

As we come to the close of another busy year, we'd like to wish you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I hope you have some moments of peace and calm.

In this newsletter we have a variety of news and updates for you, including ACS events taking place in our Hubs, online and elsewhere, between January and March. I hope you'll find some of interest.

We are closed over the holidays (from the 23rd of December) and our Hubs and events will start up again from Monday 6th January. If you need extra help over the break, we have details of support available here www.actionforcarers.org.uk/christmas-support-from-acs/.

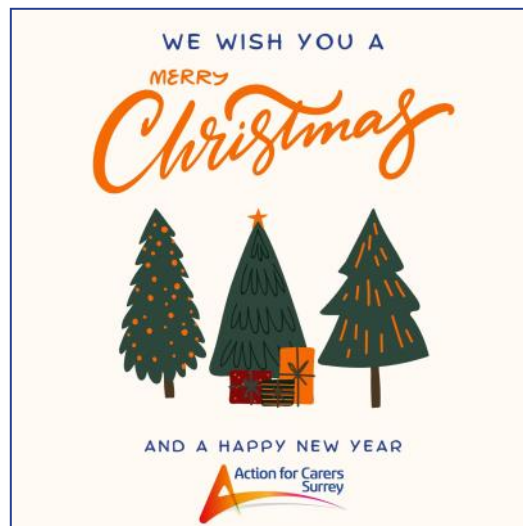
With best wishes for the holidays, *Rachel Brennan*



Manager
Adult
Carers
Support,
Action for
Carers
Surrey

PS Flu
season is

here so please get your free flu jab — please see the back page for more details.



Interested in volunteering?

We have a growing team of wonderful volunteers working with ACS. Thanks to them for all that they've done this year!

We are always looking for others to join the team. If you a carer with a little time, or your caring role has come to an end, perhaps you'd like to consider it? Current opportunities include:

Hub Volunteers in Godalming, Guildford, Camberley, Banstead, Merstham and Farnham – to support with welcoming carers at Hubs, helping set up for events, making tea/coffee etc.

Lived Experience Volunteers – current or previous carers to help interview job candidates to ensure that we recruit the right person with qualities that are important to carers.

Public Awareness Volunteers – hosting stands in places like shopping centres, to reach carers in need of support.

Find out more on our website www.actionforcarers.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering/ or email recruit@actionforcarers.org.uk

BENEFITS HELP

Do you need help with completing a benefit form?
Our team can help. See page 9 for details.

Are you struggling to pay your bills?

Funds from the Government's Household Support Fund are distributed to organisations to provide financial assistance to people struggling to pay for food, fuel, water or other essential bills. We are one of the partners distributing funds in Surrey.

The fund is for carers registered with us who are struggling to pay these bills. **If that's you, please call us (from 6th January) on 0303 040 1234, option 1, or email CSAdmin@actionforcarers.org.uk**

If you are NOT yet registered as a carer with us but are interested in the fund, please complete the form on this page <https://www.actionforcarers.org.uk/news/household-fund-bill-payments-for-unpaid-carers-in-need/> and we'll get in touch.

Action for Carers' Hub Events

We have many free events taking place each month. The following listings are for face-to-face events.

Please **BOOK** for those events with **B** next to them, call 0303 040 1234, option 1; or email CSAdmin@actionforcarers.org.uk

Closer to the event date, they will also be listed [on our website](#), where you can also book a place.

Face-to-face events at our Hubs

January, February, and March



EVENTS INFORMATION

The events below are repeated at different Hubs – check under your Hub to see what's on there. Hubs are drop in, but the **B** means you need to book for that event – details above.

NEW Mental Health Support Group **B**

Led by ACS Mental Health CSAs
Face to face support group for carers supporting someone with a mental health problem

Hubs:

Addlestone 8 January, 12 February, 12 March, 12.30-2pm
Merstham 16 January, 6 February, 6 March, 12.30-2pm
Cranleigh 20 January, 17 February, 17 March, 10-11.30am
Leatherhead 24 January, 28 February, 28 March, 12.30-2pm
Guildford 27 January, 24 February, 24 March, 1-2.30pm

Meet AC's Educational Lead for Young Carers

Ami Makhecha works with schools and colleges in Surrey to improve their support for young and young adult carers. Meet her to find out more.

Hubs:

Guildford 13 January, 10am-2pm

Shepperton 19 February, 10.30-12.30pm
Epsom 19 March, 10.30-12.30pm

Meet the Surrey County Council Carer Practice Adviser (CPA)

Hubs:

Epsom 5 February, 10.30-12pm
Hersham 9 January, 13 February, 13 March, 10.30-12pm
Merstham 20 February, 12.30-2pm
Horley 5 March, 12.30-2pm
Camberley 14 January, 11 February, 11 March, 10.45-1pm
Meet the Carer Practice Adviser from Adult Social Care to discuss support available to you and the person you care for, as well as Assessments and packages of care.

SABP Carer Forum Consultation sessions

Led by Mental Health Carer Practice Partners

There will be regular meetings where you can feedback your experiences of the mental health services.

Help us celebrate good practice and also improve how carers are included in care plans by sharing your thoughts and experiences. We will be joined by [Luminus's](#) 'Giving Carers A voice' service (more details page 5).

Hubs:

Merstham 16 Jan, 12.30pm-2pm
Cranleigh 20 Jan, 10am-11.30am
Leatherhead 24 Jan, 12.30-2pm
Guildford 27 Jan, 1pm-2.30pm

Healthwatch: Luminus

Hubs:

Leatherhead 24 January, 12.30-2pm
Banstead 28 January, 10am-12pm
Cranleigh 3 February, 10am-12pm
Share your views and experiences of social care and NHS services with Luminus's 'Giving Carers a Voice' service.



Wellbeing Crafts

Hubs:

Godalming 4 February, 10.30-2pm
Farnham 7 February, 10.30-2pm
Camberley (Valentine theme) 11 February, 12.15-1.15pm
Cranleigh 17 March, 10.30-2pm
Farnham (Valentine theme) 7 February, 12.15-1.15pm
Horley 19 March, 12.30-2pm
Merstham 20 March, 12.30-2pm
Caterham 27 March, 12.30-2pm
Each Hub will be holding crafts for wellbeing and fun; and will also celebrate the Easter period with different crafts and activities. So check out what's coming up at your nearest Hub!



Understanding The Care Act 2014 **B**

Hubs:

Epsom 5 February, 12.30-2pm
Hersham 27 February, 12.30-2pm
Godalming 4 March, 11-12.30
Farnham 7 March, 12.30-2pm
Led by ACS Carer Support Advisers

The Care Act 2014 is an important Act for carers regarding your rights and access to support. Find out more how this Act can support carers.

Moving & Handling: B Looking After Your Back

Hubs:

Shepperton 5 February, 12.30–2pm details on page 8.

Advice and tips on looking after your back and keeping it strong and supple, from our expert Moving and Handling Team.



Meet Alzheimer's UK

Hubs:
Farnham

7 February and
7 March, 11.30-1pm

Camberley 11 March, 11.30-1pm
Find out more about the support on offer to you.



Carer Feedback

Hubs:

Guildford 10 February,
10.30-12.30pm

Led by Rachel Brennan

Share your experiences of our services, and say how you think we could develop to meet your needs as carers in Surrey.

Relaxation

Led by Rachel Brennan

Hubs:

Banstead 11 February,
12.30-1.30pm

Join this session to learn easy relaxation exercises which you can use daily to manage stress.

Meet with CAB

Hubs:

Camberley 14 January,
25 February, 11 March,
10.45-12pm

Come and speak to a CAB Adviser for support.

Music for Wellbeing B

Hubs:

Guildford 10 March, 12-1.30pm
(sandwiches provided)

Banstead 11 March, 12.30-2pm
Led by ACS CSAs

Research shows that listening to music can have great benefits on physical *and* mental health – reducing anxiety, blood pressure, and pain and improving sleep quality, memory, mental health and feelings of wellbeing.

Our workshop includes a short talk on music's benefits, followed by practical help on how to create a personal playlist for yourself and those you care for. Music is especially beneficial to those with conditions such as Parkinson's, Autism and Dementia. Join our fun, interactive session and discover music for wellbeing.



Mental Health Workshop: Crisis and Contingency Planning B

Hubs:

Woking 17 February, 10am-12pm
Epsom 19 March, 12.30-2.30pm

Led by Rachel Brennan and mental Health CSAs

A session to better understand crisis and contingency planning and other related issues including early warning signs, Section 117 Aftercare and how you can be involved.

Help at the Hubs

At our Hubs you can drop-in for light touch support.

If you need more substantial help, such as form-filling, we'd rather make an appointment to meet up with you outside of Hub time, to allow staff to give you the full support you need.

Please ring the Helpline to arrange any home support on 0303 040 1234, option 2.

THE HUBS...

ADDLESTONE HUB

Addestone Community Centre,
Garfield Road, Addestone
KT15 2NJ – second and fourth
Wednesday of each month

All Carers Support Group
Second Wednesday of the month,
10.30am-12 noon

BANSTEAD HUB

United Reformed Church,
Woodmansterne Lane, Banstead,
SM7 3EX – second and fourth
Tuesday of each month

All Carers Support Group
Fourth Tuesday of the month,
10.30am-12 noon

Parent Carers Support Group
Second Tuesday of the month,
10.30am-12 noon

CAMBERLEY HUB

High Cross Church, Knoll Road,
Camberley GU15 3SY
– second and fourth Tuesday of
the month

All Carers Support Group
Second Tuesday of the month,
10.30am-12 noon

Parent Carer Support Group
Fourth Tuesday of the month,
10.30am-12 noon

Action for Carers' Hub Events (continued)

CATERHAM HUB

Westway Community Café,
25 Chaldon Road, Caterham
CR3 5PG – second and fourth
Thursday of each month

All Carers Support Group
Second Thursday of the month,
10.30am-12 noon

CRANLEIGH HUB

The Bandroom, Village Way,
Cranleigh GU6 8AF – first and
third Monday of each month

All Carers Support Group
First Monday of the month,
10.30am-12 noon

EPSOM HUB

St Barnabas Church, Temple
Road, Epsom KT19 8HA on first
and third Wednesday of each
month. **No Hub 15 January**

All Carers Support Group
First Wednesday of the month,
10.30am-12 noon

Parent Carers Support Group
Third Wednesday of the month,
10.30am-12 noon

FARNHAM HUB

NB two DIFFERENT venues

VENUE 1: The Maltings, Bridge
Square, Farnham GU9 7QR –
first Friday of each month
All Carers Support Group



Hampton Court B

We have free tickets for carers
to visit Hampton Court Palace
and Gardens.

- 17 January, 11am-3pm
- 20 February, 11am-3pm
- 26 March, 11am-3pm

Start with a free coffee/tea
meeting other carers, and then
enjoy a relaxing wander
around this beautiful site.

**Please stay all day and enjoy
this beautiful place!**

First Friday of the month,
10.30am-12 noon

VENUE 2: Hale Sure Start Family
Centre, Upper Hale Rd, Farnham
GU9 0LR – third Thursday of
the month

Parent Carer Support Group
Third Thursday of the month,
10.30am-12 noon

GODALMING HUB

Godalming Library, Bridge Street,
Godalming GU7 1HT – first and
third Tuesday of each month

All Carers Support Group
Third Tuesday of the month,
10.30am-12 noon

GUILDFORD HUB

The Hive, Park Barn Drive,
Guildford GU2 8EN – second and
fourth Monday of the month.

All Carers Support Group
Fourth Monday of the month,
12-1pm (*Sandwiches provided.*)

HERSHAM HUB

The Village Hall, 7 Queens Road,
Hersham, KT12 5LU
– Second and fourth Thursday
of each month

All Carers Support Group
Second Thursday of the month,
10.30am-12 noon

Parent Carers Support Group
Fourth Thursday of the month,
10.30am-12 noon

HORLEY HUB

Horley Library, Meeting Rooms
1&2, 55-57 Russell Square,
Victoria Road, Horley RH6 7QH
– first and third Wednesday of
each month. **No Hub 15 January**

All Carers Support Group
First Wednesday of the month,
10.30am-12 noon

LEATHERHEAD HUB

Leatherhead Community Hub,
Kingston Road, Leatherhead KT22
7PX – second and fourth Friday of
the month

*This Hub is on the Kingston Road
and is also accessible via the rear
of the building (where you'll find
parking). If driving turn down
Aperdele Road, take first right and
follow the lane all the way around
the recreation ground.*

Carers' Stress Management Course: Guildford B

Led by the Centre for Psychology
Six week course starting 3rd March, 10.30-12.30pm

This six-week course will aim to empower you with practical tools to help you navigate the stress that can come with being a carer, covering skills such as being assertive, balancing your daily activities, relaxation techniques, managing worries and increasing self-compassion.

Please book early as there will be an initial phone call assessment by the Centre for Psychology.

All Carers Support Group
Second Friday of the month,
10.30am-12 noon

Parent Carer Support Group
Fourth Friday of the month,
10.30am-12 noon

MERSTHAM HUB

Merstham Community Hub,
2b Portland Drive, Merstham,
Redhill, RH1 3HY – first and third
Thursday of each month

All Carers Support Group
Third Thursday of the month,
10.30am-12 noon

Parent Carer Support Group
First Thursday of the month,
10.30am-12 noon

SHEPPERTON HUB

Greeno Centre, 14 Meadow
View, Glebeland Gardens,
Shepperton TW17 9DH
– first and third Wednesday
of each month

All Carers Support Group

First Wednesday of the month,
10.30am-12 noon

Parent Carer Support Group
Third Wednesday of the month,
10.30am-12 noon

WOKING HUB

Now at Knaphill Methodist
Church, Broadway, Knaphill,
Woking GU21 2DR. (If the door
is locked, please ring the bell.)
– First and third Monday of the
month

All Carers Support Group
First Monday of the month
10.30am-12 noon

Helping the person you
care for move – and
look after
your back

Our Moving
and Handling
team run
sessions on
movement and back care. See
details of upcoming events p9.



ACS Mental Health team

Our team of Carer Support Advisers support those carers looking after someone with a mental health condition.

Some of the team work directly with carers, and some focus on improving how Surrey's professionals work with carers. You can meet the team at some of our events – see below.

Mental Health Workshops

These will be run at all Hubs across 2025. Sessions will look at different issues related to caring for someone with a mental health problem. The first sessions is **Crisis & Contingency Planning** – see page 3.

Mental Health Support Groups

Support Groups for any carer supporting someone with a mental health condition now run from our Hubs and online.

SABP Carer Forum Consultation sessions

Feedback your views on Surrey's mental health services, sharing your thoughts and experiences to celebrate good practice and improve how carers are supported. Luminus will join us.

Merstham Hub
16 January, 12.30-2pm

Cranleigh Hub
20 January, 10-11.30am

Leatherhead Hub
24 January, 12.30-2pm

Guildford Hub
27 January, 1pm-2.30pm

Online
6 February, 7pm-8.30pm
3 March, 7pm-8.30pm

You kindly feedback to us via email, chats, surveys and our Hub feedback boxes...

Our responses to some recent feedback is below. To share your views, please join one of our Hub or online feedback session or simply email Rachel.Brennan@actionforcarers.org.uk

You said...	We did...
<i>Feed back about the digital version of the excellent newsletter: It is very difficult, and sort of annoying, to cope with the pages that give columns in the print version. With the digital version, one has to keep scrolling up and down when an entry has a column break in the middle of the entry. It is easy to lose the place. Try it! Can something be done to resolve this in the digital version?</i>	You are right, it's not ideal, as it is simply a PDF of our printed newsletter. But you have made us think whether we could look into using a different programme to display the newsletter. We're looking into this now to see what alternative ways there might be to show our newsletter digitally. We'll keep you updated.
<i>Many of you have fed back about the changes to the weekly held Hubs which have now changed to twice a month.</i>	We understand this is upsetting however, we needed to do this in order to allow our staff to respond to the increased need for individual support from carers.

Action for Carers' Online Events

We have many free events taking place each month. Below are online (Zoom) events for you.

To register for an event, please call 0303 040 1234 option 1; or email CSAdmin@actionforcarers.org.uk

Closer to the event date, they will also be listed on [our website](#), where you can also register.

Online Events

January,
February, March

Yoga

Led by Saara

Mondays, 10 –11 am

Starting 6 January

Start the week with a positive, fun yoga session to look after yourself in both body and mind.



Mindfulness

Led by Suzette Jones

Daytime sessions each week on Tuesdays, 4-4.45pm

Starts 7 January

PLUS

Monthly evening sessions

Mondays 7-7.45pm

13 January, 10 February, 10 March

Take time for yourself in our mindfulness sessions where we'll practice techniques to promote wellbeing and reduce stress.

Music for Wellbeing

Led by Judith Hider, ACS CSA

16 January 10.30-12 noon

Research shows that listening to music can have great benefits on physical *and* mental health –

reducing anxiety, blood pressure, and pain and improving sleep quality, memory, mental health and feelings of wellbeing.

Our workshop includes a short talk on music's benefits, followed by practical help on how to create a personal playlist for yourself and those you care for. Music is especially beneficial to those with conditions such as Parkinson's, Autism and Dementia. Join our fun, interactive session and discover music for wellbeing.

Relaxation

Led by Rachel Brennan

Third Saturday of the month

18 January, 15 February, 15 March, 10-11am

Start your weekend with some easy relaxation exercises which you can use daily to manage stress and improve wellbeing.

Recovering a Life Outside of Caring

Led by the ACS Hospital Carer Support Advisers

22 January, 7-8.30pm

Ideas, guidance, and support with speakers to give you confidence to build a life outside of caring.

Coping with Caring: Caring for an Adult with Autism

Led by Marie-Anne Mckee, Space2BYou

23 January, 7-8.30pm

Unresolved difficulties: Q&A
Your chance to air difficulties, challenges or questions that are

hard to ask or resolve when caring for someone with autism.

CREATE! Visual Arts Course

Led by Liz Jackson

29 January, 10am -1pm

A 6-week course to learn a variety of visual art techniques. Liz is a versatile artist who works with different materials, and leads activities including drawing, collage, sculpture, textiles... no prior art experience required, and all materials and resources will be provided by CREATE! See Liz's work here ejackson.online/



Carer Feedback Sessions

Led by Rachel Brennan

5 February, 5 March

7.30-8.30pm

Please share your views on ACS's services and how we might improve our support to you, and share your suggestions for events. *There will also be opportunities to meet with Rachel in the Hubs.*

Introduction to Action for Carers

Led by Rachel Brennan and Tamzin Ede

11 February, 7-8pm

Find out about all the services offered by Action for Carers and how we can support you.

Coping with Caring: Managing guilt as a carer

Led by Alison Joyce, Space2BYou

13 February, 7 –8.30pm

As a carer you can feel a whole range of emotions including

carers guilt. Explore ways to manage this whilst still wanting to do the best for the person you care for and caring for yourself.

Relaxation: Young Adult Carer (ages 18-24) session

Led by Rachel Brennan

18 February, 7-8pm

Help look after yourself with some easy relaxation exercises which you can use daily to manage stress and improve wellbeing.

Understanding The Care Act 2014

Led by ACS CSAs

27 February, 10.30-12pm

The Care Act 2014 is an important Act regarding your rights and access to support. Find out more how this Act can support carers.

Coping with Caring: Caring for an Adult with a Mental Illness

Led by Alison Joyce, Space2BYou

5 March, 7-8.30pm

Unresolved difficulties: Q&A
Your chance to air difficulties, or questions that are hard to ask or resolve when caring for someone with mental health problems.



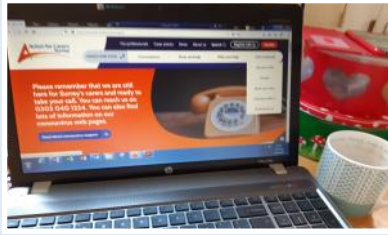
Bra fitting

Led by Mary Maguire,

Bras At Home (brasathome.co.uk)

11 March, 10.30-11.30am

Had difficulty being measured for a bra? Join us for this live demonstration on how to measure yourself or someone else. Bra fitting tips, including styles to suit different body shapes. Mary is happy to answer any questions.



ONLINE Zoom Support Groups

Join our Zoom video Support Groups with your PC, tablet or mobile. **NB Your booking link will last for three months.**

We have some specialist groups as well as our NEW 'Coffee & Chat' for all carers.

Dementia Carers

Third Wednesday each month, 10.30am-12 noon

Time to ask questions and share tips around caring for someone with Dementia.

Mental Health

Third Wednesday of each month, 7-8.30pm

For carers who care for an adult with mental health problems.

Mental Health: Caring for Young People aged 16-25

Third Thursday of each month, 1-2.30 pm

Support for parents of a young person with mental health problems.

Online Support Groups

Parent Carers

Second Friday of each month, 10.30am-12noon

Are you a parent supporting your child under 18? Join us to talk to our experienced staff, and others in a similar position.



****NEW****

All Carers Support and Information session

Now on the first Saturday of each month, 10-11.30am

1 February

What benefits are we eligible for? Q and A with ACS Benefit Advisers.

1 March

Support for working carers.

This 'All Carers' group is for any type of carer to attend, especially if you are working.

Book a place on our website, or email CSAdmin@actionforcarers.org.uk or call on 0303 040 1234 option 1.



GET MORE... via email!

When you registered with us you may have said 'no' to email contact. But do you know we send an Events Update email newsletter every three weeks? It's full of news and updates as well as listing free upcoming activities from us and other organisation.

To request it, please call us on 0303 040 1234, option 1, or email CSAdmin@actionforcarers.org.uk

Specific support from Action for Carers

As we head into a new year, we thought it would be a good time to remind you of the different teams we have at Action for Carers and the specific support they can offer.

To be referred to any of the specialist teams, please call 0303 040 1234, or email CSAdmin@actionforcarers.org.uk. You can book on sessions via the website, or by contacting the same email address.



Helpline Team

Our Helpline is your first point of call for advice, information and just a friendly chat with someone who really understands what you're going through.

The three Advisers – Belinda, Catherine and Mary – are experienced and will talk you through any concerns you have to answer your queries on all caring matters – practical, emotional and financial. They are able to:

- offer advice and information
- provide booklets and leaflets
- talk through benefits and payments you might be eligible for
- refer you to our Benefit Advisers and Hospital Carer Support Advisers
- help you understand how to apply for breaks
- give emotional support
- put you in touch with a Carer Support Adviser in your area

The Helpline is open 9am-5pm, Monday, Thursday and Friday, and open 9am-6pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Call on 0303 040 1234 or email CarerSupport@actionforcarers.org.uk

"I just want to say a very big Thank You, for spending the time to talk to me, listening and understanding. Just having that time and support has helped me so much."
Sarah

Moving and Handling Service

Do you help the person you care for move around? That's quite common for unpaid carers. But it can be challenging physically, and dangerous – both for you and your loved one.

Our Moving and Handling team can help. They can advise on safe techniques and manoeuvres to help you. For example, how to get someone out of bed safely, or into a car. They can also advise on equipment – and further sources of help and information. We offer support in person, in group training and online.

With their help, you can look after your back – and keep yourself and your loved one safe.

Upcoming events include:

Demonstration of basic moving and handling techniques (Woking)

This session explains what safe moving and handling means, and we'll demonstrate some basic manoeuvres on how to help someone get into and out of both a chair and a bed.

Held at Bluebird Care Woking Lion House, 147 Oriental Rd, Woking GU22 8AR

Thursday 30 Jan, 10.30am-12pm
Tuesday 4 March, 10.30am-12pm



Car transfers (online)

Tips and manoeuvres to help the person you care for get in and out of the car.

Tuesday 11 February, 10.30am-12pm
Thursday 20 March, 10.30am-12pm

Looking after yourself and your back

Join us for some tips & techniques to help you care for your back when caring for someone.

Shepperton Hub: Wednesday 5 February, 12.30-2pm



Specific support from Action for Carers

ACS Benefits Advisers

Do you need help with completing benefit forms?

We are excited to share that we now have two (part-time) Benefit Advisers covering Surrey, Amanda and Drew.



They can offer support with completing these forms:

- Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
- Attendance Allowance



- Carer's Allowance
- ESA capability for work if needed

(CAB are still commissioned to support with Universal Credit, so unfortunately we can't help with that). Please contact Helpline for a referral to our Benefit Advisers.

Upcoming events include:

What benefits am I eligible for? Q&A

This is a 'question and answer' session with our Benefits Advisers taking place online. **1 February, 10-11.30am, online** (see page 7),

Our Impact Report

We've produced an Impact Report which shows our support over 2023-24.

We hope it lets people understand a bit more about carers' lives, and the help we provide, and encourages more people to support our work and get involved. Find it on our web news pages or call in for a copy.



Hospital Carer Support Advisers

Our Hospital Carer Advisers can help you when your loved one is in hospital. This can often be an additionally stressful time and our team are there to help.

They can bridge communication gaps and offer advice, information and emotional support, as well as help with the discharge process.



East Surrey
Stacey Holman
Monday—Friday



Epsom General
Julie Law
Mondays, Tuesdays,
Thursdays, and
Tamzin Ede
(team manager)
Thursdays



Royal Surrey County Hospital
Naheeda Majid
Monday-Friday



Ashford and St Peter's
Sam Caine
Monday-Friday

Hospital booklets

Surrey's Adult Carer Support service have a new **Carers' Hospital Discharge Guide**.

There is a booklet available, or you can read the information on online www.surreycc.gov.uk/adults/care-and-support/carers/hospital-discharge-guide. It covers a broad range of issues related to discharge, including getting support once back home. If you'd like a printed copy, please contact call us on 0303 040 1234 option 1.

Don't forget we also have a general **Carers' Hospital Guide**, find it here <https://www.actionforcarers.org.uk/how-we-help/information-booklets/> or again call to request a copy.



News and Activities from other Organisations



Thyme for You' at the Therapy Garden

There's a new monthly group for carers called 'Thyme for You' at the Therapy Garden, near Guildford (GU3). It will take place 10am-12 pm on the fourth Wednesday of each month as part of their 'Wellbeing Wednesdays' program.

Sessions will consist of social time over refreshments in the Garden Room, a practical horticultural activity and a wellbeing activity. The cost will be £10 per person, and hopefully allow carers to feel refreshed, encouraged and get enjoyment from the beautiful garden. Apply at www.thetherapygarden.org/get-involved/garden-for-wellbeing-form/

Buses on demand

The Surrey Connect on-demand shared bus service is available across Surrey Heath, Waverley, Runnymede and the wider Guildford area (where there's fewer traditional bus services). Visit www.surreycc.gov.uk/



Struggling with bills?

Firstly, please see our story on the front page re the Household Fund. There are many other places to go for help. Firstly, contact your energy supplier as they have a range of options which may be able to help you—find out what they offer here www.ofgem.gov.uk/getting-help-if-you-cant-afford-your-energy-bills

Also get yourself on the Priority Service Register. It's a free service which provides extra advice and support, including when there's an interruption to your electricity, gas, or water supply: www.thepsr.co.uk or contact your supplier directly.

Other help includes:

- National Energy Action www.cse.org.uk/ the national fuel poverty charity working to ensure everyone is warm and safe at home.
- Centre for Sustainable Energy www.cse.org.uk help people reduce bills, improve their homes and change how they think about energy.
- [Energysavingtrust.org.uk/](http://energysavingtrust.org.uk/) have lots of tips for energy efficient homes, including clean energy solutions.



Cheaper Water Tariffs (or social tariffs) can help with water bills. Contact your supplier to see what they can offer you. And find out more on water bills at www.ccw.org.uk

Cheaper Broadband Tariffs (also known as social tariffs) and phone packages are available if you're claiming Universal Credit, Pension Credit and some other benefits. Some providers call them 'essential' or 'basic' broadband. For more visit www.ofcom.org.uk/phones-and-broadband/saving-money/social-tariffs/

Surrey 'Warm Welcomes'

Warm Welcome venues are open to all in Surrey this winter, free of charge. Whether you are old or young, live alone or with your family, feel like you are struggling or just managing to get by, a Warm Welcome awaits you.

There are 80 Warm Welcome venues across Surrey in a variety of community spaces including community and church halls, libraries and leisure centres. All you have to do is show up! Come inside, warm up, enjoy a hot drink and receive energy advice and much more.

Details and locations here www.surreycc.gov.uk/warmwelcome



News and Activities from other Organisations



Stroke signs: act FAST

Even if it doesn't seem like much, at the first sign of a stroke, call 999.

Stroke symptoms might be less dramatic, painful or obvious than you might expect. Like not being able to raise your arm, struggling to smile, or slurred speech.

Face or Arm or Speech, at the first sign, it's Time to call 999. Visit www.nhs.uk/ActFAST for more.

FoCUS

Part of Surrey Coalition, FoCUS holds public meetings where NHS Managers learn from people who've experienced NHS mental health, learning disability, older people and Drug and Alcohol services.

Service users and carers are invited to join; you attend monthly meetings, online or in person, shaping future services and meeting new people!

More at surreycoalition.org.uk/imhn/focus/ or email Jennie. Coulson@surreycoalition.org.uk or call 01483 456558.

Charity single

Ed Davey, leader of the Lib Dems, has released a



Christmas song, written by young carers, with the Bath Philharmonica's Young Carers Choir: carers.org/christmas-song/christmas-song-ed-davey-for-young-carers

Equipment Finder



SCC have a new section on their website 'Home Equipment Finder' with suggestions of products that can help. www.surreycc.gov.uk/adults/care-and-support/equipment-and-technology/equipment

Christmas lunches

Mary Frances Trust have details of various Christmas lunches for those who'd otherwise be alone www.maryfrancestrust.org.uk/what-to-do-on-christmas-day-2024-in-surrey/

Crossroads Care Surrey

Crossroads have two cards for carers. Their Emergency Service includes a card to let people know you're a carer in case of emergencies. You can also request a Carers Card, which tells others you're a carer, and provides some discounts.

End Of Life Carer Support
Crossroads also provide ongoing support and assistance for those caring for someone in the last 12 months of their life. Our Helpline can refer you. **Call Crossroads Care Surrey on 01372 869970, email enquiries@crossroadscaresurrey.org.uk**

Pharmacy help

Did you know pharmacies can offer treatment and when appropriate some prescription medicine, for seven common conditions without needing to see a GP?



At most pharmacies you can now get treatment and medicine (where appropriate) for earache (for those aged one to 17), impetigo, infected insect bites, shingles, sinusitis, sore throat, and urinary tract infections (UTIs) for women aged 16-64 – all without the need for a GP appointment. At the pharmacy no appointment is necessary and private consultations are available.

Don't wait for minor health concerns to get worse – think pharmacy first. More here nhs.uk/thinkpharmacyfirst

Theatre and cinema news

We've previously mentioned G Live's special screenings (their 'Memory Cinema'). Godalming also have a relaxed dementia-friendly **Cinema Club**, free, and starting monthly in the Wilfrid Noyce Centre. To find out more or sign up email Godalmingrelaxedcinema@outlook.com

And Yvonne Arnaud have a social group for theatre lovers. If you're feeling a bit isolated, or want to go but have no one to go with, consider their special **Showgoers** group. You get a special rate and meet with the group the show for a chat and soft drink. Email creativelearning@yvonne-arnaud.co.uk for more information.



Sharing your views...

Sharing your views

Many consultations and studies want to hear from carers. We have a variety of requests from researchers and open surveys, both local (in Surrey) and national, all seeking carers' views.

Find details of below consultations, plus more, at:
www.actionforcarers.org.uk/get-involved/use-your-voice/consultations/



SCC Surveys
Please note you'll find all SCC's consultations at

www.surreysays.co.uk

Surrey County Council's Adult Travel Policy

Surrey County Council has a new draft policy which outlines its approach to the provision of travel assistance for those adult residents who are eligible for this support under the Care Act. If you want your views heard, please see the link to the policy (bottom of the page) and the survey for your comments here:

www.surreysays.co.uk/adult-social-care-and-public-health/travel-policy-consultation/ Please note, it closes 31 December.

S&BP Care Planning

Surrey and Borders Partnership Trust are looking for people with recent or current experience of using their services, or their family members or carers, to join them in exploring the changes to national guidance on Care Planning and what these changes mean for

Surrey and Borders. Workshops take place in February and we'll share details nearer then.

EHCNA process

Surrey SEND Service want to improve the Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) process, and working with Family Voice Surrey, are forming a task group with parents with *recent* experience (last 12-18 months) of making the initial request for an EHCNA Assessment. Please join the initial meeting – pick one of the two sessions (both the same) at 12pm or 7pm on Wednesday 8 January. To book please email contact@familyvoicesurrey.org.

Social care for children

The Law Commission is reviewing the framework governing social care for disabled children in England and are running consultations till 20th January on whether the legislation meets the needs of disabled children and

Details of consultations:
www.actionforcarers.org.uk/get-involved/use-your-voice/consultations/

their families. There are specific questions and proposals in the consultation relating to sibling young carers and also parent carers. To attend a focus group with other carers to share your views, please email youngcarersalliance@carers.org

Young onset dementia and ethnic minorities

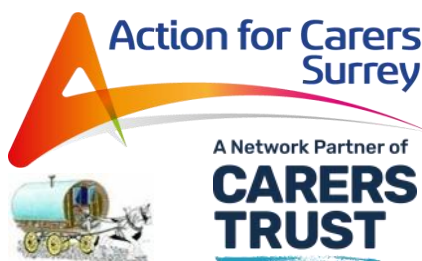
If the person you care for is from a minority community and diagnosed under 65, please take part in this Liverpool University study. More on our website ('consultations' - see below left.)



FLU JABS

Don't forget you're entitled to a free flu jab – flu session lasts till March. It's free for carers, and protects you as well as the person you care for. You can ask for a flu jab at your GP practice or at a [pharmacy offering the free vaccine](#). If you need a paper voucher for a pharmacy contact us and we will post it to you.

Action for Carers is here for you. If you haven't yet registered with us, please do. We offer a whole range of advice, support, information and events. Call **0303 040 1234** or email carersinfo@actionforcarers.org.uk Or you can register on our website: www.actionforcarers.org.uk/register-with-us/



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