

## INTRODUCTION

**Unpaid family carers have been harder hit than most by soaring food and energy bills. Millions had already been forced into either giving up work altogether or to reduce their paid work so they could carry on caring for sick and disabled relatives.**

The need for Carers Trust and our network of **126** local carer centres therefore has never been greater. Collectively we reach over **1 million** unpaid carers and cover **85%** of all local authority areas. We have reach and we have scale, but there is also growing need. Census figures show unpaid carers are supporting more people with more complex needs and for more hours every week. At the same time, social care is in crisis, with fewer family carers receiving the support they need from statutory authorities.

My sincere thanks go out to you, our loyal and growing network of supporters. The need is urgent and the support you give us helps to make a huge difference to many lives.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kirsty McNulty".

## CARERS WEEK 2023



Carers Week is an annual campaign focused on raising awareness of unpaid carers, the challenges they face and the invaluable contribution they make to society.

This year was our busiest Carers Week yet, with a wide range of activities across Carers Trust. Our Scotland team attended a roundtable with Members of Scottish Parliament (MSPs) in Holyrood, while the Wales team accompanied Youth Council members to the Senedd to meet with Senedd Members and share their experiences.

We accompanied young adult carers to 10 Downing Street for a meeting with Social Care Minister, Helen Whately. There were virtual roundtables where young adult carers met with Ed Davey and Rachel Reeves. And there was a drop-in session for MPs to pledge their support for young carers through our All Party-Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers.

## LOCAL SUPPORT FOR UNPAID CARERS

If you are an unpaid carer you may qualify for a grant as part of a package of support from your local Carers Trust Network Partner. Find your nearest service on [Carers.org](https://www.carers.org) or call 0300 772 9600 (Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm).

# LIFE-CHANGING SUPPORT

**At 14, Holly was identified as a young carer for her sister who has cerebral palsy, epilepsy and severe sight loss. Her caring responsibilities, however, started at an even earlier age.**



Holly's childhood years were spent helping her sister, alongside her mum, with sight-guiding when out in public, personal care, physio exercises and generally providing an extra pair of hands.

After being identified as a young carer by

her local carers service, Holly found much-needed support.

**"THIS SUPPORT WAS LIFE-CHANGING FOR ME; I HAD A HEALTHY OUTLET TO VERBALISE AND WORK THROUGH ANY CHALLENGING EMOTIONS OF GUILT, ANXIETY OR FRUSTRATION...IT ALSO GAVE ME ACCESS TO A WHOLE COMMUNITY OF PEOPLE WHO JUST 'GOT IT'."**

Without this identification, Holly would have missed out on important support from both her local carers centre and school.

**"IF YOU ARE, OR THINK YOU MIGHT BE, A YOUNG CARER, SUPPORT IS DEFINITELY OUT THERE, AND YOU ARE MORE THAN DESERVING OF IT."**

# CARERS TRUST MARKS 50 YEARS OF CARING FOR CARERS

**Carers Trust has marked 50 years since the setting up of the UK's first ever carer organisation with an event in the Grand Hall of London's Old Bailey.**

Held on March 29, the reception highlighted the incredible work undertaken by local carer organisations to support millions of unpaid family carers across the UK over the last five decades.

Carers Trust has its roots in Crossroads Care, which was set up after a storyline in the hit Crossroads soap opera drew attention to unpaid family carers and their need for support. The Crossroads Care Scheme grew significantly in the decades that followed and eventually merged with the Princess Royal Trust for Carers in 2012 to form Carers Trust. The merger established the Carers Trust network of local carer organisations that now covers most of the UK.

At the 50th anniversary event, colleagues from across the network of 126 local carer organisations were joined by supporters, funders, trustees and staff.

Guests also heard from young carer Aditya, who is supported by Kingston Carers' Network. Aditya

spoke powerfully about the challenges and the rewards of looking after his 10-year-old brother, who has both non-verbal autism and ADHD.

Long term supporter and TV presenter Angela Rippon, set to don her dancing shoes again later this year as a Strictly contestant, spoke movingly about her own experience of caring for her mother with vascular dementia. Unpaid carers all too often felt forgotten about despite everything they do, she said, and that is why she has been so proud to support unpaid carers and Carers Trust for so long.



# YOUNG CARERS VISIT DOWNING STREET TO CALL FOR SUPPORT

**Young people took Carers Trust's call for greater recognition and support to Downing Street on Young Carers Action Day (YCAD) this year.**

A delegation of young and young adult carers, some travelling down to London from Sheffield and Stockton-on-Tees, joined Carers Trust CEO Kirsty McHugh in Westminster on March 15.

At 10 Downing Street, they handed in an open letter signed by 83 CEOs as well as more than 300 other people. Addressed to Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, the letter urged him to "ensure that the needs of children and young people who are caring unpaid for friends and family members are being considered so they receive the support they need from across your government".

The young carers were joined on the steps of 10 Downing Street by Paul Blomfield MP, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers, and Duncan Baker, Vice-Chair and the MP leading the APPG inquiry into life opportunities for young carers.

They then headed to the House of Lords to meet Parliamentarians in an event organised by the APPG. Those who heard from the young carers included the Minister for Social Care, Helen Whatley, the Shadow Children's Minister, Helen Hayes, and Leader of the Liberal Democrats, Sir Ed Davey.



MPs were asked to sign our Young Carers Pledge to support unpaid carers with the intention that the pledge will be developed into a Young Carers Covenant.

In the run-up to YCAD, Carers Trust also arranged a visit by the Children's Commissioner for England, Dame Rachel de Souza, to St John and St James Church of England Primary School to meet young carers and hear about the challenges they face.

A Carers Trust survey released to coincide with YCAD showed just how much pressure young and young adult carers are under. The intensity of their caring roles is increasing, with more than half saying the time they spend caring is rising, and nearly half are now caring for more people than they used to. The first ever parliamentary inquiry into how these challenges affect their life chances has just been launched by the APPG for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers, supported by Carers Trust.

## THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING UNPAID CARERS LIKE MARK

**Mark cares for his girlfriend Heidi who was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia in 2005. At first, Mark didn't know who to turn to for support.**

When Mark found Wandsworth Carers' Centre, a Carers Trust Network Partner, his life turned around. Mark joined a support group which helped his own mental health struggles, and the centre offered Mark specialist mental health support and the opportunity to talk and socialise with others in similar situations.

This support led to an improvement in Mark's mental health and importantly gave him breaks from caring to relieve his exhaustion. This meant he could take better care of Heidi, which in turn helped her to live a better life with her condition.

A huge thank you to everyone who donated this summer to help us raise nearly £15,000 to support carers like Mark to live better lives.

# HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS ROYAL VISITS THREE CARERS CENTRES

**Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal has visited several carers centres in recent months, meeting staff and the people who use the services.**

The Princess Royal, who is President of Carers Trust, made a trip to Bridgend Carers Centre on April 3 where she was treated to a performance from the Carers Choir. She also had the chance to chat to young and adult carers about the support they get.

On the following day, Her Royal Highness dropped into a Crossroads Care Gloucestershire activity club for people with health conditions and disabilities. Unpaid carers told her how the Cirencester club provides a vital break from their caring responsibilities while also giving their loved ones a fun day out.

The series of visits to centres, all part of Carers Trust's network of local carer organisations, was completed on June 12 at the Carers' Support Service in North East Lincolnshire. Here, The Princess Royal saw first-hand the activities and support received by family carers in the area.



Carers' Support Service Joint Chief Executive, Helen Wilson, said:

**"HER COMMITMENT TO CARERS AND HER KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE ISSUES THEY FACE IS ASTOUNDING. WE ARE A RELATIVELY SMALL LOCAL CHARITY SO HER VISIT HELPS US TO RAISE THE PROFILE OF CARERS AND THE WORK WE DO TO SUPPORT THEM."**

## LEAVING A LEGACY FOR UNPAID CARERS

Three in five of us will become unpaid carers at some point in our lives, and have to devote much of our own time to help someone who can't manage on their own.

We believe gifts left in wills have the power to ensure no unpaid carer is left alone to care for the person they love. Leaving a gift in your will helps you stand alongside the generations of unpaid carers to follow.

We have partnered with Farewill to offer a free will-writing service. It's easy to use and allows you to write your will in under 30 minutes.

Farewill is the largest will writer in the UK and every will is checked by their specialist team, ensuring your wishes are clear.

A small amount can make a big difference. By leaving a legacy to Carers Trust, you will be leaving a long-lasting gift to support and improve services for millions of unpaid carers across the UK.

For further information please contact [legacies@carers.org](mailto:legacies@carers.org) and we will be delighted to help.

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