

The newsletter of the
Carers' Centre Bath &
North East Somerset



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Mayor of Bath, Brian Chalker, presents the PQASSO Quality Mark to (left to right) Vice Chair and carer Pippa Hawkins, Carers' Centre Chair Jill Tremellen and Chief Executive Sonia Hutchison.

Carers' Centre Scoops Double Award

The Carers' Centre is celebrating a double first with the attainment of two nationally recognised quality awards. The first accolade is the PQASSO Quality Mark, awarded by the National Charities Commission, which demonstrates the quality and credibility of the work of the organisation. The Centre went on to achieve the Princess Royal Trust for Carers' Excellence Award for its dedication and high level of service in working to support local carers.

After extensive interviews with staff, Trustees and carers, PQASSO officials praised the Carers' Centre and its work and concluded: "It's clear that carers and their needs are at the heart of services being provided and developed in this organisation."

In the assessment for the Excellence Award, the Princess Royal Trust for Carers said: "The Carers' Centre is a dynamic and vibrant organisation which strives to improve their services and outcomes for carers, demonstrated by the enthusiasm of staff and volunteers and the positive vibe from around the Centre."

"The Centre has gone from strength to strength and we have a great team of staff, Trustees and volunteers on board," said Sonia Hutchison, Carers' Centre Chief Executive. "These awards show our funders and service-users that our work is of the highest standard and that we are making a positive impact on the lives of carers."

"We are proud to announce that we are the first organisation to achieve the PQASSO Quality Mark at Level 2 in the Bath and North East Somerset area."

Carers' Update

What A Waste!

Some BathNES residents are not able to carry their rubbish, recycling or garden waste for collection. For assistance please contact Council Connect on 01225 394041 or email councilconnect@bathnes.gov.uk

Undiagnosed Conditions

SWAN UK (Syndromes Without A Name) offers support and information to families of children with undiagnosed conditions. Join their community and register for their newsletter at www.undiagnosed.org.uk

Carers' Consulted

BathNES Council is consulting on the future of home improvement services. To have your say visit <http://tinyurl.com/6c2xway>

Blind Cord Safety

There is a new drive to ensure children are safe around blind cords - with free cord safety packs available. Contact the Carers' Centre for information.

Useful Websites

Visit www.dementiawebbath.org.uk for local support for carers of someone with dementia.

For a free guide to local health, wellbeing and community services visit www.wellaware.org.uk

Visit www.countryside-mobility.org for the Countryside Mobility Scheme providing easy access to the countryside for people with disabilities.

Join Our 100 Club

For just £2 a month, why not join The Carers' Centre 100 Club and help us raise valuable funds to support local carers? Every month there is a Prize Draw where you could win up to £20 in CASH! Contact the Carers' Centre for more information.

Carers Get Involved



Carers can help the Carers' Centre to raise awareness of the issues they face to the media, the public, health and

social care professionals and funders.

Getting real carers involved helps create more understanding and develop local services for the better. Why don't you get involved? All carers are welcome and full training and support is provided.

Carers On Air

The Centre has been working with Somer Valley FM to produce a radio show about the role of carers living in Bath and North East Somerset.

Gary Smith, who cares for his wife, Sue, has been working on the project. "I've learnt so much about different caring experiences and how the Centre works to improve the lives of carers in the area," he said. "Working on the radio programme has been hard but very enjoyable and the production and editing side was fascinating. I feel different when I listen to the radio now as I understand what's going on behind the scenes."



On air at Somer Valley FM, Carers Gary Smith and Mary Allen with Jo Grobler, Ellie Mitchell and Neil Drinkwater from the Carers' Centre.

Carers' Help Required!

- Carers are needed to help develop an End Of Life resource for the NHS.
- Carers of someone who has had a stroke are needed for a new DVD for the Stroke Service.
- Carers to give talks at groups and clubs to find more carers who need help and support.

Please get in touch with the Centre for more information on 01761 431388.

New Beginnings For Women Carers

A new initiative to help carers develop employment skills and move towards work is now underway at the Carers' Centre. Following a successful workshop on CV writing and interview skills, Hillcroft College have run a training day for women carers to discover and unleash their potential.

"Funding by the National Lottery, this training helps women who have been out of employment or education for some time," explained Sarah Richardson from Hillcroft. "New Beginnings Workshops have been run at Carers' Centres across England with very positive feedback from carers. The day involves confidence-building exercises to help women identify what they would like to do or learn about, then advice and guidance on how to achieve their goals."

Rachel Hope, who cares for her 14-year-old son, attended the workshop. "It's been very worthwhile," she said. "I've met some truly inspiring carers and boosted my self-confidence. I'm now more motivated to improve my skills, face my difficulties and move forward with my life."



Carers' Officer Clive Brooks with carers Yayoi Fernando and Rachel Hope, with Sarah Richardson from Hillcroft College.

Find out more about Hillcroft residential courses for women carers at www.hillcroftcollege.ac.uk or call 0208 399 2688.

Contact Clive Brooks at the Carers' Centre for help with employment, training and education for carers on 01761 431388.



Counsellor Jenny Hailes with Sonia Hutchison, Chief Executive of the Carers' Centre.

Thanks to a grant from St Johns' Hospital, free counselling sessions are now available for Bath-based carers. Counsellor Jenny Hailes explained: "Depression, tiredness and being overwhelmed with responsibilities all take their toll on carers. Through counselling I give strategies to help them cope."

After another successful bid, the Charles Hayward Foundation donated funds for the Centre to offer free training to older carers in

Funding For Carers' Health and Well-Being

The Carers' Centre has been awarded £16,000 to help improve mental health and well-being for carers and to provide skills and training to help them in their caring role.

first aid, assertiveness and healthy cooking and lifestyle.

Carers' Centre Chief Executive Sonia Hutchison said: "Over half of all carers are over the age of 65 and can be trying to get by on very low incomes. This extra training will go a long way to helping this isolated group to improve self-esteem, live longer and healthier and cope with their relentless caring roles."

Celebrating A Year Of Success

The Annual General Meeting of the Carers' Centre celebrated a year of growth and achievement for carers in Bath and North East Somerset.



Guest speakers **Caroline Hickman, Ian Dagger and Maggie Depledge**

"We thought we may not survive past March 2011," said Chair Jill Tremellen in her opening speech. "At the last minute, we received full funding from the Council. We are now winning more funding and have more staff and volunteers than ever before: people are beginning to know more about us and what we do."

Three guest speakers provided an insight into the extensive work of the Centre. Maggie Depledge, Senior Occupational Therapist from the Royal United Hospital spoke about the close links being established with local carers through the Centre.

"Carers are experts," she said. "Working with the Carers' Centre has made us better at what we do. Through our joint efforts, carers have influenced changes in our admission documentation, shared their experiences with our staff and helped us to understand their needs through joint learning."

Ian Dagger cares for his son who has mental health problems. "The Carers' Centre raised my self-esteem and helped me realise you can be lucky to be a carer," he explained. "They offer valuable services that help practically and emotionally. Empowering carers is to be encouraged as it leads to better and more cost-effective services."



Carer **Beryl Gillet** and **Mary-Jane Middlehurst**, Development Worker for Disabled Children and Their Families with **Councillor and Chief Executive of NHS Bath and North East Somerset, Malcolm Hanney** and **Chief Executive Sonia Hutchison**.

The final speaker was Caroline Hickman, Social Work Teaching Fellow at the University of Bath. "Through the Carers' Centre, we have increased carer participation in teaching Social Work students," said Caroline. "First year students love to hear carers' experiences and now carers are getting involved in teaching second and third year students as well. Some students may forget what I teach, but I expect they will remember the carers as they really make them think."

Drop In For Free Financial Advice



Carers' Officer Tom Fox-Proverbs.

Are you a carer worrying about how to pay for long-term care for a loved one? The Carers' Centre is providing free financial advice at its Drop-In Services throughout the area, where carers can find out how to fund long-term health care and plan for the future.

"For people with savings over £23,250, local authorities will not help with caring costs," explained Tom Fox-Proverbs from the Carers' Centre. "Carers need to know what options are available and plan wisely should the need for residential care arise."

The Carers' Centre is receiving support from Somer Housing Independent Living Service, St James' Place Wealth Management and Stone King Solicitors who are providing free financial advice to carers.

Monthly Carer's Drop-in Services for confidential help, support and advice

First Wednesday

2.00pm to 4.00pm
The Atrium, Royal United Hospital,
Combe Park, Bath BA1 3NG

Second Wednesday

2.00pm to 4.00pm
Paulton Hospital, Salisbury Road,
Paulton, Bristol BS39 7SB

Third Wednesday

2.00pm to 4.00pm
Children's Ward, Royal United Hospital,
Combe Park, Bath BA1 3NG

Fourth Wednesday

2.00pm to 4.00pm
St Martin's Hospital, Midford Road,
Bath BA2 5RP

First Saturday

10.00am to 12 noon
Oldfield Surgery, 45 Upper Oldfield
Park, Bath BA2 3HT

First Saturday

2.00pm to 4.00pm
Combe Ward, Royal United Hospital,
Combe Park, Bath BA1 3NG

First Thursday

2.00pm to 4.00pm
Combe Ward, Royal United Hospital,
Combe Park, Bath BA1 3NG

First and third Tuesday

9.00am to 11.00am
Keynsham Health Centre, St Clements
Road, Keynsham BS31 1AG

Sonia Says

The Carers' Centre has been recognised for the great quality services it provides, but that doesn't mean there's not more we can do. We are now sending out our Annual Survey to carers to see if we are getting things right and what we can do to continue to improve.

"If-Only" is a new initiative from the University of Bath that encourages people with disabilities or long-term conditions and their carers to video the everyday problems they encounter around the home. If you'd like to get involved, please contact us.

Many council and primary care services are now provided through Sirona Care and Health - the new social enterprise in Bath and North East Somerset. If you want more information on how this might affect you, please book on to our free information session in February.

The Carers' Centre continues to find new ways to raise funds. Why not join in and run the London 10K on 8th July 2012? We will be taking a minibus up and we ask that runners raise a minimum of £250 to take part. Contact us if you'd like to take part.

Chief Executive





Helen Church with her son, Charlie.

Parent-Carers Unite To Improve Services

“As a parent-carer, it feels really good to know your views are being listened to and that you can make a difference: that’s why I got involved with Parent Carers Aiming High,” said Helen Church, mother of 8 year old Charlie, who has non-verbal autism, and 5 year old Oliver.

Parent Carers Aiming High is a group of mums and dads whose children have a range of special needs, physical or learning disabilities. Through the support of the Carers’ Centre, the expertise of these parents has been used to improve local services for disabled children and their families.

Helen is Chair of the group. “Our main achievement has been to build a good relationship with Children’s Services at Bath and North East Somerset Council,” she explained. “Parent-carers are the best people to consult when services are developed, and now the Council has easy access to our views.

“We’ve been involved in the commissioning of play schemes and Saturday clubs for disabled children. As a result of our work there will be a Christmas holiday play scheme this year where the children can go to have fun, giving parent-carers some time out.”

Helen is a former Director for Children’s BBC and a qualified primary school teacher, but her years of working for and with children didn’t prepare her for her son’s diagnosis of autism at the age of just 2.



New Parent Carer leaflet

“I never looked at Charlie and thought he had a serious problem,” said Helen, from her Bath home. “I was completely unprepared when I found out he was autistic and was in denial for a long time afterwards. He still can’t talk and that, for me, is the most difficult part of his condition.”

More parents are needed to make a real difference to the planning and delivery of services for disabled children in the area. Contact Lorraine Frapwell from the Carers’ Centre on 01761 431388 for more information about Parent Carers Aiming High.

Contact the Carers’ Centre



Carers’ Line: 01761 431389

Office: 01761 431388

Email: info@banescarerscentre.org.uk

Freepost: The Carers’ Centre
(no stamp needed) FREEPOST
(SWB 10722) Radstock BA3 3ZZ

Visit us: 1 Riverside Cottages, Radstock BA3 3PS

Website www.banescarerscentre.org.uk

