



Carers4Carers

Finding support through supporting each other

April—May 2021



HRH PRINCE PHILIP

1921-2021



I was in the middle of clearing out my Craft Studio when the news came through on the radio of the death of Prince Philip. To have reached the amazing age of 99 should be a cause for celebration especially when we learn of his achievements during such a long lifetime. He has touched so many lives in a really positive way.

It was therefore, I suppose, not surprising that on hearing the news that my thoughts, as one widow to another, went immediately to Her Majesty the Queen. Loss of a loved one affects us all in so many different ways. I trust that she will be given the space to grieve, supported by her family. While current COVID restrictions inevitably mean that the funeral arrangements have, like for so many other families, had to be curtailed, it is perhaps a blessing that it will give the family more privacy. I know you would all wish to join me in expressing our sincere condolences to Her Majesty the Queen and to the whole royal family.

Each day I hear from different people who tell me that they have had, or about to have, their second dose of the COVID vaccine. I have to wait until next month for mine! We also know that clinically extremely vulnerable people who have been shielding are now allowed out! This, along with the gradual easing of restrictions gives us cause for hope and something to look forward to but we must still be careful.

Although support groups for carers can meet legally with up to 15 people, we are not planning yet to re-open our monthly meetings. We know many of you are really anxious to get together again but, like Boris, we want to be cautious. We will be waiting to see how things go. In the meantime we are working on plans to re-open later in the year and working out the safest way of doing so. If the weather plays ball, we may be able to arrange another meeting at Compton Verney. Last year, although not very warm, a few of us spent a delightful morning there and a lot of talking went on!

OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS

Our monthly meetings, normally held on the 4th Friday of the month at Kineton Village Hall, are currently suspended. We hope to re-open later in the year.

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

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FROM WARWICKSHIRE TRADING STANDARDS

Each month I receive several emails from Warwickshire Trading Standards listing their latest concerns. Their recent email reflects the Easter break we have just enjoyed together with the improvements in the weather and lighter evenings. They are expecting an increase in complaints about doorstep rogue traders. Their message is 'Be on your guard.'



They are currently investigating a number of rogue trader incidents in which elderly and vulnerable residents have been targeted. They are cracking down on illegal and misleading roadside advertising used by unscrupulous traders to promote their business.

For anyone who uses Facebook, local community pages can be a helpful way of keeping in touch with what is going on. Members often post alerts of suspicious behaviours, especially unfamiliar parked white vans whose occupants seem to be watching what is going on.

Rogue traders like to appear local but they often use false addresses and bogus memberships of trade schemes. If your property needs work of any sort, take your time when choosing a trader. Recommendations from people you trust is often the best way of finding someone but you still need to do your own checks.

Advice from Trading Standards is that you should seek quotes from reputable traders whose names and addresses can be verified. Make sure they are properly insured and don't rely on verbal agreements. Make sure everything you want done and how much it will cost is in a written contract before work starts. It might take longer but could save you a lot of money and heartache in the future if things go wrong.

Never agree to buy goods or services from people who knock uninvited on the door or phone. It might seem OK to allow them to clean out your gutters but don't be surprised if they then tell you about the tiles that need repairing on your roof, once they've been up there. The tiles may well be perfectly all right but it's unlikely you can get up there to check. If at all in doubt, put down the phone and keep your door closed. If you suspect someone is a rogue trader or you have uninvited doorstep sellers, contact the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 0800 223 1133.



VIRTUAL COFFEE MORNING

Attendances at our virtual coffee mornings are gradually increasing. We know it's not the same as meeting face to face and we know, too, that it's not for everyone. However, do consider taking that first step if you've not joined us before. You're with friends so if something goes wrong, no-one will mind.

I'm pleased to say that Colin Pearson, from Carers' Trust, will be joining us for this month's meeting and it's an ideal opportunity to ask him any questions.

Please find the joining instructions in the letter or email accompanying your newsletter or phone/email if you can't find them.

The next coffee morning will be on **Friday 23rd April at 10.30 a.m.** I'll send a reminder as usual.

HEALTHWATCH SURVEY: Carers—Understanding your health and wellbeing needs

Last month I mentioned that Healthwatch Warwickshire are running a project aimed at those who identify themselves as a 'Carer'. It is hoped that those who don't identify with the term 'Carer' but who have caring duties will also participate. The project takes the form of a survey and the feedback from it will be used to help improve the planning of service delivery for Warwickshire County Council commissioned services as part of their Joint Adult Carers Strategy.

Historically, we know that Carers are often very stoic about their own situations, many don't recognise themselves as carers, and as a result many are reluctant to complete surveys. However, this really is a wonderful opportunity to inform those in a position to make a difference of what it's like to be a carer and what can help. The feedback Healthwatch are asking for covers:

- Who knows what carers do (e.g. GP, friend, support service) ?
- How much time carers spend doing things they enjoy ?
- Do carers feel they need any support for both their physical and emotional health?
- Where would carers go for support ?
- What are the barriers to them accessing support?
- What would carers like that support to look like (e.g. face to face, online...)?

The survey is a mixture of tick boxes and opportunities to describe in your own words what your experiences are if you wish. It is available online on the Healthwatch website at:

www.healthwatchwarwickshire.co.uk/news/2021-03-29/caring-carers . A paper version of the survey is also available by contacting Healthwatch (see links on the back page). A paper copy will be sent out to our mailing list members who receive their newsletter by post. They can be returned by Freepost. The deadline for completing the survey is Friday 14th May. I do urge you to complete this survey, even if you have never completed one before.

ROADMAP OUT OF LOCKDOWN

I feel a bit like surveys are coming like London buses—several at once.

Carers Trust are anxious to learn how carers feel as they approach the various stages of the Roadmap out of lockdown. How concerned do you feel about the changes in restrictions, about meeting up again and what kind of meetings would you like? What are you looking forward to being able to do again?

To find out, they are inviting you to complete a short online survey available at::

www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/JQYKTQZ . The survey will be available until the end of April. You don't need to be registered with Carers' Trust to take part although we encourage you to do so. You can do so by phoning them— the number is on the back page—or we can refer you.

LINKS AND SIGNPOSTS

We aim to use this back page 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—they are all trustworthy

More about Trading Standards, scams and rogue traders: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/doorstepsellers ; www.actionfraud.police.uk/. Report fraud directly to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 0800 223 1133.

Healthwatch Warwickshire— www.healthwatchwarwickshire.co.uk ; 01926 422823 (9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays) and email info@healthwatchwarwickshire.co.uk

Carers Trust Heart of England—www.carerstrusthofe.org.uk; 024 7610 1040 Option 4

Warwickshire CRESS Service please email warwickshirecress@carerstrusthofe.org.uk or call 02476 258816 (Out of hours: 07979 503 133).



DISCOUNTS FOR CARERS

This scheme is available for paid and unpaid carers, retired carers and volunteers. It offers meaningful discounts on a range of big name products and services and is well worth registering for. The discounts can be obtained in a variety of ways, including vouchers, discount codes and ordering directly through the website. Take a look at:

www.discountsforcarers.com/

MINDFULNESS

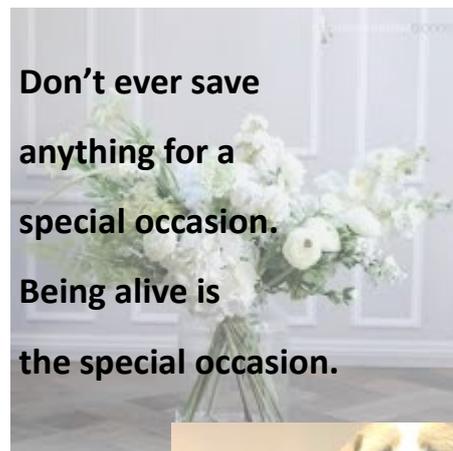
It was lovely to receive so much positive feedback for our coverage of Mindfulness last month. Thank you for letting us know that so many of you found it helpful.

POSITIVITY CORNER

I have two quotes for you to think about this month.

Don't ever save anything for a special occasion.

Being alive is the special occasion.



Make yourself a priority once in a while. It's not selfish. It's necessity

