



## “ My Life, My Choices ”

Up to date information about care and support services available for adults living in the borough is now only a click away with the council’s new online service ‘My Life, My Choices’.

Easy to navigate and accessible directly from the main Wigan Council website, the site contains information about help and support from local organisations including the council, health, housing and leisure partners, independent, community and voluntary associations.

My Life, My Choices has been designed to help people who want to organise their own care package, those who organise health and care support on behalf of someone as well as social care, health and other professionals.

Having undertaken extensive research with the public and professionals, the site has been given the stamp of approval and was launched in December. “Although we don’t intend to replace other forms of contact, we do know that people want to be able to find out information for



themselves quickly and easily. My Life, My Choices provides the ideal solution offering a wealth of information from care to health, housing, leisure and transport in all at the touch of a button.”

**Andy McNally, project lead for My Life, My Choices.**

The website can be found at: [www.wigan.gov.uk/mylifemychoices](http://www.wigan.gov.uk/mylifemychoices)

If you haven't got a computer at home or need support to find information online check out your local library who provide free Internet access (for library members) as well as offering beginners IT courses.

For more information go to: [www.wlct.org/libraries](http://www.wlct.org/libraries)

## Carers Directory

The local information directory containing contact details and information on a wide range of carer relevant issues produced by the carers support team is available on line and can be accessed by going to [www.wigan.gov.uk/carers](http://www.wigan.gov.uk/carers) and clicking on the 'Carers Information Directory' tab (at the top left hand corner of the page). Each of the main sections of the directory has been published as a PDF document, so that they can be easily viewed and downloaded.

### Carers and Their Rights The Law Relating to Carers

2011 edition of Carers and their Rights written by Professor Luke Clements is now available from Carer UK. The guide is £15.00 and can be obtained by contacting Carers UK Publications Department 0845 241 0963 or email [publications@carersuk.org](mailto:publications@carersuk.org)

## 4 Million Pound Boost for Carers

Following cancellation of the contract for Caring with Confidence the Department of Health has announced that more than £4

million will be reinvested in new measures that will help support carers in a range of projects including training schemes for health and social care workers to access better information.

There are a range of new activities, one of which is a scheme that will fund voluntary organisations to reach out to carers. It will particularly focus on early contact with those who are taking on a caring role for the first time through a variety of settings such as hospitals, places of work and supermarkets.

This will build on existing networks already used to support people with specific conditions, in keeping with the overall approach to integrate carers' issues within wider health and social care provision. It will also provide carers with key information and practical advice about how to care effectively and safely for people with specific conditions.

Other projects that will be funded include: the Department working with the Royal College of GPs to fund a further 200 training places for GPs and practice staff; and £500,000 of new support each for The Princess Royal Trust for Carers, Crossroads Care and Carers UK to support important projects.

## Care Services Minister Paul Burstow said:

"Identifying and supporting carers at an early stage is critical. The financial outlook is extremely challenging so we must make sure the money we have is working harder for us.

"The Caring with Confidence contract was not good value for money. This is why I am announcing a raft of measures today that will reinvest more than £4 million to get local authorities and the NHS spotting and responding to carers' needs earlier to prevent poor social outcomes and ill health and help them care more effectively.

"We need better information and advice, allowing people to negotiate the system more smoothly. And we need better support to help carers stay in or get back to work, as many would like to do.

"The Coalition Government is committed to improving support for carers and this funding is evidence of that."

## Carer Strategy Re-refresh

The new National Strategy "Carers at the heart of 21st century families and communities" was published in

June 2008 and provided a framework on which to continue to build a local strategy for carers in Wigan. The strategy set out a vision and both long and short term goals over the next 10 years in the following areas:

- **Integrated and personalised services** - Carers will be respected as expert care partners and will have access to the integrated and personalised services they need to support them in their caring role.
- **A life of their own** – Carers will be able to have a life of their own alongside their caring role
- **Income and employment** - Carers will be supported so that they are not forced into financial hardship by their caring role.
- **Health and wellbeing** - Carers will be supported to stay mentally and physically well and be treated with dignity
- **Young carers** – Children and young people will be protected from inappropriate caring and have the support they need to learn, develop and thrive, to enjoy positive childhoods and to achieve against all the "Every Child Matters" outcomes.

In Wigan the main strategy group has established sub groups in each of the 5 areas to take forward and further develop the local strategy following the framework of the National Strategy.

The National Strategy has also now been refreshed through 'Recognised, valued and supported: next steps for the Carer Strategy' which was produced by the Department of Health in November. The strategy identifies the actions that the Government will take over the next four years to support its priorities to ensure the best possible outcomes for carers and those they support, including:

- supporting those with caring responsibilities to identify themselves as carers at an early stage, recognising the value of their contribution and involving them from the outset both in designing local care provision and in planning individual care packages
- enabling those with caring responsibilities to fulfill their educational and employment potential
- personalised support both for carers and those they support, enabling them to have a family and community life
- supporting carers to remain mentally and physically well

A copy of the refreshed strategy can be obtained on the Department of Health web site at

[www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_122077](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_122077)

 HM Government

## Recognised, valued and supported:

Next steps for the Carers Strategy

## Carers Week 13 – 19 June - The True Face of Carers

Carers UK have set the theme for this year to try to highlight the reality of caring in the UK in 2011. How hard is life as a carer? Or how easy? How much help do carers actually receive from government? What can really make a difference to the lives of carers? Carers UK are putting carers centre stage to speak about The True Face of Carers and sweep away the myths.

If you want further information contact the Carer UK hotline 0845 241 2582 or [info@carersweek.org](mailto:info@carersweek.org)

We will be organising events in the borough during Carers Week and if you are interested in being involved please contact the carer team on 01942 705983.

Carers UK are also conducting research into the impact on people's lives of caring responsibilities. If you want to take part and have your views heard fill in the online survey at [www.surveymonkey.com/stateofcaring](http://www.surveymonkey.com/stateofcaring) or email [steve.mcintosh@carersuk.org](mailto:steve.mcintosh@carersuk.org) to request a PDF version to print out, for carers to complete and return to Carers UK FREEPOST.

## Who I Am Passport



Wigan's unsung army of carers will be able to gain access to a new passport. Called the Who I Am passport, it won't get you out of the country, but it will help people get the help and advice they need to carry on caring. The council has joined forces with the health service to launch the Who I Am passport.

### So what is a Who I Am Passport?

It enables you to tell health care staff about the person you care for and any help they may need in hospital or respite care. Giving you the opportunity to inform staff about information that you think is important, so that the staff can ensure the right help is given.

## How does it work?

You can write information, comments and your suggestions about the needs of the person you care for in the three sections. The **red section** is for **'must know'** information, **amber section** for **'important'** information and **green section** for **'helpful'** information.

The passport is not the only new innovation for carers because the borough is also launching the 'Listening to Carers Charter' and 'Carers Champions'.

The 'Listening to Carers' Charter has 10 pledges that explain how carers can expect to be supported by the health service. It is a visual aid to promote the important role carers provide within health.

Members of staff working in health can become a Carers Champion to promote the Carers Charter and the Passport, helping embed our approach to supporting carers across the NHS.

Amanda Allinson, Carers' Project Worker for Hospital Discharge, said; "All NHS health professionals across the borough of Wigan recognise that many of their patients, visitors and a number of their staff have caring responsibilities.

The passport is designed to assist health care staff in identifying carers and enable them to gain relevant accurate information on the patient; it also enables carers to record important details of the person they look after, ensuring the right help is given. The Who I Am passport is not expected to last 10 years like a British passport as it is recognised that needs change, but is a snapshot of the patient at the time".

**If you would like further information about the passport contact Amanda Allinson on 01942 705983.**



## **Services at the Carer Centre in Hindley**

### **Therapeutic/relaxation sessions**

Aromatherapy sessions (30 – 60 minutes) take place throughout the week if you are interested in accessing this please ring 01942 705959 to book your place on a session.

### **Health Trainers**

Health trainers are available each week at the centre on a Monday afternoon. The trainers can provide information and support for carers in relation to developing a healthier lifestyle. If you are interested and unable to attend on a Monday please contact us on 01942 705959 and we can set up a time that is more convenient for you to meet with one of the trainers.

### **Coffee Morning/Book and Biscuit Club**

The Carers Centre invites carers to their weekly coffee morning held each Monday between 10-12 noon. If you are a carer and would like to meet other people in a similar situation come along, we can guarantee a warm welcome. We also have a 'Book and Biscuit' club, this is held each Wednesday morning between 10.30 -12.00 noon. This activity gives carers time

to relax and listen to someone read a short story.

### **Wii Fit Activity Sessions**

Are you interested in keeping fit, meeting people and having fun? If so this may be the sport for you. Wii fit sessions are running at the carer centre on a regular basis so if you would like to take part or find out a bit more about it contact Elaine on 01942 705959.

### **Digital Photography**

If you are interested in digital photography and would like to find out more about it contact the centre on 01942 705959 for further information and to find out when training sessions are taking place.

### **Free Chiropody / Podiatry Service for All Carers**

This new service has recently started at the centre and includes foot massage as well as treatment for all conditions causing foot discomfort. If you want to access this service you need to book in advance. If you would like further information or to arrange an appointment please ring us on 01942 705959.

## Outreach Service

Wigan and Leigh Carers Centre offers a wide range of services and support for carers including an outreach service which aims to provide support to carers in their own locality.

The Outreach Service is currently undertaking promotional events in libraries across the borough (Ashton, Marsh Green, Leigh, Atherton, Beech Hill, Shevington, Golborne, Aspull and Standish) to reach as many carers as possible providing information to help and support carers.

**If you would like an event/activity including e.g. coffee morning or information session, set up in your area or if you would like to speak to someone for further information contact Pat Millward at the Carers Centre on 01942 705959 or e-mail [p.millward@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:p.millward@wigan.gov.uk).**

## LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) Carers Forum

Do you identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans?

A brand new service is now available to support you

- Find information
- Keep up to date with news and events
- Chat with others who understand

Log on now, it is completely free and confidential

[www.lgf.org.uk/carers](http://www.lgf.org.uk/carers)

**For more information about the support available for LGBT carers contact Glenn on 0161 234 4254.**

The screenshot shows the website for The Lesbian & Gay Foundation (LGF). The main navigation bar includes links for Home, What is LGF, About Us, and Contact Us. A secondary navigation bar lists various topics: Coming Out, Homophobia, Wellbeing, Health, HIV, Sex, Relationships, Social Life, Your Rights, and Equality. A sub-menu for 'Sex' includes 'Gay', 'Bisexual', and 'Trans'. The 'Carers' section is highlighted, with a sub-menu for 'Gay', 'Bisexual', and 'Trans'. The main content area features a large image of a couple and a text box stating: "You are a carer if you provide unpaid care for a relative, friend or neighbour who couldn't manage without your help because they are ill, elderly, disabled or have an addiction." Below this is a prominent button that says "Click here for online support". A key statistic is displayed: "There are over 6 million carers in the UK." A list of services is provided, including shopping and preparing meals, managing medication, and emotional support. A sidebar on the right contains a "Get support" section with links to Helpline, Counselling, and Support Groups, and a "More services" section with links to Outreach Clinic, Advice Surgery, and Hot Carers. At the bottom, there are sections for "Help Stop Abuse" and "Volunteer with us".

## **Carer Emergency Card Scheme**

Many carers often worry a great deal over the issue of 'if I go out and something happens to me, what will happen to the person I care for?' The Carers Emergency Card Scheme aims to reduce this worry and concern and provides the carer with peace of mind that if they do go out and something does happen, there is back up care that can be put in place. This ensures carers get the support they need when they need it.

Access to the scheme is through a carer assessment. This is an assessment based on individual needs. A social worker will visit you and talk to you and the person you care for. It's your opportunity to tell us about help and support that would need to be put in place to support the person you care for in the event of an emergency. This plan is then recorded and the carer is issued with a 'Carers Emergency Card' and keyring. The card is designed to fit in a wallet, purse or pocket to make it easy to carry at all times. The card does not contain personal information; it has a unique I.D number and the

telephone number to access the scheme in an emergency.

When a call is made to the scheme the operator will ask for the I.D. number and use this to access the 'back up' plan ensuring the appropriate support is then put in place. This can be anything from informing a named friend or relative right through to providing professional care in the home. This ensures the person being cared for receives the care they need until the emergency is over or until other arrangements can be made.

There is no cost to sign up for a Carers Emergency Card and the first 48 hours of care are provided free of charge.

**For further details about the scheme and how to be part of it please contact Carers Support Team on 01942 705983.**

## **'Extra Time' for Carers – Rugby Tickets**

Are you a Rugby fan, if so our new scheme may just be the ticket for you? In partnership with Wigan Warriors and Leigh Centurions Rugby Club we have been able to arrange for carers to attend some of the home games. The aim is to give carers a break from their caring role.

**For further details about the scheme and how to be part of it please contact Carers Support Team on 01942 705983.**



## **Men Who Care**

Many people view caring as a female role however the 2001 census showed that about 42% of carers are male. Male carers may feel it is not appropriate to seek support but without support as a carer you can end up feeling isolated and lonely. Meeting other male carers in similar situations can help and it may make it easier for you if you can talk to other men about the emotional and practical challenges of your caring role.

**If you interested in joining a support group for male carers contact Pat Millward on 01942 705959 or e mail [p.millward@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:p.millward@wigan.gov.uk)**

## **Time for Me Grant**

If you are a carer aged 18 or over looking after someone 18 or over and you have not had a payment from the funding for carers in the last or current financial year (April to March) you may be able to access a one-off payment of up to £100 from the Time for Me Funding. The grant can be used towards something that would help you to take a break from your caring role.

**To find out more or to obtain a copy of the application form contact the Carers Support Team on 01942 705983.**

## Holiday Breaks for Carers

A local charity has funding to provide a holiday break to carers.

They have a fully adapted caravan

specifically for

those with mobility difficulties which is wheelchair accessible with roll in shower, hoist and ramp. Available also is a lodge suitable for those on the autistic spectrum with muted colours, safety flooring, enclosed decking, ramps etc. Both are only a couple of years old. The site is Ribby Hall at Wrea Green which is an award winning site with entertainment, indoor swimming pool, restaurants, and good flat walking areas, which is ideal for those in wheelchairs or who have difficulty walking.

Mid week bookings (Monday – Friday) in both the lodge and caravan are available, accommodation is free although you will need to pay for your own transport/food costs.

**If you are interested and would like further information contact Gladys Jameson on 07821687642.**



## Carer Forum

The forum meets on the first Monday of the month at 6.00pm - 8.00pm at Wigan and Leigh Carer Centre and is always looking for new members so if you are interested in getting involved contact the forum on: **07985 439049.**

## What is Work Focused Support for Carers?

Work Focused Support for Carers (WFSC) is a voluntary scheme designed to help people who wish to combine paid work with their role caring for someone.

You can choose to take part, and are free to stop taking part, at any time. Even if you don't feel ready to work now but might like to in the future, you can still take advantage of the support available.

### Who is eligible?

Work Focused Support for Carers is available to carers who:

- do not work or work less than 16 hours a week
- are aged 18 or over
- are not able to get help from any of the other Job centre Plus employment support programmes such as New Deal or Pathways to Work.

## **Will my benefits be affected?**

If you are in receipt of benefits they will not be affected by taking part in WFSC. If you find a job you are interested in, your personal adviser will be able to tell you how your benefits will be affected if you start work and help you apply for any in work benefits or tax credits if appropriate.

## **What help will Jobcentre Plus give me to find work?**

Your adviser can help you with advice on training, finding a job, local childcare and local replacement care. Also, if you start work, your adviser can continue to provide support and advice.

## **What other support is available?**

Jobcentre Plus may be able to help pay for things like replacement care while you attend appointments with the personal adviser, take part in a training course or attend job interviews.

## **Where should I go for more information?**

To find out more about getting into work or training, you can:

- visit [www.direct.gov.uk/carersemployment](http://www.direct.gov.uk/carersemployment)
- arrange an appointment with an adviser at your nearest Jobcentre on 01942 755600



## Leigh Branch – Parkinson's UK



Do you have a few hours per month to spare? Would you like to be a volunteer and help support Leigh Branch of

Parkinson's UK? This group meet on a monthly basis in Leigh and provide information and support for people with Parkinson's Disease and their families and carers. We need volunteers to come forward to help run the group – particularly to join the committee.

**For more information contact Gill Carberry - Branch & Volunteer Support Officer. Call 0844 225 3654 or email [gcarberry@parkinsons.org.uk](mailto:gcarberry@parkinsons.org.uk)**

**More information about Parkinson's UK can be obtained from [www.parkinsons.org.uk](http://www.parkinsons.org.uk) or from Parkinson's UK freephone helpline 0808 800 0303**

## We need Volunteers to train as Aromatherapists

The brand new, purpose built Carers Centre is now open at 3-5 Frederick St, Hindley

Do you want to meet new people, learn new skills, gain useful work and life experience while having fun and keeping busy?

We are currently looking for volunteers who would be interested in training as Aromatherapists

**If you want to take the step to make a positive difference then please contact: Elaine Burgoyne at the Carers Centre on telephone number 01942 705959 or email [e.burgoyne@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:e.burgoyne@wigan.gov.uk)**



## **Crossroads – Wigan and Leigh**

Crossroads offers training opportunities for unpaid carers living in Wigan Borough.

If you are interested in taking part or accessing training opportunities which can be varied and can link to a personal interest or hobby as well as something perhaps employment related i.e. helping you to return to work or that may help you in your caring role please contact Crossroads for further information.

### **Contact Details:**

Crossroads Wigan and Leigh, Tudor House Community Centre  
8 Liverpool Road, Hindley, Wigan WN2 3HD

### **Lynda Harrison – Training & Liaison Coordinator**

Mob: 07973257332

Email: [Lynda.harrison@sthelenscrossroads.org.uk](mailto:Lynda.harrison@sthelenscrossroads.org.uk)

### **Pauline Middlehurst – Project Administrator**

Tel: 01744 612929

Email: [Pauline.middlehurst@sthelenscrossroads.org.uk](mailto:Pauline.middlehurst@sthelenscrossroads.org.uk)

### **Louise Boland – Publicity & Development Worker**

Tel: 07973290986

Email: [Louisa.boland@sthelenscrossroads.org.uk](mailto:Louisa.boland@sthelenscrossroads.org.uk)

Web: [www.crossroadswiganandleigh.org.uk](http://www.crossroadswiganandleigh.org.uk)



## Way to Work website

The Learning and Development Team in partnership with the Carers Training Group offer training & development opportunities to unpaid carers living within the borough.

A carer is someone who looks after a relative, friend or neighbour who needs support because of their age, a physical disability, a learning disability, a physical illness, mental illness, substance misuse problem or limiting illness. It's imperative that carers have access to learning and development opportunities needed to assist them with their everyday caring role. Attending training can also provide an opportunity for carers to interact with other carers in the same or a similar situation. If you are a carer or know someone who is and would like to receive further information on current training opportunities, contact The Learning and Development Team on 01942 486474.

The council's Way to Work website - <http://www.way-to-work.co.uk/> - is fast becoming the website to access for residents looking to get help and support with employment, education, training and volunteering opportunities. Way to Work was launched in September 2010 and has been able to help hundreds of

residents from all walks of life with the right advice, guidance and support.

To raise awareness of the website the Way to Work team has taken part in several community road shows and conferences gained local media coverage and distributed thousands of business cards and leaflets to supermarkets, post offices, community centres, libraries and GP surgeries across the borough. In 2011 there will be a big focus on utilising social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter, as well as having a presence at some of the borough's biggest festivals and events – so watch out for Way to Work!

For more details visit  
<http://www.way-to-work.co.uk/>

The screenshot shows the Way to Work website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, Overview, Contacts, News, and FAQs. Below this is a 'Welcome' section with a heading and introductory text. A 'How can we help?' section features four large, grey, arrow-shaped buttons with the following text: 'Need help preparing for work?', 'Interested in voluntary work?', 'Want to know more about education/training opportunities?', and 'Thinking about starting a community group or your own business?'. A 'Service Directory' sidebar is visible on the left side of the page.

## Contact Details:

### Other help

- Carers Direct - the national information service for carers - **0808 202 02 02** or visit their website for further information  
[www.nhs.uk/carersdirect](http://www.nhs.uk/carersdirect)

This information update was produced by Wigan Council's Carer Support Team, Wigan Council, Hyndelle Lodge, King Street, Hindley, and Wigan, WN2 3AW.

**Phone: 01942 705983 Email: [ssdcarers@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:ssdcarers@wigan.gov.uk)**

A summary of this information can be made available in other formats and languages on request, contact us for more details.