

DECEMBER 2019 CARERS NEWSLETTER



Hello

Welcome to our winter newsletter. We continue to be busy supporting unpaid carers in Shetland and were delighted to secure funding again to offer short break grants directly to carers. During November, we raised awareness of carers issues by hosting an event at Market House for Carers Right Day and creating publicity around this. We held a separate event to at Islesburgh to encourage carers to try things differently when it comes to taking a break from your caring role. (See handout for more info).

We are looking forward to another busy year and we hope that you all have a good Christmas and Happy New Year.

Why not try our Festive Music quiz on p8 if you have a spare moment!

Karen, Kirsten & Laura

Carers Rights Day 2019



To mark Carers Rights Day on 21st November, VAS held a Drop in Information Session at Market House. We were delighted to see some new faces call along to find out about the information and support available to help them in their caring role.

An advisor from Citizens Advice Bureau was on

hand to talk through advice about income and benefits with carers while Aa Fired Up were there if you wanted to unwind by painting a ceramic item.

- Figures released for Carers Rights Day 2019 show two thirds of UK adults can expect to care unpaid for a loved one in their lifetime
- Women taking on caring responsibilities a decade earlier than men
- Carers UK calls for sustainable investment in social care to support millions of carers

Carers UK's top three steps everyone who is looking after a disabled, ill or older loved one should take to find out about their entitlements:

1. Get a benefits check.
2. Find out about practical support.
3. Connect with other carers.

Carers UK publish the **Looking after someone** guide which gives carers the full picture of the practical and financial support available to them. The new 2020 guide can be found at carersuk.org/LAS. Or if you do not have access to internet please contact us for a paper copy.

Short Break Grants

We are now taking applications from carers for our new round of short break grant funding from Shared Care Scotland. Last year we issued 30 grants totalling £4,495 and this year we have £3,203 to award in grants up to a maximum of £150 each.

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VAS want to encourage carers to take time out for themselves to recharge their batteries. This funding allows us to offer carers a grant to take a short break (or a series of regular breaks) of their choice in order to look after their own health and wellbeing.

Joanne used her Short Break Grant to purchase an annual swimming pass at her local Leisure Centre. Having a little time out to exercise makes her feel much better and she has also started going to the gym. After her break, Joanne reported feeling less stressed and less isolated.

Joanne said "I think short breaks is such a good idea. The idea that carers are recognized and valued in this way is great in itself. It means that you prioritize taking time out to 'recharge your batteries', when otherwise you might not. Thank you".

Kevin used his short break grant to enjoy a weekend break at the Wigwams with his wife and two sons. They also enjoyed a meal out at a nearby fish and chip restaurant. It was important to Kevin to get some time to spend as a family and he reported feeling less stressed after his break.

Kevin said "These types of grants are invaluable as caring is a huge commitment and it can completely dictate your life".

Providing short breaks for carers and the people they care for is now widely accepted as vital to sustaining the caring relationship and the health and wellbeing of carers. We can offer up to £150 per carer towards your chosen holiday, activity or therapy.

After your short break all that we ask is that you provide your receipts and complete an Evaluation Form so that we can report back to our funder. This helps us to monitor the success and take-up of the project and make improvements where necessary. You can apply online or call Kirsten.



Respitality Break at Pitlochry



The Ben's bungalow at Pitlochry

VAS can offer a carer and companion a one week self catering break FREE through the Respitality Scheme. The one bedroom bungalow in Pitlochry, is made available to us by The Ben, and is not accessible or suitable for anyone with mobility issues. We can allocate a one week break on the following dates:-

14th - 20th March 2020

27th June - 4th July 2020

18th - 25th July 2020

26th Dec 2020 - 2nd Jan 2021

It may be possible to combine this break with a short break grant. Please contact Kirsten if you are interested or would like to join the Scheme.



The Carers Trust Guide to Coping with the festive season

Research has found that people feel more satisfied, and have positive feelings, if they take part in rituals at Christmas. Rituals could be traditions, or simply meeting up with groups for dinner or drinks to celebrate.

As a carer you will probably have had to change or create new traditions at home or with your family and friends. You might find it helpful to discuss which festive traditions are helpful, and which are

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more difficult and stressful. For example, traditional large family get togethers may be over facing, and smaller occasions might suit you (and the person you care for) better.

The Carers Trust have issued some top tips for carers at Christmas.

1. Agree on an approach to Christmas with family and friends well before festivities begin. This may help the holiday run smoother and can reduce conflict and stress.

2. If routine and stability is important to the person you care for prepare a few things in advance. Perhaps you could talk them through what's going to be happening on the day?

3. Get support from friends and family and make sure they know how much caring you do, and how it affects you. People don't always know what to do to help so - if you can - be specific about what they can do to support you, whether that's ringing you regularly to give you a chance to chat, meeting up

for coffee once a week, or doing practical tasks like gardening or cooking to help ease the pressure.

4. Make sure you have a Carers Assessment (in Scotland it is called an Adult Carer Support Plan). A carer's assessment is a chance to discuss your needs with your local council and you will get a chance to talk about the caring that you do and how this affects you and your relationships. Get in touch with your local council if you haven't had an assessment.

5. Find out more about getting a break from caring, This includes information about care homes, buying care and paying for respite.

6. Your local carers' centre will be able to help you find support near where you live. This may include help finding appropriate care homes, paid help at home, and local sitting & befriending services.

Our contact details are on page 7 if you want to get in touch with us.

Shetland Care Attendant Scheme

Shetland Care Attendant Scheme (SCAS) provides trained care attendants to give carers a break in their own home. SCAS are looking for new board members to help shape the future of their service. Board meetings are every 6- 8 weeks. For more info about SCAS please visit <https://www.facebook.com/Shetland-Care-Attendant-Scheme-2029502743938393>

If you are interested please contact Karen on 743931 or at karen.fraser@shetland.org.

Next Carers Allowance payment out next week....

The majority of carers will receive their next payment of Carer's Allowance Supplement on Friday 13 December.

This supplement is paid twice a year to carers in receipt of Carer's Allowance. Payments have already been made to over 91,000 carers throughout Scotland.

This year, the Carer's Allowance Supplement is two automatic payments totalling £452.40. Carers do not need to apply for the supplement because it is paid automatically. They will receive a letter with more information if they are due a payment.

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Flu vaccination for unpaid carers



Unpaid carers are one of the target groups for the flu vaccination.

The reason for this is that many people who rely on an unpaid carer would not be able to cope if their carer caught the flu and was too ill to look after them. There is also the risk that if the carer is not vaccinated then they could risk passing the virus on to the person that they care for, which could lead to them becoming seriously ill.

Last year nearly 300 people in Shetland were identified as being eligible for the flu vaccine specifically because they were carers and just over half received the vaccine. As a carer, you should be invited to attend a clinic for the flu vaccination.

NEW - Young Carer Grant

The Young Carer Grant, introduced on 21st October 2019, and is a yearly payment of £300 for young carers who live in Scotland. To be able to get Young Carer Grant, you must:

- be 16, 17 or 18 years old
- have been caring for 1, 2 or 3 people for an average of 16 hours a week for at least the last 3 months
- If you care for more than one person, you can combine the hours of the people you care for to average 16 hours a week.

You can get Young Carer Grant once a year, up until you turn 19. You'll need to reapply each year. How you spend the Young Carer Grant is up to you. You could use it for things like new clothes, driving lessons or a holiday. You do not need to tell what you spend the money on.

If you care for someone for 35 hours or more a week you may be able to get Carer's Allowance. You should apply for this once you've been paid Young Carer Grant. You will not be able to get Young Carer Grant if you're already getting Carer's Allowance.

To find out more please visit <https://www.mygov.scot/young-carer-grant/>

If you have not received an invite then this maybe because your GP practice notes do not recognise you as a carer. You are welcome to contact your practice and ask about having the vaccine. It would also be useful to ensure that your notes are updated so that in the future you will be flagged as a carer and are called automatically.

Shetland has always had the one of the highest uptake of flu vaccination amongst unpaid carers amongst the Scottish Health Boards. From looking at the figures, our NHS service also tends to have all the carers who are going to have the vaccine, vaccinated earlier in the season than many of the other Boards. Here at Shetland Carers we would like to ensure that this continues to be the case so if you are an unpaid carer please make sure you consider having the flu vaccination.



Carers Parliament

Carers Scotland, on behalf of the Scottish Government and in partnership with the national carer organisations, organised the 7th Carers Parliament for carers from all across Scotland, at Edinburgh on 30th October 2019. This year's theme was *the Diversity of Caring*.

Our carers rep attended, along with 2 other carers from Shetland who received support towards travel and accommodation costs from Carers Scotland.



As a result of a conversation at the parliament, Family Fund are coming up Shetland from 26th to 30th March 2020 as part of a joint venture between Shetland Carers and Ability Shetland. Family Fund provides grants for families raising disabled or seriously ill children or young people.

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Carers Rep Update *By Jim Guyan*

I am the Unpaid Carers Representative on the Integrated Joint Board (IJB), my purpose there is to ensure that Carers Rights are taken into consideration when changes to Health and Social Care in Shetland are proposed.

I also attend Carers Collaborative meetings run by the Coalition of Carers where me and my counterparts on other IJB's in Scotland meet four times per year to discuss what is happening in each of our areas and produce reports which are submitted to the Scottish Government (SG).

I also attend the annual Carers Parliament run by Carers Scotland where ministers from the SG are in attendance to hear from Unpaid Carers what is right and wrong with the present system of support for unpaid carers.

In every case above I try to ensure that the rights of Unpaid Carers are foremost and in order to make a difference I need to know from Unpaid Carers in Shetland what is working or more importantly what is not working.

I can be contacted by Email at: jim.guyan@shetland.org



What's On.....

STEPPING OUT

This group provides an opportunity to get out and meet people in Yell. The group meet every couple of weeks in various halls around Yell. You are welcome to just visit your nearest hall or you can come every time. As well as the chance to sit and chat there is always a quiz and we usually have other visitors along or an activity. Soup, sandwiches and fancies - cost £3.50 or donation. We would love to see you and you are welcome to just come along. If transport is stopping you then get in touch as we may be able to help. Contact Karen on 01595 743923 or 07909 966161. Next group dates are :-

- Thursday 5th December & 9th January, 11.30 - 2pm at Westsandwick Hall
- Thursday 19th January, 11.30 – 2pm at Mid Yell Hall

FRIDAY GROUP

This group is aimed at young people who find it difficult to meet and communicate with others. It meets at Mareel Café Bar from 2.30 on every second Friday. Dates for 2020 are :-

Friday 17 th January	Friday 31 st January	Friday 14 th February
Friday 28 th February	Friday 13 th March	Friday 27 th March

FAB (FAMILIES AFFECTED BY GROUP)

The "Families affected by" group is a peer support group for families that have been affected by drugs and alcohol. This group runs on every second Tuesday and meets in Market House.

- the first Wednesday of each month from 5.30-7pm at Market House, Lerwick
- Next meetings are : - Wed 4th December, Wed 8th Jan, Wed 4th Feb

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SIBLING GROUP

This is a monthly group on a Saturday morning for young people who have a sibling with Additional Support Needs or are carrying out a small caring role for a parent. For more info please contact Laura. Next Sessions:-

- Sat 25th Jan - 10.45am-12.45pm at the Bruce Family Centre.
- Sat 29th Feb - 10.45am-12.45pm at the Bruce Family Centre.
- Sat 28th Mar - 10.45am-12.45pm at the Bruce Family Centre.

PARENTS GROUP

This is a parent group for parents who have children with social communication difficulties e.g. Autism, Aspergers. You are welcome to come along even if your child has not yet received a diagnosis.

We have used the meetings to bring in visitors to talk about different topics including weighted blankets and sensory accessories. One of the most useful parts of each session has been to provide an opportunity for parents to talk to each other about the difficulties that they have been experiencing and for other group members to offer advice on things that have worked well for them.

The next meetings at Market House, Lerwick are from 10 am – 12 pm on :-

Tues 21st Jan

Tues 25th Feb

Tues 24th March

WESTSIDE GROUP

The Westside Carers' Group hold monthly meetings at 7 pm at Wastview Daycare in Walls and all unpaid carers are welcome to attend. The group, who now have their own facebook page called Westside Carers Group, recently enjoyed an excellent Christmas Dinner at Drumquin Guest House in Brae!

For further information please call Fiona Sinclair on 01595 809352.



CAB Outreach Drop-In Sessions at local Health Centres

A Citizen's Advice Bureau adviser will be available to assist with issues relating to debt, welfare/benefit rights, employment, housing, consumer rights, energy + many more! You don't need to book an appointment, just pop along to the Health Centre! However if you want to book a time, call CAB on 01595 694696.

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December

Day / date	Venue	Time
Monday 2 nd	Walls	9:30am – 12:30pm
Wednesday 4 th	Whalsay	10:00am – 1:00pm
Friday 6 th	Levenwick	9:30am – 12:30pm
Tuesday 10 th	Yell	10:00am – 1:00pm
Wednesday 18 th	Hillswick	9:30am – 12:30pm
Wednesday 18 th	Brae	9:30am – 12:30pm

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE!

If you are interested in receiving your newsletter via email, we can do that!

Contact us with your email address and we will send you a copy.

The most recent newsletter will also be available on the Virtual Carers Centre

www.shetlandcarers.org

CONTACT US

www.shetlandcarers.org



follow @ShetlandCarers

email : carers@shetland.org

Karen Hannay tel 01595 743923

Kirsten Marcus tel 01595 743980

Laura Russell tel 01595 743946

jim.guyan@shetland.org

VAS Carers Support Service festive opening hours :-

Closed from 1pm on Friday 20th December 2019

Reopens at 9am on Monday 6th January 2020.



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**Can you name the missing word from each of these famous festive songs?
Can you name the song and artist too?**

1. Santa baby, slip a _____ under the tree, for me
2. May your days be merry and _____, and may all your Christmases be white
3. Later on, we'll _____, as we dream by the fire
4. Let's hope it's a good one, without any _____
5. Why don't you give your _____ for Christmas?
6. But if you kissed me now I know you'd _____ me again
7. Come on, it's lovely weather for a sleigh ride _____ with you
8. Does your granny always tell ya that the old _____ are the best?
9. You took my dreams from me when I first _____ you
10. He sees you when you're _____
11. You will get a _____ feeling when you hear
12. Have yourself a merry little Christmas, let your _____ be light
13. Hark, now hear the _____ sing, a king was born today,
14. At Christmas time, we let in light and we banish _____
15. Oh, the weather outside is frightful, but the _____ is so delightful
16. Make my wish come true, all I want for Christmas is _____
17. The mood is _____, the spirit's up, we're here tonight, and that's enough
18. Welcome to my Christmas song, I'd like to thank you for the _____
19. A time to rejoice in the _____ that we see
20. Snow is fallin', all around me, Children playing, having _____



For answers, please visit our Carers Centre website at www.shetlandcarers.org