



CarersBucks

Annual Review 2011

Dedicated to supporting family carers

Contents

Fundraising and Development	page 4
Volunteers	page 6
Male Carers	page 7
Hospital and GP Work	page 8
Assistive Technology	page 9
Bursary Fund	page 10
Our Website	page 12
Training and Equipment	page 13
Working Carers	page 14
Parent Carers	page 15
BAME Communities	page 16
Young Carers	page 17
Meet the Team	page 20
Treasurer's Report	page 22

Welcome

We have enjoyed another successful year, with over 1,200 new carers receiving support, in addition to the thousands of carers we are already in touch with.

Services we provide include advice, information and signposting, support groups, training, an emergency service and bursary grants; all of which are designed to help carers stay physically and emotionally well in what can often be challenging circumstances.

The Board and management team have recently conducted a review of all of our services to look at improvements and to ensure that carers get the support they need and value most. In light of this we will be reorganising our work to ensure we adapt to the huge opportunities that technology offers us, to reach more carers more cost-effectively, and put more emphasis on supporting volunteers who help our work in the community.

We are very grateful for the support we receive from Buckinghamshire County Council, from local people and organisations. I would also like to thank my fellow Trustees, our staff and volunteers for the wonderful work that they do.

Dr Les Davies
Chair

Each year in Buckinghamshire over 14,000 people become carers for the first time. At Carers Bucks we know that without support it is all too common for carers to get ill, depressed or isolated. Our role is to support the wonderful work that carers do and to help them to stay physically and emotionally well.

Over sixty percent of the eight thousand carers we support are caring for a loved one for fifty hours a week or more. Whether it is supporting carers looking after their adult children with disabilities or ensuring that young carers are not disadvantaged in school, all of our work focuses on providing the support that carers tell us they want and need. Caring for someone can be very rewarding but it can also be stressful and tiring, particularly if you have a heavy caring role. I hope that this report will give you a snapshot of the work that Carers Bucks does, and why it is so important.

Over the next year we will be developing our work with young carers so that they have the chance to not only get some of their childhood back, but just as importantly, to ensure they do as well as their peers educationally and in their employment prospects.

We will work out in the community more so that we ensure our services are available to everyone in Buckinghamshire, including those that live in the more rural areas and the local BAME communities. Last year our website had over 200,000 hits and we will be developing our web based

services and reaching out to carers through social media. We will be extending the work we do with hospitals and GPs, to help ensure that they take carers properly into account.

We would not be able to do the work that we do without the dedication of our wonderful staff, and I would like to thank them for all they have done. I would also like to thank the Board for the support they have given to me over the past year.

Stephen Archibald
Chief Executive



Dr Les Davies
Chair



Stephen Archibald
Chief Executive

Fundraising and Development

We have been overwhelmed this year by the generosity of our local fundraisers and donors.

Fundraising events this year included a Zumbathon event organised by Nika Bass and Rina Kosi, 'The Zumba Siblings' who raised over £6,000 for Young Carers. What an incredible achievement; we are so grateful.

Other sponsored events included Ian Inglis who raised over £1,000 playing 54 holes of golf, and Chantal Busbridge (whose grandmother we have supported as a carer) who raised over £1,200 bungee-jumping over the Corinth Canal in Greece.

Our Morocco trip has been organised as a direct result of fundraising by staff and other fundraisers. Please see the details on page 18.

Our youngest fundraiser this year was Macy Parrott who, at eight years old, raised over £500 by cycling eleven miles from Fairford Leys to Wendover.

Macy said: "Young Carers Bucks helped my family through some hard times when mummy was very poorly and I had to look after my baby brother. I used to make sure mummy was eating and taking her medication. Young Carers gave me some 'me time'

and I enjoyed every moment of it. Now things are looking bright for my family, I feel it's my turn to give back and help other kids."

We send thanks to all of you, and this is extended to everyone who has given their time at a sponsored event for Carers Bucks. If you have ideas about a sponsored event, please contact us and we will work with you to make it a success.

We continue to receive generous donations from many sources including local groups, such as the Masons and the Rotary Club, which help us to develop our carers support services. It is impossible to mention everybody but our heartfelt thanks go out to all of our donors, be it a regular monthly donation or a one-off payment.

If you would like to make a contribution, it can be as simple as donating through the JustGiving link on our website, sending us a cheque, or setting up a monthly payment. You can even donate by texting us – all you need to do is text the code BUCK10 £1/ £5/ £10 (ie the amount you want to donate) to 70070.

Contributions, big and small, make such a difference to the work we can do.



Volunteers

Volunteers make a vital contribution to the work of Carers Bucks and we currently have thirty five who give us their time and skills.

Brian's story

Brian has been volunteering with us for over a year and during that time has worked with almost 70 carers, helping them to complete the often daunting and time-consuming disability benefits forms. Brian's experience and knowledge means that carers are well supported through the process of claiming the benefits to which they are entitled. One of our carers who Brian helped to claim DLA for her son, said: "I am so grateful to Brian and am delighted that my son has now been given an indefinite award. This has taken a load off my mind. Thank you!"

We are actively recruiting volunteers to help us in a variety of ways. If you have some time to spare, please call us on 0300 777 2722.



Male Carers

Although caring is often thought of as a female role, four out of ten carers are men. Of these, over half combine their caring responsibilities with working full time. At Carers Bucks, we specifically focus some of our services on male carers. For instance, we have a programme of life coaching and access to counselling.

Brian said:

“If I were to give a score to the support I got from the male carers group, I’d give it 12 out of 10. It really helps people to understand each other’s problems. And also, when we have our meetings, we learn about what’s available, and the different things we can get to help us with our caring. So, as I’ve said, it’s a total success.”

Andrew said:

“I was not prepared for this level of caring and I am constantly exhausted, and had resorted to drinking to excess trying to work and care. Counselling and support have helped me keep my job and stay caring for my mother.”



Hospital and GP Work

Hospitals

Carers Bucks is working with local hospitals to improve the recognition, involvement and support of carers, particularly around the time of discharge from hospital.

The five aims of the project are:

- Ensure carers are recognised and involved across the discharge process of the person they care for in a timely manner
- Promote carer awareness amongst staff and support the earlier identification and involvement of carers as partners in discharge
- Support early referral by healthcare staff to Carers Bucks to offer all carers the opportunity of early planning, emotional support and training
- Ensure that information is available and accessible so that carers understand the discharge pathway and can maximise their health and wellbeing
- Standardise this so that all hospitals share a common pathway, making it easier for carers to maintain support

GPs

We are working with the new GP consortia in the North and South of the county, keeping abreast of their plans and ensuring that carers are properly taken into account as new services are planned and commissioned.

Assistive Technology

Dave's story

“My father, Ken, became very unstable after my mother died and suffered a series of strokes that led to hospitalisation. When he came home he required medication at set times which caused me considerable stress, as my wife and I also care for our daughter who is learning disabled. Added to this was the worry that my father could have a fall and be unattended for hours.”

“My dad agreed to use Telecare services and this has greatly improved our lives. The installation was simple, and he now has a falling sensor which will alert a control centre automatically if dad falls and is unable to press the button. He also has an automated pill dispenser which alerts him to take his medication at the correct time. My regular visits are now mainly social, and this has kept him independent and our relationship has benefited.”



Bursary Fund - a Lifeline for Carers

Carers Bucks manages a Bursary fund on behalf of the County Council which helps towards the costs of some of the things that carers need in order to keep going in their caring role. We support nearly two hundred carers a year in this way, and have

helped to fund things as diverse as washing machines, power packs for wheelchairs, complementary therapies, domiciliary care, sitting services, short breaks for carers and telecare equipment.



Amina's story

Amina is a parent carer who looks after her daughter Mamta who has severe cerebral palsy, and her son Tanay who has a learning disability. Amina also has physical disabilities herself. Amina's husband works part-time but also has physical disabilities so is limited in the help he can give and they find it hard to get by financially. They have four children and Amina provides all the personal and physical care for the children and the family. Before contacting Carers Bucks, Amina felt very isolated and due to her limited English skills was unable to talk to anyone about her caring role and feelings. Trying to get information about services was also difficult.

Amina has benefited from Carers Bucks in many ways. Having someone to speak to in Punjabi about her caring role has been great and she is able to get the advice and information she needs. This has helped her confidence and self esteem. With Carers Bucks support she now regularly attends English for Speakers of Other Languages classes. Getting around with four children was also a problem so with the help of the Bursary fund, she has started driving lessons and has already passed her theory test.

Bob's story

When he contacted Carers Bucks, Bob and his wife Kathleen were under a great deal of stress caring for their severely disabled twenty six year old daughter. Bob had been unable to work for some time due to a crumbling spine and their marriage was also under stress because Kathleen felt that Bob was not pulling his weight financially.

In conversation with Carers Bucks, Bob mentioned that he had always found reading and writing difficult. We suggested meeting the Adult Dyslexia Society to investigate if this was the problem and it turned out that it was.

The Adult Dyslexia Society agreed to provide him with twenty sessions and Carers Bucks paid for these through the Bursary grant. We also bought him a second hand laptop computer. The outcome has been astonishing; he no longer looks haunted, his confidence has improved and his reading is coming along rapidly. Bob now reads to his daughter and is planning to return to work.

“It is really nice to have somewhere to go for support. I really did not know which way to turn. Without Carers Bucks I don't think my marriage would have survived and since I have had the Dyslexia sessions, my reading and confidence have improved hugely.”

Our Website

We currently get over 200,000 hits a year on our website and it continues to develop as a valuable resource for carers of all ages and caring roles. It is also a cost effective and convenient way of providing information. Over the next few months we will be developing online support for working carers and will be adding training and information videos.

We also have an online forum so that carers can support one another and exchange information at any time that suits their busy lives.



Training and Equipment

Providing training for carers is an important aspect of our work. We provide training courses on how to manage stress, condition specific training e.g. stroke or dementia, lasting power of attorney, management of incontinence and first aid, amongst others.

A good example of how useful training can be is our course on how to use a compact battery powered lifting cushion. Carers Bucks, together with the British Red Cross, loan out these cushions to carers which lift a fallen person simply and safely. This prevents carers from hurting their backs and has meant that forty one ambulance call-outs were averted last year.



Working Carers

Being employed obviously helps a carer financially, but there are also other benefits of staying in work including higher self esteem, friendships and the sense of achievement. It is therefore crucial that carers feel supported to remain in employment wherever possible.

Carers now have additional employment rights and more employers are realising the benefits of supporting their staff who are carers. To promote this, we are developing a new service specifically focused on working carers. We will work with local employers to help them understand the economic benefits of a carer-friendly workplace.

It is often the case that when a crisis happens and a person suddenly becomes a carer overnight, they decide to leave their job as they feel this is the only option. This is often regretted at a later date when things have settled down. Carers Bucks will be here to support people through this stressful time and advise new carers to take their time over any major decisions.

We will be providing online support that will be accessible to them at all times.



Parent Carers

The emotional pressure of caring for a child with additional needs can be enormous. This year we hosted a couple of two day training courses on managing challenging behaviour. Following on from this some of the parents have formed their own peer training support groups and we will be extending the training to other family members.

Clare says:

“My son is autistic, he’s non-verbal and struggling a bit, so the group keeps me one step ahead of him so I can support him as he grows up. Being involved in something like this gives me an opportunity not only to meet other carers, but to meet other people as well.”



Working with Carers from the Black, Asian and other Minority Ethnic Communities

We have a regular information slot for carers on Radio Awaaz, a radio station that serves the local Asian community.

An Asian ladies sewing group runs regularly in Aylesbury which provides an opportunity to learn new skills, to share information and provide mutual support. We also organised a 6 week yoga course for BAME women during the year.

Other activities for the BAME Communities included a family day out to the seaside and a city shopping trip. These outings provide time away with family and friends away from their everyday caring environment.

We held several information days focused on the BAME Communities in conjunction with community pharmacy & health services, and the British Heart Foundation.



Young Carers

Young Carers Bucks support nearly 500 young carers in Buckinghamshire aged six to eighteen. We provide one-to-one support, large and small group activities, residential breaks, regular club nights and targeted group work. All packages of intervention are designed to meet the needs of the individual child or young person, and the work is supported by both dedicated Young Carers staff and a team of volunteers.

An example of one of our many trips with the young carers is when we took the six to nine age range to Tiggywinkles, an animal welfare centre. They learnt about animals and held hedgehogs which they found fascinating.

A lot of our work with young carers involves doing the fun things that they have never had the chance to do. One of our six year old carers went swimming for the first time. She had only ever seen a picture of a swimming pool - never one in “real life”. She was amazed to find that you can go underwater as she thought you just stayed on the top! Before we had even got out, she was asking when she could go again.



Young Carers

We also took a group of young carers bowling, which for one of our eight year olds, was a new experience. He found it “totally awesome”. From attending various events, he now feels so much more confident with other children in school because: “I do stuff just like the other kids”. It’s a real reminder of how many young carers miss out on opportunities that many children often take for granted.

During the October half-term, ten young carers aged between fifteen and nineteen from Aylesbury and High Wycombe will be completing a nine-day trek through the Jebel Sahro in Morocco. This is a really positive challenge which will help to raise self-esteem, increase aspirations and encourage team work.

Together with Young Carers staff, the young carers raised over £10,000 to pay for the Morocco trip. They did sponsored walks, cake sales, car washing, quizzes and held a successful musical evening; all of which are a tribute to their hard work and commitment.



Young Carers Family Support Project

The Young Carers Family Support Project was launched in August 2010. The project works in partnership with Bucks County Council Children & Young Peoples Services, The Buckinghamshire Drug & Alcohol Action Team, and The Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire Mental Health Trust.

The project works with families where there are young carers caring for parents with either mental illness and / or substance misuse issues, and has been a huge success. The aim is to lower barriers to treatment services for the parent and provide targeted support to the young carers within the family.

Jade's story

Her mum suffers with long-term depression and a cannabis addiction, and her dad has alcohol dependency issues and a history of cocaine use. When we first started working with this family the young carer was very withdrawn and socially isolated. We linked her into mainstream young carers projects and offered her one to one support where we took her out on a regular basis with a small group of children to help build her confidence. We also helped her integrate into the mainstream young carers activities which she now attends regularly. Her confidence has grown and she is also getting involved with more after school clubs, thereby widening her social networks. She attended our 'Treasured' workshop to learn about keeping safe and dealing with her feelings.

We linked both parents into treatment with Oasis and her mum is now attending counselling sessions. Due to her having significantly reduced her use of drugs, she is now receiving additional support from her GP regarding her mental health. We have helped her dad to complete a 12 week programme of drug treatment in High Wycombe. He is now more motivated and also attends acupuncture, group therapy and back to work support.

Meet the Team

Stephen Archibald

Chief Executive

Stephanie Dean

Finance Manager

Ann Whiteley

Adult Carers Service Manager

Sally Mansi

Young Carers Service Manager

Adult Carers Support Team

Gill Aikens

David Bone

Rahat Butt

Diane Dalton

Julia Durrant

Amanda Essex

Ash Khan

Rukhsana Mehrban

Kate Norman

Vonayi Nyamazana

Connie Sharp

Helen Wilton

Young Carers Support Team

Sarah Beavis

Amanda Brackley

Kim Bunce

Karen Carr

Sarah Collin

Hattie Collison

Lynne de Looze

Denise Drew

Julie May

Debbie Norton

Marian Smedley

Nima Takodra

Jack Turner

Administration

Bridget Gilbert

Timea Sharrad





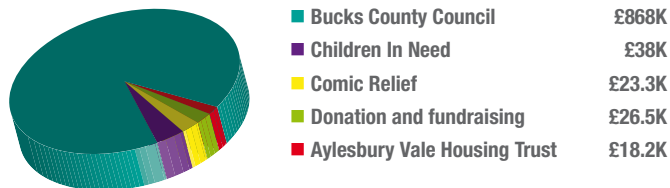
Treasurer's Report

Our total income for the year to 31st March 2011 was £974,202, which was a substantial increase on the previous financial year. We also managed to increase our reserves which now total £159,244.

The Trustees have established a reserves policy whereby the funds held by the charity should be between three and six months of normal funding costs. We still have some way to go to achieve this but as a team, we are tackling this head-on with new initiatives and strategic planning.

The majority of our income came from our Carers Support contract with Buckinghamshire County Council. We are pleased to confirm that this contract has been extended by two further years to 31st March 2013, which is a reflection of the successful track record we have established. We look forward to working with our Commissioners to further develop services for carers in the coming years. Other significant funding has been provided by Comic Relief, Children In Need and VAHT Community Chest.

Income by source: Total £974K



We are very grateful to these organisations, and all of the other individuals and groups who have helped to boost our income and allowed us to continue supporting such an important part of the community.

In these challenging times, it is important for us to diversify our income and give the charity more opportunities to develop projects and extra services. We are taking steps to increase our funding from the local community and grant giving trusts, and have developed a new fundraising strategy to achieve this.

Given the current economic climate, we have retained a strong financial position and the results since the year end to date are very encouraging.

A copy of the audited Carers Bucks accounts is available from our Aylesbury office or our website.

Expenditure by category Total £969K



1 in 5 of us will become a carer at some point in our lives

There are over 44,000 carers in Buckinghamshire

We have over 8,500 registered carers

5,158 carers registered with us are caring for fifty hours a week or more

We registered over 1,200 new carers last year

Over half the carers we support are aged over sixty

Over 1,000 carers attended our training courses & information days

**Our website provides a wide range of information and advice,
receiving over 3,800 hits a week**

CarersBucks

Ardenham Court
Oxford Road
Aylesbury
Buckinghamshire
HP19 8HT

t 0300 777 2722

e mail@carersbucks.org
www.carersbucks.org

Company Registration Number 4941481 Charity Number 1106745