



Welcome to the April edition of Volunteers News



### Investing in Volunteers (IiV) Steering Group

Tom, Carer support worker; Andrew, Bat & Chat volunteer; Catherine, Reception volunteer; Nikki, Befriending coordinator; Valerie, Volunteer coordinator and Dane, IiV Assessor

## WE ARE INVESTING IN VOLUNTEERS

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS WORK TOGETHER: PAGE 3



compact for leeds  
public and third sector  
working together for the people of leeds



Befriending  
Networks



NATIONAL  
LOTTERY FUNDED

**Message from Valerie,  
Volunteer coordinator**

*Hello everyone,*

Welcome to the spring edition of our volunteers newsletter.



Back in January, we received the fantastic news that our organisation had won the new contract to deliver the carers service in Leeds for the next 5 years. To celebrate, we've organised a 'Let's celebrate together' event during Volunteers Week.

In the same month, a national survey on the volunteer experience was published. The survey suggested that a quality volunteering experience is Inclusive, Flexible, Impactful, Connected, Balanced, Enjoyable, Voluntary and Meaningful.

At Carers Leeds, it is important to us that our volunteers enjoy what they do. This year we are going to do our own survey to ask you about your volunteer experience.

This month, with the help of two volunteers we started work on renewing our 'Investing in Volunteers' quality standard award.

This issue includes a volunteer blog; an invitation to volunteer events; befriending project update; how volunteers made a difference in 2018; meet the Advice line team; a safeguarding briefing and carers week information.

We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter.

Thank you for all the joy, compassion and strength you bring to Carers Leeds.

## **Dates for your diary**

**Volunteers Week Event—3 June—see page 5**

**Peer Meetings—May, Jun, Sept & Dec—see page 5**

**Carers Week—10-16 June—see back page**

*invest in  
people who  
invest in you*

A small steering group of staff and volunteers are working together to achieve the quality standard **Investing in Volunteers**

At Carers Leeds we want our volunteers to have the best experience with us and to feel safe, supported and valued in their role. To support this, the group will review our volunteer policies and practice and the contribution made by you, our volunteers.

We couldn't do what we do without you! Our Independent assessor, Dane Gould will be inviting a cross section of our volunteers to tell him about their experience. If possible, Dane will meet with people face-to-face, but will also speak to some volunteers by phone. He wants to get a full picture of how we work with and support our volunteers—it's not a test! It is how we're doing as an organisation, our volunteers are not the ones who are being assessed!

## **KA-POW! Volunteering Impact**

We know that volunteering has a positive impact on our volunteers, on our organisation and on our carers. This year we want to collect some evidence to assess the wide range of impacts from personal growth of volunteers, greater sense of wellbeing for carers and increased level of skills for the organisation.



To do this we are going to use a Volunteering Impact Assessment Toolkit to carry out a survey. Which means volunteers, staff and carers will be invited to complete a questionnaire.

The results of the survey will enable us to:

- + identify what works well and what we need to improve
- + better understand how volunteering makes a difference
- + provide evidence that can be used to get more support and funding

The Impact survey will replace our Annual Satisfaction survey so you won't be asked to complete two questionnaires this year! The results will be published and made available to all our volunteers.



"I always said after retiring I would never volunteer but life changes."

**Hello from Coleen** I was asked to write a blog for the Carers Leeds website regarding my experience as a volunteer having started my role as volunteer Dementia Welfare Caller in August 2017. I'm really not sure what a blog is but I can write about how my first year evolved.

I worked for almost ten years as a Carers Support Worker for the Alzheimer's Society – best job ever. I loved it and retired three years ago. I still keep in touch with my old colleagues who are now employed by Carers Leeds. I always said after retiring I would never volunteer but life changes.

I met up with my old colleagues at the cafe at John Lewis and they told me they were planning a new welfare calling service as they were so busy with new referrals and would I be interested? I didn't take much persuading (just a coffee) and they didn't quite have my arm up my back! So the process started.

I was surprised how rigorous the interviewing, selection, training process was and impressed by how valued and grateful Carers Leeds are to their many volunteers.

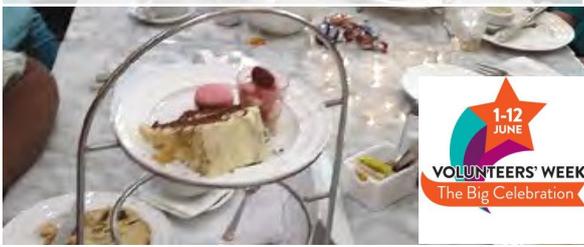
I volunteer one day per month and make welfare calls. I ring carers who have been seen by the team and talk to them about how they are, do they need any help with anything and can we help in any way? I know this helps the team as they have so many referrals they don't have time to do follow up calls. The carers are very grateful for the call. Sometimes I can answer their queries myself or if I don't know the answer I pass them back to the team. I average at least a dozen calls a session sometimes more. There is without fail always one call which makes me feel I have helped a carer. This is a great feeling and makes it worthwhile. I get to catch up with my old colleagues and meet new ones.

They are a very friendly team at Carers Leeds from the top down. I am thanked constantly for volunteering and for my help. No one is too busy to help with my many computer queries and always do it with a smile. We get regular training, made to feel part of the team and are invited to thank you events at least twice a year, trips to the theatre, afternoon teas etc. and made to feel very welcome and appreciated. I thoroughly enjoyed my first year of volunteering and would highly recommend it.

**What's a blog?** News stories on our website that you can subscribe to and receive by email. <https://www.carersleeds.org.uk/carers-leeds-blog/>



**Let's celebrate together!**



**Volunteers Week 2019** We've got a lot to celebrate—winning the new contract to run the Carers service in Leeds and having 50+ fantastic volunteers. **We couldn't do what we do without you!**

**Join us on Monday 3rd June** for Afternoon tea, meet other volunteers, enjoy a fun quiz and a little bit of creativity! There will also be a presentation of 'Length of service' certificates which will range from a few weeks to 20 years!

**Venue:** Newly refurbished—Old Fire Station, Gipton, LS9 6NL

**Time:** 10:00am—3:00pm **Transport:** Meet at the venue or at Carers

## WHAT'S NEW?



## We are changing the way we run the volunteer peer support sessions

Our volunteers roles can be rewarding and at times challenging and we want you to have the best support possible. This is often given by other volunteers who may have a similar role to you and in return, they benefit from your knowledge and experience.

The sessions will be an opportunity for you to socialise with other volunteers, share experiences, solve problems, make suggestions, take away some tips and have some fun.

In 2019 we will be offering 4 opportunities for you to get together with other volunteers.

**Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May - Join us for brunch as we focus on 'looking after yourself whilst volunteering'. Drop-in/leave anytime between 10:30am-12:00pm.**

**Monday 3rd June— Volunteers Week Event—Let's celebrate together!**

**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> September – Join us for brunch as we focus on 'reflecting on the skills and experiences you've gained from volunteering'**

**December (dates to be arranged) - Our annual thank you social events with the opportunity for peer support.**

**BOOK NOW ▶**

**To book your place on any of the above events phone our Reception volunteer team on 0113 246 8338 anytime after Tuesday 23 April.**



# Carers Befriending

## Message from Nikki, Carers Befriending Co-ordinator

As you know, the befriending project received some additional funding to offer tailored support to carers aged 50+ to help reduce loneliness and social isolation. I'm thrilled to say that this is going from strength to strength thanks to the commitment shown by the team of wonderful volunteer befrienders (many of whom also support carers under the age of 50).

### Some fun facts

- ◆ There are currently 18 befrienders (and 'befrienders in training')
- ◆ They have supported about 45 carers since the befriending project began.
- ◆ The average time for a face to face befriending session is 70mins.
- ◆ The average time for a befriending support telephone call is 35 minutes.
- ◆ The average number of sessions per carer is 12.
- ◆ The youngest carer supported by a befriender is 17 and the eldest is 91!
- ◆ The feedback received from carers equates to -



- ◆ Some of the topics discussed during befriending sessions include the caring role (of course), climate change, Brexit, Soaps, gardening and mountain climbing!
- ◆ The most common bit of feedback (and my personal favourite) – 'we had lots of laughter'

**Befrienders** are carefully selected volunteers, who are trained to provide support and companionship to lonely or socially isolated carers.

# How Volunteers Made A Difference

## At Carers Leeds In 2018

“Every volunteer brings something very special to Carers Leeds. In every role they bring a dedication and **commitment** to what they do and to the organisation and as CEO I can ask for no more.” - Val Hewison, CEO

Receptionists helped answer <b>10,358</b> admin phone calls	<b>2,800+</b> <b>HOURS DONATED</b>	Welfare Callers made <b>380+</b> welfare calls to dementia carers
Befrienders reduced the social isolation of <b>30</b> carers	Envelope Fillers filled <b>32,400+</b> envelopes with Carers News	Bat & Chat Organiser ran <b>50</b> table tennis and chat events
Yellow Card Admin registered <b>350</b> GP referrals for carer support		Book Group Organisers ran <b>20</b> book groups for carers
Support Group Assistant helped run <b>12</b> support groups	Database Assistant updated <b>500</b> records on our info database	LGBT Event Assistant helped to organise our presence at <b>PRIDE</b> and other events
Admin Volunteer kept our Support Group booklet and Google map up to date	Wellbeing day Receptionist greeted <b>88</b> Carers who enjoyed a massage	Time for Us Café Assistant helped run <b>11</b> cafes for carers
Dementia Café Assistant helped to run <b>12</b> cafes	Crafty Carers Organiser delivered <b>11</b> craft sessions for carers	Knitting volunteer raised <b>£50</b> that paid for <b>2</b> carer massages

# Meet the team—Advice Line service



Hi! Jo and Steve here.

We are members of the team of staff that provide the Advice Line service. We have known each other since 2011 as we used to work together in a previous life!

Along with our other Advice Line colleagues, we deal with telephone calls and visitors to the drop-in centre. The nature of the calls that we receive vary, with people getting in touch for information, advice or support. Some people will have contacted us before and might be ringing us with a specific question. But many are contacting us for the first time. It may have been recommended to

them by a friend or maybe their GP, or they may have reached crisis point. Lots of calls involve us explaining our services to people, and then asking them how they are...This usually reduces people to tears and we give them lots of emotional support. Some people are satisfied to know that we are here for the future and might just want to sign up to receive the newsletter. But many will be referred in to other Carers Leeds services, including our wonderful volunteer befriending service. We are so fortunate to be able to give people - especially the first time callers - all the time in the world. As far as Advice Line is concerned, there is no such thing as a stupid question! We encourage people to get in touch with us anytime. Spread the word amongst the carers that you support. And use us yourselves too!



Phone the Carers Advice Line



Drop in to Central Leeds Office



Arrange an Appointment or Home Visit



Enquire Via [Email](#) or on This Website

Carers Leeds supports unpaid carers.

Carers Advice Line: **0113 380 4300**

Carers Advice Email: **[advice@carersleeds.org.uk](mailto:advice@carersleeds.org.uk)**

# Safeguarding- Everybody's Business



In the broadest terms, safeguarding is everybody's business. Adult and child abuse can happen to anyone, anywhere and responsibility for dealing with it lies with us all as public, volunteers and professionals.

At Carers Leeds we take people's safety very seriously. Safeguarding is about keeping vulnerable people safe, especially adults and children at risk of abuse, while protecting and supporting those who work and volunteer for us. It is important that you are aware of what to look out for and what to do if you're concerned about someone you meet through your volunteering such as a carer, a volunteer or a member of staff.

Abuse may be deliberate or unintentional, a one-off or something that happens repeatedly. The affects can be short-term or last a life time.

**Types of abuse** can be Discriminatory, Psychological, Financial or material, Neglect, Self-neglect, Organisational, Sexual, Modern slavery, Physical and Domestic abuse.

**Signs of abuse** of these types may be obvious or subtle. You may notice things like: bruising or injuries they are reluctant to explain or talk about; a change in their personal hygiene or they look unkempt, someone with them uses derogatory language towards them; a change in their financial circumstances.

If someone tells you about abuse, or you witness it yourself, you should try to stay calm, make sure the person is immediately safe, listen to their concerns and reassure them that the issue will be taken seriously.

All volunteers, carrying out any role, have a duty to act in a timely manner on any concern or suspicion if they are concerned about someone being abused.

## What you should do if you become aware of abuse

1. Share your suspicion or concern with your Volunteer supervisor or another member of staff as soon as possible. You must not try to investigate yourself.
2. If you feel that a child or adult is in immediate danger, this must be reported to a member of staff immediately. If this is not possible, then you must report your concerns to the police.

## TRAINING



Refresher safeguarding training will be offered to all our volunteers later this year.



10 - 16 June 2019

**Carers Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring**, highlight the challenges unpaid carers face and recognise the contribution they make to families and communities throughout the UK. It also helps people who don't think of themselves as having caring responsibilities to identify as carers and access much-needed support.

The campaign is brought to life by thousands of individuals and organisations who come together to organise activities and events throughout the UK, drawing attention to just how important caring is.

## Carers Week 2019

There are 6.5 million people in the UK who are carers. They will be looking after a family member or friend who has a disability, mental or physical illness or who needs extra help as they grow older.

Caring can be a hugely rewarding experience but carers often find it challenging to take care of their own wellbeing whilst caring. Its impact on all aspects of life from relationships and health to finances and work should not be underestimated. Caring without the right information and support can be tough.

In the May & June edition of **Carers News** you can find out about the events and activities that we've organised during Carers Week. If you would like to read our carers newsletter you can download it from the publications section of our [website](#) or you can receive it by post if you call our Reception volunteer team on 0113 246 8338.

### Contact Details

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**Carers Leeds Advice Line:** 0113 380 4300



[www.carersleeds.org.uk](http://www.carersleeds.org.uk)



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