We Care
WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE CARERS COUNT

March 2017

ROYAL VISITOR MEETS CARERS

VISIT A GARDEN FOR CARERS TRUST

JOANNA LUMLEY SUPPORTING CARERS
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An introduction from Gail Scott-Spicer

Spring is in the air so now’s the time to start planning your visit to a National Gardens Scheme garden to help support Carers Trust. Visiting a garden is just one of the many ways our supporters show how much they value carers.

We’ve had a royal visit, Joanna Lumley has been backing our Britain’s Best Breakfast fundraiser and our corporate partners’ employees have been raising money in innovative ways.

Thanks to your generosity we’re able to help carers like Alan and Jane. Find out about the vital local support they’ve received in this edition.

If you want to help make carers count this year, you’ll find plenty of inspiration inside these pages. An enormous thank you, however you help.

Gail Scott-Spicer
Chief Executive Carers Trust

About Carers Trust

Carers Trust works to improve support, services and recognition for anyone living with the challenges of caring, unpaid, for a family member or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or addiction problems. With Network Partners, we aim to ensure that quality assured information, advice and practical support are available to all carers across the UK.

We Care is sent free to our supporters by post or email. If you would like to subscribe or unsubscribe to We Care, email fundraising@carers.org or call 0300 772 9600.

Getting in touch with us

Carers Trust has a new switchboard number – 0300 772 9600 – a non-profits number with significantly lower call charges than our old number.

We no longer have a fax number.

Post for our former office at Woodford Green, Essex IG8 8HD should be sent instead to Carers Trust, 32–36 Loman Street, London SE1 0EH.
A royal visitor for carers in Shrewsbury

Network Partner Carers Trust 4all in Shropshire was thrilled when our President, Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal, recently paid a visit.

Welcomed by our Chief Executive and the Chair and CEO of Carers Trust 4all, Her Royal Highness met with carers and those they care for, along with the Network Partner’s staff, trustees, funders and commissioners.

Our royal visitor spent time with a group of young carers, hearing about their future hopes and aspirations, including young carer Katie who presented Her Royal Highness with a copy of a painting depicting her caring world. The picture also included some words from Katie’s mum about Katie’s caring role and the positive impact the local young carers project has had on Katie.

Visit a garden this spring

Since 1927, the National Gardens Scheme, one of our largest and longest-standing supporters, has raised an astounding £45m for nursing and care charities.

This year, the National Gardens Scheme is celebrating 90 years of raising funds through opening gardens to the public and we would like to encourage you to open your garden, visit gardens in England and Wales and spread the word by talking about the National Gardens Scheme with your friends. You could even get a group together to visit a garden or a group of gardens.

“The National Gardens Scheme has been supporting carers since 1991 – raising over £2.5m for carers. I would like to say a big thank you on behalf of everyone at Carers Trust.”

Gail Scott-Spicer, Chief Executive Carers Trust

To find out more, visit www.ngs.org.uk or look out for the 2017 Gardens to Visit book in a garden centre or bookshop near you.

A new partnership with The Jockey Club

In July 2016, Carers Trust launched a multi-year partnership with The Jockey Club which stages many of horseracing’s most iconic events. Over the coming months, employees across 15 racecourses will be raising money to support Carers Trust’s vital ongoing work. The Jockey Club has also launched optional online donations when buying tickets.

The money raised will enable us to support even more unpaid carers through our grants programmes, online support services and through our support to local carers services.

Employees have already come up with creative ways of raising money including running 5.5km every day in January 2017 and we look forward to supporting them to take on more of these great events.

Employees also wanted to show their commitment to supporting carers in other ways too, including giving up their spare time to volunteer. They’ll be helping out in lots of ways including sharing their skills to better support carers and Carers Trust staff.

We’re thrilled to be working with The Jockey Club and look forward to an exciting partnership. To find out more get in touch with us by emailing corporate@carers.org.
An absolutely fabulous Britain’s Best Breakfast campaign

Our latest Britain’s Best Breakfast fundraising campaign got off to a sizzling start after Absolutely Fabulous star Joanna Lumley donated a breakfast recipe from her childhood.

The campaigning celebrity said: “I have always considered carers to be the best of the best, and if the honours system were mine to distribute, the country would fill up with my new elite, all composed of carers. Carers count: add them to your list of Most Fabulous People.”

And if one celebrity recipe wasn’t enough, TV chef Brian Turner and series one Great British Bake Off finalist Miranda Gore Brown also donated recipes. Miranda’s Little Apple and Cheese Oat Bread and Brian’s tasty Crispy Bacon with Mushroom Pancakes went down a treat with breakfast guests.

Miranda said: “I am thrilled to be working with Carers Trust and helping to recognise the amazing work done by Britain’s unpaid carers. Britain’s Best Breakfast is helping to bring people together, taking time out of routines, thinking of others and taking time to stop for breakfast.”

You can find Joanna’s recipe for Baked Bean Pâté at Carers.org/britains-best-breakfast

“I love simple food, that is to say, easy-peasy to make and delicious to eat. If it’s spicy and savoury, so much the better. Eaten cold from the fridge on sourdough bread … well, it’s sensational.”

Joanna Lumley

Pall-Ex raises over £180,000 for carers

We were delighted when our long-standing partner Pall-Ex celebrated its 20th anniversary with a fundraising dinner and dance in Newport and raised a fantastic £5,425 for Carers Trust.

To date, Pall-Ex and its employees have raised over £180,000 for carers. A key fundraiser is the Penny-a-Pallet scheme, where the company donates 1p for every pallet delivered to its warehouse. CEO, Hilary Devey CBE, is also one of our Vice Presidents and an important advocate – helping to raise the issue of caring.
Changing lives with Young Carers in Schools

Young Carers in Schools is a free initiative making it easy for schools in England and Wales to support young carers. It also awards good practice in schools.

In England, thanks to funding from The Queen’s Trust and Big Lottery Fund, Carers Trust and The Children’s Society have engaged over 750 schools in the programme to date. To showcase the schools involved, we held a special event at the Royal Society, London, where Channel 4 News presenter, Jon Snow presented young carers and school staff with Young Carers in Schools Awards.

Expanding into Wales
In Wales, we’re now delivering the programme to nine schools in a new pilot. Our bilingual guide means that schools in Wales can follow a step-by-step process to identifying, engaging and supporting young carers.

How to involve your school
To get your school in England involved and to add your school to the Schools Supporting Young Carers Map, visit Carers.org/young-carers-schools.

Supporting carers through art

Dr John Lowrie Morrison OBE and Maureen Morrison have supported Carers Trust for almost 15 years and have been Vice Presidents since 2012.

A former Principal Teacher of Art and Art Adviser, John is one of Scotland’s best loved contemporary artists, showcasing Argyll and The Hebrides while capturing the people and the light of the Scottish west coast. We are delighted to have received a significant donation from the proceeds of sales of art and merchandise, from John’s eight solo exhibitions during 2016.

News in brief

Carers Week 2017
Carers Week 2017 will continue with the theme of previous years and will once again focus on Building Carer-friendly Communities. The week – 12 June to 18 June – was officially launched in February. For information about what’s happening see www.carersweek.org.

Local carer services
Carers Trust Network Partners are independent local services for carers. With 150 Carers Trust Network Partners across the UK, in 2016 we welcomed three new members, meaning we’re delivering even more services for carers.

• Carers Outreach Service in North Wales supports adult carers over three counties with a fully bilingual service.

• Carers in Herts provides a range of services for adult and young carers across Hertfordshire.

• Calderdale Carers Project supports adult and young adult carers across the Calderdale Metropolitan Borough in West Yorkshire.
Tackling isolation with a Carers Trust grant

Caring can be lonely and lead to carers being isolated, unable to see friends and family or participate in any activities outside the home. Thanks to our generous donors, Carers Trust is able to provide grants to support individual carers in pursuing interests, courses and development opportunities alongside their caring role. We can also help Carers Trust Network Partners to meet the costs of running group activities which enable carers of all ages to meet and socialise with others in a similar situation.

Jane is in her 60s and cares for her husband Roger who has heart disease and is physically frail meaning that Jane has to provide all aspects of care for him. Roger is also showing signs of dementia meaning Jane has to monitor him all of the time to ensure he is safe. Jane’s care support worker noticed that as Jane is unable to leave her husband unsupervised she was becoming socially isolated. So we awarded Jane £250 from the Carers: Skills for You Fund to attend dress making and sewing courses.

“I am usually stuck indoors and am isolated due to my caring duties. A sewing course will help me pursue a hobby I enjoy and learn skills which will help me start my own business which I can run from home.”

Jane

With a grant from us, Carers Association Southern Staffordshire was able to organise three fabulous events for nearly 80 carers to celebrate the Queen’s 90th official birthday. The indoor street style parties were aimed at carers who look after someone living with dementia or Alzheimer’s. Carers’ opportunities to socialise reduce as these conditions progress and these supportive events meant carers could enjoy time together with the people they care for.

Guests had their individual photo taken with the Queen on arrival (a life-sized cardboard cut-out) which helped create a warm, fun atmosphere. Everyone joined in with the sing-alongs and dancing, a fun quiz and raffle. Carers also enjoyed a tasty lunch and there were lots of smiling faces at the end of the day.

“It was lovely to do something together and not have to worry if he sang at the wrong time.”

Carer

If you are a carer, you may be able to receive a grant as part of a package of support from your local Carers Trust Network Partner, see page 14 for details of how to get in touch.
Another eggstraordinary fundraising week for carers

Our supporters pulled out all the stops with Britain’s Best Breakfats being held all over the UK during the week of 10–16 October 2016. A big thank you to everyone who took part whether you organised a breakfast in your home, at work or school. Your fundraising will be helping unpaid carers access valuable support.

Our supporters included the Care and Social Services Directorate in Wales which held a Britain’s Best Breakfast in all three of its offices and raised just over £126, while 438 Marketing held a Britain’s Best Breakfast in its London and Knutsford offices and raised just over £125.

Generous guests staying at CLC World hotels in South West England and Scotland enjoyed special breakfasts throughout October and raised over £2,000 for carers.

“Tew’d like to say a huge thank you to all our guests, and people who came out in Cornwall and Perthshire for a breakfast treat all in the name of a good cause.”

Graham Wilding, UK Operations Director, CLC World Resorts & Hotels

Host your own Britain’s Best Breakfast

Hosting a Britain’s Best Breakfast is a great way to get together with friends, families and colleagues. Why not use a Britain’s Best Breakfast to enhance a business breakfast, promote your hospitality services or encourage students at your school or college to work together for a good cause?

We’ve made it even easier to host a breakfast as this year you can hold one anytime of the year. We have a wealth of free resources and inspiration at Carers.org/britains-best-breakfast to help you, including a recipe book and fun breakfast quizzes. You can also follow us on Facebook and Twitter via links from the website.

Our services for carers 24/7

Our online services are somewhere for carers to turn to outside office hours, if they live remotely, or while they’re waiting for support to be put in place. All our services are supervised environments with our Online Support team – all qualified, youth, community or social workers and trained in safeguarding – on hand for private email support every day of the year.

Carers Space (space.carers.org) is Carers Trust’s online service for carers 18+

Share tips and ideas with other carers or just have a pause in your day for some fun. Write on the boards, email the helpline or drop into live chat any time.

Matter (matter.carers.org) is our online service for carers 16–25

Connect with other young adult carers and share what’s going on for you. Have a laugh or a rant, whatever you like – with the team on hand every day.

Babble (babble.carers.org) is Carers Trust’s online service for carers under 18

A safe space for young carers to chat, share experiences and have fun, surrounded by people who understand. Get posting, email for private advice, or join supervised chats.

“It is so refreshing to find an organisation that takes so much time to be as helpful as you have been.”

Carer
Young Carers Awareness Day 2017

26 January was a big day in our diary as we announced the theme of this year’s Young Carers Awareness Day – When I Grow Up – highlighting the help needed to enable young carers to achieve their dream job or ambitions, while juggling caring at home.

We were thrilled that so many young carers’ and young adult carers’ voices were heard on a wide range of UK wide and local media, on TV and in print, with highlights including fantastic coverage on BBC Breakfast, CBBC Newsround and Sky Sunrise.

On social media, we used film footage featuring journalists and other professionals talking about what they wanted to be when they grew up. We were able to elicit some great discussions contrasting their hopes and ambitions with the reality of children who are so busy helping with shopping and cooking, handling bills, giving emotional and physical support and helping with medication – that they forget to consider their own hopes for the future.

Carers Trust Network Partners across the UK delivered lots of creative events, with local press coverage all helping to make an impact.

All in all, Young Carers Awareness Day was a huge success, where influential organisations and people, including politicians, bloggers and local authorities, were able to see and highlight how crucial it is that young carers have the right support in place to enable them to thrive.

Find out more at Carers.org/young-carers-awareness-day.

Supporting carers into work

Helping London’s carers into work

Launched in February, Working for Carers is our exciting new programme to support unpaid carers in all London boroughs who are ready to move back into work.

This project is jointly funded by the Big Lottery Fund and the European Social Fund, and thanks to £2m of funding, The Carers Trust Network in London will be providing carers with one-to-one and peer support and an employment training programme. The project will also work with local employers and carers services in London to ensure we reach as many carers as possible.

Carers to benefit from new partnership with Deloitte

We’re delighted that Deloitte Internal Client Services in London has selected Carers Trust as its charity partner for 2016–2019. As part of Deloitte’s One Million Futures ambition, funding from Deloitte will complement our Working for Carers programme, offering training workshops and grants to support unemployed carers back into the workplace.

Developing our expertise

Thanks to funding from the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union we’re part of a project to help professionals working with young people to identify young carers and develop action plans to support them. Professionals in Scotland, Austria, Germany, Ireland and Italy will be able to learn from each other to develop expertise. Find out more at www.ep-yc.org.

Vote for your local carers service

Local shoppers’ votes in John Lewis’ Community Matters scheme helped Carers Trust Wales secure £1,178 in funding. Elsewhere, Carers Trust Network Partners, Swansea Carers Centre and Wrexham Carers Service have both had fundraising successes after receiving votes from customers at their local Sainsbury’s.

Follow us on social media to keep up to date with the latest chances to vote for your local carers service (details on the back page).
A big thank you to our trustees

Charity trustees are the people who share ultimate responsibility for governing a charity and directing how it is managed and run. Carers Trust is led by our Chairman, businessman Stuart Taylor, and a board of trustees which include representatives from Carers Trust Network Partners and individuals with professional backgrounds. Many of our trustees are or have been carers.

Mark Currie, our Treasurer, is currently the Head of Portfolio Performance Improvement at KPMG in London.

Patrick Healy is a lawyer and accountant.

Gareth Howells is the Chief Executive Officer of Network Partner, Carers Trust South East Wales.

William McCormick is a senior nurse at Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.

Tim Poole is CEO of Network Partner Carers Gloucestershire.

Lynne Powrie is CEO of Network Partner Carers Bromley.

Veronica Stonor is Chair of Network Partner Newcastle Carers.

Dr Edward O Wojakovski MPBF is a businessman.

Our trustee board is responsible for:
• Ensuring we carry out our purposes for the public benefit.
• Acting in Carers Trust’s best interests.
• Managing Carers Trust’s resources responsibly.
• Ensuring Carers Trust is accountable and complies with statutory accounting and reporting requirements.

Our trustee board welcomes new scrutiny for charities and charity fundraising to ensure we always provide the very best we can to carers and to the many people, including donors, who support them. Our trustee board are all volunteers and are not paid for their time.

Find out more by visiting Carers.org/about-us/board-trustees.

Help us to plan for a better future for carers

There is one exceptional way you can help us to plan for a better future for carers and that’s by leaving a gift of hope in your will.

By leaving a legacy to Carers Trust, you will be leaving a long-lasting gift to support and improve services for the estimated seven million unpaid carers in the UK.

We are asking you to do something very special but we hope you will understand why we are asking this of you.

It is because carers are ordinary people just like you and your friends, family and colleagues, the only difference is, they are doing something extraordinary. Every day they put their own lives to one side to help someone who is unable to manage on their own.

All gifts are important to us, especially gifts left in this way. A gift in your will doesn’t have to be large. You could leave anything from a percentage of your estate to a set amount.

Recently, we were extremely grateful when we learnt that Valerie Twinning had left us a gift of over £1m in her will. We were equally as grateful to hear that Alexander Asher had recently left us £200. However large or small the legacy, it will be used to make a difference to carers through many areas of our work. Any gift of any amount truly does make a difference.

To find out more, please visit Carers.org/legacy or call us on 0300 772 9600.
Giving young adult carers a good start at university

As part of our Going Higher Wales project to break down any barriers that young adult carers have in accessing university, we asked them what would make a difference to their first weeks away from home. Starter Packs was the response! So, thanks to funding from The Waterloo Foundation and Tata Steel, Carers Trust Wales has come up with packs containing household essential items to help make the transition to independent living a bit easier.

“The pack was a tremendous help that eased my anxieties about starting university and moving away.”
Young adult carer

Speak Up for Older Carers

Our Speak up for Older Carers campaign has been highlighting the challenges faced by older carers, particularly in England. These include the complex health and social care system and the severe impact caring has on their own health. Our report – Retirement on Hold – showed the overwhelming challenges faced by carers today and the importance of planning for being a carer in later life.

We’ve been using our campaign to influence health and social care policy and heighten public perception of older carers. Older carers have been getting involved by telling us about their experiences, contacting their local councillors and getting active on social media.

In our survey:
• 86% told us they had health problems of their own.
• 81% said they felt lonely and isolated.
• 83% said their loneliness and isolation was having a negative impact on their health.

Find out more at Carers.org/speakup.

Free tickets for football loving carers

We are delighted to announce an innovative new partnership with Partick Thistle Football Club, Glasgow. This provides an allocation of tickets for every Ladbrokes Premiership home game, which we distribute to local Carers Trust Network Partners in Scotland. In turn, this gives football loving carers the chance to watch matches for free and have some valuable time out.

“Unpaid carers do absolutely invaluable work. Going to a match on a Saturday can be taken for granted by many of us. But for carers, it’s something of a luxury both financially and in terms of time.”
Ian Maxwell, Partick Thistle Managing Director
Many thanks to all our supporters who took on a range of cycling, running and sporting events to raise money for carers in 2016. If you are looking for a challenge this year we have plenty of opportunities to get involved. Email fundraising@carers.org and we can help to find the right event for you or have a look at these events to give you a taster.

Welsh Three Peaks Challenge
13 May, 19 August, 7 October
Challenge yourself to the three Welsh peaks, Snowdon, Cadair Idris and Pen y Fan on a scenic 17 mile long route.

Tough Mudder
Midlands: 20–21 May; Scotland: 17–18 June; Yorkshire: 29–30 July
Gather a team of friends to take part in a world-class obstacle course designed to push you to your physical and mental limits.

Stirling Scottish Marathon
24 May 2016
Run through history in a major new marathon, enjoying breathtaking scenery and a wealth of historic landmarks on a journey which ends beneath the imposing ramparts of Stirling Castle.

London Triathlon
22–23 July
Race past iconic London obstacles in one of the biggest triathlon events around. Cycle, swim and run from Victoria Docks into the heart of the city.

Prudential Ride London
28–30 July
Cycle from the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park on a 100-mile route into Surrey’s stunning countryside.

Big Fun Run
Across UK Cities: July to October
Get everyone involved in the 5k Big Fun Run coming to 18 different locations. You can turn up in fancy dress, get your children running and even bring your dog.

Deloitte match fund money raised by their runners
A big thank you to Sally and Zoe from Deloitte Internal Clients Services in London who took part in last year’s Royal Parks Foundation Half Marathon and raised £820 for Carers Trust as part of Deloitte’s One Million Futures strategy. Deloitte will be match-funding the money raised and it will go towards supporting unpaid carers back into employment in London.

Mecca Bingo challenge
Enormous thanks to team members from 16 Mecca Bingo clubs in the North East region who took on an outdoor charity challenge to raise funds for Carers Trust.

The challenge followed eight days of fundraising in Mecca Bingo clubs and raised over £21,000. Money generated through the partnership with the Rank Group Plc (Mecca Bingo and Grosvenor Casino) funds grants for individual carers across the UK. Since 2014, Rank employees have helped around 3,200 carers to access breaks and vital time away from caring, essential household items and skills development courses.
Positively influencing policy across the UK

Calling for more integrated support for carers in England

The Government is developing a new strategy for carers that will set out how more can be done to support them. To help develop the strategy, they wanted to hear from carers as well as professionals who support carers. Our response set out the need for a better, more integrated system to ensure carers get the support they are entitled to. We also called on the Government to guarantee enough money is made available to better coordinate health and social care.

We submitted a separate response focussing on the needs of young and young adult carers. We also set out the needs of carers of people with mental health issues, carers of people with dementia and older carers. You can read our responses at Carers.org/carers-trust-submission-government-national-carers-strategy-england.

Consulting with carers in Scotland

In Scotland, we responded to the social security consultation and asked carers about what the proposed changes to social security benefits would mean to them and their families. A Bill will be introduced to the Scottish Parliament this year.

We are preparing for the implementation of the Carers Act in 2018 by attending Scottish Government working groups that look at implementing specific parts of the Act. These include identifying more carers, and what changes need to be made to services and commissioning processes to make this happen.

The fifth Carers Parliament took place at the end of last year and was a great success, with over 100 carers coming from across Scotland to discuss how to make things fairer for Scotland’s carers.

Campaigning for carers breaks in Wales

We have continued to campaign for the introduction of a Carer Wellbeing Fund in Wales to increase the number of breaks available to carers. Welsh Labour, in the run-up to the National Assembly for Wales election, committed to investigate the benefits of establishing the fund. We are working to ensure this commitment is delivered.

We are also continuing to campaign for improved support for young and young adult carers in Wales. In January, a group from the Welsh Young Adult Carer Council met with Kirsty Williams AM, the Cabinet Secretary for Education, to discuss their experiences in school and college.

With the recent introduction of new rights for carers in Wales under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, we have also been working to ensure carers and social services are aware of the changes and that carers are receiving the support they are entitled to.

Further information

If you would like to know more about or get involved with our work to make a difference to carers, please get in touch by emailing policy@carers.org.

You can also find out more at: Carers.org/our-campaigns Carers.org/northern-ireland Carers.org/scotland Carers.org/wales
When carers tell their stories in the media it can make an enormous impact including helping other carers to recognise and seek the support that they need.

The launch of our new look website Carers.org was covered on a number of TV news programmes, helping to raise awareness of our online support for carers. A carer and her husband who has Alzheimer’s talked about their experiences and the support they get from Network Partner Camden Carers Service.

Luen Thompson, our Chief Strategy Officer, and Heather Noller, our Policy and Parliamentary Officer, along with carers from London and Scotland, also talked about our online services on regional radio stations. All our websites had more visitors as a result.

Another media highlight was the airing of BBC One’s Children in Need DIY SOS special which saw the transformation of a young carers centre for Network Partner Blackpool Carers Centre – as well as raising the profile of young carers.

In the run up to our Britain’s Best Breakfast fundraiser we saw lots of press coverage encouraging people to take part. This included a two-page feature in over 50 regional newspapers, plus radio and online coverage.

Older carers have been in the spotlight in regional and UK newspapers such as the Daily Express, while a story in the Guardian quoted Louise Marks, our Dementia Policy & Development Officer, and featured a carer and his mother supported by Network Partner Carers Lewisham.

Finally, Real People magazine interviewed one young carer and her family who are supported by Network Partner Carers Resource and presented them with early Christmas gifts from high street stores.

Encouraging tomorrow’s pharmacists to be carer aware

We’re working with Cardiff University to give pharmacy students placements with Carers Trust Network Partners across South Wales.

We have 20 students learning about the issues carers face and the support they need, which means they’ll be able to put their learning into practice and support carers in the community once they are qualified pharmacists. The placements are also an opportunity to highlight the work of The Carers Trust Network and the difference our support can make to carers.

New relationships guide for carers

We’ve been able to work in partnership with relationships advice experts, OnePlusOne, to write a new guide for carers, thanks to funding from the Department for Work and Pensions.

Many carers find that looking after someone can cause relationship problems with partners, family and friends. Carers may keep worries to themselves and feel they are betraying the person they care for if they admit their caring role is affecting their relationships. This can be particularly hard if they are caring for their partner.

Our new guide is packed with tried and tested ways to help carers cope with the strain caring can put on their relationships. Our emphasis is on preventing problems rather than only getting help when there is a crisis.

The guide is available free at relationships.carers.org/.

“Very pertinent area for support and the first time I’ve seen it dealt with in such detail.”
Carer
We Care talks to Alan

Now in his 70s, Alan, a former journalist, has cared for his wife and daughter. He is now using his experiences to support other carers.

When did you become a carer?
I married my wife Margaret, a registered mental health nurse, in 1977. During the 1990s her mental health gradually got worse and she began telling me that she could hear voices coming out of the wallpaper.

As I became increasingly worried about Margaret’s behaviour I took her to see our GP. This was the start of me being a carer. Eventually Margaret was diagnosed with depression and low self-esteem. Later, after Margaret passed away in 2002, I learnt that she had been seeing a psychiatrist and had been diagnosed as having a personality disorder. This information was never passed to her GP or to me.

When did you start caring for your daughter?
After Margaret died, my daughter Amy*, then aged 22, became unwell and she dropped out of university. She was eventually diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia. Like her mum, Amy was unpredictable and violent. After her second baby was born she was sectioned, and newly retired, I found myself caring for my 18-month-old grandson.

Happily, Amy’s condition is now under control. She has recently remarried and I see a lot of her and my grandchildren.

What affect did caring have on you?
Caring can be very lonely. And when you care for someone with a mental health condition you can get caught up in their world. People do turn their backs on you and you end up feeling exhausted.

Caring can also be frustrating. Patient confidentiality was a phrase I heard a lot even though as a carer I needed to know what was going on. I saw first-hand how carers are often ignored.

What support did you get as a carer?
I had a carer’s assessment which was helpful and allowed me to have a break by the seaside.

I also still visit my local Carers Trust carers service which is very important to me. I can talk to other carers there and also help new carers find their way.

What advice would you give other carers?
It’s important to get things out in the open. You think you’re the only one with a problem and it’s reassuring in a way to know that you’re not. I find sharing experiences with other carers recharges the batteries just when you feel you can’t cope.

Support for carers
You can find your nearest Carers Trust Network Partner by using our Find local care and carer services facility at Carers.org (any time) or calling 0300 772 9600 (Monday– Friday, 9am–5pm).

You can also access our online services, 24 hours a day, every day of the year. These are open to all carers wherever they live in the UK.

• Carers Space (space.carers.org) is for carers aged 18 and over.

• Babble (babble.carers.org) is for young carers aged under 18.

• Matter (matter.carers.org) is for young adult carers aged 16–25.

Get email support at support@carers.org.

* Amy’s name been changed in the interests of privacy.
Dear Editor

I would be interested to know how much of my donation goes directly to help carers and how much is spent on the running costs of Carers Trust.

Dear Reader

We know that this is an important issue for our supporters and we care about spending your gifts carefully. In 2015/16, for every £1 our donors gave us, 81p was spent directly on charitable activities; just over 1p was spent on governance costs and 18p was spent on raising money to keep the issue of caring and carers at the forefront of people’s minds.

Dear Editor

How can I find out how much you pay your staff as I would be interested to know if you pay any of your employees over £100,000?

Dear Reader

You can find information about our staff costs in our Annual Report which can be found on Carers.org/annual-review-and-accounts. Although we employ high calibre staff, some of whom operate at the very highest levels with governments, across the public sector and with boards in FTSE 100 companies, none of our staff are paid over £100,000 a year.

Our plans to make carers count

Over the last year, we’ve been developing a new way of working – our resulting programme is called Make Carers Count.

We’ve listened to carers, funders, commissioners of services, charities and governments plus Carers Trust Network Partners. We wanted to understand how we could deliver better services for carers.

We know that carers currently save the state around £132bn every year; they will always care but are often disadvantaged in doing so and that the number of carers will increase from seven million to ten million by 2030. We believe that carers should be appropriately supported and that they should be able to recognise their needs, ask for help and receive that help in all parts of the UK.

We will need significant resource to fund this vital work. If you know of a company which might like to make us charity of the year, or a trust or foundation, we’d love to hear from you. Or, if you are personally able to make a donation, or hold a fundraising event, then we would also be really pleased to have your extra support this year.

Please call 0300 772 9600 to find out more or visit Carers.org/news-item/make-carers-count-programme-launch-carers-trust-network.

What do you think?

Do you have any feedback on a story in We Care or something to share with other supporters? Please email editorial@carers.org or address it to The Editor, Carers Trust, 32-36 Loman Street, London SE1 0EH.
Make a breakfast, make a difference

Host a breakfast at home, in your workplace or at your school!

Give Marlon the chance to play again

Although he is only seven, Marlon is a carer. He lives alone with his mum who has heart problems. This means Marlon has to help her with cleaning, washing up, cooking and carrying heavy shopping. He worries a lot about his mum.

When Marlon and his mum started to get more isolated, he stopped playing with other children and wasn’t talking very much. His teacher noticed something was wrong so she referred him to his local carers service where he’s learning to have fun again – taking part in clubs and school holiday trips. His mum is also getting support and they’ve even been on a short break together.

£50 could make a real difference to Marlon.

Your gift could give carers like Marlon a few valuable hours break each week by providing a trained member of staff to look after the person they care for.

So who cares? At Carers Trust, we care. But we need your help. We work to provide action, help and advice to Marlon and the other seven million unpaid carers in the UK.

Host a Britain’s Best Breakfast event, raise some money and help Marlon to have the support he deserves in his young life.

To take part, visit: Carers.org/britains-best-breakfast

Identities and photos of carers have been changed in the interest of privacy. All photos posed by models.

Carers Trust is a registered charity in England and Wales (1145181) and in Scotland (SC042870).

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All library photos posed by models except for photos on page 3 of Katie, page 10 of Emily and page 14 of Alan.

*Amy’s name on page 14 has been changed in the interests of privacy. All other identities and photos of carers have been changed in the interest of privacy except pages 3, 10 and 14 where we have used Katie’s, Emily’s and Alan’s real name and photo.

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