# CARERS News

**Winter** 2018

Loneliness—the silent epidemic How to tackle loneliness in Brighton & Hove



## Welcome

Hello and welcome to the Winter edition of Carers News,

As the year draws to a close and the temperatures plummet, we say farewell to our CEO Chris Lau, who is off to find some new challenges.

We will be taking a look at loneliness for carers in Brighton & Hove and how you can beat it this wintertime.

#### In this issue:

- We are looking back at our first year of the Carers Hub.
- The Young Carers Rock Out on page 12 and our Teen Carers go Eco in Cornwall
- Take a trip to the Talking Hands Café in Hassocks.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our unpaid carers, staff, volunteers and supporters a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

The office will be closed for a week over the festive period.

We will be shutting at the end of the day on 21st December and will be back on Wednesday 2nd January.

Happy Holidays



The Carers Hub is a dedicated website and phone line for unpaid carers

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

## 10 years with the **Carers Centre**

Time flies when you are having fun! 10 vears isn't a short period of time. When I set foot in the Carers Centre in October 2008, I had no idea that I would stay for so long. I feel privileged and proud to have supported the unpaid carer community in Brighton & Hove, and I hope some would agree with me that I have made a difference to both the charity and to unpaid carers. The reason for me applying for the Director post was not just because I was a



young carer myself, but also because I appreciate and understand the sacrifice and commitment of unpaid carers in carrying out a vital role for their family and also for society. It is hard to imagine what our country would look like without unpaid carers.

Looking back over my ten years of managing the Centre I do have a few regrets. As Rag'n'Bone Man sang, "I am only human after all". However, I feel that keeping the Centre financially sustainable and working in partnership with key stakeholders are probably my biggest contributions to the Centre in the past ten years. The Royal Visit in 2013. celebrating the Centre's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and our garden barbecue in 2018, held to celebrate the Centre's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, are both occasions to remember. I still believe moving to Bedford Place was one of my best decisions for the Centre, even though the process was tricky and chaotic. I was so excited when we secured Big Lottery Funding for five years back in 2010 which offered the Centre an opportunity to work with more unpaid carers in the BME and LGBT communities and those living in deprived areas. The recent establishment of the Carers Hub is my final contribution to the Carers Centre. Only history can tell whether this change in our model of service delivery will have a long lasting impact on unpaid carers. However, based on initial feedback, I feel there are a lot of positive vibes and great potential for future growth and development. I am sure under Tom's leadership the Carers Centre will continue to thrive.

Last but not least, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to all the trustees, staff and volunteers who I have worked with in the past ten years. A special thank you to all my chairpersons – David Taylor, Sue Wallace, David Lepper, Carol Mealing and Vas Selvaratnam. With their unreserved support and commitment, I was able to get on with my job knowing they would be there for me no matter what challenges presented themselves.



8 in 10 people caring for loved ones "have felt lonely or socially isolated."

## Loneliness—the silent epidemic

Most of us will feel lonely at some point in our lives and it affects us all in very different ways, and often it will pass.

However for some people, loneliness can trigger ill effects to do with health and wellbeing,

Loneliness and social isolation is as harmful to someone's health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

Loneliness is not the same as being alone. A person can be surrounded by friends, family or colleagues and still feel lonely. It can be uncomfortable and is usually linked with feelings of sadness, loss and emptiness.

It is associated with depression, sleep problems, impaired cognitive health, heightened vascular resistance, hypertension, psychological stress and mental health problems.

It is easy in a large city like Brighton and Hove for people to feel disconnected from their communities and to fall through the cracks of local support or the opportunity to socialise.

Due to the complex individuality of loneliness and the fact that there is no specific cause, it can be very difficult to treat or prevent.

This is especially prevalent in the unpaid carer community.

The ability to take time away from your caring role is a huge hurdle to socialising or getting out of the house.

Remember if you are feeling lonely, it is a perfectly normal feeling and one you can overcome.

Making a change in the long run, can make you happier, healthier, and enable you to impact others around you in a positive way.

## Helping someone who is Lonely....

On the following page we have information about what to do if you are lonely, but here are some top tips for helping someone who is lonely.

Be patient with them—loneliness often comes from low self esteem so let them know they are valuable without being pitied.

Do something small—such as an casual invitation to lunch.

Invite them to join you on outings— Take the pressure off and invite them to join you on days out or even a trip to the supermarket.

**Check in**—if you are unable to see them then give them a call to make them feel they have not been forgotten.

**Listen**—we all like to be listened to, chat with them but really listen to what they are saying

and interact by asking questions to show you are listening.

**Do what they love**—we all love to share, it is part of what makes us human, take an interest in their interests, it will give you something to talk about.

Get to know them— Ask guestions about them or their past, get them to talk about happy times and life experiences.

**Be optimistic**—try to stay positive and leave the person with a positive attitude.

There are many tips and techniques to help someone who is lonely, but the most important thing is to connect with them on whatever level they feel comfortable with, and don't give up trying.

## What causes loneliness?

We often feel lonely when we feel we don't have strong social relationships or are unhappy with the ones we have.

- Social Networks (living alone, being widowed or divorced, a lack of contact with friends and family and limited opportunities to take part in social occasions.)
- Health (poor health, limited mobility, social care needs or cognitive and sensory impairment)
- Individual Characteristics (age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, low income, retirement)
- Neighbourhood characteristics (structures of buildings and streets, provision of local amenities, territorial boundaries.)



## It is not the quantity of social interaction that combats loneliness but the quality.

It sounds so cliché, but the best way of tackling loneliness is to get out and see people. Easier said than done, when you are already feeling low, but pushing yourself will be very rewarding.

In most cases the feeling of loneliness is temporary, so waiting for the feeling to pass does work for some, however for those where it is more chronic, other solutions might work better.

- Be kind to yourself
- Try to reach out to people you have not seen for a while.
- Reach out to people you already know but would like to get to know better.
- Accept invitations to go out and socialise.
- Try to make sure you have contact with the outside world everyday, even if it is chatting with a neighbour, having a coffee with a friend or catching up with distant family over skype.

#### Talk to Someone about your loneliness,.

Don't feel ashamed for feeling lonely, most people will be sympathetic.

If you are really concerned then please contact your doctor.

"Lonely adults consume more alcohol and get less exercise than those who are not lonely."

#### Look after yourself

It can be hard to take care of yourself when you are feeling down, but it is important to keep healthy.

Try to do exercise, eat good healthy food, get a good nights sleep (regularly) and go easy on yourself.

Being a carer can isolate you from many opportunities to socialise, here are a few suggestions for you as a Carer in Brighton and Hove:

## **Carers Coffee Mornings**

Local peer support groups for unpaid carers operated by The Carers Centre. Come and enjoy a coffee and chat with Carers from all walks of life. Held at venues across the city monthly. Find out where your nearest one is on Page 19. There are also more specific coffee mornings offered by other organisations and charities around the city.

#### Feel more connected to other carers.

Chatting with others in similar situations can sometimes help you to realise you are not alone, as we don't always have the time to go out and socialise, why not try online Forums, chat rooms and social networks. We recommend Carersuk.org/forum where you can chat with other carers 24/7 on a number of topics or you can start a topic of your own.

#### **Befriending services**

Offer the opportunity for people to make friends and receive support.

Time to talk– for 65+ —01273 737710 Neighbourhood care scheme—01273 775888 Befriending Contact Point— 01273 229005

## **Reablement Project**

As a Carer you can be paired with a volunteer for up to 10 weeks to learn a new skill or hobby. (See page 8 for more details)

#### **Carers Card Offers**

Take advantage of the offers available through your Carers Card, with discounts on activities, fitness, days out and entertainment right across the city and beyond.

If you are a Carer and are feeling lonely and isolated please get in touch with the Carers Hub.



## **Activities to tackle Loneliness**

We are very lucky in Brighton and Hove, there are so many activity and hobby groups, sports clubs, entertainment venues and chances to meet like minded people.

## **Local Groups and Sports Teams**

From Community Gardens and Book Clubs, to walking football and Park Runs, Brighton and Hove has such a wide variety of groups, teams, societies and clubs, there really is something for everyone.

#### Men in Sheds

Offers the chance for men 35+ to meet new people whilst taking part in practical activiites such as bike repair and carpentry. Contact 01273 778646

#### Volunteering

If there is a cause close to your heart you could spend some time volunteering. Find local volunteer opportunities here. www.communitybase.org/volunteers

#### Dog Walking

A great way to boost your general health and wellbeing, they also encourage you to get outside. If you don't own a dog you can volunteer to be a dog walker for most animal charities.

## **Health Walks Brighton**

A great way to be more active, get out in the fresh air and make new friends. Regular walks of all abilities across the city.

Contact the Healthy Lifestyles Team on 01273 2945889 for more information.

Get lost in a good book—you are never alone in a great story.

And the Brighton and Hove libraries offer a Home Delivery Service for those unable to get to a library. If you have limited mobility, poor health or are a full time carer.

Speak to someone in your local library or contact 01273 294599 for more information.

#### Join a Book Club

Most local libraries in the city have a book club attached to them.

Many of the activities available in the City are Free or low cost. Remember to take advantage of your Carers Card, to make even bigger savings.

# Carers Reablement Project Tackling Loneliness Locally

Established in 2014 by The Carers Centre for Brighton and Hove, The Reablement Project supports carers, assisted by volunteers, to achieve positive change within their lives through a goals approach to reach clear outcomes, which will improve the health and wellbeing of the carers.

The aim of the service is to give carers a few weeks where they have time off each week in order to learn a new skill or interest, fostering pastimes and skills which will last long into the future.

With skills on offer, from computer tuition to swimming, from meditation to cooking, our volunteers are all wonderful and can turn their hands to most things.

The project will match a volunteer with a Carer for up to ten weeks for an hour a week to work towards a clearly defined goal. Most of our matches are in the Carer's home for their convenience.

If you would like more information about the Carers Reablement Project please contact the Carers Hub 01273 977 000



## **Could you Volunteer for us?**

Volunteering is a great way to tackle loneliness, not only does it get you out and about meeting people but you also get a great feeling when you help someone else, especially if that person is lonely themselves.

We welcome volunteers from all walks of life, some are even current or former unpaid carers.

So if you have a skill you could share and you can spare an hour a week to help a Carer, then please do get in touch.

volunteer@thecarerscentre.org
Or call 01273 746222



At The Carers Centre we are closely linked with the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group for Brighton and because of this we run a number of surveys throughout the year, asking for carers' thoughts and opinions on a wide range of subjects.

With all these surveys we report our findings back to the CCG and where possible we try to make any changes to advice or services that we provide while working with other organisations and the Council, to ensure that bigger changes are examined and where possible, put in to action.

For the last survey for this year we were able to set the topic ourselves and in conjunction with a number of other organisations in the city (Brighton), we decided to focus on Loneliness and Isolation among our carers.

The results for this are still being collated following a wonderful response. In the meantime, we would like to take the time to say a huge thank you to everyone that has taken part in all our surveys, focus groups and other sessions.

If you are currently experiencing feelings of loneliness or isolation, please remember that we are only a phone call away and we run a number of coffee mornings (listed in the back of the book).



## Carers Hub—One Year On.

Carers Hub was created to deliver an integral model of support for carers through a partnership approach working closely with the local authority staff team (Carers Assessments Workers), Alzheimer's Society and Crossroads Care.

The Carers Centre for Brighton and Hove secured the tender and the Hub was officially launched on the national Carers Rights Day 2017. Carers Hub is solely funded by both Brighton & Hove City Council (Adult Social Care) and CCG Brighton & Hove. The contract duration is 4 years initially, plus potentially 2 years extension.

#### Service Outcomes of the Hub are:

To maintain the independence, physical health and emotional wellbeing of carers and their families:

To empower and support carers to manage their caring roles and to have a life outside of caring.

To ensure carers receive the right support, at the right time, in the right place;

And To respect the carer's decision about how much care they will provide and respect the carer's decision about not providing care at all.

### Achievements at a glance

- Established system—one phone line (01273 977000) and one website (www.carershub.co.uk) for Carers
- Set up Twitter and Facebook accounts for Carers Hub
- Successful launch in November 2017, sponsored by British Airways i360 and Brighton Buses and attended by two local MPs— Caroline Lucas, Peter Kyle and other er key stakeholders.
- Secured and signed partnership agreement with the two subcontractors— Alzheimer's Society and Crossroads Care.

## Achievements at a glance

- Fulfilled the quarterly KPIs under the Carers Hub contract between October 2017 and September 2018 (4 quarters).
- A successful and productive Away Day, facilitated by an independent consultant, with all Carers Hub providers in September 2018 with an agreed action plan.
- 10,374 contacts via email and phone with adult carers team.
- Offered 24 Carer awareness training sessions with health and social care professionals.
- Undertook 506 carer contact assessments with adult carers.#
- The Primary Care Carers Worker offer carer awareness training to 139 primary care professionals, including GPs, practice nurses/staff, social workers, pharmacists etc.
- The Young Carers Project delivered 84 group events attended by 130 different young carers filling a total of 685 spaces.
- 222 individual adult carers attended six monthly Carer Peer Support Groups on a regular basis.
- Meaningful engagement with over 30 employers, including universities, BSUH, JCP, etc.., around staff support and ongoing collaboration to support working carers.
- The Reablement Project supported 82 unpaid carers and matched 48 carers and volunteers to learn new skills.

- Established strong and positive working relationship with Carer Assessment workers in the Council
- Alzheimer's Society delivered 5 CrISP1 courses and 1 CrISP2 course. The Dementia Support Workers provided individual support to more than 250 carers since the start of the Carers Hub.
- Through providing the "My Health Matters Service" Crossroads Care carried out 1,059 visits and provided 3,174 hours of support to unpaid carers enabling them to attend a vast range of health and wellbeing appointments
- Over 5000 Carers Hub leaflets were distributed with key stakeholders and in public places.
- Undertook numerous radio interviews and press releases to promote the new service.



Within a short period, Carers Hub established itself as the main focal point for unpaid carers to receive information, advice and support.

Call us on **01273 977 000** or email **info@carershub.co.uk** if you need any advice and/or support.

We also have lots of resources on our website www.carershub.co.uk

## **Young Carers News**



## It's Only Rock and Roll (but I like it)!

By Ruth, Young Carer Support Worker

One of the defining features of Punk music is a DIY philosophy and attitude by the bucket -load. It seemed a natural fit then to make a punk band made up of young carers. Friend to the project and local musician Nick Hudson was keen to put on another of his exciting music based workshops and Half-term seemed the ideal opportunity to set ourselves a serious challenge – could we create, rehearse and perform a live gig with a young carers' band in just three days.

One of the joys of working with Nick over the last three years has been his ability to bring professionalism, enthusiasm and an energetic and infectious love of music to the carers. He encourages them to believe that music making is for everyone even if they've never so much as picked up a tambourine. I had high hopes that he was up to the challenge. We were also joined by Nick's bandmate and ace sound engineer Guy, who really helped the children feel special and like they were building up to their big gig. Guy also helped two of our young carers go from being non-musicians to bass players in a blink of an eye! Rehearsals were hectic, noisy but absolutely brilliant fun and by the end of day one we had two songs by Punk royalty down, Satellite of Love by Lou Reed and I Wanna Be Your Dog by Iggy Pop. You haven't heard punk until you've heard it screamed by 8 year olds! The children worked so hard, practicing, creating merchandise and making a zine to be sold on the night.

Our big gig was at The Purple Playhouse Theatre, a wonderful live performance venue where we were given the full experience – sound check, lights, and a bar. The children were delighted to find that they had support acts in the form of The Academy of Sun

(Nick's band) and Amira, a teen young carer who wowed us with a beautiful acoustic set. The kids' band, which they'd named Black Striker, took to the stage and absolutely brought the house down with amazing performance. I don't think they could quite believe what they'd managed to achieve. It was a wonderful evening with a lot of proud parents and more than a few tears of joy.

A huge thank you to Nick and Guy for all their hard work and to our sessional worker Ondine. You rocked!



## Young Carer Health Champions

Three of our Young Carers have become Health Champions for the NHS! They're half way through a year-long programme, which includes 3 activitybased residentials with lots of work to do inbetween. The programme is designed to get Young Carers' opinions on how the NHS can raise awareness, and improve the lives of Young Carers. So far, the group have come up with a digital poster to display in places like GP surgeries, dental surgeries, wellbeing centres etc. This will display a large rainbow, with rain clouds on one side and the sun on the other. The rainbow will demonstrate the path to support through places like the Young Carers Project, counselling and being open and honest with family and friends. The rain cloud will signify the potential for loneliness, isolation and hopelessness, whilst the sun will



represent friendships, support and good relationships with professionals. The idea is to raise awareness of the support out there for Young Carers, so they can cross the rainbow from the rain to the sun.

## **Young Carers News**



A group of teens were lucky enough to have visited beautiful Cornwall this Autumn, with funding from Rampion (Windfarms) and accommodation provided by the YHA. Myself and Karen took 11 teens down to the Eden Project to look at the impact of climate change on the environment and how diverse the planet is.

We had a fun packed 3 days (apart from a very long and hot train journey from Reading to St Austell!) The group got to eat all of their meals outside the indoor rain forest, slept in converted shipping containers and spent a morning in the beautiful surroundings of the Eden Project. We also managed to pack in some ice skating, swimming and rounders on the beach at sunset. It was a beautiful couple of days, the young people we took (despite being

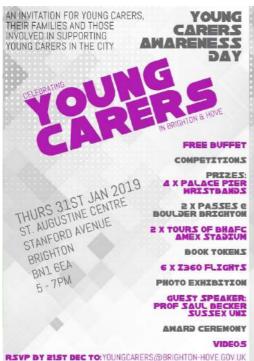
teenagers and a little 'Kevin and Perry!') all had a really positive experience, gained an understanding of how we need to look after our precious planet and enjoyed making new friendships. It was a memorable few days.





# **Update from our Schools Worker**

This term we have had the opportunity to reach out to more Young Carers in the city by attending Freshers fairs at local colleges including Varndean College and BHASVIC. These events enable us to meet and talk to potential Young Carers about the support we can offer them, as well as raising awareness amongst students and tutors of the challenges Young Carers can face balancing college with caring. This term I also had the opportunity to speak to staff from a range of local schools at a Secondary PSHE Consortium meeting, raising awareness about how we can work with schools to better support Young Carers. If you would like the Young Carers Project to come and visit your school or college give us a ring on 01273 746222 and we'll see what we can do!







## **Musicians Wanted**

## Do you play a musical instrument? Can you spare an hour a week?

We are looking for volunteers for The Carers Centre Reablement Project, supporting unpaid carers to learn new skills and achieve positive changes in their life.

You will be matched with an unpaid carer for you to support and encourage to learn a new skill. For an hour a week over a 10 week period.

You will receive travel expenses, ongoing training and regular supervision.

To find out more about volunteering at the Carers

Centre please contact:

volunteer@thecarerscentre.org 01273 746222 www.thecarerscentre.org







## **Talking Hands Café**

## The Café run by BSL British Sign Language Users

Tucked just a stones throw from Hassocks Station is this little gem of a café, light, airy and very welcoming. From the outside it looks like any other trendy station side café, but a sign in the window states 'Everyone is welcome, deaf, hearing, signers and non-signers.' This is a café run by deaf people for the local community.

## "just a normal cafe that happens to be run by deaf people."

John Palmer, Cafe Manager.

Established by John and Caroline Palmer in 2017 as a solution to deaf support services closing down in Brighton and the surrounding areas. Caroline is a sign language tutor and John ran a café in Brighton when they decided to move and build something for the community.

One year on and they have secured their position in the local area, with many regulars now ordering their morning latte and croissant in BSL (British Sign Language).

Talking Hands host a variety of classes, activities and events for signers and non signers alike, including a variety of communication clubs, where you can practice your signing in a friendly atmosphere, a parents and kids group, a bi-monthly youth club as well as daytime and evening signing classes. They even have a downstairs space which is bookable for private events and meetings. Keep an eye out for the one off events such as their popular quiz nights or craft activity afternoons.



Alongside all of this the menu boasts a selection of café favourites, from a full breakfast, to simple lunches as well as some fantastic looking cakes, biscuits and treats.

So if you are in Hassocks and fancy a coffee or are looking to learn more about British Sign Language then do pop by and have a chat.

As stated in the window, "Everyone welcome – deaf, hearing, signers and non-signers.

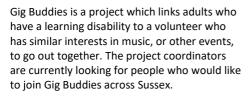
You can find the Talking Hands Café at 4 Stanford Terrace, Station Approach West,







Gig Buddies links people with and without learning disabilities to enjoy live music and other social activities together.



Gig Buddies aims to ensure that people with learning disabilities don't miss out on evening social activities, such as gigs, clubbing or theatre. The project helps to combat social isolation faced by many people with learning disabilities, by enabling people with a learning disability to make friends with other members of their community who have a similar interest to them.

Through matching people together based on their leisure activities, Gig Buddies hopes to create sustainable and genuine community networks for people who may otherwise feel disconnected from their local community.

The project grew out of local Sussex charity Stay Up Late. Stay Up Late started as a national campaign to ensure that people with a learning disability receive support that doesn't stop at 9pm – some care homes have inflexible staff rotas, which mean that many adults with a learning disability can't access practical support



to go out in the evenings.

The project has already linked over 90 people in Sussex to a volunteer Gig Buddy. Gig Buddies attracts people of all ages and all types of musical taste – from heavy metal to musicals, indie to club nights. One Gig Buddy volunteer Sam said, "Through volunteering with Gig Buddies I have met amazing people, made some great friends and shared some brilliant experiences."

Paul Richards, director and co-founder of the charity said: 'the charity was set up as a response to seeing people with learning disabilities being denied the sort of social opportunities that many of us take for granted. To see how the project has now grown with so many people benefitting from is a dream come true and we're keen for many more people to benefit."

For more information contact:

Katie Windsor <u>katie@stayuplate.org</u> / 07305 056122

Kate Ogden <u>kate@stayuplate.org</u> / 07514622204

Or see our website: www.stayuplate.org





Carers Coffee Mornings are a place to meet with unpaid 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.

## **Hangleton Carers**

First Thursday of the month, 11—12.30 Hangleton Manor, Hove

## **East Brighton Carers**

First Thursday of the month, 10.30-12 Al Campo Lounge, London Rd, Brighton

## **Queen's Park Carers**

First Tuesday of the month, 10.30-12 Cup of Joe Cafe, St Georges Rd, Kemptown

## Portslade & Hove Carers

First Monday of the month, 2-3.30pm The Railway Inn, Portslade

#### Saltdean Carers

Second Tuesday of the month 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

\*All of the activities and support groups we offer are free to unpaid carers in Brighton & Hove.

For more information about these events or any of the other support available to Unpaid Carers in Brighton & Hove, please call Carers Hub

www.carershub.co.uk

01273 977000

# 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







