

Gateshead Council

Integrated Adults and Social Care Services

Living Thriving Lives Plan (2023 – 2028)

Our Vision:

To work with our communities to enable residents to live thriving lives, be independent and individual, support themselves and each other, and access personalised quality support when they need it.

Our Vision is About:

- The people, partners and place of Gateshead.
- Valuing people for who they are, the strengths and potential they have, supporting them to improve and maintain their wellbeing to lead healthy and happy lives, where they are in control and able to make the best choices for themselves and their families.
- Equity, and recognising that not everybody in Gateshead is starting from the same point and some people will need more help than others.
- Recognising and rewarding the people working in the social care and health sector, whilst building a well-trained and resilient workforce that has a range of exciting and interesting roles, career pathways, progression and opportunities at all levels.
- Putting people at the heart of everything we do, ensuring the voice of people with lived experience is heard and working with them in true partnership to co-produce our Adult Social Care offer.
- Working in partnerships such as Gateshead Cares Alliance (health partners, Local Authority and voluntary sector) to ensure that our services are aligned to reduce duplication, improve services and are responsive to what people need and work in an integrated way to achieve the best outcomes for individuals.
- Ensuring Gateshead is a great place to live irrespective of illness, disability or caring responsibilities.

Thrive

Gateshead Council's overarching strategy 'Thrive' has ambitions to make Gateshead a place where everyone thrives. It drives our major policy decisions, aiming to redress the imbalance of inequality and championing fairness and social justice. We know that over half of people and families in Gateshead are either just managing or just coping, but more than 30% are in need or are in vulnerable situations. We want to work differently, with partners and others, to target our resources to get the best outcomes for those people and families who require more support. There is a commitment to five pledges which can be found [here](#).

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and Health and Wellbeing Strategy

[The Gateshead JSNA](#) publishes current data, intelligence and analysis of our Gateshead population. Ageing Well information displays what we know about frailty, long term conditions, and mental health and wellbeing in adults and predicts future vulnerabilities. The JSNA forms the evidence base for our strategic planning and drives development of the council's policy framework including our Health and Wellbeing strategy for Gateshead - [Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#), Good jobs, homes, health and friends. The strategy was agreed in 2020 by the [Health and wellbeing board](#) following a detailed consultation programme across the health and care system to engage the views and commitment of not only those partners involved in the delivery of health and care but most importantly those partners whose services directly impact on the wider determinants of health.



Partnership Working

Organisations and systems can be complex and difficult to navigate. By working in partnership with others we aim to make accessing support and services as easy as possible. In Gateshead we have developed a vehicle for integrated partnership working across health, housing and social care partners, known as the [Gateshead System](#). Local health and care partners come together as a system board to deliver change, by working together to achieve better outcomes and reduce health inequalities for local people. The Gateshead System board is accountable to the Health and Wellbeing Board, and Boards of individual organisations.

Prevent, Reduce and Delay the Need for Support

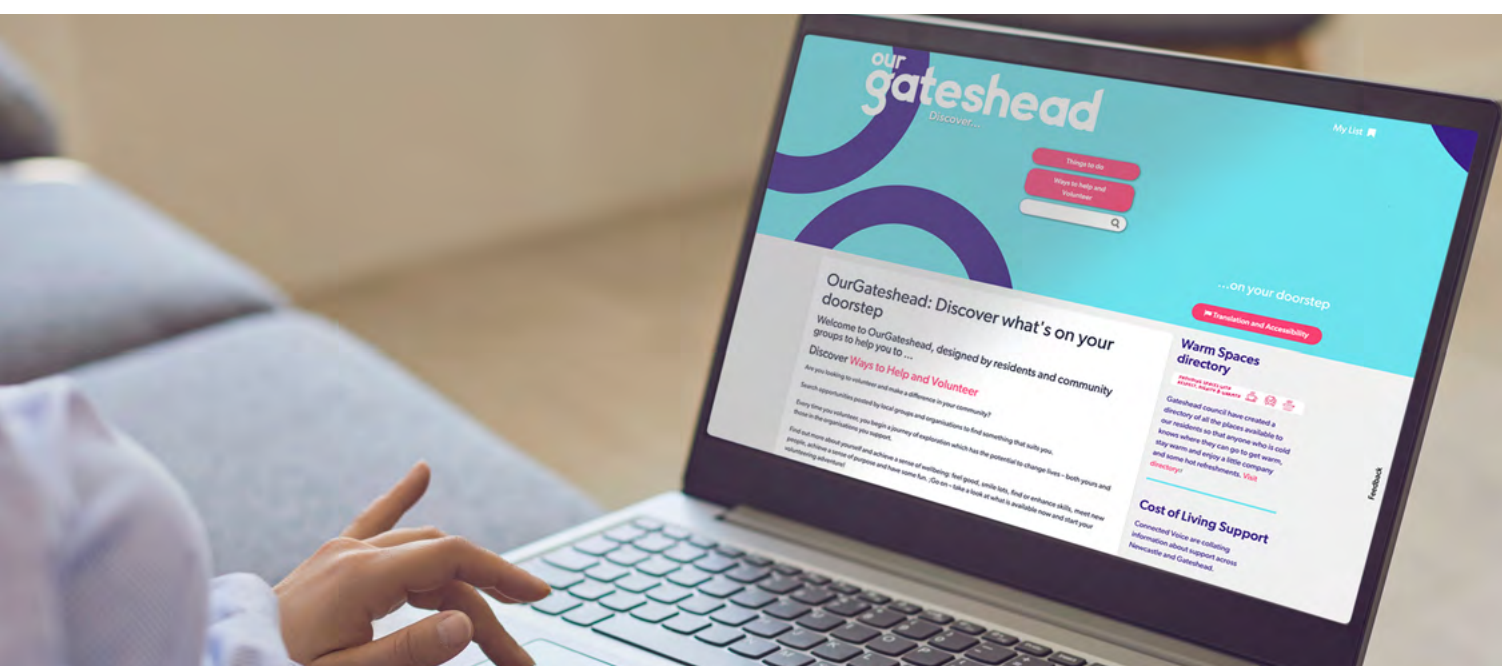
We recognise that prevention spans across many levels and that whilst preventing any need for support would be the ultimate goal, there is significant value in prevention at any stage; preventing a deterioration in someone's pre-existing condition can be as important to them as preventing the occurrence of a condition for someone else. Our aim is to ensure that people receive support that is appropriate to them and that enables independence rather than fostering dependency. There are different factors that can help prevent, reduce and delay the need for support:

◆ Information and Advice

We know that good and accessible information and advice is a cornerstone to the successful delivery of our Care Act duties, supporting people to make good decisions about their care and support and what is available to them. We will be working to strengthen this to ensure:

- People, carers and families can access information when they need it, using easy to navigate systems to support them to have control and make decisions at key points in their lives.
- That our information and advice is joined up; working with key partners in Gateshead to utilise the "Our Gateshead" website as a key resource supporting the people of Gateshead to discover what is on their doorstep ([OurGateshead - Gateshead's community website](#))
- That our information and advice offer does not exclude those who cannot access digital/online resources. The Council and the ICB are working with the Community and Voluntary Sector to better understand and address Digital Exclusion.
- People have a positive experience when contacting Adult Social Care, they receive support to help resolve the issues they face, emphasising what they can do for themselves and what support is available from other organisations and in their community.

"I can get information and advice about my health, care and support and how I can be as well as possible – physically, mentally and emotionally"



◆ Promoting Independence through Enablement

Enablement gives people the opportunity to live their most independent life. Our aim is that anyone who would benefit from enablement is supported to access it at the right time and right place. Our enablement offer is broad and dependent on the individual, it can result in some people gaining full independence, but for others it may mean that they still require some form of support, but the aim would be that they are more independent than they were or maintain their current level of independence. Our ambition is to:

- Continue to strengthen our in-house provider services offer via the PRIME service and Promoting Independence Centre, both of which are almost exclusively focused on enablement.
- Seek opportunities to expand, diversify and support the community and changing needs, including working with our Transitions colleagues for those reaching adulthood and providing a model of enablement for them to thrive in adulthood.
- Continue our work across the service to embed an enablement ethos and approach within all areas of practice, which links closely with our strengths based approach.

Equity is key, and support is tailored to the individuals starting point, needs and goals.

◆ Promoting Independence through Technology

Technology can support people to remain at home and be independent in a way that is right for them.

We recognise the importance of technology enabled care and are excited about the opportunities new and emerging technologies present. We know that the market is moving at pace and have invested in dedicated capacity to react to and harness the innovative tech opportunities available to support our residents to be more independent and look at preventative solutions. We will be working to develop our offer through:



- Creating a Technology Enabled Care strategy to drive forward our ambitions.
- Working differently with the market and look to developers for solutions for areas where we think tech could help and pilot innovative solutions.
- Working with our partners in the NHS and community and voluntary sector (with support from the Academic Health Science Network) we want to understand and map digital poverty and exclusion in Gateshead and co-design solutions. We want people to be able to use technology in their homes to support their independence, but we know the cost of living crisis is exacerbating the gap as people struggle to fund connectivity and devices.

◆ Strength Based Practice

Gateshead has a wealth of community assets that can support people at all stages of their life. For those people who approach Adult Social Care these community services may help to prevent the need for formal care, or improve the wellbeing offer for people with support needs. Our model looks to explore these community assets and opportunities with individuals, as well as their own individual strengths and assets.

Our model of strengths based practice is based on the Department for Health and Social Care's strengths based approach practice framework and handbook and has been informed by our work with organisations such as Social Care Institute for Excellence and local community partners. Through the continuation of our strengths based journey our aim is that:

- A strengths based approach is embedded across the whole service, at the forefront of our practice and seamlessly links with our work around enablement and the use of technology.
- People value the strengths based approach to assessment and we can continue to improve their experience through learning from people and train our workforce in line with this.
- The services we provide and commission support a strengths based approach to care delivery.

"I have care and support that enables me to live as I want to, seeing me as a unique person with skills, strengths and goals"

◆ Home First

The government's vision for Adult Social Care (People at the Heart of Care) recognises that every decision about care should be a decision about housing. In Gateshead we want people to be able to remain in their own homes for as long as possible. Where this is no longer possible, we want people to live as independently as possible with as little restriction on their liberty. We have a range of housing with care options that allow people to choose to live a thriving life in the community, with their own front door, whilst having support on hand, however we want to do more:

- We want to continue to explore the existing and future needs of our population and develop further housing options which focus on the home first principle.
- Work closely with our housing and planning colleagues to future proof the offer with additional extra care facilities and other alternatives, including how we can use technology.
- Have a vibrant domiciliary care market that focuses on enablement and reducing people's need for support, with direct payments more accessible for people to use as they wish to meet their needs.
- Work with NHS and VCSE colleagues to ensure that the needs of Caregivers are fully embedded within Discharge processes.

We are working collectively to make Gateshead a great place to live for everyone, whether they have care needs now, might have them in the future or are carers themselves

Caregivers

Without the army of unpaid caregivers, we know our health and social care system would be unable to cope and provide that important care and support to all those who need it. Many caregivers do not recognise or identify themselves as carers or caregivers and do not access the support that they may need, or even be aware that there is support there for them.

We are committed to improving and developing services to better support unpaid caregivers. We are determined to help caregivers continue caring if they are willing and able, and to support their health and wellbeing by achieving outcomes they have identified that matter most to them.

We are working with a range of partners including Gateshead Carers Association and the Gateshead Carers Trust Tyne and Wear to ensure they can access help and support to carry out their caring responsibilities. We want to build on the work so far:

- Our co-produced Caregivers strategy will be published this year alongside an action plan, we commit to having co-produced annual reviews so it remains fit for purpose.
- Continue to look at how to improve the Carers Assessment process to ensure it is fair, consistent and meets the needs of Caregivers.
- Strengthen the link between Adult Carers and Young Carers by working with colleagues from Children's Services and improving our online content to make information and advice relating to caregivers more accessible for all.



Workforce

Our workforce is our greatest asset, and we know that the delivery of our vision of 'Living Thriving Lives' will only be achieved through an empowered, enabled and skilled workforce. We know that we need to continue to be a good employer to retain our existing colleagues but to also attract new colleagues into the service, and we strive to create a culture of continuous learning and create opportunities for development amongst our teams.

We have embarked on several innovative ways in which to develop the social care and health workforce, including utilising the apprenticeship levy to create development opportunities for those already in the service who have ambitions to move into social work, and by creating a Graduate Management Trainee programme across the whole service. We have worked in partnership with North East Association of Directors of Adult Social Services on a regional workforce strategy and this aligns with the work in the Gateshead Cares Partnership. This considers the workforce across the region for the health and social care system.

We will continue to develop and invest in our workforce through:

- Working with HR colleagues to build on our offer and ensure our workforce are aware of the benefits available to them.
- Equipping our workforce with the right skills and knowledge in order to deliver strengths based assessments and successful enablement approaches.
- Continue to develop innovative ways to create opportunities for development and career pathway options for the sector, utilising Apprenticeships and facilitating work based placement opportunities.
- Working with schools, further education, higher education and industry to promote roles in social care.



Commissioning

The purpose of a collaborative commissioning process is to design how we best respond to the needs of people and communities by putting them at the heart of everything we do; the aim of improving outcomes, ensuring the right care, in the right place at the right time, harnessing the power of people and communities by taking an inclusive asset-based approach, and making informed investment to ensure we maximise the value of the Gateshead pound.

Effective commissioning will be driven by a data led, evidence-based approach which also promotes collaboration, integration and innovation across the Gateshead System to meet identified current and future needs, as well as any gaps in provision. Our ambition is to provide a high quality, high performing market through support and collaborative service design with people, providers and communities.

The aims of effectively commissioning in Gateshead will support:

- **Early identification, assessment and diagnosis** – effective working across health and social care to streamline processes, reduce waiting times for assessment and diagnosis, and avoid people having to tell their story multiple times.
- **Continuity of care** – there are arrangements in place to ensure continuity as young people move into adulthood.
- **Information, advice and support** – ease of access to a good range of services and user-friendly information.
- **Early intervention** – support the move towards ‘Prevention’ as well as improving access to and the availability of universal services.
- **The availability and range of services** – services are personalised, flexible and outcome focussed with a range of solutions on offer to meet people’s needs, often moving away from traditional models of support.
- **Opportunities for connecting** – enabling providers and the health and social care workforce to come together to identify opportunities for improved processes and service delivery. Also connecting communities and incorporating peer support into all health and social care pathways.
- **Family and carer support** – there is a range of mechanisms and support in place for caregivers to support them with and/or give caregivers a break from their caring role.
- **A competent workforce** – appropriately skilled and trained workforce.
- **Value for money** – that any services commissioned are done so on the basis of providing the most efficient and effective way of meeting people’s needs.

Leaders work proactively with staff and partners to deliver safe, integrated, person-centred and sustainable care and to reduce inequalities

The Voice of People and Communities

The voice of people and communities should be the key driver in planning, designing and commissioning services. Our ambition is to be a learning organisation that views people and communities as experts in their care and how they can be best supported to improve and maintain their wellbeing. There are several successful partnerships and forums operating across Gateshead however we want to strengthen this further by giving people greater opportunities to be involved in influencing and designing how their needs are met. Over the coming years we will strengthen our approach by:

- Improving our web pages to create opportunities for online feedback, and develop a greater presence on social media, with targeted messaging to encourage people and communities to have their say.
- Conduct direct engagement with marginalised groups.
- Further develop peer support models, and experts by experience in both paid and voluntary roles, which includes a Commissioning Support Officer to work in the team to really carry this forward.
- Taking a community development approach to support people and communities having more choice and control over how their needs are met.

We will be focusing on the voice of people with lived experience and working with them in true partnership to co-produce our Adult Social Care offer of the future.

Accountability

To monitor our commitment and delivery of the vision and ambitions within this plan we have developed an action and delivery plan.

We will report annually on our progress with the production of a local account.