

Surrey carers getting digital support

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Surrey County Council is rolling out additional support for tens of thousands of unpaid carers living in the county as part of a new digital service.

At least 90,000 people in Surrey provide unpaid care for friends, family members or neighbours. Through the new initiative, these unpaid carers will gain access to a wide range of free on-demand services, aimed at supporting individuals with the day-to-day realities of caring.

The initiative is being delivered by Mobilise – a carer-led digital community – in partnership with Surrey County Council. It will provide a complementary layer of added support that can be accessed remotely via an online hub by anyone caring for a loved one in the county. New digital support services which carers in Surrey are set to gain access to include:

- **An online peer community** of thousands of fellow carers from across the UK – with the chance to share advice and experiences through a community forum and during regular events, such as the ‘virtual cuppa’
- **Easy-to-use, self-service tools** outlining the different forms of support which carers may be entitled to – including Carer’s Allowance – and guidance on how to navigate eligibility criteria and access various benefits, for example
- **Tailor-made support guides** on everything from how to balance caring with full-time work, to managing personal health and wellbeing while looking after someone else
- **Information on carers’ rights** and relevant social care law, in line with the latest government guidance

An AI-powered ‘assistant’ is also available to help carers quickly and easily find the specific information, resources or support that they need.

Martin, a carer from Surrey who looks after their partner, said: *“I’m delighted to have come across Mobilise. It’s great to know that there is a wide community of carers who can, without judgement, share their honest views and experiences on such a wide range of topics. It’s reassuring to know that there are like-minded people out there and that we’re not alone.”*

Suzanne Bourne, Co-Founder and Head of Carer Support at Mobilise, commented: *“An increasing number of us are taking on caring responsibilities, with one million additional carers set to emerge in the UK over the next ten years. The reality of caring will look different for each of these people – including the 90,000 people who are looking after their loved ones in Surrey.*

“For some, it will start with needing to check in with family members more frequently, with caring responsibilities increasing over time. For others, it might be a case of having always needed to support relatives with their medication, self-care, and appointments, or even full-time care. But in each and every case, having the right support is vital.

“That’s why we’re proud to be partnering with Surrey County Council to deliver additional support for carers living in the county. Through our community of carers – the largest of its kind – carers in Surrey will gain access to a powerful peer support network, as well as round-the-clock advice, resources, and guidance from experts. We’re delighted to be able to work to connect carers in Surrey to this added support and to each other.”

Sinead Mooney, Surrey County Council’s Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, said: *“Carers play a crucial role in families and in our local communities by supporting people who would otherwise struggle to cope alone which is why it’s so important for us to make sure carers themselves are cared for.*

“We’re pleased to be partnering with Mobilise to reach more carers across Surrey and support them in new and different ways. I’d encourage anyone who looks after a family member or friend to visit the Mobilise online community and explore the additional support available.”

Vicky Stobbart, Director of Long Term Planning Delivery and Senior Responsible Officer for Carers at Surrey Heartlands Integrated Care Board, added: *“This initiative with Mobilise is a wonderful way for carers across Surrey to gain additional, digital support with their day-to-day caring duties. We’re delighted that it’s being rolled out and look forward to seeing the benefits as our carers start to use it.”*

For more information about the support now available in Surrey, visit Surrey’s Mobilise community. To start accessing support, the Mobilise app can be downloaded via the Apple App Store or Google Play, with more information available on Mobilise’s website.