Carers Week is an annual awareness campaign which takes place to celebrate and recognise the vital contribution made by the UK’s 6.5 million carers. This year it takes place between 10th and 16th June and will focus on ‘Getting Carers Connected’ to important support services, advice and information as well as family and friends.

Caring can impact on all aspects of life from relationships and health to finances and work. Caring without the right information and support can be tough.

**Connected to advice and information**

Caring can be very complicated and costly. This is why it’s important to find out how you can get advice and support. There are many places that can offer information to carers, including your local carers organisation!

We are able to provide information on benefits over the phone and support to complete paperwork at local clinics. Additionally we can refer you to other relevant support services such as the DWP home visiting team, your local Citizens Advice Bureau and Adult Social Care.

If you know someone who has a caring role and needs support and information ask them to connect with us today!

**Connected to services**

Looking after someone can be hard work. A carer’s assessment helps identify services which can help you with your caring role. Depending on individual needs and circumstances, we can support you to access grants and funding, carer’s breaks and occupational therapy.

Additionally, we are able to offer a range of volunteer services, including drivers, sitters and counsellors.

Don’t forget that you can request a re-assessment if there have been any changes to your caring role.

**Connected to friends and family**

Friends and family not understanding the situation, as well as a lack of free time, can often result in carers feeling lonely and isolated. More opportunities for breaks and social activities can help to combat these feelings, see our upcoming activities and events on page 2.

If you are unable to attend these you can speak to a support worker for 1:1 support, either over the phone or face to face.

To promote understanding among friends, colleagues and the public we are training Carers Champions in workplaces and the local community. If you think your workplace or community group would benefit from having a Carers Champion ask them to get in touch.

**Connected to other carers**

Because being a carer is so difficult speaking to someone who knows what you are experiencing can make all the difference. We have a range of regular opportunities for carers to get together such as our Caring ‘n’ Sharing Cuppa drop-ins and Carers Forums.

We’d also like to invite you to join us at our Cupcakes4Carers event during Carers Week (see details on page 2), this will be a great opportunity for you to meet up and have a chat with other carers.

**Connected to technology**

Fortunately, there is a whole world of technology that can now help to make your home safer and your life as a carer easier. We can support you to make a referral to Adult Social Care to access assistive technology such as Telecare.

A Caring with Confidence training course is available on our website as a series of Bitesize videos, visit: www.westcumbriacarers.co.uk/services-support/

Technology can also help you to connect via online forums which offer emotional support, such as www.carersuk.org/forum, or you can contact us online via our website, Facebook or Twitter.

For more information about Carers Week and how to get better connected visit www.carersweek.org

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**Find out what we will be doing during Carers Week on page 2.**

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**Tel:** 01900 821976 · **Email:** general@westcumbriacarers.co.uk · **www.westcumbriacarers.co.uk**
ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

All activities and events must be booked unless otherwise stated - call 01900 821976

Carers Forums
If you missed the Continence and Tissue Viability Carers Forum in April, fear not, there is still time to book your place at the next event!
- Bransty Legion, Whitehaven on Thursday 6th June from 10am to 12noon

Hear from local health professionals, meet other carers and enjoy some sandwiches and refreshments. Call now to book your place!

Lets talk...Continence and Incontinence
Continence care helps people to achieve and maintain control of their bladder or bowel functions. This can include tips on keeping the bladder healthy, continence assessment, identifying a course of treatment if necessary and emotional support and advice.

Lets talk...Tissue Viability & how to prevent pressure ulcers
Pressure ulcers are an injury that breaks down the skin and underlying tissue. They are caused when an area of skin is placed under pressure. They are sometimes known as ‘bedsores’ or ‘pressure sores.’

Caring ‘n’ Sharing Cuppa
If you would like to have a chat with one of our support workers or would like to get connected with other carers then drop-in to one of our Caring ‘n’ Sharing Cuppa sessions. Booking is not required.

ALLERDALE
- Lowmoor Church, Wigton at 10am – 12noon on 15th May, 17th July & 18th September
- Caldew Hall, Solway Street, Silloth at 1pm – 3pm on 19th June, 21st August & 16th October
- West Cumbria Carers, Lakeland Business Park, Cockermouth at 10am -12noon on 7th June, 2nd August & 4th October
- The Bradbury Independent Living Centre, Oxford Street, Workington at 1pm – 3pm on 3rd May, 5th July & 6th September

COPELAND
- Millom Network Centre, Salthouse Road at 10am – 12noon on 13th June, 8th August & 10th October.
- De Lucy Centre, Market Place, Egremont at 1pm - 3pm on 9th May, 11th July and 12th September
- Bradbury House Day Centre, Wadsdale Road, Gosforth at 10am – 12noon on 25th June, 27th August & 22nd October
- Harbour Youth Project, Swingpump Lane, Whitehaven at 12pm - 2pm on 28th May, 23rd July and 24th September

OH LOOK, NEW VENUE!
Don’t forget you can keep up to date with all our activities and events at www.westcumbriacarers.co.uk

Cupcakes4Carers
Join us for a cuppa and some cake on Wednesday 12th June between 10am and 1pm at our offices in Cockermouth.

Please note that these events are open to anyone, so you are welcome to bring along the person you care for, friends, family or come on your own, it’s entirely up to you.

We’d be very grateful for any donations of cupcakes anyone is able to make. If you’re able to support us then please could you call Michelle McGibbon on 01900 821976.

Pyjama Day
On Friday 14th June why not join in the fun on our pyjama day? Wear your pj’s to work or school and donate £1 to us. Get your colleagues, friends and family involved.

Spinathon
We will be holding a Spinathon at Workington Leisure Centre on Tuesday 12th June between 10.30 and 11.30.

During the hour we will be aiming to cycle 150 miles. There are 30 bikes available so if you or anyone you know would like to do a few miles and help us raise funds please get in touch. We will also have an information stall in the foyer if you would like to just pop in and say hi.

Caring for someone can feel isolating
Why not drop in for a chat with our support workers and other carers

Caring 'n' Sharing Cuppa
Meeting other carers and sharing experiences can reduce feelings of isolation while providing a well earned break from your caring role.
1-7 June 2019 is National Volunteer Week
We’re sure you’d like to join us in celebrating volunteers and thanking them for their time, commitment and passion. We would like to say a HUGE thank you to all our volunteers for all the different ways in which they help us to support unpaid carers throughout the year.

In the last 11 months our volunteers have clocked up an absolutely amazing 651 hours of support! Without them we could not provide some of the services we are able to offer.

Our volunteers are highly regarded by both us and by the carers who receive their support; we regularly receive calls and cards thanking us for the services provided by our volunteers. Well done everyone and thank you all!

USEFUL INFORMATION

Win Tickets for Ian McKellen on stage
On Tuesday 20th August Ian McKellen will be appearing at Theatre by the Lake in Ian McKellen on Stage.

A highlight of the year, this much-anticipated event is a special fundraiser for the theatre. The date is part of a UK tour in celebration of McKellen’s 80th birthday. As he himself puts it: “Growing up in Lancashire, I was grateful to those companies who toured beyond London and I’ve always enjoyed repaying that debt by touring up and down the country myself. As a theatre-mad lad in Lancashire I used to see the travelling Century Theatre, which ended up permanently on Derwentwater. So my debut here is in gratitude for those long-ago productions and for the other times when I have seen the company at work in Keswick. The Lake District is my favourite part of the country, which is another reason I wanted to bring you my new show”.

The evening will include anecdotes, performances as some of his best known characters, and an invitation for an audience member to join him on stage. The show starts at 7.30pm and will run for approx. 2 hours 50 minutes (including a 20 minute interval).

Demand for the event is anticipated to be high. West Cumbria Carers have been extremely fortunate in being selected, by Theatre by the Lake, as one of the West Cumbrian charities who have been given four tickets for this amazing event.

For a chance to win a pair of tickets please phone or email the office with your details and you will be entered into the free draw.

The winners will be drawn during Carers Week in June.

Pilot Paperwork Service
We are currently looking at developing a new service offering support with completing and sorting your paperwork.

As a pilot we are giving two of our carers the opportunity to receive this service free of charge.

If you would be interested or would like further information, please contact the office and ask for Janet.

Don’t forget you can keep up to date with all our activities and events at www.westcumbriacarers.co.uk
**State of Caring Survey 2019**

Every year Carers UK conduct the State of Caring survey, which is the UK’s most comprehensive research into the lives and experience of carers. Last year it was completed by over 7000 carers. They would like your help to paint a picture of what it’s like to be a carer in 2019. As Carers UK explain on their website:

“In the next year we want to bring your voice and experience to the heart of decisions about:

- Spending on care and support services: The way carers are recognised and supported will be a key part of the Government’s social care policy proposals expected soon. Decisions made will affect carers in England but also social care spending across the UK.

Financial support for carers: Campaigning to improve financial support for carers remains our top priority and we’d like to hear about how caring has affected your finances both in the short term and how you are able to save for the future.

Improving carers health and wellbeing: How the NHS puts into practice commitments to act on identifying and supporting carers earlier and ensuring they have plans in place for when they need the back up of health and care services. We also want to understand how we could support people who are caring to look after their mental and physical health by being more active. We know that carers face challenges to taking part in exercise or sport and we’re keen to see how we can help address those.”

You can complete the survey online by visiting [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org) or if you would prefer to have a printed copy posted to you, please email [policy@carersuk.org](mailto:policy@carersuk.org) or phone 0207 378 4942.

The survey is due to close on 24 May 2019.

**Great North Run & Great North Swim**

We still have some places left if you, or anyone you know, would be interested in taking part in either event. Call the office for more information.

**Grand Draw**

In the next newsletter we will be sending out raffle tickets for our Grand Draw. We have some great prizes already donated including:

- Bed from Sealy
- Afternoon Tea for 2 at The Trout Hotel
- Hamper from Morrisons
- £100 voucher for the Trout Hotel, from the Cumberland Building Society

If you would prefer NOT to receive any Grand Draw tickets please let us know by calling 01900 821976 or email andrew@westcumbriacarers.co.uk

**Customers have their say**

We had a fantastic response to our Lasting Power of Attorney customer survey this year, 93 responses from 117 surveys. That means that a whopping 79% completed the survey.

And guess what - 100% said they already had or were likely to recommend our service!

- 98.9% respondents were positive or very positive about our LPA service
- 98.9% said they were very or extremely satisfied with the value for money of the service
- All aspects of our service were highly rated as helpful
- 60.9% said they chose our service because of a recommendation

Sadly, over 60% decided to register an LPA due to existing health issues and were trying to do a tricky document at a time that was already difficult.

Why not do yours now, while you can just take it in your stride?

Thank you to all readers who used our LPA service during 2017/18.

**Veterans ID Card**

A new ID card for armed forces veterans, which will help them access specialist support and services, has started to be issued to service leavers.

Currently, there is no way for existing veterans to easily prove the fact that they have served. These cards will allow veterans to easily verify their service to the NHS, their local authority, and charities, helping them to access support and services where needed.

More information will be announced by the MOD on how existing veterans can apply for a card later in the year. Keep an eye on [www.gov.uk/veterans-uk](http://www.gov.uk/veterans-uk) for more.

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