

South Gloucestershire  
**Carers  
Strategy**  
2022-2027

A summary for local carers of all ages,  
to help keep you well & living a fulfilled life.



## Dear South Gloucestershire carers,

**We are delighted to introduce our Carers Strategy summary for 2022-2027.**

We spoke to carers at the start of this work. You asked us for a straightforward summary that just sets out the headline information that is important and useful to you.

Most of you didn't want – and naturally haven't got the time for – lots of background information, facts and figures. But those are available in the full strategy document for all stakeholders if you are interested in finding out more ([link to final version](#)).

The full strategy document includes detail on all the feedback from the consultation, including the 4 priorities, the focus we will give them and the actions we and partners will deliver over the five years, given the resources available to us.

What you did ask for is a summary of the vision, priorities, what's available now for carers, what 'good' looks like, how it will be achieved, by who and when, as well as how any positive impact on carers like you will be measured.

We hope that this summary strategy will be useful to you for an overview and to help you access information, advice and guidance.



### Thank you

Thank you to every carer who has taken part in this project and given us your time. Your feedback has been invaluable to us understanding the priorities for carers in our area and have informed the actions that will guide the work we do for carers over the next 5 years.

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## Carer definition

The NHS defines a carer as anyone, including children and adults who looks after a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of their illness, frailty, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction and cannot cope without their support. The care they give is unpaid.



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## What does the strategy mean?

A strategy sets out how the Council plans to deliver the ongoing commitment to improving the lives of carers of all ages. It should inform all other strategies so that meeting the needs of carers is embedded in all services across the Council and those it commissions externally. This strategy will be underpinned by a clear action plan of how we will work with partners to improve recognition and support to carers over the next 5 years.

Our Carers Strategy has been shaped by the voice and experience of carers and the organisations that support them, to ensure that the priorities for the future are based on what is important.



## What's available to carers now?

**We know from the feedback we have received that the way we provide and share information needs to improve. That's why information and advice is one of the four priorities in this new strategy, and we have agreed actions to improve the way carers can access it.**

In the meantime, this webpage includes information, advice and guidance for carers including signposting to further support:

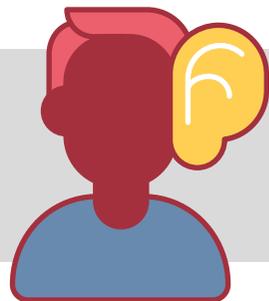
🌐 [www.southglos.gov.uk/carers](http://www.southglos.gov.uk/carers)

You can also call the Council on

☎ **01454 868007** (Adult care) or

☎ **01454 868008** (Children's services).

Updates on the strategy actions and progress will be added to the webpages.



## What carers have told us

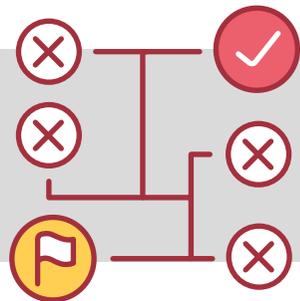
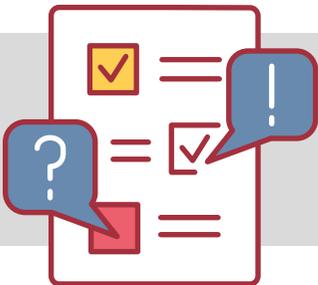
- "More needs to be done to recognise the huge demands placed upon carers"
- "Organisations work in isolation rather than together"
- "Haven't had a break in 20 years, but when I did get one it was quite difficult to access"
- "The council website is dated, not very user friendly and not very helpful"
- "Tailor the service to suit the needs of each individual and family."

## Our vision for our local carers

We believe that no carer should be at a disadvantage because they are providing support to somebody else. But we understand that many carers face challenges with finances, physical and mental health, in work or education, due to their caring role.

### We want carers of all ages to be able to say:

- The support I receive in my caring role suits me as an individual
- I know where to access good quality information on what support is available to me as a carer
- I am understood, listened to and respected by professionals
- I am able to achieve my own goals and maintain employment/study
- I am in control of the support I can give as a carer, and I am able to live my life the way I want to
- I can access support services in a timely way, as and when I need it
- I am able to take a break from my caring role to support my own mental and physical health
- I have the information and support I need to plan for the future.



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## To achieve the vision, we will focus on these priorities for local carers:

- Recognition
- Information and Advice
- Carer breaks
- Personalisation



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## Recognition for carers

We want carers to be able to say 'I am recognised, listened to and respected as an expert partner in care by professionals, schools, employers and my community'

### The actions we and partners will carry out to improve recognition for carers:

Work with partners and local employers to educate organisations of the role of carers, carers rights and how to best support carers to maintain paid employment whilst also caring for someone.

Work with the voluntary sector to develop community outreach work to improve community understanding of carers, and how carers can access information, advice and support.

Work with partners to review the current training delivered to professionals across health and social care, to ensure that the role of carers is highlighted, and professionals understand the importance of involving carers as an expert partner in the care of their loved one, alongside the support available to carers in their roles.

Working with primary healthcare to improve identification of carers in GP practices and the support provided by primary healthcare to access information, support and advice in their role as carer.

Work with adults and children's services to develop resources that improve the knowledge and skills of practitioners to identify and reduce inappropriate levels of care being given by young carers/young adult carers.

Work with acute hospitals to review how carers are identified and supported during the admission of a loved one, alongside how carers can be better involved and a key partner in discharge planning.

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## Information and advice

**We want carers to be able to say 'I know where to access good quality information on what support is available to me as a carer, at a time that suits me, so that I can achieve my goals and live my life the way I choose'**

### **The actions we and partners will carry out to improve information & advice:**

Review and recommission support and information services for carers with an emphasis on organisations collaborating, with key sources of information and support available out of hours.

Create clearer online information, advice and guidance for carers to understand what support is available, and how to access this.

Review how frontline staff can be better equipped to identify, support and signpost carers to the correct information.

Review and recommission support services that address the needs specific to those adult carers under retirement age who are in or want to return to paid employment.

Review and recommission support services to ensure that there is improved identification of young carers and young adult carers.

Work with adult and children's services as well as commissioned providers to ensure the wellbeing of young/young adult carers is not compromised as they transition to adulthood.

Review the carers assessment process to identify where improvements can be made to ensure that this process enables carers to have the right support to plan for the future and access the correct financial support.

Work with partners to review how information on financial support and benefits can be made available more widely to ensure that carers are not financially disadvantaged by their caring role.

Work with health and social care partners and the voluntary sector to understand how information sharing can be improved for carers.

## Carer breaks

We want carers to be able to say 'I am able to take a break away from my caring role to support my own mental and physical health and achieve my own goals'

### The actions we and partners will carry out to improve carer breaks:

Work with partners to improve timeliness of carers assessments that support carers when they need it, reducing the risk of carer breakdowns.

Review how carers' direct payments operate to ensure all eligible carers have equal access and to improve flexibility in their use.

Work with commissioners to develop more flexible services in the community for people to access, which enable carers to have a break from their role.

Work with partners and commissioners to explore how we improve the access carers currently have to replacement care.

Work with adults and children's services to improve understanding of what is appropriate care for young carers/young adult carers.



## Personalisation

We want carers to be able to say 'I receive the support I need, when I need it, that suits me as an individual in my caring role'

### The actions we and partners will carry out to improve personalisation:

Adapt the carers assessment documentation and process to ensure that all carers are asked if they wish to continue in their caring role.

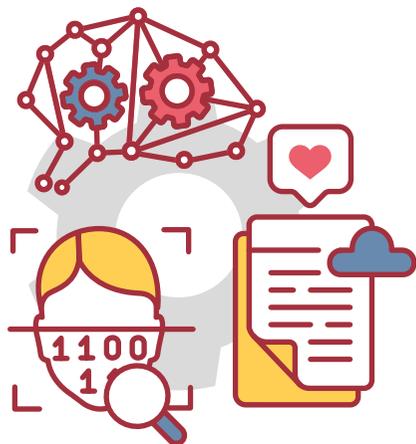
Work with partners, young carers/ young adult carers and parent carers to develop better quality information to support them in their caring role.

Review and re-commission the contract for carers assessments, ensuring that the focus of this is to create more meaningful interaction from the assessment process, identifying outcomes for carers and tailoring support to meet their needs.

Review and re-commission the contract for carers support with a renewed focus on partnership working with other organisations to improve identification and support of carers from BME communities.

Develop approaches with GPs so carers can be better supported in a more flexible and timely way to maintain their own health needs.

Review and re-commission the support groups available for carers, ensuring that the offer is dynamic and flexible to meet the needs of a diverse group of people. This includes ensuring that support is available in person in hard to reach locations, online, and outside of school/working hours.



## What happens next?

In order to implement this strategy over the next five years we will work with carers, partners and stakeholders to form a strategy implementation group. This group will review the action plan, push forward the priorities, agree how and when the actions set out in this document will be delivered, and coordinate the work.

We will involve carers, carers groups and forums in projects that come from the action plan so that their ideas and input are included and we make the right improvements in ways that carers want us to. This will include young carers/young adult carers and carers in different circumstances, as needed for particular projects.

The strategy will be overseen by the Carers Advisory Partnership (CAP) group. CAP includes a number of active and engaged carer representatives, as well as representatives from a range of partners. They will monitor the work being done by the implementation group and give their feedback and views. The strategy and action plan is approved by South Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board. Strategy progress reports will be given to the Board and they will check and challenge these.



The strategy implementation group is accountable to the Board.

This webpage signposts you to information, advice and guidance for carers, as well as the full strategy document and updates on its progress:

🌐 [www.southglos.gov.uk/carers](http://www.southglos.gov.uk/carers)

Thank you to all our local carers and to our Council partner organisations, who worked with us to develop this strategy. These include:

**All members of the Carers Advisory Partnership**

**Carers Support Centre**

**Healthwatch South Gloucestershire**

**Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership**

**Sirona care and health**

**North Bristol NHS Trust**

**University Hospitals Bristol and Weston**

**Jobcentre Plus**

The Carers Strategy 2022-2027  
and this summary strategy  
were produced by  
South Gloucestershire Council  
and approved by  
South Gloucestershire  
Health & Wellbeing Board.