

Worcestershire Carers Strategy 2015-2020

‘Carers at the Heart of Worcestershire’s Families and Communities’

Report May 2017 to April 2018 (Year 3)

Introduction

Unpaid carers perform a unique role in our society and increasingly, most of us are likely to assume responsibility for helping to care or support someone close to us at some point in our lives. We become carers when our caring responsibilities exceed normal expectations for a relationship due to the illness or chronic condition of someone close to us. Many people enjoy or derive great satisfaction from their carer role and may acquire new skills and friendships, but carers often unknowingly place their own physical, mental and financial wellbeing at risk of harm without appropriate support.

Without unpaid carers, Health and Social Care could not cope with demand for care, so there may be an assumption by professionals of a duty or obligation put on family and friends to provide care. This can lead to carers feeling guilty or confused and further isolated from friends, family and support. The Census 2011, British Household survey 2009 and GP Patient Surveys have consistently shown high levels of carers reporting poor health outcomes. The Census found carers across English regions are between 2 and 3 times more likely to be in bad health if they are providing 50 hours or more unpaid care per week than if they provide no unpaid care. Poverty is an issue that disproportionately affects carers and their families. Carers are less likely to be in full time employment, more likely to have left work or retired to care and suffered the consequences in terms of reduced income and pension rights. 1 in 10 adults, including young adult carers, will have a caring role and many have poorer mental and physical health, as a result of caring without receiving timely information and help:

- 61% report a negative impact on mental and physical health
- 46% have faced depression
- 39% are struggling financially
- 43% of carers have given up work to care

(Carers UK, State of Caring Report, 2017)

These numbers are all projected to increase, as the population ages and more people live longer with ill health. The reliance and demand on carers and carers’ time in the future is only set to increase with changing government legislation, overburdened health services and the increase in life expectancy. The proportion living with dementia, in particular, is projected to double between 2015-2025. Worcestershire has its own all age strategy “Carers at the Heart of Worcestershire’s Families and Communities” setting out the local vision (see covering paper).

Worcestershire's Corporate plan – 'Shaping Worcestershire's Future Our Plan for Worcestershire 2017 to 2022' states:

'We recognise that carers play a vital role in society and we will continue to support them by working closely with the Worcestershire Carers' Association.'

This report covers the activity of the partners involved in delivering the Carers Strategy in Worcestershire for the period from July 2017 to April 2018. This includes the support available to all carers through Worcestershire County Council (WCC), Worcestershire Integrated Carers Hub (WICH) and Worcestershire Young Carers (WYC) with the addition of some further support from a number of smaller organisations currently not contracted by WCC i.e. Redditch Carers Careline and Worcestershire Parent and Carer's Community (WPCC). These smaller organisations play a valuable part in providing bespoke support to specific communities and in contributing to the additional funding drawn in to the county via the voluntary and community sector (VCS).

Funding

Support for carers is mainly funded through the Better Care Fund. The amount allocated for carers' support was £1.26m in 2018-19 . In addition, Public Health contributes £617,000, making a total of £1.877m for carers in Worcestershire.

In addition, CAW consortium members have brought in external funding exceeding £150,000 over the last year, plus donations in kind. This 'added value' allows organisations to provide services over and above commissioned service.

Award

In the 2017 Health Service Journal Awards, the Worcestershire Integrated Carers Hub was 'highly commended' in the 'Commissioning for Carers' category.

Annual Update

The Carers Strategy sets out the outcomes it aims to achieve for carers, together with statements about how these will be achieved. These outcomes were developed with carers and carer organisations. The following section sets out progress against outcomes and provides additional information about other areas of work not originally included in the list of actions, but meeting outcomes.

Outcomes		How we will achieve this	2017/18 Update
1. Recognised and valued	<p>I am recognised and respected in my role as a carer</p> <p>I feel confident that there is support available</p> <p>I feel able to care safely</p> <p>The caring I do is appropriate to my age and capabilities</p> <p>I understand how to access support</p> <p>I am involved and can influence the assessment of my needs and aspirations</p> <p>I am able to have a say in how services are designed and delivered</p>	<p>Face to face assessment that focus on the individual</p> <p>Engagement and consultation with carers included at all stages</p> <p>Relevant consultative carer groups are in place and regular feedback to WCC, CCGs and Health & Well Being Board is ensured</p> <p>Health & Social Care professionals are Carers Aware</p>	<p>No. of Care Act Carers Assessments carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2015/16: 5,132 • 2016/17: 3,559 • 2017/18: 2,180¹ <p>102 Young Carers assessments carried out by YSS in the family home.</p> <p>Range of consultation & engagement carried out with carers e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Payment Survey & Engagement • Transportation Policy Refresh • PIP Factsheet Engagement • LD Housing Options, Day Services Re-Engagement & Replacement Care Pre-Engagement <p>Carers Partnership in place, commissioners attend meetings; Carers supported to be involved in LD Partnership Board and sub groups</p> <p>Carer Aware and Carer Aware licence renewed for a further 3 years</p> <p>WAC and Acute Trust have continued to develop closer working which is contributing to a better experience for patients and carers when they access services in the Trust. The Trust continues to embed 'John's Campaign' across the three sites. A Carers Card has been</p>
<p>¹ There have been a number of changes in operations this year that have required significant changes in reporting e.g. the use of combined assessments and reviews with both services users and their carer(s); carer support plan being combined with carer reviews.; move to Three Conversation model</p>			

		<p>Support services for young carers are in place; schools and colleges have the awareness to support young carers</p> <p>Your life Your Choice (YLYC) clearly explains the carers pathways and what universal, commissioned and WCC provided support is available</p> <p>Commissioned services are in place to provide information, advice and support for carers</p>	<p>launched to give information about this campaign and other initiatives in the Trust to support them.</p> <p>Introduction of YSS Education Link Project. Dedicated worker aiming to strengthen links with schools and colleges across the county as well as raising awareness of young carers and barriers they face.</p> <p>Your Life, Your Choice updated to reflect changes in Carer Pathways</p> <p>County-wide Integrated Carers Hub launched 2016, extended in 2018 for a further year with a re-tender in Autumn 2018</p> <p>Young Carers: Current Young Carers contract runs until end of March 2019.</p> <p>Parent Carers: Contract variation in place to Integrated Carers Hub to allow Parent Carers to access carer support services</p>
2. A life of my own	<p>I feel able to achieve a balance between my caring role and my personal life</p> <p>I feel connected to others in</p>	Support will be available to all carers	<p>Number of adult carers on carers register – 12,062 (as at March 2018) – all these carers as a minimum receive the ‘Caring News’ magazine</p> <p>Number of carers contacted following a referral – 2,880 (Apr 17 – Mar 18)</p> <p>Continued delivery of BBC Children in Need</p>

	<p>the community</p> <p>I know how to maximise my income to meet basic needs and am not forced into financial hardship as a result of my caring role</p> <p>I feel able to fully participate in education or training and enter or re-enter the employment</p>	<p>Funded social care will be made available through a carers personal budget</p> <p>Support can be provided to the person with care needs to help ensure relevant training is made available to include information about financial matters</p> <p>Professionals and organisations coming into contact with carers will be trained on carers issues. This will be through direct training of Carer Aware campaign</p> <p>Young Carers at risk of becoming NEET receive appropriate information, advice & guidance</p>	<p>funded Young Carers “Participation” group. Currently funded until end of December 2019.</p> <p>13 local adult carer support groups in place across the county, plus informal social groups</p> <p>Carers Unlimited – this WAC project is funded by donations and community fundraising and gives carers an opportunity to have a break from their caring role e.g. through trips, visits, carer breakfasts etc.</p> <p>No. of carers in receipt of direct payments - 331</p> <p>Training/information sessions include Legal and Financial sessions (e.g. Powers of Attorney, Paying for Care, Wills & Trusts, Benefits</p> <p>Carer Aware and Carer Aware licence renewed for a further 3 years and promoted across health & social care</p> <p>Building Healthy Partnerships Programme on self-care and carers includes an organisational development work strand for staff in the NHS and other organisations; STP partners and carers engaged in this work</p> <p>30 young carers received bespoke one to one support sessions with outcomes based on maintaining education, employment and</p>
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	<p>market if I wish</p> <p>I can remain in suitable employment if I wish to</p>		<p>training as well as promoting self-care and supporting to access activities and services.</p> <p>Working for Carers launched by Worcestershire Association of Carers in March 2018 – 9 employers signed up during the year, including the Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce</p>
3. Train	<p>I am able to maintain my physical and emotional wellbeing</p> <p>I am able to manage stress</p> <p>I feel confident in my role as a carer</p> <p>I am able to maintain a dignified relationship with the person I care for</p> <p>I am able to maintain relationships that are important to me</p>	<p>Personalised support will be provided to all carers.</p> <p>Some areas of provision will be provided through a carers personal budget where this is required.</p> <p>Carers support and replacement care are available to carers where they need and qualify</p>	<p>WICH – 2,880 carers supported Apr 17 - Mar 18, of these only 0.9% of referrals referred back to WCC for Carers Assessment as WAC was able to meet carer needs</p> <p>WPCC reaching in excess of 350 parent carers, this support is funded by grants outside the statutory sector, and by the fundraising efforts of WPCC parent carers, providing a valued added contribution of approximately £25,000 per year towards achieving outcomes.</p> <p>420 young carers currently accessing a service. Respite clubs and activities programme saw 901 attendances throughout the year from individual young carers. On average, one to one work last for 6 sessions – totalling 270 hours of individual, tailored support offered throughout the year.</p> <p>No. of carers in receipt of direct payments in 2017/18- 331; pilot underway with WAC undertaking carer assessment reviews</p>

		<p>for it</p> <p>Relevant training (e.g. how to manage stress, caring with confidence) and local carer support groups to be in place</p> <p>GPs and other Health professionals will make adjustments to carers in their day to day practice</p> <p>Effective support in place for independent advocacy where a carer needs this</p>	<p>Grants for carer wellbeing – amount of external funding brought in for adult carers £3,024 (Jul – Dec 17)</p> <p>Training sessions delivered on a wide range of topics – 1,178 carers training sessions attended (Apr 17- Mar18)</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1473 454 2087 790"> <thead> <tr> <th>Yr2 (July 17-March 18) Attendance by type of training</th> <th>Q1</th> <th>Q2</th> <th>Q3</th> <th>Yr to date</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Caring with Confidence</td> <td>170</td> <td>201</td> <td>110</td> <td>481</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Legal & Financial</td> <td>71</td> <td>98</td> <td>96</td> <td>265</td> </tr> <tr> <td>End of Life</td> <td>-</td> <td>13</td> <td>-</td> <td>13</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wellbeing</td> <td>8</td> <td>92</td> <td>42</td> <td>142</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTALS</td> <td>249</td> <td>404</td> <td>248</td> <td>901</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>On line training also available through the WAC Website</p> <p>Carer Aware training ; awareness presentations to Trainee GPs; Building Healthy Partnerships project (see below); NHS Commitment to Carers</p> <p>Carers one of named groups in generic advocacy contract - Number of carers accessing Advocacy services during the year - none</p>	Yr2 (July 17-March 18) Attendance by type of training	Q1	Q2	Q3	Yr to date	Caring with Confidence	170	201	110	481	Legal & Financial	71	98	96	265	End of Life	-	13	-	13	Wellbeing	8	92	42	142	TOTALS	249	404	248	901
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Cross Cutting Themes

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is a cross cutting theme across all carer outcomes. The Council and its partners co-operate in safeguarding the welfare of vulnerable adults and children as set out in the Care Act 2014 and the Children Act 1989. This means that we ensure that carers know how to raise concerns about the person they are caring for or themselves, and that carers are supported appropriately in the event of any allegations made against them.

Adults

The Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board (WSAB) includes a both a carer representative and the WAC Chief Executive as Board members. Their role is supported by a Carers Safeguarding Reference Group. Safeguarding procedures are in place and are accessible to carers. Providers of carers services are expected to have all necessary safeguarding policy and procedures in place, and ensure that staff are trained.

Children and Young People

Young Carers have no specific representation on the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) nor are specifically mentioned in the WSCB Business Plan for 2017/18.

As the provider of services for young carers, YSS's approach to managing safeguarding concerns within the team is includes ensuring that all keyworkers are WSCB safeguarding trained and have had an introduction to the WSCB Threshold document to be used as a tool to inform working practice; all staff have had up to date Safeguarding Training; Safeguarding policies are reviewed on an annual basis; the YSS Safeguarding lead has direct operational responsibility for the Worcestershire Young Carers project.

There are currently 24 young carers where there are safeguarding concerns or where Child Protection work is being carried out. This is approximately 6% of the active caseload.

Partnership working

Worcestershire Health and Care Trust - the significant work done around carers has seen all community hospital wards signed up to John's Campaign (<http://johnscampaign.org.uk/#/>). This campaign is based on the premise that when someone with dementia is hospitalised, the medical staff should do all within their power to make access easy for family carers and utilise their expert knowledge and their love. The principles of John's Campaign are applicable everywhere when a person with dementia cannot live in their own home.

WICH Carer Pathway advisers run sessions in all Worcestershire's Community Hospitals and have had stands at several events held by the Trusts. They continue to work closely with colleagues from the Acute Trust and are a partner in the 'Think Carer' initiative arising from the Building Health Partnerships Programme across Worcestershire and Herefordshire.

Five sessions

Worcestershire Association of Carers worked in partnership with Worcestershire Health and Care and Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trusts to hold a series of 5 sessions focussing on issues and themes that affect carers. Those sessions were: Peer-to-Peer Support, Hospital Discharge, End of Life, Wellbeing and Confidentiality. Carer stories are being gathered to offer a greater understanding of the various carer journeys, the challenges they present and examples of good practice. The model of bringing carers together with health professionals and VCS partners around specific topics has been well received particularly by carers and is now the model of choice going forward.

Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust

Frailty and Hospital discharge Pilot – launched 1st Feb – based at Frailty Assessment Unit at the Alexandra Hospital. The pilot aims to improve discharge planning and reduce readmissions by work closely with ward staff to identify and support carers during the inpatient stay, discharge. The project will also be looking to identify gaps in services, information or training that could have helped prevent the admission e.g. falls.

Carer Champion training and awareness sessions delivered throughout the year. Integrated Carers Hub staff now liaising with staff on some wards before and after training to enrich and sustain training experience. WICH Carer Pathway Advisers spend time in all Acute settings to identify and support carers.

Building Healthy Partnerships Programme – 'Think Carer'

The Herefordshire and Worcestershire Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) identified carers as a key group to engage in planning for the future. Carers said:

- We recognise there is a need to do more around prevention and self-care
- We offer you expertise – recognise, value, and listen to us
- In our caring role we need access to condition information; professional knowledge for advice and crisis support; good quality
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- In our caring role we need access to condition information; professional knowledge for advice and crisis support; good quality training courses
- We need the expert care partner role to be enabled and empowered – through relationship, support and processes
- We need access to that which helps us look after our own health and well-being

Work on these themes has been taken forward during the year by the national Building Healthy Partnerships Programme (BHP), supported by the Institute for Voluntary Action Research. In the latter stages of the programme, the focus has been on changing the culture within the NHS and social care through organisational development (based on feedback by carers), and ensuring that a focus on carers has been maintained at a strategic partnership level. The Herefordshire and Worcestershire STP Partnership has agreed in principle to sign up to the following Commitment to Carers principles as a result of the programme:

‘Think Carer’ - Key principles

The integrated approach to identifying, assessing and supporting Carers’ health and wellbeing needs rests on a number of supporting principles. Each of these principles covers a number of practical points and each of these practical points features examples of positive practice, in order to encourage other practitioners and commissioners to replicate or build on success.

Partners to the Memorandum of Understanding agree that:

4.1 Principle 1 – We will support the identification, recognition and registration of Carers in primary care.

4.2 Principle 2 - Carers will have their support needs assessed and will receive an integrated package of support in order to maintain and/or improve their physical and mental health.

4.3 Principle 3 - Carers will be empowered to make choices about their caring role and access appropriate services and support for them and the person they look after.

4.4 Principle 4 – The staff of partners to this agreement will be aware of the needs of Carers and of their value to our communities.

4.5 Principle 5 - Carers will be supported by information sharing between health, social care, Carer support organisations and other partners to this agreement.

4.6 Principle 6 - Carers will be respected and listened to as expert care partners, and will be actively involved in care planning, shared decision-making and reviewing services.

4.7 Principle 7 - The support needs of Carers who are more vulnerable or at key transition points will be identified early.

Department for Work and Pensions –

Joint working with DWP Partnership Team, in consultation with Carer representatives, have been working together to improve access to information, advice and support on DWP Benefits and Services for Carers and Cared For. Including: production of a Personal Independence Leaflet and Factsheet for Carers (on WICH Website), a partner referral route to DWP Visiting Service for assistance with claiming benefits and the establishment of closer working arrangements between WAC and Worcestershire Jobcentres leading to improved support for Carers.

Working with WCC Social Work Team on the Three Conversation Model

WICH continues to work closely with social work teams as Worcestershire moves to the 3C model resulting in a steady increase in the number of referrals being received from Social Workers. Significant training and support has been provided to the Carer Pathway team to ensure they feel confident with this new approach. Carer Pathway Advisers now have access to Frameworki providing for a more integrated and consistent service enabling timely access to appropriate and proportionate assessment for carers and reducing the need for carers to repeat their story.

VCS – information and advice providers

The commissioned information and advice providers including Worcestershire Association of Carers, Worcestershire Advice Network(WAN), Stroke Association, Onside Advocacy and YSS Young Carers continue to work closely to provide complementary services and where possible look for efficiencies in terms of shared events and staff training. WAN are leading on a project to utilise a platform called Refernet to enable secure electronic referrals between partners, this is in the early stages but demonstrating some benefits.

Care Home Excellence Partnership

Moving a loved one to a care home is often a difficult transition for carers that can create a lot of stress, anxiety and guilt. The caring role doesn't end there with carers continuing to support their loved one and juggle finances for the duration of the stay. Worcestershire Association of Carers along with Age UK H&W are involved with the recently formed Care Home Excellence Partnership (CHExP) looking to raise standards and share good practice across Worcestershire's care homes

Young Carers

Worcestershire Young Carers clubs delivered in Partnership with Worcester Community Trust and Batchley Support Group; co-delivery of summer 2017 activities with Coventry Young Carers service, regular multi agency working, information sharing practices, sign posting and onward referrals

Activity carried into Year 4:

- Supporting Carer responses to the Social Care Green Paper & new National Carers Action Plan – continue to ensure Worcestershire’s Carers have a voice and that the new action plan, once in place, is implemented in Worcestershire
- Embedding ‘Think Carer’ approach from Building Healthy Partnerships work:
 - NHS England Commitment to Carers to be implemented across the NHS Acute and Health and Care Trusts
 - Continuing work on exploring options for the introduction of Carer Passports across Worcestershire and Herefordshire
 - Development of Neighbourhood teams to include carer support (lead by Worcestershire Health and Care Trust)
 - Organisational develop for staff working in health and social care to reflect ‘Think Carer’ and bring about culture change
- Discussion with Worcestershire County Council about further improvements to ‘Your Life, Your Choice’ (to reflect carer pathways within the ‘Three Conversation)
- Evaluating pilot projects and considering options for:
 - Older carers project
 - Hospital discharge
 - Carer Assessment and Reviews pilot
- Recommissioning of services for adult and young carers
- Developing support for carers at transition points – e.g. when their caring role ends, support for carers to find safe and affordable care (including self funders, moving from children’s to adult services
- Identifying emerging gaps in services e.g. autism info and advice, - add to at CAW Board meeting
- Supporting the Universal Credit roll out in Worcestershire through a Universal Credit fact sheet (working with DWP)
- Young Carers
 - Whilst young carers are not directly mentioned within the new WCC Children & Young People’s plan, YSS have been involved in consultations around its development and will continue to embed its shared values in all of the work we do. YSS has also continued to strengthen our links with Children’s Services providers as well as demonstrating the value of our work to decision makers involved in the commissioning process, aimed at raising the profile of and influencing the shape of commissioned young carers services within local government.

- Our Education Link project continued into 2018 with a dedicated worker building and strengthening relationships with county schools. YSS will also be aiming to raise awareness of young carers and the barriers they face as well as increasing referrals from education establishments. These aims will be achieved through pupil assemblies, staff team presentations and awareness events.
- Due to a rapidly increasing caseload (a direct result of the Education link work) YSS staff are required to work in more innovative and creative ways. This includes the further development of our on line offer: weekly confidential on line drop in, video calling for support sessions and completing service reviews on line/over the phone.

Annex for provider updates

Carers Careline (Redditch)

Carers Careline supports approximately 300 unpaid adult carers in Redditch through the provision of a variety of services. This includes:-

- Drop-in (Monday – Thursday, 10.00am -12noon, we also offer an evening session and a Saturday morning session once a month)
- Telephone Support Service
- Counselling
- Bereavement Support
- Monthly group meetings
- Trips and outings

Outcome 1 – Recognised and valued

- The drop-in provides carers with information and support in their caring role. This may be signposting carers to other services, including services offered by other members of the consortium. This can include assistance with access to benefits , help with arranging respite, carer assessments and reviews etc.
- Carers are given regular opportunities to shape the programme that CCL offers.
- The registration process enables carers to identify their needs and the services they would like to access

Outcome 2 - A life of my own

- The activities provide carers with a varied range of opportunities for respite from the caring role. As part of these there is the opportunity for carers to talk to and get to know others carers as and pursue activities and interests.
- The drop-in enables carers to access information and support quickly and easily
- Drop-in sessions now include evening and weekend sessions for carers who work regular working hours
- Group meetings and training sessions offer carers the chance to increase their knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to their caring role

Outcome 3 - Supported to be mentally and physically well

- Relevant training and activities are open to all carers and include physical and mental health related topics
- Drop-in provides an opportunity 'to let off steam' in an easily accessible way.
- A counselling service is available for carers, including by self-referral
- Bereavement support to suit the needs of the carer

YSS Worcestershire Young Carers

Section 96 of the Children and Families Act 2014 introduced new rights for young carers (to include young adult carers) to ensure that they and their families are identified and their needs for support are assessed. Since April 2015 all young carers have been entitled to an assessment of their needs. This new provision works alongside measures in the Care Act 2014 for transition assessment for young carers as they approach adulthood, and for assessing adults to enable a “whole family approach” to providing assessment and support. A revised referral and service pathway for young carers was developed through close working between Children's and Adult services and this clearly set out the roles and responsibilities of staff in the local authority and its partner organisations in ensuring that there are truly "no wrong doors" for young carers and their families and that no gaps or breaks in continuity occur in the support available to them. This was reinforced by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Directors of Children's and Adult and Health Services which can be found in the Carer's Strategy.

In practice, through the amendment of assessment and reporting processes used by a range of family intervention services (e.g. Early Help, Connecting Families, Social Workers etc.) to include prompts to staff to actively look for young people that may have caring roles and to assess whether their demands of their caring could be inappropriate or excessive, the potential for more effective recognition and referral of young carers was increased. Once referred, our commissioned provider uses the nationally recognised PANOC (Positive and Negative Outcomes of Caring Questionnaire) assessment tool to establish the needs and level of support required by individual young carers referred.

Commissioning of support for Young and Young Adult Carers 2016-19

The commissioning of support for young and young adult carers forms an integral part of Worcestershire County Council's approach to ensuring that it supports these young people effectively and meets its statutory obligations in this regard. A recommissioning process was undertaken in the autumn of 2015. This enabled the specification for these services to be reviewed and revised to take into account the evaluation and learning from the successful provision previously made available. This service is designed to be preventative, to complement other services provided to the family by statutory and voluntary agencies and to offer a point of referral for those identifying young carers in need of support but not needing, or "stepping down" from an intervention by statutory Social Care. Following an open tendering process, and a very strong bid based on a strong track record, good sector knowledge and experience, well developed relationships with young carers and a progressive development plan, a new contract was awarded to YSS Ltd - <https://www.yss.org.uk/worcestershire-young-carers> (contact: Angela Parton angela.parton@yss.org.uk).

The second year of delivery under this new contract was completed in March 2018. Current service delivery: Young and Young Adult Carers
The number of young carers supported by the commissioned service has increased year on year. In 2017-18, 454 young and young adult

carers were being actively supported by the service compared to 380 in the previous year an increase in reach for the service of 19.5%. 62.5% of these young people were female and 37.5% male.

Revisions to the specification included recognition of the potential to develop more locally based provision for young carers given the significant numbers being engaged in each district area:

Young & Young Adult Carers actively supported by District 2017 - 18 Bromsgrove 50 Malvern Hills 27 Redditch 95 Worcester 106 Wychavon 73 Wyre Forest 100 Total 4254 (as of 01/04/2018)

We have continued to link young carers with other resources and opportunities within their areas through strong partnership work across the county. Our monthly clubs are now delivered in two separate locations (Batchley Community Centre, Redditch and Warndon Community Centre, Worcester) in partnership with two other voluntary organisations (Batchley Support Group and Worcester Community Trust). These clubs actively encourage young carers to engage in their wider programme of activities and sessions and we have seen positive results in young carers engaging in mainstream provisions at each centre. Club attendances have increased during the last year with attendances between January and March 2018 totalling 284. This is an increase of 35% from the same quarter of the previous year and continues to grow. Following on from initial referral (via self-referral, schools, colleges, social workers, Carers Hub, WAC, Parenting & Family Support (formerly Early Help) etc.), each young carer's needs are assessed and the most effective form of support agreed. In its simplest form (level 1a) this can be just be the availability of telephone or online support, but most commonly includes face to face support at home or elsewhere from an assigned key worker. Referrals from schools have increased significantly since the introduction of our Education Link Worker whose role involves engaging with local schools in order to raise awareness of young carers and increase referrals into the service. From 01/04/2017 to 31/03/2018 we received 108 referrals from schools which is an increase of 11% from the previous year. This does not include self-referrals received from pupils following school presentations. It is also worth noting that the Education Link project did not start until 01/10/2017 so its impact can only be measured in the last 6 months of the year. Taking these factors into account it is clear to see that the Education Link Work is having an impact on the number of referrals received.

We continue to work hard to raise awareness of young carers, the barriers they face and the support they require. This work includes presentations to staff teams in schools, delivering informative assemblies to students, meeting with other professionals through multi-agency meetings and sitting on various relevant boards across the county. We have also taken big steps in the development of the YSS Worcestershire Young Carers digital platform. The overall YSS website has been redesigned and relaunched. It is now mobile intuitive, more user friendly and more fit for purpose than its predecessor. Our social media accounts continue to grow and the introduction of a Senior Communications Officer to YSS staff has led to a more focused and strategic approach to social media which is already bearing results. National Young Carers Awareness day on 25th January 2018 for example saw across both YSS official and Worcestershire Young Carers

official social media platforms (Facebook and Twitter) there were 33 posts, reaching 6,318 people and gained 13 new followers in just one day. To put this into perspective, during 4 weeks in November 6 posts were shared on YSS Facebook page reaching 1000 people. In total 92 people visited the YSS website, 35 of whom came from social media and the top two pages to visit were yss.org.uk/Worcestershire-young-carers and our Young Carers Awareness Day news story.

At the end of March 2018 we revealed a brand new look for our YSS Worcestershire Young Carers Quarterly Newsletter. It was professionally designed by Crown Creative and showcased all of the usual information about what our young carers have been up to, gave the chance to meet some of our amazing donors and fundraisers through the “Charity Champs” feature, along with the opportunity to meet a different young carer and learn about their story with each new edition. Due to the rapid increase in caseload and the ever growing cost of posting out to over 450 families we have made the decision that the newsletter is now available online only and can be found at www.yss.org.uk/worcestershire-young-carers as well as being e mailed directly to many of our families.

Parent Carers

Worcestershire Parent and Carers’ Community (WPCC) - <https://www.parentcarers.org.uk> – continues to focus on the three national outcomes for carers. These outcomes are particularly important for parent carers who are likely to face a lifetime of caring and whose caring situation will often encompass multiple caring roles and complex transition points. WPCC welcomes the very positive development of parent carers now being included in the Worcestershire Integrated Carers Hub contract and the growing recognition of the vital role they play in helping to support education, health and social care services at this critical time.

Particular challenges for parent carers of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities include isolation and financial hardship; parent carers recognising their own needs as carers as distinct from the support that their children require; the difficulty of returning to work due to the lack of affordable and appropriate childcare, and employers not being carer aware and not recognising the skills which are developed when caring.

WPCC’s work covers:

Outcome 1 - Enabling parent carers to be respected and valued: Achieved by fostering carer awareness; enabling parent carers to have a voice about the services they receive; being recognised as expert partners: signposting to support services where appropriate.; partnership working with the statutory sector, private sector and voluntary sector.

Outcome 2 - Enabling parent carers to have a life of their own alongside their caring role: Achieved by bringing parent carers out of isolation, particularly through subsidised whole family short breaks; helping to develop skills for employment through training, information events and volunteering opportunities.

Outcome 3 – Supporting parent carers to stay mentally and physically well and treated with dignity: Achieved by mindfulness and other training; peer support coffee mornings; 1:1 support and an annual Carers Week event.