

**Mid  
Bedfordshire  
Advice  
Directory  
For Older  
People**

**A - Z**

## **Introduction**

We live in a country which will have more older people who will live for longer. This is evidenced by the fact that the UK population is set to increase gradually from 59.2 million in 2002 to 64.8 million by 2031. The number of people over retirement age is projected to rise by 11.9 per cent, from 10.9 million in 2002 to 12.2 million in 2011.

Against this backdrop a so-called 'Pensions Crisis' has arisen, caused by a combination of longer life expectancy and falling stock market returns. This has resulted in there not being enough money stored in pension funds to guarantee a comfortable retirement for people who are currently at work.

Therefore this directory aims to signpost older people to organisations (both statutory and voluntary) that can help maximise your income in older age.

# **Advocacy**

Advocacy empowers people to make their voice heard and enables them to make informed decisions about their future, by equipping them with the necessary skills and confidence to achieve these goals.

- Advocacy can enable people to:
- Be independent
- Make informed decisions
- Be heard and say what they feel and think
- Be included
- Get the information they need
- Know their rights
- Make the changes they want
- Learn new skills

## **Local Advice**

### **Bedfordshire Advocacy Service for Older People**

Bedfordshire Advocacy Service for Older People provides independent support to people aged 60+ in Bedfordshire, Luton and the surrounding areas. They provide personal and practical assistance in resolving problems and support people in retaining their independence, representing themselves and making their own life choices. Their most recent development is setting up the 'Open Door' drop-in service for public callers at Flitwick Library on alternate Thursdays from 10am – 1pm.

Tel. No. 01234 218880  
basop@basop.freeserve.co.uk

## **Benefits**

More older people than ever before are entitled to money benefits – yet up to £2.5 billion of unclaimed benefits cash is sitting in the Government's coffers while millions struggle to make ends meet.

For people over 65 it is important to make sure that you (and your carer, if you have one) are receiving all the benefits you are entitled to.

The Benefits system is complex and include:

- The State Pension
- Pension Credit
- Attendance Allowance (not means tested)
- Carers Allowance (paid to a carer who spends at least 35 hours a week caring for someone who is in receipt of Attendance Allowance)
- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Benefit

There are many agencies locally that can assist with benefits advice:

- Local Information Points
- Age Concern Bedfordshire
- Mid Beds Citizens Advice Bureau

You may also be able to get advice, if you served with the armed services:

- SSAFA

You may also be entitled to council tax benefit and you should contact:

- Mid Beds District Council

## **National Advice**

### **EntitledTo**

[www.entitledto.co.uk](http://www.entitledto.co.uk)

EntitledTo provides free calculators to help you work out your entitlement to benefits and tax credits. People over 60 are missing out on benefits worth more than £1 billion a year. The EntitledTo Over-60s Entitlement Calculator tells you what you could claim in Pension Credit, Council Tax Benefit, Housing Benefit and more.

### **Information for Pensioners online**

[www.info4pensioners.gov.uk](http://www.info4pensioners.gov.uk)

The Pension Service website is published by the Government. It provides information for individuals about pensions and other pensioner benefits in the UK, whether you are planning for the future, are about to retire or have already retired. The website gives advice on the following:

### **The Pension Service**

[www.thepensionservice.gov.uk/retired/](http://www.thepensionservice.gov.uk/retired/)

Find out about state pensions, Pension Credit and private income in retirement from The Pension Service, part of the Department for Work and Pensions.  
Helpline No: 0845 60 60 265

### **War Pensions**

[www.veteransagency.mod.uk](http://www.veteransagency.mod.uk)

### **Winter Fuel and Age-Related Payments**

[www.thepensionservice.gov.uk/winterfuel/](http://www.thepensionservice.gov.uk/winterfuel/)

#### *Winter Fuel Payment*

A Winter Fuel Payment is an annual payment to help people aged 60 and over with the costs of keeping warm this winter.

### *Age-Related Payment*

Age-Related payments are one-off payments being paid this year only. The Government is paying these (as well as the Winter Fuel Payments) to help people with either their Council Tax bills or to help them meet additional living expenses. You do not pay tax on either Winter Fuel Payments or Age-Related Payments

Helpline No: 08459 15 15 15

## **Local Advice**

### **Pension Service - Local Service Information Points**

Local Service Information Points provide a face-to-face service to customers in convenient locations.

Local Service staff will be available by a pre-arranged appointment, to discuss matters such as State Pension, Pension Credit, Attendance Allowance, Housing Benefit, Council Tax benefit and other pensioner entitlements and services. You will also find leaflets on the benefits and services provided by The Pension Service Information Points are an appointment only service. To make an appointment please call telephone number 0845 606 0265

Address	Town	County	Frequency	Week Day	Start Time	Finish Time
Bedford Town Hall St Paul's Square	Bedford	Bedfordshire	Weekly	Wednesday	9:00 am	2:00 pm
Luton Town Hall George Street	Luton	Bedfordshire	Weekly	Friday	9:00 am	1:00 pm

### **Age Concern Bedfordshire**

Age Concern Bedfordshire is a charity working with and for all older people in the county. Our range of services includes:

- Information & Advice
- Home Help
- Handyperson
- Insurance Products
- Clubs
- Development Work
- A Link Service

For General Enquiries: Tel. 01234 360510

Home Help (West Mid Beds Area): Tel. 01582 866880; Home Help (East Mid Beds Area): Tel. 01234 325888; Handyperson: 01234 215995

Admin.Tel. No: 01234 360510

adviceandindo.acbeds@talk21.com

National Website: [www.ace.org.uk](http://www.ace.org.uk)

## Help the Aged

How to make the most of your finances:

We all have to think about money - how much we've got, whether we should be saving or spending it and what we will need in the future. Whether you're looking for budgeting advice, or want to know whether you're entitled to a share of the 2 billion pounds of benefits that go unclaimed by people over 60 every year, we can point you in the right direction.

Money contains the following sections:

- Benefits Info: includes information and advice on how to claim means-tested benefits such as Pension Credit, Council Tax Benefit and Housing Benefit; information on special benefits like winter fuel payments; and details of non-means tested benefits such as Disability benefits. Also, find out if you could be eligible for free home insulation and other services through the 'here to HELP' initiative.
- Budgeting: our easy guide shows you how to assess your present financial situation and prepare a balanced personal budget using our downloadable sheets. You'll know exactly how much you've got to spend each week and month and what to do if your figures don't add up.
- Care Home Funding: find out how your local authority can help with care you may need, whether you're in your own home or in a care home.
- Investments: a guide to managing your savings, which includes information on Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs) and equity release schemes.
- Pensions: contains full details about the State Retirement Pension, how the current pension book changes will affect you, information about private pensions, and useful links for pensions advice and information.
- Tax: explains how to calculate your tax and how the Council Tax system works.
- Links: a list of money-related links that Help the Aged considers useful.

Please note: Help the Aged can't offer individual, specialist financial advice. We can, however, guide you to the relevant organisations that can. If you have a question relating directly to benefits information, please check the Benefits Info section above or call SeniorLine, our free welfare rights advice service on **0808 800 6565** (call **0808 808 7575** in Northern Ireland and 0800 26 96 26 for textphone users).

## Seniorline

Need help with claiming benefits or entitlements? Then call SeniorLine, our free telephone advice service, which aims to promote independence by offering advice or information on a wide range of welfare rights issues. Our trained advice workers can help with issues such as:

- Claiming benefits
- Housing Advice
- Getting help at home
- Entitlement to a bus pass

SeniorLine is free, impartial and confidential and aims to enable as many callers as possible to take action themselves. Alternatively, we can supply details of relevant local or national organizations. When you call, you may be asked appropriate

questions to ensure that we have all the relevant facts and can explore all the options available.

There are some types of help that SeniorLine staff are unable to offer:

- SeniorLine cannot take individual cases or offer advice work
- The advice workers are not trained in counselling or legal matters, neither can they offer medical advice
- Financial advice is restricted by the terms of the Financial Services Act 1986
- SeniorLine does not recommend tradespeople

Call SeniorLine today on **0808 800 6565**. Lines are open Monday to Friday 9am-4pm.

### **Mid Beds Citizens Advice Bureau**

Offer free advice and information service on individual's rights and helping to enforce them.

Amphill Office: The Court House, Woburn Street, Amphill, Beds, MK45 2HX.

Enquiry Line: 01525 404511

Biggleswade Office: Century House, Market Square, Biggleswade, Beds, SG18 8UU.

Enquiry Line: 01767 314961

Local Website: [www.midbedscab.dial.pipex.com](http://www.midbedscab.dial.pipex.com)

National Website: [www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk)

### **SSAFA Forces Help**

SSAFA stands for Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association.

They offer advice and help to serving and ex-Service men, women and their families, including widows and widowers in need.

Eligibility for their help is one day's paid service in any of HM forces and National Service. We also help those who completed a period of satisfactory service in the Reserves.

Local Contact: 89 Sundon Road, Harlington, Dunstable, Beds, LU5 6LR. Tel: 01525 875071

National Website: [www.ssafa.org.uk](http://www.ssafa.org.uk)

## **Bereavement**

### **Cruse Bedfordshire**

Cruse Bedfordshire offers support and counselling to bereaved people in Bedfordshire. For counselling help please telephone: Mid Beds: 01767 312997

Admin: Tel. No. 01525 841415

E-mail: [crusebedfordshire@btinternet.com](mailto:crusebedfordshire@btinternet.com)

Website: [www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk](http://www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk)

### **Registration of death**

Amphill: The Court House, Woburn Street, Amphill, Beds, MK45 2HX. Tel: (01234) 290450 (Monday, Wednesday and Friday - An appointment system is in operation).

The Limes

Biggleswade: 142 London Road, Biggleswade, Beds, SG18 8EL. Tel: (01234)

290450 (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday - An appointment system is in operation).

For advice and information online: [www.statistics.gov.uk/registration](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/registration)

## **Care**

### **CareAware UK**

CareAware is a public information and advisory service specialising in the issues relating to long-term care for older people.

Information about the care system may not be easy to gather and often, there will be a need for neutral and unbiased guidance. CareAware was established to fulfil the role of providing independent advice on matters of care and to do so from the perspective of the individual in need.

Because CareAware does not have any links to Social Services or Government Departments, it is able to provide information and guidance which is neutral and without external influence.

CareAware, PO Box 8 Manchester, M30 9NY. Tel: 08705 134925. Email: [enquiries@careaware.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@careaware.co.uk). Website: [www.careaware.co.uk](http://www.careaware.co.uk)

## **Local**

### **Social Services**

Whenever possible, Beds County Council Social Services try to help older people to stay active and independent while continuing to live in their own homes. They do this by working closely with other agencies to provide the best possible range of care.

Mid Bedfordshire Offices:

Office hours are Monday to Thursday 8.45am - 5.20pm and Friday 8.45am - 4.20pm

- Ampthill, Houghton Close, off Oliver Street, Ampthill, Beds, MK45 2TG. (01525) 840543
- Biggleswade, 142 London Road, Biggleswade, Beds, SG18 8EL. (01234) 276899

[www.bedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.bedfordshire.gov.uk) (Social Services Button)

### **Hospice at Home - West Mid Beds and Ivel Valley**

Hospice at Home Volunteers has been working in the community since 1986 as a free and completely confidential service.

We are on hand to help those sufferers who prefer to be cared for in their own homes. With the increased emphasis on care in the community, Hospice at Home Volunteers is an integral part of the care.

The Volunteers Organiser, when asked, visits the patient and family first to discuss their needs and then introduces a Volunteer if appropriate.

The Volunteers visit, give practical help where it's needed and become a supporting friend during the illness - and beyond, if required.

The Volunteers aim to complement the statutory services such as community nurses, Macmillan nurses, social workers, hospices and home carers to support the patient and their family.

Email:soniabanks5@ad.com

## **Carers**

If you are looking after a frail, ill or disabled member of the family, partner our friend who needs support to live at home then you are a Carer. Many people don't get the support they need because they don't recognise themselves as carers.

Carers are entitled to assessment of their own needs by social services – but they will have to request this. Most carers are also entitled to services that enable them to access short breaks. In addition other support may be available as well as benefits (i.e. Attendance Allowance).

### **Carers UK**

Carers UK is the voice of carers. Carers provide unpaid care by looking after ill, frail or disabled family members, friends or partners. Carers give so much to society & Carers UK recognises the true value of a carer's contribution to society and gives advice on where carers can get practical, financial and emotional support.

**CarersLine:** 0808 808 7777 - CarersLine is Carers UK's free advice line for carers. It is open on Wednesday and Thursday each week between 10am-12pm and 2pm-4pm. Telephone 0808 808 7777. Website: [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)

Advice is given on Benefits and finances (i.e. Carer's Allowance, Disability Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance & Independent Living Funds) & Carer and Respite Organisations (such as the Princess Royal Trust for Carers & Crossroads Schemes etc).

**Directgov - information for carers - [www.direct.gov.uk/carers](http://www.direct.gov.uk/carers)**

### **Local**

#### **Carers Short Breaks Bureau**

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity operate the Carers Short Breaks Bureau, which supports the unpaid carer by enabling them to take a break from caring by providing them with vouchers to exchange with professional care agencies. They also provide a carers helpline. Additionally, home visits can be arranged if necessary. Beds Rural Communities Charity, The free phone 0800 039 1234 (The bureau is staffed Monday to Friday 9am to 3pm with a 24 hour answer phone)

E-mail: [francescaj@bedsrcc.org.uk](mailto:francescaj@bedsrcc.org.uk). Website: [www.bedsrcc.org.uk](http://www.bedsrcc.org.uk)

## **The Eve Project**

Goldington Centre, 10 Barkers Lane, Bedford, MK41 9SJ

Tel: 01234 214914

eve.project@btconnect.com

www.theeveproject.co.uk

The Eve Project is a registered charity existing to help unpaid carers cope with the mental and physical stress arising from caring. It does this by providing practical help, advice, training and advocacy, support and information to carers in Mid & North Bedfordshire.

## **Disability**

**Directgov - information for disabled people - [www.direct.gov.uk/disability](http://www.direct.gov.uk/disability)**

### **Disability Resource Centre**

The Centre is a focal point for disability services throughout Bedfordshire. Their aims are:-

- To enable disabled people and their carers to have easy access to the information and equipment they required to live independently
- To encourage the involvement of disabled people in the provision of services
- To promote awareness of the needs of disabled people
- To encourage collaborative services for disabled people

Poynters House, Poynters Road, Dunstable, Bedfordshire, LU5 4TP

Tel: 01582 470900

Email: [information@drcbeds.org.uk](mailto:information@drcbeds.org.uk)

### **Mid Beds District Council Disabled Facilities Grants**

Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants are available to all owner-occupiers, tenants or landlords provided that the need is justified by an Occupational Therapist. For this we will need a report from an Occupational Therapist employed by Beds County Council Social Services, (contact either 01234 228211 or 01234 228430). The maximum grant available is £25,000.

The sort of works covered by this type of grant may include:

- Aiding entry and exit from people's homes, e.g. widening doorways and providing ramps.
- Aiding access into living areas, bedrooms, kitchens and bathrooms by installing stairlifts, level access showers or providing downstairs bathrooms.
- Improving or providing heating or light controls.
- Improving access for any disabled person who is responsible for the care of a child or spouse.

### ***Means Test***

All applications are subject to a 'Means Test' which identifies whether or not they are required to contribute towards the cost of works. For owner-occupiers and tenants this is based on their level of income, savings and benefit entitlement. For Landlords it is based on the rental income for the property in question.

## Home Improvement Grants

These are small and relatively simple grants limited to a maximum of £5,000 per application. They are available to owner-occupiers and private sector tenants for a wide range of repair and improvement works, including:

- Central heating system repairs/replacements/upgrades
- Dampness
- Drainage defects
- Rewiring
- General disrepair
- Providing missing bathroom and kitchen facilities

Applications are prioritised according to a prioritisation system (see below)

### *Home Improvement Grants Prioritisation System*

In order to determine which applications are approved and in what order, all potential applicants are given a points rating. Points are awarded depending on the age of the applicant (with more points being awarded for the more elderly) and whether they are disabled and/or infirm and/or seriously ill, in receipt of income-related benefits and whether they have any young children (more points being awarded in all cases). Points are also awarded depending on the type and severity of defect and its effect on the occupant's health. The two sets of points are added together to give an overall score. Each enquiry is put on a waiting list, which has a threshold above which cases proceed and below which cases are put 'on-hold' until such times as either additional resources are available, demand for grants reduces or the urgency of their works increases.

### **Mid Beds Access Group**

Are you writing a new policy or procedure? Do you need to check whether is disability friendly?

Mid Beds Access Group could be able to help you. The group recently re-formed to promote accessibility for the benefit of disabled people and all members of the community in Mid Beds.

The Group, which meets 6 times a year, is now totally independent of Mid Beds and made up of people who are either disabled themselves or represent others who have access difficulties. The group aims to improve accessibility and that any information provided by any service is accessible to all.

Martin Usher, Disability Discrimination Officer and Peter Keates, Building Control Manager are co-opted members of the Group's management committee and give guidance and technical advice.

From December 2006 the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 places a duty on all public bodies to promote disability equality. This will affect all public bodies – from local councils to government departments, from universities to hospitals.

The Duty requires the public sector to actively promote disability equality, and is similar to the existing duty to promote race equality. The access group will also be involved in consultation for the new Disability Equality Scheme.

For further information on how the Mid Bedfordshire Access Group could help you, contact Martin Usher, Disability Discrimination Officer Tel. 08458 495351. Martin.Usher@midbeds.gov.uk

## **Sight Issues**

### **Ampthill & Flitwick Talking Newspaper**

The object of the charity is to relieve the blind, or the partially sighted, or those labouring under some temporary or permanent incapacity or disability which makes reading a strain, by the provision of recorded tapes, or CDs or tactile reading matter. To this end, the local newspapers are recorded on a 60 min cassette each week and sent out free of charge to some 60 listeners. Mailing is free, courtesy of Royal Mail 'Articles for the blind' service

Name: Mrs Gale

Address: 8 Bluebell Close, Flitwick, Bedfordshire, MK45 1 NR

Tel 01525 714406

### **Biggleswade Talking Newspaper**

The Biggleswade Talking Newspaper is a registered charity which provides, free of charge, weekly local news and information services on tape cassettes for visually impaired people in the Biggleswade and Sandy areas. Tape players can be provided, without charge, when required.

Name: Martin Turner

Address: 8 Caldecote Road, Ickwell, Biggleswade, Bedfordshire, SG18 9EH

Tel 01767 627334

### **Sight Concern Bedfordshire**

Sight Concern Bedfordshire is the county's leading service-providing voluntary organisation for blind and partially sighted people and operates from offices in Luton and Bedford.

Name: Gary Ames

Address: 116 Bromham Road, Bedford, Bedfordshire, MK40 2RN

01234-311555

office@sightconcern.org.uk

www.sightconcern.org.uk

## **Energy**

### **Fuel Poverty**

A fuel poor household is defined as a household that in order to maintain a satisfactory temperature throughout the house is required to spend more than 10% of its income on heating. A satisfactory heating regime as recommended by the World Health Organisation is:

"For elderly and infirm households, this is 23°C in the living room and 18°C in other rooms, to be achieved for 16 hours in every 24. For other households, this is 21°C in

the living room and 18°C in other rooms for 9 hours in every 24 (or 16 in 34 over the weekend); with two hours being in the morning and seven hours in the evening."

The main causes of fuel poverty

- Absent or inefficient heating systems – poor energy efficiency of the dwelling, cost of heating the property,
- low household income,
- household size (under-occupancy increases the likelihood of fuel poverty).

The people most at risk are the elderly

### **Fuel poverty in Mid Beds**

It is estimated that around 16,000 of residents in Mid Bedfordshire may be living in fuel poverty.

### **Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre**

Provides independent and impartial advice to help residents identify ways to save money on bills; pointing them in the right direction for Government Grants and discounts for loft and cavity wall insulation and heating measures that are available.

Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre, Forest Centre,  
Marston Vale Millennium Country Park Station Road, Marston Moretaine, Bedford,  
MK43 0PR

FREEPHONE: 0800 512 012

Tel: 01234 765 926

Fax: 01234 767 946

Email: [beds@eeac.net](mailto:beds@eeac.net)

[www.est.org.uk](http://www.est.org.uk)

## **Health**

Help from some of the common health issues that affect older people can be found from the following:

### **Alzheimer's Society**

The Alzheimer's Society is committed to maintaining, improving and promoting its unique knowledge and understanding of dementia.

The Society has expertise in information and education for carers and professionals. It provides helplines and support for carers, runs quality day and home care, funds medical and scientific research and gives financial help to families in need.

Website: [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

**The Mid Beds Branch of the Alzheimer's Society** currently offers:

- Carer Support workers (part funded by Local Authorities)
- Telephone information and help-line with answer phone at times
- Local branch information leaflet and newsletter

- Monthly Carers' Support Groups
- Coffee and Chat sessions
- Information packs for those newly diagnosed with dementia and for professionals
- Training sessions/talks for carers, care workers and voluntary groups

Telephone help and information line: 01525 841472 (This line is answered by a Dementia worker who will listen and provide information and practical advice. Carers will be able to express their feelings and explain their problems).

### **Arthritis**

There are nine million people with arthritis in the UK. That's nine million individuals, plus their families, each affected in a unique way. Arthritis Care aims to make a positive difference to your life.

From high quality information and support to empower you to take control of your arthritis, to campaigning for change... Arthritis Care is there for you.

Arthritis Care Helpline: 020 7380 6555 (weekdays 10am – 4pm)

Freephone: 0808 800 4050 (weekdays 12pm – 4pm)

Email: [Helplines@arthritiscare.org.uk](mailto:Helplines@arthritiscare.org.uk)

Website: [www.arthritiscare.org.uk](http://www.arthritiscare.org.uk)

### **The Stroke Association**

The Stroke Association is the only national charity solely concerned with combating stroke in people of all ages. It funds research into prevention, treatment and better methods of rehabilitation, and helps stroke patients and their families directly through its community services. These include dysphasia support, family support, information services and welfare grants.

Stroke Information Line: 0845 3033 100

Address: Stroke Information Service, Stroke House, 240 City Road, London EC1V 2PR.

Email: [info@stroke.org.uk](mailto:info@stroke.org.uk)

Website: [www.stroke.org.uk](http://www.stroke.org.uk)

## **Housing**

### **Aragon Housing Association**

Aragon provides quality homes and services to meet the needs of the community. There are offices in Ampthill and Sandy, and we serve mainly in the Mid Beds area.

Name: Gill Cook

Address: Katherine's House, Dunstable Street, , Beds, Ampthill, Bedfordshire, MK45 2JP

Tel 01525 840505, Fax 01525 403682, Email [enquiry@aragon-housing.co.uk](mailto:enquiry@aragon-housing.co.uk), Web site [www.aragon-housing.co.uk](http://www.aragon-housing.co.uk)

### **Housing Grants**

Mid Beds District Council offers two types of housing grant:

**'Mandatory'** (i.e. the Council in general has to give a grant if a valid application is received) Disabled Facilities Grants

**'Discretionary'** (i.e. it is entirely at the Councils' discretion as to whether it gives a grant or not) Home Improvement Grants.

### ***Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants***

Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants are available to all owner-occupiers, tenants or landlords provided that the need is justified by an Occupational Therapist. For this we will need a report from an Occupational Therapist employed by Beds County Council Social Services, (contact either 01234 228211 or 01234 228430). The maximum grant available is £25,000.

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Grant aid may also be available to landlords in certain circumstances and also as part of our Empty Homes Strategy.

Home Improvement Grants and Disabled Facilities grants are also available to the owners of Mobile Homes in certain circumstances.

If you would like to make an enquiry about Housing Grants then please click on the download for the Housing Grant Enquiry Form on this page. This form can then be completed and returned to us by email at [Customer.Services@midbeds.gov.uk](mailto:Customer.Services@midbeds.gov.uk) or printed, completed and then sent by post to MBDC Environmental Services, 23 London Road, Biggleswade, Beds. SG18 8ED. Our telephone number is 08452-304040 should you wish to call us.

## **Poor Relief Charities**

Charities for the relief of poverty for the elderly in their defined parish area:

- Ampthill United Charities for the Poor
- Biggleswade United Charities
- Clophill United Charities
- Cockayne Hatley – Brickwell & Miller Charity
- Cranfield – Almshouse Charity of James Doodman
- The Dunton United Charities
- Eversholt Parochial Charity
- Flitton – Charities of Cox & Others
- Flitwick Combined Charities
- Harlington Poor's Charity
- Houghton Conquest United Charities
- Husborne Crawley Charities Of The Poor
- Lidlington - Thomas Johnson Lidlington Charity
- Langford Welfare Trust
- The Marston Moretaine Charities
- Maulden Charities
- Maulden Welfare Trust
- Northill Parochial Charities
- Old Warden Charities
- Potton Consolidated Charities
- Pulloxhill Trust Fund
- Sandy Charities
- Shillington and Stondon Relief in Need Charity
- Southill Almshouse Charity
- Stotfold Relief in Charities
- Stotfold - ROE'S ALMSHOUSE CHARITIES
- Tingrith - Deacon & Astry Charity of Tingrith
- Westoning United Charities
- Woburn Almshouse Charity
- Wrestlingworth Church & Poors Charity
- Wrestlingworth Goodwill Fund

Contact Community & Voluntary Services – Mid & North Beds for contact information

## **Transport**

Transport is particularly important to people in rural areas such as Mid Bedfordshire, as it allows you live independent lives. Public transport does not always address these issues and community transport can bridge this gap.

### **Transport Advice for Older People**

#### **Triscope** - Travel Information for Passengers with Impaired Mobility

Triscope is a nationwide travel and transport information service for people with impaired mobility. Triscope offer assistance with information regarding any aspect of travel, whether planning journeys involving private motoring or public transport or any other transport related question, for example:

- Help from home to vehicle;
- Boarding and alighting;
- Wheelchair or scooter hire and repair;
- Insurance;
- Accessible Toilets.

Triscope will help you with information for every stage of your journey – door to door:

- Local, long distance or international;
- Individual, families or groups;
- Social, medical, shopping, leisure or business.

National Help Line: 08457 585641 (charged at local rate)

### **Blue Badge Scheme**

Bedfordshire County Council operates a blue badge scheme (formerly orange badges). The scheme helps people with certain disabilities to park closer to shops and services. The badge applies to the driver or the passenger in the vehicle. The badge costs £2.00 for 3 years.

For an application form call Bedfordshire County Council on: 01234 228472

Email: [Liz.Woolfe@bedscc.gov.uk](mailto:Liz.Woolfe@bedscc.gov.uk)

Customer Services, Car Badges, County Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford, MK42 9AP  
[www.bedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.bedfordshire.gov.uk) (Social Services Button)

### **Bus Permits**

Anyone aged 60 years and over or with a disability and living in the district is eligible for a free travel permit.

The permit which must be presented with the photocard when travelling, allows the user to pay half the adult bus fare, with a maximum charge of 50 pence single or £1 return. It can be used at any time on local bus services in Luton and Bedfordshire and can also be used outside the county, provided the journey either starts or finishes in Bedfordshire (there are some exceptions). There are also discounts to be had on some first Capital Direct and Silverlink services.

Tel: 01525 842047

[www.midbeds.gov.uk/services/travelpermits/](http://www.midbeds.gov.uk/services/travelpermits/)

### **Older People's Transport Scheme**

The Older People's Transport Token Pilot Scheme aims to:

- Enable older people to gain information on voluntary and community activity, statutory services, leisure, learning opportunities, legal advice, benefits advice and health services
- Promote existing and traditional information sources and events that older people might already wish to visit
- Promote new and innovative forms of access to information opportunities that older people may not have considered visiting before
- Develop the capacity of older people to use traditional and new forms of information to reduce social isolation and exclusion
- Improve the way statutory and voluntary organisations understand and communicate with the target group in order to improve communication routes to target groups

With the overall aim of:

- Reducing access barriers to information, advice and services
- Improving the way in which information is communicated to, and shared among, older people in Mid Beds so widening participation and improved access to services
- Enabling direct active involvement of older people in improving services offered

The tokens are administered by Age Concern and enable free travel on public transport and participating taxi and private hire companies. Please contact David Verney at Age Concern on 01234 360510 for further information.

This pilot is an Ear to the Ground project made possible through the Mid Beds Healthy Living Initiative and will run between January and March 2006.

The overarching aim of the Mid Beds Healthy Living Initiative (HLI) is to increase access to preventative and supportive services that will help to build local community capacity to improve quality of life for the target groups of young and older people and unsupported families.

Mid Beds District Council's Ear To The Ground (ETTG) is one of the projects funded by the HLI. The project aims to research and trial new ways of disseminating a range of community information to target groups in Mid Beds.

Age Concern aims to contribute to HLI and ETTG through the coordination of the ETTG Older People's Transport Tokens Scheme, providing transport tokens to Mid Beds older people to enable them to travel free by taxi, bus or train to information related events, sharing the information gathered with others and feeding back opinions to the information providers.

## Local

Community Transport in Mid Beds includes:

### **Flittabus Community Transport Ltd**

Flittabus Community Transport Ltd is a non-profit making organisation serving village communities in mid Bedfordshire and offering self-drive private hire to groups, clubs and associations.

Tel. No. 01525 861774

garwock@aol.com

### **Ivel Sprinter (East Beds Community Bus)**

The Ivel Sprinter Bus provides a community bus service for Biggleswade, Sandy and Potton, mainly for passengers, who are elderly and without transport.

Tel: 01462 639662

mike.marsh@ntlworld.com

### **Mid Beds Link A Ride Community Transport**

The aim of Link A Ride is to provide a door to door service for those people who are unable to use ordinary transport because of a temporary or permanent disability. The service uses vehicles that are constructed for ease of access, even if you use a wheelchair. Drivers can escort you to your door but cannot transfer you from your wheelchair. This service covers all of mid beds and operates Mondays to Fridays. Limited services may be provided if possible on weekends and Bank Holidays. To make a booking, telephone the Link A Ride office on: 01525 840522

Name: Colin Poulter

Address: C/O Ampthill Social Centre, Houghton Close, Ampthill, MK45 2TG

Tel 01525 840511, Email link.a.ride@freenet.co.uk, Web site [www.link-a-ride.co.uk](http://www.link-a-ride.co.uk)

### **Whitbread Wanderbus**

Whitbread Wanderbus provides a community bus service for villages surrounding Shefford, to take passengers, who are mainly elderly and without transport, to local shopping centres (such as Bedford, Letchworth, Biggleswade or Milton Keynes).

Name: J Stanley

Address: 16 Coach Road, Henlow, Bedfordshire, SG16 6BU

Tel 01462 850075

## **Village Care Schemes / Good Neighbours Schemes**

Village Care Schemes are essentially 'good neighbour schemes' that provide easy access to help and support for every resident living in the community, should they need it.

Acting as a 'safety net' for everyone in the village, care schemes offer a friendly, local service, responding to calls for help from any villager, regardless of age. Having a care scheme in the village can help extend the length of time some people are able to remain living independently in their own homes. Care schemes can help to lessen the impact on a community caused by the decline in village services and facilities such as public transport, shops, Post Offices, doctor's surgeries and pubs. They can also help to reduce feelings of isolation and exclusion experienced by some

individuals if families and friends move away in the search for employment, education or affordable housing. Some Village Care Schemes offer extra services such as the Link Up Scheme (an initiative which aims to help elderly and vulnerable members of the community by fitting door chains, door viewers and other home security devices) and the Home Fire Safety Check Scheme (a Home Fire Safety Check is an evaluation of the occupier's risk from fire. This includes home fire safety advice and, depending on the risk category, the supply of a free smoke alarm).  
Contact: David Maxwell (Beds Rural Communities Charity)  
Tel: 01767 626466  
Email: davidm@bedsrcc.org.uk  
www.bedsrcc.org.uk

The following Village Care Schemes are operating in Mid Bedfordshire: -

- Ampthill Good Neighbours - 07833314903
- Clifton Care Scheme - 07817 614654
- Harlington Neighbourhood Help - 07849 835 410
- Haynes Community Care - 07814 708 668
- Henlow "A friend in need" - 07989 253422
- Houghton Conquest Care - 07969 982 978
- Langford Friends - 07884 046741
- Lidlington Helping Hands - 07817 258279
- Marston Moretaine "Hands across the village" - 07761 080611
- Northill & Ickwell Care Scheme - 0781 776 7246
- Potton Good Neighbours Scheme - 1767 261906
- Shillington Care - 07623 978853
- Silsoe Offers Support - 07747 827642
- Tempsford Helping Hands - 07867 868751
- Woburn - Help Around Woburn - 07815 411229

More Village Care Schemes are being developed in Mid Beds. Contact David Maxwell for more details

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For further details on Older Peoples Organisations contact:

Community & Voluntary Services – Mid & North Beds  
43 Bromham Road  
Bedford  
MK40 2AA  
Tel: 01234 354366  
www.cvsmidandnorthbeds.org.uk or www.voluntaryworks.org.uk