

Section 6

Kingston Carers' Network

Caring for Carers

Kingston Carers' Network is a local registered charity, providing independent information, support and advice to people who care for someone living in the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames.

Kingston Carers' Network mission is to:

- listen to carers;
- provide independent information to carers, whether they choose to continue to care or want to give up their caring role;
- ensure that the role and expertise of carers is understood and valued locally;
- provide input into local service planning to ensure appropriate services are available to carers;
- promote carer involvement in service planning;
- ensure that carers are aware of their rights and entitlements;
- reduce the social isolation and exclusion experienced by many carers;
- raise awareness of carers' rights.

Who is a Carer?

A carer looks after someone living in the borough who cannot manage without that help and are not paid for the care they provide.

Carers' needs

There are about 12,500 carers in the borough and many experience loneliness and stress, as well as physical and mental exhaustion. Unless carers receive the right services they often cannot continue to care. Kingston Carers' Network can help carers to find out about and get the support they need.

Help for carers

Kingston Carers' Network can help by:

- listening to carers when they need to talk;
- providing information in a "Carer's Pack" and sending out a quarterly newsletter;
- offering one-to-one support to carers to ensure they are receiving their benefit entitlements and appropriate services;
- running support groups for carers;
- consulting with and ensuring that carers' needs are brought to the attention of those who plan and provide services to those in need in the borough.

Kingston Carers' Network provides information on:

- help available to enable carers to go on caring;
- opportunities for carers to have a break from a few hours to a holiday;
- financial matters such as benefits, allowances and sources of funding available to carers and their families;
- organisations and groups that offer support and advice on specific illnesses and conditions;
- mobility and transport issues for carers;
- educational and work opportunities for carers.

Kingston Carers' Network offers help to anyone caring for someone in the borough, regardless of their age and the circumstance of the person they care for.

Carers can be young people still at school (please see Section 15 for information for young carers), people who are working full or part-time, parents of disabled children or young adults, or older people caring for partners, family members or friends.

For more information about what is available for carers in the Royal Borough of Kingston, contact:

Kingston Carers' Network

Telephone: 020 8547 1614

Email: admin@kingstoncarers.org.uk

Website: www.kingstoncarers.org.uk

The office is usually open Monday to Friday, from 9am until 4.45pm. At other times there is an answer phone. All calls will be responded to within 1 working day.

Kingston Carers' Network is funded by the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames, the Kingston Primary Care Trust, the Big Lottery, the Children's Fund, other trusts and voluntary donations.

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