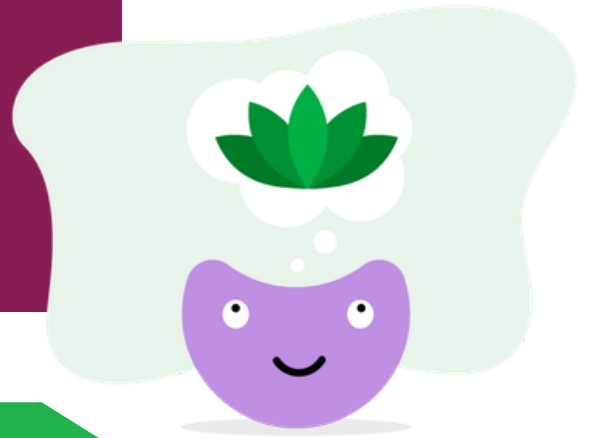


# RESPITE GUIDE

# Respite

Taking breaks from your caring role is vital to maintaining your own health and sense of wellbeing. It can be difficult to arrange, but it is important that you persist in finding the necessary support you need.



## What is Respite?

Respite can give you a break from caring, while the person you care for is cared for by someone else be that a family member, a volunteer or a paid carer.

It lets you take time out to look after yourself and helps stop you becoming exhausted and run down. Many carers tell us that taking regular breaks from caring is vital to helping them stay well.

## Different types of respite

Respite can take many different forms to suit different needs. These are the main types of respite care which you can read more detail about below:

- Day care centres and day opportunities
- A paid carer or volunteer coming into your home so that you can go out or taking the person you care for out of the home
- A short stay in a care home so that you can take a break in your own home or take a break away
- A friend or family member looking after the person you care for
- Respite holidays so that you can take a break with your loved one with someone else there to provide support to the person you care for.

# Daycare Centre

Daycare centres are designed for people who find it difficult to get out and about to socialise, make friends and take part in activities.

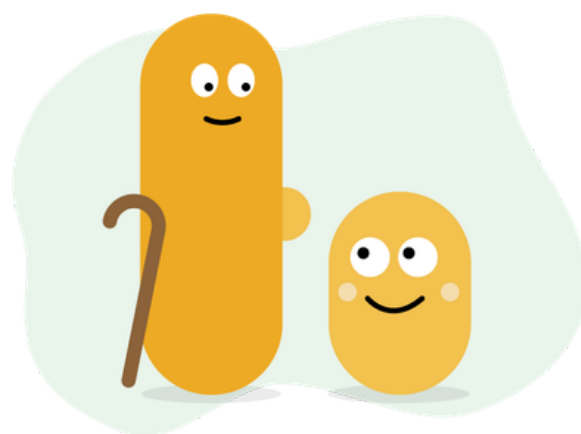
Daycare centres in Bedfordshire offer structured activities and are supported by paid members of staff.

Transport is often provided, but there is likely to be a charge.

## How do I access a daycare centre?

Your local authority will have a list of day centres, you can call their social care number and ask which is your nearest one.

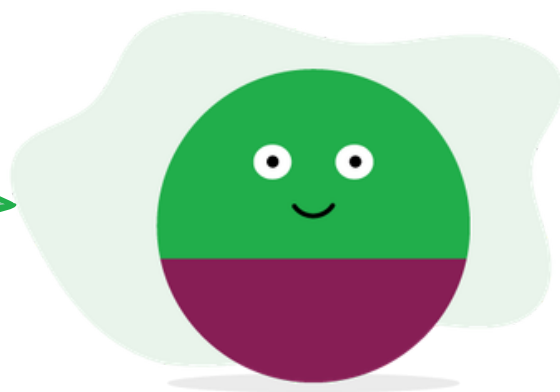
There is a charge, but if this is something you cannot afford then the person you care for will need to have a 'Needs Assessment' to see if they qualify for the place to be council funded.



# Help at home from a paid carer

Having a paid carer is a flexible arrangement that gives you the opportunity to take a break when you need it. A paid carer will come into your home and support the person you care for, for as long as you need them to. They can also take the person out if this would be more helpful. This might be for 30 minutes a day to get them up and dressed or for a couple of hours so that you can leave the house.

Some carers arrange regular care at home so that they know when they are having a break, other carers do this for a short period of time so they can take a holiday.



## How do I access a paid carer?

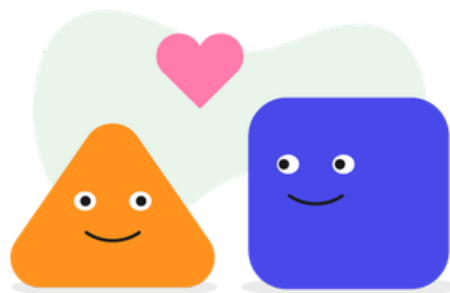
Your local authority will have a list of home care providers in your area which is in a handy online [Directory of Services](#).

There is a charge for this service and it can be quite costly. If this is something you cannot afford then the person you care for will need to have a 'Needs Assessment' to see if they qualify for the place to be council funded.

# Support from family and friends

This option can be both the simplest and sometimes most difficult solution.

“ Asking for help can be hard. But often people are surprised how willing others are to help, especially if they are struggling. ”



## How can I ask for help?

Here are some steps to take:

1. Make a list of all the things you do a day for the person you care for.
2. Categorise that list - personal care, chores, transportation etc
3. Make another list about things you worry about - your own health, financial issues etc.
4. Analyse your list - highlight the things you like doing and the things you hate!
5. Congratulate yourself! You do a lot.
6. Now you can clearly see all that you do and you can identify the tasks you could delegate.
7. Now choose who you will ask for help, show them your list and ask them if they could help with a specific task or a series of tasks so you can take some respite

**Asking for help with a list in hand is very different from complaining about your situation.**

# Sitting Service

A sitting service is where a trained volunteer or paid professional keeps the person you care for company for a short while. We are fortunate in Bedfordshire to have several sitting services available you can contact:

- Good Neighbour Scheme offer a sitting service by a volunteer:
- Age UK Bedfordshire offer a sitting service at a cost: Tel: 01234 360 510
- [Small Good Stuff](#) provide some information about providers in Central Bedfordshire

# A short stay in a care home

Sometimes Carers need the person they care for to go into a home for a short while. This can be because the carer needs to go into hospital, recover or take a break.

It can be difficult to find a respite space at short notice and choices become limited but some care homes do take advance bookings. Carers tell us that its a good idea to plan ahead where you can and know what your options are before you need it.

# How can I find a suitable care home?

Your local authority will have a list of home care providers in your area which is in a handy online Directory of Services. Or you can look on the Quality Care Commission website.

There is a charge for this service and can be quite costly. If this is something you cannot afford then the person you care for will need to have a 'Needs Assessment' to see if they qualify for the place to be council funded.

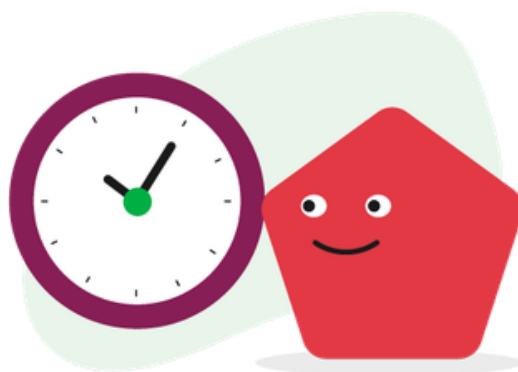


# Carers tips

Starting to think about organising some respite?

Follow these Carers tips about where to start:

- Plan ahead**
- Begin looking before you need to**
- It's natural to feel guilty**
- You need to look after yourself**
- Speak to other carers**



Do you feel guilty when you arrange some respite for yourself?



I used to, but now I realise how important it is for all of us.



# Paying for Respite

Respite care costs on average £700 to £800 per week and can be as much as £1,500 a week for emergency respite care, live-in care or staying in a care home.

You can pay for this yourself or seek support from your local authority.

The local authority will only pay for respite care for people who they have assessed as needing it following a 'Needs Assessment' and a 'Carer's Assessment'. You can find details of these on our website.

If you or the person you care for qualifies for respite care, the local authority will work out if it will pay towards respite through what's called a 'Financial Assessment'.

If you or the person you care for qualifies for council-funded respite care, you can ask the council to arrange it for you, or you can do it yourself through a personal budget or direct payment. A personal Budget or Direct Payment means that you have the money and pay the provider directly. The Social Work team will talk you through this when the time comes.



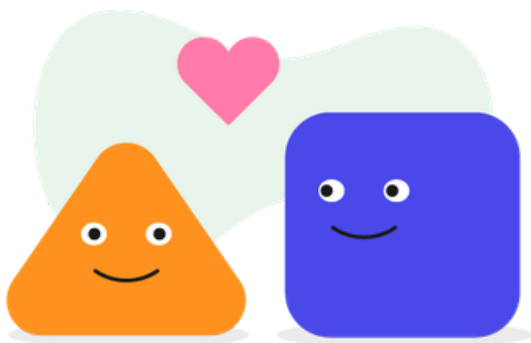
# Local Respite Options

You should now have a list of homes, services or providers that you can book an appointment with to visit. Care homes are very much used to this.

When looking around it's a good idea to make notes as you go so you can remember what you have seen. This is particularly useful if you are visiting several homes in one day. Below are our top tips on what to ask or look out for when looking around:

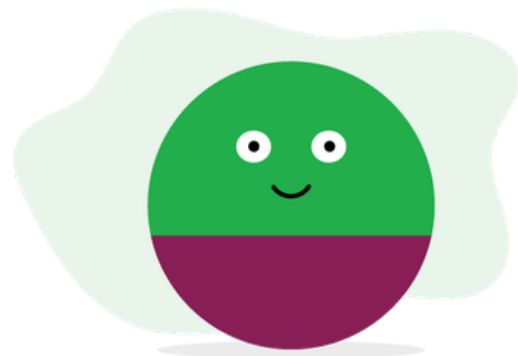
The local Council Website has a directory which gives information and contact numbers for support services and care homes:

<https://www.carechoices.co.uk/publication/bedfordshire-care-services-directory/>



**"Remember:  
respite means  
different things  
to different  
people."**

Be kind to yourself, this can be difficult to accept. We are always here for you if you need more support.





## What should I look out for when I visit a Care Home?

### What does it feel like when you arrive?

- Do the grounds seem well maintained
- Is there outside space that the residents are using?
- Would it be easy to park if you visited?
- Is it in a nice area with amenities that residents can access?
- Do you feel welcome?
- Does the house smell clean?
- Would you like to stay here?

### Staff

- Do the staff feel welcoming?
- Did you have an opportunity to meet the manager and what did you think?
- Is there a suitable ratio of staff to residents during the day, at night and at weekends?

# What should I look out for when I visit?

## Staff continued...

Do residents have choices in who they are supported by?

How are staff trained, do the staff have care qualifications?

Is there a high staff turnover? (If so, this could be a sign of low staff morale)

## Meeting needs

Does the home assess new resident's situations and needs before agreeing to accept them?

Do residents have a named member of staff who is particularly responsible for their care?

How are residents and their families involved in decisions about their care?

Do the other residents seem to have similar needs?

How does the home communicate with family and friends?

What is their protocol for emergency support?

# What should I look out for when I visit?

## Eating

How do residents usually eat? (all together, in their rooms)

Is there a choice of food and can you see sample menus?

Are snacks available during the day or at night?

Is food prepared on the premises?

Can residents and visitors make their own drinks?

Can residents store food in their room?

## Staying Active

How are residents encouraged to stay active and retain their independence?

Can you see an activity schedule?

Do residents seem happy and occupied?

Are there lounges or social areas with furniture arranged to allow small groups to socialise?

Would you feel comfortable socialising in the home's common areas when you visit?

Does the home have its own pets, or can residents bring their own pets?

What facilities are there to encourage residents to entertain themselves? (newspapers, TV, radio, computers etc.)

# What should I look out for when I visit?

## Visiting

- Are there any restrictions on visiting times or numbers of visitors?
- Are there facilities for visitors to stay overnight?
- Are young children welcome?
- Is there a space for residents to spend time with visitors?

## Fees

- What are the home's fees?
- Is a deposit or advance payment required?
- Are extra items or services not covered by the basic fees clearly identified and accounted for?

## Feedback

- Is it obvious how residents or family members can give feedback?
- Does the manager feel approachable?



**"Remember: we are  
only a phone call  
away."**