

Carers' Voice



As always we have been busy here at the Centre and have welcomed new members of staff and also had to say some goodbyes. Sadly Finella Dean, the outreach worker for the Didcot area, is leaving us after ten years to move to Dorset. Here at the Centre she will be much missed for her sense of fun as well as her wealth of experience and sensitive professionalism. I know that all of you who have met Finella will want to wish her all the best for the future and to thank her for her advice and support over the years.

We are delighted to welcome back Jackie Chown to be the new outreach worker for the Didcot area. Jackie has previously worked at the Centre, covering the Henley area and we are very pleased that she is able to rejoin the team.

Marie Grandi, a student on the Youth and Community Work Foundation Course at Ruskin College has completed her placement with us. In a very short time she raised funding for the Young Carers to have a fun day at the Vibe in Didcot where she organised the music, art and sporting activities. We wish her all the best for her future career.

We have also welcomed Chris Elliott to the team and she is developing 'Give Us a Break', a scheme for volunteers to sit with people who are not able to be left for long periods so that the carer can have some time off – more of which later.

Margaret MacKenzie Remembered

Many of you may have seen the tributes in the newspapers to Margaret MacKenzie, one of the longstanding trustees of the Centre, who died at the age of 84 in January after a long period of illness. Margaret fought long and hard for the rights of Carers as well as for other causes as a councillor and I would like to think that her spirit lives on. About 300 people attended her funeral which was held in Sutton Courtenay. Although I had only met Margaret once, I came away with a vivid picture of her and her achievements. Bob Ely, chair of the Carers Centre Trustees writes:

I worked with Margaret for some 12 years on the Executive Committee of the South and Vale Carers Centre. Most of that time I was chairman and found her the most loyal of colleagues. She became a tower of strength and wisdom, particularly political wisdom. Our backgrounds were very different but we had a great working relationship because she was never doctrinaire but always practical and generous. Together we fought red tape and bureaucracy in order to help our staff and clients.

On the more personal side I recall her penchant for chocolate biscuits – woe betide us if there were none to accompany coffee at the Centre before meetings. But I also remember her courage in the face of great pain suffered for many years. I visited her quite often during her last long illness and she still retained her strong

will and sense of humour. She even conned me into making her a cup of coffee when she well knew she was only to have herb tea and fruit juice.

To find her memorial we must look about us – like Christopher Wren and St Paul's Cathedral – and see the Centres, the Forum, the schools and many other things to which she devoted her very effective life.

She was a very great lady and I miss her very much.

Bob Ely - Chairman

Carers' Week 9 – 15th June

For us here at the Centre, every week is Carers' Week but Carers UK are working with the WRVS, Independent Age and other agencies to highlight the need for better support and services, concentrating on the health and wellbeing of carers. The theme is: Carers can't afford to be ill.

All three Carers' Centres are joining together with other agencies to publicise what help is available for carers in Oxfordshire and we hope to meet you at the Information Fair.



Young Carers' Funding

We would like to say a big thank you to Jo Grant who ran the Reading Half Marathon – a considerable achievement, and raised £237 for our Young Carers Project.

"On the 2nd March, I set out to run my Half Marathon in Reading with over 11,200 other runners. My main aim was to get round the 13 miles, although I did have a time in which I wanted to complete the course. The day was great fun and there were spectators lining the whole route cheering us on and giving us encouragement, which was much needed. When I reached the 10 mile mark my legs seemed to give way, so I had to walk and run the next 3 miles. When I arrived near the finishing line at the Madjeski football stadium I had a sudden burst of energy to get across the line. I was so pleased to have achieved my goal and also to raise over £200.00 for the Young Carers at the South and Vale Carers Centre."

Jo Grant

It can sometimes be difficult for the Young Carers in rural areas to get to the pick up points for trips and residential outings and we would like to use the money to ensure that the young people are not disadvantaged. Many thanks Jo.

Calling All Website Builders

Do you have expertise in building websites? Do you know someone who does?

Our website needs bringing up to date and we would be grateful if there is anyone who would be able to help us to do this. Please contact the Centre on 01235 510212.



Carers in Oxfordshire Website

Just to remind you that there is lots of information available at <http://www.oxoncarers.org.uk> for carers both new and old. They also welcome feedback and you can leave your comments and suggestions for improvements on the site.

Looking After Me Course

There is another 'Looking After Me' course running in April but places have already been booked up! This free six week course aims to help carers reduce stress, improve their health and not feel so guilty. Cover for caring and travel expenses are paid. The first course was described as "the best training ever received". If you would like to know more or reserve a place on the next course, contact the Carers Forum on 01993 706543.

Finding a Care or Nursing Home

Looking for a care or nursing home can be both time consuming and confusing. However Oxfordshire County Council have a new service on their website where you can find care or nursing homes near to where you live, see if there are any vacancies and compare prices and services.

Go to:

<http://tinyurl.com/5b5tth>

and then use the links on the page. We also hold information at the Carers Centre and you may want to talk over your particular situation with an outreach worker.



Volunteer Befriending Service

Since the beginning of the year a scheme to recruit and train volunteers to sit in for carers has been in the making. Chris Elliott, who is co-ordinating, is very happy to announce that the first squad of volunteers is ready to attend three sessions of training in mid-May.

We are hoping to start sending trained volunteers out to carers' homes by early June. This is quite an accomplishment and we are very grateful to those willing to give up their time. By the next newsletter we should be able to announce volunteers 'in post' and a new group on the way to being ready for the second set of training courses.

If you are interested in volunteering please contact Chris here at the Centre on 01235 510212.

Is The Social Care System Fair?

The Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) have just published their report into the state of social care during 2006 – 2007. They have found that generally those who qualify for social care now have a better experience than before but people who fall outside the system, including self funders, have a poor quality experience that can leave them struggling to cope. According to Dame Denise Platt, people who only five years ago qualified for council arranged help are today excluded by the system and left to fend for themselves.



CSCI are interested in your experiences so that improvements can be made. There is an online survey at <http://www.csci.org.uk> and the consultation lasts until May 8th. If you would like to take part we can print a survey form for you. Call Louise or Di on 01235 510212.



Trips and Outings

Wednesday 14th May Hampton Court
Wednesday 25th June Cheltenham
Wednesday 27th August Bournemouth or Weymouth
Wednesday 12th November Shopping in Southampton
Wednesday 10th December . . . Christmas Dinner at Millets Farm

Please return the reply slip as soon as possible as places are limited.

Due to a very recent grant increase, we are now able to include a ticket to the Palace, Gardens and Maze on the Hampton Court trip so **you will not have to buy a ticket on the day** as it says on the reply slip.

For the seaside trip on 27th August we are considering breaking with tradition and going to Weymouth this year. Please let us know which place you prefer and we will go with what the majority of people want. This is a good way for families to have a day out by the sea together.

Health Walks

If you would like some regular exercise and would prefer to go out with a group, don't forget the Health Walks that are held each week around the area. There are short walks of a mile for those who need to take things easy to begin with and walks of up to three miles for those with more stamina. For details of your local coordinator, contact Barbara Jordan on 01844 217904.

Older Carer?

Are you an older carer caring for someone with learning disabilities? The Older Carers Floating Support Group will meet at the Moorland Day Centre, 24 Dark Lane, Witney, on Monday 28th April from 2:30 – 4:00pm. Contact Chris Witcher at Age Concern on 01235 849400 for further details.

Free Training

We regularly hold training courses for carers offering a wide range of interesting and useful topics. These courses are free to carers registered with us and can provide a chance to meet other carers as well as learn new skills.

If you need someone to sit with the person you are caring for so that you can go on either of the courses, please contact Di at the Centre on 01235 510212.

❖ **Assertiveness – 22nd May 2008, Didcot Civic Hall**

Do you find that when people make requests of you, it's difficult to say no? This course will explore ways of dealing with these challenging situations and the feelings of guilt that can be associated with them. To be held on Thursday 22nd May, starting at 9:30am and running until 12:30pm.

❖ **First Aid – 11th June 2008, Milton Park, Didcot**

Are you confident about what to do in an emergency? This basic course will cover what to do if you have to deal with everyday accidents such as falls, cuts and grazes, burns and scalds and what to do if someone collapses. To be held on Wednesday 11th June, starting at 9:30am and running until 1:30pm.

South & Vale 護理者中心可以幫助你

身為護理者你們需要得到以下的服務嗎？

- 申請福利
- 有關護理的資料
- 參加專為護理者而舉辦的活動和訓練
- 解答有關護理的問題

請打電話或親身到臨 **South & Vale 護理者中心**。
如有需要，請在預約時要求翻譯服務。

開放時間：星期一至星期五上午**9時**至下午**4時**

地址：5 Lydalls Road, Didcot, Oxfordshire, OX11 7HX.

電話：01235 510212

傳真：01235 512198

在其他非辦公時間內請用電話留言

Support Groups

Sometimes carers find it useful to talk to other people who may be experiencing similar situations. There are support groups in the area and generally these are for people looking after someone with a particular condition. We would like to update our information about local support groups for carers. Please contact the Centre if there are carers support groups we should be aware of.

Alzheimer's and Dementia

Groups run regularly in Henley, Thame, Woodcote, Didcot, Abingdon, Wantage and Wheatley. Contact the Alzheimer's Society on 01865 876508.

Mental Health

Groups in Didcot and Abingdon.
Contact Lisa McCue at Rethink on 01865 455876.

Early Onset Dementia

A new group just starting in Wantage.
Contact Alison Rich at The Clive Project on 01235 810575.

Stroke

Group every two weeks.
Contact Delia Wells at the Stroke Association on 01865 361862.

Thank You to Our Funders

Each year we rely on funding from various organisations and individuals to enable the Centre to provide free services to carers throughout the South and Vale districts. We would like to thank:

Oxfordshire County Council	Chinnor	Nettlebed
The Primary Care Trust	Cholsey	North Hinksey
South Oxfordshire District Council	Crowmarsh	North Moreton
Vale of White Horse District Council	Culham	Pishill with Stonor
	Cumnor	Radley
The Town Councils of:	East Hendred	Shellingford
Abingdon	Ewelme	Shrivenham
Didcot	Eye and Dunsden	Sonning Common
Faringdon	Fyfield and Tubney	Stanton St. John
and Wallingford	Goring	St Helen without Parish
	Great Haseley	Steventon
The Parish Councils of:	Great Milton	Sunningwell
Ardington and Lockinge	Highmoor	Sutton Courtenay
Aston Rowant	Kennington	Tiddington with Albury
Berinsfield	Kidmore End	Towersey
Blewbury	Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor	Uffington
Brightwell-cum-Sotwell	Lewknor	Upton
Buckland	Little Milton	Warborough
Chalgrove	Long Wittenham	West Hendred
Charney Bassett	Mapledurham	Wheatley
Checkendon	Marcham	Wootton
Chilton	Moulsford	

... plus various churches, voluntary groups and individuals. We thank them all for their kind financial support.

The Last Word And A Fond Farewell From Finella

All good things have to come to an end sometime and after almost 10 years, my time at The South and Vale Carers Centre is coming to a close. My husband's new job is taking us to Dorset and so it is with great sadness that I shall be leaving my job as one of the Outreach Workers.

What a privilege it has been to be a part of the team and to have worked under two brilliant managers in Kate Oliver, and now Eleanor Cowan, and to have had the best colleagues anyone could wish to work alongside. I have had great support from them all and from our Chairman, Bob Ely, and all the Trustees who give their time voluntarily and who enable the centre to exist.

I have met so many amazing Carers who have inspired me more than they will ever know and who have given me their trust and welcomed me into their homes. My heartfelt thanks to you all.

I am leaving 'my patch' at the end of April in the more than capable hands of Jackie Chown who will, I know, give you all great support and care and the benefit of her wonderful sense of humour.

Finella Dean