

**CARERS**

**News**

*Spring 2018*

# Carers Finance Special



A guide to  
Carers Benefits

10 years of the  
Carers Garden

Young Carers  
News

Brought to you by:





The Carers Hub is a new dedicated website and phone line for unpaid carers across Brighton & Hove

**Website**

**carershub.co.uk**

**Phone**

**01273 977000**

**Email**

**info@carershub.co.uk**

**Twitter:**

**@carershub**

**Facebook:**

**/brightoncarershub**

The Carers Hub is operated and managed by The Carers Centre for Brighton & Hove  
Please contact 01273 746222



## Membership

Members are very important to the Carers Centre. Our mission is to improve the quality of life for carers in Brighton & Hove. Getting your support and involvement will make sure that the Carers Centre will continue its focus on unpaid carers by providing appropriate and relevant services.

Being a member, you will:

- support our vision and values
- be able to vote at the Annual General Meeting and stand for election to the Board
- meet up with trustees to share your stories and issues that matter to unpaid carers
- receive our regular newsletters and updates of events/activities

According to our constitution, membership has to be renewed annually. Member who did not renew their membership will be automatically taken off from the list.

All existing members have already been sent a renewal form. If you haven't received one by now and would like to sign up, please contact the Centre on 0127374622 or [info@thecarerscentre.org](mailto:info@thecarerscentre.org).

New membership applications will be considered by the Board of Trustees who will inform the applicant within 60 days of the application having been received.

# Well done Steve...

Steve Hinton is the Support and Outreach Worker at the Carers Centre for Brighton & Hove supporting carers and families of the Armed Forces Community across Sussex. Funded by the Royal British Legion for the second year, Steve has reached out and supported 118 carers and their families, providing information, advice, advocacy work, signposting to specialist support and organising workshops and peer support groups since his employment started in October 2016.



Steve collecting his Armed Forces Network Service Champion Carers Award

Covering such a huge patch single-handedly has never been an issue for Steve. With his ex-military background and knowledge, Steve is also dedicated to raising awareness of the issues facing carers in the Armed Forces community with individuals and organisations.

Adopting an extensive outreach approach, Steve is able to seek out hidden carers across Sussex. Steve is a mine of information in knowing what support for families is available from military organisations, statutory bodies and other voluntary organisations, particularly some of the lesser known associations. Steve always responds to requests for support in the most helpful way possible, going out of his way to find the appropriate support for even the most challenging of cases. This Award reflects the commitment and hard work of Steve in the last 16 months. Well done Steve!

To access Steve's services please contact 07763975190 [steve.hinton@thecarerscentre.org](mailto:steve.hinton@thecarerscentre.org)

# Carers Allowance

**Carer's Allowance is the main benefit for Carers. If you are looking after someone for 35 hours a week or more, you may be eligible.**

Carer's Allowance is paid at £62.70 a week (2017/18 rate) and the amount is reviewed each year in April, but isn't necessarily increased. It is not a contributory benefit based on your National Insurance record, nor is it means tested so is not based on your and any partner's income and capital, however there is a cap on how much you can earn from work and still be entitled.

To be eligible to claim you must be; 16 years of age or older, look after someone who gets a qualifying disability benefit, you must look after that person for at least 35 hours per week, you are not in full time education and you satisfy UK presence and residence conditions. But please note; if you meet the above conditions but already receive certain benefits (including state pension), then the amount of Carer's Allowance you are entitled to could be affected.

Carer's Allowance is taxable. However, you will only have to pay tax if you have other sources of taxable income such as occupational or personal pensions or part-time earnings. This combined income could take you over the threshold for paying tax but Carer's Allowance on its own is below the threshold.

When you claim Carer's Allowance other benefits you get may be reduced but total benefit payments will usually increase or stay the same.

While there is no upper age limit for claiming Carer's Allowance, payment usually stops when you reach retirement age as your State Pension will be paid instead (unless your State Pension is less than the amount of Carer's Allowance, in which case you may continue to be paid a smaller amount). This is because of the 'overlapping benefits' rules. You may still be able to get some extra money in recognition of your caring role, because you can still have an 'underlying entitlement' to Carer's Allowance.



Whatever your current situation it is worth getting a benefit check if you are about to get your state pension and want to know whether this 'underlying entitlement' will financially benefit you, or if you are already receiving your State Pension and would like to know if it is worth claiming for.

You can contact the Carers UK Adviceline 0808 808 7777 for further information. Normally open Monday and Tuesday 10am to 4pm.

# Carers Credit

## Are you getting yours?



Carers Credit is a National Insurance Credit that will help with gaps in your National Insurance Record. As your state pension is based on your contributions, if you are a carer and have to give up employment or work considerably fewer hours so you can care for someone else then this could cause gaps in your pension record, meaning that you may be missing out once you reach retirement age.

To be eligible for Carers Credit you must be aged 16 or over, under state pension age and you must be looking after one or more people for at least 20 hours a week. You will already be receiving Carer's Credits if you currently receive Carers Allowance or if you receive child benefit for a child under the age of 12.

You must also be caring for 20 hours a week or more for one or more people who are in receipt of a qualifying disability benefit. (Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, Constant Attendance Allowance, Personal Independence Payment.) If there is no qualifying benefit it may still be possible to claim on the basis of a signed certificate for a health or social care professional to confirm the level of care being provided is appropriate.

You will still receive Carer's Credit even if you have breaks from caring for up to 12 weeks consecutively, for example; if you take a short holiday, someone you look after goes into hospital or you go into hospital.

This means you can take on caring responsibilities without affecting your ability to qualify for the state pension.

Don't miss out: The Department of Work and Pensions estimate that over 200,000 carers nationwide are eligible, although only 10% of these currently claim.

To find out if you meet the criteria or to find out more about Carer's Credit you can visit [www.gov.uk/carers-credit](http://www.gov.uk/carers-credit) and download a Carer's Credit claim form or you can call the Carer's Allowance Unit on 0800 731 0297 (Alternative formats available on request).

# Universal Credit

Universal Credit (UC) is a benefit for people in work on a low income and people out of work that replaces six benefits with a single monthly payment. It is made up of a standard allowance plus other elements and the amount of benefit will depend on individual circumstances.

Universal Credit replaces Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit, Income-based jobseeker's Allowance, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support and Housing Benefit.

Universal Credit involves a 'claimant commitment' which is an agreement that you will meet certain work related requirements. If you claim UC as a couple you will each have your own claimant commitment.

There are four types of work related requirements which may be included: work focused interviews, work preparation, work search and work availability.

As a carer you will fit into the 'no work related requirements group' if:

- You have '*regular and substantial caring responsibilities for a severely disabled person*' or
- You have caring responsibilities for one or more 'severely disabled people' for at least 35 hours a week, but do not satisfy the qualifying conditions for Carer's Allowance—however you will need to satisfy your work coach that it would be unreasonable for you to meet a work search and work availability requirement.

Whilst this is good news for those carers that meet the above conditions, carers who fall outside of these conditions (such as those caring for less than 35 hours a week and those caring for someone who is not considered to be 'severely disabled') will have some work related requirements.



Some carers are likely to have both a work focused interview requirement and a work preparation requirement. They might also have a work search requirement and work availability requirement, however for both of these your work coach can decide that there are temporary circumstances (such as caring) which would mean these would be unreasonable. You should therefore fully discuss your caring role with your work coach, covering things such as:

- If the person you are looking after is not considered to be ‘severely disabled’ explain why—for example they have not made a claim for DLA, PIP or Attendance Allowance (and if not is there a reason why) or have they made a claim but are waiting on the outcome.
- While your caring role might impact your ability to fulfil work related requirements—for example you could describe your typical day and why you need to be available for the person you are looking after (i.e. if you need to attend school to sit with your child as and when required, if the person cannot be left alone, or if the person needs medication throughout the day and you need to help them with it, etc.)

## Carers’ Feedback

The Carers Centre conducted a survey with carers who look after people with a learning disability in January 2018. It was concluded that carers need support to claim benefits. Most of those asked did not feel well-informed about Universal Credit. The latest negative news didn't offer people much confidence about the changes to the benefits system.

Most respondents were scared that Universal Credit would have a negative impact on their lives. All respondents had bank accounts, but only half use online banking and 36% never complete forms online. Nearly 55% of them are wary of scams and how to deal with finances online could be daunting for most.

82% of respondents need support to fill in benefit forms.

In another survey around carer’s needs assessments in December 2017, there were a large number of responses indicating that carers are struggling financially. Practical support and advice are needed.

Universal Credit is now in Brighton & Hove for single claimants and is being introduced for all new claimants between October 2017 and January 2018. More information can be obtained from DWP’s Universal Credit Helpline. Tel: 0800 328 9344, Text-phone: 0800 328 1344 Mon-Fri 8am to 6pm Or visit: [www.gov.uk/universal-credit](http://www.gov.uk/universal-credit)

Locally, you can contact the Welfare Rights Team at the Council for advice. They also offer advice and representation to people who have been turned down for benefits. Call 01273 291 116 open Mondays 10am to 1pm.

# Caring and Work



## Caring and work

Working carers often have a tricky time balancing their caring duties with their job. Everyone's situation is different and the level of support each working carer needs will vary. It could be you need a private space and time to make a phone call, to check in on someone at home or you need short notice time off for medical appointments or emergencies.

Telling your employer you are a carer can be daunting, especially if you worry they may not be supportive. However you should feel you can speak to HR or your line manager. You may be surprised to discover your employer already has a carer's policy in place, and they should be open to discussing your situation and working together to find a solution. Talking about your caring responsibilities with colleagues can also provide a great support network and source of advice and information.

As a working carer you have statutory rights which provide for time off in emergencies, give you the right to request flexible working and protect you from discrimination. On top of these many companies offer contractual benefits to

further support their employees, alongside offering information about what local support is available outside of work.

Companies have a vested interest in supporting their working carers, as loss of staff and the resources involved in replacing them have a huge financial impact alongside loss of skills.

Employers for Carers (<https://www.employersforcarers.org/>) have created some fantastic resources to help both companies and working carers, including e-learning modules, employment guides for HR and line managers, support for carers around balancing work and caring.

Along with Brighton and Hove City Council, the Carers Centre are offering local companies free access to these resources, alongside promoting the free digital resources for carers. We hope to encourage some open discourse about caring and working, and help more of our local working carers access support to enable them to keep on working.





Free digital resources to make caring easier.



Caring for a loved one who is ill, disabled or older can be valuable and rewarding, but without the right support caring can have an impact on your health, your job, your finances and your social life.

**Register for our FREE digital resources and get the help you need today.**

Brighton and Hove has teamed up with CarersUK to offer carers in our area a comprehensive solution bringing together carers UK's digital products and online resources with our own information and support for carers onto a single webpage.

Visit the link below to create an account and get free access to all the products and support resources.

Visit: [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/carersuk](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/carersuk)  
Your free access code is: BHCC\_JT75

### **What's included?**

**About Me: Building resilience for carers**—an e-learning resource developed by Carers UK that aims to help you identify and find resources, technologies and sources of support in order to prevent your caring responsibilities from becoming overwhelming.

**Jointly**—Carers UK's care co-ordination app for people managing or sharing care.

**Upfront Guide to Caring**—a simple assessment tool to guide those new to caring or seeking support for the first time to navigate the Carers UK website.

**Looking after someone: Carers Rights Guide**—which aims to help you understand your rights as a carer and where to go for financial or practical help.

**Being Heard: a self advocacy guide for carers**—which helps carers develop the skills to self-advocate.

**Our own information and support resources for carers**

# The Carers Garden is 10 Years Old!



What began as an idea to offer carers a break and a very dilapidated allotment site has grown into a highly valued and very beautiful garden space for carers and bereaved carers.



We started the project on a challenging site overgrown with brambles and home to numerous slow worms!

With practical help from Working Links and staff from Brighton Pier we began to shape the allotment.



We were also given tools and equipment by Bupa, B&Q and other generous individuals. And so we began to **GROW!**





We had open days on sunny days.....



We grew some lovely vegetables and flowers....

On rainy days we gathered in the shed and some people juggled.....



We kept bees.....

**And we continue to meet every Thursday come rain, shine or snow!**

A **HUGE** Thank you to everyone who has helped us over the years. Funders, donations, volunteers and of course carers and bereaved carers.

# Young Carers News



So the winter has been long, cold and definitely wet (no doubt there will be a hose pipe ban before we know it!) However despite the grey days we always enjoy a few traditional activities at the Young Carers which stop us feeling too down about the winter.

The first was the annual ice skating trip, organised by Tammy. We took 12 young carers to the Royal Pavilion ice rink. It's a beautiful setting and friendships are always formed pretty quickly, especially if you need a fellow novice skater to stop you from hitting the ice. Again we had a wonderful evening which never fails to get us all in the mood for Christmas. A great way to get some exercise, meet new friends and experience something new.





We also had our Christmas party, this time up in Hangleton. Nearly 30 young people attended and got to enjoy face painting, games, party food, arts and crafts and a visit from the big chap in a red suit; who managed to fit us in despite his busy schedule!

We had some great dancing and some of the young people even tried their hand at DJing, although it has to be said that the highlight of the evening was no doubt the 'Wrap up a staff member as a Present' competition. With myself,

Karen, Ruth and Tom bravely putting ourselves forward as 'presents' we were wrapped up in a huge amount of paper and tape by teams of delighted young carers. Unfortunately I wasn't the best looking present and the prize went to Karen whose head was wrapped as a reindeer!

Great team work, great crafting skills and great memories! Coming up over the next quarter we will be having Nerf Gun battles, bouldering and beach cleaning... roll on the summer!

By Paula Mellis

# Young Carers News

## Go Karting



In December we took a group of teen young carers Go Karting at Brooklands in Worthing. We met at 11am took a minibus there and then were split into two teams and took turns at racing round the track. We ended with a race where everyone was timed to see who was the fastest round the track. It was pretty competitive! But we had a clear winner and a 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>

place. After the Go Karting we walked down the beach to the Perch café on the seafront and enjoyed some hot chocolates and drinks in the winter sunshine.

## Young Carers Awareness Day

On January 25<sup>th</sup>, we were delighted to celebrate National Young Carers Awareness Day. Like many Carers Centres across the country, we were keen to mark the occasion by raising awareness of the challenges many Young Carers face every day. However, we felt it was important to celebrate the amazing achievements of the Young Carers of Brighton & Hove too! So we combined the two messages with an amazing evening at Brighton Town Hall attended by Young Carers, their families, councillors, professionals and even the City Mayor! We had a great evening during which we highlighted what families want to see from the Young Carers Strategy in the future. We also awarded prizes to 3 Young Carers who had been voted by their peers as high achievers this past year. So once again, congratulations to Jade Carrick-Howat, Ollie Mitchell and Luana Turner! We hope to make this an annual event so if you'd like to put forward a Young Carer for one of next year's awards, you can ask a Young Carers Project staff member at any time...



# Schools Update

By Lizzie Hovard

This term I've enjoyed visiting many of our schools to raise awareness of Young Carers and am pleased to see more schools in Brighton & Hove engaging with our services. My role is not only to help schools identify and support Young Carers but also to bring more awareness to, and therefore destigmatise, the role of the carer which is a daily reality for many young people in our city.

Sadly many of our Young Carers experience bullying at school, as reported in the Safe and Well School Survey (SAWSS), an anonymous online survey conducted annually with school children across the city. The SAWSS reports that in 2016 Young Carers were almost twice as likely to be bullied compared to non-carers, and in particular over a third of Young Carers at primary school and 28% of secondary school pupils reported to have been bullied. There may be many reasons why a young person, in particular a Young Carer, is bullied in school. In response to this the Young Carers Project is looking to work directly with Young Carers over the coming months to find out more about their experiences of bullying in school, in order to support schools to improve the way bullying can be prevented, reported and responded to. We hope to be able to share good practice to ensure all Young Carers feel safe and happy in school.

School Nurses are working in partnership with the young carers team to offer support for children/young people and their families around any health issues or concerns.



School Nurses understand the needs of young carers and want to give young carers the opportunity to access their service – they are happy to meet children/young people at home or at school. School Nurses want to offer a service to young carers that is non-judgmental, visible, accessible and confidential.

School Nurses will also be attending the young carers' drop in every half term to promote healthy lifestyles for children and young people. At the drop in some young people may ask to speak to the School Nurse individually and if they do, the School Nurse always encourages the young person to speak to their parent/carer.



## Back Care Support Service

The Back Care Support Service works with unpaid or informal carers to help them look after their own physical health and wellbeing, with a focus on good back care and injury prevention.

Following a referral either from a health/social care or voluntary sector professional, or self-referral, the support worker will visit the carer in their own home, where advice can be tailored to each individual situation.

Advice given may cover:

- Safer ways of carrying out tasks that involve moving and handling.
- Basic principles of good posture and how to care for your back.
- Equipment available to help with manual handling.

*“Advice on correct techniques and useful equipment made it safer and easier to move my mother, plus less strain on my body so I slept better and got more rest! Thank you so much.”*

*“The support worker communicated the subject matter in a way that was easy to understand and digest. He was very knowledgeable, demonstrating clearly the techniques that would meet our needs best. We are very thankful to*

To be eligible for support you have to be an unpaid carer for someone living in their own home (i.e. not in a residential nursing home) and the person you are caring for must be registered with a Brighton and Hove primary care trust GP. You can refer yourself by contacting them directly.



Back Care Support Service,  
Briggs Unit, Brighton General Hospital,  
BN2 3EW.  
Tel: 01273 696011 ext 3310  
[sctr.backcaresupportreferralline@nhs.net](mailto:sctr.backcaresupportreferralline@nhs.net)



# The doctor will see you now....

But are you ready for your appointment?

If you do need to see your doctor, it is important to prepare for the appointment to help you and your GP get the most out of your time together.



Here are our top ten practical things you can do prior to an appointment:

1. Sign up for GP online services to book appointments without having to phone.
2. Turn up to appointments on time and cancel appointments you don't need to ensure you and others get the most time possible with their GP.
3. Ask for longer appointments if you have more than one problem to give you more time to talk them through.
4. Write down your symptoms and when they started/occurred so you can tell your GP exactly what the issue is.
5. Write down any questions and worries you want to ask the GP so you don't forget.
6. Bring a list of medication you are taking and any other relevant documents to help your GP know everything you are taking.
7. Tell your GP about the most important things first, don't leave your main concern to the end.
8. Bring a friend or carer if you need support so they can help you understand or explain what the doctor is telling you.
9. Don't be afraid to ask your GP to explain if you do not understand what they say, make sure you know the next steps before you leave the room.
10. Consider seeing a practice nurse who can often deal with your concern without having to wait to see a GP.

# Want to Learn a New Skill or Hobby?



Are you an unpaid Carer?  
Would you like to learn something new?

We will match you with a volunteer for up to 10 weeks to support you to achieve positive changes in your life.



Reablement Project

Get in touch to find out more.  
01273 746222

[thecarerscentre.org/carers-Reablement-service](http://thecarerscentre.org/carers-Reablement-service)

## Changes Ahead



*"Changes Ahead is an invaluable source of support that has offered me real help, allowed me to be myself, put me in touch with a wonderful community and given me coping skills; a beacon of light in darkness - thank you."*

Changes ahead is a carer led service, funded by Brighton & Hove City Council, offering 1-1 support sessions for carers looking after someone with a Mental Health difficulty to help them regain control of their lives and, in turn, promote independence, recovery and a future for the person they care for. Their follow up sessions ensure that progress is monitored and continued. They also facilitate activities, training, events and talks specifically for Mental Health Supporters (Carers) and offer a Mental Health book borrowing scheme.

The Changes Ahead monthly coffee morning is now running, please call 07935 302838 or email [changesaheadoakleaf@gmail.com](mailto:changesaheadoakleaf@gmail.com) to arrange an appointment. (open Mondays and Tuesdays)



## Carers

**Monday 19 March 2018**  
1.30pm - 4.30pm  
Manor Road Gym  
Manor Road BN2 5EA

- Giant games: Jenga, Connect 4 & Kerplunk
- Bingo
- Stress busting session
- Art activity
- Afternoon Tea



• meet with other carers  
• free transport for carers who need it  
• afternoon tea

**Call 01273 977000  
to book your place**




The Carers Centre for Brighton & Hove

# Coming Soon



Monthly support group for people caring for someone who has a life limiting illness.

See the next issue of Carers News for more details or please call The Carers Centre 01273 746222



## Carer Coffee Mornings



### Hangleton Carers

First Thursday 10.30—12.00  
Hangleton Manor, Hove

### East Brighton Carers

First Thursday, 10.30—12.00  
Al Campo Lounge, London Road, Brighton

### Queen's Park Carers

First Tuesday, 10.30—12.00  
Cup of Joe Café, St Georges Rd, Kemptown

### Portslade & Hove Carers

First Monday, 2—2.30pm  
The Railway Inn, Portslade

### Saltdean Carers

Second Tuesday, 10.30—12  
The Saltdean Tavern (BN2 8SP)

\*Carers from Rottingdean, Ovingdean and Woodingdean are also welcome.

### Current & Former Carers

Every Thursday, 10.30—12  
Chapel Royal, Brighton

### Carers of Adults with Eating Disorders

Last Wednesday, 7—8.30pm  
Brighthelm Centre

Carers Coffee Mornings provide a place to meet with carers from your neighbourhood and to take a break. Each group is run by a Carers Centre Support Worker, who is available for advice and information.



# carershub.co.uk

information & support in Brighton & Hove

One Number

One Website

One Place for Carers

A dedicated phone line and website  
for unpaid carers in Brighton & Hove

**01273 977000**

Lines open weekdays 9am - 5pm

