



# Carers In Touch

*The free magazine for Carers in Staffordshire*

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Carers Week/ Swinging 60s Event (page 3)**
- **A Simple Guide to Carers Allowance (page 4)**
- **World Alzheimer's Day (page 5)**

### Message from CASS -

If you know someone who is not on our mailing list and would like to receive the E-newsletter please call CASS on 01785 222365. Alternatively if you would like our newsletter in a larger font or different format please call our main office on 01785 222365.

### JOIN CASS ONLINE

You can keep up to date with what CASS are up to and the latest Carers information and advice:

Find us on Facebook - CASS The Carers Association

Follow us on Twitter-



**W**elcome to the third edition of Carers in Touch. We've had a busy few months at CASS, including Carers Week in June, which you can read more about on page 3. The sun may have gone away as we move into summer, but CASS haven't, our groups and office are still up and running. Do check the dates and times of the groups on our website/social media or contact the office to be on the safe side. We hope you enjoy this issue of the Newsletter, if you would like to include something in next quarter's issue, or have any comments or suggestions for future publications do get in touch.

*Sarah Dakin - Communications Officer*

*sarah.dakin@carersinformation.org.uk*

## Chief Operating Officer Update

Doesn't the time fly? It doesn't seem five minutes since I started in my new role with CASS twelve months ago! It's been a busy year working in the Community promoting CASS and the importance of supporting family Carers. Please keep helping us to spread the word, if anyone would like any leaflets or posters to distribute please get in touch with the Sarah.

We recently held an event where we invited all Carers who are registered with us to meet up in one place, see page 3. The theme for this year was the Swinging 60's! Lots of people wore 60's 'gear' adding to the lovely atmosphere on the day. The feedback from you all was amazing and we are looking for a bigger venue next year as it was a little snug!

We received some really sad news in May. Our Patron of many years the Dowager

Countess of Harrowby, affectionately known by us all as Janie, died suddenly. Janie was a staunch supporter of CASS and in the early days supported our young Carers and latterly our Living Well with Dementia Groups as well as attending every Board meeting. We were all shocked and our thoughts go out to her family, which I have had the privilege to meet. Caroline, Janie's daughter recently came into the office with her children to give CASS donations received in lieu of flowers at Janie's funeral of £1,298.00. People are so kind. We are currently trying to think of a lasting legacy in memory of Janie as we can't let her commitment to CASS be forgotten. If anyone has any ideas please let me know.

There are a variety of consultations that you can get involved with. Please check our website and Staffordshire County Council website to have your say. We

also have information available at our groups.

Lastly, I would like to welcome Gail Lewis to the Team. Gail will be replacing Lisa Brickles as The Caring Communities Link worker in the South Staffordshire. Gail will be bringing a wealth of knowledge with her and I am sure you will make her feel most welcome if you meet her at the groups or in the community.

Kind Regards,  
Karen Leighton

Chief Operating Officer



*Karen pictured receiving the funds raised with help from Councillor Len Bates BEM and his consort Pat Bates.*

## Living Well with Dementia Burntwood Fundraiser

Some of the wonderful volunteers from Burntwood organised a dance at Norton Canes Community Centre in July, in aid of the Burntwood Living Well with Dementia Group.

Jane and Karen went along to judge the dancing - look out Shirley Ballas they're after your job!

The grand total raised from the

evening was £715!

CASS would like to say a big thank you to the volunteers that organised the dance, and all those that helped out on the night. We look forward to meeting up with the volunteers and discussing how the funds could be used at Burntwood Living Well Group.



## Bed for Sale



A former Carer has an almost new electric bed for sale. The bed is a '**CASA Med Classic FS**' from **Patterson Medical**.

This four-section profiling bed is powered by a Dewert motor, and can be easily adjusted using the eight button handset, ideal for those with limited dexterity. The bed is adjustable between 40-80cm, enabling Carers to care without bending

and causing back injuries. It also features tool-free assembly and dismantling.

The former Carer is open to offers. They are based in Wheaton Aston, and collection of the bed is required. If you are interested in the bed, please contact the CASS Office in the first instance on 01785 222365.

## Stafford Repair Café

Do you have broken items sitting at home? Rather than throw them out bring them along to Stafford Repair Café to see if it can be fixed.

The Stafford Café is part of the Repair Café Foundation, a non-profit organisation that look to repair broken items and reduce waste.

The cafes are completely free, and the repairers are all volunteers using their skills to help you fix items for free. From clothes and toys, to electricals and furniture, you name it they can try to repair it.

Since the first café in 2017 volunteers have fixed 100+ items!

The next Café is 14th September 2019 at Salvation Army, Stafford, ST16 3NQ. The café is free, no need to book. For more information visit <https://repaircafe.org>.

Alternatively do you have a skill you could share?

If you're interested in joining the team of volunteer repairers contact Rob Hine on 07526746388 or email [roberthine@btinternet.com](mailto:roberthine@btinternet.com).



**Do you need assistance with Digital Skills?**

**Come and have a chat with us!**

**Perton Library**  
Every Tuesday 11am to 1pm

**Penkridge Library**  
Every Wednesday 10am to midday

**Codsall Library**  
Every Thursday 2pm to 4pm



For more information or to reserve a place call **0300 111 8000**



## #DoingOurBit

Communities across Staffordshire are being encouraged to do small actions that make a big difference. With less money coming in from the government, and county councils focusing on the most vulnerable in society, residents are being encouraged to do one more thing to help those around them. This could be anything from volunteering, to putting a neighbour's bin out. Residents across Staffordshire are using the hashtag #DoingOurBit to share what they've been getting up to, and showcase how doing one small thing can make a difference. For more information visit <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/DoingOurBit>.

## Carers Week 2019

The week 10th-14th June was National Carers Week, the focus of this year being "Getting Carers Connected". As well as our regular Carers Café, we were out and about in the community throughout the week.

With stands at County and Cannock Hospital, the CASS team were on-hand to meet Carers and open up discussions about their caring role and signpost to relevant support services. These conversations prompted several individuals to identify themselves as Carers. Throughout the week, we were pleased to register many new Carers,

and begin to get them connected with support and advice. The stands also provided the opportunity to raise the profile of unpaid Carers amongst healthcare professionals, and a chance to pass on information for Carers that they may meet.

A couple of the CASS team attended a Carers event organized by Tutbury Practice. They were impressed by how well organised it was, and the number of Carers in attendance. The event provided a great way to "get Carers connected" with support, and connect with professionals. The week was rounded off with a Carers Celebration...



## Swinging 60s Carers Celebration



Thank you to all those that took a trip back in time with us at our "Swinging 60s Carers Celebration".

You certainly dressed to impress with some groovy outfits featuring flared trousers, blue suede shoes, and knee high boots - they definitely weren't made for walking!

In the morning we enjoyed reminiscing about the 1960s with Kath Reynolds, talking about fashion trends, music, and toys, including asking how many people could remember the first ever

Barbie doll.

After fuelling up on fish, chips and ice-cream we took a trip to Motown with Holly Reynolds, singing along to some 60s classics including "Build me up buttercup" and "You can't hurry love".

The music was enjoyed by all generations, with some teeny tots leading the way on the dance floor. We rounded off the day by "Dancing in the street" before heading home for a cup of tea (and a lie down).

We hope you enjoyed the day as much as we did, and CASS

welcome any feedback to help us in planning future events. Contact us on 01785 222365 or [enquiries@carersinformation.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@carersinformation.org.uk).

CASS would like to say a huge thank you to the volunteers that helped out on the day, your assistance was invaluable and we couldn't have done it without you.

Here's to next year's Carers Celebration!

(If you attended and would like to see the photographs taken on the day they will be brought round at our groups to have a look through.)



# A Simple Guide to Carers Allowance

Navigating the care system can be tricky, and it can be difficult to know what support is there for you, especially when it comes to benefits. To try and help, here is a simple guide to Carers Allowance, the main benefit for Carers, this guide details what Carers Allowance is, who is eligible for it and how to apply for it. If you would like more information on Carers Allowance, Carers UK have put together a Carers Allowance factsheet which goes into greater detail. To view and download this go to <https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/financial-support/help-with-benefits/carers-allowance>.

## What is Carers Allowance?

Carers Allowance is the main welfare benefit for those providing unpaid care for someone, be it a friend, neighbour or family member.

You don't have to be related to or even live with the person you care for to claim Carers Allowance.

## How much is Carers Allowance?

- Carers Allowance is paid at £66.15 a week, the amount is reviewed each year in April but isn't necessarily altered.

- This benefit is not means tested, therefore it is not based on income, but there is a cap on how much you can earn from work and still be entitled to Carer's Allowance.

- Carers Allowance is below the tax threshold however, a Carer will only have to pay tax if they have other sources of taxable income such as personal pensions.

*Please note that Carers Allowance payments are slightly different for Carers living in Scotland – see Carers UK guide to Carers Allowance for more details.*

## Carers Allowance Form

The form includes demographic information about yourself and the person you care for, as well as a statement on behalf of the person you care for.

There are also questions about the care you provide, employment and other money you receive.

## Am I Eligible for Carers Allowance?

Not all Carers are entitled to Carers Allowance, the benefit depends on meeting the following criteria:

- You look after someone who gets a qualifying disability benefit
- You look after this person for at least 35 hours a week
  - You are aged 16 or over
  - You are not in full-time education
  - You don't earn over £123 a week
  - You must meet the UK presence and residence conditions (be habitually resident in the UK)

Unsure if you can claim? Carers UK have a simple online tool which can help you to work out what benefits you are eligible for. Fill in your details, answer a few questions and Carers UK will guide you to the information you need.

<https://www.carersuk.org/upfront/>

## How to apply for Carers Allowance

Visit <https://www.gov.uk/carers-allowance/how-to-claim> to apply online or download a claim form.

For help applying for Carers Allowance, contact:

The Carers Hub Staffordshire on  
0330 123 1937

For more information and terms surrounding Carers Allowance see <https://www.carersuk.org>

## World Alzheimer's Day - Dementia Support in Staffordshire



World Alzheimer's Day (WAD) is an international campaign that occurs on the 21st September every year, aimed at raising awareness and challenging the stigma surrounding Alzheimer's disease. In light of WAD we have put together a small list of organisations and groups that provide support for those living with dementia and their Carers in Staffordshire. *Please note that this list is not exhaustive.*

• **Living Well with Dementia** groups for those living with dementia and their Carers to have a break, receive information from local support services and socialise. (For dates and time see page 6).

• **MASE Group** aims to provide social support and information for those living with dementia and their Carers. The Monthly Alzheimer's Support Evening's are free of charge, there are relevant organisations there to offer information, as well as entertainment and refreshments. The evenings are held in Haughton,

Rugeley, Hednesford and Stafford 19:00-21:00, and a lunchtime group at Cannock 13:00-15:00. For more information visit <http://themasegroup.org/> or call Daphne on 01785 211140.

• **Singing for the Brain** sessions are championed by the Alzheimer's Society, these sessions use singing to bring people with dementia together in a fun, stimulating activity. There is a group at Wombourne Library, DY76EW, every Monday 13:00-15:00. There is also a group in Lichfield at Martin Heath Hall, WS13 8AY, the last Thursday of every month

10:30-12:00. And in Burton at Brook House, DE14 2BA, on Tuesdays. To find out more and to book a place contact Alzheimer's Society local office on 01543 573936.

• **Approach** provide support and advice for older people with dementia in North Staffs, including day groups and Carers Cafes. Approach are offering free dementia awareness training for unpaid family carers looking after a loved one with dementia. In Stafford, ST17 9NF July 1st/8th/15th 10:30-13:00pm and Cannock WS11 6BP October 24th and 31st and November 7th 10:30-13:00. To find out more contact Approach on 01782 214999.

• **Alzheimer's Society National Dementia Helpline** is for anyone looking for information, support or advice about dementia. The helpline 0300 222 1122 is open 9-8pm Monday - Wednesday, 9-5pm Thursday/Friday and 10-4pm Saturday/Sunday. Calls are at the national rate, all calls are confidential and interpreters can be provided. If you are hearing impaired you can use text to relay or call on 18001 0300 222 1122. They also have an online advice line Monday - Friday 9-12 and 6-8pm on Mondays. To find more support in your local area visit <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk>.

### Carers Championing the way

We would like to give a special shout out to the Carers Champion at The Colliery Practice, who has arranged for their Carers to be able to use a dedicated telephone line when making enquiries and booking appointments. Such a useful service for Carers - well done!

### CASS Success Stories

“ Look forward to meeting every month - a real highlight! ”

A Carer attending a monthly CASS group

“ Thank you for your help, I feel much better already, you have helped me more than you realise by just listening to me ”

A Carer on calling the office

“ So nice to be waited on instead of being the one doing everything. Thank you ”

A Carer at the 60s Carers Celebration Event

“ After talking to you I made a 'plan of action' and looked at my own health needs ”

A Carer following a 1:1 with our Carling Communities Link Worker

## MAC Clinical Research

At MAC Clinical Research, we are known for our expertise in dementia research and have been selected to be involved in many of the world's leading Alzheimer's disease clinical trials. Here at MAC, we understand that the condition can be difficult to live with and are experienced in supporting dementia patients and their carers.

Our highly skilled team ensure that throughout a patient's participation in a study both them and their carer are kept fully informed. Patients are closely monitored and there is always a doctor available to answer any questions or concerns.

Currently at our clinic in Cannock we are running clinical trials for patients

- aged between 50 – 90 with:
- Mild cognitive impairment and Alzheimer's disease
  - Agitation in Alzheimer's disease

- Participants will receive:
- A full health check-up
  - Reasonable travel expenses
  - Potential relief of symptoms

If you would like to learn more about our background with dementia, or you would be interested in taking part in one of our clinical trials please call 0800 6335507 or email [siobhanparry@macplc.com](mailto:siobhanparry@macplc.com).

**Written by Siobhan Parry, Clinical Relations Specialist.**

## Cycling for CASS

Congratulations to Sally Harrington for completing the final day of the Aberdovey Bike ride in aid of CASS.

Sally had a really good day, cycling 104.8 miles/4993 ft climbing. She rode alongside a friend and two others, together they made a great team and took it in turn to ride at the front, braving the strong headwinds. Well done for completing the cycle, it is quite an achievement and we hope you are having a well deserved rest.

We're pleased to say that Sally has raised over £300 for CASS The CASS team would like to say a big thank you for choosing to raise funds for CASS.



## CASS in the Community

All support groups meet **once a month**. For more information on what to expect at our groups, call CASS on **01785 222365** or email [enquiries@carersinformation.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@carersinformation.org.uk)

Group	Dates	Time	Address
Stafford Living Well with Dementia	<b>Wednesday</b> - July 3rd, August 7th, September 4th	11am—1pm	St. Bertelins Church Hall, Holmcroft Road Stafford, ST16 1JF
Cannock Living Well with Dementia	<b>Thursday</b> - July 4th, August 1st, September 5th	11am—1pm	St Lukes Church, Church Street, Cannock WS11 1DE
Burton Living Well with Dementia	<b>Wednesday</b> - July 17th, August 21st, September 18th	11am—1pm	Burton Library, Riverside, Burton DE14 1AH
Burntwood Living Well with Dementia	<b>Thursday</b> - July 18th, August 15th, September 19th	11am—1pm	The Scout Hut, Ironstone Road, Burntwood, WS7 1LL
South Staffs Living Well with Dementia	<b>Tuesday</b> - July 23rd, August 27th, September 24th	11am—1pm	Codsall Village Hall, Wolverhampton Road, Codsall WV8 1PW
Tamworth Carers Café	<b>Monday</b> - July 8th, August 12th, September 9th	10:30am—12:30pm	Victoria House, Cygnet Drive, Lichfield Street, Tamworth B79 7RU
Wombourne Carers Café	<b>Wednesday</b> - July 10th, August 14th, September 11th	10:30am—12:30pm	The Brook Room, Wombourne Civic Centre, Wombourne WV5 9HA
Penkridge Carers Café	<b>Monday</b> - July 29th, August 19th, September 11th	10:30am—12:30pm	The Haling Dene Centre, Cannock Road, Penkridge ST19 5DT
Eccleshall Carers Café	<b>Thursday</b> - July 25th, August CANCELLED, September 26th	10:30am—12:30pm	Eccleshall Community Centre, Shaw Lane, Eccleshall ST21 6AU

Our **CARING COMMUNITIES LINK WORKER** works across the South Staffordshire (South Staffs District council area only.)

**LIZ TOLHURST** our **HEALTH LIAISON WORKER** will be working in County and Cannock Hospital, as well as GP practices across Staffordshire. If you would like support in Hospitals/GP Practices contact Liz on 01785 220665.

# Thank You



We are extremely grateful for the donations that we have received over the past few months. With particular thanks to:

- Donations received In Memorium of Lady Jane Harrowby

- Councillor Len Bates BEM for supporting CASS during his year as Chairman and helping to raise £5032.65 for CASS

- Acton and Bednall Parochial Church Council for their donation of £333.51

- The donations given at the Swinging 60's Carers Celebration, amounting to £148

- One of our regular donors for the donation

of £123.24

- Lido Working Mens Club in Norton Canes

- Yates Sports and Social Club, Norton Canes

We would also like to thank our volunteers for your continued support at our groups, in the office and in fundraising. You do an invaluable job, and we are extremely grateful!

Interested in volunteering? Find out more below.

# Get Involved

Volunteer support is vital to the success of CASS, with many of our volunteers speaking directly to and engaging with Carers in person and helping assess how CASS can help them move forward.

If you would like to take an active role here at CASS, you can volunteer with us. We have plenty of opportunities including to; raise awareness in the community, volunteer at our support groups or be a part of our team in the main office. If you would like to discuss our

volunteering opportunities contact our Volunteer Coordinator Jane on 07740418643.

You could choose to become a trustee. Our elected trustees meet quarterly and participate in shaping both the present and future pathways of CASS. Associate and voting members of CASS can vote on decisions that will affect CASS at our AGM.

We encourage all those who would like to be a member of CASS to call us on 01785 222365.

Alternatively if you are an active fundraiser and would like to get involved in any of our fundraising efforts or make a donation, please call our main office on 01785 222365.



CASS The Carers Association is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. Registered Number - 4184030 Registered Charity number - 1086979

## CASS The Carers Association Supporting Carers to Care

F2/F4 Tollgate Court  
Tollgate Drive  
Stafford  
ST16 3HS

Phone: 01785 222365  
E-mail: [enquiries@carersinformation.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@carersinformation.org.uk)  
Visit: [www.carersinformation.org.uk](http://www.carersinformation.org.uk)  
Facebook: CASS The Carers Association  
Twitter: @CASSwecare

## Useful Numbers

### CASS Team

#### Main office

01785 222365

#### Chief Operating Officer

01785 256313

#### Living Well with Dementia

##### Coordinator

07740418650

##### CASS Café Coordinator

07740418643

##### Caring Communities Link Worker (South Staffs)

07918603929

##### Volunteer Coordinator

07740418643

##### Health Liaison Worker

07740418647

### External Organisations

#### Mencap

0800 808 1111

#### North Staffs Carers

01782 793100

#### Pension Service Helpline

08456 060265

#### Red Cross - Mobility Aids Stafford

01785 279847

#### South Staffordshire Network for Mental Health - Toolbox

01543 301139

#### Staffordshire Housing Association

01682 744533

#### St Giles Hospice (Lichfield)

01543 432031

#### Stafford and District Stroke Association

01785 245159

#### Support Staffordshire

01785 413160

Proud to be a network partner of the Carers Trust



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