



Aberdeen City
Health & Social Care
Partnership

A caring partnership

Aberdeen City Carers Strategy 2026 – 2030 Consultation and Engagement Summary

A City
for all
Carers



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1. Key Facts

The engagement, co-production and consultation process is aimed to gather views from unpaid carers and stakeholders to inform the refresh of the Carers Strategy for 2026–2030.

The goal is to ensure the strategy is **written for carers, by carers**, shaping services and actions that reflect their needs and priorities.

Dates:

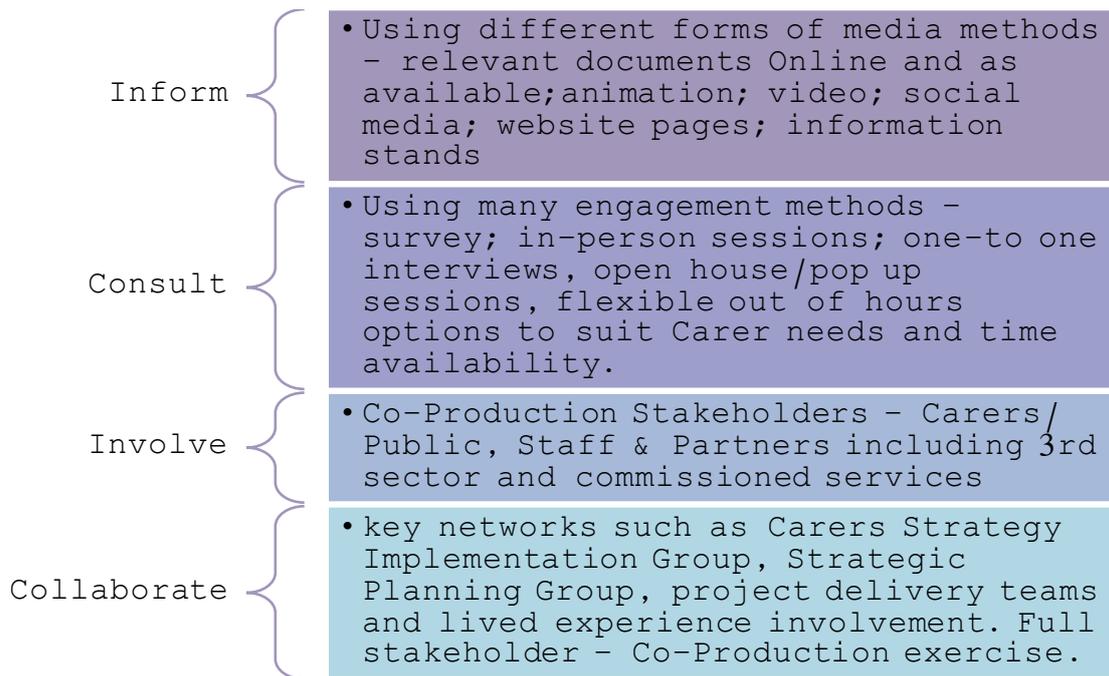
Engagement period – August – September 2025

Co-Production Period – October – November 2025

Consultation period – 15th December 2025– 13th January 2026 (7 weeks)

Leads:

- Transformation Programme Manager, Stuart Lamberton
- Senior Project Manager, Grace Milne
- Development Officer, Matthew Carter



This document notes an extensive engagement and co-production undertaken to develop the Aberdeen City Carers Strategy 2026-2030, a city for all carers. We provide Community Engagement Guidance for staff to use for all our Engagement activity – you can find it here

<https://www.aberdeencityhscp.scot/globalassets/documents/guidance-for-community-engagement-human-rights-and-equalities.pdf>



2. Engagement

Pop Up Events

Help Shape Aberdeen's Carers Strategy (2026 – 2030)
Are you an unpaid Carer? We want to hear from you

Please come to one of our engagement meetings in September.
 Your views and insights will help ensure the new strategy is realistic and effective.

Date	Time	Venue
Wednesday 10 th September	6.30pm – 8.30pm	North East College, Gallowgate, room
Tuesday 16 th September	10.00am – 12.00md	Marischal College, room 1N – 01
Friday 19 th September	10.00am – 12.00md	Marischal College, room 3W - 01
Saturday 20 th September	10.30am – 12.30pm	Tillydrone Campus, Donbank room
Wednesday 24 th September	6.30pm – 8.30pm	North East College, Gallowgate, room
Thursday 25 th September	1.00pm – 3.00pm	Marischal College, room 3W - 01
Saturday 27 th September	10.30am – 12.30pm	Central Library, Information Centre
Tuesday 30 th September	7.00pm – 9.00pm	Online (Microsoft Teams): call or email for link to join.
Wednesday 1 st October	2.00pm – 4.00pm	Online (Microsoft Teams): call or email for link to join.

To get involved, or find out more....
 Phone: **1224 067039** or Email: achscengagement@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Over the course of September into October 7 pop up events were organised, Carers were invited to attend and some events were a natural footfall occurred to catch general public views. These events were over and above the normal support groups called “Wee Blethers” where we have a brilliant number of attendees across Aberdeen City every week.

Young Carers were asked to give feedback after attendance at Barnardos events over the period too, high level feedback was provided, there was an acknowledgement that feedback from Young Carers is sometimes difficult. However young carers have provided what matters to them, and hopefully this is reflected within the Strategy document.

At all sessions Carers and those they care for were able to complete the Carers Survey if they wished, but also gave feedback on the Carers Strategy and what it means for them. Feedback on the current strategy, what has worked and what can improve.



Carer Interviews and feedback

Development Officer for Communication and Engagement undertook 15 interviews with Carers telling their stories over the Engagement period. We acknowledge that Carers journeys are different for almost everyone, and noting these journeys will help us better understand the support required across Aberdeen City.

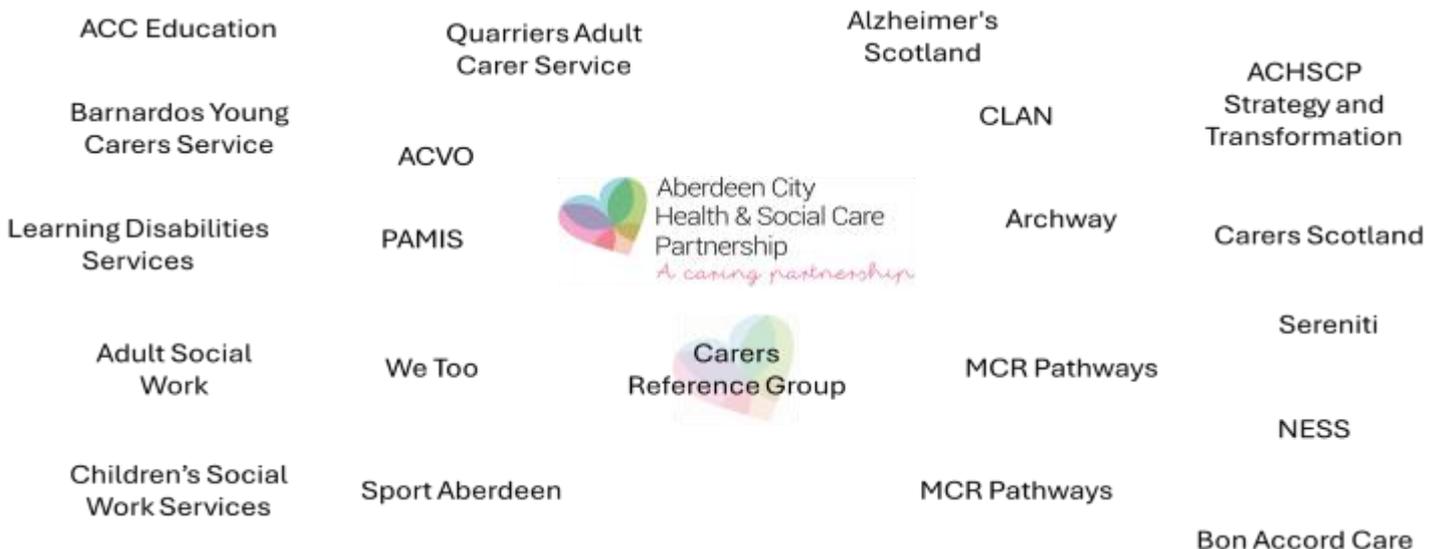
Annual Carers Survey

1. Hosted on Commonplace platform.
2. Open from **August to 3rd October 2025**.
3. Purpose: Collect feedback on the current strategy and ideas for the refresh. Collect local demographic and Carer support information to support national data.

Although with effort of promotion through Social Media, Carers Support distribution lists, and wider dissemination. The annual carers survey does tend to have a low turnout for responses. We have taken lessons learned for this approach – a review of this for the new strategy will be done. However keeping it similar for the duration for the current strategy felt appropriate to gather recurring trend information to support Annual Reporting.

Carers Strategy Implementation Group – Programme Review

All Stakeholders were asked to input to a Digital Whiteboard on the Programme Review of the Current Strategy and also reflections on what works well or could be improved for the implementation of the Carers Strategy. Self reflection – There has been a focused effort to broaden the Carers Strategy Implementation Group. Each meeting has a good attendance from a wide network of partners.





3. Engagement Findings

Key Themes from Engagement from Carers

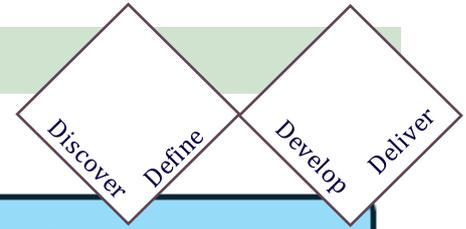
- **Respite:** High demand; carers express desperation for breaks.
- **Rights Awareness:** Carers often unaware of entitlements early in their journey.
- **Communication Gaps:** Between carers and services, and across services.
- **Continuity of Support:** Reduces stress and avoids repeated storytelling.
- **Emergency Care Planning:** Confusion over responsibilities.
- **Action over Aspirations:** Carers want tangible outcomes, not just policy statements.
- **Mental Health & Wellbeing:** Balancing caring with life responsibilities remains challenging.
- Majority of respondents **agree with current priorities**, but stress the need for practical delivery.

Data Highlights

- **Adult Carers supported:** Increased from 803 (2022/23) to 2,065 (2025/26).
- **Young Carers registered:** Increased from 135 to 306 in same period.
- **National Indicator (N18):** Carers feeling supported rose from 32% to 37% locally (vs. Scotland 31%).
- Carers delivering **50+ hours/week** remain a significant proportion.



4. Coproduction Sessions



Co-Production Sessions

Key Elements for Strategy coproduced with Carers, Partners and Professionals

Co-Production Session 1

What we know and what we can shape together. -

Key Elements

Aim
Priorities
Key Actions

6/10/25

Marischal College

Co-Production Session 2

Refining
Priorities and
Assigning key
actions

22/10/25
Marischal College

Co-Production Session 3

Developing Plan
on a Page
Aim, priorities and
key programmes
of work agreed

07/10/25
Marischal College

Co-Production Session 1 – 6th October 2025

Attended by 15 stakeholders, including Adult Social Work, Children Social Work, Quarriers, Barnardos, ACVO, MCR Pathways, Sport Aberdeen, Strategy and Transformation and Unpaid Carers.

This session included reviewing the data and findings from the engagement period as well as know national data and key legislation.



Break Out Session

Are any of our Current Priorities still relevant?
Can you suggest any other priorities?

What are our main challenges for Carers over the next 4 years?

How do we ensure our Strategy is meaningful for Carers as well as professionals?

6/10/25 15

Outputs from Session 1

Productive Bunch in session 1

Finance and Resources

Managing Expectations

Service Changes and Gaps

Realistic, accessible and Relevant

Achievable, succinct and informative

Changes or amalgamations needed

Are any of our Current Priorities still relevant?
Can you suggest any other priorities?

What are our main challenges for Carers over the next 4 years?

How do we ensure our Strategy is meaningful for Carers as well as professionals?

6

Co-Production Session 2 – 22nd October 2025

Session 2 was attended by 12 stakeholders, different unpaid Carers around the table – their input was invaluable to our discussions.

Drafted initial Priorities were scoped from session 1 and presented to the group. The suggestion to amalgamate previous priorities.



PRIORITY 1 - Identifying as a Carer and the first steps to support	PRIORITY 2 - Access to advice and support for Carers	PRIORITY 3 - Supporting future planning, decision making and wider Carer involvement	PRIORITY 4 - Community support and services for Carers
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MODERNISE OUR APPROACH TO SERVICE DELIVERY



SHIFT OUR FOCUS TOWARDS PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION

Draft Priority 1

Carers are respected, empowered and informed about their rights and services available to them.

Draft Priority 2

We are creative and innovative with our resources to maximise support to Carers.

I know that I can be clear about what matters to me, and I trust that my choices will be respected and understood by the people who support me

If I need to access services or support, I am treated with kindness, dignity and respect at all times.

the people I am involved with work together with me and each other to share information, in a way that is accessible to me and develop a clear understanding of how to support my wellbeing

The people who support me take the time to listen and understand me as a person and we consider my whole life when making decisions about my life

I have the information I need to make decisions about my life, in a way that works for me, and I am supported to understand what options are available to me, and trusted to know what is right for me

Discussion took place to discuss the drafted priorities. The group decided if these were appropriate and achievable and if they reflect the GIRFE principles. We also discussed initial key actions for these priorities and who and what can be delivered from these. The conversation started talking about language, and framing of these priorities. All of which has led to what they are now reflected in the Drafted Strategy.

Throughout this session we undertook a – Addressing the Elephants session this helped the group understand what we could do, what we couldn't and also what we could influence.

Addressing the Elephants

The Elephants in the room...

Volunteers—there may well be challenges, blocks and barriers to developing and enacting a Carers Strategy that would fully meet the needs of all Carers in Aberdeen City, and for the professionals and groups who support them. Some of those challenges were discussed during the first co-production session back on Monday the 6th of October. We want to take an opportunity during this session for people to identify any other, as yet unspoken, challenges, blocks and barriers that could get in the way of developing, rolling out and enacting the new Carers Strategy.



Not all elephants are the same

Beauniversity - frames context (various) more than one master visibility of budgetary words document

Uncertainty around legislation e.g. right to breaks is not defined, value of National Care Service.

Budgets and potential cuts

Being able to reach all carers,

Access to information when you need it.

Jason

Lack of choice
- The Elephant in the room - one, regular carer only.

Differing practice - diff. parts of city

Mr. Blue Budget 'em...
eligibility criteria
Resource availability i.e. 6yr stage

Feelings
that support available here

Expectation
"hidden" carers -> services

Identification
Connection
Carers Needs - finding the right people

Gatekeepers

How we interact with people

- recording
- meeting
- Communication
- assessment of need for both groups

Practice improvement

What can we influence:

Manage expectations
Increase awareness of resources - finding the right people

RESPECTE

What we cannot control or influence:

Finance / Budgets

Timing / Choice

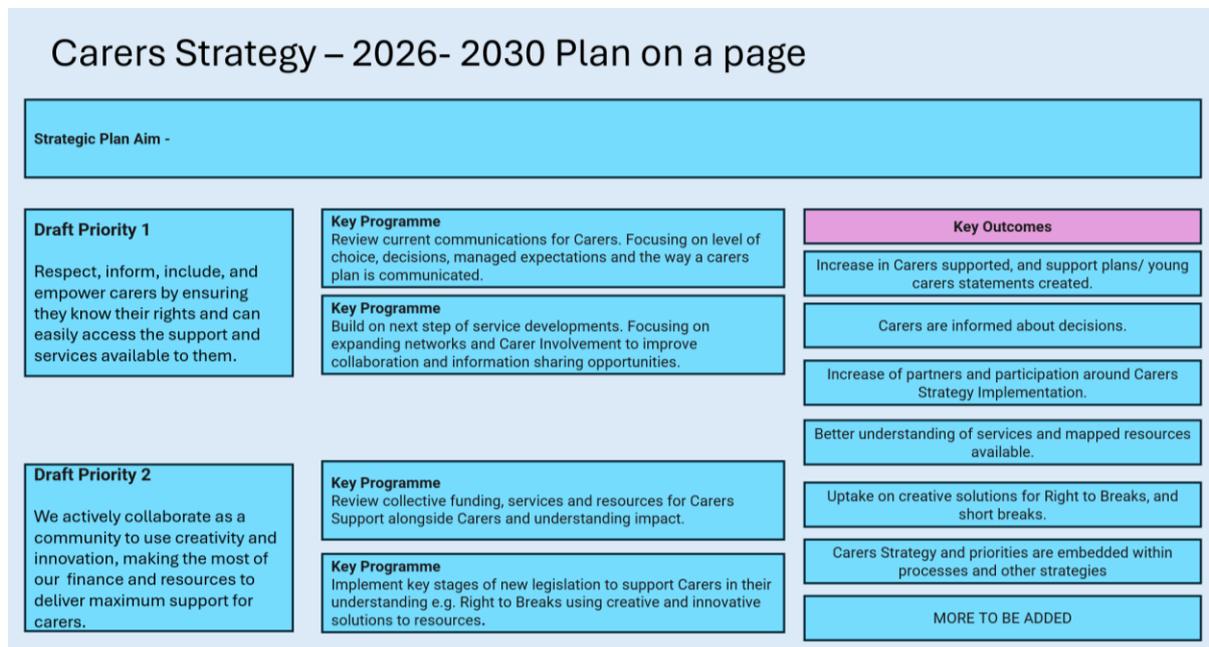
The purpose being to ask unpaid Carers to consider the above and try to accept that some things aren't in our control. "When we encounter difficult situations, there are often things we can control and things we cannot. The trick, according to stoic philosophy, is to distinguish between what we can control and accept what we cannot. This can help us to feel more in control of our emotions, even when faced with adversity."



Co-Production Session 3 – 7th November 2025

This final session was attended by 14 stakeholders. Feedback directly from an unpaid carer said that these sessions have given her a better insight to the workings of the Carers Strategy, and she feels the Carers Strategy should be a key document that Carers are signposted too. She enjoyed being around the Co-Production Events.

Main discussion was agreement of a drafted Plan on a Page for the Carers Strategy. There was conversation about language, and collective community being owners of the strategy. This is all reflected within the draft Carers Strategy.



The key aim of the Strategy was also discussed at the final session. An agreement of using the HACE Carer feeling supported to continue there role is good to keep improving on. However a focus on Carer Engagement and Involvement in decision making felt more appropriate. An ambitious aim of increasing this by 50% was set by the group.

Conclusion from Co-Production stage

Key to make sure that opportunity to have everyone in the same space to do these sessions. Same information being consistently delivered for the group to make informed agreement for collectively agreeing the key elements of the Carers Strategy. This has been a successful Co-Production, given the time and staged development – there were practical expectations of the co-production stage, allowing for the wider strategy development to take place after these key elements were formed.



5. Wider considerations

[Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan 2025 – 2029](#)

[Children's Services Plan](#)

[The Promise](#)

[Local Outcome Improvement Plan](#) and the supporting [Locality Plans](#)

[National carers strategy - gov.scot](#)

6. Consultation Approach

Drafted Carers Strategy is also going to IJB with the 2025/26 Annual report with will finalise the current strategy in February. The Carers Strategy however will undertake its wider consultation with the following groups, all have been main stakeholders in the Engagement and Co-Production processes.

Consultation for the February IJB is slightly longer due to the Christmas period. All consultees are asked to have comments and amendments back by Monday 12th January 2026.

Strategic Planning Group	11 th December 2025
Carers Strategy Implementation Group	16 th December 2025
Carers Reference Group	19 th December 2025
ACC Strategy Board	8 th January 2026
Children Service Board	19 th January 2026 (Report for noting)
IJB Statutory Consultants	15 th December 2025
IJB Meeting for Approval	3 rd February 2026

7. Assessing our Impact

A full IIA will be included with the final report to IJB. However section1 Proportionality and Relevance section has been undertaken and attached with the consultation documents.

8. Completing the Feedback Loop

We recognise the importance of demonstrating how the views and impacts gathered in the consultation and engagement process have shaped the Carers Strategy 2026-2030

A Communications Plan will support the Final Carers Strategy full launch, including feedback on what we have heard and what we have incorporated or not, and the



reason why not. This will form the basis of our governance and delivery plan structure to ensure our key messages, initiatives, changes and impacts are clearly consulted and communicated within Aberdeen City.

Ensuring our Strategy is friendly for all readers, we have been seeking views on how best people would like these messages to be relayed, there are many imaginative communication methods. Biteable video summary and our plan on a page easily displayed throughout our communications will be available. However the approach we have taken with the Strategy overall is to create a more visual strategy, succinct and informative.