

Blackpool Carers Centre

Quality • Passion • Respect

Charity No. 1114558

Social Impact Report



2022-23

Our purpose

“

We exist to make a better life for carers through our values of Passion, Quality and Respect.



”

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*Adult carers
Alpaca Walking
at Lowlands Farm*

Introduction

Hello and welcome to the first ever standalone Social Impact Report from Blackpool Carers Centre. For 22/23 we have decided to provide a dedicated document which explains the impact we have achieved with our carers through the financial year. Also included, is a Social Return on Investment calculation, available on page 11. This is the result of work conducted by Civil Society Consulting, through Carers Trust. Our staff, volunteers and carers were involved in the creation of this model and as such it reflects the value of the work we do.

This report provides a comprehensive overview of the transformative work we have accomplished over the past year and showcases the impact we have made to the lives of unpaid carers across Blackpool. It also highlights the staggering effort made by our dedicated staff, volunteers and supporters.

At Blackpool Carers Centre, we exist to make a better life for carers. Through this report we aim to provide an in depth understanding of the positive impact we have achieved, working alongside our carers and their families.

Within these pages you will find a wealth of statistical information, clearly demonstrating the amount of work which has been carried out through the financial year 22/23. There are also a series of compelling stories which show the level of determination and compassion which are demonstrated by carers every day. For the individuals who have shared their personal journeys, the impact of our work is clearly seen in their experiences.

We hope that you will be inspired by the stories, moved by the outcomes, and empowered to join us in our mission. Together, we can continue to make a better life for carers, advocating for their rights, well-being, and recognition. We hope to create a community where carers are truly valued, supported, and celebrated.

Thank you for your continued support, and we hope you find this report as inspiring and enlightening as we do.



Sarah Lambert
Chair of Trustees



Tom McMurdo
Director of Finance & Resources

What we do

Our mission is to create a better life for carers. We seek to achieve this aim through a variety of interventions, which centre on a person led approach. Because of the individualised nature of our service delivery, this can include a range of activities, from intensive, time limited one to one support through to trips and activities for carers of all ages in the Blackpool community.

We offer a wide range of services and projects, all of which are designed to meet the diverse needs of carers across Blackpool. Our dedicated team of professionals provides personalised support, information, and guidance to carers, helping them to navigate the complexities of their caring role. We offer one-on-one support, service navigation and support groups that provide a safe and understanding environment for carers to share their experiences and find solace in knowing they are not alone.

Caring can be physically and emotionally demanding, which is why we recognise the importance of respite. We provide respite services that offer carers a much-needed break from their caring roles and responsibilities. Whether it's through an activity session at Beaverbrooks House or a trip out into the community or beyond, we strive to give carers the opportunity to take a break, recharge, and focus on their own well-being.



Adult carers meeting
Coco the Therapy Dog



Young Carers having fun
in the garden during a
Take5 Respite session



Young Carer playing Jenga
during one to one support



Volunteers at our
annual fundraising Ball

We are committed to evidence-based practice and continuous improvement. We track and measure the impact of our services and

projects to ensure that everything we do is making a better life for carers. Through rigorous data collection, analysis, and feedback from carers, we constantly evaluate our outcomes and refine our approaches to better serve those who rely on our support.

We are proud to say that all our staff, volunteers and Trustees work together to make a significant impact on the lives of carers and ensure they receive the support they deserve.

Adult Carers

We understand the unique challenges faced by adult carers and the immense responsibilities they shoulder. We are committed to offering a comprehensive range of services and resources that address their individual needs, help them to navigate their caring role, and improve their own well-being.

Our Adult Carers Service is designed to provide a lifeline for carers, offering practical assistance, emotional support, and respite opportunities. We recognise that caring can be physically and emotionally demanding, often leaving carers with little time for themselves. Therefore, our services are tailored to offer the necessary respite and support that adult carers require.

This year has been one of expansion for the adult team, with crucial support bring provided within the hospital as part of the multi-disciplinary Transfer of Care Hub. We have also continued our work within the Refocus project, supporting adults providing care to those with alcohol and substance misuse.

Adult Carers' Comments

“You have been my rock and a lifeline for me. When you phone it gives me light at the end of the tunnel. A huge thank you, your help could not be more appreciated.”

“The peer support group has really helped me. I wasn't sure beforehand as I had never done a group before, but speaking to others on similar journeys has helped. We have all swapped our experiences and I think we have all learned something from each other. Your support and advice has changed my life in coping with my son's problems.”

“I think the dementia support group is brilliant. It has given me hope that there is someone else who understands and who I can talk to. I also feel more confident to cope with things.”

“I can't believe how quickly you got back to me [to triage a referral], that's brilliant. Thank you so much, this is a brilliant service and I'm impressed by your efficiency.”

Mavis's Story

Being a carer is a life changing event that no one prepares you for, my caring journey began 25 years ago looking after my mum who lived to the grand old age of 100, and my younger brother who was diagnosed with Downs Syndrome. After they passed away, I thought I would have some quality time with my husband Ted of 33 years, until he was diagnosed with dementia in 2020.

We were locked down due to the Covid Pandemic and there was little in the way of support to help me. Ted's behaviour became incredibly challenging to the point where I reached rock bottom and asked for help. Blackpool Carers' Support Worker, Debbie, supported me to navigate through the health and social care services and access support that allowed me to understand Ted's diagnosis, and to take a break from the 24-hour care that Ted needed.

Debbie visited me at home and encouraged me to attend dementia training. Ted and I both attended the weekly dementia drop in which was a real lifeline.

Ted sadly passed away in 2022 which left a huge void in my life. Debbie continued to support me and even accompanied me to the Carers Choir, as I didn't have the confidence to go on my own. This was a real turning point for me. I have since joined the Connect 23 group and have made some really good friends.

Being a dementia carer can be so lonely. I have definitely had moments where I felt overwhelmed and isolated. However, the support from Debbie and the Carers Centre has made a real difference in that it offers me the feeling that I am not alone, whether it is Debbie or the staff and volunteers, I always feel like I have someone to talk to, or sing with!

I now feel able to support other people in my position and hope that by sharing my story other carers will be encouraged to call the staff at the Carers Centre who have made such a difference to my life.



Mavis (r) with Support Worker, Debbie

Project Impacts



658
new adult carer referrals received



3,126
one to one support sessions took place



805
welfare checks made for adult carers



96%
of reassessments conducted using the Carers Star, report an improved or maintained score

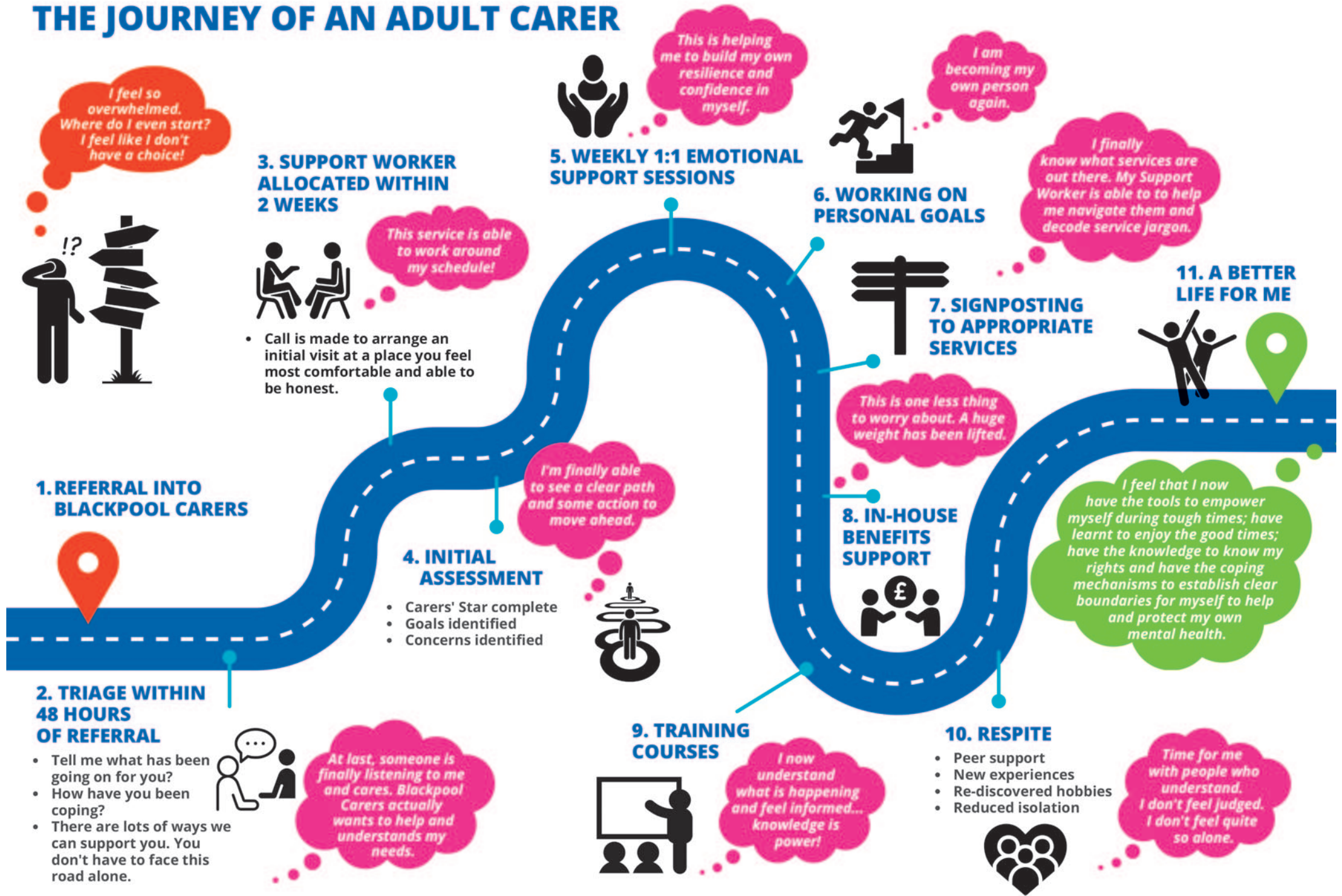


454
Benefits Advice appointments conducted face to face



517
instances of partnership working took place on behalf of adult carers

THE JOURNEY OF AN ADULT CARER



Young Carers

Young carers face a multitude of challenges as they navigate the responsibilities of caring for a family member or loved one. Our Young Carers Service is dedicated to providing personalised support, respite, and empowerment to these remarkable young individuals, who often take on adult-sized responsibilities at a young age.

Our commitment to young carers is rooted in a deep understanding of their needs and aspirations. Through one-to-one support, group activities, and dedicated projects, we aim to alleviate the burden of caring and create an environment where young carers can thrive.

The Young Carers Service also focuses on fostering a sense of community and belonging for young carers. Through group activities, workshops, and social events, we create opportunities for them to connect with peers, build supportive relationships, and share their experiences in a safe and inclusive space. This sense of belonging helps combat feelings of isolation and provides a network of understanding individuals who can relate to their unique challenges.

During 22/23 we undertook large scale research across Blackpool schools to determine the true number of young carers in the town. We also renovated some of our downstairs rooms at Beaverbrooks House, providing new one to one and group space for our young carers to meet with their support workers and one another.

Young Carers' Comments

“Attending Blackpool Pride with young carers has showed me that I'm not alone and has helped me gain more confidence.”

“I have made so many friends and all the adults here are so kind and nice. Thank you so much for accepting me and letting me come here. I am so glad I did come. I've enjoyed every single trip, especially Story Squad and the night away.”

“Take5 helps with my mental health and it is always there for me when I need it.”

“I have never seen Brendan so happy and smile so much, he talks about the Centre all the time.”

Summer's Story



Summer was referred to Blackpool Carers Centre under our Family Focus programme from The Early Help and Support service. Summer lives at home with her mum who is alcohol dependant.

Summer completed a Young Carers Assessment which suggested a one-to-one support plan would be best to

support her due to her worries about her mum.

During a one-to-one, Summer mentioned how disappointed she was that she was unable to go to the prom due to current financial pressures within her household. Her support worker could see how much Summer wanted to go and made sure this happened!

During one of the sessions with her support worker, Summer (together with one of her newly made friends from our Take 5 Youth Club), chose the perfect dress from a beautiful dress collection that had kindly been donated.

We sourced sparkly shoes and a bag to finish the outfit, along with a donated bag of makeup, body spray and face masks from the Miles of Smiles charity. On the day of Summers' prom, colleagues from the Young Carers team worked together to make her day extra special. She was picked up from home and brought to the Centre to have a pamper. She had her hair blow dried and styled and was treated to a makeup master class, followed by a very fancy glass of orange cordial.

Summer loved her experience and thanked us for making her prom night so special. She said it wouldn't have happened without us.

Project Impacts



223
new young carer referrals received



43
young carers attended drop-in sessions held at their school



447
young carers assessments took place



210
young carers attended respite sessions

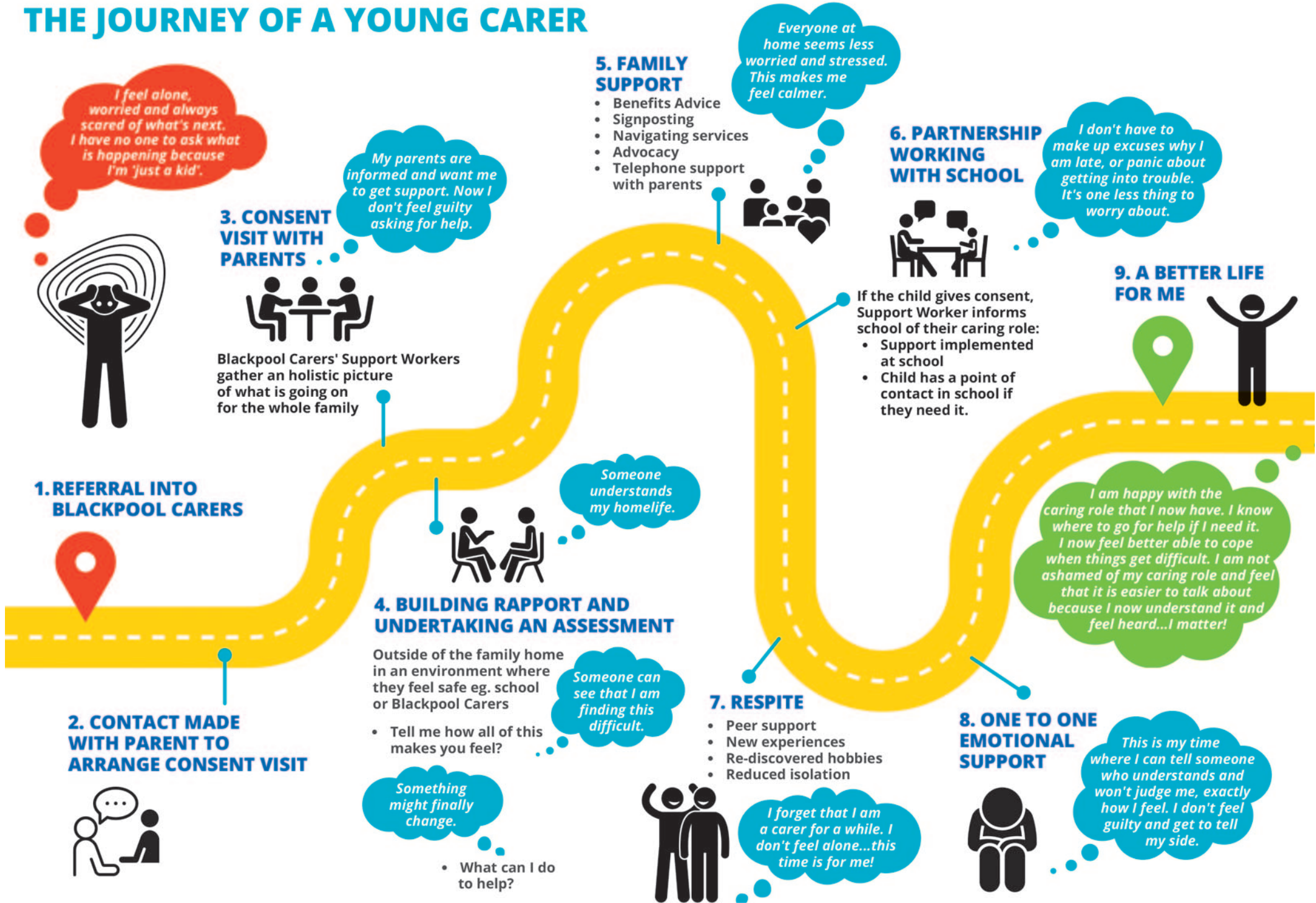


530
young carers accessed support



100
multi-agency meetings attended on behalf of young carers

THE JOURNEY OF A YOUNG CARER



Volunteers

Volunteering and development of the volunteer team continues to be a key part of the work at Blackpool Carers Centre. We are lucky to be supported by volunteers who keep Beaverbrooks House the welcoming centre that it is for carers of all ages. Often with their own experiences as carers or professional skills and experience, this year they have been active in supporting existing services and projects whilst helping to develop some new ones.

With an increase in community and health and wellbeing events being delivered in Blackpool, we have been able to increase the amount of volunteer participation at awareness raising and partnership events. Volunteers have taken part in Lowlands Farm open day, have supported stands at the Winter

Gardens for the Spring into Spring event with Blackpool Council and NHS Integrated Care Board and most recently to support the Macmillan Wellbeing event at the Grand Hotel.

Volunteers also attended the first drop in event for carers at The Harbour, developed by our adult team in conjunction with staff from Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust, for family members and those caring for people with mental health illnesses. Our experienced carers who volunteer with us are such a valuable part of this work as they speak to those who approach the stand with empathy and understanding.

A core team of 37 volunteers provide weekly support to the Centre including Reception duties, providing administration support, and helping to deliver respite sessions for carers.

We currently have around 120 people on the database of volunteers who have actively supported us within the last two years at external events, with fundraising and delivering posters to local community centres and GP surgeries.

Volunteers' Comments

“I volunteer for Blackpool Carers Centre as the centre has greatly helped me and enabled me to become confident in my work it makes a huge difference to my life as it has allowed me to become more independent which I greatly appreciate.”

“I really feel that I have found my feet at Blackpool Carers Centre and have gained many skills that I can use to go forward in my life..”

“The staff here are all amazing and so dedicated to helping the carers. It really does lift my mood coming into the centre and interacting with them.”

Christine's Story

I was given my first sewing machine before I went to school and was also taught to knit. I started my first cardigan at the age of 7 and by the age of 11 I had managed to finish it and luckily the pattern that I had been given meant it still fitted me. I grew up just after the war and there was still rationing so it wasn't a matter of it being a hobby, 'Make Do and Mend' was what everyone did. My family even worked together to create our own stair carpet and we were very proud of it!

As I had my own family I carried on making everything for myself so it was only when I retired from the NHS where I had worked in the medical records offices that I had time for creating for fun. Since 2016 I have volunteered, crocheting outfits for Rocco the Carers Centre mascot. To help with fundraising, they are sold in The Imperial Hotel, Carlton Best Western and Liberty's Hotel, as well as from reception at the Carers Centre.

I often find it difficult to get out now, so crafting with my friend Jackie (also a volunteer) who helps with the details on the finished outfits, means that I can keep doing something I enjoy in company. It's a bonus that it raises money too! Jackie works for the Grand Hotel but still finds time to help and we both love choosing the colours for the next outfit, that's part of the fun.

Roccos dressed in some of the fabulous outfits, crocheted by volunteer, Christine.



Impacts



6,106

hours donated by volunteers



£75,019

estimated value of volunteers' time



29

new volunteers welcomed



87

individuals volunteered during the year



3

Corporate Volunteer Days held at Beaverbrooks House

Plans for the future

Looking ahead, Blackpool Carers Centre is committed to advancing our support and services for carers in the Blackpool community. We have set ambitious goals and developed a robust strategy and operational plans that will guide our work in the coming years, ensuring that we continue to make a positive and lasting impact.

- developing our work to reduce the impact of loneliness with our most isolated carers by seeking ways to remove barriers to accessing work, professional support and friendships;
- identifying more carers at an early stage in their caring role by improving our external communications with professionals, families, businesses and the public generally;
- improving the financial position of carers by increasing provision of benefits advice;
- securing long term funding for adult carers substance misuse support (ReFocus Project)

Importantly, as the Health and Social Care landscape shifts, we will develop new ways of working that align with the priorities of our statutory partners.

“ Thank you from the bottom of my heart for all your support over the year. Thank you for being professional and non-judgemental. Being the mother of an adult son with dual diagnosis is a lonely and scary place at times (well nearly all the time).

When I come to the Carers Centre, you give me hope and an ear that listens and doesn't judge the illness. You work tirelessly with other agencies, educating them and engaging with them to enable carers of mental health and substance misuse to access the help from these services. I know it's not always easy but you never give up. This is why I have a lot of respect for you.

ReFocus Project Carer



The start of building work to transform the site of the old annex into a new outdoor courtyard space for young carers.

ReFocus group ladies making new friends and having fun on an afternoon trip to Barton Grange

Our supporters

Young carers 'refueling' during a fun trip to Ascent Trampoline Park



In 2022/23, we worked with a whole host of partners to create the best possible opportunities for carers within our local community.

Support received from our valued corporate sponsors, grant funders and local organisations made the impacts shown in this report possible.

Fundraising is an essential part of our plans for the future and our purpose, to make a better life for carers.

Generous support from partners, funders and volunteers means we can continue to offer support to some of the most vulnerable people in Blackpool, from providing young people with a positive start, to ensuring older people are engaged in regular social activities.

By working creatively and flexibly to maximise every opportunity, we can do more together.

If you would like to find out more about how you could directly impact any of our projects, from funding support to volunteering, we would like to hear from you. Please contact Terry Hodkinson, Head of Business Development and Fundraising on 01253 393748 or email: terry.hodkinson@blackpoolcarers.org

At Blackpool Carers Centre, we are immensely grateful for the unwavering support and generosity of our incredible supporters. It is through their dedication and contributions that we are able to continue our vital work in supporting carers and making a positive impact in the Blackpool community.

We love to play a small part in supporting the team and carers in the amazing work they do. It's a magical place that humbles us every time we visit.

*Glenn Willis, InXpress
(Caring Corporate)*

The Impact of Blackpool Carers in ONE year

EVERY
£1
INVESTED IN
BLACKPOOL
CARERS CENTRE
PROVIDES A
SOCIAL RETURN
ON
INVESTMENT OF
£21.44

Our adult carers feeling less socially isolated returned a value of **£295,062**

The improvements in the financial situations of our adult carers generated a value of **£445,734**

Our adult carers returning to work generated a value of **£312,717**

Our work with young carers with a high level of need returned a value of **£491,324**

The reassurance provided by Blackpool Carers to young carers with a low level of need generated a value of **£1,266,522**

Our respite provision for young carers returned a value of **£281,339**

Our work within the hospital setting returned a social value of **£140,817**

Carers involved in our voluntary schemes returned a social value of **£42,056**

Our work with the 'cared-for' has returned a value of **£2,000,707**

These calculations are the result of work conducted by Civil Society Consulting. Their expert team were commissioned by Carers Trust to develop a model which would calculate the social value returned by Network Partners. The Civil Society team consulted widely with professionals, stakeholders and with carers themselves, as well as studying a range of relevant data points to develop the model. A more complete explanation of the data is available from Blackpool Carers Centre.



To make a donation to provide
respite for our carers
Text **BLACKPOOLCARERS to 70085**
to give £5*

*Texts charged at your standard network rate

OR



JustGiving™



Blackpool Carers Centre

Quality • Passion • Respect

Charity No. 1114558

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