

# OUR LIFE

WINTER 2021/22

## Hello from Michelle

To all Surrey Young Carers,

When any year comes to a close, we're filled with a level of excitement that only seems to crop up at this time of year. Excitement for a brand-new chapter, clean slate and 12 new months ahead of us.

In this past year, we saw people doing their best to return to life as they remember it and although this has been another tough time for many, every experience, and every moment we have faced is a lesson and something to learn from.

Sometimes we can think too much about what could lie ahead, and forget to soak up those good and bad

moments that made us who we are today.

Make sure you take some time over the festive break to stop, reflect and think of what you have achieved because I am sure there is so much you should feel proud of and being a young carer is just one of them!



Happy Holidays,

**Michelle Harper,**  
Manager Surrey Young Carers  
Action for Carers Surrey

## Panto pandemonium!



**SW Young Carers went to the Pantomime – oh yes they did!**

In the South West, we are really fortunate to have the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre (YAT) who produce a fantastic pantomime every year. This year, the lovely people at YAT generously gave 100 free tickets to young carers which we passed on to our secondary schools. In turn, the schools offered them to their young carers through their groups and students from six schools came along with their teacher and enjoyed an evening of fun and mayhem!

The panto was Dick Whittington- Dick and his cat, Tommi went to “that there London town” to rid the place of King Rat and all his little rats. Dick fell in love with Alice, became Lord Mayor of London and lived



happily ever after. One student said: “Just have to say, i love their acting, music and omg i love their outfits” and another said “this is the best day of my life.” One of the adults told us, “It was wonderful to see the smiling faces and hear the young carers’ laughter during the performance.”



If you aren't already a member of your Young Carer Group at school, check it out after Christmas – they do lots of fun things too.

We had another group attend the panto the next afternoon, as part of their ‘welcome’ to SYC. This was a younger group, but they also had a fantastic time.

**Hopefully we will see everyone again at events throughout the coming year.**

# End of year updates from our teams across Surrey



## South West Surrey Team

Well done to you all for surviving 2021 with all its thrown at us. You are an amazing bunch of young people and all of us in the South West team would like to wish you a very Merry Christmas and we really look forward to seeing you in the new



year. Make sure your parents check their inboxes for your email invites!

## North East Surrey Team



The last 18 months has thrown us a few curve balls and at SYC we have had to think a little differently about how we put on our events.

Since early summer 2021 we have been using the fantastic facilities offered to us at ACS International schools in Cobham and Egham. In June and July I had a Junior and Senior Drop In at Cobham making great use of the private outdoor facilities like the

adventure playground and treehouse. Our young carers were also able to have a taster session using virtual reality headsets, which went down really well. A Mum of a junior age boy that attended his first face-to-face event told his Mum it was 'the best ever'.

In October we were at their Egham site where we able to make use of their impressive climbing wall.

We also had a room set up with table tennis and a quiet games and crafts area. In December we went back to Cobham where the YCs got to print mugs for themselves and for Christmas presents for family. We have been very lucky to have ACS International Schools offer such amazing facilities (and food) and it's been really rewarding to see how this has positively impacted on our young carers.



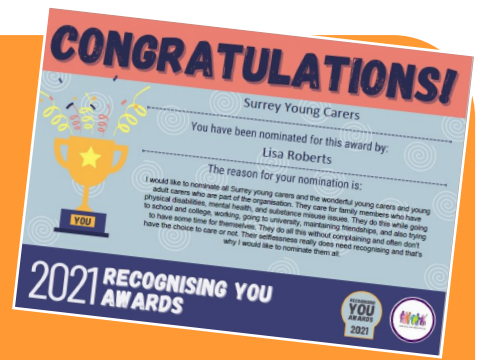
## Christmas Quiz

If you've got some spare time, why not try this Christmas Quiz with your family or friends?

1. How many ghosts show up in *A Christmas Carol*?
2. In *Home Alone*, where are the McCallisters going on holiday when they leave Kevin behind?
3. When do the 12 days of Christmas start?
4. How many gifts are given in total in *The Twelve Days of Christmas* song?
5. In which Christmas movie does Tom Hanks play six of the characters?
6. In which country is it tradition to eat KFC for Christmas dinner?
7. How many of Rudolph's fellow reindeers' names start with 'D'?
8. What is traditionally hidden inside a Christmas pudding?
9. Which city has been donating Trafalgar Square's Christmas tree to London every year since 1947?
10. If you're born on Christmas day, what's your star sign?
11. What time is the Queen's speech traditionally broadcast on Christmas Day?
12. What colour are mistletoe berries?
13. *Miracle On 34th Street* centres on what real-life department store?
14. What is the opening line to Shakin' Stevens' *Merry Christmas Everyone*?
15. According to Buddy the Elf, what are the four food groups elves can eat?

Answers on the back page, no peeking!

# Surrey County Council's Recognising YOU Awards



Congrats to YOU ALL for being winners in Surrey County Council's (SCC) 'Recognising You' Awards. We nominated all of SYC, and were delighted that you were recognised. The Awards were made in December, and yours is in recognition of all that you do as young carers – and just how amazing you are! Your certificate, and a letter from Michelle (SYC Manager) are included with this newsletter. Well done you!



## South East Surrey Team

The South East Team have had another busy year, so many great events, here are a few highlights.

Nic held our YC2 drop ins for Juniors and Seniors, including one in Dorking where we had the Surrey Rams visit for some basketball and the last in

Tadworth which included a spooky Halloween theme! We enjoyed our visits to Gatton Park, Fiona's Farm, High Ashurst, Crawley Bowl, all these events offer a fun, different and new experiences for all ages of young carers we support.

In summer we ran a sailing and water-boarding event for 16+ carers at Mercers



Lake. Great fun!

Summer's highlight was our Family Fun Day, with 49

families enjoying a great event, trying out loads of different activities. It was lovely to see our families together.

We were thrilled to work with charity called CREATE to offer a three-day group themed around Art and photography. The group created some amazing masterpieces and met new friends.

In November the Rotary Club run a jazz band fundraiser for us at Leatherhead Theatre. We had front row seats and a fabulous night.

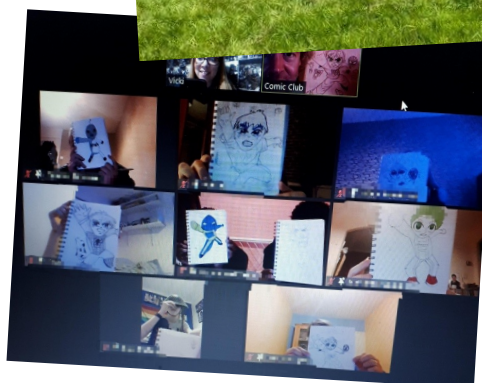
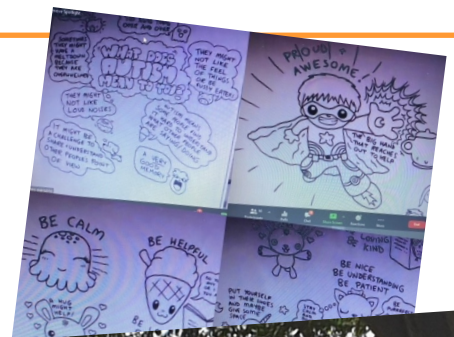
As we come to the end of this year, we are busy planning for 2022. Just our Panto to finish it off "oh no you're not!" We wish you all a fun Christmas – see you next year!



## North West Surrey Team

Well, the end of another busy and very eventful year. You've all been fantastic this year, despite all the challenges, and we've enjoyed some fantastic events with you—just a few pictured here.

We wish you all a wonderful Christmas break. Here's to 2022!



# Young Carers' Action Day 2022



Young Carers Action Day takes place on 16th March next year – and will again be aiming to raise awareness of the struggles and importance of the UK's young carers.

We're already looking forward to it. As part of the big day this year, organisations across the UK are recording young carers reading the poem 'Who Am I', which was written by SYC. We'll then release the recording on the day.

If you'd like to find out more, please get in touch with Lisa ([lisa.roberts@actionforcarers.org.uk](mailto:lisa.roberts@actionforcarers.org.uk))

## Who Am I?

*May I have your attention? A few minutes of your time,  
Take a break from your life, I'll tell you how I live mine.  
See this face? See this smile? See these eyes open wide?  
It's a mask to disguise how I'm feeling inside,*

*I'm one in twelve in my city, yet it's hard to describe,  
But just give me a moment, I promise, I'll try.*

*I'm a cook; a cleaner; a doctor; a healer,  
A helper; a sitter; a supporter; a leader,  
By my demeanour, it may not always be clear that I'm needed,  
When my mum takes a fall, has a fit or a seizure,  
When my brother breaks his toys and I pick up the pieces,  
When his autism means that even though I pleaded,  
He kicks and he screams and every day this is repeated,  
But before bed, I still hug him, because I know he doesn't mean it.*

*And some might say that this sounds strange,  
Why I have all these skills and I don't even get paid,  
When I get home from school and make sure the table is laid,  
Because my dad is upstairs, still in bed, still afraid,  
Oh, I'm sorry, did I not mention?  
That his mind is affected by stress and by tension,  
Depression that means he requires my attention,  
So my homework goes unwritten with no chance of extension.  
I shop; I feed; I help shower and bathe,*

*I wash; I make sure that the beds are all made,  
I talk; I listen; I cuddle; I play,  
I make sure that the medicine is stored safely away.*

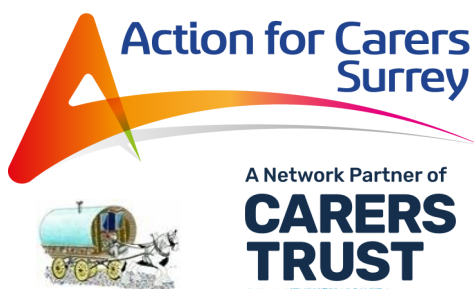
*And even though I know that those who love me understand,  
It's hard to keep up friendships when I have to cancel plans,  
When phone calls go unanswered, when they say they'll lend a hand,  
Sometimes it feels that it's only me who can.  
So thank you for listening, to the words I have to say,  
About how I live my life, about what I do each day,  
I hope; I dream; I wonder; I pray,  
Because I'm a young carer, And I wouldn't have it any other way.*



Do you remember *The Big Ask* survey? Over half a million children responded, including many of you. The report is out: [www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/occ\\_the\\_big\\_ask\\_the\\_big\\_answer\\_2021.pdf](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/occ_the_big_ask_the_big_answer_2021.pdf)

## Quiz Answers

- Four: The spirits of Christmas Past, Present and Future and business partner Marley
- Paris
- Christmas Day
- 364
- The Polar Express*. He plays Hero Boy, Father, Conductor, Hobo, Scrooge and Santa.
- Japan
- Three: Dancer, Dasher, Donner.
- A coin (silver)
- Oslo, Norway
- Capricorn
- 3pm
- White
- Macy's
- "Snow is falling, all around me"
- Candy, candy canes, candy corns and syrup



**CONTACT US** Call 01483 568269 or email [SYC@actionforcarers.org.uk](mailto:SYC@actionforcarers.org.uk)

Surrey Young Carers is part of charity Action for Carers Surrey.

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