



Carers 4 Carers

Finding support through supporting each other

October 2018

Congratulations everyone! You helped raise £240 at the MacMillan Coffee Morning we held at our meeting last month. This is a fantastic amount and reflects all the hard work put in by so many people, including our volunteers from the Timebank who stepped in at the last minute. Thank you so much to everyone who attended—it was wonderful to see the hall so busy. We had a bumper selection of cakes and raffle prizes. Pam did a fantastic job in persuading local businesses to make a contribution. We still have a few prizes left, including a voucher for our local butcher, H.C. Lewis. The ticket numbers are 440, 469, 432 and 680 so if you still have yours, please check them and get in touch if you have a match.

I'm delighted to let you know that Rachel Parsons, a MacMillan Cancer Carer Support Worker, working with Carers' Trust, will be with us at our October meeting.

Details of our next few meetings are detailed below. My thanks to Jacqui for pointing out I had given the wrong date last month for our December meeting. The correct date is below and more details for the morning will be available next month.

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.

October 26th—Physiotherapist, Sarah Patterson, will gently take us through our paces, introducing us to ideas for keeping moving, even when we only have a few minutes to spare. It is so essential that we

do this, in order to be able to carry out our caring roles effectively. She will take into account the physical and medical issues some of you have so you can participate as well. During the morning, Sarah will also spend some time meeting members of the Companionship Group and will return to work with them on another occasion.

Anita will be with us, offering us some of her lovely gentle massage moments.

November 23rd— Fire and home safety talk with members of the Watch from the Gaydon Station.

December 14th—our seasonal meeting.

CLAIRE HALL—A TRIBUTE

I suspect that only a few of you, mainly those who have been attending our meetings for a number of years, will have met Claire Hall or even know who she was. Back in June, 2015, Claire wrote to me explaining that she was the Commissioner for Carers' Support Services across Warwickshire and was in the process of conducting a survey with carers to help improve the services offered. We set up a Focus Group that some of you attended. I was immediately struck by the way in which Claire listened, made copious notes and clearly absorbed what we were telling her. It was so refreshing and reassuring.

Sadly, illness put matters on hold for a time but the re-commissioning of Carer Support Services eventually took place last year and both Liz and I were invited to join the Delivery Board as Carer Reps. Throughout the process, Claire has demonstrated immense drive, enthusiasm, and determination for improving the services available for carers and a creative flair for making things happen despite reduced resources.

I last saw Claire during Carers' Week, charging around the County trying to be in three places at once and shortly afterwards learnt that she was on sick leave. I was incredibly saddened to learn that Claire passed away last Saturday. Carers in Warwickshire have much to be thankful to Claire for and have lost a great champion.

We send our condolences to Claire's family and her colleagues at this difficult time.

A POEM — I recently found this poem by Alan Powell on the website of the York Carers' Centre. It 'tells it how it is' and I know so many of you will connect with his words.

We are a motley bunch of folk, who meet up
once a week
Take tea and talk together, to find the answers
that we seek
We are a group of carers, with someone in our
life
That needs the help we give them, be it mother,
daughter, husband, wife
We're known as 'carers', someone stuck us with
that label,
But really only normal guys, doing the best we
are able.

I did not choose to be a carer, it happened
slowly I suppose,
A gradual transformation, as each new pressing
need arose.
It started with the shopping, then hanging
washing on the line

Taking on more housework, help with showers
and dressing, both arrived in time.
It's not for public plaudits, or nice things that
people say
And when things get more demanding, we do
not turn away.

I am not a Godly man, who stands with faith
unshaken
I am just a worldly bloke, standing by the vows
he's taken
'For better or worse, whether poor or rich, in
health and sickness giving
To cherish and care, with no other there, as
long as we are both living
It's not for approbation or blessings from above
We do what we do, what we need to do, for
honour, hope and love.