



Unite Carers in Mid Devon

ANNUAL REPORT

1ST APRIL 2022 - 31ST MARCH 2023

Unite Carers is a Company limited by Guarantee

Charity Number: 1099188

Company Number: 04779388

2 Bridge Street, Tiverton, Devon EX16 5LY

Telephone No.: 01884 257511

e-mail: info@unitemd.org.uk

Website: www.unitecarers.org.uk

Patron:

Angela Rippon CBE

Unite Carers in Mid Devon

Information and Support for Carers

A Carer is a person of any age who provides regular unpaid care for a friend or relative who cannot manage alone because of severe illness, disability, frailty, or vulnerability.

The aims of Unite Carers' Service are:

To promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of unpaid carers who look after someone who depends on them in the Mid Devon community, by the advancement of education, the protection of health and the relief of poverty, sickness and distress; also to ensure that every individual is made aware of the services available to them and is given the opportunity to express their needs effectively, regardless of race, gender, sexuality or disability.

Contact details:

Unite Carers In Mid Devon
2 Bridge Street
Tiverton
EX16 5LY

Tel: **01884 257511**
Email: **info@unitemd.org.uk**
Website: **www.unitecarers.org.uk**

Office open by appointment.

Unite – Carers in Mid Devon

Positions as at 31st March 2023

Board of Trustees:

Bernice Philbrick	Chair of Trustees & Safeguarding Trustee
Jenny Baker	Trustee
Jack Bukin	Trustee - IT
Patricia Eardley	Trustee
Paul Fitzmaurice	Trustee - Governance
Natalie Lee	Trustee - Treasurer
Tina Webber	Trustee – Board/Office Liaison

Staff:

Sharon Trerise	General Manager
Tracy Downs	Adult Carers' Services Manager

Chair Of Trustees Report

This year we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the launch of Unite Carers Mid Devon, established as a Charity in May 2003 with the backing of Social Services. Since those early days we have gone from strength to strength.

Carol Benn our founder acknowledged the fact that being thrust into a caring role can happen to anyone of us at any time, we can become carers overnight. Life does not prepare us for this role, and we don't always know where to get support. This remarkable lady "Carol Benn" recognised the needs of the unpaid Carer and Unite Carers Mid Devon was launched.

Today we salute her memory.

As might be expected there has been some changes in our organisation during the course of the year. Our staff, Sharon and Tracy have shown quite remarkable dedication to the job. Despite the fact that there are still only 2 of them they have maintained, expanded and developed the support services offered to our unpaid carers.

We are painfully aware that we need a third staff member, but financial restraints have prevented us from achieving this at the moment.

Nevertheless, despite these conditions, Unite's support services have gone from strength to strength and continue to meet the needs of the increasing numbers of unpaid Carers in Mid Devon.

Sharon and Tracy, generosity with your time and your dedication to Unite has contributed to keeping our Charity vibrant productive and alive. We of Unite Carers in Mid Devon thank you.

The board of Trustees has seen numbers swell by 4.

Tina has been an office volunteer for some time involved with many services provided by the Charity. She became a Trustee in July 2022 and provides liaison between the office and the board.

Natalie Joined us in November 2022, we had been without a treasurer since the departure of John Anderson in 2018, we were very pleased to welcome Natalie as our treasurer.

Jack joined us in November 2022 bringing with him a wealth of IT knowledge and skills which bought us huge benefits as the year progressed.

The last of our 4 new trustees joined us in Jan2023, **Paul** with many years' experiences in senior management. **Paul** has taken on the role as Governance and Charity Commissioner officer. He has also undertaken the responsibility for Trustees Training in Good Governance.

Chair Of Trustees Report (Continued)

As for the remaining "old" Trustees Pat, Jenny and myself, you may well imagine how pleased and relieved we are to have an influx of new trustees with so much talent and experience between them.

To all Trustees I voice my thanks for your support to me over the past year.

The number of Volunteers joining us continues to rise. They are the backbone of our Charity; without them we could not exist.

It's not easy being a volunteer, pitching the level of support for, and being aware of any changing needs of a carer is a responsibility. Our volunteers have these skills, many of them have been carers themselves in the past and will have personal experience of the ups and downs of being a carer.

To all our Valued Volunteers we acknowledge you and you have our sincere and heartfelt thanks.

As I mentioned earlier, during the past year we have kept Unite's support services going we have improved expanded and developed this support, it has not been an easy task. I am not going to blind you with facts and figures, specific information regarding details of our services and support are in the Annual Report I do hope you will take the time to read it, its impressive.

We can't escape without mentioning money. As ever funding is a struggle, while local businesses have been generous with their donations and we could not function without their support, it does however not meet rising costs.

Sharon and Tracy have pared these rising costs as much as possible, even working in a freezing office with inadequate heating wearing coats and scarves to save energy.

We have no national or local government support; we rely on grants from charitable funds and foundations. We have no official fund raiser - this job was always done by our previous Chair of Trustees Roy.

Sharon's year has been challenging getting to grips with fundraising, she is doing an amazing job. Every non-profit organisation has its cause, a community it works to support, we are no exception and of course there are many more equally worthwhile causes seeking financial support from the same potential funders. Despite these tough times Sharon has kept us solvent.

The future while not rosy is not all doom and gloom. We must keep positive that one of our larger applications for funds will respond.

We will do everything in our power to keep Unite Carers viable as we celebrate its first 20 years in memory of Carol Benn our founder.

BERNICE PHILBRICK

GENERAL MANAGER OVERVIEW

My role as General Manager means that I oversee the day to day running of the charity. The last year has been a particularly difficult one with the departure of our previous Adult Services Manager Sarah through ill-health in June and the retirement of Jenny Tower in July last year.

As I found myself alone in the office day after day trying to juggle the enormously varied tasks I faced, I was delighted that Tracy was able to return to support me in keeping everything on track. Even working just one day a week Tracy was able to provide the enthusiasm and professionalism to enable me to see some light at the end of the tunnel. Since November when she took on 21 hours per week, we have seen our services and support increase significantly. We were able to reintroduce our Let's Unite Outdoors group, reinstate our much-valued counselling service and expand our sitting service to Witheridge – all of which are covered elsewhere in this report.

Our ex-Chair of Trustees Roy Grantham had been fundraising for the charity for many years and with his retirement in February last year this daunting task was passed to me. With no fundraising experience, it was certainly a baptism of fire, but somehow, we managed to bring in enough income for 12 months and use only a very small amount of our reserves (see attached income report). Along with the larger grants we are also very grateful for the personal donations we receive and the donations from small local organisations – as Tesco says – every little helps!

With this success, my confidence grew and with the help of a new volunteer supporting me with grant applications, we are now applying for bigger long-term grants which, if successful, will give our charity the much-needed long term stability and my peace of mind! A big factor in being able to make these applications is the meticulous detail Tracy puts into recording the statistics of all of the services we offer – the evidence we need to prove to granters that we are making a difference. We also very much appreciate feedback from our carers, and I have enclosed a recent example from a grateful carer. Messages like this are what keep Tracy and I going on a day-to-day basis.

Of course, just two staff cannot offer the extent of support that we do to unpaid carers and without our army of wonderful volunteers the charity would not be the success it is today. We thank each and every one of you for working tirelessly. I would particularly like to thank Jenny Tower for continuing to work with us as a sessional worker running our Safe Stop Groups and for being our Lead Safeguarding Officer whilst continuing to run various support groups and also being a befriender. Of course, not forgetting our Board of Trustees at the helm and my colleague Tracy.

Although we pride ourselves on the face-to-face support that we provide across Mid Devon, we live in an ever-increasing digital world. Our Trustee Jack and Tracy have worked hard on our new website which is invaluable in providing information for carers and professionals along with our informative Facebook posts and the excellent quarterly newsletter produced by Tracy.

As mentioned in Bernice's report – the expansion of our Board has strengthened our charity and with good governance and some successful grant applications we hope to employ another member of staff and continue to offer our services for another 20 years and beyond.

I have been proud to read this Annual Report and see what WE – Unite Staff AND Volunteers have achieved TOGETHER and to know that we are still supporting unpaid carers in Mid Devon day in and day out – long may it continue!

SHARON TRERISE

UNITE CARERS INCOME 2022/2023

Grants:	Allen Lane Foundation	£	2,000.00
	Crediton Town Council	£	1,500.00
	Cullompton Town Council	£	2,000.00
	David Gibbons Foundation	£	5,000.00
	Devon Community Foundation	£	3,000.00
	Devon County Council	£	4,780.00
	Devon Voluntary Action	£	1,000.00
	Duffield Tiverton Charityable Trust	£	100.00
	Francis Winham Foundation	£	5,000.00
	Garfield Weston	£	7,500.00
	H Trust	£	1,000.00
	Lady Amory	£	1,500.00
	National Lottery - Awards For All	£	9,974.00
	Ottery Help Scheme	£	270.00
	Sobell Foundation	£	10,000.00
	TTVS (Velocity)	£	2,059.86
	Viscount Amory	£	750.00
	Weinstock Fund	£	3,000.00
	Total Grants:	£	60,433.86
Donations:	Amazon Smile	£	5.00
	Anonymous (Riverside customer)	£	200.00
	Cameo Club, Willand	£	35.00
	Clare Moughton	£	50.00
	David Saunders	£	147.00
	London Marathon Sponsorships (TD)	£	325.38
	Mr P & Mrs M Fitzmaurice	£	1,800.00
	Mrs Marks	£	50.00
	Riverside Club	£	1,004.20
	Roselyn Spencer-Barnard	£	250.00
	Ruth Broomfield	£	50.00
	Soroptimists	£	550.00
	St James Church	£	166.00
	Tiverton Municipal Charities	£	2,000.00
	Tiverton Rotary Club	£	500.00
	Trevor Whiteley (Memorial)	£	110.00
	Total Donations:	£	7,242.58
Contracts:	Young Carers Connected	£	4,375.59
Other Income:	Cosmic (Velocity project)	£	1,800.00
	Safe Stop Sitting Group	£	1,025.00
	Travel reimbursement/Returned expenses	£	64.79
	Total other income:	£	2,889.79
Interest:	Interest	£	942.00
TOTAL INCOME:		£	75,883.82

Unite Carers – Making a Difference

This is an email recently received from a carer receiving support from Unite Carers.

"A dementia diagnosis is dreadful to experience, particularly for the person of course but also for the spouse or main supporter. I had kept my awful suspicions to myself for several years until there they were - confirmed, written clearly in black and white! But for my husband they were a new reality as he was convinced he was fine. His shock and disbelief meant he could not respond with any hope for the future at all. And on that path we continued, but presenting a positive picture, a false positive you could say! In time I allowed myself to become isolated. Friends and family were getting on with their own lives, having adventures, living! We were not doing well. I had nothing to say of any value to anyone!

And then instead of being given 'Happy Pills' I was connected with Unite! Tracy was my first contact. She was just perfect, so easy to be honest with; I felt trust straight away. I cannot describe after the isolation, the need to cope, to be strong, to just get on with it, what it felt like to have someone listen to me. I know that sounds horribly self-centred. I know this is not about me! I do listen to, care for and encourage my husband the best way I can. But I was lost, myself. I used to consider myself a fairly strong person dealing with whatever life placed in my path. But I had completely lost sight of that person. Meeting Tracy gave me the enormous realisation that I WAS NOT ALONE!!

I no longer had to cover up my fear for our future, I could say, 'I'm afraid'. I could say that it's been a hard week or share the moments of joy that I had started to feel over small things. I felt so lucky to have found Unite and felt they were really looking out for me so that I could support my husband with hope and optimism. Unbelievably I soon received free counselling which afforded me even more opportunity to purge the pressure cooker of emotion! And boy did I talk! So much so I only needed two of my sessions!

It did not end there. I was teamed with a buddy! A wonderful volunteer who gives her time freely to support me, gives me the opportunity to discuss new aspects of concern as they inevitably arise. We meet once a month for a coffee or a walk. I really like her. We have much in common. I feel beyond lucky to have such wonderful support. Just knowing there is someone on the end of the phone makes me actually feel strong and definitely able to cope. Because of this I now recognise myself again and feel that it's important to make the most of your day in big or small ways. There is joy to feel, warmth to experience and laughter to be had.

And as if all that support was not enough, Unite has group get togethers, lends books (my husband devoured the one I took home last week) and is possibly just about to 'unite' my husband with a chap who is also recently diagnosed. What an incredible bunch of people! What an asset to our community! But they are a charity and really need whatever financial support they can get. I really don't know where I would be now without them! I cannot thank them enough!

I have dealt with many organisations in my teaching career. Some charitable some not. I really do think Unite is quite exceptional. Tiverton (and Mid Devon) is really lucky to have you."

AGM Report for Adult Carers' Services

1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023

The last Adult Carers' Services Report for the 2022 AGM was written by Jenny Tower in July 2022, just before Jenny retired from Unite, on behalf of Sarah Taft who sadly had to resign as Volunteer and Services Manager in June 2022 due to ill health. Both Jenny and Sarah were very involved with Adult Carers at Unite. Jenny's role included working with many of the groups, whilst Sarah supported adult carers, recruited and trained volunteers, validated the database and did an exceptional job of ensuring that all volunteers had up to date DBS checks.

In August 2022 I was asked to help assist Sharon with Adult Carers' services, working 1 day a week for Unite Carers. This role was extended to 21 hours a week from the 1st November 2022 when I began in the role of Carers' Services Manager, a role which includes working with carers and volunteers, 1:1 Support Services such as Befriending, the carers' Groups, the Newsletter and looking after our social media accounts. Let's start with Unite's important volunteers:

Volunteers

❖ **As at 31st March 2023, Unite Carers were ably supported by 56 volunteers.**

Of those 56 volunteers:

24 were supporting Groups (currently 24)

22 were providing 1:1 Befriending Support and Telephone Friendship (currently 28)

3 volunteers were providing IT Support (currently 4)

3 volunteers were providing Form Filling Support (currently 4)

1 volunteer was providing CFC Counselling for Carers (currently 1)

4 volunteers were providing admin or office support (currently 4)

All volunteers have received a DBS check and are DBS clear (1 in progress).

All volunteers have been offered an annual Volunteer Support Meeting this year and, while only 12 volunteers have taken up the offer, we encourage all volunteers to contact us whenever they need to outside of these organised support meetings, to share worries or seek advice and support from staff or trustees.

This year, Unite's volunteers have been offered additional Dementia Awareness training from the Devon Memory Consortium and a NCFE Level 2 Award in Volunteering in conjunction with South Devon College.

I am in awe of all Unite's volunteers and all that they do to help others. Volunteers - although I'm sure that you have heard words of appreciation many times previously, you are an integral part of Unite and we really couldn't do what we do without YOU – Thank you from all of us. Unite are very lucky to have you.

Now for the people we are all here to help - unpaid carers and former carers:

Carers

Carer Registrations

- ❖ **As at 31st March 2023 there were 312 carers registered with Unite Carers (currently 324)**
- ❖ **There were 73 carers newly registered with Unite during the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 (currently 23 for the period 1st April 2023 to 31st August 2023).**

A very warm welcome to you all!

Carers Services – The Groups

- ❖ **During the period 1st April 2022 - 31st March 2023, Unite Carers were offering 11 Support Groups to Carers (currently 15 groups)**

Our groups are split into categories and Unite currently have 4 support and friendship groups for Carers of loved ones with any medical condition. They are:

- The Bampton Carers' Coffee Group led by Denise.
- The Cullompton Carers' Coffee Group led by Jean.
- The Tiverton Carers' Coffee Group led by Denise and Fiona.
- New for this year is the Crediton Carers' Coffee Group led by Tracy (staff)

Unite's groups for Carers of loved ones with Dementia are:

- The Tiverton Forget Me Not Café for carers and the people they care for, led by Denise with the help of our amazing team of FMNC volunteers.
- The Culm Valley Oasis, led by Audrey and Veronica.
- The Exe Valley Oasis, led by Denise and Fiona.
- New for this year, the "A Different Journey" Group for Carers and their loved ones who may be just starting out on their dementia journey, led by Fiona.

Unite's groups for Parent Carers are:

- The Let's Unite at No.4, for Parent Carers of school-aged children with additional needs, led by Jenny T.
- The Carers of Adults and Teens (16+) with Additional Needs Group, led by Jenny T.
- Back for 2023, The Let's Unite Outdoors, our seasonal group for Parent Carers of school-aged children and their families, led by Katie and helped by Sharon and/or Tracy (staff).

Unite's sitting groups for Cared-for-people are:

- Tiverton Safe Stop, which runs twice a month
- Witheridge Safe Stop, both led by Jenny T and her brilliant team of Safe Stop volunteers.

Unite's groups for Former Carers (Ex-Carers) are:

- The Uffculme Ex-Carers Lunch Group, led by Jackie.
 - A new collaboration this year for Unite, the very successful Tiverton and Cullompton Ex-Carers Lunch Group which is wholly run by Veronica and Jenny F.
- ❖ **For the period 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023 there were 916 recorded attendees at the Groups (currently 670 for the period 1st April 2023 to 31st August 2023)**

Carers Services – One-to-One Support

Befriending and Telephone Friendship

Unite's free Befriending Service matches carers with a like-minded volunteer befriender who they can meet for a cup of tea and a chat in a local café perhaps, plan an activity or outing together, or visit carers in their homes if they are unable to get away.

Prior to the befriending match, there is a conversation with the carer, more formally known as "The Carer's Assessment", to find out what the carer's needs and wants are from the befriending relationship, the type of person they would like as their befriender, how often they would like to meet and where, interests and hobbies etc. If meetings are expected to take place in the carer's home, a home visit is carried out prior to the first get-together. A review is then carried out after 3 months to make sure that both parties are happy, although contact is encouraged at any point should a problem arise. Our carers and befrienders know that any problems will be handled tactfully, discretely and with care.

We also offer a free Telephone Friendship service, based on the model above, so that carers can enjoy chatting with someone over the phone, from the comfort of their own home.

- ❖ **As at 31st March 2023, 20 Carers were receiving Befriending Support and 16 receiving Telephone Friendship support – Total 36 (currently 29 carers receiving Befriending Support, 14 receiving Telephone Friendship – total 44).**

The Befriending Team - those who give help either in person or by telephone, many of whom also help with the Groups - are amazing. Your dedication to the people you support is compassionate, professional, and incredibly inspiring to me and to others. You give comfort and friendship to carers when they need it the most. Thank you all so much.

Counselling For Carers

Counselling For Carers re-started in February 2023 this year with our private counsellor Jessie, in collaboration with Petroc College.

Jessie is a Level 4 Student Counsellor at Petroc's North Devon campus and she has been delivering free, private counselling sessions to Carers registered with Unite.

The initial course of 8 counselling sessions (more offered if necessary) can take place in person in a private and safe space at Unite's meeting rooms on No. 4 Bridge Street, or via video link, or a combination of both, according to the carer's personal preference.

Jessie is in her fourth and final year working towards her Lv.4 Diploma in Counselling with the gold standard CPCAB (Counselling & Psychotherapy Central Awarding Body), is insured, professionally supervised and is DBS clear.

We are also in the process of meeting with Qwell for carers to have access to professional support online, through either booked or drop-in sessions, as and when a session is required, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with qualified practitioners.

- ❖ **For the period 1st February 2023 to 31st March 2023, Jessie was delivering on-going counselling support to 5 carers registered with Unite (currently 10).**

Thank you so much Jessie. Your professionalism and commitment to carers, and to Unite, is greatly appreciated by us all.

Form-filling Support

Unite's Form-Filling Support volunteers help carers to complete long and complicated paperwork, and other tasks, that would otherwise lead many of us to just give up. We have helped carers with anything from Attendance Allowance forms to applications for the Household Support Fund to Passport Applications, either in paper or on-line form. We have also offered space and IT facilities to carers when their home environment isn't suitable for the task at hand.

- ❖ **For the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 10 Carers have accessed form-filling support (currently 19).**

Thank you to our hard-working form-filling volunteers; it's not always easy I know, but we usually find a way.

IT Support

As we head ever more speedily into a world where "on-line" is sometimes the only way offered, our IT Support volunteers have been on hand to help carers to get started on-line, or to get a better understanding of the IT they are currently using. Whether this be setting up an email address, shopping on-line, using social media or understanding a smartphone, laptop, or any other device.

- ❖ **For the period 1st April 2023 to date, 7 Carers have accessed IT support.**

Thank you to our IT Support volunteers for all your help, knowledge and expertise.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank the carers who have made a voluntary financial contribution to the Counselling and Form-filling services; your generosity allows Unite to continue to provide these important services to all unpaid carers.

Newsletters and Social Media Accounts and IT

Newsletters

Readers may have noticed a change in format for the Unite Newsletters. They are now sent quarterly to both Carers and Volunteers and include a popular “Word from our Chair” section on the front page from Bernice and the “Spotlight On” from one of our volunteers at the back, with lots to read in between. We hope that you find the Newsletters interesting and informative. Please do share your comments with us on how they may be improved.

New Website

With lots of help from our trustee Jack, the Unite Carer’s long-awaited new website is now “live” and it can be seen here:

www.unitecarers.org.uk

Although content is still being added to the website, you will be able to see Unite’s most up to date news, find information on all of the Groups and Services, see Extra Help for information on your rights and role as a carer, financial support and bereavement support, you can seek specific information on Care Needs for the person you care for, medical conditions such as Alzheimer’s and other forms of dementia, Parkinson’s, Autism, Cancer and other life-limiting illnesses and disabilities and you will be able to Meet The Team too. Anyone viewing website can also make contact with Unite directly via the website.

Facebook

Unite has had its own Facebook page for quite a while now and it can be seen here:

www.facebook.com/unitecarers

Facebook has various metrics that the administrator can use so I am able to tell you that over the last 28 days, Unite’s Facebook page had 3,245 views and 431 post engagements – this means that people either liked or commented on a post from Unite. Most of the audience are in the 35-44 age group (27%), followed by 23% in the 45-54 age group, 17% in the 55-64 age group and 10% for the over 65s.

To help to avoid the inevitability of digital exclusion as much as we can, Unite Carers still provide paper copies of information for those that need it. However, if any of our registered carers would like help to access either the new website or Facebook, please do contact us for help, or to arrange for help with one of our IT support volunteers.

Quality Assurance

Unite’s Quality Assurance kite mark from Involve expired in October 2021. We now are in the process of working with Involve again to collate evidence on what we do and how we do it, making changes to our systems and procedures where necessary, in order to win back our quality assurance kite mark for another 3 years.

Quality assurance is the process of ensuring continuous improvement in the quality of our services and involves activities and measures that are designed to track and analyse metrics, processes, and outcomes.

We hope that re-gaining our quality assurance mark will help to reassure prospective and current carers, volunteers and those referring to us, that we offer high quality services, by means of attention to every stage of the process of delivery.

This just leaves me to say again, wholeheartedly, thank you. Thank you to Carers and their families, to volunteers, the Board of Trustees, former staff and colleagues, to Roy, to Jenny for her support with safeguarding, and last but certainly not least, to my friend and colleague Sharon, all of whom are, and have been essential to the continued success of Unite Carers in Mid Devon over the last 20 years.

Tracy Downs
Adult Carers' Services Manager
Unite Carers in Mid Devon

31st August 2023

SAFE STOP SITTING GROUP

We have two Safe Stop groups running through Unite Carers. The Tiverton one which runs out of Cherith Church near Tesco's supermarket on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday mornings each month from 10 am until 12 30 pm. Then the Witheridge group which is the newer of the two groups which runs on the 3rd Tuesday of the month in Witheridge Parish Hall from 10 30 am until 12 30 pm.

Both groups are run for 'cared for' people to attend, which allows their carers a little bit of respite to do anything they would like to do in that time, whilst their loved one is well cared for and entertained at the group. Some carers choose to stay and have fun with us and that is fine too. Others go off shopping, have hair or dental appointments, a catch up with friends or to just sit and read the newspaper quietly.

At both groups there is an amazing team of volunteers who come to both groups. We take part in the fun and stimulating activities throughout the sessions starting with refreshments, with more in the middle of the session. We do a wide variety of things to try to accommodate all interests. This includes physical things like carpet boules, bowling, golf, curling, quoits and chair football. We play games at the table, have quizzes, including music quizzes and trying to work out what old items are or were used for. We have silly stories, jokes, craft, singing and lots of chatting banter and more like inviting entertainers in.

Between 5 and 6 participants join each session, but we could accommodate double. A small charge of £10 is made to cover expenses and having someone appropriately trained there to lead the group for safety reasons.

All in all it is great fun and we have all become good friends and look forward to the sessions.

Jenny Tower

Group Facilitator



Unite Carers Support Groups 2023

Who's it for?	Group Name	Location	With	Day in month	Time
All Carers	Bampton Carers' Coffee Group	Spelt, Bampton	Denise	1 st Tuesday	10.30 am - 11.30 am
All Carers	Crediton Carers' Coffee Group	@100 Café, High St, Crediton	Tracy	3 rd Thursday	11.00 am - 12.30pm
All Carers	Cullompton Carers' Coffee Group	The Hayridge, Cullompton	Jean	2 nd Wednesday	10.30 am - 12 noon
All Carers	Tiverton Carers' Coffee Group	Unite Carers, 4 Bridge St, Tiverton	Denise & Fiona	4 th Tuesday	2 pm
All Carers and Former Carers	Uffculme Support Group	Locations change monthly – Please call the office	Jackie	4 th Monday	12.30 pm
Cared-for-people	Tiverton Safe Stop Group	Cherith Church, Tiverton	Jenny	2 nd and 4 th Wednesday	10.00 am - 12.30 pm
Cared-for-people	Witheridge Safe Stop Group	Witheridge Parish Hall, Witheridge	Jenny	3 rd Tuesday	10.30 am - 12.30 pm
Carers of adults and teens with additional needs	Carers of Adults and Teens with Additional Needs	Unite Carers, 4 Bridge St, Tiverton	Jenny	3 rd Wednesday	10.30 am - 12 noon
Carers of school-aged children with additional needs	Let's Unite Outdoors	Wilcombe School, Tiverton	Katie	Seasonal April-October	Please call the Office
Carers of school-aged children with additional needs	Let's Unite at Number 4	Unite Carers, 4 Bridge St, Tiverton	Jenny	1 st Wednesday	9.30 am - 11.30 am
Dementia Carers	Culm Valley Oasis	Padbrook Park Hotel, Cullompton	Audrey & Veronica	3 rd Monday	2.30 pm - 4 pm
Dementia Carers	Exe Valley Oasis	Unite Carers, 4 Bridge St, Tiverton	Denise & Fiona	2 nd Thursday	10.30 am
Dementia Carers and Cared-for-people	A Different Journey Support Group	Unite Carers, 4 Bridge St, Tiverton	Fiona	1 st Tuesday	10.30am – 12 noon
Dementia Carers and Cared-for-people	Tiverton Forget Me Not Cafe	Cherith Church, Tiverton	Denise & Fiona	3 rd Tuesday	2 pm - 3.30 pm
Former Carers	Tiverton and Cull Ex-Carers Lunch Group	Locations change monthly – Please call the office	Veronica	1 st Tuesday	12 noon

PLEASE CALL THE UNITE CARERS OFFICE TO REGISTER - 01884 257511

AGM Report for Young Carers Connected

1st April 2022 – 30th September 2022

Young Carers Connected, or YCC as it's more widely known, was a partnership between TTVS in Bideford, Unite Carers in Mid Devon, and Citizens Advice in Torridge, North, Mid and West Devon (CATNMWD). At its outset, it was partially funded for 3 years by the National Lottery to offer carer-specific support to Young Carers between the ages of 8 to 24 years in Mid Devon, North Devon and Torridge.

I was appointed by TTVS in Bideford on 1st January 2022 as Project Manager, on temporary contract for 6 months, to set up and manage the new project, and to support young carers in Mid Devon and part of North Devon, while my brilliant colleague Immy Buckland looked after young carers in Torridge and North Devon, with admin support provided by Judith Nock.

Our goal was to support young carers in the following ways:

- **Assessment** - An initial needs-based assessment with regular reviews.
- **Support** – With every young carer assigned a support worker with who they can build a strong, trusting relationship, right from the outset.
- **Planning and Mentoring** – 1:1 mentoring support, accompanied by an Action Plan that is based on individual need.
- **Family Support** – Family support complimented by YCC's direct access into Citizens Advice services, and direct support for families from YCC Support Workers. For instance, access to support groups for their cared-for person, access to social care, grants, advice, and information and activities for the whole family, providing transport where necessary.
- **Advocacy** – A voice for young carers and attendance at TAF meetings, education meetings and other statutory meetings such as child protection meetings.
- **Access to training, information, and advice** - Through social media platforms, the website, YouTube channel, Facebook page (with a private group for older young carers).
- **Ambassadors** - Primarily a group of former young carers themselves who help to support young people directly through our activities, attendance at Steering Groups and promotional events – their approach based upon their own personal experiences as a young carer.
- **Respite Activities** – Occasional trips and activities to give young people a break away from caring.

During the period 1st April 2022 to 30th September 2022, young carers registered with YCC attended the following trips and activities:

16th April – TTVS / YCC Skydive at Honiton Airfield

20th April – Young Carers Development Trust Employability Conference at City Hall, Bristol

1st May – Jubilee Arts Workshop – Batik – Theatre Performance – Life as a Young Carer

15th May – Jubilee Arts Workshop – Flags and Bunting - Theatre Performance – Life as a Young Carer

29th May – Jubilee Arts Workshop – Jubilee bonnets and crowns – Theatre Performance

2nd June – Carers Jubilee Celebration for all at the Plough Arts Centre – street party and performance

11th & 12th July – Lundy Snorkelling Experience

19th & 20th July – Lundy Snorkelling Experience

10th August – SS Freshspring – Mast climbing and activity day

13th August – Canoeing at Haven Banks

With several young adult carers joining me on the new project from Bright Futures Upbeat, Year 1 referral targets for YCC, as stipulated by the National Lottery, were met, and exceeded in the Mid Devon locality by June 2022, 6 months ahead of schedule. Happily, this left YCC in a very good position going forwards for the next 6 months and into January 2023.

I left YCC as Project Manager on 30th June 2022 handing over the reigns to Dawn Lawrence who remains in post as YCC Project Manager, amongst other roles at TTVS, and continued in my role as Young Carers Support Worker until 30th September 2022. During this time, I was also working 1 day a week, helping Sharon to support Adult Carers at Unite.

In November 2022, Unite Carers ended their partnership agreement with TTVS, with the indication that a new Support Worker for Mid Devon would be appointed directly by TTVS going forwards.

YCC continues to be an outstanding provision for young carers and I'm extremely proud to have been a part of its inception.

Tracy Downs

YCC Project Manager (1st Jan 2022 – 30th June 2022) and Support Worker for Mid and North Devon (1st Jan 2022 – 30th September 2022).