Recognising and valuing Carers in Sunderland
A multi-agency approach to supporting carers
2009 - 2025
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Acknowledgements

This strategy has been developed by the Multi-Agency Carers Strategy Group, which included the following organisations:

Sunderland City Council:
• Health, Housing and Adult Services
• Community and Cultural Services
• Children’s Services
• Family, Adult and Community Learning
• Safer Communities Team
• Office of Chief Executive

Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust

City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust

Sunderland Carers Centre

People Into Employment

Physical Disabilities Alliance

Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Trust

Alzheimer’s Society
Foreword
by Councillor Norma Wright,
Portfolio Holder for Healthy City

One in three people will become a carer at some point in their lives. Carers perform a crucial role in families and in their communities by providing care and support to people who otherwise would not be able to manage because of disability, illness or frailty. The contribution that carers make and the issues they face, however, is often not recognised or understood and therefore not valued.

When I talk to carers, they often tell me that by getting the services right for the person they care for, it will help them too. Through the transformation of adult social care, where person centred packages of care are the norm and people have real choice and control over the services they receive, we will see benefits, not only for individuals but also their carers.

However, we also need to ensure that carers are enabled to have a life outside of caring, where they can continue to work, access training or leisure opportunities and to look after their own health and well-being. For young carers we have a responsibility to make sure that they are not providing inappropriate levels of care and that they can enjoy their childhood and do well in school. This means that we need to recognise and understand the complex issues that carers face on a daily basis when they juggle the support they give with their other responsibilities.

I am therefore delighted to be introducing this strategy, importantly, a multi-agency strategy. Through this strategy and its delivery plans we aim to ensure that the contribution made by carers is recognised and valued, and that they receive the support they need, both to care and also have a life outside of caring. It is not the responsibility of one agency alone to support carers, we need all partners in the city to understand what they can do and to work together to achieve our ambitious, but achievable, vision for carers.

Caring involves, or has the potential to involve, each and every member of society, this is why we must recognise and value the immense contribution that carers make everyday and ensure that support to them is improved.
Purpose of the strategy

In the context of changing family structures, alongside the impact of an ageing population, an increasing number of people will become a carer at some point in their lives. As carers make up an increasing proportion of the population, they need a system that is on their side, a system that places them at its heart and that supports them with their caring responsibilities, but also to have a life outside of caring. Above all, carers need a system that recognises and values the increasingly important role that they play in society.

The vision for carers is to ensure that the immense contribution made by carers everyday is recognised and valued by society, and that they are respected as an expert partner in the provision of support to the person they care for. Carers will be enabled to have a life outside of caring where they can contribute to the social, cultural and economic life of the city and to fulfil their aspirations for a full, healthy, safe and prosperous life.

The purpose of this strategy is to set out a framework for partners to work together to achieve the vision for carers and enable people in Sunderland who have caring responsibilities now or in the future to have an ordinary life – a life outside of caring and an identity that is separate from that of the people they support. This means that they are not disadvantaged because of their caring role and that they are able to access the same opportunities as others. For example, regardless of their caring role people should still be able to remain in or return to employment; to have financial security; to continue or begin to access leisure; learning and educational opportunities; to have good health and to be able to maintain their social networks. In the case of young carers, they should have the opportunity to enjoy their childhood and have the same opportunities as their peers so they can thrive, develop and learn and they should not be providing inappropriate levels of care. To achieve the vision, 14 outcomes have been identified, each of which are supported by delivery plans that will be revised and updated on a three yearly basis.

The strategy has been developed by the Multi-Agency Carers Strategy Group which includes, carer support organisations and partners from across the city. It sets out areas for action that carers have identified as being important to them and that would enable them to have an ordinary life. The strategy is aligned to the Sunderland Strategy to ensure that carers are central to achieving the vision for Sunderland.
Who is a carer?

A carer is someone who, without payment, provides help and support to a friend, neighbour or relative who could not manage otherwise because of frailty, illness or disability (The Princess Royal Trust).

The strategy covers three broad groups of carers:

• Adult carers - who provide care for another adult, such as a spouse, partner, relative or friend.

• Parent carers - a parent or guardian who provides more support than other parents because their child is ill or disabled.

• Young carers – somebody who is under the age of 18 who carries out caring tasks for another member of their family or close friend who is ill or disabled, often taking on the type of responsibility that an adult would have.

The strategy does not cover paid care workers or people who provide care on a voluntary basis through a third sector organisation.

Carers are a diverse group with many people moving in and out of the caring role, possibly a number of times during their life course. Some may only provide care for a short time, while others may have caring responsibilities for a long period of their life, or the whole life of the person they support, for example parent carers. Caring involves, or has the potential to involve, each and every member of society.

What do carers do?

The care given by an individual will vary depending on the circumstances of their situation and may change over time or from day to day, but it is likely to include:

• Personal care – washing, dressing, assisting with meals, prompting or administering medication and other similar tasks.

• Domestic tasks – shopping, housework, food preparation and budget management.

• Emotional support – giving reassurance to someone who may be distressed, anxious or confused.
Carers in the UK

- There are around 6 million carers in the UK (DoH, 2006) and every year 2 million people will become a carer (www.carers.org.uk).

- People caring more than 50 hours a week (1.25 million) are twice as likely not to be in good health as those who are not carers.

- Three quarters of carers are financially worse off because of their caring responsibilities. In addition, 400,000 people combine full time work with caring more than 20 hours per week (DoH, 2006). Over 3 million people juggle care with work.

- There are also estimated to be 50,000 young carers in the UK - young people under the age of 18 who might be helping to look after a parent with physical disabilities or mental health problems, or who may be caring for a brother or sister with learning disabilities.

- Carers save the economy £87 billion per year, which is what it would cost to replace them if they stopped providing care.

- By 2037, it is estimated that the number of carers would have to increase by half to 9 million to keep pace with the rising levels of frailty and disability (www.carers.org.uk).

The contribution that carers make to society cannot be underestimated and they should be recognised and valued for the enormous contribution they make everyday. However, many carers face a number of issues, which they report derive from a lack of recognition of the contribution they make to society, for example:

- 1 in 3 carers are not able to return to work because the right alternative care is not available.

- 1 in 5 carers are forced to give up work because of their caring responsibilities, losing on average £11,000 in income. This can lead to isolation and poverty.

- Carers face barriers when they try to improve their skills, particularly as training and education opportunities conflict with their caring responsibilities.

- 625,000 carers suffer mental and physical ill health as a direct consequence of the stress and physical demands of caring.

- The benefits system does not recognise the contribution carers make to society. The main benefit for carers – Carer’s Allowance – is just £50 a week for a minimum of 35 hours, equivalent to £1.44 an hour.
Carers in Sunderland

There are more carers in Sunderland than the national average and more provide care for over 50 hours a week. According to the 2001 Census, Sunderland had a population of 280,807, of which, around 32,000 people reported themselves to be a carer. However, it is important to remember that many people do not consider themselves to be a carer, they are just looking after their mother, son, or best friend, just getting on with it and doing what anyone else would in the same situation, therefore the true figure is likely to be higher. Carers in Sunderland save the economy £529.5 million per year - this is what it would cost the city if the care they provide had to be replaced (Carers UK and Leeds University, 2007).

The number of carers in Sunderland can be broken down as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Number of people who provide unpaid care between 1 to 19 hours per week</th>
<th>Number of people who provide unpaid care between 20 and 49 hours per week</th>
<th>Number of people who provide unpaid care 50 or more hours per week</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 17</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>1,002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 - 59</td>
<td>14,754</td>
<td>3,272</td>
<td>5,164</td>
<td>23,190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 - 74</td>
<td>2985</td>
<td>830</td>
<td>2,450</td>
<td>6,265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75+</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>664</td>
<td>1,307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>19,025</td>
<td>4,386</td>
<td>8,353</td>
<td>31,764</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What has the city achieved so far for carers?

Carers are currently supported by a range of organisations in the city. One of the aims of this strategy is to ensure that this support is co-ordinated and that any future developments are in line with the vision for carers.

The support currently provided includes:

• Sunderland City Council was awarded Beacon Council Status for supporting carers in 2005. The award recognised the significant partnership activity taking place, particularly within health and social care for the benefit of carers. It also recognised the input from carer support organisations and carers, in shaping and planning services that carers see as important for the people they care for and for carers themselves.

• Sunderland City Council’s directorate of Health, Housing and Adult Services has a successful history of working with, and supporting carers and carer support organisations. The directorate provides grant funding to a number of carer support organisations including Sunderland Carers Centre and the Alzheimer’s Society. It also ensures that carers and carer support organisations are involved in planning and shaping services through working groups such as the General Managers and Carer Representatives Group. Health, Housing and Adult Services supports carers through a range of services, and working with the Carers Centre, it has been responsible for the implementation of Carers Emergency Planning.

• Carers are enabled to maintain and improve their own well-being through initiatives developed with the City Council’s Community and Cultural Services. Carers who are in receipt of carers allowance receive concessionary status enabling them to access the city’s sports and leisure facilities. The Wellness Service has undertaken targeted work with the Carers Centre to ensure links are established with carers and the Community Wellness Programme, through distributing Wellness Guides via the Carers Centre.

• Sport and Leisure have entered into a partnership arrangement with Children’s Services regarding Looked After Children. This provides support for young people who are within the care system in the city. Community Services provide free Life cards for use by these children and also their carers, so that they are both able to access activities at a cheaper rate. The scheme administered by Sport and Leisure provides opportunities for children who may otherwise have found it difficult to access the city’s leisure facilities.

• The needs of carers and ex-carers were recognised very early on during the pre-delivery review process of the Northern Way Worklessness Pilot. A Carers into Employment seminar was held to identify opportunities to enable carers to return to employment. Following the event, interested parties were invited to tender for a bespoke service to support carers and former carers to return to employment. A contract was awarded to Sunderland Carers Centre and the results of the pilot are encouraging. Interest in the project has been widespread and may prove instrumental in a positive change to the mainstream provision provided by the Department for Work and Pensions. Sunderland City Council are actively looking at ways to continue this and the other projects that were part of the pilot.
• Sunderland City Council values all employees and is committed to helping them achieve a work-life balance. In order to help employees to balance their work and caring responsibilities and to provide a supportive environment, the council currently offers a number of options to its carer employees. Flexible working is the foundation of the approach at Sunderland and all employees have the right to request to work flexibly. An employee who requires a long-term change to their working arrangements, in order to allow them to exercise their caring responsibilities, can apply for flexible working. In addition, the council offers carers leave/emergency time off to care for dependents. Specifically, in the short-term, managers may use their discretion to grant an employee paid leave of up to 5 days per leave year, in order to support emergency caring responsibilities. Furthermore, carers have access to confidential employee counselling services. These services include access to face-to-face counselling via the Occupational Health Unit and access to telephone-based support through a number of specialist organisations. The council is continuing to develop its employment policies and practices that support council employees who have caring responsibilities, and to provide good quality information and advice to its carer employees.

• City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust developed a Carers Strategy in September 2004 and it is now firmly embedded within the Trust. The strategy aims to work in partnership with patients and carers to ensure the focus on patient choice. As well as promoting the need to engage with local partnership agencies, it emphasises the training of front line staff, aimed at improving the quality of care based on patient and carer experiences and as a result this has been incorporated for example into the regular Health Care Assistants training programme. The Patients Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) and the Matrons, link regularly with the Carers Centre and Alzheimer's Society, as well as a number of support groups, e.g. MS society. The Trust learns from patient/carer experiences through feedback from PALS and complaints and by Clinical Governance Groups by, for example, presenting a patient and carer episode as part of the medical and nursing staff training programme. In neurology a carer, via PALS has been instrumental in the introduction of the Collett Memorial Training Day, which was held in December 2008, jointly with the Hospice for medical and nursing staff. The lessons learned and changes that have resulted, have extended beyond City Hospitals Sunderland. Senior members of City Hospitals have spent time with carers and will so do regularly in the future.

• Northumberland, Tyne and Wear Trust greatly value the very important work of family and friends caring for people who use our services. The Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Trust want to work in partnership with carers to ensure it carries out its role more effectively and to listen to what carers say so, that it might work more efficiently. To achieve this the Trust is committed to the principles outlined in a ‘Carers’ Charter’, developed in partnership with local carers and carer organisations. The charter is based on involvement with carers throughout the Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Trust. It details how the Trust will work in partnership with carers and provide support and help including ‘recognising and listening to carers’; ‘valuing carers’; ‘informing and advising carers’; ‘involving carers in the care and treatment of the person they care for’; ‘involving carers in the planning, development and evaluation of services’ and ‘help to guide and support carers’. This includes informing carers about their right to a carers assessment and providing them with the opportunity for a carers assessment with Local Authority partners. Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Trust have also undertaken a commitment to develop a Trust wide strategy for involving young carers, which will involve Recognition, Support, Information and Training.
Over the last year, support for carers of people with substance misuse problems has developed significantly with the launch of two new services South Area Parents Support (SAPS) and Families United Support Help In Addiction (FUSHIA). Together with the Carers Centre these services can offer direct one to one support, group work sessions around a range of activities, guidance and signposting to appropriate organisations. A bi-monthly carers meeting supported by the Safer Sunderland Partnership provides an opportunity for these organisations to work in partnership, share challenges and good practice. The National 10 Year Drug Strategy (2008-2018) Protecting Families & Communities also highlights the significant role carers can play in drug and alcohol treatment. Recognising this, carer representation feeds into local commissioning decisions across Sunderland through the Joint Commissioning Group.

There are many third sector organisations in the city providing support to carers. These include Sunderland Carers Centre, The Alzheimer’s Society, the MS Society and People into Employment (PIE). These organisations provide valuable support to carers ranging from ‘a listening ear’, advice and information and peer support. Voice for Carers is an umbrella group for carers support organisations and it represents carers on various strategic working groups in the city. Voice for Carers ensures that carers are involved in and can shape both strategy and service planning and developments.

There are now 17 Children’s Centres across the city working in partnership with other agencies supporting children and families in local communities. Children’s Centres offer inclusive services for disabled children and their families. The centres provide a range of support to carers and parents of children under 5. This includes; access to training; short term supported child care to support parents in emergency situations or to attend hospital appointments; family support including a sympathetic ear, a guiding hand and advice. Early Support has been embraced within Children Centres across the city. It is lead by parents and supported by Health Co-ordinators. The support is aimed at children with additional needs and it brings together relevant agencies and partners to ensure the child and family’s needs are met and to avoid duplication of meetings, appointments and services. A Disabled Children’s working group is responsible for developing services for disabled children and their families across the city. Parent/carer representation on this group supports the views of parent/carers needs and future developments.

Sunderland City Council’s Children’s Services works closely with carer support organisations, including Sunderland Carers Centre and Contact a Family, to ensure that the needs of young carers and parent carers are addressed. Children’s Services recently supported the establishment of the Sunderland Parent Carer Council. Parent carers and carer support organisations participate in planning and shaping services through representation on strategic planning groups and the annual Parent Carer Forum.

Sunderland is a Family Pathfinders and Extended Pathfinders for young carers site. The Extended Pathfinders for young carers project will address in more detail the support needs of families with young carers, and test preventative support. The aim is to help ensure that children do not have to take on inappropriate caring roles.
National policy context

Published in 1999 by the Department of Health, the National Strategy for Carers recognised that helping carers is one of the best ways of helping the people they care for. It emphasised that all social and health care organisations must focus, not just on the client, patient or user – but must include the carer.

The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004
was implemented on 1 April 2005 to give carers more choice and opportunities to lead a more fulfilling life. Until this Act, previous legislation only offered carers support in their caring role and carers assessments did not necessarily have to take into consideration wider issues of carers lives, such as training, employment and leisure.

The principle aims of the Act are to:

• Ensure that work, life long learning and leisure are considered when a carer is assessed.

• Give local authorities new powers to enlist the help of housing, health, education and other local authorities in providing support to carers.

• Ensure that carers are informed of their rights.

This Act amended the Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995 and the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000.

The Work and Families Act 2006
which came into force in April 2007, gives carers new rights at work. The Act builds on the right to request flexible working for parents of children under 6, or under 18 for a disabled child, and extends this right to include employees who care for or expect to care for adults.

The White Paper Our Health, Our Care, Our Say (DoH, 2006) announced A New Deal for Carers with the aim of improving support for carers through a commitment to update and extend the Prime Minister’s 1999 Strategy for Carers and encourage councils and PCTs to nominate leads for carers’ services. The updated strategy reflects developments in carers’ rights, direct payment regulations, carers’ assessment and carers’ grants.

It also announced plans to:

• Establish an information service/helpline for carers.

• Ensure that short term, home based emergency care is established for carers in crisis or emergency situations.

• Allocate specific funding for the creation of an Expert Carers Programme.
**Putting People First: A shared vision and commitment to the transformation of Adult Social Care (HM Government, 2007)**

The landmark protocol sets out and supports the Government's commitment to independent living for all adults, outlining aims and values to guide the transformation of adult social care. It recognises that within the context of changing family structures, caring responsibilities will impact on an increasing number of people, therefore the care and support system should be fair, sustainable and unambiguous about the respective responsibilities of the state, the individual and the family. The objectives of transformation include ensuring that family members and carers are treated as experts and care partners; supporting programmes which enable carers to develop their skills and confidence and to strengthen universal information; advice and advocacy for people needing services and their carers.

**Carers at the heart of 21st century families and communities (HM Government 2008)**

Sets out the Government’s vision for carers and the actions required over the next 10 years to make the vision a reality. By 2018, carers will be universally recognised and valued as being fundamental to strong families and stable communities. Support will be tailored to meet individual’s needs, enabling carers to maintain a balance between their caring responsibilities and a life outside caring, while enabling the person they support to be a full and equal citizen. Making this a reality requires changes and attention on issues including breaks, income, information and advice, the workplace, access to employment, emotional support, the health of carers and the specific needs of young carers.
Local policy context

The vision for Sunderland 2008 - 2025

The Sunderland Strategy has been developed to provide the framework for members of the Sunderland Partnership and all organisations, groups of people and individuals to work together to improve quality of life in Sunderland. It sets out a collective vision for the city and its residents and how the vision will be achieved.

The shared vision for Sunderland is:

Creating a better future for everyone in Sunderland: Sunderland will be a welcoming, internationally recognised city where people have the opportunity to fulfil their aspirations for a healthy, safe and prosperous future.

Five strategic aims have been developed to achieve the vision:

Aim 1:  
By 2025 Sunderland will be an enterprising and productive global city with a strong and diverse economy providing jobs and careers, where everyone has the opportunity to contribute to and benefit from the regional economy, to fulfil their potential to be skilled, motivated and wealth creating without losing the special characteristic of Sunderland’s balanced way of life.

Aim 2:  
By 2025 Sunderland will be a city where everyone can be supported to make healthy life and lifestyle choices – a city that provides excellent health and social care services for all who need them. Everyone in Sunderland will have the opportunity to live long, healthy, happy and independent lives.

Aim 3:  
By 2025 Sunderland will be a place where everyone feels welcome and can be part of a safe, inclusive community where people will feel safe and secure and can enjoy life.

Aim 4:  
By 2025 Sunderland will be a city with a thriving learning culture where everyone can be involved in learning in a cohesive, inclusive city that is committed to social justice, equality and prosperity where creativity flourishes and where individuals can have all they need to thrive in the global economy.

Aim 5:  
By 2025 Sunderland will be a clean, green city with a strong culture of sustainability, protecting and nurturing both its built heritage and future development, and ensuring that both the built and natural environments will be welcoming, accessible, attractive and of high quality.

The Carers Strategy is aligned with the Sunderland Strategy and aims to ensure that carers are integral to achieving the vision for Sunderland.
How the strategy has been developed

Carers have played a central role in the development of the strategy. The process began during Carers Week 2007 where carers were asked what areas they would like the strategy to address. These views, alongside the 2008 National Carers Strategy, have been used to inform and influence the strategy.

The Adult Social Care Partnership Board gave its support to develop the strategy and the Board sought commitment from partners to be involved in developing the strategy. As such, a Multi-Agency Strategy Group was established to take forward the development of the strategy, which included key partners and carer support organisations. A partnership approach to developing the strategy is crucial. If carers are to be supported with their caring responsibilities, but also have a life outside of caring, then all partners in the city need to recognise their role in making this a reality.

Formal consultation on the draft strategy was carried out between January and March 2009. Around 2800 people, the majority of which were carers, but also organisations and members of the public, were invited to take part in the consultation by completing a questionnaire based on the vision and outcomes of the draft strategy. 141 questionnaires were returned and from the feedback received, the area of the strategy where changes have been made is the Carers with Learning Disabilities outcome. Feedback from respondents highlighted that the draft strategy did not address the needs of carers with disabilities or older carers. Therefore, the Carers with Learning Disabilities outcome has been strengthened to be inclusive of all carers with disabilities and older carers.

A workshop was held with staff from various organisations, including Health, Housing and Adult Services, Children’s Services, Job Centre Plus, Community and Cultural Services and Family, Adult and Community Learning and NHS organisations. The purpose of the workshop was to raise awareness of the strategy and to engage frontline staff around their role in the delivery of the strategy. The workshop was very positive with staff conveying key messages that will contribute to the successful implementation of the strategy.

Overall, the draft strategy was very well received by carers, members of the public and professionals and the vision and outcomes were seen as the right ones needed to support carers. The strategy was very much welcomed by carers and was seen as a positive move forward in recognising the contribution made by carers and in supporting them as carers and as individuals.

A report outlining the consultation has been produced separately.
Monitoring implementation of the strategy

The strategy sets out a vision to be achieved over the next 15 years. It is supported by 3 year delivery plans that identify key areas for action, along with lead agencies and timescales by when the action will be achieved.

To drive forward the implementation of the strategy, the Multi Agency Carers Strategy Group will meet on a quarterly basis and provide progress reports on the implementation of the strategy to the Adult Social Care Partnership Board, including where progress is going well and where it is not.

The Multi-Agency Carers Strategy Group carry out a full review of the delivery plans on a 3 yearly basis and identify actions for the subsequent 3 years to ensure that the strategy remains responsive to the changing world and that it reflects local and national developments.

In order to find out how successfully the strategy is being implemented and whether it is making a difference to the lives of carers, a Carers Strategy Reference Group will be established. The purpose of the group will be to gather feedback from carers about whether their experiences of services are improving and whether they feel better supported. This will ensure that carers are involved in the implementation and monitoring of the strategy.
Outcomes

The following outcomes have been identified that this strategy will aim to achieve. Many of the outcomes are integral to each other, therefore the actions required to achieve the outcomes have been cross-referenced in the delivery plans. For example, information and advice is a fundamental theme in many of the outcomes.

Aim 1: Prosperous city

Improving opportunities for employment:
carers and former carers can remain in or return to work, through the development of carers employment policies and the provision of good quality information, advice and support for both carers and employers.

Increasing economic well-being:
carers are aware of the benefits they are entitled to through the provision of good quality information, advice and support to access them and carers incomes will be maximised.

Aim 2: Healthy city

Improving well-being:
to actively promote the opportunities for carers to access sport, leisure and wellness services and activities, including support programmes to improve or maintain their own health and well-being and to promote social inclusion.

Personalised support:
carers receive a Carers Assessment that identifies how they can be supported both within and outside of their caring role. The support they receive will be holistic and person centred and focused on achieving positive outcomes for carers. Staff will recognise and value carers as an expert care partner and they will respond to their needs. Carers’ experiences of services will be improved.

Health:
carers and their needs are recognised and they are provided with advice, information and support, that is effectively co-ordinated, to maintain their own health and that of the person they care for. Staff will recognise and value carers contribution and they will be seen as an expert care partner. Carers’ experiences of services will be improved.

Supporting parent carers:
parent carers will be supported to access the same opportunities as other parents and to have quality time with their other children, their partner or friends. Parent carers will have access to comprehensive information as to the support that is available, pathways to access services will be straightforward and the criteria for access to services will be publicised. Parents will be offered more choice as to what services they can use, this will include direct payments.
Aim 3: Safe city

Supporting young carers:
young carers and their needs are recognised and support to them is improved in order to prevent young carers from having to take on inappropriate levels of caring. Young carers will enjoy their childhood and have the opportunity to thrive, develop and learn.

Emotional support:
the emotional needs of carers will be recognised and they will have a choice over where they access their support. Through the provision of emotional support, carers can make informed choices about their lives as carers.

Supporting older carers and carers with disabilities:
older carers and carers with disabilities, including learning disabilities, will receive the right support at the right time to enable them to care, whilst also ensuring that their health and well-being is maintained and that they remain safe.

Aim 4: Learning city

Improving opportunities for training, education and lifelong learning:
carers have access to training, education and lifelong learning opportunities either for recreational purposes or to enable them to learn or regain skills to return to work, if they wish, or to help them cope with their caring situation. These opportunities will be actively promoted.

Aim 5: Attractive and inclusive city

Recognising and valuing contribution:
carers will be recognised and valued for the immense contribution they make to society everyday.

Information and advice:
carers receive high quality information and advice to support them both within and outside of their caring role.

Involving carers:
carers are empowered to be involved in and shape the development of local services and to be involved in the life of the community.

Supporting carers from black and minority ethnic communities:
the specific needs of carers from black and minority ethnic communities will be recognised and they will receive the support they need to access information and services and to carry out their caring responsibilities.
This information can be made available in large print, Braille, audio and other languages. Please contact the Communications Service on 0191 566 1419 or email HHAS-Communications@sunderland.gov.uk for help.

As part of Sunderland’s commitment to a balanced and sustainable future this leaflet is printed on paper made from 75% recycled post consumer waste. Please recycle it again after use by putting it in your Kerb-it box or your paper bank.