

Carers in East Sussex

Who is a Carer?

- A carer is someone who accepts the responsibility of providing long-term care and support for another individual who is frail, disabled, and/or has a long-term illness. This includes those who care for someone with a mental health diagnosis.
- The person receiving the care may be a relative, friend or even a neighbour.
- The carer gains no financial reward and may be almost any age but his/her own lifestyle and personal choices are limited by the over-riding duty of providing care.
- Carers often live with the person they care for but this is not always the case. In most caring situations the range and level of care and support will change and increase over time.
- Carers provide care because of the relationship they have with the recipient. Most do it willingly, but some feel they have no choice. The health of a carer is very vulnerable.

NB: The above definition excludes careworkers (often called carers) who are paid for the care they provide in residential or nursing homes or in the service user's own home. This definition also excludes parents, unless their child has a long-term illness or disability.

Some Facts and Figures *:

- East Sussex has a total of 50,993 unpaid carers.
- Carers represent 10.35% of the total population (492,324).
- Of those caring, approximately 30% have caring responsibilities over 20 hours per week and nearly 20% have caring responsibilities in excess of 50 hours per week.
- Hastings has 8,635 carers
- Eastbourne has 8,767 carers
- Lewes has 9,695 carers

- Wealden has 14,343 carers
- Rother has 9553 carers
- One third of all carers are aged over 60
- The likelihood of becoming a carer increases with age and the number of older carers is increasing
- The heaviest caring roles are most often undertaken by older carers, for longer hours per week, at a time when their own health and strength are more vulnerable
- More than 50% of older carers have their own long-term illness or disability
- Only one in ten of those who live with the person they care for are in receipt of home care
- One third have never had a break since they began caring
- Older carers are also one of the poorest groups in the UK
- Over two thirds of carers look after older people. However, they may care for a child or younger adult.
- 95% of disabled children are cared for at home by a parent.

* Facts and Figures taken from "Carers and Services for Carers in East Sussex", Health and Social Policy Research Centre – University of Brighton, 2006 (based on data collated from the 2001 Census) This is the most recent data available.

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