

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2016 – 2017**

**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

**5th OCTOBER 2016**

**YOUNG CARERS**  
**ANNUAL REPORT 2016**

**REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S  
SERVICES**

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**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

The purpose of the report is to update members on RCT Young Carer's Service and Annual Report 2015-16.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Corporate Parenting Board note the contents of the attached report and the work undertaken by the Young Carers Service.

**3. BACKGROUND**

The work of the Young Carers Service is led by the 5 key aims of the RCT Carers Strategy Action Plan:

Identify and recognise carers of all ages

Provide information and training to carers of all ages

Ensure carers of all ages have a voice

Ensure access to carers' assessments

Deliver quality services for carers of all ages

#### **4. CURRENT SITUATION**

There is positive work being undertaken within the Young Carers service which is evidenced within the report.

98% of Young Carer's Assessments were completed and services provided

Of the 82 Young Carers assessed in 2015-2016, 45 were referred onto the Young Carers project (Action for Children) and 34 are actively engaged. 37 Young Carers received individual or family support from the service and were then signposted to other appropriate services.

240 young carers are currently known to the service and receive information and support.

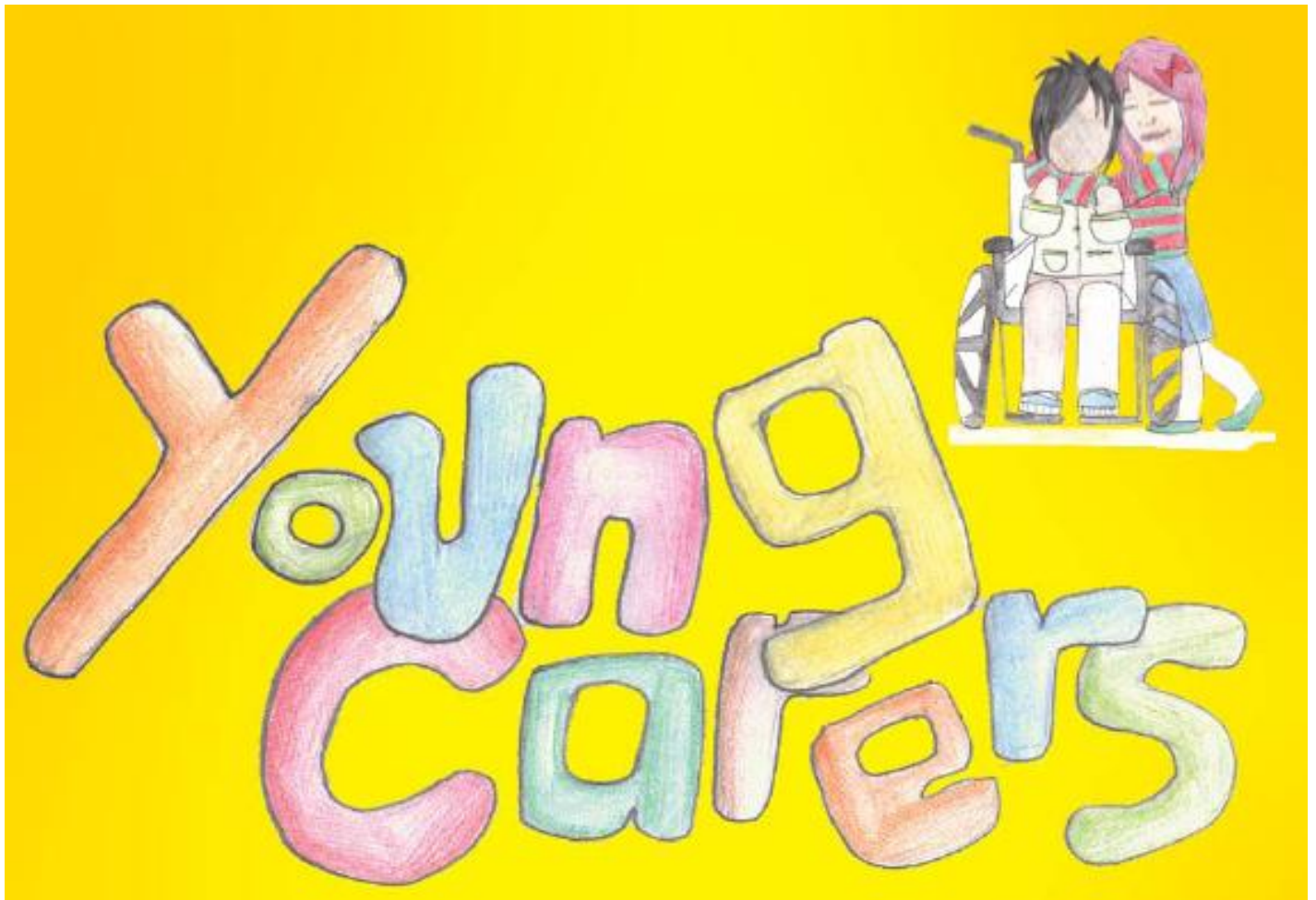
Due to the focus on raising awareness in schools through the establishment of a Carers Measure Education Co-ordinator and the Schools Award pilot programme, referrals from education increased from 5% in 2013-14 to 15% in 2015-16.

96 referrals for young adult carers have been received by the service in 2015-16. 30 new referrals were received for Young Adult Carers, a 50% increase on last year..

In terms of young carers "having a voice" and making decisions, 9 young carers were trained to become Young Commissioners and were instrumental in re-commissioning the young carers project; young adult carers regularly meet as part of CASE to lead the work of the Young Adult Carer aspect of the service; the Schools Award was developed as a direct result of young carers highlighting the need for schools to improve the support they provide young carers.

Young and Young Adult Carers have been involved in consultations regarding the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act and their views have fed into the development of the new Information, Advice and Assistance Service.

The young carers service has also been instrumental in building working partnerships with services and departments across RCT to ensure that young carers are able to access their services.



**RCT Young Carer's Service**  
(Supporting carers aged 0-25 years)

**Annual Report**  
**2015-16**



**“A young carer takes responsibility for someone who is ill, disabled, elderly, experiencing mental distress or affected by substance use, or has *substantial* responsibility for caring for a sibling.**

A young carer could be from any family and is under 25. They may be providing all of the care or helping someone else provide care.

The care they provide is not only the things you see-like changing bandages, cooking, cleaning or helping someone to use the toilet or have a wash-but also things you can't see, such as how the young carer feels or thinks because of their caring role.”

**Our aim is to promote and improve the health and well-being of young carers and their families by**

- **Preventing and protecting young people from carrying out excessive and inappropriate caring roles *and***
- **Preventing the continuation of inappropriate caring**



The Young Carer's Service recognises that young carers have varied needs and aims to offer a range of support.

We do not wish to create dependency on our service; therefore we aim to support a young carer *through* our service, ensuring that individual aims and objectives have been met, so they can move on from the service and feel able to integrate into mainstream provision.

### **Census figures and local stats:**

According to the Census (2011) there has been a 15% increase in the number of young carers (aged 0-24) across RCT since the 2001 Census.

The Census (2011) identified **2509** carers aged 0 - 24 years in RCT. 13% of these are carrying out a staggering 50 hours or more unpaid care a week.

However, a recent BBC survey found that 1 in 12 school children have some caring responsibilities. If the survey reflects the UK as a whole, potentially there are 700,000 young carers in the UK and **over 4000 in RCT**.

Between February 2008 - March 2016, **838 referrals** have been received by the service.

Of those, **632** have received a Young Carers Assessment & support and **33** (age 18+) have received a Carers Assessment.

This data illustrates that there are still a huge number of Young & Young Adult Carers in RCT not receiving the support they are entitled to.

## The Rhondda Cynon Taf Young Carer's Service consists of:

- The **Young Carers Assessment & Development Worker**  
(based within Children's services)

Responsible for strategic developments and reports relating to Young Carers/Young Adult Carers and carrying out Young Carers assessments

- The **Young Carers Support Worker**  
(based within Children's Services)

Responsible for developing the RCT Schools Award, carrying out young carers assessments and individual intensive support



- The **Young Adult Carer Development Worker**  
(based within Children's Services - only funded until March 2017)

Responsible for developing a service to support Young Adult Carers (18-25 yr olds) as they transition to Adult Carers and carrying out Carers Assessments

- The **RCT Young Carers Project** – Action For Children

The Local Authority commissions the project to support Young Carers needing ongoing support and intervention. The project provides social opportunities for Young Carers as well as individual support and workshops on a range of issues and topics.

***This report will only make brief reference to the work of this project as they produce their own report***



### **Combining the Action Plans of the RCT Carers and Young Carer's Strategies**

The Young Carers Service has developed over the last few years and now provides a service to young carers up to 25 years of age. The service also sits within the wider Carers Support Project (for adult carers) and we work together to support carers of all ages within RCT. Therefore it was decided that the Carers Strategy and Young Carer's Strategy Action Plans would be amalgamated and redesigned to provide a plan that would deliver quality services for carers of all ages living in RCT. This plan has been produced and covers the period 2014 - 2016 when the new 'Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act' will come into force and a new strategy and plan will need to be developed. A new strategy group has been formed with representatives from a range of organisations and LA departments that meet quarterly to review the plan.

The combined action plan contains 5 key aims that align with the aims of the (Carers Measure) Cwm Taf Information and Consultation for Carers Action Plan :

- Ensure access to carers' assessments
- Identify and recognise carers of all ages
- Provide information and training to carers of all ages
- Ensure carers of all ages have a voice
- Deliver quality services for carers of all ages

The following pages use these aims to illustrate the work of the service 2015/16

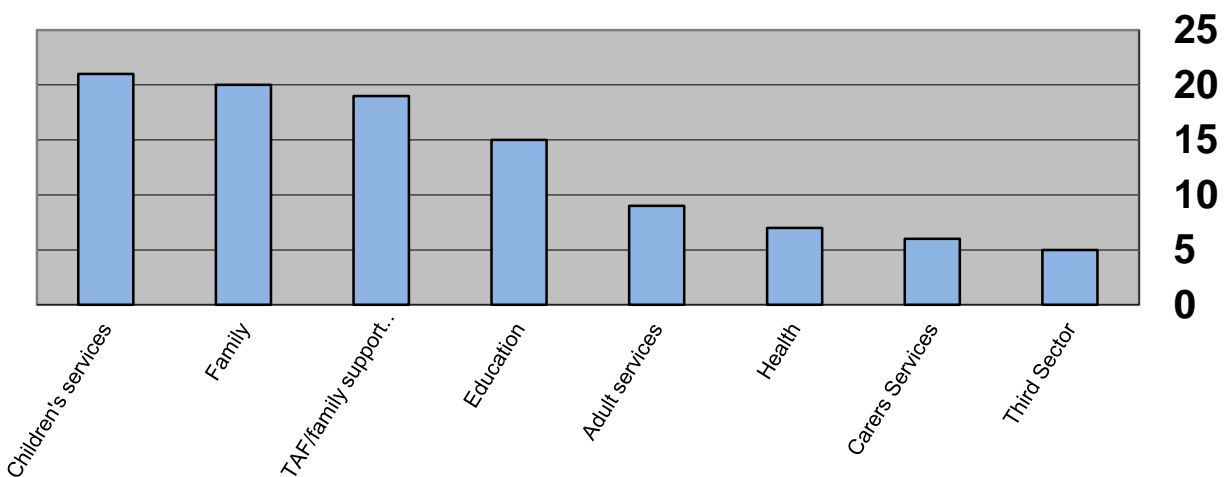
## Aim 1. Ensure access to Carers Assessments

All contacts and enquiries for the service are received by the Assessment & Development worker, apart from referrals for 18-25 year olds which go directly to the Young adult carer worker.

### Young Carers

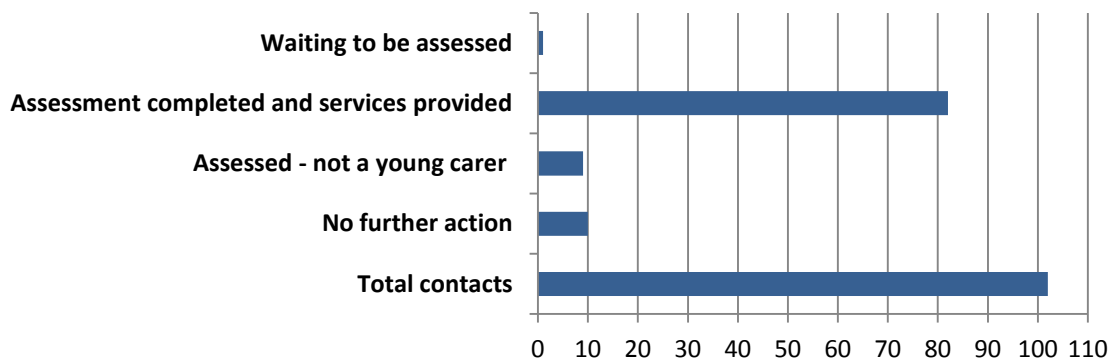
**Data to illustrate contacts and assessments for Young Carers (0-18 years) received for 2015-16**

**Source of contacts 2015-16 TOTAL = 102**



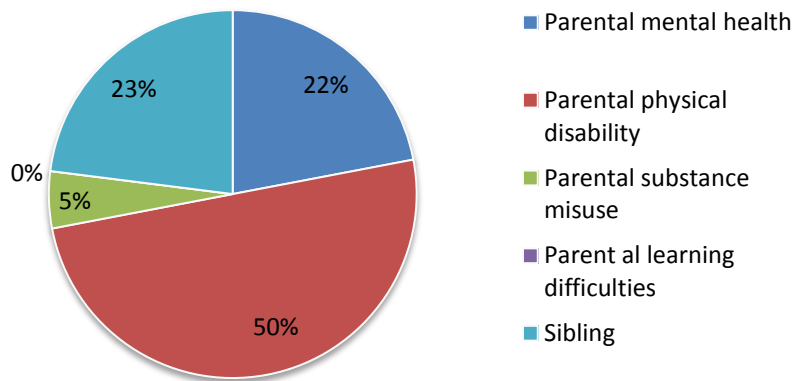
- ✓ 50% increase in referrals from Education
- ✓ 75% increase in referrals from Health
- ✓ 100% increase in referrals from Adult Services
- ✓ 140% increase in referrals from TAF/family support services

### **Result of Contacts**



- 98% of Young Carer's Assessments completed and services provided (PI submitted to Welsh Government)
- **240 young carers are currently known to the young carers service and receive information/support**

**Category of person cared for from 82 assessments completed 2015-16:**



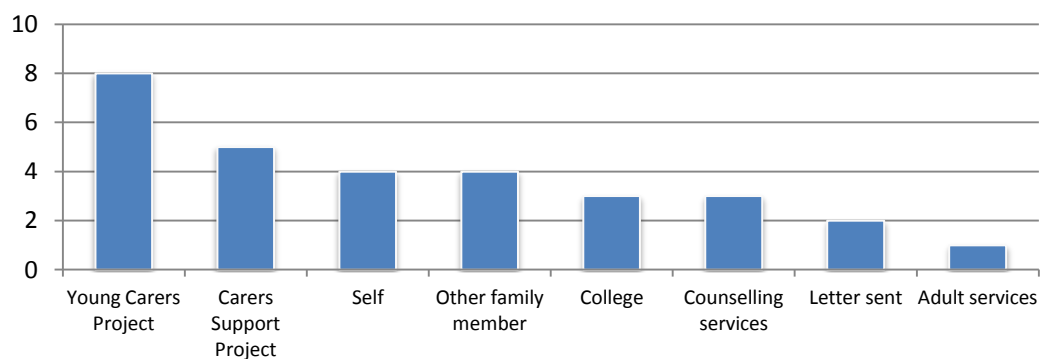
***Of the 82 young carers assessed during 2015-16,***

- *45 were then referred onto the Young Carers Project (Action For Children).  
34 are actively engaged  
11 didn't engage or moved out of area*
- *The remaining 37 received individual or family support from our service and either then decided they didn't need ongoing support or were referred on to other appropriate services*

**Young Adult Carers**

**Data to illustrate referrals and assessments for Young Adult Carers (18-25 years) received for 2015-16**

**Source of referrals**



- 30 Referrals received for YACs - **50% increase** on last year
- 13 Carers Assessments carried out during 2015-16
- Of the 30 referrals received this year, 14 were NEET, 14 were attending college and 2 were in employment
- The YAC development worker is actively supporting 50 Young Adult Carers
- 96 referrals for Young Adult Carers have been received by the service to date

- As previously illustrated, **95 Young & Young Adult Carers** have received an **assessment of their needs** this year. The assessment is a chance for the young people and their families to talk about their situation, what they enjoy about it and what they find difficult. The assessment looks at the needs of the whole family and covers issues such as dealing with medication, manual handling, and coping with parent's fluctuating mental health. It is also a time for the young people to consider their wishes in relation to employment, training, education and leisure opportunities and to discuss the barriers they feel they are facing. Some assessments can take a number of visits and 1-1 time to complete as it takes time to build a relationship with the young person.
- Following the assessment a plan is put together with the young person and other family members, if appropriate, to address the identified needs.
- The follow-up work often involves a lot of joint working with teams in adult services as well as other support organisations to ensure the young carer isn't carrying out inappropriate levels of care and has a choice about the care they want to continue to provide.

- ✓ Capacity and the resilience of the service was increased this year as a result of training the YAC worker to be able to complete young carer assessments while the support worker was on maternity leave.
- ✓ Notable increases in overall number of referrals for both Young & Young Adult Carers
- ✓ A significant amount of work has taken place, due to the Carers Measure, to raise awareness of Carers within Health, Education and many teams within Social Services. It would appear that this has had a positive effect on the number of carers identified.

**So What Next?** Plans for 2016-17:

- **Implement the new SSWBA and adopt new ways of working, to include setting up a review system**
- **To sustain the increased resilience of the service, funding for the YAC post needs to be secured post March 2017**
- **Aim to reduce the number of NEET Young adult carers by identifying training and employment opportunities and working with the new Communities For Work and SEET service**



## Aim 2. Identify and Recognise Carers of all ages

The key aspects of this aim are raising awareness of young carers/young adult carers among professionals and the public and promoting their needs and rights as carers.



To take forward the work initiated in schools last year, the Young Carers Support Worker took on the task of developing and piloting the **RCT Young Carers Schools Award.**

The Schools Award will create a uniformed approach across RCT and will ensure that good practice is taking place in all schools in relation to young carers and their needs. Six schools have been involved in the pilot project this year and by the end of the year 5 of the 6 schools had achieved the Bronze level of the Award. Feedback from the Award has been so positive that Coleg Morgannwg decided that they wanted to take part and so the award has been adapted for the college campuses.

The Aberdare campus was presented with the Bronze Award at the Carers Champion Conference in March. At the conference, a group of young carers also had the opportunity to perform one of the songs that will feature in the Young Carers Musical



### YOUNG CARERS COUNT!

To celebrate the start of Carers Week, the Young Carers Service held a recognition evening to recognise the support that young carers and young adult carers provide their families. It was also an opportunity to showcase their talents and highlight their achievements during the past year. Some carers were brave enough to perform on the night and we were treated to a piano solo, gymnastics display, solo and group singing. Awards were presented for inspirational carers, educational



achievement, caring whilst overcoming personal difficulties and many more.

It was a showcase of the young carers and young adult carers personal, social and educational achievements and a chance for them to come together, with their special guests, for an evening of fun and recognition.

Working with the wider Carers Support Project we have:

- Attended events and open days including the Big Welsh Bite, RCT Homes fun day and Freshers Days at the 3 college campuses
- Updated the RCT Carers webpages and written pieces for 'Carers News'
- Included monthly updates in the 'Carers Matter' E-Bulletin
- Ensured that Young Carers and Young Adult Carers were included in all training sessions for Carers Champions and other professionals. This included using young carers situations as case studies, showing their digital stories and inviting them to speak/perform to share their stories
- Taken part in the Young Carers Awareness Day in January, organised by Carers Trust

- ✓ We have continued to see the positive effects from the Carers Champion and Schools Award work. The percentage of referrals received from Education has risen from

**5% in 2013-14 to 15% in 2015-16**

As a result of raising awareness among the public, we have also continued to see an increase in referrals received directly from families from

**9% in 2013-14 to 20% in 2015-16**

**So What Next?** Plans for 2016-17:

- **Begin to roll out the Schools Award to all Comprehensive Schools in RCT and pilot a version with a Primary School**
- **Support the 3 College campuses to achieve the College Award**
- **Take forward the development of the Cwm Taf Carers DVD, working with Digichemistry Studios, involving carers of all ages**
- **Perform the Carers Musical at The Coliseum as part of Carers Week**
- **Hold the second 'Young Carers Count' event to celebrate Carers Right Day 2016**

### Aim 3. Provide information and training to Carers of all ages

Following the success of last year's residential, we organised a **'Taking Care of Me Part 2' training residential**, thanks to funding from RCT Social Care Workforce Development Partnership via the Welsh Government training grant.

35 Young Carers & Young Adult Carers attended the 2-night residential and enjoyed a mix of workshops, training and positive well-being sessions including emergency first aid, safe use of social media, volunteering and wood art.



The Young Adult Carers have access to their own private Facebook group which the Development Worker updates regularly. The YACs are able to **access up to date information** on employment opportunities, training courses and other relevant information, in a format that they choose to use

The 9 **Young Commissioners** were trained to interview and score potential providers of the Young Carer's Project. They also received additional First Aid training and were recognised for their work at the Interlink Volunteering celebration. (this work will be discussed in more detail in Aim 4)

**Carers Champions** are key to disseminating information to professionals and then onto young carers themselves. Information regarding young carers and young adult carers is now included in all information packs and training sessions for Carers Champions as well as the monthly e-bulletins and annual conference.

The Young Adult Carer Development Worker has facilitated and supported **YACs to engage with training and employment opportunities** during the year. Some of the achievements include:

- 12 YACs took part in volunteering opportunities
- 4 YACs have been attending a course run by the 'Your Future First' initiative that aims to identify barriers to employment and training and build confidence and self esteem
- 1 YAC successfully completed an anger management course
- 1 YAC has been supported to access the NHS banking course
- 1 YAC has received support to return to her studies in college
- 3 YACs have gained employment

- ✓ Feedback following the residential was extremely positive with 88% of participants reporting increased confidence and 100% feeling they had a break from caring at home.
- ✓ 100% said they found some or all of the workshops useful and interesting
- ✓ 1 YAC has gained a diploma and is about to begin the next college course and says she *"wouldn't have done it if it wasn't for all the confidence the young carers service has given me all these years"*
- ✓ 240 YCs & YACs receive information throughout the year via the Carers Newsletter and additional information about family friendly events organised by the project

**So What Next?** Plans for 2016-17:

- **Develop a programme of training opportunities appropriate for sibling carers**
- **Investigate possibility of organising a rolling programme of training about specific conditions and issues for young carers e.g. Epilepsy, MS**
- **Work with other local partners to provide training opportunities for carers aged 16+**

## Aim 4. Ensure Carers of all ages have a voice

### Young Commissioners

At the beginning of the year we completed the process of commissioning the new Young Carers Project. The process began in 2014 when a group of 9 young carers were trained to become Young Commissioners and they gave a considerable amount of their time to the project. Their contribution was celebrated when they received certificates at the Volunteering Event organised by Interlink. This pioneering work is due to be recorded and shared as good practice by the Institute of Public Care, Oxford Brookes University. The Young Commissioners will now be involved in monitoring the new service.

### Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act

Young and Young Adult Carers have been involved in consultations regarding two aspects of the new Act. The young people and their families completed questionnaires to feed into the development of the new Information, Advice and Assistance service. They also completed online surveys to highlight the issues that affect them as carers in RCT and these have been used to develop the new joint Cwm Taf Carers Strategy, which will be launched in the next financial year.

Four Young Adult Carers attended a **'Time to be heard' residential**, organised by Carers Trust, to share their views about further education and other issues that are important to them at this stage in their lives. Two of these young people went on to attend a special 'hustings' prior to the recent Welsh Assembly elections. Carers Trust made a short video about the event, which includes interviews with RCT carers:

<https://carers.org/young-adult-carers-wales>

Young carers who attend the 6 schools taking part in the pilot **RCT Young Carers Schools Award** have been involved in evaluating the progress and outcomes achieved by each school, prior to any awards being made. They have also attended each award ceremony with representatives from their schools. Students studying at Coleg Morgannwg have been involved in adapting the Schools Award for Colleges and 2 students from the Aberdare campus spoke about the new award at the Carers Champion Conference.



### **CASE**

The Young Adult Carer Worker has been supporting a dedicated group of Young Adult Carers, known as **CASE**, to come together to make decisions about the service they receive. They decided that they wanted to be able to raise money that they could use for social activities and were supported to create a constitution and set up their own bank account. The group met regularly during the year to take forward fundraising ideas and to decide what training and social activities to organise for the following months. The Young Adult Carer Development Worker has been very involved in supporting this process and developing the group's skills and now plans to delegate more responsibility to the key members.

- ✓ Young and Young Adult Carers are actively involved in the development and evaluation of new service initiatives and wider policy consultations.

**So What Next?** Plans for 2016-17:

- **Work with carers of all ages to produce a short film that can be used to raise awareness of the difficulties that carers face day-to-day. We will take the lead on this Cwm Taf wide project**
- **Ensure the new Young Carers Project delivers a quality service to Young Carers in RCT by supporting the Young Commissioners to monitor and evaluate the project at the end of its first year**
- **Involve more Young and Young Adult Carers when rolling out and evaluating the Schools and College Award**

## Aim 5. Deliver quality services for Carers of all ages

Any additional development work not covered elsewhere in the report

- We again worked with **Crossroads Care Cwm Taf** to enable 40 young and young adult carers from RCT to meet up with young carers from Merthyr while visiting the Harry Potter Studios in London and Thorpe Park. These were both amazing experiences for all the young people who had the opportunity to attend.
- We have been continuing our excellent joint working initiative with the **STARS** programme within Leisure Services and last year provided 12 days of activities for Young Carers (through the Young Carers Project) and Young Adult Carers with activities ranging from Horse Riding to an activity-filled residential. The activities enabled the carers to try new physical activities whilst helping to build confidence and self-esteem.



- In response to requests from parents and siblings of children with additional needs, we organised an 'Autism Friendly' cinema day in partnership with **Cultural Services**. Over 200 people attended the screening of Inside Out after taking part in an arts & crafts session beforehand. Feedback has been extremely positive with one parent commenting "I would never have tried taking her to the cinema before, but it's been great!"
- We also worked with **Cultural Services** to build on the successful song-writing and recording project completed last year. We decided to use the songs to create a musical that would be based around young carers and the issues they face. During the 'Taking Care of Me 2' residential, the young carers started working on the script and dance routines and it is intended to perform the musical at the Coliseum as part of Carers Week 2016
- Carers of all ages have stressed how important it is for them to be able to take part in events with their families, where everyone is made to feel welcome and events are as inclusive as possible. To address this, we arranged a number of **family events** during the year, as part of the wider

Carers Project, such as a Vintage Family Fun Day, relaxed pantomime performance, and family activity day in Daerwynno Centre

- Working with the **Youth Engagement & Participation Service**, we have started to address some of the barriers that young carers face when accessing extra-curricular activities in their school and community. Funding has been used to pay for transport and staff time to ensure young carers can take part in social events and activities
- The **Young Adult Carer** Development Worker has supported the YACs to arrange 17 social events during the year. These are opportunities for young adults with caring responsibilities to get together and take part in activities that other young people take for granted. The YACs have also been utilising a private social media group to keep in touch with each other, offer support and celebrate achievements such as finding work or passing exams. The YAC worker also uses this social media group to post weekly updates of local job vacancies and training opportunities

- ✓ Through effective partnership working, Young and Young Adult Carers in RCT have been able to access a range of events, activities and services, with other carers, their families and within their wider communities.

**So What Next?** Plans for 2016-17:

- **Confirm future funding of YAC development worker post**
- **Continue our partnership working with Cultural Services and perform the Musical at the Coliseum to celebrate Carers Week and then take the Musical to local schools and colleges to raise awareness of Carers**
- **Explore the currently unmet need of supporting siblings of children with additional needs, working with Team Around the Family and increasing capacity of the Parent Carer Development role**
- **Develop and implement a 'Volunteers Policy' to ensure sustainability of the service**
- **Explore potential of an ID card for Young/Young Adult Carers**

**For further information please contact:**

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