

# NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL CAREERS STRATEGY



# FOREWORD

## Cllr Gill Mercer

### *Adults, Health and Wellbeing*

Carers do a fantastic job looking after their loved ones. This strategy sets out how we will help them, whether it is providing information, helping them to fit caring around their day to day lives or having a well deserved break. We will also set up a Carers Forum to continue to work with carers to keep this strategy under review.



## David Watts

### *Executive Director, Adults, Health Partnerships and Housing (DASS)*

We value the significant contribution that unpaid carers make in our local communities. This strategy has been developed in partnership with unpaid carers and sets out our shared ambitions for how we will continue to support unpaid carers in their essential role.

This strategy is the start of a journey for us in further developing our offer to unpaid carers and strengthening our ability to work in partnership with unpaid carers as we move onto implementing the ambitions that are set out in this document.

We will work tirelessly in partnership with experts by experience to ensure that this strategy comes to life and begins to make a real difference to people's lives; ensuring there is an offer across north Northamptonshire that provides effective support, information and advice to improve the lives of unpaid carers as well as those individuals you support.



## Alice Turrell

### *Expert By Experience*

As a carer juggling full-time work, raising three children, and coping with close bereavements, I've intimately experienced the challenges, struggles, and exhaustion that come with caregiving. It's a journey that's as complex as it is rewarding, balancing the needs of those we care for with our own personal lives.

Every day feels like a delicate juggling act, with demands pulling us in multiple directions. But amidst it all, there's a deep sense of purpose and love that keeps us going, knowing that we're making a difference in the lives of our loved ones.

We're no strangers to the emotional toll of caregiving, from feelings of guilt and isolation to moments of resilience and overwhelming love. Yet, through it all, we find strength in connection and community, supporting each other through shared experiences.

As carers, we have a vital role in shaping strategies that support our needs. By raising our voices and advocating for greater recognition, support, and inclusivity, we can drive positive change and empower fellow carers to thrive in both their personal and professional lives.

Recognising the diversity of the carer experience is crucial. Each of us brings unique perspectives and challenges to the table, and it's essential to embrace inclusivity and cultural sensitivity in our support systems. By honouring the contributions of carers from all backgrounds, we can create a more equitable and inclusive society.

Our roles as carers are ever-evolving, responding to changing circumstances and needs. It's essential that support services and resources remain flexible and adaptable to accommodate our evolving needs at different stages of our caregiving journey.

Together, we have the power to create a future where carers are

valued, supported, and empowered. As we look ahead, let's remember the transformative power of collective action and our ability to effect meaningful change in the lives of carers and their families.

The North Northants carers strategy fills us with hope and possibility. While the challenges may seem daunting, our collective commitment to creating a more inclusive, supportive, and empowering environment for carers is unwavering.

Let's seize this opportunity to prioritise the needs of carers and invest in their well-being and success. By working together with carers and policymakers, we can create a future where carers are valued, supported, and empowered without compromise.

Together, let's remain steadfast in our commitment to building a more inclusive, supportive, and equitable society for all carers in North Northants. Through advocacy, collaboration, and empathy, we can ensure a brighter, more hopeful future for all carers in our community.





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# Definition of a Carer

There are three statutory definitions of a Carer, these are:

## The Parent Carer



The Children Act, 1989 defines this term as a person aged 18 or over, who provides or intends to provide, care for a disabled child for whom the person has parental responsibility.

## The Young Carer



The Children Act, 1989 defines this term as being someone under 18 who helps to look after another person but not under a contract or scheduled voluntary work.

## The Adult Carer



The Care Act, 2014 defines this as an adult, i.e., a person aged 18 or over, who is providing care and/or support for another adult, for free, but not under a contract or scheduled voluntary work.

# Introduction

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Welcome to our first North Northamptonshire All Age Carers Strategy, which outlines our intentions to improve and develop services and experiences for unpaid carers, of all ages, who provide care in North Northamptonshire.

It also details our commitment to work collaboratively to ensure carers are supported in the best way possible throughout their caring journey.

North Northamptonshire Council will underpin the strategy by ensuring our values and behaviours are woven throughout this strategy, and are visible at the point of delivery.



# The Value of Care - some key statistics:



The most recent Census in 2021 puts the estimated number of unpaid carers across the UK at **5.7 million**

**9%**

This means that around 9% of people are providing unpaid care. However, Carers UK research in 2022 estimates that the number of unpaid carers could be as high as 10.6 million (Carers UK, Carers Week 2022 research report).



Over the 10 year period between 2010-2020, every year, 4.3 million people became unpaid carers – 12,000 people a day (Petrillo and Bennett, 2022).

**59%**

Of unpaid carers are women (Census 2021). Women are more likely to become carers and to provide more hours of unpaid care than men. More women than men provide high intensity care at ages when they would expect to be in paid work (Petrillo and Bennett, 2022).



One in seven people in the workplace, in the UK, are juggling work and care (Carers UK, Juggling Work and Care, 2019).

**£445  
million**

Unpaid carers in England and Wales contribute a staggering £445 million to the economy every day – that's £162 billion per year (Petrillo and Bennett, 2023).

**£164  
billion**

The value of unpaid care is equivalent to a second NHS in England and Wales, which in 2020/21 received an estimated £164 billion in funding (Petrillo and Bennett, 2023).



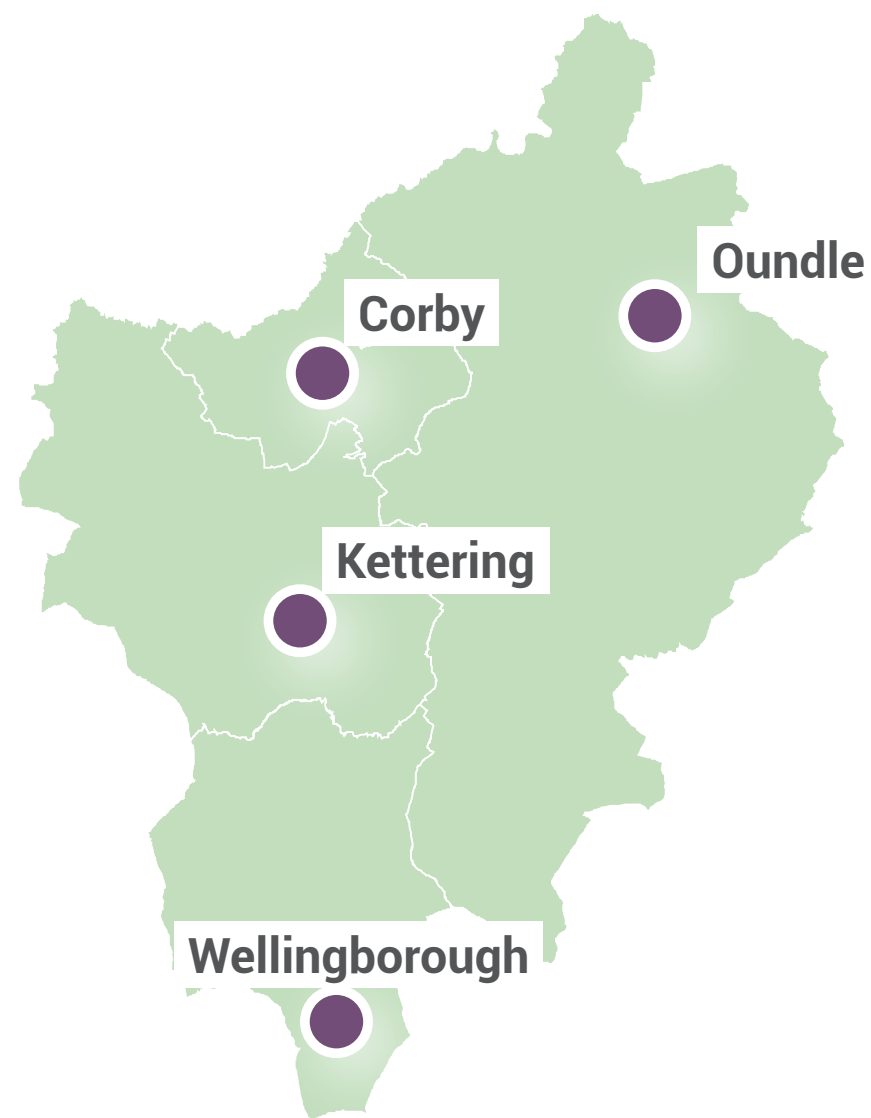
# Carer Demographics in North Northamptonshire

The Census of 2021 informs us that there are currently 28,916 residents that recognise themselves as a carer in North Northamptonshire

We know of 10,190 adult carers and 756 Young Carer as they registered with our Supporting Carers Service, this service is provided by our contracted partner Northamptonshire Carers.

The Office of National Statistics (ONS) informs us of the following hours of care delivered by carers living in North Northamptonshire:

Number of hours of care delivered per week	Number of carers providing the hours
0-19	14,066
20-49	5,881
50+	8,969



# Carer Demographics in North Northamptonshire

The main areas in North Northamptonshire with the highest percentage of people providing unpaid care were concentrated around Corby, Kettering, Rushden, and Wellingborough.

Of the 28,916 people providing unpaid care in North Northamptonshire, 4,944 were aged 15 and under, 1,464 were aged 16-24, 2,657 were aged 25-34, 6,818 were aged 35-49, 10,603 were aged 50-64, and 6,877 were aged 65 years and over (NOMIS Census 2021).

In North Northamptonshire, people aged 55-59 provided the most unpaid care (15.7%) (England 16.4%). At the two extremes of the age range, 1.3% of people in North Northamptonshire aged 5-17 provided unpaid care (England 1.4%), whilst 4.5% of people aged 90 and over provided unpaid care (England 4.9%). Source: Office for National Statistics (Office for National Statistics)

Among the 1 in 10 (8.6%) people in North Northamptonshire who provided unpaid care, 3.0% provided nine hours or less of unpaid care a week (England 3.2%), whilst 2.7% provided 50 or more hours of care a week



**28,916**

On Census Day 2021, there were 28,916 people in North Northamptonshire providing unpaid care to family and friends. This is equivalent to 8.6% of the local population aged five years and over, which is (statistically) significantly lower than the England average of 8.9% (figure 1)



**33.6**

% of carers who receive direct payments 2022/23 in North Northamptonshire

# Current offer for Carers In North Northamptonshire

North Northamptonshire Council provide a range of services to Carers through our contracted provider- Northamptonshire Carers

**Carers  
Support  
Payments**

**Respite Services:**  
Community Companions  
Crisis Response Service  
Planned Break Service

**Carers  
Assessment**

**Information  
and Advice**

**24 Hour  
Support  
Line**

**Peer  
Support  
Program**

**Support  
Groups**

**Training**

**Social  
Groups**

**Carer  
Advocacy**



# Current offer for Carers In North Northamptonshire

North Northamptonshire Council provide a range of services to Young Carers through our contracted provider- Northamptonshire



# North Northamptonshire Council's Corporate Strategy

North Northamptonshire Council was formed in April 2021, that a Corporate Strategy was developed with 6 six key commitments:

1. **Active, fulfilled lives:** We will help people live healthier, more active, independent and fulfilled lives.
2. **Better, brighter futures:** We will care for our young people, providing them with a high quality education and opportunities to help them flourish.
3. **Safe and thriving places:** We will enable a thriving and successful economy that shapes great places to live, learn, work and visit.
4. **Green, sustainable environment:** We will take a lead on improving the green environment, making the area more sustainable for generations to come.
5. **Connected Communities:** We will ensure our communities are connected with one another so they are able to shape their lives and the areas where they live.
6. **Modern public services:** We will provide efficient, effective and affordable services that make a real difference to all our local communities.

Our key commitments to help ensure that the priorities we make, now and in the future, maintain the necessary breadth of focus in those areas that we believe matter most.

# North Northamptonshire Council's Corporate Strategy

What does the strategy say about Carers?

## Commitment 1 - Active, fulfilled lives:

Identify the priority to value and support carers (and volunteers). As outlined below:

- Work with Northamptonshire Carers to deliver carers needs assessments, a carers forum, and other support such as a sitting service and respite care.
- Work with carers to establish the support that is needed and determine how this support can be best delivered.
- Train carers in using complex aids and equipment.
- Identify children who are carers and ensure support is in place to allow them to live their lives.
- Deliver the Carers Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) which includes the exploration of the needs of older carers.
- Support adult carers who report that they have not had as much social contact as they would like through social prescribing.
- Ensure those in a management role within the Council are enabled to support working carers.





# North Northamptonshire Council's Adult Social Care Strategy 2023- 2028

## Future Strengths Based Ways of Working

- Person centered strength-based safe care
- Single route of access into adult social care with the right allocation to community places / hubs
- Information, advice and signposting embedded – conversation 1
- Carers, friends and families involved most of the time when appropriate
- Strengths based three conversations embedded with entire ASC workforce
- Co-production embedded
- Safeguarding culture owned by all to provide a person-centered outcome based on making safeguarding personal
- Reduction of handoffs between services supported by the right technology
- Appropriate and timely housing and accommodation offers
- Needs based population commissioning, contracting underpinned by integrated brokerage and commissioning based at Place



# Northamptonshire All Ages Integrated Carers Support Strategy 2023 - 2027

The Northamptonshire Carers Partnership have developed an Integrated Care System All Ages Carers Support Strategy 2023-2027. The strategy focuses on progressing collaborative co-design of integrated service solutions.

## The 10 categories of need identified in the strategy :

1. Carers in Crisis
2. Identification/awareness and signposting/navigation.
3. Assessments and planning\* (contingency, anticipatory and advanced care\*).
4. Breaks and respite and life outside caring.
5. Carers health and well-being.
6. Integrated approaches, collaborative arrangements & system priorities.
7. Young Carers and Young Adult Carers.
8. Specific cohorts and need.
9. Inclusion and diversity.
10. Poverty, disadvantage, social exclusion.



# Considerations from these Strategies

Single route of access into adult social care with the right allocation to community places / hubs

Carers, friends and families involved most of the time when appropriate

Focus on carers health and well-being.

Identification/ awareness and signposting/ navigation

Connected communities

Active, fulfilled lives

Co-production embedded

Young Carers and Young Adult Carers

Preventing Carers in Crisis

Better, brighter futures - Young Carers

Information, advice and signposting embedded – conversation 1





# What Carers have told us- what **IS** working well

Young Carers support has been amazing - very proactive with son (my carer), and also when he lost his dad, there was nowhere for grief counselling, but Young Carers service stepped in. Son was also involved in the recruitment process of Young Carers services. Carers choir and day trips have been excellent.

I value all support, as it keeps me mentally well.



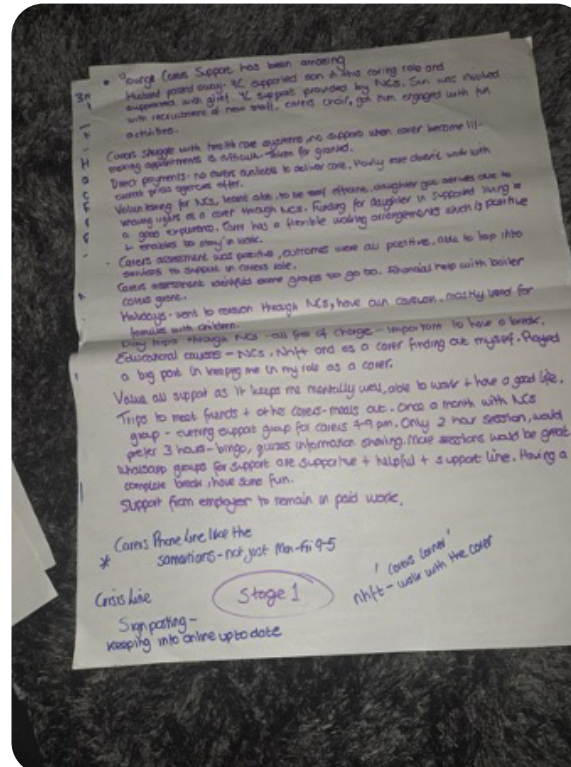
My daughter is in a Supported Living arrangement, and is living a really good life, this has been a good experience for me, as it has enabled me to stay in my caring role.

I had a positive carers assessment, it identified outcomes and I was able to get some support.

# What Carers have told us- what IS working well

Their (contracted provider) information and range of services is impressive. As well as being named carer for my husband, I also have very elderly parents living 100 miles away, and in their area there is nothing like this organisation. We often don't realise how lucky we are locally to have such a resource.

I received a carers grant that supported me with getting my boiler fixed.



Working full time helps me keep my identity and gives me respite, I am lucky to work for an organisation that recognises this.

# What Carers have told us- what **ISN'T** working well

There needs to be more practical support for carers, so they can get help in their role. Help with shopping, time out, etc

Financial support

It is difficult to navigate through social services and the system when you are new to such services . It isn't streamlined, which makes things stressful

Lack of support to keep me (carer) well

I never get a regular break

Make it clear what is potentially available and the criteria for that





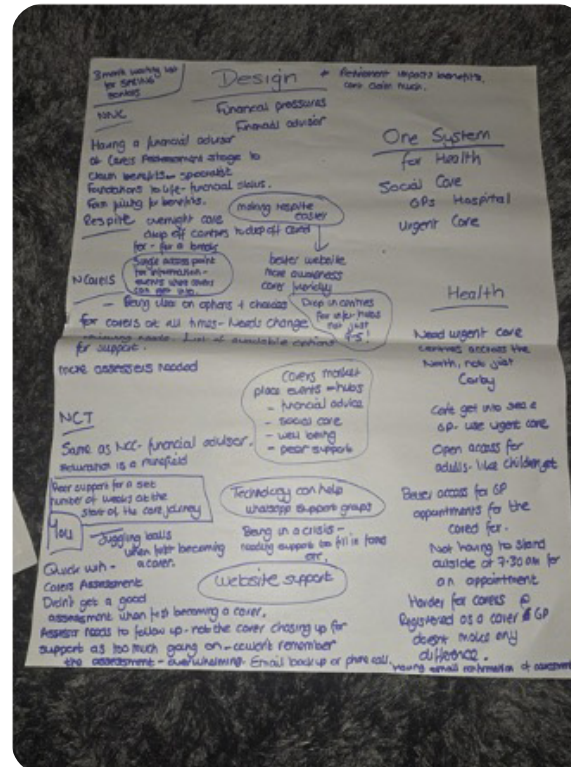
# What Carers have told us- what ISN'T working well

Keep raising awareness.

Many people/spouses/offspring don't think of themselves as carers and therefore may not be aware of services available.

Ironically, at the same time, caring can be all consuming and can gradually take over a carer's life, sapping energy, confidence, earnings, experiences, healthy relationships etc

Being in a crisis situation and having to fill out forms/red tape



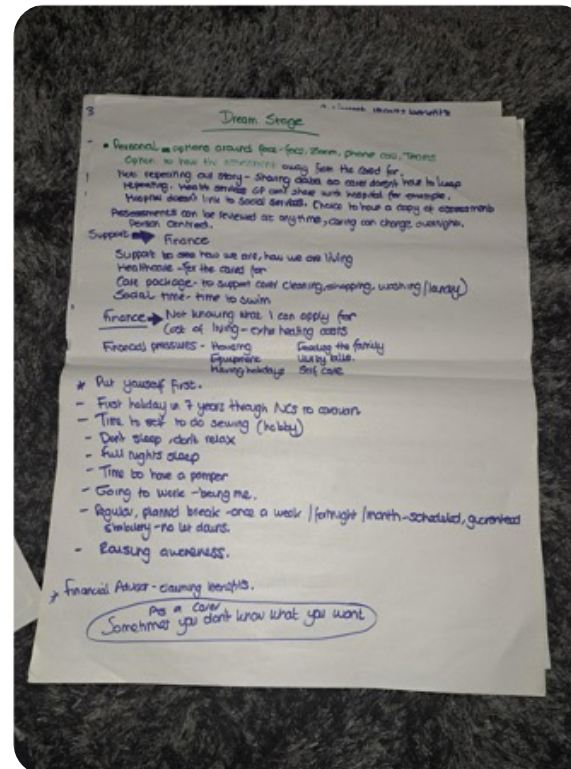
Having a bad carers assessment, with no follow up

# What Carers have told us - THE DREAM

Not repeating my story, more joined up services

Peer support, a buddy.

An online carers directory – so I can easily access support



A regular planned break

A full nights sleep

A one stop shop for information and advice - a single point of contact

# Young Carers

Northamptonshire Carers completed a survey with Young Carers. The organisation acknowledges that the response to the survey is low in numbers (10), but are confident that survey findings reliably represent the issues, impacts and support needs of local Young Carers, as the local findings are consistent with a range of other national Young Carers research.

## Some key information gathered from the survey:

- 40% are caring for more than 1 person
- 30% estimated they were caring for 50 hours plus and 30% for 40 hours. 30% said 'Other'
- 50% of respondents had their own mental health needs
- 40% had found it 'difficult' to get support, 60% had found it 'neither easy or difficult'
- 60% were caring for a parent, 70% for a sibling and 10% for a child.
- The main sources of help and support were: family and friends, Northamptonshire Carers, education, doctor, social services, school counsellors and community groups

## Young Carers were asked: What types of services and support do Carers need in the future?

- Mental health support
- Just someone to understand and to talk to
- I think places of education do need to be better at supporting Carers and doing so in a timely manner
- More activities for Carers
- 1:1 time with Young Carer Workers

Northamptonshire Young Carers have produced a short film which highlights **what it means to be a Young Carer**

**Young Carers One Million of Us x subs (youtube.com)**



# Key Strategic Priorities

Following the gathering of data and feedback, we have been able to identify the key priorities of carers in North Northamptonshire



**Identification  
and  
recognition**

**Joined up  
systems- telling  
my story once**

**A Life  
Alongside  
Caring**

**Carers  
breaks**

**Information  
and advice**

# Identification and Recognition

## What else did Carers tell us?

- Carers living in North Northamptonshire have informed us that more needs to be done to identify carers. More awareness campaigns to encourage carers to recognise themselves as a carer is required.
- This is further supported through the Census data, with 28,916 carers identifying themselves as Carers, but only 10,190 Adult and 756 Young Carers are registered with North Northants Council.

## What will we do?

- Collaborate with, and support the Provider, to improve on promoting and delivering awareness campaigns, events and support available for all Carers,
- Work with Northamptonshire Children's Trust to ensure awareness about Young Carers is promoted widely, to enable children and/or their family or friends, to recognise themselves as Carers,
- Improve North Northamptonshire Council's website information for Carers and clearly signpost them to a range of supportive services,
- Hold an Annual Carers Fair in Partnership with local organisations and voluntary sector groups (VCSE)
- In partnership with Public Health, produce a Carers Insight Pack , which presents the key facts and needs of carers living in North Northamptonshire. Local and national data will be utilised wherever possible to highlight important issues which may lead to recommendations for further, more detailed work such as deep-dives, JSNAs (Joint Strategic Needs Assessments) and service reviews.



# Identification and Advice

## What else did Carers tell us?

- The overwhelming impression was that improvements are needed regarding Information & Advice.

## Carers told us that Information and Advice needs to be :

- Clear
- Easily Available
- Accessible
- In one place
- Age appropriate (Young Carers)

## Carers told us that their priority topics for Information and Advice are :

- Finances
- Support for Carer Health and Wellbeing
- Support for Cared for – such a support group info related to a condition or diagnosis
- Training, such as manual handling , or how to administer medication
- Understanding the social care system.

## What will we do?

- Support our contracted Provider to better deliver Information and Advice services by working in partnership with them
- Co-produce Information and Advice services when recommissioning the Supporting Carers Service (current contract ends 30th September 2024), ensuring future services meet the expectations set out by Carers during the engagement sessions,
- Support Northamptonshire Children’s Trust to undertake a service review on their provision of services for Young Carer, collaboratively map out these services, and identify gaps,
- Work with local VCSE sector organisations to explore the possibility of a one-stop shop for financial advice for Carers. Financial information, advice and support in one place was a “dream” scenario for carers attending the engagement workshops. The “dream” was described as a “Money Saving Expert (Martin Lewis) for carers”
- Work with our contracted Provider and internal NNC services to ensure all related documentation is accessible online, and provide information in other formats as requested,
- Produce an online directory of Carers Services available in North Northamptonshire in partnership with our contracted Provider and the VCSE.



# Carers Breaks

## What else did Carers tell us?

Much of the feedback received during our engagement with Carers indicated that Carers need a break in order to focus on their own health and wellbeing. The following statements have been taken from Carers taking part in our engagement forums:

- "To have a regular break once a week, even if only for an hour, to have a coffee and read a magazine alone".
- "Swimming relaxes me, I want to be able to go and not have to worry" (about the cared for).
- "Sometimes being a Carer is overwhelming, appointments, paperwork, finances applying for this that and the other. A weekend away, without any responsibility would take some pressure off."
- "I have my own health issues, it is difficult to manage my own health needs when I have to look after my husband."
- "I crave a full nights sleep, without any interruptions."
- "Working full time and caring is a constant juggle. I feel like I can never truly relax."
- "Meeting my friends for a girls night out, and not having to worry about caring and having a hangover the next day would be such a treat! I can't do this at the moment, as I have no-one to care for my adult child to give me that break."

## What will we do?

- Review the current Carers breaks elements that sit within our Supporting Carers offer, which is contracted to our Provider. Once this review is completed, analyse how the services are utilised, the demand for services and how we can improve Carers breaks.
- Review the current provision for Young Carers, which is contracted to our current Provider. Once completed, analyse how the services are utilised, the demand for services and how we can improve time away from caring for Young Carers
- Undertake a mapping exercise of available respite for Parent Carers in North Northants
- Undertake a mapping exercise of available respite available within NNC services
- Understand what the VCSE sector can offer, in terms of breaks for Carers, and how these can be utilised.
- Ensure that these offers are easy to understand.
- Promote Carers breaks offers more widely.

# A life alongside caring

## What else did Carers tell us?

- In addition to needing a break, it was clear that Carers also needed to retain their own identity, and have opportunities to access things that were important to them, such as hobbies, support groups, education, work and volunteering.

## What will we do?

- Raise awareness of the caring role with local employers and businesses, including their legal duties to Carers
- Increase the number of employers in North Northamptonshire to sign up to the Carer Friendly Employer Accreditation Scheme provided by Northamptonshire Carers
- Raise awareness of Young Carers in local schools, colleges and educational settings
- Through our Supporting Carers Service Offer, ensure there is a robust provision for Carers interested in starting/returning to work, accessing education opportunities or seeking to volunteer. This will include support with CV writing, interview skills and opportunities in personal development.
- In collaboration with the NCT, Northamptonshire Carers and local organisations, map services that are available for children, to enable Young Carers to have easy access to all educational and wellbeing support on offer.
- Undertake an in-depth review of the wide range of support and social groups available to all ages of Carers through the current Supporting Carers Service offer. Continue to provide these services in partnership with our contracted provider.
- Promote, more widely, the support available and the social groups that are available to all age Carers.



# Joined up systems- telling my story once

## What else did Carers tell us?

- We were informed that Carers often have to repeat their story to a multitude of different professionals, this can be tiring, overwhelming, frustrating and lengthy.
- Carers felt that this often led to barriers, delays in receiving services and not establishing relationships with professionals.
- Carers also felt that they couldn't follow their own journey, or the journey of the cared for person easily. One carer told us that they could easily track a parcel out for delivery, but they couldn't track where their loved one was in Adult Social Care system.

## What will we do?

- Work closely with the Northamptonshire Carers Partnership and the Integrated Care System (All Ages Carers Support Strategy 2023-2027), to understand the challenges faced by carers and the systems they encounter. Work together to make improvements across the Integrated Care System.
- Develop a Carers Portal, by working with internal NNC teams to explore the possibility of a dedicated Carers Portal through the NNC website, so that Carers can track their cared-for persons' journey through Adult Social Care.
- Understand how Young Carers experience contact with professionals, and explore ways of how we can make improvements.

# Measuring Success

## The tools we will use to measure success :

- Engagement with Carers via workshops, focus groups and an annual satisfaction survey.
- Work with our contracted providers and review performance on a quarterly basis.
- Set up an Expert-by-Experience Carers Board to monitor the implementation of the strategy.

Priority	How we will measure success
Identification and Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased number of registered carers of all ages</li> <li>• A more diverse group of registered carers</li> <li>• A completed Carers Insight Pack</li> </ul>
Information and Advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carers reporting it is easy/easier to access Information and Advice</li> <li>• A one-stop shop for financial advice for Carers is available</li> <li>• Accessible information is more widely available</li> <li>• An online directory of Carers services is available</li> </ul>
Carers Breaks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of service reviews for both Adult and Young Carers breaks</li> <li>• Improvements to the carers break offer in the new Supporting Carers Service</li> <li>• Links with the VCSE sector are in place, and carers breaks offers are available</li> <li>• A clear pathway to access carers breaks is established</li> <li>• Carers are aware of the offers available</li> <li>• Carers reporting they are receiving a break</li> <li>• Carers reporting a variety of break</li> </ul>



Priority	How we will measure success
A life alongside caring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased attendances to support/social groups offered via the Supporting Carers Service</li> <li>• Carers reporting they are supported to start or remain in employment</li> <li>• Increase in employees signing up to the Carer Friendly Employer Accreditation Scheme provided by Northamptonshire Carers</li> <li>• Carers reporting they are able to take time to engage in their hobby/social group/events</li> <li>• Young Carers reporting they are accessing education as they wish</li> <li>• Young Carers reporting they are not educationally disadvantaged</li> </ul>
Joined up systems- telling my story, only once	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coproduction with the Integrated Care System and partners to make improvements</li> <li>• A carers portal on the NNC website is available for carers to follow their own, or their cared for persons journey</li> <li>• Carers reporting satisfaction with more joined up services</li> </ul>

# Thank you

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**The development of this strategy would not have been possible without the valuable contributions and support from the following individuals, organisations and groups :**

- Experts by Experience – individuals engaging in workshops, project boards and local bespoke surveys
- Carers UK
- Northamptonshire Carers
- Northamptonshire Young Carers
- Northamptonshire Carers Partnership
- North Northants LGBT+ Forum

# Further Information

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## National Information

- State of Caring survey | Carers UK
- People at the Heart of Care: adult social care reform white paper - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))
- Care Act 2014 ([legislation.gov.uk](http://legislation.gov.uk))
- Children and Families Act 2014 ([legislation.gov.uk](http://legislation.gov.uk))
- Informal carers - House of Commons Library ([parliament.uk](http://parliament.uk))
- Measures from the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework - NHS Digital
- Unpaid carers in the Armed Forces community | Research | Royal British Legion
- Measures from the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework - NHS Digital

## Local Information

- Corporate plan | North Northamptonshire Council ([northnorthants.gov.uk](http://northnorthants.gov.uk))
- Carers | North Northamptonshire Council ([northnorthants.gov.uk](http://northnorthants.gov.uk))
- Northamptonshire Carers Association ([northamptonshire-carers.org](http://northamptonshire-carers.org))
- LGBT Forum
- Carers partnership | Northamptonshire Carers Association ([northamptonshire-carers.org](http://northamptonshire-carers.org))