



Life after Bereavement

written by

Former Carers for Former Carers
with Carers in Bedfordshire



Welcome



We are all former carers and we have developed this booklet to help guide you in rebuilding your life after your caring role has ended. We have already been on this journey and wish to share our experiences with you.

The booklet provides:

Support—Carers in Bedfordshire will continue to support you after your caring role has ended.

Hope—you may know that the person you care for is going to pass away, but it is still a shock when it does happen; it is possible to rebuild your life.

Confidence—that there is a life beyond caring but it does take time.

To fill a void—as a carer in many ways your life has been put on hold whilst you were caring. You are probably wondering how you are going to fill your time now after being so busy caring.

Inspiration —you are so stretched by your caring role that you are not able to keep up-to-date with what is going on and what is around you.

Encouragement—you can feel a loss of purpose when caring comes to an end but you still have something to offer others, value the gifts and skills you have and develop new ones.

Support Available

“My grieving began when my wife, who had Alzheimer’s disease, went into long term care. I was devastated. I sought out a counsellor whom I did not know, and who did not know me. I was able to ‘off load’ on her all my anxieties, emotions and feelings of guilt, in strict confidence, knowing that she would be totally non-judgmental.



I did most of the talking; she listened; only occasionally asking what my feelings were at the time or how I felt now. It was marvellously therapeutic! I strongly recommend that you seek help to help you adjust to life alone.”

Carers in Bedfordshire provides Transitional Carers Grants for 6 months after your caring has ended to help rebuild your life. We offer a counselling service.

Resources available

Cruse Bereavement Care	Bereavement Counselling	0300 200 4108
Bedford Daycare Hospice	Bereavement Support	01234 352 015
Keech Hospice	Bereavement Support	0800 0353 011
Sue Ryder	Online Bereavement Counselling	www.sueryder.org/online-bereavement-counselling
Age UK	“Going Solo”	01234 360 510
Neville Funerals	Talking Elephant Support Groups	01582 499 608
www.way-up.co.uk	Website supporting those widowed in their 50s and 60s	
www.ataloss.org	Website to find local bereavement support	

For more details, contact 0300 111 1919 or visit www.carersinbeds.org.uk

Connecting with Others

“My husband’s death was sudden and unexpected even though he had been ill for many years and living in a care home. He was a wonderful man who had spent his spare time caring for his community. Whilst he was ill, I had joined Carers Rest through which I had made many new friends. We were able to help one another and share our experiences. Once my husband had gone, these friendships were extremely important to me.



Connecting with others is so important both at carer groups but also in my local community when I can.”

Carers in Bedfordshire will continue to send the Carer Magazine to you for up to two years unless you tell us otherwise. We welcome former carers to our groups and activity sessions. You can find the details at www.carersinbeds.org.uk click the What’s On box.

In your local area

Women’s Institute	Groups throughout the county	01234 359 538
Men in Sheds	Bedford Dunstable	sc@steveconway.net 07707 259 395
Bowls Clubs	Bedford Sandy Leighton Buzzard	01234 403 551 01525 372 033 sandytownbowlingclub.org.uk
Townwomen’s Guild	Biggleswade Leighton Buzzard Sandy	For details, visit www.the-tg.com

For more details, contact 0300 111 1919 or visit www.carersinbeds.org.uk

Looking after your Physical Health

“I felt lost and lonely after the death of my husband. Whilst I had been caring I also hadn’t thought about my physical health at all, I was so focused on him. After his death I soon realised that it was essential that I ate properly and did not stay in the house all day. I started to exercise and I tried different groups until I found something that I enjoyed.”



Carers in Bedfordshire runs several walking groups throughout the county. At our Wellbeing Sessions we provide treatments such as foot care, massage and haircuts. For details, visit www.carersinbeds.org.uk click the What’s On box.

In your local area

Team Beds & Luton	For activity groups in Bedfordshire	www.teambedsandluton.co.uk/getting-active
Bedford Borough Council	Activity Sessions at Home	https://bedfordsportlive.crd.co
Tennis Clubs	Linslade Pavenham	01525 850 160 01234 824 995
Walking groups	Throughout Bedfordshire	www.walkinginbeds.co.uk
NHS	Kickstart your health	www.nhs.uk/better-health
NHS	Fitness Studio Exercise Videos	www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-fitness-studio

For more details, contact 0300 111 1919 or visit www.carersinbeds.org.uk

Learning Something New

“I have done several new things since my husband died. I joined the U3A which had lots of other activities, like art, film club etc. and made new friends in the same situation as me.



I have helped to prepare lunches at the Carers Rest. It can be a challenge but it is also enjoyable. It has helped to rebuild my confidence and develop new skills. I can also share experiences with those attending, which benefits me by keeping memories of my husband alive.”

Carers in Bedfordshire runs a number of activity groups such as the Carers Choir, Cooking and Art courses. We run workshops giving you new ideas on how to improve your wellbeing.

In your local area

University of the Third Age	Bedford Ivel Valley Leighton Buzzard	07940 074 488
Your Wellbeing Bedfordshire	Online activities whilst self-isolating	www.yourwellbeingbedfordshire.org.uk
Local History Association	Bedfordshire	01582 655 785 (after 7pm)
Rothsay Education Centre	Bedford	01234 302 203
Bedford Guild House	Bedford	01234 352 038
Bedford Model Club	Bedford	bedfordmodelclub.co.uk
Workers Educational Association	Leighton Buzzard	07795 145 657 (Brian Goodyear)

For more details, contact 0300 111 1919 or visit www.carersinbeds.org.uk

Volunteering

“When my wife died and then my disabled daughter nine months later, there was an immense feeling of loneliness but also a huge sense of relief and calm. Volunteering and especially meeting and helping others in a similar caring role to myself has helped greatly in keeping me active, alert and empathetic.”



Carers in Bedfordshire relies on volunteers and some former carers take up volunteering opportunities with us. This may allow you to share the knowledge you have gained as a carer with other carers or help us to keep a service running by helping in the offices. There are many roles available in Bedford, Biggleswade and Leighton Buzzard.

Contact Carol Solaiman on 0300 111 1919 or email volunteering@carersinbeds.org.uk

In your local area

To volunteer with a local group in your area contact.

CVS Volunteering	Bedford	01234 354 366
Voluntary & Community Action	Central Bedfordshire	01525 376 281

For more details, contact 0300 111 1919 or visit www.carersinbeds.org.uk



“I hope you feel inspired by what you have read in this leaflet and that you find something here that helps you think about the opportunities which are there for you now. Maybe you will want to return to something you have enjoyed in the past, or try something new.

Your experience of caring has given you so much to share with others in your community. Maybe you want to help others who are caring now.

I hope there has been something here that has helped you. Please do give me a ring if you would like to know more or you think we can help you further.”

Best Wishes

Amanda Thaxter

Personalised Adult Support Service Lead



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