



**2022 - 2027**

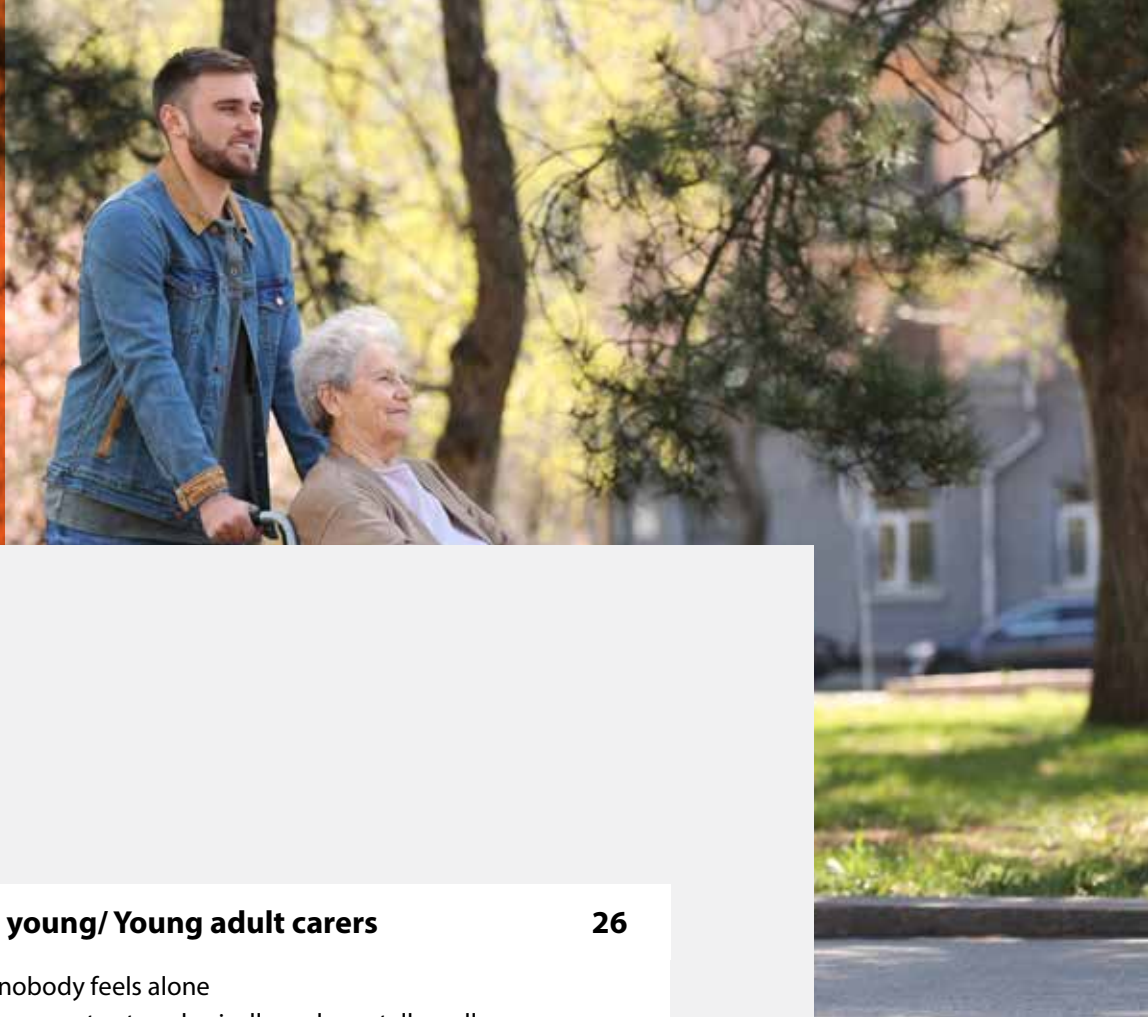
# All Age Carers' Strategy

**Kingston All Age Carers' Strategy  
2022 - 2027**

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## Foreword

# MP Ed Davey

I am delighted to be introducing the Royal Borough of Kingston's All Age Carers' Strategy 2022 - 2027. As you may know, I myself am a carer and I am all too aware of the enormous commitment you show every day in supporting your family member, son, daughter, partner, husband, wife or neighbour. I know the last two years have been very challenging and I thank you for all that you do to take care of others.

It is vitally important that carers remember to take care of themselves too. Health and wellbeing, as well as respite, have come out as some of the main priorities carers are asking us to focus on.

This strategy has been written by carers, for carers in partnership with Kingston Carers' Network, other Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector organisations, the Royal Borough of Kingston Council and health partners. Through this strategy and the action plan, which will be written by carers and carer support organisations in the Royal Borough of Kingston, we will do our very best to support carers in a way that works for them.

We want to ensure that carers in the Royal Borough of Kingston feel supported in their caring roles and are able to continue to care safely for their family member/ friend as well as having a life of their own outside of their caring responsibilities.

Thank you to each and every single carer and carer support organisation who has taken the time to assist us with this strategy, giving us your feedback and ideas on the priorities we should focus on over the next five years.

Our Vision in the Royal Borough of Kingston is for carers to enjoy good mental and physical health, feel supported, find the information they need at the right time for them, are respected, heard, valued and enjoy life beyond their caring role.

We hope this strategy can build on the work of the previous strategy and go some way in making our vision a reality for carers in the Royal Borough of Kingston.

## Foreword Young Carer



**Emily Forey**

Since joining the Kingston Young Carers Project over ten years ago, I have found their ever-growing support and kindness towards me to be overwhelming. The vast opportunities and experiences I have encountered have been down to the project and the incredible individuals that make it what it is. Being a carer provokes a complex mix of emotions but the impact it has on me is indescribable and is something that I will cherish.

I am beyond privileged to introduce the All Age Kingston Carers Strategy 2022-2027, which has been developed from the knowledge, views, and experiences from key professionals in health, education, the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector and most importantly carers of all ages in the borough.

The Kingston All Age Carers Strategy 2022-2027 aims to build on the success, in addition to bridging the gaps of the last carers strategy (2013-2015). This recently developed strategy aims to support carers of all ages to promote their full potential and wellbeing. The priorities within the strategy aim to further strengthen the support that carers can access, in addition to increasing the identification and assessment of carers; thus, reducing the amount of 'hidden carers' in the borough. The strategy seeks to promote happier living initiatives and to make information and advice more readily available to carers, both digitally and physically. The updated strategy strives to recognise and address the additional mental, emotional, and physical burden placed on carers over the last two years, due to the Coronavirus pandemic. The Carers strategy presents an opportunity for not only health and social care providers to work together but for everyone, especially employers and businesses in the borough to recognise and support carers.

The strategy sets out the priorities for carers over the next five years and demonstrates that the borough is focused on improving the support and wellbeing of carers and their families.

# Executive Summary

The Kingston Carers All Age Strategy sets out our renewed vision and strategic priorities to support carers and will ensure that the Council, health partners and voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector organisations work towards meeting the needs identified by carers and in line with Care Act 2014 requirements.

Since the Royal Borough of Kingston Council's (RBK) last Carers Strategy 2013-2015, the Care Act 2014 has been implemented. The Care Act and statutory guidance not only outline a local authority's duty on identifying carers, assessing their needs and providing support, but also outline the duty to involve carers in service planning, development and monitoring as a partner.

The aim of the All Age Kingston Carers strategy is to paint a picture of what it is like to be an unpaid carer living in the Royal Borough of Kingston, what is important to carers, what current issues they are facing, what is working well and more importantly what can be improved.

This strategy will inform the development of two action plans, one for Young/Young adult carers and one for Adult carers. The Kingston Carers Board will have oversight of the action plans and will ensure actions are progressed. The action plans will be developed by carers and young carers with RBK/ Achieving for Children's support.

The All Age Kingston Carers Strategy has been drafted following extensive engagement with young/ young adult and adult carers, carers support organisations and the Kingston Carers Board. The All age Carers board is made up of carers, VCSE sector organisations that support carers, including Kingston Carers Network, health and care professionals, Kingston Healthwatch, Achieving for Children and RBK. The Carers Board will oversee the implementation of the strategy.



**Carers in the Royal Borough of Kingston have told us their top priorities for supporting them in their caring role are:**

**Young/ Young adult Carers**

**Make sure nobody feels alone.**

**Help young carers to stay physically and mentally well.**

**Identify other young carers.**

**Help young carers have a break from their caring role.**

**Aid access to financial support.**

**Adult Carers**

**Health and Wellbeing.**

**Enjoying a life outside of caring.**

**Respite.**

**Information and advice.**

**Financial impact of caring.**

**It is clear from our local engagement with carers through the Carers Board and our local Kingston surveys, that whilst some carers experience similar pressures and challenges from caring for a friend or family member, some experiences are more specific around life stages and / or protected characteristics. These are summarised below.**

- |   |            |   |
|---|------------|---|
| <b>Start Well - Young Carers</b>            | <b>01.</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limited identification / self-identification as carers</li><li>• Isolation - mental health / stigma</li><li>• Accessing support</li><li>• Fulfilling educational potential</li></ul>  |
| <b>Start Well - Young adult carers</b>      | <b>02.</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identification of young adult carers who are not in education, employment or training</li><li>• Young carers transitioning to adulthood (16-17 years), and as young adult carers (18-25 years old)</li></ul>  |
| <b>Live Well - Working Age Carers</b>       | <b>03.</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Balancing work and caring responsibilities - financial impact</li><li>• Mental and physical health</li><li>• Respite</li><li>• Support for parent carers of children approaching adulthood</li></ul>  |
| <b>Age Well - Older Carers</b>              | <b>04.</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Post bereavement support/ transition into no longer being a carer, practical and emotional support</li><li>• Complexity of care / end of life care</li><li>• Own health &amp; mobility issues</li></ul>   |
| <b>Black, Asian and multi-ethnic Carers</b> | <b>05.</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Language barriers and lack of accessible information</li><li>• Lack of culturally appropriate support</li><li>• Limited identification / self-identification as carers</li><li>• Less likely to access support</li><li>• Higher financial impact of caring</li></ul>                  |
| <b>LGBTQ+ Carers</b>                        | <b>06.</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gap in outreach to LGBTQ+ carers for support and advice.</li><li>• Some people feel the support services are 'not for them' and won't understand their needs.</li><li>• Some people may access support late or not at all, because they anticipate stigma or discrimination</li></ul> |





The strategy's priorities recognise and address universal challenges for all carers, while recognising that some groups benefit from different more targeted approaches. More details are available in the Carers strategy Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA), available on Kingston Council's website. This will be used to inform our work on the action plans, which will address and act on the priorities identified in this strategy.

Translating the priorities for young and adult carers into outcomes for carers in Kingston means that we will aim to ensure:



**01**

**Young and young adult carers are empowered to link up with other young and young adult carers for support, socialising and friendship.**



**04**

**Young and adult carers access information and guidance that is accessible and relevant.**



**02**

**Young and adult carers live a balanced life, being physically and emotionally well and have a life outside of caring.**



**05**

**Young and adult carers access the right financial support to minimise financial disadvantages related to caring, including maintaining their education and employment potential.**



**03**

**Young and adult carers are able to access tailored and personalised respite at the time of their choosing.**

As part of our engagement on the draft strategy, carers have also told us about the importance of being seen as an expert. This is also linked to identification so we have added the following outcome:



## 06

**Young and adult carers are better identified by all partners and providers, including the local authority, health and VCSE sector organisation and recognised as equal partners.**

This includes under represented carers (LGBTQ+, Black Asian Multi Ethnic carers, carers with mental health support needs, carers with substance misuse as well as carers caring for someone with substance misuse, working carers, young/ young adult carers, older carers, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller carers).



# Introduction

The pandemic has had a significant impact on unpaid carers, with many family members, including young people, taking on new and additional caring responsibilities. Carers UK<sup>1</sup> estimates that overnight, an additional 4.5 million people became unpaid carers in March 2020, meaning 1 in 4 (26%) UK adults were providing unpaid care to an older, disabled or ill relative or friend at the height of the pandemic.

**Carers save local authorities and the NHS a significant amount of money: Carers UK reports that 'Carers' support has been valued at a staggering £530 million per day during the pandemic, or £193 billion a full year – outstripping the value of the NHS<sup>2</sup>. Unpaid carers for people living with dementia is estimated to save health and social care £11 billion each year<sup>3</sup>. But this comes with high personal costs.**



With such a significant impact on their lives, it is imperative that we give carers the right support at the right time.

In this strategy we outline our local vision for carers of all ages and highlight the priorities carers and young carers have identified.

We know many carers do not see themselves as carers and think of their caring responsibilities as part of their role as a mother/ father/ partner or friend for example. Supporting people to access what they are entitled to as carers is one of the main focuses of the strategy.



## Who is a carer?

The Carers Trust definition of a carer is:

**Anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health issue or an addiction can not cope without their support.**

Carers may provide physical or practical care and/or emotional support. A carer could be a spouse, partner, parent, sibling, child (usually referred to as a 'young carer' - under 18 years old), young person (young adult carer - 16 to 25 year old), friend, neighbour or any other relation.

Caring responsibilities may include practical care such as shopping, cooking, cleaning, child or sibling care, financial, personal care and often includes emotional support.

<sup>1</sup> Carers UK - State of Caring report

<sup>2</sup> Carers UK (2020) Unseen and Undervalued

<sup>3</sup> AHSN Network (August 2021) Supporting carers of people with dementia.

# Background to the All Age Kingston Carers Strategy

The All Kingston Carers Strategy 2022-2027 has been developed by carers, including young and young adult carers, for all carers, in partnership with Kingston Carers' Network, other VCSE sector organisations, the Royal Borough of Kingston (RBK) and health partners. It sets out the borough's five year plan for supporting carers of all ages.

To produce the strategy and identify the main priorities for all age carers, we have drawn on the results of our extensive local engagement with young and adult carers.

In November-December 2021, young people within the borough were invited to participate in a Young carers/ young adult carers survey. The survey was designed in partnership with the Carers Board, young and young adult carers and shared by Kingston Carers Network. There were 111 unique responses received from 8-25 year olds.

The Kingston Adult carers survey was also jointly devised with carers and carer support organisations on the Kingston All age Carers Board. The All age Carers board is made up of carers, VCSE sector organisations that support carers, including Kingston Carers Network, health and care professionals, Kingston Healthwatch and RBK.

The survey was live for 3 months from August to October 2021. There were a total of 244 responses. Considering the overall number of carers in the Royal Borough of Kingston (approx. 14,870), this was a low response rate. If we look at the total carers known to carers support services, the response rate is about 34%, which is above average response rate for a survey (average response rate is 10-15%).

Further detail of the engagement is available in the Equality Impact Assessment on the RBK website and in the appendix of the full strategy, which is available on demand.

Following this extensive engagement five main priorities have been identified by carers and young (adult) carers and we explore each of these in more detail in the body of the strategy.



## **Young/ Young adult Carers**

**Make sure nobody feels alone.**

**Help young carers to stay physically and mentally well.**

**Identify other young carers.**

**Help young carers have a break from their caring role.**

**Aid access to financial support.**

## **Adult Carers**

**Health and Wellbeing**

**Enjoying a life outside of caring.**

**Respite.**

**Information and advice.**

**Financial impact of caring.**

For each of the above identified priorities, we looked at what 'good' looks like, as highlighted by Carers Board members, carers support organisations and carers in the Royal Borough of Kingston. The priorities for action are then summarised in the last section of the strategy.

The needs of Black, Asian, multi-ethnic carers are incorporated into the whole strategy but have also been detailed separately as we have been hearing from carers themselves that they would like these distinct issues to be highlighted.

The Kingston Health and Care plan, which sets out the South West London Health and Care Partnership's aspirations for the people of Kingston, is divided into Start Well, Live Well, Age Well, which reflect the different needs of people at their various stages of life. Following engagement with Kingston carers, we have used this approach in the strategy to ensure it fully integrates with existing health and care aspirations in the Royal Borough of Kingston.

This All Age Kingston Carers Strategy is owned by RBK but oversight and governance will be by the Kingston Carers Board. Updates on progress on the action plans work will be given to the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Kingston Place Based Partnership Board and RBK as required.



Finally to devise this strategy, we also gathered and reviewed evidence from:

- The NHS Adult Social Care Outcomes framework Carers survey. The survey went out in October 2021 to people on the RBK Adult Social Care system as having had a carer's assessment and a review of this assessment. There was a 45% response rate (269 surveys were sent out and 121 were completed).
- The latest Carer UK's State of Caring Report (2021) to identify what matters to carers nationally.
- Kingston Carers Network's own survey for the carers they support and relevant publications by Carers UK.



# National Legislation and Policy underlying the strategy

This All Age Carers' Strategy has been informed by and incorporates a number of legal and strategic drivers, which introduced important new rights for carers. It outlines the Council's legal duties and wider system ambitions for carers to be recognised and supported. This includes:

- Care Act 2014 - this means councils must identify and provide information to carers, undertake carers assessments and provide preventative support. There are statutory carers eligibility criteria and where these are met, support must be provided.
- Children Act 1989 (as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014) - Councils must identify and provide information to young carers and parent carers, undertake young carers needs assessments and parent carers assessments and also provide preventative support.
- Both the Care Act 2014 and Children Act 1989 include requirements for NHS bodies to cooperate with local authorities, including in relation to their responsibilities to carers and young carers.
- Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995 - the right to carers assessments also applies to other carers of disabled children (grandparents, aunts, uncles and adult siblings).
- Health and Care Act 2022 - includes requirements to consult carers and involve carers in hospital discharges.
- Carer identification (White Papers ***Integrating care: Next steps to building strong and effective integrated care systems across England***<sup>4</sup> and ***People at the Heart of Care: adult social care reform***<sup>5</sup>).
- In December 2021 the White Paper, People at the Heart of Care: adult social care reform set out a 10-year vision for adult social care centred around 3 core strands:
  - o Work on a change in the services provided to support unpaid carers;
  - o Identifying, recognising and involving unpaid carers;
  - o Supporting the economic and social participation of unpaid carers.

The Children and Families Act 2014 amended the Children Act 1989 to strengthen the rights of young carers and parent carers to an assessment of their own needs. Both this and the Care Act significantly strengthened the rights for young carers. They aim to assess and protect children and young people from taking on excessive or inappropriate care and include the obligation to undertake a young carer needs' assessment should a young person or their parent make a request. Councils must also provide information to parent carers and undertake parent carers assessments.

# Kingston's Local plans and policies



## Kingston Health & Care Plan

'Recognising all carers' is one of the four priority themes or 'golden threads' (for all ages) of the recently refreshed **Kingston Health and Care Plan 2022-2024**<sup>6</sup>. It includes a commitment to take action to improve our practice in identifying and recognising carers of all ages so they are linked to appropriate support options, enabling carers to reduce the social, financial and health impacts they face.

Carers were identified as a group at increased risk of developing, or having mental health support needs and who may benefit from targeted action for prevention to ensure their needs are met in the forthcoming **Kingston's Better Mental Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2022**.

## Looking back - Review of the 2013 - 2015 Carers' Strategy for the Royal Borough of Kingston

The 2013 - 2015 Carers' Strategy was developed to recognise and tackle the challenges faced by unpaid carers. It was developed by carers, voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector organisations, RBK and Kingston Clinical Commissioning Group (now part of South West London Integrated Care System - Integrated Care Systems are partnerships of organisations that come together to plan and deliver joined up health and care services to improve the lives of people in their area).

<sup>4</sup> NHS - *Integrating care: Next steps to building strong and effective integrated care systems across England*, November 2020

<sup>5</sup> DHSC - *People at the Heart of Care: adult social care reform*, March 2022

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.southwestlondonics.org.uk/publications/kingston-health-and-care-plan-2022-to-2024/>



Some of the goals outlined in the action plan were achieved such as for example establishing a service within Kingston Hospital to identify carers, supporting them with issues such as discharge planning and provision of advice and advocacy to carers.

These are steps in the right direction, but there is still a long way to go. Also, since this last carers' strategy, carers have experienced two years of the Covid pandemic, the impact of which is discussed in the Covid section.

We have engaged with carers to find out from them about their evolving needs and carers have been involved in creating this new strategy, which will build on the progress made, the shortfalls from the last strategy and the ever-changing challenges. We have learnt from the last strategy, including what we need to do differently. With this new and refreshed strategy, the two ensuing action plans and clear accountability to the Kingston Carers Board, we will ensure progress is monitored and a real difference is made to the lives of unpaid carers in the Royal Borough of Kingston.

# Carers and young carers in the Royal Borough of Kingston - the local picture



With an ageing population and people living longer with disability and ill-health, the number of family members and friends taking on a caring role is growing, including in the Royal Borough of Kingston. The current estimated number of carers as of April 2022 is 14,870, which is an extra 12% (1,500 carers)<sup>7</sup> compared to the 2011 Census data. However this figure is most probably underestimated - due to an ageing population with improved life expectancy for people with long term conditions or complex disabilities and more high level care provided for longer.

Of the above 14,870 carers, we estimate there are approximately 2,000 young carers in the Royal Borough of Kingston<sup>8</sup>.

The recently published Carers Week 2022<sup>9</sup> report shows that the number of unpaid carers remains higher than before the pandemic with one in five of the UK's adults (approximately 10.58 million people) now supporting a relative, close friend or neighbour because of chronic illness, including mental ill-health, dementia, disability, or older age. This means in RBK, we can assume that out of a population of 168,000<sup>10</sup> there may be as many as 33,600 carers.

When we compare the number of carers identified above with the local data held (for example data for the GP practices in the Royal Borough of Kingston, shows that 2,293 residents are flagged as adult carers and 61 as young carers<sup>7</sup>), it becomes apparent that local mechanisms for identifying unpaid carers in the Royal Borough of Kingston need to be developed and work needs to be done to improve data recording and carer identification at a local level.

Work around identification needs to be prioritised in order to be able to support unpaid carers in a timely and effective manner through any future pandemics or health crisis. The Social Care Institute for Excellence highlights the importance of social care workers also working to identify unpaid carers<sup>12</sup>.

Data is also key in being able to identify the gap between the number of carers identified and the number of carers accessing support from carer support organisations. This can inform actions that need to be taken to reach carers not currently accessing support.

There is more information available on local data in our full length strategy, available on request.

## Local support for carers

Kingston Carers' Network is a voluntary organisation that provides support for unpaid carers in the Royal Borough of Kingston.

- Counselling and emotional support, run by BACP accredited volunteers.
- Social activities and support groups
- Benefits advice & appeals
- Carers Assessments on behalf of RBK, through which carers are able to access a flexible break payment or relief care.
- Care Plans
- Direct Payment brokerage / commissioning support services for local carers
- Working for Carers Project to help carers move closer to employment



<sup>7</sup> RBK data and insight team

<sup>8</sup> 2011 Census identified 177,918 young carers in England and Wales, whilst in September 2018, research by Nottingham University and the BBC suggested there were 800,000 young carers in England.

<sup>9</sup> Make caring visible, valued and supported - Carers Week 2022 report.

<sup>10</sup> [www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censuspopulationchange/E09000021/](http://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censuspopulationchange/E09000021/)

<sup>11</sup> SWL CCG Health Insights dashboard

<sup>12</sup> Supporting people who provide unpaid care for adults with health or social care needs - A quick guide for social care practitioners - Scie

There are also a large number of VCSE sector organisations in the Royal Borough of Kingston that offer carers tailored support and which carers access for their expertise in specific areas:



### **Support for young carers:**

Kingston Carers' Network is a voluntary organisation that provides support for unpaid carers in the Royal Borough of Kingston.

- Kingston Carers' Network's Young Carers@Project - work with local schools: peer support groups, well-being and resilience activities, advice and guidance offered.
- Achieving for Children.
- Support from schools, colleges, universities.
- Support from Day opportunities, such as Yorda adventures.

### **Support for adult carers:**

- Kingston Mencap supports people caring for someone with a learning disability.
- Kingston Mental Health Forum and Mind in Kingston for carers of people with mental health support needs.
- Alzheimers' Society for carers of people living with dementia.
- Kingston Centre for Independent Living.
- Milaap, for older Black, Asian, multi-ethnic carers.
- Staywell for older carers.
- Crossroads.
- Enhanceable respite
- Citizens Advice Kingston.
- Day services, such as Enhanceable, Eco-Op, Stud Farm, Home Farm Trust and Fircroft for the person being cared for.
- St Georges and South West London Mental Health trust: Carers, Friends and families open group, Triangle of care project group, peer support network and recovery college courses.
- RBK

These organisations also refer directly to Kingston Carers Network for carers' assessments, with the carer's agreement. Support organisations can be found on Connected Kingston, the online directory of services in the Royal Borough of Kingston.

It is worrying however that with a range of support for carers in the Royal Borough of Kingston, **6 in 10 local carers say they have not been able to access the right support when they needed it**<sup>13</sup>. Some of the reasons carers gave ranged from not knowing what support is available, including from RBK, lack of recognition of the role of caring, organisations not being proactive and the lack of respite available.

## Covid 19 - lessons learnt

It is vital to acknowledge the impact the last two years of the pandemic has had on unpaid carers. Carers UK notes in their State of Caring report that 'The COVID-19 pandemic has seen 81% of carers take on increasing hours of care, often with less or no outside support. This has had a significant and detrimental impact on carers' health and wellbeing; over two-thirds of carers (69%) reported that their mental health has worsened, and 64% of carers said their physical health has got worse as a result of caring in the pandemic'<sup>14</sup>.

A survey completed by Carers week<sup>15</sup> in June 2021 showed that 71% of carers who responded to the survey were stressed and anxious, 65% felt lonely and isolated and 72% had not had any breaks during the pandemic. This is reflected in our own carers survey, the details of which are shared later in the strategy.

We asked the members of Kingston Carers Board for their feedback and input into what the challenges had been over the pandemic and the lessons learnt.

<sup>13</sup> Carer Strategy survey 2021

<sup>14</sup> Carers UK - State of Caring 2021 - A snapshot of unpaid care in the UK - October 2021, p.16

<sup>15</sup> Breaks or breakdown', Carers Week 2021 report, June 2021.

The following are the main themes they highlighted (full details of the discussion and more details of the impact of Covid on carers are available in the full length strategy):

- Lack of carers' digital knowledge meant some were unable to support their family member and felt even more isolated.
- The importance of continuing to offer training/ access to digital support/ devices.
- More people were drawn into a caring role due to the nature of the pandemic and the reduction/ closure of services.
- There is a need to identify new carers who may not know what support services are available.
- Greater financial strain on carers with people losing jobs/being furloughed during the pandemic. Being at home for others meant incurring extra costs.
- Added pressure/ strain on family members as people's conditions deteriorated and others lost independent living skills.
- Lack of support and services and the long term need for other avenues of support in its place to offer carers a break, i.e . look at how to future proof services and prepare for any potential future pandemics.
- Covid 19 disproportionately affected Black, Asian, multi-ethnic people, putting them at higher risk of getting sick and dying from Covid 19<sup>16</sup>. This will have been mirrored in people who are carers.
- Long Covid and its impact on carers and their ability to care<sup>17</sup>.



As we slowly move out of the pandemic and look to a different way of living with Covid, it is therefore essential that unpaid carers, including young carers and Black, Asian and multi-ethnic carers are considered each step of the way. This needs to include how unpaid carers can be supported to recover from the impact of the pandemic through suitable breaks and respite for example as well as through practical support that includes information and access to COVID-19 information, vaccination and boosters and infection control advice when caring for a clinically vulnerable person.

<sup>16</sup> Health Equity Considerations and Racial and Ethnic Minority Groups

<sup>17</sup> Healthwatch Kingston Living with Long Covid report (28 February 2022), p.4



# Start well - Young carers/ young adult carers

The National Carers' strategy clearly states our responsibility to young and young adult carers is that:

**Young carers will thrive and be protected  
from inappropriate caring roles.**

Caregiving can be a positive experience, where young carers benefit from:

- Maturity
- Independence
- Resilience
- Life skills
- Closer family relationships.

There are also many challenges.

- Young carers can feel isolated, stigmatised, have low self esteem and anxiety.
- The median family income for families including a young carer was £5,000 less than families without a young carer and they are four times as likely to live in a household where no adults are in work<sup>18</sup>.
- Caring responsibilities can significantly impact academic attainment, reducing the likelihood of future opportunities and therefore young carers' health and wellbeing outcomes.
- Young carers are 1.5 times more likely to be from Black, Asian and multi ethnic communities, twice as likely to not speak English and less likely to self-identify. Children and young people in the Gypsy Roma and Traveller (GRT) community are at risk of becoming young carers and young adult carers as the adults from the GRT community are more likely to suffer chronic ill health or suffer more than one health condition.

<sup>18</sup> Hidden from View, The Children's Society May 2013

Young adult carers are usually considered to be aged between 16 and 25. They face similar challenges to young carers, such as isolation, lack of confidence and anxiety and may also make decisions affecting their future, such as not leaving the local area for university or employment opportunities as they feel unable to leave the person they care for. They are also four times as likely to be "not in education, employment or training" compared with all young people<sup>19</sup>.

In 2018, RBK's Public Health team undertook a Joint Strategic Needs' Assessment of Young and Young Adult Carers. It concluded that:

- Identification of young and young adult carers was not consistent.
- Assessments were not taking place.
- There were significant negative impacts on young and young adult carers e.g. at increased risk of missing out on education, employment, and social opportunities, and may be carrying a significant emotional burden.

Recommendations included improving identification, assessment and support. The pandemic has been a difficult time for young and young adult carers, especially as many support networks, including schools, were limited and COVID continues to negatively impact the lives of carers.

# Young Carer Strategy Survey and main priorities

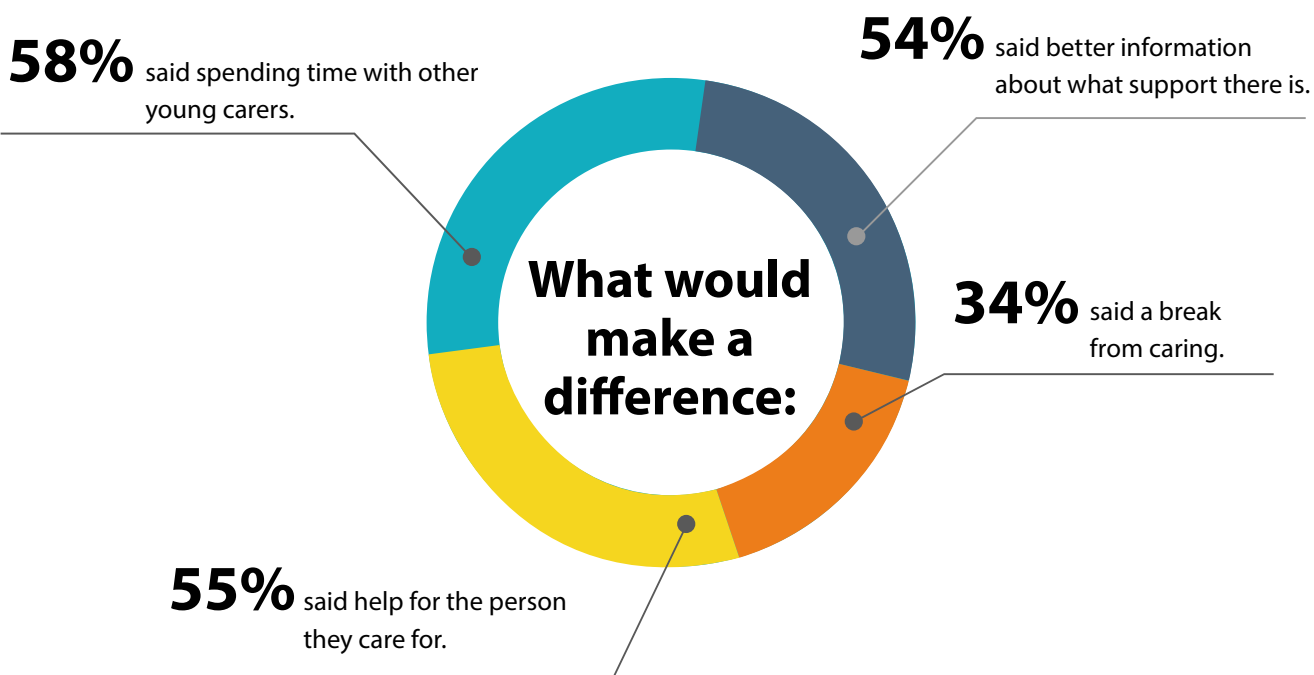
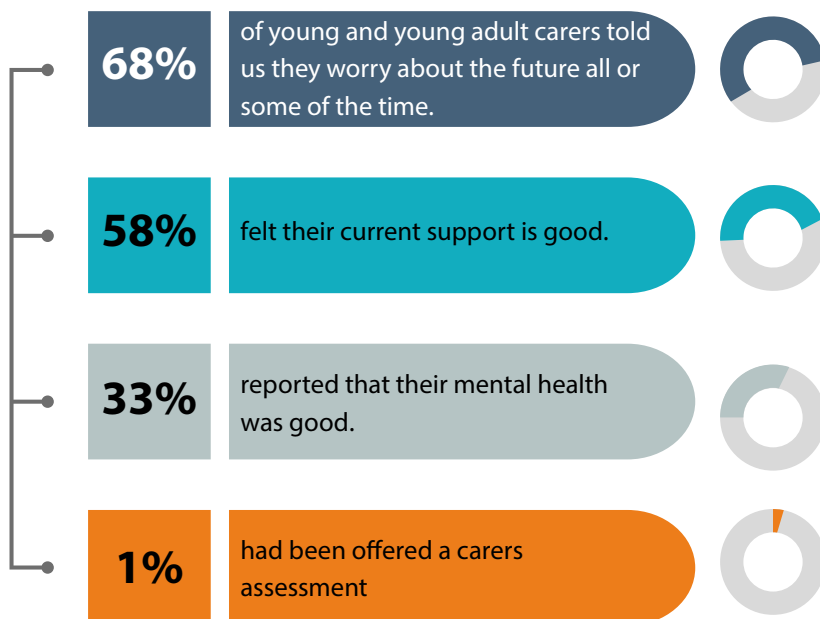
*'Friends can't come around my house often' - 'I struggle with coursework deadline as I can't concentrate for long periods on study days' - 'Sometimes I'm very late for school'*

**Young carers survey 2021**



<sup>19</sup> Audit Commission 2010

**In the local Young and young adult carers survey, we heard that:**



When asked for their priorities, they responded:

1. Make sure nobody feels alone
2. Help young carers to stay physically and mentally well
3. Identifying other young carers
4. Helping young carers have a break from their caring role
5. Aiding access to financial support.

### **Case study**

#### *Joe's story*

11 year old Joe was referred to the Young Carers' Project as he cares for his mum with mental ill health and autistic brother. Joe did not go to after school clubs or go out with friends, he was quiet and often anxious. The YCP worker supported him to come to regular groups where Joe's confidence increased, he has made friends, learned new skills and is now a young leader.

### **Hidden Young and Young Adult Carers**

Raising awareness of young carers and early identification is very important. Young people do not identify as young carers as they may not recognise that they are a carer or may be fearful of the stigma attached. Identification is the responsibility of all organisations, to help ensure carers receive the support they need to improve or maintain their wellbeing and resilience.

**We recommend schools, GPs, Children's Services, Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector sign up to a memorandum of understanding and commit to asking questions, recognising and acting when they see a young carer.**

### **What good support for young carers would look like in the Royal Borough of Kingston:**

- I, as a young carer, am fully supported emotionally, physically and financially.
- My family and I have access to support groups and we have a say in our care and support.
- I access short breaks in a timely way.
- I am offered carers assessments consistently
- I access practical and emotional support pre-bereavement and with bereavement if the person I am caring for, passes away.

# Live well - Adult Carers



*'I never really thought of myself as a carer, I was just helping out with my mum two days a week to give my Dad some respite'*

**Kingston Adult Carers survey 2021**



*'Looking after my husband seemed the natural thing to do'*

**Kingston Carers survey 2021**

Caring for a family member, neighbour or friend can be rewarding and carers take pride in doing this to the best of their ability. We also know the personal cost and toll this has on carers, physically, mentally and financially.

Our engagement with Carers Board members and our local adults carers survey gave us invaluable information and insight on what it is like to be an adult carer in the Royal Borough of Kingston. We also used the results of the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) NHS Digital Carers Survey to inform this section.



# Black, Asian, Multi ethnic carers

*"I do not speak English very well and no one can help me in this matter"*

## NHS Digital Carers Survey

It has been evidenced that the experiences of black and multi ethnic carers are often different and may be more challenging than those of white carers. Black and multi ethnic carers are less likely to access services and may also find services less satisfactory than white carers<sup>20</sup>.

In their State of caring report, Carers UK found that when asked about their current needs for support, Black carers (77%) were significantly more likely to prioritise better recognition of their needs as a carer from their local council than carers who are from a White British background (56%).

Issues related to work were also given more importance by carers from a Black, Asian or Mixed ethnic background.

Asian carers (29%), Black carers (28%) and carers from a Mixed / Multiple ethnic background (25%) were significantly more likely to prioritise better support to return to paid work than carers from either a White British (13%) or any other White background (16%)<sup>21</sup>.

The financial impact of caring is also higher for carers from a mixed or multiple ethnic background and for Asian carers. The average monthly spend for carers is an estimated £114.16, rising to an estimated £145.84 for carers from a Mixed or Multiple ethnic background and £158.88 for Asian carers<sup>22</sup>.



The disproportionate impact of Covid on Black, Asian, multi ethnic people has been well documented and it is important to highlight that this will have directly affected Black, Asian and multi-ethnic carers as seen earlier in the strategy<sup>23</sup>.

A separate survey was devised for Black, Asian, multi-ethnic/ mixed carers living in the Royal Borough of Kingston. The response rate was very low. This may have been due to there being a large number of carers surveys being sent out around the same time. Due to Covid, we were unable at the time to follow up with face to face engagement, attending meetings where Black, Asian, multi-ethnic carers of colour and marginalised carers are already meeting. This is something that will be looked at through our action plan work.

<sup>20</sup> Better Health Briefing - Supporting black and minority ethnic carers, Nan Greenwood - August 2018

<sup>21</sup> Carers UK - State of Caring 2021 - A snapshot of unpaid care in the UK - October 2021, p.16



Feedback and suggestions included:

- Carer support groups should be user led.
- Culturally appropriate services, with people understanding cultural needs and most importantly encouragement to get involved with organisations so that their voices and specific needs can be identified and hopefully supported.
- Needs of mixed race families to be considered, particularly in reference to racism.

It is important to ensure that any work looking at how to support carers takes into account these challenges and ensures that Black, Asian, multi-ethnic carers have a voice and a say on the support they would like as carers.

## **What good support for Black, Asian, multi ethnic carers would look like in the Royal Borough of Kingston**

- The care staff for the person I care for are culturally aware and sensitive, which enables me to have a break knowing my family member will be well supported.
- The respite and services I access are culturally appropriate.
- Support and information is tailored to my specific cultural, religious and faith needs.
- I have access to and am able to lead carers support groups.
- I have access to information in my own language.
- My needs as a member of a mixed race family are considered.

<sup>22</sup> Carers UK - State of Caring 2021 - A snapshot of unpaid care in the UK - October 2021, p.10

<sup>23</sup> Beyond the data: Understanding the impact of COVID-19 on BAME groups, Public Health England 2020

# Age Well

As life expectancy increases, this means carers care for their family member into their older years, often caring for elderly parents, partners as well as grandchildren, or adult children with a learning disability or autism, well into their 80s and 90s.

Respite/ short breaks are key to supporting older carers with their own wellbeing as well as having time to attend their own health appointments. It would be useful to explore, as best practice, how best carers can be supported to access respite in order to attend health and wellbeing classes.

Support with end of life care is also an emerging theme with carers asking for practical support in how to give end of life care support for their family member as well as the carers' own end of life.

Carers have told us about the challenges they experience when the person they care for passes away and that difficult transition period into no longer being a carer. There can be a loss of identity and life purpose as well as going through grief and bereavement. Loneliness post bereavement is a significant issue. It is essential services continue to support carers post bereavement and beyond their caring role.

Loneliness in older carers is also often experienced when their husband/ wife/ partner develops dementia and there is a loss of what the relationship used to be, the partner they used to have.

Carers have told us that they want support with emergency planning both long term when they are no longer around, and for short term emergencies. Planning long-term gives peace of mind to carers, especially parent carers. Knowing their adult sons/ daughters with a learning disability or mental health support needs for example, will be safe and cared for so that they can continue to lead fulfilling lives, is reassuring. This may need to be approached sensitively as some carers may not be ready to have this conversation.



Practical support is also key for older carers. It can be challenging to manage household duties along with caring responsibilities and there can be difficulties in finding trades and trusted people to do small jobs and essential repairs around the house. We have heard from carers that it is difficult at times to organise GP home visits.





## **What good support for older carers would look like in the Royal Borough of Kingston:**

- I am supported after the person I cared for has passed away and beyond.
- I am able to access practical support and advice around ageing and end of life care, including training which covers areas such as frailty, osteoporosis, depression, dementia etc.
- I access breaks and respite when I want.
- I have access to a directory of support services that support people at the end of their life (work being done by the Integrated Care System on this - mapping and gap analysis).
- I have access to respite that is suitable for the person I care for and that I can access at the time of my choosing.

Kingston's Better Mental Health Joint Strategic Needs' Assessment 2022 includes a recommendation to improve respite provision for older carers and to consider services to tackle social isolation amongst older carers.

Healthwatch Kingston and Kingston Voluntary Action's report Bereavement Services and Support in Kingston – Community Engagement Report<sup>24</sup> highlights the following key actions to support carers of all ages with preparation for the death of the person they care for and bereavement:

- Offer families, friends, and other carers caring for individuals who are experiencing a terminal illness (including theirs), diverse and culturally appropriate, accessible information and support to assist in making pre-death funeral arrangements.
- Increase identification of people who may be anticipating grief (for example in a care-giving role) as well as people experiencing grief following a loss and signpost people with bereavement needs to bereavement services and support.
- Offer families, friends, carers, and others involved in pre-death care who are affected by the death, practical and emotional bereavement support, ensuring this continues as required after the funeral, including access to their pre-existing care support networks.



These points have been added to the priorities for action, at the end of the document.

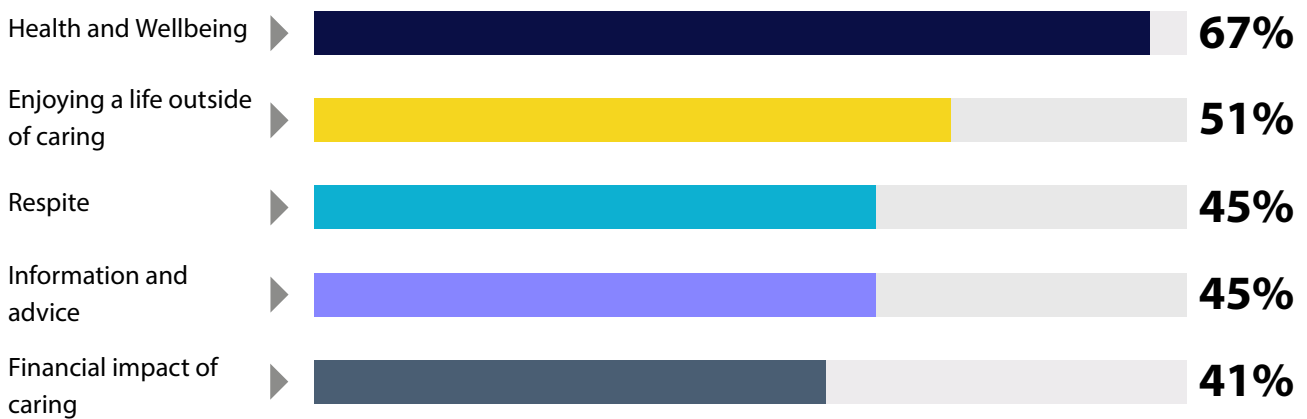
## Main priorities for adult carers

Here we dive deeper into the five main priorities for adult carers which carers identified in the local adult carers' survey we undertook in the Royal Borough of Kingston.

1. Health and Wellbeing - supporting carers to stay mentally and physically well
2. Enjoying a life outside of caring
3. Respite
4. Information and advice
5. Financial impact of caring

<sup>24</sup> Bereavement Services and Support in Kingston-Community Engagement Report, Healthwatch Kingston in collaboration with Kingston Voluntary Action, August 2022

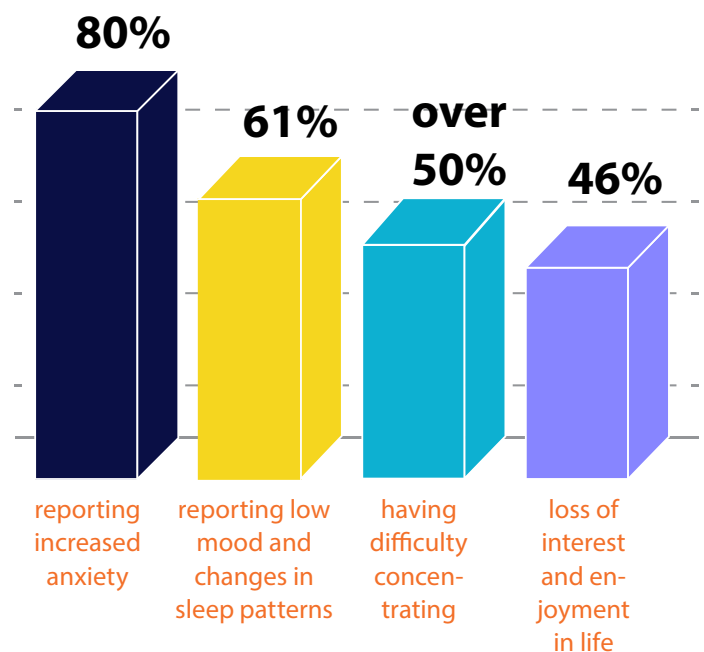
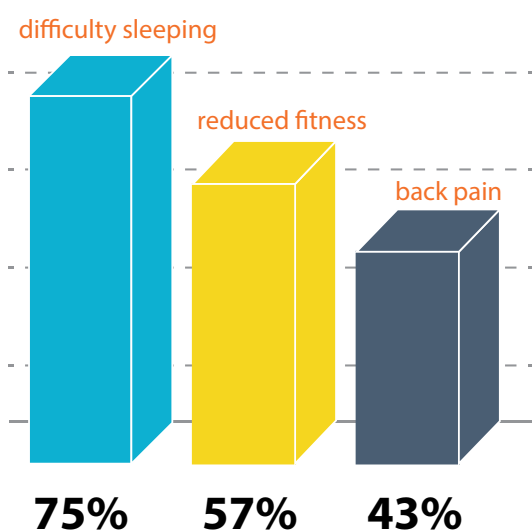
## 5 main priorities for carers



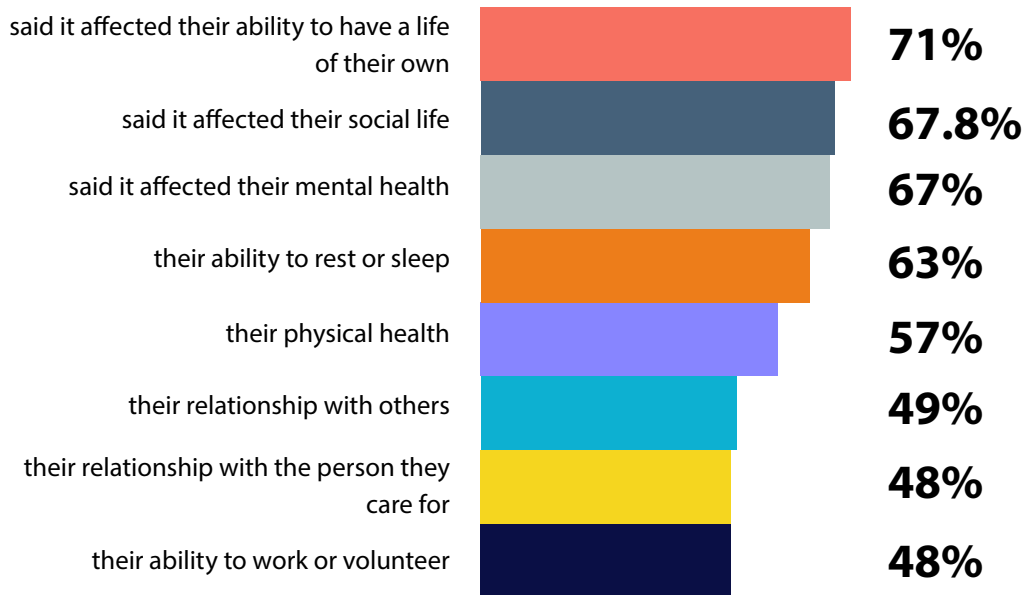
## 1. Health and wellbeing

Physical health has been affected by caring responsibilities for 73% of carers, the majority having

Carers' mental health has been affected by caring responsibilities for 76% of carers



## We know that caring takes a huge toll on carers and when we asked which areas of a carers' life are being affected:



Concerningly, **57% of the carers who responded to our survey have not had a carers assessment to consider their own needs and support.** The main reason cited being that carers didn't know they could access this. This trend is mirrored across England and Carers UK has highlighted that 'Despite all carers in England having the right to an assessment on the appearance of need, only 24% of carers surveyed reported having a carer's assessment or reassessment in the last 12 months. This is a decrease from 27% of carers in 2019 and 31% in 2016<sup>25</sup>.

**Only 42% of carers in the Kingston Adult Carers' survey accessed support for their physical or mental health.**

The majority of carers who did seek support chose to talk to their GP. This highlights the pivotal role GPs play in identifying, supporting and referring carers to support services.

There are many benefits to being formally registered as a carer with a GP, for example:

- Arranging home visits to the carer or the person cared for, if caring responsibilities make it difficult to attend appointments at the surgery;
- Arranging 'double' appointments for both the carer and the cared for at the same time to avoid having to visit the surgery twice;
- Arranging for repeat prescriptions to be delivered to the local pharmacy.

Of our Kingston Adult Carers survey respondents:

- 62% are registered with their GP as a carer.
- Of the 38% not registered with their GP, 47% of carers didn't know they could do this.

South West London Integrated Care System, which holds data for the GP practices in the Royal Borough of Kingston, shows that only 15% of the estimated total number of carers in the Borough are registered with their GP.

Others mentioned that because they are caring for a family member they would not be seen as a carer. This will be a focus for our action plan and carers will support us to identify how we can best work with GPs to promote this offer.



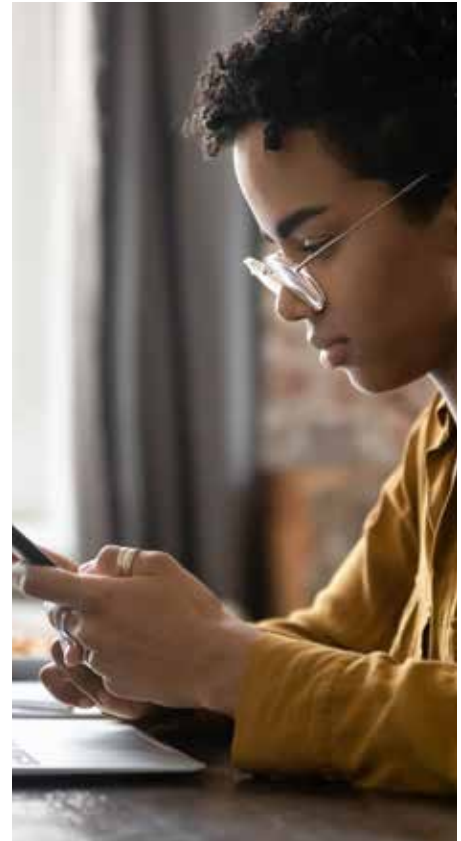
Carers' ability to look after themselves was a question asked in the NHS Digital Carers Survey:

- In the last year carers' ability to look after themselves has worsened: 36% in 2021/2022
- 37% of respondents said that sometimes they can't look after themselves well enough.
- 27% of respondents saying they are neglecting themselves.
- Social isolation is common amongst carers, with only 34% of adult carers in Kingston having as much social contact as they would like.

<sup>25</sup> Carers UK - State of Caring 2021 - A snapshot of unpaid care in the UK - October 2021, p.27

## What good health and wellbeing offer would look like in the Royal Borough of Kingston (identified by Carers Board members):

- When I explain my needs as a carer, I know there will be cross referral between statutory services and the VCSE sector, with better coordination of care/services to best support my needs.
- I have access to early and timely communication of what support/ short break/ activities are available, especially from the VCSE sector.
- I access information regarding the mental health support services available at my GP surgery.
- Supporting me to identify as a carer and accessing support is everyone's responsibility (ie community providers, GPs, health partners, VCSE sector).
- I am able to access support as a carer, even if the person I care for is not engaging with support services.
- I experience services' flexibility and support: for example the person I care for is able to accompany me to certain events, which may help their wellbeing and independence during their recovery.



## 2. Enjoying a life outside of caring

For 53% of carers, in our local Kingston carers survey, being able to balance caring responsibilities with leisure would really make a difference. **It is important to note here that carers are not saying they do not want to care for their family member, neighbour/ friend anymore, only that they are wanting to have a balanced life.**

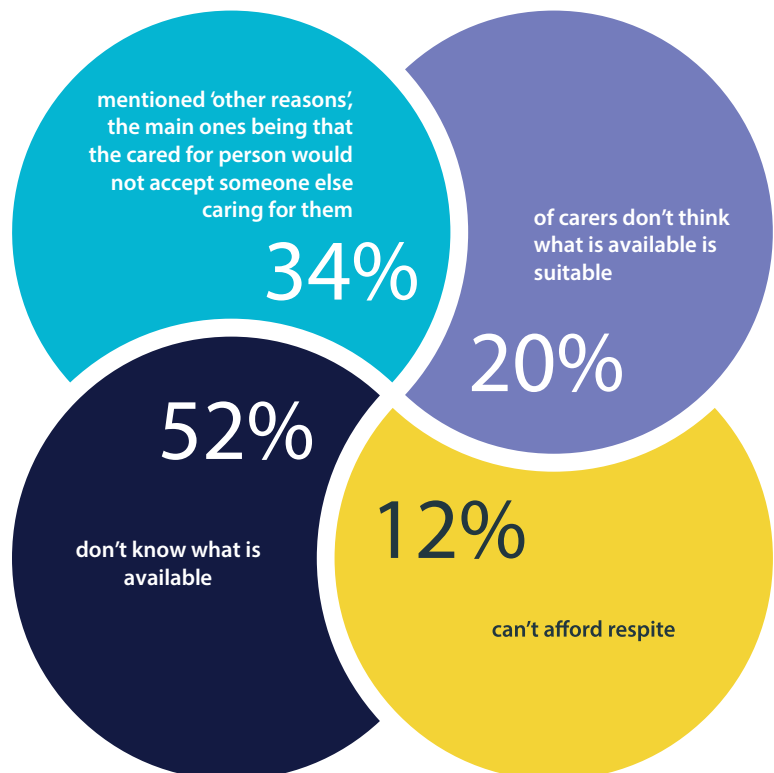
Supporting carers therefore means carers are able to continue in their caring role in a way that is rewarding, safe and balanced.

## What would having a life outside of caring look like in the Royal Borough of Kingston:

- I am able to choose to work/ play as I would like.
- I am able to access support groups and connect with other carers.
- I am able to access social prescribing\* (reducing isolation) through my GP, including green social prescribing\* (accessing activities such as wild swimming, physical activities etc) and looking at digital options (virtual tour of National Trust). This needs to last for a longer period of time. There also needs to be one full-time social prescriber in each practice.
- I access information on low cost/ free activities available easily, including outside of working hours.
- I have time to enjoy a longer break from my caring responsibilities as transport for the person I care for to and from day activities is available.

### 3. Respite

Respite is a new emerging theme from our survey and is not surprising considering the impact of the pandemic on unpaid carers. Despite hearing how difficult it is for carers to have a life outside of caring, **only 19% of carers who responded to our Kingston adult carers' survey currently use respite services.**





*'My mother does not want a "stranger" to care for her so I cannot consider respite.'*

**Kingston adult carers' survey 2021**



*'We don't just need anyone, we need someone particular who suits the person we care for and enhances their life and doesn't leave them exhausted and in greater need than before. This is a big deal.'*

**Kingston adult carers survey 2021**



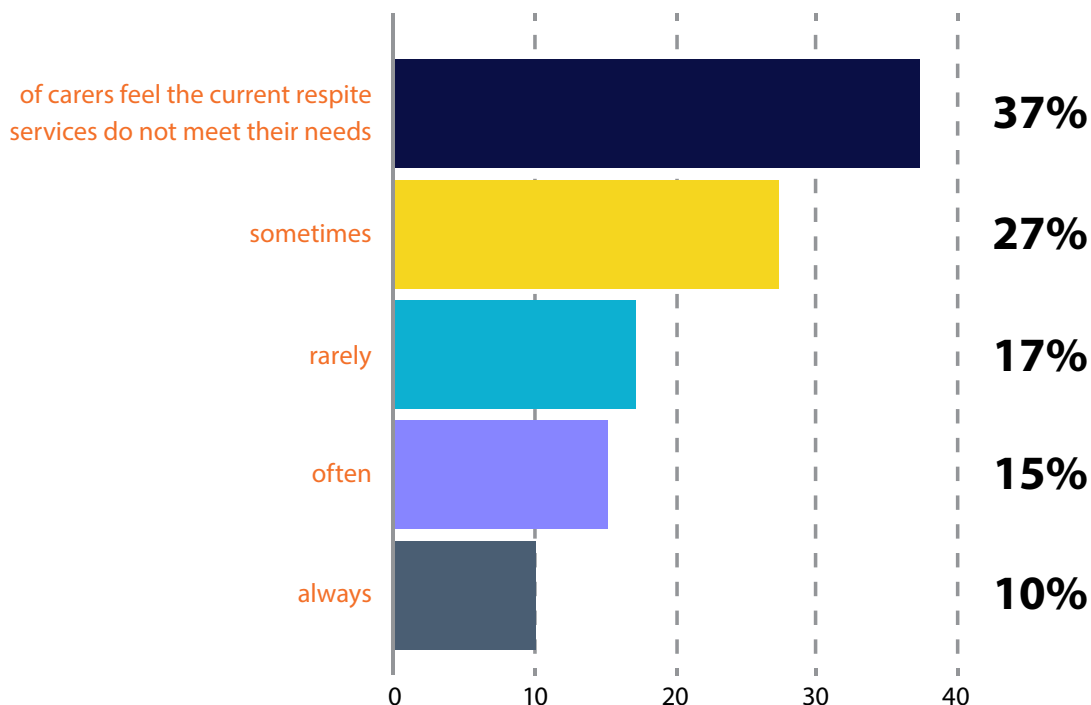
*'Our son is 19, most respite services are for older or younger people or not ASD specific which he would prefer. It can be difficult to afford respite care when as a family you are on benefits.'*

**Kingston adult carers' survey 2021**



*'The person I'm looking after is my wife who has cerebral palsy and has limited physical abilities. I feel that everything I do is as any other person would do for their partner. The reason I have not used any of the services is I don't want my wife to feel guilty for needing my help.'*

**Kingston adult carers' survey 2021**



Using a direct payment is a way for carers to increase the choice of respite options, however 79% of carers report that they do not use one.



## What good respite would look like in the Royal Borough of Kingston:

- I access a variety of Kingston based respite:
  - o Short notice affordable 'in home' respite for emergencies so I can attend my own health appointments and routine check ups.
  - o Overnight respite.
  - o Respite to enable me to have a break/ time away to support my own wellbeing through activities/ rest etc.
  - o Meaningful respite (learning skills for example) such as homecare, overnight, activities for the person I care for.
  - o Specialised respite support for particular disabilities, such as autism, learning disability, profound and multiple learning disability, mental health support needs including respite when taking a break is not easily done.
- I access forms of respite that are not labelled, for example carers' breaks.
- I access guidance to help me in identifying and accessing the support I need, including what is available to make my caring role easier (dosette boxes from pharmacies for example).
- I use assistive technology to support me to have a break.
- I have access to Personal health budgets.
- As a parent carer, I access support when someone leaves college - (college may have been a time of respite for me. Short breaks offer is much more comprehensive for parent carers of someone who is under the oversight of local children's services provider, Achieving for Children).
- The person I care for, who is living with dementia, accesses befriending support.
- I experience joined up support between day centres and overnight respite.
- The person I care for is able to access regular, reliable support through day opportunities and meaningful occupations.

## 4. Information and advice

*'Too many points of contact - like swimming through fog - should be one co-ordinator for advice and one for help and that person should contact agencies on your behalf.'*

**NHS Digital Carers Survey**



The most important type of information for carers, as identified in the Kingston adult carers' survey, is:

- Health and wellbeing
- Enjoying a life outside of caring
- Benefits available to carers
- Respite
- Carers network and support forums
- Carers needs assessments

Following the pandemic, it has also become clear that it is key for carers to have timely and accurate advice and information on COVID-19. In addition carers and young carers should receive timely information and access to annual flu vaccinations, childhood immunisation programmes, cancer and health screening as well as information on extremes of weather to include heatwave guidance.

## Internet and technology

The results from the survey show that 51% of carers use the internet to access information on being a carer and 21.5% to access support groups. However, 65% of cared for people do not use assistive technology (like sensors, voice activated devices or pendants).

49% of people who do not use the internet said the reason they don't is because they are not confident using the internet, 14% don't have a tablet/ laptop or smartphone and for 13% of carers cost is prohibitive.



*'So much is geared to online, social media or IT distribution. We need printed or verbal help, say in doctors surgeries and places of easy access. Our simple phones cannot cope. I would not know an App if it bit me!'*



*'When you are caring, it can be very difficult to access help online. It can take ages searching for the bit of support or advice you need. It is also difficult to rely on information unless it is a genuine, well known service/charity'*

**Kingston Carers' survey, 2021**

## What good and accessible information would look like in the Royal Borough of Kingston (identified by Carers Board members):

- I have access to clear advice and guidance on the information and support that is available.
- I access information on my rights with regards to hospital discharge.
- I have access to drop in advice centres that are easily accessible.
- I have access to information that is available in print as well as digital format.
- I access publicity/ awareness raising events about the support that is available, including a timetable of available opportunities.
- The information I am given is in an accessible format, for example easy read, plain English, BSL.

## 5. Financial impact of caring



*'I had to take early retirement - and my work pension at the same time, so it has affected that greatly. I was in a very well paid job, now absolutely cannot go to work due to being a full time carer for my Mother'*

**Kingston adult carers' survey 2021**



*'An allowance to help bridge the gap between income lost through having to reduce the hours I work. As I earn over the limit to be able to claim Carer's Allowance I am unable to make up part of my 'lost' income. I can not retire as the women's retirement age has increased to 66.'*

**Kingston adult carers' survey 2021**



*'Some of these impacts have been positive. Working from home has meant much more isolation but has meant being able to care for mum at the same time - she might have needed to go into a home otherwise. Job and caring can be very difficult though''*

**NHS Digital Carers Survey**

Carers UK's new research Under Pressure: Caring and the cost of living crisis reveals a worsening picture in the 6 months since the publication of Carers UK State of Caring report in Autumn 2021:

*'just under half (45%) of unpaid carers are currently unable to manage their monthly expenses and any further increases in energy bills will negatively affect their own physical and mental health or that of the person they care for. In the months ahead, 42% thought that they would not be able to heat their home to a safe level, while 32% are worried they will have to use a food bank<sup>26</sup>. Nearly two thirds (62%) of all carers said their financial situation had got worse. This rose to 80% of carers who said they are unable to manage their monthly expenses.'*

This was reflected in our local Kingston carers' survey with 56% of carers saying that caring had affected their financial situation and 59% said that caring had affected their ability to work or reduced the hours they are able to work.

Carers UK new research shows that three-quarters (72%) of working carers say that they worry about continuing to juggle work and caring and that they continue to worry about those they care for when they are at work<sup>27</sup>. The biggest challenge to working carers, the report adds is the lack of affordable and accessible care<sup>28</sup>. Carers UK's recommendations are to 'encourage all employers to review their flexible working policies, including flexibility of hours and or location, with a view to how they support carers'<sup>29</sup>. The value of flexibility for carers being able to juggle work and care and, for some, the increased wellbeing.

The report goes on to stress the importance of providing support for carers, especially those looking to stay in or return to paid work, as women will disproportionately be financially affected in older age.

## What good financial support for carers would look like in the Royal Borough of Kingston:

- Care support staff access training on welfare rights. I can access a support helpline as appeals can be very complex.
- I am aware of one off poverty hardship grants available through charities.
- I access good information on available benefits, as well as the implications for me, if I am considering giving up work, in understanding the impact on my pension.
- I have access to financial support with the additional costs of being a carer (transport costs/ new charges/ etc), which assist my wellbeing.
- I have the financial ability to have a life outside of caring.
- I experience carer friendly employment practices, reasonable adjustments, unpaid leave, flexible working etc..
- There is increased capacity in the VCSE sector for information and advice.

# How Will We Know If We Are Making A Difference?

**We will work together with carers and carers support organisations to create two exciting and ambitious action plans to address and act on the priorities identified, one specific plan for young/young adult carers and one plan for adult carers. The actions will be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time specific. There will be sub-groups created and led by carers to work on specific areas of the action plans.**

The Action Plans will be implemented over a five-year period and overseen by the Carers Board comprising Carers support organisations, health partners, RBK and most importantly carers themselves. There will be sub-groups and workstreams established that will report into the Board, these in turn will feed back to the Kingston Partnership Board and the Kingston Place Based Partnership Board. This line of accountability will ensure joined-up working to provide support for carers, where they feel valued, heard, supported and enjoy good mental and physical wellbeing, through regular breaks and a life outside of their caring role.

We are also planning to review how we commission some of our carers' services over the next year so that they reflect the current and future needs that carers have within the community. The services will be designed based on the feedback carers have given us through the Carers Board and the local Kingston Carers survey. RBK will work in partnership with providers, carers and partners to ensure that services deliver a high quality support offer to carers in the Royal Borough of Kingston.



<sup>26</sup> Carers UK - Under Pressure: Caring and the cost of living crisis - March 2022

<sup>27</sup> Supporting carers at work: opportunity and imperative - November 2021

<sup>28</sup> Supporting carers at work: opportunity and imperative - November 2021, p.18

<sup>29</sup> Supporting carers at work: opportunity and imperative - November 2021p.21

# Our Priorities For Action

The following priorities for action have been identified by carers and our All Age Kingston Carers Board members:

## Young carers/ Young adult carers

**01. Young and young adult carers are empowered to link up with other young and young adult carers for support, socialising and friendship.**

- Promote existing support for young carers in the Royal Borough of Kingston.

**02. Young and adult carers live a balanced life, being physically and emotionally well and having a life outside of caring.**

- Increase and promote young carers assessments and its benefits, such as mental health support and respite opportunities to young carers.
- Ensure consistency of provision of young carers assessments.
- Plan ahead for transition from young carer to adult carer.
- Support young carers to maintain resilience beyond a 'crisis point' and support to plan for emergencies, including information if they are caring for someone with a terminal illness or they cared for someone who has passed away.
- Raise awareness of Special Education Needs and Disability and young carers with Achieving for Children teams.

**03. Better identify and recognise young and adult carers as equal partners**

- Schools, GPs, Children's Services, VCSE sector organisations sign up to a memorandum of understanding and commit to asking questions, recognising and acting when they see a young carer.
- Increase identification of young/ young adult carers who are not in education, employment or training.
- GPs/ hospitals identify young (adult) carers.
- Ensure representation of young and young adult carers to be part of Integrated Care System/ Integrated Care Board work and have involvement in decision making.

## Adult Carers - Health and Wellbeing

### **01. Better identify and recognise young and adult carers as equal partners**

- Engage with carers in a way that works for them, promoting self identification.
- Work with GP practices to promote identification of unpaid carers (GP markers) as part of routine appointments, at point of diagnosis/ health intervention/ trauma and promote Make Every Contact Count\* initiative (liaise with Richmond on this).
- Work with businesses, VCSE sector organisations to support identification of carers so this is seen as 'everyone's business' and support them to have policies in place to support carers in times of crisis.
- Work with Kingston hospital to promote identification and involvement of unpaid carers.
- Increase identification of people who may be anticipating grief (for example in a care-giving role) as well as people experiencing grief following a loss and signpost people with bereavement needs to bereavement services and support.
- Ensure the involvement of adult carers in decision-making: join up with Integrated Care Systems/ Integrated Care Board around the Health and Care bill, consulting carers on commissioning services around prevention as well as hospital discharge and the Triangle of care\*.
- With better identification, demand will increase so joint work will take place with health and commissioned services to address this.

### **02. Young and adult carers live a balanced life, being physically and emotionally well and having a life outside of caring.**

- Timely and appropriate interventions to support carers, followed by minimal delay between referrals and assessments.
- Promote carers' health checks and carers' assessments and their benefits/ link to wellbeing offers to residents.
- Ensuring carers are part of Mental Health commissioning work.
- Promote initiatives such as Ideas for Happier living\* and recovery college\*.
- Offer carers involved in pre-death care who are affected by the death, practical and emotional bereavement support, ensuring this continues as required after the funeral, including access to their pre-existing care support networks.

## **Black, Asian, multi-ethnic carers**

### **01. Better identify and recognise young and adult carers as equal partners.**

- Engage with Black, Asian, multi-ethnic and seldom heard carers to understand their priorities and write action plans together.
- Better identification of Black, Asian, multi-ethnic carers through GP practices, adult social care and the VCSE sector.

### **02. Young and adult carers live a balanced life, being physically and emotionally well and having a life outside of caring.**

- Support the establishment of Black, Asian, multi-ethnic carer led initiatives. Work with providers such as Helmar Care, Milaap, Tamil Elders.
- Offer families, friends, and other carers caring for individuals who are experiencing a terminal illness (including theirs), diverse and culturally appropriate, accessible information and support to assist in making pre-death funeral arrangements.

### **03. Young and adult carers are able to access tailored and personalised respite at the time of their choosing.**

- Ensure carer support organisations and respite providers offer culturally sensitive services through service specifications and contract monitoring.
- Ensure information for carers is accessible, supportive and tailored to carers.

## **Adult Carers - Enjoying a life outside of caring**

### **01. Young and adult carers live a balanced life, being physically and emotionally well and having a life outside of caring.**

- Work with SWL ICS to increase and expand social prescribing offer to carers as well as Proactive Anticipatory Care.
- Ensure all low cost/ free activities for carers are on Connected Kingston and accessible to carer support organisations.
- Promote carers support group offers in the Royal Borough of Kingston, both for wellbeing support as well as information and advice.
- RBK to work towards becoming Carer Confident.



## Adult Carers - Respite

### 01. Young and adult carers are able to access tailored and personalised respite at the time of their choosing.

- Promote respite offers to carers, working through the new Day Opportunities framework\* from 23/24 and in collaboration with Public Health at RBK and Kingston Voluntary Action (expanding the offer on Connected Kingston and promotion).
- Increase the offer of high quality respite/ short break options in the Royal Borough of Kingston, ensuring quality of care. Offers to be flexible, personalised and include specialist support for people with specific support needs (autism, PMLD, sensory impairments for example). Promote Shared lives scheme as an option.
- Use of assistive technology to support carers with taking a break, confident that there is a safety net for the person they care for.
- Promote and increase use of Direct Payments to promote choice of respite.
- Promote personal health budgets.
- Promote digital skills for carers through training, for example in partnership with Superhighways.
- Improved communication around hospital discharge both in terms of the carer and 'cared for', consideration of impact and support put in place for all.

## Adult Carers - Information and advice

### 01. Young and adult carers access information and guidance that is accessible and relevant.

- Develop and maintain diversity of supply of information and advice - e.g. explore ways to ensure printed information remains easily accessible, relevant and up to date; ensure language barriers in communications are reduced.
- Increase awareness of support services/ information available for carers amongst all VCSE sector organisations.
- Develop information on services on Connected Kingston that is accessible to carers and/or to those working with carers.
- Work with Citizens Advice around identification and advice for carers.
- Continue membership of Carers UK/ Carers digital resources and promote with local VCSE sector organisations, as well as health partners and businesses.
- Promote IT support program for carers.

## Adult Carers - Financial impact of caring

### 01. **Young and adult carers access the right financial support to minimise financial disadvantages related to caring, including maintaining their education and employment potential.**

- As a major employer in the Borough, ensure RBK has robust carers' policy and support - apply for Carers confident status.
- Support for carers to stay in employment if they so wish, especially female carers and Black, Asian, multi ethnic carers who are disproportionately affected by the financial impact of caring.
- Consistency of employers' support for carers in the workplace, including support to return/ access employment, including employment rights.
- Welfare rights training for staff.
- Support uptake of disability related expenses, including clarity on what this includes.

## Older carers

### 01. **Young and adult carers live a balanced life, being physically and emotionally well and having a life outside of caring.**

- Support for the carer once the cared for person passes away, i.e. post bereavement and transition into no longer being a carer, practical and emotional.
- Highlight the importance of emergency planning both short term and long term with VCSE partners, through carers assessments or individually if the carer is not willing to have a carers' assessment. Include promoting carers emergency card.

# Glossary

## Carers Health checks

The NHS Health Check is a health check-up for adults in England aged 40-74. It's designed to spot early signs of stroke, kidney disease, heart disease, type 2 diabetes or dementia.

## Carers assessments

If you care for someone, you can have an assessment to see what might help make your life easier. This is called a carer's assessment. It might recommend things like: someone to take over caring so you can take a break. gym membership and exercise classes to relieve stress.

## Day Opportunities framework

A list of approved providers in the Royal Borough of Kingston who offer day opportunities for residents, including respite.

## Disability related expenses

If you care for someone with a disability or a medical condition, there may be extra costs involved in helping them manage this. These are called disability-related expenses. There are many examples of these, as listed below, and they could vary from special dietary requirements to certain types of medication not available through the NHS.

## Make every contact count

Making every contact count (MECC) is an approach to behaviour change that utilises the millions of day to day interactions that organisations and people have with other people to encourage changes in behaviour that have a positive effect on the health and wellbeing of individuals, communities and populations.

## Personal Health budgets

A personal health budget is an amount of money to support someone's health and wellbeing needs, which is planned and agreed between them (or someone who represents them), and their local NHS team. It works in a similar way to personal budgets, which allow people to manage and pay for their social care needs.

## Recovery college

They provide a range of educational courses and resources to people who might be struggling with mental health issues, families, friends, mental health workers and anyone else who might be interested.

## Service specification

The service specifications define what should be delivered as part of the service.

## Social prescribing and Green social prescribing

Social prescribing and community-based support enable GPs, other health and care practitioners and local agencies to refer people to a link worker who gives people time and focuses on what matters to the individual. For some people this will be green social prescribing, which links them to nature-based interventions and activities, such as local walking for health schemes, community gardening and food-growing projects.

## Triangle of care

The Triangle of Care guide highlights the need for better involvement of carers and families in the care planning and treatment of people with mental ill-health. It emphasises the need for better local strategic involvement of carers and families in the care planning and treatment of people with mental ill-health.

**If you have difficulty reading this document or would like it in a different format, please call our helpline on 020 8547 5000 or ask someone to call on your behalf.**

**Kingston All Age Carers' Strategy  
2022 - 2027**

**The Royal Borough of Kingston upon  
Thames**

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