

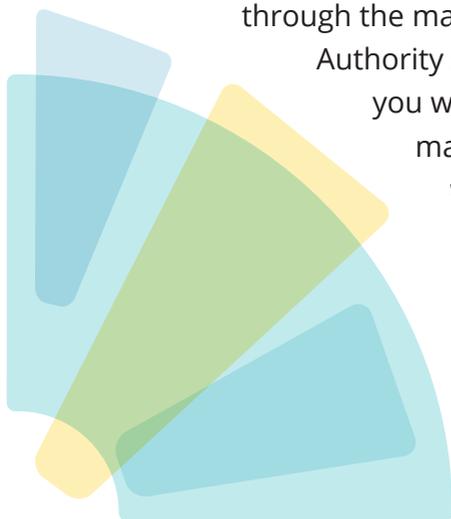


## INTRODUCTION

**Being a carer** isn't always easy, in fact, although it can be one of the most rewarding, it can also be one of the most difficult, tiring and stressful times in anyone's life. That's why getting the right support at the right time is so important; because one of the most difficult challenges is doing it all by yourself. Any one of us can become a carer at any time and it can mean making life-changing decisions, juggling work and family commitments.

The Borders Carers Centre is here to help – we understand what it is like to take on caring responsibilities and over the years have developed a wide range of services to help ease the process and support carers. We hope these help you to find a way through the maze of benefits, NHS and Local Authority services available and provide you with the necessary support to maintain your own health and well-being.

Detailed here you will find information about the support you can access through the Carers Centre.



## Join a group

Joining a local carers' support group can be a way of getting both practical and emotional support. Other carers are often a great source of knowledge and expertise. No matter what you are struggling with there will usually be someone who has been through the same thing and can understand how you feel.



**The Borders Carers Centre runs Carers' Support Groups throughout the Borders.**

### ■ Central Borders

The Borders Carers Centre,  
Brewerybrig, Low Buckholmside, Galashiels TD1 1RT  
1.30pm – 3pm. Third Wednesday of each month.

### ■ Kelso

Poynder View, Kelso Hospital, Inch Road, Kelso TD5 7JP  
11am – 12.30pm. First Monday of each month.

### ■ Eyemouth

Eyemouth Health Centre, Houndlaw Park, Eyemouth TD14 5DD  
2pm – 3.30pm. First Friday of each month

### ■ Hawick

Hawick Community Hospital, Victoria Road, Hawick TD9 7AH  
10am – 11.30am. Second Tuesday of each month.

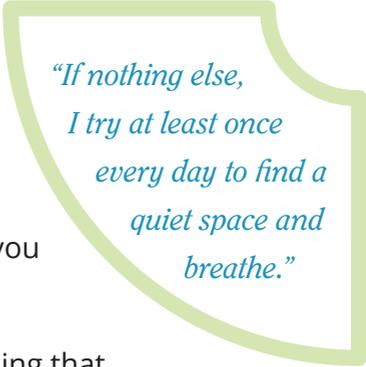
### ■ Tweeddale

The Volunteer Resource Centre, Peebles EH45 8AL  
10.30am – 12pm. First Tuesday of each month.

Please check with the Carers Centre to confirm dates and times as these are subject to change.

## **Taking time out for yourself**

Remember when you had time to meet people, go to the cinema, or do whatever it was you used to enjoy doing?



*“If nothing else,  
I try at least once  
every day to find a  
quiet space and  
breathe.”*

Leisure time is often the first thing that disappears for carers, and the last thing they have time for, and yet it is one of the best stress relievers.

If possible, try to take some ‘time out’ each day, even if it’s just for twenty minutes. This can be something quite simple like reading a book or taking a bath, the important thing is that it’s time for you and that you give yourself permission to get out the “do not disturb “ sign.

Carers can apply to the Borders Carers Centre’s “Time to Live” fund for grants to cover short breaks including leisure activities or a series of short weekly breaks. Contact the Carers Centre to see if you are eligible.

## **Relationships**

Carers often say that one of the most difficult things to accept is that their relationship with the person they care for has changed. The Borders Carers Centre runs workshops on dealing with changing relationships, as well as emotional and on going support to help you cope with the ever changing world of caring.

## Getting enough sleep

Most of us need around 7 to 8 hours sleep a night, less as we get older. If your sleep is often disturbed think about having a 5 to 20 minute catnap during the day to recharge your batteries. But remember that a nap of more than 30 minutes can make you feel groggy so don't sleep too long! If you are consistently being disturbed at night, this is a good indicator that you may need extra help.

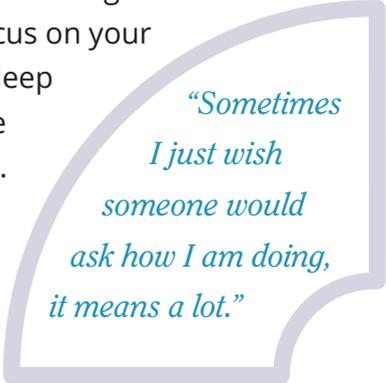
## Think about your diet

If we are giving our bodies plenty of fuel in the form of nourishing food and drink (including fresh fruit and vegetables) and monitoring our caffeine and alcohol intake then generally we find that our 'engine' will run better. The healthier we are, the more easily we can cope with the demands of caring.

## Remember to breathe!

A simple technique to use when things are getting on top of you is to focus on your breathing. Take three slow, deep breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth.

Practice this next time you are in a queue or on a bus and notice the calming effect it has.



*“Sometimes  
I just wish  
someone would  
ask how I am doing,  
it means a lot.”*

*"I found it really hard to move on. My days were no longer filled with structure and people coming in and out, and I suddenly had time on my hands. Going to the groups really helped."*

## **Moving on and letting go**

Moving forward first involves letting go of something, the old life that you had before you became a carer and maybe some of your hopes and dreams for the future.

Sometimes we feel hopeless and stuck, not believing that anything will ever change for the better. We need to acknowledge what we have lost and accept that, before we can think to the future and begin to allow ourselves to create new plans. The Borders Carers runs workshops on dealing with loss and change as well as support to help you move on.

## **Carers workshops**

The Centre runs a series of workshops throughout the year on a wide variety of topics, details are available by calling the Carers Centre or going to our website at [www.borderscarerscentre.co.uk/carers-workshops.html](http://www.borderscarerscentre.co.uk/carers-workshops.html)

## **Moving and Handling**

The Carers Centre offers personalised moving and handling training in your own home. You will receive one-to-one guidance and advice about manual handling and using equipment in your own home from an experienced trainer. To access this contact the Carers Centre on 01896 752431.

## **One-to-one advice and information**

The Carers Centre can provide you with someone to talk to or give you advice and information relating to your role as a carer, we are here to support you.

## **Carers Support Plans**

The Carers Centre will help you set up a plan that will help to support you in your caring role, this may include regular breaks, emergency planning or access to other forms of support for you.

We also have the following factsheets and help guides available –

- ▶ A – Z of children’s services
- ▶ A – Z who’s who in adult services
- ▶ Anger management help guide
- ▶ Assertiveness help guide
- ▶ Caring for someone with an addiction help guide
- ▶ Coping with loss and change help guide
- ▶ Dealing with emergencies
- ▶ Financial assistance
- ▶ Going into hospital
- ▶ Information for young adult carers
- ▶ Information for young carers
- ▶ Legal matters
- ▶ Respite/short breaks for carers
- ▶ Support for children and families

- ▶ Support services
- ▶ Transport
- ▶ Useful contacts

You can download our factsheets and help guides from [www.borderscarerscentre.co.uk](http://www.borderscarerscentre.co.uk) or telephone 01896 752431.

If any further information is required, please contact us directly. Please note: this information will be regularly reviewed and updated. If there is anything you'd like to see reviewed, please contact us.





# Borders Carers Centre (SCIO)

*Supporting carers throughout the Borders*

Brewerybrig Low Buckholmside, Galashiels TD1 1RT

phone: 01896 752431

[www.borderscarerscentre.co.uk](http://www.borderscarerscentre.co.uk)

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