

CARERS NEWS

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Carers Money Matters

Carers Gateway North Ayrshire is encouraging unpaid carers across the region to access Carers Money Matters, a new programme offering free, practical support with finances, energy bills and household costs.

The programme is designed to help unpaid carers navigate the ongoing cost-of-living pressures, which continue to have a significant impact on carers' financial wellbeing. Carer Money Matters is supported by Carers Trust and aims to assist unpaid carers with financial advice and support. It is delivered by Carers Gateway North Ayrshire and funded by the gas distribution networks.

With access to advisors who can help carers with a wide range of issues, including:

- Maximising income through benefits, grants, financial support and managing and reducing debt by working with local organisations such as Money Smarts which is run through North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership.
- Practical advice to reduce energy usage and lower bills by working with Home Energy Scotland and Lemon Aid, based in Ardrossan.
- Support to access hardship funds and emergency assistance
- Help to register for the Priority Services Register, ensuring carers receive extra support from energy suppliers during outages or supply interruptions

The programme also offers financial resilience workshops, access to small emergency grants, and targeted support for carers from under-represented groups.

Speak to your Support Worker or contact Carers Gateway North Ayrshire

Top News

Short Breaks Update

Carers Trust Fund Grants Available

Carer's Appreciation Card Update





David Cooke
Carers Gateway Manager

WHO'S WHO AT CARERS GATEWAY NORTH AYRSHIRE

January 2026

Over the past few months, we've added to the team at the Carers Gateway and there are a few new faces alongside those that you already know.



David Weir
Localities Coordinator



Ann Cook
Support Worker - Irvine



Holly Tait
Irvine Support Worker &
Engagement Officer



Sheena Morrison
Family Support Worker -
Arran



Morag Blackley
Health Support Worker



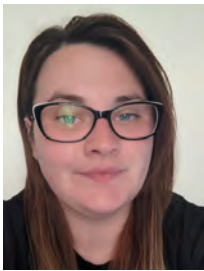
Ann Stevenson
Support Worker -
Kilwinning



Lorna Rowan
Support Worker - Three
Towns



Sharon Taylor
Support Worker -
Garnock Valley & North
Coast



Emma
Nethercote
Coordinator Young
Carers



Kiera Morris
Young Carer Support
Worker - Three Towns



Isla Culverhouse
Young Carer Support
Worker - Irvine &
Kilwinning



Melanie McNeil
Young Carer Support
Worker - Garnock Valley
& North Coast



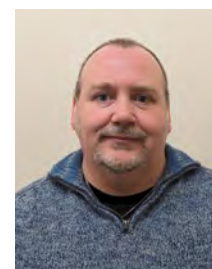
Nicole Blyth
Short Breaks Officer



Lizzy Cain
Admin & Evaluation Officer



Andy Mitchell
Marketing Coordinator



Stephen Miller
Wellbeing & Activities
Officer

SHORT BREAKS



Short
BREAKS fund

Time to Live: Small grants, big difference

Are you an unpaid carer living in North Ayrshire?

If so, you may be eligible for a Time to Live microgrant — a small fund that can help you take a meaningful break and do more of the things you love.

What is Time to Live?

Time to Live is a funding program from Shared Care Scotland delivered by Carers Gateway North Ayrshire. It's designed to give unpaid carers the chance to rest, recharge, and enjoy regular short breaks away from their caring role. These grants aren't just about taking a break — they're about boosting your wellbeing in ways that matter to you.

What can the grant be used for?

You can use your grant for anything that gives you a bit of breathing space and taps into your hobbies, passions, or interests. Here are just a few ideas:

- Unlimited cinema pass
- Gym or fitness membership
- Massage or holistic therapies
- Theatre or concert tickets
- Meals out or special treats
- Tech items like a tablet or smartphone
- Creative or wellbeing classes (e.g. yoga, pottery, photography)
- Subscription services (Audible, Netflix, Disney+, magazines)

Whether it's something relaxing, fun, or enriching — this is your time.

Who can apply?

You can apply if you are:

- An unpaid carer living in North Ayrshire
- An adult caring for another adult
- A young carer (under 18 or still in school)

When can I apply?

First-time applying? You can apply at any time — we're here when you're ready.

Applied before? You'll be able to apply again 18 months after the date of your last successful application.

This updated timescale helps us make Time to Live funding available to more Carers across North Ayrshire — especially those who haven't had the chance to benefit from it before.

How do I apply?

1. Scan the QR code.
2. Fill in the website form.



CARERS TRUST- THE CARERS FUND

We now have access to limited applications to The Carers Fund from Carers Trust. This grant is made by the Carers Trust after an application is completed by you and our staff.

Examples of eligible items and activities included, but are not limited to:

- Essential home repairs
- Costs associated with accessing courses and purchase of related materials
- Purchase of IT and mobile phone equipment, software and data allowances
- Transport costs related to caring e.g. transport to hospital

If you would like to know more, please speak to one of our locality based Support workers.

Please note that this fund is not open to anyone under 16 yrs old and there are some restrictions on the use of the monies, including:

- Utility bills and payments such as gas, electricity and water
- Credit card bills or debt repayments
- Long term replacement care

These small grant applications are means tested and will involve discussions based on your income and expenditure. All decisions from the Carers Trust are final, but there may be other funding options available if your application is unsuccessful



CHRISTMAS ROUNDUP

CHRISTMAS LUNCHES



Over 100 carers and professionals, attended the annual Adult Carers Christmas lunch at the Riverside Hotel in Irvine. A wonderful three-course lunch, a DJ, bingo with loads of prizes all contributed to a wonderful afternoon. Thank you to the team from Friends of Redburn for running the bingo and keeping us all entertained.



Carers from both Three Towns Constituted Group and Saltcoats Group came together for a fabulous festive Breakfast at Cecchini's in Ardrossan. Over 20 carers enjoyed a lovely breakfast filled with lots of festive chatter, Christmas Crackers and a prize draw.



Carers on Arran met at Auchrannie Resort for Christmas lunch and an afternoon of festive fun.

A huge thank you to everyone who came along or organised the events.



NEW AI CARER SUPPORT

Free, multilingual and just like speaking to a real person!

Visit our website to try the free AI voice coach today!

Looking for carer support?
Bridgit your 24/7 AI Helper

bridgit

Carers Gateway
NORTH AYRSHIRE

We're proud to share that Carers Gateway North Ayrshire has partnered with Bridgit Care to bring a new online support tool for adult and young unpaid carers ❤️

Just visit our website <https://carersgateway.org.uk/north-ayrshire/> to give it a go.

The AI Voice Coach offers free, multilingual voice support, helping carers of all ages get answers to questions about their caring role. Available day or night and in multiple languages, it provides accessible guidance and reassurance whenever caring feels overwhelming.

Because every carer deserves inclusive, easy-to-access support – whenever they need it most.



01294 311333

northayrshire.carers@unity-enterprise.com



www.carersgateway.org.uk

CHAMPIONS BOARDS

WHAT IS A CHAMPIONS BOARD?

A Champions Board is an informal forum specifically designed to improve outcomes for carers. It brings together people with lived experience (carers like you) alongside senior decision-makers from key organizations including:

- Local Authority Heads of Service
- Elected Members
- Health and Social Care Partnership representatives
- Third Sector leaders
- Housing, education, and employment services

The Board operates on four key principles: **Equality, Empowerment, Collaboration and Action**. Everyone participates as equals - no one party controls the board. Together, the group sets its own objectives, meeting frequency, and agenda. The schedule for the Spring meetings are:

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday 3 February	9:45 - 12pm	Kilwinning College
Tuesday 3 March	9:45 - 12pm	Online: https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/32320374948855?p=xnegniOzubfyjIN2x4L Meeting ID: 323 203 749 488 55 Passcode: SP38ch9A
Tuesday 7 April	9:45 - 12pm	TBC
Tuesday 5 May	9:45 - 12pm	Redburn Community Centre, Irvine
Tuesday 2 June	9:45 - 12pm	Ardrossan Civic Centre



YOUNG CARERS ACTION DAY 2026

Young Carers Action Day 2026 is on Wednesday 11th March.

The theme for Young Carers Action Day 2026 is '**Fair Futures for Young Carers**', a call to ensure every young carer has the same chances to learn, grow and thrive as their peers.

Carers Gateway North Ayrshire, have organised two events for young carers to celebrate Young Carers Action day.



FIRST AID TRAINING

Young Carers have asked to learn skills that can help them with their caring role. On **Thursday 12 March**, Carers Gateway will be hosting a First Aid training day at the Scottish Maritime Museum for 15 young carers.

ODEON CINEMA TRIP

A chance to relax, meet other young carers, eat some popcorn and enjoy a movie. There will be 30 spaces for young carers available.



SUPPORTING THOSE WHO SUPPORT OTHERS



Adult Mental Health Services Carers Forum

Are you a carer who...

Has supported someone - past or present - accessing mental health services? Join us for a welcoming and informative monthly forum designed just for you.

What to expect:

- Insightful discussions on mental health topics that matter to carers
- Your rights & support options as a carer
- Guest input from a range of support organisations
- Facilitated by Engagement & Carers staff and Advocacy Services
- Safe, supportive environment to share your views, learn, and connect



Last Wednesday of the month join one or come to all!

Open to All Carers
Whether you're currently supporting someone or have done so in the past, you are welcome.

28TH JANUARY

17:30 - 19:30

The Glade (1st Floor), Woodland View Hospital

Opportunity to meet NA Alcohol & Drugs Partnership & North Ayrshire Drugs & Alcohol Recovery Service (NADARS)



25TH FEBRUARY

12:30 - 14:30

Saltcoats Town Hall, Countess St, KA21 5HP

Find out more about Power of Attorney and Guardianship with Matthew Brown Solicitors

MATTHEW BROWN
Solicitors & Notaries

25TH MARCH

17:30 - 19:30

The Glade (1st Floor), Woodland View Hospital

Find out more about carers rights and Adult Carer Support Plans with Carers Gateway North Ayrshire and North Ayrshire HSCP



29TH APRIL

12:30 - 14:30

Saltcoats Town Hall, Countess St, KA21 5HP

Find out more information about benefits and entitlements from the Money Smart team



27TH MAY

17:30 - 19:30

The Glade (1st Floor), Woodland View Hospital

Find out more information about courses to support mental, physical and emotional wellbeing



24TH JUNE

12:30 - 14:30

Saltcoats Town Hall, Countess St, KA21 5HP

Opportunity to meet NA Alcohol & Drugs Partnership & North Ayrshire Drugs & Alcohol Recovery Service (NADARS)



Let's work together to strengthen support, raise awareness, and empower carers.

For more information or to find your nearest session:



07392 128298



mentalhealthengagement@north-ayrshire.gov.uk



www.nahscp.org

North Ayrshire HSCP in partnership with Carers Gateway North Ayrshire, East Ayrshire Carers Centre, Carers Gateway South Ayrshire, VoiceAbility Advocacy and East Ayrshire Advocacy.

YOUNG CARERS CHAMPIONS BOARD

What is the Young Carers Champions Board?

The Young Carers Champions Board is a space where young carers can speak up, be listened to, and help change things that affect their lives. Brings young carers together with people who work in health, education, and other services, so young people's voices actually matter. It's about more than meetings.

The Board helps young carers build confidence, make friends, learn new skills, and feel proud of who they are — not just as carers, but as young people with ideas, opinions, and power to make a difference.

Why does it matter?

Young carers are often busy looking after others and don't always get the chance to be heard. The Champions Board makes sure young carers are part of the conversation and helps services understand what life is really like for them.

What's in it for you?

Being part of this means boosting your confidence, making new friends, and having a real say in decisions that affect your life. It also helps adults understand what young carers need, so services and policies actually work for you. Plus, you'll get chances to step up, lead, and make a difference in your community.

Want to join the Young Carers Champions Board?

If you have a voice, and want to be the go-to person in your community for young carers, sign up today! Speak to Holly on 01294 311333 or email northayrshire.carers@unity-enterprise.com, or speak to your Young Carers Worker in school today.

YOUNG CARERS CHAMPIONS BOARD

When is the Young Carers Champions Board?

Greenwood Academy Wednesday 25th Feb, 9am-3pm

Auchenharvie Academy Thursday 19th March, 9am-3pm

Garnock Campus Tuesday 24th March, 9am-3pm

Kilwinning Academy Thursday 16th March, 9am-3pm

St Matthews Thursday 23rd April, 9am-3pm

Irvine Royal Friday 8th May, 9am-3pm

Largs Academy Wednesday 13th May, 9am-3pm

Ardrossan Academy Friday 15th May, 9am-3pm

Community Sessions - Youth Forums, Events, Champ Meet ups.

Wednesday 11th March, Saltcoats Town Hall, 11am-2pm

Monday 6th April, Starbucks Irvine, 10am

Monday 13th April, Ardrossan Youth Hut, 11am-2pm

Friday 27th March, Ardeer Community Centre, 10am-2pm

June 2026, Arran Outdoor Residential, **TBC**



Sign up and
become part of
the Young Carers
Champions Board
today!

Speak to your in
school Young Carers
Worker or Guidance
Teacher for more
information.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

14 Feb 2026	Beith Trust Ceilidh
19 Feb 2026	Carers Light Bite- CMM Info session Love Hall Kilwinning
27 Feb 2026	Garden Project- Eglinton Park- H&S Induction
6 Mar 2026	Garden Project- Eglinton Park- Outdoor First Aid
10 Mar 2026	Time out Tuesday Group 1 Session 1
11 Mar 2026	Young Carers Action Day
13 Mar 2026	Garden Project- Eglinton Park- Tool Time
14 Mar 2026	YCAD Cinema trip
17 Mar 2026	Time out Tuesday Group 2 Session 1
24 Mar 2026	Time out Tuesday Group 1 Session 2
31 Mar 2026	Time out Tuesday Group 2 Session 2
14 Apr 2026	Family Visit to Rangers Museum and Stadium Tour- 10am Time out Tuesday Group 2 Session 3
17 Apr 2026	Family trip to Heads of Ayr
21 Apr 2026	Time out Tuesday Group 1 Session 4
28 Apr 2026	Time out Tuesday Group 2 Session 4
5 May 2026	IJB- Time out Tuesday Group 1 Session 5
12 May 2026	Time out Tuesday Group 2 Session 5
19 May 2026	Time out Tuesday Group 1 Session 6
26 May 2026	Time out Tuesday Group 2 Session 6
30 May 2026	Arran Pride
8 Jun 2026	Carers Week 2026

HOME ENERGY SCOTLAND

CARERS TRUST

Carers Gateway NORTH AYRSHIRE

19 Feb 2026

CARERS LIGHT BITE

FEBRUARY 19

JOIN US FOR A COFFEE, A SANDWICH AND AN INFORMAL SESSION ABOUT OUR CARERS MONEY MATTERS PROJECT

WILLIAM LOVE MEMORIAL HALL, KILWINNING 4PM-6PM

FIND OUT ABOUT THE DIFFERENT SUPPORTS AVAILABLE WITH YOUR HOME ENERGY SOLUTIONS

Scan the QR Code to sign up

For more information contact northayrshire.carers@unity-enterprise.com

Scottish Maritime Museum

CARERS TRUST

Carers Gateway NORTH AYRSHIRE

11 March 2026

YOUNG CARERS ACTION DAY

MARCH

Weds 11th

A TRAINING DAY FOR ALL REGISTERED CARERS AGED 16-25. INTRODUCTION TO EMERGENCY FIRST AID AND FUN ACTIVITIES WITH LUNCH PROVIDED ALL FUNDED BY THE CARERS TRUST.

SCOTTISH MARITIME MUSEUM, IRVINE 10AM- 3PM

SCAN QR CODE TO REGISTER INTEREST

For more information contact northayrshire.carers@unity-enterprise.com

BritishRedCross Training.





YOUNG CARERS ACTION DAY TRAINING DAY

MARCH

12 FIRST AID TRAINING AND MORE
SCOTTISH MARITIME MUSEUM



14 APRIL 2026

CARERS IBROX VISIT



JOIN US FOR A TOUR THROUGH THE RANGERS MUSEUM AND IBROX STADIUM. IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE RANGERS CHARITY FOUNDATION

TUESDAY 14TH
APRIL 10AM- 3PM
TICKETS ONLY £2.50
RETURN COACH FROM IRVINE TOWN CENTRE

AN INFORMATIVE DAY OF HISTORY, FUN AND ADVENTURE WITH A LIGHT LUNCH PROVIDED.



Scan QR Code to sign up

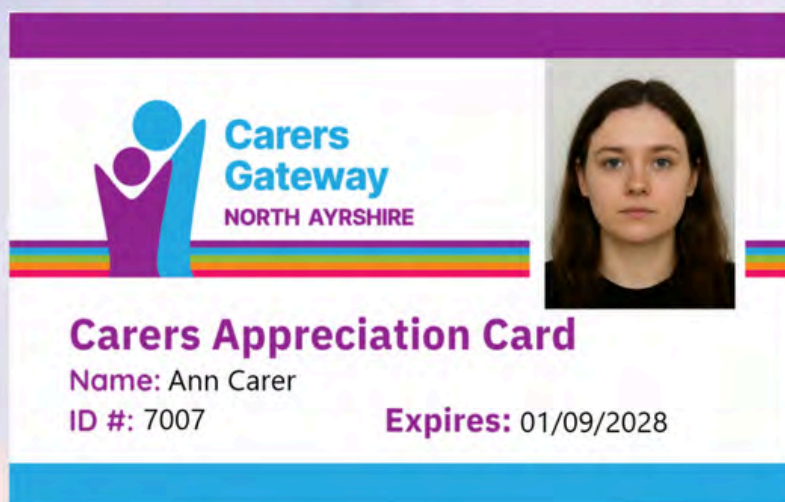
For more information contact
northayrshire-carers@unity-enterprise.com





Are you an unpaid carer?

We want to say thank you for everything you do!



With the Carers Appreciation Card, you can enjoy special discounts and offers across the community – from meals out to holistic therapies, gym access to money off toys, and much more.

**Free to apply
Exclusive to North Ayrshire carers
A little extra support, just for you.**

*thank
you*

**To find out more contact-
northayrshire.carers@unity-enterprise.com
or call 01294 311333**



North Ayrshire COMMUNITY CHAMPION AWARDS 2026

Celebrating Excellence in your Community

**Community Champion Awards 2026 are coming to
North Ayrshire 🏆**

The North Ayrshire Community Champion Awards celebrate the people and organisations who make a real difference through kindness, leadership, creativity, courage, and community spirit.

Has a friend, teacher, family member, grandparent, or work colleague made a real difference? If someone came to mind, they're exactly who these awards are for.

Who can you nominate?

- We're looking for people of all ages who:
- Go above and beyond to help others
- Volunteer or support their community
- Inspire others through care, leadership, or kindness
- Make a difference in health, care, sport, or the arts
- Strengthen the community through business or charity
- Show courage, compassion, or a true Heart of Gold
- Are young people making a positive impact
- Protect nature or take action for the environment

Ready to nominate?

[North Ayrshire Community Champion Awards - Newsquest Scotland Events](#)



ADULT GROUPS

	Carer Groups	Support Sessions
Arran	Carers peer support group Heather Lodge, Brodick second Tuesday of the Month 11am - 1pm.	Adult carers pop-up drop in different locations around the island each month. Contact Sheena Morrison at sheena.morrison@unity- enterprise.com for details
Garnock Valley	Carers peer support group Kilbirnie library every first Thursday of the month 2pm until 4.00pm	Beith Community Centre every Wednesday 1:30pm - 3:30pm
Irvine	Redburn Community Centre (limited appointments). Every Thursday 12pm - 4pm Vineburgh Community Centre, 24 Feb, 24 March, 21 April, 19 May, 23 June 11am - 2pm	Trinity Church, Irvine. Every Thursday 10am - 12pm Castlepark Community Centre. Every Thursday 1:30pm - 3:30pm Dreghorn Library. Every Friday 10am - 12pm Irvine Library. Every Friday 2pm - 4pm

**For all Support Sessions please phone 01294 311333
to book your slot with a Support Worker**



01294 311333

northayrshire.carers@unity-enterprise.com



www.carersgateway.org.uk

ADULT GROUPS

	Carer Groups	Support Sessions
Kilwinning	<p>Kilwinning Library, third Wednesday of the month 10:30am - 12:30pm</p> <p>Monthly Walk and Talk group, second Monday of the month from 10am</p>	<p>Monday - Love Hall, 10am-12pm and Kilwinning Library 1pm-4pm</p> <p>Tuesday - Cranberry Moss Community Centre 10am-1pm</p>
North Coast	<p>Carers Constituted peer support group Brooksby Medical Centre Largs first & third Wednesday of the month 10.00am - 12 noon</p>	<p>West Kilbride Community Centre every Friday 1pm until 3.00pm.</p> <p>Skelmorlie second Monday of the month 11am - 12:30pm</p> <p>Garrison House, Millport first Wednesday of the month 10am - 12 noon.</p>
Three Towns	<p>Carers constituted peer support group. Ardeer community centre, third Monday of every month 10.00am - 12 noon.</p> <p>Carers peer support group Saltcoats library, Fourth Monday of every month 10.00am - 12 noon.</p>	<p>Ardeer Community Centre Ardeer every Monday 1.00pm - 3.00pm.</p> <p>Saltcoats Library every Tuesday 2pm - 4pm</p> <p>Hayocks Hall every Wednesday 10am - 12pm</p> <p>Auchenharvie Leisure Centre every Wednesday 1pm - 3pm</p> <p>Argyle Centre, every Thursday 10am - 12pm</p> <p>Community Food Hub, third Tuesday of the month 10am - 12pm</p>



CARERS GATEWAY - EDUCATION CALENDAR

Ayrshire College	Third Tuesday of the Month
Corsehill Primary School	Third Tuesday of the Month
Moorpark Primary School	Third Tuesday of the Month
Arran High School	Third Thursday of the Month
Auchenharvie Academy	Third Thursday of the Month
Springside Primary School	Third Thursday of the Month
St Johns Ogilve Primary School	Third Thursday of the Month
Ardrossan Academy	Third Friday of the Month
Beith Primary School	Fourth Monday of the Month
St Johns Primary School	Fourth Monday of the Month
Garnock Campus	Fourth Tuesday of the Month
St Winnings Primary School	Fourth Tuesday of the Month

CARERS GATEWAY - EDUCATION CALENDAR

Dyesmains Primary School	Fourth Tuesday of the Month
Blacklands Primary School	Fourth Tuesday of the Month
Greenwood Academy	Fourth Wednesday of the Month
Caledonia Primary School	Fourth Wednesday of the Month
Cumbrae Primary School	Fourth Wednesday of the Month
Stanley Primary School	Fourth Wednesday of the Month
St Matthews Academy	Fourth Thursday of the Month
Kilwinning Academy	Fourth Thursday of the Month
Glencairn Primary School	Fourth Friday of the Month
Lawthorn Primary School	Fourth Friday of the Month
Abbey Primary School	Fourth Friday of the Month
Castlepark Primary School	Fourth Friday of the Month