We are Carers Wales and this is what we do
We are Carers Wales – The leading all Wales charity putting carers first.

We understand carers; we are their voice.

We’re influential, effective and a trusted, respected charity. Acknowledged as experts, we continue to build on our established reputation for delivering positive change to make life better for carers in Wales.

Our impact is seen and felt by many of the 370,000 people who have already identified as a carer in Wales. We believe the actual number of Welsh carers is much higher and that is why our vital work must continue.

With our colleagues at Carers UK, Carers Scotland and Carers NI; our partners and volunteers, we ensured our activities and impact remained at the highest possible level.

We have three priority work areas:

• Research, policy and campaigning
• Information, advice and support
• Carers and work

This is my invitation to you to look at some of our achievements and activities over the last 12 months; to recognise, reflect on and celebrate the impact our work has had and to read about our plans for the future.

A heartfelt ‘Thank you’ for the support you have given us and for the support we know you will give us in the years to come.

In particular, a big thank you to all the carers we have spoken to this year who have shared their caring stories with Carers Wales. Your experiences have made me uplifted, frustrated and angry. They reinforce the vital role carers fulfil and make me even more determined for fight for better rights and improvements in help and support.

Claire Morgan
Director

Carers Wales is part of Carers UK. Together with Carers Scotland and Carers NI we are a united voice across the United Kingdom.
"Carers Wales do a fantastic job and support so many people and provide an invaluable service to many"
We are the voice of carers in Wales and we know people rely on us to tell it as it is.

Many issues affecting carers in Wales are under the direct control of Welsh Government so we are pleased to have its support. However, we do not shy away in presenting to those in power how difficult life can be for carers in Wales.

We know those who are in a position to effect and influence change listen to us. We lead and support the Wales Carers Alliance and the Carers Workers Network. We meet and work with politicians on a local, national and UK level; national organisations including Older People’s Commissioner for Wales; Wales Council for Voluntary Action; Public Health Wales; Social Care Wales; Welsh Local Government Association, all of which value our opinion.

We were delighted to have considerable engagement with Welsh Government ministers and deputy ministers during the year. We had productive conversations with Huw Irranca Davies and Julie Morgan, both of whom held/hold the portfolio with responsibilities for caring.

Our contribution to the activities within Welsh Government is extensive:

- Representative of Ministerial Advisory Group on Carers
- Reviewer Social Care Wales Carers Assessment Toolkit
- Representative on Social Services and Well-being Act Evaluation Group
- Contributor Advocacy Technical Group
- Contributor Cross Party Group on Autism
- Contributor Wellbeing and Future Generations Act
- Responder to Loneliness and Isolation Strategy Consultation
- Responder to Services Fit for the Future Consultation
- Responded to Adult Learning in Wales Consultation

The Carers Wales policy conference was held in Cardiff in September and was a resounding success. We were delighted to secure high level speakers and workshop leaders. We welcomed more than 100 delegates and we sold out of exhibitor spaces. Feedback received was excellent, with 75% of attendees saying the conference improved their knowledge of caring and carers’ issues and 93% saying they found the conference useful.

Track The Act is Carers Wales flagship programme which monitors and gathers information from carers about the impact the 2014 Social Services Heath and Wellbeing Act is having. We had a fantastic response to the 2018 survey. 627 submissions were received from people living in every local authority areas of Wales. We also received information from 21 of the 22 Local Authorities (Neath Port Talbot failed to respond) and 6 out of 7 Local Health Boards (Cardiff & Vale UHB failed to respond).

Our findings were launched at our policy conference through our briefing publication Track the Act 3 and we continue to work hard to deliver the recommendations for statutory bodies. Our activities around Track the Act programme continue on a rolling basis throughout the year. Our Director meets regularly with local authorities and health boards to discuss the concerns Carers Wales has about carers within their jurisdiction.

In 2016, seven statutory regional partnerships came into being to drive the strategic regional delivery of social services in close collaboration with health. These are known as Regional Partnership Boards (RPB). We support the RPB carer representatives and during the year brought them together for peer to peer support and information sharing. Carers Wales was also asked to present findings of the Track the Act to the RPB Third Sector representatives.

As well as running our own events, we are invited to attend many events. Of particular note we were delighted to be included at the high profile ‘NHS at 70’ event at the Senedd which was opened by the First Minister and attended by senior politicians, stakeholders and influencers from across all sectors. We were also asked to attend the Royal Welsh Show as an Expert Panel Member at a Social Care Wales event on loneliness and isolation. Contributions at this event were collated and submitted to the Welsh Government’s new team developing the proposed loneliness and isolation strategy.

Carers Wales was delighted to be invited to work with The Older People’s Commissioner for Wales in following
2018/19 we will:

- Continue to campaign on behalf of carers including our Track the Act
- Promote and support Carers rights Day
- Promote and support Carers Week
- Report on the State of Caring in Wales
- Complete our Big Lottery funded programme working directly in the community to identify and support hidden carers

up its Rethinking Respite Report. As a result we were able to contribute at two roundtable events 1) to discuss a pocket guide which they were producing and how we could collectively roll out the report recommendations and 2) to discuss the proposed respite outcomes framework.

In Spring 2018, Carers Wales hosted the International Sustainable Care Research team (based at Sheffield University) where invited external stakeholders discussed and considered ways that care will need to be delivered to meet future needs. The event in Wales focused specifically on carers-related policy in Wales. We will ensure Wales benefits from this international research work.

Our ability to bring together organisations and communities to highlight the issues carers face every day is well known. We recognise and celebrate the significant contribution made by carers to society. One of our key missions is to enable carers to know their rights, entitlements and what support is available. We want to go further – our goal is for everyone in Wales who is in a caring role, to recognise and identify themselves as a carer. We know there is a long way to go so our work will continue to encourage individuals to come forward through our engagement work.

Carers Week in June 2018 followed the theme of ‘Healthy and Connected’. We wrote to every Member of Parliament and Assembly Member and key stakeholders in Wales to draw their attention to the campaign and the activities taking place. Many directly pledged their support to our campaign.

We achieved a 40% increase in events being registered for Carers Week in places such as hospitals, GP surgeries, garden centres, and markets as well as within major employers in Wales. There was a huge 150% increase in requests for Welsh Language information pack for Carers Week.

Carers Week also saw the official launch event of the Wales hub of Employers for Carers (see section 3). The event hosted at Centrica’s offices in Cardiff and stories of carers who came forward to tell of their experiences achieved significant media coverage through television, radio, online and in print for the launch.

Alongside our Carers UK colleagues in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland, we promote Carers Rights Day. The theme for 2018 was ‘Make Connections, Get Support’. We held roadshows in North and South Wales and multiple information stands around Wales. We also launched our State of Caring in Wales report.

For Carers Rights Day in November, we were delighted to see a significant increase in the number of events being held across Wales for Carers Rights Day up by more than 25%.

We focused our messaging on our latest State of Caring report and shared some shocking statistics from those who responded.

- 75% said they have suffered mental ill health as a result of caring
- 61% said that they have suffered physical ill health as a result of caring
- 46% said they expect their quality of life to get worse in the next 12 months
- Only 9% said they expect it to get better
- 45% said they expect that they will be able to provide less or no care in the future because of poor or current physical ill-health
- 37% of carers said they expect that they will be able to provide less or no care because of current or future mental ill health

Television, radio interviews and coverage in print and online has increased over the last year, demonstrating that our expert opinion is acknowledged, valued and trusted by those with the power to reach mass audiences. We are approached and are proactive in generating newsworthy articles on topics that affect carers across Wales and beyond.

Overall the Carers Wales profile remained in the public eye through more than 20 media and press articles being published last year across all platforms and often on a national basis. Coverage was substantial on BBC Cymru Wales (Radio and TV), ITV Cymru Wales and S4C as well as commercial and community radio stations. Carers Wales stories also featured in print (Western Mail; South Wales Echo; Daily Post and many regional titles) and on numerous high profile websites.
Inform, advice and support

Q. Who do carers turn to when they need support?

A. Carers Wales – we’re recognised as the trusted charity for easy to access expert information, advice and support.

Our suite of resources is continually updated to ensure we cover the issues that matter to carers. We offer free telephone advice, a website featuring online tools and downloads of our guides and factsheets and a carers forum which is available 24/7. ‘Looking after someone’ is one of our most valued publications – we know this because carers tell us how useful and informative it is.

Whilst we saw a reduction in the numbers of people on our mailing list (because of GDPR), we worked hard to ensure our resources and materials are still easily accessible for all.

One of Carers Wales core activities is organising and facilitating events and face to face meetings where carers are able to share experiences and find useful information and advice. Our staff and amazing volunteers are found in every county across Wales and deliver many talks, awareness raising sessions, information days and training events across Wales in the community. We often talk with people who don’t recognise themselves as carers until we’ve spoken with them. We target places where we know carers will be visiting so that our friendly and knowledgeable staff and volunteers will have a positive impact such as hospitals; supermarkets; pharmacies; leisure centres; libraries and community centres.

Our regular attendance at relevant events means our message is communicated and heard at the highest level.

Our online presence continues to surge in popularity. We were delighted to see our social media following increase by 30% across Facebook and Twitter with nearly 4,000 social media followers. Engagement with people online topped more than 1.1million. The Carers Wales website pages were visited by more than 117,000 unique visitors and the Members Forum received more than 40,000 hits from Wales based addresses.

"The information and advice shared by Carers Wales has broadened my knowledge"
We were excited to start our three year lottery funded programme entitled Reach, Connect and Support Carers in the Community in 2018. We have achieved and/or exceeded every milestone expected of us in the first year and have had some remarkable results within the first year.

We recruited 37 new volunteers, reached 387 ‘hidden’ carers, supported more than 1,000 carers and attended 60 events. Nearly 5,000 resources were distributed in hard copy. Our training sessions were hugely effective; 92% of the 225 professionals we trained on carers, caring and carers rights reported positively on the session. Our tailored training programmes for carers and professionals was delivered to more people during 2018/19 than the previous year (362 vs 340).

On average volunteers and staff from Carers Wales participated in at least one meeting every working day of the year in 2018/19.

**Key statistics: 2018**

- **19,155 Resources distributed**
  - 2017 figure: 7605

- **1.13m Social media engagements**
  - 100% increase to 1.13million social media impressions
  - 2017 figure: 500,000

- **4,002 Social media followers**
  - Facebook: 1617
  - Twitter: 2381
  - 2017 figure: 3085
  - Facebook: 1301
  - Twitter: 1763

- **45,500 Website hits**
  - 117,000 unique visitors to website – 40,000 Wales visitors to Carers UK forum
  - 2017 figure: 40,000
Our work to support carers who are employed has never been as important as it is now; with people living longer with illness and disability, and more and more employees have and will have caring responsibilities.

Caring can affect all employees from management to shop floor. Carers Wales now has 10 volunteer ‘Workplace Champions’ in organisations across Wales who (with management backing) bring carers together in the workplace for peer support; to access relevant information and encourage their employer to be carer-friendly.

The Carers UK Employers for Carers (EfC) programme was launched in 2009. Across the UK there are more than 115 EfC member organisations across the public, private and voluntary sectors. The total number of employees covered by member organisations is now above the 1.5 million and the number of working carers represented is approximately 160,000.

Welsh Government recognised that Carers Wales is uniquely placed to offer a full support service for employers in Wales. As a result, in June 2018, the Wales Hub of Employers for Carers was launched, supported by one year of Welsh Government funding and managed by Carers Wales. Its mission is to change employers’ practices across Wales to effectively support carers in their workforce. We want to demonstrate the huge value unpaid carers give to society and how much they save health and social services. We also want to show employers that by supporting their employees they too may receive true business benefits such as improved productivity and workforce retention.

During the first nine months of operation, the Wales hub of EfC recruited five new members that employ tens of thousands of people including DVLA, Cardiff County Council, South Wales Police and West Wales Care Partnership which includes the Hywel Dda Health Board and the local authorities of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire.
Key statistics

223,000 carers in employment in Wales
6% of the Welsh adult population have quit their job to care
1 in 7 employees juggle caring with work

We developed a suite of bilingual EfC materials (including digital), engaged with more than 50 organisations, achieved significant media coverage through our official launch and have been invited to participate in conferences and events. We were delighted to see our new Wales members as well as established EfC members with a presence in Wales attend our networking events.

We know that our work with employers is already having an impact:

DVLA “Feedback from carers on what we have introduced so far is very positive and the business has benefitted through measurable increased productivity and reduced absenteeism.”

Nationwide Building Society “As a result of the information presented at the Wales Hub networking meeting I will consider how I can support our employees in Wales with caring responsibilities better and share awareness of initiatives local to their communities.”

Cardiff County Council “From a carers point of view there are three main ways joining EfC has helped. 1) It has opened up a greater network of help for our carers to access. 2) It has given the Carers Network useful facts to pass on to our carers. 3) It has raised the profile at higher levels of our amazing carers juggling work in Cardiff Council and their caring role.”

We delivered onsite awareness raising training sessions to more than 200 employees across various sectors including NHS, Universities; local authorities, non-government organisations and more. We are able to demonstrate evidence to support the business benefits of implementing carer friendly policies, including reduced absenteeism, improved productivity, staff retention, reduced training and retraining costs.

2018/19 we will:

- Grow membership of Employers for Carers in Wales
- Develop resources for employers and employees on issues affecting carers
- Develop a series of ‘Employers for Carers’ networking events
Looking ahead

We’re already planning for a busy year.

We’ll be working with colleagues in Carers UK on UK-wide campaigns as well as keeping a strong focus on issues within Wales. Highlights will include:

• a series of roadshows across Wales to engage with carers to influence our work
• developing the Wales Hub of Employers for Carers
• a campaign to increase the pay level of Carers Allowance

Thank you
Every year we’re privileged to work with and have the support of some amazing people and organisations. We give our profound thanks to our dedicated staff, committee members and volunteers, our collaborative partners and of course our funders and supporters without whom our work would not be possible.

We would also like to thank those organisations who have contracted with Carers Wales to undertake commissioned work during the year including Social Care Wales and NHS Wales.
Get involved
We want you to join us and be part of our organisation so that together we can make life better. If you’re a carer we’ll be with you on every step of your journey. If you have a passion for caring, believe and support our work you can be part of our journey.

Free membership includes:
• a strong voice
• a free guide to caring
• support from other carers including through our online Forum
• the latest news, information and campaign updates
• a say in our future

Volunteering opportunities:
Thanks to our wonderful volunteers Carers Wales is represented throughout Wales. We have varying roles meaning you choose how you’d like to take part – from out and about in your community, joining a national campaign or from the comfort of your own home.

Looking after someone can be tough, but you’re not on your own

Carers Wales is here:
• to listen
• to give you expert information and advice that’s tailored to your situation
• to champion your rights
• to support you in finding ways to manage at home, at work, or wherever you are

"Carers Wales improves the services, knowledge and emotional support available to carers"
Our mission is to make life better for carers

We give expert advice, information and support

We connect carers so no-one has to care alone

We campaign together for lasting change

We innovate to find new ways to reach and support carers

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