

CARERS IN BEDFORDSHIRE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 07140432 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1135507



AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31st MARCH 2023



CARERS IN BEDFORDSHIRE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023

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See Annual Review for a summary of achievement and performance in 2022/2023

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

The Charity is controlled by its governing document, the Articles of Association, and constitutes a limited company, limited by guarantee as defined by the Companies Act 2006. It is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission. The Articles of Association were updated and adopted by the members at the Annual General Meeting held on 25 November 2016.

Recruitment and appointment of Directors

The Directors of the company, also charity Trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the company's articles, revised as at 25 November 2016, are known collectively as the Board.

Under the requirements of the Articles of Association, the Board consists of not fewer than four and no more than 14 persons. The members of the Board are initially appointed by the Board to fill a vacancy and at the following Annual General Meeting (AGM), appointed directors offer themselves for election. Thereafter at the third annual general meeting after their last election a Trustee Director must retire. They are eligible for re-election for two further terms and may not serve more than nine years in office.

In order to manage the transition to this new system for resignation and re-election of Trustee Directors, account shall not be taken of any time served by the Trustee director before 25 November 2016 when calculating the timing of the 3-year retirement and re-election.

Phil Taverner has acted as Chair, and Graham Mills has acted as Treasurer throughout the year. Helen Battersby retired as a director during the year.

Induction and training of new Directors

All new Directors are required to provide two satisfactory references and are subject to an enhanced DBS check. All new Directors undergo an induction programme to brief them on their obligations and are supplied with an induction pack, which includes written information about:

- The obligations of Directors and a Trustee Code of Conduct
- The Articles of Association
- The most recent Annual Report and Accounts
- Operational performance reports

Directors are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events to support them in their role.

Organisational structure

Carers in Bedfordshire (CiB) is governed by a Board which meets quarterly and is responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the organisation, ensuring that it is solvent, operating in a professional manner and delivering the outcomes for which it has been set up. The Board met on 6 occasions during the year, including at two strategy meetings. At 31 March 2023, the Board comprised 12 Trustee Directors from a variety of backgrounds relevant to the work of the charity.

The Board has two sub-committees. The Finance Committee consists of not less than 4 Directors appointed by the main Board of Directors with an appropriate mix of financial and business skills. This group has met 4 times during this financial year. The Nominations Committee deals with Board recruitment, training and succession planning.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is appointed by the Board to implement the agreed strategy and to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity. To facilitate effective operations, the CEO has delegated authority, with terms of delegation approved by the Board, for operational matters including finance, employment and service delivery. A Senior Leadership Team of three, each reporting to the CEO and overseeing the work of a small team, are responsible for day-to-day operational management, supervision and training of the staff team; ensuring they develop their skills and good working practices. The staffing level for the year was an average of 29 full time equivalent employees and there were 40 individuals employed on a full or part time basis by Carers in Bedfordshire at 31 March 2023.

Related parties

The charity is a Network Partner of Carers Trust and affiliated to Carers UK. In so far as it is complementary to the charity's objectives, the charity is guided by national and local policy. At the national level it is steered by the government's National Carers' Strategy and relevant National Service Frameworks for a range of illnesses and disabilities. The charity supports the work of Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council, and Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group Carers' Strategies and monitors the outcomes of these strategies using feedback from its membership. The Chief Executive Officer and staff are represented on key local partnerships to deliver the relevant strategies in Bedfordshire.

Membership

Each Member of the Charity undertakes that, if the Charity is wound up while they are a Member, or within one year after they cease to be a Member, they will contribute a sum not exceeding £1 to the assets of the Charity for:

- payment of the debts and liabilities of the Charity contracted before they cease to be a Member; and
- payment of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up

Honorary Life Members are Members but are exempt from subscription charges if set.

All Members must pay the subscriptions (if any) that the Board decides from time to time. The Board may fix differing rates for subscriptions for members. At present no membership subscription is set.

Members are entitled to attend the annual general meeting of the Charity and may vote in person or by proxy. During the year ending 31 March 2023 in accordance with the Articles of Association, the level of membership fees was set as zero by the Board in order to remove barriers to membership.

Every carer registered with CiB will have access to most of the charity's services.

As at 31 March 2023 there were 12 Members, 2 Honorary Life Members and 10,714 registered carers. The underlying number of registered carers continues to increase.

Governance

The skills, experience and expertise of the Directors assure the robust governance of the Charity. Directors have experience in strategic management, systems, human resources, finance, project management, risk assessment, education, training, facilities management and an in-depth understanding of carers' issues. During the year, at least 50% of the Board have had or still have personal experience of caring.

Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety and safeguarding practice of staff, volunteers and visitors to the premises.

The Board is aware of its responsibility to ensure that the charity acts through sustainable means and is responsible for minimising its impact on the environment.

Risk management

The Board maintains a risk register which is reviewed regularly. It acts as a central repository for all significant strategic risks identified by the organisation and, for each risk, includes information such as risk probability, impact, mitigation and risk owner. The risk register was discussed in detail at each Board meeting. The Board has direct responsibility for overseeing non-financial risks, with the Finance Committee providing detailed support to the Board on financial matters including financial risks.

Public benefit

The Board of Directors has regard to the requirement to demonstrate the public benefit of the charity's activity as defined in section 4 of the Charities Act 2006. Most of the charity's services have been offered free of charge to all carers. For some services, carers are asked for a contribution towards its cost of provision.

CARERS IN BEDFORDSHIRE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023

Unpaid carers in England and Wales contribute a staggering £445 million to the economy everyday (that's £162 billion per year (source Petrillo and Bennett 2023)). The value of unpaid care is equivalent to a second NHS in England and Wales, which in 2020/2021 received an estimated £164 billion in funding (source Petrillo and Bennett 2023). Accordingly, the charity's services are designed to enable those who wish to continue caring to do so; to be informed and enabled to access support and to have a voice; to have a life outside of caring, with equal opportunity to access work, leisure and education. Support is continued even if the individual with care needs is admitted to residential care or if they pass away.

Reserves policy

The Board of Directors has regard to managing its level of reserves effectively. As a not-for-profit organisation it has developed and adopted a policy on reserves, which establishes a level of reserves that is right for the charity.

Reserves are held in three categories for future activity:

- Restricted – where the funder restricts the activities or projects the funds can be used for
- Designated – where CiB determines the activities or projects necessary to achieve certain outcomes or objectives
- Unrestricted – that are held to manage uncertainty and CiB's capacity to manage unforeseen financial difficulties and short-term changes in circumstances.

CiB are working towards targeting a minimum of four month's salary costs of all staff on all projects and four months central organisational costs and a maximum of 150% of this amount in unrestricted reserves. Based on these financial statements the minimum equates to £332,406 and the maximum £498,609.

CARERS IN BEDFORDSHIRE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Company number

07140432 (England and Wales)

Registered Charity number

1135507

Registered office

Carers in Bedfordshire
First Floor, Suite D1, Emerald Court
Pilgrim Centre, Brickhill Drive
Bedford
Bedfordshire
MK41 7PZ

Trustees

E Wilkinson	
G Mills	
B Wootton	
S Lowe	
J Fincham	
H Battersby	Resigned December 2022
P Taverner	
T Palmariellodiviney	
H Aylward	
N Kidby	
M Canning	Appointed 20 th January 2023
J Ahluwalia	Appointed 20 th January 2023
J Preston	Appointed 20 th January 2023
M Evans-Riches	Appointed 21 st June 2023

Key Management Personnel

Chief Executive Officer – Christopher Stelling
Finance Manager – Tracey Gill

Company Secretary

Tracey Gill FMAAT

Auditors

MDG Business Associates Audit Limited
Chartered Certified Accountants &
Registered Auditors
Room 73, The Mansion House, Wrest Park
Silsoe Bedfordshire MK45 4HR

Bankers

Barclays Bank plc
111 High Street
Bedford, MK40 1NJ

CARERS IN BEDFORDSHIRE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees (who are also the Directors of CiB for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure of the charitable company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the Trustees are required to

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charity Statement Of Recommended Practice (SORP);
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

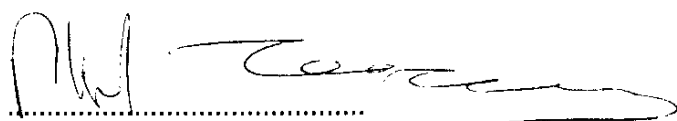
In so far as the Trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware; and
- The Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

AUDITORS

The auditors, MDG Business Associates Audit Limited, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD:



P Taverner - Chair

Date: 09/10/2023

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE TRUSTEES OF CARERS IN BEDFORDSHIRE

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Carers in Bedfordshire for the year ended 31st March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31st March 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further disclosed in the Auditors responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the charitable company's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information, and except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE TRUSTEES OF CARERS IN BEDFORDSHIRE

- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies exemption in preparing the Report of the Trustees.

Respective responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a Report of the Independent Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

We have assessed that there is a low risk of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations central to the trading activities of the charity. This assessment has been based upon a substantive testing approach to key identified risk areas, principally being revenue recognition and the threat of override of controls by management. No suspected fraud, breach or other non-compliance with underlying laws and regulations has been identified during the sample testing undertaken during the audit process and no such issues have been raised by the board of trustees or management prior to making this assessment. A full review of available board minutes, and other supporting third party documentation where available, has been undertaken and no items have come to our attention which require to be reported to the user of the financial statements. The charity has strong internal controls and our audit testing has indicated no instances of managerial override of controls, through the testing of journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness. No transactions have been identified as being made outside the normal course of business from the work we have performed in each key risk area of the audit. The trustees and other key local officers are informed management and as such they make regular reviews to ensure the company is compliant in all instances.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

Opinion on other matter prescribed by the companies Act 2006

In our opinion the information given in the Report of the Trustees for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements

**REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE TRUSTEES OF
CARERS IN BEDFORDSHIRE**

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

MDG Business Associates Audit Limited

Michael Grange BA (Hons) FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of MDG Business Associates Audit Limited
Chartered Certified Accountants &
Registered Auditors
Room 73, The Mansion House, Wrest Park
Silsoe
Bedfordshire
MK45 4HR

Date: *18/10/2025*

CARERS IN BEDFORDSHIRE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023

		Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Year Ended 31.3.23 Total	Year Ended 31.3.22 Total
	Notes					
Income from:						
Donations, legacies and other income	2	18,750	3,927	-	22,677	33,255
Investments	3	278			278	
Charitable activities		18,528	791,781	536,635	1,346,944	1,337,117
TOTAL INCOME		37,556	795,708	536,635	1,369,899	1,370,372
Expenditure on:						
Charitable activities		27,877	783,199	541,981	1,353,057	1,297,366
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		27,877	783,199	541,981	1,353,057	1,297,366
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		9,679	12,509	(5,346)	16,842	73,006
Total funds brought forward		193,484	198,246	21,748	413,478	340,472
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		203,163	210,755	16,402	430,320	413,478

All transactions during the year are derived from continuing activities.

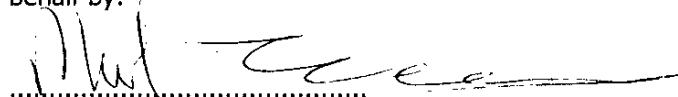
CARERS IN BEDFORDSHIRE**BALANCE SHEET
AT 31ST MARCH 2023**

Company Number: 07140432 (England and Wales)

	Notes	Unrestricted and designated funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total funds £	2022 Total Funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	7	10,897	2,898	13,795	17,307
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	8	58,209		58,209	35,609
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>766,143</u>	<u>116,854</u>	<u>882,997</u>	<u>702,908</u>
		824,352	116,854	941,206	738,517
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year		421,331	103,350	524,681	342,346
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>403,021</u>	<u>13,504</u>	<u>416,525</u>	<u>396,171</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		413,918	16,402	430,320	413,478
NET ASSETS		<u>413,918</u>	<u>16,402</u>	<u>430,320</u>	<u>413,478</u>
FUNDS	13				
Unrestricted funds				203,163	193,484
Designated funds				210,755	198,246
Restricted funds				<u>16,402</u>	<u>21,748</u>
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>430,320</u>	<u>413,478</u>

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on 9th October 2023 and were signed on its behalf by:



P Taverner - Chair

CARERS IN BEDFORDSHIRE**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

	Total Funds 2022/23	2021/22
Cash Flows from operating activities		
Net Cash flows provided from operating activities	185,080	153,290
Cash Flows from investing activities	(4,991)	(2,095)
Purchase of fixed assets		-
Change in cash in the year	180,089	151,195
Cash at the beginning of the year	702,908	551,713
Cash at the end of the year	882,997	702,908

RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year, as per the Statement of Financial Activities	16,842	73,006
Adjustments for		
Depreciation charge	8,503	7,745
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(22,600)	41,592
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	182,335	30,947
Net Cash flows provided from operating activities	185,080	153,290

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023**

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice, applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 October 2019) and the Companies Act 2006.

The company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

The Trustees consider there to be no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern. The review of the financial position, reserves level and future plans gives Trustees confidence that the charity remains a going concern for the foreseeable future

Income

All incoming financial resources are included on the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable. Grants are recognised in full in the Statement of Financial Activities in the year in which they are receivable
- The value of services provided by volunteers has not been included in these accounts.
- Investment income is included when receivable.
- Incoming resources from charitable activities are accounted for when earned.

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis. Expenditure includes attributable VAT, which cannot be recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates. Charitable expenditure comprises of those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

Allocation and apportionment of costs

Costs that can attribute to a specific activity or reserve are directly allocated within the Statement of Financial Activities.

Allocations of overheads to individual funds are based on a budget which is set at the commencement of each contract period.

CARERS IN BEDFORDSHIRE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - CONTINUED FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES – continued

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Office equipment/furniture	- 25% on cost
Computer equipment	-25% on cost

Fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Minor additions of less than £400 are not capitalised.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the Trustees.

Designated funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives under contracted services or specific programmes designated by the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

2. DONATIONS, LEGACIES AND OTHER INCOME

	Year Ended 31.3.23	Year Ended 31.3.22
	£	£
Membership income	0	0
Donations, fundraising and legacies	22,677	33,255
	22,677	33,255

The types of membership were consolidated into one at the Annual General Meeting held in November 2016, plus Honorary Life Membership.

All members must pay the subscriptions (if any) that the Board decides from time to time. The Board may fix differing rates for subscriptions for different members or categories of members. At present no membership subscription is set.

CARERS IN BEDFORDSHIRE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - CONTINUED FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023

3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	Year Ended 31.3.23	Year Ended 31.3.22
	£	£
Bank interest receivable	278	0

4. NET INCOME

These are stated after charging:

	Year Ended 31.3.23	Year Ended 31.3.22
	£	£
Auditors' remuneration	4,416	4,280
Depreciation - owned assets	8,503	7,746

5. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31st March 2023, nor for the year ended 31st March 2022.

Trustees' Expenses

Some trustees received reimbursement for travel expenses incurred on behalf of the charity totalling £192 (2022 – £128) but the trustees gave this back to the charity as a donation.

6. STAFF COSTS

	Year Ended 31.3.23	Year Ended 31.3.22
	£	£
Wages and salaries	772,557	744,618
Social security costs	57,329	50,902
Other pension costs	14,139	13,551
Total staff costs	844,025	809,071
Training and DBS checks	6,211	10,759
Total human resources costs	850,236	819,830

The average monthly number of employees during the year was 37 (2022: 40)

No employees' emoluments exceeded £60,000 during the current or prior period.

Key management remuneration

The total employee remuneration of the key management personnel, identified members of the Carers in Bedfordshire Leadership Team and other employees having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity were £104,572 (2022: £97,243).

CARERS IN BEDFORDSHIRE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - CONTINUED FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023

7. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Office equipment / Furniture	Computer equipment	Totals
	£	£	£
COST			
At 1st April 2022	29,524	59,234	88,758
Additions	2,222	2,769	4,991
At 31st March 2023	31,746	62,003	93,749
DEPRECIATION			
At 1st April 2022	27,096	44,355	71,451
Charge for year	1,318	7,185	8,503
At 31st March 2023	28,414	51,540	79,954
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31st March 2023	3,332	10,463	13,795
At 31st March 2022	2,428	14,879	17,307

8. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade debtors	38,294	8,795
Prepayments	18,915	25,814
Other debtors	1,000	1,000
	<u>58,209</u>	<u>35,609</u>

9. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade creditors	10,374	13,997
Taxation and social security	14,950	13,149
Carers breaks awarded not yet claimed	28,991	38,155
Deferred capital grants	386,059	230,027
Other creditors and accruals	84,307	47,018
	<u>524,681</u>	<u>342,346</u>

10. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions in the year to 31 March 2023 (2022: £nil).

CARERS IN BEDFORDSHIRE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - CONTINUED FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023

11. CAPITAL

The company has no share capital. The types of membership were consolidated into one at the Annual General Meeting held in November 2016.

The maximum number of members is 14. Each member of the Charity undertakes that, if the Charity is wound up while they are a member, or within one year after they cease to be a member, they will contribute a sum not exceeding £1 to the assets of the Charity for:

- payment of the debts and liabilities of the Charity contracted before they cease to be a member; and
- payment of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up

Honorary Life members are members but are exempt from subscription charges if set.

All members must pay the subscriptions (if any) that the Board decides from time to time. The Board may fix differing rates for subscriptions for different members or categories of members. At present no membership subscription is set. Members and Honorary Life Members have voting rights at the AGM. There were 12 (2022: 42) members and 2 honorary life members as at 31 March 2023 (2022: 0).

12. OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

The following operating lease payments are committed to be paid

	2023	2022
	£	£
Expiring:		
Within one year	40,000	40,000
Between one and five years	56,667	16,667
	96,667	56,667

CARERS IN BEDFORDSHIRE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - CONTINUED FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023

13. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	1/4/2022	Incoming Resources	Resources expended	Surplus/(deficit) for year	Transfers	31/03/2023
RESTRICTED FUNDS						
Redford Carers Lounge- BBC	-	45,000	45,000	0		0
Carers Grants	21,327	226,578	247,872	(21,294)		33
Luton and Dunstable Carers Lounge - CRC	-	21,013	21,013	0		0
Volunteering	-	40,016	40,016	0		0
Carers Grants Admin	-	39,000	41,689	(2,689)		(2,689)
Carers Café	-	73,891	70,535	3,356		3,356
Carer Support (dementia)	-	46,318	34,144	12,174		12,174
Lottery Core Funding	470	0	156	(156)		314
BLCF Beds Coronavirus Emergency Fund	900	0	413	(413)		487
BLCF NET Coronavirus Programme	4091	0	1,500	(1,500)		2,591
Mental Health Fund – Young People	-	3,347	3,348	(1)		(1)
Social Activity for Carers	-	2,259	2,259	0		0
WEG Stability	(5,040)	19,545	14,505	5,040		0
Rookery South	-	340	335	5		5
Business Development	-	19,328	19,196	132		132
Sub total	21,748	536,635	541,981	-5,346	0	16,402
DESIGNATED FUNDS						
External designation						
Carer support (all carer types)		402,174	389,085	13,089	0	13,089
Dementia Services		56,666	57,936	(1,270)	0	(1,270)
Sibling support		33,045	33,332	(287)	0	(287)
Governance		13,483	9,117	4,366	0	4,366
Workshops, Education and Groups		65,499	59,316	6,183	0	6,183
Specialist		95,386	95,386	0		0
Health Outreach		116,452	123,028	(6,576)		(6,576)
Community Engagement		12,800	15,404	(2,604)		(2,604)
Innovation Fund		203	595	(392)	0	(392)
Carer Service Development	99,072	0	0	0	0	99,072
	99,072	795,708	783,199	12,509	0	111,581
Legacy	99,174	0	0	0	0	99,174
Sub total	198,246	795,708	783,199	12,509	0	210,755
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	193,484	37,556	27,877	9,679	0	203,163
Grand Total	413,478	1,369,899	1,353,057	16,842	0	430,320

CARERS IN BEDFORDSHIRE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - CONTINUED FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023

14. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS – continued

Bedford Carers Lounge – BBC	Funding received from Bedford Borough Council to open and run a Carers Advice and Information Centre within Bedford Hospital (South Wing)
Carers Grants	Funding received under contract from BLMK CCG to allow the award of grants direct to carers whose emotional and/or physical wellbeing has been adversely affected by their caring role
Luton and Dunstable Carers Lounge – CBC	Funding received from Central Bedfordshire Council to open and run a Carers Advice and Information Centre within The Luton & Dunstable Hospital
Volunteering	Bedford Borough Council have provided funding to employ a Volunteer Coordinator to identify and support the development of volunteering
Carers Café	Weekend social activities for carers, individuals with care needs and extended family
Carer support (dementia)	A range of services including identifying and coordinating a team of volunteer dementia befrienders, and running a weekly group for carers and people living with dementia in Bedfordshire
Carer support (all carer types)	We are funded under contract by Central Bedfordshire Council, Bedford Borough Council and the BLMK CCG acting together to offer carers support services on their behalf

Memory Navigation Services	We are funded under contract by Central Bedfordshire Council, Bedford Borough Council and the BLMK CCG acting together to offer support services to people affected by memory loss or dementia and their carers.
Sibling support	We are funded under contract by Central Bedfordshire Council, Bedford Borough Council and the BLMK CCG acting together to offer support services to young people caring for, and/or affected by the illness or disability of a sibling.
BLCF – Bedfordshire Emergency Coronavirus Fund	Funding from Bedford and Luton Community Foundation for a postal mailing to carers, additional hours for Support Workers, a social media consultant and laptops for staff working from home
BLCF NET Coronavirus Programme	Funding from Bedford and Luton Community Foundation allowed us to provide laptops for staff who were working from home
Mental Health Fund For Young People	Funding provided by Bedford and Luton Community Fund and The Sun Readers' Fund allows us to offer free counselling to young carers and young adult carers
Lottery Core Funding	This was awarded during the pandemic helping to fund core costs and purchase equipment
BLCF and Harpur Trust	To support our workshops, events and groups programme – predominantly the salary of the workshops, events and groups co-ordinator
BLCF Whitbread Fund	To support peer groups and activities in South Bedfordshire
Rookery South	Funding for young carer activities in the parishes of Ampthill, Brogborough, Cranfield, Houghton Conquest, Lidlington, Marston Moretaine, Maulden, Millbrook, Stewartby or Wootton.
Legacy	Legacies are received from individuals who gift monies to Carers in Bedfordshire in their wills. The Board of Trustees then determine how these funds can be effectively spent and allocate specific amounts to projects within this fund.

Carers

in bedfordshire

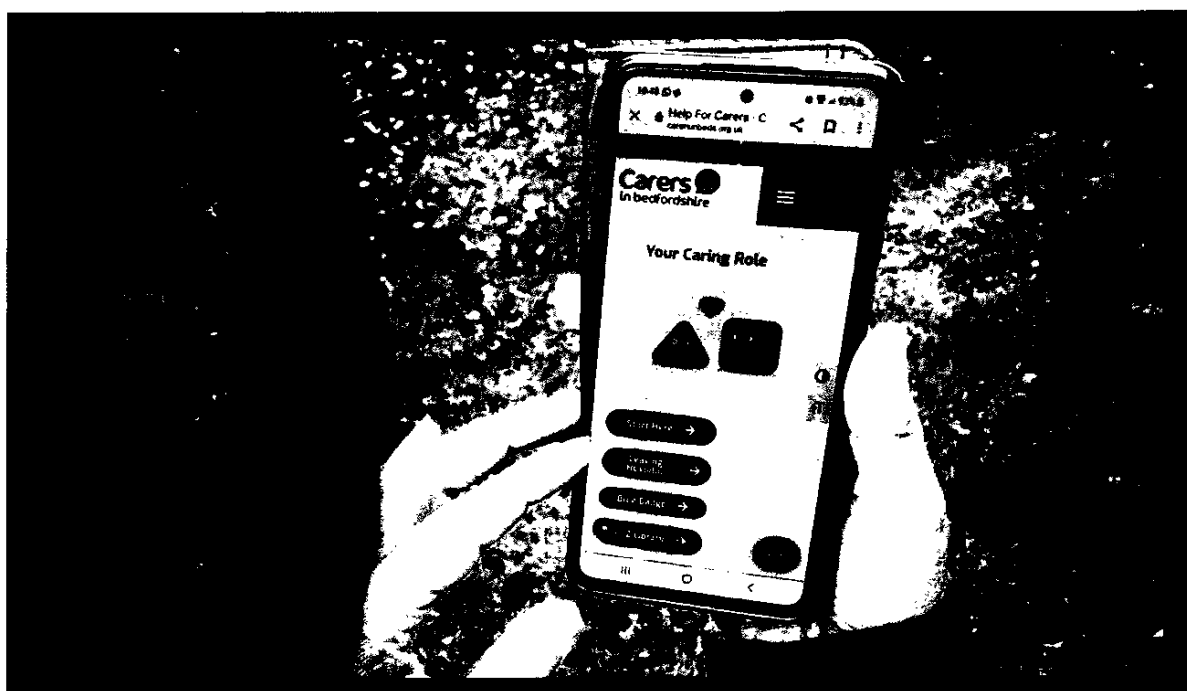


**ANNUAL
REVIEW 2022/23**

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WELCOME

3

Welcome to this year's annual report, we hope it provides an inspiring insight into how our dedicated team of staff and volunteers have worked to reach our vision of *Every Carer feeling recognised, respected, and supported in their role.*

This year has been another year of growth as demand for our services continues to increase. The areas of need we see most are based around mental health, physical health, benefits and finances.

With growing demand, we continue to review how we work and what we provide to ensure that our services remain relevant, accessible, and responsive. We cannot afford to stand still in an ever changing climate and I would like extend my gratitude to our Board of Trustees and the Carers Panel, who have been unwavering in their support and constructive input over the past year.

It's been another successful year in which Carers in Bedfordshire has continued to adapt to the post-Covid world, particularly in making the most of technology. This has meant, among other things, that we've seen an increase of 60% in carers registered with us, since Covid, and staff now spend 33% more time on frontline services.

A particular highlight came when we won the Transforming with Digital Award in the UK Charity Governance Awards 2023. To receive national recognition, not just amongst carers' charities but across the whole charitable sector, is an indication of the way in which that adaptation I refer to has improved our services.

We still have much to do, of course, and we look forward to working ever more closely with other organisations to improve the whole system for carer

Carers in Bedfordshire is not an island, we are part of an important and sometimes complex system of organisations that come into carers lives and whilst we come in all different shapes and sizes, our successes and challenges are shared. Without the support of the Local Authorities, Integrated Care Board and our voluntary sector partners we could not achieve what we do.

Of course, none of our achievements would have been possible without our dedicated team of staff and volunteers who continue to go above and beyond in their commitment to improving the lives of carers across Bedfordshire.

CHRIS STELLING

Chief Executive Officer



support in the next few years. No one organisation can do it all alone.

As always, I would particularly like to thank all our funders, donors, partners, members and volunteers without whom we simply couldn't operate as we do.

We're delighted to have welcomed Mercy Canning, Jagdeep Ahluwalia, Joanne Preston and Michelle Evans-Riches as new trustees. Their combined knowledge and experience will help to ensure that we continue to grow in future years.

PHIL TAVERNER

Chairperson



ABOUT US

4

OUR VISION

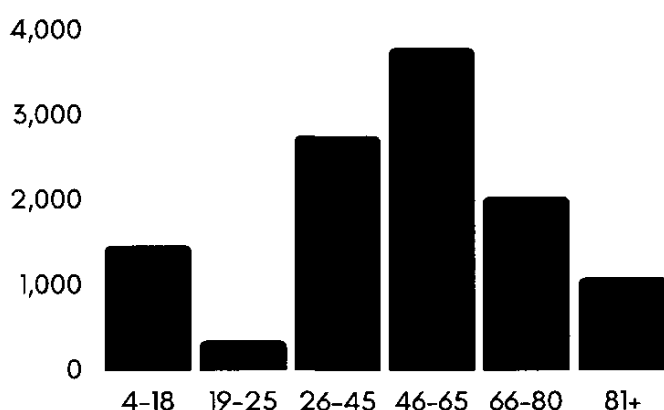
Carers will feel recognised, respected and supported in their role.

OUR MISSION

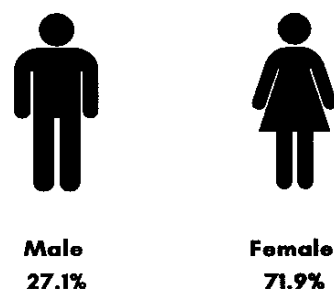
To give carers access to the support, information and skills that enhances their wellbeing and enables them to remain in a caring role for as long as they choose.

WHO WE SUPPORT

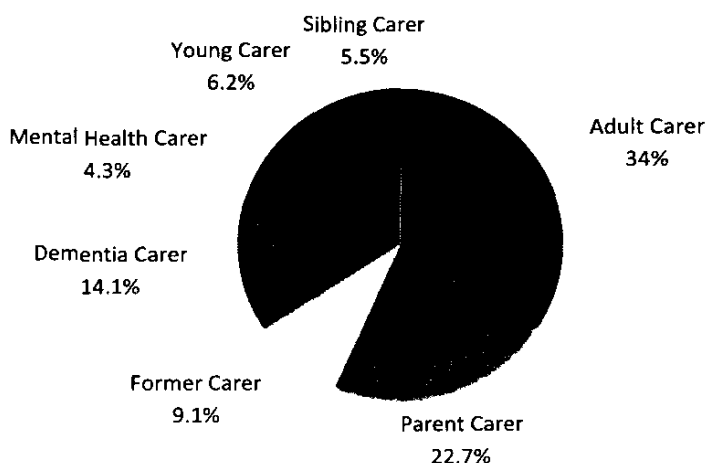
Age of carers



Gender of carers



Carer Types supported



We support more than **11,500** carers across Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire that's a **21%** increase from last year

HOW WE SUPPORT

5

We're a local charity which has supported unpaid family carers of all ages since 2004. They might be an older person looking after a spouse with dementia, a young person caring for a disabled sibling, a parent supporting a child with additional needs, or an adult looking after a partner with a mental health condition or addiction.

Our compassionate and knowledgeable Support Workers give a listening ear and practical advice. They help carers navigate the health and social care system, or reassure someone dealing with a difficult situation at home.

We have a busy program of peer support groups and activities to bring carers together. We run regular social groups, one-off activities and wellbeing events.

Our services include counselling, wellbeing sessions, coping with hospital admissions, grants, benefits advice and information such as the Carers magazine.

Our Memory Navigation Service is for people living with memory loss and dementia, and their carers.

We are regulated by the Charity Commission and comply with Company Law. We're a Network Partner of Carers Trust, and also work closely with Carers UK, the UK's two national carer charities.

We help carers have their say on caring matters in Bedfordshire, and beyond, working with the NHS, local councils, and influencing government, local and national.

We are well connected locally with many health and social care organisations and have strong links with businesses, schools and employers.

We work closely with local and national agencies and can signpost carers to specialised sources of support.



We only do what makes life better for carers – carers are at the heart of our values.

OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

6



We have 40 members of staff (29 full-time equivalents) and 83 volunteers working across Bedfordshire to give carers access to support, information and skills which enhance their wellbeing and enables them to remain in a caring role for as long as they choose.

**66,000 interactions
with carers**

an increase of 38% from last year

**20,224 telephone
conversations**

an increase of 44% from last year

**133,000 unique website
page views**

an increase of 33% from last year

**£216,080 carers grants
awarded**

decrease of 12% from last year

**1097 unique carers
attended our groups**

decrease of 21% from last year

**5070 hours donated by
volunteers**

an increase of 23% from last year

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

7

As a charity supporting so many people with a diverse range of needs the Board of Trustees set strategic priorities to guide the charity in what it chooses to do and for whom. Otherwise the charity can be pulled in a number of different directions and end up working towards goals that are not rooted in its core vision and mission. In 2020 the Board published its strategic plan for the coming years; within that plan it committed to five key objectives.

OUR FIVE KEY OBJECTIVES:

**Reach more
carers**

**Be transparent,
efficient and effective**

Work in Partnership

**Invest in high
quality support**

**Advocate with
carers**



HOW WE REACHED MORE CARERS

8

We supported professionals to identify carers

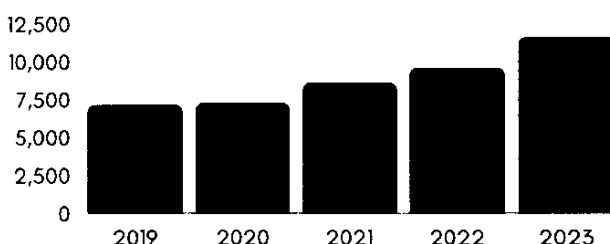
We ran a programme designed to increase carer awareness with GP's.

Supported by Dr Simon Lowe we worked with every practice across Bedfordshire to identify Carer Champions and embed our referral form into the GP's System so that GP'S could refer carers far easier than before. We also developed a digital carer awareness training package for GP's so that they can access training at their convenience. We aim to push this out to more GP's over the coming year.

“ I really liked it; it doesn't feel like training which is nice because it's so informative but also with the videos gives it a very 'real' feel rather than having to go through slides and slides of information. I think the videos and the 'to the point' information makes it a lot easier to digest.”



The number of carers registered with us has increased by over 40% since 2019



Digital Advances and Re-Branding

We worked to modernise our Branding and build new digital resources

We designed and built our new Online Support Hub which gives carers an easy way to find useful information.

We also rebranded all our printed literature and online presence making it more engaging, eye catching and modern, we introduced our "Blobs" to help communicate our message to our diverse range of carers.



Social Media Strategy

We changed the way we engaged on social media

We decided to use the platforms to highlight more broadly "Who we are and what we do" and reduce our specific event posts. Our events are too numerous and far reaching, and are already advertised to carers via our bulletins. By adopting a more clear focus about our service we have been able to use social media to increase brand awareness and registrations.



HOW WE REACHED MORE CARERS

9

Identifying Gaps in Carer Demographics - While we understand that there are thousands of carers who may require our support, we also recognize that there are certain carer demographics that we fail to reach as effectively as we would like.

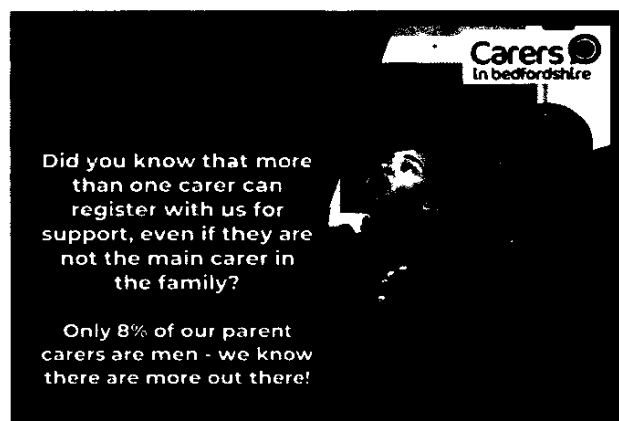
This year we prioritised reaching out to male carers as while they represent 42% of the carer population, they only represent 27% of those registered with us.

We got funding from the Heads Up Community Fund to trial some new ways of engaging carers with great results.

Heads Up Community Fund helped us:

- Deliver a media campaign to encourage more male carers to register with us.
 - Leaflets were delivered to 7,500 households
 - A banner was displayed in Kempston Rovers Football Club and we were featured on their website
 - A Men Care Too postcard was inserted into our parent carer guide. Copies of the guide were distributed at this year's River Festival in Bedford and via local schools.
- A new dedicated web page was designed for male carers

The campaign **increased** our male carer registrations by **88%**



National Lottery Funding

The success of the Men Care Too campaign gave us the confidence to expand this approach to reach more carers. We were delighted that the National Lottery saw the value in this work and agreed to fund us from next year. This allows us to continue our work to reach those most currently significantly underrepresented.

These groups include:

- Young Adult carers (aged 18-25)
- Ethnic minorities
- Males

We look forward to seeing and reporting the results next year.

Thanks go to all of our generous grant funders for helping us achieve our goals
Here are a selection:



WHITBREAD



The Wixamtree Trust*

ST JOHN'S
HOSPITAL TRUST

“ Thank you, I don't want to cry but you have been so reassuring and helpful. ”

“ I honestly don't know what I would have done without having someone like you to talk to. ”

“ We are extremely grateful for what you have offered us so thank you so much it means every thing to us! ”

“ Thank you for the support that you give for carers. ”

“ It has made a big difference to me to be able to come into the hub and see you, thank you for everything you do, all of you. ”

“ “That's amazing thanks so, so much!! I have booked us on for a holiday at Butlins, we are all super excited! ”

HOW WE INVESTED IN HIGH QUALITY SUPPORT

11

We invested in high quality support by securing a number of new and existing roles integral to supporting carers. In addition to staff training to ensure our workforce is delivering the best support possible for carers.

Wellbeing

Our adult wellbeing service has continued to flourish. 89% of carers who accessed our wellbeing service reported stable or improved wellbeing following sessions.

Individual and group support was accessed and our Wellbeing Practitioner dealt with 337 referrals.

Our Practitioner also regularly contributes wellbeing articles to our magazines and e-bulletins. From July to September 2022 she ran a 10 week social media campaign around the wellness wheel.

Demand on our counselling service has reduced significantly since we introduced our Wellbeing Practitioner.

We have seen increased demand for our young carer wellbeing service. This service focusses on one to one support for Young Carers in Bedford Borough. Funded by Bedford Borough Council's Youth Empowerment Fund, she also contributed regularly to Young Carer e-bulletins giving tips and wellbeing advice.

Benefits Advice

We saw a need, carers were not receiving the awards they were entitled to. Carers told us that they didn't know what they were eligible for, found the forms confusing and often difficult to complete alone.

The Benefits service was introduced on 1st April 2022 with one welfare rights adviser three days a week. In that time we have assisted more than 318 carers and generated **£172,265.09** for carers.

The requirement to close support plans within 90 days ensures that the work is focussed on advising on benefits entitlements and supporting with applications.

Two volunteers have supported us this year helping carers applying for Attendance Allowance, Blue Badges and giving benefits advice.

Community Nurse

In February we recruited a Community Nurse to offer Health Checks for people caring for someone with a Severe Mental Illness. Health Checks are completed at home or another place where the carer and cared for feel comfortable. The results are shared with the clients GP and other healthcare professionals. Since we began 22% identified that the person has high blood pressure.

- 24% identified that the person is prediabetic.

- Among patients diagnosed with high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or prediabetes during their health check, 70% had not previously received a professional medical assessment to detect those conditions.

HOW WE HAVE BEEN TRANSPARENT, EFFICIENT, AND EFFECTIVE

12

We continued to look at how we can improve services and the way we do things to ensure the charity was running as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Digital Advances

We continued to invest in our digital infrastructure and automated processes, to direct more of our resources into frontline support for carers. Examples of these initiatives are:

- Continued to develop a responsive **registration form** and enhanced database efficiencies. Due to increased demand we continued to be efficient by enhancing our registration process for carers and professionals through fundraised income. The re-design now enables Carers in Bedfordshire to make the carers journey more streamlined by identifying carers needs. The specifically designed questions mean that we can now provide bespoke support plans, intervention based around key areas that impact a carers life. The impact of this is that we can prevent, reduce and delay further needs more efficiently.
- We are now able to **text** to a carer individually through our CRM system. We can also text a whole group and people that will/have attended a session. The reply comes to the support worker individually and is recorded on interactions. Reminders for groups via text and email is now achievable, which makes it more efficient for support workers to send reminders about events.

This has impacted waiting times and allowed us to disseminate information more quickly. These advances allow staff to concentrate more time on front line services.



Excellence for Carers Award

We were awarded the national Excellence for Carers Award by the Carers Trust, for the support the charity gives to family unpaid carers in the county.

The award follows a rigorous assessment of the support services we provide, including the quality of our leadership, staff, internal processes and engagement with key local partners and stakeholders.

Overall

To date, both small and big changes to how we work has enabled us to work with a growing number of carers within a broadly similar budget. This year we have mainly focused on embedding those changes into our everyday practice and monitoring the impact of those changes.

A key challenge for us this year was to recruit Trustees who would not only meet gaps in skills and experience but also ensure the Board has a broader representation of the people we support. We were delighted to welcome Mercy Canning, Jagdeep Ahluwalia, Joanne Preston and Michelle Evans-Riches each of whom come with a wealth of experience to help ensure the charity remains well led.

Goals for the year ahead:



- Continue to invest in digital services to help us manage the demand on services
- Embed a young carers voice in Board level discussions

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

13

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Income			
Statutory bodies	953,809	975,284	820,052
Grants and trust foundations	294,295	345,460	518,687
Donations	21,981	33,255	22,725
Service Charges	8,928	12,360	7,973
Misc.	983	4,013	462
	<u>1,279,996</u>	<u>1,370,372</u>	<u>1,369,899</u>
Expenditure			
Carer Services	823,754	836,621	987,033
Dementia Services	171,178	188,821	92,084
Carers Grants	189,307	232,669	247,870
Fundraising	36,198	39,255	26,071
	<u>1,220,437</u>	<u>1,297,366</u>	<u>1,353,058</u>

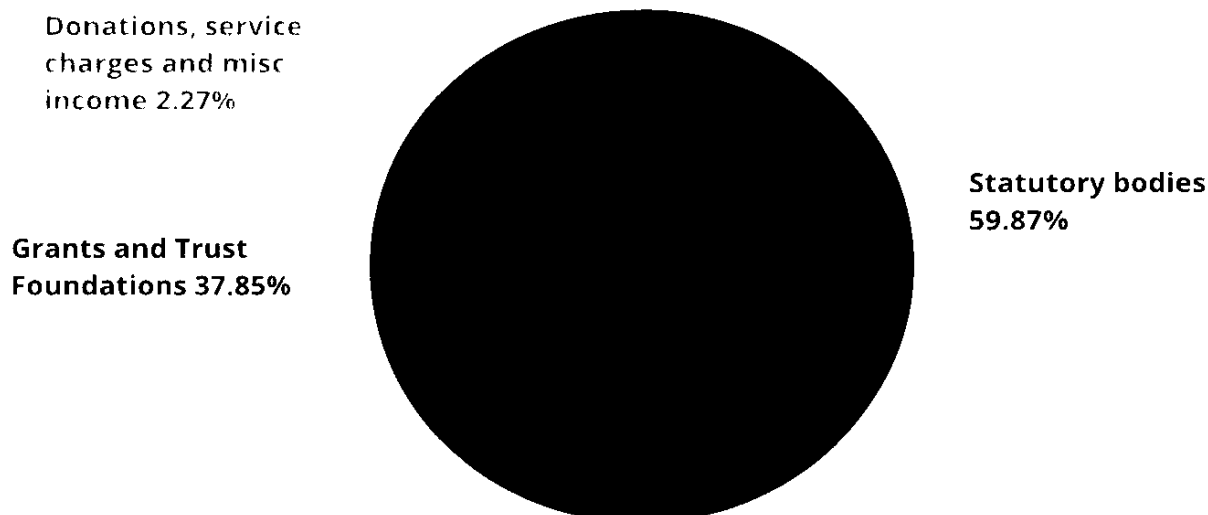


Income

We have seen our statutory income take a significant decrease, but hard work within our grants and trust team has bridged the gap as income grew in this area by approximately £173,000, allowing us to continue to meet demand on services. As well as, allowed us to enhance our core offer, develop our infrastructure and pilot new ways of working.

Our donation and service income decreased by 31% and 49% compared to the previous year, and continues to remain well below pre-Covid levels.

Overall, total income decreased by 0.7% on the previous year.



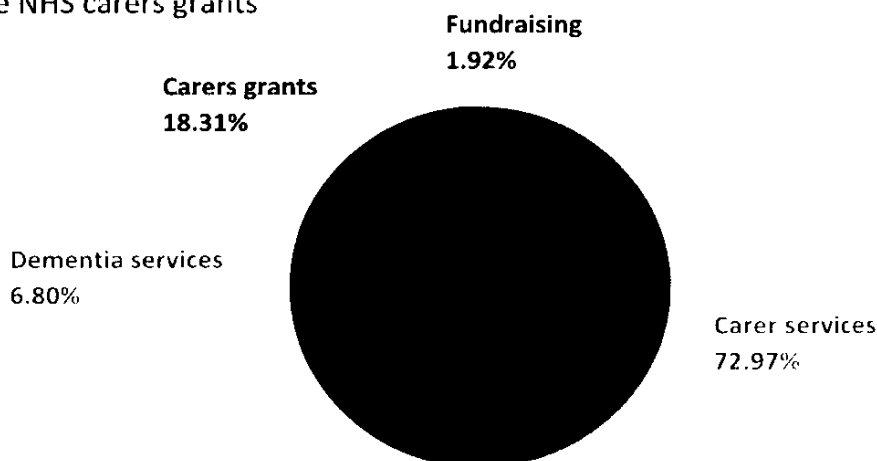
Expenditure

14

Expenditure increased by 3.8% excluding NHS Carers Grants (4.29% including NHS Carers Grants) compared to the previous year. This was largely due to:

- Investment in digital infrastructure, such as our website and database
- Staff training

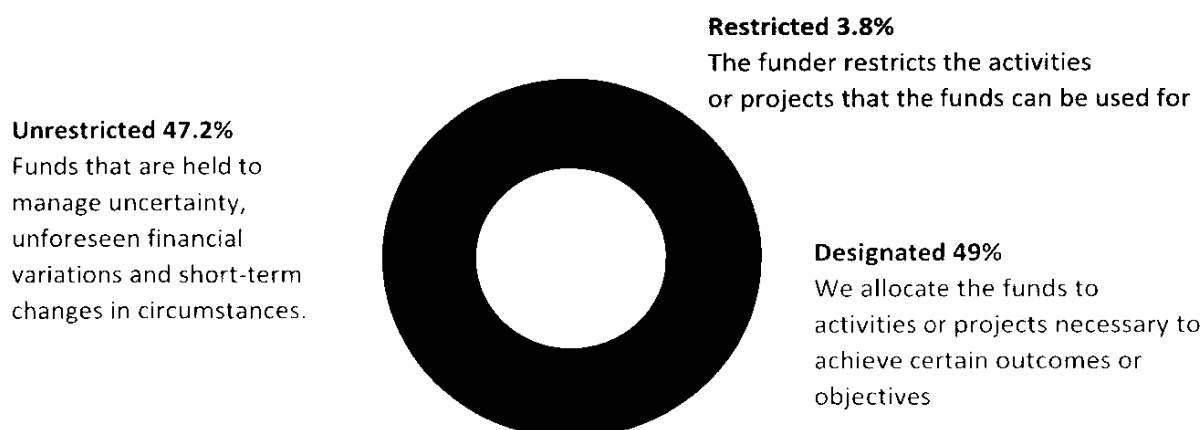
We were delighted to end the financial year with a surplus of £38,133. This includes the funds we hold for the NHS carers grants



Funds in Reserves

At the end of the 2022-23 financial year the total reserves of the charity stood at £430,320. These are funds that we hold to provide resilience for the charity against any unforeseen circumstances. Our policy is to hold a minimum of 4 month's salary costs of all staff on all projects and three months' central organisational costs, and a maximum of 150% of this amount in unrestricted reserves. The total reserves figure is lower than the policy as we are currently working towards targeting a minimum of 4 months salary costs and 4 months central organisation costs.

The total funds that we hold in reserves are in three categories for future activity:



“ I just wanted to thank you
so much for the lovely food
parcel, it was so kind.
Have a lovely Christmas
and stay safe ”

“ Many, many thanks for the
opportunity to have all
the yoga classes and
reflexology sessions. It's
made my January. ”

“ That's a very long winded way
of saying I really do want your
help and I value it so much and
couldn't believe there was
someone who could offer the
assistance that you kindly
proposed. ”

HOW WE WORKED IN PARTNERSHIP

16

We worked with many partners to deliver sessions and groups, as well as team up on special projects to support carers.

Young Carers National Voice

We continued our work with Young Carers National Voice which is a growing network of local organizations that are committed to promoting the voice of young carers. The aim of the network is to bring together young carers from across the country to campaign collectively on the issues that are important to them.

Sue Ryder

Caring for someone with a life limiting illness with Sue Ryder St Johns Hospice and ELFT Macmillan Specialist Psychotherapy developed a 6 week programme for carers offering a mix of emotional and practical support for 2 hours a week. Carers able to attend in person or via Zoom. The course covered self care, coping with loss and change, managing worries, legal and financial matters, what to expect in the last days of life, organising funerals and future planning. Each session concluded with a mindfulness or relaxation exercise. Our first programme was delivered during February and March 2023 with further programmes planned for later in the year.

“ I found the course enormously helpful during a terribly stressful time of my life. I feel the course prepared me well for what was to come. ”

Tibbs Dementia

Since April 2022, we have increased our partnership working with Tibbs, to include regular team meetings, an internal referral system incorporated into an MS Teams channel, co-hosting groups to offer additional services and guidance to more carers. We continue to work together with them to provide service information at the Moving Forward groups and regularly promote their groups and encourage carers to attend.

Memory Assessment Service

We continue to work together with the Memory Assessment Service, providing information for those recently diagnosed at their Moving Forward groups. We also receive referrals from the Memory Assessment Service, on average this is 44 referrals per quarter.

HOW WE WORKED IN PARTNERSHIP

17

Conference

In November 200 carers from across Bedfordshire attended an in-person and online conference aimed to help them learn from each other, make sense of and manage change, and deal with modern challenges.

There were also dozens of organisations with information stands from partner agencies and different teams within Carers in Bedfordshire, with other talks about care homes, mental capacity, power of attorney, deputyship and advocacy also taking place.

Young Carers Alliance

The Young Carers Alliance is a growing network of over 150 organisations and 350 individuals committed to changing this and improving the support available for young carers, young adult carers and their families. They bring together representatives from research, policy and practice, all of whom are committed to bringing about improved outcomes for all young carers.

The Young Carers Alliance provides opportunities for collaboration, sharing best practice and a strong, collective voice for young carers.



Young Carers Bedroom Makeover

Two Bedford young carers, aged 4 and 9, were nominated for a bedroom makeover to celebrate national Young Carers Action Day (15 March 2023). This was in recognition of the amazing care they give to three of their family members who have physical health conditions. We teamed up with **bpha**, **Baileys** heating company, **Bellgroup** and **Bedford Repair Café** to transform the bedroom which the sisters share.

Goals for the year ahead:



- **Improve carer awareness amongst health and social care staff**
- **Improve carer awareness with employers**
- **Support partner organisation to deliver support in condition specific areas**

OUR PARTNERS

18

Here are some of the partners we've been working collaboratively with over the last year to provide a high quality service to carers

We are grateful to the Integrated Care Board (NHS), Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedford Borough Council who have supported Carers in Bedfordshire both financially and with key projects. Whilst Carers in Bedfordshire is an independent charity we would not be able to have the impact we have without their support.



We are also grateful to these organisations who have worked with us to support carers:



“

Since I lost my wife this July
the group has been so good,
helped me move forward

”

“

Thank you for the walk
and chat yesterday. I
really enjoyed it. Thank
you for your advice too.

”

“

Thank you for today honestly
makes a difference when you
feel someone gets it and
listens, so I don't feel like I
should be over this by now.
So, thank you for listening.

”

HOW WE ADVOCATED WITH CARERS

20

We advocated with carers in a number of ways helping them to get their voice heard and be the instrument for change. This included in how we run our services, how partners run theirs. This year we identified three priority areas that carers have said were most important to them:

Carer assessment process

What were carers telling us?

That the Carers offer in Bedford Borough did not give enough choice to carers about how they could access additional support.

Many carers who would benefit from an assessment were either not aware that this was an option, had been waiting for a long time or did not want the hassle of more forms to complete.

What did we do?

Discussed these concerns with the local authorities to identify a way forward. Updated our literature and guides to better emphasise when an assessment might be useful to carers.

What has changed?

Bedford Borough has now changed their offer so carers can now have the freedom to arrange and pay for support services of their choice through direct payments. We remain in dialogue with both councils as to see how we can better work together so that carers who would benefit from an assessment can access one without going through an onerous process.

Increase Respite Options

What were carers telling us?

That their health and wellbeing was being adversely affected by not feeling able to take a break from their caring role. Carers reported that the lack of choice and access to finances were the principal reasons behind this.

What did we do?

Raised those issues with the local authorities and carried out a survey with carers to help quantify this need. We supported carers to raise these issues themselves through engagement exercises with the local authority and continued to identify this as a central barrier to carers wellbeing.

What has changed?

Central Bedfordshire have published a carers strategy which includes a commitment to review respite options.

Given the limited progress and the fact this remains a central barrier to carers wellbeing, Carers in Bedfordshire's board have taken the decision to investigate the viability of opening a respite service either by ourselves or in partnership with another organisation.

Young Carer Support in Central Bedfordshire

What were carers telling us?

That support for young carers in Central Beds wasn't comparable to the support offer in Bedford Borough

What did we do?

Raised those issues with the council, detailing where the gaps in their provision were. CBC's Healthwatch also investigated and published [a report on their findings which mirrored our concerns.](#)

What has changed?

Central Beds have updated their website so their offer is more clear and are working to recommendations from the Healthwatch report.

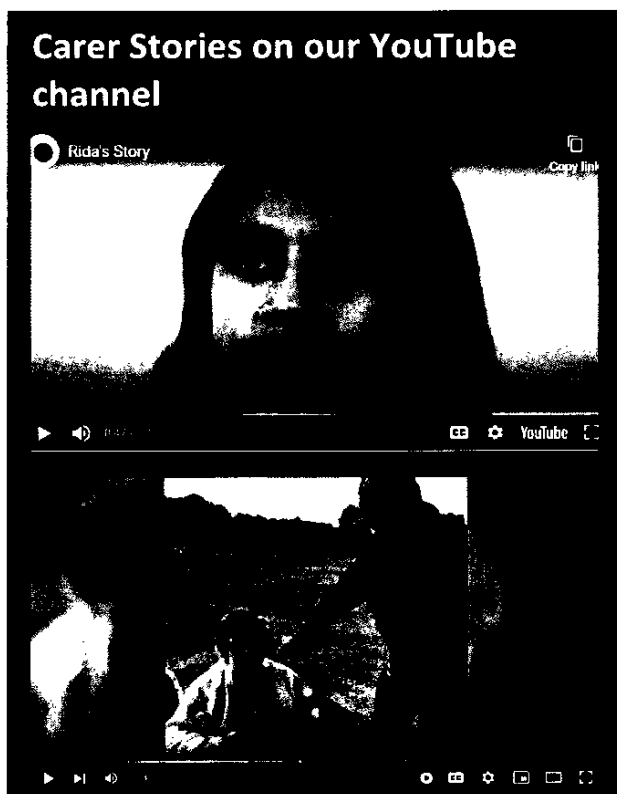
HOW WE ADVOCATED WITH CARERS

21

We continued to listen to carers, hearing about their lives and their concerns. We are grateful to the carers who are willing to share their stories and give their time to help us and other carers.

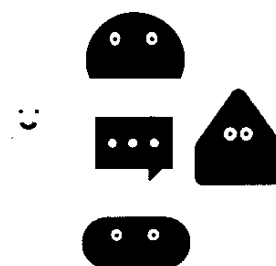
Carer Stories

We continued to grow our list of Carer Stories. Six carers stories were published this year to highlight the coping mechanisms used by carers facing many different types of struggles. Powerful messages – other carers can relate to, service providers can learn, informs our strategy; two of them part of the GP learning package. We thank those that were willing to share their stories and would be keen to hear from any other carers who would be willing to tell their story to help other carers and professionals alike.



Carers Panel

This year we introduced a Carers Panel, as a formal governance measure to give trustees a direct co-produced channel of dialogue with carers. After an introductory session, two formal meetings were held this year – all are hybrid. The Panel now takes place a fortnight before the Board meeting and up to two Carers Panel members attend those as observers. Discussions have focused on accessibility and inclusion and consulting with carers. We'd like to thank all those who serve on the Carers Panel for their commitment and support



Future Goals:



- We will continue to advocate on those priority areas as we have not yet made the progress we would like to.

“ Everyone at Carers in Bedfordshire is wonderful/ kind and very helpful. I will be making a donation to say thank you. ”

“ I am blown away with everything you have told me and offered today. the whatsapp group sounds amazing and made me quite emotional thanks ”

“ Thank you for listening I hadn't realised I would be able to have support whilst my mum was in the Nursing Home receiving end of life care or afterwards when she passed away - didn't think I was still a carer. ”

There is little doubt that the past few years have created many challenges for both carers and us as an organisation. The effects of Covid and the rise in the cost of living have had a detrimental impact on carers physical and mental health. As we move forward, we need to be prepared to support a growing number of carers, allowing them to survive and thrive in their caring role, however, we know that this will not be straightforward.

Over the past four years the number of people we have supported has grown by 76% yet our income has only grown by 12%. This has meant that the amount we can spend on each carer has reduced significantly while service delivery costs are continually increasing. To date, changes we have made in how we work, and support carers has

enabled services to cope with demand, however, looking ahead, we expect demands to increase and the costs to deliver those services will also rise. Securing additional investment into those services is always difficult. Many charities around the country are facing a similar situation.

Recognising these challenges, the Board of Trustees and the Carers Panel have begun to think about how Carers in Bedfordshire positions itself in the coming years so that we remain mission focused in these ever challenging circumstances. We hope to share those plans with you in the early part of 2024.

If you are a carer or a former carer and want to help shape how we meet these challenges, then please consider joining our Carers Panel.

Rising Demand

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
No. of Carers Registered	6500	8000	9,500	11,500
Income	£1,216,402	£1,279,993	£1,370,372	£1,369,899
Available expenditure per carer	£187.14	£160.00	£144.25	£119.12

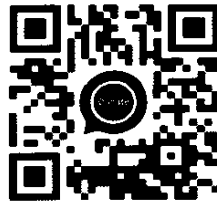
Carers in bedfordshire

We support unpaid carers across Bedfordshire.
Carers are at the heart of everything we do.
Would you like to help?

SUPPORT US

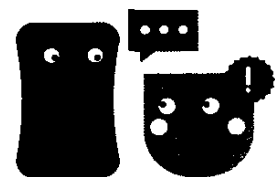
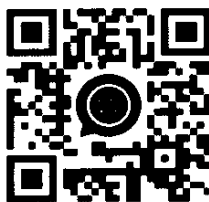


VOLUNTEER



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