



CARERS COMMUNITY CHRONICLE

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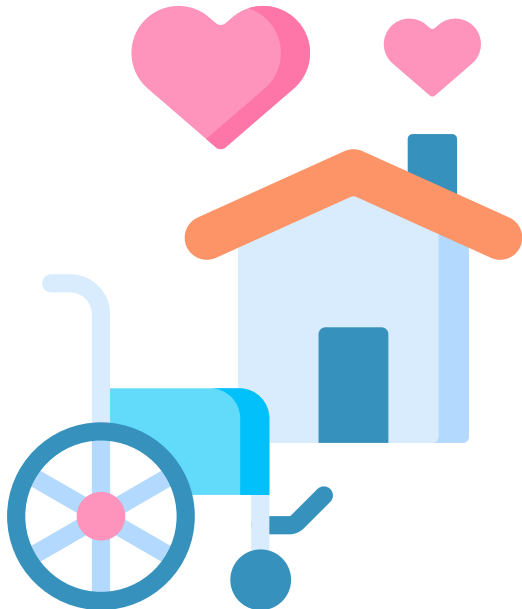
Falkirk

West Lothian

Midlothian

East Lothian

Welcome to Our Newsletter for Carers *Housing edition*



Each edition will provide the latest **carer updates** from The Action Group, news on **benefit changes** that may impact you or your loved-one, and highlights of upcoming **carer events and training** opportunities in **the Lothians and Falkirk**.

Did you know?

In Scotland, adults with additional support needs have the right to a social care assessment from their local council to determine their housing and support needs.



Carer Involvement Officer - Alisa Jaakkola
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Carer Group now
on Facebook!**

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Alisa Jaakkola's Corner **Carer Involvement Officer**

Greetings from Alisa, our Carer Involvement Officer!

Hello Parent/Carers,

For young people with additional support needs, the path to independence doesn't look the same for everyone, and that's okay. Some may be ready to move into supported housing, while others may take smaller steps while still living at home.

As parents and carers, it's natural to feel uncertain about the future. This newsletter will hopefully offer a starting point: A guide to different housing options, practical advice on planning and support, and a simple checklist to help you take the next steps at your own pace.

The aim is not to give one answer, but to offer insight into the choices available, and remind you that this journey doesn't need to be rushed or taken alone. However independence looks for your loved one, we hope these resources provide support and reassurance along the way.

With warm wishes,
Alisa

The Action Group's Welfare Rights Service

Did you know that The Action Group's Welfare Rights Service can be accessed by Carers of people that are supported by TAG?



The Action Group's Welfare Rights service provides advice on all welfare benefits and tax credits. It is **free, independent** and **confidential**. We can offer home visits and interpreters wherever needed.



Our Welfare Rights advisors can help you with:

-  **Benefit Checks** - Making sure you are getting all of the benefits that you are entitled to.
-  **Claims & Forms** - We can help you make new claims and complete benefit forms.
-  **Challenging Decisions** - We can help you ask benefits agencies to look at their decisions again.
-  **Appeals** - We can represent you at benefit appeals, including gathering evidence and writing a formal submission on your behalf.
-  **Passported Benefits** - We can give you information about any other entitlements you are eligible. For example: a blue badge.
-  **Scenarios** - We can give you the information you need to make informed choices about which benefits are best for you and how changes in your life might affect these benefits (for example, starting work)
-  **Wider Support and Wellbeing** - We can connect you to other sources of support that can help you. For example: Money Advice, grants and help with managing energy bills.



Contact Us: Call us on 0131 285 5207 (and ask for a member of the advice service) or **email advice@actiongroup.org.uk** Please let us know if there is anything you need that will make to service feel safe and accessible for you.

Welfare Rights Advice and Updates



Carer Support Payment – earnings limit

The earnings limit for Carer Support Payment (previously called Carer's Allowance) has increased to £196 per week. If you work part-time and were not entitled before because of your earnings, you may now be able to get this benefit. You can find out more information [here](#)



Once you receive Carer Support Payment, if your earnings exceed £196 per week you must contact Social Security Scotland to avoid overpayment, as your entitlement will end.

Universal Credit – monitoring claims



If you receive Universal Credit, it is a good idea to check your online journal at least once a week for letters, messages and things on your 'To do' list and also to check every monthly statement. If the amount you are paid changes and you are not sure why, ask Universal Credit about this and get in touch with an advice agency if needed.



If there have been changes in your circumstances that might affect your Universal Credit, you should report these as a change in the 'Home' section of your online journal. Here are some examples, but get advice if you want to check about another change: new income from work or something else; increase or decrease in savings; new address; change in who you live with.

Welfare Rights Advice and Updates

Reaching pension age



Pension age is currently 66 for both men and women. It will rise gradually to 67 between 2026 and 2028. You can check when you will reach pension age [here](#).

There are significant changes to benefits when someone reaches pension age. The Department for Work and Pensions usually sends you a letter about claiming State Pension. You may also be entitled to Pension Credit but the DWP does not send a specific letter about this, even if you have been receiving benefits like Income Support, income-related Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit.

If you or someone you care for are approaching pension age, you can get in touch with an advice service to discuss your entitlements.



Have benefit enquiries?

Email us at careradvice@actiongroup.org.uk
or call 0131 285 5207 to request a call back
from our carer advice team.

Housing Options for Young Adults with ASN

For young adults with additional support needs, deciding where and how to live is a major life step. As a parent and your loved one's carer, it is natural to feel both hopeful and overwhelmed. This guide breaks down the different types of housing available in Scotland, from supported living to council housing, and provides key considerations to help you and your loved one take those big steps towards independence and own home.



**DID YOU
KNOW?**

The Action Group's Housing and Community Support Service helps people live independently, whether in their own tenancies, in shared accommodation, or living at home.

This can be anything from a few hours support a week to 24/7 care and support. We work with people who live anywhere in Edinburgh, the Lothians and Falkirk areas.

Living at Home with Support

The young person stays in the family home but receives care and support from:

- Family
- Social care staff
- Personal assistants (via Self-Directed Support)



Pros

- Familiar environment
- Close to family
- Flexibility in timing and planning



Things to Consider

- Limited independence
- Can put ongoing pressure on family carers



For young adults who are not ready to move out and/or who need a long transition period.

Supported Housing - Living with Support

What is it?

The young adult lives in their own tenancy (alone or with others) and receives support based on individual needs. This might be:

- Living with other people with support needs
- Independent living with visiting support
- Living with a live-in support worker
- 'Core and Cluster' accommodation model run by care providers



Support types

- 24-hour staffed support
- Help with meals, medication, daily living
- Budgeting and/or community engagement

Supported Housing - Living with Support



Pros

- Encourages independence
- Can be tailored to individual needs and goals
- Often long-term housing
- Increased social opportunities



Things to Consider

- May have a waitlist
- Requires careful matching to the right location and support provider



For young adults who want to live more independently but still need regular support.

Residential Care in Shared Housing

What is it?

A home staffed 24/7 care and support. Offering accommodation, meals, and full-time personal care. Some are for short breaks (respite), others for long-term living.



Pros

- Full care and supervision
- Safe, structured environment
- Social life and community with peers



Things to Consider



- Less personal independence
- Limited control over daily routines
- May have fewer opportunities for community engagement



For those with complex health or behavioural needs needing full-time care.

Social Housing (Council or Housing Association)

What is it?

Affordable housing managed by local councils or housing associations. Some properties are adapted or near support services.



Pros



Long-term stability

Lower rent than private market

Can be adapted to physical needs

Tenancy agreement not tied to a specific support service

Things to Consider

Finding a property may take time

Not always matched to preferred location

Usually requires support to be arranged separately



BEST CHOICE

For young adults who are ready for more independence and can access community-based support.

Private Rented Housing

What is it?

Renting a flat or house from a private landlord. Care packages would not be tied to tenancy and would need to be arranged separately.



Pros

-  Faster access than council housing
-  Wider range of options compared to social housing
-  Tenancy agreement not tied to a specific support service



Things to Consider

-  Higher costs
-  Tenancy rules can be strict
-  Less secure (shorter tenancy terms, rent increases)
-  Aids and adaptations need to be approved by landlord



For young adults with some income or benefit support, who want more independence and can manage tenancy responsibilities (with or without support).

Shared Lives / Family Placement

What is it?

Living with a paid carer or host family in their home as part of a Shared Lives scheme.



Pros

- Nurturing home environment
- Strong relationships and continuity
- Community inclusion



Things to Consider

Less privacy than a flat 

Limited availability 

May not suit everyone's preferences 



Young adults who thrive in close-knit, family-style support settings

Home Ownership & Shared Ownership

Two ways to have a home of your own

Full Ownership

Buying a home out-right using savings or a mortgage.



Pros

- Full ownership of your home
- Wider range of options around types of property and location
- More freedom to make home accessible and fit for support needs



Things to Consider

- Requires a big deposit and regular income
- Responsible for all repairs and bills
- May need help finding a suitable property



Young adults who can get a mortgage or have family financial help.

Home Ownership & Shared Ownership

Two ways to have a home of your own

Shared Ownership

You buy part of the home and pay rent on the rest. The other part is owned by a housing association.



Pros

- Needs a smaller deposit than full ownership
- Still have a say in your home
- More affordable route to home ownership



Things to Consider

- Rent needs to be paid for the part that is not owned
- Responsible for any other costs e.g., repairs, maintenance
- Might have a waiting list



People who want independence but can't afford full ownership.



To Do List

Starting your housing journey

Use this checklist to start planning the right housing path for your young person:



Talk with your young adult

- What do they want? (Independence, social opportunities, routine?)
- What are their fears or worries?



Contact your local social work team

- Request for a social care assessment
- Ask about eligibility for Self-Directed Support (SDS)



Explore support and transition services

- Involve your child's school or transition worker
- Consider a transition planning meeting (starting by age 14–16)



Look into different housing options

- Get in touch with local organisations that provide supported housing
- If want to explore social housing, get housing officer
- Look into Shared Lives, care homes, or housing associations



Check benefits and funding

- Seek benefit advice to ensure all correct benefits are in payment
- Check for grants or funding for home adaptations
- Explore direct payments or SDS options





To Do List

Starting your housing journey



Practice independent living skills

- Cooking, budgeting, travel training
- Short overnight stays away from home



Connect with others

- Join local parent/carer groups, at your local Carers' Centre
- Watch real-life stories on [Keys to the Door](#)



For more help and links to everything in this guide

Contact



Useful information and resources for families with disabled children.

For more information

[CLICK HERE](#)

MENCAP



Easy read-guides on housing and independent living people with additional support needs.

For more information

[CLICK HERE](#)

Care Information Scotland



Information on social care and support, both in care homes and in community.

For more information

[CLICK HERE](#)

Shelter Scotland



Housing advice and information on housing laws in Scotland. .

For more information

[CLICK HERE](#)

Housing Support and Services

Housing Options Scotland



Housing Options Scotland help disabled people, older adults and members of the Armed Forces community to find a home that suits their needs.

For more information

[CLICK HERE](#)

Community Help & Advice Initiative (CHAI)



CHAI provides specialist housing and money advice across Edinburgh and Midlothian to both tenants and homeowners.

For more information

[CLICK HERE](#)

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)



Contact your local CAB for free, impartial and confidential advice. Check your rights and options when dealing with a housing-related issue.

West Lothian

[CLICK HERE](#)

Midlothian and East Lothian

[CLICK HERE](#)

Falkirk

[CLICK HERE](#)

Carer Advice and Support for Carers – the Lothians and Falkirk

Carers of West Lothian (CoWL)

Carers of West Lothian offers a range of services to meet the needs of unpaid carers and disabled people in West Lothian.



They provide a variety of services and support, including: information and advice, training, emotional support, hospital-based carer assistance, peer support groups, counselling, signposting to services, young carer programs, recreational courses, short break funding

For more information



Carers of East Lothian (CoEL)

Carers of East Lothian (CoEL) have a team of Carer Support Workers who work closely with carers in their local area to support them across a wide range of issues.

Their services can provide anything from practical advice to supporting carers who are struggling to cope with the physical and emotional demands of caring for someone on a full time basis.

CoEL works with carers who live in East Lothian or carers who live outside the area but the person they care for lives in East Lothian.

For more information





Midlothian Carer Centre (VOCAL)

VOCAL Midlothian provides support for unpaid carers through advice, training, and wellbeing services.

VOCAL provides unpaid carers social, learning and leisure opportunities to support their caring role or their own wellbeing and interests. They can also help help access to breaks from caring through [Wee Breaks](#).

For more information



Falkirk & Clackmannanshire Carers Centre

Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Carers Centre provides information, support and breaks for carers of all ages in Falkirk and Clackmannanshire.

Carers Centre can support carers with benefits as well as grants to support personal well-being. They can also signpost carers to other organisations where required.

For more information



Carer Events and Resources



Supporting Families of Autistic Adults.

PASDA offers support to parents, partners, siblings and carers of autistic adults (over 16) who live in Edinburgh and the Lothians. Their programme includes carer information meetings, coffee mornings and walking groups.

For more information

CLICK HERE



VOCAL Midlothian

VOCAL Midlothian provides unpaid carers social, learning and leisure opportunities. Weekly groups, training opportunities and workshops.

For more information on VOCAL Midlothian Carer Centre events

CLICK HERE



For more information on carer training and events

CLICK HERE



Carers of East Lothian

Carers of East Lothian run monthly support groups across the county. Great opportunity to meet fellow carers, to share experiences and get support from experienced Carer Support Workers.

For more information

CLICK HERE



Carer Events and Resources



Carers of West Lothian

Carers of West Lothian run regular carer groups alongside monthly courses and events.

For more information

[CLICK HERE](#)



Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Carers Centre

Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Carers Centre run weekly carer groups and events.

For more information

[CLICK HERE](#)



THANK
YOU

*Thank You for
Reading the Housing
edition of Carers
Community
Chronicle!*

We want to hear from you!



We're thrilled to share this journey with you as part of our carer community. **We'd love to hear your thoughts, suggestions, and ideas for future newsletters.**



Is there something specific you'd like to see included? Perhaps a topic you're curious about, a story you'd like shared, or resources you'd like us to explore?



Your input is invaluable in shaping this newsletter into something that truly supports and inspires you.



Additionally, we'd greatly appreciate it if you could take a few moments to complete our **Carer Survey**.  This will help us better understand the needs of the carers we reach and ensure we're providing the most meaningful content and resources.



Thank you for being a vital part of Carers Community Chronicle! Together, we can create a newsletter that uplifts and supports everyone in our caring community.