

Caring in the City 2017

**North West
Edinburgh**

**North East
Edinburgh**



VOCAL Edinburgh

**South West
Edinburgh**

**South East/Central
Edinburgh**



VOCAL Midlothian

VOCAL support for carers

- Individual support
- Welfare rights
- Carer training & events
- Regular carer surgeries
- Carer counselling service
- Family Support (Addictions)
- Peer support & mentoring

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 is affiliated to Carers Scotland, Shared Care Scotland and Eurocarers.

Dear carers,

"Whatever the weather, we weather it together."

Carers and their families will start 2017 wondering what the New Year may hold for them. At VOCAL, we hope we can be here for you whenever you require help and support.

We ended 2016 with the good news that VOCAL has again been awarded Level II of the PQASSO Quality Award, without a single improvement condition attached. But the process of self-assessment and independent inspection helped us identify areas in which we can do even better. We are determined we will.

2017 holds much uncertainty: Council and NHS cuts in services across Scotland, local government elections in May, the unknowns of the Brexit effect and much more. Come what may, we start 2017 with some ambitious New Year resolutions:

- VOCAL will focus on a new initiative to develop person-centred short breaks for carers. We are hosting a seminar with Shared Care Scotland and other agencies on 19 January to explore how we can shape new partnerships to develop 'Respitality' for carers.
- Securing funding for new initiatives will be a great challenge. We welcome Francesca Greaves, our new Partnership Development Officer for corporate and community fundraising, to help us with this task.

We also seek to strengthen our Board and appeal directly to carers and former carers who may have skills and experience to support the governance of our services in Midlothian. There are many carer champions out there who think and plan strategically, who have management, personnel or finance expertise, or who bring valuable experience in partnership developments from voluntary work or their previous profession. We are currently advertising several vacancies on the Board and hope to find new people to join a great team at VOCAL.

We look forward to meeting potential candidates at an event in March - see the VOCAL website (www.vocal.org.uk/vacancies) for more information.

With all best wishes for 2017,

M. Bennett

Margaret Bennett, Vice Convener
(pictured above holding PQASSO certificate)



VOCAL celebrates after another successful PQASSO inspection

Book helps carer Pat find her own voice

When Pat Clark's husband suffered a major stroke in 2008 their lives changed dramatically. Despite her intensive caring role, with support from VOCAL Pat realised she could have a life of her own and embarked on her own journey - researching and writing a book about the Scottish Artist Charles H Mackie.

"Like many carers this journey was not the one planned for our retirement years" says Pat. "VOCAL provided a lifeline during that painful time and for many years. Both journeys have now ended but my debt to VOCAL is inestimable. This book is testimony to that help and encouragement."

People, Places and Piazzas: The Life & Art of Charles H. Mackie took Pat seven years to complete and is available to buy from independent and online bookshops.



VOCAL in the City...

VOCAL has carer support workers permanently based at locations across the City of Edinburgh - not just at our carer centre - offering a range of support for carers:

- ▶ **South Queensferry** - based at the Haven, carer support worker Gillian Smith is involved in running carer social events and training as well as supporting individual carers.
- ▶ **North Edinburgh** - Bill McLaren is now based at the social work centre in West Pilton Gardens for two days every week and has been developing close working relationships with health and social care staff there. Carers can access individual support, welfare rights surgeries and free training courses here.



- ▶ **South West Edinburgh** - Carer support workers Lisa Rice and Emma Pattinson (pictured above) provide free, confidential one-to-one support for individual carers at the Westerhailes Healthy Living Centre and a weekly carer support group at the Pentlands Community Centre where carers can meet and share their experiences.
- ▶ **South Edinburgh** - supporting carers at Libertus four days a week is Hazel Waddell. As well as offering individual support, carers can also access regular carer training and Power of Attorney and benefits surgeries.
- ▶ **Edinburgh Recovery Hubs** - VOCAL's Family Support Addictions team hold regular carer support sessions at Edinburgh's four recovery hubs in Leith, Muirhouse, Wester Hailes and Craigmillar - see www.vocal.org.uk/addictions for more details or phone **0131 622 6262**.

Boost for VOCAL's carer counselling service

We are delighted to announce that the Queensberry House Trust (QHT) have granted VOCAL a further two years of funding to provide counselling to carers of someone affected by dementia.

This will allow the carer counselling service to offer at least 700 therapeutic counselling sessions from qualified counsellors until April 2019. To contact the carer counselling service call **0131 466 8082** or speak with your VOCAL carer support worker.

Edinburgh carer training expands!

VOCAL are pleased to welcome Rebecca Caulfield back after maternity leave and introduce her new role as Carer Training Co-ordinator.

Rebecca says:

"I look forward to meeting carers at our courses and events in 2017. As well as regular sessions such as introduction to caring, understanding dementia and stress management, there are some exciting new events in the pipeline."



Look out for 'New Year, New You' at the end of January and the 'Podcast workshops', which will teach carers new ways to access books via podcasts and then review them together as a group."

These free courses and events take place all year with sessions in the evening and weekends to accommodate all carers. For more information go to the carer events website www.carerstraining.co.uk or call Rebecca on **0131 662 6666**.

Midlothian carers - we'll help you find some 'Me Time'

As a carer it is important that you take a break from your caring role allowing you to continue to care in good mental and physical health. VOCAL are committed to supporting you to take a break - that might be a few hours, a day out or a week away with or without the person you care for - whatever works best for you!

Respite is a concept developed by Shared Care Scotland which VOCAL have embraced, working in partnership with hospitality, tourism and leisure providers who are 'gifting' experiences and breaks to carers - including spa days, trips to the theatre and holiday cottages.

After a Respite break in Pittenweem with Fife Cottages one carer said: *"I had a great stay in Pittenweem, the break came at the right time - it was a life saver! The break has really helped to bring my sister and me closer together."*

If you would like to find out more about Respite and taking a break from your caring role call VOCAL Midlothian today on 0131 663 6869.

Me time

Francesca aims to take VOCAL's fundraising to the next level!

VOCAL are delighted to welcome new Partnership Development Officer Francesca Greaves to the team. Francesca will be working to develop new partnerships for community and corporate fundraising. This will include everything from fundraising events to charity of the year partnerships - watch this space!



If you have an idea for fundraising please get in touch with Francesca: fundraising@vocal.org.uk or **0131 622 6666**.

Take the Rotary Forth Rail Bridge Abseil challenge in 2017



To kick off 2017, VOCAL are looking for intrepid folk to take part in the Rotary Forth Rail Bridge Abseil on Sunday 28 May 2017. Registration opened on 1 January so don't delay if you would like to take part as places are limited - visit the VOCAL website: www.vocal.org.uk/abseil17 for details.

Social security consultation update

VOCAL hosted three carer consultation groups to respond to the Scotland-wide Social Security consultation last year. We thank all carers who took part.

Carers were adamant that they provide a valuable role in the lives of the cared for person and save the government and social care a lot of money with their contribution.



The main points carers raised included:

- Carers want to see Carers Allowance (CA) increased to reflect their contribution to society and for CA to be excluded from calculations for other benefits e.g. housing and council tax.
- All agreed that stopping CA for carers when they reach pension age is unfair and should be reassessed. Many carers are already penalised by receiving lower pensions due to years of caring.
- Carers agreed that the amount carers can earn while receiving CA (currently £110/week) should be increased to allow carers to stay in employment alongside their caring role.
- Many carers reported their experience of claiming disability benefits either for themselves or the person they care for. They highlighted the challenges of completing forms and assessments and would like to see these simplified. The requirement for constant re-assessments should be abolished for those with long-term conditions which are unlikely to change.

Overall carers welcome the opportunity and are very hopeful that the new social security system in Scotland will work better for them and the people they care for, and that carers will be valued for the work they do.

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](mailto:centre@vocal.org.uk). Please tick here if you do not wish VOCAL to do this