

Essex All-Age Carers Strategy

2026 to 2030

At some point in our lives, we're all likely to need to provide care for someone, or to receive care ourselves. If you look after someone – a family member, friend, or loved one – you play a vital role.

We call people who do this “carers,” but not everyone uses that word. Whether you do or not, if you live in Essex and take care of someone else, we want to make sure you are seen, supported, and able to look after your own needs too.

The Essex All-Age Carers Partnership Board brings together Essex County Council (ECC), local NHS organisations, the voluntary sector including specialist carer organisations, and carers themselves. We work together to support and champion carers in Essex. This strategy sets out how we will work on the six priorities together.

Building on the progress we have made together, this strategy focuses on continuing to improve support for carers and driving further change. It has been developed with carers across Essex. We want every carer to understand what help they are entitled to and to have a positive experience when they reach out.

Welcome to the Essex All-Age Carers Strategy 2026–2030.

Working in partnership with

Action for Family Carers
Carers First
Essex Carers Network
Essex Carers Support
Essex Community Pharmacies
Essex County Council
Essex Family Forum
Essex Integrated Care Board
Essex Wellbeing Service
Healthwatch Essex
Mobilise

**Summary
Document**

Where we want to get to – Our priorities going forward

Priority 1

Having time
for myself and
a break from
caring

Our plan is to:

- Help you find information and support to plan breaks in ways that are right for you.
- Increase the range of flexible break options available, providing choice and control.
- Create more opportunities for young carers to have fun, make friends and take a break from caring.

We want you to have flexible and affordable breaks from caring when needed – time to rest and look after yourself.

Priority 2

Looking after my
own health and
wellbeing

Our plan is to:

- Help health professionals better understand your caring role and provide support earlier.
- Make it easier to access health appointments that fit around your caring responsibilities.
- Improve access to physical and emotional wellbeing support, training and resources to help you stay healthy and confident.
- Introduce a local scheme offering access to services, support and discounts that help you take part in your community.

We want to make it easier for you to look after your own health – physical, mental, and emotional.

Priority 3

Knowing
what support is
available and
how to get it

Our plan is to:

- Provide clear and easy-to-find information about support and how to access it.
- Make sure professionals can help you find the right information and support, no matter where you first ask for help.
- Identify adult carers early and offer timely support to help them stay well in their caring role.
- Identify young carers early and ensure they receive the right support when they need it.

We want you to find clear, up-to-date information quickly – without having to search everywhere or repeat your story

Priority 4

Support that
works for me

Our plan is to:

- Provide clear information and advice, including support with planning ahead, finances and legal matters.
- Improve access to practical and emotional support that meets your individual needs.
- Ensure carers are offered an assessment where appropriate that identifies available support.
- Help young carers access education, employment and social opportunities, including support as they move into adulthood.
- Work with employers to promote flexible working and carer-friendly workplaces.

We want you to have emotional and practical support when you need it, tailored to your age, situation and caring role, along with clear advice on the financial support available.

Priority 5

Understanding
and navigating
health and social
care

Our plan is to:

- Improve carers assessments so they are easier to access, personalised to your needs and connect you with the right support.
- Ensure carers are involved in decisions about the person they support and that their views are listened to.
- Help carers understand their rights and access advocacy support so their voice is heard.
- Make health and social care services easier to understand and navigate through clearer information and joined up pathways.

We want you to have emotional and practical support when you need it, tailored to your age, situation and caring role, along with clear advice on the financial support available.

Priority 6

Feeling listened to
and respected by
workers

Our plan is to:

- Ensure professionals listen to you, treat you with respect and value your knowledge and experience as a carer.
- Promote inclusive and culturally sensitive support so all carers feel understood and respected.
- Help schools and colleges identify and support young carers through flexible and tailored approaches.

We want you to feel valued and included in decisions, treated with respect, and supported by professionals who understand your role as a carer.

Delivering the strategy and measuring impact

How we will know we've made a difference?

This strategy is not the end - it is the continuation of, and builds upon, the ongoing work already taking place. We will keep listening to carers and adapting our plans as needs change. The Essex All-Age Carers Partnership Board will oversee delivery, bringing together carers voices and experiences.

The board will:

- Monitor progress against the priorities in this strategy and report on progress annually to the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- Make sure carers' voices remain central to decision-making.
- Connect with organisations across the system to drive the change that's needed

Carers told us they want real, visible improvements - not just words. To make sure this happens, we will measure progress in ways that matter to carers.

Success will mean carers feel valued, listened to, and supported - and that they can live well while caring. We'll also look at how progress is being made across different parts of Essex and for people of all backgrounds, because change must be fair and inclusive.

As local government changes over the coming years, the organisations involved may look different - but our commitment to carers will remain. This strategy will be reviewed regularly to make sure it stays relevant and delivers real impact.

Success will mean carers feel valued, listened to, and supported - and that they can live well while caring.

