

# VSA TODAY



Aberdeenshire Carers  
Service Newsletter

APRIL 2025 • [VSA.ORG.UK/CARERS](https://vsa.org.uk/carers)



## VSA Aberdeenshire Carers Service

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vsa.org.uk/carers

### Cover Photo:

Young Carer Chloe at her school helping to raise awareness during Young Carers Action Day.



# Welcome!

## Dear Carers

As we enter spring and the weather improves, many will be looking forward to the lighter mornings and evenings as we emerge from winter.

The first signs of spring are here! Daffodils are beginning to appear; trees are coming back to life with their leaves and blossom and the birds are singing as we awake in the morning.

In this edition, we will be reading about events that have taken place since our last newsletter and from some of the carers who are registered with the service and the support they have received.

Our long-awaited Carers Rights events have taken place and Young Carer Chloe writes about raising awareness of Young Carers on Young Carers Action Day 2025 in her school.

Sit back and enjoy reading through all the events and activities our carers have been up to and here's hoping spring brings new adventures.

Kirsty and  
the Team



# Meet the Team!



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# Carer's Rights Events



## Our North Aberdeenshire Carers Rights Day event finally went ahead after postponing due to bad weather.

Connie and her team at MACBI Sports & Community Hub in Mintlaw were so lovely and very accommodating in provided us with perfectly placed tables by the café, for our displays.

Carers travelled from all across the Shire to talk to us, and it was nice to be able to welcome and say hello to some of our existing Carers and share information and advice on "Carers Rights", "SDS Budgets", and "Hospital Discharge".

Some who came along were interested to find out what defines a "Carer" and what is a "Carer's Role" – and then after receiving this information, realised that they actually could identify themselves as a Carer, so accessed our help to register with our service.

Shaun from Advocacy North East was able to help people with queries on the best way forward to voice their opinions, and some will now be using Advocacy North East services in the very near future.

Barbara, a Care Practitioner from Aberdeenshire Council, along with Sarah from Aberdeenshire Council, gave out information and spoke to many people in regard to their SDS budgets, and also advised on grants for short breaks for carers.

After a full day of mingling with other stands and various people who attended the event, we felt the day had ended on a successful note.





# Young Carer's Blog

**Hello! My name is Chloe, I'm 16 and I have been raising awareness for Young Carers at my school, surrounding this Young Carers Action Day, and throughout my whole school year!**

I do this with an excellence programme in my school, called "The School of Citizenship" which aims to make small, but impactful changes in the local community.

We are a small, but mighty team of 14 young people, along with our amazing teacher and a very inspiring lecturer from Aberdeen University who have both been a great support to me, and to our team in our projects!

So far, I have selected posters to be put up around the school concerning "Young Carers Action Day", I've also created a PowerPoint slideshow about "identifying" Young Carers, and what to do or who to talk to if you think you may be a young carer, which plays on the information TVs around the school.

And I created a large notice board (still a work in progress!) that remains up all year round with more in depth definitions and examples of what a young carer may do in their day-to-day lives!

This is important to me as I have been a young carer for many years and didn't realise until I was 13! My aim is to not only raise awareness, but to help other young carers identify if they are Carers too, and to help guide them in the right direction of where to get support!

*Chloe Crossman*







# Carers Connect

**The Vinery Café**  
**(Duff House Gardens, Low Street, Banff, AB45 1AS)**

.....

VSA's Aberdeenshire Carers Service are delighted to introduce **Carers Connect** - a **free** session for Carers to have a cuppa and a chat with one of our highly skilled Carer Advisors for information and advice, including...

- Registering as an Adult Carer
- Carers Rights
- Carer Support Plans
- Emergency Plans
- Hospital Discharge
- Signposting and peer support

**No appointment required**

**Sessions will run from 3:00pm to 4:00pm  
on the last Monday of every month.**



Contact our team  
today who would  
be happy to help  
with any questions...

01224 727670  
carers.shire  
@vsa.org.uk



# Male Carer Peer Group



**We had a great time at Buchan Indoor Bowling, with Cameron, Bill, Brian and Murray.**

Bill from the bowling club, did a sterling job of teaching the guys the basics, they really enjoyed it and would be up for going again.

We had a well-earned cup of tea afterwards and started planning what's next on the agenda....





# CARER'S BLOG



**Please enjoy our Carer's Blog about combining her Creative Break funding and Carefree short breaks. This was a combined team effort, between her Carer Advisor and Respitality Officer to enhance the experience of her having a break from her caring role:**

### **Read on...**

When Pam from VSA phoned to let me know I had been approved for my Creative Break funding, I was absolutely over the moon.

I work full time, and I am a carer for my husband who has both mental and physical conditions that require my support, so my life is busy and often stressful.

I used The Creative Break funds for our garden, and it was like a ray of sunshine on a gloomy day. It also made things safer for my husband and made me feel more relaxed about spending time away from the house.

However, whilst she was on the phone, Pam asked if I would be interested in registering for a Carefree break, time away from my caring role. I said yes, but it was never something I considered and just thought that it won't do any harm to be registered, but I'd probably never use it. So, when the text came through confirming registration, I didn't give it a thought and didn't even look at it. Weeks later though I did look at it, but then thought what's the point, I can't get away.

As the days went on, I went on to the site a few times looking at the accommodation available, because I knew I was exhausted and needed something to look forward to, I needed a break, I wanted a break, I hadn't had a proper holiday in 17 years. But with the things that needed to be put in place to make it safe for my husband, I found it daunting, and felt it was impossible.

Then there was the feeling of guilt that I couldn't I take him with me on this break, and also that I actually needed time away from him, was overwhelming. Yet I was determined, so I booked the days off work, chose the dates and location - Tulloch Castle Hotel in Dingwall. The site is easy to navigate and select dates & location. It said it can take about a week to confirm you've been successful, but I heard on the same day. The trip was fantastic! I left early on the Sunday morning and had an ice cream breakfast while sitting on the beach at Cullen.

Travelling towards Inverness I stopped at The Winding Walks in Fochabers, this is not something I could have done safely with my husband, and I loved it. I had become so accustomed to thinking of all the things we couldn't do,





that I forgot there are still things that I can do and enjoy. The hotel was a castle, perfect for me historic & quirky.

At reception the staff member mentioned that it was a Carefree booking, and I was a bit embarrassed, but it was only to tell me I had received an upgrade to a four poster bedroom! From the friendliness of the staff, great breakfast and lovely evening meals I felt totally spoilt.

All this time just for me, a windy but worthwhile trip to Culloden Battlefield, a woodland walk in Alness, and a coffee with a friend who travelled from Caithness to meet me in Dornoch I had a fantastic time.

I cannot thank Pam enough for introducing me to Carefree Space, for having this fantastic resource and the hotels who sign up to it.

Honestly, there are so many things as carers we miss out on, and so we should definitely use these resources while they are available, if we don't use them, we will lose them... and the funding won't be there in the future. I've used my allocation for this year, will I use it again? Definitely.

To be a strong and capable carer for my husband, I can't forget about me. I came back re energised and ready to return to my caring role... thank you, J.M.





**Did you know, as an unpaid carer, you can access a Scottish Vocational Qualification in Health & Social Care, Level 2, for free?**

Aberdeenshire Council offer 2 qualifications, depending if you care for a child/young person, or if you care for an adult.

Unpaid Carers who have already undertaken this qualification have done so for a variety of reasons – ie. Increased confidence in their caring abilities, sense of personal achievement, greater understanding of health & social care standards and the ability to access further learning and training while undertaking the SVQ.

Some have also used their qualification to gain paid employment, or aim to use it in the future to pursue a career in the health and social care sector.

This opportunity is also available for young carers in S3 upwards who may be interested in gaining a vocational qualification based on their caring role at home.

If you would like to find out more, contact the SVQ Assessors for Unpaid Carers, who will be happy to discuss further with you, and answer any questions you may have.

**They can be contacted at:**  
**[carersvq@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:carersvq@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)**

## Binky Sensory Bus

**SensationALL are now running free sessions on the Binky Sensory Bus (Autism & Neurodiversity North Scotland) on:**

- Wednesdays  
@ Peterhead Fire Station
- Thursdays  
@ Fraserburgh Leisure Centre
- During term time  
10.30am, 12noon, 2:00pm

For kids aged 0-12yrs,  
with additional support needs,  
siblings, parent and carers,  
free of charge.

**To book, visit**  
**[info@sensationall.org.uk](mailto:info@sensationall.org.uk)**



# Creative Breaks Review

**A BIG shout out and a message of Thanks to all of you, who have had your Creative Break funding for the year 2024/25.**

The funding was completed in February and the new funding, if we are successful, will be open again late April 2025. Please keep an eye on our Facebook page and Website for updates.

We hope that you and your "cared for" person, if they were involved, have felt refreshed and a little more rested after taking a short break from your caring role.

If you haven't already done so, please help us by completing your Evaluation Form, as this helps us inform and show the government just how valuable and important this funding is to our carers.

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

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



Thanks again for all your help. Here are the receipts I have for the creative break funds.

Only two of us did the pottery class, which was very good.

We also did an escape room and then some food at Nando's





I am delighted to say I am finally the very proud owner of new piping shoes, a bag and a few accessories.

I just want to say a massive thank you for allowing me this opportunity to receive this help, and this will give me many years of joy... maybe not to others ears the blowing of pipes but certainly to myself, Thank you!!!!



I booked to go to Edinburgh for a few days in February and visited Stirling Castle and the Wallace monument, thoroughly enjoyed my time away, thank you for granting me the award.



Just to let you know that I have enjoyed the grant and spent it on three massages, which were very relaxing, plus two nights at Kingsmill Hotel in Inverness.

Many thanks again for this funding, I have really appreciated everything.



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

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

# Young Carers Family Day

During the April holidays we held a wonderful Family Fun Day for young carers, their families, and those they care for, creating a welcoming and inclusive space for everyone to enjoy.

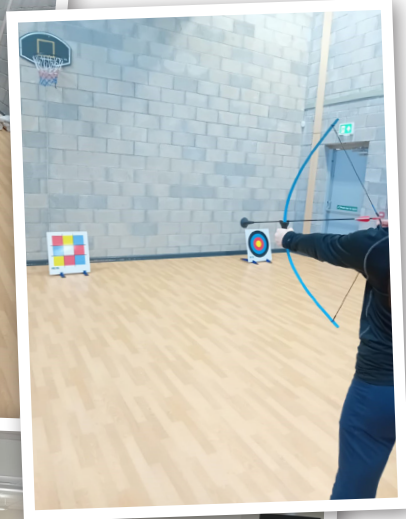
The day was packed with exciting activities, including an Active Schools workshop where children took part in athletics games, archery practice, and fun throwing challenges.

Families also had the chance to get creative with Easter crafts and enjoy a delicious lunch together. It was heartwarming to see so many smiles and hear the laughter filling the room for the day.

The feedback we received was overwhelmingly positive, with families expressing how much their children enjoyed the experience.

One attendee shared that the event was "worth the long drive" because it provided a safe, judgment-free environment where everyone felt comfortable and included.

Seeing young carers have the opportunity to relax, have fun, and connect with others in a supportive setting was truly special. We are so grateful to everyone who joined us and helped make the day such a success! To the next one!



**National charity Family Fund provides a wide range of grants to families living in Scotland raising a disabled or seriously ill child, or young person, on a low income.**

Grant items range from white goods and sensory play equipment to digital devices and even family breaks and days out – whatever is needed the most.

The quickest and easiest way to apply is online. Most families are given a grant decision within just a few weeks.

**To check if you are eligible and apply today visit the Family Fund website.**



# Are you raising a disabled or seriously ill child?

Grants  
available  
now



## What grant item could your family apply for?

Whether you need a fridge, cooker  
or washing machine; clothing and  
bedding; sensory or play equipment;  
technology for your child, or a  
much-needed family break,  
we're here to help.

Scan me



Check you're eligible and  
apply online today



**Family Fund**

Helping disabled children

[www.familyfund.org.uk/apply-now-in-scotland](http://www.familyfund.org.uk/apply-now-in-scotland)

# Coming up: Port Elphinstone

## PORT ELPHINSTONE CAFE SPRING/SUMMER SCHEDULE



**2025**

THU  
**24TH**  
**APRIL**

**HEARING DOGS**

THU  
**22ND**  
**MAY**

**VINTAGE TEA PARTY WITH  
GO THERAPEUTIC  
SERVICES**

THU  
**26TH**  
**JUNE**

**GCRA (CARDIAC  
REHABILITATION CLASS)  
INTRODUCTION TO  
SERVICES**

THU  
**31ST**  
**JULY**

**CREATIVE WORKSHOP  
INTRODUCTION TO  
DRAWING**

THU  
**28TH**  
**AUG**

**SUMMER  
STRAWBERRY TEA &  
BINGO**





# Coming up: Turriff

Name of Organisation	Activities	Date/Time	Venue	Intended Group	Fees
<b>Health Visitor</b>	Baby massage delivered by a Nursery Nurse	Runs every 4 weeks	Resource Centre, Turriff	Suitable for ages starting from 8 weeks	Contact your local Health Visitor for more information
<b>Home-Start Garioch</b>	Family service in Turriff – an event for families with children under 5 but also welcoming older children.	Saturday 19th April 11:00am - 2:00pm	Baden Powell Centre Baden Powell Road Turriff AB53 4FA	Families	Free of charge Contact info@ homestartgarioch.org.uk for more information
<b>National Trust Scotland</b>	Easter Trail for families	Fri 18th April to Mon 21st April 10.30am - 3.30pm	Fyvie Castle, NTS	Families	£5 (plus 89p booking fee when booking online)  Scan the QR code to book online:  Walk-ins are also welcome
<b>National Trust Scotland</b>	Fyvie Castle Health Walk  A low-level walk around the grounds and estate, lasting for approx. 1 hour, followed by refreshments in Fyvie Castle.	Wednesdays, 10:00am	Fyvie Castle, NTS	All ages	Free of charge Simply turn up on the day, meeting in the car park at Fyvie Castle



To view a full list of events throughout Aberdeenshire, visit [vsa.org.uk/carers](http://vsa.org.uk/carers)



## TEC Room, Peterhead

### Where tech meets health and wellbeing...

Technology Enabled Care (TEC) is the use of technology to help people live more safely and independently at home.

Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership has created a TEC Room in Peterhead to provide a friendly and welcoming introduction to some of the options available. The room is within the former Kingscliff Day Centre at 70 King Street and can be visited during one of our monthly drop-in sessions.

You can find out how a smart speaker can be used to set reminders and control devices such as lighting, a video doorbell and an electronic curtain opener. You can also see some examples of equipment available from our community and alarm telecare service, Aberdeenshire Lifeline, such as fall sensors and pendant alarms.

Resources are also now available to view online on the TEC Room web page including a video walkthrough of the TEC Room, demonstration videos and guides to technology options. You will also find a booking link with the dates for the upcoming drop-in sessions – please note the building is not open outwith these times.

**Visit <https://engage.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/aberdeenshire-hscp-tec-room> for more information.**



# What's on



**Alzheimer  
Scotland**  
Action on Dementia

## April 2025 – Aberdeenshire

Our Community Groups are there to be enjoyed by anyone living with dementia or experiencing difficulties with their memory, including their families and friends. All are welcome; people who can attend independently and/or, for those unable to do so should come with a companion who can provide any support for them. We are unable to provide transport for these groups and therefore it is your responsibility to get to and from this community activity, safely. Please speak to us, so we can support you to explore other transport options.

If you are unsure, or have questions about any of the groups, or have an idea for a new group, please let us know. All contact details are below.. **Please contact your Activity Organiser in advance of attending any of the groups. – see contact details below.**

<b>Tuesday 15th</b>	<b>Turriff Hae a News</b> <b>Turriff Library, Grange Villa, The Square, Turriff</b> <b>Come along for a reminiscing session with Richard and Memories Scotland.</b>  For people living with dementia and their carers to meet others, gain social stimulation in a dementia friendly environment.	<b>11.00am-12.30pm</b>
<b>Tuesday 22nd</b>	<b>Fraserburgh Hae A News</b> <b>Fraserburgh Library, King Edward St Fraserburgh</b>  For people living with dementia and their carers to meet others, gain social stimulation in a dementia friendly environment.	<b>11.00am-12.30pm</b>
<b>Tuesday 29th</b>	<b>Dementia Information &amp; Advice Surgery</b> <b>Fraserburgh Community &amp; Sports Centre, Maconochie Pl, Fraserburgh</b> Alzheimer Scotland want to make sure that nobody faces dementia alone.  Our Dementia Advisors support people with dementia, their families and carers and work with local communities. Your local dementia advisor can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide information and advice.</li><li>• Help you to find the dementia-specific support that you need.</li><li>• Connect you to local groups and services.</li></ul> <b>Pop in past to chat to Laura Crockatt &amp; Kathy Fraser to find out more about the range of services on offer.</b>	<b>10.00am-1.00pm</b>

<b>Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> &amp; 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Walk &amp; Talk @ Aden</b> <b>Aden Country Park, Station Road, Mintlaw</b> Meet in the car park beside carers garden	<b>11.00am-12.30pm</b>
<b>Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Carer Support Group</b> <b>Kirkburn Court Care Home, Academy Pl. Peterhead</b> Peer support, establish new friendships and get advice from your local Dementia Advisor. If you need to bring your cared for with you, please get in touch and we can arrange for them to join our dementia friendly social group in a safe environment so you can relax and get the support you need. <b>Contact Laura Crockatt or Kathy Fraser for further details</b>	<b>2.00pm -3.30pm</b>
<b>Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Banff Castle Gardening Group</b> <b>Banff Castle, Castle Street, Banff</b> Come along and join us planting our tatties, followed by a cuppie in the cafe.	<b>11.00am-12.30pm</b>
<b>Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> &amp; 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Mintlaw Hae a News</b> <b>Mintlaw Library, MACBI Community Hub, Newlands Rd, Mintlaw</b> On the 3 <sup>rd</sup> April, Police Scotland will be providing a talk on scams in the first half of the group. For people living with dementia and their carers to meet others, gain social stimulation in a dementia friendly environment.	<b>11.00am-12.30pm</b>
<b>Thursday 24<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Banff Hae A News &amp; Carer Support Group</b> <b>Banff Library, High Street, Banff</b> For people living with dementia and their carers. Both groups to run alongside each other within The Library. <b>CARER SUPPORT</b> is a safe space for carers to gain peer support and get advice from their local Dementia Advisor <b>SOCIAL GROUP</b> is for the person living with dementia and their carer to meet others and gain social stimulation in a dementia friendly environment <b>From Jan – April will meet every 4<sup>th</sup> Thurs of the month.</b>	<b>11.00am-12.30pm</b>

Alzheimer Scotland - Action on Dementia is a company limited by guarantee.  
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In Person Group		What's On In Central Aberdeenshire
Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Port Elphinstone Social Group</b> Port Elphinstone Community House, Flat 1, Pinewood House, Elphinstone Road, Inverurie.	11.00 – 12.00pm
	A social group for people living with dementia and their carers to have a blether, a cuppa and some fun.	
Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>Information Stand Westhill Library</b> <b>NEW</b> Westhill Library, Westhill Primary, Westhill Drive	10am - 6.00pm
	Join us on Tuesday, 22nd April 10 - 6pm at our Information Stand. For anyone who would like to chat to the team about anything dementia related, brain health or memory concerns. Learn more about our local groups in Westhill. We run a Social Group for people living with dementia, and their carers, to enjoy some fun activities over a chat and a cuppa. We also run a Carers Group for people supporting someone at home who lives with dementia.	
Wednesday 16 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Westhill Carers Support Group</b> Westhill Library, Westhill Primary, Westhill Drive	2.00 -3.00 pm
	For people who support someone with dementia, to get together for a chat with others in the same situation, share information and experiences	
Wednesday 30 <sup>th</sup>	<b>In the Same Boat</b> Stonehaven Library, Even Street, Stonehaven	2.00-3.30pm
	<b>New in person carers support group</b> for those carers who support someone with dementia living in a care home, or about to move into long term care. It's a great opportunity to access peer support, exchange stories and share information. Please contact Mags if you are interested in attending.	
Thursday 10 <sup>th</sup> & 24 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Ellon Social Group</b> The Kirk Centre, Station Road, Ellon (Upstairs – there is a lift)	2.00 -3.00pm
	A social group for people living with dementia and their carers to have a blether, a cuppa and join in a fun activity.	

<b>Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> &amp; 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Stonehaven Activities &amp; More</b> <b>Community Education Centre, Bath Street, Stonehaven.</b>  A social group for people living with dementia, and their carers, to meet up for some fun activities whilst enjoying a cuppa & a catch-up.	<b>10.30 - 12.00pm</b>
<b>Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Aboyne Social Group</b> <b>Aboyne Library, Bridgeview Road, Aboyne.</b> A social group for people living with dementia and their carers to meet up for a cuppa and a chat.	<b>2.00 -3.00pm</b>
<b>Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>In the Same Boat</b> <b>Stonehaven Library, Even Street, Stonehaven</b>  <b>New in person carers support group</b> for those carers who support someone with dementia living in a care home, or about to move into long term care. It's a great opportunity to access peer support, exchange stories and share information. Please contact Mags if you are interested in attending.	<b>2.00-3.30pm</b>
<b>Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> &amp; 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Banchory Social Group</b> <b>Banchory Library, Bridge Street, Banchory.</b>  A Social Group for people living with dementia, and their carers, to enjoy some fun activities over a chat and a cuppa.	<b>1.30 - 3.00pm</b>

For those times when you cannot make it into the centre, or wish to attend some groups in person, and some online.

Please contact the person listed below the activity and they will send you the link to join.

#### On-line Groups

<b>Thursday 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Aberdeenshire Carers Support Group – Laura Crockatt and Mags Corbett</b>	<b>11 am – 12.30pm</b>
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# Carefree

**Short hotel  
breaks for  
unpaid carers.**



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

