

2025



Your care and support: Doncaster

Adult Social Care Local Account 2025

Co-produced by the
Adult Social Care Making it Real Board,
City of Doncaster Council



Forewords from the co-chairs of our Making It Real Board



Helen Stirland,
Lived experience expert

This past year both Sarah and I became co-chairs of the Making it Real Board and have personally seen the power of co-production—how real voices and experiences shape the work we do and the changes we’re making together.

I keep telling people that Doncaster needs to shout more about what is being achieved with this way of working! Having Issachar, Glyn, Wendy, Kyla, Zac, Martin and Emily bringing their own lived experiences to the Making It Real Board alongside me has been brilliant. As you’ll see on page 23, there’s plenty of room for more people who draw on care and support to take part.

A special big-up to Glyn – last year he used the confidence and experience he got from the Making It Real Board to chair the annual Team Doncaster Summit, a huge event that agreed ways we can take our amazing city forward together!



Councillor Sarah Smith,
Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

Whilst challenges remain, the spirit of teamwork in Doncaster gives me hope. It is a testament to our incredible people—those who draw on care and support, those who provide it, and those who work hard in and with social care for everyone, collectively. I’m especially proud of our increased focus on cultural competence. This means more than understanding diversity—it’s about building real connections, meeting people where they truly are, and recognizing how trauma shapes our experiences and responses.

This year, the Making it Real Board has also agreed two additional priorities: unpaid carers and people experiencing homelessness. As someone who has been both, I am so grateful for this focus. Our commitment to social justice and trauma-informed care will help us ensure that dignity and support is for all, without exception.

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Introduction

Our vision is that every person in Doncaster lives in the place they call home with the people and things that they love, in communities where they look out for one another, doing things that matter to them.

Sometimes people need some extra help to live good lives and that's the role of Adult Social Care. Our purpose is to listen to people seeking support, understand what matters most to them and the people who love them and work together to achieve it.

This report has been co-produced by Doncaster's Adult Social Care Making it Real Board. It is structured around the six themes of the Think Local Act Personal (TLAP) Making it Real framework.

The report showcases what's good and what's not so good. At the end, we've set out the key actions and priorities we've agreed for 2025. Some of these build on our 2024 key actions because there is still a lot of work to be done. We've added some new actions and priorities that Doncaster people have asked us to address. For each theme, we've included:

- **spotlights** on great things going on in Doncaster that we're proud of and we want to celebrate – including the progress we've made against the key actions we agreed for 2024
- **data** to show how we're doing, and how we compare nationally with other councils in England, and locally with the three other councils in South Yorkshire
- **quotes and stories** from Doncaster people who have shared their experiences.

We've also included information about different ways you can work alongside us to help to build better care and support – and better lives – for Doncaster people.

A note on the data

Most data in this report comes from two main sources:

- Information from the records we – and other councils – keep about the people we support and serve. All Councils with Adult Social Services Responsibilities send local data every year to NHS Digital.
- The results of the national 2023-24 Adult Social Care Survey.

Around **355** people who draw on care and support in Doncaster completed the survey between January and March 2023.

Overall people who draw on care and support from 151 out of 153 Councils with Adult Social Services Responsibilities in England took part in the 2023-24 survey

We've included our statistics, and information about how we compare with the other three councils in South Yorkshire (Barnsley, Rotherham and Sheffield) and with the other councils across England that took part in the Adult Social Care Survey last year.

More detailed data is available for Doncaster and all other councils on the NHS Digital Adult Social Care Analytical Hub.

Adult Social Care Practice Framework



WHY?	We want every person in Doncaster to live in the place they call home with the people and things that they love, in communities where they look out for one another, doing things that matter to them.					
	WHO?		WHO?		WHO?	
	Everybody	People who require urgent support		People who require longer-term support		
	We listen to people to understand what matters to them. We make connections and build relationships to improve people's wellbeing and independence.	We don't make long term plans in a crisis. We work with people until we're sure there is no immediate risk to their safety, health or wellbeing, and they have regained stability and control in their life.		If people need longer-term care and support, we work with them to understand what a good life looks like for them. We make sure they have resources and support to live the life they choose and do the things that matter to them as independently as possible.		
HOW?	Hope	Connection	Relationships	Inclusion	Flexibility	Rights
	We focus on possibilities, dreams and aspirations. We don't limit people's choices.	We explore ways to involve people in their communities. We make and maintain meaningful connections.	We support people to keep existing relationships and make sure they have opportunities to build new ones.	We don't judge people or make assumptions. We involve people as equal partners in conversations and decisions about them, their families and their communities.	We are willing and able to adapt. Our approach is responsive and proportionate.	We make sure people know their rights. We promote autonomy, choice and self-determination.
	We're kind	We behave	We're trusting	We're transparent	We're present	We're honest
	We respect and understand people as individuals. We don't make snap judgements.	We know and follow the law, ethics and best practice. We are always open to improvement.	We know people tend to be honest and know what's right for them. We listen and we keep an open mind.	We're open about our rules, making them clear so people know what they can and cannot expect.	We connect and engage well with people. We respond in a timely manner.	We are honest about what we're going to do. When we say we are going to do something, we do it.
	We know the language we use matters. We use plain, respectful and kind language.					
WHAT?	Wellbeing and independence	Information and advice	Active and supportive communities	Flexible and integrated care and support	When things need to change	Workforce
	Living the life I want, keeping safe and well	Having the information I need, when I need it	Keeping family, friends and connections	My support, my own way	Staying in control	The people who support me
SO?	Better experiences and better lives for Doncaster people		Improved morale and satisfaction for Doncaster's workforce		More sustainable use of resources	

Doncaster adult social care: our commitment to cultural competence

What cultural competence isn't:

- Just being tolerant
- Something to think about that is separate or distinct from day-to-day practice in adult social care
- Having to know everything about age, disability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, being pregnant or on maternity leave, being married or in a civil partnership
- Getting everything right first time when you meet someone
- Assuming that a single, polite conversation will establish all the facts in a calm and objective way
- Something that's only important for "front-line" workers who directly interact with Doncaster people who need information, advice and support about adult social care

What cultural competence is:

- Actively addressing discrimination
- Central to the way adult social care makes connections and builds relationships to improve wellbeing
- An individual conversation that starts with asking what is important to that person, then actively listening and looking for ways to improve understanding and shared learning
- Being able to admit ignorance and open to exploring unconscious biases
- Recognising individual boundaries, emotions and traumas that may require trust to be built over time
- Something that's important for everybody, including managers who also need to provide culturally competent support to the individual staff and the teams they manage

How will we get there?

- By always focusing on human rights to ensure everybody can live in the place they call home with the people and things that they love, in communities where they look out for one another, doing things that matter to them
- By using plain, respectful and kind language, planning ahead to think about the first impression we want to make and enabling a conversation that is based on curiosity and mutual respect
- By feeling safe and supported enough to be able to admit limits to our knowledge
- By understanding how previous trauma informs the way people feel and react and being able to respond to this
- By creating different spaces for people to connect with each other and, whether they are receiving support from adult social care or work within it, feel seen, understood and respected

Key facts and figures

Around 314,200 people live in Doncaster.

It's the 15th largest city in the UK.

59% of people are aged 18-64

(186,300 people)



Almost 20% of people are aged 65 years and over

(61,700 people)



Of residents aged 18+:

2.7%	Asian/Asian British
1.1%	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British
0.9%	Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups
94.1%	White
1.1%	Other ethnic group

20.2% of people living in Doncaster are disabled.

Unpaid carers

The 2021 Census showed almost 1 in 10 people in Doncaster are unpaid carers, supporting a partner, family member, friend or neighbour who relies on them for help to live their life. We think the actual number is probably much higher.

In 2022 we launched Doncaster's All Age Carers Strategy 'We hear, we listen, we care, if you care' and our Carers Action Group have led the co-production of a report giving an update on progress against the six main priorities in this strategy, and outlining key actions.

New requests for support April 2023 - March 2024

We received **5,144** requests to support people aged 18-64 – 409 more than in 2022-23.

Almost all requests (96%) came from community routes. Just 3% related to people leaving or being diverted from hospital.

We received **9,426** requests to support people aged 65 and over – an increase of 267 from 2022-23.

Most requests (83%) came from community routes. 16% related to people leaving or being diverted from hospital.

These requests led to people accessing:

18-64 year olds		65 years and over
3089	information, advice or community-based support	4535
96	Short term Support to maximise Independence	1311
126	long-term care and support at home	380
19	long-term residential care	172
5	long-term nursing care	27
2	long-term care and support in prison	1
22	no services or support provided (person died)	129
1785	no services or support provided (other reasons)	2907

People drawing on long-term support by ethnic group April 2023 - March 2024

1.3%	Asian/Asian British
0.7%	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British
0.4%	Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups
97.0%	White
0.6%	Other ethnic group

Key facts and figures

People drawing on long-term support April 2023 - March 2024

1,605 people aged 18-64 drew on long-term support – up from **1,435** last year.

3,150 people aged 65 and over drew on long-term support – up from **3,000** people last year.

The main reason for support was:

18-64		65+
210	physical support (access and mobility only)	815
165	physical support (personal care support)	795
20	sensory support	70
15	support with memory and cognition	190
840	learning disability support	135
140	mental health support	155
0	social support (substance misuse support)	0
30	social support (e.g. social isolation, loneliness)	80

People's long-term needs for support were met by:

18-64		65+
550	a direct payment	235
135	direct payment and council managed personal budget	110
615	council managed budget	1,280
270	residential care and support	1,305
35	nursing care and support	220

Of the 2660 clients in a long term service for longer than 12 months 1770 had a review completed. This is 67% compared to last year's figure of 66%

Money spent on care and support in Doncaster (2023/24)*

Total money spent by main reason for support

18 – 64 year olds

65 years and over

£8,854,000	Physical support	£50,662,000
£620,000	Sensory support	£1,842,000
£241,000	Support with memory and cognition	£5,999,000
£46,454,000	Learning disability support	£1,728,000
£4,804,000	Mental health support	£5,873,000
£60,973,000	Total money spent (by main reason for support)	£66,104,000

Total money spent by type of support

18 – 64 year olds

65 years and over

£644,000	Short term support	£4,699,000
£10,034,000	Community: Direct payments	£6,223,000
£3,381,000	Community: Home care	£12,998,000
£28,668,000	Community: Supported living	£0
£3,941,000	Community: Other long term support	£807,000
£0	Supported accommodation	£2,028,000
£12,852,000	Residential care	£33,291,000
£1,453,000	Nursing care	£6,058,000
£60,973,000	Total money spent (by type of support)	£66,104,000

* These figures represent total money spent on the reasons and type of support listed. They include care and support funded both by the Council and by people who have been assessed as being able to afford to contribute to their care and support.

Working Together

Co-production happens when people with lived experience work alongside people working in organisations on an equal basis, to agree what good looks like, and to work together to achieve it.

Key actions for 2024

- Review our co-production payments policy and fund, to understand the impact it has had so far, and to ensure that people with lived experience continue to be recognised and rewarded for their time and expertise.
- Explore opportunities for developing peer support worker roles within Adult Social Care, in recognition of the importance and value of peer support
- Co-produce a 'glimpse of the future' to describe how we anticipate local people will experience care and support in Doncaster in three years' time.
- Continue to embed co-production across all our work, with a particular focus on the 'heart and soul stuff' and the 'day-to-day stuff' to make sure that no decisions about people are made without them being fully involved.



What we've done in 2024

- ✓ We reviewed our approach to coproduction payments and developed a reward and recognition policy. This gives people with lived experience of drawing on care and support choice and flexibility about how they are rewarded for their time when they take part in activities to improve adult social care. We set aside an increased amount of funding to support this every year.
- ✓ We coproduced guidance for co-production in general, and specific guidance for co-production in recruitment and selection, meetings, and events. This is helping people working in adult social care to fully involve people with lived experience when making decisions.
- ✓ We produced "glimpse of the future" videos, based around interviews with Doncaster people receiving care and support and drawing out what worked well for them to live the life that they wanted to.
- ✓ Direct Payment peer support role developed with people with lived experience – other roles including Assistive Tech and Shared Lives also being shaped in this way
- ✓ Community Link Champions role being explored by Operational Commissioning - Home Care and Extra Care
- ✓ Opportunities are being explored with NDTi around Community roles

"Let's change some stuff, let's try and do best we can and, while we're in the process of it, let's be human" - Issachar, Making It Real Board member



Wellbeing and independence

Living the life I want, keeping safe and well

Key actions for 2024

Becoming more visible and physically present in communities – working from within community bases

Build on our ‘think local’ principle, supporting social care workers to spend time finding out what resources exist in local communities, and to build connections and relationships within their locality.

Make **safeguarding** personal – reducing bureaucracy and delays and ensuring that safeguarding is based on relationships and what matters most to people

Improve our **assistive technology** offer, supporting more people to use assistive technology to live their life in the way that they choose



Living in a place called home

82% of adults with a learning disability live in their own home or with their family. This is an increase of 4% compared to last year, and Doncaster now ranks 82nd in England compared to 109th last year.

Similarly, Doncaster now ranks 87th nationally (compared to 124th last year) for the number of adults aged 18-64 with long-term care and support needs who live in residential and nursing homes (per 100,000)

Our performance on the same measure for older people has also improved but more slightly, from ranking 126th last year to 116th this year.

What we’ve done in 2024

- ✓ It’s not a one size fits all! Different things are important to different communities when improving access to social care. Each social work team has worked together with people to identify what and where physical presence in the community would add value and improve people’s experiences.
- ✓ Teams are now starting to work from community bases. For example, the Community Autism and Learning Disability team (CALDT) now hold drop-in sessions in the city centre and also at the People Focused Group in Intake,. The North Team are trialling a pop-up hub.
- ✓ Each Social Work team have created their own directory of local community resources. Staff have been encouraged to spend time in the community and find out about local resources – to develop their team directory and keep this up to date. These resources are now being used in new staff inductions.
- ✓ The East Locality Social Work Team made this fun and spent a day doing a treasure hunt where staff were asked to get out into the community to find out about everything that existed. The team with the most assets were rewarded with chocolate and a voucher.
- ✓ We have co-produced and introduced a ‘waiting well approach’ – which outlines how we keep in touch with people if they cannot get support straight away. We have also created an easy read version of this document.



I do genuinely believe that the innovation approach is positive, it is encouraging to see that informal support can reduce delays in access to support. I really do love this way of working. ”



Wellbeing and independence

Living the life I want, keeping safe and well

What we've done in 2024

We have worked with staff to strip away the amount of paperwork that is completed when supporting someone when there are safeguarding concerns – to free up staff time to spend with people.

We have tested out a new approach to safeguarding in two social work teams– where safeguarding is based on a relationship with a worker and conversations are held about what matters to the person, rather than isolated discussions about 'safeguarding' undertaken by a separate safeguarding team.

Positive stories from people about how this feels from both a staff and lived experience view. We are now rolling out this approach across all our social work teams.

Assistive Technology

We have brought together a group of people (staff, individuals with lived experience) to agree a set of actions of how we can start to improve our assistive technology offer. We are now introducing assistive technology hubs / libraries, where people can loan and test out pieces of equipment / technology.

"I am enjoying working as part of the pilot. I am learning new triage skills and feel that I have more control in the decision-making process"

Social Worker

"We needed the support in everything we discussed, and my mum said she felt really listened to, that's not something I've heard her say very often. Your kind approach made a big difference, for my mum as well as me"

Story of Difference

A safeguarding referral was submitted by a person who wished to remain anonymous. The referral only had an address on. There were concerns about hoarding and possible self-neglect. The person was not known to any services and due to having no name or date of birth it would be hard to find out any other information out about the Individual.

As duty officer for safeguarding that day I decided to visit to see the person straight away, assess the situation and provide support. I arrived at the property and there was a man outside who when I introduced myself explained that he had come to support his mother. His mum agreed that we could enter the property and there I managed to gather more information from them both. By having this conversation, we agreed that the Occupational Therapy service was required alongside more detailed follow up from a social worker..

Once returning to the office these contacts were made and a list of local services were sent to the son to support him to help his mother. Communication was also sent to the GP practice to support a request for a home visit. Being able to go out as soon as I received the referral meant that I was able to speak to both mum and son to gather the information required to offer support in a timely manner.

Feeling Safe

- ✓ Almost 75% of Doncaster people using adult social care services say they feel safe, this is a slight increase compared to last year and ranks 28th in England.
- ✓ From April to September 2024 the Central Locality Team took an average of 39 days and the Mental Health team took an average of 36 days to complete a safeguarding enquiry testing the new approach. This is much quicker than the old way of working which took an average of 163 days.



Information and advice

Having the information I need, when I need it

Key actions for 2024

Take a more proactive approach to information and advice, linking in with the work on improving access to care and support

Focus on supporting people to make meaningful connections rather than just signposting people to sources of information, advice and support

Develop our approach to advocacy, so we tell more people about their rights to advocacy and representation and make sure these services are available.

Do more work on changing the story of social care in Doncaster, so people know and trust that they can get the support they require to live the lives they choose to lead.



Finding Information

There was a very slight increase (from 62% to 63%) in the proportion of people who had responded to the survey that had sought information about support or services and found this either very or fairly easy to find. We still rank 126th in England for this indicator and fourth in South Yorkshire.

What we've done in 2024

- Co-produced [Adult Social Care standards for co-producing written information](#)
- Co-produced [public information about rights](#)
- Restructured the [Support for Adults section of Your Life Doncaster](#) and co-designed the banner at the top of the page – promoted in Your Life Doncaster newsletter and on social media
- Co-designed a z-fold card on 'Your rights' – 2,000 copies printed and distributed
- Co-produced new pages for the Council website on 'What is adult social care', 'Finding the right support', and 'Eligibility'



I've been pleasantly surprised to see that it is working, and information is accessible – Member Information and Advice Group





Active and supportive communities

Keeping family, friends and connections

"Julie is such a lovely person and the impact on me from helping her to live the life she wants has been incredible." Social Worker

What has changed?

Since moving to Garforth Julie has seen family members every day. Her nephew and baby Charlotte live within walking distance from the care home, and she is now able to pop round with David and Sharon and have a cup of tea in the garden. She has had visits from her family, and they have stayed and had dinner with her in the home.

Julie has been able to read books to baby Charlotte on a regular basis like she did for Charlotte's dad when he was young.

The move has meant everything to Julie, she is just so happy to be close to her family, to have the family life that we all want and deserve to have. Popping and having a cup of tea in the garden of a loved one is something most of us take for granted, for Julie it is a dream come true.



Julie's Story

Julie had boarded at school Monday to Friday as a child, later in life she lived with her parents and attended day services. After her mum sadly passed away, she and her dad happily lived together for years but sadly he died while she was away on a residential break at Oldfield House.

Julie remained there for a time having come to love the staff and other residents. However her family live in the Garforth area of Leeds and they are very close.. Julie's brother, David, his wife, Sharon, and their two children, and their partners and her great niece Charlotte, all live in the Garforth area of Leeds. Julie's brother and sister-in-law visited every week and the rest of her family visited when they could, but not as often due to wider commitments. When it proved not possible to get Julie over for a family wedding, they decided to hold a second reception at Oldfield House, and they all came over in their wedding attire and had a lovely celebration together.

What did we do?

Julie decided "it's time for me to concentrate on me and my family" and wanted to move closer. Family members visited all the local care homes, wanting to choose just the right one for Julie. It took some time and perseverance but the ideal home was found. So, Julie moved from Oldfield House to The Coach House in Garforth, Leeds.



Having social contact

43.5% of people surveyed said they had as much social contact as they would like which is nearly 5% lower than last year and ranks Doncaster 99th nationally in England. Although there continues to be a huge improvement since 2022, there is much more still to be done to help people receiving adult social care support feel connected to families, friends and supportive communities.



Active and supportive communities

Focusing on inclusive employment

Key actions for 2024

Develop and commit to employment standards so we can show how we apply these standards in practice

Increase opportunities within the council and partner organisations for employment of autistic people and people with a learning disability

Work alongside people with lived experience to identify and attempt to remove some of the barriers to gaining employment that disabled people face

Increase support for disabled people to stay in work.

Adults in paid employment

The proportion of adults with a learning disability in paid employment has increased to 4.5% (up from 4% in 2023). This is above the regional average and Doncaster is one of only four authorities on Yorkshire and the Humber to improve in this area.

Philip's Story

Philip has a love for washing cars. He has dreamed of a job working at a garage for as long as he can remember! Philip has a learning disability and received support as part of the council's Local Supported Employment (LSE) programme. Philip received supported to apply for jobs and attend for interviews. He is now working at Toyota valeting cars.

"The LSE programme helped me find my dream job. It was so good to have help to find the job, I could not have done it without support. I was really excited to get extra hours and my job coach has helped me a lot. It has improved my confidence and I get on well with other employees. They even laid on a spread for my birthday which made me feel really special."

What have we done in 2024

- ✓ Signed up to the co-produced South Yorkshire Employment Ambassador standards, committing them when recruiting and supporting people with a disability into work
- ✓ Used feedback from people with a disability to make some direct changes to how we advertise and recruit to jobs – for example making the Council's website easier to navigate, simplified adverts, planning to amend the application form.
- ✓ The Community Autism and Learning Disability Team have joined the Local Supported Employment programme supporting people with to find and keep a job they love..
- ✓ 2 people with a learning disability / autistic individuals are now working for the council following being provided with support via the LSE programme– one in the role as an assistive technology officer and the other person in business support.





Flexible and integrated care and support

My support, my own way

Key actions for 2024

Co-produce accessible information about direct payments to increase people's awareness about how they work, and to support social care workers to actively promote them

Improve the advice and support available to people receiving or considering a direct payment, including in relation to the recruitment and management of personal assistants, to enable people to make the best use of their personal budget

Ensure our organisational policies and procedures reflect our legal duties in relation to direct payments and do not inadvertently restrict people's choice and control

Listen to people drawing on home support to understand how they feel about the support they currently receive, and make sure people with lived experience are fully involved in shaping our future approach to support at home

Test out a co-designed approach to home support in specific local areas to learn about what works well for people, communities and partners, and to inform further development of this support.

What have we done in 2024

- ✓ People in receipt of a direct payment in Doncaster have fed back on what they feel needs to be done to improve our offer. A working group with a mix of adult social care staff and people in receipt of direct payments is now coproducing these improvements, starting with staff guidance
- ✓ The group has codesigned a job description for a direct payment lead who will be recruited by a panel of staff and people with lived experience of direct payments.
- ✓ We have visited communities and had conversations with people who receive home care to find out what they think about it. We have also co-produced a survey that was sent to people receiving support at home. The 120 responses have helped us to find out how we should work in the future to provide the support people need and want.



Having choice and control over care and support

38.1% of people in Doncaster who use adult social care receive direct payments. This proportion has declined slightly since last year but still ranks 11th nationally and first in South Yorkshire.

77% of people who use services report having control of their daily life. This ranks 94th nationally and third in South Yorkshire. There has been a decline in this measure since 2023. Doncaster's performance is now only slightly better than recorded in 2022.





Flexible and integrated care and support

My support, my own way

Satisfaction with care and support

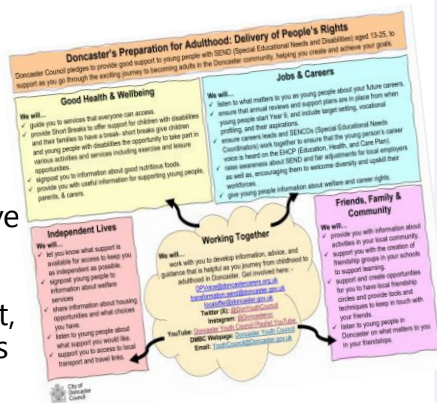
65% of Doncaster people surveyed said that they were satisfied with the care and support they received, almost identical to last year and very close to the national average. Doncaster ranks 72nd in England on this measure and third in South Yorkshire.

Key actions for 2024 Focus on preparing for adulthood

Improve how we use information and data to identify young people who require support from adult social care early – so that we can provide proactive timely support, building relationships with young people to help them plan and prepare for their future as an adult, focusing on their goals and aspirations in life

Review and make changes to our existing arrangements for supporting young people preparing for adulthood, based on best practice and what young people tell us could improve

Develop and co-produce with young people and their parents a preparation for adulthood charter, which will set out expectations and standards for what young people and their families can expect from us when moving to drawing on support as an adult.



"Things are confusing; it feels like you have to fight for everything. At least what you are doing is listening to the things that need to change to make things easier for us" Mrs A

What have we done in 2024

- ✓ We have developed a dataset that helps us identify young people over the next 5 years who will likely require some support. Using this tool we will be able to support these young people earlier and avoid plans for the future being rushed or made in a crisis.
- ✓ We have worked with young people to co-produce a charter (Delivery of People's Rights) – which sets out young people's expectations from us.
- ✓ We have undertaken a review of our current arrangements to identify what is working well, what needs to change and improve. We have used surveys (led by young people) asking about people's experiences, people's stories about their experiences, workshops and focus groups with young people and practitioners.
- ✓ We are introducing changes are based on what people have told us needs to improve – more timely, joined up, co-ordinated support. One example is for the service to move away from being diagnosis led (only working with people with certain diagnoses) to person / outcome led.

"Some of the changes being proposed to the transitions team will stop the 'ping pong' (young people being bounced around the system) as they don't have a diagnosis or don't meet a certain criteria. Its tiring, so removing this will really help" – Zac





When things need to change

Staying in control

Key actions for 2024

Increase the number of people who are able to safely return to their own home after a hospital stay, rather than having to move to a care home either temporarily or permanently

Continue to build on the work started to listen and connect to the experiences of people who have received support on the mental health wards in Doncaster, to identify any barriers to people being discharged and returning home and what needs to happen to remove these barriers.

Co-produce accessible information about people's rights when they are in a mental health hospital and when they leave hospital

What we have done in 2024

- ✓ Improving the delivery of service within the Positive Steps Unit by planning for peoples' long term support needs from the day they arrive and increasing the number of people who return home
- ✓ Proportionate Care Project – increasing dignity and reducing intrusive care for people who need help with mobility, in turn increasing capacity to allow people to leave hospital quickly and safely to the place they call home. Increasing "reablement" capacity to support more people to recover in their own homes.
- ✓ Working alongside RDASH and the People Focused Group to listen to people's experiences in hospital under the Mental Health Act. We have heard suggestions of what would have supported people to stay at home and some of the difficulties in leaving hospital.



Regaining skills, confidence and independence

Doncaster has improved significantly since 2022 in the proportion of older people offered reablement services after discharge from hospital. We continue to rank second in South Yorkshire on this measure. We rank 95th in England compared to 123rd in 2022. The proportion of older people still living at home 91 days after receiving reablement has fallen by 1% (from 81% to 80%) but our national ranking has declined more markedly (from 90th to 111th). We're still ranked third in South Yorkshire on this measure.

Alan's Story

I have lived on my narrowboat for 4 years for my retirement. I had a fall and could not get up; I was in Doncaster Royal infirmary for one month being treated for a bleed on the brain. Then I arrived at Positive Step on 4th June 2024 in the evening, I was made very welcome and found it easy to settle in. Everyone at Positive Step have been so helpful and supportive and they listen to me and know I wish to return to my boat.

Positive Step is not a custodial place it's Brilliant!! And I cannot express that enough, I have regained all my independence and feel 100% well again. If it Wasn't for place like Positive Step I would have to live with my sisters and that is not what I want for them or myself and for many other reasons. I have met the loveliest people here who are helping me achieve my goals. I can now see the light at the end of the Tunnel to return to my boat, and finally Positive Step is a great place to recover.

Workforce

The people who support me

In 2023/24 there were an estimated **9,400** jobs in adult social care in Doncaster – up from 9,200 in 2022/23.

Approximately 8,600 of those posts were filled, split between the council (9%), independent sector providers (80%), roles working for direct payment recipients (7%) and other sectors (5%).

The staff turnover rate across the independent sector and the council was 23.9%- down from 33% in 2022/23, which is lower than the national average of 24.8% and regional average of 25.2%.

The majority (81%) of the social care workforce in the independent sector and at the council were female, and the average age of workers was 44.9 years old.

Less than a quarter (12%) of the workforce were on zero-hours contracts. Over half (57%) of the workforce usually worked full-time hours and 43% were part-time.

Key actions for 2024

- Working on recruitment and retention initiatives and campaigns to promote a positive image of social care as a rewarding, challenging and fulfilling career
- Increasing values-based recruitment to attract and retain the workforce we need
- Developing roles to ensure the social care workforce are more visible and active in communities
- Developing and enhancing the skills of both paid and unpaid carers so they can support the people they care for and about to flourish
- Continuing to develop peer support networks so workers can share ideas and issues and draw on support from colleagues in similar roles or circumstances, or with shared experiences
- Co-produce a shared commitment to improve cultural competency across adult social care, benefitting Doncaster people and the workforce
- Introduce a programme of leadership development, including reverse mentoring, to ensure senior managers lead by example
- Improve the effectiveness of staff equality, diversity and inclusion training by connecting with wider adult social care changes that seek to build on inclusion and respect for human rights
- Develop diversity networks and champions that bring people together to provide support, build empathy and influence policy.



Hannah Moody was a finalist at the national Social Worker of the Year awards, 2024



Workforce

The people who support me

What we've done in 2024

- ✓ Proud to Care - Working with care providers and other organisations to arrange recruitment events in schools, careers events, job centre, and focussed Health & Social care recruitment events
- ✓ Recruitment drive led by the Principal Social Worker for Social Worker vacancies
- ✓ Fundamental changes to our adverts – describing what our vision for Adult Social Care is in Doncaster and the team's statement of purposes.
- ✓ Values based questions in interviews: panel comprising Principal Social Worker, member of staff from social work team and person with lived experience of care and support. High uptake of successful candidates and strong feedback from people who applied.
- ✓ A range of peer support networks in place including via partnerships with Skills for Care
- ✓ Tailored training and wellbeing offer for unpaid Carers, co-produced with carers themselves.
- ✓ The training offer now includes Enhanced Continence, Enhanced Nutrition and Enhanced Medications Skills courses in conjunction with RDaSH and DBTH.
- ✓ Our shared commitment to cultural competency across adult social care has been co-produced and is overleaf
- ✓ A reverse mentoring programme is also under development
- ✓ Both our Spring and our Autumn Festival of Practice for adult social care staff incorporated sessions on equality, diversity and inclusion led by our Researcher in Residence from the University of York. The Autumn Festival included an explanation of cultural humility which showed how cultural competence was underpinned by openness, inclusion and the avoidance of assumptions
- ✓ Adult social care staff have been involved in diversity networks set up and consolidated by the Council over the past year including the Ethnic Culture Fusion Network, the Women's Network, the Climate Champions network, the LGBTQ+ network, the Menopause network, the Unpaid Carers network, the Disability and Wellbeing network and the Veterans network



Key actions and priorities for 2025

1 Increase opportunities for local people with lived experience of care and support to influence Doncaster's approach, from improving our services to recruiting the right people

In 2025 we will

- Expand the coproduction payments policy so it supports key partnerships including the Doncaster Safeguarding Adults Board
- Co-produce a learning event that brings together local and national evidence and experience to underpin further development of peer support roles
- Agree an adult social care research strategy that draws strongly on lived experience
- Strengthen communication about the future of adult social care in Doncaster showcasing the voices of people experiencing care and support

2 Develop and support the wellbeing of Doncaster's adult social care workforce so they can support Doncaster people to live their best lives.

In 2025 we will

- Extend values-based recruitment across Adult Social Care using accessible recruitment processes.
- Ensure more people working in Adult Social Care respond to our employee survey that they feel energised, have trusting relationships and can be themselves at work
- Support the development of employers and managers so they have the tools to enhance the mental health and wellbeing of their staff both now and in future.
- Develop alternative, flexible and blended approaches to learning and development and practice, which are co-produced and incorporate technology where appropriate.

3 Ensure promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion as fundamental to day-to-day adult social care practice

In 2025 we will

- Understand how people with different backgrounds are present both as recipients of care and support and in our workforce and address any identified inequity
- Provide focused training for managers and staff about trauma-informed approaches that will support both Doncaster people and workers
- Create deliberate spaces for people to connect with each other and build shared humility, understanding and trust
- Continue to support diversity networks that bring people with protected characteristics and allies together to provide support and influence policy

Key actions and priorities for 2025

4 Make sure that we make public information and advice about rights (including to independent advocacy), responsibilities and sources of support routinely available

In 2025 we will

- Invite people with lived experience of care and support to be part of a reference group that ensures clear and accessible public information
- Support the prioritisation of better information and advice for key areas: charging and financial assessment; support to help leave hospital; adult safeguarding
- Improve access to independent advocacy for everybody who requires this
- Continue to improve the accessibility of information and advice so that it is available on-line, on paper and also via face-to-face contact, ensuring that information is shareable in Easy Read format as well as a range of community organisations

5 Continue to improve local, timely access to care and support, making sure we listen to people seeking support, their families and local communities to understand what matters most to them

In 2025 we will

- continue to build on activity in 2024 to become more visible and physically present in communities – working from within community bases
- improve the experience that people receive when requiring support from social care out of hours or in an emergency
- continue with steps taken in 2024 to fully introduce our new approach to safeguarding across all social work teams (making safeguarding personal – reducing bureaucracy and delays and ensuring that safeguarding is based on relationships and what matters most to people)
- ensure whilst we are continuing to improve our approach to access and supporting people with safeguarding concerns, we identify ways to reduce paperwork, free up time to spend with people, to understand what matters to them
- produce easy to understand information about charging and financial assessment
- improve our assistive technology offer, supporting more people to use assistive technology to live their life in the way that they choose

6 Create and sustain more employment opportunities for disabled people in Doncaster.

In 2025 we will

- focus on listening to people's experiences and increase the support people receive once they are in work
- think about how we can apply the learning and support provided by the Local Supported Employment programme to other adults we support in our social work teams, for example people with mental ill health
- focus on how we are doing as a council as an employer – against the South Yorkshire Employment Ambassador standards

Key actions and priorities for 2025

7 Ensure Direct Payments further increase choice and control for Doncaster people

In 2025 we will

- Co-produce the recruitment of a lead for direct payments, this will be a peer support role
- Hold a local summit, informed by national research and local experience, to co-create a plan that helps more Doncaster people have choice and control over their support
- Develop opportunities for a thriving pool of Personal Assistants to connect with Direct Payment recipients
- Continue to co-produce accessible public information alongside clear organisational policies and that will enhance choice and control

8 Develop care and support within and across local neighbourhoods

In 2025 we will

- Co-design a new approach to homecare alongside Doncaster people with lived experience, drawing on recent learning from the co-production of supported living
- Connect more strongly with voluntary, faith and community organisations to build neighbourhood approaches to care and support
- Increase our emphasis on access to care and support that helps Doncaster people feel socially connected

9 Support more people to live in a place they call home by helping more people to leave hospital and mental health in-patient stays promptly, and reducing the number of people living with restrictions on their liberty.

In 2025 we will

- Increase timely home adaptations and equipment that support independence
- Increase the number of people who receive short-term support following a hospital stay
- Increase the number of people who are able to return home after a hospital stay
- Continue connect to the experiences of people who have received support on the mental health wards in Doncaster to improve and increase the support provided to people to return home.
- Co-produce information about care and support to help people leave hospital
- Co-produce accessible information about people's rights when they are in a mental health hospital and when they leave

Key actions and priorities for 2025

10 Improve our support for young people who require care and support in their teenage years and into early adulthood, to make sure they can plan ahead and have enough time to make informed decisions about their future.

In 2025 we will

- make the proposed changes to our current transitions service and approach (based on the feedback we have received) to provide more timely, personal, joined up, co-ordinated support to young people requiring support from adult social care, to think about and plan for their future as adults.
- work with young people and parents to produce helpful information about the transitions service, support available and what young people and parents can expect to happen as young adults reach 18 and they are supported by adult services.

11 Improve the experience of people with care and support needs who are at risk of homelessness or rough sleeping

In 2025 we will

- Co-produce and share stories about strengths, hopes and connections to challenge the stigma that still exists about the lived experience of homelessness
- Increase meaningful day opportunities for rough sleepers who need care and support.
- Co-design a central space, where people experiencing homelessness can feel safe connecting with trusted care and support.
- Work jointly with health organisations to improve access to healthcare for rough sleepers.

12 Improve the recognition and identification of family carers alongside the support and information provided

In 2025 we will

- Co-produce public information to dispel myths that still exists about to who can be a carer.
- Launch a 'think carer' campaign to help adult social care staff to consider carers at every contact they have.
- Display information about carers rights in key locations as well as directly providing to identified carers
- Ensure that we are checking, and documenting the views of carers when planning support for loved ones
- Increase the number of carers who benefit from an individual assessment of their own needs

Help shape the future of care and support in Doncaster

We have three main ambitions in Adult Social Care. We want Doncaster people seeking and drawing on care and support to have better experiences and better lives. We want to improve the morale and satisfaction of Doncaster's adult social care workforce. And we want to make more sustainable use of resources.



We're proud of what we've achieved together in 2024. But we also know there is lots more to do in 2025 and beyond.

Making it Real Board members have decided our key actions and priorities for 2025. Now we need more people with lived experience to work alongside people working in Adult Social Care to make these priorities real.

This is your opportunity to help shape care and support across Doncaster. There are lots of ways to get involved.

Maybe you'd like to help recruit new members of staff to make sure we're selecting the right people. Or you might want to help to create accessible public information, in formats that work for you. Or use your personal experience of direct payments or home support to make changes that benefit you and lots of other people across our city. Or you might have your own suggestions for things you feel could be better. You might even like to join our Making it Real Board, and help to hold us to account on the things we've said we'll do in 2025, and to shape our priorities for 2026.

If you'd like to know more about getting involved, please talk to your social worker or email coproduction@doncaster.gov.uk



Paying people for their time and expertise

Co-production starts from the idea that no one group or person is more important than any other group or person. Everyone is involved as an equal, and valued for the unique knowledge, skills, experience and aspirations they bring. There are responsibilities and expectations on everyone, and people involved should receive something back for putting something in.

In 2022 we introduced a 'co-production payments policy' to ensure a consistent, fair and equitable way of recognising and rewarding people with lived experience who work alongside people working in Adult Social Care, for example through participation in Making it Real Board meetings, working groups, project teams, recruitment and selection, and learning and development.

The policy means that we will pay people with lived experience for their time and expertise, as well as travel and any other expenses, if they are involved in co-production and if they are contributing either in a personal capacity or as the representative of an organisation that does not already pay them or cover their expenses.

Your care and support: Doncaster 2025



City of
Doncaster
Council

