

# Carers' organisations and support groups

---

All of the support groups mentioned provide the opportunity for carers and former carers to get together to share experiences, offer emotional and sometimes practical support, exchange information and ideas, make new friends and feel less isolated.

## **Ascot Area Alzheimer's Carers Support Group – 'Triple A'**

Meets third Thursday of the month, Winkfield Manor, 7.30pm

Respite care third weekend of the month at Woodlands

*Una Rowson – 01344 886887*

## **Blackwater Valley Alzheimer's Carers Support Group**

Meets second Monday of the month, Sandhurst Day Centre, Yorktown Road, Sandhurst, 7.30pm (but please call first to check meeting is taking place)

*Bob Ollerenshaw – 01276 504630*

## **Bracknell and District Mental Health Carers Support Group**

Meets every 3rd Tuesday evening, Coopers Hill Centre, 7.30pm

*Jean Plumb – 01344 621052*

## **Bracknell Alzheimer's Disease Carers Support Group**

Meets second Thursday of the month, Johnston Court, Bracknell, 7.30pm

*Marion Tarry – 01344 454230*

## **Bracknell Branch of the Parkinson's Disease Society\***

Meets second Monday of the month, Edmund's Court, Bracknell, 7.30pm

*William Hague – 01344 862725*

*Sue Preece – 01344 771628*

## **Bracknell Epilepsy Support Group\***

Meets last Tuesday of the month, Edmunds Court, Bracknell at 7.30pm

*Jessie Palmer – 01344 451870*

*Jean Kite – 01344 412402*

**Care Plus Support Group – Ascot, Bracknell and Beyond**

Meets on a Tuesday, Lynwood Rise Road, Sunningdale, 2.30pm

*Pamela Griffin – 01344 622950*

**Carers UK Support Group**

Meets third Thursday of the month, Coopers Hill, 2pm

*Barbara Briggs – 01344 451656*

**Crowthorne Carers Support Group**

Meets second Thursday of the month, Carlyle Court, Kings Road, Crowthorne, 2pm

*Jill Revans – 01344 351474*

**East Berkshire Autistic Support Group**

Speaker evenings and social events

*Helen Taylor – 01344 302972*

**Konnections** – Support group for parents of children with a disability

Meets every Friday in term time, Kerith Centre, 10am-12noon (creche for young children)

*Catriona Mitchell – 01344 862699*

**Konnections Men's Support Group**

Meets alternate Thursdays, 38 Nutley, Hanworth, Bracknell, 8-10pm

*Catriona Mitchell – 01344 862699*

**Parents Encouraging Parents**

*Liz Sawyer – 01276 64520*

**Parents Together** – support group for parents with disabled children

Meets third Monday of the month, Barnet Court, Bracknell, 8pm

*Mandy Ball – 01344 441199*

**Stroke clubs\***

Edmunds Court:

- First and third Tuesday: *Yvonne Eastman – 01344 640457*

- First and third Thursday: *Donna Gleave – 01344 456330*

Sandhurst: *Pam Owles – 01344 775689*

Crowthorne: *Sue Thompson – 01344 775349*

*\*Groups marked are for both carers and cared-for*

# Social services

---

Bracknell Forest Borough Council Social Services and Housing provides and supports a range of services for local adults and children who have specific needs. It operates within limited resources, but works hard to ensure that services reach those people whom have the greatest need.

It does so by establishing eligibility criteria that the cared for person or the carer must meet to receive one of the following services:

- Home care including personal care
- Day care services
- Respite services
- Residential care
- Nursing home care
- Social work support
- Occupational therapy and equipment

## **Carer's Assessment**

The purpose of the Carer's Assessment is to look at the help you provide and the stresses that it places on you. It provides an opportunity to look at how your needs can be met by Social Services or by other support agencies.

The assessment process will help you think about what you do to help the person you care for, how long it takes and how you cope with the different tasks. It also reflects upon how caring can affect your life, both the good and the bad. It then reviews the help that you get and what support would make caring easier.

### **Are you entitled to a Carer's Assessment?**

The Carers and Disabled Children's Act 2000 gives you the right to request an assessment of your own needs if you are:

- aged 16 or over and provide or intend to provide care on a regular basis for someone aged 18 or over
- someone with parental responsibility for a disabled child who provides or intends to provide regular and substantial care for the child

You do not have to be a relative of the cared for person. Friends and neighbours can still qualify to have a Carer's Assessment. The act excludes paid carers.

## **How to get a Carer's Assessment or find out more**

If you would like more information about a Carer's Assessment please contact the care manager/social worker who visits the person whom you care for. Or you can contact the appropriate Social Services team - see below for contact numbers. Someone from the team will discuss your situation with you and, if appropriate, an assessment of your needs will be arranged at a mutually-convenient time and place.

## **Carer's Self-assessment**

Before you speak to someone you may wish to complete the carer's self-assessment. This has been designed with the support of carers to help you draw up a picture of your caring role. This is not a substitute for the full Carer's Assessment.

### **Please note:**

- Carer's Assessments recognise the carer's knowledge and expertise.
- You must be a 'substantial and regular' carer to get an assessment.
- Carer's Assessments can be separate and remain confidential from the cared-for person.
- Carers can choose to have help when completing an assessment.
- Carers do not need to be experts in the filling in the assessment form, but they are invited to play an active part in the process which may include completion of some paperwork if they wish.
- The assessment focuses on outcomes that carers value.
- You can request another assessment if and when your caring circumstances change.
- You can say if you are not happy with your assessment.
- Where possible, carers will be provided with a timescale for completion of their assessment.
- Carer's Assessments will be reviewed periodically.

## **Support services for carers**

The assessment may lead to a range of support being provided to the carer such as:

- Advice and information about helpful services and support.
- Support to allow the carer to take a break from caring.

In other cases social services will not be able to help directly but will try to provide information or direct carers to other support and guidance. Even where the assessment process does not immediately lead to additional services for the carer, it may still have a positive effect such as:

- Recognition of their role
- A chance to talk through issues and consider their own needs
- Information and links to support groups and voluntary services
- A shared sense of responsibility
- Peace of mind from knowing how to make contact with service providers in the future
- Increased confidence about accessing services

## **Young carers**

Young carers are children and young people under 19 years old who provide care for a sick or disabled relative. The relative is usually a parent but may be a grandparent, brother or sister or other family member. The person they care for may be frail and elderly, have a physical disability or illness, mental health problems, a sensory disability or be misusing substances such as alcohol or drugs.

There is a group for young carers on a Monday, offering fun outings and support, and a drop-in for information and advice in on Wednesdays. If you want to know more please ring Bernadette Adams 01344 351546 or Children's Services Duty Social Worker on 01344 351582 / 351584

## **Who to contact if you care for an adult...**

- ...who has a disability or is frail/elderly - Access Team 01344 351500
- ...who has a mental health problem -duty 01344 351630
- ...who has a learning disability - duty 01344 823310

## **Who to contact if you are a parent or carer for a child...**

- ...who has a learning or physical disability
- ...who has a sensory impairment
- ...who has a chronic illness or significant health needs

In each case, call the children's and families duty team – 01344 351582 or 351584

There is also the:

### **Parent Partnership Service**

This is a statutory service provided by Bracknell Forest Borough Council for all parents/ carers of children with (or feel their child might have) special educational needs (SEN), even if these needs have not been formally recognised.

The confidential service aims to empower parents/carers to play an informed and active role in the education of their child by providing them with impartial information and advice about SEN issues and procedures.

Helpline: 01344 354011 (24 hour. 52-week voicemail)

Email: [jaki.carter@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:jaki.carter@bracknell-forest.gov.uk) (Jaki Carter, Parent Partnership Officer)

## **Further information**

Further information about whether you are entitled to help is contained in the Social Services and Housing leaflet *Your Guide to Social Services Eligibility Criteria*.

Bracknell Forest Borough Council also published some useful booklets:

- A Guide to Services & Support for Carers
- Your Guide to a Carers Assessment
- Better Care, Higher Standards
- A Guide to Services for Children & Families in Bracknell Forest

Please ring 01344 351500 for adult services and 01344 351582 or 351584 for children's services to request a copy of any of the above.

You may also like to look at the Bracknell Forest Borough Council website: [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

## **Suggestions, compliments or complaints**

You may wish to make a suggestion, pay a compliment or complain about the care you have received from Social Services. If so you should speak to the manager of the team or unit providing the service.

If the outcome is not satisfactory, you may wish to contact Bracknell Forest's Customer Response Officer, Patricia Morris on 01344 351588 office hours or 0800 169 4491 (24 hours answerphone)

# Health

---

Caring can give great satisfaction but can put a great deal of strain on your emotional and physical health. It is important to take care of yourself, as well as the person you look after, by eating well, exercising and getting some rest.

## **National Strategy for Carers**

In 1998, the Government published *Caring for Carers – the National Strategy for Carers (NSC)*, which sets out plans to increase support for carers. NSC also provides much useful information, particularly about carers' rights. *Caring for Carers – a National Strategy for Carers* is available on the website: [www.doh.gov.uk/carers](http://www.doh.gov.uk/carers)

## **Bracknell Forest Primary Care Trust**

Since April 2002, Bracknell Forest Primary Care Trust (PCT) has been responsible for purchasing healthcare on behalf of the residents of the borough of Bracknell Forest, and for health promotion and illness-prevention across the area.

Its functions include overseeing the work of 13 general practices, managing community nurses, working closely with the NHS dentists, pharmacists and opticians in the borough, and managing Ward 15 at Heatherwood Hospital, with an emphasis on rehabilitation. Extra nursed beds are also being created at Ladybank, Birch Hill, so fewer people need to go into hospital and others can come out earlier. The PCT provides a range of therapy services for patients across east Berkshire.

In the autumn of 2003 the Trust commenced a service that enables patients (and their carers) to attend a range of out-patient clinics locally, without having to travel to Heatherwood or Wexham Park Hospitals. This service is seen as a first step towards developing a 'Healthplex' in Bracknell – offering many services traditionally based in a hospital – when the town centre redevelopment gives us the opportunity.

The website [www.berkshire.nhs.uk/bracknell/](http://www.berkshire.nhs.uk/bracknell/) can be used to identify GPs, NHS dentists, pharmacies and opticians (optometrists).

The PCT works with partner organisations and the voluntary sector on measures – including this information pack – to improve support for carers within primary care.

For example, the Government expects general practices to establish a register of carers who use their surgery. This register will then make it easier to offer training and to provide

information and support to carers. In support of this initiative, Carers UK (formerly Carers National Association) and other carers' organisations, suggest that you ask your family doctor (GP) to indicate that you are a carer on your medical records. The computer systems in all practices that hold your records are capable of displaying this information.

## **GP surgeries**

The GP surgery is the key to accessing health services. With the help of a good general practice, a carer's life can be made much easier. Many of the services required by the carer or the cared-for person can be arranged through the GP surgery – *don't be afraid to ask*.

GPs work with other health professionals, including practice nurses, health visitors, midwives and community nurses. Community nurses typically work closely with doctors from the surgeries, providing nursing care in the home where this is appropriate. They play an important role in supporting carers. You can request these services by telephoning your GP's surgery.

A full and up-to-date list of general practices can be obtained from Bracknell Forest PCT on 01344 823250, or from the PCT website: [www.berkshire.nhs.uk/bracknell/](http://www.berkshire.nhs.uk/bracknell/)

## **Hospitals**

The following are the main NHS hospitals for residents of Bracknell Forest; not all have accident & emergency (A&E) units:

### **Wexham Park Hospital – A&E**

Wexham Street, Slough, SL2 4HL

Tel: 01753 633000

### **Heatherwood Hospital – no A&E**

London Road, Ascot, SL5 8AA

Tel: 01344 623333

*There is a minor injuries unit at Heatherwood Hospital, though this is not open 24 hours. Telephone 01344 620246 to confirm when it is open and whether it is the right place for you to attend.*

### **Frimley Park Hospital – A&E**

Portsmouth Road, Frimley, GU16 7UJ

Tel: 01276 604604

**Royal Berkshire Hospital – A&E**  
London Road, Reading, RG1 5AN  
Tel: 0118 987 5111

**Battle Hospital – no A&E**  
Oxford Road, Reading, RG30 1AG  
Tel: 0118 987 5111

A range of treatments are provided at clinics in the above hospitals, as well as at Upton Hospital (Slough), King Edward VII Hospital (Windsor) and St Mark's Hospital (Maidenhead).

Patients may also be sent to other hospitals for procedures and treatments that are not carried out locally.

## **Specialist NHS trusts**

### **Berkshire Healthcare NHS Trust**

*Provides services for people with mental health problems or learning disabilities for all of Berkshire, at a range of locations*

Church Hill House, 51-52 Turing Drive, Bracknell, RG12 7FR  
Tel: 01344 422722

### **Royal Berkshire Ambulance NHS Trust**

44 Finchampstead Road, Wokingham, RG40 2NN  
Tel: 0118 936 5500

## **NHS Direct**

NHS Direct is a telephone service, staffed by nurses, giving confidential healthcare advice and information 24-hours a day. It may be a valuable first point of contact to help you look after the person for whom you are caring. Call 0845 4647, or visit: [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

## **Compliments, comments and complaints**

NHS organisations welcome your compliments on care you feel we have provided well, as well as your comments about any healthcare issues that you may not be satisfied with.

Where the treatment has been offered by a general practitioner or an NHS dentist, community pharmacist or optician, you should contact that practice/business first.

In any case you can write to Diane Hedges, Chief Executive, Bracknell Forest PCT, Church Hill House, 51-52 Turing Drive, Bracknell RG12 7FR.

The Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS) helps patients resolve difficulties, offers advice on how to access services and supports people in the formal NHS complaints process.

Contact Graham Theobald, PALS Manager for Bracknell Forest PCT, on 01344 823262, or email: [PALS.BFPCT@berkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:PALS.BFPCT@berkshire.nhs.uk)

# Benefits

---

The Government's Department of Work and Pensions provides a variety of benefits for both you and the person you care for. Don't be reluctant to claim them - that's why they are there.

Your local Citizens Advice Bureau can assist you with what to claim and help you deal with the claim forms. It is advisable to keep photocopies of all forms and letters that you send to the Department of Work and Pensions. Claiming can be a time-consuming and complicated business, but is worth doing. Useful addresses are given at the end of this section.

## Benefits for carers

Benefits for carers include:

### Carer's Allowance

To claim, you must be aged over 16 and spending at least 35 hours per week looking after someone who claims one of these benefits:

- Disability Living Allowance (higher or middle rate)
- Attendance Allowance
- Constant Attendance Allowance

You don't have to be living with, or related to, the person you look after, but you must not be in full-time education or earning more than a set amount.

*Apply to the Department of Work and Pensions.*

### Jobseeker's Allowance – contribution-based (JSA)

This benefit is not means-tested and can be claimed, for six months only, by an unemployed person who has paid the required National Insurance contributions. It cannot be paid at the same time as Carer's Allowance but will be topped up to Carer's Allowance level if that is higher. Claimants must be looking for work but a carer of a close relative or member of his/her household can restrict availability for work to 16 hours per week.

*Apply to the Job Centre.*

### Jobseeker's Allowance – income-based

This is a means-tested benefit which can be claimed by an unemployed person who is not, or has ceased to be, entitled to contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance. It includes a Carer's Premium, an additional element for carers, but any Carer's Allowance paid will be deducted as income. The requirement to be looking for work is reduced to 16 hours per week for carers of a close relative or a member of the same household.

*Apply to the Job Centre.*

## **Benefits for people with disabilities**

Benefits for people with disabilities include:

### **Attendance Allowance**

This benefit is for people disabled at or after the age of 65, physically or mentally, such that they need considerable help with their personal care or continual supervision to avoid substantial danger. The care or supervision needs must have existed for six months unless the person has a terminal illness. Attendance Allowance can also be claimed by those who don't have a carer.

*Apply to the Department of Work and Pensions.*

### **Disability Living Allowance (DLA)**

This benefit is for people disabled before the age of 65 who need help with their personal care (the care component) and/or mobility (the mobility component) as a result of their physical or mental disability. The need for help must have existed for three months before the claim and be likely to last a further six months, except in the case of terminal illness when there are special rules. There are separate rules for children; to qualify, children must have needs beyond what is normally required for children in respect of care and attention.

*Apply to the Department of Work and Pensions.*

### **Incapacity Benefit**

Normally, this can only be claimed by people who have paid the appropriate National Insurance contributions before becoming unable to work because of illness or disability. Some people who have been incapacitated since youth may be able to apply.

*Apply to the Department of Work and Pensions.*

## **Other benefits**

Other benefits that could be claimed by carers or by people with disabilities include:

### **Working Tax Credit/Child Tax Credit**

These are not tax rebates but means-tested payments made through the Inland Revenue to people who work at least 16 hours per week. There are limits on the claimant's earnings and savings.

### **Income Support (IS)**

This is a means-tested benefit. It can be paid to people as their only income or as a top-up to low income - other benefits, for example. It is the only benefit which helps with mortgage interest payments on owner-occupied properties. Entitlement to Income Support, and the amount paid, will depend on individual and family circumstance, including the income and needs of the claimant's dependants.

An additional amount can be paid within IS to a carer who is receiving or entitled to Carer's Allowance. This is called the Carer's Premium. People with disabilities receive additional amounts according to their level of disability, age and whether they live alone. These are called Disability Premium, Enhanced Disability Premium, Severe Disability Premium and Higher Pensioner Premium.

*Apply to the Department of Work and Pensions.*

### **Housing Benefit**

A means-tested benefit to help with rent payments. The additional premium for carers and people with disabilities is included in the calculation of this benefit as with the calculation of income support.

*Apply to the Council.*

### **Council Tax Benefit**

A means-tested benefit to help with council tax payments. The additional premium for carers and people with disabilities is included in the calculation of this benefit as with the calculation of income support.

*Apply to the Council.*

### **Health benefits**

All charges are waived for people receiving Income Support or income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or, in some cases Working Tax Credit and their dependants. Prescriptions and NHS eyesight tests are free to anyone over the age of 60 and for people with specific conditions.

*Apply on Form FP92A, available from a hospital, chemist or your doctor.*

Help with charges for people on low income but above the Income Support level can be claimed by completing form HC1 available from the Department of Work and Pensions, NHS hospitals, doctors, dentists and opticians. If you are not entitled to full help under the low-income scheme and you need more than five prescriptions per four-month period, a pre-payment certificate for prescriptions will save money.

*Apply on form FP95 from the chemist or post office.*

## **National Insurance contributions**

Anyone in receipt of the following benefits will be credited with a Class 1 National Insurance contribution: Incapacity Benefit, Income Support on grounds of incapacity for work, Invalid Care Allowance, Jobseeker's Allowance (contribution-based or means-tested).

Other sources of money:

### **Community care grants**

Payments from the Social Fund at the Benefits Agency can help people on Income

Support or means-tested Jobseeker's Allowance live or establish themselves, or someone they are looking after in the community. Grants may also be given to help relieve exceptional pressures on the claimant or on his/her family. The grant fund is limited and so there is no guarantee of success.

### **Independent Living (1993) Fund (ILF)**

This is a trust set up with government money to provide payments to people with severe disabilities to enable them to live independently at home. The payments must be used to purchase 'joint care packages', which are a combination of service or direct payments from the local authority through social services, and cash payments from ILF. Money from the Independent Living Fund is completely ignored when means-tested benefits are calculated.

## **Useful numbers**

### **Independent Living (1993) Fund**

Tel: 0115 942 8191

### **Local Department of Work and Pensions**

Tel: 01344 744800

### **Inland Revenue**

Tel: 0845 608 8844

### **Job Centre**

Tel: 01344 658610

### **Citizens Advice Bureau – Bracknell & District**

Tel: 0845 120 2969

### **Benefit Enquiry Line**

Tel: 0800 882200

(9.30am–4pm, weekdays)

### **National Debt Helpline**

Tel: 0808 808 4000

# Housing

---

You may find that your home, or that of the person you care for, is not entirely suitable, particularly if circumstances start to change. Stairs or steps may become difficult, or you may need extra space to help with mobility or privacy.

Plenty of advice and information is available locally, as well as help with home alterations and equipment, so you can maintain as much independence at home as possible, for as long as possible.

## Advice and information

You can ask for an assessment of your needs from Social Services at Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell RG12 1JD. Your first point of contact should be with the Access Team on 01344 351500. You will be assessed against guidelines called eligibility criteria, to see if we are able to help you. Details on the eligibility criteria can be found in the leaflet Your Guide to Social Services Eligibility Criteria, or on the Bracknell Forest internet site (<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk>).

The Housing Needs Team at the same address (contact 01344 351597, Minicom 01344 352045) may also be able to give information and advice about your housing options, and about any specialist housing that you may wish to consider.

For advice and information about Disabled Facilities Grants, affordable warmth and insulation, you should contact the Environment Team on 01344 351400, which is also at Time Square.

It is hoped to develop an independent Home Improvement Agency, during 2003/04, which will offer a wide range of advice and practical help - all in one place.

If you, or the person you care for, is a council or housing association tenant, your landlord may also be able to give useful advice and information.

Independent advice and information agencies are listed separately in this pack. For details of local voluntary agencies, please contact Bracknell Voluntary Action on 01344 304404

## Equipment and 'lifeline' services

Forestcare (contact 01344 786500 Minicom 01344 786514 ) provides a range of 'life-line' services, which means help can be summoned using a pendant or other alarm system. There is a charge for these services.

A wide range of equipment can be bought to help with daily living – from scooters and stairlifts, to pan-lifters and tap-turners. This in itself can be bewildering, but you can often get impartial information and advice from your occupational therapist (OT) or your district nurse.

Depending on the needs of the person you care for, Social Services may be able to assist with providing and installing equipment. You can contact Social Services to ask for a needs assessment on 01344 351500.

Equipment such as wheelchairs and commodes can be borrowed - contact the Access Team on 01344 351500.

## **Keeping warm at home**

Advice, information and assistance about keeping warm at home are available from Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell RG12 1JD. The Energy Conservation and Promotions Officer (01344 352536) would be pleased to advise you at home. Grants up to £2,500 are available from EAGA, which can provide insulation measures and heating, depending on circumstances and benefits. The home visit will establish what is both best for the individual and the best solution in the home. Two low-energy light bulbs are also available free for anyone who is visited at home.

## **Home alterations and adaptations**

If you feel that your home, or that of the person you care for, needs altering to make it more suitable, then you should discuss this with your OT. Under some circumstances, you may be entitled to a Disabled Facilities Grant, or other assistance from the council with the costs and organisation of such works.

## **Moving home**

Any decision to move home is very difficult. It is usually best to seek independent advice and to consider all options for home alteration and equipment as a first step.

Moving home can take a long time, whether you are applying for council or housing association housing, or buying your own home. Forward planning for any changing health needs is essential.

‘Sheltered housing’ means housing designed for older people, where usually a lifeline and other support is available. There are many different types of sheltered housing, offering different levels of service, so it is important to be clear what services are provided and how much they cost for any particular housing scheme.

Sheltered housing is available locally, either to buy (from some housing associations or private companies), or to rent (both from the council and housing associations). Often,

you can obtain similar services in your own home through Forestcare or other lifeline providers, so you may wish to explore this before thinking of moving.

## **Residential and nursing homes**

Residential homes provide 24-hour care, meals, and activities. Nursing homes also provide qualified nursing care. Information about local homes is available from Social Services at Time Square (01344 351500), and from the National Care Standards Commission, which is responsible for registering and inspecting homes. The local office is on 0118 903 3230.

The types and costs of these services vary enormously. Under some circumstances, according to your assessed needs, Social Services may be able to assist with the costs of care. Your income and savings will be taken into account. For more information, contact Social Services on 01344 351500.

# Taking a break

---

Short breaks are available to carers through Bracknell Forest Borough Council across all client groups, subject to assessment. To arrange a break see Social Services' *Who to Contact* information sheet.

**For those looking after elderly people who are frail, have a physical disability or a dementia**, respite care can come in the form of a week away in a residential or nursing home. There is a charge for this support, which is available up to four times a year.

Very short breaks of two to three hours are also available. A care assistant from Home Care or an agency can come and sit with your 'cared for', allowing you to go out to do the shopping, have your hair done, play a game of golf or do anything that is important to you. For more details contact 01344 351500.

There are many day centres in the Bracknell Forest area in which an older, frail person can enjoy the company of others, activities and a good lunch. This can be another means for the carer of having a break from the caring role. For more details contact 01344 351500.

**For carers looking after an adult with a learning disability**, respite care is available at Waymead. This can be anything from two nights a month to one week in two, depending on assessment of need. This assessment would be undertaken by a care manager.

Using direct payments it is sometimes possible to have respite at home, allowing carers to go away.

Again there are day opportunities and a day centre for those adults with a learning disability, thus giving the carer a break. For more details contact 01344 823310.

**For carers looking after children with learning disabilities**, respite is available. Overnight, day or weekend care can be offered, depending on need and availability. There is a small charge to cover the cost of meals.

A weekend club offers activities once a month to a limited number of children with physical and learning disabilities. There are holiday and play schemes as well as after-school clubs that will take children with special needs. For more details contact 01344 351582 or 01344 351584.

**For carers looking after adults with mental health problems,** it is possible to have respite care. This is usually one week at a time up to a maximum of 10 weeks in the year. There is no charge and this is accessed through a care manager, a member of the community mental health team. For more details contact 01344 351630.

## **Carers' Grant**

Carers in Bracknell Forest can directly access some money for a break from caring. The money is from the Department of Health and is called the Carers' Grant.

This is to be used for carers providing more than 20 hours' care in a week and is not to be used in an emergency situation, such as when the carer has to go into hospital. In other words, it is for breaks from caring that are planned in advance. Carers have used the grant to pay for stays in residential and nursing homes for their loved one, so carers can have a break; for breaks away with schemes such as Winged Fellowship, where some support is on hand; or to pay for someone to come and sit in the home while the carer goes out.

Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action (BFVA), an independent voluntary organisation, convenes a Carers' Grant Panel made up of representatives from carers' support groups. The panel makes decisions on applications from carers for a break. There is no financial assessment and the panel aims to be as flexible as possible in the type of break it approves, as long as it is clearly shown how the carer will get a break from the normal caring role. The Carers' Grant is available both for carers of adults and for parent carers. For more information or to request an application form, ring BFVA on 01344 411878.

## **Private options**

A range of services is available from private organisations, including help in the home, live-in care, or residential or nursing home accommodation. Look in Yellow Pages under Care/Nursing Agencies.

# Legal matters

---

In order to safeguard the future for you and the person you care for, it may be necessary to make some legal provision. This is particularly important if the person you care for is unable to make his or her own decisions, or will be unable to do so in the future. This section covers some of the main areas to consider. Do seek more advice or information.

## Looking after someone else's financial affairs

You could become the cared-for person's Agent (which is a temporary arrangement) or Appointee (which is longer-term) and collect their benefit payments. Contact the Benefits Agency for more information.

### Power of Attorney

This is the provision of a document proving authority to undertake most financial actions (but not signing a will) on someone else's behalf. The person who gives over the authority is called the donor and the person receiving the authority is the attorney.

#### Types of Power of Attorney

*General Power of Attorney* gives unlimited scope to run someone else's affairs. *Limited Power of Attorney* is for stated specific purposes (you will require assistance from a solicitor to define these). These types of power of attorney must be created by a donor with mental capacity and will become invalid if the donor becomes mentally incapacitated. *Enduring Power of Attorney* is authority to act for another person (the Donor) which will continue or commence after the donor becomes mentally incapacitated. To be valid it:

- Must be drawn up with specific wording (contact Oyez Publications 08707 377370)
- Must be made while the Donor is mentally capacitated
- Must be registered with the Court of Protection when the Donor becomes mentally incapacitated. The Donor's three nearest relatives must be notified.

#### Creating a Power of Attorney

The following are key points in creating a power of attorney:

- The document must be witnessed but not by the Attorney or his/her spouse
- The Donor must be mentally capable
- Anyone who is mentally capable can be appointed an Attorney
- The Donor can create 1 or more Attorneys to act together (as joint attorneys) or to act either together or separately (joint and several attorneys)
- The Donor can continue to act for him/herself

The Power of Attorney ends when:

- The specified limits are reached
- It is revoked by the Donor, attorney or the court
- The Donor dies
- A single or joint attorney dies
- The Donor or attorney is bankrupt
- The Donor becomes mentally incapable (except for Enduring Power of Attorney).

## **Detention and treatment under the Mental Health Act 1983**

Where possible, medical treatment and care for people with mental health problems is provided with the consent and full involvement of the individual who needs that help. However, sometimes those who have a serious mental illness – such as schizophrenia or dementia – do not recognise that they are ill or that they need help. Where this is the case it may be necessary for the person to be taken into hospital and given medical treatment against their wishes under the Mental Health Act.

A person will only be detained under the Mental Health Act where this is necessary for their own health or safety or for the protection of other people, and where there are no alternative ways of achieving this which are less restrictive. A decision to detain a person is usually made jointly by their GP, a consultant psychiatrist and a specially-trained social worker (known as an Approved Social Worker). Close relatives, including those caring for the person, will be consulted and involved in the decision. One relative, known as the **nearest relative**, has particular rights under the Mental Health Act. The **nearest relative** will often be the person's main carer, but this is not always the case.

Both Mind and Rethink have published useful booklets giving further information about detention and treatment under the Mental Health Act and the rights of the nearest relative. See **Useful Contacts** section for their details.

## **Arrangements when the cared-for person is not mentally capable**

The Court of Protection (in England and Wales) appoints Receivers to carry out the day-to-day management of the affairs of people who are mentally incapable of doing this for themselves, and for whom an Enduring Power of Attorney does not exist. The Public Guardian Office supervises the Receivers appointed by the Court of Protection.

It is usually the nearest relative of the person whose affairs need managing who applies to become a Receiver. If the nearest relative is not available then other relatives, friends, a solicitor or bank manager may apply. If no-one is available, the Court of Protection will appoint a Receiver. This may not be necessary if the person's assets are less than £16,000.

In order to become a Receiver, applications should be sent in writing to the Public Guardianship Office. You will be required to complete some paperwork, including a medical certificate and checks will be made for the Court of Protection. The receivership can be challenged in a court hearing.

The duties of the Receiver are to:

- Act for the incapacitated person under the supervision of the Public Guardianship Office
- Gain Court of Protection permission on any decision concerning the incapacitated person's capital
- Present yearly accounts

■ Note that certain fees are payable in respect of applications to the Court of Protection and for administration by the Public Guardianship Office. There is discretion to waive all or part of the fees in exceptional circumstances or where hardship would be caused.

Witnesses must not be beneficiaries or spouses of beneficiaries under the will.

The Public Guardianship Office  
Stewart House  
24 Kingsway  
London  
WC2b 6JX  
Tel: 020 7664 7000  
Website: [www.guardianship.gov.uk](http://www.guardianship.gov.uk)

## Wills

If there is no valid will then a deceased person's estate is distributed according to the laws of intestacy. The outcome may not reflect the person's wishes. It is particularly important to leave a will if specific provision for a vulnerable dependent is planned.

To be valid the testator (the person making the will) must be:

- Over 18
- Acting voluntarily and without pressure from another person
- Of sound mind

...and the will must be

- In writing
- Signed by the testator in the presence of two witnesses
- Signed by those witnesses in the presence of the testator

In certain circumstances, a person whose affairs are being dealt with by a Receiver through the Court of Protection may be able to make a will. The Receiver must inform the court so that investigation of the person's capacity to make a will can take place. If the court decides that the person is not capable then the court may make a statutory will on the person's behalf.

It is necessary to appoint an executor of the will to take on responsibility for administering it after the testator's death. Up to four executors can be appointed although two is the usual number. If nobody is available to take on the task, the Public Trustee may be appointed. The Public Trustee's fees are based on the value of the estate.

It is always advisable to have a will checked by a solicitor to avoid mistakes which could render the will invalid. Help with the legal costs of making a will may be available where the person making the will is:

- Aged over 70
- Disabled

- The parent of a disabled person for whom provision will be made in the will
- A single parent wishing to appoint a guardian for a minor child.

## **Security of Tenure (Housing)**

Problems can arise for the carer if the person cared for is the owner or tenant of the property in which they both live.

If the cared-for person is a tenant of rented property and dies, it may be possible for the carer to succeed to the tenancy, or to have the tenancy assigned to him/her should the cared for person go into residential care. Rights to succession or assignment depend on the type of tenancy and should be checked. It may be possible to avoid problems by asking the landlord to grant a joint tenancy.

If the cared-for person is an owner-occupier who goes into residential care, it may be the case that the value of the home is treated as capital. This could mean that when the charges for the residential care are calculated and part or all of the proceeds of the sale of the property may have to be used to pay the charges. This will not be the case if the cared for person's spouse or close relative continues to live in the property.

# Carers' self-assessment checklist

Before you ask for a Carer's Assessment you may wish to complete this self-assessment checklist. It has been designed with the support of carers to help you draw up a picture of your caring role. This can then be easily shared when necessary.

## Care-giving tasks

The activity or support you offer	How often? 1 = never 2 = sometimes 3 = often 4 = all the time				How do you cope? Any difficulties experienced, help or equipment needed? Also think about which parts of caring you find rewarding
<b>Practical tasks:</b>					
■ Shopping	1	2	3	4	
■ Cleaning/housework	1	2	3	4	
■ Cooking	1	2	3	4	
■ Laundry	1	2	3	4	
■ Form filling	1	2	3	4	
■ Telephone calls	1	2	3	4	
<b>Personal tasks:</b>					
■ Using the toilet	1	2	3	4	
■ Incontinence	1	2	3	4	
■ Bathing	1	2	3	4	
■ Meals	1	2	3	4	
■ Dressing	1	2	3	4	
■ Night-time support	1	2	3	4	
<b>Mobility support:</b>					
■ Getting in/out of bed	1	2	3	4	
■ In/out of wheelchair	1	2	3	4	
■ Supporting exercise	1	2	3	4	
■ Moving around	1	2	3	4	
<b>Finances:</b>					
■ Organising finances	1	2	3	4	
■ Collecting benefits	1	2	3	4	
<b>Transport:</b>					
■ Providing	1	2	3	4	
■ Arranging	1	2	3	4	
<i>Totals to carry overleaf:</i>					

**Health support:**

■ Medication – giving/ monitoring etc	1	2	3	4
■ Other health needs	1	2	3	4
■ Visits to GP/hospital	1	2	3	4
■ Crises	1	2	3	4

**Communications:**

■ Support with socialising	1	2	3	4
----------------------------	---	---	---	---

**Relationship with person you care for:**

■ Enjoy their company	1	2	3	4
-----------------------	---	---	---	---

**General supervision:**

■ Checking on safety	1	2	3	4
■ Avoiding getting lost	1	2	3	4

**Totals:***This page**Carry forward from p1***Grand total**

=

# Useful contacts

---

## Local statutory organisations

Bracknell Forest Borough Council (inc. Social Services)	01344 424642	<a href="http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk">www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk</a>
Social Services (evenings & weekend)	01344 786543	
Housing Services	01344 351420	
Bracknell Forest Primary Care Trust	01344 823250	<a href="http://www.berkshire.nhs.uk/bracknell">www.berkshire.nhs.uk/bracknell</a>
NHS Patient Advice & Liaison Service	01344 823262	
Sensory Needs Service	0118 927 2200	
Heatherwood Hospital Minor Injuries Unit	01344 620246	<a href="http://www.hwph-tr.org.uk">www.hwph-tr.org.uk</a>
Dental Access Centre, Slough	01753 635505	
Benefits Agency (Bracknell)	01344 744800	

## Local voluntary organisations

Age Concern (Bracknell)	01344 428074	
Ascot Area Alzheimer's (Triple A)	01344 886887	
Berkshire County Blind Society	0118 987 2803	
Berkshire Disability Information Network	01344 301572	
Bracknell Alzheimer's	01344 454230	
Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action	01344 304404	<a href="http://www.bfva.org">www.bfva.org</a>
Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action (Carers' Grant)	01344 411878	
Carers UK (Bracknell)	01344 451656	
Citizen's Advice Bureau (Bracknell)	0845 1202969	
East Berkshire Mind	01344 861195	<a href="http://www.eastberksmind.org">www.eastberksmind.org</a>
Mencap (Bracknell)	01344 867555	
Parents Together	01344 441199	

## National helplines

Age Concern	0800 009966	<a href="http://www.ageconcern.org.uk">www.ageconcern.org.uk</a>
Alzheimer's Disease Society	0845 300 0336	<a href="http://www.alzheimers.org.uk">www.alzheimers.org.uk</a>
Benefits Agency	0800 882200	<a href="http://www.dwp.gov.uk">www.dwp.gov.uk</a>
Carers UK Help Line	0808 808 7777	<a href="http://www.carersonline.org.uk">www.carersonline.org.uk</a>
Counsel & Care for the Elderly	0207 4851566	<a href="http://www.counselandcare.org.uk">www.counselandcare.org.uk</a>
Deafblind UK	0800 132320	<a href="http://www.deafblind.org.uk">www.deafblind.org.uk</a>
Disabled Living Foundation	0845 1309177	<a href="http://www.dlf.org.uk">www.dlf.org.uk</a>
NHS Direct	0845 464748	<a href="http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk">www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk</a>
Parkinson's Disease Society	0808 800 0303	<a href="http://www.parkinsons.org.uk">www.parkinsons.org.uk</a>
Rethink (Nat'l Schizophrenia Fellowship)	0845 4560455	<a href="http://www.rethink.org">www.rethink.org</a>
Samaritans	0345 909090	<a href="http://www.samaritans.org.uk">www.samaritans.org.uk</a>
SaneLine	0845 767 8000	<a href="http://www.sane.org">www.sane.org</a>
Shelter	0808 800 4444	<a href="http://www.shelter.org.uk">www.shelter.org.uk</a>
Stroke Association	0845 3033100	<a href="http://www.stroke.org">www.stroke.org</a>

**Health support:**

■ Medication – giving/ monitoring etc	1	2	3	4
■ Other health needs	1	2	3	4
■ Visits to GP/hospital	1	2	3	4
■ Crises	1	2	3	4

**Communications:**

■ Support with socialising	1	2	3	4
----------------------------	---	---	---	---

**Relationship with person you care for:**

■ Enjoy their company	1	2	3	4
-----------------------	---	---	---	---

**General supervision:**

■ Checking on safety	1	2	3	4
■ Avoiding getting lost	1	2	3	4

**Totals:**

*This page*

*Carry forward from p1*

**Grand total**

=

## **Bracknell Forest Carers Information Pack**

**Dear Carer**

**We hope you find this pack useful and informative. In order that we can send you revised information from time to time would you please fill in your details below.**

**We will keep this information on a database only for this purpose.**

Name .....

Address .....

.....

.....

Tel. No. ....

e-mail .....

Carer for .....

I agree to my details being held on a database

Signed .....

Please return to: Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action, Coopers Hill Centre, Bagshot Road, BRACKNELL RG12 7QS