

Caring Matters

January 2019 - The newsletter of Carers Northumberland

Meet the Team..

Chief Executive

Debra Blakey

Information & Engagement Coordinator

Lisa Mordue
01670 320018

Information & Development Team

Anne-Marie Johnstone &
Sarah Long
01670 320025

Training Coordinator

Kate Whitehead
01668 932008

Volunteer Coordinator

Gail Purvis
01670 320024

Key Worker Team

Pauline Appleby
01434 267002

Lorraine Burley
01670 320026

Information Line

01670 320025

I am Lisa Mordue, the Information & Engagement Coordinator.

As the newest member of the team here at Carers Northumberland I would like to introduce myself and say how pleased I am to be here!

I have spent my first month getting to know the team and settling in to the office. I have attended some support groups and took part in Carers Rights day in Berwick, which was a great success. My first impressions are that I am very lucky to be working with such an amazing bunch of people; the staff, volunteers, trustees and carers that I have met have been incredibly lovely and welcoming to me.

I look forward to the coming year and meeting many more of you, working together to support the carers of Northumberland.

Lisa

Information & Engagement Coordinator

Carers Northumberland will be closed from Monday 24th December 2018 and reopen on Wednesday 2nd January 2019.

If you require medical advice please contact your doctor, or Social Services on 01670 536400 if you require care advice.

Out of hours, Social Services can still be contacted on 01670 536400 and you can contact the NHS on 111 for medical advice however, please call 999 in the case of an emergency.

What's on : January 2019

Listed below are all of our groups and activities for January 2019.

Carers are welcome to attend **any** activity in **any** area. If you haven't been to a group before why not come along to one and see for yourself how welcoming and supportive they are? For more information or to book an event please call our Information Line on **01670 320025** or email

info@carersnorthumberland.org.uk

Jan 2019	Groups / Activity	Time
3rd	Ponteland Support Group, Merton Hall	10.30am—12noon
3rd	Felton Support Group, Felton Village Hall	1.30pm—3.00pm
9th	Caring Crafters - Berwick, William Elder Building *Booking Essential* Activity – Jewellery making £2.00 pp	10.00am—12noon
9th	Morpeth Support Group, Northumberland County Blind Association	10.30am—12noon
17th	Blyth Support Group, Buffalo Community Centre	10.00am—11.30am
16th	Bedlington Support Group, Salvation Army	1.00pm—2.30pm
23rd	Hexham Support Group, Adapt Building	1.30pm—3.00pm
28th	Alnwick Support Group, St Pauls Court	1.30pm-3pm
30th	Berwick Support Group, William Elder Building	11.00am—12.30pm
31st	Cramlington Support Group, Community Room, Concordia Leisure Centre	1.00pm—2.30pm

Please note activities and talks may be subject to change without notice.

Carers Support Groups run by our partners:

Groups / Activity	Details
Berwick Mental Health Carers Support Group, Northern Spirit	01289 305 002
Hexham Mental Health Carers Support Group, Scout Hut (behind Marks & Spencer's), Hexham	15th Jan 1.30pm—3.30pm
New Beginnings Group, ring for details	01670 320 025
Wooler Carers Group, Terrace Café, Wooler	16th Jan 10am –12 noon
Bellingham Carers Group, Bellingham Practice	23rd Jan 1.30pm—3pm
Mental Health Forum, Wooler	Contact Jane Pannell on 01289 388321 or email jane.pannell51@btinternet.com

Consultation on changes to social care charges in Northumberland

Northumberland County Council (NCC) has announced a consultation on changes to Social Care charges.

Proposed changes to how they assess what people can afford to pay

- People who receive the highest rates of Attendance Allowance, or Disability Living Allowance (Care Component), or Personal Independence Payment (Daily Living Component), would be assessed as able to pay an additional £13.30 per week, unless they can demonstrate that they spend more than £35 a week on other costs related to their disability.
- People who have a spouse or partner would be assessed as able to pay £43.90 a week more (if they or their partner are over state pension age), or £19.45 a week more otherwise, ending an anomaly which means that they often pay less than single people who are in similar circumstances.

If you already pay the full cost of your services, these proposals might not affect you – nobody will have to pay more than their services cost the Council.

Proposed changes to charges for particular services

If NCC have assessed that you can't afford to pay the full cost of your services, these increases may not affect you – nobody will have to pay more than NCC have assessed that they can afford.

- People in rural areas who can afford to would pay the full cost of their home care. This is currently subsidised to match the lower cost of home care in South East Northumberland (with protection for people living in some very rural areas where home care is particularly expensive).
- People using some day care services, which are currently free or subsidised, would be asked to pay the full cost if they can afford to.

Proposed changes to discounts and administrative charges

- People paying by Direct Debit would no longer get a 4% discount on their charges.
- People with savings of more than £23,250 who choose to ask the Council to arrange their services rather than making private arrangements would be asked to pay an administration fee of £3.45 - £4.00 per week.

For a copy of the full consultation document or if you have any questions on how this may affect you please contact our Information Service on **01670 320025** or

info@carersnorthumberland.org.uk

FREE INFORMATION AND ADVICE ON NHS CONTINUING HEALTHCARE...



Free advice

Contact Beacons Information and Advice Service for up to 90 minutes of free advice from their trained staff.

Their expert advisers can answer your questions on any aspect of **NHS Continuing Healthcare**. They have helped thousands of people to understand the eligibility criteria, navigate the assessment process, understand the Decision Support Tool and your assessment, review a decision, or begin an appeal. They can also talk to you about funding policies and issues in your area.

Contact the free NHS Continuing Healthcare Information and Advice Service on:

0345 548 0300



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

INFORMATION STAND VOLUNTEERS

We have a core of valued volunteers, many of whom have been volunteering for over 5 years, who help to promote Carers Northumberland.

Most new carers tell us they didn't know they were carers until we talked to them. Carers frequently tell us they didn't know they could receive emotional and practical support.

Our information stand volunteers play a vital role is 'spreading the word'. They attend hospitals, GP surgeries, events run by our partner organisations and our own events. We've even been in shopping centres such as Cramlington and local cafes with leaflets – just chatting to anyone who wants to know who we are and what we do.

Some volunteers, like Allen and Lillian hold regular information stands every month; other information stands are 'as and when' we are asked to attend events.

If you have a couple of hours once and a while and would like to meet new people and help to promote our services, **ring Gail on 01670 320024 and have a chat about it.**



Do you or someone you know have a heart condition?

Many heart patients and their families feel the need for further information and continuing support. A British Heart Foundation (BHF) heart support group can do just that.

Support groups are as varied as the people in them, and offer a range of benefits including:

- The chance to share experiences and gain emotional support
- Opportunities for families and carers to learn about how others cope with living with heart disease
- Options for exercise, e.g. walking groups or swimming classes
- Healthy lifestyle tips
- Links to other services that are useful for heart patients, such as stopping smoking.



**British Heart
Foundation**

The initial meeting is planned for 11am on the 14th February 2019 at The Buffalo Community Centre, Blyth. To show your interest or for more information please email chris@buffalocommunitycentre.co.uk or telephone 01670 363 858.

Ashington Drop-In

Our Ashington Info Drop-In will **no longer be running** in 2019 due to a fall in attendance.

You can still meet with our Information Team, Anne-Marie & Sarah who are available by appointment. If you would like a face to face appointment with our Information Team

please call us on **01670 320025**
or email

New Carer Groups..

We are opening **two** new Carer Groups in:

- **Ashington**, meeting monthly at Age UK
- **Amble**, meeting monthly at the Dry Arts Centre

More details will follow in our next newsletter





BEFRIENDING VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Volunteers are required in the North of Northumberland to support our new befriending initiative.

If you have time to meet a carer on a regular basis for a cuppa and a chat we would love to hear from you. Please get in touch with Gail on 01670 320024 or email gailpurvis@carersnorthumberland.org.uk

New guide aims to improve toilet provision for disabled people

Disabled people in Northumberland could benefit from a new guide that aims to encourage organisations to make their toilets more accessible and available for people to use.

The guide has been produced by researchers at Newcastle University, who worked with Carers Northumberland.

It is aimed at businesses and anyone who provides toilets for public use and sets out a range of low cost and easy to implement changes they can make to ensure toilets are accessible for people with additional needs and their carers.

The '**Nowhere to go**' guide was launched at a special event which also launched a short film made with people from Northumberland talking about their experiences and why better toilet provision across the county would help.

To develop the sixteen-page guide researchers talked to disabled people and their carers, as well as volunteers from a range of organisations across Northumberland including Age UK, the Alzheimer's Association and BID Services Morpeth, who support people who are deaf, hard of hearing, are visually impaired or have a dual sensory loss.

The research highlighted the difficulties people can face on a day to day basis when trying to access suitable toilet facilities. Some of the participants said that they had often been forced to return home or were prevented from leaving the house in the first instance by the lack of appropriate facilities.

Others talked about the negative attitudes they had encountered from members of the public who had challenged why they had used an accessible toilet when their disability wasn't obvious.

Many commented on unclean or poorly equipped facilities, while there was also a widely held view that there should be more - and better signposted - accessible toilets.

You can read the whole article at <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/press/articles/latest/2018/12/disabledtoiletsnorthumberland/>

The guide can be downloaded from <https://research.ncl.ac.uk/nowheretogo/> or for a hard copy call the Carers Northumberland info line on **01670 320025**



Caring Matters - January 2019

Carer Workshop Sessions

A welcome to all carers reading this and a wish that 2019 will prove to be a year of opportunities for you. We have been busy looking ahead to see what we currently offer carers and also to find out what carers might want that we could provide.

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Don't forget the next carer workshop in **Cramlington**

Cramlington: Beaconhill Community Centre

- **Good Life Good Death WED JANUARY 9th 2019 10.30—12.30**

All the practical information you might need to plan for the inevitable future event. YOU know what you want but how do you communicate this to others?

This workshop should leave you feeling more confident and more comfortable that you know how to take control of your own decisions.

To join this session please contact our office on 01670 320025 or email info@carersnorthumberland.org.uk. Encourage a friend to join you and spread the word.

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Following the success of partnership working with other organisations last year, there will be a further 6 sessions running at **Benmar House** in Morpeth for carers looking after **someone with MS**. The sessions, called 'Caring & Sharing—Let's talk about...', begin monthly between 1-2.30pm starting in February & each one will have a different focus :

The February session is entitled ' Good Day, Bad Day, talking about ups & downs'.

Contact either Deborah at Benmar House or our info line to find out more.

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Do you live in the Bellingham / Otterburn area and would like to meet other carers ? Carers Northumberland is running a taster workshop session at the meeting on Thursday January 24 between 1-2.30pm which is held at the Bellingham GP practice.

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Do you go to any regular group that is aimed at patients and carers with a particular disability? Would you like to arrange a Carers Northumberland taster workshop? Please contact us on 01670 320025 for more information.

Befriending

Carer Companion Corner

Do you like to talk about

- Politics
- Travel
- Railways
- Sport



Do you like to go to the cinema?

How would you like to meet a carer in the Morpeth or Alnwick area for a cuppa and a chat approximately once every 3 weeks or so for about an hour on either a Tuesday or Friday afternoon?

If you would like to volunteer with our pilot befriender initiative, contact Gail on 01670 320024, 07825952605 or email gailpurvis@carersnorthumberland.org.uk

How to join our online forum:

- Visit our website www.carersnorthumberland.org.uk
- Select the Carers Forum Button at the top of the page
- Then you will find the register button at the top of the page.
- Complete the registration process as prompted.
- Don't forget to read the **forum guidelines and conditions**.
- Once registered you can post and view other discussions.
- Enjoy!



**If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter
please contact 01670 320025**

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