Second issue of 2026 www.carersinherts.org.uk

Carewaves

A Newsletter for Family Carers and Caring Friends



Clare conquers Mount Kilimanjaro's 5,895 metres to highlight unpaid carers and support Carers in Hertfordshire. Find out more on page 11.

Carers in Hertfordshire

charity registration number 1085491

Making Carers Count

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Disclaimer

Every effort is made to ensure the information in Carewaves is correct at the time of publication. However, Carers in Hertfordshire is not liable for any errors or how you interpret or use the information. The material is general and does not substitute personalised, professional advice.

Don't forget you can receive regular updates via email. Please call 01992 58 69 69 or email contact@carersinherts.org.uk if you would like to be added to our mailing list.

Welcome

Welcome to the latest issue of Carewaves. It has been wonderful to see so many carers coming together through our events, groups, and online activities. We hope these opportunities help you feel connected and supported.

Carers Week in June was a highlight. We moved our Annual Carers Event from autumn to June and were delighted to welcome even more of you. It was a pleasure to meet so many carers and hear about your experiences and what matters to you.

We have also created more ways for current and former carers to connect and enjoy valuable 'me-time', including new monthly groups - an online Writing for Wellbeing group and cooking workshop in Welwyn Garden City.

It is encouraging that carers' voices are increasingly being heard in Hertfordshire and nationally. The Government's plans to appoint a Champion for Unpaid Carers and its Unpaid Carers Action Plan, *Recognise, Refer, Reach,* put greater focus on recognising carers, connecting them with support, and helping them fulfil their potential.

We will continue working with carers and partners, including Hertfordshire County Council and NHS services, to help shape local support.

Looking ahead, we have online sessions on Carers Rights Day (Thursday 19th November 2026) and an Information Event in Watford on Tuesday 24th November.

Whatever your caring circumstances, remember we are here for you. We are also grateful to everyone who supports our work, including two inspiring women who took on a mountain climb and open-water swim for us. Their stories are on pages 10 and 11, and if you are inspired to help us, such as by volunteering or fundraising, please get in touch.





Michèle Stokes
Chief Executive

Our services – how we can help

We are dedicated to supporting unpaid carers with free information, advice, and other services. Whether you are newly caring for someone or have been looking after someone for a while, we are here to help.

Support is available to current carers and those whose caring role ended within the last three years. Here is a summary of our services.

What's new

An **online support group for people looking after someone with dementia**. It meets the first Friday of the month, 1.30pm to 2.30pm.

A **Writing for Wellbeing Group** that started in September 2026 and meets online, usually the last Monday of the month, 10.30am to 12pm noon. You will explore different forms of writing and use prompts to inspire reflection, conversation and self-expression.

Other support





Information and advice: If you have a question or need help related to your caring role our Advisors are available 9am to 5pm Monday to Thursday and 9am to 4pm on Fridays (except bank holidays), please call or email us. They also offer appointments for phone support until 7.30pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Keep in Touch calls: Volunteers call carers to check how you are.

Carers' Passport: A card that can be used to show you are a carer and gives you access to discounts or offers from various businesses.

Have your say (carer engagement): Opportunities to share your experiences and shape health, social care and other services that you or the person you look after use.

One to one and group support: We offer mentoring over the phone or face to face, and we have carers' groups (details on pages 16 and 17).

Workshops and learning: Activities take place online and in community venues around Hertfordshire. Details of some of our upcoming workshops and events are on pages 34 and 35.

Specialist support for dementia carers provided by our **Admiral Nurses**, and activities and **support for young carers**.

Bereavement support: Provided over the phone or at two groups that meet monthly in Ware and Watford.

Our digital offer for carers

We know caring and other responsibilities can make it difficult to contact us during our daytime opening hours or to attend our groups or activities at venues around Hertfordshire. That is why our growing online offer gives carers more ways to access information, support and activities at a time and place that works for them. **Here is what we offer.**

Access to information: On our website or social media channels and via emails, including our weekly bulletin. You can email us anytime at contact@carersinherts.org.uk

Join in one of our **online groups, workshops, webinars, or information sessions,** or **watch one of our recorded courses** that are available on the *Activities to do at Home* page on our website.

Book onto our events (a course, support group, information session, or other activity).

Apply for a Carers' Passport or find out where you can get discounts.

Register with us.

Apply to volunteer with us.



Follow us on our social media!

@carersinhertfordshire

To contact us at Carers in Hertfordshire:
Call 01992 58 69 69 or email contact@carersinherts.org.uk
Website: *www.carersinherts.org.uk*

Support for dementia carers

What is an Admiral Nurse?

Admiral Nurses are specialist dementia nurses who provide free, expert advice, clinical guidance, and emotional support for families and carers of people with any form of dementia. Developed and supported by Dementia UK, they help families navigate caring for someone with dementia.

Carers in Hertfordshire employs seven Admiral Nurses *(pictured is one of them Susie – on the left – helping a carer.)*

The service is commissioned by Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust. We are also part of the Memory Support Hertfordshire dementia service.

Who can access Admiral Nurse support?

A family carer supporting someone with dementia can access Admiral Nurse support if they or the person they care for live in Hertfordshire or are registered with a Hertfordshire GP.



Our service focuses on more complex situations, such as the carer experiencing high levels of stress, emotional strain, or risk of burnout.

What to expect from a visit from an Admiral Nurse?

Your first appointment provides an opportunity to discuss your circumstances, wellbeing, concerns, and the challenges you may be facing. The Admiral Nurse will identify your support needs and suggest services or practical solutions that may help. They may also make referrals to organisations that can provide further support.

Follow-up visits or contact focuses on reviewing how things are going, addressing new challenges, and offering ongoing emotional support.

Support is tailored to your needs and may be a one-off visit or ongoing. The Admiral Nurse will step back when their support is no longer required.

How can I get help?

Contact us on 01992 58 69 69 or Memory Support Hertfordshire on 0300 131 3946. *https://memorysupportherts.org.uk*

For Dementia UK visit *www.dementiauk.org* or call 0800 888 6678.

A snapshot into caring from our Carers' Survey

We carried out a survey with carers – adults and children – during our 30th anniversary year. Our aim was to get a better understanding of caring in Hertfordshire in 2025/2026.

Just **over 1,400 current and former adult carers** responded – **96%** with a current caring role. Thank you to everyone who took part. Here is a snapshot of some of the findings.

Health and wellbeing



27% of carers said their physical and mental health was bad or very bad.

Up from **22%** in 2022.



Half the carers said they didn't get enough sleep.

Up from **45%** in 2022.

Lower than the **65%** from the 2025 Carers UK survey.



A quarter of people said they had cancelled or missed health appointments.

Up from **20%** in 2022.

Lower than the **40%** in Carers UK 2025 Carers' Survey.

Finances





Two in three (66%) current and former carers were worried about their finances.

Up from **60%** in our 2022 survey and **51%** in the Carers UK 2025 Survey.

Caring situation



52% of carers spent **50+ hours a week caring** for someone.

Similar to our 2022 survey.

Giving carers a voice with Hertfordshire's MPs

Family carers from across Hertfordshire have met with their Member of Parliament (MP) to share the realities of caring. They also discussed changes that could improve their lives.

Recognising that many issues affecting carers are shaped by national policy, we organised meetings with all 11 Hertfordshire MPs. The meetings took place between July 2025 and this summer and gave each MP a chance to hear directly from carers in their constituency. They can use these experiences to inform decisions in Parliament, particularly about health and social care.

Carers spoke about how caring affects their health and wellbeing, finances, and employment. Common concerns included unreliable care visits, limited respite and unsuitable housing. They also highlighted difficulties navigating health and social care services. They called for better joined-up, flexible and earlier support.

John, from Three Rivers, who cares for a relative with dementia, said: "I felt the meeting with the MP went well. He was receptive to what we had to say, listened to us, and his staff took notes. Meetings like this are important because they give carers the chance to be heard.

I raised concerns about changes to dementia services and the reduction in support many carers feel they have experienced."

Roma Mills, our Policy and Engagement Manager, said: "We now want to bring carers and Hertfordshire MPs together to build on these conversations."



Chris Hinchliff, MP for North East Herts (front centre), with some carers and Carers in Hertfordshire staff.

Government pauses council reorganisation plans

The Government has paused plans for changes to Hertfordshire's council structure while it reviews the Local Government Reorganisation programme. The proposals were to replace the county's two-tier county council and 10 district / borough councils with four new unitary authorities, and likely a countywide Strategic Authority.

The changes were expected in April 2028, subject to parliamentary approval. Elections to shadow authorities were planned for May 2027. The reorganisation is aimed at saving money and bringing decision-making closer to local communities.

In September 2026, the Government announced the review following updated legal advice. It was also to ensure the plans aligned with its priorities for reform under the new Prime Minister, who took office in late July 2026, after the proposed changes were made public.

For now, nothing is changing for unpaid carers or the services they receive. Any council elections due in May 2027, are expected to go ahead, with their current boundaries.

We will share updates when available and you can learn more at *www.hertfordshire-lgr.co.uk*



News

Two inspiring women challenged themselves - Clare climbed Mount Kilimanjaro and Julie completed an open water swim - to raise funds for our work supporting unpaid carers. Congratulations to you both for completing your September challenges and thanks for your support. Thanks also to everyone who supported them and donated.

If you want to do a fundraising challenge talk to us.

Julie's story

Having dived into her biggest swimming challenge yet, Julie has completed the two-mile Swim Serpentine event in London's Hyde Park and raised just over her £1,000 target for us.

Despite suffering a broken elbow earlier this year, Julie, our Hub and Volunteer Co-ordinator, remained focused on doing the swim, which she completed in two hours.

Julie, who has worked for the charity for 12 years and is an unpaid carer, said: "It was a tough swim, the water was choppy, it was windy, and after the first lap I got cramp. I wasn't sure if I could carry on, but the support from the crowd, including family, friends and colleagues cheering me on, kept me going.

I was elated to complete the swim. Thank you to everyone who supported me and the charity."

The challenge followed a successful fundraising swim Julie completed with friend and former colleague Jane during the charity's 30th anniversary celebrations last year. The pair swam 70 lengths (just over a mile) in 50 minutes at the pool at John Warner Sports Centre in Hoddesdon.



Julie said: "Through my job and caring role, I've seen the difference our support makes to carers' lives and how important it is to have help when it is needed. Every donation helps us continue to be there for carers."



Clare's story

Months of strategic planning and milestone-driven training propelled Clare from Hemel Hempstead to the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro - the highest peak in Africa.

After climbing Morocco's Mount Toubkal last year, Clare scaled up her ambitions, targeting a more complex objective. It involved extreme altitude, demanding terrain, and the technical Barranco Wall at 4,000 metres, a narrow ledge where climbers must hug the mountain and trust their footing.

Summit night brought the ultimate test of risk mitigation and adaptive problem-solving. In freezing darkness, unexpected nerve pain prompted Clare to change her approach and stow her climbing poles. Relying entirely on balance and tactical adjustments, she decided to continue her ascent with her hands across her chest for warmth.

At Stella Point, when her guide questioned if she could safely proceed, Clare did a quick assessment of her physical condition. Her response demonstrated her commitment to the objective: "I've come here to summit, and that's what I want to do."



Clare successfully reached Uhuru Peak after sunrise. She proudly displayed the Carers in Hertfordshire banner at 5,895 metres *(as pictured on the cover)*. She then executed a safe descent.

Clare dedicated her climb to unpaid carers, raising vital funds for Carers in Hertfordshire, whose services she highly values and recommends.

Mobilising an effective fundraising campaign, Clare exceeded her financial target, raising over £1,182 within a short time.

The climb was more than a physical challenge. It was a masterclass in self-belief, courage, humour, and purpose.

As Clare reflects: "If you trust in yourself completely, anything is possible."

A family's caring story

A caring journey that reaches around the world

Caring for their youngest daughter Maya, who has Down syndrome, has shaped Anil and Ruth Patil's family life. It has also inspired a mission to improve the lives of unpaid carers around the world. Here, the couple from Welwyn Garden City, share their story.

Our caring journey

Anil explained – we met when we worked in India in the late 1990's. I was working in mental health and Ruth in children's speech and language therapy. Through our work we met many unpaid family carers. However, becoming parents to our two children, including Maya, gave us a deeper understanding of a caring role.

Ruth said: "Until you live something yourself you don't really appreciate all the complexities of it. There are a lot of layers to caring, including the emotional and physical impact, plenty of health appointments and acting as advocates - fighting for appropriate support."



Today, Maya who is 20, is forging her own path – pursuing performing arts. She is also an ambassador for Learn and Thrive, which supports people with Down syndrome to develop skills and confidence, and for Up on Downs, the Hertfordshire-wide family support group.

Anil said: "She has such love, laughter and passion for life. Having Down syndrome has not stopped her. She'll give anything a go!"

Finding support in Hertfordshire

We discovered Carers in Hertfordshire when we were looking for support. Over the years, you have provided us with lots of information and advice.

Ruth has also attended workshops and this year she had some massages paid for through the Make a Difference service.

Ruth said: “It is important to know what support is out there, and Carers in Hertfordshire is good at helping you find it. The massages have been lovely – something just for me. They have helped me relax, while also easing the tension and back pain I experience.”

Reflecting on the importance of support, Anil said: “Sharing your issues, challenges and difficulties with a trusted support network cannot be overstated. We benefited from that and wanted to share that opportunity with others.”

Supporting carers worldwide

Combining our personal experiences and our work in international development, we established Carers Worldwide in 2012.

The charity has grown from initially supporting 250 carers to now reaching over 275,000 carers and family members across India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Kenya, where recognition and practical support can be limited.

Ruth mainly looks after fundraising and manages projects in Bangladesh, Nepal and Kenya, while Anil visits the countries and projects every three to four months to support the charity’s partners and coordinate with local governments.

The charity helps carers access healthcare, peer support, and counselling. It also provides carers with opportunities to earn an income and take breaks from caring.

A key achievement has been working with regional governments and Union Territories in India to secure financial support for carers. To date, three states provide monthly allowances to eligible unpaid family carers.

Anil shared the charity’s story at our Annual Event for Carers in June 2026. He is pictured with Roma Mills, our Carer Engagement and Policy Manager.



The couple’s ambition is simple as Anil shared: “We want every carer to be recognised and valued and for their needs to be met.”

You can learn more about Carers Worldwide at *https://carersworldwide.org/*

Carers Rights Day 2026

If you have a caring role, it is important to know your rights and use them. This helps you access the support you're entitled to and feel more confident advocating for yourself or the person you care for, especially in challenging situations.

Each year Carers Rights Day raises awareness about carers' rights. For 2026, the Day is on Thursday 19th November. We have several events planned (details below).

Our events for Carers Rights Day

Thursday
19th November 2026



Drop-in Information Event

10am to 1pm.

At Ware Priory, in **Ware**.

For carers of adults with mental health challenges. It is focused on the support available in a crisis.
A range of services will be in attendance.

Online events

Making the most of your Carer's Assessment

10am to 11am.

Learn about how to prepare for an assessment and communicate your needs.

Employment Rights for Carers

2pm to 3pm.

An expert from Longmores Solicitors will talk about employment rights, including flexible working requests and time off for dependants.

To book onto any event, sign up via the listing at *www.carersinherts.org.uk/events* or contact us.

Carers' rights at a glance

You have the right to a **Carer's Assessment**, regardless of how much care you provide. This is an opportunity to discuss the help and support you need as an unpaid carer. You can also request a needs assessment for the person you care for.

You have the right to be **involved in decisions about care** for yourself or someone you care for, with their consent if they are an adult with mental capacity. If someone you look after is being **discharged from hospital**, your views as their carer should be considered, including whether you are willing and able to provide care and what additional support may be needed.

In hospitals in England, **Martha's Rule** provides an additional safety measure. If you are concerned someone's condition is getting worse and your concerns are not being addressed, you can request an urgent review from a separate healthcare team.

If you combine caring with paid work, you have **employment rights**. These include the right to request flexible working from your first day of employment. You can make two requests a year.

Eligible employees may be able to take up to one week of **unpaid carer's leave** in each 12-month period to provide or arrange care for a dependant. The amount of leave is based on the hours worked.

You may also be entitled to **financial support**, depending on your circumstances. This could include benefits for you or the person you care for, help with household costs, or a Council Tax discount, reduction, or exemption. It is worth checking with your local council to find out what help may be available.



Find out more about the day, organised by national charity Carers UK, at *www.carersuk.org/carers-rights-day*

Our groups

Our support groups are for adults who provide unpaid care to someone who depends on them. Held online and across Hertfordshire, they offer a friendly space to connect with other carers, share support, and learn about helpful services.



Online groups that meet on Zoom

Men's Group, on the third Tuesday of the month, 10.30am to 11.30am.

Evening Carers' Group, on the second Wednesday of the month, 7pm to 8pm.

Morning Carers' Group, on the second Friday of the month, 10.30am to 11.30am.

Reading Group, on the second Thursday of the month, 10.30am to 11.30am.

Groups that meet in community venues

A **Carers' Camera Club** for those interested in photography that meets the second Wednesday of the month, 10.30am to 12.30pm, usually in the Welwyn Hatfield area.

A **Pudding Club** meets in Bishop's Stortford, the third Monday of each month, 8pm to 9.30pm. Contact Tricia on 07935 277039 if you want to attend.

Hub group	Meeting details
Berkhamsted	Second Tuesday of the month, 11.15am – 12.45pm, at The Vyne Theatre, Northbridge Road, Berkhamsted, HP4 1EH.
Bishop's Stortford	First Wednesday of the month, 10.30am – 12.30pm, at Bishop's Stortford Baptist Church, Twyford Road, Bishop's Stortford, CM23 3LJ.
Borehamwood	First Wednesday of the month, 10.30am – 12.30pm, at Allum Manor House & Hall, 2 Allum Lane, Elstree, WD6 3PJ.
Buntingford	Last Tuesday of the month, 10.30am – 12.30pm, at The Manor House, High Street, Buntingford, SG9 9AB.
Chorleywood & Rickmansworth	Third Monday of the month 10.30am – 12.30pm, at Christ Church, The Common, Rickmansworth Road, Chorleywood, WD3 5SG.

Hub group	Meeting details
Harpenden	Third Thursday of the month, 11.30am – 1pm, at Harpenden Trust,130a Southdown Road, Harpenden, AL5 1PU.
Hemel Hempstead	Second Wednesday of the month, 10am – 11.45am, at The South Hill Centre, Cemetery Hill, Hemel Hempstead, HP1 1JF.
Hitchin	First Monday of the month, 1pm - 2.30pm at Christchurch, Bedford Road, Hitchin, Herts, SG5 1HF.
Hoddesdon	Last Friday of the month, 10.30am – 12.30pm, at Hoddesdon Baptist Church, Burford Street, Hoddesdon, EN11 8HX.
Letchworth	Third Wednesday of the month, 10.30am – 12.30pm, at Hertfordshire Football Association, The County Ground, Baldock Road, Letchworth, SG6 2EN.
Potters Bar	Last Wednesday of the month, 10.30am – 12.30pm, at King Charles The Martyr Church, 368 Mutton Lane, Potters Bar, EN6 3AS.
Royston	First Thursday of the month, 10.30am – 12.30pm, at Royston Town Hall (Heritage Hall), Melbourn Street, Royston, SG8 7DA.
St Albans	Third Tuesday of the month, 10.30am – 12.30pm, at St Paul's Church, Blandford Road, St Albans, AL1 4JP.
Stevenage	Last Thursday of the month, 10am - 12pm noon, at The Oval Community Centre, Vardon Road, Stevenage, SG1 5RD.
Ware	Third Friday of the month, 11.15am – 1pm, at Allenburys Sports & Social Club, Harris's Lane, Ware, SG12 0DJ.
Watford	Second Monday of the month, 10.30am – 12.30pm, at St Luke's Church, Langley Way, Watford, WD17 3EG.
Welwyn Garden City	Third Wednesday of the month, 12pm noon – 2pm, at United Reformed Church, Church Road, Welwyn Garden City, AL8 6PS.

If you want to attend any group, you need to book a place. We advise checking meeting details with us before attending as the arrangements can change. Keep updated about our meetings on the Meet Other Carers and Events pages on our website *www.carersinherts.org.uk* or call us on 01992 58 69 69.

Making time for you

When you are looking after someone else, finding time for yourself can be difficult. But taking a break does not always mean having hours away from your caring role. Sometimes, a few minutes can help you pause, reset, and recharge.

These small pauses, sometimes called microbreaks, can fit around everyday life, such as when boiling the kettle or while on hold during a phone call. It could be enjoying a cuppa, stepping outside, doing a hobby, or simply taking a few slow breaths.

Here, some carers and our Advisors share activities they enjoy or would recommend if you can only have a short break from your caring responsibilities. Even five, 15 or 30 minutes can make a difference.

Helen, who supports her husband since he had a stroke in 2024, said: “I find **going for a short walk** gives me a little break to clear my head. I come back feeling refreshed and better able to continue with the day.”

She added that you could even go for a walk with other people or the person you care for if they can manage it.

Mary, who cares for a relative with a neurological condition that affects their mobility and memory, also enjoys going for a walk with her dog.



Mary added: “I enjoy **crafts** such as **knitting and crochet**, and if I have longer, I make quilts. These activities help me to switch off, as my mind is focused on the activity.”

Mary also suggested **reading** or **listening to an audio book** and she **plays cards** with the person she looks after.

Find what works for you

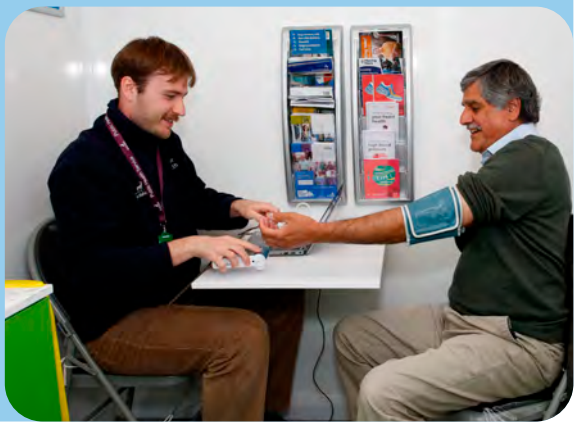
Everyone is different, so think about what helps you relax or lift your mood. Suggestions include:

- Resting in the sunshine or fresh air, listening to birdsong or simply enjoying your surroundings. You may also like to listen to music or practise mindfulness.
- Getting active by dancing to a favourite song or doing some gentle stretching, seated exercises or other sport. There are guided exercise videos online that you can watch anytime. We also run online activities such as chair yoga and barre ballet.
- Connecting with others by calling or messaging a friend or relative, or join a group.
- Learning something or keeping your brain active, for example you could do a quiz or puzzle, or watch a short tutorial.
- Doing a hobby or something creative. This could be building models, photography, writing, baking, colouring, or any other activity you enjoy.

Remember your own health too

Making time for yourself is an important part of self-care, and looking after your own health matters too. If you are worried about your physical health, try not to put off seeking help.

Jaswinder, who cares for an adult relative with various health conditions said:
"Make time for routine appointments, health checks and screenings when invited. Your GP can also support you with your wellbeing and may be able to connect you with other support through social prescribing."



To discuss your caring role, including having a break, you can contact our Advisors - our contact details are on the back page.

Young Carers

This summer was packed with opportunities for young carers from across Hertfordshire to get active, creative and adventurous. From skiing and kayaking to model making with LEGO, cookery and mindfulness, there was something for a range of interests. There was also lawn bowls, music, online illustration and a Health and Wellbeing Day.

Families joined in our Growing Together Family Activity Day in July. Painting and planting flowerpots, making nature collages, outdoor games and mindful activities, gave families the chance to have fun, spend relaxed time together and make happy memories.

Kay, cares for her autistic son with some support from her daughter Harley, who is a young carer. After attending our Family Day with Harley, Kay said: “Being a young carer can be challenging, but the support from Carers in Hertfordshire has been wonderful. It’s helped Harley realise she isn’t alone. The activities give her time for herself, to have fun and express herself.”

Nicky and Rosie, our Youth Voice & Activities Coordinators, *pictured with a young carer*, have been busy getting to know young carers and their families.

Nicky and Rosie said: “It has been lovely getting to know young carers and their families and seeing them enjoy the experiences.

Activities provide a great way for young carers to try new things or develop their skills, have fun and connect with others. They also give us valuable opportunities to listen.”



Young carers' comments

"I enjoyed kayaking because it was fun and I got to spend time with other young carers. I also like being part of the Young Carers' Council because I can share my ideas and have a say in things that are important to us." Emilia, 13.





"The skiing sessions were great, it's always exciting learning new things. Everyone was really friendly and made me feel comfortable." Luca, 13.

Young carers helping to shape what comes next

Alongside activities, an important part of our Young Carers Service is creating opportunities for young people to have their say and help shape support.

Our **Young Carers' Council** continues to bring young people with a caring role together to share their experiences, views and ideas.

This summer, members began helping us think about one of our biggest events of the year, the **Young Carers' Conference**, which we are planning to hold again in 2027.

The young carers will help decide on the themes, activities, and experiences on offer. There will be more opportunities for young carers to share their views and help shape the conference and future activities.

We are also planning more Family Activity Days and a variety of events for young carers and young adult carers.

Watch out for our communications and updates to learn more.

Spotlight on ... Lasting Powers of Attorney

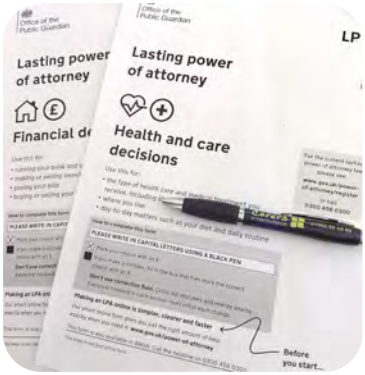
Many of us put off thinking about what would happen if we could no longer make certain decisions ourselves. A Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) can provide reassurance by allowing one or more adults you trust to help make decisions for you related to your health, wellbeing, finances, and property, if you cannot do so. They must act in your best interests and follow your instructions and preferences, as recorded in the LPA document.

What is a Lasting Power of Attorney?

An LPA is a legal document that lets you appoint one or more people, known as attorneys, to make decisions on your behalf. You must have the required mental capacity to make an LPA, and the person or people you appoint must agree to be appointed.

There are two types of LPA:

- One for property and financial affairs, which covers matters such as bills, bank accounts, benefits, investments, and property.
- One for health and welfare that covers decisions about areas such as care, medical treatment and where you live.



You can make either or both.

When can an attorney start making decisions?

A property and financial affairs LPA can be used once it is registered, if the LPA allows this and the person who made it gives permission. A health and welfare attorney can only make a decision when the person can no longer make that particular decision themselves.

What if I have an old Enduring Power of Attorney?

Before LPAs, an Enduring Power of Attorney (EPA) covered property and financial matters. An EPA made and signed before 1st October 2007, may still be valid. It cannot be changed, but you can replace it with the property and finance LPA, or complete both LPAs.

How do I make an LPA?

If you're an adult, you can make one yourself online or using paper forms, or pay for legal advice. You need to be able to print the form, so that relevant people can sign it.

It currently costs £92 to register each LPA, although you may be exempt or able to get a discount, depending on your income or if you receive certain benefits.

It can take up to 10 to 15 weeks to register an LPA, and don't forget to review it every few years or after major life events.

You must also notify the Office of the Public Guardian if an attorney or the person who made the LPA changes their name, address or dies.

You must also notify a change in attorney or if you wish to stop being someone's attorney.



What if someone lacks mental capacity and has no LPA?

Nobody has an automatic legal right to manage their financial or welfare affairs. Medical staff and care professionals make choices under a "best interests" framework.

A relative, friend or someone close to the person, must apply to the Court of Protection to become their Deputy. This can be an expensive, complicated and time-consuming process.

Where can I find out more?

Visit *www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney* or call the Office of the Public Guardian on 0300 456 0300.

Sometimes legal experts visit our carers' groups or deliver workshops on LPAs, giving you an opportunity to learn more and ask questions. Details will be on our website at *www.carersinherts.org.uk/events* or contact us.

Carers' Lasting Power of Attorney experiences

For two carers, Robert and Ian, putting Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPAs) in place has brought reassurance. Their experiences show the value of planning ahead, as they have seen how important an LPA can be when someone they care for has needed decisions made on their behalf.

Robert cares for his wife, who was diagnosed with dementia in January 2025. They made LPAs in 2024. Ian, who has cared for different family members, also registered his LPAs in 2024.

Their experience and advice about making an LPA

Robert said: "My wife and I looked at using a solicitor to complete the LPA, but the cost was high, so we completed the forms ourselves. We paid for a legal professional to check them before they were registered, thanks to an offer I found. I also attended a Carers in Hertfordshire talk about LPAs, which was useful."

Ian said: "I was nervous about the task, even though I had experience of legal work, as everything needs to be accurate. I took my time, worked through the information provided and completed them."

Tips when making a Lasting Power of Attorney



- Think carefully about who you appoint as your attorney. Will they be comfortable making decisions? If you have more than one attorney, will they work well together?
- Discuss your wishes with your family and attorneys, and make sure they know where to find important information, including details of bank accounts, insurance policies, and other bills.

Acting as someone's attorney

Robert said: "The financial LPA became particularly important when I needed to manage my wife's finances. We had separate bank accounts, but the LPA made it easier to deal with the banks and manage her money."

Ian said: "My wife was an attorney for her late mum. She managed her money, including payments for her supported housing, and kept statements and receipts. The experience made us realise the importance of having plans in place."

Have your say update

Our Engagement Team works to ensure carers' voices are heard and acted on by health and social care services in Hertfordshire when they are developing or reviewing services. This input shapes improved services that better meet the needs of carers and the people they look after.

The team have been busy with various reviews and events, such as:

- Holding workshops to gather feedback from carers about their experiences during the first year after a dementia diagnosis. Common issues experienced include navigating information and services, and knowing where to go for help.
- Supporting carers to have their say on Hertfordshire's new Carers' Strategy for 2026 to 2028.
- Running Everything Technology Workshops - details below.

Helping carers with technology

Following a successful Everything Technology Event in Ware in May 2026, we plan to bring this drop-in event to more Hertfordshire venues.

The event aims to help carers discover ways technology can make caring easier. Experts share advice on assistive technology, emergency alarms, NHS apps, online safety and scam awareness.

At the May event, carers could try out equipment and get help with their phones or other devices.

Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service shared home fire safety tips. Representatives from Hertfordshire Police, Herts Careline, Community Alliance's Digital Helpdesk, and other organisations were on hand to answer questions.



Austin, from North Herts, who supports a relative with dementia, said: "I wasn't sure what to expect, but I'm glad I went. I came away with some useful information about support and equipment that could help in the future. I even arranged for the Fire Service to replace some old smoke alarms with new smoke and carbon monoxide detectors."

We are planning an event in January 2027. We will share details in our communications, on our website and social media channels.

Hertfordshire County Council

As outlined on page 9, the Government is reviewing Local Government Reorganisation decisions. This includes proposals for four unitary authorities in Hertfordshire. As part of this announcement, they have confirmed that the elections to the shadow authorities will not take place in May 2027. Local authorities will continue with their usual cycle of local elections for 2027.

In response, the 11 councils in Hertfordshire affected by the proposals will continue to work collaboratively and engage constructively with ministers and officials throughout the review.

In Adult Care Services, the focus remains on delivering high-quality services and ensuring people receive the care and support they need.

In addition, the Council says it won't lose some of the benefits already seen from working collaboratively with district and borough colleagues. It also wants to maintain the stronger relationships with residents, carers, voluntary organisations and community groups.

Whatever the outcome of the Government review, the Council says it will continue to work in the best interests of Hertfordshire. It will provide further information as it becomes available. For updates visit *www.hertfordshire-lgr.co.uk*

Have you got a Carers in case of Emergency Plan?

If you support someone aged 18 or over living in Hertfordshire, you can complete a simple form that tells Adult Care Services at Hertfordshire County Council what support the adult you care for needs.



If you suddenly fall ill or are unavailable, Adult Care Services will have all the information needed to quickly step in and arrange care.

You can learn more and complete an In Case of Emergency Plan at *www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/carers* or by calling 0300 123 4042.

Call to return loaned equipment so it can help others

Hertfordshire Equipment Service (HES), funded by Hertfordshire County Council and the NHS, provides free daily living equipment on loan to help residents stay safe, manage everyday tasks and remain independent at home.



Recycling and reusing equipment

Sustainability is at the heart of HES. A wide variety of equipment is provided on loan for as long as it is needed by the person it has been prescribed for.

When the equipment is no longer required, returning it allows it to be cleaned, serviced and, wherever possible, reused by another Hertfordshire resident.

Each year, HES:

Sanitises and recommissions **more than 45,000** pieces of equipment.	Recycles and reuses **90%** of returned items.	Saves **£11 million** through reuse.

How carers can help

If equipment is no longer needed by the person it was prescribed for, check for a HES label and arrange for collection.

Please do not throw unwanted items away, even if they appear damaged or are no longer working. HES can collect them and assess whether they can be repaired, reused or recycled responsibly.

Support with equipment

HES technicians deliver, install, maintain and collect equipment across Hertfordshire.

An out-of-hours emergency repair service is also available seven days a week for urgent problems with essential equipment.

Find out more or arrange a collection

Email hesenquiries@hertfordshire.gov.uk or call HES on 01707 292555.

Web link: Equipment at home | Hertfordshire County Council

Volunteer update

We couldn't provide the range of support we do without our wonderful volunteers. By sharing their time, skills and compassion, they help us reach and support unpaid carers in Hertfordshire in many ways.

We are always ready to welcome people to volunteer with us. If you have some time available to help us, please get in touch.

Alternatively, you can attend one of our volunteer recruitment events to meet the team and learn about our volunteer roles. There is an online event on Tuesday 8th December 2026,11am to 12pm noon. More dates will be shared on our website, social media pages and our communications with you.

Various ways to get involved – our roles

Ambassadors: Assist in raising awareness of Carers in Hertfordshire by representing the charity at community events and sharing information about our services.

Bereavement support: Help people whose caring role has ended through bereavement by making telephone calls that offer understanding and a listening ear.

Hub Leaders and Helpers: Support the smooth running of our monthly carers' groups. Leaders plan meetings, record attendance and welcome carers and speakers. Helpers assist with refreshments, setting up and tidying away.

Keep in Touch Callers: Make calls to carers to check on their wellbeing and remind them of services available. It's a home-based role that can be done during the day Monday to Friday or Tuesday or Wednesday evenings.

We offer training and ongoing support. Many roles can fit around existing work, family or caring commitments.

Volunteer feedback about the benefits of volunteering with us

Flexibility
Health boost
Good use of time
Using or developing skills
Friendly team
Satisfaction or Fulfilment
Belonging
Motivation
Connection with people

Why volunteer with us – what our volunteers say!



"I found Carers in Hertfordshire while searching for a volunteer role closer to home, and I'm glad I discovered the charity. Everyone is so friendly and supportive, and volunteering each week gives me the chance to be part of a great team and make a difference in my community.

I have been making wellbeing phone calls to volunteers and this has been a rewarding experience. Volunteering gives me a sense of purpose." Tanya, who has been an admin volunteer since March 2026.

"I currently work part-time as a hospital consultant and have volunteered as a mentor since February 2020. I have supported five carers since then. This has been a rewarding experience for me – being able to use my experience as a parent and carer to help others.

The training and support for the role is great, and there is no pressure to mentor continually – in fact I've recently had a break from the role." Tim.

54 of our **129** volunteers replied to our 2026 Volunteers Survey. **100%** would recommend volunteering at Carers in Hertfordshire.

57% said they were more confident due to volunteering.

49% said volunteering boosted their health.

Interested in volunteering?
Visit the volunteer pages on our website
www.carersinherts.org.uk/help-us-help-carers/volunteer
or contact our Volunteer Team.
Email: volunteer@carersinherts.org.uk or call 01992 58 69 69.

Fundraising

It was a busy spring and summer for fundraising, raising awareness and getting out and about in our community. From golf days to events such as Hertford Family Pride Day, Potters Bar Carnival and fetes, we welcomed the support we received. Some of the highlights are pictured.







Thank You

As part of our 30th anniversary celebrations, from September 2025 to September 2026, we reached out to businesses, organisations and community groups, to see if they would do some fundraising for us. We'd like to say thank you to everyone who got involved. Your generosity and community spirit have helped boost funds for our work supporting current and former unpaid carers in Hertfordshire.

Here are some of the wonderful people and organisations who have helped us.

North Herts Ladies Choir, who held a concert in **Letchworth**.

Oakview Lodge Care & Nursing Home, in **Welwyn Garden City**, for inviting us to be part of their summer fete.

Two **Subway** stores in **Watford**, **The George of Harpenden** pub in **Harpenden**, and **Ware Football Club**, for displaying our donation tins.

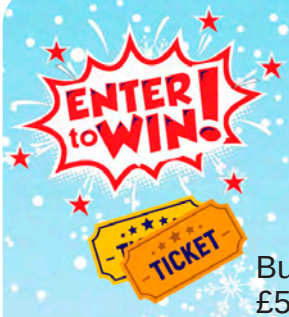
Skipton Building Society in **St Albans**, for selecting us to benefit from their Community Giving Scheme.

Strutt & Parker Estate Agents and **Harpenden Books**, in **Harpenden**, for donating raffle prizes.

Waitrose stores in **Rickmansworth** and **Welwyn Garden City**, for choosing us to benefit from their Community Matters Scheme.

There are many ways you could help us this festive season from taking part in our raffle, making a donation, or using our **gift wrapping service** at the **Harlequin Shopping Centre, Watford**, on **Thursday 17th December 2026, 9.30am to 6.30pm**.

Details of other fundraising activities will be shared on our website, social media pages, and in our communications.



Festive Raffle 2026

£1 per ticket

Prizes include Amazon and One4all gift cards.

Draw on 10th December 2026

Buy online at *www.carersinherts.org.uk/shop*
£5 minimum order. Winners drawn at random.
Must be 18+ to buy a ticket.
Terms and conditions are on our website.
We're committed to responsible gambling and comply with the Gambling Act 2005.

Help unpaid carers with a donation that's doubled

Donations made in December 2026, through our Standing Together for Unpaid Carers campaign on the Big Give platform, will be doubled at no extra cost to you.



We want to raise £2,000 for our volunteer-led services, including mentoring and carers' groups.

To donate use the link at *www.carersinherts.org.uk/big-give*

Only for donations between 12pm noon on 1st December and 8th December 2026.

Christmas Challenge BigGive

Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

Please note some donations may include a transaction fee - details at *www.carersinherts.org.uk/fees* or contact the fundraising team. Email fundraising@carersinherts.org.uk or call 01992 58 69 69.

Health services support

Have you told your GP practice "I am a carer"?

If you care for someone with an illness, disability or other care need, make sure your GP practice and other healthcare providers know you are a carer. Identifying yourself helps them understand your circumstances and connect you with relevant support. It also ensures you are given access to health checks, vaccinations and other services available to unpaid carers.

Whenever you attend an appointment don't be afraid to say: "I am a carer."

Most GP practices in Hertfordshire have a Carer Champion who help identify carers and refers them to Carers in Hertfordshire, with permission.

Sheila Fox, our Health Liaison Officer, said: "You may assume your surgery knows about your caring role, but that's not always the case. Telling them you are a carer, can help ensure you receive the support available to you."

Sheila added: "Thank you to Hertfordshire's healthcare professionals for your work identifying and supporting carers. Through my recent visits to GP practices and events, it has been encouraging to see the commitment to carers across local services. I look forward to sharing practical tips and helping practices build on this work."

Want to help protect yourself or someone you care for against flu or COVID-19 this winter?

Consider having a free NHS seasonal vaccination if you're eligible. Unpaid carers, this should include you for the flu vaccination!



You can check what is available to you at *www.nhs.uk/seasonalvaccinations* or speak to your GP surgery or local pharmacy.

Useful Contacts

Age UK Hertfordshire
01707 323272 / 0300 345 3446
www.ageuk.org.uk/hertfordshire
Advice, info and practical support for older people and carers.

Citizens Advice
0800 144 8848
www.citizensadvice.org.uk or *https://hertscitizensadvice.org.uk/* if you are in Hertfordshire.
Provides confidential information and advice to assist people in the UK with legal, debt, consumer, housing and other problems.

HertsHelp
0300 123 4044
www.hertshelp.net
A service to help you find the right support or group near you.

Hertfordshire Mind
020 3727 3600
www.hertfordshiremind.org
Provides mental health and wellbeing support to Hertfordshire residents aged five and above.

Memory Support Hertfordshire
0300 131 3946
www.memorysupportherts.org.uk
Offers a range of support for people with memory problems or dementia in Hertfordshire, including family carers.

The Samaritans
Freephone number 116 123
www.samaritans.org
Provides confidential 24/7 emotional support.

Our Advisors have details of more organisations, so please get in touch for help.

New Direct Payments Support Service in Hertfordshire

People in Hertfordshire who receive Direct Payments, or want to know more about them, can access support through a new service. It is called DP Connect and is provided by Hertfordshire Care Providers Association.

Direct Payments are council-funded payments that allow eligible people to arrange and manage their own care and support. This gives them an alternative to having services provided by the council.

DP Connect offers information and guidance to people receiving Direct Payments, and their relatives and family carers. You could get help with matters such as finding and employing a Personal Assistant and understanding how to use Direct Payments.

Learn more at *www.dpconnect.org.uk* or email connect@hcpa.co.uk or call 01707 937520. Carers UK also has information at *www.carersuk.org/direct-payments*

Free courses and workshops

Our courses, workshops and events are for unpaid carers registered with us. Some take place online, usually on Zoom, and others in community venues around Hertfordshire. Listed is a selection of upcoming sessions.

For details of all our upcoming workshops and events, visit *www.carersinherts.org.uk/events* or call us.

Online activities

Winter Wind Down Meditation on Thursday 17th December 2026, 10am to 10.30am. Take time for yourself with a gentle online meditation session focused on relaxation, mindfulness, and wellbeing.

Festive Quiz Night on Tuesday 22nd December 2026, 7pm to 8.30pm. Test your knowledge in this fun quiz.

Guided meditation on Tuesday 29th December 2026, 11.30am to 12.30pm, and Thursday 7th January 2027, 7pm to 8pm. A deeply relaxing meditation designed to help relieve stress.

Around Hertfordshire



Cooking Together Workshops in **Knebworth**, **Royston** and **Welwyn Garden City**.

Learn to cook simple, tasty, budget-friendly recipes in a friendly and relaxed group setting.

We hold sessions monthly, usually 10.30am to 12pm noon. Please only book one session per month in your chosen area.

Annette from St Albans, who cares for an adult relative with several health conditions, said: “I enjoy cooking with other people. I have attended a few of your workshops, including face yoga and mindfulness. They give me time to focus on myself and my wellbeing.”

More events around Hertfordshire

Looking after your Emotional Wellbeing Course

The course is run over three sessions. It includes strategies to manage stress, build resilience, improve communication skills and strengthen relationships.

By April 2027, it will have been held in all 10 Hertfordshire district council areas and then more sessions will be planned. The last three areas are:

North Herts: Tuesdays 10th to 24th November 2026, 10.30am to 1pm, at the North Herts Museum, Brand Street, **Hitchin**, SG5 1JE.

Broxbourne: Wednesdays 13th to 27th of January 2027, 10.30am to 1pm, at Bishop's College, Churchgate, **Cheshunt**, EN8 9XH.

Watford: Wednesdays 24th February to 10th March 2027, 10.30am to 1pm, at Holywell Community Centre, Chaffinch Lane, **Watford**, WD18 9QD.

Drop-in Information Event on Tuesday 24th November 2026, 10am to 1pm, at the Stanborough Conference Centre, 609 St Albans Road, **Watford**, WD25 9JL.

Local health, social care and community organisations will be there to provide unpaid carers with information, advice and support.



Flower Fusion Art Workshop

Join artist Hazel Russell for a fun workshop with other carers to create a collaborative flower painting. You will get to take home a unique piece of the finished artwork.

Monday 18th January 2027, 10.30am to 12.30pm, at Bishop's Stortford Baptist Church, Twyford Road, **Bishop's Stortford**, CM23 3LJ.

Tuesday 9th February 2027, 10.30am to 12.30pm, at Holywell Community Centre, Chaffinch Lane, **Watford**, WD18 9QD.

To book a place on any of our courses visit the events section of our website *www.carersinherts.org.uk/events* or contact us by emailing learning@carersinherts.org.uk or calling 01992 58 69 69.

Making Carers Count

About Us

Carers in Hertfordshire is a countywide charity for unpaid carers looking after a partner, relative, friend or neighbour, due to physical or mental illness, disability, addiction, or other care need.

We support all carers - children and adults - living, working or caring in Hertfordshire, and bereaved carers for three years after the death of the person they cared for.

Carers do not have to live with the person they are looking after to receive help and advice.

We are an independent charity, and we receive funding from Hertfordshire County Council and the NHS in Hertfordshire, in order to provide support for carers.

For more information about our services or how you can support our work, see the contact details below.

Join the online conversation!

Find us on Facebook ***www.facebook.com/carersinherts***

X **@CarersinHerts** Instagram **@carersinhertfordshire**

LinkedIn ***www.linkedin.com/company/carers-in-hertfordshire*** and our Carers in Hertfordshire YouTube Channel ***www.youtube.com/@carersinhertfordshire***

To contact Carers in Hertfordshire

Write to: Carers in Hertfordshire, The Red House, 119 Fore Street, Hertford, Herts, SG14 1AX.
Call: 01992 58 69 69.
Email: contact@carersinherts.org.uk
Visit: *www.carersinherts.org.uk*

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Our standards and partnerships:

Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

A Network Partner of CARERS TRUST

Supported by:

NHS Central East Integrated Care Board

Hertfordshire