

# Aberdeenshire Carer's Service Newsletter



**VSA**  
the best of care

*Do you look after someone?*

Could they manage without your help?

If you provide unpaid support to a relative, friend or neighbour who could not manage to live independently without your support, then

*You are a Carer*

VSA Aberdeenshire Carer's Service  
shire@vsa.org.uk  
224 727670

**TODAY**

Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership  
VSA

→ Pink Zone Level 2 →





## VSA Aberdeenshire Carer's Service

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 [carers.shire@vsa.org.uk](mailto:carers.shire@vsa.org.uk)

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

**Cover Photo:** Our team were at ARI during Carers Week to meet carers and professionals from across the region, telling them more about our services.



# Welcome!

## Dear Carers

I am delighted to connect again with you all via our new Newsletter. Here we all are under the new organisation VSA. The whole Team came over in April this year.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the whole Team for their unfailing dedication to the Carer's Service for making the transition as smooth as possible and ensure our unpaid carers in Aberdeenshire experienced unbroken support from the Service.

This Newsletter is a testimony to the work and professionalism of the Team to bring the work together.

Read about our Male Carer Group visit to Fraserburgh Lighthouse and the Young Carer Events.

We had a wonderful day with them at the great venue of Lochter Activity Centre and again we were down at the Annual Scottish Young Carer Festival along with approximately 500 Carers from all around Scotland. There is nothing better than our young people getting together and having fun with one another.

Our much-loved Creative Break Funding is all set up and delivering alongside the wonderful Carefree breaks, opening up hotel rooms for our Carers.

A very warm welcome to our new Team members Suzanne and Lennon. They have both already made their positive impacts known to the Carers and Staff. They are great additions to the Team, and we are lucky to have them on board.

Please take the time to fill in our Local Authority surveys to give us your views and help shape our Service to better support you in the future.

## Heather and the Team



# Meet the Team!



**Heather Knowles**  
Service Coordinator



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**Lennon Thomson**  
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Aberdeenshire  
Health & Social Care  
Partnership

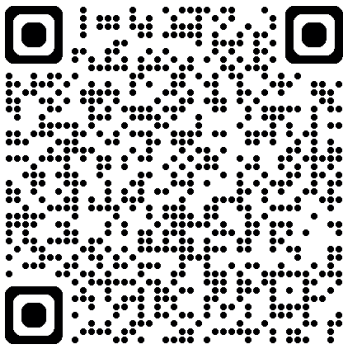
**Aberdeenshire Adult Carer Strategy 2025 - 2030**

# Adult Carers Survey 2024

## Are you an unpaid adult carer in Aberdeenshire?

A carer is someone who provides support to someone who could not manage without this help due to an illness, disability, mental ill-health or alcohol or drug dependency.

Give us your views on how we are supporting adult carers to sustain their caring role and have a meaningful life alongside caring.



**Scan this QR Code  
to access the  
survey and to give  
us your views!**

Chance to enter prize draw to win an Amazon Voucher.

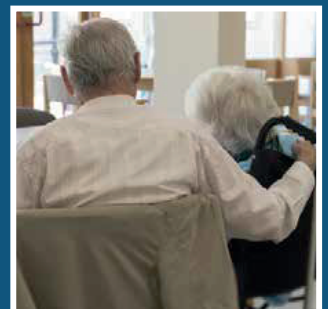
Please provide contact details within survey or you can submit views anonymously.

For more information or to access the survey, visit our website:

**<https://engage.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/adult-carers>**

This survey is available in large print, and other formats and languages can be supplied on request. Please email **[Carersupport@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:Carersupport@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)**

Paper copies of the survey are also available from Aberdeenshire Council Service Points or Libraries.



**CLOSING DATE FOR RESPONSES  
IS 6<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2024**

**Aberdeenshire**  
COUNCIL



**NHS**  
Grampian



# S...YOUR PHOTOS



Our Male Carer Peer Group enjoyed a tour of the Museum of Scottish Lighthouses in Fraserburgh on Tuesday 27/8/24



Send us your photos and  
feature in the next edition  
of our newsletter!

**carers.shire  
@vsa.org.uk**

# What's on



## September 2024 – 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.**

In Person Group	What's On In North Aberdeenshire	
Monday 9th	<b>Walk &amp; Talk @ Aden</b> Aden Country Park, Station Road, Mintlaw Meet in the car park beside carers garden	11.00am-12.30pm
Monday 16th	<b>Gardening Group @ Banff Castle</b> Banff Castle, Castle Street, Banff For people living with dementia and their carers to meet up. Come along and join in with some light gardening.	11.00am-12.30pm
Tuesday 3rd	<b>Walk &amp; Talk @ Aden</b> Aden Country Park, Station Road, Mintlaw Meet in the car park beside carers garden	11.00am-12.30pm
Tuesday 17th	<b>Turriff Hae a News</b> Turriff Library, Grange Villa, The Square, Turriff For people living with Dementia and their carers to meet up, have a cuppa, chat and take part in an activity	11.00am-12.30pm
Tuesday 24th	<b>Fraserburgh Hae A News</b> Fraserburgh Library, King Edward St Fraserburgh For people living with Dementia and their carers to meet up, have a cuppa, chat and take part in an activity	11.00am-12.30pm
Wednesday 4th	<b>Gardening Group @ Banff Castle</b> Banff Castle, Castle Street, Banff For people living with dementia and their carers to meet up. Come along and join in with some light gardening.	11.00am-12.30pm

### Men's Shed Stonehaven

- Tuesday September 24th, 2024

For details, contact...

**Leanne McLaughlan**

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07386 661704

**Charlee Skingle**

charlee.skingle@vsa.org.uk

07386 660484

### Carers Cafe (North)

- First Wednesday of the Month

**The Ban Car Hotel, Lomnay**

**(10:30am - 11:30am)**

To follow our Facebook Group, search:

**"VSA Aberdeenshire Carers"**

PLUS



# GETTING TO GRIPS WITH SELF-DIRECTED SUPPORT

## HALF-DAY ON-LINE TRAINING COURSE Microsoft Teams

**Tuesday, 1st October 2024**

**1:00 pm - 3:00 pm**

**in  Control<sup>®</sup>**  
Scotland

### WHAT'S IT ABOUT?

**1**

This half day online training course is all about the basics of self-directed support covering the values, principles and processes and is facilitated by Dr Danielle Farrel, Project Co-ordinator at In Control Scotland



**2**

### WHO IS IT FOR?

It is suitable to people new to self-directed support or as a refresher for anyone else.



**3**

### WHO CAN ATTEND?

The training course is open to:

- Health and Social Care Partnerships
- Service Provider Organisations
- People in Receipt of Support
- Unpaid Carers

**4**

### IS THERE A COST TO ATTEND?

The cost to attend is **£50.00**, but we are able to offer some **FREE places** to people in receipt of support and unpaid carers!



**5**

### FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information and how to register for a place on the next 'Getting to Grips with Self Directed Support' on-line training course contact us at:  
[info@in-controlscotland.org.uk](mailto:info@in-controlscotland.org.uk)





# Scottish Young Carer's Festival

August saw the young carers re-start their holiday activities, and we kicked it off this year with an activity day at Lochter Activity Centre, and a two night residential to the Scottish Young Carers Festival.

These activities give young carer the opportunity to take breaks from their caring roles and meet with others who are in similar situations while also having their say about the effects of their caring role. Many new friendships are always created at these events and many of the young carers stay in contact with each other after the events.





Over the summer holidays young carers took part in go-karting, buggy driving, and rifle shooting at Lochter Activity Centre on a very sunny day. Followed up by a trip to Fordel Firs, to meet with another 500 young carers to take part in activities ranging from campfires, live music, inflatables, outdoor activities and lot and lots of other fun activities (even if we did get a bit wet in the rain).

***Check out the pictures of some of the things the young carers took part in.***



# YOUNG CARERS SURVEY 2024



## ARE YOU A YOUNG CARER IN ABERDEENSHIRE?

A young carer is anyone under the age of 18 (or 18 if still at school) who cares for a family member or friend due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction.

**Give us your views on how we are supporting young carers to sustain their caring role and have a meaningful life alongside caring.**

For more information or to access the survey, visit our website:

<https://engage.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/young-carers>

This survey is also available in large print, and other formats and languages can be supplied on request. Please email

[Carersupport@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:Carersupport@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

Paper copies of the survey are also available from Aberdeenshire Council Service Points or Libraries.

**CLOSING DATE FOR RESPONSES  
IS 22<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024**



**Scan this QR Code to access the survey and to give us your views!**

Chance to enter prize draw to win Amazon Voucher. Please provide contact details within survey or you can submit views anonymously.





# Staff Focus



Suzanne

“ I joined the team at the end of June and can honestly say I love being part of the Carers team.

Everyone has made me feel so welcome, so much so, I feel like I have been here for years not months! Throughout my working career I have always had customer facing roles and love meeting and helping people of all ages.

My most recent posts were support roles in education where I discovered I really enjoy working with young people. (maybe it helps to keep me young!) This experience has been so beneficial for taking on the role of Young Carer Advisor.

I live about 10 miles from Ellon which is ideal for covering North Aberdeenshire.

Working part-time has given me more freedom to enjoy spending time with family and friends and if I am not walking my two dogs, you will usually find me in a local café having a blether with my friends.

It has been great getting out and about to meet some of our young carers. I have been very impressed by their attitude towards their caring role as they show real strength and determination to cope with the challenges they face on a daily basis.

I am privileged to be part of their lives and am looking forward to helping make a positive difference to our carers.

In each newsletter, get to know our staff better - in this edition, we introduce you to the newest members of the team, **Suzanne Hedrick** and **Lennon Thomson...**

Lennon

“ I recently joined VSA in July after completing various courses in college with my most recent being a health and social care course which I absolutely loved.

The team here have been so welcoming and made me feel so welcomed from my very first day. I have always had an interest in care from starting school and this job has been perfect for me. I grew up and continue to live in the city and working in the south is amazing for me because the dual carriage way is on my doorstep!

In my free time I love to do escape rooms, spending time with family but most importantly taking my wee French bulldog Luna for big walks (even though she is super lazy.)

Since starting it has been truly amazing to meet some of the young carers and seeing how strong and resilient they are and having so much responsibility with still dealing with the pressures of growing up and trying their hardest in school and afterschool clubs.





## Creative Breaks

The Creative Break Funding is well on its way and already being enjoyed by a few of our carers, some kindly sent photos of their use of the funding...

and If you haven't already applied for a Creative Break, please go to our website and get your application in, it is open to ALL who have a caring role.

Also, we had a lovely gesture by BEDZ 2 GO, who provided free delivery of a bed to one of our young carers, which greatly helped, as she was then able to make the most of her award by adding some additional items for her room, because she saved on the delivery charge!

SO... If you haven't already applied for a Creative Break, please go to our website and get your application in, it is open to ALL who have a caring role!







## 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 10.30 am, 12 noon, 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)**



# Carefree Breaks

VSA became a member of Carefree's platform to refer full-time unpaid carers for access to a 1-2 night break donated by the hospitality industry in November 2023.

Here are some testimonies from a few of our Carers who have enjoyed a fantastic break within the last ten months via Carefree Breaks:



**I actually had proper breathing space. Fantastic service, really helpful and easy to use**

Lynne – Stayed at Village, Aberdeen



**I had a lovely relaxing time away with a friend and enjoyed a couple of theatre shows and some lovely meals. It's given me some "me time" and I was able to recharge my batteries.**

Melanie – Stayed at Tavistock



**The hotel was amazing, we absolutely loved it. We are very grateful for the chance to have had a few days away**

Nichola  
– Stayed at Village, Aberdeen



**I took my 11 year old daughter with me. Our time together is often compromised due to the full time caring role that I have for my 16 year old son (who hasn't been able to attend school for the past 2.5 years)**

**It was so nice to have that 1-1 quality time with her doing fun new things and for me to fully get a break from my caring role. I feel that I have came back recharged, helping me to continue my caring role.**

Melanie – stayed at the Royal National Hotel



# Carefree

**Short hotel  
breaks for  
unpaid carers.**



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

