

INFORM

THOSE WHO CARE

**SUPPORT
FOR CARERS
LEICESTERSHIRE**

SPRING EDITION 2015



The SFC team were somewhat ill prepared for their New Year fitness regimes!

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2015!

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2015. Inside this issue, you'll find information to help you keep warm and top tips from other carers, plus news about forthcoming events and as always, a round up of our Carers Support Groups.

**Remember, you can call us for support and advice on:
0845 689 9510 during office hours.**

Call : 0845 689 9510 Email : maureen@supportforcarers.org Visit : www.supportforcarers.org

Please note : calls are charged at local rates, although calls from mobiles may be higher.

Voluntary Action South Leicestershire, The Settling Rooms, St Mary's Place, Springfield Street,
Market Harborough, Leicestershire, LE16 7DR. Registered charity number 1141274



WARM HOME DISCOUNT SCHEME

Did you know?

If you're a pensioner or are classed as a vulnerable customer, you may be entitled to extra help with your gas and electricity bills during the winter months, including the Warm Home Discount Scheme.

Top Tip: Each energy supplier has different criteria, so it's well worth getting in touch with your supplier to see if you're eligible, even if you don't think you meet the criteria below.

What is the Warm Home Discount Scheme?

If you're on a low income, you may qualify for the Warm Home Discount Scheme. This gives a rebate to pensioners on low incomes and some other customers on low incomes. At the moment, the rebate is £140 on your electricity bill for winter 2014-2015. The Warm Home Discount Scheme is run by energy companies and the largest ones are required to offer this rebate by law.

Who qualifies for a Warm Home Discount?

In 2014-2015, if you were a pensioner on 12th July 2014, you can qualify for a Warm Home Discount if you get the Guarantee Credit part of Pension Credit - even if you get the Savings Credit part as well. Your name or your partner's name must be on your electricity bill, and your energy company must be taking part in the Warm Home Discount Scheme.

Not a pensioner but on a low income?

It's up to your supplier to decide whether you can get the Warm Home Discount. You may be eligible if you're on a low income and you have a disability or long-term illness, or children. The actual criteria used will vary depending on your supplier.

How to claim a Warm Home Discount

If you're an eligible pensioner, the Department for Work and Pensions will try to make sure you get this discount automatically. If you're missed out, you can ask for the discount directly from your supplier. If you're on a low income, you'll need to contact your supplier directly.

To find out more call the Warm Home Discount Scheme helpline:

Call: 0345 603 9439 (Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4.30pm)

Visit: www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme

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Local help to keep your home warm

Warm Homes Officers are available to provide independent and tailored advice to anybody living in cold housing on the best ways to keep their home warm. They can help you cut your fuel bills and live in a warmer home by:

- Providing practical support e.g. programming central heating
- Checking you're on the right energy tariff
- Checking your eligibility for heating and insulation grants and for minor works, such as draught proofing and boiler servicing.

To book a FREE Warm Homes check please complete a First Contact referral at www.leics.gov.uk/firstcontact

Top tips to keep warm and stay healthy

- **Keep your home warm** - make sure you keep your living room warm during the day around 18-21° C, and heat your bedroom before you go to bed.
- **Keep moving** - any kind of activity, from walking to the shops (if it's not too cold) to just moving your arms and legs and wiggling your toes and fingers will help your circulation.
- **Dress for warmth** - wear plenty of thin layers, rather than one thick one and always put on a coat, hat, scarf and gloves when you go outside.
- **Eat for warmth** - try to have at least one proper hot meal a day and regular hot drinks to provide warmth and energy.

Struggling to pay your energy bills?

The Home Heat Helpline is a service for vulnerable customers struggling to pay their bills. It's funded by energy suppliers and provides information on grants, payment schemes and benefits that may be available to you, as well as basic advice about energy efficiency.

Call Freephone 0800 336 699 or visit www.homeheathelpline.org.uk

The Energy Saving Trust

The Energy Saving Trust has an online home energy check to find out where you could make savings on your bills. You can also contact your local Energy Saving Trust advice centre for help.

Call Freephone 0300 123 1234 or visit www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

Charis Grants

Charis Grants has details of schemes run by energy suppliers to help some customers in debt.

You can find out more at www.charisgrants.com

The information above is from the Citizens Advice Bureau - www.adviceguide.org.uk

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POWER

ENERGY SAVING MYTH BUSTING

What's the best way to save energy? We look at some top tips and bust some myths in the process!

Should you leave the heating on low all day, even when you're out, or turn it up only when you need it?

According to leading energy experts, the idea that it's cheaper to leave the heating on low all day is a myth. You'll save energy, and therefore money, by only having the heating on when it's needed. (Using a timer is best, because your thermostat is designed to turn your heating on and off to keep your home at the temperature you set).

Should you keep your hot water boiler on all the time, or turn it on and off as needed?

If you have a gas, oil or LPG (liquefied petroleum gas) central heating system, it will always be cheaper to time the system so the hot water comes on only when needed. However, if you use an electric immersion heater and have an Economy 7 tariff (where energy is cheaper at night), it's cheaper to heat your water during the night. Make sure your tank is well insulated to prevent it cooling during the day. If you're unsure what tariff you're on, check your latest energy bill or ask your energy company.

Is it cheaper to use radiators or electric heaters?

Electric heaters are one of the most expensive forms of heating. Generally, the cheapest way is using an efficient gas central heating system, with a full set of thermostatic radiator valves, a room thermostat and a timer.

Should you run appliances at night?

If you're on an Economy 7 tariff, you'll pay less during the night, but a higher rate than average during the day. But if you're on another tariff, it doesn't make any difference.

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Do phone or laptop chargers still use electricity when they're plugged in, but not connected to the device?

According to British Gas, leaving chargers in a plug socket uses energy, even if they're not connected to a device. However, it says some chargers, including Apple chargers, turn themselves off when not connected to a device. Generally, branded chargers are more efficient than non-branded ones. A lot of devices draw power when plugged in and not in use. This can easily be avoided by switching devices off at the wall.

Should you set thermostats on individual radiators, rather than using the main thermostat to control all of them?

It's best to have as many controls as possible, so you're in charge of the way you want your home to be heated. A room thermostat saves, on average, about £70 a year, whereas having all your radiators installed with thermostatic radiator valves can save around £10 a year.

Would painting your radiators black or putting reflective panels behind them help you save energy?

Putting reflective panels behind your radiators could help, because you'll reflect heat from the radiator back into the room. Painting your radiators black won't make any difference though.

Should you leave lights and appliances on, or turn them on and off each time?

Turn them off when you don't need them. Also avoid leaving TVs and other devices on standby.

Should you use a tumble dryer, or place washing on an airer with the heating on?

An airer is better because tumble dryers use a lot of energy. Try timing it so you put your washing out on a clothes-horse during the hours your heating comes on. Normally, that way you wouldn't use any more energy. The National House Building Council recommends opening the window and closing the door of the room where the clothes are drying, so moisture can escape.

Should you leave your heating on if you're going away?

To prevent frozen pipes, which can cause hundreds of pounds of damage, the Energy Saving Trust (EST) recommends you leave some heating on even if you're not there. Set your thermostat so the heating comes on when it drops below 5 °C. Alternatively, you can set your heating to come on for a couple of hours a night, at about 15/16°C.



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Dancing
Mindfulness Taster
Laughter Yoga
Complementary
Therapies
Health Checks

Health Related
Information Stands

Chair Based
Exercises

Free
Refreshments
And Lunch

Strictly
Spring
Time
For Carers



***Come along and have some "Me" time
at our amazing event***

Thursday 26th March 2015

10am till 2pm

Thurmaston Elizabeth Park
Sports and Community Centre
Checkland Road,
Thurmaston, LE4 8FN

To book a place please
call 0845 689 9510
or email: maureen@supportforcarers.org

VASL
VALUING - VALUING - VALUING

*A carer is somebody who looks after someone, who because of their
illness, frailty or disability could not cope without their support*

MINDFULNESS

What is it and how can it help you?

Being mindful is listening to what our senses are telling us.

When we are being mindful we are choosing to notice the details of our experiences, just as they are in the moment, and without judging or trying to change them.

In our busy, modern lives it's often hard to be mindful though, and we're constantly multitasking or doing things 'on automatic pilot'. We're easily distracted and can fail to notice the good things about our lives or hear what our bodies are telling us. We can also be very critical of ourselves.

For example, have you ever driven somewhere and arrived at your destination, before realising you only remember parts of the journey, or eaten something and then thought "did I enjoy that"?

Mindfulness is a way of acknowledging and seeing clearly whatever is happening in our lives and becoming more aware of our thoughts, feelings and sensations. Mindfulness is for anyone who is willing to open their minds to it.

Evidence has shown that regularly practising mindfulness will:

- **Reduce stress, anxiety and exhaustion**
- **Improve both mental and physical health**
- **Improve sleep**
- **Improve wellbeing and quality of life**

We're hoping to set up mindfulness sessions throughout the county.
If you're interested in attending:

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Carers' Support Groups

Charnwood District

Loughborough Time Out For Carers Group

meets at Gorse Govert Community Centre, Maxwell Drive, Loughborough, LE11 4RZ on the 4th Monday of the month from 2.30pm to 4.00pm.

Call Gurjit from Support from Carers on 0845 689 9510.

Loughborough Well-Being Group

meets at John Storer House, Wards End, Loughborough, LE11 3HA on the 1st Thursday of the month from 1.30pm to 3.30pm.

Call Joanne Clarke on 01509 631 782.

Shepshed Well-Being Group

meets at Charnwood Road Community Centre, 47a Charnwood Road, Shepshed, LE12 9QE on the 3rd Tuesday of the month from 2.00pm to 4.00pm.

Call Joanne Clarke on 01509 631 782.

Sileby & District Group

meets at Soar Bridge Inn, 29 Bridge Street, Barrow upon Soar, LE12 8PN on the last Thursday of the month from 12 noon to 2.30pm.

Call Joanne Clarke on 01509 631 782.

The Group - formerly called Snowdrops is not only changing its name but now has a brand new home.

"We support families, carers and loved ones of adults who use drugs, alcohol or other substances and aim to help carers through the turmoil that addiction can bring to families, such as family breakdown, violence, lost futures and bereavement." - **VASL support worker Marion Lewin**

"We are moving on August 6th to 'The Carpenter's Arms', Wharnccliffe Road, Loughborough."

If you are caring for an adult or are a family member, or friend of someone experiencing addiction or who are in recovery you are welcome to come and join The Group's confidential meetings on the first Wednesday of every month 7pm-8:30pm in The Stable Room.

For more information contact: Marion Lewin at VASL (Voluntary Action South Leicestershire) mlewin@vasl.org.uk or ring 0845 689 9510.

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Oadby & Wigston District

Oadby & Wigston Time Out For Carers Group

meets at the Salvation Army, Ladysmith Road, off Saffron Road, South Wigston, LE18 4UZ on the 2nd Thursday of the month from 1.30pm to 3.00pm.

Call Gurjit from Support for Carers on 0845 689 9510

Blaby District

Blaby Time Out For Carers

meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month at Blaby Civic Centre, 22-24 Leicester Road Blaby, Leicester LE8 4GQ from 10.30am to 12 noon.

Call Jackie Williamson from Support for Carers on 0845 689 9510

Harborough District

Carers' Break Group

meets on the 4th Thursday of the month from 1.30pm to 3.00pm at the Methodist Church (opposite the Market Hall), Northampton Road, Market Harborough, LE16 9HE.

Call Support for Carers on 0845 689 9510

Knit & Natter Group

meets at The Angel Hotel, High Street, Market Harborough, LE16 7AF on the 3rd Thursday of each month from 1.30pm to 3.00pm.

Call Support for Carers on 0845 689 9510

Lutterworth & District Carers' Support Group

meets at Hazeland Court Residential Lounge, Guthlaxton Avenue, Lutterworth on the 4th Wednesday of each month from 7.00pm to 9.00pm.

Call Val on 01455 283387

Harborough Mental ill Health Carers' Support Group

meets 2nd Wednesday of each month 6.30pm - 8.30pm at the Methodist Church Northampton Road, Market Harborough in the "upstairs room".

Next meeting 11.03.2015. **Please call Nicola on 0845 689 9510**

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Hinckley & Bosworth District

Time Out For Carers Group

meets at Hinckley Library (meeting room), Lancaster Road, Hinckley, LE10 0AT on the 3rd Tuesday of each month from 10.30am to 12 noon.

Call Jacqui from Support for Carers on 0845 689 9510

Earl Shilton Carers Support Group

meets at Greenacres Garden Centre, Ashby Road, Stapleton, LE9 8JE on the 3rd Wednesday of every month from 10.30am to 12.00 noon.

Call Maureen on 01455 846360 or Marlene on 01455 844878 or Support for Carers on 0845 689 9510

Melton District

Melton Carers' Support Group

meets on the second Thursday of each month at 11am at the Carnegie Museum Thorpe End, Melton Mowbray, LE13 1RB.

Call Diane from Support for Carers on 0845 689 9510.

Bottesford Time Out For Carers Group

meets on the 4th Tuesday of the month at The Rutland Arms, 2 High Street Bottesford, NN13 0AA (in the restaurant) from 10.30am - 12 noon.

Call Diane from Support for Carers on 0845 689 9510

North West Leicestershire District

Coalville Carers' Support Group

meets at the Marlene Reid Centre, 85 Belvoir Road, Coalville, LE67 3PH on the 1st Thursday of the month from 10.30am to 12 noon.

Call Gurjit from Support for Carers on 0845 689 9510.

Ashby de la Zouch Drop-In

Next meeting Monday 13th April from 10am to 11.30am at Ashby de la Zouch Library North Street, Ashby de la Zouch, LE65 1HU

Call Gurjit from Support for Carers on 0845 689 9510.

To find out more about any of the Carers' Support Groups above, or if you would like to set up a group near you, please feel free to get in touch with us on 0845 689 9510. We can give new groups help, support and advice to set up free of charge.

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CARER SUPPORT GROUP

Please come along to a NEW very informal Support Group
Coffee Morning

At the One Stop Shop
Wycliffe House, Gilmorton Road,
Lutterworth, LE17 4DY
10.30am - 12.30pm

Held on the 2nd Wednesday of every month
To find out more call Sarah or Gwyn on 01933 677837

THRUMMY DRUMMER DEMENTIA GROUP

We're a social and support group for dementia sufferers and their carers. We meet on the 2nd Thursday of each month at Elizabeth Park Sports Centre in Thurmaston, from 10.30am to 12.30pm.

At each meeting, Jane, Carolyn and Marian try to have someone come along to give a short talk on matters of interest and organise light entertainment. For example, a keyboard player to sing along with, small choirs or a quiz.

Gayle Shell came along earlier in the year to give a demonstration on flower arranging and will be coming along again in June, her arrangements then become our raffle prizes for the month. We serve tea, coffee and biscuits and ask for £1 to help cover our costs.

Our aim is to help alleviate the isolation that can sometimes be experienced by dementia sufferers and their carers.

To find out more please call Jane on 0116 269 3184

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Welcome! We are a social group for people living with dementia, their partners, carers and family in Lutterworth & surrounding villages.

The Share & Care Group



13th February 2015

10-12 noon

The

Lutterworth Methodist church

[opposite Morrisons]



We would like to invite you to join us for morning coffee on the 2nd & 4th Friday of every month.

Venues in 2015

27 th February	St Mary's Church
13 th March	Methodist Church
27 th March	St Mary's Church
10 th April	Methodist Church

Enjoy a mouth watering array of coffee, tea, and cakes as well as chance to chat and laugh!

All are welcome, whether you come as a person with dementia or a carer/family member, and we look forward to seeing you.

If you have any queries or would like further information :

Please contact: Jackie Parkes on 07748 647 192

CARERS' MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION TRAINING PROGRAMME

FREE one day courses for non-professional carers of someone who experiences mental ill health

The course will focus on:

- Increasing understanding of mental illness and diagnosis
- Developing confidence in dealing with crises and working with challenging behaviour
- An opportunity to share experiences and ideas

Tuesday 24th February 2015	Coalville/Marlene Reid Centre	10:00am - 16:00pm
Wednesday 18th March 2015	Blaby/Council Social Centre	10:00am - 16:00pm
Tuesday 14th April 2015	Lutterworth/Town Council	10:00am - 16:00pm
Tuesday 19th May 2015	Melton Mowbray/Carneige	10:00am - 16:00pm
Wednesday 17th June 2015	Wigston/Salvation Army	10:00am - 16:00pm
Tuesday 14th July 2015	Hinckley Bosworth/Library	10:00am - 16:00pm

Course Facilitator: **Nicky Daly**

**For further information or to register, please contact:
Nicola Tate-Bohannon on 0845 689 9510 or 01858 468543
from a mobile or Email: ntate-bohannon@vasl.org.uk**

POOR MENTAL HEALTH Promoting recovery, wellness and inclusion

The Richmond Fellowship aims to support people who are recovering from or living with mental health problems, helping them maintain maximum independence and wellbeing by providing: *advice, information and signposting, support to take part in social and community activities and support to identify and use self-help strategies.*



**To find out more Call: 0116 262 6337
Email: leicestershire.lifelinks@richmondfellowship.org.uk
Visit: www.richmondfellowship.org.uk**

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INHERITANCE NEW LAWS

New inheritance laws came into place from 1st October 2014, here's a summary of the key changes.

What happens if I don't leave a will?

Hundreds of thousands of people die each year without leaving a will (known as intestacy) which can make it difficult for family left behind, especially if you're not married. If this happens to you, there are strict rules on what will happen to your estate and it could leave someone who you want to protect, unprotected. Please note: if you live with someone and you're not married or in a civil partnership and you don't have a will, your partner will inherit NOTHING.

- Under the new rules, if you're married or in a civil partnership with no children your entire estate will go to your surviving partner, regardless of how much it's worth.
- If you're married or in a civil partnership with children, the first £250,000 of your estate will go to your surviving partner. Anything above this amount will be split, half to your surviving partner and half between your surviving children (and held in trust for them if they're under 18).
- If you're unmarried or single with no children, your surviving partner will inherit nothing even if you lived with them. Your estate will be shared between your surviving parents and if they're not alive, it will go to your closest blood relative such as a brother or sister. If you have no surviving blood relatives, your estate will go to the Crown.
- If you're unmarried or single with children, your surviving partner will inherit nothing even if you lived with them. Your estate will be shared between your surviving children.

To find out more visit:

www.gov.uk/inherits-someone-dies-without-will



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CARERS' TIPS

This page features top tips for carers, kindly sent in to us by other carers in Leicestershire. We hope you find them useful and please let us know if you have any tips you'd like to share.

I find that sprinkling a few drops of good quality pure lavender oil on a pillow case (or a cotton handkerchief inside the pillow case) really helps to relax me and promotes sleep

My husband used to have lots of water infections then I started to give him cranberry capsules, they're stronger than cranberry juice, and they've really helped. They're available from health food shops and on the internet

I found the book *Contented Dementia* by Oliver James gave me some really useful tips to help me deal with my mum's Alzheimer's

If you're having outside help from paid carers, lay things out on a spare bed or another place i.e. pants, PJs, pads, flannels etc, so they don't have to hunt for them and you can see what needs replacing at a glance

If the person you're caring for has varicose eczema - a condition that causes the skin on the lower legs to break down into an ulcer encourage them to sit with their feet up

Your pharmacist can also advise you about moisturisers and mild steroid creams, both of which may help if only the surface areas of skin are affected

If anyone offers help, think what will help you - an hour off or a casserole?

No matter how poorly people like to smell nice

To give us your hints and tips simply call us on 0845 689 9510 or email maureen@supportforcarers.org

Alternatively, you're welcome to bring them along to any of our Carers' Support Groups. Find out more about these on pages 8-10

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Find new friends online and keeping up to date.

Follow us on **twitter**

@support4carers follow all our latest news.

skype JS:

pat.sfc
diane.sfc

gurjit.sfc
jacqui.sfc

Useful numbers for carers

Leicestershire County Council - Adult Social Care

0116 305 0004

Leicestershire County Council - Adult Social Care Emergency Team

0116 255 1606

NHS Carers Direct

(Calls are free from UK landlines & mobiles or you can request a free call back)

0808 802 0202

NHS Direct (Health advice & reassurance 24 hours a day, 365 days a year)

0845 4647

Age Concern

0800 169 6565

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