

‘Caring for all’ All-age Carers’ Strategy

Contents

Contents	2
Foreword.....	3
1. 'Caring for all' Strategy Landscape	5
Putting people who care at the heart of our strategy.....	5
Introduction and overview to the strategy.....	6
2. Our Commitment and Strategic Priorities	10
3. Progress and achievements since our last Carers' Strategy	25
4. Providing care in North Yorkshire	27
Who we mean when we talk about carers:.....	27
What the law says:	27
What can caring look like?	28
Caring for the people who are important to us	29
5. What do we know about people who care in North Yorkshire?.....	30
6. Future Challenges	32
Changes in age groups	33
What this means for local services.....	34
What this means for Carers and Health and Social Care Capacity	34
7. Appendix 1 - Legal responsibilities towards carers across health and social care.....	37
Links to wider strategies and partnerships	38
Linking to the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy	39
NICE: Principles of what good looks like for carers.....	40
Bringing the Carers' Strategy in line with the NHS 10-year plan	41
8. Appendix 2 – Carer Priorities across wider partner strategies	43

Foreword

Caring is universal. This is illustrated by the fact that an estimated 12,000 people a day in the UK become carers¹. We know from research that it can often take up to two years for a person to recognise their caring role and identify as a carer². This affects people who care across all age ranges including children and young people³.

Whilst it is important that those who provide care are not unnecessarily 'labelled', if the caring role is not recognised by individuals themselves, professionals, or schools, many people miss out on the support they are entitled to – support that can make a significant difference for both the person caring for and the person being cared for.

We also know that caring for family and friends can sometimes feel all-encompassing - both rewarding and challenging. How a person feels about their caring role is often heavily influenced by situations and systems over which they have limited or no control, as well as by their interactions with professionals and whether they feel seen and valued. Young people who care often do not disclose that they care for a family member for fear of repercussions, including potential family separations⁴.

These impacts influence the decisions people who care may need to make, such as reducing their working hours or giving up work altogether, navigating unfamiliar health, social care and benefits systems, managing the associated financial pressures, and balancing the health and wellbeing of the person they care for with their own needs. Together these challenges can detract from the human relationships and rewards of caring for someone who is important to them.

This is why we have co-created this strategy with people of all ages who care for others, alongside our carer support organisations across North Yorkshire. This approach ensures that our strategic priorities reflect what we have heard about what matters most to those who provide care.

As a collective group of partners, we are committed to recognising and understanding these challenges, and to working with people to ensure that the support and services we provide are accessible, responsive, and relevant.

¹ [facts-about-carers-june-2025final.pdf](#)

² [facts-about-carers-june-2025final.pdf](#)

³ [The Children's Society - Whole Family Pathway](#)

⁴ [Still Hidden Still Ignored Barnardo's young carers report.pdf](#)

In this strategy we adopt three principles from the Carers Trust 'Carer Narratives Report'⁵ that will shape how we talk about and design support for people of all ages who provide care for others:

Caring is universal. At some point in life, most of us will care or be cared for.

No care without support. Good care is supported care – made possible by the right information, services, flexibility at work and education, and a community around you.

Prevention and partnerships. Families, communities, employers, education providers, the NHS and the Council each have a role – working together early, so no one reaches breaking point.

We would like to offer our sincere thanks to everyone who shared their insights, personal stories, and words of encouragement, as well as constructive feedback on the draft versions of this document. We are also especially grateful to those who engaged in and co-created the 'I' Statements included in this strategy.

⁵ [CarerNarrativesReport.pdf](#)

1. 'Caring for all' Strategy Landscape

Putting people who care at the heart of our strategy⁶

This strategy is for everyone who looks after someone else – family or friends – and we want it to genuinely make sense to you and your life. The only way we can do that is by really listening to what people who care are already telling us. When we work side by side with carers, we can make sure the information and support we offer is useful, easy to find, and consistent wherever you live in North Yorkshire.

As part of developing this strategy, we asked those who care for others to share their thoughts, ideas and experiences. The comments that follow show just how varied and powerful those experiences are – and they remind us why change is needed, and why it's needed now.



⁶ [Carer Engagement Feedback Report 2024-25.pdf](#)

Introduction

This strategy is for anyone, of any age, who looks after someone without being paid – whether that person has a disability, a health condition, or simply needs extra help. It's for you if the person you care for lives in North Yorkshire, and it's also for you if **you** live here but the person you support lives somewhere else.

Supporting people who care for family and friends is a big priority for North Yorkshire's Health and Adult Services (HAS) 2030 plan, Children and Family Services and for many of our partners in health and care⁷. We want things to be better for everyone who cares for someone, and we're working in lots of ways to make that happen – including offering direct payments so people have more choice and control, and making sure support is fair and consistent wherever you live in the county.

We know that caring looks different to everyone, because every relationship is different. But this variety often gets lost when we reduce people's lives to numbers and statistics. We already have some practical support in place – things like online self-assessments, advice and guidance, and options for taking a break. But as we look ahead to 2030, our aim is to go further. We want carers to be recognised earlier, have support that truly fits their lives, and be much more involved in shaping the services they use.

By understanding and respecting the many ways people care for one another, we can help make sure support happens in the place people know best - home – and from the people who know them best. That's what good, person-centred care is all about. We're inviting all our partners, professionals and communities to stand with us in championing carers: to listen to them, value what they bring, and help them to stay well themselves.

This strategy brings together what we've learned from local and national reports, alongside the real voices and experiences of people who care for family and friends. We want to make sure that behind every statistic, the person – and their story – is seen, heard and valued.

The North Yorkshire Council Carers Report: Evidence and Engagement Review (2024)⁸ brings together what people have told us locally and nationally about their day-to-day experiences of caring. It includes what we learned from 296 carers who completed an online questionnaire in 2021, and this has helped shape what matters most in this strategy. The report also draws on work from organisations such as including Carers UK, The Kings' Fund, Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, Public Health England, Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Office for National Statistics, so we have a clear and rounded picture of what carers are facing.

⁷ [Appendix 3](#)

⁸ [NYC Carers Report - Evidence and Engagement Review - March 2024](#)

Alongside the report, we've also listened directly to those who care for family and friends, as well as carer support organisations, voluntary and community groups, Healthwatch North Yorkshire and the NHS Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board. This new 'Caring for all' strategy has genuinely been shaped with carers, not just for them.

The strategy focuses on getting the basics - the "**ABCs**" – right. That means making sure people get **Advice and an Assessment** when they need it, can take meaningful **Breaks** from caring, and have support to stay connected with their **Community**, so they can keep working or return to work if they choose.

These ABCs are the simple, everyday things that make the biggest difference. When we get them right, we move closer to our vision: a North Yorkshire where people who look after family and friends feel seen, supported and genuinely valued.

'We want people of all ages who care for someone in North Yorkshire to be recognised and supported to do what matters most to them. We'll do this by setting priorities that are shaped with carers themselves, guided by real experiences and by what national policy tells us works best'

We'll bring this vision to life by focusing on four key priorities for carers. These priorities, along with our vision statements, remind us of what good support should feel like for people who look after family and friends across North Yorkshire.

The evidence and experiences behind this strategy show that carers need both long-term ambition and reliable, everyday support. To build on what we already have, the next section explains the support that's currently available across North Yorkshire. These services are the starting point – the first steps in finding information, guidance, assessments and breaks – and they'll help us make the bigger changes we're aiming for through this strategy.

Support for people who care for others

Carer's Assessment

If you look after someone who lives in North Yorkshire, you can ask for a Carer's Assessment. If the person you care for lives in a different area, their local council has to offer you an assessment instead.

A Carer's Assessment is simply a conversation about how caring affects your life. It isn't a test of how well you care or whether you're 'doing it right'. It's about *you* – what would make caring easier, safer and more sustainable, and what support you do need to stay well.

If you are aged 18 or younger, tell someone you trust at your school or college that you are a young carer so they can offer support and complete an Early Help Assessment if required.

Phone our Customer Contact Centre on **0300 131 2 131** to request a Carer's assessment. If you are a young carer, you will be signposted to organisations who we work with and will be able to support you.

Adult carers can fill in a Carer's Assessment online on the [North Yorkshire Council website](#) or phone our Customer Contact Centre on **0300 131 2 131**, to ask for a face-to-face assessment. Depending on your situation, you'll meet with either a Living Well Co-ordinator or Social Care worker.

Carer Information, Support and Guidance

We work with three local carer support organisations who are here to help anyone looking after a family member or someone important to them. They offer clear information, friendly guidance and practical support to make caring a little easier.

[Carers' Resource](#) provides support across Harrogate, Craven and Selby.

[Carers Plus Yorkshire](#) provides support across Hambleton, Richmondshire, Scarborough and Ryedale.

[Dementia Forward](#) provides support across North Yorkshire.

Carer Break Service

We work with three organisations who, together with their volunteers, offer a Carer Break Service for adults. This means someone can step in for a while giving people who care, some time for themselves.

[Carers' Resource](#) - provides support across Harrogate, Craven and Selby.

[Hambleton Community Action](#) – provides support across Hambleton and Richmondshire.

[Caring Together North Yorkshire](#) – provides support across Ryedale, Scarborough and Whitby.

Carer's Emergency Card

The Carer's Emergency Card shows that you look after someone who depends on you. It's for anyone who provides unpaid care to a family member, friend or someone important to them – whether you support them with everyday tasks, emotional support, personal care, or keeping them safe.

If you become unwell or have an accident and can't explain your situation, the card tells professionals to contact the person you've chosen as your emergency contact.

You can apply for a Carer's Emergency Card online through the [North Yorkshire Council Website](#), or by calling our Customer Contact Centre on **0300 131 2 131**. You can also request a card from any of the organisations that provide carer information, support and guidance listed in the section above.

The Carer's Emergency Card is currently used for Adult Carers but as part of our ongoing work, we are looking at how we expand this for Carers of all ages.

Our Commitment and Strategic Priorities

Across North Yorkshire, more than 53,000 people say they look after someone important to them. Every one of those carers has their own story and their own set of challenges. Our new Carers' Strategy is shaped by both solid research and the real experiences of local people, helping us to understand what life is like for those who care for family members, friends and neighbours.

In this strategy, we're clear that carers of all ages matter. We want to make sure the support offered is thoughtful, practical and consistent, whoever you are and whatever your caring role looks like.

This strategy belongs to all of us: people who care for others, local communities, voluntary groups and organisations, health services, schools, and the council. The four priorities we set out give us a shared sense of direction and describe how we will work together to offer the right support. They aren't meant to act as a full action plan. A separate, detailed action plan will sit alongside this strategy, explaining exactly what we will do to improve services and bring our shared ambitions – shown in the table below – to life.

Carer Priority:	Our Vision - what the priority looks and feels like
Collaborative and accessible information and support for people who care.	You'll be able to find the information you need easily, along with practical help that makes a real difference. Working with our partners, we make sure that there's 'no wrong door' – whoever you speak to, you'll get the right guidance and support, joined up across health, social care, education and our communities.
Supporting people who care to stay healthy and well.	You know what support there is out there, and you can take a break from caring when you want to. You feel connected to the people around you - your family, your friends and your community.
Identifying and recognising the caring role.	You can spot when caring is becoming a part of your life. Caring doesn't have to be your whole identity – you still have your own sense of who you are, where you belong, and you feel cared for too.
Evidence based and personalised support	We help people who care to live their own wonderfully ordinary lives, with support that's shaped to fit them. We work alongside carers and use good evidence to keep improving and creating services that truly work.

Priority 1: Collaborative and accessible information and support for people who care.

Our Vision: You'll be able to find the information you need easily, along with practical help that makes a real difference. Working with our partners, we make sure that there's 'no wrong door' – whoever you speak to, you'll get the right guidance and support, joined up across health, social care, education and our communities.

What does this mean?

We want everyone who lives in North Yorkshire and looks after family or friends to have clear, useful and accessible information, as well as any practical support they need. Good information shouldn't be hidden, confusing or full of jargon – it should be easy to find, easy to understand, and connected to real, down-to-earth help.

To make this happen, everyone involved – health services, social care, schools, community groups and more – needs to share information well and work consistently together. This helps make sure that people of all ages who care for others get joined-up support, no matter where they start.

Why is this a priority?

Most of us, at some point in our lives, will either provide care or need care from someone who matters to us. Caring only works well when people are properly supported, and that support begins with clear, timely information.

In the 2021 North Yorkshire County Council carer survey, 72% of respondents said that having "...good quality information and advice [that] is relevant to me" was extremely important. But a third also said they had missed out on support because they didn't know what to ask or where to go.

There are many reasons people delay asking for help. A recent Carers Trust report⁹ found that fear, guilt and worry about what caring might involve can stop people from seeking information early. We also know that many young carers go un-recognised. We need to get better at seeing the human relationships behind caring - not just labels like 'carer' and 'cared for'. When we do this, our conversations and our language become more human, supportive, relevant, and more likely to help people at the right time.

⁹ [CarerNarrativesReport.pdf](#)

What insight has informed this priority?

The Carers UK **State of Caring Report**¹⁰ found that 73% of carers hadn't had a Carers' Assessment in the past year. For those who had, more than half said they received only information or advice, rather than the practical support they actually needed.

Carers said that they want:

- a. information and advice that's easy-to-get hold of and tailored to them.
- b. practical help with the caring role, with Carers' Assessments leading to real support - not just signposting alone.

What does success look like?

We have strong, two-way relationships with all our partners across services and within local communities.

Young carers are identified early, supported in school, and able to attend school regularly, engage in learning, and achieve their potential without their caring role holding them back.

We work together to align systems, processes and information so people who care for others can get clear, coordinated support. When this happens, carers of all ages feel informed, confident and supported to navigate their caring journey.

¹⁰ [State of Caring 2025](#)

People who care across North Yorkshire will be able to say the '*I*' *statements* and our ways of working and organisational values will reflect the '*We*' *statements* that sit alongside them.

'I' Statements		'We' Statements	
Adult Carers			
I can get the information I need, when I need it, in a way that makes sense to me.		We share clear, up-to-date information in ways that work for different people.	
I understand what my rights are as a carer.		We explain people's rights in plain language and help them understand what this means for them.	
I can speak up for myself and the person I care for - or get help to do that if I need it.		We help people who care for others to be heard and offer advocacy when it's needed. We involve carers in decisions.	
I can find the advice, information and training that helps me support the person I care for.		We give straightforward advice, information and training to help people feel confident in their caring role.	
I know what's going on locally – groups, activities, support and services – and I can get involved if I want to.		We make sure people know what's happening in their community and how to get support.	

'I' Statements		'We' Statements	
Young Carers			
I am doing well at school.		We recognise the vital role young carers play in their families and the impact this can have on their education and wellbeing.	
I am listened to by teachers and other adults, they understand my situation and help me to balance my education with my caring role, so I don't miss out on opportunities.		We will work together – across schools, health services, social care, and the voluntary sector – to identify young carers early, understand their needs, and provide the right support at the right time.	
I feel supported, included, and able to achieve my goals.		We will make sure young carers are included, listened to, and offered flexible help so they can succeed in education, maintain their wellbeing, and thrive now and in the future.	

Priority 2: Supporting people who care to stay healthy and well

Our Vision: You know what support there is out there, and you can take a break from caring when you want to. You feel connected to the people around you - your family, your friends and your community.

What does this mean?

We want everyone in North Yorkshire who looks after someone else to know what support is available. We want people who care to stay connected to the people and places that matter to them. Our aim is to create a culture where carers feel supported, included and able to live well – both in their caring role and as individuals within their own needs, goals and aspirations.

Why is this a priority?

Caring can take a real toll on health. Carers are more likely than non-carers to experience poor physical and mental health¹¹. This can be due to the physical effort of caring, lack of breaks or the stress of managing money and day-to-day life¹². Many carers put their own wellbeing last, and the 2021 Census shows that more carers now have a disability than a decade ago¹³.

National and local evidence paints a consistent picture: caring can seriously affect someone's health and quality of life. In the **2022 Carers UK 'State of caring'** report¹⁴ almost a third of carers rated their mental health as 'bad' or 'very bad', and over three-quarters expected their health to be affected by caring in the future. Many said they would like to be more active but simply cannot find the time.

A fifth of carers also rated their physical health as 'bad' or 'very bad'. Census data shows that across almost all age groups, carers are more likely to have a disability than people who don't provide care¹⁵. The GP Patient Survey 2024 found that people with long-term conditions are more likely to be providing care¹⁶.

¹¹ [Carers UK \(2025\) A Fresh New Approach To Supporting Unpaid Carers Our Vision For Delivering The NHS 10 Year Health Plan In England](#)

¹² [Carers UK - State of Caring 2022](#)

¹³ [Carers UK - Facts about carers: March 2025](#)

¹⁴ [Carers UK - State of Caring 2022](#)

¹⁵ [Unpaid care and protected characteristics, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

¹⁶ [Carers UK - Facts about carers: March 2025](#)

What insight has informed this priority?

When carers' health worsens, many are forced to reduce their working hours or leave work altogether, which affects their income and increases pressure. Financial strain, isolation, and having little time for hobbies or seeing family and friends can all make health problems worse ¹⁷.

Research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation shows that the financial impact of caring isn't the same for everyone – it varies by age, gender, family make-up and ethnicity¹⁸.

Carers UK have also highlighted that many carers are cutting back on essentials such as food and heating due to rising living costs¹⁹.

What does success look like?

Those who care for others can easily find and use support that fits their lives, helping them to care safely without damaging their own wellbeing.

We routinely ask – and act on - what someone needs so they can continue to be a partner, parent, child or friend and 'not only' a carer.

Young carers feel safe, supported and emotionally and physically well, with access to timely help that reduces stress, prevents burnout, and promotes their long-term wellbeing.

¹⁷ [Carers UK \(2025\) A Fresh New Approach To Supporting Unpaid Carers Our Vision For Delivering The NHS 10 Year Health Plan In England](#)

¹⁸ [Unpaid care and poverty: unpaid carers' priorities for change through participatory co-design | Joseph Rowntree Foundation \(jrf.org.uk\)](#)

¹⁹ [State of Caring Survey 2025 | Carers UK](#)

People who care across North Yorkshire will be able to confidently say the '*I*' statements, and our work and values will reflect the '*We*' statements that sit alongside them.

'I' Statements	'We' Statements
Adult Carers	
I feel physically healthy and mentally well or know how to get help if I'm not.	We help carers look after their own health, stay safe and stay connected.
I can choose to learn, work, and save for my future.	We work with others to create chances for carers to learn and remain in education, work or volunteer.
I have time for myself and can do things I enjoy away from caring.	We offer reliable break options and make sure carers know how to use them.
I feel safe and supported when managing risks around the person I care for.	We help carers understand and manage risks and know where to turn when things feel unsafe.
I understand why telling my GP that I'm a carer can help me.	We help GP's identify carers and help carers understand the benefits of being registered.
Young Carers	
I am understood by adults – they know how caring affects my physical and emotional health and they help me to look after myself as well as the person I care for.	We recognise that caring can impact a young carers' physical and emotional health.
I feel safe, listened to, and able to ask for help when I need it.	We work together – across health services, education, social care, and voluntary services to identify young carers early, understand the pressures they face, and make sure they receive timely, coordinated support.
I feel healthy and well and I know how to get help if I need it.	We ensure that young carers can access health advice, emotional wellbeing support, and opportunities for rest and resilience, so they can stay healthy, safe and able to thrive.

Priority 3: Identifying and recognising the caring role

Our Vision: You can spot when caring is becoming a part of your life. Caring doesn't have to be your whole identity – you still have your own sense of who you are, where you belong, and you feel cared for too.

What does this mean?

We want everyone in North Yorkshire who looks after someone to feel seen, recognised and valued – not just for what they do, but for who they are. Caring for someone matters, but it shouldn't be the only thing that defines a person.

People of all ages who care should feel that they belong, that their whole wellbeing is supported, and that they're not forgotten in the process. Our aim is to create a culture where people who care are noticed, listened to and encouraged – both in their caring role and in their own life beyond it.

Why is this a priority?

Every day, 12,000 people in the UK become carers²⁰. More than half take over a year to realise that caring has become part of their life - and some groups, such as people caring for someone with mental ill health, parents caring for children with additional needs and those caring from a distance, often take even longer²¹.

If someone doesn't realise the caring role, they're far less likely to get the help, advice or support that could make their life easier. This makes it more likely that they'll struggle, feel overwhelmed or make big decisions – like cutting their work hours – without the information they need²².

Those who provide care and support to others need to feel valued and supported to maintain balance in own lives. Their voices must be heard, and they should be treated as an essential part of the life of the person they support²³.

²⁰ [Looking After Someone 2026-27 England \(carersuk.org\)](#)

²¹ [Looking After Someone 2026-27 England \(carersuk.org\)](#)

²² [cuk-crd-research-report-2016-web.pdf \(carersuk.org\)](#)

²³ [Kings Fund - Caring in a complex world 2023](#)

Often, the help a carer receives depends on whether education, health and care staff recognise their role early on. If this doesn't happen, opportunities for financial help, advice and preventative support can be missed²⁴.

There is growing evidence²⁵ regarding the significant educational challenges faced by young carers:

- Average of 23 days of school missed each year
- 38% of young carers are persistently absent, rising to 45% in secondary schools
- Around double the rate of suspensions and exclusions
- 1 in 10 young carers have missed a test or exam because of caring
- 48% of young carers have been bullied in the past year

Caring and Classes 2025 – Young Carers and Attainment Inequalities

What insight has informed this priority?

Carers UK²⁶ reports that 71% of carers don't recognise themselves as carers because they see what they're doing as simply being a parent, partner, family member or friend. One in three carers say nobody ever told them they were a carer – showing how important it is that professionals help people understand the role they're taking on. Four in ten people say they didn't notice when they were carers because they were too busy caring to reflect on it. Others feel unsure about being given the label 'carer'²⁷.

Locally, the North Yorkshire County Council Carer Survey, tells a similar story. Most carers - 82% - said it was extremely important that they felt listened to and that their views influence decisions. More than half said that having time for their own hobbies and interests was also extremely important.

The recent Growing Up in North Yorkshire²⁸ data illustrated that almost 5% of children are identified in school as young carers which highlights that may remain unknown.

It's also estimated that around one in ten LGBTQ+ people are unpaid carers²⁹; but this doesn't show up clearly in who accesses carer support – meaning some communities may be missing out³⁰.

²⁴ [caring in a complex world unpaid carers 2023.pdf \(kingsfund.org.uk\)](#)

²⁵ [caring-and-classes-2025---attainment-report.pdf](#)

²⁶ [Carers UK - State of Caring 2022](#)

²⁷ [Carers Week Report 2023](#)

²⁸ [Growing up in North Yorkshire Survey](#)

²⁹ [Unpaid carer Cecilia hails 'incredible' LGBTQ+ group for providing much-needed support | Carers Trust](#)

³⁰ [Healthwatch North Yorkshire - LGBTQ Report](#)

What does success look like?

Success means people who care will feel valued, respected and included in conversations and decisions that affect both them and the person they support. Professionals will be confident in identifying carers early and will help them access clear, consistent information and support.

People who care will have better balance in their lives, feel healthier and have more time for the things that matter to them – whether that's work, education, hobbies or rest.

Support will be proactive, inclusive and available to everyone, no matter their background or community. Carers will feel connected, understood and supported in return.

Young carers are identified quickly, their caring role is understood, and they feel recognised, valued and supported across all services.

People across North Yorkshire will be able to say the '*I*' statements with confidence, and our organisations will work in ways that reflect the matching '*We*' statements.

'I' Statements	'We' Statements
Adult Carers	
I can spot when caring is becoming part of my life, and I can get early support that fits around everything else I do – without feeling labelled.	We offer early help that fits around people's lives and doesn't require them to take on a label.
I know about things like the Carer's Emergency Card, the NHS App 'My Carer' feature and the Hospital Carer Passport, and I can choose to use them.	We promote the Carer's Emergency Card, the NHS App 'My Carer' feature and the NHS Hospital Carer Passport, so people understand how they help.
I have a plan for emergencies so I know what would happen if I suddenly couldn't care.	We support carers to create an emergency 'what if' plan and make sure everyone knows what to do if something happens. The plan also talks about what is important to the person being cared for.
I can learn / work and care – and my education setting / employer supports me to do both.	We support carers in our own workforce and encourage other employers to do the same.
I am treated as a partner in care. People listen to me about the person I support.	We treat carers as partners in care and make sure their voices are heard.
Young Carers	
I know that adults around me notice that I am a carer. I am listed to and adults understand what I do at home so I don't have to explain my situation over and over again.	We work together to identify young carers early, recognise the impact of their caring role, and make sure a safety plan is in place including identifying their network, so no child's caring responsibilities go unseen or unsupported.

Priority 4: Evidence based and personalised support

Our Vision: We help people who care to live their own wonderfully ordinary lives, with support that's shaped to fit them. We work alongside carers and use good evidence to keep improving and creating services that truly work.

What does this mean?

It means that carers in North Yorkshire have a real say in the support they receive. We take on board people's feedback, their experiences, and what they tell us matters most, and use that to shape support that feels personal and genuinely useful.

We're open about how we make decisions, and we treat carers as equal partners when creating or improving services. We also use research, data and new ideas to make sure support stays up to date, effective and able to change when people's needs change. At the heart of this is a commitment to making a real and positive difference in carers' everyday lives.

Why is this a priority?

People who care tell us that support works best when it is built with them, not for them. Working **with** people builds trust, makes services more relevant, and helps to ensure support is accessible and long-lasting. Evidence also shows that personalised and strength-based approaches improve outcomes both for carers and for the people they support.

By being open to new ways of working and always looking to learn and improve, we can respond better to changing needs, reduce inequalities, and make sure what we offer keeps pace with what really matters to people. This approach helps carers live lives that feel full, balanced and meaningful – not lives defined only by caring.

What insight has informed this priority?

Carers, both locally and nationally, say they want to have more involvement in shaping services, clearer information about how decisions are made, and support that reflects their own circumstances. Research from Carers UK shows that their policy and campaigning work is grounded in carers' lived experience and evidence gathered through national surveys, including the **'State of Caring'** Survey – the UK's largest study of carers' experiences, consistently highlights the need for personalised, flexible support shaped by real-life insights³¹.

³¹ [Policy and research | Carers UK](#)

Carers Trust also emphasises the importance of meaningful involvement, stating that carers should be engaged at every level of service design and delivery and that lived experience plays an integral role in shaping effective, relevant support³².

Carers in North Yorkshire have also told us they want support that is more joined-up, clearer, and more consistent, with more opportunities to help shape what comes next. All of this reinforces the need for approaches that are co-produced, evidence-informed and open to new thinking.

What does success look like?

Success means we are genuinely working alongside people who care at every stage – designing, delivering and reviewing support together. It means working with partners and communities to strengthen services, share learning and build a culture where new ideas are welcomed, and evidence guides what we do.

It means carers experience support that feels personal, flexible and helps them enjoy both the everyday ordinary moments and the joyful 'heart-sing' moments that matter most ³³.

Young carers receive the right support at the right time – support that is tailored, proven to make a difference, and helps them stay safe, well, and able to thrive.

³² [About carer involvement - Carers Trust](#)

³³ [What is a Gloriously Ordinary Life? - Gloriously Ordinary Lives](#)

Across North Yorkshire, people who care will be able to say the **'I' statements** with confidence, and our way of working and organisational values will live up to the **'We' statements** that sit alongside them.

'I' Statements	'We' Statements
Adult Carers	
I feel that what I say – my experiences and suggestions – is listened to and taken seriously.	We use carers' feedback, experiences and research to shape the services we provide.
I am invited to help design and improve the services that support carers.	We involve carers in designing and reviewing services.
I have a say in how limited resources are used.	We work with carers to decide on how resources are used.
I know the person I care for is well supported when I'm not there.	We make sure the person being cared for is well supported when the carer isn't there.
I have a clear 'what if' plan, and someone I trust knows exactly what matters to me and the person I care for.	We help carers create emergency 'what if' plans based on what really matters to them.
Young Carers	
I receive support that fits my needs and is based on what works, so I can stay healthy, feel understood, and balance caring with the rest of my life.	We provide personalised, evidence-based support that responds to each young carers' unique circumstances and strengthens their wellbeing, resilience and opportunities.

Progress and achievements since our last Carers' Strategy

The Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014 set out what support we must provide to people who care for others. Since our last Carers' Strategy, '**Caring for Carers 2017 - 2022**' and in the years since, we've been working hard to make this support stronger for carers of all ages.

We know this work is never finished. We depend on the honesty, experience, and ideas of people who care for family members and friends. Their feedback helps us make sure carers across North Yorkshire can live their own lives, follow their own goals, and enjoy the small, everyday moments that matter to them – whatever those moments look like.

Here are some of the ways we've improved support:

Online carers assessment tool – Created with carers and local carer organisations, this tool gives people an easy, flexible way to explain how caring affects them. They can tell us what they do, what matters to them, and what support might help them to keep a healthy, balanced, ordinary life.

Carers Support and Information Services – Working alongside Carers Plus Yorkshire and Carers' Resource, we provide information, advice and hands-on support for carers of all ages. This includes one-to-one help and groups where carers can meet with others who understand what they're going through.

Carers Emergency Card – Carers can create a simple plan for 'what if' moments. If an emergency happens, a named contact is alerted so that replacement care can be arranged quickly and safely.

Helping carers be recognised by health services – Local carer organisations have been working with GP surgeries across North Yorkshire to make sure carers are identified, acknowledged, and supported. This work helps ensure that carers are 'seen' and given the right support for their own wellbeing.

Building new, evidenced-based tools – We are working with the University of York to develop and test a 'Care Confidence' tool. This tool helps people who fund their own care, plan ahead and have meaningful conversations about their needs, hopes, and goals for the future.



Carer Recognition and Identification - Together with York and Scarborough Teaching Hospital Trust, Carers Plus Yorkshire, Healthwatch North Yorkshire and local community partners, we've created a visual 'Carer Icon'. This symbol shows our commitment to recognising carers and valuing the part they play.

Helping carers keep a healthy life balance and take breaks – We offer a range of options to help carers take time for themselves or arrange replacement care. Each year we review our Carer Break Service to learn from carers' experiences and build evidence for improving the service in future. Carers have been directly involved in telling us what works and what needs to change.

Supporting Carers with End of Life Caring – Through the Palliative and End-of-Life Care Network, we're working with health partners, community groups, care providers, and academics to create joined-up, effective support for people caring for someone at the end-of-life.

Raising awareness of suicide prevention – Caring for others can take a toll on mental health. As part of the North Yorkshire and York Suicide Prevention Steering Group, we are working with academics to put evidence-based approaches in place. This helps us identify carers who may be at risk and make sure they receive compassionate, timely support.

Providing care in North Yorkshire

At some point in our lives, most of us will either look after someone we care about or need care ourselves. What that support looks like can vary a lot, depending on someone's age, health and personal circumstances.

Who we mean when we talk about carers:

When we talk about strategy and policy, we use the word 'Carers' to describe people who look after family members or friends. Carers can be grouped into a few broad categories:

Adult Carers

These are adults who care for someone aged 18 or over. This might include:

- People juggling caring responsibilities with a job.
- 'Sandwich carers' supporting both children and older relatives.
- Older adults who may share caring roles with another family member.

Young Adult Carers (16 to 25 years)

Young adults who may or may not be in education, employment, or training. They're often moving from getting support as a child to managing more adult responsibilities on their own.

Young Carers (under 18)

Children and teenagers who help look after someone at home. They might not fully understand that what they're doing is a caring role, especially if they're looking after a parent.

Parent Carers

Parents who care for children with additional needs – for example, due to an illness, disability, mental health condition or substance use issue.

What the law says:

The Care Act 2014 describes a carer as:

An adult who provides or intends to provide care for another adult.

and

Someone who helps a relative or friend with everyday life, unpaid. This is different from paid care work or volunteering.

The Children and Families Act 2014:

- **Young Carers** as under 18s who provide or intends to provide care for someone else.
- **Parent carers** as adults who care for a disabled child for whom they have parental responsibility.

What can caring look like?

For Carers Week 2022, Carers Trust³⁴ shared a simple but powerful description of caring and why carers often need support themselves.

'A carer is defined as a child or adult, who cares (unpaid) for family or friends who have a disability, illness or who need support in life. Supporting another person could mean that a carer may also need support to manage a life of their own.'

Using this as inspiration, we asked carers in North Yorkshire to share their own words about what caring means to them. Their thoughts – honest, real, and heartfelt – are brought together in the graphic below.



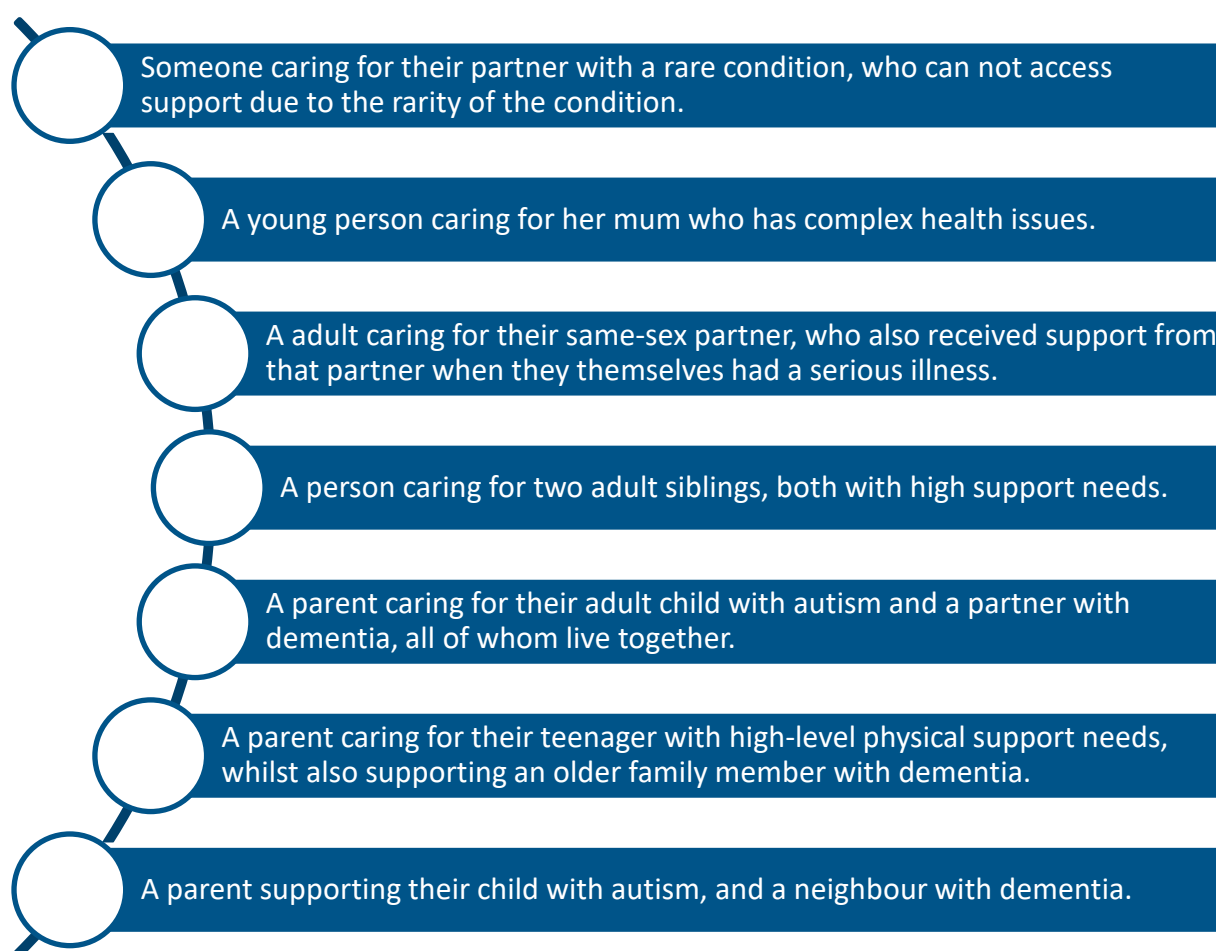
³⁴ [cw 2022 definition of a carer poster a4 final.pdf](#)

Caring for the people who are important to us

All across North Yorkshire, families, friends and neighbours are quietly helping the people they love through illness, disability or addiction. supporting the people they care about to live with impairments, addictions or illness. People care in all sorts of ways and for all sorts of reasons, and everyone's situation looks a little different.

The King's Fund, in their report '**Caring in a complex world**'³⁵ shows in a simple graphic that caring isn't something that belongs to one age group, gender or type of relationship. It runs right across our communities.

Most of all, caring is something that touches all of us – either now or at some point in our lives. We're all part of this story.



³⁵ Figure 1: <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/insight-and-analysis/reports/unpaid-carers-caring-complex-world>

What do we know about people who care in North Yorkshire?

According to the 2021 Census, North Yorkshire is home to **53,723 carers**. That's roughly **one in every twelve people aged 5 and over**. But in 2024, only **2,001 carers** had a **Care Act assessment** from North Yorkshire Council. In simple terms: **most carers aren't getting the support they could be getting**.

Most of the assessments go to **older carers**, this might be because they need more help or simply because **younger carers don't realise they can ask for it**.

Here's what else we know about caring in the county:

- **People aged 40 to 64** are the most likely to be carers. Most of them provide **up to 19 hours of care per week**.
- Carers aged **65 and over** are the most likely to be doing **50 hours or more** of care each week.
- **Young carers** (aged 5 to 17) and **working-age carers** (18 to 64) mainly provide **up to 19 hours** of care per week.
- The **older** a carer is, the **more care** they tend to provide. Only **1.4%** of carers aged 18 to 39 provide 50 plus hours, but this jumps to **4.5%** for carers aged 85 plus.

Overall, carers in North Yorkshire are **older** than the national picture. There are **1,242 young carers** aged 5 to 17 in the county, making up **2.3%** of all carers (slightly below the national figure of 2.5%).

Carers aged **18 to 39** make up **14.4%** of carers here compared with **21.0%** nationally. More than half **54.5%** are aged **40 to 64**, which is similar to the national figure.

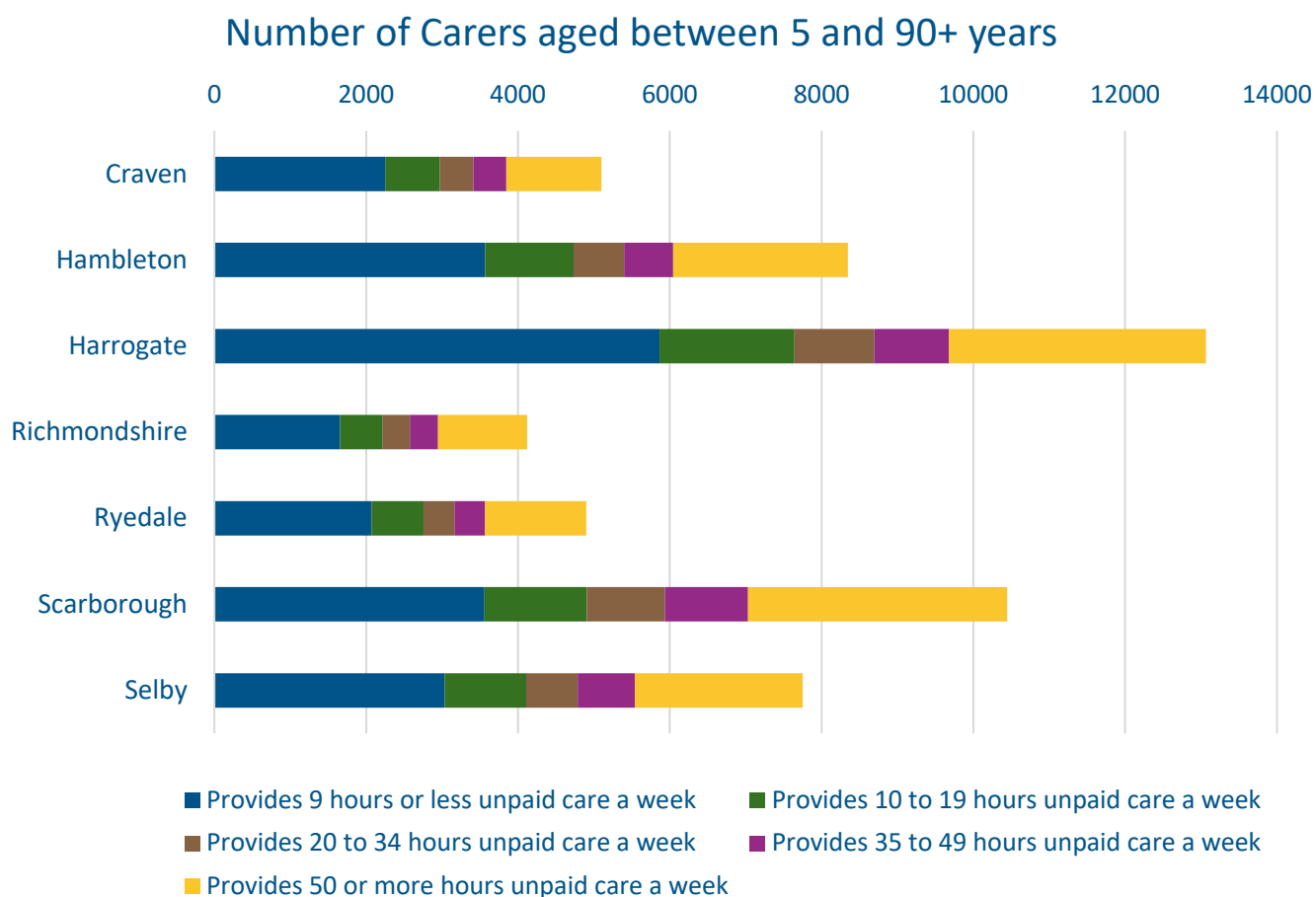
But the biggest difference is in older carers: **26.1%** are aged **65 to 84**, much higher than the England average of **21.1%**, and **2.7%** are **aged 85 plus**, compared to **2.1%** nationally.

Another important point is that many carers have **their own health problems or disabilities**. In fact, in almost every age group (except people aged 90 plus), carers are **more likely to have a disability** than people who aren't caring³⁶.

All of this shows why carers – especially older carers, need **support that's right for their age, health and circumstances**.

³⁶ [Unpaid care and protected characteristics, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/unpaid-care-and-protected-characteristics-england-and-wales)

While the overall trends are county-wide, each area of North Yorkshire has its own picture. The chart below shows how many carers live in each former district of North Yorkshire and how many hours of unpaid care they provide.

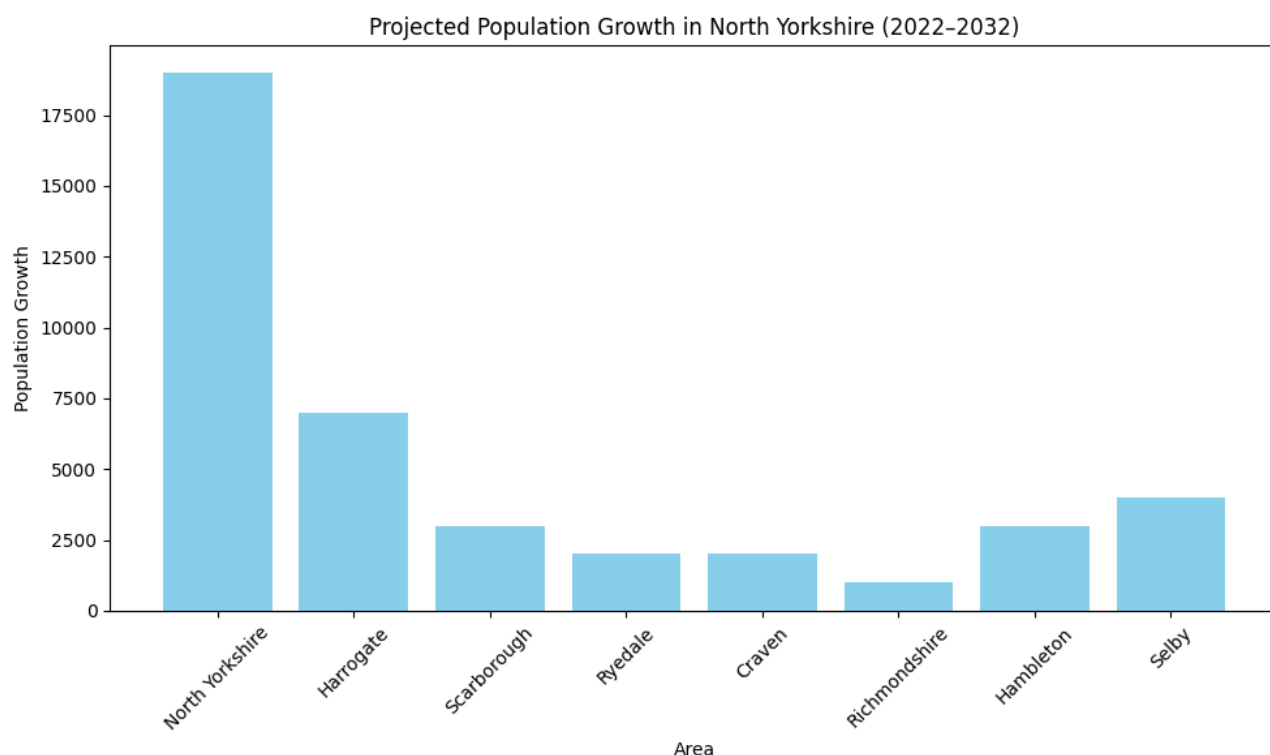


Future Challenges

How North Yorkshire's population is likely to change by 2032

North Yorkshire's population isn't expected to boom, but it **will** keep growing bit by bit. The Office for National Statistics³⁷ predicts that the number of people living here will increase from around 618,000 in 2022 to around 637,000 by 2032 - a rise of just over 3%.

Every part of the county is expected to grow, but places like Harrogate and Selby are likely to see the biggest increases. A lot of this growth comes from people moving into the area, especially older adults relocating from elsewhere. This steady rise means it's more important than ever to think about carers when planning the future of health and social care across North Yorkshire.

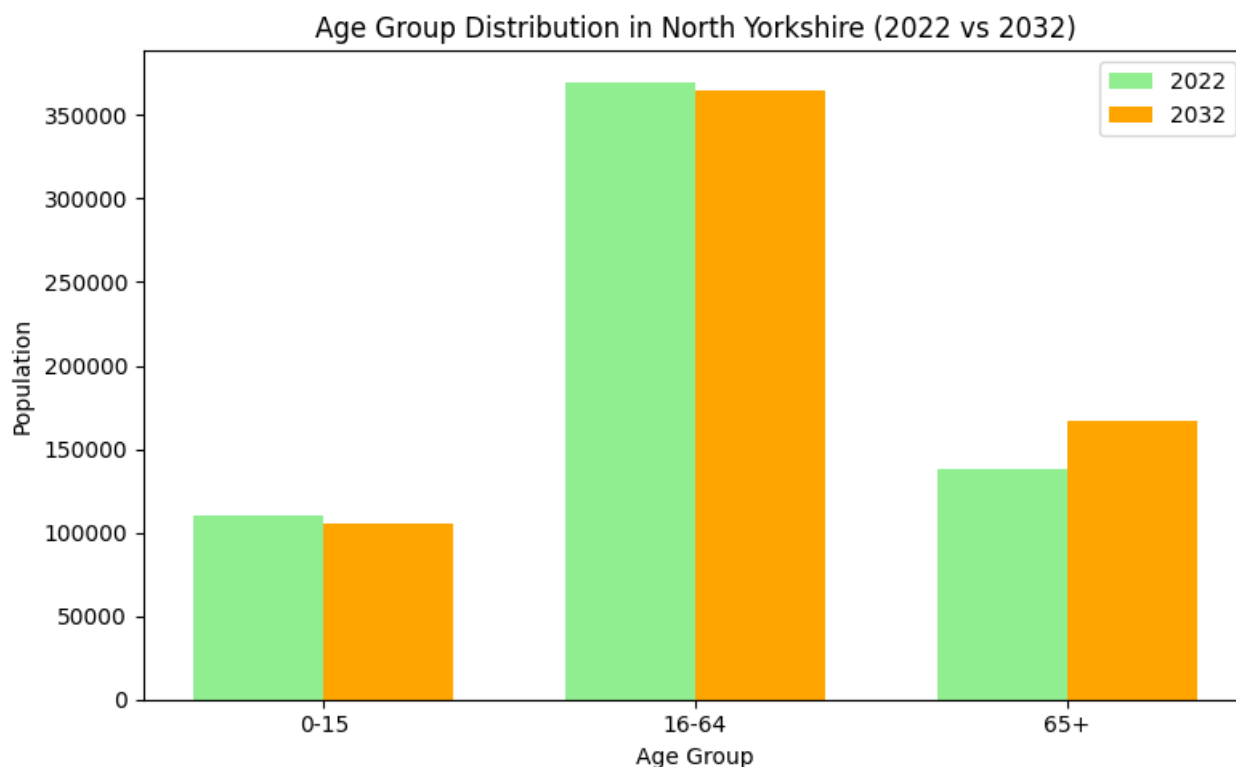


³⁷ [Subnational population projections for England - Office for National Statistics](#)

Changes in age groups³⁸

The biggest shift is in the 65 plus population. This group is expected to grow from 138,000 in 2022 to 167,000 in 2032 - a very noticeable jump.

There will be slightly fewer children and young people aged 0 to 15, while the working-age group (16 to 64) is expected to stay roughly the same overall, though some rural areas may see a small decline.



³⁸ [Subnational population projections for England - Office for National Statistics](#)

What this means for local services³⁹

Health and Social Care

More older people means more demand for adult social care, especially support for long-term health conditions and help to keep living independently.

Carers will need more support too – things like breaks from caring, mental health help, and practical advice.

Housing and Infrastructure

Homes and neighborhoods will need to work well for an aging population, with accessible housing, good transport links, and places where people can meet and stay connected.

Growing areas such as Harrogate and Selby may need more schools, GP surgeries, hospitals, and better transport links.

Workforce and Economy

Sectors like health, social care, and education may struggle to recruit enough staff.

On the positive side, there are opportunities to attract younger workers and families by offering affordable housing and good job prospects.

What this means for Carers and Health and Social Care Capacity^{40 41}

Increasing Demand and Health Risks

- Many people - especially women - are likely to spend a significant part of their lives providing unpaid care. For example, girls aged 15 today can expect to spend **7.6 years** of their future life caring, compared to **5.3 years** for boys.
- Around **a quarter of carers** say their health is “not good”, compared to fewer than one in five non-carers. The more hours someone spends caring, the higher the health risks.
- Close to **one in five carers** experience low mental wellbeing, with those caring more than 50 hours a week at the greatest risk.
- **Young adult carers (16 to 34)** are particularly likely to struggle with their health, which shows the need for support that's tailored to younger carers.

³⁹ [Director of Public Health annual report 2023-2024](#)

⁴⁰ [Unpaid care expectancy and health outcomes of unpaid carers, England - Office for National Statistics](#)

⁴¹ [State of Caring 2021 report | Carers UK](#)

Strain on the system and gaps in support

- Even though carers have a **legal right to support under the Care Act 2014**, only **8% of carers** in England contacted their local authority for help in 2021, and only **a quarter** of those received direct support.⁴²
- **Carers providing 20 plus** hours of care each week are more likely to live on low **incomes**, face **money worries**, and feel **socially isolated**.
- **Adult social care nationally** is under huge pressure. Around **11% of posts unfilled**, and funding hasn't kept up with demand since 2010/11. This means more care is being provided by unpaid carers⁴³.
- **Hospitals are under pressure** to prevent unnecessary delays in patient discharge. Carers are often left supporting people with **complex health needs**, they need to be recognised and given the right training or help rather than being left to cope alone⁴⁴.
- **People are living longer**, and the biggest growth in population over the next 40 years will be older adults – particularly in rural and coastal communities⁴⁵.

⁴² [Understanding unpaid carers and their access to support - The Health Foundation](#)

⁴³ [Social Care 360: Workforce And Carers | The King's Fund | The King's Fund](#)

⁴⁴ [Hospital discharge and community support guidance - GOV.UK](#)

⁴⁵ [Our Ageing Population | The State of Ageing 2025 | Centre for Ageing Better](#)

Acknowledgements

Our grateful thanks and appreciation to all the people, community groups, organisations and colleagues who so generously contributed their time, experience and expertise to support with developing this strategy.

- People across North Yorkshire with lived experience of caring for someone.
- Carers Plus Yorkshire
- Carers Resource
- Hambleton Community Action
- Caring Together North Yorkshire
- Dementia Forward
- Healthwatch North Yorkshire
- Parent Carer Voice
- North Yorkshire Horizons
- Tees, Esk Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust
- Independent Care Group
- Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board

Appendix 1 - Legal responsibilities towards carers across health and social care

The Care Act 2014⁴⁶

This law explains what councils must do to support adult carers. It says carers should get an assessment in their own right, be offered support that they need to live the life they want, and have their wellbeing taken seriously. Councils must also give carers good information and early help, so problems don't snowball. Importantly, carers must be involved in shaping the services that affect them - their voices should help design what support looks like.

The Children and Families Act 2014⁴⁷

This law protects children and give specific rights to young carers, young adult carers and parents who care for disabled children (including those with a long-term condition). Councils must find out who these carers are, assess their needs, and offer the right support. The law also brought in a 'whole family' approach, making it easier for young carers to get an assessment that looks at their whole situation, not just one part of it.

The Carers' Leave Act 2023⁴⁸

This law gives employees who provide unpaid care the right to take up to one week of unpaid carer's leave each year. It's designed to help people juggle their job with caring for someone who has a long-term care need. It also sits alongside other workplace rights that aim to make life easier for working carers.

The Health and Care Act 2022⁴⁹

This law strengthens the role of carers in health and care services. It says NHS England must listen to carers and their representatives when making decisions about services (Section 10). Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) must involve carers when planning care and when making commissioning decisions (Section 25). NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts must also involve carers, where appropriate, in planning for someone's hospital discharge at the earliest opportunity (Section 91). Altogether, the law makes clear that carers are partners in care, not an afterthought.

⁴⁶ [Care Act factsheet 4: Legal duties for a carers assessment - SCIE](#)

⁴⁷ [The Children's Society - Whole Family Pathway](#)

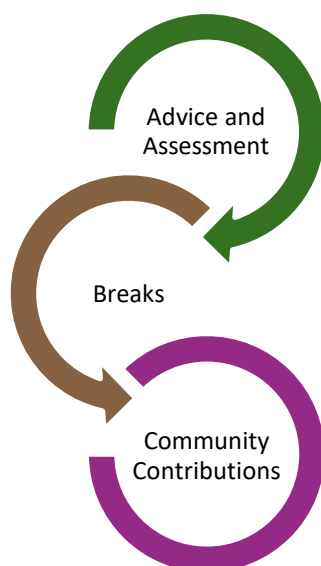
⁴⁸ [The Carer's Leave Act 2023 | Carers UK](#)

⁴⁹ [Carers UK - Health and Care Act 2022](#)

Appendix 2 – Linking to wider strategies and partnerships

In North Yorkshire, we want to make sure that anyone who looks after family members and friends gets the right support at the right time. We know we can only do this properly if we work side-by-side with carers and with the organisations who support them. That's why our countywide way of working is rooted in practical teamwork, shared priorities, and listening to what carers tell us they need.

The North Yorkshire HAS Plan 2030 brings this approach to life. It reminds us that our job isn't to create complicated systems, but to focus on the things that genuinely help people day to day. We talk about these basics as our "ABCs", and they give us a simple, shared language for the support we aim to provide.



These three areas – **Advice and Assessment**, **Breaks**, and **Community Contributions** – help us stay focused on what matters most. When we get these right, we give carers the space, tools, and confidence to keep going, and we do it in a way that's grounded in real lives and real experiences.

This reflects our strategic vision:

'We want people of all ages who care for someone in North Yorkshire to be recognised and supported to do what matters most to them. We'll do this by setting priorities that are shaped with carers themselves, guided by real experiences and by what national policy tells us works best'

Linking to the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Research shows that caring can affect people in all sorts of ways, and many carers experience additional difficulties not because of the caring itself, but because systems are hard to navigate and the information and support they need aren't always easy to find. Our local Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy⁵⁰ sets out how the council, the NHS, and other partners want to work together to help people live longer, healthier lives and to reduce the unfair differences in health across our communities.

By linking the Carers' Strategy and action plan to the approach shown below, we can avoid repeating work, make better use of everyone's efforts, and strengthen how we work with partners and our wider communities.



⁵⁰ [Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023-2030](#)

NICE: Principles of what good looks like for carers

NICE sets out some straightforward principles for what good support should look like for adult carers - anyone aged 18 or over who looks after someone aged 16 or over with health or social care needs.

Their guidance is all about helping health and social care staff spot when someone is a carer, understand what they're juggling, and make sure they get the right information and support at the right time. This includes things like advice and information that makes sense, practical help, emotional and social support, training to feel confident in the caring role, and support for carers providing end of life care⁵¹.

NICE also provides more detailed advice for carers supporting people with specific health conditions, which sits within the guidance for those particular illnesses or needs.

Carers are identified by health and social care organisations and encouraged to recognise their role and rights.

People providing unpaid care to someone aged 16 or over with health or social care needs are encouraged by staff to recognise their carer role and right to support and advice.

Carers are supported to actively participate in decision making and care planning for the person they care for.

If the person they care for agrees, health and social care staff proactively engage with carers and understand the value of their knowledge about the person they care for.

Carers having a carers' assessment are given opportunity to discuss what matters most to them.

Including discussing carers' health and wellbeing and help/support they may need. If wanting to work, support to remain in, start or return to work, education or training.

Carers are given regular opportunity to discuss the value of having a break from caring and the options available to them.

Including ensuring carers make time for themselves in their usual routine, and are given or directed to information about local reliable alternative care services to meet their specific needs.

Carers are offered supportive working arrangements by workplaces.

Carers who are in work can use flexible working arrangements and support and advice from their employer to help them balance their caring with work.

⁵¹ [Overview](#) | [Supporting adult carers](#) | [Guidance](#) | [NICE](#)

Bringing the Carers' Strategy in line with the NHS 10-year plan

Carers are the people who quietly keep everything going – supporting family, friends and neighbours day in, day out. The NHS has made it clear that it sees carers as essential to the whole health and care system. The new **Fit for the Future**⁵² 10-year plan for England also highlights how important it is to recognise carers properly and give them better support. National carers organisations, including Carers UK⁵³ and Carers Trust⁵⁴, have welcomed the fact that the Government has listened to carers while shaping this plan, and they are encouraged to see a firm promise of help for carers going forwards.

North Yorkshire Council is committed to working closely with our NHS partners so that carers get the recognition and support they deserve. We will build the NHS's six key commitments into our own action plan, so the national ambition is reflected here in our local communities.

Recognition and Inclusion

The NHS plan commits to ensuring carers are:

- **Identified early** through health and care pathways and the role and responsibilities of the carer are acknowledged within the NHS.
- **Involved in decisions**, with approaches like family group conferencing helping everyone plan care together.

Digital Support through the NHS App

We will encourage carers to use the “**My Carer**” feature in the NHS App, which helps with appointments, health information and personalised advice.

Local **digital skills** support will help carers feel confident using these tools.

Personal Health Budgets

The plan aims to **widen access** to Personal Health Budgets (PHBs) for carers supporting someone with very complex or at the end-of-life. This gives families more choice and flexibility in arranging care.

⁵² [Fit for the future: 10 Year Health Plan for England](#)

⁵³ [Carers UK \(2025\) A Fresh New Approach To Supporting Unpaid Carers Our Vision For Delivering The NHS 10 Year Health Plan In England](#)

⁵⁴ [A 10-Year Health Plan for England: what will it deliver for carers? | Carers Trust](#)

Help with Condition Management and Self-Care

The NHS will work with charities and voluntary groups to give carers **practical training** and resources to manage long-term conditions and end-of-life care.

This includes better access to information, skills and digital tools – especially important for carers in **rural or harder-to-reach areas**.

Joined-Up Local Services

Carers will benefit from more **coordinated care** through Neighbourhood Health Centres, making day-to-day support easier to navigate.

Multidisciplinary teams will work alongside carers to ensure care is smooth and joined-up across health and social care.

Support for the Workforce and Volunteers

A new national volunteering platform will help carers tap into more **community-based help**.

NHS staff will also receive training on **carer awareness**, making sure carers are seen as true partners in the care process.

Appendix 3 – Carer Priorities across wider partner strategies

