

CARING MATTERS

Autumn/Winter 20/21

A FREE magazine for carers in Dorset

Plenty to celebrate after first year for Carer Support Dorset . . .

AS Carer Support Dorset approaches its one-year anniversary, we have been reflecting on a really successful year and wanted to update you on what we have been up to.

The year has flown by and our small team has been very busy growing the Dorset Carers Register. During and after

lockdown we have been working closely with our partners to ensure that carers know we are here and receive the advice and information they need about the services that are available to them.

This includes Rethink Mental Health, Dorset Digital Champions, The Leonardo Trust and many others.

We are celebrating our one-year anniversary on Friday 20 November! We are

holding a baking competition and will be launching new video content across our website www.carersupportdorset.co.uk and our social media channels.

There will also be other ways for carers to become involved, so please keep an

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Not all superheroes wear capes...

...some are young carers!

Find out how they have been coping during lockdown with help from the MYTime charity

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Free energy advice in time for the winter

THE Local Energy Advice Partnership (LEAP) is back – when you most need it!

Due to the pandemic, more of us are staying at home and now winter is coming – good job LEAP is back to help us keep warm and cut our energy bills.

There is a FREE home visit scheme to assist residents in all BH postcodes with free energy advice, energy saving devices, plus a fast-track to other improvements like heating upgrades and insulation.

Last year BCP Council residents saved a total of £700,000 because of LEAP.

Covid has meant the way you can now receive the LEAP service has changed.

Eligible households will first get a telephone advice call, followed by a non-contact delivery of energy saving devices (e.g. LED light bulbs, smart electric sockets, draught excluders).

Or, if you prefer, a 30-minute home visit to fit the devices for you can be arranged.

To be eligible for LEAP, households must include someone receiving benefits (e.g. Carers Allowance, Universal Credit, Pension Credit, Child Benefit) or have



a long-term health condition (e.g. high blood pressure, asthma, diabetes) or a disability. Many households are eligible.

LEAP is provided by Ridgewater Energy Ltd and their Help for Warmth scheme also delivers grant-funded improvements to homes in BH postcode areas.

This service continues unchanged – with the addition of appropriate PPE for staff.

There are grants available for loft and cavity wall insulation, heating improvements and broken

gas boiler replacement (all subject to eligibility).

Apply for LEAP and other energy grants by phoning Ridgewater Energy on 01202 862717 or visiting:

www.ridgewaterenergy.co.uk/projects-and-services/leap/



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If you require Caring Matters information in an alternative format, please call: **01202 458204** for carers of people living in **Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council area** and **0800 368 8349** for carers of people living in the **Dorset Council area**.



The Carer Support Dorset Team

Top row from left, Carer Advisers: **Roxana Catrina, Trevor Davies, Poppy Connell.** Communications Lead: **Emma Kirkup.**

Left: **Manager Anna Elston.**

Plenty to celebrate on our first-year anniversary

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eye on our website for full details.

Virtual Cuppas and Virtual Training

Our fortnightly Virtual Cuppa sessions are set to continue, with monthly guest speaker sessions.

Pop along for an informal chat with other Dorset-based carers and some of the Carer Support Dorset team.

We are also offering virtual training

WE ARE HERE FOR YOU

Twitter: @CarersDorset

Facebook: CarerSupportDorset

Call free: 0800 3688 349

www.carersupportdorset.co.uk



sessions on issues such as emotional resilience and dementia.

To join one of these free sessions or to request training in a particular area, please contact us on 0800 368 8349 or email admin@carersupportdorset.co.uk

Last but not least, we are currently recruiting to grow our team to increase the support we can offer, including to schools and colleges, and growing the number of carers who are able to be involved in developing carer services across Dorset.

HERE TO TALK

Register for our Here To Talk service by calling free on **0800 3688 349**

(Mon-Thurs, 9.30am to 4.30pm, Friday 9.30am-4pm).

Navigating a journey through dementia

In 50 years of marriage, Jennifer Evans (77) has adapted easily to many of life's twists and turns with her Master Mariner husband Patrick by her side.

For three years, they sailed the world's seas in cargo ships, calling at the four corners of the globe,.

She loved it, typing for the ship's officers, writing up cargo plans by hand and wielding chipping hammer and a paintbrush on deck, much to the horror of the Indian crews.

When daughter Caroline and son James came along, Patrick gave up the nine-month voyages and worked on ferries, to spend more time at home.

The family moved to North Dorset, bought a 30-acre farm and began to grow organic cherry tomatoes.

They started out with little experience and packets of seeds and ended up delivering eight tonnes to supermarkets twice a week. With 24 cherry tomatoes to the pound, there was a lot of picking and packing to do.

But, as relatively small-scale growers, they found dealing with supermarkets

difficult and Patrick went back to sea on the ferries.

After such busy working lives, the calm waters of retirement should have beckoned. But it was not to be.

Patrick gradually developed dementia until he suffered violent delusions about members of his closest family, making Jennifer fear for her safety.

This was something she could not adapt to and, earlier this year, Patrick had to be admitted to a care home.

Since then, Jennifer has reflected on her experiences of Patrick's illness and how things might have been done better.

'Early on, in particular, I badly needed information,' she said.

'How do I respond to him? Do I agree with him? Or find ways to avoid him dictating?'

'The gist seemed to be merely: *Do not contradict*. Everything one thought one knew has to be re-learned - common sense just does not apply, with dementia.

'My saviour was finding a book *Contented Dementia* by Oliver James. (ISBN 978-0-09-290181-3). This should be required reading for all carers, as it



ARTISTIC VIEW: The farm barn, painted by Jennifer

HAPPIER TIMES:

Jennifer and Patrick Evans



gives lots of case histories, and how other people dealt with this.

'It is very easy reading; I went through it twice, with a highlighter, to help the information imprint itself on my own brain! I could not get information from the internet, as Patrick became jealous of my time on the computer. I had to make phone calls while outside in the glasshouse, until my mobile ran out.

'But I had my faith. I knew this was an awful time. But I also knew that God would look after us, in whatever form that might take, and He has.'

She also had a cousin who is a retired GP. 'He was a wonderful backstop. I could run things past him to see what was normal and what was not.'

Patrick developed many different symptoms, including violent headaches. 'I thought it was a normal symptom of dementia. It is not. I knew so little of the disease that I had assumed - something one must never do,' said Jennifer.

'I should have battled and battled to get my husband's headaches sorted.' Eventually it was discovered that they were due to an increase in statins her husband was prescribed. The cure was instant, said Jennifer.

'The carer is the patient's warrior go out and do battle until there is a result,' she urged.

'Just to let him shrivel away in a care home seems a doubly terrible waste of a wonderful man'

Now Jennifer is having to adapt again, this time to life on her own.

With increasing illness, Patrick had neglected maintenance of buildings and fences

and she feels ashamed of the state of the farm.

'For 18 months **before** his diagnosis I desperately needed advice for the farm - which crisis to do first, as Patrick had always done it

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Make sure you are on your GP's Carers Register

THE national Carers Rights Day will take place on Thursday November 26.

The aim during this annual event is to ensure carers are aware of their rights, let carers know where to get help and support and raise awareness of their needs.

It is important that GPs and practice staff know who among their patients are carers so they can help them find the support they need.

Prescription pads are currently being provided in Dorset practices (see article below) but they may not be widely available by Carers Rights Day,

Helping your GP practice to know you are a carer

THE Carers Prescription Pads have been updated and redistributed to GP practices across Dorset.

The aim of the pads is to help practice staff identify unpaid carers and add them to their Carers Register.

The pads contain one form for carers to complete for the practice, and a second for the carer to keep. The latter contains contact information for the two main carers support organisations in the county. These are:

1 Carer Support Dorset (CSD) who support all unpaid carers looking after people living in the Dorset Council area. To find out more about how CSD can



It has been suggested by carers that during the week of Carers Rights Day you might check to see if you are on the Carers Register at your surgery and who the Carers Lead is for the practice. Alternatively, have a look at the practice website and see if they promote local carers support.

If not, send them a link to www.CRISPweb.org for carers of people in BCP Council area, and www.carersupportdorset.co.uk for carers of people living in the rest of Dorset.

help you, call 0800 368 8349 or log onto www.carersupportdorset.co.uk

2 The Carers Resource Information Support Programme (CRISP). This service is available to unpaid carers of people living in the BCP Council area. To find out more, log onto www.crispweb.org

Carers can also download the forms from either of these websites and take them to their GP already filled out if they wish.

Practice staff can refer a carer to CSD or CRISP if the carer is happy for them to do so.

The hope is that the use of the prescription pads will make it more likely that carers will access the wealth of support available to them, but of which they may be unaware.

Harriet works to help GP practices become more carer friendly

HARRIET Stevens (pictured) took up the role of Carers Engagement Facilitator with Dorset HealthCare NHS Foundation Trust in late March, covering for Lizzie Adams' maternity leave. Her first day was the day of lockdown! She has come to Dorset from Cardiff where she was a mental health nurse.

Harriet's work will continue from Lizzie's, helping to support GP practices to become ever more carer-friendly.

Her main contact in each surgery is the Carers Lead. Harriet said, 'It's clear to me that a huge amount of work has already been done by Carers Leads and their GP practices across Dorset to identify and support carers.

'I shall be working very hard to make

A journey through dementia

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all. Farming charities, I now know, can supply this.'

Patrick is settled in the home, recognises her, is receiving good care and does not ask to go back to the farm. But Jennifer has one regret about his situation.

'I wish he could have contributed to some research. Here was this interesting man, who's managed ships, been all round the world, been chairman of the Naval Club in London and run his own business, gradually struck down and



sure that best practice is shared and that together we strive towards achieving every carer being identified and given all the support they need to access the best sources of advice and support.

'GP practices and Carers Leads are vital in this process, and my job is to help them make a positive difference to the lives of the carers who play such an important role.'

debilitated by this horrid disease.

'What has caused it? Surely lots of case histories would at least throw up some statistics. At least the case history would be there, available for the time when someone does have a theory which could be tested. Just to let him shrivel away in a care home seems a doubly terrible waste of a wonderful man.

'Our children and I were lucky to have had so many years with him.'

**Farming Community Network
help number: 03000 111 999**

MYTIME charity comes to the lockdown rescue

THE national Covid-19 lockdown in the spring brought the adventurous activities for young carers at the MYTIME R&R Retreat Centre near Worth Matrovers to a sudden halt.

But staff and volunteers quickly turned their attention to how best they could support young carers, for whom the lockdown was going to be particularly difficult.

'Facing increased caring responsibilities and subjected to heightened levels of social isolation, young carers needed the support of MYTIME more than ever during lockdown, and we weren't about to let them down,' said CEO, Krista Sharp (pictured). The team came up with three main projects:

- 1 MYTIME Food Provision Plan
- 2 MYTIME@Home
- 3 The London Marathon 2.6 Challenge

'When we spoke to the young carer community it became clear that so many families have been facing huge challenges as a result of Covid-19,' said Krista.



VOLUNTEER SHOPPERS: Kate Bennett and Toby Kenneally,

'Many families in our community are at high risk and therefore shielding.

'Unable to get food delivery slots, job losses, increasing electricity costs and no longer having access to school meals means that feeding their families had become a huge and very real challenge.'

At a cost of £600 a week, the charity provided the most-needy young carers and their families with a weekly food shopping delivery service.

Funding was initially from the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF). That has now run out but the need is still there.

MYTIME is applying for grants and donations to cover the cost of the food, which is delivered by a volunteer team of motorcyclists, who meet all their own costs 'It is clear that the financial and social impacts of Covid-19



are really starting to hit,' said Krista.

With young carers isolated at home and unable to see their friends at school, the MYTIME@Home project provided them with a series of short activities to take part in via YouTube.

They include Scott Maslen, better known as Jack Branning in EastEnders, showing how to prepare a simple smoothie.

Professional drummer Sam Durham demonstrates how to make a junk drum kit with two wooden spoons and an array of household items like empty yoghurt pots and bean tins.

All the bite-sized videos are based on the five ways to wellbeing: Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning and Give - with the aim of supporting both physical and mental health. You can find them via YouTube or the MYTIME website

www.mytimecharity.co.uk

The 26-mile London Marathon may have been postponed and run in a completely different way in the autumn, but MYTIME staff and supporters still seized the chance to raise much-needed funds.

They staged The London Marathon 2.6 Challenge.



CHOCOLATE HEAVEN: A nine-year-old young carer tucks in.

'Whether by completing a 26-mile row or a 2.6-mile space hopper challenge, our team members and amazing support network pulled out all the stops for MYTIME that day, and in the end, we raised over £5000!' said Krista.

'Among the fundraisers were Megan and Teddy (below) who did 26 different exercises 26 times including my favourite - 26 wiggles!'



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We'll help you to send us your virtual views

THE NHS and Adult Social Care are committed to involving carers in decisions about how they develop services aimed at supporting carers.

They recognise that carers provide a fresh, independent voice, built on experience and not bound up with jargon. What they all need is a group of carers to refer to.

The Carers Reference Group has existed for some time for carers of people living in the BCP Council area.

Carer Support Dorset, for carers of people living in the rest of Dorset, have started to build similar contact with carers.

The pandemic resulted in a 'pause' to this involvement as we all struggled to adapt to communicating in a virtual

Websites you can try

If you're nervous about the internet, have a look at these websites which are aimed at people unfamiliar with technology:

The Komp www.noisolation.com/uk/komp/what-is-komp
tel: 020 3966 5397

Kraydel www.kraydel.com/
tel: 033 3344 75

Ethel www.ethelcare.co.uk/
tel: 028 9252 8083.

For advice on technology:

www.techsilver.co.uk/
tel: 03300 10 14 18

dementia.livebetterwith.com/

world, and sadly, saw some of the carers that had been involved, no longer able to have a voice in the same way.

One day, we will be able to return to physical meetings, and may have a combination of physical and virtual, but for now more carers are needed to have a virtual voice and represent carers.

If you have access to the internet and would like to find out more about what this would involve, please contact:

01202 458204 for the BCP Council area Carers Reference Group, or
0800 368 8349 for the rest of Dorset.

You don't need to be a super surfer of the net.

We are getting better at understanding how to work the virtual systems the groups use, and you will be given help to get used to them.

abilitynet.org.uk/at-home/how-we-help
tel: 0800 269 545

Dorset Digital Champions for any carers in the Dorset Council area. More details from www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Search for Digital Champions and then click on the link for Dorset Digital Hotline.

You can sign up to receive your local councils' e-newsletters to keep in touch. For BCP Council contact the Carers Centre (details on P 14)

For Dorset Council go to the Dorset Council website's Home Page and follow the 'E-newsletter sign-up' link at the bottom of the page.

News for young carers

MYTIME support

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'We can't wait to spend the money on a series of activity days for young carers to enjoy once all this is over.'

Normally, the centre offers a wide range of activities to provide a much-needed break for young carers, sometimes for a day and sometimes longer.

There are outdoor challenges in the fresh air designed to boost young carers health and grow their confidence.

There is a constant need to raise funds; the centre is in desperate need of renovation, which is expected to cost over £500,000.

Income is also boosted by hiring out the R&R Outdoor Centre to the general public to any family or group for holidays.

To find out more about all the activities on offer, or to volunteer, donate or to



Tackling a treetops challenge

book a stay at the centre, please email enquiries@mytimecharity.co.uk, or call: 01202 710701 (head office)

Meet the young carers team for BCP Council

DURING the last year, we have been working together, planning services for young carers in the BCP Council area.

Our new team comprises: Jeanette Yorke (Manager) and Young Carers Officers: Charlotte Baker, Hannah Beedie, Maggie Harris, Melissa Mondon and Sarah Norris.

For further information please see the Family Information Directory at www.fid.bcpccouncil.gov.uk

External requests for young carers support and assessment should be made via the Children's Services First Response Hub on 01202 735046 or childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Hub steps up to the lockdown challenge

PLANS to open a new Dorset Carers Hub in Dorchester in April were delayed by Covid 19, but eventually went ahead in July.

The hub is the brainchild of Mark and Sue Watson. Mark is a full-time carer for his wife, who has a debilitating abdominal condition.

The hub - which receives funding from The Leonardo Trust charity - had been based at a local church, providing information and activities to carers in Dorchester and the surrounding villages.

But it is not a faith-based organisation or specific to any disease. All carers are welcome.

Now the hub has a town-centre base in Trinity Street and is expanding the support it can offer. Sue explained: 'We have had such a busy time thanks to COVID-19.

'We have helped with housing and benefits issues, appeals, requests for counselling, of which we are seeing an increase every month, and grant requests.

'Our biggest project so far this year has been our Masks4Carers project which has been produced in conjunction with The Leonardo Trust.

'I designed the masks which were put together by many volunteers, enabling us to distribute more than 600 so far.'

Carers can still apply for a free reusable mask (all come with washing instructions and so on) by emailing or phoning the



WORKING TOGETHER FOR CARERS: Sue and Mark Watson

hub or by contacting The Leonardo Trust (see opposite page).

'We have been concerned that we have not been able to reach as many of the older carers out there as we would have liked,' said Sue.

'We also helped to distribute over 800 boxes of food and hygiene products as well as happiness packs of things like cream teas and meals as part of The Dorchester Community Kitchen, which is now Community-Share Dorchester.

'At times we were working seven days a week to ensure carers received everything they needed to keep them going.

'We are now completing online benefits training with Child Poverty Action Group and are busy planning Christmas (including a raffle). We are in the process of publishing our own booklet/magazine

(Cont'd on opposite page)



Masks4Carers

Being an unpaid carer is hard work and can impact upon other areas of a your life such as work, relationships, finances & social life. We are a charity that supports unpaid carers that live in Dorset.

We are giving every recognised unpaid carer a FREE Cloth Mask to help them to keep them safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. If you are an unpaid carer that lives in Dorset and needs a mask please contact us.

The Leonardo Trust
Tel: 01202 698325
Mob: 07742 868 002 (text only)
Email: info@leonardotrust.org

The Leonardo Trust
Helping People Who Care For Others
01202 698325

to help with carers' mental health.

'It will be packed full of crosswords, word searches, activities, recipes, short stories, poems and cartoons as well as many other things.

'We are aiming to publish in November to cover the Christmas period.

The hub is open in line with COVID

restrictions. The new address is:

Dorset Carers Hub,
Unit 3 Trinity House,
Trinity Street, Dorchester, DT1 1TT

Call: 01305 751524

Email: dorsetcarershub@gmail.com

Twitter @dorsetcarershub

Facebook: Dorset Carers Hub

Help and where you can find it

Social services for carers are provided by the council where the cared-for person lives:

- Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council
- Dorset Council (for the rest of the county).

Social Services Helpdesk for any enquiry about **Social Services in Poole** for an adult:

call 01202 633902
text relay 18001 01202 633902
e-mail sshelpdesk@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

To make a comment or complaint about Social Services in Poole:

call 01202 261159,
e-mail
comments.adultsocialcare@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Children's Social Services duty desk:

call 01202 735046

On the web: www.bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Carers' Service

To find out about support for carers of people living in Bournemouth Christchurch or Poole contact the Carers Centre:

St Ambrose Cottage, Alumhurst Road, Westbourne, BH4 8ER.

call 01202 458204
e-mail carersupport@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Care Direct provides information to help people find the services they need in Christchurch and Bournemouth:

call 01202 454979
minicom 01202 454874
email caresdirect@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Face to face contact with Care Direct is changing.

It is best to telephone or e-mail them first, to find out if it is possible to meet, and where this may take place.

To make a comment or complaint about Social Services:

call 01202 458953
e-mail accomplaint@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Children's Services:

call 01202 735046 or email
childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

On the web: www.bcpcouncil.gov.uk

The Carers Centre drop-in service has been suspended due to Covid-19.

Carers Support on the web: go to www.CRISPweb.org to find local support and to join the Carers Information Service online.

Help and where you can find it



Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Young Carers' Service

External requests for Young Carers support and assessment should be made via the Children's Services First Response Hub.

Call 01202 735046 or email
childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Requests can be made by young people, families or professionals.

Emergency Duty Service number

for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole is 0300 1239895

Dorset Young Carers' Service

Carer Support Dorset can register you as an unpaid carer on the Dorset Carers Register. They are also able to refer you for a Care Act Carers Assessment via Dorset Council.

To find out more about the support services they can offer, or for information, advice or guidance in your caring role please contact Carer Support Dorset:

Call 0800 368 8349
email admin@carersupportdorset.co.uk
or visit www.carersupportdorset.co.uk

The Out-of-Hours emergency number

for Dorset is 01305 858250

Have you got a Carers Card yet?

The Carers Card enables carers to receive discounts or concessions on a wide range of range of businesses and other services.

For more information, carers of people living in BCP Council area, can call 01202 458204, or join the Carers Information Service online at www.CRISPweb.org and you will get a card in your welcome pack.

To find out where a discount are available, go to www.mycarerscard.co.uk

For carers of people living in Dorset, you can contact Carer Support Dorset by phone on 0800 368 8349, email admin@carersupportdorset.co.uk or visit www.carersupportdorset.co.uk

Some carers are using the card as a proof of identity during Covid-19, although we would recommend also having some photo ID, such as a driving licence, to back this up.

Benefits of joining an energy supplier's Priority Services Register

THE Priority Services Register (PSR) is a free service provided by energy suppliers and network operators. To get on it, you need to contact your energy supplier.

If for any reason you do not know who that is, you can call 105, give your postcode and you will be given the telephone number to find the information you need.

The benefits of being on the PSR may include:

- > advance notice of planned power cuts, which is particularly important if you rely medically on the supply
- > help to identify someone acting on

behalf of their company

- > priority support in an emergency
- > your account statements or bills sent to a carer or someone you trust
- > having your meter read for you if you are unable to read it yourself
- > having your account and bill information in larger print or Braille.

You are eligible for the register if you:

- > are of pensionable age
- > are disabled or chronically sick
- > have a long-term medical condition
- > have a hearing or visual impairment or additional communication needs
- > are in a vulnerable situation.

There is a wealth of information on the on the energy regulator's website, ofgem.gov.uk and the gov.uk website or talk to your supplier.