

# Adult Carers Newsletter

## Carers Spring Forum

**“You seem to offer a varied programme in your newsletter, always good to read and keep in mind”**

Over 25 carers joined us for our Spring Forum in March at Community House in Bromley. We presented a service update which included how many carers we have supported and how many carers and professionals have attended our groups and courses from October 2017- February 2019.

The afternoon started with a game of Social Bingo which was enjoyed by all. We then updated carers and professionals on our upcoming service development; such as our Carers Allotment and Walking for Health Walks- more details of those on pages 12 & 13! Carers then enjoyed tea and cake, followed by a reading of two of the Carers Creative Writing Competition pieces; including the winning entry **Reminiscences** featured on page 15.



Thank you to all that attended and participated and for all your valuable feedback. We are glad you enjoy our newsletter and appreciate you taking the time to read it and getting involved with our service! Please let us know if there is anything you would like us to arrange for our next or future Carers Forums.

**Come along to  
our next  
Carers Forum!**

Tuesday 4 June 2019  
2:30pm – 4:30pm  
Community House,  
South Street, Bromley, BR1 1RH  
**Please RSVP**

# What have we been up to?

## Carers attended First Aid workshop delivered by British Red Cross



Grant Hoyle from British Red Cross ran a free Everyday First Aid workshop for carers in Bromley. Grant has kindly agreed to come back and hold another workshop in June. Please see page 9 for further information.

## Carers led three knitting groups

Two of our carers led three knitting groups in January, February and March; making miniature hats for Age UK's Big Knit Campaign. Diane and Margaret said they found making the hats relaxing and therapeutic. They will also be running the Arts & Crafts groups going forward. May's Arts & Crafts group will be related to Dementia in aid of Dementia Action Week. Thank you Diane and Margaret for dedicating your free time to support other carers!



## Carers attended two Mindfulness for Resilience workshops in Mottingham and Penge run by Bromley Mindfulness

Robert Mitchell of Bromley Mindfulness delivered another two workshops for us last quarter- in Penge in the afternoon and in Mottingham in the evening. Carer feedback included:

"I enjoyed the course, especially the managing sleep patterns and techniques to help with sleep. I found Robert very helpful and the relaxation techniques very useful".

"I thought the course was fabulous. There weren't many people at it, but this meant we got a lot more personal time with Robert. I thought he was very "in tune" with the needs of carers and geared relaxation techniques to our lifestyle. I found it very useful and interesting".

Our Mottingham evening workshops were far better attended than our afternoon sessions in Penge. We hope that Bromley Mindfulness will be able to deliver some more mindfulness workshops in autumn- so please let us know your preferences if you are interested in attending.



## We said goodbye to Natasha and Parmjot (PJ)



We said goodbye to Natasha in early January and Parmjot (PJ) in early February. The Adult Carers team would like to extend the thanks of the carers they supported and for the contribution they both made to the Adult Carers service.



We wish you both well in your future and luck in all you do.  
Many thanks from us all!

## We welcome Alison (Allie) Perriss to the team!

Allie joined the team in late February this year. Some of you may have already met or spoken with Allie, but for those who haven't, here's a short message from her:

"I have worked with Age UK Bromley and Greenwich for nearly 4 years in several departments. I look forward to transferring my skills and experience to supporting carers. I look forward to getting to know the services we provide and the carers we support over the next few months."



## We welcome Kelly Richards to the team!



Kelly joined the team in March this year. Again, some of you may have already met or spoken with Kelly, but here is a quick message for those who haven't:

"I have been working for Age UK Bromley & Greenwich and have a strong background in Dementia support. I'm looking forward to working with the team and looking forward to meeting some of you at the varied groups and workshops we have available!"

## We say goodbye (for now!) to Helen Brushett

"I will be taking maternity leave at the end of April and wanted to say a little goodbye (for now). I intend to be away for a year and will return in Spring 2020. I wish you all well! Helen"

Helen's maternity cover will be starting in April, so that Helen can handover fully to her replacement. There should be no period left without a Mental Health Carers Support Advisor in post.



Please call **0203 409 5228** or e-mail [wellbeing@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:wellbeing@bromleywell.org.uk) for further information about Helen's maternity cover.



# Looking after your Mental Health

## Mental Health Awareness Week

Hosted by the Mental Health Foundation, Mental Health Awareness Week 2019 will take place from Monday 13 to Sunday 19 May 2019.

### 10 Practical Tips for Mental Wellbeing

- Talk about your feelings
- Keep active
- Eat well
- Drink sensibly
- Keep in touch
- Ask for help
- Take a break
- Do something you're good at
- Accept who you are
- Care for others



Mental Health  
Foundation

[www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)

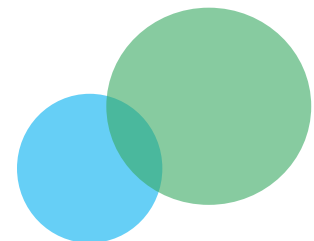
**Order free resource guides from the  
Mental Health Foundation on a variety  
of subjects!**



## Bromley Well Mental Wellbeing Service

Are you feeling low, stressed and worried?  
Bromley Well Mental Wellbeing Service may be able to help  
with:

- A series of telephone appointments to help you first understand and then consider ways to look after yourself and practically manage your wellbeing. This will include managing any symptoms you may have such as anxiety attacks, poor sleep etc.
- Information and advice on appropriate services and therapies available locally and how to successfully access them
- Help you create your own personalised document detailing your plans to maintain and improve your mental wellbeing and the next steps you want to take to move on
- Access to peer support groups to explore common difficulties such as depression, stress and anxiety; giving you an opportunity to meet others with similar experiences and learn about practical techniques to help manage and maintain your wellbeing in a friendly and supportive environment



### Contact

If you are already registered with Bromley Well, you can ask an advisor to refer you to the Mental Wellbeing service.

If you are not already registered, please contact the Single Point Access (SPA) to register on:

**0300 330 9039** or

[spa@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:spa@bromleywell.org.uk)

## Mental Wellbeing Services in the borough



Talk together Bromley offer a range of free and confidential talking therapies and support for adults over the age of 18 in the borough of Bromley, who are registered with a Bromley GP.



0300 003 3000



[talktogetherbromley.co.uk](http://talktogetherbromley.co.uk)



The Recovery College offer a range of courses and workshops supporting people in their bid to develop improved mental health. Recovery College is open to anyone aged 18 or over, who either lives, works, volunteers or has a GP within the Bromley borough.



020 8289 5020



[www.blgmind.org.uk](http://www.blgmind.org.uk)



020 8460 7711



[www.bccs.uk.com](http://www.bccs.uk.com)

Bromley Community Counselling Service (BCCS) is a registered charity whose aim is to provide counselling to anyone over the age of 18 who lives in the London Borough of Bromley or surrounding areas. The service is for people who may be struggling with personal, emotional, or mental health difficulties and is geared to assisting them either to find new ways to make a fresh start in certain areas of their lives or to come to terms with things that can't be changed. Their mission is to provide high-quality, effective affordable counselling and support for individuals with a view to promoting self-awareness, psychological wellbeing and mental health.



Westmeria Counselling Services has been established since 2003 and is recognised for its quality of service throughout the Bromley borough and beyond. They offer a private branch to their service for those who do not want to wait, have specific timings or can afford to pay for their therapy. However, the cost of the service is subsidised to enable it to be more affordable than private counselling elsewhere.



020 8467 9693



[westmeriacounselling.co.uk](http://westmeriacounselling.co.uk)

## Telephone Support



This is a national charity providing emotional, listening support to any person, at any age, who feels alone, down or in crisis at any time of day or night. All calls are free.



116 123



[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

# Dementia Support



## What's available for carers in the borough?

Bromley Dementia Support Hub is commissioned by Bromley Council and NHS Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and delivered by organisations with many years of experience and expertise; including Mindcare Dementia Support (part of Bromley, Lewisham & Greenwich Mind), Age UK Bromley & Greenwich and Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust. Support is available free of charge for people with dementia in the London Borough of Bromley and their carers. Support for carers includes:

### Support & Information

For carers on a one-to-one basis:

- Information about dementia, tailored for your needs to assist you in your caring role
- Support to access services in the local community
- Carers groups and mutual support
- Help with planning for the future
- Help with understanding and accessing all the support you are legally entitled to as a carer

### Group Workshops

A series of workshops are available, offering information about dementia with a focus on the individual experience of the person with dementia. This is a chance to meet and share experiences with other dementia carers in similar situations.

Carers will learn about:

- Understanding dementia – including benefits and support
- The experience of dementia and the impact on the person
- Meeting the emotional needs of the person with dementia

### Coaching

Personalised coaching in the home, focusing on your own experiences, challenges and needs as a carer of a person with dementia. Coaching is available for individual carers or family groups to help you make the changes necessary to care for someone with Dementia.

### Memory Mates

A monthly peer-to-peer support and social group for those living with dementia in the Borough of Bromley who are under the age of 65. Explore ways to live well with dementia and give a voice to those with the diagnosis.

Tues 30 April 10:00-11:30am  
 Tues 28 May 10:00- 11:30am  
 Tues 25 June 10:00- 11:30am  
 Community House, South Street,  
 Bromley BR1 1RH

Please contact Nicola Fishman for further information on **020 8315 1885** or [nicola.fishman@dementiahub.org.uk](mailto:nicola.fishman@dementiahub.org.uk)

### Dementia Cafés

Dementia Cafés are for people living with dementia and their carers. The cafés often run dementia friendly activities or have entertainment, and refreshments free or for a small fee. There are currently 20 Dementia Cafés across the borough. Please contact Bromley Dementia Support Hub or Bromley Well Adult Carers for the full list!

### Telephone

020 3328 0366

### E-mail

[info@dementiahub.org.uk](mailto:info@dementiahub.org.uk)

### Website

[www.bromleydementiasupporthub.org.uk](http://www.bromleydementiasupporthub.org.uk)

# Dementia Action Week

## What's happening in the borough?



Monday 20 May	Tuesday 21 May	Wednesday 22 May	Thursday 23 May	Friday 24 May
<b>10:30-12:30</b>	<b>All day</b>	<b>10:00- 4:00pm</b>	<b>9:00-12:00</b>	<b>10:30-12:30</b>
<b>Handling History</b>  A unique experience to handle a range of interesting and unusual objects.  Community House, South Street, Bromley BR1 1RH	<b>Bromley Dementia Action Alliance</b>  A collection of information tables in the foyer  Orpington Tesco 9 Augustus Lane, Orpington BR6 0NH	<b>Art Display Beckenham Mindcare Dementia Services</b>  Glades Shopping Centre, 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor (opposite Lush)	<b>Bromley Dementia Community Conference</b>  Sponsored by Orpington 1st  Odeon, Walnuts Shopping Centre, Orpington BR6 0TW	<b>Memory Lane Dementia Café</b>  <div>Regular event!</div>  Community House, South Street, Bromley BR1 1RH
<b>2:00- 3:00pm</b>	<b>2:00-4:00pm</b>	<b>2:00-3:30pm</b>	<b>12:00- 4:00pm</b>	<b>1:30- 2:30pm</b>
<b>Love to Move</b>  An exercise class run by Home Instead.  The Assembly Halls, 18 Gates Green Road Coney Hall West Wickham BR4 9JW	<b>Carers Arts &amp; Crafts Making Memory Books</b>  Please call or e-mail to book your space on this workshop.  020 8315 1925 <a href="mailto:carers@bromleywell.org.uk">carers@bromleywell.org.uk</a>  Community House, South Street, Bromley BR1 1RH	<b>Singing with Friends</b>  For people with memory problems and their carers.  <div>Regular event!</div>  Bromley United Reformed Church, 20 Widmore Road, Bromley BR1 1RY	<b>Street Party</b>  Crofton Halls, 27 Crofton Rd, Orpington BR6 8QE  <div>Some of these events are subject to change. Please check before attending:</div> <a href="http://www.bromleydementiasupporthub.org.uk/dementia-action-week-2019">www.bromleydementiasupporthub.org.uk/dementia-action-week-2019</a>  or call: <b>Bromley Dementia Support Hub</b> <b>020 8315 1885</b>	<b>Flashmob Choir (TBC)</b>  The Glades Shopping Centre

# What's on for Adult Carers?

## Dementia Carers Peer Support Groups

*No booking necessary*

**Community House, South Street,  
Bromley, BR1 1RH**

Thu 18 Apr | 11:00am – 12:30pm

Thu 16 May | 11:00am – 12:30pm

Thu 20 Jun | 11:00am – 12:30pm

## All Carers Peer Support Groups

*All carers welcome. No booking necessary*

**Jubilee Room, Christ Church Beckenham,  
1A Christ Church Road,  
Beckenham, BR3 3LE**

Mon 8 Apr | 2:00pm – 4:00pm

Mon 13 May | 2:00pm – 4:00pm

Mon 10 Jun | 2:00pm – 4:00pm

## All Carers Drop-ins

*Drop-in for a chat with an advisor*

**Community House, South Street,  
Bromley, BR1 1RH**

Wed 17 Apr | 2:30pm – 5:00pm

Wed 15 May | 2:30pm – 5:00pm

Wed 26 Jun | 2:30pm – 5:00pm

## Carers Walk

*Please contact us to register your interest*

**Wed 15 May | 10:30am – 12:00pm**

Location: TBC

## Carers Forum

*Please call or e-mail to book your place*

**Community House, South Street,  
Bromley, BR1 1RH**

Tue 4 Jun | 2:30pm – 4:30pm

## Carers Week Social

*Please call or e-mail to book your place*

**Churchill Theatre, High Street,  
Bromley BR1 1HA**

Wed 12 Jun | 2:00pm – 5:00pm

## Activities

*Please call or email to book your place*

**Community House, South Street,  
Bromley, BR1 1RH**

**Arts & Crafts- led by carers**

Tue 23 Apr | 2:00pm – 4:00pm

Tue 21 May | 2:00pm – 4:00pm

Tue 25 Jun | 2:00pm – 4:00pm

**Crochet for Beginners**

Fri 17 May | 2:30pm – 4:30pm

## Allotment Grand Opening

*Please call or e-mail to book your place*

**Wed 29 May | 2:00pm – 4:00pm**

Location: please contact us for details

Contact us on: **020 8315 1925** or **carers@bromleywell.org.uk**



## Free Workshops & Courses

*Please call or email to book your place*

### Coping with Caring: CBT

11 April – 30 May (8 weeks)

Thursdays 6:15pm – 7:45pm

Bromley Central Library, High Street  
Bromley, BR1 1EX

### Stress Busting Workshop

Tuesday 30 April | 2:30pm – 4:30pm

Community House, South Street,  
Bromley, BR1 1RH

### Carers Get Online!

**(Part 1)** 1 May – 22 May (4 weeks)

**(Part 2)** 5 June – 26 June (4 weeks)

Wednesdays 7:00pm – 9:30pm  
Poverest Centre, Poverest Road,  
Orpington BR5 2DQ

### Making Souvenir Cushions

1 May – 22 May (4 weeks)

Wednesdays 7:00pm – 9:00pm  
Kentwood Centre, Kingsdale Road,  
Penge, SE20 7PR

## Free Workshops & Courses

*Please call or email to book your place*

### Introduction to Reflexology

**(Part 1)** 2 May - 23 May (4 weeks)

**(Part 2)** 6 June – 27 June (4 weeks)

Thursdays 9:30am – 11:30am  
Kentwood Centre, Kingsdale Road,  
Penge, SE20 7PR

### Low Impact Yoga

13 May – 24 June (6 weeks)

Mondays 10:00am – 11:00am  
11:30am – 12:30pm

Poverest Centre, Poverest Road,  
Orpington BR5 2DQ

### Estate Planning Workshop

Monday 3 June | 2:00pm – 4:00pm

Community House, South Street,  
Bromley BR1 1RH

### Everyday First Aid

Tuesday 18 June | 2:00pm – 4:00pm

Community House, South Street,  
Bromley, BR1 1RH

## Polite Notice

*about our free courses & workshops*

The Bromley Well Adult Carers team understand the time constraints on carers. We aim to put courses, groups and workshops on at times that carers have fed back to us are accessible to them. We also work very closely with Bromley Adult Education College and other organisations to provide a wide range of courses at varied times, which are all **free of charge to carers**. We kindly ask that anyone who books on any courses or workshops let us know if they are unable to attend **as soon as they know**, so we can offer the space to another carer.

If courses are not well attended, providers may be reluctant to run them again for us.

We thank you for your consideration and co-operation.

Check out our website for more info: [www.bromleywell.org.uk/events](http://www.bromleywell.org.uk/events)

## What's on for Mental Health Carers?

A Mental Health Carer is someone looking after a person with a mental health condition and these activities are specifically for them.

### Mental Health Carers Drop-ins

*No booking necessary*

**Green Parks House, Princess Royal Hospital, Farnborough Common, BR6 8NY**  
Every Wednesday 4:30pm – 5:30pm

### Mental Health Carers Support Groups

*No booking necessary*

**Ripley Arts Centre, 24 Sundridge Avenue, Bromley, BR1 2PX**  
Tue 9 April | 6:00pm – 7:30pm  
Tue 14 May | 6:00pm – 7:30pm  
Tue 11 June | 6:00pm – 7:30pm

### Mental Health Skills & Information Group

*Please call or e-mail to book your place*

**Bromley United Reformed Church, 20 Widmore Road, Bromley BR1 1RY**

Monday 29 April | 1:00pm – 3:00pm  
*Topic: Understanding the Mental Health Act and the rights of the nearest relative*  
Monday 24 June | 1:00pm – 3:00pm  
*Topic: To be confirmed*

### Contact

Please call **0203 409 5228** or e-mail [wellbeing@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:wellbeing@bromleywell.org.uk) for more information or to book

## What's on for Mutual Carers?

Bromley Well provides specialist support for Mutual Carers, aged 55+ living at home with an adult son, daughter or sibling that has a disability or long term condition.

### Mutual Carers Lunch & Workshop

*Please call 020 8466 0790 or e-mail [nikki.hassling@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:nikki.hassling@bromleywell.org.uk) to book your place*

#### Older Carers (55+) Lunch & Workshop

**St Augustine's Church, Southborough Lane, Bromley, BR2 8AT**

Fri 22 Mar | 11:15am – 2:30pm

*Speaker: Andy Craig Oakhouse Foods – Good Food Delivered*

Fri 26 Apr | 11:15am – 2:30pm

*Speaker: Claire Lovis, Thackray Williams – Mental Capacity and the Law*

Fri 24 May | 11:15am – 2:30pm

*Speaker: Dr Sandra Baum, Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust- Bereavement and Loss*

# What's on?

## Long Term Health Conditions

The Long Term Health Conditions service helps people aged 18+, living with health conditions such as arthritis, fibromyalgia, chronic pain, irritable bowel disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, COPD and many more. The service provides free, practical and emotional support to help you look after your physical and emotional wellbeing.

### Fibromyalgia Support Group

Community House, South Street,  
Bromley, BR1 1RH  
11:30am- 1:00pm  
Friday of every month

This group is for people living with Fibromyalgia and is an opportunity to share your experiences and learn from others.  
For more information call: **0208 315 1857**

### Good Health & Wellbeing Workshops

Orpington Village Hall, 311 High Street,  
Orpington, BR6 0NN

Friday 12 April | 11:00am- 12:30pm  
*Topic: Ensuring good medical care*  
Friday 19 April | 11:00am- 12:30pm  
*Topic: Planning for the future*

To book your place, please call: **020 8315 1857** or e-mail: [enquiry@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:enquiry@bromleywell.org.uk)

## Befriending Hubs

These Hubs are a safe place where older people can socialise, make friends and take part in fun activities. The weekly Hubs are aimed at people who are still mobile but might be feeling a little socially isolated. Activities in the last year have included quizzes, craft events, guest speakers, outings to local places of interest, members sharing their own enthusiasms, have-a-go sessions and board games - such as scrabble, dominos or cards - as well as a cup of tea and a nice chat. No need to book, just come a long. If you would like further information, please contact the team on: **020 8315 1868**

### Bromley

South Street Café  
Community House,  
Bromley  
BR1 1RH

Every Monday  
10:00am- 12:00pm

### Orpington

Cotmandene Community  
Centre,  
64 Cotmandene Crescent,  
Orpington BR5 2RG

Every Wednesday  
10:00am- 12:00pm

### Chislehurst

Garden Rooms  
85 High Street,  
Chislehurst  
BR7 5AG

Every Thursday  
3:15- 5:00pm

# Walking for Health



Walking for Health is England's largest network of health walks with over 375 active schemes, helping people across the country lead a more active lifestyle. Set up 14 years ago, the scheme has been improving the mental and physical well-being of thousands of people. Bromley Ramblers offer **free** weekly walks across the borough and are led by trained volunteer leaders. You do not need to book in advance, just head to the meeting point and arrive 10 minutes early if it is your first visit to fill in your Walker Registration form beforehand.

## Walking for Health Walks in Bromley

Walk Name	Meeting Point	Day	Time	Duration
Bromley Church Gardens	Bromley Central Library/ Churchill Theatre	Saturdays	10:30am	00:45
Darrick & Newstead Woods & Tugmutton Common	Outside the cricket pavillion, Tugmutton Common off Starts Hill Road	Wednesdays	02:00pm	01:00
High Elms Country Park	Beeche car park & café area	Tuesdays	10:00am	01:00
Jubilee Park	Tent Peg Lane, Crest View Drive, Petts Wood	Fridays	02:00pm	01:00
Kesley Park & Harvington Woods	Outside Kelsey Park café by the notice board	Thursdays	10:00am	01:00
St Pauls Cray- Scadbury Park	Car park at the top of Cotmandene Crescent	Mondays	09:45am	01:00
Sundridge Park (1)	Outside the Prince Frederic Pub, Nichol Lane (BR1 4DE)	Mondays	10:00am	01:00
Sundridge Park (2)	Minster Road entrance to Kings Meadow Park	Mondays	10:40am	00:15

### For more information

Please check with Walking for Health Bromley before attending any walks- as details are subject to change

[www.walkingforhealth.org.uk/walkfinder/bromley-ramblers-walking-for-health](http://www.walkingforhealth.org.uk/walkfinder/bromley-ramblers-walking-for-health)

Scheme Coordinator: Sam Walsham  
07800578095  
[samwalsham@hotmail.com](mailto:samwalsham@hotmail.com)

### Did you know?

May is **National Walking Month!**  
Therefore, we thought this would be the perfect time to start our very own  
**Carers Walks!**

Please check if you can make the date of our first walk on page 8 and register your interest with us!



# Free breaks for carers!



In our last newsletter, we told you about free breaks for carers. We have partnered with carefree; a charity who strive 'to support and sustain unpaid carers, the invisible workforce without which our social care system could not survive'. Carefree have holiday accommodation providers all over the country signed up with them and you choose where you stay. There is more information about the scheme on the carefree website; but referrals need to come through us. Please contact us if you would like more information or would like to be referred to carefree for a free break.

# We now have an allotment!

Getting outside and doing physical activity is proven to lift your mood and improve overall health. Not everyone has a garden or the time to commit to an allotment or garden of their own.

With our Carers Allotment you can tell us how much time and effort you can put in. We have lots of ideas but would very much like your input too!

Please let us know if you would be interested in being involved using the contact details below, as this will shape how often we hold groups and activities there.

Our grand opening is on:

**Wed 29 May | 2:00pm – 4:00pm**

Please contact us if you would like to attend, or if you can't make the grand opening let us know if you want to be involved in the future!



Contact us on: **020 8315 1925** or **carers@bromleywell.org.uk**

# Carers Writing Competition

We're asking carers to submit a poem or short story relating to the theme of **'happiness'** and we'd love to hear from you. You can interpret the theme in any way you like, but your work needs to **relate in some way to your life as a carer**.

We will select the winning entry to be featured in our next newsletter. The winning entrant will also receive a mystery prize!

**All** submitted entries, with author's permission, will be compiled into an anthology and distributed alongside our newsletter.

## What do I need to know?

- The competition is **free** to enter
- It's open to **all** carers and former carers
- No writing experience is needed
- Your piece can be as short as you like
- You must not exceed 1,000 words
- It does **not** have to rhyme
- Spelling and grammar are **not** taken into consideration
- This is a chance to tell us what it's like to be in your shoes



## Great! How do I enter?

Entries must be submitted by **Friday 24 May 2019**. You can email your submission to us at [carers@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:carers@bromleywell.org.uk) or send them by post to **Bromley Well Adult Carers, Community House, South Street, Bromley, BR1 1RH**. Not sure how to tell your story? Give us a call for a chat: 020 8315 1925.

## Thank you!

In our last Newsletter we asked you to submit a poem or short story relating to your caring role and specifically to the theme of **'reminiscence'**. Thank you to all those who participated in the competition – all the entries will be compiled into an anthology which we hope to publish next year. We really enjoyed reading all your entries and encourage anyone who has entered before to enter again!

The team all ranked their top three creative writing pieces; giving a score of 1-3. The scores were then all totalled and the top three scorers were awarded 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place. The top three entrants were unable to attend our Spring Forum to receive their prizes so will be receiving them shortly!

**1<sup>st</sup> place: Maureen Axford**

**2<sup>nd</sup> place: Dave Martin**

**3<sup>rd</sup> place: Mylene Lamy**

# Carers Writing Competition Winner

Congratulations to Maureen Axford- our Carers Writing Competition Winner for Spring 2019!

## Reminiscences

I want to write a poem and tell you how it is.  
How looking after someone is not always a life of bliss.  
For my someone has dementia, a man who was so bright  
That I was always asking him the answers to my plight.  
“How do I do this?” And “Where’s the way to that?”  
He would answer patiently while he helped me clean our flat.

So now I do the same for him and help him every day.  
I sometimes find it hard to find the perfect words to say.  
It is not always easy with lots of things to do, like-  
Injections, tablets, changing beds and maybe cleaning poo.  
I keep him safe and keep him calm as he always did for me  
Making sure the door is locked in case he wants to wander free.

And when he wanders back in time- a lovely time it was  
And wants to collect the kids from school  
But I do not make a fuss  
I tell him that they are off with friends although  
They are all grown up  
And he settles back and smiles at me-  
“Can I have another cup?”

And yet.....  
The days are not sad at all, we sit here for a while,  
Whilst we chat on about this and that,  
And he really makes me smile.  
A chink of light a little glimmer will surface through his mind  
He remembers when we went to Rye and how people were so kind.

What a cruel disease this really is, to delete his memories so  
But I remind him of those lovely times when we skied together in snow  
We have a smile- and I love his smile, so gentle and unaware  
That he is now the vulnerable one and I am there to care.  
Our roles have changed and this is true of one thing I am sure  
That we still love each other very much each day a little bit more!

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# Thank You!

We would like to take this opportunity to thank these service providers for their generous contribution of time and skills.

Bromley  
MINDFULNESS

[www.bromleymindfulness.org.uk](http://www.bromleymindfulness.org.uk)

Robert Mitchell led two 4-week courses on *Mindfulness for Resilience*, teaching Carers stress management techniques.



[www.baec.ac.uk](http://www.baec.ac.uk)

Bromley Adult Education College organised a number of courses for carers, including *Creative Writing: Life Stories*. They are running most of the courses in this issue.



BritishRedCross

[www.redcross.org.uk](http://www.redcross.org.uk)

British Red Cross ran a free Everyday First Aid course for carers in February and will be running another for us in June.



[www.bromleydementiasupporthub.org.uk](http://www.bromleydementiasupporthub.org.uk)

Bromley Dementia Support Hub provided us with all the information on pages 6-7 for Dementia Action Week.

## Like our Newsletter?

We are a small team and we write, design and print this newsletter ourselves in-house. Please contact us if there is something you would like us to include in future editions.

If you are receiving this newsletter in the post and you don't find it useful, please let us know and we'll save money by not sending it to you. Equally, if you are receiving a paper copy and you would prefer to receive it electronically please let us know.

If you are already receiving a paper copy please sign up to electronic updates too. We will continue to send you a paper copy but we may want to update you in between newsletter publications.

You can sign up for electronic updates on our website here:

[www.bromleywell.org.uk/our-services/carers](http://www.bromleywell.org.uk/our-services/carers)

### Contact us



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[www.bromleywell.org.uk](http://www.bromleywell.org.uk)

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