



INVISIBLE ARMY

Carers (unpaid) stage an artistic protest calling for better rights

Carer's awareness Community Interest Company Invisible Army is gathering its troops to stage an artistic 'protest' in Bristol.

It's calling on the 61,000 carers (unpaid) in Bristol and South Gloucestershire to tell them what they would write on their placard if they were to go on strike.

The placards will then form a two-week exhibition putting the spotlight on how difficult it is for carers, unlike many others in society, to just stop caring to negotiate 'a better deal' and to have their rights met.



Caring comes with additional costs and many have to leave their employment which can have a significant impact on carers' finances and many carers suffer financial hardship. 44% of working-age adults who are caring for 35 hours or more a week are in poverty. The only regular financial support available to carers is Carer's Allowance, though there is a strict criteria and it only equals £81.90 a week. You have to look after someone for at least 35 hours a week which as an hourly rate is only £2.34 per hour.

Carina Andrews, co-founder of The Invisible Army, said: "Carers can't strike because people are unable to survive without our care, we have no union to support us and massive levels of guilt."

"If carers across the UK did go on a one day strike, it would cost the country a staggering £445 million and would be disastrous. The social care system would not be able to cope. We need more respect and to be valued for what we willingly do, day in and day out."

"Invisible Army wants to bring carers' voices together to empower and educate, and this art project is just one of a number of initiatives we are staging to do this."

To have your voice heard, simply find a piece of cardboard no bigger than A3 and some pens or paint. Make your statement using words, images or symbols. Then post it to: Meridian Vale House, Meridian Vale, Bristol BS8 1BY.

Do write your name and email address in the envelope so Invisible Army can keep you up to date with the exhibition details.

Alternatively share what you would say on your placard by emailing invisiblearmy2020@gmail.com who will then create your placard for you.

Deadline for submissions is the beginning of November.

www.invisiblearmy.org/carers-strike

The art installation at Circular Artspace in Fishponds will run from the 7th to the 21st of December 2024. Free entry. www.circularartspace.co.uk

The Invisible Army was founded in 2019 by Carina Andrews and Tina Gue to shine a light on carers (unpaid). We want to make the challenges and joys carers cope with everyday visible. We use art as a tool to create social change.

