

the Dudley Carer

Dudley Carers Hub and Wellbeing Service

Welcome to the
Autumn 2023
edition of the
Dudley Carer.

Supporting people who care
for a family member or friend

 Information  Advice  Support



Sign up for our free newsletter and e bulletins call **01384 818723** to speak to an advisor.

PLEASE KEEP US UP TO DATE. If you are no longer a carer, or you do not wish to receive this newsletter in the future, please let us know by phone or email **dudleycarershub@dudley.gov.uk**

Welcome to the Autumn edition of the Dudley Carer newsletter.

Since our last newsletter we have continued to be busy offering a range of support and activities for carers, including information drop-in sessions across the borough, a range of activities during National Carers Week 2023, which included a carers afternoon tea, a day trip to Trentham Gardens and the We Love Carers, Carers Awards.

With many carers struggling financially due to the cost of living we have been able to support over 3,500 registered carers to access advice and financial support through the local Household Support Fund Scheme.

We have also been working with colleagues from the Dudley Disability Service to provide a series of 'Preparing for Adulthood' workshops for parent carers supporting a young person (aged 14 - 24 years) who are preparing to move from children's to adult social care services. Our next workshop will take place on the 20th September and focus on mental capacity.

As we move into autumn we will be continuing to support carers working with a range of organisations and community groups to ensure carers are able to access the right support for them, including our daily Carers Together Drop In at Brett Young Carers Hub providing a warm and safe place to go to and access support.

Please have a read to find out about activities taking place in the next few months, as well as services available to support you and the person you care for.

We have also introduced a monthly e-newsletter and text messaging service to keep you posted on activities and events taking place each month (copies can be provided by post if you prefer).

If you would like to register as a carer and receive regular updates or if you are not sure if you are registered please contact us on 01384 818723 or email dudleycarershub@dudley.gov.uk

You can also complete our online registration form on Dudley's Adult Social Care Portal simply visit <https://adultsocialcare.dudley.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/home> and click 'Your Needs as a Carer'.



Dates for your diary

Tuesday 24th October, 10am-4pm, Carers Health Day – Brett Young Carers Hub, Halesowen

We will be running our first Carers Health Day to support carers to think about their own health and wellbeing, the day will include information, advice support on accessing health screenings, a breast cancer awareness session, mental health awareness, there will also be a range of activities carers can take part in such as hand massage, taster pilates session, and much more. For more information please contact the hub.

Friday 3rd November 2023, 11am-3pm Carers Family Funday

We will be holding a Carers Family Funday on Friday 3rd November at Brett Young Carers Hub, Halesowen. Carers and their families are invited to pop in and join us during the day, there will be a range of outdoor and indoor activities taking place including 'soft archery, hand massage and 'memory lane' reminiscence. There will also be a host of information stalls, and food and refreshments.



Thursday 23rd November 2023, Carers Rights Day

Carers Rights Day is about raising awareness of carers' rights and entitlements, to help carers get the support they need. We are currently working on our own 'Carers Rights Day' event and will send out more information nearer the time.

Carers can find out more about Carers Rights Day at www.carersuk.org

Thursday 21st December 2023, 12.30pm-3pm, Carers Wellbeing Café - Christmas Party

Join us for our Carers Christmas Party at Brett Young Carers Hub, Halesowen, there will be entertainment and activities for you to take part in. Food and refreshments will be on offer for all. Give us a call to book yourself in.

Spotlight on.... Ladies Carers Group

Are you a female carer who would like the support and friendship of other female carers?

Our Ladies Carers Group has been running for nearly 2 years and now takes place every tuesday from 11am onwards at Brett Young Carers Hub in Halesowen. Wellbeing Advisor Tehmina organises the group with regular craft and pilates sessions being held each month, as well as guest speakers, group chat and trips out. It is a safe space for ladies to share their experiences of caring and gain ideas from others. Tasty refreshments are always provided. Recently the group took a trip to the Boundary Mills Outlet for some retail therapy and lunch. The ladies find this group helps their mental health and wellbeing by giving them time away from their caring roles and a chance to relax.

A carer new to the group said:

"My first time here, everyone made me feel welcome. Talking to everyone made me feel good"

Another regular carer said:

"The group is so welcoming and friendly; it is a pleasure to be part of it. I am also finding helpful advice and support. It's lovely to come and have a cuppa and a chat, the regular activities are fun too."



What's On at the Carers Hubs

Brett Young Carers Hub, Old Hawne Lane, Halesowen, B63 3TB.

Carers Together Drop In

Carers can drop in to our daily Carers Together sessions at Brett Young Carers Hub, Monday to Friday 10am - 4pm (excluding bank holidays) and the first Wednesday of each month 5pm – 7pm.

The drop in sessions offer a safe and welcoming place for unpaid carers to speak to an advisor about your caring situation, find out about support available to you and the person you care for or to meet other carers and access some of our activities and groups taking place at the hub. These include:

- **Monday**

Dudley Mental Health Partnership Carers Group, 10.30am – 12.30pm, second Monday of each month

Peer support group for carers who support someone living with mental health. The group is run by carers who are caring or have cared for someone living with mental health difficulties.

- **Tuesday**

Ladies Carers Group, 11am – 1pm, every Tuesday

Providing time out activities and an opportunity to relax, learn something new including yoga quizzes and much more. Our bilingual staff will be able to help you in Urdu, Punjabi & Pothwari. Call Tehmina on 07523 515125

Pre and Post Carers Group, 11am – 1pm, last Tuesday of each month

The Pre and Post carers group is run by carers for carers who are caring for someone through 'end of life' or experiencing bereavement. The group provides social peer support to help through this changing time.

- **Wednesday**

Wellbeing Carer Advice Surgery, 10am – 3.30pm, every Wednesday

Providing one-to-one appointment with a Wellbeing Advisor, who will be able to provide advice and guidance about your caring situation. Carers can pre book an appointment or you can drop in and wait.

Appointments are available outside of these times and at Queens Cross Carers Hub in Dudley on request, please ask a member of the team.

Evening! Care For A Cuppa, 5.30pm – 7.30pm, 1st Wednesday of each month

An evening session providing an opportunity for carers who cannot attend during the day to drop in and speak to a member of the team and meet other carers, our next sessions will include

- **4th October - Slow and Low Slow Cooker Scheme - Meal Planning and Healthy eating on a budget**

Learn about preparing meals on a budget using slow cookers and how this can help to reduce the impact of food costs and food waste. Carers who attend will be provided advice, recipes and may be eligible for a free slow cooker and £50 Asda voucher to get them started (subject to eligibility and availability)

- **1st November - Supporting carers with the Cost of Living**

Learn about support available to reduce the impact of the cost of living, i.e. energy discount schemes, Household support fun payments, welfare benefits, council tax reduction, Leisure Options+.

- **6th December - Christmas Fun**

Dementia Carers Group, 11am - 12.30pm, 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month

Support for carers caring for someone living with dementia, the session is open to both carer and the person they care for.

Memory Lane Café, 2pm, 3rd Wednesday of each month

A relaxed, informal afternoon where you can come along to share stories and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee. You can enjoy bringing memories back to life or just sit and take a trip down memory lane.

- **Thursday**

Tea and IT, 10am – 12.30pm, every Thursday

Free help and advice to get more out of your mobile phone, tablet or laptop or find out about the best tariff's or app's to download for free or the best ways to connect with friends and family online using Zoom, what's app etc. Improve your digital skills or resolve any issues or concerns you may have using the internet or digital equipment. If you do not have access to a mobile, tablet or phone you may be able to access one on loan or free via the service (subject to eligibility and availability) Call Stuart on 07486 380590.

Wellbeing and Relaxation, 1pm – 2pm, every Thursday

Learn how to take some time 'Me Time' through relaxation techniques and breathing exercises or learn something new like drawing or balloon modelling

Young Adult Carers, 3pm – 4.30pm, 2nd Thursday of each month

A place for young adult carers aged 18 – 25 to meet and come together to socialise and participate in activities that will develop personal skills i.e. writing a CV.

Carers Wellbeing Café 1pm – 3pm, 3rd Thursday of the month

A monthly group for all carers and the person they care for providing an opportunity to relax, learn something new or meet other carers.

We are also seeking carers interested in joining the following clubs and groups:

Carers Gardening Club

We would like to start a gardening club at Brett Young Carers Hub, members will help develop the garden area as a place where carers can relax and enjoy the outdoor space.

The next chapter – Supporting carers after caring

We are starting a new group for people who have experienced a change in their caring situation for example the loss of a loved one, or the person you care for has moved away or into a long term residential/care home. The group will provide a warm and welcoming opportunity to share experiences about these changes with others and make new friendships.

If you are unable to leave the person you care for, but would still like to join some of our groups please contact us, as you maybe able to join virtually via MS Teams, we can even provide support to show you how to do this.

Film Friday Club

We have had some carers express an interest in starting a new Carers TV and Film Club, if you are interested in watching and discussing free screenings of modern and classic tv and films please contact us. Bring along a companion, friend or family member, these screenings are here for you and provide a great opportunity to come together and connect with your fellow audience members you don't even need to come to the hub as we can provide a link to join virtually using MS Teams,

Queens Cross Carers Hub, Wellington Road, Dudley, DY1 1RB

We are developing the following groups and activities at Queens Cross Carers Hub.

Wellbeing Carer Advice Appointments

One-to-one appointment with a Wellbeing Advisor or member of the Carers Network Team, who will be able to provide advice and guidance about your caring situation. Appointments must be pre booked to ensure an advisor is available to speak with you. **Please call 01384 818723 or email dudleycarershub@dudley.gov.uk**

- **Tuesday**

Relaxation and Taking Time Out, 11am – 12.30pm and 1pm – 2pm every Thursday

Learn how to take some time 'Me Time' through relaxation techniques and breathing exercises or learn something new like drawing or balloon modelling. **Call Stuart on 07486 380590.**

- **Wednesday**

Knit and Natter, 9.30am – 11.30am, every Wednesday

Join a friendly group of knitters. You can be an expert or beginner everyone is welcome, it's an opportunity to chat in a relax and meet other people with an interest in knitting.

Dominos Club, Wednesday's 5pm – 7.30pm starting September 2023

A new dominoes club for those interested in coming together once a week to play dominoes. You can pair up as buddies, play as a group or as a single. There will be a pause when the dark nights set in during the winter and will restart in the Spring 2024. Please call the Dudley Carers Hub on 01384 818723

We are also able to offer the following activities at both our hubs subject to interest

Pilates for Carers (charges may apply)

Grab a mat and start to stretch those muscles, we have all the equipment you need. Pilates supports your body and can help to:

- Reduce stress and increase energy
- Tone your body
- Improve your posture and balance
- Decrease back pain
- Relieve tension

Beat It - Sound Relaxation For Carers (charges may apply)

A gentle technique using soothing and stimulating sounds to bring about a deep meditative state, giving the listener a complete break from the concerns and responsibilities of everyday life and leaving them feeling refreshed.

Believe To Achieve

In conjunction with Dudley's Adult Learning team, the Carers Hub is planning to run a series of courses for carers who are looking to develop skills around employability whether you are planning to enter the workplace now or in the future. The Believe to Achieve programme is an exciting new initiative to help you get the skills and knowledge you need to get a job or change career.

It offers a selection of two-hour learning workshops, which are free of charge and taught by experienced employability tutors.

For more information or to book places for any of the groups or activities please call 01384 818723 or email dudleycarershub@dudley.gov.uk



Activities and group in the community

Carers Information Session

- Kingswinford Library, 2nd Thursday of each month, 10am - 12pm
Kingswinford Library, Market Street, Kingswinford, DY6 9LG
- Russell Hall Hospital, 5th October, 23rd November 2023, 9am - 2pm
Main Reception, Russell Hall Hospital, Pensnett Road, Dudley, DY1 2HQ

Drop-in sessions where carers can go for a chat or for advice and information to help them in their caring role.

Carers Walking Groups last Thursday of each month

- Mary Steven's Park, 10.30am
Mary Stevens Park, Stourbridge DY8 2AA.
- Steven's Park, 2pm
Steven's Park, Thorns Road, Brierley Hill, DY5 2HR

Friendly carer walking groups at Mary Stevens Park, Stourbridge and Steven's Park, Quarry Bank suitable for all abilities. The walks last for around half an hour and refreshments are available after at cafés in the park. (individuals will need to pay for own refreshments)

Call Mandie on 07714 739883

Carers Walking Group – Saltwells Nature Reserve, 3rd Wednesday of each month from 12pm

- Saltwells Local Nature Reserve, off Coppice Lane, Quarry Bank, Dudley, West Midlands, DY5 1AX

A friendly walking group suitable for all abilities, led by Lee who is a carer himself. The walk lasts for around an hour with the option for refreshments afterwards at the Saltwells Inn (individuals must pay for own refreshments). Call the Carers Hub 01384 818723 or email dudleycarershub@dudley.gov.uk

ALTERNAT+VES

ALTERNAT+VES is a support programme for families affected by a loved one's alcohol and drug dependencies.

Tina and Dave who are carers themselves providing training to families which can transform drug and alcohol recovery.

You can find out more about them and the support they provide at <https://www.alternat-i-ves.org>

Meet the Team - Introducing Abigail Corbett, Young Adult Advisor

Abi is the newest member of the Wellbeing Team, focusing on Young Adult carers aged 18-25 years old. We are very pleased to welcome Abi to the team. In her spare time Abi plays the saxophone and enjoys time with her dog Bonnie.

The Young Adult Carers are supported through either visits at home or college, phone calls or emails and attending the monthly Young Adult Support Group at Brett Young. This group is currently held monthly on the second Thursday of each month from 3pm. In the past they have also been out bowling and undertaken training.

Some of the young adult carers were previously young carers whilst others are just starting their caring journey. Regardless of when their caring journey started, Abi is there to give advice and practical support with applying for college, university, jobs, or apprenticeships. Some may need guidance about what welfare benefits they are now entitled to as adults, help with managing household finances and budgeting. This is a stage in life when carers need to plan how their future will look and ensure they still have their own identity as a person and hopes and inspiration in life are not sacrificed due to the caring role. It is possible to achieve goals in life and be an amazing carer.

Congratulations to Logan Brigdale from the young adult group who has won an award from the High Sherriff of the West Midlands, Wade Lyn CBE DL CD at the "Inspiring Others" Awards. This is an annual event where exceptional members of the community aged 18-25 are recognised for their work, giving time and energy freely to help and inspire others, making a real difference to people's lives. On our recommendation, Logan was nominated by Andrea Goddard, Mayor of Dudley for his work as a young adult carer and his volunteering work.



Volunteering opportunities

We have a number of volunteering opportunities with the Carers Hub and Wellbeing Service, whether you are a carer yourself wanting to develop new skills or someone with a passion for supporting unpaid carers.

We need volunteers to support various roles and groups such as our wellbeing cafés, digital groups and gardening groups to name a few. As a volunteer you will help people visiting Dudley Carers Hubs in Halesowen and Dudley and at events in the community.

If you are interesting in our volunteering opportunities... please call us on 01384 818723 and ask for Gill

Training and Workshops for Carers

All sessions are free to carers. Places are limited and must be booked (unless otherwise stated) via Dudley Carers Hub **01384 818723** or email **dudleycarershub@dudley.gov.uk**

Sessions at

**Brett Young Carers Hub,
Old Hawne Lane, Halesowen, B63 3TB**

New - Building Emotional Resilience

Friday 15th September 2023 10am – 1pm

Develop skills based round the 4 key pillars of emotional resilience for yourself and others to recognize signs of stress and strategies to cope.

Paediatric First Aid

Monday 18th September 2023 10am – 2pm

Delivered by a qualified trainer this is an introduction (non-accredited) session to Paediatric First Aid. Carers will learn about the basic principles of Paediatric first aid, be able to recognise signs and symptoms of choking, demonstrate their ability to give CPR on a child and how to place a casualty into recovery position while awaiting the arrival of the emergency service.

Preparing for Adulthood Workshop – Understanding Mental Capacity

Wednesday 20th September 2023, 10am – 12.30pm

This workshop is for parents carers, caring for a young person aged 14 – 25 years who is moving or has moved from Children's to Adult Social Care Services. The session will focus on understanding the principles of mental capacity, when and why a mental capacity assessment will be completed and how this may impact parent carers.

If you are not able to attend the session at Brett Young Carers Hub, you will be able to join via MS Teams if you wish.

Places are limited and must be booked via Eventbrite <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/preparing-for-adulthood-understanding-mental-capacity-tickets-705494843067?aff=oddtcreator>

First Aid Training

Monday 25th September 2023 10am - 2pm

Delivered by a qualified trainer this is an introductory session (non-accredited) to First Aid. Carers will learn about the basic principles of first aid, be able to recognise signs and symptoms of heart attack, stroke, choking, and will have demonstrated their ability to give CPR and how to place a casualty into recovery position while awaiting the arrival of the emergency service.

Caring For Me and You - Carers Self-Management Programme

**Monday 2nd October – Monday 6th November 2023
11am – 1.30pm**

Delivered by Dudley Empowerment Partnership, this self-management programme offers support to help carers stay well and improve their quality of life by learning skills to address the issues and challenges caring may bring. The programme will help develop confidence and control in the daily management of your own health and caring role, it will help you to plan for the future and set achievable goals.

The course runs for 6 weeks with each session 2½ hours.

For more information or to book a place contact smp@dudleycabx.org if you do not have access to email please call the hub on 01384 818723 and we can pass on your details.

Benefits and Finances

Monday 16th October 2023 1pm – 3pm

Information and advice about welfare benefits available for carers and their families, including

- eligibility and application process for disability benefits (i.e. Disability Living Allowance, PIP and Attendance Allowance)
- carer related benefits (i.e. Carers Allowance, Carers Credit and Carers Exemption from Council Tax)
- means tested Benefits (i.e. Universal Credit and Pension Credit and elements linked to these such as Council Tax Reduction)
- eligibility for free TV licenses and reduced water tariffs.
- advice about Appeals and Tribunals for unsuccessful claims.
- how to apply for other elements connected with caring (i.e. Blue Badges, SMI Council Tax Exemptions)

Planning for the Future

Friday 27th October 2023 1pm – 3pm

Information about Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA's), Wills, Property Ownership including

- managing someone's affairs using LPAs, Appointeeship or Guardianship through Court of Protection, including how to arrange and the costs involved.
- the benefits of getting a person's affairs in order by making a Will, Funeral Plans, expression of wishes.
- How to check what State Pension you will be receiving and how retirement will affect your finances as a carer.

Sessions at

**Queens Cross Carers Hub,
Wellington Road, Dudley, DY1 1RB**

Benefits and Finances

Monday 11th September 2023 1pm – 3pm

Information and advice about welfare benefits available for carers and their families, including

- eligibility and application process for disability benefits (i.e. Disability Living Allowance, PIP and Attendance Allowance)
- carer related benefits (i.e. Carers Allowance, Carers Credit and Carers Exemption from Council Tax)
- means tested Benefits (i.e. Universal Credit and Pension Credit and elements linked to these such as Council Tax Reduction)
- eligibility for free TV licenses and reduced water tariffs.
- advice about Appeals and Tribunals for unsuccessful claims.
- how to apply for other elements connected with caring (i.e. Blue Badges, SMI Council Tax Exemptions)

Planning for the Future

Friday 29th September 2023 1pm – 3pm

Information about Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA's), Wills, Property Ownership including:

- managing someone's affairs using LPAs, Appointeeship or Guardianship through Court of Protection, including how to arrange and the costs involved.
- the benefits of getting a person's affairs in order by making a Will, Funeral Plans, expression of wishes.
- How to check what State Pension you will be receiving and how retirement will affect your finances as a carer.



Sessions taking place at other venues

**Crossroads - Caring for Carers,
494 Wolverhampton Road Oldbury B68 8DG**

Manual Handling Training - 3 hours session

Date to be confirmed for September 2023

“ Do you have to lift or move a loved one as part of your caring role?”

Many carers suffer from back problems and joint pains from helping their loved one in and out of bed, assisting with their mobility, pushing a Wheelchair etc without taking proper care of themselves.

A Manual Handling course will show you the correct way to help or lift a person without putting undue stress on your own joints. You may have been provided with equipment but not shown how to use it properly. This free course will look at the best techniques to use and have a chance to practise them in a safe environment.

To register you interest in the course please call the Dudley Carers Hub on 01384 818723.



**Stourbridge Family Hub,
Forge Road, Stourbridge, DY8 1XF**

Diabetes Self-Management Programme – Type 2 Diabetes

Starting Friday 27th January

Do you have Type 2 Diabetes?

Delivered by Dudley Empowerment Partnership, this self-management programme offers support to people living with Type 2 Diabetes to stay well and improve their quality of life by learning skills to address your symptoms. The programme will help develop confidence and control in the daily management of you own health, it will help you to plan for the future and set achievable goals.

The course runs for 6 weeks with each session 2½ hours.

For more information or to book a place contact smp@dudleycabx.org

if you do not have access to email please call Dudley carers hub on 01384 818723

Cost of Living - support for carers

If you are struggling, we may be able to help

Dudley Carers Hub and Wellbeing Service can provide support to carers who maybe struggling to meet basic day to day living costs such as increased food and energy costs.

We can provide practical help including

- advice on saving money on utilities such as energy.
- applying for eligible welfare benefits and discounts (subject to need and eligibility)
- accessing available grants including Household Support Fund vouchers to purchase essentials i.e. washing machine, mattress, oil filled radiators (subject to need a qualifying criterion)
- support and training to access online services, including learning practical skills and being safe and confident, we may also be able to provide access to a tablet or laptop (subject to need and availability)
- access to our 'Slow and Low' Slow Cooker scheme focused on 'meal planning' and 'healthy eating', including preparing healthy meals on a budget using a slow cooker, carers may also be eligible for a free slow cooker (subject to need and availability) to get them started
- identification of other helpful organisations
- Free Toothbrush Pack Scheme, providing access to dental hygiene for carers and their families and Period Poverty, providing free access period products.

For more information on the support available from the carers hub around 'cost of living' please call 01384 818723 or email dudleycarershub@dudley.gov.uk

Carers can also register with the service by visiting <https://adultsocialcare.dudley.gov.uk>

More information about the cost of living and support available to borough residents is available at <https://www.dudley.gov.uk/council-community/cost-of-living/>



Citizens Advice - Cost of Living Hubs

Citizens Advice Cost of Living Support Hubs have also been opened which can provide help to Dudley residents in need of support.

Citizens Advice found that many people were struggling to meet basic day to day living costs and the climb in energy prices.

These hubs can offer support and information on how to save money and make money stretch further. They also provide practical help relating to food, fuel and access to available grants and funds based on qualifying criteria.

The support hubs are operated by Citizens Advice Dudley & Wolverhampton, and have been commissioned by the Dudley Empowerment Partnership. They are supported by Dudley Council Public Health and the NHS Black Country Integrated Care Board

To visit a hub you must book an appointment between 9.30am – 3pm. Support will only be offered by attending a pre-booked appointment.

Due to significant demand the hubs have implemented the following criteria:

1. Households are allowed to attend up to 3 times. This is for any of the hubs (i.e. 3 times across any hub and not per hub)
2. There needs to be a minimum of 12 days between each appointment
3. If you have attended any of the hubs 3 times and/or not 12 days apart, then please go back and cancel your appointment as you will be declined entry.

What to expect?

When you arrive at a hub you will be greeted by a friendly member of staff. They will first help you complete an assessment to find out your support options. This could include:

- Information on how to save money and make money stretch further.
- Practical help accessing: food, fuel, energy, period products, available benefits, grants and funds (based on qualifying criteria).
- Advice on saving money on utilities such as energy.
- Household vouchers to purchase essentials (subject to need and availability).
- Fuel bank vouchers (pre-payment meters only - subject to conditions).
- Laptop loan referral.
- Identification of other helpful organisations.

Hubs are available

Wednesday Halesowen Library, The Cornbow Centre, 7th Floor, Halesowen, B63 4AJ

Thursday Brierley Hill Methodist Church, 24 Bank Street, Brierley Hill, DY5 3DA

Friday Provision House, 80-81 High Street, Dudley, DY1 1PY

Appointments cannot be booked at the venues and must be done online via <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/citizens-advice-dudley-amp-wolverhampton-61171080013>

For more information visit <https://www.dudley.gov.uk/council-community/cost-of-living/cost-of-living-support-hubs/>

Carers Week 2023



Celebrations for carers week included the Wellbeing Team taking carers and their families on a coach trip.

This year's destination was Trentham Gardens and Shopping Village near Stoke. Despite not getting the sunshine experienced later in the week for the Carers Walk and Picnic in Mary Stevens Park, the weather was kind to us and stayed dry. 34 Carers enjoyed the beautiful gardens and lake at Trentham and some great bargains were bought in the various outlets shops and Boutiques.

For some it was a welcome break to have a change of scenery, buy a coffee and just sit and watch the world go by. The trip gave carers a chance for a few hours respite, either with their loved one or other carers. Everyone also got to experience Tehminas wonderful entertainment and singing on the coach!

"Excellent day out at Trentham Gardens. Nice and relaxing"

"Lovely day out. Enjoyed every minute"

"The stress free environment really helped me to relax"



Dudley Young Carers

The Dudley Young Carers team provide free, confidential one-to-one support with a dedicated worker, education and general wellbeing support, youth clubs, activities in the school holidays and much more.

The aim is to help young carers and young adult carers from Dudley, access the support they need and to take a break from their caring role.

Our Youth Clubs for young carers are an opportunity to take a break from your caring role, play games, take part in activities and make new friends, as well as getting support and advice from our team. Assistance with travel can be provided.

The Dudley Young Carers service is delivered by Crossroads Caring For Carers.

If you would like more information, or to speak to someone about the support we can provide, please call 01384 886429 or send an email to info@crossroads-caringforcarers.org. Alternatively, complete our online <https://www.crossroads-caringforcarers.org/dudley-carers-wellbeing-hub/dudley-young-carers/>

Options+ Leisure Discount Scheme

Registered carers with Dudley Carers Hub and Wellbeing Service can access the councils Options+ Leisure Discount scheme, entitling you to upto 50% at Crystal Leisure Centre, Halesowen Leisure Centre, Duncan Edwards Leisure centre.

You can also receive concessions on tickets for Dudley and Stourbridge Town Halls. 12 month Membership is £5 for adults and £2.50 for under 16's.

For more information visit:

<https://www.dudley.gov.uk/things-to-do/leisure-centres/optionsplus-leisure-scheme/> or call Dudley Carers Hub on 01384 818723



Dudley Energy Advice Line

This council run service offers impartial, up to the minute advice from it's energy advisors on all things home energy. The service can also offer practical support to people who may be in crisis and without any heating.

Advice for your home and situation is on offer, including energy saving advice - to be as energy efficient as possible, advice on tariffs, support with energy debts, and help with replacement boilers and home insulation to qualifying households.

Don't worry about the costs of home energy - get in touch with the service for free information and advice. Call 01384 817086.



Dudley Carers Alliance

Dudley Carers Alliance, is a group where carers and local carer organisations can network in a positive way to talk about issues and support for carers, providing an opportunity to:

- share views, experiences and feedback to local decision makers
- inform and influence local policies and services that impact carers
- discuss and share knowledge of local services

The Alliance welcomes people with an interest in supporting carers, whether they are caring themselves or provide a service for carers, everyone is welcome, but if you are attending from a local organisation we would encourage you to bring a carer who you support with you.

Our next meetings will be

- Tuesday 19th September 2023
10.30am - 12.30pm
- Thursday 9th November 2023
10.30am - 12.30pm

Meetings take place at Brett Young Carers Hub, Old Hawne Lane, Halesowen, B63 3TB or you can join via MS Teams if you are not able to attend the hub.

If you would like to attend please call us

Carers Have Your Say

In partnership with Dudley Carers Alliance we are looking to recruit carers who would like to share their views and experiences and are interested in working with the council and other organisations to shape and co-produce local policies, processes and services for carers and the person they care for. Using carers experiences, ideas and views to develop future services can make a difference for local carers to inform the next strategy and shape support for carers living in Dudley.

If you are interested in being part of this new carers group please register your interest with Dudley Carers Hub

For more information or if you are interested in attending the Carers Alliance for the first time please call 01384 818723 or email dudleycarershub@dudley.gov.uk



The Unicorn Centre

Located near Stourbridge the Unicorn centre is a nationally recognised specialist resource for people with profound and multiple learning disabilities and complex health needs.

The service provides rooms and activities which include:

- 3 Sensory rooms equipped with the latest equipment, including heat and vibration-controlled water beds, fibre optic lighting, bubble tubes and soft mats
- State of the art music room
- Wet and dry art rooms
- Computer suite
- Changing Places facility (also available to the public)

Trained staff deliver

- therapeutic activities such as SMILE - Sensory, Musical, Interactive, Learning Experience; Music Therapy, Makaton sing and sign.
- Intensive Interaction training - enabling communication and social interactivity delivered by accredited Intensive Interaction co-ordinators.
- Independent Living Skills - an introductory 6-week course covering
 - money management and budgeting
 - basic cooking skills and easy recipes
 - home safety, including internet and devices
 - work opportunities and volunteering
 - supported living and getting your own place
- Independent Travel Training



Facilities at the Unicorn centre can be hired by individuals, professionals and service providers subject to approval and risk assessment being in place.

People who are self-funders or have a Personal Health Budget can access the service following an assessment and agreed support plan.

For more information go to <https://www.dudley.gov.uk/residents/care-and-health/dudley-disability-service/adults-with-disabilities/unicorn-centre/>

We Love Carers - Carers Awards

WeLoveCarers Charity celebrated Carers Week by holding its annual Carers Awards Ceremony on the 8th of June 2023 at Halesowen Town Hall.

The Mayor of Dudley and Mayor Consort, Cllr Andrea Goddard and Cllr James Clinton attended with local dignitaries and unpaid carers to honour their peers and supporting professionals who have gone above and beyond in their roles.

The evening was dedicated to all unpaid carers who the charity believe are unsung heroes in society, providing an important role in providing care for those with disabilities. Award winners were presented with unique hand-crafted glassware crafted by the Glasshouse College.

Winners:

- Stepping Up in the Community Award: **Friends of Wollescote Park**
- Exceptional Carer Award: **Ivor Waite**
- Carers Service Award for Adults: **Dudley Carers Hub and Wellbeing Service – Dudley Council and Crossroads Caring for Carers**
- Carers Service Award for Childrens Services: **Dudley Young Carers – Crossroads Caring For Carers**
- Carers Awareness Award: **Lewis Wastell**
- Carer above and beyond Award: **Jennifer Masterman**
- Professional above and beyond Award: **Tracey Dalloway**
- Young Carer Award: **Aleisha Griffin & Millie Thomas**
- General Practitioner Award: **Pedmore Medical Practice**
- Mayor Carer Recognition Award: **Jacqueline Passmore**

Preparations are already taking place for next year's event so if you would like to nominate an organisation , professional or volunteer for next years awards please contact We Love Carers.

The charity's is based at Mary Stevens Centre, Stourbridge and is open to anyone needing advice, information, and support if they are caring for someone. They can drop into the centre, telephone 01384 396626 or email hello@welovecarers.org



Dudley Dementia Advisor Service

Are you a person living with dementia, or caring for someone living with dementia?

Dementia Advisors can support you with information and advice on how to live well with dementia. We can share information on important areas such as

- Understanding a diagnosis
- Health and wellbeing
- Carer support
- Lasting Power of Attorney and will
- Relevant benefits
- Prevention services
- How to access care and support services

You can contact the service on 01384 816039 or email demgate.services@dudley.gov.uk

Fix-A-Home Listed Trader Scheme

The Fix-a-Home scheme is a list of reputable tradespeople to carry out maintenance work in your home, provided by Dudley Trading Standards.

These tradespeople have applied, been invited, or have been recommended by satisfied customers.

It includes only reliable tradespeople who will do a good job at a fair price. All traders go through a selection process and have made certain commitments before being accepted - see our Code of Practice.

Please Note: We should also point out that the price is not subsidised nor discounted to users of this list.

We know things can sometimes go wrong with jobs or repairs, even in the best run organisations. We hope that the traders on our list will make sure that things are put right if this does happen.

Dudley Trading Standards cannot be held accountable for any dispute resulting from the use of a listed trader. Trading Standards cannot accept any liability for, nor underwrite the quality of work done by listed traders.

If you are dissatisfied with any work, please inform the Citizens Advice Consumer Service, so that the matter can be looked into. We will give you as much help as possible to resolve the dispute. <https://www.citizensadvice.org/>

Remember

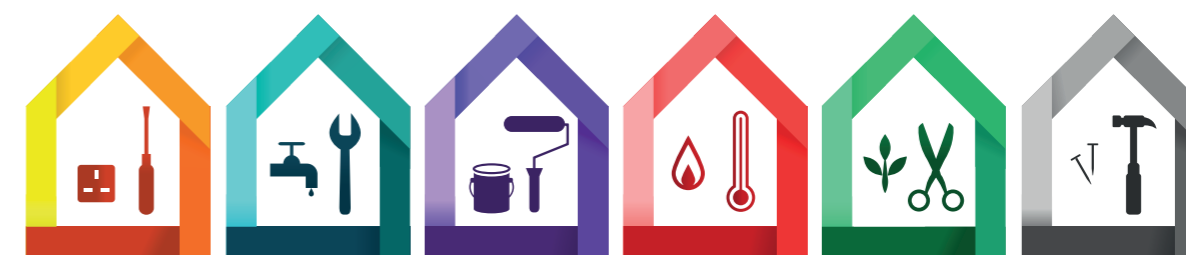
- Always get at least three written quotes that list all the work to be carried out
- If not using Fix-a-Home, beware of traders that only have a mobile telephone number and do not give official business documents that include an address
- Do not pay in advance - only pay when the work is finished and you are satisfied
- Always get a written receipt for any money paid
- Do not choose a contractor just because they offer a generous guarantee. A guarantee will be worthless if the trader goes out of business

Know your rights

- Always ensure you are given pre-contract information detailing the work to be done, by whom, and your cancellation rights if these apply, in writing
- Never allow a trader to force you to sign away your cancellation rights - it is illegal
- Never allow a trader to start work there and then. Give yourself time to think about whether you really want or need the work to be carried out
- Never pay for work in full before it is completed. A legitimate trader will never ask for anything more than a small deposit
- Always ask for a receipt detailing work done. If a trader refuses to do this, do not pay them and contact Trading Standards

A copy of the list is available at <https://www.dudley.gov.uk/business/trading-standards/approved-traders-the-fix-a-home-scheme/>

If you do not have access to the internet please contact Dudley Carers Hub and Wellbeing Service who will be able to provide you with a copy, call 01384 818723 or email dudleycarershub@dudley.gov.uk





IMPROVING ACCESS TO COUNCIL SERVICES

MyDudley platform to launch later in the year

Residents are helping to shape the way council service requests are reported as a brand new platform sets to launch later in the year.

The MyDudley online platform will allow residents to report and request a host of services from Dudley Council, while still being able to access support via face-to-face consultations at Dudley Council Plus or over the phone.

Dudley Council has appointed Granicus to co-design and deliver the new platform. The company is renowned for helping public sector organisations succeed by using cloud-based software solutions to better connect, engage and serve citizens.

The council held two workshops to find out how people like to communicate with the council and picked up on the desire for easy, streamlined and joined up online reporting as well as the desire to retain help in person or over the phone when needed.

The groups came up with the new name and the council will continue to hold engagement workshops as the project evolves to allow for resident input.

The new digital platform will be a cornerstone of the MyDudley approach. Residents will be able to use the platform to self-serve, meaning that those who are digitally able will spend less time waiting to speak to a customer service officer.

Whether a resident needs to book a bulky item collection or pay a bill, they will independently be able to in just a

couple of clicks. This will save customers time and allow them to make a report or request at any time of the day or night, not just during office hours.

Kevin O’Keefe, chief executive of Dudley Council, said:

“This is a really significant step forward for the council, streamlining the way we work and making it even easier for our residents to report and request services from us. We already know that many of our residents like the convenience of being able to pay bills, request a green bin collection or book a tip appointment online.

“The new MyDudley platform co-delivered with Granicus will allow us to extend this ease of access to so many other council services, while still ensuring that our customer service advisers are able to assist residents in person or over the phone where they are needed.”

Ian Roberts, Managing Director of Granicus UK, said:

“We are thrilled to be working with Dudley Council to reimagine and transform the end-to-end experience of residents in engaging with the Council for services while also giving residents the choice in how they would like to communicate.”

The MyDudley platform will improve customer service by providing residents with a seamless, secure and accessible experience across all contact points at whatever time best suits them.

The new five-year contract, which can be extended up to seven years, began at the start of April, with the initial launch of MyDudley expected to take place later this year in the autumn.



Carers - telecare is changing as the digital switchover rolls out.

The UK’s telephone network is changing - you may have heard about this already. Between now and 2025 telephone providers will be moving their customers from old analogue landlines over to new upgraded landline services using digital technology.

Providers will be switching off analogue landline telephone services and replacing them with digital internet protocol (IP) technology which means that phone calls will be made through the internet. Analogue phone lines have been around for decades and are now harder to maintain - making them less reliable.

How will the switchover affect me/what do I need to do?

The good news is – your landline isn’t going anywhere and for most households this change will be straightforward. In fact, many customers are already making the switch when they upgrade to full fibre broadband. Your telephone provider such as Virgin Media O2 or BT will be contacting you before the switchover to check in with you and discuss what you need to do to make sure your service isn’t affected. If you have an internet connection, the change may be as simple as plugging your phone into your broadband router rather than the socket on the wall.

What about telecare devices I have?

If you use one or more telecare alarms from Dudley Telecare Service and you currently have a telecare alarm unit plugged into your analogue phone line you will be affected by this change. After your phone line is switched to a digital service, your current telecare equipment will no longer work. At this point Dudley Telecare Service will need to provide you with an upgraded telecare alarm unit which will work with the new digital technology.

When you are contacted by your phone or broadband provider and offered a digital phone line, arrange for the new line to be installed and immediately let Dudley Telecare Service know the date of your upgrade. They will then provide you with a new unit that will work with your new digital service. They will make sure that the new unit is properly connected or will look at other options with you if reconnection is not possible.

When will I be moving to a digital line?

We do not know when each household will be switched to a digital system. Each telephone provider has their own schedule of works taking place between now until 2025 and they will be in touch with you when they are ready to tell you when your phone line is being upgraded.

I use telecare/ care for someone who uses telecare - can I do anything to support the switch ?

Yes, it is useful for your telephone provider to know that you or the person you care for is what is called a ‘vulnerable customer’ and that you have a telecare alarm unit, which means that you will need additional consideration when they come to switch your line. Please contact your current telephone provider and let them know, numbers for larger providers can be found below. This should allow them to give you time to make arrangements with Dudley Telecare Service for alternative equipment before changing the line to digital.

- BT 0800 800 150
- Virgin Media 0345 454 1111
- Talk Talk 0345 172 0088
- EE 0800 956 6134
- Vodafone 03333 040191
- Sky 0333 7591 018
- Plusnet 0800 432 0200
- Gigaclear 01865 591131

For more information on the switchover visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-transition-from-analogue-to-digital-landlines>. For any enquiries on the switchover and telecare you can call Dudley Telecare Service on 0300 555 2040 or email DudCommAlarms.Dachs@dudley.gov.uk



ADULT CARERS SURVEY 2023

Calling all unpaid carers!

*Help influence government
policy and get your voice heard*

**CARERS
TRUST**



Survey of Adult Carers In England 2023-24

Your opinions and feedback are needed!

Every two years NHS England carries out a national survey of Adult Carers in England, to gather carers opinions and experiences which will inform national and local carers strategies. The next survey will take place between 1st October and 12th November 2023. Councils in England who have responsibility for Adult Social Services, including Dudley will be issuing the survey to carers aged 18 years or over, caring for a person aged 18 years or over on areas such as

- **The amount of social contact you have as a carer**
- **Level of satisfaction of carers with social services**
- **Ease of access to information about services**

Survey's will be sent out to a randomly selected number of carers who are registered with and/or received support from either the Dudley Carers Hub and Wellbeing Service or Adult Social Care Services. If you receive a survey please take the time to complete it as your experiences are valuable in helping improve local services for carers.

If you would like help completing the survey please contact Dudley Carers Hub and Wellbeing service on 01384 818723 or email dudleycarershub@dudley.gov.uk .

If you require any assistance with this correspondence or would like to request an interpreter, translation, large print or audio version, please contact Dudley Council on 01384 813400, 813401, 813470 or email L2L@dudley.gov.uk

Contacting Dudley Carers hub

For advice, information, to join our mailing list or for a list of carers support groups call **01384 818723** email dudleycarershub@dudley.gov.uk visit www.dudley.gov.uk/carers