Issue 17, December 2024

CROSSROADS NEWS

CROSSROADS
Caring For Carers

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Welcome...

Welcome to the December edition of Crossroads News. With Christmas fast approaching and a brand-new year ahead ahead of us, I would like to take this opportunity reflect on the past year.

We have sadly said goodbye to colleagues, with several retirements and the Dudley Carers Wellbeing Service and Community Offer transferring to other providers, but we have also seen many highs.

I'm really pleased with the way that our Day Club is going, making progress in reducing isolation and improving the health and wellbeing of those with care needs and their family carers in Sandwell and surrounding areas. There is never a more important time for this than winter. Our regular carers groups and of course, our care teams out in our communities are also vital in keeping people in good health and spirits over the colder months.

I would like to wish our team members, service users, families, partners and volunteers, a very happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Very best wishes,

Chris

LATEST NEWS

Councillor Taylor Visits Crossroads

We were recently joined by Greets Green and Lyng Councillor, Jackie Taylor, Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Health and Wellbeing.

Cllr. Taylor paid a visit to our Carers Hub, where she had a tour of our facilities and chatted to team members about the help and support that they provide to unpaid carers in the community. She heard all about the care at home that we provide, alongside support for unpaid carers.

The visit concluded with Cllr. Taylor joining Crossroads colleagues and members of their regular carers group for a lunch of turkey with all the trimmings. Here she chatted to local families about the essential support that we provide to help people with their caring role, whist enabling those with care needs to stay in their own homes for longer.
Cllr. Taylor commented, “It was great to be on the ground, meeting people and hearing for myself the work that Crossroads are doing to support family carers and their families.”

We hope Cllr. Taylor can help to spread word about our services and we look forward to working with her in the future.

Goodbye Sandwell Community Offer...

We are sad to say goodbye to the Sandwell Community Offer service. After four very successful years, the service will be delivered by new providers - Murray Hall, Agewell & St Albans - from 1st January 2025. Sarah Jones, Community Navigator, will be leaving Crossroads and joining Agewell.

Luke McCubbin, Services Manager said. “We would like to take this opportunity to thank Sarah for her hard work and dedication to Crossroads over the last 3 and a half years. She has supported countless people in our communities in her roles as a Care Support Worker and Community Navigator. She has also been a regular face helping out at our Day Club and carer groups, LGBTQ+ groups and events. We wish her all the best for the future and every success with Agewell.”

...Hello to CARS

From January 2025, we will be introducing a new service as an enhancement of our Carers Assistance Line. The Crossroads Accelerated Response Service (CARS) will provide the same high-quality services as our well-established Carers Assistance Line, with additional features for unpaid carers and cared for individuals, or those who have recently been discharged from hospital. The service will help people to manage their life and retain their independence.

L-R: Samatha Whitney, Katie Shinton, Lauren Copper and Sarah Jones

Luke McCubbin will manage the service, with Community Responders Samantha Whitney and Lauren Copper delivering support. This will include - providing benefit and winter fuel payment advice, prescription collection, shopping tasks, IT support, and help with online bill payments. They can also accompany people to GP or hospital appointments and arrange medical visits for those struggling with IT or phone systems, as well as offer immediate help through 111. Finally, they can arrange in-home training on equipment use via our trainer, Clare Baker, and supply Winter Warm Packs to carers and cared-for individuals.

December Crossroads Champion

We are pleased to announce our latest Crossroads Champion, the last one of 2024, is... **Amy Wood, Care Support Worker.**

This was not a hard decision to make as Amy has all of the qualities expected of a Crossroads Champion!

Her nominator said, “Amy’s bubbly personality and positivity bring so much light to those around her. Her infectious smile can brighten even the darkest of days, and her ability to make her service users smile is a true gift.”

“Every day, she will go above and beyond to provide comfort, support, and compassion to those in need. Her ability to manage numerous responsibilities with grace and patience is nothing short of inspiring…Whether it’s offering a listening ear, managing medical needs, or simply being there when someone needs her most, she makes an immeasurable difference in the lives of others…she is an invaluable part of the team and a true blessing to those she carers for.”

Wow! Well done Amy, you really are a very deserving winner of this award, keep u the fantastic work.

How to Nominate

Download a Crossroads Champion Award Nomination Form from our website (address below) and give as many details as possible about the outstanding service that has been performed.

Please hand completed nomination forms to our receptionist, or email it to – michelle.oseland@crossroads-caringforcarers.org. **Nominations for our next award are due by Friday 21st March 2025, so get nominating**!

www.crossroads-caringforcarers/crossroads-champion-award

Celebrating the end of 2024!

The last few weeks have seen our carers groups and team members celebrating the end of 2024 in style.

Our Carers Wellbeing & Dementia Group held a fabulous end of year party for carers and their loved ones at the Boars Head World Buffet in Great Barr. Every-one let their hair down to music from singer Vijay, who knows how to please the crowd with their favourite tunes from the past and present! (Photos 1 & 2).

Our Carers Assistance Line team hosted a Christmas dinner at The Oak Tree Centre (pic 3). And thanks to funding, earlier in the festive season, regular carers group members were lucky enough to head to the West End in London to see a performance of Wicked. A brilliant day was had by all! (Pic 4).

Office staff enjoyed a Christmas meal at The Old House at Home in Harborne and our care team got into the spirit of things when they came together in the office for food, music and lots of laughs! (Pics 5 & 6).

Fundraise For Us in 2025!

As a charity, the work that we do to support unpaid carers is made possible through the funding that we secure and is supported by generous donations.

Will 2025 be the year that you take part in a fundraising activity or challenge, such as a sponsored walk, marathon or even a sky dive? Why not consider collecting your donations for Crossroads?!

We will support you and if we can support you with setting up a fundraising page and with promoting your event.

If you would like to discuss any ideas, please email Vicky Marshall on vicky.marshall@crossroads-caringforcarers.org.

Office Christmas & New Year Office Hours 2024-25

Tues 24th Dec 2024: Open as usual, 8.30am - 4.00pm

Weds 25th Dec - Thurs 26th Dec: CLOSED

Fri 27th Dec – Tues 31st Dec: Open as usual, 8.30am - 4.30/4pm

Weds 1st Jan 2025: CLOSED

Thurs 2nd Jan 2025: Open as usual, 8.30am - 4.30pm

Out of hours number - 07968 219850