

# Annual Report for Staffordshire Together for Carers Service 2023- 24



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# Year End Report 2023/24



**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 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 CARERS TO CARERS TO CAREANISATIONS

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

FACE-TO-FACE ACTIVITIES ATTENDED BY

1201

YOUNG CARERS

123 VIRTUAL ACTIVITIES
ATTENDED BY

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.



# NHS North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare

#### 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













# **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

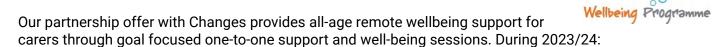
We will continue to support carers to take a break from their caring role through a range of activities. In line with consultation feedback from carers and stakeholders, we will develop this offer to include:

- 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



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

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.

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:

SUPPORTING CARERS BY A DEDICATED ADVISER

£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.

12TERM
TIME

+4 SCHOOL
HOLIDAY
ACTIVITIES

455 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.

TERM TIME ACTIVITIES 88 ATTENDANCES



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

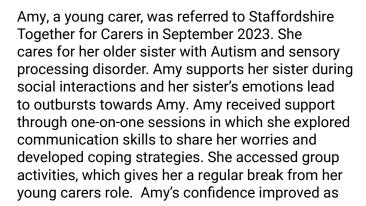
**DELIVERED** 

9 TERM TIME 103 ATTENDANCES



#### **Case Studies**

#### **Amy's Story**











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 146 SUPPORTED:

#### 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

Pacebook 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