



All-Age Carers Strategy

April 2023 – March 2026

Contents

Page

Foreword	3
Who Are Carers?	4
Introduction to All-Age Carers Strategy	5
Carers Supported (2019 to 2022)	7
Reviewing the All-Age Carers Strategy	8
Our Duties Towards Carers	9
Carers in Waltham Forest	11
Our Core Offer to Carers	15
Our Commitments to Carers	16
Public Health for Carers	17
Measure of Success	19
NICE Quality Standards	20
All-Age Carers Support Pathway	21
Contact Us	22

Foreword

Opening message from:

- Cllr Louise Mitchell (Cabinet Member Adults)
- Cllr Kizzy Gardiner (Cabinet Member Children & Young People)

We want to start by saying “thank you” to all our residents who care for others in Waltham Forest. Whether you are an adult looking after a loved one, a neighbour, a friend; a parent who is caring for a child with additional and/or complex needs; or a young person who has additional caring responsibilities looking after an adult or sibling: “*thank you*”.

We know that you play a vital role in ensuring those cared for are accessing and receiving the support they need. Without you, your support, and your commitment, they would struggle. And as a carer, you may not have had the same opportunities and experiences as your peers, friends, and family members. The value of **carers’ contribution to the UK economy is estimated to be at £132b per year**¹. Due to your caring responsibilities, we recognise and acknowledge you may need support which ensure you have a life of your own alongside caring, allowing you to access and participate in activities and opportunities that may not usually be possible.

We know this was more evident during the pandemic, when some services had to close or reduce to a minimum, as the country went into lockdown. And without our carers in Waltham Forest, many who need day-to-day care and support would not have managed without your continued support, so thank you again. It is estimated that **carers saved the UK economy £530m everyday of the pandemic**, and the **collective care provided by families is valued to be at £135b** over the course of the pandemic².

We are now pleased and excited to present our All-Age Carers Strategy that you have influenced and shaped. Building on the successes from the previous three years (2019 to 2022), the next three-year strategy will push our commitments for people who care for loved ones further. We have made good progress over the past three years in establishing some important foundations, making new connections across the system, and delivering key programmes of work. We will use the next three years (2023 to 2026) to strengthen those connections, make new ones, ensure the needs of our carers are considered across the whole system, and deliver key programmes of work that will develop and enhance our offer to carers supporting vulnerable residents across the borough.

We will continue to work with our stakeholders, partners, providers, and the community, taking a “whole system approach” in ensuring the needs of carers have been considered when developing and delivering services. Through this strategy, we want to raise further awareness, shared understanding, and recognition of the invaluable support that you, as carers, provide in Waltham Forest. We want to make lives easier for carers where we can. We want to listen and respond to what you want and need, to support carers to enjoy and maintain a life where they are safe, healthy, well, connected with friends and family, feel resilient and independent.

From everyone here at Waltham Forest, a heartfelt “thank you” for your ongoing dedication and commitments to those who you care for.

¹ [Facts and figures - Carers UK](#)

² [Unpaid carers save UK state £530 million every day of the pandemic - Carers UK](#)

Who are Carers?

As defined by the NHS: *“A carer is anyone, including children and adults who looks after a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of their illness, frailty, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction and cannot cope without their support. The care they give is unpaid”*.³

The Carers Trust has used the following definition: *“A carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support”*.⁴

This strategy will focus on three core groups of carers and our universal offer. However, this will not exclude other groups of carers, such as “working carers” (people caring who juggle this with work), “former carers” (people who were carers, but where caring has come to an end) or “older carers” (people who are older adults with caring roles).

All-Age Carers Strategy

3 Core Groups + Universal Offer

(1) Young Carers (0 – 18)

Children under 18 who are in a position of caring for another, regardless of how much care or how frequently they provide the care, are young carers.

01



(2) Parent Carers

Parent Carers provide support to their children, including grown up children who could not manage without their help. The child/adult can be ill, disabled, or have mental health needs.

02



04



03



(3) Adult Carers (18+)

18 and over, caring for another with physical, mental or wellbeing needs which has an impact on their own needs, or likely to do so if relevant support has not been put in place.

(4) Universal Offer

Our universal offer is designed for all unpaid Carers who may need one off support/ intervention, or personalised information, advice and guidance from our dedicated Carers support service Carers First or digital services. This includes former Carers, Working Carers and Older Carers.



³ [NHS commissioning » Who is considered a carer? \(england.nhs.uk\)](#)

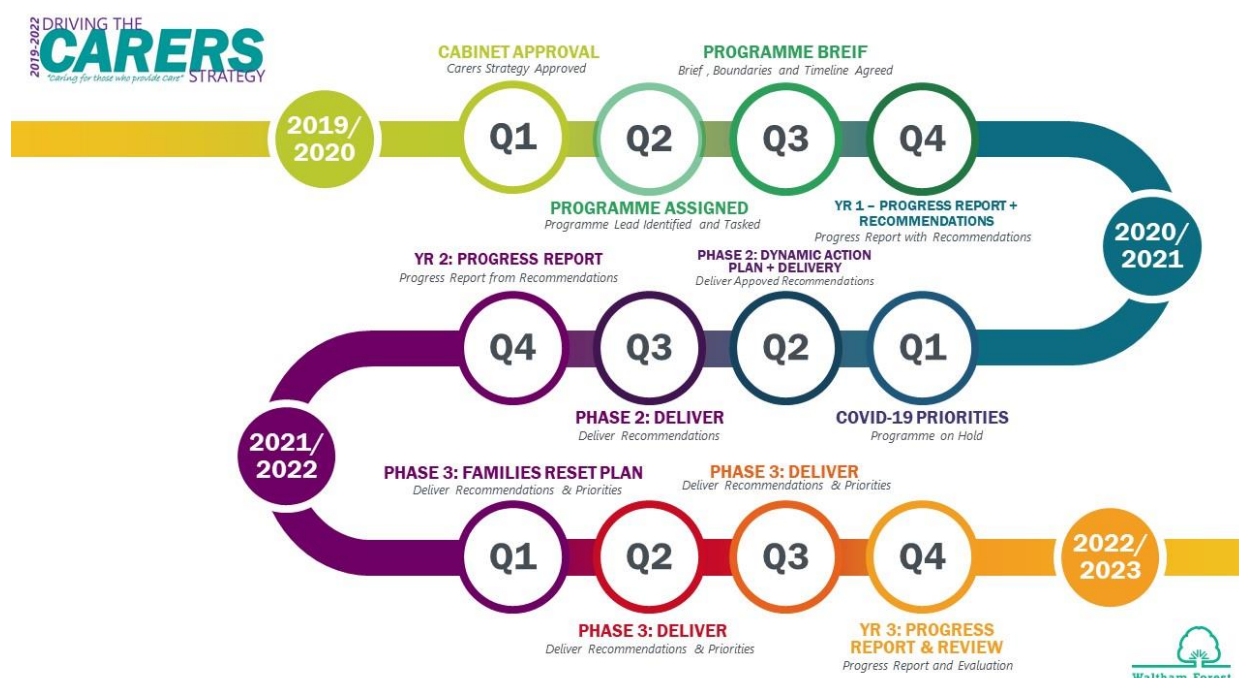
⁴ [About Us - Caring as an Unpaid Carer | Carers Trust](#)

Introduction to All-Age Carers Strategy

Our first All-Age Carers Strategy (2019 to 2022)⁵ was ratified by the London Borough of Waltham Forest Cabinet in March 2019 and came into effect from April 2019.

The strategy focused on three core groups of carers, plus our universal offer: **Universal Offer, Young Carers, Adults Carers** and **Parent Carers**. Each cohort had a lead service(s) who are responsible for delivering support, working towards achieving the commitments made, and the same will apply to the new commitments we make in this strategy. In addition, we know that there are other groups of carers such as carers who juggle caring with work, carers who are older, and carers where caring has come to an end, who also can access support through our named stakeholders and providers.

The Journey So Far (2019 to 2022):



Over the life cycle of the last strategy, we have delivered and achieved positive successes. Key areas of progress:

Carers Development Group

We established the Carers Development Group who meet regularly to influence, contribute, and shape the priorities that are delivered through our Carers Strategic Programme. The group's representation has significantly increased and now includes representatives from the Council, Health, Public Health, and Voluntary and Community Sector who all have a responsibility to provide support to carers. This will now also include carers and carer groups so we can co-develop the priorities and workstreams that will be delivered through the strategic programme.

New Carers Assessment, Plan and Reviews

Carers and practitioners said our Carers Assessment, Plan and Review process was too long, outdated and the process did not feel relevant to carers today. We consulted carers, front-line practitioners and managers, and developed and launched our new assessment, plan, and review process in June 2022 with the aim to improve the overall experience of carers accessing support from the Council.

⁵ [All Age Carers Strategy 2019-2022 \(public site\).pdf](#)

Young Adult Carers Protocol

We have developed a protocol, enhanced our systems, and adopted new policy which supports young adult carers aged 17 to 18, to make the seamless transition from Children's Services to Adult Services or Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), without disrupting support that is currently in place. Once transitioned, Adult Social Care or SEND lead on providing ongoing support in partnership with our providers to ensure that the carer's needs for support and care have been considered.

Carers Week Celebration and Carers Rights Day

We have joined the national campaign to celebrate and recognise the contributions of carers in Waltham Forest and beyond. Over the past three years, the Council has worked closely with its partners to deliver a variety of activities and opportunities to both carers and front-line teams. We have used this opportunity to say thank you to our carers, but also raise awareness, offer training, and help identify new carers who are supporting residents in Waltham Forest.

Communication and Messaging

We have enhanced our communication and messaging for carers. We have utilised a variety of campaigns, channels, and platforms to inform and update our carers on activities, events, campaigns, and of changes that impact them. We will continue to develop our messaging and engagement with carers as we recognise this is an area we need to continue to enhance and prioritise within the new strategy and our commitments.

Training and Development Opportunities

We continue to offer training and development opportunities for our carers, front-line practitioners, and managers. Our carers service provider Carers First continue to support carers via various training opportunities that are delivered in-person and remotely. For frontline practitioners and managers, we have developed and delivered a training session every quarter, designed to help raise the profile and awareness of carers, and the support available from services in Waltham Forest. We have also collaborated with our Safeguarding Adults Board to deliver themed training and opportunities related to safeguarding.

Contingency Planning (emergency planning)

In collaboration with our partners (NHS, Carers First and Apteligen), we have reviewed our Contingency Planning (emergency planning) arrangements for carers. The independent review and report made a number of recommendations. The commitment to deliver those recommendations will be included as a priority in this new strategy.

COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

During the COVID-19 pandemic, between 2020 and 2021, we worked closely with NHS Digital to prioritise carers in receiving their vaccination. 1,200 carers from the borough were invited to have their vaccination as a priority group. In addition, we ran dedicated campaigns to encourage carers to come forward and have their vaccinations.

Young Carers Programme

We have a dedicated in-house Young Carers Programme supporting over 200 young carers and their families at any one time. Over the past three years, we have tripled the number of young carers that are known and supported across the borough. Our Young Carers Programme is deemed as an exemplar and has been visited by several other London local authorities. In total, the Council is supporting more than 400 young carers and families across Early Help 0 to 19 and Children's Services.

Carers Supported (April 2019 to March 2022)⁶

Adult Carers



1,446 Carers Assessments completed – increment of 8.7% over this period.



319 Carers Reviews completed – increase of 419% over the same period.



783 Carers Support Plans completed – increase of 164% over the 3-year period.



1,838 Carers Payments awarded – increase of 27.8% over the same period.

Young Carers



162 Young Carers and Families supported in Children's Social Care – 41% increase.



867 Young Carers and Family Plans reviewed (EH and CSC) – 73% increase over this period.



957 Young Carers and Families supported across Early Help 0 to 19 – 59% increase.



640 Young Carers and Families supported via Young Carers Programme – Covid Project, Clubs, School, Grants, Tuition & Digital

Personalised Information, Advice and Guidance (Carers First)



974 referrals received by Carers First – 16% increase over the past 3 years.



389 Carers supported via one-to-one sessions – 45% increase over this period.



768 Carers assessed via Carers Star (Carers First) – 56% increase in the same period.



831 Carers accessed positive activities – 64% increase over the lifetime of this strategy.

⁶ Output data provided by WF Business Intelligence, WF Young Carers Programme and Carers First (October 2022)

Reviewing the All-Age Carers Strategy

The Council adopted a five-step process to review the All-Age Carers Strategy, which was ratified by the Cabinet in March 2019.



Step 1: Achievements

Each lead named service (stakeholder) under the All-Age Carers Strategy to report overall progress against the commitments that were made at the inception of the previous strategy (2019 to 2022).

Step 2: Voice of Carers

We consulted with carers and carer groups from all three core groups of the strategy: Young Carers, Adult Carers and Parent Carers. The consultation has been used to capture the views and experiences of carers. The process was also used as an opportunity for carers to prioritise what is important to them. These priority areas have been used as themes to set our new commitments for the next three years of the revised strategy (2023 to 2026).

Step 3: Commitments

Lead services have made commitments for the next three years of the strategy clearly outlining how they aim to enhance and provide better support and interventions for carers. The priority areas have been selected and ranked by carers who participated in the consultation process.

Step 4: Strategies

Develop the new All-Age Carers Strategy (2023 to 2026) using the reported service progress, carers voice, future commitments, staff and management consultation, borough priorities and national policies, standards, and statutory guidance.

Step 5: Plan and Deliver (Strategic Programme)

Devise and refresh a carers strategic programme to reflect the priorities and commitments. Report progress to Cabinet, Scrutiny Committee and Senior Management. Track and monitor progress through Carers Development Group and reporting framework.

Our duties towards Carers?

Your rights as a carer are underpinned by law which informs the way in which the Council and other organisations, including, Health, Schools, and Public Health, should support you and your family.

The **Care Act 2014**⁷ sets out the responsibilities the Council has - mainly for adult carers. We have a duty to offer you an assessment where you appear to have needs and to arrange support according to your needs, desired outcomes, and eligibility. You can be an adult carer and have an assessment with us if you are over 18 and care for another adult such as a spouse, parent, partner, friend, neighbour, relative or adult child who is an ordinary resident of Waltham Forest. You might also have caring responsibilities for different generations such as children and parents and/or you may even be receiving some care for yourself. You may be in receipt of Carers Allowance.

The **Children and Families Act 2014**⁸ sets out the responsibilities of the Council to assess parent carers of disabled children under 18. You are a parent carer if you are 18 or over and you are providing or intending to provide care for a disabled child and have parental responsibility for the child/children. This will be based on impact and not the amount of time spent in your caring role.

This act also sets out the responsibilities for the Council to carry out an assessment if you are under 18. A young carer is someone who intends to or who already looks after another person. This could be towards one of your siblings and/or parents or supporting a parent to care for a family member or friend. The assessment will look at the impact caring for someone has on you, and if this is appropriate for you to be doing that, and what support you might need as a young carer.

There are a range of other Acts that protect carers, including the **Human Rights Act 1998**⁹, the **2010 Equality Act**¹⁰ and the **Work and Families Act 2006**¹¹ which gives carers the right to request flexible working and the right to take unpaid time off during emergencies without affecting your employment.

The Council cannot deliver these duties alone and the law says that each partner of the Council must co-operate generally to improve outcomes for carers. Health is a particularly important partner of the Council, and we will work closely with our stakeholders and partners from across the whole system to ensure the needs and rights of carers are better understood so they can be considered and accounted for when developing services and programmes. This strategy will emphasise on taking a **“Whole System Approach”** to supporting carers of residents in Waltham Forest.

⁷ [Care Act 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

⁸ [Children and Families Act 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

⁹ [Human Rights Act 1998 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

¹⁰ [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

¹¹ [Work and Families Act 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

Legislations and National Policies

There are a number of statutes, national policies and standards that underpin our duties and commitments that will be delivered through this strategy.



The statutes and national policies will steer and shape our delivery to ensure that we are delivering our services and support in line with statutory requirements and best practice.

Most recently, the Government published its Adult Social Care system reform white paper, **'People at the heart of care'**¹² (December 2021). The white paper sets out a 10-year vision for care and support in England and is based on three key objectives:

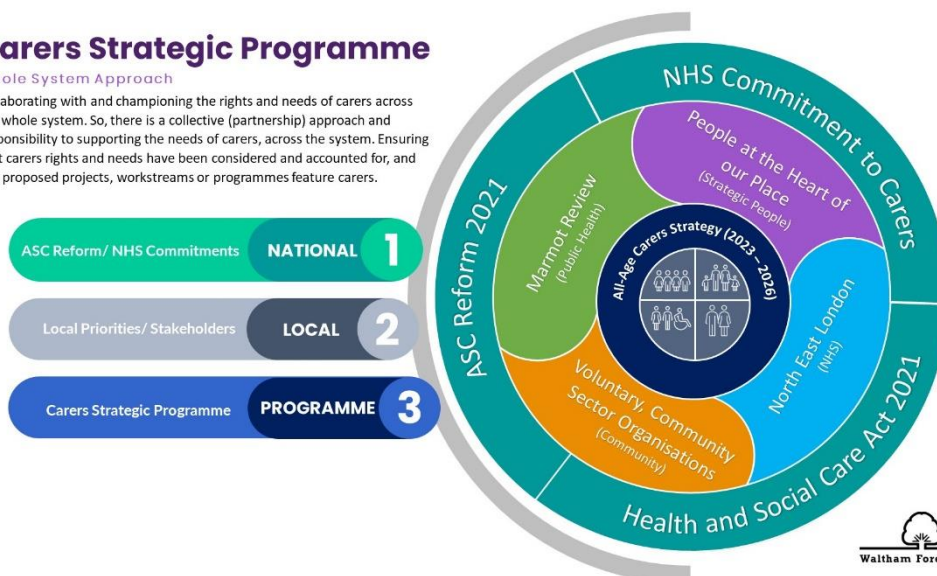
1. People have choice, control, and support to live independent lives
2. People can access outstanding quality and tailored care and support
3. People find adult social care fair and accessible

At a local level, the support, and services that we offer to our carers will be shaped by local priorities and programmes to ensure they meet the local needs of our carers via a number of organisations and programmes; **Whole System Approach**;

Carers Strategic Programme

Whole System Approach

Collaborating with and championing the rights and needs of carers across the whole system. So, there is a collective (partnership) approach and responsibility to supporting the needs of carers, across the system. Ensuring that carers rights and needs have been considered and accounted for, and any proposed projects, workstreams or programmes feature carers.



¹² [People at the Heart of Care – Adult Social Care Reform White Paper \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/101421/people-at-the-heart-of-care-adult-social-care-reform-white-paper.pdf)

Carers in Waltham Forest

It is estimated that eight per cent of the population in Waltham Forest provide unpaid care.

The 2021 census¹³ data estimates this to be 22,272 individuals who have caring responsibilities. Three point six (3.6) per cent of carers are providing 19 hours or less of unpaid care per week, 1.8 per cent are providing 20 to 49 hours of unpaid care per week, and 2.3 per cent of carers are providing 50 hours or more of unpaid care per week. Statistical data collated in 2010 by the Greater London Authority¹⁴ estimates that there are about 955 young carers in Waltham Forest.

In addition, Waltham Forest CCG¹⁵ (2015) estimated that there are more than 26,000 carers (sometimes called 'family carers') in Waltham Forest, and that more than 5,000 of those are providing more than 50 hours a week of unpaid care. The work that carers do can range from helping an elderly relative with domestic chores, to full-time personal care for a partner or friend who has a chronic health condition or a disability.

Carers in the UK

Facts and Figures published in 2019 found (A Carers UK report¹⁶):

One in eight adults (around 6.5 million people) are carers

- Every day, another 6,000 people take on a caring responsibility – that equals over 2 million people each year
- 58 per cent of carers are women and 42 per cent are men
- 1.4 million people provide over 50 hours of care per week
- Over 1 million people care for more than one person
- As of 2020, carers UK estimates there are around 13.6 million people caring through the pandemic

Carers save the economy £132 billion per year, an average of £19,336 per carer:

- 5 million people in the UK are juggling caring responsibilities with work - that's one in seven of all workers
- However, the significant demands of caring mean that 600 people give up work every day to care for an older or disabled relative
- Carer's Allowance is the main carer's benefit and is £69.70 for a minimum of 35 hours, the lowest benefit of its kind

People providing high levels of care are twice as likely to be permanently sick or disabled

- 72 per cent of carers responding to Carers UK's State of Caring 2018 Survey said they had suffered mental ill health as a result of caring
- 61 per cent said they had suffered physical ill health as a result of caring
- Eight in 10 people caring for loved ones say they have felt lonely or socially isolated

¹³ [Unpaid care, England, and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

¹⁴ [Young Carers in the UK and young people admitted to hospital - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

¹⁵ [Waltham Forest CCG – NHS Services London England UK - find local help now!](https://nhs.uk)

¹⁶ [Facts and figures - Carers UK](https://carersuk.org)

Carers Engagement

We engage with carers throughout the year to ensure our services and programmes are co-developed, and that we continue to listen, learn, and adapt with the current needs and experiences of our carers. The engagement with carers is facilitated through a number of channels and platforms. For the purpose of developing this strategy and our commitments towards carers, we have engaged with and/or used the following engagement platforms and channels.

Adult Carers Online Consultation¹⁷

In August 2022, the Council held an online consultation for adult carers. The consultation was promoted through a number of channels including Carers First, Parents Forum, the Council's Residents News e-newsletter, Social Media Channels, Managed Buildings, Customer Contact Centres and Sheltered Homes. The consultation received a total of **69** responses.

The vast majority of respondents were females (**79 per cent**), with **19 per cent** of respondents being male. The largest age group was for 55 to 64 (**30 per cent**), with 45 to 54 the second highest (**22 per cent**) and 65 to 74 the third highest (**15 per cent**).

45 per cent of those who responded are caring for more than 50 hours per week, about **20 per cent** of carers providing 20 to 34 hours and **18 per cent** providing five to 19 hours of caring activities.

When we asked how your caring role had impacted your own life, **72 per cent** said they missed social events and gatherings, **70 per cent** said they reduced or stopped personal hobbies and **64 per cent** said they had reduced time for families and friends. Multiple answers were allowed for this question.

When asked about the barriers to accessing support, services and information, **46 per cent** said they were unaware of the support and services available, **40 per cent** said they were unsure of where to seek the support and **40 per cent** said the services and support offered did not meet their needs. Multiple answers were allowed for this question.

Survey of Adult Carers in England (SACE) 2021 to 22¹⁸

This national survey takes place every other year and is conducted by Councils with Adult Social Services Responsibilities (CASSRs). This survey has been developed to learn more about whether services received by carers are helping them in their caring role and their life outside of caring, and also about their perception of the services provided to the person they care for.

Key Findings:

Excluding carers that had not received support or services, roughly a quarter (**24.1 per cent**) of carers felt they were very or extremely satisfied with the support and services received in the last 12 months. This contrasts to **29.4 per cent** in 2018 to 19.

Around one in five (19.8 per cent) of carers felt they were very or extremely dissatisfied. This was an increase from **12.9 per cent** in 2018 to 19.

¹⁷ Adult Carers Online Consultation (August 2022)

¹⁸ NHS Digital (23 June 2022), 'Personal Social Services Survey of Adult Carers in England, 2021-22' <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/personal-social-services-survey-of-adult-carers/england-2021-22>

61.8 per cent of carers reported that in the last 12 months, their caring role had caused them feelings of stress. This was up from **59.5 per cent** in 2018 to 19.

Over a third of carers (**37.3 per cent**) reported their caring role had not caused any financial difficulties over the last 12 months. This was a decrease from **42.4 per cent** in 2018 to 19.

More than one in 10 (12 per cent) of carers said that caring caused them a lot of financial difficulties. This was a decrease from **14.8 per cent** in 2018 to 19.

Excluding carers that had not received support or services, **21.4 per cent** of carers felt they were extremely or very satisfied with the support or services received during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and **8.8 per cent** were very or extremely dissatisfied.

The proportion of carers who felt they have as much social contact as they want with people they like, increased from **21.7 per cent** in 2018 to 19 to **24.5 per cent** in 2021 to 22. **23.9 per cent** of carers reported that they had little contact with people, and they felt socially isolated during the last 12 months. This is a decrease from **25.1 per cent** in 2018 to 19.

Over half (**52.9 per cent**) of carers reported little social contact and that they felt socially isolated during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, while **15.3 per cent** felt they had as much social contact as they needed during the pandemic.

The percentage of carers that feel they have encouragement and support has fallen year on year and most recently from **24 per cent** in 2018 to 19 to **21.8 per cent** in 2021 to 22. The percentage of carers that feel they have no encouragement or support decreased from **29.9 per cent** in 2018 to 19 to **25.6 per cent** in 2021 to 22.

Young Carers Online Consultation¹⁹

Our end of year online consultation with young carers and families was held in April 2022. **Sixty-five** young carers and their families responded to the consultation.

Nearly **80 per cent** of the responses were provided directly by young carers, while the remaining **20 per cent** were provided by either a parent or family member. The majority of our young carers are being supported by Early Help 0 to 19 Service (**70 per cent**), about **10 per cent** in Children's Services. We will do more in the next strategy to identify more young carers across Children's Services, and ensure they have access to dedicated support from the programme.

About **70 per cent** of young carers said they knew who their named family practitioner is, and that they have been referred to the dedicated programme. The top three support offers referred to and accessed by young carers are **(1) Group Sessions, (2) Support in Schools and (3) Holiday Activity Schemes**.

Young carers and families rated the support and programme **4.1 out of five**.

Young Carers Focus Groups²⁰

In May 2022, we held focus groups across all our group sessions, which included our junior young carers and senior young carers. The feedback and response was very positive about

¹⁹ Young Carers Annual Consultation Feedback (2021 – 2022)

²⁰ Young Carers Focus Groups (May 2022)

the support and engagement offered through Early Help 0 to 19 and the dedicated Young Carers Programme. Young carers shared areas that they want us to explore:

- More respite opportunities for adult carers in the borough for their parents or guardians
- Weekly sessions as opposed to fortnightly sessions, *“because it is a long time to wait each month, when you are a ‘young carer’ every single day of every single week!”*
- More training for colleges and staff to enhance understanding about young carers and how they can better support young carers
- Therapeutic support for those who may be struggling with their mental health and wellbeing
- Opportunities to share their stories with MPs and local Councillors

Total Carer Engagement

Carers	Engagement	Total
Young Carers	Online Consultation	65
Young Carers	Focus Groups	80
Adult Carers	Online Consultation	69
Adult Carers	Public Health Engagement	200
Adult Carers	Survey for Adult Carers England (SACE)	160
Total		574

Our Core Offer to Carers

Here in Waltham Forest, we want to ensure that our offer to all carers is a robust and consistent offer that meets the needs of carers, and provides effective support, interventions, and opportunities that carers benefit from.



Whole Family Support

When we carry out an assessment of needs and outcomes, we will also assess the needs of those around you to ensure their needs and outcomes are supported too. We want to ensure that everyone at home, including the person you care for (who may live elsewhere), has the right support in place. This can also reduce the demand and pressures faced by yourself as a carer.

Carers Assessments

Whether you are a young carer, young adult carer or an adult carer, we will offer you an assessment which will be supported by a plan and reviewed periodically. The assessment will consider your own needs and outcomes, your role as a carer and how this impacts you as an individual and your wellbeing. The assessment will be accompanied by a plan to support you navigate any challenges that may exist and support you to achieve personal goals.

Financial Support

If you are an adult carer, we can explore financial assistance via direct payment, subject to eligibility, and review this annually or according to changing needs. The direct payment may be utilised to meet or achieve outcomes agreed in a care and support plan following a carers assessment and/or assessment of the person cared for.

Personalised Information, Advice and Guidance

All carers can access personalised information, advice and guidance via our dedicated carers support service and digital services. Carers can refer themselves to Carers First, our voluntary and community sector partner for support, or can contact other organisations. Information on support and services is available online via the Council's and Carers First webpages.

Groups, Clubs & Peer Support

We also offer a variety of positive opportunities for carers. These include opportunities for carers to meet with other carers and share experiences, have time away from caring responsibilities, learn new skills and hobbies.

Our Commitments to Carers

Following the consultation, and learning from the previous All-Age Carers Strategy, carers have told us the following five areas are important to them, which will now form one of the key foundations of this strategy, and shape service delivery and our strategic programme.

5 Priority Areas (Commitments)

Prioritised by Carers (Young, Adult and Parent Carers)



Lead Services

Key departments within the Council and Carers First have developed actions plans which will support the delivery of our commitments to carers.

Commitment area:	Lead stakeholder(s):
Universal Offer	Commissioning Services and Carers First
Young Carers (0 to 18)	Early Help 0 to 19 and Children's Services
Adult Carers (18 and older)	Adult Social Care
Parent Carers	SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)

Partnership Approach

In addition to our lead stakeholders, we will work with a range of stakeholders across the borough to raise awareness of carers needs and to improve access to meaningful support and interventions. Our partners include, but are not limited to:



Public Health for Carers

The health of carers in Waltham Forest has been highlighted as a priority in a number of key public health strategies. There is a need to ensure that evidence-based approaches are taken to improve the mental health and wellbeing of carers, and that healthy lifestyles are achievable for everyone.

Public Health has a role in improving the understanding of the challenges faced by carers with their health including challenges accessing services to support them with their mental wellbeing and maintaining healthy lifestyles.

Resident engagement work has shown that carers are often less likely to take proactive steps to protect their own mental health and wellbeing and there is a need to better understand the reasons behind this in order to provide the support they need. Health improvement services can also be harder to access for people with caring duties and we will continue working to make all our services accessible to everyone.

Our recent resident health survey engaged almost 200 carers from the borough and their responses are helping to shape new strategies for mental wellbeing and healthy weight as well as the All-Age Carers Strategy. Some of the survey highlights are:

Healthy Weight

Carers were less likely than any other group to be happy with their current weight, despite 89 per cent saying that maintaining a healthy weight is important to them. The most common reason given for its importance was to protect their health in the future. However, 70 per cent of carers said that they find it difficult to maintain a healthy weight compared to only 48 per cent of residents overall. The difficulties they identified in achieving this include the easy availability of unhealthy food and drink, the perceived high cost of healthy food and a lack of time to live healthy lifestyles. Going forward, our plan is to work with providers such as weight management to identify ways to support carers better.

Mental Wellbeing

Thirty-seven percent of carers rated their mental wellbeing as “poor” and identified the poor health of a loved one as one of the top issues having a negative impact on their mental health. An important aspect of our local strategy for improving mental wellbeing is promoting self-help approaches for residents, especially when they are facing more difficult or stressful situations than normal. Carers were considerably less likely than other groups to be taking positive steps to look after their mental health and wellbeing.

Many of the themes of our strategy are particularly relevant to carers. The cost-of-living crisis and social isolation were identified by carers as priorities to tackle for their mental health, as were interventions at an early stage and providing good information and guidance to support people with their mental wellbeing.

- 1) We will continue to make mental health, weight management and other health improvement services as accessible as possible for carers. This will involve working with providers to ensure the needs of carers are built into their offer. Online or digital services also have an important role to play in improving access to support.
- 2) In our approach to work across directorates, we are part of the Carers Development Group, led by the Carers Strategic Lead to ensure healthy weight and mental health are a core part of our support to carers. Our strategic approach is to support the

whole system, who work with carers to embed mental health and wellbeing into their support offers.

- 3) In light of the Council's work with the Marmot Institute of Health Equity, we are developing healthy weight and mental wellbeing strategies that will focus on reducing inequalities experienced by some groups of our residents in these areas. This includes carers who face particularly challenging situations with maintaining healthy lifestyles.

Measures of Success

We want to ensure that we are able to understand progress towards our commitments to carers. We will use several approaches for this.

Making Every Contact Counts

We want to “Make Every Contact Count” (MECC). MECC²¹ is an approach to behaviour change that uses the millions of day-to-day interactions that organisations and individuals have with other people to support them in making positive changes to their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Listening to Carers

We will continue to consult and listen to carers throughout the year. It will be vital for this strategy and stakeholders to continue engaging with carers to understand better: what is working well, what may not be working so well, and what we need to focus on over time. The needs of carers are likely to change and shift, and we will need to adapt accordingly.

Cabinet Leads and Scrutiny Committee Panels

Elected members with portfolio responsibilities (Cabinet leads) or Scrutiny Committee panels will play an active role in the organisation to ensure the Council is on track in delivering the commitments in this strategy, and ensure the Council is having a positive impact and making a difference to the lives of carers across Waltham Forest.

Senior Management Groups/ Boards

Regular updates, progress reports and engagement insight from carers will be provided to senior management boards. This will enable the Council to oversee the Carers Strategic Programme and to address any challenges to achieving our commitments to carers.

Carers Development Group

The Carers Development Group will continue to meet every eight weeks to review progress, influence delivery, and provide updates and information relating to carers. This group ensures that we have broad representation of managers from our core stakeholder group of departments and wider stakeholders, including carers and carer groups.

Data and Benchmarking

We will utilise resources and advanced tools which are available to help better understand how well we are delivering our support and services across the borough. Using data will enable the Council to better understand the impact and difference it is making. It will identify gaps and new areas that may become a priority. The data will comprise of internal, external and independent data, and will allow us to benchmark against our neighbouring boroughs.

Quarterly Progress Report (NICE QS200 + Stakeholder Commitments)

The core stakeholders named in this strategy will be required to provide updates on a quarterly basis against the commitments they have made in the action plan. This will be an opportunity to evaluate how well they are delivering against the NICE Quality Standards QS200 for carers. The NICE Quality Standards overlap the five priority areas (commitments) set in this strategy, and will also ensure that the Council and its partners are delivering support and services in-line with statutory guidelines and evidence-based practice.

²¹ [Main heading \(england.nhs.uk\)](https://www.england.nhs.uk/)

NICE Quality Standards QS200 – Supporting Carers

NICE (National Institute for Health and Care and Excellence) social care quality standards are practical tools to help deliver good health and wellbeing for users of adult and children's social services.²²

They help people understand the quality of services and care they should expect. Providers and commissioners use them to assess performance and make improvements.

NICE social care guidelines make evidence-based recommendations on the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of interventions and services. They are co-produced with social care experts.

As part of this strategy and our commitment to improve our services and offer, and sustain those improvements, we will aim to achieve the NICE Quality Standards QS200 for carers across all services who are stakeholders and have commitments towards carers.



NICE Quality Standards QS200

We will use a new reporting framework to monitor and evaluate whether practice and delivery is in line with the recommendations in supporting carers (NICE Standards QS200).

The framework and tool will also be used to track and monitor progress against the commitments that have been made by stakeholders, but also allow the Council to collect the evidence needed to demonstrate that it is working towards or achieving these standards.

²² [Overview](#) | [Supporting adult carers](#) | [Quality standards](#) | [NICE](#)

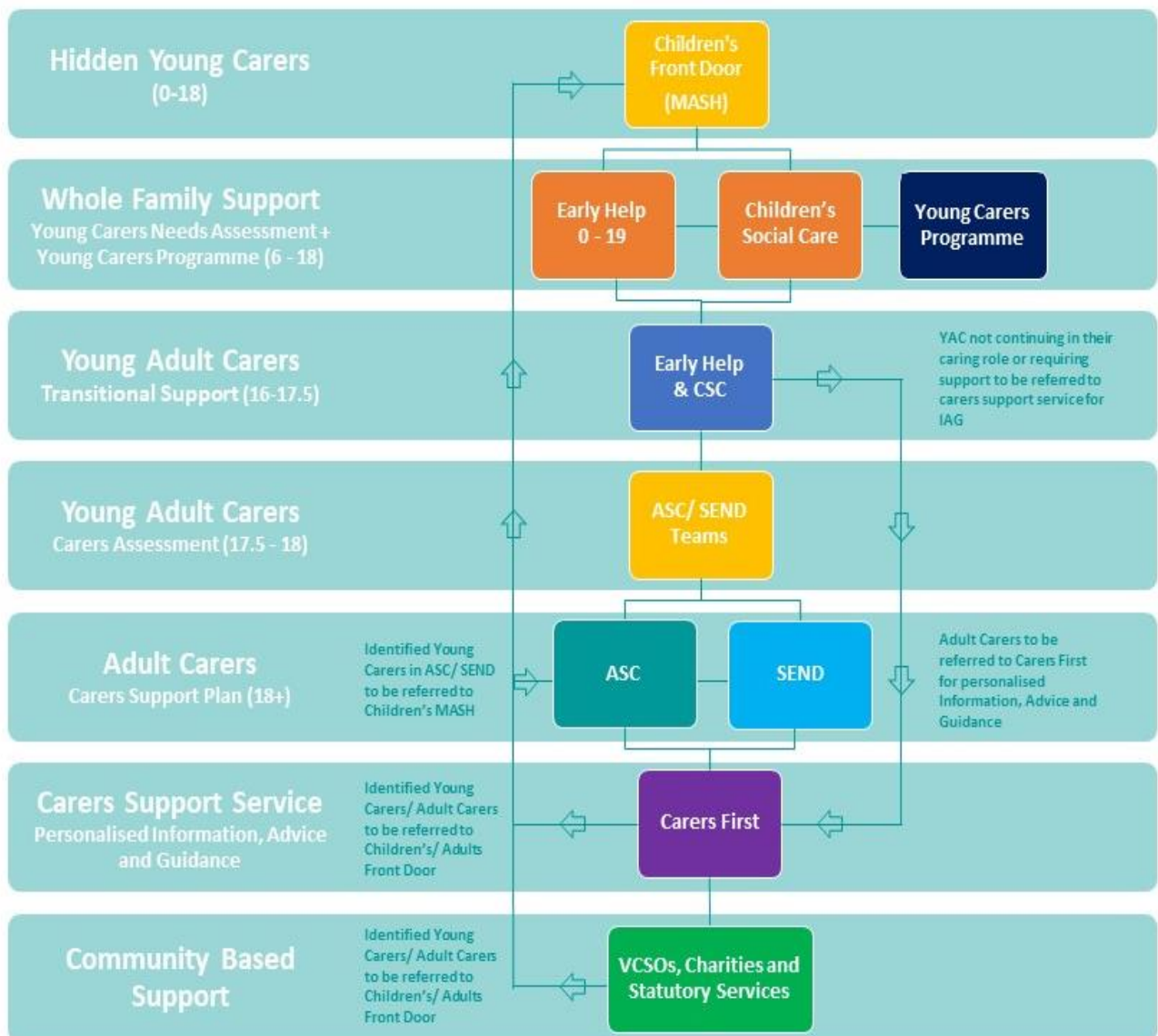
All-Age Carers Support Pathway

Whether you are a young carer, young adult carer making the transition to adulthood, or an adult carer who needs care and support, you will benefit from the following support pathway which connects Council services and providers ensuring the support and services provided are consistent, smooth, and well connected.

Information, Advice or Guidance: If you are a carer, unsure or would like to find out more about support and services that are available in Waltham Forest, then please contact our dedicated carers support service, *Carers First*.

Young Carers: If you are aged 18 and under and caring for another and need support then please contact the *Young Carers Programme*, or our dedicated *Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)* service.

Adult Carers and Parent Carers: In the first instance, please contact our dedicated carers support service, *Carers First*. If you would like to have a Carers or Parent Carers Assessment completed and need support from the Council for yourself and/or the person you care for, then please contact our dedicated services: *Adult Social Care* or *SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)*.



Contact Us

Carers First (Personalised Information, Advice, Guidance, Groups and Activities)

1 Russell Rd
Walthamstow
London E10 7ES

Tel: **0300 303 1555**

Email: hello@Carersfirst.org.uk

Webpage: [Online, Phone & In Person Support for Unpaid Carers - Waltham Forest | Carers First](#)

Young Carers Programme (Young Carers and Families)

Leyton Children's and Family Centre
215 Queens Road
London E17 8PJ

Tel: **0208 496 2442**

Email: young.Carers@walthamforest.gov.uk

Webpage: [Young carers | London Borough of Waltham Forest](#)

Adult Social Care (Adult Carers)

Willow House
869 Forest Road
London E17 4UH

Tel: **020 8496 3000**

Email: WFDLiaison@walthamforest.gov.uk

Webpage: [Adult carers | London Borough of Waltham Forest](#)

SEND Service (Parent Carers)

Wood Street Health Centre
6 Linford Road
Walthamstow
London E17 3LA

Tel: **0208 496 6503**

Email: SENteam@walthamforest.gov.uk

Webpage: [Local Offer: Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) | London Borough of Waltham Forest](#)

MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub)

Willow House
869 Forest Road
Walthamstow
London E17 4UH

Tel: **020 8496 2310**

Email: MASHrequests@walthamforest.gov.uk

Webpage: [Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub \(MASH\) | London Borough of Waltham Forest](#)

