

# OUR LIFE

Winter 2025-26



## Hello from Michelle

Hello everyone,

What an incredible year it has been! From the busy days filled with learning, caring, and supporting loved ones, to the fun times we've shared together at events, 2025 has truly shown just how amazing you all are. You are all simply fab, the dedication and kindness you show in supporting your family members is something to be proud of.

As the year comes to a close, we encourage you to take a moment to reflect on all the good you've done this year. Every small act of care makes a big difference, and you deserve to celebrate that.

Looking ahead, we can't wait to see more of you at our events in the new year. They're a chance to connect, have fun, and recharge together. But before then, enjoy a well-earned break from your studies, rest, relax, and take time for yourself.



## Moving from print to digital

As mentioned last time, we've moved our newsletter online because of the huge cost of postage to us as a charity. (And all copies have gone digital, not just the older ages as we'd hoped.) We will be looking at our comms with you this year, and seeing what methods and channels might be best for everyone.

*We'll keep you posted ('scuse the pun!)*

From all of us, we wish you a happy holiday season and a bright, exciting year ahead. Here's to more of the good stuff in 2026!

Best wishes,  
*Michelle*

**Michelle Harper, Manager SYC,  
Action for Carers Surrey**

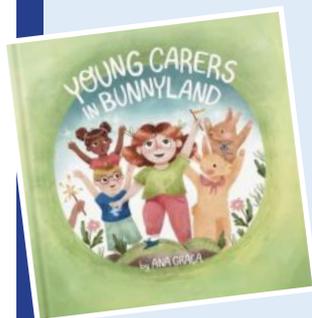


## Young carer books and comics — all ages

There's a few new fiction titles featuring young carers that you might like to take a look at.

### 4-6s

In *Young Carers in Bunnyland* by Ana Graca, Honey the bunny explains what a carer is, and helps children talk about caring.



**FREE on  
Apple  
Books/  
Amazon  
Kindle.**

### 8-12s

*The Late Crew* are all young carers who meet aliens, in a book series for 8-12 year olds.



[Click here](#) or scan the QR code to download it for your phone/kindle. A gift from author, Rab Ferguson.



### 13+

*Who Cares*, by Matt Woodhead and illustrated by Maia Lees is a comic based on a play by Lung Drama. They want to hear your views on it! [Read it here: Who Cares](#) and feedback to [info@lungtheatre.co.uk](mailto:info@lungtheatre.co.uk)



# What's Been Going On?

Images from recent events, L-R each row from

**top:** Pop up arcade; Hampton Court; Skills Building Surrey Heath; paddleboarding at Hampton Court; Wildwood; crafts and games; Xmas snowmen; and crafts at Gatton Park.



**Jokes** Joke corner!



What do you call a snowman with a six pack?  
*An abdominal snowman!*

## Attending Our Events

From 1st January – 26th November 2025, we delivered 265 events for young carers across the county. These take time, money, and resources to make happen.

But here's the tough fact: **1,297 places were accepted but not used.** That means children on our waiting lists missed out, and our charity carried the cost.

Please only register and accept if you intend to come. If your plans change, let us know quickly so another young carer can benefit.

In 2026, we must reduce non-attendance. Every empty seat is a missed opportunity for a child who truly needs it.

*Thank you for helping us make sure no one misses out.*

# News and Updates

## Save the Date – YCAD 2026

**11th March 2026 – theme: Fair Futures for Young Carers**

Young Carers Action Day (YCAD) is all about *you* – shining a light on the incredible role you play and making sure your voices are heard.

Led by national charity Carer's Trust, this year's theme is Fair Futures. And we will be focusing on how we can build better opportunities and stronger support for young carers across Surrey.



Can you ask your school, college, and community to get involved?

- Can they hold a tutor group chat or assembly to raise awareness?
- Can they organise a fundraiser to support young carers locally?
- Can they create activities that help identify and support the 'invisible' young carers who may not yet be recognised?

Mark 11th March in your calendar and join us in making a difference!

**This is your day.**  
Together, we can make sure every young carer is seen, valued, and supported.

Young carers from the Young Carers Alliance have designed [this schools checklist](#). **Why not share it with your school?**

### YOUNG CARER SCHOOL CHECKLIST

This checklist was developed by young people involved in YCNV to help schools to effectively support young carers.

<b>01.</b> Every school should have a named Young Carer Lead and a second named person to support young carers, and all students should know who they are and how to contact them.	<b>06.</b> All school staff should receive yearly training or refresher training about young carers. Action points: learn how to identify and support young carers in the classroom and as a wider school.
<b>02.</b> Schools should offer flexibility in and around support to help young carers balance their education and caring responsibilities. Action points: give flexible deadlines, compassionate absence for caring, flexible mobile phone use.	<b>07.</b> Tailored pastoral care should be available for young carers. Action points: offer mental health support, regular check-ins with the Young Carer Lead, time-out cards, or a dedicated young carers' group that meets regularly.
<b>03.</b> All students, parents and carers should regularly receive information about young carers and where to get support. Action points: give assemblies, lessons, have posters on noticeboards, tutorials, specific section on school website and anonymous suggestion box.	<b>08.</b> The school should work closely with the local young carers service. Action points: have flyers or information available for pupils, make referrals to the service, support pupils to have 1:1 time with their young carers worker.
<b>04.</b> Schools should offer designated spaces for young carers to have their time out or study. Action points: offer identified quiet spaces to study or take sensitive phone calls, offer home work clubs.	<b>09.</b> The school should have a clear Young Carer Policy co-created with young carers, explaining how it identifies and supports young carers and their families.
<b>05.</b> Log all identified young carers on the MIS so relevant school staff know which young carers are in their classes and support them. Action points: use the same system used to identify SEND, PAF, EAL, so that the attendance and attainment of young carers can be tracked, and return the January school census.	<b>10.</b> Young carers should be offered extra support during transitions between schools or when planning next steps. Action points: organise transition days to meet the Young Carer Lead and peer mentors, and tailored carers' advice post-GCSE or post-16.

## Young Carer: Fun Facts

### You're a super multitasker!

You can help with homework and make a snack and find the TV remote – all at once!

### You know grown-up stuff

You might know how to give medicine, cook dinner, or calm someone down – skills even adults find tricky!

### You're a pro at problem solving

Whether it's fixing a wobbly wheelchair or cheering someone up, you've got clever solutions.

### You're basically a secret hero

You do amazing things every day that most people don't even see – like a kindness ninja!

### You've got a heart of gold

Caring for someone shows how kind, strong, and thoughtful you are – and that's something really special.

### You're not alone...

There are thousands of young carers just like you across the whole of Surrey – and loads of people who want to support you.

## A Festive Young Carers' Poem

*Through tender hands and quiet grace,  
Young carers shine in every place.  
They lift, they love, they give their all,  
Answering each unspoken call.*

*As midnight chimes, the year turns new,  
May joy and peace come back to you.  
With hope that sparkles, strong and clear—  
A brighter path, a gentler year.*

## Are there other carers in your family? A sibling over 18, parent, grandparent?

Please let them know our Adult Service can help them too! It offers information on rights and benefits, practical and emotional support, free events, wellbeing sessions, support groups, resources and much more. **Get them to register at [www.actionforcarers.org.uk/register-with-us/](http://www.actionforcarers.org.uk/register-with-us/) or phone on 0303 040 1234 (option 1).**

Got a yummy recipe to share? Send it in, and we'll print it!

## Snacky? Let's get cooking!

### Warm Apple & Cinnamon Wraps



Serves 2-3. Cooking time 15 minutes.  
Don't forget to ask an adult for help if needed.

#### INGREDIENTS

- 2 large apples
- 2 tablespoons sugar (brown or white)
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 4 flour tortillas (small wraps)

#### METHOD

1. **Prep the apples:** Wash, peel (optional), and cut into small cubes .
2. **Cook:** Put the apple cubes in a frying pan with the sugar and cinnamon. Cook on medium heat for 5–7 minutes until soft and sweet .
3. **Fill:** Spoon the warm apple mixture onto each tortilla, then fold or roll them up .
4. **Warm through:** Place the filled wraps back in the pan for 1–2 minutes each side, until lightly golden .
5. **Enjoy:** Serve warm with a sprinkling of icing sugar or ice-cream – they taste like mini apple pies!

## Get involved – opportunities to make a difference

The Children's Commissioner is recruiting Youth Ambassadors, apply via the QR code or url

[www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ambassadors2026](http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ambassadors2026)

Apply:

**CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER**

Co-Developing Peer Support for Young Dementia Carers

Do you live in England or Wales? 11–16 yrs?

“My dad has dementia. I try to help as much as I can but it's hard”

Does this sound like you?

Take part in our research study!

TO FIND OUT MORE CONTACT:  
Jen Roberts  
✉ [j.roberts@bangor.ac.uk](mailto:j.roberts@bangor.ac.uk)

Are you caring for someone with dementia? A national study seeks 11-16-year olds to help design a new support tool for young carers in this situation. Interested? Please email Jen at Bangor University: [J.roberts@bangor.ac.uk](mailto:J.roberts@bangor.ac.uk)

**NATIONAL YOUNG CARERS' WORKSHOP:** NHS England, the Department of Health and Social Care, and the Department of Education are holding a workshop with young carers to work together on ways to improve support. Sign up to join their online session, either 4-5pm or 6-7pm on Tuesday 6th January. To take part, please email [england.nhsthinkcarer@nhs.net](mailto:england.nhsthinkcarer@nhs.net) (mark your email 'young carers workshop').



Call on 0303 040 1234, option 2 or email [SYC@actionforcarers.org.uk](mailto:SYC@actionforcarers.org.uk)

Surrey Young Carers is part of charity Action for Carers Surrey.

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