

Our support for unpaid carers



Carers Oxfordshire is a free service that offers information, advice and support to unpaid carers, aged 18 or over, caring for someone living in Oxfordshire.



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 **carers_oxfordshire**

 **carersoxfordshire**

01235 424 715

carersinfo@carersoxfordshire.org.uk

www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk

Client details are kept confidential and will only be shared where we have a serious concern, such as safeguarding.

Action for Carers Oxfordshire (registered charity no.1149577 and company limited by guarantee no. 8125002) is a local independent charity, working with and for all adult carers of someone living in Oxfordshire. Registered office 10 Napier Court, Barton Lane, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 3YT.

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Commissioned by



Am I a carer?

You are an unpaid carer if you have someone who relies on you to stay safe and well, and you are not paid for the support you give.

The person you care for can be any age, and you don't need to live with them. They may need support due to a disability, mental or physical illness, an addiction, or other additional needs. They do not need to have a formal diagnosis.

Anyone of any age can be a carer. At Carers Oxfordshire we support people aged 18 and over. This includes adult carers (adults who provide care for another adult), and parent carers (who have parental responsibility for, and care for, a child with additional needs).

For support for young carers (aged 18 and under), we recommend contacting Be Free Young Carers (details on p26).



A message to carers

As a carer, you may face new challenges every day, but you don't need to do this alone. Carers Oxfordshire is here for you, special people in our society.

We are here to support you because you are doing something incredible but might never hear that 'thank you' or reassurance that you are doing well. We want you to know that you are doing a great and vital job, and that it doesn't go unnoticed by us.

If you are 18 or older and care for someone who lives in Oxfordshire, we can help. Our team live in Oxfordshire, are familiar with the area you live in, and genuinely care about carers. Many of our staff have experience of unpaid caring, and so understand the highs and lows of being a carer. We know that caring can be stressful, while also being incredibly fulfilling and rewarding.

How we can support you

We offer a personalised service because we understand that no two caring situations are the same.

On the following pages you will find out more about what Carers Oxfordshire do to help unpaid carers.

“Before the support I was stressed out, lonely and felt that no one cared. I'm in a much better place now.” - An unpaid adult carer



Identifying your strengths and needs with carer's assessment

A carer's assessment is an opportunity for you to think about your caring role, your hopes and priorities, and it can identify if you have any needs for support.

For many carers, a carer's assessment can be the best way of understanding their strengths, as well as their difficulties.

The assessment is to identify what you can do and what help you may need to do the things that are important to you. It is not an assessment of your ability as a carer.



You can complete one at any stage of caring - whether you're taking on a caring role for the first time, or have many years of experience. You can request a carer's assessment every 12 months if you are still caring, or sooner if things have changed.

You can choose to complete an assessment online yourself at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk (search 'carer's assessment') or we can help you.

If you'd like some support with an assessment, please contact us.

carersinfo@carersoxfordshire.org.uk
01235 424 715

Working together to find the information you need

Having the right information at the right time can make a huge difference to carers and the people they care for. We make your caring journey more manageable by providing information so that you have a better understanding of your rights as a carer, can navigate caring, and are better informed to make choices and decisions.



Our resources are designed to bring you the advice and information you need, when you need it, simply and accurately. We can also help signpost you to other support available in your local area and more widely in Oxfordshire.

To find out more visit our website or contact us.
carersinfo@carersoxfordshire.org.uk
01235 424 715



Helping you to access financial support

With the rising cost of living it's more important than ever to find out about the financial support available to you.

There are many different benefits and one-off payments available, but the list is forever changing, which can be confusing when working out what you're entitled to.

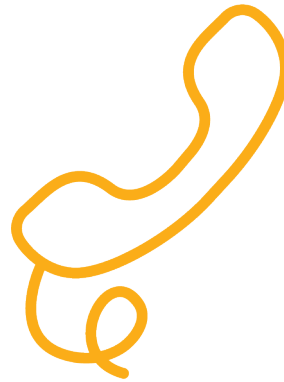
We have an up-to-date list of benefits and a leaflet with information on benefits calculators and a list of advice agencies. Both are available on our website, or you can contact us and we'll post a copy out to you.

To find out more visit our website or contact us.

carersinfo@carersoxfordshire.org.uk

01235 424 715

www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk/financial-support



Supporting you to be prepared

Be prepared for an event that could take you away from your caring role such as an unexpected hospital admission.

Have you thought about what would happen to the person you care for if you were unable to be there? When unexpected events happen, our lives are often put on hold while we deal with them. It's important the person you care for is looked after in these circumstances.

That's why we recommend being prepared in advance by creating a plan that helps you and the person you care for. We have a handy template along with other useful information and guidance on how to prepare.

This information is available on our website or we can post a 'be prepared' pack out to you.



To find out more visit the website or contact us.

carersinfo@carersoxfordshire.org.uk

01235 424 715

www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk/be-prepared

Helping you connect with your community

Talking to other carers can be a big comfort, whether it's asking for advice or just discussing how you feel.

There are many unpaid carer groups in Oxfordshire. Some, like ours, are for carers in general, while others are aimed at carers of people with specific conditions such as dementia, autism, mental health illness or addictions. There are also groups for specific communities such as veterans.



We know that some carers prefer the idea of connecting with a group around a hobby or activity.

Either way, we know how important it is for you to connect with your local community and we can support you to find out what's going on near you. You can also take a look yourself online:

Adult carers

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/livewell

Parent carers

fisd.oxfordshire.gov.uk

For information about our current carers groups, or for help connecting into your local community visit our website or contact us.

carersinfo@carersoxfordshire.org.uk

01235 424 715

www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk/groups

Looking out for your wellbeing

Short breaks away

Getting a break is important but we understand it can be difficult depending on your situation. If getting away for a few days is right for you, we can help. We have a range of options available.

Our most popular break is with our partner Carefree – a multi award winning charity who provide short hotel breaks for unpaid carers.

This offer is designed to give you a break from caring. Choose one or two nights of hotel accommodation from a wide range of locations across the UK. Carefree eligibility criteria applies.



Time for you

Caring means something different for everyone – but one thing that's true for every carer is that you cannot keep going without a rest. The regular demands of caring can lead to feelings of exhaustion, so it's important to recognise when you need some time for you.

We have a range of offers to give unpaid carers time for themselves which vary depending on your circumstances. There are lots of different options that can be explored.

To find out more visit our website or contact us.

carerswellbeing@carersoxfordshire.org.uk

01235 424 715

www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk/time-for-you



Providing opportunities for learning

A Carers Journey is a FREE award-winning programme exclusively for carers, created in partnership with Abingdon & Witney College. The sessions are designed to help you improve your mental and physical wellbeing, offer practical help and provide an opportunity to meet other carers.

Most of the sessions are online, offering you the ability to join without having to travel, and are easily undertaken from home.

Contributions towards courses - We can offer contributions towards any part-time and evening courses from Abingdon & Witney College.

Both offers are available for carers age 19 or over who support someone living in Oxfordshire.



To find out more visit our website or contact us.
carerswellbeing@carersoxfordshire.org.uk
01235 424 175
www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk/learning-opportunities

Providing ID cards

Carer ID

We can issue a Carer ID card. This can be very useful if the person you care for is in hospital or you are accompanying them somewhere else where you might need to show you are a carer, such as a GP surgery.

It can also help you access discounted entry at attractions and more. When applying you will be asked to provide some information to clarify your caring position and a photograph of yourself before we send you the ID.

To find out more visit our website or contact us.

carersinfo@carersoxfordshire.org.uk

01235 424 715

www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk/carers-id

Max Card

Max Card is a discount card for special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) children. In Oxfordshire, Max Card is run in partnership between Carers Oxfordshire and the Oxfordshire Children, Education and Families Directorate. Families can use it at venues across the UK to get free or discounted admission. The discount offered varies between venues. For example, some give a free ticket to carers, while others offer discounted entry.

To see the list of venues that take part and details of their discounts visit:

www.mymaxcard.co.uk

To apply for a Max Card visit:

www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk/max-card

Contact us for support with your application.

carersinfo@carersoxfordshire.org.uk

01235 424 175

Amplifying carers' voices

We know how important it is for carers to share their experience of caring and local services. It is also vital that carers are heard and valued by those who can make a real difference.

Carers can help create services that work for them through our carers' voices workshops and storytelling events, all of which help us to better understand the priorities and needs of carers.

Each year we hold a number of carers' voices events. You can find details of any upcoming events on our website.

www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk/events

Find out more or to talk to us about sharing your experience by contacting us.

carersvoices@carersoxfordshire.org.uk

01235 424 715



How you can help

Action for Carers Oxfordshire is a charity that exists to improve the lives of unpaid carers (18+) of an Oxfordshire resident or of someone living in Oxfordshire. Donations and fundraising efforts help ensure that we can continue to provide vital support for unpaid carers, just when it's needed.

You can support us in many ways including through a range of **fundraising activities**, by **making a donation** (please contact us or visit www.justgiving.com/actionforcarers-oxfordshire), or by **leaving a gift in your will** (you can take our charity number '1149577' to your solicitor).

Please contact us if you require any information or guidance. Thank you so much for your generous support.

fundraising@carersoxfordshire.org.uk

01235 424 715

Useful contacts

Age UK Oxfordshire

0345 450 1276 / www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire

Be Free Young Carers

01235 838 554 / www.befreeyc.org.uk

Better Housing Better Health

0800 107 0044 / www.bhbh.org.uk

British Red Cross Mobility Aids Short Term Loan

0300 456 1914 / www.redcross.org.uk

Carers UK

0207 378 4999 / www.carersuk.org

Child & Adult Social Care

0345 050 7666 / www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

Dementia Oxfordshire

01865 410 210 / www.dementiaoxfordshire.org.uk

Home Library Service

01865 810 259

Live Well Oxfordshire (online directory)

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/livewell / 01235 849 410

Out-of-hours Duty Social Worker

0800 833 408 / www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

Oxfordshire Family Information Service

01865 323 332 / www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

Oxfordshire Family Support Network

07821 987 080 / www.oxfsn.org.uk

Oxfordshire Mind

01865 247 788 / www.oxfordshiremind.org.uk

Oxfordshire Specialist Advice (financial advice)

01865 410 660

Oxfordshire Talking Therapies

01865 901 222

www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/oxon-talking-therapies

Rethink Metal Illness

01865 904 499 / www.rethink.org

Samaritans

116 123 / www.samaritans.org



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If someone relies on you, you can rely on us.



Contact us to sign up to receive a copy of our magazine 'Care Matters' in the post or visit our website to sign up online.

