

Unite - Carers in Mid Devon

ANNUAL REPORT

1ST APRIL 2018 - 31ST MARCH 2019

Unite Carers is a Company limited by Guarantee
Charity Number: 1099188
Company Number: 4779388

2, Bridge Street, Tiverton, Devon EX16 5LY

Telephone No.: 01884 257511
e-mail: info@unitemd.org.uk
Website: www.unite-carersinmiddevon.org.uk

Patrons:

Angela Rippon OBE
Neil Parish – Member of Parliament
Polly Colthorpe – Counsellor Devon County Council

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:

Feel free to visit our offices, telephone, write or e-mail us.

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

**Open: Monday to Friday, 10 am and 1 pm
Tel: 01884 257511
Email: info@unitemd.org.uk**

Out of office hours please leave an answerphone message and we will return your call as soon as possible.

Volunteer Services Manager – Support For Adult Carers:

Lara Pope: Tel: 07773 446928 E-mail: lara@unitemd.org.uk

Adult Carers Support Worker:

Tracy Downs Tel: 07939 290560 E-mail: tracy@unitemd.org.uk

Young Carers "Kids Who Care" Activities Co-ordinators (5 - 17 year olds):

Sharon Trerise: Tel: 07535 411470 E-mail: sharon@unitemd.org.uk

Tracy Downs: Tel: 07939 290560 E-mail: tracy@unitemd.org.uk

Young Adult Carers "Bright Futures Project" Transitions Worker (18-24 year olds):

Tracy Downs Tel: 07794 675706 E-mail: tracy@unitemd.org.uk

Office Administrator:

Sharon Trerise Tel: 01884 257511 E-mail: admin@unitemd.org.uk

Unite Carers in Mid Devon

Chairman of Trustees Annual Report 2018/2019

Welcome to Unite Carers' 16th AGM. It's gratifying to see so many people here today. Caring for a loved one is a most worthy occupation, but you all know only too well it's also a heavy burden on time and emotion. In a recent survey by Carers UK, a much larger and more nationwide organisation than Unite, it was concluded that there are 6.5 million carers in the UK alone. Without these dedicated citizens the government would be overwhelmed and chaos ensue. Scotland has recently brought in a law which firmly puts the responsibility for supporting carers back on government and we can only hope that England will follow suit in the near future. Until that great day we will struggle on and give whatever support we can to carers in Mid Devon.

In the last financial year there have been organisational changes in the Unite set-up. The Board of Trustees lost two valuable members in Claudette Harrower and the very long serving Margaret MacDonald. I would like to thank both of them for their contribution to the charity over the years. However, we have been lucky enough to recruit two new stalwarts to serve in the capacity of trustees. Liam Edwards, who has been a carer himself, and Beverley Moore, both of whom are already showing admirable enthusiasm for the job. On the staff side we lost the excellent Christina Dymond but were lucky enough to find an equally excellent replacement in Tracy Downs who is already proving her worth. She had undertaken the joint role of KWC Activities Coordinator and is also contributing to the adult carer part of Unite. Our two long serving staff members Lara Pope, Adult Services Manager, and Sharon Trerise in her dual capacity as office administrator and KWC Activities Coordinator continue to provide excellent service to our charity and from the chair I would like to thank them sincerely for the sterling work they do in making the charity work so efficiently. You will be hearing from them later in the meeting.

I realise that at every AGM I go on about funding, but I make no apology for so doing. Without national or local government support we rely on grants from charitable funds and foundations. These grants are vital to our survival. In the last financial year we were lucky enough to be supported by The Masonic Central Fund, Woodroffe Benton, The Francine Trust, The Gibbons Family Trust, The Barbara Ward Children's Fund, The Sobell Foundation, and The Charity of Edward Blagdon to name but a few. A word of thanks here to the valuable work done by Phil Lloyd in the area of fund raising. We are also very grateful for donations from individuals and organisations which include the Soroptomists, Mr Dave Saunders, the Masons, Tiverton Municipal Charities and the Bampton Parish Council, again to name just a few of our benefactors. We are also grateful to Westbank for their contribution to the cost of our KWC respite activities. We have been hosting Westbank staff for some time now and being paid for it, but their contract has now come to an end leaving us with a significant loss of income. Steps are being taken to alleviate the loss, but the fact remains that money will now have to be sought elsewhere. If anyone here today has any ideas for fund raising that might bring in some cash don't be shy, I would love to hear from you.

Continued/.....

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It would be remiss of me not to mention the huge contribution that our valued volunteers make to the work Unite does in supporting carers both young and adult. The personal commitment of these volunteers is something greatly appreciated at all levels within the charity, whether it be providing one-to-one support for adult carers or helping to provide respite activities for our young carers through monthly club nights at Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton and monthly outings to exciting events and places around the county. My thanks go out to them all. While I'm on the subject of volunteers I have to mention our valued Board of Trustees who make their own significant contribution to the work we do. John Anderson, our long-serving Treasurer, Bernice Philbrick our hard working Company Secretary and Patricia Eardley, Liam Edwards and Beverley Moore who all play their parts in overseeing the support work carried out by Unite Carers in Mid Devon. Thank you all for your valued contributions.

We believe in cooperation with other local organisations concerned with the welfare of people in the Mid Devon community and to this end we have worked during the year with Westbank, Devon Carers, Age UK, the Alzheimers Society, Turntable, Involve, Chat, Devon Youth Service Space and other third sector bodies.

As I'm sure many of you know we are one of the partners in the Bright Futures Upbeat project. At the end of April we unfortunately lost our Mid Devon Transitions Worker, Helen Head who moved onto pastures new after making a very useful contribution to the service. We were lucky enough to find a sound replacement in Tracy Downs, a name you may well recognize as an existing Unite stalwart. I'm confident she will continue the important work of supporting young adult carers across Mid Devon.

Lastly if you think we do a good job here at Unite please make sure that you pass on the word to people you meet. We would like to reach all carers in Mid Devon who would benefit from our support.

ROY GRANTHAM
Chair Of Trustees

ORGANISATIONAL CHART – April 2019

Unite – Carers in Mid Devon

Board of Trustees:

Roy Grantham Chair of Trustees	Liam Edwards Vice-Chair Of Trustees	Patricia Eardley Safeguarding Trustee	John Anderson Treasurer	Bernice Philbrick Safeguarding Trustee & Secretary	Beverley Moore Trustee
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Unite Carers Staff

Lara Pope
Volunteer Services Manager

Sharon Trerise
Office Administrator &
Kids Who Care Activities Coordinator

Tracy Downs
Kids Who Care Activities Co-ordinator
& Adult Carers Support Worker

**Hosted Devon Carers Staff
Adult Carers**

Lorraine Mee **Clare Moughton** **Susanna Venner**
Devon Carers Support Officers

Young Carers

Tracy Downs
Devon Young Carers
Lead Practitioner

**Bright Futures (18 – 24 Year olds)
Young Adult Carers**

Bright Futures
Transitions Worker

GENERAL INCOME 2018/19

Donations

AC/DC concert	£400
Anonymous	£2
Bampton PCC	£600
Blundells Pupils Concert	£402
Bramblehaies Surgery	£63
Brent Lodge	£400
David Saunders	£184
Forget-Me-Not	£673
Heathcoat Amory	£225
In memory W Dunn	£106
Mrs Marks	£50
My Donate	£391
NCS Wave 2	£225
Paul Fitzmaurice	£1,500
R Huxtable	£10
Soroptomists	£450
St Andrews Church	£81
The Giving Machine	£17
Viscount Amory	£300
Walter Squires	£428
	£6,507

Grants

29th May Charitable Trust	£2,000
Ashworth Trust	£3,000
Clare Milne	£6,000
David Gibbons Trust	£4,000
Devon Community Foundation	£3,354
Devon County Council	£571
Edward Blagdon	£6,000
Elmgrant	£500
Foxglove Trust	£1,500
Grant Unity Lodge	£500
Heathcoat Trust	£1,000
John & Lady Heathcoat Amory	£500
Jules Thorn	£750
Kathleen Laurence	£1,000
Leonard Laity Stoate	£1,000
Lord Barnby's Foundation	£3,000
Macfarlanes	£500
Marsh Christian Trust	£400
Matthews Wrightson	£500
Norman Family	£2,000
Northcott Devon Foundation	£200
Prince of Wales Charitable Trust	£1,500
Sobell Foundation	£5,000
Souters	£1,000
Tiverton Municipal Church	£1,000
Woodroffe Benton	£750
	£47,525

Active Volunteers. April 18 - March 19

Volunteer Activities Key:

AC - Adult Carer Support, YC - Young Carer Support, Tr - Trustee, OV-Office volunteer

	Activity
Dorothy Allan	AC
John Anderson	Tr-AC
Sue Arnold	AC-YC
Neil Babbage	AC
Chris Bell	AC
Rita Bell	AC
Sylvia Boddy	YC
Catherine Britton	AC
Ruth Broomfield	OV-AC
Denise Butt	AC-OV
Lynne Colley	AC-YC
Ken Cornish	AC
Grahan Cridland	AC
Jenny Davies	AC
Lou Dedames	AC
Mary Duke	AC
Pat Eardley	Tr-YC
Charles Edwards	AC
Liam Edwards	AC-YC-TR
Heather Edwards	AC
Kylie Ford	AC
Norman Ford	YC
Roy Grantham	TR-YC
Linda Gregory	AC
Stephen Green	YC
Liz Grout	AC
Alex Hawkins	YC
Carol Hewings	YC
Joanne Hill	AC-OV
Janice Kitchen	AC
Alison Knott	AC-OV
Toni Lane	YC
Phil Lloyd	AC-YC-OV
Amy Lodder	AC

	Activity
Vivienne Menear	AC
Jean Milne	AC
Beverley Moore	TR
Josie Musannif	YC
Sonia Notley	AC
Marianne New	AC
Rowan Nye	YC
Marjorie Osborne	AC
Duncan Oxley	AC
Fiona Passmore	AC
Bernice Philbrick	TR-YC
Valerie Pocock	AC
Penny Prosser	AC-YC
Jill Prudhoe	AC
Jacqueline Quaife	AC
Sue Raffill	AC
Alarna Raines	YC
David Saunders	AC
Gill Saunders	AC
Pauline Shields	OV
Laura Sollis	AC
Sally Souter	AC
Rosalyn Spencer-Bernard	AC-YC
Maureen Spry	AC
Vicky Stafford	AC
Pat Stagg	AC-YC
Jill Stewart	AC
Barbara Strong	AC
Audrey Tidball	AC
Jenny Tower	AC
Cathy Urquhart	YC
Tina Webber	AC-YC-OV
Anne Wood	OV
David Wood	OV
Terina Wood	AC

Volunteer Services for Adult Carers

(April 2018 to March 2019)

Unite Carers in Mid Devon

Unite Carers in Mid Devon offers many services to unpaid carers who care for a relative or friend who struggle to manage alone because of their illness, disability or vulnerability. The main office is no 2 Bridge Street, Tiverton which is open 10am -1pm, Monday to Friday, with an out of hours answerphone facility. Carers are welcome to drop in during opening hours with any queries, seek information or support and may often be signposted to relevant agencies or projects for further assistance.

This year has been a year for GDPR (general data protection regulations) which consisted of new guidelines and laws around data protection. This entailed contacting all of the people with data held on the Unite database and ensuring that we had their permission to hold their personal details, send them Unite's biannual Newsletter and validate their caring role position. This resulted in the **546** Carers being slimmed down to **411** and has helped us achieve a true account of how many active adult carers we are supporting. The details of volunteers, staff and professionals from outside organisations are also held on the database.

Sharon Trerise, Office Administrator, oversees the running of the office four mornings a week along with Lara Pope the Volunteer Services Manager. Christina Dymond retired this year and went on her travels. We welcomed Tracy Downs who took over Christina's role as the Young Carers Activities Co-ordinator and Assistant Co-ordinator on the adult carers' side.

Office volunteers are present every morning of the week with a back-up team to cover holidays and sickness. Their role is crucial to the smooth running of the charity and they are kept busy with many administrative tasks including GDPR database validation, creating the Unite Carers newsletter, photocopying, updating display boards, sending out letters, ringing carers, signposting carers to the correct organisation or professional person.

The main office currently hosts three Adult Carer Support Officers from Devon Carers who all work on a part time basis. This enables great communication between the two organisations resulting in an effective support system for the carers.

The second office at no 4 Bridge Street, Tiverton is where the lead practitioner for Devon Young Carers is based which enables close liaison with our young carers team based next door. Unite is a member of a consortium called Bright Futures which supports Young Adult Carers between the ages of nineteen and twenty-five and our Transitions Worker Helen Head is based in number 4 as well. This office can also be used for meetings and training to take place and there is a small meeting room downstairs which is used for private counselling sessions.

There is also a website www.unite-carersinmiddevon.org.uk that holds current information and news including video links on various subjects.

1:1 Adult Carer Support

This 1:1 support is provided by volunteers that deliver face to face befriending, IT guidance in the home, regular telephone contact, assistance with filling in forms, advocacy, crisis, bereavement and counselling support.

Carers are individually matched with a suitable volunteer who is available to provide them with the support that they have asked for – be that cups of teas and chats, attending meetings with them to act as an advocate, walks, trips out, how to store photos on their computer, help with paperwork and/or to provide practical and emotional support.

The **1:1 support for Adult Carers** started in 2011 and has consistently provided support to over 100 carers a year. This year has proved no different with a total of **124 carers** receiving the service. We would like to see this number increase but respite care has become so difficult that carers find it difficult to leave home to meet up with someone or attend a group. Although home visits happen this is not as beneficial as the 'cared for' is present and the carer does not have a break from the caring role and environment.

69 Carers have received **1:1 Befriending Support** (of which 48 were still active at the end of March 2018) Each match is reviewed on a regular basis and is brought to an end if either party does not wish to, or can no longer commit. If a carer becomes bereaved their volunteer can continue to support them under the umbrella of Unite for up to six months if needed. **14 carers** took up the offer of **bereavement support** (3 of whom are still receiving it.) Sometimes this is from their volunteer befrienders and sometimes from volunteers trained in bereavement support.

15 Carers received regular **Telephone Support** throughout the year which suits them better than visits or meetings outside the home. Knowing that someone is going to touch base with them to make sure that they are okay is appreciated.

8 Carers received help with IT in the comfort of their own homes helping them stay in touch with people, searching the internet and emailing. The **Volunteer Counselling Support** continued to be very successful and **16 carers** took up this amazing free offer. **2 Carers** were helped with filling out the very complex forms for attendance allowance and PIP

Our amazing team of volunteers continuously provide this support to carers and without them Unite Carers would purely be a signposting organisation. Volunteers all have their reasons for volunteering but the main reason is the feel good factor that comes with helping others and giving back something to the community.

In the past year **48** volunteers have provided some sort of 1:1 support to adult carers with **42** Volunteers still current and active. Some volunteers are not active at present – and just having some time out. Volunteers have contributed a fantastic total of **1,038 hours** supporting carers in a 1:1 role.

6 new volunteers attended the induction training throughout the year to support adult carers in various roles (including the trustees and facilitating groups) but unfortunately

14 volunteers left due to personal reasons and were unable to continue and commit to their role.

Support Groups for Adult Carers

Our support groups vary with regards number of attendees and how they run, but the basis of each group is to provide carers with the chance to meet other carers in a social environment who are in similar situations to themselves and gain some peer support, information and advice. There is research done by organisations such as the Alzheimer's Society and Age UK that demonstrates that carers who regularly take part in a support group report less mental and physical health problems, feel less isolated, and have improved coping skills. In the past year we have had between **51** and **94** carers attend a group each month and between **24** and **35** ex-carers that attend the ex-carers lunch group.

Unite Carers is involved with **13** carer support groups in Mid Devon. **8** of these groups are run solely by Unite Carers and facilitated by our volunteers and **3** are facilitated by a Carer Support Officer from Devon Carers. One group is run in conjunction with Parkinsons UK. We provide monthly information packs to each group which offers up to date information and stimulates a focus for conversation. There are **General Carer Groups** which are based in particular geographical areas that welcome any adult carers - whatever the illness or disability of the cared-for.

- ❖ **Tiverton Lunch Group** – This very successful group has a regular core group of carers that attend and meet at different lunch venues in and around Tiverton. Susanna Venner facilitates this group.
- ❖ **Crediton Drop in Café** changed venue and now meet in Crediton Costa Coffee and has a stable number of carers that attend.
- ❖ **Uffculme Group** is a small but cosy group of carers and ex carers that also lunch out at two separate venues
- ❖ **Cullompton Carers Coffee Group** tried meeting at different venues in Cullompton but it did not appear to work so now always meet in the Hayridge café

Other groups are aimed more for Carers specific to their caring role such as...

- ❖ **Carers of people with mental health issues.** This lively, effective group is a long standing established group which is facilitated by Lorraine Mee from Devon Carers.
- ❖ **Parkinson's Group** is a drop in for people with Parkinson's and their carers. Parkinson's UK Staff are always present. The group is keen to have an element of casual drop in mixed with some professional input and the occasional guest speaker
- ❖ **Carers of Teenagers /Adults with Additional Needs.** This group is also open to the transition period of caring for children into adulthood. Again they have had guest speakers at the group relevant to the caring role and it has a nice core group of carers attend. Clare Moughton from Devon Carers facilitates this group

- ❖ **Affinity – A group for carers of children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)** This interactive group is thriving and was started by three volunteers under the umbrella of Unite Carers to provide much needed support and advice to carers/parents with a child diagnosed of Autism or on their pathway. They meet twice a month and have invited guest speakers to cover relevant topics. During the school holidays they run family activities.
- ❖ **Oasis Groups** are well established groups for carers of people with short and long term memory issues. Groups are held in **Cullompton, Tiverton** and **Bampton** and offer invaluable advice and peer support to carers on this very difficult journey.
- ❖ The **Tiverton Forget-Me-Not Memory Café** changed venues this year which has proved to be a successful move but most importantly it has been awarded the **Devon Memory Consortium Quality Assurance Mark!** It continues to be a haven where carers can attend with their cared-for, in the knowledge that there is volunteer and quite often professional support and advice on offer. It is helpful to gain peer support and hear talks by guest speakers with the knowledge that their cared-for are being looked after by an amazing team of volunteers, whilst enjoying a cup of tea and a piece of home-made cake. There are always various activities on offer for the cared-for although some, however, prefer quiet 1:1 interaction with a volunteer.

Guest speakers and visitors in the past year include Occupational Therapists from Independent Living; Alzheimer's Society, Tiverton Community Rehab team and the police community support officer. Their outing this year was a barge trip along the canal and a cream tea.

- ❖ Bereaved carers or carers who have loved ones in residential care are referred to our **Ex Carers Luncheon Group** in **Tiverton**. This group is so well attended that the only issue they face is finding venues big enough to carer for them! The Crediton group still meet but is no longer supported by Unite Carers.

Lara Pope
Volunteer Services Manager



UNITE CARERS IN MID DEVON

KIDS WHO CARE ANNUAL REPORT 2018 - 2019

It has been another busy year for Kids Who Care, our staff and team of volunteers!

We said goodbye to our friend and colleague Christina Dymond who retired in December and is currently enjoying travelling around New Zealand with her husband. After over 2 years in post, Tracy Downs has recently left her Lead Practitioner and Young Carer's Support Worker roles at Westbank Devon Young Carers to replace Christina and to join Sharon as the Kids Who Care Activities Co-ordinator, and as an assistant to Lara the Adult Services Manager. Tracy has also recently been appointed as Transition Worker for Bright Futures, replacing Helen Head who left in April to take up a new role at Tiverton High School. Tracy is hoping that her existing relationships with young carers and their families will help to increase the numbers of young adult carers being supported by Bright Futures during 2018-2019 and beyond, as well as continuing to encourage transition to adult services with our young carers at Club Nights.

Attendance continues to increase at our monthly Club Nights, particularly in Tiverton where new record highs were seen in January and February when 40 and 41 young carers attended respectively. These attendance levels triggered plans to split the Tiverton sessions into two age groups; the "Junior session" and the "Senior session", allowing us to offer improved age-appropriate activities and support in each. The split sessions are currently undergoing a 3 month trial period, after which time the views of Young Carers and their families will be sought. However, the new session structure is working very well and at the time of writing, it is anticipated that the split sessions will continue.

There has been a change of venue for our Crediton Club Night this year from the Congregational Church to the Methodist Church. The new venue is very close to the lovely park in Crediton and this has meant that our Young Carers have enjoyed sunny evenings playing and picnicking together in the fresh air. The venue lends itself well to active play in the large hall that the children use for running around and letting off steam and a separate area for crafts, cooking and quieter game playing and chat.

Cullompton Club nights are well attended and continue at the John Tallack Centre, which is well equipped with 2 pool tables, a football table, separate spaces for crafts and cooking, a quiet room as well as outside space for picnicking, ball games and play.

Young Carer's Club nights are held on the first, second and third Tuesdays of the month respectively. We provide a meal, which we often incorporate as a cooking activity, as well as a craft activity relevant to the time of year. Sessions in Tiverton run from 5pm-6.30pm for Juniors and 6.30pm-8.30pm for Seniors and from 6pm-8pm in Crediton and Cullompton.

Trips continue to be over-subscribed during 2018-2019 and we receive in excess of 30-40 applications for each monthly trip. Young Carers have enjoyed some of their old favourites again this year such as the KWC Cooking Day at Blundell's School, Kayaking with the Exeter Canoe Club and the Christmas Panto as well as some new trips to the National Marine Aquarium in Plymouth, Flip Out! Trampoline Park and a Pony Party (horse riding and party games). With future trips to the Greatest Showman stage show, the Go Ape High Ropes at Haldon Forest, and 3 days away at the Young Carer's Festival in Southampton already planned, Young Carers have a very busy and exciting summer ahead of them.



UNITE CARERS IN MID DEVON

KIDS WHO CARE ANNUAL REPORT 2018/2019

We have reached out to over 270 Young Carers registered with Kids Who Care in Mid Devon and have directly supported over 130 individual young carers through our Club Nights and trips during 2018-2019. We could not run any of our activities without the generosity of our volunteers and we would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of them.

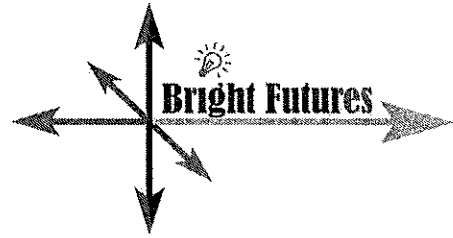
This year we welcomed several new volunteers to Kids Who Care – Welcome Sue, Rowan, Cathy, Alex, Lindy, Lynne, Carole, Norman and Liam. If you are interested in becoming a KWC volunteer please contact us for an invitation to one of our club nights to get an idea of what is involved.

The backbone of our basic funding comes from generous grants provided by Charitable Trusts and Foundations throughout the country and particularly the West Country. However we are also very fortunate to be supported by individuals and organisations within our local community. The Interact group at Tiverton High School has donated £1,000 for Young Carers to attend the festival this year; we have received generous donations throughout the year from Tesco in Tiverton and by Morrisons who pledge £20 of vouchers every month to go towards the Tiverton Club Night. We ensure that every penny we receive is put to good use to give our Mid Devon Young Carers a break away from their caring responsibilities and a chance to be a child again.

Funding to continue the work we do is becoming harder to find. There isn't another service like Kids Who Care for Young Carers in Mid Devon; we need to protect it to ensure that we can continue to care for children who care for others.

We thank all volunteers, Trustees, funders and staff for the support our Young Carers receive.

Tracy Downs & Sharon Trerise
KWC Activities Co-ordinators



Bright Futures

In 2008 Unite became part of a consortium with three other Devon based charities to deliver support services to young adult carers across Devon. The consortium, led by Torrridge Voluntary Services successfully secured funding from the Big Lottery Reaching Communities Fund to continue to deliver the Bright Futures Upbeat project.

The Bright Futures Upbeat project offers support to Young Adult Carers aged 18-24 to help them get the skills, confidence and help they need to manage periods of transition and change in order to build their resilience and improve their future life chances. There are four Transitions workers based around Devon; the Mid Devon Transition worker is based in the Unite office in Tiverton. The Transition workers aim to support young adult carers aged 18 to 24 by offering 1:1 support, signposting, advocacy, information, training, activities, skills development and the chance to engage with peer support groups.

The Bright Futures Upbeat project in Mid Devon has been successful in applying to local grants to help fund the much valued peer support activities we offer. The project has been awarded a grant from the Viscount Amory's Charitable Trust which has given the Young Adult Carers in Mid Devon much needed respite from their caring role and has given them the opportunity to mix with peers in a similar situation. So far the activities such as a trip to Plymouth, Haldon Forest and craft sessions and a 3 course meal have been enjoyed by the Young Adult Carers in Mid Devon. We have also been accepted by the Tesco Bags for Life scheme run by Tesco and will be using any funds raised to put towards an 'Upbeat and Health' project which aims to promote the physical and mental health of Young Adult Carers in Mid Devon through activities such as exercise, cooking classes and mindfulness.

As well as supporting Young Adult Carers I have been working closely with other organisations and groups in the local community, to develop awareness of Young Adult Carers, the issues they face, how they can be supported and to develop partnership working. For example I have worked closely with the local colleges, PETROC and Exeter to make staff 'carer aware' and to help them understand how they can help support their students who are Young Adult Carers. I have been holding monthly drop in sessions at the colleges and have been invited to attend many events that they hold throughout the year.

Over the last year I have done lots of 1:1 work with Young Adult Carers across Mid Devon, supporting them in their caring role. Below is a case study highlighting some of the work that has been done.

Case Study

I have been supporting a YAC who is currently on a zero hours contract working in retail. The YAC will sometimes go a week without any work and is struggling financially. She wants to work in the Early Years sector, but doesn't know how to go about it. She did attend Exeter College where she studied a Level 2 in Childcare but due to her caring responsibilities and finding the campus overwhelming she quit. We looked at what was involved in working in the early years sector and the different routes into employment so she was better informed about her choices. The YAC was keen to look at apprenticeships. I put the YAC in touch with PETROC to discuss apprenticeships so she had an understanding of what was involved. The YAC applied for an apprenticeship in Exeter and has since been accepted. The YAC has reported feeling much more positive about her future and her education.

Helen Head - Bright Futures Transitions Worker 2018 to 2019