



Carers 4 Carers

Finding support through supporting each other

April 2016

Welcome to our April newsletter. Quite a lot has been happening and this month we welcome several guests to our meeting.

First of all, I have an invitation for you, extended by the Stratford Parkinson's group, but not restricted to those with Parkinson's. They are holding a community event in honour of the Queen's 90th Birthday on Sunday 15th May between 2 and 4 p.m. It is being held at the Cricket Club in Stratford. Parking is available; park your car then collect a free ticket from the Club and display on your dashboard. There will be refreshments and various activities. It should be fun and it will be lovely to see a good crowd there.

Last month Len Mackin's talk on provision of and access to mental health services in the area provoked a lot of discussion. As a result he will be returning to us for our April meeting and anyone who has experiences that they would like to relate to him will have an opportunity to do that in private.

This month I've looked at accessibility, not just for those we care for, but for carers as well. Remember, it's worth asking if carers are admitted free of charge, even if it's not advertised.

OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS

Carers 4 Carers' monthly meetings take place on the **fourth** Friday of the month. We meet at the Kineton Village Hall, Mill Street, Kineton, CV35 OLB between 10.30 and 12 noon. We always start with time for coffee and chat and then, if a speaker or workshop is scheduled, this will usually begin at about 11 o'clock. Come when you can and stay for as long as you are able.

22nd April— Ashley, the Independent Living Adviser from Stratford DC will be available to offer advice on various items of assistive technology and also energy efficiency in the

home. Len Mackin will be with us again (see above) and we will also have a return visit from Joelle Loew, research assistant with the e-Treasure Chest project. Anita has some new mini-treatments to tempt us with—a Shiatsu pressure point scalp massage and an Exquisite Eyes massage. The choice is yours, as always.

27th May—Kate Richmond from Age UK Warwickshire's Psychological Services will be with us. She will explain ways in which the service can help both carers and cared for.

Carers4Carers is part of the network of Omega Care for Life Meeting Point Support Groups

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The e-Treasure Chest (an online support toolkit) project has been galloping ahead and is now at a very exciting stage. The researchers have been very busy finding out the sort of information that carers need and the support that they want. As the project is geared towards older carers, they have also explored the way in which this group use technology and specifically the internet. The team, working with a web development company, now has a 'skeleton' of a website which can demonstrate the structure of the site and give carers an idea of what it can do and what carers can do with it.

At our meeting on 22nd April, Joelle, one of the research assistants, will be with us to give you the opportunity to explore this and give your reaction to it. The team take serious note of all items of feedback so this really is a valuable opportunity to shape something that will ultimately become an online resource for carers throughout the country.

FREE ACCESS FOR CARERS

As we move to the warmer months, some of us may be looking forward to some trips out.

An increasing number of organisations and attractions now offer free access to carers when accompanying those they care for. After all, without them, the person they care for wouldn't be able to go there. Here are just a few:

- The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.
- Compton Verney
- RSC
- English Heritage
- The National Trust has an 'Access for all Admit One Card' which is issued by their Supporter Service Centre. You can email them via the website or phone them on 01293 817634.

We already have a list on file. If you find somewhere that you think we might not know about, please let us know so that we can spread the word.

**SOMETIMES ALL YOU NEED IS A
BREAK, EVEN FROM THE PERSON
YOU LOVE THE MOST, IN ORDER
TO RENEW YOURSELF**

Robert Tew

DEMENTIA AND DISABLED FRIENDLY LOCAL BUSINESSES

Mary was recently telling me how she visited a local restaurant with her mother-in-law who suffers from Alzheimers. It was busy and Alice was showing signs of not being able to cope. Mary had a quick word with the management and it was just as if a magic wand had been waved. Alice was kept engaged by a member of staff while Mary ordered the food and the meal was on the table in a trice. What could have proved a very difficult visit was made so much more relaxed because the staff were trained and understood. (Names have been changed)

If you have a similar experience, please let us know so that we can make a list of such venues.