

Caerphilly Cares Case Study 2: Miss R

Referral From: Self-referral (via phonenumber)

What was the background?

Miss R initially contacted the Caerphilly Cares phone line to request an emergency food parcel for herself and her 3 children. She was struggling financially and had previously applied to the Discretionary Assistance Fund, however this had unfortunately been unsuccessful.

What Matters Conversation

Following a lengthy conversation with the Duty Officer about her situation, it was clear Miss R was struggling financially and she disclosed that her children were sleeping on mattresses on the floor. Despite other pressures, sourcing proper beds for her children was her priority but she admitted not knowing how to access support or indeed if any help was available to her.

What did we do?

The first action the Duty Officer completed was to process the foodbank voucher to meet the family's immediate need for food.

With permission from Miss R, the Duty Officer contacted the Tenancy Support Team (Caerphilly Homes) to outline the issues discussed in the initial phone call and make a referral for support with potential funding for the children's beds. The Tenancy Support Team agreed to contact Miss R to support with an application to Children In Need grant for the furniture.

Again, following permission from Miss R, the Duty Officer linked with St Gwladys Church who operate a project that distributes donated household items back out those in need in the community. St Gwladys Church were happy to support Miss R and issued a request for donations via their social media channels.

What were the Outcomes?

- Family supplied with emergency food parcel.
- Successful application to Children in Need resulting in set of bunk beds, single bed and 3 mattresses for the children.
- Miss R now aware of support available to her from Caerphilly Cares team & local Church project.

Who were the Partners?

- Upper Rhymney Valley Foodbank (Trussell Trust)
- Tenancy Support Team (Caerphilly Homes)
- St Gwladys Church, Bargoed

What are the next steps?

The Tenancy Support Team will review Miss R's circumstances and assess if she is eligible for any further financial support.

The Duty Officer will maintain 'light touch' contact with Miss R, building a relationship of trust to ensure her needs have been met and she knows who to contact should she need support in the future.



Caerphilly Cares Case Study 4 – Mr I

Referral From: Community Connectors

What was the background?

Mr I was initially referred to Caerphilly Cares by Community Connectors with limited information - he was bed-bound due to his MS diagnosis and was looking for a befriender. Mr I had originally reached out to Community Connectors for support but was referred on to Caerphilly Cares to access support via the Buddy Scheme.

What Matters Conversation

During the call with the Duty Officer Mr I stated he had carers who visited daily who supported his physical wellbeing but he would like someone to chat to on a friendship basis, preferably face to face with house visits. He wanted this to take place as soon as Caerphilly Cares were able to find a match, as he was bed-bound and had little interaction with anyone other than his carers. Mr I had previously expressed his love for the Navy, having served for many years and was keen to be matched with someone of similar interests.

What did we do?

The Duty Officer liaised with the CCBC Regional Armed Forces Covenant Liaison Officer to establish any organisations that could offer befriending support to veterans and agreed that the local Royal Navy Association would be the best fit.

The Royal Navy Association offer a befriending service delivered by veteran volunteers or volunteers with a keen interest in the armed services. The Association also offer a subscription to a monthly thirty-page booklet on related topics. When The Duty Officer contacted Mr I to share this information, he was ecstatic and could not wait to get in contact with the volunteer and receive the monthly booklet. The Duty Officer noticed an immediate difference in Mr I's tone and could tell he was looking forward to getting to know someone new.

What were the Outcomes?

- Volunteer befriender now visiting Mr I on a weekly basis for two hours a time
- Mutual friendship established between the volunteer and Mr I
- Monthly magazine delivered to Mr I's home address

Who were the Partners?

- Regional Armed Forces Covenant Liaison Officer, CCBC
- Newport Royal Navy Association



Caerphilly Cares Case Study 5: Mrs G

Referral From: Self-referral (via phonenumber)

What was the background?

Mrs G contacted the Caerphilly Cares phone line requesting a foodbank parcel for herself and her child.

What Matters Conversation

Mrs G was very distressed at the start of the call but through gentle questioning the Duty Officer established that she was in significant rent arrears and her private landlord had issued her with notice to leave the property. Mrs G had spent all her income attempting to pay the rent arrears and consequently had no money remaining to feed her family, which was her immediate priority.

What did we do?

The Duty Officer processed the Foodbank referral and arranged for the parcel to be delivered to Mrs G's home address by the Foodbank volunteers, as she had no access transport or budget to cover the cost of public transport.

With permission from Mrs G, the Duty Officer referred the case to the Tenancy Support Team (Caerphilly Homes). Through discussions with the Tenancy Support team, it was established that Mrs G had rent arrears in excess of £1500 and she had been issued with a section 21 notice by her landlord, which meant the threat of losing her home was very real.

As a tenant living in a private rental house, Mrs G was unaware that she was also eligible to apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP), which are available to any tenant in hardship regardless of tenure. The Tenancy Support Officer worked with Mrs G to complete an application for DHP.

What were the Outcomes?

- Emergency Food parcel delivered to the family's home
- Discretionary housing payment awarded lump sum of £1200.00 and an amount of £32.00 paid weekly for a period of 13 weeks
- Mrs G was able to negotiate a repayment plan with her landlord for the remaining debit

Who were the Partners?

- Foodbank (Trussell Trust)
- Tenancy Support Team (Caerphilly Homes)

What are the next steps?

Mrs G was extremely grateful for the support received and commented that "a weight had been lifted" off her resulting in improved wellbeing as she hadn't been sleeping due to the worry. The Duty Officer will maintain contact with her over the next few weeks to ensure she has no further support needs.



Caerphilly Cares Case Study 6: Mrs AY

Referral from: Volunteer Buddy (supporting AY)

What is the background?

During the first initial Covid-19 lockdown, AY received support for shopping from the Buddy scheme. The Buddy made the referral on AY's behalf as her rubbish & recycling collections were being consistently missed. The issue was escalated to the refuse department every couple of weeks and each time the issue was only temporarily resolved.

From this work a professional relationship developed between the Development Officer and AY, trust grew, and AY began opening up about other issues that mattered to her. It became clear more intense support was required for potentially numerous issues, and work continued over a 12-month period and to date is still progressing.

What Matters Conversation

Whilst the relationship developed the Development Officer began documenting AY's issues and facilitated discussions about what mattered most to her. AY found it difficult to explain how they felt but agreed that finances would be the main priority, along with gaining a new boiler having been without heat or hot water for over 6 months - ***'I don't know what to do anymore, I can't go another winter without a boiler, please help!'***

Bereavement support was another priority mentioned, as AY was grieving the loss of their partner and could not afford to pay for a headstone. Food was also a concern for AY as she could not afford to live a basic standard of life anymore.

What did we do?

Due to the multi-faceted nature of the case, the Development Officer has worked closely with a number of key partners (both internally & externally) to put appropriate crisis (short term) support, as well as longer lasting measures, in place for AY. As the initial referral related to issues with waste collections, this was dealt with first and the CCBC Refuse team were able to support with basic education for AY around appropriate recycling. An application to the NEST grant scheme was made for a replacement boiler to ensure the home was heated and hot water accessible.

AY mentioned that she was sleeping on the sofa in her living room as the stair lift in her home was not working and she was unable to climb the stairs. AY had previously paid for repairs but was no longer able to do this. The Development Officer contacted IAA and Occupational Therapy to ascertain if there was any support available, following which the Occupational Therapist submitted a WOA request for support in repairing the stair lift which was granted. AY is currently saving to be able to afford the initial payment and the application is being left open until this time.



Caerphilly Cares Case Study 7– Mr X

Referral From: Community Connectors

What was the background?

Mr X called into the Caerphilly Cares central number asking for support to remove his sofa from his property. He was very angry and frustrated at his situation, having a disability meant he could not physically move the sofa out of his property for refuse to collect from the curb side. Due to Covid restrictions at the time CCBC staff were not able to enter the property. Mr X was so frustrated at 'The Council' he was going to set fire to the sofa and place posters onto the local roundabout to tell everyone how badly he felt he was being treated.

What Matters Conversation

During the first conversation the man was reluctant to engage as he was so angry and continued to shout at the call handler. Using 'what matters techniques' during subsequent calls the Officer was able to de-escalate the conversation and confirm what Mr X wanted that could be realistically achieved. Once calm, Mr X was reassured that Caerphilly Cares would support him to resolve the situation, but it may take a few days to find a solution.

What did we do?

The call handler co-produced a plan with Mr X and agreed to speak to Refuse Team on his behalf, keeping him updated at all stages to maintain his engagement. Refuse Team explained that they could not help the man due to the restrictions and could only collect from the curb side as per CBCB policy.

In order to resolve the situation, Mr X was assigned a Buddy volunteer to help move the sofa from the doorway to the curb side and this was actioned in time for the curb side collection. Mr X was very grateful and thanked the Duty Officer for all their support and said he was glad somebody was listening to him.

What were the Outcomes?

- Trusted, positive professional relationship built with the Council.
- Customer reported he felt 'listened to'
- Sofa moved by Buddy volunteer and collected by CCBC as planned.
- No potential anti-social behaviour took place.
- No loss of reputation for CCBC.

Who were the Partners?

- CCBC Refuse & Cleansing Team
- Buddy Scheme (GAVO & Caerphilly Cares)



What are the next steps?

The Duty Team carried out several follow up calls with Mr X but no further issues were forthcoming and in agreement with him, the case was closed to the team. However Mr X is aware he can contact the team for any support needs in the future.



Caerphilly Cares Customer Testimonials

Members will recognise that the support provided has been life changing for many of our residents and the quotes highlighted below give an insight into the difference the team is making to our residents' lives.

- Mr S, Blackwood
"You are an angel"; "I would have given up without you", "I cannot thank you enough", "I am so grateful" "Honestly, you made my year" "Cannot put into words how grateful I am with all my heart."
- Mr and Mr M from New Tredegar
'Thank you so much for all of the time you spent helping us, it has changed our lives so much and cannot thank you enough for what you have done for us. '
- Mr J from Caerphilly
'You are an outstanding example of CCBC staff that raised hope in the most difficult times I have ever encountered in my life, I could not have managed without you.'
- Mr A from Bedwas
"We would not have got 1/10th of the way without your support", "You are the one who has sorted out all of this for us" "We would not have known what we were entitled to without you"
- Mrs P from New Tredegar
I could not believe it when I got the extra money It was like winning the lottery, a safety net, always there to fall back on.
- Ms T, Cefn Fforest
The welfare benefits officer has been an absolute gem, her support after I came out of work has been great, she is knowledgeable, kind and very patient. Without her help I would not have been able to apply for any benefits, some of which I didn't know existed or thought I won't be entitled too.
- Mr E, Caerphilly:
A big thank you for all your support in helping me with benefits I didn't know I could get and with food parcels. You have supported me through a very difficult time in my life. Thank you. If there was more people in the world like you this world would be a better place.
- Mr C, Risca
Absolutely fantastic service, made us more confident, 100% more helpful than anyone else and if it wasn't for them we wouldn't know how we would have managed.



- Mrs C, Hengoed
Thank you for your recent support, I really appreciate the way you dealt with my call with a friendly and informative manner, displaying excellent customer service and responding promptly and efficiently. It has been quite stressful recently, but your response really helped, thank you.
- Miss T, Caerphilly
The only person who has helped me, going above and beyond for me. Always keeping in touch to keep me updated on everything.” “Always really helpful with everything and you are a “fountain of knowledge, and can always find a way to give the support needed”
- Mrs R, Pontllanfraith
I was so concerned things were causing me a tremendous amount of stress. I am very grateful for the help I received; I could not have sorted this out with your help”
- Mr S, Gelligaer
“it’s been fantastic speaking to you, you’ve taken a load off my mind and I feel better as I didn’t know all the help I could get”

The volunteering opportunities offered as part of Caerphilly Cares have continued to have a positive impact on both the lives of vulnerable people and the volunteers throughout the year. During a period of uncertainty, when it has been difficult for the population to interact & connect in the usual ways, the Buddy Scheme volunteers continued to provide a lifeline for some members of the community.

“My buddy does not have family near and some weeks I am the only face to face contact she has.”

“I think ** appreciates my calls, she’s always grateful and says thanks for ringing.”

“I enjoy chatting to my buddy and hearing about her week. I feel like I’m making a difference, which is great.”

“My buddy has limited mobility & lacks support from family & other services. She is coping with complex medical conditions & mental health issues. She finds it reassuring to know at the very least she has a friendly phone call every week & the food shopping is sorted.”

As these quotes demonstrate, the benefits of volunteering are felt keenly by both the volunteer and the recipient, and this is something that will be built upon as the new Befriending scheme is developed and launched in Spring 2022

“Making a difference to someone’s life by providing support, assistance and helping to reduce loneliness.”

“For me, feeling that I am helping someone who needs it, we never know when ourselves or our family members may need support.”

