Julie’s tip comes out top!
Newton Press is a print company with a unique history. Back in 1963 our young founder started up during the days when design and print was just emerging from the dark ages. His vision: to create really great Design and Print. Over the years Newton Press has grown by being techno geeks, embracing the latest design, pre-press and print technology.

We love our toys because we can print faster, better, cheaper and more environmentally friendly for you, us and the planet!

Five decades on, our County Durham operation has some great kit, including two flagship world’s best environmental friendly presses. Next to these fantastic presses we operate Heidelberg’s and a variety of digital and large format machines.

So if it’s ink on paper that you need - we have the solution ready to rock and roll.

Oh, and that founder of ours, he is still here, along with his 3 sons and a great team of designers and printers living the dream and making great print!

The Blue Bridge Centre, Aycliffe Business Park, Co. Durham DL5 6DS
T. 01325 300212  F. 01325 312893
E. sales@newtonpress.net
W. www.newtonpress.net

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Meet the Staff....

Sue Orton is our Quality and Development Manager. Sue is constantly monitoring and reviewing our operations and procedures and looking for ways to improve the delivery of our services to Carers.

“I listen to staff comments to find out what Carers are saying. Staff are under a lot of pressure to meet Carers’ needs and keep up with new information, so I try to look at ways that we can work smarter so that staff can focus their time on helping the Carer. Carers’ comments are key to me being able to carry out improvements. We hold consultations and surveys to invite Carers to give us their feedback both on our services and external services. I then work with operational staff to come up with the most effective solutions to make improvements”.

Sue works alongside our funders to ensure we meet all of our contractual requirements, “I write all of the organisation’s policies and procedures to make sure we are staying within the requirements of our Commissioners and work in a consistent and effective way. I then disseminate the information to our staff and volunteers. I also manage a team of Development Workers who work in partnership with Health and Social Care Services and other voluntary organisations. The Development Workers promote our service, share the good practice that we have developed from our experiences with Carers and develop joint working relationships so that we can easily access services from other agencies to supplement the support that we provide for Carers”.

Sue has worked with Carers’ charities since 1995. Previously working at Carers’ Centres in Durham and Chester le Street, Easington and Sedgefield and then, since the Carers centres merged, with Durham and Dales and Consett; in 2012 she took up her current role. “The last three years have been incredibly busy. The merger of 5 organisations into one required every policy, procedure and operation to be re-developed. I then worked to help the charity achieve our PQASSO 1 quality mark”.

“I have worked with Carers and the issues they face for quite some time now. I have also had my own experience of being a Carer so I can understand what it is like to face these issues at the same time as trying to work in full time employment. Carers need all the support that they can get and I would like our service to reach out to as many Carers in County Durham as possible. I want us to be able to help take some of the pressure off for Carers. We can’t make every pressure go away but we are constantly working towards helping to make their lives easier. My favourite part of this job is working directly with Carers and talking to them about their concerns, complaints and suggestions. I welcome every opportunity to improve our service and any feedback we receive is appreciated”.

Your AGM invitation....

You are invited to the Annual General Meeting of Durham County Carers’ Support on Friday 16th October 2015 at 2.00pm in Durham Town Hall.

Following the feedback we received, Durham Town Hall was chosen as it is central and accessible by public transport, park and ride and within easy reach of car parks.

Come along to find out what has been happening in the organisation over the last year and more about our achievements. It is a great opportunity to meet the Managers, Trustees, Staff and Volunteers. We have written out to our members to invite them to the AGM. If you want to find out more about becoming a member, please contact Liz Johns at the details below.

Russell Hodgson from the Mindfulness Team at Tees, Esk & Wear Valley NHS Trust will be coming along to talk on the benefits of mindfulness. Mindfulness can help us to become more aware of our thoughts and feelings so that instead of feeling overwhelmed by them we are better able to manage them.

Refreshments will be provided so please let us know if you would like to attend by emailing liz.johns@dccarers.org or call 01833 600573.
Coming in the autumn at various places across County Durham

Free Moving and Assisting Advice Sessions offering help for family Carers

We know that the right support at the right time is essential for you to maintain your own health. Therefore, we would like to offer training that will give you real advice that could reduce the risk of injury to you and the person for whom you care.

By learning how to move or assist the person for whom you care safely, you can reduce anxiety and stress to both you and them, whilst minimising the risk to you and your back.

If you are interested in attending one of our Moving and Assisting advice sessions, please declare your interest by contacting:

Jan Burden, Durham County Carer Support.
1, Hutton Close, South Church Enterprise Park, Bishop Auckland, County Durham DL14 6XG.
Email: jan.burden@dccarers.org
Tel: 0191 500 6034 before 31st August 2015

Independent Living House in Spennymoor

The Equipment Advice Service now has a three bedroomed house that is fitted with a large range of daily living equipment.

The house has bath lifts, stair lifts, mobility aids, household gadgets, communication aids and much more.

People can make an appointment to visit the house to try out the equipment in a normal home environment.

Specialist sensory support products are also available and you can see demonstrations of the telecare equipment. The house doesn’t sell the equipment, but the staff can advise you and supply you with a list of suppliers.

To make an appointment to visit the house please call 03000 265 667 between 10am and 3pm Monday to Thursday. Or, email: equipmentadvice@durham.gov.uk

If you are looking for something to get involved in, in the Blackhall area, then pay a visit to Blackhall Community Centre. I was given a friendly welcome and a tour of the building from a proud Centre Manager Alison Paterson. Alison works tirelessly to maintain and fund a varied schedule of activities and is committed to removing any barriers for centre users. They boast a slogan “from Babes to Bumps and Grannies and Grumps” everyone is welcome. Alison first started at the centre 14 years ago as a volunteer and has been employed there for the last 8 years.

Every Tuesday Alison manages Men’s and Women’s coffee mornings to help “Improve Mental Health and Wellbeing”. Trained in Mental Health First Aid, Alison is able to spot the signs that someone may be struggling to cope but is reluctant to admit it. She is also an experienced welfare rights and debt advisor and offers help to anyone with regard to applying for benefits, completing the huge application forms and the process of appeals and tribunals which would scare off most people. Open since 1957 the building was formerly the Miners Welfare Hall and still gets the nickname “the welfare”. The building may be almost 60 but it is fully accessible with beautifully maintained gardens and once inside it is bright and airy with information about their activities and events and walls full of pictures of the local community and its residents over the years.

A Warm Blackhall Welcome!

Their Fitness Suite is open 6 days a week and unlike large gyms there is no uncomfortable pressure to turn up in skin tight lycra. There is modern accessible equipment all for a low joining fee and a small contribution each time you visit.

There were delicious smells of the home cooked food being prepared in the community café which serves lunch from Tuesday to Friday in a room that can be hired out for events with its fully licensed bar.

The Funky Feet toddler group meets every Friday morning and has been going for the last 13 years with sometimes up to 30 members. Once a month they hold a Country and Western night which has been known to have 120 in attendance. Other activities include bowls, line dancing, tea dance, watercolour class, bingo, Slimming World, circuit class, Pilates, drama and karate.

For more information on any of the activities contact Alison on 0191 5867396 or email Alison.blackhallcommunity@gmail.com
Meet Julie and Jordan. Julie was the lucky winner of our Carers’ Tip competition in the last edition of Caring Matters. Her tip was “surround yourself with positive people, family and friends and try to smile even when you want to scream and cry”.

“I am a single Mam to two adopted children age 2 and 14 both with “additional needs”. Jordan has bowel issues along with social and emotional difficulties and Freya has cerebral palsy, hearing loss, heart defect and behavioural issues. I adopted through a local Durham charity agency DFW who have been a great support and I helped set up a Single Adopters group to give support and advice to other singletons! I worked at Tudhoe Colliery school for 19.5yrs but had to give it up this year as my little girl has significant needs and a huge amount of appointments..... doctors, physio, occupational therapist, speech therapists, portage etc!! Life has changed dramatically since taking on two children with a range of needs, I’ve had to adapt to becoming a mother, father, doctor, therapist, teacher, counsellor and carer which has been quite difficult. At times I feel bogged down and have to find that extra strength to get to the next appointment or calm my daughter through her next major paddy or juggle making tea with doing physio on Freya and helping Jordan with homework. Thankfully I have amazing family who help out all they can and a fab best friend who lets me offload and counsels me then takes me to Dancefit where I get to dance off my stresses and woes!!!”

“I think it’s so important carers take time out to love and nurture themselves, caring is such a wonderfully rewarding thing to do but can be very draining and physically and emotionally demanding! I found dancing is my outlet and luckily my friend Sharon always knows how to cheer me up!!! It’s a hard balance but such a worthwhile one as I have two children I love with all my heart and who need me and rely on me to be the best I can be. Every day brings a new challenge but also a new big milestone and a new reason to smile and laugh...... which is the best medicine in the world!!!”

Julie said “I haven’t given Jordan the iPod yet, he’s going to tidy his room first!!! Thank you so much for this wonderful gift, I’ve never won anything like this before so I’m extremely grateful”. You are very welcome Julie, we hope Jordan enjoys it and keeps his room tidy!!!

Grateful thanks to Newton Press and BNI Elite for the donation of the prize.

This page is sponsored by DUN-N-DUSTED.....
A LEGAL DOCUMENT THAT CAN BRING YOU PEACE OF MIND

Have you thought of preparing a Lasting Power of Attorney?

Janet Potts with North East Law, Solicitors takes you through some of the basics

We all know that we should write a will, this confirms what we want to happen to our property after we have passed away, but too few of us know we should also consider something called a Lasting Power of Attorney which records our wishes for life.

Because we are living longer, an increasing number of people are likely to become physically or mentally dependent; there are expected to be a million people with dementia in the UK by 2025, but accidents, strokes, brain injuries and Parkinson’s disease to name but a few can also affect someone’s ability to make their own decisions and at all kinds of ages.

If something did happen to you, dealing with your financial affairs, health and care could be very difficult and without someone authorised to act on your behalf, relatives can face long delays, expense and distress if they have to go through the Court of Protection to be permitted to do so.

An LPA allows someone you trust to legally act on your behalf at a time when you can't.

An LPA is a legal tool which gives someone you trust the legal authority to make decisions on your behalf about your financial affairs or health and welfare.

The crucial thing is to set up an LPA while you are still mentally capable, well before you need it. If you become mentally incapacitated later in life and don't have an LPA in place, your relatives can face long, distressing delays and expense in applying to the court to take control. And don’t assume that because you have set up an LPA, you have lost control.

You can choose whether it can be used either before, or only when, you lose mental capacity.

Do you think an LPA only applies when you have lost capacity? In the matter of your property and finance think again…..

A key difference is that a property and financial affairs LPA can be used while someone still has capacity if they so choose, but remember a health and welfare LPA can only be used once someone has lost mental capacity.

“Mental and physical incapacity can hit at any time, which is why I recommend planning ahead to ease the potential burden on loved ones. As individuals we are unique and an LPA allows you to record your personal wishes and leaves nothing to chance”, Janet Potts Partner with North East Law LLP.

As individuals we are unique and deserve to maintain our dignity and independence. For more information on our discounted rates for DCCS Carers Card holders and a free consultation telephone 0191 372 6835.

North East Law LLP are members of

Great North Runners all set in aid of DCCS

Meet Gareth, seen here sporting one of our Great North Run vests. Gareth is one of 10 runners we have supporting our charity in this year’s run on Sunday 13th September. Gareth ran for us last year and managed to raise almost £500 on his own and then a further £250 was donated by his employer UKAR. Once again Gareth has agreed to run this year for us and has enlisted the help of friend and colleague Lindsay and generously UKAR have agreed to match fund their fundraising.

Also running for us again this year are the Wells family, Claire-Louise and David will be running together in the main race and sons Jack aged 9 and Harry aged 5 will also be running in the mini run.

Good luck to all of our runners and thank you for choosing us to support. If you would like to support our runners you can make a donation by texting DCCS01 followed by £ and your amount in numbers to 70070.
Does thinking about benefits keep you awake at night? It’s not the easiest subject to get your head around. Where can you go for advice and how long are you going to have to wait before your mind can be put at rest?

Caring is a difficult enough role as it is without taking on the benefits system and completing the seemingly never ending forms asking increasingly personal questions.

Turn2us and entitledto both have handy “benefits calculators” on their websites which take you step by step through your details with easy to complete online forms. Both sites have confidential forms which you can complete at your own pace and save it and come back to it later.

Try logging on and giving one of these sites a go. Still confused? Registered Carers can contact Sam Stimpson at sam.stimpson@dccarers.org or call 01325 524600

http://benefits-calculator.turn2us.org.uk/AboutYou
http://www.entitledto.co.uk/benefits-calculator/

What is the Priority Services Register?

The Priority Services Register is a scheme which offers extra free services to people who are of pensionable age, are registered disabled, have a hearing or visual impairment, or have long term ill-health. It is run by energy suppliers. Services which might be available include:

- **a service more tailored to your needs.** For example, you can ask to have your bills and meter readings in Braille, large type or audio tape
- **moving your meter free of charge** to make it easier for you to access
- **having controls or adaptors provided** to make your meter or appliances easier to use
- **free quarterly meter readings** if you tell your supplier you can’t read it yourself
- **priority reconnection if your supply is interrupted** and advance notice if they have to stop your supply
- **alternative facilities for cooking and heating** if your energy supply is interrupted
- **additional protection from bogus callers** with a password protection scheme
- **arranging for your bills to be sent or copied to someone else**, such as a carer, who can help you read and check them
- **free advice and information** about the services available because of your age, disability or chronic illness.

How to sign up to the Priority Services Register

To ensure you receive additional services, you need to sign up to your supplier’s Priority Services Register. If you have different suppliers for electricity and gas, you will need to register with each.

If you have a carer, they can register on your behalf. There is no charge and you can register for all or some of the services.

New Freephone Support Service

...for family carers of people with learning disabilities - England

The Family Carer Support Service (FCSS) is now offering a Freephone service for family carers of people with learning disabilities. The support service, which is run by Hft – the learning disabilities charity, will offer free telephone support, including from mobiles, between 8.30am and 4.30pm weekdays to ensure that family carers have sufficient access to information. Support can be accessed using The Big Word telephone translation service which is available for people who don’t speak English. The Freephone number is 0808 801 0448

The FCSS is the only free national support service for family carers of adults with learning disabilities. Support provided via the Freephone service includes helping family carers know their rights, understand the law, how to navigate health and social care systems and challenge decisions. For family carers who are looking for support, the Freephone number is 0808 801 0448. E-mail support can be accessed by contacting familycarersupport@hft.org.uk

This page is sponsored by AVL....
A Day Just For You 2015

Once again, Durham County Carers’ Support is holding a special day specifically tailored for Carers who look after an adult with a mental health issue or a memory problem. This is a day designed to help you relax and be yourself in the company of other Carers who face the same issues. Each day will include 2 workshops, one half hour therapy and a hand massage for every Carer.

This year there will be a choice of three different venues.

Redworth Hall Hotel: Shildon, 28th September 10am-2pm
Shotton Hall Hotel: Peterlee, 5th October 10am-2pm
Beamish Hall Hotel: Beamish, 12th October 10am-2pm

Lunch is provided at all venues.

To register an interest, please fill in and return the slip below and tick the box of the venue you wish to attend. Attendance will be allocated on a first come first served basis, Carers are restricted to one event only.

Closing date is Friday 28th August, 2015
For more information please contact Carole on 01325 524603

Carer quotes
“Thank you for such a lovely day, it was great to meet so many nice people.”
“I had a very enjoyable day. Thank you”
“it was so lovely to have a break just for myself. What a lovely day”

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY FOR YOUR PREFERRED VENUE
Redworth  Shotton Hall  Beamish Hall

Name ...........................................................................................................................................
Address ........................................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................................................
................................................................................................Postcode ....................................

Telephone number ..........................................................................................................................

Please return, with information on any dietary requirements, to:
Carole Gibson at Durham County Carers Support, Unit 1 Hutton Close, South Church Enterprise Park, Bishop Auckland DL14 6XG.
Parent Carer Support Groups - County Durham

Our Parent Carer groups offer advice and support, a chance to share experiences, meet other Parent Carers of children with additional needs, aged 0-18 years old, guest speakers are frequently arranged to give advice on varying issues related to parent caring role.

Parent Carer Group Pelton Children’s Centre
9.30-11am The first Wednesday of each month
Pelton School, Ouston Lane, Pelton, Chester-le-Street
DH2 1EZ
For more information
Tel: Rachel McCreesh
Durham County Carers
0191 500 6016

Bishop Auckland
Parent Carer Support Group
10am-12pm the first Tuesday of Every Month
at One Point Centre, Walker Drive, Bishop Auckland, Co. Durham DL14 6QL
For more information
Tel: Sara Carlton 01325 524606
or Catherine Jordan
Parent Carer Volunteer
catherinejordan338@btinternet.com

Barnard Castle
Parent Carer Support Group
10am-12pm on the second Monday of every month at
One Point Centre, Shaw Bank, Staindrop Road, Barnard Castle DL12 8TD
(dates can vary in school holidays-contact for details)
For more information
Tel: Sara Carlton 01325 524606

Why not join our Facebook group for Parent Carers? Follow this link and join
www.facebook.com/DCCSparentcarers

Parent Carer Trip 2015
Cinderella Pantomime

Darlington Civic Theatre
Wednesday 9th December 2015 at 7pm
and Durham Gala Theatre
Thursday 17th December 2015 at 7pm

Parent Carer Trip Reply Slip
Please identify which pantomime you would like to apply for
(you can only apply for ONE):
Darlington Civic Theatre - Wednesday 9th December 2015 at 7pm
Durham Gala Theatre - Thursday 17th December 2015 at 7pm
£5 cheque or postal order enclosed

Parent Carer Name:..............................................................................................................
Address:..................................................................................................................................
Contact Numbers (including mobiles):.......................................................................................
Cared for Name: .......................................................... Date of Birth: ......................
(under 18 years of age)
Additional Adult Name:..........................................................................................................
Number of Additional Siblings (Under 18 years of age): ........................................................
Siblings Names and Dates of Birth:.......................................................................................
Total Number of Tickets Requested: .................................................................

Transport required (please circle) Yes or No
Please note: Pick up points for transport will be announced at a later date, if you are successful with your
application and have identified that you require transport, we will be in contact to confirm your nearest pick
up point. We cannot guarantee that there will be a pick up point in your local area. You will need to make
your own way to the pick up point.

Who can apply:
• Parent Carers registered with Durham County Carers Support as caring for a child under 18 years of age.
• Parent Carer plus 1 other adult.
• Cared for plus their siblings, under the age of 18 years.

How to apply for tickets:
• Please complete and return the reply slip to the address supplied by the 30th September 2015.
• Please enclose a non-refundable deposit of £5 per family to secure your tickets. Please send cheques or postal
cards. Please do not send cash.
• Transport will be available but details of pick up points will be announced at a later date. If you would prefer, you
can apply for tickets and make your own way to the theatre.

Terms and Conditions:
• Limited Tickets Available.
• Places will be allocated on first come first served basis—any reply slips received after the 30th September 2015 will not
be considered.
• Applications only accepted by post - no phone calls or office drop-ins.
• Durham County Carers Support will contact you via letter to confirm that your application has been successful.
Further details will follow about transport arrangements. Please note that coaches are standard access only.
• All children must be aged under 18 years old.
• The £5 deposit will be used to fund future Parent Carer trips with Durham County Carers Support. Please do not send cash.
• The cheques from those who are unsuccessful in securing a place will be destroyed and you will receive a £5 refund for the postal order.
Unfortunately we cannot refund the cost of making the postal order.
**Durham County Carers Support**

**500 CLUB**

Joining the 500 Club gives you the opportunity to support the charity and a very good chance of winning a monthly prize with 50% of the income paid out as prize money. Club members pay £12 per year to be entered into 12 monthly draws for prize money of 1st £100, 2nd £70 and 3rd £35. The value of the prize money will depend on the number of Club members and could be higher or lower than the stated amounts. The draw will take place on the first Thursday of each month and the winners will be contacted by letter along with their winnings. Names of the winners will appear in our quarterly newsletter. We do appreciate that you must receive many requests for charitable donations, but our 500 Club gives you the chance to win your money back and more every month!

**Previous Winners:**

**May 2015**
- 1st Prize: R Wilson, £116.25
- 2nd Prize: Elaine Davidson, £77.50
- 3rd Prize: Margaret Simpson, £38.75

**June 2015**
- 1st Prize: Gwen Britton, £114
- 2nd Prize: Mr A Stephenson, £75.50
- 3rd Prize: Maureen Nellis, £38.00

**July 2015**
- 1st Prize: Paula Wallace, £113
- 2nd Prize: Teresa Sweeney, £76.50
- 3rd Prize: Pauline Atkinson, £38.00

**We currently have 455 members**

**Durham County Carers Support 500 Club membership application:**

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**Other ways you can help us...**

We would like to answer every cry for help, so we have come up with the following methods to help you choose how you could support us.

- A monthly gift is the best way to support us, it gives us that confidence to plan ahead.
- £3 a month could help us answer more calls.
- £5 a month could help us provide more support groups.
- £10 a month could help us give people a place to turn.
- One off Donation
- Wills & Legacies - Leaflet available upon request

Please tick the box that applies

- Making a monthly donation
- Wills and Legacies
- I enclose a cheque for a one-off donation of ...............................................

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**...Thank You!**

Thank you to all Carers who took time to complete our recent online and telephone Learning Disability Carers Respite & Hydrotherapy survey. There will be a workshop in the future, to look at the information gathered with the Local Authority, NHS and Carers. The date and venue are to be confirmed, if you would like to attend please email or call Susan Garrett at susan.garrett@dccarers.org or 0191 500 6030.
Much more than the name suggests!

Upper Teesdale Agricultural Support Services (UTASS)

Visitors to Teesdale see the tranquil views and peaceful rurality. However, those working in the agricultural industry can become isolated and stressed and have been known to reach the most desperate of decisions. UTASS is a charitable organisation that informally began in the early 1990’s after an epidemic of suicides locally, then opened its doors in the year 2000 to help provide appropriate support for people in agricultural services.

15 years on, it is a very different organisation from the one first set up. Today any member of the community can walk in or call UTASS and ask any question and for those with urgent needs 24 hours a day seven days a week assistance is available. No longer restricted to Upper Teesdale they serve anyone from Durham Dales.

“We don’t just deal with agricultural services and people from that industry, we are prepared to answer any question, and we are all about helping people from the community to stay in the community. It’s not always convenient to travel into the next town for services. If it’s in our capabilities to provide them we will do our best” said Emma Spry, UTASS. They still specialise in offering practical support to farmers with things like complex forms, training, regular briefings that eliminate government jargon, helping people to understand new regulations and signposting to specialist third parties.

They now offer a varied range of activities available to the rest of the community such as: internet access and photocopying facilities, twice weekly Pilates’ sessions, beauty therapy, meeting room hire and outreach services for people to access other organisations, young people’s drop ins and support with the organisation of local events. They have a willing team of staff and volunteers to help out and love to hear from anyone else who wants to help out. They have a Community minibus bus and, with a grant from Teesdale Action Partnership, can currently provide MIDAS training for anyone who wants to volunteer as a driver.

“The young people’s drop ins are really popular, they are three times a week, at one group we can expect anything from 75-80 young people from the ages of 8 upwards. They have a say in what they do, it is very much a service led by them and they can take part in art activities, table tennis, healthy eating programmes or play xBox and Wii games. We have a community mini-bus which picks up and drops off young people from the most isolated farms up the dale” said Emma Spry, UTASS.

Reading some of the comments made by members there is a popular theme running through them all, “UTASS staff are always readily available when you need them and they are very helpful” - “Staff are friendly and helpful” - “Advice is always just a phone call away” - “The newsletters keep you up to date with useful information” - “I just couldn’t have survived in the industry without the help of UTASS”.

For more information why not visit their new website http://utass.org/or call 01833 641010

Diamond Commercial Cleaning

T: 01325 301 000

Diamond Commercial Cleaning are based in Newton Aycliffe near Darlington, Co Durham. Diamond Commercial Cleaning are experts in the cleaning industry. The business was established in 2005 and the owner of the business has over 18 years of commercial cleaning experience, giving them a wealth of knowledge and experience in the commercial cleaning industry. Using Diamond Commercial Cleaning you can expect exceptional standards of cleaning for your company. Working in factories, health centres and offices all commercial cleaning is carried out to a high standard with quality and health and safety audits carried out monthly.

Why choose Diamond Commercial Cleaning?

• Friendly, reliable and professional service
• Over 18 years of commercial cleaning experience
• Quality audits carried out monthly
• NHS approved
• All cleaning work is COSHH assessed
• Managers and Supervisors are trained in first aid
• All staff are fully trained and carry CICS cards
• Colour coded systems to avoid cross contamination
• CHAS accredited contractor
We have a team of Volunteer Counsellors who provide a confidential professional service to Carers helping them to cope with the issues and anxieties related to becoming a Carer. Counselling is done on an outreach basis in the community using venues that are accessible and friendly. Our Counsellors create a comfortable non-judgmental environment that is characterised by the Counsellor being genuine, displaying empathy and having an acceptance of the person regardless of circumstance.

How our Counselling can help
- it’s a safe platform to allow time out for reflection
- a place to be able to air your personal concerns privately
- a sympathetic ear
- time to ‘let off steam’
- the opportunity to be heard in a non-judgemental way
- a place to plan better strategies of yourself, your situation and those around you
- help identify and deal with problems and situations

“I don’t know how I would have coped without my counselling sessions. My Counsellor was like no one I have ever talked to before; I can’t speak highly enough of him. He turned me from a wreck into a much more confident person.

Our family experienced some difficulties, my confidence was destroyed and I couldn’t face them, thanks to my Counselling sessions we are now in a much better place and we are communicating much better”.

Volunteer Counsellors

This year nominations were invited for 7 award categories. In addition the County Durham Volunteer of the Year Award aims to recognise a volunteer or group that has been successful in one of the categories and who is considered to have given outstanding voluntary service. Nominations have now closed and the judges for each of the categories face the unenviable task of choosing between the varied achievements of so many ‘unsung heroes’.

All of the staff were asked to nominate and I have managed to whittle it down to 1 Volunteer from the South, 1 Volunteer from the North and 1 Group. Unfortunately from the 7 categories available not all of our Volunteers fit the criteria. This is a point that I intend to raise and hopefully rectify for the future. Good Luck to Margaret (Mac) Smith and Michael Tempest who have been voted as this year’s nominees with our Consett group being submitted in that category. As this goes to print we have our fingers crossed they successfully make it to the next round.

Mac and Michael have volunteered with us for many years and have given us vital support in their roles including Groups support, Admin support, Peer support and Counselling and the Consett group have helped with consultations internally and externally and many Carers in Derwentside have benefited from having this group. They are the largest of our groups and have up to 30 people attend on a monthly basis.

Well done to all of our volunteers and groups, without your contribution we could not continue to provide such a high level of support to Carers. Each and every one is a valued member of our team.

Get involved and have some fun!

How would you like to get involved in one off events to help us raise funds and raise our profile? We are looking for a team of volunteers, who would be interested in taking part in a fundraising event such as sky diving, zip slide or something a bit less scary like a sponsored swim or walk. All we need is to get a group of enthusiastic people together to make some great memories for you and for our charity and raise some vital funds to help support Carers. If you are interested in getting involved please contact Andrea on 0191 5006010 or email: andrea.emerson@dccarers.org

Carers Support Group in the Dales?

Are you a Carer living in Weardale? Would you like to meet with other Carers and join a support group?

Durham County Carers Support is having a meeting at Durham Dales Centre, Stanhope on Thursday 10th September at 10.30 a.m. to talk with Carers about the possibility of starting a group.

If you live in Weardale and would like to attend please contact: Barbara Hughes, Carers Support Co-ordinator on 01833 600571. Refreshments will be provided including cakes, scones, tea and coffee.
Together North East: First festival in the region designed by people with a learning disability

Together North East was the first ever large scale festival in the region designed by people with learning disabilities. The festival took place on Saturday 27th June 2015, at the Customs House, South Shields, and was open to everyone free of charge. The event was supported by Lottery Awards for All; twelve local councils in the region, Health Trusts and Clinical Commissioning Groups. The festival formed part of making people aware of the most important issues for people with learning disabilities in the north east, such as welfare reform, equal rights, and the right to socialise and develop friendships.

The event successfully showcased the achievements of people with learning disabilities, through performances from regional theatre groups, musicians and social enterprises. An inclusive fashion show, supported by Sunderland University, took place and a day long film festival by regional film-makers. A live Latin American party provided non-stop music all day, with dancing and entertainment. Salsa dancing and samba drumming workshops, and a special appearance of the band ‘Los de la Vega’ played into the night. There was live street theatre and comedy, and Bollywood dancing demonstrations.

Helen Smith a member of the County Durham Learning Disability Parliament said: “Myself and my friend Heather from the County Durham Learning Disability Parliament volunteered as stewards on the day. It was a great experience for both of us; I met so many nice people and really relaxed and enjoyed myself. Everyone had ice cream, drinks and danced together. I enjoyed encouraging people to join in, and seeing people be treated like normal. I learnt new skills and thought the drama workshop and performances were fantastic. We stayed all day and got home late at night!”

Helen said: “Here is a picture of everyone dancing, you can see me in the red T shirt looking at the camera, I am wearing a black cap, and we had some great fun”.

The event was a huge success, altogether it was estimated that up to 1000 people attended on the day, this doubled the original numbers expected. Further information and news articles about the event can also be found at:


What’s on...

Mental Health Carer Information Programme
Lanchester Road Hospital
Starting 22 September for 5 weeks
9am-12.30pm, Finishes 20th October
Aimed at family members who care for adults with mental health problems.
For more information contact: carole.gibson@dccarers.org or call 01325 524603

Mindfulness
Bishop Auckland Methodist Church
Taster Sessions 18th and 25th August
9.30am-11.30am
This is for Carers of people who have had recurring depression, dementia, autism or a learning disability. Following these taster sessions there will be the opportunity to enrol on an 8 week mindfulness course. For more information contact: carole.gibson@dccarers.org or call 01325 524603

Dignity In Our Hearts And Minds
County Durham Care and Support Learning Disability Dignity Festival 2015
Wednesday 9th September,
The Orchards, Brandon
1pm to 4pm
This year’s challenge is: DIGNITY IS NOT FORGOTTEN IN TIMES OF CHANGE
All welcome to help CDC&S celebrate its Dignity work which is making a difference in people’s lives. The festival this year will take a more casual approach, “a Carnival” celebrating people and life. For more information contact susan.garrett@dccarers.org or call 0191 5006030

Learning Disability Fulfilling Lives Event
Tuesday 10th November
Town Hall Bishop Auckland
10am to 4pm
Carers welcome to attend.

Why not join our Facebook group for Carers of Adults with Learning disabilities?
Follow this link and join https://www.facebook.com/groups/420979081411958/?fref=ts
Durham County Carers Support is working with Utility Warehouse to help save you money on your household bills. Utility Warehouse can get your Energy, Home Phone, Broadband and Mobile services, all bundled together. By combining services, we can keep costs low and make life easier for our members. You’ll have just one monthly bill for all your utilities, making budgeting easier and putting you in control of your spending. We asked one of our Carers Graham to tell us about his experiences in switching with Utility Warehouse.

“It started when I was looking at the household finances, specifically with regards to utilities at the time. I took time out in surveying the market place online and found that by far, a company called “Utility Warehouse” came out tops”

Graham went on to say that upon changing all of his services over to them that the savings in comparison have been phenomenal. The changeover was refreshingly smooth and they can even supply a “Cashback Card” which is ideal for shopping online and offline and earns you cashback which is then debited from your monthly utility spend at source.

The really exciting part for us is that for everyone who now chooses to switch with Utility Warehouse quoting our appeal number they will donate 5% of your household bills to Durham County Carers Support. Graham on his finishing remark was happy to say... “It really is a Win-Win-Win for all concerned!” Why not give them a call and remember to quote our appeal number E55145. Call 0800 131 3000 or visit www.utilitywarehouse.org.uk/e55145

Without You...

Harold might not speak to anyone this week

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