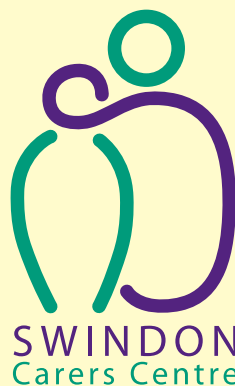


# *Caring Matters*

## **Newsletter**

*Autumn 2013*



*Meet our new CEO! page 2*

*Become a Trustee with SCC page 4*

*Young Carers Festival page 14*

***Supporting Family Carers of All Ages***

## ***I am delighted to announce we have appointed Cath Johnston to the position of Chief Executive, Swindon Carers Centre.***

As many of you will know, Cath has been an integral part of our Senior Management Team running the organisation since Diana Finch's departure in May.

Cath has a wealth of experience she can bring to the role; including a background in education health and social care and clear strategic vision.

I know she is the right person to be leading the organisation and she has a very strong Senior Management Team and a great staff supporting her to ensure

we deliver our objectives.

All that is left for me to do is to congratulate Cath and wish her all the best in her new role.



**Ian Price**  
*Chair of Trustees*

I am delighted to be taking over the position of CEO at Swindon Carers Centre. I have been here for nearly two years, firstly as the Further & Higher Education Outreach Officer and subsequently as Development Manager. It's been a steep learning curve already with, no doubt, more to come.

Just a little bit about me; I'm a proud 'Welshman' from a passionate sporting family. Born and brought up in Swansea, on

the beautiful Gower coast, with an older brother and sister we were often to be found on the football pitch, netball court, squash court, or in the swimming pool. My Dad was an avid Swansea City FC supporter and my brother a Gooner (Arsenal FC). I just followed the team with the best looking footballers! My Mam can be found behind the sofa whenever Wales play England in rugby union. My sister has a lovely

family, with two sons in their 20's, whom I adore.

I studied in Cardiff to be a PE teacher and took my first job in a multi-cultural school in Bedford for 13-18 year olds. I believe the seven years I spent there to be some of the best of my life. I was very interested in the pastoral care of my students and eventually became a Deputy Head of Year. This very nicely moved me into studying to become a Family Therapist which I achieved in 2010.

When I left the school I joined a small local charity called Plan B, a substance misuse service for young people. A year before leaving Bedford to come to Swindon I became the CEO of the charity. I moved to Swindon in 2012-13, with my partner Leon, to work for the borough council as the Young People's Substance Misuse Commissioner; then moved on to facilitate an innovative project focussed on developing creative ways to work with families to support them in their desire for change. This was initially called the LIFE programme.

Following a self-created sabbatical I decided to get back

closer to the action which is when I joined Swindon Carers Centre. Since being here I have had the pleasure of meeting some remarkable people – carers of all ages. I have been stunned by their unstinting desire to ensure the services provided for the person they care for is respectful and of the highest quality. The selflessness with which they live their lives is astounding. It is imperative we as a Centre ensure we provide the information, advice and support that encourages all carers to have a quality of life alongside their caring. It is also crucial we ensure the 'voice' of carers is heard at all levels.

I have no doubt this is possible.....why? Because I have worked with the staff, volunteers and trustees over the last two years and am confident their passion and quality of work will mean carers will continue to be central to all we do.



**Cath Johnston**  
*CEO*

## AGM update from Ian Price – Chair of SCC

Like most organisations which go through rapid development, as Swindon Carers Centre has over the past couple of years, a lot of time is taken up with forward planning and improving working practices. However it's also worth taking a little time to reflect on what has gone well and I'd like to take this opportunity to share with you some success stories highlighted in our latest Annual Report:

- In 2012-3 569 new adult and parent carers were registered with us (up 19% on the previous year)
- We had 419 Young Carers with "active status" in 2012-3 which is up 29% on the previous year
- 73% of Young Carers were able to reduce their caring role as a result of intervention from YC Support team
- 131 carers received benefits advice between Apr-Dec 2012. Benefits total claimed for carers and cared for: £213,764
- Overall during 2012-3 there were 127 attendances at training for carers, an increase of 22% on the previous year

**The Annual Report, presented at our recent AGM is available to download from the Resources section of our website:**  
[www.swindoncarers.org.uk](http://www.swindoncarers.org.uk)



As Chairman, I am supported by a really dedicated group of Trustees. However, we are always looking for new people who can strengthen the Trustee Board. If you fancy being a Trustee or know anyone who would like to join our Board then please feel free to contact me via the Carers Centre, or our Communications Officer Susanna Jones ([susanna.jones@swindoncarers.org.uk](mailto:susanna.jones@swindoncarers.org.uk)) in the first instance.

We are in particular looking for Trustees who have a financial background; have worked in the health industry; or could lead on commercial enterprises. Being a Trustee is very rewarding and it is an opportunity to work with some great people and give something back.

As with all charities one of the areas that we have to spend a lot of time focussing on is how we raise money to continue to improve the service to our carers. We are spending time this year developing our relationships with local businesses in order to increase the awareness of Swindon Carers Centre and hopefully raise some money along the way. We appreciate that fundraising in today's economic climate is very difficult but we need to continue looking at different ways of revenue generation.

## Get Active in Swindon!



Swindon Carers Centre has joined forces with Swindon Borough Council to offer all carers, parent carers and young carers registered with the centre the opportunity of free swimming, ice skating, gym, Golf / Pitch & Putt & the STEAM Museum at participating venues across Swindon. These sessions will only be free off peak. Carers will need to apply for a Leisure card and at some venues will also need to take additional confirmation of being a carer with them.

To take advantage of this new scheme, carers need to contact the centre so we can review your current caring role. We will then send you an application pack that you need to take with you when signing up for the leisure card.

Please contact the carers support line 01793 531133 for further information.

**Young Carers - Do you like going swimming, ice-skating or even the gym? Swindon Borough Council and Swindon Carers Centre are now able to offer these activities free for off peak sessions. You will need to get a leisure card before you can go. To get hold of a card please call Julie or Helen for more information.**

## Latest News



**Fundraising Volunteer Needed** – Are you a carer? Could you spare an hour every two months to help us plan our fundraising activities? Swindon Carers Centre is looking to recruit a carer to sit on our Fundraising Strategy Group. We believe carer representation is important and will help our fundraising progress. No qualifications or experience needed - just an interest in how we might raise money to support carers.



**Sunbeat Success** – Thanks to everyone who came along and supported Swindon Carers Centre's Sunbeat Festival at The Sun Inn, Coate on 26th May. The day raised more than £3000 for Swindon Carers Centre which is a fabulous result. Big thanks go to Melanie Stanbury and The Sun Inn for organising the Festival. You can download a 1 hour video with highlights of the day (great value at just £5) from here: [sunbeat.uklocaltv.co.uk](http://sunbeat.uklocaltv.co.uk)



**Activity sessions for disabled people** – SBC's Leisure Services department organises activity sessions for disabled people which carers can bring the person they care for along to on a weekly basis. For more information contact Coaching Co-ordinator Doug Imrie on 01793 465405.



**Free Home Fire Safety Visit** – Wiltshire Fire and Rescue are offering some free appointments to visit you in your home to give advice on fire risks, how to prevent and reduce the risk of fire, developing a night time fire safety routine, developing a fire escape plan, fire detection and free smoke detector fitting (where appropriate). To request a free home safety visit; contact 0800 389 7849 or go to [www.wiltfire.gov.uk](http://www.wiltfire.gov.uk).



## 7 Positives for a Better Life

(from the International Stress Management Association)

- 1. Change the thought – Change the outcome:** This is the starting point, reprogramming your brain by replacing an unhelpful negative thought or belief with a new positive one. Use your imagination to visualise or “show” your brain what you want. The power of the mind cannot be over-estimated!
- 2. Self-belief starts with you:** This is an empowering way of taking more control in your life rather than relying on others to make you feel good. Do something fun or caring for yourself today!
- 3. Don't just do what you did last year:** Repeating what you always do will bring you the same outcome unless others change & this is not in your control. So if you didn't like all that happened last year make plans and set new goals, do something different!
- 4. Deal with difficult decisions now, not later:** “Never put off until tomorrow what you can do today” We all know this but positive action is required to make it happen. Prioritise and do difficult tasks first in the day so you have a clear focus for the rest of the day making you less stressed and more productive!
- 5. Find reasons to say “yes”:** “I would love to but...” here comes the negative reason why you can't! It can be a really positive experience to just say yes, if it is possible and what you want, try to find ways that will allow you the opportunity, maybe you need others to persuade you, take control and decide for yourself!
- 6. Renegotiate:** Stuck with what you have always had and now want a change? Look at learning to develop and use your assertive skills, ask for what you want, discuss your changing needs, expectations with yourself and others to reach the deal that works for you!
- 7. Flip it!** There are always two sides to every situation, sometimes more. Take time to look at all your options, don't just assume, maybe ask others and make informed choices based on facts!

**www.isma.org.uk** Always consult your GP if you are concerned about your health.

Will Writers and LPA Specialists

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**Our services include:**

- ✓ Will Writing
- ✓ Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPA)
- ✓ Guardianship for children
- ✓ Protection Against Care Home Fees
- ✓ Pre-paid Funeral Plans

**We offer fixed fees and FREE HOME VISITS if required.**

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## Carers Holidays

If you care,  
we care.

The Carers' Support Centre

**Carers Holidays**

Breaks for  
carers and their families



[www.carersholidays.org.uk](http://www.carersholidays.org.uk)

**The Carers' Support Centre is a charity providing low-cost holidays for carers.**

Their holidays are designed for carers and their families to have an affordable break. They are for carers, either alone or with the person they care for. They offer disabled accessible accommodation in their caravans in Torbay and the Cotswolds.

The Carers' Support Centre is a network partner of Carers Trust, based in Bristol, but you don't have to be a local resident to use their holiday service.

Lynette Thoburn-Perrett, Carers Holidays Manager, says:

“We know carers have needs of their own – and a short break can help them re-energise and support them to continue in their vital caring role. We have an understanding of carers' needs and are an organisation carers trust. We've priced our holidays so they are affordable for carers, and you also have the satisfaction of knowing any money

generated through our holidays goes back to the charity to provide support services to carers.”

The holiday homes are located at Hoburne Holiday Parks in Torbay and the Cotswolds. They are well equipped with good site facilities, free access to on-site entertainment and great local tourist attractions.

**Here's what some carers said about Carers Holidays in 2012:**

**“We would not be able to have a holiday unless we went in the carers caravans - we are on a low budget and struggle financially - thank you for all your help and support - it meant so much to us to go in this caravan that was both clean/tidy with excellent facilities.”** Torbay holiday

**“The accommodation was excellent and the beautiful, quiet surroundings, plus wildlife was very calming.”** Cotswolds holiday

**For more information, prices and to make a reservation:**

**Tel: 0117 965 2365** [info@carersholidays.org.uk](mailto:info@carersholidays.org.uk)

[www.carersholidays.org.uk](http://www.carersholidays.org.uk)

CARERS RIGHTS DAY



CARERS RIGHTS DAY

## Carers Rights Day

Swindon Carers Centre  
will be holding an  
**EVENT FOR CARERS**

on

**Friday 29th November 2013**

The venue is yet to be confirmed and we  
are still working on the programme  
but please



## SAVE THE DATE



We will be sending out more details  
nearer the time, meanwhile if you are  
interested in attending please ring  
the office on **01793 531133** or email  
**carers@swindoncarers.org.uk**  
to reserve a place



CARERS RIGHTS DAY

CARERS RIGHTS DAY

### Swindon Carers Centre – Social Media



Don't forget that you can keep up to date with all the latest news from Swindon Carers Centre online at Facebook. You can search for Swindon Carers Centre and click on the 'Like' button or find us by using the following link:

**[www.facebook.com/swindoncarerscentre](http://www.facebook.com/swindoncarerscentre)**



You can now also find us on twitter too!

**@swindoncarers**

### DIRECTORY

We have introduced a new directory to make life easier for those of us looking for a phone number! These things tend to start small but will hopefully grow quite

quickly to become a real resource for you. If you would like to advertise your services in our directory, please contact [editor@swindoncarers.org.uk](mailto:editor@swindoncarers.org.uk)

#### Chiropody & Podiatry



**Steven Ayre**

D.Pod Med, D.S. Ch, MSSCh, MBChA

Home Visiting Chiropodist 07769 736364

#### Opticians



**VisionVisit**

Home Visiting Optician

[www.visionvisit.co.uk](http://www.visionvisit.co.uk)

01793 232588

#### Legal



**Foresight Wills**

Will Writers and LPA Specialists

[www.foresightwills.com](http://www.foresightwills.com)

01793 433705

## Groups/Breaks/Courses/Talks and Activities Review (Apr-Jun 2013)

**Dementia/Alzheimer's Disease Carer Group** On 4th April the group was visited by 2 representatives from SEQOL (providers of health and social care services in Swindon) who explained about 'Shared Lives for people with dementia'. This service is like fostering for adults with dementia. The person who is cared for goes to stay at the home of the fosterer on a 1:1 basis, to provide respite for the family carer.

### Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults course

On 10th April a group of carers attended this safeguarding course. Topics included:

Who is a vulnerable adult? What is meant by the term abuse? Who may abuse and why? What should we look out for? What can be done about it? How do we report any concerns?



**Highworth Carers Group** On 11th April the group enjoyed a presentation by Norman Jeffery from The National Gardening Scheme (NGS). Norman showed us slides from stately home gardens and inspired us to be creative with our own smaller versions! NGS Gardens are opened to the public at certain times of the year, with refreshments provided, all at a reasonable cost. Details of gardens and dates can be found in their Yellow Book. Proceeds go to charities (including Carers Centres and Hospices).



### Course from Rethink Mental Illness, in partnership with Swindon Carers Centre.

#### Caring and coping for mental health carers.

Donna and Jamie from Rethink Mental Illness piloted this new course, for carers of people with mental health conditions; and will deliver another course at our Centre starting in September.



**Confidence to Care course 15th April** This course is mainly useful for new carers but may be beneficial to more experienced carers too. During the first session Lucy Hawkes from LIFT Psychology Service gave a presentation about:

- Different feelings and emotions/coping with your role
- Managing your own wellbeing/stress management
- Relaxation tips
- Where to access additional support/courses

Carers could then choose to attend further sessions that may be useful to them including Personal Care, Manual Handling, Medication, Emergency Card Scheme, Telecare, Time For Yourself/Looking After Your Own Health, Sources Of Information and Services Available, PALS (what to do if you are unhappy with service received at GWH), First Aid etc.

**Meal** On the evening of 25th April carers met at Cosmos (JRC Global Buffet) and enjoyed an 'all you can eat buffet' with food stations from all around the world-including Indian, Thai, Chinese, Mexican and English followed by a large range of desserts!



### Food Hygiene and safety course 1st May

- Topics included:
- Consequences of food poisoning and vulnerable people
  - Safe preparation, cooking, serving, storage of food
  - Hygiene in the kitchen, the importance of hand-washing

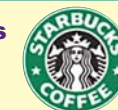


**Ten-Pin bowling** was held for the 18-25 year old carer group on 7th May. Carers enjoyed a couple of games of bowling and a drink, in a social setting.



### Group for carers of people with mental health conditions

On 9th May, Facilitator Emilia met the group at Starbucks for a chat and mutual support.



**Ex-Forces Group** This is a group for carers who were in the Forces themselves or if the person they care for is Ex-Forces. The group has joined with the Gulf war Veterans Group (Swindon Trauma Group, facilitated by Dick Hilling) and meets in the community. On 10th May a social meeting was held in Lydiard House and tea and scones were provided.



**Male carer group** Male carers met for an Italian meal and social evening at Da Vinci's. John and David, from Swindon Carers Centre, hosted the event and encouraged carers to say what they would like to gain from the group and suggest future activities the group could try.



### Basic First Aid Awareness course

This course was delivered on 15th May and 25th June. Carers learned how to:

- Manage an emergency situation
- Place someone in the Recovery Position
- Check airway/breathing
- Perform CPR
- Manage shock, choking etc.
- Apply a pressure bandage and a sling



**Pamper sessions** were given at The Equilibrium Beauty Salon, Swindon College, on 21st May. Carers enjoyed a little 'me time' and chose to receive a manicure and make-up or pedicure and make-up.



**Talk from Counsellor** We were pleased to offer a talk by Kate Woodhouse (Counsellor) on 7th June. In a safe and supportive setting Kate encouraged carers to explore feelings and emotions around caring, setting boundaries and taking some time for oneself. The talk was interactive and thought provoking.



**Trip to Oxford** Carers met at Swindon Bus Station on 11th June and then travelled to Oxford via coach to spend a few hours relaxing by the river, doing some shopping or exploring the historical sites.



**Dementia Awareness course:** the course scheduled for 13th and 19th June had to be postponed to 3rd and 10th July, due to the Trainer being ill.

**Knitting/Crochet Group:** On Sat 15th June the group, as part of Carers Week activities, were involved in fundraising for Swindon Carers Centre at Sainsbury's, Bridgemead Centre. Items that had been knitted/crocheted were sold to shoppers. Many thanks to all involved.



**Yoga and relaxation classes** A new 4 session course started on 17th of June. We hope to offer further courses in the future.



**Wills, Living Wills, Lasting Power Of Attorney and Care Homes Fees** were the topics explained by Nigel Schofield from Foresight Wills on 18th June. The presentation was very informative and thought provoking. Nigel invited carers to speak to him about any queries they might have.



**Open Minds group** The new monthly group for older carers, carers of people with dementia and the person they care for, met at St Andrew's Church Hall, Raleigh Avenue, for the first time on Thursday 20th June. There was an excellent turn out. The afternoon was an informal, friendly occasion, the group took part in a quiz, enjoyed a cuppa and biscuits, voted for the name of the group and 'Open Minds' was the winner. There was impromptu singing of Second World War songs! The group gave suggestions of what they would like from the group and future sessions.



**Forthcoming events: Please see the enclosed Oct-Dec 2013 flyer for 'What's On'** If you have any queries about any of the groups, courses, talks or activities please contact Heather Goldsmith, Groups and Breaks Co-ordinator at Swindon Carers Centre on 01793 401095.



To all you creative and artistic young carers - Friends Of Young Carers (who raise money each year for young carers activities), would like you to design a Christmas Card. You don't have to be a fantastic artist to have the chance to get your card produced, it's just got to be bright, colourful and eye catching.

All entries can be handed in at groups, activities or sent to [youngcarers@swindoncarers.org.uk](mailto:youngcarers@swindoncarers.org.uk)

Please get your entries in by Monday 2nd September 2013...  
...Good Luck!!!

## Big Thank You!

Swindon Young Carers would like to say a huge thank you to the Freshbrook 2nd Brownies for the £200 they have raised as part of their fundraising badge. The girls did a sponsored litter pick around Freshbrook centre a few weeks ago. Kerry Rutherford chose us as a beneficiary and campaigned to the rest for the group to choose us. The money they raised will be used for in the Go For Its and Getaways group to specific activities.

Julie Collar



YC Support Worker Julie Collar with the Brownies

## Young Carers Festival 2013

*At the end of June 2013, a group of 16 young carers, 2 carers centre staff and 2 Young Carer volunteers ventured down to Southampton for The Young Carers Festival 2013. Here is what some of them said about their experience.*



“This weekend for me has been amazing! I have really enjoyed spending time with others that have similar difficulties. Over the weekend there has been loads to do! The fireworks were so beautiful and were in time with the music. Everybody got on well with each other which was lovely, I've so many memories over this weekend and those memories will stay with me forever. So thankful for everyone that has made this weekend away amazing.” **Chloe 14**

“This weekend I have met new people and done activities that I haven't done before. It has let me be who I really am and have a chance to relax. Thank you for everything you have done and for a brilliant time this weekend. This weekend has given me the opportunity to meet people in the same situation as me. All the activities have been brilliant. Thank you for a fabulous weekend.”

**Ashleigh**

“I have had so much fun on the YCF 2013; it has been the highlight of my year! There has been great weather, great activities and great people. One of my favourite activities has been canoeing (even though I got stuck in the middle of a water fight). I just want to thanks the Friends Of Young Carers for funding the trip, without them we couldn't have had the time of our lives.”

**Lauren 15**



“I think the YCF was really fun, I really enjoyed the disco and it gave me a good break. Thank you for giving me the chance to come.” **Rebecca 14**

“This weekend has let me be who I am and relax; it's been just been amazing! Thank you for all you have done and for a brilliant time. This has given me the opportunity to meet other people in the same situation and difficulty. It's given me a chance to express who I am and just relax. I've made lots of friends and it's given me a bit of freedom. Thank you so much for this opportunity. The activities were fab, the fireworks were beautiful and lots of people got on and there was no fuss. This weekend away was just beautiful.”

**Eden 12**

“I really enjoyed it, it was the best weekend ever, I loved every single bit of it.” **Abbey**

“I really enjoyed the nights, the atmosphere and the buzz of the weekend was great. I think lots of people made new friends, it's a great time.” **Becky 14**

“It's been an absolute privilege to spend such a fab weekend with a group of funny, well behaved young people. It's been really great to see some of them really blossom over the 3 days and do things they didn't think they would could do, make new friends and be themselves. I have absolutely loved every minute of it and feel really lucky to have been allowed to share it with them.”

**Mel Young Carer Volunteer**



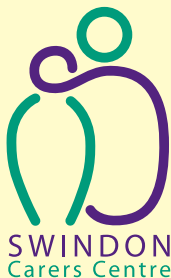
### Swindon Young Carers Facebook



Swindon Young Carers have a Facebook account which is only open to Young Carers who have had a Young Carers assessment with us and that are still registered at Swindon Carers Centre. To access it you will need to send a friend request to Swindon Young Carers, however if you are under 12 years old we will need permission from your parent or guardian before we add you.

If you need to talk to one of our Young Carers support workers (Julie and Helen) you can now just send us a personal message. We may not see it straight away as this page will only be checked once a day Monday to Friday. It will also be used to send out any updates about the Young Carers team, groups, activities and anything that may be happening with the Young Carers forum.





## Swindon Carers Centre

**1 Wood Street, Swindon SN1 4AN**  
**Tel: Swindon (01793) 531133**

**Office Hours:**  
**9.30am - 4.45pm Monday to Thursday**  
**and 9.30am - 12.30pm Friday**

## Swindon Young Carers

**Tel: Julie Collar 01793 401096**  
**Helen Rankin 01793 401091**  
**Matt Teale 01793 401092**

**Please contact the Editor Susanna Jones with your views/articles and information [editor@swindoncarers.org.uk](mailto:editor@swindoncarers.org.uk)**

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**[www.swindoncarers.org.uk](http://www.swindoncarers.org.uk)**

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