

Carers In Touch



The free newsletter for Carers in
Staffordshire

WINTER 2021

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

Welcome to the latest edition of **Carers Together**.

This is the time of year we remind you about the importance of your own health, ensuring you are well is so important as family Carers have a tendency to neglect their own health and wellbeing. We encourage you all to have the free flu jab you are entitled to as a family Carer. This can be accessed via your GP practice. At present, we know, on some occasions, gaining appointments to see a GP is difficult. We can support you if this is the case. Alternatively you can feedback to Healthwatch (0800 051 8371 or enquiries@healthwatchstaffordshire.co.uk) if you are struggling to get through to your GP and they will follow it up for you.

As we are heading into the festive season, we hope you can have a restful Christmas and a happy new year.



CASS The Carers Association
Carers Advice Line

01785 606675

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 10am - 4pm
Free information, support and advice for family Carers in Staffordshire

CASS The Carers Association registered Charity Number: 1086979. Limited by Guarantee in England & Wales no. 04184030 Address: 56 Tollgate Court, Tollgate Drive, Stafford ST16 3HS



Carers Together Online

Many of you are still feeling the effects of the pandemic, with disruptions to routines, lack of respite, isolation and financial hardship. When our support services altered because of restrictions, Carers Together was born - a weekly online support group for Carers across Staffordshire. An opportunity to meet with others, regardless of social restrictions. The group has gone from strength to strength and has seen

friendships blossom. The group is very much Carer led and the direction falls in line with what Carers (you) want and need from the group.

If you are interested in joining Carers Together please get in touch to book onto the sessions by ringing the Carers Advice Line (see above). If you are not registered with us you can also book and register free of charge by using the same contact number (the Carers Advice Line).

CASS Service Update . . .



Carers Together Community

Get together again with CASS and our **new Carers Together Community groups**. We are looking forward to welcoming family Carers and the person they care for, for a coffee, chat and a catch up beginning in January.

The group will be held at **The Haling Dene Centre in Penkridge (ST19 5DT), every 3rd Wednesday of the month** starting on the 19th January 2022.

Booking is essential and Carers **must book each month** via the Carers Advice Line to confirm their place. To ensure everyone's safety we will be checking temperatures on arrival and social distancing will be in place. You need to be a current family Carer to attend this group.

Digital Buddy Scheme



We were pleased to receive funding from The Postcode Neighbourhood Trust this year to set up our Digital Buddy Scheme. The pandemic highlighted the digital divide between those who have the resources and opportunities to access the internet and those who do not. Our scheme is enabling those who are digitally isolated to access the internet with a free 6 month loan of a tablet and internet access.

In addition there is 1 to 1 support for Carers to get the best out of the internet.

If you are interested in joining our scheme, or know of a family Carer who may be interested we would love to hear from you. For more information call our Digital Buddy (Megan) on Wednesdays, Thursdays and

Fridays on 01785 222365



Caring and Support Skills Workshops

Throughout 2022 our Caring and Support Skills Workshops will be focusing on different groups of Carers. The workshops are tailored to specific caring roles to provide relevant support and information. Carers can increase knowledge over different topics to enable them to feel confident, supported and safe in their caring role. These are currently being held online, so Carers across the south of the county can access them. We have partnered with numerous local services to ensure Carers have the opportunity to explore help in their local community.

Dates for 2022:

Starting January - Parent Carers
 Starting February - Managing changes
 Starting March - Dementia Carers
 Starting April - Caring Day to Day
 Starting June - Health and Wellbeing
 Starting July - Moving On

To book call Mandy (Carers Skill Coordinator) on 07740418643



Local Life . . .



Reducing Household Bills—Beat The Cold



If you are struggling to keep warm and pay your energy bills this winter and this is causing you worry, you can speak to someone from [Beat The Cold](#) to see what help is available. Beat The Cold can advise you about reducing cost and waste; paying for fuel—or finding the best tariff or switching companies; the warm home discount and priority service register or much more call 0800 3892258.



Did you know there are offers, benefits and discounts

available exclusively for carers and people with care needs?

CarerSmart is making life a little easier for carers! It is a club from Carers Trust, the UK's largest carers charity. It is open to carers, people with care needs, staff and volunteers across the Carers Trust network. Joining is easy and free.

CarerSmart

Once you're a member, you can benefit from a wide range of offers, including:

- Cashback on shopping from numerous high street retailers
- Best rates from energy providers
- Reductions on insurance renewals
- Discounts on holidays and travel arrangements
- Reduced price lifestyle activities
- Free legal advice services
- And much more.... You can register at www.carersmart.org



Community Transport

Staffordshire County Council list a number of community transport schemes that run throughout our area. Each are run by not for profit or charitable organisations. Fares are kept to a minimum and with **some of the schemes Carers travel for free**. They may prioritise medical appointments, but they are also aimed at providing transport for shopping trips and also to enable people to meet up with social groups. Community Link Stafford offer wheelchair accessible vehicles: contact your area provider to check if this is needed for your journey.



The available schemes and contacts numbers can be found on the [Staffordshire County Council website here](#)

Winter Carer Checklist

- Get your free Flu Jab
- Write a 'What If' plan—for those unexpected situations this winter
- Stock up— medication & food in case of bad weather or illness
- Register with CASS— you can call our Advice Line for any queries that pop up
- Check if you are eligible for the Cold Weather Payment and/or the Winter Fuel Payment
- Stay warm, well and enjoy the festivities.

Call 105 in the event of a power cut It's free of charge and will put you through to your [local network operator](#) who can give you help and advice

**POWER CUT?
CALL 105**

A Christmas Bonus for CASS?

Don't forget if you are treating others for Christmas or even treating yourself—you could treat us too, **without spending a penny more!** Please sign up to easyfundraising—it's easy and completely FREE! 6,100 shops and sites will donate to us when you do your usual online shopping with them—**at no extra cost to you!** To find out more and to support CASS you can visit the [Easy Fundraising website](#)

You can also shop over at Amazon and they will donate to your chosen charity, at **no extra cost to you too.** Head to [Smile.Amazon](#) to get started.



Carers are always at the core of the services we provide. If you have any general feedback, observations, improvements or comments to make about our services at CASS please feel free to email enquiries@carersinformation.org.uk or call 01785 222365 (*Wednesday, Thursday, Friday*)

TRUSTEE VACANCY

Are you looking to make a difference to the lives of Carers? We are seeking enthusiastic volunteers to join our Board of Trustees. Our Board contributes to the development of CASS. The board meet up quarterly, at the moment this is virtually. Call 01785 256313 (*Monday—Friday*)



Carers Advice Line - 01785 606675 *Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
10am—4pm*

Carers Wellbeing & Advice Officer – Liz

We will be saying goodbye to our current Carers Wellbeing & Advice Officer, Liz, at the start of December. Liz has been influential in relaunching our Carers Advice Line over the past 18 months, hosting our Carers Together group and working with GP surgery's across Staffordshire in our campaign to raise Carers Awareness. We want to thank Liz for all of her hard work during her time with CASS and wish her the best of luck in the future.

Please keep your eyes peeled as we will be introducing our new Carers Wellbeing & Advice Officer very soon.

Registering with your GP

It is a great idea to register as a Carer at your GP practice. As a registered Carer your GP may be able to support you with flexible appointments, arrange repeat prescriptions, book double appointments to see you and the person you are caring for and provide additional information and advice on the medical condition the person you are caring for has so you feel more confident in providing the right care.

Speak to your GP practice and ask to be registered as a Carer today.

Emergency Advice and Support Contacts

If you need support over the winter period, there are several support numbers you can contact

Staffordshire County Council Contacts

Social Care team: 0300 111 8010

First Response Team: 0800 1313 126

Reporting Abuse (adult): 0345 604 2719

Emergency Duty Team: 0345 604 2886

(Out of office hours 5pm - 9pm, Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays)

NHS Non Emergency: 111

In an emergency call 999

Carers UK Helpline: 0808 808 7777

(Mon - Fri 9am - 6pm)

Family Line: 0808 802 6666 (9am - 9pm)

Staffordshire Mental Health Helpline:

0808 800 2234 *(open 24 hours)*

Samaritans: 116 123 (open 24 hours)

Southern Staffordshire Urgent Mental Health

Helpline:

0808 196 3002 *(open 24 hours)*

Staffordshire Women's Aid Helpline: 0300 330

5959 *(open 24 hours)*

Citizens Advice: 0808 278 7874

Crime Stoppers: 0800 555 111

British Red Cross Support Line: 0808 196 3651

(10am - 6pm)



Contacting CASS

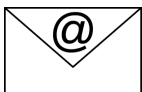
To speak to a specific member of our team - please see the contact numbers below

Carers Wellbeing & Advice Officer & Carers Together Online: 01785 606675

Carers Skills Coordinator (Workshops): 07740418643

Digital Buddy Scheme / Communications Officer: 01785 222365 / 07793579012

Carers Together in the Community (Penkridge): 01785 606675



enquiries@carersinformation.org.uk



www.carersinformation.org.uk



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[@CASSwecare](https://twitter.com/CASSwecare)



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A company limited by guarantee in England No. 04184030
S6 Tollgate Court, Tollgate Drive, Stafford ST16 3HS

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*To subscribe,
contact our team
on 01785 606675*