

# United!



Registered Charity No. 1043956

Issue no. 14 June 2015

## The Carers Centre

LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND

**Police Commissioner Sir Clive Loader**  
speaks exclusively to UNITED!

**Spoken from the heart**  
Life as a parent carer

**Can there be a positive future**  
for disabled young people?

**Think carefully about your will**  
Ensure that your beneficiaries benefit

**Be empowered...**  
Take a training course  
or just a session – details inside

**Bake your way to five a day**  
Make A Cake!

**We're going green!**  
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**Fundraising,**  
News from The Carers Centre and...

...and Charles' Chat

# Summer issue

## Letter from the Editor

Although we are now used to longer warmer days and padding around the house in bare feet and a t-shirt – there is one thing we will never get used to – and that is austerity. That word that is so readily bandied about by the media and the politicians is one that sadly seems to be set in stone for the foreseeable future. What does it actually mean though, to us, the people who have to tighten our belts even further when they are already on the last notch? Personally, I think of austerity as a Victorian concept meaning that those who had very little were forced to get by on even less in order to make things work, and worse yet, they were blamed and demonized for their predicament. What can we do then? Well, we can be more aware of the need to support each other because now more than ever, community spirit really matters. Of course being informed and knowing your rights is crucial. With that being said, sign up for a training course and get some support from your fellow carers and those in 'the know'. Become part of your community of carers so that you can share ideas and views and who knows, you can make changes happen – even in a small way.

On a lighter note, this is the time of year that we can all decrease our carbon footprint. Walking is more pleasurable than waiting for a bus or trying to find a parking space and the central heating boiler is finally a sleeping beast, no longer guzzling gas or your precious coins. We at UNITED! are also doing our bit to be green, reduce our carbon footprint and minimise wastage. So, If you want to receive your copy of UNITED! in the post or alternatively by email only, then please let us know by cutting out the freepost form on the back page and sending it to us and we will do the rest.

So dear readers, keep reading, stay informed and have a joyous and peaceful Summer.

My very best wishes

Ann Johnson

[unitededitor@claspthecarerscentre.org.uk](mailto:unitededitor@claspthecarerscentre.org.uk)

# The Big Care Sign-Up at the Guildhall

April 19th saw The Big Care Sign-Up take over the Guildhall; it's mission: to raise money and awareness of The Carers Centre with an event that brought celebrities and the general public together. We had over 320 people through the doors on the day, joining our celebrity guests, stall holders, Cybermen (yes, you DID read that correctly), U.N.I.T. and Doctor costumed helpers, and last but by no means least, our crew of 25 volunteers and organisers. We also had support from Radio Leicester in the form of Tony Wadsworth and Julie Mayer (both 2 weeks prior to the event, and on the day, when we were featured as the final clue on "Clueless" - the most listened to show in its time-slot in the UK) and from doctorwhonews.net, who picked up our auction and guests as a major news item, bringing The Carers Centre to an international audience

We had invaluable help from tenthplanetevents.co.uk in helping us to organise the event, providing us with five of our seven celebrity guests. Our celebrities were Carole Ashby (A View To A Kill/'Allo 'Allo), Martine Beswick (From Russia With Love/Thunderball/Dr Jekyll And Sister Hyde), Nathalie Cox (Star Wars: The Force Unleashed 1&2/Clash Of The Titans - 2010), Matthew Dale (Doctor Who), Virginia Hey (The Living Daylights/Mad Max 2/Farscape), John Levene (Doctor Who) and Caroline Munro (The Spy Who Loved Me/The Golden Voyage Of Sinbad). Many of our celebrity guests are or have been carers for the last few years, and so were passionate about helping us raise money for the cause.

Our World Record attempting Massive Charity Auction had 413 lots for sale on the day, with our Peter Capaldi (12th Doctor) autograph attracting four separate commission bids, and selling at two times its top estimate, bringing in a total of £240! Other items sold on the day included autographs from Pierce Brosnan and Halle Berry, Sir Patrick Stewart, John Cleese, William Hartnell, Sir John Hurt and Clint Eastwood. At time of going to press, we're still working out how much the auction has raised, so we'll let you know as soon as we can.

Thank you to everyone who was involved.

Last issue we asked what happens when three friends get together; in this case, it was pretty amazing.

# Charles' Chat!

## Carers Week

This is the week where carers receive more publicity and more public support than at any other time. One of our challenges is to support the weak while making sure that we try to keep the publicity and support going throughout the year – especially difficult during a General Election year where there was more coverage about immigration than about health and social care.

However, we're supporting a number of events around the City and County, but I wanted to make sure you knew about these events:

10th June 10am-4pm – Carers' Market, Humberstone Gate, Leicester.

You can find out about the wide range of services available to carers up and down the City and County.

12th June 10am – 3pm – Carers' Drop in and therapies session, Leicester ARC, 22 St. George's Way, Leicester (just across from The Carers Centre).

You can come and chat with other carers, staff from The Carers Centre, find out about your rights and local services – and have a massage!

## Future Plans

Not many people will know this but next year is our 25th Anniversary year. We're starting to plan our activities for the coming year as I write this. As part of this, we'd like to hear from you about what difference The Carers Centre has made to your lives. Please contact me.

As always, if you have anything to ask, or to say about our services, please contact me in the usual ways – you can telephone me on 0116 251 0999 or 07740403294, or email me on [Charles@claspthecarerscentre.org.uk](mailto:Charles@claspthecarerscentre.org.uk). Or you can use traditional mail using the Freepost address:

The Carers Centre, FREEPOST RTLH-HHXR-YAJL, LE1 1PL

# Caring with Confidence

is a FREE programme for anyone caring for a family member or friend, with any condition.

Starting at West End Centre, Leicester

Caring for a chronically ill or disabled loved one can have a huge impact on your own health and wellbeing, many say they feel isolated, experience feelings of being unable to cope, unsure where to go for advice and support or feel they are not being heard. Others say they would like the chance to meet others in a similar situation.

Caring with Confidence can help with these problems and is held in a relaxed and friendly environment with two facilitators who are themselves carers.

The programme runs over five weeks so come to as many sessions as you can.

Everyone welcome!

Bring a friend or a family member if you think they could also benefit.

Starts Monday 6th July 2015

10.00am – 1pm

West End Centre, Andrewes Street off Hinckley Rd, Leicester LE3 5PA

Complimentary refreshments are provided.

Finding your Way Monday 6th July 2015

The introductory session which welcomes you to the programme and explains more about each session and how it can help you in your caring role.

Caring and Coping Monday 13 July 2015

Gives you time and space to look at the emotions involved in looking after someone and how to recognise and deal with stress more effectively.

Caring and Communicating Monday 20th July 2015

Helps you get the best from communicating with professionals and service providers. Ideas to help with self-advocacy and find out more about local support available to you.

Caring Day-to-Day Monday 27th July 2015

The essentials of caring for someone every day from medication to emergencies. Discussions around equipment available to help keep someone safe in their own home.

Caring and Life Monday 3th August 2015

Invites you to take time out and think about how to juggle competing demands and how your caring role fits with other aspects of your life.

Managing Stress Effectively Monday 10th August 2015

Relaxation and how not to avoid it! Using simple techniques that can be incorporate in everyday life. Looks at ways to help you juggle your caring role and also how to find valuable time for yourself!

To book your place or to have a chat about the programme, please contact

Ranjana or Debbie at

The Carers Centre 0116 251 0999

## Carers Writing Group

How do we nourish ourselves in the midst of taking care of others? A new creative writing group for carers is starting in Evington in April. The group will be run by Nina Robertson, herself a carer. Why a creative writing group for carers?

“Writing is one of the most nourishing things I do to look after myself,” says Nina. “Writing can help us reflect and come to terms. It’s not therapy but it can be deeply therapeutic. It’s a place we can put everything in our lives whether we choose to do it through fiction or poetry or autobiography. It is also somewhere where we can change our focus and make something up. It can give us a great sense of achievement.”

Nina is trained in the Amherst Writers and Artists method of facilitating creative writing groups. “It’s a great method,. It is all about encouragement and support. It recognises that we are all already story tellers: we tell people about our day, our holidays, our children, about things that happened to us in the past.” The group will be fun, relaxed and friendly. You don’t have to have written before.

It will initially meet monthly on Wednesday afternoons from 2.00 to 4.00 at St Denys Parish Centre, Church Road, Evington LE5 6FA. on April 22nd, May 20th, June 3rd and July 1st. By donation (suggested minimum of £2.00). Come to every session or come when you can.

Email [info@writingsanctuary.co.uk](mailto:info@writingsanctuary.co.uk) or call 07500 833771

# RECIPES

## If you have to have 5 a day best to make one of them cake!

These recipes are children friendly, so you can have some fun during the long summer holiday.

### Banana and Gingerbread Fingers

275 g 10 oz plain flour  
4 tsp of ground ginger  
2 tsp mixed spice  
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda  
115 g 4 Oz soft brown sugar  
60 ml 4 tbsp sunflower oil  
60 ml 4 tbsp of black treacle  
2 eggs beaten  
60 ml 4 tbsp orange juice  
3 ripe banana's  
115 g 4 oz raisins

#### Method

Sieve the flour, spices, bicarbonate of soda into a large bowl. Add the sugar and mix well. Add the eggs, black treacle, and oil and mix together. Mash your bananas and add to the mixture, add the raisins and mix well. Line and grease 18 cm x 28cm 7 x 11 inch baking tin. Pour your mixture into your tin. Bake in a pre-heated oven (180 c 350 f) for 35 to 40 minutes or until the top springs back when touched. Allow to cool in the tin, when completely cold cut into 20 fingers.

### Rhubarb Brown Betty

375g 15 oz rhubarb cut into 1 inch lengths.  
200 g 8 oz cake crumbs  
Juice of 1 orange  
150 g 6 oz sugar

#### Method

Place rhubarb in a bowl and pour boiling water over it, allow it to stand for 10 minutes, then drain. Place rhubarb into a buttered baking dish. Mix half the sugar with the cake crumbs, then cover the rhubarb. Pour over the orange juice and sprinkle the remaining sugar over the top. Place in a pre-heated oven (175c 350 f) for 30 to 40 minutes. Can be served hot or cold.

## **Pear Jalousie**

1 pack of ready rolled puff pastry  
100g 4 oz apricot jam  
1 tin of pear halves  
1 beaten egg  
10 ml 2 tsp icing sugar

### **Method**

Cut the ready rolled pastry in half. Spread the jam down the middle of 1 half, leaving about 1 inch all around the sides. Drain the pears and place on top of the jam. Brush a little of your egg on the edges of your pastry and then place the second half of pastry over the first and use a fork to press down to make a seal. With a sharp knife make cuts along the top of your pastry. Brush the rest of the egg wash over your pastry. Place into a pre-heated oven (2230c 450 f) for 20 to 30 minutes. When cooked sprinkle over the icing sugar.

## **Fruit Batter Pudding**

450g 1lb of a mixture of plums, apples and apricots quartered and stoned  
200ml 7 fl oz of milk  
60ml 4 tbsp of dried milk powder  
1 tbsp of light Muscovado or light brown sugar  
15 ml 1 tsp of vanilla essence  
75g 3 oz self-raising flour  
2 egg whites

### **Method**

Oil a shallow baking dish and add the fruits. Mix together all the other ingredients to form a smooth batter. Pour over the fruits and bake in a pre-heated oven (220c 425f) for between 25-30 minutes. Serve hot, best with ice-cream.

You can make these recipes vegan by using egg replacement, unsweetened soya milk, not glazing with egg and using vegan baking spread instead of butter.

## **NEWS from the fund-raisers**

As always, the fund-raising team is working hard for The Carers Centre and we have received confirmation from Waitrose, London Road, Oadby, that they are running their green token scheme for the month of May 2015, which will net The Carers Centre a proportion of the £1000 that they have available to donate to charities each month.

Babs is running her cards and stationery stall at the South Wigston Community Fun Day, Saturday 20th June, at the Tesco superstore (I think it is in part of the car park), then again at Railfest 15, an event for model railway enthusiasts and their families on Sunday 25th October in Newbold Verdon.

Babs also sells packs of 8 notelets for £2, with the full amount raised going to The Carers Centre. These notelets are all taken from original artwork created by a local family carer, so are unique to us! She also has a range of greeting cards and stationery through Phoenix Trading available to buy at all times, which again raises much needed funds for us.

### **easyfundraising**

Did you know that whenever you buy anything online - from your weekly shop to your annual holiday - you could be raising a free donation for The Carers Centre (Leicestershire & Rutland)? There are nearly 3,000 retailers including Amazon, John Lewis, Aviva, Thetrainline.com and Sainsbury's, who will donate a percentage of the amount you spend to The Carers Centre (Leicestershire & Rutland) to say thank you for shopping with them. It's really simple, and doesn't cost you anything, all you have to do is:

1. Go to <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/claspthecarerscentre>
2. Sign up for free
3. Get shopping - your donations will be collected by easyfundraising and automatically sent to The Carers Centre (Leicestershire & Rutland). It couldn't be easier!

There are no catches or hidden charges and The Carers Centre (Leicestershire & Rutland) will be really grateful for your donations.

### **London Marathon 2015**

Diane, Marie, Jenna W, Liz and Jenna M all made it to the start line on Sunday 26th April 2015. Unfortunately Jenna M was unable to finish it and had to pull out half way through. The other four runners soldiered on to the finish line and achieved their ambition to run the London Marathon. Jenna W was extremely brave as on mile 7 she had to stop and ice her knee as her knee 'popped', but she didn't let it stop her and carried on to the bitter end.

Our runners not only trained hard but also fundraised for The Carers Centre, and we are very grateful for all of their efforts. The money they have raised will help us support many carers. Thank you team 2015 for all of your hard work!

### **London 10K**

This year is very exciting as it is the first year that we have entered the London 10K

on 12th July. Not only have we entered but we have six very excited runners; Diane Wildbur, Jenna Wildbur, Marie Concannon, Jacque Chapman, Claire Alker and Grace Costall. Some of these names you may recall from Diane's 1955 Challenge and the London Marathon – they are very dedicated to fundraising for us!

As well as running for us, they are also raising much needed funds. To help them reach their fundraising goals we are running a raffle, which will be drawn on the 13th July. The first prize is a £30 gift card from Next, and the second prize is a £15 gift card from Body Shop. To enter the raffle, please send donations to The Carers Centre with your name and address.

### **Diane Wildbur 1955 Challenge Update**

Diane's challenge is steaming ahead. She is training hard and competing at many events. Before the London Marathon she had completed 700 of her 1955 miles, and was starting to get nervous and excited for her second London Marathon. What she didn't realise was how amazing she was going to do on the day, she didn't just complete it but broke her own record and ran it 30 minutes quicker than last year; 5:31:24! However, she is not getting complacent, she is already booking her next races and looking for even more;

Market Bosworth Half Marathon (10 May 2015)

Derby Ramathon (7 June 2015)

Great British London Run (12 July 2015)

Her fundraising is also going really well, but I know she would appreciate our support to get her through the last few months of her challenge. Any sponsorship can be sent to The Carers Centre (cheques made payable to CLASP) or visit her Just Giving page <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/DianeWildbur>. All of her challenges and updates also appear on her Just Giving page, so you can track her progress.

## **Sir Clive Loader Speaks Exclusively to United! readers**

As Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) it is my job to hold the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of policing and to set the direction and priorities for Leicestershire Police. These priorities focus on issues that, through community consultation and engagement, I know matter to the people of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. It is these issues - reducing offending and re-offending, supporting victims and witnesses, making communities and neighbourhoods safer and protecting the vulnerable - that inform much of the work of my office and the Force.

We work with partners to address these priorities and a key part of my role is to commission organisations to deliver services in these areas, as well as awarding funding to community projects helping to make a difference to local people.

I understand that ensuring the person you care for is safe is an important part of your role as a carer and it is an important part of my role too.

Protecting vulnerable people is an area I am deeply committed to. I want to safeguard those who need help and support and ensure they feel safe in their community.

I recently announced, in collaboration with the city and county councils, I would be providing funding for mental health first aid training for frontline professionals, including police officers, health practitioners and those working in social care.

My aim is to improve the response and service for those with mental health needs and equipping frontline staff with the right skills which in turn will help provide better outcomes for those suffering with a mental health illness.

It is also important that vulnerable people, particularly those that are disabled and elderly, feel protected in their own home.

For those people that unfortunately become a victim or witness to a crime, I want to ensure they receive specialist support. This is why in October I will be launching my innovative Victim First service.

The service will be delivered by Catch22 and will ensure vulnerable people receive the right help and support they need, when they need it.

In particular, I have pledged to support victims of hate crime and hate related anti-social behaviour. It is paramount that victims of this type of crime are confident to report it and have a positive outcome.

I have awarded funding to leading learning disability charity Mencap to run an initiative in Leicester called Speak Up! The project is designed to raise awareness of hate crime among young people and encourage the reporting of hate related crime against those with learning difficulties.

It is evident that, with local events and initiatives, there is a real desire, not only by me but also the police and our partners, to tackle hate crime and educate people about the devastating impact it can have on people's lives.

Partnership working is at the heart of the work of my office and the police too. We want to keep communities safe by preventing crime and addressing the causes of crime and not just dealing with the symptoms of the problem and managing the immediate consequences.

I regularly hold and attend public events and I would urge you to come along or contact me if you have any questions or concerns you wish to raise.

Further details can be found at [www.leics.pcc.police.uk](http://www.leics.pcc.police.uk)

# Training Forums and Meetings

## City Carers Forums

Thursday 4th June 10:30-12:30 at: The Depot Rutland Street Leicester

Topic: New changes in contacting the council

Thursday 9th July 10:30-12:30 at: The Depot Rutland Street Leicester

Topic: Supported Living

## Carers of a person with Autism Group meetings

Thursday 16th July 10-12:30 at the Carers Centre

Thursday 17th September – 10 to 12:30 at the Carers Centre

Thursday 19th November – 10 to 12:30 at the Carers Centre

Topics still to be confirmed for all dates

## Leicestershire Learning Disability Partnership Board Carers Group meeting

Monday 1st June 10-12:30 County Hall Glenfield

Monday 6th July 10-12:30 County Hall Glenfield

Monday 3rd August 10-12:30 County Hall Glenfield

Monday 7th September 10-12:20 County Hall Glenfield

Monday 5th October 10-12:30 County Hall Glenfield

Monday 2nd November 10-12:30 County Hall Glenfield

Topics still to be confirmed for all dates

## Speaking up for yourself: A three week session looking at how to put your message across

To be held at the Carers Centre

Tuesday 2nd June Time 11-1pm

Topic: looking at your needs

Tuesday 9th June

Time 11-1pm

Topic: Planning what you want to say

Tuesday 16th June

Time: 11-1pm

Topic: Preparing for meetings

For more details about these training sessions, ring Gill on 0116 2510999

# Training Sessions

We are inviting you to attend FREE training sessions in response to Carers interests in the following;

## **Moving & Handling**

Learn safe techniques to prevent injury

Date: 1st June 2015 Time: 10am - 1pm

Venue: Age UK, Clarence House

46 Humberstone Gate, Leicester LE1

## **Survival - Life Saving Skills**

“What would you do in an emergency”

Learn basic lifesaving skills by St John’s Ambulance

Date: 11th June 2015 Time: 10am-1pm

Venue: Quaker Meeting House, 16 Queens Road, Leicester LE2 1WP

## **Making a Will and Power of Attorney**

This informative talk highlights the importance of making a Will and Power of Attorney. It includes protecting your hard earned assets from the threat of Tax and Care Home fees.

Followed by a question and answer session with Solicitor Richard Lockwood of Collective Legal Solutions.

Date: 15th June 2015 Time: 10am-1pm

Venue: AGE UK, Clarence House, Humberstone Gate, Leicester LE1 3PL

Please take this opportunity to attend these one off Training Sessions

Places are limited, so if you would like to attend any of the above, or would like more information, please contact Debbie or Ranjana on 0116 251 0999.

## **A positive future for young people with complex needs**

Not so long ago young people with special educational needs went to school until they were eighteen, then many spent the remainder of their days in their home, often without the opportunity to gain further education or experiences.

Today, there are further opportunities for available for those young people to improve their skills and experiences - and not before time. Carers for our young people need to be aware of what is available and where to look for it, so we can enrich their lives by the experiences and opportunities we provide for them. Unfortunately, carers and parents need to look very hard to find these opportunities and work equally as hard to be successful in gaining a placement.

However, there are now providers, such as the one I work with, who offer people with disabilities lifelong opportunities to build skills develop independence, communication and confidence and enjoy a fulfilling worthwhile life.

We believe that every person we work with has an untapped resource, which, if freed, will develop into a new skill. Every so often a student will do something that takes your breath away making you say to a colleague "how did they know how to do that?" We believe it is important to get our students into the community, to engage with the public and develop their confidence and independence. We can offer many of our students work placements, which have resulted in some students gaining paid or voluntary employment. We believe our young people should be supported to access work if possible and to lead rich and meaningful lives with a positive future.

Much emphasis in our organisation is placed on students making choices that affect their lives. From the moment our students get out of bed on a morning they are encouraged to make choices- What clothes would you like to wear today? Would you like a bath or shower? What would you like for breakfast? This is continued throughout each and every day so students are making choices regarding food, activities and the way they wish to relax (yes, sometimes we do get a chance to relax) let's face it students do like to chill out with the TV or music. Holidays and away days are arranged out of term time and such activities enrich student's lives.

The community is a huge learning station. Activities such as ten pin bowling, cinema, discos, restaurants, shopping, going to sporting events and trips down to the pub all enhance our students lives. Our students are members of the public and should be given the opportunity just to be that. Newcastle is a vibrant city with lots going on and we are lucky to have the stunning Northumbria coastline and countryside within easy reach.

On site, those students who are resident within our service have their own bedrooms, which they are able to personalise and it really is seen as their home. We have a sports hall, sensory room, swimming pool and hydrotherapy pool, all of which we use well to promote the health and well-being of each individual.

There are facilities such as ours, around the country and we need to make our young people and their carers aware that there are services out there who want to improve and enrich our young people's lives. They just need to be aware of them and how and where to find them.

Mark L. Webb, Residential Services Manager, Percy Hedley College

## Thoughts about being a parent carer

My life changed totally on 16th January 1999, when my little girl Francesca was born. For over half the pregnancy, there had been concerns about her growth or, rather, lack of it. So I was induced at 39 weeks. She weighed 3lbs 15ozs and looked like a little bag of bones. Her eyes were looking in two different directions, she was floppy and had a tiny mewling cry. The hospital suspected a chromosomal abnormality, as did I. Their geneticist was sent for and she ran some tests. We had a diagnosis when Frankie was ten days old of Wolf-Hirschhorn Syndrome, a very rare condition involving a small deletion of part of chromosome 4. There was no useful information at The Royal Infirmary; the consultant told me Frankie would “probably die as a baby; go home and kick the cat”. Funny what you remember, isn't it?

Words do not exist to describe how I felt at this time. Although I had twelve year old twin daughters already, Frankie had been a planned and much wanted child. I pretty much fell apart physically and mentally for a while and my partner was no better. In fact, he couldn't handle the reality of life with Frankie and left when she was just under a year old.

I did the next five years on my own. If I hadn't had Hazel and Sam, my twin girls, I am sure I would have gone under - they became “adults” virtually overnight. In the first four years of her life, Frankie spent roughly half of it in hospital.

To add to our difficulties, of course I wasn't earning as Frankie took up so much time and effort. I had no other family to call on as my parents were dead and I have no brothers or sisters. We somehow lived on DLA, Carers Allowance and child benefit, by virtue of not using the heating and having no social life. To be honest, for quite a while, some of my “best friends” were staff at the LRI. In fact, the family liaison officer, Jacki Burrell, is still a friend to this day.

In 2005 I met Dave, who is now my husband and Frankie's dad (her own has not been in touch for years) and he is her main carer. I work in a variety of jobs to try and give us enough income to have a reasonable quality of life, but a career has been out of the question. I try to earn enough per year to give us one good holiday, we need that, as we are both 'on duty' 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We have some respite provision, but as other parent carers will testify, it is never enough.

I have found the last sixteen years very difficult, very lonely much of the time, extremely worrying and stressful, often not knowing if my daughter will survive each successive bout of pneumonia (caused by aspirating during her fits), financially challenging and it has had a huge impact on my physical and mental health. During this time I have developed coeliac disease, rendering my social life even more difficult, and tinnitus, which started overnight four years ago. I regularly feel depressed, but battle on anyway, because the alternative (giving up) would, I am sure, be worse.

To try and end on a positive note, Frankie is a darling girl. She has the ability of a small baby, she does not walk or talk, wears nappies and is gastrostomy fed. But she is my baby and I love her to bits. The irony of my situation is that, much as I want to walk away from it, I know that if I did, I would miss my girl so much it would be unbearable. So, for now, we carry on and see what each day brings. Once I have gone to her bedside in the morning and checked that she is breathing, the day starts.

Babs Marson

## **You are invited to our Carers Social Group**

We have new dates for our carers group, it would be lovely if you could come and join us!

Carers who have attended Caring with Confidence Training Sessions will recognise the benefits of meeting others and having regular breaks. The idea is to extend this group, to help other carers with mutual support, to reduce isolation, make new friends and give a much needed break.

Wednesday 3rd June 2015

11am, Abbey Park, Abbey Park Road. Leicester. LE4 5AQ

Why not come and enjoy walking around or just sitting and relaxing in our 32-acre park land. Explore the formal flower gardens, historical ruins, Chinese peace garden, canals and boating lakes and of course the pets corner. Finish by visiting the Abbey Tea Rooms which serve light lunches and afternoon teas, including home-made cakes - Yum Yum!!!!

Wednesday 15th July 2015

10.30am, Good Earth Café, 19 Free Lane, Leicester. LE1 1JX

Come and enjoy a leisurely catch up with other carers, over delicious cakes and coffee in relaxing surroundings.

Please confirm if you are able attend by calling the office on 0116 251 0999.

Pam and I look forward to seeing you there...

Kind regards, Ranjana & Pam

## Summer Lawns

Here it is at last, my favourite time of the year, summer. Now this year I thought I would talk to you about something I've never talked about before, your lawn and more importantly how to look after it properly.

First, we will start with the right cutting regime, and by this I don't just mean taking the lawn mower to it, if you want it to look nice and green pretty much all year round there is a lot more you need to do and my hope is, that by telling you what to do, those of you who can't do it by yourself will know what to look out for should you need to get somebody in to help.

The tools you should need are a lawn mower, a grass rake, and either a strimmer or garden shears. Cut the grass using the lawn mower and cut it as low as you can without cutting into the soil. Most come preset to the right height but some have a lever to adjust the height. After you've cut the grass you can go over it again with the lawn mower and use it as a vacuum cleaner and pick up any grass left behind if your mower has a box for picking the bits up and for cutting any blades of grass you might have missed. Now for the grass rake. What you want to do is go over the grass with the rake as hard as you can as you will be picking up what's known as thatch and removing it from your lawn. Once you've done that, you can then go round the edges and any hard to reach areas with either your strimmer or the shears - it just makes it look tidier. You could also spread a special weed killer and lawn feed on the grass afterwards but since most domestic lawns don't need one I would advise against it - unless it's full of weeds like dandelions then by all means go for it! However if you do wish to use some, it won't kill all that might befall your grass, fairy rings for example will not be affected and need a more labour intensive fix than putting down chemicals. What is a fairy ring? It's a fungal infection that gets into the soil and can affect an area big or small and looks like a ring of darker looking grass. To fix it you need to dig up the ring of grass and throw it away then do the same with the soil underneath and get new soil, compost or topsoil in bags will do and then get new grass put on top.

Happy mowing!

As always if you want more hints and tips or professional work done to your garden call HORTIS on 07719308901 or email [gardeningwithhortis@gmail.com](mailto:gardeningwithhortis@gmail.com)

## **Think carefully when writing your Will...**

If you have a disabled child or beneficiary and want to see the fruits of your labour benefit them after your death, you need to think carefully. The best way to deal with their inheritance could be to put it into a Disabled Discretionary Trust under the terms of your Will, which can hold money, property, shares or any other assets.

Typically, poorly advised individuals will either leave the inheritance intended for the disabled beneficiary to another trusted family member, hoping it will be used as intended, or the inheritance will simply be left outright to the disabled beneficiary. Both carry inherent risks. The trusted family member is not obliged to use the funds as you intended, and can even have the decision taken out of their hands if they pass away or suffer financial or marital difficulties – the inheritance intended for your disabled beneficiary could easily end up somewhere you never intended. Leaving the inheritance directly to the beneficiary may not be the answer either, as it will impact on any means tested benefits as well as being vulnerable to being spent in a manner other than what you intended.

It is also worth bearing in mind that not to make any provision at all for a disabled son or daughter on the grounds that another member of the family will look after them or that the state will provide for them may not be a wise course. This is because under the Inheritance Act (1975) if insufficient provision is made it is possible for Social Services and the Department of Social Security to challenge the Will. In turn this can result in an unpleasant, unhelpful and costly legal dispute.

A Disabled Discretionary Trust is set up by parents or other relatives in their Will as a way of making long term financial provision for a disabled child or beneficiary. The trust itself will be a clause in the will and will include the Trustees powers. A letter would normally be kept with the Will directing the trustees as to how they should manage the trust.

The reason a trust is useful is that assets once put in trust do not belong to the 'object' of the trust (disabled son or daughter who is intended to benefit). This means that the capital held in the trust is not taken into account when assessing entitlement to state benefits like Income Support or local authority obligations to fund care. The trust assets will be looked after by a minimum of two trustees (maximum of four) and by setting up the trust the testator is saying who they wish to look after their beneficiary's assets.

Richard Lockwood delivers information talks on Wills, Trusts & Powers of Attorney at The Carers Centre, and is readily available to deliver free talks for other community groups. He also offers free consultations in the comfort of your own home. Call Richard Lockwood of Collective Legal Solutions on (0116) 2432200 or (0771) 2298779 for further details.

# SNIPPETS

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