



Carer Support
Wiltshire



Carer Support
Dorset

2025

CARER SUPPORT WILTSHIRE STRATEGY

2025 AND BEYOND





➞ Anonymous - CSD

"A wonderful day out, as had never been to Brownsea before and felt 'balanced' afterwards." – *Carers Week Brownsea Island Trip*

➞ Anonymous - CSW

"We have had such a difficult time—this money will help us get the break we need. It really is a breath of fresh air." – *CMM Wiltshire Feedback*

➞ Anonymous - CSD

"This has lifted a weight off my shoulders." – *CMM Dorset Feedback*

➞ Anonymous - CSW

"I had had a truly difficult week and was just wondering how much longer I could cope when I received your phone call to say I had received the grant. It means so much to me—one less thing to worry about. I shall be eternally grateful to Carer Support Wiltshire." – *CMM Wiltshire Feedback*

SHARING IS CARING

POSITIVE FEEDBACK FROM OUR WONDERFUL CARERS

FEEDBACK FROM HIGHGROVE HOUSE 2025

"I have just returned from what can only be described as a 'heavenly trip' to Highgrove Gardens courtesy of Carer Support Wiltshire.

First of all, can I thank you for the opportunity. I rarely have time for 'just me' so to be lucky enough to be one of the few offered this experience I am truly appreciative...I actually felt quite reluctant to leave as the sense of calm brought about whilst touring was something I have not felt in a very long time...I should like to end by saying how well we were all treated and that nothing was too much trouble with everyone making us feel so welcoming.

So... Thank you CSW – I don't know if everyone else feels the way I do this afternoon but I for one am definitely lifted." – Anonymous – CSW Carers Week

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CONTEXT

- While at the start of this strategy period Carer Support Wiltshire (CSW) is smaller than in previous years, the ambitions we have to support unpaid carers and the beneficial impact we seek to achieve for unpaid carers remain mighty!
- It is no secret that the past 5 years or so have been very challenging for unpaid carers – COVID 19, the spike in the cost of living (which has not really returned to pre-COVID levels), the longer-living UK population with ever increasingly complex health and social care needs that this population has have all contributed to increased pressure for those who are unpaid carers. Yet the role of an unpaid carer is often undervalued or deprioritised by central government, local authorities and communities, despite research which shows that unpaid carers in England and Wales contribute a staggering £445 million to the economy in England and Wales every day – that's £162 billion per year.
- Public sector funding to meet the needs of unpaid carers has reduced consistently over the last five years in terms of what is available to meet ever increasing numbers and complexity of needs of unpaid carers and there is consequently growing pressure and competition on the sources of fundraising and income generation – for instance trusts and foundations, corporate partners, even community fundraising and individual giving – that all charities need to survive and thrive.
- While this is hardly an ideal context within which to be operating, CSW has nonetheless looked positively upon the opportunities inherent in this situation.
- In considering the future for CSW and how we might identify and realise our strategic ambitions and impact, we started at the very beginning: who are we, what are we here for and what do we want to achieve.

- We concluded that our very purpose, vision mission and values were all unchanged.

These are set out below:

Our Purpose

The objects of the charity are to promote any charitable purpose, for the benefit of the whole community (particularly, but not exclusively the community in and around Wiltshire), including the advancement of education, the promotion of health and the relief of poverty, sickness and distress in particular but without limitation by supporting carers.

Our Vision

Our long-term vision is for a society where no carer is left unseen, unsupported, or without opportunity.

Our Mission

To provide trusted advice, support and information to those who care for others, thereby enabling them to combine their caring role with their own health and wellbeing.

Our Values

Carer-focused, creative, integrity, collaboration, and empowerment.



Vision



Mission



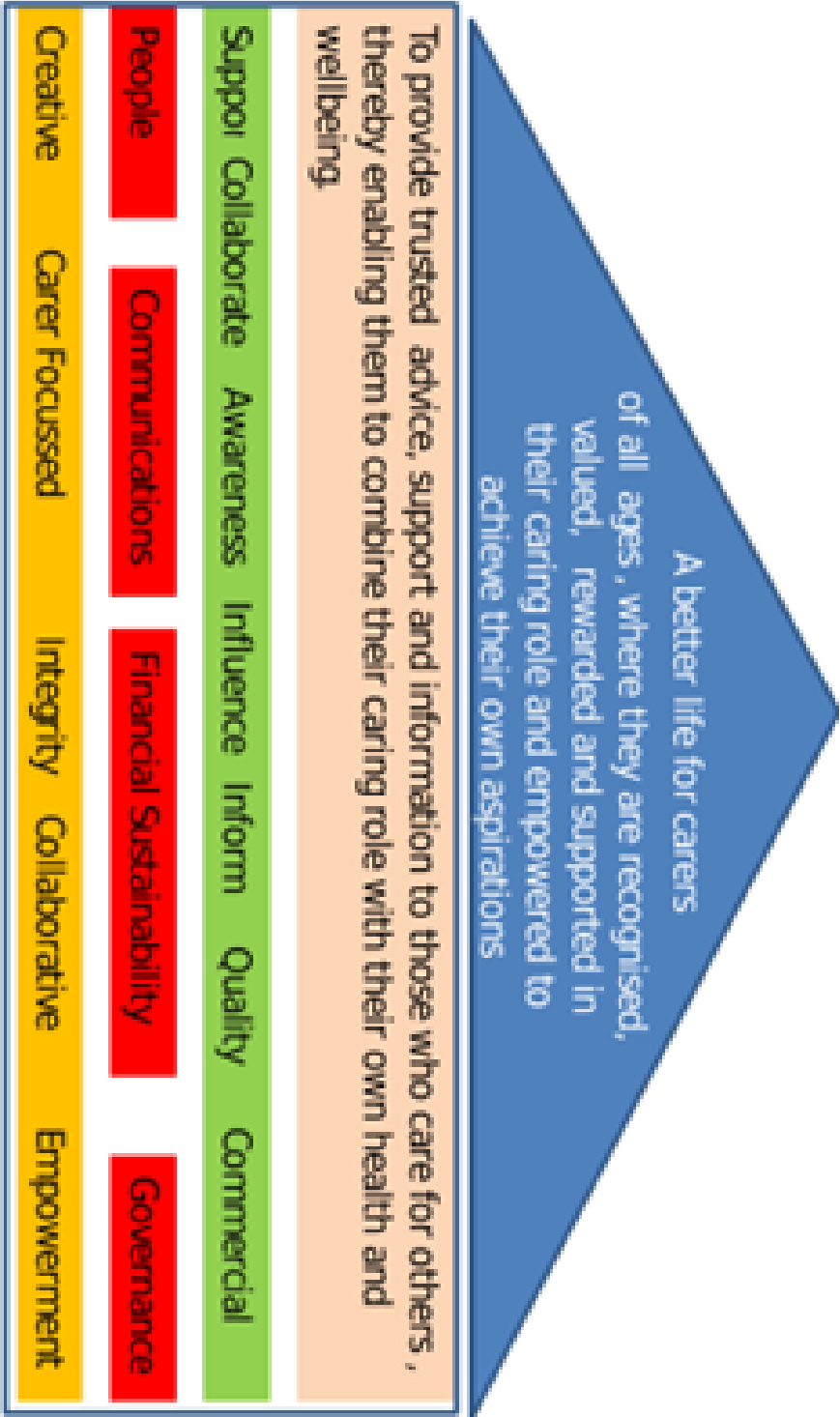
Goals



Enablers



Values





STRATEGIC AMBITIONS

Having concluded the above fundamentals, with our strategic aims being primarily determined by our vision and mission but also by our statutory duties to ensure financial sustainability for the charity, we asked ourselves what we wanted to achieve for the unpaid carers we support and how best we could achieve it. This led us to our three strategic ambitions for this strategy period:

Strategic ambition 1 - Reach

- We do not need to limit ourselves to providing support and advice for unpaid carers solely in Wiltshire. We have a track record of working successfully with Dorset Council over the past 6 years, since November 2019. We have built upon this in Dorset in establishing strong partnerships with the Carers Trust, working collaboratively with the Gas Distribution Networks to deliver the Carer Money Matters Programme, the aim of which is to reach unpaid carers in Dorset in order to create greater awareness and knowledge about money, for carers and the people they are caring for.
- This has shown that we have a strong track record in being able to both build relations with unpaid carer communities and stakeholders and also to quickly spin up capacity to provide resources on the ground to provide unpaid carers with the advice and support that they need.
- It is our ambition to spread our reach beyond the geographical boundaries of Wiltshire and seek to work with other organisations/partners elsewhere to the benefit of unpaid carers wherever they live as and when the opportunity arises, subject of course to the necessary due diligence.

Strategic ambition 2 – Brand

- Given our first strategic ambition to seek to support unpaid carers outside Wiltshire as well as inside, our second strategic ambition is to consider changing the name of our organisation as it may be somewhat limiting. We will therefore be taking the necessary steps to review whether our name is a barrier to our first strategic ambition at some point within the first 12 months of this strategy period in order better to reflect our new future.

Strategic ambition 3 - Partnerships

- Our final strategic ambition is that we open ourselves to the reality that we are not the only charity/organisation providing support and advice for unpaid carers in Wiltshire/Dorset/England more widely and that it may be in the best interests of the unpaid carers that we support if we were to work together with these other organisations. This joint working may take any form, from working under contract as part of a consortium, to a pooling or sharing of resource and expertise. We will seek to reach out to relevant organisations accordingly.

‘I had a phone call from Leigh from Carer Money Matters this morning. She was so professional, easy to talk to, and made me smile at the end of the call. She made me feel at ease.’

Feedback from a carer who used our Carer Money Matters Service.



PRIORITIES

With both our fundamental purpose re-established and our strategic ambitions identified, our attention then turns to the priority areas where we shall focus our resources and expertise during this strategy period in order to secure best impact for the unpaid carers who we support.

As mentioned in the context section, while the number of unpaid carers and the complexity of their individual caring situations continues to increase, the squeeze on availability of resources, particularly financial resources, continues to become tighter. There is more competition for funding, whether from public sector contract sources, grants and private trusts and foundations or from the fundraising undertaken by and in our communities and with our corporate partners, all of which means that CSW will need to have a very clear and sharp focus on both the cost, as well as the value and impact, of activities and support that we can provide to unpaid carers. We cannot do everything that we have done in the past nor everything that we would like to do in the future.

To enable us to concentrate on our strengths and provide what we feel is the best impact for unpaid carers, we are targeting our efforts into **three priority areas**:

Work Under Contract:

- With a keen eye on our fundamental purpose, seeking to work under contract, as primary or sub-contracted parties or in consortia, with a range of organisations such as local authorities, Integrated Care Boards, energy companies, Carers Trust, other charitable organisations working in the same space etc. to provide unpaid carers with support and advice and any other relevant services stipulated in the contract. In order to provide best value and impact for the unpaid carers to be supported under any contract, the value of the contract and its deliverables must be realistic.



Peer Support:

- A range of services to support unpaid carers in a range of settings, for instance 1-2-1 or group sessions, focused conversations and signposting about particular carers' needs for instance around physical and mental health and wellbeing or opportunities to take a break. The demand for these services may come from employers, from parish or district councils, local community groups or individual carers themselves.

Military Unpaid Carer Support:

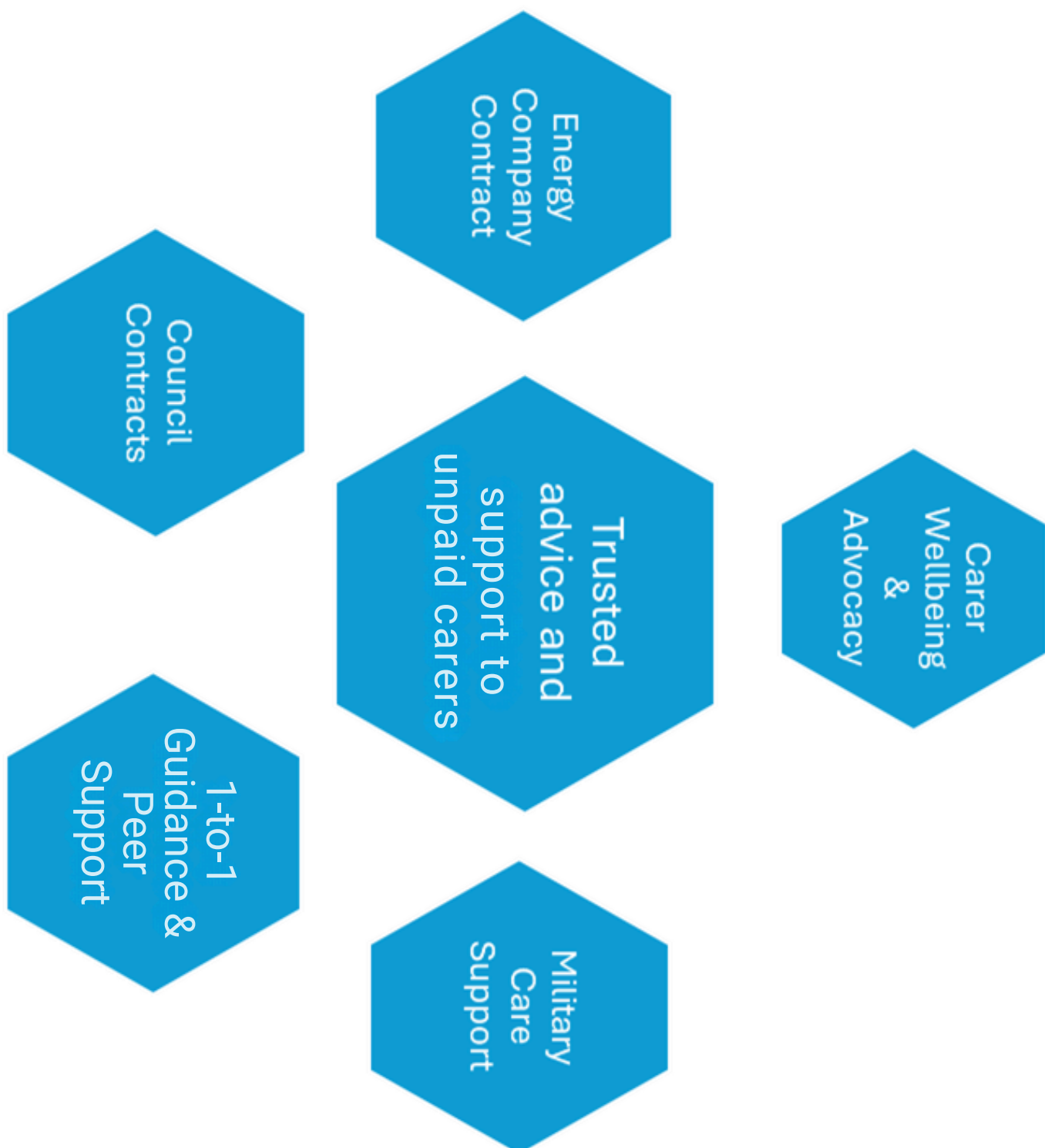
- Military unpaid carers represent a group that is often underrepresented within both the wider community and the military environment in which they live and work. Our successful Courage to Care Programme has demonstrated the significant benefits of tailored support and advice for these individuals, highlighting the need for dedicated, strategic focus.

To build on this success, we propose a two-pronged approach:

- **Strengthen Collaboration with Military Organisations and Charities:** We will continue to develop partnerships with military organisations and charities, focusing on embedding carer awareness training and ongoing education within welfare and medical centres. This will ensure that those who provide frontline support to service personnel and their families are equipped to recognise and respond to the needs of unpaid carers.
- **Address Internal Cultural and Structural Barriers:** We will explore and address the specific barriers faced by unpaid carers within the military community. This includes working to overcome potential misunderstanding or resentment and advocating for the implementation of services that are responsive, inclusive, and informed by the lived experiences of military carers.

Through these efforts, we aim to ensure that military unpaid carers are recognised, valued, and supported within the systems they rely on.

Below is a visual representation of what we aim to do under this strategy.





Impact (Our Overall Goal)

We aim to provide a better quality of life for carers of all ages, ensuring they are recognised, valued, and supported in their caring roles, and empowered to pursue their own aspirations. Our long-term vision is for a society where no carer is left unseen, unsupported, or without opportunity.

Outcomes

To achieve this, we are committed to delivering outcomes across three levels:

- **Short-term Outcomes**

- Carers feel heard, connected, and emotionally supported through peer and wellbeing initiatives
- Carers gain access to relevant and timely advice tailored to their individual needs

- **Medium-term Outcomes**

- Carers develop increased confidence and resilience in their roles
- Carers engage more consistently with support services and prioritise their own wellbeing

- **Long-term Outcomes**

- Carers experience improved mental and emotional wellbeing
 - Carers are empowered to pursue their own goals alongside their caring responsibilities
 - Reduced isolation and increased inclusion for underrepresented groups (e.g., military carers)
-



Activities

We will deliver the following core activities:

- Expansion of peer support services, including both informal groups and structured wellbeing sessions
- Provision of 1-2-1 advice and guidance, tailored to the specific needs of carers
- Targeted outreach and engagement with hidden carers or marginalised carer groups, including military carers, to ensure inclusivity and equity of access

Inputs

The successful delivery of our outcomes is supported by:

- Experienced staff and trained peer facilitators
- Strategic partnerships with local health, military, and community organisations
- Secure and sustainable funding
- A strong digital and physical outreach presence
- Feedback mechanisms to inform responsive service design

Assumptions

Our approach is underpinned by the following assumptions:

- Carers are willing to engage when services are relevant, respectful, and accessible
- Peer and 1-2-1 support contributes meaningfully to wellbeing and empowerment
- Stigma and barriers for underrepresented groups (e.g., military carers) can be overcome with the right approach
- External conditions, including funding and partner support, remain stable enough to allow service continuity



SUMMARY

Carer Support Wiltshire remains proud to support and advise unpaid carers and we look forward to working more closely with a wider range of partners to be able to continue to achieve the beneficial impact for unpaid carers that we have established over the last 15 years. Please read on for some insights into the stories of carers who we have helped over the years.

CARER SUPPORT WILTSHIRE and CARER SUPPORT DORSET

March 2025



‘Thank you so much for calling me. It’s been so helpful and really validated what I’ve been going through. I feel reassured there is support for me now.’

Feedback from a carer who used our Carer Money Matters Service.



‘Thank you for calling me back so quickly. It’s so refreshing to have a service that you feel actually wants to support you.’

Feedback from a carer who used our Carer Money Matters Service.





CARER STORIES

Annie (pseudonym)

Annie contacted our Dorset services, explaining that she currently works full-time and when she is not working, **"I spend a lot of my leisure time supporting my elderly mum who has existing medical conditions and of late has been of more ill health. I am trying to maintain my own home, work, and then care of evenings during the week at my mums whilst also I haven't been of the best of health mentally and physically the last couple of months has made me think I may need to start seeking extra support, whatever that might be. If there is anything you can suggest that would be lovely."**

Our advisers responded to Annie by providing information on local talking support, upcoming opportunities to attend a 'Parkinson's Explained' training workshop, and details about our local community drop-in where she could meet face-to-face with an adviser for further information. We also gave her information about how to refer to various services and local authority support. Annie replied, stating she was **"very grateful"** for the information she received.

The following week, Annie attended her local community drop-in session. Annie advised she felt very **"lonely"** and **"exhausted"** due to caring for her mum. Whilst providing face to face support, our Adviser was able to guide Annie through the information previously shared and made a referral to a local provider to access counselling services on her behalf, and book onto the upcoming Parkinson's Explained workshop. In response, Annie stated, **"thank you so much for helping me, you've made me feel so much happier"**.

Our shared team ethos of providing carers with a 'hand-held approach', directly referring them to services so they do not have to jump through more 'hoops' to access relevant support, remains a priority.



CARER STORIES

Mary (pseudonym)

Mary attended a Carers Clinic delivered by Three Chequers Medical practice in Salisbury in July 2024. Prior to coming in to see our Carer Project Worker, Mary had a health check with a Health Care Assistant at the Surgery, this format is designed to identify any health issues amongst carers; a valuable preventative measure.

Mary was caring for her partner who has several health issues, and she was finding accessing appropriate NHS medical care challenging. As part of the guided conversation the Carer Project Worker asked Mary how her caring role was affecting her own health and wellbeing. Mary said she was well supported by her family and friends and felt that she was managing.

However, after further gentle questioning, Mary confided **“I didn't know I was a carer until recently, the nurse suggested to me that I was caring for my husband...I feel so much better knowing there is help out there, I have just been getting on with it till now...Thank you for all your help and listening to me, I haven't spoken about how hard it is until now”**.

In order to ensure Mary was supported going forward, the Carer Project Worker encouraged Mary to reach out the Care Coordinator at the Surgery who would guide her in relation to private healthcare services and encourage her to look after her own health needs. Mary was not aware that as a carer she could get access to flexible appointments at the Surgery and also request home appointments for her husband, which would make things easier. The Carer Project Worker described all the services CSW offer including Carer Café's and training events, Mary welcomed the level of support available to unpaid carers. After encouraging Mary to reach out to CSW if her support needs change, the session came to a successful conclusion with Mary appearing more upbeat than when she first entered the room.



CARER STORIES

Pat (pseudonym)

The Carer Project Worker met Pat at a carers coffee morning in March 2025 and they sat together chatting for some time. Pat explained that her partner was ex-military, and she wondered whether there was any support available for him now he faced health difficulties.

The Carer Project Worker encouraged Pat to describe the challenges the couple were facing and this included necessary alterations to the house and garden, accessing the Mobility car scheme and paying for a gardener and cleaner. Pat said that she found there was so many **“hoops to jump through”** when accessing support services and **“lots of paperwork and barriers”**.

The Carer Project Worker reassured Pat that as a first-class signposting service, CSW works hard to be inclusive and does not insist on carers being registered before support is given.

Together, Pat and the Carer Project Worker looked at several military support services on the internet and discussed the suitability of each one. Pat asked for contact details of the chosen services to be written down for her, which the Carer Project Worker was happy to facilitate, recording both telephone numbers and website details under clear subheadings.

Pat was grateful for the information and asked for a CSW registration form to take away with her, with a view to becoming part of the CSW family.



CARER STORIES

Sally (pseudonym)

Sally is a Parent Carer who attended the Transition to Adulthood webinar in May 2025. The presenter delivered the session and invited questions throughout, Sally was a responsive participant and asked several questions which were welcomed by the trainer.

Before the other participants logged on, Sally and the trainer had a chance to chat and Sally said that she was supporting her child into adulthood and felt there was so many things to think about, she didn't know where to start.

The trainer reassured Sally that transition to adulthood is a fluid process and there is no correct start and end date, going on to explain that at times of overwhelm for both Sally and her child, it is important to step back and take time for self-care.

Sally gave positive feedback at the end of the webinar saying:

"That was brilliant, I have learnt so much and have made pages of notes...I knew I should be finding out about this stuff but just haven't got round to it yet, I now have loads to look at and feel I know where to look...It was really good, thanks."

The trainer encouraged all participants to reach out to CSW if they had any questions going forward or wanted some more information about a particular topic. Sally asked for details of carer assessments and carers ID card, and these were sent to her shortly after the session.



CARER STORIES

James (pseudonym)

James self-referred himself to be registered with our Dorset services and shared, **"I am looking after my wife who is recovering from a stroke."**

In a compassionate support conversation, our Adviser acknowledged the changes in James's life as he navigates new caring responsibilities. James responded, **"While life won't be the same, there's no reason why it can't still be good."** To enhance James's support network, the adviser suggested he go along to our Bridport Carer Café, offering him the chance to connect with others facing similar challenges. James showed interest, stating, "That would be helpful" and requested to receive the details via email.

The adviser enquired about additional ways to support James, who indicated that he had no further needs at the moment. The adviser assured ongoing support and encouraged him to reach out with any queries.

Post-conversation, James responded to the adviser via email, expressing gratitude, **"Thank you for the information, and I will be joining you for coffee next Thursday."** He acknowledged the call's timing, stating, **"It was probably just at the right time"** and conveyed, **"I look forward to learning more about the role of a carer."**

CARER SUPPORT WILTSHIRE STRATEGY

**THANK YOU FOR
READING**



**Carer Support
Wiltshire**



**Carer Support
Dorset**

CSW & CSD STRATEGY

0800 181 4118

www.carersupportwiltshire.co.uk