

CROSSROADS

CARE KENT



IMPACT REPORT 2022

Kent's leading Carers Charity -
Supporting Caring families
since 1982

Care Charity of the year 2021

#KentCarersNeedBreaks

"We are now at a stage where his body is totally gone. He cannot feed himself or make a drink. I just do not know what I would do without Crossroads Care Kent. I can go out and do some gardening, have a cup of tea with a neighbour or see a friend. It is three hours of freedom....and I should not be saying that."

Sue is 74 years old and lives in Tonbridge



Delivering Carer Support

- **Over the last four years we have supported over 23,000 unpaid Carers and the people they care for.**
- Thousands of Carers have benefited from support from our Carer Support Workers in their own homes; others have been supported through group activities, one to one support from our Care Managers, referred on and supported to access other services, and provided with information and advice to help them in their caring role.
- **Our amazing care team have delivered over 480,000 hours of care during the last 4 years - equating to over 150,000 individual visits.**
- 99% of the Carers that we work with have told us that our support has had a significant positive impact on their health and wellbeing.
- On average we provide replacement care to just under 1000 Carers with high levels of need in Kent every week.
- **Crossroads Care Kent are the proud winners of the Kent Care Charity of the Year 2021.** Judges recognised the fantastic benefits and outcomes that Carers receive from the wide range of services that we provide.



Richard Parsons –
Chairman, Crossroads
Care Kent

INTRODUCTION

The challenges of caring for a loved one are immense. Caring can be rewarding but at the same time it is often lonely, stressful, all-consuming and exhausting.

Crossroads Care Kent have been funded by Kent County Council for 40 years to deliver our unique brand of high quality Carer support – with additional investment from Kent’s CCG’s through the Short Breaks contract.

This Impact Report gives us the opportunity to showcase the real difference that we make every day to Carers through our wide range of charitable activities, achievements, and partnerships and to highlight just how vital regular Short Breaks are for Kent’s Carers if they are to carry on caring.

Knowing and understanding the difference that we make is vitally important to our funders, supporters, commissioners, staff, volunteers and other interested parties, but this report also allows us to learn from what we do, improve and promote a culture of accountability and transparency within our organisation.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

The passion and dedication of our team at Crossroads Care Kent shines through this Impact Report. I have constantly been inspired by their tireless efforts through which the organisation has continued to thrive and make a real difference to so many caring families across Kent, even during the most challenging times and circumstances.

The Board of Trustees and I remain committed to everyone within Crossroads as they develop and grow the charity and the impact that it makes across the many diverse services that we offer.

However, there are always new and ever-changing challenges to be faced and it is true to say that as an organisation we feel threatened and extremely concerned about our future given new directives for supporting carers in the county and the unsettling restructure of Clinical Commissioning Groups.

It is extraordinary and unacceptable, that the extremely talented Senior Management team at Crossroads Care Kent have had to devote so much time over the last 2 years explaining to Commissioners and other funding bodies our critical funding needs. Further then, having to demonstrate the clear and obvious need within the county for Carers to have some respite and regular breaks from caring in order to have any quality of life, where they can re-charge and just take time out.



Adding Real Social Value

- 83% of all our income is spent on our services. Only 17% of income is used to cover our general overheads.
- Our crisis response team saves the NHS over £1 million each year.
- 78% of the Carers that we work with have told us that our support has delayed or negated the need for the person with care needs to move into long-term residential care.
- In the last year our Crisis team supported and worked with 1,459 Carers across Kent following referrals from a stretched NHS and social services bodies.

Ian is 62 and from Whitstable.

Six years ago, his wife was diagnosed with early onset dementia. Now 68, she is bedbound and cannot talk or move her limbs. Ian is her full-time Carer and gave up his career to look after her. His life is a constant twenty-four hour a day challenge. Every week, Ian gets a three-hour break, through the support of Crossroads Care Kent.

He tells us;

“Crossroads allow me to live at home with my wife and allow her to stay here and not go into a care home so that I can go out and do our food shopping. I can go and see my dad, go down to my allotment, I can see friends or go for a walk along the beach. If Crossroads Care Kent went, then for myself, it would, if you want, pull the rug out of my mental wellbeing”.

Crossroads Care Kent has been supporting Carers throughout the county for over 40 years now and is recognised as the pre-eminent charity, representing Carers across Kent.

OUR VISION is that everyone who comes to us will receive the help and support that they need to face the challenges of caring for a loved one. We will deliver Carer services, to a family member or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or who is struggling with mental health issues.

OUR MISSION is to support Carers of all ages to make a life of their own outside caring by providing their loved ones with short breaks delivered through quality care services. This gives them peace of mind, enabling them to enjoy some time out for themselves.

OUR VALUES are central to us. We are an equal opportunity, can do organisation. We strive for excellence, we maintain a clear people focus and we have respect for everyone we support, work for and work with.

Through a well-considered mix of important services, the team at Crossroads Care Kent support Carers in their own homes. This means that people living with a range of different conditions are not placed into already stretched care homes and can stay where they are most comfortable.

WHAT DRIVES US

We are driven to offer a level of care and support for all unpaid Carers across Kent, free of charge and we are proud and feel privileged that we can do so.

Over the last 40 years Crossroads has developed a unique insight into Carers needs and building trusted relationships with them underpins all of our interventions and services. Carers accessing Crossroads Care Kent give so much to help their loved ones and dependents. By offering them some respite and by being trusted to do so really does lift our spirits and motivates us to do more.

OUR SERVICES

SHORT BREAKS FOR CARERS

Our free service offers adult Carers regular time away from their caring responsibilities.

Referrals for these short breaks can be made directly or through family, friends, GPs or other Health and Social Care professionals.



Our Staff – making a real difference

Staff at Crossroads Care Kent are the bedrock of our success as Kent's leading Care Charity. In a recent staff survey:

- 96% of our staff say that Crossroads Care Kent is a great place to work.
- 99% of our staff tell us that they feel supported in their role.
- 96% of our staff say that they feel trusted by the organisation to do a good job.
- 93% of our staff tell us that they completely trust our leadership team to make decisions that protect them, their colleagues and the organisation's future.

We received a referral from a case manager at Social Services for Mrs A who is 102, has chronic arthritis in her hands and legs, ulcerated legs, recurring UTI's, TIA's, hypertension, carpal tunnel syndrome, osteoporosis and is doubly incontinent.

Mrs A lives with her son Eric, who is her full time Carer. He himself has Parkinson's disease, and struggles to manage her care at the best of times.

Mr A had been admitted to hospital, leaving Mrs A home alone.

Supporting an existing regular care package of 4 daily calls, our team provided two waking nights of care and support until Mrs A's daughter could take over.

Respite visits are usually weekly, for a morning, afternoon or evening and give Carers the opportunity for a little "me" time to do what they really want to. The same Carer Support Worker visits each time to build a trusting relationship with both the Carer and the person needing support. They can conduct all the caring tasks that the Carer does, including personal care tasks.

RAPID RESPONSE TO CRISIS

We provide a free service, 24/7, across East and West Kent supporting Carers at a time of crisis. The service is designed to offer practical assistance that will prevent the breakdown of a caring situation that might otherwise lead to a hospital or care home admission.

This time-limited intervention service can only be accessed via a Health or Social Care professional, GP, or emergency services, and can respond to a crisis or emergency within 2 hours of accepting a referral in order to meet the needs of a Carer, or a person with dementia in their own home who is experiencing a crisis.

HEALTH APPOINTMENT COVER

This free service ensures that Carers can look after their own health needs. Crossroads provide a trained and vetted Carer Support Worker to remain in the home with a dependent or loved one enabling their Carer to attend health appointments with their own doctor, hospital, dentist and optician. This replacement care is pre-bookable and goes a long way to enable Carers to look after themselves thereby preventing Carer breakdowns in the future.

DEMENTIA SUPPORT

One to one advice and support is available for Carers looking after a dependent with dementia at home. Home visits and telephone appointments are available by arrangement and are delivered by our specialist staff, fully trained in dementia.

CROSSROADS CARE KENT / MACMILLAN VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Our trained volunteers can support Carers with help at home, as well as individuals living with cancer. Our volunteers provide free, one to one, practical, emotional and companionship support.

Volunteers can visit Carers or individuals at home or contact them remotely via video or phone.

They are fully trained and DBS checked and offer a kind and listening ear. By way of example, they can help with:

- Light housework or gardening
- Shopping
- Transport to health appointments



Carer's quotes

"Crossroads Care Kent's service was an absolute godsent to my brother and I when we needed help desperately"

"We believe without this support, my mother could have been taken into a care home, which is not something she wants to happen"

"I am still here, alive, with my wife, thanks to you all..."



From a parent of a Young Carer

Feeling that our children are missing out on fun things makes being unwell even worse.

The Young Carers group at Crossroads gives the kids an outlet for them to have some fun and not have to worry about home life for a while. The support at the club for the whole family is fantastic.

From a Young Carer

Crossroads Young Carers means the world to me, and I don't know what I would do without it.

From a Professional referral partner

I am always relieved when I hear Crossroads Young Carers are involved with a family because I know the child will be well supported.

END OF LIFE CARE

Our support is available for Carers at the most difficult times in the lives of both the Carer and the person they care for.

When someone has a life-limiting illness, it is reassuring to know that we can offer support throughout the last year, months, weeks, and days of life.

We understand how important it is to feel secure and safe with caring staff who know your family well and make it possible for final days to be spent at home.

YOUNG CARERS

We offer help and support for children and young people (from 5 to 15 years old) who care for someone in their family who has an illness or disability.

Our regular club nights give young Carers the chance to meet other young Carers and realise that they are not alone. Each week we involve them in different activities including crafts, team games, board games and sporting activities. We also offer more practical support and guidance such as school liaison, First Aid and cookery.

We take young Carers on amazing trips and fun-filled days out and have visited places such as Chessington World of Adventures, Joss Bay, London theatres, Colchester Zoo and many more.

Our young Carers are a source of inspiration to us all.

COGS CLUBS

Crossroads runs COGS clubs in Maidstone, Northfleet and Tunbridge Wells for those with mild to moderate dementia.

Activities at these clubs are based on the principles of Cognitive Stimulation and encourage members to participate in purposeful stimulating activity, music, games, puzzles and fun. The clubs also give Carers five hours of respite.

COGS clubs have been shown to increase wellbeing and improve or at least maintain cognition for people living with dementia.



Crossroads Care Kent – Our CEO and Services Director met with Helen Whately MP, then Minister of State for Social Care, to share our thoughts and concerns about the future of Carers' breaks in Kent.

“My wife, Mary, would like to give some feedback about Tina, her Carer Support Worker who visits her every Tuesday afternoon.

Tina is a very jolly person who makes Mary laugh, is sympathetic, listens to her, gives encouragement when needed and is a very personable and loving Carer to her. She is greatly loved by both of us and Tuesdays can't come around soon enough. Tina is a real asset to Crossroads Care Kent and will hopefully be so for a long time to come.

I would also like to thank Crossroads for arranging to be with Mary when I have had several recent hospital appointments. It really is a tremendous service. Thank you so much.

Colin, who is the husband and Carer for Mary.

CAMPAIGNING FOR CARERS

As well as having a duty of care and support to the Carers and their dependents who we work with we also make sure that their voice is heard by key influencers and decision makers in the public sector, the NHS, Clinical Commissioning Groups and our core funders and supporters.

We are campaigning to ensure the continued provision of breaks for unpaid Carers. Having supported Carers across Kent since 1982, we know how vital these breaks are in ensuring carers don't burn out. The messages of our campaign are clear:

❖ **Breaks need to be regular**

Caring can be round the clock for many years. An occasional break or a couple of hours a week for a few weeks isn't enough.

❖ **Carers should be able to choose what to do on their breaks.**

They shouldn't be limited to having to take part in particular activities.

❖ **For a carer to get a break, excellent replacement care is needed**

People with dementia or complex disabilities need people they know and trust coming in to look after them. If that doesn't happen, carers can't take a break.

❖ **Carers know when they need a break**

Carers don't need to wait weeks for an assessment to tell them they need a break. If they say they need breaks, and a health or care professional agrees with them, they should get them.

❖ **Carers also need help in a crisis or to go to their own health appointments.**

Carers often become unable to keep on caring when there's an unexpected crisis or they become unwell themselves. Giving them the help they need will mean they can carry on caring.

❖ **Carers need special help when the person they care for is dying.**

This means they can spend the time they have left with the person they care for, instead of worrying about care.



Crossroads Care Kent – Unrivalled response to COVID 19

Our organisation remained open for business throughout the COVID pandemic at a time when other community services were suspended because we saw first-hand the increased pressure the pandemic placed on Carers. Referrals for our services increased significantly and there can be no doubt that the role of Carers became increasingly difficult as vital support networks were not available and they were isolated from family and friends.

Despite confusing government guidelines, the challenges of access to PPE and uncertainty over COVID infection and transmission our teams adapted services to ensure continued, vital home support that included crisis and emergency support, vital medicine collection and delivery to those who were shielding, transport for Carer health appointments, grocery shopping and regular online interventions.

David from Ashford

“During COVID you were the only people there to support us. Without Crossroads we would have been in real trouble”.

A VERY POSITIVE IMPACT

Crossroads Care Kent takes the strain

CARERS

We know from the feedback we receive the positive impact our range of services have on family Carers and Young Carers.

“Crossroads Care Kent has been a lifesaver for me. Without them I would never get a break from my husband.” Mrs J. Jones, Ashford.

“Trips (organised and paid for by Crossroads Care Kent) have really benefitted me because it has given me the chance to spend some time away from the stresses of home and to give me the opportunity to experience new things like paddle boarding. It also gives me the chance to socialise with other people in my situation. It has built up my confidence and self-esteem.”

James – Young Carer

FAMILIES

Whilst the primary Carer must face the day-to-day challenges of looking after a loved one, it often falls on other family members to give added support. We work with and offer support to extended families.

Ann was struggling with her everyday care due to her breathlessness. Her daughter Suzanne lives next door and was feeling the strain of looking after her.

Ann was unable to get up the stairs to the bathroom. Suzanne was having to work from 5am till 2.30pm and then visit her Mum to check if she had food, drinking and medication and as a result she was burnt out and under a lot of strain.

Suzanne had contacted an overstretched Social Services team but was told it may be some time before they could organise any support.

On being referred to Crossroads Care Kent we were able to give her access to 4 weeks support as the Social Services backlog was cleared.

THE KENT AND MEDWAY NHS and CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUPS

With Health Services under increased pressure, we provide vital support and important savings which are recognised, through funding by The NHS in Kent and Medway and their Clinical Commissioning Groups. This funding and the associated savings in both time and money covers critical support areas such as:



You have supported our family for years. First my Dad and now my Mum. You do it all with such good grace, charm and efficiency, and it is hugely appreciated. I don't know what we would do without Crossroads Care Kent

Being a Carer can be physically and emotionally challenging, and it's important you have the opportunity to take a break from your caring role.

There are lots of ways you can take what we call a 'short break' from caring. This could be for a few hours, overnight, a weekend or longer. The person you care for will be looked after in a supportive, safe environment ... while you take some time for yourself.

Crossroads Care can provide you with a break from caring if you are providing care or support to a family member or friend who is ill, elderly or has a physical or learning disability who can't manage without your support.



- Ensuring Health appointments are met and in many cases transport supplied. This includes supporting hospital discharge services.
- Ensuring that our Crisis Management team can operate 24/7, offering practical assistance that will prevent the breakdown of a caring situation that might otherwise lead to a hospital or care home admission
- Ensuring where possible that a patient can be discharged back to their home, alleviating the pressures of bed clogging in hospitals and benefitting from support from our trained and vetted Care Support Workers.

CARE HOMES AND RESPITE CARE IN CARE HOMES

For Care givers and their families, the stress and the cost of placing a loved one into a Care Home, even for a period of respite is extremely difficult and, in some cases, just not possible.

Residential Care Homes and those that also offer dementia capabilities are increasingly stretched as costs of care spiral and recruitment difficulties escalate.

Professor Martin Green, chief executive of the English Community Care Association has said that "Recent research has proved that the numbers of care providers going into insolvency has increased significantly. This creates not only a crisis for the people who are currently in those care services, but also takes capacity out of a system, which will be significantly stretched in the future."

Services offered by Crossroads Care Kent provide a seriously compelling solution to the needs of loved ones being placed in care and for them to remain, supported by us at home.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Crossroads Care Kent offers replacement care for more than 800 care dependents every week. We know from Carers that we work with that, in many cases, this support is the difference between their dependent remaining at home or having to go into hospital or long-term care.

Figures from the Department of Health suggest that the cost of an NHS hospital bed could be up to £400 per night and the price of the average care home bed, offering multi-purpose and high-needs intervention, is around £140 per night.

The evidence supports our view that many hospital or care home admissions could be avoided and the person needing support could be helped within their own homes, with the right package of care and of course the savings are there for all to see.



Being a volunteer is a journey that has enabled me to meet lots of lovely people, like Victoria, who I have been able to support. I love helping people find some peace through their challenging journey, It is a two-way relationship and no words can fully express the compassion, love and understanding developed.

Julie, Crossroads volunteer.



I have been volunteering for just over 5 years and enjoy it as much today as I did when I started. I have had some challenging placements that I have needed to work closely with the office team in order to support my client in the best way and to remain emotionally safe. I never feel that I have a "silly question"; they are so supportive and offer me what I need to carry on. I get offers of training, get included in celebrations and feel valued in my role. My volunteering experiences gave me the push I needed to sign myself up to a counselling course. When I qualify, I will give my time to offer therapy as part of the Crossroads offer.

Mrs J.

In fact, all of our services are designed to relieve pressure on Social Services. Sadly, austerity measures have overtaken logical thinking and the fallout could be the ability to provide excellent care resources and support to Carers as they would like to be supported.

VOLUNTEERS

Our amazing volunteers provide help and support for family Carers of all ages across Kent and Medway. All volunteers receive detailed, ongoing support and training to equip them with the skills and knowledge needed to be happy and confident as a volunteer.

Here are a few of the volunteer interventions:

- Offer a listening ear or just be there for someone who needs to talk.
- Make someone's day by doing some light housework or gardening.
- Make a big difference by helping with a little bit of shopping or cooking,
- Support someone to get to their healthcare appointment.
- Help signpost someone to other helpful organisations.

OUR STAFF

The impact that our brilliant team has on the Carers we support is inspirational. Our teams operate to very high levels of dedication, skill, compassion and perseverance and we do attract some unbelievable feedback from our clients as evidenced within this report.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The move away from Clinical Commissioning Groups and uncertainty around replacement funding and indeed serious concerns about our block contract funding from Kent County Council makes looking at how we maintain and grow our business into the future very difficult.

We sincerely hope that our various funders see sense in those services that we have offered so effectively over the last 40 years that have been a lifeline to Carers across Kent and Medway.

That having been said we do have serious ambitions to:

Leading the Volunteer service at Crossroads gives me a huge sense of purpose as I know from 9 years' experience what a difference we make to Carers and people living with cancer.

Truly understanding the complex support needs by listening and responding carefully and compassionately, means we can positively affect the outcomes for treatment for cancer/health conditions, whether that is for the person with care needs or their unpaid Carer.

Providing high quality volunteer help, information, guidance, and support when it is needed the most can turn a bad day into a good day, *"my volunteer brings joy into my dark life, the fact she visits me because she wants to and not because she is being paid to makes me realise that I am worthy, and I have something to say that isn't about treatment or my caring role"*.

The service helps Volunteers too by providing rewarding, safe and satisfying voluntary work, through training, being part of a wonderful team, quality contact with our clients as well as references for further education or for a work application.

"I feel humbled to have had the chance to support a Carer as a volunteer. I think about time in a different way now and will try not to take the space and time I have for myself for granted. Your reference as part of my Uni application has helped me stand out from other students and I am grateful for the opportunity you have given me".

Marnie – Volunteer Lead at Crossroads Care Kent

- Secure mainstream funding that will keep us in business and able to operate at the levels we currently do.
- Maintain, develop and expand our services in line with what Carers tell us they need to feel supported and able to continue in their caring role.
- Secure tenders for Carers services: A critical aspect of our business plan is to ensure that we are well placed to compete in tender processes.
- Promote the needs and challenges faced by unpaid Carers in Kent and Medway and be a voice for them.
- Develop further volunteering opportunities across Kent, both within our partnership with Macmillan and to provide volunteer services for Carers and people with care needs, which are flexible and meet their needs and those of our funders.
- Secure the highest possible level of support for new Carers.
- Increase income: Proactively seek alternative fundraising sources
- Encourage and further develop our volunteers and staff through on-going training and support.

IN CONCLUSION – FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The future of Crossroads Care Kent hangs in the balance and rests in the hands of Kent County Council Councillors and commissioners. We ask that the needs of those Carers with the heaviest caring roles are given priority in commissioning intentions. They contribute the most in reducing pressure and cost on the already stretched health economy; their caring role has a huge impact on their lives and yet they ask so little in the way of support.

Kent County Council Wellbeing Strategy for Carers plans to dilute precious funding by targeting those Carers with a lighter caring role and providing them with access to activities and hobbies. Our plea to the Council is please **THINK AGAIN**. Please do not abandon Carers with the heaviest caring role.

Crossroads Care Kent's short breaks model of support has proven impact; demonstrates great value and has stood the test of time with 40 years of supporting Kent's Carers.

It's a well-loved local charity which beat fierce competition to be named Kent Care Charity of the Year, a title we are hugely proud of.

Carers with the heaviest caring roles are some of the most vulnerable in our society, together let's deliver support we can all be proud of.



Irene Jeffrey CEO



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