



**DARLINGTON**  
Borough Council



# Our vision for Adult Social Care in Darlington 2023-2026

# The Transformation Journey to 2023

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We started our transformation journey in 2016. The Care Act provided the context to review and implement a new operating model for adult social care to support the delivery of good quality services at a sustainable cost. The plan was established to enable the delivery of modern services which are Care Act compliant working in partnership with people to maximise their individual strengths and assets.

The transformation plan and model has been delivered through a systematic and controlled delivery of projects and task and finish activities

that were separated into 4 work streams:

- a. Managing Demand
- b. Maximising Independence
- c. Self-Directed Support
- d. Effective and Responsive Best Value Provider Economy

Along with a major service redesign sat changes to the way financial information was reported to give improved financial oversight and a target approach to package reviews.

## Improvements and actions 2016 - 2023

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Much of the journey from 2016 was focussed on strengthening our online offer via an online directory and online self-assessment function, building our Front Door to maximise independence and manage demand. As part of this work, the development of a Team Criteria gave clear identity to the teams to enable better flow through the system with a right team first time approach, ensuring staff with the right skills were assessing need and providing support. The aim was to reduce hand offs and maximise the experience for the individuals needing our services.

A key part of the journey was to redesign our Reablement function to improve the quality of our in house offer to develop our prevention offer and reduce external expenditure.

We improved our social work practice via the introduction of strength-based working, use of the progression model and training in relational practice.

## Strength Based Approach

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We developed a Strength Based Working Methodology based on supporting staff to use their skills, knowledge and professional judgement.

We now call this our 'Strength Based Practice Framework'.

We recognised that individuals and families we work with are all different and unique. They need different things at different times... and this may mean we

have to support them using different Strength Bases approaches.

We trained our staff are trained in a series of identified and proven Strength Based Working Methodologies. This allows them to use and utilise the appropriate approach that reflects and best suits the person/people they are working with. We are refreshing this throughout 2023.

## Strength based practice timeline:



We created a Transformation Review Team to ensure that all packages were reviewed in a strength-based way and to clear a backlog of outstanding reviews, this then transitioned into a separate review function. We developed a Transitions to Adults Services Forum to ensure smooth transition for Children's Social Care to Adults and a no surprise budget situation. Work was also undertaken on recruitment and retention of staff, creating progression opportunities for social workers, revamping pay grades and working with the academy, partners and providers to create a 'grown your own' culture for ASC staffing.

Implementation of a mobile working option for ASC staff by rolling out portable computing options (tablets, laptops and improved mobile phones) helped with staff work life balance and assisted with recruitment and retention of staff.

To support staff, we had a focussed effort on creating a practice guidance and local procedures guide along with a simplified Direct Payment Policy and upgraded DFG offer.

We implemented a Validation Forum to ensure consistency of standards of practice, appropriate packages of care, and to understand demand, trends and market sufficiency.

We undertook a review of our financial processes and through scrutiny, financial oversight, review of packages of care and building on the strength based approaches, we were able to make considerable savings within the core budget.

We looked to embed these changes and successes throughout 2016-2020, however the pandemic slowed a number of actions and delayed the embedding of the full transformation agenda with significant capacity issues due to increasing demand, increasing complexity, significant staff retention issues and turnover, resulting in some teams particularly the Adult Contact Team (rebranded from the Front Door) being at 50% capacity throughout 2021-2023.

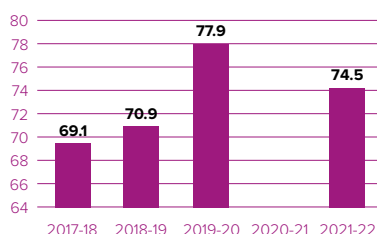
In addition we invested significantly in targeted reablement approach building on the John Bolton Roles and Principles of Reablement in delivery of personalised outcome focussed care enabling people to remain at home for longer, reducing the need for residential care and/or long term support. This Reablement function delivered a highly effective discharge from hospital model in partnership with County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust.

We had several successes including:

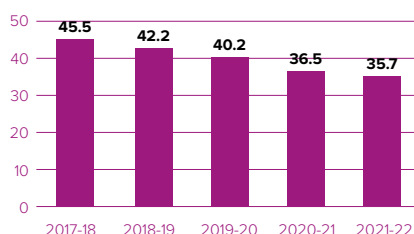
## Outcomes for the people we support



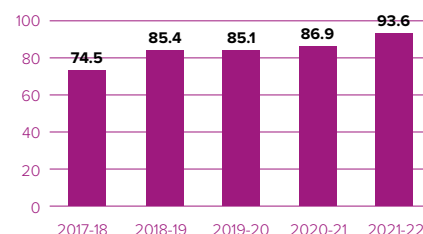
The proportion of people who use services who have control over their daily life



The proportion of people who use services who receive direct payments



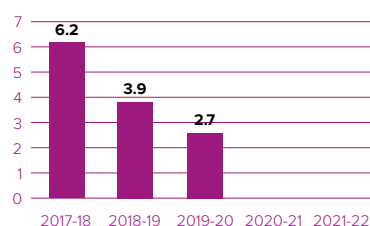
The proportion of carers who receive direct payments



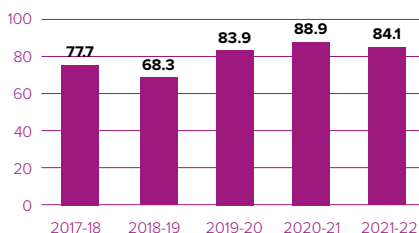
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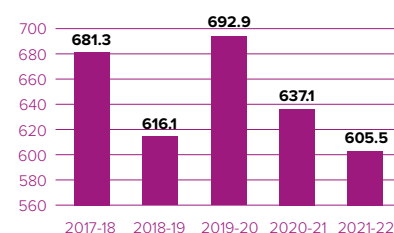
Delayed transfers of care from hospital, per 100,000



The proportion of older people (aged 65 and over) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/rehabilitation services



Long-term support needs of older adults (aged 65 and over) met by admission to residential and nursing care homes, per 100,000 population





# Our current position

In December 2021 the Government published a set of mutually reinforcing reforms which include the Health and Care Bill, Health and social care integration: joining up care for people, places and populations - a white paper which is part of the government's commitment to transform the delivery of care in England, the Build Back Better: Our Plan for Health and Social Care and the adult social care reform white paper- People at the Heart of Care.

These reforms were formalised via the Health and Care Act in April 2022 and can be categorised as follows:

- a. Fair Cost of Care exercise
- b. Charging Reforms including the Cap on Care
- c. ASC readiness for CQC Inspection
- d. ICS/ICP Development (Integration)
- e. Liberty Protection Safeguards (currently DOLS)

These reforms resulted in a focus on the refreshing of Darlington's Adult Social Care priorities. Therefore, through a series of workshops with teams across the People's group we developed a new vision for adult social care that reflected the new Health and Social Care Act 2022, with the purpose of pulling together all activity into a single transformation plan that linked to the vision.

**NB:** it notes that some of the reforms outlined in the Health and Care Act 2022 have been paused and our transformation implementation plan reflects this.

This new Transformation Plan incorporates Commissioning, Quality, Practice and Workforce Development into a single plan along with the service reviews/redesigns that sat within the previous 2019 transformation plan.

The new Transformation Plan is also mindful of the demands and pressures post COVID, for example:

- Demographics
- Managing demand
- Impact of covid
- Workforce retention and capacity
- The national cost of living situation
- Budget pressures
- Health inequalities
- Loneliness
- Mental health.



# The new Vision for adult social care in Darlington 2023-2026

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We aim to create a friendly town where Children & Adults **THRIVE**

**T**

Together and Inclusive

**H**

Healthy and Safe

**R**

Resilient and Strong

**I**

Independent and Innovative

**V**

Valued and Respected

**E**

Educated and Aspirational

Through this vision we will work together with residents, partners and communities to enable the people of Darlington to maximise their independence, their wellbeing, to have care and support when they need it and to empower them to contribute to and feel valued in their communities,

underpinned by the Duties and Statutory Functions of the Care Act 2014, with the emphasis on ensuring a person's well being whilst providing support to people to prevent, reduce or delay the need for ongoing support.

# The Transformation delivery plan 2023-2026

The delivery plan sets out into themes and strategic objectives and the ambitions within our **THRIVE** Vision and service plan priorities.

Themes	Strategic objectives
Amazing practice/strength-based working and workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service user/carers engagement, feedback and co-production (the person's voice is central to everything we do)</li> <li>• Ensuring Strength based approaches and practice (working with partners and the community)</li> <li>• Highly trained and skilled workforce working in line with internal strategies and procedures.</li> </ul>
Market developing, shaping and commissioning (Creating the right conditions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commissioning Services to meet current and future need.</li> <li>• Working wider community assets providing outcomes and making a real difference</li> </ul>
Ensuring safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective Safeguarding - Ensuring people are supported in their caring roles to enable them to feel valued and empowered.</li> <li>• Ensuring continuity of care including supporting young people through to adulthood</li> </ul>
Strategic leadership and workforce development (Enabling delivery)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic leadership and workforce development</li> <li>• Systems, policies, procedures, practice guidance and governance (that support effective social work and social care practice) e.g. Care reforms - LPS, charging reform, data improvement.</li> <li>• Inspection readiness- baselines, evidence collation</li> <li>• Efficient, well managed budgets delivering services and support within the budget, being response to pressures and anticipating demand.</li> <li>• Intelligence led Service development and planning.</li> <li>• Intelligence Led Business Planning</li> <li>• Improved Digital and Communications (inc. web, information, self-service, use of technology)</li> </ul>

We plan to deliver this:

- ◆ Through the delivery of strength-based practice.
- ◆ Quality monitoring to ensuring we are doing the right thing, at the right time, in the right way.
- ◆ Effective use of resources and budgets. (Ensuring we send the Darlington pound wisely)
- ◆ Supporting people to have jobs, homes and feel part of their community.
- ◆ Enable carers to be supported in their caring roles.
- ◆ Ensure we understand the legislation and statutory guidance in our roles.
- ◆ Innovative use of technology.
- ◆ Engagement and co-production with people with lived experience, staff, and partners.

We will ensure we are achieving our goals by having:

- ◆ One agreed transformation plan
- ◆ Identified leadership.
- ◆ Working **SMARTER**.
- ◆ Consideration how we can do things differently.
- ◆ High challenge with high support
- ◆ A refresh of strength-based practice within Adult Social care teams
- ◆ Accountability through regular reviews of vision and service plan and transformation plan which will be subject to routine monitoring, reflection and reporting.
- ◆ Targets and milestones which are refreshed annually.
- ◆ Feedback from people who use our services.





We will base our transformation plan on the Think Local Act Personal key principles of Making it Real - I and We statements:

## Six Themes of Making it Real



### **Wellbeing and Independence**

Living the life I Want, keeping safe and well



### **Information and Advice**

Having the information I need, when I need it



### **Active and Supportive Communities**

Keeping family, friends and connections



### **Flexible and Integrated Care and Support**

My support, my own way



### **When Things Need to Change**

Staying in control



### **Workforce**

The people who support me

Underpinning our vision and objectives will be quality assurance, performance and understanding of what good looks like.

As we embed the transformation plan, we will continue to deliver on our core operational activity as business as usual.

Strategically we will continue to contribute within the integration agenda as the Integrated Care Systems develop ensuring Darlington as a place has a voice and role within the system wide ambitions.

## Delivery structure

- The Transformation Plan will be owned by adult social care service. It has been developed following several workshops with service managers, heads of service, team managers, commissioners, contracts and finance and shared with teams to seek feedback and ownership.
- Each individual project will have an assigned service lead and where needed, a named Project Manager.
- There will be a programme management approach to the delivery of the objectives. Within the programme will be a series of projects.
- Each theme in the programme has key strategic objectives and key success criteria which will be the overall measure of the theme's success.
- Each project should identify the resources (who and when and any costs) needed to deliver which will form part of the project plan, enabling Senior Leadership Team to reprioritise where there is a clash of resource need.
- Each project will have a monthly meeting (project team, project manager and service lead) to assign actions and track progress.
- The project plan will detail each key deliverable and milestone - these will form the basis of the Programme Reporting - RAG rated based on time, cost and quality.
- The progress of each project will be monthly to the designated theme lead via a highlight report and by exception to Senior Leadership Team who will operate as the Programme Board.
- Transformation programme support will be used to assist with the reporting arrangements to Senior Leadership Team (the programme board) and project support will be assigned to complex or high priority pieces of work.

## Governance arrangements

- Each theme lead is accountable to Adult Social Care Senior Leadership Team
- Theme updates - monthly at Senior Leadership Team (RAG rated via a highlight report, with discussion around exceptions i.e. those not adhering to time, cost or quality)
- Highlight report via programme manager to Assistant Director/Director on overarching transformation plan progress monthly prior to Senior Leadership Team (programme board) operating on a No Surprise basis.
- Highlight reporting through Directorate Leadership Team
- Yearly review and refresh of the plan will take place.

## Engagement and Co-Production

Darlington Borough Council is committed to engagement and working in co-production with people, carers and families in Darlington ensuring that people are enabled to have a voice to express their current experience of adult social care and shaping, through co design opportunities work with us to review how services can improve and build on better support and services for the future.

We are committed to ensuring people are at the heart of all we do and within our quality and improvement processes we ensure we evidence we do this in practice and meet our service priority:

We are developing an Engagement and Co production strategy which aims to outline our approach to actively arrange opportunities to meet with and involve people with regards to early engagement on new service proposals and reviewing how we are doing and building positive joint equal partnerships with people and local groups within a cycle of activity. We have adopted the principles of TLAP (Think Local, Act Personal) with National Voices collating priorities of what people expect from adult social care.

We recognise that we are stronger when we work together and therefore our engagement and co-production strategy will recognise the value in relationships and partnerships at both a strategic level, through formal structures such as the health and well-being Board, Integrated Commissioning Board committees, and Local Area Delivery Boards, alongside more localised placed based meetings, as well as operational activity and joint commissioning.

These formal and informal arrangements will include engagement, coproduction and communication with:

- Partners and stakeholders
- Voluntary and community sector
- People who require support and their carers
- The People Group and wider council including housing, economic development and growth.





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