

Carer Conversation Cafés

Anyone who cares for someone else in the capital is invited to join the conversation at weekly **Carer Conversation Cafés** hosted by local carer organisation VOCAL (Voice of Carers Across Lothian).

✘ Unpaid carers, people providing vital help and support to a partner, family member or friend, can become isolated and feel left out of the wider conversation and VOCAL want you to know that they are there to help.

Edinburgh Carer Conversation Cafés is a pilot project aiming to provide a space for carers to take time for themselves, meet like-minded people and share thoughts and ideas on the issues that matter to them.

VOCAL carer support worker Wendy Brooks, herself a carer for her teenage son, is the Café host and brings both a professional and personal understanding of the pressures and issues affecting carers in their daily lives.

“Carers often lose themselves within the caring role, lacking the time, energy or space for themselves.

“The aim of the Carer Conversation Cafés is to provide that time and space for carers to take care of themselves and to inspire and support each other.

“Carers can begin a conversation that involves what matters to them and acknowledges the vital role that they play.”

Jane Greenacre, Assistant Director (Carer Support) at VOCAL, believes that this project will be successful in reducing isolation and helping carers to maintain contact with their local community:

“For over 21 years, VOCAL has been providing much needed free

practical and emotional support to carers in Edinburgh from our carer centre.

“What makes the Carer Conversations Cafés so exciting is that they are using public spaces to enable carers to stay engaged with the wider community, and helping the wider community stay engaged with carers.”

The next Carer Conversation Café is on Monday 17th October from 10am-12pm at the Lifecare centre, Cheyne Street in Stockbridge where the theme for discussion is: ***Do you feel carers are sufficiently valued in society?***

This will be followed by regular weekly sessions at four city-wide cafés on a rotating basis, initially until March 2017. Refreshments are provided and sessions are structured so that everyone who wishes to is given the opportunity to contribute.

For further details about the Carers Conversation Cafés visit the VOCAL website (<https://www.vocal.org.uk/conversation>) or contact the VOCAL carer centre on 0131 622 6666.