

Young Carers Events – Update and Progress Report

Richard Rogers, Strategic Engagement and Partnership Manager

1. Introduction

Young carers and young adult carers (18 to 25) all too often spend significant amounts of time caring for a relative in addition to the time they need to spend on education, work and time for themselves. Coronavirus has significantly increased those pressures with evidence showing a steep decline for many of them in their mental health and wellbeing. Additionally, two thirds of young carers are feeling more stressed and less connected since Coronavirus.¹

Melksham Area Board has recognised this and the vital role that these young people play in our community. As a result, the board is keen to express their appreciation and support the running of some additional activities for them.

Youth Action Wiltshire, who are commissioned by Carers Support to provide activities for young carers, were approached and they agreed to take on this project.

This is the first time that an Area Board has requested to be linked to this vital support and offered its help.

2. What will take place?

It is proposed that 2 separate events should take place for different age groups as experience has shown that it is extremely difficult to just do 1 event for a wide age range. They will also need to be held outside of school holidays as there is already ample provision during these times.

- I. A primary school age event lasting for at about 4 hours on a Saturday at Melksham Campus
- II. A secondary school age event to be held on a weekday evening at the campus

The above two events will be completely run and organised by Youth Action Wiltshire. They will undertake a three week consultation with all known young carers to ensure that what is provided is what they want and is not duplicating other provision. Transport will be provided for anyone who needs it.

3. How many young carers are there?

There are currently 52 open young carer cases in Melksham Community Area. 25 are of secondary school age and 27 of primary school age.

Not all young carers will wish to or be able to attend. If there are any free spaces left, they will be offered to other young carers in close geographic proximity

¹ “Our survey on the impact of Coronavirus on young carers and young adult carers” – Carers Trust 2021

4. What is the time frame?

The events will be held during January/ February 2023. The key tasks and timeframe can be seen below:

Task	target date	Who	Comments
Consultation with young carers regarding content of provision	Completed by 7 th Oct 22	Youth Action Wiltshire	3 week consultation starting mid September
Discussions with Carer Support regarding young adult carers provision	Completed by end Sep 2022	SEPM	If agreed by the Area Board and Carer Support to hold an event, some additional tasks may be required
Book venues	Completed by 14 th Oct 2022	Youth Action Wiltshire	SEPM has obtained support of Campus Manager. What facilities are to be booked depends upon activities required and the dates depend upon availability
Programme put in place	Completed by 8 th Nov 2022	Youth Action Wiltshire	There is a menu of readily available provision
Budgets and funding finalised	Completed by end Nov 2022	SEPM	In conjunction with the Area Board
Arrange suitable gifts for the carers	By end of 2022	Melksham Area Board	Possible options to be investigated, discussed and agreed
Formal invitation and bookings for young carers	November onwards	Youth Action Wiltshire	Informally the young carers will know that the events are happening
Staff and volunteers assigned and checks undertaken	From Oct to end of 2022	Youth Action Wiltshire	Indications are that it will be one or two staff members per event plus a couple of volunteers.

5. What funding is required?

Melksham Area Board have accrued £5,500 to support this project.

Youth Action Wiltshire have their own funding to provide these types of activities and will therefore not require too much additional money from the Area Board to run these events. A contribution for the following will be requested:

- Cost of hiring the campus rooms
- Some additional staff time to carry out the administration of this project

Some funding will also be required to run the young adult carers event if agreed and any gifts that the board wishes to offer.

6. Support for young adult carers

There are approximately 20 young adult carers aged 16-25 registered in the Melksham Community area. There is some cross over with Youth Action Wiltshire for those aged 16-18 as they are also receiving support to transition into adult caring.

The Strategic Engagement and Partnership Manager (SEPM) is discussing with Carer Support whether a separate activity for young adult carers can be organised particularly as this age range seem to have been affected the most by coronavirus. As the “cost of Living” takes effect, it is likely that for many of them, anything classed as a luxury will quickly disappear.

The proposal is that the Melksham Area Board uses some of its funding to show its appreciation for what they do by paying for them to have a ‘luxury’. This could be one of many things such as going to an escape room or being taken out for dinner. They may like to do this activity with the person they care for as the opportunity to do something fun and special together seldom arises. If this proposal is agreed, then Carer Support will discuss this with the carers and see what they would prefer. The cost should be less than £1k

Young Carers Action Day is on March 16th 2023 and normally there is no funding to do an activity for the carers. Holding it on or near this date would be wonderful for the carers but also raise awareness and provide additional publicity.

7. What will be the involvement of the Area Board?

The organisation and running of the events will be carried out entirely by Youth Action Wiltshire and if the young adult carer event is agreed, Carer Support. Melksham Area Board will offer its support mainly through the provision of funding where required as well as helping raise the awareness and profile of the events

The area board has indicated that it would like to offer a gift to the young carers attending. Some of the suggestions so far have included:

- Helping with leisure centre membership for 3 months. Currently only adult carers get a concession and not those under 18. This is being looked at within Wiltshire Council
- Cinema membership / tickets
- Discounts at local stores subject to business agreement.
- Jus Eat Vouchers

This would all need to be looked at in relation to the cost, demand and availability

8. Recommendations

The Area Board is asked to

- I. Note and approve the running of the 2 young carers events as outlined in this report
- II. Agree to the provision of an event for young adult carers as outlined in this report