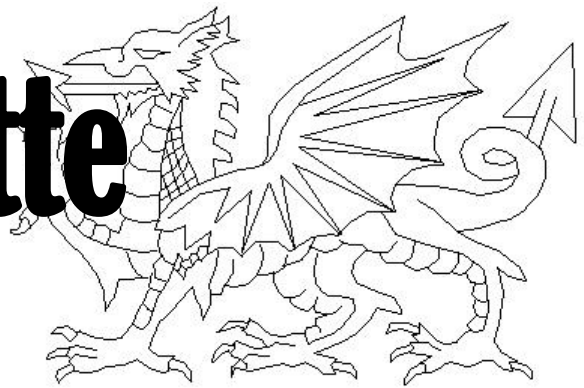


Carers Gazette

News and Views from around Pembrokeshire

Issue 22 - March 2008



Thanks for all the welcome back messages that I've had since my return from South Africa. I had a fantastic time while I was away with a huge variety of different experiences. Now I'm back with renewed energy, ready for the challenge of improving carers' lives in Pembrokeshire!

But I can't do it on my own and need help from **you**. One of the main priorities is to make sure that carers are recognised for what they do and it's important to get carers' voices heard. The decision makers in both health and social care are keen to ensure that carers are well represented at all levels of planning and there are a number of vacancies for carer reps on various groups.

If you are already a carer rep or you are interested in finding out more about what being a carer rep entails why not come along to PAVS on Tuesday 8th April from 11 to 1. Please contact Louise or Sally at PAVS on 01437 769422 with your details.

An example of a carer rep position waiting to be filled is the Building Strong Bridges Project as follows:-

The Building Strong Bridges Project Steering Group is looking for a carer representative to attend their quarterly meetings. The Steering Group is multi-agency and looks to provide guidance and support for Michelle Copeman, the Health and Social Care Facilitator, based in PAVS, and to provide a steer for the project. The aim of Building Strong Bridges is to strengthen partnership working between the Voluntary Sector and the NHS in Wales. Partnership Working is the core principal for the delivery of the Welsh Assembly Government's policies and plans.

For more details about the Building Strong Bridges Project, or to find out more about becoming the Carer representative to this group, please contact Michelle Copeman at PAVS on 01437 769422 or email michelle.copeman@pavs.org.uk



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We would like to hear from you if you would like any carers' issues included in the Carers Gazette or if you have any ideas for improvement. Please send your comments to the address below. The next deadline for articles is 8th May 2008. Send them and your pictures to:

Carers Gazette
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FREEPOST SWC4881
36-38 High Street
Haverfordwest
Pembrokeshire
SA61 2ZZ
or email :
louise.raine-lower@pavs.org.uk

This newsletter is also available to view and download at www.pavs.org.uk/carers. Alternatively, if you would like to receive this newsletter via e-mail rather than post, or if you are no longer a carer and you do not wish to receive further copies, please feel free to contact Sally Davies on: sally.davies@pavs.org.uk or 01437 769 422.

Carers News



Carers Week 9 – 15th June 2008

Yes it's still February but it's not too soon to start looking forward to Carers Week in June. Carers Week is taking place between 9th and 15th June and the theme this year is 'Carers can't afford to be ill'. Enclosed in this newsletter is a letter from the organisation 'Carers Week' asking for support from carers to help them to campaign about carers issues and bring about some much needed changes. If you would like to be involved please return the slip or reply via the internet to Carers Week.

In Pembrokeshire there will be a number of different events including a Carers Day which will be held on Thursday June 12th. More details about this day will be sent out in the next newsletter. If you have any ideas on what you would like to see at the event please contact Sally Davies on 01437 771196.

Carers Rights Day, 7th December 2007

There are over 6 million carers in the UK, who provide support to their chronically ill, disabled or frail partners, relatives and friends. The care they provide is unpaid. It is estimated that their work saves the state £87 billion every year – equivalent to the total annual spend on the NHS.



The day was opened by Ann Berry from Pembrokeshire Carers Outreach and chaired by Cllr Sian James. Beth Evans from Carers UK gave a very interesting presentation on the Work and Families Act 2006 which has extended rights to carers for

Carers Rights Day was jointly organised by Pembrokeshire Carers Outreach and Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services (PAVS) and was held on Friday 7th December in Albany Hall, Haverfordwest.

Over 50 people attended the day, including Carers, Support Groups, voluntary and statutory staff members. The aim of the day was to inform carers of the benefits and services available to them, with particular emphasis on caring costs, the rights that help carers remain in work and ensuring all carers get the correct benefits and entitlements.

The event was endorsed by Stephen Crabb, MP who said "I am really pleased to be supporting Carers Rights Day again this year. I believe that carers are the unsung heroes of the social care system. Their quiet contribution is absolutely vital in assuring quality of life for the most vulnerable in our society.

We owe them an enormous debt and I am grateful to the Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services & Pembrokeshire Carers Outreach for the part they are playing in raising the key issue of caring costs in Haverfordwest on Friday."

flexible working patterns and leave arrangements. This was followed by 2 carers, Maureen Canton and Nicole van Schie sharing their experiences of work and caring. Question Time to a panel comprising Cllr Sian James, Pembrokeshire's Carers Champion; Paul Davies, Assembly Member for Preseli Pembrokeshire; Steve Lewis, Princess Royal Trust for Carers & Liz Blazey, Pembrokeshire County Council, and assisted by Carol Mason, the Carers Representative to the Local Health Board, took place before a lovely festive lunch prepared by Sandy Williams, a Pembrokeshire carer who runs her own catering business.

Carers Forum

Question from Jan Hartzell:

Please provide observations on government association with UNUM provident – a company that has been described as an 'outlaw company', and has operated in an 'unlawful fashion' for years. According to press reports, since their involvement in the DWP, the success rate for DLA appeals has dropped from some 50% to 30%.

Paul Davies replied, saying he had looked into it the day before, and this is a Californian Company and years ago it was found guilty of dealing fraudulently. The UK government has used them

Carers News

to refigure the Dept for Work and Pensions (DWP). He is concerned with this company's links with fraudulent activity and that the government has asked them to set targets to get people off disability living allowance and back into work. It is always worrying when targets are involved in this kind of work. Jan said that it is reported that DWP officials are receiving bonuses for turning down appeal applications and this is a worry. Paul Davies said he was concerned and he would continue to make his own enquiries.

Question from John Woodham:

I have been told that during school years disabled children have regular health checks. On leaving school patients or carers are expected to make appointments with their GPs. Many are unaware of this. The GPs however, are paid in advance of the health check, whether they happen or not. How can this be right?

Sian James replied, saying there should be an automatic referral.

Carol Mason added Mencap ran a campaign for automatic recalls for anyone on their register. She didn't think Doctors should be paid in advance. Both Sian and Carol will take this forward to the LHB board meeting.

Question from Jane Sanders:

Why can't carers have a flu jab at the same time as their cared for? It makes it very difficult if 2 appointments have to be booked.

Sian James replied saying each GP practice is an individual organisation with its own protocol. However, if you have a complaint you can complain directly to the LHB. They have very few complaints and if they don't know about the problems it is very difficult to resolve them. Sian and Carol encouraged people to make a formal complaint if they had experienced problems.

Nicole van Schie added in her experience, it was much easier to submit a complaint to the local authority whose complaints procedure was widely available.

Paul Davies said if anyone was having a problem complaining to any organisation then please let him know and he is more than happy to intervene.

Sian James said there should be a leaflet and poster in all GP surgeries but often people don't feel comfortable complaining about their GP and suggested contacting the Community Health Council in Milford Haven in the first instance.

Question from Lyndsay Bone:

Trefin satellite surgery has closed and so patients have to try and get a home visit which is almost impossible to get a Doctor to come out.

Paul Davies said this is something he is very concerned about.

Sian James added this has implications for A&E because if the GP doesn't come out it usually results in a 999 call. However, the emphasis is on urgent care and providing support across the board to make sure people get the help they need at the right time.

Carers own stories:

Maureen Canton

Maureen started caring at the age of 13, for her newborn sister and younger brother. Her mum had a nervous breakdown which was probably post natal depression. So she learnt to juggle her time – school allowed her to do her homework at lunchtime and 2 aunties would look after the baby in the day time. Maureen's evenings were spent looking after the baby, cooking, cleaning and ironing. The neighbours also helped whilst dad worked.

Her younger brother went everywhere with her, even courting! They moved to Pembrokeshire when she married and she set up her own business. Being self-employed is a great way to work and care.

She was self-employed for 30 years, her caring role altered, her father-in-law had died but then her mother-in-law became ill and Maureen's daughter went to University.

Someone then asked if Maureen would work part-time as a shop manager in Haverfordwest on a temporary basis for 3 months. Time went on and the business changed hands, Maureen was forced to work full-time and things became very tough. Maureen was not even given permission to collect a prescription from the chemist during work time. She was still caring for 2 parents when her husband became ill and ended up in intensive care in Withybush all night. She still had to go and open up the shop and stay there until managerial relief arrived. That was the final straw and Maureen handed in her notice. In hindsight, she should have taken them to tribunal.

Carers who were unable to attend the day can obtain further information by contacting Sally Davies at PAVS on 01437 769 422

Carers News

Caring costs and employment

As an unpaid carer of my school age son, recently come into employment, I have been asked to give a short talk about the costs of caring at the Carer's Rights Day.

The caring costs are manifold. Firstly in my case there were financial costs. To accommodate my son's need for care I worked as self employed, but I had to fit the work around the care needs and so the income was minimal. We have lived for years on a budget of £ 30 per week for food, outings, presents etc. Looking back on it now I don't know how we managed it.

There are also emotional costs. Feeling guilty for wishing some time to myself and for being unable to improve family life, avoiding and preventing extreme difficulties. Being isolated and unappreciated is a result of working from home and caring at home too.

My physical health has often been affected by being a carer 24/7. Frequently exhausted, run out of energy causing backache, headache etc. For me the way to deal with that was regular support

from aromatherapy and homeopathy.

Since we have a diagnosis, and support from Social Services through Direct Payment together with being employed by PAVS the level of caring costs have come down. My income has increased, we now have more to spend on food etc each week. I feel more part of the rest of society, appreciated and part of a team. I even spend time on socializing as well as being in a job away from home. This new situation has made me look for alternative ways of care for my son and as a result his world has expanded too and he also benefits from it in spite of the resistance.

I would say making the decision to go into employment and work away from home was not an easy one, but I am glad I have taken the step. For me the costs of caring have come down since I am in a job.

Nicole van Schie, mother of son with Asperger syndrome.

Pembrokeshire Crossroads – Caring for Carers

Pembrokeshire Crossroads is pleased to announce it is moving offices at the beginning of March. We are moving to 5 Dark St, Haverfordwest. For those who don't know who Pembrokeshire Crossroads are, we are a voluntary organisation based here in Pembrokeshire and our aim is to provide a respite service for carers in Pembrokeshire. We do this by providing a qualified and experienced Care Support Worker to take over the caring roles which would be completed whilst the unpaid carer is having time to be themselves.

We are a charity and this is led by a group of trustees who have either first hand caring experience or business skills to enable the charity to develop. The charity is managed by a scheme manager and is supported by administrative staff who are involved in the assessment, finance and management of staff.

Day Centre

In March we are anticipating opening a day centre in Milford Haven, this is designed to ease the

pressures of caring for a person with Alzheimer's or dementia. The session will run on a Saturday and the times are 10am-4pm. Lunch, teas and mid morning and afternoon snacks will be provided along with activities which are based purely on the capabilities of each person. The ethos behind this is to enable carers to have a break at weekends.

Coffee Morning

On Easter Saturday (22.3.08) we are holding our annual coffee morning at St Davids City Hall from 10am until 12.30pm. There will be a raffle, various stalls eg, book stall, Easter egg, cake stall, bottle stall, plant stall. This is a popular and well supported event – all welcome.

If you would further information on the services available then please ring Pembrokeshire Crossroads on 01437 764639.



Carers News

PRT Pembrokeshire Carers Centre - Adult Services

At a ceremony at the Ivy Bush Hotel, Carmarthen, Ann Berry, chair of PCO accepted a cheque from the South Wales (Western Division) Freemasons towards furtherance of the work of the Carers Centre. At the same ceremony she also accepted a cheque from the Cleddau Lodge, Haverfordwest, on behalf of Young Carer Services. Pembrokeshire Carers Outreach is most grateful for both cheques.

Guest speaker at the AGM in November was Cllr Roy Thomas, Mayor of Haverfordwest. Three trustees who completed their three year term of office were re-elected. They are Dr E David, Mrs A.D. Tunbridge and Mr G. Swainson.

Pembrokeshire Carers Outreach, Pembrokeshire Branch, Carers Wales and PAVS joined forces to arrange a very successful Carers Rights Day on December 8th. The programme included presentations by Beth Evans, Carers Wales and Maureen Canton and Nicole van Schie who spoke about their experience of juggling work and caring. Carers Champion Cllr Sian James chaired the 'Any Questions' session assisted by Steve Lewis, Wales Region, Princess Royal Trust for Carers and Paul Davies A.M.

In addition to the monthly Outreach Support Group there was a Christmas Shopping trip to Carmarthen and the annual Christmas lunch, held at the Rising Sun, Pelcome Bridge. Guest speaker at the January meeting was Bernard Caldicott MBE who related his experiences of visiting Buckingham Palace to receive his award from the Queen. He also showed a video film of the event.

Carer training sessions included a presentation by the Community Safety Officer on 'Safety at home and in the Community' and a stress management day when carers were pampered with a variety of alternative therapies and a 'healthy eating' lunch.

Carols for Christmas was a most enjoyable evening and very well attended. Special guests were the Sheriff of Haverfordwest and the Mayor of Milford Haven. The programme was presented by Cllr Beryl Thomas-Cleaver and the accompanist was Mr Bill Cale. Several YAACS and Young Carers gave musical items and Mrs Dorothy Cale gave a selection of poetry readings. Mrs Maureen Canton told the story of the Advent

Crown and an item on alternative gifts for Christmas.

The Christmas Open Day on December 19th was busy with a great many carers and supporters dropping in for mince pies and coffee.

An evening event for Trustees, Staff and Volunteers gave everyone the opportunity to relax, socialise and enjoy a buffet supper.

Tele Care by Carol Mason

Recently I completed a training course for Telecare at the E-commerce Centre in Pembroke Dock. I have been interested in this for some time, this is something I would like to see other carers having the opportunity to have a look at. Having discovered this range of equipment to help carers in their own homes I asked for a referral and was very impressed when Tracy came out to our home and demonstrated all the different Telecare equipment available. I had the opportunity to look at all of the aids and was able to ask lots of questions and decided as a family we would like to try out the Epilepsy sensor that goes under the sheet in the bed and monitors tonic - clonic seizures which alerts the carer. Also the Gems which are personal triggers (they are buttons you press to summon help) which are suitably placed around the home. We decided to have one by the bed, in the bathroom and others to place where they would be of most help, and one that could be worn on the wrist like a watch. They are all linked up to the Lifeline connection and they alert the carer. There are a number of ways this can be done but we chose the DDA Pager which is portable and can be charged up. A lovely chap came out to fit the equipment and it took a couple of hours to link it all up. It will take time to get used to it all but I am looking of ways of coping for the future. In this day of modern technology I would encourage any carer to at least have a look and see if any of this equipment could possibly be of help to you, and discuss ways to tailor it to your particular needs. If you are caring for someone with Dementia, Epilepsy, Learning disabilities, older or disabled people with long term needs, it could give support and reassurance to lead a more independent life.

For more information contact Tracy Martin-Smith on 01437 776092

Carers News

CARERS EMERGENCY CARD SUPPORT SERVICE

The British Red Cross is currently setting up a Carers Emergency Card Support Service for Pembrokeshire Carers.

Working in partnership with Pembrokeshire Crossroads, the service will offer 24hr a day EMERGENCY cover to carers to ensure that if a carer is suddenly taken ill, has an accident or is genuinely prevented from returning home when expected, help can be summoned for the person who is cared for until alternative arrangements can be put in place, or the carer returns.

The scheme is supported by Pembrokeshire County Council.

It is anticipated that the scheme will become operational in April.

If you would like to register your interest in receiving further details of the scheme when they become available - please contact: Jacky Lang on 01639 644914 – if her answer phone is on, could people leave their name and contact number. Alternatively contact Louise Raine-Lower at PAVS on 01437 769422 and leave your details with her.

Paul Sartori Breast Cancer Support Group

The monthly meeting recently took place at The Paul Sartori Headquarters, 31 Haven Road, Haverfordwest and was attended by a number of new members.

The group recently enjoyed a Christmas lunch at The Glen Hotel. Several members were accompanied by partners and siblings adding to the occasion.

The next meeting is planned for Friday 14th March. Enquiries to Anne Evans at Paul Sartori Tel: 01437 763223 or Email: enquiries@paulsartori.wales.org

The group meets on the second Friday of every month to offer support and friendship and is open to anyone who has been affected by breast cancer.

Unfair access to services

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers welcomes the announcement by Social Care Minister Ivan Lewis of a review of eligibility criteria and hope that the review will pay particular attention to the impact of unfair assessments on carers, following the release of the Commission for Social Care Inspection Report. The Trust also welcomes that the government has formally accepted that the current system of allowing councils to decide how to ration social care for elderly and disabled people is unfair and inconsistent. Carers have always known this, having been at the sharp end of assessment processes that can seem designed to withhold community care rather than to offer it to those in need.

The rules say that disabled and elderly people should be offered a level of support based upon their individual needs, not upon the current availability or cost of services.

But too many assessments result in lower offers of support where a family member can be identified to provide care, regardless of the impact on that carer.

This means that in some areas carers are feeling forced to take on unacceptably high levels of care that result in them having to give up work, their social life and even their health.

To make matters worse, some areas are now threatening major cuts to the voluntary sector services which support those carers to carry on caring.

Alex Fox, a spokesperson for The Princess Royal Trust for Carers says, 'For the system to be made fairer, families must be given accurate information about their rights to support without assumptions being made about the role of carers.'

Assessments must always consider the impact of care decisions on all family members. We should value and support the UK's 6 million carers, not exploit them. Without them, the costs of caring will rise beyond affordability.'

Carers News

England's Carers Strategy

The most far-reaching consultation ever on how to improve the future of the nation's six million carers drew to a close with an event attended by over sixty carers, the Prime Minister Gordon Brown, Health Secretary Alan Johnson and Health Minister Ivan Lewis.

The consultation, to engage carers in debate about what would make a positive difference to or improve their lives as carers, was announced by the Prime Minister in June. Since then, the debate has seen more than 1,700 ideas contribute by carers through a dedicated website, and thousands more carers have contributed their ideas at the events run by both the Department of Health and carer organisations up and down the country. All of this valuable insight will inform the new Prime Minister's Carers Strategy to be published later this year. January's event, at which carers debated issues such as local services, income, employment, discrimination and recognition, was also attended by members of the new Standing Commission on Carers, which was announced by Gordon Brown in September. The commission will ensure that the voice of carers remains central to the long term development of Government policy.

Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, said:

"Britain's carers are an immense force and I want to thank them for the tremendous work they do, especially given the huge challenges and pressures they face. We know that supporting carers is not just the right thing to do, but vital to ensuring the most vulnerable people in our

communities have the care they need when they need it. I have spent today listening to our carers, volunteers, charities and community groups and have heard about the pressures that families and carers are under. What I have heard today, and what carers throughout the country have told us, will form the basis of our new carers strategy."

The new strategy will build upon a number of recent initiatives to improve support for carers. A national helpline for carers will be available from this summer and £25m has been made available to local authorities in England to provide short-term cover for carers in emergencies.

Also today, the £5 million contract to support the development of an experts carers programme, has been awarded to a consortium made up of the Expert Patient Programme, Princess Royal Trust for Carers, Carers UK, Crossroads and Partners UK. The programme will provide vital training for carers to develop the skills they need to take greater control over their own health, and the health of those in their care.

Secretary of State Alan Johnson said:

"Carers are the hidden heroes of society. They selflessly contribute their time and money to caring for someone and ask little in return.

"Today's event has been about listening to the experts - carers themselves - about what we can do to improve their lives. Our job is to take what we have heard and learnt and ensure that our new strategy builds on this and the progress we have made."

Pembrokeshire Alliance of Complementary Therapists



Pembrokeshire Alliance of Complementary Therapists are running a series of workshops at the Bloomfield Centre in Narberth, mainly on Wednesdays and Thursdays. They cover topics such as ayurvedic medicine, herb/flower walks and acupuncture. If you would like to find out more about these sessions please visit their website on www.pembrokeshiretherapy.org.uk

Carers News

Noddfa – Caring for Carers

We welcome those of you who care for the sick or disabled in your homes, when you have the opportunity for a break.

Come and enjoy a few days near the sea and the mountains, in a lovely old house, where you can relax and restore your energy. We also welcome those who have been carers in recent years.

We can give you a chance to meet new friends who share similar experiences. If you wish, there will be someone who can help you reflect about your situation.

Above all there will be an atmosphere which will help you to relax and enjoy the beauty of your surroundings. Situated in Penmaenmawr, North Wales we are well situated to visit local places of interest such as Conwy, Llandudno, Snowdonia and Anglesey.

Just a few recent guest comments: "many thanks for making us so welcome. Noddfa is such a special place with a wonderful atmosphere of peace and love, thanks to the great efforts you all make." "You are so warm and welcoming. How can I thank you enough?" "Thank you so much for all your generous hospitality".

Community activities will be arranged according to the needs of the group. You will enjoy home cooking. There are 16 single rooms, 6 twin and 3 doubles. We offer a special price for carers of £30 per night full board.

Please do contact us if you would like any further information on 01492 623473 or have a look at our website www.noddfa.org.uk.

Expert Patient Programme

'LOOKING AFTER ME' a free six week self-management course for adult carers

In October 2007, Pembrokeshire LHB successfully ran the first Looking After Me course for adult carers. As its name implies, the course was about carers making time to look after their own health needs. The course ran with 16 participants whose caring roles ranged from caring for a child, spouse, parent, in-law or friend. One participant summed up the benefits of the course by saying:

"The course has benefited me in many ways. I have gained a lot of confidence in myself ... it has helped me come to terms with a lot of things in my life. I am recognising that I really need to understand myself and my needs, and that actually I have to say no sometimes to other peoples needs. I have remembered that I am a woman, a human being in my own right with hopes and ambitions. My whole family seems to have lifted itself up a notch. Since the course

finished, my husband and I have been able to have some time together, without our son, because I have allowed my younger children to have time with their brother which has taken away the need for me to constantly clock watch." Looking After Me is a free course for any adult who gives help to a relative or friend who is ill, disabled, elderly or in need of emotional support – in other words a Carer. It is led by trained tutors who themselves have experience of caring and is run over six weekly, 2 ½ hour sessions including coffee/tea breaks.

The course looks at:
Relaxation techniques
Dealing with tiredness
Exercise
Healthy eating
Coping with depression
Communicating with family, friends and professionals
Planning for the future

Future courses will be run in Pembrokeshire but in the meantime there is a forthcoming course in Cardigan for anyone interested.

Venue & Location	Start & Finish Date	Time
Looking after Me Theatr Mwldan, Cardigan	Every Monday from 7 th April to 19 th May 08	1.30pm till 4pm

To book your place, register your interest in a future course or to discuss your support needs to allow you to take part in the programme, call The Expert Patients Programme on 01554 744492.

Day in the life... Helen Loan

Carer

Background... Helen was born and lived in Camden, London for most of her life before moving to Pembrokeshire 3 years ago with her son after they inherited a cottage down here. Helen has 8 grandchildren ranging from ages 2 to 23 years. Moving here was a difficult decision to make because of the family they left behind. We decided to move because our London property was council owned I felt my son would be more secure in his own property.

Who do you care for? My son who has mental health problems.

What is your usual daily routine? I get up and have a cup of tea before calling my son to get out of bed, which isn't always easy – you know what youngsters are like! I try to get out of the house for a couple of hours, we either go together or I will go on my own depending on how we feel. I try to attend as many activities as possible, which is getting harder with fuel being so expensive. On Wednesdays I work as a volunteer for MIND from 1pm til 6pm. I like to help with catering for MIND events whenever possible too. I like to feel as though I'm helping.

What support do you have?

For most of my 20 years caring, the support offered from groups was just not available to me because I didn't know they existed, so I just did the best I could with very little knowledge of mental health issues. In London, as I always appeared very confident and as though I was coping well, I was never offered any support until the latter years but even that was irregular and unreliable. The Community Psychiatric Nurse was obliged to visit at least once every 6 weeks but would continually cancel appointments and so months would go by without any professional support at all. Since moving to Pembrokeshire the care and support we get is very good. Our CPN down here is very good and reads between the lines when things are difficult and tries to help solve any problems. I was introduced to Pembrokeshire MIND by Age Concern Haverfordwest and they were my saviour during our 1st two years here. I then became one of their volunteers and I am involved in various activities through them like bingo, swimming & evenings out with the carers group and much more. PAVS have organised holiday money, support if necessary and therapy sessions. TRI Tenby offer my son support including animation sessions and confidence building sessions. Also they have a drop in centre which helps so much.

What has been your worst experience?

In London there was an emergency number that could be called out of hours, but there was never any answer. One time I desperately needed help to get him to hospital and calm down and the only thing I could do was phone 999. The next thing I knew there was an ambulance and 2 police cars with blue flashing lights outside and the police barging into the house, I was furious! I got rid of the police and then the ambulance crew were fantastic but I never phoned that number again.

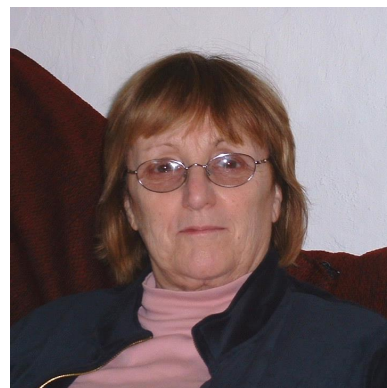
What has been most helpful? All the family have been very supportive and helpful. Phil Brookes from Age Concern was fantastic and took me to MIND and to Angela Corfield who is an angel. After a year or so I became a volunteer for MIND and that has taught me a lot. I've done college courses in Mental Health and food hygiene and received certificates for them which has been a huge confidence boost. The hospital down here is helpful too, they keep appointments to time and they are never rushed, time is given which means so much to the care process and is really important for mental health sufferers. There is no comparison to London where you would usually wait 2 hours before being seen and then only for 10 minutes.

What would you like to see changed to make it easier for carers

More respite – I don't receive any respite from the local authority. All I can do is claim the Holiday Breaks grant from PAVS every 2 years. And carers allowance stopping at age 60, this doesn't seem right – you don't stop caring do you?

What advice would you offer other carers?

Try to look after yourself, don't put yourself last – which we do all the time. And get involved in a support group. Hearing other caring stories helps you to deal with your own situation and knowing you are helping others with your stories and experience at the same time is great for your confidence and well-being.



Day in the life... Tracey Price

Director Pembrokeshire and Carmarthen Mind

Background

Tracey qualified as a Psychiatric Nurse and worked for Social Services and Special Education before discovering the Voluntary Sector. She then worked for the British Red Cross in Hereford and Worcestershire before moving to Pembrokeshire 10 years ago and starting work for Age Concern. She always maintained her interest in mental health and jumped at the chance when Pembrokeshire Mind advertised the Director vacancy. She has two children aged 19 and 10 who are both Welsh speakers.



Over the last 3 years I've seen a distinct shift towards the significance of the impact on carers.

Previously we offered support to carers as a by product of service user help. Now the emphasis is on looking after carers and our carers support service supports in excess of 120 carers and 60 cared for. About 25 of our carers are young carers.

What is the biggest problem you encounter?

The geography of Pembrokeshire is a problem – it adds to the problem of isolation and makes it harder to reach out to people. Another big problem is trying to encourage people to have a positive attitude towards mental health. Nationally, 1 in 4 of us will have some form of mental health problems in our lifetime, in Pembrokeshire that figure is 1 in 3. In addition, people are usually suffering from a range of problems and trying to address several needs at the same is very difficult to manage.

If there were no carers, what impact would this have on your organisation?

It would be an even bigger struggle for us. We are open 365 days of the year but only for 3 hours a day, a lot of our service users need support for much longer than that each day – so where would it come from?

What sort of support do you offer carers?

Our carer support service is open to carers of people with mental health problems and for carers with a mental health problem. We offer social, emotional and practical support also crisis support if needed. Our social activities can be for carers on their own or uniquely for carers and their cared for – this gives them the opportunity to spend quality time together with someone else taking the caring burden in a setting and with people they feel comfortable with. Activities include trips to the theatre, meals out, bowling etc. and we publish a schedule of forthcoming events to keep everyone informed. We also offer peer group support and one to one support. We also provide lots of information and a co-ordinator is available at the end of the phone.

What changes would you like to see to benefit carers?

Recognition of their value. Professionals being a little kinder to carers' issues and involving the carer in treatment or service delivery. More work should be done to provide opportunities for carers to work or do volunteering to reduce their isolation and increase their self-esteem and confidence.

What is your role?

Pembrokeshire Mind and Carmarthen Mind are managed by the same board and director but they remain two separate organisations. I manage the operations of both organisations' staff, volunteers and service provision. I also inform the trustee board in order for them to strategically plan and to develop the organisations' staff. Pembrokeshire Mind has 17 paid staff and 35 volunteers. Carmarthen Mind has 3 paid staff members.

Describe a typical working day?

No two days are the same, as an organisation we try to be proactive but make sure we are flexible enough to quickly react to the unexpected. I attend lots of planning meetings, including the Mental Health Planning Group and Valued Occupations Group. Basically any organisational strategic representation is done by me. Today I've attended a 'Prolific problem offenders' meeting, a significant number of those falling into this group use Mind's services. This was followed by a meeting with WWAMH to see how we can support each other and to plan a facilitation session. Then I met with the West Wales Substance Misuse Worker and I met a service user to discuss a rehab programme. After this interview, I'm back to the office to interview a candidate for a vacancy within Mind. It is important to spend time with users / carers to be sure I am representing their views and planning the appropriate services.

What is the best part of your job?

When I see someone for the first time and they may be very distressed, with multiple problems and they can't even look you in the eye and then a few weeks later I see them engaging in an activity and later applying to be a volunteer in Mind, until eventually they are back in work. That is incredibly rewarding and reminds me why I'm doing this job.

How much of your time is spent working with carers issues?

Tribute to Dave Watkin

Sadly on 27th Dec 2007, Dave Watkin passed away. Throughout his time here, he worked tirelessly on issues that concerned him and other carers in Pembrokeshire, and his contribution and personality will be long remembered. His family have been comforted by over 80 letters and cards of sympathy and over 200 people came from far and wide to attend his funeral.

We took some time with his widow Joyce, and his granddaughter Laura, to talk about his life and his great lovethe family.

Dave was born in Welshpool and was very proud to be Welsh. Dave & Joyce met in Birmingham where Dave was a bus conductor. They married in 1952 and had their first daughter Carol in 1955, their second daughter Beverly in 1956 and their youngest daughter Alison in 1961. They have 13 great grandchildren, of whom Nia is the youngest at 6 months old. She loved sitting on Dave's lap and 'talking' to him – they had a special bond.

Dave and Joyce went dancing every week, they started about 30 years ago when they still lived in the West Midlands. Birmingham had just introduced a 'sitting service' which meant a care worker would come in to sit with Alison for a few hours one evening a week. They decided to do a regular sequence dance class. They carried on when they moved to Pembrokeshire. It has always been a leisure, fitness and social activity, they have never had any formal lessons or taken part in competitions.

Dave had many jobs, proverbially known as a job changer! He was conscripted into the army as a mechanic and after discharge he became a tool room engineer. He worked in several factories, did various salesman jobs, and ended up as a taxi driver in Birmingham. He gave up this job after a colleague was mugged at gunpoint. Then he started driving for the hospital, he loved that job it took him all over the country.

They eventually moved to Pembrokeshire after years of visiting here for holidays. They had a touring caravan but Joyce loved it so much they parked the caravan here and she would spend most summers down here.

He had done voluntary work in Birmingham and was the chair of the Friends of Ebrook (like Portfield school), where they raised money and



arranged excursions. As soon as he arrived in Pembrokeshire, Dave was looking for voluntary work. He did some driving for Social Services, taking children to school – he found that hard, as the children's stories were often very harrowing. Joyce was already a member of Carers UK and as they were living just around the corner from Pembrokeshire Carers Outreach they soon got involved. They also joined High Support Needs group, Dave became vice-chair. He was a representative on the All Wales Forum along with Carol Mason and Joan Ward. He was also a representative for Learning Disability Wales. In 2005, he set up the Ubiquitous Carers Group, which has been an extremely successful group. Right to the end he was enthusiastic and wanted to be involved. Indeed, he was most disappointed that he wasn't able to join the committee for De Clare Court after they had moved.

Dave was particularly good at dealing with people - he had his arguments but never held grudges. He was never frightened of rocking the boat. He would always say what he thought and what he wanted.

Dave celebrated his 80th birthday in 2007 and 80 people came to his party. In September 2007 he was proud to make to the journey to America on his own to visit his auntie and cousin.

Dave and Joyce have always been concerned for Alison's welfare when they were unable to look after her anymore, and so last year they took the step of signing their bungalow over to Alison, the 2 of them then moved to De Clare Court leaving Alison to be cared for by their granddaughter Laura, and her partner. They have their hands full being parents to 6 month old Nia as well!

Shortly after they moved, Dave became ill. They

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had already booked a holiday in November and Dave insisted on going into respite so that Joyce could still get away. He was happy to go into respite but he was lonely there and didn't want to go back again.

His last outing was the High Support Needs Christmas do, just a couple of weeks before he died.

He was a big family man, he loved his family and would talk about them to anyone who would listen – whether they wanted to know or not! He had a great sense of humour and loved his jokes. He always had a bulb joke to hand, and he would search the internet for new ones!

Dave will be greatly missed by all who knew him and we are all richer for the experience. Our thoughts are with Joyce and the family and we thank both Joyce and Laura for their help in writing this article.



Dave and Joyce Watkin - Carers Week 2003

We asked a few people who worked closely with Dave to share their thoughts.

Thanks to Carol for sending in the following:-

Dave our colleague and friend will be greatly missed. Dave was a very active Vice Chair of the "Pembrokeshire Parent Carers High Support Needs Group" for many years. He was also a trustee of the "All Wales Forum of Parents and Carers" and kept the line of communications open for the group. Dave was outspoken and not afraid to tell it how it is. He was a devoted carer to daughter "Ally" and a loving caring family man. Dave hated political correctness especially when it deprived other carers and their cared for, from getting the help they so badly needed. He was always ready to fight and lobby for other carers and encouraged other carers to stand their corner. Dave and his wife Joyce being long term Parent Carers experienced all the problems of fighting to get a good care package for daughter Ally. He had a very positive attitude to life and found time to share this with other people. It was a privilege to have known such a friend and he would, I know, want us to remember all the fun and enjoyment of his many outings with the group and to continue to support each other and to fight for a better life for all carers.

Sally Davies from PAVS gave us the following comments:

'Dave was always very helpful and enthusiastic. He was very keen to see improvements for carers in the county and he was always willing to get involved in a wide range of activities. He wasn't afraid to speak his mind when he attended meetings as a carer representative. He will be greatly missed.'

Self-catering Holiday Houses for families with disabled children

The Harriet Davis Trust provides self-catering holiday houses in Pembrokeshire for families with disabled children. Three of the houses are in the Tenby area and sleep between 7 and 10 people – they are all accessible and one has a heated swimming pool. The 4th most recent house is near Narberth and has been specially adapted and equipped to cater for families with children with autism and other learning disabilities.

If you would like to know more about the accommodation you can either visit the website on www.harriet-davis-trust.brecon.co.uk or telephone 01834 845197.

Parent/Carers

Parent Carers Consultation Day Date for your Diary

Following the success of the Parent Carers consultation Day last June, another day is being arranged. It will be held at the Cricket Club in Haverfordwest on April 10th. There will be an opportunity to comment on the Single Plan for Children which will be out for consultation. You might also like to give your comments on the availability of child care for parents who wish to go out to work. The programme for the day has not yet been finalised so there is time for you to help shape the day. If there is a topic that you feel parent/carers of disabled children and young people should be consulted on please contact either Sally Davies at PAVS on 01437 769422 or Judith Edwards at the NCH Children's Centre on 01437 764569

Disabled Children Matter Wales Campaign

The Campaign has now been running for 6 months and initially targeted the Welsh Assembly Government to put more resources into providing better services for Disabled children and their families. So far the campaign has been successful in securing extra funds for 2008-2009 for services such as transition, early year materials, play, changing places and a range of other services. It is important that campaign supporters work with us by signing up to the campaign via our website and e-mailing your local council in order to influence the Children and Young People's Plan and make sure that services for disabled children and their families are a priority. The campaign will be holding events in your region within the next few months and you will find details of these on our website. www.dcmw.org.uk. To find out more about the campaign please call Zoe on 07816149856.



Young Carers

Zoom!

Carers Week has teamed up with the John Lewis Partnership to provide some fantastic prizes for the second Carers Week young carers photography competition.

The competition is divided into two age groups; under 13 and 13-18. As well as their prizes both winners will also be invited to attend the Carers Week parliamentary reception in Parliament as special guests.

There will also be prizes for regional winners and for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

To take part in Zoom! Visit www.carersweek.org and download an entry form.

Young Carers News

A busy autumn included the Halloween Party when the young carers (*and staff!*) showed considerable creativity by the selection of fancy dress costumes they wore. The amazing magic performed by Philip Jones was a highlight of the evening and had everyone thoroughly perplexed.

A Rustic Craft Workshop was another much enjoyed club night activity and part of the November club night was given over to rehearsals for the annual Christmas concert.

Our Young Carers Service is most grateful to the Freemasons' Cambrian Lodge for its most generous donation. Haverfordwest Lions Club continued to provide practical help and financial donations towards the cost of young carers activities and at Christmas, Lions not only arranged for Santa to drop in at the young carers party, complete with a sack full of gifts, but went on to treat young carers to a visit to the pantomime and present us with a cheque. A cheque was also received from the staff at Sir Thomas Picton School. Young Carers would like to say a big, big 'THANK YOU' to all our kind benefactors.

Several young carers and YAAC'S (Young Adult/Adolescent Carers) stole the show at the annual 'Carols for Christmas'. Well done to James, Jade, Ethan, Lee, Ryan, and Ryan's brother who provided piano accompaniment to his tenor horn solo.

The Young Carers Christmas Party was greatly enjoyed. A hamper of goodies donated by Sainsbury's Supermarket added to the fun and each young carer was given a £10 voucher, also donated by Sainsbury's. The annual Young Carers' panto trip was also greatly enjoyed.

CONGRATULATIONS TO . . .

. . . one of our YAACS who was one of six recipients of the annual McWhirter Foundation Awards for services within the community. The award ceremony took place at a banquet held at the Inner Temple, London. In her acceptance speech, she explained that her brothers shared in her caring duties and said that she was accepting the award on behalf of all the other children and young people in the country who have a responsibility for the care of a parent or sibling.

We are very proud of all the youngsters and young adults who take on the responsibility of caring, and see our award winner as a most worthy champion for the children and young people who are involved in such duties.

Tenby Rotary Club have very kindly donated £100 to benefit young carers in Pembrokeshire. On Tuesday 12th February Sally and I were presented with the cheque by President, Steve Williams at the Royal Lion Hotel in Tenby. PAVS were extremely grateful to Tenby Rotary Club for this welcome contribution to help with the work that we do for young carers.



President Steve Williams with Sally Davies & Louise Raine-Lower.

Poetry Corner

Thanks to Barbara Davies for sending in these 2 poems that she has written.

THE INVISIBLE CARER

I am an ephemeral person
and things can only worsen
'cos now I'm over 65
I have no right to be alive
especially as the Powers that Be
refuse to acknowledge me
and states most categorically
there's no grant for metaphorical!
No allowances for personal Care
because there is no cash to spare
no matter how I toil and sweat
they most sincerely regret
I'm far too old to be - A Carer....

The fact I work both day and night,
toil 24/7 with all my might
to keep my patient nearby,
an Ancient like me *can't* qualify.
I am too young to be too old
a detail that leaves the experts cold.
Authority rates me invisible
e'en tho' I'm indestructible.
They heave a sigh and shake their head
don't listen to word that's said
to them there's no way can I be
functioning for such eternity
To their reckoning, let it be known,
etched in Tablets made of Stone,
I'm far too old to be...A Carer...

No reasonable argument will suffice
No readies for me at any price,
The Council insists I am not here...
no matter protests of unfair
In their wisdom this cannot be
which slightly smacks derogatory.
Despite dispute to make it clear
there ain't nobody else round here.
I'm on my own; just me alone.
Useless to complain and moan
but take it all upon the chin.
Knuckle down, Girl - and maybe win...
Until those Tablets made of Stone
should shatter and the myth be blown
I'm far too old to be... A Carer?



Care

Care is such a simple word
just four small letters; a tiny cliché
but therein lies...
Love; loyalty and Bonding...
And, Yes
despondency, despair and anguish.

But who can explain the depth of this word
Care?
Is it the selflessness of those
who willingly make sacrifices?
Who with concern and infinite patience
dedicate their lives to loved ones
and ask no reward in return,
only to see the light shine out of a beloved face
when they enter a room.
A smile of anticipation? The feeling of warmth?
The invisible magnate that passes between them?
An understanding that no one else can surpass.
To be of help; a conveyance of Hope
no matter how impossible the odds?
To know this immeasurable trust,
the devotion linking the Carer to the Cared For
is something, unless experienced
can never be explained.

Quote of the Quarter

“ When one door of happiness
closes, another opens:

but often we look so long at the closed
door that we do not see the one
which has been opened for us ”

If you ask me...

If you ask me ... Lee Hind

If you were Prime Minister for the day, what one thing would you change to make life easier for carers?

I would provide automatic respite for all full time carers who wanted it.

Who or what has been the biggest influence in your life and why?

Work-wise, the biggest influences in my life have been the staff and friends at Theatr Fforwm Cymru. Legends, one and all.

What was the last book you read? Did you enjoy it? If so / not, why?

Derren Brown, Trick of the Mind. Excellent book showing some of the techniques that he uses, just mind blowing what that man can do/make you do...

If you could ban one thing, what would it be?

Wonkey-wheeled shopping trolleys – the bane of any shopping trip

Which fictional character do you most admire?

Captain Kirk

If you won the lottery how would it change your life?

In every way, as soon as I won I'd be off on holiday and that would be just the start...

What is society's worst fault?

Political Correctness.....what a load of tosh

What makes you angry?

Ignorance

What makes you happy?

My wife and children

Which one word would your friends use to describe you to a stranger?

Mad

Work

Carers Wales hails landmark case as millions of carers get protection at work

A carer has won the initial stages of her case at the European Court of Justice which could give new rights to millions of carers.

The Advocate-General agreed today that the carer Sharon Coleman suffered "discrimination by association". She had claimed that she was discriminated against and harassed because she had a disabled son.

Sharon Coleman claimed that her employer, London law firm Attridge Law, treated her less favourably than it did other parents of non-disabled children. Amongst other things, she was accused of being "lazy" when she needed to take time off to care for her child and threatened with disciplinary action.

Commenting on the case, Roz Williamson, Director of Carers Wales, said:

"This is a positive step towards true equality for carers. Too many carers face discrimination at work, yet they are the bedrock of our communities and society."

"This landmark legal opinion means that employers will have to alter the way they treat carers in their workforce. There are currently 2.5 million carers who are in work, yet one in five gives up work to care, meaning that we are losing thousands of people from the workforce every year. Every employer will have to look at their recruitment and employment practices and make sure they are not discriminating against carers. At a time when we have a shortage of skilled workers, this makes good business sense."

She continued:

"This is an important start, but we need to go further and ensure that carers are protected from discrimination in all aspects of their lives, not just employment. We think there should be a duty on public sector organisations to actively promote equality between carers and non-carers and that service providers should also be required to treat carers equally."

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“The Prime Minister will publish his National Carers Strategy later this year and we are lobbying for it to include carers in the new equalities legislation which will be introduced next year. How we help families care for elderly and disabled relatives will be one of the biggest challenges of the 21st Century and Government has an opportunity to get the right laws in place to deal with it.”



Training

FREE Courses for Carers (and those involved in Social Care).

The Social Care Workforce Development Partnership offers FREE places for the unpaid carers and care workers on a wide range of training courses. Most courses take place in The E-Commerce Centre, Cleddau Reach, Pembroke Dock and include:

Protection of Vulnerable Adults: A Framework for Raising Awareness

11th February/ 3rd March 9.30am-4.15pm

This course is designed to help staff understand the importance of preventing and/or minimising abusive and inappropriate behaviour.

This is central to good practice within Health and Social Care settings.

Diabetes

21st February 2008 9.30 am - 4.00 pm

The course will increase participants knowledge of the biological reasons for the development of diabetes. It will cover risk factors, treatment and health promotion.

Basic First Aid

10th March 9.30am-4.30pm

A course designed to give participants the knowledge and skills to deal with health emergencies in the absence of a fully trained “First Aider”

All Wales Local Government Manual Handling Training Passport & Information Scheme: 2 x Day Passport

Various dates throughout January – March 9.30 am - 4.00 pm

This scheme aims to provide a consistent approach to manual handling training standards throughout Wales, thus allowing employees to transfer their skills when moving from Authority to Authority and ensuring skills are consistent across Wales

This is just a small selection of the many courses that are available through the Social Care Workforce Development Partnership. For more information or a booking form please contact Kelly Hunt, Telephone: 01646 683625 or e-mail: kelly.hunt@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

If you are interested in attending any of the above courses, or would like more information on the Mentoring Skills course (no current dates) please contact Louise Walters at PAVS on 01437 769422 or email: training@pavs.org.uk

Forthcoming Courses available through PAVS:

Course Name	Venue	Date and Time
Presentation Skills (A)	PAVS, Haverfordwest	10.00am-4.00pm 21 February & 11 March
Train the Trainer (A)	PAVS, Haverfordwest	10.00am-4.00pm
How to Develop a Volunteer-	PAVS, Haverfordwest	9.30am-4.00pm
Introduction to Sustainable	To be confirmed	9.30am-1.30pm

Volunteering

Another Clash with Government over Volunteers' Expenses

The government is heading for another clash with the voluntary sector over volunteer expenses.

Last year it had to withdraw a leaflet on volunteers and benefits which stated lunch allowances were not an allowable expense for volunteers in receipt of benefits. The withdrawal followed a massive campaign against the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) by voluntary groups in Wales and throughout the rest of the UK.

Now the same government department – re-named Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) is under siege from the sector again because of a statement that childcare costs should be considered a benefit rather than an expense. It appears in new guidance following consultation on the Minimum Wage Act which claims that reimbursing childcare costs “represents a significant benefit in kind and as such would change the nature of the relationship between voluntary worker and qualifying organisation

The implication of this is that volunteers who are able to reclaim child care costs as part of their out of pocket expenses claim could be entitled to receive the minimum wage, should they pursue a case against the voluntary group. However, in previous cases where volunteers have attempted to claim the minimum wage, the payment of child care costs were considered reasonable and did not amount to benefit to volunteers.

The costs of child and other carer expenses are believed to be a real barrier to single parents and people like young carers who would benefit from having the opportunity to volunteer. They are also the target of government and Assembly initiatives on volunteering, such as the Russell Commission proposals to get more young people to volunteer. The advice to voluntary groups who are concerned about this is to write to their MPs and to DERR asking for a change in policy.

Latest Volunteering Opportunities

GREEN LINKS COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY

Volunteer Clerical Assistant
Volunteer Workshop Assistant

RSVP (RETIRED AND SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME)

Friends in Classroom (languages) volunteer
Friends in Classroom (history) volunteer
Friends in Classroom (maths) volunteer
Friends in Classroom (gardening) volunteer
Friends in Classroom (art and craft) volunteer

TAX HELP FOR OLDER PEOPLE (TOP)

Tax Volunteer

THE STROKE ASSOCIATION

Stroke Awareness Presentation Volunteer

GIRL GUIDING—SENIOR SECTION

Volunteer Adult Leader 16+

MOUNT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Volunteer Market Garden Worker

AGE CONCERN PEMBROKESHIRE

Hospital Homecoming

PAUL SARTORI FOUNDATION

Event Organiser

THEATR FFORWM CYMRU

Trustee Volunteer

BOAT SKOOL

Volunteer Supervisor

TRYSORDY

Office Volunteer
Welsh Translator
Scrap Store Assistant

CHRISTIAN AID

Volunteer Teacher

CYLCH-WALES COMMUNITY RECYCLING NETWORK

Volunteer Event Recycling Wardens

Volunteering in South Africa

I have just returned from a 5 month trip to South Africa, which was a fantastic experience ... one which I would recommend everyone to try at least once in their lives.

I had 3 very different experiences as a volunteer over there, all amazing in their own right, as you can see from the photos. Two of the volunteering opportunities were set up before I left and the third was organised whilst I was there – for other people who may be planning to volunteer abroad I would recommend making some arrangements prior to travelling, but it is also good to have some flexibility to build in other opportunities which may arise once you are in the country.

The first volunteer placement was for 2 weeks as a WWOOFer (World wide Opportunities on Organic Farms) – this is an international organisation which has farms listed worldwide – their website address is www.woof.org . I worked on quite a small farm helping out with everything from building new homes or childminding to cultivating vegetables.

From there I went to the north east of South Africa to Ingwavuma which is in a remote part of KwaZulu Natal where I volunteered for nearly 3 months for a small NGO called Zisize. The organisation works mainly with schools to try to improve their standards, but they also have various other projects including feeding programmes and an orphanage. There is a 40% incidence of HIV/AIDS in the area so there are many orphans whose parents have died from AIDS. Due to the high number of orphans, it was decided to set up a fostering project, which I helped to develop. I also ran some basic counselling skills workshops for some of the staff and set up a support group for teenage mums who were still at school. The work was a bit slow to get started but once I'd been there for a while I really enjoyed it and found it quite difficult to leave. If you'd like to find out more about Zisize take a look at their website on www.zisize.org.uk – they are always keen to recruit volunteers.

I arranged the third volunteering opportunity while I was in South Africa, after discovering an amazing place on the east coast when I was travelling between the first 2 projects. The place is called Bulungula and it is the first fair trade backpackers lodge in South Africa. It is run in partnership with the local community, who benefit from 40% of the profits, and the setting is really beautiful. I approached Dave, the owner, to see if they would be interested in me teaching some of the local women to do massage which would give them a sustainable source of income and enable them to continue to live in the village. Fortunately they thought it was a good idea so I spent nearly a month there – and when I went back to visit the 3 young women were doing 3-4 massages a day, which was great. For more information about Bulungula, see their website on www.bulungula.com

All in all it was a really enjoyable time – so good that it's taking me a while to settle back into life back at home, especially to the Pembrokeshire weather!



Sally's new home



Children at the orphanage



Bulunga



Odette's House



Bulunga massage girls



Sally with Zulu Chiefs

Carers Handbook

Do you have a copy of the Carers Handbook?

It contains lots of useful information on areas such as benefits, Carers and Work, Housing, Young Carers and has a really good information section at the back of the book.

You'll be able to find out about all the carers support groups in your area, as well as all the support organisations such as Carers Outreach, Crossroads, Age Concern Pembrokeshire, Alzheimers Society, Barnardos, NCH Children's Centre to name but a few.

If you would like to get a free copy of the handbook, you just need to phone the Contact Centre at Pembrokeshire County Council on 01437 764551

Let us know...



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