

VOCAL Carer Survey

"VOCAL really is a one-stop shop!"

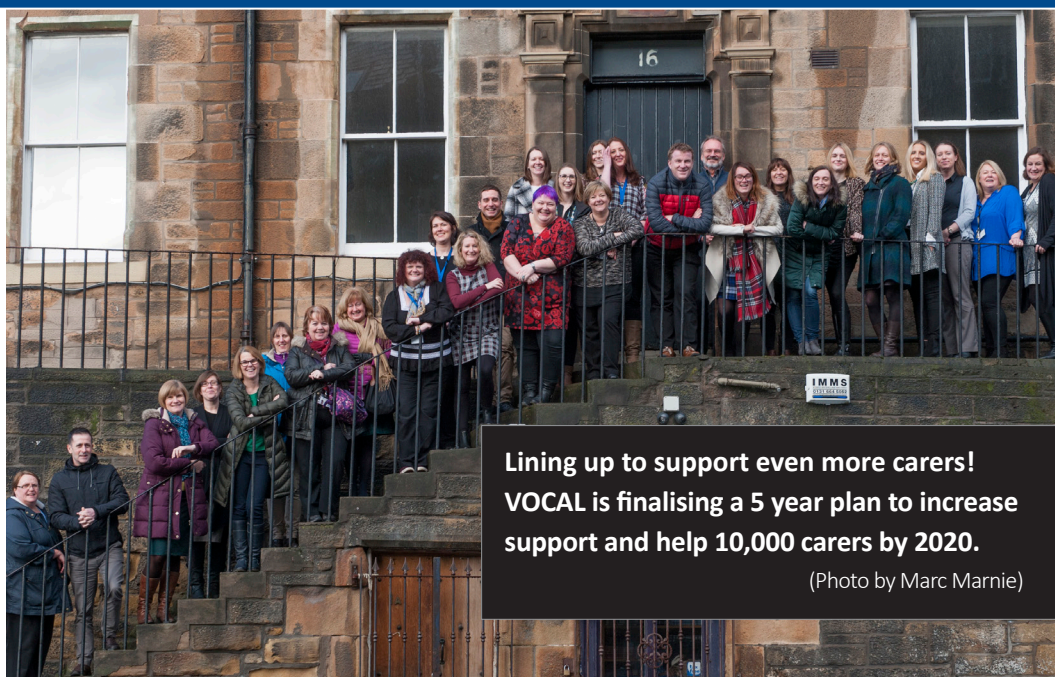
In October 2015 VOCAL invited over 7,000 carers to provide information on the impact caring has on their lives. 940 carers responded in our third and largest carer survey to date.

- A growing number of carers report they are caring for more than one person
- Around half of carers report that caring has affected their finances
- 36% (EH) and 24% (Mid) had to reduce or give up paid work to care
- Accessing benefits and allowances scored highest in a list of important issues for carers, followed by planning financially for the future and reducing energy and utility bills
- Asked about priorities for the future, most carers listed more opportunities for breaks from caring, followed by services with a focus on physical and emotional health.

The full reports will soon be available on VOCAL's website (www.vocal.org.uk/carers-survey2015) and shared with planning partners to inform carer support developments in Edinburgh and the Lothians.

Think carers!

In partnership with Morisons Solicitors, we can now support people who consider leaving a gift for VOCAL in their will. From May 2016, we have access to a fund to meet up to 50% of your cost of making a will, up to a value of £150. Find out more at: www.vocal.org.uk/legacy



Lining up to support even more carers!
VOCAL is finalising a 5 year plan to increase support and help 10,000 carers by 2020.

(Photo by Marc Marnie)

Make it YOUR business!

Supporting carers in the workplace

More and more carers, above all women, struggle to combine paid work with growing caring responsibilities. Many feel under pressure to reduce or even give up employment, but could continue with more recognition and support from colleagues and employers.

VOCAL has joined forces with Standard Life, The Open University, Carer Positive and City of Edinburgh Council to bring together Edinburgh employers to share good practice and develop positive approaches to supporting unpaid carers at work.

On Thursday 9 June 2016 – during this year's National Carers Week – Standard Life are hosting an inspiring seminar for representatives from 50 city employers to showcase best practice and initiatives to support and retain experienced staff, reduce absences and make considerable savings on recruitment.

The day starts with a networking breakfast followed by guest speakers, interactive workshops and a round table discussion. Delegates also have the opportunity to view exhibits of good practice and hear directly from staff who juggle work and care.

Calling all carers at work:

Please bring this event to the attention of your employer and encourage your company to become part of positive actions for carers at work! Alternatively, send us details of your employer and we will contact them directly.

For more information, please visit the VOCAL website:
www.vocal.org.uk/makeityourbusiness

ABOUT VOCAL

VOCAL supports carers in all family or relationship settings, be they defined by kinship, partnership, friendship, affection or obligation.

What do we do?

Carers can access the following:

- Information & advice
- Individual support
- Legal & financial surgeries
- Training & groupwork
- Social & leisure opportunities
- Family Support (Addictions)
- Carer counselling service

Connect with VOCAL:



Email:
centre@vocal.org.uk



Website:
www.vocal.org.uk



Twitter:
@EdinburghCarers



Facebook:
www.facebook.com/
VOCALCarers

VOCAL Carer Centres

VOCAL Carer Centre

8 - 13 Johnston Terrace
Edinburgh EH1 2PW
Tel: 0131 622 6666

VOCAL Midlothian Carer Centre

30/1 Hardengreen Estate
Dalhousie Road, Dalkeith
EH22 3NX
Tel: 0131 663 6869

Additional services:

Family Support
Addictions (FSA) 0131 622 6262
Counselling 0131 466 8082
South Edinburgh 0131 672 0987
South West Edin 0131 449 8606

VOCAL is an active member
of the Coalition of Carers in
Scotland and affiliated to
Carers Scotland, Shared Care
Scotland and Eurocarers.

Dear Readers,

Cross-party support for the Carers (Scotland) Act in February and the election manifestos of all political parties bear witness: the personal is political!

Caring for a relative – once regarded a private family matter – is now a very public issue and a major priority for our society. Carers stood up to be counted, campaigned for more rights and are gaining further recognition and support.

At the same time, more caring responsibility is shifting to families and friends because public services are inadequately funded and cannot keep up with demand.

In the Manifesto for Unpaid Carers in Scotland, national carer organisations are clear: "Funding for social care is in crisis and this will not be resolved through policy without significant investment. Long term solutions need to be sought, such as universal social care insurance."

Our new government, opposition parties, NHS and local authorities must be held to account beyond these elections - good policies mean nothing unless they are implemented and funded and bring more tangible support to carers.

Locally, VOCAL remains carer-led and is developing a new five-year business plan, guided by legislation, local health and social care strategies, but most of all by key carer messages emerging from our local survey (see front page).

VOCAL wants to create the conditions to help more carers, increasing support from currently 7,000 to reach 10,000 beneficiaries each year by 2021.

Funding is a key issue to achieving these targets. We are grateful to all of VOCAL's donors, carer donations, supporters who fundraise for us by cycling, abseiling, walking and running marathons, trust funds who value our services and increasingly also businesses and companies who show their support for carers in their workforce.

These pages can never do justice to all individual and collective fundraising efforts. Nevertheless, we mention a few to represent the many. We thank a carer who left VOCAL £500 in her estate; Mark Hewitt who gave up a whole weekend to install a kitchen at the Edinburgh Carers Centre; Abbie Greenough (see below) for her sweet production and Great Bake-Off and all carers who support our 100 Club.

With supporters like you, VOCAL can look to the future with confidence!

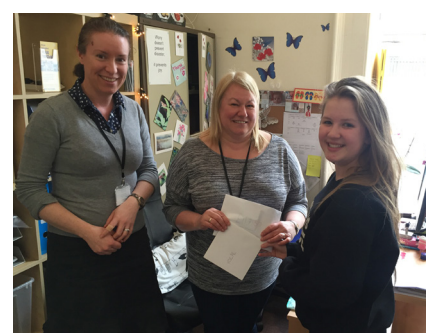
With best wishes

Sebastian Fischer, CEO



Young baker raises money for carer support!

Our thanks to Abbie Greenough, who raised an impressive £117.50 for VOCAL through the sale of her home baked goods as part of the Junior Award Scheme for Schools (JASS). She is pictured handing over the money raised to VOCAL assistant director Rosemary and finance officer Gillian. Well done Abbie - your delicious tablet will always be welcome at VOCAL, it's amazing!!



That's Life!

Remember the show? Remember the song? Frank Sinatra 1966...

*"I've been a puppet, a pauper, a pirate, poet, a pawn and a king
I've been up and down and over and out
And I know one thing
Each time I find myself flat on my face,
I pick myself up and get back in the race"*



"That's Life!" is a new VOCAL project – funded by the Scottish Whisky Action Fund – to help carers and former carers in each of the four Edinburgh city sectors to explore new ways to look after themselves and enjoy a life outside of caring. We want to help you to 'get back in the race'!

Caring for a family member or friend, or losing someone we love, can take its toll on our own health and wellbeing. Carers often tell us they are exhausted, stressed, have low mood or feel lonely and isolated. Some are in danger of using alcohol to deal with emotional pain, relax or as a way to meet people socially.



"That's Life!" will support you 'to pick yourself up' and Rachael Honeyman (pictured below) is looking forward to supporting carers and former carers on the project.

"Life brings a lot of challenges, but there's a lot more to life and it's worth exploring!" says Rachael. "VOCAL wants to help carers face up to harmful drinking and talk about it openly. We hope "That's Life!" can help carers and former carers feel more confident in themselves, become more active again and get more out of life. I am really looking forward to help carers to improve their health and well-being."



Rachael will meet with you, arrange groups, activities and breaks from caring, help you engage with local activities, make new friends and get back into long forgotten interests.

You don't need to be drinking heavily or regularly to access this service - you just need an interest in looking after yourself and getting more out of life!

Contact the VOCAL carer centre on 0131 622 6666 for more information or to refer yourself for support.

Fit for Health: free exercise for people with long term health conditions

NHS Lothian and Edinburgh Leisure are working in partnership to deliver 'Fit for Health', a free exercise programme for people with long term conditions in Edinburgh.

Helen (74) was referred into Fit for Health following completion of Pulmonary Rehab at Wester Hailes Health Centre. She suffers from breathlessness and heart problems which can limit her ability to do everyday tasks. Helen found the experience very beneficial physically and also enjoyed meeting other people with similar health conditions.



If you have a long term condition and are interested in being referred into Fit for Health, please ask your GP or Health & Social Care professional to be referred onto the programme. Visit edinburghleisure.co.uk or call Edinburgh Leisure on **0131 458 2100** for more information.

Taking time off from caring

The responsibility of attending to someone else's needs means that carers' own needs are often neglected. Carers often tell us that doing something outwith their caring role is one of the best stress relievers, but that it can be hard to find the time.

VOCAL supports carers to access short breaks to take some time for themselves. Some carers already have an idea of what they would like to do, others need a bit of help in finding a break that will work for them.



Carers can apply for funding to take a break as well as taking advantage of discounts and freebies for carers. For short

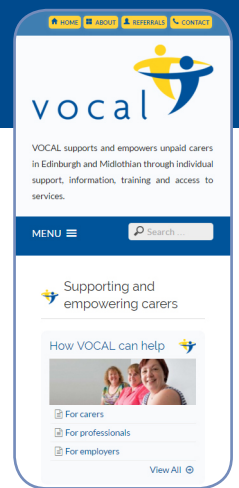
break ideas, inspiration and funding information visit the VOCAL website: www.vocal.org.uk/short-breaks-respite.html or the WeeBreak Midlothian website: www.weebreak.org

VOCAL launches mobile-friendly website!

We are very pleased to announce the launch of the new VOCAL website which went live in April.

The new site is a fully responsive design which will enable users of mobile phones and tablet devices to access all the information and features easily.

New features include: a new dedicated section for VOCAL Midlothian, an enhanced search function and a new section for employers and professionals. You'll find the new look website at the same address as before: www.vocal.org.uk



VOCAL kitchen gets a makeover!

It's not just the website that's had a makeover! The staff kitchen at the VOCAL Edinburgh carer centre has under gone a total transformation recently. We would like to thank David Lowe (Plumbase, Sighthill) for donating the kitchen sink and tap and Howdens Joinery Company Ltd for the discount on the kitchen units and worktops. Thanks also to Mark & Lewis Hewitt of Thistle Building Services who kindly donated an entire weekend to fit and decorate the kitchen - great job, we all love it!

Fundraising news

Two big VOCAL fundraising events need your support - the **Sponsored Walk and Picnic in the Park** at Dalkeith Country Park to kick off Carers' Week on 4th June and **Forth Rail Bridge Abseil** on 26th June. Find out more on the VOCAL website: www.vocal.org.uk/support-vocal

We would also ask you to support Emma and Sylva, two amateur cyclists who are cycling the entire length of Ireland in May to raise money for VOCAL. You can follow their journey on Facebook (www.facebook.com/vocalm2m) and make a donation on their JustGiving page: www.justgiving.com/cyclethelengthofireland

VOCAL reaching more Central and Eastern European carers

VOCAL has been working with community groups and organisations to reach more carers in the growing Central and Eastern European community in Edinburgh and overcome some of the barriers to them accessing support services.

Two Polish volunteers, Karolina (pictured) and Ewa, joined VOCAL in May 2015 and have been busy translating and distributing VOCAL leaflets and publications for the Polish community and forging links with organisations that work with people who have come to live here from Central and Eastern Europe.



Karolina and Ewa have also translated a whole section of the new VOCAL website so that Polish-speaking carers can access information about support and services in their own language - see www.vocal.org.uk/polish-carers

If you would like to update or remove your details, or would like your name added to VOCAL's mailing list to receive Carers News, then complete this form and return to: **FREEPOST RTJZ-RBZT-LHGH, VOCAL, 8-13 Johnston Terrace, Edinburgh, EH1 2PW**

Title: Name: Add ☐

Address: Remove ☐

Previous address (if updating): Update ☐

Postcode: Tel: Email:

Condition of person being cared for:

Relationship to person being cared for:

The information provided in this form will be stored on VOCAL's database. This will allow us to let carers know about events, training and other relevant opportunities. We may occasionally contact carers by telephone. We will add carers to VOCAL's carer email list. We will not share any personal information with a third party unless required to do so and will always seek to obtain consent first. Information is regularly checked to ensure it is accurate and up to date. If you wish to view the information we hold about you or if you wish your details to be removed, please contact VOCAL on 0131 622 6666 or email centre@vocal.org.uk. Please tick here if you do not wish VOCAL to do this ☐