

# NEWS

## CARERS

All the latest Carers information from around Rhondda Cynon Taf



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Issue 72 • Winter 2021

## Carers Rights Day 2021

Every year Carers Rights Day encourages unpaid carers to find out about their rights and how to get the help and support they need. This year Carers Rights Day will be held on Thursday 25th November.

Whether you are a new carer or have been caring for someone for a while, we believe that it's important that you understand your rights and are able to access the support that is available to you as soon as you need it. Many people who provide unpaid care on a daily basis, still deal with their own lives and families.

In a recent survey by Carers UK (of nearly 6,000 carers) found that 78% reported that the needs of the person they care for have increased during the Covid-19 pandemic. So, we want to take this opportunity to remind carers about the inspiration they provide, how appreciated you are, by not only your cared for, but our Service too, and how proud we are of you.

On this year's Carers Rights Day we will be looking into supporting those Carers to expand and enhance their knowledge and rights around the transitioning process for their cared for between the ages of 16-18; this will take place in the form of a virtual work-shop, where we will be joined by a representative from RCT Social Services. Topics to discuss may include; access to further education, gaining independence skills, welfare benefits advice, job and training opportunities and much more! If you are a Carer and you feel this Workshop would benefit you and your cared for, we would love to see you on 25th of November!

To find out more; please visit page 2 about the booking process for all our events.

### Useful websites for information on Carers rights:

Carers UK: [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)

Carers Wales: [www.carersuk.org/wales](http://www.carersuk.org/wales)

Carers Trust: [www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org)

Citizens Advice Bureau: [www.carct.org.uk/](http://www.carct.org.uk/)

All Wales Forum:

[www.allwalesforum.org.uk](http://www.allwalesforum.org.uk)

Welsh Government:

[www.gov.wales/strategy-unpaid-carers](http://www.gov.wales/strategy-unpaid-carers)



### 'Devilish Delights' box

(available for request from booking day onwards):

Fancy a delicious 'fright-fest' this Halloween in the shape of a 'trick or treat' hamper? All boxes will consist of a 'foul' film voucher for you to stream / purchase a 'monster movie'; some 'sickly sweets' to satisfy those 'blood thirsty' tastebuds and a 'spine-tingling' soda to wash it all down. Don't miss out on this 'Fang-tastic' offer. Limited boxes available. One per household.

**Please note: priority will be given to those Carers who missed out on our previous 'Happy Hampers' and 'Movies and Munchies boxes'.**

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF

# STAR EVENTS & ACTIVITIES



## How to book onto Events and Activities

Our activities and events are becoming more and more popular, as a result, all of our events have been marked **Gold, Silver or Bronze**. Please see our event list on pages **18 - 22** to see which category each event falls under.

Please note you can choose **1 Gold, 2 Silver** and **limitless Bronze activities and events**.

**Places will be allocated on first come first served basis.**

Our last booking day proved to be our busiest ever and placed an unmanageable demand on the Carers Project Team. It's because of this that moving forward we will be trialing a new booking procedure.

Event bookings will open on **Wednesday 6th October 2021** and booking will be available between **10am and 5pm**. If you are unable to contact us between these times, you will need to contact the team the following day to confirm your booking.

On the initial booking day (6th October) events will be able to be booked by **TELEPHONE ONLY** by calling **01443 281463**. Email bookings will be accepted after this date. NO bookings will be taken via social media, including Facebook.

**Please note: where possible, email will be used for all correspondence so please check your email, junk/spam on a regular basis to check for updates from the Project.**

Please be advised that our phone lines can be extremely busy, and we appreciate your patience when processing your booking requests. It would help us if you have the details of all of the events you would like to book in readiness for your booking phone call, in order for us to process your requests as quickly as possible and move onto the next Carer.

Please be advised that places for events are limited. We endeavour to make the booking process as fair as possible and aim to accommodate the wishes of all Carers, however owing to the demand on our events and training this may not always be possible.



## Carers Connects

Dear Carers,  
Come along, meet other Carers, share experiences and provide guidance & support to each other.  
You will have the opportunity to discuss your concerns, or if you choose, just listen to others. This group is facilitated by the Carers Support Project Counsellor.  
Look forward to seeing you.

**From the Carers Connects Group.**

*Wish you were here!*

For further information please contact:  
Tel: 01443 281463  
Email: [CarersSupportProject@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:CarersSupportProject@rctcbc.gov.uk)

Join us on 2nd Tuesday  
of the month  
10am-11am  
This group is held via  
Zoom. Booking essential.



Carers Cwtch is an informal friendly group for individuals who care for a family member, friend or neighbour. We meet on the second Tuesday of the month from 6:30pm-8pm.

Join us for a fabulous evening of games, quizzes, bingo and fun! You'll have the opportunity for a classic "night in" with other Carers.

**So join us, have some time out, relax and have fun. Booking essential. The Group takes place via Zoom.**

**If you would like any further information, please call the Carers Project on 01443 281463**

## Carers Cwtch



## Calling ALL unpaid carers in RCT

We are seeking people who are passionate about the future of social care and carer support within RCT to come together to form a Carers Panel. In this capacity, you will be asked for your feedback and sometimes to take part in engagement events. You can decide what and how much you want to get involved in, but your valued insight will help develop and improve our services. This panel is intended to supplement existing groups within the local authority to enable more people to have their say.

If this is something of interest to you, please contact our engagement officer for adult services, Richard Ferguson, at [Richard.Ferguson@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Richard.Ferguson@rctcbc.gov.uk) or **07384910500**.

# It's good to talk

A free confidential telephone counselling service provided by qualified counsellors available to local Carers in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

## Why Counselling?

The counsellors are trained listeners who can help you to look at options, consider issues in a different way and make decisions about how to manage your life in a way that works for you.

The aim is to help you find your own solutions to your problems and concerns, respecting you and your right to self-determination.

## Who knows I have requested an appointment?

Only you, the project staff and the counsellor.

## What does confidentiality mean?

The counsellor will not discuss your affairs with anyone. The only exception to this may be if the counsellor thinks there is a risk to you or to anyone else. This will be discussed with you at the time.

## How many sessions will I have with the counsellor?

Initially you will be offered up to 6 sessions of up to 50 minutes. The vast majority of carers take sessions fortnightly however, under certain circumstances the frequency can be discussed with the counsellor. At present Counselling sessions are taking place via telephone only.

## Is counselling right for me?

In the first session the counsellor will explain what to expect from the sessions and at the end you can decide if it is right for you. If not, the counsellor may suggest you access the monthly peer support group which is moderated by a senior counsellor or may suggest alternative organisations that might be of help.

## What can I discuss?

Personal and caring problems are frequently inter-related and help with one will often help the other. You can talk about any areas of your life you are concerned about.

## How do I make an appointment?

Contact the Carers Support Project on

**01443 281463**

Email: [CarersSupportProject@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:CarersSupportProject@rctcbc.gov.uk)

# Carers Leisure Discount

**Carers of all ages and interests can access a world of leisure, social and relaxation opportunities with discounts worth up to 40%.**

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council is offering all RCT Carers discount of up to 40% on Leisure for Life membership prices.

A Leisure for Life membership offers unlimited access to swimming, gym, classes and indoor sports at leisure centres throughout RCT. You can go as often as you like to whichever centre you like.

Discounted access can include pay-as-you-go or direct debit monthly membership.

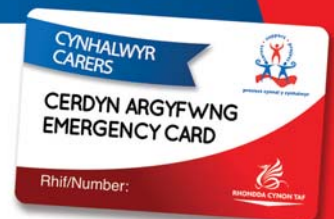
What's more, it's really easy to join.

For more information  
call the Carers  
Support Project on  
**01443 281463**



# Carers Emergency Card

**Do you worry about what would happen to the person you look after if you were suddenly taken ill or had an accident?**



If the answer is YES then the Rhondda Cynon Taf Carers Emergency Card Support Service may help to ease your concern.

## What is the Carers Emergency Card?

It's a credit size card that you can carry with you at all times. It's used as an instant source of identification in case of accident or sudden illness. The Carers Emergency Card is now available for online applications.

For more information or to apply online please visit:

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Resident/AdultsandOlderPeople/Caringforotherpeople/Supportforcarers/CarersEmergencyCard.aspx>

Please email

[CarersSupportProject@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:CarersSupportProject@rctcbc.gov.uk)

or call **01443 281463**

to request a  
hardcopy form.



# Staying Well At Work

Direct and rapid access to physiotherapy, counselling and business support at no cost

## Do you live or work in Rhondda Cynon Taf and are you employed by a small business with less than 250 employees?

The Staying Well at Work Service offers a proactive and integrated approach which supports the prevention of physical and mental ill health, whilst supporting rehabilitation and the management of long-term conditions. We provide clinical support for people to improve their daily functioning and symptom management so that they can return to or continue to work.

## What problems can they help with?

The service, led by Rhondda Cynon Taf part funded by the European Social Fund through Welsh Government offers direct and rapid access to specialist support at no cost in the following areas:

- **Physiotherapy:** delivered by professionals who are specialists in Musculoskeletal (MSK) Physiotherapy, Occupational Health and ergonomics. They provide advice and treatment to individuals who are struggling with a MSK problem that is keeping them off work or affecting them at work. They also provide return to work rehabilitation programs for individuals trying to return to physically demanding job roles or environments after a period of sickness absence and/or surgery such as hip and knee replacements.
- **Counselling and therapeutic support:** skilled therapists that support people with mild to moderate mental health problems and also help them with their plans to return to or remain in work. This service is available to anyone who has any difficulties related to their psychological and emotional wellbeing.
- **Occupational Health Advice:** able to offer impartial advice and recommendations on managing long and short-term health conditions within the workplace, disability and workplace adjustments to support individuals with their return to work.

As well as 1 to 1 support the service offers access to group workshops to help address a range of Health and Wellbeing issues.

The Staying Well at Work team are able to offer virtual consultations via Attend Anywhere, telephone consultations and face to face appointments where

required following a risk assessment in our COVID secure consulting rooms in the communities of Mountain Ash and Ferndale for counselling and Pontypridd for physiotherapy.

## What problems can't they help with?

Staying Well at Work cannot provide the service to individuals who:

- are unemployed
- are unable to provide proof of their right to live and work in the UK
- are employed by an organisation with 250 staff or more
- do not work or live in RCT.

If they are unable to help, they can signpost people to other services that may be more appropriate for them.

## How to access the service?

You can self-refer without seeing your GP first.

For further information on how Staying Well at Work can support you (subject to eligibility) please contact us on **01443 827317** or [stayingwellatwork@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:stayingwellatwork@rctcbc.gov.uk).

You will be asked to complete a self-referral form prior to attending an appointment. Self-referral forms are available at the GP practice or alternatively can be sent out via post or email.

## Contact details

Telephone: **01443 827317**

Telephone lines are open Monday to Friday  
9.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m.

Email: [stayingwellatwork@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:stayingwellatwork@rctcbc.gov.uk)

Website:

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/GetInvolved/StayingWellAtWork/StayingWellAtWork.aspx>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/StayingWellAtWork/>



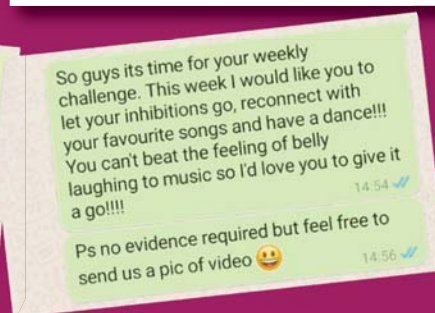
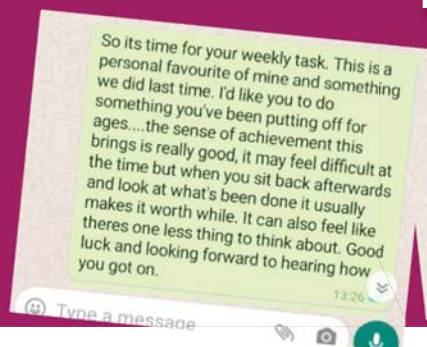
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BUILDING RESILIENCE, PROSPERITY AND WELLBEING

# Lifestyle with Lynds

'Lifestyle with Lynds' is a month-long challenge that will not only encourage you to become more active but will hopefully give you a sense of community and friendship.

Over the course of the month you will be given weekly challenges to complete, focusing on improving health, wellbeing and self-confidence. You will also be given the opportunity to attend our weekly walks. The 'Lifestyle with Lynds' WhatsApp group has been instrumental in giving participants peer support, encouragement, and a feeling of being part of something great. The support and encouragement you get from other carers to achieve your goals really is the key to success.

At the end of the month the group are given the opportunity to be entered into a virtual challenge to complete in their own time. RCT Carers project are extremely proud of the achievements of members of 'Lifestyle with Lynds'.



## And it doesn't stop there....



Since attending 'Lifestyle with Lynds' Gaynor Perry has taken on 3 virtual challenges completing a whopping 243 miles in a few months.

Gaynor said "Doing the 'Lifestyle with Lynds' has helped me a lot. I wasn't going out at all, but since doing the challenges I walk most days... she arranged the first walking challenge for me and since doing that I have done another two and will be doing more.... thank you Lyndsey for all your support and encouragement."

Vicki Leader has also conquered Mount Fiji and when asked what achieving this challenge has meant to her, Vicki said, "I really enjoyed doing the Mount Fiji challenge. It gave me the incentive to complete the challenge, but there were also virtual postcards and street views along the way as well as the

opportunity to interact with others via the online chat making the whole challenge a fun and enjoyable experience".

Watch this space for more inspiring and incredible achievements from the lifestyle with Lynds group.

If you would like to be involved in lifestyle with Lynds sign up for our new programme starting January 2022!!!

Remember Stay strong and never give up.... You can achieve great things if you put your mind to it!!

# SUMMER FUN WITH THE CARERS PROJECT



# Cherry & Almond Tray Bake

## Ingredients for the filling

- 300g butter
- 300g caster sugar
- 375g self raising flour
- 1 lemon, zest & juice
- 85g ground almonds
- 4 free range eggs, lightly beaten
- 25g marzipan, chilled & grated
- 2 tsp almond extract
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 3 tbsp whole milk
- 200g glacé cherries, quartered. Reserve 8 for decoration
- flaked toasted almonds



## Ingredients for the icing

- Fondant icing sugar
- Juice of 1 lemon

## How to prepare cherry and almond tray bake

1. Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4.
2. Grease and line a square traybake tin, about 28 x 28cm, with baking parchment.
3. Put all the cake ingredients (apart from the cherries) in a large mixing bowl or tabletop mixer and beat together until thoroughly combined.
4. Toss the cherries in a little flour, then fold them into the cake mixture using a spatula.
5. Spoon the mixture into the prepared tin and bake for 30-35 mins until the cake is golden brown, springy to the touch, and a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Leave to cool completely in the tin.
6. To make the icing, sift the icing sugar into a bowl, then add the lemon juice and enough water to make a thick yet fluid icing. Spoon the remaining icing over the cooled cake – it should be liquid enough to level itself out; if not, use a palette knife to smooth it.
7. Cut into squares and garnish with glace cherry quarters and toasted flaked almonds.

Enjoy!

You can call the Macmillan Support Line on 0808 808 00 00.

# What's going on over the next few months...

We've got lots planned for you over the next few months, including...

## Nutrition and Sleep

**Thursday 21st October - 10:30am - 12pm**

Ever wondered if your diet may be having an impact on your ability to get a good night's sleep? Join Joanne Crovini, Nutritional therapist, as she discusses how small changes in diet can have a big impact on wellbeing.

## Sensory Workshop

**Tuesday 19th October - 10am - 12pm**

This workshop will focus on your child's sensory needs from an Occupational Therapist perspective. It will explore how some children may need more or less stimulation from the environment around them, and how this may be fulfilled in both the home and learning environment.

## Carol Singing

**Friday 17th Dec - 6pm – Ponty (Ynysangharad) Park**

'Tis the season to be jolly', so join us for some family friendly carol singing. We will cover all the greats, as well as a few festive fun songs.

## Nutrition and Weight Management

**Thursday 13th January - 10:30am - 12pm**

Let's talk menopause...gaining weight when nothing about your diet and lifestyle has changed can be frustrating, this can be a familiar story during menopause. Join Joanne Crovini, nutritional therapist as she explains how to tackle it.

Find out more on pages 18 to 22.



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## Carers Wales Self Advocacy Training for Carers

Caring can be rewarding but also very isolating. You may not know about what your legal rights are, what help may be available and what you can ask for, how to ask, or indeed who to ask.

Carers Wales are hosting a 'Carers Rights and how to advocate for yourself' workshops on Thursday 2nd December and Thursday 24th February, both from 1pm-4pm.

Carers Wales Self-Advocacy training aims to help you to understand your rights as a Carer, the system, as well as consider ways for you to be able to negotiate with professionals in a positive way.

The training aims to give you the information and skills to get your message across effectively to ensure your needs are properly considered.

To book a place, please visit event bright and search for 'Carers Wales Self Advocacy Training', or go to:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/carers-rights-and-how-to-advocate-for-yourself-tickets-159409611439>



## Carers Wales Listening Support Service



Caring can be very rewarding, but it can also feel isolating or challenging at times. The Listening Support Service offers a series of phone calls with someone who understands the ups and downs of caring and who can provide a listening ear. Whether you want to discuss some of the issues you are facing as a carer, or just want to chat, our friendly, trained callers are here to listen. How you use the calls is up to you.

### What you can expect

Our callers will phone you once a week/fortnight, up to four times, for a chance to chat. Calls take place around the same day and time each week/fortnight, and last around 30 minutes. The callers (who are all trained volunteers) can provide emotional support and are able to suggest services to contact for more support, but they cannot give advice or counselling.

### How do I sign up?

To find out more and/or sign up to the Listening Support Service, visit:

<https://www.carersuk.org/wales/help-and-advice/listening-support-service>



## Nominate a Carer

What a year 2020 was. We know that Carers, probably more than ever, have come up against great challenges over the past year. We, at the Carers Project, have heard some amazing stories of resilience, perseverance and sheer determination from our Carers. This made us think – wouldn't it be lovely to recognise some of the amazing work you do!

So, if you know of someone, who you feel deserves special recognition, let us know and show them how amazing they are!

Contact: [CarersSupportProject@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:CarersSupportProject@rctcbc.gov.uk)



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## Rhondda Cynon Taf Stroke Recovery Service

### About this service

Rhondda Cynon Taf Stroke Recovery Service provides practical advice, emotional support and high-quality information following a stroke. Whether you are a stroke survivor, carer or family member, we will work with you to identify and address your physical needs through a personalised plan, and support you to rebuild your life after stroke.

This service offers:

- Coordinated support throughout your stroke journey
- Home visits and/or regular telephone calls
- Leaflets, factsheets and information
- Help with returning to work, if required
- Assistance with accessing local leisure, social activities and self-management tools
- Support for carers
- Signposting to other organisations that could help.

### Who is this service for?

This service is for stroke survivors (including TIAs/mini-strokes), and families and carers of people affected by stroke, living in Porth, Church Village, Rhondda, Llantrisant, Mountain Ash, Tonyrefail, Pontypridd, Aberdare and Tonypanyd.

### Contact

Stephanie Martin -

**Stephanie.Martin@stroke.org.uk**  
or **07951 206353**

If you are unable to find a suitable service in your area, contact our Stroke Helpline on **0303 3033 100**, or email **helpline@stroke.org.uk**, and we may be able to put you in touch with alternative support.

## Priority Service Register

### What is the Priority Services Register?

The Priority Services Register (PSR) is a free and voluntary system that your supplier uses to ensure the correct support is given to its most vulnerable customers.

It is a system designed and overseen by Ofgem to better ensure that individuals with special requirements have access to additional support from their energy supplier as and when they require it.

This support varies by supplier and by an individual's circumstances, but can include:

- Large-format or Braille bills
- Advanced notice of service interruption
- Priority in a power cut
- Quarterly meter readings

### How to register?

You can apply by contacting your energy supplier or network operator.

Give them as much information as you can about your needs. Your supplier can pass your details to your network operator to add you to their register too. It's a good idea to ask them to do this if you rely on your energy supply for medical reasons.

If you have a different supplier for your gas and electricity, you need to contact them both.

To find out more visit: [www.ofgem.gov.uk](http://www.ofgem.gov.uk)

## Think 111

There are many different ways you can access the NHS without having to go to your GP. If you have a non-urgent healthcare need, the NHS Wales 111 website, and online symptom checker, are quick and easy ways for you to access healthcare advice and information 24/7.

If its life threatening or an emergency, call 999 or go to the Emergency Department.

**The NHS 111 Wales website, can be used to access:** • urgent care • support for minor injuries • GP Out of Hours Service • general health advice and information • Primary Care Services

You can also have a free NHS consultation, and free over-the-counter medicines for 26 common ailments at your pharmacy. Just register with the pharmacy of your choice.

This will probably save yourself a trip to the GP, but, if you do need to consult a doctor, your pharmacist will advise this too. Call: **111** or visit: [www.111.nhs.uk](http://www.111.nhs.uk)

Think  
111

## Welsh Water WaterSure scheme

If you already have a meter, or have requested one, the WaterSure scheme puts a cap on the amount you have to pay for your water. WaterSure caps your annual metered bill amount so you won't pay over a certain amount for the year, no matter what your actual consumption is.

### Am I eligible?

The scheme is available to customers who already have a water meter or opt in to have a water meter fitted. To be eligible, you must be receiving a qualifying benefit or tax credit and either:

1. have 3 or more children under the age of 19 living at your home who you can claim Child Benefit for, or
2. have a member of your household with a medical condition that requires significant use of extra water

### Qualifying benefits

You must be in receipt of at least one of the following:

- Income Support
- Income related Employment & Support Allowance
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Pension Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Attendance Allowance (AA)
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit (except families in receipt of the family element only)
- Universal Credit
- Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

### Medical conditions

Common conditions which require a significant amount of extra water can include:

- Desquamation (flaky skin disease)
- Weeping Skin (eczema, psoriasis, varicose ulceration)
- Incontinence
- Abdominal Stoma
- Crohn's Disease
- Renal failure requiring home dialysis (except where the healthy authority contributes to the cost of the dialysis)

If your condition is not listed here, but still requires a significant amount of water, you may provide information in your application.

To find out more or to apply, download a form from: <https://www.dwrcymru.com/en/my-household/get-help-paying-your-bill/watersure-scheme> or contact Welsh Water on **0800 052 0145**

## Welsh Water HelpU Tariff

The HelpU tariff helps low income households by putting a cap on the amount you have to pay for your water. The HelpU tariff helps the lowest income households in our region. If you qualify, we will cap your water bill so you won't pay over a certain amount for the year.

If you have a water meter, you will never pay more than the amount you have used. If your consumption is less than the HelpU cap amount, you will only be billed for the amount of water you have used.

### Are you eligible?

To qualify for the tariff:

- the water supply to the household must be for domestic use only
- someone in the household must receive at least one means-tested benefit
- the combined annual household income must be on or under the threshold for the household size as shown in the table below.

Here's a list of types of the means-tested benefits which someone in the household must be receiving at least one of:

- Pensions Credit
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income Support
- Income-related Employment & Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit
- Housing Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Reduction / Support

You would also need to reapply for the tariff at the end of every 12 month period.

To find out more or to apply, download a form from: <https://www.dwrcymru.com/en/my-household/get-help-paying-your-bill/helpu-tariff> or contact Welsh Water on **0800 052 0145**



**Dŵr Cymru**  
**Welsh Water**

# Young Adult Carers



## YACTY YAC

**The Carers Service promotes resilience. This is the ability to adapt to changes and problem solve in creative ways when faced with life's challenges.**

This summer has brought new challenges and even more changes. YACs have learnt how to adapt as individuals while still caring. It has taken time to adjust to and understand all the changes and the opportunities that they present while still remaining safe. There is no shortage of resilience, but the task is made easier with support, and this is what the YAC service and Carers Project offers.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the YACs, both new and old, for the care and support you have shown me as your Support and Development Worker. You have made me laugh and cry, and you have trusted me when the going has been tough. I have learnt such a lot about caring and sharing from your acts of kindness and seeing your resilience. It's now time for me to move on to new adventures and challenges but I feel very privileged to have worked with you all. A big THANK YOU!

## Island Life

Not even dark clouds and the threat of thunderstorms could hold us back as we headed to Barry Island!

There were friendships reunited, smiles, laughter, relaxation and even a swim in the sea! It was truly a day to be remembered and one that revived our spirits...



## Wha's occurin'?

Over the coming months we will have a Pop up meet up, Online Quiz Night and celebrate Halloween

## Stay in touch

If you have any questions about the Young Adult Carer Service, or need support please contact us on: **01443 281463** or email: **CarersSupportProject@rctcbc.gov.uk**

# What's Occurred?

## Art in the Park

The sun was out and artist and teacher, Kristel Trow, helped us create portraits where we used new artistic skills and techniques that we learned. Do you recognise any of us?





# RCT Young Carers Schools and College Award...

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The Young Carers Schools & College Award has been developed after speaking to Young Carers and obtaining their viewpoints about the support they receive in education. The Local Authority wanted to establish an Award to help Schools and Educational Staff develop an informed understanding of the issues faced by Young Carers in relation to their personal and school life.

The focus of the Award is for education establishments to work directly alongside the Young Carers Service in RCT to ensure that this vulnerable group is recognised and supported to go on and reach their full potential.

The Award ensures that good practice is taking place in education establishments relation to Young Carers and their needs. Along with help from the Young Carers service schools can put plans in place to work towards set standards. The school will be recognised by achieving bronze, silver or gold levels of the award. The award they achieve will be dependant on how much they put into the award and how much they put in place for young carers. We are hopeful that the award will develop a uniformed supportive approach to young carers in all schools in RCT and will raise the profile of young carers amongst pupils and staff. The young carers have had a say in what the standards should be and will be involved in the process.

Good Luck!



## Save money with a **MAX card**

Max card is the leading discount initiative for looked after children (LAC) and children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The scheme was set up to make days out more accessible and affordable for families. You can have discounted entry into lots of attractions including go air trampoline park, Caerphilly castle, Castell Coch, Jump, Tenpin bowling and further afield Drayton Manor, Alton Towers, Legoland and go ape.

The MAX card usually costs £2.50 plus vat however the carers project are offering MAX cards to parent carers who are currently registered with us.

To find out more contact Lyndsey on **01443 281463** or email: [Lyndsey.r.williams@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Lyndsey.r.williams@rctcbc.gov.uk)

## The RCT Carers Project Christmas Survival guide.

Last Christmas may not have been the Christmas we had planned, no large group gatherings, chaotic Christmas dinner for 20 or even the usual pantomimes, parties and school Christmas concerts. This may have come as a welcome relief to some people, or you may be craving the traditional Christmas this year. Whichever way you like to celebrate the festive season just remember that we can all do Christmas our own way and this should best suit the needs of your family.

We have come up with this short survival guide to hopefully make things a little easier.

### The run up

Christmas can very often bring a whole new set of routines both at home, school and the wider community. Prepare your child in advance, and involve them as much as possible, by talking about Christmas; use visual aids, show them photos of previous Christmas', and speak with other care givers and especially the school to encourage them to use the same approach as you.

### Gifts

Some children love surprises, but for others it can be too much. If this is the case consider not wrapping presents, putting them in gift bags, or putting a picture of the present on the label. Speak with other family members about doing the same. Also consider that lots of gifts can be overwhelming for children, so introduce them one by one, stagger the gift giving or just allow them to go over to the gifts when they are ready.

### Christmas dinner

There is usually the expectation on Christmas day that we all sit down together and indulge in a delicious roast but if your child will only eat chicken nuggets and chips is it really a big issue? Do what suits you and your family rather than conforming to social norms. It may even be that Christmas Eve/Boxing day is a more appropriate day to sit down together for Christmas dinner. Also consider preparing children if there is a change to the table layout or different people will be around the dinner table but wherever possible keep things the same for them (the place they sit, plate they use etc).

### Visitors

Wherever possible speak to friends and family about arranging their visits in advance, so that you can prepare your child. Spontaneous visits can be overwhelming and cause distress.

Remember the most important thing about Christmas is the time that you spend together.

In the words of Dr Seuss "It came without ribbons, it came without tags, it came without packages, boxes or bags. Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before, maybe Christmas he thought doesn't come from a store, maybe Christmas perhaps means a little bit more". (Dr seuss, how the Grinch stole Christmas)



## Financial support after the loss of a child

The Welsh Government has announced a new £500 payment for bereaved parents to be introduced from April 2021.

Under this new scheme, families in Wales who register the death of a child under the age of 18 will receive £500 as a contribution towards their child's funeral costs.

Parents will not need to make a claim for this benefit. Instead, it will be offered by the Registrar at the point when the death is registered.

For more information please visit:

<https://gov.wales/ps500-support-bereaved-parents-wales>

## What is Healthy Start?

If you're pregnant or have children under the age of 4 you can get free vouchers or payments every 4 weeks to spend on:

- cow's milk
- fresh, frozen or tinned fruit and vegetables
- infant formula milk
- fresh, dried, and tinned pulses

You can also get free Healthy Start vitamins.

### How to apply...

You'll qualify for the Healthy Start scheme if you're at least 10 weeks pregnant or you have at least one child that's under 4.

### In addition, you must be receiving any of the following:

- Child Tax Credit (only if your family's annual income is £16,190 or less)
- Income Support

- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Pension Credit (which includes the child addition)
- Universal Credit (only if your family's take-home pay is £408 or less per month from employment)

### You will also be eligible for Healthy Start if:

- you're under 18 and pregnant, even if you are not claiming any benefits
- you claim income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and are over 10 weeks pregnant
- you or your partner get Working Tax Credit run-on only. (Working Tax Credit run-on is the Working Tax Credit you receive in the 4 weeks immediately after you have stopped working for 16 hours or more per week)

## Sensory Workshop.

Tuesday 19th October  
10am - 12pm

This workshop will focus on your child's sensory needs from an Occupational Therapist perspective. It will explore how some children need more or less stimulation from the environment around them and how this may be fulfilled in both the home and learning environment.



# The Newsletter for the Rhondda Cynon Taff Parent and Carer Network

Caring for children with disabilities and special needs aged 25 and under

## Supporting Siblings – being open about disability

Many parents feel anxious about telling siblings about their brother or sisters' disability or condition. Very often they feel that it will be too upsetting or that they are too young to understand, however according to 'sibs' the charity for sibling carers, siblings need to be told what is happening to help them to cope better.

Talking to siblings about their brother or sisters disability helps to **IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING**. They may begin to realise why things are different in their family and why maybe their brother or sister needs that little bit more attention at times. It also helps them to **IMPROVE THEIR RELATIONSHIP** with their brother or sister. Sibling Carers can be some of the most empathic, patient and kind young people there are. Being open with your child also helps to **MAINTAIN TRUST**. Sometimes the effects of not telling the truth can be worse, children can conjure up all sorts of things in their imaginations, which is usually more frightening and unrealistic than the truth.

## How to talk to siblings

If possible, tell your child at the time of diagnosis, answer questions as they come up and if you don't know be open and honest. ....learn together. Keep things up to date and depending on age you may need more detailed information as they get older.

Ways you can support younger siblings:

Scrap books

Story books

Question box

Worry dolls

Internet (but only reputable sites. ....i.e. known charities have good information)







## Talking about life limiting conditions


Some siblings are growing up with a brother or sister with a life-limiting condition or illness. As a parent you are already facing up to a hugely challenging situation and thinking about how to support siblings may seem like too much. However, siblings cope best when they are told about what is happening and when they can share their feelings about it. It can be much harder for siblings if they find things out from other people, are told that everything is going to be ok when in fact they know it is not, worry that they may get the same illness or condition, don't have anyone they can talk too (they may feel that they cannot burden their parents anymore) feel guilty about getting on with their own lives, feel left out of conversations.





For more ideas on how to support siblings visit [www.sibs.org.uk](http://www.sibs.org.uk)

**Sibs**  
for brothers and sisters  
of disabled children & adults








## Carers Support Project events, activities and workshops for Winter 2021

Event/Activity/Workshop	Venue, Date & Time	Information
<b>October 2021</b>		
<p><b>Becs' Book Buddies</b> - Do you have a favourite read? Would you like to engage with others who do too? Every month we'll meet virtually as a group over a cuppa to discuss a book of your choice; please note all books will be provided to each Carer. So, come and join this exclusive club; it's on a "read to know" basis!</p>	<p><b>Monday 4th October</b> 2pm-3pm Zoom</p>	<p>Bronze. <b>Carer Only.</b></p> 
<p><b>Chatterbox</b> our regular coffee morning held on the 1st Tuesday of every month. Make your own cuppa and join us for some craft and a good old chat in this friendly informal group.</p>	<p><b>Tuesday 5th October</b> 10am – 11:30am Zoom</p>	<p>Bronze. <b>Carer Only.</b></p> 
<p><b>8 Stages of Man</b> - Have you ever wondered what makes you, you? You are invited to learn about Erikson's principles and apply them to your own life journey for the purpose of enhancing emotional self-awareness and personal growth. You will learn about Erikson's 8 stages of man (alongside parallel stages identified by Sigmund Freud and Jean Piaget), reflect inwardly about how psycho-social development impacts a person's life journey, learn about the power of communication on self and others, and learn some techniques to improve and enhance quality of life.</p>	<p><b>1 session per month for 6 months</b></p> <p><b>Friday 8th October</b> <b>Friday 19th November</b> <b>Friday 10th December</b> <b>Friday 14th January</b> <b>Friday 18th February</b> <b>Friday 11th March</b> Zoom</p>	<p>Bronze. <b>Carer Only.</b></p> 
<p><b>Carers Connects</b> - join this Carers peer support group and meet other Carers, share experiences and provide guidance and support to other Carers. You will have opportunity to discuss your concerns if you choose or just listen to others.</p>	<p><b>Tuesday 12th October</b> 10am – 11am Zoom</p>	<p>Bronze. <b>Carer Only.</b></p> 
<p><b>Cwtch</b> - join us for a fabulous evening of fun and games! You'll have the opportunity to have a 'night in' with other Carers in a light-hearted atmosphere.</p>	<p><b>Tuesday 12th October</b> 6:30pm – 8pm Zoom</p>	<p>Bronze. <b>Carer Only.</b></p> 
<p><b>Sensory Workshop</b> - this workshop will focus on your child's sensory needs from an Occupational Therapist perspective. It will explore how some children may need more or less stimulation from the environment around them, and how this may be fulfilled in both the home and learning environment.</p>	<p><b>Tuesday 19th October</b> 10am – 12noon Zoom</p>	<p>Bronze. <b>Carer Only.</b> <b>Aimed at Parents/Carers who have children with additional needs</b></p> 

Event/Activity/Workshop	Venue, Date & Time	Information
<b>October 2021 (continued)</b>		
<p><b>Nutrition &amp; Sleep</b> - ever wondered if your diet may be having an impact on your ability to get a good night's sleep? Join Joanne Crovini, Nutritional therapist, as she discusses how small changes in diet can have a big impact on wellbeing.</p>	<p><b>Thursday 21st October</b> 10:30am – 12noon Zoom</p>	<p>Bronze. <b>Carer Only.</b></p> 
<p><b>'Tour of Terror'</b> – Halloween Special - Join in with other carers and a very well-informed historian on a terrorising tour of 'Old' Llantrisant, where you will learn about haunted homes, witchcraft, ghosts, the plague and few murders thrown in the mix! Not one to be missed!</p>	<p><b>Thursday 28th October</b> 7pm – 8pm Old Llantrisant</p>	<p>Silver <b>Carers &amp; Cared for (max 2 per family)</b> Age 18+</p> 
<b>November 2021</b>		
<p><b>Beccs' Book Buddies</b> - Do you have a favourite read? Would you like to engage with others who do too? Every month we'll meet virtually as a group over a cuppa to discuss a book of your choice; please note all books will be provided to each Carer. So, come and join this exclusive club; it's on a "read to know" basis!</p>	<p><b>Monday 1st November</b> 2pm-3pm Zoom</p>	<p>Bronze. <b>Carer Only.</b></p> 
<p><b>Chatterbox</b> - our regular coffee morning held on the 1st Tuesday of every month. Make your own cuppa and join us for some craft and a good old chat in this friendly informal group.</p>	<p><b>Tuesday 2nd November</b> 10am – 11:30am Zoom</p>	<p>Bronze. <b>Carer Only.</b></p> 
<p><b>Winter Wellbeing</b> – stress, anxiety, worry and guilt, are all normal human emotions. Join us on this workshop provided by the Carers Project Counsellor, where we will explore emotions, learn more about why we feel what we feel, and learn some techniques which may help us to better cope with managing our emotions.</p>	<p><b>Thursday 4th November</b> 10:30am-12:30pm Zoom</p>	<p>Bronze. <b>Carer Only.</b></p> 
<p><b>Carers Connects</b> - join this Carers peer support group and meet other Carers, share experiences and provide guidance and support to other Carers. You will have opportunity to discuss your concerns if you choose or just listen to others.</p>	<p><b>Tuesday 9th November</b> 10am – 11am Zoom</p>	<p>Bronze. <b>Carer Only.</b></p> 

Event/Activity/Workshop	Venue, Date & Time	Information
<b>November 2021 (Continued)</b>		
<p><b>Cwtch</b> - join us for a fabulous evening of fun and games! You'll have the opportunity to have a 'night in' with other Carers in a light-hearted atmosphere.</p>	<p><b>Tuesday 9th November</b> 6:30pm – 8pm Zoom</p>	<p>Bronze. <b>Carer Only.</b></p> 
<p><b>Confection Perfection – Chocolate Making</b> - Join in the ultimate Chocolate Challenge for an online, live streamed workshop. Our energetic Chocolatier will challenge you and other carers to create the most outrageous, most professional, and most crazy-flavoured fresh cream truffles. Our Chocolatier teaches everyone how to mix their ganache, pipe like a pro and how to dip and decorate their truffles using techniques such as marbling and caging. Everyone will be well on their way to creating wildly fun chocolates that also taste incredible! All equipment and ingredients to be supplied to each Carer a few days before the event.</p>	<p><b>Wednesday 10th November</b> 10:30am-12noon Zoom</p>	<p>Gold. <b>Carer Only.</b></p> 
<p><b>Escape Rooms – Mansion Impossible</b> - join us for a fun filled virtual escape room. Working in a team, you will need to solve a series of puzzles to escape! - "Geoff the ghost has been stuck in this mansion for many years, never being able to solve the mystery of what is keeping him inside. You have entered the mansion yourself and find that you too are now stuck and need to solve the puzzles and escape the mansion before midnight!</p> <p>Explore the rooms within the mansion, piecing together the pieces of the mystery in this fantastic &amp; fun, family adventure!"</p>	<p><b>Tuesday 16th November</b> 10:30am – 12noon Zoom</p>	<p>Silver. <b>Carer Only.</b></p> 
<p><b>Escape Rooms – Who Shot the Sheriff</b> – join us for a fun filled virtual who- dunnit, working in a team to find out 'Who Shot the Sheriff' - "Needletown is one of the few beacons of law, order, and justice out in the Wild West, all thanks to the friendly neighbourhood sheriff. Or, so you thought. Because he's just been shot. Now you have to prove your own innocence by trackin' down the real outlaw, before he gets you next. After all, this town ain't gunna be big enough for the both of you".</p>	<p><b>Wednesday 17th November</b> 10:30am – 12noon Zoom</p>	<p>Silver. <b>Carer Only.</b></p> 

Event/Activity/Workshop	Venue, Date & Time	Information
<b>November 2021 (Continued)</b>		
<p><b>Busy with Becs @Christmas</b> - join our Becs for some Christmas inspired themed crafting and an opportunity to expand those creative fingers and minds! All craft items will be provided beforehand.</p>	<p><b>Tuesday 23rd November</b> 10am – 12noon Zoom</p>	<p>Gold. <b>Carer Only.</b></p> 
<p><b>Carers Rights Day – Special Educational Needs Transition Workshop</b> - Does your child / the person you care for have SEN? Are they approaching their 16th / 17th Birthday? Are they about to leave School or are looking for support around the next stage of their lives? If so, then this could be the workshop for you! On this year's 'Carers Rights Day' we are very fortunate to be joined by Abigail Jennings, RCT Transition Worker, who you can put your questions to for support and guidance regarding services, schemes and everything in between, including travel training to assist young people into adulthood.</p>	<p><b>Thursday 25th November</b> 10:30am – 12noon Zoom</p>	<p>Bronze. <b>Carer Only.</b> <b>Suitable for Parents/Carers with children age 16-19.</b></p> 
<b>December 2021</b>		
<p><b>Come Dine with Claire @ Christmas</b> - Christmas is nearly here and it can mean only one thing – it's time to cook up our festive favourites. Join Claire and cook up a creative treat for you and your family right from your own kitchen. Step aside Nigella, Gordon, Jamie – RCT Carers are moving in! All ingredients will be provided.</p>	<p><b>Wednesday 1st December</b> 11am – 1pm Zoom</p>	<p>Gold. <b>Carer Only.</b></p> 
<p><b>Becs' Book Buddies</b> - Do you have a favourite read? Would you like to engage with others who do too? Every month we'll meet virtually as a group over a cuppa to discuss a book of your choice; please note all books will be provided to each Carer. So, come and join this exclusive club; it's on a "read to know" basis!</p>	<p><b>Monday 6th December</b> 2pm-3pm Zoom</p>	<p>Bronze. <b>Carer Only.</b></p> 
<p><b>Chatterbox</b> - our regular coffee morning held on the 1st Tuesday of every month. Make your own cuppa and join us for some craft and a good old chat in this friendly informal group.</p>	<p><b>Tuesday 7th December</b> 10am – 11:30am Zoom</p>	<p>Bronze. <b>Carer Only.</b></p> 

Event/Activity/Workshop	Venue, Date & Time	Information
<b>December 2021 (Continued)</b>		
<b>Carers Connects</b> - join this Carers peer support group and meet other Carers, share experiences and provide guidance and support to other Carers. You will have opportunity to discuss your concerns if you choose or just listen to others.	<b>Tuesday 14th December</b> 10am – 11am Zoom	Bronze. <b>Carer Only.</b> 
<b>Cwtch</b> - join us for a fabulous evening of fun and games! You'll have the opportunity to have a 'night in' with other Carers in a light-hearted atmosphere.	<b>Tuesday 14th December</b> 6:30pm – 8pm Zoom	Bronze. <b>Carer Only.</b> 
<b>Carol Singing</b> - Tis the season to be jolly', so join us for some family friendly carol singing. We will cover all the greats, as well as a few festive fun songs.	<b>Friday 17th December</b> 6:30pm onwards Ynysyngharad Park (Ponty Park)	Bronze. <b>Carer &amp; their families.</b> 
<b>January 2022</b>		
<b>Chatterbox</b> - our regular coffee morning held on the 1st Tuesday of every month. Make your own cuppa and join us for some craft and a good old chat in this friendly informal group.	<b>Tuesday 4th January</b> 10am – 11:30am Zoom	Bronze. <b>Carer Only.</b> 
<b>Carers Connects</b> - join this Carers peer support group and meet other Carers, share experiences and provide guidance and support to other Carers. You will have opportunity to discuss your concerns if you choose or just listen to others.	<b>Tuesday 11th January</b> 10am – 11am Zoom	Bronze. <b>Carer Only.</b> 
<b>Cwtch</b> - join us for a fabulous evening of fun and games! You'll have the opportunity to have a 'night in' with other Carers in a light-hearted atmosphere.	<b>Tuesday 11th January</b> 6:30pm – 8pm Zoom	Bronze. <b>Carer Only.</b> 
<b>Nutrition &amp; Weight Management</b> - let's talk menopause...gaining weight when nothing about your diet and lifestyle has changed can be frustrating, this can be a familiar story during menopause. Join Joanne Crovini, nutritional therapist as she explains how to tackle it.	<b>Thursday 13th January</b> 10:30am – 12noon Zoom	Bronze. <b>Carer Only.</b> 
<b>Lifestyle with Lynds</b> – New Year, New You! Join Lyndsey on this monthly challenge 'steps for the soul'. Throughout the month you will set your own goals and be part of a group that will motivate and encourage you to get out and get active. Have some fabulous fun, meet new people, and make new friends along the way.	<b>Monday 17th January</b> 10:30am – 11:30am Zoom	Bronze. <b>Carer Only.</b> 