



Carers

in bedfordshire

trustee enquiry pack

"Thank you for your support through some very hard times.

The waves still crash over my head at times but I am learning to breathe before the next one comes!"

Adult carer, Biggleswade

Contents

We hope this pack will give you
a feeling for our charity, the
opportunities which lie ahead
for us, and what we believe we
need to achieve our goals
- that may be YOU



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Thank you for your
interest in becoming a
Trustee of Carers in
Bedfordshire



Our Board of Trustees has an important part to play in helping us to achieve our ambitions of supporting more unpaid carers to be recognised, respected and supported in their role. If you join our Board of Trustees, you will have the opportunity to make a real impact and be part of our success story.

We very much welcome applicants from all backgrounds as our current board is not as diverse as the world around us.

An exciting future lies ahead for us. If you believe you can contribute to the continued growth and development of Carers in Bedfordshire, I hope that you will apply to become a Trustee and look forward to hearing from you.

Phil Taverner Chair of Trustees

Where we came from



Yvonne Clark, left, founder of
Carers in Bedfordshire



Watch a video of Yvonne
talking in 2021 to CEO Chris
Stelling about why she set up
Carers in Bedfordshire

Since we were constituted in June 2004, we expanded rapidly to meet ever-increasing demand. Starting as the Eve Project, the name *Carers in Bedfordshire* came into use in 2006 and with it, the growth of services across all of Bedfordshire with over 700 carers accessing our services by 2008.

The next twelve years saw exponential growth; working in partnership with the NHS and the local authorities, service delivery grew year on year and today we have more than 11,000 carers registered with us.

We are now looking to build on this success to provide a greater breadth of service, and influence to ensure that Bedfordshire is the best place to be a carer.

Where we are today



We support young carer and young adult carers, as well as adults

- More than 11,000 carers are registered with us, including children.
- All services are totally free to carers, or attract only a small fee
- Our funds come from contracts for commissioned services, grants, trusts, donations, legacies and fundraising
- Our turnover is just over £1 million
- We work closely with local agencies and professionals such as GPs and schools who refer carers to us
- We employ around 38 people, some of them carers themselves and are supported by 70 volunteers
- We have 11 trustees
- We are commissioned to deliver carer services in Bedford and Central Bedfordshire, dementia services in Bedfordshire and young carer services in Bedford

What we do

Visit our websites to see
our wide range of services
[Click the logos to open the links](#)

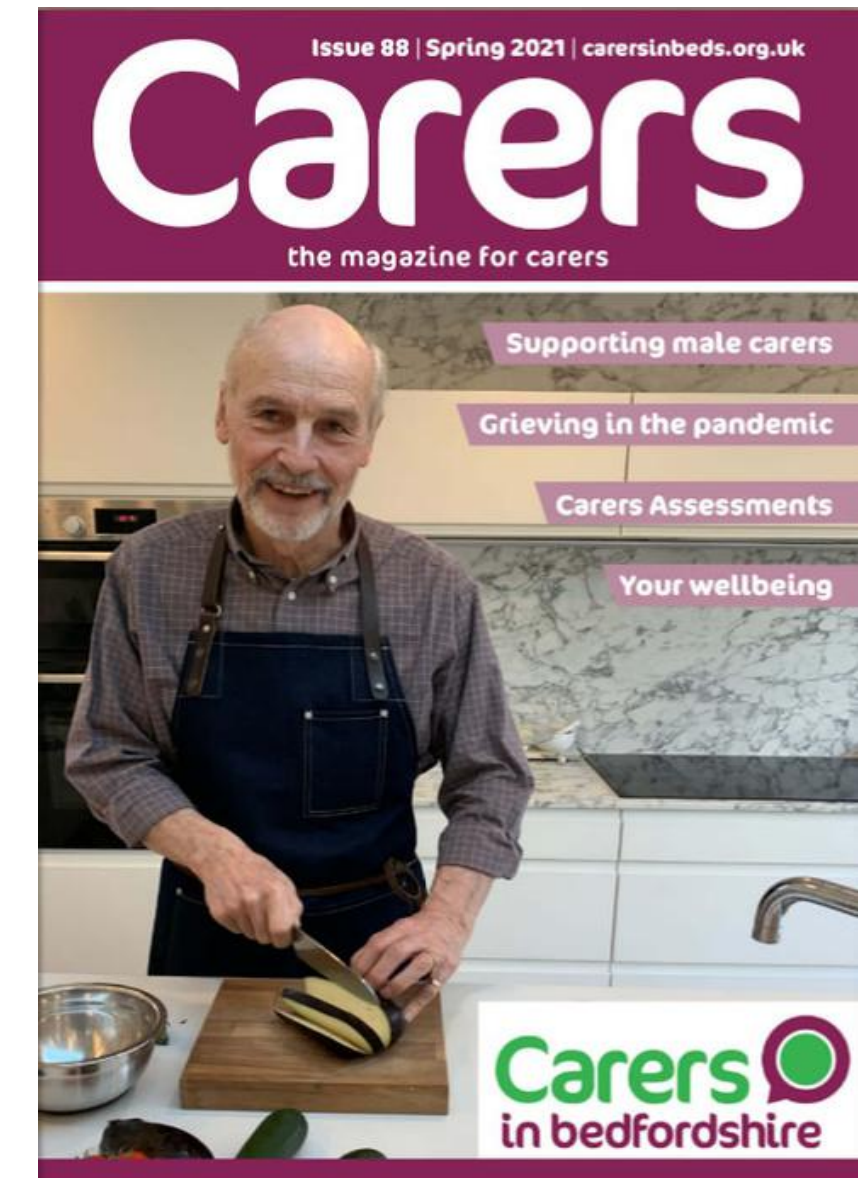


**Bedfordshire Memory
Navigation Service**

Read the last Annual Review
to see what we did, our
impact and what carers say
[Click the picture to open the link](#)



Read the magazine to see
the latest news and stories
we share with carers
[Click the picture to open the link](#)



Our Vision

Carers will feel recognised, respected and supported in their role

Our Mission

To give carers access to the support, information and skills that enhances their wellbeing and enables them to remain in a caring role for as long as they choose

Where are we going?



Our Five Objectives

1. Reach more carers
2. Be, transparent, efficient and effective.
3. Work in partnership
4. Invest in high quality support
5. Advocate with carers

1

Reach more carers

We want every carer in Bedfordshire to be able to access the support they need, when they need it. We plan to double the number of carers who access our support by 2024.

2

Be transparent, efficient and effective

We want every person who contributes to our mission to be secure in the knowledge that we will use our funds effectively, efficiently and to the benefit of front - line services.

3

Work in partnership

There are an estimated 40,000 carers in Bedfordshire and if we are to reach them, we must work with partner organisations from the statutory, profit and non - profit sector.

4

Invest in high quality support

We are a charity built upon the dedication, knowledge and professionalism of our staff and volunteers.

An investment in their development is an investment in the charity 's future.

5

Advocate with carers

We will support carers to navigate the system they are in by visibly advocating on their behalf.



**Who cares for
that carer?**

"Who cares for that carer?", I hear a man say,
Her day blends with night and then night becomes day,
The cooking, the cleaning, the hospital trips,
The changing, the bathing, wiping food from his lips,
The meltdown, the tears.... So hard to endure
What keeps her from walking straight out of that door?

I'll tell you what stops me from leaving each day
And what gets me through when I don't want to stay
It begins with an "I" and ends with an "e",
It's a power, a force, emanating from me,
An empathic heart, a gift from above,
I do this, my friend, in the name of love.

Megan Jenkins



Isobel is a parent carer

“My son is eight years old. He’s been diagnosed with a rare genetic disorder, ASD, ADHD, a heart condition, diabetes, asthma, sensory processing issues and anxiety. He’s also double incontinent and wears nappies 24/7. As he’s gets older, his diagnostic list gets added to, new challenges come and we adapt our lives accordingly.

He keeps me going, he's our whole world. If we didn't do what we do, his anxieties and frustrations would be far worse than they are. I rarely put my own wellbeing into consideration, it's all about him.

Having a child with neurodiverse conditions has so many challenges. A lot of people think being a carer for your child is “just parenting”. They don’t see the ups and downs, the sleepless nights, the incontinence issues, the vast amounts of appointments and the emotional toll it can take.

The punches and slaps hurt, the bruises are visible but we hide them and the tears are real even though no one ever sees them.”

Carer experiences



Chris (right) with best friend Jenny, whose husband also had Huntington' disease

It's always been just the two of us. We decided not to have children when we got married because Huntington's is a genetic condition. Nick saw his mother and brother pass away from the same cruel disease.

Nick had been in and out of hospital over the years with lung-related problems associated with Huntington's. At the beginning of March 2020, myself and a carer tried to get Nick out of bed but found he was paralysed.

When your relative has to move into a nursing home, we experience it as a bereavement. I really miss Nick, even though I go to visit him every day. Thankfully the managers at the home are fantastic.

They value my input as Nick's wife and I know that, like me, they love him too.

Dave cares for his wife Sarah, who has physical disabilities.

He took up 3-D printing during lockdown and is also a keen angler.

I got very despondent during lockdown – at one point, I couldn't even look after myself, let alone Sarah. I couldn't go fishing or to the Men in Sheds workshop where I volunteered. A neighbour lent me his home 3D printer and I've really got into it. In fact, I've ended up buying my own.

An NHS carers grant helped me buy some supplies.



Sarah says I was a grumpy so-and-so before I got into wood work and now the 3D printing. And she hated being stuck indoors. Now we have more laughs and the 3D printing has brought us closer together.

For more carer experiences, visit [Carers Stories](#)



**Ready to know how
you can play your part?**

What Trustees do



You'll use your skills, knowledge or experience to help the Board reach sound decisions.

The Board agrees the strategic goals of the charity and reviews its work, finances and services, meeting six times a year.

There is a finance committee and a governance and nomination committee. We have eleven Trustees who also act as guarantors with liability limited to £1.

This is a voluntary role - reasonable travel and other expenses will be reimbursed.

Watch this short video from the Charity Commission so you understand the legal responsibilities of a trustee

[The Essential Trustee - what you need to know, what you need to do](#)



Watch a video of Tania Palmariellodiviney talking about why she joined the Board in 2019

Advantages of becoming a trustee



- You'll be making strategic decisions about the future direction of the charity
- You'll keep our focus on carer-first services
- You'll gain valuable experience which may help you in future leadership or other roles
- You may learn new skills - whether you are an experienced trustee or just starting out, there's always something new to learn
- You'll be volunteering for a forward-thinking, excellent local charity

Annual time commitment



- Four 3 hour business meetings
- Two half day strategy days
- Four meetings per year with your staff link
- Occasional networking or fundraising events
- Committee meetings if a member

Meetings are currently day time on Weds in Bedford or via Microsoft Teams video-conference call

Your first term of office is three years. You'll be eligible for a further two terms

Who are we looking for?

People who can meet the criteria* and have any of the following

- lived experience or working knowledge of caring for others
- all backgrounds as our current board is not as diverse as the world around us - particularly people with disabilities, minority groups and younger people (under 60)
- a background or experience in adult social care, communications, marketing, fundraising or IT and digital resources, finance and accounts.

If none of the above apply to you, you can still apply if you meet the general criteria



*see trustee role description

What happens next?



If you decide a trustee role is not for you right now, but you would like to contribute to our work in some other way, please visit our website for other ways to support us

- Read the trustee role description and person specification
- Contact us if you'd like to talk to us before applying
- Use the online application form when you are ready
- We shortlist applicants against the criteria in the person specification
- You may then be invited to an interview with trustees and invited to observe a trustee meeting
- We will police check and vet you against the eligibility criteria
- If selected, you will receive an induction and a trustee mentor
- Your appointment will be confirmed at the next Annual General Meeting

Thank you for your interest
We're looking forward to hearing from you

volunteering@carersinbeds.org.uk
tel 0300 111 1919

