

newsletter

Information for Carers throughout Falkirk District and Clackmannanshire

SUMMER 2015

www.carersfalkirk.org.uk

New look for the Carers Centre

We hope you like our new look and our new logo!

The need to re-brand was driven by the fact that 'The Princess Royal Trust for Carers' was replaced by a major new UK charity, 'Carers Trust', which, in Scotland, supports a network of independent Carers Centres, including ours.

We will now be known as **Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Carers Centre** and we have a bright and modern new logo and strapline— **Inform | Support | Involve** - which we think concisely encapsulates what the Carers Centre's all about.

As part of this exciting new venture, and to ensure that everyone was part of the re-branding process, local carers, staff, board members and professionals we work with participated in various stakeholder engagement exercises to consider what the Carers Centre actually means to the people who use our service and work with us.

Re-branding will allow us to create a stronger local identity and raise our profile, which will make us more visible to local carers and encourage professionals to signpost any carers they come into contact with to us for support.

We are also in the process of developing a new website and information resources, which again will allow us to reach more carers and provide them with information and opportunities to have their say on issues that are of interest to local carers.

A stronger brand and a new website will also be a great asset when we are looking for funding to enable us to continue to provide and develop services to support local carers.



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Carers Week 2015

PAGE 2

Young Carers Project

PAGE 4

Carer's Bill

PAGE 6

Plus much more...



Carers Week

8-14 June 2015

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 throughout the UK.

This year's campaign will focus on **Building Carer Friendly Communities** - Communities which support carers to look after their loved ones well, while recognising that they are individuals with needs of their own.

Carers Week is brought to life by the individuals and organisations that come together to organise activities and events throughout the UK, drawing attention to just how important caring is.

Locally, the Carers Centre will be organising the following events for carers:

CLACKMANNANSHERE

Monday 8 June	Coffee Morning and Activities, Community House, Alloa
Tuesday 9 June	'Carer Friendly Communities' – what is available to support carers in Clackmannanshire – involving a range of 3rd Sector Organisations, Health and Clackmannanshire Council, Alloa Town Hall
Thursday 11 June	Samba Drumming, Hawkhill Community Centre Carers Cafe, Hawkhill Community Centre
	Central Carers Association AGM, including a talk from Heather Noller, Carers Trust Scotland, followed by a buffet lunch, Carers Centre, Falkirk
Friday 12 June, AM	Big Fit Walks, Tullibody

FALKIRK

Monday 8 June	Afternoon Tea at Callendar House, Falkirk
Tuesday 9 June	Men's Group Lunch Individual Pampering Appointments
Wednesday 10 June	Carers Cafe, Carers Centre, Falkirk Nail file and polish appointments
Thursday 11 June	Central Carers Association AGM, including a talk from Heather Noller, Carers Trust Scotland, followed by a buffet lunch, Carers Centre, Falkirk
Friday 12 June	Film matinee at the Carers Centre, Falkirk

Full details and a booking slip are enclosed with this newsletter or available from the Carers Centre in Falkirk or Alloa.

Central Carers Association AGM

Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Carers Centre

Thursday 11 June - 11 am to 1 pm

During Carers Week, Central Carers Association (CCA) will be holding its AGM. The membership of CCA is made up of carers and those who support the aims of CCA. A voluntary Board of Directors, elected by the membership of CCA, manages Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Carers Centre.

If you are a carer living in Falkirk district or Clackmannanshire and would like to become a member or renew your annual membership of CCA, please complete and return the enclosed registration form.

Carers, professionals and all those with an interest in the work of the Carers Centre are warmly invited to attend our AGM. Following the business part of the meeting, Heather Noller, from Carers Trust Scotland, will provide an update on the Carers Bill. All of those attending are then invited to stay for a buffet lunch. To assist with catering, please let us know if you are able to attend by phone or email, or complete and return the enclosed Carers Week booking slip.





Carers in Clackmannanshire celebrate their Care with Confidence programme

Councillor Les Sharp, Leader of Clackmannanshire Council, was joined by 22 carers, staff from the Carers Centre, Robert Stevenson (NHS Forth Valley) and David Niven (Clackmannanshire Council) to celebrate the Care with Confidence programme delivered in Clackmannanshire over the past twelve months.

At the Celebration in March at Hawkhill Community Centre, carers reflected on the last year of the programme, and spoke about the difference it had made to their lives. Carers were also invited to suggest new topics they would like included in future programmes.

Stella McDonald and Donna Mulder (Training Co-ordinators) provided information about the 47 topics covered at the sessions that were delivered to 87 individual carers in 5 different local communities.

Councillor Sharp then presented the carers with certificates before everyone enjoyed a buffet lunch.

Care with Confidence sessions in Clackmannanshire do not stand alone, they are an element of a broad range of support services offered by the Carers Centre including weekly and monthly carer support activities, one to one support, information and carer involvement opportunities.

Autism Development Fund

The Carers Centre has received funding from the Scottish Government's Autism Development Fund since 2011.

We have used the funding from this 4 year programme to employ specialist workers (Jenni Fulton and Jacqueline Kidd) to work with parents and carers of children and adults who have autism and young carers who have a sibling with autism. Over the last 4 years, the workers have provided focused and needs led support to families across Falkirk district and Clackmannanshire.

Unfortunately, the funding for these additional posts is due to end in July this year. We are currently trying to resource alternative funding, however, until such funding is found, the carers and young carers who have been receiving support from Jenni and Jacqueline will still be able to access support via the regular one to one support and parent and young carers groups provided by the centre.

Young Carers project news



Young Carers Group Update

Over the last few months we have been really busy at our young carers groups.

In December, over 80 young carers (YCs) attended a Christmas pantomime. Our older YCs went to see Aladdin at the MacRobert Arts Centre and our younger YCs went to see Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs at Falkirk Town Hall.

In February, our YCs had a go at playing basketball and hockey. Everyone tried their best and lots of goals and baskets were scored.

In March, we made chocolate lollies and then played extreme dodgeball. More recently in April, we did some Spring-time crafts, and Gecko Venture brought their rock wall.

In May and June, we plan to get outside and enjoy the sunny weather – this will include biking and trips to Callendar Park and the Helix to play rounders and football.

Young Carers Celebrate Autism Awareness Month

The Young Carers Sibling Groups have been very busy recently celebrating their siblings and helping raise awareness about autism during April's Autism Awareness month. Working with two volunteers from Youth Scotland, Abi and Elise, the group produced a drama video showing what it is like to have a sibling with autism. The groups also worked with animators from Red Kite to produce a short animation to raise awareness of autism.

In April, thanks to a grant from Carers Trust, the secondary girls Sibling Group enjoyed a well-deserved short break at Carlogie House in Carnoustie.



Babble carerstrust
The New Service for Young Carers

Carers Trust launched their new web based service and online community for young carers in January. As this was launched, new research by Carers Trust showed the shocking effect that caring for parents or siblings has on the wellbeing of young people who care for others.

Being a young carer is making young people feel stressed and tired. However, over half also reported they were proud of being young carers and 42% that it made them happy. The research also shows a quarter of the young carers group don't have enough people to talk to and 28% said they would like to talk to other young carers online.

Babble will help address this by providing friendship and support online for young carers under 18.

Babble is a space where young carers can find others in a similar position, chat to each other, share their stories and hear about each other's experiences in a safe environment. As well as the support and friendship young carers can find with each other, they will also have access to help and advice, email and chat sessions with the Carers Trust Online Support team who are all qualified youth and community workers or professionally qualified social workers.



Visit: babble.carers.org

News In Brief

Carers Forum

A voice for local carers

The Carers Forum meets every quarter to discuss issues and share information. It provides an opportunity for carers and professionals to come together to talk about local and national issues relevant to carers and to comment on any current policy or proposed legislation.

If you'd like to be better informed and have your say, the next meeting of your local Carers Forum is:

Clackmannanshire:

Wednesday 27th May 2015 at 10am in Hawkhill Community Centre, Alloa

THEME: Health & Social Care Integration

Falkirk:

Monday 18th May 2015 at 10am in the Carers Centre

THEME: Self Directed Support – One Year On.

For further information please contact Ian McCourt on 01259 226838 or ianmccourt@centralcarers.co.uk



Giving carers a break with Scottish hospitality

'Respitality' (respite breaks + hospitality) is a new and effective way the hospitality sector can help their local communities by recognising and appreciating the contribution that carers make. Hotels, for example, could pledge a 'gift' of a short break stay that enables a carer and a companion to have a break away from their caring responsibilities to recharge their batteries and have some time to themselves. Another example would be the gift of a day-pass to a leisure club or spa, or a voucher for dinner for two. There are lots of possibilities.

To explore the potential for Respitality in Scotland, Shared Care Scotland has initiated a project covering five areas of Scotland, starting with Fife, and now including Falkirk. The Carers Centre is currently working with Shared Care Scotland, Falkirk Council and local hospitality providers to look at the possibilities for Respitality for Falkirk carers.

Already, the Carers Centre can offer a number of 2 night hotel breaks outwith the Falkirk area to local carers, afternoon tea for two at Callendar House, and we have recently been gifted a River Carron fishing permit by Larbert and Stenhousemuir Angling Club which can be used by local carers by arrangement.

If any carer is interested in finding out more about these or future Respitality breaks, please contact Sharon Campbell at the Carers Centre. Future Respitality offers for carers will be posted on our website.

Farewell to Jenni

In June this year, carers and the staff team at the Carers Centre will be saying goodbye to Jenni Fulton who, as a Carer Support Worker, has supported over 900 parents of children with additional support needs in her role over the past 14 years. As well as providing specialised one to one support to parent carers, and latterly specifically to carers of people with autism, Jenni has also been key to the facilitation of the regular monthly Parents Support Groups over the years. As she leaves to pursue a new and long planned-for life in the north west of Scotland, she will be missed by carers and colleagues alike.

We wish Jenni every happiness and success for the future.



Short
breaks fund

Better Breaks

Thanks to funding from the Better Breaks programme of the Scottish Government's Short Breaks Fund, the Carers Centre was able to offer children with additional support needs and their families and carers in Falkirk district and Clackmannanshire a programme fun and stimulating outings during the school holidays in the past year. These included trips to Auchengarrich Wildlife Centre in Comrie, Bowling, a visit to the Pantomime and a trip to Edinburgh Zoo. We are also delighted to announce that the Centre has been awarded funding to continue to offer family outings going forward with some exciting trips currently being planned for the Summer holidays. We know that these outings can have many positive benefits to the confidence, health and wellbeing of parent carers and their children, many of which last beyond the duration of the trip.

Parents have told us:

'(Attending the outings) gives you confidence to do more on your own with kids once done with carers centre.'

'Got some tips on how to handle things when stressed.'

'Know I can now take them bowling without worrying.'

Creative Breaks

Carers in Falkirk and Clackmannanshire can apply for funding of up to £300 for a short break through the Carers Centre's Creative Breaks Fund.

The Creative Breaks Grant Programme is funded through the Scottish Government's Short Breaks Fund as part of its commitment to the development of short breaks for the benefit of carers and those they care for. The purpose of Creative Breaks is to improve the range, choice and availability of short breaks so that carers and the people they care for have a better quality of life and feel better supported in their caring relationship.

Eligible carers can apply for up to a maximum of £300 for breaks that must be taken before the end of October 2015. Creative Breaks funding is intended to be flexible and provide carers with a break from day-to-day routines, a chance to try new things and participate in social activities, and time to rest and recharge their batteries. Breaks might include, for example, short holidays, swimming lessons, cinema passes, pampering sessions, gym membership, or could be used for alternative care or activities for the person being cared for to give the carer time to themselves.

Contact the Carers Centre or visit our website for further information.



Carers and the Integration of Health and Social Care across Forth Valley

As part of the Scottish Government's schedule of reform to improve services for people who use adult health and social care services, The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Bill was passed by the Scottish Parliament on 25 February 2014.

Carer's Bill

The Scottish Government is proposing new laws that intend to ensure that carers' needs are identified and that carers are given the support they require.

The Carers (Scotland) Bill is the document that sets out the proposed new laws. If this Bill is passed by the Scottish Parliament, it would mean that all adult carers would have a support plan, and that young carers would be offered a young carer's statement.

Support plans and young carer's statements would outline what the carer wants to achieve and set out the support they need to help them in their caring role. The Bill would also make sure that carers who meet certain criteria would have their support needs met by the local council.

Local councils would have to produce a plan for identifying and meeting carers' needs and they would have to establish services for giving carers information and advice. The Bill would also widen the definition of carer to include people who are providing some level of care to another person, whether or not that person receives community care services.

The Health and Sport Committee will consider the Bill at Stage 1 of its passage through the Scottish Parliament and then publish a report on the general principles of the proposed new laws. To help the Committee in its consideration, earlier in the year, carers were invited to send their views on what is being proposed and the Committee will consider the views it received and invite a number of individuals and organisations to discuss the Bill in further detail. These discussions will take place at public meetings of the Committee in May and June 2015.

Integration will endeavor to ensure that services across Forth Valley are joined up and seamless, making it easier for people to sustain an independent life at home for as long as possible. Joining up services in this way is not about beginning again - so many services are already working well together - it is about building on that, putting people first and implementing services that fit the needs of individuals and their families.

Have Your Say

Many of you will have already participated in the recent consultation on the draft vision and outcomes for the local integration schemes. However, if you are still interested in finding out more, or you would like to share any hopes or concerns you have about integration, you can contact the local Programme Managers, Lesley White (Clackmannanshire and Stirling) or Suzanne Thomson (Falkirk). Their details are available on the website - www.nhsforthvalley.com/hsci, or alternatively you can contact the Carers Centre.

Carer Representation

Two Health and Social Care Partnerships will cover Forth Valley - one for Clackmannanshire and Stirling, the other for Falkirk. The partnerships will be managed by a Joint Board for Health and Social Care Integration. This board will be made up of representatives from the Local Authority, Health and other bodies. Carers will also have a representative on the Integration Joint Board. Plans are currently being developed to identify the carer representative for both Clackmannanshire and Falkirk. The carer representative will help to ensure that the voice of local unpaid carers is heard and, where possible, shape services for unpaid carers and those they care for. The representative will be supported by the Carers Centre in this important role and we will also facilitate engagement with the wider carer community.

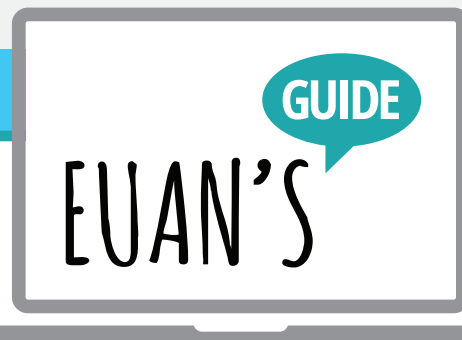
Further information about becoming a carer representative is available in the enclosed flier, or you can contact Ian McCourt at the Carers Centre.

Universal Credit

In 2013, a new system was introduced for people claiming in-work or out-of-work benefits, called Universal Credit. Universal Credit has been introduced in stages since April 2013. This means it affects people at different times depending on where they live and what their circumstances are.

Universal Credit is being introduced to Forth Valley from Monday 25 May 2015 and will impact, at this stage, on all single claimants aged between 18 and 60 years and 6 months who do not own their own home, with some exceptions.





State Pension Statement

Anyone over the age of 55 is now able to request a personalised State Pension statement, giving them an estimate of what they are likely to receive based on their current National Insurance (NI) record. It also provides helpful information explaining how this position may change with further NI contributions or credits. Until recently, the scheme was only open to people over the age of 60.

Extending the service will equip people with vital information as they consider their options under new pension freedoms which came into effect in April this year. Before people take advantage of the new freedoms, they will also be encouraged to seek free and impartial guidance on their retirement choices from the new Government service, **Pension Wise**.

To get a State Pension statement, call Newcastle Pension Centre (Futures Group) on 0345 3000168 (textphone: 0845 3000169). Statements can also be obtained by downloading the application form for a State form from **www.gov.uk/state-pensionstatement**. Alternatively, write to The Pension Service 9, Mail Handling Site A, Wolverhampton, WV98 1LU.

Disabled Access Review Website

Euan's Guide is a listings and review website that helps disabled people and their families find out which venues are truly accessible. It features disabled access reviews from disabled people and their friends and families.

"The aim of Euan's Guide is to empower disabled people by providing information that will give confidence and choices for getting out and about. Euan's Guide is an alternative to hours of web searching and phone calls and, most importantly, removes the 'fear of the unknown' when visiting a venue for the first time." **Euan MacDonald, Founder of Euan's Guide**

As well as tourism and entertainment venues such as hotels, restaurants, bars, theatres and visitor attractions, Euan's Guide features disabled access reviews of any place that is visited as part of everyday life such as post offices, railway stations, supermarkets and many others. Search www.euansguide.com to find a venue in your area and, if there isn't one, write a review for the first one now!

New discount club launched for carers

Carers are set to benefit from a new club designed specifically for carers.

CarerSmart is the first club of its kind and has been launched by Carers Trust, giving the UK's seven million carers a chance to save money on a range of products and services whilst they continue to provide care.

Carers will be able to save money on a range of products by getting cash back in numerous high street stores as well as discounted rates on energy bills, insurance renewals and lifestyle activities, such as the gym, the cinema, days out and travel. They will also have access to free legal advice. As part of Carers Trust, carers can also find out more about both local and online services to support them in their caring role.



The CarerSmart club is free to join. To register, visit www.carersmart.org.

Regular Groups

Falkirk Groups

Regular groups held at the Carers Centre

- **Weekly Carers Cafe**

This drop-in event is held each Wednesday from 10am until 12 noon. Please feel free to come along and enjoy a cup of tea/coffee and meet informally with other carers.

- **Mens Group**

The Group meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 12 noon for lunch in the Carers Centre. During lunch, the members plan and arrange their next outing.

- **Parents Groups**

Groups for parents of children with additional support needs meet during term time on the first Tuesday of the month, 7.30pm to 9.30pm and on the first Thursday of the month, 10.30am to 12 noon.

Community Support Groups:

Bo'ness Carers Group

Meets on the first Wednesday of the month from 10.30am to 12.30pm in the Kinneil Bowling Club lounge, Angus Road, Bo'ness.

Slamannan Carers Group

Meets on the last Thursday of the month from 10am to 12 noon in Slamannan Health Centre or Slamannan Community Centre (depending on activity).

Polmont Carers Group

Meets on the second Tuesday of the month from 10.30am to 12.30pm at the Greenpark Community Centre, Polmont.

Larbert Carers Group

Meets on the third Wednesday of the month at Larbert library from 10.30am – 12.30pm.

Clackmannanshire Groups

- **Carers Drop-in**

For coffee and a chat on Tuesday mornings, 10.30am – 12.30pm at Ludgate House.

- **Coffee Morning**

A weekly drop-in opportunity to meet other carers and try out different art and craft activities. The meetings are held in Community House, 23 Maree Court, Alloa (entrance on Forth Crescent) from 10am - 12 noon each Monday.

- **Carers Cafe**

A monthly event where carers can drop-in and enjoy a light lunch together at Hawkhill Community Centre, Alloa from 12.30pm to 1.30pm on the second Wednesday of the month.

- **Menstrie Carers Group**

A monthly group that meets for afternoon tea and a chat at Menstrie Parish Church Hall, from 1.30pm to 3pm, on the third Thursday of the month.

- **Tillicoultry Carers Group**

A monthly group that takes place in The Annexe, Murray Square, Tillicoultry, from 10.30am – 12.30pm, on the first Thursday of the month.

Young Carers Groups:

Groups for young carers take place each month during term-time in Falkirk and Clackmannanshire. Contact the Carers Centre for further information.

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Email: centre@centralcarers.co.uk
www.carersfalkirk.org.uk

Ludgate House, Mar Place,
Alloa, FK10 2AD Tel: 01259 226839
Email: alloaoffice@centralcarers.co.uk

Falkirk & Clackmannanshire Carers Centre is managed by a board of trustees elected from the membership of Central Carers Association, a voluntary organisation comprising carers and those with an interest in carers' issues.

The organisation is a Company Limited by Guarantee (Company No SC184443) and a Registered Scottish Charity (No SC023658)

Mission Statement

Central Carers Association seeks to ensure that carers of all ages in Falkirk district and Clackmannanshire are recognised, valued, receive the information and support they need to allow them to care with confidence and in good health, and are empowered to have a life of their own outside caring.

Quality Statement

Central Carers Association is committed to running an organisation with high standards of organisation and operational practice, which can be demonstrated by the achievement of the PQASSO level 1 Quality Mark and the Carers Trust Quality Award.



Data Protection

If you have received this publication by post, it means that we currently hold your name and address details. This information is used for administration purposes only in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act. We will never pass on your details to third parties without your permission. If you wish your details to be amended or removed from our mailing list, please contact the Carers Centre.

Former Carer Policy

Falkirk & Clackmannanshire Carers Centre provides information and support to carers, young carers and former carers for up to two years after their caring role has ended.

Funded by



Contact by Email and Text

Many more individuals and organisations use email now as a means of communication and it is a very cost effective and speedy way of distributing information. We already have a number of email addresses for carers who are on our mailing list, but not for everyone. If you would be happy to receive the newsletter and/or occasional information between newsletters by email and don't already, and if you have not already given us your email address, please send us an email and we will add it to our list for future information, or, alternatively, complete and return the enclosed form.

In future, we may also be looking at communication by text where appropriate, so please ensure that we have your mobile phone number if you have one and would be happy to be contacted in this way.