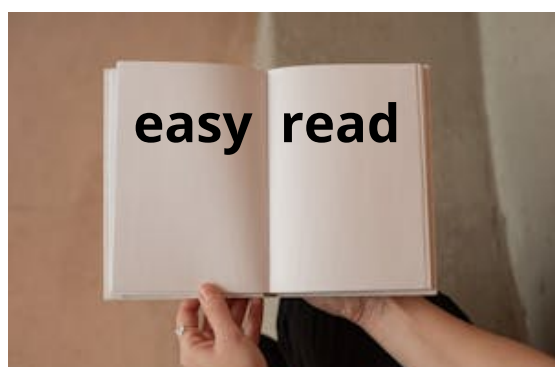


# Improving Lives with Carers

## West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership Local Carers' Strategy 2024 to 2026



# What is a strategy?



A **strategy** is a plan that describes a way to do something.

It helps us know what we want to do and how we will do it.

This strategy is called Improving Lives with Carers.

## What is this strategy about?



We wrote this strategy for carers.

**Carers** are people who look after others and don't get paid for it.

The strategy talks about who carers are in West Dunbartonshire, and how important they are.

It also describes what support carers can get from the Health and Social Care Partnership and its partners.

In the rest of this document we will say **HSCP** for short, to mean Health and Social Care Partnership.

## How did we decide what to put in the strategy?

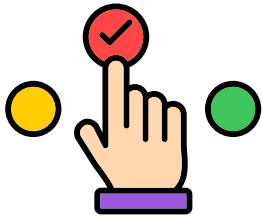


To decide what to put in the strategy, we looked at national and local plans. We asked carers what's important to them.

We learned that every carer has different needs and different things they want to achieve.

The HSCP and its partners will work together with them to help make these things happen.

# What are the most important parts of the strategy?



- **Making sure carers have a say in decisions:**
- This means they get to be a part of important choices, like how services are run, planning their own care and the care of the people they look after.



- **Helping carers deal with the effects of COVID-19 and the rising costs of living:**

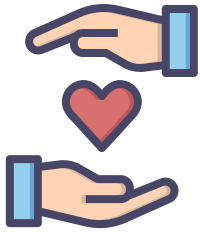
We want to support carers through the things still happening because of the pandemic and the challenges of managing the increasing costs of living.



- **Making carers' lives better:**

Caring for someone can be hard. We aim to help by getting involved early on and preventing problems. We also want to give carers access to good support, like breaks to take care of themselves while they're busy looking after others.

# What does 'carer' mean?



A **carer** is someone who looks after someone else without getting paid.

A **young carer** is someone up to 16 years old.

A **young adult carer** is between 16 and 24 years old.

An **adult carer** is over 25 years old.

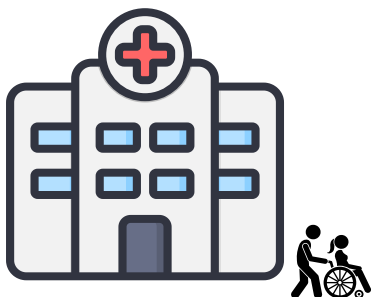
## What do carers do?



Carers can help with things like:

- personal care (like helping with washing or dressing)
- housework
- handling money
- shopping
- getting to appointments
- giving and managing medication

Caring could also mean keeping someone company, giving emotional support, and making sure they are safe.



Carers can also help people:

- stay in their own homes
- get home from hospital sooner
- avoid going to the hospital when it's not needed
- keep mentally healthy by preventing loneliness

# Caring in West Dunbartonshire



Many carers in West Dunbartonshire spend 35 hours or more each week caring. This is like having a full-time job and means they may be able to claim money to help called **Carer's Allowance**.



**Carers of West Dunbartonshire** is the organisation that works with the HSCP to help adult carers.



**Y Sort It** is the organisation that helps young carers and young adult carers.

# Understanding Adult Carers' Needs



The HSCP work with carers and people from Carers of West Dunbartonshire and Y Sort It. They formed a group to make **eligibility criteria** which are rules to help decide the best level and type of support you might need.

They also help carers and staff know which services are best for them based on how much their caring role affects their lives.



Adult Carers and Young Adult Carers are asked to complete a form called an **Adult Carer Assessment and Support Plan** to help understand what can be done to support every carer.

The **Adult Carer Assessment and Support Plan**, and a guide for those who want to complete it online is available. There is also an **animation** which is like a cartoon to help people understand the process. They can all be found by clicking on this link [here](#).

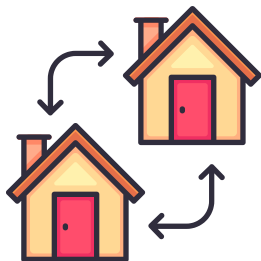
# Understanding Young Carers' Needs



Young Carers complete a form called a **Young Carer's Statement** to measure how caring affects them.

Copies of West Dunbartonshire Young Carers Statement and Referral Guidance can be found online by clicking on this link [West Dunbartonshire Young Carers - Resources - Carers Trust](#)

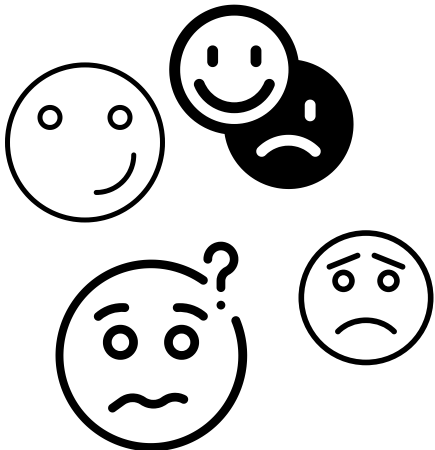
## How Caring Affects Adult Carers



In their Adult Carer Assessment and Support Plan, many carers told us they have had to change parts of their life to care for someone. Some carers had to stop working or move house and live with the person they care for.

Carers often say they feel lonely. Many carers also have their own health problems and have to manage looking after themselves while looking after someone else. We want to help carers to feel better.

## How Caring Affects Young Carers



In their Young Carer's Statement, young carers said they worry and feel lonely, but they also feel happy and proud to help someone they love.

Some worry about bullying and that their friends and teachers might not understand about what they do in their caring role.

We will work to support families and make sure all their needs are met.

## How did Covid-19 Affect Carers?



The Covid-19 pandemic was hard for carers. They worried about the people they care for and felt more alone compared to those who didn't have a caring role.

We want to use this plan to help make things better for them.

## How is the Cost of Living Crisis Affecting Carers?



The **cost of living crisis** means things are more expensive than they used to be. Carers are affected more by the cost of living crisis than others.

The higher costs for carers can include energy bills, equipment costs, and special food for the person they care for.

## What Rights do Carers have?



The **Carers (Scotland) Act 2016** is a law that helps make life better for carers. The Act helps to identify carers, includes them in decisions, and makes sure there are services available to support them.

In West Dunbartonshire, we are dedicated to following The Carers Act completely. We want to make sure that carers' rights are respected, and they get the support they need to have a good life while taking care of others.



# Local Carer Strategy 2020-2023

We've been working on the Local Carers' Strategy from 2020 to 2023. Here are some things we've done:



- We changed how carers access support, making Carers of West Dunbartonshire the main place for all carer support.
- We talked to carers about how our services that affect them should be.
- We made a form to help us understand carers' strengths and what they want to achieve. Carers can now fill it out online by clicking this link [here](#).
- We helped staff in the HSCP be more aware of the role of carers by making an online training module.
- We made sure all carers get support based on how much caring affects them.
- We helped Carers of West Dunbartonshire with making our community a place where carers are understood better, this includes the [Valued Carers Card](#).
- We invested £260,000 for a Short Breaks project.
- We are looking at how to make breaks better for carers.



- We have a member of staff called a **Liaison Officer** who leads and organises help for carers.
- We created a network in schools to help young carers. We also trained new teachers so they know about young carers.
- We worked with an organisation called Carers Trust Scotland on a project for young carers and built a special place for them to take short breaks.
- We made Bonhill Community Centre better for young carers.

The new plan for 2024 to 2026 will keep building on these successes.

# The Carers Development Group

The **Carers Development Group** is a group of people that helps make sure carers get the right support. Its members are made up of carers, people from organisations that support carers, the HSCP, and Education services.



## What the Carers Development Group Does:

- They are in charge of making sure the plan for supporting carers is happening and working well.
- They watch and report on how well the plan for supporting carers is going.
- They make sure the money set aside for supporting carers is used the right way to meet the plan's goals.
- They look for chances to work together with others and find money to support carers.

## Protecting Carers' Rights

In Improving Lives with Carers we promise to treat everyone with **respect** -treating people with kindness and showing their thoughts and feelings are important.



We also promise to **protect their rights** - making sure we obey to the rules that keep you safe from harm and say how you should be treated.

We did a special check called an **Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)**. This helps us make sure everything we do is fair and includes everyone. It looks at how our plans and services might affect different groups of people. This way, we can be sure that what we do works well for everyone.

# How We Will Check the Plan is Working



We have a **Delivery Plan** - this is plan that shows what work will be done and when it will be done by.

It also shows how we will see if things have changed.

We will check how well the work of Improving Lives with Carers is going.

We will write a report every year to show the work that has taken place. The report will be available for everyone to read.

# Services for Carers in West Dunbartonshire

West Dunbartonshire  
Health & Social Care Partnership

## 1. The HSCP can help with things like:

- developing an Adult Carer Assessment and Support Plan or Young Carer Statement.
- respite and short breaks
- **Self-Directed Support.** This is how adult social care is provided in Scotland. It aims to make sure that when people need social care, they are involved in choosing and controlling the type of support they receive
- advice and signposting to other services

For more details, you can visit the website: [www.WDHSCP.org.uk](http://www.WDHSCP.org.uk)

## 2. Carers of West Dunbartonshire can help with things like:

- developing an Adult Carer Assessment and Support Plan
- Carer health and wellbeing
- emotional support
- hospital discharging arrangements
- advocacy
- signposting and support to access other services
- information and advice

Contact details:

- Website: [www.wdcarers.org](http://www.wdcarers.org)
- Telephone: 0141 941 1550
- Address: 84 Dumbarton Road, Clydebank G81 1UG

## 3. Y Sort It can help with things like:

- assessment and completion of Young Carer Statement.
- accessing relevant information and support to understand information
- ongoing support and advocacy
- one-to-one, drop-in, and group support
- changing from youth to adult services

Contact details:

- Website: [www.ysortit.com](http://www.ysortit.com)
- Telephone: 0141 941 3308
- Address: 5 West Thomson Street, Clydebank, G81 3EA



#### **4. West Dunbartonshire Community Volunteering Services (WDCVS):**

- supports, promotes and develops volunteering and third sector activity across the West Dunbartonshire
- offers Ask ACCESS social prescribing hub service
- signposts and supports people to connect with opportunities for health and wellbeing

Contact details:

- Website: [www.WDCVS.com](http://www.WDCVS.com)
- Telephone: 0141 941 0886
- Address: Arcadia Business Centre, Miller Lane, Clydebank



#### **5. West Dunbartonshire Macmillan Carer Services** can help with:

- support for those caring for someone with cancer
- emotional and practical support
- access to support groups and more

Contact details:

- Website: [www.macmillanorg.uk](http://www.macmillanorg.uk)
- Telephone: 01389 776439
- Email: [catherine.barry@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:catherine.barry@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)