

# 2025 DONCASTER'S CARERS JOURNEY

CO-PRODUCED BY

Carers Action Group and Carers Oversight Board  
City of Doncaster Council



[www.doncaster.gov.uk/CarersJourney](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/CarersJourney)

# About this journey

This document has been put together alongside Doncaster carers, structured around the six themes from Doncaster's All Age Carer's Strategy (2022 – 2025). Crafted by the Carers Action Group and the Carers Strategic Oversight Board, it includes members with firsthand experience in care and support services.

Our commitment to transparency, genuine engagement, and making a positive impact for carers remains steadfast. This document highlights carers' voices, sharing their experiences and outlining the progress made so far. It also details the current priorities identified for 2025.

You'll find stories and insights from carers, the progress we've made together, and our goals for the coming year. This journey is about more than just policies and strategies; it's about the people who care for their loved ones every day and the community that supports them.

**Thank you for being part of this journey with us. Together, we can continue to make a positive impact for all carers in Doncaster.**

“

*I want us to work on a better joined up approach.”*

“

*Thank you so much for your and your organisation's work to support Doncaster's carers.”*

“

*I hope for us to double down and achieve even greater things this year!”*

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## Councillor Sarah Smith

As co-chair of the Carers Strategic Oversight Board & a family carer - I am proud of the work we are doing to make things better for carers across Doncaster. We believe in the power of partnership and co-production, especially when it comes to supporting those who care. Unpaid carers are often called “the invisible workforce”—providing care out of love, necessity, or responsibility, yet frequently overlooked in policy and practice. Their (our) work underpins health and social care, but they face immense challenges, from financial hardship, to ill-health, to social isolation. It’s time to make their vital contribution more visible and prioritised—and that’s our aim with the second Doncaster’s Carers’ Journey report.

This partnership - that we have worked hard on and co-produced with unpaid carers in Doncaster, seeks to transform how services and support are delivered. These priorities weren’t imposed from above—they emerged through listening, sharing experiences, and collectively deciding what matters most. The result is a co-produced set of actions that reflect carers’ real needs—not just to survive but to thrive.

Carers told us they need identification—particularly in healthcare settings—recognition, practical support, and flexibility. We want services to understand our roles in the lives of those we care for and to communicate accordingly. We seek responsive services that respect our time, timely support, and access to spaces where we can rest and live our lives. Our shared priorities centre on improving these needs, alongside focused work on enhancing access to breaks, better information and support, and stronger community connections.

**This is just the beginning. Co-production is never a one-off process—it can be messy, with non-linear progress—but it’s a continuous commitment to collaboration. By prioritising carers’ voices and valuing their experiences, we can build a city that genuinely cares—not just for carers but with them. And this is my commitment to you.**



## Debbie Osborne

I co-chair the Carers Strategic Oversight Board and the Carers Action Group. Over the past year, we have worked to make progress in supporting carers in Doncaster. I have over 30 years of experience as a family carer, and have had to navigate various services, including mental health, physical disabilities, social care, education, older people’s and children’s services.

I started volunteering at Doncaster Carers Centre in 1999, moving into a paid position and eventually becoming the CEO before retiring a few years ago. **I am passionate about ensuring carers receive the recognition, assistance, and resources needed.**

I am looking forward to continuing to work closely with Sarah, Bal, and all partners on the Carers Strategic Oversight Board and the Carers Action Group to build on achievements and make further positive changes for carers in the community.

**Your experiences  
and ideas are not  
just valued; they  
are indispensable!**



# Am I a carer?

A **carer** is a person who supports someone close to them who needs extra help as they grow older, or due to a disability or health condition.

Carers are sometimes referred to as '**unpaid carers**' because they are not paid for their caring role. People who receive Carers Allowance are still unpaid carers. You are not classed as a carer if you have a paid job like a care worker or a support worker, or you work as a volunteer in a caring role.

**If you support a partner, family member, friend or neighbour who relies on you for help to live their life, you are a carer.**

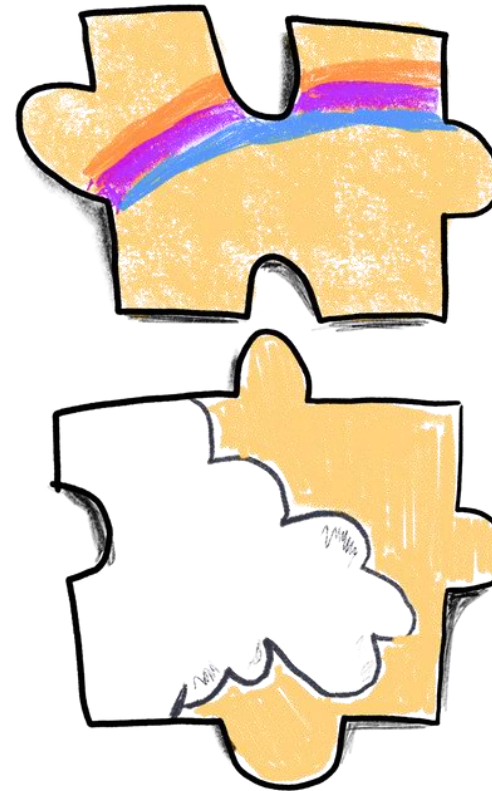
A **young carer** is a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person (of any age) with a disability, illness, mental health requirement, or use substances (e.g., drugs or alcohol). They may look after one of their parents or care for a brother or sister. They may also give a lot of physical and emotional help to a parent, brother, or sister who is disabled or ill.

A **parent carer** is someone who provides care and support to their child or adult child who has a physical, mental, or emotional disability, illness, or addiction that prevents them from living independently.

The care provided by carers is vital, as it significantly contributes to improving the wellbeing and quality of life of the people they support. Without the help and support that carers provide, many children and adults would face more challenging circumstances, and some could even be at serious risk.

## Do all these pieces fit together? Appendix A

Do you spend time caring for someone, adult or child?



Is your caring work unpaid?

Does this involve support with everyday life like eating, washing, shopping, managing money, appointments etc?



Does this person need extra support due to their age, disability or a health requirement?

# Identification

**Carers have a legal right to be identified early on. Barriers need to be removed for carers to access support sooner, allowing them thrive without reaching crisis points, and to manage their caring roles effectively.**

*We committed to various key priorities in 2024, to enhance the identification of carers. Among these priorities were, working towards achieving the Carer Confident Accreditation with Carers UK and enhancing the use of GP resource packs in surgeries. These aimed to better identify and support carers. Looking into the progress made...*

## Progress in 2024

- Delivered webinars for health professionals using GP resource packs to help identify carers accessing primary health care services.
- Worked with Carers UK and other partners to gather evidence and make further progress towards achieving advanced level of Carer Confident Accreditation to better identify and support carers within the City of Doncaster Council workforce.
- Dedicated a section in the monthly City of Doncaster Council newsletter to emphasise the importance of identifying carers and involving them in decisions. Facilitated sessions with adult social care team leaders and advanced practitioners on statutory responsibilities for identifying and supporting carers.
- Trained 42 people from 10 organisations to improve skills and knowledge in identifying training needs for carers.
- Offered Parent Carer Needs Assessments at every new assessment and short break review in City of Doncaster Council. This ensures full support for families, identifying their needs.

## Appendix A

*Looking ahead to 2025, we've set priorities that will continue to build on efforts and make a meaningful impact.*

## Priorities for 2025

- Distribute carers resource packs to surgeries, clinics, and health vans, and conduct surveys of GP patients. Review feedback to understand barriers and improve carer identification and services.
- Co-produce and display carer posters in GP practices and all community buildings. This will signpost carers to the appropriate resources and support services.
- Co-produce and distribute a simplified, accessible card for carers to be handed out by GP receptionists and other community touchpoints. This initiative aims to ensure carers are identified early and can access the support they need.
- Improve the identification of carers, particularly those aged 18 – 25 years, by collaborating with Universities and other relevant institutions. This will help carers access scholarships and financial support.
- Focus on the identification of kinship carers by developing new programs/activities in children's and families' social care. This will support family members who take on caring roles for children when parents are unable to do so.
- Identify carers from St Leger Homes Doncaster tenant base and signpost/refer them to relevant areas (such as Carer Support Services), ensuring carers are appropriately supported.
- Launch a 'Think Carer Campaign' in adult social care to raise awareness and involve carers in key decisions, to clarify who constitutes a carer, enhancing identification.
- Streamline referral processes and improve communications toolkit and promotional material to promote awareness. This will enhance carers accessing support and increase awareness, improving carer identification.
- Ensure Parent Carer Needs Assessment are offered and recorded in joint assessments by City of Doncaster Council. This will provide comprehensive support and improve carers' needs being better identified.
- Enhance the Short Breaks Offer. This will improve the quality and accessibility of Short Breaks, significantly contributing to the identification of carer' needs.

# Identification

## Sarah and Her Young Carers:

Sarah, a single mother of four children - Emily, Jake, Lily, and Noah - was struggling with her mental health and parenting. The family lived in temporary housing and had no support network. Emily and Jake, the eldest children, were identified as young carers, helping their mother and siblings.

The City of Doncaster Council's Young Carers team stepped in to support the family. Emily and Jake received one-to-one emotional support to build their confidence and self-esteem. They also attended social groups to reduce isolation and make new friends. Lily and Noah received emotional support through school counselling.

The family secured permanent housing and received financial support for essential items. Sarah attended a parenting course and started using new strategies to create a more stable home environment.

Now, the family feels more settled and secure. Sarah has fewer low days and is optimistic about the future. Emily and Jake are happier and more confident, and the younger children are thriving.

“

*I feel it is helping...” – young carer receiving one-to-one emotional support to build confidence and self-esteem.*

“

*I'm proud to be a carer as I wouldn't be the person I am today without it.*

“

*The speed of support and navigating through the care system is problematic and we need to make it a lot simpler and more sophisticated, where services speak to each other.”*

# Recognition

**Carers often feel unheard and underappreciated by services, such as benefits, where the carer's income is often lower than many unemployment benefits.**

*In 2024, there were key priorities agreed to enhance carer recognition. One of which included, embedding patient, family, and carer involvement in policies and governance. These aimed to improve the recognition and value of carers. Progress overview so far...*

## Progress in 2024

- Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospital included patient, family, and carer voices in policy development and review to ensure staff are informed and trained, strengthening carer recognition.
- Actively involved carers in recruiting senior roles within adult social care, recognising their invaluable contributions and ensuring their perspectives are included.
- Supported over 100 young carers with tailored assessments and support from City of Doncaster Council, recognising their unique needs and ensuring appropriate support.
- Explored parent carer needs assessments with families receiving Short Breaks, ensuring comprehensive support plans that address both the child's and parents' needs. Provided Short Breaks to 314 children and completed 199 Short Break Reviews, with parent carers reporting a 2.28-point increase in quality of life. This recognises the holistic needs of the family and the positive impact on families' wellbeing.
- Parent Carer Needs Assessment Practitioner Training made available for all partners. Provided to build a knowledgeable workforce capable of recognising and supporting carers effectively. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with participants reporting improved skills in identifying carers and increased awareness of available support options.

*Building on previous efforts, here are carers key priorities for 2025.*

## Priorities for 2025

- Include carers in policy and practice development. The Carers Action Group will ensure carer voice (carers' views and advocate carer needs), whilst the Carers Strategic Oversight Board will implement policies, track progress. Ensuring carers' (contributions) are recognised.
- Recognise unpaid carers as a priority group locally, ensuring fair treatment and enhancing support and opportunities for them.
- Introduce a citywide survey to understand the priorities of unpaid carers and better recognise carers' needs across a broad spectrum. This will inform future support and services for carers.
- Increase the profile of carers' community grants across Doncaster to ensure more carers are recognised.
- Develop a comprehensive communications plan, promoting national awareness days and setup a network of champions in schools and health services. Enhancing awareness and support carers.
- Work with existing support networks to make the best use of resources and services for families. Ensuring carers and the people that they support receive the support they need.
- Work with carers to ensure appropriate Short Breaks are in place. Improving families' wellbeing and recognising their needs.

# Recognition

## Simran's Acknowledgement:

Simran had been caring for her sister, Sharon, for over 10 years. The daily challenges were immense for her. Simran felt her role as a carer was often overlooked by others. Simran felt overwhelmed and isolated.

A local carers group recognised Simran's invaluable support to Sharon. She was nominated by her neighbours, who witnessed her strength and courage, having cared for Sharon for many years. At the event, Simran was awarded with a luxury spa break.

Simran was deeply moved by the acknowledgment. This recognition gave her renewed hope. She felt a sense of belonging and realised that she was deeply valued by others. It was the renewed courage Simran needed.

Now, Simran regularly attends the carers group and feels valued by others.

“

*Long wait times to input information onto systems, leaving the cared for struggling and extra load on the carers.”*

“

*These kids need our support and respect as they often have a challenging childhood due to their caring roles”.*

“

*I have been a carer for the last 25 years it has been very challenging..”*





## Carers need personalised, high-quality information and guidance to address their own needs effectively.

*In 2024, various priorities were set by carers and other partners. For example, the Carers' Wellbeing Service undergoing a relaunch to improve accessibility and visibility as well as enhancing feedback options for carers by forming a Carers Working Group and using various channels to gather and respond to their views. Here's a snapshot of the progress made in 2024...*

### **Progress in 2024**

- Co-produced a carers rights leaflet, improved both Your Life Doncaster and City of Doncaster Council websites, serving dedicated sections for carers, by working together with carers. ensuring comprehensive and accessible information for carers.
- Ensured comprehensive information on Parent Carer Needs Assessments on City of Doncaster Council website. Provides accessible guidance and resources to carers with clear details on the assessment process, eligibility criteria, and available support.
- Provided significant resource to support the physical and emotional wellbeing, relationships, material needs, and educational needs of young carers and their families. Over 218 young carers accessed both targeted and non-targeted information, advice, and guidance (IAG) last year, totalling 1,959 contacts, enhancing their access to essential information and advice.
- The Carers' Wellbeing Service improved accessibility and visibility, introducing a new logo, user-friendly website and promotional materials to ensure carers know where to access tailored carer-support, information and advice.
- Raised profile of Parent Carer Needs Assessments has been raised at every new/annual review with parents, increasing awareness of their rights and available support, and enhancing the overall information and advice provided to carers.
- Established a Carers Working Group within Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals and used various channels (such as, surveys, meetings, and online forms) to gather and respond to carers' feedback. Ensuring carer' voice, shaping the information and advice provided to carers.
- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) provided tailored information and advice for carers through Jobcentre resources and support networks, ensuring carers receive the benefits and support they need, improving information and advice for carers.

*Following on from the progress made in 2024, we've shaped our future priorities.*

### **Priorities for 2025**

- Enhance online resources (such as Your Life Doncaster) to include more resources for carers, that is clear and accessible. Enhancing overall carer information and advice available to carers and others.
- Co-produce contact cards and provide physical copies of information about carers' rights and how to contact social care. This initiative aims to make it easier for carers to communicate important updates, ask questions, and access support, improving information and advice for carers.
- Co-produce and share accessible information on carers' rights, including legal protections (e.g., the right to a Carer's Assessment and protection from discrimination, to prevent carers being treated unfairly by i.e. employers or service providers) because of their caring roles) and available support. Empowering carers with the knowledge to self-advocate and empowering them to understand their rights.
- Develop local media to increase awareness about Parent Carer Needs Assessments and available support, making the information engaging and accessible. Enhancing carer information and advice.
- Refresh and offer Parent Carer Needs Assessment awareness training monthly through Buy Doncaster, ensuring practitioners are well-equipped to support parent carers effectively. This will strengthen the carer information and advice provided to carers and others.
- Support the delivery of Child Safeguarding TARGET Sessions, providing information, advice, and guidance to Health Practitioners such as GPs about Parent Carer Needs Assessments and resources available e.g. via online platforms. Ensuring carers understand their rights, understand access necessary services. Thereby enhancing improving carer information and advice.
- Develop reports from case management system to evidence work undertaken, ensuring transparency and accountability. This will support the carer information and advice framework.
- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will continue current work and identify important issues related to carers from Serious Adult Reviews (SARs) and Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs). This will include additional learning and awareness sessions to improve information and advice for carers.

# 3 Information & advice

## Emma and her Journey:

Emma cares for her dad, John, who has Parkinson's disease. The daily challenges felt "too much" for Emma, and she often felt overwhelmed. Emma heard through a colleague about a local carers' support group that was being ran in partnership with the City of Doncaster Council.

Emma attended workshops, which provided her with essential knowledge and resources. She also received emotional support from the group, helping her feel less isolated.

Connecting with other carers gave Emma valuable tips and a sense of community. With the right information and advice, she felt more confident in her role.

Now, Emma feels supported and optimistic about the future. Her father's condition is better managed, and she has found a balance that allows her to thrive as a carer.

*"Being a carer, I have faced many difficulties."*

*"It's okay to ask for help..."*

*"I didn't realise how much information and support was out there for us carers!"*



**Carers are not often aware of their legal entitlements. Through raising awareness of carers rights, carers can advocate for themselves, ensuring that they can access the support they are entitled to.**

*In 2024, we prioritised understanding carers' feedback from events like Carers Rights Day to better shape future events and activities, and to enhance our advocacy for carers' rights. Among our key priorities also included the (re)launch of the Carers contract and John's campaign in hospitals. Below is a summary of the progress made on these and other priorities throughout 2024.*

## **Progress in 2024**

- Established a carers working group for events and activities, based on feedback from Carers Rights Day in 2023. The 2024 Carers Rights Day event, co-produced with the Carers Action Group and Carers Wellbeing Service, saw high attendance and satisfaction, highlighting the important role carers play in our communities, and strengthening advocacy for carers' rights.
- Developed a carers network for City of Doncaster Council workforce, sponsored by the Council's Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care. Highlighted carers' rights on the Your Life Doncaster website and distributed newsletters during Carers Week with information on the carers network and changes to law impacting carers. Co-produced easy read versions of carers' rights information to improve awareness and understanding of carers' rights.
- Introduced the Carers contract and John's campaign in Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals to ensure carers are treated with dignity and respect. DBTH also conducted a Carers Survey during Carers Week, leading to improvements in distributing mealtime vouchers and communicating parking concessions for carers, enhancing support and services for carers' rights.
- Delivered 91 young carers assessments and transition assessments, as well as 231 adult carers assessments, in the first half of 2024/25 to ensure carers receive tailored support that aligns with their rights, including the right to specific assessments.
- Provided comprehensive information about Parent Carer Needs Assessments on City of Doncaster Council web page to empower families and practitioners with clear guidance on the assessment process, eligibility criteria, and available support, ensuring carers understand their rights and how to access necessary services.
- Raised the profile of Parent Carer Needs Assessments by City of Doncaster Council staff discussing them at every new or annual review with parents to ensure that parents are aware of their rights and the support available to them, reinforcing the importance of these assessments in meeting carers' needs.



Appendix A

*Built on efforts in 2024, here are our priorities for 2025.*

## **Priorities for 2025**

- Ensure adult social care staff consistently include carers and seek their views during key moments such as support reviews. This ensures carers are recognised and involved in planning.
- Ensure the Council's equalities and accessibility policies and quality standards effectively champion carers' rights and needs.
- Introduce an Accessibility Policy aimed at improving highways throughout City of Doncaster Council geography. This policy will ensure carers as well as those being cared-for have safe and accessible routes and access essential services, strengthening their rights.
- Promote information for carers through St Leger Homes Doncaster tenant newsletter, website, and social media to ensure carers have access to key information and advice. Co-produce support guidance for carers. This will allow carers and staff to better understand carers rights and needs.
- Deliver specific training for St Leger Homes Doncaster housing officers on carers' rights and the support available. This will ensure that housing officers are well-equipped to support carers effectively.
- Enhance communication and coordination to ensure carers receive timely and accurate information. For example, develop a centralised online portal for accessible information from all key partners. By collaborating with carers to identify and address challenges, creating a more efficient and accessible support system that better meets carers' needs and upholds their rights.
- Develop a welcome pack for carers, offering clear and comprehensive information about their rights, ensuring they feel supported and well-informed.
- Raise awareness and promote the use of advocacy services to support carers in navigating the system and understanding their rights. This will empower carers to advocate for themselves and their needs.



“

9.5% of Friends and Family Test feedback from the hospitals come from carers, who rate the Trust **4.5 out of 5** for their experience.”

“

Carers Rights Day 2024 event, Service, achieved 99% attendance, 26% attendee feedback, and an 87% satisfaction rate on timing and location”

“

*The [hospital] staff were amazing with both me and my daughter. I was kept informed about what was happening, and my daughter was kept calm and entertained during the examinations. My daughter was also brought some food and toys to keep her occupied.”*



### Jane and Tom:

Jane and Tom had been married for over twenty years when Tom began struggling with his mental health needs. His condition made it difficult for him to work and manage daily tasks, placing a significant burden on Jane as his carer.

Through Jane having a conversation with the City of Doncaster Council, Jane was able to access one-to-one emotional support to help her cope with the stress and responsibilities of caring for Tom. She also was connected with support groups where she could share her experiences and connect with others in similar situations, reducing her feelings of isolation.

Tom was provided with details of where to access mental health support services. Jane was thrilled to learn about her rights to a carer's conversation. She also attended workshops on mental health and caring, which equipped her with new strategies to support Tom effectively.



**Most carers often prioritise the needs of the person they support over their own, delaying their own support and putting their caring responsibilities first.**

*Our priorities for 2024 saw us driven to expand opportunities for carers to access broader peer support, to hold community events with carers groups, in collaboration with Healthwatch Doncaster and voluntary sector organisations, among other initiatives. Let's recap on how we've got in on with these priorities in 2024.*

### **Progress in 2024**

- Arranged access to Family Hubs, and other rooms and facilities through partnerships. Delivered seven carers wellbeing sessions at carer groups (including four new groups that supports those caring for loved ones with Dementia), and planned Carers Action Group meetings in diverse locations to expand peer support and create more networking opportunities, enhancing carer connection.
- Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals held twelve community events with carers groups, Healthwatch Doncaster, and voluntary sector organisations to increase engagement and awareness of the support that carers' need, helping carers connect with each other and access support.
- Primary Care Doncaster involved carers in planning primary care services by inviting them to patient engagement events and strategic meetings. Promoted carers information through the health van and static clinics and conducted public engagement sessions. This allowed carers to share experiences, access support and strengthen their connections.
- Held regular social groups for carers, which receive positive feedback from attendees. This fosters a sense of community and connection among carers.
- Equipped Family Hubs with extensive knowledge about Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) support and services, including signposting and a newly developed SEND booklet. This ensures families receive the necessary support and information.
- Piloted a peer support approach to address SEND queries and concerns. This initiative aims to provide families with peer-to-peer guidance and support.
- Actively shared the local offer with all parent carers to support them to connect with other families and access specialist services. This creates a supportive network for parents to find both peer support and professional resources.

*Looking ahead, we've prioritised our goals for 2025.*

### **Priorities in 2025**

- Support organisations and community groups in Doncaster to increase the availability of carers' activities and events, such as social groups, during evenings and weekends. Venues like Family Hubs and St Leger Homes communal areas will be available at no cost, closer to residents' homes. The Council will ensure these activities and events are accessible, creating inclusive spaces for carers and those they support to gather, receive support, and connect with each other.
- Enhance transport options for young carers to ensure they can easily access social groups and holiday activities, fostering stronger connections among carers.
- Establish a more frequent and accessible calendar for social groups, making it easier for carers to participate and build connections with their peers.
- Improve how Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals celebrates success stories when engaging with families and changed services, raising the profile of things that happening where carers and others can connect.
- Continue to recruit Citizens Panel members in Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals to ensure proportionate representation, including carers' representatives, enhancing connection.



# Connection

## The Carers Action Group: A New Beginning

As 2025 began, the City of Doncaster Council's Carers Action Group took a bold step to better connect and support carers across the Doncaster. The first meeting of the year was held at a faith-based community hub that offered a warm and welcoming environment. This marked a significant shift from the formal council buildings to a more inclusive and community-oriented setting.

Carers expressed a desire to move away from the impersonal atmosphere of formal venues and instead, immerse themselves within their local communities.

By co-locating the Carers Action Group meetings within the heart of the community, the initiative aims to make support more accessible and inclusive. This move is not just about changing locations; it was about creating a network of carers who could share their experiences, support one another, and build lasting connections.

This just the beginning of the Carers Action Group's mission to bring essential resources and support to carers. This initiative symbolises a powerful commitment to ensuring that carers are an integral part of Doncaster's supportive and connected communities.



“

*Carers wellbeing sessions at carer groups saw remarkable engagement, with attendance peaking at 16 participants, highlighting strong interest and a need for these sessions...*”

“

*Caring does get me down, but I know that I'm needed.”*

“

*Companionship, Bingo, Crafts, Games. A great afternoon out”*



# Independence & Wellbeing

**Carers require a life beyond their caring roles. It is common for them to feel as if their own identity is overshadowed by their caring role, where all discussions revolve around the person they support.**

*During 2024, our priorities were to reassess the availability of recreation and leisure activities and to introduce the 'AskSARA' service, an online tool providing advice on equipment to make daily living easier. Let's reflect on our developments of 2024.*

## Progress in 2024

- Launched the AskSARA service, providing personalised advice on equipment and home modifications to help people live more independently. Promoted through social media, meetings, emails, and the Doncaster City Gazette, aimed to increase awareness among carers and highlight benefits such as reducing hospital admissions and shortening stays, thereby improving daily living and overall independence and wellbeing for carers and those they care for.
- Completed major improvements on upgraded crossing facilities and installed new signalised crossings in various areas. These enhancements aim to improve accessibility and safety for carers and those they care for, promoting their independence and wellbeing.
- Offered comprehensive and well-received holiday activity programme for young carers to support their independence and wellbeing, providing enjoyable and enriching activities.
- Provided discounted access to Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust (DCLT) venues for young carers to promote their wellbeing by making leisure and recreational activities more affordable and accessible.
- Supported 314 children and young people to access short break services, supporting the independence and wellbeing of carers by giving them the opportunity to take a break from their caring responsibilities.

*Reflecting on our journey in 2024, we have established our key priorities for 2025 to continue enhancing support for carers and improving their wellbeing.*

## Priorities in 2025

- Improve short break services and wellbeing programs by developing Shared Lives, where people with care needs spend time with Shared Lives carers in a family setting. This will make services easier to access and more responsive to carers' needs. Carers will benefit from more accessible short breaks, personalised support, and a stronger sense of community, enhancing their independence and wellbeing.
- Improve support for carers through the co-production of a dedicated app, providing easy access to resources and information. This app will help improve carers' wellbeing by offering support and useful tools in one place.
- The upcoming Accessibility Policy will support the construction of new crossing facilities on the A19 in Bentley and Askern urban areas, the redevelopment of Mexborough town centre, and an active travel scheme in Woodlands. These initiatives aim to enhance independence and wellbeing by improving accessibility and promoting active lifestyles.
- Raise awareness of Carers' Trust grants across Doncaster, ensuring more carers know about and can access these grants. This initiative aims to provide essential financial support to carers in need, helping them maintain their independence and wellbeing by alleviating financial stress and enabling them to access necessary resources and services.
- Develop a skills framework to assist in creating holiday activity plans. This framework will help ensure that activities are well-organised, engaging, and beneficial for young carers, enhancing their independence and wellbeing.

### The Impact of Bite-Size Sessions

Bite-size sessions have been invaluable to the Carers All Together group, a peer support group, whose members care for those who suffer from long-term severe mental health issues.

*Over the past 2 years, we have had several wide-ranging sessions, from Drug and Alcohol awareness to Empowering in Nature. The session is tailored to our group needs.*

*One member was able to cut down on her weekly alcohol intake and another, through a Tai-chi session, uses regularly a technique to help lower her blood pressure before a test.*

*Other members enjoyed the calming effects these sessions had on them from Aromatherapy to Understanding Stress and Anxiety. It's always good to learn something new, we can't recommend them enough!*



“

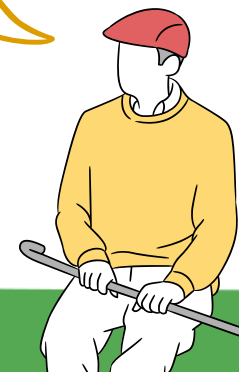
What a lovely Group. A place to go and talk to people who actually understand what carers are going through. Lisa gives us an Indian Head massage – bliss.”

“

Being a 24hour a day carer 7 days a week the 8 hours a week are a life changer”

“

It's giving us that break which we really need”







# Why this matters...

## Key Facts and Figures

On Census Day 2021 (March 2021) there were approximately **28,130** unpaid carers in Doncaster; this equates to 9.7% of the usual resident population, aged 5 years and over.





In Doncaster, the ward with the highest percentage of people providing unpaid care was **Sprotbrough (11.0%)**



The ward with the lowest percentage was **Town (6.8%)**

The percentage of people providing unpaid care was higher in females than males

**11.3%**  
Female

**8.0%**  
Male

There are approximately **625 young unpaid carers** aged between 5 and 17 years in Doncaster. This equates to **1.3% of 5 – 17 year olds**



“I couldn’t watch them struggle and looking after them makes me feel like a good person.”




“...Our various programs for carers have been met with enthusiastic approval, and we continue to extend support to all carers. We are dedicated to making a profound difference in the lives of carers and their loved ones, ensuring they receive the recognition and support they truly deserve!”

Source: Census, 2021


## Everyone’s caring journey matters.

THE PROPORTION OF CARERS WHO RECEIVE DIRECT PAYMENTS IS **97.2%**

This is much higher than national/regional averages, regional 81.0% and nationally 77.4%




Proportion of Carers who find it easy to locate information about service



| Doncaster | Regional | National |
|-----------|----------|----------|
| 63.3      | 69.0     | 67.9     |

The overall quality of life score for Carers in Doncaster is 6.5 (143rd nationally)

This is below the regional (Yorkshire & Humber) and England scores of 7.3



# Partners and Support Networks

In Doncaster, there are several Partnership Boards and networks that consist of representatives from diverse groups that draw on care and support in Doncaster. These forums empower members to actively contribute to shaping care and support tailored to specific groups.

- Carers Action Group
- Carers Strategic Oversight Board
- Dementia Partnership Board
- Commitment to Carers
- Making It Real Board
- Learning Disability Partnership Board
- Autism Partnership Board
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Partnership Board
- Mentally Well Alliance
- Doncaster Parents Forum (VOICE)
- Carers All Together (CAT) group



# Get Involved

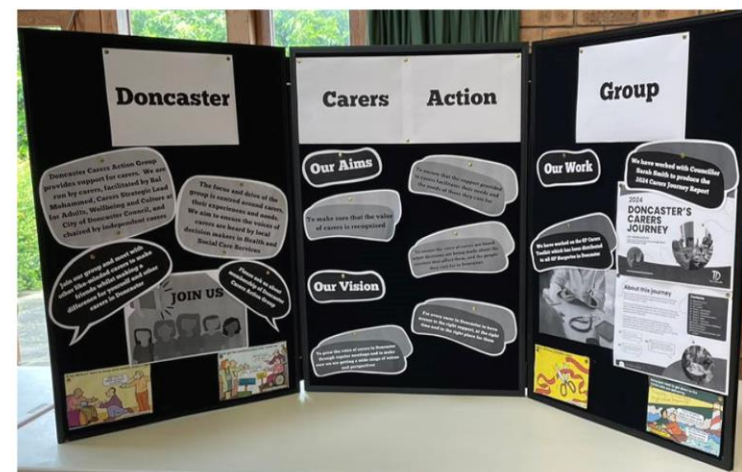
Appendix A

Team Doncaster is committed to ensuring that all carers in Doncaster have a voice and are represented. By getting involved, you can help make a difference in the lives of carers in your community.

Doncaster carers have supported with identifying key priorities for 2025. To make these priorities a reality, we are seeking more people with lived experiences to get involved. This is an opportunity for you to help shape care and support across Doncaster and make a difference in the lives of carers in your community.

**If you are interested in finding out more information about the Partnership Boards and networks or want to join our Carers Action Group, please email:**

[PA.Carers.Lead@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:PA.Carers.Lead@doncaster.gov.uk)





You care.



We care.

[www.doncaster.gov.uk/CarersJourney](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/CarersJourney)