



“It is good to think I might have made a difference to someone. It certainly made a difference to me...”

Supported by:



For more information and an informal chat, please contact The Chief Executive Officer at:

Carers Link East Dunbartonshire, Enterprise Centre
Ellangowan Road, Milngavie G62 8PH

Telephone: 0141 955 2131

Email: enquiry@carerslink.org.uk

For lots more information about the organisation visit our website:

www.carerslink.org.uk



Staff and Volunteers support people who look after a member of their family, neighbour or friend.

BE PART OF IT
Volunteer
BY
GETTING ON
BOARD



Carers Link have a range of opportunities for Volunteers

What Does Carers Link do?

Most people do not even think of themselves as a 'Carer', rather they are parents, friends, neighbours, or the child or husband or wife of someone who needs care because of an illness, addiction, frailty or disability.

In East Dunbartonshire, 1 person in 8 provides such care and support and nationally 3 out of every 5 people will become a Carer at some point in their lives.

Carers Link is the local Carer organisation in East Dunbartonshire dedicated to those providing help and support to their family, relatives or even to neighbours or friends. The Carers we support either live within East Dunbartonshire or provide care for someone who lives within the area.

Whether juggling to provide care a few hours a week in-between job and family, or caring 24-hours each and every day, Carers Link provides Carers with help and support for their caring role, and the opportunity to pursue their own needs, interests or work, by providing information, advocacy, one-to-one support and a range of informal support groups.

Why Volunteer as a Board Member?

Carers Link is supported by a dedicated team of Volunteers. Whether personally providing support to Carers, putting up posters or helping in the office, we couldn't do what we do without them.

However, many people may not realise that the support provided by Volunteer directors on our Board of Management is just as important as those directly involved in providing support. Indeed without Volunteer directors, there would be no charities!

You may be interested in volunteering as a Board Member because of your personal experiences, but prefer not to be involved in directly supporting other Carers. You might be volunteering to gain experience or to learn something new, or you might have key skills or knowledge that would be useful.

This booklet should answer any questions you have about becoming a Board Member, however please feel free to contact Carers Link to further discuss volunteering on the Board - or indeed discuss any of our other volunteering opportunities.

*The broadest,
and maybe the
most
meaningful
definition of
volunteering:*

*Doing more
than you have
to because you
want to, in a
cause you
consider good*

What Experience do I Need?

Over three-quarters of our Board Members have caring experiences - either now or in the past - and we always welcome hearing from people who are interested in joining our Board.

Part of any Board's success is through fresh faces and new skills and it is vital that we involve people who are not only committed to Carers Link and our support of Carers, but who also represent the diversity of caring in East Dunbartonshire.

- **Geographical** - a Carer living in Milton of Campsie or Twechar might have different experiences from someone living in Bishopbriggs or Milngavie.
- **Demographics** - Carers are all ages, are both male and female, may be working or not, be in education or have retired.
- **Experiences** - some Carers provide support 24/7, others provide care for a few hours each week. Some may be caring now, others may be 'former' Carers and are no longer actively providing care.
- **Reason for Care** - People may need care because of any illness, disability, addiction or frailty. You may provide care for a relative or a neighbour. Your caring may be around practical tasks, looking after finances or you may be providing personal care.

We are therefore keen to hear from any Carer or former Carer. However, although you do not need any formal experience to become a Board Member, you should be comfortable with reading reports!

We are also, however, keen to hear from people with specific backgrounds - whether or not they have caring experiences - such as:

- Business Skills
- Management or HR backgrounds
- Knowledge of the voluntary, health or social work sectors
- Legal or Financial Skills
- Fundraising

Carers Link were looking for a new Treasurer and it was suggested this might be an appropriate position for me. Being born and brought up in Milngavie, volunteering for Carers Link, which is very much a local charity, seemed the ideal choice. Ensuring Carers have help and support is so important to me.

What would be my Responsibilities?

Good Board Members have a vital role to play in directing the success of any charity. The main responsibility is governance: to ensure Carers Link is run efficiently and properly, that our funds are spent properly, to monitor the progress of the work of the organisation and to make sure that as the organisation grows, it continues to meet the needs of Carers in East Dunbartonshire.

Acting as a Board Member of any charity usually involves decision-making. However, not all decisions are of major importance, sometimes these can also be very run-of-the-mill decisions about how something is done!

These decisions are made at Board Meetings, which are usually held every 2 months for no more than 2-3 hours at a time. There are additional sub-groups that meet in between Board Meetings also on a bi-monthly or quarterly basis. Your other main responsibility is therefore to commit to attending meetings.

Implementation of any decisions is usually the responsibility of the Chief Executive who is employed by the Board to ensure the day-to-day workings of Carers Link. The Chief Executive is also usually responsible for providing the Board with any information required in order that you make effective decisions.

As a Board Member, you would also have legal responsibility on the very rare occasion that something goes wrong. However, as Carers Link is a Company Limited by Guarantee, your liability will be limited to £1 provided you have not acted negligently or fraudulently!



I was my mother's carer. I found this experience, although short, to be the most difficult experience I have ever encountered.

Can Anyone be a Board Member?

Almost anyone can become a Board Member provided there is a vacancy - there are only 15 seats available - and provided that they agree to be bound by the principles and policies that govern Carers Link.

However, to become a Board Member, you first have to be a member of Carers Link. Membership is free and is an easy and straightforward process. The form is available on our website or just telephone for a copy to be sent.

The other criterion is that you are over the age of 18, however Charity Law also disqualifies anyone who:

- Has been convicted at any time of any offence involving deception or dishonesty, unless the conviction is legally spent
- Is an undischarged bankrupt
- Has ever been removed from being a Trustee or Board Member because of misconduct
- Has been disqualified from being a company director
- Is subject to an order made under s429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986

How can I become a Board Member?

There are 2 ways to become a Board Member:

1. Hand in a signed nomination form before the Annual General Meeting (AGM). A copy of the form and details of dates are always on our website. Please note, however, that if there are more nominations than there are seats available, then an election will be held.
2. If it is some time before the next AGM, you could be co-opted onto the Board of Management by invitation from other Board Members. You would still need to provide a nomination form for the next AGM that is to be held.

Joining the Board - by either method - is subject to an Enhanced Disclosure (formerly known as a Police or SCRO check).

If you are considering joining or would like to be co-opted, why not telephone or visit Carers Link for an informal chat?

I became a volunteer board member of Carers Link to put some of my personal and my family's experience as Carers, to positive use, hopefully helping make the lives of Carers a little easier by reflecting the needs of Carers to the statutory authorities in a way that will help them listen, and put in the resources that work.

What support will Carers Link offer me?

Carers Link is committed to supporting our Volunteers and to make your experience as a Volunteer Board Member a positive one.

All new Board Members are invited to spend some time in the offices of Carers Link, to meet the staff and other Volunteers and to find out what we do to actively support Carers. All Board Members are also invited to any social events or activities organised by Carers Link.

As a new Board Member you will also receive copies of previous meeting minutes and an Induction Pack. This will help you to catch up with what has been discussed at previous meetings.

You will have the option of a mentor from amongst the existing Board Members who will offer support between meetings and help fill in any gaps. New Board Members are also invited to participate in the Induction Training provided to all Volunteers.

Naturally, you can raise concerns or simply have a chat with the Chairperson or the Chief Executive Officer at anytime.

*Carers Link are
there for you
and
nothing is a
bother
to them.*



“ We must become the change we want to see. ”



How much time will I need to commit?

Board Meetings are usually held every 2 months for no more than 3 hours at a time. There are additional sub-groups attended by different Board Members that meet in between Board Meetings, usually on a bi-monthly or quarterly basis. Dates for most meetings are set at the start of the year.

Most Board members will therefore commit to 3-5 hours each month, however this also allows for time spent reading meeting papers or e-mails!

Where are meetings held?

At present, meetings are held at the Carers Link offices in Milngavie. However, they may be held elsewhere in East Dunbartonshire if required.

Can I claim expenses?

All Volunteers are able to claim travel and reasonable out-of-pocket expenses.

What now?

See page 5 for full details, or simply call Jennifer Roe, CEO, on 0141 955 2131 for an informal chat about becoming a Board Member.

For an up-to-date list of who is currently on our Board of Management, please take a look at our website www.carerslink.org.uk

Carers Link have made a great contribution to the lives of so many people...