



Carers 4 Carers

Finding support through supporting each other

February—March 2021

I'm starting this newsletter the day after Valentine's Day and at long last it's a bit warmer. I don't mind cold weather, mainly because I don't like hot weather. My argument is you can put more clothes on when it's cold but it's difficult to take them off when it's hot. I was pleased however, that I still have some of the accessories I had when I went north of the Arctic Circle a few years ago. I could really wrap up warm on my daily walks. Now the sun is shining, it's considerably warmer and I've even put the washing on the line.

Recently I received an email from the Body Shop. Would I would prefer not to receive marketing emails about Mother's Day? Boots offer the same. Not being a mother and having lost my own mother 12 years ago, this was quite a pleasant surprise. When Valentine's Day came along and a similar message did not appear it set me thinking. So many people have gone through so much during this pandemic, suffering loss and hardship. It's hard when the rest of the world carries on, but carry on it must. Several years ago my sister-in-law became upset when she saw a poster advertising the clinic where my niece had received IVF treatment but recently suffered a miscarriage. She suggested it was insensitive to advertise this when parents had suffered a grievous loss. But then of course there is the other side of the coin when people need to know about the services. Life goes on. A recent prayer for the grieving I saw on Facebook read 'In the moments where life seems to go on for the rest of the world but we are left with an overwhelming feeling of brokenness, help us to look up.' Whatever faith or no faith you have, this is something that you will relate to if you have suffered loss of any sort. The good news is that there are so many people out there ready and waiting to pick you up and support you.

The news about vaccinations is really positive. Have you had yours? I'm due to have mine in a few days time. Full marks and congratulations to the NHS and scientists on this amazing achievement and in particular our local surgeries and their army of volunteers. What will life be like after lockdown? Well, hopefully we'll be able to meet face-to-face for a start. Many hope the positive response to need that has occurred in so many communities will not be forgotten. Most clouds have a silver lining and community resilience and spirit has definitely been one of the positives of this pandemic.

Census Day will have been and gone before you receive the next edition of our newsletter. It's an opportunity to declare yourself a carer and provide a clear picture of how many unsung heroes we have in our country. I was born on Census Day. I leave you to work out which one!

Carers 4 Carers is part of the network of Omega Meeting Point Support Groups Reg. Charity No. 1120322

VIRTUAL COFFEE MORNING



Last month, for the first time, we were able to offer the ability for members to join our coffee morning by phone. I experimented with the process beforehand and can confirm that it's easy, straightforward and the sound is good. While obviously you won't be able to see our bright and cheerful faces, it's great to be in touch.

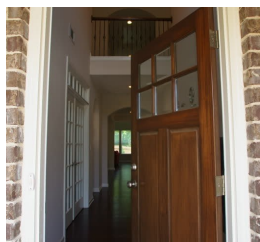
I'm pleased to say that Colin Pearson, from Carers' Trust Carer Wellbeing Service, aims to join us this month.

As the days seem to blend into each other, I know it can be difficult to remember to log on. Therefore, I will send a reminder email the day before the meeting. Please find the joining instructions in the letter or email accompanying your newsletter.

The next coffee morning will be on **Friday 26th February at 10.30 a.m.**

PROTECT YOUR Pa\$SWoRD

Neighbourhood Watch has launched a campaign urging us to take care of our passwords. As we do increasingly more online, some are overwhelmed and some complacent. Their CEO says "You wouldn't leave your front door open when you leave your house for criminals to walk right in. Having weak passwords is like leaving your digital front door open for cybercriminals to steal all your personal data and images."



Their advice is:

- Create a separate password for your email account
- Use 3 random words
- Turn on two-factor authentication. This involves responding to instructions sent to you in a separate text message.

Use the link on the back page to find out more.

INTRODUCING

Gillian Jones: I first met Gillian through the Timebank. She is active in the Lighthorne community. Gillian had been caring for her parents 'at a distance' until sadly both of them passed away last year. Gillian is offering her time as a volunteer and will be helping in any way she can.

Rev. Heather Turner: Heather, in Wellesbourne, contacted me a couple of years ago and then again last year as her caring responsibilities increased. Heather's husband, Fred, passed away in January. As Chaplain at the Shakespeare Hospice for a few years and experience as both a nurse and member of the clergy, Heather knows she has much to offer carers. If any bereaved carers feel the need to talk, she is happy to listen. She is also ready to help with the sensitive issue of forward planning for end of life. Let me know if you would like to be put in touch. This, of course, is for anyone of any faith, or none.

CARING FOR SOMEONE YOU DO NOT LIVE WITH?

It has recently been announced that PPE is available for carers who do not live with the person they care for. At the time of writing, this will be until June this year, but of course could change.



To apply for the PPE, carers can email cv19ppe@warwickshire.gov.uk or complete the form available [here](#). No phone number has been provided, presumably because most staff are working from home. If you have no online access, either ask a friend to email for you (I'll do it if necessary) or ring 01926 410410 and ask for advice on how to apply.

WE'RE IN A NATIONAL NEWSPAPER !

I was delighted when member Anne Constable emailed to say there was an article about her in the Telegraph and that she hoped I was happy about her reference to Carers4Carers. The article, "A day in my life as an unpaid carer – and why we should be prioritised for the vaccine" appeared on 15th January and can be accessed in full [here](#). In it, Anne describes how she joined the UK's army of 13.6 million unpaid carers when husband Andrew had a stroke and then a fall. While she wouldn't have it any other way, but like so many carers, she needs support.



Unpaid carers were not mentioned in the priority list for the COVID vaccine at the time of her article and whereas the nation clapped for carers last year, these were professional carers, not the unpaid family carers who are just expected to keep going.

Like so many carers, Anne doesn't doubt her commitment to caring for Andrew, knowing, of course, that if she doesn't, who else will? 'At my age,' she says, 'you do not dwell on life's misfortunes; you pick yourself up and get on with it. At least I do.' Well, that is such a typical response for unpaid carers. What would the country do without you all? There's no time any more for needlework, tapestry or gardening. Recognise the situation? "I'm on the go from the moment I get up," she says, "to the moment I collapse into bed, usually exhausted."

Now, of course, the pandemic has made the situation so much worse, with no visits from family to support and no outings to alleviate the monotony of bedroom and living room.

Caring also affects your relationship. You still love the person, but it's different. "It is more like being a widow, while not being a widow, because my husband is still alive and still living with me." This isn't the first time I've heard that and indeed it's how I felt.

Then Anne goes on to describe our 'fantastic' group, where, in normal times, it helps to talk to those in a similar situation. We listen to speakers and share stories about the daily rigours of caring for a loved one. "They are women whose husbands suffer from Parkinson's; men whose wives can't move, or struggle to remember their name. And there are other friends whose husbands and wives are no longer with them," she says.

Photo reproduced by permission: David Rose/The Telegraph.

ARE YOU REGISTERED AS A CARER?

Carers Trust and other organisations have been campaigning for carers to be vaccinated, ideally at the same time as those they care for. Ensuring your GP knows you are a carer is more important than ever now. That way, you are more likely to receive the right information at the right time.

There will be a form on your surgery's website but if in doubt, phone them up.

Don't forget to register with Carers' Trust, too. Contact details are on the back page.

www.carers4carersonthefosse.org.uk 07947 893504 kcarers4carers@gmail.com



LINKS AND SIGNPOSTS

We aim to use this backpage for links to items we have mentioned throughout the newsletter. They will then be easy for you to find. The links are also uploaded onto our website, so if you can't find your newsletter, you can find them here:

<https://www.carers4carersonthefosse.org.uk/Links/>



LINKS MENTIONED IN THE NEWSLETTER

Protect your password: more information at safeinwarwickshire.com/2020/11/11/neighbourhood-watch-launches-protect-your-pawOrd-campaign/

The form for requesting PPE: this is an extremely long link with lots of letters and numbers so the not sensible to copy here. Instead, click on [this link](#) if you are reading this online.

Carers Trust Heart of England Carer Wellbeing Service: www.carerstrusthofe.org.uk/help_and_advice/carers-wellbeing/

Carers Registration forms:

Kineton and Tysoe Surgeries: www.kinetonsurgery.warwickshire.nhs.uk/carersinformation

Hastings House Surgery: hastingshouse.org.uk/Our-Services/Supporting-Carers

Fenny Compton and Shenington Surgeries: there does not appear to be an online form so ask at the surgery or phone.

COVID SUPPORT: Ettington: ettingtonhub.org/

Wellesbourne and Walton Community Cares: www.ww-cc.co.uk/

Kineton Community support: 07391 549 598 or email kinetoncovid19group@gmail.com

Lighthorne: www.lighthornepc.uk/coronavirus/coronavirus.shtml

If you need support and your village is not mentioned, I'll do my best to find the details for you.

BBC HEADROOM

The BBC has launched a Mental Health Toolkit, with wide-ranging content. Tips, strategies, videos, sounds, stories: it's all there so take a look.

www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/ or type 'Headroom' into your search engine.



OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS

In accordance with Government guidelines during the current COVID-19 pandemic, we regret that our meetings have been **CANCELLED** until further notice.