



Carer Council

Member Spotlight Gail Ward | Carer Council Deputy Chair

Background

Gail is a metropolitan-based kinship carer member who was reappointed to the Council in December 2025. Gail will serve as Deputy Chair from July 2026.

What type of care do you provide?

I am a long term guardian kinship carer and currently registered with Beyond Kin Care to provide respite foster care.

How did you become a carer?

Like many kinship carers my journey was not planned and instead began with a phone call one afternoon asking us to look after my brother's child 'just for a few days'. They came to us as a high needs newborn and led to many sleep deprived months while also having to learn how to negotiate with DCP. The few days got extended and extended until they are now with us permanently.

Our other kin-child came to us under similar circumstances. At 5.30 on Friday I got a phone call asking us to take my (other) brother's child, a 3 year old we had never met, 'just for the weekend'. They were already in the worker's car on their way to us.

From your experience, what are some of the areas that need addressing in child protection?

Social workers tend to have inconsistent views and replies depending on who you ask. It can also be difficult to get any responses from offices. I always felt well supported by my kinship worker but I have heard from others that can vary, another sign of inconsistency within the system.

What are some of your fondest memories of caring?

When we started getting to know our kin-child's family and having birthday and holiday celebrations like Christmas all together. Our kin-child gets to see their family and extended family all together and our bio-kids get to be part of a larger family as well.

Can you share something about yourself outside of caring?

Outside of caring I am heavily involved in my local community organising community events and advocacy. I am also involved with my local children's centre and primary school. In my free time I enjoy gardening, reading, playing video games and board games with the family.

What are your hopes for the Carer Council?

I hope that the Carer Council can bring carer views and voices to the minister and that in turn can bring change and positivity to the carer community as well as visibility of carers to the wider community.

