For many unpaid carers, affording even basic essentials to make life a little easier for them and the person they care for is a daily struggle. Finding the money for those larger expenses, such as fixing a broken washing machine or renewing a bus pass, can be almost impossible.

That’s where our Carers Funds come in, helping unpaid carers (aged 16+) to address the difficult situations that caring can create and contribute to. Working with Carers Trust Network Partners across Great Britain, from Aberdeen Carers Support Service to Cornwall Carers Service, helps us ensure that unpaid carers most in need have access to this financial lifeline.

Every fortnight, our expert team review applications for everything from household items, breaks and courses, to transport needs. In the last six months we’ve awarded £236,423 in grants to 1,094 unpaid carers. It’s all thanks to the kindness of our generous supporters. While we were able to support 77% of requests, we would love to make it 100%, and with your help we could.

Tara is in her 40s and cares for her teenage son James who has Asperger syndrome. She supports him every day with household tasks, interactions with other people and managing his emotions.

Tara’s own long-term nerve damage means she has trouble sleeping and her old mattress was giving her painful nights. So we were pleased to award her £200 for a new mattress.

“IT WILL MEAN I AM IN LESS PAIN, LESS TIRED, HAPPIER AND HAVE MORE PATIENCE TO CONTINUE TO CARE.”

TARA

THANK YOU FOR HELPING YOUNG CARERS

In our Christmas appeal we asked you to support our work with young carers. Thanks to your help we raised over £43,000. We can’t thank you enough for recognising the support that young carers need to reach their potential.

LOCAL SUPPORT FOR UNPAID CARERS

If you are an unpaid carer you may be able to receive a grant as part of a package of support from your local Carers Trust Network Partner. Find your nearest service on Carers.org or call 03000 772 9600 (Monday-Friday, 9am -5pm).
We are so grateful for your support for unpaid carers. As we know from our work across the UK, including with local carer services, the pandemic has meant that unpaid carers are facing growing challenges.

That’s why, this year, we are committed to being ambitious and innovative in our work. We will continue to strive to ensure that all unpaid carers across the UK are truly valued, recognised and supported.

With your help we can continue to provide support to unpaid carers, advocate on their behalf and seek positive change. Importantly, we can also work in partnership with local carer services to provide targeted help. This year, we are centring on giving unpaid carers respite and breaks, and providing wellbeing and financial support with a focus on supporting young and young adult carers and ethnic minority carers.

So, a big thank you to everyone who is helping us reach those aims by generously donating, pledging a gift in your will or taking part in our fundraising activities. Last financial year, with your support we were able to award £4,377,823 in grants to unpaid carers. With three in five of us becoming an unpaid carer at some point in our lives, your continued kindness means we can be there for unpaid carers, when they need it most. Thank you so much.

Svetlana Kirov
Director of Fundraising, Carers Trust

Since the launch of our Respite Fund in 2021 we’ve provided grants of up to £400 to 558 unpaid carers. The grants have funded respite breaks chosen by unpaid carers to most suit their needs.

Carers like Ally, who is a single mum to four sons including Adam who is autistic. His behaviour is extremely challenging and can be hard to manage. During lockdown and with no help from other adults, Ally struggled to find time for herself which impacted her wellbeing. With our grant of £300 for a gym membership, once lockdown restrictions lifted Ally has been able to enjoy getting fit.

Thanks to your generosity, The Princess Royal Respite Fund for Carers has raised over £151,000 towards our target of £3m. This will enable us to provide grants to approximately 30,000 unpaid carers over the next three years so they can take a much-needed break. Find out how you can help us reach our goal at Carers.org/respite-fund.
An enormous thank you if you were one of the adult carers who recently completed our social care survey.

The findings provide alarming evidence of a deep-rooted failure by successive governments to understand and meet the basic support needs of millions of people struggling to care unpaid for a family member or friend.

- Almost nine out of ten carers (86%) agreed, or strongly agreed, that ‘successive governments have ignored the needs of unpaid carers for a long time’.
- 49% said they’d had to use their personal savings because of caring.
- 51% said they’d had to give up on personal interests because of caring.

And only 1% of respondents (just 12 out of more than 1,500 unpaid carers who completed the survey) felt that politicians understand unpaid carers.

With so many of you taking part, this gives us powerful findings from across the UK to present to government as part of our social care campaign to highlight:

- The UK’s broken social care system.

We know that young and young adult carers have felt increasingly isolated from friends and peers as a result of the pandemic. So, it was no surprise when they told us that they wanted this year’s Young Carers Action Day theme to be Taking Action on Isolation.

The day is our annual event to raise awareness of young carers and the incredible contribution they make to their families and local communities.

We’ll be campaigning for young and young adult carers to get the support they need to live full and varied lives alongside their caring roles. We’re particularly asking decision makers to commit to ensuring young and young adult carers can access respite breaks. These are essential in reducing isolation and promoting wellbeing.

We would love our We Care readers to get involved on 16 March. The young people on our Young Carers Action Day steering group suggested you could write to your parliamentary representative (MP, MSP, MS or MLA), newspaper or other organisation and ask them to Take Action on Isolation.

We have template letters you can adapt. Find out more at Carers.org/YCAD or email ycad@carers.org for a copy of the template.
LEAVING A GIFT IN YOUR WILL

MARCH IS FREE WILLS MONTH

This March is Free Wills Month so why not write your will for free with Carers Trust and Farewill? Farewill is the UK’s leading will-writer with an easy-to-use service which allows you to write a will in less than half an hour.

At Carers Trust, we believe gifts in wills can help ensure that, in the future, no unpaid carer will have to care for the person they love alone. By leaving a gift in your will to Carers Trust, you can help an unpaid carer in so many ways - from providing a break from caring and time to relax, to giving an emergency grant to help a carer in crisis. Or your gift could help provide a mentor for a young carer who is struggling at school so they can feel confident about their future.

To find out more about our free will-writing service, call Farewill on 020 8050 2686 or visit Carers.org/free-wills.

FINANCIAL HELP

If you are struggling financially, make sure you claim any benefits and credits that you, and the person you care for, are entitled to. To see what you might be able to claim, including Carer’s Allowance, use the new and improved benefits calculator from Turn2us on our website. Find out more at Carers.org/money-and-benefits/intro.

YOUNG ADULT CARER INTERNS

Our new internship programme is offering young adult carers work experience that gets them on the career ladder and helps them develop working life skills. At the same time, they are giving us valuable insight into our work with young and young adult carers. Find out more at Carers.org.

Many thanks to Anne, Carolyn, Katy, Jelena and Ruthi, the Carers Trust Readers Panel members who helped with this edition of We Care. To find out more about joining the Panel, see Carers.org/we-care/.

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