

Essex All Age Carers Strategy

Care Act 2014 Unpaid Carers

Unpaid carers provide vital support to their family and friends, which can cause a strain on their own lives: health, work, education, housing etc.

Since 1 April 2015, any adult carer who meets national eligibility criteria must be provided with services and/or direct payments for things like home help or social activities.

- Are needs the result of providing necessary care.
- Does the caring role have an effect on the carer.
- Is/has there likely to be significant impact on the carers wellbeing.

Even when the criteria are not met, local authorities have discretionary powers to provide support.

Those in receipt of Carers Allowance are still unpaid carers.

Drivers for change

- There are estimated to be in excess of 150,000 unpaid carers in Essex; all ages; unique situations from looking for a neighbour to providing care and support.
- 30% likely to be providing over 100 hours care per week.
- 35,000 people in receipt of carers allowance in Essex.
- 8,960 carers are known to Adult Social Care.
- 3,184 young carers received statutory assessments since 2017.
- Many do not identify as carers and a system approach is needed to supporting all unpaid carers of all ages.
- The ambition is to support the health and wellbeing of unpaid carers and prevent crisis occurring.

The All Age Carers strategy is designed deliver better for those who need support when they need it at the right time “Early Help”.

Carers' satisfaction and use of adult support services

CARERS WHO ASC HAVE PROVIDED INFORMATION, SUPPORT OR SERVICES TO IN PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS
SAMPLED IN THE SURVEY OF ADULT CARERS (SACE)

Measures that have improved in 2021/22 compared to 2018/19

- 82%** report no worries about personal safety (81%)
- 56%** are looking after themselves (50%)
- 50%** are using sitting services (23%)
- 32%** have enough social contact (23%)
- 32%** have encouragement & support (31%)
- 25%** have control over their lives (16%)
- 19%** are doing things they value or enjoy (10%)

Above the England and East of England averages with the exception to 'encouragement & support' average which similar to both.

Measures that have declined in 2021/22 compared to 2018/19

- 83%** report information is helpful (86 %)
- 66%** feel involved in discussions about their cared for persons support or services (67%)
- 58%** report information is easy to find (59%)
- 12%** use respite of more than 24 hours (20%)
offset by increase in sitting service take up (23% to 50%). Short notice/emergency respite declined in same period (18% to 10%)

Below the England and East of England averages with the exception to 'feeling involved' which is above the England but below East England avg.

The challenges and benefits of being a carer

RESIDENTS WHO IDENTIFY AS CARERS WHO WE MAY OR MAY NOT PROVIDE SUPPORT OR SERVICES TO WHO HAVE PARTICIPATED IN LIVED EXPERIENCE RESEARCH DONE AS PART OF THE ALL AGE CARERS STRATEGY

Carers reported to us that:

- ▶ Whilst many find aspects of their role enjoyable whilst, **others do not find it enjoyable at all**, and this may be impacting how well people feel supported.
- ▶ The **impact of the pandemic led some carers to feel unsupported**, as help dwindled (e.g. family members, sitter pool) and some took on extra responsibilities.
- ▶ Some **do not take up respite** as they can't take it with their spouse or feel they can leave their cared for person.
- ▶ There is some **confusion** over who care and carers assessments are for, with some carers feeling their needs are unmet.
- ▶ They value **having a life of their own and balance** between their caring, household, work life and free time, something which isn't always achieved.
- ▶ They appreciate the **trusting relationships** they have with **other carers and their support**, to socialise and develop knowledge / skills. Carers report bodies such as Carers First, has enabled this.

"None of it...it is draining and has made me lose my identity. I haven't worked for four years and it is a struggle to feel independent and confident, no time for myself". [Engagement surveys]

"The barriers [to working] are being in a caring role and balancing this with the need to meet family responsibilities whilst meeting my own needs"
[Amy, 70s, Carer, Self-employed, Interview]

"Online group has been a lifeline since Covid hit"
[Carers focus group]

six

Commitments to Carers

- 1 Carers can easily access the information, advice, guidance and support when they need it and early into their caring role.
- 2 Develop professional practice and processes to improve identification and support to carers.
- 3 Improve transitions for carers as they move through specific phases or life events in their caring role.
- 4 Carers will have increased opportunity to access good quality support, including opportunities for breaks, to maintain their own wellbeing and those they care for.
- 5 Carers' needs and rights will be understood and recognised across Essex communities.
- 6 Carers will be the experts that influence, shape and be involved in the decisions that are intended to improve their support and wellbeing.

Carers outcomes framework

Outcome for carers

Physically healthy and safe

Emotionally healthy and happy

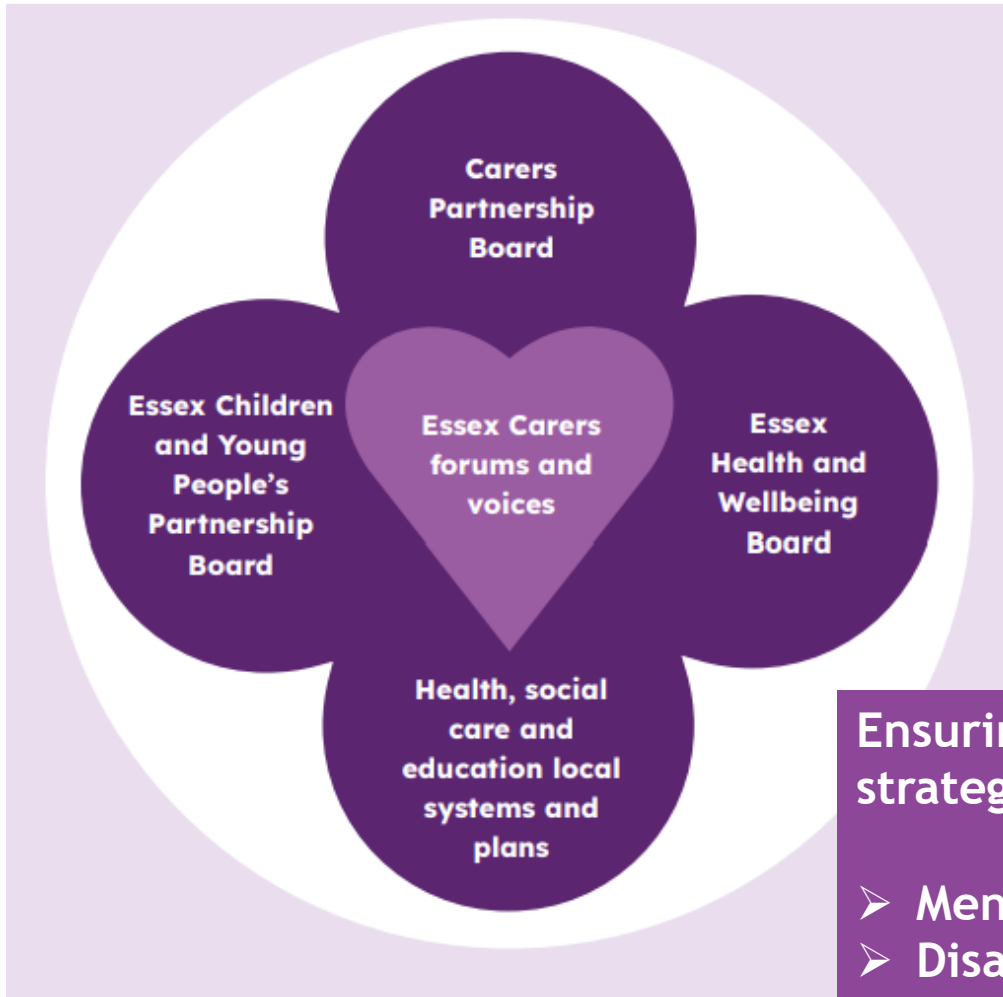
Connected to people and the community

Financial wellbeing

Stable and resilient

- ✓ You will feel empowered
- ✓ You will have increased confidence and good self-esteem
- ✓ You will have good health, mental wellbeing and feel safe
- ✓ You will feel cared for and respected
- ✓ You will have time for yourself to do what you choose to
- ✓ You will know about your rights and entitlements
- ✓ You will know about the conditions of those you care for
- ✓ You will know what is available for you and those you care for
- ✓ You will have improved educational and employment outcomes

System support for carers



Ensuring carers visible in all plans & strategies e.g.

- Mental Health
- Disability
- SEND Short breaks
- Domestic Abuse

Current Offer

- Direct Payments through assessments.
- Commissioned Information Advice and Guidance.
- Counselling.
- Time for You - short breaks.

The next 18 Months

- Assessment and review practice and processes.
- Develop a Think Carers Toolkit.
- Peer Support groups - transitions young people.
- Supported self assessment.
- Mobilise on-line.
- Redesign and commission the carers offer.
- Coproduction officers with lived experience.