm
	Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital	Barrack Rd, Exeter, EX2 5DW	Thu 13th June	10am - 4pm

Watch out for updates on our website and social media for the latest news.

For more information about how you can join us for Carers Week visit:

<https://devoncarers.org.uk/community/carers-week/>

Or visit Carers UK to find out more about what is happening across the UK:

<https://www.carersweek.org>

Top tips for keeping safe in the heat

Whilst some look forward to the sunshine that summer brings, the heat can also cause problems for others, such as older people, or those with health conditions. Follow our top tips to help you to look after yourself as well as the person you care for:



Stay hydrated: During hot weather, it is important to drink plenty of water. If you can, use a transparent bottle, so you can see how much you have actually drunk. Also, try to limit the amount of caffeine and alcohol you have, as they can make you dehydrate more quickly than usual.



Avoid the sun! If you are spending time outside in the heat, regularly move into the shade or go indoors to have a break from the sun. Whenever possible, try to avoid being outside between 11am and 3pm, as this is when the sun's rays are strongest.



Dress for the weather: If possible, wear loose fitting clothes that are made of light, natural fibres, such as cotton, and you will hopefully stay cooler. Wear a hat in the sun and also sunglasses.



Keep in the shade when you are on the go: If you use a wheelchair for yourself, or the person you care for, take an umbrella or sunshade to protect you from exposure to direct sunlight.



Keep your house cool: Try to keep rooms in your house as cool as possible by closing blinds and curtains to keep the sun out. Only open your windows when it is cool enough outside to do so.



Protect your skin: Apply sunscreen generously and re-apply frequently, especially after activities that can remove it, like swimming. The NHS recommends that sunscreen should have a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30, and 4 or 5 star ultraviolet A (UVA) protection.



Exeter Riding for the Disabled Association Group are offering Tea with a Pony sessions specially for Devon Carers. These structured sessions are aimed at people living with Dementia and their carers. There will be an opportunity to spend time with the ponies and enjoy some refreshments. We're planning these sessions for June / July with dates and times to be confirmed.

Please register your interest by emailing:
peer.support@devoncarers.org or
call our Helpline on 03456 434 435.



Peer Support Craft Group reduces Karen's loneliness

We often hear from those we support that caring can, at times, be incredibly isolating and lonely. In fact, in the Carers UK State of Caring 2023 Survey, 50% of unpaid carers across the UK* reported feeling lonely in their caring role. One of our carers felt an incredible sense of isolation while caring for her father and she shares her story with us.

Karen said "I have been a carer for over eight years, giving up work and sharing my home with my father, Jim. He lived with Dementia, prostate cancer, chronic kidney disease and heart problems."

She continued "Life for my father and myself diminished over the years, spontaneous outings became a thing of the past and although happy in our bubble we became isolated from the world at large, which unfortunately included both friends and family, who just didn't understand the limitations of our situation."

"After contacting Devon Carers for support, they became my lifeline. Crafting was often my only pleasure when I found some precious time to indulge myself and they suggested joining their Peer Support service. I was able to attend their online Zoom group sessions which focussed either on Dementia or crafting. They soon took the place of long-forgotten coffee outings with friends, and it was such a relief to be able to talk truthfully and freely with others in a similar situation about the day-to-day problems we faced and the crafts we were making."

"I was invited to join other carers from our Peer Support Craft Group to make festive decorations for the Killerton National Trust Estate Christmas Tree event in their Chapel. These face-to-face meetings enabled me to take a couple of hours off for myself, to dress up, put my 'face' on and go into Exeter. I was suddenly like everyone else as I boarded the train, looking forward to coffee and cake with friends. I found talking and comparing notes with other carers helped. It offered friendship, advice and practical solutions to small annoyances and also many, many laughs!"

"Making the decorations for the Devon Carers tree enabled me to pay back in some small way the help, support and friendship I have received from them over the years. I was amazed to see such a variety of beautiful and sometimes inventive craft decorations on the trees, especially ours. Everyone, when time allowed, made just a few items that made this tree so attractive, meaningful and unique to us. Sadly, my father died a few weeks later, so he never saw the finished tree in all its glory."

"I am still dealing with the loss and coming to terms with the huge gap left in my life. I now have a brighter future to look forward to, but maybe one day I will turn my experience into something useful and become a volunteer with Devon Carers myself."

Why not join one of our Peer Support Groups (online and face-to-face) where carers mutually support each other practically and emotionally by sharing knowledge and experiences? There are a range of groups to join from, dementia, craft, autism, neurological conditions, LGBTQ+, games night and even a living room disco!

Contact us to chat about our groups by emailing: peer.support@devoncarers.org.uk or call our friendly Helpline: 03456 434 435.

* <https://www.carersuk.org/reports/state-of-caring-survey-2023-the-impact-of-caring-on-health/>



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: workshops@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



Relaxation in nature with mindfulness practices

Would you like to enjoy the beauty of nature whilst learning relaxation and mindfulness techniques? In this face-to-face session we will:

- Include a guided meditation
- Give you strategies to help you let go of your worries and find peace and joy in the moment
- Offer you time to reflect and share your experience with others

Tuesday 21st May	2pm to 4pm	Simmons Park, Okehampton, EX20 1EA
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Managing challenging behaviour for carers dealing with mood disorders

For many carers dealing with the mental and emotional changes in their cared-for can be the most challenging aspect of their caring. In this live, real-time Zoom session we will:

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

Thursday 23rd May	10am to 12pm	Online on Zoom
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First aid Q&A

Learning basic first aid is essential for every day caring roles 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 what to do when approaching the scene of an emergency/first aid situation and decision making to manage the situation effectively

Tuesday 4th June	10am to 11.30am	Online on Zoom
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How to cope as a carer

Would you like to learn some hints, tips & 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 which will cover eating, exercise, sleep, alcohol and smoking
- Advice on being organised, rewarding yourself, taking time for yourself (and why not to feel guilty about it)
- Advice about getting the best out of the NHS and other sources of practical help
- **Part 2** - Coping mentally and emotionally looking at feelings of guilt, resentment, anger, negativity, loneliness, loss (of the person they were before and the future you thought you were going to have).
- Looking at help, accepting help (not just saying I am fine) and advice on managing unhelpful suggestions, from other people when you are busy contending with a caring role

Monday 10th June (part 1)	10am to 11.30am	Online on Zoom
Monday 17th June (part 2)		

Assertiveness

Would you like to become more assertive in how you communicate with people? This workshop will give you practical skills and tools to help you become more assertive. In this live, real-time Zoom 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
- Talk about how to deal with confrontational people
- Help you to eliminate the need for others' approval
- Discuss how to take control of your life and your choices
- Set boundaries without confrontation or guilt

Wednesday 12th June

10.30am to 12.30pm

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:

- Look at the environment factors
- Chat about which clothes are easier to get dressed in
- Discuss pain and discomfort 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
- Discuss why people with dementia maybe fearful

Monday 24th June

10am to 11.30am

Online on Zoom



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 live, real-time Zoom session we will:

- Allow an informal discussion to identify sleep problems
- Find solutions that carers need to get a good night's sleep

Wednesday 3rd July

10.30am to 12.30pm

Online on Zoom



Dementia & effective communication

Caring for people with dementia can be difficult as we see them struggle with everyday tasks. But to communicate with the person you care for more effectively, we need to improve our own interpersonal skills. In this live, real-time Zoom session we will:

- Look at five different types of dementia
- Discuss problems with communication and how to avoid miscommunication issues
- Chat about problems experienced by asking questions

Monday 8th July

10am to 11.30am

Online on Zoom





Manual handling

It is important to look after your own health when looking after someone. In this face-to-face session we will:

- Discuss how to protect yourself in terms of back injuries
- Assess the risks involved when manual handling in your care role
- Look at falls, getting in and out of cars etc
- Pick up particular individual manual handling issues that carers might have

Thursday 11th July	10am to 12pm	Exeter Community Centre, 17 St. Davids Hill, Exeter, EX4 3RG
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Dementia and food

If you care for someone with dementia food and eating can sometimes be an 'issue.' In this live real time zoom session we will:

- Discuss and learn why people with dementia can have issues around eating.
- Look at strategies to try and make eating easier, and healthier.

Monday 15th July	10am to 11.30am	Online on Zoom
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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 live, real-time Zoom session we will:

- Give you space to talk about your thoughts and feelings on being a carer
- Allow you to explore the challenges you face and look at strategies to help you manage those challenges

Monday 22nd July	10.30am to 12.30pm	Online on Zoom
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Looking at our feelings as carers

Life is punctuated with a series of changes, as carers we have to cope with many issues. Some changes will be welcome, but others will need some adjusting to, and may lead to feelings associated with grief and grieving. As a Carer, we may also experience these with the health and wellbeing of our cared-for. In this live, real-time Zoom session we will:

- Look at grief, grieving and adapting to change as well as the idea of pre-grieving
- Discuss that grief and grieving is not all about death and dying. It also occurs when life changes – both expected and unexpected

Tuesday 30th July	2pm to 4pm	Online on Zoom
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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 a variety of techniques to find methods that work for you. In this live, real-time Zoom session we will:

- Discuss the awareness of 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
- Guide you on what to do if they are feeling overly stressed and where to get further support and advice

Wednesday 31st July	10.30am to 12.30pm	Online on Zoom
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Digital Inclusion Hubs enabling people to access online services

Did you know that 1 in 14 households and 10.2 million* people in the UK don't have the basic digital skills to enable them to access online services? This is creating a digital divide which is becoming worse with people cancelling their broadband services due to the cost of living crisis.

As a result, they are negatively impacted by being unable to access a whole range of online services and support, stay connected with friends and family at a distance, online training and are disadvantaged by 'online only' offers. But the Digital Inclusion Hub initiative is looking to help by providing community-led support, enabling people to access the internet, to learn basic and essential online tasks and digital skills so that they can make the most out of the online world.

To find your local Digital Inclusion Hub visit: <https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/our-network-services-map/england/> or call our Helpline if you are unable to access online services and they can look for you: 03456 434 435.

* <https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/insights/building-a-digital-nation/>

Taking Carers Skills Workshops to Community Carers Groups

Carers Skills Workshops have taken a new focus over the past few months. We have been bringing the training directly to established carer support groups that are run independently across the county, and carers in the groups have found it very beneficial. It is an ideal and convenient way for carers who are already part of a regular group, to learn new carer-focused and self-supporting skills.

One of the carers, Tina, at a local carers support group commented *"I think having Carers Skills Workshops brought into our carers group is a fantastic idea! As we all know each other and are aware of everyone's caring role, it's easier to open up about our concerns or thoughts. I really enjoyed a recent session we had and look forward to future ones."*

We hope that by offering a whole range of ways that carers can access our Skills Workshops, whether it is in carers support groups, online or in-person, we will enable more carers to access the free training available.

If you are part of a local carers support group which would benefit from accessing our range of bite-sized workshops including First Aid, Managing Stress, Dementia-related sessions, or Manual Handling, to name but a few, do contact us for more information: workshops@devoncarers.org.uk

Volunteer opportunities



"I love the thought of being able to offer support to carers. My experience of volunteering with Devon Carers has been so positive and I am pleased that I can help."

Join our volunteer team and make a difference!

Volunteering roles:

- Group supporter
- Phone support volunteer
- Carer engagement
- Time For You sitter

For more information or an informal chat:

Call: 03456 434 435

Email: volunteering@devoncarers.org.uk

Devon
Carers

Carers Trust launches landmark Young Carers Covenant



On the 13th March, National Young Carers Action Day, a young carer and young adult carer from Devon had the opportunity to promote a new covenant for young carers in London. They were joined by two other young carers and were able to hand a copy of the covenant to the Children's Commissioner as well as holding a very successful Q&A session with interested MP's, which received cross-party support.

In 2023 the Carers Trust surveyed carers aged under 25, with results highlighting 40% feel they don't get the help needed to balance caring and learning, 33% always or usually struggle to balance caring and learning and 45% always or usually struggle to balance caring and paid work*.

The covenant hopes to tackle these issues by setting out goals and actions that everyone can take to help young carers and young adult carers reach their full potential. It was written by young carers and young adult carers with support from the Carers Trust, to help raise awareness of their caring role, the challenges faced and the need for greater support.

It is hoped that employers, organisations, and individuals will commit to making positive changes to make the covenant aims possible. For example, employers providing more flexible working practices for young adult carers.

If you would like to find out more about the covenant or wish to sign up to offer support, you can do so at www.carers.org/youngcarerscovenant

*<https://carers.org/young-carers-action-day-2023/being-a-young-carer-is-not-a-choice>

How can a Personal Assistant help me?

Personal Assistants (PAs) are employed to meet the needs of people who require social care, because of their age and/or disability, to enable them to live as independently as possible. They can provide help by shopping, carrying out household tasks and support by enabling access to community resources like the library, local activities or leisure facilities. A PA can also help with personal care such as bathing and getting dressed. But how can you access this support?

A spokesperson for Devon County Council who provide information about employing PA's on their website commented "We have a 'PA shout out' service, which matches people with available PAs. Your request will go out to all the PAs across Devon who are registered with this service. You will receive responses from those who fit the requirements you have stipulated and who are available at the times requested – but it can be helpful to be flexible over the times required if possible."

They continued "We are aware that recruitment of a PA can be difficult. For this reason, you can find the latest updated advice and information, and a list of PAs registered with us on our website. We do recommend that you undertake some basic checks on PAs before recruiting them. These are once again outlined on our website."

For more information visit: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/adult-social-care/independent-living/support-at-home/personal-care-at-home/find-a-personal-assistant/>

Support for you after a planned hospital admission

Are you or the person you care for due to be admitted to hospital and worried about how you will cope when you or they return home?

Our Hospital Services team can support you!

Caring for others can be challenging enough when we are fit and well, but to carry on looking after others it is also important to prioritise your own health needs by attending planned hospital admissions. We can support you, when either you or the person you care for has been in hospital. Please get in touch with us up to two weeks before your admission date so we can start planning support for you.

Our Hospital Services team have NHS contracts with local hospitals including; Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital, North Devon District Hospital, Torbay Hospital and Derriford Hospital.

The team can offer you one-to-one practical help, support, advice, problem-solving and signposting to ensure you and the person you look after can cope during the first few weeks while you are recovering at home. Depending on your level of need, one of our Hospital Liaison Workers can offer you one-to-one guidance and advice following discharge from hospital.

We will discuss your current caring role, what it entails, and what aspects you are finding, or will find more difficult, following discharge from hospital. If needed, we can arrange tailor-made packages of practical help and support for a limited time, dependent upon your situation. The team try to be as creative as possible when looking for solutions to help ease the situation.

You can receive our support from the planned admission date, or date of referral if it was an unplanned admission, or up to two weeks post-discharge. If there is still an appearance of need to support you in your caring role, you will be offered the opportunity for a Carers Assessment which forms part of our core offer to carers.

Access the support you need and find out more:

<https://devoncarers.org.uk/support/hospital-services/>

Or call our Helpline: 03456 434 435 or email: info@devoncarers.org.uk

Experience the smell of spring this Naturally Healthy May to support your wellbeing

May is the perfect time of year to get outside and connect with the natural world around us, but it can be hard to overcome the barriers you might experience to becoming more active. If you're caring for someone, it can sometimes feel impossible to find the time to move more.

Fortunately, now, there are more options to take advantage of than ever, so hopefully you will be able to find an activity to suit the time you have available. Even the smallest changes will be beneficial and you won't have any regrets when you see what it could do for your long-term health. The short-term gains too should soon be noticeable, from feeling fitter and having more energy, to feeling more productive and having a calmer, clearer and more confident frame of mind.

Immersing in nature through your senses and exploring your outdoor surroundings can help to offer those positive changes. It is widely known that just by being outdoors, we can feel revived and relaxed, helping our mental health and wellbeing by reducing our stress and anxiety levels. The idea of exercising can be daunting if you've been inactive for a while, so this May, why not start slowly and gradually build up your stamina levels. Even on a wet day, grabbing a waterproof coat and putting on wellies, allowing yourself to walk through puddles and go down muddy lanes, can remind us of the joy we can experience by taking part in simple activities, either on our own or with friends and family, and can do wonders for our health and wellbeing.

Naturally Healthy May is part of Devon's Naturally Healthy initiative, led by Active Devon and Devon County Council on behalf of the Devon Local Nature Partnership. It brings together a wide range of partners from the health, wellbeing, community and environment sectors to ensure that everyone in Devon, whatever their age, is happier and healthier through increased connection to nature.

If you are able, how about taking a stroll in your local area or park, join a guided walk or event, enjoy a cycle, get outdoors for a bit of light gardening or just stop and mindfully listen to the birds singing early in the morning, breathing in the fresh smell of spring.

Finding someone to help when you take time out can also be a challenge, but if it is impossible, maybe look at ways you can be more active together, using free online videos or try to incorporate more movement into your daily routine by doing things like climbing the stairs as often as you can – every little bit will help!

If you do have a window of time and you're not sure what to do, to find ideas of events to help you get moving in your local area visit www.devonconnect.org. Let's all celebrate naturally healthy month together!



In 2023 we supported 30,000 unpaid carers across Devon.

As a Charity, we rely on donations and grants to help us run our services.

There are many ways you can support us: donate, volunteer, or leave a gift in your will.



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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 look out for our latest updates on social media, email and letters, or get in touch for our latest schedules.

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 / Bideford / Bovey Tracey / Crediton / Cullompton / Exeter (City Centre and Wonford) Neurodivergent Carers / Holsworthy / Ivybridge / Newton Abbot / Okehampton / Ottery St Mary / Totnes / Torrington

June: Bideford / Exeter (City Centre and Wonford) / Exmouth / Holsworthy / Ivybridge / Killerton / Okehampton / South Molton / Teignmouth/Dawlish / Totnes

July: Barnstaple / Bideford / Bovey Tracey / Crediton / Exeter (City Centre and Wonford) / Holsworthy / Ivybridge / Newton Abbot / Okehampton / Ottery St Mary / Teignmouth/Dawlish / Tiverton / Torrington / Totnes

August: Barnstaple / Bideford / Bovey Tracey / Exeter (City Centre and Wonford) / Exmouth / Holsworthy / Ivybridge / Killerton Neurodivergent Carers / Okehampton / South Molton / Teignmouth/Dawlish

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.

Games Night	Tuesday	07/05, 21/05, 04/06, 18/06, 02/07, 16/07, 06/08, 20/08	7.30pm - 9.00pm
Autism Group	Wednesday	01/05, 05/06, 03/07, 07/08	10.30am - 12.00pm
Dementia Group	Monday	13/05, 17/06, 08/07, 12/08	10.30am - 12.00pm
Mental Health Group	Wednesday	22/05, 26/06, 24/07	12.00pm - 1.00pm
Mental Health (evening Group)	Tuesday	14/05, 09/07, 13/08	7.30pm - 9.00pm
Male Carers	Wednesday	08/05, 10/07, 14/08	2.00pm - 3.00pm
Craft Group	Thursday	09/05, 11/07, 08/08	11.00am - 12.00pm
	Tuesday	28/05, 25/06, 23/07	7.30pm - 9.00pm
Parent with Dementia Group	Thursday	16/05, 20/06, 18/07, 15/08	7.30pm - 9.00pm
Open to All	Thursday	23/05, 27/06, 25/07, 22/08	10.30am - 12.00pm
Living Room Disco	Thursday	06/06, 01/08	7.30pm - 9.00pm
*Neurological Conditions	Thursday	09/05, 06/06**, 11/07, 08/08	6.30pm - 8.00pm
LGBTQ+	Monday	22/07	10.00am - 11.00am

*Group for carers of people with neurological conditions such as MS, Parkinsons, Huntington's, MND etc.

**Note 06/06 group 10.00am to 11.30am.

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 printed on sustainably sourced paper using vegetable-based 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.