

AGENDA SUPPLEMENT (1)

Meeting: Children's Select Committee

Place: Council Chamber - County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN

Date: Tuesday 31 October 2023

Time: 10.30 am

The Agenda for the above meeting was published on 23 October 2023. Additional documents are now available and are attached to this Agenda Supplement.

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Max Hirst max.hirst@wiltshire.gov.uk of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, direct line 01225718215 or email max.hirst@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications on direct lines (01225)713114/713115.

This Agenda and all the documents referred to within it are available on the Council's website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

6 **Young Carers in Wiltshire (Pages 3 - 24)**

11a **Update from Wiltshire Youth Voice Representative (Pages 25 - 30)**

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 27 October 2023

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Carer Friendly Wiltshire

Draft All Age Carers Strategy 2023 - 2028

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Foreword

We are delighted to introduce our Joint Wiltshire All-age Carers Strategy.

We recognise caring is an important part of life and it is unpaid carers - daughters, sons, partners, or friends, who often hold families together and fill the gaps in support that statutory services are not always able to provide.

This strategy has been developed following the Covid-19 pandemic, which brought the important role and experience of carers of all ages to the forefront. We understand that some carers would have struggled to manage additional hours of care during this time, and many would have felt the impact of increased anxiety, isolation, loss, and loneliness.

We hope that this Carers Strategy will help us to build on the achievements of the last joint strategy and will present some real opportunities for us to reaffirm our recognition and appreciation of the vitally important role that unpaid Wiltshire carers make to the cared for person and our communities .

We are committed to making Wiltshire Carer Friendly and we will do our best to ensure that support for carers in Wiltshire continues to develop and improve.

This strategy sets out some important priorities:

- Early identification and recognition of carers.
- Improved information and advice.
- The need for systems and services that work for carers.
- Improved health and wellbeing of carers
- Young carers having the same recognition and priority as adult carers, as well as access to information and support services

We want to thank our voluntary sector partners for helping to facilitate our engagement with carers of all ages over the past year.



Cllr. Jane Davies

Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, SEND and Inclusion

Wiltshire Council



Cllr. Laura Mayes

Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, and Skills

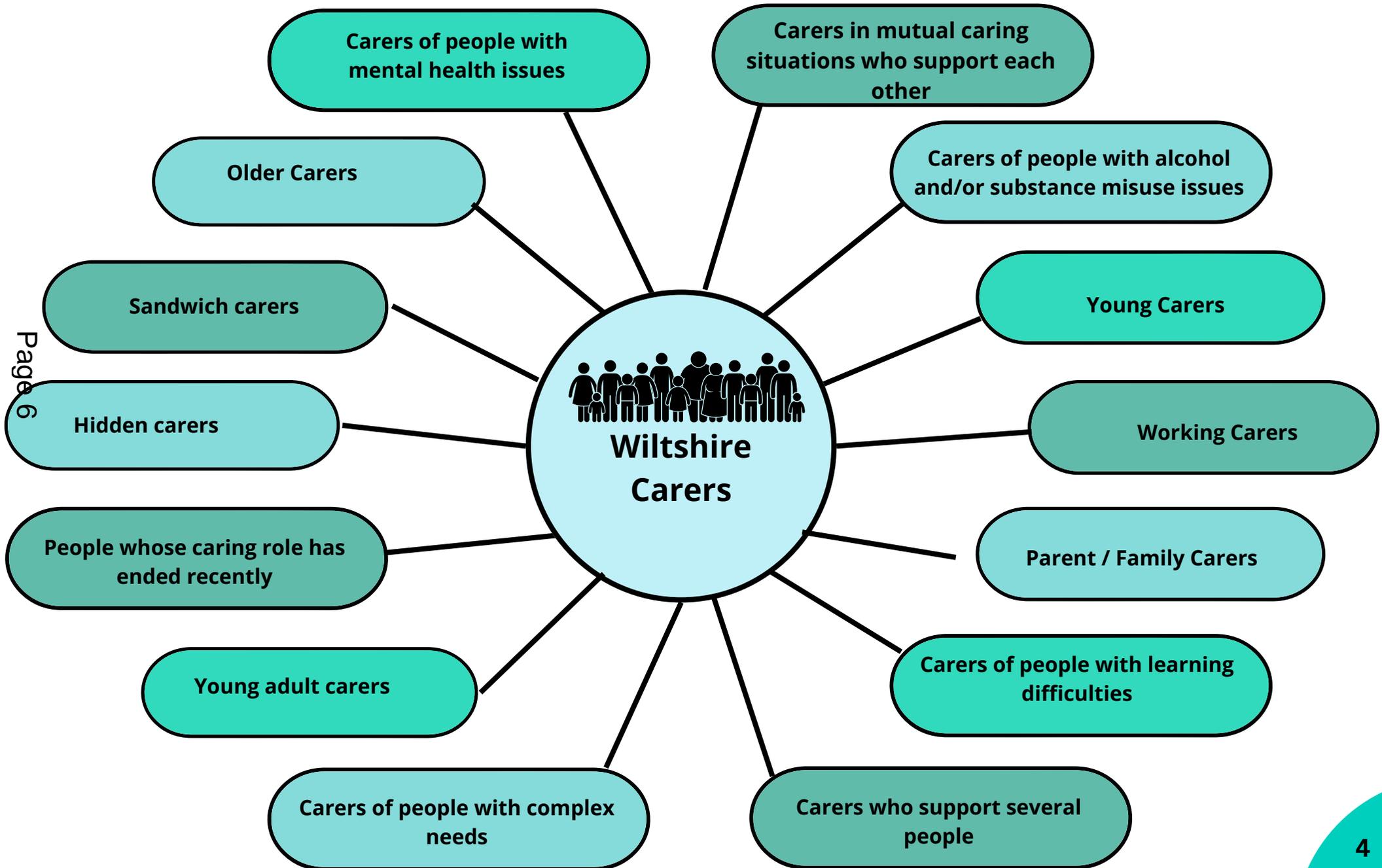
Wiltshire Council



Richard Clewer

Lead of Wiltshire Council and Chair of **Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Partnership**

This Strategy is for all unpaid carers who live in, or are caring for someone that lives in Wiltshire (excluding Swindon), including but are not limited to:



A person is a carer if they provide unpaid care to a family member, friend, or neighbour because of long-term physical or mental ill health or disability or care needs relating to old age.

Carers provide a range of support including personal care, emotional support, help with practical tasks such as shopping, and reminding or giving medication. Most unpaid care is provided by children and spouses. Research suggests that 1 in 5 children under the age of 18 provide some level of care.

As a society, we rely on unpaid carers, and improving support for carers must be at the heart of how we meet the needs of both our ageing population and the demands on our health and social care systems. This is an issue that can affect any of us - the need to provide care for a friend, neighbour or loved one in our lifetime, often with very little time to plan. However, the impacts of being a carer are wide ranging: it affects carers' social and family lives; their mental and physical health; their mental and physical health; their education, work and income.

Wiltshire Council's vision is to create strong communities where here people can fulfil their potential, be actively involved and included in their communities, make informed decisions, have control over their lives, and be valued and included within society. In Wiltshire, we start from the strengths, talents and assets that each person has – this means looking beyond their diagnosis or needs, however important these may be. This strategy describes how we will work together to make Wiltshire a supportive, carer-friendly place where the contribution of unpaid carers of all ages is valued and recognised, and where carers are able to live good lives alongside their caring responsibilities. the delivery plan that goes with it will set out how we will make that happen.

Quotes are from Wiltshire Carers in 2022-2023

"I need to know where to get help in a crisis"

"I don't want to be treated differently to my peers"

"A break that is right for me is important - time to recharge my battery"

"I want to have choice and be able to find information that will support me in my caring role"

"My financial situation needs to be recognised - there is a financial impact to caring so I may need help"

"Quality services are important for both me and the person I care for"

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"I don't want to be seen as just an overprotective parent. I want to be listened to"

"I need to be prepared to adapt to changes"

"I want to be able to access support in my local community"

"Early recognition will help me to work longer"

"I matter too. I want to enjoy my own life and achieve my own goals"

"I want to access the right help as my life changes"

"I want to carry out my role safely"

"Peer support is really helpful"

"I want to have some support when my caring role ends"

"Caring can be rewarding but it can take its toll on your own health"

Our Vision and Aims

Our aim is to ensure that carers can maintain good physical and mental health and wellbeing, achieve a healthy balance between their caring responsibilities and a life outside of caring, whilst enabling the person they care for to enjoy a good quality of life.

The strategy has been shaped by the diverse range of carer voices in Wiltshire. They have told us that caring is often uniquely rewarding but sometimes incredibly frustrating. So many people do not realise they are carers; they do what they do because they love those they care for. They need our recognition, creativity, and tangible action so they feel confident, supported, and able to cope with the often-tough demands they face daily.

Our Vision

We want Wiltshire to be a carer friendly County, where communities recognise and support unpaid carers of all ages, so people do not feel alone in their caring role.

It is important that carers are able to continue to support the person they look after and care about, to a degree of their choosing; and that in doing this, carers are still able to look after their own health and wellbeing.

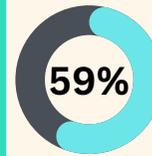
A) The Impact of Caring

The impact of caring is significant and varied. The financial value of unpaid care work in England Wales is roughly equivalent to the annual NHS England budget. The quality of care provided by a family member will often be high-quality and personalised, to an extent which a paid worker arguably could not reach. However, caring can also negatively affect relationships, as well as the health, quality of life, education, skills, work status and income of the carer. Often the impact will be more negative for carers that provide personal care (such as helping to dress), care for 50 or more hours of care per week, and for those that live with the person for which they care.

The contribution that unpaid family members, partners, friends, neighbours and others make in caring for people with age-related frailty, disabilities, health conditions, substance misuse and other needs is enormous. New findings from Carers UK and the University of Sheffield show that unpaid carers in England and Wales contribute £445m to the economy in England and Wales every day – that's £162bn per year, roughly equivalent to NHS England's entire annual budget.

These impacts are felt disproportionately by some groups more than others, and this strategy will target the right support where it is needed most.

According to the 2021 Census, there are an estimated **5 million** unpaid carers in England and Wales. **(Carers UK, 2021)**



Nationally 59% of unpaid carers are women. Women are more likely to become carers and provide more hours of unpaid care than men. **(Carers UK, 2021)**

1 in **7**

1 in 7 carers in the UK are juggling work and care. **(Census 2021).**

1 in **5**

As many as 1 in 5 children and young people are young carers. **(Action for Children, 2023)**

B) Local Profile

The 2021 Census showed that there are approximately 44,000 unpaid carers in Wiltshire. The proportion of the total population who provide care has dropped since the last Census^[1]; however, the number of people providing significant levels of care increased. Carers who provide more than 20 hours per week, and particularly more than 50 hours per week, are more likely to experience poor mental and physical health outcomes, lose out in the workplace, and feel unable to cope.

	2011 Census	2021 Census
% of population providing unpaid care for family, friends, neighbours etc	10.1%	8.7%
Number of carers providing more than 20 hours unpaid care per week	14,500	19,300
Number of carers providing more than 50 hours unpaid care per week	9,500	11,800

[1] This may be because the wording of this question in the Census changed between 2011 and 2021.

On Census Day 2021, there were approximately 5m carers in England and Wales – equivalent to 9.1% of the usual resident population aged 5 years and over. Nationally, a higher proportion of females than males are unpaid carers; a higher percentage of people living in the most deprived areas provide care, compared to people living in the least deprived areas. Almost half (41%) of unpaid carers are between 46-65.

1 in 7 carers in the UK are juggling work and care, and as many as 1 in 5 children are carers. The latest census data shows 166,000 young carers in England and Wales; however, there are estimated to be an additional 600,000 hidden young carers who may not be receiving any support.

We know that the number of young carers nationally is under-recorded, and this is likely to be reflected in Wiltshire. A survey of young people in 2020/21 provided stark evidence of the impact of caring on young people's lives:

- Young carers are significantly more likely to drink alcohol daily or weekly than their peers. 4% of young carers at primary school drink alcohol often / most days.
- Young carers are the group of vulnerable young people most likely to take prescription drugs recreationally.

Local & National Context

- Young carers at primary school are less likely to feel safe at home than their peers, and young carers are least likely to feel safe from crime.
- 36% of secondary school age young carers have either been a victim of domestic abuse or violence themselves or witnessed a family member being a victim.
- 33% of primary age young carers and 42% of secondary age young carers have spent money on gambling.

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Less than two thirds of primary school age young carers and less than one third of secondary school age young carers feel confident about their future. Half of young carers have felt so worried, they cannot sleep at night.

- More than a third of young carers in Year 12 and above have self-harmed – the highest proportion in this age group.
- Amongst primary school pupils, young carers are the least likely to eat breakfast and have 5 or more portions of fruit and vegetables per day.

Whilst we have made progress through the previous Wiltshire Carers Strategy, we still have further to go. Each year, carers nationally are asked five questions about their experiences of being a carer. Although carers in Wiltshire report better-than-

average satisfaction with the support they get, and often feel part of the decision-making process, they currently report poorer quality of life and social contact than the national and regional averages.

	Wiltshire	England	South West
% of carers who said they were extremely/very satisfied with Social Service support for carer or cared-for person	39.3	36.3	37.8
Proportion of carers who report that they have been included or consulted in discussion about the person they care for	65.7%	64.7%	66.5%
Proportion of carers who find it easy to find information about support.	58.9%	57.7%	61.5%
Carer-reported quality of life score	6.6	7.3	7.1
% of carers who reported they have as much social contact as they want	16	28	23.9

National Policy and Legislation

This strategy aligns with and supports implementation of national and local priorities

National Policy / Legislation / Guidance



The Care Act 2014

The Children and Families Act (2014)

NHS Commitment to Carers (2014)

National Carers Action Plan (2018 - 2020)

The NHS Long Term Plan (2019)

The White Paper - Health and Social Care Integration (2022)

The White Paper - People at the Heart of Care: Adult Social Care Reform (2021)

NICE Guidelines

The Triangle of Care: A guide to best practice in Mental Health Care in England

Local Policy / Guidance



Wiltshire Council Business Plan 2022 - 2032

Wiltshire's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Wiltshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

Wiltshire Independent Living Strategy 2022

Wiltshire Autism Strategy 2022

Wiltshire Dementia Strategy 2023

Wiltshire Council and the ICB have worked with carers, practitioners, BSW Integrated Care Board, our local voluntary sector and other stakeholders to create a shared vision of what support for carers in Wiltshire should look like.

In Spring 2022, Carers Support Wiltshire hosted a series of conversations with carers to explore experiences of providing unpaid care. This included a conference attended by around 30 carers, an online survey and 1:1 and group discussions with carers who attend CSW carer support groups. Separate sessions and workshops were also held with young carers.

The themes that emerged included:

- The importance of peer-to-peer support for carers to get the information and support they need.
- The need for professionals to be sensitive to and aware of the challenges carers face.
- The need for clearer communication between professionals and carers.
- Carers are often not aware of the full range of support that is available.

- Respite is still a critical part of helping carers manage their wellbeing, allowing them to take breaks from their caring role and access training.
- Training and support needs to be delivered flexibly so carers can access it at a time and a place that's convenient to their caring role.

Carers Support Wiltshire have written a report summarising these conversations, in which they review the experience of being a carer:

"Many carers go on a journey that is uniquely rewarding but sometimes incredibly frustrating. Their experiences may reflect that of others, but the diversity of carers and their loved ones means that one size does not fit all when it comes to finding solutions. So many people do not realise they are carers; they do what they do because they love those they care for. They need our recognition, creativity, and tangible action so they feel confident, supported, and able to cope with the often-tough demands they face daily."

Feedback sessions and workshops were held with young carers in schools and young adult carer groups to explore:

- What makes you feel good about yourself?

- What has helped you in your caring role?
- What would help you to manage your role and achieve your goals in life?

Young carers reported that they need their caring role to be recognised and appreciated, and that they require support (1:1 and peer support) around developing skills, counselling and other mental health support for their emotional health and wellbeing, and access to breaks.

Co-production will continue and will include partnership with a range of voluntary sector organisations using different models of engagement to make sure there is good insight into hard to reach communities.

Engagement with carers that have or are experiencing looking after someone with dementia was also conducted over the Summer of 2023 to inform our dementia strategy at Wiltshire Council. This consisted of group sessions held in Trowbridge, Salisbury and Corsham.

The main outcomes of this were:

- Understanding a carer and their role when the cared for moves out of the family home
- The impact of COVID on families and people with a diagnosis of dementia

- A guide for families when receiving a diagnosis
- Peer support

This will support and inform dementia commissioners on what works well for the carer and family members as well as the person being diagnosed ensuring a whole family approach and more joined up working in commissioning.

Lastly, Wiltshire Council have commissioned over the late summer/autumn of 2023 an external provider to hear and relay Wiltshire carers voices since the change in contract in 2018.

This provider will encourage carers of all ages and backgrounds to use creativity to talk about their experiences and lives as a carer, through the uses of:

- Poetry
- Song writing and music
- Movement, performance through play
- 360 filmmaking and animation

These will be used by Wiltshire Council commissioners to create a new contract for carers from 2024

Achievements from last strategy

Outcome 1

- Carers cafes in every area (support group for other carers to get together)
- Bereavement groups
- Health checks at GPs surgeries (this is a expectation in the GP accreditation)
- Schools accreditation launching

Outcome 2

- Training provided to carers from WC (manual handling, safeguarding yourself and understanding autism)
- Carers support is still running
- Hospital liaison service commissioned

Outcome 3

- Cost of living crisis support by public health
- Free cooking classes, slow cookers and vouchers given to select young carers
- WC employment of young carers
- Citizens advice specialist services for carers

Outcome 4

- Monthly meeting with carers commissioners and centres across UK
- Monthly meetings with carers commissioners and centres across ICB
- Events for carers week
- GP and schools accreditation

Outcome 5

- Regular engagement events
- Carers sit on the Wiltshire carers forum as board members
- Hospital liaison service

Priority Outcomes

Our priorities are informed by the outcomes that carers have said are important to them. We have worked with carers, care professionals and partner organisations to design our approach to supporting and working with carers under the vision of a carer-friendly Wiltshire.

Priority 8

Awareness raising in communities, within schools, and workplaces and services is a consistent action. Carers to be expert partners in the growth and monitoring of services

Priority 7

Carers are able to share their experiences, and have a wide range of social opportunities in order to reduce isolation

Priority 6

Carers are supported to transition from their caring role when the time comes

Priority 5

Carers have access to information and services which support their health and wellbeing

Priority 8



Priority 7



Priority 6



Priority 5



Priority 1



Priority 2



Priority 3



Priority 4



Priority 1

Carers are identified, recognised and offered support if they need it, at the earliest opportunity.

Priority 2

Carers with different needs are able to access the right support and information when they need it, in the way that works best for them.

Priority 3

Carers have equitable access to support and information on financial matters and their rights

Priority 4

Young carers are able to thrive and develop educationally, personally and socially, and are protected from excessive or inappropriate caring roles.

Principles underpinning the delivery plan

Community recognition and understanding of the issues faced by unpaid Carers of all ages

The needs of cared for and carer should not be seen in isolation of each other

Readily available information and support to access services for children ,young people and adults

Working together to commission a range of easily accessible services to support unpaid carers

Personalised care

Organisations working together

Reducing social isolation of carers

Delivery plan

	Community engagement	Easy access to information and assessment	A range of personalised support	Support during crisis	Support when the caring stops
	Review and extend the carers champion role	Online assessment tools as well as paper based information and support	Online resources for workplaces on supporting carers at work and into employment	7 day a week 8am-8pm urgent community response services	Counselling support and mentorship
Page 20	Community meeting events	Range of assessors including social prescribers, hospital carer liaison, care provider facilitators and school-based champions	Developing flexible at home and residential options for respite care for self directed support	Carers advanced care planning support	Bereavement support
	Young carer community projects	WC dedicated web page and links to delivery partners. Financial assessment tools to maximise benefits, financial advice	manual handling training , end of life care, as well as CV support and careers advice	Carers hospital based liaison	Housing and employment advice
	Awareness raising projects in workplaces and communities	Broad communications campaigning and events throughout the year to raise awareness on key issues	Expert carers mentor role developed. Health checks for all carers Wiltshire Carers passport with wellbeing benefits	Safeeguarding for young carers	Support for 18 months after caring role has ended

Measures

OUTCOMES REQUIRED	MEASURES
I want to access support , contribute to and be valued by my community (inc. work, education, family & social life)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of identified carers receiving carer assessment & review • Satisfaction survey of carer services & experience of being a carer (via survey) • Spend on carer services • Impact of caring on working hours • School attendance/attainment for young carers • Active identification of people with LD living at home with older parents, •
I don't want to be financially disadvantaged because of my caring role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referrals to / uptake of financial advice • Impact of caring on working hours
I want good mental and physical health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referrals to / uptake of MH services (inc. counselling, psychotherapy) • Caregiver Strain Index • Number of cares registered as a carer with GP
I want to be identified as a carer, recognised as an expert partner and be informed, involved, included and listened to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to training • Survey of carers feeling involved in decision-making around the cared-for
I want to spend quality time on myself, away from my caring role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of people receiving respite • Number of hours respite provided
I want to be able to adjust to transitions in life, including a life outside of caring when the time comes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to bereavement counselling support • Access to employment and financial advice
I want support to prevent crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of referrals to rapid response • Number of emergency admissions to hospital for cared for persons

"BSW"

Bath & North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire

"Hidden Carers"

Hidden carers are those who may not recognise themselves as a carer and consequently are less likely to access support. Some studies suggest that identification as a carer and seeking support can vary across the spectrum of caring, with some carers being more at risk of being hidden. For example, those who do not care for people with very complex and/or intensive needs are more likely to be hidden. Parent carers of children and young people with SEND, may not always recognise themselves as a carer. There can also be a resistance to adopting the label of 'carer' because of close family relationships.

"Sandwich Carers"

There is an increasing number of 'sandwich carers' (Carers UK estimate 2.4 million in the UK) – those looking after more than one person at the same time. For example, caring for young children and caring for older parents. This terminology can also be used much more broadly to describe a variety of multiple caring responsibilities for people in different generations.

"Working Carers"

An increasing number of people are having to work longer, often beyond retirement age. According to the 2021 Census, the largest proportion of carers are in employment either full or part-time. This means that carers are often juggling working with caring responsibilities and some with multiple caring responsibilities.

"Young Carers"

A young carer is someone aged 18 or under whose life is affected by caring for at least one family member, over and above just 'helping out'. Young carers might look after, parents, grandparents, siblings or close relatives.

"Parent/Family carers"

Parent and family carers can provide support for their children, including grown up children if they cannot manage without their help. They can be ill, disabled or have mental health and substance missue problems.

"Strategy"

Outlines the key priorities we'll focus on for Carers services over the next 5 years and the vision of Wiltshire Council. It describes how we'll work together to improve the health and needs of carers and provide support when needed. The plan has been developed by listening to carers living in Wiltshire in our communities, our partners and stakeholders.

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"Unpaid Carers"

Carers who are not employed by a business and not receiving a typical wage to care for the person they are caring for, this does not include incomes such as: benefits or employment for another job.

"Outcomes"

Focusing on achievements for the carers due to the changes in processes and services.

"Priorities"

Important factors based on importance to Wiltshire Council and Wiltshire Carers.

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Voice and Participation Service, Children's Select Committee Update

October 2023

Joe Sutton Voice and Participation Manager

Children in Care and Care Experienced Adults

Go Beyond Residential

13 children in Care aged between 8 and 13 attended an October half-term 5-day Cornwall excursion with Go Beyond enabling the participants to build on their friendships, develop their self-confidence and experience a holiday adventure.

Christmas Activity

The Children in Care Council will also attend a Christmas get together with the activity being laser tag. This will provide an opportunity to celebrate and reflect on their contribution together.

Podcast sessions

The team has recorded three new podcast episodes, which will be edited and released shortly.

1. How young people feel in their statutory meetings.
2. How we can support them to feel safe.
3. Lived experience of what it's like to be in prison as a care leaver.

A future session of the podcast will focus on health. The Podcasts enable young people and professionals to become more informed about the support able and share best practice in working with young people.

Parent Group

The most recent parent group for care experienced people had 4 families attend, the feedback was positive. The group celebrated the fact that one of the mums was about to give birth and done games such as guess the baby weight. There are 2 more potential parents joining the next session on 13th November. This innovative work enables parents to develop and maintain peer support network where they feel included and their experiences understood.

Sessional Voice Ambassadors

The Voice and Participation Service is having the interviews for Sessional Voice Ambassadors on Wednesday 25th October. We have had 15 applicants which include care leavers, parents that have been supported by social care and young people with SEND.

The Voice Ambassadors will use their lived experiences to help with training staff members, interviewing foster carers and professionals, speaking at conferences, and attending committee's and panels meetings.

The Parent Voice Ambassadors will also work with our Family Voice Worker to support families that are currently on Child Protection, these Ambassadors will act as advocates and help to bridge the worlds of Family and Children's Services and service users readdressing barriers to engagement.

The Care Leaver Voice Ambassadors are also forming a subgroup of the Corporate Parenting Panel. They will discuss the CPP priorities and hold Dragon's Den style events where the lead officers and elected members will pitch to the group how they have met the CPP priorities, this will give the Ambassadors a chance to scrutinise and make positive suggestions for improvement.

This approach aims to Empower service users to fully engage and drives service delivery, improvement, and leadership.

Kinship and Fostering Mini Conference

3 members of the team and another care experienced adult spoke at Wiltshire's Foster Carer Mini Conference on September 25. The speakers spoke about the importance of writing their daily notes in a trauma informed way and how this helps them to reflect on ongoing issues. We also talked about how foster carers can support their foster children, both past and present if they become a pregnant. The team also delivered an interactive workshop named the "rucksack exercise" which offered a unique perspective on values held by families and their interpretation in the context of children in care.

These conferences have strengthened and built awareness around issues for young people to inform the care provided to them by their carers having a direct impact on the quality of care they experience within these relationships.

Ofsted

The team supported 2 groups of children and care experienced adults to speak with Ofsted during the recent inspection. The conversations helped bring to life the work that is being carried out in Wiltshire and the positive impact it has for service users who are the ones being supported. This engagement enabled OFSTED to have an honest and open reflection of what young people's experiences of Social Care are.

Mind of My Own App

The team continues to lead on the Mind of My Own app, which allows children and young people to communicate directly to their workers by sending in statements and have their views heard, enabling them to participate in their own care planning.

Since the last CSC update the following number of statements have been sent.

- Number of One Statements sent (by Practitioners and young people) 86
- Number of Express Statements sent (by Practitioners and young people) 26
- Total statements sent to Wiltshire Children's Services (One and Express) 112

Below is a table of the types of statements beings sent through the one app

One app Usage			
STATEMENT TYPE	SENT DIRECTLY BY YOUNG PEOPLE	COMPLETED WITH PRACTITIONERS	TOTAL
Totals	33	53	86
Prepare for Conference	1	0	1
Foster Care Review	8	0	8
My Life	7	19	26
My Wellbeing	0	3	3
Preparation	3	4	7
Sort a Problem	4	4	8
Share Good News	6	1	7
This Is Me	1	9	10
Worker Visit	3	13	16

We also took the time to hold a praise the impact of the app by hosting a Celebration Event for Practitioners. This app gives Young people's view in a timely, friendly and age-appropriate manner, which can inform the quality of working relationship, assessment quality and planning.

Bright Spots Survey

Collaborating with Coram Voice and the University of Oxford, our involvement in the Bright Spots program signifies our ongoing dedication to enhancing well-being for children in care. We have launched 2 surveys', "Your Life, Your Care" and "Your Life After Care," these will run until mid-November and will look at the children's and young people's subjective wellbeing enabling us to glean valuable insights into their perceptions, needs, and experiences. The collected information will inform service improvements and better support.

This approach will provide an opportunity to hear from a wider voice of young people across Social Care. Fuller reputation will give us better representation of the experience of young people and therefore inform future policy and practice direction.

Wiltshire Youth Council

Preparations for the next elections are underway which will take place in February 2024, the team hopes to build on the success of the first cohort and learn from the past experiences. The team hopes to recruit a Youth Democracy Officer to coordinate the efforts which will allow for better outcomes and more joined up work with other areas of the local authority embedding youth voice throughout the whole council.

The Members of Youth Parliament are preparing to attend the annual House of Commons Sitting. To debate their proposed universal free school meals bill.

This provides us with a universal experience of children of Wiltshire.

New Workstreams

Strengthening Family Engagement

As our new Family Voice Worker has joined the team and exciting plans are in motion. The Family Voice Worker and the parent Voice Ambassadors will support families that are open on CP Plans to

- Understand their rights.
- Prepare for meetings.
- Improve self-advocacy skills of the parent and their wider support network.

After a trusting relationship has been made parents will be supported to access the Family Advisory Board helping Wiltshire by holding it to account and ensure the local authority is truly embedding relationship-based work. The FAB will be involved in developing training and having open honest and frank conversations about what is working and what can be improved.

Showcasing Success at Community Care Live

The team spoke at a fully booked Community Care Live conference event. The workshop amplified the voices of our youth, parents, and supported adults, showcasing firsthand the positive impact of our work. By sharing their transformative stories, we aim to inspire and attract skilled individuals to join our workforce. Many leads were taken at the event and these are now being followed up by our recruitment team.

SEND Voice Lead Worker

The team will be recruiting a new member of staff to coordinate SEND voice activity in Wiltshire. they will also train organisations on how to engage with children and young people with communication difficulties, reduce duplication and create opportunities for organisations to work together and evidence SEND Voice Work and lead on this at a strategic level. The role will work across multi-disciplinary teams to ensure a joined up collaborative approach that will drive forward the SEND voice agenda in Wiltshire.

Families and Children's Volunteering Team

An integration of the Independent Visitor Scheme and Community involvement Scheme is taking place to create a Families and Children's Volunteering Team. The volunteering opportunities that will come over from Community Involvement, include.

- Community Mentors
- Primary School Mentors

- Referral Order Panel Members
- Appropriate Adults
- Parent Mentors
- Transitional Mentors

We will be producing a strategy which will outline what each scheme is, its KPI's and how we will recruit, assess, and train volunteers. We will be for the first-time allowing volunteers to cross train in multiple roles which will enable us to support more children and young people.

The Independent Visitor (IV) Scheme is still growing from strength to strength.

Current Status

- 72 young people successfully matched with IVs. Which will increase to 89 before Christmas

National Context

- Our matched population: 17.3% of the looked after cohort.
- National average: 3.3% (last FOI report).
- Previously the highest percentage recorded in England and Wales: 16%.

Waiting List

- There has been a reduction of the waiting list of children wanting an IV. It is projected to decrease to 22, the lowest on record.

Our growth, high matching percentage, and reduced waiting list highlight our commitment to care-experienced individuals.

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