

Carers of East Lothian Newsletter

April 2024

Welcome to the first edition of the new Carers of East Lothian Newsletter. The newsletter is for unpaid carers and will be sent three times each year. We hope that the newsletter keeps you up to date with relevant and important information for unpaid carers as well as keeping you in the loop with what we are up to as an organisation.

Good news for CoEL



**EXCELLENCE
FOR CARERS**
Carers Trust Quality Award

Carers Trust Excellence for Carers Award

We are thrilled to announce that Carers of East Lothian have successfully achieved the Carers Trust Excellence for Carers Award. The award follows a rigorous assessment of CoEL's services to unpaid carers across East Lothian.

The assessment report acknowledged a person-centred approach, a focus on improving the lives of carers and a genuine partnership approach with carers as real strengths of the organisation. Carers Trust assessors found strong evidence of good service provision provided to meet carer needs, outcomes and interests.

Carers Trust remarked on the dedication and values of CoEL's staff team, management team and Trustees. A genuine can do attitude was observed where the team sought opportunities to overcome challenges and carers were observed to be at the heart of all services and all service developments.

We would like to express our gratitude to the focus group of unpaid carers who contributed to the assessment. Carers Trust reported that members spoke incredibly positively about Carers of East Lothian, articulating that they felt like equal partners in the organisation and that being part of the organisation gave them a genuine voice.

To read more about the award that we have won: [Link to Web Article](#)

Photo credit: Louise Anne Kennedy

More news

David Binnie appointed as Carers Representative of the Integration Joint Board (IJB) for East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP).

Carer Representative

David Binnie appointed Carer Representative for **East Lothian Integration Joint Board**



David's role as the Carers Representative is to ensure that the views and interests of unpaid carers are taken into account by the IJB, which is responsible for planning, resourcing and overseeing the delivery of integrated health and social care services in East Lothian. He will also work closely with other IJB members, HSCP staff and partner organisations to promote and improve the support available for carers.

We are very pleased to hear about David's appointment as we know that David has extensive experience in the field of caring, including his own lived experience of unpaid caring and as former Chair of Carers of East Lothian.

To read more: [Link to web article](#)

Carers Survey 2024

Thankyou so much to those of you who contributed to our Carers' Survey 2024. We received nearly 200 responses from people with a huge variety of caring roles. This is a great opportunity for us as an organisation to learn from you about what it really means to be an unpaid carer. We appreciate the time that you gave to this. We are currently working through the responses so that we can present what we have learnt to our Board, our staff and our Carers Panel.

One entry has now been randomly selected and they have been informed that they have won a £100.00 voucher.

Carers Survey 2024 Now Closed

Thankyou for your
feedback!



☎ 01316650135

✉ centre@coel.org.uk

Welfare Guardians

Date: Thursday 18th April 2024 **Time:** 10AM-12PM

Location: Brunton Hall, Musselburgh

There is also a contact email address for Private Guardians:

awiqueries@eastlothian.gov.uk

Are you a Welfare Guardian or looking to become a Welfare Guardian?

East Lothian Mental Health Officers team are holding a session in April to answer queries about the renewal of guardianship process, adding a substitute guardian, and how to find a solicitor who will undertake this specific type of work. Guardians are welcome to attend with specific questions or just to listen to the conversation. There will be a chance to chat too.

CoEL Charity Partner of the Year

We were absolutely delighted earlier this year that the monthly networking club Love Your Business chose Carers of East Lothian as their charity partner for 2024 to help us raise even more awareness of the services and support we offer and to raise funds too by donating a percentage of their event ticket sales.

Love Your Business which was founded in 2018 by Michelle Brown to help business owners build their network and share contacts, referrals and ideas, has supported various charities and social enterprises over the years.

We are thrilled to embark on this exciting partnership with them this year.



Adventure Wellbeing Group

Venturing Out have launched their East Lothian Carers' Adventure Wellbeing Group! This group will be able to access a year of adventurous outdoor activities. They aim to offer unpaid Carers, of people aged 18+, a break from the caring routine, a chance to meet other Carers and time out to focus on their health & wellbeing.

For more information about the activities that are on offer: [More information](#)

Do you care for someone living with dementia?

CoEL are collaborating with partner organisations in East Lothian to offer support to carers of people living with dementia. We have recently asked for input from people with lived experience via a survey and received some very helpful input. We would love to hear from anyone with lived experience of caring for someone with dementia who would like to be involved in the development of this work.

If you are interested, please contact Gemma on gemma@coel.org.uk






Upcoming One Off Sessions with CoEL

Would you like to be involved in a photography exhibition in Carers Week 2024?

Join CoEL's Louise to learn about how photos can tell stories, as well as some introductory photography techniques. This session will run twice, so carers can choose which session they would like to attend.

Attendees will need to bring their own phone or camera to participate in the session.

To request a space on this session: [Email CoEL](mailto:centre@coel.org.uk)







ALPACA TREK FOR YOUNG AND ADULT CARERS

Join CoEL and the Young Carers Service as we trek with the alpacas.

VENUE: John Muir Alpacas, Dunbar
DATE: Monday April 15th
 The event will run between 10am - 1:30pm

To sign up for your space, please contact CoEL:

 **01316650135**
 **centre@coel.org.uk**

Walk with a Countryside Ranger

Join Gemma from CoEL and Leigh from the Countryside Rangers for a gentle, interesting walk from Harbour to Harbour, followed by refreshments and a beach litter pick if participants if people are keen.

To request a space on this session: [Email CoEL](mailto:centre@coel.org.uk)




Would you like to be involved in a photography exhibition for Carers Week 2024?

If so, join CoEL's Louise at a photography workshop. Learn about how photos can tell stories and some simple photography techniques. During the session, you will try your hand at taking some photos. No previous experience required, you'll just need to bring a camera/ camera phone.

Dates/ Times : Wednesday 3rd April 11:00 - 12:30
 or
 Wednesday 17th April 17:00 - 18:30
Location: East Linton Village Hall

To sign up for your space on one of the sessions, please contact us on:

 **01316650135**
 **centre@coel.org.uk**

Intergenerational Alpaca Treks

Following the success of this event in 2023, we are repeating our intergenerational alpaca walks.

Team up with a young carer to trek with an alpaca in the fabulous surroundings of John Muir alpacas.

To request a space for an adult carer: [Email CoEL](mailto:centre@coel.org.uk)





Harbour to Harbour (Cockenzie to Port Seton) walk for carers

Enjoy an interesting walk with other carers. Led by East Lothian Countryside Ranger Leigh McCrum, accompanied by CoEL's Gemma.

Date: Monday 22nd April, **Meeting time:** 10.00am
Walk length: 1.5 hours
 (at an easy pace and inclusive of time for warm drinks at the end of our walk).

To sign up for your space, please contact CoEL:

 **01316650135**
 **centre@coel.org.uk**

Seasonal Yoga for carers (online)

We will be trialling online seasonal yoga for carers. If this session proves popular, we may run a course of sessions later in the year.

Serena has 39 years experience as a nurse and has been practicing yoga since 2018. She started practicing to help her with pain management. She now feels the best she has in years and attributes lots of that to yoga. She decided to train as a Seasonal Yoga teacher during the pandemic.

Seasonal Yoga is a practice that aligns with the changing energies of nature and the seasons. It's designed to improve physical strength and flexibility, providing balance, harmony, and an enhanced sense of well-being. We are really excited to see how this first session goes. Why not come along? To request a space: [Email CoEL](mailto:centre@coel.org.uk)



**SEASONAL YOGA TASTER
SESSION FOR UNPAID CARERS**

No previous experience of yoga is required to participate in this session.

INSTRUCTOR: Serena Liddell
PLATFORM: Zoom (link sent on sign up)
DATE: 29th April 2024
Time: 7:00pm - 8:00pm


To request a space on this session, please contact us on:
 **01316650135**  **centre@coel.org.uk**

Upcoming courses with CoEL

3 week Mindfulness Course (evening sessions)



In late 2023, CoEL's very own Carer Support Worker Claire Thomas led a mindfulness course for carers. This was positively received and we will therefore run a second course in May 2024.

To request a call with further information about this course, please: [Email CoEL](mailto:centre@coel.org.uk)



**TRAUMA INFORMED PARENTING
COURSE FOR PARENT CARERS
(ONLINE)**

TRAINER: Suzanne Scott,
Trauma Informed Parenting
PLATFORM: Zoom (link sent on sign up)
DATE: Session 1 - 22.5.24
 Session 2 - 29.5.24
Time: 10:00am - 12:00pm

To request a space on this 2 session course, please contact us on:
 **01316650135**  **centre@coel.org.uk**



3 week mindfulness group for unpaid carers

VENUE: Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre
DATES: Tuesdays 7th, 14th, 21st May
TIME 5:30pm -7:00pm
 LIGHT REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED

To sign up for your space, see below:
 **01316650135**  **centre@coel.org.uk**

Trauma Informed Parenting Course (Online)

We are delighted to be partnering with the charity Trauma Informed Parenting who are offering CoEL a two part course for parent carers. The sessions will cover how to manage children's challenging behaviours by applying a trauma informed approach.

Staff and Volunteer News



Suzie

Staff Changes - Musselburgh Support Groups says “Goodbye Suzie and Hello to Kirsteen!”

After supporting Musselburgh Support Group for nearly six years and over a 100 carers in the Musselburgh area, Suzie Q is now planning to concentrate more on parent/carer support at Carers of East Lothian.

Musselburgh Support Group provides a safe and happy space for unpaid carers to meet up monthly on the last Wednesday morning of the month at the

Musselburgh Education and Learning Centre (Meca) at 10am. The group offers carers peer support, wellbeing activities, trips and a break from caring.

Suzie is sad to be leaving this group, but is delighted Kirsteen Powell will continue to facilitate and support the group. No doubt there will be new ideas and opportunities arising for carers, along with continued care, support and compassion currently provided.

Suzie and Kirsteen hosted the last session together on Wednesday 29 March and Kirsteen will support the group from Wednesday 24 April at 10am at the Meca.



Kirsteen

Spotlight

Each issue we will spotlight one staff member and one volunteer to help you get to know our team. This month, introduce Catherine, our Volunteer and Training Coordinator and Carol, our Art Group Volunteer.

What is the best thing about your role?

The people I get to work with. Our volunteers never fail to amaze me with their compassion and genuine drive to help others, and the same is true of my colleagues in the staff team.

Describe a day in the life of a Volunteer and Training Coordinator.

No one day is the same – it’s a really varied role. One day I might be delivering carer awareness training, another I might be recruiting new volunteers. My favourite thing is catching up with our volunteers for their ongoing support and supervision – I love to chat about what they’ve been up to.

Why Volunteer with CoEL?

CoEL is a really friendly and welcoming team, and volunteering with us is a great way to meet new people, use existing skills and develop new ones. We have a wide range of roles to suit different interests and backgrounds, and we’re always keen to hear ideas for new ones. We’re a Carer Positive ‘exemplary’ employer, which means that any volunteer with caring responsibilities can expect understanding and flexibility from us. ([Email Catherine](#) if you are interested in Volunteering with us)

About me...

I’m originally from Northumberland but fell in love with Edinburgh and the Lothians when I moved up to study 13 years ago. I have a 20-month-old son and a 7-year-old standard poodle – it’s hard to know which one keeps me on my toes more!

I love...

Food - I love cooking, eating, talking about cooking and eating...I especially like to try new things from different cultures.

I really don’t like...

The requisite exercise to balance the life of a foodie. Sigh.



Catherine

Carol - Art Group Volunteer



Carol volunteers on our Caring Spaces Art Project. She supports CoEL by helping group members to feel at ease and comfortable, contributing to the overall enthusiasm and positivity in the room and making sure everyone has plenty of tea and biscuits. Carol is very creative and a perfect fit for volunteering with this group. We want to thank Carol enormously for her valuable support for CoEL. Here is an example of the beautiful work that emerges from the group.



Vacancies at CoEL

We currently have two vacancies at CoEL for an Admin and Finance Manager and a Hospital Link Carer Support Worker.

Admin and Finance Manager

- Part time role
- Haddington / hybrid
- Closing 5th April 2024
- 24 – 28 hours per week.

Job Purpose: To provide administrative, operational and financial support, to the core work of the organisation. To effectively manage the Admin Team to achieve this.

For more information about this role, please click: [this link](#)

Hospital Link Carer Support Work

- Part time
- £31,842 – £32,821 pro-rata
- Haddington / hybrid
- Closing 5th April 2024
- 21 hours per week

Job purpose: Identify, support and signpost unpaid carers in a ward setting at East Lothian Community Hospital in Haddington, ensuring carers are well placed to act as equal partners in care.

For more information about this role, please click: [this link](#)



Regular Support Groups through CoEL

CoEL run a wide variety of regular support groups. See details on the next page for more details. If you are interested in joining one of these support groups, please contact us on 01316650135/ centre@coel.org.uk

Support Groups and Other Group Activities for Carers

April 2024

We run a number of monthly support groups across the county. These are a great opportunity to meet other people in the same situation, to share experiences and receive support from our Carer Support Workers. Groups are informal and everyone is welcome.

Dunbar Support Group

When: Second Wednesday of each month at 10:30am to 12:00pm

Where: The Stables, Belhaven Church, Dunbar

Musselburgh Support Group

When: Last Wednesday of each month at 10:00am to 11:30am

Where: Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre, Haddington Road, Musselburgh

North Berwick Support Group

When: Second Tuesday of each month at 10:30am to 12:00pm

Where: The Nether Abbey Hotel, North Berwick

Men Who Care (for male carers with a focus on outings and activities)

When: Second Thursday of the month

Where: please contact Raj on 07483390080 or email raj.singh@coel.org.uk

Carers of People with Mental Health Issues

When: Last Tuesday of each month at 5:00pm to 6:30pm

Where: Port Seton Community Centre, Port Seton

SPACE - Parent Carer Support Group (particularly parents of children with autism/ADHD)

When: Second Tuesday of each month at 6:00pm to 7:30pm

Where: Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre, Haddington Road, Musselburgh

Online Support Group

When: First Tuesday of each month at 12:30pm to 1:30pm

Where: Online

Other Regular Group Activities

Care to Sing singing group for carers

When: Every Wednesday at 1:30pm to 2:30pm

Where: East Lothian Community Hospital, Haddington

Caring Spaces Art Group

When: Fourth Wednesday of each month at 10:15am to 12:15pm

Where: Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre

Care to Create craft group for carers

When: Third Friday of each month at 10:00am to 12:00pm

Where: Haddington Day Centre, Haddington

Please contact us on the details below if you are interested in attending any of these groups:

Carers Rights

Adult Carer Support Plan

All unpaid carers have the right to request an Adult Carer Support Plan. The plan is an opportunity to express your feelings and needs as a carer and talk about how caring affects you. The aim is to find out what impact your caring responsibilities have on your life and look at ways to support you in your caring role.

Completing a plan is entirely up to you. You can complete the form with help from a Carer Support Worker at Carers of East Lothian, with help from the Local Authority (East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership) or by yourself.

The process starts with a conversation about your caring role and what matters to you. The plan sets out your support needs and personal outcomes. It also covers emergency and future care planning and whether support should be provided as a break from caring.

If you would like more information about the Adult Carer Support Plan, please: [Email CoEL](#)



Carers Leave Act

From 6 April 2024, employees will be entitled to unpaid leave to give or arrange care for a 'dependant' who has:

- a physical or mental illness or injury that means they're expected to need care for more than 3 months
- a disability (as defined in the Equality Act 2010)
- care needs because of their old age

The dependant does not have to be a family member. It can be anyone who relies on them for care.

Employees are entitled to carer's leave from their first day of work for their employer. Their employment rights (like holidays and returning to their job) are protected during carer's leave.

Employees can take up to one week of leave every 12 months. A 'week' means the length of time they usually work over 7 days. For example, if someone usually works 3 days a week, they can take 3 days of carer's leave. They can either take a whole week off or take individual days or half days throughout the year.

For more information about Carers Leave: [Link to Gov UK information](#)

Carers Week - 10 - 16 June 2024



Carers Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring, highlight the challenges unpaid carers face and recognise the contribution they make to families and communities throughout the UK. It also helps people who don't think of themselves as having caring responsibilities to identify as carers and access much-needed support.

The campaign is brought to life by thousands of individuals and organisations who come together to provide support for carers, run activities, highlight the vital role carers play in our communities and draw attention to just how important caring is.

This year the theme is 'Putting Carers on the Map' highlighting the invaluable contributions of carers across the UK and ensuring their voices are heard loud and clear. Together we want to help increase the visibility of the carers among politicians, employers and throughout our communities. And by raising awareness we hope they will better recognise the challenges unpaid carers face and help them access the support they deserve.

CoEL will host a variety of events across the week. These will be promoted in May 2024. Ensure you are signed up to our mailing list for updates about these events: [Mailing List Sign Up](#)

With thanks to...

Michelle Brown and her siblings who raised money for CoEL through their February challenge.

Jude Gibson for her generous donation to the organisation.

All other individuals who have recently made donations to CoEL's work.

These donations support us to continue our work with carers.

Future Newsletters

You can ensure that you are signed up to receive our future newsletters via email by signing up to our mailing list [Mailing list sign up link](#)

The CoeL Newsletter will be issued 3 times a year.

Do you have an idea for something you would like to see in our newsletter that you think would be of interest to carers? If so, please contact Gemma on gemma@coel.org.uk

The deadline for sending information for the next issue is 28th June 2024.

Thankyou for reading

