

newsletter

Information for Carers throughout Falkirk District and Clackmannanshire

SUMMER 2022

FINANCIAL PRESSURES ON CARERS

According to the latest research from Carers Scotland, **more than half (52%) of unpaid carers are currently unable to manage their monthly expenses.** Rising energy prices and fuel costs, among other things, saw household bills increase significantly in April,



with vulnerable households, particularly those in fuel poverty, most severely impacted.

As well as this, many carers have had to give up work in order to care for a family member, and as a result, often find that their financial circumstances have changed overnight. They may have to suddenly find out about entitlements, learn about the benefits system, make claims for themselves and the cared for person, and live on a much-reduced income.

Falkirk Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) runs the '**Help for Carers**' project, which is a partnership between Falkirk CAB and the Carers Centre. This project is funded by the Falkirk Health and Social Care Partnership. The project was set up to support carers requiring advice on benefits and entitlements, with advice provided to the carer and the cared for person, if required.

Our 'Help for Carers' officer will assess all possible benefit entitlements and assist carers with claims in order to maximise their income.

Some possible benefit entitlements are:

- Carer's Allowance
 - Carer's Allowance Supplement
- Universal Credit
- Pension Credit

Citizens Advice Bureau can complete a full benefit check which will establish which benefits apply in your individual circumstances.

They can also deal with urgent hardship issues by referring to the foodbank and/or the **Scottish Welfare Fund** and can also refer to **Home Energy Scotland** or **Home Energy Advice** for assistance with energy bills. They can also refer to the Household Support fund.

Carers may find their financial commitments to be unmanageable due to reduced income and other pressures. If this is the case, Citizens Advice Bureau have Money Advisers who can advise on problem debts and how best to resolve the situation.

In addition to these resources, the Centre also helps carers to access and fund breaks through a number of initiatives, including Young Scot. More information can be found on pages 5 and 6.

Clacks Citizens Advice Bureau can be contacted on **01259 219404**.

Falkirk Citizens Advice Bureau can be contacted on **01324 626070**.

citizens
advice

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Carers Week

Visible, valued and supported

**Monday 6 until
Sunday 12 June**

Carers Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring, highlight the challenges unpaid carers face and recognise the contribution they make to families and communities throughout the UK. It also helps people who don't think of themselves as having caring responsibilities to identify as carers and access much-needed support. This year's theme is 'Visible, valued and supported'.

We're currently planning our Carers Week 2022 programme, and we'll share more in the near future.

T: 01324 611510 | E: centre@centralcarers.co.uk

www.centralcarers.org

CARE WITH CONFIDENCE

The Carers Centre offers regular Care with Confidence information sessions for carers to help them in their caring role and to improve their health and wellbeing.

Throughout the pandemic, sessions have been offered online to carers, with some face-to-face sessions taking place when restrictions allowed. In Falkirk, some indoor sessions have been offered on a 'blended' basis, with carers able to access these in person OR online. It is planned that these blended sessions will continue going forward.

There are weekly sessions for carers in Falkirk and Clackmannanshire covering a range of useful topics for carers, as well as regular specialised sessions on Power of Attorney, dementia related topics and sessions for parent carers including joint sessions with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) for carers of children with autism.



Care with Confidence sessions are also now available in the evenings on Zoom for carers who cannot attend during the day, or who would prefer to do so in the evening. These take place on the last Tuesday of the month from 6 to 7.30 pm.

You can find out who to contact about these session at the '**Who To Contact**' section on page 3.

IN FOCUS - YOUNG CARER INVOLVEMENT WORKER



Welcome to **Alice Wadkin**, who is our new **Young Carer Involvement Worker**! Some of you might recognise her as she's done some volunteering with the project in the past!

Here's what Alice had to say:



Q: What's your favourite way to spend a day off?

A: I like to go out with friends when I can (any excuse for some coffee and cake)! I also enjoy reading and time in front of the tv! I love any show where there is a house renovation.

Q: What was your favourite age growing up and your best memory from then?

A: Growing up my best memories are definitely our caravan holidays during the summer break. I have two younger brothers so my favourite age was probably 12 or 13 (before my brothers grew up and gave me attitude!)

Q: What's something an outsider wouldn't know about your job?

A: I officially joined the team in December 2021 as the new Young Carer Involvement Worker, although I had volunteered at the Clacks groups for a few years before. A lot of my new role is around **listening to YC's and YAC's views and making sure these are heard by decision makers at local and national levels**. I will also be making connections out in the community and supporting YCs and YACs to find other opportunities, like volunteering, which help them to reach their goals and aspirations.



PROFESSIONALS AFTERNOON (FALKIRK)



These sessions bring together professionals who encounter carers during the course of their work to find out, not only about the work of the Carers Centre, but also how important they themselves can be in identifying carers and referring them to the Centre.

The sessions offer the opportunity to examine how the **Carers (Scotland) Act 2016**, along with the EPiC principles, underpin this.

EPiC
Equal
Partners
in Care

There is also an opportunity to meet some of the team who will talk about the different roles within the Centre and how carers can be referred to them, as well as the support they are able to offer.

Sessions for professionals are held on the **third Wednesday afternoon of each month from 2-4.30pm** on Zoom. You can find out who to contact about these sessions at the '**Who To Contact**' section below.

STAFF CHANGES



There have been a number of changes in our team since our last newsletter in November:

Margaret Anderson, who had worked at the Centre in Falkirk since October 2011, retired at the end of March. We wish 'Mags' a very happy retirement!



Our Young Carers Project welcomed two new staff members; **Mikhailla Stowe** (Left-L) (Young Carer Support Worker) and **Alice Wadkin** (Left-R) (Young Carers Involvement Worker).

The Falkirk Adult Support Team also welcomed **Taylor McFarlane** (right) who will be providing adult carer support to carers in Falkirk.



CARERS' RIGHTS

Did you know that carers in Scotland have a number of rights. These include (but are not limited to):

- a right for carers to receive an **Adult Carer Support Plan** or **Young Carer Statement**, setting out their outcomes (including emergency planning for adult carers)
- a duty for local authorities to provide support to carers, based on the carer's identified needs which meet the local eligibility criteria
- a requirement for local councils to establish and maintain an information and advice service for carers. They must also publish and review a short breaks service statement
- a duty on the NHS to inform and involve carers if the person they care for is discharged from hospital

WHO TO CONTACT

PROFESSIONALS AFTERNOON

Cath Brunton
01324 611510 (option 4)

CARE WITH CONFIDENCE

Falkirk: Donna Mulder & Cath Brunton
01324 611510 (option 4)
Clackmannanshire: Tracy Gibson
01324 611510 (option 2)
Evening sessions: Cath Brunton
01324 611510 (option 4)

BENEFIT SUPPORT

Falkirk: 01324 611510 (option 1)
Clackmannanshire: 01324 611510 (option 2)



SUPPORT

Did you know? An adult carer support plan or young carer statement is the first step to accessing Self-directed Support. Contact a carer support workers to find out your options.



CARER SUPPORT JOURNEY STEWART'S STORY

Stewart is a parent carer who first contacted the Carers Centre in November 2020 to ask about the support he could receive. With his son having been diagnosed with autism at the beginning of the first lockdown, Stewart spent many months trying to understand what this diagnosis meant, and what he could do to help.

"I was lost, I didn't understand where to go or what to do at the time. Or what support was available."

After being signposted to contact the Carers Centre, an appointment was made to meet with a carer support worker. Stewart, who was also working full-time, sat down to discuss his caring role and some of the challenges that he faced as a parent carer.

As part of this discussion, an **Adult Carer Support Plan (ACSP)** was put together with Stewart, which helped both him and his support worker to identify what his goals were, and what needed to be done to meet them. In his Plan, it was identified that Stewart would benefit from income benefit support and information, training to help him understand his son's condition, as well as other supports.

"We did all these wee goals and the stuff we've had from it since then has been fantastic."

Stewart felt that the training sessions run by the Carers Centre and CAMHS were particularly helpful, as they not only helped to explain his son's behaviour, but also what more he could do to better support his son.

"I don't feel lost anymore because I know if I've got a question, I can ask the Carers Centre."

Six months on, Stewart met with his support worker to review his ACSP and the progress that had been made. As well as the improvements from the benefit and CAMHS support, Stewart said that the information and advice he'd received had helped him become better informed and more confident in his caring role for his son.



WHAT IS AN ACSP?

Under the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016, carers have the right to an **Adult Carer Support Plan (ACSP)**. An ACSP is a chance for carers to let the right people know about anything that might support them in their caring role and what they would like to achieve in their life.

ACSPs focus on 9 important areas of a carer's life: **Physical Health**, Emotional Wellbeing, **Life Balance**, Finances, **Feeling Valued**, Relationships, **Living Environment**, Employment/Training and **Future Planning**.

YOUNG CARER STATEMENT 2022 UPDATE

Like an Adult Carer Support Plan, a **Young Carers Statement** (YCS) is a written record of the conversation between a young carer and one of our young carers workers or another professional, like a teacher. The Statement looks at the young carer's hopes and aspirations, how they are affected by

their caring role and what support can be put in place to help the young carer achieve their personal outcomes.

Support will look different for all young carers; for some they may be looking for someone to talk to about their worries, for others their personal outcomes might be around meeting new people and having time away from their caring roles just to be themselves.

The current Statement used by the Young Carers Project was co-produced with young carers back in 2018. Young carers had their say on the language used in the document, the questions being asked and how it would look in terms of colours and graphics. **Four years on, we're now looking at reviewing the current Statement with a new cohort of young carers.**

If you are a young carer or know of a young carer who would be interested in giving their feedback on the Statement please get in touch with **Alice Wadkin**, Young Carers Involvement Worker.



Social Security Scotland
Teannachd Shòisealta Alba

YOUNG CARER GRANT

The Young Carer Grant, provided by **Social Security Scotland**, is a yearly payment of **£326.65**.



The Young Carer Grant is for young carers who are aged 16, 17 or 18, and provide care for an average of 16 hours per week (for at least three months).

You may be caring for just one person, or up to three people, but any time you spend caring counts towards the 16 hours per week.

YOUNG SCOT'S YOUNG CARERS PACKAGE



Any young person in Scotland who provides care to someone, and is **aged 11-18 inclusive**, can sign up for a Young Carers Package, a free bundle of treats to help support your wellbeing as a carer.

Young carers can claim vouchers, tickets to events and prizes through our free Young Scot Membership. It takes a few minutes to sign up, and you do not need a Young Scot National Entitlement Card to get started.

You can speak with a young carers worker to find out more about these entitlements. You can also email us at:

youngcarers@centralcarers.co.uk

WHO TO CONTACT

TO ARRANGE AN ACSP OR ADULT CARER SUPPORT

Falkirk:

01324 611510 (option 1)

Clackmannanshire:

01324 611510 (option 2)

TO ARRANGE A YCS OR YOUNG CARER SUPPORT

Young Carers Project:

01324 611510 (option 3)



SHORT BREAKS

Know your rights! There is a requirement for the responsible local authority to consider support in the form of a break from caring, and the desirability of breaks from caring provided on a planned basis.

SCOTSPIRIT



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot



Between October 2021 and April 2022, the **ScotSpirit Holiday Voucher Scheme** supported low-income families and carers who had been particularly adversely affected by the impact of the pandemic to take an overnight break or day trip in Scotland. It was funded by the Scottish Government in partnership with VisitScotland and forms part of the Scottish tourism pandemic recovery programme.

Up until the end of March, over 50 carers in Falkirk & Clackmannanshire were approved to take a ScotSpirit



break, including Carer B:

Carer B and their partner were delighted to have the opportunity to have a short break together in the Highlands.

Carer B was able to obtain free access to Historic Scotland sites due to their employment and enjoyed spending time at various attractions in the local area. Carer B felt very appreciative of the opportunity to have a break away from the caring role and has returned home refreshed

Although applications for the ScotSpirit Holiday Voucher Scheme are now closed, there are still a number of short break opportunities that carers can take advantage of. **Please get in touch with us to find out more!**



Eligible local carers can apply to the Centre for grants of **up to £300** to fund a short break of their choosing.

Breaks are funded by the Scottish Government through the Short Breaks Fund ('Time to Live') and Falkirk Health & Social Care Partnership (Breaks for Carers).

While grants may be used for breaks away from home, applications for equipment or activities that will allow carers to have break from their everyday caring role and improve their health and wellbeing in different ways are welcome and encouraged. Past examples have included **music tuition, arts and crafts materials, exercise equipment, and gardening tools or equipment.**

The purpose of Respitality is to **give carers a break** from their caring responsibilities so they can have some time for



themselves **to 'recharge' their batteries.** This is achieved through the generosity and support of local and national hospitality providers who gift a Respitality break in the form of, for example, an overnight hotel break, dinner for two in a restaurant, complimentary leisure centre pass or free access to other leisure activities.

Recent Respitality breaks have included:

- Family Swim Passes
- Glamping at Howe of Torbeg, Aberdeenshire
- Elie Holiday Park, Fife

IN FOCUS - SHORT BREAKS SUPPORT

Ami McKnight is one of our carer support workers who, since October, has been co-ordinating our various short breaks opportunities. If you are interested in finding out more about short breaks opportunities, or applying for funding, please contact us on 01324 611510 to speak with a support worker.



Know your rights! There is a duty for local councils and health boards to involve carers in planning and evaluation of services that support carers, including preparation of the local carers strategy.

INVOLVE



CARERS' VOICES

Previously Carers Forums

Next Meetings

Clackmannanshire
May 2022 (TBC)

Falkirk
7 June 2022
(Followed by the 2022 AGM)

THANK YOU MORVEN!

Morven Mack has stepped down from her post as the Integration Joint Board Representative (IJB) for Carers. We were fortunate that Morven continued for an extra year as Falkirk's IJB representative, and we wish to express our gratitude and thanks to Morven for work as the carer representative.

Morven will be very much missed, and the centre and carers have appreciated all that Morven has done in representing them. Morven will continue with some carer involvement work but have more free time to enjoy her hobbies and pursuits.



Thank you, Morven! We shall be seeking a new Integration Joint Board carer representative in Falkirk so please contact Susan if you are interested in this role. Frank Donnelly will continue as the deputy representative.

As a charity we are funded by various organisation who require feedback on the service that we provide. We would usually do this by sending out an annual survey to all carers who are registered on our mailing list. However, carers have told us that, recently, there have been too many surveys. **We would agree and recognise that carer's time is too precious to be completing lots of surveys!**

On a daily basis we speak with lots of carers who tell us what is working and what isn't working for them. This year we are going to pull together a report for our funders that will highlight the main issues and feedback from carers about the information, support and involvement opportunities provided by the Centre – we have made a conscious decision to review all of the existing information that carers have already provided through ACSP, reviews and one to one and group evaluations.

If you feel you have not had an opportunity to feedback on our service or share any ideas for improvement or change, **we would still love to hear from you.** Please contact Susan, Nicola or Alice to have a chat.

YOUNG CARERS ACTION DAY

Young Carers Action Day (YCAD) 2022 took place on 16 March this year. YCAD is an annual national event, organised by Carers Trust, which raises awareness and calls for action to increase support for young people with caring responsibilities.



This year the theme was **Taking Action on Isolation**. For young carers and young adult carers, having the right support – such as regular breaks from caring – can be really beneficial, giving them a better chance of succeeding in all parts of their lives.

Here's what a couple of our young carers had to say about the importance of the Young Carers' groups:

- "You get to meet people that are going through sort of the same thing as you but you don't have to talk about it"
- "You get time to just be you, and not your caring you"

WHO TO CONTACT



FALKIRK CARERS' VOICES,
IJB RECRUITMENT
Susan Docherty
01324 611510 (option 4)

CLACKMANNANSHIRE
CARERS' VOICES
Nicola Weedon
01324 611510 (option 2)

YC & YAC
INVOLVEMENT
Alice Wadkin
01324 611510 (option 3)

Group Support Activities

1a Bank Street, Falkirk, FK1 1NB

Ludgate House, Mar Place, Alloa, FK10 2AD

Telephone: 01324 611510

Email: centre@centralcarers.co.uk

Website: www.centralcarers.org



Group meetings take place on a regular basis on Zoom and in the community, they provide an opportunity for carers to meet with other carers for a cuppa and a chat, share information, hear from speakers on a range of topics, participate in activities and have a break from their caring role.

FALKIRK

For more about **Falkirk** groups, contact **Jason** on 01324 611510 (opt. 1).

• Men's Group

The group meets on Zoom (with the occasional in-person meet), every Tuesday between 1 pm and 2 pm.

• East Locality Support Group

Meets on Zoom every Thursday between 10.30 am and 11.30 am. Every fourth Thursday of the month, the group meets in-person.

CLACKMANNANSHIRE

For more about **Clacks** groups, contact **Tracy** on 01324 611510 (opt. 2).

• Monday Carers' Lunch

This group meets for lunch every third Monday of the month at **Tullibody Civic Centre**, between 12 noon and 2 pm. Carers and the person you care for are welcome.

• Tuesday Carers' Lunch

This group meets for lunch every first Tuesday of the month at **Hawkhill Community Centre, Alloa**, between 12 noon and 2pm. Carers and the person you care for are welcome.

• Monday Zoom Group

The group meets on Zoom every Monday morning between 10.30 am and 12 noon.

• Carer Support Group

The group meets every Tuesday (except the first Tuesday of the month) at **Hawkhill Community Centre** between 1.30 pm and 3 pm.

Annual General Meeting

This year's AGM will take place on **Tuesday 7 June**, between **11.30 and 12.30** at Falkirk Carers Centre. Lunch will be provided.

Young Carer Support

For info about our supports available for young carers (up to 18) or young adult carers (16 – 25). Contact us on 01324 611510 (opt. 3) for an informal chat.

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.

Former Carer Policy

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

Privacy

If you have received this publication by post or email, this means that we currently hold your contact details. This information is treated as confidential, kept securely and will not be shared with other organisations without your consent.

You can update or remove your details from our mailing list at any time using the contact details on the back page of the newsletter or by returning the reply slip included with this newsletter.

Full information about the information we collect and how it is treated is contained in our Privacy Notice which is available from the Carers Centre and on our website.

Funded by

