



The Princess Royal Trust for Carers  
Network Member

ISSUE 59

# CARERS' voice

News from North Tyneside Carers' Centre

January 2011



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caring

North Tyneside  
Carers' Centre

Third Floor,  
YMCA building,  
Church Way,  
North Shields,  
NE29 0AB

0191 643 2298

## Happy New Year!

We will begin the year with our AGM on Thursday 27 January 2011 in the café area on the ground floor of the YMCA building, between 11.30am and 1pm. Lunch will be provided. All carers are welcome but those who are members will also be able to vote.

We will start with the formal part of the AGM where we will look back over the year, adopt the accounts, elect the trustees etc. After that we would like to discuss the issues that are important to you as a carer and the support you need from us. This will inform the new five year plan for the centre. If you would like to attend please contact the centre on 643 2298.

## The 2011 Census is coming.

The census collects information about the population every ten years. Government and local authorities depend on this information to identify the services local communities need. The next Census is on March 27th 2011, you will receive your questionnaire through the post between the 4th and the 11th March. Look out for the large white envelope with the purple C and contact the centre for support needed.



## New Contact Numbers

As you may be aware we are in the process of changing our telephone number. We are now part of North Tyneside Council telephone system so all our numbers will begin with 643. You can still reach us on our old number 0191 200 1111 and Fax 0191 200 1112 as well as our new one for the time being, however this will be phased out in the near future. We will inform you as soon as our old number is removed. For your information our new numbers are:

General enquiries - 0191 643 2298

Fax - 0191 643 2299



## Government announces £400 million for Carers' respite breaks

As part of its new vision for adult social care, the government has announced £400 million to be spent on respite for carers through the NHS. This amount will be spread over the next four years allowing those who care for vulnerable family and friends to take a break for themselves. According to the plan, the state will also arrange a paid carer for the duration of the break.

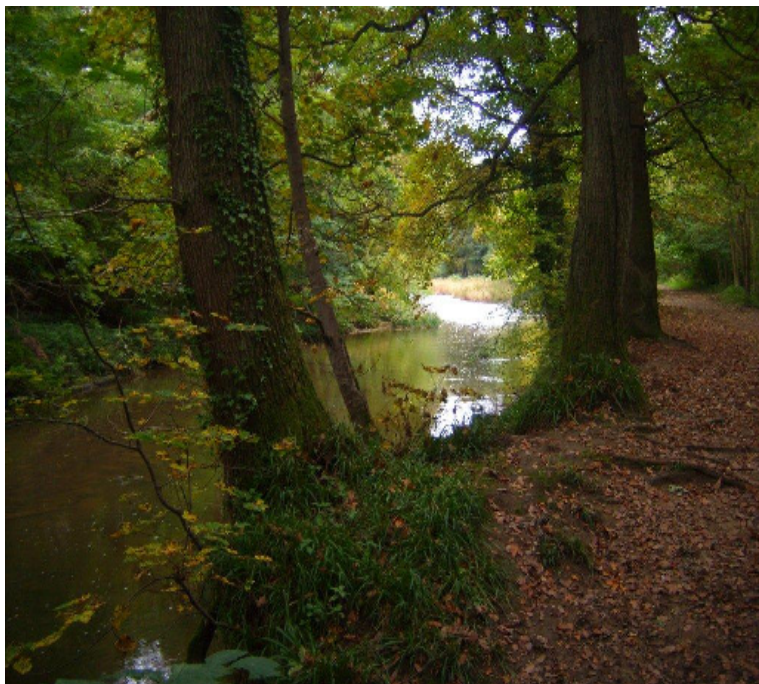
Included in the same vision, is the plan to introduce "personal budgets" for everyone by 2013. Personal budgets will give people more flexibility in terms of choice and control over social care services received. Carers will be able to tailor services to meet their specific needs including taking respite breaks such as holidays or pursuing hobbies.

Announcing the funding, care services minister Paul Burstow said "The Coalition Government's vision for social care will deliver on our manifesto commitment to provide guaranteed respite care by making over £400million available in additional funding over the next four years to the hundreds of thousands of carers who work over 50 hours a week."

In emphasising the importance of a well-earned respite break for carers, Burstow said "We will also go further than ever before in ensuring carers decide themselves what they want to do to take a break from caring. This is why we are ensuring that breaks are delivered through direct payments or personal health budgets".

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers has welcomed the £400 million for respite breaks but warns that it might not be used for its intended purpose as it is not ring-fenced. Chief executive Carole Cochrane said: "Without these vital breaks, carers can often reach breaking point where they can no longer continue, and their own physical and mental health deteriorates as a result. However we are concerned that the money in today's announcement has not been ring-fenced, as in the past, money earmarked for carers' breaks has been spent elsewhere.

"In 2009-10 and 2010-11, £150 million was pledged for carers' breaks, but our research found that most primary care trusts failed to spend the money on carers and instead used it elsewhere."



**Autumnal scene - Plessey Woods**

## Photo Competition

Well done to carer George Chomanides who is the lucky winner of our photo competition which was run on the Carers' Centre outing to Plessey Woods.

George has received a £10 Eldon Square voucher for his efforts.

Well done George.

## Manual Handling Training - Protect Yourself and your loved one

*"The human form is an awkward burden to lift or carry. Weighing up to 100 kilos or more, it has no handles, it is not rigid and is liable to severe damage if mishandled or dropped." The Lancet 1965*

The Centre has teamed up with Age UK to deliver free moving and assisting training sessions. The sessions will run on **Thursday 3rd and Thursday 10th February** at Age UK, Park Road, Whitley Bay from **10am –1pm** and refreshments will be included.

The training has been specially tailored for carers and will cover safe handling techniques, risk reducing measures, spinal awareness, replacing lifting with sliding, handling a wheelchair, safeguarding and much more. The training is aimed at those carers who may have to move and lift the person that they care for on a regular basis. It will teach you the skills you need to ensure your own safety and that of the person you care for. You will be shown safe principles and methods of reducing risks within your caring role. To book your place or to find out more please contact the Centre.





## Struggling with debt?

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) is an award winning debt counselling charity with a network of 150 centres based in local churches. CAP offers hope and a solution to anyone in debt. Thousands of families have been released from the pressures of debt through advice, financial education, budgeting and insolvency services. CAP is not just for Christians they will help and advise anyone in need irrespective of race gender or belief through their debt counselling team. CAP adopts a non judgemental approach supporting people as they take each step out of debt. The service is completely free however they will accept charitable donations, but this is completely voluntary.

After the initial contact a Support Worker will visit you at home to talk about your situation. After this a realistic budget will be worked out for you by prioritising your essential bills, negotiating affordable payments with creditors and stopping unfair interest and charges wherever possible. CAP has a good relationship with the Finance Industry which means that companies are happy to work with them to negotiate fair repayment rates for you. To find out more call free on 0800 328 0006 or visit [www.capuk.org](http://www.capuk.org)



## Carers Online Survey

Carers UK is conducting a major new piece of research into the impact that caring for ill, frail or disabled relatives can have on carers' finances, health and ability to live their own lives.

The survey will take about 20 minutes and will bring together and update a variety of different pieces of research Carers UK has done in previous years to get a fresh picture of the state of caring in 2010-11.

If you would like to take part in the survey go to: [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)

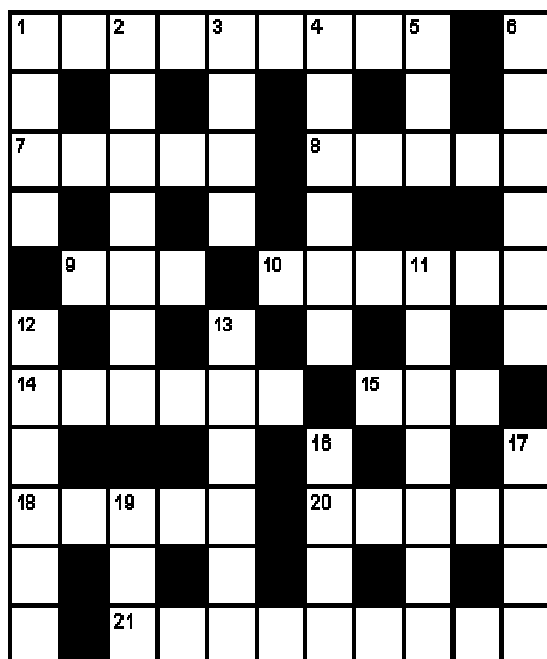
## A Guide to Carers' Rights and Benefits

Carers have certain legal rights to benefits and other help. Many carers do not know their rights or how to access help. Every year £840 million of carers' benefits are unclaimed. Carers UK have produced a 'Looking after Someone' Guide 2010/11 that is available to download from the internet or you can order a free copy by contacting them direct or you can get one from the Centre.

This guide sets out what rights carers have and how and where they can get support. The topics include both financial and practical help as well as tips on combining work and caring.

To be sent a free copy of the guide call 0808 808 7777 or download a copy from [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)

## Quick Crossword



### Across

1. Group of musicians (9)
7. Eye socket (5)
8. Jockey (5)
9. Epoch (3)
10. Part of the foot (6)
14. Shrewd (6)
15. Cacophony (3)
18. Thighbone (5)
20. Ice hut (5)
21. Court game (9)

### Down

1. Woodwind instrument (4)
2. Floor show (7)
3. Consumes (4)
4. Despot (6)
5. Assistance (3)
6. Precipitous (6)
11. One of three (7)
12. Perplex (6)
13. Gaped (6)
16. Flightless bird (4)
17. Metal money (4)
19. Disorderly crowd

If you are looking for a fun way to de-stress in the New Year, then Taking Part Workshops are for you!

Arts on Prescription is a programme that helps people to recognise the health benefits of taking part in social, participatory and fun activities.

People who have attended the sessions, were able to access FREE arts workshops by getting an Arts on Prescription slip stamped at their GP surgery, without needing to make an appointment.

A series of workshops have been running at the Linskill Centre and Wallsend Town Hall. One participant commented "I felt so inspired by Saturdays session, I was talking about it all day". Taking Part Workshops is particularly for people who have common problems such as stress, depression and anxiety. The workshops help to increase confidence, show you what you can achieve and help you to meet new people.

Sessions start again from the 10th January, and will include Drumming, Salsa, Group Singing, Drama. More sessions will be announced in the New Year.

Call Victoria on 0191 262 1808 for more details

**Taking Part  
Workshops**  
...Creating Better Health

Activity/Group	When	Where
ADHD Parent Carer Group	<p><b>Please note new times:</b>            2nd Wednesday of the month            10am-12pm            4th Wednesday of the month            6.30-8pm            12 and 26 January            9 and 23 February</p>	Carers' Centre
Autism Support group (For adults caring for other adults)	2nd Thursday of each month 10am–12pm  13 January 2011 10 February 2011	Carers' Centre
Carers Lunch Club. (Open to all carers)	Meet at 12.30pm Thursday 20th January 2011 Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup> February 2011	Powder Monkey, Wallsend Killingworth Arms, Killingworth Village
Carers Coffee Morning	10am—12pm Thursday 6th January 2011 Thursday 3rd February 2011	Carers' Centre
Carers Evening support group (open to all carers)	Monday 10th January Monday 14th February	Killingworth Arms, Killingworth Village  Taste of Persia Newcastle
Mental Health Carers Support Group Support Group	Wednesdays 6pm - 8pm £5 contribution required. 26 January 2011 23 February 2011	Jewellery making at the Centre Please ring centre.
Parent Carer Group	First Tuesday of the month 9.30am—12pm 4 January 2011 1 February 2011	Carers' Centre
Carers' Forum	Tuesday April 12th 2011 Speaker TBC	Carers' Centre
Walking Group	Please contact the centre for details	

## Carer's Lunch Clubs

Carers had a lovely time when they visited The Dolphin in North Shields for Christmas lunch. There was lots of festive cheer, and delicious food which got us all in the mood for Christmas!

The lunch club meet once a month, (every third Thursday) and new members are always welcome! If you have any suggestions or ideas about where you'd like to go for lunch, please contact Giselle Nejady at the Centre.



## Crafternoon

Thursday 24th February 1pm—3:30pm

**Contact person: Giselle Nejady**

Pop along to the Carers' Centre for a cuppa, and share the crafts you enjoy.

Bring your own knitting, sewing, and any other crafts you like, or just come along for a chat and join in. Free to all carers and former carers.



## Carers' Surgeries

<b>Monday</b>	1.30pm - 4.30pm	Monkseaton Medical Centre	4 <sup>th</sup> Monday of the month	Appointment basis – patients only.
<b>Tuesday</b>	9am - 12pm	Village Green, Wallsend	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month	Appointment basis - open to all.
	11.45am - 1.45pm	Quadrant East, North Tyneside Council	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the Month	Appointment basis. Open to anyone working at Cobalt.
	1pm – 4pm	Oxford Centre, Longbenton	1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month	Appointment basis – open to all.
<b>Wednesday</b>	5pm – 8pm	Carers Centre, YMCA Building, North Shields	Every Wednesday	Appointment basis – open to all.
<b>Friday</b>	10am - 12pm	Collingwood Surgery, North Shields	1 <sup>st</sup> Friday of the month	Appointment basis – patients only.
	9am – 1pm	White Swan Centre, Killingworth	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Friday of the month	Appointment basis – open to all.
<b>Saturday</b>	9am – 1pm	Carers Centre, YMCA Building, North Shields	Every Saturday	Appointment basis – open to all.

## Feedback from our Annual Survey

You said	We did/are doing
You would like more support for carers who work.	The centre is open late on Wednesday evenings and on Saturday mornings. Within this years programme we will vary the times of our activities and groups so that carers who work can access them. We are also working with the Job Centre and local employers to make them more aware of carers needs.
Most of you were very happy with communication with the Centre but a few people felt that it could be improved and that waiting lists were too long.	Reviewing the database to ensure that details are up to date so that carers receive the information and follow up that they want in a timely fashion. We do try to follow up referrals as soon as we can, however we do only have a small staff team so ask that you bear with us.
Delays in carers assessments being carried out and therefore delays in Sharing the Caring respite being set up have been frustrating	The way that carers access short break respite with us has changed as we are no longer grant funded and now have a contract with the Council. Carers now need to be assessed by the Local Authority in order to access respite. We have 3 workers who are working with the Local Authority Community Assessment and Support teams to help carers through the assessment process and try to make sure that it is as user friendly and timely as possible.
You appreciated and enjoyed the social events and classes and would like more at variable times.	We are putting together a programme of activities for the year to promote health and wellbeing that we hope will be physically and mentally stimulating as well as enjoyable which will be on at various times to suit all.
You wanted continuity of support	There have been some changes in staff roles over the last year and this could happen in the future as it is dependent on funding. However we will ensure that carers in contact with a particular staff member will be informed and given the name of another person they can contact.
Caring with Confidence course has been very useful	We have been successful in gaining funding to run a special project jointly with the YMCA which will include a 'Caring with More Confidence' course where respite will be available and will include lots of fun activities.
You want more activities in the North West of the borough	We do run monthly carers surgeries in Killingworth and Longbenton. We are working with other agencies to try and put on more activities in local venues across the borough

## **Pension News**

Currently, the State Pension age for men is 65. On 6 April 2010, the State Pension age for women started to increase gradually from 60 to 65, to match that for men. The government has announced new proposals for increasing State Pension age which would affect you if you were born between 6 April 1953 and 5 April 1960.

The proposals would mean women's State Pension age would increase more quickly to 65 between April 2016 and November 2018. From December 2018 the State Pension age for both men and women would start to increase to reach 66 by April 2020. Any change to the timetable needs the approval of Parliament. The government is also considering the timetable for future increases to the State Pension age from 66 to 68.

### **Fewer years needed to qualify for the full basic State Pension**

To get a full State Retirement Pension you have to have paid enough National Insurance Contributions (known as stamps) for a number of years called qualifying years. This can be done when working or by being 'credited' with contributions when unable to work., for example, if you are unemployed or a carer. From April 2010, the number of qualifying years is reduced from 44 for men and 39 for women to 30 for both men and women.

If you have a pension query or need more information you can contact the Pensions Advisory Service on: 0845 601 2923 or Carers UK's helpline: 0808 808 7777

For financial support for older people you can contact: Age UK on: 0800 00 99 66 or visit: [www.ageconcern.org.uk/AgeConcern/income\\_pensions\\_information.asp](http://www.ageconcern.org.uk/AgeConcern/income_pensions_information.asp)

You can also visit Directgov for an excellent source of information by visiting: [www.directgov.uk/pension](http://www.directgov.uk/pension)

### **Cold weather payments**

Winter fuel payments are available to most people who were born on or before 5 July 1950. To be entitled to a winter fuel payment you must be ordinarily resident in the United Kingdom. You don't need to apply. If you can get a Cold Weather Payment, you'll be paid it automatically. Cold Weather Payments can help people who are in receipt of certain benefits with their additional heating costs during winter. A payment will be made for each seven day period of very cold weather between 1 November and 31 March, if you are getting a state pension or a benefit administered by the Department for Work and Pensions (this includes most benefits but not Child Benefit, Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit).

If you have a partner born on or before 5 July 1950 who receives Pension Credit, Income-based JSA or Income-related Employment and Support Allowance for you both, then the payment will be made to them. The winter fuel payment will not affect your other benefits and you will not have to pay Income Tax on it. Everyone who is entitled to a winter fuel payment will receive one but the amount you will get depends on your age and who you live with.

## Do You Need A Break From Your Caring Role? Sharing the Caring Could Help!

Sharing the Caring is a well established service that gives carers the opportunity to have a break from their caring role. The service gives carers the chance to take time out by providing workers who give support, care and stimulation to the person cared for, regardless of their disability or illness.

Our highly trained and skilled staff team are able to provide support to both the carer and the person they are caring for. The service will, whenever possible, send the same worker to provide breaks. Breaks are available from 1 hour up to 24 hours in length, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

If you would like further information on the service please contact:

Amy Anderson, Sharing the Caring Coordinator, on (0191) 643 2298 or email [amy.anderson@ntcarers.co.uk](mailto:amy.anderson@ntcarers.co.uk)

## New Research from the NHS

Findings from new research published by the NHS Information Centre point to extremely tough times ahead for families struggling to provide care for loved ones. This may mean carers will experience poor health, having to give up work and struggling on low incomes. In England around 5 million people provide unpaid care, to an ill, frail or disabled relative.

With local councils facing devastating 28% budget cuts over four years, including 10% in the first year, the outlook for families looks extremely bleak unless local councils prioritise care and support.

This research clearly shows that cuts to social care will be counter-productive, increasing worklessness and the numbers of families suffering ill-health. There is a clear correlation between these negative impacts of care and the amount of support that is provided by local councils social care services. NHS research points to increasing pressure on families who care for ill or disabled loved-ones.

- One in four carers ability to work is affected by caring
  - Half are in poor health
- Half expect their caring responsibilities to increase over the next five years

Imelda Redmond, CBE, Chief Executive of Carers UK, said "It is vital that local councils invest in families and listen carefully to their needs. We appreciate that local councils have been placed in an extremely difficult position. However, our message is: *Support families, Don't cut care*".



## Fun for Young Carers

Skate board, scooter and bmx fun, skills and tricks with Urban Mix.

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2011 6-8pm

Tyne Youth and Community Centre, Mariners Lane,  
Tynemouth

Skate boards are provided but you can bring your own scooter, board or bmx.

For more information or to book contact Steve on 0191 6432298 or text 07919414703. Email: [steve.wilkinson@ntcarers.co.uk](mailto:steve.wilkinson@ntcarers.co.uk)

## Caring with *More* Confidence..

The Carers' Centre is very pleased to announce that we will be working with the YMCA to run a **free** 'Caring with *More*' Confidence course. The course will run on a weekly basis during February and March 2011.

We will cover all of the useful elements of the 'Caring with Confidence' course that you may have heard of such as building self esteem and confidence, sources of help, dealing with finances, coping strategies, carers' rights etc. However we have added extra elements as there will also be the opportunity to take part in a range of fun activities designed to be mentally and physically stimulating which could include:

- ◆ Arts and crafts
- ◆ Music
- ◆ Performing arts
- ◆ Diet and nutrition
- ◆ Tai chi
- ◆ Yoga.
- ◆ Activities specifically for male carers such as gym based sessions
- ◆ Volunteering and work experience placements

We are aware that sometimes carers are unable to take part in activities as they are unable to leave the person they care for, so carers who sign up to the project will be offered **free respite provision** so that they can take part fully.

We will also tailor the exercise provision and other activities, where possible, so that carers can replicate them and continue them in their own home.

If you are interested in finding out more please contact Julie at the Centre on 0191 6432295 or email [julie.tait@ntcarers.co.uk](mailto:julie.tait@ntcarers.co.uk)

***Please note that we will also be running another free 'Caring with Confidence' course during March and April 2011 - for more details contact Kath at the centre.***

**Solution to Quick Crossword**

O	R	C	H	E	S	T	R	A		A
B		A		A		Y		I		B
O	R	B	I	T		R	I	D	E	R
E		A		S		A				U
	E	R	A		I	N	S	T	E	P
B		E		S		T		R		T
A	S	T	U	T	E		D	I	N	
F				A		K		P		C
F	E	M	U	R		I	G	L	O	O
L		O		E		W		E		I
E		B	A	D	M	I	N	T	O	N

*Any Views or opinions expressed in Carers' Voice are those of the author and may not necessarily be those of North Tyneside Carers' Centre*

**Complaints Policy**

North Tyneside Carers' Centre is committed to providing a high quality service to the people it serves. Occasionally we may fail to meet our usual high standards for whatever reason and we would like to know if and when this has happened, in order that we can rectify and make the necessary improvements.

If you have any concerns, we would be interested in hearing from you. Please address any complaints to The Centre



In April there will be a representative in the Centre from the Department of Work and Pensions who will be able to run benefit checks and offer you advice and information.

The rep will be in the centre on a regular basis, and you will need to make an appointment to speak with them.

Look out for more information in the next Newsletter.

**If you have any difficulties reading our Newsletter, please contact us so that we can make arrangements to help you with this.**

**MAILING LIST**

If you do not subscribe to this newsletter and would like to receive future editions, please contact us:

[enquires@ntcarers.co.uk](mailto:enquires@ntcarers.co.uk)

or telephone: **0191 643 2298**

Alternatively you can send a letter:

**North Tyneside Carers' Centre  
Third Floor , YMCA building, Church Way, North Shields. NE29 0AB**