



# Our Strategy

2024 - 2027

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## Introduction

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Derbyshire Carers Association (DCA) is a registered charity that supports Young, Young Adult and Adult Carers who look after a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of their illness, frailty, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction. The care they give is unpaid. DCA offers a variety of support and information services to improve Carers wellbeing, ease pressures associated with caring and to help navigate services. We continually build networks and partnerships that enhance community support and make 'Carers everyone's business'.

Our new strategic plan will act as a map to help our Board of Trustees, Chief Executive and Management Team plan ahead effectively. Setting out clearly how we can best support unpaid Carers as well as ensuring we connect with communities to identify Carers, and effectively manage the charity.

To develop the strategy; we have reflected with our staff and trustees on our strengths and areas for growth and improvement. We have evaluated the impact of our previous work and communication with funders and considered our relationships with sector peers and partners. We would like to thank everyone who offered their valuable input.

The DCA Strategy highlights the four priority areas that we believe will strengthen our organisation, increase resilience and improve the quality of our services for Carers and their families.



# Our History

DCA has supported Carers in Derbyshire since 1988. In April 2017 DCA was awarded the Derbyshire Carers Assessment and Support Service contract and became the lead provider for Carers services in Derbyshire. At the same time, DCA began supporting Young Carers in Derbyshire and Young Adult Carers in transition.

In December 2019 DCA launched our partner service, Nottinghamshire Carers Association, which promotes awareness and identification of Carers in education, health, employment and community services. The service leads on consultation with Carers across Nottinghamshire.

In 2023, all Nottinghamshire service contracts came to an end and DCA entered competitive tendering to retain the Carers Engagement and Promotion service. DCA was successful and will continue to deliver the service for a further four years. DCA have partnered with TuVida to deliver the health and education element of their Nottinghamshire Young Carers Support service contract.

The Derbyshire Carers Assessment and Support service and Young Carers service ended in 2024 and was replaced with an All Age Carers Support service, which DCA have been awarded for an initial five year term.





# Our Vision & Mission

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## Vision

Carers of all ages can live healthy lives; are identified early; are empowered, informed and supported; have an opportunity for a quality of life alongside caring; can care safely; can make realistic choices as to whether they wish to be Carers, and can be involved and recognised as experts in consultation and planning. Carers should have the same rights, hopes, expectations and choices as people who are not Carers.

## Mission

Our mission is to make a positive difference to the lives of local Carers by; increasing public awareness of the Carer's role and the inequalities unpaid Carers face and offering person-centred support that is co-produced, professional, compassionate, respectful, and inclusive and meets individual need. In doing so, we will deliver quality services that sustain caring roles and improve Carers' quality of life.







## Our Values

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### Whole family approaches

We are committed to a whole family and strengths-based approach that provides Carers of all ages with the tools they need to set goals, create plans, and to achieve those goals.



### Collaborative

We connect, collaborate and share, recognising the expertise, knowledge and experience of Carers and our partners.

We ensure that people with lived experience of caring play a pivotal role in shaping DCA services.



### Compassionate

Compassion is at the heart of DCA. We listen, expressing kindness, empathy, understanding, dignity, respect and inclusivity.

We respect people's differences and endeavour to offer appropriate services that are sensitive to each Carer's identity and heritage.



### Accountable

We act with integrity and are accountable and honest about what we do and how we do things.

We are self-reflective, continually identifying areas of our organisation and services where we can improve.



# Legislation

## Care Act 2014

The Care Act 2014 came into effect from April 2015 and replaced most previous laws regarding Carers and people being cared for. Under the Care Act, local authorities have new functions. The Act gives local authorities a responsibility to assess a Carer's needs for support, where the Carer appears to have such needs. Local authorities must consider the impact of the caring role on the health and wellbeing of Carers. If the impact is significant then the eligibility criteria are likely to be met. Local authorities should work with other partners, like the NHS, to think about what types of service local people may need now and in the future.

The Care Act 2014 also places a duty on local authorities to conduct transition assessments for children, children's Carers and Young Carers where there is a likely need for care and support after the child in question turns 18. The assessment should also support the young people and their families to plan for the future, by providing them with information about what they can expect.

## The Children and Families Act 2014

The Act gives Young Carers more rights to ask for help. Councils must check what help any Young Carer needs as soon as they know they might need help, or if the Young Carer asks them to. In the past, Young Carers always had to ask first if they wanted their council to check what help they

needed. Local authorities, carrying out a Young Carer's needs assessment must consider the extent to which the Young Carer is participating in or wishes to participate in education, training or recreation or employment. The Act also says that councils must assess whether a parent Carer within their area has needs for support and, if so, what those needs are. This check is called a 'Parent Carer's Needs Assessment'. In the past, parents always had to ask first if they wanted their council to check what help they needed to look after a disabled child.

## NHS England's Commitment for Carers

The Department of Health set out in its mandate to NHS England 'that the NHS becomes dramatically better at involving Carers as well as patients in its care'. In May 2014 they published NHS England's Commitment for Carers, based on consultation with Carers. Based on the emerging themes NHS England has developed 37 commitments around eight priorities, which include raising the profile of Carers, education, training information, person-centred well-coordinated care and partnership working.







## Statistics

The Census 2021 reported that there are

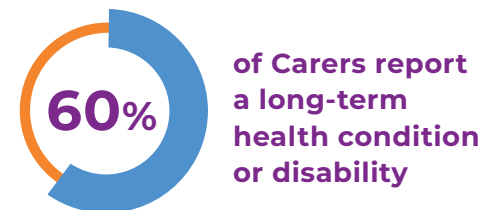
**102,000** Carers living in Derbyshire + **106,000** Carers living in Nottinghamshire

who support a family member or friend living with a long-term physical or mental health condition or illnesses, or problems related to old age.

**Unpaid Carers in England and Wales contribute a staggering £445 million to the economy every day** – that's **£162 billion per year!**

*Petrillo and Bennett, 2023*

Caring can have a significant impact on health and wellbeing.



compared to 50% non-Carers

*Carers UK analysis of GP Patient Survey 2021*

**The value of unpaid care is equivalent to a second NHS in England and Wales**, which in 2020/21 received an estimated

**£164 billion** in funding

*Petrillo and Bennett, 2023*

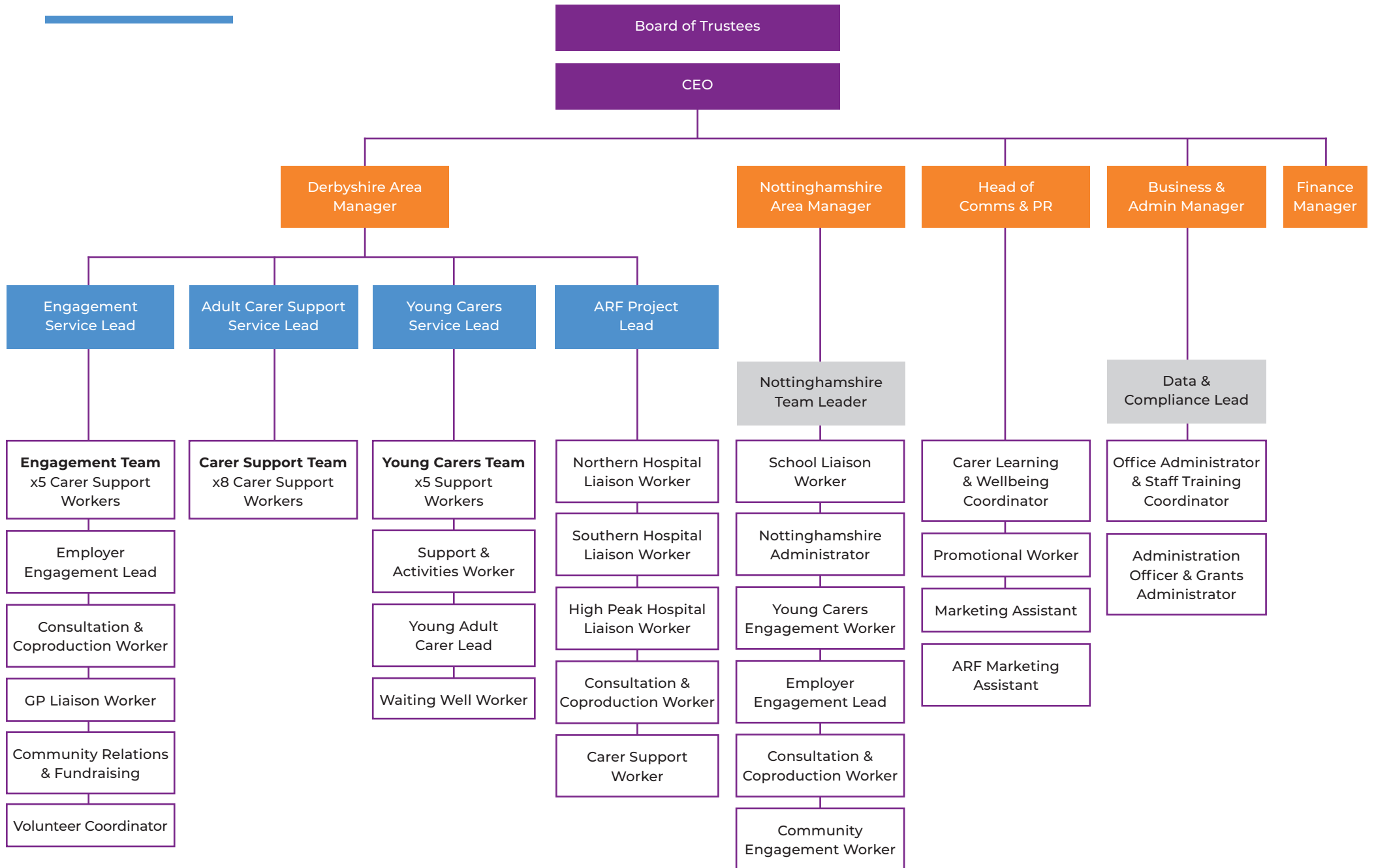


**1 in 7 people in the workplace in the UK are juggling work and care**

*Carers UK, Juggling Work and Care, 2019*



# Our Team





# Strategic Priorities

## Visibility

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### Strategic Objective

To have greater visibility in all communities across Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire; improving early identification for Carers and access to preventative support.

### Background

- The DCA Derbyshire Diversity project reported that being visible within communities is vital when identifying and supporting Carers from diverse backgrounds.
- The DCA Carers Voice: High Peak Carers Consultation project reported that Carers wanted choice on how they access service information.
- Early identification is essential in supporting the health and wellbeing of Carers, and the people they care for.
- Our current branding and marketing is often confusing as we operate across two counties. Many Carers and professionals report being confused as we are branded as Derbyshire Carers Association and Nottinghamshire Carers Association. It is also not always clear who we are and what we do.

### What we plan to do

#### Year one

- Complete a marketing audit to identify areas where we are not reaching Carers or our service offer is unclear.
- Co-design an organisational marketing plan with Carers to ensure our branding is clear and consistent across both counties.

#### Year two

- Ensure marketing materials and methods are age appropriate and our service information is accessible to all Carers.
- Engage with local communities to build awareness of Carers and improve pathways to community- based support.

#### Year three

- Proactively build upon our work with traditional media (Newspapers, TV and Radio) to raise awareness of the charity and the needs of Carers.





# Strategic Priorities

## Partnerships & Networks

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### Strategic Objective

Increase opportunities to work in collaboration with health, social care, the voluntary sector and education; establishing at least two new partnerships which will result in a positive outcomes for Carers.

### Background

- Partnerships are essential to successful early identification, prevention and community-based support for Carers and the people who they care for.
- DCA hold expertise in Carer support but recognise that we cannot be the experts in all areas. We value our existing partnerships which bring a wealth of complementary support for Carers but identify there are areas to increase joint working.
- We are fortunate that there is a rich and diverse voluntary sector across Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire with a wealth of knowledge and expertise, which many Carers or the person with care needs can access.

### What we plan to do

#### Year one

- Build relationships and partnerships that will have positive outcomes for Carers and improve early identification.
- Represent the voice of Carers across all networks, making Carers 'Everyone's business' and building Carer friendly communities.
- Engage with employers, supporting policy design and delivering training to make sure they are aware of the barriers Carers may face during or entering employment.
- Create opportunities for all Carers to take a role in co-producing and influencing the shape of future services.

#### Year two

- Establish at least two new formal partnerships with organisations whose purpose fits within our aims to enhance Carer services.
- Map services we communicate with and how we share information. Introduce new communication methods to increase reach and ensure an effective two way flow of information.





# Strategic Priorities

## Capacity & Consistency of Services

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### Strategic Objective

To have quality efficient services that can meet increased demands and changing needs of Carers.

### Background

- There has been an increase in referrals to our Derbyshire All Age Carers Support services. In the last four years, referrals have increased by over 60%. As we implement further awareness raising and partnerships, we will increase the number of referrals further.
- Carers are all unique. We support Carers who are new to caring, whilst others register after caring for some time. Some Carers support more than one person, whereas others may share caring with other people. Services need to be responsive to all Carers' unique needs and circumstances.
- New DCA services, including the Acceleration Reform Hospital Discharge project, will identify more Carers who are at different stages of the Carers pathway. Carers registering may be going through transitions, others may be caring for someone at the end of their life.

### What we plan to do

#### Year one

- Review each service pathway, using a recognised audit tool to ensure services are working as effectively and efficiently as possible.
- Enhance team learning opportunities expanding the skills, knowledge and capabilities of our teams and volunteers, ensuring they feel confident in their duties and are best placed to undertake their role.
- Consult with Carers on how they would like to access support, such as digitally or in person. Co-produce new methods and approaches to pilot for effectiveness.

#### Year two

- Review our organisational structure to ensure we have a succession plan in place as well as the right people in the right roles.
- Improve internal communication networks to enhance awareness of organisational developments.
- Diversify our income to fund additional complementary areas and projects that have been identified through consultation and coproduction.

#### Year three

- Introduce a three year Business Strategy to improve sustainability, resilience and support growth.
- Ensure effective financial governance at all times, continuing to be financially viable, prudently managing our income and reserves to ensure sustainability for the future.



# Strategic Priorities

## Research & Quality

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### Strategic Objective

To establish a programme of quality assurance that includes the views of all stakeholders. DCA wishes to become a recognised lead in Carer research, raising Carers profiles locally, regionally and nationally.

### Background

- DCA are committed to delivering quality services to all Carers. We continually adapt services to ensure they are appropriate to support Carers through local and national changes.
- We know our services are effective but we have an inconsistent approach to measuring Carer outcomes and our effectiveness with partner services.
- DCA has participated in research projects with the University of Derby. The DCA Board has recently introduced a Research sub-group to prioritise learning and insights.

### What we plan to do

#### Year one

- Trial Carer outcome measure tools in specific areas of the service.
- Respect and listen to both Adult and Young Carers as 'experts by experience', and actively support and encourage Carer involvement in the design and delivery of DCA services.
- Agree areas, priorities and partners with our Research sub-group.
- Promote external research and consultations that Carers can contribute to or that facilitate contributions from Carers.

#### Year two

- Introduce a proven Carer outcome measure across all services.
- Introduce approaches for Carers, partners, staff, and funders to evaluate the quality and appropriateness of our services. Use feedback to continually develop and improve.

#### Year three

- Share research findings and recommendations with partners during a Carers Conference which will be hosted in partnership with the University of Derby.

