

If you look after someone, we look after you

The quarterly magazine for unpaid carers



Summer 2026



What's inside:

- Welcome
- Latest news
- Carers Week
- 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





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



Helpline:

Open from 8am to 5pm Monday to Friday 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 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**.



Peer Support:

If you haven't already accessed our Peer Support, now is the time to contact us, visit: www.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. Details are sent to the printer approximately one month before publication date. All information correct at time of going to print.

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:

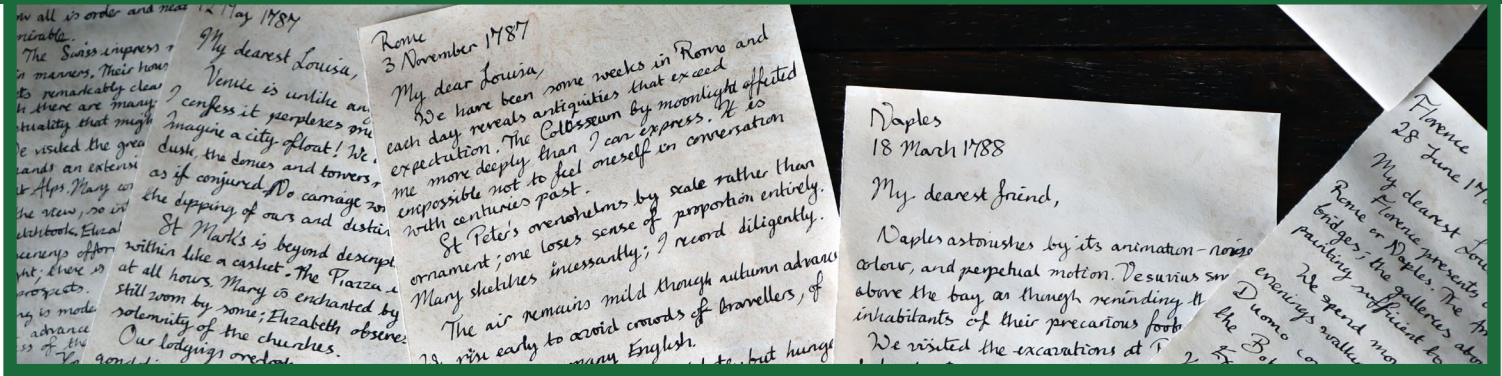
Helpline: 03456 434 435

Email: info@devoncarers.org.uk

Webchat: www.devoncarers.org.uk



Carers get creative over local history exhibition



Our Peer Support service's third craft collaboration with the National Trust's A la Ronde in Exmouth, saw carers inspired by the Estate's current historical exhibition of Mary and Jane Parminster's Grand Tour.

"Seeing all our pieces come together at A la Ronde is a reminder that even in the middle of caring, something beautiful can grow."

She continued: *"Carers often run on very little sleep and time that isn't really ours, yet we still manage to create something meaningful together. This project at A la Ronde has been about creativity, connection, and celebrating the quiet strength carers carry every day."*

If you would like to join us on other craft projects like these and would like more information, email: peer.support@devoncarers.org.uk



The latest craft project, entitled 'The Parminster Grand Tour Through the Eyes of Artists, Crafters and Writers' involved a group of carers meeting and creating together over a 6-month period. Guided by National Trust experts, the extraordinarily imaginative carers once again produced a truly exquisite collection of handmade pieces which will be on display throughout the year at A la Ronde.

Equally important to those taking part in the group was the sense of community which fostered between them as they supported and encouraged each other with both the creative process and the real challenges of caring. One of the carers who took part in the Peer Support project commented:

"As carers, our time is rarely our own, but this project gave us the chance to pause, be creative, and connect with people who truly understand."



Carers Week is a national annual campaign that raises awareness of caring, highlights the challenges unpaid carers face, and recognises the vital contribution they make to families and communities across the UK.

The theme for this year is **'Building Carer Friendly Communities'**, focusing on how supportive local environments can make a meaningful and lasting difference to the lives of unpaid carers.

Devon has been leading the way in developing carer friendly communities. In 2019, Devon Carers launched the Carer Friendly Community scheme, working with organisations and businesses to increase awareness of unpaid carers and encourage small, practical changes that help make everyday life easier for them. You can find carer friendly organisations in your area by searching the Devon Carers website or by looking out for the Carer Friendly Devon logo displayed in local businesses.

During Carers Week 2026, our team will visit a different town each weekday, raising awareness, meeting both new and existing carers, and hosting Peer Support connection events. These sessions provide welcoming spaces where you can meet, share experiences and build supportive networks. The event map shows daily locations and venues for the week.

The National Trust, a Carer Friendly Community supporter, is offering carers free entry during Carers Week to selected local properties, along with a plus one. Full details are also included on the event map.

Additional venues may be added throughout the week, so please look at our website (www.devoncarers.org.uk/carersweek) or our Facebook page. If you do not have internet access, contact our Helpline for further information.

Newton Abbot

Wed

Newton Abbot Leisure Centre	9.30am – 3.30pm	Come at our
Newton Abbot Library	9.30am – 3pm	Come at our
Courtenay Centre	10.30am – 12.30pm	Come at our
Venue TBC	TBC (afternoon)	Join us carers Conne

Tavistock

Thursday 11th June

Tavyside Surgery	9.30am – 3.30pm	Come and say hello to us at our awareness stand
Tavistock Library	9.30am – 3.30pm	Come and say hello to us at our awareness stand
Venue TBC	TBC (afternoon)	Join us and other carers at our Carer Connection Event

Greenway – The

Saturday 13th June

Free entry for carers as w
Please bring your Carers

- The National Trust

All day

as well as a plus one guest.
Carers ID card for access.

Wednesday 10th June

and say hello to us
at our **awareness stand**

and say hello to us
at our **awareness stand**

and say hello to us
at our **awareness stand**

and other
at our **Carer
Connection Event**

National Trust

All day

as well as a plus one guest.
Carers ID card for access.

Bideford

Monday 8th June

Northam Surgery	9.30am – 12pm	Come and say hello to us at our awareness stand
Torrington Health Centre	1.15pm – 4pm	Come and say hello to us at our awareness stand
Tesco	9.30am – 3pm	Come and say hello to us at our awareness stand
Venue TBC	TBC (afternoon)	Join us and other carers at our Carer Connection Event

Crediton

Tuesday 9th June

Active Crediton (leisure centre)	9.30am – 2.30pm	Come and say hello to us at our awareness stand
Tesco	9.30am – 3.30pm	Come and say hello to us at our awareness stand
Crediton Library	2pm – 3.30pm	Join us and other carers at our Carer Connection Event

Knightshayes – The National Trust

Thursday 11th June

All day

Free entry for carers as well as a plus one guest. Please bring your Carers ID card for access.

Killerton House – The National Trust

Saturday 13th June

All day

Free entry for carers as well as a plus one guest. Please bring your Carers ID card for access.

A la Ronde – The National Trust

Saturday 13th June

All day

Free entry for carers as well as a plus one guest. Please bring your Carers ID card for access.

Exmouth

Friday 12th June

Rolle Surgery	1pm – 4pm	Come and say hello to us at our awareness stand
Venue TBC	TBC (afternoon)	Join us and other carers at our Carer Connection Event

Castle Drogo – The National Trust

Thursday 11th June

All day

Free entry for carers as well as a plus one guest. Please bring your Carers ID card for access.



Carers stories

Help shape the future of carer services



Like so many of us, Tracy only recognised herself as an unpaid carer when her daughter was diagnosed in her early 20's with Autism and Inattentive ADHD. Her caring journey has led her to become a Carer Ambassador for Devon Carers, which enables her to speak out for others, raise awareness and help shape the future of adult carer services. She tells us her story below.

“Like most unpaid carers, I didn't see myself as an unpaid carer, it's part of what we do, right?”

“I'm a mum, sister, daughter and a wife. My Daughter was diagnosed in her early 20's with Autism and Inattentive ADHD. That led to my diagnosis in my mid 50's. My family is tiny but complex and we share a lovely mix of Autism, PDA, ADHD, Dyslexia, OCD, POTS, FND, Epilepsy, Brain Injury, Arthritis and COPD.”

“I'm the researcher, administrator, accountant, form filler, mediator, translator, health consultant, problem solver, IT and fix-it girl. I'm the toolbox, scaffold, emotional support, advocate, and protector. I am the

one who eliminates as much stress and anxiety as I can so that my family function to the best of their ability. I'm also the clown - humour and silliness are essential!”

“Three years ago, I happened upon Devon Carers. It was only then that my journey of viewing myself as an unpaid carer began. I received my Carers ID Card, welcome pack and emergency planner, all of which have been very helpful.”

“Living a rural life with very limited transport (no bus service), Autism, ADHD and social anxiety, I noted the online groups and asked to attend the Autism Peer Support group. It takes a lot of time to earn my trust, but this little group of the most amazing folk immediately got me, they have become like my second family. We share the ups and downs of life, offering support, a smile, virtual hug, tears and laughter and words of wisdom. I get to share my own experiences living with neurodivergence for others to relate to. I now belong to five of their marvellous online Peer Support groups.”

“One day, they asked if any of us would be interested in becoming a Carer Ambassador? I said yes. Being a Carer Ambassador gives me a voice and a chance to represent how Devon County Council services can further enhance support for carers and our cared-for. Personally, I speak for those who are neurodivergent or have communication and/or cognitive difficulties, yes, carers have health conditions too!”

“But there's so much more! I've been amazed at what I've learned by attending the various online Carer Skills Workshops, especially the assertiveness and dementia ones facilitated by very knowledgeable, approachable, articulate people with firsthand experiences. There are also health walks and face-to-face Peer Support groups too, literally something for everyone.”



Top tips for getting active this summer

Carers UK stated in their 'Carers and Physical Activity' Report (2021) that unpaid carers face significant challenges in being physically active, despite 87% wanting 'to be fitter than I am'.

We know that carers face many barriers which prevent them from prioritising their own health and wellbeing. But exercise doesn't have to be daunting, you can add little steps into your daily routine, without having to train for a marathon!

"I started this journey with two main aims:

- *To find community and support*
- *To help me navigate future planning for when I am unable to care and look out for my family."*

"Westbank's Devon Carer services and the carers I have met have helped me so much with both. I am so grateful and feel so much stronger with them all in my life. Thank you, Devon Carers."

If you would like more information about becoming a Carer Ambassador, please contact us on: **03456 434 435** or email: **info@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**



Home fire safety checks

Every year we refer carers to the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service for free Home Fire Safety Checks. We were recently contacted by a carer who had received the service to say a very big thank you! She was woken at 3am by their carbon monoxide alarm, which was provided free by the service, as the person she cares for had left the gas hob on. She phoned 999 and was told to evacuate and the fire service attended to make their home safe again.

If you would like us to refer you for a FREE Home Fire Safety Check please call our Helpline: **03456 434 435** or email **info@devoncarers.org.uk**.



Increase your step count:

Arrange to meet friends for a wander through nature, enjoy a shopping trip, visit a location you love, take the dog for a walk, or potter around the block, all steps count!



Access offers from our Carer Friendly Devon supporters:

Enjoy free entry and walk around local National Trust Estates or join Active Mid Devon for discounted fitness sessions for unpaid carers.

For more offers, visit:

www.devoncarers.org.uk/cfc



Online fitness sessions: Visit YouTube and choose an exercise which suits you best. Start slowly and increase as you become more used to it. Speak to your GP before you start if you haven't exercised for some time or have a medical condition.



Add exercise to everyday activities:

Try getting off the bus a stop earlier, use the stairs rather than the lift or take time out for gardening; it's all additional movement.



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

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 or call: **03456 434 435** with the workshop name, date, your name and date of birth. **Please do not contact the venue.**

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 18 th May	10am to 12pm	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 you are feeling overly stressed and where to get further support and advice



Wednesday 3 rd June	10.30am to 12.30pm	Online on Zoom
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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 carer role
- Look at falls, getting in and out of cars etc
- Pick up particular individual manual handling issues that carers might have

Wednesday 17 th June	11am to 1pm	Raleigh Manor Care Home, 13 Drake's Avenue, Exmouth, EX8 4AB
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Hoarding (limited to 5 spaces)

Do you or the person you care for have hoarding tendencies? There are reasons for hoarding, and this workshop aims to explain the reasons of what causes hoarding and how to deal with it.

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

- Discuss what hoarding is (and isn't)
- Chat about how it can affect your life
- Find out where to get support
- Look at ways someone can help themselves
- Talk about how you can help someone you're worried about

Monday 29 th June	1.30pm to 3.30pm	Online on Zoom
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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

Monday 13 th July	10am to 12.30pm	The Burton, Kingsley Rd, Bideford EX39 2QQ
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Join us this year at Exeter Respect Festival 2026!

Saturday 6th & Sunday 7th June

All day

Pop along to our awareness stand in **Belmont Park** and chat with us about our free services!

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

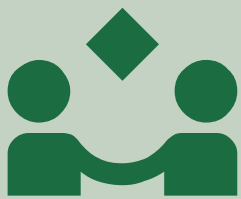
In this live, real-time Zoom session we will:

- 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 15th July

2pm to 4pm

Online on Zoom



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

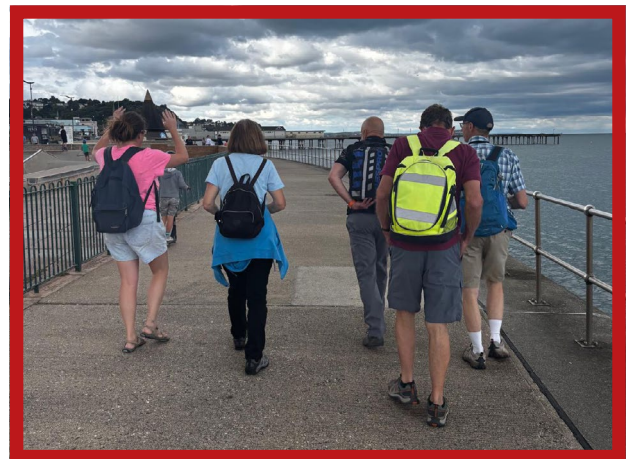


Upcoming Westbank Community Health and Care Health Walks

This year marks Westbank Community Health and Care's 40th anniversary, a wonderful milestone celebrating four decades of supporting health and wellbeing across the county.

In recognition, a number of additional commemorative Health Walks have been organised over the course of the year, with many taking place in May during 'National Walking Month'. A total of 9 walks, led by fully trained Volunteer Health Walk Leaders, are due to take place across the county between now and the end of June. These include:

- **7th May** – Exminster
- **9th May** – Tiverton – Bickleigh Mill Loop
- **14th May** – Shaldon
- **21st May** – Tiverton
- **24th May** – Otterton Loop from Budleigh Salterton
- **28th May** – Exeter Quay
- **4th June** – Green Circle, Exeter
- **6th June** – Princetown
- **20th June** – Haldon Forest – Discovery Trail



We do hope you can join us on one of the walks. Full details including times, meeting locations and length of walk can be found online at www.westbank.org.uk/healthwalks
To book onto a walk please email healthwalks@westbank.org.uk



Is your emergency plan up to date?

Having an emergency plan in place gives you peace of mind knowing that the person you care for will be looked after if you are unexpectedly unable to. We suggest you add a 12-month reminder in your diary to review the details on your plan, as this is key to ensuring it works effectively when you need it most.



Recently, a carer had an experience where it came to light that their plan was out of date. When it was originally written a few years ago, the person they looked after was recorded as the person to be contacted in an emergency. At that time, the cared-for person was fully able to deal with minor issues and was capable of contacting family members to ask for help.

However, a short time ago, the carer was unexpectedly unable to care and the emergency plan was activated. Unfortunately, the condition of their cared-for person had deteriorated, and they were no longer able to look after themselves or call anyone to ask for support. Sadly, at a time when the plan was needed the most, it failed.

Keeping your plan up to date will ensure you are prepared for an emergency. We suggest:

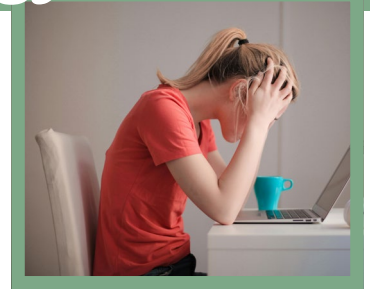
- Anytime your caring situation changes significantly, review and amend the emergency plan
- Set a reminder to review the emergency plan annually
- If you need a new set of forms, you can either download them from our website www.devoncarers.org.uk/emergency-plan or contact our helpline (page 2) to request they are sent out to you.

If you need help with the plan, we have a team of volunteers available to support you – contact us to request a call from a volunteer.



Are you struggling with energy costs?

Carers UK report that 60% of the UK's unpaid carers feel anxious or stressed when they think about their financial situation.



Caring for others brings many responsibilities; worrying about household bills shouldn't be one of them. Follow our helpful tips below to find out what support is available.

- **Find the best tariff:** Utility services can assess your circumstances by recommending the most cost-effective tariff. For example, most utility companies offer a social tariff.
- **Don't hide away:** if you're struggling to pay a bill, call the company and ask to discuss what support is available. Some larger companies even have grants for people in need. Citizens Advice can provide information: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/get-help-paying-your-bills/struggling-to-pay-your-energy-bills/
- **Contact LEAP:** This free energy and money-saving service is helping people keep warm and reduce their energy bills. See how you can save by visiting: www.applyforleap.org.uk/about-leap/
- **Entitled to a benefit?** You may be eligible to claim a benefit but you might be unsure of where to start. Use the benefits calculator provided by national charity Turn2Us, to gain access to welfare benefits, charitable grants and support services, visit: www.turn2us.org.uk/
- **Council Tax discounts:** You may be entitled to certain discounts on your bill as not everyone is counted for Council Tax purposes, for more information visit: www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/financial-support/help-with-bills-and-household-costs/help-with-council-tax/

Visit the Carers UK website for more helpful information: www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/financial-support/



Make the most of summer by joining a Peer Support group

It's been fantastic to welcome a record number of carers attending our Peer Support groups and events. Your feedback has been very helpful and we are pleased to hear that you value sharing your experiences and enjoy swapping tips and information with others who really understand the highs and lows of being an unpaid carer.

This summer, why not come along and meet local carers from your community? We've planned a wide range of meetings, walks, crafting activities and workshops across Devon.

Relaxation in Nature sessions: Join us for an outdoor guided well-being session for carers on **Tuesday 12th May** in **Tavistock** and on **Friday 17th July** in **Bideford**.



Forest bathing at National Trust Killerton (near Exeter): Our National Trust partners are hosting a special session for our carers on **Friday 15th May**. We will immerse ourselves in nature while engaging all our senses to achieve relaxation and improve our well-being.

Coastal path walks: Guided by a South West Coastal Path Walk Leader, our monthly challenging 2 to 3 mile walks take place in different coastal locations in North Devon. Previous walks have covered stretches of the coast near **Woolacombe, Ilfracombe, Instow** and **Westward Ho!**



Craft café: Carers meet every other month in **Broadclyst**, to enjoy their favourite arts and crafts with upcoming sessions on **Monday 15th June** and **Monday 17th August**. Previous themes have included Christmas wreaths, Valentine's Day and Easter crafts.



Peer Support groups: We hold groups across Devon for carers to meet (see page 15) and are always keen to welcome more people.

Not able to meet us in person? Why not join one of our online groups? (see page 16). These include a new group for working age carers who are combining full or part-time work with caring responsibilities.

To keep up to date with all of our latest news, groups, new activities and events, ask to be signed up to our Peer Support service by emailing: peer.support@devoncarers.org.uk or call our Helpline: **03456 434 435**.

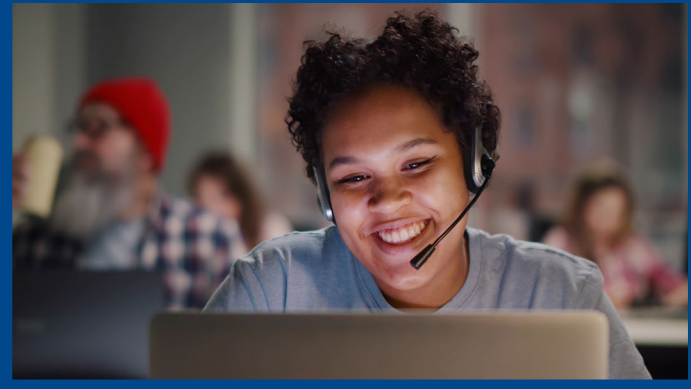




Devon Carers calling...



Introducing Bridgit Care



At times, we may need to contact you, either as part of your initial registration, to discuss one of our services, or because you are experiencing difficulties and need support.

When we try to call, it can sometimes be difficult to get hold of you – this means we may need to make several attempts, or send a letter to let you know we are trying to get in touch.

We understand that it can be frustrating if we don't leave a message on your voicemail, so we'd like to explain what you can expect when we try to get hold of you:

- **If your record states “do not leave a message,” we will not leave one.** We understand that some caring relationships may be sensitive, and leaving a message may create tension or conflict.
- **If your record shows that it is OK to leave a message, we will leave a clear and helpful voicemail** explaining who we are, why we called, and how you can contact us.
- **If there is no information on your record about leaving messages, we will leave a brief voicemail.** This will include who the message is for, our telephone number, and a request to call Devon Carers – **but we will not mention the reason for the call.**

Please don't hesitate to let us know if you would like us to amend your preferences for receiving a voicemail.

You can do this by emailing info@devoncarers.org.uk or you call us on **03456 434 435**.

Caring for someone doesn't follow a schedule, so why should support? That's the thinking behind Bridgit Care, a digital tool created to make life a little easier for unpaid carers by offering guidance and information whenever it's needed.

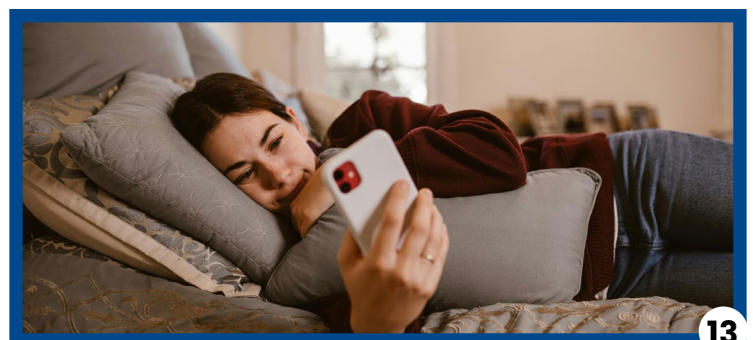
Devon County Council have commissioned Bridgit Care, an AI powered platform that complements the existing support from Devon Carers, putting helpful resources right at your fingertips. Whether you're searching for answers, looking into available support, or simply need a bit of direction, it's there to help, no matter the time of day.

Bridgit Care offers a convenient way to find answers without having to wait. It's especially useful during evenings, weekends, and bank holidays when the Devon Carers team is not available.

It's important to remember that Bridgit Care is not a person. You're interacting with artificial intelligence, not a trained advisor. While it can offer helpful guidance and point you in the right direction, it doesn't replace the personalised support, understanding, and human connection that the Devon Carers team provides.

Instead, think of it as an extra layer of support, ideal for quick questions or those moments when you just need a little reassurance. The Devon Carers team remains available between 8am and 5pm Monday to Friday on **03456 434 435**, or via email at info@devoncarers.org.uk.

To find out more about Bridgit Care visit <https://carers.bridgit.care/app/devon/ca>





40th Anniversary Milestone Year

Earlier in January, Mary Nisbett, founder of Westbank Community Health and Care returned to the Healthy Living Centre in Exminster to cut the ribbon on our wall-mounted timeline, kickstarting our 40th anniversary milestone year and recognising our charity's many achievements over the past four decades.



In recognition of our special year, we will be sharing 40 personal stories from service beneficiaries, volunteers, staff, trustees and partner organisations to showcase the difference Westbank has made to them, their families and their communities. A number of these are already available to read online at www.westbank.org.uk/personal-stories

Our '40 for forty' Fundraising campaign has now launched inviting you to raise £40, donate 40 hours, or take part in simple acts of kindness, all to help people live fulfilled, healthier, happier lives for longer. More information can be found online at www.westbank.org.uk/Appeal/40-for-forty

Our Micro Volunteering campaign is now live, offering members of our community the chance to undertake small, quick, low commitment actions to support us in our 40th anniversary year! More information can be found at www.westbank.org.uk/volunteering

There are lots more events and activities planned throughout the year with more information available at www.westbank.org.uk/40th-anniversary



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

@westbankdevon @westbankdevonuk

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

Reg Charity:1119541 | Company No: 06243811



DEVON CARERS
AT WESTBANK



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

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

28/05, 25/06, 23/07, 27/08

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

14/05, 11/06, 09/07, 13/08

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

01/05, 05/06, 03/07, 07/08

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

06/05, 03/06, 01/07, 05/08

Mental health evening group

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

Tuesdays at 7pm – 8.30pm

12/05, 09/06, 14/07, 11/08

Mental health group

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

Wednesdays at 12pm – 1pm

27/05, 24/06, 22/07, 26/08

Dementia group

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

Mondays at 10.30am – 12pm

11/05, 08/06, 13/07, 10/08

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

21/05, 18/06, 16/07, 20/08

Games night

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

Tuesdays at 7pm – 8.30pm

05/05, 02/06, 07/07, 04/08

Music night

An easygoing group to mix with other carers while enjoying music.

Thursdays at 7pm – 8.30pm

04/06

Hobbies, crafts & wellbeing

A cheerful group to mix with other carers while doing your own hobby or craft.

Thursdays at 11am – 12pm

14/05, 11/06, 09/07, 13/08

NEW – Working carers

A new group aimed at working age people who are combining full or part-time work with caring responsibilities.

Tuesdays at 7pm – 8.30pm

26/05, 23/06, 28/07, 25/08