

# CARERS' STRATEGY 2024 - 2027



## CARING TOGETHER

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# Forward



**Fiona Davies**  
Chief Officer

**A**rgyll and Bute published its first **Caring Together Strategy in 2018 in response to the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016.**

This legislation supported how we work with unpaid carers in Argyll and Bute and provided an opportunity for us to focus and invest in them.

Scotland’s National Carers Strategy was delivered on the 21<sup>st</sup> December 2022 and was timely given the work of unpaid carers in supporting the safety and wellbeing of those being cared for during the Covid-19 pandemic.

With our partners who support unpaid carers in Argyll & Bute we have reviewed our own strategy in this context, reflecting the national strategy, our collective learning since 2018 and aspirations in supporting and acknowledging the role of unpaid carers, especially as a vital part of care in our remote and rural geography.

### Carers’ Impacts

While we have moved on in our formal support with a focus on implementing the Act and providing support to young carers, ensuring that carers’ impacts are considered within all strategy there is much to develop.

We have developed our representation on our Integration Joint Board and within planning structures to ensure we have the active voice of carers and opportunity for co-production throughout our planning process and in partnership across Argyll and Bute.

I’d like to note our two Integration Joint Board members, Kirstie Reid and John Stevens whose

active involvement nationally and locally has been advantageous.

John Stevens sadly died earlier this year. He used both his experience and a measured approach to ensure that we consider carers’ impacts across all our work. His skills and kindness will be missed but his approach will stay with us.

### Support

We will continue to raise awareness of support for carers of all ages and we thank the carers’ organisations, Education and the 60 young carers who supported our ability to deliver this refreshed strategy to the benefit of unpaid carers who are known to us and those we do not yet know.

Being a carer can be both rewarding and exhausting but their role in our community is a key part of how we maintain a compassionate and caring society and provide dignity and respect to those who are vulnerable.

I am delighted to renew our strategic commitment and look forward to developing Argyll & Bute’s continued support for carers.





# Carers Strategy - Introduction

This strategy is for Adult and Young Carers

# Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 & National Carer Strategy 2022

## What is a strategy?

It is a plan which details work that we will do to support Unpaid Carers. It explains how we plan to do this and how we will monitor the commitments we make in it.

## Why are we writing this strategy?

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 informs the Health and Social Care Partnership of the right of Carers and the duties we must provide to anyone looking after a relative or a friend who would struggle without their help.

It sets out our Vision for supporting Unpaid Carers

The Act refers to anyone caring for a loved one as an Unpaid Carer. In this strategy we will refer to an Unpaid Carer as a Carer as this is what Carers told us they prefer

## What do we mean by the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP?)

Argyll and Bute HSCP means Health and Social Care services in Argyll and Bute working together.

The Health and Social Care Partnership works with colleagues and partners from a broad range of Independent and Third Sector organisations.

To support Carers in Argyll & Bute, some services have been commissioned and are provided by Carer Centres and other organisations

## Who is this Strategy For?

The Argyll & Bute Health and Social Care Partnership has a duty under the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016, to provide supports and services for unpaid Carers, we do this by working together with colleagues, partners and Unpaid Carers.

This strategy is for anyone who cares for a friend or family member living within Argyll and Bute.



**T**he Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 and extended and enhanced the rights of carers to help improve their health and wellbeing, so that they can continue to care, if they so wish, whilst having a life alongside caring.

Following previous Carer Strategies implemented by UK Government and Scottish Government, the refreshed **National Carer Strategy** was published 21<sup>st</sup> December 2022 and declared that Scotland should be a place where all carers are recognised and valued for the contribution they make and where they are enabled to provide the right support for the people they care for while living full, rounded lives.

### Getting it Right

**Getting it Right for Young Carers:** The principles and values embedded in the Getting it Right For Every Child approach apply for young carers. Getting it Right For Every Child is Scotland's approach to promoting and

improving the wellbeing of every child, including those who hold a caring role.

**The Promise:** The Promise implementation plan sets out our actions and commitments to Keep the Promise for care experienced children, young people, and their families. It contributes to our ambition for every child in Scotland to grow up loved, safe and respected so that they realise their full potential.

One of the key principles is "Family" is that it requires families to be kept together and they are offered support together, nurtured as a family unit and are helped to overcome difficulties.

Within our strategy we will share information about Local and National strategies that are in place within Argyll & Bute that also support Carers.



# Carers Living in Argyll & Bute

# The Impact of Caring

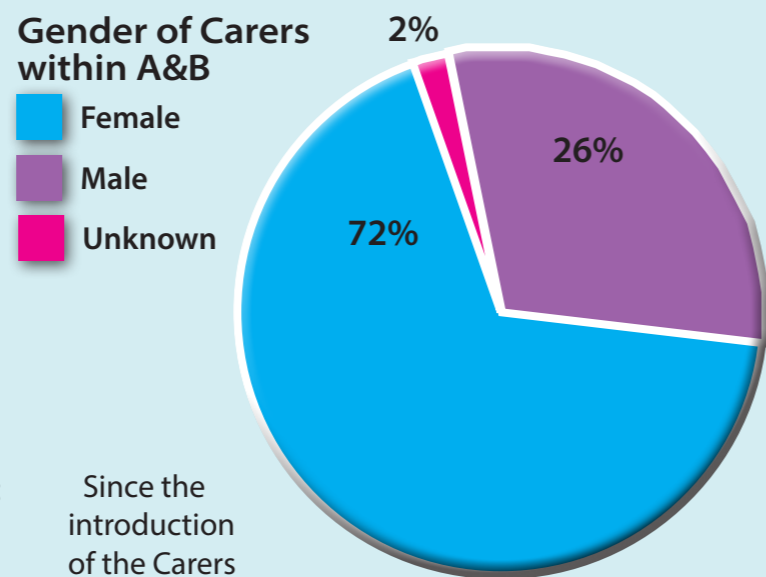
## Who is a Carer?

A carer provides care and support to: family members, partners, friends, or neighbours affected by physical or mental illness, disability, frailty or an addiction.

Young Carers across Argyll & Bute are now supported from the age of five years in all areas of Argyll and Bute when caring responsibilities may start.

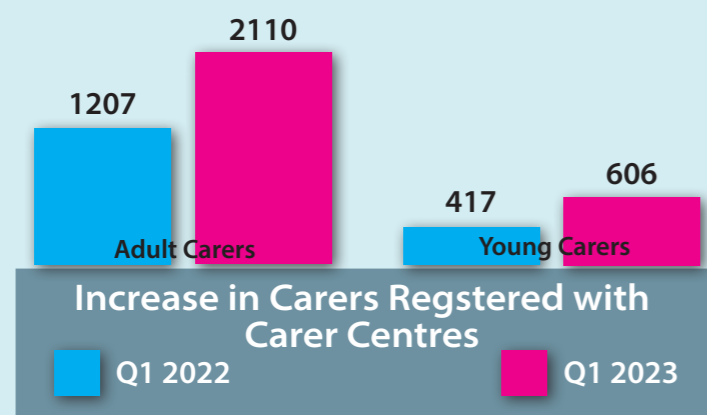
Carers may care intensively for a long period of time or may care for shorter periods and do not need to be living with the person they are caring for, to be recognised as a Carer.

For the purposes of this strategy, Adult Carers and Young Carers will be referred to as 'Carers'.

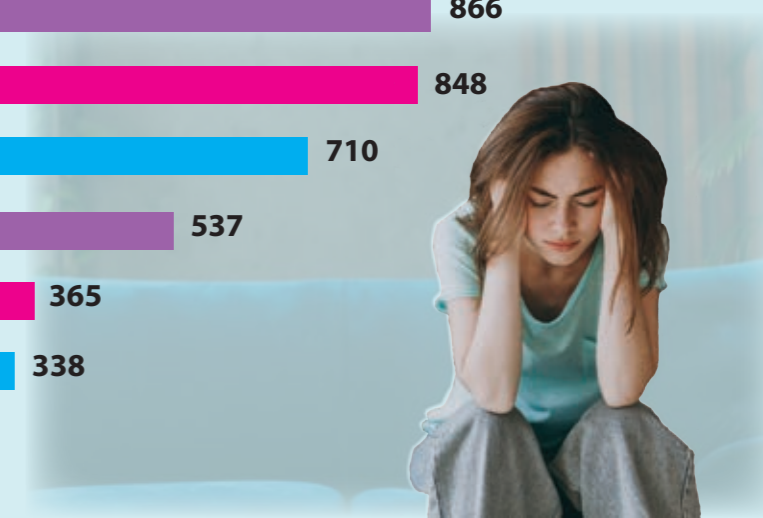
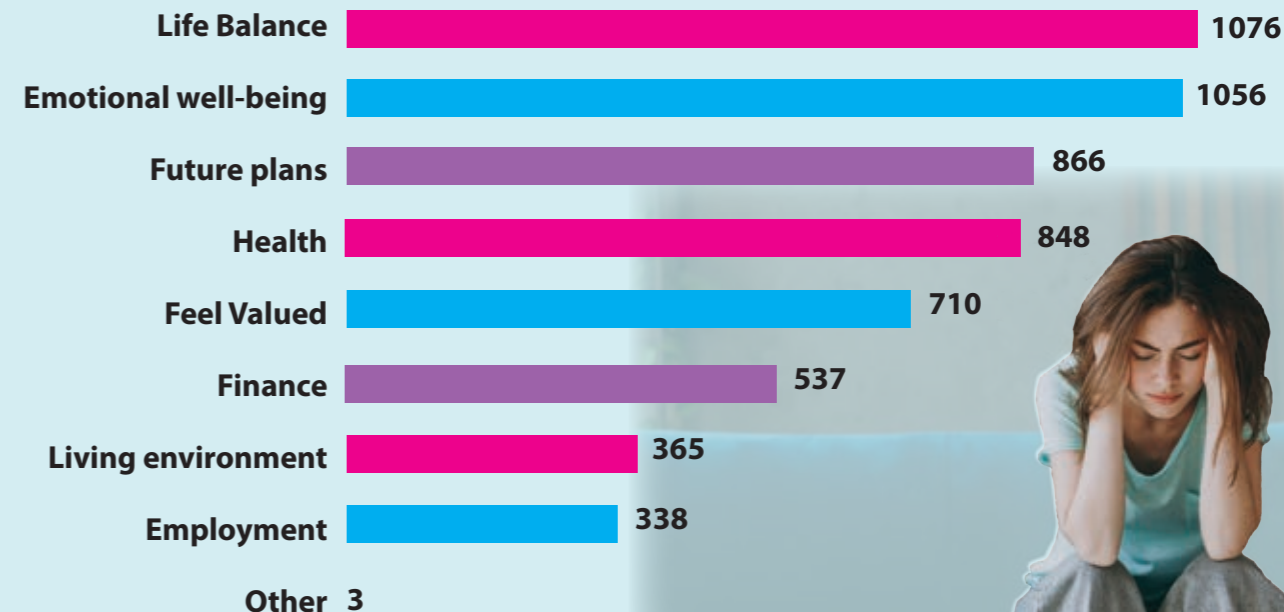


Since the introduction of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 we have recorded a steady growth in the number of Carers accessing information and being supported.

Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership recognises, values and respects the roles that Carers have, and are aware of the impact the caring role can have on so many parts of a Carers own life. We commit to continuing to raising awareness of the support available, promoting the benefits of seeking information and support early.



As many as 12,000 people aged 16+ provide unpaid care in Argyll and Bute with the highest proportion estimated to be residing in Bute, Cowal, and Kintyre (Estimated using Scottish Health Survey results and population estimates) [2].



A&B Carer Census Data 2022

Caring for someone can be bring feelings of wellbeing, fulfilment, and compassion, however Carers in Argyll and Bute also shared that it can be lonely, exhausting, and at times very frightening.

Carers told us the impact can be felt financially, within education, employment, personal finances, social life, relationships, and their mental and physical wellbeing.

Many carers still do not seek support that is available to them and struggle alone, we know from data that Carers caring for someone with an alcohol or drug addiction do not readily seek our support or see themselves as carers.

Every Carer will have a different caring journey, only they will know they true impact it has on them.

The National Strategy states that 29% of Carers in the most deprived areas care for 35hrs or more each week – more than double the level in the least deprived areas.

Scottish Government estimates that there are 696,000 Carers in Scotland. 28,000 are Young Carers under the age of 18 years.

Within our commitments we aim to provide increased support to Carers supporting someone with a drug or alcohol addiction, by working with colleagues and partners alongside Drug and Alcohol Addiction Partnership Teams.





## What is in a young carer's school bag?

Bills and money worries

Is there any milk in the fridge

I can't concentrate

I need to check on home

I didn't sleep last night

What if?

I never see my friends

I'm so stressed I hope no-one notices

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**A** Young Carer Statement, helps young people with caring responsibilities to identify and highlight their personal goals and any support that they may require as a young carer, as well as record who is responsible for providing that support.

In Argyll & Bute, our online Young Carers Statement provides Young Carers throughout Argyll & Bute with opportunities to talk to a trusted adult about their caring role, what they do, how it impacts on them and the individual supports they need.

Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 Jargon Buster for Young Carers created by Young Scot is an excellent resource to understand the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016.

Young carers love the person they care for and quite often do not realise they are a Young Carer, they develop good organisational skills, able to manage medication, time and budgets, are resourceful and can often appear more mature than their peers.

### Reality

Young Carers should be seen as Children and Young People first, have opportunities to an education, achieve, have fun, develop, and enjoy their childhood. However, in reality, caring roles can lead to anxiety and worry, impact on mental health, social isolation, reduced educational attainment, lost days in education, reduced access to activities and fun, as well as bullying and stigma.

In Argyll & Bute we want to ensure that all Young Carers can access our Young Carers Statement and support that is meaningful to

them, this will help to ensure opportunities for short breaks, and caring roles are appropriate and not overwhelming.

By working with our colleagues in Education and the Health and Social Care Partnership, we commit to raising awareness of Young Carers, how to identify and offer support, how caring can impact Young Carers, as well as raising awareness amongst our young people.

### Covid Impact

The impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on the mental health and wellbeing of Young Carers should not be underestimated. Pandemic restrictions and school closures led to children with caring responsibilities providing increased levels of care, having less opportunities to access breaks from caring and being isolated from their peers. Some Young Carers still provide higher levels of support to their loved ones than prior to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

We recognise that Scottish Government will be implementing Children's Rights within Scotland during the period of this strategy and that work to support this within Argyll & Bute is currently ongoing. Further details regarding Children's Rights in Argyll & Bute will be available on the Argyll & Bute website over the coming months, however reference can be found on the Scottish Government website.

At the time of writing this strategy the Youth Voice group for children and young people in Argyll & Bute has begun in its infancy and will enable children and young people to have a voice not only on Children's Rights in Argyll & Bute, but inform on challenges that affect them, and ensure children and young people are able to contribute to and participate in consultation and implementation of change.

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# Where did we start when refreshing the current strategy?

# What did we do and how did we do it?

What is important to you in your caring role?

What is working well?

What could make your day difficult?

How could difficult times be improved?

If you don't access support what would help?

**T**he National Carers Strategy, was published on the 21st December 2022.

In February and March 2023 we reviewed the National Strategy and met with Carer partners to discuss how this would reflect within our Strategy.



*Helensburgh & Lomond Carer Centre*

The National Strategy highlighted five focus areas, these will be embedded in our Caring Together Strategy and our commitments.

In April and May 2023 we worked together with Carer Organisations to produce and share a consultation paper to gather feedback from Carers.

Focus was intentionally on the support in place, what currently worked well, and how this could be improved. 198 Carers responded and we appreciate the time taken in providing this feedback. (Engagement Framework

2023 (argyll-bute.gov.uk)

WE ALSO:

- Consulted Carers in person;
- Visited five Carer Centres where we held focus groups. 65 Adult Carers attended.
- 60 Young Carers provided their feedback including at the annual Scottish Young Carers Festival hosted by Carers Trust Scotland.

Colleagues in the Health and Social Care Partnership were also approached for their feedback as colleagues and as Carers in a Consultation Survey.

Each individual submission from the Carers Consultation was reviewed.

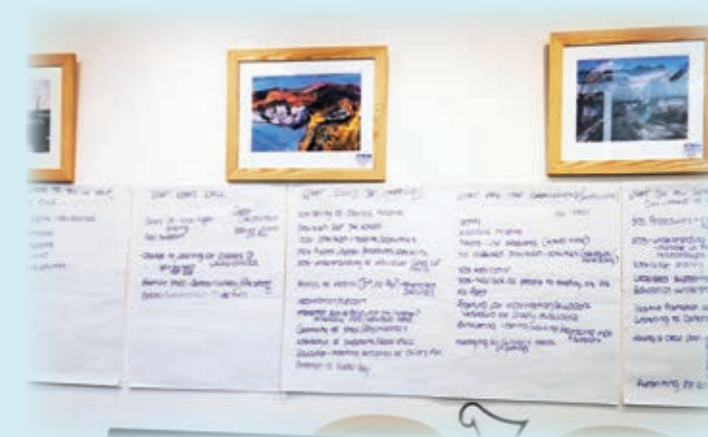
This gave us insight into Carer data in Argyll & Bute which helped inform on services for Carers. We were able to gather lots of information from open questions and took time to read and review all **198** replies.

Where did we start when refreshing the current strategy, what did we do and how did we do it?

Carers Organisations, Argyll & Bute Health & Social Care Partnership and an Integrated Joint Board Carer Representative, were involved in reviewing the 198 responses to five questions asked in the consultation.

Action plans of support for all 198 Individual carers were created.

We reviewed the recurring themes that stood out in the action planning process, alongside information gathered from in person sessions with 135 Adult and Young Carers.



*Dochas Carers' Centre, Parents group*



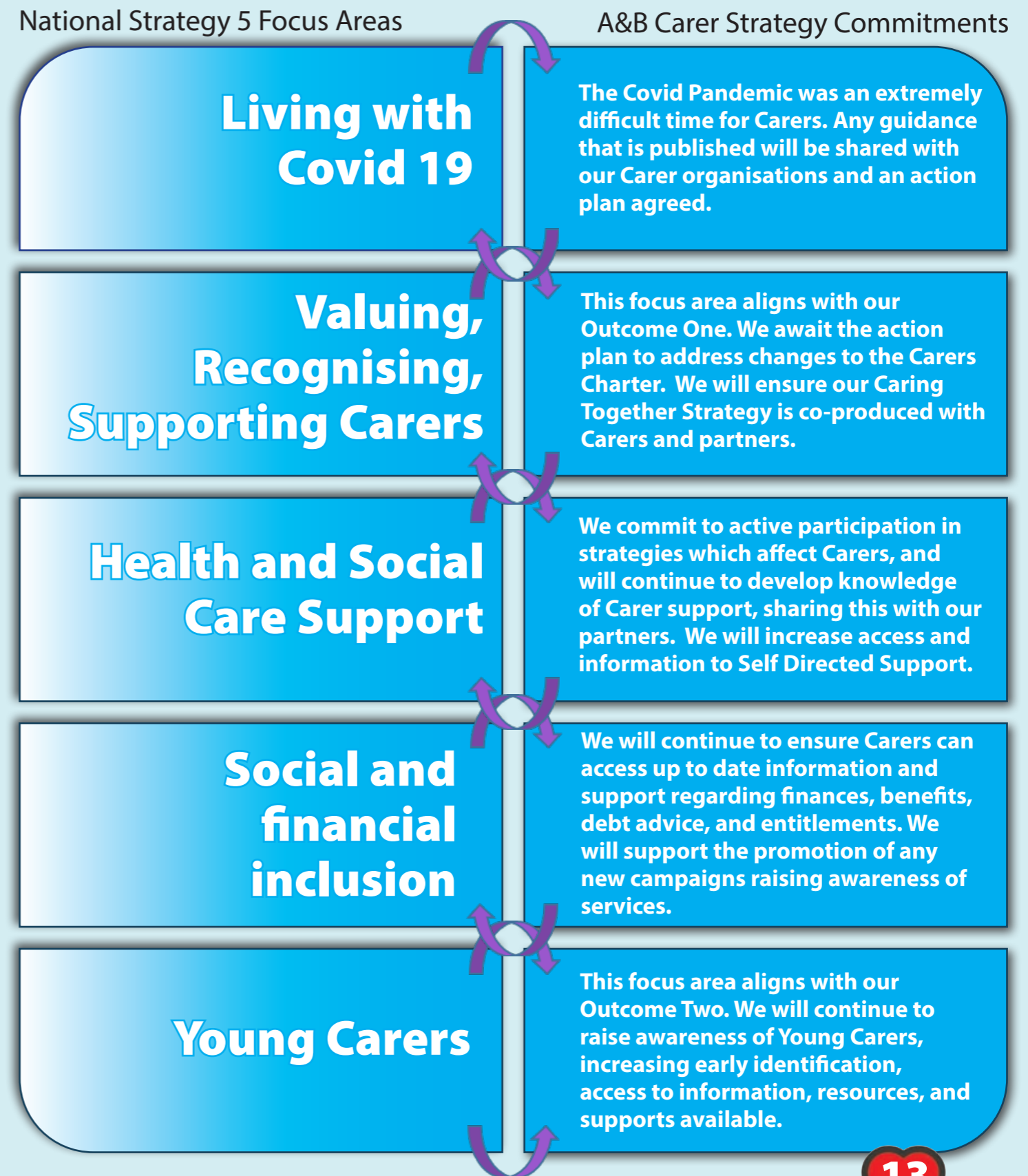
**Our Commitment includes Four Outcomes for Carers in Argyll & Bute Caring Together Strategy 2023-2027**

# Our Commitments to Carers

# National Carers Strategy

The Strategy was published on the 21st December 2023. We have reviewed the 5 focus areas and aligned them within our Caring Together Strategy.

<p><b>Outcome 1</b> All Carers are identified at the earliest opportunity and offered support to assist them in their caring role.</p>	<p><b>Outcome 2</b> Young Carers are supported with their caring roles and enabled to be children and young people first.</p>
<p><i>This strategy sets out our commitments to ensure Carers are supported and involved as equal partners</i></p>	
<p><b>Outcome 3</b> Carers will have access to, advice, information and support services to improve their overall health and wellbeing and enjoy a life alongside their caring roles.</p>	<p><b>Outcome 4</b> Carers have access to information and advice about their rights and entitlements to ensure they are free from disadvantage or discrimination in relation to their caring role.</p>





# Working in Partnership

# Carer Organisations

**We commit to continuing practices of partnership working with Carers, organisations and local communities across Argyll and Bute.**

The Carers Act Implementation Group meets every six weeks and is made up of members of the Health and Social Care Partnership, Carers Organisations, and the Carer Rep from the IJB.

Through this group actions identified within the strategy will be regularly discussed, reviewed, and monitored. The group provides a setting to discuss issues and concerns as well as, new ideas and solutions with all partners. This Strategy is one of many that make up A&B

HSCP Joint Strategic Plan Joint Strategic Plan 2022-2025

Through our partnerships, particularly our relationships with voluntary organisations, our partnerships will reach more Carers throughout Argyll and Bute. Offering Carers a range of meaningful supports to meet their needs, in locations and times that suit them.

We commit to continuing to support organisations in Argyll & Bute providing support to Carers in many different ways.

**More detail on Carer organisations on page 34**

Five Carer Centres are located across Argyll & Bute providing far reaching supports tailored to Carers Outcomes.



When landslips meant that Young Carers on Islay could not reach their outdoor residential break in Lochgoilhead, the MAYDS team became creative and arranged for a sleepover and games night on the island. One of the Young carers even said: "Today was the greatest day of my life."



“ The services provided by the Carers Centre are a real blessing, with staff who are professional, understanding, non-judgemental, caring, proactive, and supportive, and provide opportunities for relief and respite on an ongoing basis as well as advice, information and help with any problems - *Quote from an A&B Carer* ”

## Supports provided by Carers Organisations include:

<b>Adult Carer Support Plans</b>	<b>Young Carer Statements</b>	<b>1 to 1 Support</b>
<b>Income Maximisation</b>	<b>Group &amp; Peer Support</b>	<b>Short breaks</b>
<b>Information on Power of Attorney and Guardianship</b>	<b>Raising Carer Awareness</b>	<b>Bereavement Support</b>
<b>Signposting</b>	<b>Emotional Support</b>	<b>Hospital Discharge</b>
<b>Carers' Rights</b>	<b>Support &amp; Information</b>	<b>Holistic Therapies</b>
<b>Emergency &amp; Future care planning</b>	<b>Befriending Services</b>	<b>Training</b>



# Short Break statement

# A break from Caring – Time to be Care Free

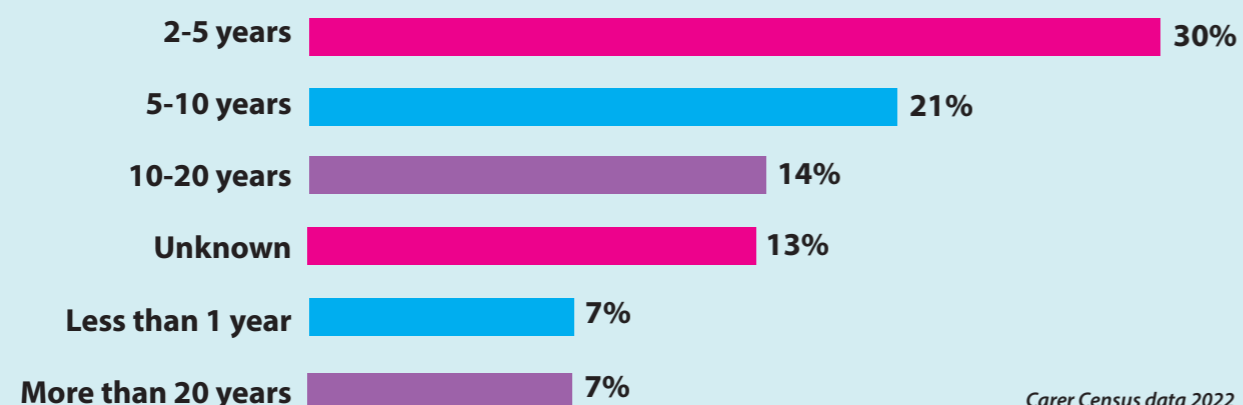


**T**here is a duty to ensure the Health and Social Care Partnership provide, prepare, and publish a statement which sets out information on short break provision available to local carers and cared for persons.

### Short break Statement Argyll & Bute

Our Commitment in this strategy is to work with our Carer partners to refresh and update the current statement.

## How long a Carer has been providing care A&B (%)



Carer Census data 2022

**A** break enables carers to have sufficient and regular periods away from their caring routines or responsibilities.

Personalised, flexible short breaks can make a real difference for carers offering opportunities to relax, helping to sustain caring relationships, enabling carers to have time to themselves.

Breaks can be for short or for extended periods. Take place during the day or overnight; a break from home for the cared for person; support the Carer to have

valuable time for themselves; or replacement care whilst a Carer has a break.

Adult Carer Support Plans and Young Carers Statements provide opportunities to discuss Carer supports and breaks from caring.

A break will either be put in place by Carer Organisations or discussed with the Health and Social Care Partnership in line with the eligibility criteria and established procedures.

### Spend on Replacement care: 5 Year Spend 2018-2023

#### Carer Centre and HSCP short breaks spend

Classification	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
<b>Carer's Centres</b>	<b>674,439</b>	<b>683,197</b>	<b>927,229</b>	<b>1,166,975</b>	<b>1,365,925</b>	<b>4,817,765</b>
Children	246,215	248,714	191,548	134,421	179,178	1,000,076
Learning Disability	137,154	146,498	63,268	99,190	185,171	631,281
Mental Health	4,061	5,896	13,439	16,052	1,515	40,963
Older People	149,985	135,044	213,756	345,031	313,409	1,157,226
Physical Disability	16,134	12,864	13,985	25,011	27,843	95,836
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,227,988</b>	<b>1,232,213</b>	<b>1,423,226</b>	<b>1,786,679</b>	<b>2,073,041</b>	<b>7,743,148</b>





# A break from Caring - Time to be Care Free

# Case Studies

“ Sometimes when I say “I am OK” I just want someone to hug me tight and say “I know you are not” - Anon ”



Helensburgh & Lomond Carers' Centre



North Argyll Carers' Centre



Dochas Carers' Centre, Lochgilphead

**C**arers can often feel guilty in leaving their cared for person, which may mean Carers find it difficult to ask for a break.

However providing a break from caring enables Carers to take time to themselves, promotes physical, mental and emotional wellbeing.

Carers have told us of positive experiences, fun, and laughter they have when spending time with other Carers in similar situations, through the range of groups and activities Carers Organisations provide.

Carers do not always share how they feel with friends or family. One Carer stated that she felt **“it was something I have to get on with, I don't want to sound like a broken record”**.

Another carer mentioned how she had **“lost touch with my friends due to looking after my husband, I felt so lonely until I attended a group at a Carer Centre and met new friends”**. Both Carers attended groups at their local Carer Organisation, and as many other Carers shared with us, it was their lifeline to support and peer relationships.

Group and Peer support is not what every Carer will want or need, but knowing it is there can mean a warm welcome for a time when it may be needed. We will ensure communication about activities are shared widely and known about across the Health and Social Care Partnership.



Carer Centres are proactive in accessing funding from Shared Care Scotland to support Carer breaks. The funds are split into four programmes; Better Breaks, Creative Breaks, Time to Live micro-grants, and Take a break Scotland which provide direct grants to carers of disabled children and young people to support personalised short breaks.

**G** cares for her son **A** who has developmental delay, behavioural issues, epilepsy and is being assessed for ADHD.

**A** presents behaviour which could be disruptive, aggressive, controlling, destructive, and verbally abusive. **G** and her ex-partner were struggling due to the pressures and exhaustion of their caring for **A** which took a toll on their relationship.

**G** often needed to take more time away from work as the school could not cope with behaviours **A** was presenting. A crisis meeting was held at the Carers centre involving social work and community contacts. **G** was tearful and stated she felt hopeless.

Social worker **X** was able to explain options available to **G** and focus on the main issues affecting **G** and her son **A**. After discussion, it was felt that using Self Directed Support, option 1, to pay her daughter, as a personal assistant would enable **G** to return to work and provide **A** with continuity in pre and after school care.

**G** felt listened to, valued, and could see a way forward. In the long term, community contacts will look for a

**Y** helps to care for her sibling who has ADHD and mental health issues. The school that **Y** attends discussed the caring role **Y** has and shared the information about the local Carers Centre. With **Y**'s consent, a referral was made to the Carer Centre.

The Young Carer support worker initially met with **Y** in school and together they completed a Young Carers Statement. The Young Carers Statement identified the nature of **Y**'s caring role and the impact it was having on her.

Home life was becoming increasingly hard, and it was highlighted that **Y** would benefit from accessing emotional support and having regular 'breaks' away from her caring role. As a result of the Young Carer Statement, weekly 1-to-1 support with a Young Carer worker was started in the school. Information was also provided to **Y** about the groups that the Carer Centre provided and the benefits of meeting with other young Carers.

suitable PA. The social worker **X** agreed to contact the school and arrange a meeting to discuss the issues at school and at home.

After the meeting, **G** said she was feeling much more supported and could see things improving for her and her family. **G** said she was worried the meeting would be a waste of time but after the meeting, she felt much happier about things.

### Quote from G

**“**I no longer feel on my own and meeting altogether at the carers centre was a huge relief, I feel confident that things will now change for **A** and my family. Meeting with **X** from social work face to face really helped, and also I could understand how this day package will fit with me and my family's needs. I cannot wait to get back to work and get me time away, as this helps me cope with my caring role and provide for my family. Many thanks to all concerned.”

Due to the nature of the caring role, **Y** was involved in a referral being made to the local Children and Families social work team and a child-planning meeting was established.

**Y** decided to join the youth group sessions provided by the Carer Centre and went on to enjoy day trips and residential breaks, which allowed her the time away from her caring role to have fun with other young Carers.

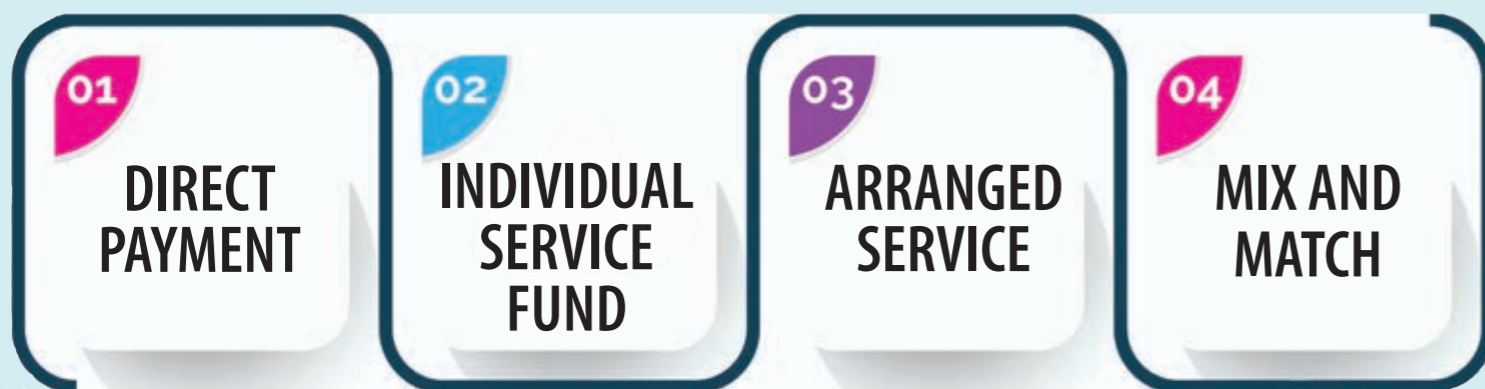
The Young Carer Statement, the Child Plan and the support from the Carer Centre enabled **Y** to meet new people and try new things.

On Young Carers Action Day, **Y** spoke to the class about what her role as a Young Carer was like. Over the six months following the referral to the Carer Centre and a Young Carer Statement being completed **Y** gained enough confidence to become a **‘Young Carer Ambassador’** and promotes the support and services that are available.

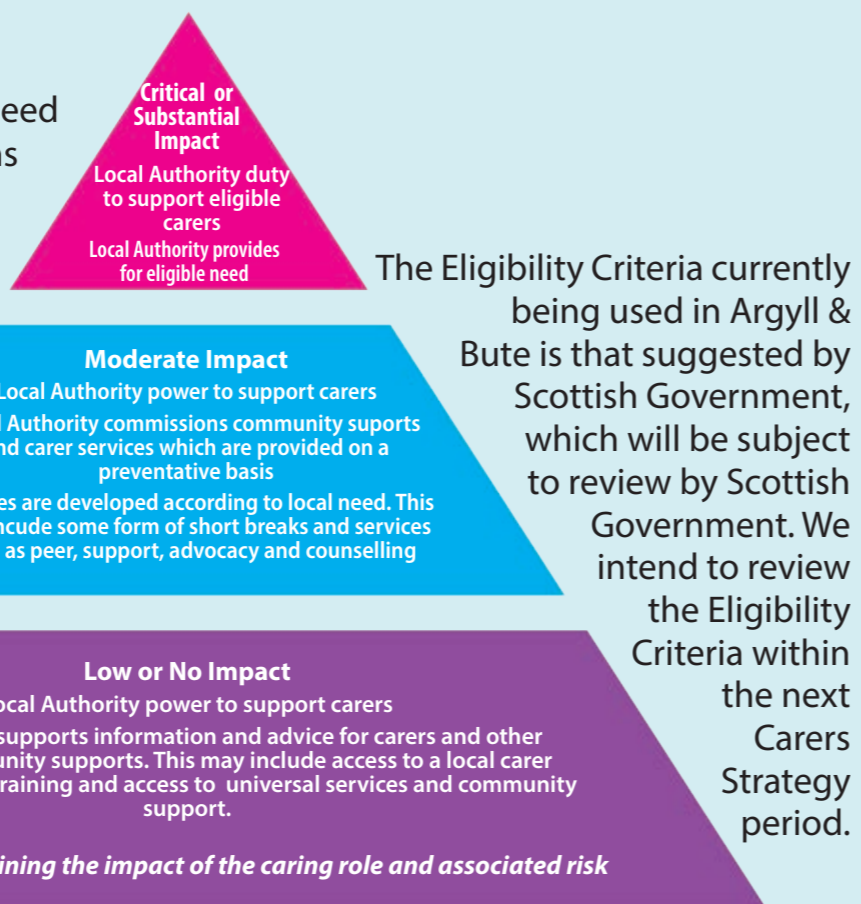


# What is Self-directed Support?

SELF-DIRECTED SUPPORT is about giving choice and control over how support services are designed and ensure you receive the support that meets your needs. It enables people to choose how their support is provided by giving control over the money spent on support. The Carers Act makes it clear that Carers must be involved in any assessments for Self Directed Support options and decision-making for the supported person where appropriate.



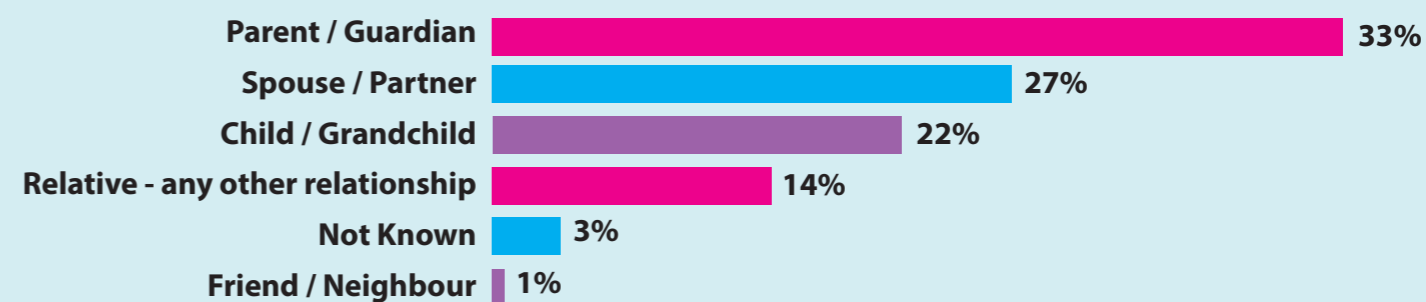
Our consultation highlighted Carers need a greater understanding of the options available to them and the cared for person. Having more flexibility to how breaks are provided could mean a more relaxed break for a Carer. Our commitment is to increase Carer awareness of the four Self Directed Support options, and work closer together in discussing creative breaks with Carers and colleagues within the Health and Social Care Partnership.



# Self-directed Support

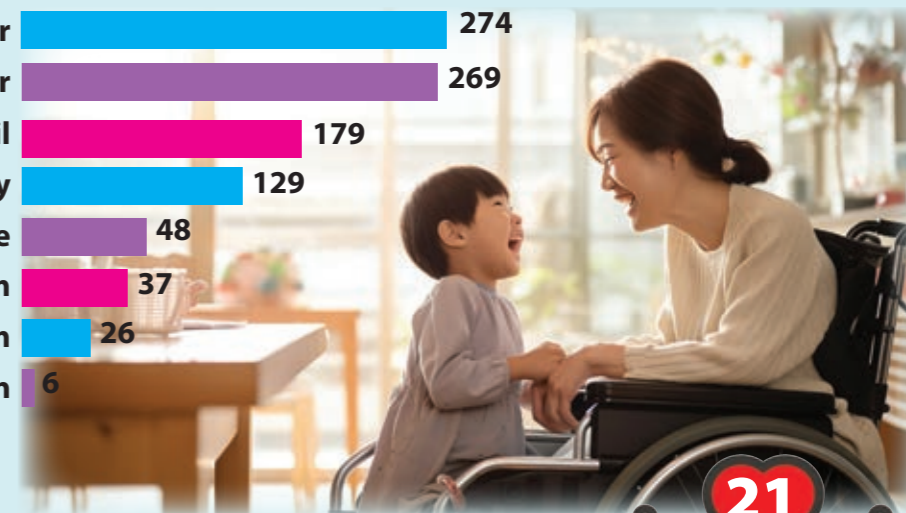
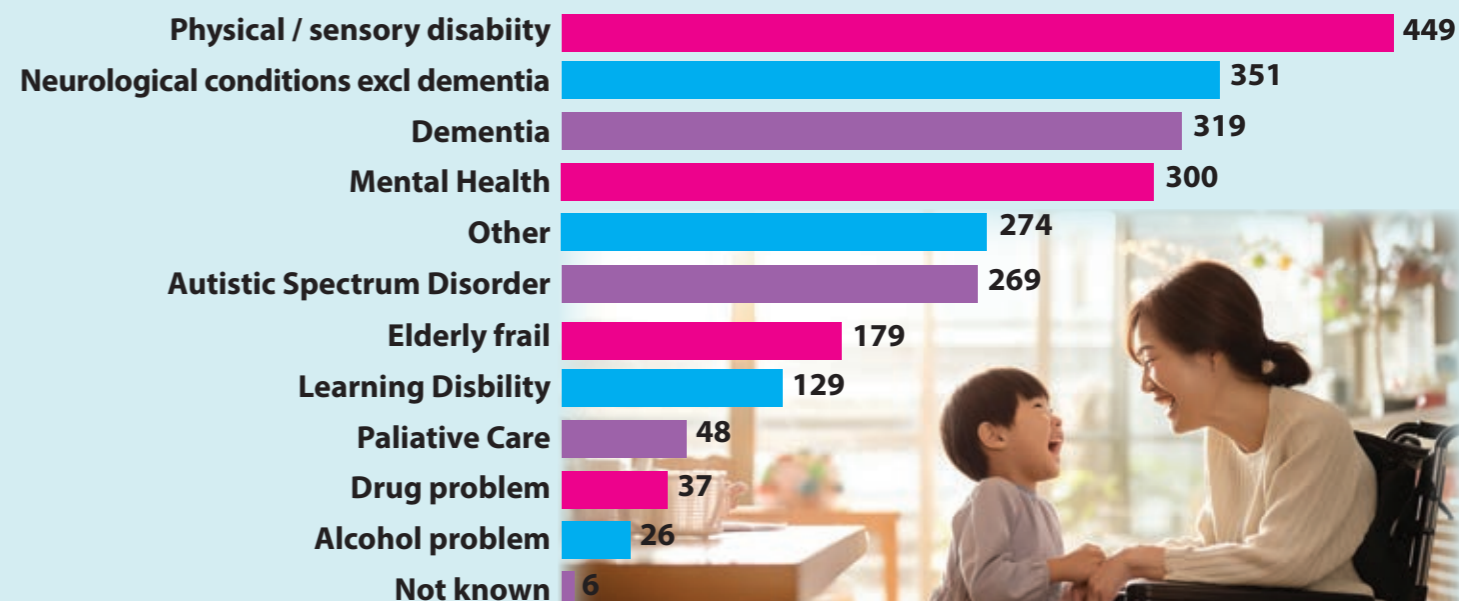
THE NATIONAL CARERS STRATEGY ACTION PLAN, included that, "In addition to updating the SDS Statutory Guidance, they will continue to work with and through delivery partners, including Local Authorities, to support and improve delivery of Self Directed Support consistently throughout Scotland and to support national conversations promoting improvement, early intervention, capacity-building, innovation and good practice".

## Carer's relationship to Cared For across A&B (%)



My Choice My Support report (2020) up to 50% of people are not being offered the choice of all the Self Directed Support options.

## Client group of Cared For person across A&B (%)





# Dementia Strategy & Training Resources for Families

# Parent Carers

*dementia-scotland-everyones-story.pdf (www.gov.scot)*

**The Argyll & Bute Enhanced Community Dementia Service provides specialist assessment, diagnosis and post diagnostic support for people referred with suspected dementia.**

The service aims to be responsive to need using a person-centred approach that aligns to the Standards of Care for Dementia in Scotland. This is aimed to empower people with dementia and their carers to make informed decisions about their future care to maximise quality of life.

The service promotes and supports carer education as being one of the most effective ways to help ensure optimum care for those with dementia.

Learning about the disease and knowing what to expect can help carers feel more in control and better able to plan ahead.

As part of this strategy we aim to help promote the awareness of support the service promotes and supports carer education as being one of the most effective ways to help ensure optimum care for those with dementia.

Learning about the disease and knowing what to expect can help carers feel more in control and better able to plan ahead.

**As part of this strategy we aim to help promote the awareness of support available to anyone caring for a loved one and create a focus group where Carers' voices can be heard.**



**Parent carers provide support to their children, as a result of an additional support need, disability, mental health or substance use.**

Parent carers are often less recognised as Carers, as parents often see themselves as a Parent first, before the additional caring elements they provide, and can be unaware of support that is available for them.

We commit to raising awareness of supports for Parent Carers, where they can access opportunities to share concerns they have about their child, family relationships, education, finances, employment, and long term future planning.

Together with colleagues in Education the Health and Social Care Partnership we aim to increase the support Parent Carers and Families can access.

Working with Parent Carers we aim to learn and identify how to best provide support and will continue this in our strategy.

Parents told us during our consultation about the 'constant fight' they have to have to 'access services' for their children, be 'involved in decision making' and recognised as an 'equal' when meeting with professional bodies.

Within Argyll & Bute, Parent Carers have started to form their own Charities which can provide support in ways that work best for them. Community led, created by them, working for them, used by them.

**Our commitment is to help support Parents and Peer groups on this journey and work alongside them, to add to local resources and highlight National resources so that Parents feel included, supported, and knowledgeable about their rights and services.**



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# Parent Carer Support

# Parent Carer Support

**ENQUIRE** supports Parent Carers in navigating the rights a child has in education, how to be involved in decision making and wealth of other areas that parents told us they struggle with

**We commit to maximising the awareness of this charity.**



### What the law says about additional support for learning

Every child may need extra help with their learning at some point in their lives.

Enquire will be able to provide help and support to get the right outcomes for children.



### Understanding the jargon

Some of the language around additional support for learning can be confusing.

Enquire's glossary cuts through some of the jargon you might hear when you are talking to your school about your child's support needs.



### Who's who: professionals supporting your child

There will be lots of people involved in you child's care and support.

Enquire can help you find out more about their roles and responsibilities.



**Gypsy/Traveller carers:** MECOPP offers a dedicated support for carers within the Gypsy/Traveller community whether resident on sites, roadside or living in 'bricks and mortar'. Support is available via the MECOPP Gypsy/Traveller Carer Support Worker.

**We will continue to support the MECOPP in Argyll & Bute and provide opportunities for co-operation with Gypsy/Traveller communities.**



## Kinship Carers

Kinship Carers may be looking after a child with a disability or long term health condition on a full or part-time basis. Kinship Carers are usually a relative or close friend looking after a child or young person in place of their parents. The Health and Social Care Partnership have a duty to support Kinship Carers in their caring role.

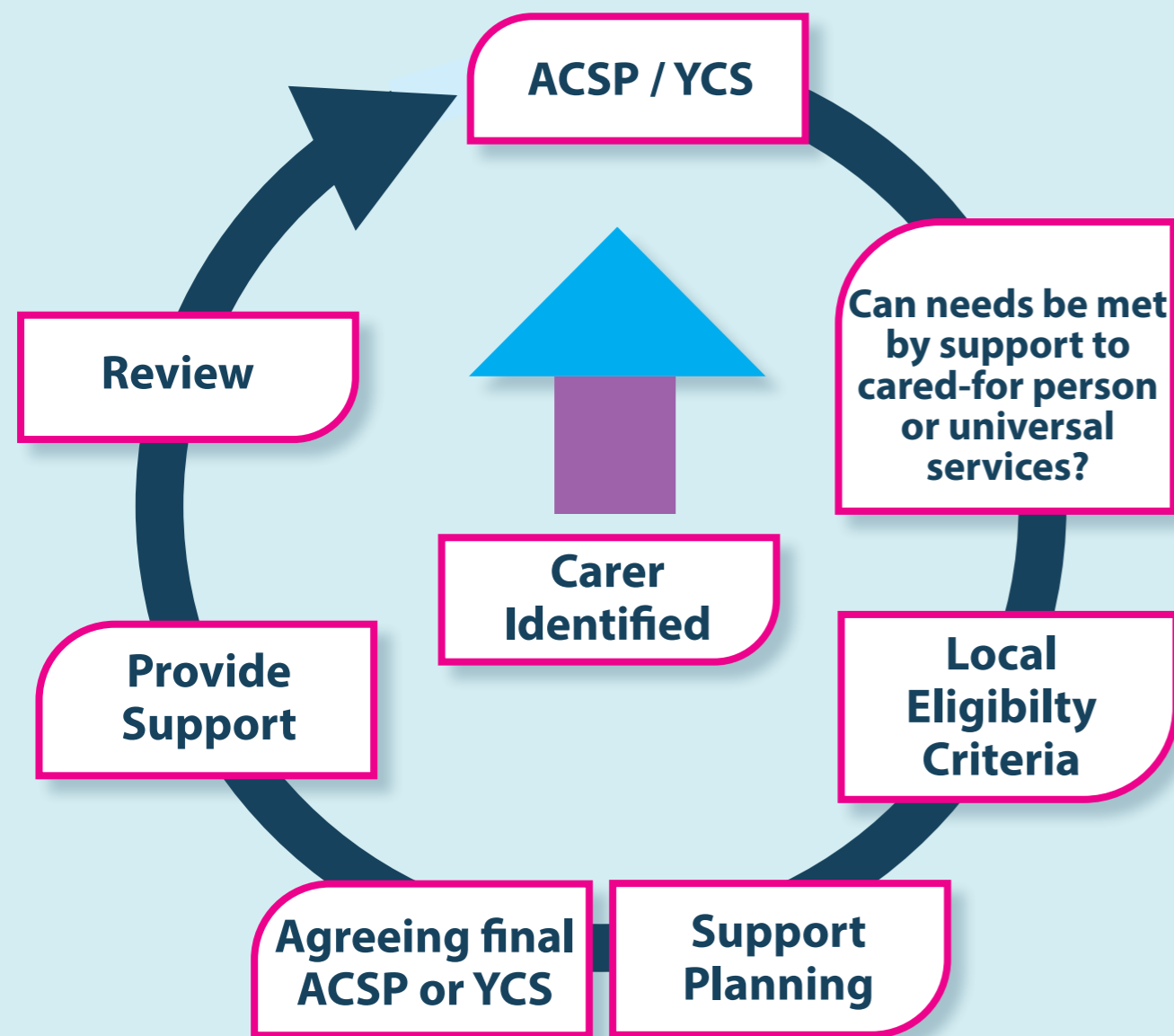
**We commit to raising awareness of supports available to this group of Carers.**





# Carer Pathway

In April 2023 we distributed our Carer information leaflet and Carer Pathway to 42,000 homes and 12,000 households received a digital version. Carer centres recorded higher registration in the following quarter. Within this strategy we will **continue to work alongside Carer Organisations and support the work to highlighted carer support available across Argyll & Bute and Nationally.**



# Carer Pathway

At the point of a carer being identified, we will ensure there is accessible information about supports available and a referral to Carers Centre offered. Our commitment aims to support Carers at the earliest opportunity in their caring journey. To help achieve this, we will **raise awareness of the Carer Pathway within the Health and Social Care Partnership**

**T**hrough consultation, we are aware not all Carers will need or wish to be supported.

To reach unidentified Carers, we will regularly share Carer information and resources, via Social Media, local posters, and attend community events to raise awareness of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016, and the range of supports available.

Carer Centres have offices in; Dunoon, Helensburgh, Lochgilphead and Oban and have outreach Carer Support in various locations including Campbeltown, Isles of Islay, Tiree, Mull, Coll, Bute and Jura.

When a Carer is referred or self refers, a local Carers Organisation will contact the Carer and offer

an Adult Carer Support plan or Young Carer Statement. Carers Organisations are highly skilled and knowledgeable in providing support to Carers in their localities.

Carers needs can be vastly different, as a result we acknowledge the diverse range of skills, knowledge, and information Carers Organisations need to be aware of to support Carers.

We commit to **continuing to support continuous development, new learning, training, and sharing of opportunities and activities within the Health and Social Care Partnership to our partners and colleagues.**



# Mental Health & Emotional wellbeing

## Carers shared that at times Caring can be overwhelming and impact on their emotional and mental health.

The 123 out of 198 Carers who replied to the consultation told us how their mental health was impacted due to their caring role.

Carers talked about the guilt they feel, the emotional abuse they receive, the fear of doing something wrong or forgetting something, Carers desperate to off-load. Carer Centre staff provide

a fantastic resource for carers where they can share fears, worries, pressures about their caring role.

We commit to increasing the services and resources Carers Organisations can offer to Carers, such as; Silver Cloud and Distressed Brief Intervention.

To assist Carers Organisations **we will provide opportunities for training and learning to further knowledge and resources for Carers.**

**We will provide links to national resources such as; Sleep Scotland and One Parent Families for Carers.**



*Sleep Scotland is the UK's oldest sleep charity and leading provider of sleep support, training and resources*

# Technology Enabled Care

## Carers shared Technology equipment extremely beneficial.

Within Argyll & Bute there are currently 2,200 homes using Telecare devices. Within our strategy, we aim to **promote the benefits of equipment and raise awareness of how technology can provide reassurance and assistance to carers.** Further information can be found at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/tec](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/tec)



### E-Learning - Building resilience

Designed to help carers access advice and information relevant to their situation, find resources and identify sources of support including technology, as well as promote carers' own health and well being

### Jointly - Care co-ordination app

A central place to store and share important information about the person you are caring for. Set up appointments, allocate tasks, save files and notes, anagrmedication and lots more

Within the Digital resource we have links to each Carer Centre within Argyll and Bute.

**As part of this Strategy, we will promote and raise awareness of Carer UK resources for Carers and the Health and Social Care Partnership.**

Topic	Replies	Views
How To Get Husband To Doctors? Specific disabilities and conditions dementia	12	268
New to this forum as a carer for my wife New to Carers Connect	13	177

## Money related worries

The cost of living crisis has affected us all, the Carers Census 2022 reports 38% of Carers were impacted financially.

Through the Carers Consultation we have heard from Carers advising of the financial worries and concerns they face.

We want to ensure Carers know how to access benefit checks, financial advice and information, and will work with colleagues in a range of services such as; Bute Advice, the Citizens Advice Bureau and AliEnergy to reach Carers in Argyll & Bute.

Further information and how to access support can be found on the Argyll & Bute website.





# Emergency & Future Planning

For when the unexpected happens

# Emergency & Future Planning

For when the unexpected happens



The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 states Adult Carer Support Plans and Young Carers Statements should ask about Future and Emergency care planning. The Carer may wish to make a future plan, and can be supported in identifying their needs and personal outcomes for this through discussion. Emergency planning includes planning for events such as the carer not being able to care due to illness or medical appointments.

Our commitment in this strategy is to **review the current documentation with Carers and Carer Partners whilst looking to include information about anticipatory care planning processes.**

## Diagnosis of Terminal illness

When a Carer is supporting someone with a Terminal Illness diagnosis, the Health and Social Care Partnership has clear timescales that have to be met.

At this time a light touch Adult Carer Support Plan or Young Carers Statement, must be offered and actioned following the timescale guidelines.

Data extracted from the 2022 Carer Census, highlighted that a relatively small number of Carers being supported with these plans versus those with a Terminal Illness diagnosis.

We commit to **increasing Carer awareness of the support available during this time, and continue to work closely with Health and Social Care Partners promoting the guidance of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016**

## Involving Carers in Hospital Discharge

Section 28 within the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016, requires the Health and Social Care Partnership to involve the Carer before a cared-for person is discharged from hospital.

It must do so by taking steps it considers appropriate to: inform the carer as soon as reasonably practicable of the intention to discharge the cared-for person; and invite the views of Carers about the discharge; and taking account, 'so far as it is reasonable and practicable to do so', of any views given by the Carer in making decisions relating to discharge of the cared-for person.

This duty only applies where:

- The Carer of the cared-for person can be identified 'without delay'; and
- Where it appears to the Health and Social Care Partnership that the cared-for person is likely to require care following discharge.



Carers during the consultation shared that they are not always fully involved, and at times can feel pressure to support a discharge when they do not feel fully prepared or are able to provide the care needed for the person.

We commit in this strategy to **increasing the resources and supporting the discharge planning process to ensure Carers are involved and included in discussions.**

## Bereavement support

The death of a loved one is a traumatic time. For friends and family this time can bring many emotions.

Resources are in place within Carer Centres to support a Carer for 13



months after the passing of a loved one, recognising the isolation a Carer may experience.

Carers Centres are experienced and knowledgeable in the support a Carer may need after a loved one has passed away.





# Learning Together



**O**ur Strategy is about ensuring we listen and learn. Promote the positive support of Carers experience and review areas that Carers told us do not work so well.

We commit to developing four Focus groups with Carers and, Health and Social Care Partnership colleagues – Dementia support, Drugs and Alcohol, Parent Carer, and Young Carers.

Carers spoke about the good relationships they had with Social Work teams but noted the anxieties they had at the beginning. They highlighted the need to share good news stories

about the impact Care at Home, Home support and Health teams have in helping to support their friends and relatives, which can ease the pressure on their caring role.

Care Opinion is an online resource where Carers can share experiences of health or care services, 'At Care Opinion we make it safe and simple to share your story online and see other people's stories too.

You can see how stories are leading to change.'

We commit to **promoting Care Opinion and raising the awareness of this resource**



**Care Opinion**  
What's your story?

# Learning Together

## Health and Social Care Partnership and Education

In the last strategy we committed to creating and sharing our Guidance document.

This piece of work has been created in partnership with Carer Organisations, however as information on short breaks needs further development, this has not

been fully circulated across the partnership.

Sharing of information, our duties and the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016, however have been ongoing throughout the Health and Social Care Partnership and Education.

We commit to **embedding guidance, formalising and developing our training plan with Carer Organisations within this strategy.**

## Website - a resource for everyone

Carer's advised us, that often issues arise from not knowing where to go for advice, information and support, and for others too much information can be overwhelming.

We commit to refreshing and updating our website, raising awareness of Carers, making it accessible, interesting and Carer friendly.

We aim to **develop this resource in co-production with Carers, Health and Social Care Partnership colleagues, Carer organisations and Education.**






# Learning Together

# Our Commitment

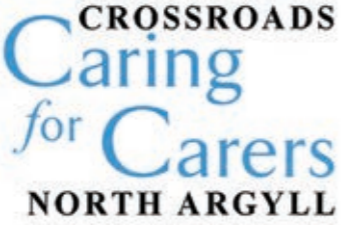
The Health and Social Care Partnership would like to thank our Carer Organisations, the Staff teams and Board members, for their support to Carers, the input to the development of our services over the past five years and being at the tough end when individuals can be at their most vulnerable. Thank you

During the Carers Consultation over the spring and summer 2023, Adult Carers and Young Carers shared the challenges they face and what they feel is working well. In response to this we have focused on four Outcomes for this Carers Strategy.



Crossroads Cowal & Bute aims to enhance the quality of life for unpaid carers and their families, empower carers to maximise their rights and entitlements, raise awareness of carers and their needs, and their contribution to society. Crossroads provides a range of support for carers; support groups, peer support, Holistic therapies, counselling, short breaks etc. We provide a warm welcome, a listening ear, and a safe place for carers in need.

[crossroadscowalandbute.org.uk](http://crossroadscowalandbute.org.uk)



Crossroads (North Argyll) is a locally managed charity in North Argyll covering Oban, Lorn and the Isles. They aim to provide a local respite service to enable those looking after a relative/friend/neighbour to have some time to themselves. Even a brief period of respite can benefit the Carer to cope better in their daily lives. This helps to promote and maintain independence and choice for both the individual Carer and the Cared-for.

[Crossroads North Argyll | Oban](http://Crossroads North Argyll | Oban)



We have been supporting unpaid carers in Mid Argyll, Kintyre, Islay and Jura for many years; with friendly staff located in each of the areas we cover. We have years of knowledge, skills and experience of working with and supporting carers; offering a variety of emotional, practical and group supports to meet individual needs. We pride ourselves in providing a warm welcome, a listening ear, and the time carers need.

[dochas.scot](http://dochas.scot)



## OUTCOME ONE

All Carers are identified at the earliest opportunity and offered support to assist them in their caring role.



Emotional & Practical support to navigate the Health & Social Care System


Someone to chat to when things are difficult

Knowing who to contact for help



HLCC has adopted the following Mission Statement: "To make a positive difference to the lives of unpaid carers." This is underpinned by a commitment to place carers at the heart of the organisation; respect and learn from them as experts in their own lives; give them a voice in service design, delivery and review; help them achieve better outcomes; and ensure that services are accessible and effective for all intended users, regardless of their caring situations or personal circumstances.

[www.hlcc.org.uk](http://www.hlcc.org.uk)



MAYDS have been providing support services to young carers across Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay for several years. Along with undertaking Young Carer's statements and also provide support in a number of other ways including short breaks via residential or other activities, counselling and emotional support, support to access grants and funding if needed and transitional support to further education, employment etc. They provide a person centred approach to make sure each Young Carer has the particular support they need not only to manage their role but to have positive outcomes for the future.

[www.mayds.org.uk](http://www.mayds.org.uk)



We are an independent charity, supporting unpaid carers across the Oban, Lorn and Isles area, making a positive difference to their lives and ensuring their voices are heard. We provide person-centred emotional and practical support to unpaid carers over the age of five, with support tailored to individual need. We are a team of 17 staff with Carer Support Workers based at our office on Albany Street in Oban, on Mull and Iona, Coll and Tiree, and an outreach team covering the rural mainland. For more information about what we can offer you please visit [northargyllcarers.org.uk](http://northargyllcarers.org.uk)

Feeling lonely & isolated

Juggling work and caring, it's a lot

Help in the early stages

Feeling lonely & isolated

A clear map of available assistance, sort of one stop shop, so where to turn is clear and available

Someone to take time to listen and help





# Our Commitment

## We commit to:

**1.1** Working with partners to identify Carers early and prevent a crisis situation.

Key Performance Indicators will show numbers of new Carers receiving support and will be received by the Health & Social Care Partnership quarterly from organisations commissioned to support Carers.

We will provide annual Carers Surveys to understand what is working well and what the challenges may be.

Increased numbers of Carers will report feeling supported through a variety of means; Carers Organisations, Health and Social Care Partnership, online resources.

**1.2** Work with partner organisations to raise awareness of Carers and improve accessibility to supports.

The Health and Social Care Partnership and Carer Organisations will strive to raise awareness of Carers in Argyll & Bute through Healthcare settings, Education, community events, social media, websites and other appropriate means.

**1.3** Refresh and update Argyll & Bute Health and Social Care Partnership 'Carers' website and produce an online 'Booklet' resource.

We will work with Carers and Carers Organisations in Focus Groups to identify information and supports of arrange of services, to develop a resource of information on the Argyll & Bute Health and Social Care Partnership website.

**1.4** Work with Four Focus Groups of Carers to identify the best routes to reach unidentified and support Carers – Dementia, Drug and Alcohol, Parents Carers and Young Carers.

We will work with known Carers, Carers Organisations, and partners in developing a pathway to access support, resources, and information to raise awareness of support for Carers in these groups.

**1.5** Share resources with Carers so that they may access appropriate resources and information at a time and place that suits individual need, such as; Enquire, Carers UK Digital.

Promotion of information, resources, and supports through social media, website, and community events will be shared by Argyll & Bute Health and Social Care Partnership and Carers Organisations.

We will listen to Carers at every opportunity.

**1.6** Completing and sharing Health and Social Care Partnership Guidance.

A Guidance Document will be produced and circulated to colleagues within the Health and Social Care Partnership, to support this we will provide learning sessions to colleagues in Health and Social Care.

**1.7** Work with Health and Social Care Partnership colleagues in the Discharge planning process.

We will promote and work with colleagues in the Discharge planning process by increasing resources to support this work.

**1.8** Raise awareness of the duty in response to support for Carers faced with a loved one with a Terminal illness diagnosis.

Ensure colleagues and partners have access to learning opportunities of the key elements of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016.

**1.9** Raise awareness of Kinship carers who have caring roles and supports available to them.

Promote awareness of the supports available through Carers Organisations, Education and the Health and Social Care Partnership.



# Our Commitment

## OUTCOME TWO

Young Carers are supported with their Caring roles and enabled to be children and young people first.

### Young Carers told us:



My class teacher doesn't understand when things are tricky at home

My own mental health

Fear of something happening when I am not there

People don't understand my role as a carer

We would like to know people care for us too

School staff being trained in what a young carer is and a better understanding of their needs

Reducing the stigma

Someone to understand and help when needed

Breaks, time out, respite with other people that understand

# Our Commitment

## We commit to:

- 2.1** Work with partners in Education, the Health, and Social Care Partnership to increase awareness of Young Carers.  
We work with Carers organisations and provide annual surveys will advise increased numbers of Young Carers will feel understood and supported.
- 2.2** In partnership with Carers Organisations we will provide awareness sessions to partners both online and in person.  
Colleagues and partners working with Young Carers will be able to identify and understand the needs of Young Carers.
- 2.3** Provide information sheets and 'how to' guidance to partners to identify and support Young Carers.  
We will work with a Focus Group of Young Carers to understand Young Carers challenges and needs as Carers.
- 2.4** Refresh information & resources on Argyll & Bute Health & Social Care Partnership's website.  
Young Carers will be able to access information and resources through the Argyll & Bute website.
- 2.5** Provide a platform for Carers Organisations and partners to undertake Young Carers Statements with Young Carers.  
We will ensure Carers Organisations have access and training in the use of the Argyll & Bute Young Carers Statements.  
Young Carers will be able to access Young Carers Statements and support through Carers Organisations in Argyll & Bute.

- 2.6** Work with Carer Organisations to raise awareness of Young Carers in Argyll & Bute enabling Young Carers to feel supported and have opportunities for fun and short breaks.  
Increased numbers of Young Carers will advise they feel supported and listened too through evaluations and Carers surveys.  
Colleagues and partners working with Young Carers will be able to identify and understand the needs of Young Carers.
- 2.7** Work with Argyll & Bute Educations Services to ensure Young Carers are recorded on SEEMiS.  
We will support Carers Organisations to share data with Argyll & Bute Education Services for the purposes of SEEMiS.
- 2.8** We will offer an Annual Consultation to all Carers to identify what is working well and challenges they may be experiencing.  
We will listen and respond to Young Carers feedback through consultations, surveys and feedback.



# Our Commitment

## OUTCOME THREE

Carers will have access to; advice, information and support services to improve their overall health and wellbeing and enjoy a life alongside their caring roles.

### Unpaid Carers told us:



Caring has left me isolated, people don't understand

Having support to manage difficult conversations would help

Respite at a time that suits me

I want support but I don't want to go to a Carers Centre, I want to stay anonymous

Talking therapy would help, access to counselling, information and advice

How to support someone with Dementia

Befriender for my cared for so I can have a break

Communication, Communication, Communication

Online support for my cared for person's condition



# Our Commitment

## We commit to:

**3.1** We commit to reviewing and refreshing our current Short Break statement in line with National Guidance and involvement of Carers, Carers Organisations and Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership.

Through a Short Life Working Groups we will produce a revised Short Break Statement which will be distributed in 2024.

**3.2** We will continue to actively support Breaks away from Carers roles, following National Guidance and Eligibility Criteria.

We will provide clear information on routes to Short breaks that Carers can access.

We will continue involvement in Carer resource allocation groups focusing on replacement care.

**3.3** We will work with Self Directed Support Teams to assist Carers in accessing and raise awareness of the four Self Directed Support options.

We will increase resources in Self Direct Support.

We will raise awareness of Self Direct Support options.

**3.4** We will update and refresh our website and provide links to National Specialist organisations to support Carers.

Carers will be able to access supports, information, and resources from the Argyll & Bute Health and Social Care Partnership website.

We will invite specialist organisations to raise awareness of their services to Carers and Carers Organisations in Argyll & Bute.

**3.5** Argyll & Bute Health and Social Care Partnership will keep up to date in National Policy and contribute to decision making processes locally and nationally that involve Carers.

We will share information and policy with the Carers Act Implementation Group and wider partnerships within Argyll & Bute, Health and Social Care Partnership and Carers Organisations.

**3.6** We will help Carers and Carers organisations in Argyll & Bute identify specialist services and raise awareness of those services.

We will promote the Community Directory provided by the Third Sector Interface (TSI) in Argyll & Bute.

We will invite specialist services to share their specialisms with Carers and Carers Organisations, developing opportunities for learning and increasing knowledge.

We will regularly ensure resources, information and advice are disseminated through Social Media.

We will offer an Annual Carers Consultation to Carers in Argyll & Bute.

**3.7** We will identify and advertise supports for Carers where they wish to remain anonymous or would prefer online support.

We will promote the Carers UK App, Silvercloud, Sleep Scotland and other identified resources to Carers throughout Argyll & Bute.

**3.8** We will work with Carers Organisations in developing learning and knowledge of services and supports available to support Carer Mental Health.

Through opportunities for skills development and learning Carers Organisations will have increased knowledge of supports and services available.

**3.9** We will review existing methods of Emergency and future planning with Carers and identify a 'what would work well' approach for Carers.

Focus groups will review the current documentation and advice on changes.

Carers Organisations will be involved in the process of developing new documentation.

**3.10** We will work with Carers supporting loved ones through Substance use to identify, build upon and raise awareness, of a range of supports meaningful to them.

We will work with Focus groups and Carers Organisations to identify and implement a range of resources and supports that meet their needs.



# Our Commitment

## OUTCOME FOUR

Carers have access to information and advice about their rights and entitlements to ensure they are free from disadvantage or discrimination in relation to their caring role.

### Unpaid Carers told us:



Financial help to free up time from doing daily tasks would give me a break

We are struggling to manage as a family, I can't work because of my caring role, and the money we get doesn't go very far

Where can we get advice for future planning?

Money! We struggle to get by. I'm firefighting!

Information about my rights as a carer from a legal perspective

Access to funding to manage our own support

Advice on Power of Attorney

Being kept informed by professionals as the Carer for my person

Being included, listened too and respected



# Our Commitment

# Making a Difference

## We commit to:

**4.1** We will work with the National strategy and the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 in support of Carers in Argyll and Bute.

We will provide opportunities for Carers to have their voices heard through Carers Surveys and Focus Groups.

We will contribute to local and national strategy on behalf of Carers, working alongside colleagues nationally, feeding back to Carers and Carers Organisations.

**4.2** We commit to Carers and Carers Organisations having access, knowledge, and training to provide Adult Carer Support Plans and Young Carers Statements.

We will review the current Adult Carer Support Plan with Carers and Carers Organisations.

We will provide a platform for Young Carers Statements for Young Carers and Carers Organisations.

**4.3** We will promote Carers Rights, Benefit entitlements, access to National Policy and specialist supports. We will increase resources in Self Direct Support.

Carers will have access and knowledge of services to support them in their caring roles.

We will increase resources to access services such as; the Citizens Advice Bureau.

We will invite partners, colleagues, and Specialist Supports to share their areas of support, information, and resources to reach Carers in Argyll and Bute.

We will support opportunities for Carers Organisations to increase knowledge and build upon resources to support Carers.

Carers will advise increased awareness of their rights and have access to services for Benefits Reviews.

We will support Parent Carers in accessing advice and information in Argyll & Bute Health and Social Partnership, Education and specialist supports.

**4.4** We will commit to ensuring information, advice and support is accessible on the Argyll & Bute Website.

Contact information for Carers Organisations, Specialist Supports will be available on the Argyll & Bute website and reviewed and refreshed.

Carers will advise information is accessible during Carers Surveys.

We will share details of partner Organisations and services which may be useful via Argyll and Bute Social Media.



## We asked carers: "What's making the difference for unpaid Carers in Argyll & Bute?" They told us:

- My Carers Centre runs a good Parent Carer support group
- Physio have been so helpful
- Our Care Package
- Our family – great support
- Good support from Family and Friends, Teacher and Physio
- A new charity to meet the needs of the Cared for Person
- Respite from a Carer a few hours each week
- I get support from the carer centre which is extremely important as they give you an outlet to chat and be listened to
- I arrange my own Carers so I can have time out
- Good Parkinson's Doctor
- Help is from Epilepsy Scotland who are amazing
- Support from a Counsellor
- Carer centre is wonderful. And I get to the gym free for an hour a week
- Friends, social worker, carers centre, dementia link worker have been a great support
- Specialised Nurse in Glasgow
- The Carers Centre have been amazing in helping me access support
- Occupational therapy have been truly wonderful, assisting me to continue my Cared for Person's independence at home for as long as possible and then helping to make my home accessible when she moved in with us
- Social worker has been supportive and proactive and liaised with everyone and keeping us all informed
- Care company staff are amazing and supportive
- The Carers Centre advocacy on our behalf has been really good
- The Carers Centre has been a lifeline
- Health Visitor has been a good support
- Carers Centre is amazing for support and a chat
- Good support from family, Carer Centres, Health adviser, Occupational Therapy, Physio, district nurses
- Support from likeminded Carers
- Funding, support and a listening ear from the Carers Centre
- Support from Social Work to apply for Self Directed Support
- Our Nurse and GP have been a great support
- Support for direct payment is excellent
- Carers Centre always available for a chat, empathise and have given us a respite break this year
- Social Worker is very helpful
- Excellent GP care
- Friends, family, school teachers is working well for us
- Carers Centre is great and is a good place to talk and find out information as well as take advantage of the therapies they offer
- Carers Trust Scotland
- Telecare Support
- Help from carers centre is great as is help & support from social work
- School is a massive support, as has the health visitor team
- Mental health team and friends
- MacMillan Advice Line
- The help we've been given from Occupational Therapy, Physio and Telecare
- Carer Centre advice and my friends have cheered me up
- Support from Dementia Link Worker
- Support from Carers Centre is really good if you can make it
- The Recovery Café
- NHS staff and Care Workers
- Shopper-Aide and a Hairdresser that comes to the house
- Knowledgeable Social Worker
- Specialist groups and walking groups
- Yoga, massages and counselling
- Dementia Centre
- The services provided by the Carers Centre are a real blessing, with staff who are professional, understanding, non-judgemental, caring, proactive and supportive, and provide opportunities for relief and respite on an ongoing basis as well as advice, information and help with any problems
- Health professionals are helpful

A number of Carers told us how important their relationships with family and friends were to them, and that support from Carers Centres, Social Workers, GPs, Telecare had been very much appreciated.

We would like to thank Carers in Argyll & Bute for sharing their stories, successes, and challenges with us. They have been so valuable to help inform the writing of the Carers Strategy for 2023 -2027.







**Thank you to all unpaid Carers in Argyll & Bute for taking the time to share their insights and caring experiences, Carer Organisations and Colleagues in the HSCP for their support, and Fiona Howard for her time and expertise in graphic design.**

***Prepared and produced by Kirsty MacKenzie,  
Linda Currie, and Mags Todd***

