

## Information & Support for Unpaid Adult Carers



### The Mayor meets Derek Elliott winner of The North East of England Marsh Award for Carers 2016

0191 4900121 [enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com](mailto:enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com)

[www.gatesheadcarers.com](http://www.gatesheadcarers.com)

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*Crichton*  
Wills • Trusts • Probate



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**Do you have a current Will?  
Do you have a Lasting Power of Attorney?  
Have you protected your assets so they pass  
to your loved ones and not to the  
Government (e.g. Inheritance Tax, Care Fees)?**

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**Don't leave things to chance.  
Protect your loved ones and put your affairs  
in order before it's too late!**

**We do home visits as a matter of course  
so no need to come to us as we come to you!**

**£100 for a single Will (simple) or £150 for mirror Wills (simple)**

**Lasting Power of Attorney - £250 for 1 or £350 for 2**

*(This price does not include the registration fee which is a maximum of £110 per LPA  
but you may be able to apply for a reduction based on your income)*

**For further information or to book an appointment in the  
comfort of your own home please contact:**

**Julie McAlpine | Tel: 0191 432 6860**

**or email: [jsm@crichtonwtp.co.uk](mailto:jsm@crichtonwtp.co.uk) [www.crichtonwtp.co.uk](http://www.crichtonwtp.co.uk)**

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**DATE FOR THE DIARY!**  
AGM  
Friday 25th November  
St. Joseph Centre  
High Street West  
Gateshead

**Advertisements:** Crichton WTP (pages 2, 7), Healthwatch (pages 14, 23)  
**Front cover photo:** Carer Derek Elliott welcome the Mayor of Gateshead to our Party in the Park 2016.  
**Inside right photos:** Carers enjoy getting involved in our short break activities, events and volunteering opportunities.

# Welcome

Hello everyone,

Welcome to our latest newsletter which is in our new A5 format. I hope you all enjoy the new look. I'd like to thank everyone who responded to the request we made in our last edition for feedback on the newsletter. Your comments and suggestions were really valuable in helping us to decide how we could reduce printing and distribution costs and retain the content that you found most useful. The new design should save us around £2500 per year.



We have some staffing changes which I would like to tell you about. Katalin Bartos is our new Employer Engagement Officer. She joined the team at the beginning of August in what is a key role for us in developing our work with employers. One in five carers have to give up work in order to provide the care and support a loved one needs. We believe this is too many. Employers can retain staff with a caring role often by agreeing to minor adjustments to their working practices like offering Flexible Working or providing a private space for employees with a caring role to telephone the cared for person. Katalin will be engaging with employers across Gateshead to support them to become 'carer friendly employers'. Cortney Harding has been appointed to develop a new Befriending Service for carers who are feeling lonely and have little contact with other people because of the demands of their caring role. This is an exciting new initiative which is funded as a pilot programme by Gateshead / Newcastle clinical commissioning group. You will find more information about this on page 10.

We have had some fantastic news about Derek Elliot, who has been awarded the North East of England Marsh Award for Carers. This is an award for carers who have contributed to supporting other carers in their community (e.g. through participating in their centres' / schemes' activities for instance). Derek has contributed greatly to the lives of carers in Gateshead through his huge contribution to our Carers allotment, his help at our events such as Party in the Park in Carers Week and through his willingness to help at publicity events and appearing on TV news programmes to increase the general public's understanding of the role of carers and carer support in Gateshead.

With best wishes

Steve Cowen - Chief Executive Officer





## Carers Rights Day

This year Carers Rights Day is taking place on Friday 25 November and to support the campaign we will once again be holding our Annual General Meeting on this day.

The nationally recognised day brings together organisations & individuals from around the UK to help carers in their local community know their rights and find out how to get support.

We will also be asking Gateshead employers to promote Carers Rights Day to working carers in our community by displaying our posters and leaflets around the workplace and sharing this information with staff.

If you would like to support Carers Rights Day please get in touch:

**Call 0191 4900121 or email [enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com](mailto:enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com)**

## AGM Event

Friday 25 November 2016  
11.00 am - 2.00 pm

Our Annual General Meeting will be held on Carers Rights Day and we hope that you will be able to join us to celebrate another successful year at GCA. This is a great opportunity for you to speak to key individuals and to hear from members of the board about progress and developments underway at GCA. It is also an opportunity to enjoy a tasty lunch on us!

**Join us to celebrate at**  
St. Joseph Centre, High Street West,  
Gateshead, NE8 1LX

**Please let us know if you wish to attend.**

**Call 0191 4900121 or email [enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com](mailto:enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com)**



## CONGRATULATIONS!

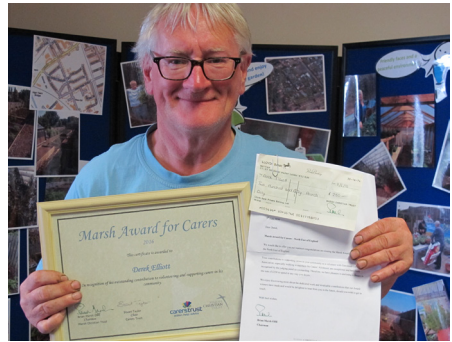
**Derek Elliott winner of The North East of England**

**Marsh Award for Carers 2016**

This prestigious award, by The Carers Trust, is in recognition of Derek's outstanding contribution to volunteering and supporting carers in his community. Derek was presented with his framed certificate along with a cheque for £250 by our Chief Executive, Steve Cowen, at our volunteer lunch held in the summer (pictured on the right).

Derek has been and continues to be instrumental in nurturing and developing our Community Allotment Garden and this has been duly recognised by the judging panel as outstanding.

Derek was also congratulated by The Mayor of Gateshead, Councillor Allison Ilderton-Thompson, at our Carers Week 'Party in the Park' summer celebration held in Saltwell Park.



**Carers are always welcome at our allotment which is situated at Plot 42, Sandown Allotments, Arkle Street, Gateshead, NE8 4YH. For more information and to find out about volunteering please contact Laura Ratcliffe [laura.ratcliffe@gatesheadcarers.com](mailto:laura.ratcliffe@gatesheadcarers.com)**





## Question:

**My mum has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's & the bank are threatening to freeze her bank account. Help! Mum wants me and my brother to take over. What do we need to do?**

## Answer:

Providing your mum still has capacity to do a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) I would suggest that you do this as soon as possible. This is a legal document which allows the 'donor' (your mum) to appoint one or more people known as 'attorneys' to manage her financial affairs if she lacks the capacity to do so herself. However, if your mum no longer has the mental capacity to create a LPA then the process becomes a lot more complicated, time consuming and expensive. I am more than happy to discuss this in further detail if anyone is in this situation.

## Question:

**My husband has been in a care home for the past few years. I now have a terminal illness and I am concerned that when I pass away I wish to leave my assets to my children who have cared for me rather than my husband. My house is owned 'jointly' with my husband.**

## Answer:

You will need to make a Will which stipulates who you wish to inherit your estate. If you own any assets 'jointly' with your husband, then these assets will automatically pass to your husband on your death. You can sever the tenancy on your house so you own it as 'tenants in common' rather than jointly and this will then enable you to leave your half to your children in your Will.

If anyone has any queries in relation to any of the issues raised above or would like to submit any questions to be answered in future newsletters, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Please contact Julie McAlpine Tel 0191 432 6860  
[jsm@crichtonwtp.co.uk](mailto:jsm@crichtonwtp.co.uk) [www.crichtonwtp.co.uk](http://www.crichtonwtp.co.uk)



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Regulated by the Society of Will Writers & Estate Planning Practitioners

## Party in the Park

Carers Week 2016 was an exciting time for us as we delivered a range of fun & informative events to raise awareness of carers and appropriate support services. Throughout the week we ran an information stand at the Civic Centre, Gateshead as well as running specific 1-2-1 sessions at Sainsbury's Team Valley.

The weather was kind to us during our Party in the Park event held on Wednesday 6 June when we played host to over forty local and national organisations who came together in Saltwell Park. The event, attended by the Mayor of Gateshead - Councillor Allison Ilderton-Thompson, also welcomed stars from Gateshead Football Club (including Adam Wrightson & Ben Clark) and talented musical stars from Gateshead Music Academy. Our Scruffs Dog Show was a huge hit again. This year it was sponsored by Oscar Pet Foods, who also helped to judge the event. The festival atmosphere made for a fantastic day and our stall holders generously donated raffle prizes helping us to raise over £250 for Gateshead Carers.

Our Community Allotment opened its gate to visitors on Thursday 7 June for its Open Event. A great chance for visitors to relax, enjoy refreshments and to find out about volunteering at our wonderful allotment; lovingly tended by Derek Elliott and other carers.



## Very special thanks

We have been privileged to receive such kind support from so many who donated time, skills, funds and prizes to help make this year's Carers Week so successful. We would like to give special thanks to the following individuals and organisations for their dedicated help and support but are very thankful to everyone!

### Funders, Donors, Contributors

Oscar Pet Foods  
Pets at Home, Metro Centre  
Gateshead Music Academy  
Gateshead College Community  
Volunteers  
Gateshead Football Academy  
Elementary Pilates  
Sainsbury's Team Valley  
Northumbria University film group  
Made in Tyne & Wear TV - Link:  
<https://youtu.be/Xq-opD8drSE>

All of our stall holders for booking a stall & who generously donated to our raffle

### Volunteers & Key Individuals

The Mayor of Gateshead  
Our Created by Carers group  
Derek Elliott  
June Gordon  
Photography group  
Peace of Mind





Our joint social media 'Thunderclap' campaign promoting Carers Week under the hashtag [#MyCommunityCares](#) achieved a social reach of 120,865.

# Volunteering

## 1 hour makes a difference!

**Volunteers play an essential part in making Gateshead Carers a successfully run charity by giving their time, talents, energy and enthusiasm.**

Volunteering your time can also help with personal development and developing your talents. We are keen to recruit volunteers to help us in our work to support carers and have a host of opportunities for you.

### Here are just some ways you can help:

**Groups/Training:** support our groups by sharing knowledge, experience & skills.

**Allotment:** help with the upkeep and maintenance of our lovely allotment. Let your 'green fingers' plant and tend!

**Fundraising:** help out at bag packs, sell raffle tickets, organise coffee mornings or give out collection tins - just a few ideas!

**Publicity/Networking:** share your 'carer story' to help others and raise awareness of issues surrounding a caring role.

**Events:** support us at our events, information stands & community fun days.

**Newsletter/Ad Hoc:** help with stuffing, labelling and packing envelopes for our newsletter mailing.

**If you are interested in getting involved and volunteering your time please contact Laura Ratcliffe on 0191 4900121.**

## BEFRIENDING

### One-to-one companionship and support for adult carers

**Our new FREE befriending service aims to match carers with a volunteer befriender who will visit the carer each week. Our Befriending Co-ordinator will introduce the carer to the befriender and monitor the friendship and level of support required.**

**Befrienders are volunteers from all walks of life, carefully selected, vetted and trained by GCA. We will try to ensure that the match is suitable and the befriender lives locally to the carer, shares similar interests or can introduce the carer to new skills or interests.**

**Although befrienders cannot offer formal advice or assist with personal care or domestic chores, they can provide companionship and attend local activities and meetings in the community together with the carer.**

### Would you like to know more?

**Want to train as a befriender?**

**Can you spare some time?**

**Want to reach out to help?**

Please contact Cortney Harding on 0191 4900121 or [cortney.harding@gatesheadcarers.com](mailto:cortney.harding@gatesheadcarers.com)

## Financial Wellbeing in a Caring Role

Here are some examples of how we have helped carers improve their financial wellbeing. Of course everyone's circumstances vary greatly and you will need an individual holistic assessment by one of our support workers to work out what is right for you.

### CASE STUDY

*The carer was a mother caring for her son who has both mental health and substance misuse problems. He had been living with his partner but the relationship broke down and he returned to live with his mother. He had been claiming Employment Support Allowance (ESA) whilst with his partner but this was stopped after one year as he had to claim an income related benefit but his partner's income was too excessive for the claim to be awarded. He had informed the DWP of the change in his circumstances, i.e. that he was now living with his mother, but the DWP refused at the start to reinstate payment of this benefit. We intervened on his behalf and completed a separate set of forms explaining the new circumstances. This second set of forms was then lost by the DWP. Eventually we had to contact an appropriate manager on behalf of this gentleman as he had now been without an income for a nine month period.*

**With this intervention his ESA claim was reinstated and he has been paid over £2000 in back payment alongside his now regular benefit payments.**

### CASE STUDY

This family were referred to us to help the male carer make a claim for Personal Independence Payment (PIP). He had applied several times in the past for this benefit but despite significant health problems, had been turned down each time. We completed a new PIP claim form and attended a face-to-face assessment with him. He was awarded a standard rate for both components of the benefit for a period of three years. His income was further increased as he was awarded further disability premiums that were added onto his Employment Support Allowance (ESA) claim.

**His income now has been increased by £720 each month as a result of our intervention on his behalf.**



**Contact us today.  
We are here to help you.  
Tel: 0191 4900121**

# Working Carers

## The Working Carers Team

We now have 4 staff members in the working carers' team; Mandy, Denise, Carly and Katalin. They all provide support to employees and employers on a variety of matters, and attend the drop-in and 1-2-1 appointments we arrange. Katalin is our new Employer Support Officer and will liaise with HR teams, and encourage employers to sign our 'Carer-Friendly Employer' Charter.

## Our Vision

- To increase employer awareness & understanding of the difficulties facing working carers on a day to day basis
- To enable carers to remain in employment
- To increase the support offered by employers to staff with caring roles



## Carer-Friendly Employer Charter

More employers have signed up to become Carer-friendly employers and we are pleased to announce that the following businesses have recently signed our Carer Friendly Charter.

*Legal Aid Agency  
Northumberland, Tyne & Wear NHS  
Foundation Trust  
Equality North East*

Carer-friendly Employers can benefit from free support including drop-ins, 1-2-1 appointments on-site, information and training sessions for their staff.

## Welcome to Katalin Bartos Employer Support Officer



I joined the team mid-July to replace Hannah in the Working Carer Project. I moved to the UK five years ago from Budapest and currently live in Newcastle. I studied Social Policy & Social Work and have years of experience in development work. I am a very active person and interested in many things. I love doing yoga and going for long walks. I cycle from spring to autumn, but I think I will have to build up my pedal force a bit to handle the uphill cycling in Gateshead to get to the office! My special goals for this year are to learn wall climbing and to do a handstand without help. I love reading books, news & recipes; cooking and baking.

### What is my role about?

The Working Carers Project aims to work with employers in our community to develop their understanding of the nature of challenges faced by carers and to identify employees in caring roles to support and enable them to stay in work. I will continue to establish partnerships with local businesses and provide on-going information, advice and support to them. Thanks to our project many employers in Gateshead are signing up to our "Carer-Friendly Employer' Charter and hosting drop-ins and information sessions and training for their staff.





## E-learning package to support employers and working carers

We are working with Northumbria University to develop a pilot e-learning package which will deliver bite-size learning modules for use by employers and working carers.

The modules will include memorable and informative issue based films; an interactive assessment tool and other relevant content. The project is due to be launched in the Autumn and the e-learning package will be freely accessible online.

The aims are to:

- Demonstrate the business case for employers supporting working carers
- Raise carer awareness amongst employers
- Outline the law in relation to working carers



### Please get in touch!

If you would like us to try to engage with your employer or have positive stories to share, please contact Katalin Bartos Tel: 0191 4900121 or [katalin.bartos@gatesheadcarers.com](mailto:katalin.bartos@gatesheadcarers.com)

## Dignity & Respect in a Caring Role

One of our working carers informed us he was having problems at work regarding his shift pattern since a new line manager got appointed to his team. He had previously been working a set shift pattern each week as this allowed him to manage caring for his Dad alongside work. The carer's line manager had informed him of a new rota which would mean working a shift pattern subject to constant changes. He tried to explain to the line manager why this wouldn't be feasible for him but was met with remarks which suggested the line manager wasn't very well informed in terms of the impact caring can have on an employee. The line manager had stated that they too would like to spend time with their parents which made him feel very invaluable as he had worked at the company for over twenty years.

**We assisted by writing a letter to his manager and HR department which outlined the client's caring responsibilities and the impact it had on him. We explained why it would be beneficial for him to remain on his current shift pattern and how this would help reduce his stress at work. We also stated how important having a part time job was for him, not only for financial gain but also for his well-being and sense of identity. The client informed us that after the letter was submitted and a meeting was held, he was allowed to stay on the shift pattern and this made him feel respected by the organisation and the employer had a much better understanding of the implications of caring alongside work.**

# News From Other Organisations



## Take in the Great Outdoors and join the Ability Trek 2016

**Date:** Wednesday 21 September  
**Time:** 11.00am finishing approx. 2.00pm  
**Start and Finish:** Swalwell Visitor Centre  
**Cost:** FREE!  
**Bus routes:** \*Go-North-East public transport bus nos. 45, 46, 46A, 47, 49, 49A

Carers and their 'cared for' are invited to join in the LiveWell Gateshead Ability Trek, an accessible walk for wheelchair users, people with disabilities and their carers, organised by Gateshead Council wellness coaches, LiveWell Gateshead and Walking for Health.

The route will be a looped circuit around the Derwent Walk, near Swalwell, approx. 3-4km. Transport can be arranged or there are buses that stop outside Blaydon Rugby Club\*, a short walk from the start point. Options are available for those only wishing to complete some of the walk. In the past the walk has attracted over 80 participants with people from different services and backgrounds taking part. The walk is not a run or competition and LiveWell staff are there to support people to finish no matter how long it takes.

**To book your place please contact Kate Lang, Sport, Lifestyle & Health Development Asst on 0191 4338112**



**Healthcare services** are services provided by e.g. hospitals, GP's, ambulance service, dentists, opticians, specific clinics and mental health services.

**Social care services** are services provided in the community e.g. respite care, home helps, care homes, facilities, adaptations and assessments.

You can contact us during office hours, via Facebook, Twitter, email, phone, pop in or come to one of our community locations (see events on website), or invite us to your group or activity session. Call Kim or Carole free on 0808 801 0382 for a chat and tell them your experiences of such services.

We cannot help with raising complaints but know someone who can. Give Victoria a call free on 0808 801 0382 and she can point you in the right direction.

If you're interested in becoming more involved in Healthwatch we have volunteer roles available too. Roles include becoming a Board member, Enter and View Representative and Mystery Shopper.

Visit our website <http://bit.ly/2b-1k5PP> or look under the GET INVOLVED tab or give Karen a call for an informal chat.

**Freephone 0808 801 0382**



## Carers Conference

Wednesday 28th September  
10 am – 3pm  
Marriot Hotel  
Metro Centre, Gateshead

Do you care for a  
person with a  
learning disability &  
live in Gateshead?



Come and join us to  
have your say on  
different topics, hear  
people's stories and get  
information from our  
Market Stalls

To book please contact:  
Maria/Sue/Helen on  
0191 433 2577/2659  
[commissioningteam@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:commissioningteam@gateshead.gov.uk)



ARTHRITIS CARE

## The Arthritis Care Gateshead

Branch meets on the first Monday of the month to support all people affected by arthritis. Come along to our friendly nights where we have a range of evenings with speakers, entertainers, monthly newsletter, quarterly magazine & a range of activities:

**Branch Night.** Support Group at the Civic Centre. First Monday of the Month 6.30 -8.45pm Next dates: 3 Oct, 7 Nov, 5 Dec

**Walking Group.** Easy walks (approx. 2 miles) suitable for all. Transport can be arranged. Contact the Walk Leader Arthur Coulson 0191 414 8535 or 07760 447574

**Outings.** Next outing 17 Sept to Teviot Smokery & Winter Gardens with afternoon Tea at Cross Keys Hotel Kelso.

**Zumba Gold Class.** Seated or Standing. Every Monday 11.30am at Wesley Methodist Church, Low Fell. Cost £3.50

**Hydrotherapy Swimming Group.** Whickham Villa, Millfield Rd. Wednesdays 11am-12 noon & Fridays 10-11am

**Rheumatology & Pain Management Support Group.** St Peter's Church, Kells Lane, Low Fell 10am-12 noon. With the QE & Bensham Hospitals Last Tuesday of the month. Next dates: 27 Sept, 25 Oct

**Drop-in Coffee Mornings.** Gateshead Central Library Coffee Shop, Prince Consort Rd. 10am-12 noon. Next dates: 12 Oct, 16 Nov.

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

For more information contact Allison on 0191 420 1302 or 07941 339 123 or email [allison64.w@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:allison64.w@blueyonder.co.uk)

# Employer Awareness Training

Our Carer Training Officer, Kelechi Dibie, answered a call by the HR Team at Tyne & Wear Fire & Rescue Regional Office at Washington to deliver our Employer Awareness Training.

What did they learn from the session & how will they use this?

- 90% of participants said they now feel more confident about addressing or responding to carer issues in their role
  - Better able to recognise who may be a carer
- Know where to access information and things they need to consider as an organisation
  - That the Care Act exists!



In their own words: What they enjoyed most about the session:

- "Interaction." • "The knowledge gained." •
- "The amount of information." • "Different scenarios." •
- "Very engaging delivery; trainer very knowledgeable." •

"Very informative."  
"We will look into carers in our organisation."  
"I will get in contact."



Building a work environment where carers are valued and supported begins with gaining some awareness about carers as part of any organisation's wider equality and diversity agenda. This brings lots of benefits for employers such as promoting the retention of experienced workers, reducing staff absences and increased savings on recruitment and retraining costs from losing skilled employees.

If you are an employer, business owner (large, medium or small) or part of a personnel team and wish to access our FREE 'Employer Carer Awareness Training', please contact our Training Officer at [enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com](mailto:enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com)

**Gateshead Carers**

Unlock the potential of working from home by selling on **ebay**

**BOOK YOUR FREE PLACE NOW!**

Join us for our 2-day eBay workshop aimed at carers who want to explore the idea of selling on eBay as either a part time or full time flexible alternative to traditional employment

**25 places only on each workshop**  
(first-come-first-served)

**Thursday: 13th & 20<sup>th</sup>**  
**October 2016**  
**10.00am - 1.00 pm**

**Attendees to bring their own laptops**

**TO BOOK YOUR PLACE call Admin on 0191 4900 121**  
**or [enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com](mailto:enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com)**

**Deadline for bookings a place: 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016**

**[www.gatesheadcarers.com](http://www.gatesheadcarers.com) | [f](https://www.facebook.com/GatesheadCarers) [t](https://twitter.com/GatesheadCarers) **@GatesheadCarers****  
John Haswell House, Gateshead, NE8 4DY | Tel: 0191 4900121 | [enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com](mailto:enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com)  
Charity Registration No.1118942. Company Registration No.6133161

# Short Breaks

- Art • Crafts • Gardening • Creative Writing • Digital Photography • Male Carer Club • Peer/Carer Support Club • LGBT Carer Support Club • BME Carer Support Clubs • The BILD Group.



Take a well earned break!

We have groups & activities for everyone.

Contact Laura Ratcliffe  
laura.ratcliffe@gatesheadcarers.com

## SOCIAL GROUP ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE

Sept - Dec 2016



### Caldew House Day Trip

**Tuesday 20 September**

*9.30am-5pm*

An opportunity to visit our very own short break property in Cumbria. Have a peek at the house itself and enjoy a local pub lunch. Transport and lunch (food only) included. Refundable deposit required.



### Musical Performance

**Friday 14 October**

*12.30-2.30pm*

Enjoy a musical performance by Gateshead Music Academy students, showcasing their musical abilities and talents. Buffet lunch and refreshments included.



### Gilsland Hall Day Trip

**Thursday 3rd November**

*10am-6.30pm*

Escape for a full day of entertainment, bingo, dancing and lunch. Entry, lunch, entertainment (not bingo) and transport included. Non-refundable contributions required.



### Christmas Meal

**Date yet to be arranged**

Celebrate the festive season with fellow carers at our Christmas Meal enjoyed at a local restaurant. Food only included. Non-refundable contributions required.



## Spa Treatment Days at Gateshead Carers

**Treat yourself to 30 minutes of 'me time' with one of our monthly Spa Treatment Days.**

For only £10 our qualified therapist can offer Aromatherapy, Sports or Indian Head Massage, Reflexology, Manicure, Pedicure or Facial.

**Monday 12th September, Monday 10th October, Monday 7th November  
Monday 5th December**

Call 0191 4900121 to book your appointment slot (between 9am-4pm)

## LGBT CARER SUPPORT GROUP ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE

### ShIPLEY Art Gallery

**Wednesday 12th October**

1.30-3.30 pm

A look round the North East's leading gallery of craft & design. Coffee and cake. Possible talk from a guide too.

### Vue Cinema Gateshead

**Wednesday 16th November**

2.00pm (or thereabouts)

A lucky dip trip to the local cinema – see what's on that afternoon!

### Christmas lunch

**Wednesday 14th December**

12.30pm-2.30pm

Venue to be confirmed - join us for our traditional pre- Christmas social.

**Veterans Group** If you are interested in hand-built models and their electrics or just want to socialise with fellow veterans, then our Veterans Group is perfect for you. For further information please contact Laura Ratcliffe or visit their new website [www.gatesheadveterancommunity.co.uk](http://www.gatesheadveterancommunity.co.uk)

## INTERESTED?

**If you would like to gain further information, express interest or book for any of the above activities please call 0191 4900121 and speak to Sandra, Jess or Laura. If you book for an activity, we will send a confirmation letter with full details (including meeting time, place etc.) in the two weeks before the event. Please note that where a deposit is required, your place will not be secured until this payment is received.**

# About Our LGBT Group

**We are proud to be the only carers association in our area that offer a group for lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgender (LGBT) carers and know how valuable the group is to everyone involved.**

We recently consulted carers about the future of the group and have had very positive feedback. People felt it was very important to continue the group as it provided an opportunity to meet others who understood what it was like to be a carer as well as being LGBT and to be able to discuss general and specific issues relevant to members.

**Some comments from carers include:**

**'The group gives carers and ex-carers something to look forward to, and share these concerns.'**

**'I have enjoyed meeting up with other LGBT members of Gateshead Carers. I think it's a good outlet to have, especially as there is no other kind in the area.'**

As a result we have arranged more activities for carers to get involved in. Paul Forster and Laura Ratcliffe are available to chat with anyone interested in attending the group but who may be a little anxious or shy about coming along.



**Paul Forster explains:**

*"The group is small and very informal. Everyone is very friendly and welcoming. Carers and ex-carers can share as they wish to about their lives but there is no pressure to discuss your situation. First and foremost the group is about having a break and taking your mind off any worries."*



Gateshead  
**Carers**



You don't need an idea...you just need a pen!

Get inspired and use your imagination at our fun and friendly writing group. We write stories and poetry with support from a professional writer. It's open to everyone and FREE to join.

Join our  
Happy Jotters  
writing group ...


10.30am-12.30pm on  
the last Thursday of the month

*"No matter where I go my pen and paper are always at the ready to capture a moment or idea. The class has given me confidence to record what I am thinking on to paper, and this I find gives me confidence."*

By Elizabeth (Carer)

## POETS CORNER

We would love to include your poems in our next issue so please do send them in or why not go along to the Happy Jotters group for inspiration!



I started getting involved with Gateshead Carers back in January 2016 after being referred to them by the 'Children and Young People's Mental Health' services in Gateshead, to offer me additional help to deal with a member of my family who is currently substance misusing (Alcohol). They also referred my Mam to them in 2015 so she could be offered extra support as well. When I started seeing the team at Gateshead Carers I saw my worker on a one-to-basis every 3 weeks to start discussing what has been going on, what to expect and just to get to know each other. It was really relaxing and I felt like I could talk about anything and it would be listened to. After a few one-to-one sessions we started meeting with my mam in a 3-way session so we could start working together as a team to help us through the responsibility of being a carer for an alcoholic.

It is great that Gateshead Carers have been able to offer us so much support, by providing us with both a personal support plan and a joint support plan. The support both myself and my Mam have received has helped us to come such a long way in supporting ourselves and each other and it has also helped to make our relationship as a mother and son so much stronger; to deal with and work together on many different things in our lives. I know that without the support from GCA I wouldn't have been able to cope with the stress I have been facing and I don't know what could have happened. The support they give can be used in so many different situations which is what is so great about it.

They also offer a range of carer training and support services and I have already attended a Stress Awareness Course run by the GCA Training Officer Kelechi, which has given me new ways to support myself when I am going through a stressful situation so that it doesn't knock me back too much.

When I first started with the carers I was worried that with work and other commitments I would be unable to do a lot with them, but I later found out they are so flexible with everything making sure as many people can take part whether they are in work or not, this is one of the many great things about Gateshead Carers. Through the carers I have also started getting involved in their regular Craft Groups which is great for meeting new people and also learning some fantastic new skills in the process. I am hoping to get more involved with them as time goes on and have already helped them with the Party in the Park in June for Carers week and the Crawcrook Festival. I am so grateful for the help, support and guidance the carers team have offered me and my Mam and would recommend anyone who needs that bit of extra support to contact them, you won't regret it!

**Jack (Carer)**

**Get in touch...**send your letters, stories & photos to:  
The Carer's Column, John Haswell House, 8-9 Gladstone Terrace,  
Gateshead, NE8 4DY or email: [enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com](mailto:enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com)

WIN A £10  
shopping Voucher!



## ...on Health and Social Care services in Gateshead

Come along to our Annual Event in November. Details will be made available on our website nearer the time [www.healthwatchgateshead.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchgateshead.co.uk) We want to hear what you have to say about local services to help influence positive changes for us all.

## ...on shaping Autism services in Gateshead

Autism is a life long condition that affects how a person communicates with, and relates to, other people. It also affects how they make sense of the world around them. Gateshead Council are reviewing the Gateshead All Age Autism Strategy 2014 / 17 and want to hear the voices of people with Autism and their Carers so they can aim to meet their needs. There are many ways to be involved. To find out more contact:

**Bernie Cowan, Valuing People Co-ordinator, Health & Social Care Commissioning & Quality Assurance, Gateshead Council, Civic Centre, Regent St, Gateshead, NE8 1HH**

**New Website** to be launched mid / end of September 2016. The new website will allow service users to leave comments and "rate" services via a 5 star rating system.

**Annual Report 2015/16** Find out what we have been doing to make sure peoples voices are heard in Gateshead <http://www.healthwatchgateshead.co.uk/>

**Reminder on signposting** If you have any questions or uncertainty on any health or social care issue please contact Healthwatch Gateshead.

## Changes to Mental Health Services in Gateshead

Mental health services in Gateshead are due to change following a major consultation by the Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group. As part of this decision it was recommended that the services provided by Northumberland, Tyne & Wear NHS Foundation Trust (NTW) will move from the Tranwell Unit at the QE site to alternatives across the region. To be clear the inpatient units based at QE Gateshead (Craggside Court & Sunnyside Unit) as well as community based mental health services for older people in Gateshead remain unaffected. The day hospital and Specialist Memory Service at Ellison Unit Bensham, and the Younger Persons Dementia Service at Woodside, Dunston Hill also remain unaffected. To read more about the CCG plan for mental health services contact Healthwatch Gateshead and ask for Phillip Kerr.

To find your local Healthwatch:

<http://www.healthwatch.co.uk/find-local-healthwatch>

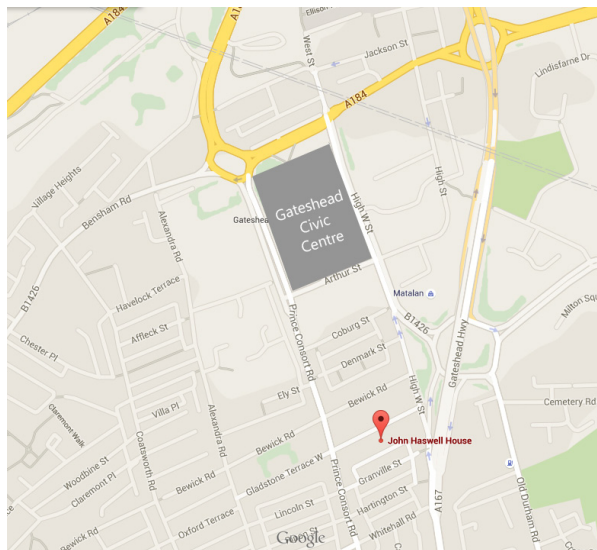
# Are you an unpaid carer?

A carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support. The reasons and causes of someone taking on caring responsibilities are varied but can include:

- Serious physical illness
- Long-term physical disability
- Learning difficulties
- Mental health problems
- Dementia
- Alcohol & substance misuse

## Get in touch...

**GET FREE  
HELP &  
SUPPORT  
TODAY!**



**Gateshead Carers  
John Haswell House  
8-9 Gladstone Terrace  
Gateshead  
Tyne & Wear  
NE8 4DY**

**Tel: 0191 4900121  
Fax: 0191 4900128**

Scan the QR code to visit  
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**0191 4900121 enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com**

**www.gatesheadcarers.com**

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