

Sunderland Carers' Centre

Newsletter

January 2013

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of Sunderland Carers' Centre took place on Tuesday 23rd October at the Stadium of Light and was attended by 137 carers and friends from other agencies who were welcomed by The Chairperson of Sunderland Carers' Centre, The Venerable Stuart Bain.

Stuart spoke about the major changes that have happened this year, including the retirement of Senior Manager, Ailsa Martin, the move from Toward Road to Thompson Park, the union of The Princess Royal Trust for Carers and Crossroads to become Carers Trust, and the Centre's achievement in gaining the PQASSO quality standard. He also formally announced the appointment of Graham Burt as the new Senior Manager.

Stuart gave thanks to staff for their commitment and to those individuals and organisations who support and work in collaboration with the Centre. Tribute was made to retiring Board members, Jenny Cooke, Dorothy Dobinson, Norman Hildrew, Alan Lindsley and Marjorie Trueman, who had served the maximum time of 6 years on the Board, and welcome was given to newly appointed Board members, Elaine Bell, Mike Brewster, Elaine Cruikshanks, Christine Dawson and Sue Ingham.

There was an address by the Mayor of Sunderland, Councillor Iain Kaye, who spoke about his pleasure and pride in having the Carers' Centre as one of his two mayoral charities. Architect, Ged McCormack then gave a presentation about how the old Thompson Park nursery, which had been empty for over five years, was transformed into the new Carers' Centre premises.

The meeting ended with the drawing of raffle prizes – the first prize being a beautiful hand-knitted blanket created and kindly donated by our former volunteer receptionist, Susan White. A fantastic £190 was raised on the day. Thank you to Susan and to everyone who bought raffle tickets. The money raised will go towards the work of the Carers' Centre.

Video footage from the AGM can be viewed on our website:

www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk/agm2012.html



Pictured, from left to right, are the Mayor of Sunderland, Councillor Iain Kaye, Susan White, Barbara Blyth (the winner of the blanket) and the Mayoress of Sunderland, Councillor Barbara McClellan.



NHS South of Tyne and Wear
serving Gateshead Primary Care Trust, South Tyneside Primary Care Trust and
Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust

Sunderland
City Council

carerstrust
a Network Partner

New Senior Manager

Sunderland Carers' Centre is pleased to announce that our new Senior Manager is Graham Burt. Graham started work at the Carers' Centre on 3rd December 2012 and is very excited to be taking over the role from Ailsa Martin. He has worked with the Carers' Centre for a number of years whilst in various posts at Sunderland City Council. In the past he has also been a member of the Board of Sunderland Carers' Centre.

Graham says "I am really looking forward to working with the team at Sunderland Carers' Centre and to meeting as many carers as possible. I feel honoured to be representing the Centre and the great number of carers in Sunderland who rely on the work of the Centre to support them through difficult times. I realise following on from Ailsa will be a massive task but I am determined that the way the Centre supports carers continues to the very highest standards possible. I am also looking forward to meeting the many partners who work with and alongside the Carers' Centre to support and recognise the role of carers in Sunderland."



Satisfaction Survey

Sunderland Carers' Centre wants to give as good a service as possible to carers and would like your views on the services we provide. We would like to know what we are doing well and what we are not doing well so we can improve our service. If you receive the newsletter by post please complete the enclosed survey and return it to us in the freepost envelope provided. If you receive the newsletter by email please complete the attached survey and email it to info@sunderlandcarers.co.uk – if you would prefer to complete it by hand please email us or ring 549 3768 and we will send you a printed survey and freepost envelope.

Keep warm – keep well

The Department of Health has produced an online leaflet called 'Keep warm keep well' for the over 60s, low income families and people with a disability or a long-term health condition with advice on staying well in cold weather and the financial help that is available. Read the leaflet on the Publications page of our website. The guide's top tips are:

- Get your free flu jab if you are aged 65 or over, pregnant, have certain medical conditions, live in a residential or nursing home, or are the main carer for an older or disabled person.
- Keep warm. By setting your heating to the right temperature (18-21°C or 65-70°F), you can keep your home warm and your bills as low as possible.
- Layer your clothing and wear shoes with a good grip if you need to go outside.
- Try to make sure that you have hot meals and drinks regularly throughout the day and keep active in the home if you can.
- Get financial support. There are grants, benefits and sources of advice available to make your home more energy efficient, improve your heating or help with bills.
- Have your heating and cooking appliances checked – carbon monoxide is a killer.

Calling all male carers

Are you or do you know a male carer? We have a Male Carer Group that have an active annual programme, which includes social activities e.g. a day at York Races, ten pin bowling, supervised walks etc. This is an informal group of carers from all backgrounds and caring situations. We usually get together on the first Thursday of each month, between 1 – 3pm (depending on outings or activities). We have room for more male carers and we would encourage new members to join. For more information or a copy of our Male Carer Programme for 2013, please contact Dave or Gina on 549 3768.

Transition Group

The next meeting of the Transition Support Group is on Thursday 31st January, 10.30am – 12 noon, at the Carers' Centre. It is open to all carers of young people going through transition from children's services to adult services. Any queries please contact Eibhlin or Helen on 549 3768.

Carers Breaks and Opportunities Scheme

The Carers Breaks and Opportunities Scheme offers carers the chance to take a break from their caring responsibilities and take part in opportunities or activities that they would like to do and that will help to maintain or improve their quality of life. It can also provide care to the person cared for while the carer is away from their caring responsibilities. Examples of the types of breaks or opportunities that carers can apply for include:

- Funding to enable the carer and the person they care for have a break together but where help is provided with caring, so the carer has a break from their caring responsibilities
- Funding to enable the carer to try something new, for example, courses for leisure or learning, gym membership and even help with the costs of driving lessons to enable the carer to meet the needs of their caring role
- Funding to help groups of carers to try something new or take a break together

This is a free service and the decision to give funding is based on the carer's individual caring circumstances, not their income.

The project reaches carers throughout the city and from all caring situations. The Scheme is open to adult carers, parent carers of disabled children, young carers and group applications. The breaks chosen are often very creative and are always focussed on what individuals need. Carers are encouraged to focus on their own health needs as caring for someone can take its toll. We have seen very positive results from the scheme because carers feel so much better in themselves to carry on caring knowing they have something to look forward to.

Carers can apply for up to £500 once a year (£250 for young carers). Each application is looked at in its own right as caring situations can be very different. The application goes before a Panel who consist of Team Managers from Health, Housing and Adult Services, Children's Services, carers and ex-carers. There are two Facilitators based at Sunderland Carers' Centre who will complete the application form on behalf of the carer then start the application process. There is some criteria to be met to see if carers are eligible to apply for a grant.

For more information or to apply to the scheme please contact the Carers' Centre on 549 3768.

Young Carers need your help!

The Sunderland Young Carers in the 16-25 group were offered the opportunity by Mount Kilimanjaro First Aid Community Programme to do some voluntary work in Tanzania in summer 2013. After a long think and a lot of consideration we have decided that four of our young carers: Becky, Rachael, David and Gabi are going to Africa next Summer! We are all very excited and grateful to be given this opportunity and we are determined to make a difference to those children living in poverty. It's going to be a long and difficult journey raising £2,000 but we know we will have the full support from the community to make it possible!

From Gabi Neale, young carer

To be able to go to Africa the young carers need to raise £2,000 each. If you would like to make a donation please contact the Carers' Centre on 549 3768.



Learning Disabilities

Do you look after someone with a learning disability? GP surgeries all across Sunderland are signed up to providing an annual health check for people with learning disabilities. Find out from your surgery how the person you care for can access this service. Many more surgeries have signed up to the health check now so get back to them if they were not providing this service before as they almost certainly will be now. Most importantly while you are there don't forget to ask for **your carer's health check** to which you are entitled! If you have any questions about this please contact Eibhlin Inglesby at the Carers' Centre on 549 3768.

Standing Commission for Carers visits the Carers' Centre

On 6th November 2012, Sunderland Carers' Centre hosted a visit by the Standing Commission for Carers which is a body that advises National Government on carers' issues. The purpose of the visit was a fact finding venture to understand how services for carers in Sunderland are both commissioned and delivered in the broadest sense as well as to hear about specific examples.

The Commission representatives were Anne Smyth, Christine Osborne and Robina Mallett. We were also joined by representatives from the Primary Care Trust, The Clinical Commissioning Group, Health Housing and Adult Services, City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust, Northumberland Tyne and Wear Foundation NHS Trust and NHS South of Tyne and Wear Trust.

The Commission members met several carers who were at meetings at the centre during the day as well as hearing from some carers on specific issues such as carers' breaks, carer representation and young carer provision.

The Commission gave very good feedback about the Carers' Centre services and about the excellent level of partnership working with statutory agencies seeing the Carers' Centre as a 'critical friend' to statutory bodies in order to ensure that carers are identified, recognised and valued.

We, at Sunderland Carers' Centre, would like to thank the Commission for their visit and also thank our statutory colleagues for their commitment, support and attendance at what was a very enjoyable day.



Have a coffee with us!

We realise that sometimes carers need to have a bit of a breather – just to have a coffee and a chat. It doesn't have to be about anything specific but it's good to be able to talk to other carers who understand. With this in mind we have decided to run a coffee morning and evening every month for any carer to pop into. It doesn't matter who you care for or how old they are (or how old or young you are!). A member of staff will be there to organise refreshments and give any specific advice if necessary but the aim is to be relaxed and 'chill'!

The get-togethers will be at the Carers' Centre on the 3rd Monday of each month from 10.30am – 12 noon and on the 1st Thursday of each month in the evening from 6.30 – 8pm. If you have any queries please don't hesitate to call Eibhlin (Eileen), Vera or Karen on 549 3768. Otherwise we will look forward to seeing you there. No need to book, just come along. The next dates will be Monday 21st January at 10.30am – 12 noon and Thursday 7th February at 6.30 – 8pm.

Parking

The Carers' Centre has its own car park for use by staff, carers and visitors, but sometimes it may be full. If this is the case, we have kindly been given permission to park in the Wearmouth Colliery Welfare Sports and Social Club car park located across the street. There is also a car park in Thompson Park itself (next to the basketball court) – access is via Carley Road.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information in this newsletter is correct. Sunderland Carers' Centre can accept no liability for errors and omissions and can not recommend products or services. Views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of Sunderland Carers' Centre.

The Carers' Centre is open
Monday to Friday 9am-5pm.

Tel: 0191 549 3768
(Answerphone after 5pm)

Sunderland Carers' Centre, Thompson Park,
Thompson Road, Sunderland SR5 1SF.

Email: info@sunderlandcarers.co.uk
Website: www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk
Twitter: [@sunderlandcarer](https://twitter.com/sunderlandcarer)

This newsletter can be made available in large print, braille, audio and other languages.

Company limited by guarantee No. 5842011 Registered in England and Wales
Registered Charity No. 1118502