

Issue 46 Summer 2016

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To cut print and postal costs for our charity, please let us know if you would be happy to have your future Newsletters by Email.

Email your name to carers@involvekent.org.uk



Dear Carer,

Welcome to your summer newsletter. The photograph above was taken recently at the riverside in Chatham, but thanks to the blue skies you could be forgiven in thinking it was a more exotic location. Let's hope there are more blue skies ahead for us all this summer.

Thank you to everyone who responded to the survey about access to the internet included in your last newsletter. When the results are available we will share them with you.

Due to the costs of including an insert with your newsletter, please note that your invitation to the Involve Carers Forum is on page 11. Do make a date in your calendar if you would like to attend.

Very Best Wishes from all the Team

Barbara, Jane, Katy, Joe, Debbie, Lynne, Jen, Eleanor, Maureen, Marilyn, Maisie, Donna, Rachel, Gaynor and Rhian



Find us on Facebook & Twitter
www.facebook.com/InvolveKent
www.twitter.com/InvolveKent



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 Maidstone Community Support Centre
 39 - 48 Marsham Street
 Maidstone, Kent ME14 1HH
 Phone: 01622 685276
 e-mail: carers@involvekent.org.uk
 website: www.involvekent.org.uk

Carer Activity Groups



Our Carers' Book Group at their most recent meeting

Please see the back cover for the full list of Carer Activity Groups we run. We would like to say a special thank you to all of our Connecting Carers Volunteers who organise, facilitate or assist with all of our groups. All volunteers are also Carers or former Carers themselves so understand both the challenges and joys of being a Carer, without their support our groups would not be the success they are.

Our thanks go to Carol Benjamin and the Team who took part in a Charity Quiz at the Swan Pub in Loose, Maidstone.

THANK YOU!

We received two donations totalling £250.

This money will go towards our Carers' Activity fund, enabling Carers to have time out and meet others whilst enjoying an activity.

ALL OF OUR ACTIVITY GROUPS ARE FREE TO CARERS

We can only fund them thanks to donations received from Trusts, Carers and fundraising efforts from Groups, Clubs and businesses.

Our most grateful thanks to all those that have supported us.

Please send any donations to us at our address on the front page.

Cheques need to be made payable to our umbrella charity 'Involve Kent'
(Registered Charity No.1066911)

Donations will be used exclusively to fund Carers' Activities.

Carers' Drop-In Come join us for Coffee & Chat



Every Monday between 11am to 12.30pm at

Maidstone Community Support Centre,
39 - 48 Marsham Street,
Maidstone, Kent
ME14 1HH

Tel 01622 685276

Web www.involvekent.org.uk



Introducing a new over 50s community based Day Centre in Maidstone

The Garden of England Day Centre is offering emotional and physical support to those with disabilities and to those who just want to meet new people.

An individual focussed approach will enable visitors to use the Day Centre for on-going support in a friendly and fun environment meeting each individual's personal needs.

- * Rehabilitation * Chiropodist/Hairdresser * Carers support
- * Entertainment * Memory engaging sessions * One to one support
- * Hobby and Social groups

Shepway Court, Maidstone Mondays & Thursdays

Call 01622 662942 or email info@goedaycare.co.uk



MENTAL HEALTH NEWS

REACT Website

REACT (Relatives Education And Coping Toolkit)

The REACT website has now gone live, you can sign up immediately and take part online at www.reacttoolkit.co.uk

Are you a **relative / friend** of someone with psychosis or bipolar disorder, who is in distress and in need of some **support**?

The online toolkit was co-designed with relatives and peer support forums.

Involve Carers' Mental Health Support Group



The Group meets to support those caring for someone with mental health issues

On the last Tuesday of every month 11am -12.30pm
(with the exception of December)
At Maidstone Community Support Centre

To find out more about the group and before attending for the first time, please call
Maureen or Marilyn at Involve Carers 01622 685276

You will be made most welcome

Do you need mental health advice and support?

Mental Health Matters are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to offer confidential, emotional support and guidance.

Call free on **0800 107 0160**

Freephone number for mobiles **0300 330 5486**

Or contact Kent & Medway Partnership Trust Single Point of Access Number.
Also available any time of day or night 365 days a year.

0300 222 0123

Do you have your free of charge Emergency Card?

If you as the Carer, has an accident and are unable to undertake your caring role as you are in hospital, the Kent Carers' Emergency Card can give you peace of mind that the person you care for is being looked after.

The scheme is administered here at Involve Carers.
Ask us for an application form.



Important information to existing Emergency Card Holders:

Please ensure that you inform us of any changes as and when they occur e.g. change of telephone number for your emergency contact or change of vehicle registration.

Remember....if needed, the card will only work if information is correct!

Caring with Confidence – a free 7 week programme for Carers

Caring with Confidence is aimed at connecting Carers with others in similar situations, and each week covering different aspects of caring, encouraging Carers to make small but effective changes to their lives.

What do Carers who have attended a course say about the experience?

“My time with CWC was really helpful and informative. As a Carer I learnt so much, made new friends, and realised I wasn’t alone tackling all the problems that cropped up on a daily basis. Not only did I receive personal, but practical help and support too, which was very useful. Thank you so much for being there when I was at my most vulnerable – I couldn’t have wished for better support.”

“The CWC is well constructed and gives you an opportunity to work through different scenarios. I found it useful to realise that I wasn’t alone with my problems and that there are ways you CAN handle them. With friendly faces and people who care, it’s a place for sharing and listening.”

“It made me look at caring from a different perspective.”

“I was a newcomer into UK and I learned about benefits that my husband and I were entitled to through the class. I learned to talk more confidently about his illness. And most important I met incredible people whom I am still friends with today.”

The next course starts:

Tuesday 16th August from 10.00am to 1.00pm
Maidstone Community Support Centre in Marsham Street
It runs for 7 weeks ending on Tuesday 27th September

Places are limited, and help may be available in providing alternative care and/or transport.

Please call Involve Carers on 01622 685276 for more information.

Is Dementia something which affects you or your family?

Do you have any questions or concerns and would like to talk to someone?

24 Hour
Kent
DEMENTIA HELPLINE

Freephone
0800 500 3014

***Information and support for people living with
Dementia and their Carers***

Please call – we are here to help

**Calls between the hours of 9am - 5pm, Monday – Friday
are taken by qualified staff that can:**

- **Source and phone / e-mail back relevant information**
 - **Discuss any concerns**
- **Signpost to relevant services offering local support**
 - **Listen and offer confidential emotional support**

**Outside of these hours, callers will be offered
emotional support and information only.**

You can also e-mail your questions to:

helpline@alz-dem.org

E-mail enquiries are answered within 24 hours on weekdays

We understand the difficulties you may be experiencing and never judge.

NEW FREE OF CHARGE INFORMATION GUIDE FROM DISABILITY RIGHTS UK

The **new free of charge** information guide:

“Get back to where we do belong: An employment skills guide for people with newly acquired disabilities or health conditions”

now available on the Disability Rights UK website: www.disabilityrightsuk.org

The guide is online but it's in a user-friendly pdf format so can be downloaded or printed. If you don't have the ability to do this Involve Carers can do this for you.

Main sections of the guide are:

- New experiences and managing change • What to expect from employers
- Careers information and advice • Access to education and training
- Coping strategies and resilience • Peer support • Welfare benefits

Wellbeing Workshop for Carers

Are you caring for a loved one? **Do you feel stressed and over-whelmed?**
Do you feel isolated and spend a lot of time worrying?
Are you experiencing lots of negative or unhelpful thoughts?

Insight Healthcare are hoping to pilot free workshops for Carers in Maidstone that will help Carers learn about stress management, improve coping skills, develop strategies to cope with negative emotions and improve their sense of wellbeing.

The sessions are facilitated by trained practitioners.

- You need to be 18 years or older to join
- Meet for 2 hours, once a week for 6 weeks
- Be registered with a GP in Kent or Medway

If you are interested in joining this free workshop, for further information please contact: **0300 555 5555** email: Admin.kent@insighthealthcare.org

You can also find out more about this at our forthcoming
Involve Carers Forum





One-to-one IT help for Kent's housebound residents and their Carers

Would you like to gain basic computer skills, but find it hard to get to classes in your local area? Do you own a laptop or iPad, but would like one to one support to improve your online confidence?

Kent Libraries, is offering free support through the 'Touch a New World' scheme which provides homebound residents of Kent and their Carers the opportunity to get online in their own homes. This basic training, delivered by a network of dedicated volunteers, is offered to people who have never been online before and do not have their own computer equipment.

To help, a web-enabled iPad is lent to them for the period of the training. Support is also available for people who already have their own computer and internet access but lack the skills or confidence to use it.

In today's world it is vital that people have access to the information they need, and more and more information is being created and shared digitally. For anyone who is housebound and unable to get out, getting online can be a real answer to isolation and loss of independence.

95 year-old Doris from Deal was shown the basics of how to use email and the internet by her Touch a New World volunteer buddy.

Doris says, "It was a bit confusing at first but now it is so easy to me. I can't get out much so this is a very convenient way of keeping in touch with all my family and friends. I don't feel so isolated; the world can come into my life. Now that I am 95 I can't do what I did, I used to love travelling but with the iPad I can explore the world from my armchair."

"It keeps your mind active and has given me my independence," added Doris. "This is the main thing – I can share pictures and keep in touch with my great grandchildren."

If you feel you might benefit from this training, or know someone who would be interested to learn more, please contact Jenny House for more information:

jennifer.house@kent.gov.uk

Or drop in to your local library or call **03000 41 31 31** and request to be put through to Kent History and Library Centre in Maidstone.

Carers' Week Trip Thursday 9th June

Tenterden's Steam Railway

This year we are taking a trip on the Steam Locomotive run by the Steam Railway at Tenterden, where wheelchair users can ride in the specially designed carriage 'Petros'.

We will be taking a minibus from Maidstone, leaving at *11.00am* and leaving Tenterden at approximately *3.45pm*.

If you are able to make your own way, you can of course meet us there but as we will be making a block booking
please let us know in advance.

You are very welcome to bring the person that you care for.

As places on the bus will be limited, please call Maisie to let her know if you would like to come, **as soon as possible** on 01622 685276.

On arrival there will be time to enjoy a picnic for those bringing their own lunch or for others choosing the Refreshment Rooms or looking to browse the Gift shop there is full wheelchair access.

We will board the train in good time for a 1.15pm departure, enjoy a relaxing journey through the Kent Countryside before returning to the station at 3.10pm, when all ticket holders can enjoy free entry to the Railway Museum before we head for home at 3.45pm.

Due to the cost of this trip we suggest a donation of £5 per person

We really hope that you can join us!



CARERS' FORUM - Carers' Week



When?

Wednesday 8th June
10.00am - 12.30pm

Where?

The Grange Moor Hotel
St. Michael's Road
Maidstone
ME16 8BS

**Find out about services: Carers' Hospital Discharge Service,
Wellbeing Workshop for Carers, Falls Prevention Service**

**Learn about KCC's responsibility for Safeguarding -
what this means and how Carers can be involved**

**Representatives from:
KCC Safeguarding, Insight Healthcare, Involve Older
People's Service and Involve Carers**

**Involve Carers' Forum
A regular opportunity to:**

- ❖ **Meet other Carers**
- ❖ **Exchange helpful information**
- ❖ **Have your views heard and questions answered**

Free Parking on-site and Disabled access at the rear,
through the garden

PLEASE NOTE CARERS ONLY TO ATTEND

**If anyone has difficulty in attending and would like help with alternative
care arrangements, or transport, please let us know two weeks before the
Forum by calling 01622 685276**

Unless stated otherwise, all our Groups are at Maidstone Community Support Centre,
39-48 Marsham Street, Maidstone ME14 1HH

Mondays

CRI Support Group - meet in the evening for families/friends affected by people misusing alcohol or drugs - Call Kim Flain at CRI 01622 690944 to register/further details

Crafting Carers - 1st Monday of each month 1.30 - 3.30 for art and craft activities - call us to register

Carers Walking Group - meet last Monday morning of each month, weather permitting (transport from Maidstone may be available) - call us to book

Connecting Carers Coffee & Chat - Carers' Drop-in every Monday between 11.00 to 12.30

Tuesdays

Swimming Group - 10.00 to 11.30 for Carers at the Living Well Fitness Centre. Call us to express your interest

Carers Book Group - 2nd Tuesday of each month, 10.00 - 11.30

Mental Health Carers Support Group - 11.00 - 12.30 Last Tuesday of the month (with the exception of December)

Wednesdays

Learning Disability Carers Group - last Wednesday of the month, 1.30 - 3.00

Thursdays

Zumba for Carers - (a fusion of Latin American dance and exercise) Weekly, 3.00pm - 4.00pm at Mu Mu lounge bar and nightclub in Maidstone

Fridays

Carers' Friday Group [CwC keeping in touch group] 2nd Fri of month 11.00 - 12.30

Carers' Meditation Group - Every fortnight 11.00 - 12.30, call us to book

Other information

Caring with Confidence - 7 week course for Carers, Tuesday 16th August 10.00 to 1.00, call us to book your place

Carers' Week Monday 6th to Sunday 12th June

Carers' Forum - Wednesday 8th June from 10.30 at Grange Moor Hotel, Maidstone