

THIS MONTH'S THEME IS...



LAUGHTER & JOY

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ISSUE

**LAUGHTER & JOY ARE
IMPORTANT FOR
WELLBEING**

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COUNCIL UPDATES

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CEO'S MESSAGE

Dear Carers,

I was reflecting on laughter and joy, our theme for this month's newsletter, and realised that quite small things make me laugh and bring me joy. To name a few, cycling to work, greeting a diminutive lady who walks a dog who is as tall as her and saying hi to our local shopkeepers in North Harrow, now that they are opening up. This connectivity between people is life affirming and it is a large part of what we hope to achieve in our support of you in your caring role.

This month we are preparing for Carers Week, where we hope to connect with many more of you and greet both our established and the new carers that have joined us this year. Although this week is mainly online, there are many different events and I hope that you will find something that you enjoy. See page 10. We have planned more in person activities later in the year.

All of us have faced different challenges this year and there have been many significant ones for you as carers. However, in all adversity there are inspiring and joyful stories, so do take a look at the short video stories by carers (click [here](#)), produced with the help of Young Harrow Foundation and Harrow Council. These organisations and many others, have supported us throughout the year and we are very much appreciative of their continued support. We are also grateful for the support of many individuals who have left us donations and legacies, so that we can continue our work.

Wishing you joy and laughter,

Charmian Boyd



UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

HARROW CARERS ACTIVITIES ROUND UP

Cooking Session

Harrow Carers' very own Colin and the Carer Lead in Harrow, Allie, hosted a fun and interactive cooking session for our carers. It went so well that this will become a more regular activity. We can't wait to have more of these!



Zine

The 7 week Zine course has come to an end; the feedback from the participants was that it was thoroughly enjoyed and a great success.

A Zine is a small version of a magazine, Create Arts who ran the course encouraged the class to be social and imaginative, while exploring their thoughts and learning techniques to develop the Zine. All Carers involved will receive a final version for their enjoyment.

One Carer said "A HUGE and heartfelt thanks for this life affirming and joyful course." ❤️

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

WELLBEING SESSIONS



Laughter Therapy

Our theme this month is laughter so join us and dust off those cobwebs for a full filled laughter therapy session. The workshop will be run by Laughter Therapy. Laughter therapy has been shown to have beneficial effects on various aspects of biochemistry.

Benefits include: reductions in stress hormones, pain relief, boosts communication, enhance positive thinking and increased energy & wellbeing.

13th of May
11AM - 12PM



The Psychology of Happiness

This course will help you to develop your natural capacity for wellbeing and happiness. It will help you understand what is happiness and how we can achieve it. It will involve a number of topics including mindfulness, gratitude, the concept of letting go, forgiveness, self-awareness and many more.

4th, 18th, & 25th of May | 1st of June
10:30AM - 12:30PM

***If you would like to join any of the activities please contact wellbeing@harrowcarers.org for joining instructions.**

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITIES



Pilates

Sometimes our bodies crave gentle and relaxing movements and this is the perfect Pilates workout for those days.

Every Wednesday
11AM



Mini Mindfulness

These gentle, drop-in sessions are a mix of simple breathing, mindfulness, relaxation and visualisation techniques which can reduce stress and anxiety, and improve wellbeing.

Every Friday
12:30PM - 1PM

SUPPORT GROUPS



Virtual Cuppa

Every Monday
10AM - 11:30AM



Mental Health Carers

14th & 28th of May
1:30PM

***If you would like to join any of the activities please contact wellbeing@harrowcarers.org for joining instructions.**

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES



Caring for my Partner

2nd Wednesday of Every Month
2:30PM - 4:00PM

WORKING FOR CARERS SESSIONS



Basic IT Skills

27th of April
10:30AM - 11:30AM



Confidence Building

4th of May
10:30AM - 11:30AM



Interview Techniques

23rd of April
10:30AM - 11:30AM



CV Writing Skills

29th of April
10:30AM - 11:30AM



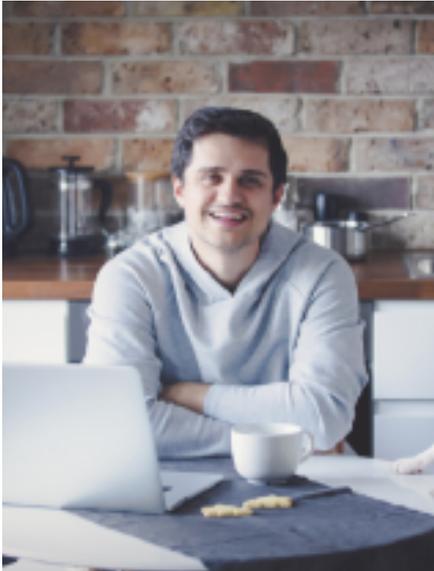
Job Search Success Through

LinkedIn

6th of May
3PM - 4PM

***If you would like to join any of the sessions please email workingforcарers@harrowcarers.org or call 020 8868 5224 Ext 218/208 for joining instructions.**

SERVICE UPDATES



WORKING FOR CARERS

Many carers have the statutory right to request flexible working. This can help you balance work and caring. You can make a statutory request if: you have worked for your employer for 26 weeks in a row and you have not made a request within the last 12 months. Click [here](#) for our factsheet.

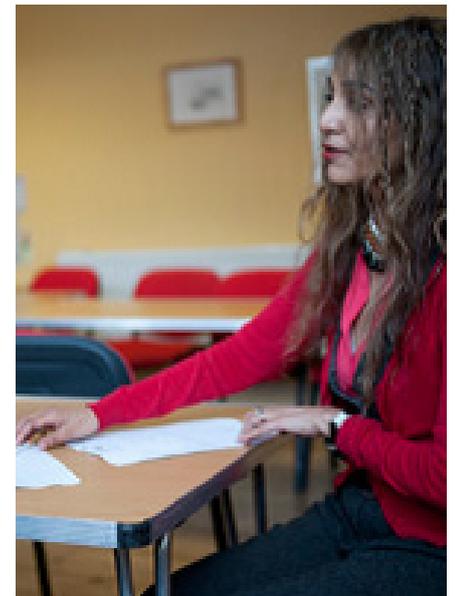
In case you missed it, check out our recent video [here](#). Also click [here](#) to have a read of our latest carer story in our newsletter.

For further useful information, have a look at our latest poster [here](#).

BENEFITS & ADVICE

If you have any questions or require any assistance with benefits or any other issues relating to your caring role, both Anne and Bunny, Adult Services Advisors are available at the centre: 0208 868 5224 ext 209 for Anne and 210 for Bunny.

The services available to carers range from entitlement advice on benefits available for Carers, including assistance with applications, to help accessing a Carer Assessment and grants.



YOUNG CARERS

It's April and our groups are on! Take a look at the groups below:

Run: Tuesday & Thursday | Ages 6 -11 | 3:30PM - 4:30PM | Methodist Hall
Youth Drop-In: Wednesday | Ages 11+ | 3:30PM - 5:30PM | The Hangout
The Jam Lab: Friday | Age 11+ | 4:00PM - 5:30PM | The Hangout
Study Up: Saturday | Ages 11+ | 10:30AM - 2PM | The Hangout

For more information about the groups, please contact our Young Carers team at youngcarers@harrowcarers.org

SERVICE UPDATES



HOMECARE

In the last two months, we provided respite support to 40 Carers in Harrow. The respite enable carers to take a break from their unpaid duties as carers. Some of our Carers told us they were able go outside and take some exercise, relax and regain their mental strength, go to the supermarket, attend their own medical appointments, had time to speak with family and friends without pressure.

Each one of the 40 Carers received two blocks of 2 hours respite and 3 hours, totalling 7 hours per Carer over the course of the two months. Due to the pandemic and lockdown, Carers who were unable to split the hours as specified in the original proposal and were allowed to use the full 7 hours as flexibly as it suits them. This way Carers are not placed under undue pressure and had a well meaningful and much more useful respite.

NOVUS HOMESHARE

It's been a great month for our matches. Here is what the two lovely ladies pictured had to say about their experience living together: "We're both really go with the flow type people. She watches a lot of "first dates" with me and I've started watching a whole lot more of "the antiques roadshow", and I must say, I now look forward to it."

As more and more people have received vaccinations, we are receiving an increasing number of enquiries and are pleased with some particularly interesting matches which we have been able to make. For example, we matched up a homeowner who needed a vegetarian Gujerati speaking Homesharer after months of patient searching and interviews.

Do let your friends and family know about our Homeshare service which extends all over London. We are always happy to have a chat and see whether this would work for you.

For further information please give us a call at 03300 88 2225.



Joke 01

What do sprinters eat before a race?

Nothing, they fast!



LAUGHTER & JOY IS IMPORTANT FOR WELLBEING

You may have heard the famous saying, "laughter is the best medicine." Well we at Harrow Carers certainly believe so! Laughter is the physical manifestation of finding something funny and it can help reduce stress. Laughter brings joy. Laughter makes you look at life through positive lenses. Laughter creates and nurtures connections with people. Laughter makes you care better. There is not much joy in life without laughter, so make sure you find time to laugh!

Here are some tips to get your laughter and joy going:

- Watch a funny film
- Listen to a humorous podcast
- Smile at someone...its infectious!
- Put on lively music and dance!
- Sing a feel-good song at the top of your voice
- Call an upbeat friend for a natter
- Recall a happy memory
- Write a list of things that make you smile
- Watch some YouTube videos of toddlers laughing
- Go for a walk in the sunshine

If you'd like more tips from our Carer Wellbeing Worker, Michelle, or to speak with her about your general wellbeing, call her on 020 8868 5224.

VIDEOS TO WATCH



[Best of Bollywood Songs](#)



[90's Bollywood Songs](#)



[Where joy hides and how to find it](#)



[Laughter is the best medicine](#)
[-Laughing meditation](#)

OTHER UPDATES

STAFF HIGHLIGHT

Hi Carers,

My name is Lydia, I cover the Reception desk at Harrow Carers.

I have been with Harrow Carers organization for the past three years, managing the reception desk as well as undertaking various other duties at the Charity, but it is the privilege of meeting and speaking to our inspirational and wonderful carers which I cherish most.

As you are aware during the past 14 months all our events for carers were moved to online services, but work related activities at our lovely Centre carried on regardless.

You may be interested to know we are in the middle of sprucing up the Centre, refreshing and updating the interior and public areas on the ground floor, getting ready for a day when we open the Centre to everyone.

I very much look forward to the day when I'll be able to once again welcome you in person to our Centre, and as always I will be looking after you every step of the way... so until then please take good care and stay safe.

Wishing you laughter and joy,
Lydia



Joke 02

Why do bees have sticky hair?

Because they use honeycombs.

Carers Week™

CARERS WEEK 2021

7 - 13 June, 'Make Caring Visible and Valued'

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.

This year, unpaid carers people are continuing to face many new challenges as a result of the coronavirus outbreak. Many carers have shielded and are taking on more caring responsibilities for their relatives and friends who are disabled, ill or older and who need support.

Carers need to be recognised for the difficulties they are experiencing, respected for all they are doing, and provided with information, support and understanding. Due to the continuing pandemic and covid restrictions it will sadly not be possible to hold our very popular carers retreat day this year, however we do have our fingers crossed for a belated event later in the year.

While most events will be held online for a second year, we are planning some smaller socially distanced face to face events, pending government advice.

Look out for more details in our June newsletter.

SURPLUS ITEMS AT THE CENTRE

As we ready the centre to welcome you back soon, we found some items which we are offering free to anyone that can use them. Please email Lydia at admin@harrowcarers.org if you want any of these, first come first served since there is only one of each. We have a bath seat and rail, back rest, steps set of 6 levels, steps set of 3 levels, caddy to go on top of these and a walker with a seat. Have a look at some of the the items below:



OTHER UPDATES

HARROW COUNCIL ACTIVITIES



Cooking on a budget for Carers

Learn more about healthy meal options and preparation

Join Allie & Dougie 11am
every Tuesday

Live from London's Community Kitchen

ZOOM :
Meeting ID: 993 8037 0666
Password: singalong

***If you are a carer wanting to contact Harrow Council specifically around carers you can email carers@harrow.gov.uk . Also check out the council carer web pages: [Carer Support - Harrow Council](#).**

OTHER UPDATES

HARROW COUNCIL ACTIVITIES



***If you are a carer wanting to contact Harrow Council specifically around carers you can email carers@harrow.gov.uk . Also check out the council carer web pages: [Carer Support - Harrow Council](#).**

OTHER UPDATES

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY: SCHOLARSHIP AND BURSARY SUPPORT FOR CARERS

The Open University's [Carers Scholarships Fund](#), which offers 10 successful applicants with funding to complete a full undergraduate qualification of their choice, is now open for applications. This year also sees the introduction of the [Carers Bursary](#) - a £250 award to support registered students with study costs. The Carers Scholarships Fund is supported by Carers Trust, Carers UK and CareTech Foundation. To apply for the next cohort, with studies starting in Autumn 2021, please click [here](#). Applications close at midnight on 21 August 2021.



The Open
University

FREE PPE FOR CARERS NOT LIVING WITH THE PERSON THEY CARE FOR



The government has announced they will extend a programme that offers free Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) given to unpaid carers who do not live with the person they care for until March 2022. Carers will be able to request PPE through Local Authorities (LA) and Local Resilience Forums (LRF) who have chosen to take part. DHSC has updated the [guidance for unpaid carers](#) which also links unpaid carers to information on which [Local Authorities and LRFs are taking part and how to contact them](#). For Network Partners who are based in London, the carers you support can access the free PPE by visiting www.careplace.org.uk and filling out the online application form. The PPE will be sent to their local authority who will contact them directly to fulfill their order. Please do share this information with the carers you support.

THANK YOU

We want to say a big thank you to Armando Conte for his dedicated research work with NHS Mind the Gap for helping to improve access to services for unpaid carers and refugee and asylum seekers! His valuable work will help us serve even more carers in Harrow and build a stronger carer community.

Thank you Armando!



CARERS WEEK: MESSAGE FROM CARERS TRUST WHO ARE LOOKING FOR UNPAID CARERS TO SPEAK TO MPS

Carers Trust are taking part in Carers Week, an annual week to raise awareness of the issues unpaid carers face. We are looking for two unpaid carers to join Carers Trust staff at an online event to speak to MPs about being a carer. Carers can choose what they want to say to MPs, and if they aren't quite sure what they'd like to say or how they might say it, we can help. Carers would need to be free on Monday 7 June, ideally from 1.45pm – 4pm. Carers will actually talk to MPs from 2-4pm.

If carers are only available for some of that time, we may be able to work around that. As it's an online event, carers will need access to a mobile phone, PC or tablet with a good internet connection. They'll also need to be comfortable with having their camera on for the discussion. We can reimburse carers for data if needed. We can reimburse for the cost of replacement care if carers need it.

Carers also need to be happy for photographs of themselves to be used on social media and by MPs. We have a consent form and we can talk to carers about what that means. If more than two carers are interested, we will work out who is best placed to attend. We will talk to carers before the day so that we can work out together what they'll feel happy to talk about. We'll also practise with the technology we'll be using (Zoom).

So that we can make sure that all carers are represented, ideally we are looking for carers who identify as one of the following:

- A young carer or young adult carer
- A male carer
- A carer from an ethnic minority background

If carers don't identify with one of these, please still get in touch. If you have any questions or are interested in taking part, please email Laura and Ramzi from the Policy team policy@carers.org or call 0300 772 9600 – we can call you back.

CARERS TRUST

Joke 03

Why did the M&M go to school?

It wanted to be a Smartie.

LAUGHTER & JOY IN APRIL

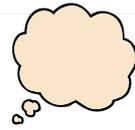
HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO KEEP THE LAUGHTER AND JOY GOING THIS MONTH



PUT ON YOUR
FAVOURITE
SITCOM



WATCH FUNNY
KIDS VIDEOS ON
YOUTUBE



THINK OF A
FUNNY MEMORY



PLAY A FAMILY
GAME WITH
OTHERS



SET TIME FOR
YOUR HOBBIES



CALL SOMEONE
YOU LOVE TO
TALK TO

POEM OF THE MONTH

LAUGH A DAY
LAUGH IT NOW
LAUGH AS LOUD
AS YOU WANT;
IT SHAKES UP YOUR BODY
LETS GOOD THINGS FLOW
THROUGH YOUR VEINS;
DON'T THINK ABOUT IT
JUST LAUGH A MINUTE
OR LAUGH A DAY
LAUGH LONG AS LAUGH TIME

YOU AND I
COME LET'S LAUGH
HA HA HA HA
JUST LIKE THAT
AS TWO HUMANS
ALIVE AND MEANING WELL
HA HA HA HA

UNKNOWN

USEFUL LINKS & CONTACTS

Getting help from the NHS : the NHS urges public to get care when they need it.

Vaccination: info on getting vaccinated in Harrow.

COVID Testing: testing centres open at St. Anns.

Samaritans: if you need to talk to someone.

Rethink: top tips on managing your mental health.

GOV.UK: what you need to know about coronavirus

Harrow Council: council updates.

Carers UK: expert advice, information and support

SEE YOU NEXT MONTH!