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With the cost of postage rising, we like to make savings where ever we can. If you have an email address and would be happy to receive the newsletter this way, please let us know by emailing: [annemoore@carerssupportharrow.org](mailto:annemoore@carerssupportharrow.org)



SEPT 2008

HARROW CARERS NEWSLETTER

Volume 6 Issue 12

## Harrow Carers AGM and visit to Harrow Carers by Ivan Lewis MP - Minister for carers services.

Harrow Carers will be welcoming Ivan Lewis MP - the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Care Services on Monday 27th October 2008. We will have a full agenda but there will be a chance to ask the Minister some questions. The event will also be attended by our local MP Gareth Thomas and local professionals from health and social care.

This event will also incorporate Harrow Carers AGM and we will be sending formal notices to members for the AGM shortly.

In the meantime, if you would like to attend the event with Ivan Lewis MP, please call the office on 020 8868 5224 to register. There will be a limited number of places available and they will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Please take this opportunity to meet the Minister responsible for carers services in central government. It will be a chance for your views to be listened to and fed into the national agenda for carers.



Members Lounge –  
Harrow Civic Centre  
Monday 27th October 2008  
10.45am – 2pm.

## Carers Action Group

Wednesday 8th October 2008

Harrow Baptist Church, College Road, Harrow HA1 1BA

9.30am registration for 10am start - Finish time and light lunch 12 noon

**At the Carers Action Group we will be covering:**

Home Care agencies presentation  
An update of the new homecare agencies that are providing contracted care services in Harrow

A showcase of services and projects run by Harrow Carers with your chance to comment on them and to make suggestions.

The National Strategy for Carers.  
Jasvinder Perihar from London Borough of Harrow will explain the new clauses that could affect your caring role.

Please attend if you can as this is a chance for your voice to be heard. Issues raised by carers at previous Carers Action Groups have been very influential in changing services and helping to gain more support for carers.

**Buses:** Most buses go to Harrow Bus Station

**Trains:** Harrow-on-the-Hill.

Please let us know if you will be coming to the meeting so we can cater accordingly

**020 8868 5224**

## Breaks for Parent Carers Service

Hello, my name is Rowena Fernandes. I joined Harrow Carers in January 2008 to manage the Breaks for Parent Carers Service. I was delighted to get the opportunity to make a difference in people's lives. And I have certainly met families with whom I enjoy working. Everyone has different requirements and I aim to meet these requirements.

Harrow Carers has always been proud to provide a unique, free respite service to parents of children with physical or learning disabilities.

This service has been running for over 3 years and is valued by the families on the scheme.

I am pleased to let you know that there are opportunities to join the scheme. Please inform people you know, who may require the service to contact me.

### TEN COMANDMENTS FOR CARERS

1. Thou shalt NOT be perfect, or even try to be.
2. Thou shalt NOT try to be all things to all people.
3. Thou shalt leave things undone that do not have to be done.
4. Thou shalt not spread thyself too thinly.
5. Thou shalt learn to say NO.
6. Thou shalt schedule time for thyself.
7. Thou shalt switch off regularly and do nothing.
8. Thou shalt be boring, inelegant and unattractive sometimes.
9. Thou shalt not feel guilty.
10. Thou shalt NOT be thine own worst enemy, but thine own best friend.

### Please contact me if:

- you would like regular 'time-out' from your caring role
- you look after a child between 2 and 18 years with learning or physical difficulties.
- you live in the Borough of Harrow
- you are not receiving any other domiciliary or residential respite service ie via Social Services, including direct payments

**Rowena Fernandes**

**020 8868 5224**



## Carers Assessments

Do you care for an adult aged between 18 - 65 who has a learning disability? If the answer is yes then you should be entitled to a carers assessment.

Please contact Allie Brice @ Harrow Learning Disability Team on 0208 4242 1019 to discuss.

## Connecting for Care

This is a brand new online forum bringing ALL carers together in one place.

**Family carers - Community and District Nurses - Healthcare Assistants Social Care Workers - and others**

At **connectingforcare.co.uk** you can:

- Share resources and carer tips
- Find support and create friendship
- Share your experiences and learn from others

Create your personal profile, join the interactive forums and become part of this new carer community at:

**[www.connectingforcare.co.uk](http://www.connectingforcare.co.uk)**

## **APOLOGIES**

During April and May we had some problems with our database as we are changing over to a new database system. This resulted in some of the information that had been received during this time not being transferred over correctly for which we apologise. We especially apologise to those carers who informed us that they were no longer caring, and had asked to be taken off our mailing list. If you have received this newsletter and are no longer caring please ring us (020 8868 5224) and we will ensure that you no longer receive our newsletter or other information.

**SATURDAY 18th OCTOBER 2008**

The Parkinson's Disease Society  
Harrow Branch

Presents

**The British Airways Brass Band**

In concert



Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> October  
7.30pm

**Harrow High School**  
Gayton Road  
Harrow

Tickets £6 each (children under 12 £3)

Box Office  
Sarah Horrey 020 8930 8634



## **Free Low Energy Light Bulbs**

**eDF ENERGY** are giving up to 4 free low energy light bulbs to some carers as part of their Carbon Emissions Reduction Target scheme.

To qualify for the free light bulbs you must be claiming Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, or be over 70 years old.

Please call us on 020 8868 5224 to arrange collection of the light bulbs.

# **Carers Week** **June 9th - 13th**

We had a very successful Carers Week in June in which we met many of our carers at different events that we had organised.

The week started with our 'Country Retreat' at the Niland Centre in Bushy, just outside Watford. The sunny weather, beautiful surroundings, home cooked food and interesting activities made it a day to remember for the 100+ carers who attended. Everybody was in a relaxed mood and enjoyed chatting to our staff and to other carers.

Three families also started their weeks' holiday to Pontins at Blackpool

On Tuesday we had two events at our offices in Pinner Green. The first was a talk with tasting samples about healthy eating and then some gentle exercises that carers could do at home. We also served coffee and biscuits to carers at Northwick Park Hospital.

On Wednesday a coach full of carers enjoyed a day out to Kew Gardens which included a train ride round the garden, a tour of Kew Palace and a very good lunch.

On Thursday we held the Mental Health Conference, which was very well attended and appreciated by all who went.

We would like to thank all the carers who attended the various events and made it one of the best Carers Weeks ever.



# The New Carers Strategy

In June, the Government launched its new National Strategy called "Carers at the heart of 21st century families and communities - a caring system on your side. A life of your own." It is a ten year plan that includes £255m of new money for carers, including local health trusts receiving £150m over the next two years for breaks and respite.

In the preface, the Prime Minister says that the Strategy is the "start of a process rather than the end" and that he acknowledged that carers needed more help and support than has been available in the past and above all he recognised the need for better support for respite and short breaks.

The forward, signed by seven Secretaries of State says that every day 6,000 people take on new caring responsibilities and that people who provide a lot of care tend to have lower incomes, poorer health and are less likely to be in work than their counterparts.

## The vision

The Strategy sets out a ten year vision that, the report says, must be a shared responsibility between central and local government, the NHS, third sector, families and communities.

The principles behind the vision are that by 2018:

- carers will be treated with dignity and respect as expert care partners
- carers will have access to the services they need to

- support them in their caring role
- carers will be able to have a life of their own
- carers will not be forced into financial hardship by their caring role
- carers will be supported to stay mentally and physically well
- children and young people will be protected from inappropriate caring roles.

Carers UK believes this vision reflects what carers said they want to see. We feel that Government has finally got the message that caring is a critical issue and they have taken on the challenge caring poses to society. Delivering this vision would be genuine equality and recognition for carers, and it echoes our own call for a new 'social contract' which makes it clear what the state, employers, and others will provide and what individuals have to contribute.

The Strategy seems to support this view: "The long-term challenge is to create a new settlement between individuals, family and the government...There needs to be an open and honest debate about the appropriate balance of responsibility between the family, the individual and the government if England is to have a sustainable care and support system."

However the Strategy does not make clear what the precise steps are that would lead to this being achieved. They will be pressing government for more detail.



## National Carers Summit 08 NEW DEAL OR RAW DEAL

12th November 2008

Clifford Chance, Canary Wharf, London

Carers UK AGM 10am - 11.15am

National Carers Summit 11.30am - 4pm

Guest Speaker, Rt. Hon. James Purnell, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions

The Government has published its National Carers Strategy setting out its vision for improving support for carers over the next ten years. It includes new money for breaks, and promises a review of carers' benefits, but no timetable for action. How much longer can carers wait to address carer poverty?

This summit will cover issues such as Carer poverty

- How do we tackle the derisory level of carers' benefits so that carers do not fall into financial hardship because of their caring role?
- Should carers get extra financial help with winter fuel expenses and the cost of transport associated with their caring role?
- How do we better support carers who are working part time on low incomes?

Health, care and support

- Should carers be paid using the direct payments of the person they care for?
- How do we end the postcode lottery of care and support?
- Are carers plugging the gaps caused by cuts in social services and tightening the eligibility criteria?

Book your place at this event by going to

[www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)

or phone 020 7378 4931

# Free Home Fire Safety Check

## Be Safe and Sound

Is anyone in your household disabled or over 60 years of age?



## Harrow Association of Disabled People is offering a Free Home Fire Safety Check

We want you to be safe and sound. We're carrying out Free Home Fire Safety Checks, in partnership with the **London Fire Brigade**, for people who live in the London Borough of Harrow who are disabled or over 60 years of age.

The Free Home Fire Safety Check takes about 45 minutes to complete and if you need smoke alarms they will be supplied and installed free of charge during the visit.

The smoke alarms installed have a 10-year battery life and can be disabled if you are grilling or frying in the kitchen and will re-set themselves after a short time to ensure that you remain fully protected. We can also supply and install special smoke alarms suitable for people with a visual impairment or who are profoundly deaf.

The Free Home Fire Safety Checks and installations are carried out by our staff who have been fully trained by the **London Fire Brigade**.

If you would like us to visit, please telephone us on 020 8861 9929, fax 020 8861 9926, minicom 020 8861 4547 or e-mail: [s.dashwood@had.org.uk](mailto:s.dashwood@had.org.uk)



Do You Have a Disability?

or

Are Unemployed or  
Need Training?

guidance



training



or

Female

+

Basic Education



advice

support

We can help YOU



Take your "Next Step" to  
Harrow Association of Disabled people

[Registered charity no. 1080505]

Contact Stuart Dashwood, Harrow Association of Disabled people.

Tel: 020 8861 9929 Fax: 020 8861 9926

Minicom: 020 8861 4547 e-mail: s.dashwood@had.org.uk

# Are you paying too much Council Tax?

**Carers UK are suggesting that some carers may be paying too much Council Tax as they are not claiming discounts that can apply to them.**

## **How does the Council Tax discount scheme work?**

Council Tax is paid at a flat rate regardless of how many adults live in the property. A discount can be applied to the bill if:

- only one adult lives in the property or no-one lives in the property
- adults living in the property are 'disregarded'. This includes some carers, people aged 18 for whom child benefit is payable, students, and people who are severely mentally impaired. Children and young people are always ignored.

A 25% discount applies if, after taking into account disregarded people, there is only one adult resident in the property.

A 50% discount applies if, after taking into account disregarded people, there are no adults resident in the property.

## **Which carers are disregarded?**

To be disregarded as a carer you must:

- provide care for at least 35 hours a week and
- live in the same property as the person you are caring for and
- not be the spouse or partner of the person you are caring for, or their parent if you care for a child under 18 and
- the person you care for must receive either the highest rate of the care component for Disability Living Allowance or the higher rate of Attendance Allowance or constant attendance allowance.

## **Which people are eligible for the severe mental impairment discount?**

A person is considered 'severely mentally impaired' if they have a severe impairment of intelligence and social functioning, and this appears to be permanent. To qualify for the discount they will need a certificate from a GP confirming this. The certificate will be free of charge. The person you care for must also be claiming one of specified benefits which include:

- Disability Living Allowance (middle or high rate care component)
- Attendance Allowance
- Constant Attendance Allowance
- Severe Disablement Allowance
- Incapacity Benefit
- Income Support where a disability premium is included.

## **How do you apply for a discount?**

If you feel that you qualify for a discount you should check your Council Tax bill to see if any discounts or reductions have already been awarded. If not you should contact:

**Harrow Council on 020 8428 1670.**

# Become a Member of Harrow Carers



In September 2006 we launched our Membership of Harrow Carers. Many of our carers became members and enjoyed benefits such as

- A vote at the AGM
- Receiving Annual Reports
- Selecting the Management Committee
- Standing for the Management Committee
- Invited to special Events

The cost of membership is only £5, and subscriptions are now due for the period up to April 2009.

To renew your membership or become a new Member for 2008/9 at a cost of £5 please return this Form.

I wish to apply for Membership/or renew my Membership of Harrow Carers for the year 2008/9.

Name ----- Date -----

Address -----

----- Postcode -----

Telephone No ----- Mobile No -----

Signature -----

## You do not have to become a member to receive services from Harrow Carers

Membership Payment Fee	£5.00
I wish to make a donation of	£ _____
Total of Monies sent	£ _____

Please make cheques payable to **Carers Support Harrow**  
Registered Charity No. 1062149. Company Limited by Guarantee No 3325055

Please return to Harrow Carers, 25-27 Pinner Green, Pinner, HA5 2AF.

### Gift Aid helps you give more at no cost to you

“Please treat all donations I’ve made to Carers Support Harrow since 6th April 2000 and all donations I make in the future until I notify you otherwise as Gift Aid” The Inland Revenue Gift Aid scheme allows us to reclaim an extra 28p tax for every £1 you donate, if you confirm that:

“I have paid UK Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the tax that the charity will reclaim on this donation.” Please sign below if this is true.

Signed: ----- Print your name: -----