

Make VOCAL Your Charity of 2020

2020 sees the beginning of the next quarter century of our work with unpaid carers. Your support helps us to innovate and grow our services to meet the changing and complex needs of carers.

We are celebrating our partnership with Historic Environment Scotland who have chosen to support VOCAL as part of their 2020 wellbeing programme. Here are a few ways that you, friends and colleagues can help carers through VOCAL in 2020:

At Work

VOCAL works with employers to support carers in the workplace. Your workplace can support us by making us charity of the year or undertaking some team fundraising. Your employer will enjoy connections in the community and thanks and acknowledgement for your team's support across the VOCAL network.

In Your Will

Legacies can do so much for the future of carers. With a gift left in your Will, VOCAL can take the next step in supporting our carers. Remember, our services are carer led so we always listen to what our carers have to tell us about the services they need. Your legacy will one day make a big difference to carers. Get in touch if you want to know more about making a gift in your Will to VOCAL.

Become a Friend of VOCAL

Even If your journey as a carer has ended, you can still keep in touch and hear about our campaigns, fundraising and volunteering activity, events and news. By being a Friend of VOCAL, you are joining a group of like-minded people who want to support carers by telling others about us, donating or volunteering from time to time.

To find out more about making VOCAL your new year's resolution, email Julie on jforster@vocal.org.uk or call **0131 622 6666**.

Thank You!

Our gratitude goes to everyone who supported us in our 25th year. Our anniversary Ceilidh in November was a great success thanks to our attendees, event sponsors Keegan & Pennykid Insurance Brokers, Midlothian School of Dance, Auld Spice Ceilidh Band and to the students of Edinburgh College for making a fabulous celebration cake for our guests.

We plan to announce another event for autumn 2020 to bring the VOCAL family together – carers, volunteers, partners, supporters and staff.



The Carers Choir entertain guests at our 25th party in Midlothian



Our anniversary Employer's Event



Cutting the cake!



Dancing the night away at the ceilidh

Reaching over 7,500 carers in Edinburgh

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 & group work
- Social & leisure opportunities
- Family Support (Addictions)
- Carer counselling service

Connect with VOCAL:



centre@vocal.org.uk



vocal.org.uk



[@VOCALEdinburgh](https://twitter.com/VOCALEdinburgh)



[/VOCALEdinburgh](https://www.facebook.com/VOCALEdinburgh)

VOCAL Carer Centres

VOCAL Edinburgh Carers' Hub

60 Leith Walk
Edinburgh EH6 5HB



0131 622 6666

VOCAL Midlothian Carer Centre

30/1 Hardengreen Estate
Dalhousie Road, Dalkeith
EH22 3NX



0131 663 6869

Additional services:

Family Support

Addictions (FSA) 0131 622 6666

Counselling 0131 466 8082

South Edinburgh 0131 672 0987

South West Edin 0131 453 9457

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



HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

Caring for Yourself

This time of year is often hard. A new year brings with it thoughts of what we want to change in our lives, meanwhile the short days and long nights have a marked physiological impact. All of this close on the heels of the hectic festive season can feel a little overwhelming.

So how do we take time out when we need it the most? Even a short 'breathing space' can make a big difference. Ask yourself what you need in that moment – it's different things for different people. Is it getting some fresh air, finding a quiet place for a cuppa or using your favourite app for a short meditation? Allowing yourself to have a breather and being kind to yourself can go a long way.

Beating those winter blues can involve some surprisingly small and

simple things working together to lift your mood. Keeping active probably comes top of the list, even a 15-minute walk and getting some natural daylight releases 'happy hormones'. Making healthy choices and getting your five-a-day when all you want is reach for your favourite comfort food can also make you feel good. Talking to someone about how you are feeling can also be helpful.

Remember VOCAL is here for you if you need someone to talk to: as well as our free carer support our COSCA recognised counselling service is available to carers living in Edinburgh or Midlothian, with financial contributions agreed at a level to suit your individual circumstances.

To talk to carer support email centre@vocal.org.uk or call us on **0131 622 6666**.



New Year, New You?

In the New Year thoughts often turn to resolutions or changes we want to make in our lives. You may want to get healthier, take up a new hobby or interest or get away for a few days. Or perhaps you want to review your finances, for instance, through having a benefits check or switching energy providers.

Changing habits and routines is not always straightforward, so it fairly common for resolutions to fall by the wayside after only a short time. To increase your chances of being successful:

- **Keep your goals fairly small and achievable.**
- **Build on them over time.**
- **Don't worry about your first step being small.**
- **Celebrate your successes.**

It is better to get the confidence boost that comes from a small achievable goal than to set your sights too high and fail.

When you achieve a goal, remember to reward yourself – even in a small way like having a cuppa, with your feet up, watching your favourite TV



Be Brave on Sunday 10th May 2020

This year's Forth Bridge abseil is taking place on Sunday 10th May 2020 and our friends are invited to sign up for this exciting personal challenge. Join a group of like-minded supporters who want to undertake this adventure for their own sense of achievement as well as raising funds for VOCAL's work.

The event is organised by South Queensferry Rotary Club and VOCAL has participated for a number of years.

"It is such a sense of achievement. The whole experience gives you a

real rush, especially when you are part of a team doing this challenge together" said Seb Fischer, VOCAL's Chief Executive who took on the challenge himself in 2019.

Participants are required to raise sponsorship money as well as make a deposit payment. Our daring abseilers will be supported by the VOCAL team to promote their fundraising activity across social media and in print and email newsletters.

To register interest or find out more email fundraising@vocal.org.uk or visit justgiving.com/vocal

Beating the Blues

VOCAL's free carer learning and leisure opportunities are a great way to get rid of that blah feeling and help banish the winter blues.

We all feel like just curling up on the couch in winter, but staying active helps keep our mood up. We've a Seated Exercise Class on improving physical strength, flexibility and posture. Or have you ever wanted to try yoga? We have that too!

Learning something new is another great way to break up the long nights and short days. VOCAL has a range of courses such as Jewellery Making, Crafty Carers or an Aromatherapy Course. We've a huge range of

courses to choose from but here are a few highlights:

- New Year, New You
- Seated Exercise
- Introduction to Yoga
- Stress Management
- Basic Aromatherapy
- Laughter Yoga
- Dealing with Anger
- Jewellery Making
- Crafty Carers

Many carers can't remember the last time they had a good laugh, especially in the winter months. At Laughter Yoga classes we'll learn how to generate laughter from the body rather than the mind – empowering us to access laughter even when we don't feel like laughing, or feel that we have nothing to laugh about.

At any of these courses you'll meet with other carers also caring through the winter months, another real source of support in itself.

To register or find out more visit carerstraining.co.uk or call us on **0131 622 6666**. All courses are free.

show. Being proud and confident about our achievements is not something that comes easily for many. But you should be!

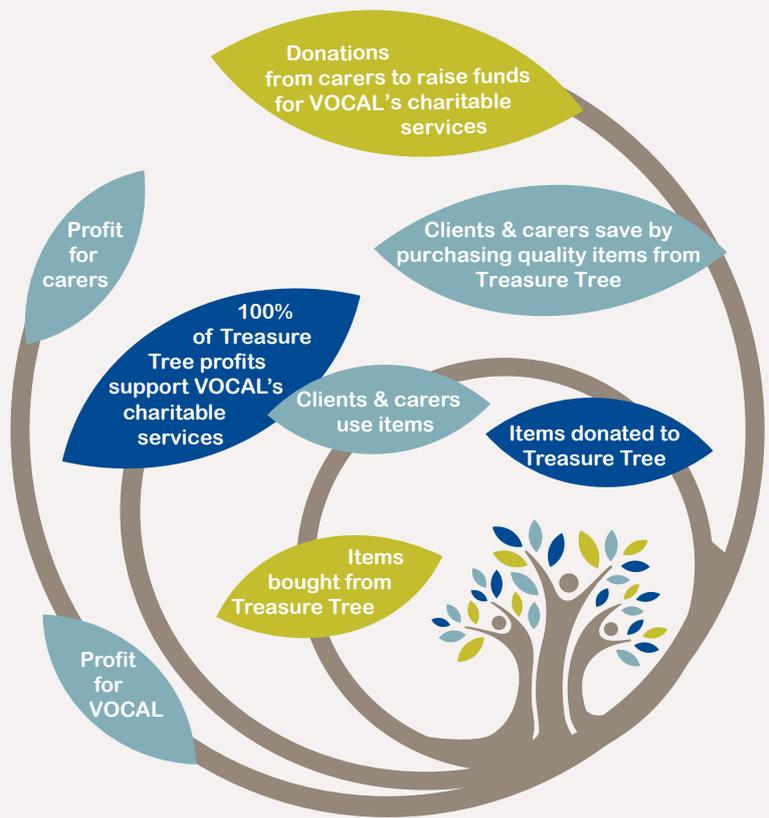
You are much more likely to achieve your goals when you share them with another person and engage them in supporting you. Our carer support workers can help you stay motivated and overcome barriers you could encounter along the way. If you think this might help, email us at centre@vocal.org.uk or call us on **0131 622 6666** to chat through how we could support you.



TreasureTree

A Circle of Treasures

Mr Jaime Gutierrez has recently returned to Edinburgh to care for his Mum. He has found pushing her around in a manual wheelchair “challenging, tiring and difficult”. He found that all of their outings were utilitarian such as going shopping. He contacted Treasure Tree who had a Karma attendant propelled small wheel wheelchair and dual wheel power pack available. He immediately put it to good use and took his mum for a walk. He said that this outing was more pleasurable, he found it much less tiring and his Mum found it far more comfortable. An outing just for pleasure. He said that “it gives more energy emotionally and physically” to carry on with the other caring tasks. Treasure Tree enabled him to buy a used mobility item in an immediate and affordable way, and he could try it out without having to find the cost of a brand new one. He has now donated her manual chair, which means another carer will benefit as will VOCAL. In addition, the carer who donated the chair will receive a share of the money.



We Need your Treasures!

Mr Gutierrez’s story demonstrates what we can do with your mobility items. We need all mobility items. We also value retro and vintage donations. Likewise jewellery. Treasure Tree can sell all of these things. **Please note:** If you have an electric wheelchair or scooter you do not have to have it serviced before you donate it. It will just cost you money and does not add the equivalent value to the chair. If it requires a new battery, we can purchase and replace that on your behalf.



Keep it local. Sell through VOCAL

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: **VOCAL Edinburgh Carers’ Hub, 60 Leith Walk, Edinburgh EH6 5HB** or email us with this information:

Title: Name:

Address:

Previous address (if updating):

Postcode: Tel: Email:

Condition of person being cared for:

Relationship to person being cared for:

Add

Remove

Update

The information provided in this form will be stored on VOCAL’s secure systems. We will use it to send you information about carer support and services by post and email. We may occasionally contact you by telephone. We will not share any personal information with a third party unless required to do so or with your consent. 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 for your details to be removed, please contact VOCAL on 0131 622 6666 or email centre@vocal.org.uk You can read our full data privacy statement on the VOCAL website: www.vocal.org.uk/privacy