



Staffordshire
Together For Carers
Service

Annual Report for Staffordshire Together for Carers Service 2023- 24



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n|compass
towards a brighter future

 Staffordshire
County Council

NHS
Staffordshire and
Stoke-on-Trent
Integrated Care Board


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IDENTIFIED & SUPPORTED

574 
ADULT CARERS AND
182
YOUNG CARERS

“It was great to meet other carers and have a chat too, these events really lift the spirits and it is good to be able to offer others support and realise you are not alone with your caring role.”

ADULT CARER

206 
REFERRALS AND
SIGNPOSTS FOR YOUNG
CARERS TO **7**
ORGANISATIONS

“You have given us something to look forward to, we can't believe we have been so lucky to be supported by Staffordshire Together for Carers.”

ADULT CARER

283 
REFERRALS AND
SIGNPOSTS FOR ADULT
CARERS TO **125**
ORGANISATIONS

“She said that she no longer feels sad all of the time and looks forward to your groups and activities with our service.”

PARENT OF YOUNG CARER

WE DELIVERED
19 VIRTUAL
ACTIVITIES
ATTENDED BY
287 YOUNG
CARERS

WE DELIVERED
80 FACE-TO-FACE
ACTIVITIES
ATTENDED BY
1201 
YOUNG CARERS

WE DELIVERED

123 
VIRTUAL ACTIVITIES
ATTENDED BY
302 ADULT
CARERS

717 
ONE-TO-ONE
SESSIONS
DELIVERED TO
YOUNG AND ADULT
CARERS

“One to one support was very helpful. The breathing techniques that I was taught were helpful to help me feel better. I really like being at young carers group, I wish I could be here every week. I can meet new friends who are similar to me.”

YOUNG CARER

WE DELIVERED
183 FACE-TO-FACE
ACTIVITIES
ATTENDED BY
880 ADULT
CARERS

2023 to 2024 marks our third year of delivering the all-age carers service throughout Staffordshire. We are really proud to share our successes this year in addition to future developments, key statistics and achievements around our partnerships, carers small grant scheme, social impact and social media.

Successes

New All Age Carers Strategy



Through collaboration with the Staffordshire County Council commissioning team, we supported the development of their new All Age Carers Strategy, to ensure all relevant groups of carers had their voices heard. Co-production included creating a detailed questionnaire for parents of young carers and working with young carers to ensure their views were captured to influence and shape the new strategy. Key priorities were identified, and we have continued our close collaboration with commissioners to work together to achieve these objectives.



North Staffordshire
Combined Healthcare
NHS Trust

North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare

We have spent the year working in collaboration with the North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare Trust as part of a project group to support them to work towards their Triangle of Care Star 2. This has included delivering Caring for Carers workshops in conjunction with North Staffordshire Wellbeing College, supporting the creation of carers information leaflets and working with them to ensure all staff have access to carer awareness training. Next year will see us deliver Carer Champion training to a nominated Carer Champion for each team within the Trust.

Carer Friendly Mark

As part of our Carers Rights Day celebration (during quarter 3), we launched our Carer Friendly Mark. This award has been developed across all n-compass carers' services and is designed to support any service or organisation across health, education or VSCE sector to deliver best practice in being carer friendly, ensuring that carers are identified and supported within their service. We successfully piloted this award with a GP Surgery and one of our partners and have plans to roll this out further in 2024/25 alongside the increased capacity to deliver Carer Champion training.



Awareness events and engagement

This year, we promoted our service within the wider Staffordshire communities by attending **32 EVENTS**, during which we engaged with **404 PROFESSIONALS** from health, social care, and the VSCE sectors, and directly interacted with **235 CARERS**. We raised awareness of the importance of identifying unpaid carers and support available to carers including our service offer, through delivering **27 SERVICE BRIEFINGS** to **257 PROFESSIONALS**. As a result of this ongoing engagement, we designed and distributed our first professional e-bulletin and have continued to send these out to more than **150 PROFESSIONALS** each quarter within Staffordshire, sharing our service offer, news, and developments: including training, carers small grants scheme, and the Carer Friendly Mark.



Carer Awareness training

Working with colleagues within the county council, we co-produced online Carers Awareness training to share information about unpaid carers and the local support available to help them live happier, healthier and more independent lives. This included a video for the public as well as for professionals which, in line with the Carers Strategy action plan, will be mandated for Social Care practitioner training commencing in 2024.

Young Carers activities

Young carer **ACTIVITY ENGAGEMENT HAS INCREASED (BY 50%)** with access to additional age-focussed activities which not only provide them with a break from their caring role, but also facilitates peer support and gives them the opportunity to engage with an activity which has a positive impact on their physical, emotional and mental wellbeing. Transport has been provided and arranged **804 TIMES** for those young carers who would be otherwise unable to access these activities.

This year we have delivered **THREE X 3 DAY YOUNG CARERS ARTS WORKSHOPS** delivered in partnership with Create Arts. We have taken young carers bowling, crazy golfing, to a football match, to the circus and abseiling as well as to the theatre. We have delivered our monthly sports, crafts and drama workshops as well as aged 13+ young carer peer support groups.

We have referred **53 YOUNG CARERS** aged 5 to 12 to Honeypot to access a residential respite break.

16 YOUNG CARERS aged 12-14 have accessed a residential respite break with Go Beyond

CREATE ARTS.ORG.UK
20 YEARS OF SPARKING CREATIVITY



Continuous Improvement

Increasing Carer awareness

In the coming year, we will utilise additional capacity (created through additional funding in response to priorities identified through the Carers Strategy) to deeply embed carer awareness within the community. This will involve increased promotion and delivery of Carer Champion training, the Carer Friendly Mark, and our small grants scheme. Through increased partnership working with the Integrated Care Board and Education, we will ensure that all communication channels are fully utilised to share and amplify our comprehensive offer to ensure that young and adult carers are identified at the first opportunity.

Young carer emotional support

We will also utilise additional capacity and our partnership with Catch 22 to reduce waiting times for one-to-one support for young carers, to negate the impact of caring. In line with young carer feedback, we are working with YESS (our new counselling provider) to increase the capacity for counselling to support young carers who will benefit from a higher-level therapeutic intervention.

Carers' Breaks

We will continue to support carers to take a break from their caring role through a range of activities. In line with consultation feedback from carers and stakeholders, we will develop this offer to include:

- additional activities within adult carers Coffee and Chat sessions
- a wider range of online and face to face activities available geographically as demand requires
- opportunities/support for carers to access activities along with the person they care for.



Partnerships

Changes



Our partnership offer with Changes provides all-age remote wellbeing support for carers through goal focused one-to-one support and well-being sessions. During 2023/24:

35 ADULT CARERS AND
48 YOUNG CARERS SUPPORTED

184 WELLBEING SUPPORT SESSIONS WITH ADULT AND YOUNG CARERS DELIVERED

132 ONE TO ONE SUPPORT SESSIONS WITH ADULT CARERS DELIVERED

54 ONE TO ONE SUPPORT SESSIONS WITH YOUNG CARERS DELIVERED

"The presentations were well designed and easy to understand and made me realise my own well being is key"

- Carer

"She loved her sessions with you, and it's amazing to hear how happy and communicative she is for that hour each Tuesday"

- Parent of young carer

ON THE HORIZON

On The Horizon provides person-centered counselling to both young and adult carers.

33 ADULT CARERS SUPPORTED

25 YOUNG CARERS SUPPORTED



Partnerships

CATCH 22

Our seconded post has played a crucial role in coordinating young carers activities alongside supporting delivery within schools. Following the departure of the Catch 22 staff member in February 2024, we successfully worked alongside Catch 22 to recruit a new individual into this post, who began their role in March 2024.

**catch
22**

564 HOURS
PROVIDED
TO SUPPORT
SERVICE

Citizens Advice

Our partnership with Potteries MoneyWise provides carers across Staffordshire with help and advice on managing their money through a bespoke one-to-one appointment with an adviser. During the last year:

705
HOURS SPENT
SUPPORTING CARERS
BY A DEDICATED ADVISER

56
CARERS
OR THEIR FAMILIES
SUPPORTED

£326,239
POTENTIAL FINANCIAL
GAINS IDENTIFIED



"Thank you so much for your help. It confirmed that I had done what I needed to do to help my son. He has now been awarded full PIP which has helped enormously. I will apply for my own PIP when I have a formal diagnosis. Your help sheets about energy saving have made me look at some of our bad habits (leaving lights on) and this has greatly improved. I just wanted to say thank you for a job well done!"

- Adult Carer



Future partnership developments

To ensure our partner offer provides carers with the most effective, appropriate support to meet their needs, we carried out a comprehensive review and evaluation of our partnerships. The results informed developing and establishing changes ready for implementation for April 2024 to March 2025.

Catch 22

By increasing Catch 22's seconded hours from 12 to 24 and evolving the responsibility of this post to support young carers directly, we can reduce waiting times for one-to-one support and can maximise the benefits of their expertise in supporting in complex cases for vulnerable young carers. As there is a proven link that young carers are at more risk of Child Sexual Exploitation, Catch 22 can use their experience to assist the Staffordshire Together for Carers Team by providing up-to-date CSE information to minimize young carers vulnerabilities to exploitation.



YESS

Throughout the past year, demand for counselling for carers has outweighed provision. This, coupled with the change in circumstances for our 2022/23 counselling provider which affected their ability to meet demand, led us to source a new provider who could fulfil demand and operate equitably across the county. During quarter 4, we established a new partnership with YESS with increased capacity to provide a range of therapeutic interventions for carers including talking therapy, art therapy and movement therapy for young and adult carers.



Young Carer Delivery Partnerships

We continue to work with local delivery partners to consistently offer a range of quality and regular activities for young carers. This allows them to take a break from their caring role, empower them to learn new skills and supports with physical and mental well-being.

NEW VIC

Delivering arts-based activities in both term-time and school holidays in Newcastle and Stafford, including a theatre tour and tickets to a Christmas show.

DELIVERED
12 TERM TIME
+ 4 SCHOOL HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES
455 ATTENDANCES



DELIVERED
8 TERM TIME +
5 SCHOOL HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES
214 ATTENDANCES

Providing a range of craft and sports activities in term-time and holidays, including VIP hospitality tickets for older young carers to watch a Burton Albion match.



Offering sports activities in term-time and holidays.

DELIVERED
7 TERM TIME ACTIVITIES
88 ATTENDANCES



Delivering craft, games, and forest school activities and activities at the Museum of Cannock Chase.

DELIVERED
9 TERM TIME
103 ATTENDANCES



Case Studies

Amy's Story

Amy, a young carer, was referred to Staffordshire Together for Carers in September 2023. She cares for her older sister with Autism and sensory processing disorder. Amy supports her sister during social interactions and her sister's emotions lead to outbursts towards Amy. Amy received support through one-on-one sessions in which she explored communication skills to share her worries and developed coping strategies. She accessed group activities, which gives her a regular break from her young carers role. Amy's confidence improved as

a result of coming to young carers activities and groups and she has said *"I have lots of new friends at young carers now, I really enjoy coming to the sessions"*. Her mum fed back to us:

"We just wanted to say thank you so very much for the activity attended - she absolutely loved it! The support provided, kindness and activities offered are just brilliant and so valuable too. We are very grateful and just wanted to pass on our huge appreciation. Thank you all"



Kate's Story

Kate, a parent carer, was referred to our service by First Contact following her statutory carers assessment. She cares for her oldest child, Luke, who has Cerebral Palsy and is non-verbal. Kate and her husband both work full time, and she is the primary carer for Luke. Kate felt isolated in her caring role and faced challenges in hiring a new Personal Assistant (PA) for Luke, as she wants to ensure clear expectations and quality support for her son. Kate's allocated Information and Support Officer introduced Kate to another parent carer Helen, knowing that Helen could support Kate by sharing some of her experiences, Helen was happy to share her experience, information and advice about managing a PA for her son. Kate was able to use Helen's guidance, to create clear support plans for Luke to help recruit and manage a new

PA successfully. Kate continued to connect with other parent carers via the service and attended one of our local coffee and chats and built a further support network. Kate felt that Helen's advice and guidance has empowered her to ensure her sons support needs are being met and that she is in control of how his allocated hours of care are used. Kate feels less isolated knowing that there is a service that operates a local group who she can reach out to. *"I love coming along to these (coffee and chat) because I always go away with a lot of information, it does me good to attend, it's my therapy and it's important to me. Meeting with Helen really helped me, she gave me lots of ideas and advice, things I hadn't thought about or was even aware of"*.



Small Grant Scheme

**9 GRANTS
AWARDED**

**£16,479.30
AWARDED IN TOTAL**

AVERAGE AMOUNT AWARDED:

£1,831

**CARERS
SUPPORTED: 146**

Types of projects funded

- Online craft workshops
- Horse riding and animal care for young carers
- Knitting carers peer support group
- Parent carers peer support group
- Carer peer support group in residential living developments

Successes

- Local peer support for carers have been established and embedded into communities and support networks
- Carers have accessed high quality creative workshops from home, increasing self esteem and wellbeing
- Improved physical health for young carers taking part in different physical activity
- Increased positive wellbeing for young carers through interaction with animals and nature
- Decreased isolation for carers through interaction with other local carers in local projects

Development

2024/25 will see increased promotion as part of our Professionals' Bulletins and increased engagement through Carer Champion and Carer Friendly Mark engagement, with the aim of funding an increased number of grants for a wider range of projects.



Social Value

In partnership with Staffordshire County Council, we delivered £347,852 of added value last year through social, economic, and environmental initiatives. Our commitment to the local economy is demonstrated by 87% of the Staffordshire Together for Carers team living locally. We reinvested £161,723 into the local supply chain through carer activities, venue hire, local sub-contracts and travel. Additionally, we awarded £16,479 in grants to local organisations and contributed more than 250 volunteer hours in 2023-24.

We enhance local families' quality of life by paying the Real Living Wage.

We reduce energy consumption with a hybrid delivery model, coordinated route planning, public transport, car sharing, and a cloud-based IT infrastructure. We encourage recycling and aim to become a 100% paperless office.



Social Media



We operate a public Facebook page and a private Facebook group for adult and young carers to provide online peer support and up to date information regarding activities and offers.

599
FOLLOWERS

Facebook
page visits
2.7k
up 92% in
comparison
with 22/23

100%
improved post
engagement in
comparison
with 22/23

1.5k
content interactions
up 74% in comparison
with 22/23



We run an Instagram account aimed at young carers sharing information about the support we provide, as well as general advice for young carers. We post stories sharing every activity to raise awareness of the support available.

159
FOLLOWERS