



Norfolk County Council



# Being part of the community as an adult

A guide for parents/carers and young people

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This guide was co-produced in July 2021 by a number of partners including Norfolk County Council, Norfolk and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group, Family Voice Norfolk, City College Norwich and Sidestrand Hall School.

# What does being part of the community mean?

**Becoming an adult is a very exciting time.** You gradually gain more independence and want to enjoy a more active social life. Being part of the community means that you take part in life outside your family and home, choosing how you spend your time and having the chance to meet new people.

Across Norfolk a wide range of leisure and community activities are available, including volunteering, music, dance, art and drama, sporting activities, clubs and classes. Being able to travel to the activities that interest you is important. This guide also contains information on help and support to get about.

You can find information about other kinds of independence such as [Employment](#), [Community and relationships](#) and [Independent living](#).





# How to use this guide

**This guide is a good starting point to help find more detailed information, advice and support on independent living.**

It is part of a set of [Norfolk information guides](#) that help young people prepare for adult life. These can be found on the Norfolk County Council website, alongside other guides and links which may be helpful.

**Other resources available include:**

- **Transition from secondary school to post-16 – A guide for parents and carers**
- **Transition and training at 18+ – A guide for young people, parent carers and settings**
- **Post-16 parent/carer guide**
- **Being independent as an adult**
- **Being part of the community as an adult**

This guide can be used by parents/carers, young people and those who support them.

# Leisure activities and things to do

You can use the Norfolk Community Directory to find activities that match your interests.

Information about clubs and societies, hobbies and games, sports and exercise, cinema, concerts and shows, art galleries, libraries and museums, and acting and music can be found on the [Things to do section of the Community Directory website](#).

It's a good idea to make contact with the activity you are interested in to make sure it is accessible and right for you. The Norfolk County Council website offers [information on activities and things to do](#), where you can access entries in the Norfolk Community Directory that are particularly suitable for young people with SEND.

## Things to do for children and young people with SEND

Norfolk County Council website offers information [things to do for children and young people with SEND](#).

## Norfolk children's and young people's hub

[The Norfolk children's and young people's hub](#) for ideas and suggestions, including joining a Youth Advisory Board to make a difference to the local community, getting involved in local decision-making and creating social change.

## Disabled-access venues

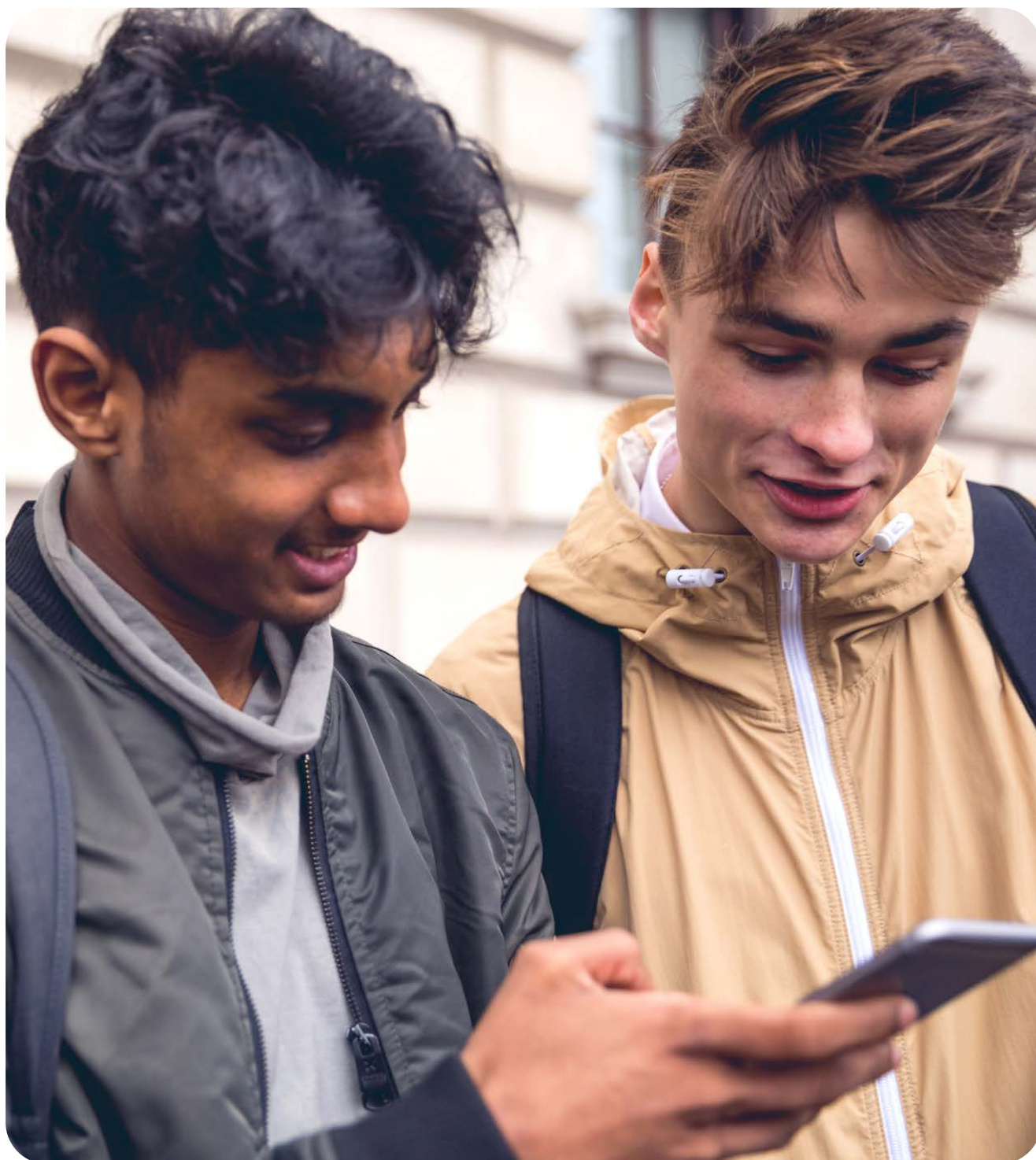
There are many things that affect how accessible a place is for a young person with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). [Guides and reviews on disabled-access venues](#) can be found on the Norfolk County Council website.

“  
Norfolk Community Directory contains activities, services and groups to help all Norfolk residents live healthy, active and fulfilling lives  
”

“  
What might be accessible for one young person may not be accessible for another so take time to check this out  
”

## Making friends

As a young person with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) grows up, the importance of having friends, relationships and being part of the community develops too. Norfolk County Council offer [advice and ideas on making friends](#) on their website.



# Support when in the community

It can be easier for a young person with SEND to go out in the community, if they:

- Are able to go with a group of friends (see page 06).
- Have support from someone.  
This can be a friend or relative or a personal assistant. This is someone, who is normally paid, to help a young person carry out an activity. Find a personal assistant in the [community directory](#).
- Are supported by an organisation.

## Independence Matters

This is an independent social enterprise that provides personal assistant services. Advice and support can be found on the [independence matters website](#).

## Build Charity

This organisation provides help and support for young people to get out and about in the community. [Visit the Build Charity website](#) for more information.

# Volunteering

To try something new, learn new skills, gain work experience and have the sense of giving something back to the community. Find out more and [search through the community directory](#).

You can also find more information on volunteering through the [Help You Choose website](#).

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**Evidence shows  
volunteering gives  
young people self-  
worth and builds  
confidence**

”

## Voluntary Norfolk

This charity works with people and organisations across Norfolk to promote a wide range of opportunities. For more information [visit the voluntary Norfolk website](#).





## Day opportunities

There is a wide range of day opportunities (sometimes known as day services) across Norfolk for people aged 18 or over. These focus on delivering social opportunities, independence skills and activities, community access, and employment-based skills and opportunities. They are normally accessed by those eligible for Adult Social Services.

Your Preparing for Adult Life (PfAL) worker or social worker can discuss this with you. You may be charged for day opportunities, depending on your financial circumstances.



# Short Breaks (Children's Services)

Short Breaks give eligible children and young people under 18 the chance to take part in activities, explore new opportunities, form friendships, become more independent and enjoy themselves. The Norfolk County Council website provides [information on Short Breaks](#).

Short Breaks activities take place outside school hours during daytime, evenings, weekends and school holidays.

Short Breaks could, depending on the allocated budget, be used for:

- Group activities like a youth club or Saturday group for children and young people with disabilities
- Holiday play schemes
- Sports, arts or music activities
- One-to-one support to access other activities, such as youth clubs, cinema trips or meeting friends



# Travel

Young people who are able confidently to use public transport, cycle, walk or use other kinds of travel have a wider range of opportunities for independence, being active in their community and employment. Planning is an important skill for independent travelling.

A young person with SEND may worry about using public transport because:

- They need to plan travel routes.
- They need know what to do if there is a disruption to the normal route, or journey timings.



**There are several websites that can help with route planning:**

### **Find your transport**

Norfolk County Council provide a [find your transport tool](#) to find transport services that operate in your area.

### **One Network**

The [One Network website](#) provides information on planned roadworks and diversions:

### **Accessibility aids**

Norfolk County Council provide a useful [list of ideas and systems to help Norfolk's public transport accessibility](#).

### **For other things to think about visit:**

For further information, see the [guidance on independent travel](#) from the local offer.

### **Travel Independence Training Across Norfolk (TITAN)**

The TITAN team will help a young person with SEND (16–25 years old) learn to travel to college, sixth form or another educational setting independently through their [TITAN travel training](#).

**“**  
**TITAN offers young people with SEND support to help become confident independent travellers**  
**”**

### **Concessionary travel (bus) pass**

For information on [age-related and disabled travel passes](#) visit the Norfolk County Council website.



# Young people who may need support through Adult Social Services

Young people who have more complex care and support needs might need services through Adult Social Services.

In Norfolk when the young person is under 18 the Preparing for Adult Life (PfAL) Service is responsible for carrying out the Care Act (2014) assessment to identify the young person's needs and the support required.

Young people can be referred to the PfAL Service when they are aged 14–17 when:

- They have a disability (learning disability, mental health needs, autism or physical disability) and
- They are likely to need support from Adult Social Services (under the Care Act) to achieve the four PfAL outcomes – good health, independent living, employment, and friends, relationships and community inclusion.

The PfAL service will normally start the Care Act assessment on the young person's 17th birthday. For those under 17 it will work with the young person and others to produce a person-centred PfAL plan.

The PfAL referral should be completed by someone who knows the young person well. This could be a social worker or other Children's Services worker. If there is no such worker involved, then the referral should be made via the Children's Advice and Duty Service (CADS) by ringing **0344 800 8021** (for professionals) or **0344 800 8020** (for young people themselves, family members or other supporters).

Norfolk County Council provide more detailed information online on [people who can help in transition to adult life](#).

“ All young people under 18 who are likely to require Adult Social Services should be referred to the PfAL Service ”

After the age of 18 people who may require services through Adult Social Services should be referred directly by calling 0344 800 8020. Referral can be made by young people, families or professionals. As an alternative to this telephone number you can also email the Social Care Community Engagement team at [norfolkcareconnectbusinesssupport@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:norfolkcareconnectbusinesssupport@norfolk.gov.uk)

Further [information on Adult Social Care, Support and Health](#) is provided online by Norfolk County Council.

Norfolk County Council also produces a helpful guide to adult care and support called [Your Guide to Care and Support for Adults](#).



# Support for carers

**A carer is anyone who helps somebody with an illness, disability or mental health difficulty that means they need support.**

Carers Matter Norfolk delivers personalised services to unpaid carers on behalf of Norfolk County Council including:

- Carers' assessments
- Information, support and advice
- Advice line open six days a week Monday to Saturday
- One-to-one support to find out about help available

Carers Matter Norfolk has also produced a handbook offering advice and information for carers on a range of topics including handling emergencies, benefits and self care. It also includes a list of useful contacts.

- If you'd like someone to call you and chat about your needs, [visit the Carers Matter website.](#) or call 0800 083 1148.
- [Information for young carers and family support](#) can be found them on the [Young Carers website.](#)

**“  
If you are an  
unpaid carer  
living in Norfolk  
Carers Matter  
Norfolk is there to  
support you  
”**

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## Emergency planning

Having a plan for emergencies can be a comfort for carers and those they care for, even if it never needs to be put into action. You can [sign up for a Carers Emergency Card](#) and Young Carers Matter provide [advice on making an escape plan.](#)

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## Norfolk Community Directory

The Norfolk Community Directory provides wealth of [information and support for carers of all ages.](#)

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## Norfolk Carers' Charter

[The Carers' Charter](#) has been produced by carers and councillors. It has three key strands – carers in work, young carers in education, and carers in the community.

# Support available through Adult Social Services Development Workers

This team works to improve links within communities as a whole, support new or struggling community groups, and help strengthen an individual's links to their communities.

The team includes Information Development Workers who focus on county-wide information-sharing, both within social services and with professionals working within organisations that seek to support individuals through early help and prevention. Development Workers can support practitioners by undertaking research requests for individuals who need support and are aged over 18 (by referral).

This includes putting together information on local community activities, funding opportunities, adult learning and volunteering opportunities. If appropriate they can work directly with an individual to identify social opportunities and community information so they can connect with other people.

Internal Adult Social Services professionals can request this help. Self-referral is also an option through the Council's customer service centre on 0344 800 8020. External professionals would also use this referral route. As an alternative to this telephone number you can email the Social Care Community Engagement team at [norfolkcareconnectbusinesssupport@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:norfolkcareconnectbusinesssupport@norfolk.gov.uk)





# The changing legal status of young people at 16/18

“ At the age of 18 there are changes for a young person in respect of their legal status. They legally become an adult ”

At the age of 18 a young person legally becomes an adult. Below is some important information to consider about this.

## Mental Capacity Act

The Mental Capacity Act is designed to protect and support people who may lack the mental capacity to make their own decisions about a range of subjects.

- It applies to people aged 16 and over.
- Young people with a learning disability or autism may at times be assessed to check their mental capacity in relation to a decision.
- This is not about their overall capacity but about a particular decision or type of decision.
- This may be about everyday things or more difficult decisions about whether to have surgery or move to another home.
- The Act says how an individual can be supported and how ‘best interest’ decisions can be arrived at on their behalf if they are assessed as lacking capacity to make a certain decision.
- For example, a person may have capacity to decide what to wear or what to eat, but not have capacity to understand their own finances.

Full [guidance on the mental capacity act and making decisions](#) can be found on the Government website.

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## Becoming an appointee for someone claiming benefits

- A person – often a family carer – can apply for the right to deal with the benefits of someone whose disability means they are unable to manage their own affairs.
- Further [information on becoming an appointee for someone claiming benefits](#) is provided on the Government website.

## Power of attorney

- A lasting power of attorney (LPA) is a legal document that lets a young person appoint people to make decisions on their behalf. It can be about finances or about health and social care. A young person must be 18 or over and able to make their own decisions when they make the lasting power of attorney. If they do not have mental capacity a court-appointed deputy might be needed.
  - A deputy is a person appointed by the Court of Protection to make decisions for someone who is unable to do so alone. They are responsible for doing this until the person they are acting for dies or is able to make decisions on their own again.
  - The government provides more [information on power of attorney](#) via their website.
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## Wills

- A will lets a person decide what happens to their money, property and possessions after their death.
  - A person can write their own will, but it is better to get advice if the will isn't straightforward.
  - Special thought needs to be given when leaving money to someone who needs care, such as a child or a person with a learning or other disability. A professional with experience in these matters can help.
  - A will needs to be formally witnessed and signed to make it legally valid.
  - An existing will can be updated by making an official change (called a 'codicil') or a new will can be made. If a person dies without a will, the law says who gets what.
  - A person has to have the mental capacity to write a will.
  - The government provides more [information on making a will](#) via their website.
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## Mental Health Act

- The Mental Health Act is a law that can be used to provide support and treatment to people with a diagnosed mental illness.
- Being detained (also known as sectioned) under the Mental Health Act is a legal process that starts when an approved mental health practitioner and two specialist doctors have assessed that someone is not safe to be at home and needs to be kept safe while they are being assessed and/or treated. This law protects a person's rights.
- The NHS provides and [easy read document on your rights and the Mental Health Act](#).

### **Children and young people – consent to treatment**

People aged 16 or over are entitled to consent to their own treatment. This can only be overruled in exceptional circumstances. Adults and young people (aged 16 or 17) are presumed to have sufficient capacity to decide on their own medical treatment unless there is significant evidence to suggest otherwise. Children under the age of 16 can consent to their own treatment if they're believed to have enough intelligence, competence and understanding to fully appreciate what's involved in their treatment. This is known as being 'Gillick competent' (or within 'Fraser guidelines' when used in relation to sexual health consent). Otherwise, someone with parental responsibility can consent for them.

The NHS provides further advice in their [consent to treatment guidance](#).

# Ten steps to prepare for adult life

Norfolk County Council provides a useful [step by step guide on preparing for adult life](#) and the different stages involved.

