

Aberdeenshire Carer's Service



MAY 2026 • VSA.ORG.UK/CARERS



the best of care

Aberdeenshire Carer's Service

01224 727 670

carers.shire@vsa.org.uk

vsa.org.uk/carers

Cover Photo:

Mankind offered our male carers a trip to Fraserburgh to visit the RNLI.



Welcome!

Dear Carers

Welcome to the new bumper edition of Aberdeenshire Carers Service Newsletter. Spring has arrived in Aberdeenshire and what a difference it can make!

The nights are getting lighter and vibrant colours of flowers and trees are popping up everywhere.

There is so much packed into this edition we hope that you enjoy reading it. You will find articles on the different events which have been happening with our Male Carer Group and Young Carers along with information on funding, and up and coming events.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome some new faces to the team who have joined since our last newsletter: Brittany and Caitlin have joined the Young Carers Team while Charlie, Lilianna and Lyndsey have joined the Adult Carer Team. They are all making a positive impact to the team and I hope that many of you will be meeting them soon.

Kirsty and the Team





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Meet the Team!

Aberdeenshire Carers Team



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Meet the Team!

Carers Practitioner Team



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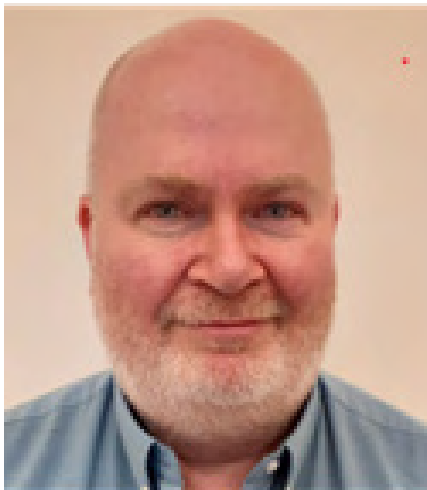
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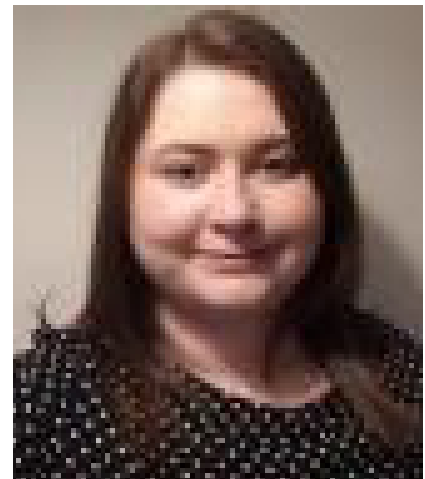
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Meet the Team!

“Hello everyone, I am Caitlin. I am 23 years old and come from Kemnay, but now live in Aberdeen. I am super excited to be working within the Aberdeenshire Carers Service, as part of the young carer's advisors.

I have spent the last 6 years at the University of Aberdeen (call me crazy), first doing my Undergraduate in Psychology and then doing a Master's in Health Psychology. During this time, I also became a fully qualified fitness instructor and PT.

I am super passionate about health and wellbeing, specifically using exercise and movement to maintain a stable mental wellbeing, and improving mental health. I have always been passionate about helping others and have also worked in the mental health services across Aberdeen with VSA.

Outside work, I enjoy seeing friends and family, exercising, and I love a good true crime or psychological thriller on Netflix (as well as trash TV).

I have also recently been trying to make more effort with cooking and whipping up some nice meals (the key word being trying – but hey we've all got to start somewhere) – if anyone has recipes, I would love to try them out. I am always up for a chat and a laugh and look forward to working within such a great group of people working towards a great cause!”



“Hi my name is Lyndsey Davidson, and I live on out skirts of Ellon, I've been there for 2 years now.

Before I joined VSA, I worked as a support worker for 11 years in a variety of places, hospital, care homes and with complex and non-complex adults, elderly, children and in prison. I have 2 cats, Tony the Ragdoll he is a house cat, and Dexter is a black hunter which I rescued.”

Meet the Team!



My name is Charlie and I studied health and social care at NESCOL.

I previously worked as an epilepsy outreach worker for Quarriers.

I enjoy travelling, being out in nature, and spending time with my family, friends and animals.

I am looking forward to meeting everyone and excited to have joined VSA.



Hi! I am Lilianna O'Neill.

I am originally from Ireland and moved to Aberdeen two years ago, and excited to be working as the first Hospital Discharge Carer Advisor, supporting carers through the transition from hospital to home.

My passion for this line work began at 14, when I supported individuals with intellectual and physical disabilities through therapeutic horse riding- an experience that shaped my career path. I hold a degree in Applied Social Studies and have worked in the health and social care sector ever since! I have worked with so many incredible individuals and look forward to meeting and supporting new people in this very exciting role.

When I lived in Ireland I grew up with horses, cows and sheep! I competed in competitions with my horses. During covid I bought my best friend Billy, or as his past owners called him "Wild Bill!" When I'm not in work, I spend my time with my dog Barney, and going to the gym or boxing. I enjoy staying connected to my roots and have been trying to teach my partner Irish as I have come to realise the importance of keeping my culture alive!

Ar scath a cheile a mhaireann na daoine – we depend on each other



Farewell to our retired staff!

This year, we said farewell to three long standing and highly valued members of staff - Moira Stewart, Alison McKessick, and Sandra Andrew - as they retired after many years of dedicated service.

Their commitment, compassion, and professionalism have made a lasting difference to our organisation and to the many people they have supported over the years.

In particular, their work with unpaid carers has been truly invaluable.

Through their guidance, advocacy, and kindness, they have helped ensure that carers felt heard, supported, and recognised for the vital role they play.

Their dedication has strengthened our services and improved the lives of countless families in our community.

We are incredibly grateful for everything Moira, Alison, and Sandra have given, and their presence will be greatly missed by colleagues and those they supported alike.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish them all the very best for a happy, healthy, and fulfilling retirement, and every success and enjoyment in the years ahead.



News

DEESIDE ACTIVITY CENTRE

We were so lucky with the weather for all our summer events and our trip to Deeside Activity Centre was no different. It was a lovely sunny day which makes the activities even more enjoyable.

Lennon and I set off to collect 6 young carers and take them for a fun packed day at the centre. We split into two groups of 4 to take part in a number of activities over the course of the day– rifling shooting, axe throwing, Bomb disposal and assault course, 4 x 4 blind buggy driving, and go-karting.

We even had time to squeeze in lunch at the café which was a much welcomed break to refuel for the afternoon.

These events are great fun and seeing our young carers enjoy themselves, make new friends and relax makes them all worthwhile.

FAMILY FUN DAY - EASTER ANGUSTON FARM

Following on from the success on a previous event at Easter Anguston Farm we had a Family Day at the farm on Thursday 7th August. We were joined by The Critter who brought along his critters to meet our primary school aged young carers and their families.

The Critter Keeper and his friends were a huge hit, and we had some very brave children stroking the snake – some of the staff may not have been so brave and hid at the back of the room when the snake appeared!

Lunch was provided by the lovely staff at Blossom café and again we had a wonderful day, so our families made full use of the lovely location and used the picnic benches throughout the farm.

In the afternoon one of the farm staff kindly introduced us to the animals on site and the children had the opportunity to use the playpark and enjoy a walk around the Stickman Trail. We had a scavenger hunt as well but sadly some of the pieces were taken by the wind, however, we didn't let that spoil our day and it was lovely to see our families get the chance to relax and enjoy themselves in a such a lovely calm space.



ABERNETHY RESIDENTIAL TRIP

On Friday 22nd August we took 5 academy aged young carers to Abernethy Outdoor Centre, Nethy Bridge for two nights.

Despite it being the first week back to school our young carers were all in high spirits and were keen to explore on our arrival. They very quickly found the games room and had some time to chill out playing pool and table tennis before it was time to get some sleep for the busy day ahead on Saturday.

It was an early start with breakfast at 8.15am and the first of many activities at 9am. The morning was spent taking part in team challenges such as the Blind Trail, Code Breaking,

Spiders Web to name a few. I was so proud of the determination in the team and working together they managed to successfully complete every challenge.

We had a break before moving onto crate building – the aim was to successfully get the team across the river without losing any crates. We didn't quite master this one but had lots of fun and laughter trying.

In the afternoon we climbed Jacobs Ladder – this is not an easy thing to do and looks much harder than you think so once again the team's determination and strength was put to the test. We did have one or two that made it to the top which was very impressive.

We moved in doors for a while and the young carers all had great fun with a session on the climbing walls – think Jacobs Ladder had got them in the mood for climbing as they were all fantastic at this.

Our last activity was archery which was great fun and great to see the team learn another new skill.

We had some much needed rest before our evening meal and then it was movie time followed by some more pool and table tennis.

We hardly stopped on Saturday, and it is safe to say we all had a brilliant day.

Still feeling a bit tired from our busy day, Sunday was a much more relaxed space getting packed up to head home and a nice drive to Huntly for lunch via Keith.

Another fabulous trip to end our busy summer.

Latest News

YOUNG CARERS ACTION DAY - MARCH 11TH 2026

This year Young Carers Action Day focused on Fair Future for Young Carers. 'Let's make sure every Young Carer has the same chances to learn, grow and thrive as their peers.' Carers Trust Aberdeenshire Young Carers Service secured funding from Cares Trust Scotland to help raise awareness and hold events for Primary Aged Young Carers. Due to the geographical nature of Aberdeenshire, it can prove difficult for Young Carers to access events so to ensure we could reach as many Young Carers as possible we decided to run micro events in different areas of Aberdeenshire in February during mid-term school break.

We had the pleasure of running two Cinema trips on Monday 9th February, one at Cineworld, Aberdeen and the other at The Arc Peterhead. Each trip was run by two Carer Advisors who transported 5 young carers to the event. In Peterhead we were watching *Pets on a Train* and at the same time in Aberdeen they were enjoying *Zootopia 2*. We provided snack bags and all Young Carers were chilled out watching their movie enjoying some snacks.

Once the movies were finished we headed to the nearest McDonalds for lunch.. McDonalds were providing a free game of Dobble with the Happy Meals, so we had lots of fun playing games and chatting before it was time to head home.

Having offered Young Carers from both North and South Aberdeenshire the chance to enjoy a break from their caring role, our attention turned to Central Aberdeenshire. On Tuesday 10th February, we took 9 young carers Ten Pin Bowling at Garioch Bowling Centre. Once split into our teams, we played two games before sitting down together for lunch.

It is always very impressive to see how quickly we see connections made and friendships develop at our Young Carer Events. These types of events not only provide a break and a chance to relax, but they also offer peer support and build self-confidence and resilience.

The feedback we have had has been positive -

"Meeting new friends and the film was amazing and all the snacks.

"It was great fun thank you very much."

Aberdeenshire Young Carers Team didn't stop there. Our Carer Advisors are focused on raising awareness throughout Aberdeenshire Academies and have been relentless in establishing and strengthening working relationship with Guidance teams to ensure they are fully aware of the support we provide and to help identify Young Carers.



Lots of fun bowling at Garioch Bowling Centre for our young carers!



YOUNG CARERS... YOUNG CARERS...

Belwade Farm

On Wednesday the 8th of April 2026, we held a Young Carers Event at Belwade Farm.

Our day began with a walk around the horse fields, allowing all the young carers to see the several types of horses there, whilst also enjoying the lovely sunny day we were blessed to have.

A picnic was enjoyed afterwards with a variety of sandwiches, crisps, and some sweet treats – well-earned after our walk!! There was then a "meet the ponies" session where the Young Carers could see some of the horses up close, pet them, and get to know a bit more about them whilst watching the horses chomping on their hay. We ended the day by running around and playing games in the fairy garden.

All the Young Carers who attended said they had a fun time, friendships were made and fun was had. Some Young Carers said it was "the best day ever" and it was good to see everyone go home with a smile on their face.



Following our first successful trips to Cullen, Ballater & Montrose last year with some of our Carers, funded by Shared Care Scotland's Short Break Fund, we are happy to offer places for this year's excursions as follows:

- **Wednesday 17th June Coach Trip to Spey Bay:**
 - Pick-up point 1, Ellon Park & Ride 9:00am,
 - Pick-up point 2, Ban Car Hotel, Lonmay, approx 9:30

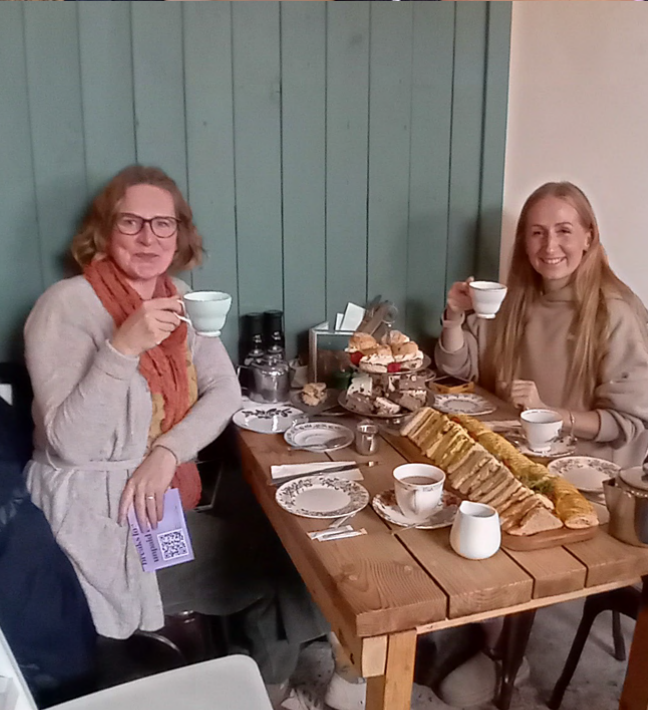
There will be some free time to spend at Simpsons Garden Centre, Fochabers, have a browse get a coffee/tea fine piece on us, plus there will be an afternoon tea/lunch at 1:30pm at Spey Bay Golf Club, visit the Dolphin centre if you wish before heading back to drop off points for approximately 4:30pm.

- **Thursday 16th July Coach trip to Dundee (itinerary tbc)**
 - Pick-up point 1, Kingswells Park & Ride 9am,
 - Pick-up point 2, Newtonhill Park & Ride (tbc)
- **Wednesday 12th August Coach trip to Ballater (itinerary tbc)**
 - Pick-up point, Inverurie Town Hall 9:30am

These trips are free of charge and open to adult/parent registered Carers and their "cared for" a friend/relative can accompany if wished instead, however no children under the age of 16yrs please. The coach has a toilet, and floors which are lower for access, however, there are steps with handrails for support into the coach. Assistance and support will be given to anyone having difficulties getting onboard. They can also accommodate Rollators etc in the luggage compartments if required.

To register your interest & secure your place and for more detailed information, on pick up/drop off times you can complete this short form or contact: Pam McCreedy Tel 07386662048, email: pamela.mccready@vsa.org.uk or Aberdeenshire Carers Service 01224 727670 with your name, contact information, which excursion you are interested in any dietary requirements and those of your Cared for and or Companion and we will be happy to help.





Coach Trip to Ballater

Jodie proudly showing off her achievement certificate, which was supported through Creative Break funding



Provider number

TTL - Creative Breaks

The response for year 2025/2026 was **HUGE**, and it took us a bit of time to get to you all. We had to be fair and give priority to those who had never had the funding before, so we really appreciated your patience.

The feedback has been amazing as always, and it warms our hearts knowing how much this funding is helping you to de-stress and take some time out to enjoy some well-earned time away from your caring role, and to enjoy spending it on whatever gives you that "break".

Please use this link for the Creative Break Application:
<https://vsa.tfaforms.net/f/ttl-cbapplication>
or scan the below QR code.

Alternatively, you can call us on (01224) 727670 and we will be happy to assist you with it.



"Thank you so much for the creative break money.

My mam and I are looking forward to going out for lunches and coffees over the next few months"



"I could go to the garden centre, decide on my purchases & enjoy some lunch on my own. It was so nice to be able to spend time looking for things for the garden. What I bought has enhanced the space & allowed myself & my husband to sit outside in this glorious weather & enjoy just looking & admiring. So, he has benefited too.

But it really gave me a great deal of pleasure that I was able to do something on my own, just for me and honestly it cheered me up no end and provided some relief from my very stressful life. Being a full-time carer isn't easy & this grant is very much appreciated."



"Thank you for the money I have just bought my Lego, and I wanted to say a big thank you"



"We have all sorts of ideas of things we would like to do together on an overnight break.

We will definitely choose something fun to do together."



"I am delighted with my new Botanical water colours and brushes bought with my creative fund. Now have a variety of different mediums to draw and paint with.

This is so going to help in the long winter months, and I cannot thank you enough".



Visit our website to find out more about applying for a Creative Break...

[vsa.org.uk/
carers](http://vsa.org.uk/carers)

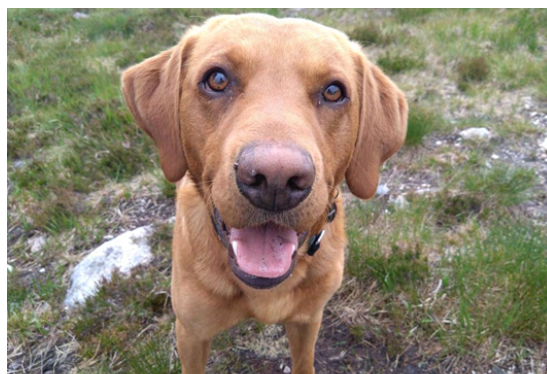
Creative Breaks

Photos and stories from Cameron Laing from his Creative Break in June 2025.

Geopark guide Jim, Cameron, and another walker, Wilfred.



Abhainn, Jim's dog who is a trained rescue dog.



Scourie Hotel: No TV - total relaxation!



Wilfred and Cameron caught walking too fast by the local Cardboard Speedcop!



On top of Ben Dreavie



Interesting ancient rocks and Ben Stac in the background.



Jamie really wanted to visit London, go sightseeing and go on the underground. Jamie had the most amazing weekend travelling to the sights by the underground and he was thrilled to go on the London Eye and go to Madam Tussauds (he met his idol - Mbappe!).

We both got a break from our caring role and wouldn't have been able to take this trip without the creative breaks.

Thank you so much!

Jamie, written by his mum



My outfit is ordered, hair and nails booked and what was already an amazing day is something I truly can't wait to share with my son is now even more exciting to look forward to.

My mum and friends are also so thrilled for me as they know what a tough couple of years it's been. Fighting for my son to go and then actually achieving that for him was amazing but exhausting. And now he's at Clare house I have missed hm terribly.

Ann-Marie and Harris



I'm enjoying the weights. It's going to be fun watching myself get a little stronger. The tripod is amazing and soon take some wildlife pics with the timer. All these interests were made possible because of you and your charity.

The reward money really has helped me. My brain is working again and not just sitting looking out the window. Thank you and everyone for everything, even the lovely emails. Don't get many of those now days.

Thank you again for everything. It really means so much to me.

Martin

Wendy Buist Blog

The creative break fund has made a huge difference to both of us in navigating the many challenges of a most difficult year. While confined to bed my husband, whom I care for, is able to look at a newly drawn and framed image of the beach where he used to play as a child at his grandmother's house, and it's now hanging on the wall, next to his bed.

The beach was accessed by ladder (with handrails) from the street level at the side of the house and all sorts of memories return to him about games they used to play on and under the steps and about the other people who lived in the neighbouring houses. I used the funding to frame this image and to buy some botanical water colours, inks, and pastels.

One sunny Sunday I decided to get my oil paintings out and paint my favourite beach in Shetland. I visited once and it was so hard to tear myself away from this wonderful place.

I really enjoyed revisiting that moment while covering every single work area in the kitchen and beside my husband's bed with brushes and paint and giving us both a headache with oils, linseed oil and turps followed by a huge effort to tidy up again, and cook our evening meal, which is why I am so grateful for all my new materials which can be used and tidied away quickly, without me being exhausted by the process and needing a 'cleaning team and a chef' to come along behind me!

Deciding what to paint is often the biggest challenge but I have been inspired by the changing seasons in the garden. I am looking at a framed image of our tiny garden pond (made out of reclaimed materials) with snowdrops in the frost last winter. I have drawn lavender in the summer and poppies in bloom: apples on the apple tree and am just being inspired by the golden yellow leaves of autumn as I write. I must not forget my brother's amazing dog Boris, who was happy to have his portrait done in pastels and is a natural at looking sooo cute: our neighbour's cat basking in the sun on our garden bench could not have cared less when he had his portrait done! My husband does not want to be drawn anymore!!!.... I do hope others will find similar inspiration to switch off from the 'everyday' just for a little while and make some lasting images in the process to last a lifetime and bring a smile to an otherwise desperate set of circumstances.

I cannot thank you enough for introducing me to the TTL Creative funding and igniting a former passion again, and really making it possible to do something which allows me to switch off for a while.



Sadly, since the writing of this blog, Wendy's husband has passed away. We would like to thank and acknowledge Wendy for allowing us to publish this page and we extend our sincere condolences to her.



Amazing artwork
by Wendy Buist.

Wendy 25



blossom.onthefarm



now open at easter anguston farm!

introducing blossom,
now open daily at
easter anguston farm,
from 10am to 4pm -
serving breakfasts,
lunches, cakes and a
selection of hot & cold drinks.



view our menu at vsa.org.uk/blossom

Elaine Mottram

Hi everyone

As a carer, you will know better than anyone how much time, energy and commitment it takes to be a carer. You will also know that squeezing out some time for yourself can feel nearly impossible.

And even if you do manage to spend some time taking care of yourself, the chances are you might feel a bit guilty or pre-occupied or perhaps worried about how your loved one will be without you.

Why does taking care of yourself matter? Well it matters for two reasons – firstly failing to take care of yourself may mean that you run out of steam or even damage your own health and secondly, if we are not looking after ourselves then we may not be able to provide care in the way we would like to – we may find it difficult to concentrate and manage medication accurately or we may be more irritable than we would want to be or just not able to deal very well with the unpredictability of life as a carer.

After working with around 70 carers over several years I developed some tools which would be helpful in managing the challenges of being a carer. Things like how to remain calm and avoid your emotions taking over, how to make sure you focus on the things that really matter and don't get distracted by all those aspects of life over which we have no control, and how to keep hold of your own identity and not lose sight of who you are, for example, a wife or son as well as a carer.



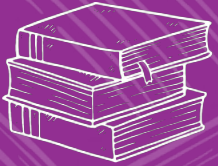
All these tools are brought together in my book, *You Can't Pour From an Empty Cup*. Every chapter has a story of a real carer I have worked with (anonymised and adjusted to protect confidentiality) and a section called *Over To You* so that you can apply the contents of the chapter to your own situation.

Diane Ackerman, an American poet, provided a nice reminder about how life is about quality not just quantity when she wrote "I don't want to get to the end of my life and find that I have lived just the length of it. I want to have lived the width of it as well."

You Can't Pour From An Empty Cup by Elaine Mottram

Available from thehealthycarer.com
for £12.99 plus p&p.





THE MERCAT
BOOKSHOP



Join our
monthly Mercat
Moments events!

VISIT THE MERCAT BOOKSHOP

Open Monday to Saturday,
from 10am - 3pm

45 Castle Street, Aberdeen, AB11 5BB
(next door to the VSA offices)



The Men's Groups
visited the RNLI in
Fraserburgh through
ManKind and
Crathes Castle!



Spotlight on...

MALE CAREERS



Men United SCIO: Supporting Men, Strengthening Communities

At Men United SCIO, we believe that no man should have to struggle alone.

Across our communities, too many men are facing challenges in silence, whether that's poor mental health, loneliness, financial stress, family pressures, grief, addiction, or simply the overwhelming weight of trying to "keep going" when life feels too hard. For many, asking for help still feels difficult. Some don't know where to turn. Others feel they should cope on their own.

That's why Men United SCIO exists.

We are here to provide a safe, supportive, and understanding space where men can speak openly, connect with others, and access the help they need without judgment. Our work is rooted in one simple belief: real strength is found in connection, honesty, and support.

What We Do

Men United SCIO offers practical and emotional support for men from all walks of life. We work to create opportunities for men to come together, talk, build confidence, and improve their wellbeing in ways that feel approachable and real.

Our support can include:

- Peer support and listening spaces
- Mental health and wellbeing support
- Social connection to reduce isolation and loneliness
- Signposting to specialist services and professional help
- Community-based activities, groups, and events
- Encouragement, guidance, and practical help during difficult times

Not every man needs formal counselling or crisis intervention. Sometimes what's needed first is a conversation, a welcoming environment, and the reassurance that someone is there to listen. That first step can make all the difference.

Why Our Work Matters

Men are often expected to be strong, resilient, and unaffected by life's struggles. But behind that pressure, many are carrying far more than people realise.

Too often, men suffer in silence because they fear being judged, misunderstood, or seen as weak. This silence can lead to worsening mental health, broken relationships, social withdrawal, and in some cases, crisis.

At Men United SCIO, we are working to change that.

We want to challenge the stigma around men asking for help and create a culture where speaking up is normal, encouraged, and respected. By offering support early, building trusted relationships, and creating a strong sense of community, we can help prevent men from reaching breaking point.

The Help We Provide

The support we offer is not about having all the answers, it's about standing beside men while they find their way forward.

We help by providing:

- A place to be heard
- A sense of belonging
- Access to support and resources
- Opportunities to rebuild confidence and purpose
- A reminder that no one has to face life alone

Whether someone is dealing with anxiety, loss, unemployment, isolation, low self-esteem, or simply needs people around them who understand, Men United SCIO is here to help.

Moving Forward Together

Our mission is to build stronger men, stronger connections, and stronger communities. Every conversation matters. Every bit of support matters. Every man matters. At Men United SCIO, we are proud to stand alongside men, offer hope where it's needed, and remind people that reaching out is not weakness, it's courage.

Because when men are supported, families are stronger, communities are healthier, and lives can be changed.

Contact Us

If you or someone you know could benefit from support, or if you'd simply like to find out more about what we do, please get in touch.

We also have groups in Turriff & Newmachar too:

- Every Tuesday @ Pathway Centre Newmachar 7:30pm
- Every 2nd Tuesday of the Month Turriff United FC 7:30pm

You can contact Men United SCIO by:

- Messaging us on Facebook
- Email: hello@menunited.scot
- Phone: 01779 560448

No matter the reason for reaching out, you will be met with understanding, respect, and support.



Men's Shed

ABOUT MEN'S SHEDS

The Men's Shed movement started in Australia and spread like wildfire.

The movement grew fast as a social and workshop environment for men of all ages from 18-90+ who found themselves retired, out of work, and/or with disabilities or just plain bored.

They had time on their hands and the Men's Shed movement was born.

The Men's Shed concept has proved exciting and useful. A group of men get together, decide what and where they want to have a Shed and the men themselves make it happen.

Our Shed is a not-for-profit Charity being duly constituted with a board and members.

The Shed provides not just an escape but a place to meet other men, enjoy social company and either pass on their own skills or learn new ones.

Being operated by the members themselves gives the incentive to make the Shed a success. There is no one in charge; the members run the charity by committee and all have equal say.

So the Shed is a community within a community and becomes part of the larger social structure, designing and making, for example, fences, park benches or memorials.

The men decide, based on the skills they have, what form these community projects take.



**SCOTTISH
MEN'S SHEDS
ASSOCIATION**

Men's Shed

MEN IN MIND

Peer-to-peer men's mental health support groups. Supporting men who may be struggling with their mental health in our local community by providing peer to peer support in a safe space.

Weekly in-person meetings are based in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire

Website: www.meninmind.org

Email: Info@meninmind.org

Facebook: Men In Mind | Aberdeen | Facebook



ANDY'S MAN CLUB



Men's suicide prevention charity, offering free to attend peer-to-peer support groups across the United Kingdom and online. Wanting to end the stigma surrounding men's mental health and help men through the power of conversation.

Website: andysmanclub.co.uk

SCOTTISH MEN'S SHED ASSOCIATION

Men's Sheds are kitted out community spaces where men can enjoy practical hobbies. Friends and learning - everyone's welcome.

Website: About - Scottish Men's Sheds Association



**SCOTTISH
MEN'S SHEDS
ASSOCIATION**

MEN'S SHED - ABERDEENSHIRE CONTACTS

- **Scottish Men's Sheds Association** 07397 382533
- **Turriff** 01888 567341 contactus@mensshedturriff.co.uk
- **Ellon** 01358725849 ellonmensshed@gmail.com
- **Inverurie** info@inveruriemensshed.co.uk inveruriemensshed.co.uk
- **Alford** 01975 520491 contactus@alfordmensshed.org.uk
- **Blackburn** 07590 245630 blackburnmensshed@gmail.com
- **Fraserburgh** 01346541797 rcgfraserburghmensshed@gmail.com
- **Peterhead** 07735010351 peterheadmensshed@outlook.com
- **Mintlaw** 07947 960366 mintlawmensshed@outlook.com
- **Banff** 07988 975615 chairman@bmdmensshed.orgBanff-
- **Cullen** 07762 743485 cullenmensshed.org.uk
- **Stonehaven** 07533 886391 douglas.knox888@gmail.com
- **Westhill** 01224 917345 contact@westhillmensshed.co.uk
- **Midmar** midmarmensshed@gmail.com
- **Aboyne** 01339 885222 info@aboynemensshed.org.uk
- **Banchory** 07775 752141 banchorymensshed@gmail.com
- **Edzel** 07902 283171 brianbeattie47@gmail.com
- **Braemar** braemarmensshed@btinternet.com
- **Culter** 07774896421 erik@estien.co.uk

Male Carers Group

Calling all Male Carers!

Our registered Unpaid Male Carer Group usually meet on the last Tuesday of every month in various locations covering North, Central & South Aberdeenshire.

We engage with local activities and organisations to allow a break from your caring role and socialise with other male carers. This is also a great opportunity to try new activities and hobbies as well as have a bit of fun!

Spaces are free and numbers limited for the organised activities and priority will be given to Carers from the area we are covering at that time.

Some previous group activities include Dolphin spotting - Aberdeen harbour tours, ten pin bowling, National Trust visit to various castles and walks in their grounds and Peterhead Football Club tour.

**May 26th: 10:30am – 12:30pm & 1:30pm – 3:30pm,
Easter Anguston Farm, Peterculter (to be confirmed)**

You can also contact us directly, Neil.Alexander@vsa.org.uk (Carer Advisor),
Pamela.mccready@vsa.org.uk (Grants Officer)

Tel. 01224 727670 we are happy to help with any questions you may have.

If you would like to express your interest in attending any of the forthcoming events, enrolling & receiving regular information about the group and having your say about which activities you would like to see or are available in your area, if you could please complete the short form linked by scanning this QR code, that would be greatly appreciated.



VSA Aberdeenshire Carers Online Resources

Latest events
Grants and breaks
Carers news and updates
and much more!

Scan the QR code for
our online resources



VSA

the best of care

Carefree

**Short hotel
breaks for
unpaid carers.**



Access VSA's
Carefree Referral Form
by scanning this QR code

186 Carers referred in the last year, and you can be too:

Through Carefree you can access a 1-2 night hotel stay with a companion, at a time and place that works for you.

Who can get a break?

To be eligible you need to be over 18 years of age and provide more than 30 hours of unpaid care per week.


What are the costs?

There is a charge of a £38 admin fee per break. You're also responsible for paying for your travel and other expenses.

Who can I go with?


Most hotels offer double or twin rooms with breakfast included. You can take someone with you, but this should not be your cared-for person so that you can truly get a break away from caring.

Feedback from those who've enjoyed their break



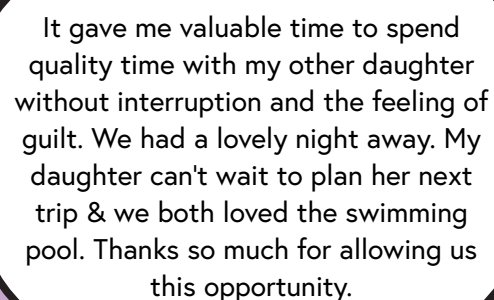
It was away from everything day to day, away from the house so I could completely switch off. Hotel was lovely. Highly recommend to anyone who could use your service. Just knowing there's something that is there for us carers means a lot.

Elizabeth - who stayed at Village Aberdeen



Absolutely loved our visit to this area/hotel. Enjoyed the various visitor attractions. Hotel staff were so very friendly and helpful. Hotel was so clean and room in perfect order. Breakfast was a real treat alongside their gluten free options. Would love to go back again.

Gail - who stayed at Four Points Flex by Sheraton Dundee



It gave me valuable time to spend quality time with my other daughter without interruption and the feeling of guilt. We had a lovely night away. My daughter can't wait to plan her next trip & we both loved the swimming pool. Thanks so much for allowing us this opportunity.

Naomi

Carer's Rights Information

CARERS RIGHTS DAY BANCHORY POP-UP EVENT



Sandra Proctor, (Carer Advisor), Tommy Thomson, and Kara Robertson (Carer Practitioners from Aberdeenshire Council), joined me, Angie Howarth, at our Pop-Up Carers Rights day event in Banchory.

We enjoyed a very successful day and spoke with many Carers and professionals alike.

Lots of information was passed on about our services and some carers passed on their thoughts on additional things they'd like to see being introduced or that they would be interested in setting up for Carers themselves and just needed advice, which Tommy & Kara said they would pass on to the appropriate people within Commissioning.

CARERS RIGHTS DAY NOVEMBER 2026

This year Carers Rights Day is taking place on Thursday 20 November and our theme is 'Know your rights, use your rights'.

Get involved and help to make sure more carers are aware of their rights and feel empowered to use them.



Scan the QR code to learn more.



Pop-up Events - Carers Rights

Carers rights pop-up stalls with information on carers rights, support available to carers and potential links with other third sector organisations.

Date	Where	Time
26th May	Green Pastures, Westhill	10am - 3pm
8th June	Inverurie Academy	9.45am - 3pm
9th June	Crimmond Hub, Peterhead	10am - 3pm
11th June	Stonehaven Town Hall	1pm - 8pm
12th June	GPH, Ellon	10am - 2pm
9th July	Wild About Aden, Mintlaw	11am - 3.30pm

Transfer Your Experience And Skills As A Carer Into A Scottish Vocational Qualification



**Qualifications
Scotland**
Approved Centre

Did you know the skills, experience and knowledge a carer has can be transferred into a Scottish Vocational Qualification?

Aberdeenshire Council / Health and Social Care Partnership offer unpaid adult carers and young carers the opportunity to undertake a SVQ; allowing those who care for a family member, friend or neighbour to gain a recognised qualification through Qualifications Scotland, whilst carrying out their caring role at home.

There are two qualifications on offer, one if the carer cares for an adult, and one if the carer cares for a child/young person. Carers who progress with the qualification are allocated a SVQ Assessor, Sandra Baxter, who will provide support & guidance throughout. Carers will work through 6 different units, providing written and practical evidence to demonstrate their skills and knowledge.

What are the benefits to carers?

- Carers will have increased confidence in their caring abilities enabling them to cope in a more relaxed & confident manner.
- Carers may feel a sense of achievement from the qualification and feel they are doing something for themselves.
- Carers can use the qualification, if they wish, to help pursue a career in the health and social care or childcare sectors.
- Young carers may also wish to undertake this qualification which is recommended for school age S3 upwards.



**If you would like to find out more, contact
Sandra Baxter, SVQ Assessor**

**Email: carersvq@aberdeenshire.gov.uk
Or Tel: 01467 539 019**

**Or further information can be found by visiting
the Aberdeenshire Council webpage by
scanning the QR code.**



"It was a personal achievement to complete this and it provided me with more confidence to know that the care I provide is quality care. This qualification will hopefully help me gain part time employment in the future. I liked being able to link the SVQ to my role as a carer, as you think of this qualification as for someone in a care home, so it was nice to be able to gain it while being a carer for my son. I enjoyed meeting up with my tutor and getting to know her, as being a carer can be lonely".

"The flexibility to submit the work in my own time worked really well, especially with a busy household & caring role. It has felt amazing to achieve something for myself after so many years supporting others to reach their potential. I hope to advance in the area of my SVQ & get back into some form of paid employment alongside my unpaid caring role at home".

"My assessor was very supportive throughout the full qualification. I appreciated that it wasn't just a phone call but also video calls which made chatting through things a lot easier. My assessor was very patient also when we had to do a part of my course at home with my kids. My assessor made me feel that I was doing a great job when handing in my work and very supportive in helping me to add in anything extra that would help pass each part of work. I put a lot of value on achieving my SVQ as learning for me isn't something that is easy. I hope to be able to use my SVQ further down the line when I look to maybe change over careers. Overall I have thoroughly enjoyed all the learning through this SVQ. Thank you very much to my assessor who made this an enjoyable course to do".



Above is feedback from Aberdeenshire carers who have successfully completed the qualification.

Sandra Baxter, SVQ Assessor
SVQ Level 2 Social Services (Children & Young People)
SVQ Level 2 Social Services & Healthcare

Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



Aberdeenshire
Health & Social Care
Partnership



