

Carers of East Lothian (CoEL) Annual Summary 2018/19



“Where to start? Support and advice is totally invaluable and knowing someone cares and understands. I felt I was drowning under a huge weight and CoEL came along and reduced that weight allowing me to understand and function again.”

The carers we support

- 2018/19 has been another very busy year for CoEL:
 - We directly supported **1,238** individual carers over the year (including **477** carers who were referred to us for the first time during the year) and helped people with **59** Adult Carer Support Plans.
 - At the end of the year we were in contact with **3,115** carers in total.
 - There has been a **103%** increase over the past 5 years in the number of carers we are in contact with.

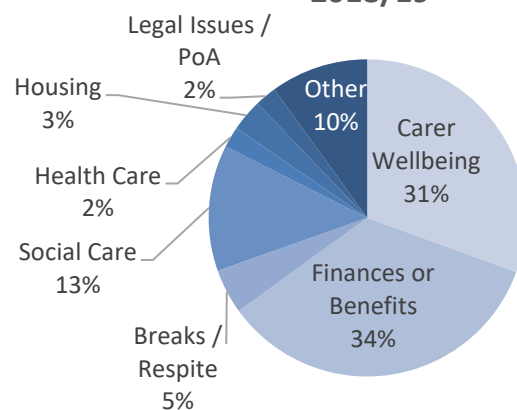
Support for other organisations as well as carers

- CoEL also supports other organisations where we see this as providing benefits for carers. In 2018/19 we began ‘hosting’ the North Berwick Coastal Community Connections project to enable it to start.

The support we provide carers

- Carers are overwhelmingly positive about our support– we have maintained our **99% approval rating** with 95% of carers rating us as “very good”.
- Carers approach us with a wide range of concerns. However, the two main areas of concern are about welfare benefits and finances; and concerns about carers’ wellbeing, stress and exhaustion.
- We continue to provide a wide range of support for carers depending on their needs. This includes:
 - One to one information, advice and emotional support – for example linking an isolated parent carer with other parents or supporting a carer to know how to respond when someone has suicidal thoughts. Last year we also helped carers to access support from **169** different organisations.
 - Help with benefits and financial concerns – last year we supported **412** carers (and the people they care for) to claim **£802,712** worth of extra welfare benefits.
 - Specialist support and small grants to help carers get a break – we focus on helping carers take breaks and, as part of this, last year we provided grants totalling **£7,306** towards such breaks.
 - Run workshops and events for carers – including the first ever ‘Carers Film Festival’ with over 200 carers attending one of the 2 screenings.
 - Facilitate 6 separate monthly support groups across the County - attended by **129** carers in the year.
 - Run Power of Attorney, Dementia and Financial Planning surgeries - helping **71** carers.

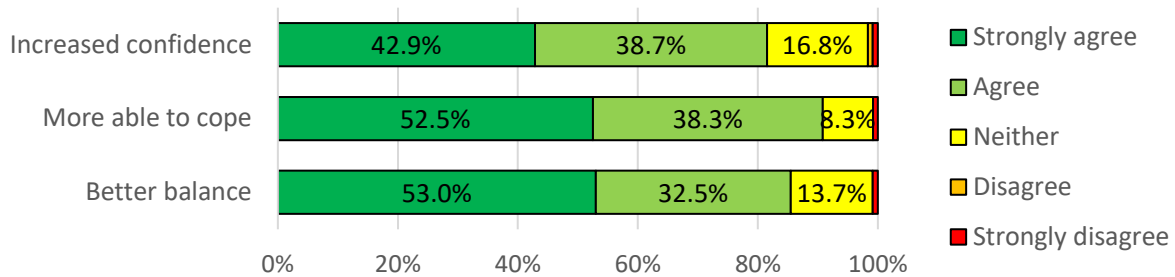
Presenting issues for carers seeking support 2018/19



Outcomes from our support for carers

- Carers tell us our support makes a real, positive difference for them (although one person felt otherwise and we have followed up to resolve their concerns).

Carer Outcomes from CoEL Support - 18-19 (n=120)

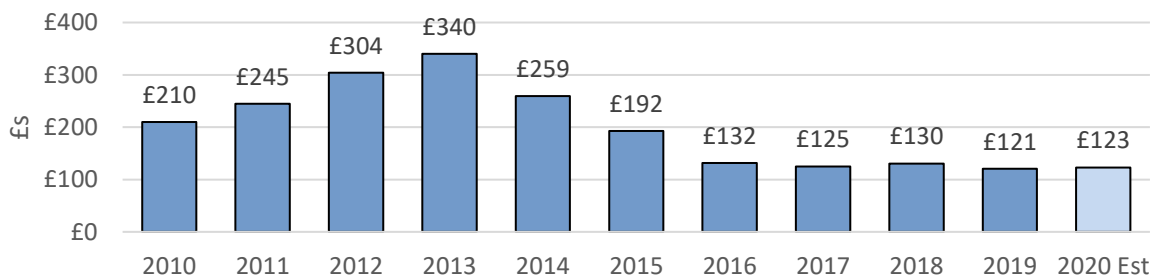


- Qualitative analysis of feedback shows the ways our support makes a difference for carers including:
 - **Providing reassurance, confidence and emotional support.**
 - **Helping people access information and practical support.**
 - **Supporting people to adopt more sustainable approaches to caring.**
 - **The importance that income maximisation can have for some carers.**

Our resources

- CoEL’s funding increased to £389,923 in 2018/19 largely as a result of our work supporting the Health and Social Care Partnership to meet the statutory requirements of the Carers Act. We operated at a surplus of £23,847 last year but we need this to put towards the costs of moving offices in Nov. 2019 (see below).
- We anticipate a further increase in our funding in the current year and this is very welcome. However, because of past cuts and ongoing increases in demand, the funding we receive for each carer we support has essentially remained the same over the past 5 years and is much lower than it used to be.

Funding per carer known to CoEL by year (ending March 31st)



Our plans for the future

- CoEL is moving to offices in the new East Lothian Community Hospital (but our phone no. won’t change) – a great opportunity to bring support for carers into the heart of Health and Social Care in East Lothian.
- We are developing counselling support for carers and expanding support for parent of children with support needs



“A huge difference ... to receive such friendly but also well-informed and practical direct support and information and follow-through. after so many years of not understanding this has helped my mother's last years be less worried and better supported. Thank you”.