

Crossroads Care Sir Gâr have achieved their liC bronze award

Congratulations to Carers Trust Crossroads Sir Gâr on being the first Third Sector Organisation in West Wales to achieve their Bronze level of the Investors in Carers scheme!

The Investors in Carers (liC) scheme was initially designed for all GP Practices in the Hywel Dda University Health Board area.

It is a framework of good practice in which GP practices can utilise to develop their carer awareness and ways of working to support carers in the three counties (Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire) and has since been broadened to also include Pharmacies, Hospital settings, Schools and Third Sector organisations.

Alison Harries, Chief Executive Officer of Carers Trust Crossroads Sir Gâr said "We are very proud of our staff, and of being the first third sector organisation to achieve the bronze level award. We constantly strive to improve as we continue to support carers' individual needs across the county, and we look forward to being the first to achieve the gold standard".

The Investors in Carers award is given in recognition of settings compiling an evidence folder



detailing all that they do to support carers.

This may include everything from training staff on carers issues, to the type of advice and support given, the outcomes achieved, and the monitoring undertaken.

In Carers Trust Crossroads Sir Gâr case it gave opportunity to demonstrate all that is done to support unpaid carers across Carmarthenshire, both by the Carers Information Service and via the paid carer support workers and managers, who now carry liC registration/ referral forms, along with the Message in a Bottles.

For more information on liC please contact Pennie Muir (Regional Manager) at Pennie.Muir@wales.nhs.uk.

Inside this Issue

| | |
|---|----|
| Crossroads Sir Gâr liC bronze award | 1 |
| About us | 2 |
| 50+ Forum | 2 |
| Yammer Group | 3 |
| Disabled Identification Card | 3 |
| Carers Wales Track the Act | 4 |
| Caring Boss Awards 2017 | 5 |
| Investors in Carers Awards | 5 |
| Carers Wales: State of Caring in Wales 2017 | 6 |
| State of Caring Survey 2018 | 7 |
| Dewis Cymru | 8 |
| Social Services Well-being (Wales) Act . | 8 |
| Elizabeth Evans MBE | 9 |
| Carers Rights Day | 10 |
| Carers Week 2018 | 10 |
| Carers UK: 'Jointly' App | 11 |
| Young Adult Carers Project | 12 |
| Carers' Educational Years Project | 13 |
| Tackling Loneliness | 14 |
| Llandovery - Caring for Carers | 15 |
| Carmarthenshire Carers Forum | 16 |
| The Welsh Water HelpU Scheme | 16 |
| Pension Credit | 17 |
| Message in a Bottle | 17 |
| Free Legal Advice for Carers | 18 |

About us...

The Carers Information Service provides free and confidential information, advice and support to carers throughout Carmarthenshire.

We produce and distribute information including a range of factsheets on how and where carers can access support for themselves and the people they care for. The Carers Information Service is part of Carers Trust Sir Gâr and further information can be found on our new website at www.carmarthenshirecarers.org.uk

Contact us: Carers Information Service, Unit 3, The Palms, 96 Queen Victoria Road, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire, SA15 2TH.

Email: info@carmarthenshirecarers.org.uk

Outreach Service

Our team of Carers Outreach Workers can provide individual support to you, the carer, to optimise your quality of life & well-being and to continue to be effective in your role as a carer for as long as that is right for you.

The outreach team are able to use the Carers Star to help them look at with you, seven areas of your life including health, time for yourself and how you feel. Please note that the Carers Star is not an assessment of your ability to care and participation is optional.

To arrange an appointment with a Carers Outreach Worker please call the Carers Information Service on **0300 0200 002** or email info@carmarthenshirecarers.org.uk.

Please let us know if you would prefer to receive an electronic copy of our newsletter by emailing info@carmarthenshirecarers.org.uk



CarmsCarers

We organise two regular carer support groups:

- Llanelli - 3rd Wednesday of the month at Carars Trust Crossroads Sir Gar, The Palms
- Llandovery - 1st Friday of the month at The Castle Hotel

50+ Forum



The last annual 50+ Forum took place on 15th September 2017 at the National Botanic Gardens.

There was an exciting line-up of speakers, included the renowned entertainer, composer, singer, actress and script writer, Caryl Parry Jones in addition to information stands from over 40 organisations and a full range of activities.

The activities and taster sessions included arts and crafts, painting, ballroom dancing, men's sheds, therapy horses, guided walking tours, computer / tablets (Fitbits), reflexology and short mat bowls. In addition, there was a chance to learn about health and wellbeing and this year for the first time there was be a special dementia friends area.

Over 400 Forum members flocked to the Gardens and over 200 members packed the marquee to hear the speakers including Councillor Linda Evans, Councillor Jane Tremlett, Ros Jervis, Director of Public Health for Hywel Dda, representatives from the cyber security section of Dyfed Powys Police and of course the special guest Caryl Parry Jones who entertained her audience with lots of stories from her childhood and her life in the media.



Carmarthenshire Carers Yammer Group

Yammer is an online network which brings carers together in a private, secure and restricted social network site.

The Carmarthenshire Carers Yammer Group was set-up and is administered by the Carers Information Service for people who help to look after a relative, friend or neighbour.

It is easy to use and improves communication between carers and the Carers Information Service (sharing information as well as upcoming activities/events), as well as directly between carers. Yammer works across different devices: smartphone, tablet or home computer / laptop.

Yammer allows the sharing of information more easily than ever before. It also increases communication between Carers who might not

normally speak to each other and connects those Carers who live in more rural areas.

Yammer is used to:

- Share information and spark a conversation.
- Ask a question or request feedback on a topic or problem.
- Post updates on what you are doing.

This Yammer Group is a fantastic way of pooling carers skills, experiences and knowledge, as well as sharing information and building an online community to help support each other.



How do I join?

To join the Carmarthenshire Carers Yammer group, send an email with your contact details (name, address and telephone number) with 'Yammer' in the subject line to: info@carmarthenshirecarers.org.uk or call 0300 0200 002

Disabled Identification (DID) Card

The National Disabled Identification (DID) Card was introduced in response to disabled people posting comments in a number of social media sites that they were getting tired of constantly having to carry their paperwork proving they were entitled to some form of disability benefit in order to obtain a concessionary rate.

In particular parents of children with disabilities and special needs, whose children's disability is not immediately obvious, such as autistic, global developmental delay and other disabilities find it hard to explain their disability, especially if the children are present who may be unaware that they have a disability.

Disabled individuals often do not want to request or highlight the fact they have a disability when they would be entitled to concessionary rates. There can be stigma attached to requesting disabled rates.

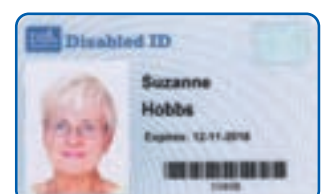
The aim of the National DID Card is to remove the need for individuals to carry their paper documentation with them at all times. The card will have a photograph of the cardholder and will only be issued to disabled people who are in receipt of some form of disability allowance or medical evidence to support your application.

The card can be used as proof that they are in receipt of an eligible benefit and therefore entitled to gain entry at concessionary rate. Many establishments, theatres, museums, attractions, leisure facilities etc. offer concessionary prices for disabled people and in some cases offer free entry to another person assisting the disabled person.

For more information and to find out how to apply for the Disabled Identification (DID) card, go to:

www.did-card.co.uk/index.php

or you can write to: DID Card Ltd, PO BOX 1072, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP1 9AN.



Carers Wales Track the Act



Carers Wales created the Track The Act programme shortly after the implementation of the Social Services and Well Being Act (Wales) 2014. It was set up to monitor and gather information on how the changes to the law has affected carers in reality.

The Track The Act Briefing 2 report was published in September 2017 and it relates to the first year of the Act's implementation, from 6th April 2016 to 5th April 2017. A total of 517 carers representing every Welsh council completed their survey.

The full Track The Act Briefing 2 report can be found at:

www.carersuk.org/files/section/5763/track-the-act-briefing-2-final-draft-year-1.pdf

Findings from the 12-month report include:

- In the first six months of the Act's implementation (6 April 2016 - 6 October 2016) 16% of respondents had seen any information produced by councils that would help them in their caring role. However, in the second six months (6 October 2016 – 6 April 2017) this had increased to 46%.
- Of the carers who had seen this information 78% thought the information was useful or very useful.
- Of the 517 respondents 155 had been referred by their council to a third party to get support for their role as a carer and 70 of these 155 had received advice from a member of staff employed by a council about their caring role.
- Of the 517 respondents 233 of them had received advice from a member of staff employed by a council about their caring role with 198 of these finding that the advice was very useful or useful.
- In the first six months of the Act's implementation (6 April 2016 - 6 October 2016) 19% of our respondents had been offered a carer's needs assessment (CNA). However, in the second six months (6 October 2016 – 6 April 2017) this had increased to 44%.
- Of the 150 people who responded to our survey and who had had a carer's needs assessment 48% had received a service from their council

"I feel like nobody cares about the carers, there is not enough support unless you make a nuisance of yourself it seems that no-one takes any notice and if that is not your nature you are left to cope on your own."

Track the Act respondent

Carers Wales would like as many carers as possible to complete the Track the Act survey. To share your experiences, the survey can be accessed via their website at www.carersuk.org/wales/news-campaigns/track-the-act.

Hard copies of the survey are available via the Carers Information Service on **0300 0200 002** or email info@carmarthenshirecarers.org.uk

Caring Boss Awards 2017



The biennial Caring Boss Awards were presented by Councillor Jane Tremlett which recognise an employer or manager at work who has demonstrated support and understanding for employees who are in a caring role.

The following finalists were awarded certificates for their contribution in supporting carers in their workforce.



Gold

Menna Davies,
Department for Work and Pensions



Silver

Nicola Davies,
Carmarthenshire County Council



Bronze

Sarita Bennett,
Carmarthenshire County Council

Highly Commended certificates were also awarded to:

Wayne Armishaw, Rebecca Lewis, Allison Thomas, Rachel Gegeshidze and Bernadette Thomas.

Investors in Carers Awards

Ysgol Glan-y-Môr School and Ysgol Coadcae School were presented with certificates by Councillor Jane Tremlett (Executive Board member for Social Care & Health) having achieved Bronze award level in the Investors in Carers scheme, evidencing their commitment to adopt and promote best practice and support services for Carers.



Ysgol Glan-y-Môr School



Ysgol Coedcae School

Carers Wales: State of Caring in Wales 2017



To coincide with Carers Rights Day 2017, Carers Wales released a report on the State of Caring in Wales.

Key facts and figures (as published on 24th November 2017):

- There are 370,230 carers in Wales.
- Every year in Wales 123,000 people become carers.
- Carers save the Wales economy £8.1 billion per year.
- Nearly 3 million people in the UK juggle caring with holding down a job.
- 103,594 people in Wales provide over 50 hours of care per week.
- People providing high-levels of care are twice as likely to be permanently sick or disabled.
- Over 1 million people in the UK care for more than one person.
- 58% of carers across the UK are women; 42% are men.

Overview

Evidence from carers on the financial impact of caring shows that, far from having their contribution appropriately recognised by the social care and social security system, people providing unpaid care are struggling to make ends meet and are unable to protect their future financial security.

Impact on carers' health and wellbeing

Caring can have a significant impact on health, with the pressures of providing care taking a toll on both carers' physical and mental health. Those providing over 50 hours of care each week are twice as likely to be in bad health as non-carers. In Wales 59% said their physical health has worsened as a result of caring, while 7 out of 10 (70%) said they have suffered mental ill health.

"The overall impact of being a carer means I am as housebound as my husband is. It's very difficult when someone totally relies on you, even though you are very happy to love and care for that person. There is no freedom."

Staying healthy as a carer

Carers reported a number of negative impacts of caring upon their wellbeing. The report found that 8 out of 10 people (77%) said they feel more stressed because of their caring role. Almost 7 in 10 (65%) also said they find it difficult to get a good night's sleep because of their caring role. Over half of people (53%) also reported that they have reduced the amount of exercise they take because of caring and 47% reported that they found it hard to maintain a balanced diet.

“I have had severe anxiety and nearly had a breakdown due to stress of work and caring. I do feel less stressed now I have given work up but more anxious and hopeless about myself. I feel I should be more confident but feel too tired all the time. The future scares me that who will take over when I’m gone.”

Taking a break from caring

Breaks are vital for carers to be able to deal with the physical and emotional strain of providing care and support. It helps them to continue in their caring roles. However, disappointingly, carers often report not receiving the support they need to take a short break.

4 out of 10 carers said they had not had a day off in a year. Having more than a day was rarer with (62%) reporting they have not had a weekend off in over a year and as many as 8 in 10 carers (83%) not having had a week off for over a year.

Carers describe being close to breaking point. Carers are desperate for some time to themselves to be able to sleep, recuperate and see friends and family.

“I have not had a break/holiday or a single day off in 17 years.”

For those who said they were struggling to get a break from caring, the most common reasons that people gave were that the person they are caring for is not willing to accept care and support from others (30%), the care and support needed for the person is not on offer (28%) and the cost of paying for or contributing to the cost of a break (28%).

The full ‘Carers Wales: State of Caring in Wales 2017’ report can be found at:

www.carersuk.org/wales/news-campaigns/news/press-release-state-of-caring-in-wales-2017-released

State of Caring Survey 2018

Carers UK want to hear your experiences of being a carer in 2018.

We are launching our latest State of Caring Survey to help us paint a comprehensive picture of the impact that providing care can have on your life and to gather evidence of where more support and understanding is needed from services, employers and society.

Last year over 7,000 carers shared their experiences with us. What they told us last year made the front pages of newspapers, was quoted over and over again by politicians and policy makers. This helped us bring the voice of carers and experience of carers into discussions on a whole range of issues from reform of NHS Continuing Care funding to how the Government can better support people to return to work after they are no longer caring, making changes where carers need them.

This year we are campaigning for carers to be able to access a break from their caring role, for a rise in Carer’s Allowance and for stronger rights for carers who are juggling work and care.

We know too that social care and the NHS will again be at the top of the agenda this year. We want to make sure that pressure on carers is at the centre of discussions about more funding and we need your evidence to do this.

As the survey is very comprehensive and we want to understand the different experiences of people and of having different caring responsibilities, it will take at least 20 minutes to complete. We very much appreciate you taking the time to do this.

To take the State of Caring Survey 2018 go to:

<https://carersuk-news.org/74C-5KBOC-QJON65-32VY7G-1/c.aspx>.



www.Dewis.Wales
Have choice and take control



Do you run or attend a group, activity or service that supports people of all ages in Carmarthenshire?

Have you heard about the new Health and Wellbeing Directory in Wales called Dewis Cymru?

If you run or attend a group, activity or service that supports people of all ages with their health and wellbeing in Carmarthenshire we need you. This could be anything from a family centre, toddler group, guides and scouts to a cuppa club, knit and natter group, art and craft groups or just a community get together.

Dewis Cymru is a public website that aims to help people connect in their community, to help reduce loneliness and social isolation by giving people knowledge and information. It is THE place to go for people who want information or advice about what is on in your community to help support their wellbeing –

whether that's their own well-being or the well-being of a family member or friend.

Dewis Cymru is supported by the Welsh Assembly Government and signed up by your Local Authority, as a response to all of the consultations across Wales one theme that is consistent amongst communities is the need for more information about what is available to help and support. Dewis Cymru is the answer to that need, which is why we need your group, service or activity on the directory.

Can I add information about any service?

Yes. We encourage people to add information about specific services that they offer. So, if you run a community group you can add details of what it's about, where and when it meets, and how to get in touch. If you represent an organisation which provides a range of services, please add the services individually so that users of the site can find the services they are looking for.

How to contact Dewis Cymru

If you would like to know more or have support to add your service, group or activity contact:

**Sue Smith, Community Resilience Coordinator,
01269 830061, susansmith@cccpartners.org.uk; or**

**Jess O' Donnell, SPICE Project Co-ordinator,
07397 890429, jessicaodonnell@justaddspice.org**

To search Dewis Cymru for a group, activity or service in your area go to: www.dewis.wales

Social Services Well-being (Wales) Act

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act came into force on 6th April 2016 and promised to transform the way that social services are delivered in Wales.

The Act places a set of new duties on councils:

- Unpaid carers in Wales have equal legal rights for support as the people they look after.
- There is a legal duty on councils to meet a carer's eligible needs following a carer's needs assessment.
- Councils must ensure that they have information, advice and assistance services in place and clearly signposted so carers can get the right information at the right time.
- There is a legal duty on councils to make sure there are a wide range of relevant community services and activities available in the local area for information services to signpost people to.
- Councils are now also required to promote the well-being of both, people 'in need' and of their carers.

Elizabeth Evans MBE Carer and Activist, In Memory of a Great Human Being

Elizabeth Evans MBE was known to many of us as just Liz.

Liz really was an incredible lady, a lifetime of giving, supporting and guiding whilst being a very busy wife, mother, grandmother and significant carer. A selfless person who so many would turn to when they needed help or assistance. If Liz didn't know the answers she knew someone who did. Liz involved herself, along with her late husband David, with several groups in Llanelli - Together they contributed to the establishment of the Carmarthenshire Disability Coalition for Action, CATCHUP Ltd. and Llanelli Carers and both were committed members of the Llanelli Disabled Drivers Group.

Liz married David in 1957 and cared for him with incredible commitment and support. Liz went beyond expectations and ensured that not only were David's daily needs met through the general support she gave, but also helped and assisted him in achieving some of their shared personal goals. They both had an unwavering desire and determination to promote the betterment of disabled and disadvantaged groups.

Liz took up voluntary work with social services in 1973 running activity groups for disabled people in Llanelli and organised holidays and trips for them and their families. Liz went on to become a tribunal member on the DSS Disability Living Allowance panel and was instrumental in ensuring that disabled people were heard and their needs met.

Along with David she helped establish the Independent Living initiatives and the formation of CATCH UP Ltd. which was formed by disabled people for the benefit of disabled people. Liz gained more and more knowledge and experiences in welfare benefits and provided advice and help to those who contacted CATCH UP for help and support.

For a while Liz was the only specialist benefits advisor in the county, this included giving advice to social services staff, health staff, voluntary organisations and the public.

Liz became chairperson of the Llanelli and District National Carers Association. This later developed into Carers Wales and Liz formed the Llanelli branch in 1992. Liz was also a member of the Margins to Mainstream Committee National Initiative to develop full user and carer participation - sponsored by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Liz and David were a real force to be reckoned with and accomplished many milestones through their work around equalities and disability, welfare benefits, and the support of unpaid carers - whilst all the time raising their lovely family of six children. Liz was awarded the MBE in 1997 for services to the community - a hugely deserved honour.

As a carer Liz understood the importance of recognising and supporting the role of unpaid Carers. She was aware of the great variety of caring roles, of the many scenarios that involved unpaid care and she valued mutual support amongst carers. Llanelli Carers thrived for many years under her stewardship and guidance, and it remains an active Carers Support Group until this day.

We hear these days of how communities could and should try to rekindle that bygone era of 'community spirit' where family, neighbours, friends and the wider community pulled together for the greater good of others.

We're told by Government and policy makers that we have to do more for ourselves and seek to support each other.

The Social Services and Well Being Act emphasises how we have to become more resilient - as



individuals and as communities and the Future Generations Act seeks to strengthen people's resolve and their ability to care for themselves, their communities and the environment in decades to come.

Liz was the epitome of resilience. She was the glue that bound so many people together, she had a passion for helping others and a determination to ensure people's rights and entitlements were upheld. All of this whilst being a carer herself who endured her fair share of trauma and tragedy. Her tenacity ensured whoever she was pursuing for assistance, advice or support would not wriggle off the hook until answers were received or outcomes were resolved.

You can't create people like Liz Evans, some would say that only a God can do that. You can't train people or manage them to become true Champions, people are born to it and acquire qualities through the course of living their lives in a compassionate and caring way - it's in their DNA, their nature, it's who and what they are.

Liz was an outstanding character, one who didn't shy from challenges and sought fair play for all. If only we could have created a mould of Liz and created a few more like her then Llanelli and Carmarthenshire would be a better place.

God Bless you Liz and thanks for everything.

Written by Jon Rees



Carers Rights Day



Most of us will provide care at some point in our lives to ill or disabled loved ones. Whether caring affects your family gradually or suddenly, it is common to feel unprepared. When you are caring, getting the right information at the right time can make all the difference.

Carers Rights Day is a UK wide annual event to bring organisations together to help carers in their local community know their rights and find out how to get the help and support they are entitled to.

On 24th November 2017 Carmarthenshire County Council funded a Carers Rights Day event at Parc Y Scarlets, in Llanelli. A full programme of events was organised with the central theme being 'Carer Resilience'.

Welsh actor Nicholas McGaughey gave the key note speech which provided a humorous and light-

hearted address on his personal experiences of being a carer.

Carers had the opportunity to take part in three 30-minute workshops relating to resilience as well as taster therapy sessions including reflexology and massage.

Workshops included: Arts for Health (Arts 4 Well-being), First Aid (British Red Cross), Laughter (Tracey Roberts-Jones), Low Impact Functional Training (Age Cymru) and Resilience (Tracy Pyke - CEO of Carmarthenshire Youth and Children's Association).

There were over 25 Information Stands from a wide range of organisations and support services. Two community pharmacists were also present to offer flu vaccinations to carers.

The day was very well attended and a huge success. Thank you to Carmarthenshire County Council for funding the event and to the carers, organisations and volunteers who attended.

A video of the event can be found here:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=FAg209PHYz4&t=117s



Carers Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring, highlight the challenges carers face and recognise the contribution they make to families and communities through the UK.

If you would like to know more about Carers Week and how you can get involved please visit www.carersweek.org.

The Carers Support Services Network, a group of organisations who work with carers in

Carmarthenshire, will be organising a series of events to mark this year's Carers Week which runs from 11th-17th June 2018.

Further information will be made available closer to the time and will also be made available online at www.carmarthenshirecarers.org.uk, as well as via social media and the Carmarthenshire Carers Yammer Group (see page 3 for further details).

Carers UK: 'Jointly' App

Developed by Carers UK, Jointly is a mobile and online app that can make life better for the millions of people looking after a loved one.

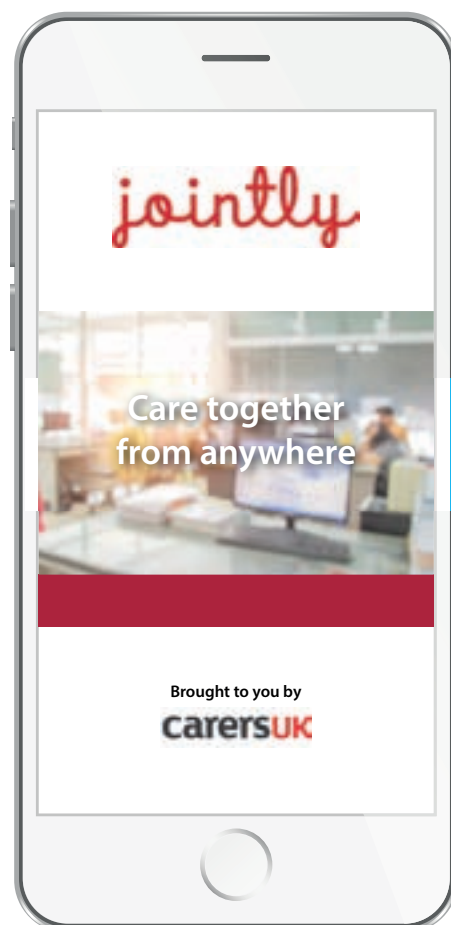
Designed in consultation with carers, Jointly brings together key features in a single tool:

- One central place to store and share the important information about the person you are looking after.
- Simple, intuitive group communication to keep everyone informed and better connected.
- Shared calendar, task lists and medication manager to help co-ordinate responsibilities and organise what needs to be done.
- Works across different devices: smartphone, tablet or home computer / laptop.

Jointly works by enabling people to set up circles of care. Once a user sets up a Jointly circle they can invite as many people as they want to share the care with them at no additional cost. Alternatively, they can use Jointly on their own to organise the care around someone.

Features

- Home: Invite people, see who is in your circle, view a log of recent activity.
- Profile: Store useful information about the person you are looking after and access it at the touch of a button.
- Messaging: Communicate with everyone in your Jointly circle at a touch of a button. Simply post a message or upload an image.
- Tasks: Stay on top of everything with tasks and lists. Add tasks and assign them to any member of your circle (including yourself) and monitor their status.
- Calendar / Appointments: Create appointments and events and invite anyone in your calendar.
- Medication Manager: Keep track of current and past medication for the person you are caring for. Upload images to identify medicines quickly.



- Notes: Create and organise notes and store images, sort them into categories or just view as a simple list.
- Contacts: Store useful contacts and access their details anytime, anywhere!
- Settings: Manage the settings of both your personal account and the Jointly circle as a whole.

Looking after somebody

Jointly makes sharing care with others easier, less stressful and more organised. Once you have got your account you can log in to the app on your mobile, tablet, laptop or desktop computer.

For more information about Jointly visit:
www.jointlyapp.com

If you are not sure if Jointly is for you?
Download the app today and set up a demo circle for FREE.

jointly

Young Adult Carers (YAC) Project

The Young Adult Carer (YAC) project has been very busy the past few months delivering short breaks to carers aged 16-25 through the Respite Care Grant awarded by Welsh Government.

The activities have included several residential trips including going to the Harry Potter studio in London, Alton Towers theme park and even going to Disneyland, Paris! These have all been amazing opportunities especially going abroad which many had never done before and had to get passports for the first time in their lives which they found very exciting!

These trips have been in addition to all the regular events the project runs which includes fortnightly youth clubs held at Dr M'z in Carmarthen, a 'Healthy Relationships' workshop and eight 'Digital Reach' workshops kindly funded by Carers Trust.

There has also been an outstanding piece of work led by several young adult carers but particularly Lucy Prentice who has been directly affected by the issue they are tackling. This issue is the '21-hour rule' which



Lucy meeting Her Royal Highness Princess Anne

the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) imposes as a restriction on carers claiming Carers Allowance whereby they are not allowed to study more than 21-hours a week.

To promote the petition a short film was made by Fixers who are a national organisation who help young people raise awareness about issues that matter to them. To see this film please visit www.fixers.org and search 'Lucy Prentice'. To compliment the film, a petition was launched

and submitted to Parliament which closed on 18th April 2018.

The petition was highlighted at an event on 26th February at The Hallam Conference Centre in London which was presided over by Her Royal Highness Princess Anne who Lucy met in person. Lucy then went on to deliver a presentation at the event which resulted in a direct response from the DWP and an article in the Times Education Supplement.



Young Adult Carers at Ten Pin, Swansea

If you are a young adult carer aged 16-25 years and would like to take part in this exciting project, please get in touch. For further details, please contact Melanie Rees-Lewis on 0300 0200 002 or email melanie@carmarthenshirecarers.org.uk.



YOUNG ADULT CARERS



Meeting penguins at Folly Farm



Racing up the climbing wall



Playing with a parachute at club

Carers' Educational Years (CEY) Project

The Carers' Educational Years project was launched last September thanks to funding from Children in Need, after it was identified that a lot of young carers in Carmarthenshire didn't meet the qualifying criteria of the Young Carers Project provided by the local authority.

The CEY project works to ensure that young carers aged 5 to 18 years old can access the appropriate support and in the six months since we first started, we have received nearly 60 referrals with over 40 of those regularly involved in the project. Since the age range is so broad, we have created two separate groups for the peer support and activities as this is what the young people said they wanted and it is working really well.

With the children aged 5-11 years, we have a monthly youth club that is very popular, and the children have a great time playing games together, making arts and crafts, and recently we had a really fun session with

Circus Eruption who taught us some circus skills. We have been on trips to Folly Farm, canoeing and the Christmas Pantomime, and we will be going horse-riding soon.

The older group is also very popular and our 12-18 year olds have been having a great time too. After a long day at school and their tiring lives at home caring for their families, our teenagers love coming to club to relax, blow off steam and hang out together. We also chat through things that are important to them, and recently had a big discussion about whether young carers should have ID cards which was then fed back to the Welsh Assembly

Government for consideration.

For the trips, our teenagers braved ice skating and rock climbing and then had a great time running around in the rain at laser tag. We have recently visited Manor Wildlife Park and Heatherton Activity Centre soon too, making sure that the young carers get time to enjoy themselves and spend time with people their own age.

If you help to look after a family member with a disability, illness, mental health or substance misuse issue and are aged between 5-18 years, please get in touch.

For further details, please contact **Cat Hooton** on **0300 0200 002** or email **cat@carmarthenshirecarers.org.uk**

Due to the increasing demand on both the CEY and YAC projects we have recently recruited another project worker to join the Carmarthenshire Children & Young People's Carers Service and are very grateful to the organisations which have contributed grants to help the service grow and continue. Special thanks to The Waterloo Foundation, The Sobell Foundation, Garfield Weston Trust and BBC Children in Need.



Carer's Educational Years

Tackling Loneliness

Loneliness and isolation are not fringe issues; they have been shown to damage health, are the basis for social exclusion and are a significant and pressing problem in Wales that cross all boundaries of social class, age, race, gender identification, sexual orientation, financial status and geography.

The recent National Survey for Wales showed the 17% of people in Wales were lonely and 54% of people experienced some feelings of loneliness.

Emotional loneliness is felt when we miss the usual companionship of one particular person; often a spouse, sibling or best friend. Social



loneliness is experienced when we lack a wider social network or group of friends.

Loneliness can be a transient feeling that comes and goes. It can be situational; for example only occurring at certain times like Sundays, bank holidays or Christmas. Or loneliness can be chronic; this means someone feels lonely all or most of the time.

Feeling lonely?

Feeling lonely is a normal human emotion and is simply a sign of wanting contact with people. Feeling lonely can be fleeting, felt for just a day, or for it can be a longer-term emotion. It is useful to think positively about doing something to help yourself out of loneliness, while remembering not to blame yourself for feeling this way.

If you have been feeling lonely for a while, a first step is to notice and identify this, even if just to yourself. This can help you to think about what you could do to help yourself, or how to ask for help from others.

Think about yourself

Think about what you would like more of – maybe time with friends or family, if so invite them to visit. Often if you are lonely you think people do not want to visit. This is understandable but often people will respond to an invitation and will come and spend quality time with you.

Look after yourself

If you can do something to improve your health, take small steps to eat well, take gentle exercise and keep active, all of these things can help you to relax more fully in your own company.

Share your skills and time with others

You can offer time or specific skills by helping out in your street, neighbourhood or with local organisations. You could volunteer with the Royal Voluntary Service, Sense or Independent Age who support older people.

Take it slow

If you have felt lonely for a long time, or even if you are surrounded by people, it can be terrifying to think of trying to meet new people, or opening up to people for the first time. It is a good idea to start off by going somewhere like a cafe, the cinema or an event where you can be around people, but not expected to talk or interact straight away; like a class where everyone is focused on an activity.

Your community and neighbourhood

Find out what local groups, activities or services are running and join in: singing or walking group, book clubs, bridge, bingo, quiz nights or faith groups.

Visit Dewis Cymru

(Health and Wellbeing Directory)

and search your area: www.dewis.wales

Llandovery - Caring for Carers

A Carers event was developed and run in partnership with hospital staff and supported by the Investors in Carers (IiC) Development Officer, Carers Trust Sir Gâr Carers Outreach Worker, the local Police Community Support Officer (PCSO), Welsh Ambulance, and Carmarthenshire County Council Community Resilience Officer.

This was aimed at identifying and supporting Carers and took place on 28th February 2018 at Llandovery Hospital.

Despite the cold weather members of the local community, GP surgery patients, and hospital patients' visitors took the opportunity to drop in. Hot drinks and Welsh cakes engendered a relaxed atmosphere where Carers felt able to take a few moments for



Photo from left to right: Vanessa Buckler (Carers Trust Sir Gâr, Carers Outreach Worker), Debbie Bence (Investors in Carers, Development Officer), Susan Smith (Carmarthenshire County Council, Community Resilience Officer), Helen Fender (Police, Community Support Officer), Alison Johnstone (Welsh Ambulance).

themselves. As a result conversation flowed and a lot of 1:1 support was given verbally. This included, for example information pertaining to relevant third sector organisations, financial advice and potential local support. Meetings have been arranged for the Outreach Worker to meet with some newly identified Carers, and the PCSO also arranged to visit a local carer who is struggling.

A wide range of appropriate information was made available, including the IiC GP surgery registration/referral forms, meeting dates for Llandovery Carers Club, access to free sessions with New Law Solicitors, keeping yourself safe etc. 17 Message in a Bottle 'bottles' were distributed.

For more information on these please contact:
debbie@carmarthenshirecarers.org.uk

Vanessa Buckler, Carers Trust Sir Gâr Carers Outreach Worker said:

"the day was a great success as we provided information on caring matters and encouraged carers to register with their GP surgery. I talked to Carers about how they are coping and took details of those who would like further support."

If you missed the event and want further information please contact:

Helen Fender -
helen.fender@dyfed-powys.pnn.police.uk
Vanessa Buckler -
vanessa@carmarthenshirecarers.org.uk



CATCHUP

Co-operative Action to Change and Hurry Up Progress (CATCHUP) provide an information and advice centre specialising in welfare benefits advice, based at Coleshill Social Centre in Llanelli.

Staff are able to deal with enquiries on a range of issues involving people with disabilities and their carers. Most of their work involves advising disabled and elderly people on their welfare benefit entitlements. Assistance can also be given with form filling, reviews and appeals for most claimable benefits.

CATCHUP is funded by the Carmarthenshire County Council and they cover the whole of Carmarthenshire; from Newcastle Emlyn to Llanelli, Whitland to Llandovery. If you live in Carmarthenshire and need assistance with any benefits-related issue, do not hesitate to contact them.

The Information & Advice Centre is open 5-days a week, Monday to Friday from 9:30am to 2:30pm. Appointments are advisable.

Contact CATCHUP for a FREE and confidential appointment to discuss your individual benefit entitlements.

Contact details

CATCHUP

Welfare Benefit Advice Service,
Coleshill Social Centre
Coleshill Terrace, Llanelli SA15 3BT

Telephone: 01554 776850

Email: info@catchupltd.co.uk

Welsh Water HelpU Scheme

The Welsh Water HelpU scheme helps some people with their water bills. To apply for the scheme, you must have a low household income.

What is the Welsh Water HelpU scheme?

If you get help through the Welsh Water HelpU scheme, your water bill will be capped. This means you will not pay over a certain amount for the year.

If you have a water meter and the charge would be lower than the Welsh Water HelpU amount, your bill will be based on the actual reading. Otherwise the bill will be capped at the Welsh Water HelpU level.

Who qualifies for Welsh Water HelpU?

To qualify for you the Welsh Water HelpU scheme, need to have an annual household income of less than £15,000.

Applying for Welsh Water HelpU

For more information and to find out how to apply for the Welsh Water HelpU scheme, go to the Welsh Water website:

www.dwrcymru.com/en/My-Account/HelpU.aspx

For a paper copy of the application form, ring Welsh Water on 0800 052 0145.



Dŵr Cymru
Welsh Water

Pension Credit

According to recent reports, up to 1.4million pensioner households are missing out on vital income by failing to come forward for pension credit.



What is Pension Credit?

Pension Credit is a means-tested benefit for people on a low income who have reached the Pension Credit qualifying age.

Pension Credit has two parts – Guarantee Pension Credit and Savings Pension Credit. You may be able to get one or both parts depending on your circumstances.

Guarantee Credit tops up your weekly income if it is below £163 (for single people) or £248.80 (for couples).

Savings Credit is an extra payment for people who saved some money towards their retirement, for example a pension.

For further information go to:

www.gov.uk/pension-credit or contact CATCHUP by telephone on 01554-776850 or by email: info@catchupltd.co.uk.

The quickest way to apply for Pension Credit is by phone. A friend or family member can call for you - you must be with them when they call.

Pension Credit help / claim line
Telephone: 0800 99 1234
Textphone: 0800 169 0133
Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

If you would prefer to complete a paper application form, you can call (or get a friend or family member to call) the helpline to ask for a paper application.

Message in a Bottle

Local Lions Club Support Carers Across Carmarthenshire.

In partnership with the Investors in Carers scheme, the Lions Club have been supporting carers throughout the county, through the FREE provision of 'Message in a Bottle'.

Available from your GP surgery or through Crossroads Care Sir Gâr, the scheme is designed to encourage people to keep their basic personal and medical information in a common location....the fridge!

This not only saves the emergency services valuable time in an emergency situation, but also provides peace of mind to you, your family and friends.



For more information or to receive your FREE bottle please speak to a member of staff at your GP surgery or contact Crossroads Care Sir Gâr on:

Carmarthen: 01267 220046, Llanelli: 01554 754957

Free Legal Advice for Carers

NewLaw
solicitors

New Law Solicitors are very proud to be working in partnership with Carers Trust Sir Gâr.

New Law recognises that many carers are often faced with a minefield of information from social workers, general practitioners and other professionals about powers of attorney, deputyship and other legal matters.

We want to help carers by providing a free initial advice session without the worry of unknown and expensive fees.

If you decide to instruct us we will work on a fixed fee basis.

We are able to advise on:

- Wills (including statutory wills for people who lack capacity)
- Trusts for vulnerable people
- Funding for Care
- Capacity
- Lasting Powers of Attorney
- Estate/Tax planning
- Protection of Assets
- Court of Protection and Deputyship
- Estate Administration

New Law will be running a legal advice session for carers between **10am** and **3pm** on the following dates.

| Month | Delivery | Venue |
|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Friday, 18th May | Telephone appointment | N/A |
| Friday, 20th July | Face-to-face appointment | Carmarthen am Llanelli pm |
| Friday, 17th August | Telephone appointment | N/A |
| Friday, 21st September | Face-to-face appointment | Carmarthen am Llanelli pm |
| Friday, 19th October | Telephone appointment | N/A |
| Friday, 16th November | Face-to-face appointment | Carmarthen am Llanelli pm |

Please note that early booking is essential as we anticipate a demand for the sessions.

To book a place or for further information please contact the Carers Information Service on **0300 0200 002** or email info@carmarthenshirecarers.org.uk

Disclaimer

Every care has been taken in compiling this newsletter and we cannot take responsibility for any action arising from these pages. If you'd prefer to receive an electronic copy of the newsletter please let us know by emailing info@carmarthenshirecarers.org.uk or by calling **0300 0200 002**.