

Autumn 2016 | carersinbeds.org.uk

Carers



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

Registered Charity
No. 1135507



**DISCOUNT CARD
COMES TO BEDFORD**

CQC – WHO ARE THEY?

CARERS' GRANTS NEWS

AGM – 25 NOV 16

Stay well this winter

Don't forget your flu vaccine

You are entitled to request a free flu jab from your GP if you:

- provide unpaid care to family or friends, or
- are in receipt of the carer allowance for looking after vulnerable adults or children

Did you know you can transfer the flu virus to someone you look after. Be safe - get your flu vaccine.

Speak to your GP to book an appointment



Redford Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire Council working together



Editorial

Welcome to the September 2016 edition of Carers. We hope you all had a lovely summer and had the opportunity to join in some of the events and groups we had running. Carers Week flashed by in June and was a blur of scones, jam and cream! We also had the official opening of the Luton and Dunstable Carers Lounge.



Our Chief Officer, Helen, has some important news on p7 about local services and is keen to hear what

you think of the improvements and changes we are proposing, including to the grants scheme (p9). We are also featuring some of the fun activities the Young Carers did recently and we have a lovely carer's story from a former carer who has benefited immensely from our groups and activities (pp10-11).

It is that time of year again where we need to prepare for winter so don't forget to book in for your flu jab at your GP surgery - for you and the person you look after.

We are all busy now preparing for Carers Rights Day and our AGM on the 25th November and we have exciting plans afoot.

Please continue to get in touch with me with your ideas and stories for the magazine.

Nicola
nikki.brandon@carersinbeds.org.uk

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Cover photo: Young carers at Young
Carers Festival: see page 19

NEWS

Alistair Burt steps down from front bench

**Our President and Bedfordshire
North East MP, Alistair Burt**
announced in July that he is
stepping down from his frontbench
role as Health Minister as of
September.

Commons Speaker John Bercow
paid tribute to Mr Burt for being
an "extremely popular and
respected minister who commands
widespread affection and loyalty in
all parts of the House."

Alistair Burt remains our charity
president and plans to address our
AGM in November (see p.17)



Training brochures

With this edition of the magazine we
are sending you a handy brochure of
the groups and training coming up in
your area. For a full list of groups and
training please visit our website.
If you would like to book on any
of the training courses listed
**please contact either Nic West,
Sarah Johnson or Dawn Ray.**

Bedford Café new venue

Our Bedford Carers Café has moved!
We no longer meet at Goldington
Day Centre, instead we are at Priory
Methodist Church, 63 Newnham
Avenue, Bedford, MK41 9QJ. The café
runs on the 4th Saturday of the month.
**For further information please call
Joanne White on 0300 111 1919.**

New website

www.carersinbeds.org.uk

Just in time for Carers Week, we
launched a new website. Feedback
from carers so far suggests it is much
easier to navigate and looks much
more contemporary. Check out some
of the pages such as What's On, or
Carers Cafés and let us know what you

think of the website
by emailing
**website@
carersinbeds.org.uk**



New discounts available for Bedford Borough carers

We're delighted that we
can now offer the Carers
Discount Card to unpaid family
carers living in Bedford Borough in
partnership with Bedford Borough
Council and Bedfordshire Clinical
Commissioning Group.

More than 60 businesses are
offering discounts to carers on
products and services ranging
from food and drink to transport,
holidays to household goods. You
can receive discounts from many
household names - including
Butlins, Haven, Wiltshire Foods
and Virgin Experience - as well as
coffee shops and chemists.

The scheme was launched in
Central Bedfordshire in October
2015 and over 400 carers have
cards. We are eager to sign up
more Bedford-based businesses,
so if you know any who you think
would like to join the scheme
please ask them to get in touch.
All you need do to register for a
card is complete the form on the
back of this magazine and return
it to our Bedford office with a
passport sized photo. There
are further details on our
website. Happy
shopping!



Carers Week News

Carers Week saw the formal opening of Carers in Bedfordshire's Carers' Lounge within St Mary's Wing of the Luton and Dunstable Hospital by Alistair Burt MP.

The service is funded by Luton Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire Council and forms part of the Luton Carers Network which supports people living and caring in Luton.

The Lounge has now been running for a year and is staffed by Carers in Bedfordshire support workers and volunteers. Representatives



from MIND, the Disability Resource Centre's Confident Caring service, the Stroke Association, Alzheimer's Society and Keech Hospice are available in the Lounge regularly to support carers.

To contact the Carers Lounge call: 01582 491166, open Monday to Friday, 10am - 5pm.



Book Club 1st Anniversary

The Mindful Bookclub celebrated its first birthday in June 2016! The club gives carers an opportunity to meet monthly,

review a book and have a gossip. We have so far read eleven books, everything from sci-fi to drama, fiction to non-fiction.

The group is warm, friendly and supportive, and all agree they are more friends now than people who like reading. Our focus is each other first and the books second.

We hope next to visit the cinema together and get back into creative writing.

"When I joined the book club I was at a low point. I felt a great warmth and kindness from everyone. This was of course more important than the books themselves although you can escape into a book. Just being amongst people who 'get it' makes such a difference."

We hope to celebrate many more years to come and welcome anyone interested in joining! For dates/times please call Jaz Sargeant on 0300 111 1919.

Carers' Services Update



We are delighted to confirm that, following a tender process coordinated by Central Bedfordshire Council, Carers in Bedfordshire has secured the contract to deliver support to carers from 1st October 2016, for the next three years.

The contract is jointly funded by Central Bedfordshire Council, Bedford Borough Council and Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and allows us to continue services that we know you find beneficial, including:

- Cafés
- Grants
- Carer Groups
- The Carers Rest and volunteer befriending for carers of someone living with dementia
- Services for young carers living in Bedford Borough and sibling carers in Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire, including sibling workshops, young carer clubs, peer mentor scheme and the Hubs for Young Adult carers.

We are thrilled that our core services are secure for at least three years, and our priority is to ensure that we continue to offer you a wide range of services to support you as you care, whatever your circumstances.

At the time of writing, over 7,800 carers are registered with Carers in Bedfordshire, an increase of nearly 4,000 since I joined in 2013. It's fantastic that so many carers are aware of the support available. But the income we receive across all sources has not increased proportionally, so we will be pursuing a range of initiatives to ensure we maintain a wide range of services for all carers. These will include introducing a small charge for some services, and stepping up our fundraising.

Please read the letter from me enclosed with this magazine to find out more. We will be developing our plans and discussing them with you over the coming months and will announce more in December's magazine. The letter also refers to the tender process for dementia services in Bedfordshire, the results of which, at the time of writing, are not yet available.

As always, if you have any concerns or wish anything to be clarified, please ring us on 0300 111 1919. You can email me directly at helen.satterthwaite@carersinbeds.org.uk or contact any member of the team.

CQC – who are they?

How can you be sure your loved ones are getting the right care from a social care or NHS provider? Do you know how to complain if you feel they are not being looked after properly?

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the regulator who monitors all organisations providing community care services including hospitals, care homes, home care agencies, GP practices and dentists. Care providers have to be registered with CQC and have to conform to a set of standards.

These are the 'fundamental standards' everybody has a right to expect:

- Person-centred care
- Dignity and respect
- Consent
- Safety
- Safeguarding from abuse
- Food and drink
- Premises and equipment
- Complaints
- Good governance
- Fit and proper staff
- Duty of candour
- Display of ratings

If you, or someone you care for, experiences poor care you can do the following:

- Raise your concerns with the service
- Tell the Care Quality Commission

The CQC's role as regulator means they cannot settle individual complaints but do want to hear about your experiences, good or bad. If a service is not meeting required standards CQC will take action to ensure improvement. The CQC's regulations are that services should support positive relations with carers.

You can raise any concerns about services that you or the person you care for have received in the following ways: 03000 616161 or tellus@cqc.org.uk



Carers Grants news



The NHS Carers Grants scheme, administered by Carers in Bedfordshire, is a key way that you can access a service or product that will improve your health and/or wellbeing.

Many of you tell us what a positive difference a grant has made. But we also hear that the scheme is not perfect; in particular you tell us that the form is too long and the process too complicated.

Over the past few months we have reviewed your feedback – the good and the not so good – and will be introducing the following modifications to the scheme from 1st October 2016:

- A shorter application form which, together with the revised criteria, will be available from later this month from CiB offices and our website, www.carersinbeds.org.uk
- All applications for a product or service with a value below £120 may be eligible for 'fast track'; to be considered by the panel more frequently than monthly
- There will be no upper limit on the value of grant you can apply for, but the panel will be unlikely to award more than £300
- Applications for a product or service with a value over £120 will need to be supported with a written quotation. These applications will be assessed by the panel monthly, as currently

- Applications will still need to be endorsed by a professional – for example, a health visitor, GP or social worker – who is familiar with your health and wellbeing, is not a family member or friend, and who will not gain from the grant award
- Confirmation of awards will be sent by email where possible so you find out your result quickly
- Payment against receipts will be made fortnightly and the minimum amount claimable will increase to £20. Exceptions to these can be made by prior arrangement.

Please use the new forms and criteria when you are applying for your grant if you plan to apply after 1st October. However, we will consider applications made using the current forms and criteria up until the end of 2016.

Our plans are still evolving so please feel free to share your thoughts on these changes by contacting the Grants team on 0300 111 1919 or by emailing grants@carersinbeds.org.uk

Making new friends



This edition's carer's story comes from Jackie Harris. Jackie is a former carer for her husband (pictured) and volunteers for Carers in Bedfordshire as well as coming to our art group, former carers group and cafés.

"I had been caring for my husband Alan for about six months without any help. Things were tough. My sister had told me about a meeting for carers at St Andrews Church. I was reluctant to go, but decided on a compromise - I would go for the last hour.

I was greeted by lovely warm kind people from various organisations

including Carers in Bedfordshire. I am so glad I went as it turned out to be an ongoing nurturing relationship.

I joined the art group and went to the meetings. What a relief to be able to talk to people in similar situations! Alan and I would also go to the Carers Cafés together.

I soon realised that one of the hidden benefits of joining Carers in Bedfordshire was the support and friendships made there. These friendships led to arranging to meet up as a group when the cafés were closed in January. Theatre trips with lunch out soon followed. We tried to help others out; transport to hospitals is a big comfort when you have another carer with you.

So is exchanging practical tips on coping with various problems, having someone to listen to your woes without burdening the family.

Four years ago, Alan died and I was left feeling purposeless, what now? Once again Carers in Bedfordshire came to my rescue when I started volunteering, first at the Carers Lounge at Bedford Hospital and then at the Biggleswade office.

And guess what? Those friendships made through Carers in Bedfordshire continue to this day. I enjoy going to the former carers dining club, organised by them. Us 'ex' carers are still in close contact with each other, we meet for lunch, do art together when there are no art classes on and some of us knit together too. Thank goodness I decided to go to that first meeting, it changed my life."



Carers Tip

Did you know that our local authorities produce handbooks for carers to complete on behalf of the person they care for if they have any communication difficulties?

These can be helpful if they are in hospital and you can't be with them 24/7. All their preferences and essential information is to hand for the doctors and nurses.

These are particularly useful for carers of those with learning difficulties, dementia or memory loss and for parent carers too.

Check out the training brochure you received with the magazine for your nearest groups and events.

Localities News

Bedford Locality News

How creative Bedford carers are!

Recently, members of the Camera Club and the Mixed Media Art groups participated in the 'Weaving Narratives' project, in partnership with Bedford Archives. Carers toured the archive to see the conservation of historic materials about Bedford's past. Everyone found something of interest to them.

For example, Dennis found maps relating to the area where the new cinema is being built and John found out about Bedford's military history. Michelina had worked at Moggerhanger hospital and found photos of the old sanatorium. Sheila found the history of the Meltis sweet factory in Bedford and saw sketches of the chocolates.

All very fascinating!

Anne, our Mixed Media Art course tutor, has the group now following up with projects based on the archive. Look out for our exhibition of the Weaving Narratives project work coming soon.

Whether it's on television, at the leisure centre or from the NHS, are you hearing people talking more these days about 'Wellbeing'? It's an important subject for carers. I heard a great definition recently - 'feeling good and functioning well'. I'm sure you get ups and downs in how you are coping. These are the ups and downs of wellbeing. Look out for ways to support your wellbeing in our Groups and Training brochure which arrived with this magazine.



West Mid Beds Locality News

(covering Amptill, Flitwick, Barton le Clay and Woburn area)

We were pleased with the success of the information day in Barton le Clay and will be arranging some other events here, starting with a course on Managing Stress on 24th October.

The café in Flitwick now has crafts and armchair exercises on offer so please do come along.

We are hoping to do some events/training in the Marston Moretaine/Woburn area so if anyone who lives in this area has any ideas, please do contact us. We are looking forward to meeting you all soon.



Ivel Valley Locality News

(covering Biggleswade, Sandy, Shefford, Stotfold and surrounding villages)

We have been raising more awareness in the area. We were lucky to be Biggleswade Sainsburys' Charity of the Year and appreciated that they raised **£3,625** for our funds and allowed us to have an information stand in the store. I have been talking to the GP surgeries in the area which also helps us raise awareness.

The Carers Choir in Biggleswade continues to grow but we are always keen for more members. And remember we are still offering relaxation therapies at the Biggleswade office.

We will be holding a Meet The Team event on the 22nd November for all carers registered in the last 6 months. **Come and find out more about the services we offer.**



Leighton Buzzard & Chiltern Vale News

We had a great turnout for Carers Week activities and the number of cream teas we made at eight different groups means I am now exploring a catering career!!!

We would really like new members for the walking group - numbers have dwindled recently, but those who attend really enjoy it. **Please contact Sarah Johnson on 07772231208, for details or if you are interested in joining us.**

Hopefully most of you have now seen Jane Stokes' update and thank you letter. It's so lovely so many of you have asked after her. Anyone who hasn't seen it, please ask when you see me at a café or group.



Extra concessions for Blue Badge Holders

Did you know if you or the person you care for is a blue badge holder, you may be eligible for exemptions from road tolls or access to places where other vehicles are restricted? Here we have found out other concessions that may be available.



Radar Toilet Key

A Radar Toilet Key allows people living with a disability access to use disabled toilet facilities nationwide. The Royal Association for Disability Rights (RADAR) is a national charity that campaigns for the rights of people with a disability or health conditions and the Radar key scheme fits into the charity's objectives to promote freedom and choice.

Who can get a toilet key?

There is no need to provide proof of disability. Parents can apply on behalf of disabled children, spouses can apply on behalf of each other and those considered to have a mental illness also qualify.

The keys are given on trust that the applicant considers themselves or the person they are caring for to be disabled.

New Users - £2.50

Cost for lost/missing keys - £6.00

Contact

Residents in Bedford Borough should contact Customer Contact Centre, 2 Horne Lane, Bedford, MK40 1RA, 01234 718060 or email **environment.helpdesk@bedford.gov.uk**

Residents in Central Bedfordshire should contact Disability Recourse Centre, Poynters House, Poynters Road, Dunstable, Bedfordshire, LU5 4TP or Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, Bedfordshire, SG17 5TQ.



Are you a pensioner or disabled bus pass holder living in Bedford Borough? Bedford Borough Council are proposing you pay £1 for any journey starting before 9.30am or after 11pm on weekdays. To find out more and to comment on this proposal, please visit www.bedford.gov.uk/earlytravel



Road tax

If you or the person you care for are severely disabled and meet certain other criteria, your road tax may be free.

To qualify, one of the following must apply:

- you/they get the higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- you/they get the enhanced rate of the mobility component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
- you/they get Armed Forces Independence Payment (AFIP)
- you/they get War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement
- you/they are aged 65 or over.

You can only be exempt from paying road tax for one vehicle at a time. The vehicle must be registered in your name or someone authorised to act on your behalf. If you are no longer entitled to one of the specified benefits, exemption from paying road tax stops.

You can find out more about exemption from road tax on www.gov.uk

Wheel clamping

If a vehicle is displaying a valid blue badge, it must not be wheel clamped on a public highway and should only be towed away in an emergency.

Tolls at road bridges and tunnels

If you have a valid blue badge, you do not have to pay tolls at certain road bridges and tunnels.

Contacting your local council

Your local authority may also provide extra parking facilities for blue badge holders, such as:

- special on-street parking places
- free parking places in off-street car parks
- access to town centres where other vehicles are restricted.

You can find more information about the Blue Badge Scheme at www.gov.uk



Welfare and Benefits

support for carers

Funding for one-to-one Benefits help has ended, so we will offer you support in a different way. Every quarter this magazine will feature information on benefits and entitlements, and our team will signpost you on to agencies to help you, including:

Age UK Bedfordshire

Telephone: 01234 360 510,
Mon-Fri, 9:30am-4:30pm

Citizens Advice Bedford

Telephone: 01234 351589 or
01234 327262, Mon-Thur
10:00am-1:00pm

Citizens Advice West Mid Beds

Telephone: 01525 402742,
01767 601368 and 01525 841217,
10:00am-2.30pm

Citizens Advice Dunstable

Telephone: 01582 661384,
10:00am-12.30pm, Mon-Fri;
1:00pm-3.30pm, Mon-Wed

Citizens Advice Leighton Linlade

Telephone: 01525 373878
and drop in callers
10:00am-1:00pm, Mon-Thur;
2:00pm-4:00pm, Tues-Thur

Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)

For help with Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment and Attendance Allowance applications, contact the office that sent you the application form. The number should be in the pack supplied. Request a home visit stating that you are having difficulty completing the form and that you are vulnerable; carers are classed as vulnerable people in this circumstance.

Housing Associations

If you are a tenant, your housing association may have a welfare rights/money advice service. Contact your Housing Association to find out more.

Disability Resource Centre (DRC), Dunstable

Telephone: 01582 470900;
Textphone: 01582 470968;
Fax: 01582 470959
Workshop based or 1:1 appointments with benefits advisors are arranged by the information staff who can be contacted on: 01582 470970, Mon-Thur 9am-5pm, Fri 9am-4.45pm or by email on information@drcbeds.org.uk

Older Peoples Visiting Support Service (available to people over 60 residing in Bedford Borough and rural communities)
Telephone: 07484 001744
or 07484 001674

One Support (Bedford Borough residents only)
Telephone: 01234 215040

Useful benefits websites

<http://advicecentral.org.uk/benefits-advice-central-bedfordshire/>

<http://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/financial-support>

<https://www.carersuk.org/upfront/>

<https://www.turn2us.org.uk/>

Announcing our Annual General Meeting 2016 Caring in rural areas

We would love to see you at our next AGM. Lots of people who came last year one enjoyed interviews with carers conducted by Jenny Harris (pictured), displays from the art classes and hearing from Carers Discount Card businesses.

This year's theme is "caring in a rural area" as we know that this can be a real challenge. Why not come along to meet Board members, staff and other carers, see some of our projects in action and find out about services that may help you? Alistair Burt MP, our President, is due to attend.

Friday 25th Nov 2016

- Parkside Hall, Ampthill
- Morning (time to be confirmed)
- Buffet lunch
- Highlights from the year and future plans
- Demonstrations, workshops and displays

Full members have voting rights and will receive official notification in due course. If you would like to find out more about full membership, please contact Carol Solaiman on **0300 111 1919** or email carol.solaiman@carersinbeds.org.uk

Young Carers

Smiles in the Skies

Debbie Corey,
Young Carer Support Worker



Young Carers Festival 2016

Thirty young carers (and one very apprehensive support worker!) attended a flight experience on the 19th June at Shuttleworth. We flew in the Piper Cherokee which is in a family of light aircraft. This particular plane has been in circulation for 51 years.

We were briefed before the flight by Captain Smith (pronounced Smiiiith) as to what we should expect. He also explained the logistics around flying a plane. We were all raring to get on the plane.

Family and friends were able to enjoy the sun in the holding area. Some brought picnics and made a full day of it. They were also offered free admission to the Collection and the Swiss Gardens. They took photos of the young carers on their flights and one parent commented that it was nice that they were the ones in the spotlight for once.

"I enjoyed my plane flight experience. I liked the view the most as you could see different places from a viewpoint that you wouldn't

do normally."

"It was really a fantastic experience for David and Christina. I think they broke the world record for the use of the word 'awesome' when talking about it on the way home. Special mention should also go to the fantastic team of pilots who did more take-offs and landings in a day than they normally have hot dinners in a month."

"I am writing to say a huge thank you for arranging for Luke & Claire to take part in the Smiles in the Skies event last Sunday. It was a once in a lifetime experience for both of them and certainly put a smile on their faces."

Attending a two-day festival may conjure up images of tents, mud, rain and damp sleeping bags and this year our young and sibling carers were fortunate to get the whole experience! The Young Carers Festival, run by YMCA Fairthorne Manor in partnership with The Children's Society, is held yearly and young and sibling carers from all over the UK are invited to take part.

"New experience, absolutely loved it."

Carers in Bedfordshire's young and sibling carers have attended the festival for the past four years and have a fantastic time making lots of new friends. This year we took 19 young and sibling carers along with three members of staff and a wonderful volunteer who gave up his weekend.

The festival was held in a large field and the activities on offer varied from zip wires and canoeing to a live radio show and free funfair, all topped off with a spectacular firework display. The weather didn't deter carers from having the best time and even the loudest thunderstorm and cloud burst and hailstones didn't spoil their fun.

"Think positive."

Since the first Young Carer Festival in 2000 with 600 young carers, the festival has grown up to 1800 young carers attending. It provides carers with the opportunity to enjoy some time to themselves, which for some is a rare experience and eagerly welcomed by them and their families.

"Didn't realise the amount of carers there were and we were just a small handful of them."

The importance of our young carers knowing they are not alone and that many others share very similar experiences and struggles is the essence of the festival.

For more photos from the Young Carers Festival go to our website www.carersinbeds.org.uk/youngcarers

For more photos and a video from the day please see our website www.carersinbeds.org.uk

Fundraising News

Collecting Tins

Have you seen our collecting tins out and about? Could you ask your local shop or hairdressers, or maybe a pub or doctors surgery to take one for us? We'd love to see lots more out there!



Thank You!

Woodside Church in Bedford raised £130. This gives a carer looking after someone with dementia a much-needed break while a specially trained volunteer spends time with their loved one. This is just one of the generous donations we have received recently. Thank you.

Ever forgotten your shopping bag at the supermarket? Sainsbury's in Biggleswade selected us as their Charity of the Year last year and recently donated a total of nearly £3,270 - all from the sale of carrier bags. A donation like that could fund a month's worth of support offered at our hospital Carers Lounges.

#7for7in7

We have 7 staff members and volunteers who are training hard and raising money for Carers in Bedfordshire in the 7for7in7 challenge - 7 half-marathons in 7 days for 7 different charities! Even our CEO Helen Satterthwaite has got her running shoes on! You can support them at www.747in7.com/CarersInBedfordshire and cheer them over the finish line at the Pavilion in Bedford Park, from 11.30am, on 24 October.

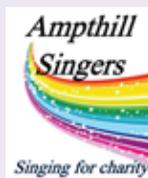
GOTTA SING, GOTTA DANCE

The wonderful **Amphill Singers** are holding this year's main show in aid of Carers in Bedfordshire and Autism Bedfordshire. The theme is singing, rhythm and dancing with hits like 'All that Jazz' and 'Cabaret' to name but a few.

Friday 11th November
Saturday 12th November
at 7.30pm

Amphill Methodist Church,
Dunstable Street, Amphill MK45 2JS

- £10 Adult
- £8 concession
- £6 child
- £25 for family of 2 adults and 2 children



Buy tickets from Country Properties (Amphill) and Amphill Town Council.
Or call 07506 198682. | www.facebook.com/AmpSing

Fundraising Events

Are you up for a challenge?

We've secured places on a range of events to help the more adventurous among us raise much-needed funds for Carers in Bedfordshire. Any of these get that adrenaline pumping for you or your family and friends?

- Sign up for our Coast to Coast Cycle - crossing the breadth of Britain by bike.
- Trekking along Hadrian's Wall sound more your thing? You'll be hiking 25 miles over one weekend through stunning scenery that's full of history.
- Ready to take the leap? We have places available for a tandem skydive! Freefall with an instructor from 13,000 feet.

Not feeling quite THAT adventurous?

There are so many ways that you can help us raise the money that don't involve running and jumping!

Every penny really does count, and we're always grateful for donations of any amount and can put them to good use.



- Coffee and cake is always a winning combination. Get the kettle on and get together with friends or neighbours. Perfect chance to show off those 'Bake Off' skills, too!
- Casual Friday? Dress Down Wednesday? Let you and your colleagues kick back for a treat - or maybe make it a once-a-month occasion. Get creative and give it a theme - why not?
- A quiz is always a great fun and fundraising, all at the same time! You could talk to your local pub about hosting your quiz or hand out quiz sheets to family and friends. Then brush up that general knowledge...

All the details about these and more are on our website www.carersinbeds.org.uk/support-us/set-up-your-own-event/ Which one will you pick?

Valued Volunteer wins Carers Trust Marsh Award

One of our valued volunteers, Bill Simpkins has won the 2016 Carers Trust Marsh Christian Award for his volunteering roles at Carers in Bedfordshire. The award is given to carers for their outstanding contribution to volunteering and supporting other carers.

Bill cares for his wife and among many other contributions he runs a Monday coffee morning carer group at our Bedford office. The group gives carers the opportunity to meet every week to support each other and those who attend truly appreciate the work Bill puts into it.

On winning the award Bill said, "Volunteering is my way of helping others care in return for all the help I receive from Carers in Bedfordshire."

Carol Solaiman, Volunteer Coordinator said, "Bill has direct experience of the isolation that carers can face and is totally committed to the idea of peer support. He is proof that the natural support carers extend to each other is a powerful tool."

"Bill's greatest strength is his warm and friendly approach, making regulars and newcomers feel equally welcome and valued. Volunteering has such a positive impact on carers' wellbeing, it gives opportunities to meet new people, develop new skills and is a way to give back to the community and make a difference."



"This award has come as a complete surprise and made an extremely difficult week well worth the effort."



Volunteer News

We now have more than 100 volunteers and were delighted that another volunteer as well as Bill, was officially recognised during Volunteers Week in June. Bob Izzard who runs a camera club and gives talks about being a carer, was Highly Commended at the Central Bedfordshire Cheering Volunteering awards.

Visit the volunteering pages of the website to find out more about volunteering opportunities and about our volunteers.

If you would like to help out at a group, give a talk or look after collecting tins in your neighbourhood, please call our volunteer coordinator. Volunteering can be flexible - you give as much time as you like.



For any enquiries about these opportunities please contact Carol Solaiman, Volunteer Coordinator on **0300 111 1919** or volunteering@carersinbeds.org.uk

Got time to spare? We need your help

Café

Houghton Regis, second Saturday of month 1 – 5pm.

Can you help people feel welcome? Volunteers will chat to carers, help with refreshments and activities.

Carers Grants

The Grants Panel meets monthly to consider carer applications against criteria to support carers health and wellbeing. You would be a panel member or join the steering group.

Community Promoter

Do you know your local community? We need people to spread the word, to reach more carers by giving talks, and/or running stalls with us at community events.

Editorial Contributors

2 hours, 4 times a year.

Are you good with words? Know what makes a good story? We need editorial contributors for the Carers Magazine to review the articles and join in the editing as well as offer opinions and ideas.

The discount card is now available to residents in
BEDFORD BOROUGH

Carers Discount Card

The latest offers for our Carers Discount Card!
Sign up for yours now, then enjoy these discounts!

10% off Gunns Bakeries - Bedford, Biggleswade & Sandy

20% off Lotus Spa, The Swan Hotel, Bedford

10% off Haven Holidays

20% off Virgin Experience Days

FREE ENTRY to Bird of Prey Centre, Wilstead.

Please note that unfortunately the Boots company has withdrawn from all carers discount card schemes.

To apply for your Carers Discount Card, please complete and return this form to Carers in Bedfordshire, Suite K, Sandland Court, Pilgrim Centre, Brickhill Drive, Bedford, MK45 7PZ.

You must include a passport sized photo.

Alternatively, email discountcard@carersinbeds.org.uk
or call **0300 111 1919**.

Full name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Email: _____

Contact number: _____

Do you care for an adult? child?

