



Angus Carers Centre

supporting carers

Newsletter



The Princess Royal Trust
for Carers

Summer Edition 2010

WELCOME...

Carers Day

Carers Day and the AGM are being planned for Wednesday, 16 June, and will again be at the Carnoustie Golf Hotel. This is a day that carers tell us they really enjoy.

As well as experiencing good company and a delicious lunch, a variety of light-hearted workshops have been planned. These will include some of the old favourites as well as new ones. They are all described in the enclosed booking form.

To book a place please complete the enclosed form by 31 May, indicating your choices of workshops and return it to the Centre, with a £5.00 donation towards the costs of the day. But please book early to ensure a space. If the places are over-subscribed they will be allocated on a first come basis. So make sure you return your form promptly and we will look forward to seeing you there.

Invitation to Tea

Around 75 carers accepted the Invitation to Tea, which was held at venues in Arbroath, Forfar and Monifieth. The invitation was sent to all those who had returned the questionnaire enclosed in the last newsletter, which asked about the quality of the service Angus Carers Centre provides.

At the event carers received feedback from the questionnaires and then some time was spent in further discussion about the services which are provided. However, it was very clear that carers simply enjoyed the opportunity to meet together over a cup of tea or coffee and a chat. So, learning from this experience, we hope to plan a series of social events both in the evening and at different locations throughout Angus where carers can simply meet with other carers and enjoy time together.

The first will be in Montrose on 28 May in the George Hotel, 10.30 am to 12 noon, so if you stay in the Montrose or Brechin areas, and would like to attend to meet with other people who have caring responsibilities, then please tick the Reply Slip and return it so that we can include you in the numbers for refreshments.

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How are we doing?

Thank you to all who completed and returned the questionnaire enclosed with the last newsletter to let us know what you think about the service Angus Carers Centre provides. Here is a summary of the findings from each question:

1. Do you feel the newsletter provides the right information you need to continue to care?

99% responded good, very good or excellent

2. Do you feel you have had the opportunity to express your view on services for carers?

92% agreed they had some, good or very good opportunity to express views

3. Do you feel informed and aware of financial or practical benefits to which you may be entitled?

92% said they had good, very good or excellent opportunity.

4. Has contact with our service helped you feel less isolated?

96% stated that they felt less, much less or very much less isolated.

However, percentages are helpful to gauge the quality of the service, but what is most helpful are the comments received, these are very encouraging. One carer said, "I find the service excellent and re-assuring in every respect." Thank you to all who took part.

Carers Have Got Talent and the Tayside Carers Choir

Saturday 19 June, 7.30 am-9.30 pm, the Steeple Church Dundee

Tickets £5 per person

The three Tayside Carers Centres (Perth, Dundee & Angus) are running a joint event for this year's Carers Week to celebrate the *talents and gifts* of carers of all ages. The centrepiece of the evening will be a Carers Choir with carers from all ages and across Tayside taking part, and we want **YOU** to get involved (yes, **YOU!**). The choir will be singing a mixture of contemporary songs that represent the diversity of carers across the region. There will be several choir rehearsals beforehand, although you wouldn't be expected to attend all of them. It would be helpful if you could read music or have some experience of singing in a choir, but it's not essential. Rehearsal dates are as follows, all taking place at the Steeple Church in Dundee:

*Monday 17 May / Monday 31 May / Tuesday 15 June, all 7.30 am -9.30 pm
Saturday 19 June, 1.00 pm -5.00 pm (including food)*

There will also be an opportunity for **YOU** to take part and book a slot on the evening to showcase your own special talent, whether that be singing, belly dancing, stand-up comedy or even playing the spoons!

We appreciate that we may have missed the first rehearsal date, however it's not too late to join in for the remaining rehearsals.

Please let us know as soon as possible if you would like to get involved. We may be able to assist in co-ordinating lift-shares if required.

A new Course for Carers and Former Carers

- Are you stuck in a rut?
- Would you like more direction in your life?
- Does your confidence need a boost?
- Would you benefit from some new company?



If you have answered 'yes' to any of the above then this 10-week course is for you.

This course has been designed to help carers and former carers develop more confidence about the experiences they have had in their lives, and how these experiences can be used in a positive way in the future.

The course helps to build self-confidence. Trying something new can mean taking up a new leisure interest or learning a new skill. It can also mean working out how your past experiences can help you feel confident about promoting your skills for training or employment reasons.

If you are interested, please complete the Reply Slip and more information will be sent out. It will run for a couple of hours one morning a week, starting date still to be confirmed. If you have any questions please contact Lynne at Angus Carers Centre.

This is a joint venture between Angus Carers Centre and Community Learning and Development (Literacy). The Big Lottery funds the Transitions Project.

Challenging Behaviour Training

Do you care for someone who can sometimes display challenging behaviour? How do you cope with this? Dealing with challenging behaviour can be both physically and emotionally demanding for carers. We intend to hold a training session in the autumn on issues around challenging behaviour and hope to be able to equip carers with some coping strategies. If you would be interested in attending, and indeed have any suggestions for areas, which you would like to cover, then please indicate this on the Reply Slip

How to Manage your Stress

Over the last year a number of short training sessions in Stress Management have been delivered in various areas in Angus. Lasting two and a half hours, these are excellent for providing an insight into managing stress and introducing coping strategies, which can help carers. If you would be interested in attending one of these courses, then please tick and return the Reply Slip and you will be contacted when a course is run in your area.

Moving Safely - a Course for Carers

Knowing how to assist someone to move safely is very important for carers to safeguard their own health and well-being and to ensure that the person for whom they care is kept safe. Twice a year courses are offered to carers. If this is of interest to you, then please tick the Reply Slip and you will be contacted when the next course is in your area.

Angus Carers Forum

Information and communication was the subject of the February meeting of the Forum, when Susan Smillie, Communication and Engagement Officer with Social Work and Health, updated carers on the various ways in which Angus Council seeks to provide information for carers. Carers were also invited to put forward their views and comments. In March, Bridget Stone, Senior Planning Officer spoke about Adult Support and Protection. Carers commented that both meetings were informative and valuable.

Any carer is welcome to attend the Forum meetings and details will be in the next newsletter.

Awards for All



Angus Carers is delighted to have been awarded an Awards for All grant through the Lottery. This grant will benefit adult carers by providing opportunities for carers to enjoy time out from their caring responsibilities and to access training, which will support them, both to care for the person they look after, but also to look after their own health and well-being. In addition the funding will allow the garden project to continue which will bring therapeutic benefits to carers involved in this creative work and also make a relaxing space for carers to come and sit.

Outing to Aberdeen

It is that time of year again when we start to think about escaping for a day. This time the plan is to head north to explore the Granite City, Aberdeen.

There certainly seems to be plenty to do, so if you feel like a bit of retail therapy there is shopping at the new Union Square Centre or the Bon Accord and St Nicholas Centre. For those of you with culture in mind, there is the Aberdeen Art Gallery plus other smaller galleries and museums. Other options are the Aberdeen Maritime Museum and the Marischal Museum, which is the main museum in the city centre. The museum most notably houses examples of Egyptian and Classical antiquities, non-Western ethnography and pieces relating to Scottish prehistory. Plus there are lots of cafés and restaurants to suit most tastes for the odd cuppa and lunch.

The date is Tuesday 7 September 2010. Please indicate on the Reply Slip if you are interested in this event.

D & A Support Group

The support group for those caring for someone with a drug or alcohol problem continues to meet every second Wednesday here at Angus Carers Centre. A further support group has started in Kirriemuir also every second Wednesday. Any person who looks after someone with drug and alcohol problems will be made very welcome at the groups. For dates see back page.



Free Access to Leisure Pass



Many carers have benefited from the Angus Council Free Leisure Pass, which has been available to carers registered with Angus Carers Centre since 2005. However, this provision is currently under review by Angus Council who are planning to withdraw it. Carers who currently hold a pass will be contacted once further information is available. In the meantime the current passes are valid until 1 July 2010.

Do you care for someone who has a long-term condition?

Would you like to use your experience as a carer to make positive changes in the NHS and local authority planning of services? Chest, Heart & Stroke Scotland has been working with the NHS in Scotland, talking to people who have chest, heart or stroke illness, helping them to make their voices heard in planning better NHS services. To continue this work, they would also like to talk to carers of those with any long-term conditions, not only Chest, Heart and Stroke illnesses, about the help and support they need to get from the NHS and Angus Council, so that carers can also get involved in planning better services.

Your voice needs to be heard!

Angus Carers Centre is working in partnership with Chest, Heart and Stroke Scotland and would like some carers to form a focus group to take this project forward. **The person you care for can have any type of long-term condition.** If you are a carer, you are interested in getting involved, and you can spare an hour or two to come and talk to us, and other carers, then we would like to hear from you. The date for the initial meeting is 8 June 2010 at 2.00 pm at Angus Carers Centre. If you would like more information contact Mhairi on 01241 439157 or tick the Reply Slip.

The book group

Just a little note from the book group to say that this month's books are "Oranges are not the only fruit" by Jeanette Winterson and "Number Ten" by Sue Townsend

The next meeting of the book group is Tuesday 11 May 2010.

Long-term Condition Self Help Group

This self help group is open to anyone who has a long term condition and is challenging it. The group meets on the last Wednesday of the month from 2pm until 4pm in Parkview Primary Care Centre, Carnoustie.



CAB Drop-in



Angus Carers Centre continues to hold a monthly drop-in at the Centre on the first Thursday of the month from 10.00 am – 12 noon for registered carers. A member of staff from the Citizens Advice Bureau will be available to give a free confidential service, which can include advice on benefits, money, and debt. A Carer Support Worker will also be available to answer any queries carers may have. You are welcome to just drop in for a coffee and a chat or you can make an appointment by contacting the Centre on 01241 439157.

Gardening Club

The Gardening Club is now up and running and looking for new members. If you would like to have some fun, fresh air, gentle exercise and social chat then please feel free to join us at the Angus Carers Centre on Mondays from 10.00 am – 12 noon. Good weather cannot be guaranteed! Expert tuition from Jane Maguire from Angus College is on hand each week and there may also be opportunities for further practical work at the College.

We are also looking for donations of garden furniture (any condition, we can clean it up!), plants, working tools, even a garden shed. Collection may be arranged.

If you would like to join us, or would like any further information, please simply come along, or tick the Reply Slip and you will be contacted.

Benefits Corner

Carers Credit

Carers credit is a new National Insurance credit available from 6 April to people of working age who are looking after one or more disabled people for a total of 20 hours or more each week. These people need to be in receipt of an appropriate disability benefit or a certificate must be supplied, certified by a health or social care professional, which confirms the level of care.

It is not a cash benefit but a National Insurance credit, which helps to build up State Pension entitlement and will not affect any benefits already received. People who already receive Carers Allowance, Income Support on the basis of substantial caring, or child benefit for a child under 12 will be given these credits automatically.

Carers credit claim packs are available from our centre or can be printed off at www.direct.gov.uk/carers where you will also find more information about the credit.

Council tax reduction

If you care for someone who has limited capacity they may be discounted as a liable person for council tax. If you live with the person with no other adult in the household you may be eligible for the single person 25% discount. A certificate needs to be completed by the person's GP to confirm limited capacity. This is usually due to a mental illness, dementia and learning disability.

If you have any queries about any of these things give us a phone 01241 439157.

Angus Young Carers

Easter Outings

Over the Easter holidays the young carers had the opportunity to take part in different day trips. The under 12s went to Jumping Joeys for a fun morning of soft play, then to the Oasis to paint some pottery. Ferry Potty came along with lots of different ceramic animals, trinket boxes and shapes to paint!! Everyone had something to take home, fun was had by all!

The over 12s had a two- day visit to Dundee Rep. This trip was organised by Creative Identities, they put on different workshops including drama, art and music. Angus Young Carers had the opportunity to meet other young carers from Dundee and Perth.

We are now looking forward to summer and are planning the residential and summer outings.



Fire Safety Check



Tayside Fire and Rescue (TFR) recognise the important role of carers within Angus which gives a better and safer quality of life to those close to you. TFR is keen to work with carers to prevent and reduce the likelihood of household fires that destroy homes, personal property, severely injure and kill family members. 50% of fire deaths in Scotland in 2009 could have been prevented with correct positioning and installation of working smoke detectors and a home fire escape plan. TFR offer a free home fire safety visit and carry out a fire safety check of your home, provide and install free smoke alarms. Please contact **0300 123 9998** or text **CHECK** to **61611** or email rick.moore@taysidefire.gov.uk for more information.

Raising Funds

Two activities are being undertaken to raise funds specifically for a support group at Angus Carers Centre, the group for parents with children on the autistic spectrum.

Firstly, six walkers are aiming to walk a combined 500 miles in a series of challenges in September 2010 along the John Muir Trail in California in September, and secondly a Charity Ceilidh will be held in Glenisla Village Hall on Saturday, 3 July at 7.30 pm. Tickets, priced £10 and including stovies, are available from Sue Ross on 01575 582383

Clay Pigeon Shoot

Our enthusiastic volunteer, June Smith, is proposing to run a Clay Pigeon Shoot again this year. This will be the tenth year the event has been held. Venue and date has still to be finalised, but donations of bottles for raffle and prizes would be very welcome as would volunteers to help out on the day. If you would like to help or attend, please tick and return the Reply Slip and you will be contacted once further details are to hand.

Staff Changes

A few changes have taken place within the staff team. Firstly we say goodbye to June Dickson, our Volunteer Co-ordinator/Outreach Worker who has been with the Centre for over eight years and will be greatly missed. You will find her final 'goodbye' below. However, although we are sad at June's leaving we are pleased to welcome Jim Dallas who will take over June's remit. Jim will introduce himself in our next newsletter.

Another addition to our staff team is Mhairi Blyth, who takes up the new post of Deputy Manager. Mhairi has previously managed Crossroads (Dundee) and brings a wealth of experience to the organisation.

June's goodbye ...

When you read this article I will have retired from my role as Volunteer Co-ordinator with Angus Carers Centre. This is a move that, like many others before me, is filled with mixed emotions.

It hardly seems eight months never mind eight years since I joined the team at Angus Carers and during that time I have seen many changes. The one thing that for me has remained constant is the ability of carers, staff and volunteers to show warmth and caring for those around them. The memories I will take with me are many, from the fantastic generosity of the volunteers, to the fun and laughter at the Snail Race events, the move from our cramped office space to our lovely new "home" and the lots of mopping up from the flooding! As they say this is "life's tapestry".

Retiring is, I hope, a time to move on to some more personal challenges, the opportunity to learn and to spend time with friends and family, and oh yes probably some volunteering! And finally thanks to everyone for cards, gifts and kind words, I really appreciate them. It was not possible for me to catch up with everyone but I send my good wishes to you all.

Cheery-bye
June

Diary of Events

Date/Time	Event
Tuesday 11 May 2010	Book Group 10.00 am—12 noon Angus Carers Centre
Friday 28 May 2010	Montrose & District Carers Event 10.30 am—12 noon George Hotel, Montrose
Wednesday 16 June 2010	AGM/Carers Day 10.00 am—3.00 pm Carnoustie Golf Hotel
Saturday 19 June 2010	Carers have got Talent 7.30 pm—9.30 pm Steeple Church, Dundee
Tuesday 7 September 2010	Outing to Aberdeen

Groups

ARBROATH 10.30 am at Angus Carers Centre. (Second Monday of the month)

Monday 13 June 2010
Monday 13 September 2010
Monday 11 October 2010
Monday 8 November 2010
Monday 13 December 2010

MALE CARERS (Monifieth) 1.30 pm at Monifieth Health Centre. (Third Monday of the month)

Monday 17 May 2010
Monday 21 June 2010
Monday 20 September 2010
Monday 18 October 2010
Monday 15 November 2010
Monday 20 December 2010

DRUG & ALCOHOL GROUPS 10 am at Angus Carers Centre (fortnightly) and 6.30 pm—8.30 pm in Age Concern Hall, Kirriemuir

Wednesday 19 May 2010
Wednesday 2 June 2010
Wednesday 16 June 2010
Wednesday 30 June 2010
Wednesday 14 July 2010
Wednesday 28 July 2010

KIRRIEMUIR 10.00 am at Age Concern Hall. (Last Friday of the month)

Friday 28 May 2010
Friday 25 June 2010
Friday 24 September 2010
Friday 29 October 2010
Friday 26 November 2010

AUTISM GROUP 10.30 am at Angus Carers Centre, Arbroath and Salvation Army Hall, Chapel Street, Forfar

Wednesday 19 May 2010—Forfar
Wednesday 16 June 2010—Arbroath
Wednesday 15 September 2010—Forfar
Wednesday 20 October 2010—Arbroath
Wednesday 17 November 2010—Forfar

Every effort is made to ensure that the information in this newsletter is correct. Angus Carers Centre can accept no liability for errors and omissions and cannot recommend products or services. Views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of Angus Carers Centre.

Please note ...

As an organisation that holds information, we are required by law to ask those who are on our mailing list if they still wish to receive regular mailings. If you do not wish to remain on our mailing list or if the information we hold on you is incorrect, please contact us so that we can make the necessary alterations.