

Caring Matters



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From our CEO – Susanna Jones



It's amazing how quickly our key events of the year come around! We are busy with preparations for Carers Week and our Walk A Mile awareness-raiser and fundraiser and we would love you to be involved! Please have a look at pages 8 and 9 for all the details.

Our Annual General Meeting on July 26th is also a key opportunity for us to update on the work we have done over the previous year - the date and details for joining us this year can all be found on page 6.

We are very grateful for all the work our community champions (including Swindon Mayor Councillor Abdul Amin) are doing to support our team's engagement with Asian communities in Swindon to raise awareness of the support available for unpaid carers. It's brilliant to read on pages 4 and 5 about the important work Monica has been doing and it's great to welcome Kiran to the team too!

Two of our carers have recently been involved with a consultation around a new Carers Passport being introduced at Great Western Hospital – there's more information on this on page 7 – and thank you to Tania Currie, the Carers Lead at GWH for all the work she's doing to embed support for carers across the hospital.

If you would like to be part of our Carers Forum, our next meeting is on Monday September 4th at 12.30pm. The forum is a space for carers to share their experience of caring for someone - to influence our service design and delivery, as well as to raise awareness of unpaid carers in Swindon. Previous meetings have been held on Zoom, but this next meeting will be face-to-face (venue to be confirmed). For more information, please email communications@swindoncarers.org.uk.

Finally, another huge thank you must go to Friends of Young Carers Swindon (FOYCS). This amazing charity funds our holiday groups and activities for young carers (further information on pages 11 and 12). We all know what a difficult fundraising environment it is at the moment and these dedicated volunteers work tirelessly fundraising to support our work with young carers.

With very best wishes, Susanna

Cover image: Carers Cuppa at Lawn Community Centre. L-r Wendy Humphries, Social Prescriber at the Live Well Team and Wyvern Health Partnership, Tina Richards, Deputy Service Delivery Manager for Adult & Older Carers at SCC and Lisa Reeves, Care Lead and Receptionist at Lawn Medical Centre. Story on page 7.

A warm welcome to:



Suzanne (Sue) Stickley

Events Coordinator
(Adult Carers & Older Carers)

I joined the Adult Carers Event Team at Swindon Carers Centre in January this year. My role is to support the wellbeing of adult carers, who are doing a fabulous job as dedicated carers for family members and friends.

We provide lots of opportunities for carers to meet in a comfortable, safe environment both on their own and at some activities with their dependents.

Previously, I have worked in education as a Teaching Assistant, as a Nursing Auxiliary within the NHS and as an office administrator. I am married to Gavin, and we have three lovely children and a very lively cockapoo named Flossie!

I've really enjoyed my first few months working at SCC - everyone has been very friendly and made me feel very welcome.



Jacky Barnes

Finance Manager

I joined Swindon Carers Centre in February 2023 and I work alongside Bronte, Cathy, Sally and Sujata in the Finance and Resources Team. I am enjoying my work here, getting to grips with charity finances and being part of a fantastic team of people who are so welcoming and great to work with. It is great to be part of the charity and support all the fantastic work it does in the community.

I previously worked in various Swindon schools for the last 20 years in roles ranging from Finance Assistant to Bursar. I am used to managing challenging budgets and Human Resources.

I am looking forward to helping all the different teams at SCC to make a difference to unpaid carers of all ages in Swindon.

I live in Swindon with my daughter.



Roger Davies

Events Volunteer (Adult Carers & Older Carers)

I became a volunteer with Swindon Carers Centre in December 2022, but my links with it go back a few years when I was a registered carer for my late wife, Jenny.

I cared for Jenny while I worked and after I retired in 2016. Being a carer was my most fulfilling role and Swindon Carers Centre was a godsend. Attending their events, meeting and chatting with other carers in similar circumstances meant I went from being a relatively lonely, isolated person (because of my carer role) to being surrounded by friendly people in the same circumstances as myself.

When I lost Jenny it was SCC - its staff, volunteers and fellow carers who were friends - who helped me get through the worst of it. This included attending The PATH Group, a friendship and social club for bereaved carers.

As a volunteer, I work with lovely and very hard-working people helping at events for carers. It's very enjoyable and fulfilling to help carers enjoy themselves while they have time away from their caring role.

Spotlight on our Community Engagement Project

Making carers count in our diverse community

Monica Chumber, our Community Engagement Officer (pictured below), gives an update on her role since joining Swindon Carers Centre's Adult and Older Carers Team a year ago.

What is your role?

I'm working on a project called Making Carers Count, which is funded by the Carers Trust. We're focusing on specifically extending our reach to Asian carers as this is the largest under-represented ethnic minority group in Swindon. We're hoping to increase uptake of services within the Asian community and ensure that our services are accessible to all cultures and needs.

How is the project progressing?

The project is going really well! We have established some strong connections with local leaders and champions within the community, who are helping us to make the most of outreach opportunities - raising awareness about how we can support unpaid carers.

What do you enjoy about your role?

I enjoy meeting new people and networking. A large part of my role is focused on building connections with others, which is most definitely a highlight. I also enjoy attending community events such as the Easter fun day, organised by the Hindu Community Centre, and running information stalls at places of worship like the Shri Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara (Temple).

I also enjoy leading conversations which challenge cultural perceptions within the Asian community. As part of the South Asian community myself, I know that it can be daunting to ask 'outsiders' for help, or even acknowledge yourself as a carer in the first place.

Right: Monica with Swindon Mayor, Councillor Abdul Amin, who is a community champion for the Making Carers Count project.



Below: SCC's Monica and Katie at the Shri Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara (Temple).



Monica and Kiran from SCC with community champions Usha and Nisha Karavadra at the Hindu Community Easter Day event.



Monica at the North Swindon Bazaar, organised by the ILM Hub at Redhouse Community Centre, with community champion Mr Khan and committee members.



SCC Engagement Officer Kiran at the Hindu Community Easter Day event.

Anything coming up you'd like to update carers on?

We've recruited another Engagement Officer who will be supporting me with working on the project, so a warm welcome to Kiran.

We're due to attend many more community events over the spring and summer months which will be promoted on SCC's Facebook page. We're also hoping to run a new event as part of the Making Carers Count project in the next few months, so watch this space!

*Are you interested in becoming a community champion or do you belong to an organisation that would like to get involved with the Making Carers Count project? Please email monica.chumber@swindoncarers.org.uk

2021 Census figures

New data from the 2021 Census supports the importance of our Making Carers Count project, to further reach ethnic minority groups in Swindon.

Swindon saw the South West's largest percentage-point rise in the proportion of people who did not identify with any national identity associated with the UK (from 8.6% in 2011 to 13.6% in 2021).

In this latest 2021 Census, around 179,100 Swindon residents said they were born in England. India was the next most represented, with around 13,900 Swindon residents reporting this country of birth.

Added to this, 11.6% of Swindon residents identified their ethnic group within the "Asia, Asian British or Asian Welsh" category, up from 6.4% in 2011.

Swindon Carers Centre strives to run a fully inclusive service, working together with all carers to find the support that may make caring roles more manageable.

We're delighted that the work Monica and Kiran are doing will help us to have new conversations with carers who may not have previously heard of us.

News in brief

Save the date!

Please save the date for our Annual General Meeting which will be held on Wednesday July 26th at 11am to 12.30pm.

This will be a virtual meeting, via Zoom, to

allow as many people to attend as possible. You can register for this event, to receive the Zoom link and meeting agenda, by emailing communications@swindoncarers.org.uk. For further details, you can also phone Anne Saunders on **07435 961071**.

Carer Poverty Coalition

Swindon Carers Centre is one of 100 organisations which have come together in a dedicated coalition in an effort to lessen the financial hardship experienced by millions of unpaid carers across the UK.

The Carer Poverty Coalition aims to build awareness of carer poverty and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on unpaid carers, improving the limited financial support available to them. Crucially, the coalition will also look at what carers need to support

them to continue with paid work, alongside their caring role, for as long as possible.

The coalition is also campaigning to see a benefits system that better supports people providing high amounts of unpaid care. A small steering group of current and recent former unpaid carers is providing insight and comments on major policies and plans.

You can read more about the coalition here: www.carersuk.org/news-and-campaigns/carers-poverty-coalition/

Fundraising update

As a charity we rely on the generous donations of individuals, organisations and businesses to deliver our services to unpaid carers in Swindon. We are part funded by Swindon Borough Council, but to cover the full cost of running our essential services we need to fundraise.

We are extremely grateful to have received funding from the following organisations:

Science Museum Group Wroughton Solar Park Supporting Communities Grant (administered by Wiltshire Community Foundation) of £2,498.53 to enable us to run support groups for unpaid adult and older carers in Wroughton and Chiseldon.

Edward Gostling Foundation for a grant of £10,000, which will go towards our work supporting carers in Swindon to improve their health and wellbeing.

Carers Forum members. Suggestions include "There for those who care" and using the letters SCC from Swindon Carers Centre. For example, "Supporting and Championing Carers."

What would catch your attention as a carer? Please let us know which of the options suggested you prefer or if you have a different idea we should consider. Email communications@swindoncarers.org.uk or call Anne Saunders, Media & Communications Manager on **07435 961071**.

Help us choose our new charity tagline!

Our current charity tagline is "Improving Quality of Life for Carers since 1997." We use this on our publicity materials and email footers to describe who we are. It's important that we can sum this up so that people who come across us as a charity understand what we do!

We are now looking to update this tagline following feedback from staff and from our

News from other organisations

Carers Cuppa

Tina Richards, our Deputy Service Delivery Manager for Adult and Older Carers, attended the inaugural Carers Cuppa organised by social prescribers at the Live Well Team at Swindon Borough Council for the Wyvern Health Partnership.

The drop-in session, at Lawn Community Centre in March, was an opportunity for patients at Lawn Medical Centre who are carers to meet and chat. The social prescribers promoted health and wellbeing

opportunities and Tina talked about the services Swindon Carers Centre offers.

Our practitioners regularly attend meetings, sessions and talks hosted by other organisations to raise awareness of the vital work of Swindon Carers Centre and the



importance of unpaid carers in our community.

Tina Richards with carer Sue at the Carers Cuppa event.

Great Western Hospital's support for carers

Tania Currie, Head of Patient Experience and Engagement, at the Great Western Hospital, Swindon, gives an update on the work to support unpaid carers.

We have relaunched our weekly carers café. This is held every Wednesday in the main hospital restaurant from 2pm to 3.30pm. Carers can get a free cuppa and enjoy a friendly chat, advice and support.

We are currently trialling our new Carers Support Passport. This has been designed to:

- » Support identification of carers

- » Value the contribution and expertise of carers and ensure appropriate involvement
- » Ensure that there is a clear agreement in place to support partnership working
- » Provide recognition and benefits to those supporting care – including the carers café, open visiting (including being able to stay overnight) and discounts on parking, food and drink

We have volunteers in place to support the carers agenda across the trust, but are keen to recruit new members who would like to be involved in this work. If you would like more information, please contact me at tania.currie1@nhs.net or **01793 604170**.

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards: What do carers need to know?

A deprivation of liberty is when a person has their freedom limited in some way. This includes decisions being made for them on their behalf, limitations on where they are allowed to go, and their routine being decided for them. In some circumstances, a person's freedom is limited to give them the care they need or protect them from harm.

This may be the case for people with dementia or a mental health condition, for example. If this applies to the person you care for, you need to know about the Deprivation

of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) procedure.

This procedure prescribed in law protects a person receiving care whose liberty has been limited by checking that this is appropriate and in their best interests. If you need any further information or have any concerns about this subject, please visit this website https://safeguardingpartnership.swindon.gov.uk/info/1/swindon_safeguarding_partnership/15/adult_safeguarding/6 or call Swindon Borough Council Adult Social Care on **01793 445500** option 2 or **01793 463333**

Carers Week and Walk A Mile

Join us for Walk A Mile 2023

We would love to see you at our annual Walk A Mile event on Saturday June 10th, which is our opportunity to raise awareness, making sure unpaid carers in Swindon are visible and recognised for the vital work they do.

Walk A Mile takes place during Carers Week (from June 5th to June 11th), which is a national week raising awareness of unpaid carers. The theme for Carers Week 2023 is recognising and supporting carers in the community.

We're inviting people to put themselves in a carer's shoes by joining us for a circular walk around the town centre, starting and finishing at The Swindon Hub, 36 The Parade, Swindon, SN1 1BA. The Swindon Hub, in the former River Island store, is a great community space so we are excited to be meeting here for Walk A Mile 2023!

We will be using the ground floor space at the



front of The Hub (pictured above), which is flat and accessible for wheelchairs. There is a lift available for toilet facilities on the second floor.

Refreshments will be available to purchase at the Swindon Hub Cafe (pictured below).



Event details

When: Saturday June 10th

Where: The Swindon Hub, 36 The Parade, Swindon, SN1 1BA

Registrations: From 10.30am

Start time: 11am

End time: 1pm

The nearest car parks are at Fleming Way, Whalebridge and Regent Close.



You don't need to book for this event. Please just turn up on the day, but if you would like any more information in order to attend you can email communications@swindoncarers.org.uk or call Anne Saunders, Media & Communications Manager on **07435 961071**.

Fundraising

Walk A Mile is our main fundraising event and you can support it by playing our raffle. Local car dealership Pebley Beach Hyundai and Suzuki Swindon are, once again, sponsoring the event and we are thrilled they have offered to match fund anything we raise up to £1,000 during Carers Week.

We have an online raffle and tickets cost £1 each. The prizes include hampers of goodies, beauty vouchers and restaurant vouchers.

The raffle is open and you play it by scanning the QR code below or online here:

www.peoplesfundraising.com/raffle/swindon-carers-centre-carers-week-2023-affle

At our stall in The Hub for Walk A Mile we will have a tombola with various prizes to be won. You can buy tickets by using a bank card or cash.



Spread the word!

Would you like to support us by displaying our Walk A Mile poster at your workplace, or sharing this with a school or community organisation you are connected to? The poster includes details of our fundraising raffle. Please email us communications@swindoncarers.org.uk

Do you want to share your story?

As well as our Walk A Mile event, we want to champion our carers throughout Carers Week to ensure they are recognised, valued and supported and to shine a light on what it means to be an unpaid carer.

Would you like to share your experience of being a carer? This could be a story about your caring role, or maybe you have written a poem that we can feature on our website and social media channels.

Please get in touch with us by emailing communications@swindoncarers.org.uk

Other events during Carers Week

Our Adult Carers Events Team are holding events including;

Monday June 5th

Freshbrook Carers Cuppa 1.30pm-3pm.

Tuesday June 6th

Dance class 11am-12noon.

Wednesday June 7th

Females pamper session (am).
Dementia Group 2.45pm-4pm.
Social evening 7pm-9pm.

Thursday June 8th

Quiz Night 7pm-9pm.

Please contact the Events Team for further information by emailing acgroups@swindoncarers.org.uk

You can follow Swindon Carers Centre, be kept updated and join in the conversation on our social media channels!



Twitter: [@SwindonCarers](https://twitter.com/SwindonCarers)



Facebook: www.facebook.com/swindoncarerscentre



Instagram: Search for 'swindoncarers'



LinkedIn: Search for **Swindon Carers Centre**

Young Carers Action Day

We supported Young Carers Action Day on March 15th – a national day raising awareness and the challenges facing young carers.

Our Chief Executive Officer, Susanna Jones, signed an open letter to Prime Minister Rishi Sunak written by the Carers Trust. It urged him “to ensure that the needs of children and young people who are caring unpaid for friends and family members are being considered so they receive the support they need from across your government.”

You can read the letter here

<https://carers.org/young-carersalliance/pm-open-letter>

The Carers Trust also published the results of a survey of young carers (aged under 18) and young adult carers (18-25), which showed the increasing intensity of their caring responsibilities.

The UK-wide survey found:

- » **56% per cent said the time they spend caring has increased in the last year**
- » **47% said they now care for more people than they used to**
- » **51% are caring for between 20 and 49 hours, while also balancing their studies, work and lives outside of caring**

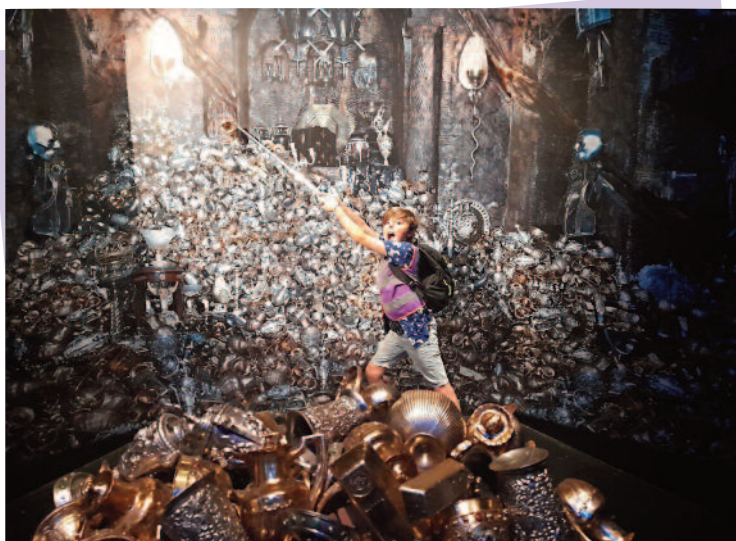
In addition, the survey showed the cost-of-living crisis was also having an impact, with

32% always or usually facing additional costs because they are a carer and 56% said the cost-of-living crisis is always or usually affecting them and their family.

Young carers and young adult carers say the key things they need are support around: mental health, money and finances, education and a break from caring.

The theme for Young Carers Action Day was Make Time for Young Carers. We highlighted the need for a break from caring in a video made with the help of one of our young carers, Rhys.

During the video, which was shared on social media for Young Carers Action Day, Rhys speaks about his caring role looking after his dad and why the trips out with our Young Carers Team give him a vital break.



Young carer Rhys at Harry Potter World.

You can watch the video of Rhys here: **www.youtube.com/watch?v=gx0LxLJx58s**

News from our Young Carers Team

During the Easter holidays our young carers enjoyed trips to the theme parks Chessington World of Adventures and Drayton Manor, plus watching the Demon Dentist show at the Bristol Hippodrome.

They also visited Roves Farm in Swindon and this was so popular that we ran two trips. At the farm they went on an Easter Egg hunt, met an Easter bunny, fed the animals, did arts and crafts and played in the playground.



Enjoying the play area at Roves Farm.

We'd like to thank the Friends of Young Carers Swindon (FOYCS) for funding these trips, which gave young carers a break from their caring roles.

We received donations of hundreds of Easter eggs from local groups and organisations for our young carers. They were all excited to be given an egg to take home and enjoy (well, some eggs made it home!).



Meeting the Easter Bunny at Roves Farm.

Feeding a lamb at Roves Farm.



A big thank you to Zurich Community Trust, the Friends of Young Carers Swindon, JIYU Consulting Ltd, Nationwide Building Society and Slimming World Swindon for your egg-cellent donations!

News from our Young Carers Team

The Friends of Young Carers Swindon (FOYCS) held their annual ball in March. The funds raised will allow the Young Carers Team to continue offering holiday activities for our young carers, enabling them to have a much-needed break from their caring roles. We are so grateful for the ongoing support we receive from FOYCS and thank them and everyone who supported the ball – it was a fun evening!



The SCC team at the Friends of Young Carers Swindon annual ball.

Thank you also to The Cast of Stage Struck for choosing to fundraise for us. They raised a fantastic £1,350 from the raffle and programme sales at their Christmas production in Swindon. This will be used to benefit young carers we support by enabling them to have a break from their caring role.



Young Carer Groups

Those who are registered for Young Carer Groups are now able to attend regular sessions in a local venue. This is a space to be yourself, to meet peers, play pool, do arts and crafts and play board games.

Each session is run and led by one of our Young Carer Support Practitioners giving young carers the opportunity to speak about their caring role if they would like.

News from our Parent Carers Team

Family Focus event

Parent carers and their families enjoyed socialising and having fun at Kidz About soft play centre in Swindon. We were able to hire the venue exclusively for our use and 29 families – including parents, siblings and young carers – attended.



They had a great time on the soft play facilities as well as enjoying a buffet and a disco in a safe and welcoming environment. This was made possible thanks to a grant we received from The Midcounties Co-operative Community Fund.



One parent carer who attended told us:

"It's been such a wonderful event, thank you for all the support, it's great to be able to take the kids to something like this where we don't have to worry about judgements and comments being made about our child, it's freeing for us all as a family."



School visits

Isabel and Lorraine from the Parent Carers Team would be delighted to visit your school and chat with parent carers about our services, answer any questions, as well as signposting to the registration process. This is a good opportunity for parent carers to meet others within the school community and could give them a chance to make new friends and share tips, ideas and support around their caring roles.

It will also help some parents recognise that they are carers, as many do not recognise themselves in this role. Please contact the team for more information or to book a visit by emailing parentcarersupport@swindoncarers.org.uk

Autism Talk

We held a very successful talk on autism presented by Lisa McCullough from South West Autism Devon. We invited Lisa back by popular request, as she has a wealth of knowledge and personal understanding around many of the challenges that face parent carers with autistic children and young people.

Everyone who attended found it engaging and helpful and there were lots of discussions and sharing of support practices within the group which was great to see.

Global Buffet meal

The Parent Carers Team held an evening meal at YC Global Buffet restaurant, Swindon, earlier in the year. The team had a lovely evening as did the parents.



Adult Carers Events Team News

Awareness Events May 15th-21st *Dementia Action Week and Mental Health Awareness Week are both taking place from May 15th to May 21st.*

Dementia Action Week

Swindon Carers Centre is part of the Swindon Dementia Action Alliance, whose aim is to influence change and make Swindon a dementia friendly town.

One of the events being held during the week is an Expo, where there will be many stalls

(including SCC) providing information and support for carers and people living with dementia.

It is on Tuesday May 16th at Foundation Park, Swindon Town Football Club, SN1 2FD. There is an afternoon session from 3pm-4.30pm and an evening session from 5.30pm-7pm.

Mental Health Awareness Week

The theme of this year's week is anxiety.

We often talk about stress and anxiety and carers trying to recognise that they may need some support before they become unwell and/or close to 'breaking point.'

You look after someone; you must remember to look after yourself too. Perhaps you might think about the following analogies;

- » You cannot pour from an empty cup.
- » In a plane you should put your oxygen mask on first before helping others, so that you CAN help others BUT not at your own expense.
- » If your body was a beaker, into which every worry, thing to sort, things to do were

poured into, inevitably it would overflow. You need a little tap near the bottom of that beaker which you can open regularly to reduce the amount inside you - allowing yourself time to be you, asking for help, having a hobby, reading, going for a walk in nature, meditation etc.

We are offering a range of events (below) with the aim of giving you a little break from your caring role. We can also help support you to seek other types of support for your mental wellbeing.

In addition, The Mental Health Foundation, a UK charity, has suggestions to cope with feelings of anxiety on its website:

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/our-work/public-engagement/mental-health-awareness-week>

Swindon Carers Centre events during the week include:

Monday May 15th

(am) SN25 Carers Cuppa at The Jovial Monk.

(pm) Silver Linings Group for carers and dependents living with dementia at Stanton Park.

Tuesday May 16th

(am) The PATH Group (for bereaved carers) and The Love & Loss Group (for carers feeling loss due to their caring role) at The Olive Tree Café.

Wednesday May 17th

(am) Arts & Crafts Workshop.

(pm) Flower Workshop.

Thursday May 18th

(pm) New Carers Cuppa in Chiseldon.

(eve) Meal for carers who support someone with a mental health illness.

If you'd like to attend these events, please complete your What's On form and email to acgroups@swindoncarers.org.uk

What have we been up to? *We now have five members in our Events Team - Sue, (see her profile on page 3), Sarah, Leigh, Zoe and myself.*

We have delivered our regular events plus some new ones. We will be sending out a survey to gain your feedback about what you think of our events provision and any suggestions to improve our service.

Sue and I have completed training, delivered by Cancer Research UK, to become Cancer Champions and you may hear us mentioning this topic at an event you attend. We will be

promoting cancer screening (pre-diagnosis) and the positive impact that may have. The three screening programmes currently available are bowel, breast and cervical. Carers are often so busy looking after someone they forget to look after themselves and get a check-up if there is something they have noticed that is different to 'the norm.'



Afternoon Tea.



Arts & Crafts session.



Dementia Group.



Time to Talk event.



Walk & Talk.

We hope to see you very soon. Best wishes from Heather and team.

If you are a registered carer with Swindon Carers Centre, would like to register with us, or would like to speak to one of our team, here are the telephone numbers you'll need.

- » **Adult Carer Support Services: 01793 401090**
- » **Parent Carer Support Services: 01793 401094**
- » **Young Carer Support Services: 01793 401091**
- » **Adult Carer Groups and Activities: 01793 401095**
- » **Young Carer Groups and Activities: 01793 401092**
- » **Benefits Advice: 01793 401093**
- » **Our main switchboard telephone number: 01793 531133**

Swindon Carers Centre address

Sanford House, Sanford Street, Swindon SN1 1HE

Contact us between 9.30am - 4.30pm Monday to Thursday and 9.30am - 4pm Friday

To share your stories, ideas and news items please contact the Communications Team by emailing communications@swindoncarers.org.uk

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