**ERC’s Work with Young Carers**

A 17 year old boy and his 13 year old sister, who the ERC Young Carers Advocacy Project has supported, found themselves facing challenges that so many of us do not expect to confront until adulthood.

These two young people were raised by their grandfather since they were toddlers, but at the age of 75, he was in poor health and struggling to support them adequately, meaning that these two children were forced into caring roles. The family’s home was in poor repair, the grandfather faced serious mobility problems and he did not have access to home care support. Looking for help, the family turned to ERC’s Young Carers Advocacy service which was able to help them flag up and explain where and how they needed support.

The Advocacy Project has liaised with the council’s Social Care Department to provide the grandfather with much needed access to home care support. In addition, the project has worked with the Occupational Therapy service for support around the grandfather’s mobility so that he can remain independent while living at home. Advocacy workers also liaised with the family’s landlord to organise repairs to the home.

The project is working hard to identify social opportunities for the grandfather to develop independence and improve his health and mobility. Project workers are also in the process of helping the family apply for a grant to decorate and improve the home. In addition, project workers are supporting the two children and helping them to explore education options for their future.

The link with the Young Carers’ Project has made a significant difference for this family. The project has provided this family with essential support so that they can enjoy life as a family together. Most importantly, the project has helped these two young people to enjoy their childhood without having to take on what would normally be adult responsibilities. ERC’s Young Carers Advocacy Project offers support to between 36 and 48 young carers and their families every year, enabling young people in those families to have the same opportunities and access to community life as other children their age.

The ERC Young Carer’s Advocacy Project offers support to young people 18 years old and under living in Camden or Islington who are acting as carers to someone with a disability. The project is a partnership working with Family Action Islington and CASA Islington.

To learn more about how the Young Carers Project is working to support the community please visit [www.elfridacamden.org.uk/services/advocacy/](http://www.elfridacamden.org.uk/services/advocacy/)