

# If you look after someone, we look after you

The quarterly magazine for unpaid carers

Spring 2026



## What's inside:

- Welcome
- Latest news
- A look back at Carers Rights Day
- Carers Skills Workshops
- Health and wellbeing
- Peer Support groups

**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)





# Welcome!

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:



## Website:

For up to date information and guidance for unpaid carers visit: [www.devoncarers.org.uk](http://www.devoncarers.org.uk)



## 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:

Chat online with our Helpline during our opening hours by clicking on the 'ask' button on [www.devoncarers.org.uk](http://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](http://www.nhs.uk)

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



## Peer Support:

If you haven't already accessed our Peer Support, now is the time to contact us, visit: <https://devoncarers.org.uk/peersupport> 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:

<https://devoncarers.org.uk/csw>



## Health and Wellbeing Checks/Reviews (Carers Assessments):

These 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.

## Please note:

Devon Carers is a service delivered by Westbank Community Health and Care. This service is commissioned by 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.

## If you are no longer a carer

Please use this form to update your details on our database:

<https://forms.office.com/e/btLw9cEyjV>



## Our contact details:

**Helpline:** 03456 434 435

**Email:** [info@devoncarers.org.uk](mailto:info@devoncarers.org.uk)

**Webchat:** [www.devoncarers.org.uk](http://www.devoncarers.org.uk)



# Carers enjoy getting back to nature with Peer Support

Taking inspiration from the beautiful Devon countryside, carers involved with our Peer Support service have been able to take time out from their caring role to get creative and relax in nature.

Life on the Edge, from South Devon National Landscape, kindly organised a series of monthly creative workshops in Modbury for carers to learn new art techniques. By taking inspiration from windswept trees to wildflower meadows, carers ventured outside to create pieces of art by wet felting, which involves using wool, warm soapy water and bubble wrap!

In another session, they were joined by a local artist and learnt watercolour techniques for 'en plein air' painting. Sitting in sunbathed meadows, carers created a variety of paintings inspired by the nature around them, including detailed leaves, trees and flowers to landscapes of the stunning surrounding hills. They all enjoyed themselves so much that they were reluctant to go home!



Jurassic Discovery organised for carers to take part in a therapeutic sensory walk and mindfulness session at Seaton Wetlands.

Led by an expert Education Ranger from East Devon District Council, carers were guided around the Wetlands and learnt about the environment, including the birds and other wildlife that make this area so special. They then enjoyed a mindful relaxation activity using natural materials to produce pictures using a cyanotype printing method.

***"We loved the relaxing activities and the chance to connect not only with nature but also with other carers in such a beautiful environment."***

If you would like to join us and other carers at one of our Peer Support events and activities, please email: [peer.support@devoncarers.org.uk](mailto:peer.support@devoncarers.org.uk) or visit: [www.devoncarers.org.uk/peersupport](http://www.devoncarers.org.uk/peersupport)



# Raising awareness on Carers Rights Day

Carers Rights Day is a nationwide event which is held annually to raise awareness of unpaid carers and their invaluable role.

The theme for the event in November was 'Know your rights, use your rights' which aims to highlight carers rights.

We ran Carers Rights Day events at venues across the county where we were able to speak directly with carers. There were many common concerns, including people who were juggling work, family and caring, those who were worried about what would happen if they could no longer care, those who were fearful that they weren't caring well enough and those who were worried about the conflict between work and caring with the added complication of trying to cope with the cost of living crisis.



Claire Cowen-Brown, Assistant Community Engagement Manager for Devon Carers, commented:

*"The awareness events we run throughout the year are so important to enable us to reach unpaid carers in Devon. We currently have over 34,000 carers registered with us, but we know there are so many more who don't recognise themselves as an unpaid carer and thus are unaware of their legal rights and what they are entitled to. We need to ensure that carers are aware of the free support available to them."*

She continued: *"We chatted with so many people who weren't aware that they had rights as an unpaid carer such as to ask for five days unpaid carers leave or to be*

*consulted when the person they care for is discharged from hospital."*

*"These countywide events enable us to register carers to access our free services, to get more support in our caring role."*

One of our carers who came over to thank us at the event commented:

***"The Devon Carers service has been extremely helpful. It has been wonderful to see you today to chat about our rights as carers as well."***

We would like to thank the accompanying organisations and businesses who joined us on the day and gave advice to our carers as well, including: Devon Young Carers, Talkworks – NHS, South West Water, Unite Carers Mid Devon, The Filo Project, Devon, Citizens Advice Exeter, Active Tiverton and Healthwatch Devon.

If you know someone who is an unpaid carer but isn't currently accessing our support, please let them know about us. For more information, visit [www.devoncarers.org.uk](http://www.devoncarers.org.uk) or call our Helpline: **03456 434 435**.

For more information about your rights as an unpaid carer visit: <https://www.carersuk.org/news-and-campaigns/our-campaigns/carers-rights-day/>

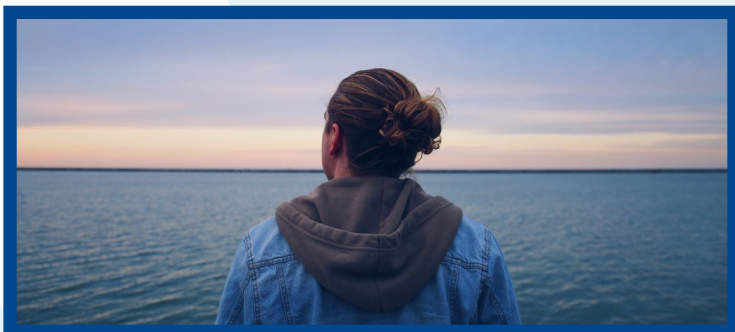




# Enjoy a Carer Friendly Break

Carers across the whole of Devon can now access breaks at a reduced cost with a new scheme launched by Devon Carers, Torbay Carers and Improving Lives Plymouth (who support carers in Plymouth).

We are teaming up with hotels and B&B's across the South West and further afield to offer you discounts for a short break. For example, accommodation providers have kindly offered discounts such as 10-25% off or 3 nights for the price of 2, so why not treat yourself to a break away?



This scheme will help to make booking a break more achievable, giving you the opportunity to take the time out you need as a carer. To access the discounts, you need to be registered with either Devon Carers, Torbay Carers or Improving Lives Plymouth. If you are registered with Devon Carers, you can contact us to request a discounted break.

To help us continue to seek funding for this scheme, we will ask you a few questions about your caring situation before you can book your break. Following your break, we will contact you again for a quick review about how taking time out has made a difference to you.

The Carer Friendly Breaks scheme is slightly different to the Carefree Breaks offer, so we have put together a handy table to show the difference between the two:

	Carer Friendly Breaks	Carefree Breaks
<b>Who do I book with?</b>	Choose from a selection on Devon Carers website and contact us to access the discount	Contact us to be referred to Carefree
<b>What discount / break can I receive?</b>	Various discounts depending on time of year	1-2 night break
<b>Who is eligible?</b>	Any carer registered with us who is an adult caring for someone in the DCC area	Any adult carer of a person who is 18yrs+ and is available to care for 30hrs+ a week
<b>How many breaks can I book?</b>	As many as you like	2 per calendar year for a £38 admin fee for each break
<b>Do I have to pay for food and travel?</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Can I bring the person I care for with me?</b>	Yes	No - but you can bring someone else to accompany you
<b>How long can I go for?</b>	As long as you like, if there is availability with chosen hotel/ B&B	1 - 2 nights max
<b>For further information visit:</b>	<a href="http://www.devoncarers.org.uk/cfbreaks">www.devoncarers.org.uk/cfbreaks</a>	<a href="http://www.devoncarers.org.uk/carefree">www.devoncarers.org.uk/carefree</a>

# Local businesses committed to supporting Devon's unpaid carers



Did you know you can access discounts, free entry to local attractions and extra support from many local businesses and organisations across Devon with your Carers Passport and ID card?

Our Carer Friendly Devon supporters have considered how to make their businesses more carer friendly. For example some have made their shops more disabled friendly, have provided quieter times to shop, offer free fitness sessions, or provided their staff with training to enable them to support carers when they need to use their services.

More and more places are joining our Carer Friendly Devon initiative across the county to provide you with a carer-friendly experience.

From local attractions, community shops, libraries, leisure centres, medical practices, to community interest companies, they have all joined our scheme to actively support your health and wellbeing (and even save you a few pounds!) by creating a carer-friendly culture in their establishments.



Seaton Tramway

The National Trust in Devon have been a Carer Friendly Devon supporter since the scheme began, offering free entry to their participating properties and hosting a number of events including our Peer Support craft groups and participating in Carers Week.

Paula Clarke – Volunteering and Community Manager commented:

*“We have been involved with the Carer Friendly Devon scheme since Devon Carers first started it. We understand the pressures of caring and recognised that we could make the lives of unpaid carers a little easier by offering them free access to our estate and grounds with their carers ID card. We also provide our staff with carer awareness training to enable them to support carers and make their visit as enjoyable as possible.”*



Castle Drogo – National Trust

Active Mid Devon is one of our supporters who is committed to helping carers to ensure they look after themselves by keeping fit and healthy.

Kelly Lee, Customer Experience Manager – Active Mid Devon commented:

*“We think it is very important to support unpaid carers in our community. We recognise the ongoing contribution they make and it's great to be able to give something back, which is why we offer them discounted fitness and swimming sessions, to help support them to look after their own health and wellbeing.”*

Check out our website to see who is supporting Carer Friendly Devon. Or maybe you own a business or organisation which would like to become a Carer Friendly Devon supporter, either way, for more information visit: <https://devoncarers.org.uk/cfc>

Devon Carers and Devon Young Carers together support more than 34,000 unpaid carers across the county, are both services delivered by Devon's foremost health and wellbeing charity, Westbank Community Health and Care.

This year we will celebrate Westbank's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary and planning is well underway for lots of exciting events and activities to mark this special milestone.

This includes a yearlong campaign dedicated to the sharing of personal stories from service beneficiaries, volunteers, colleagues, trustees and partner organisations, as well as a dedicated fundraising campaign '40 for Forty', alongside creative art projects, challenges and events.

Further details will shortly be available online at [www.westbank.org.uk](http://www.westbank.org.uk)

## Planning for a hospital stay?

Do you, or the person you care for have a planned hospital stay coming up?

We understand that this can be a difficult time for you both but with the help of our hospital planning booklets we can ease your concerns by guiding you through what to expect before, during and after your stay.



To download your copy of these booklets visit: [www.devoncarers.org.uk/hospital](http://www.devoncarers.org.uk/hospital) or if you need a printed version, contact us.



## Top tips for managing stress

Caring for others can take its toll on us mentally and physically, which can become overwhelming as we juggle family, work, the home, finances, emotions and our overall wellbeing. Read our top tips below to help you learn about being kind to yourself and reducing stress.



**Attend a Carers Skills Workshop:** Learn practical skills and coping strategies from our range of topics to help you manage stress, avoid carer burnout and how to cope as a carer. For more information visit: [www.devoncarers.org.uk/csw](http://www.devoncarers.org.uk/csw)



### Make time for yourself:

Take regular breaks, whether it's for 30 mins to read a book, a few hours to pop out for coffee with friends, or even a night away, if you are able to. Either book a break with our new Carer Friendly Breaks scheme: [www.devoncarers.org.uk/cfbreaks](http://www.devoncarers.org.uk/cfbreaks) or with Carefree Breaks: [www.devoncarers.org.uk/carefree/](http://www.devoncarers.org.uk/carefree/)



### Look after your health and wellbeing:

Regular exercise, healthy eating and getting enough sleep, is very important. If it is difficult to leave the person you care for, try online exercises, breathing techniques and mindfulness to help you manage stress.



### Request a Carers Assessment:

This will enable you to consider how caring may be impacting YOU and is an important step in ensuring that you look after yourself and your own life as well as caring. Call our Helpline to book yours: **03456 434 435**.



# 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 and face-to-face Carers Skills Workshops, where you can learn in the comfort of your own home, or face-to-face at a venue with other carers.

The workshops enable carers to develop new skills and knowledge that they need to be more confident in their caring role, and meet other carers and be able to share similar experiences. Increasing your skills will help you grow in confidence and reduce your stress levels.

**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: [www.devoncarers.org.uk/csw](http://www.devoncarers.org.uk/csw)

## Key:



Online workshops



Face-to-face workshops

To book your place or if you have any queries about our workshops email [workshops@devoncarers.org.uk](mailto:workshops@devoncarers.org.uk) or call: **03456 434 435** with the workshop name, date, your name and date of birth. **Please do not contact the venue.**

## 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.

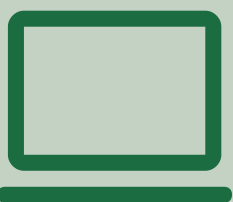
In this live, real-time Zoom session we will:

- 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

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February

2pm to 4pm

Online on Zoom



## Free access to Carers UK Digital Resources

You can access the Carers UK Digital Resource platform which is packed with guides to help you manage your caring responsibilities. Set up your account today on the link below and enter the free access code funded by Devon County Council **DGTL8827** when requested:  
<https://carersdigital.org/login/index.php>

### **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 23<sup>rd</sup> February

10.30am to 12pm

Online on Zoom

### **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 9<sup>th</sup> March

11am to 1pm

Online on Zoom

### **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



Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March

10am to 12pm

Online on Zoom

### **Dementia & the environment**

People living with dementia can be affected by environmental factors.

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

- Look at the environmental factors that affect people with dementia
- Discuss problems with depth perspective e.g. why they can't see the food on their plate or see patterned carpets
- Talk about stored and working memory
- Discuss the importance of routine and sleep



Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March

10.30am to 12pm

Online on Zoom



### 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 those you care for, family and friends

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

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

This workshop will be informative and fun, with no requirement to share personal stories, in a safe and supportive environment.

Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> April (part 1)	1pm to 3pm	Online on Zoom
Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> April (part 2)	1pm to 3pm	Online on Zoom



### 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 and effectively
- Discuss common injuries; bleeds, fractures and burns
- Give you time to ask Q&A's

Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup> April	10am to 12.30pm	Raleigh Manor Care Home, 13 Drake's Avenue, Exmouth, EX8 4AB
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### Do you attend a Carers Support Group?

From managing stress to first aid and looking at your thoughts, feelings and challenges of being a carer, we have workshops which can help support you in your caring role. If you would like to discuss us attending your group, email:

[workshops@devoncarers.org.uk](mailto:workshops@devoncarers.org.uk)



### Save paper – receive the magazine digitally!

Did you know that you can receive our magazine by email? If you would like to change your preference to digital please send us an email to: [newsletter@devoncarers.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@devoncarers.org.uk)



# Would you have time to volunteer with us?

We are always looking for more people to join our fantastic team of volunteers. You can offer as little or as much time as you can spare.

You could simply like and share our social media posts to help us reach more carers. Or you could help at one of our Peer Support groups or if volunteering from home is more convenient, you could spend time chatting over the phone with carers. Alternatively, if you can spare more time, you could join us as a Carer Ambassador to help shape the future of carers services. The choice is yours!

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.

## In the last financial year;

Our volunteers supported: **285 carers**

Our volunteers have given: **2,988 hours**



## Emergency planning

**If you face an emergency, who will care for the person you look after?**

Give yourself peace of mind by putting plans in place if you are unable to care due to an emergency or unexpected hospital visit.

Download our Emergency Plan to instruct others what actions should be taken:

[www.devoncarers.org.uk/emergency-plan](http://www.devoncarers.org.uk/emergency-plan) or contact us to request the emergency plan forms be sent to you.



## Carers Break Fund success

With thanks to Devon County Council for providing the Carers Break Fund in 2025, we are pleased to announce that the £150,000 fund has been awarded to unpaid carers across the county.

The scheme helps support carers to take a break from their caring role enabling them to enjoy hobbies such as a golf membership, enrolling in gym classes, ordering new art supplies and even buying a wetsuit for wild swimming on Dartmoor! It has been so successful that the full funding has been distributed to over 700 carers and is **now closed to new applications.**



# Try something new with a Peer Support group

This spring, we want to reach even more carers! Whether you want to join other carers to talk about supporting someone living with a particular condition, learn a new skill or just have fun, we have something for you. So, if you've never tried Peer Support before, why not give it a go? All groups and events are FREE for registered carers.

**Peer Support Groups:** We hold groups across Devon for carers to meet (see page 15) and are always keen to welcome more people, especially in our face-to-face groups in **Ivybridge, Kingsbridge, Teignmouth** and **Okehampton**. Not able to meet us in person? Why not join one of our online groups? (see page 16). These include a new group for carers supporting someone with a pain and fatigue condition and a male carers group, which are both looking for new members to join and share their experiences with each other.

**Walk & Talk:** Due to their popularity last year, we are holding more walks, including along the stunning **North Devon coast**, led by the South West Coast Path Association (1-3 miles approx.) and exploring the estate at **National Trust Parke** (near Bovey Tracey). We will also be hosting less strenuous, inclusive walks, in partnership with our Westbank Health Walks colleagues in **Tavistock, Newton Abbot, Bideford, Torrington** and **Totnes**.



**Mindfulness & Nature:** Sign up to find out about our mindfulness in nature activities at **Seaton Wetlands** in conjunction with our partners at Jurassic Discovery. Or join us to search for signs of spring at **A la Ronde (Exmouth)** or take a deep breath at a Relaxation in Nature workshop in **Tavistock** in May.

**Carers Skills Workshops:** We've had positive feedback from carers who attended recent workshops. In February, we have a Sleep workshop at our online Neurological Conditions group and a workshop on Thoughts, Feelings & Challenges at **South Molton**. In March, we'll host a Manual Handling workshop at our **Bovey Tracey** group and a Dementia & Effective Communication session in **Bideford**.



**Arts & Crafts workshops:** Take some time out for yourself by enjoying crafting using a range of different media at the inspiring **National Trust A la Ronde in Exmouth**, over refreshments and conversation with like-minded carers.

**Craft group:** Meet with other creative carers in **Broadclyst**, where in February, we'll be making crafts along the Valentine's theme of love and caring.

**Creative workshops:** Our project with Life on the Edge in **Modbury** concludes with a Music Making workshop in February and painting a sculpture for an Arts Trail in March – with places still available!

If you are interested in attending any of these sessions or have suggestions for new activities, please email: [peer.support@devoncarers.org.uk](mailto:peer.support@devoncarers.org.uk)





## Fire risk with emollient creams

Do you use emollient creams on yourself or the person you care for? The Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service tells us about the fire risks that common moisturising products pose.

Creams, ointments, sprays, body wash and moisturisers are used by millions of people every day to manage dry skin conditions such as eczema and psoriasis. These products are sometimes called emollients.

Studies show that both paraffin-based, and non-paraffin-based creams are highly flammable when dried onto fabric. **Since 2010, 84 fire deaths or serious incidents, across the UK, detailed emollients as a contributing factor.**

### Reduce the fire risk of emollient skin creams

When using emollient creams, it is important to think about your **increased fire risk through flammable clothing and bedsheets.**

- **Wash clothing** belonging to the person who uses emollients **separately** to other people's clothing.
- **This flammable residue is not removed by washing** at any temperature, so even freshly laundered items can still be a risk when near to any heat source.
- Anyone with emollient creams on them should **not sit too close to open fires, heaters, or candles.**
- **Avoid cooking whilst wearing contaminated clothing** as being too close will increase the fire risk.
- **Avoid naked flames** such as candles, smoking materials (cigarettes, lighters etc) and heaters.
- Ensure you have a **working smoke alarm** on **each level of your home**, and they are tested every month.

Book in for a free home fire safety visit. Please quote Devon Carers and partner code **035** when contacting us. Call **0800 0502 999** or refer online at [www.dsfire.gov.uk/homesafety](http://www.dsfire.gov.uk/homesafety)



## You responded, we delivered

Thank you to everyone who filled in our Carers Skills Workshops survey, which asked for your feedback on how we can ensure they continue to meet your needs.

As a service guided by its carers, we have listened to your responses and, as a result, have updated the Carers Skills Workshops section on our website, with a new easy-to-use booking system.

We have made it simpler than ever to access our workshops by updating these pages, enabling you to browse available workshops, check dates, and reserve your place quickly by directly emailing the team with your details. We hope you find the new system easier – we would love to know your views once you have used it!



Whether you are new to caring or have been caring for years, these sessions are designed to help you build practical skills, boost confidence, and feel less isolated. Topics range from moving and handling, first aid and understanding dementia, to building resilience and looking after your own wellbeing. Each workshop is delivered by friendly, experienced trainers who understand the challenges carers face.

Most importantly, these workshops offer a chance to step away from daily pressures, meet other carers in similar situations, and develop new skills and knowledge.

Workshops are delivered both online and face-to-face and with the new booking system making access easier than ever, now is an ideal time for you to explore what's available and join a workshop.

For more information visit: <https://devoncarers.org.uk/csw>

The primary focus of Westbank Community Health and Care - the charity that delivers Devon Carers and Devon Young Carers - is preventative healthcare. The charity provides a broad range of services to help people lead more fulfilled, happier, healthier lives and maintain their independence for as long as possible. We all know that walking is good for both our mental and physical health, and Westbank's extensive programme of Health Walks across Devon are open to all. They're a great way to keep mobile and make meaningful social connections.



The charity began offering organised, volunteer-led walks more than two decades ago, initially around Exminster, on the southern edge of Exeter. The idea was to offer an alternative to established walking groups by providing a sociable group activity suited to people's individual fitness and stamina levels, across locations that are easy to reach by public transport.

The programme has expanded over the years and now offers several hundred places each week on walks that vary from a gentle 30-minutes to a longer walk at a slightly faster pace, and they all end with an opportunity to socialise over a cuppa!

You can find out more at <https://www.westbank.org.uk/healthwalks>



Last year we supported 34,000 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.



[www.westbank.org.uk](http://www.westbank.org.uk)

 @westbankdevon  @westbankdevonuk

Westbank, The Healthy Living Centre, Farm House Rise, Exminster, EX6 8AT | 01392 824752

Reg Charity:1119541 | Company No: 06243811



## What is Peer Support?

Peer Support gives carers the chance to meet other carers and provide each other with mutual support and understanding. It's also a chance to share tips and find out about local services and events. Our team of Peer Support Officers keep gatherings informal and relaxed, supporting you in getting to know some of the other carers in your area. We often add new groups to our schedule so please do get in touch if you have a request for a group or would like to suggest a different time or date. We will do our best to accommodate our carers' availability and preferences where capacity allows.

## How do I join?

To express your interest in attending any of these groups call our Helpline on **03456 434 435** or email [peer.support@devoncarers.org.uk](mailto: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, or get in touch for our latest schedules.

## Face-to-face groups

These groups are open to any carer and are informal gatherings where you can support each other. At some of our meetings, we host guest speakers or hold Carer Skills Workshops. All groups are hosted by a Peer Support Officer who facilitates the meetings and can signpost carers to other support available via Devon Carers or in the local area. We meet regularly for Peer Support groups in the towns shown on the map:



# Peer Support online groups

No matter the weather, there will always be a warm welcome at our online Peer Support groups and all have space for new carers. We keep group numbers lower so everyone has a chance to join in. There's always a Peer Support Officer facilitating to keep the discussion flowing and handle any technical issues. All you need is a device with a camera and a microphone.

## Open to all

An 'open' group for all carers, regardless of the condition of the person they care for. This is an ideal first step into accessing further Peer Support groups!

**Thursdays at 10.30am – 12pm**

26/02, 26/03, 23/04, 28/05

## Hobbies, crafts & wellbeing

A fun light-hearted group to mix with other carers while doing your own hobby or craft.

**Tuesdays at 7pm – 8.30pm**

24/02, 24/03, 28/04, 26/05

## Male carers

Over 40% of unpaid carers are men and our online Male Carers group is a space for men to share their experiences and get the advice they need.

**Fridays at 10.30am – 11.30am**

06/02, 06/03, 10/04, 01/05

## Caring for an autistic person

This is aimed at carers who are caring for an autistic person. They may or may not have a formal diagnosis.

**Wednesdays at 10.30am – 12pm**

04/02, 04/03, 01/04, 06/05

## Mental health evening group

This group is aimed at carers of people who experience mental health conditions.

**Tuesdays at 7pm – 8.30pm**

10/02, 10/03, 14/04, 12/05

## Mental health group

This group is aimed at carers of people who experience mental health conditions.

**Wednesdays at 12pm – 1pm**

25/02, 25/03, 22/04, 27/05

## Dementia group

This group is for carers that look after someone with any form of dementia.

**Mondays at 10.30am – 12pm**

09/02, 09/03, 13/04, 11/05

## Caring for a parent with dementia

This group is for carers that look after a parent with any form of dementia.

**Thursdays at 7pm – 8.30pm**

19/02, 19/03, 16/04, 21/05

## Games night

A fun light-hearted group to mix with other carers while playing games.

**Tuesdays at 7pm – 8.30pm**

03/02, 17/02, 03/03, 17/03, 7/04, 21/04, 05/05, 19/05

## Music night

A fun light-hearted group to mix with other carers while enjoying music.

**Thursdays at 7pm – 8.30pm**

05/02, 09/04

## Carers of people with neurological conditions

An evening group for carers looking after someone who has a neurological condition such as Multiple Sclerosis, Huntington's, Parkinson's and Motor Neurone Disease.

**Thursdays at 7pm – 8.30pm**

12/02, 12/03, 09/04, 14/05

## Caring for someone with a pain or fatigue condition

This group aims to provide a friendly and understanding space for carers of someone with a chronic condition causing pain and/or fatigue.

**Thursdays at 11am – 12pm**

12/02, 12/03, 09/04, 14/05