

CARING WELL IN DEVON

A Strategy for Devon County Council

2023 to 2028

Contents	Page
Foreword	2
Introduction	3 to 4
Devon County Council's Strategic Plan	5
Our Vision and Aims for Adult Social Care in Devon	6 to 8
What people have told us	9 to 10
Where we are now	11 to 14
How we will achieve our Vision	15 to 18
How we will know if we have been successful	19 to 22

Foreword

We are delighted to write this foreword to our Caring Well Strategy, which focuses on people who provide unpaid care and support to their family, friends and/or neighbours. It sits alongside our Living Well and Ageing Well strategies.

Our vision for supporting adults in Devon to live as independently as possible is best summarised through the words used by the Social Care Future movement: ***We want to live in the place we call home with the people and things that we love, in communities that look out for one another, doing the things that matter to us.***

We live in challenging times, and carers have been impacted more than most. First, because of the Covid-19 pandemic and the restrictions we lived through, with some services provided differently or not at all. And now through the cost-of-living crisis, where pressures on private and public finances mean that we are having to think very hard about getting best value and good outcomes by doing what matters most.

This strategy is rooted in what people have told us is important to them. When we speak to people, they tell us that they want to lead meaningful lives in the community. They do not generally want to be dependent on public services, preferring to live with and be supported by their family and friends at home in the community and connected to their communities and interests. We recognise that this can put pressure on those who support them, which is why our Caring Well Strategy is so important.

This strategy provides us with an opportunity to address these challenges and transform how we support adults in Devon. We would like to take the opportunity to thank all who have worked with us to develop this strategy and to unpaid carers for all they do. We will continue to listen to people as we take forward our ambitions.



Tandra Forster
*Director of Integrated Adult Social Care
Devon County Council*



Councillor James McInnes
*Cabinet Member for Integrated Adult Social Care
Devon County Council*

Introduction

This strategy is for adult carers of adults (of all ages), young carers when they are transitioning to be adult carers of adults and parent carers of children when the children are approaching 18 and their parent carers are transitioning to be adult carers of adults.

Across Devon, we want more people to live independently in their own homes in the community, to benefit from support that builds on their strengths and to live the life that is right for them and those who support them. We want to create fairer, healthier, more inclusive and caring communities where people feel safe and connected within their community, and able to help themselves and each other.

Our dialogue with carers is continuous through the Carers Partnership Steering Group and “Carer Ambassadors” - unpaid carers who provide a vital link to the wider community of carers and who help to guide our thinking. The [Commitment to Carers](#) outlines our system-wide priorities and now is the time to restate our goals, recognising all that we have learned together over the past few years.

Adult Social Care in Devon County Council delivers the Council’s responsibilities for the safeguarding and wellbeing of the residents of Devon, including the Care Act 2014 duties. In broad terms, this includes the following:

- Prevention, early intervention and support for adults and older people, including through the provision of advice, information, advocacy and support for carers, together with effective use of digital and Technology Enabled Care and Support (TECS) and reablement to promote independence and prevent the need for more dependent and expensive services in the future.
- Assessment of the needs of adults, older people and carers, including safeguarding and protecting adults from abuse.
- Commissioning, procuring and providing services that meet assessed eligible needs, support choice and control and maximise independence.

This strategy is written during a period of unprecedented financial challenge at a national level and, consequently, at a local level as less funding is available. Across Devon, demand from people who are eligible for adult social care continues at a level that exceeds the available budget. This is alongside significant challenges to recruiting and retaining our social care workforce in Devon. We need to work in partnership with people and communities to transform the way that we work over the next five years, alongside planning for and implementing the wide-ranging changes needed to deliver the Government's reform of adult social care.

The Adult Social Care service in Devon has set out significant savings in response to the financial challenges facing the Council over the next five years. Whilst reductions on this scale will have an impact on the amount of support we can provide to people, they do not represent straightforward service reductions. There are a number of transformation programmes planned across Adult Social Care, which are expected to ensure delivery of these reductions whilst meeting statutory duties and minimising the risk or impact to people.

Covid-19 has brought to wider consciousness inequalities within society, in areas from healthcare to technology. These inequalities are felt along various lines, including ethnicity, disability and income. We need to reduce inequalities and target the funding we have on the most vulnerable, disadvantaged or isolated communities, so that more

people can reach their own potential and have equality of opportunity, free from discrimination and harassment.

This strategy is rooted in what people have told us is important to them and national good practice, including [People at the Heart of Care: adult social care reform white paper - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#), which sets out a 10 year vision to transform support and care in England; to offer people choice and control, and to promote independence and wellbeing in the community through outstanding care.

Delivering the actions within this strategy is a priority for both our County Council Strategic Plan and the One Devon Integrated Care System.

DRAFT

Devon County Council's strategic plan

[Devon County Council's strategic plan](#) sets out how the Council will work in partnership with other organisations and networks to create fairer, healthier and more caring and inclusive communities across Devon.

The Council's strategic plan is aligned to the actions set out within this Living Well Strategy, along with *Healthy and Happy Communities 2020-2025*, Devon's [Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#), to create conditions for good health and wellbeing where we live, work and learn.

Devon County Council Plan 2021-2025

Best place

Recovering from the pandemic, and building on the resilience of local people and communities to create a fairer, healthier and more caring place, and grasping the opportunity to create a greener and more prosperous and inclusive future for all

The best place to...



grow up

We are committed to being a child friendly Devon where all children and young people are safe, healthy, ambitious, and can fulfil their potential



live well

We are committed to being a fairer Devon: inclusive, compassionate and caring, where everyone is safe, connected and resilient



prosper together

We are committed to being a greener and more prosperous Devon, with opportunities to create a sustainable future for all

Our priorities

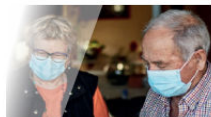
Be ambitious for children and young people



Respond to the climate emergency



Tackling poverty and inequality



Support sustainable economic recovery



Improve health and wellbeing



Help communities be safe, connected and resilient



How we will work...

with each other, our partners, citizens and communities:

We are committed to being:

a trusted council...

that leads and collaborates well, makes good decisions, uses resources effectively and is financially resilient

an inclusive council...

that is intolerant to prejudice and discrimination, invests in, develops and nurtures our workforce, and hears the voices of all our communities

an innovative council...

that listens and learns, uses data well and transforms the way we work in order to improve our services to the people of Devon

Our Vision and Aims for Adult Social Care in Devon

People tell us that what matters to them is to live safely at home in their community, surrounded by their family and friends, where they can retain or develop their independence for as long as possible. We want to support adults in Devon to find the solutions they need to achieve this.

We will focus on promoting the resilience and wellbeing of carers, recognising that the caring role can bring challenges as well as being rewarding, and that Carers can experience detriments to health and wellbeing as a direct result of caring.

We recognise the equality of carers before the Law with the person(s) they care for. We value the role carers play and recognise them as fundamental to strong families and stable communities.

In everything we do we will take Carers into account.

Our vision is for you to have personalised care and support that focuses on your strengths, the outcomes you want to achieve and gives you choice and control.

We will support carers in achieving the greatest possible independence and wellbeing for the people for whom they care.

We recognise that the caring role can have adverse impacts on people's lives. We respect carers as expert partners in care and want to support them to maintain their own health and wellbeing and help them to continue in their caring role whilst achieving a good life balance, recognising that their own life aspirations may sometimes differ from or conflict with those of the person(s) they care for.

Our aims are to:

- **Encourage you to stay well and support you to help yourself; and**
- **Work with you when you need help through personalised, strength-based support to keep you connected to your community.**

Early intervention and prevention are vital to supporting people's health and wellbeing. We will focus on supporting people and their carers early with targeted information and advice, and community, employment and reablement services, that prevent or delay the need for longer term care.

We will work in partnership to support people to be active in their community, to connect with others and to stay well. We will recognise and support the growing contribution and needs of voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations to improving the health and wellbeing of people and achieving different solutions, alongside the continuing development of services. This is described below in the context of your caring role.

Encouraging you to stay well and supporting you to help yourself

- Help you to remain fit and well, or to improve or maintain your current abilities for longer by making informed choices.
- Encourage you to do as much as you can for yourself as well as the person you care for with support from your family, friends and community networks.
- Promote the use of technology and digital solutions where they can play a role in helping to maintain or improve your well-being and independence.
- Work with other organisations to ensure you can access advice and find out about local support and other services to help you look after both the person you care for and yourself in your community.
- Contribute to making your local places, healthy and safe places that support you in your role. We will work with partners, in particular the NHS, GPs and the Voluntary Sector, to achieve this.
- Help you to find the support that increases your ability to manage the specific care needs of the person you care for and for yourself
- Work with you where the young person you care for is approaching adulthood to prepare for that transition so that it is a positive experience.
- Work with you when you are a young carer approaching adulthood yourself so that experience is positive and contributes towards a healthy and fulfilling future.

Our approach is underpinned by a way of working that builds on people's strengths. **Strengths-based working** is a collaboration between service professionals, you and your family and community, which draws on your skills, abilities and networks. This approach supports you to remain happier and independent for longer and resilient in your caring role, whilst staying socially connected.

Where direct adult social care support is needed, we will make sure that the care and support is personalised and strength-based, to keep people connected to their communities and fully cognisant of your needs as a carer.

Working with you when you need help through personalised, strength-based support to keep you connected to your community

- When you are in need of direct support, we ensure you have timely access to health and social care services that meet your needs and are affordable for the County Council.
- If you are referred to Adult Social Care, we ensure that we understand what you really need to support you in the short and longer term to live as independently as you can.

- The support you have focuses on achievement of goals, digital or equipment needs, existing or new community and family connections.
- We support you by commissioning housing and support that promotes and maintains your independence for as long as possible, by developing more modern settings and offering more short-term and goal-focused opportunities.

Our vision and aims for carers across Devon provide the framework for the outcomes we want to achieve with people and the priority areas we will focus on. These are set out in the infographic below and are developed further throughout this strategy.



The outcomes and priority areas of focus are informed by what people have told us and what we know about the current context in Devon.

What people have told us

Carers are at the heart of our work and are involved at all stages of planning and delivering care. We will continue to make sure that their views and experiences are heard, taken into account and influence how we achieve the best possible support for people. The table below sets out the key issues that carers have told us about.

The things carers say are most important to them are:

- I have choice in and about my caring role.
- I find support in my community and from local community organisations.
- I can easily find the information and advice I need in my caring role.
- I have a contingency plan for when I cannot care.
- I am respected as an expert partner in care.
- I am able to care safely, confidently and effectively.
- I am able to maintain my own health, wellbeing and independence.
- I am able to achieve my own most important life goals, including education, training and working.
- I am assured of the quality of the services I and the person(s) I care for use, and that my views are taken into account.
- I am supported to achieve the above when I have difficulty in doing so and am involved in designing the support I need.
- I am able to share my experience and skills as a carer with other carers

The survey results (see below) show us that carers:

- Mostly find it easy to find information about services
- Value being involved in decision-making about the person they care for but that this does not always happen
- Need greater support with their employment, their sense of choice and control and whether they feel safe
- Do not have as much social contact as they would like and consequently feel isolated and lonely.
- They find it difficult to access the formal or informal support they need to take a break.

In addition, carers in Devon also share with us:

- A perception that the formal caring system can be unresponsive and that, where there is a lack of service availability this has a detrimental impact on them.
- That the caring role is often complex and where different teams are involved with support, there is a risk of an holistic picture not being developed.
- Concern about training needed to support people with a Learning Disability, Autistic people, dementia and mental health needs and strokes.
- Concern about the availability, accessibility, flexibility and affordability of services, together with concern about the cessation of replacement care for people with a Learning Disability and for older people.
- Concern about poor accessibility in relation to General Practice, where there is often low carer awareness.
- That it can be difficult to find a suitable agency or worker with the right skills in some circumstances.

The Council is committed to being an anti-racist ([Anti-racism at Devon County Council](#)) and inclusive Council that is intolerant to prejudice and discrimination. We want our staff, providers and communities to feel empowered to challenge the inequalities they may see or face and contribute towards the actions in our strategy.

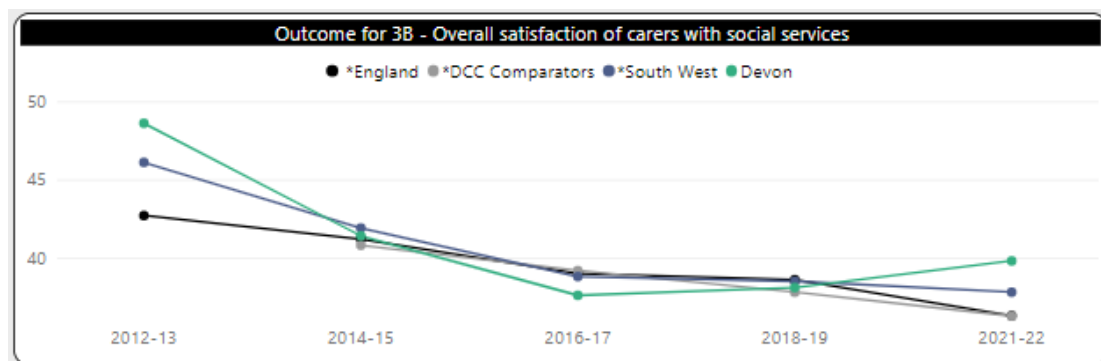
Whilst this strategy focuses on transforming Adult Social Care in Devon, it will be achieved as part of the wider health and care system. This strategy will help organisations that support carers and those they care for to focus on the things that matter most to people in their local communities. This includes GPs and other health service providers, organisations providing housing, leisure facilities, transport and those who help make sure that our communities are safe.

DRAFT

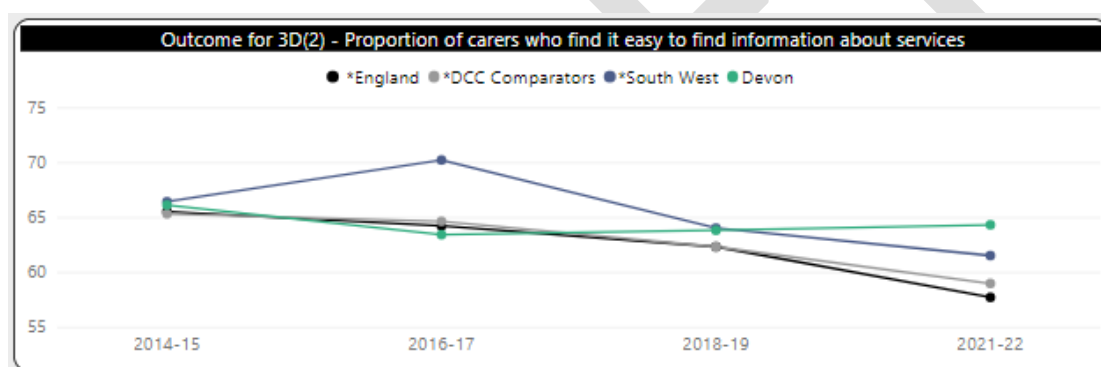
Where we are now

The latest Department of Health and Social Care national survey of unpaid carers in the winter of 2021-22 are summarised below.

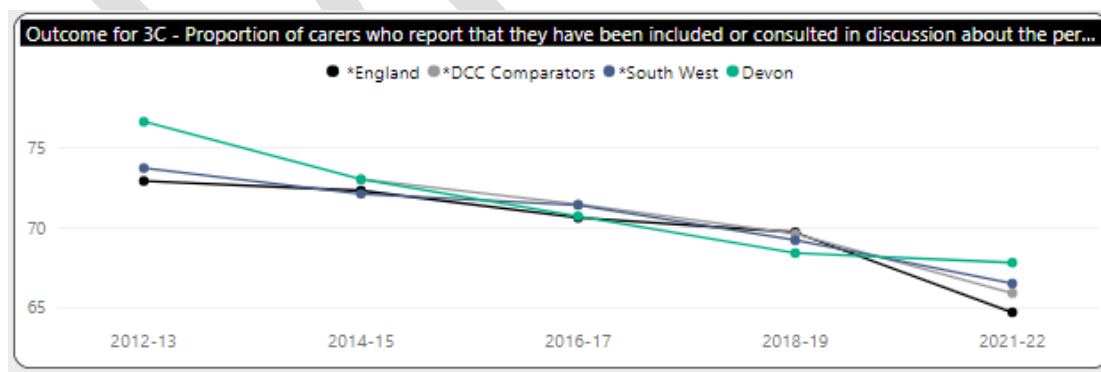
For overall satisfaction of Carers with social services, the national downward trend during the austerity period was reflected in Devon but we have seen some improvement in recent years, and now rank 40/150 of local authorities.



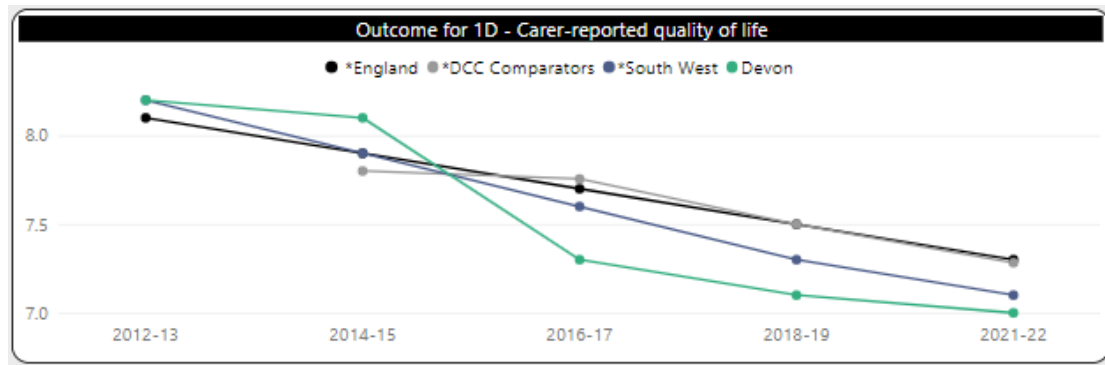
The feedback on access to information and advice is reflected in the survey with Devon ranking 19/150 and better than all comparator averages



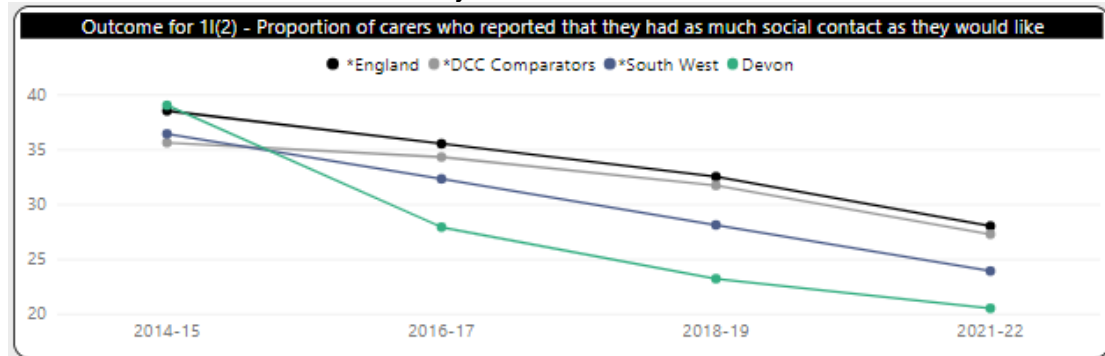
When considering how well carers report that they have been included or consulted in discussions about the person they care for, the picture is mixed. Our performance declined, but more slowly than that of our statistical neighbours and England as a whole.



Carers in Devon respond less positively than all comparators to questions about multiple facets of Carers' lived experience.



Carers in Devon do not feel socially connected:








The 2021 National Census provided important information about those providing unpaid care in Devon.

- More than 20% of carers in the 2011 census provided 50 or more hours of care a week.
- National estimates of the “value” of carers unpaid work, place the total value of the unpaid work of Carers in Devon as £1.6 billion annually.
- During 2020 the Office of National Statistics suggested that there were 130,000 unpaid Carers in Devon (1 in 6 of the population)..
- During 2022, approximately 42,000 carers are known to Devon County Council, 24,000 carers are registered with Devon Carers.
- Carers of people with substance abuse or addiction issues, male carers, working age carers, carers aged over 75, carers from minority ethnic communities, LGBT+ carers, carers with multiple caring roles are less likely to access support.
- Carers are less likely to work than their peers, and when they do work are more likely to work part-time and/or in lower paid jobs.
- 44% of those caring for more than 50 hours per week are economically inactive, compared with 20% in the wider population.

The Covid-19 pandemic impacted on carers more than most of us, increasing their number and caring commitments, affecting their health, wellbeing and economic circumstances.

Pandemic Experience of Carers (i)

Cause	Local services being reduced or closed (e.g. day care)	Paid health and social care (in peoples homes) was reduced	Worries about the cared for contracting COVID-19 from Care staff
Impact	<p>Increase in Caring</p> <p>It is estimated that the COVID-19 pandemic led to a 50% increase in the number of unpaid Carers which now stands at 13.6 million in the UK¹</p> <p>81% of Carers reported providing on average 10 hours more care post the start of the pandemic²</p> <p>More new Carers of working age were created as a result of the pandemic, with 95% of new Carers being under 65³</p> <p>14% increase in Carers that are in paid work post the start of the pandemic³</p>	<p>Financial Impacts</p> <p>72% of Carers said they were spending more on food²</p> <p>50% said they were spending more on Household bills³</p> <p>1 in 6 carers are in debt as a result of their caring role⁴</p> <p>Working age Carers had to reduce their working hours as a result of their increased Caring role</p> <p>10% reported financial difficulties which meant they were not able to afford equipment and WiFi and therefore access online services⁴</p>	    

¹Carers Week 2020 Research Report: The rise in the number of unpaid carers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak
²Caring behind closed doors: six months on the continued impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on unpaid carers
³Coronavirus and the impact on caring: Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)
⁴Carers UK: Heading for Crisis: caught between caring and rising costs

While some carers mentioned benefits from working or socialising online, spending more time with their loved one, the significant majority reported only negative effects:



74% reported feeling exhausted and worn out and 44% said they were reaching breaking point

64% said that they had not been able to take any breaks from their caring role during the COVID-19 pandemic

55% of Carers agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I feel overwhelmed and I am worried that I'm going to burnout in the coming weeks"

87% of carers agreed/strongly agreed with the statement "I am worried about what will happen to the people I care for if I have to self-isolate or become ill"

Source - Carers UK – Behind Closed Doors Study, April & Oct 2020

The cost-of-living crisis is exacerbating some of these challenges. Carers UK 'Heading for Crisis: caught between caring and rising costs', identifies that nationally, carers are a particularly vulnerable group to the effects of the cost of living crisis, due to their limited ability to earn an income and the extra costs they incur as a result of caring.

Assessing how much we spend on supporting carers relative to our population and comparative to others is made challenging by differences in operating models and accounting between different local authorities. but the 2021-22 national returns suggest that we support far more carers than is typical nationally, regionally or in similar authorities because of high carer identification and registration (though more would be desirable). Nationally, the number of Carers supported decreased during the Covid-19 pandemic but increased in Devon.

We need to have more **timely and proactive conversations with people** about how best to support them to develop and maintain independence. This includes changing the culture and practice of social work in Devon to have conversations with people that focus on the achievement of goals, the home environment, equipment needs, and existing or new

community and family connections. We must improve the frequency and number of strength-based reviews of the support people need to live as independently as possible and increase the use of digital solutions and Technology Enabled Care and Support (TECS).

There are significant **workforce challenges** in Devon. We need to continue to grow the social care workforce and ensure that new ways of working are adopted, including digital and TECS solutions. [Skills for Care](#) estimates that the staff turnover rate for the independent provider market in Devon was 39.9% in 2021, which was higher than the region average of 32.0% and higher than England at 29.5%. Not all turnover results in workers leaving the sector, as many leave for another role in social care, but this churn can impact on service and provider quality (continuity of care and training/development) and efficiency (indirect spend to recruitment and agency staff).

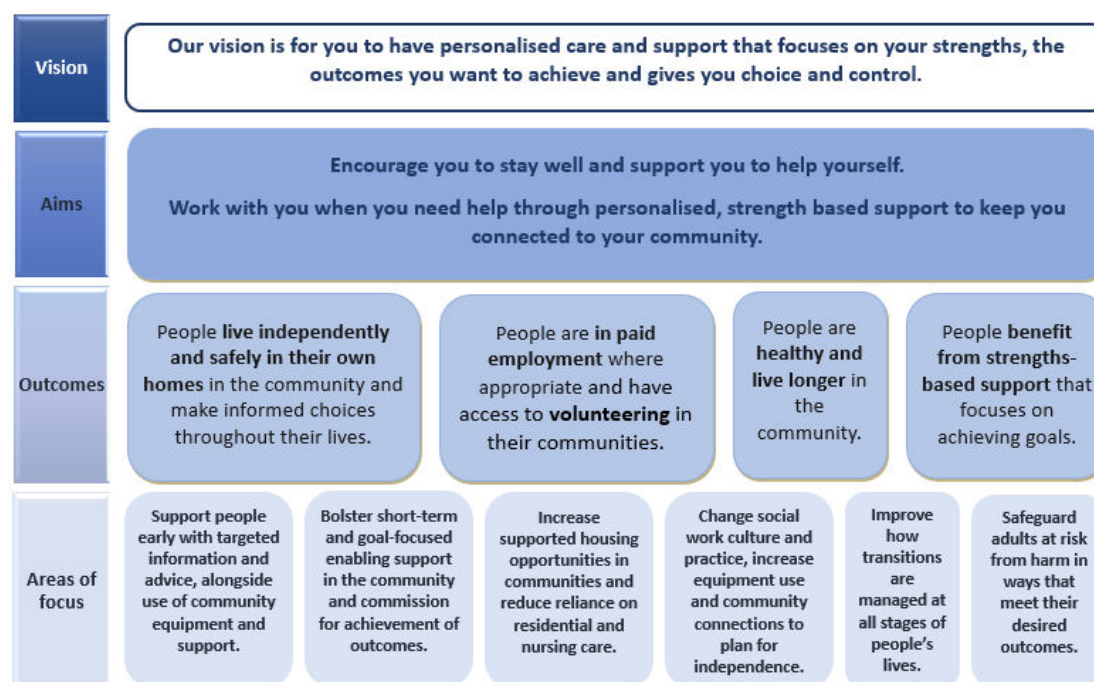
In Devon, the pandemic has highlighted the **limitations of building-based day services** and short break/replacement care models. Many people want to access outreach support in the community. We need to invest in a more diverse set of opportunities for enabling and independence in communities that is short-term and goal focused, to allow people to regain independence. We also need to develop replacement care models alongside this.

Poor mental health and wellbeing has a considerable impact on quality of life and is a major contributor to premature death. Mental and physical health needs are closely linked. Loneliness is often a precursor for mental health needs and is seen in people of all ages. People in many Devon communities have a high risk of loneliness. Younger renters with little sense of belonging to their area, unmarried middle-agers with long-term conditions and widowed older people living alone with long-term conditions are at increased risk.

The Covid-19 pandemic has led to an increase in the **number of people aged 50-64 who are out of work**. Many more people in their 50s and 60s are not working nor looking for work: they have left the workforce altogether. Some might have stopped working for health reasons or because they need to care for someone else. Others may want to work but are struggling to find a job that fits their needs. Research from before the pandemic shows that older workers who lose their jobs are more than twice as likely as other age groups to be unemployed for at least two years.

How we will achieve our Vision

The priority areas that we will focus on over the next five years are set within the context of our vision, aims and outcomes for people across Devon.



The actions that we will take over the next five years to achieve our vision are described below.



1. Prevention – we will:

- Identify carers as early as possible in their caring journey.
- Act across the Health and Care system to connect carers to preventive, universal, services.
- Work with partners to improve carer identification and recognition in Primary and Secondary healthcare.
- Seek effective means to tackle carer isolation and improve their quality of life.
- Continue to develop our carer offer to be sharply focussed on prevention, reducing and delaying needs arising for carers.
- Improve “front door” information so carers who are seeking support for the people they care for can find appropriate support easily.
- Make best use of digital and other technological solutions, while recognising these do not work for everyone.
- Take account of wider determinants of health in promoting carers’ wellbeing and resilience, including the need for breaks.
- Focus on carers issues and support through Local Care Partnerships.

- Optimise the independence of the people carers are supporting.
- Continue to work with GP Practices so that carers known by services are also identified as such by their primary care team.
- Continue to develop the applications and functionality of Carers Passports.

2. **Community – “Carer Friendly Devon” – we will:**

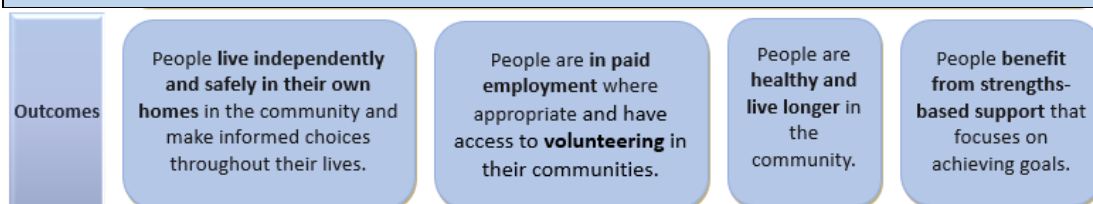
- Enable carers to find support where they live by encouraging “Carer Friendly Communities” which are carer aware and supportive.
- Enable carers to enter or remain in employment if they wish to do so by supporting the development of “Carer Friendly Employers”.
- Encourage Colleges and Universities to identify and support young adult carers, working alongside services on transitions to adulthood as appropriate, and encouraging carers in Education and Training.
- Promote the “Carer Confident Employer” scheme and use the County Council’s community leadership role as an exemplar to support these objectives.

Case study: Maximising vaccination uptake by carers

Targeted work has been taking place to address low uptake by unpaid Carers of COVID-19 booster vaccinations with Devon Carers identifying and supporting Carers registered with them to access vaccinations.

Further work took place in autumn 2022 to support the latest booster campaign (and flu vaccine take-up) to keep Carers safer and their loved ones more protected from the risk of onward infection or Carer breakdown. We will continue to collaborate with the NHS to support carers’ health and wellbeing in this particular way for as long as necessary.

AIM: Work with you when you need help through personalised, strength-based support to keep you connected to your community



3. **Effective support for carers – we will:**

- Take a whole family approach, so carers’ mental and physical health is maintained or improved.
- Support carers to have effective and informed choice about their lives and caring role.
- Link carers into effective support, including training, to care confidently, “future proofing” planning for contingencies and awareness of out of hours support.
- Offer carer friendly services, always aware of the challenges carers face.
- Build on the success of our Carers Hospital Scheme in early identification, effective reduction of needs in a brief intervention, and seek to apply learning in other areas of the carers’ support service.
- Develop Shared Lives schemes to support people with high levels of needs as short-term replacement care and alternative to residential care, or to develop independent living skills.
- Act upon carers’ needs in relation to Hospital Admission/readmission and discharge.

4. Employers – “Carer Friendly Devon” – we will:

- Enable carers to enter or remain in employment if they wish to do so by supporting the development of “Carer Friendly Employers”.
- Promote the “Carer Confident Employer” scheme and use the County Council’s community leadership role as an exemplar to support these objectives.

5. Replacement Care – we will:

- Publish a new vision for replacement care which is focussed on outcomes for carers and personalised to enable carers to take the breaks they need and the person they care for to have a positive experience.
- Publish a needs assessment for replacement care to guide development including locality Replacement Care profiles and data.
- Promote new ways of providing replacement care, test and spread innovative and complementary services meeting need informally, and work to overcome workforce and market issues to achieve the vision.
- Implement practice improvements to deliver on these recommendations.

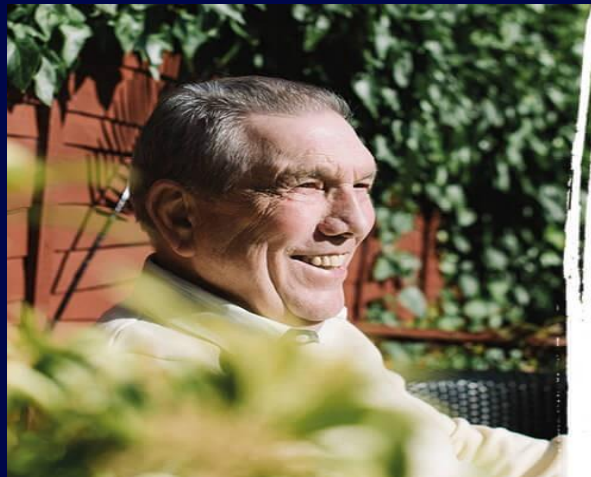
6. Strengths-based and personalised practice – we will ensure that:

- Staff working with people with social care needs recognise, positively engage and respect carers, and are supported in their practice.
- When they are needed, Carers Assessments are always a helpful and useful opportunity, supporting carers’ wellbeing and resilience and achieving outcomes.
- We implement in all services the principles of the “Triangle of Care” so that carers are involved in assessments, care planning, decision making and reviews, are universally recognised as “Expert Partners in Care” and are supported in this role.
- Parity of esteem is achieved for the quality of practice with carers as for the people for whom they care.

Albert lives with dementia and Technology Enabled Care and Support enables him to stay in the comfort of his own home and reduces the need for residential care and hospital stays.

Strokes, followed by depression, led to people assuming he needed a care home. However, instead he was supported to successfully return home.

Albert has a screen on his lap. He sees a reminder to ‘call Charlotte’ and photos of her latest diving trip in Dubai pop up. Albert touches a picture of his granddaughter’s face to video call her. When he doesn’t want to Skype he presses ‘message Charlotte’ and writes a letter instead.



[TSA - the voice of TEC \(tsa-voice.org.uk\)](http://tsa-voice.org.uk)

This is Jean with her Robo -pup “Robby”. Jean is living with dementia and uses Robby as part of a therapeutic approach to support her and her husband.

Jean is over the moon with Robby, she loves him (though she can never remember his name). She treats him like a real dog and spends most of her time cuddling, talking and trying to feed him. She even takes him for a walk.

Robby has given Jean so much fun in looking after him. Robo-pup has made such a difference to her husband being able to support Jean at home – where she belongs.



[TSA - the voice of TEC \(tsa-voice.org.uk\)](http://tsa-voice.org.uk)

7. Recognise and support carers whose roles are changing, prioritise those who are more vulnerable

- Give particular attention to all points of transition for carers – for example becoming an adult carer of an adult at age 18.
- Identify the following groups as being particularly likely to being under-supported (or are otherwise particularly vulnerable) and commit to redress that: carers of people with substance abuse or addiction issues, male carers, working age carers, carers aged over 75, carers from minority ethnic communities, LGBT+ carers, carers with multiple caring roles.

8. Our contract and sustainability model

In our recent joint review with Devon Carers of the Caring Well in Devon contract, we concluded some improvements are necessary, reflecting that:

- Partnerships and development of resources for Carers in the community require focussed capacity.
- Timeliness of first response is critically important – leading to a First Response Function.
- Our data is gold-dust in understanding, shaping, and demonstrating what we do to support Carers and the system.
- Some of the quieter things we do, such as Peer Support, are critical to the wellbeing of some participants, who welcome sharing their experience with others who's understanding is rooted in their own caring journey.
- Without social change for Carers, for example Carer Friendly Devon, and good prevention, our more intensive services will be unsustainable.

9. Be an anti-racist Council

A number of actions are being taken forward across Devon County Council to support our intent to be an anti-racist organisation. We will:

- Support staff to feel safe, including listening and providing support to staff and managers.
- Improve data on equalities and ethnicity, including in the independent provider market.
- Improve representation in our engagement forums.
- Include a clause in our social care contracts with acceptable standards that are monitored.
- Consider race equality as part of all commissioning strategies.

How we will know if we have been successful

It is important that we continually monitor the impact of our work to better support people across Devon. We will review our progress in respect of the outcomes that we have developed with people and their families/carers. Local Involvement Groups will have an important role in the monitoring of local action plans, ensuring the full involvement of people and their families and/or carers. Our Assurance Framework is current under review. Measures used to assess our impact could include the following performance indicators.

Identification and Recognition:	
<i>Performance Indicator</i>	<i>Rationale</i>
Increase the number of carers registered with our carers service as a proportion of carers identified in the Census 2021	Identifying carers is critical to connecting them with high quality information, advice and support. Identifying carers directly in communities and through employers earlier in their caring journey, will enable more carers to be supported to remain healthy and resilient.
increase the number of carers recorded with primary care	Primary care is often the first point of contact for carers and is a crucial gateway to support. Carer awareness in Primary Care is critical to this.
improve the identification of carers at all stages of the Hospital Discharge pathway, including at Pathway 0	Experience shows that carer identification in hospitals can be improved and can help to both prevent admissions and support timely discharge
Reduce the proportion of carers known to Integrated Adult Care and to GP Practices who are not known by the carers support service.	Ensure effective identification of family and friends who are carers in Health and Care everyday work, and efficient mechanisms for cross referral.
Improve inclusion and equity of access to carer support services for under-served and more vulnerable groups.	Our analysis shows that the following groups of carers are proportionately under-represented in the “population” known to Devon Carers (or are otherwise particularly vulnerable) and effective action is required to address this: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- carers of people with substance abuse or addiction issues, male carers, working age carers, carers aged over 75, carers from minority ethnic communities, LGBT+ carers, carers with multiple caring roles
Sensitive and proportionate assessments and reviews for carers along their caring journey	While we aim to get as much help as possible to carers without assessment, assessments and reviews can be vital tools in promoting carer wellbeing and supporting them in maintaining the independence wellbeing and good life outcomes of the people for whom they care

Information and Advice:	
Performance Indicator	Rationale
That there is a continued improvement of carers satisfaction with how easy it is to:	
Find user-friendly information and advice that is inclusive of their communication and accessibility needs to make informed and empowered decisions about their lives – now and in the future.	<p>Access to information and advice connects carers with support to support them throughout their caring journey. Early access prevents issues escalating, promotes carer well-being and improves outcomes for the person they support.</p> <p>Carers can easily access information about services needed by the person(s) they care for, understand out of hours support, and service pathways.</p>
Find out about their rights are and where they can get information and advice on all the options for my health, care and housing.	
Understand the support that is available to them in their local area to maintain their health and wellbeing and achieve the outcomes that matter to them.	
Get tailored information and advice to support the person they care for.	
Find information on services needed by the person(s) they care for.	

Carers involvement in care planning for the cared-for person:	
Performance Indicator	Rationale
Improvement in carers reported satisfaction with:	
Being recognised as a carer, especially at critical periods like hospital attendance and admission	Recognition is crucial to optimised outcomes for both the cared for person and the carer. By involving the carer planning is most sensitive to the needs of the cared for person and gives greater resilience to the carer. At assessment we should be focusing on personalisation and agreeing and meeting outcomes.
Being involved in decision making about care and support for the person for whom they care (unless they decline to allow this and have capacity)	Decisions made with the cared-for person without their carer may lead to unforeseen consequences that do not fully understand the context for the person in question, nor the support needed by their carer to sustain them in that role. When the cared-for person refuses involvement this is a decision which is as well informed as possible. The consequences are recognised and addressed with the carer, to enable their own considered decision-making.
Timely reviews.	Timely reviews of the people carers are supporting are as critical to the wellbeing of the carer as well as that of the person with care or support needs if we are to ensure that agreed outcomes are met.

Access to breaks and replacement care:

<i>Performance Indicator</i>	<i>Rationale</i>
Carers will have access to support and information that enables them to take a break in a timely way	Carers sustained by breaks and timely access to information will enable them to take them at the best time for them.
Where appropriate there is timely access to the short breaks fund for that purpose	Sometimes carers need access to some small financial support to enable them to take a break.
There is an improvement in carers' access to replacement care	This is the top priority for carers and has been increasingly difficult as a result of Covid – new solutions need to be found
The needs assessment for replacement care is reflected in our Market Position Statement and there is active market development	Development of solutions will not take place without engagement from the market

Carer Friendly Communities and Employers

<i>Performance Indicator</i>	<i>Rationale</i>
Increase the number of communities who are supported to be Carer Friendly Communities	This is key to recognition and prevention. Where carers feel supported by their local communities, businesses and services they report greater resilience. Also encourages understanding of the caring role and increases recognition.
Increase the number of employers registered with Employers for Carers or with Devon Carers as Carer-Friendly employers	Supports carers to stay in paid employment, which is both positive for their well-being and for the success of their employers. Engages communities and employers as allies

The carers biennial survey

<i>Performance Indicator</i>	<i>Rationale</i>
These, and other actions, will result in improvements in satisfaction levels are reported in the biennial survey (next due in 2024) in the following measures:	
Overall satisfaction with social services	Overarching measure that reports on how effective we are where services are needed
Proportion of carers who find it easy to access information	As above
Proportion of carers who report that they have been included or consulted in discussion about the person they care for.	As above.
Carer reported quality of life	An important overall indicator of the well-being of carers on which we perform poorly.

Carers who report that they have as much social contact as they would like	Devon performs particularly badly on this measure and steps need to be taken to see how we can address low levels of social contact. Isolation is a key element in reduced well-being and ultimately adds to risk of carer breakdown.
--	---

Performance Indicators to support the Council's intent to be an anti-racist organisation can be accessed via [Race Equality Action Plan - Equality and Diversity \(devon.gov.uk\)](#).

The delivery of the priority areas of focus within this strategy will be monitored through action plans. Alongside the indicators above, there are a number of documents that will support delivery. These can be accessed via [Devon County Council - Our vision, 5 Year Plan and Annual Report | Devon County Council](#) and the [Provider Engagement Network \(devon.gov.uk\)](#) and include Devon County Council's market position statement (refreshed annually), Housing strategy, Workforce Development Plan, and Quality/Safeguarding strategy.

DRAFT