

Bradford District and Craven Carers Strategy 2024-2029



Introduction

A carer is anyone, child or adult, 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. They do not get a wage for the care they give, although they may get welfare benefits for caring.

There are more than 45,000 adult carers, 9% of whom are working, and 2,000 young carers in Bradford district and Craven. We know that an unpaid carer supporting a family member or friend has an understanding of that person: their needs, likes and dislikes that means they are able to deliver very personalised care. Carers in Bradford district and Craven are estimated to contribute the equivalent of nearly £162bn annually to the local health and social care economy. We need to ensure that we can support carers in the valuable care they provide. That is what has motivated us to understand what carers need in their own right and develop this strategy. We will use this strategy as the basis to develop a delivery plan and monitor whether we are achieving progress and whether carers across the district feel they are being better supported.

Our Message to Carers

First and foremost, this strategy is for carers

We know that many people might not think of themselves as a carer – they are a husband or wife who feel that they are fulfilling their marriage vows, a son or daughter undertaking their duty to their parents, or a loyal friend. Whatever the relationship to the person you care for or the reason you care we want to be there to support you

This strategy outlines our commitment to carers of all ages across Bradford district and Craven. We admire you and value the support that you give and we are committed to supporting you. We understand that many people don't feel sufficiently supported and it is a priority for us to improve that.

This document is based on what carers have told us and outlines our intention to improve the support that you receive.

In addition, it has been informed by people working in the Council, the NHS, The Children & Families Trust, The Voluntary Sector and beyond, to outline our shared commitment to carers. We appreciate all the work that you do to support carers, often going above and beyond what is expected of you, but we also know we need to do more and the best way to do that is working in partnership with carers and key organisations.



Background

In order to develop this strategy we surveyed over 300 adult carers, nearly 40 young carers and over 30 professionals working with carers. We also conducted focus groups with 100 adult carers and over 50 young carers as well as 65 staff working with carers. We have also used information from over 200 carers provided in a survey that all Councils have to undertake, called the Survey of Adult Carers in England.

We looked at national research and available national and local data. The detail of what those carers told us and a summary of the research and data is collated in a separate document.

Summary

Of the people surveyed many viewed their caring role as a valuable one and 89% felt satisfied they were making a difference. Often carers indicated their experience was both a positive and negative experience, but one that came with many challenges.

Following surveys and face to face interviews, that captured the voice of over 500 people across Bradford district and Craven, the priorities have been agreed.

OUR COMMITMENTS TO ALL CARERS

<p>We will identify more carers</p>	<p>Carers have told us (14% of people surveyed) that they don't recognise what they do as caring. We therefore will ensure we run focussed information campaigns on carers rights and what support is available. Ensuring we reassure carers there will be no judgement when they seek support.</p> <p>We will look for new ways to identify young carers, who are currently unaware the support available.</p> <p>In particular, we need to direct campaigns to carers from all our diverse communities as we know carers from ethnically diverse communities and those with a learning disability or mental health challenges face additional barriers and are less likely to seek support.</p>
<p>We will focus on providing the right support at the right time, proportionate to need and culturally appropriate.</p>	<p>Carers indicated that finding support could be challenging and the literature review we commissioned reminded us of the need to ensure we are always considering how we make that support culturally appropriate for all our diverse communities.</p>




	<p>This included ensuring access to social networks for support, influence and voice and monitoring representation of minoritised unpaid adult carers in all our systems of support.</p> <p>For young carers the ask was for more activities and day trips to recharge (47%) and time away from the caring role (29%).</p>
<p>We will ensure the provision of useful, timely and appropriate information for carers.</p>	<p>There is a wide range of information for carers available and in our survey 52.3% found information very or fairly easy to find and 34.53% found the information very or fairly helpful.</p> <p>However, carers told us that they can feel overwhelmed with the amount of information available and they need to be able to more easily find relevant and useful information.</p> <p>For young carers we need to continue to develop age appropriate information.</p> <p>The literature review we commissioned emphasised the need to review the information we provide to ensure it is fully accessible.</p> <p>One idea carers suggested was for workshops to allow one to one support with input from the Council, DWP, NHS, financial advisors and specific support around BAME groups for example. Also suggested was training for carers on specific health conditions and how to safely move someone.</p>
<p>We will ensure carers are supported: emotionally, psychologically, financially and physically</p>	<p>Carers reported they had some support but not as much as they would want. Often this was someone to talk to but not someone who offered practical support.</p> <p>In relation to health impact, carers reported: feeling tired, stressed and depressed, but 91% felt the worst impact was feeling tired. 60% of carers reported feeling lonely often, always, some of the time or occasionally and 58.6% of carers had a disability, mental health issue or a long standing illness themselves.</p> <p>Occupational therapists also raised concerns about the impact of unsafe moving and handling techniques could have on the carer.</p> <p>When young carers were asked about the impact on their lives of caring they identified having no time to do things</p>

	<p>which they want to do: schoolwork and meeting friends and also being tired.</p> <p>Parent carers identified the strain was on the whole family. When young carers were asked what would make their lives easier 53% said understanding from schools about the challenges they face as a young carer and 29% said more recognition of being carers.</p>
<p>We will work to provide respite for carers from their caring responsibilities</p>	<p>There were generally requests for more support for the cared for person to allow the carer to have respite and for this to be good quality support. That could be house adaptations, help with household tasks or personal care. Carers wanted practical support, including faster responses from professionals. In addition there was a request for more variation in times and the focus of groups for carers, e.g. online or out of hour groups for working carers, as well as groups that met carers cultural needs or where for carers with similar lived experience. The need for a geographical spread of support was noted, specifically in relation to parent carers in Keighley.</p>
<p>We will ensure carers and their views are valued</p>	<p>Carers told us that they didn't always feel that their views were taken into account by professionals, even though they had a day-to-day detailed understanding of the needs of the person they cared for.</p> <p>52.9% felt they were always or usually involved & consulted and 30% felt they were sometimes involved & consulted</p>
<p>We will provide clear information on benefits and other forms of financial support</p>	<p>Finances was a major area of concern for lots of carers with 50% of carers reporting experiencing financial difficulties to some extent or a lot.</p> <p>The literature review undertaken reminded us to ensure we consider, in particular the socio-economic inequalities faced by diverse communities.</p>
<p>We will offer clear information on statutory carers assessments and other carers rights</p>	<p>Carers, including parent carers told us that it can be difficult to get a statutory carers assessment.</p>

<p>We will endeavour to ensure professionals and services are working together</p>	<p>Of the adult carers surveyed 72% said they felt professionals worked together. However carers also identified this as an issue saying there was a need for services to work together as well as for professionals to deliver what they had promised. We will commit to ensuring there is a 'whole system approach' to support carers, including attention to improving data systems and evaluation.</p> <p>Specifically, carers wanted the following:</p> <p>From Social Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrying out care packages in a timely manner • Greater awareness by authorities that carers problems do not fit into convenient pigeon holes • More help with adaptations • Better monitoring of care workers <p>From Health professionals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easier access to healthcare and more input from health professional: booking appointments, speak to clinicians, navigating the health services • Make treatments for various medical conditions more holistic and less fragmented • Regular health checks for carers
<p>We will support Working Carers</p>	<p>25.1% of carers were in paid employment or self-employed and felt they were supported/able to balance work and caring or didn't need support. However, 7.2% didn't feel supported or were unable to balance work and caring</p> <p>The need for clear policies and training for managers to ensure there is a consistent approach was raised, with support from Occupational Health and Managers was valued.</p>

What Support is available?

We have in place the following support for carers.

	<p>Access to a digital resource for Carers run by Carers UK packed with information, e-learning modules, hands-on guides and tools to help all carers living in or supporting someone in West Yorkshire to manage their caring responsibilities.</p> <p>You can click on this link to take you to their website</p>
	<p>The Community Directory on Connect to Support has details of local community groups that offer activities and support.</p> <p>You can click here on this link to get details of these groups</p>
	<p>An Adult Carers Service across Bradford District and Craven, run by Carers' Resource open to all carers. They can help with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practical care and support• Access to a Wellbeing Review and to a small carer wellbeing grant where appropriate• Support to plan for emergencies• Help for working carers and parent carers• Support & training in using a computer at home or in the community, with a small number of devices available to loan <p>You can click on this link for more information</p> <p>Or call tel: 0808 5015939</p> <p>Our Young Carer team offers a range of support to help young carers get a break from their responsibilities, have fun, meet other young carers and cope when times are tough.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Youth clubs• Trips and activities• One to one support <p>You can click on this link for more information</p> <p>Or call tel: 0808 5015939</p>



Social workers can help adult carers by providing an assessment of their needs and offering advice, information and suitable support to help them in their role as carer.

There is a service called Time Out which provides support to adult carers by spending time with the person they care for whilst the care takes a break for a few hours at a time once a week typically. This time can be between 7am and midnight and includes weekends. To receive this service there will need talk to a Social Worker.

[You can click on this link for more information](#)

To discuss either of the above you can use this [online form](#) or phone the Independence Advice Hub on 01274 435400: Monday to Thursday: 8.30am to 5pm, Friday: 8.30am to 4.30pm



For information on support available to young carers you can use the following link:

[Directory Search Page | Bradford Families and Young Persons](#)

Also young carers are welcome at any of the Children and Families Trust Family Hubs.

[You can click on this link for more information](#)

Young Carers and their families can pop into their local family hub during opening hours and ask to speak to one of our navigators or phone to speak to our friendly staff who will be able to help.

- Bradford East: 01274 437523
- Bradford West: 01274 436700
- Bradford South: 01274 434940
- Keighley/Shipley: 01535 618005

Family Navigators will be able to support Young Carers and their families to get information and advice, and support to access family support services if their needs are more complex and/ or talk to a social worker if there are any safeguarding worries.



Challenging Disabling Barriers

A respite service run by **Equality Together** called **Holibreaks+**. This is a one stop shop providing innovative opportunities for all unpaid carers and people with identified social care needs to take a break and take part in activities. The service is open six days a week including one late evening and Saturday mornings.

[You can click on this link for more information](#)

Or call 01274 594173



Making Space supports carers of people facing mental health challenges. They offer the following types of help:

- Emotional support
- Advice and guidance to assist you as a carer
- Supporting carers to enjoy life outside of their caring role
- Signposting carers to other services and organisations
- Providing information about mental health conditions, treatments and local services
- Supporting carers to communicate with mental health services

[You can click on this link for more information](#)

Or contact on Tel: 07843 268 115

What have we achieved since 2019?

In the Carers Strategy 2019- 2024 carers told us the area we needed to focus on.

You told us	We did
Identify carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents making it easier for staff in GP surgeries to identify carers were developed • Bradford District Care Foundation Trust are working to ensure that carers they employ are identified and supported • Bradford Teaching Foundation Hospital Trust are working to ensure they identify carers who are supporting patients and ensure they in turn are supported • Carers Card launched in 2021 via Carers' Resource • Early Help Co-ordinators working in schools to identify young carers and an agreement in place between Children's Services and Adult's Services to identify young carers
Provide better support for carers in health and social care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help carers plan for all contingencies. Carers' Resource offer both a 'What If' plan and an 'Emergency Plan' to carers. The Emergency Plan is available to residents in Bradford and is offered in partnership with the Council's Safe and Sound service.
Provide better support for carers in communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are now lots of places across Bradford district and Craven where you can access support from Carers' Resource • Training courses run for carers to support resilience in 2021 covering carers rights, keeping safe and well, wellbeing strategies, and available information and resources • Distributed £100,000 in 2023/24 in additional grants to carers from the Household Support Fund
Provide better support for carers in education and employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotional materials on carer friendly employers produced and promoted via the Chamber of Commerce • Development of a Carers Network in the Local Authority
Provide specialist support for carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospital based Carer Navigators established to act as conduit between newly identified carers and support services • Safeguarding for carers event run November 2023 • Improved respite options with the Alternatives to Respite Service • Increased the number of male carers supported with a project run by Carers' Resource • Provided access to infection control grants as part of the COVID response • App was developed for the NHS for Young Carers

Adult Carers: National Facts and Figures

- The 2021 census indicates 5m people, around 9% of people in the UK are providing unpaid care. However Carers UK estimate that the real figure may be nearly twice that.¹
- 59% of carers are women (Census 2021). Women are more likely to become carers and to provide more hours of unpaid care than men. (Petrillo and Bennett, 2022)
- One in seven people in the workplace in the UK are juggling work and care (Carers UK, Juggling Work and Care, 2019).
- Between 2010-2020, people aged 46-65 were the largest age group to become carers. 41% of people who became carers were in this age group (Petrillo and Bennett, 2022).
- Nationally the care provided by carers is the equivalent of £193 billion per year – equivalent to spending on the NHS – and even more during the pandemic, the equivalent to £530 million every day. (Carers UK estimates)
- Carers provide significant levels of support to family or friends – equivalent to 4 million paid care workers. (Kings Fund)

National Research on Adult Carers indicates:

- Half of all carers took over a year to recognise their caring role, with over a third taking over three years to recognise themselves as a carer.
- The majority of carers feel that they do not have a choice about caring with many saying that they want to continue, but also need some support. Also a third of carers surveyed by Carers UK felt that their need to take regular breaks from caring was not properly considered in the Carer's Assessment process or in the support they receive.
- Carers quality of life is impacted by the care being received by the person they support and spending time co-ordinating care. There is a need for improvement in integrated systems. ²
- Carers experience poor mental health, including anxiety and depression, alongside 'carer burden', stress and poor quality of life and that different groups of carers may

¹ [Key facts and figures | Carers UK](#)

² [Caring In A Complex World: Perspectives From Carers | The King's Fund \(kingsfund.org.uk\)](#) 26.05.2023

have different support needs, in particular that younger carers, and carers with poor social and financial support, may experience higher 'carer burden'. Also that the health impact of caring can be worsened by carers being unable to find time for medical check-ups or treatment, and carers being less likely to be able to take part in the recommended levels of physical activity compared with non-carers, often because of an inability to find time or motivation to take part in activity due to their caring role.³ Also 90% of carers said they had felt lonely, with a third of carers feeling lonely often or always.

- Carers feel they are not always recognised by the NHS or by social care, and that they are invisible in society and often feel taken for granted
- LGBTQ+ carers face a number of specific challenges in their caring role. These could include caring for family members who do not recognise, or have rejected, their LGBTQ+ identity, or younger LGBTQ+ carers having fewer opportunities to explore their identity. These challenges are complex and can mean LGBTQ+ carers experience increased isolation and discrimination when attempting to access services.
- BAME carers provide more care proportionately than other groups, putting them at greater risk of ill-health, loss of paid employment and social exclusion. Certain groups also experience greater levels of isolation, namely Pakistani and Bangladeshi carers⁵
- There is a financial penalty associated with being a carer with reductions in income from leaving work or reducing hours with benefits estimated at replacing less than 50% of earnings for the majority of new unpaid social-care givers.⁴ Carers UK research indicates 1.2 million carers are in poverty in the UK.
- The recent ONS Census 2021 in England and Wales found that there are just under 2.5 million carers in employment (excluding full-time students): 9% of the workforce. 59% of carers are women and 41% are men. Among carers in employment, 58% are women and 42% men. Other research suggests that the number of carers in paid employment could be even higher.⁵

³ [Caring as a social determinant of health: review of evidence - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/reviews/caring-as-a-social-determinant-of-health) 19.03.2021

⁴ [Supporting carers' financial wellbeing | Money and Pensions Service \(maps.org.uk\)](https://www.moneyandpensions.gov.uk/supporting-carers-financial-wellbeing)

⁵ [Facts and figures | EfC](https://www.efc.org.uk/facts-and-figures)

Adult Carers: Bradford District & Craven Facts & Figures

- A total of 45,649 people (8.4% of Bradford's population) provide unpaid care
- 27,208 (60%) carers were female and 18,441(40%) male
- White ethnic group (40.2%) had the highest reported proportion of unpaid carers in Bradford district
- Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African (4.2%) ethnic groups had the least reported proportion of unpaid carers in the district
- There are over 5,098 carers living in Craven providing care of between 9-more than 50 hours a week.
- At the end of June 2024 there were 14,110 unpaid, informal carers registered on the Bradford and Craven primary care clinical system.
- There are over 9,000 Bradford District and Craven based carers receiving the Carers' Resource newsletter.
- The proportion of unpaid carers in Bradford District increases as age increases but declines after age 65
- The proportion of carers who reported that they had as much social contact as they would like was 33.7%
- Overall satisfaction of carers with social services was 35.5%
- The proportion of carers who report that they have been included or consulted in discussions about the person they care for was 52.9%
- The proportion of carers who found it easy or fairly easy to find information about services was 52.3%

Young Carers: National Facts and Figures

- The 2021 ONS census reported that there are around 120,000 young carers aged 5-18 in England
- The school census in 2023 suggested that there were 39,000 'known' young carers in the country
- A Parliamentary enquiry in November 2023 estimated 1m young carers with 15,000 children, including 3,000 aged just five to nine, spending 50 hours or more a week caring

National Research on Young Carers indicates:

- Responsibilities include household tasks, personal care and emotional support
- Impact on mental health with higher amounts of anxiety and depressive symptoms
- Impact on physical health: sleep, headaches, back pain, skin and digestive conditions
- Impact on education through missing school a
- Loneliness, especially in holidays and friendships

Young Carers: Bradford District Facts and Figures

- The 2021 census reports 1.7% (785) of children aged 5-15 years old and 4.1% (1,221) of young people aged 16-19 years old being reported as young carers living in Bradford district
- In 2023-24 Carers Resource:
 - Provided 1,105 Young Carers with ongoing support
 - Assessed 354 newly identified Young Carers
 - Gave 74 Young Carers one to one support such as mentoring
 - Provided 671 Young Carers with access to trips & activities
 - Supported 442 Young Carers at Youth groups
 - Maintained Young Carer champions in 172 primary schools & 40 Secondary schools

What's important to carers

These are the things carers identified as important to them:

Young Carers: what would help

- Being recognised as carers
- Support from school
- Help to balance their caring roles with school and social life
- Opportunities to take a break and have fun

Young Carers Priorities

- Time away from caring role to recharge
- Chance to do more activities and day trips

Adult Carers: What would Help

- Information appropriate to their needs
- Clear information on rights
- Respite from the caring role
- Supportive manager at work
- Support groups at times they can access and with people with similar experiences

Adult Carers Priorities

- Mental, emotional and psychological support
- Being listened to and valued
- Time to relax and enjoy their own interests
- Finances
- Communication between carers and professionals
- Joint working

Next Steps

This strategy has been developed with input from, adult, parent and young carers as well as staff from across the Health, Social Care and the Voluntary Sector.

It has given us an opportunity to further understand the needs of carers across our district and given us an opportunity to re-iterate our commitment to continue to work to support carers better by focussing on those areas carers have told us are a priority.

To make real changes it will require all those people working together. We will now develop a detailed delivery plan with tangible actions to deliver the following commitments:

1. We will identify more carers
2. We will focus on providing the right support at the right time, proportionate to need and culturally appropriate
3. We will ensure the provision of useful, timely and appropriate information for carers.
4. We will ensure carers are supported: emotionally, psychologically, financially and physically
5. We will work to provide respite for carers from their caring responsibilities
6. We will ensure carers and their views are valued
7. We will provide clear information on benefits and other forms of financial support
8. We will offer clear information on statutory carers assessments and other carers rights
9. We will endeavour to ensure professionals and services are working together
10. We will support Working Carers

