

Voluntary Action Shetland



Carers Spring Newsletter

Staff Changes



From left to right: Kirsten Harcus, Amanda Brown, Jim Guyan (Carers' Representative on the Integrated Joint Board) and Laura Russell

We wanted to let you know that as of Monday 2nd March 2020, Karen Hannay has left her post within VAS Carers Support, and has moved down the corridor within Market House to take up a new position as manager of Shetland Community Connections. Karen will be a huge miss within VAS Carers Support service, but thankfully she is not too far away and we wish her well in her new post.

Kirsten Harcus has directly taken over Karen's post as Carers Support Worker and Amanda Brown has joined the team as Admin Support. Laura Russell remains part of the team in her usual role. At present Amanda is working 10 hours a week, which will increase to 17 hours at the beginning of April. Amanda is excited to join the team and is looking forward to learning more about VAS Carers Support service.

Time to Live Grants



Time to Live grants, also known as Short Break grants, are now available for carers

to take a short break (or a series of regular breaks) to recharge their batteries.

Voluntary Action Shetland has been fortunate to secure £3,203 from Shared Care Scotland's Time to Live Fund allowing us to offer carers of adults in Shetland the chance to benefit from a short break from their caring role from October 2019 to September 2020.

The money is for distributing grants of up to £150 to unpaid carers who provide a significant amount of caring for another adult, aged 21 years or older.

Ideas for a short break could include any of the following:

- ❖ Relaxation therapy
- ❖ Indian head massage
- ❖ Manicure
- ❖ Swim session
- ❖ Drama club
- ❖ Reflexology
- ❖ Reiki
- ❖ Meals out
- ❖ Gym session
- ❖ Arts and crafts session
- ❖ Aromatherapy
- ❖ Trip to hairdresser
- ❖ Holiday
- ❖ Cinema pass
- ❖ Horse riding
- ❖ Sauna

VAS are keen to encourage carers to take time out for themselves in order to look after their own health and wellbeing. After your short break, all that we ask is that you provide 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.

Some feedback from carers who have received a short break in the past:

"This grant is something that allows you to do something you might not otherwise do, as it gives you focus to do something for yourself."

"The break enabled time out for me to exercise and reduce stress levels through relaxation classes. Having less stress makes me a better carer."

A new research report recently published by Shared Care Scotland explores existing evidence about the vital role played by short breaks and respite care in families where there are significant caring responsibilities. The report details a literature review which was undertaken by Diane Seddon and Louise Prendergast of the Wales Centre for Ageing and Dementia Research at Bangor University and tells us what the evidence says about outcomes for carers.

Some of the research looks at positive outcomes of the impact of short breaks on carer health and wellbeing. It discusses how, for some carers, their short break has enabled them to continue caring - and some further research has concluded that having short breaks leads to improvements in the carers' emotional wellbeing - with feelings of normality, freedom and relief.

The full report is available on Shared Care Scotland's website:
www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/research/what-the-evidence-tells-us-about-short-breaks-for-family-carers/

To find out more about applying for a Time to Live grant, contact VAS Carers or visit our website at
www.shetlandcarers.org/need-a-break

Short
breaks fund


SHARED CARE
scotland

Pitlochry Respitality Break



VAS can offer a carer and companion a one week self-catering break FREE through the Respitality Scheme. The one bedroom bungalow in Pitlochry, Perthshire 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:

27th June – 4th July 2020

18th July – 25th July 2020

26th December 2020 – 2nd January 2021

It may be possible to combine this break with a Time to Live grant. Please contact Kirsten on 743980 if you are interested or would like to join the Scheme.



Young Carer Grant



Young Carer Grant is a yearly payment of £300 for young carers in Scotland.

To be able to get a 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.

Young Carer Grant is a yearly payment for carers aged 16 to 18 who care for someone receiving a qualifying disability benefit. The payment is a flat rate of £300 and can be applied for once a year. Young carers can spend this money as they choose.

"You can get Young Carer Grant once a year, up until you turn 19. You'll need to fill in a new form or call each year you want to apply."

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.

Young carers can get more information and apply by calling 0800 182 2222 or visiting <https://www.mygov.scot/young-carer-grant/>

Key figures since the grant was introduced are outlined below.

- From 21 October 2019 to 30 November 2019, 750 Young Carer Grant applications were received
- In total, 365 applications had been processed by 30 November. Of these, 90% (325) were authorised, 8% (30) were denied, and a small proportion (10, 3%) were withdrawn
- In total, £66,900 in Young Carer Grant payments had been issued to clients by 30 November 2019.

The full report can be accessed on the Scottish Government website.

Family Fund



The Family Fund are currently running a small grant programme called 'Your Opportunity' that supports disabled and seriously ill young people aged 18-24 years old who are living at home. This runs in the same way as the main Family Fund grants programme for those aged 17 and under. The main difference is that they cannot help with grants for family breaks through 'Your Opportunity'.

'Your Opportunity' has very limited funding and they will accept applications from families on a first come, first served basis until the funding is fully allocated. They can only process one application per household, so if you have already received a grant from Family Fund in the last 12 months, or are awaiting a decision, they

will not be able to accept an application to 'Your Opportunity'. This is to help them reach as many families as possible with the limited funding they have.

For further information and how to apply, please visit

<https://www.familyfund.org.uk/help-for-18-24-year-olds>

State of Caring Survey



Each year, Carers Scotland carries out a survey of carers to understand the state of caring in Scotland. Last year 755 carers shared their experience of what it's like to be a carer. Carers Scotland's report provides a snapshot of caring in 2019.

Some key points from the report include:

- 66% of carers said they have to focus on the care needs of the person they care for, and not on their own needs.

VAS want to support and empower you to manage your caring role and have a life outside caring. We can help you access short break grants through our Short Break Grant Scheme 'Time to Live' and our Respite Scheme. Visit our website at <https://www.shetlandcarers.org/support/break>

- 21% of carers said that plans for an emergency had been thoroughly considered in their adult carer support plan.

Having a plan in place can stop an emergency becoming a crisis and can give

you and the person you care for peace of mind. VAS can help you prepare an Emergency Plan, please phone 743980.

- 28% of carers felt that their need for support to look after their own physical and mental health alongside caring had been thoroughly considered.

Have you had a carers support plan? Under the Carers Act (Scotland) 2018 carers are entitled to a support plan in their own right. To find out more about a support plan contact VAS on 743980 or Social Work on 744400.

- 68% of carers regularly use their own income or savings to pay for care or support services, equipment or products for the person they care for.

Have you been in touch with the Occupational Therapy department at the Independent Living Centre at Gremista? Contact them on 744319.

- 37% of carers are struggling to make ends meet.

Have you had a chat with Citizens Advice Bureau to make sure that you are maximising your income and receiving all the support that you are entitled to? Contact CAB on 694696.

The full report for 2019 can be viewed at https://www.shetlandcarers.org/site/assets/files/2200/2019_cs_state_of_caring.pdf

The new State of Caring Survey for 2020 is now live and is open to current and former carers. In the survey you'll be asked what life is like now, and what needs to change. Please view the link below if you wish to take part:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/C8T89ND>

Fair Dementia Care Campaign



The Fair Dementia Care Commission, established by Alzheimer Scotland, published the 'Delivering Fair Dementia Care For People With Advanced Dementia' report.

The report sets out a firm definition for advanced dementia for the first time. It also identifies the inequality people living with advanced dementia face in terms of access to health care. Through the report the Fair Dementia Care Commission calls for a number of reforms, including equal access to free healthcare for people living with advanced dementia.

Through the report, the Fair Dementia Care Commission calls for a number of reforms, which has now been delegated to the Scottish Parliament.

Alzheimer's Scotland have been hosting events around the county seeking support of their petition and are hoping for 10,000 signatures.

You can read more and sign the petition by visiting:

<https://www.alzscot.org/our-work/campaigning-for-change/current-campaigns/fair-dementia-care>

Shetland Care Attendant Scheme



Shetland Care Attendant Scheme (SCAS) has been chosen to benefit from the Co-op Local Community Fund from 27th October 2019 until 24th October 2020. During this funding phase, Co-op Members will be able to choose Shetland Care Attendant Scheme (SCAS) as their local cause. This means that every time you buy selected own-brand products and services, 1% of the money you spend goes to Shetland Care Attendant Scheme. The money will be used specifically to support carers throughout Shetland.

To choose SCAS as your chosen charity, please go online at <https://www.coop.co.uk/local-causes>. If you are not already a member of the Co-op, you will need to become a member first and create an online account. Please let your friends and family know about this too so that we can raise more funds to support Shetland carers. Thank you ☺

Hospital Discharge Checklist for Carers

If the person you are providing care to is ever admitted into hospital, remember that you have the right to be included in any discussions around when they will be discharged from hospital and what additional support you might need at home to care for them.

To find out more about what you can expect when the person that you are caring

for is discharged from hospital, check out our updated guide here:

<https://www.carersnet.org/carers-act-resources/>

Hospital Discharge Checklist for Carers



Let hospital staff know that you are the carer and how they can contact you.



Get consent from the person that you care for to discuss their care with hospital staff.



During discussions be clear about how much caring you are able and willing to do.



If there are any changes to your caring role, request an adult carer support plan or young carer statement.

Covid-19 Advice for Carers

Anyone providing regular support to a vulnerable friend or relative will want to do what they can to protect their own health and that of those they look after during the coronavirus outbreak.

Like everyone, unpaid carers (including young carers) and people being cared for should familiarise themselves with the public health advice on how to protect themselves from infection. As the situation is changing quickly, the guidance may also change, so carers should therefore check regularly to make sure they are following the latest guidance at:

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19>

Carers who do not already have an emergency plan* in place may also want to talk with family and friends about who could take over their caring role if they

become ill or need to self-isolate – particularly while social work services are under additional pressure during the coronavirus outbreak. It will also be important to make sure you have key information about the person you care for easily available - so that anyone taking over care has all the information they need.

Where carers and family and friends are unable to provide essential care for someone, they should contact the local social work department:

Office hours: 01595 744400

Out of office hours: 01595 695611

See NHS 24 for advice on coronavirus symptoms; precautions to take; and what to do if you think you may have become ill with coronavirus:

www.nhs24.scot

*VAS can help you create an emergency plan. For more information about this, please check out the following link:

<https://www.shetlandcarers.org/info/documents/emergency-planning>

Be Kind To Yourself ★



While it's important to stay informed about coronavirus, having a non-stop

stream of notifications and speculation may harm our mental health. Don't forget to spread kindness, especially to yourself.

If you find yourself trying to cope with extended periods of anxiety or stress, then please don't hesitate to get in touch with the Mind Your Head team, based at Market House.

Mind Your Head are open for business as usual. They provide support via telephone, emails, messaging, or website contact form requests. Please note that Market House reception is currently closed to the public.

Mind Your Head cannot offer face to face support at the moment, but hope that you won't hesitate to get in touch if you feel that you need help during a tough time, regardless of recent events. Mind Your Head will also continue to give you informative and uplifting content on their social media channels.

There is some good advice in the following article on managing your mental health during the coronavirus outbreak:

<https://www.rethink.org/news-and-stories/blogs/2020/03/managing-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/>

www.mindyourhead.org.uk

01595 745035

mindyourhead@shetland.org



Dates for Groups:

Please note that due to the current coronavirus outbreak, there are no groups taking place at the moment, but if anyone needs support they should contact VAS Carers Support Team (contact details below). Any queries about Stepping Out or FAB (Families Affected By) can contact Karen Hannay on 745091.



CAB Outreach drop-in sessions

Shetland Islands CAB has cancelled its drop-in sessions at the bureau office in Lerwick and in rural health centres. Local CAB advisers will continue to provide advice and support to folk across the isles by phone and by email. If you need advice, please call the bureau on 01595 694696 or email sicab@shetland.org

Please do not drop-in to the office or your local health centre. Staff will be contacting people with pre-booked appointments.

This decision has been taken to minimise the risk to clients, volunteers and staff during the current coronavirus outbreak.

You can contact us:

www.shetlandcarers.org

email: carers@shetland.org

Kirsten Marcus tel: 01595 743980

Laura Russell tel: 01595 743946/743909

Amanda Brown tel: 01595 743923

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