Annual Activity Report
April 2025-March 2026

This report aims to give you an idea of how the Carers Centre meets its outcomes through the services we deliver to Carers. We hope you will find it interesting and that it gives you at least a glimpse into who uses the service and how Carers are supported.

CHIEF OFFICERS REPORT

As we move towards the 30th anniversary of the Carers Centre it is hard to believe that the service has been in D&G for all that time – it will be so nice to move into the year 2026-27 and start to really reflect on that time and hear from Carers that have used us – some for all of those 30 years.

The year 2025-2026 has yet again been a busy year with over 2200 Carers and Young Carers accessing the service over that time. 46% of those Carers were newly registered in the reporting year and we have seen a 32% increase in the number of Young Carers registering with the service in comparison to last year. This has been managed amazingly by the Young Carers staff team who weren't at their full complement throughout the year.

The demands placed on Carers continues and the increases in stress and pressure that staff report Carers experiencing is not easy to see but cannot and should not be ignored. It is important that as an organisation we are reporting this to the planners, commissioners and decision makers both locally and nationally. This forms part of the work we do as well as providing direct support to the Carers that use the service. We have welcomed this year recruitment to the Carers representative's post on the Integration Joint Board which had been vacant for a while and together with the other local Carers Services Provider organisations we will provide feedback and comments on the issues that the IJB deal with to ensure Carers voices are heard.

Last year this report highlighted the lack of care at home and respite services that was impacting negatively on Carers and the times they had to wait to access these support services. This year has seen a shift where we are now seeing Carers having to wait for care at home and respite as a result of restrictions on Social Work budgets and unfortunately this will continue in the foreseeable future. Issues like these combined with cuts in education services, the increasing pressure on hospital services as well as the increasing cost of living means it is more crucial than ever that Carers have access to a service that makes ***them*** the focus, promotes their rights, health and wellbeing as well as their need for support. It feels there is a greater priority than ever to ensure there is access to financial wellbeing checks, grants that support emergency situations, can give Carers a break as well as somewhere that provides other 'time for you' opportunities highlighting the need for Carers to have a right to a break.

Despite the challenging times Carers face, this report should demonstrate the progress and positivity of the past year and highlights the positive impact of our work. None of this would be possible without the commitment and dedication of every member of staff, who consistently go above and beyond to support Carers and Young Carers. It is also important to acknowledge our volunteers and Board members, whose time and guidance help us deliver the services we provide. The collective efforts of us all make this an enjoyable and positive place to work and gives us a platform to ensure that the Carers Agenda remains visible, valued and championed where it matters most.

As we enter the year of the Carers Centre's 30th Anniversary we are looking forward to reflecting and reminiscing about where we have been and all we have achieved over that time. The fact that many staff and Board members have been here for all, or nearly all, of that time as well is testament to how committed and passionate people are about the organisation and about making a difference to the Carers that we support.

The theme of our 30th Year is Looking Back ~ Moving Forward and this report will be presented at the AGM marking the start of many activities in celebration of the organisation. We look forward to seeing you at one of these.

Claudine Brindle

Chief Officer

How is the Service Provided?

The Carers Centre is commissioned and supported by the Integration Joint Board to provide an information, advice and support service to Carers. We are also supported by Shared Care Scotland to provide a Short Breaks service to Carers and the Holywood Trust who continues to support the Young Carers Project. Various other funding is sourced throughout the year to ensure that the service continues to be viable.

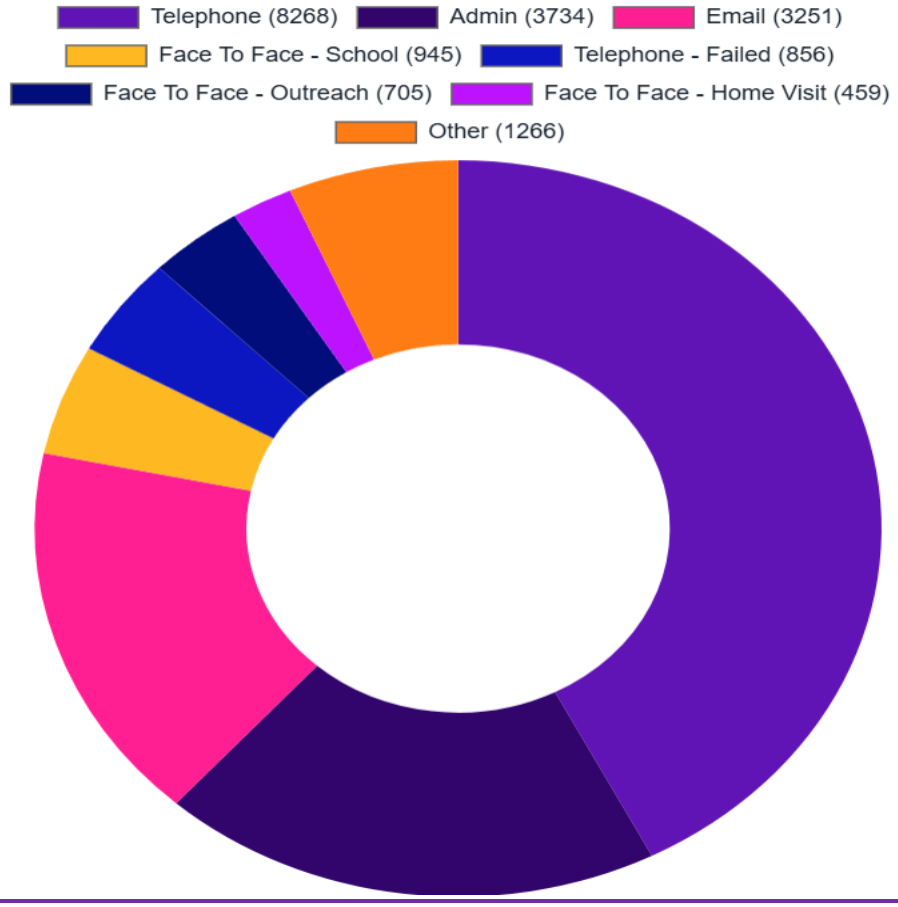
The service is provided by 24 staff and 4 volunteers and is governed by a voluntary Management Board of Trustees 50% of whom must be Carers or ex-Carers. This year we have had 9 active members of the Board who meet regularly.

Staffing Developments

This year we have seen 2 members of staff join us in the Young Carers Team, Paul and Chloe while Emma and Jordan moved on to new things. We also saw the departure of 2 long standing staff members who have been part of the history of the Carers Centre. Kirsty Paton retired from the Young Carers service after working with us in Wigtownshire for 20 years. Gillian Corbett retired from the service where she had worked delivering short break and training opportunities for Carers over 23 years. We will miss them both and the contributions they made.

How is One to One Support Provided?

The following diagram shows the many ways in which the service has provided one to one support to Carers over the last year. If we had been able to produce this report over the years it would have been interesting to see how this would have changed. Telephone support has definitely increased due to the higher number of Carers we are now supporting.



19483 one to one support contacts were made with Carers.

This amounts to **5802** hours of support

42% of one to one support provided on the telephone

14% of support was face to face offering 2680 appointments

NUMBER OF CARERS SUPPORTED

The following table shows the number of new Carers who have accessed the service, alongside those who have returned to use the service, compared with the previous two years. This year's figures demonstrate a sustained level of engagement across both the Adult Carers and Young Carers projects. Despite ongoing demand, staff remain committed to delivering a robust and valuable service, and the positive feedback received from Carers reflects the quality and impact of the support provided.

	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
New Adult Carers	**766**	**1027**	**802**
Returning Adult Carers	**1100**	**1074**	**812**
New Young Carers*	**143**	**193**	**197**
Returning Young Carers*	**223**	**268**	**396**
Total	**2232**	**2562**	**2207**

**includes Young Adult Carers (18-25)*

There has been a significant number of new Young Carers registering with the service over this reporting period. The number of new Adult Carers registering has reduced this year, but we continue to see a significant number of Carers returning to access support. This demonstrates the increasing need for vital support which allows Carers to sustain their caring role.

ADULT CARERS

New Adult Carers by Locality	%
Dumfries	40%
Upper Nithsdale	8%
Annandale & Eskdale	22%
Stewartry	15%
Wigtownshire	14%
Out of Area	1%

These contacts include face to face meetings, home visits, telephone and video calls, support at professional meetings and email support.

103 Adult groups, 88 Young Carers and 10 Young Adult Carer groups offering over 2000 places at these groups.

ADULT CARER SUPPORT PLANS

202 ACSPs have been completed this year. 60% of these were for Female Carers with 40% being completed with Male Carers

"You have been great and have provided us with more support than anyone else we have been in contact with."

"My husband is now receiving end of life care – you definitely went above and beyond for me and I will be eternally grateful."

"You have been my rock. Always had my back. I knew that I could phone you anytme. You don't know just how much that has meant to me. I am so grateful for your support."

"Thank you so much for helping complete my ACSP. I think we have achieved something and have been tremendously thorough. I feel so reassured now that it has all been recorded and well expressed."

"We have received 20 respite nights as a result of completing the Adult Carer Support Plan. Thank you for all your help"

Carers Health & Wellbeing

Supporting Carers to maintain their own health and wellbeing is essential if they are to continue in their caring role. We actively encourage Carers to make time for themselves, however brief, recognising the positive impact that even small moments of respite can have on overall wellbeing.

Following feedback we reviewed and adjusted the timing of our regular groups to make them more accessible and inclusive. These changes have enabled more Carers to participate who may previously have been unable to attend. Our monthly Cuppa & Catch Up groups continue to be highly valued, providing opportunities for Carers to connect with others who understand the realities of caring, receive support from staff, and discuss any concerns in a welcoming and informal environment. Importantly, Carers can benefit simply from being in the company of others with shared experiences, without feeling any pressure to share their own story or circumstances. Bringing Carers together remains a vital part of our work. These opportunities help reduce feelings of isolation, strengthen peer support networks, and create meaningful friendships that can make a lasting difference to Carer wellbeing.

Belfast Day Trip – November 2025

"The Belfast trip was a wonderful way to take some time out and give us a mental break from the roles we have as Carers. It helped me refresh and reset and come back to my role with a better mindset. I feel it gave me and my husband valuable time together that we usually do not get due to our caring roles and helped us be more refreshed to manage our caring role"

"I really enjoyed the sound bath session. I was nervous going alone but everyone was so lovely. Thank you for organising. It made me feel relaxed and allowed me to forget about the stresses I am going through. I came away feeling more positive."

"Glasgow trip was a great day out and lunch at a beautiful Italian restaurant perfect day and great to meet new people.

This break offered through the Carers Centre was quiet refreshing. Staff were very understanding, treated every Carer with outmost professionalism. respite location was great and helped me unwind, relax and get to know other carers."

Online Craft Group

"I just wanted to let you know how fantastic the new craft has been for me this weekend. I had plans for every day of the long weekend, doing lots of fun things and meeting lots of people, along with my partner, and unfortunately everything had to be cancelled due to being very unwell. So, this afternoon I turned to my calligraphy set and started practicing writing and it made a huge difference and made me feel so much less alone because of the connection to everyone in the group"

YOUNG CARERS PROJECT



YOUNG CARERS &
YOUNG ADULT CARERS PROJECT



The Young Carers (YC) and Young Adult Carers (YAC) Project has continued to provide a range of personalised support through one-to-one sessions, group activities, and drop-ins within schools, colleges, and the community. All young people accessing the service are offered a Young Carer Statement or Adult Carer Support Plan where appropriate.

This year has seen an increase in referrals, particularly from Young Carers and Young Adult Carers seeking support with their mental health and wellbeing. Many have also required support to build confidence, improve self-esteem, reduce isolation, and access new experiences.

Balancing caring responsibilities with education, employment, and daily life can be challenging. Our team has provided tailored support, opportunities for respite, and ensured the voices of Young Carers and Young Adult Carers continue to be represented in local and national discussions.

The following highlights some of the activities and support delivered throughout the year.

Referrals & Young Carers Statements

	2024-2025	2025-2026
New YC Referrals	149	197
Returning YC	229	367
New YAC Referrals	22	21
Returning YAC	52	29
YC Statements	50	58

"Accessing support from Young Carers changed everything, for the first time I had finally met people who truly understood what life was like without me having to explain."

Holiday Activities

A variety of different activities were held during the Easter, Summer and October holidays giving Young Carers a break from their caring role and giving them access to new opportunities they hadn't tried before.

Activities included:

Trampoline Park
Bowling / Laser Tag / Escape Rooms
Glasgow Science Centre
Wetlands Centre – Caerlaverock
Bake Off
Autism Awareness Sessions
First Aid
Dalscone
Table Tennis
Art's/Crafts/ /Park Fun

School Drop-ins are a valued part of the support we offer to Young Carers. It is an opportunity to check-in with them in a school setting, teaching professionals are able to make referrals easily, and is a great example of partnership working. The work our Educational Officer has completed throughout the year with teaching staff has shown a commitment from schools ensuring the needs of pupils in a caring role are met.

School Drop In Attendance Figures

April – June	237
July – September	187
October – December	228
January - March	251

Education Mental Health & Wellbeing Fund

This is a fund where there is a demonstrated need for a Young Carer to apply for funding towards something that will help or improve their educational experience. We are aware of the financial constraints that families face due to the demands of caring and on some occasions Young Carers and Young Adult Carers need support to assist them to reach their full educational potential. This fund has awarded laptops, cameras, school clothing, school equipment, study desks, drumming lessons, fidget toys, digital printers and much more.

A total of £4784 was awarded to individuals this year.

Residentials

Two residential opportunities were delivered during the year, supporting 22 Young Carers to take a break from their caring responsibilities and focus on their own wellbeing. The residentials provided opportunities to socialise, develop confidence, participate in new activities, and create lasting memories. Staff from the project accompanied and supported Young Carers throughout each trip.

10 secondary-aged Young Carers attended the Scottish Young Carers Festival in Fife in August 2025, while twelve primary-aged Young Carers attended a residential weekend at Honey Pot House in New Cumnock in March 2026



Young Carers Action Day March 2026

'Fairer Futures for All'



Young Carers and Young Adult Carers recently visited **Edinburgh Zoo** to take part in a hustings event with MSPs, helping to raise awareness of the issues and barriers they face and ensuring their experiences are heard by decision makers.

Across the region, Young Carers participated in a group called **"Future Me Celebration Night."** The evening featured a range of activities designed to encourage reflection on their future aspirations while highlighting the importance of self-care and wellbeing throughout every stage of life.

Activities included pampering sessions, meditation, journaling, vision board creation, and discussions around positive aspirations. Participants also contributed to a **time capsule**, writing messages about their hopes for how services will support Young Carers and Young Adult Carers over the next 10 years. The event provided a valuable opportunity for young people to celebrate their achievements, focus on their ambitions, and recognise the importance of looking after themselves

Awareness Raising

Over the course of the year the following sessions have been delivered in partnership with Education:

Cluster Event/Sharing Practice/ Careers Event	4 Events
YPI Engagement Sessions	2 Groups
Assemblies to pupils	1 School
Probationers Teaching Training Session	1 (40+ attendees)
College Events	2 Events

Family Day

We had our annual family day at Mabie Farm Park, this was an opportunity for the whole family to have a day out, meet with people they know, form new friendships and connections, over 200 individuals attend this day.

ANOTHER BUSY YEAR FOR GRANT GIVING

Short breaks fund

£124,758 Awarded

The Time for You microgrant programme enabled Carers across Dumfries & Galloway to access personalised, meaningful short breaks that supported wellbeing, resilience, and connection. The flexibility of the fund empowered Carers to choose the type of break that would benefit them most, resulting in a diverse range of activities, experiences, and practical purchases.

This year, we have seen a significant rise in demand for support through the Short Breaks Fund. Applications reached an unprecedented level, with the number of grants awarded increasing by more than **38%** compared with the previous year.

- **389 awards were made this year.**
- **The average grant was £295, with the maximum being £500.**
- **542 Carers and 204 people they care for benefited from local funding this year**



Overnight breaks or day trips with the cared-for person
159 microgrants · 41.7%

Overnight breaks or day trips without the cared-for person
74 microgrants · 19.4%

Leisure or fitness activities
22 microgrants · 5.8% · Gym memberships, swimming sessions, fitness classes

Classes or lessons
37 microgrants · 9.7% · Evening classes, hobby or interest groups, driving lessons

Relaxation therapies
40 microgrants · 10.5% · Reiki, massage, mindfulness

Entertainment activities
3 microgrants · 0.8% · Cinema, theatre, meals out

Equipment purchases
46 microgrants · 12.1% · Digital devices, bikes, gaming equipment, household items

Other
8 microgrants – Bowling adaptations, Lego sets, DIY equipment

HOW I USED MY TIME FOR YOU GRANT

An RHS Level 2 gardening course (online) - When I became a carer for my mum, I had to give up my job and I felt that I lost my purpose. As time went on, I started doing the odd gardening job for my mum and some of her friends, which gave me a feeling of purpose and accomplishment again, and I realised it was something that was flexible and something I could work around my caring role. I saw the RHS course and that I could do this online in my spare time over 2 years and that it's something to up-skill me and fits around my caring role. I plan to go self-employed in the future and this course enables me to plan for the future. It has helped me realise that you can still have a purpose and do something for you, alongside your caring role. It's very easy to lose a bit of yourself when you are a Carer, especially If you've had to walk away from a career _ Caring is very focused around giving, but there's not a lot of time to do things for you and you can almost feel guilty for thinking about yourself. If this fund can enable carers to do something that's going to give them a bit of themselves back, even for a short time, then I I think it's really important. Thank you for being so flexible and offering the funding

SHORT BREAK VOUCHERS

Funding enabled smaller grants to be made to Carers in the form or a voucher – Carers described this as like receiving a gift that prioritised their wellbeing.

Short Break Vouchers	Number
Vouchers purchased	181
Number of Carers who benefited	334
Number of Cared for also benefiting	38

I went with my husband and daughter for an afternoon tea. We all care for my mother who has dementia. She lives with us in our cottage. The tea was amazing - scones and cream, cakes, sandwiches and even a tiny cup of soup and a mini–Eton mess. The staff were welcoming and very attentive. It really was a welcome and indulgent few hours' break. Thanks a lot, to you and the Carers' Centre for arranging it!

Respitality Donations continue

Respitality aims to encourage local businesses from across the hospitality & leisure sector to donate breaks of some kind which we then match with Carers. This year we have had £7,000 worth of donations providing lots of different breaks for Carers. From weddings and lodge breaks to ice hockey games; Carers have benefited from many different opportunities through this scheme.

One of our big donors this year was Lime Tree Cottage. They donated a full weeks self-catering break during the school summer holidays.

- **We kindly received donations from 10 local businesses.**
- **Donations were worth over £7,000**
- **Solway Sharks supported us for the third year.**

A Respitality Wedding

Dumfries and Galloway Life's 'Win a Wedding' prize took an unexpected turn recently, becoming the first ever Respitality wedding. The day came together through generosity, with friends, family, and local supporters all playing their part. Their kindness helped create long lasting memories and a wedding day to remember.

After winning the 'Win a Wedding' competition with Dumfries and Galloway Life, Heather chose to donate the prize through the Respitality programme via her local Dumfries and Galloway Carers Centre, giving a local unpaid Carer the chance to enjoy their dream wedding day. Many thanks to both Heather and Dumfries and Galloway Life for making it happen.



CARERS EMERGENCY FUND Over £24,000 Awarded

Many Carers and their families find themselves in a difficult financial position. The Emergency Fund exists to provide the Carer with monies for essential items or services that they cannot afford and where funding is unavailable elsewhere. This fund is supported by local Carers Strategy Funding.

In this financial year 78 applications were made to the fund and 9 were declined. The total amount awarded = £24,316



Help to purchase a tumble dryer

It helped massively as my children both have sensory issues. Drying their clothes in the dryer makes them softer than on the radiator. This can cause sensory overloads and lead to meltdowns which has been averted. I tried other avenues to acquire the money for the dryer before contacting the centre I called and asked them for information on other agencies that could possibly help me and they took control, explained how they could help, what the situation was etc and told me they could possibly help through the emergency fund . If it wasn't for the help I received, then I don't know what I would have done . A massive thank you

DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY Carers centre

This year the staff and board worked on updating the organisation's Vision, Mission and Values to make sure they were relevant to the work we do. These are below. Our annual survey (overpage) reviews how Carers feel they are supported and if this is in line with our Values, Mission and Values

VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

OUR VISION:
Carers of all ages in Dumfries and Galloway are recognised, valued, heard and supported.

OUR MISSION:
To challenge and raise awareness of the inequalities that Carers face and ensure that they have access to support and services that matter to them.

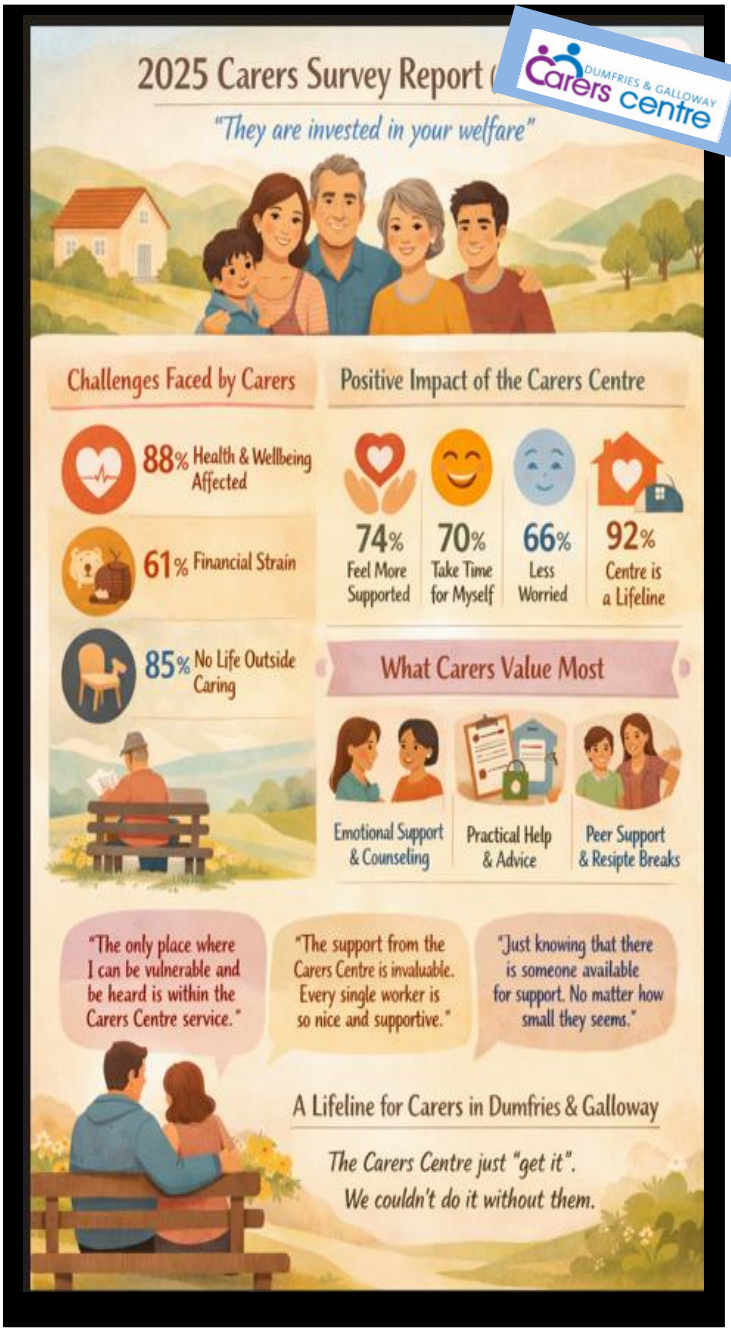
OUR VALUES:

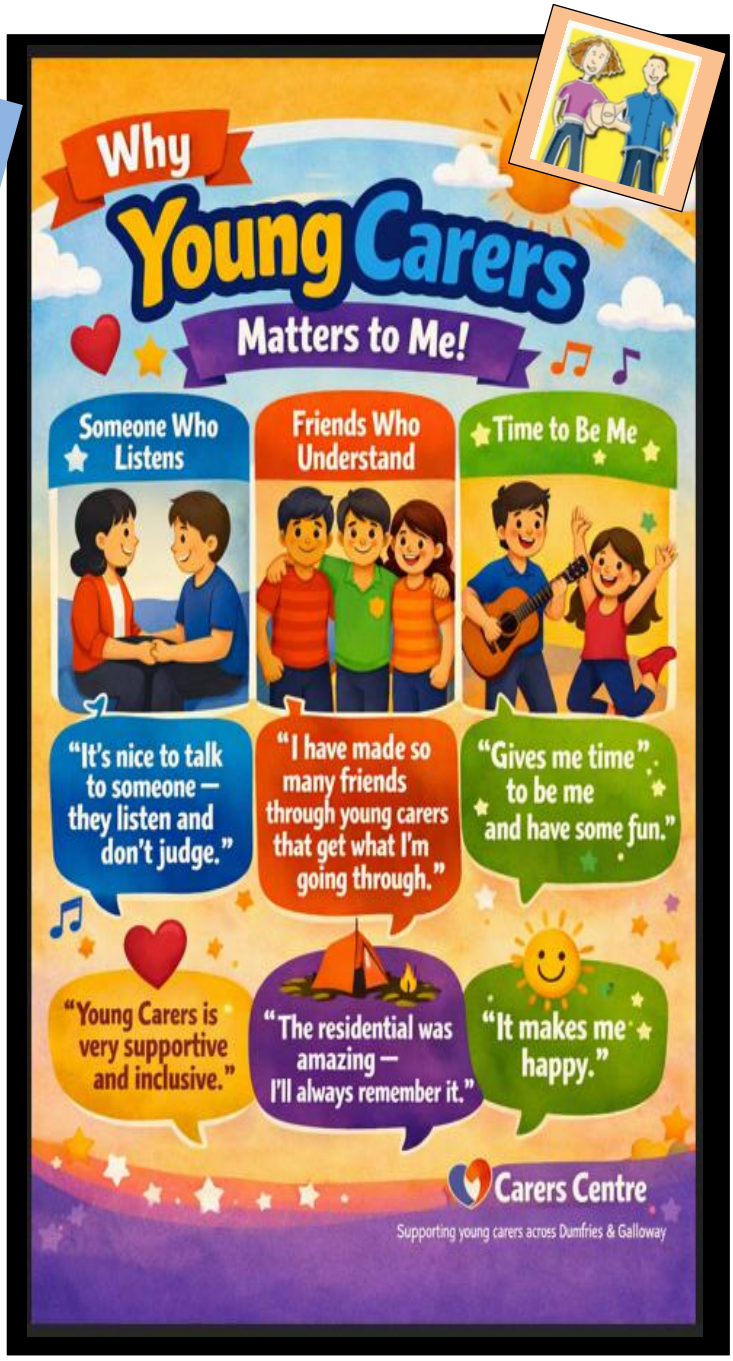
Inclusion - treating people as individuals equally and respectfully by actively ensuring our services are accessible.

Enablement- providing an open, honest and supportive service where people are encouraged to identify and develop their own solutions.

Relevance - developing and responding to the evolving needs of Carers of all ages

Excellence- striving for continuous improvement and best practice and being accountable to stakeholders.





Results from the Adult Carers survey demonstrated that the Centre is widely described as a **lifeline**, a **safe space**, and a **vital source of emotional, practical, and social support**. Staff are repeatedly praised for kindness, consistency, and genuine care.

✨ **Overall Message from YC survey**

The Young Carers Project is described as a **lifeline** — offering friendship, emotional relief, and recognition. It helps Young Carers feel **heard, connected, and confident**, giving them time to be themselves and opportunities to thrive.

The Carers Centre just "get it" our parenting journey was/is different to many families and that's ok. But I firmly believe we couldn't have coped as well mentally and physically without the assistance of the staff

I've been part of the Carers Centre originally since I was 7 years old where I joined as a Young Carer. I then came back as an Adult Carer and having been through both sides of the service they have consistently supported me through thick and thin. I'll be forever grateful and want others to feel this too.

Registered Name - Carers Centres Project for Dumfries & Galloway Limited Registered Address - 2-6 Nith Street, Dumfries, DG1 2PW Registered in Scotland - SC166447 Registered Scottish Charity No: SC024103 A Network Partner of Carers Trust Scotland