

Application deadline: Midday – Friday 15 January 2021

Voluntary Sector Provider Contribution Fund Scheme Application Form

Details of your Organisation

Name of organisation	Action for Family Carers
Address:	Brickhouse Farm Community Centre Poulton Close Maldon Essex
Postcode:	CM9 6NG
Contact Person	Ruth Morton
Position in Organisation	Funding Coordinator
Telephone Number:	07702 858670
E-mail address:	Ruth.morton@affc.org.uk
Website address:	www.affc.org.uk
Charity Registration No:	1127164

Declaration:

1. I am authorised to make the application on behalf of the above organisation.
2. I certify the information contained in this application is correct.
3. If the information in the application changes in any way I will inform Uttlesford District Council.

Signed: 

Date: 15 January 2021

Name: Ruth Morton

Position: Funding Coordinator

Details of Application

Description of work undertaken by the organisation

Action for Family Carers has supported unpaid Carers of all ages in Essex since 1990. We are a Carers Trust Network Partner, Centre of Excellence and hold NCVO's PQASSO Level 3 Quality Mark. The charity first registered as Maldon Carers Centre, renamed as Action for Family Carers in 2008 and merged with Caring for Harlow Carers in 2015.

Our Mission is to make a positive difference to the lives of all Carers including Young Carers. Our Vision is that Action for Family Carers will be recognised as a Centre of Excellence which campaigns for and achieves positive outcomes for Carers. Our Strategic Aims are to:

1. Have a positive impact on outcomes for Carers
2. Raise public awareness about Carers
3. Improve public awareness of the organisation
4. Ensure the sustainability of the organisation for the benefit of Carers

We provide information, befriending, counselling, volunteering opportunities, GP Carer support, return to work support, respite day care and Activity Groups for people with dementia across the county, run Young Carer youth clubs and work within schools and a variety of community settings.

How many paid employees does your organisation have?

44

How many volunteers does your organisation have?

180

How many members does your organisation have (if applicable)?

77

Who/what does your organisation support and in what way?

We offer the following services to Young Carers, Young Adult Carers and Adult Carers. Carers, who can be any age, provide unpaid care by looking after an ill, older or disabled family member, friend or partner.

Young Adult Carers in Uttlesford: Our Uttlesford support worker meets with Young Adult Carers in their homes or a mutually convenient place such as a coffee shop, providing information, support

and the chance to talk to somebody. The support worker also accompanies Young Adult Carers to meetings and supports them to get their views, needs and wishes across to other professionals. We can also support Young Adult Carers to complete paperwork and forms when applying for a place in further or higher education, job application forms and benefit applications. During the Covid-19 pandemic, much of this work has been online; this has meant that at times we have been able to make contact with more Young Adult Carers than if delivery was predominantly face-to-face.

Young Carers are children as young as five years old, and any young person aged under 18, whose life is restricted in some way because they look after someone else on a regular basis.

Young Carer Club Nights: Our Young Carers Club nights run on weekday evenings at youth centres. Many activities take place at club night including access to computers, games such as pool and table tennis, arts and crafts, life skills such as cooking and varied seasonal activities. Occasional trips and other activities run over school holidays.

Clubs give Young Carers a chance to make friends who are also caring for someone, to have fun and a break from their caring role. During the pandemic, we have been holding online club sessions and backing these up by providing craft and activity packs which the Young Carers can take part in 'together', either at the online session or in preparation for it. We have been holding joint Great Dunmow/Standed online Zoom meetings, with the division by age, not geographical area. Favourite activities include games of mime/dance moves (pretending to vacuum, paint walls, wash windows, fly and trampoline, etc.), Simon Says, and quizzes. At the end of each session, we ask the children what they would like to do next time. Next week, the Uttlesford Young Carers are going to all bake a mug cake together.

Young Carers School Service: Our school service provides:

- One-to-one support sessions in school giving Young Carers the opportunity to talk confidentially to somebody who understands.
- Practical support such as providing support in meetings with teachers to explain why, for example, they have fallen behind with their homework.
- Informal drop-in groups where Young Carers can meet others in the same situation and access information and advice.
- Information on how to access Respite Clubs in the local area where Young Carers can meet other young people in the same situation.
- Raising awareness of Young Carers to both staff and students through PSHE lessons, assemblies and teacher training.

During the pandemic we have been in regular contact with schools and colleges who are referring Young Carers to us for a variety of reasons. Schools recognise that Young Carers' mental health has been negatively impacted by the pandemic and are happy that we can continue to support their students.

Feeling Good Caring Well: We provide sessions and activities to support the physical and mental wellbeing of Carers across every district of Essex. The project involves a range of subjects including:

- walking groups,
- mindfulness sessions,
- stress-busting sessions,
- managing emotions effectively,
- complementary therapies,

- 'live your life' workshops and
- social wellbeing meet-ups.

The project is led with a Carer steering group and we work with trained practitioners to provide professional and quality support. This project has continued during the pandemic with some activities as before – such as Carers' wellbeing walks – and some sessions online. We have also been able to provide bespoke YouTube films for Carers.

Counselling: We offer a free, confidential counselling service where Adult Carers can receive individual counselling sessions from qualified counsellors in Essex. Carers come to counselling to discuss all kinds of concerns, including:

- Transitions – when the caring role begins, changes or ends
- Bereavement or other loss, there are many losses which can affect our lives
- Illness, accident or trauma
- Depression, anxiety, worries or stress about the past, the present or the future
- Isolation, loneliness or difficulties in a social setting

All counsellors working with us are members of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and work within their ethical framework. Counselling sessions have continued online throughout the pandemic.

Befriending: We lead a partnership comprising of Action for Family Carers, Hamelin Trust, Independent Age and Mind in West Essex. We are working together to help address loneliness and social isolation in Essex. With grant funding from Essex County Council we are delivering volunteer befriending services across the county as 'Essex Befriends'.

New Work Challenge: This programme helps Carers build confidence and resilience, improve health and wellbeing and secure a new future by moving into rewarding and sustainable employment. Key Workers work with Carers in order to build a profile and focuses on the barriers that prevent the Carer moving forward. Some Carers move into education, training or volunteering before looking to find employment. All participants are individuals and some people may feel they only need some work to update their CV, whilst others may be looking for a complete career change and seeking funding for courses, etc. Whatever the objective, we aim to achieve the best outcomes for all.

GP Liaison Support: We support GP practices to develop their processes and systems to:

- Identify Carers
- Enable the GP practices to signpost Carers to support and suitable services
- Identify with GP's how they can proactively support Carers with managing their healthcare needs

We also offer Carer awareness training to GP surgeries in Mid Essex. We have not been able to work in GP surgeries during the pandemic. However, we continue to offer support to any Carers referred to us via GP practices.

Day Care: We provide day care for older people which also provides a few hours break for family Carers. The centres provide clients with an opportunity to meet and socialise with other people in a similar situation, reminisce about days gone by, or simply have a chat and a laugh. At the same time, their Carer will have an opportunity to have some precious time to call their own. During the pandemic, we have delivered outreach services to our clients – delivering care packages, medication, food parcels and activity packs. We have also kept in regular contact with Carers and

their cared-for, so they know they remain important to us.

Activity Groups: We run weekly Activity Groups for people with dementia in Harlow, Epping and Great Dunmow – Keeping Active groups (activities include seated chair exercises, games, singing and dancing) and Active Minds groups (activities designed around cognitive stimulation, e.g. quizzes, puzzles, reminiscence and music). During the first and current lockdowns, face-to-face groups ceased; our Volunteer Manager organised the Activity Group volunteers into telephone befrienders. It was extremely helpful that the volunteers understood the nature of dementia and personally knew the service users and Carers.

How much money is your organisation requesting?

2021/22 £14077.73

Please give full details of the use that will be made of any financial aid given by Uttlesford District Council. (Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary).

We will offer comprehensive and holistic support for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers in Uttlesford, based on one worker, dedicating two days per week to Young and Young Adult Carer support across Uttlesford.

We will organise and facilitate fortnightly club nights for Young Carers alternating between Stansted and Great Dunmow to ensure that there is a club within reasonable reach for all Young Carers across the district. During lockdown we will continue to hold online sessions and help the young people prepare for the transition to safe face-to-face meetings again.

Young Carer clubs/sessions will be two hours long with an extra half-hour reserved for private conversations with older Young Adult Carers. This will give Young and Young Adult Carers a consistent and reliable time and place to meet with a worker. Young Adult Carers will also be encouraged to attend the club itself to either meet with others or volunteer with the younger children as a peer mentor. At times when we are only able to offer online support, we will ensure that all known Young and Young Adult Carers are fully aware of how and when to join a Zoom session.

We have access to small grants through Carers Trust and other funders with which we can purchase a tablet or laptop for a young person in need. We will utilise these grants to support Young or Young Adult Carers in Uttlesford who may be struggling to access online services.

We surveyed Young Carers and Young Adult Carers in Uttlesford and they were unanimous in telling us that continuity of support is highly important to them, e.g. continuing to liaise with the same support worker before, during and after transition from Young Carer to Young Adult Carer.

We also surveyed Young Carer parents and when asked how likely it would be that their Young Carer child would attend online meetings after the pandemic restrictions are lifted, 67% said that their child would be likely or very likely to continue to attend these. With this intelligence, we will trial running both online and face-to-face meetings, which will potentially enable us to engage with more Young Carers from rural and remote areas of Uttlesford.

Our worker will also maintain contact with primary and secondary schools in the Uttlesford District. They will inform staff and pupils about Young Carer issues, provide resources and work with the schools to establish Young Carer after-school clubs. Once established, we anticipate that the after-school clubs will continue independently with light touch support from us.

We will liaise with the family (if applicable) of every Young and Young Adult Carer who is referred to us to make sure that the support we offer is appropriate and meets the needs of the Young or Young Adult Carer. We will carry out a psychometric assessment of the Young Carers caring situation at the start of our intervention with them and after a period of approximately one year.

412/500

Name up to three things you aim to achieve in the funding period.

We will:

1. Establish and maintain contacts in all primary schools in Uttlesford, offering support to younger Young Carers.

This is a group that historically has had very little support from any services, but research shows that Young Carers can be as young as five years old. Being identified as a Young Carer in their school will ensure that their teachers have understanding when they turn up late, look untidy or badly groomed, or “forget” their lunchbox. We will work with the schools’ pastoral staff to establish Young Carer lunch clubs so that the children will not need to feel isolated or embarrassed and can get to know other children who understand what they have to do. We know this will be a challenge as some schools are not willing to admit that any of their pupils are Young Carers, but statistically, one in 12 young people is a Carer.

2. Offer Young and Young Adult Carers in Uttlesford the support needed to reach their potential in school or college.

We will enable more Young and Young Adult Carers to fulfil their potential by working with schools and colleges to address their issues at the earliest possible stage. Many unpaid family Carers start out as Young Carers and from these early days they are at risk of not achieving their potential, with poorer achievement and attendance rates than their non-caring peers. We will work with Young and Young Adult Carers who are displaying poor behaviours, including substance misuse and self-harm, as a result of trying to cope with their lifestyle challenges and stresses.

3. Establish and maintain Young Carer clubs in Stansted and Great Dunmow giving Young and Young Adult Carers the opportunity to meet socially and gain respite from their caring roles.

Although currently unable to run the clubs, we have continued to maintain regular contact with Young Carers and their families in Uttlesford. We have also taken the opportunity, whilst calling them, to find out exactly how they would like our provision to be in the future. The most significant finding was their wish for a Friday evening club; a time when there is very little else they can access. Once open again, the clubs will offer a range of activities including team work games, healthy lifestyle sessions, healthy eating and a chance to be with other Young and Young Adult Carers who understand each other’s issues. Being at the club will give Young and Young Adult Carers the chance to forget about their caring responsibilities while there and have some much-needed respite.

What is the demand for the service and how is this being established? How will your project/service find out what the views of its users are and about the services they (will) receive?

In Uttlesford, 7% of primary school children (3% of secondary school children) identified themselves as a Young Carer, with 1% saying that being a Young Carer takes up more than two hours of their time a day. The majority care for a family member (SHEU survey 2019). Assuming approximately 15,000 children aged under 19 in Uttlesford (2011 census data), there are an estimated 450 Young Carers in Uttlesford District.

The Uttlesford Young Adult Carers that we work with have told us that one of the most important aspects of support to them is continuity and consistency. They want to have the opportunity to build a trusting relationship with a support worker and not have to change workers because they reached a certain birthday.

Many Young Carers suffer consequences that can be serious and long lasting:

- 1 in 20 misses school because of their caring responsibilities.
- Significantly lower educational attainment at GCSE level, equivalent to nine grades lower overall than their peers e.g. the difference between nine B's and nine C's.
- 1.5 times more likely than their peers to be from BAME and 2x as likely to not speak English as their first language.
- 1.5 times more likely than their peers to have SEN or a disability.
- Average annual income for families with a Young Carer is £5000 less than families who do not have a Young Carer.
- Essex 2015, Young Adult Carers had a NEET rate of 30% - 6x average
- Many come from hidden and marginalised groups, including children caring for family members with mental illness or a substance dependency.

(ECC Supporting Young Carers in Essex, 2018)

'Young Minds' identified that 68% of Young Carers have been bullied directly because of having to care for someone.

Young and Young Adult Carers who live at home are generally more vulnerable than their peers due to their circumstances. Many of them live in a family where the focus is always on the cared for, others may be an only child in a single parent family where the parent is ill. This can leave them craving attention and love from anyone who is willing to show them they are important. Unfortunately, this puts them at greater risk of exploitation and of entering into inappropriate relationships.

HealthWatch Essex Carers Report September 2015 states 'continued and increased support for Young Carers is essential. Support groups that offer a wide range of activities and opportunities to relax in a safe environment away from the home are particularly valued by Young Carers and are important for their present and future health and wellbeing'.

We regularly and systematically ask Carers and Young Carers what they would like or need from our services and clubs. We also have a Suggestions Box in the centres we use, which is accessible to the young people to comment anonymously if they wish to do so. This is also evidenced by our pledge to run a Friday evening youth club for Young Carers in Uttlesford; a direct request from them. We carried out considerable research with them regarding the new club in Great Dunmow and established that they wanted their club to be on Friday evenings. They told us that there is very little provision for young

people on Fridays and said that is probably because it's seen by workers as part of the weekend. We have therefore committed to run the club on Fridays as per their request and have agreed the use of an Essex Youth Service building for this time. We already have 23 Young Carers ready to attend the clubs and we are setting the groundwork for a further increase.

During the current times, where only online meetings are possible, we always plan for the next session with the young people. Including their suggestions helps the Young Carers to feel that they are a real part of a real group and has a positive effect on their confidence and self-esteem. One primary aged Young Carer from Thaxted told us, "This (Zoom) club made me feel loads better, it was like I was playing with my friends even though I can't go out".

The Uttlesford Young Carers have enjoyed some of the Zoom activities so much they have asked that we also do them in a 'live' situation when we are able to open the clubs again.

Our charity has a strong ethos of service user involvement. One of our Trustees has a dedicated Carer Engagement lead role and we have Steering Groups with direct service user involvement for our delivery projects. We run an annual satisfaction survey which gives us insight into how well we are supporting Carers of all ages across Essex.

Importantly, we will always ask Carers and Young Carers what they want to achieve from their engagement with us and use this to help them move on and make transitions, e.g. from Young Carer to Young Adult Carer to Adult Carer or employment/further education options.

Many of the Carers we have supported choose to volunteer with us. In Uttlesford we are supporting Young Adult Carers who also help out with the younger Young Carers during clubs and the interaction between the different ages has a positive impact on all concerned.

**Does the Council encourage or support your organisation in any way other than financially?
Please give details.**

Uttlesford District Council is always supportive of Action for Family Carers. For example, they supported our use of the Garden Room in Saffron Walden enabling adult local Carers to meet for support, social interaction and advice and guidance sessions.

Uttlesford District Council also has a Citizens Advice service in Saffron Walden, Dunmow, Thaxted and Stansted Mountfitchet. All of these centres can refer Carers to us including via Uttlesford Frontline.

The council's staff and Members have always been helpful and cooperative, enabling us to establish excellent professional relationships and good practice when working with Uttlesford Carers. For example, two council officers attended our West Essex Young Carer celebration event which was the finale to a joint Epping Forest, Harlow and Uttlesford community project.

A link to the Council's Corporate Plan is below. Please explain how your organisation or the proposed project would contribute to the Council's corporate plans objectives?

<https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/corporate-plan>

Promote healthy lifestyles in diverse and inclusive communities

We will work with Young and Young Adult Carers regularly and ensure that they receive information,

advice and guidance on aspects of healthy and safe living. We will also support them to develop in confidence and self-esteem so that they have the confidence to transfer their significant caring skills to skills that are needed in the workplace.

We will help them to plan and prepare healthy food and understand about nutritional requirements for themselves and the person they care for. For example, we will support them to make pizza using fresh vegetables and other healthy ingredients and give them the opportunity to develop social skills with a sit-down meal with the group.

Young and Young Adult Carers can experience poor mental wellbeing. They may feel anger or resentment towards the person they care for, guilt about these emotions and feel disengaged with their peers who do not have or understand the extra responsibilities of caring. We will support Young Carers to feel positive and proud of their caring roles, which will help towards preventing poor choices, including self-harm and food, alcohol or drug misuse, as they struggle to find ways to cope.

Young and Young Adult Carers are often from less affluent families. The medical condition or disability of the person can affect their earning ability and may mean they are dependent on benefits. This can mean that the young person has fewer opportunities to experience activities than do others in their school or college. Having their own place to go to, will give these young people the chance to socialise and develop their social skills with their peers without having to explain or justify their home circumstances.

Support our students, schools and libraries

We will arrange sessions with Young and Young Adult Carers around future education and career planning. We will give them the support they need. Some may require assistance with filling in application forms; we will arrange to meet them separately or after club and show and encourage them to do these. Some Young or Young Adult Carers may need practical support such as help to attend an interview and we will accompany them if needed or help them to arrange transport to attend.

For example, we worked with two Young Carers in Uttlesford who were being home-schooled. One of the Young Carers also had learning difficulties and suffered from severe anxiety. With our support, the Young Carer successfully applied to attend college at Stansted. Another Young Carer was struggling to work at home during the pandemic as she had no access to the equipment needed and, due to her home circumstances, had not previously taken exams when she should have. We obtained a laptop for her and negotiated on her behalf with Harlow College. As a result, she was accepted by Harlow College to take Functional Skills courses and then move onto the Early Years course she really wanted to do.

The service we propose would mean that some reliance is placed on Young Adult Carers to come to us when support is required. Part of the work that we will do whilst they are still Young Carers is to teach them to take personal responsibility and know how to ask for help when needed. This will help to ensure that they become responsible adults in the community.

Are there any other organisations providing the same service as your organisation in Uttlesford? If yes, please give details.

There are no other organisations in Uttlesford which provide the same service as Action for Family Carers. Essex County Council works with high need Young Carers up to the age of 18, giving intensive one-to-one support for a period of six weeks. This fulfils statutory requirements.

Our service is about early intervention and prevention; supporting Young Carers and Young Adult Carers to achieve the best they can alongside their caring role. Our aim is to prevent Young Carers reaching the point where they need intensive support. We refer to the Essex Young Carer Service if that is more suitable for the young person, and the Essex service refers to us where our offer is more appropriate.

We understand there was a Young Carer Club running from Fairycroft House in Saffron Walden. We will continue to run our Young Carer clubs from Stansted and from Great Dunmow, so the three venues would be complementary and give a good choice across Uttlesford. We have contacted the club in Fairycroft but so far we have not received any response from them.

Do you work in isolation to these organisations or collaboratively in any way? Please provide details.

We work closely with Essex County Council and other providers in Essex to ensure all Young Carers achieve positive outcomes. For example we actively engage in their Young Carer Provider Engagement meetings.

If possible, we are keen to work collaboratively with those delivering the stand-alone provision at Fairycroft House to ensure that all Young and Young Adult Carers in Uttlesford receive the best possible support for their needs.

Your project costs

Please give an estimate breakdown of your running costs

Revenue Costs	2021/22
Salaries, NI and Pension costs	11480
Rent	0
General running expenses (phone, Post, room hire, insurance etc.)	168
Producing information, education and Promotional materials	0
Training	0
Travel expenses a) Staff	819
b) Volunteers	0
Recruitment costs	0
Club expenses – refreshments and equipment	360
Club expenses – young people’s transport	360
Overheads @ 12.5%	1648
Additional cost relating to Covid-19	0
Total revenue costs	14835
Capital costs	0
Total capital costs	0
Total Organisational costs	14836
Income - current year only	
From grants	466039
From other sources	284590
Total income	750629

Is your organisation financed or supported by other organisations, if yes, give full details, if no, why not?

Our funding comes from a range of sources, including grants, donations and charges (Day Care service and Activity Groups). We receive a grant for befriending services from Essex County Council and other grants for specific projects and services from The National Lottery Fund Community Grants, The Henry Smith Charity, Essex Community Foundation and other charitable trusts and foundations. We also receive small donations from individual supporters and from Rotary Clubs and others.

We are supported by Essex County Council's Youth Service in kind – they provide use of their youth centre venues for our work with Young Carers.

We have a robust funding strategy which aims to diversity income streams to ensure the future sustainability of the charity.

What fund raising activities has your organisation undertaken in the last 3 years and how much money have you raised? Please do not include grants from Uttlesford District Council or other funding bodies.

Raffles	£2,867
Jumble Sales	£1,040
Beer Festival	£980
Ball	£800
Quiz Nights	£1,242
Christmas Fayre	£2,175
Total:	£9,104

What percentage of your users are Uttlesford Residents?

5% of Carers supported in 2019/2020 were Uttlesford residents.

How many people benefit from your service(s) each year?

7323

What effect would a reduction in the amount you have applied for have on your forward plan/service? Please provide quantifiable information?

The funding we have applied for is based on two working days per week. If the funding were reduced, we would have to reduce the number of hours for the post of the Young and Young Adult Carer Support Worker. This would also mean a reduction in the number of groups that could be facilitated in the district of Uttlesford, the number of Young and Young Adult Carers we could support and the number of hours of support given.

For example, if funding were reduced by 50%, we would be able to provide a reduced service. This

may mean we would not be able to support a second Young Carer club in Great Dunmow and would be able to support 50% of the Young and Young Adult Carers in Uttlesford that we would support with the full funding.

We would be able to provide a support worker as follows:

Project worker 7 hours per week @ £10.88 per hour	3960
NI contribution (goodcalculators.com)	308
Pension contribution	119
Management and office core costs	1000
Sessional Club Assistant	353
Mobile phone rental	168
Session budget 6 x £30	180
Young Carers' travel	180
Travel 35 miles per day x 48 days @ £0.45	410
Overheads	835
Total costs	7513

If you are currently in receipt of a grant from Uttlesford District Council, what effect would a reduction in funding have on your organisation? Please provide quantifiable information?

Any reduction in the grant would limit our capacity to continue providing comprehensive support for Young and Young Adult Carers across Uttlesford. The current grant has assisted with our core staffing costs and enabled us to provide a free service to Young Adult Carers in Uttlesford. We will continue to fundraise using our existing resources and funds raised locally will be used to support local services to Carers.

We do not charge for any of our services for Young and Young Adult Carers and their families have told us that this would detrimentally affect their ability to access support. Many Young and Young Adult Carers would be unlikely to continue to access our services and would therefore lose a valuable source of support, information and guidance.

Our learning and feedback from the previous grant period has informed us that Young and Young Adult Carers in Uttlesford want a seamless service that they can access when they require support including in school/college. Young Adult Carers we are currently working with said that their ideal model is for a Young Carers Club to run for Young Carers and then as they become Young Adult Carers, they can continue to contact the support worker during or after the club. They told us they want to retain the option of 'coffee-shop' meetings, but the continuity of the service and the same worker is

the most important aspect of provision that they want.

This feedback from Young Adult Carers forms the basis of our bid. A reduction in funding would compromise our ability to deliver a service that benefits the whole geographical area of Uttlesford for Young Carers, their transition to Young Adult Carers and the Young Adult Carers.

Check List

- **Most recent Audited financial accounts**



- **List of extra spending due to Covid-19**



- **Medium/Long term business plan**



- **Copy of the organisation constitution**



I confirm that:

- to the best of my knowledge the information given above is accurate;
- I am authorised to make this application on behalf of the organisation named overleaf;
- Neither I nor the organisation is seeking to obtain any personal or financial benefit from the project/initiative.