

Carers Together

A consortium of carers in Hampshire

Carers Together is a vibrant, active and developing organisation that is carer-led, independent and county-wide, supporting carers in the county of Hampshire, as well as in the cities of Portsmouth and Southampton.

All the trustees are carers or former carers with a passionate interest in the needs of carers and the people they care for.

Our aims and plans for the next 5 years are ambitious and include some new and innovative ideas, suggested by carers, which we will be sharing with you in the next few weeks and months.

Our services are growing and developing constantly to respond to the needs and choices expressed by carers. Do visit the website regularly to find out about the new services we will be offering and find out more about our long standing services.

Carers and former carers are welcome to join Carers Together and we encourage them to join other groups that may also offer support, as we believe that they will want and need to look at all the options available

We work with and/or support a wide range of provider organisations of all different sizes that help to support, inform, and provide services to carers. However, In the fifteen years we have been working with carers in Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton, we have found essentially it is **our mutual relationship that gives us strength and a real understanding of what it feels like to be a carer.**

We are all **'experts by experience'** and, in common with our colleagues in service user led organisations, agree strongly with the statement **'nothing about us without us'**

We respond to needs identified by carers and try to ensure carers are able to access or find the services available to support them.

Some of the services we provide are shown below and we are always happy to receive constructive suggestions for new and/or different ideas.

PLEASE NOTE - ALL MEMBERSHIP IS FREE TO CARERS AS WE BELIEVE NO CARER SHOULD BE OBLIGED TO PAY FOR ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND SUPPORT TO HELP THEM.

We do however welcome donations from any individual or organisation wishing to support our work. Legacies are also welcome.

Choice for carers

No single organisation has all the answers for everyone. Carers Together will support carers to look at all the options open to them if it is their choice. Carers have the right to choose:

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- who will give them support
- what support they need
- when they need it
- where they access their support
- why they need choice and control of their own support
- how the support is provided

Hampshire Carers Network

In order to receive and share information, any individual carer who wishes to join the Hampshire Carers Network should contact the office on Tel: 01794 519495 or Email: admin@carerstogogether.org.uk. A registration form is available to enable carers to join the network and hear about the opportunities for sharing and caring together.

We also maintain a Hampshire Carers Group Network for any carers support group that wishes to join. In order to receive and share information, any carers group that wishes to join the Network should contact the office on Tel: 01794 519495 or Email: admin@carerstogogether.org.uk. A registration form is available to enable groups to join the network and hear about the opportunities for sharing and caring together.

Carers Centres

We operate 5 Carers Centres in Hampshire

Basingstoke (Glebe Hall)
Havant (Murchistoun Hall)
New Forest (Fenwick 2)
Romsey (Love Lane)
Southampton (Unity 12 Rose Road).

We also provide a number of regular carers' drop-in points at other venues around the county including Alton and Meon Valley, where carers can drop-in for support and information.

Information about groups and times and venues can be obtained from the main office in Romsey.

Carers Advocacy and Outreach

We offer an individual advocacy service for carers to assist them with difficulties or they may have with statutory or voluntary provider organisations.

Our mobile resource is always reaching out in the community to carers who may not recognise themselves as carers. It is a mobile information and support resource vehicle staffed by experienced personnel

Carers Support Groups

We are involved and/or link with over 40 carers support groups across the area and the majority of these are carers –led. This is because carers can give mutual support and empathy to each others and learn more from each other's experience than they do from statutory or voluntary personnel providing services to them.

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We are always looking at innovative ways we can support carers and never turn down any good idea or suggestions from a carer until we have fully investigated how it may work.

Information and training for carers

We provide information to enable carers to find out what is available to support them and guide or signpost carers to supportive services in the community.

We also provide carers training and awareness sessions to help carers discover what is available in the community to help them. This includes specialist training for Parent Carers of Young People in Transition, Clear Action Planning for emergencies, Legislation that affects carers and what effect it has on carers services etc

We provide training in carers issues to statutory and voluntary organisations and work closely with local universities of social work and nurse training

Carers Website

Our website is always changing and growing – please visit regularly to keep up to date with news and take part in the message board when carers can share views and opinions in confidence with other carers

Email Support and Information

Anyone who would like to receive regular email information about carers issues should contact the office and ask to go on the carers email distribution list. Tel: 01795 519495
Email: admin@carerstogether.org.uk

Carers Active Listening Line CALL

This telephone line is available to give emotional support to carers and older people who need someone to talk to, to offload stress and to communicate with an independent, non judgemental listener in total confidence. It is available from 9am to 11pm 365 days a year

It also provides

- Telephone conference calls (free) for carers and older people to chat with others
- Telephone reminder or contact service for isolated people

Carers Active Support Service CASS

This is a flexible and responsive respite care service for carers. It offers support to carers to allow them to go out for real break, provides flexible times and days and will take people out as well as keep them company at home. No reasonable request is refused and the service works totally flexibly to give carers the break they need

It also provides and/or signposts carer sand older people to befriending and companionship services for people who need support to help them to be more independent

It can provide a visiting service for people at home or in residential care who have no relatives living close by in the centre of Hampshire

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Clear Action Planning for Emergencies

CAPE is simple, supportive and available for anyone who would like to plan for the future and would like help and support to do this.

It supports older people, carers, people with a disability, people with a long or short term health condition and anyone, who feels they need help to formulate a plan so they are prepared for any emergencies

It also helps them to find out what is available in the local community to support them.

Newsletter

Our newsletter is a regular resource for carers giving information about services to support them, government and other news as well as information about local services and networks

It is available in hard copy from the Carers Together office or you can download it from this website.

Health and Social Care Passport

Carers Together and other organisations and agencies have tried in the past to promote and produce a simple Health and Social Care passport for use by service users and carers as well as by professionals. We know this would alleviate the need for 2 - 25 different professionals to visit a person and ask the same basic questions over and over again.

However, barriers such as the lack of agreement on formats and content between different organisations, information sharing issues, the cost and complexity of changing systems and the lack of resources and priority to make this happen, have previously prevented it becoming reality. need.

We are therefore fully involved in Common Assessment Framework Demonstrator Site Programme in Hampshire. This government initiative brings together and builds on the current Single Assessment Process (SAP) and the Care Programme Approach (CPA) in mental health. The work done on preparing this bid has already removed some of these barriers. Information formats and content have been discussed and agreement reached that we will keep it simple and focused on user

CAF aims to improve outcomes for all adults with complex, longer-term health and social care needs. Its unified approach will be especially helpful to those who previously had to deal with separate health, social care and other support systems.

It will be firmly set within the context of Putting People First: 'a shared vision and commitment to the transformation of adult social care' and of 'transforming social care'. In particular, proposals must take account of developments in personalisation, self-directed support and improved outcomes for individuals.

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Carers Together has been fully involved with the joint project team in ensuring this project will improve the lives of individuals, families and carers, by putting them firmly at the centre of assessment, and not (as many currently feel), on the periphery of a set of professionally-led processes. Individual choice and control is the key to the success of the project.

Essential to the process is gathering a wide team of critical friends and a support network which includes other local authorities and user focus groups. The focus on personalisation resulting from the recent Commission in Hampshire and the 'Getting Personal' report has provided an environment where the aims of personalisation are a high priority.

This is a real opportunity to work with services users and carers to enhance their life experiences and make good information available to them and for them, whilst enhancing the opportunity for professionals to work better together in a positive innovative way.

Please sign up to receive regular email information about the Project and to take part in consultation on activities. It is really important that service users and carers have full input into the project development at all levels and in each development stage so that the outcome really does improve the lives of individuals and carers.