



# Carer Support Wiltshire

## Carers News - September 2020

[www.carersupportwiltshire.co.uk](http://www.carersupportwiltshire.co.uk)

### Connecting Carers befriending service will continue over coming months

Carers have been left feeling isolated and alone as a result of the pandemic, separated from family and friends and unable to attend their regular support groups and cafés.

It was for this reason that, 8 weeks ago, we vastly expanded our Talk and Support service, where volunteers call carers regularly, to check in on them, offer support or just have a chat. In that time, the number of volunteers involved has more than tripled to nearly 50 and over 170 carers have received regular and vitally important calls.

The Connecting Carers project is a three month funded project to extend and expand Talk and Support to include a virtual 'face-to-face' offering. Many carers have responded positively to the service, saying it has been helpful at a particularly difficult time and has helped them feel less isolated and given them a space to be sociable.

Carer Julie Weymouth from Bradford-on-Avon (pictured below) cares for her husband Paul following his stroke in 2013. She has been receiving the calls and said: "I have felt very alone and lockdown has not been easy. One day the phone rang and it was Sam. She saved my sanity then and helped me with a problem that I had been worrying about. Her phone call was perfect timing."

To register for the phone or face-to-face calls, please call us on 0800 181 4118 and ask to be referred to the service.



## Parent carer advice for returning to school

Children returning to school will bring with it a range of emotions, good and bad. Some of us will be understandably very concerned about the safety of our child and family. Others will be feeling relief that they now have the extra support and respite that school offers, and their children are returning to a predictable routine.

Advice that may be helpful for you has been issued by a range of organisations, including Wiltshire Council, which you can find links to [here](#). Wiltshire Council is also funding a new telephone support service for children, young people and parents/carers called On Your Mind, which is available 7 days a week and can help with a range of issues. Find out more at the [On Your Mind website](#).



## 78% of young carers more worried about the future since Coronavirus

Carers Trust has conducted a survey of young carers (aged 12 to 17) and young adult carers (aged 18 to 25) to find out how they have been affected by Coronavirus.

The results are concerning and show significant increases in the amount of time young people are spending on caring for family members or friends. The survey also shows increases in stress, and a steep decline in mental health among younger carers. [Read more here.](#)

If you have a family member who is a young or young adult carer, Carer Support Wiltshire can offer advice on the support that may be available to them. Call us on 0800 181 4118.

## Time for Carers Appeal update



We are pleased that our Time for Carers Appeal has got off to a fantastic start, despite the current climate, and has raised £4243 to date. This money will be used to fund breaks for carers who are under pressure, helping to ease the physical and emotional strain of caring and enabling them to continue caring for their loved one.

Studies show that 40% of carers haven't had a single day off from their caring responsibilities for over a year. Lakshmi is a parent carer who has received funding from the appeal. She said: "With the funding I booked a week away at a meditation retreat at the Barn, The Sharpham Trust. For me, this is not just a holiday but healing 'me time' that is desperately needed from my busy daily life caring for my two disabled children."

We are off to a good start but want to raise much more. If you would like to donate to the appeal or fundraise for it – or you have friends, family or are part of an organisation who would like to – please [find out more here](#).

### Your views are important to us

Responding to Covid-19 has seen Carer Support Wiltshire introduce new services, including virtual cafés, counselling, befriending and welfare checks.

We are seeking feedback from carers on our services and would appreciate it if you could take the time to [complete our survey](#).

### Join the Carer Support Wiltshire Fantasy Football League

We've created a Carer Support Wiltshire Carers League and we'd love you to join us! To join in, download the Premier League app and set up your team. Pick players from all the Premier League teams with a fixed budget and get points based on their real life performance. [Click here](#) for more information and guidance.

Once your team has been set up, click 'join FPL League' and quote the code **1woems** to join.

## What's On

### Virtual cafés and support groups

We're continuing to run a number of regular online cafés where carers can log in and have a chat with other carers; helping to break up the day and provide some support. Many of our cafés will also have staff or volunteers in attendance who can help with any specific signposting or support you might need.

Some cafés are location-specific, but we have several that are open to all. [Find a café here](#). Please pick the one that's most convenient for you and drop us a line at [admin@carersupportwiltshire.co.uk](mailto:admin@carersupportwiltshire.co.uk) to book.

### Virtual quiz for male carers

A date for your diaries - we're going to be holding a virtual quiz just for male carers on Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> October (time TBC) hosted by our resident quiz expert Andrew (he takes his quizzes very seriously!). It's open to all male carers who would like to join us for a cerebral workout and some laughs. Call us on 0800 181 4118 or email [admin@carersupportwiltshire.co.uk](mailto:admin@carersupportwiltshire.co.uk) to put your name down and we'll send you details of how to join. Thanks to Carers Trust for funding this event.

## Good to Know

### Winter flu jab

As a carer you will be entitled to a flu jab for free this winter. Many GP surgeries and pharmacies are booking appointments now (although some aren't – check with yours). This winter, preventing hospitalisation with flu is going to be more important than ever and getting the jab will reduce the chance you will pass flu onto the person you care for. Do book in for yours when you're able – if you're not registered as a carer with your surgery, make sure you let them know.

### Raise funds for carers while you spend

Carer Support Wiltshire is registered with AmazonSmile, which means we can receive money from your purchases if you choose to support us (at no extra cost to you). AmazonSmile is now available through the Amazon app, which makes it effortless to donate every time you spend. [Click for instructions on how to set it up](#).

### Alzheimers Support groups reopen

Alzheimers Support have reopened many of their day clubs and other face-to-face services, including day clubs in Trowbridge, Devizes and Warminster and their Memory Café in Westbury. [Visit their website](#) or contact them if you need more details.

To find out more about our services, or how to get involved, visit our website at [www.carersupportwiltshire.co.uk](http://www.carersupportwiltshire.co.uk). If you're interested in fundraising for us, please email [fundraising@carersupportwiltshire.co.uk](mailto:fundraising@carersupportwiltshire.co.uk) or call 01380 908028.

You can also find more information on what matters to you locally and nationally by following us on Twitter [@carerswiltshire](https://twitter.com/carerswiltshire) or liking our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/carerswiltshire](http://www.facebook.com/carerswiltshire)

We really hope you enjoy these monthly updates and find them useful. If you have any feedback or would like to unsubscribe, please email us at [admin@carersupportwiltshire.co.uk](mailto:admin@carersupportwiltshire.co.uk).

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Carer Support Wiltshire is a local charity supporting carers in Wiltshire

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