

# Caring for our Carers

## Adult Carers Strategy 2025 - 2028

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**"Our vision is to create an empowered, inclusive, and supportive community in Oldham where all carers are recognised, valued, and equipped with the resources they need to thrive alongside those they care for."**



# Foreword

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**Oldham**  
Council

We are both honoured and excited to present Oldham Council's Adult Carers Strategy for the forthcoming years—a strategy that puts people at the heart of its mission. Unpaid carers are the hidden heroes of our community, providing invaluable support to family members, friends, and neighbours. In Oldham, we have more than 20,000 estimated carers making selfless contributions every day, often juggling multiple responsibilities while tending to the needs of their loved ones.

The Care Act 2014 recognises the vital role carers play in our society, and it is our statutory duty to ensure they receive the support and resources they need. Yet, we see it not just as an obligation but as a moral imperative to make Oldham a place where all carers—whether young, working-age, or elderly—feel acknowledged, supported, and empowered.

Your voice matters and we aim to listen, learn, and adapt accordingly. This strategy outlines our plans to provide holistic, person-centred support that acknowledges the unique challenges faced by each carer. We also recognise that the true success of this strategy will not be determined solely by the actions of Oldham Council but will be a community-wide effort. It will take collaboration across health, social care, the voluntary sector, local businesses, and, most importantly, carers themselves to create a supportive, inclusive environment.

So, as you read through this strategy, know that it is more than just a document; it is a pledge—a pledge to make Oldham a community where every carer is heard, valued, and given the tools to both provide care and take care of themselves.

Together, we can make Oldham a place where carers thrive.

With sincere regards,

Jayne Ratcliffe - Director of Adult  
Social Care,

Cllr Barbara Brownridge - Cabinet  
Member for Health and Adult Social  
Care



# Carers Foreword

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When my journey as a carer began, there was no formal induction, no instruction manual. My second child was born with Down's Syndrome, and at 31, I found myself in the irreplaceable role of a carer. Whether you come into this responsibility early or late in life, the objective is universal: to give the best possible care to our loved ones.

But caring is not just an emotional endeavour—it's a maze of rights, entitlements, and often convoluted systems. Throughout my 35 years of caregiving, I've navigated complex organisations and deciphered intricate documents that seem engineered to confuse rather than help. It's a task that feels like it needs its own set of professional qualifications.

That's why the supportive community of carers I've found, especially through leading the Carers for Positive Change group, has been invaluable. Sharing knowledge and lived experiences lightens our collective burden and often provides solutions to problems we thought was insurmountable.

This new Adults Carers Strategy for Oldham is a monumental step towards breaking down the barriers we face. It aims to simplify the complexities, enhance our visibility, and prioritise our well-being—both as individuals and as carers. It's more than just a document; it's a commitment to making our roles a bit less lonely and a lot more supported.

I'm hopeful that this strategy will serve as a roadmap for current and future carers, guiding us towards a future where our contributions are not just acknowledged but valued and supported in tangible ways.

**Oldham Carer**

# Introduction to our strategy

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## What is adult social care?

Adult Social Care supports adults of all ages, disabilities, and backgrounds to be independent, healthy, safe, and well. We understand that for most people, staying independent is important for ensuring that you live a happy and fulfilling life.

## Our Commitment to Carers

Oldham Council proudly introduces our three-year Adult Carers Strategy, fulfilling a statutory obligation under the Care Act 2014. With over 20,000 carers in Oldham, this strategy aims to support both the carers and those they care for.

Our carers range from young people balancing education, to adults juggling work, and to the elderly who may also need support. They are vital to our community and deserve to be recognised, valued, and supported.

This strategy was shaped by consulting with our carers and stakeholders. It focuses on enhancing information, promoting well-being, and fostering partnerships. Our goal is to ensure all carers in Oldham feel supported and empowered.

**In 2024, 506 new Carers consultations took place and were provided with guidance and support.**

**In 2024 we completed 996 carers assessments**

**1 in 4 unpaid carers have poor or very poor mental health (State of Caring Survey 2023)**

I dealt with Stephen, I'm sorry I don't remember his surname. He was very professional and he listened to me as I spoke which I think it's a lovely skill. I felt at ease while we went through the form with him. I received my carers grant at the time Stephen said which was very welcome.

I'm hoping to continue to have Stephen as my support.

You are all there to support parents and children, when we need you. You can't do anything more than you have already done for me and my family, I can't thank you all enough.

Stephen is the most understanding advisor ever, he listens.

Although it was done on the phone it was comprehensive and was understandable.

I just want to say thank you to you and everyone at young carers, she really enjoys it there. They have made plenty of friends and developed excellent relationships with the leaders. Thank you so much for the excellent support you provide.

Stephen was very professional polite and made me feel at ease. He also gave me some contact details for groups I could access.

I had reassessment as I was struggling. The assessor made sure I received a payment to help take my children to Blackpool. Which made me extremely happy as the kids had a great night.....thank you

The staff are brilliant and they talk to her and support her with any problems and challenges she has at home or school. This has really made a difference with her confidence at school. I can't thank the young carers team enough, without going we wouldn't be where we are now.

The lady I spoke to was very good she gave me a lot of useful advice and listened to what I had to say

The assessor was good at her job very patient and kind explained everything in a friendly and professional manner and was very informative.

# Our Commitments

Our strategy is rooted in the lived experiences and needs of unpaid carers in Oldham. We are committed to not only acknowledging the invaluable role that carers play in our community but also to ensuring their well-being, empowerment, and active involvement in shaping the services and support they receive.

Our aims are framed in 'I statements,' placing the carer at the centre of our commitments. These aims serve as guiding pillars, articulating what we strive to achieve for every carer in Oldham, irrespective of age, circumstance, or the extent of care they provide.

**I am recognised early as a carer. Professionals in health, social care, and schools ensure I get timely support, especially during key moments. My experiences shape better outcomes for carers.**

**I am supported by a community that collaborates effectively. Through joint efforts of health, social care, the voluntary sector, and other key partners, I receive integrated support that recognises and meets my needs in a coordinated and person-centred manner.**

**I always have access to information and advice when I need it just for unpaid carers in Oldham. There are training and workshops available to help me learn, grow and be supported in my role as a carer.**

**I am empowered to maintain my own wellbeing while caring for others. I have access to tailored support, resources, and services that recognise my unique needs and value my contributions. I am assured of flexibility in my work and the availability of quality care when needed.**

**I am heard, valued, and celebrated in my community. Through open communication, I actively shape the support I receive, ensuring both my independence and that of those I care for are prioritised and enhanced.**



# Commitment 1

## I Statement:

"I am recognised early as a carer. Professionals in health and social care ensure I get timely support, especially during key moments. My experiences shape better outcomes for carers."

## What we will do:

- We will boost awareness by disseminating information and resource material across our borough to increase visibility of unpaid carers.
- We will continue to ensure our services, and partners understand how to recognise and respond to carers needs.
- We will create clear, concise, and easy-read guides about who can be a carer, what's involved and how to get support.



## How we will measure:

- ◆ Count of new carer referrals received.
- ◆ Number and attendance of drop-in sessions specifically for carers.
- ◆ How many important partners are working with our carer service.
- ◆ Total number of care and support packages.
- ◆ Feedback from "You Said, We Did" sessions.
- ◆ Wait times for Carer's assessments and reviews.



# Commitment 2

## I Statement:

"I am supported by a community that collaborates effectively. Through joint efforts of health, social care, the voluntary sector, and other key partners, I receive integrated support that recognises and meets my needs in a coordinated and person-centred manner."

## What we will do:

- We will set up clear plans with health, social care, the voluntary sector, and other essential partners to support carers better.
- We will bring back the Carers Partnership Board to keep everyone talking and working together.
- We have integrated our carer and cared for Social Care service offers.

## How we will measure:

- Frequency and records of Carers Partnership Board meetings.
- Audits of reviews of support plans for carers
- Number of joint initiatives or projects undertaken with health, social care, and voluntary sectors specifically for carers.





# Commitment 3

## I Statement:

"I always have access to information and advice when I need it just for unpaid carers in Oldham. There is accessible support available to help me learn, grow and be supported in my role as a carer."

## What we will do:

- We will maintain a dedicated contact point, directory and website for carers
- We will strengthen partnerships with local organisations to refine and enhance carer support resources.
- We will prioritise continuous feedback from carers, ensuring our strategies remain responsive to their evolving needs.
- We will ensure written materials are available for those who cannot access our digital offer.

## How we will measure:

- Frequency of visits to the carer-dedicated website.
- Volume of contacts responded to by our Carer's Link Officers.
- Number of local partnerships established to enhance carer resources.
- Frequency of partner support service interventions accessed by Carers.



# Commitment 4

## I Statement:

"I am empowered to maintain my own wellbeing while caring for others. I have access to tailored support, resources, and services that recognise my unique needs and value my contributions. I am assured of flexibility in my work and the availability of quality care when needed."

## What we will do:

- We will launch wellbeing initiatives specifically for the physical and emotional health of carers.
- We will offer flexible care plans that are carer led and tailored.
- We will collaborate with local businesses to champion and promote carer-inclusive workplace practices.
- We will ensure care services are available and of high quality for when carers need a break.



## How we will measure:

- ♦ Number of social and recreational activities specifically designed for carers.
- ♦ Audit of care plans and direct payments.
- ♦ Compliance rates with caring-related legislation and guidelines.
- ♦ Availability of respite care support where required.
- ♦ Number of local businesses adopting carer-friendly workplace policies.



# Commitment 5

## I Statement:

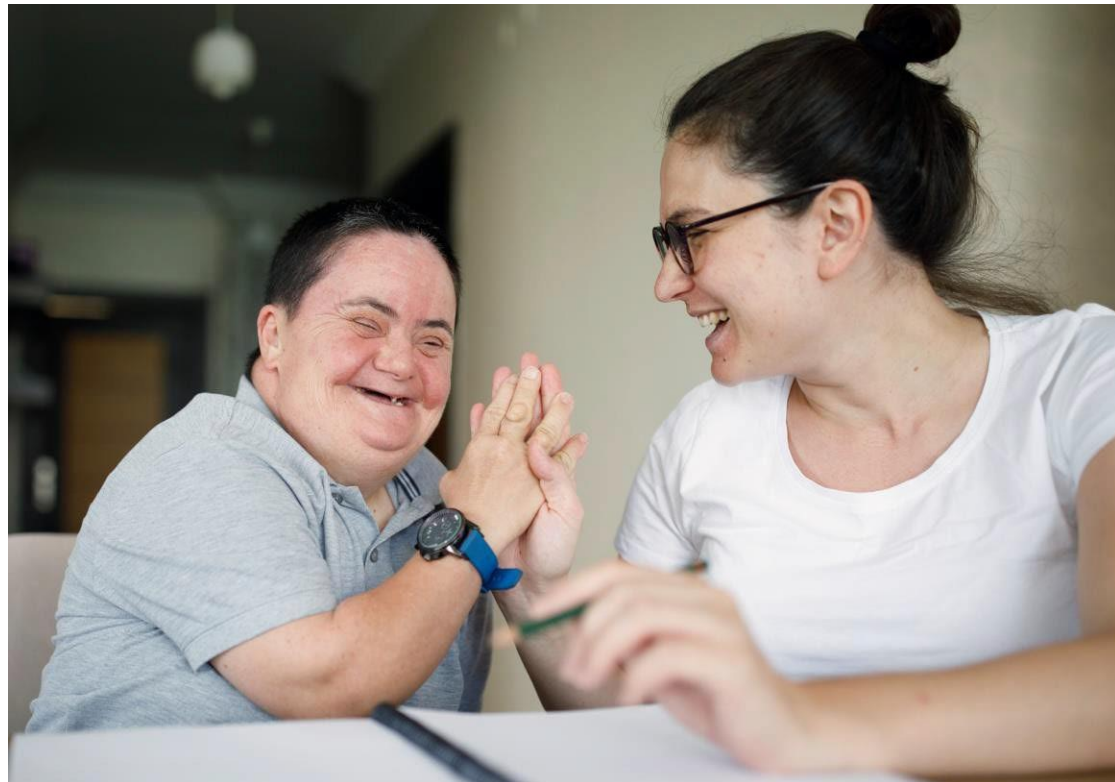
"I am heard, valued, and celebrated in my community. Through open communication, I actively shape the support I receive, ensuring both my independence and that of those I care for are prioritised and enhanced."

## What we will do:

- We will launch community events and campaigns that recognise and celebrate the contributions of carers.
- We will foster partnerships with local organisations to advocate for carer recognition and benefits.
- We will ensure that carer feedback directly influences policy changes, service improvements, and new initiatives, prioritising their unique insights and experiences.

## How we will measure:

- Number of attendees and activities during Carers Week celebrations.
- Frequency and outcomes of Carers Partnership Board meetings.
- Number of carers involved in shaping the strategy.
- Implementation and results of strengths-based assessments for carers.
- Count and quality of advice, information, and support offerings, including both sign-posting and practical support.





# Community groups

In Oldham, we are proud to have a vibrant network of community groups dedicated to supporting carers at various stages of their journey. These groups play an invaluable role in providing emotional support, practical advice, and a sense of belonging to carers who often juggle numerous responsibilities. Ranging from specialised groups focusing on particular care needs to more general support networks, these community groups are essential pillars in our strategy to ensure carers feel valued, supported, and empowered.

Whether you're a adult providing for a family member, or someone who cares for a friend, there's a community group in Oldham for you. These groups offer a range of services including support meetings, educational workshops, and social events, all designed to enhance the well-being of carers in our community.



[Dementia Carers Groups](#)



[Cancer Support Group](#)



[Spring Board Group](#)



[Young Carers Group](#)



[Autism support group](#)



[Oldham Directory](#)



[Carers' Drop In](#)



[LGBTQIA+ Support](#)



**Click a  
group to  
find out**

**more!**



# How we developed our strategy



**Oldham**  
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Our strategy is deeply rooted in the principles of co-production and shared decision-making, ensuring that it reflects the genuine needs, experiences, and aspirations of the carers and communities we serve. We believe that the best outcomes arise when those most affected by policies have a say in shaping them. Here is how various groups have been involved in shaping this strategy:

- ◆ **Online Survey**

We received responses from 165 diverse unpaid carers via an online survey, providing key insights into service gaps and unmet needs.

- ◆ **Adult Social Care Staff**

Our Adult Social Care team, with their on-the-ground experience, helped identify practical challenges and solutions for adult carers..

- ◆ **Carers Workshop**

An adult-focused workshop helped pinpoint daily challenges and explored how the council can offer better, tailored support.

- ◆ **Stakeholders**

Consultations with healthcare providers, community groups, and businesses ensured a holistic and aligned strategy.

- ◆ This strategy is a product of collective wisdom and shared ambitions. It is designed to serve the real needs of carers in Oldham, thanks to the invaluable contributions from each of these groups.

