**Case Study**

Mr & Mrs G have a large family made up of adult children and a teenager who has complex needs including Autism. For years they went on with their lives unaware of support services available to them. Periodically, this had been very challenging. Their mental health deteriorated significantly; they felt not listened to, unsupported and their frustration soon turned into withdrawal from society and subsequent social isolation. Mr & Mrs G struggled with trust based on their experiences and felt they only had each other to confide in.

This continued for several years until Mrs G made the decision to contact the Carers Support Project. Mr G was not in a good frame of mind at that time and his wife recognised this was not healthy for them both; she was looking after his needs, her own and trying to support their children, especially the youngest.

Contact was first made with the Project in 2019 but, understandably, it took some time for Mr & Mrs G to consider the options the Project had to offer, especially where group activities were available. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 Pandemic put an end to any planned face to face activities for some time although telephone support was available to all Carers during the pandemic including Mr & Mrs G.

In 2022, after speaking with Support Staff at the project who provided lots of reassurance, Mr & Mrs G attended their first event. This was a significant step for them; even though they attended together and were provided with an overview of what to expect, they were extremely anxious.

As time has moved forward so have Mr & Mrs G. They have become regular attendees at Project activities and workshops. They have enjoyed a full range of experiences on offer including emotional support, time out, creative activities and family excursions. On one occasion, Mrs G attended a group session alone when Mr G was unwell indicating a real shift. This is because she had made friends at the Project and felt supported and comfortable in their presence.

Mr & Mrs G have both spoken openly to other Carers and Project Staff about how they feel these days; they’ve mentioned they are far less isolated, have more confidence to request support and very importantly, feel happier and more relaxed. This has enabled them to become more resilient and prepared for the future, as they are realistic that there will be further challenges along the way.