



CARING MATTERS

Brent Carers Centre
Wembley Centre For Health & Care
116 Chaplin Road, Wembley, Middlesex HA0 4UZ

Tel: 020 8795 6240 • Fax: 020 8795 6250
Email: email@brentcarerscentre.org.uk
Web: www.brentcarerscentre.org.uk

Brent Carers Centre Newsletter

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Welcome to our autumn newsletter. As many of you may remember, in last quarter's newsletter I asked if anyone knew of a venue we could use for our AGM whilst the Tower Restaurant at NWL College was being refurbished. Unfortunately no suitable alternative was offered. Therefore with less money

to spend this year, after discussion with the Board of Trustees, we have decided to be prudent and combine this year's AGM with the annual Carers Rights Day meeting at Brent Town Hall on Thursday December 3rd. I am sure that you will understand our reasons and will join us for at least part of what will

be a busy, but hopefully interesting and enjoyable day at Brent Town Hall. The agenda and reply slip for the day are enclosed in this mailing and we look forward to receiving your response as soon as possible to help us organise the venue and lunch.

Parent/Carer Day trip to Legoland



The sun was shining when we went to Legoland which made the 76 parents/carers and children on the trip very happy, the children in particular were very excited. Whilst some of our families enjoyed the exhilarating rides, some enjoyed having a stress-free day out, taking in the breathtaking scenery and the fantastic models made out of Lego. Many of the families that came had not been to Legoland before and were pleasantly surprised by the excellent facilities that were on offer for disabled children. Although there were hills to climb and conquer, they were few and far between which made our day out such a success. Thank you to everyone for their comments. We have had very positive feedback from carers

who came on the trip which include the following:

"Thank- you and the team for the trip to Legoland. The children had the most enjoyable day and the weather really held out for us".

"Thanks for organising the trip to Legoland. We had such a nice time".

"Thanks for including us in this fantastic trip. We all had so much fun".



Carers' Survey

Brent Council is launching a survey in November of carers who receive social care services after being assessed by the local authority.

A sample of around 750 carers who receive support from Brent Council will receive a copy of the survey, which needs to be returned by 30 November. All replies to the survey will be treated in the strictest confidence; no responses will be disclosed to any other organisation except to the Department Of Health in an anonymous format.

The research is to assess the quality of council services for carers and indicate how services and support to carers could be improved. The Department of Health will gather the responses from Brent and other local authorities for a national picture.

All councils in England and Wales which provide social care must survey carers and report back the findings to the Department of Health. Only carers who have been assessed or reviewed in the last 12 months will be part of the survey's sample.

If you are a carer and receive a survey form and letter, please take a little time to complete the survey and return it in the reply paid envelope by 30 November. For more information email Paul Chennell at Brent Council on paul.chennell@brent.gov.uk or call 020 8937 4143.

Carers' Information

Carers' Visit to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office

An intrepid band of carers met at Wembley Park Station and made our way to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, close to Whitehall. After security checks, we were given a guided tour by Stephen Bickers (son of Shirley Bickers), who works for the FCO.

In a short report on the tour, it is difficult to fully describe the magnificence of the building, with its wide corridors and elegant staircases, built in an era of Empire. In the building, there is a strong emphasis on India with the portraits and busts of great figures in Anglo- Indian history and with the names of Indian provinces and cities. This is complimented by portraits of former British governors of Indian provinces. We were able to visit

the Council Chamber of the former India Office, where the Secretary of State for India and his Council met to discuss Indian affairs and where many important decisions were taken between 1868 and 1947. It is now a modern meeting room.

The FCO seems very aware of its own history with busts of former Foreign Secretaries, such as Anthony Eden and Ernest Bevin, being on display in the corridors, alongside portraits of famous historical figures, such as the Duke of Wellington. On a more sombre note, there was a memorial plaque to the British Consul in Istanbul and local staff, who were killed in a terrorist attack a few years ago.

With its sense of history, it was difficult to envisage the FCO as a modern working office. It houses London based staff and staff of the Diplomatic Service,

who alternate between London duties and overseas postings. Most of its doors are guarded by large wooden doors, but the few offices we did manage to see were staffed by officials, looking intently at computer screens rather than writing with quill pens, as would have happened 100 years ago. We were able to view the elegant Ambassadors Waiting Room, reserved for Ambassadors and other dignitaries waiting to meet the Foreign Secretary. On a really modern note, one of the large and impressive Conference Rooms was being used for a "health seminar and exhibition" for the FCO staff.

It seems that tours of the FCO are not normally open to the general public, so it was a great privilege to tour this historic building and modern office, for which many thank to Stephen Bickers.

A F O'Connor

Carers' Seaside Trip to Broadstairs, Kent



The Broadstairs trip was like going down memory lane for me, as I had visited there many times as a child on

family holidays. There were concerns early in the week that rain was forecast, but on the day of the trip the sun shone. The photographs from the day show the many activities carers indulged in which included walking along the promenade, paddling in the sea and listening to music by young musicians at the bandstand. Then of course there was the eating of ice cream on the beach, having fish and chips, no longer wrapped in newspaper, but polystyrene! Then for many it was shopping for gifts for family members before boarding the coach for the journey home. However,

for me, the high spot was a trip to Morelli's and a Knickerbocker Glory, a real reminiscent treat (but are they smaller than when I was a child)?

Shirley Bickers



You don't need to fill this in if you are already a member

JOIN BRENT CARERS CENTRE

MAKE SURE YOU ARE KEPT UP TO DATE WITH WHAT IS HAPPENING FOR CARERS IN BRENT

All members receive FREE copies of our newsletter 'Caring Matters' four times a year, and are kept informed about other events we offer. Membership is FREE. Please complete and return this form to Brent Carers Centre at the address below.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

NAME:

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE: POST CODE:

Date: Signature:

Please tick the box that is applicable to you:

Are you A carer Former carer

Who do/did you care for?

What is/was their illness or disability?

Where did you pick up this newsletter?

If you are a voluntary/statutory organisation and would like to receive copies of our newsletter please contact us and we will send you an order form.

Please return this membership form to us at the address below or contact us by telephone for further details:

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Carers' Information

Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT)

NHS Brent are currently planning to improve and increase access across Brent to psychological therapies for people with common mental health problems. 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.

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 health and well being.

NHS Brent are currently reviewing the needs of the local community by completing a Psychological Therapies Review and a Mental Health Needs

Assessment. We will be bringing you more information as the development of the IAPT service in Brent progresses and would like 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. We hope that raising awareness of the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) programme will help you keep informed of new NHS Brent developments and may bring benefits to both you as a carer and the person you care for.

Carers Emergency Support Service (CESS)

You may remember we told you about this last year.

As part of a Carer's Assessment, carers can agree in advance an Emergency Support Plan. This plan comes into action if, for example, you as a carer were to become ill or have an accident. It would need to be put in place within

two hours and lead to longer term support being arranged as necessary for the person you care for.

To be eligible for CESS a carer must be

- Caring for a person who lives at home in Brent
- Providing regular and substantial care
- Registered with CESS on the basis of having a current Carer's

Assessment or review that includes an Emergency Support Plan

We would advise carers who are eligible to request this Service. The person who organised your Carer's Assessment should be able to help you. If not, contact the One Stop Shop 020 8937 1200 and ask to apply for the Carer Emergency Support Service.

Mental Health – Your Views Are Needed on CPA

The Trust (CNWL) is reviewing how it conducts its Care Programme Approach. CPA is a process used to assess and provide for the mental health and support needs of people with severe and enduring mental health illness.

The review will look at the documentation that is used, the guidance that is given to staff and the underlying principles that guide the CPA process.

If you are looking after someone who is on CPA or has been please let me know your experience of it as a carer. This information will be communicated to the people

responsible for making CPA a more meaningful and effective process for all involved with it. All feedback received will be communicated anonymously so I hope you will feel able to share your experience freely.

Please contact Sonia on 020 8795 6240 or email@brentcarerscentre.org.uk. You are welcome to send your comments by post if you prefer to.

Occupational Therapy Weekend Pilot Project at Park Royal Centre for Mental Health

A 3 month pilot project is being set up from October to provide occupational therapy over the weekends. Many service users, staff and carers have commented that organised activities over the weekends are a very

important part of the well being and support of service users. This project is a result of such feedback and we will keep you informed of whether the weekend activities will be developed further.

Refurbishment on Shore Ward, Park Royal Centre for Mental Health

A fire on Shore Ward at the Park Royal Centre for Mental Health has meant the ward had to be closed. Fortunately no one was hurt in the fire. The staff have been working hard to manage the challenges of moving service users to other wards. Some service users have been cared for some distance away

from their families and friends, and have also been moved between beds and units during their stay. Arrangements have been made to ensure that everyone can now stay at more local wards.

CNWL have agreed that while the ward is closed, this is an opportunity to discuss with NHS Brent to have a complete refurbishment of this ward (leading to an 18-bedded ward, with most rooms being en-suite) It does

however mean that the ward would remain closed until 19th December.

This work will make a real difference to improving the environment and support for service users, carers and staff.

If you are affected by any of the changes as a carer, if you are anxious by what has happened or have any questions, please contact Sonia on 020 8795 6240.

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

A new Carers Help-Line has also been set up. The number is **0800 161 38 39**.

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.

Brent Carers Film Club

The Film Club grew out of our Book Club and we decided to meet once a month at the Tricycle Cinema on Thursday afternoon to see whatever was available and then have a short

discussion group after the film. We also get our free tea on a Thursday! The first film was 'Coraline', quite a scary children's film – too scary for most of the kids! Last month we saw 'Imagine that', an Eddie Murphy film.

We had a good chat about it and, as ever, about lots of things it reminded us of. The film club is open to anyone who is interested - call Brenda on 020 8795 6240 to add your name. See you there – Jill Sutton.

Brent Library Service Activities:

Over 50s Clubs in Brent Libraries

Arthritis Care

At Brent Town Hall Library On Tuesday 17th November from 10.30am to 12 noon. Speaker: Sasha Barnes talks about how to cope with arthritis and how to help others.

Waste and Recycling

At Neasden Library Plus on Friday 6th November from 10.30 – 12 noon.

Speaker: Yvonne Crace, Waste Policy Team to answer some of your questions on recycling.

How to improve the quality of your life

At Kilburn Library on Friday 27th November from 2.15pm to 4.00pm.

Speaker: Rosemary Wiseman to talk about and demonstrate 'Thought Field Therapy', a technique to help overcome anxieties, anger and phobias.

Higher Education

At Kingsbury Library Plus on Tuesday 24th November from 10.30am to 12 noon.

Speaker: Annette McCone from Birkbeck University to talk about degree level study.

There are a wide range of weekly, monthly and special events at Willesden Green Library over the October period. Please contact Willesden Green Library on **020 8937 3400** or for general information on all library services in Brent please visit www.brent.gov.uk/libraries

Travel Mentoring Service

The Travel Mentoring Service offers support to disabled Londoners who want to broaden their horizons and make use of the many mainstream accessible public transport options now available.

The Travel Mentoring Service can offer advice on planning a journey using an accessible route and can provide a mentor to come with you for your first few journeys to help you gain confidence and become an independent traveller.

Mentoring is free of charge and can be provided Monday-Friday from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm.

For more information please call the **Travel Mentoring Scheme** on **020 7027 5822**.

Solace Women's Aid

Solace Women's Aid works with women and children over 16 years old who have been affected by domestic and sexual violence. They run a wide range of services, including emergency accommodation, to meet the different needs of service users.

The Solace Women's Aid also offers:

- Emotional support,
- Information and advice on legal rights,
- Referral on to external agencies for specialist advice on immigration, debt, employment, training and parenting support,
- Counselling Service.

For more information you can contact the Advice Service on:

Telephone: 0808 802 5565

Email: advice@solacewomensaid.org

Website: www.solacewomensaid.org