



Carers of West Lothian

Bulletin for Partners

Winter 2021



Service update

As restrictions eased, we reintroduced some in-person support in November. This included a blended approach to groups, offering both in-person and online sessions, which were all going well!

Following the First Ministers COVID update on Monday 29th November, Carers of West Lothian made the decision to close Sycamore House and for staff to return to home working. This was not an easy decision but one that was taken to ensure the safety of the people we support, volunteers and staff. This means all in-person support has stopped until further notice but we will continue to run our groups online. The situation will be reviewed in early 2022 and we will update everyone as soon as we can.

Our team are still available Monday - Friday 9am-5pm for telephone and online support.

Referral Process

We want to make it as easy as possible for you to refer carers, young carers and disabled people to us for support so we have a number of ways you can do this. We find pro-active referrals really support people in accessing the right support at the right time. By accessing support as early as possible, crisis situations can be reduced or even avoided. By making the referral on behalf of someone you are supporting, you are instantly removing a barrier to receiving support. All we need is a name and number, if the person is happy for this to be passed on and we will do the rest. Additional information is great but not essential.

You can make a referral in a number of ways:

Call us on 01506 448000

Email us on office@carers-westlothian.com

Visit our website www.carers-westlothian.com

Fort West Lothian referral system: <https://westlothian.thefortsystem.com/>

GROUPS

Morning Social Group for Disabled People	4th Tuesday of Month 10.30am - 11.30am
Evening Social Group for Disabled People	3rd Tuesday of Month 6pm – 7pm
Bereaved Carer Support Group	2nd last Friday of Month 10.30am – 12noon
Mental Health Carer Support Group	1st Monday of Month 6pm – 7pm
Carers Coffee Morning	Every Wednesday 10am – 12pm
Carers Evening Support Group	Last Wednesday of Month 6.30pm - 8.30pm
Armadaale Carers Cuppa and Chat	Postponed until further notice

Free CoWL Awareness Training for Staff



The sessions will cover:

- Identifying and engaging with unpaid carers and disabled people.
- Understanding the impact of caring and having a disability.
- Why unpaid carers and disabled people need your support.
- How to help carers and disabled people access our support.

Session dates:

Thursday 27 January 2-3pm

Wednesday 23 February 4-5pm

Monday 21 March 10-11am

Sessions are being delivered on Microsoft Teams. To book email or phone: catherine@carers-westlothian.com/01506 448 000. We can also deliver sessions to individual teams so please get in touch to arrange.

If you would like to become the CoWL Champion in your team, why not get in touch to register your interest.

Support for Disabled People

Our Disability Service is growing and developing all the time. As well as providing an information and advice service, we continue to run two monthly social groups supporting social inclusion. We have been running one off and themed events as well as the introduction of an evening information session 4 times a year where guest speakers are invited along to provide updates. We were delighted to have Euan's Guide along in October with a very informative talk. In February we have Police Scotland talking about the Keep Safe initiative (an I Am Me and Police Scotland partnership) and in June we will be joined by Social Security Scotland with an introduction to the Adult Disability Payment.



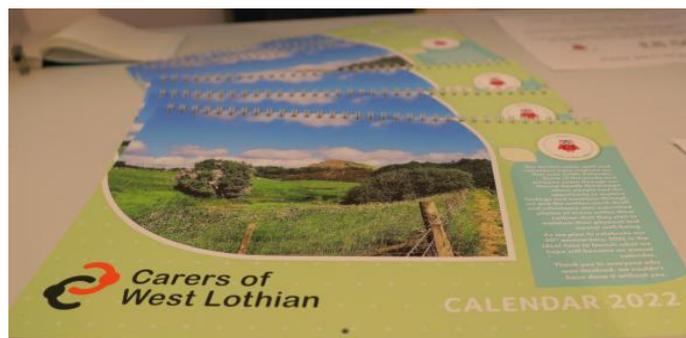
30th Anniversary

In 2022, we have a full programme of events to celebrate our anniversary. This includes physical and mental wellbeing events, social events and information events to name a few. Keep an eye on our website and social media for updates.

The Perfect Christmas Gift!

As part of our 30th anniversary celebrations we have produced our first ever calendar. You can buy a copy of for £8.50 or 2 for £15 plus £1.50 for postage and packaging.

Call **01506 448000** or email office@carers-westlothian.com to place an order.



Online Advice Clinics

Benefits advice and support - Fortnightly sessions are being delivered on Wednesday mornings via Microsoft Teams with an Advisor

from the Advice Shop. Carers and disabled people looking for benefits advice or needing help to complete a form can get in touch to book an appointment. Anyone without access to IT or lacking confidence around IT, can request a call from the advisor as part of this advice clinic.

Power of Attorney (POA) - These appointments are run by Blackadders Solicitors and are being delivered virtually. Zoom and Microsoft Teams are the preferred method. It's important the person granting the POA has capacity and must be able

to speak to the solicitor online. For more information or to book an appointment please encourage people to get in touch with us on 01506 448000. At this current time, the cost charged for a full POA is £195.00. Please note, appointments fill up fast and we are booking a few months in advance.

CoWL Social Media:   

Our social media is a great way to keep up to date. Why not follow us!

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CarersofWestLothian/

Instagram: www.instagram.com/carerswestlothian/

Twitter: www.twitter.com/CarersWL



Update

Weekly Junior and Senior Groups are continuing to meet online and we are hoping to start back face to face next year, but this is dependent on Covid restrictions at that time

We will also be moving towards an online drop in on the last Thurs of the month.

The Young Adult Carer group meets the last Friday of the month and will have a blended approach.

School Peer Support Groups have started and we will continue to develop them in the New Year.

We are still taking referrals, so please continue to send them to us when you identify a young carer, to:
office@carers-westlothian.com



Community Pass

Please remember our pass for Five Sisters Zoo can still be booked for carers and their families. The pass allows entry for 2 adults and 3 children.

The pass can be booked by calling 01506 448000



Often, when caring comes to an end through bereavement our carers struggle with the change to their identity, the end of that caring role as well as grieving the loss of a loved one. Carers of West Lothian can support bereaved carers through this process with our peer support group.

The group is small, relaxed and informal, and is facilitated by our volunteer Jeff. The group currently meets online on the 2nd last Friday of the month from 10.30am - 11.30am.

Psychoeducation Group - Coming out of COVID: managing anxiety and boosting wellbeing.



Hello, my name is Erin and I am a Trainee Counselling Psychologist who has offered psychological therapy for Carers of West Lothian for the past 4 years.

Over the past six months, many of my clients have expressed some anxiety and stress about coming out of COVID-19 restrictions and returning to 'normal' life – and rightly so!

This is another huge, and unpredictable transition in our lives that will most likely create some difficulty. However, as carers for vulnerable children or adults, there is the potential months.

Thus, it's important to identify our stressors, and boost our self-care to help manage our wellbeing during this time.

I have designed a free psychoeducation group to explore and discuss the stressors attached to this new transition and develop some new self-care acts to help you cope during this time.

The group will be run via Zoom on

Monday January 17th January at 3pm for around 90 minutes and will have 8 spaces available.

If you are interested in attending this group, please call or email to register your interest. Thank you!



ScotSpirit Holiday Voucher Scheme

The Scheme is funded by Scottish Government and forms part of the Scottish tourism pandemic recovery programme. It is being delivered by Charity Partners, Family Holiday Association, Shared Care Scotland, and the Carer Centre Network.

It will enable unpaid carers to enjoy a 2-3-night subsidised overnight break or day out in Scotland. It offers a contribution towards an overnight stay in a bed and breakfast, camping/ holiday park, guest house, hotel or hostel or day visit activities in Scotland. The scheme is now open and breaks can be taken up to 31 December 2022. Its worth noting, the fund has to be allocated by end March 2022.

The scheme is open to all adult unpaid carers and young carers registered with a local support organisation, such as a us, or be referred by a health professional in Scotland. If you or a carer needs more information, please get in touch.



Short Breaks, Time to Live is funded by the Scottish Government

through Shared Care

Scotland and aims to improve the range, choice and availability of short breaks for carers. Carers of West Lothian's Time Out Project enables carers to access funds and support to help them take short breaks that meet their needs. Our Time Out Project is now open.

If you or a carer needs more information, please get in touch.

