

What is a Carer?

A Carer is someone of any age who provides unpaid support to family or friends who could not manage without this help. Carers often experience stress, loneliness and isolation, they can find it difficult to go out because they cannot leave the person they look after.

What we do

We support unpaid Carers in East Sussex to continue in their caring role by providing free, high quality, volunteer-led services that encourage independence and reduce isolation.

Our services include

Regular Respite Breaks: Giving Carers the opportunity to have some time to them self, building a long-term befriending relationship with the cared for person.

Respite for Healthcare: Enabling Carers to attend their own healthcare appointments by sitting with the cared for person while they go.

Telephone Support: Providing Carers with a listening ear and the opportunity to discuss their caring role in confidence.

Computer Help at Home: Teaching Carers to use their computer in ways that will help them to have more time to themselves and reduce their isolation.

Young Carers Befriending: Giving Young Carers the opportunity to take a break from their caring role.

What does a driving volunteer do?

Do you enjoy driving and talking to people? Our volunteer drivers help us in a number of ways. They enable volunteers that can't drive or don't have access to a car to get from their home to the Carer's home and back again. They can also help Carers take a break by transporting the person they look after to and from a day activity.

Skills/Qualifications needed

The Volunteer Coordinator is responsible for our volunteer's wellbeing. Our volunteers need to:

- Have good local knowledge and be able to adhere to the Highway Code
- Have their own reliable transport with adequate insurance and an up-to-date MOT
- Be friendly, patient and understanding

- Be able to treat people with respect
- Be confident in a crisis
- Be understanding of what it means to look after someone
- Be able to attend our induction and training sessions

Where does the volunteering role usually take place?

Volunteers can choose which area/s they would be happy to drive to and can help out as little or as much as they are able.

What is the induction process for volunteers?

We ask our volunteers to complete an application form, provide two references and meet us for an informal chat. We also carry out a DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) check for volunteers whose role will bring them into contact with people who are considered vulnerable. Following this, volunteers attend a one day induction, which helps them to:

- Understand more about the Association and the support it provides to Carers
- Understand what it means to be a Carer and the impact caring has on people' s lives
- Feel confident in a variety of situations
- Gain an awareness of health and safety
- Learn how to be safe when lone working

What training are volunteers provided with?

We ask all our volunteers to attend Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults and First Aid training. In addition to this they can also attend other relevant training throughout the year, for example;

- Dementia/Stroke and Parkinson' s Awareness
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

What support do we offer our volunteers?

- We encourage our volunteers to call us or pop in to one of our offices if they need a chat, advice, or have any concerns
- We accompany new volunteers the first time they go to visit the cared for person
- If volunteers are unable to drive we find them a volunteer driver or arrange a taxi
- We reimburse expenses incurred while volunteering, for example, travel expenses are reimbursed at a rate of 45 pence per mile