

## **LOCAL GROUPS HIGHLIGHTED IN WESTMINSTER CARERS' DEBATE**

Corri Wilson MP has praised the work of two Ayrshire carers' groups in a debate in Westminster today (Thursday 9<sup>th</sup>) in a speech which highlighted the challenges which face carers across the UK.

The debate was held to coincide with Carers Week, the annual campaign to raise awareness of caring, highlight the challenges carers face and recognise the contribution they make to families and communities throughout the UK.

The MP for Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock used the opportunity to reflect on her own experience as a carer, and to draw attention to the work of the East Ayrshire Carers Centre, which provides invaluable respite breaks to carers, and the Dalmellington Carers Centre, which offers work placements to young carers to give them the skills, experience and confidence to go onto find work.

Speaking after the debate, Corri Wilson said:

*"I was delighted to be able to highlight the work of these two organisations, who do a fantastic job in their communities. But they are just two examples of the many groups and organisations the length and breadth of the country who are making a huge difference for those of us who have caring responsibilities.*

*"I was also keen to point out the challenges carers experience when it comes to juggling work and caring. Unpaid carers are the backbone of community care and play an indispensable role in supporting the needs of their loved ones, often at enormous cost to their own health and wellbeing.*

*"The majority of carers are of working age, and many are doing a full-time working week alongside long hours of care. Almost one and a half million working age people spend at least 20 hours a week caring for someone, and more than a third of them are living in poverty.*

*"A lack of carer friendly workplace policies such as paid care leave and flexible working mean that an increasing number of employees, more often than not women, are forced to either give up work at the peak of their careers, or move to part-time working. As demand for care continues to increase and the state pension age rises, we have a responsibility to break down the barriers facing carers' access to employment opportunities."*