

Unite Carers in Mid Devon

Summer 2022 Newsletter



Welcome to our
new-style
Newsletter

Traditionally at Unite Carers we have produced separate newsletters for Carers and Volunteers every quarter, but this Summer our newsletter is for everyone.

We do hope you enjoy it. Please let us know what you think.

A WORD FROM OUR CHAIR

This is my second newsletter since stepping into the role of Chairperson and quite a lot has happened since our last one, much of which is covered in the newsletter.

The Board of Trustees welcomed Tina Webber who joined us in June as a Trustee. Tina is a long standing volunteer with a good knowledge of how Unite works.

We are also pleased to have Tracy Downs helping Sharon in the office for 1 day a week, since Sarah sadly left us in June. Tracy's knowledge and expertise will be a great asset to our charity.

We were extremely privileged to be chosen as the charity for the year by the Riverside Club recently and this resulted in the presentation of a very generous cheque for £1004.20. The event was attended by Richard Foord, the MP for Tiverton and Honiton, who acknowledged the challenging times ahead for all unpaid carers in our area.

Dave Wood did a splendid job organising the technical side and Dave was also responsible for raising £420 of the donated money through Twyford internet Radio. The Riverside Club kindly hosted the event and they also host the regular meetings of our Exe Valley Oasis and the Tiverton Carers' Coffee Group. Thank you. Debbie and Matt Winter, Riverside Club Stewards, were duly thanked for all their support.

As the AGM approaches, I hope you have the date in your diary and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the Hartnoll Hotel. We hope that Richard Foord will accept his invitation and join us. Have your questions ready just in case.

Bernice Philbrick – Chair of Trustees

NEWS FROM OUR SUPPORT GROUPS

In May we introduced our **Let's Unite** support group for carers of school-aged children with Special Educational needs. The group meets on the 1st Wednesday of the month at our No 4 office on Bridge Street, Tiverton, and provides a safe space for carers to receive support from likeminded carers and volunteers who have walked in your shoes.

May was a busy month because it also saw the beginning of our popular **Let's Unite Outdoors** family sessions for carers with primary aged children with additional Special Educational Needs. The



Bernice accepting the generous cheque from the Riverside Club

sessions are run by Katie, our wonderful forest school's teacher, supported by Steve our fantastic and very experienced young carer's volunteer, with lots of fun had by all. The sessions ran from May until the end of July with a break for the school summer holidays and they resume in September.

Our **Safe Stop Sitting Service** continues to play a vital role in offering respite to our carers. The warm and welcoming group offers a safe space for adult loved ones to be left with our capable staff and volunteers for 2 and a half hours where they will be entertained with an array of activities including craft, boules, bingo and so much more. The sitting service is based in Tiverton and costs £10 per session and we are looking to expand to other areas. Please do let us know if you would like to be able to access another SSSS group to a location near to you.

If you are interested in joining or supporting any of our support groups, we'd be very happy to chat to you. Please do give us a call us at the Unite Office – 01884 257511 and ask for Sharon or Tracy.

NEWS FROM OUR ADULT CARER BEFRIENDING TEAM

July has seen a flurry of activity for our invaluable Befriending Support Team, with several new matches made, helping to support adult carers who may be feeling lonely and isolated. Befriending Support can be either in person over a coffee and a chat or through telephone support, or a combination of both. We try our best to match you with a like-minded person and if there's ever any problems, we're here to help. It's all about what works best for you.

If you are feeling lonely and would like someone to talk to on a regular basis, please do get in touch with us; we're here to make life just a little bit easier for you.

We would love to recruit more volunteers of all ages to our Befriending Team, particularly from men to support men, so please do get in touch to find out more.

NEWS FROM YOUNG CARERS CONNECTED

Young Carers Connected, or YCC as it's more commonly known, is our project in partnership with TTVS in Bideford, supporting young carers between the ages of 8-24 years.



Carers are always busy looking after loved ones and coping with school and college work, but some of our young carers have managed to get a break away recently to go snorkeling with the the seals and dolphins off the coast of Lundy Island on 11th-12th July and 19th-20th July. The trips were kindly donated to young carers by Seaful and Easy Divers North Devon.

Quote from a young carer: "This was the best day of my life!"

During May, young carers were invited to the Plough Arts Centre for 3 Craft and Drama workshops, culminating in a big Jubilee Party for young carers and their families on 2nd June.

On 20th April young carers from YCC attended the Young Carers Development Trust Aspirations Conference at Bristol City Hall with a tour of the Bristol Uni Campus also included.

There's lots more coming up for young carers in August to keep spirits up – a day of mast climbing and other activities on the SS Freshspring in Bideford and an afternoon canoeing along the beautiful River Exe kindly donated by the Exeter Canoe Club.

Please see our Young Carers Connected Facebook page for more information and some great photos.

[Young Carers Connected | Facebook](#)

If you'd like to know more about YCC, please contact Tracy YCC at tracy@unitemd.org.uk or call the office number on 01884 257511.

CARER'S CORNER - FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR CARERS

It's a difficult time for many of us at the moment financially, but there may be help available for you. The Turn2Us Website has an excellent Benefits Calculator, a Grant Search and information on Energy Schemes to help with energy and water bills. You can find it here: www.turn2us.org.uk – Well worth a look.

For Parent Carers the Household Support Fund is now open again to help financially support families on low incomes with child(ren) pre-birth to 18 yrs. The HSF can help with food, utility and energy costs and white goods, and runs until 30th September 2022.



Date for your diaries

Unite Carers AGM – 14th September, 2pm at

The Hartnoll Hotel, Bolham



We cordially invite you join us for a cream tea at our AGM – Please call the office to book your place – Thank you!

UNITE CARERS FACEBOOK PAGE

For those of us that use Facebook, the Unite Carers Facebook page is worth taking a look at. You can find it by clicking here:

[Unite Carers in Mid Devon | Facebook](#)

Or by searching Unite Carers in Mid Devon in the Facebook search box.

Our Facebook page has reached 127 people in July, which is an impressive increase of 323.3%.

Please like and share!

And finally...

Introducing our new **Spotlight On regular feature – this time it's Tracy Downs**

I'd like to introduce myself if I may – I'm Tracy and the creator of your newsletter this quarter.

Some of you may already know me from my work with Young Carers at Devon Young Carers, Unite Kids Who Care and most recently with Young Carers Connected, a project for young carers in North and Mid Devon, so I have been supporting young carers in some shape or form for around 6 years.

Before working with young carers I was a Family Support Worker for South West Family Support, nine years as Assistant Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDSCO) at Chulmleigh Academy and a whopping 15 years working for Reuters as Assistant Editor on the editorial desks and latterly as a Financial Markets Analyst.

I have 3 adult children, Lucy, Bill and Anna and live with my partner in Nomansland. We look after 4 cats (2 feral) called Pig, Midnight, Solo and Black Cat, 1 dog called Petal, 3 retired ponies called Rosie Bear, Pepper and Twiggy, oh and 5 rescue chickens (mustn't forget the ladies).

In my spare time, when not feeding animals, I like to walk a bit, run a bit, particularly running on trails, and cycle a bit. I've recently come back from cycling across Spain and Portugal with my brother and cycling the C2C route from Whitehaven in the Lake District across the Pennines and into Sunderland. In October I'm going to try to run (probably more walk) the London Marathon.

I've been helping out in the office for a day or so over the last 3 of weeks, with Sharon, and have really enjoyed chatting with carers and volunteers and getting to know you a little better. Please bear with me whilst I learn the ropes of Adult Carer Support. Thank you for all that you do to help others.

Warmest wishes, Tracy

Next time we put the **Spotlight On** Tina Webber. 😊

CONTACT US

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If you would like an adapted newsletter – large print, translation, dyslexia friendly colours, please do get in touch with the office and we will be happy to help with this.

UNITE CARERS SUPPORT GROUPS AND SERVICES – SUMMER 2022

Client Base	Group Name	Location	Day in the month	Time
All Carers	Cullompton Carers Coffee Group	The Hayridge Cullompton,	2nd Wednesday	10.30 am to 12 noon
All Carers	Tiverton Carers Coffee Group	Riverside Club, Tiverton	4 th Tuesday	2 pm
All Carers & Ex-Carers	Uffculme Support Group	Various Locations	4 th Monday	12.30 pm
Cared-for	Safe Stop Sitting Service	Cherith Church, Tiverton	2 nd & 4 th Wednesday	10 am to 12.30 pm
Carers of Adults & Teenagers With Additional Needs	Carers of Adults & Teenagers With Additional Needs	Unite Carers 4 Bridge Street, Tiverton	3 rd Wednesday	10.30 am to 12 noon
Carers of Primary Age Children With Special Educational Needs	Let's Unite Outdoors	Wilcombe School, Tiverton	Seasonal contact Unite	
Carers of School Age Children With Special Educational Needs	Let's Unite Peer Support Group	Unite Carers 4 Bridge Street, Tiverton	1st Wednesday	9.30 am to 11.30 am
Dementia Carers	Bampton Oasis Group	The Swan, Bampton	1st Tuesday	10.30 am to 11.30 am
Dementia Carers	Culm Valley Oasis	Padbrook Park, Cullompton	3rd Monday	2.30 pm to 4.00 pm
Dementia Carers	Exe Valley Oasis	Riverside Club, Tiverton	2nd Thurs	2.00 pm
Dementia Carers & Cared-for	Forget-me-Not Cafe	Cherith Church, Tiverton	3rd Tuesday	2.00 pm to 4.00 pm