



# WORCESTERSHIRE'S LEARNING DISABILITY STRATEGY 2023-2028



# Contents

1.	Introduction from the Worcestershire Learning Disability Partnership Board.....	X
2.	Principles and Themes.....	X
3.	Members of the Partnership Board – Useful Links.....	X
4.	Information pages.....	X
5.	Theme 1 – A Place to Live, a Home.....	X
6.	Theme 2 – Communities Which Include Everyone.....	X
7.	A Focus On: Accessibility and Reasonable Adjustments.....	X
8.	Theme 3 – Purposeful Days.....	X
9.	Theme 4 – Being Healthy, Body and Mind.....	X
10.	A Focus On: Annual Health Checks & Healthy Bowels.....	X
11.	Theme 5 – Life Changes.....	X
12.	A Focus On: Capacity and Advocacy – Hearing Everyone’s Voice.....	X
13.	Theme 6 – Being Safe.....	X
14.	Theme 7 – The Right Support for Family Carers.....	X
15.	Making it Happen – Our Year 1 Action Plan.....	X



# Introduction from the Worcestershire Learning Disability Partnership Board

Welcome to Worcestershire's Learning Disability Strategy, which has been co-produced by the Learning Disability Partnership Board on behalf of people with a Learning Disability in Worcestershire.

We want Worcestershire to be a great place to live for people with Learning Disabilities.

We talked to people with Learning Disabilities and family carers as well as people working in a wide range of support services across our communities. We ran workshops, attended coffee mornings and self-advocacy groups and facilitated lots of conversations and discussions. We also ran a survey to find out people's views.

## OUR PRINCIPLES

Together, we have developed some principles which underpin this strategy:



### Working Together



### Supporting Each Other



### Including Everyone



### Treating People Fairly



### Enabling Good Lives



#### JARGON BUSTER!

What is **Co-production**?

A way of working where everyone works together in **partnership** on an **equal** basis to create or develop a service.

## OUR THEMES

The strategy sets out some of the most important areas where we think actions need to be taken by people and organisations in Worcestershire to improve the lives of people with Learning Disabilities and those who know, love and support them.

We have organised our strategy into seven themes:



### A Place to Live – A Home



### Communities which Include Everyone



### Purposeful Days



### Being Healthy – Body and Mind



### Life Changes



### Being Safe



### The Right Support for Family Carers




## READING AND USING THIS STRATEGY

For each theme area, we have set out our high level aims for Worcestershire, along with some suggested actions. We would like organisations in Worcestershire to use these aims and actions in their own individual strategies and delivery plans so that together we are helping to make Worcestershire a great place to live for people with Learning Disabilities.

We have indicated which organisations and people need to be involved in the “**Who needs to make the change happen?**” sections.

We have collected local case studies and quotes from Worcestershire people to show what success will look and feel like.

We have also used the opportunity of the strategy to share and highlight some important information about some specific key areas. Look out for the “Focus On” symbol: 

Where words are used which may need a bit more explanation, we have used added an explainer or a jargon buster box, for example:

“I would like people to see me as an individual.”

Comment made in Worcestershire Learning Disability Strategy survey 2022



### EXPLAINER!

#### What is a Learning Disability?

A learning disability is a **significant, lifelong** condition which affects a person’s development, and which means that they **may need help to understand information, learn skills and live independently.** (definition from Enable Group)

▶ [What is a learning disability? - YouTube \(Mencap\)](#)



Finally, we have decided on some aims which we want to work on immediately, and these can be found in our “Year 1 Plan”.

We hope you enjoy reading our strategy! Please get in touch via [ldstrategy@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:ldstrategy@worcestershire.gov.uk) with any feedback or if you have ideas or support you can offer to the Learning Disability Partnership in Worcestershire.

# Members of the Worcestershire Learning Disability Partnership

These are the organisations who are part of our Partnership.  
Click on the names below to link to their websites for more information.



SpeakEasy N.O.W



Our Way



Worcestershire Association of Carers



Families in Partnership



Worcestershire County Council



Worcestershire Children First



NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire



Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust



Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust



West Mercia Police



Healthwatch Worcestershire

## Service providers, represented by:



Emily Jordan Foundation



Midland Mencap



Where Next Association

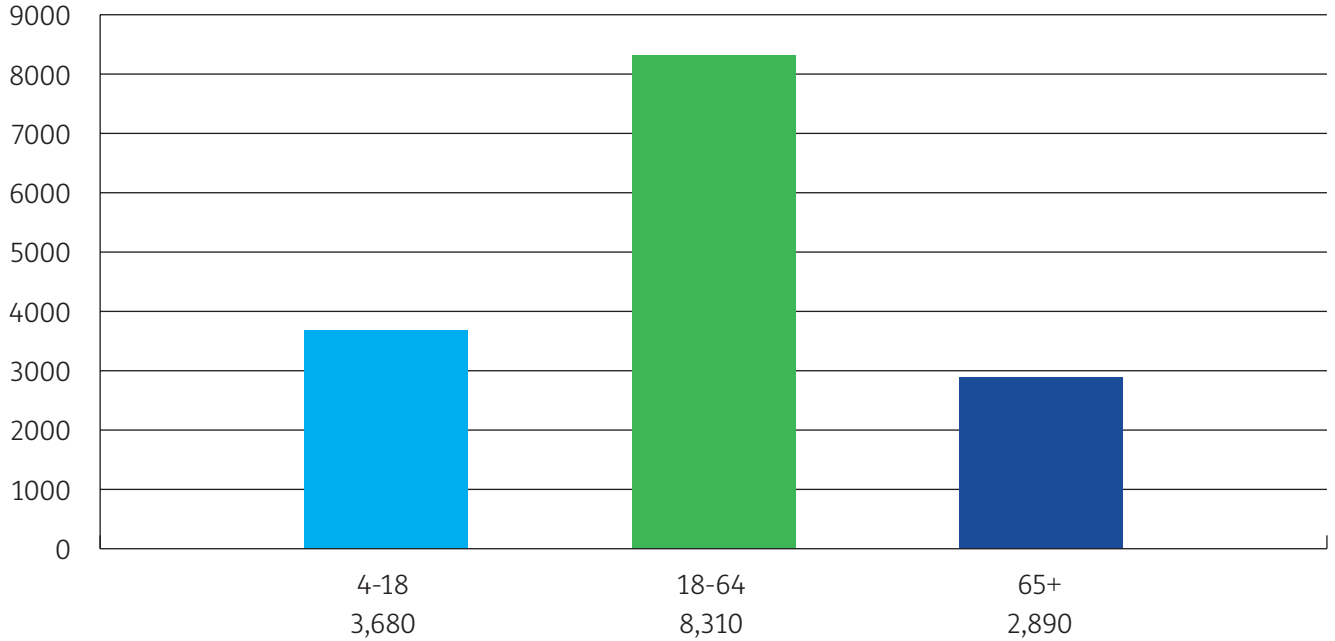
You can find out more about the Partnership Board in our webpages:

▶ [Worcestershire Learning Disability Partnership Board](#)

# Information pages

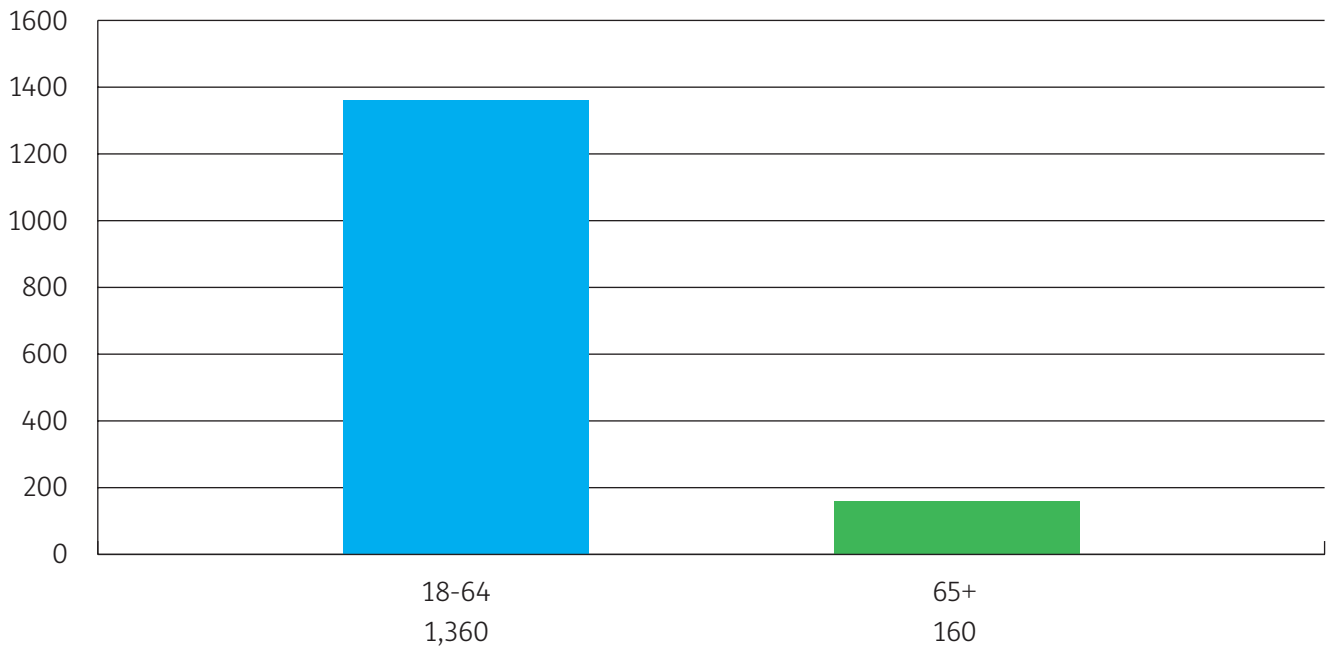
Here are some key facts and figures about Learning Disabilities in Worcestershire.

## Number of children and adults with Learning Disabilities in Worcestershire



Source: Worcestershire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (Learning Disabilities Briefing) 2021

## Number of people with Learning Disabilities receiving support from Worcestershire County Council (Adult Social Care)

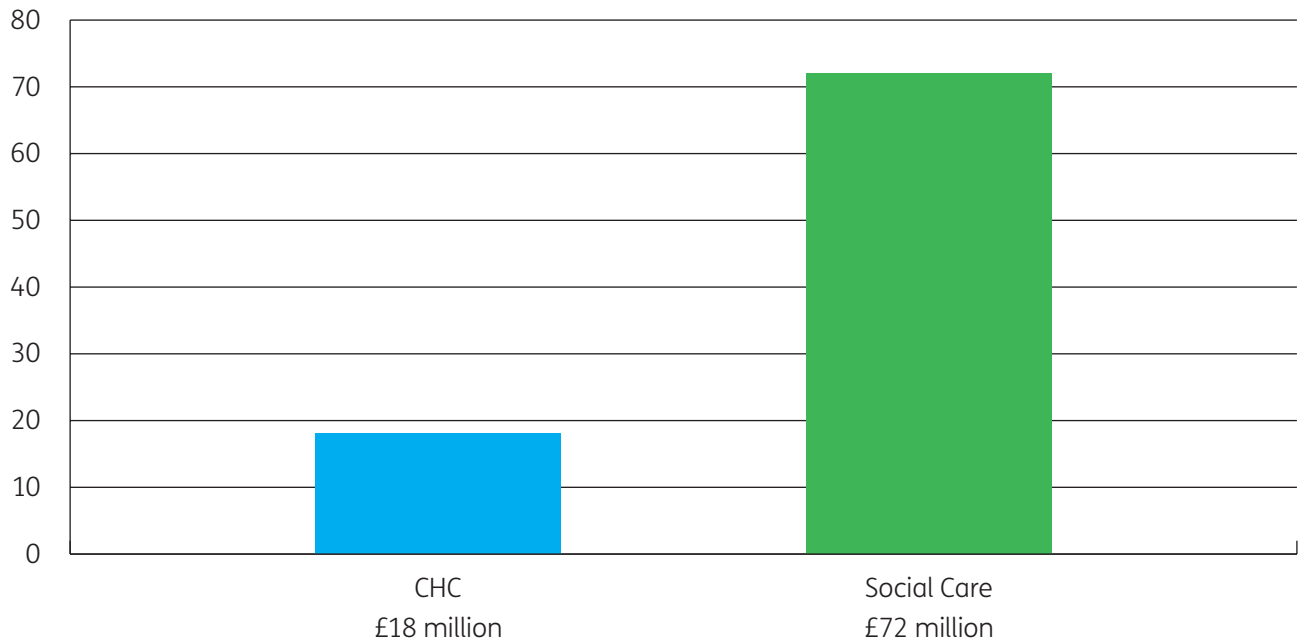


Source: Worcestershire County Council – March 2023

**Currently 158 carers of adults with Learning Disabilities are also receiving support from Worcestershire County Council (Social Care)**

Source: Worcestershire Association of Carers – March 2023

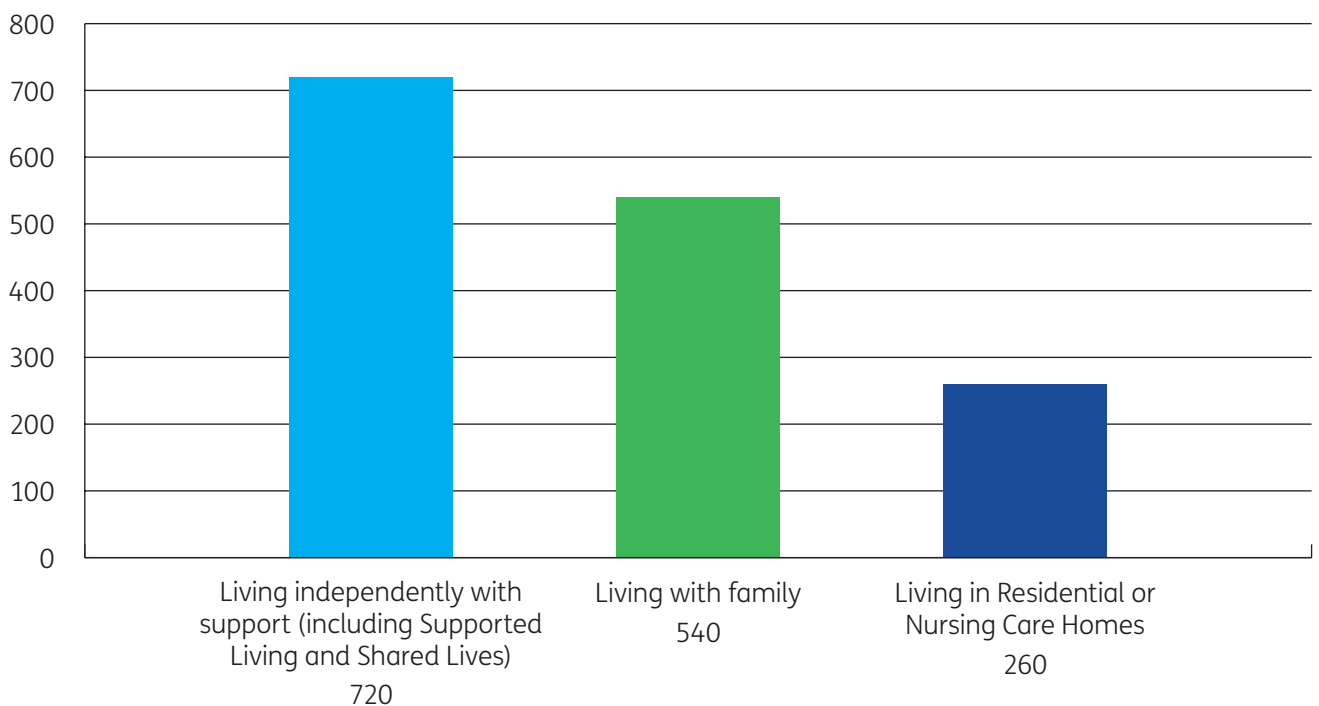
**How much do public services spend every year supporting adults with Learning Disabilities in Worcestershire?**



CHC = Continuing Health Care

Source: Worcestershire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (Learning Disabilities Briefing) 2021

**Where do adults with Learning Disabilities receiving support from Worcestershire County Council live?**

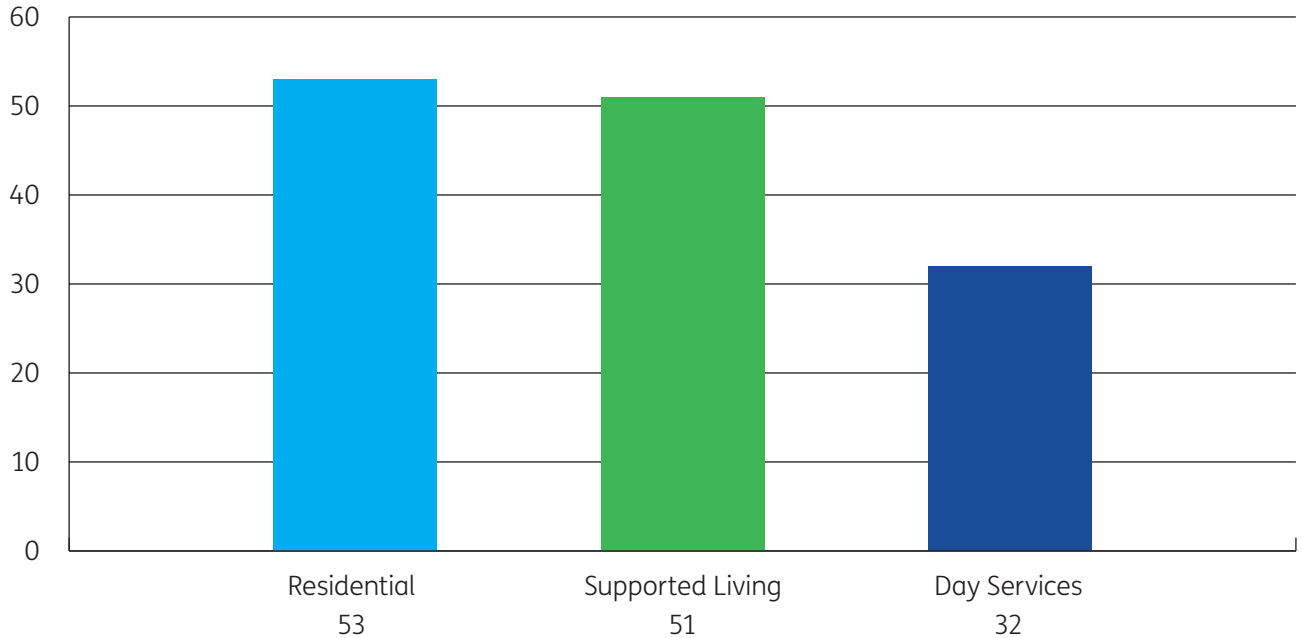




# Information pages

Here are some key facts and figures about Learning Disabilities in Worcestershire.

## How many providers of services for people with Learning Disabilities work in Worcestershire?



Source: Worcestershire County Council – February 2023

### Annual Health Checks and Health Action Plans

As of 31 March 2022:

- **4,495** people with Learning Disabilities on the GP LD Register in Worcestershire.
- **4,107** people with Learning Disabilities aged 14 years and over were eligible for an Annual Health Check
- **3,285 (80%)** of those eligible had an Annual Health Check, and **90%** of these had a Health Action Plan (HAP)

See page 29 for more information about Annual Health Checks and Health Action Plans

Here are some of the facts and figures that we want to change for the better:

On average, people with a learning disability die **22 years younger** than people from the general population.

**6 out of 10** people with a learning disability die before age 65, compared with **1 out of 10** for the general population.

**Half** of all deaths, of people with a learning disability, could have been avoided, compared to **less than a quarter** of people from the general population.

Source: Learning from Lives and Deaths (LeDeR) Annual Report 2021 (Easy Read)

**There were 308 hate crimes recorded against people with disabilities in the West Mercia area in 2021/22**

**Over two thirds (70%) of disabled people say that social isolation is affecting their mental health and wellbeing, with 2 in 5 (40%) reporting an impact on their physical health.**

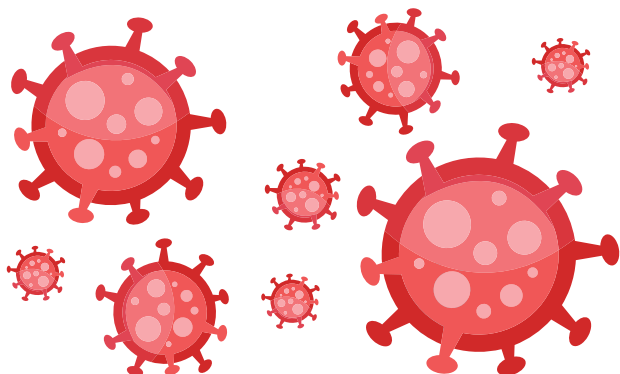
Source: Sense

**The gap in employment rate between those with a learning disability and the overall employment rate is 70.1%**



In the words of Lucy, Co-Chair of Worcestershire's Learning Disability Partnership Board:

**“We want this strategy to make a real difference. By taking action we can make a positive change to the lives of people with learning disabilities in Worcestershire.”**



## COVID-19 – A note

We feel it is important to acknowledge the huge impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the way everyone lives their lives, and the impact on people with Learning Disabilities.

COVID-19 has brought about many changes to the way we now live. In the words of Worcestershire's SpeakEasy N.O.W. People's Parliament:

“We are not all in the same boat. We are in the same storm. Some are on super-yachts. Some have just one oar.”

Damian Barr (author)

“Some of these changes have been good. They gave us an opportunity to learn new things or try something different. Sometimes these changes have made our lives better.

But sometimes they have made things more difficult. They might make us sad or angry or upset. We might find it hard to talk about this. We might not know who to talk to about it.

**COVID-19 has changed the World. It has affected everyone.”**

The Worcestershire Learning Disability Partnership Board strongly feels that COVID-19 should not ever be used as an excuse by organisations for services not being offered or people not being supported on equal terms.

We also want to acknowledge the resilience of people with learning disabilities and their families through this period and the ongoing impacts on people's physical and mental health and wellbeing.

### **Worcestershire's COVID-19 response – a good news story**

In Worcestershire we worked together to make sure that people with a learning disability had early access to COVID vaccinations. We believe that this helped save lives. Across Herefordshire and Worcestershire, the proportion of deaths as a result of COVID in 2021 notified to the LeDeR programme were half that of the England average.

*Deputy Chief Nursing Officer, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board*

The successful COVID-19 vaccination roll-out in Worcestershire shows that by working together we can make a real difference.



# STRATEGY THEME 1 – A PLACE TO LIVE – A HOME

## Our Aim:

- » Everyone should be able to live in a place they feel is their home, which is suitable for their individual needs and where they feel safe.

“Having your own home means you can be your own boss. You no longer feel like a child being told what to do. It’s great to make your own decisions about what you do.”

Sam, Expert Member with a Learning Disability





## What actions need to be taken to achieve this aim?



1. We need the right types of housing in Worcestershire so that everyone can live in the right place for them.
2. Housing and care commissioners and providers must make sure that housing and support are safe and good quality for everyone.
3. Information and communications about housing and housing facilities should be easily available and accessible to everyone in a format that works for them. People should understand their rights and responsibilities as a resident, tenant, or homeowner.
4. Housing planning and development needs to fully recognise the needs of people with disabilities.
5. People need to be able to access the right equipment, aids, and adaptations to support them in their homes.

“I would love to get my own flat again.”

Adult with a Learning Disability

## Who needs to make the change happen?

- » Support providers
- » Housing Associations
- » Private landlords
- » Property developers
- » Adult Social Care and Health commissioners
- » Social workers
- » District Councils
- » Health services
- » Equipment and technology providers
- » People with Learning Disabilities
- » Families of people with Learning Disabilities
- » Advocates and representatives



### JARGON BUSTER!

**What are commissioners and providers?**

**Commissioners plan, buy and monitor quality** of services which are **delivered by providers**.



### JARGON BUSTER!

**What is an advocate?**

**Advocacy** means getting **support from another person** to help you express your **views** and **wishes**, and help you **stand up** for your **rights**. Someone who helps you in this way is called your **advocate**.



## What will success look and feel like?

### CASE STUDY - Moving into my own house

When looking at supported living one of the wishes both from Carter and his parents was having a place to live that **felt like a home** and staff that **felt like family** to Carter. He was able to find a house and support provider that fitted his wishes, and this also made it easier for his parents, Pam and Lloyd, to let Carter “go”.

The family felt they were **kept involved** throughout the whole process of picking locations, getting to view properties (virtually), and writing their wishes for a care provider’s approach and staff skills, and this really helped with understanding how supported living would work.

Carter’s house really feels like this is his home and not just a “placement”. There have been some hiccups and challenges along the way, but these have been solved through **working in partnership** to come to agreements that worked for everyone involved.

Now that Carter is living with his friends in his own house, he says he is **“Proud of his life”**.

### Spotlight on..... Supported Living

Supported Living is where a person with a disability gets the support that they need to live in a home they own or rent as a tenant.

Between 2017 and 2022, the number of people with learning disabilities in Supported Living funded by Worcestershire County Council increased from 330 to 490, an increase of nearly 50%.

We aim to increase this further over the next three years, giving as many people with a Learning Disability as possible the chance to live in their own home.

### What does “good” look like for housing and support?

The “Reach standards” were published in 2019 by an organisation called Paradigm. They set out “what a good, ordinary life looks like for each person we support”, reminding us “about the human rights of all and our duty to protect these.”

Here is the link to the Reach Standards for more information:

▶ [A Practical Guide to the Reach Standards](#)

### What’s it like to live independently?

- “It’s different – it’s more active!”
- “It’s good that I can do things on my own now.”
- “Now I’m here, I feel more confident. I enjoy cooking my own meals with staff helping me.”
- “It’s good to have my own front door.”
- “I like to eat healthy food like fruit and vegetables and staff help me choose.”
- “I can go to town and feed the ducks and look about, and on the bus.”
- “I love everything about living here!”

Quotes from Worcestershire adults living in Supported Living.

▶ [For more information and videos see the pages on Worcestershire County Council’s website: Worcestershire County Council - Supported Living](#)



# STRATEGY THEME 2 - COMMUNITIES WHICH INCLUDE EVERYONE

## Our Aim:

- » People with Learning Disabilities have a right to be fully part of their community. All of Worcestershire’s communities – our physical communities and our online and digital spaces - should be welcoming and accessible to everyone.

“I want to make sure that all people are aware of people with Learning Disabilities and their needs.”

Adult with a Learning Disability

“I would like to go to new places and make more friends.”

Adult with a Learning Disability





## What actions need to be taken to achieve this aim?



1. We need more frequent and accessible public transport, particularly buses, more options for travelling out and about in Worcestershire, and more initiatives such as “travel training” to support people with learning disabilities to use public transport.
2. Places, services, and activities need to be easier to access for people with disabilities, for example for wheelchairs, and all organisations should plan and make “reasonable adjustments,” as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
3. Everyone, including people who work in our communities and our transport services, should be aware of and understand the needs of people with Learning Disabilities and what they can do to make sure people with disabilities are included and treated with respect.
4. We want more organisations in Worcestershire to become “Safe Places” for people with Learning Disabilities.
5. Information about services should be easy to find and easy to understand.
6. Support should be available so that people with Learning Disabilities can access and use online connections and digital resources.

## Who needs to make the change happen?

- » Worcestershire businesses
- » Worcestershire community organisations
- » District Councils
- » Worcestershire County Council Transport
- » Bus, train and taxi companies
- » Worcestershire community transport organisations
- » Worcestershire citizens
- » People with Learning Disabilities
- » Families of people with Learning Disabilities
- » Advocates and representatives

“Transport was identified as our number one issue by people with learning disabilities.”

Worcestershire Learning Disability Strategy engagement 2022-23





## What will success look and feel like?

**Here are just a few examples of what it might be like when these aims are achieved:**

- » Rather than us having to ask a business to put the ramp out for us, it's already there.....
- » Businesses and organisations don't just make "reasonable adjustments" as an afterthought or because they are forced to but work proactively in advance to welcome people with disabilities.....
- » "Changing Place" toilets and facilities are available in every town.....
- » We can get to where we want to, when we want to, whether on public transport, in our own vehicle or on bike or foot.....
- » Online, captions and Easy Read versions are automatically available, we don't have to ask.....

► For more examples, have a look at the website of [Diversity and Ability](#), a national social enterprise led by and for disabled people, paving the way for a future where everyone is welcomed and included: [Diversity and Ability](#)

## Q A CASE STUDY FOCUS ON.....Travelling and Transport

### CASE STUDY

**Nick, one of our Worcestershire Expert Members has given us an example of a great experience he has had using Community Transport**

"Worcester Wheels are very helpful for people with disabilities you can book a time which is good for you to be picked up, they help people with their bags and are very friendly and listen to what you say. I think they are very good."

**"Travel is the key to independence."**

Adult with a Learning Disability

### CASE STUDY

**James' Mum supported him to tell us about his positive experience of the Motability scheme**

I have PMLD (Profound and Multiple Disabilities) so using Public Transport has been difficult for me and my Carers.

I now have a Wheelchair Accessible Car from the Motability Scheme. It has changed my life! I go shopping, to the cinema, bowling and on holiday. In fact, I can go anywhere which is an amazing feeling.



## What will success look and feel like (continued)?

### CASE STUDY: Raising awareness

In Worcestershire, SpeakEasy N.O.W. have been working with organisations to raise awareness of Learning Disabilities. Museums Worcestershire have really embraced this training – here is a selection of feedback from staff:

- “Hearing from the experts was very useful and insightful, they did a great job.”
- “To treat everyone individually - everyone is different and has different needs.”
- “Feel I gained a better understanding of autism and learning disabilities with examples/lived experience as well.”



the positive



### EXPLAINER! What is a Safe Place?

The Safe Place initiative gives the elderly and people with a disability, illness or learning disability, or who just feel in danger, a range of safe places where they can go to for help if they feel they are being bullied, abused or harassed while out and about.



All Safe Place venues display the Safe Place logo in a window or other prominent place. Staff there will be ready to help and assist anyone who goes to them for help, creating a temporary safe haven for them, whatever the circumstance. In Worcestershire, Our Way have done a lot of work to help businesses and organisations become Safe Places for people with Learning Disabilities.

► For more information have a look at the national Safe Place website: [Safe Places - Keep Safe with Safe Places](https://www.safeplaces.org/) and our local directory of Safe Places: <https://www.ourway.org.uk/safe-places>

“Don’t fear what you don’t understand. Be open to seeing things from a different perspective.”

Comment in Worcestershire LD Strategy survey 2022

“There need to be more calm and safe spaces for people to go to.”

Adult with a Learning Disability

## Q A FOCUS ON.....

### ..... Accessible information and reasonable adjustments



#### JARGON BUSTER!

#### What are “reasonable adjustments”?

**Reasonable adjustments** are **changes** that organisations and people **providing services** must make, to make sure people with a disability are **not disadvantaged** compared with people who don't have a disability.

Accessible - <https://www.accessable.co.uk/>

The Accessable website has lots of the information you need to work out if a place is going to be accessible for you.

#### NHS England » Reasonable adjustments

The NHS has to make it as easy for disabled people to use health services as it is for people who are not disabled. This is called making reasonable adjustments. These could be things like:

- making sure there is wheelchair access in hospitals
- providing easy read appointment letters
- giving someone a priority appointment if they find it difficult waiting in their GP surgery or hospital
- longer appointments if someone needs more time with a doctor or nurse to make sure they understand the information they are given.

#### YouTube Videos

- ▶ [Use of Reasonable Adjustments to reduce health inequalities for people with LD](#)
- ▶ [Reasonable Adjustments make the biggest difference to people's health and wellbeing](#)
- ▶ [Link to Reasonable Adjustments Care Plan - AHC - Reasonable Adjustments \(hwics.org.uk\)](#)

#### Easy Read

SpeakEasy N.O.W. have told us about one way we can make documents more accessible:



“Last year we helped lots of different organisations translate their documents into Easy Read. Easy Read is written and designed for people with learning disabilities. It is a way of writing and presenting information in an easier to read format without using jargon or difficult words.

We also use pictures, from Photosymbols, on our Easy Read documents. Photosymbols work with people with learning disabilities to create the pictures. Our own members have also been involved in creating the pictures.

Organisations that have used our Easy Read Service recently include Worcestershire County Council, Platform Housing, Public Health and West Mercia Police.”





## STRATEGY THEME 3 – PURPOSEFUL DAYS

### Our Aim:

- » People with Learning Disabilities should be able to contribute fully to society. This could be through community activities, volunteering, paid employment, clubs, societies and events, as well as through access to a network of loving and fulfilling friendships and relationships.

“I like going to the library in Malvern and the Hive in Worcester as I love reading books.”

Adult with a Learning Disability





## What actions need to be taken to achieve this aim?

1. People with Learning Disabilities need appropriate support to gain and keep paid employment.
2. Employers should embrace the benefits of employing people with Learning Disabilities and ensure they make reasonable adjustments to provide as many opportunities as possible for paid employment.
3. More volunteering opportunities and support to volunteer should be available to people with Learning Disabilities.
4. People with Learning Disabilities should be able to access a wide range of activities in the daytime, evenings, and weekends.
5. Support to people with Learning Disabilities should be of a high quality, person-centred and respectful of people's rights e.g. the right to a family life and the right to a private life, including an active social life.



## Who needs to make the change happen?

- » Worcestershire businesses and employers
- » Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership
- » Skills 4 Worcestershire
- » Supported Employment Services
- » Adult Social Care and Health commissioners
- » Voluntary organisations and day services
- » Education providers
- » People with Learning Disabilities
- » Families of people with Learning Disabilities
- » Advocates and representatives

“I like.....

- going to the gym
- walking on the hills
- going to clubs
- doing voluntary work
- meeting people and seeing friends
- working at the café.”

People with Learning Disabilities in Worcestershire



## What will success look and feel like?

### CASE STUDY

#### My Purposeful Day

When Jane\* came to live here it was thought they had onset dementia and that they could no longer live in a supported living setting. Once they had settled in, it was apparent they didn't have dementia and they made great progress. It was reported that before moving here, they wouldn't socialise with others, ate in their room and liked to wear their pyjamas all day.

Over time and with support from staff, they started to do little daily living tasks around the house, giving them a sense of purpose. They also started taking part in activities around the house.

One of Jane's biggest achievements is going out on the bus to the community. It started with short outings but now they go to the theatre, discos, cafes, and meet their parents. Their favourite activity is going for an ice-cream.

Praxis Care (\*anonymised)

### WHY VOLUNTEERING?

- Volunteering can connect you with other people
- Volunteering builds self-confidence and self esteem
- Volunteering can be important for physical and mental health
- Volunteering gives you purpose
- Volunteering helps others and gives back
- Volunteering can give you a more positive outlook on your life
- Volunteering can help you find a job and build skills

### A REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE.....

Since leaving Chadsgrove School, James has been volunteering in a charity shop in Worcestershire. He works three days a week, on the till and since starting his voluntary work he has learned lots of new skills and his confidence has rocketed!

► [Source: Life Beyond School – Choices](http://www.skills4worcestershire.co.uk)  
[www.skills4worcestershire.co.uk](http://www.skills4worcestershire.co.uk)

### CASE STUDY – Purposeful Days making Worcestershire a greener place

The Ground Maintenance Team, run by Emily Jordan Foundation, work hard each week at Severn Trent's Trimpley reservoir, replacing signs, installing new benches, repairing fences and installing bird boxes, as well as keeping the reservoir free of litter.

They can also be regularly seen out and about in North Worcestershire's parks and riverside. Regardless of the weather, the team clear the leaves, hoe the weeds, trim back hedges and ivy, mow grass and collect litter.

# What will success look and feel like (continued)?

## Q A FOCUS ON.....employment



### JARGON BUSTER!

#### What is “inclusive employment”?

**Inclusive employment** means **having a job** you **chose yourself** in a place where people **with disabilities** and people **without disabilities** can **work together** and be **treated as equals**.

A recent survey by Indeed revealed that two thirds of disabled people believe that employers should be doing more to support them into employment.

Over 65% of people with Learning Disabilities want to work and many would be able to work with the right support and opportunities.

Mencap Employer’s Guide

### EXPLAINER!

#### What is a supported internship?

A supported internship is a type of study programme specifically aimed at young people aged 16 to 24 with an Education, Health and Care Plan, who wish to move into employment.

Supported internships can bridge the gap between education and the world of work or volunteering. These courses can help you get ahead as you move into adulthood

For more information see the Skills 4 Worcestershire website:

▶ [Skills 4 Worcestershire - Supported Internships](#)

The UK employment rate is currently around 76% (as at September 2022) which is almost 15 times higher than the 5% rate for working aged people with learning disabilities. This disparity is known as the learning disability employment gap.

Worcestershire’s Supported Employment Services are working hard with employers and employment organisations to narrow this gap. Have a look at some of the great resources available in our Life Beyond School Choices booklets on our website:

▶ [Skills 4 Worcestershire - Choices](#)



# STRATEGY THEME 4

## Being Healthy - Body and Mind

### Our Aim:

» By working together, we aim to reduce health inequalities and start to close the gap in life expectancy between people with Learning Disabilities and the general population. People with Learning Disabilities should be able to access the physical and mental health services and support they need, to be able to live healthy lives.

The Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care System (ICS) has a vision as set out in the LeDeR strategy 2022-2025:

“Our vision is for people with a **learning disability** or **autism** to **get the support** that they need to **access the full range of health care** that is available to all.

As a result of this their **health will measurably improve** and they **will live longer and happier lives.**”

▶ See the ICS's webpages for more information: H&W ICS Learning Disability and Autism



### JARGON BUSTER!

#### What is LeDeR?

LeDeR is a national **health improvement** programme. It is about **learning** from the **lives and deaths** of **people with a learning disability** and **autistic people**. It aims to:

- **Improve health and social care** for people with a learning disability and autistic people.
- **Reduce health inequalities** for people with a learning disability and autistic people. Health inequalities are **unfair** and **preventable differences in health**.
- **Stop more people** from **dying too soon** by **making care better**.

▶ More information can be found at the national website: [NHS - LeDeR](https://www.nhs.uk/ledeR)





## What actions need to be taken to achieve these aims?



1. We need to make sure that everyone with a Learning Disability (from aged 14) has a good quality and meaningful Annual Health Check and a Health Action Plan in place.
2. All partners must work together to implement the actions identified through the LeDeR (Learning from Lives and Deaths) programme.
3. People with Learning Disabilities should be able to access and use good quality Mental Health services, and support networks should be in place to support the mental health and wellbeing of people with Learning Disabilities.
4. We want to reduce the number of people with complex needs who are in hospitals and make sure there are high quality services in the community for people with complex health needs, including community mental health services and supported living homes, care, and support.
5. All people with Learning Disabilities should have their voice heard in healthcare settings, such as hospitals, GPs and dentists; health and social care professionals should receive appropriate training to be able to recognise and meet the needs of people with Learning Disabilities.

## Who needs to make the change happen?

- » NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire (Integrated Care Board)
- » Continuing Healthcare
- » Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust
- » Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust
- » Worcestershire Public Health
- » Primary Care Services (for example GPs, dentists, opticians)
- » Worcestershire Adult Social Care
- » Healthwatch Worcestershire
- » Care providers
- » Voluntary organisations
- » Worcestershire businesses
- » People with Learning Disabilities
- » Families of people with Learning Disabilities
- » Advocates and representatives



## What will success look and feel like?

### CASE STUDY – Christopher’s Music Therapy

Christopher has been having music therapy sessions for over 30 years. The term “therapy” derives from an Ancient Greek root, meaning “to be alongside” - this is exactly what his therapist Kate seeks to do by offering musical company.

Christopher doesn’t use words but is brilliant at using sound patterns to share his emotions, which Kate supports and validates. Together, they have rich musical conversations, in which Christopher makes clear choices to express emotions.

He particularly enjoys creating percussive metallic noises, using different objects and surfaces, with Kate accompanying on guitar and piano. He loves the funny sounds she plays on her violin, which match his own laughter. Recently, he has begun singing along and experimenting with turn-taking.

Music therapy is an important part of Christopher’s week, allowing him to take the lead and hear himself being heard.

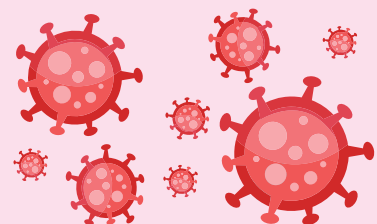
### CASE STUDY

#### Supporting COVID-19 vaccination in Worcestershire

Through the LeDeR programme and the completion of COVID Rapid Reviews we were able to identify that people who were dying of COVID lived in care settings with other people. This evidence supported us to gain agreement from senior leaders to vaccinate people with a learning disability living in care settings at the same priority point as older people living in care settings.

How we supported high levels of COVID vaccination:

- Clinical leaders shared accurate facts about vaccination with people, carers and advocacy groups at key forums
- We developed and distributed Frequently Asked Questions sheets
- We shared “Easy Read” leaflets that were available
- We shared information on reasonable adjustments with those delivering vaccination services
- Community Learning Disability Nurses became skilled vaccinators in order to support those who found it most difficult to access other vaccination sites
- We shared data on the uptake of vaccination to help narrow the gap between people with a learning disability and the rest of the population who were eligible



# What will success look and feel like (continued)?



## CASE STUDY

### Reaching Out to Encourage Breast Screening

An event to encourage women with learning disabilities to access routine breast screening took place at the Worcestershire Breast Unit in December 2022.

Hosted by the HWHCT Community Learning Disabilities Team, the ‘My Breasts and Me’ event sought to raise awareness of the risks of breast cancer, and to increase the uptake of women with learning disabilities attending their routine breast screening appointments.

Nurses at the event gave practical demonstrations and used Easy Read information to reinforce their message. Attendance was high and the feedback from all who attended was extremely positive.

It is hoped that this will become an annual event to increase uptake of breast screening for women with Learning Disabilities in Worcestershire.

► [Event promotes screening to women with a learning disability | News and updates from Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust](#)

“The attendance this year was overwhelming and the feedback we have had from all who attended was extremely positive.”  
Saffron Davies,  
Community Learning Disability Nurse - South Worcestershire



## Q A FOCUS ON.....No Health without Mental health!



In October 2022, Worcestershire's People's Parliament, run by SpeakEasy N.O.W. published their report "No Health without Mental Health!". The people we spoke to had some very powerful messages about the importance of good mental health and some of the ways we can support people.

"It doesn't help to bottle things up."

"I talk to my close friends when I've got problems."

"I find it really helps to talk to my support worker."

"You need to trust people before you share your personal problems with them."

"I like to walk when I feel low. I think the exercise does me good."

"It makes you feel good when someone says it was good to talk to you."

"The sunshine makes me feel happier."

► The full report can be found here ['No Health Without Mental Health' – SpeakEasy NOW](#)

► There are also some great resources on the [Herefordshire and Worcestershire Healthy Minds website: Home | Healthy Minds \(whct.nhs.uk\)](#)



## What will success look and feel like (continued)?



### EXPLAINER! What are Annual Health Checks and Health Action Plans?

Annual Health Checks are for **all adults** and **young people over the age of 14** who have a **learning disability**.

Some of the benefits of Annual Health Checks are:

- Getting to know your GP better, which will help if you ever get ill
- Understanding how you can treat any minor health problems with easy to understand information from your GP
- Asking your GP any questions you have about your health, including how you are feeling, your care, as well as any medicines you take
- Help your GP to stop you getting a serious health condition, rather than waiting until you are ill.

After the health check, your GP will work with you to develop a **Health Action Plan**, which tells you about what to do to keep healthy.

► [More resources and information can be found here: Annual Health Checks | Mencap](#)



### A FOCUS ON.....Healthy Bowels

Constipation affects up to 30% of the general adult population. However we know that individuals with learning difficulties have an increased risk, with some studies reporting it being a problem for up to 70% of people with learning disabilities. Constipation is more common in people with learning disabilities for a number of reasons:

- Lack of understanding of the importance of going to the toilet
- Not drinking enough and poor diet
- Reduced mobility and lack of exercise
- Side effects of some medications
- Anxiety

#### Useful links:

- [How to keep your bowels healthy - Bladder & Bowel UK \(bbuk.org.uk\)](http://bbuk.org.uk)
- [Constipation – NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)
- [Poo Matters – Information for health professionals \(england.nhs.uk\)](http://england.nhs.uk)



Worcestershire Healthy Bowel Event – July 2022



# STRATEGY THEME 5 – LIFE CHANGES

## Our Aim:

» We want people with Learning Disabilities to have a positive experience of major life changes, including the transitions from childhood to adulthood and into older adulthood.

“School is where community starts and bonds are made for life.”

Comment in  
Worcestershire LD  
Strategy survey 2022



“I really want to go to college because it will allow me to be independent and allow me to learn how to live on my own without supervision.”

Young Person with  
Learning Disabilities



## What actions need to be taken to achieve these aims?



1. There should be good quality information available to families from the earliest years about what adulthood will be like and what opportunities will be available, to enable children and young people with learning disabilities to plan their lives and achieve their ambitions.
2. Preparation for adulthood planning should start from the earliest years, and services need to be co-ordinated so that young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities experience positive transitions as they progress through their education and into adult life.
3. People with Learning Disabilities should have access to lifelong educational opportunities and be able to grow in their own community.
4. There should be information, advice and support available for adults with Learning Disabilities and their families, to enable them to grow older with a Learning Disability in a planned and supported way.
5. The care and support that people with learning disabilities have at the end of their lives should be planned, compassionate and rooted in their own wishes.

## Who needs to make the change happen?

- » Worcestershire Children First
- » Worcestershire Adult Social Care – commissioners and social workers
- » Health services
- » Schools
- » Colleges
- » Worcestershire Association of Carers
- » Families in Partnership
- » Housing providers
- » Care providers
- » Voluntary organisations
- » People with Learning Disabilities
- » Families of people with Learning Disabilities
- » Advocates and representatives

**“We all have the right to be happy and healthy when we get older.”**

SpeakEasy N.O.W. People’s Parliament





## What will success look and feel like?

“People who have learning disabilities can achieve ambitions and dreams if they have the right support network to do so.”

Comment in  
Worcestershire LD  
Strategy survey 2022

“In November 2021, there were 2,885 people aged 65 and over with a learning disability.”

Worcestershire Joint  
Strategic Needs  
Assessment 2021

### Learning new skills for life as an adult – Case Study

My name is Zach and I am in Post 16 at Rigby Hall. I decided to stay on in Post 16 so that I could learn to be a bit more independent and learn more functional skills. In my time at Rigby Hall I have improved my confidence and now I feel ready for my future. After I leave Post 16 I would like to go to college to study IT and computing. I would also like to learn how to live on my own.

I think I have learnt lots about ‘work’ in sixth form, I enjoyed working in our community café and learnt how to communicate and be professional. I really enjoyed working in the new Life Skills Village, we have been setting up our own gym business.

► [Source: Life Beyond School – Choices www.skills4worcestershire.co.uk](http://www.skills4worcestershire.co.uk)

### Learning new skills for life as an adult – Case Study

Lisa joined Reddi Support, a Redditch-based day service, while she was at college, attending during the holidays. She quickly settled in, made friends and took part in all activities.

Working at the shop and cafe gave Lisa the opportunity to learn new skills and interact with others in a professional manner. Lisa has learned how to use the till and the card payment machines independently. She enjoys researching prices for new items and donations, and interacting with customers.

► [See Life Beyond School – Choices www.skills4worcestershire.co.uk](http://www.skills4worcestershire.co.uk) for more information



## What will success look and feel like (continued)?



### Q A FOCUS ON.....Growing Older and Bereavement

“We think that growing older and dying are important things to talk about”

SpeakEasy N.O.W. People’s Parliament

Macintyre’s “Dying to Talk” project aims to help people with a learning disability and their families feel less frightened to hear about and talk about death and dying so that they can make personal choices.

For more information, see Macintyre’s website:  
Dying To Talk

#### CASE STUDY – Losing a Loved One

St Richard’s Hospice offer specialist support to people with Learning Disabilities who have experienced a bereavement.

Andy, a specialist palliative care social worker in the Family Support Team, supports people before and after the death of their loved one. He says:

“Many people struggle to discuss death, dying and bereavement. It’s a complex, nuanced and very emotive topic. We ensure people with learning disabilities are offered the same opportunities to access emotional support as neuro-typical people. We treat every person as an individual.”

Support includes communication tools to create social stories and craft activities such as creating memory boxes.

► For more information, see [St Richard’s Hospice website: Bereavement support](http://St Richard’s Hospice website: Bereavement support)  
- [St Richard’s Hospice \(strichards.org.uk\)](http://St Richard’s Hospice (strichards.org.uk))

### Q A FOCUS ON.....Capacity and Advocacy – Hearing Everyone’s Voice

#### What is Advocacy?

Advocacy means **getting support from another person to help you express your views and wishes, and help you stand up for your rights.** Someone who helps you in this way is called your advocate

► [What is advocacy? - Mind](#)

#### What is Mental Capacity?

Mental capacity is about **being able to make your own decisions.** We all make decisions every day, and most of us are able to make these ourselves. However, **sometimes, we may lack capacity** to make a big decision.

Mental capacity must be assessed each time someone has a decision to make.

► [Capacity - Mind](#)



# STRATEGY THEME 6 – BEING SAFE

## Our Aim:

- » People with Learning Disabilities should be able to live in safety and feel safe in their day to day lives, whether in the community, in support services or in their own homes.

“Not all disabilities are visible.”

Adult with a Learning Disability



## What actions need to be taken to achieve this aim?



1. Communities should come together to express zero tolerance of hate crime or abuse, through Community Safety awareness campaigns and the growth of schemes such as “Safe Places.”
2. Organisations should work together to increase awareness of the risk of exploitation for people with Learning Disabilities and put in place actions to reduce and prevent exploitation.
3. Commissioners and providers must have effective safeguarding policies and processes to ensure people with Learning Disabilities are safe in services; where issues are identified these should be addressed and lessons learned.
4. Information, advice and support on financial wellbeing, cost of living, benefits and funding options should be equally available and accessible to people with Learning Disabilities, at the same time as in other formats.
5. Providers of public transport, including trains and buses, should be aware of the needs of people with Learning Disabilities and ensure that public transport is as safe as possible.

## Who needs to make the change happen?

- » West Mercia Police
- » Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board
- » Care Quality Commission
- » Adult Social Care commissioners, quality teams, safeguarding and social work teams
- » NHS Herefordshire & Worcestershire Integrated Care Board
- » Care providers
- » Bus, train, and taxi companies
- » Worcestershire businesses
- » Worcestershire community organisations
- » District Councils
- » Worcestershire citizens
- » People with Learning Disabilities
- » Families of people with Learning Disabilities



### JARGON BUSTER!

#### What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the **welfare of people** and **protect** them **from harm**.



## What will success look and feel like?

### Case Study: Freedom Day Service – Police Talk

Freedom, a day service based in South Littleton, have begun to work with their local police force to hold regular community meetings.

Their aim is to help strengthen the relationship between their local police force and the learning disability community, while enjoying a hot drink and biscuits!

Tracey, the Service Manager says “The police who come really are great. They are aware that there’s a gap that needs filling and it’s good for our service users to see that they are approachable.”



#### Explainer

##### What is hate crime?

Hate crime is a crime against a person because of their race, religious belief, sexual orientation, political opinion, gender identity or disability



#### Explainer

##### What is mate crime?

Mate crime is where someone pretends to be your friend and then takes advantage of you, by maybe making you give them money or making you do something.

### Kate from BILD and SpeakEasy N.O.W has done lots of work on combatting hate and mate crime

#### Kate says:

“We like to think that we are all included in our local communities, we believe everyone should be treated the same as everyone and everyone to respect everyone. If people believe that we are different and bully us this is not right and it’s those people who should be brought to justice.

There are a lot of changes and improvements that have to be made so people are aware of how serious this can be on people with learning disabilities and autistic people.

It’s important to listen and to help people to speak up if they are experiencing hate or mate crime.”

▶ See Kate’s blog on the BILD website for more information: <https://www.bild.org.uk/how-does-hate-and-mate-crime-have-a-big-impact-on-the-lives-of-people-with-learning-disabilities-and-autistic-people/>





# STRATEGY THEME 7 - THE RIGHT SUPPORT FOR FAMILY CARERS

## Our Aim:

- » Carers should have the right support to enable them in their caring role.

“If we can get the best support for our cared for, that makes a carer feel better.”

Worcestershire family carer



“Practical help keeps us caring safely for longer.”

Anne, Family carer



## What actions need to be taken to achieve this aim?



1. There should be reliable and good quality support available to enable carers to carry out their caring role by being able to:
  - » take a break when needed
  - » start or continue in paid work and develop their career
  - » enjoy hobbies and leisure activities
  - » take care of their own health and wellbeing
  - » enjoy time for themselves, having a meaningful life outside of their caring responsibilities
2. Support networks should be in place and promoted effectively to support carers' health and wellbeing.
3. Organisations involved in supporting carers should facilitate and promote early and sensitive conversations about planning for the future needs of the cared-for person at all stages in their life, and the needs of their family.
4. There should be an awareness and appreciation by organisations and communities of the needs of carers, the contribution they make and the insights they bring to service planning and development through co-production.
5. Carers should be informed and involved as appropriate in relation to quality of services and safeguarding and have clear channels for reporting and discussing any concerns.
6. Carers should be able to access good quality information, advice, and training to support them in their caring role e.g., legal, financial, benefits, pensions etc.

## Who needs to make the change happen?

- » Adult Social Care commissioners
- » Social work teams (adults' and children's)
- » NHS Herefordshire & Worcestershire health partners
- » Public Health
- » Department of Work and Pensions
- » Worcestershire Association of Carers
- » Families in Partnership
- » Voluntary and community organisations
- » Care providers
- » Family carers
- » Advocates and representatives



## What will success look and feel like?

### “The Right Support for Carers” – discussion and action

Worcestershire’s family carers of adults with learning disabilities regularly come together with professionals from Worcestershire’s social care and health organisations to discuss the issues which are important to them and their families.

In the words of Anne, one of the members of Right Support for Carers: “We value the opportunity to get together to share concerns and solutions that help us all to lead fulfilling lives.”

#### The Worcestershire Carers Hub



Worcestershire Association of Carers is contracted by Worcestershire County Council to run the Carers Hub.

The Worcestershire Carers Hub:

- Provides a full range of information, advice and support for carers on their caring journey
- Empowers and builds resilience of carers to maintain their caring role
- Helps to manage the impact of caring roles on the lives of carers and their physical and mental health and wellbeing



#### Explainer

##### Who is a Carer?

**A carer** is someone who provides unpaid support and care to a child, young person or adult who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental ill-health. A carer may provide emotional support, medical care, personal care, physical care and/or domestic tasks.

▶ See Worcestershire’s All Age Carers Strategy for more information: [Worcestershire All Age Carers Strategy](#)

### Case Study – Support for Carers through “Replacement Care”

Replacement care, also known as “respite” from caring or “short breaks”, is the support provided to an individual due to a carer having a break from their usual caring role. The support enables the carer to look after their own physical and mental health and wellbeing, social and economic wellbeing and to spend time with other members of the family and personal relationships.

Lock Close in Redditch is one of Worcestershire County Council’s commissioned providers of replacement care, supporting around 40 families by providing regular breaks for adults with Learning Disabilities.

They support on a day-to-day basis with activities in the community, such as trips to the local park and further afield, and fun activities “in house” such as arts and crafts, games and sports, and music sessions.

And when a family needs more support, for example due to illness or an emergency situation, they step in with extra support as required and the emotional reassurance of being a familiar place to stay.





# Worcestershire Learning Disability Strategy: Our Year 1 Action Plan

We, members of the Learning Disability Partnership Board, recognise and embrace the fact that this strategy is ambitious and aspirational, and that it will take some time to achieve all of our aims and ambitions.

Working with all our partners, we have therefore identified some specific actions which we want to focus on for the first year of our strategy.

We believe that these actions will all contribute to getting the strategy aims well underway, and we have identified below which themes each action will support.

We will review the strategy every year and measure our progress in Worcestershire, looking at these actions, as well as the bigger aims and actions in each of the strategy themes. Our first annual review will take place in May 2024.





## WORCESTERSHIRE LEARNING DISABILITY STRATEGY – YEAR 1 ACTION PLAN

REF	ACTION	LINKED TO THEME/(S)
1.1	Ensure that the voices of people with Learning Disabilities are being heard in Worcestershire’s transport improvement programmes, for example the Bus Travel Taskforce and the Active Travel Stakeholder Group.	Themes 2, 3 and 6
1.2	Set up a focussed workshop to explore Shared Ownership options for people with learning disabilities and their families, which will include a follow-up action plan.	Themes 1, 5 and 7
1.3	All partner organisations to review their Learning Disability webpages to increase accessibility; develop the LDPB webpage to include links to useful resources.	Theme 2
1.4	Roll-out the Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training in Worcestershire.	Themes 2 and 4
1.5	Update the Planning for the Future leaflet and information available in print and online. This will include information about housing, support, health, and end of life planning.	Themes 1, 4, 5 and 7
1.6	Improve the information available about social care and health services for people with learning disabilities by producing a visual map.	All themes
1.7	Complete all the actions in the 2023/24 LeDeR delivery plan, including Healthy Lifestyles and cancer screening actions.	Theme 4
1.8	Improve the information available in the Preparing for Adulthood pages of the Worcestershire SEND Local Offer	Themes 3 and 5
1.9	Develop a Charter setting out how practitioners from different organisations should work with people with Learning Disabilities when undertaking assessments (including Mental Capacity Act and Best Interest assessments) and providing support.	All themes
1.10	Make primary care mental health services more flexible and accessible to people who need any adjustments.	Themes 2 and 4

# Partners and Useful Links

We also work closely with other partnerships in Worcestershire and with colleagues in Herefordshire. Here are some other strategies and partnerships which are closely linked to the Worcestershire Learning Disability Strategy:

- ▶ [Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 to 2032 | Worcestershire County Council](#)
- ▶ [Worcestershire Autism Partnership Board](#)
- ▶ [Worcestershire's All Age Carers Strategy | Worcestershire's All Age Carers Strategy | Worcestershire County Council](#)
- ▶ [Our SEND strategy | Our SEND strategy | Worcestershire County Council](#)
- ▶ [Herefordshire Learning Disability Partnership Board](#)

We have also been inspired by the work done by Learning Disability England on the Good Lives Framework. See their website for more information.

- ▶ <https://www.learningdisabilityengland.org.uk/what-members-are-saying-and-doing/good-lives-building-change-together/>

## GET INVOLVED!

Thank you for reading our strategy!

We hope you have been inspired to work with us, to take action and to make positive change in Worcestershire, for people with Learning Disabilities, for their families and for everyone who lives and works in our county.

**If you want to get involved, or have ideas or initiatives you think can contribute, please get in touch using our email address: [ldstrategy@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:ldstrategy@worcestershire.gov.uk)**



The Learning Disability Partnership Board would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this strategy to give quotes, case studies, photos and content.

We would like to give special thanks to Chris, Simon and the team at CJ Media for their generous support with the design and production of this strategy.



This document has been made with Photosymbols.