



Our Impact 2024-25





Alison Yard

Chair of the Board of Trustees
Action for Carers Surrey

Message from our Chair

As a former carer, I recognise the difficulties that unpaid carers face. I am so proud of the tremendous work that ACS does to help support carers of all ages across Surrey.

The landscape of caring is becoming more challenging. Carers face a range of issues including huge financial pressures, cut-backs in services and even more complex individual caring situations.

ACS strives to alleviate some of these pressures, offering advice and guidance, advocacy, help with money, vital services, and opportunities for carers to increase their wellbeing and enjoy a little 'time out'.

We aspire to do more for Surrey's unpaid carers; more for those that we support now and a commitment to reach those not yet aware of or benefitting from our services. We look forward to working with partners and supporters to do even more to help carers of all ages live the lives they deserve.

"One day, something happened and I cracked. I rang the Helpline and spoke to a lovely lady called Mary. She literally talked me down from the precipice and made me realise that I wasn't as much of a failure as I thought I was. She put me in touch with an adviser who helped me complete some of the paper work I needed to do and advised me where to go next. At a time when I was feeling at my lowest, Mary's kind voice and the efficient help from the adviser helped me so much. I didn't feel quite so alone and hopeless."

Carers save the UK
£184 billion a year by
providing unpaid carer.
In Surrey the figure is
£2.87 billion

Message from our CEO



Tim Bevans

Chief Executive Officer
Action for Carers Surrey

Action for Carers Surrey has been proud to support Surreys unpaid carers for over 30 years. Carers continue to face myriad challenges, and caring can have serious detrimental effects on people's health, wealth and wellbeing.

Our staff and volunteers continue to do an amazing job, supporting carers of all ages – from the smallest five year olds helping a parent or sibling, to people in their late 90s faithfully caring for their husband or wife.

As carers face increasing challenges – from reductions in services, the cost of living crisis, and a fluctuating political landscape, in caring situations that are increasingly complex and difficult – so Action for Carers has striven to grow and develop to meet these needs.

You can read more about the challenges Surrey's carers face on the following pages as well as our varied support. If you can assist us in any way to help more of this hard-pressed community, please get in touch. Thank you.

98%

of the carers we support would recommend us to another carer

"Unfortunately my husband, who I cared for, for 24 hours a day, sadly passed away. I would like to thank all the wonderful people I came into contact with during the time I cared for him.

Action for Carers was my life-line and an invaluable source of information and support. A wonderful organisation."

What do Action for Carers do?

Unpaid carers – those looking after an unwell or disabled relative or friend – have it extremely tough. Supporting someone else who couldn't manage without you takes a toll on you – emotionally, financially and practically.

Action for Carers exists to support this valuable, devoted and hard-working group of people, helping them access help, cope better, feel more informed – and less alone.

We provide information, advice, support and activities for unpaid carers of all ages, right across Surrey. Our support is wide and varied, but includes a Helpline, 1-1 care, advocacy, workshops, support groups, information and relaxation events (all offered both online and face to face), free resources and much more.

We have specialist teams too – including our hospital carer advisers, a team helping carers move their loved one safely, and advisers for those carers helping someone with poor mental health. And we help Surrey health, social care, and education professionals better identify, understand and support unpaid carers too.

We've been supporting unpaid carers for more than 30 years, and with your help, will be doing so for many more.



Surrey carers in numbers

We have **21,000+** adult carers registered with us for support, **5,068** being referred this year; and **4,130** young carers registered, with **1,076** being referred this year. While we are proud of these figures, there's so much more to do. There are around 120,000 carers in Surrey, so many carers are facing challenges without the support they need. Through donations and partnerships we can change that.

Challenges facing adult carers



49% have cut back on essentials such as food, heating, and clothing.



74% are worried about their future financial security.



42% said their physical health has worsened as a result of caring.



43% of carers feel lonely, and **59%** said their caring role has meant they have lost touch with family and friends.



51% are worried about living costs and whether they can manage in the future.



74% report feeling stressed or anxious, and **40%** feel depressed.



52% of unpaid carers are providing more hours of care than a year ago.



35% of working carers have reduced their working hours, and **61%** said caring has affected the type of employment they've taken on.

Challenges facing young carers



44% of young carers always or usually feel stressed because of caring (Carers Trust 2023)



23% of young carers said that their caring role had stopped them making friends. (Children's Society 2023)



36% of young carers report being bullied about their caring role (Young Carers in Schools 2023)



Almost half (46%) of young carers at secondary school in England were persistently absent in 2022/23. (Carers Trust)



44% frequently struggle to study for tests or exams because of the caring's demands and only 46% left secondary school with 5 GCSE passes including English and Maths. (Carers Trust)



Almost a third of young carers (30%) are regularly late for school because of the demands of their caring situation



Young Adult Carers - aged 18-25

Caring can affect a young person's health, social life and self confidence - over 45% of young adult carers report a mental health problem.

32.9% of young adult carers were not in education, employment, or training (NEET) compared to 5.3% who were not carers. 2023 Census.

Young adult carers are four times more likely to drop out of college or university.

Information, advice and guidance

Helping carers understand the support that's available, get expert guidance and advice is crucial and a primary part of our offer. From 1-1 support, to workshops and information events, we held sessions to help carers feel more informed, updated, and in control. Over the year we:

- Held regular carer drop-in Hubs each month in **Addlestone, Banstead, Camberley, Caterham, Cranleigh, Epsom, Farnham, Hersham, Horley, Godalming, Guildford, Leatherhead, Merstham, Shepperton** and **Woking**.
- Held **514** events for adults at our Hubs, and **184** online
- Held **225** events for young carers
- Held a special information day on Dementia, for **40** carers
- Gave moving and handling advice and help to **1,185** carers
- Provided life-changing benefits advice to **399** carers
- Our Hospital Advisers took **921** new referrals
- And **366** new referrals came to our specialist Mental Health carers team



"When you have a child with additional needs, everything is a fight, it takes so much energy and strength and often, admin tasks like this one, that carry so much importance, can feel like an extra battle that you just can't face. It is overwhelming and to have someone to offer help, advice, guidance and support, free of charge, to take this weight of your shoulders, is a life saver!"

91% of our carers believe that our services improved their ability to cope with the challenges of caring

Raising voices and reaching more carers

We amplified carers voices and profile in Surrey during our activities for the three national annual carers events: Young Carers Action Day, Carers Week, and Carers Rights Day



Carers Week June

Carers Week celebrates carers and raises awareness of caring.

We held events across Surrey, and online, thanking carers for all they do – and helping more carers become aware of the help available.



Carers Rights Day November

Many carers don't know or understand their rights.

We held **four** carer Information Fairs - with ourselves and other helpful Surrey organisations offering hundreds of carers advice and support, particularly around rights.



Young Carers Action Day March

A day of action to improve young carers' identification and support.

As well as events for young people, and training in schools, we held a conference with professionals – from health, education and social services – learning about young carers' lives and needs.

Training and learning

As well as information, carers often need practical help, that's why we offer training for carers too - things like first aid workshops so carers feel able to cope better, and more confident in their skills.

A key area is support for carers who have to help their loved one move about - from simply helping someone out a chair, to moving someone with a hoist. All such manoeuvres need to be done without harm to you, or the person you care for. This year we:

- 24 sessions on how to move someone safely, training 117 carers
- Multiple sessions for adult carers to improve understanding of issues such as rights, benefits, and legal matters such as Power of Attorney
- Young carers' learning included issues such as self-esteem and wellbeing



"Many, many thanks, we learned some great tips and it gave us confidence. Such an amazing service."

Training Professionals

A major part of our work is helping professionals better identify, understand and support carers. We run workshops, training and presentations for a wide range of professionals in health, social care and education. This year:

70 professionals took our 'Because Carers Count' course, with another 100+ education attending our Schools Learning sessions.

And we ran multiple bespoke sessions for groups including GP practices, Borough Council teams and social work and nursing students.

Reaching schools: The Angel Award

Our aim is to ensure all children in Surrey schools are identified early, supported properly and able to reach their full potential – despite their caring role.

Our Angel Award scheme encourages schools to become 'carer-friendly' with 8 standards to including holding caring-focused assemblies, having Young Carer Clubs, and making support clearer for young people. This year nine new schools gained the Award, and 14 renewed.



Time out and friendships

Caring is exhausting, non-stop and lonely. Adults lose touch with friends, can't leave their cared-for and have limited funds. Young carers sometimes don't even have the chance to make friends – they have little free time, can be seen as 'different' and feel unable to have anyone over, because of embarrassment around their home situation.

Our wellbeing events and opportunities allow carers to have a little 'me time' - a chance to do something new, recharge, and connect with others. Opportunities range from simple events, like creative sessions, or mindfulness, to full-blown activity days to learn new skills, build confidence, and meet other carers.

- Our partnership with the National Trust allowed **2,000** carers to visit NT properties across the South East, for free
- A partnership with Historic Royal Palaces allowed groups of carers to visit Hampton Court for free each month
- Many organisations, such as Watts Gallery, Yvonne Arnaud Theatre, and ACS International Schools gave amazing free or discounted support and opportunities.

THANK YOU to all our supporters.



"I just wanted to say a huge thank you for organising the funding for my daughter to try windsurfing. The timing was perfect as it coincided with her sister having a really difficult week and she could get away from it all. She absolutely loved it. She passed her stage one and made a new friend. They are already planning to do their stage two together in the spring."

Pilot project: **Young carers residential**



100%
of parents surveyed agreed that their child had enjoyed the residential, made new friends and learned new skills.

In Spring we ran a pilot project, taking 21 young carers to the Surrey Hills, working with Outdoor Learning and Development, for a residential break.

The residential gave young carers the chance to have a break from caring, learn new skills, build their confidence and meet other young people like them.

Taking place over the last weekend of March, and enjoying beautiful weather, the young carers hiked hills, climbed obstacle courses, made fires, shot arrows and more! Not a huge amount of sleep was managed, due to all the excitement, but it was a weekend to remember!



Watch the fun of the weekend:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rnv7HZQ-vf4

Awareness Days: Specialist support

1 in 2

of us will care for someone with dementia or need dementia care ourselves
(Dementia Care)

Carers we support are looking after people with a variety of conditions.

However, two of the most common are dementia and autism. Each year we hold a special Awareness Day for one of these events.

This year we held a Dementia Day in May, with 70+ carers getting tailored advice, information and support, from ourselves and partner organisations.

There were also talks and an opportunity to go on the Dementia Experience Bus, which allows people to experience what Dementia can feel like.

Less than a third of dementia carers feel they have had the support they need.
(Dementia Care)

We support dementia carers throughout the year too, with special learning events, wellbeing opportunities and a regular dementia carers support group.



Specialist support: Welfare benefits help

Carer families are often poorer, because of being less able to work, and caring bringing additional costs.

There are welfare benefits that carers may be entitled to, which can make a big difference.

Until September 2025, we had a team of two Benefits Advisers, who had expert knowledge of benefits, as well as in-depth understanding of carers' lives and challenges.

They were able to support carers with information, as well as assist them in completing often very long and complex benefits application forms, ensuring carers were able to access the support they were due.

Funding for this service has now finished, and we are seeking further help to allow us to continue offering this vital support.

We gave

399

carers benefits help, unlocking

£3.15m

in annual welfare benefits for them.



"Drew was an absolute godsend. He helped me complete the lengthy and arduous attendance allowance forms. He was friendly and knowledgeable and I really don't think I could have managed without his help. The stress of having the completion of these forms hanging over me disappeared within an hour! I was definitely so happy to have his help."

Partnerships that make a difference

Throughout our 2024/25 financial year, we were proud to work alongside a number of corporate partners who gave their time, energy, and resources to support unpaid carers in Surrey.

Their involvement went far beyond donations, they volunteered, raised awareness, and organised creative fundraising activities that helped us reach more carers and deliver vital services.

Berkeley Homes brought joy to families by donating Easter eggs, hosting bake sales, and even staging their own pantomime performance of Jack and the Beanstalk.

Azets Guildford took fundraising to new heights with their Snowden challenge, raising an incredible £2,500 for our work.

Absolute Insurance added excitement with a Charity Race Day, contributing over £1,200 to support carers.

Royal Bank of Canada combined generosity with action by donating to our services and volunteering at our Carers Rights Action Day.

Finally, **Stevens Bolton** helped make Christmas brighter for carers and their families by supporting our Christmas Gift Appeal.

We welcome opportunities to collaborate with businesses that want to make a positive impact for carers. Together, we can raise awareness among staff and customers while generating vital funds to support unpaid carers across Surrey.





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Help us make a bigger impact

Every day, thousands of unpaid carers in Surrey face challenges without the support they need. Together, we can change that.

Donate today, partner with us, or volunteer your time – your support makes a real difference.

Visit: www.actionforcarers.org.uk/get-involved/fundraising/

Contact our fundraising team: fundraising@actionforcarers.org.uk

Here for you

Are you a carer in need of help? We provide information, advice and support for unpaid carers of all ages, right across Surrey.

Our support includes advice, advocacy, training, guidance on moving and handling, workshops, events, support groups, drop-in Hubs throughout Surrey, free tools, resources and more – giving carers a little time out and helping them feel less stressed, and more in control.

We have specialist support for young carers, a support team working in Surrey's hospitals, and also provide training and support for professionals working with carers.

Find out more at www.actionforcarers.org.uk, or call our Helpline on **0303 040 1234**; or email CarerSupport@actionforcarers.org.uk

"I can't praise Action for Carers enough for the help you have provided us. When my wife first had her stroke there was very little help for carers. After recently being in contact with the Action for Carers team, I was pleasantly surprised how much help and support is offered. You have been a lifesaver for me and I can't thank you enough. Keep things as they are you are doing a great job."