

DECEMBER ROUND UP 2025

NEWSLETTER



Hello one and all!

As the year winds down, we want to send a truly heartfelt thank you for the dedication and support you have given over the last twelve months. Every journey completed, every task managed, and every smile shared has made a colossal difference—you are the heart and soul of our mission!

We know the festive season can be a wonderful time for many, but we also acknowledge that it's not always a happy or joyful period for everyone. Please know that we are sending warm wishes and support to all our volunteers, whatever this time of year brings for you.

We are so incredibly excited for what we will achieve together in 2026 and look forward to your continued support as we start a brand new chapter!

For now, grab a hot drink and enjoy this last newsletter of the year.

What do you call an elf who sings? ... A wrapper! 😊
Happy Christmas and see you in the New Year!

Kind regards

Tina

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If you have any ideas for articles or would like any information featured in the newsletter, please let me know.

HIGHLIGHTS

LT update

Voluntary Sector Alliance (VSA)

Spotlight on... Gertrude

Help at Home service update

Wellbeing service update

Exceptional you

CNC calling

What would you do?

Save the date

Reset Workshop posters



Company number:
6297277

Charity number:
1120693

LEADERSHIP TEAM UPDATE ...

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!

As we approach the festive season, we want to take a moment to thank every one of you for your incredible dedication and support over the past 12 months. Your commitment has made a real difference in our community, and we couldn't have achieved so much without you.

Exciting Opportunities Ahead

We are currently advertising for a Community Development Manager to join our team. This role will be pivotal in driving forward our community initiatives, and we hope to have the position filled early in the new year. Please share this opportunity within your networks to help us find the right person!

Our Motability bid is now in development. If we are successful with our application, this funding will allow us to strengthen our transport infrastructure and expand volunteering capabilities, aligning with the transport plans outlined in our strategy. This is a big step toward improving accessibility and support for our community.

We're delighted to announce that we have received Work-Well funding! This means our Wellbeing Coaches will begin delivering face-to-face wellbeing workshops for the next 6 months across the county, helping to support mental health and resilience for working aged people with a learning disability or neurodivergence.



LEADERSHIP TEAM UPDATE ... CONTINUED



Over the last 12 months, the Leadership Team have been part of a development team looking at the model of care that patients receive from the hospitals back into their homes after hospital admission. This piece of work has led us and our system partners to design what is being called a 'Home First Hub', working in collaboration with CPFT, Peterborough County Council & Cambridgeshire County Council on operational delivery. This hub will be launching in January and our Help at Home team will play a pivotal role in shaping this piece of work over the coming weeks and months ahead.

And finally, just a gentle reminder, if you are volunteering for us outside of our normal operating times during the holidays, (or any time really!) and find you need some advice, guidance or speak to a member of staff please call our Out of Hours number, found on the back of your ID badge. **Tel: 01954 774805.**



Thank you again for everything you do.

Wishing you and your loved ones
a joyful Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year!



VOLUNTARY SECTOR ALLIANCE



Going from strength to strength...



The Voluntary Sector Alliance is a collaboration between Age UK Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, Care Network Cambridgeshire and Caring Together, working holistically to support more hospital discharges and providing a better experience to patients and referrers. With a single point of access for referrals, we can ensure that everyone referred to us receives the most appropriate support whilst reducing referral duplication for professionals and offer quicker support access for clients.

Utilising a Discharge Support Budget we can provide the practicalities needed for safe and early discharge. Some of the tasks that have been provided:

Task	Totals
Key Safe	191
Furniture moves	66
House Clean / Declutter	58
Furniture builds / repairs to house	8
Purchase goods	26
Other	10
People Supported	333
Total Spend	£50,375.99
Bed Days Saved	1074
Average Spend Per Person	£151.27



85% of 2217
referrals
accepted for
onward support

80% of referrals
for people 70
years and
above



Referral source:
CUH 52%
NWAFT 40%
CPFT 6%

SPOTLIGHT ON ... GERTRUDE GOMEZ



Hello everyone,

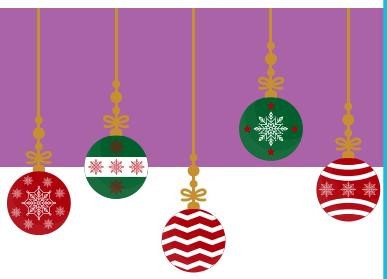
My name is Gertrude Gomez,
and I am excited to join the
team as the new
Help at Home Service Manager.

I have my Master's in Social
Work with a minor in
Psychology and Public Health. I
have spent the last 15 years
working in the mental health
field, working out in the
community doing client facing
roles, as a licensed therapist
and in management roles.

Most of my experience has been in the United States, and
most recently at Mind in Colchester.

I am looking forward to partnering with all of you to
support our shared goal.

HELP AT HOME UPDATE ...



We had 104 referrals made into us in November, which lead to us assigning 21 volunteers to clients across Care Network. We continue to see an increase in complex cases.

We are seeing a busy end to the year for all the team in Help at home. We have welcomed new volunteers, and our long-standing ones have been providing us with much needed help across the county. They have been helping with food shops, support, and practical support around our clients' homes.

It's wonderful to have you all involved, and you always go above and beyond when it comes to helping our clients as their needs can change during the course of our interactions; what starts as a simple food shop, can change to having to support someone who has been socially isolated and has not seen or spoken to anyone all week, and you guys become someone they look forward to seeing.

So thank you for all you guys do and continue to do for Help at Home.

We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and look forward to seeing you all again in 2026.



WELLBEING UPDATE ...

Things have been busy for Wellbeing. We received 81 referrals into the service during October and November. These came with a mixture of different needs ranging from support with bereavement and isolation to requiring more complex intervention with chronic illness and those on waiting lists for talking therapies.

We have started to roll out our Reset Workshops. It has been a slow start, but we are hoping to pick up some momentum and then reach out to you for support with delivering these. The aim is to provide small group sessions to educate on how individuals can nurture and support their wellbeing. An idea of sessions covered include; Self-care, Stress Management and the 5 Ways to Wellbeing.

The Finding Help Forum continues to be a success and Adele is working away to ensure that these go as seamlessly as possible. The Forum is a place for professionals who work in Cambridge City to get together and discuss clients that will benefit from a wider group discussion. The emphasis is always on what the client thinks matters most to them.

The festive season is fast approaching. Christmas can bring so much joy but can also be a time of huge stress. Volunteers are also eligible for wellbeing support, so we urge you to reach out if needed.

Thank you as always for your valued support.



WELLBEING ... CASE STUDY



We thought we might share this case study which shows the impact your support makes.

Background

The client was referred following the loss of their partner, with whom they were deeply dependent for emotional and practical support. Their bereavement was complicated by a period of hospitalisation during their partner's final days, leaving them with feelings of guilt, loneliness, and isolation. With limited contact with their daughter and no access to transport, they struggled to maintain independence and felt unsure about their goals, expressing a desire to rebuild confidence and reduce loneliness.

How we supported

Support focused on helping the client regain independence and social connection. A volunteer was allocated to help them learn to use the local bus service, and they were introduced to community groups, social clubs, and support services.

Outcome

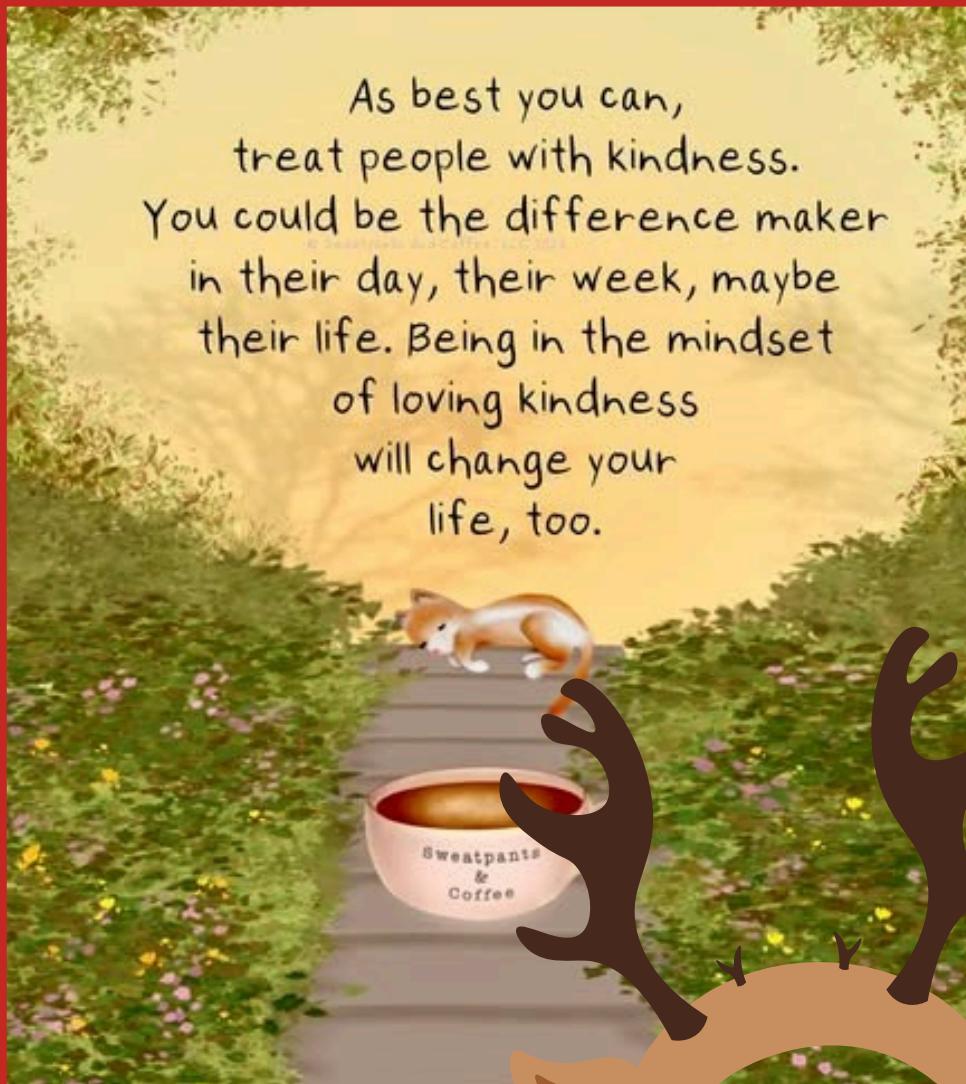
Over time, the client grew confident using public transport, enabling them to meet friends for lunch, plan outings, and reconnect socially. Their wellbeing scores improved across all areas, and they reported feeling more able to reach out to others—including neighbours—for companionship and mutual support.



EXCEPTIONAL YOU...

“It's lovely chatting to my volunteer once a week, we've got quite friendly and I can't fault her...”

As best you can,
treat people with kindness.
You could be the difference maker
in their day, their week, maybe
their life. Being in the mindset
of loving kindness
will change your
life, too.



CARE NETWORK CALLING...



The digital switch over is well underway with the UK aiming for completion by January 2027 the purpose is to create a single, future-proof network, meaning landlines will no longer work without an internet connection.



This may cause some disruption for you and our clients. We can signpost anyone who is struggling to the appropriate information.

Care Network has already swapped onto a VOIP (voice over the internet protocol) system. What this means for you, is that the number that displays on your caller ID, may not be Care Network telephone numbers you are familiar with, and you will not be able to text or use this number to return the call.

Frustrating we know! So, where possible we will leave you a voice mail and then follow up with an email with the reason we are calling. All coordinators have a direct dial number which can be found on their email footer and in the assignment template they send to you.

Our main contact number is: 01954 211919



CASE SCENARIO - WHAT WOULD YOU DO

Have a look at this case scenario and ask

What are your concerns?

What would you do?



Eddie is supporting Charles through Help at Home following his long stay in hospital. He has spoken to the client and arranged a home visit to help with organising the post, shopping and putting the washing on, and has updated his coordinator inline with the lone working process.

Eddie arrives a little late due to road works. Charles is happy to see Eddie and invites him in. The hallway is a little untidy and Eddie notices that there appears to have been a recent water leak near the radiator.



When they reach the lounge Charles says to Eddie to please excuse the mess, the radiators have leaked badly and the others have stopped working completely.

Charles says he called out an emergency heating engineer, who charged £500 drained the system and took all the radiators off the wall two days ago. However Charles has not heard from him since.

CASE SCENARIO - WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

RESPONSE

There are a number of things that should raise concern.

The heating is not working and while this may not be too concerning in the summer, if it is in the middle of winter, then this could have serious health implications for Charles.

The leaked water could also pose a slip hazard and potentially lead to a damp/black mold problem in the home if not properly cleaned up.

Radiators not being fixed to the wall and left in the rooms could become an obstacle and thus a trip hazard for Charles, particularly if he has a sight impairment or mobility issues.

While there could be a simple explanation Charles has no idea when the remedial work will be completed. Has he become a scam victim? After all, he has already paid £500 to the Emergency Heating Engineer.

Eddie should let Charles know about his concerns and that he would like to share them with his coordinator. It may be that the coordinator can arrange for heaters and/or dehumidifiers to help Charles stay warm and help dry out the property. If Charles has paid by cheque there may be time for the bank to stop payment.

Even without Charles' consent this should be raised with the coordinator as he is vulnerable and may need further support to protect him from further harm and support to report to the police and find a suitable heating engineer to complete the work.

SAVE THE DATES 1 - 20 JANUARY

Date	What	Where
Thursday 8 January 14:15-16:15	<p>Making Connections Workshop</p> <p>Discover ways of improving community connections in this workshop delivered by British Red Cross.</p>	<p>Care Network, Broadway House 149-151 St Neots Rd, Hardwick CB23 7QJ</p>
Wednesday 14 January 18:00-19:00	<p>Meet the Leadership Team</p> <p>Your chance to meet the LT, share your ideas and hear about our plans</p>	<p>Online - log details will be sent after confirmation of attendance</p>
Monday 19 January 13:00-14:30	<p>Volunteer Monthly meet up - East.</p> <p>Wear your badge to get a coffee on us! Meet the wider team, bring a case study (no names please) and catch up on what's happening at CNC!</p>	<p>Simpson's Nurseries Coffee Shop, 42 Station Road Fordham, Ely Cambs CB7 5LW</p>

To reserve your space at any of the events please email Tina:

tina.o@care-network.org.uk or call: 01223 869892

SAVE THE DATES 21 - 31 JANUARY

Date	What	Where
Saturday 24 January 10:00-13:00	Volunteer Recruitment Fair - March Town Can you spare an hour or two to help set up/take down, hand out leaflets and chat to prospective volunteers about your volunteer experience?	St. Peter's Church Hall Church High Street, March, PE15 9JR
Monday 26 January 10:00-11:30 Arrive from 09.30	First Aid Awareness Delivered by BRC Peterborough	Peterborough HRS Tait Close Peterborough PE1 4QH Limited parking on site and in nearby roads. Stagecoach stops outside Eastfield Road entrance to Regional College a short walk away
Wednesday 28 January 09:00-16:30	Pain Community Appointment event Can you spare an hour or two to help set up/take down, hand out leaflets and chat to prospective volunteers about your volunteer experience?	The Meadows Community Centre, Cambridge CB4 2JL

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SAVE THE DATES FEBRUARY

Date	What	Where
Monday 9 February 13:00- 15:00	<p>Volunteer Monthly meet up - Fens</p> <p>We have a guest speaker coming along to update our Dementia Awareness and advise on the best ways to support anyone with dementia.</p>	<p>Chatteris Office: South fends Business Centre, Fenton Way, Chatteris PE16 6TT</p> <p>Free Parking - the first set of double gates on the right as you enter Fenton Way</p>

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YOUR WELLBEING BEGINS WITH A

RESET

CareNetworkCambridgeshire are running
wellbeing Reset Workshops in your area!

Run by our experienced Wellbeing Coaches and volunteers, this is a set of 6, 1 hour, in-person small group sessions, where we will provide you with basic ways to nurture and support your wellbeing.

You will need to be ready and willing to accept change and will be asked to complete all 6 sessions.

The sessions will cover:

- The 5 ways to wellbeing
- Self-care
- Healthy eating & exercise
- Stress-management
- And more!

Take your first step towards a happier future.

Sign up for a **RESET WORKSHOP**
today!

Contact our Wellbeing Service via email: wellbeing@care-network.org.uk
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