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# SIGNPOSTS FOR CARERS

**The newsletter for Torbay Carers**

## Hello and Welcome..

...to our June edition, I hope you are enjoying the beautiful weather and have been able to get out for some fresh air, now that the measures have been relaxed a little. I know COVID-19 has taken us by surprise and we have been rallying as a community and a nation to support each other in every way possible – but we would like to take this opportunity to not only give the NHS a big clap, but to you also, our wonderful Torbay Carers, the often-unsung heroes. Also, a big thank you to our two local Carers who have sent in their letters (P2 & 3) sharing their personal experiences.



On (P2) our Carers Lead provides an update on our service and what we are able to provide, as well as what is happening with our GP Carer Support Workers, Mencap and Carers Aid. Although our face to face groups and courses are currently not taking place, you might like to take a look at some Zoom alternatives (P12 & 13).

This edition is packed with useful information – The Sunflower Lanyard (P3), Dimensions for Autism (P6), Commitment to Carers and Tesco's Bags of Help, both (P7) and Talking Points (P10). Unfortunately our Carers Week events (8 – 14th June) have been cancelled due to COVID-19, however we have a number of ideas around alternative activities, please see (P8) for more information – we hope you will be able to get involved. Most of our usual groups are cancelled until further notice, apart from the ones listed on the notice board (P12 & 13). Carers Aid have also provided us with an update from the team on (P15).

Please do continue to contact us on the phone number below, if you need any Carer advice or information – we are here for you during this time.

Wishing you well during the summer months and look forward to seeing some of you on our Zoom get togethers during Carers Week.

**Natalie Townsend - On behalf of Carers Services.**

## Carers in Torbay can benefit from...

- A Carers Emergency Card, to alert the appropriate people as a back-up if anything happens to you
- Free parking at local hospitals (when attending in support of the person you care for) and discounts in local shops

## Contact us c/o Signposts for Carers

Telephone: 01803 666620 Email: [signposts@nhs.net](mailto:signposts@nhs.net)  
[www.tsdf.uk/carers](http://www.tsdf.uk/carers)

# CARERS SERVICES ARE STILL HERE TO SUPPORT YOU AT THIS DIFFICULT TIME!

Since the onset of lock-down, Carers Services have closed all their drop-in centres, but ARE working remotely as normal. So you can still contact your Carer Support Worker, Mencap, Signposts, or Carers Aid Torbay (including Bay Benefits) by phone or e-mail.

All groups, courses and face-to-face services have been cancelled and our administrative processes (such as Carers Registration) are taking a bit longer than usual, but we are beginning to think about how to offer services going forward. Some of this may be electronically and, when we are allowed, some may be 'socially distanced'.

As technology is being used so much more, there may be grants available to help you access Wi-Fi, courses or tablets etc and if you would like help improving your IT confidence, contact Signposts, please see below.

Carers Services will continue to send out communications by e-mail – we promise not to send too many! so if the register doesn't have your e-mail address (or if someone else can receive it for you), e-mail us at: [tsdft.torbaycarersregister@nhs.net](mailto:tsdft.torbaycarersregister@nhs.net) with your card number and name. Add Signposts to your safe sender list too.

Stay safe!



## YOU ARE THE GATEKEEPERS

In some ways I failed. At least as far as I am concerned, in the five-year care of my mother. I wasn't always as patient as I should have been, I wasn't as organised as I could have been, and at the end, possibly because of long-term sleep deprivation, I wasn't as strong and clear-minded as she needed me to be to ensure the right medical decisions.

It is a failure that I carry every day like a boulder. Some days I feel it might be okay to collapse under that boulder and have it crush me like an injured bee being put out of its misery. (I only give you this rare glimpse into my experience so that you know that I know what carers go through.) But with Dad to still care for, like the bees we must carry on.

Bees, like most Carers, do not have a day off. And even if they did, such is their heavy sense of responsibility and work ethic they would surely, as you well know, spend the day worrying if certain work were being done in their absence by other bees, whether care was being taken not to spill the pollen, whether the queen was being looked after properly etc. so it wouldn't really be a proper day off for the stressed-out little buzzer would it?

My point is this: those of you caring for another human being who cannot care for themselves, those of you surrendering YOUR time and YOUR mental and physical energy, are, (I'm going to use a term to describe you now that I usually abhor, so, y'know, be prepared), you are the real (ready?), you are the real heroes. Yeah, I know, it's an atrocious term isn't it? But I absolutely mean it. You are the Gatekeepers. You are the ones bearing the responsibility. You are the ones stepping up to the plate.

Cometh the hour, cometh the man or woman. That's you. So, well done. And any given Thursday evening at 8pm, when you hear people on their doorsteps applauding the NHS, I want you to feel that the applause is also for you, the Gatekeepers. Go on, breathe it in. (Don't take a bow and blow kisses though, they hate that.) I'll certainly be clapping for you. Because you deserve it. Keep up the good work. You are amazing people. You deserve the applause.

**Written by Torbay Carer**

# WHAT IT'S LIKE BEING A YOUNG ADULT CARER DURING LOCKDOWN

During the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic life as a Young Adult Carer has had its ups and downs, some days have felt like a ray of sunshine, whereas others have felt like walking on eggshells. Lockdown is difficult for everyone, there's no doubt about that, but it can stretch Young Carers and Young Adult Carers to the extreme.

You can wake up one day and your brother is in a giddy mood, wanting to play or walk the dog, or you can wake up and your brother might have had a bad night, so you have to spend your day calming him down and making sure he's safe and reassured about every tiny little thing. Of course, the days are more or less the same, only now no one can work, which also means that the people we care for can't go to any placements or support groups.

We all love looking after our loved ones as part of our daily routine, lockdown or not, but this also means that us Carers potentially must forget some things, that regular kids can do without thinking. For example a child who isn't a Carer will have all the time in the world to play on their consoles and sit and do coursework or homework, but a Carer will have to make sure the people they care for are sorted, have had any medication, been fed and are safe, before they spend time on themselves. It's safe to say that this can have a terribly negative impact on a Carer, sometimes small amounts of sleep and little motivation can make Carers feel depressed very quickly.

As for myself, lockdown as a Carer has been a mix of ups and downs. There have been fun filled days running alongside low mood, together with exhausted and depressing days where I wish I could just curl up and disappear. Despite me looking after both my mum and older brother, lockdown has been an overwhelmingly emotional eye opener; I wouldn't change my loved ones for the world, I'd just like to ensure their days are fulfilled and full of activity.

Finally, lockdown can have a massive toll on a Carers' mental health, including my own. I'm in a constant mindset of Carer, so I sometimes forget to care about myself, which leads to being in bed at 3am wide awake crying and wishing that Covid-19 would disappear, then my loved ones could feel safe and go back to their placements. If my mum is having a good day with her condition, it takes a lot of stress off of me, but still at the back of my head I'm constantly in a Carer mindset; I wouldn't change anything for the world though.

**Chloe, Young Adult Carer**

## BOOK REVIEW

*Carers' Quiet Corner* by Samantha Little

### THE GRAND TOUR

Agatha Christie (ISBN: 0007460687 Harper Collins, 2012)

In 1922, a young Agatha Christie accompanied her first husband, Archie, on a Grand Tour of South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii and Canada, leaving behind their two-year-old daughter, Rosalind with Agatha's mother.

During the ensuing 10 months. Agatha kept a record of their journey, taking photographs of new-found friends and famous sights, keeping newspaper cuttings, invitations, menus and memorabilia, and making notes that she would later use in her autobiography, all the while maintaining an enthusiastic correspondence with her loved ones at home.

This gorgeous volume, displayed as a travel journal, reproduces these items and reveals Agatha's deep appreciation of the places she visited, the local customs she encountered, and the drama of incidents observed with the keen insight that would see her emerge as the world's most prolific crime writer.





### WHEN DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE ENDS AT 16

If you are caring for a young person who is getting Disability Living Allowance (DLA), you should be aware that as their 16th birthday approaches, they will \*usually be asked to switch to Personal Independence Payment (PIP). PIP is somewhat different to DLA, and you may feel anxious about the impending changeover, but by acquainting yourself with the PIP rules a few weeks beforehand and gathering the paper evidence to support the claim, you can reduce the stress and optimise the outcome.

\*unless receiving DLA under the terminal illness rules or a hospital inpatient

The changeover starts when the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) contacts you a few months before your teenager's 16th birthday and invites a claim for PIP, although the timescale may be delayed by the disruptive effects of the Covid-19 emergency. Fortunately, once you have made a claim for PIP, the DLA payments continue until a PIP decision has been issued, but only if the claim is made within 28 days of contact from the DWP.

One point to consider at this time, is your child's capacity to manage money. PIP is normally paid to the young person, not the Carer, so if there are any concerns, this could be the time to think about becoming a DWP 'appointee' - more information here: <https://bit.ly/2zZnsJj>. If you do choose this option, you will retain responsibility for their benefits.

### HELPFUL FREE ONLINE RESOURCES

The maxim of "if you fail to prepare, you are preparing to fail" is especially relevant to PIP. We cannot cover everything you need to know here, but there are some reliable online guides to steer you through the PIP process:

- Contact: <https://bit.ly/3biMlaJ> (a PIP guide for Carers of young people)
- Disability Rights UK: <https://bit.ly/2Lg0kZB> (a general PIP guide for all adults)
- DWP: <https://bit.ly/2SJxLrC> (a series of videos on PIP basics)
- Mencap: <https://bit.ly/35L3huz> (an on-screen PIP guide)

### EVIDENCE, EVIDENCE, EVIDENCE...

Once you have got to grips with the structure of PIP, it will be time to collect the evidence that will support the new claim. The type of evidence you submit will partly be determined by your child's disability, for example, difficulties caused by juvenile arthritis will be quite different to those of a teenager with high functioning autism. Regardless of the diagnosis, the supporting evidence must be consistent and credible. That generally means proof that is produced as part of a treatment or support plan, making it truly plausible and impartial. Examples may include a copy of an Education, Health and Care Plan, a consultant's patient copy letter (sent to the Carer and GP), investigation results or a list of specialist equipment that has been supplied, etc. Note that It is rarely useful to request a GP letter - a DWP review undertaken in 2012, revealed that out of 26,500 successful appeals relating to disability benefits, GP evidence was the main influencing factor in only 2.9% of all cases.

# BEREAVEMENT

## DEALING WITH BEREAVEMENT

Following enquiries from Carers, Martin Manley, Co-ordinating Chaplain from Torbay Hospital has put together an article about dealing with bereavement. Martin and his colleagues can be contacted on: **(01803) 654186**

Anyone can find life difficult following the loss of someone close to them. If there are family or trusted friends to help with practical tasks, that can make a real difference, as can a shoulder to cry on or a friend we can be honest with. But for all kinds of reasons, bereavement can leave us feeling lost, alone and overwhelmed. But there is help available, both emotional and practical.

## THINKING AHEAD

It is not morbid to plan ahead – in fact it can be a great comfort to relatives left behind if they know exactly what you want when your time here comes to an end. It can also help to make financial decisions without the emotional pressure that comes with bereavement. Most Funeral Directors offer a Funeral Plan, where you can decide what you want, how much you want to spend, and pay for the funeral in advance. This can be done as a lump sum or in instalments, usually over 12 months, although a longer spread of payments may also be available. Some people even write a message or a poem to be read at their funeral.

## ARRANGING A FUNERAL

It is the responsibility of the next of kin to arrange a funeral. Local Funeral Directors will be able to advise you on most practical details. They are used to dealing with people at difficult times, so don't be embarrassed about getting upset, or not knowing what to do. They will be able to help you. You can tell them which priest, minister or celebrant you would like to conduct the service, or they will be able to introduce you to someone suitable. Discussing your plans and wishes with someone experienced usually helps to clarify your thoughts if you are unsure what is possible or what would feel right. The service can be religious, but it doesn't have to be.

## FINANCIAL HELP

If money is a worry, there are a few things that might help. If you are on benefits, you can apply for a grant from the Government (Funeral Expenses Payment). This is means-tested, and will cover certain costs (including cremation fees and death certificate) plus £700 towards the cost of the funeral. If you are below the state pension age and your spouse dies, you may be entitled to something called Bereavement Support Payment, which is a lump sum (either £3,500 or £2,500 depending on circumstances) and further monthly payments for up to 18 months. Some local funeral directors are also able to offer the option of paying for a funeral in instalments (this is likely to be via a finance company).

When a child or young person dies, there need be very few expenses: most local Funeral Directors make no charges (although you would of course need to pay for extras such as hiring a limousine), and local Councils have no burial or cremation fees for people under 18 years (although charges do apply for private woodland burials) although in the case of a burial, you will have to pay for a permit to erect a headstone. The same is true for a loss during pregnancy.

## BEYOND THE PRACTICAL

Many people find that they only begin dealing with their loss once the funeral and practicalities are over. It's not "closure" so much as an early step on a long and rocky road. This is normal, and it can help to share your feelings either with a trained counsellor or with others who have walked the same path. There is often a waiting list for "face to face" services but don't let that put you off enquiring. It is worth asking your GP if they can refer you: it can help to know a meeting is in place, even if it is a little while ahead. There are a whole range of national phonelines and local support groups available, whether for you or to support someone you know. Torbay Hospital Chaplaincy keep a comprehensive list and would be pleased to put you in touch. During COVID-19 funerals are still being held, but please check with your funeral director what the latest guidance is around arranging and attending.

# DIMENSIONS FOR AUTISM

## IS COMING TO TORBAY

Dimensions for Autism (DFA) is a community interest company (CIC) running support groups for adults on the spectrum who **do not** have a learning disability. The new Torbay group will be held on the last Monday afternoon of the month (2.30 - 4.30). Adults can turn up at the virtual group and do not need a referral to attend. Adults who suspect they may be on the spectrum may also attend the group, where they will receive support and advice. This support group is free.

For more information contact Trish Darke on: [trishdarke.dimensionsforautism@gmail.com](mailto:trishdarke.dimensionsforautism@gmail.com) or Heidi Slatter/Group facilitator on: [advocate4autism@outlook.com](mailto:advocate4autism@outlook.com)

Trish Darke (DFA, Director and co-facilitator) and Heidi Slatter (autistic adult) will facilitate this group. **Trish will also be offering 1:1 support sessions** for either adults who suspect they are autistic, or who have a diagnosis, and their Carers. These 1:1 sessions are limited and need to be pre-booked (two hours per month). If you know of an autistic adult or their Carer, that would like a 1:1 then please refer them to Trish via her email as listed above. These 1:1 support sessions will now be held online or over the phone until further notice.

You can also find more information about DFA's support groups on DFA's website: [www.dimensionsforautism.life](http://www.dimensionsforautism.life). On this website there is a **guide to services** for adults on the spectrum (and their Carers) called The Yellow Brick Road: Click on the Devon Autism Guide, or: [https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/daa5b68f/files/uploaded/AutismServiceGuide\\_1\\_03\\_1%20%281%29.pdf](https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/daa5b68f/files/uploaded/AutismServiceGuide_1_03_1%20%281%29.pdf). This guide is written by DFA's volunteer members, as well as our members also being responsible for our website etc. Not only does this guide have lots of information about autism, but it also provides information about what an individual should do if they suspect they are on the autism spectrum.

## HAS YOUR SITUATION CHANGED?

Torbay Carers Service is aware that caring for someone is always changing and developing. We will do what we can to support you with your caring situation and can signpost you to other services which might be able to help further.

If you are a Carer whose caring role has changed recently, or if you haven't spoken to your Carer Support Worker for some time, then it might be the right time to contact your GP practice and ask for a new Carer's Assessment. This would take into account how your role has changed and if there are any new services that might be able to help you.

If the person you care for has moved out of the area or into residential care please contact us. It might be that you can no longer be on our Carers' Register, but we could signpost you to support services that could help with your current situation if necessary.

You are eligible for support under the Care Act if you provide support to a friend, family member or neighbour in Torbay, who would not be able to cope without you. If that person is in residential or nursing care, that service should provide the 'necessary care', and therefore Carers who provide support to them are not able to access the benefits of the Carers Register emergency card / Carers Passport, including free parking at local hospitals and discounts on food and drinks at Torbay Hospital, the Carers Discount Scheme or Carers Education Courses. However, they will still be able to access information and advice such as the Signposts newsletter, so contact Signposts as below.

# DEVON ORGANISATIONS LAUNCH COMMITMENT TO CARERS

In 2014, NHS England (which oversees the NHS) laid out its Commitment to Carers - 39 commitments to improve the identification and support of Carers across the NHS. In 2018, the Carers' Leads who cover the three areas of Devon started to draw up their own Commitment to Carers based on this and the Triangle of Care – partnership working between the person, their Carer and the professional. It was hoped that Devon's NHS organisations and Local Authorities in the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) would sign up to the Commitment which has the following 7 principles:

- 1 : Identifying Carers and supporting them
- 2 : Effective Support for Carers
- 3 : Enabling Carers to make informed choices about their caring role
- 4 : Staff awareness
- 5 : Information-sharing
- 6 : Respecting Carers as expert partners in care
- 7 : Carers whose roles are changing or who are more vulnerable

There is also guidance / recommendations within each of the principles, as can be found on our website: [www.tsdfi.uk/carers](http://www.tsdfi.uk/carers) under Strategy tab.

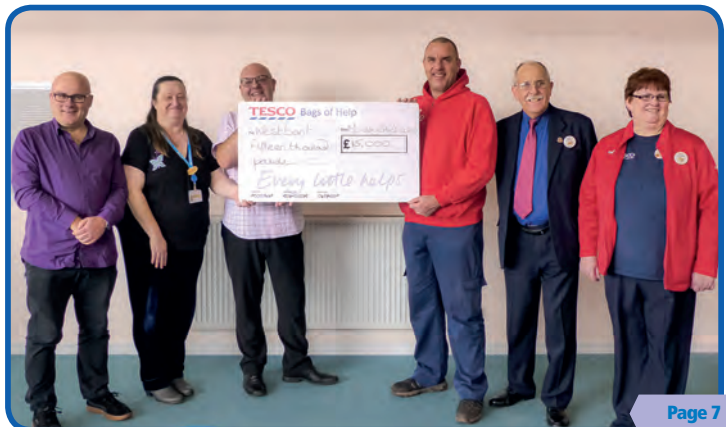
In late 2019, the STP agreed to the principles above and agreed that each organisation would nominate a senior member of staff to work with Carers Services, to self-assess against the principles and draw up an action plan. On March 26th the Commitment was meant to be launched with all the organisations coming together to formally sign the Commitment; due to COVID-19 this has been postponed, but will be rescheduled in due course.

## CARERS ACROSS DEVON TO BENEFIT FROM TESCO'S "BAGS OF HELP"



In Tesco's Centenary Year, they ran two special 'Bags of Help' funding where customers voted for their favourite causes. Carers in Devon came second and have just received £15,000 for Carers' breaks. This has been divided across the patch on the basis of Carer population, so Torbay will receive almost £2000 over the next few months towards giving Carers a break. Katy Heard, Torbay's Carers' Lead, said, 'We are very grateful to Tesco, and to Westbank who submitted the application, for helping us to increase the opportunities for Carers to have a much needed break. Natalie Townsend, who coordinates our fabulous Carers' Week activities, has some plans!'

The photo shows Carole Brierley from Torbay, with Billy Hartstein from Devon and Lee Sewrey from Plymouth, receiving the Bags of Help cheque from representatives of Tesco.



# CARERS WEEK 8-14th JUNE



Carers Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring, it highlights the challenges Carers face and recognises the contribution they make to families and communities throughout the UK. This year the theme is: Making Caring Visible.

**During Covid-19 I think it is fair to say that Carers within Torbay and throughout the country have become more visible than ever and we are keen to reach those who currently don't know about our service. If you know of anyone who's in a caring role but isn't registered with us, please pass on a copy of Signposts electronically, or if you make contact with us, we can send out a paper version.**

Unfortunately we are unable to meet in person this year to celebrate Carers Week, however, we don't want to miss the opportunity to say a massive thank you to all Torbay Carers, for all of your tireless and ongoing hard work, so we have decided to offer some online events that you might like to get involved in.

**There is also a competition in the following 4 categories:**

The best: 1. Decorated cake 2. Poem 3. Photo 4. Garden in bloom

All submissions are required by the end of Carers Week, 14th of June and will then be judged. Winners will be announced in each category by the 22nd of June and prizes will include a Cream Tea delivered to your home, or an M&S voucher. Please email your photos to: [ntownsend@nhs.net](mailto:ntownsend@nhs.net) with the subject: **CARERS WEEK COMPETITION**.

## ACTIVITIES FOR CARERS WEEK

### TUESDAY

**VIRTUAL TOUR OF WINDSOR CASTLE**  
2pm (allow up to an hour)

### WEDNESDAY

**VIRTUAL ZOOM KAHOOT QUIZ**  
Join at 2.45pm (allow up to an hour)

### THURSDAY

**COFFEE MORNING & SING ALONG**  
11am (allow up to 45 mins)

THIS EVENT WILL HAPPEN OUTSIDE OF  
CARERS WEEK ON MONDAY 22ND

**RELAX & UNWIND WITH TEMPLE SPA**  
11am (allow up to 45 mins)

Learn relaxation techniques and facial  
application of sample products

If you would like to take part in any of the virtual Zoom activities, please contact Natalie Townsend (see email above) with the subject title of the event, for example: VIRTUAL ZOOM KAHOOT QUIZ

You will need a laptop, tablet, or smartphone to take part and you will need to download Zoom, which is free of charge. Instructions and Zoom ID/password will be emailed to you once registered, spaces are limited.

You also might like to take a virtual Horse and Cart Ride, or Steam Train at:  
[www.beamish.org.uk/discover-beamish-from-home/](http://www.beamish.org.uk/discover-beamish-from-home/)

Or visit The Royal Collection Trust on:  
<https://www.rct.uk/discover>



# WHERE TO GET SUPPORT FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

every mind  
matters

It can sometimes be hard knowing who and where to go for help if you're struggling with your mental health.

Support is available for you, even if services seem busy at the moment because of coronavirus.

You are important and you will not be wasting anyone's time. **Here are some options to help you find the right kind of support:**

Your **local GP** can advise you about helpful treatments and help you access mental health services and support.

Visit [Healthwatch](#) to find out more about local mental health services for issues such as anxiety, stress, depression and bereavement, as well as details of helplines, phone apps, online support and lots of self-care resources and tools.

Parents and carers can visit [Action for Children](#) to find advice and resources on coronavirus and speak to a parenting coach in a 1-to-1 live chat.

## Torbay and South Devon COVID-19 Emotional Wellbeing Helpline

A supportive listening and signposting service for relatives affected by COVID-19 and health or care colleagues seeking support in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Hosted by Rowcroft Hospice, this helpline is not a crisis response line. Callers are asked to leave their contact details and will receive a call back within 2-3 working days. Call: 01803 217433. (Open Mon-Fri 9-5)

[Talkworks](#) is a free NHS talking therapy service for people over 18 for people who are struggling to cope, feeling low, anxious or overwhelmed by their thoughts and feelings. Access Talkworks by calling 0300 555 3344 or via an [online](#) self-referral form.

**Kooth** provides online counselling and emotional well-being support for children and young people.  
Visit: [www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)

**Checkpoint** offers free and confidential information, advice and support services for children and young people aged 8-17yrs. Call: 01803 200100  
Visit: [www.childrenssociety.org.uk/checkpoint](http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/checkpoint)

Visit [www.everymindmatters.co.uk](http://www.everymindmatters.co.uk) to get a free plan with tips to help you deal with stress and anxiety, improve your sleep, boost your mood and feel more in control.

## Torbay Community Coronavirus Helpline

Practical help during the COVID-19 Pandemic, including shopping, collecting medication and befriending.  
Call: 01803 446022  
(8am-8pm, 7 days a week)

The Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) offers a free helpline or webchat for anyone needing to talk about life's problems. Call on 0800 58 58 58 (5pm-midnight every day) or visit [www.thecalmzone.net/](http://www.thecalmzone.net/) to use their webchat service

**The Silver Line** provides 24/7 information, friendship and advice to older people. Call: 0800 470 8090 Visit: [wwwthesilverline.org.uk](http://wwwthesilverline.org.uk), for online support and lots of self-care resources and tools.

## MY JOURNEY

I remember the first day I met with Cheryl, Young Adult Carer Support Worker; I was only 16 years old at the time and studying Health and Social Care. At this point I joined Young Adult Carers.

I have known Cheryl and Dave (Young Adult Carer Support Workers) for 10 years. In that time, I have built a lovely relationship with them both and they have truly changed my life. Today, I work as a 1-2-1 mentor at South Devon College in re-engagement. The positive path I lead has been massively impacted by three people, my father, Cheryl and Dave, and I cannot thank them enough.

My journey began in Health and Social Care, when I was offered an experience on the Tall Ships for one week as competent crew, sailing across London to France and returning to Brixham. I met some lovely people and the outdoors made a huge impact on my life.

At 18 years old, I was offered a three-week adventure experience in Ullswater for Outward Bounds. Although I struggled throughout, I was still voted an unsung hero and achieved my John Muir Award. Wanting to go home on a few occasions, my instructor Andy supported me throughout and changed my life.

Outward Bounds was enough to change my whole career path. I have never been perfect throughout education, because of my personal issues, however I am proud of what I have achieved. I have gained a Bachelors Degree in Coaching (Outdoor Education), Foundation Degree in Outdoor Education, voluntary work at climbing centres, two seasons at Acorn Adventure as a lead climbing instructor and running sessions with outdoor activities. I have qualified as an Archery GB Instructor, Climbing Wall Instructor, I did a season for Peter Gordon Lawrence (outdoor education and activity organisation) and lots of other experience and qualifications. I haven't missed out on travelling or adventures, because I have done things as and when I can in short bursts and I go for every opportunity I can.

Importantly, my dad is an inspiration and I am so lucky to have spent so much time with him. He is 82 years old, brave and extremely supportive with everything I do. We have a lovely bond and although my dad is a double amputee, that never stops him; he cooks and completes any activity he sets his mind too. I am so incredibly proud and love him very much.

I cannot thank Cheryl and Dave enough, they have been amazing!

### **Stephanie Sparkes** Young Adult Carer

If you are a Young Adult Carer, or you know someone aged between 16-25 years old, who is in a caring role, please contact us via our website: [www.torbayyac.co.uk](http://www.torbayyac.co.uk) or email: [torbayyac@nhs.net](mailto:torbayyac@nhs.net) or phone: (01803) 208455.



# TORBAY YOUNG CARERS UPDATE



Wow! what a start to the year - two residentials, a half term activity programme, and a huge move. The really big news is – WE HAVE MOVED!! Torbay Young Carers Service has moved out of Torbay Council to form part of Torbay Youth Trust, alongside Torbay Youth Service. It's an exciting time with lots of new opportunities ahead of us. We are continuing all elements of the current service and hopefully will be able to offer some additional support in the future. It does mean that most of our contact details have changed though, so please make sure that you have the up to date numbers and emails:

Torbay Youth Trust: **(01803) 895299**

Address: **Torbay Youth Trust, Torquay Business Centre, Lymington Road, Torquay, TQ1 4BD**

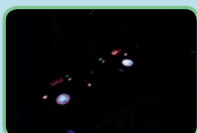
Email: **[youngcarers@torbayyouthtrust.org.uk](mailto:youngcarers@torbayyouthtrust.org.uk)**

For referrals: **[referrals@torbayyouthtrust.org.uk](mailto:referrals@torbayyouthtrust.org.uk)**

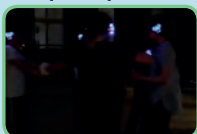
Individual workers' mobile numbers have remained the same.

The move hasn't stopped us from offering support to Young Carers – our Brixham, Paignton and Torquay groups have all been going ahead as usual. We have been busy back in the schools and we have also been able to offer two residential opportunities. Firstly, we took our Young Leaders group to a leadership residential funded by UKYouth – we had a busy weekend of teambuilding and high ropes in the New Forest. The following weekend was an incredible event with our partners at Playback Theatre, giving opportunities for Young Carers to explore their own stories with Playback and a cookery session, craft activities and games. Food for the weekend and the cookery lesson were provided by Ashburton Cookery School, and the Young Carers even received a wonderful cookery book each.

Then came the half term activities with 35 Young Carers joining us for our zoo trip. It was great to see some of our young leaders in action, supporting our younger members at the zoo. The evening was all about the 'older' 11-18 year old Young Carers with a silent disco, with light-up headphones and a music battle between DJ Ricardo and DJ Gabe from the Sound Communities team! It was a fantastic evening – many thanks to our friends at Babbacombe and St Marychurch Lions Club, for funding the disco and supplying all of our Young Carers with burgers, ice-creams and refreshments.



**Silent Disco With Light Up Headphones**



As always, our activities cannot take place without the help of others with funding and practical support. Over the last few months the following organisations have been key in helping our Young Carers to access activities:

BMAD; Babbacombe and St Marychurch Lions Club; Playback Theatre; Ashburton Cookery School; Sound Communities; UKYouth; Brixham Soroptimists; Preston Rotary Club and Orchard Forest School. We are so grateful for their support.

Best Wishes,

**Teresa Mikalauskas, Young Carers Manager, Torbay Youth Trust**

# CARERS NOTICEBOARD



Parkinson's UK is a national charity dedicated to supporting people affected by Parkinson's.

I am Karen Safe, your friendly Parkinson's local adviser and I am here for you – whether you have the condition or you're a Carer, friend or family member of someone with Parkinson's.

As a Parkinson's local adviser, I can help if you:

- are looking for advice and information
- are looking for tips on how to deal with the day-to-day impact of Parkinson's
- need emotional support
- want to find out more about the services available in your area
- want to learn about your rights and entitlements
- need help navigating the benefits process
- are looking for support on employment issues
- supporting you with your health and social care queries
- finding local support such as our local Torbay Branch meetings (currently postponed)

Parkinson's local advisers are there to turn to, so no-one has to face Parkinson's alone.

You can contact me on: **0344 225 3699** from Tuesday to Thursday, or email me at: **adviser4.southwest@parkinsons.org.uk**.

Our confidential National Helpline is: **0808 800 0303** available from 9am-7pm Monday to Friday & Saturday 10am-2pm.



Just to let Torbay Carers know, we are currently extending our service beyond Devon.

If you are caring for someone with a learning disability or autism and they are struggling with isolation, we are offering communication through Whatsapp, on our Facebook page and we will be happy to offer a direct phone service.

**Jo Morgan, Chief Officer**

Devon Link Up, The Beehive, Dowell Street, Honiton, EX14 1LZ

Phone: **07808 053992** Email: **admin@devonlink-up.org**  
web: **www.devonlink-up.org**

## Carers Groups

All Carers groups are postponed until further notice due to Covid-19.

However, please feel free to ring your GP Carer Support Worker should you need support, or a Carers Health and Wellbeing Assessment, which can be completed over the phone.



## MENCAP GROUP UPDATE

If you are a Carer aged 18-60 of an adult with a learning disability, we would like to advise you that while face to face groups are unable to take place, we are trialling some virtual groups via Skype and conference calls – details to be confirmed.

If you are interested, please contact **Emma Young**, Project Officer (Collaboration) on: **07852 546530** or email: **emmajane.young@mencap.org.uk**

## Chatty 10

Many people across Devon are facing social isolation due to lockdown. Let them know they can call us for a 10 minute chat Mon - Fri, 9 - 4

**01752 512280**



#chatty10



## Other News

### NHS Grab And Go Guide

The NHS has published a two-page Grab and Go guide designed in partnership with people with learning disabilities, families and nurses. It gives the information that doctors and nurses will need if you go to hospital because of COVID-19. The documents can be downloaded here: <https://bit.ly/3f17zIW>. You may also want to look at the link below, being prepared for hospital admissions:

<https://bit.ly/BeingPreparedHospital>

### Spiritual Encouragement

For anyone you know who is feeling isolated and has no contact with the digital world: if they have access to a phone line they can call freephone for a daily message from Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, on: **0800 804 8044**. The same phone line also offers a daily prayer for the lockdown and favourite hymns.

Also, there is a Blessing for the UK (you'll also find similar Blessings for many other nations if you search on-line). This can be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PUtl3mNj5U>.

### Scrabble Group

As the 'Scrabble Group' is no longer running at Paignton Library maybe you'd like to take a look at on-line scrabble with friends.

[scrabble.wonderhowto.com/news/best-places-play-scrabble-online-0129726](https://www.scrabblewonderhowto.com/news/best-places-play-scrabble-online-0129726)



online

## Online Courses for Unpaid Carers Putting Carers First

Caring for someone can be tough and Carers can't always attend courses in person, and during our current climate there are even more reasons not to attend a classroom-based approach. To better support Carers Promas have developed a series of simple and easy to follow online courses which cover a range of topics.

### For example:

- Recognising the type of Carer you are and how caring affects your life
- How to manage and recognise stress
- Strategies to help you understand and cope with challenges in your caring role
- How to achieve a healthy balance in your life and look after yourself

Courses include online videos, interactive quizzes, written information and worksheets which can be completed online, or printed off and completed by hand. These courses are not pass or fail tests. Instead, they are designed to help Carers to understand how they are coping and to offer tools and practical ways to help them.

If you would like to try courses 1-3 **Free of Charge**, please log onto: [www.promasonline.co.uk](http://www.promasonline.co.uk), then click Try Our Courses from the Menu, then scroll down to **TRY THE FREE COURSES**. If you find these 3 courses of interest and you would like to complete courses 4-7, please contact Signpost for Carers on: **(01803) 666620** and we will issue you with a password.

## Learning at Home

We have found a number of free courses online and during COVID-19 you might like to take this opportunity to dip your toe in and learn something you've always fancied trying.

### OpenLearn

The home of free learning from The Open University. If you are looking for a new topic to explore, or want to dig deeper into something you've already discovered? Whether it's a 60-second animated video, a 24-hour course, or Beginners French or Spanish, you will find it on OpenLearn for free.

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/for-study>

### FutureLearn

FutureLearn have a diverse range of subjects and courses which vary in length. Most are six to ten weeks long, but some are shorter two and three week courses. Courses are free, or you can upgrade, or buy unlimited.

<https://www.futurelearn.com/>

### Oxford Home Study Centre (OHSC)

Provides distance learning professional courses. The college is a global distance learning institute dedicated to providing accredited home study courses across the world. They offer both free and chargeable courses.

<https://www.oxfordhomestudy.com/aboutus>

### edX

edX is a platform for education and learning, a global non-profit organisation offering 2,600+ courses in over 30 subject areas from short courses to advanced degrees, there are learning opportunities for everyone. They offer both free and chargeable courses. The courses and programs are flexible to fit in with your lifestyle, you can take the courses online anytime, anywhere. They may include on-demand video lectures, quizzes, hands-on projects, and more. Take a look on:

<https://www.edx.org>

## Torbay Community Coronavirus Helpline

Revised  
hours

If you need help or would  
like to help, contact us:

Phone: 01803 446022

Online form: [bit.ly/torbayhelpline](http://bit.ly/torbayhelpline)

Info: [www.torbayhelphub.com](http://www.torbayhelphub.com)

Monday-Friday: 10am-6pm

Saturday: 9:30am-12:30pm



# "TALKING POINTS" IN TORBAY

## A NEW WAY TO ACCESS ADVICE & SUPPORT

We are changing the way we support health and wellbeing in Torbay and our relationship with local people. We want to make it easier for you to access advice, information and support and we know that sometimes this is best done face-to-face, in an informal way. So, across the Bay, we are creating "Talking Points". These are regular sessions which provide an opportunity for you to speak with social care staff and experienced members of the community sector, in a friendly and welcoming setting.

The conversation can help you to explore your options and find ways forward with the things that matter most to you, or someone you care for. We will do our best to support you by listening, giving advice/information and, helping you to connect to things in your local community which can help improve your wellbeing or stay independent. If needed, we can arrange more formal services.

At some Talking Points we have specialist input, around things such as equipment and home adaptations, mental health, finance and benefits, employment and training and community groups/activities.



At present, due to COVID-19 there are no drop-ins taking place, however phone appointments can still be made to discuss what Talking Points can offer on: **(01803) 219700.**



## HEALTHWATCH OFFERING FREE DIGITAL SUPPORT FOR THOSE STAYING AT HOME

Independent health and social care champion Healthwatch Torbay has urged the local public to continue to get in touch with them during the COVID-19 outbreak should they have any issues accessing local healthcare, particularly with digital services.

This regularly updated information page can be found at: **[www.healthwatchtorbay.org.uk/information-advice-on-coronavirus-covid-19/](http://www.healthwatchtorbay.org.uk/information-advice-on-coronavirus-covid-19/)**.

Before the virus lockdown, Healthwatch Torbay were also leading the award-winning 'Digital Health Devon' project, showing the public in Devon how they can use the internet to access useful healthcare tools and resources such as prescription-ordering services and online GP consultation. They were delivering 'digital drop in sessions' at GP Practices and select community venues throughout the county, but have had to postpone these sessions due to the lockdown.

Now their team of volunteer digital trainers – despite being in lockdown at home – have clubbed together to offer digital support for the public remotely, including advice on how to access Governmental and NHS Coronavirus online services. Anyone interested in receiving this remote support should call free on: **08000 520 029** to discuss their query and book a free appointment. A volunteer Digital trainer will then contact you to try and support you with your digital healthcare related query, either over the phone, via email or even via an online video call.

Digital Health Devon have made their online e-learning tool free to access at home via: **[www.digitalhealthdevon.co.uk](http://www.digitalhealthdevon.co.uk)**, which includes a number of useful learning videos and guides on how to access online GP services, self-referral services, and online benefits from home using the internet.

Healthwatch Torbay and Digital Health Devon have also launched an online live webchat feature on their websites – available during working hours – so people can chat live with an adviser about both their healthcare services feedback and any digital healthcare access or IT-related queries.

For more information please contact Healthwatch Torbay Communications Officer Simon Culley on: **(01803) 402 751** or via email at: **[simon.culley@healthwatchtorbay.org.uk](mailto:simon.culley@healthwatchtorbay.org.uk)**.

Dear Carers,

I hope you are well and your marvellous resilience and the kindness of friends, family and strangers are keeping you buoyed. Here at Carers Aid Torbay and Bay Benefits, things look very different from a few months ago, when we sat down to consider all the jolly's we could put on for you in the months ahead and the services we could provide for you.

All groups and workshops previously meeting at the Olive Carers Centre, Torquay have been postponed. However, we are trying to keep in contact with group members to encourage and support them. All Outings previously advertised have also been postponed.

We vacated our offices at the Olive Carers Centre in Torquay, on the 17th March and are all now working from home. So very much business as usual, but in many different settings. Here are our up to date contact details:

Carers Aid Torbay and The Enabling Service are being covered by Pennie (Manager) Steph, Julie and Simon, from 9.00am-4.30pm Monday to Thursday and Fridays 9.00am-1.00pm available on: **(01803) 323510**.

Pennie (Manager) works 9.00am-4.30pm Monday – Thursday and is available on: **07972 410514**  
Email: **pennie@carersaidtorbay.co.uk**

Steph (Admin) mans the office phone throughout the week: **(01803) 323510** and will forward calls as necessary to the appropriate worker. Email: **steph@carersaidtorbay.co.uk**

Julie (Senior Support Worker) works Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 9.00am-3.00pm. Mobile: **07511 616254**  
Email: **julie@carersaidtorbay.co.uk**

Simon (Support Worker) works Tuesday and Wednesday 9.00am-3.00pm. Mobile: **07398 188197**  
Email: **simon@carersaidtorbay.co.uk**

All the team are available for support, signposting, assessments, kindness, care and advocacy.

Bay Benefits is operational on Tuesday and Thursday, 9.00am-4.00pm and can only be contacted on: **07530 790354** or by email: **kyla@carersaidtorbay.co.uk** John is the Bay Benefits Advisor and Kyla is the Bay Benefits Assistant. They can help you with form filling, benefit and entitlement advice and online form filling. Although it may seem a little more difficult, not meeting in person, John and Kyla have a great deal of experience, patience and kindness and are happy to help.

Wishing everyone a safe and peaceful summer.  
Warmest wishes Pennie and the team.



# ATLAS RESPITE AND THERAPY PILOT MEMORYCOACH



We are really excited to be partnering with MyCognition to offer this new service MemoryCOACH and we are looking for informal carers or people living with dementia to take part in our free pilot.

## THE IDEA

### MemoryCOACH does 2 things:

1. It helps those supporting or caring for someone living with dementia by offering access to a live coach.

The coach offers families –

- a. Opportunity to talk through any current challenges or ask questions about the illness.
- b. 8 weekly sessions helping to build resilience and offer practical tips
- c. Work with the Coach to do MyCognition which has shown to build mental resilience and improve mood.
- d. Set up peer to peer support and facilitate the sessions.
- e. Encourage healthy habits and help to connect with the local dementia support.

2. Each Coach works with someone living with early to moderate dementia.

- a. An 8 week project agreed at the beginning designed to engage and be fun
- b. A purpose to the project that has an outcome and allows the person to work towards a tangible end product.
- c. The use of MyCognition assessment to prove the mental improvements associated with working with a coach
- d. Support in living well to slow deterioration
- e. Reduction of loneliness

The first phase of MemoryCOACH showed clear benefits to those living with dementia, including increased engagement, communication and mood lasting into the next day. We believe with the opportunity to use the MyCognition assessments we will be able to prove the cognitive improvements in working with a live coach remotely. While carers have fed back that it would be beneficial to have someone that can offer support and work with them during this isolating time. We hope the 2nd phase will lend more evidence to the benefits to supporting the family member.

For phase 2 of the MemoryCOACH trial we are looking to work with at least 25 participants; a mix of families/husbands/wives that support someone with dementia and individuals living with early to moderate dementia. They don't need to have any technology or be able to understand how to use computers all this will be managed remotely through an auto-answer video calls system. Please join us on this exciting journey and benefit from our free trial.

To find out more or to sign up please email [jonathan@atlas.care](mailto:jonathan@atlas.care) or call **01626 774799**.

**Do you know a Carer who would benefit from our services?**

- FREE parking at local hospitals • Discounts in local shops • A Carers Emergency card

**This document can be made available in other formats.**

**For details please contact: (01803) 666620, or email: [signposts@nhs.net](mailto:signposts@nhs.net)**