

**HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD
18 MARCH 2021**

DARLINGTON CARERS' ACTION PLAN 2020 - 22

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide information about carers in Darlington and to request endorsement of the Darlington Carers' Action Plan 2020 - 22.

Summary

2. The 2011 census identifies 11,048 carers in Darlington, 2758 (25%) of whom are providing care for 50 or more hours per week. 197 of these were aged 0-15 and the largest group of carers (37%) is those aged 50-64.
3. A national Carers Action Plan for 2018-20 was published by central government in June 2018. This Action Plan outlined the cross-government programme of work to support carers in England and built on the previous National Carers Strategy. It retained the strategic vision for recognising, valuing and supporting carers from 2008, which has been the vision of successive governments.
4. Despite a stated intention by government to publish plans for carers post 2020, nothing has been published as yet. In addition, the Covid 19 pandemic has resulted in both national and local challenges, including a further raising of the profile of carers and their needs. Darlington Carers' Strategy Steering Group (CSSG) has therefore developed a Darlington Carers' Action Plan for 2020-22. This is attached as **Appendix 1**.

Recommendation

5. It is recommended that:-
 - (a) Members endorse Darlington Carers' Action Plan 2020 - 22
 - (b) Members act as champions for carers in Darlington and consider how to support progress of the carers' agenda in Darlington

Reasons

6. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons :-
 - (a) To enable Darlington to continue to support carers and to be responsive to the challenges carers face as a result of the pandemic.

James Stroyan
Director of Children and Adults Services

Background Papers

Darlington Carers' Action Plan 2020-22
 National Carers Action Plan 2018-20
 Lisa Holdsworth Ext 5861

S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Well Being	Carers can experience poor health as a result of their caring responsibilities. Identifying and supporting carers contributes to supporting their health and wellbeing and the health and wellbeing of the people for whom they care.
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	There are no implications arising from this report.
Diversity	Caring affects all groups of people in Darlington
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	Carers are the group primarily affected
Budget and Policy Framework	N/A
Key Decision	N/A
Urgent Decision	N/A
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	Supporting carers contributes to supporting the 'One Darlington' Healthy Darlington theme.
Efficiency	Research published by Carers UK in 2015 indicates that unpaid carers in Darlington provide support to the value of £224 million.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

7. The 2001 census identified 10,064 carers in Darlington, 2330 (23%) of whom were providing care for 50 or more hours per week.
8. By 2011, this number had increased to 11,048 of whom 2,758 (25%) were providing care for 50 or more hours per week. The largest group of carers (37%) are those aged 50-64.

Age	Number
0-15	197
16-24	543
25-34	915
35 -49	2807
50-64	4124
65+	2462

9. Darlington's Carers' Action Plan for 2020-22 has been developed by the CSSG as a local response to the needs of carers. It continues to be based on the themes identified in the national Carers Action Plan 2018-20, which remain relevant.
 - (a) Services and systems that work for carers
 - (b) Employment and financial wellbeing
 - (c) Supporting young carers
 - (d) Recognising and supporting carers in the wider community and society
 - (e) Building research and evidence to improve outcomes for carers
10. The aim is to ensure the continuation of responsive support to carers in particularly challenging times as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic, as well as to look ahead to the broader needs of carers as the effects of the pandemic ease.
11. It should be noted that the pandemic, particularly in its early stages, resulted in a decrease in referrals to both the Carers Support and Young Carers Services, although there are early indications that these numbers are starting to increase again.
12. However, both services were adaptable and rapidly developed a remote service offer, which enabled them to continue to support carers throughout. This included the offer of virtual carers groups and events for both adult and young carers; well-received courtesy calls for carers aged 70+; setting up a chat facility on the Carers Support Service website; use of facebook pages by both the Carers Support and Young Carers Services.

13. The Carers Support Service also sent out hard copy newsletters to those individuals for whom they did not have an email address, in order to ensure that carers who were not online also received information and were not excluded.
14. In addition to the continuation of day to day service delivery, funding has also been awarded for a new Carers in Employment Co-ordinator which commenced on 1st January 2021. This post will enable the progression of the agenda of support for carers who combine paid work with their unpaid caring role.

Outcome of Consultation

15. Darlington's Carers' Strategy and Action Plan is developed and monitored by the CSSG taking into account the views of carer members of the group and the wider views of carers as relayed by the Carers Support providers.