

# Adult Carers Newsletter



**“All the support makes the journey easier and more enjoyable”**

Amidst a glow of fairy lights and cheery Christmas music, 30 carers enjoyed a laugh and even a sing-song at our Carers Christmas Forum! Carers got competitive in an interactive team quiz, won hampers and gift bags in our big raffle, and tasted 5 different kinds of mince pie – along with lots of cake!

Thank you to those who participated and gave their feedback (a glimpse of which can be found on the next page). We would also like to thank our kind raffle prize donors listed on the back page.

**“A lovely, well organised afternoon. Need to go on a diet after all the mince pies. Nice to meet new people as well.”**

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

Thursday 28 March 2018  
2:30pm – 4:30pm  
Community House,  
South Street, Bromley, BR1 1RH  
**Please RSVP**

# What have we been up to?

## We held a free raffle

**“This is a wonderful organisation, you have all changed my life and given me so much support at a time when I really needed it. I have met some wonderful people and have made lots of new friends that are experiencing the same things in caring for their loved ones. So thanks again from the bottom of my heart.”**



## We had a mince pie taste test

**“My hubby is really poorly – had a wonderful afternoon. Laughter, fun, food, what more could I ask for. Sincere thanks to everyone who made this afternoon special – as it’s a wonderful break for me.”**



## We made memory books & Christmas ornaments

**“The memory book has inspired me to make another at home.”**

**“Thank you so much for all you have given me in support and encouragement. I can’t express how much I have appreciated everything. It has lifted me out of a very dark place.”**



## We learnt to use aromatherapy & give an Indian head massage

**“It’s wonderful learning a new skill for my life. I felt relaxed, confident in doing massage and making blends.”**



# Employment Support

## We asked Pierrette Mascaux, Project Manager at Working for Carers...



### Q: Can you tell us who you are and what you do?

**A:** We are a London-wide project led by Carers Trust, working in 24 boroughs across London. We offer a free and flexible service to support unpaid carers to achieve their employment, education and training goals. We practise a holistic approach to suit the complex needs of our carers/ clients.

### Q: What is the eligibility criteria to access your service?

**A:** A carer who:

- looks after a family member, relative or a friend with an illness or disability (unpaid)
- is aged 25 and over
- is able to live and work in the UK
- lives in London
- is not in any paid work

### Q: How do you support carers in getting work?

**A:** We have links with local organisations, businesses and learning providers to create training and volunteering opportunities for our carers. Carers have access to: one-to-one sessions with a dedicated Employment Personal Advisor; workshops; group activities; volunteering and

training opportunities. Specifically, the support includes:

- writing and reviewing CVs
- interview preparation techniques
- job searching and volunteering opportunities
- grants and bursary support
- advice and guidance on flexible working and self-employment

### Q: What other assistance can you provide?

**A:** We have a small flexicare fund available on our project which can help with the initial costs of going back to work. This includes clothes, transport costs and the cost of a small course if needed. We also provide advice and guidance around emergency planning.

### Q: Can you give an example of a time when you have made a difference?

**A:** Kathleen is 50 years old and cares for her mother who was diagnosed with dementia two years ago. Kathleen had previously worked in administration but gave this up when her mother's care needs became more intense. When Kathleen first met with her Employment Personal Advisor, she said she was overwhelmed by the prospect

of finding and keeping a job. However, she really wanted to return to work, and said caring for her mother had made her feel isolated.

With support from her advisor she started applying for jobs, attending interviews and finally accepted a part-time administration role within the NHS. To help Kathleen adjust to re-entering the employment market, her advisor agreed to provide her with new work attire and continued support. This included arranging a meeting with her manager to discuss her needs as a carer. Kathleen said:

**“If it wasn't for Working for Carers, I am not quite sure how I would manage.”**

### Q: How can I refer myself to your service?

Telephone **020 8699 8686**  
or email **workingforcarers@carerslewisham.org.uk**.



## Am I a carer?



Do you support a spouse, partner, family member, friend or neighbour who has a long term health condition, mental health condition or disability to carry out everyday tasks? **If so, you are a carer!**

## What support is out there for carers?

### Carer's Assessment

As a carer, you are entitled to a Carer's Assessment from Bromley Social Services. The assessment is about determining what might make **your life** easier - you may be eligible for a gym membership, support with housework, care costs and taxi fares.

You can request a Carer's Assessment from the Adult Early Intervention Team at Bromley Social Services by calling 020 8461 7777 and choosing option 3, or email them at: [adult.early.intervention@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:adult.early.intervention@bromley.gov.uk).

### Care Needs Assessment

This assessment identifies the support required for the person you care for. This may include equipment, home adaptations, a paid carer or meals delivered to your home. If deemed necessary, you will have a financial assessment to see if the council will pay towards these things.

To ask for a free Care Needs Assessment, call the Adult Early Intervention Team on 020 8461 7777 or email [adult.early.intervention@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:adult.early.intervention@bromley.gov.uk).

### Register with your GP

Registering as a carer with your GP can make your life easier. You may qualify for a free flu vaccination, home visits, joint visits with your cared-for to avoid having to visit the surgery twice, NHS services such as continence services and transport to hospital appointments, repeat prescriptions delivered to your pharmacy and supporting letters to help you access benefits.

Just ask your GP for a registration form.

### Discounts

Carers can receive discounts on all sorts of things – we listed lots in our previous newsletter! For example, you can get offers on everything from shopping to insurance by becoming a member of *CarerSmart* for free. Register online at [www.carersmart.org](http://www.carersmart.org).

Families of children with disabilities can also save money on days out by registering for a *My Max Card*. Find out more online: <https://bromley.mylifeportal.co.uk/maxcard>

## Did you know?

Looking for a homecare agency or care home? The Care Quality Commission (CQC) allows you to find out the quality of care services and check their most recent inspection results. You can check via their website: [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk) or call them on: 0300 061 6161.

## Respite care

If you can't leave the person you care for alone, there are a number of options available. You can find a directory of sitting services and care agencies in Bromley's *Adult Care & Support Services 2018-19*. Call us for a paper copy or download it free here:

<https://bromley.mylifeportal.co.uk/careandsupportdirectory/>

## Priority Services Register

Energy suppliers offer a Priority Services Register to vulnerable customers. This includes those who have a disability, a visual or hearing impairment, long term ill health or are over pensionable age.

It provides free services such as priority reconnection after power cuts, regular meter readings if you're unable to do it yourself, and bills provided in large print and braille if required. Some suppliers offer additional services, so contact your existing energy supplier to find out more. We've listed a few for you below:

British Gas: 0800 072 8625 or [www.britishgas.co.uk/Priority-Service-Register](http://www.britishgas.co.uk/Priority-Service-Register)

npower: 0800 073 3000 or [www.npower.com/help-and-support/meeting-your-needs](http://www.npower.com/help-and-support/meeting-your-needs)

EON: 0345 052 0000 or [www.eonenergy.com/for-your-home/help-and-support/extra-help](http://www.eonenergy.com/for-your-home/help-and-support/extra-help)

## Potential free breaks

Carefree works with accommodation providers to offer free cottage and hotel getaways for eligible carers. Having been referred by a carer support worker, eligible carers are invited to register with Carefree and specify their preferences for a 3 or 7 night break. Contact us to find out more!

After Umbrage offers carers a free cottage retreat in Bath. To find out more, visit:

<http://afterumbrage.org.uk/the-cottage/>



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

# What's on?

## Dementia Carers Peer Support Groups

*No booking necessary*

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

Fri 11 Jan | 2:00pm – 4:00pm

Fri 08 Feb | 2:00pm – 4:00pm

Fri 08 Mar | 2:00pm – 4:00pm

## All Carers Drop-ins

*Drop in for a chat with an advisor*

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

Wed 23 Jan | 2:00pm – 5:00pm

Wed 27 Feb | 2:00pm – 5:00pm

Wed 20 Mar | 2:00pm – 5:00pm

## Mental Health Carers Support Groups

*No booking necessary*

**Ripley Arts Centre, 24 Sundridge Avenue,  
Bromley, BR1 2PX**

Tue 08 Jan | 6:00pm – 7:30pm

Tue 12 Feb | 6:00pm – 7:30pm

Tue 12 Mar | 6:00pm – 7:30pm

## Mental Health Carers Drop-ins

*No booking necessary*

**Green Parks House, Princess Royal  
Hospital, Farnborough Common, BR6 8NY**

Every Wednesday 4:30pm – 5:30pm

## All Carers Peer Support Groups

*All carers welcome. No booking necessary*

**Azelia Hall, 258 Croydon Road,  
Beckenham, BR3 4DA**

Mon 14 Jan | 3:00pm – 5:00pm

Mon 04 Feb | 3:00pm – 5:00pm

Mon 04 Mar | 3:00pm – 5:00pm

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

Tue 12 Feb | 3:00pm – 5:00pm

Tue 12 Mar | 3:00pm – 5:00pm

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

Wed 30 Jan | 6:30pm – 8:00pm

Wed 27 Feb | 6:30pm – 8:00pm

Wed 27 Mar | 6:30pm – 8:00pm

## Mutual Carers Activities

*Please call 020 8466 0790 to book your place*

### Cookery Class

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

Fri 11 Jan | 10:30am – 2:30pm

Fri 08 Feb | 10:30am – 2:30pm

Fri 08 Mar | 10:30am – 2:30pm

### Older Carers Lunch

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

Fri 25 Jan | 11:15am – 2:30pm

Fri 22 Feb | 11:15am – 2:30pm

Fri 22 Mar | 11:15am – 2:30pm

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

## Free Workshops & Courses

*Please call or email to book your place*

### Introduction to Reflexology

10 January – 14 February (6 weeks)

Thursdays 10:00am – 12:00pm

Community House, South Street,  
Bromley, BR1 1RH

### Coping with Caring: CBT

21 January – 11 March (8 weeks)

Mondays 10:30am – 12:15pm

Cotmandene Community Resource Centre,  
64 Cotmandene Crescent,  
St Pauls Cray, BR5 2RG

### Creative Writing: Life Stories

30 January – 13 March (6 weeks)

Wednesdays 1:00pm – 3:00pm

Kentwood Centre, Kingsdale Road,  
Penge, SE20 7PR

## Free Workshops & Courses

*Please call or email to book your place*

### Upcycling Clothes & Materials

31 January – 14 March (6 weeks)

Thursdays 7:00pm – 9:00pm

Kentwood Centre, Kingsdale Road,  
Penge, SE20 7PR

### Mindfulness for Resilience in Penge

04 February – 25 February (4 weeks)

Mondays 2:00pm – 4:00pm

Melvin Hall Community Centre, Melvin Road,  
Penge, SE20 8EU

### Everyday First Aid

Monday 18 February | 2:00pm – 4:00pm

Community House, South Street,  
Bromley, BR1 1RH

### Mindfulness for Resilience in Mottingham

11 March – 01 April (4 weeks)

Mondays 6:30pm – 8:30pm

St Edward's Church, St Keverne Road,  
Mottingham, SE9 4AQ

## Activities

*Please call or email to book your place*

### Knitting for Beginners

Thursday 10 January | 2:00pm – 4:00pm

Community House, South Street,  
Bromley, BR1 1RH

If reading this electronically, click on the course or activity title for more information. If reading a paper copy, you can call us or check out our "what's on" page to find out more!  
[www.bromleywell.org.uk/events/](http://www.bromleywell.org.uk/events/)

## Mental Health Skills & Information Group

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

Bromley, Lewisham & Greenwich Mind,  
Anchor House, 5 Station Road,  
Orpington, BR6 0RZ

Monday 25 February | 1:00pm – 3:00pm

Topic: A psychiatrist and psychologist answer questions about diagnosis

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

# Money Matters

## Benefits for Carers

Please note –  
this is not  
everything that's  
available!



### Carer's Allowance

Do you care for someone for 35 hours or more a week? Are you **not** in full-time education and **not** earning more than £120 a week? You may be entitled to £64.60 per week in Carer's Allowance. You do not have to live with or be related to the person you care for to claim Carer's Allowance but they must be in receipt of a qualifying benefit; such as Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance (middle or higher rate) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

For further information or to apply,  
call: 0800 731 0297 or visit:

[www.gov.uk/carers-allowance/how-to-claim](http://www.gov.uk/carers-allowance/how-to-claim)

### Did you know?

Bromley Well can carry out a benefit check for you and even assist you with filling in the forms.

### Attendance Allowance

If you are aged 65 or over and need some help in your daily life to remain independent, you could be entitled to £57.30 at the lower rate or £85.60 at the higher rate per week in Attendance Allowance.

This benefit is **not** means tested, is tax free and will **not** reduce any other income you receive. If awarded, it may also increase your entitlement to other benefits.

For further information or to apply,  
call: 0800 731 0122 or visit:

[www.gov.uk/attendance-allowance](http://www.gov.uk/attendance-allowance)

### Council Tax Discounts & Exemptions

There are a number of discounts and exemptions available on your Council Tax. You may receive a 25% single person discount if you live alone or the person you care for is disabled or mentally impaired. Council Tax Support and Council Tax Discretionary Discount may also be available to you if you are on a low income.

For the full list, further information  
or to apply, call: 0300 303 8670, email:

[council.tax@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:council.tax@bromley.gov.uk) or visit:  
[www.bromley.gov.uk/info/59/council\\_tax\\_discount/119/council\\_tax\\_discounts\\_and\\_exemptions](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/info/59/council_tax_discount/119/council_tax_discounts_and_exemptions)

### Did you know?

You can complete an independent benefit check online that will look at your whole financial situation, including:

- Your household
- Your age and disability
- Benefits
- Housing Costs
- Council Tax

Log on to: [www.entitledto.co.uk](http://www.entitledto.co.uk) for your free assessment!



# Money Matters

## Keeping Warm in Winter

### Warmer Homes Scheme

Warmer Homes is Mayor Sadiq Khan's scheme to help Londoners save on their energy bills. If you live in London and are in receipt of benefits you may be eligible for a free boiler, insulation, double glazing or other improvements to help you heat your home affordably. You can apply if you own **or** rent your home but it's first-come, first-served, so get your application in early!

For more information, visit:  
[www.london.gov.uk/warmerhomes](http://www.london.gov.uk/warmerhomes)

### Warm Home Discount

If you receive Pension Credit or you're on a low income you may be entitled to a Warm Home Discount. This is money taken off your electricity bill by your energy supplier.

To find out more, visit: [www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme](http://www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme).

### Winter Fuel Payment

Most people born before 6 November 1953 are entitled to the Winter Fuel Payment to help with heating costs. This is a tax-free payment of between £100 and £300. To ask about your payment or make a claim, call the Winter Fuel Payment Centre on 0800 731 0160.

### Cold Weather Payment

Anyone who receives Pension Credit, or certain other benefits, should automatically be paid a Cold Weather Payment when the temperature is at 0°C (32°F) or below for seven days in a row.

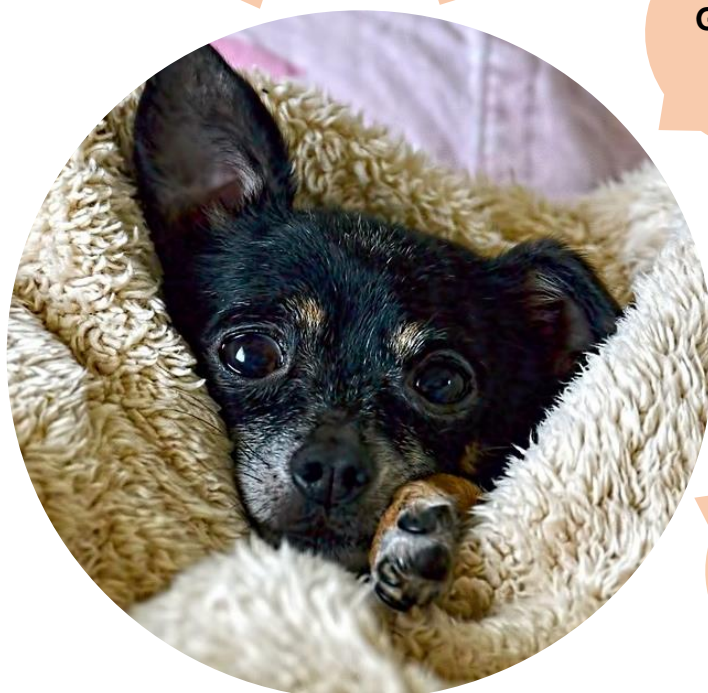
To find out more, visit:

[www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment](http://www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment)

**Stock up on food and essentials!**

**Order medications or prescriptions in advance!**

**Get your free flu jab!**



**Keep a hot water bottle or microwaveable back/ hand warmer!**

**Stay active indoors!**

### Making sure your home is safe

The London Fire Brigade offer free home fire safety visits! To book or for further information, call: 0800 028 4428 or visit: [www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-home/home-fire-safety-visits/](http://www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-home/home-fire-safety-visits/)

# Are you a Mental Health Carer?

## Book your place on the next Carers Education Programme!

### Who is the course for?

The Carers Education Programme is aimed at those caring for an adult with mental health problems. It is run by staff from Bromley Well and Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust who will support you to gain more information about mental illness and how to cope with the challenges that may occur for you as a carer.

### You will learn:

- About mental health diagnoses
- New skills and strategies to help you in your caring role
- How to gain support for yourself and family members
- How caring for someone with mental health problems impacts on you and your relationships

### Will it be difficult?

We appreciate that, for some people, attending a course like this can be a little daunting. However, we hope that as you get to know your facilitators and the other course attendees, your confidence in participating in discussions and asking questions will grow.



**30 January – 20 March (8 weeks)**

**Wednesdays 6:00pm – 9:00pm**

**Green Parks House, Princess Royal Hospital,  
Farnborough Common, Orpington, BR6 8NY**

Contact **07718403572** or  
**[helen.brushett@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:helen.brushett@bromleywell.org.uk)** to book your place

# Carers Writing Competition

We're asking carers to submit a poem or short story relating to the theme of '**reminiscence**' 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.

In March 2019, we will select the winning entry to be featured in our next newsletter. The top three entrants will also receive a mystery prize each!

**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 **Monday 25 February 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.

"Who cares for that carer?" I hear a man say,  
"Her day blends with night, and then night becomes day.  
The cooking, the cleaning, the hospital trips,  
The changing, the bathing, wiping food from his lips.  
The meltdowns, the tears - so hard to endure,  
What keeps her from walking out that door?"

I'll tell you what stops me from leaving each day,  
And what gets me through when I don't want to stay.  
It begins with an 'I' and ends with an 'e',  
It's a power, a force, emanating from me.  
An empathic heart, a gift from above,  
I do this my friend, in the name of LOVE.

**A poem by Megan Jenkins, submitted to Carers UK in 2017**



# Thank You!

Thank you to these businesses for their kind donations towards the Carers Christmas Forum raffle!



[www.bluebirdcare.co.uk/bromley](http://www.bluebirdcare.co.uk/bromley)

Blue Bird Care led a *Moving & Handling* workshop, giving carers practical skills to assist them in the physically demanding aspects of their caring roles.



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

Bromley Adult Education College led a number of courses for Carers, including *Confidence & Assertiveness*, *Carers Get Online* and *Carers: Looking After Yourself*.

**“Thank you for your support and motivation - very glad I made the call... just having someone to speak to is a lovely reminder as one does feel very alone.”**

## Contact us



020 8315 1925



carers@bromleywell.org.uk



www.bromleywell.org.uk

## Follow us



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