



Clackmannanshire & Stirling

Carers Strategy

2026 - 2029

Overview

Unpaid carers play a vital and often unseen role within families and communities, providing essential care and support to relatives, friends, and neighbours. Their contribution is fundamental to the wellbeing, dignity, and independence of those they support, as well as to the sustainability of our health and social care systems. While caring can be rewarding, it can also impact carers' health, wellbeing, and opportunities, making it essential that they are recognised, valued, and supported in ways that reflect their individual needs.

This strategy outlines our approach to identifying, supporting, and involving carers across Clackmannanshire and Stirling. It focuses on identification, improving access to support, and ensuring carers are involved in decisions that affect them.

Vision

Our vision is that together as partners we will deliver improved and more consistent support for adult carers so that they can continue to care, if they so wish, in better health and to have a life alongside caring.

Introduction

Carers make a vital contribution to sustaining health and care services through the extensive support they collectively provide. As demand continues to grow and caring roles become increasingly complex, it is essential that we take a proactive and coordinated approach to meeting the needs of carers.

The Clackmannanshire and Stirling Health and Social Care Partnership's (HSCP) Carers Strategy 2026 to 2029 outlines our plans for continued and improved ways of recognising and identifying carers, strengthening supports, and ensuring that carers are empowered to be involved in decisions affecting them. In addition, to supporting them to maintain their own health and wellbeing alongside their caring responsibilities.

Unpaid carers are fundamental to the resilience and wellbeing of our communities, delivering essential care that would otherwise place significant demand on formal services. The HSCP is committed to recognising their critical contribution and providing meaningful, sustained support to:

- Both carers and those they care for, who come from all walks of life and represent the diversity of carers across Clackmannanshire and Stirling.
- Carers themselves who may also have care needs.
- The many unidentified people who conduct caring roles, in line with what we as an organisation would define as a 'carer,' who may not be accessing the support and services they need to support them to live full and positive lives.

To aid this commitment there is an acknowledgement that there is a need for innovative approaches to the delivery of care and support, while also understanding the changing world in which we live. In addition, we need to be commissioning and providing a tapestry of supports for carers, to enable access to choice and provide flexible supports that work for carers across our communities.

Context

In recognition of carers as a key priority both locally and nationally, our work is guided by national legislation and supporting guidance, including the [Carers \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#). Introduced in April 2018, the Act extends carers rights to help improve their health and wellbeing, helping them continue in their caring role, if they wish, while also having a life alongside caring. [The Carers' Charter](#) was developed to help carers understand their rights as carers, as defined in the Act.

This strategy is underpinned by the National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes and the Carers' Charter, with a focus on ensuring carers are recognised early, involved in

decision making, and able to access the information, support, and opportunities they need to sustain their role and maintain their own wellbeing. It builds on our previous local Carers Strategy, which prioritised identifying more carers, providing flexible support, and intervening earlier to prevent crisis. Engagement over the past year with carers, support providers and the wider public has reaffirmed these priorities.

The strategy reflects a wider and evolving legislative landscape, including the Care Reform (Scotland) Act 2025.

This strategy is further supported by key local strategic drivers, including our [Self-directed Support Policy](#) (published in 2024) which outlines the way support is provided locally, and the principles and values we are operating within. The [NHS Forth Valley Population Health and Care Strategy](#) defines their Population Health approach to improving health and wellbeing across our communities, including carers as well as those they care for. In addition, the [Strategic Commissioning Plan 2023–33](#), which was recently reviewed, sets out five strategic themes: prevention and early intervention; independent living through choice and control; care closer to home; supporting empowered people and communities; and reducing loneliness and isolation. Across these themes, carers are consistently recognised as providing a valuable contribution within their communities.

A strong commitment to human rights and equalities underpins our approach, ensuring that support is inclusive, accessible, and responsive to the diverse experiences and needs of all carers.

Ensuring carers have access to the right support is a central focus of this strategy. These strategic priorities reinforce the importance of working in partnership with carers, supporting their health and wellbeing, enabling choice and independence, and ensuring they are connected to their communities and able to access the right support at the right time.

Understanding the need for support

In December 2022, the Scottish Government published the reviewed [National Carers Strategy](#) estimating there to be at least 696,000 carers living in Scotland, including 28,000 young carers.

Locally, the following figures from [Scotland's Census \(2022\)](#) highlight circumstances that may lead to a need for care, or which may also be experienced by unpaid carers, such as family or friends, in their own lives:

- 11.3% of people living in Clackmannanshire and Stirling have a mental health condition, this is highest in Clackmannanshire.
- Around 7,800 people, 5.4% of Clackmannanshire and Stirling's population, are reported to have one or more of the following: learning disability, learning difficulty or developmental disorder.
- 13,200 people, 9.2% of Clackmannanshire and Stirling's population, are reported to have a physical disability.
- Around 30,200 people, 21% of Clackmannanshire and Stirling's population, are reported to have a long-term illness, disease, or condition.

In addition, the census outlined that there is a growing number of carers supporting people with long-term conditions and frailty, dementia, or mental health conditions.

Furthermore, the [2022-23 Carers Census](#) which was carried out and published by Scottish Government told us that:

- Women are more likely to become carers with three quarters of carers reported to be female. Most age groups show a higher proportion of female carers than males, however this was more pronounced in carers of working age.
- Three in five carers included in the Census were of working age.
- Adults aged 65 and over accounted for a quarter of carers identified within the Census period.
- Three in five adult carers reported caring for an average of 50+ hours a week.
- The most common impacts experienced by carers, due to their caring role, were on their emotional well-being and life balance.

[Scotland's Census \(2022\)](#) reported that there were 17,125 unpaid carers locally. It is likely that this is an underestimation due to not everyone who carries out caring responsibilities identifying as a carer. Comparing census information with data regarding limits to day-to-day activities due to frailty, illness, or health conditions, it would suggest there may potentially be an additional 16,761 unpaid carers not yet known to services.

Analysis of potential carers based on reported limits on daily living

	Clackmannanshire	Stirling	Total C&SHSCP area
Local population	51,778	92,604	144,382
Population – day-to-day activities are significantly limited	6,049	8,549	14,598
Population – day-to-day activities are slightly limited	7,403	11,885	19,288
Unpaid carers known	6,402	10,723	17,125
Potential unidentified unpaid carers that may require support in the future	7,050	9,711	16,761

By combining the number of known unpaid carers of 17,125 and the potential number of unidentified carers of 16,761, as outlined above, the total provides a potential estimated number of unpaid carers across Clackmannanshire and Stirling as 33,886. This potentially large discrepancy in the number of carers within Clackmannanshire and Stirling reinforces why the identification of carers is a key outcome, which is defined within this strategy.

The HSCP has drawn on a range of data, included data laid out above, to understand local need, alongside insights from carers and those they support. This

evidence has directly informed the development of this strategy and the associated commissioning approach to carers' support. It highlights the importance of a tapestry of supports that offer genuine choice, enabling carers to access support, including in person, online and by phone, in ways that suit their individual circumstances. These supports play a key role in providing timely information, advice, and assistance, helping carers make informed decisions and sustain their caring role.

1. Identifying Carers

Where people are living with a life changing health condition, they are likely being cared for and supported by a friend, partner, or relative. In such cases, the friend, partner, or relative may not see themselves as an unpaid carer or even associate with the term 'carer.'

As conditions progress, the amount of care and support from family and friends can increase. Therefore, knowing what support is available for carers, and knowing how to access support as early as possible, can help maintain an individual's own health and wellbeing. To allow them to continue to care, if they wish to do so, and to enjoy a life alongside caring.

Community health services assist in identifying carers within their community. Whilst GP surgeries or local pharmacies discuss a person's individual health needs, they may also require support with social or other issues which can be offered by Community Link Workers. Link Workers help support the HSCP's prevention agenda through social prescribing. This is an approach that connects people with activities, groups and services that improve their health and wellbeing. For examples of the impacts of the supports Community Links Worker provide, view [Community Link Workers – CTSI](#).

Outcome 1:

Carers are identified as early as possible in their caring journey and supported to access the information and support they need to maintain their own health and wellbeing and sustain their caring role. With progress measured through increased early identification rates and uptake of support.

Identifying carers as early as possible helps to increase confidence in carers to seek more in-depth support, therefore, to achieve this the HSCP commits to:

Key priority: Raising awareness across communities

Encouraging good conversations and strengthening communities through community engagement to assist in raising awareness, helping carers to access support that is right for them.

Activity that supports this priority

Carer information days and events regularly take place throughout the year facilitated by the HSCP, with similar events also being organised by partner organisations. These events take place in multiple locations across Clackmannanshire and Stirling and are always well attended. Such events provide

the opportunity to discuss carer's individual circumstances with many discussions leading to the identification of the need for more in-depth support.

298 hours of Carer engagement has occurred across communities since 1 April 2024

Local Carer support organisations ensure that carers are identified and provided with information so they can receive appropriate support. They do this by:

- Promoting the early identification of carers which results in increased referrals to the Carers Centre and wider carer support organisations.
- Providing information to carers about the services they offer and supplementary services from other organisations.
- Providing workforce learning opportunities for professionals raising awareness of carer needs and rights, as well as the services they provide.
- Delivering talks and participating in events to raise awareness across communities.



The annual 'Celebration of Carers' event held at Alloa Town Hall on 4 June 2025

Planned activity 2026-2029

Key Priority: Raising awareness across communities

1. We will continue to engage with carers and those they support across Clackmannanshire and Stirling to promote early identification and improve awareness of available supports to carers.

Key Priority: Digital campaigns

According to [Scottish Household Survey 2022: Key Findings](#), 91% of people in Scotland have internet access. However, this figure is expected to rise given the commitments set out in Scotland's digital strategy [A Changing Nation - how Scotland will thrive in a digital world: progress report 2021 – 2024](#). This commitment to enable a digitally inclusive Scotland represents incredible opportunities for all and can increase the reach and impact of digital campaigns.

Activity that supports this priority

Locally, digital campaigns use digital technology to raise awareness to carers across Clackmannanshire and Stirling through providing information and support.

Such digital approaches encourage those who provide care and support to loved ones to recognise that from an HSCP perspective, the support they provide is in line with that of an unpaid carer, and that this identification means supports are available to them.

These digital approaches can also assist in reducing anxieties around caring and improve carer confidence which enables carers to seek more in-depth personalised support available through their local Carers Centre or support which is outlined in the local Carers Support pack (see section 2- page 15).

Online supports provided by Mobilise were commissioned and adopted in April 2024 to progress digital campaigns locally. The aim was to increase awareness of carers and make it easier for someone to recognise themselves as a carer, which in turn would enable them to access appropriate support and advice.

Discover Overall Goal ▾	Discover Actuals	% Completed
32k	29.1k	90%

Reach achieved through digital campaigns
(as of 31 March 2026) Source: Mobilise Online

The above figure defined as ‘Discover Actuals’ represents the number of people reached across the HSCP area where information has been provided and the support opportunities offered to individuals. The amount of people who have been reached and been able to access information would not have been possible without the use and promotion of digital campaigns. It is also important to note that many of those reached may also know someone who is either providing unpaid care or may do in the future, and that promotion of these materials through word of mouth is also an important way to continue to reach those in caring roles.

It is recognised that some carers may have specific requirements to be able to access online supports. Therefore, content must be accessible to support carers that may also be living with disabilities, including visual, auditory, cognitive, and motor impairments.

Planned activity 2026-2029

Key Priority: Digital campaigns

1. We will facilitate the delivery of targeted digital campaigns to raise awareness of carers and their needs, with a focus on reaching those who may not yet identify as carers. These campaigns will support earlier identification and improve access to information on available supports.

Key Priority: Collaborative working

Activity that supports this priority

The HSCP will continue to work in partnership with local providers enabling them to have good conversations whereby people who provide unpaid care and support are empowered to identify themselves as unpaid carers and seek appropriate supports.

The HSCP has been working closely with local organisations and has identified carers when attending groups in the community arranged by the HSCP and local carer support organisations.

Collaborative working at the carer event in Alloa, June 2025



Planned activity 2026-2029

Key Priority: Collaborative working

1. We will strengthen partnership working to improve the early identification of carers and ensure they can access coordinated and meaningful support.

Key Priority: Carer Positive accreditation

Recognising that three in five carers are of working age, it is important that appropriate supports are in place for those managing employment while also caring for a loved one.

The [Carer Positive](#) employer accreditation scheme aims to encourage employers to create a supportive environment for carers in the workplace with routes for carers to identify themselves and access the support they need.

Activity that supports this priority

Clackmannanshire Council, Stirling Council, and our local Carers Centre have all received Carer Positive accreditation. Work is currently being progressed to also achieve accreditation for NHS Forth Valley.

Planned activity 2026-2029

Key Priority: Carer Positive accreditation

1. We will continue to promote the Carer Positive employer accreditation scheme and encourage organisations to work towards accreditation, supporting the development of carer-friendly workplace practices.
2. We will work towards progressing through the stages of the Carer Positive employer accreditation scheme, strengthening our approach to identifying and supporting carers who balance caring and employment.

Key Priority: Redesign Social Work front door – Right care, right

time

The HSCP are redesigning the 'front door' processes, part of this programme of work will be to identify carers as early as possible and improve their experience of navigating systems to access support.

Activity that supports this priority

Work is underway to support the aim of callers who telephone Social Work Adult Services being able to swiftly be signposted to a suitable service, offered advice, or an assessment to identify their needs associated with their caring role.

Planned activity 2026-2029

Key Priority: Redesign Social Work front door – Right care, right time

1. We will work in partnership with organisations to improve carers' experiences of accessing frontline services, enabling more carers to recognise themselves as carers who are able to access supports to aid them in their caring role.
2. We will provide Carers Act training to the wider workforce to support understanding of statutory duties, strengthen confidence and support the development of a consistent approach to identifying and supporting carers.

2. Supporting Carers

As an HSCP, we will collaborate with commissioned partners to ensure carers can:

- Have their needs assessed and outcomes determined so they can be supported in a way that suits them.
- Access to a wide range of support including, online and community supports to assist them in their caring role and to maintain their own health and wellbeing.
- Access to information or specialist advice to assist individuals in their caring role. This may include information on power of attorney, welfare guardianship, welfare rights, and financial supports, to increase their knowledge of entitlements, in addition to supporting wellbeing.
- Access to short breaks, which may require replacement care, to enable regular breaks from caring.

Outcome 2:

Carers can access a range of flexible supports that are accessible and clearly communicated, including information, advice, and advocacy, where appropriate. In addition to, services that meet their individual needs, to enable them to maintain their health and wellbeing and have a life alongside caring.

Providing a wide range of supports to carers can help in balancing caring roles with living full and positive lives. To enable this, the HSCP and carer support organisations commit to:

Key Priority: Signposting and providing access to information

Activity that supports this priority

The Carers Support pack was coproduced with carers and carer support

organisations as a local information pack for carers. The pack was introduced to enable carers to self-manage their own caring journey and to maintain or improve their own health and wellbeing. The HSCP plans to further develop the information contained within this pack.

The Carers Support Pack includes a wealth of information that provides a tapestry of supports. These include, carer support organisations, including those offering online support, community groups, and health and wellbeing supports.

To view the Carers Support Pack please visit

<https://clacksandstirlinghscp.org/find-a-service/carers/#carer-support> or speak to the Carer's Centre.

Specific supports include '[Ask SARA](#)' - a rapid access self-assessment tool. This online tool helps advise individuals of the different types of equipment they can purchase to assist with daily activities. This tool does not replace a social work assessment for equipment or adaptations but can provide information quickly, providing carers with more control over decision making.

Planned activity 2026-2029

1. **Key Priority: Improving access to information and signposting** We will work across communities to develop and maintain the Carers Support Pack, ensuring information is clear, current, and accessible, and supports carers and those they care for to identify and access relevant information and resources.

Key Priority: Carers Assessment of needs

Adult Carer Support Plans

The HSCP has a duty to undertake adult carer assessments, this is referred to as an Adult Carer Support Plan (ACSP).

An ACSP focuses on indicators in a carer's life that may be impacted by their caring role, such as health, emotional wellbeing, finance, life balance, feeling valued, future planning, employment, and living environment. This helps to identify the specific areas a carer may need support with.

What carers can expect is illustrated in the pathway diagram, below.



Carer's Pathway (expanding on the pathway developed by Self-Direct Support Forth Valley)

If consent is given by the carer, details in the Adult Carer Support Plan will be shared with a service which can help a carer meet their outcomes.

Activity that supports this priority

All carers can request an ACSP. It is intended that ACSP's are prepared within 30 days of initial contact however, if for any reason this is not possible, this will be clearly communicated to the carer.

Future Planning

For a carer there is always a risk that there may be an emergency, or an event may arise which affects or impacts upon their role as a carer. With the Adult Carer Support Plan, carers will be asked to consider alternative care arrangements for the person(s) they care for in circumstances whereby they are unable to continue caring; due to an emergency or unforeseen circumstances. This planning involves useful information to aid those through providing support in emergencies.

Planned activity 2026-2029

Key Priority: Carers assessment of needs

1. We will continue highlighting carers rights, which includes the offer of an Adult Carer Support Plan

2. We will strengthen the focus on future planning within Adult Carer Support Plans and commit to improving this going forward.

Key Priority: Short breaks from the caring role

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 requires HSCP's to prepare a Short Breaks Services Statement which sets out information on short breaks for carers locally.

Activity that supports this priority

The Short Breaks Services Statement has been reviewed and was approved by the Integration Joint Board for Clackmannanshire and Stirling in March 2025, which contains the following commitments:

- To provide flexible and person-centred short breaks supportive of individual choice and control.
- To widen the scope of short breaks to include alternatives to bed-based respite and a more community focussed approach, e.g. short breaks at home, or holiday type breaks for both the carer and the cared for person.
- To enable a choice of bed-based respite across Clackmannanshire and Stirling.
- To develop a short breaks service to improve the carer experience when arranging short breaks.

A short break for carers, also known as respite care, provides temporary relief from caring responsibilities. Where the person being cared for receives care from someone else for a short period of time, the carer can then focus on their own needs and well-being.

The Short Breaks Services Statement provides information on a range of short breaks support available to carers and those they care for as well as helping them to understand how to access a short break. The full Short Breaks Services Statement can be viewed [here](#).

Planned activity 2026-2029

Key Priority: Short Breaks from the caring role

1. We will continue to develop the local Short Breaks Service, ensuring carers can access clear information and guidance on available short breaks.
2. We will regularly review the provision of short breaks across Clackmannanshire and Stirling to ensure it remains responsive to the needs of carers and delivers best value.

Key Priority: Involving carers in hospital discharge

Within the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016, the HSCP is required to involve carers in the care planning of the person they care for, prior to the cared for person leaving hospital.

Evidence suggests a significant increase in care being provided by unpaid carers following a period in hospital by the cared for person. Where the discharge from hospital is managed in a positive way taking account of the carer and seeking their involvement in the discharge process, the result can be to aid patient recovery and

improved outcomes for the carer.

Activity that supports this priority

The HSCP involves carers in the hospital discharge process ensuring they are fully informed and can contribute to the process. To improve this process for carers, the Carers Centre have a presence within both Clackmannanshire and Stirling Community Hospitals, enabling carers to be supported during challenging times for both carers and those they care for. This presence also helps hospital staff make direct links with the Carers Centre who can support the carer.

For more information on preparing for a hospital stay please visit

<https://nhsforthvalley.com/hospitals/forth-valley-royal-hospital/coming-into-hospital/>.

Planned activity 2026-2029

Key Priority: Involving carers in hospital discharge

1. We will continue to support carers to be involved in care planning, including when the person they care for is discharged from hospital, recognising their contribution and valuing them as equal partners in care.

Key Priority: Outcome focused assessment

Self-directed Support is a principle and practice offering choice and control to individuals and their carers who are eligible to access social care services and support. The values of Self-directed Support are respect, fairness, independence, and safety.

The HSCP are in the process of refocussing assessment documentation to be more explicit in the identification and recording of individual outcomes and drawing on natural supports.

Activity that supports this priority

The HSCP's [Self-directed Support \(SDS\) Policy](#) was approved by the Integration Joint Board in June 2024 with directions to both Clackmannanshire and Stirling Councils around the implementation of the policy. The policy is aligned to the national principles of; participation and dignity, involvement, informed choice, and collaboration. These factors have culminated in the HSCP's approach to assessment being reviewed to be more asset based and outcome focused.

Local independent advice is available on Self-directed Support, allowing carers and those they care for to understand their rights and, in turn, exercise choice and control over how their support is delivered to meet their defined individual outcomes.

Carer's voice

"Following the principles of SDS has enabled us to create something where we can now say she has a life and is enjoying it by going out and doing things independent to us and being a young adult"

Planned activity 2026-2029

Key Priority: Outcome focused assessment

1. We will continue to involve carers in the assessment of the person they care for, recognising the unpaid care they provide and ensuring the impact of caring

on their own needs and wellbeing is identified and addressed.

2. We will continue to deliver flexible and responsive support through SDS, enabling carers and those they care for to make informed choices about their care and support.

Key Priority: Carer Health, Wellbeing and Emotional Support

Adult Carer Support Plan's include the different elements that can impact on a carer's life. Through analysis, we understand that the most impacted element for many carers is their emotional wellbeing.

Carer support organisations provide support for carers either individually through counselling or within their community. Whereby carers can meet other carers and develop social connections to help maintain their mental wellbeing, or access practical supports to help alleviate any challenges and improve their emotional wellbeing.

Carer's voice

"It's like taking a heavy jacket off you, that weight is lifted right away."

Activity that supports this priority

It is recognised that many carers prefer to be nearby the person they care for in case they need support or comfort, or, due to the intensity of their caring role, they may feel unable or unwilling to take time away from the person they care for. In these cases, a carer may prefer to access emotional supports online. [Mobilise](#) is an online resource available for carers across Clackmannanshire and Stirling, 7 days a week with the option to receive individual support in a range of languages, and in formats that are accessible to all.

Carer's voice

"It's not social media, you are coming into a place that will hold you and accept you, with every culture and every age group"

Planned activity 2026-2029

Key Priority: Carer Health, Wellbeing, and Emotional Support

1. We will continue to develop the Carers Support Pack to include clear information on national and local organisations that provide emotional support to carers, including details on how to access and contact these services.
2. We will work with carer support organisations to review Adult Carer Support Plans, including wellbeing indicators such as emotional wellbeing, to identify areas for improvement.
3. We will work in partnership to provide carers with access to the services and support they need to maintain their own health and wellbeing.

Key Priority: Welfare rights and financial support

The [National carers strategy](#) reminds us of the interactions between caring responsibilities, individual incomes, maintaining social connections and how financial challenges can increase social isolation. Many carers can find

themselves financially impacted, particularly if they have given up employment or are not accessing the provisions to which they are entitled.

Activity that supports this priority

In Clackmannanshire and Stirling carers can access information and specialist advice that empowers them to know and understand; their rights, how to improve their health and wellbeing, and information that may improve their financial situation. These provisions can help minimise disadvantage or discrimination experienced by carers in relation to their caring role.

Carer's voice

"I was able to get support from grants which was just before Christmas time and was like a Christmas miracle"

Planned activity 2026-2029

Key Priority: Welfare rights and financial support

1. We will continue to commission carer support services that raise awareness of carers' rights and support carers to access the financial support to which they are entitled.
2. We will work with partners to monitor and review the impact of financial support on carers and ensure carers are aware of, and know, their rights, responsibilities and services that are available to them, in addition to being supported to express their needs.

3. Involving Carers

Unpaid carers are vital within health and social care; their experience of caring contributes substantially to the sector and to improving outcomes for people with support needs across Clackmannanshire and Stirling. This is reinforced by the HSCP considering carers as equal partners in care and a commitment to involving them in decision making processes in terms of their own support and that of their loved one, as well as the planning of services going forward.

Outcome 3:

Carers are meaningfully involved in decision-making at all levels, from assessment and support planning to strategic policy, and are recognised and valued as equal partners in care.

To achieve this the HSCP commit to:

Key Priority: Carer representation within strategic groups

Integration Joint Board (IJB)

Clackmannanshire and Stirling's Integration Joint Board (IJB) is responsible for planning health and care services and have full powers to decide how to use resources and deliver delegated services to improve quality and outcomes. The IJB direct their respective NHS Board and Councils to deliver services, meaning NHS Forth Valley and Clackmannanshire and Stirling Councils are accountable to

IJBs who both oversee and deliver delegated services.

Activity that supports this priority

Carers are involved through designated representatives who are invited to sit as members of the IJB. The representatives are appointed by the local Carer Centre from existing carer networks to reflect the views of carers across Clackmannanshire and Stirling.

Strategic Planning Group (SPG)

The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 places a duty on the IJB to arrange a Strategic Planning Group to support the strategic planning process. This is carried out by developing a Strategic Commissioning Plan and reviewing progress of the Plan through measurements aligned to the statutory outcomes for health and wellbeing, and associated indicators.

The SPG focusses on community working and policies that affect communities and is an open forum, where carers are represented and further involvement is encouraged. This group provides accountability for work aimed towards improving outcomes for all those within our communities, including carers.

Carers Planning Group (CPG)

Clackmannanshire and Stirling HSCP's Carers Planning Group ensure carers can influence policy and planning in the delivery of carers support and services. The aim of the group is to plan and influence the commissioning of carer support in line with the [Carers \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#) and [Social Care \(Self-directed Support\) \(Scotland\) Act 2013](#), as well as working in collaboration to improve outcomes for carers.

The Carers Planning Group includes carers with living and lived experience, providers of carer support, as well as commissioned services. The group meets quarterly in a hybrid way, offering a choice of in-person or online attendance. Those that would like to attend the Carers Planning Group should please contact, Jennifer Kennedy, Carers Lead Officer, kennedyje@stirling.gov.uk

Carer Voice Forums

The local Carers Centre, as part of their service, provides a Carer Voice Forums which allows carers to discuss issues affecting them, meet professionals to hear about policies and developments pertinent to carers locally, and to contribute to local and national strategies.

For those that would like to attend the Carer Voice Forums or for more information follow the links for [Stirling Carers' Voice](#) or [Carers' Voice - Clackmannanshire](#).

Planned activity 2026-2029

Key Priority: Carer representation within strategic groups

1. We will continue to support and strengthen carer representation within strategic groups, ensuring their experiences inform decision-making and contribute to improving outcomes.

Key Priority: HSCP commissioned carer support services, group involvement

Providers of carer support funded directly by the HSCP are expected to involve carers as part of their contract delivery. This is to ensure their services are shaped in a way that reflects the local needs of carers.

Activity that supports this priority

A recent example being the 'Innovation for Carers' event which took place at the University of Stirling. The event was hosted by Mobilise (who are funded by the HSCP) and brought together those with experience of caring, personally and/ or professionally from across Scotland. The aim was to gain insight into progressing digital campaigns to help identify carers and to deliver online carer support. See highlights from the event at the link below.

Innovation for Carers event (February 2025)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-JS-pXxJXkY>

Planned activity 2026-2029

Key Priority: HSCP commissioned carer support services, group involvement

1. We will continue to involve carers in shaping and improving services, using a range of mechanisms to ensure their experiences and insight inform service development, including consultations, evaluations, and informal discussions.

4. Young Carers

While Children's Services are not a service delegated to the Integration Joint Board, there is an ongoing commitment that Adult Services and Children's Services across both Clackmannanshire and Stirling Council's work together to ensure the best outcomes for young and adult carers.

Census and national analysis (within the [Scotland's Census 2022](#)) indicate that 1-2% of children and young people provide unpaid care, with higher prevalence in areas of deprivation. In addition, the [National carers strategy](#) estimates 28,000 young carers in Scotland.

Young carers are at increased risk of:

- Poor mental health
- Educational disadvantage
- Social isolation

In response to young carers the HSCP supports the delivery of [Clackmannanshire](#)

[Council's Children's Services Plan](#) and [Stirling Council's Children's Services Plan](#). Each plan details the offerings of universal, early intervention and targeted support for children and their families with the focus on 'Getting it Right for Every Child,' including those with caring responsibilities.

Early identification through schools, youth services and primary care remains a priority.

Support is offered to young carers through the offer of a Young Carer Statement, delivery of respite groups, flexible individual support, and funding opportunities.

Outcome 4:

Young carers are supported in their caring role and enabled to experience opportunities and achieve outcomes comparable to their peers.

To achieve this the HSCP will work with Children's Services and carer support services and commit to:

Key Priority: Young carers

Planned activity 2026-2029

1. We will continue to encourage representation from Children's Services within the Carers Planning Group.
2. We will continue to support and fund local services to identify, support and involve young carers across Clackmannanshire and Stirling.
3. We will continue to work in partnership with Clackmannanshire Council, Stirling Council and NHS Forth Valley to strengthen support for young carers to minimise the impact of caring on their education and future opportunities.