



# Creating Carer Friendly® Communities

**Impact Review 2022**





“

**I felt comfortable and listened to and was given lots of information and felt supported after a very long time of not feeling that.**

Our grateful thanks to all the Carers whose words and images feature in this review. The quotes and case studies used throughout come from written feedback provided by Carers and from case studies submitted by our partners. Please note, the Carer quotes shown on or alongside Carer images should not be attributed to the people in the images.



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# A message from our CEO



**I'd like to start by stating my utmost pride and appreciation for the Carers we have the privilege to support, work with and learn from each year.**

Carers face significant financial challenges at all times, and this year we witnessed the impact of the cost-of-living raises throughout year. You can find out how we supported Carers and families on page 12.

We also witnessed a growing recognition of and regard for the caring role, both in communities, wider society and workplaces and we're proud of the role our Carer Friendly Communities programme played in this. Read about our Carer Friendly community in the pages that follow, and please do take action to get involved, whether that's as a supporter, fundraiser, volunteer or business.

In 2022, our impact supporting Carers was recognised through winning two new local authority contracts to deliver Walsall Carers Hub (page 23) and a new Carer Friendly ID card scheme in Dorset. We were also delighted to retain our place in the [UK's top 100 Social Enterprises](#) and to be selected as a finalist in the Social Enterprise UK's Health and Social Care organisation of the year.

We were thrilled to be selected to deliver the Birmingham Carers Hub service (page 14) for a further five years, providing us with the opportunity to deliver innovative new services in collaboration with our wide range of not-for-profit partners.

As we look ahead to 2023, I feel hopeful that Carers will become more visible as we await the results on the annual census and that Carer Friendly Communities will flourish as we empower more people to play a part in developing Carer Friendly Communities.

I hope you enjoy this snapshot of our work.

**Simon Fenton**  
**CEO Forward Carers**

## Our Vision

Our vision is a world where all Carers live within Carer Friendly Communities that empower them to thrive in all areas of life and work. Communities come to life when every interaction in a Carer's day is with a person, service or business that understands and values the caring role.

## Find out how our Values shape everything we do

OUR VALUES

# Who is Forward Carers?

**We're an award-winning, not-for-profit, social enterprise and Community Interest Company (CIC). We create Carer Friendly Communities, places that open their eyes and hearts to unpaid Carers.**

## What we do

We deliver local authority contracts to create and manage impactful Carers Hub services that improve the wellbeing of unpaid Carers, often in partnership with other local non-profits (see page 26). And as a social enterprise, we've developed a range of commercial services to help businesses and organisations to better support the Carers in their communities. 100% of our profits are reinvested into our work.

## How we do it

Our services are designed in consultation and collaboration with Carers. Our innovative Carers Voice programme provides opportunities for all Carers in the areas we work to contribute their knowledge and expertise in ways that work for them – from completing surveys to attending focus groups or co-production activities, or even becoming a Forward Carers Ambassador.



## Our Ambassadors

In 2022, we were delighted to formally recognise our wonderful Carer Ambassadors into the Forward Carers team. Our six Ambassadors are all passionate about helping other Carers to get the support they need. They raise awareness and understanding of Carers by giving talks to health and social care settings, community groups or workplaces, help us choose Carer Friendly award winners and assess and evaluate Carer Friendly Employer Commitment Mark submissions. They also regularly contribute to the Carer Friendly Forum for Carers, share Forward Carers' social media posts and promote our Carer Friendly Communities work. Our Ambassadors and Carers Voice contributors are essential to the work we do and we are very grateful to have them.

**[You can read about Marie, Neil, Sharda, Sarah, Sylvia, Anne by clicking on here.](#)**

## Our Priorities in 2023

Roll out our programme to create more Carer Friendly Communities	Enhance support to families affected by dementia	Inform Carers about their rights, entitlements and support so they are empowered	Improve online and in-person Carer support groups to reduce isolation	Identify new partners to reach more hidden Carers
Work with Commissioners to offer high quality personalised Carer support	Showcase the difference we are making for Carers through partnerships	Reduce our environmental impact so we better protect our amazing world	Recognise and challenge health inequalities in exist in our communities	Tackle economic inequality that many Carers face

# Our Impact in 2022

Our mission is to create Carer Friendly Communities, places that open their eyes and hearts to unpaid Carers, so Carers can live their lives to the full, while supporting the person they care for. We achieve our mission by delivering Carer services in partnership with other non-profits, providing innovative support direct to Carers and empowering others to make simple changes that make a big difference to Carers' lives.



**5872**

Carers supported across our services



**365**

Carer groups and activities;  
70 online groups



**2736**

New Carers identified and registered



**2638**

Carers Assessments undertaken



**£394,000**

in wellbeing grants distributed to  
1,878 Carers



**106,012**

Carers accessed online information



**95%**

of Carers rated their Assessment experience as very good or good



**£11.56**

was saved by the social care sector for every £1 invested in us\*



**87%**

of those who had a Carers Assessment felt more positive about their caring role

[\\*find out more here](#)

# Our Impact

While many Carers describe their role as fulfilling and rewarding, it can have a significant impact on health, leisure, work, family and home life. So, it's essential that the services we offer to Carers are effective and make a real difference to their lives.

## A huge return on investment:

[Read Blog](#)

Without our support and services, many Carers would need extra help. Our package of Carer support contributes a substantial cost saving to the NHS, facilitates increased economic contributions from Carers who remain in work, and reduces statutory costs for funded care and support. Check out our blog to find out exactly how we used Adass and Carers UK methodology to identify our return on investment value.

**For every £1 invested in Forward Carers, £11.56 is saved by social care.**

## Caring confidently:

One of our most important services is providing Carers with a statutory Carers Assessment, an in depth conversation discussing all aspects of the caring role and the ways it impacts on a Carer's life.

In 2022:

**2638**

Carers received a statutory Carers Assessment and wellbeing action plan

**83%**

of Carers said they feel they can provide care more confidently as a result of their assessment

**87%**

of Carers said they feel more positive about their caring role as a result of their assessment.

## Improving wellbeing:

To help us measure the impact of our services, Carers complete a Wellbeing Assessment before and after receiving our support. In 2022, the biggest positive change was experienced in Carers getting time-out and Carers reporting improved health and wellbeing.

## Financial impact:

**We distributed over £394,000 to 1,878 Carers.**

These funds helped Carers to undertake activities to improve their wellbeing. We also helped Carers to access over **£1 million** in welfare entitlements.

## Quality Assurance:

**95% of Carers rated their Carers Assessment as Good or Very Good.**

We also surveyed 1500 Carers to ask about their experiences and quality of life as a Carer.

# About Carers

## Why do Carers need support?

Unpaid Carers are amazing people who deserve support, respect and recognition. They are our family, friends, neighbours and colleagues who support someone who could not manage without them due to a health condition, disability, frailty or addiction issues. Without support Carers can, and do, breakdown, at huge impact on themselves, their families and the social care system. The right support at the right time can empower Carers to thrive.

Research shows the contribution that Carers make each year in terms of their time and resources is £162bn, almost the costs of a second NHS. We simply can't afford not to care for Carers.



## The Health and Wellbeing Impact of Caring

Without significant emotional, practical, financial and workplace support Carers would reach breaking point, rupturing families and risking our health and social care system.

**21%**

of Carers describe their physical health was 'bad' or 'very bad'

**29%**

of Carers report they felt lonely 'often' or 'always'

**63%**

of Carers are 'extremely worried' about managing their monthly costs

**75%**

of Carers worry about continuing to juggle work and care

\* Responses from the 2022 State of Caring Report by Carers UK

## The social costs of caring

The UK's army of unpaid Carers contribute so much to our society. Carers carry the majority of the caring burden, not doctors, professionals or the health and social care system. When Care breaks down and Carers' health is compromised, it comes at a high cost to our society, not just to Carers.

**£57 billion\***

Unpaid Carers provide social care valued at £57 billion

**£22.2 billion\*\***

The amount spent on social care by Councils

**£37 billion\*\*\***

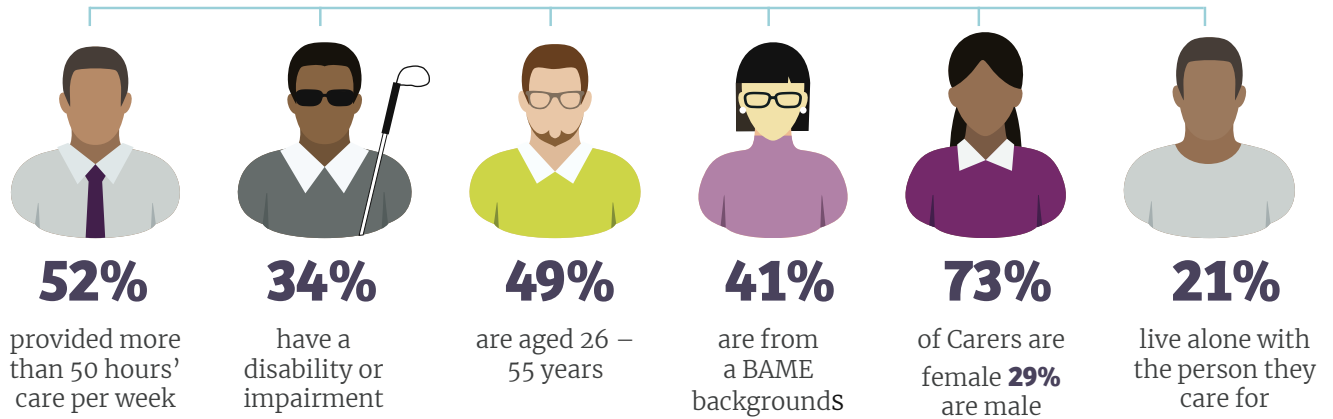
The costs to the state of Carer health issues and lost income

\* ONS Social Care Cost of Caring \*\* [Social care 360: expenditure | The King's Fund](#) \*\*\* [Unpaid care isn't free - NEF Consulting](#)

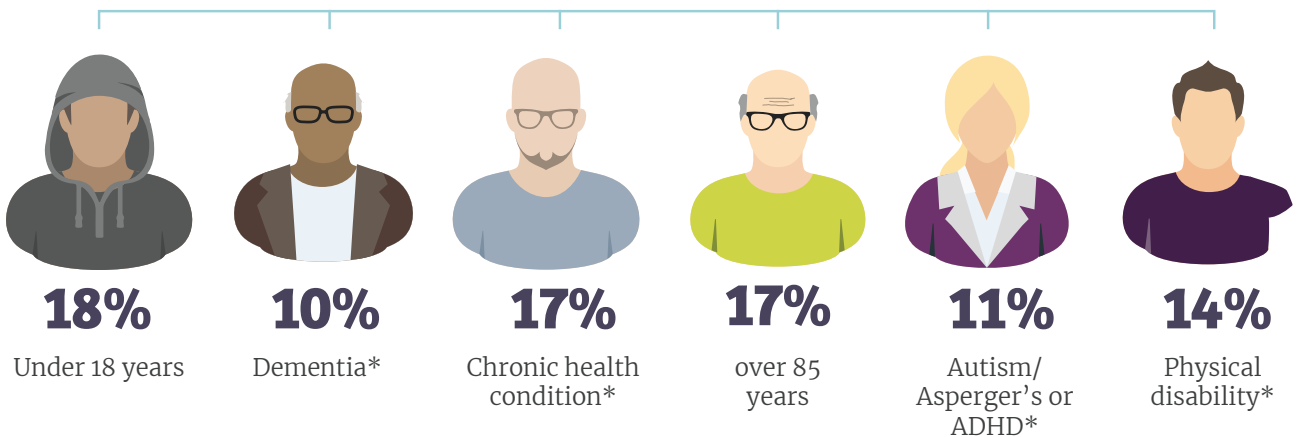


Carers come from all ages and backgrounds and are as diverse as the people they care for. Of the 20,237 Carers registered with us:

## Who are the Carers we support?\*



## Who do they care for?



\* This includes primary (the reason care is required) and secondary health conditions of the people who Carers registered with us support

## What do Carers do?

Caring isn't simply defined by personal care or physical assistance, it's any combination of emotional and practical support, ranging from a couple hours per week to round-the-clock care. For the many who live alone with the person they care for, this it can be an all-encompassing role. That's why we care for Carers.

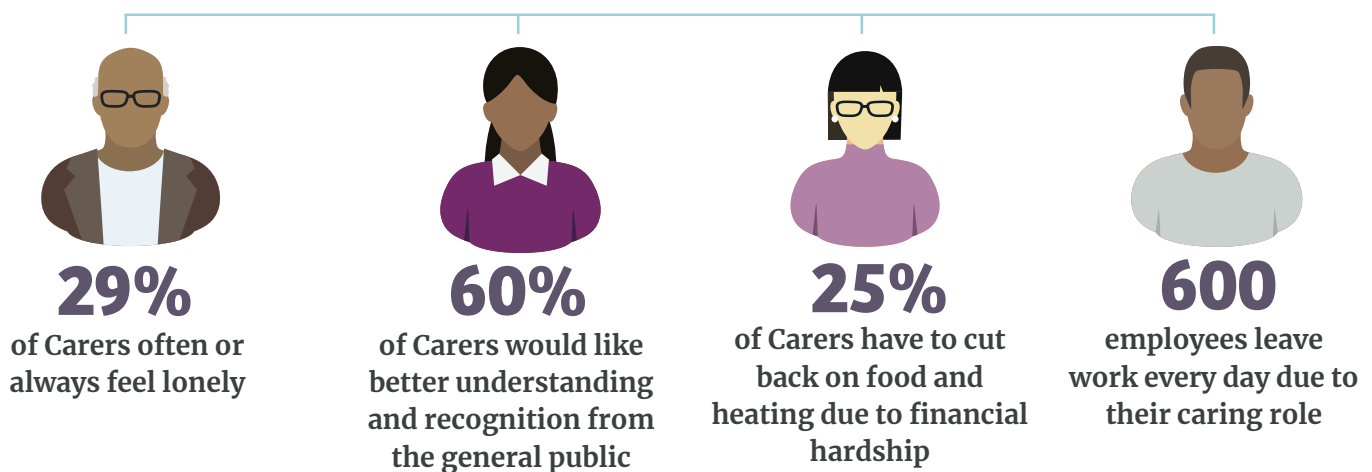


# Creating Carer Friendly Communities

Our mission is to create Carer Friendly Communities across England, places that open their eyes and hearts to the lives of Carers. We believe great things happen when communities come together.



## Carers need support from communities and workplaces because: \*



## We help communities to become Carer Friendly by delivering the:

The award winning Carer Friendly ID and discount card

Carer Aware and Carer Champion workplace training

Carer Friendly Employer Commitment Mark

## We growing our community:



## Organisations and groups who join their Carer Friendly Community benefit from

Promotion of their organisation or service to over 15,000 Carers

Tools, tips and training to better understand Carers

Happier, healthier, more productive staff

\*figures from Carers UK

# Carer Friendly Card

Our Carer Friendly ID and discount card for verified Carers, helps Carers to feel validated, seen and supported by the community. We also work with local and national businesses and services to provide unique discounts and offers to cardholders, helping Carers manage their finances and raising awareness of unpaid Carers across all sectors.

The Carer Friendly Card is so much more than an identity card.

**Card holders also get access to:**

- **Exclusive online support including our Carer Friendly Online Forum**
- **Access to discounts on presentation of the card at participating services**
- **Peace of mind with in case of emergency details printed on the reverse**

Find out more at [www.forwardcarers.org.uk/carers-id-cards](http://www.forwardcarers.org.uk/carers-id-cards)



## Carers Card Case Study:

Neil cares for his brother Adam who has learning difficulties and his dad who has Alzheimer's. Neil used his Carer Friendly ID card to gain free access at Cadbury World when he took his dad and Adam to celebrate Adam's 40th birthday! The smiles say it all.

# Creating Carer Friendly Workplaces

Our Carer Friendly Workplaces programme provides training and a Carer Friendly Employer verification scheme helps employers to improve the support they provide for staff who juggle work and an unpaid caring role. As a social business, all proceeds from our commercial activities are invested into our mission to create Carer Friendly Communities.

## Carer Friendly Employer Case Study:

In 2022, the University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation (UHB) Trust became England's first ever certified Carer Friendly Employer! We were delighted to support the UHB's ambitions to certify their Carer Friendly support for their workforce of 22,000 employees, meaning anyone who balances work and care will benefit from outstanding support. You can read more about it [here](#).

They have a wide range of policies that are put into practice everyday and knowledgeable and supportive line managers who understand the challenges of balancing work and care and the benefits of empowering staff to balance their responsibilities successfully.



# Supporting Carers through the cost-of-living crisis

**The level of poverty and financial hardship amongst unpaid Carers is unacceptable. 44% of adults caring for more than 35 hours a week are in poverty and the proportion of carers unable to afford their utility bills has more than doubled since last year – from 6% in 2021 to 14% in 2022\***

As a member of the Carer Poverty Coalition, we are committed to alleviating financial suffering caused by minimal welfare entitlements for Carers, high living costs and challenges maintaining paid work.

**In 2022, we undertook a range of activities to directly support Carers:**

## Cost-of-living Hub

We created a dedicated Cost of Living Hub, a repository to help Carers identify grant funding and financial support, understand their benefit rights and work through ways to save costs around the home.

## Wellbeing payments

As a Carer, when money is tight, it can feel impossible to prioritise your own needs. We provided £394,000 wellbeing payments to 1,878 Carers through Birmingham Carers Hub to help them meet their priority wellbeing needs.

## Welfare entitlements

According to analysis from online benefits calculator Entitledto, more than seven million UK households could be missing out on benefits like council tax discounts. In 2022, we launched our multi-lingual online Benefits Calculator, putting the power in Carers' hands to check whether they were missing out on vital funds with just a few clicks.

**644**  
online calculations run

**£48,213**  
identified in unclaimed funds

**Within just weeks of launching the calculator, one Parent-Carer of a child with additional needs realised she was missing out on £500 each week in unclaimed entitlements, including Universal Credit and Child Benefit! You can read more about this below.**

[READ MORE](#)

\*<https://www.carersuk.org/news-and-campaigns/our-campaigns/cost-of-living-crisis>



## Online and hybrid support

Many Carers told us that having some sessions available online helps them access support and services they wouldn't otherwise be able to attend.

**70**

online groups attended  
by 374 Carers

**106,012**

visitors accessed  
information and support  
via our websites

**3,000**

Facebook followers  
across our services

Groups ranged from yoga, support groups, training sessions, activities and peer groups, you can read about some of these below:

Our Zoom at Noon sessions are hosted by one of our fabulous Ambassadors who uses her personal experience of caring and over 40 years of meditation practice to create an aura of peace and tranquillity and a safe space for Carers to share their stories.

### Case Study: Kissing it Better



Kissing it Better runs daily intergenerational online catch-ups each week – bringing together Carers, young people and the wider community to connect online, share experiences and meet new friends.

B cares for her son D who has severe mental health issues and needs a great deal of support, as well as managing her own health conditions and a recent bereavement. B told us that trying to care for her son has been extremely challenging and she is constantly concerned about his wellbeing.

During one session, Jill Fraser, Chief Executive and Co-founder of the charity, told B about their 'Twiddlemuffs', cuddly, colourful knitted muffs made by their student volunteers and usually used by older people who are living with dementia. They can provide great comfort and distraction. B mentioned that her son would enjoy them too, so to her surprise Jill posted one out from her holiday in the Lake District, to avoid the postal delays and get it out to D as soon as possible!

For B, the sessions are an opportunity to do things for herself and to have a bit of 'down time'. On more than one occasion she has commented that her son might enjoy the sessions we run and has asked if he could join in too. She then laughs and says: 'Here I go again, I find something that I can do on my own and find myself only thinking about what might be good for my son'!



Image of a twiddlemuff

# Birmingham Carers Hub: 2022 in Numbers



Forward Carers CIC powers Birmingham Carers Hub, a partnership of non-profits based in the communities they serve. Our services support unpaid Carers across Birmingham, so families can stay together, happier and healthier, for longer.

## Supporting Carers



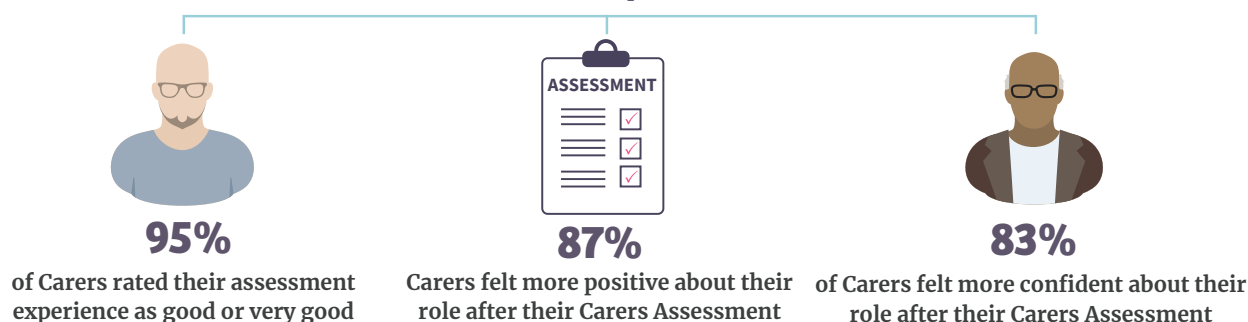
## Carer Emergency Response Service



## Financial Support for Carers and Families



## Our Impact



## Improving Carer Health and Wellbeing

Empowering Carers to stay mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually well supports them to build and maintain the reserves of compassion and dedication needed to carry out their caring role.

Our services recognise that routes to health and wellbeing can look different for all – for some it can be found in socialising with friends or taking some time-out, for others it's in a gentle yoga or meditation class and for others it's found by undertaking hobbies and activities they care deeply about which can be funded by a Carers wellbeing grant.



**988**

yoga and relaxation  
sessions



**263**

wellbeing and support  
groups run



**1,572**

Carers attended groups  
and activities

### In Carers' Words:

We love to hear about the impact of our services on Carers' wellbeing, here are just a couple of the dozens of quotes we've had from Carers sharing how much better they feel about taking part in free yoga sessions for Carers:

"There is always an amazingly positive vibe after the yoga carer sessions where we begin chatting, share our experiences pertaining to problems people air, console people, generally smile and feel relieved that others understand and care.

The yoga and massages are fabulous as they keep our tight bodies moving and release tension....Being given time to switch off on the yoga mat is incredibly restorative. I don't feel judged that I can't do the moves (though frustrated with myself at times)- it's a friendly supportive environment."



**"I really appreciate all your hard work and efforts to make our time with you such a relief and so enjoyable."**

## Breaks for Carers

Our partnership with Carefree provides free stays for Carers in hotels around the country! Carefree transform vacant hotel rooms into much-needed respite breaks for registered full-time Carers who may otherwise be unable to afford to go away. Taking time out to recharge gives Carers the vitality to continue in their caring role, happily and healthily.

**In 2022, 26 Carers registered for a free holiday**

**"I was able to relax without having to worry about any responsibilities and really just spent a night focusing on myself and recharging." – Muneeba.**

## Wellbeing budgets

As part of the Carer's Assessment, Carers may be allocated a Wellbeing Budget to use to improve their wellbeing. Carers use their budget to pay for the things that matter to them and make them feel good. Nearly 1 in 5 Carers used their funds for activities such as days out, short breaks and time-out.

## Supporting Dementia Carers

Caring for someone with dementia can be lonely and emotional. Our specialist dementia Advisors and dementia training and support delivered by Dementia Carers Count can help Carers to understand the impact of the illness on their loved one and help them provide practical and emotional support. Our dementia support groups bring Carers together to laugh – and cry – and to help them stay connected and healthy.



**250**

dementia training an group sessions



**330**

specialist dementia Carer Assessments

**"I found it very very good. The way she (Sue from Dementia Carers Count) explained things was brilliant. I asked her a couple of questions about teeth cleaning which I really struggled with with my husband and her advice and information on this really helped alot. I would recommend this to other carers."**



## Supporting Young Adult Carers

Over the past decade, the number of young people under the age of 24 who act as Young Carers has climbed to 140,000.

Our Young Adult Carers Service delivered by YMCA Sutton Coldfield offers free help and advice for those aged between 18 and 25 and caring for someone in Birmingham. We offer personalised support for Young Adult Carers in transition, supporting them with current and future work and education aspirations, social and emotional support, peer groups and activities and one-to-one support with a key worker.

Giving young adult Carers the chance to have fun with other young people is at least as important as our education and aspiration services. Last year, our partner YMCA Sutton Coldfield arranged tennis and gaming sessions, meals out, an adventurous trip to Thorpe park, art and cooking sessions, a London residential, trips to the theatre, as well as more regular meet ups, topic talks and coffee clubs. Check out the [TikTok video](#) of a recent young Carers residential and theatre trip to London – smiles all around!



**297**

young adult Carers and  
their families supported

### Carer's Story

A.G is a Carer for his grandad who has a serious health condition. When he was first introduced to the service, he was initially very shy but after attending a few social sessions with friends, one of our Young Adult Carer Advisors arranged to meet him at his school in order to understand his aspirations for work and education. Over time, it became clear that he faced barriers to pursuing his dream to get a job because he didn't have a personal bank account or the identification required to open one. A.G's Advisor supported him to create an action plan to get a birth certificate, then a driving licence and bank account. She also supported him with his CV and applications.

A.G next had a young adult Carer's Assessment where he spoke about his caring role and the impact it has on him and he shared that he and the family were facing financial difficulties. Following the Assessment A.G. was awarded a wellbeing payment which allowed him to purchase a copy of his birth certificate and some new shoes to replace his current ones which had holes in them – this made him so happy.

A.G and his Advisor have continued to meet regularly. He is in a more positive place, doing well at college and has set goals which we are absolutely sure he will achieve.



**297 young adult Carers and their families supported**

## Supporting Parent Carers

We've made it as easy as possible for Parent-Carers to find the right help. By registering with Birmingham Carers Hub, parents gain access to the Midland Mencap Family Support Service and dedicated support and service from our fantastic partners Action for Children and Kids. In addition, our partners Oscar Birmingham provide specialist support for families affected by Sickle Cell Disease and Thalassaemia.



## Improving support for Carers in health settings (health liaison)

Our health liaison services build links between the health and social care, to improve support for Carers and their loved ones.

### Support from GPs

GPs and GP practice teams are usually the first place that Carers have contact with the NHS and have a vital role in identifying, recognising, supporting and signposting Carers to specialist support.



**395**

Carers registered for support after conversations with their GPs or another professional

### Support in Hospitals

Relatives and Carers often become experts in the needs of the person they care for and when fully recognised as 'partners in care' can provide a valuable insight that health professionals can benefit from.

In 2022, 600 Carers identified as partners in care and provided with a Carers ID Card.

Forward Carers funds one of two Carer Coordinator roles to bring together patients, Carers and medical staff across the University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust (UHB) as 'partners in care' by:

- liaising with ward staff on the Carer's behalf to ensure provision of an overnight guest bed
- ensuring access to food and drinks vouchers
- helping to clarify decisions around eligibility for visiting
- providing emotional support and practical information such as Carers packs and distribution of the official Partner in Care card scheme
- signposting Carers to specialist support.

## Carers Emergency Response Service: Helping Carers to look after their health

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Many Carers deprioritise their own needs in order to provide care for the person they support, unwilling – or unable – to leave them to attend their own appointments, which can have a significant impact on their own wellbeing.

Through our partner Midland Mencap, we provide a free sitting service for Carers registered with Birmingham Carers Hub, so they can prioritise their own healthcare and stay fit and well in their caring role. The sitting service is part of our Carers Emergency Response Service (CERS) which also provides emergency cover for up to 48 hours (72 hours on a Bank holiday) in the event a crisis situation occurs.

**In 2022, we carried out 302 planned sittings and 17 emergency call-outs.**



### Carer's Story:

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Often Carers have their own health conditions to manage alongside the needs of the person they care for. One Carer was worried about how she would be able to undertake her cancer treatment as her husband, who she cares for, has significant needs. The Carer Co-ordinator helped her to identify a suitable respite facility so that she could start her treatment without delay:

**"A massive weight has been lifted from me and my daughter. I could not have left my husband without the right respite care being set up. He needs specialised nursing care so couldn't have just gone anywhere."**

## Providing Grants for Carers

We wanted to put power into the hands of Carers to give them the freedom to develop activities to bring together fellow Carers to improve their wellbeing and reduce social isolation.

### What we did

We set up a Small Grants programme so Carers could apply for funds to set up new activities. We wanted to put power into the hands of Carers to give them the freedom to develop activities they enjoy to bring together fellow Carers in social settings to improve wellbeing and reduce social isolation.

We funded 13 dynamic groups to put on dozens of activities from choirs, craft groups and fitness activities, to social groups, coffee mornings, day trips out, and much more. These groups brought together over 100 people of different ages and backgrounds to share in the joy of connecting with other people who understand what it means to provide care for someone.

### How we did it

We invited groups of Carers to apply to us for funds of between £50 – £2000 to put on new activities to help improve their wellbeing and social connections, giving Carers the chance to create experiences and build memories they wouldn't have otherwise been able to.

## Carer Stories

The Forget me not choir is an inclusive choir for people with dementia and their carers. The choir meets weekly at Christ the King Church in Kingstanding and serves a group of people who would not otherwise be able to access such an activity. The funds allowed them to hire a choir practice space with refreshments and to send 10 luxury hampers to attendees at Christmas.



Jean, aged 91 years'

Carers United Birmingham South (CUBS) enjoyed craft sessions. 'I found the card making very relaxing and good fun to do with friends. Ah, it brought out some creativity in me I didn't know I had!'



Carers enjoying lunch at the Harvest



# Developing Specialist Support for Carers (Carer Projects)

## What we did

In 2022, our first Carer Projects Grant funding programme came to the end of its three-year cycle succeeding in achieving its aim to grant-fund a wide range of innovative projects to support more Carers with diverse needs.

As a Carer-led social enterprise, we believe Carers are experts in their own experience. The Carer Projects in this programme were selected with the support of a Carer-panel of experts by experience.



## £251,422

grants funded 12 non-profits to deliver new services to support hundreds of Carers

We funded 12 local not-for-profit organisations to deliver specialist services to meet the needs of Carers, bringing a wide range of new, relevant services to new Carers covering short breaks, services for parent carers, support for Carers who provide care for someone with substance misuse, services for Carers supporting someone with a sensory impairment, services for young carers aged 14 years and over, services for young adult carers (18 – 25 years old) .

## How we did it

We worked with Carers to understand what additional services would have the biggest impact on their lives. We promoted the funding opportunity to small, local, not-for-profit organisations capable of delivering specialist support in the communities they serve, and supported them to design successful projects. We committed to continuous learning and improving by undertaking an independent external evaluation of the project, so we can identify and share best practice and ensure that we continually improve.

## Evaluation

The Birmingham Voluntary Sector C (BVSC) spoke to a large number of Carers who used the project services as part of an independent evaluation, they said:

**"Carers taking part in all of the projects said that they had increased confidence and feelings of self-worth as a result. The recognition of Carers, the understanding of the caring role, and the fact that the projects made Carers more visible was seen as a huge benefit. This also made Carers more aware of their own needs. All of the projects were described as a 'lifeline' by Carers"**

You can read a brief snapshot of three of the projects below and find out more on our blog [here](#):

### OSCAR Birmingham

offer a Specialist Carer Support and Family Resilience service for Carers supporting someone living with Sickle Cell Disorder (SCD) or the Thalassaemia condition, which predominantly effects people from BAME communities. As an inherited condition, many parents are caring for their children whilst experiencing the effects of SCD or thalassemia themselves.

The grant funding allowed OSCAR to provide a wonderful array of activities and events for children, young people and their families.



### Barefoot Wellbeing CIC

designed a fantastic Carer Life-Spa experience where Carers could feel renewed and invigorated. A programme of activities provided the opportunity for Carers to indulge in the physical, mental and emotional nourishment necessary for a rich life outside of caring via yoga sessions, gentle relaxation, massage, mindfulness, mindful movement and more.



### Aquarius

provides support and services for adults and young people who use substances or gamble. Thanks to grant funding, they were able to offer support to help their Carers to develop coping strategies and improve self-care. When family members of someone with a substance misuse issue are overlooked, it can impact the recovery of those that are using substances and make it harder to keep the family unit together.

Aquarius says,

**"If we can get just one family Carer working better, supporting better in that situation, it has a knock on effect with the rest of the family, including the person who's drinking or using drugs. So you've got one person functioning better and the ripple effect is massive. So that's our objective."**

# Walsall Carers Hub

In July 2022, we launched Walsall Carers Hub, providing a brand new support service to unpaid Carers across Walsall.

Our drop-in Hub is co-located with Walsall Disability Hub, making it easy for people who care for someone with support needs to access information in one place. Our three specialist advisors are available in person or at the end of a phone / email.

Our services help Carers to care healthily and happily:

- Information and Advice
- Wellbeing Checks
- Max Card for Parent Carers
- Support to Access Welfare Entitlements
- Support Groups

## Our impact in 2022

In the first six months of opening we:

Worked with

**316**

to understand their needs and design our services

Registered

**1,355**

Carers – registration is the first step in accessing support and services

Held

**11**

events for Carers

Helped Carers access

**£1,888**

in welfare and entitlements.

## In Carers' Words

Our new service is already making a real difference to local Carers:

"I can't believe all the support we have had. We have been managing on our own for 3 years and in just a couple of weeks you have got things moving for us and we feel supported for the first time since A's diagnosis."

"I have been crying and praying to God for help and you came along and have helped so much, thank you."

## Carer Groups and Events

We host a range of Carer support groups, activities and events throughout the year, providing a mix of information, advice, support, our ever-popular wellbeing and pampering activities, and opportunities for new friendships to flourish



■ Spending time with fellow Carers is great for wellbeing



■ Carers having their hair and nails done



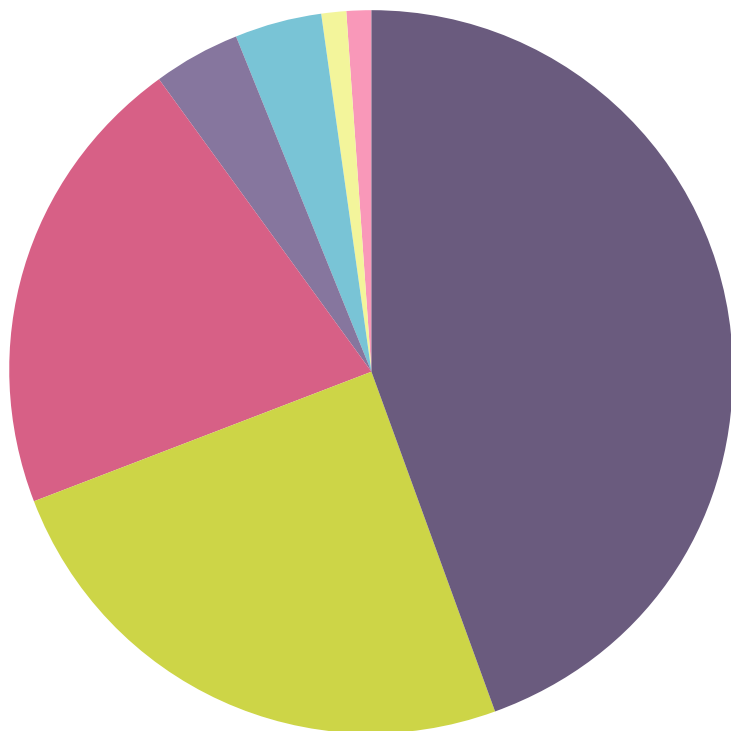
■ Providing information and advice on Carers Rights Day

"Lovely walk, lovely company. Please organise the same weather again for the next walk!"

"Nice to meet people of similar needs and experiences. I had a great chat!"

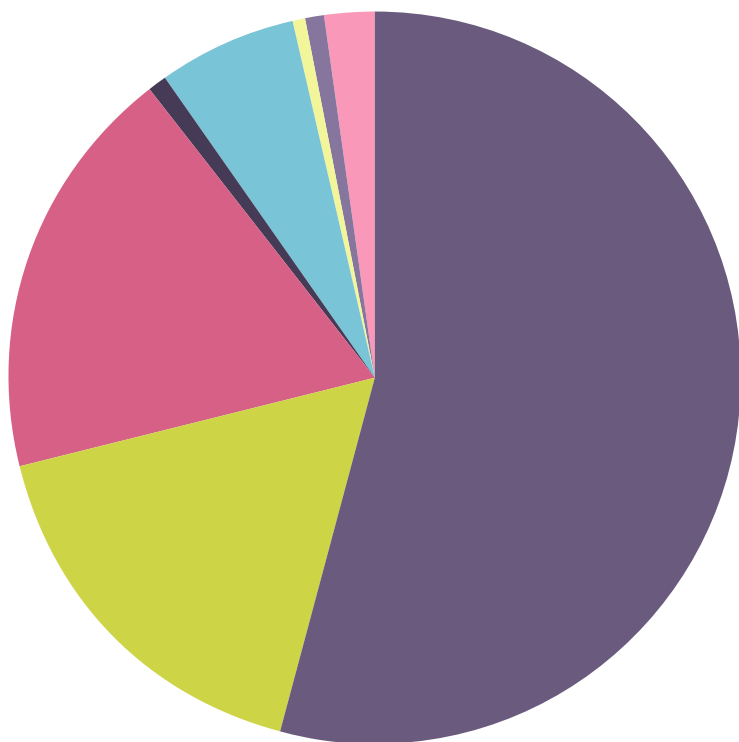


# Our Finances



## Our Income in 2022

- Birmingham Carers Hub (BCH) Core Contract - 45% - £1,459,559
- Carer Projects including dementia services (BCH) - 25% - £438,600
- Carer Wellbeing Budget (BCH) - 21% - £700,000
- Health Liaison (BCH) - 4% - £121,874
- Young Adult Carers (BCC) - 4% - £123,117
- Ageing Better in Birmingham - 1% - £21,851
- Walsall Carers Hub - 1% - £46,180



## How We Spent Our Funds

- Birmingham Carers Hub Service Delivery - 54% - £1,251,902
- Carer Projects (including dementia) - 17% - £410,530
- Carer Wellbeing Payments - 18% - £421,189
- NHS / GP Projects - 1% - £32,311
- Grant Funded Projects - 6% - £134,327
- Young Adult Carer Support - 0% - £11,536
- Walsall Carers Hub Service Delivery - 1% - £28,539
- Business Development - 2% - £37,476

# A huge thank you to...

## Our Partners

Our gratitude goes to our wonderful Delivery Partners listed below. Thank you for your everything you have done for Carers in our community.



AGEconcern  
Birmingham



Birmingham Buddhist Centre



And our sincere thanks to our funding partners whose belief in us empowers us to achieve so much together for Carers:

Finally, and importantly, thank you to all the wonderful Carers who work so hard and contribute so much to the lives of friends and loved ones. You are amazing.

If you are a Carer or know someone who is, please visit our website at:



[forwardcarers.org.uk](http://forwardcarers.org.uk)

If you care for someone in Birmingham or Walsall, please visit:

[birminghamcarershubs.org.uk](http://birminghamcarershubs.org.uk)

[walsallcarershubs.org.uk](http://walsallcarershubs.org.uk)

If you are a funder, commissioner, provider, employer or Carer and would like to find out more about the work of Forward Carers Consortium Ltd then please contact us at [info@forwardcarers.org.uk](mailto:info@forwardcarers.org.uk)





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[Being a Carer is] trying to do the best for your loved one, regardless of how they're treating you, to the best of your ability inside or outside the home, all the time.



**Forward Carers CIC is a not-for-profit, social enterprise. We're on a mission to create Carer Friendly Communities, places that open their eyes and hearts to the lives of unpaid Carers.**

As well as delivering a wide-range of support and services for Carers, we help organisations to become Carer Friendly and employers to develop Carer Friendly Workplaces. And you can help us by showing you care for unpaid Carers. Find out more at [www.forwardcarers.org.uk](http://www.forwardcarers.org.uk)



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**info@forwardcarers.org.uk**



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