



SPRING NEWSLETTER 2025

Dear Carer & Service User

Welcome to our Spring Newsletter. I am so very delighted to be saying Spring! The mornings are getting lighter and it's lovely to have some more daylight at the end of the day. For what felt like forever, we endured that east wind. Hopefully, it blown itself out and we are in for a dry spell so the farmers can get on their land and new life will be seen in the fields soon too.

We hope you find the contents of the newsletter of interest to you. There are general service updates, a section on training some of you may find useful and very importantly, information on the consultation into the new legislation on Carers Rights to Breaks. We encourage as many of you as possible to participate in the consultation. Your input will be invaluable in helping shape how breaks can be delivered to Carers now and in the future.



Time to Live Microgrant scheme.

Our 2025-2026 allocation is almost finished but not quite! We do not know how much we are receiving for 2026-2027 or when but hope it will be sometime in April or at the latest in May. This funding is specifically for Carers to access a break from their caring role. The microgrant can be spent flexibly and creatively from purchasing new garden equipment to a new iPad, easels and paying towards travel and accommodation on and off the island. If we can support you with this, please don't hesitate to get in touch and we can talk you through it and send you an application form.



Carers Support Group.

We have decided to change the day of the Support Group in the hope that it may suit more people to attend. We will hold it on the **1st Tuesday of every month from 11am-1pm** starting from **7th April 2026**. Feel free to drop in as you wish and you can take the person you care for along as well. Follow us on Facebook for updates and we will continue to advertise on Radio Orkney.



8-14 June 2026

This year's UK wide campaign will focus on 'Building Carer Friendly Communities, highlighting the impact carer friendly communities can have in making a real and lasting difference to the lives of carers everywhere.

There are 5.8 million people in the UK caring for a family member, friend or neighbour and are the backbone of our communities. Unpaid carers often feel undervalued and unsupported and face challenges everyday which could affect their mental health and wellbeing, education, careers and livelihoods, relationships, hopes, and aspirations. Carer friendly communities can help to change this by turning understanding into action and make support part of everyday life.

Some areas to consider how this might look are –

- Business and services – making everyday tasks easier for carers by offering flexible or priority access.
- Community – sports clubs, faith groups, or community organisations creating opportunities for carers to feel connected.
- Education – schools, colleges, or universities identifying young and young adult carers and putting support in place to help them reach their potential.
- Health – GP practices, pharmacies or health services raising awareness amongst their staff to help identify and connect carers to support.
- Social care – taking a whole-family approach to ensure everyone gets the help they need.
- Work – offering flexible working to support employees to juggle paid work and caring.

Crossroads will continue to play an active role in promoting Carers Week in Orkney and will hold various events for Carers to attend.

We will let you know our plans closer to the time. If you have any suggestions we'd love to hear from you, so please do get in touch.



An update from Improving the Cancer Journey (ICJ) Service – NHS Orkney.

Although their name is staying the same, the Improving the Cancer Journey (ICJ) Service is now also supporting people living with cardiac conditions, alongside those affected by cancer. ICJ, delivered in partnership with Macmillan, provides free, confidential, non-clinical support to help people navigate the wider impact of their health condition.

A diagnosis of cancer or a cardiac condition can leave people feeling unsure about what help is available or how to access it. ICJ is here to guide individuals through that maze and connect them with the right support at the right time.

Non-clinical concerns may include:

- Support to access local teams who can help with money, housing worries, or benefits.
- Advice around caring or work responsibilities
- Help addressing physical or day-to-day challenges.
- Access to complementary therapies
- Emotional wellbeing support and links to local services
- Information to answer questions or concerns about diagnosis or treatment.

Anyone accessing ICJ will be offered a Concerns Checklist, a simple tool that helps identify what matters most with careful consideration into financial, practical, physical, emotional, and spiritual areas of life. Following this, an ICJ Link Worker will support and create a personalised support plan.

People can refer themselves into ICJ or be referred by a professional. Referral and self-referral forms, along with further information about the service, are available on the ICJ page of the NHS Orkney website: [Improving the Cancer Journey \(ICJ\) – NHS Orkney](#)

Completed forms can be emailed to ork.icj@nhs.scot

If you have any questions or would like to learn more, please get in touch with the team.

Email: ork.icj@nhs.scot

Phone: 01856 888084 (Public Health Department)



Friends of Crossroads Event.

Our fundraising champions continue to work hard organising various events throughout the year. The next event taking place is a Soup and Cheese scone afternoon on **Saturday 28th March in the King Street Halls from 11am – 2pm** and all are welcome. If anyone would like to donate something for the bottle stall or some baking for the day itself, that would be greatly appreciated, and donations can be left in the Crossroads Office on the week of the event.

Power of Attorney Day.

Carers Scotland and Standard Life have joined forces to launch the first ever UK-wide Power of Attorney Day which will take place next month on **Wednesday 22 April 2026**. The initiative aims to raise awareness and understanding of powers of attorney and to encourage more people to put them in place.

Despite the importance of powers of attorney, many people delay setting them up due to myths and misconceptions about what they are and how they work.

The campaign, part of a UK wide initiative run by Carers UK, will tackle these misunderstandings and highlight how having power of attorney can make a vital difference - particularly for the 627,700 unpaid carers in Scotland who support someone who is seriously ill, older, or disabled.

A power of attorney is a legal document that can ensure a person's wishes are respected, should they be in a position where they are no longer able to express this directly. For carers, having power of attorney in place can provide clarity and avoid stressful decision-making during difficult emergency situations.

In Scotland, a Power of Attorney (PoA) allows an individual to appoint a trusted person to make decisions on their behalf. Anyone aged 16 or over can set up a Power of Attorney, but it must be done while they still have mental capacity to make their own decisions.

Having these in place provides reassurance and peace of mind, reducing additional stress during challenging times.

To find out more about Power of Attorney Day, visit [**https://powerofattorneyday.org.uk**](https://powerofattorneyday.org.uk)

For more information about Power of Attorney and how to make one visit [**https://www.mygov.scot/power-of-attorney**](https://www.mygov.scot/power-of-attorney)

Neurodiversity Training



A clear, practical introduction to neurodivergence with simple, effective ways to support communication, sensory needs, executive skills, wellbeing, and inclusive practice at home and in out-of-school settings.

Colin Foley, CEO of Neurodiversity Training UK, to run three training sessions to support parents, parents who are awaiting assessments, those considering pursuing a diagnosis, and those who are working with neurodivergent children in non-school settings.

More information about the training can be found here: Scan the QR CODE



Parental Sessions

- Two individual 1-day sessions
 - 20th of March or
 - 21st of March
- Kirkwall Town Hall
- 10:30 am - 2 pm
- Lunch Included
- Limited spaces
- Free

Youth Workers / Volunteers / Professionals

- 20th March
- Online via Microsoft Teams
- 7 pm - 9 pm
- Free

To book email:

employability.support@orkney.gov.uk



**NEURODIVERSITY
TRAINING**



FROM FRONTLINE EXPERIENCE TO FUTURE POLICY

Closes: Friday 22 May 2026

The Scottish Government have launched a 12-week consultation on the new right to a break, seeking views on proposed options for implementation of this right. This consultation provides an important opportunity for the right to a break to be shaped by the unpaid carers it aims to support, and the organisations that will help deliver this right.

While the right to a break has the potential to be transformative, planning and delivery must recognise the current challenges unpaid carers and services face. The time for effective and meaningful change to short breaks is now.

Have your say: [Right to breaks for unpaid carers - implementation - Scottish Government consultations - Citizen Space](#)

Share your views

We're hosting two online roundtable events providing the opportunity to share views on the consultation. Discussions from these events will help shape our continued work and support towards considered and careful implementation, ensuring all carers in Scotland can realise their right to breaks.

Right to a break consultation – unpaid carers' online roundtable: Friday 27 March 2026, 10.30am – 12.00pm: [Right to a Break consultation - online roundtable for unpaid carers Tickets, Friday, Mar 27 from 10:30 am to 12 pm GMT | Eventbrite](#)

Right to a break consultation – organisations' online roundtable: Tuesday 21 April 2026, 10.30am – 12.00pm: [Right to a Break consultation - online roundtable for organisations Tickets, Tuesday, Apr 21, 2026 from 10:30 am to 12 pm GMT+1 | Eventbrite](#)
Shared Care Scotland (27.02.26)

Please note - Any Carer/s who do not have access to a computer, you are more than welcome to use the Crossroads office, and we will support you to join the online meeting on 27th March. All we need is to know a few days beforehand so we can secure a ticket and ensure we have sufficient space should there be a number of Carers who want to attend from the office. Alternatively, there is an online questionnaire, and we would also be happy to support anyone to complete that.

Myself, Gemma, Steve, and Lynn will all be attending the event for organisations and can also put forward suggestions or ask any questions that you may have too.



Spring recipe. Easy Easter nests.

Ingredients

200g milk chocolate broken into pieces

85g shredded wheat crushed

2 x 100g bags mini chocolate eggs

You'll also need cupcake cases

Method

step 1

Melt the chocolate in a small bowl placed over a pan of barely simmering water. Pour the chocolate over the shredded wheat and stir well to combine.

step 2

Spoon the chocolate wheat into 12 cupcake cases and press the back of a teaspoon in the centre to create a nest shape. Place 3 mini chocolate eggs on top of each nest. Chill the nests in the fridge for 2 hrs until set.

Finally, Thank you for taking the time to read this. Remember, we are here to provide emotional support as well as practical support. We have our lending library for items to loan out for as long as needed and can refer and signpost you onto the various services within Orkney.

Take care and Happy Spring!

Yours sincerely,

Sheila Ritch

Registered Manager

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