

# Working Together for Change



## Working together to improve how we support unpaid carers in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

**Laura Green, Service Manager and Strategic Lead for Carers, Cambridgeshire County Council**

**Karen Kelley, Strategic Operational Lead for Carers. Peterborough City Council**

Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council joined up with a national programme co-ordinated by Social Care Future to support people and organisations trying to make progress with difficult issues referred to as the 'plumbing and wiring of social care'.

The aim is to gain strength and insight from sharing our learning with others striving to make progress in the same way.



### Fixing the social care plumbing and wiring

**What is this about?**



We believe that we should all be able to "live in the place we call home, with the people and things that we love, in communities where we look out for one another, doing the things that matter to us" and we think that this is what social care should help everyone to achieve.

People drawing on and working in social care often speak of their frustration at having to swim against a tide of rules, regulations and ways of working when trying to put national and local visions into practice. This is the 'plumbing and wiring' of adult social care that can help or get in the way of change.

This work is about:

- identifying those things that get in the way
- working out which are local, and which are national
- agreeing what the solutions might be.



It follows on from the ADASS Time to Act report published in April 2023. Nationally, Social Care Future has got commitment from organisations with influence to look at the main issues and start to tackle them.

**#SocialCareFuture**

Both CCC and PCC have engaged unpaid carers to understand what is working well, what is not, and their priorities for the future.

Criteria	CCC	PCC
Surveys Sent	192 surveys sent to carers	Surveys sent to carers and promoted on Facebook
Responses Received	50 responses	46 responses
Engagement	6 face to face events	Surveys complete in collaboration with organisations
Sessions	July 2024 - 2 workshops – 20 attendees (staff as well as carers) September 2024 – follow up progress session	November 2024 – 2 workshops – 35 attendees (staff as well as carers) January 2025 – ‘mop-up’ session

Workshop	Day Structure – How does it work?
Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We discussed and sorted the feedback from the carers survey on to two boards titled ‘working well’ or ‘not working well’</li><li>• Everyone worked together to group and identify key patterns.</li><li>• A ‘Parking space’ board was created to share any issues that were important, but not be reflected in the information we had collected.</li><li>• We worked together to identify the ‘not working well’ themes which we felt if we could do something about them would have the biggest positive impact on the lives of carers</li></ul>
Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We thought together about why these themes were happening and what it would look like if we could make a meaningful improvement</li><li>• Looking at the key themes we looked at what was already in place and what we could do to make a difference.</li><li>• After we had chosen our favourite ideas, we plotted the top voted ones on an ‘investment grid’ to see how much of a difference it would make vs how much effort would be involved</li><li>• Finally, we thought about which of the top voted ideas made sense to work on first and chose action plans to take forward. 3 for CCC and 4 for PCC. We made a smart plan for each idea based on 6 key questions</li></ul>

Plan	Action	Action Progress to Date
Action Plan 1	Establish a single point of contact to coordinate & navigate care & support needs. Through development of shared principles around a care coordinator role that provides seamless assistance either directly or on behalf of carers & their cared for person. This role will be aligned to existing staff & is about the principle of no wrong door.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Integrated All Age Carer Support Service recommissioned in August 2024 offering support to carers to navigate services and find the right support including an information and advice service provided by Caring Together.</li><li>• Bridgit Cares, an AI enabled digital carers support platform providing a one-stop shop to help carers in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough launched in December 2024 in partnership with Caring Together.</li><li>• Plans to initiate formal discussions with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care Board partners for a joint strategy for carers by 2026.</li><li>• Planned co-production activities with carers and carer support organisations to support the development of a set of principles to underpin seamless carer support which can be used to support professionals and organisations working with carers.</li></ul>

Plan	Action	Action Progress to Date
Action Plan 2	Kickstart more unpaid carers groups & self-help groups for unpaid carers across Cambridgeshire. For the unpaid carer: somebody who supports you who understands your situation, who knows what you are experiencing – by offering more opportunities to bring people together. For the budget holder: to take pressure off services, save money, save resources, know unpaid carers have someone to talk to who understands their situation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Care Together work to design and develop local services building connections with local people and partners to co-design future services. The Care Together team offered an increased amount of seed-funding to enable development of further Peer Support Groups for Unpaid Carers resulting in a new carer café in South Cambridgeshire and an additional peer support group in Fenland.</li><li>• Further co-production activities are planned with our carer support providers and carers to develop an improved understanding of the need for peer support, map this against current groups and identify gaps.</li><li>• Existing groups will be better promoted to carers using tools like Bridgit.</li></ul>



Plan	Action	Action Progress to Date
Action Plan 3	Overhaul existing process to bid on properties to make it easier for people to access suitable housing by making the Homelink website easier to use & having a worker that you can talk to for support. This reflects the carers feedback that having the right housing makes a big difference to carer wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Follow-up actions related to Homelink website:</li><li>• Feedback on Homelink provided to sub-regional Homelink manager and issues regarding search filters raised with technical support provider for the Home-Link website.</li></ul>

Plan	Action	Action Progress to Date
Action Plan 1	We want to improve clarity on eligibility for carers support. We want to ensure that a wide range of support including a focus on Direct Payments are available for carers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Working with our quality practice team to create factsheets for employees that easily explain what is available and the differences.</li><li>• Ensure we include the wide range of support available and not just what we provide as a local authority but also from charities and organisations who provide breaks/support for carers and the person they care for.</li><li>• Regular meetings involving carers and various carers organisations.</li></ul>



Plan	Action	Action Progress to Date
Action Plan 2	Aiming to reach the wider community wide a central space for people to access. Currently considering how we develop family hubs into an All Age Hub to support families and carers. Face to face contact during the working week and enhanced out of hours support (Phone etc).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Using family hubs and other community spaces for better outreach.</li><li>• Working closely with our Integrated neighbourhood teams to utilise spaces and groups they have in place</li><li>• Working closely with our commissioning team to look at what is already in place</li><li>• Face to face contact during the working week and out of hours support (Phone etc) to be made available.</li></ul>

Plan	Action	Action Progress to Date
Action Plan 3	Create a dedicated carer support team to explore the lack of communication between services, and co-ordinate support and resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creating a virtual team to include key partners specifically voluntary sector. social care, health partners (integrated neighbourhoods) schools and colleges, carers, charities, commissioned services.</li><li>• Peterborough carers community Facebook page has been launched.</li><li>• Bridgit Cares, an AI enabled digital carers support platform providing a one-stop shop to help carers in Peterborough launched in December 2024 in partnership with Caring Together and alongside CCC.</li><li>• Working with the SUN network to ensure the creation of the group is carer led. Involving those with caring responsibilities at every stage</li><li>• Thinking out of the box to reach all carers who need support</li></ul>

Plan	Action	Action Progress to Date
Action Plan 4	A holistic approach to reaching diverse community needs to implement culturally relevant carer services in trusted community settings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A plan to engage with diverse communities through focus groups and community champions and carers, ensuring culturally relevant services are provided.</li><li>• Our first meeting convened professionals who work across voluntary sector, statutory services and charities. We identified and mapped existing community contacts. We confirmed our narrative around what we want to do, and we agreed who will make initial approaches to invite community contacts onto the working group.</li><li>• Next step we will discuss our initial findings, agree any changes to our approach and ensure we involve carers every step of the way</li></ul>

Working Well	Feeling listened to	Not Working Well	Bureaucracy
	Having the support of care workers coming to the house		Conflict of wishes/needs of carer and service user
	Getting the right benefits/financial support for independence and well-being		I'm not able to access / use IT and computers
	Getting the right home equipment and adaptations		I'm having to co-ordinate care between services
	Being with people who are in a similar situation to me		Confusion about the difference of professional roles and responsibilities
	Having the support / advice from carer organisations		Lack of a One Stop Shop
	Having helpful and supportive healthcare professionals		Loss of services, professional and expertise when you reach 18 years
	Help and advice with queries and filling in forms		Lack of forward planning for the future
	Having a Day Centre that my loved one is happy and safe in		Lack of understanding by professionals of my situation
			Services and support are kept secret

# All-Age Carers Strategy 2022-2026

## 7 Strategic Intentions:

- Reaching and identifying young carers
- Reaching and identifying parent carers
- Supporting young carers transitioning into adulthood
- Supporting carers at risk of domestic abuse
- Supporting emotional and psychological wellbeing
- Joint working across health and social care
- Ensuring easy access to information

**Laura Green, Service Manager and Strategic Lead for Carers,  
Cambridgeshire County Council  
E:Mail: [Laura.green@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:Laura.green@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)**

**Karen Kelley, Strategic Operational Lead for Carers.  
Peterborough City Council  
E:Mail: [Karen.Kelley@peterborough.gov.uk](mailto:Karen.Kelley@peterborough.gov.uk)**