

newsletter

*Information, advice and support for all
unpaid carers & people with disabilities*

AUTUMN '19

Welcome to our new format Newsletter, we hope you like it. We have made this change, at a time when funding is being stretched and we are keen to find ways that we can reduce our running costs. This new version of the Newsletter is cheaper for us to print and we are also keen to send it out electronically to reduce postage costs, so if you are happy for us to send you the Newsletter by email, please contact us and tell us your email address. Saving money in this way, allows us to use funding for activities, workshops and groups to support carers and people with disabilities throughout West Lothian.

Please tell us if you have any comments on this new format and contact us if you need an "easy read" version.

Scotmid Community Benefit Fund



Scotmid coop

We have been successfully chosen as one of three charities in the Lothians and Fife to be supported by Scotmid Community Benefit Fund. Funding will help us to pilot a new initiative supporting young adult carers from the age of 18 to 24 to develop life skills to help them when they start work, training or go to college.

Please help us by voting for us when you shop at Scotmid; further details are included in the Newsletter to show you how you can do this. Thank you for your support!

Expanding our support for adults with a disability

Thanks to funding from The National Lottery Community Fund, in September we will be starting a pilot aimed at supporting adults with learning or physical disabilities.

This is great news with the pilot enabling us to test out how groups and workshops that we already offer to carers will help people with disabilities;

more information on venues and groups is shown on page 2. If successful we will secure funding to let us extend these to a wider audience. We'll keep you updated on how this goes but in the meantime, please help us to raise awareness of our support services by telling adults with disabilities about us. Thank you. *(cont.)*



Supporting Adults with a Disability

(continued from front page)

We are delighted to be one of the organisations sharing in the National Lottery Awards for All Scotland Fund. This Community Fund gives grants to help people take part in arts, sport, social, environmental, health related, educational and other community activities.

So what are we doing with our share of the fund?

We are expanding our disability service which will include piloting two social groups, mindfulness and counselling over the next six months.

Our social activity groups for people with physical and/or learning disabilities will run fortnightly at the following venues:

Bathgate Partnership Centre

21-55 South Bridge Street, Bathgate
EH48 1TL

6 - 8pm

Tuesday 3 & 17 September,
1, 15 & 29 October, 12 November

Forrestbank Community Centre

Ladywell Livingston
EH54 6DX

10.30am - 12.30noon

Tuesday 10 & 24 September,
8 & 22 October, 5 & 19 November

If you would like to meet other people and have fun, why not come along?

You are welcome to bring your support worker with you.

To book your place please call 01506 448 000 or email office@carers-westlothian.com

Exciting News!

In addition to the social groups we are delighted to be running 2 Mindfulness courses for people with disabilities.

Mindfulness is something that has become incredibly popular over the past few years. It's described as being in the present moment, instead of being distracted by thoughts or thinking. This can be effective in helping people manage stress, pain and anxiety. Offering carers mindfulness courses has been beneficial, and it is our hope that by offering this to people with disabilities it will also have a positive impact on their lives.

We are confident that we can build on the success of this pilot and be able to roll the groups and courses out next year so watch this space!

WEEKLY DISABILITY INFORMATION DROP-IN

During the renovations to the Ability Centre in Carmondean, the weekly disability information drop-in is now temporarily based in **Carmondean Library. The Drop-in continues to run every**

Wednesday, but times will be 1.30pm to 3.30pm. If you are someone with a disability and would like information, advice or support then please come along to the Carers of West Lothian Information Stand and we will be happy to assist you.



Mindfulness for relaxation

Mindfulness is increasingly being recognised as an effective way to reduce stress. Studies have shown that practised regularly Mindfulness can be an effective method of reducing stress and anxiety and can often lead to improvements in overall health and wellbeing. We will be offering an Introduction to Mindfulness for relaxation over three Wednesday evenings in October. The dates are 2nd, 9th and 16th October from 6pm - 8pm at Sycamore House.

Please contact 01506 448000 to register your interest.

Morning of Mindfulness

Have you completed a Mindfulness Course with Carers of West Lothian? If so we will be holding a morning of Mindfulness on Saturday 9th November from 10am to 12.30pm at Sycamore House. Previous Mindfulness course attendance is essential. Please contact us to register your interest.

Our Community



Hi there

If you are reading this newsletter you may be a carer like me and as carers, we are busy people who give 100% of ourselves to our caring role.

As a carer for many years I hadn't known about CoWL until a visit from an Occupational Therapist who recommended I go along. I thought to myself that it could be good to do this but then I thought I won't have the time – I think as carers we all think like this. It was a few weeks later that I decided to go.

The first time I walked into the carers coffee morning, every single person was so nice. They made time to speak with me and made me feel welcome. It has made such a difference to have CoWL in my life. I now take the time to go to the coffee morning and to meet and mix with people in a caring role. As carers we understand and care about each other.

If you have been thinking about coming along but are still not sure, give it a try like I did. It might be one of the best things you do. It has been for me.

Thank you everyone – you are like sunshine on a rainy day!

Liza Plant.

A few words from **Joyce Neale**

The support from Carers of West Lothian has been really good. I have a degenerative disease and was feeling fed up in my house with no-one to talk to. As a sociable person it's important for me to have a social life. I contacted Carers of West Lothian for some support and advice. Since contacting CoWL I've been attending groups socially and there has been more social work involvement which has really helped. I feel happier and feel I have a brighter future ahead.

Volunteering with Us

If you have benefitted from our support, and have some spare time, you can help us to support other carers or people with disabilities. There are different ways you can help from welcoming people to our groups, making new people feel welcome, getting newsletters ready for posting or helping with our young carers groups.

You will bring skills and experience our staff don't have so we are keen to involve you. Volunteering means you will help us to provide the service and to shape our future service; involving volunteers in this way also helps us to design the service around the needs of carers or people with disabilities.

You also get a lot back from volunteering. By being part of something great, you will help others and if you're looking to get back to work, you can use volunteering to build your confidence and experience. Volunteering is also a regular chance for some time for yourself.

If you're interested in volunteering or would like to find out more, please get in touch and we can arrange to meet up for a coffee, cake (of course!) and a chat



ARE YOU A PARENT CARER?

Would you like to:

- Increase your confidence in communicating your needs and the needs of your child/ young person?
- Increase your peer support network and gain an understanding of where to go for additional practical and emotional support, advice and information specific to your needs and the needs of your family?
- Feel valued for the skills and knowledge you have?

Building on feedback from parent carers, we are offering a range of workshops, information sessions and support groups for parents of children and young people with additional support needs.

“ Meeting with other parent carers is helpful, it has improved my mental health & wellbeing as I no longer feel alone.

“ I found I am not alone and advice and support that I didn't know was there, is there.



Please see our

'Courses Sep – Nov 2019' page for more details.

YOUNG CARERS SERVICE

Successful Summer Programme

We've had lots of fun out and about as part of our Young Carer Summer Programme. We were lucky with the weather and we did some really cool things thanks to the funding we received from Tesco Bags of Help. Thank you to everyone who voted for us and helped us win this funding.

We went to Megazone in Falkirk, Polkemmet Park and the Owl Centre, Langasm Virtual Reality, Go Karting, Almondell Country Park Ranger Service and lots more!!

#thankyou #youngcarers #tesco #summerfun #happydays



New Term

Over the past few months we have been busy working hard to meet everyone on our waiting list and complete consent forms. We have been developing school peer support groups within all West Lothian secondary schools. These groups introduce young carers to other young carers within their own school at least once a term to build up peer support. We currently have 3 groups meeting regularly and 3 are due to start in the new school term, so please if you are a young carer at high school and you get an invite, come along and say hi to Wilma & Xanthe.

Scotmid Community Connect Award



As you may have seen on our front page and across our Social Media, we have been very lucky to be one of the 3 finalists in with a chance of winning £15,000. This will go towards supporting and developing our 16+ Young Carer Support. We need you all to become Scotmid Cooperative members and vote for us. Membership forms can be collected here or in your local store. Once you have your card, ask them to set your vote to 'Carers of West Lothian' and start collecting your votes.

We ask you to please go into a store between the 8th and 22nd September to nominate Carers of West Lothian as your charity of choice, you can then vote like crazy using your membership card. Please note you don't have to buy anything to vote. After this 2-week window, you have to attend their AGM to vote.

Please get behind us and vote for us so we can try and win £15,000 for our young carers.

Many thanks from all at the Young Carer Service

Courses

Sep – Nov 2019

For more information on any of the courses below or if you are interested in attending please contact us to register your interest.

SEPTEMBER

Basic Footcare Session For Carers & People With Disabilities	Tuesday 10th	10am – 12noon	Sycamore House
PASDA 16+ Carers Peer Support Group	Monday 9th	6pm – 8pm	Sycamore House
Parent Carer Peer Support Group	Tuesday 10th	9.30am – 12.15pm	Sycamore House
Scottish Autism Information Session For Parent Carers	Monday 23th	10.30am – 12noon	Sycamore House

OCTOBER

Mindfulness For Relaxation For Adult Carers	Wednesday 2nd, 9th, 16th	6pm – 8pm	Sycamore House
Getting It Right For Your Child Workshop For Parent Carers	Monday 7th & 14th	10.30am – 2.15pm	Sycamore House
PASDA 16+ Carers Peer Support Group	Monday 14th	6pm – 8pm	Sycamore House
Parent Carer Peer Support Group	Tuesday 8th	9.30am – 12.15pm	Sycamore House
Carers Gentle Massage Course	Monday 28th	10am - 12noon	Sycamore House

NOVEMBER

Morning Of Mindfulness For Adult Carers	Saturday 9th	10am – 12.30pm	Sycamore House
Parent Carers Peer Support Group	Tuesday 12th	9.30am – 12.15pm	Sycamore House
Carers Gentle Massage Course	Monday 4th, 11th	10am - 12noon	Sycamore House

Events

Sep – Nov 2019

Please contact us to confirm your interest in attending any of our groups as last minute changes can sometimes occur.

WEEKLY EVENTS

Carers Coffee Morning	Wednesday	10am-12noon	Sycamore House	A drop-in coffee morning for carers.
Carers Walking Group	Wednesday	10.15am - 11 am	Sycamore House	A group for carers, walking around Livingston Village, suitable for all abilities.
Disability Information Drop-In	Wednesday	1.30pm - 3.30pm	Carmondean Library	Drop-in for information advice and support.

MONTHLY EVENTS

Carers Mental Health Support Group	Mon (2/9, 7/10, 4/11)	6pm – 8pm	Sycamore House	Support group for carers of individuals with a mental health condition.
Power of Attorney Clinic	Tues (7/9, 22/10, 19/11)	9.30am – 4.30pm	Sycamore House	For carers & people with a disability, phone to make an appointment.
Carers Massage	Wed (11/9, 9/10, 5/11)	10am – 12pm	Sycamore House	Twenty minute carer massage, call to make an appointment.
Carers Evening Support Group	Wed (25/9, 30/10, 27/11)	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Sycamore House	Meet other carers, share experiences and meet new friends.
Home Energy Advice Clinic		10am–12noon	Sycamore House	Useful energy & money saving tips for the home for carers and people with a disability.
Carers Advice Shop Clinic Sycamore House	Wed (4,18/9, 2,16,30/10, 13, 27/11)	9.30am – 11.30am	Sycamore House	Financial advice for carers.
Disability Advice Shop Clinic Carmondean Library		1.30pm – 4.30pm	Carmondean Library	Financial advice for people with a disability.
Dementia Drop-In Support Group for carers	Fri (6/9, 4/10, 1/11)	10am – 12noon	Sycamore House	Support group for carers looking after someone with dementia at home.
Bereavement Support Group For Carers & Former Carers	Friday (20/9, 18/10, 22/11)	10am–12noon	Sycamore House	Support group for bereaved carers in West Lothian.

Helping us to help you

We have been supporting carers for over 27 years and have 5,500 carers registered with us. At a time

when local council and NHS budgets are being squeezed, we are finding that funding is becoming more competitive and we are now looking at how we can generate income ourselves.

One way we can do this is to ask you and your family and friends, to make small donations to us. To help us to continue to support more people and to expand the support we offer, we want to make it easy for people to make donations or to sponsor us. There are simple ways to do this, so we'd like to tell you about two schemes that you might want to try.



amazon smile

Amazon Smile

Amazon Smile is an easy way of making a small donation every time you shop on Amazon. The next time you visit the site, just register for Amazon Smile and when making purchases you will be asked to use www.smile.amazon.uk which allows 0.5% of the purchase price to be donated by Amazon to Carers of West Lothian. Please register if you use Amazon regularly.



Virgin Giving

You'll see a link on our website to the Virgin Giving page. Follow the link to make small donations either as a one-off or on a regular basis. Please also ask your family and friends to support us in this way. This extra funding will allow us to run new groups which will benefit carers and adults with disabilities throughout West Lothian. Thank you.

✉ office@carers-westlothian.com

🌐 www.carers-westlothian.com

☎ 01506 448000

📍 Sycamore House, Quarrywood Court, Livingston, EH54 6AX

🕒 Opening Hours: 9.00am - 4.30pm (Monday - Friday)

🚌 16, 22, 23, 24, 25, 40, 280, N23, N25, X23, X40
get off at Alderstone Road, 5 minute walk to Sycamore House.



Please note that views expressed throughout this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of Carers of West Lothian.

We cannot endorse/recommend any service advertised within this publication.

If you have a compliment or complaint to make please see above for contact information.

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