

2014
2015

Annual Report



CHAIR'S REPORT

KEY FACTS:

Carers Clinics are now based in 17 GP surgeries across East Lancashire

We now support over 7333 adult carers and 79 young carers in five boroughs

During the last year Carers Link Lancashire has evolved from Carers Link Hyndburn and Ribble Valley to also provide services for carers in Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale. The number of adult carers now registered is 7333 with 1727 new referrals being received during the year. Our services to young carers have also increased with 67 actively engaging out of the 79 now registered with us.

A successful re-tender with Lancashire County Council and East Lancashire CCG has enabled the contract to be extended to March 2016.

Carers Link Lancashire is commissioned by Lancashire County Council to undertake Carers Assessments, with 357 being carried out during the year. In addition 743 Peace of Mind for Carers plans were written which provide a contingency plan for carers in the event of an emergency. A further 613 plans were reviewed as part of the annual update.

The Sitting in Service has further developed and now has 18 regular volunteers to enable carers to take a short break from their often demanding caring role. The number of hours provided by this service for carers was 1073.9 hours during the year.

Carers Link Lancashire's presence in hospitals, which is supported by East Lancashire CCG and Blackburn with Darwen CCG, continues to help identify and support carers of patients in hospital and support them through the discharge pathway. This service is provided at Royal Blackburn Hospital with future plans to expand into Burnley General Hospital and the three community hospitals in East Lancashire.

Carers Clinics now take place in 17 GP surgeries throughout the boroughs, focusing on identifying hidden carers. These are proving very successful in providing easier access for carers to speak with Carers Link Lancashire staff and receive tailored support.

The LGBT (Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Trans) Project obtained further funding and continues to raise awareness, within generic and health settings, of LGBT carer issues and identified hidden carers who now receive support.

Groups supported by Carers Link Lancashire such as the Carers Chorus, both Creative Carers groups and Hyndburn Carers have benefited from small groups funding this year enabling them to become self-sustaining and independently run by the carers themselves.

The voice of the carer is extremely important to Carers Link Lancashire and our 'Carers4Carers Groups, which meet monthly, have increased in membership with carers sharing their ideas for service development and fundraising. These include organising fundraising events, speaking to external businesses to raise awareness and some members have also assisted with recruitment.

BBC Children in Need funding has enabled extended support for young carers until October 31st 2015. Young carers information and awareness raising primarily takes place in schools. Support groups and activities are provided for young carers to have a break from their caring roles. 'The Strategists' young carers group is equally important in sharing their ideas for service development.



Fundraising events which have taken place during the year and were either organised by the Carers4Carers Groups or were they assisted us with them were:

- Britain's Best Breakfast
- Christmas Fair
- Accy Rockers Music Event.

We are extremely grateful to all our funders for their continued support especially at a time when resources are under pressure.

Both young and adult carers are involved in staff selection and recruitment processes to ensure that staff understand issues from the carers perspective. During the year partnership working has further developed with our Carers Trust Network partners; Carers Trust Fylde Coast and Blackburn with Darwen

Carers Service. In addition we are grateful to our longstanding partners Ribble Valley Borough Council, Hyndburn Borough Council, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Council for Voluntary Service, East Lancs Clinical Commissioning Group, Lancashire County Council, and also Burnley Pendle and Rossendale Council for Voluntary Service. Partnership working will continue to be integral to our work to ensure that carers receive the best possible support without unnecessary duplication.

Finally I would like to thank all our carers, Trustees, staff, volunteers, funders and partners for the invaluable role they all play contributing to our ongoing work.

Anne McCarthy

Carers Link Lancashire's purpose is to support unpaid carers to maintain their own health and wellbeing so that they can continue in their caring role for as long as possible.

This will be achieved through the provision of a quality person centred health and social holistic approach through collaborative partnerships, empowerment, innovation and representation across East Lancashire.

Our mission is to make a positive difference to the lives of carers.

We do this by:

- Providing quality, person centred services
- Forming and maintaining collaborative partnerships across the statutory, voluntary, community, faith, education and private sectors
- Identifying hidden carers and offering them up-to-date and accurate information and direction
- Ensuring that individual carers needs are assessed and that their collective needs are recognised
- Ensuring that carers have access to individual support, training, counselling, advocacy and breaks from their caring role.

The Values that we will observe to guide us to achieve our vision are:

- Respect for the people we serve and work with
- To act with integrity
- To be non-judgmental
- To develop and maintain collaborative partnerships.



CEO REPORT

KEY FACTS:

1727 new adult carers identified

2208 1:1 sessions provided tailored support to a carers individual needs

"The future lies before you, like paths of pure white snow. Be careful how you tread it, for every step will show."

Author unknown



Welcome to the first report on the activities of Carers Link Lancashire! On 1st April 2014, all the assets and liabilities of Carers Link Hyndburn and Ribble Valley transferred to the new charitable company, Carers Link Lancashire. This followed a resolution at the Annual General Meeting to become a Company Limited by Guarantee.

Carers Link may have changed its name slightly, but our focus on carers and young carers, meeting their needs and delivering a high quality service remains as committed and dedicated as it was when the organisation first began in 2001. We now serve carers across East Lancashire and in April we welcomed a number of staff who transferred from Carers Contact at BPRCVS.

Young Carers have enjoyed an active and busy year, with relationships with schools developing and new young carers being identified all the time. The continued funding from BBC Children in Need has made all of this possible. Funding from Carers Trust through their Time to Find Me grant, enabled a group to attend a residential event to explore their aspirations for the future. The resulting artwork can be seen in the offices at Melbourne House.

The activities undertaken by the young carers throughout the year have focused on improving health and wellbeing. This was funded from the Carers Small Grant Funds, provided by East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group (ELCCG) and administered by Lancashire County Council (LCC). Growing, cooking and eating food, lighting and using fires to cook, first aid, bush-craft skills have been just some of the activities provided to improve wellbeing, increase self confidence and learn new things.

The same grant scheme enabled us to fund a new service to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) carers, with much of the focus being on training other professionals on the specific needs these carers face. Overall the service to adult carers has continued to grow with over 1700 new carers identified over the year. We continued to receive funding from ELCCG and LCC to provide much of the adult service, and were awarded the contract to continue to deliver the service for the coming year.

Other funders have contributed much to the success of Carers Link Lancashire and the benefits experienced by carers, including The Henry Smith Charity which has generously funded us for four years, and Ribble Valley Borough Council. We are grateful to all our funders for their continued support.

I would also like to say a huge thank you to the volunteers who contribute so much to our service. Whether acting as a Trustee overseeing the running of the organisation, providing free complementary therapy sessions, participating in the Sitting in Service, assisting with admin duties or working with our young carers, our service would be much poorer without you. Thank you!

We look forward to the coming year knowing that the demands on our resources, skills and abilities will become greater and greater. However, we have a determination that Carers Link Lancashire will meet those challenges, always keeping carers at the heart of all we do.

Liz Hamilton

TREASURER'S REPORT

Following the move of staff to Melbourne House and the incorporation of services subcontracted to Carers Contact into Carers Link Lancashire, the main priority has been seeking efficiencies in order to be able to secure the next contract with Lancashire County Council.

One of the efficiencies was to close the office in Burnley which housed the transferred Carers Contact staff and incorporate them into the headquarters office. Additionally there has been some restructuring of the organisation to harmonise terms and conditions for all members of staff. This has led to some one-off expenditure but the on-going savings, along with different methods of delivering services to carers, have contributed to the successful re-tender.

This has all taken place alongside the continuing tasks of seeking new and ongoing sources of funding, as well as monitoring the budgets of current projects. During the financial year 2014/2015 the expenditure was £886,236 compared to total funding received of £1,203,654.

The organisation's investment policy continues to be reviewed, funds are being placed with several financial institutions in order to mitigate against possible bank collapses, and advice is sought from our investment advisor as to minimising the risks of our portfolio. It has now been established which funds are restricted and which can be used for general purposes. Free reserves (i.e. unrestricted general funds) represent 3.6 months of operating expenses and exceed Carers Link Lancashire's reserves policy of free reserves not being less than three months of the projected expenditure for the following year.

A large proportion of our funding comes from public sources, Lancashire County Council and East Lancashire CCG. Due to the government's continuing cuts in public expenditure we also seek other sources of income, both from alternative funders and other public sector bodies.

We have secured funding from the Lancashire County Council Small Grants Fund for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Trans work along with developing Young Carers wellbeing; and NHS East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group. Continuing sources of income include BBC Children in Need, The Henry Smith Charity and Ribble Valley Borough Council.

We are grateful to all current and former funders large and small and for all those who support our organisation.

Brian Birtle



Donations have increased by 225% in this financial year

KEY FACTS:

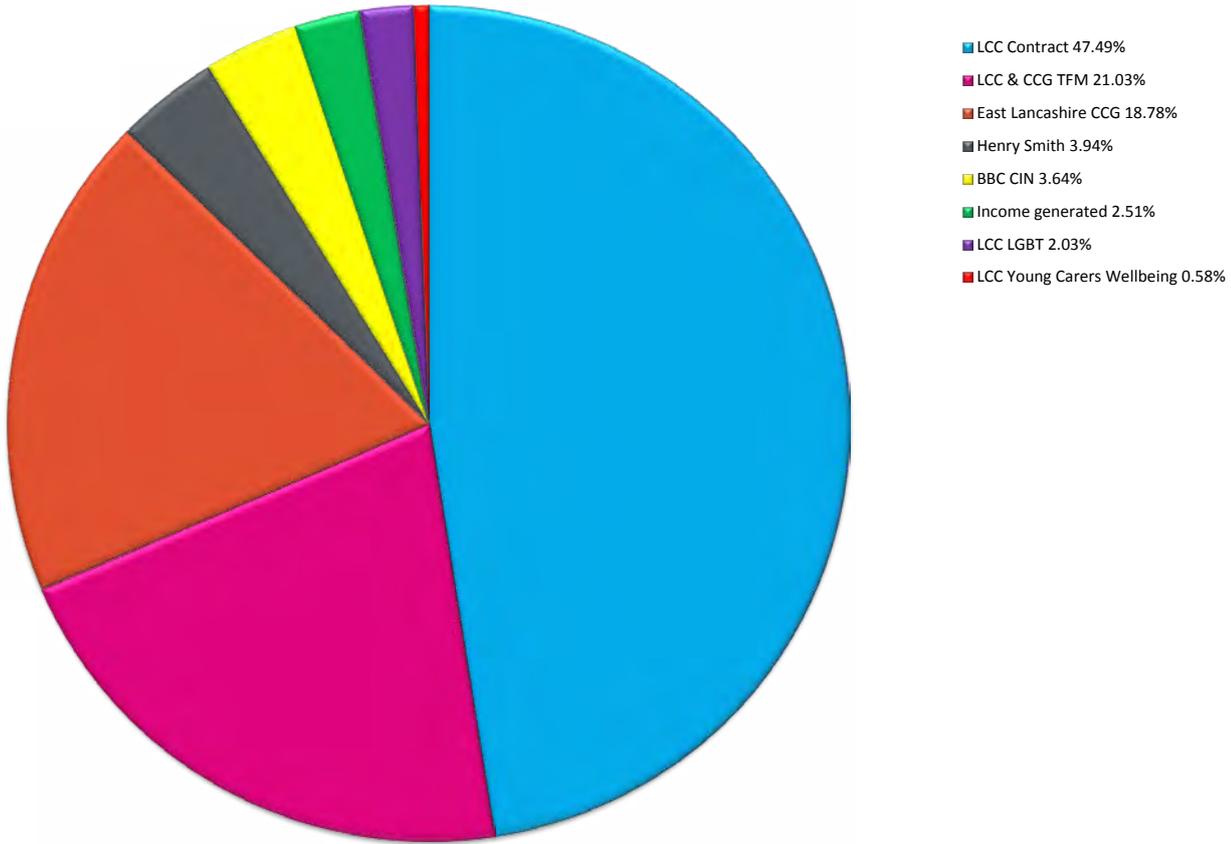
Carers Link Lancashire continues to diversify its income streams with fundraising activities, often organised by the two Carer Involvement Groups

Reserves have increased by 10% to ensure a greater financial stability

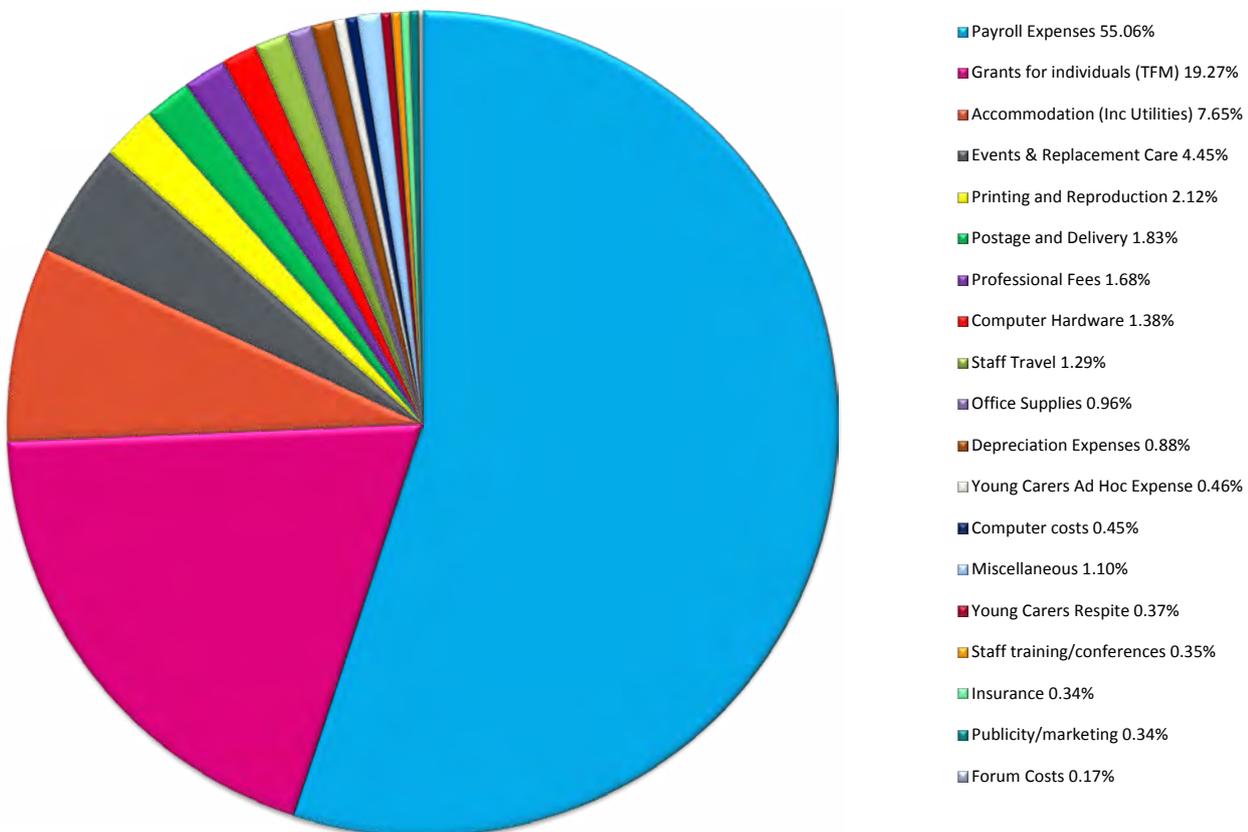


STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

INCOME



EXPENDITURE



The financial information set out above does not constitute the charity's statutory accounts and may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of its financial affairs. The information has been extracted from the full accounts for the year ending 31st March 2015 which can be obtained from the Finance Manager at the registered office. The audited report on the accounts was unqualified. In our opinion the financial summary is consistent with the full accounts of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2015. Slade and Cooper Ltd Registered Auditors Green Fish Resource Centre, 45-50 Oldham Street, Manchester M4 1IE

ADULT CARERS PROJECT

Identification of 'hidden carers' within health and community settings

Over the last year work has progressed with the East Lancashire Healthcare Trust. We have focussed on 15 wards where the most likely cared for patients are, speaking to staff about the services of Carers Link Lancashire and developing referral protocols. We have also engaged with the Complex Case Management Team covering all acute sites and have in place referral protocols linked to complex discharges.

- We now offer outreach on a weekly basis at the Royal Blackburn Hospital, working in partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support, utilising their information pod which offers a high profile location within the hospital entrance.
- Carer Awareness Training has developed in order to reach the wider professional groups both across Primary and Acute services. Specific groups have been targeted such as Occupational Health Staff with a view to providing an accessible service for staff.
- We have developed relationships with key senior staff with responsibility for patient experience, quality and training and development.
- We have been involved in key events such as the vascular awareness day at RBH and during Carers Week had a presence at four acute sites including Community Hospitals.
- We continue to deliver carer awareness training and update across all GP practices and have especially targeted community nursing, integrated therapy and rehabilitation teams.

Dementia

- We continue to deliver Understanding Dementia courses to carers who are supporting friends or family living with dementia.
- Carers Link Lancashire have agreed a referral pathway with the Memory Assessment Unit to ensure the carers supporting people living with dementia are aware of the services available to them.
- We have been working closely with the Rossendale Dementia and Ribble Valley Dementia projects to raise awareness of the schemes in these specific boroughs.

Neighbourhood Carer Clinics and Outreach

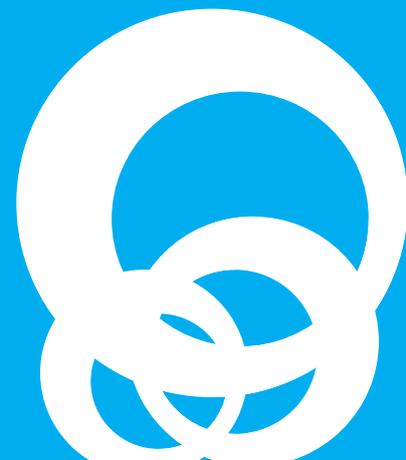
- The way carer support is being delivered within the community has changed, which means we are now able to offer appointments for carers within the local INT's (Integrated Neighbourhood Teams). This way of working means that carers can access support within the local community as well as in the carer's own home.
- Carers Link Lancashire are delivering information and support sessions twice a month in Nelson Job Centre Plus, identifying hidden carers and offering them support from our service.
- The services that we offer carers is continually evolving, the biggest change within the last couple of years has been the ability of carers services now being able to undertake Carers Assessments directly, rather than through Social Services.
- We continue to deliver Carer Awareness training to local community groups and organisations as well as working closely with our partner organisations to ensure that we continue identifying hidden carers within our community.

Audra Higgin & Carol Pollard, Senior Carers Development Workers

KEY FACTS:

63 Carer Awareness Training sessions were delivered with 688 professionals attending

Carers save the UK economy £119 billion each year, which is more than the annual budget for the NHS



CASE STUDY

Jennifer (*pseudonym*) has been volunteering with Carers Link Lancashire for eight months and it has made a positive improvement to her life, especially her health and wellbeing.

She was interviewed last November and she appeared very negative, timid and unconfident. I asked her the reason why she wanted to volunteer and she said

'I've had a difficult personal life where I was in an abusive relationship for many years. Things have changed and I now want to give something back to the community and to be able to help others whilst building on my confidence.'

She was very reluctant to volunteer at first and didn't believe in herself and thought her past would affect her volunteering. She wrote a letter wanting to withdraw from her volunteer application.

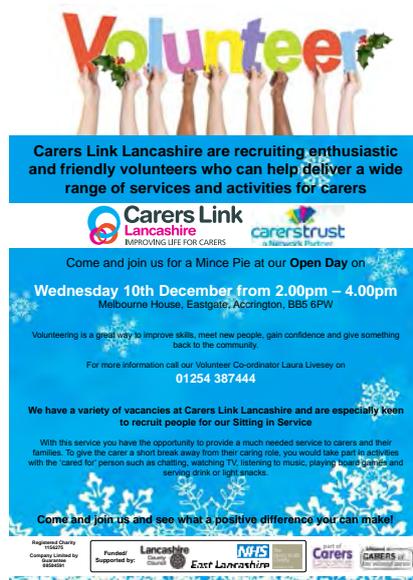
'After leaving an abusive relationship that I was in for many years, I had a complete breakdown, in fact I kept trying to commit suicide and spent a month in Burnley General for a complete rest. Now you know my life story, please do me a favour and rip up my application and accept my apologies for applying in the first place.'

After receiving the letter we contacted her and encouraged her to become a volunteer and through much support, training, other volunteer encouragement and social activities there has been such a positive development with her self-belief and confidence. The volunteer now sits for two families, supports the group sessions and regularly attends our Volunteer socials, where she has made good friends with other volunteers.

This is what she spoke about in her recent supervision:

'I am very grateful for my opportunity as it has made a big difference to me. I've always had rejection in my life and giving a little something to someone means that you get so much back. It has given me extra confidence. It has taught me to be very caring and looking after someone else has given me such an enjoyment. My relationship with one family in particular is very unique, I've become very close to them and they have welcomed me into their home and have respected me as an individual. I've also met some friends who are volunteers through Carers Link and I do enjoy the social aspect which has helped with my confidence.'

Laura Livesey, Volunteer Co-ordinator



Carers Link Lancashire are recruiting enthusiastic and friendly volunteers who can help deliver a wide range of services and activities for carers

Carers Link Lancashire
IMPROVING LIFE FOR CARERS

carerstrust
A Network Partner

Come and join us for a Mince Pie at our **Open Day on**
Wednesday 10th December from 2.00pm – 4.00pm
Melbourne House, Eastgate, Accrington, BB5 6PW

Volunteering is a great way to improve skills, meet new people, gain confidence and give something back to the community.

For more information call our Volunteer Co-ordinator Laura Livesey on
01254 387444

We have a variety of vacancies at Carers Link Lancashire and are especially keen to recruit people for our **Sitting in Service**

With this service you have the opportunity to provide a much needed service to carers and their families. To give the carer a short break away from their caring role, you would take part in activities with the 'cared for' person such as chatting, watching TV, listening to music, playing board games and serving drink or light snacks.

Come and join us and see what a positive difference you can make!

Approved Charity 1034257
Company Limited by Guarantee

Funded Supported by: Lancashire Council, East Lancashire, NHS, Carers, Carers UK



COMMUNITY EVENT 2015

Carers Link Lancashire
IMPROVING LIFE FOR CARERS

carerstrust
A Network Partner

These fun filled community events are for carers, former carers and volunteers to find out more information and what they may be entitled to!

With stalls from local organisations you can find lots of information about:

- Volunteering Opportunities
- Advocacy
- Training & Education
- Carers Rights
- And the services available from Carers Link Lancashire

Monday 26th January 2.00pm to 4.00pm	Tuesday 27th January 4.00pm to 6.00pm
Burnley Tennis Club 30 Lower Ridge Close Burnley BB10 4BW	Melbourne House Eastgate Accrington BB5 6PW

For more information or to let us know you would like to attend either event, call Laura Livesey our Volunteer Co-ordinator on 01254 387444 or email info@carerslink.net

Refreshments will be available along with raffle prizes to be won!

Approved Charity 1034257
Company Limited by Guarantee

Funded Supported by: Lancashire Council, East Lancashire, NHS, Carers, Carers UK

KEY FACTS:

1073.9 hours were given voluntarily to run the Sitting in Service project in 2014-2015

Volunteer therapists continued to provide complementary therapies to carers in our refurbished therapy room at Melbourne House



CASE STUDY

I care for both my parents. Mum suffers with 'ME' and Dad has chronic back pain from an injury at work.

I had to do lots of things around the house, helping to cook and clean, I would also collect and do the laundry. I would help Dad to get in and out of bed by lifting him and also helping Dad to sit comfortably in chairs.

I spend a lot of time offering emotional support to my Mum, neither of my parents are able to work due to illness so money was always very tight with little to spare.

I was very isolated, no one at school knew I had a caring role. I didn't want to be different or pitied, I had no confidence and suffered with low moods and felt down due to the fact I believed I was missing out on things and opportunities other young people had.

My mum referred me to Young Carers. I eventually started attending Young Carers groups after having 1-1 support but I would always sit at the back with my face hidden behind a cap that I wore. If I was spoken to I would turn bright red and turn away without giving any eye contact.

With the support from Young Carers I was able to work on building my confidence and low self esteem in the 1-1 sessions and small group work. I began to attend, not just the groups but the Activity Days where I was mixing with my peers, learning new skills and having fun. I became less isolated and more able to cope with my caring role. I really enjoyed going on residential trips and having the freedom to just be me.

Young Carers has helped me develop my confidence and I now attend College and I am looking forward to achieving my dream of going to University later this year, something I thought I would never be able to do.

I have changed so much over the years and that is down to all the support I have received from the Young Carers Team. I want to give something back and I am now looking at volunteering opportunities with Young Carers during the holidays.

Tom, aged 17

KEY FACTS:

Nearly 15,000 children up to the age of 17 are providing more than 50 hours care a week - that is 6.4 hours more than the average working week (The Children's Society)

1 in 3 young carers, supported by Carers Link Lancashire, care for someone with a mental health problem



CASE STUDY

KEY FACTS:

Carers Link Lancashire continues to run carers groups with its most successful being the Grub Club which meets every month for lunch or dinner

45 carers groups ran during the year including specific support for male carers and former carers

As part of my role as Carers Support and Activities Worker, I arranged, facilitated and attended meetings of various carers groups including the Creative Carers at Greenfield Community Centre, Haslingden.

This group has been running for a number of years, firstly under Carers Contact then Carers Link Lancashire, and has many regular members attending for a wide range of crafting activities run by different providers such as Pendle Crafters and Lancashire Adult Learning. These have included:

- Fused Glass Workshops
- Pottery
- Felting
- Flower Arranging
- Handmade Clocks
- Festive Crafts

The group has a well established core membership and they meet once a month to learn new skills, chat and enjoy refreshments which they often bring or bake themselves. They are a friendly mixed group of carers and former carers, who have a laugh and enjoy the relaxing atmosphere of the group. Here they can forget about their caring roles for a while and have some well earned “me time”.

With the introduction of the new LCC/CCG contract it became evident that we would no longer be able to fund this group. Very much like the Clitheroe Creative Carers group before it, we felt that to continue, it would need to be run independently from Carers Link Lancashire.

At the end of March 2014 I informed the group about the situation and suggested they apply for a grant from the Small Groups Fund which would allow them to continue running under their own guidance. To their delight they were successful and, having appointed members to manage the group, they are now running their own sessions at the community centre in the knowledge that Carers Link Lancashire is always available for support.

One of the unforeseen benefits of becoming independent was the return of carers who have since moved on and are no longer registered with the organisation. Having been supported for many years their return to ‘the fold’ has renewed friendships. As a way to combat social isolation in Rossendale amongst carers and former carers, this group has succeeded and I look forward to seeing how they continue and develop.

The pictures below show some of the activities they have taken part in.

Diane Flynn, Carers Support & Activities Worker



LGBT PROJECT

Over the past year I have been working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Trans carers and LGBT groups across East Lancashire along with delivering training on LGBT issues for a range of health professionals.

Examples of the work I have undertaken are:

- Developing links with a number of local LGBT groups and increased their awareness of carers issues and encouraged them to make referrals to Carers Link Lancashire.
- Providing some intensive support to individual LGBT carers. This has included linking them into local LGBT groups and attending meetings with them with social workers, housing officers and health workers.
- Organising a meeting at Towneley Hall in Burnley during LGBT History Month about the work of the LGBT Carers Project. This included a showing of the film 'Pride' which tells the true story of lesbians and gay support during the miners strikes of the 1980's. This was followed by a question and answer session with Mike Jackson who is originally from Accrington and whose story is featured in the film. The meeting was well attended by a wide range of carers as well as members of the LGBT community in East Lancashire (*advertising example below*).
- Providing training on LGBT issues for GP practices and other health professionals in East Lancashire. The training looks at changes in legislation, terminology, monitoring sexual orientation and gender identity plus specific health needs of LGBT people.
- Providing training on LGBT issues for voluntary organisations, young people and Healthwatch staff and volunteers.
- Producing a leaflet about the project for use in GP practices and other health settings.

Paul Fairweather, LGBT Carers Development Worker

LGBT History Month

LGBT Pride

This final event of LGBT History Month offers a free showing of the acclaimed film 'Pride', starring Bill Nighy and Imelda Staunton, about Lesbians and Gays' support for the miners' strike in 1984 - followed by a Q&A session with Mike Jackson, founder member of LGSM. Also, find out more about an innovative project with LGBT carers that provides training for health professionals in East Lancashire and share your news and views over refreshments.

Saturday 28th February 2015
1:00pm – 4:00pm

Towneley Hall Museum, Burnley BB11 3RQ

For more information please contact
Paul Fairweather
e: paul@carerslink.net

Carers Link Lancashire
NARROWING THE GAP FOR CARERS

carers trust
A Network of Partners

LANCASHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL

KEY FACTS:

25 training & awareness sessions have been delivered to GP Practices, LGBT groups and health professionals

300+ individuals have so far attended the training



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Judith Addison		6 years service
Brian Birtle	Treasurer	3 years service
Gerald Griffiths		14 years service
Cllr Joyce Holgate	Nominated Officer of Ribble Valley Borough Council	11 years service
Norman Ireland	Vice Chair	5 years service
Katie Martin	Appointed September 2014	7 months service
Sheila Maw		9 years service
Anne McCarthy	Chair	4 years service
Imdad Shah	Resigned June 2014	2 years service
Mavis Strong		7 years service
Angela Stuttard		1 years service

STAFF TEAM

Noreen Akhtar	Carers Development Worker
Yasmin Akhtar	Carers Development Worker
Sinita Almond	Modern Apprentice
Angela Austin	Finance Manager
Kubra Begum	Carers Development Worker (to March 2015)
Rachael Campbell	Senior Administration Assistant
Jo Clarke	Finance Assistant (from July 2014)
Phil Evans	Young Carers Sessional Worker (to December 2014)
Paul Fairweather	LGBT Carers Development Worker (from June 2014)
Diane Flynn	Carers Support & Activities Worker (from November 2014)
Liz Hamilton	Chief Executive Officer
Audra Higgin	Senior Carers Development Worker
Rebecca Hodgson	Adult Carers Manager (from July 2014)
Kathryn Immins	Carers Development Worker
Kerrie Knowles	Health Carers Identification Worker (to March 2015)
Jill Laing	Carers Development Worker
Laura Livesey	Volunteer Co-ordinator (from July 2014)
Michelle Lord	Carers Wellbeing Worker (from July 2014 to November 2014)
Karen McCarthy	Information & Administration Officer
Emma Mortimer	Administration Assistant (from June 2014)
Carole Moulton	Young Carers Development Worker
Michelle McClure	Young Carers Development Worker (to August 2014 then from December 2014)
Cheryl O'Reilly	Hospital Carers Development Worker (to August 2014)
Rebecca Ormerod	Hospital Carers Development Worker (to August 2014)
Carol Pollard	Office Manager
Karen Poole	Senior Carers Development Worker (from July 2014)
April Rushworth	Administration Assistant (to March 2015)
Shakil Salam	Administration Assistant (to January 2015)
Sonia Spencer	Carers Development Worker
Graham Walton	Administration Assistant (from July 2014)
	Carers Support & Activities Worker (to June 2014)
	Senior Carers Development Worker (from July 2014)



Carers Link Lancashire

Melbourne House, Eastgate, Accrington, BB5 6PW

Email: info@carerslink.net

Website: www.eastlancscarers.org.uk