

A close-up photograph of two men looking at a photo album. The man on the left is younger, with a beard and mustache, looking down at the photos. The man on the right is older, with grey hair, looking intently at a photo. The photo album is open, showing several photographs of people. The lighting is warm and focused on the men's faces and the photos.

Carers Charter Progress Report

October 2021

www.norfolk.gov.uk/thinkcarers

#ThinkCarers

Facts & Figures:

Adult Carers

Nationally
1 in 8
adults (around 6.5 million people) are Carers

3 in 5
people will become a carer at some point in their lives

Every day another
6,000
people are taking on a caring responsibility – that equates to **2 million people each year**

58%
of Carers are women and
42%
are men

1.3 million
provide
50+ hours
of care per week

Over 1 million
people care for more than one person

As of 2020, it is estimated there are
13.6 million
people caring throughout the pandemic

Carers UK, 2021

Young Carers

It is estimated that there are over
6000
young carers in Norfolk

As many as
1 in 5
secondary-aged pupils are estimated to be young carers

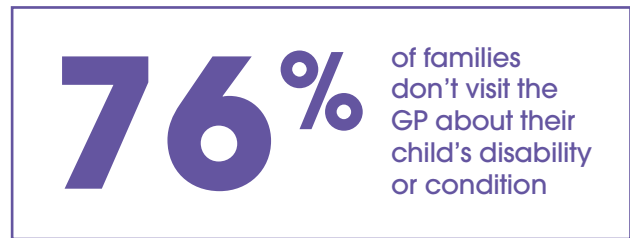
The average age of a young carer is
12

In the last census, 600 young carers and young adult carers in Norfolk reported they provided over 50 hours of care a week

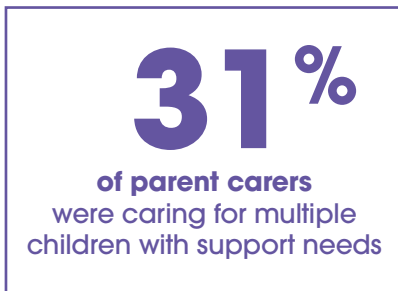
Caring Together, 2021.

Facts & Figures:

Parent Carers



The following are from the Parent Carer Survey completed locally in April:



Caring Together, 2021.

Locally



It is estimated the support they provide is worth between **£500 million to £1.9 billion per annum**

Carers in Work:

At Norfolk County Council, supporting carers in work remains a high priority. Particularly within the context that over a third of our workforce identified themselves as a Carer in the recent 2021 employee survey. Based on those that responded, 8.31% (2020 - 7.6%) confirmed that they are a working carer and 33.12% (2020 - 29.5%) responsible for children under the age of 18.

Also, as part of our recent employee survey, we have a 'balance of the deal' score. This brings together responses to all the questions to show overall, how happy NCC colleagues are with the balance between the employer and employee contribution (sometimes called, the psychological contract). The 2021 survey showed that colleagues with parental caring responsibilities scored the same as colleagues without any caring responsibility. The score for working carers, whilst the score was not poor, it was two points below the score for non carers/parental carers and our future plans will focus on working carers”.

NCC also has the Carer Friendly Tick (Employer) accreditation and are committed to renewing our application for this when our current one expires in July 2022.

We continue to make progress in respect of our Carer Charter commitments and have used the learning from the past year, during the pandemic to take this forward. We have continued with our established approach to supporting carers, by providing a swift, agile and positive response; attempting to engage a larger audience of staff and enabling them to continue balancing their home and work commitments.

Key developments over the past year include:

- **Increased Flexibility** - recent events (COVID19) may have made balancing the work and home life even harder so in response to this, a revised temporary policy framework was implemented to increase the flexibility available to our employees, including:
 - Suspension of core working hours
 - Option to purchase additional annual leave
 - Option to temporarily reduce working hours
 - Flexible pay options for unpaid leave
 - Guaranteed pay

Communications Plan – Key dates such as Carers Rights Day and Carers Week continue to be highlighted in terms of our commitment and support to carers. Work is regularly underway with our communications and change and engagement teams to ensure information reaches as wide an audience as possible.

Supporting those with caring responsibilities has also featured heavily in all methods of communications around COVID19 which includes daily/bi-weekly employee/manager updates as well as weekly updates/BLOGs from the Head of Paid Service. These continue to take place.

Intranet - refreshed information for carers – We continue to review our information available to staff on Carers. With the key aim to ensure information is easier to find and accessible. We are about to commence work in this area, to explore updating information.

We continue to support managers to have discussions with their team members about their caring needs. This included holding a virtual Zoom event during Carers Week, for both employees who have caring responsibilities and managers, sharing information on real life situations and information about available support. This was supported by a range of internal communications, including the Head of Paid Service Blog and a refresh of our Intranet pages for Carers and managers, including information on wellbeing support available. It was clear from the responses that most felt able to do their job and care for their loved ones with the flexibility NCC has provided people to set their working hours, including catching up during evenings and weekends.

The Carers Advisory Group had just been set up when last year's update was produced. Since then this group has continued to develop, meeting monthly and has grown to 48 members. This group reports directly to the Head of Paid Service and Director for People and has made a number of recommendations which are now being implemented. This includes the development of a Carers passport which will make it easier for carers when they change roles within NCC. We are also registered with Employers for Carers and are exploring how we can develop training for staff and managers in this area. Our Operational Business Lead for Carers has attended a session and made staff aware of the Carers Matter Norfolk service and their legal right to a Carers Assessment; they also promoted the Carers Emergency Planning offer and encouraged them to register with this.

We are also a member of the Norfolk and Waveney Inclusion leads group which is made up of Health and social care employers. Covid response had led to a delay in introducing Caring Together to the group however this will happen during 2021.

Our updated Online learning manager kit now includes guidance for managers on supporting carers within their teams.

We are also a member of Carers UK Employers for Carers resource and are exploring how we can promote this among managers and staff.

Progress will continue into next year with further work planned around engagement and communications as we continue to review the support options available.



Young Carers in Education:

A continuing campaign from September 2019 initiated by the previous Chairman of the Council, Harry Humphrey, promotes the Carer friendly tick in Schools, for example through Management Information sheets to schools and through awareness raising sessions. As of May 2021, 19 schools were awarded Friendly Tick Award and 65 are actively working towards this.

There has been a large amount of training for school staff delivered through webinars with safeguarding and support leads in schools, the training was designed to help schools to upskill staff in being able to identify and support Young Carers and their families. These workshops have been very well attended and we have received fantastic feedback and requests from schools to continue as the training has enabled them to share good practice and proactively identify and support the young carers.

In November 2020, a Carer Awareness and Voice Co-ordinator from Caring Together met with a group of advisers and officers from Learning and Inclusion to provide information and raise awareness. Following this, a further session was arranged with representatives from the Norwich Opportunity Area. A Carer Awareness and Voice Co-ordinator from Caring Together provided a similar session for attendees of the CEO network.

As more routine visits and meetings with schools and academy trusts resume following the pandemic, conversations will include promotion of Carer Friendly Tick Award and schools' understanding of and provision for Young Carers

Other developments & ongoing work:

- Representative from Caring Together has attended DSL network meetings to raise awareness
- Representative from Caring Together has met with advisers and officers across Learning and Inclusion teams to raise awareness
- When visits/meetings with schools and academy trusts resume, conversations will include promotion of Carer Friendly Tick Award and schools' understanding of and provision for Young Carers.

Young Carers in the Community:

We continued to develop our multi agency working, which commenced as part of our COVID-19 response for young carers, which has proved invaluable to help us improve our support to young carers and their families.

We also have a commitment to continue to encourage uptake of the Carer Friendly Tick award for Education amongst education providers.

Also, the multi agency partnership working around young carers has been shortlisted for a national award- Young Carer award in the CYP Now Awards 2021.

Other areas we have worked on include:

- We have improved the pathways and access to services for children and young people and their families in partnership with our providers and operational teams.
- We have continued to review our information and toolkit for the multi-agency partnership with the key aim to ensure information is easier to find and accessible. This work is ongoing.
- Support for children, young people and their families has continued throughout COVID virtually with additional support offered where needed.
- We have also worked with Young Carers and Carer organisations to develop the Young Carers Emergency Planning tool and this continues to be promoted.
- We have put in place agreements using Data Protection Impact Assessments with approximately 80 schools enabling us to share data of Young Carers in need. This helped Children Services to reach out to every known young carer household in writing and offer support.



Following the successful awareness campaign launched last year and the improved pathways has resulted in increases in young people accessing support and services.

Progress next year will focus on:

- Continued Joint multi-agency working to ensure needs are met
- Continued work to develop our tool kit and accessible information
- Developing the Education Achievement and Vulnerable Groups Access Services; which is a GDPR compliant system that collects information about the educational attendance, and needs of Norfolk's young carers and young adult carers.
- Multi-agency Professionals Tool kit for identifying and supporting young carers, including key tools such as 'emergency plans' co-produced with young carers and partner agencies jointly.
- Streamlined pathway for schools to access support both via commissioned service (Carers Matter Norfolk) and within Children's Services.
- Supporting above will include a young adult transition assessment and support framework (14-25) jointly between Childrens and Adults Services.

Parent Carers in the Community:

Significant work has commenced in this area over the past 12 months; with Children's and Adult Social Services committed to supporting Parent Carers, particularly in respect of navigating the Health & Social Care system and transition between Children's and Adult Social Services. It is recognised that much more work is needed to support Parent Carers and this work continues. Parent Carers have also been included in the Carers Charter moving forward.



Progress includes:

- Work completed by Children's Services, in particular from the Children with Disabilities Service, to review their service and redesign this accordingly.
- This includes working with Parent Carers to identify areas of positive and negative practice and use their input as experts, to help shape and design services & support.
- In conjunction with Caring Together and Family Voice, sub groups have been formed to work on designing a new Parent Carer Assessment form and Parent Carers Emergency Planning offer and explore the current transition offer for Parent Carers.
- Work also includes scoping and mapping out of current services and exploring how this can be communicated to Parent Carers, across a range of forums.
- Our Preparing For Adult Life Team has also been central to this work and the Operational Business Lead for Adult Carers has worked closely with them, to ensure they #Think Carer and offer and complete Carers Assessments for Parent Carers, as part of transition planning for their child/young person.
- Work is also underway to review the short breaks offer as well and Parent Carers are being consulted on this.
- As part of Carers Week this year, Caring Together, in conjunction with Family Voice arranged a session for Parent Carers, which was attended by NCC representatives from Childrens Services, PFAL and Adult Social Services, to provide an overview of support available for Parent Carers and enable Parent Carers to ask a range of questions.

Progress in the coming year will focus on:

- Developing a Parent Carers Emergency Plan.
- Developing the support offer for carers, including short breaks, parent carer needs assessments, access to welfare rights advice, information and support and review of the front door offer.
- Designing a Parent Carer Assessment form.
- Exploring the wider support offer from children's services, when they do not meet the PFAL criteria.
- Considering how to provide advice, information and support to those supporting their child under a home schooling arrangement.
- Refreshing the Parent Carer Assessment and Parent Carer Transition pathways.

Adult Carers in the Community:

Norfolk County Council remains committed to supporting adult carers. This includes enabling Carers to self-identify, recognising the importance of early identification and facilitating good quality conversations with carers. These conversations cover topics from their life and aspirations, caring role and ensuring they have access to good quality advice, information and support.

A key area is ensuring our social care workforce can effectively engage with carers, from raising awareness of carers' legal rights, including a right to a Carers Assessment, to signposting carers to valuable support. In the past year we have updated our carer related practice guidance.

Another area we have worked on is developing our carers webpages on the Norfolk County Council website. This has included:

- Adding a carer specific page on the Norfolk Community Directory with signposting information for all carers, which was agreed through co-production with carers.
- Updating the carer pages to ensure they are up to date, informative and relevant, without being overwhelming.
- Our Carers Emergency Planning offer has also been updated, with an improved online webform and a key fob added to the Carers Emergency Card, following feedback from Carers.

We are also exploring other ways in which we can promote information, particularly for those who are not able to access the internet, struggle with literacy etc. In the past year, we have done the following:

- Sent text messages to ALL registered Carers via their GP surgery, promoting Carers Matter Norfolk and Carers Emergency Planning.
- Used Carers Voice's newsletter, which is sent via post to carers without access to email, to share key messages with carers.
- Worked to support carers with digital literacy through use of Alcove devices, with the ambition to increase their confidence in accessing services online.

We continue to recognise the importance for carers to have a life outside of caring, including the fact carers should be regarded as experts in their own life's and that carers are people first and should be supported to achieve what matters to them. This has been evidenced in ongoing co production work with carers. We have met with carers to seek their views about Carers Emergency Planning, Safeguarding and Hospital Discharge. The aim is to take their views, suggestions and experiences and use these to inform service developments. There are plans later this year to develop a focus group with Carers, to seek their views and suggestions about Replacement Care.

Enhanced Support:

- Following extensive Carer engagement and analysis of our Carer support offer, the enhanced Carers support offer delivered by Carers Matter Norfolk has been in place for over a year now.
- This service can deliver Carers Assessments on behalf of the council and has access to short term carers' breaks services and a Health & Wellbeing grant. This means carers can receive a lot more support from one service, only needing to tell their story once; unless in specific circumstances they require support from NCC.
- Since its inception over 2500 Carers have been referred to the service and there is ongoing work to promote the service across Norfolk. Assessments continue to be audited regularly, to ensure the service is delivering good quality assessments and outcomes for Carers.
- We have also managed to secure 40 Alcove Devices (a more simplified version of an I-Pad), for the service to provide to digitally excluded Carers, to reduce social isolation and enable them to sustain their caring role.
- Alongside this, we are continuing to develop our replacement care offer, arranged by Norfolk County Council, which we want to make more straightforward for eligible carers to access and book. A focus group is going to be set up to seek the inclusion and views of Carers.
- We have also distributed 4000 wellbeing packs to Carers during the pandemic, which include PPE and 'pick me up' items. Carers have said that these packs have made them feel valued and supported during the pandemic.
- In the past year we also worked closely with our health partners to launch and deliver the 'Call to Carers' campaign, to raise awareness among Carers of the COVID vaccine. Over 2000 Carers registered with the online portal to arrange their vaccine, and over 700 provided consent to be sent information about carer support available for them in Norfolk. We have sent them an initial email communication including information about: Carers Matter Norfolk; Emergency Planning; Wellbeing Packs; and access to PPE.
- We have also updated our emergency planning offer, redesigning the webform to enable more key information to be recorded; so more effective support can be provided in the event of an emergency. Over 2000 Carers have registered a plan since early 2021.

- Our Operational Business Lead is also working closely with our Norfolk Adult Safeguarding Board and Carers, to explore how we can ensure Carers are considered and supported in respect of Safeguarding. Another area we are considering is how we can raise awareness among Carers, staff and other organisations about abuse, the different forms of abuse and how to get support, to ensure a holistic and unified approach. Carers are also going to be incorporated into our Safeguarding Strategy.
- Our Operational Business Lead is also working closely with our front door redesign project leads, to ensure there is a focus on Carers and they have access to good quality advice, information and support.
- Another area we continue to work on is the redesign of the government mandated Discharge to Assess model. Our Operational Business Lead is working closely with the project lead and wider health system, including and most importantly Carers, to aid with the design of this and ensure Carers are involved and their views sought throughout this.
- We are also working with our voluntary sector, Health and District Council partners, to consider how we can identify carers, particularly carers with disabilities, carers of a black, Asian or other minority ethnic background and LGBT+ carers, who may experience barriers to accessing services and are looking to incorporate this into the All Age Carers strategy that is being developed.

Carers Champion:

In addition to the Member Champion role for Carers, in Adult Social Care we continue to deliver a “Carers Champion” approach, meaning each locality and service area has a champion with expertise in working with and supporting carers, who will be able to advise and guide their teams.

- This will mean carers continue to receive the high-quality support and help they need, no matter who they meet within our service.
- The Carers Champion also continues to collate any operational issues practitioners face when supporting carers and feed this back to our Operational Business Lead for Adult Carers, who will be able to support and address these via training, coaching etc.
- They continue to link with Community Engagement Officers from the new service, to share expertise and knowledge about support available for carers in their specific locality area.

Training:

- Our Operational Business Lead continues to deliver training to front line staff about our legal and statutory duties to carers.
- This ensures they are aware of how to identify, engage and support carers.
- Our Operational Business Lead is also developing an e-learning module, which ALL staff in Adult Social Services will be able to access.
- The Business Lead is also liaising with Children's and Young People's services to redesign our Enabling Disabled Parents protocol; to ensure we can offer a consistent & holistic approach to the families we work with.
- Our Business Lead is also working closely with Children's Services and Carer organisations to review transition planning from Children to Adult Services for Young Adult Carers and Parent Carers, to ensure there is an agreed and consistent approach for these key cohorts.

All Age Carers Strategy:

We are also working to develop an All Age Health and Wellbeing Board Carers Strategy. Adult Social Services have funded Carers Voice to independently lead the engagement about this and this is taking place over the course of late 2021 into early 2022. Carers Voice are keen to engage with Carers of all ages, and are working to identify how to reach minority carers as well. The next stage will be to co-produce a plan of action in response to the engagement findings, and take this for partner sign-up through the Norfolk and Waveney Health and Wellbeing Board.



Britain Thinks Social Research work with Carers-Learning from the results:

- In summer 2020 Adult Social Services commissioned a piece of work, to qualitatively track the experiences of 15 social care services users over a x6 month period, to understand how experiences evolved and explore the impact of COVID- 19 on them and their cared for.

- There were x3 research objectives:

*Explore the impact of changes in services arising from the pandemic.

*Explore experiences of communication, including what Carers were hearing & from whom.

*Identify lessons in relation to resilience and future service delivery.

Key findings included:

1 / Amongst service users & carers, understanding about how social care works is low.

2 / A desire to avoid being a burden and a sense the social care system is overstretched and under funded to prevent service users from seeking additional support.

3 / Only a minority of information carers in the sample received support. For many, there were concerns about cost and doubts services would be available locally; all acted as barriers to seeking support.

4 / The majority of social care users consulted, have reported positive experiences of the carer system; they considered the package of support in place was meeting their needs and they felt well supported by their care workers/ providers.

5 / On balance, Social Care is felt to have adapted well in it's response to the pandemic.

6 / However, most social users have noticed at least some disruption to their care as a result of the pandemic.

7 / The long term impact of the pandemic on the provision of social care is not a 'top of mind' issue for service users; however, when asked for views, opinions are divided.

Progress will continue into next year with further work planned around training and reviewing how we support carers, particularly following the survey results.