



worcestershire  
county council

# Adult Social Care Strategy



2023-2028

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# Foreword



## Reflections and Moving Forward

Worcestershire is a great place to live and work! We are thankful for our dedicated and passionate workforce, our excellent partners in the NHS, Voluntary organisations, Primary Care Networks, District Councils, providers and carers. We have a strong sense of community across our County, which was demonstrated during the pandemic, when people, organisations and local businesses came together to ensure the wellbeing of everyone. We are grateful for this opportunity to thank them for their contribution and remind them how much we value their commitment to supporting the people of Worcestershire.



**Mark Fitton**  
**Strategic Director of People**

Our partnership work places us in a strong position to focus on the challenges presented to us. Councils across the country are still learning how to live with the longer term impact of the pandemic such as increased need and demand, a competitive recruitment market and the cost of living challenges. Acknowledging these difficulties, we need a new approach in Adult Social Care that shows we understand these challenges. A way that consolidates the learning over the recent years and builds on the relationships formed across our County. Our new approach will support all aspects of an individual's wellbeing to stay active and well regardless of their age, disability, or condition.



**Councillor Adrian Hardman**  
**Adult Social Care Lead Member**

There is a wealth of knowledge and experience in our communities that will help to deliver our strategy. Thriving communities improve the quality of life for individuals and help to reduce health inequalities.

That is why we think now is the right time to launch our long-term vision and strategy for the future of Adult Social Care in Worcestershire. We want to 'build together to live a good life'.

We believe this strategy will help us to enable people to live their best lives and improve their health and wellbeing.

# Strategic Context



This strategy is central to the People Directorate and outlines the work in place and in development for adults in accordance with our statutory duties set out in the Care Act 2014. It also builds upon key strategies as detailed below.

Shaping Worcestershire’s Future is our five-year corporate plan for change. [Our plan](#) for Worcestershire sets our clear objectives to transform services, deliver better outcomes for individuals and achieve financial sustainability.



A whole Council approach is far more likely to maximise impact than if we acted in isolation. Our corporate plan contains four priorities for a sustainable Council.

## Worcestershire Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy

2022-2032



The Health and Wellbeing Board brings together the organisations responsible for improving health and wellbeing and reducing health inequalities across Worcestershire. A 10-year [strategy](#) has been developed in which the Health and Wellbeing Board identified good mental health and wellbeing as the main priority, supported by action in areas that we all need to ‘Be Well in Worcestershire’.

The Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Partnership Assembly has brought together a wide range of representatives supporting our local residents to develop the [Integrated Care Strategy](#).



The Strategy presents eight commitments which describe what we want for local people, and how we are going to work together to take action and build on existing strategies and plans that enable improvement in health and healthcare outcomes for all.

**Links to strategies:** [Shaping Worcestershire Future 2022-2027](#), [Worcestershire Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#), [Integrated Care Strategy](#) (Integrated Care Partnership Assembly 2023-2033).



# What is Adult Social Care?



## Who do we provide services to?

Adult Social Care (ASC) is the support we offer to adults of all ages to help them live an independent life. Social care may be available to adults of all ages-including young people moving into adulthood, and those of working age-with a diverse range of needs (people with a learning disability or physical disability, older people, people with mental health conditions, people who are neurodiverse, people living with dementia and other long term conditions such as frailty). Care and support covers a wide range of activities to promote people's wellbeing and support them to live independently, staying well and safe.



## How we meet people's needs?

The Care Act 2014 sets out our responsibilities as a local authority for understanding and meeting people's needs. Support can be delivered in a variety of ways including our in-house services, services that we buy from other social care providers, the community and voluntary sector or by support from family and friends providing informal care. Many people directly employ individuals ('personal assistants') to provide their care and support using a direct payment from the council in lieu of receiving care provision as a matter of choice.

We are responsible for making sure that people can choose how their support is provided, that it meets their needs, is well coordinated and effective. We have a duty to ensure that there is support available in Worcestershire to meet the needs of local people. Some people may have to pay for all the support they need or part of it, depending on their financial circumstances.

## Our key statutory duties

As a local authority, we are classed as a statutory organisation. This means we have a legal responsibility to do something, and our role and powers are defined by law. Our responsibilities are defined in the Care Act 2014. Specific duties relate to:

- Provision of social care (assessment of individuals' and carers needs, providing care and support plans, a duty to meet the needs of someone assessed as eligible for care and support);
- Promoting wellbeing;
- Preventing the need for care and support-providing information and advice;
- Protecting adults from abuse and neglect (safeguarding);
- Promoting health and care integration, and
- Market shaping (quality, choice, ensuring we have enough resources to provide services).



# The way we work



At the heart of this strategy are the voices of people who access care and support or may require information and advice. Together with their carers and the organisations who support them, their experience and knowledge will shape what we do and how we do it, developing a collective vision of our aspirations for Worcestershire.

This strategy is underpinned by our core standards, these are our commitments to the residents of Worcestershire based on what people have told us is important to them. Within this document, you will see our commitments described as 'We will'.



## BETTER TOGETHER

We have listened to the voices of people who have experience of receiving adult social care and support, or of being a carer. Our recently developed 'Building Together' forum brought Worcestershire residents together to help us understand and hear what they want and need from us to achieve 'a good life'. Within this document you will see their voices described as 'I' statements.

During our discussions with people, they told us that often the language we use is too complicated. They also said we had too many priorities, which were confusing and felt like we were repeating ourselves. Reflecting on this, we have reduced our priorities from 7 to 3. The discussions with people at our Building Together forum, where the 7 priorities were discussed, has shaped what we will do and is central to this strategy. Pictures (such as the one on the right), were created during the sessions and have been used in this strategy to reflect the voice of our residents.



**People Directorate Guiding Principles**

- Partnership** - Listening to and engaging with people, communities and partner organisations
- Enabling** - Empowering people to have control over their lives
- Accountable** - Being accountable and transparent in the service we provide
- Respectful** - Respecting diversity in our communities and workplace
- Strengths** - Working with people's strengths and assets to determine outcomes

Worcestershire is famous for many things, one of which is its black pear trees which form part of our County's coat of arms. In keeping with this theme, our staff have developed a set of guiding principles on how we work with people who use our services. These principles are embedded into our practice and puts the individual at the heart of everything we do.

Link to documents: [Building Together Forum/Consultation](#), People Directorate Guiding Principles.

# Integrated Care System



Integrated care is about giving people the support they need, coordinated across local councils, the NHS, and other partners. It removes traditional barriers between hospitals and family doctors (primary care) , between physical and mental health, and between NHS and council services. In the past, these barriers have meant that too many people experienced disjointed care.

Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) are new partnerships between the organisations that meet health and care needs across an area, to coordinate services and to plan in a way that improves the health of the population and reduces health inequalities. Health inequalities are unfair and avoidable differences in health across the population and between different groups within society. These include how long people are likely to live, the health conditions they may experience and the care that is available to them.

An ICS has been formed across Hereford and Worcestershire. Working together is key to improve the care and support people receive. The vision and key priorities of our ICS and how we will work together are detailed below:

**Our Vision:**  
**Working together to enable better health, fulfilment and safety in our resident' lives**

1. To ensure **healthier, well connected and more resilient communities** with targeted support to **reduce health inequalities** and inequities, preventing ill health.
2. To provide **high quality services** through improving access to clinically effective treatments.
3. To make the **best use of resources, being exemplar employers** and strengthening the local economy by employing local people, and investing in local businesses wherever possible.
4. To promote a **healthier physical environment**; reducing our carbon footprint through positive action around our buildings, working practices and **digital transformation**.

Worcestershire County Council is a key partner providing social care and public health functions for local people. Working together with our NHS colleagues, Primary Care Networks and the Voluntary Sector enables us to focus on what really matters for the people of Worcestershire.

**Link to documents:** [Hereford and Worcestershire Integrated Care System.](#)

# The challenges facing Adult Social Care in Worcestershire



Worcestershire has an adult population of 354,064. Our population is older than the national average with 1.39% of the adult population receiving support from Adult Services. The population is growing and more of us can expect to live longer.

## Demand for Adult Social Care is growing

The number of adults (aged 18-64) requiring care is forecast to increase by 29% by 2038. For people over 65 years predictions are even higher at a 57% increase in people who may require care and support.



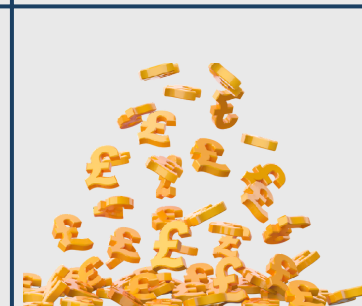
## More people are living with long term conditions

Many of us will be living with two or more long term health conditions at any one time. However, we are also living longer and our needs may become more complex as we age. This can make care and support more difficult in later life.



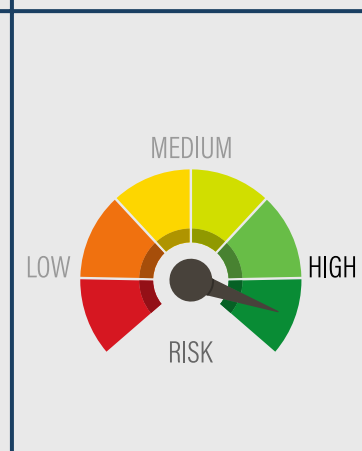
## Costs are Rising

We know that the costs of delivering care and support are rising. Currently £16.5bn is spent by Local Authorities across the Country and all are seeing increasing demand and complexity of needs of their population. Worcestershire County Council currently spends a gross £275m on services for Adults and a £162m after grants, income and contributions.



## Workforce Pressures

Nationally across social care there are significant staffing challenges. In 2023, the national social care vacancy rate is reported as 9.9% (approximately 152,000 vacancies) particularly regarding specialist roles such as Approved Mental Health Professionals, Social Workers and Occupational Therapists. We have experienced challenges finding the people that are needed to deliver the services we provide. We have maintained safe staffing levels and are supported by our Council's Workforce Strategy.



Despite these challenges, we believe we can overcome them by working together as a whole system with the community, our partners, carers and the people of Worcestershire.

Links to strategies: [Workforce Strategy](#)

# Our vision



Bringing the vision to life! In Worcestershire...

We enable people to live their best lives in a place they call home. We put people at the heart of everything we do, providing the **right support, in the right place, at the right time**. We work in **partnership with local people**, building thriving and connected communities where everyone feels included and safe. We offer easy access to high quality and efficient support when needed. We are **future-focused** to deliver this vision.



We are committed to working more closely with the people who use our services and partners to truly co-produce our adult social care services for today and for the future.

# The key themes of our strategy



Over the last 6 months, we have talked to many people who have helped shape the new ASC strategy. People who have received our services and/or are carers, have written the 'I' statements using their experience.

This strategy is structured around three key areas which support our overarching Corporate plan whilst aspiring to deliver the best outcomes for individuals in line with our statutory duties. The table below highlights the areas and themes of focus within this strategy.

## Right support, right place, right time

Offering care and support that is coordinated and enables individuals to live as they want to, being seen as a unique person with skills, strengths and goals.

Enabling people to make informed choices to manage their health and wellbeing at a time and place that's right for them.

## Working in partnership with local people

Working together across Worcestershire to provide a holistic approach to the health and care needs of our community.

People feel connected to their community and their feedback and experience is used to shape services and make changes.

## Future-Focused

Understanding and responding to the many changes and opportunities that face social care, now and in the future.

Working with people and our partners to maintain safe systems of care, making safeguarding personal by concentrating on improving people's lives.

**Link to strategy:** [Shaping Worcestershire Future 2022-2027](#), [Building Together Strategy 2023](#).



# Key Priority 1



We are committed to ensuring residents have access to services which are personalised, local and available when they need it. Below are our areas of focus over the next 5 years:

## Right support, right place, right time.

- **We will** provide high quality advice, guidance, and information which is easy to navigate, joined up and which enables people to maintain control and to exercise choice at whatever point they are in their lives.
- **We will** work towards an inclusive and fair culture by improving equality, equity and choice for Worcestershire residents.
- **We will** take a whole family approach when planning and delivering care.
- **We will** work closely with external care providers, the Integrated Care Board, health and primary care colleagues, district councils and the voluntary sector to ensure we have local services which are easy to access, using our Market Position Statement to inform this work.
- **We will** embed an early intervention and prevention approach across our work to de-escalate and delay need, to enable individuals to access services when they really need them.
- **We will** enhance the support and process for young people in their transition into Adult services.

**Link to documents/strategy:** Advice, Guidance and Information Strategy 2023, Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy 2023, [CQC-Theme 1-Working with people](#).



# Key Priority 1



## Where are we now?

Delivering better outcomes and improved experiences to enable people to access the support they need, at a place they choose, when they need it, requires a whole system approach. Below are examples of the great work already in place:



We are updating our Community Services Directory to provide up to date information and easier navigation to services and support.

Following the recent launch of our Building Together Forum we will continue to ensure an inclusive and fair culture and integrate this further with existing co-production partnership boards.

**BETTER**  
**TOGETHER**



We have recently redesigned our assessment documentation and asked people who use services their thoughts on the new document which places greater emphasis on a whole family approach.

The Healthy Worcestershire Programme brings integrated health and social care improvement opportunities into the local community, increasing access and opportunity.



We have recently launched our Adults Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy.

We have reviewed our process with Worcestershire Children First colleagues to enhance the experience for young people moving into adult services.

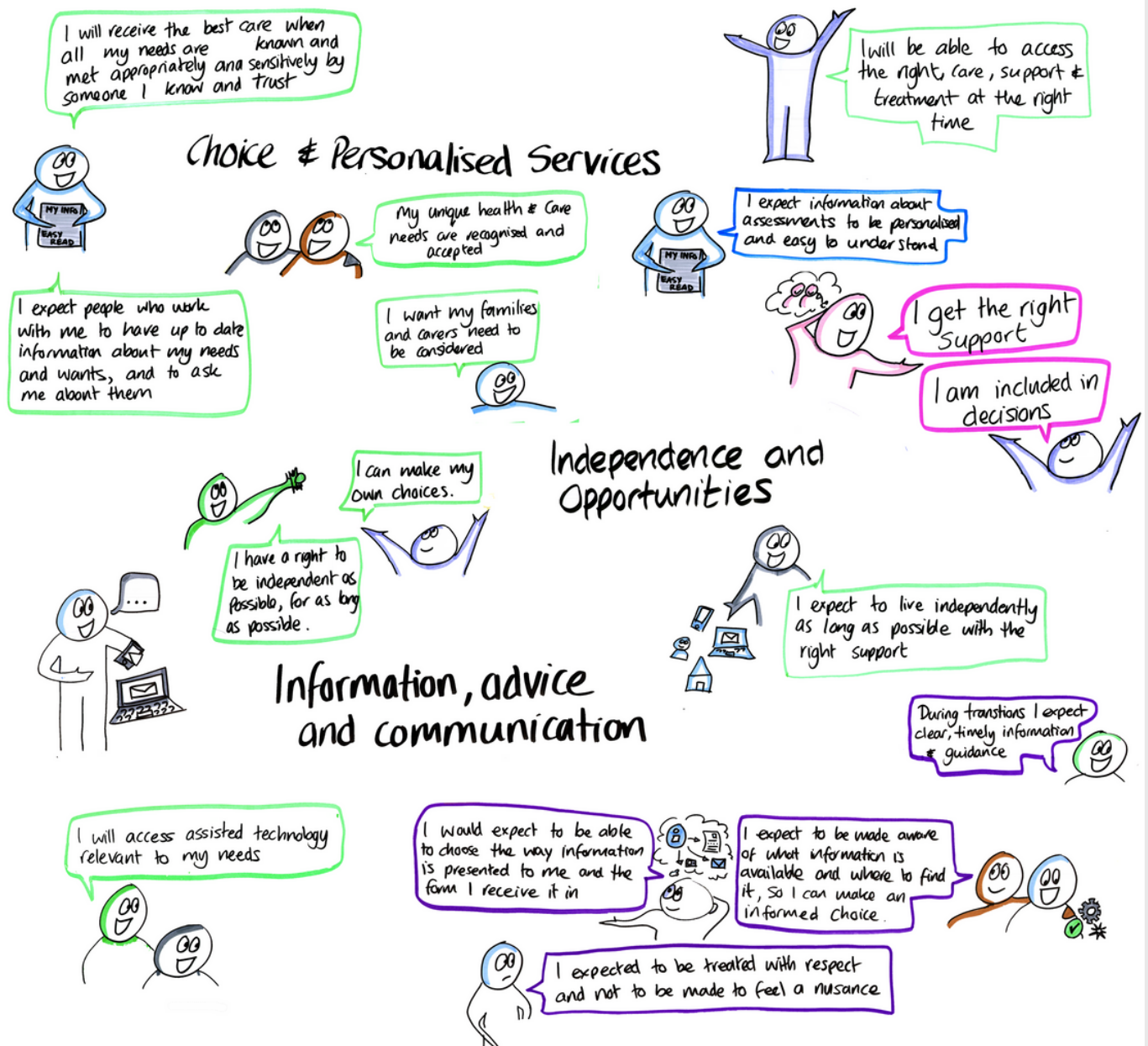


# Key Priority 1

## What outcomes do we want to achieve?



Working together with our partners across Worcestershire, we want to provide a joined up approach to ensure people can access the right support at the right place at the right time. When talking about their experience, our residents were clear about what they wanted, they said...



People co-produced these 'I' statements based on discussions on 'Independence and Opportunities, Choice and Personalised Services and Information, Advice and Communication'.

# Key Priority 1

## How will we get there?



We will re-launch our community directory which will offer a central location for accessing advice, guidance and support across the county to enable self-management, choice and control regarding decision making and promoting independence.



Working with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead, our Building Together Forum and other co-production Partnership Boards, we will review and enhance access to care and support to ensure an inclusive and fair culture for our Worcestershire residents which is personalised to their needs.



As a key organisation in the Integrated Care System, we will work closely with partners to develop digital records to provide a joined up approach to access resident information which is up to date and accurate.



Following the launch of our Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy, we will ensure preventative approaches are at the heart of everything we do to provide better outcomes for individuals at a time and place which is right for them.



We will work with young people, their families and other involved services towards maximising their independence and quality of life as part of 'preparing for adulthood' and effective transitional safeguarding.

*Collaborating with our partners will offer integrated health and social care services which improve access, choice and promote independence and opportunities for the people of Worcestershire.*



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# Key Priority 2



**We are committed to working in partnership with local people and communities to provide better experiences and outcomes for people.**

## Working in partnership with local people

- **We will** work in partnership with the voluntary sector, health colleagues, primary care networks and district councils to increase our service delivery and enhance resources for Worcestershire residents.
- **We will** work collaboratively with our partners to have a greater understanding of inequalities across Worcestershire. This will help us shape and commission future provision to offer greater diversity and inclusion for our residents.
- **We will** work together as a system, to provide a seamless approach to hospital admissions and discharges.
- **We will** ensure that co-production is embedded in all that we do when designing and commissioning services, including policy updates and new strategies.
- **We will** look at new ways of working to ensure that services across health and social care are joined up to enable continuity of care and support for our residents.
- **We will** share information and learning with our partners to offer a holistic approach to improvement.

**Link to strategy/documents:** [Integrated Care Strategy 2023-2033](#), [CQC-Theme 2-Providing Support](#), [CQC-Theme 3-How the Local Authority ensures safety within the system](#).

# Key Priority 2



## Where are we now?

We understand our duty to collaborate and work in partnership, to make our services work seamlessly for people. We share information and learning with partners and collaborate for improvement. Below are examples of the great work already in place:



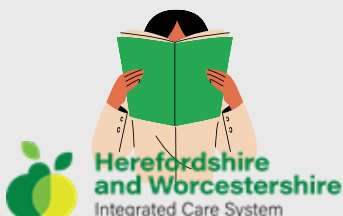
The ICB have brought partners together to create a Frailty Strategy and associated delivery plan, including areas such as Falls Prevention.

We are members of the Being Well Strategic Group, who support the delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy for residents across Worcestershire.



We have an integrated Community Reablement Service to support individuals at home and avoid unnecessary hospital admissions/deterioration in their independence.

We are members of the Learning Disability, Autism, Carers and Mental Health Partnership Boards, which focus on shared outcomes, the development of joint strategies and learning.



We are part of the ICS Academy model which supports the development of our health and care staff. We are currently launching a dedicated ICS Social Care Faculty.

We are members of the Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board who monitor the effectiveness of the safeguarding work carried out by all partner members and partner agencies.





# Key Priority 2

## What outcomes do we want to achieve?



Working together with our partners across Worcestershire, we want to provide a joined up approach to ensure people have better experiences and outcomes. When talking about their experience, our residents were clear about what they wanted, they said...



People co-produced these 'I' statements based on discussions around Working with our Communities and Working with Partners.

# Key Priority 2



## How will we get there?



We will work closely with our partners to successfully deliver the vision, ambition and priorities set out in the Integrated Care Strategy.



We will work closely with our Public Health colleagues to analyse and further understand the needs of our people across Worcestershire and reduce inequalities through future commissioning of services.



We will work closely with our health colleagues to support the development of our integrated urgent care system including the Care Navigation Hub to support safe and timely hospital discharges.

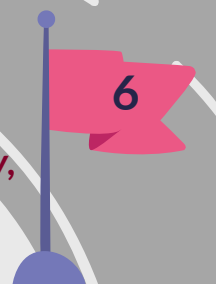


We will continue to develop and expand our Building Together Forum to ensure people are at the heart of everything.



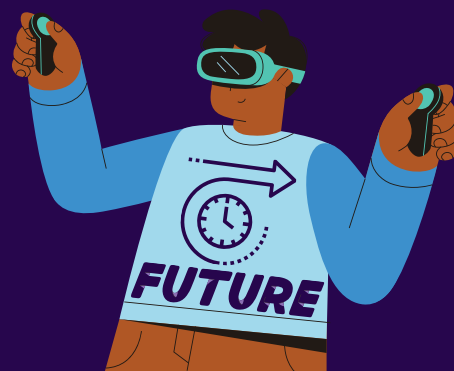
We will have the courage to 'do things differently and try new approaches' to ensure we are making the best use of our resources.

*We will utilise our communities' strengths, capacity, skills and resources to prevent, reduce and delay needs from arising.*





# Key Priority 3



We are committed to responding to the many changes and challenges of social care to ensure sustainable and safe outcomes for people within the resources available to us.

## Future-Focused

- **We will** respond to and deliver national social care reform expectations and opportunities.
- **We will** continue to build a proactive and positive culture where innovation can happen which focuses on outcome and impact.
- **We will** work with people and our partners to establish and maintain safe systems of care, where quality is managed, monitored and assured whilst promoting positive risks.
- **We will** ensure that safety is a priority for everyone and have robust systems, processes and practices to safeguard people from abuse.
- **We will** maintain a clear focus on our financial position.
- **We will** ensure we have a good understanding of local care markets and have detailed plans to ensure their continued sustainability, whilst ensuring best outcomes for individuals and value for money.

**Link to strategy/document:** [Market Position Statement 2023](#), [Safeguarding Policy](#), [CQC-Theme 3-How the Local Authority ensures safety within the system](#), [CQC- Theme 4-Leadership](#)

# Key Priority 3



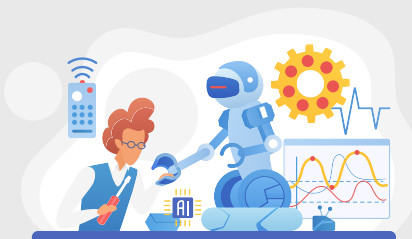
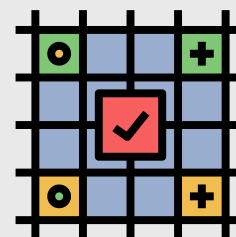
## Where are we now?

The most efficient model of Adult Social Care is needed to enable us to continue to provide high quality services in a challenging financial position. This requires us to think differently, measure what matters and demonstrate how we deliver safe, effective, high quality, person centred care in our given resources. Below are examples of the great work already in place:



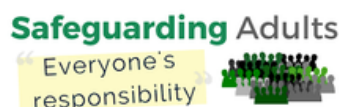
We work closely with our ICB partners to oversee the quality of commissioned providers and have proactive stakeholder groups such as the lived experience group who monitor services performance and care quality and safety.

Working with key partners, we have developed a detailed market position statement which sets out our commissioning intentions for the next 5 years.



We champion the use of digital technology and provide Assistive Technology to enable people to maximise their independence and reduce reliance on services.

We contribute funding towards two new posts which focus on the VCSE and Housing to think differently about how we maximise our local assets and reduce inequalities.



We have undertaken a recent review of our Adult Safeguarding Team to enhance our systems and processes.

We have recently introduced a Strategic Board to review Performance, Quality and Practice, ensuring we deliver safe, effective and excellent services.



# Key Priority 3

## What outcomes do we want to achieve?



There has been much discussion in the media about the challenges facing Social Care. To ensure care services are sustainable it is important we innovate and assure ourselves that we have robust systems and processes. When talking about their experience, our residents were clear about what they wanted, they said:-



People co-produced these 'I' statements based on discussions around Safe and Effective Services and Sustainability and Quality.

# Key Priority 3



## How will we get there?



We will continue to contribute and respond to external assurance, assessment and sector-led improvement activities, nationally, regionally and locally.



We will continue to contribute to the work of Worcestershire's Integrated Care Partnership, ensuring the Local Authority is an equal and valued partner and to support the development of a thriving VCSE Alliance.



We will keep looking at what we are doing to make sure it is effective, take learning and share information with our partners to innovate and improve quality.



We will continue to focus on safety, preventing abuse and neglect and identifying risk early through effective local safeguarding arrangements.



We will maintain a clear focus on our financial position, ensuring we work with finance colleagues to monitor and support the effective delivery of our projects and ambitions.

*We will remain committed to co-production, and have open and honest conversations with people and communities which will help to deliver solutions to future challenges.*



# From strategy to action...



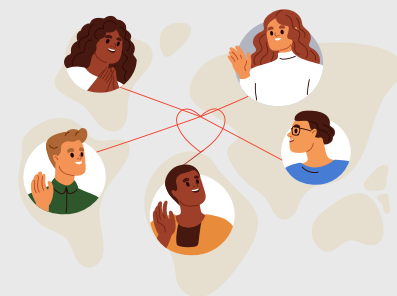
To achieve our ambitions over the next 5 years, we will need to work differently with the residents of Worcestershire and our key partners. We will know this strategy is successful when:

People make the best possible choices about their health and care.



People tell us they feel supported and safe and have clear goals.

People have a sense of independence and a connection to their community.



People continue to receive a high quality service and are confident we can manage our resources well.

In addition to our statutory duty, it is important that this Strategy is informed by people's views and experiences. We are committed to ongoing engagement, co-production and community led approaches with the people of Worcestershire.



# We will achieve this through...



# Making sure this work happens



It is important that we have good governance around our ambitions and plans. Governance means the way in which we manage the business and how we achieve our stated commitments. To ensure the work outlined in this strategy happens...

We have developed a work/action plan to support the delivery of this strategy.



We will monitor progress at our ASC working group, and report to the Performance, Quality and Practice Strategic Board.

Representatives from our Building Together Forum will be invited to attend our Board bi-annually to offer challenge and review our progress.



We will review our success and priorities with people or groups who have an interest in what we do and who are affected by our decisions.

Additional scrutiny will be provided by CQC who will review our assurance and auditing systems and processes. We must demonstrate that we assess, monitor and drive improvement in the quality and safety of the services we provide including risk management systems.

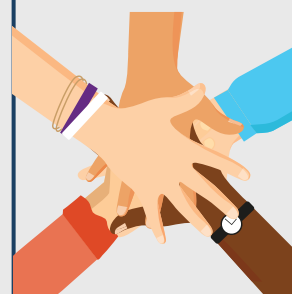


# With thanks...



## Working together

Our areas of focus cannot be delivered in isolation, whilst acknowledging our duties set out in the Care Act 2014. Successful delivery of this strategy will only be achieved through collaborative working to provide a joined up approach for the residents of Worcestershire.



## Your voice matters

In developing this strategy, we have shared our plans and ideas with many people and heard their thoughts and considerations. These have shaped our priority areas which we believe will have the greatest impact and improve outcomes for our residents.



## Thank you

We would like to extend our thanks to our partners who have contributed and acted as a critical friend in the development of this strategy. Our journey has just started, but we are determined to provide the best for our residents.



# Glossary



Word/ Abbreviation	Meaning
Assets	Assets in the context of this strategy are things we have near by and consider strengths. Examples of this would be community relationships and social networks; and community and neighbourhood services, activities and facilities.
ASC	Adult Social Care.
Building together	Service users, their families and carers, are given the opportunity to improve Adult Social Care across the County by contributing their experience, skills, and influence on the design, development and delivery of our services through our Building Together Forum.
Commissioner	A person or organisation that buys services on behalf of the people living in the area that the commissioner covers. This may be for a population as a whole, or for individuals who need specific care, treatment and support.
Co-production	'Co-production' describes working in partnership by sharing power between people who draw on care and support, carers, families and citizens.
CQC	The Care Quality Commission is the independent regulator for care within England. This includes the care provided by the local authorities, independent providers, the NHS and voluntary organisations in registered settings.
Culture	Learned attitudes, beliefs and values that define a group or groups of people.
Effective	By effective, we mean that people's care, treatment and support achieves good outcomes, promotes a good quality of life and is based on the best available evidence.
Family approach	The whole family approach recognises that reaching large goals and maintaining them, requires the support of all family members.
Independence	Freedom from the control or influence of others.
ICB	An Integrated Care Board is a statutory NHS organisation which is responsible for developing a plan for meeting the health needs of the population, managing the NHS budget and arranging for the provision of health services in a geographical area.
ICS	Integrated Care System (as described on page 7).
People who use services	The legislation uses the term "service user", which means a person who receives services from a provider as they carry on a regulated activity.
Primary Care Networks	A PCN is a group of GP practices working closely together, aligned to other health and social care staff and organisations, providing integrated services to their local population.
Provider	An individual person, partnership or organisation registered with CQC to carry on one or more regulated activities.
Resources	The things needed to carry out a task or piece of work. Resources can include appropriately qualified staff, finances, suitable buildings and sufficient equipment.
Safeguarding	Ensuring that people live free from harm, abuse and neglect and, in doing so, protecting their health, wellbeing and human rights.
Stakeholder	People or groups who have an interest in what an organisation does, and who are affected by its decisions and actions.
Sustainability	Sustainability regarding social care needs to be responsive to an individuals present needs and resilient over the longer term-this may be financial and resources.
VCSE	VCSE means an incorporated voluntary, community or social enterprise organisation which serves communities. They are usually registered charities or not-for-profit organisations.