

S Hutchison
The Nineveh Charitable Trust
8 Mill Lane
Saffron Walden
Essex
CB10 2AS

28.8.23

Dear Ms Hutchison

Supporting those who care for others

I am writing to thank you for your generous donation to Care for Carers and report back on what we have achieved in the last 12 months. With your help, we have been able to employ a Senior Administrator to support our service, working within the Carer Support Team.

The expansion of our team has come at a very important time. The number of individual calls and enquiries from carers has become a much larger part of our workload, particularly as carers are increasingly vulnerable with ever more complex circumstances. The Carer Support Team deal with over 170 new referrals every year on a one-to-one basis, offering home visits and ongoing support across a range of carer issues, to support them emotionally and practically with their caring role. The referrals coming into this team often require a significant level of ongoing support which has increased over the past few years.

The Senior Administrator is a key member of our team, managing incoming referrals – including assessing the urgency of the referral – supporting events, recording information gathered by the Carer Support Workers to monitor project outcomes and individual carer outcomes, and completes carer grant applications. We have secured over £10,000 from **Carers Trusts grants**, helping carers buy household items and exercise equipment, as well as paying for respite breaks. Having a dedicated team member who is able to undertake these tasks saves the Carer Support Workers a lot of time in routine administration and enables them to focus on one-to-one support for the very vulnerable carers who are being referred to us for support.

Carers told us that:

- They felt better supported.
- Their mental health and wellbeing is improved.
- Their physical health is improved.
- They are better able to continue caring.
- They are less stressed.
- They have access to short break options.

Wendy's story

Wendy lives with their partner, and together they share the care for her father, whose health is poor following a stroke. He has limited mobility, especially in his left side, and also his mood has been affected by his condition. While attending a Stepping Out residential break, Wendy shared some of her concerns about their struggles with a Carer Support Worker who was assisting on the break. She said **the family had money worries**, living on Universal Credit, Carers Allowance and Employment Support Allowance, due to her own mobility issues and her partner's poor health, and their routine was erratic; **they needed to visit her father multiple times a day at various time, so she was often at home, unable to go far, and feeling lonely**. She did the housework for her own household and her fathers', but the washing machine was broken, making this difficult. The family did not have any opportunity to take time away together and she was worried about the children missing out.

The Carer Support Worker continued to contact Wendy after the residential break, and they were able to devise a plan to give Wendy a break. **The Senior Administrator, on the Carer Support Worker's behalf**, submitted applications to the VOCAL Carer Assistance Fund for a new **washing machine** and the VOCAL Wee Breaks Fund to replace the **family camping equipment**, so that the family could go camping together, for short breaks very near to home where they could spend quality time connecting with each other, while still being close enough to return and provide care for her father.

Wendy told us that the new washing machine has been a godsend: *"Having a new washing machine has reduced the cost of using a laundrette, the time this takes and has really helped me feel less tired doing all the extra work that came along with the journeys to wash clothes and bedding."*

They really appreciated the grant to help them to buy camping equipment because this had long-term utility, so they could plan a number of breaks that previously would not have been possible. The support made a difference to the whole family.

"We haven't had a family trip for some years and will benefit from time to reduce our stress and improve family relationships and improve our wellbeing."

Other grants included funding for a second-hand electronic drumkit (this does not cause noise complaints) and private physiotherapy sessions, following advice by their GP, after the pain from a 15-year-old neck injury worsened to a point that they were unable to use their shoulder, in constant pain, struggling to sleep and reliant on pain killers for any relief.

Helping carers to cope with their caring responsibilities

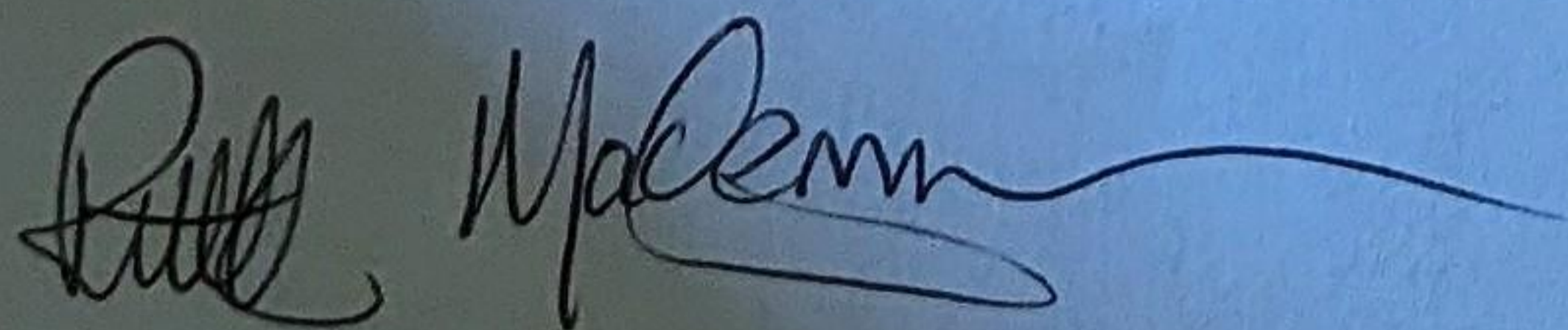
Our activities, some attended by the carers who receive support from the Carer Support Team, for the last financial year, from April 2022 to March 2023, have included:

- Our **Bigs Days Out Programme** provides a range of day trips across Edinburgh and Central Scotland. The scheme was launched in response to feedback from carers who told us that due to cuts in respite care and other support, it was harder for them to manage a full residential break. The day trip provides a short break that gives them the opportunity to meet other carers in similar circumstances.
- 281 carers participated in our **online events**, which included yoga and relaxation sessions, a workshop on herbs and microgreens planting, art and mindfulness sessions, photography and creative writing. Online sessions are more convenient, considering restrictions of alternative or respite care or travel time and costs.
- 710 carers took part in 88 events as part of our **Still Caring** series of in-person events and activities. Events have an emphasis on crafting and activities that carers can continue beyond the end of the block of sessions, including creative writing, crochet and photography.
- We have sent out over 24,000 **newsletters** to carers, providing vital information updates and activities. Before the pandemic, we delivered 6,000 newsletters annually. Carers tell us that the newsletter is an easily accessible source of reliable information.
- Our core service, providing residential breaks, remain very popular. Throughout 2022, 191 carers took part in one of our **Stepping Out residential breaks**. Providing carers with access to meaningful breaks will help them to cope with caring for longer.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information.

Thank you once again for your support.

Yours sincerely



Ruth MacLennan
Chief Executive