



Welcome to YOUR Spring edition of Caring News!

In our last edition we shared the exciting news of our rebrand.

Carers & Communities, Navigating Life's Journeys aims to capture all we offer as an organisation, while emphasising the importance of building connections in communities to help carers get the support they deserve.

The past few months have been truly a heartwarming time for us, filled with support and enthusiasm from our partners, stakeholders, and those we serve. Our launch celebration at our lovely shop in Droitwich was an important reminder of the nearly 30 years of

dedication supporting carers and why keeping carers at the heart of all we do and the services we provide to serve our communities, is essential.

Spring is a season of renewal, and in the spirit of our refreshed identity, this edition encourages you to make self-care a priority - even in the smallest of ways. While many of us start the year with resolutions to eat better, move more, or try something new, winter can often feel slow, heavy, and a little uninspiring.

Just as nature begins to reawaken, we invite you to gently do the same. Take a moment to pause, breathe, and consider how

you might care for yourself as you step into the new season.

In this issue, you'll find practical tips and a helpful checklist designed to inspire small, positive steps toward your own wellbeing. We know that caring can sometimes feel challenging, but remember - you don't have to face those moments alone. If you ever feel overwhelmed in your caring role, we're here to support you.

So take a moment for yourself: settle in, enjoy a warm cuppa, and explore our latest news, events, and insights. We hope this edition gives you the space to recharge, reset, and take good care of yourself.

WHAT'S INSIDE

Caring News
Well-being.
Caring & Me.
PAGES 2-3

Up & Coming Dates
Listings of activities
PAGE 4

More News
Carers Allowance.
Overpayments Advice.
Disability & Health Benefits.
PAGE 5

CEO Words
Shop & Support Us.
PAGE 6

More News
Carer Voice.
PAGE 7

How to get in touch
PAGE 8

Carers & Communities
Navigating Life's Journeys



OUR LAUNCH

Note - You can read more about our shop and how you can support us on page 6.



Caring and taking care of your own emotional mental health and well-being is not always easy.

In fact, we know it can be very challenging.

Carers UK highlights the very real pressures carers experience. Their State of Caring 2025 survey found that caring can take a toll on both physical and emotional health, with many carers reporting increased **stressor anxiety, and low mood.**

At the same time, we also know that carers often put their own needs aside, continuing to care even when they feel close to breaking point.

These findings may feel difficult to read, but they also serve as an important reminder: **if you're**

struggling, you are far from alone. Many carers share similar feelings - and recognising this is the first step toward making positive changes for your own wellbeing.

This is why taking even small moments for yourself matter. Every small act of self-care, however simple, can help protect your health and restore your energy. In the following pages you'll find practical ideas that other carers have found helpful.

Being well - and caring well - isn't only about your mental and emotional health. For many carers, it also means having the space, stability and support to manage day to day life with confidence. It can be 'getting your ducks in a row,' getting something organised, understanding your financial situation, or knowing exactly what support you're entitled to and when and how to ask for it.

It can be taking a break, better understanding the needs of the person or people you care for or having time to understand your own caring role. For some, it's making time to do something purely for that has absolutely nothing to do with caring. It could be sharing a meaningful moment with the person you care for to do something that you've always enjoyed together.

The services we offer go a long way to support carers with this. You

We have also included details of organisations that can provide extra support if you are struggling with your mental health.

Most importantly, please remember that **we are here for you.** If you need advice, a listening ear, or guidance on where to turn next, don't hesitate to get in touch. And please share our details with any friends or family who are in caring roles and may benefit from our support.

might want to access one of our legal and financial sessions or attend one of our activities. You might need information, advice, support, or a listening ear. For a full range of what's on offer, all of which is free to access for unpaid carers, please see pages 4 and 5.

We also have lots of carer information and what we provide on our website - practical solutions, emotional support, health and wellbeing and legal and financial information. Of course, you can give us a call or email us, and we will be happy to help you.

Finally, one of our team, who is long-standing member of staff and has supported carers for many years advises: "Aiming for progress not perfection."

Whatever wellbeing looks like for you, **each small step matters.** Taking action to look after your own needs isn't selfish - it's a vital part of

sustaining your ability to care. And you deserve that care just as much as anyone else.

Here are some ideas that the teams have put together to kickstart or continue your self-care journey.

- Learn ways to relax 
- Keep a diary 
- Take a break from technology 
- Talk with a friend 
- Dance - yep, put on a good tune and boogie away 
- Get some daylight 
- Join one of our events, activities or training sessions 
- Plan for difficult times 
- Asking for help is a sign of strength 
- 10 minute mini workout, or whatever you can manage, stretch 
- Get outdoors in nature 

More information can be found here by scanning these QR Codes:

Finally, if you require support in your caring role, please do get in touch with us. You are not on your own and we can help. We are here for you.

-  READ MORE Samaritans
-  READ MORE Mental Health
-  READ MORE Activebeat
-  READ MORE Mind

Caring & Me

Our Caring & Me leaflet is shared in our welcome pack but may be a useful reminder and checklist for you to use and keep.

When you are supporting someone else, caring can often become all-consuming. It's easy for your own needs to slip to the bottom of the list.

It is at moments like this when you should take some time for yourself to think about how you are balancing your caring role with everything else. However, we know that it can be difficult to know where to start.

To help, we've put together a checklist to guide your thinking.

You can use it to reflect on different aspects of your caring role and how you're feeling about them. Some statements may highlight areas where small, positive changes could help you retain a sense of balance.

Try writing down your thoughts against each statement to see how you feel about them. You can return to your notes from time to time to see what's changed and to track your progress. It is a gentle way to check in with yourself - and make caring for you part of the routine.

Please remember that you can call the **Carers Hub Helpline on 0300 012 4272** to receive any help and advice or email us or use the web chat to get in touch. All our details can be found on the back page.

We are here to help.

My Health & Wellbeing	My Thoughts
I am able to manage my own health conditions	
My caring role has an impact on me physically	
I get enough sleep	
My caring role has an impact on my mental health	
I am able to manage feelings of stress	
I feel in control most of the time	
Relationships & Time for Me	
I am able to see my friends & family	
I feel that I have a balance between my caring role and doing things that I enjoy	
I am able to go shopping & visit my GP & dentist	
Caring & Me	
I feel confident to fulfil my caring role	
I feel safe fulfilling my caring role	
Money	
I have concerns regarding money	
Future Planning	
I have a plan if there is an emergency	
I know how to get a break if I need one	
Work & Education	
I am able to work/volunteer without any problems	
After reading this information the first thing I am going to do is ...	

Learning

MOVING WITH CONFIDENCE

It's essential as carers you are confident with safe moving and handling to prevent hurting ourselves and the person we look after.

BOOK NOW
6th MAY
10:30am-12:30pm
Location TBC

BOOK NOW
7th JULY
10:30am-12:30pm
Location TBC

BOOK NOW
9th SEPTEMBER
10:30am-12:30pm
Location TBC

CARERS ESSENTIALS SESSION ONLINE

This introduction to some of the ways carers can begin to access practical help and support.

BOOK NOW
16th APRIL
10:00am-11:00am
Online

BOOK NOW
12th MAY
10:00am-11:00am
Online

BOOK NOW
17th JUNE
10:00am-11:00am
Online

BOOK NOW
16th JULY
10:00am-11:00am
Online

BOOK NOW
18th AUGUST
10:00am-11:00am
Online

DEMENTIA TOOLKIT

Join Carers & Communities and the experts to cover the different types of Dementia.

BOOK NOW
15th APRIL
10:30am-12:30pm
Online & Redditch

BOOK NOW
11th JUNE
10:30am-12:30pm
Online & Bromsgrove

BOOK NOW
4th AUGUST
10:30am-12:30pm
Online & Malvern

FALLS & FRAILITY SKILLS

Risk-check the living space and situation of the person you care for.

BOOK NOW
3rd JUNE
10:30am-12:30pm
Worcester

BOOK NOW
20th AUGUST
10:30am-12:30pm
Online & Tenbury

BOOK NOW
26th OCTOBER
10:30am-12:30pm
Online & Kidderminster

PRACTICAL FIRST AID

Having up to date First Aid skills can make a significant difference to your confidence in that situation.

BOOK NOW
26th MAY
10:30am-12:30pm
Online & Evesham

BOOK NOW
29th JULY
10:30am-12:30pm
Worcester

Wellbeing

HEARTHMATH

Designed to help you feel calmer, clearer, and more in control, especially when life gets overwhelming.

BOOK NOW
15th MAY
10:30am-11:30am
Online & Bromsgrove

THERAPEUTIC WRITING SESSIONS FOR CARERS

These NEW monthly online sessions are a gentle, nurturing space designed especially for carers.

BOOK NOW
29th APRIL
10:00am-12:00pm
Online

BOOK NOW
3rd JUNE
10:00am-12:00pm
Online

BOOK NOW
24th JUNE
10:00am-12:00pm
Online

BOOK NOW
29th JULY
10:00am-12:00pm
Online

BOOK NOW
26th AUGUST
10:00am-12:00pm
Online

Legal & Financial

LEGAL AND FINANCIAL

Join Solicitor Chris Milne and Carers & Communities for all the essentials.

BOOK NOW
7th APRIL
10:30am-12:30pm
Online & Kidderminster

BOOK NOW
3rd JUNE
10:30am-12:30pm
Online & Malvern

BOOK NOW
6th August
10:30am-12:30pm
Online & Bromsgrove

PREPARING TO PAY FOR CARE

Worried about care home fees? Join our expert-led online event and get the answers you need.

BOOK NOW
13th AUGUST
10:00am-12:00pm
Online & Worcester

CARERS & CARING MATTERS: THE BENEFITS BOOSTER ONLINE ONLY

Benefits explained and all your questions answered by an expert from Society Matters CIC.

BOOK NOW
21st APRIL
10:00am-1:30pm
Online

BOOK NOW
21st JULY
10:00am-1:30pm
Online

We are pleased to announce that when you book your spot for an event, there is now the option to make a voluntary donation.



Any contributions you make will go back into supporting carers.

Thank you!

NEWS ARTICLES



Overpayments Advice

Carers Allowance and overpayments can cause confusion and anxiety. Carers UK has some advice on what to do if you receive a notice of overpayment:

"An **overpayment** is when you receive more money than the amount you should have been paid, usually for a certain benefit like Carer's Allowance.

When claiming a benefit like Carer's Allowance, it's important to remember you have a responsibility to keep the Carer's Allowance Unit (Disability and Carers Service in Northern Ireland)

informed of changes to your circumstances as these could affect your entitlement. Naturally, it could come as a shock to receive a notification that you have been overpaid and are being asked to pay money back. Many others will have been in a similar situation, and while it may feel daunting, it's important not to panic or put off the issue. The government has now improved the letters that they send to carers. These include information about how much the overpayment might be, to what time periods it relates and how it was worked out. Don't hesitate to seek professional guidance if needed and see our **'Support with overpayments'** page for further details."



Carers UK

Carers Allowance

If you spend at least 35 hours a week caring for someone with an illness or disability, you may be eligible for extra money called Carer's Allowance. **It is paid at a rate of £83.30 per week (2025/26).**

This is set to increase in April 2026. For the 2026/27 financial year (starting April 2026), the weekly Carer's Allowance rate is set to increase to **£86.45** (up from £83.30 in 2025/26). The earnings threshold for eligibility will also rise to **£204 per week**. These changes are designed to help more carers maintain eligibility while working.

For more information on benefits and rates you can find here:



gov.uk website

Disability & Health Benefits

In March 2025, the Government published its Pathways to Work Green Paper, detailing plans to reform the welfare system. This included proposals to make substantial cuts to Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and carers' benefits.

Thanks to significant pressure from unpaid carers and disabled people, the Government had to make important changes to the proposed legislation, including removing aspects which would have seen 150,000 carers lose their benefits entitlements by the end of the decade.

On 1 July, during the Second Reading of the Universal Credit and Personal Independence Payment Bill, Sir Stephen Timms MP, Minister for Social

Security and Disability, confirmed that the Government would remove all provisions relating to Personal Independence Payment (PIP) - and carers' benefits - from the Bill. This means:

- There will be no changes to PIP or carers' benefits as originally proposed.
- Any future changes to PIP will only be introduced after Autumn 2026, and only once the Government's full, co-produced review of PIP has been completed.

These were significant changes to the Bill, achieved through the vital campaigning of thousands of carers and disabled people who united against the proposed cuts to PIP.

This article from Carers UK can be found here:



At Carers & Communities, we recognise that the benefits system is complex and can be daunting to navigate.

Did you know we provide free to access benefits sessions for unpaid carers? We have sessions arranged throughout 2026, in partnership with Society Matters.

In this specialist session, we cover all things benefits with carers as the focus.

Find out what financial support you could be entitled to and join one of our online sessions. More details about these and all our events, can be found on our events page.



A few words... from our CEO

In our last edition of Caring News, we shared the thinking behind our new name - **Carers & Communities**. It reinforces our responsibility to support not just individual carers, but the wider environments that shape their wellbeing.

Two months on, the feedback from partners and friends has been overwhelmingly positive. The brand is helping us communicate more clearly what we stand for, why collaboration matters, and the role each of our services play in supporting carers effectively. I've picked out a few upcoming national changes highlighting why this matters.

The Government's ongoing review of employment rights for unpaid carers continues throughout 2026, including how the new unpaid

carer's leave is working and whether there is a case for introducing paid carer's leave.

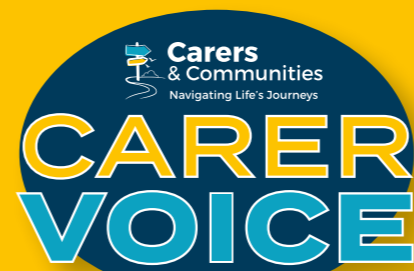
From April 2026, carer benefits will increase, including a rise in Carer's Allowance and a higher earnings threshold, giving more carers the ability to stay in work while keeping their entitlement. The Government has also accepted the findings of the Sayce Review, meaning many carers affected by historic overpayment errors will have their cases reviewed and, where appropriate, debts reduced or refunded.

Alongside these changes, wider adult social care reform continues, with the Independent Commission on Adult Social Care due to publish interim findings in 2026 as part of a longer term plan for a more joined up and person-centred system.



These reforms reflect what carers have told us they need: clarity, security and systems that work with them, not against them. As they take shape, **Carers & Communities** will ensure Worcestershire's carers are kept informed, supported and heard.

with best wishes
Karen



Valuing; Opinions, Involvement, Consultation, Engagement

Carer voice enables carers to have their say and make a difference.

Our aim is to ensure carers lived experiences inform and influence local strategies.

We have well-established partnership connections and support carers to be involved with a variety of meetings and boards, influencing strategies, policies, and procedures. Some of these include the Learning Disability Partnership Board, Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board, Autism Partnership Board, Mental Health Partnership Board, Dementia Partnership Board and Carers Partnership.

Why Get Involved?

We believe that every carer voice deserves to be heard. We value your opinions, insights, and experiences, and we are committed to fostering a system wide approach where lived experiences are embedded in practice and service provision.

How You Can Participate Social Media

Follow us on social media and engage with us by commenting, sharing, and participating in our online polls and discussions.

Join our online membership

We recognise that some carers may not be able to join meetings due to their caring role. If you would like to get involved, you can join our online membership, receive emails directly to your inbox.

- Find out more about topics that are of interest to you
- Share your views at a time to suit you
- As much or as little involvement as you like
- Be kept updated on topics of interest to you

Become a Carer Representative

- Represent the views of other carers
- Inform and influence service provision and decision making
- Join a supportive group of carers who are passionate about making a difference
- Develop new skills
- Be supported and trained in your role

We appreciate your willingness to share your voice with us. Together, we can create a more inclusive, responsive, caring community. **If you would like to know more, we're here to help. Email us and we will give you a call.**

carervoice@carersandcommunities.org.uk

Join the conversation and let **your voice be heard** today!

Carers & Communities SHOP

Navigating Life's Journeys



#DONATETODAY

Donations!

Could you donate your time or items to our boutique charity shop in Droitwich? Every hour or item donated helps us support people caring for someone they love.

Shop Items

If you or someone you know are having a spring clean and have any homeware items, toys, CDs or clothing you no longer need, please donate them to our shop - we have really low stock at the moment.

Volunteering

We are looking for people who would like to join our vibrant Droitwich shop with duties such as serving customers, sorting donations, building our online presence or helping at one of our events. To find out more, please see our website.



FIND US AT:
53-59 Ombersley St East
Droitwich WR9 8QS



FREE! UPCOMING HEALTH PROMOTION EVENTS 10AM-MIDDAY

FEB 20	NHS HEALTH CHECKS AVAILABLE 10AM-MIDDAY	JULY 22	10AM-MIDDAY
MARCH 25	NHS HEALTH CHECKS AVAILABLE 10AM-MIDDAY	SEPT 16	10AM-MIDDAY
APRIL 17	10AM-MIDDAY	OCT 16	10AM-MIDDAY
MAY 13	10AM-MIDDAY	NOV 11	10AM-MIDDAY
JUNE 26	10AM-MIDDAY	DEC 11	10AM-MIDDAY

Do you need help with?

- Work & returning to employment
- Money & Benefits
- Health & Wellbeing Support
- NHS App
- Carer advice

No appointment needed!

The HUB, Woodrow Centre, B97 7RY
Dates and times noted above



NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire **NHS App**

Manage Your Health with Proxy Access on the NHS App

For more information scan the QR code

READ MORE

Check out the latest from SCIE - Raising National standards of care

"The ambition to introduce national standards of care reflects widespread recognition of persistent inequities in adult social care. People's access to support, the quality of care they experience, and the outcomes they achieve continue to vary significantly depending on where they live and how local systems operate. This report's purpose is not to restate these challenges, but to clarify what national standards of care could realistically achieve, the problems they are best placed to address, and the conditions under which they are most likely support meaningful improvement."

scie to Read more here

READ HERE

HOW TO GET IN TOUCH



Carers & Communities

Here are ways you can keep connected with us.



Carers Helpline :
0300 012 4272

Monday - Friday: 9am - 5pm, with a later opening time of 8pm on a Wednesday



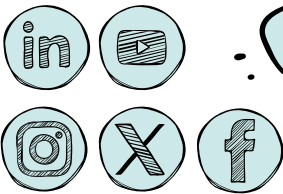
For more information :
www.carersandcommunities.org.uk



Email us at :
mail@carersandcommunities.org.uk



Carers & Communities
Polysec House,
Blackpole Trading Estate West,
Hindlip Lane,
Worcester, WR3 8TJ

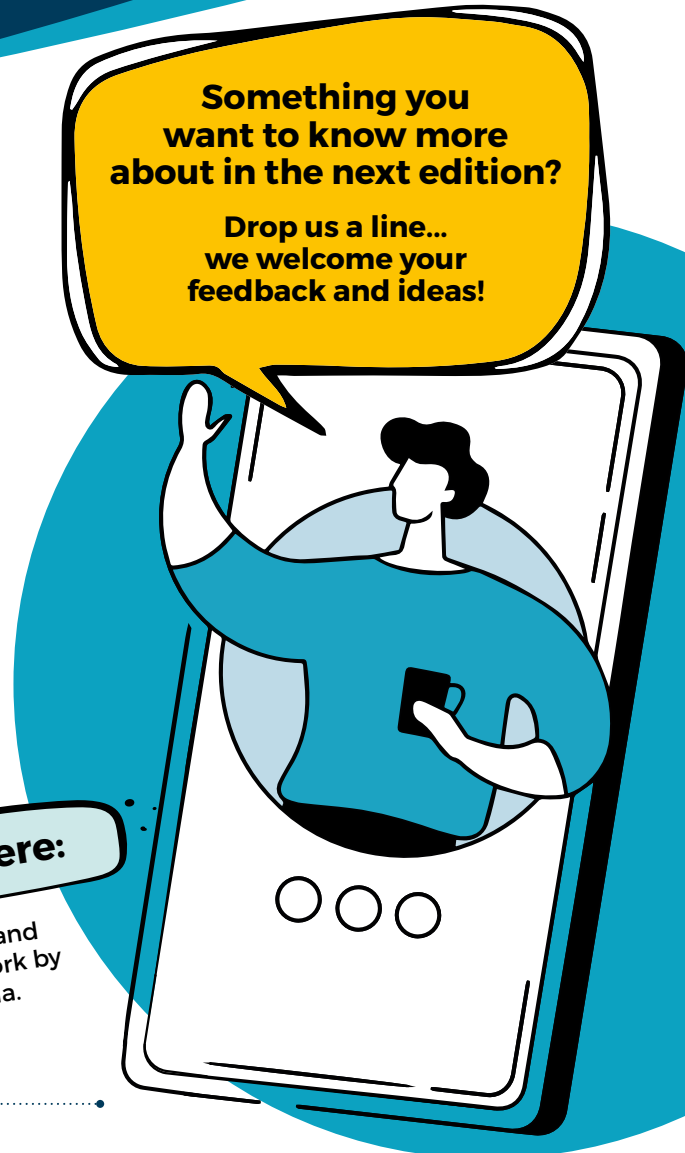


You can FOLLOW US here:

Keep on making a difference and sharing your support for our work by following us on social media.

Something you want to know more about in the next edition?

Drop us a line... we welcome your feedback and ideas!



*Carers & Communities is a working name of Worcestershire Association of Carers. Registered Charity No. 1071850. Registered Company No. 03485350. 12/2025.

Change of Circumstances?

Need to tell us about a change of personal details – name, address, email, telephone number? Are you no longer a carer? You can get in touch with us via phone, email or even webchat. Or you can tell us via the handy form on our website. Keep us updated at a time to suit you and we can ensure you are getting the information you need in your caring role.



CARERS ACTION WORCESTERSHIRE A CONSORTIUM COMPRISING:

Carers & Communities

Reg Charity no: 1071850
Polysec House, Blackpole Trading Est. West,
Hindlip Lane, Worcester, WR3 8TJ.
t: 01905 751340
e: mail@carersandcommunities.org.uk
www.carersandcommunities.org.uk

Crossroads Caring for Carers Worcestershire

Reg Charity no: 1110582
Weir Lane, Lower Wick, Worcester, WR2 4AY.
t: 01905 729293
e: care@crossroads-worcestershire.org.uk
www.crossroadsworcs.org.uk

Worcestershire Parent & Carers Community

Reg Charity no: 1122583
WPCC, Perdiswell Young People's leisure Club,
Perdiswell Park, Droitwich Road, Worcester, WR3 7SN.
t: 07955 760488
e: tamara@worcestershireparentcarers.org.uk
www.worcestershireparentcarers.org.uk

YSS Worcestershire Young Carers

Reg Charity no: 1071850
Polysec House, Blackpole Trading Est. West,
Hindlip Lane, Worcester, WR3 8TJ.
t: 01905 751340 e: mail@carersworcs.org.uk
www.carersworcs.org.uk

Carers Careline

Reg Charity no: 1106747
Room 1, Ecumenical Centre,
6 Evesham Walk, Redditch, B97 4EX.
t: 01527 66177
e: info@carerscareline.co.uk
www.carerscareline.co.uk

Jigsaw Worcestershire Mental Health

Reg Charity no: 1173868
35 The Drive, Powick, Worcester, WR2 4SA.
t: 07503 601737
e: jigsaw.worcs@gmail.com
www.jigsawgroup.info

Worcestershire Integrated Carers

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