

# North Lanarkshire Carers Together



Supporting Carers in North Lanarkshire to access their rights and live full and active lives



# Contents

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Welcome to our North Lanarkshire Carers Together information pack. You'll be able to find all the essential information here on how we can support you in your caring role, how you can find out about your rights as a carer, and all the details you need to get in touch with us to have a chat and get help that will work for you.

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# Who are NLCT?

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**North Lanarkshire Carers Together, working for you**



**North Lanarkshire Carers Together  
Forgewood Housing Cooperative  
49 Dinmont Crescent  
Motherwell, ML1 3TT**

Contracted by North Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Partnership, North Lanarkshire Council and Community Solutions, we are the Information and Advice Service for carers and professionals and Carer Support Network Leads offering a range of services ensuring carers rights and needs are known, upheld, and considered as part of local and national policy and guidance development.

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# What do NLCT do?

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## Information, signposting and referral service

The staff at the office will usually be the first people you speak to when contacting NLCT. We will listen to you, understand the type of information or advice you are looking for, and aim to provide this in a way that you can understand and ensure it is of value to your needs.



I can't believe how much information is out there, I am so grateful to the NLCT staff

## The type of information and advice we provide is usually related to

**Carers Rights**

**Health & Wellbeing**

**Income Maximisation & Benefits**

**Bereavement Support**

**Education & Training Opportunities**

**Emergency & Future Planning**

**Advocacy**

**Carer Support & Short Breaks**



“ “

I applied for the grant you told me about, and received word this morning that my application was successful! Thank you so much for informing me about it

## Over the past year we have:

**Worked with 1,133 carers**

**Provided over 4,500 pieces of information**

**Made 623 active referrals to set up short breaks for carers, assist with family income maximisation, and to support carers to access other crucial supports and services**

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**Carers should be able to obtain information from a range of sources relevant to them and the person they care for to help support them in their caring role. We will:**

Develop information that is accessible and relevant to individual need

Offer an active signposting and referral service for carers to link carers into services and local supports including groups, activities and short break opportunities

Develop a range of promotional information to ensure those carers who haven't had an opportunity to access support, can do

Work in partnership to ensure that carer information is distributed and displayed within health & social care settings, including social work localities, GP practices, community health centres and other locations

Provide our members with an annual newsletter and invitation to attend our conference in June which will include our AGM

We recognise the importance of making sure our services are accessible to all, including minority ethnic carers, LGBTQIA+ carers, carers with sensory loss, disabled carers and rural carers who all face additional barriers to accessing support.

We have introduced the use of Language Line, an interpretation service that allows us to communicate with carers in over 200 languages including BSL. In addition, we are working with local partners to build relationships with community groups and services supporting diverse groups of carers so that we can improve our work to ensure people know their rights and can access services.

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## Our Aims

**We will be a potent force for change**

**We will raise the profile of carers' issues and needs**

**We will influence policy development and service provision at the planning stage**

**We will form active links between carers and professionals**

**Collect and disseminate up to date information for the carer community**

**We will establish innovative and productive consultation processes with service providers**

**We will promote the inclusion of all carers**

**We will represent the views of all carers, including the many young carers in North Lanarkshire**



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## All carers are welcome at NLCT

During office hours, carers can access information by speaking to, or meeting with, one of our dedicated staff team. You can arrange an in person meeting, or talk to us on the phone or via email.

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Our contact details are

T: **01698 404055**

E: **enquiries@carerstogether.org**

Outside office hours carers can access information and contact our team via:

@NLcarerstogether

@nlct\_carers

carerstogether.org

# What is a Carer?

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**Do you support someone regularly who has a disability or health condition including long term conditions, mental illness, or addiction?**

This could be your child, spouse, other family member, friend, or neighbour. The support you provide could be as simple as picking up medications and doing shopping, to assisting someone with tasks in their home, providing personal care like washing and dressing, attending medical appointments or being entirely responsible for the welfare and wellbeing of the person you help.

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**You probably don't think of yourself as a Carer!**

Lots of people don't recognise themselves as a carer as they are 'simply being a parent, or a partner, or a good friend' but caring regularly over a period of time can impact your own life in many ways. You deserve help and have rights to be supported while you are caring.

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## You don't have to be receiving, or qualify for, carer benefits to be classed as a carer

Just because you aren't receiving payments from the government for your caring role, or if you don't even qualify for the minimum eligibility criteria, that doesn't mean you aren't a carer. If you're providing support that someone couldn't do without, you are a carer.

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## You might get paid carers mixed up with the kind of care you are providing

It's common that people hear the word 'carer' and think that only means people who are paid by local authorities, charities, and companies to provide care in people's homes, nursing homes or day support services. What we are describing here is a different kind of carer, the 'unpaid carer' who supports someone outside of paid employment.

We provide support to 'unpaid' carers, not to people who are in paid employment with 'carer' as their job title. That being said, 'unpaid carers' can claim the Carer's Allowance benefit if they are eligible and if they do they are still classed as 'unpaid', claiming a benefit doesn't change that status.

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I had been caring for a long time, but it wasn't until I started working for NLCT that I realised I was an unpaid carer, I just assumed this was what we do for our loved ones. I was juggling work, family and driving to a different local authority to help with cleaning, shopping, and practical tasks.

I quickly realised I was a carer, and I was able to be offered support to allow me to have a life alongside caring and working. My caring role didn't define me but acknowledging this role allowed me to access the right supports and information at the right time

## You have legal rights!

Under the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016, carers are entitled to several supports from people like social workers and social work departments, NHS staff looking after the person you support when in hospital, and local Carer Centres (charities that provide support tailored for you).

Our job is to make sure you know those rights so that you can access funds and services available to support you and the person you care for, and to keep you well and living a healthy and meaningful life outside of your caring role.

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## The NLCT team are here for you

Being a carer might be very new to you if someone in your life has had a recent illness or become disabled, or you may have helped someone for many years. Either way, we at North Lanarkshire Carers Together can keep you right. Our Board of Directors and our dedicated staff are either in a current caring role, or have been at some point, and therefore know what you are going through and how you might be feeling.

Prior to the pandemic there were an estimated 729,000 unpaid carers in Scotland. That rose to an estimated 1.1million, meaning 1 in 5 people in North Lanarkshire could now be carers.

It is widely expected that these carers save the Scottish economy £10.8billion which is the equivalent of the funding of another Scottish NHS.

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## A note on Kinship Carers

'Kinship care' is a term used for the raising of children by grandparents, other extended family members, and adults with whom they have a close relationship with, such as godparents and close family friends because their biological parents are unable to do so.

North Lanarkshire Carers Together recognise that with kinship care arrangements, these are often a result of trauma, illness, or addiction, and this is likely to have impacted on the child being looked after. If the child has additional needs, either from illness or disability, or has experienced trauma which affects their day-to-day life, our organisation will support the kinship carer regardless of any arrangements made with statutory services.

Our contact details are

T: **01698 404055**

E: **enquiries@carerstogether.org**

Outside office hours carers can access information and contact our team via:

@NLcarerstogether

@nlct\_carers

carerstogether.org

# NLCT Independent Carer Advocacy Service

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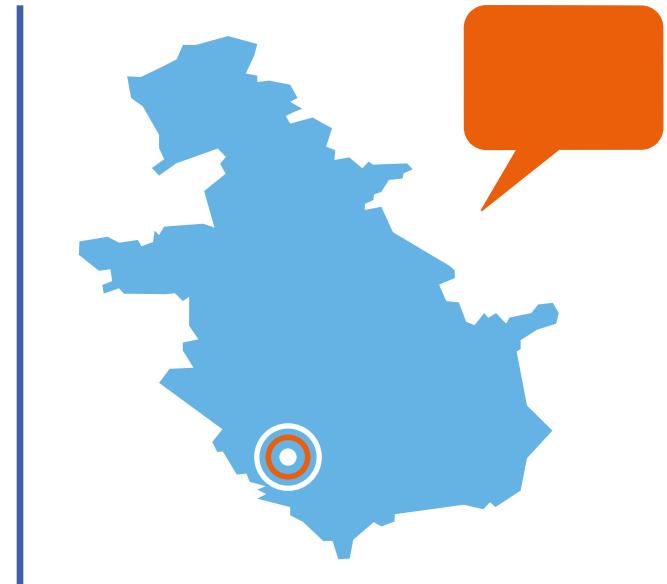
North Lanarkshire Carers Together (NLCT) have now launched a new Independent Carer Advocacy Service, available to adult carers over 18 years of age living in North Lanarkshire.

This service ensures that carers have full access to their rights as outlined within the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016. We know that health and social care systems can often be difficult to navigate, coupled with the fact that many people struggle to understand their rights as unpaid carers, and our service seeks to address those issues.

Our advocacy worker is now supporting carers via one-to-one advocacy, empowering them to express their views and concerns to statutory services and ensuring they are fully involved in the decisions that affect them and the person, or people, they care for. Some of the reasons carers may require access to our advocacy service include difficulties in accessing SDS budgets, problems around the hospital discharge of people they care for, and adult protection issues.

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“ “

The advocacy service has played a major role for our family and for me as a carer. It has lifted a big weight off my shoulders and the fact of just knowing I always have their help and support, makes my role as a carer that little bit easier. I've felt heard and listened to when no one else would listen

Queries can be directed to:

T: **01698 404055**

E: **enquiries@carerstogether.org**

Or you can access our referral forms **via our website**

Outside office hours carers can access information and contact our team via:

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@nlct\_carers

carerstogether.org



“ **Working for you** ”

# NLCT Carer Forum



North Lanarkshire Carers Together (NLCT) Carer Forum is a group of carers who meet in person or digitally 4 times a year to help shape local and national policy that affects carers and the people they care for.

It is an important role and ensures carers' voices are heard by policy makers.

The Carer Forum has formed responses to the Scottish Government on upcoming changes to Carers Allowance, to the proposed National Care Service, and helped shape new services that provide short breaks for carers. The forum ensures carers are at the heart of new services in North Lanarkshire; two of the Forum members were on the funding decision panel for the most recent services rolled-out for carers in the area.

Carer engagement must be meaningful, supported, funded and crucially we make sure that carers are always made aware of the outcome of them sharing their views, participating in consultations and bringing their expertise to the table.

## Our guiding principle

**“ We asked,  
You said, We did ”**

**is our promise to the members of our Carer Forum**

## Some of the things Forum members say:

“ “ Carers Forum is a safe place for Carers from all different backgrounds to come together, share information and discuss the important factors that relate to unpaid Carers at a grassroots level. It’s also a platform where Carers can be informed about the work that is being done both at a community level and national level to make sure Carers’ voices are being heard and to make sure the issues and challenges that unpaid Carers experience regardless of circumstances are being brought to the forefront

“ “ The Carer Forum is a friendly, helpful place which encourages carers to be people in their own right, recognises their stresses and joys, and sees them for the wonderful human beings they are

“ “ It is important for me to be able to express my views and feel my voice is being heard as so often Carers feel they do not have a voice, or that someone is truly listening

“ “ Since joining the Carers Forum, it’s given me the reassurance and understanding that NLCT are using their platform to promote change and ultimately fight for Carers with Carers views firmly at the forefront

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If you are a carer and are interested in joining the Forum, please get in touch via the contact details below. If you would like to join our closed Carer Forum Facebook Group **please visit the page and request to join.**

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T: **01698 404055**

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**“ Working for you ”**

# NLCT as Carer Support Network Leads



North Lanarkshire Carers Together (NLCT) leads the network of organisations across the area that come together on a quarterly basis from a range of sectors. This is known as the Carer Support Network.

The sectors involved include Health and Social Care North Lanarkshire (HSC NL), carer organisations, advocacy providers and the vibrant Community and Voluntary sector, all of which have one thing in common – they come into daily contact with carers in their work.

## Carer Breather

An exciting recent development within the network, thanks to an investment made by HSC NL, is known as 'Carer Breather'. Since spring 2022 carers have been able to access new services across North Lanarkshire that provide breaks from their caring roles and allow them to take some quality time out for themselves.

In partnership with HSC NL, and as Carer Network Leads, we supported the consultation of carers on the design of the new services. Carers told us that service providers needed to think outside the box and address the need for time out that didn't only take the form of an annual short break, or holiday, but that was easily accessible regularly in the community.

Carer Breather funded projects have been set up to offer activities such as art therapy, health and wellness activities, holistic support, and groups supporting people caring for loved ones with learning disabilities or living with long term conditions.



## The organisations providing these services are

Bazooka Arts

Parkinson's Self-Help Group Airdrie

Health and Wellness Hub

Parkinson's Self-Help Group Motherwell

Getting Better Together Shotts

The Haven

Glenboig Development Trust

Watch Us Grow

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**“Working for you”**

# NLCT Carer Aware Workshops



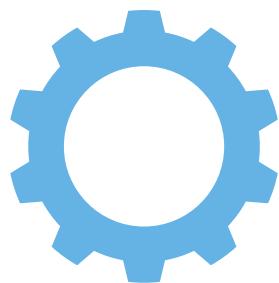
North Lanarkshire Carers Together (NLCT) works in partnership with Health & Social Care North Lanarkshire, North Lanarkshire Council, NHS Lanarkshire and the Community and Voluntary Sector to provide helpful information to unpaid carers and partners in North Lanarkshire.

We run Carer Aware Workshops for our partners and carer groups across North Lanarkshire to ensure everyone is up to speed on carer rights and all the essential background. This empowers carers to access support and services, and supports our partners to best provide support and services to the carers.

The course is interactive with attendees encouraged to participate in discussions to facilitate and support peer learning.

## Course Content

- **Background of NLCT**
- **Definition of a carer**
- **Challenges and barriers faced by carers**
- **Rights and duties as set out in the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 including update to the guidance (terminal illness regulation)**
- **3 commissioned carer services in North Lanarkshire**
- **Partnership approaches to supporting carers**
- **Useful resources and NLCT contact information**



## At the end of the course the participants will:

- Have a clear understanding of who is an unpaid carer
  - Be aware of the barriers and challenges for carers and how carers contribute to the health and social care system
  - Be able to recognise the benefits of working in partnership with carers using principles of EPIC (Equal Partners in Care) and involving them in decision-making processes
  - Have gained knowledge of what support and information carers need to carry out their role
  - Know how they can identify and support carers
  - Know where carers can receive further support, information, and guidance
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If you are a carer group, community group, or a team who engages with carers, and would like to discuss or arrange a training workshop, please get in touch.

“ Great session today! So much out there and if we can help raise awareness and get people linked into services, it will benefit both our NHS staff and patients

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 [@nlct\\_carers](https://twitter.com/nlct_carers)

 [carerstogether.org](http://carerstogether.org)



**“ Working for you ”**

# NLCT Carer Podcast



At North Lanarkshire Carers Together (NLCT), we were delighted to launch our new carer podcast, Carers Together, early in 2022.

A podcast is an audio programme, a little like a talk radio programme, but you subscribe to it on your smartphone, tablet or laptop and listen to it at any time which suits you. A great way to spend a spare half hour for some you time!

You can find an enormous number of podcasts discussing a range of topics from WWII, cycling, gardening and of course, carers.



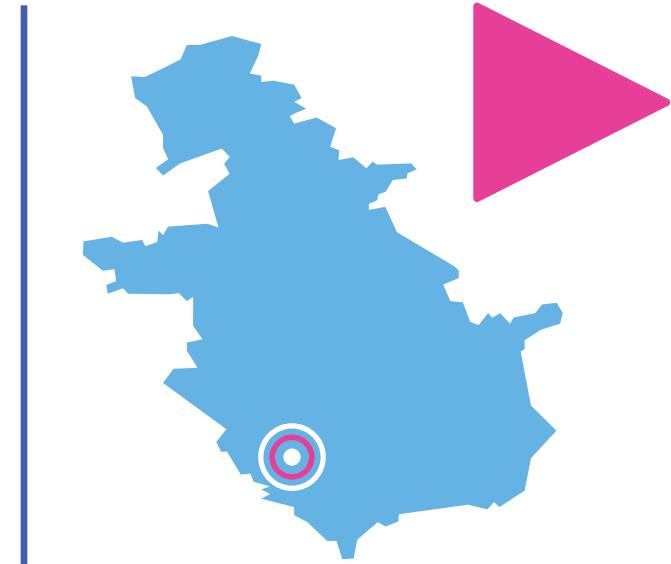
If you have an  
Android phone,  
these are  
available on  
Google Podcasts



If you have an  
iPhone, these are  
available on  
Apple Podcasts



If you have  
Spotify, they can  
also be listened to  
there too



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Our first ever podcast features Scottish actor Jane McCarry from Still Game, who agreed to discuss her previous caring roles and the impact the pandemic has had on the mental health and wellbeing of carers and the people they care for.

We have lots of exciting plans for this new way of ensuring carers and the challenges of being a carer are made more visible in society, and you can find it on any of the above programmes by searching for North Lanarkshire Carers Together and clicking 'subscribe'. It's completely free of charge.

The team would welcome any carer or partner who would like to share their story on any aspect of caring or providing a service to carers in future recordings. If this is something that interests you, and you would like to help share information and experiences with listeners, then please get in touch.

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**“Working for you”**

# A carer's experience of NLCT



“ “

I am a single dad, who has two boys with complex needs; a rare chromosome disorder called Kleefstra Syndrome. It has been described by medical researchers as one of the most stressful syndromes to be diagnosed with, due to how rare it is.

Over the years I have contacted the NLCT Team for advice on my caring role; mostly around my rights as a carer. In January 2021 I became involved in the Carer Forum, so I could get involved with helping other carers, as I have had plenty experience of caring challenges over the years. I also wanted to gain confidence, and it also gave me the chance to meet up with other carers.

I used the advocacy service in January 2022 after my son had a number of complications from a hospital visit, and I needed support in getting my voice heard for my rights as a carer. It was a tough few months, however with a lot of input and guidance from the advocacy service, I have now achieved the outcome I was needing, which was additional support to help me and for my son. The service given to me was so helpful and I was treated as if I was the only carer. If it wasn't for the service, I would not have achieved this and possibly be in a different position today. It has taken a lot of stress off me, and given me a lot more confidence in dealing with situations that arise in my caring role. I now want to go on and make sure that no other carer has to go through what I have over the years. I cannot speak highly enough of the team at NLCT.

