



CARING MATTERS

Brent Carers Centre
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Brent Carers Centre Newsletter

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Welcome to our July newsletter which reflects a time of much change with Shirley leaving and our new Chief Officer Dermot joining us

this month. We all wish Shirley a fond farewell, she will be much missed. However, we are very pleased to welcome Dermot to the

staff team and look forward to supporting him in his new role.

Dermot Boyle, Chief Officer, Brent Carers Centre

I am very pleased to be joining Brent Carers Centre. I have worked in the charity sector for virtually all of my career moving between local charities and the larger national ones. Over the years I have also worked with a

variety of service user groups and I hope that this serves as useful experience in learning about the wide range of activities with which the organisation is involved. Obviously Shirley's amazing contribution to the organisation makes her a very hard act to follow,

but I look forward to this challenge just as I do the challenge of maintaining the organisation in the currently difficult time for charities. I shall certainly be relying on the talents and experience of all our supporters in doing this.

Dermot Boyle



Best Wishes from us all to Shirley and Pete enjoying more time together in the future

Well the time has come to say farewell and what a send off! I have had such lovely comments from everyone. It felt really right for me to do most of my farewell during carers week, which I have always felt was Brent Carers Centre's opportunity to say thank you to carers by offering them fun and companionship. I hope carers are enjoying the different trips that have been organised. Personally I have

been having a great time on the 2 activities in carers week and my 2 trips in the following week. I wish you all well and my request is that you remember that you carers are really important, so look after yourselves and try to take a small time out to be you.

Hugs to you all,

Shirley

Brent Community Champion Awards

The Brent Community Champions Awards are organised by Brent Council and held every year to honour those who make a difference to others in the borough. They are presented in May at the Annual Meeting of Brent Council by the outgoing Mayor of Brent. This year Brent Carers Centre's Board of Trustees was delighted that their nomination of an award

to our longest serving Board member, Sylvia Wiseman, was approved by Brent Council. Sylvia was a member of the steering group of Brent Carers Centre in 1991, and has served as Chair, Vice Chair and continues as a valuable Board member. She has also represented carers on many committees and has no hesitancy fighting the carers' cause. She has been a carer twice so she speaks from the heart.



Sylvia Wiseman accepting her Brent Community Champion Award

An Opportunity to Attend The Mayor's Thames Festival

11 & 12 September 2010 - Free public event.

Noon-10pm from Westminster Bridge to Tower Bridge and beyond. The Mayor's Thames Festival takes place annually in mid-September. Activities take place over a weekend on the River Thames, the riverside walkways, roads, bridges, docks and public open spaces from Westminster Bridge to Tower Bridge and beyond. The festival is a stunning, free celebration of London and its river and it has become a key highlight in the city's cultural life. Its river and

water-focused activities aim to inspire and excite and its extensive education programme involving some 300 schools hopes to increase interest in and appreciation of the river and its environment.

In 2009 a group of ten of us went to the second day of the festival and spent the whole day there. It was a great day out, 5 of us even made it to 10pm to see the fireworks display!

We would like to encourage as many of you who can to go to the festival to visit it.

This year staff from Brent Carers Centre will be going on Saturday 11th September.

If you would like to join us to meet as a group you are welcome to, it may be

an incentive to come out if you are meeting others.

We can arrange meeting times and points throughout the day but ask that you make your own arrangements to get there. There are many stalls and eating venues or you may prefer to bring a picnic for the day.

If you would like to go to the Thames Festival you are welcome to meet up with us. **Contact Sonia at Brent Carers Centre on 020 8795 6240.**

If you would like to go yourself on either days please check information about the weekend on www.thamesfestival.org

SING! SING! SING! BRENT MIXED VOICES CHOIR

Brent residents of any age are invited to join singing sessions led by Sense of Sound.

They are a community music education organisation, who have worked with the BBC and have even trained X-Factor finalists!

Singing has such a therapeutic, social and fun value. We would recommend it to anyone in the borough.

No previous experience is needed. You can learn to sing with a professional tutor in a relaxed and friendly setting.

The sessions run for 10 weeks with a 2 week break at the end of summer

WHEN: Brent Mixed Voices will meet every Monday starting 12th July, 7 – 8.30pm.

WHERE: Vernon Hall, Chalkhill Community Centre, The Welford Centre, 113 Chalkhill Road, Wembley, HA9 9FX.

CONTACT: Call Joanne Brown for more information on 020 8976 1079 or go along to a session and SING, SING, SING!!!!

Carers Book Club

The Book Club has been running now for about 18 months. During that time we have read an amazing array of books from heavyweight novels such as *The Kite Runner* to short comedies like *The Snapper* by Roddy Doyle and short stories from all over the world. Many of the books I would never have chosen from the library but have been wonderfully surprised by stories which have gripped me, to writing

styles I thought I couldn't read! As a carer it gave me permission to find time for myself without feeling guilty and as an ex-carer has given me reasons to keep on reading and finding new works to delight me.

We have read crime novels, serious novels, short stories of all sorts, lighthearted comedies and sometimes poetry. What comes out of our discussions is really amazing as it not just what we read but how it affects us and fits into our very varied

personal experiences. I think we all learn new things about ourselves in the process.

Some of our members have had to miss some meetings because of other commitments and we are always looking for new people to join us and enjoy the reading experience. If you think this could be for you then please come and join us. We meet once a month at the Centre. **Please contact Brenda at Brent Carers office for more details.**

Film Club for Carers

If you enjoy the cinema or have not had the opportunity to go to the cinema as much as you would like, why not join Brent Carers Centre's Film Club for Carers. Carers meet on the third Thursday of each month at the Tricycle Cinema to watch the

matinee of the day and have an opportunity to discuss the film together afterwards. This is a great way to enjoy a variety of films and to meet and socialise with other carers. Your membership will entitle you to a discount on your tickets to the Tricycle Cinema. If you are

interested in joining Brent Carers Centre's Film Club **please contact Brenda at Brent Carers Centre on 020 8795 6240.**

A life of your own is possible!

The theme for this year's Carers week was 'A Life Of My Own', with this in mind Brent Carers Centre and Brent Council organised a number of fun and interesting events for you to take part in.

These events were aimed at giving you a break from your caring role, to meet with others and have fun!

So, Carers week is over but having time to yourself, having fun and socialising doesn't have to end there. It is very important that you allow yourself a break where possible. As a carer it may come as a surprise to you that you are entitled to a life of your own, but you are, and very much deserve to nurture yourself and grab any opportunities that come your way to enable you to fulfil your own potential.

Afternoon at Mercers Hall

Can I share my experience with you? When I lost my mum, I felt I had also lost myself, but with the help of the Moving On Project meetings I have begun to feel that I have regained myself to some degree. I was very pleasantly surprised recently to be invited by the Carers Association to join them on an outing to Mercers Hall in the City to hear some opera! Well I must admit that I'm not a huge opera fan, but thought why not experience something different! We took the Met to Moorgate and I was suddenly thrown back to the early 1960's when as a teenager and I was sent to temp as a secretary in the City. At the time it was such a depressing place, grey buildings, some bomb sites were still remaining and it really was somewhere that I didn't want to be. But now, WOW it's a busy bustling place with some really amazing buildings. We arrived at Mercers Hall and its entrance does

What happens if you do not have a life of your own you may feel stressed, exhausted and resentful which may eventually start to have a negative impact on your physical and mental well-being.

So, what can you do to have a life of your own? You may want to learn something new, get some exercise, meet new people, have a hobby, and learn how to relax. There is plenty to do in Brent and getting involved in your local community is a great way to make friends and pursue interests.

- Do you deserve a life of your own?
- Do you enjoy socialising, learning new things and having fun?
- Can you allow yourself a break from time to time?

If you have answered yes to these

nothing to prepare you for the inside! We were directed to the most beautiful large room with a high ceiling and huge tapestry wall hangings and their descriptions told us about them. The building has been rebuilt 3 times, the last time after World War II when it was destroyed during the blitz, and is maintained to the highest degree. The photos on their website really don't do the building justice. After leaving our coats we were shown upstairs to yet another amazing room, all wood panels, stained glass windows and fabulous chandeliers. As we sat quietly waiting, a lady entered wearing a very sparkly pink gown and sat at the piano, as she started to play we heard voices and a man and lady came in singing and joined the pianist. Well that was a surprise entrance! They sang songs from many popular shows in an operatic style and I was surprised how many I recognised! The female singer had several change

questions then let me ask you a final one; what are you waiting for?!

For information about local sports, leisure, libraries and education contact Brent Council on telephone number 020 8937 1200 website: www.brent.gov.uk
Brent Council Sports Service- Healthy Walks & Jog Programme telephone number 020 8937 3707 website: www.brent.gov.uk/sports
Or look up activities in the free Brent Magazine or your local free paper.

Teresa Kain

of gowns, each as beautiful and sparkly as the previous one, for the South Pacific segment she wore a tropical print playsuit. South Pacific is very special to me because it was one of my mum's favourite movies and I did feel a pull at my heartstrings. At one point the pianist told us that she was going to play some '60's songs but in a classical way and if we recognised them to join her and sing! Well, I recognised quite a few Beatles songs but wasn't brave enough to do anything more than hum! We were entertained for an hour and afterwards were shown into yet another lovely room for refreshments. How nice to be served tea in china cups and saucers rather than the heavy mugs we get everywhere! On the journey home I said to my travelling companions "What a truly delightful way to spend an afternoon" And, it really was! Many thanks for the invitation!

Marijke Davis

Launch of Carers Week at The Crown Moran Hotel

Thank You

Dear Brent Carers,

Thank you very much for a wonderful Carers Week.

First, my husband and I very much enjoyed visiting about 10 gardens around Queens Park – it was also interesting to walk through people's houses to access their gardens.

Monday at the Crown Moran Hotel was a lovely day. I especially enjoyed the Bollywood dancing and hope we will do it again! I was lucky enough to win a ticket for the Wembley Stadium tour on Tuesday. We met up with about 20 others for our tour and had a tour guide with a great sense of humour... Our tour lasted about one and a half hours – we sat in the Royal

area with specially padded seats and were able to have a photo done of each of us holding the FA Cup.

On Thursday, through Brent Council I went to Vale Farm for an 'Active Life' session for carers and also had some time on the machines in the gym. It was a week when I felt really lucky to be a carer and my family enjoyed it too!

With best wishes Marilyn Segall



Carers Week Outing to St Pancras Church and the British Library

One of my trips out was to take a group of carers to St Pancras Church's lunch time concert. I will be honest and confess that I have walked past the notice board a number of times and thought I must go one day. So when Brenda asked the staff to give suggestions for an outing, this sprang immediately to mind.

So on Thursday, I met 10 carers at Wembley Central and it was great there were both old and new faces. So with lots of chatting we travelled to Euston. It was good to hear the buzz of conversation, then wishing I had an umbrella to lead the way, we traversed over the numerous traffic lights to get to

the church. On a hot day we sat in a cool building to listen to the cello and piano pieces of Schumann and Brahms.

I then led my party down the Euston Road to show them the wonder that is the British Library. Here we had a well deserved refreshment stop. And yes, more conversation. The carers had the opportunity to visit the various exhibitions. Come 3.30 pm some carers were ready to go home whilst some remained. So if you want to go and hear some classical music in an interesting church do look at their web site www.stpancraschurch.org or for the British Library exhibitions look on their web site www.bl.uk.

Shirley

Carers Week 2010

Carers Week Coffee Morning and Walk

On a beautiful sunny day carers had another opportunity during Carers Week to take time out with the staff of Brent Carers Centre and to say farewell to Shirley over morning coffee and cakes. There was a very relaxed atmosphere as carers took up the chance to chat with other carers and the staff team. Those who wanted some fresh air and

exercised then followed our Walking Guide, Doug Try, up to King Edwards Park for a leisurely walk through the park. It was a busy morning, especially for one carer, Edith, who very kindly brought along her specially baked home made cakes for everyone to enjoy. All carers have so many different talents, so we would like to thank, Edith, for generously sharing her time and talents by baking such delicious home made cakes for us all to enjoy.



Edith with her homemade cakes



Working carers enjoying a night out to chat and take a break over a relaxing meal



I would like to say to Sema and Sonia A MILLION THANKS for the boat trip on Tuesday. I had a great time and the food was lovely.



Plus one of the parents drove me home. That was my special day. Big hug to everyone who made this day so special for us.



Kind regards
Nadia

The New Opportunities Fund

Brent Carers Centre has a fund called the 'New Opportunities Fund' available for unpaid carers. This fund has come from the National Carers Grant. Carers can apply to the fund for up to a maximum of £300 to pay for activities that will give them respite from their caring role. Below are some examples of activities, but each individual will need to decide what will most benefit them based on their circumstances.

- Help towards joining a gym or health club
- Help towards doing a course
- Having a therapeutic session
- Trips to theatre or cinema
- Meals out
- Having a health/beauty session

- Driving lessons
- Going to a football match

The fund is available for the carer only, residing in Brent and who has not received a grant from Brent Carers Centre in the last 3 years. Similarly carers who have applied or received a grant from Mental Health social services in the same year as applying for this grant will not be considered.

To access this fund carers need to fill in an application form, full guidelines will be sent out with this form. Once completed each application is presented to a panel of trustees. Once a decision has been made carers will be informed in writing of the decision. The process usually takes 1 month from receipt of their application.

If there are queries or anyone needs advice and guidance then please contact Teresa at Brent Carers Centre on Thursday's 10.00am – 3.00pm, telephone number 020 8795 6240.

Letter from a carer who has benefited from the New Opportunities Fund

Dear Sonia and all the staff,

I would like to thank you all at the end of my carers grant (New Opportunities Fund) – which I used for gym membership. I lost 1.5 to 2 stones already – my fitness is better, more energy – better sleep at night. It helped me to improve my personal health and my caring role.

I wish I could carry on but financially it is not possible for me. Thank you very much. Keep up the good work. God bless you all. I'm really grateful.

Mrs Soneji

How to make caring easier

It can be hard caring for someone, therefore we hope this article will be helpful to carers. Jean French, Carers UK Advice and Information Manager offers these practical tips to help.

- **Let off steam.** Looking after someone can put you under stress, so be realistic about what you expect of yourself. Pace yourself and tackle one thing at a time. Learn to say 'no' occasionally, and set aside time to do activities you enjoy.
- **Learn to sleep well.** With so much to think about, many carers can find it hard to unwind and get a good night's sleep. Try to go to bed at the same time every day, even if you are not tired – the routine helps you set your body clock. If you still cannot sleep, get up and do something you find relaxing. After a while you should feel tired enough to go to sleep again.
- **Tackle twinges.** You may find that lifting the person you care for and helping them dress can put a strain on your back. If you are in pain, ask your pharmacist or doctor for advice – they may suggest an anti-inflammatory medicine to help ease it. They can also give you tips on the correct ways of lifting, to help you avoid damaging your back in future.

Be informed about medicines.

Managing someone else's medication for them is a big responsibility, but there is plenty of help. For example, Boots Medisure can divide tablets into separately sectioned blister packs, each marked with the time they should be taken. Your pharmacist can also talk you through the side effects of medicines and how they should be stored.

Disclaimer:

Every effort is made to ensure that the information in this newsletter is correct. Brent Carers Centre can accept no liability for errors and omissions and can not recommend products or services. Views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of Brent Carers Centre.

Carers' Information

INFORMATION AND ADVICE SESSIONS USEFUL FOR CARERS

A series of information and advice sessions are to be held on Direct Payments, Personal Budgets and Self Managed Care services as follows:

Date: 29 July 2010
Venue: Shanti Centre, 89 Askew Road
London W12 9AS

Time: 11.00 am to 1.00 pm

And

Date: 12 August 2010
Venue: 152 Olive Road
Cricklewood, NW2 6UY

Time: 11.00 am to 1.00 pm

These sessions are set up to help you find out more about your rights, entitlements and how to access direct payments, personal budgets and how to set up self managed care support services. Contact Shanti Centre Tel: 020 8811 1501.

This event is organised by The Asian health Agency in Partnership with Advocacy Partners and Women's Consortium. See www.taha.org.uk or www.selfdirectedcare-taha.org.uk

Join the virtual protest

Many carers feel strongly about the lack of practical and financial help they receive. However, because of their caring responsibilities they are unable to take to the streets and protest.

Carers UK are giving carers the opportunity to take part in a 'virtual protest' by sending a photo of yourself and what you want to see changed.

Have a look at the gallery of photos to see what carers have said they want. The theme is 'what do carers want?'

Write your slogan on a large piece of paper. Get a friend or family member to take a photo of you holding up the slogan. You can be on your own or with the person you look after. Tip for a good photo: Standing in front of a plain background will make the slogan stand more.

You can submit your photo by either emailing: campaigns@carersuk.org or text your phone pictures to 07810 192158. Please remember to write your full name, where you live and who you care for. You can see some of the pictures on www.carersuk.wordpress.com.

Refurbishment at Park Royal Centre for Mental Health

Shore, Pine and Pond Wards have been fully refurbished. This has been possible after a number of months and a lot of flexibility of staff members, service users and carers. There have been many positive comments about

the environment of the new wards and the female only areas.

If you have any comments to feedback, please contact Sonia here at Brent Carers Centre on 020 8795 6240.

Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) – Update for Carers

Thank you again to carers who have given their thoughts and ideas around the planning and development of this new service in Brent. This is a new service development by NHS Brent to improve and increase access across Brent to psychological therapies for people with common mental health problems. The aim is to launch this new service in September 2010.

Many people suffer from common mental health problems such as depression, panic disorder and anxiety. The IAPT programme sets out to increase access and choice to appropriate psychological therapies to help improve individual's well-being and also to help support people returning to work who are suffering from common mental health problems. Brent Carers Centre were pleased to work together with NHS Brent to seek

carers views and to give carers the opportunity to input suggestions on how they would like to see this service develop to help with their specific needs as carers.

Caring can be a rewarding experience, but can also bring stresses and strains when trying to balance caring with other life commitments such as work and looking after your own mental and physical health and well being. We hope that raising awareness of the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) programme will help carers keep informed and may bring benefits to both you as a carer and the person you care for. Thank you again to all carers who gave up their time to give their input towards the development of this new service in Brent. We will continue to keep you informed of the new IAPT service.

CNWL Helpline

"CNWL has a medicines helpline for patients and their carers'. The aim of the helpline is to support patients and carers with their medicines. The helpline is staffed by mental health pharmacists who can discuss and look into questions about medicines, such as:

- What is my medicine for?
- How long will it take for my medicine to work?
- Will my medicine cause side effects?
- Is it safe to take with the other medicines I take?

The helpline can be contacted Monday to Friday, between **9am - 5pm on 020 8206 7270**.

Outside these hours a message can be left and someone will call you back during working hours.

Details of the helpline can also be found on the CNWL website at <http://www.cnwl.nhs.uk/medicines.html>"

Contact details for the helpline are printed on business cards, which are given to all outpatients receiving medication from a CNWL pharmacy or who are being discharged from inpatient services. If you would like to order some of these cards then please contact the helpline number.

Care Quality Commission

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and social care in England.

It regulates care provided by the NHS, local authorities, private companies and voluntary organisations. The CQC aim to make sure better care is provided for everyone - in hospitals, care homes and people's own homes and also seeks to protect the interests of people whose rights are restricted under the Mental Health Act.

Consultations: As the health and social care watchdog in England, CQC need to make sure that they take into account any changes in mental health, social and health care policies and the way services are provided. They also want to make sure they know and understand the standards of care that members of the public expect and the issues that matter most to them. To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to comment on plans and activities. CQC will consult regularly with people who use mental health, social care and health services. They will also ask for the views of professional groups and organisations about key relevant issues.

To contact CQC: Contact customer services team to give feedback, raise a concern or complaint about a health or social care service or to get hold of publications or reports from the Care Quality Commission's predecessor organisations.

Telephone: 03000 616161 (customer services team available 8.30am to 5.30pm, Monday to Friday)

Fax: 03000 616171

Address: Finsbury Tower, 103 - 105 Bunhill Row, London .EC1Y 8TG

Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk

NHS Carers Adviceline is now up and running CarersDirect

Information, advice and support for carers

Freephone: 0808 802 02 02

www.nhs.uk/carersdirect

This telephone service was launched at the start of April 2009 and provides advice, information and support to carers. The adviceline is free from all UK landlines and advisors will be able to answer questions on UK-wide law and refer callers to local organisations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Welfare Rights - New Carers' Helpline and New Website

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers has received funding from Abbey, part of the Santander Group, and have set up a new interactive web-site: www.carerscentre.com The site has been set up with information to help carers reduce costs. Some features of the web-site include:

- Q & A section
- Book training on-line
- Discussion forums
- Benefit charts
- On-line Adviser
- Chat rooms
- Training section
- Benefit news up-dates
- Email advice

A new Carers Help-Line has also been set up.

The number is **0800 161 38 39**.

SOME USEFUL NUMBERS

Voluntary Sector Organisations

Admiral Nursing Service.....	020 8459 5020
Age Concern (Brent).....	020 8965 7711
Asian People with Disabilities Alliance.....	020 8902 2113
Asian Women's Resource Centre.....	020 8961 6549
Association of Muslims with Disabilities.....	020 8830 3821
Brent Association of Disabled People.....	020 8451 3822
Brent African and Caribbean Disabled People's Association.....	020 8963 1731
Brent Bereavement Service.....	020 8459 6818
Brent Indian Association.....	020 8903 3019
Brent Irish Advisory Service.....	020 8459 6655
Brent Mencap.....	020 8451 5278
Brent MIND.....	020 7604 5177
Brent Samaritans.....	020 8961 6181
Carers UK.....	0808 808 7777
Citizen's Advice Bureau (Brent).....	0845 0505 250
Crossroads Care West London.....	020 8572 8834
Elder's Voice.....	020 8968 8170
Friends of African & Caribbean Carers And Sufferers of Dementia.....	020 8965 1112
Jewish Care.....	020 8922 2000
NHS Direct.....	0845 4647
Brent Council (Out of Hours Social Services).....	020 8863 5250
Brent Council - One Stop Shop.....	020 8937 1200