

Winter 2026



Carers'

Newsletter

Dates for
your Diary



Support
Groups



Help &
Support



Useful
Information



 03000 810005

 hello@involvekent.org.uk

Welcome to the Carers Winter Newsletter 2026

Welcome to the Winter edition of our newsletter for unpaid carers!

We hope that whatever the festive period looked like for you, it brought you moments of peace and calm.

As we step into the new year, we're taking a moment to reflect on another busy year for Involve's Carer's Team. Our dedicated Navigators have supported more than 6,500 carers throughout 2025, and many of you have told us just how much that support has meant.

Caring for someone can bring unique challenges and that can be very isolating. You don't need to face that alone. Our Navigators are here to listen and support you. Please reach out to us.

In this edition, you'll find details of upcoming events and workshops, along with a new 'Help and Support' section shaped by your suggestions.

You may also spot a fresh look from us. After celebrating our 50th birthday last year, we felt it was the perfect moment to have a refresh. Our updated logo reflects the future of Involve and centres on connection and inclusion, values that are at the heart of everything we do.

Get in touch with us if you have any questions or if you are interested in attending one of our events.



Follow us on social media:

@InvolveKent

Contact Us

How to get in touch:

Opening Times:
Monday to Friday 9:00am - 5:00pm

Telephone: 03000 810005

General Email:
hello@involvekent.org.uk

Website: www.involvekent.org.uk

Address: 30 Turkey Court, Turkey Mill
Ashford Rd, Maidstone, ME14 5PP



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About Our Carers Service

Involve's Carers Service is a single point of access for adult carers (18+) and young carers (16 - 24) who are providing unpaid care for a friend or family member and live in one of the following areas; Maidstone, Tonbridge and Malling, Tunbridge Wells and Sevenoaks.

We can help you by:



Supporting you to access a Carers Assessment on behalf of KCC



Offering information and advice focused on your needs



Providing a Kent Carer's Emergency Card



Supporting you to take a break



Linking you to support from other local organisations



Support on hospital discharge for you or your cared-for



Engagement to ensure your voice is heard



Peer support groups, training and more

We want to hear from you!

We're supporting KCC to understand the health and wellbeing needs of unpaid carers across Kent - and your insight is vital. Our Engagement Team is holding 20-minute one-to-one phone conversations with carers across West Kent to learn more about your caring role and the impact it has on your daily life.

These conversations will be taking place until the end of February. If you are interested, please get in touch to arrange a time that works for you.

Call: 03000 810005

Email: engagement@involvekent.org.uk



Carers' Forums

Our Carers' Forum is an opportunity for those caring unpaid for an adult family member, partner or friend to meet, to gain information about services in the community, and have their voices heard. You will benefit from meeting other carers, share ideas and find support.

Find out about energy saving ideas and free equipment to save energy, caring for someone with a mental health diagnosis, the patient carer race equality framework, power of attorney, health needs assessments and much more.



Wednesday 25th February, 10:30 to 13:30, Ditton



Workshops


Our workshops and events have given carers confidence in their role and an opportunity to support each other by sharing experiences and advice.


"Thank you for noticing caring is hard. Thank you for acknowledging the need for carers to have care, to have time and to have contact with others."



Caring and Me

Caring and Me is a five week course, with each week tackling a different topic based on challenges you may experience when caring for someone. It's an opportunity to learn new information, share ideas, and find support in a welcoming space with those who understand your situation.

 Tuesday 24th March, 15:00 - 16:30 - Online


 Wednesday 25th March, 14:00 - 16:00 - Tunbridge Wells

"Being able to talk to other carers who understand the problems and strains of the role is crucial."

"Questions raised were responded to very promptly, and the information feedback by all was really helpful."

Anticipatory Grief

Carers can experience feelings of grief even while the person they support is still alive, which can be overwhelming. In this workshop we look at what anticipatory grief means and strategies for coping and finding support.

 Thursday 19th February, 10:30 - 12:30 - Maidstone

Wellbeing with The Sonic Sanctuary

A workshop learning how music can provide a way to destress and cope with anxiety. Enjoy a session of interactive drumming and a soothing soundscape and take away ideas to use at home.


 Thursday 5th March, 13:30 - 16:00
Maidstone





Emergency First Aid

Learning emergency first aid with the British Red Cross including cuts, broken bones, choking, suspected heart attack, CPR and using a defibrillator. This workshop will give you the confidence to know you can cope in an emergency.

 **Wednesday 18th March, 14:00 - 16:00**
Maidstone



Culinary Carers with CommuniGrow

An opportunity to harvest some fresh vegetables and create a quick to make, tasty meal all while having a quiet time of respite from your caring role.

 **March details TBC - West Malling**

Carers Week 2026

Carers Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring, highlighting the challenges unpaid carers face and recognise the contribution they make to families and communities throughout the UK.



This year's theme is: Building "Carer Friendly" Communities
To celebrate Carers Week we are holding a Cream Tea event on Wednesday 10th June, 14:00 - 16:00 in Southborough.

More events to be announced.

To book your space, email hello@involvekent.org.uk or call 03000 810005



Being a carer can often feel lonely and isolating. While friends and family may be supportive, they often don't understand the true impact caring for someone can have on your life.

Many carers have found being able to meet and talk to other carers a huge benefit. Our peer support groups offer the opportunity to talk openly about your experience with others in a similar situation, or to simply take a break from your caring role for a couple of hours and unwind with a cup of tea.



Coffee & Chat Tonbridge

First Tuesday of every month from 10:00am to 11:30am



Coffee & Chat Maidstone

Last Thursday of every month from 10:00 to 12:00pm



Online Support Group

Every Wednesday from 11:00am to 12:00pm via Teams



Evening Online Support Group

Second Wednesday of every month, from 6:00pm to 7:00pm



Walking Group Maidstone

First Wednesday of every month from 10:00am to 11:30am



Walking Group West Kent

Third/Fourth Thursday of every month from 10:15am to 12:30pm

To find out more details about these groups, call us on 03000 810005 or email hello@involvekent.org.uk. Alternatively, speak to your Community Navigator.



Priority Register



The Priority Services Register (PSR) is free to join. It helps utility companies, including energy suppliers, electricity, gas, and water networks to look after customers who have extra communication, access or

safety needs. It helps companies tailor their services to support households who need extra help with everyday energy matters like bills, and also in the event of a power cut, gas, or water supply interruption.

[Find out more](#)

Hair and Beauty

Would you like to access a bit of pampering and time to relax? Fancy a haircut, manicure, or facial but find it too expensive?

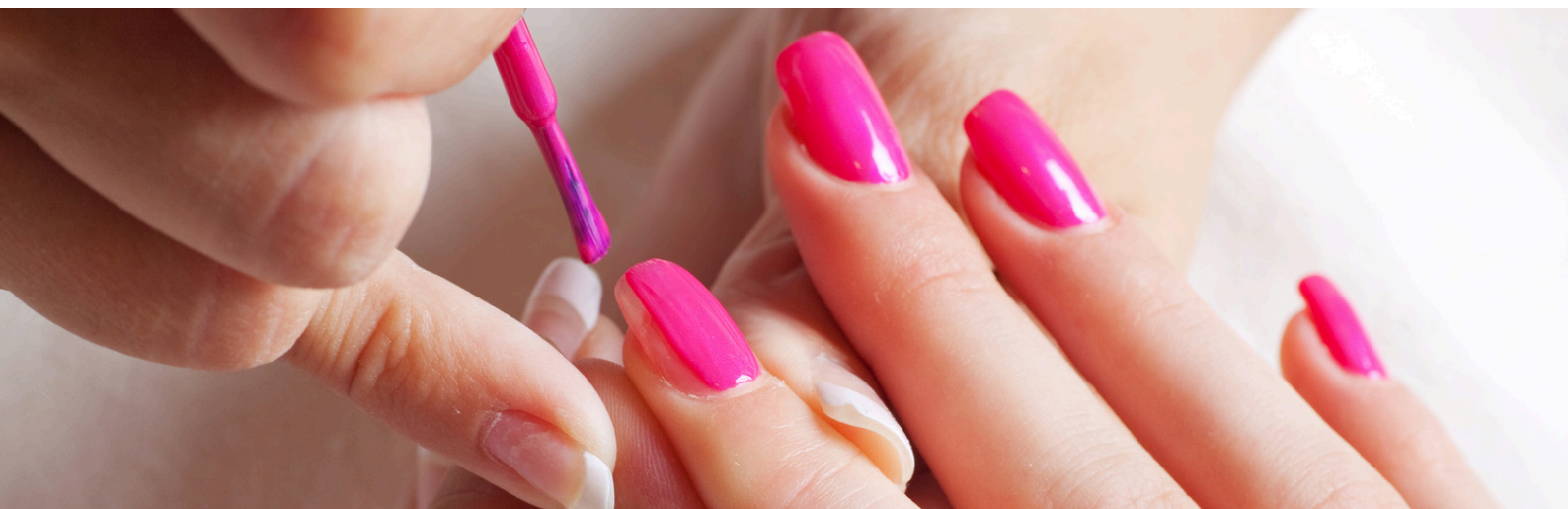
Mid Kent College Hair and Beauty department are always on the lookout for people to come to the college for a range of beauty treatments carried out by the students, helping them build the hours of experience they need to complete their qualifications.

In January, we took a group of carers along and we all had a wonderful afternoon. The students were professional and friendly, and we all left feeling good about ourselves.

If you would like to find out more you can contact them on:

Phone: 01622 625920

Email: hthdmaidstonereception@midkent.ac.uk





Kent Library Service

The library is more than just a book lending service. Once you've joined for free you can also provide:

- Access to thousands of free eBooks, audiobooks and online newspapers and magazines for all ages and interests
- Access to free internet and Wi-Fi, and help using computers
- A home library service if your circumstances mean you cannot get to the library
- Clubs and activities - many libraries host group activities, contact your local library to find out what they offer

Digital Kent

Digital Kent is working to improve digital inclusion and capabilities in the county of Kent.



If you need support to access online services or understand how to make the most of digital technology, Digital Kent offer a wide range of workshops and one to one support to help you get connected.

[Find out more](#)

Medequip

Medequip is the leading provider of community equipment services to local authorities and the NHS across the UK, delivering a wide range of equipment and support to people in their own homes, keeping people independent for longer.

If you have equipment from NRS, you can contact Medequip for help and support.

[Find out more](#)



Kent & Medway Carers' Emergency Card



As a carer, you may often worry about what would happen to the person you care for if you suddenly became ill or were involved in an accident. The recognised Carers' Emergency Card means that should something happen to you, a person close to you will be contacted to ensure the person you care for is supported whilst you receive care. Involve will supply you with an Emergency Plan to complete and can assist you with completing this.

Money Helper



Money Helper is here to make your money and pension choices clearer. Here to cut through the complexity, explain what you need to do and how you do it. Free, impartial guidance that's backed by the Government, and recommended further trusted support. Open to everyone, Money Helper helps you to clear your debts, reduce spending and make the most of your income. Visit www.moneyhelper.org.uk or call 08000 113 797.

Kent Fire & Rescue



Making sure home is a safe place is important for everyone. You'll find lots of advice and help in the Kent Fire & Rescue Service's Home Safety section - from smoke alarms to electrical and kitchen safety, they are there to help you stay safe. If you have a young family, a long-term health condition, dementia, a smoker, or are an older person, you are eligible for a Kent Fire and Rescue Service free Home Safety Visit.

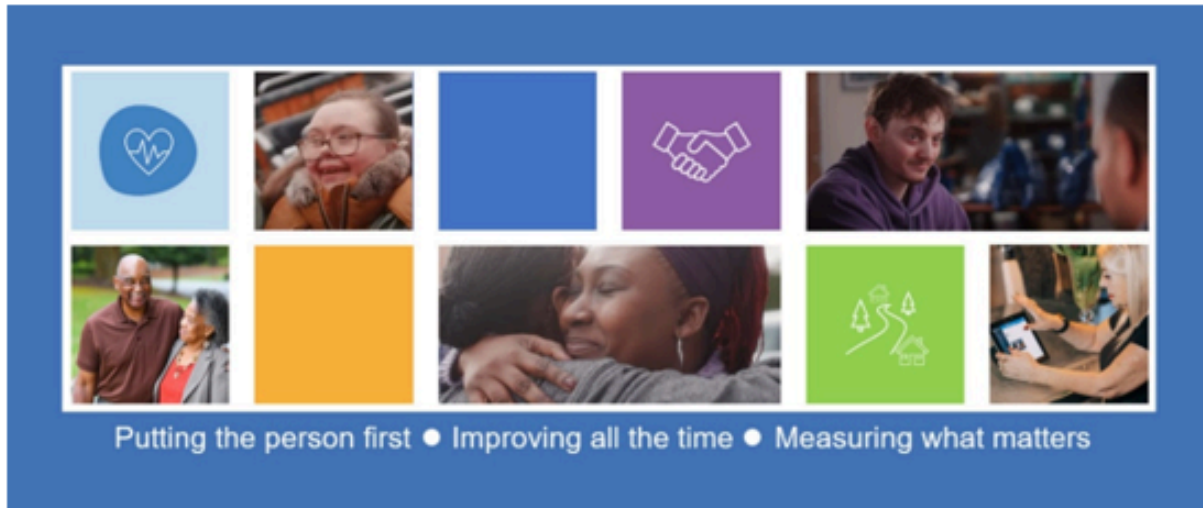
Kent Connect to Support

Kent Connect to Support is a website provided by Kent County Council that gives you answers to common questions, information and advice to help you look after yourself, stay independent and connect. You can access a Community Services Directory and Care Services Directory.



KCC Adult Social Care Involvement

Join our online Adult Social Care Involvement and Information group



Hosted by KCC Adult Social Care and Health's Involvement and Information Team, these are ongoing discussion forums for people who draw on care and support and unpaid carers, to help shape adult social care for the future.

Please register your interest for the advertised dates and times, final community locations will be agreed in areas where venues have yet to be confirmed.

Please note that the Social Care Involvement Groups will resume in February.

[Find out more](#)

Useful Organisations

Click the links to visit the organisation's website.

<u>Involve</u>	03000 810 005
<u>Kent Adult Social Care</u>	03000 416 161
<u>Kent Adult Safeguarding Team</u>	03000 416 161
Emergency Duty Team	03000 419 191
<u>Kent Community Connectors</u> (Free, confidential support for wellbeing)	03000 422 065
<u>Blue Badge</u> (Disabled Parking Permit)	03000 416 262
<u>Attendance Allowance</u> (Benefit)	0800 731 0122
<u>Carers Allowance</u> (Benefit)	0800 731 0297
<u>Personal Independence Payment</u> (Benefit)	0800 121 4433
<u>Disability Living Allowance</u> (Benefit)	0800 121 4600
<u>Citizens Advice Bureau North & West Kent</u> (Free advice)	0808 278 7810
<u>Mental Health Matters</u> (Support for mental health needs)	08000 1070160
<u>Release the Pressure</u> (Free mental health advice from trained therapists)	0800 107 0160
<u>Live Well Kent</u> (Free advice about money, housing, wellbeing and more)	0800 567 7699
<u>One You</u> (Support for a healthier lifestyle e.g. quitting smoking)	0300 123 1220
<u>Kent Connect To Support</u> (KCC online information resource)	0800 107 0160
<u>West Kent Stroke Association</u>	0303 3033 100
<u>Alzheimer's and Dementia Support Service</u>	01474 533 990
<u>Kent Fire & Rescue Service</u> (Free home fire safety visits)	01622 692 121

Your Feedback

We value your voice and always seek your feedback on how we can improve our service for you. Please let us know if there is something you would like to feedback on, or have an idea that you think would benefit yourself and others. Please call **03000 810005** or email hello@involvekent.org.uk

