

Promoting 
Independence

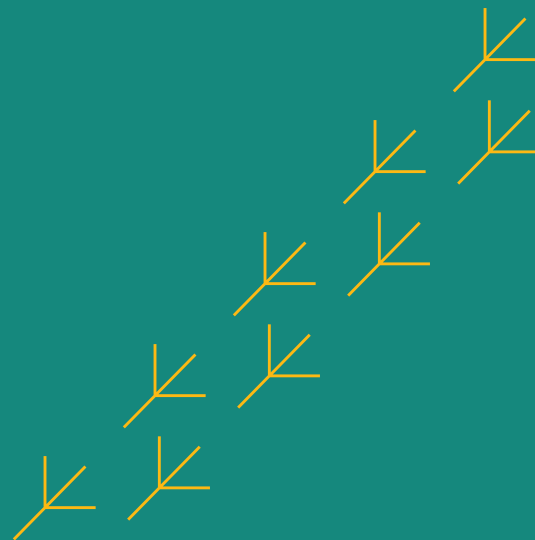
Promoting Independence Strategy

Adult Social Services

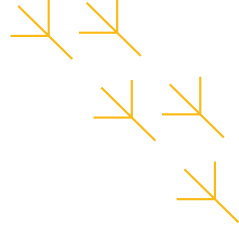
Supporting people to be independent,
well, and able to deal with life's challenges.

2024 – 2029

 **Norfolk** County Council



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Introduction.

Councillor Alison Thomas.

Adult Social Services is vital to supporting people in our community who need a little, or a lot, of help to continue living well and it's a commitment I take very seriously.

At a national level, there are funding challenges and recruitment struggles across the social care workforce. In Norfolk we face a higher ageing population as more young people continue to leave the county.

We must consistently meet the changing needs of our residents, and this strategy outlines how we will meet our vision aimed at, supporting people to be independent, live well and to be able to deal with life's challenges.

In developing this strategy, we spoke to a cross-section of people about what they would like, and need, from Adult Social Services in the coming years. Many also shared their personal experiences and I want to thank each and everyone who took part to help shape our priorities. Your input is invaluable.

Although a lot has already been accomplished, we know there is always more work to be done. This strategy reinforces that people in Norfolk are at the heart of our work, we want to empower them to stay safely and happily in the place they call home for as long as possible, while knowing we are there to provide support and help when they need it most.

Thank you,



Councillor Alison Thomas
Norfolk County Council



Our county.

Norfolk is home to nearly a million residents living in one of seven districts: Breckland, Broadland, Great Yarmouth, King's Lynn and West Norfolk, North Norfolk, Norwich, and South Norfolk. We have a diverse geography spanning rural, urban, and coastal areas.

Our population is generally older than the rest of the country, with the average life expectancy consistently higher than the national average (around 80 years for men and 84 years for women). But the average number of years Norfolk residents can expect to live in good health is between 63 and 64 years. This means the time we spend in ill health is getting longer. This will increase demand on our health and care services, including how we recruit staff and prepare for the future.

1 in 4

residents are over
65 years old

**Most people over
the age of 65 live
in rural areas**

(19% vs 22%
living in urban areas)

16%

of Households live
in fuel poverty

Our environment is linked to our health across our lifetime. Over 140,000 people live in areas categorised as the most deprived 20% in England. People who live in these areas are more likely to have worse health outcomes, be admitted to hospital in an emergency, and die earlier. Our more affluent areas are often the most rural with the highest number of people over the age of 65, making access to services and support often difficult.

In Norfolk, the day-to-day activities of 1 in 5 people are limited by their health or disability. We have a higher number of people with Dementia than the rest of England, which is expected to increase by 25% by 2030. Ongoing care and support needs often mean people need help with everyday living, such as personal care, and their families need support too.

Much of the care and support provided is by unpaid carers, families and friends. There are 114,000 carers across Norfolk who provide unpaid care and support for a friend or family member who cannot cope without their support, due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction. People who look after friends and family can often be struggling with their own health needs, working commitments, and personal lives and part of our work will be to look at how we can provide people with more support.

By 2024
our population is expected
to grow by about

116,500 people

Largest growth is
expected in older age
groups, with those aged
65+ increasing by

95,000

33%

of residents are disabled or
have work-limiting disability,
compared to 29% in England

Adult Social Services in Norfolk.

Norfolk is a fantastic county in which to work, live and grow old, but we also know there are significant challenges.

To meet the aspirations and needs of our residents, our aim and ambition is to create a service that is fit for the future - one that is focused on prevention and early help, rather than one that responds to demand and crisis. Our goal is to offer a service that our residents deserve and, by working together, we will achieve it.

Over the past 5 years, we have seen more people coming to us for support. This includes people living at home and people discharged from hospital who need support to be able to continue to live independently.

We have changed the way we work to improve the services we offer and to manage increasing demand. This includes growing our workforce, investing in short-term reablement support for people leaving hospital or who need to regain independence after being unwell, and investing in technology which helps people stay in their own homes.

It also includes supporting young disabled and autistic adults to be independent and have the same opportunities as everyone else in society, such as their own home and a paid job, and to offer support to people to recover from long term mental illness.

We have not been able to keep pace with the increase in people asking for help, and many people are having to wait too long for us to assess their needs and find the right support.

Pressures in the NHS also mean more demand for Adult Social Care, as people need to be discharged from hospital safely. With over 1,400 vacancies in our care sector and care providers struggling to recruit, there is less care available for people. People who receive care and support in residential and nursing homes need higher levels of care, with staff needing more skills and training to provide good quality, safe care. We know that care quality is an issue in Norfolk, with only 71% of care providers rated as 'good' or 'outstanding' by the Care Quality Commission.

Over the next few years, we estimate that people over 75-years-old will need around 15,000 residential and nursing beds and more than 6,000 specialist housing units. We want to develop more appropriate housing options that promote independence and shape the market to increase provision of nursing and enhanced residential care.

We are seeing an increase in demand for services alongside a challenging financial environment. Therefore, we must be ambitious and forward-looking in how we meet these needs in a sustainable way. If not, we risk being overwhelmed by demand in the future.

Better Together, for Norfolk.

This Promoting Independence strategy is at the core of Norfolk County Council's strategic plan – 'Better Together, for Norfolk.' This ambitious plan aims for the county to be a place where we put people first and where everyone works together to create a better place to live.

The vision for Better Together, for Norfolk

In Norfolk, we cherish our heritage, we embrace opportunity, and offer an extraordinary place in which to spend a lifetime.

1. We want Norfolk to be the place where everyone can start life well, live well and age well, and where no one is left behind.
2. We want our economy to be vibrant, entrepreneurial and sustainable, supported by the right jobs, skills, training and infrastructure.
3. We want our communities to feel safe, healthy, empowered and connected, their individual distinctiveness respected and preserved.

Our vision is underpinned by 5 key priorities to enable:

- A vibrant and sustainable economy
- Better opportunities for children and young people
- Healthy, fulfilling and independent lives
- Strong, engaged and inclusive communities
- A greener, more resilient future



To support people to be independent, well, and able to deal with life's challenges, we need to work across the whole council and with our partners in the community. By improving educational outcomes, growing skills, helping to create good quality jobs, and putting in place affordable housing and the appropriate infrastructure, we will improve the life-chances of our residents and strengthen our economy.

This is why the Promoting Independence strategy is so important to the whole of Norfolk County Council and shaping how we work together.

Promoting Independence: Our vision for Norfolk.

We have an important vision for Adult Social Services in Norfolk: we want to support people to be independent, well, and able to deal with life's challenges.

To achieve our vision, this strategy – Promoting Independence – is shaped by the Care Act, which aims to prevent, reduce and delay the demand for social care. This means we don't just provide the statutory minimum for our residents; we also continuously look for ways to support people before they face a crisis.

Our strategy outlines our choices of how we will do that into the future, based on what you have told us is important. And through those choices, this strategy will also help us manage the demand for our services, our finances, and plan for our long-term future.

Over the past 5 years, we have changed the way we work to meet the growing demand for our services, and also to improve those services we offer. We have done this by growing our workforce and improving our skills, by investing in short-term support for people leaving hospital or who have been unwell, and by using technology to help people stay in their own homes.

For the next 5 years, we will continue working in this way, focusing more on prevention and targeting support to those who most need it but who are less likely to use our services. We will also continue to work closely with our colleagues and partners in the NHS, the voluntary sector, care providers and residents to offer choices for people at all stages of life – disabled people who want to leave the family home, people who want access to training, learning and employment and people who want support at home which fits their lives.

We have spoken to hundreds of residents and partners from across Norfolk to find out what matters most to them and to understand how we can improve our services. This strategy has been developed based on that feedback and what people in Norfolk have told us.





What the people of Norfolk told us.

People would like to understand more about the services we provide.

Some of our residents feel they have a limited understanding of what Adult Social Services is. Advertising and promotion would help to address this, alongside working in partnership with residents and communities. It would be really helpful to some of our service users to have a greater understanding of what our Social Workers do and the services they provide.

To ensure information is easy to find.

Information can sometimes feel difficult to find. People would like to know how to access our services. Residents would like information and signposting in different formats and based more in the community. This should include advice on health, community groups, employment and volunteering opportunities, and the services we offer. Residents want to be able to access information and support as early as possible to avoid their issues or concerns getting worse.

Be consistent in the way we communicate with people.

The way we communicate with people is really important. Residents would like clear, consistent and accessible information delivered promptly by empathetic and experienced staff with good listening skills. For people with additional needs this should be available in whatever format they need, including in British Sign Language, Braille, different languages, and easy read.

People who look after friends and family said they would like more support in some areas.

Some people felt that they would like more support with long-term care and contingency planning, as well as adaptable, flexible and reliable respite services. Some people who look after friends and family struggle with their health and wellbeing. We want to continue to acknowledge and support their well-being.

People with sensory support sometimes feel that they would like more support accessing information.

How we support people who have different communication and support needs (for example D/deaf, deafblind, visually or hearing impaired, autistic people, and people with learning disabilities) is very important and should be equitable and easy to access. We want all our information to be accessible to all communities.

Co-production and engagement should continue be a priority.

We regularly engage with residents, communities, partners and organisations to help develop and adapt our services. People are eager to get involved to share their ideas and experiences, but they want to know how we use their feedback and what difference this has made.

Encouraging people to help us co-produce our services is a brilliant way of ensuring we are meeting people's needs and expectations. We need to be honest and transparent about what is available and achievable and work within our Real Care Deal.

Promoting Independence: Our strategy for Norfolk.

From what residents told us, we have updated our priorities and what we think you should expect from Adult Social Services in Norfolk over the next five years. We want to be ambitious and transform the way we deliver our services.

Our priorities are:

Benefiting from prevention and early help

- How we help people stay well and independent in the place they call home.

Becoming, being, and staying independent

- How we are effective and provide support for people to live independently, avoid losing independence, and where possible gain it back.

Living with multiple and complex needs

- How we recognise that some people might need a higher level of support with many aspects of their daily life in the long-term.



Benefiting from prevention and early help.

Prevention is about supporting residents' health and wellbeing by offering support as soon as possible to avoid them becoming unwell, losing their independence, or needing more care in the future.

This priority shows how we help residents stay well and independent in the place they call home.

What you can expect from us

Easy to find information about your health and wellbeing, finances, employment, and housing, to help you plan for your future. These will be in a range of styles and formats, including British Sign Language and Braille, with clear ways you can use our services

Targeted advice for the most vulnerable and isolated

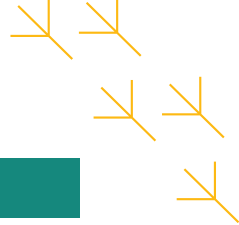
Finding people who may benefit from early help, through community hubs and spaces

Connections to a range of help and support which encourages your independence and offers you choice – everything from gardening to residential care, volunteering or a buddy

If you have a disability, help to find housing, social activities, and employment by listening to you and working with you, your family, and carer

Carers to have identification and support to improve your health and wellbeing, access assessments, and help you plan for your future

People who look after friends and family are able to plan for the long-term with flexible support and a focus on their needs and those of the person you support.



What we are going to do

Improve information and advice to make it more user-friendly and accessible, helping people to navigate the care system and understand the options available to them

Trial new ways of working with technology and assistive technology to enable staff to use their time more efficiently

Proactively reach out to people who might benefit from assistive technology

Provide digital self-service processes, providing help and support for those who are digitally excluded

Making information and advice easier to access and simpler to use so carers can find out about information available

Understand the Carer experience and make sure our practice reflects that
Improve our website to ensure the right information is available for people when they need it most including self-assessment

Support young disabled and autistic adults to be independent and have the same opportunities as everyone else in society, such as their own home and a paid job

How we will know we are successful

Residents know what services we offer, how they can access them and contact us when they need to

Our information and advice is easy to find and available in the way that is needed, when it is needed, to avoid issues or concerns getting worse

Our website reflects new ways of working and has clear and simple guides on how to complete self-assessments and supported self-assessment

Practitioners feel they use their time most efficiently to provide the best service to those who need it most at the time they need it

Increased number of people receiving Care Act assessments with reduced delays in the assessment and review processes

People who look after friends and family will feel supported by Norfolk County Council and will feel supported to tell us how they feel.

Becoming, being, and staying independent.

Independence means something different to everyone and can change based on how they feel, the support they have around them, or the choices available to them.

This priority shows how we are being effective and provide timely support for people to live independently, avoid losing independence, and where possible gain it back.

What you can expect from us

A range of housing options, including for younger people, to help prepare you for living independently, or whatever solution best meets your needs, and helping you understand what is available

Community and voluntary groups who can keep you connected to people and find you support.

Help for you to re-gain confidence and independence after a fall or being ill

Types of adaptations, technology and equipment for people who want to stay in their own home but who need a little extra help— like handrails or community alarms

Help in your home which is planned with a focus on you and your needs
Support to live independently, including managing money and cooking, finding activities and support to go out and about, including from voluntary and community services

Support for carer's health, wellbeing, and lives, including putting in support so you can go to medical appointments, work and socialise

Clear information about carer's rights and what services are available to you locally, including linking young carers to employment and education support



What we are going to do

Create flexible and diverse ways to use community resources to personalise care

Ensure consistent access to care and support across the county

Work alongside our voluntary partners to utilise and promote services, build their resilience, and support local communities

Implement and expand proactive interventions using digital technology to support people to stay independent for longer

Build on our Independent Living and Supported Living Housing Programmes

Listen to what people who look after friends and family need from us and give our practitioners the tools and information they need to support them

Provide reablement services to ensure people get the right support in their own homes to support them be more independent

Develop more appropriate housing options that promote independence and shape the market to increase provision of nursing and enhanced residential care

How we will know we are successful

Reduced number of permanent admissions to residential and nursing care, and those who need long-term care

Where needed, an increased number of enhanced residential and nursing care beds available across the county

Feedback will tell us where we need to improve services and where we are performing well

People feel supported by Adult Social Services and feel they get the right support at the right time

People in all areas of the county have timely access to home care housing that promotes independent living options

Living with multiple or complex needs.

Some people may have long-term or severe needs which affect their physical, mental, social, or financial wellbeing. Multiple needs often interact with each other and worsen, making it harder for people to get the help they need.

This priority shows how we recognise that some people might need a higher level of support with many aspects of their daily life in the long-term.

What you can expect from us

Support to organise and arrange your care, including employing personal assistants and helping you with funding if you are eligible

More availability of specially adapted and accessible homes
– with care and support nearby

Trained staff who listen to you, your family and support network, and build a plan around your needs

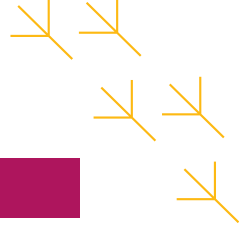
Someone to help you express your views and what matters to you if you need support

A funding process which is easy to understand and clear

Access to, and choice of, good quality and appropriate residential, nursing, home, day, and respite care

Reliable, suitable, and flexible respite for you and the person you care for, so you can have a break and attend appointments or support groups

Early and flexible emergency and long-term planning and support to prevent crisis



What we are going to do

Continue to identify how we can improve quality and performance in our services

Support the care market and care providers to improve the quality and availability of care, and take action when failures arise

Proactively find ways to provide services where there are gaps
(day services, hub support, respite facilities)

Expand the opportunities available for respite

Support an increase in good quality nursing and enhanced residential care provision in areas where it is needed

Improving access to information so it is clear, in different formats and understandable in particular around funding and eligibility

Improving access to information so it is clear, in different formats and understandable in particular around funding and eligibility

How we will know we are successful

People who use our services, their family, and carers are the focus of their care planning, both in an emergency and the long-term

Reduced waiting list numbers

Residents feel that they have choices and are supported to make decisions

Overall satisfaction of people who use our services

An increased number of care providers rated good or outstanding

Providers feel we engage with them and that their voices are heard

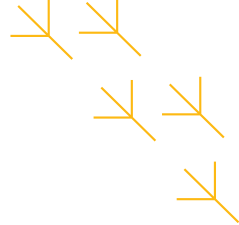
Framework for Success.

Every year we measure how well our services meet the needs of our residents by using a set of national standards. These are called the **Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF)**. The ASCOF sets outcomes-based priorities for care and support, focused on key objectives for people who use **Adult Social Services**.

We will also use Vital Signs and other tailored measures to help us measure success.

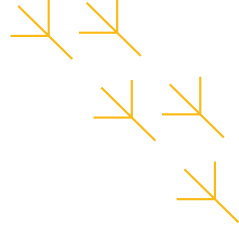


Benefiting from prevention and early help.



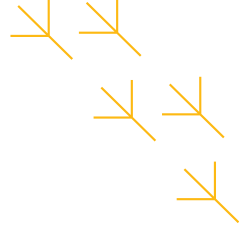
What are we going to do	Measurement of success
Residents know what services we offer, how they can access them and contact us when they need to	<p>▶ ASCOF Measure 3C: the proportion of people and carers who use services who have found it easy to find information about services and/or support</p>
Our information and advice is easy to find and available in the way that is needed, when it is needed, to avoid issues or concerns getting worse	<p>▶ ASCOF Measure 3C: the proportion of people and carers who use services who have found it easy to find information about services and/or support</p>
Our website reflects new ways of working and has clear and simple guides on how to complete self-assessments and supported self-assessment	<p>▶ ASCOF Measure 3C: the proportion of people and carers who use services who have found it easy to find information about services and/or support</p>
Practitioners feel they use their time most efficiently to provide the best service to those who need it most at the time they need it	<p>▶ Measured through Norfolk County Council's Annual Staff Survey Vital Sign: Timeliness of risk management within the holding list Measure: Percentage of new people waiting for an assessment for more than three weeks</p>
Increased number of people receiving Care Act assessments with reduced delays in the assessment and review processes	<p>▶ ASCOF Measures 1E: overall satisfaction of carers with social services (for them and for the person they care for)</p>
People who look after friends and family will feel supported by Norfolk County Council and will feel supported to tell us how they feel	<p>▶ ASCOF Measure 3B: the proportion of carers who report that they have been involved in discussions about the person they care for</p>

Becoming, being, and staying independent.



What are we going to do	Measurement of success
Reduced number of permanent admissions to residential and nursing care, and those who need long-term care	<p>▶ ASCOF Measure 2C: the number of adults aged 65 and over whose long-term support needs are met by admission to residential and nursing care homes (per 100,000 population)</p>
Where needed, an increased number of enhanced residential and nursing care beds available across the county	<p>▶ Measure: Number of enhanced residential and nursing beds in the county</p>
Feedback will tell us where we need to improve services and where we are performing well	<p>▶ ASCOF measure 1D: overall satisfaction of people who use services with their care and support</p>
People feel supported by Adult Social Services and feel they get the right support at the right time	<p>▶ ASCOF Measure 4A: the proportion of people who use services who feel safe ASCOF measure 1D: overall satisfaction of people who use services with their care and support</p>
People in all areas of the county have timely access to home care	<p>▶ Measure: Number of people on the Interim Care List</p>
Housing that promotes independent living options	<p>▶ ASCOF Measure 3A: the proportion of people who use services who report having control over their daily life Measure in development: number of people in independent living options</p>

Living with Multiple or Complex Needs.



What are we going to do	Measurement of success
<p>People who use our services, their family and carers are the focus of their care planning, both in an emergency and the long-term</p>	<p>Vital Sign: Maximised independence for those who draw on services</p>
<p>Reduced waiting list numbers</p>	<p>Vital Sign: Timeliness of risk management within the holding list</p>
<p>Residents feel that they have choices and are supported to make decisions</p>	<p>ASCOF Measure 3A: the proportion of people who use services who report having control over their daily life</p>
<p>Overall satisfaction of people who use our services</p>	<p>ASCOF Measure 3A: Overall satisfaction of people who use services with their care and support</p>
<p>An increased number of care providers rated good or outstanding</p>	<p>Vital Sign: Quality of the market</p>
<p>Providers feel we engage with them and that their voices are heard</p>	<p>Measure: Feedback to be gathered via NORCA</p>



Promoting Independence

A decorative graphic consisting of several overlapping, semi-transparent shapes in shades of red, yellow, and blue, resembling stylized petals or leaves.