

# INFORM

THOSE WHO CARE

WINTER EDITION 2013



Welcome to our winter newsletter including articles on how to stay warm and lower your energy bills together with an updated list of the Carers' Support Groups we run around the county.

## Did you know?

It was Carers Rights Day on 29th November and this year the day was all about carers getting the information and advice they need to claim benefits, access practical support and find out how technology can help take the pressure off. To assist, we've included articles in this newsletter on how to get the help you're entitled to. Simply read on to find out more.

Call : 0845 689 9510 Email : [maureen@supportforcarers.org](mailto:maureen@supportforcarers.org) Visit : [www.supportforcarers.org](http://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



# HELP TO ADAPT YOUR HOME

Did you know you could be entitled to a grant to help you adapt your home, or the home of the person you care for, if changes are needed for them to carry on living there?

The Disabled Facilities Grant is available from Leicestershire County Council or your local authority if they think the changes are needed to help meet the needs of the person you care for, and the work is reasonable and practical.

## The grant can be used for a variety of things, including:

- Making sure the person you care for can get in and out of their home and/or garden.
- Helping them get around their home, for instance, widening doorways for a wheelchair or installing a stair lift.
- Installing better washing facilities or an adapted bathroom.
- Adaptations to a kitchen, such as lowering worktops.
- Improving heating systems.

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# Who can apply?

- You - if you care for a disabled person in your own home
- The person you care for - if they're disabled
- Your landlord if you or the person you care for lives in a rented home

In all cases, it's a requirement that the property you want to adapt must be the sole or main residence for the person you care for and that they intend living there for at least five years after the work is finished, unless there are health or other special reasons.

# How much could you get?

The maximum grant in England is £30,000. The grant is subject to a means test so the amount given depends on the savings and income of the disabled person. Your savings and income as a carer won't be taken into account, unless the person you care for is your spouse or civil partner. If the person you care for is under 19, the grant won't be means tested at all. If the person you care for is on certain benefits, they're likely to be entitled to a full grant.

# How to apply

Please call Leicestershire County Council's Adult Social Care team on 0116 305 0004 for an application form.

**You must apply for a grant before you begin adapting your home, or the home of the person you care for, as you won't normally get any help if you start work before the council approves your application.**

Once the council receives your application, they'll normally arrange for an assessment by an occupational therapist. The occupational therapist will consider the needs of the disabled person and also decide if the adaptations are reasonable and practical given the age and condition of your home.



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# DO YOU CARE FOR SOMEONE WITH DEMENTIA?

**Attend our carer workshops for information and support**

**What is the Carer Information and Support Programme?**

The Carer Information and Support Programme is a series of workshops run over 4 sessions for people caring for a family member or friend with dementia. It provides an opportunity for you to talk in a friendly and confidential environment about your experiences and the impact they are having on you. The workshops aim to provide you with information and support.



## Topics will include:

- What is dementia?
- How can you support and care for someone with dementia
- The support services that are available
- Planning for the future

## Course Dates:

Session 1 - Wednesday 8th January 2014

Session 2 - Wednesday 15th January 2014

Session 3 - Wednesday 22nd January 2014

Session 4 - Wednesday 29th January 2014

**All sessions will run from 6pm - 8.30pm**

## Venue:

Mosaic, 2 Oak Spinney Park, Ratby Lane, Leicester Forest East, LE3 3AW

## Who will be there?

The workshops are run by Alzheimer's Society staff and volunteers for people who care for a family member or friend with dementia.

**For further information or to book a place:**

**Call: 0116 231 1111 email [leicestershireandrutland@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:leicestershireandrutland@alzheimers.org.uk)**

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# TIME IS RUNNING OUT!

## Don't leave parent carers behind...

The Government is bringing forward some major new rights for carers through the Care Bill and the Children and Families Bill, but one group of carers is set to miss out. Parents of disabled children under 18 will be left with lesser rights as they aren't included in the Care Bill, which covers adults caring for adults, or the Children and Families Bill, which will bring stronger rights for young carers.

Carers UK is calling for urgent changes to be made to the Children and Families Bill, to give equal rights to parent carers and make sure they're not left behind.

## What can you do?

If you're a parent carer and you'd like to have your say, why not write a letter or send an email to Edward Timpson MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary for Children and Families. You may want to copy the letter or email to your MP too.

**You can write to Edward Timpson MP at 30 Victoria Street, Crewe, CW1 2JE or email [timpson@parliament.uk](mailto:timpson@parliament.uk)**

If you'll be affected personally, it's important that you add details of your own circumstances and you're clear on the impact 'being left behind' will have on you and why it's unfair.

**Don't forget to include your name and full address.**

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# ICE - In Case of Emergency



ICE stands for In Case of Emergency and this is how it works. If you have a mobile phone you put ICE as a contact name, together with the phone number of the person you would like the emergency services to contact in case of an emergency. If you're involved in some sort of accident or incident and aren't able to communicate, the emergency services will look at your mobile phone for someone to contact. The first thing they look for is someone called ICE in your contact list. This is a brilliant system, which everyone should be aware of and use. Consider having ICE1, ICE2, ICE3 etc so you have more than one emergency contact. Just remember though, it's very difficult for the emergency services to check your phone if it has a password on it, so consider leaving it off!

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# GRANTS AND SCHEMES TO HELP YOU SAVE MONEY ON ENERGY BILLS

**Did you know you might be able to get help with the cost of insulating your home or making it more energy efficient through various Government grants and schemes to keep your home warmer and your gas and electricity bills lower?**

Depending on your circumstances, you could get a new energy efficient gas boiler to replace your old one, together with insulation and glazing, absolutely free! The main Government scheme is called the Energy Companies Obligation (ECO). If you're eligible for the scheme, you can get help from any energy supplier, whether or not they supply energy to you.

There are three parts to the scheme - the Carbon Saving Communities Obligation (CSCO), the Carbon Emissions Reduction Obligation (CERO) and the Home Heating Cost Reduction Obligation (HHCRO) - known as the Affordable Warmth Scheme.

## **Under the CSCO, you could get help if you:**

- Live in a specified postcode area or
- Live in a low income household in a rural area. This means you live in private or social housing, in a population of under 10,000 homes and you, or someone who lives with you get certain benefits.

Under the CERO, you could get help with solid wall and cavity wall insulation if your home is considered 'hard to treat'. Under the Affordable Warmth Scheme you could get help towards the cost of a new energy efficient gas boiler or boiler repairs, as well as loft or cavity wall insulation. Depending on your circumstances, you could even get these things for free.

**To find out more and to apply you can go to your local Citizens Advice Bureau or call the Energy Saving Advice Service (ESAS) on 0300 123 1234, or talk to your energy supplier.**

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## Extra help if you're older, disabled, chronically ill or on a low income

If you're a pensioner, disabled, chronically ill, unable to look after your own welfare or living with someone who is unable to look after their own welfare then you may be able to get extra help with your electricity and gas.

### Priority Services Register

The Priority Services Register is run by energy suppliers and offers free services for older people and those with disabilities. These services include priority reconnection after a power cut, taking regular meter readings if you can't do it yourself and bills tailored to your needs, including large print and Braille. You can find out more by getting in touch with your energy supplier.

### Free annual gas safety checks

You could also be entitled to a free annual gas safety check if you get a means tested benefit and you're of pensionable age, disabled, chronically ill or have a child aged under five and live alone - or the people you live with are also of pensionable age, disabled, chronically ill or under 18. You can find out more by getting in touch with your energy supplier. Remember, if you rent your home, it's your landlord's responsibility to sort out gas safety checks.

### Extra help with bills in the winter

If you, or someone who lives with you is of state pension age, you may be able to get the Winter Fuel Payment.

**To find out more call the helpline on 0845 915 1515.**

Depending on your circumstances, you may also be able to get help through other Government schemes like The Warm Home Discount Scheme and Cold Weather Payments.

**To find out more about the Warm Home Discount Scheme call the helpline on 0845 603 9439.**

**To find out more about Cold Weather Payments, get in touch with your local benefits office.**

### The Home Heat Helpline

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, as well as basic advice about energy efficiency.

**You can call the helpline free on 0800 336 699  
or visit [www.homeheathelpline.org.uk](http://www.homeheathelpline.org.uk)**

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# KEEP WARM - & SAFE!

Able Community Care, who provide live-in care schemes around the country, have sent us the following hints and tips for keeping electric blankets safe this winter.

Every year there are over 5,000 electric blanket fires, most of which could have been prevented by looking out for the following before placing the blanket on the bed and switching it on:

- Fraying fabric
- Scorch marks
- Exposed elements
- Creasing or folding
- Soiling
- Damp patches
- Tie tapes damaged or missing
- Worn flex
- Loose connections



If you can see any of the things above, you should replace your electric blanket with a new one. If your blanket has the old BEAB safety mark it is over 10 years old and again, it should be replaced. The old BEAB safety mark is a round symbol. The new sign is black capitals on a white background.

Never buy a second hand blanket and look for one displaying a European Certification Mark, such as the new BEAB safety mark, on the blanket and packaging. This will mean it conforms to the latest European safety standard. You should also check it has an overheating protection system to cut the power off if the blanket starts overheating. All new UK blankets now have this feature.

Sometimes, organisations like Leicestershire County Council and Age UK hold free electric blanket testing days. We'll let you know via our website and carers' groups if we hear of any being held this winter.

## Always use your blanket safely:

- Always follow the instructions
  - Never use an electric under blanket as an electric over blanket, and vice versa.
  - Tie electric under blankets to the bed or mattress - this stops them slipping and creasing, which could damage them.
  - Only leave a blanket switched on all night if it has thermostatic controls for safe all-night use. Otherwise switch it off and disconnect it before you get into bed.
  - Make sure an expert tests your blanket at least every three years.
- You can ask the shop where you bought it about testing and servicing.

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# CARERS' TIPS

**Here are some top tips to help you in your caring role.** If you have any tips you'd like to share with other carers please give us a call on **0845 689 9510** or email us at: **maureen@supportforcarers.org** and we'll publish them in the next newsletter.

Make sure you get a break, even for a few hours. This will help you recharge your batteries. Use this time for your interests if you can, rather than chores like grocery shopping. You may be able to get some funding to help you do this. If you'd like to find out more, please get in touch with us about the Carers' Support Fund.

Look after your health. Eat properly, try to get some exercise when you can and make sure you get regular check ups from your doctor. If you've got a symptom you're concerned about, get it checked out quickly. Don't leave it to get worse.

Ask others to help - many people want to help but don't know how. Give them specific things you need doing and specific times you need them to come. They may well be pleased to be asked.

If you're looking after someone, look after yourself too. You matter just as much as the person you care for.

Don't feel alone. Get in touch with other carers or people with similar interests to you. If it's difficult to get out, you could get regular telephone calls from one of our telephone befrienders. If you'd like to find out more, please feel free to get in touch.

Look after yourself emotionally. Caring is hard and many carers get depressed or anxious. Talk to friends or family members about how you feel. Tell your doctor if you're feeling low and ask what help they can give you.

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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.

Please note there will be no group on 23rd December 2013.

**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.**

## 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.

Please note there will be no group on Thursday 12th December 2013.

**Call Gurjit from Support from Carers on 0845 689 9510.**

## Blaby District

### Caring Friends Group

meets at Palmers Garden Centre café, St John's, Enderby, LE19 2BS  
on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month from 10.30am to 12 noon.

**Call Alan Hooton on 0116 284 1982.**

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## Blaby Time Out For Carers

meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month at Blaby & District Social Centre, Leicester Road Blaby 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. Please note that the venue of this group is changing and from 23rd January will be meeting at the Methodist Church (opposite the Market Hall), Northampton Road, Market Harborough, LE16 9HE.

There will be no group on Thursday 26th December 2013.

**Call Support for Carers on 0845 689 9510.**

### Knit & Natter Group

meets at Bower House, 32 Coventry Road, Market Harborough, LE16 9BZ 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.**

## Hinckley & Bosworth District

### Hinckley & Bosworth Carers' Group

meets at the Community House, Peggs Close (off Candle Lane), Earl Shilton, LE9 7BP on the 3rd Wednesday on the month from 10.30am to 12 noon.

**Call Jackie Williamson from Support for Carers on 0845 689 9510.**

### 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.**

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# Melton District

## Melton Carers' Support Group

19th December - Christmas Meal (contact Diane on 0845 689 9510 for more details).  
16th January usual meeting at Melton Carnegie Museum at 11am. Following meetings will meet on the second Thursday of each month at 11am at the Carnegie Museum.

**Call Diane from Support for Carers on 0845 689 9510.**

## Bottesford Time Out For Carers Group

meets at The Rutland Arms, 2 High Street, Bottesford, NN13 0AA (in the restaurant)  
10.30am – 12 noon. Please note there will be no meeting in January and the following meetings will be on Tuesday 18th February and Tuesday 25th March

**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.**

**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.**

## Earl Shilton Carers' Support Group - Update

**Just to let you all know, the Earl Shilton Carers' Support Group will now meet on the 3rd Wednesday of the month (instead of the 4th Thursday of the month). Next dates are:**

**18th December, 15th January, 19th February**

**We look forward to seeing many of you there!**

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# HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT JOINING A CHOIR?

**We're very excited to have new funding for a year to form carers' choirs in two boroughs across the county:**

**Oadby/Wigston and Hinckley/Bosworth.**

Leicestershire Carers' Choirs aim to bring the joy of singing to carers across Leicestershire and it will not matter where you live, as long as you can get to the venues. (Venues to be advised).

Carers would meet for fortnightly choir sessions in the two areas to learn contemporary, upbeat songs in four-part harmony under the leadership of a musical director. Previous experience of singing in a choir isn't necessary. You just need to be willing to give it a go. In addition to developing musicality, the sessions would explore fundamental areas such as breathing technique, vocal hygiene, posture and singing technique.

One of the most important factors is what it does for people's confidence; it lifts people in ways that no other activity can and is a great way of meeting others with similar interests.

Singing is a wonderful way to boost your mood and it has been proven to help you physiologically.

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**According to TV choirmaster Gareth Malone:**

"There are obvious health benefits as well as it being excellent for your state of mind".

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**If you're interested in joining either of the carers choirs, please give us a call on 0845 689 9510.**

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# CALLING MEN IN MARKET HARBOROUGH!

WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN A NEW MEN'S GROUP?

**John Stride and Colin Sole from the Congregational Church in Market Harborough are looking into starting a drop-in group for men of all ages who spend more time than they would like on their own, here's the story in their own words:**

Women are good at socialising aren't they? Coffee mornings and sewing groups abound. Men find it harder. We're sure many men in Market Harborough would like to get out more often, but are short of options as to where to go. What we're not sure of is whether we can persuade these gentlemen to come to the type of group we envisage.

The group would meet in Market Harborough town, rather than outlying villages, to make it easier for people who don't drive. We can also offer transport to anyone who needs it, within the town.

We would meet in either a hired room or at a pub - we have the Royalist in mind. All ages are welcome and there'll be no charge to join in, at least initially. We would have to charge for future activities like meals or trips though. Please note: we can't offer assistance with personal hygiene needs.

When we get the initial group together then we can get your input as to what you would like to do. We have in mind coffee/tea and a chat, maybe pub games, perhaps a shared meal, and, if numbers justify, visits to places of interest.

**If you'd like to find out more or you think the group is a good idea and you'd like to get involved please call John Stride on 01858 468136 or alternatively email [jd.stride@talktalk.net](mailto:jd.stride@talktalk.net)**

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## Are you affected by the drug or alcohol related behaviour of a family member or friend?

The GROUP has been set up to support people who care for adults affected by substance misuse. Caring for family members or friends can bring up many issues such as stigma, illegality, personality changes, fear for the person you care for and feeling you have no control over their situation. The GROUP aims to offer tools for dealing with behaviours, knowledge of drug and alcohol misuse, help with information about legal rights, the chance to take time out, care for your own wellbeing and share experiences with other carers in a similar situation and a space to say what you need to say.

**There are currently groups running in Harborough, Melton, Loughborough and Hinckley. To find out more please call us on 0845 689 9510**

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# New courses for carers in...

Loughborough, Lutterworth, Hinckley & Melton Mowbray

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**We've got two new creative courses for carers coming up in the New Year - both of which are free to attend:**



## **Beadcraft (3 week course)**

**Tuesday 7th, 14th and 21st January 2014 from 10am to 11.30am  
at Rosebery St Peter's Community Centre, Storer Road  
Loughborough, LE11 5EQ.**

**Thursday, 9th, 16th and 23rd January 2014 from 10am to 11.30am  
at Lutterworth One Stop Shop, Gilmorton Road  
Lutterworth, LE17 4DY.**

Beadcraft is a traditional skill from the Acholi people in Uganda and the courses will be run by Alison Rockett who lived in Uganda and spent time learning the skill from the local population. Why not come along and hear fascinating stories of the Acholi tribe's life and struggles - while making beads!



## **Glass painting (2 week course)**

**Wednesday, 15th and 22nd January 2014 from 10am to 12 noon  
at the St Francis Community Centre, Tudor Road, Hinckley, LE10 0EQ.**

**Friday, 17th and 24th January 2014 from 10am to 12 noon  
at the Melton Carnegie Museum, Thorpe End  
Melton Mowbray, LE13 1RB.**

This course follows on from our very successful arts and crafts course and the course tutor, Victoria, will help you develop your artistic skills to produce a beautiful piece of art.

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## **Do you care for someone with Pick's Disease?**

We have a carer who is happy to talk to carers in Harborough District who looks after someone with Pick's Disease or Frontotemporal Lobe Dementia.

**If you can help, please get in touch with us on 0845 689 9510.**

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# KEEP UPDATED



**Like us on** 

Find new friends online and keeping up to date.

**Follow us on** 

@support4carers follow all our latest news.

 **us:**

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**

**Call : 0845 689 9510 Email : [maureen@supportforcarers.org](mailto:maureen@supportforcarers.org) Visit : [www.supportforcarers.org](http://www.supportforcarers.org)**

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

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