

Winter 2017 | carersinbeds.org.uk

Carers



A not-for-profit
organisation run for
carers by carers

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TEARS AND LAUGHTER BELONG TOGETHER

NEW RESPITE OFFER FROM AGE UK

DEMENTIA SERVICES UPDATE

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 digital resources
 for carers

Looking after someone?

Caring for a loved one who is ill, disabled or older can be valuable and rewarding, but without the right support caring can have an impact on your health, your job, your finances and your social life.

Visit carersdigital.org

Your Free Access Code is: **DGTL9072**

Use this code to get free access to all the digital products and online resources, including:



About Me eLearning Course

This online course aims to help you identify and find resources, technology and sources of support to prevent your caring responsibilities from becoming overwhelming.

Jointly Care co-ordination app

A central place to store and share important information about the person you are caring for. Set up appointments, allocate tasks, save files and notes, manage medication and lots more.

Free publications Carers UK guides

Essential reading for carers including: *Upfront guide to caring*, *Looking after someone - Carers Rights Guide 2016* and *Being heard: A self-advocacy guide for carers*

Links to more info and local resources

Access links to further resources and sources of local information and support for people who are looking after a loved one.

Scan to register without using a code:



Editorial

Welcome to the December edition of Carers. We have just held our first Carers' Conference; find out more on p. 4. The Conference was Anne Grant's last appearance as Chair of Carers in Bedfordshire. Hear from Anne, and meet our new Chair, Emma, on p. 20-21.

We're proud to introduce the **About Me** resource from Carers UK in partnership with Bedford Borough Council, and Age UK's new respite service for carers living in Central Bedfordshire (p. 8). We've also got three pages packed with Dementia service news. (pp. 16-18).

We'd also like to introduce Christine Marsh, Shani Davies, Misbah Mehmood and Maria Panteli, who have joined the team. Christine has joined our Dementia team and is based in Bedford, Shani and Misbah are working with Adult Carers in Central Bedfordshire, and Maria is the new Carers Lounge Coordinator at the Luton and Dunstable. Please do say hello when you pop in.

Christmas and New Year opening

Monday 25th and Tuesday 26th December - all offices closed.

Wednesday 27th, Thursday 28th, Friday 29th December -

Bedford office open 8.30-5pm; calls to 0300 111 1919 and 0300 111 9090 (Memory Navigation Service) will be answered.

Monday 1st January 2018 - all offices closed.

Please continue to get in touch with your stories and ideas for the magazine. A peaceful Christmas and New Year to everyone.

Helen

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groups and organisations.

NHS
Bedfordshire
Clinical Commissioning Group



NEWS



First Carers' Conference

Carers in Bedfordshire held its first ever Carers' Conference on Friday 17th November, in partnership with the East London Foundation Trust (ELFT), at the Rufus Centre in Flitwick. 152 carers and professionals attended to listen to keynote speakers, Emily Holzhausen, OBE, Dr Johan Schoeman, and four carers sharing their caring experiences. Carers tried out wellbeing opportunities including mindfulness, massage and Bollystep, and participated in a lively information and advice workshop. Find out more on our website.

What you told us in the survey

In March, 570 of you shared what life is like for you, and fed back on the support you have received, through the Adult Carers Survey. Thank you.

Your responses helped us understand whether what we do helps you. We also feed back what you tell us to the Local Authorities and other agencies to inform how services could be improved, for you and the person you care for.

Here are just a few of the things we learnt:

- **Over 50%** of you spend more than 71 hours per week caring
- **36%** of you have been caring for more than 10 years
- You rated the carers magazine and the carers grants our most helpful services

You told us that transport and being unable to leave the person you care for, were two of your biggest obstacles for not being able to access services.

For further details of the survey results please visit our website www.carersinbeds.org.uk

Roger is our Carer Experience and Quality Officer, our "Quality Man". Please contact Roger if you would like to feed anything back to us. He is based in our Bedford office.



Amsterdam Half Marathon



We did it! It was a very warm day but we all managed to finish our runs. There were plenty of people lining the route, encouraging us along and a shout out of 'Come on Bedfordshire, YOU can do it' went a long way to keeping us going. Finishing in the Olympic stadium was an uplifting experience for the Carers in Bedfordshire Five. We've raised £650 so far for Carers in Bedfordshire, and we're really proud! **Jenny**

Local authorities ask you to have your say

Mark Fensome and Jane Leek, Central Bedfordshire Council



In 2016 a range of preventative support services were commissioned for people in Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough.

These services are:

- Carers service provided by Carers in Bedfordshire
- Support services for people with a sensory impairment provided by Sight Concern
- Support services for people who have had a stroke provided by the Stroke Association
- Social and / or voice and empowerment support services provided by Autism Beds and Right Track
- Dementia Services provided by Carers in Bedfordshire, Alzheimer's Society and Tibbs Dementia Foundation.

The aim of these services is to improve outcomes for people, specifically to help people:

- live independently at home
- participate in their local community
- feel less isolated and lonely
- feel safe, secure, respected and valued

As these new services have been in place for just over 12 months we are keen to get your views on whether they are achieving these outcomes. We would therefore encourage you to spend a few moments providing your opinion on any of these services you have used within the last 12 months.

You can do this by completing a short questionnaire here www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/VCSO-Survey

If you would like to comment but need some help to do so, please contact Jane Leek (for Carers Services Jane.Leek@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk 0300 300 6639) or Mark Fensome (for Dementia Services mark.fensome@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk 0300 300 5121).



Mark



Jane

Locality News

Christmas festivities

Carers' groups have treats in store in the run up to Christmas. Carers in Leighton Buzzard will be 'Lighting up for Carers' in the Christmas Tree Competition and in Shefford carers will be going out for a Christmas meal. And the Carers Choir has a full schedule, singing at the Bedford Christmas Tree Festival, the Biggleswade carers group and the Taster Thursday session at St John's, Moggerhanger. Caring can be lonely and meeting other carers can really do you good, so do come along to one of our groups or learning activities.

Learning about your loved one

It's important that you have the opportunity to learn about the condition of the person you care for, so we are really fortunate to have Consultant Psychiatrist, Dr Middleton talking about Schizophrenia in the New Year in Leighton Buzzard. And e-learning workshops on medical conditions are provided by the NHS Recovery College and FutureLearn. Our Training webpage contains details of these workshops and you can follow us on Twitter: [@CarersInBeds](https://twitter.com/CarersInBeds) and Facebook: [CarersInBedfordshire](https://www.facebook.com/CarersInBedfordshire)

Digital learning

'About Me' is an on line resource for carers which helps you find resources, technology and sources of support to prevent your caring responsibility from becoming overwhelming. There's also 'Jointly', a care coordination app. Find these on Carers in Bedfordshire's website and there's more information in the advert on the inside front cover.

We are very fortunate to be Sainsburys' charity of the year in Biggleswade in the approach to Christmas so will be raising awareness and making a collection in store on the weekend of 15th December 2017. If you are shopping, say hello! Or if you want to help, let us know.



Sandra Rome



Sally Petre



Sharon Rogers

Want to help make *Carers* magazine better?

We are always looking for ways to improve *Carers* and would love your help. Why not join our Readers Group? You will meet four times a year and help us choose the right topics and keep it appealing! Contact Carol if you are interested on carol.solaiman@carersinbeds.org.uk; 0300 111 1919.

New Carers' Respite Services Offer

Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) has negotiated with Age UK Beds to provide a new respite service offer for Central Bedfordshire residents, to help carers have a break from their caring role. This increases the carers' respite offer, from sitting services only, to a range of services that will give carers greater choice.

The service will be applicable for carers aged 50+ in receipt of Carers Vouchers from the Council, who either:

- Care for someone who will not need personal care (including toileting) during the time that Age UK is supporting the cared-for person.
- Want a service that does not involve supporting the cared-for person.

The service will be available seven days a week, 9am to 8pm.

Initially services will include:

- Sitting services
- Taking the cared-for person for a walk, to the local garden centre, etc.
- Help with shopping
- Gardening
- Housework



Staff are Enhanced DBS checked and have completed Lifting and Handling, Dementia, Safeguarding and Bereavement training.

The Council's Brokerage team will provide details of these services to you if you live in Central Bedfordshire and receive Carer's Vouchers. You can then contact Age UK to arrange a service, and Age UK will arrange for a visit and assessment to be undertaken.

Once the service is completed, you would give the Age UK worker the Carers Vouchers to cover the hours of service provided and Age UK will invoice the Council for the value of the vouchers (£16 per hour).

Can I travel free on the bus?

If the person you care for has a disability or is a pensioner and they are unable to travel alone, they can apply for a companion pass.

The companion - or carer - travels free, or pays a very low fare, when accompanying the holder of the companion pass. You will need to contact the Council and request an application for a 'companion bus pass', or download an application form from the website.

The Council may require your GP (or qualified medical practitioner) to sign and stamp a certificate to confirm that the person you care for is unable to use public transport without another person to accompany them. Your doctor may charge for this.

Please note that the person you care for will need to meet the criteria set by the Council to qualify for this pass and the pass can only be used when the holder of the pass (the person you care for) is present.

For further information and/or to download forms or apply on line:

www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/transport/bus-pass/passes.aspx

www.bedford.gov.uk/transport_and_streets/public_transport/bus_pass.aspx

Carers' tip!
Watching the clock?



When you are away from your cared for do you find yourself constantly checking your watch or a clock to see how long you have been away?

Why not set an alarm on your mobile phone to alert you when you have been away for a certain period of time? This will take some of the worry away and give you some peace of mind whilst you take your well-earned break.



Stop Press! We've just heard Age UK Beds are developing a similar service for carers living in Beds Borough. Contact them for details; more in March's Carers magazine!

The Carers Respite Services Team at Age UK (Beds) can be contacted by:

Telephone: 01234 360510

Email: enquiries@ageukbedfordshire.org.uk



**Will your GP charge you?
Don't forget to ask first.**

Are you applying for a Carers' Grant? Want to ask your GP to endorse it? Please note that your GP surgery may charge you to endorse your grant application, as with other forms. You should check first before you leave forms for signature at the surgery, and if your GP is going to charge you, think of an alternative endorser.

"Could your counselling service help me?"

What is counselling?

It's a process people seek when they want to make changes, explore thoughts and feelings. Counselling allows people to discuss their problems safely, confidentially.

What can counselling help with?

If you are a carer or have been a carer, you may be experiencing many emotions. Stress, guilt, bereavement, trauma, loss - to name just a few. Counselling can help you work through these emotions.

How can counselling help?

For many, counselling offers a safe, confidential environment where talking is all it takes. Counselling enables freedom to explore thoughts while not being judged.

It can help you understand yourself better, which will help you develop a clearer understanding of your problems. Eventually you can come out the other side feeling more positive.

Our counsellors believe that our life experiences can distort our ability to grow emotionally. During counselling sessions you will be able to explore this and restore your ability to grow.

About the therapy.

The type of counselling we offer is Person Centred and most in tune with the issues carers face.

What to expect.

You might be feeling anxious about your first session. The decision to seek help is an important first step.

Your counsellor will try to gain an understanding of what you are struggling with. It's best to be as honest as you can.

Everything your counsellor is doing is to help you, even if it doesn't feel like it sometimes. You should aim to build a trusting relationship.

How many sessions will be needed?

This depends on the nature and severity of the problem.

Counselling takes time and consistency to work effectively.

"My experience with the counselling service has been fantastic, my counsellor has helped me to open up about my feelings and I feel after our sessions like a weight has been lifted - thank you."

What does it cost?

£15 a session. If you are eligible for a Carers Grant, you may apply for a grant towards a course of counselling.

What to do next.

Call us on 0300 111 1919.



Christina

Tears and Laughter go together

Jenny and Chris met two years ago through a mutual friend at church. It was like a bolt of lightning, knowing that there was someone else in the same boat. Chris says, "it felt like there was an angel looking down on me".

That was the start of a very special friendship. Jenny and Chris are both carers to their husbands who have Huntington's disease. Jenny talks about how difficult it has been to watch someone go downhill, losing speech, choking, involuntary movements, incontinence and memory loss. And how lonely caring has been.

Now Chris and Jenny are 'buddies', in contact with each other every day, sharing good and bad, having a moan, having a cry. And laughing! Yes, you heard that right, laughing.

Chris and Jenny both came along to a Carers in Bedfordshire group to hear a talk about Laughter Yoga, and went away determined to have 'a laugh a day'. Chris and Jenny share things that come up day by day. They share 'stupid things' texts and have a lively and sometimes



rather irreverent banter about the intimacies of personal care. And it does them good!

Chris and Jenny have become regulars at Carers in Bedfordshire - they found 5 Ways to Wellbeing helpful and Jenny enjoyed Mindfulness and Meditation - though to get away for half an hour to meditate without interruptions is a challenge. They are keen to follow up the First Aid course and get their certificate in the new year.

Chris and Jenny really recommend you try buddying with a carer in a similar situation as you. Maybe that's something which could help you? If you'd like to do that through Carers in Bedfordshire, please let us know.

And if you are caring for someone with Huntington's and would like to be in contact with Jenny and Chris, please contact Carers in Bedfordshire and we'll put you in touch.

**And do try 'a laugh a day'!
It could really do you good too!**

Workshop programme Jan – March 2018

Stay Safe

Everyday First Aid

Jill Organ,
British Red Cross

Covers broken bones, strains and sprains, head injuries, bleeding and dealing with unresponsiveness. Includes an information pack and certificate but the course will not qualify you as a first aider.

Weds 28th February,
1pm-3pm

Leighton Buzzard

Venue: to be advised. We will confirm when you book.

Free
(Donations welcome)

Emergency First Aid at Work Certification Day

Helen Bell-Day

For carers wanting a recognised First Aid qualification. Certificate valid for three years. Please bring a packed lunch.

Thurs 19th April,
9am - 4.30pm

Bedford office

Free
(Donations welcome)

Moving & Handling

Jennie Archer,
physiotherapist

Covers good handling techniques, safety measures to avoid injury and caring for your back.

Mon 5th March,
10am-midday

Dunstable Fire Station

Free
(Donations welcome)

Care Confidently

Coping with Change

Contemplating sharing care with a paid carer, or residential care. Whatever your circumstances, this workshop will help you find strategies to help.

Tues 23rd Jan,
10.30am-12.30pm

Sea Cadets HQ,
Biggleswade

Free
(Donations welcome)

Change for Good

Larissa Clarke,
Transition Coaching

Larissa will be talking about ways to make and maintain positive changes in your life. Learning for all carers and Choose your Challenge participants.



Weds 17th January,
9.30am-midday
Bedford office

Free (register in advance, donations welcome)

Find out more about Choose Your Challenge 2018 on pp. 22-23.

Medication Management

Smarta Healthcare

Finding medication confusing? Have questions about the medication your loved one takes? Bring your queries along.

Tues 20th February,
10.30am-12.30pm

St Nicholas Church Hall,
Barton-le-Clay

Free
(donations welcome)

Hate Crime

Georgia Searle,
Bedfordshire Police

How does hate crime affect disabled people? What should I do if I witness a hate crime?

Weds 28th February,
10.30am-midday

Sea Cadets HQ,
Biggleswade

Free
(Donations welcome)

Power of Attorney

Nigel Ashton,
Woodfines Solicitors

Struggling to understand what Power of Attorney means for you and your loved one? Nigel will tell you what you need to know, and take your questions.

Tues 6th March,
10.30am - 12.30pm

Bedford office

Free
(Donations welcome)

Wellbeing

Biggleswade Art Group

Deidre Porter Hanson

Thursdays starting
18th January,
10.30am-12.30pm

Sea Cadets HQ,
Biggleswade

£40 per course or £6 per session

Try Art Session

Deidre Porter Hanson

Want to try something new? Come and discover your hidden talents!

Thurs 8th March,
1.30-3.30pm

St. Nicholas Church Hall,
Barton-le-Clay

Free
(donations welcome)

Mix Media (Art)

Anne Thompson

Take 2 hours out of your week to be totally absorbed in drawing and art.

Friday 12th, 19th January; 2nd, 9th, 16th February; 2nd, 9th March
10.30 - 12.30pm

Bedford office

£35 per course; £6.00 per session

Wellness

Dawn Sunrise

A firm favourite with carers, including relaxation skills and gentle exercise. "It always leaves me feeling calm after a session. It gives me skills for everyday life."

Course 1:

Monday 19th,
26th February;
5th March,
12-1pm

Course 2:

Monday 12th, 19th,
26th March,
12-1pm

Bedford office

£15 per course,
£6 per session

Ceramics (for Carer and your loved one)

Mandy Thurland

You'll learn how to create a piece of hand pottery, such as an animal, a train or a leaf. Open to both carers and the person you care for.

Tuesday 13th, 20th, 27th March; 10th, 17th, 24th April; 1st, 8th May
10.30am -12.30pm

Bedford office

£40 per course,
£6.00 per session

Information

Technology (IT), 5 Ways to Wellbeing, Meet the Team and Relaxation therapy will also be running. For up to date information, please visit carersinbeds.org.uk

To book:

Biggleswade/Barton
please contact

Dawn Ray
01767 315079

Leighton Buzzard/
Dunstable please contact

Sarah Johnson
07772 231 208

Bedford
please contact

Nicola West
0300 111 1919



Staying Warm and Well this Winter

Barbara Wonford,
Bedford Borough Council

In common with the rest of England and other countries across Europe, more people die in the winter in Bedfordshire than in the summer. Here are some tips to keep you warm and well during those cold months.

Warm Home Discount Schemes

You could get £140 off your electricity bill for winter 2017 to 2018 under the Warm Home Discount Scheme. It's a one-off discount on your electricity bills between October and March. The discount won't affect your Cold Weather Payment or Winter Fuel payment.

You qualify for the discount if on 9 July 2017 all of the following applied:

- Your electricity supplier was part of the scheme
- Your name (or your partner's name) was on the bill
- You were getting the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit (even if you get Savings Credit as well)

You may be able to apply directly to your electricity supplier for help if you don't get the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit but:

- You are on a low income
- You get certain means-tested benefits

Check with your supplier to see if you are eligible.

The following suppliers are part of the scheme:

Atlantic, Bristol Energy, British Gas, Co-operative Energy, Economy Energy, EDF Energy, E.on, Equipower (Ebico), Equigas (Ebico), Extra Energy, First Utility, Flow Energy, Fischer Energy, GB Energy, Manweb (see Scottish Power), M&S energy, npower, Our Power, OVO, Sainsbury's Energy (see British Gas), Scottish Gas (see SSE), Scottish Hydro (see SSE), Scottish Power, Southern Electric, Spark Energy, SSE, Swalec, Utilita, Utility Warehouse.

For more information on keeping warm in winter see:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/winterhealth/Pages/Winterhealthhome.aspx>

Other top tips for keeping healthy in the winter months are:

Banish winter tiredness

This is often due to lack of sunlight, which disrupts our sleep and waking cycles. So get outdoors in natural daylight as much as possible, get a good night's sleep, and destress with exercise or meditation.

Eat more fruit and veg

It's tempting to fill up on comfort food when it's cold and dark. Ensure you maintain a healthy diet with plenty of fruit and vegetables. Winter vegetables such as carrots, parsnips, swede and turnips can be roasted, mashed or made into soup for a comforting winter meal.

Keep your immune system happy

You are more likely to get a cold in winter so milk and dairy products such as cheese, yoghurt and fromage frais are great sources of protein, vitamins A and B12, and calcium to help keep bones strong.

Save money on your prescriptions!

Pay for a prescription and it's £8.60 a time, so if you need them regularly it can really add up. If you have more than one prescription a month, you can save money and get a prepayment certificate. A three-month one costs £29.10, a year's costs £104 - and once you've got it it covers all your prescriptions in that time. Apply via the NHS

Prescriptions website (www.nhs.uk/help-nhs-prescription-costs/prescription-prepayment-certificates). You can pay by card or, to spread the cost, direct debit. Forms are also available at certain pharmacies, or alternatively call 0300 330 1341.

Barbara Wonford, Senior Officer for Public Health (Place and Strategy), Bedford Borough Council Tel: 01234 276874 (ext 44874)

Stay Well this Winter and keep an eye on family, friends, and neighbours who may be most vulnerable to falling seriously ill during the colder months.

- If they can, keep the room/home heated to at least 18 degrees C (65f)
- The flu jab is the best way to protect yourself and the person you care for from flu
- Seek immediate advice and help from a pharmacist as soon as they feel unwell, before it gets too serious
- Keep basic cold and flu medicine at home
- Collect prescriptions early especially during the winter months
- Take all prescribed medicines as directed.

New workshops for 2018

Want to learn more about dementia and the support available? Sign up for a programme from Tibbs Dementia Foundation (TDF) or the Alzheimer's Society. To book, call Tibbs or the Alzheimer's Society direct, or call the Memory Navigation Service on 0300 111 9090 and we can book for you.

TDF's **Support for Memory** is for people with a recent diagnosis of dementia and their main supporter. Over six weeks participants learn together about the changes and challenges a diagnosis can bring, support available and healthy lifestyle tips. Participants work together to build strategies for managing symptoms, plan for the future, and build up a network of support and friendship.

London Road Surgery, London Road, Bedford. 10.45am-1.15pm
10th January-14th February
28th February-4th April

The Alzheimer's Society's **Living Well with Dementia** programme helps people living with early stage dementia develop the understanding, skills and practical tools, to take an active role in the management of their own health and well-being.

The next programme will run for seven consecutive weeks from the 19th January between 10.00am - 12.30pm at St Andrews Rooms, St Andrews St, Biggleswade, SG18 8BA.

Memory Navigation Service
0300 111 9090

Tibbs Dementia Foundation
01234 210993

Alzheimer's Society
01234 327380

Don't forget to check out memoryinbeds.org.uk for the latest information on local memory services and useful information.



Call the Memory Navigation Service

Mon-Fri 11am-1pm to get the latest on groups and activities and have your dementia questions answered. If you ring outside these times the line will be answered and we will get back to you.

0300 111 9090

Carers, groups

The **Barton-le-Clay** carers' group is a proactive, supportive group, which meets on alternate Tuesdays at St Nicholas Church Hall, MK45 4LA from 2 - 3.30pm. The first meeting in 2018 will be on 16th January. This group runs alongside the Cognitive Stimulation Group run by the Alzheimer's Society.

The **Dunstable** carers' group meets on the first Thursday of the month at St Augustine's Church Hall, Oakwood Avenue, LU5 4AR from 11.30am-12.30pm - the first meeting in 2018 is 4th January. This runs alongside the Alzheimer's Society Oomph Group.

The **Henlow** Wellbeing group meets monthly on the third Friday of the month at the Community Room, Henlow Gardens, SG16 6DG from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Discussion topics have included nutrition and benefits; activities include armchair exercise. Carers can attend alone or with the person with dementia.

We recently started a **Cognitive Stimulation Therapy (CST) group** running for 14 weeks from 20th November in Leighton Buzzard at St Georges Court, St Georges Close, **Leighton Buzzard**, LU7 1BF every Monday morning from 11am - 12pm, for people with dementia. If you think you would be interested in this, please contact us.

Carers of someone with dementia are welcome at all our carers' groups. Call us or visit the website for times, dates and locations.



Come to Tibbs Dementia Foundation's

Christmas Extravaganza

Music 4 Memory and friends' annual Christmas celebration will take place on Saturday 16th December. Come along for an inclusive afternoon of fun and merriment, singing, dancing, poetry and laughter. All welcome to this free event - just turn up!

All Saint's Church,
Westbourne Road,
Queen's Park,
Bedford

Saturday 16th December

3.00pm-4.30pm

followed by refreshments

Herbert Protocol

Catherine Bishop,
Alzheimer's Society

Alzheimer's Society and Bedfordshire Police are working in partnership to deliver the Herbert Protocol for missing persons with dementia.

The Herbert Protocol encourages people with dementia to register their details with the police, with a current photograph. Should that person get lost or go missing the police can access that information instantly, mobilising their resources as quickly as possible to find the person and return them to safety.

People with dementia may go missing for a number of reasons. The obvious one may be forgetting a previously familiar route or taking a wrong turn (and how many of us have done that?!), but they may also be searching for a place or person which is no longer there, such as a workplace or home. I don't use the term "wandering" as the person may have a definite destination or purpose in mind when they set off.

As a Dementia Support Worker I can work with families before or after an incident and help them find solutions to keeping their loved one safe, such as using technology or finding additional services to add interest and routine to someone's day.

People with dementia can sign up to the protocol by calling Bedfordshire Police on 101 or by emailing dementia@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk

Catherine Bishop,
Alzheimer's Society
Dementia Support
Worker catherine.bishop@alzheimers.org.uk



The Alzheimer's Society's Activity groups Jan – March 2018

For people with a dementia diagnosis and their carers. Each group has a theme and gives confidence as well as the chance to chat to others.

Leighton Buzzard - Comedy
10.30am Tuesdays, fortnightly,
starts 9th January, Astral Park
Community Centre

Biggleswade - Music, 10.30am
Wednesdays, fortnightly, starts 17th
January, Trinity Methodist Church

Dunstable - Music, 10.30am
Thursdays, fortnightly, starts 11th
January, Salvation Army Hall

Dunstable - Oomph, 10.30am
Thursdays, fortnightly, starts 4th
January, St Augustine's Church

Young Onset activity group
Shefford, 10.30am third Wednesday
of the month, starts 24th January,
Aragon Housing Association

For further information and details of all Alzheimer's Society services, call **01234 327380** or contact the Memory Navigation Service on **0300 111 9090** memoryinbeds.org.uk

When a young person is bereaved....



As a Young Carers Service we have the privilege of supporting some wonderful young people. We share happiness, fun and adventures but a young carer may also need us when the person they care for passes away.

How children and young people deal with bereavement varies according to their age, maturity and understanding of events. Specialist support can be needed to understand and work through loss. We provide ongoing support to young carers following bereavement and signpost to relevant agencies.

The Child Bereavement Service has a wide range of experienced, trained professionals and volunteers throughout Bedfordshire. Barneys supports children aged up to 12, while CHUMS helps older children and young people. Individual support and group workshops are available. Workshops offer a safe and supportive environment where children and young people are helped to explore what has happened to them, to understand the feelings they are experiencing and to find ways of coping. Children and young people may decide that they need a bit of both, and that's ok. The service is free and confidential.

Phone: 01525 863924
Email: info@chums.uk.com
www.chums.uk.com

Bedford Open Door is a charity providing free and confidential counselling to young people aged from 13 years. Counselling is provided by a team of fully trained, experienced and friendly volunteer counsellors. Counselling by appointment is available as well as a drop in service.

Phone: 01234 360388
Email: ucounselling@bedfordopendoor.org.uk
www.bedfordopendoor.org.uk

Cruse Bereavement Care is the leading national charity for bereaved people providing services with a network of 5,000 trained volunteers and are confidential and free. Cruse offers face-to-face, telephone, email and website support to children, young people and adults.

Free phone national helpline:
0808 808 1677 or for Bedfordshire: 0300 200 4108
www.cruse.org.uk and <http://hopeagain.org.uk> for children and young people.

Update from the Board

New Board members

At Carers in Bedfordshire's AGM on November 17th, three new Board members were elected:

Keith Lee was a full time carer for his wife with dementia for 3 ½ years until she moved to residential care. His specialism is internal auditing and information technology.

Sue Lowe cared for her mother with vascular dementia. She is a Human Resources specialist.

Tim Napper works for Carers in Hertfordshire, managing finance and central support services. Previously he worked in Adult Social Care commissioning.

Farewell Anne. Welcome Emma

At the AGM we offered a fond farewell to Anne Grant who stood



Keith



Sue



Tim

down after 7 years as Chair, and 13 on the Board. Our new Chair is Emma Wilkinson. Emma has cared for older relatives and a brother with a learning disability. She is a senior research fellow in health services at the University of Bedfordshire, where her work includes research with patients and carers.

Emma will be coming to the Bedford office to say "hello" on Thursday 14th December, including attending the Volunteer Christmas Drop In between 12 and 2pm. Please come and meet her if you haven't already.



The Rt. Hon Alistair Burt MP, President of Carers in Bedfordshire, led the tributes to outgoing Chair, Anne Grant. Pictured here with Helen Satterthwaite, CEO, and Emma Wilkinson.

Emma says "The importance of informal caring is something that's close to my heart as well as something I work on in my day job so I'm really thrilled to be becoming the new Chair of Carers in Bedfordshire. We know carers face challenges on a daily basis and there are challenges for carers' organisations that support them, so our Board will be working hard to make sure the organisation continues to adapt to make sure our funds are spent wisely for the benefit of carers."



Anne says

Despite saying "No thanks, I don't want to be a trustee" to Yvonne Clark, Carers in Bedfordshire's founder, 13 years ago, somehow I became a trustee and subsequently Chair of the Board! I have enjoyed every minute. It has been a steep learning curve, helped enormously by the support of the close, supportive team of Board, staff and volunteers. The most important thing is the feeling that runs through the whole organisation, that if it does not benefit carers, Carers in Bedfordshire won't do it! As a carer for my husband, who suffered a brainstem stroke over 25 years ago leaving him a tetraplegic without speech, that remains the most important thing to me.

I would like to thank all those who I have got to know. I have gained far more than I have given back; it's kept the fading brain cells from totally atrophying! Although I have stepped down from the Board, I will continue to be involved in some way with Carers in Bedfordshire. It is a fabulous organisation.

Anne Grant



Gardening – helping you care

Do your plants make you feel better? Gardening can be very therapeutic and help us deal with the stresses of life. If you are happy to share with other carers in the Spring edition of the magazine how gardening has helped you cope with your caring role, please let Carol know on carol.solaiman@carersinbeds.org.uk We'd love to see your pictures too!

Help with independent living...

Does the person you care for struggle with some everyday tasks because of disability or infirmity? You've seen the aids you can buy, but they just don't quite work for your family. You might even have asked a care professional, but they're stuck too.

We are a team of design and make engineers here in Bedford that love solving these problems. We're part of a national charity, but talk to us locally - you'd be amazed at what we've done - from very simple little gadgets to use of modern technology.

We're here to help, call us. 01234 741846 or 07982 453108
www.remap.org.uk





Choose Your Challenge 2018

Whether it's finally signing up for that 'couch to 5k' course, giving up smoking once and for all, going 'dry' in January, resisting the temptation of chocolate - or cake - or whatever you can't live without, share that challenge with us and we'll help you make it stick!

Why not raise money for Carers in Bedfordshire too? We're looking for 100 people to raise at least £100 each towards our support for carers. Only you know what will challenge you - and what will get your friends and family supporting you with sponsorship.

Register your challenge online at carersinbeds.org.uk/challenge and we'll send you our Choose Your Challenge pack, including tips on setting smart goals and meeting them, on fundraising with friends and online, and on making positive changes that will last.

Register by December 31st and come along to Larissa's special 'Change for Good' session on Wednesday 17th January, 9.30-midday at our Bedford Office. **Please let us know if you plan to come by calling 0300 111 1919.**



Larissa Clarke of Transition Coaching is offering her support as you Choose Your Challenge in 2018.

Larissa's tips for making your Challenge stick!

Make 1 small change a week, nothing dramatic:

- 1 less cigarette
- 1 less glass of wine, 1 extra glass of water
- walk 1,000 extra steps

Small achievable bite size tweaks can transform your daily life.

Imagine how different things could look a year from now...



Cakes and Kilometres for Carers



Darran, Parent Carer Support Coordinator here at Carers in Bedfordshire, has already chosen his challenge. He'll be running a total

of 100 kilometres in January - and you can sponsor him at justgiving.com/100K4CiB. Darran says, "I love to run. It's good for my physical and mental wellbeing but sometimes I lack motivation (especially when it's cold and dark outside). What better motivation than raising some much need funds to support unpaid family carers in Bedfordshire?"

Sandra, Bedford Locality Lead, is flattered by how much we all love her scones, so has decided to do a sponsored cakeathon - how many can she bake in a day? What a yummy challenge!



Help Helen choose



Helen, our CEO here at Carers in Bedfordshire, can't make up her mind which challenge to choose. You can help by going online and helping her decide at carersinbeds.org.uk/challenge. Helen says, "I can't wait to get going on my challenge - whatever it turns out to be!" She's promised to take on the one that has the most votes by 31st December - and we're all looking forward to seeing which one you choose for her.

Pick from Water Wipeout - the ultimate obstacle race and very muddy assault course, **the Jubilee Swim** - a 10k open water dip in a flood channel off the Thames, or the **London NightRider** - a 50k bike ride through central London at night.

Kids Care Too!

We've got some great ideas for challenges that kids could take on - from organising a non-uniform day at school to baking cakes for family and friends, giving up chocolate for a month, or promising to eat your greens every day. There are so many choices - **how creative can you make your challenge?**

We need you!

Want to make a difference in 2018?
We may have a volunteer opportunity
that is right up your street!



IT helper – Bedford or Biggleswade

Are you patient and good at explaining technical things to non-technical people?

Please come and support carers on an individual basis to use their mobile phone, tablet or laptop.

Welcoming face and a friendly smile – Biggleswade

There's nothing like the smell of fresh toast and butter... put on the kettle at the Sea Cadets HQ in Biggleswade and help us give carers a lovely welcome at our Tea & Toast group on the third Monday morning each month.

We also need a friendly face to welcome and offer a cuppa to visitors to the Memory Gateway in Biggleswade every second Monday of the month.

A passion for photos – Bedford

Is your passion for photography infectious! Our Bedford camera club is looking for a new leader to work with the group to explore new projects and techniques!

**Last Thursday of every month,
1.30 - 3.30pm.**

Flying the flag for CIB – across Bedfordshire

Could you be our local ambassador in the Leighton Buzzard or Dunstable area? You can choose whether to help at a stall at a community event, be one of a collecting team at a local supermarket or give a talk to a local group or donor organisation. This would be perfect for you if you want to help out now and again in your local area and you enjoy meeting new people.

Why not call Carol, our Volunteer Coordinator? She can tell you more about our current opportunities or where else you could offer your services.

