

What comes next

Our values

We are **inclusive**
we put people first

We are **informed**
we are knowledgeable
and consistent

We are **effective**
we aim for the greatest
positive impact for carers



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Welcome

As we write this in November 2020, the world around us has changed immeasurably and our lives are very different.

The weeks spent in 'lockdown' gave us a glimpse into what life can be like for carers. Caring for someone who can't cope without your support is tough at the best of times, and can have a devastating effect on a carer's own health and wellbeing. During this unsettling time, we have been certain of one thing: that carers and their families need our support. Now more than ever.

We knew that 2019/20 was to be a time for change. For us as a charity. And for everyone in our communities who plays a role in caring together.

During the year we launched our new name and brand – Caring Together – aimed at improving our visibility to carers, improving their experience of our services and increasing our fundraised income. As a result we reached just over 11,000 carers and achieved a 20% increase in donations. This contributed to our overall income of £3.8m. We are confident we'll see further increases in fundraised income in the years ahead.

Our commitment to becoming a more efficient and sustainable organisation is reflected in our investment in the skills and expertise of our team. We implemented the first phase of digital transformation, with many staff working remotely but with more

information and fewer paper-based systems than before.

We are now in a strong position to respond to the fast changing and uncertain environment that lies ahead, and to provide flexible, targeted, and focused support for carers. We have successfully transitioned our office-based staff to work from home and established virtual support sessions for groups of carers. All our staff and volunteers have gone above and beyond the call of duty throughout the pandemic to ensure services and support have been available to all those who have needed us.

We are delighted to have been commissioned by Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council to deliver the three-year adult carers contract. We acknowledge the ongoing support of both national and local organisations who have provided grants and much needed personal protective equipment throughout the last few months.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the hidden heroes of our communities: the carers.



Stuart Evans
Chair of trustees



Miriam Martin
Chief executive

Caring Together

We are Caring Together. We provide information and advice, run services in our communities and campaign so that carers have choices.

Our charitable purpose is:

The provision of comprehensive support services for carers and people with care needs in the East of England.

.....

The assistance of carers in need including raising awareness of issues affecting carers.

Our vision is a world in which all carers have choices.

We know that this is a big, bold, statement. It is designed to make you stop and think. It expresses the change that we want to see and drives all that we do.

The time for change. We were not shy about our ambitions to help more carers and the changes that were needed to do so during the year. Because it is urgent. Because the need is growing. And because carers tell us being a carer is really tough.

We know that most carers find themselves in caring roles without choosing to be there and the idea of being able to have a choice in anything, can feel far removed from daily life.

Becoming a carer can happen to anyone at any point in their life. Three in five of us will be a carer at some point. It is often not a role that we choose, and it can turn lives upside down in a heartbeat.

We want to be there to offer the practical and emotional support that they need before, during and after their caring role. We want everyone in our communities to know that they are not alone. That we are all caring together.

Through delivering our strategy of growth, focus and excellence, we have been there. Bringing carers together – together with information and advice, together with services that help and together with each other.



Our year together

June 2019

We unveil our new name and brand.



July 2019

60 young carers and their families watch Norwich City Football Club in action thanks to Aviva's Friendliest Friendlies project.



September 2019

We introduce dedicated local care teams to make sure that our customers receive the best care possible.

Our new digital transformation manager joins us to help improve our ways of working across the team and with our customers.

November 2019

We launch the Carer Friendly Tick Award across health, employers and community groups.

We introduce 'our place'; an intranet so that our teams can keep in touch and up to date with information across the charity.

Volunteers Pat and Niamh are recognised for their support of carers at the Peterborough CVS Voluntary Sector Awards and by the Hunts Forum of Voluntary Organisations.



October 2019

We are awarded the Hunts FA and McDonald's Grassroots Award for Project of the Year for our work to promote healthy lifestyles for young carers through football.



December 2019

We collect and deliver over 600 selection boxes to help spread the cheer to carers at Christmas.



January 2020

We are proud to become a Living Wage employer.

Young Carers Awareness Day sees us launch an infant carers resource pack for primary schools.

We win Employer of the Year Award for Health and Social Care at Cambridge Regional College's Apprenticeship Awards.

Chief nursing officer for NHS England, Ruth May, visits our carers' hub in Ely.



February 2020

17-year-old Lynne heads to London to share the challenges she faces as a young carer on the BBC's Victoria Derbyshire Show.



March 2020

Four fundraisers join #TeamTogether at the Saucony Cambridge half marathon.



11,150
people
received our
support

**We give
advice**

**so that carers
have choices**

**“ This was the first time
she felt someone had
understood her situation. ”**

Sandra* cares for her son who has Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME). He was so exhausted that he was unable to get out of bed, leaving him feeling suicidal.

Sandra was sitting with him from 7.00am until 11.00pm and this was having an impact on her relationship with her family.

Initially she was unsure that talking to anyone would help. She had tried to get support through other organisations with little success.

On the first call Sandra advised that her son's health had deteriorated further. She was feeling guilty. The Listening Ear volunteer suggested ways for her to take some time for herself, including spending time in the garden, listening to the radio, reading; all things she enjoys that she can do at home. They encouraged her to ask her husband for more support which she did, taking some pressure off her.

The Listening Ear volunteer continued to call regularly and Sandra felt more able to cope.

Sandra said that she really appreciated the support and this was the first time she felt someone had understood her situation and she really looked forward to the calls.

Our aim

Building an exemplar, externally accredited, information and advice service which empowers and equips carers with the information, skills and knowledge they need before, during and after caring

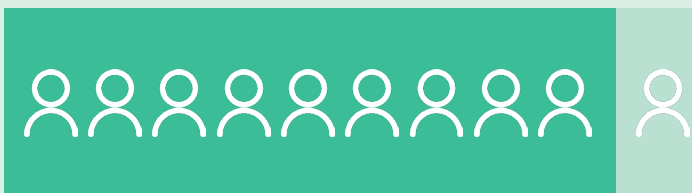
We know that navigating the support available to carers can be challenging. Our expert information, advice and guidance advisors are on hand to help.

- ✿ We created a single carer services team and produced a comprehensive information directory for them to use.
- ✿ Through our dedicated carer helpline, we enabled **2,705 carers** to access information and support.
- ✿ We helped **1,045 carers** to plan for when something unexpected happens that means they are unable to care for the person they look after.
- ✿ We registered **527 What If? emergency plans**, giving carers peace of mind to know that we can help them respond to an emergency.
- ✿ As part of our Listening Ear project, our volunteers lent a listening ear to **91 carers**.

* names have been changed throughout to protect the identity of individuals.

Company Registration Number 4379948

9 out of 10 carers feel better supported in their caring role



12,129
breaks
provided
for carers

**We run
groups**

**so that carers
have choices**

" She was a totally different person when she came out and SO happy. "

10-year-old Fiona cares for her mum who suffers with mental health issues. Mum often has panic attacks which require Fiona to calm her down. Due to her anxiety, mum finds driving difficult which can mean they don't go out much.

We gave Fiona the chance to join other young carers to watch Matilda at the Norwich Theatre Royal.

When Fiona arrived she was very shy and didn't talk to any other young people. Our staff gently encouraged her to chat and asked her to hold the programme for the group photo which helped her feel important. She began talking to the young carers sat next to her and, by the end of the show, had made three new friends.

Mum said "I was a little worried leaving her as I could see she was withdrawn. She was a totally different person when she came out and SO happy.

"I had a panic attack on the way home which Fiona has unfortunately seen more than a few times. But this time she seemed very confident and much more able – the only thing that has changed is that she is now part of your group."

Our aim

Growing our reputation as the premier provider of carer breaks on our patch

Carers tell us that giving them the opportunity to have a break is one of the most important things we do here at Caring Together. We know that, whatever their age, taking a break from looking after someone is vital.

- ✿ We were joined by **1,024 carers** at **80 carers hub sessions** where they could connect with other carers and learn new skills whilst having some much-needed time out.
- ✿ As part of our Big Lottery-funded Reaching Communities project, we took **37 carers** and the people they care for to 'Carriages', for afternoon tea, enabling carers from different areas to meet and create new friendships.
- ✿ Our carer breaks didn't stop there as we supported **970 young carers** to take part in trips and visits.
- ✿ Oh no you didn't! **101 young carers** enjoyed a fun evening with their siblings and other family members at the pantomime in Peterborough.
- ✿ The highlight of our calendar was once again taking **32 young carers** from Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Norfolk to the national Young Carers Festival where they joined 1,300 other young carers for a break away from their caring responsibilities.

"I enjoyed being able to get out and enjoy good company of people in a similar situation."



79,597
homecare
hours
delivered

We provide homecare

so that carers have choices

“ She had reached breaking point as they were totally reliant on her. ”

Grace* was referred to Caring Together as she was caring for both parents. Her father had dementia and was not sleeping at night and so keeping her up too. Her mother had physical health problems and needed support with personal care. Neither were able to manage tasks at home without her.

She had reached breaking point as they were totally reliant on her. Our specialist advisors arranged to give her a break by providing a dedicated care worker who could support her parents. This enabled Grace to get some sleep during the day when the care worker was with her parents.

Our team went on to liaise with the local social care team to arrange longer-term support, which Grace hopes will mean she is able to go back to work.

Recognising that Grace could benefit from a range of support the team also set up a What If? emergency plan so that she had peace of mind knowing that support is available should anything happen that means she can't care for her parents. She was also put in touch with her local family carers hub, giving her the chance to get together with others in a similar situation.

Our aim

Growing our reputation as the premier provider of carer breaks on our patch

Caring for someone who can't cope without your support is tough. It can have a devastating effect on a carer's own health and wellbeing and even lead to carer breakdown.

- ✧ Through the Family Carers' Prescription **820 carers** from **93 GP surgeries** were able to take a break or attend their own medical appointments, helping **529 carers** to avoid their own admission to hospital.
- ✧ The Family Carers' Prescription was recognised by the Social Care Institute of Excellence as a particularly innovative approach to carer support.
- ✧ Our dedicated care workers delivered **79,600 hours** of homecare in our local communities, giving carers a chance to get out and about, meet up with friends or simply have a rest.
- ✧ We introduced dedicated care teams across Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Norfolk.
- ✧ Regular day clubs across the region enabled **40 people** with care needs to get together in a safe space and take part in activities, allowing the person who looks after them to take a break.

83% of carers feel more able to cope with challenges as they arise and prevent them escalating





178,000

carers in
Cambridgeshire,
Peterborough
and Norfolk

We campaign

so that carers
have choices

“ We value the amazing role
that young carers play in
their families. ”

Hampton College in Peterborough were awarded the Carer Friendly Tick Award - Education in November but have been supporting young carers in their school for over ten years. They run a regular group for young carers which they believe is vital to give carers space for themselves as engagement and pastoral support coordinator, Katherine, confirms: "We value the amazing role that young carers play in their families and we celebrate this within our young carer group in school."

Through pupil premium funding they support young carers with costs for trips, school uniform and other expenses, working with our team to highlight any young carers who are in need of additional support.

During Carers Week and on Young Carers Awareness Day, they run stalls and competitions across the school to raise awareness of what a young carer is and the support that is available to them.

Having achieved the Carer Friendly Tick for education, the school are working towards the award for employers, so that staff who are carers are also identified and supported.

Our aim

Establishing ourselves as the 'go to' organisation for all carer matters.

The majority of carers take years to recognise their caring role. And even longer to get any help that they need. We work together with other organisations to raise awareness of the challenges that carers face and the practical things that can be done to identify and support them.

- ✦ Recognising our need to stand out from the crowd so that carers know where to come for support, we re-developed our brand, changing our name to Caring Together. Because it's what we do.
- ✦ We delivered **271 carer awareness raising sessions to 10,684 professionals and young people.**
- ✦ On Carers Rights Day we launched the Carer Friendly Tick Award.
- ✦ Our team worked with **21 organisations** to gain the Carer Friendly Tick Award and continue to support an additional **77** who are actively working towards achieving the accolade.
- ✦ We worked with Magdalen Gates Primary School to create a young carers resource pack and animation for schools.

7 out of 10 carers feel their role is now more recognised



£3.8m

our income
for
2019-2020

**We raise
money**

**so that carers
have choices**

**" The best thing about
working for Caring Together
has been the team. "**

Care worker, Lizzy, joined Caring Together in 2019, completing two weeks of essential training before starting work with our clients as part of our homecare team.

After this initial period there has been on-going training that is there to help make sure she has the skills she needs in her role and ensure her wellbeing.

She said, "online training is available, which can be looked back on if I am unsure of any aspects of my role. Other support includes one-to-one which has been valuable for my wellbeing as well as to raise any concerns."

Lizzy enjoys seeing the benefits that her work brings: "my role has a significant impact on clients and their families as it allows them to be as independent as possible while assisting them in things that they are not able to do themselves. This gives their families a break from caring for them."

She values being part of the charity explaining, "the best thing about working for Caring Together has been the team. All staff are lovely and very helpful which is very important."

Our aim

Becoming an efficient, sustainable and growing organisation.

We are committed to identifying and supporting more carers across the region. We continued to invest in our team, our digital transformation and our fundraising to make sure that we will be able to do so. Now and in the future.

- ✧ As part of our improvements to terms and conditions for staff we became a Living Wage employer.
- ✧ A human resources and volunteer coordinator joined us to help grow our volunteer team and make sure that they get the most out of their time volunteering with us.
- ✧ To make it easier to keep in touch, collaborate and share information with each other we introduced our new staff intranet, 'our place'.
- ✧ In order to work together and with others more efficiently we procured a new IT and care management system ready for implementation in April 2020.
- ✧ To grow our income and enable us to deliver new services we welcomed a fundraising manager.

90% of people said they felt happy working for Caring Together



Looking to the future

The coming year will be a difficult one for all charities and we are no exception. Our plans have been and will continue to be impacted by the coronavirus crisis.

Preparing our business plan for 2020/21 has been challenging as we work our way through uncertain times.

Whilst we will not be able to achieve all that we originally set out to within the coming 12 months, our purpose and commitment to carers remains the same and we will continue to implement our programme of change.

Our strategy remains unchanged.

Growth
reaching more people

Excellence
being the best we can

Focus
growing our core services

Following a review of our business plan and the risks the current climate presents, we will streamline our focus to the activities that will have the greatest benefit for carers.

Our focus will be:

- ✿ **Producing high quality and reliable information.** Online, over the telephone and face-to-face. For carers, their families and the organisations that we work with.
- ✿ **Increasing the number of carer breaks we provide.** Promoting our CQC rated good homecare service designed to give carers a break.
- ✿ **Delivering the all age carers contract for carer services.** Commissioned by Cambridgeshire County and Peterborough City Councils to support carers locally and starting on 1 August 2020.
- ✿ **Implementing the planned elements of our digital transformation plan.** Rolling out the new care rostering system, providing new devices to care workers and introducing the fundraising customer relationship management system.
- ✿ **Growing fundraising income.** Creating new ways for people to support the charity and making sure their experience is a positive one.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Caring Together exists so that carers have choices. Equality, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of realising that vision.

Inclusion sits as one of our core values and yet we recognise that there is more that we can do to make this a living reality at Caring Together.

We believe that the combination of different life experiences, attributes and contributions from all stakeholders including carers, volunteers, paid staff and trustees will make the organisation more effective, inclusive and a better place to work.

We value every individual, going beyond our statutory responsibilities by taking positive action to build a culture that eliminates discrimination, champions and promotes equality, diversity and inclusion and encourages and supports all individuals to develop and realise their full potential.

We have committed to take specific and focused action to improve workforce diversity, workplace inclusion and to serve our customers better.

Whilst we acknowledge that this is just the first step in what will be an ongoing journey, becoming a more equal, diverse and inclusive charity is something that has the full support of our chairman, trustees and senior leadership team.

In doing so we will adopt the following principles:

Fairness

giving all individuals the same choices and opportunities.



Honesty

being truthful and sincere in words and actions.



Respect

having due regard for individuals' feelings, rights and wishes. Being considerate and seeking to understand the views and opinions of others.



Excellence

striving to be outstanding role models, engaging in learning and developing our understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion.



Thank you

We exist to make sure that carers get the practical and emotional support that they need and we cannot do this without you; whether it is by donating, fundraising, volunteering, taking part in an event or championing the cause of carers.

From sponsored bike rides to charity concerts to donations in lieu of Christmas cards, your support means that we have helped even more carers across Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Norfolk.

We created #TeamTogether, our army of supporters taking part in challenges all in the name of carers.

And it doesn't stop at fundraising. From providing a listening ear to helping out at our carers' hubs, our volunteers continued to give their time (2020: 2,344 hours, 2019: 2,383 hours) and enthusiasm willingly throughout the year.

And, whilst unfortunately the end of the year saw many of our fundraising events put on hold due to the coronavirus crisis, we plan to explore new ways for you to get involved and continue to show your support for carers.

On behalf of everyone at Caring Together and the carers we support, thank you.



Four supporters joined #TeamTogether taking part in the **Saucony Cambridge half marathon**.



As one of the chosen monthly charities for 2019, the generous members of **St Marks, Newnham** kindly collected donations for us.



Colleagues at the Peterborough and Stamford branches of **Halifax** chose Caring Together as their charity of the year.



Pupils at **Swaffham Junior School** got into the festive spirit by making a donation to wear a Christmas jumper.

To help us support even more carers you can:

- * Make a donation
- * Organise a fundraiser
- * Take part in an event or challenge
- * Give a gift in memory of someone
- * Support us in your workplace
- * Leave a gift in your will
- * Volunteer your time.

Our fundraising team are here to support you every step of the way.

£10 could enable a young adult carer to travel to an interview.

£20 could pay for a young carer to take part in a fun activity.

£50 could give a carer and the person they look after a day out.

£175 could provide a day of homecare to give a carer a break.

caringtogether.org/donate

We would like to thank the following organisations for supporting Caring Together:

- * BBC Children in Need
- * Cambridgeshire Young Carers Fund (Cambridgeshire Community Foundation)
- * Carers Trust
- * Huntingdon Freeman's Trust
- * Hutchinson Charitable Trust
- * James Griffin Fund
- * Masonic Charitable Foundation
- * Mistra Trust
- * National Lottery Community Fund
- * Patricia Ann Seaman Will Trust
- * People's Postcode Trust
- * Simon Gibson Charitable Trust
- * The Childwick Trust
- * The Hinchingsbrooke Foundation
- * The Wisbech & Wolsoken Poor Sick Charity
- * Uttlesford Trust.



Our trustees



Stuart Evans - chair of trustees

Entrepreneur Stuart previously chaired the Arthur Rank Hospice and was a board member of the East of England Development Agency. He and his wife adopted three children and have first-hand experience of caring.

Matthew Lester

Matthew is currently a director of Sunday Times and ESTA Gold Award winning Maxine Lester Residential Lettings and Property Management. He spent 10 years as operations director for the Papworth Trust where he was responsible for service delivery by 200 staff.



Alison Griffiths – honorary treasurer

Alison, a chartered accountant, brings vast professional expertise to the board and was a director of taxation in international FTSE 100 groups. She is a trustee of Cambridgeshire Community Foundation.

Mike Passfield RN QN MSJ MSc

Graduating as a clinician, Mike joined the NHS and brings a decade of management experience to the board. He was also a young carer himself, caring for his father.



Tim Britt

Tim was elected onto the board in January 2020, bringing with him a wealth of experience across commercial roles and business process development. Tim is head of strategic services within Marshall Centre, part of the Marshall Group of Companies.

Ben Walsh

A practising mediator, Ben has a wealth of experience in the field of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, working with charities that help families overcome barriers to accessing support and has personal experience of caring himself.



David Hipple

David brings considerable financial and general management skills to the charity having spent over 35 years as a chartered accountant and director of finance for a number of large and medium sized groups in both the public and private sector.

Christina Wells

Christina spent over 25 years working at a senior level in the public sector and has a wide range of experience, particularly within the NHS. Her interests include promoting the health and wellbeing of carers, developing carer friendly communities and safeguarding.



Our senior leadership team



Miriam Martin – chief executive

Miriam has worked in the charity sector for over 20 years, including as chief executive at Action for Blind People, a UK-wide charity with a budget of £23mn, 900 staff and 400 volunteers, supporting 90,000 people each year.



Melanie Gray – deputy chief executive

A qualified applied psychologist, Melanie has a wide range of sector experience and her skills include change management, project management, commissioning, research, consultancy and business development.



Helen de Spretter FCCA - director of finance and resources

A chartered accountant, Helen has operated in both private and public sectors.



Vanessa Kinsey-Thatcher – head of care services

Caring for her sister in her early years, Vanessa has held roles spanning governance, regulation and improving standards within healthcare settings. Most recently she was a mental health hospitals inspector with the CQC.

Anna Bainbridge - head of people

With a background in psychology and the third sector, she has a broad range of experience covering contracts and partnerships, project management, grants and tenders, quality standards and people management.



Hannah Crouch - head of fundraising and engagement

With over 12 years' experience in the third sector, Hannah is experienced in growing both capital and revenue funding.



Andy McGowan - head of carer services

Andy has over 15 years' experience of carers' policy, awareness-raising and participation on a local and national level and was part of the national campaign to introduce legal rights for young carers.



John Platten - digital transformation manager

John has a broad experience of delivering customer-centred digital services with a focus on user experience and change management in the academic, local government and property sectors.





Unit 4, Meadow Park,
Meadow Lane,
St Ives, PE27 4LG

T 01480 499090 or 0345 241 0954
E hello@caringtogether.org
caringtogether.org

Caring Together Charity
Charity Registration Number 1091522
Company Registration Number 4379948



A Network Partner of
**CARERS
TRUST**

