

# Wirral Carers Newsletter

Winter 2011

**Happy New Year and a challenging 2011 for us all!**

Hi all welcome to our 2011 winter edition of the Carers Newsletter.

This edition we will be focusing on information that may help you with your caring responsibilities, the Carers Association and a free weekend to give away at the Bond Hotel in Blackpool for 2 people.

## The Wirral Carers Association

The Association was formed in October 2009 at the request of Wirral Carers. The Association has a chairperson who is Ken McDermott and a steering committee who are the drivers behind the Association and its objectives. The association hope to seek and represent your interests. We are looking for new members of the Executive Committee as membership has declined for various reasons. Ken is also hoping for someone to volunteer to co-chair the Association meetings with him. If you are a current or previous Carer and feel you would like to contribute in driving forward issues which effect Wirral Carers, please contact the Carers helpline on 0151 670 0777 for further information or come along to an association meeting.



You can attend the Association meetings to highlight any Carers issues you feel need addressing or to meet other Carers and build up a network and find out information. You can also become a member of the Association and receive notes about meetings or other communication. The Association has also been tasked to find a volunteer to act as a Carer representative for the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee facilitated by the Local Authority. For

details about what this committee is and what they do, please go to [www.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.wirral.gov.uk). For information about the representative position please contact Jacqui Canning on 0151 670 0777 or email [carers.support@wired.me.uk](mailto:carers.support@wired.me.uk).

If you feel you would like to come to a meeting but have barriers such as transport or someone to care for the person you look after, please call us and we will see what we can do to help.

The Association meets the last Wednesday of every month. All Carers are welcome and your contribution is important. The Executive Committee meets more regularly to discuss future issues.

For dates of future meetings and venues please call the Carer Helpline

**on 0151 670 0777**

**or email: [carers.support@wired.me.uk](mailto:carers.support@wired.me.uk)**

*We look forward to seeing you - you will be made very welcome.*

## Review of Wirral Carers Strategy

The national strategy for Carers (*Carers at the Heart of the 21st Century families and communities*) was published in 2008 and set out the Government's priorities for supporting Carers to enable them to maintain a balance between their caring responsibilities and a life outside caring, whilst enabling the person that they support to be a full and equal citizen.

Wirral supplemented this by devising its own strategy taking account of local needs.

In order to achieve the aims of the local strategy, various Sub-Groups of the Carers Development Committee were established, each with their own set of actions.

Although this was effective in some ways, in other ways some Carers felt frustrated that things have not changed for them.

In recognition of this, leaders of the Sub-groups met with the Wirral Carers Association to discuss how to prioritise improvements for Carers, and make sure that the Carers Association became fully involved.

The Department of Adult Social Services arranged an event which was held for Carers at the beginning of November. At that event Wirral Carers agreed that the main priority for them was that, **'Carers will be recognised and respected as expert care partners and will have access to the integrated and personalised services they need to support them in their caring role'** (one of the outcomes in the strategic vision from the national strategy).

To achieve this priority, eight objectives were agreed, linked to a range of actions:

1. A quality assurance system devised and implemented so that following any assessment or other intervention the Carer can return a feedback form commenting on the quality of the intervention.
2. A system established under which someone can be contacted within the

Council when a Carer has not received a promised phone call or email from a staff member

3. A system established in Accident and Emergency units under which Carers are recognised and their knowledge of the person for whom they care is welcomed as part of the admission process
4. A system established so that whenever Carers are asked to participate in a consultation, etc, a copy of that consultation is made available to them
5. A system established so that Carers can have some input into Recruitment and Selection of relevant staff and their staff appraisals
6. A system established so that Carers can see what is written when a joint assessment is carried out (e.g. when they are present and assisting with the assessment of the person for whom they care)
7. Carers can only be assessed by someone who has been trained in Carer issues
8. Carers to be an integral part of any training around Carer issues

A small group of Carers were involved in identifying these objectives as their priorities at the event; the Carers involved and the Department of Adult Social Services would like to know if you agree that these are also important to you.

***If you have any comments about these priorities, or would like to become involved in achieving them, you can do this either by attending the Wirral Carers Association meetings : contact WIRED Carers Team (670 0777) or contact Carol Jones, Carers Development Officer (666 5200).***

## Carers Groups

In our last newsletter, we listed a number of Carers groups across the Wirral offering support etc. If you are a member of any groups which offer any activity/help/support to Carers and have availability, please contact the Carers Helpline and give us the details.

## Wirral Carers Register

This register was launched during Carers Week 2007. The register is a way of linking up and recording all the Carers who live on the Wirral. We know according to the National Census, there are over 37.500 people on the Wirral looking after someone but there is no official record of whom or where they are. This register will ensure Carers receive regular information on services or changes to services that may help with their caring responsibilities.

It will also help the people who plan services and would like to consult with Carers about any changes. We now have over 1000 people registered with us and the number is growing daily. If you look after a child, parent, spouse or anyone who depends on you because of disability or an illness and would like more details of how to register, please call the **Carers Helpline at WIRED on 670 0777 or log onto [www.wirralcarers.co.uk](http://www.wirralcarers.co.uk)**

## The Wirral Carers Emergency Contact Card

Are you caring for someone and wondered what would happen if you had a fall or were taken suddenly ill while you were out or away from the person for whom you care?

The Wirral Carers Emergency Contact Card is here to give you peace of mind should this situation arise. It's a free card for anyone who has caring responsibilities and has someone who depends on them for care and support. You will need to carry the card with you at all times. In the event of you being involved in an emergency, someone can contact the people you have identified on the card to take over your caring role.

It is important that you have a contingency plan in place should you find yourself unable to care for your relative, partner or friend who relies on you because they are ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems.

To receive your Carers Emergency Contact Card you will need to complete a simple registration form. You should identify 2 or 3 people who could be contacted in the event of an emergency; they will need to agree to have their names put on the card and know what sort of help they will be required to provide.

Once you return your application form, the Carers Team at Wired will send out your card.

*For further information please ring;*

**Wired Carers Team 0151 670 0777    Monday – Friday 9.30 am – 4.30 pm**

## Get Into Reading....

...run reading groups at the Lauries Centre, Birkenhead. One of these groups is called the Book Break and is especially for Carers this takes place on Thursday afternoons 1pm – 3pm. This gives Carers, who look after someone, some time to themselves and lets them think about something other than their caring duties for a couple of hours each week.

**Call 07973247707 or email [katemcdonnell@thereader.org.uk](mailto:katemcdonnell@thereader.org.uk)**

## Free Weekend Away Offer

Some very exciting news. The Bond Hotel Group have very kindly offered us a FREE weekend for 2 people to stay at their hotel in St. Annes. This will be the weekend of 25th to the 28th March 2011.

We are offering you the chance to enter into our FREE prize draw to win this fabulous prize which is a Michael Jackson tribute weekend. The weekend includes 3 nights dinner, bed and breakfast including live cabaret every night plus a star tribute act.

All you have to do is call the Carers helpline on 0151 670 0777, between Tuesday 22nd and the 25th February - 2011 - 9am - 4.30pm and give us your name and details. We will then pull the winning name out of a hat. The winner will be notified by 1st March.

Pam and Alan Hollinshead took advantage of the last offer from Bond Hotels for a cheap Carer's weekend last year - *"there was nightly entertainment and accommodation was on a dinner bed & breakfast basis allowing you a free day to explore the beautiful countryside, venture into Blackpool or simply sleep!"*

*"The rooms are well designed, with fully accessible bathrooms, loads of hot water, and bed hoists come as standard. The hydrotherapy pool is very warm and bubbly and all the function rooms are fully accessible."*

For more information go to <http://www.bondhotel.co.uk/>  
(<http://www.bondhotel.co.uk/index.php/bond-hotel-st-annes.html> this is the St Anne's link)"

The Award Winning Specialist Hotel Group for Disabled People  
**Celebrating Carers across the UK**



## Put a spring in your step with this unique offer

Mary Savory and Alex Gibson who are both qualified holistic therapists and have very kindly offered the Carers Team **2 FREE 1** hour treatments each for us to share with you. Mary said "Carers do a wonderful job taking care of others" and she would like to help.

Mary and Alex are offering either reflexology, reiki or a holistic massage and will be delivered locally and date to be arranged.

**If you are interested please call the Carers Helpline on 0151 670 0777 and let us know who you are and which therapy you would like by 4pm 24th February 2011. All names will be put into a draw. The first name pulled out will be offered an appointment.**

## The Cinema Exhibitors Association Card

The Cinema Exhibitors Association Card is a national card for disabled people, which entitles the holder to one free ticket for a person accompanying them to the cinema. To be eligible, the holder must receive Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance or be registered blind.

The card costs £5.50 and is valid for one year. You can get an application form at any participating cinema or download one from the CEA website.

Even if a cinema is not participating in the scheme, it is worth asking whether they offer reduced or free admission to you as the Carer. [www.ceacard.co.uk](http://www.ceacard.co.uk)

**If you have a change of circumstances please contact us on 0151 670 0777.**

**If you visit [www.wirralcarers.co.uk](http://www.wirralcarers.co.uk) and have any ideas or feedback, please contact us.**

**We do appreciate hearing from you. The views and suggestions in this newsletter are those of individual contributors and not necessarily supported by Wired. Wired cannot accept responsibility for goods and services mentioned in this newsletter.**