



Carers 4 Carers

Finding support through supporting each other

January 2023

We will be about half way through January by the time you receive this but I hope it's not too late to send my best wishes for 2023 to you all. There will be many of us who will be pleased to see the back of 2022 with its many challenges. While I know that many of those challenges will continue into 2023 and the thick of winter can do little to brighten our spirits, let's try to be positive. We are past the shortest day of the winter and we are beginning to see the days slowly lengthen.

Our programme for the first few months of this year is taking shape and we hope you will find plenty of interest in it. We return to our pre-pandemic mix of information-based meetings and activities to support your wellbeing. I am sure everyone will be keen to learn how they can economise on their energy usage at this month's meeting, with the help of Alwynne from Act on Energy and next month we are pleased that Ukrainian violinist, Hanna, is able to join us, having been prevented from doing so by illness in December.

For a number of years, we have had a carer rep who has participated in team meetings and reported back on any comments raised by carers. This role was fulfilled admirably by David Brazier whom we had supported while caring for his wife with dementia. David passed away early in 2022 and it is now time we found a replacement for him. If you think you would like to take on this role, please speak to either Lisa or myself or, if you would like to nominate someone, again, speak to us, after having gained the nominee's permission. As a guide, ideally it would suit someone whose caring role is not too onerous or who is not actively caring. If necessary, we will take a vote at next month's meeting.

OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS

Carers4Carers meets on the **fourth** Friday of the month, except in December, when it's the second Friday. We meet at Kinton Village Hall, Mill Street, Kinton, CV35 0LB, 10.30 a.m. until 12 noon. We start with time for coffee and chat and then the main part of our meeting will start at about 11 o'clock. Anyone wishing to bring their loved one to attend the Companionship Group, especially for the first time, is asked to contact us in advance so that we can be sure that we can provide appropriate care.

Friday 27th January 2023—Alwynne Curley from Act on Energy will make a timely visit to help us make the most of our energy resources. She'll advise on heating your home economically. Bring along your questions. Our companions will enjoy a craft activity.

Friday 24th February— Ukrainian violinist, Hanna Sokolyk, who is living with her host

family in Kinton, will entertain us. This will be for both carers and companions.

Friday 24th March— Jaqui Smithson will show you how she takes raw wool and, using the technique of wet felting, creates the most beautiful pictures. Jacqui is a very entertaining demonstrator. The Companions will be doing a bit of gardening!



Carers4Carers is part of the network of Omega Support Groups Reg. Charity No. 1120322

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WARM HUBS

Many of you will have noticed that Warm Hubs are appearing in communities. Their purpose is to offer a warm place where local residents can go to enjoy some time in the warm. Many people are lowering their thermostats in order to reduce their heating bills or worse still, turning their heating off all together. For those able to be busy and active this may not be



too much of an issue but for those unable to move very much and who spend most of their time sitting, then their room temperature may become dangerously low. The Warm Hubs are an opportunity to keep warm for a few hours, socialise with other members of the community, join in an activity and enjoy hot drinks and, in some cases, hot food. The list of Warm Hubs is constantly being added to. I have found these so far:

- Avon Dassett: at the Yew Tree, every week day 12 until 3 p.m. except Bank Holidays or if the Yew Tree is closed.
- Kineton: at the Village Hall 12.30 and 5 p.m. every Tuesday.
- Lighthorne Heath: at the Village Hall, on Tuesdays, 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.
- Moreton Morrell: at The Room, Church of the Holy Cross. Tuesdays 12—3 p.m.
- Northend will be starting their Warm Hub on 24th January from 11 until 3 p.m. at the Village Hall
- Wellesbourne: St. Peter's Church Centre's Warm Wednesday from 10.30 a.m. Coffee and cake and then Soup and a roll will be available 12 to 1 p.m.
- Wellesbourne: Warm Hub every Monday 2 till 3 p.m. at Wellesbourne Sports and Community Centre
- Wellesbourne: Fridays 10—12 at the Library for hot drinks, board games, craft activities etc.

GERRY

Gerry and Pat have been joining us at Carers4Carers for at least 5 years, Pat enjoying the carers' meeting and Gerry a lively member of the Companionship Group. Those of you who knew him will be sad to learn that Gerry passed away in hospital shortly before Christmas. We extend our love and thoughts to Pat and the rest of the family.

BLANKETS

This week I received a call from a lady who has a number of handmade blankets that she would like to donate. Their size makes them very suitable for anyone using a wheelchair or who would like one to snuggle under while sitting at home to keep warm. If you would like to accept one of these blankets, or know of someone who might benefit, please get in touch or talk to one of our volunteers at the next meeting.

OUR 10th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS



All who were able to attend our celebrations at the end of November agreed we had a great morning. It was lovely to see the hall filled with carers and cared-for as well as our invited guests, all of whom had supported us in one way or another across our ten years.

We had several boards displaying photographs of our activities over this time which must have brought back memories for those members who have been with us almost since the beginning. It was great for everyone to see the variety of activities and support we offer.

When all were assembled, I gave a quick whistle-stop tour of the history of the group, including some significant milestones. In particular was the formation of the Companionship Group in 2014, followed not long after by our move to the Village Hall after the ceiling fell down in the Methodist Chapel, making the disabled facilities no longer accessible.

I couldn't, of course, give a history of the group without mentioning the volunteers without whom the group would not exist, including those unable to be with us. Elizabeth Feldman joined us in March 2013 and looked after our finances. She was also largely responsible for setting up the Companionship Group, assisted by Judy Kirk. Nadine Povey, our professional carer, brought a lot of fun and creativity to the group. Elizabeth relinquished her responsibilities for our finances shortly before the pandemic and these were taken on by Lisa, our Assistant Co-ordinator. Unfortunately Liz has not been well enough to return to us since we re-opened. Judy moved to be near her family in Bath having suffered a stroke and I learnt that she passed away round about Christmas time. Grace, our first tea-lady, moved to be near her family in Wales in her early 90s. She has spent some time in hospital after a fall but I understand is now well and back at home.

Also important in our development has been our relationship with Omega, our 'umbrella' organisation who provide us with much needed support and advice as well as essentials such as banking! It was great that their Director, Thomas Memery and finance officer, Rob Rutherford, could join us.

The culmination of the morning was the unveiling of our celebratory work of art, "The Garden of Respite". Carers and cared-for have had such enjoyment creating this, guided by Penny Varley, and there was great anticipation as to what it would finally look like. We were



delighted that our MP, Rt. Hon, Sir Jeremy Wright, who has supported us on several occasions, could be with us, albeit for only a short time, and who did the honours of revealing the work. There is no doubt that the colourful piece will bring some cheer to a wall in the Village Hall where it will be hung and, hopefully, initiate some conversations about carers and caring.



How else could we end the morning but with anniversary cake! Many thanks to those who made them and, of course, to the two Timebank ladies who served the refreshments, to our current volunteers and to Anne Baker for her lovely floral decorations.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS AND LINKS



- **Caring Together, Warwickshire**, the new statutory carer support service for Warwickshire carers at phone 0800 297 5544 or visit www.caringtogetherwarwickshire.org.uk .
- For consumer complaint, consumer help and advice or to report an issue to Trading Standards, please contact the Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 0808 223 1133.
- For consumer or business help and advice, including details of an approved trader scheme, please visit our website: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/tradingstandards>
- Advice on scams and rogue traders: Report fraud directly to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 0800 223 1133. More advice available at: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/doorstepsellers ; www.actionfraud.police.uk/.
- Healthwatch Warwickshire— www.healthwatchwarwickshire.co.uk ; 01926 422823 (9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays) and email info@healthwatchwarwickshire.co.uk
- **Silverline**—available 24/7 as well as a befriending service www.thesilverline.org.uk/ . Email: info@thesilverline.org.uk or phone 0800 4 70 80 90
- Warwickshire County Council: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/ 01926 410 410 . For social media go to their facebook page: www.facebook.com/WarwickshireCountyCouncil or search 'Social Media' on the website for details of dedicated links such as Instagram and Twitter.
- **Searchout Warwickshire**—the replacement for the Warwickshire Directory can be found at <https://searchout.warwickshire.gov.uk/>
- **Act on Energy**— for information about energy efficiency and hardship support. Phone 0800 988 2881 or visit actonenergy.org.uk/

BACK&4TH TRANSPORT

A reminder that we offer transport by Back&4th minibus from the Wellesbourne direction. Pick-ups are from your home or Wellesbourne Village Hall, addresses enroute to and including in Kineton. You need to book this a week before our meeting, so the closing date this month is Friday 20th January at 6 p.m. We will contact you with a pick-up time. There is a small charge, payable at the meeting to Lisa.



POSITIVITY CORNER

A time to reflect and perhaps to smile
Four ideas for New Year Resolutions

I will take time to share old stories and memories with my loved one.

I will make a point to take care of myself.

I will find healthy outlets for dealing with anger, frustration, and grief that comes with taking care of a loved one.

I will ask for help if it ever gets to be too much.