



Meeting: Adults and Cultural Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date/Time: Monday, 7 September 2026 at 2.00 pm

Location: Sparkenhoe Committee Room, County Hall, Glenfield

Contact: Mrs. A. Smith (0116 305 2583)

Email: angie.smith@leics.gov.uk

Membership

Mrs. K. Knight CC (Chairman)

Mrs. L. Broadley CC
Mr. N. Chapman CC
Mr. G. Cooke CC
Mr. M. Durrani CC
Mr. N. Holt CC
Mr. A. Innes CC

Mr. P. King
Mr. B. Lovegrove CC
Mr. P. Morris CC
Dr. D. North CC
Mrs. R. Page CC
Mr. V. Richichi CC

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AGENDA

<u>Item</u>	<u>Report by</u>
1. Minutes of the meeting held on 1 June 2026.	(Pages 5 - 10)
2. Question Time.	
3. Questions asked by Members under Standing	

Democratic Services ◦ Department of Public Health, Communities, Law and Governance

Leicestershire County Council ◦ County Hall

Glenfield ◦ Leicestershire ◦ LE3 8RA ◦ Tel: 0116 232 3232 ◦ Email: democracy@leics.gov.uk



Order 32(1).

4. To advise of any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent elsewhere on the agenda.
5. Declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.
6. Declarations of the Party Whip in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.
7. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 33.
8. Draft Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2025-26. Independent Chair of the Leicestershire and Rutland Local Safeguarding Adults Board (Pages 11 - 62)
9. Annual Review of Leicestershire Country Parks. Director of Adults and Cultural Services (Pages 63 - 70)
10. Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland. Director of Adults and Cultural Services (Pages 71 - 76)
11. Adult Social Care Statutory Complaints and Compliments Annual Report 2025-26. Director of Adults and Cultural Services (Pages 77 - 96)
12. Care Quality Commission Assessment 2025 Improvement Plan Delivery Update. Director of Adults and Cultural Services (Pages 97 - 114)
13. Leicestershire Carers Strategy 2026-2030. Director of Adults and Cultural Services (Pages 115 - 152)
14. Dates of Future Meetings.

Future meetings of the Committee are scheduled to take place on the following dates, all on a Monday at 2.00pm:

7 September 2026
2 November 2026
18 January 2027
1 March 2027
7 June 2027
6 September 2027
8 November 2027

15. Any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent.

QUESTIONING BY MEMBERS OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

The ability to ask good, pertinent questions lies at the heart of successful and effective scrutiny. To support members with this, a range of resources, including guides to questioning, are available via the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny website www.cfgs.org.uk. The following questions have been agreed by Scrutiny members as a good starting point for developing questions:

- Who was consulted and what were they consulted on? What is the process for and quality of the consultation?
- How have the voices of local people and frontline staff been heard?
- What does success look like?
- What is the history of the service and what will be different this time?
- What happens once the money is spent?
- If the service model is changing, has the previous service model been evaluated?
- What evaluation arrangements are in place – will there be an annual review?

Members are reminded that, to ensure questioning during meetings remains appropriately focused that:

- (a) they can use the officer contact details at the bottom of each report to ask questions of clarification or raise any related patch issues which might not be best addressed through the formal meeting;
- (b) they must speak only as a County Councillor and not on behalf of any other local authority when considering matters which also affect district or parish/town councils (see Articles 2.03(b) of the Council's Constitution).

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Minutes of a meeting of the Adults and Cultural Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Monday, 1 June 2026.

PRESENT

Mrs. K. Knight CC (in the Chair)

Mr. N. Chapman CC
Mr. G. Cooke CC
Mr. N. Holt CC
Mr. P. King CC

Mr. B. Lovegrove CC
Mr. P. Morris CC
Dr. D. North CC
Mrs. R. Page CC

In attendance

Mrs Fiona Barber – Healthwatch Leicester and Healthwatch Leicestershire

1. Appointment of Chairman.

That it be noted that Mrs. K. Knight CC be appointed Chairman for the period ending with the date of the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2027, in accordance with Rule 6(a) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules (Part 4E of the County Council's Constitution).

2. Appointment of Vice-Chairman.

It was moved by Mrs. Kerry Knight and seconded by Mr. Andrew Innes:

"That Mr. Peter Morris be elected Vice-Chairman for the period until the next Annual Meeting of the Council."

It was moved by Mr. Brian Lovegrove and seconded by Mrs. Rosita Page:

"That Mr. Phil King be elected Vice-Chairman for the period until the next Annual Meeting of the Council."

The Chief Executive informed members that both candidates had been duly proposed and seconded and in accordance with Standing Order 25 a secret ballot would therefore take place.

The Chief Executive announced the results of the ballot as follows:

Five votes for Mr. Peter Morris, four votes for Mr. Phil King and one abstention. The motion "That Mr. Peter Morris be elected Vice-Chairman for the period until the next Annual Meeting of the Council" was therefore carried.

RESOLVED:

That Mr. Peter Morris be elected Vice-Chairman for the period until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2026 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

4. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 35.

5. Questions asked by Members under Standing Order 32(1).

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 32(1).

6. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

7. Declarations of Interest.

The Chairman invited Members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

No declarations were made.

8. Declarations of the Party Whip in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.

There were no declarations of the party whip.

9. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 33.

The Chief Executive reported that no petitions had been received under Standing Order 33.

10. Change of Order to the Order of Business.

The Chairman sought and obtained the consent of the Committee to vary the order of business from that set out in the agenda for the meeting.

11. Cultural Services.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Cultural Services, the purpose of which was to provide an introduction to the three new services areas that had moved into Adults and Cultural Services from May 2026: Country Parks, Beaumanor Hall and Park, and The Century Theatre. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 12' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were made:

- i. A Member referred to recent increased fees and charges, including car parking charges at country parks, and questioned if an assessment had been undertaken of the likely impact on users and visitors. The Member also asked if similar information was available in relation to other services, including Beaumanor Hall and its use for weddings, and whether the impact of any changes could be reported to a future meeting.
- ii. Officers advised that the issue would be taken away for further consideration. In relation to country parks car parking charges, officers undertook to review the decision-making process for the daily parking charge increase, noting that it had been implemented from 1 April 2026, and was likely to have been considered through the previous year's scrutiny and Cabinet processes.
- iii. It was noted there was a proposed increase to annual passes for country parks, which was still being developed as a savings proposal and would require further business case and impact assessment work. Officers confirmed they would check the position and provide further information.
- iv. Members noted that the services discussed represented new areas of scrutiny for the Committee and requested further detailed information, including working hyperlinks to supporting documentation. It was also noted that Century Theatre and Beaumanor Hall had been the subject of previous discussions about viability. Members indicated that information on uptake, visitor numbers and related performance data would be helpful.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the report on Cultural Services be noted.
- b) That the Assistant Director be requested to provide a briefing note on current and additional areas now supported by the Department to be circulated to Members following the meeting.
- c) The Chairman requested that should Members require further information following circulation of the briefing note, a separate meeting would be arranged to discuss the three new service areas.

12. Care Quality Commission Assessment 2025, Improvement Plan Delivery Update.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Cultural Services, the purpose of which was to provide an update of the progress made to deliver the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Improvement Plan, prior to submission of the progress update to the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) due 17 June 2026. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 10' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were made:

- i. For such reports in future, Members requested a traffic light system, or similar, to clearly show how delivery against the Improvement Plan was being measured, what the targets were, or what the Department aimed to achieve, which would provide clearer oversight and identify areas at risk of delay.

- ii. In response to a query, officers advised that paragraph 35 of the report summarised work on equity of access and experience, including rural communities. Access to services for unpaid carers in rural areas would be considered through the draft Carers Strategy and future commissioning, with dementia support cited as an example. Officers would consider how rural initiatives could be presented more clearly in future reports.
- iii. The Healthwatch representative described the Improvement Plan as an ongoing journey and asked how people's experience of services would differ from around 15 months earlier. Officers advised that progress had been made on assessment timeliness, with short and long-term actions to reduce waiting times, improve understanding of waiting lists, and strengthen monitoring.
- iv. Members were advised that 551 people were awaiting an Occupational Therapy assessment at the end of April 2026, down from 605 at the end of March 2026. Work was also taking place through the Customer Service Centre to improve how people contacted and accessed the Council.
- v. The Healthwatch representative referred to the Waiting Well policy in Appendix A and asked what Members could expect from the work. Officers advised that staff engagement and audit feedback was informing updated guidance, tools and practice. Future guidance would set expectations on waiting times, ambitions for people awaiting assessment, and a risk-based approach to prioritising referrals using professional judgement.
- vi. The Healthwatch representative asked how engagement and communication feedback was being used. Officers advised that the Council's engagement panel, involving people who used services, had informed work such as the Dementia Strategy. A staff engagement panel had also been established to gather staff views on service delivery.
- vii. Officers added that staff communications and briefings were highlighting changes to reporting dashboards and improvement plan activity. Staff engagement was also informing telephone system changes, expected by August 2026.
- viii. A Member asked how many further appointments were needed to increase Reablement Team capacity, when previous efficiency work had identified reablement savings, and asked how this related to the planned staffing increase. Officers explained that the CQC had identified a need to strengthen reablement capacity, including weekend working and discharges and that rolling recruitment was underway to ensure capacity of the team was kept up into the future. The efficiency work built on increased capacity to maximise independence, support discharge and prevent avoidable hospital admissions. Officers were requested to provide further detail to Members on remaining vacancies to be appointed to after the meeting.
- ix. On carers, officers reported that consultation on the draft Carers Strategy was due to conclude during Carers Week, with results to inform the final strategy, actions and future service design. The existing carers contract required strengthening, and a business case was being developed for the future service offer and expected impact.
- x. Members were advised that £600,000 had been identified for carers as part of CQC improvement activity, comprising £200,000 per year for three years to support

voluntary sector provision. Officers acknowledged the challenge of balancing delivery of the improvement plan with departmental savings.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the report be noted.
- b) That officers be requested to consider how rural initiatives could be presented more clearly in future reports.
- c) That the Director of Adults and Cultural Services be requested to provide information on the remaining recruitment requirements to the Reablement Team to Members.

13. Performance Report 2025/26 - Position at March 2026.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities, which provided an update of the Adults and Cultural Services Department's performance for the year 2025/26. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 11' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were made:

- i. A Member referred to the library loans data in the Performance Report and noted that, while total library loans had increased, junior loans and community library issues had fallen. Clarification was sought on the age range for junior loans, whether community library issues were included in the overall figure, and what support was being provided to increase use of community libraries.
- ii. In response, it was explained that the main library loans figure related to Council-managed libraries and that community managed library figures were reported separately. Officers outlined the support provided through a dedicated team and engagement with trustees and volunteers, and highlighted the wider community role of community libraries beyond book lending. Officers acknowledged the apparent reduction in community library issues and undertook to review the data and bring further information to a future meeting.
- iii. In response to a question on Care Act assessment waits, it was explained that the figure of 83 referred to people awaiting allocation for assessment at the end of March 2026. It was confirmed that no one had waited more than six months, compared with 19 people at the end of March 2025.
- iv. A Member asked what action was taken where performance indicators were red, particularly on social contact and access to information. Officers advised that more detailed survey analysis was being used to identify issues by demographic and geographic factors and to inform service improvement. This work aligned with the Care Quality Commission Improvement Plan, including actions on contact, consistency, rural access and support for carers and people with dementia.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the report be noted.

- b) That the Director of Adults and Cultural Services be requested to review the data for community library issues and bring further information to a future meeting.

14. Date of next meeting.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 1 September 2026, at 2.00pm.

2.00 - 3.22 pm
01 June 2026

CHAIRMAN



**ADULTS AND CULTURAL SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE 7 SEPTEMBER 2026**

**DRAFT LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND SAFEGUARDING ADULTS
BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026**

**REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT CHAIR OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE AND
RUTLAND SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD**

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the views of the Committee on the draft Annual Report of the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board (LRSAB) for 2025-2026, attached as an appendix to this report.
2. The Annual Report is the report of the Independent Chair of the LRSAB who must publish an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding adults in the local area. This is a statutory requirement under the Care Act 2014.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

3. The LRSAB is a statutory body established as a result of the Care Act 2014. The main purpose of the Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) is to ensure effective, co-ordinated multi-agency arrangements for the safeguarding of adults with care and support needs.
4. The Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Boards' [Strategic Plan 2025-2031](#) was presented to the Committee on 1 September 2025. It includes the Business Plan for 2025-2027.
5. The strategic priorities for 2025-2031 are:
 - Leadership and Partnership
 - Performance, Quality and Audit
 - Meeting statutory responsibilities
 - Understanding our communities
 - Prevention, including awareness raising within our diverse communities.

The business plan priorities for 2025-27 are:

- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Timeliness and proportionality
- Impact of learning.

Background

6. SABs have three core duties. They must:

- Develop and publish a Strategic Plan setting out how they will meet their objectives and how their member and partner agencies will contribute;
- Publish an Annual Report detailing how effective their work has been;
- Commission Safeguarding Adults Reviews for any cases which meet the criteria for these.

7. The LRSAB brings together organisations from the statutory, voluntary and independent sectors across the counties of Leicestershire and Rutland to oversee the multi-agency approach to safeguarding adults with care and support needs. The local safeguarding adults' arrangements are led by the statutory safeguarding partners, namely the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board, Leicestershire Police, Leicestershire County Council and Rutland County Council, and an Independent Chair in accordance with the Care Act 2014. As it shares several partners with the Leicester SAB, the LRSAB publishes a joint strategic plan and business plan and shares joint meetings, a number of subgroups and an Independent Chair with the Leicester SAB.

Annual Report 2025-2026

8. The Annual Report provides details of the performance of the local approach to safeguarding adults in line with the requirements of the Care Act 2014.
9. The key purpose of the Annual Report is to assess the impact of the work undertaken in 2025-2026 on safeguarding outcomes for adults with care and support needs in Leicestershire and Rutland. Specifically, it evaluates performance against the priorities that are set out in the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Boards' [Business Plan 2025-2027](#).
10. The key messages from the LRSAB for Leicestershire are:
- The Safeguarding Adults Board is analysing safeguarding adults' data and disproportionality to understand which communities might require targeted work to support safeguarding engagement. It has progressed work to identify how the partnership responds to safeguarding alerts/concerns, including conversion to enquiries, how long it takes to make people safe and what people are doing, i.e. safeguarding plans.
 - In 2025-2026, 4,337 safeguarding alerts were received in Leicestershire, as opposed to 2,908 at the end of last year (2024-2025). The increase in safeguarding alerts over the past year is considered to be a reflection of work with partner agencies in identifying and reporting potential safeguarding concerns to the local authority. Despite the rise in alerts, the conversion rate (calculated by dividing the total number of alerts received by the number of enquiries undertaken) has remained stable, providing assurance that safeguarding criteria continue to be applied consistently and that enquiries are undertaken proportionately where Care Act criteria are met. The conversion rate over the last year was 35.4%, which is similar to the latest published national data of 34.5% and slightly above the regional rate of 29.5%. Numbers have remained stable across both alerts and enquiries, relating to demographics including gender, age and ethnicity.

- Quality assurance processes have indicated that the local Self-Neglect guidance is supporting identification and practice around high-risk cases.
- The multi-agency response to the Domestic Abuse in Older Adults report has been robust, collaborative and impactful. All recommendations have been addressed, with changes embedded into practice, policy and training.
- Safeguarding Adults Boards have a statutory duty under Section 44 of the Care Act 2014 to undertake Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) into cases where individuals with care and support needs have been seriously harmed or died, and abuse or neglect is suspected. During 2025-2026, the LRSAB received five new referrals for consideration of SAR. One case met the criteria for a SAR, and a review has been commenced.

Proposals/Options

11. The Committee is asked to consider the draft Annual Report for the LRSAB appended to this report and to make any comments. These comments will be considered and addressed prior to the final report being published, if required.

Consultation

12. The Annual Report is produced as a summary of the work of the SAB which has been carried out in relation to safeguarding and prevention. The report will be published later in September 2026 on the LRSAB website – <https://lrsb.org.uk/sab-annual-reports-and-business>.
13. All members of the Board have had opportunities to contribute to and comment on earlier drafts of the Annual Report.

Resource Implications

14. There are no resource implications arising from this report, as this is a retrospective report covering April 2025 to March 2026.
15. The LRSAB operates with a budget to which partner agencies contribute.
16. SAB statutory partners have agreed to share the operating costs of the SAB for Leicestershire and Rutland. Costs are shared between the Local Authorities, Police and Integrated Care Board.
17. As part of this agreement, the County Council contributed £46,375 to the SAB in 2025-2026. This is 30% of the total funding for the SAB (£155,825). This matches the contribution from 2024-2025.
18. Expenditure has increased this year by £23,042. Staffing costs increased due to the agreed Local Government pay award (as the staff are hosted by the Local Authority). Expenditure on Safeguarding Adults Reviews increased due to the number of reviews progressing throughout the year. Costs have risen and the Safeguarding Adults Board spent more than it received from partners' contributions. The shortfall was made up from reserves. Despite budget constraints, the Board has still achieved an increased training programme linked to the previous Mental Capacity Act business priority and launched new safeguarding adults' resources.

19. As of 1 April 2026, the SAB's reserve funds stand at £103,315. These are carried forward. The amount has been held due to a foreseen increase in costs and has meant that partners have not been asked for an increase in contributions. However, this surplus will eventually be used and therefore all partners will be expected to ensure that the LRSAB is self-sufficient.
20. The County Council also hosts the Safeguarding Partnerships Business Office that supports the SAB and the Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Timetable for Decisions

21. This report seeks comments from this Committee prior to presenting the report to Cabinet on 8 September 2026.
22. Subject to consideration by the Cabinet, the Annual Report will be published by the end of September 2026 and presented at the meeting of Leicestershire's Health and Wellbeing Board (to highlight safeguarding matters relevant to the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board and support effective partnership working).

Background papers

23. Report to the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1 September 2025: [Draft Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2024-2025](#)
[Leicester and Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Boards' Strategic Plan 2025-2031, including the Business Plan 2025-2027](#)

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

24. None.

Equality Implications

25. The LRSAB seeks to ensure that a fair, effective and equitable service is discharged by the partnership to safeguard adults with care and support needs. At the heart of the work is a focus on any individual or group that may be at greater risk of safeguarding vulnerability. One of the Business Plan priorities for 2025-2027 is Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. The Annual Report includes a summary analysis of the characteristics of the subjects of Safeguarding Adults Reviews.

Human Rights Implications

26. There are no Human Rights implications arising from this report.

Crime and Disorder Implications

27. The LRSAB works closely with Community Safety Partnerships in Leicestershire to scrutinise and challenge performance in community safety issues that affect the safeguarding and wellbeing of individuals and groups, for example domestic abuse and Prevent. The LRSAB also supports Community Safety Partnerships in carrying

out Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews, previously called Domestic Homicide Reviews, and acting on their recommendations.

Health Implications

28. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Health and care needs can be linked to safeguarding risk for adults and children, and the health and care system can support the prevention of, identification of and response to safeguarding risk.

Appendices

Draft Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2025-2026

Officer(s) to Contact

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Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2025-2026

A Message from the Independent Chair



It is once again a privilege to introduce the Annual Report for Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board (L&R SAB) for 2025/2026.

The Report highlights the work that the Board has been engaged with over the year. I am grateful to all partners for their ongoing contribution to the Board. The work of the SAB is delivered through several subgroups chaired by partners.

The Report provides information about how partners have continued to provide care and support to people and respond to the changing safeguarding needs and risks that occur alongside the ever-changing demands and pressures upon their organisations, which is

evidenced in the data and information provided.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Timeliness and Proportionality, and Impact of Learning are the areas of priority for 2025-2027. In year one, you will see the work undertaken which has contributed to these priorities.

Continued development was supported by the multi-agency audits – Timeliness of response to Safeguarding and Self-Neglect. The audits have highlighted the challenges confronted by those caring for people with dementia and wider work outside the SAB to meet the changing needs for people living with dementia which we are aware is increasing nationally.

It is important we continue to learn from Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) and work has continued on learning identified by SARs completed in previous years.

Actively hearing the voice of those involved in safeguarding and implementing effective learning from this is also critical to the Board's assurance function and will be considered as an area of focus of future work.

Finally, I would like to thank the Board Manager, Gary Watts, and the Team for efficiently and effectively managing the business of the Board over the last year.

I would also like to acknowledge the work of the staff and managers across all statutory, voluntary and community partners who have been committed to working together to keep people safe in Leicestershire and Rutland.

Seona Douglas – Independent Chair, Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board

Local Context

The sources of information for this section are the local Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs), which analyse the health needs of populations.¹

Leicestershire

Leicestershire, not including Leicester City, is made up of seven District council areas: Blaby District Council, Charnwood Borough Council, Harborough District Council, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, Melton Borough Council, North West Leicestershire District Council and Oadby & Wigston Borough Council.

The Leicestershire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2026-2029 shows that:²

- In 2024, the total resident population in Leicestershire was 745,573. 49.4% (368,446) of the population were male and 50.6% (377,127) were female.
- 56.6% (421,855) of the Leicestershire population were aged 20-64 years and 21.1% (157,349) were aged 65 years and over.
- The Leicestershire population is weighted towards older adults, particularly those aged 50-64 years. Compared to England, Leicestershire had a higher proportion of the population aged 65+ and 85+, with 21.1% in the 65+ age group and 2.7% in the 85+ age group compared to 18.7% and 2.5% in England respectively.
- Across the Leicestershire districts in 2024, Charnwood had the largest population (188,385 people), while Melton had the smallest population (54,052 people). Melton and Harborough had larger proportions of residents in the upper middle age categories. When compared to other Leicestershire districts, Melton had the largest proportion of residents in every five-year age band between 55 and 84 years.
- In 2021, the majority (87.5%) of the resident population of Leicestershire was of white ethnicity.³ The figure for the East Midlands was 85.7% and the figure for England was 81.0%. Those residents from an Asian ethnic background constituted 8.2% of the population; those residents from a mixed ethnic background constituted 2.2% of the population; and those from a black ethnic background constituted 1.1% of the population.
- There are differences between age groups. A smaller proportion of people in the age groups under 50 years old in Leicestershire identified as white compared to those in the age groups over 50 years old. This is evident when looking at the 25-34 and 65+ age groups.

¹ See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/joint-strategic-needs-assessment-and-joint-health-and-wellbeing-strategies-explained>.

² Leicestershire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2026-29 – accessible via <https://www.lsr-online.org/leicestershire-2026-2029-jsna>. The JSNA data is taken from the Demography Dashboard, first created by Leicestershire County Council Business Intelligence Service in December 2025 and updated in June 2026.

³ This is the most recent data available on the Leicestershire JSNA.

Ethnicity	% of people in 25-34 age range in Leicestershire	% of people in 65+ age range in Leicestershire
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh ethnicity	10.1%	4.0%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African ethnicity	1.1%	0.3%
Mixed or Multiple ethnicity	2.4%	0.2%
White ethnicity	85.0%	95.0%
Other ethnicity	1.3%	0.5%

Rutland

The Rutland Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2026-2029 shows that:⁴

- In 2024, the resident population estimate for Rutland was 41,443. 51.2% (21,237) of the population were male and 48.8% (20,206) were female.
- 52.0% of the population were aged 20-64 years and 26.4% (10,949) were aged 65 years and over.
- The Rutland population is weighted towards older adults, particularly those aged 50+ years. Compared to England, Rutland had a higher proportion of the population aged 65+ and 85+, with 26.4% in the 65+ aged group and 3.9% in the 85+ age group compared to 18.7% and 2.5% in England respectively.
- In 2021, the majority (94.8%) of the resident population of Rutland was of white ethnicity. A larger proportion of the population were of white ethnicity in Rutland than in the East Midlands (85.7%) and England (81.0%). Those residents from a mixed ethnic background constituted 1.8% of the population; those from an Asian ethnic background constituted 1.5% of the population; and those from a black ethnic background constituted 1.3% of the population.
- There are differences between age groups. A smaller proportion of people in the age groups under 50 years old in Rutland identified as white compared to those in age groups over 50 years old. This is evident when looking at the 25-34 and 65+ age groups.

⁴ Rutland Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2026-29 – accessible via <https://www.lsr-online.org/rutland-2026-2029-jsna>. The JSNA data is taken from the Demography Dashboard, first created by Leicestershire County Council Business Intelligence Service in December 2025 and updated in June 2026.

Ethnicity	% of people in 25-34 age range in Rutland	% of people in 65+ age range in Rutland
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh ethnicity	1.9%	0.3%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African ethnicity	4.0%	0.2%
Mixed or Multiple ethnicity	2.9%	0.3%
White ethnicity	90.5%	99.1%
Other ethnicity	0.7%	0.2%

The Safeguarding Adults Board

The [Care Act 2014](#) stipulates that each local authority must set up a Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB). The main objective of a Safeguarding Adults Board is to assure itself that local safeguarding arrangements and partners act to help and protect adults in its area.

The three core duties of a Safeguarding Adults Board, outlined by the [Care and Support Statutory Guidance](#), are to:

- Publish a strategic plan for each financial year that sets how it will meet its main objective and what the members will do to achieve this.
- Publish an annual report detailing what the SAB has done during the year to achieve its main objective and implement its strategic plan, and what each member has done to implement the strategy as well as detailing the findings of any safeguarding adults reviews and subsequent action.
- Conduct any safeguarding adults review in accordance with Section 44 of the Care Act 2014.

The work of the Safeguarding Adults Board is informed by the six key principles which underpin all adult safeguarding work, as set out in the Care and Support Statutory Guidance:

- Empowerment
- Prevention
- Proportionality
- Protection
- Partnership
- Accountability

Meeting our Strategic Priorities

The Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board set a joint [Strategic Plan for 2025-2031](#) with the Leicester Safeguarding Adults Board. It sets out how adults at risk of abuse or neglect across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland will be helped and protected.

The strategic priorities are:

1. Leadership and Partnership
2. Performance, Quality and Audit
3. Meeting statutory responsibilities
4. Understanding our communities
5. Prevention, including awareness raising within our diverse communities

The Safeguarding Adults Boards also set Business Plans to progress work as part of the Strategic Plan. The Business Plan considers data, feedback from organisations, learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews and people's views to define specific areas of work. A two-year-plan allows time to embed the outcomes of the key deliverables and, subsequently, analyse the impact of these outcomes.

The work on these business plan priorities is embedded within the assurance, training, procedure and review work of the Safeguarding Adults Boards, outlined further in the following sections of this report.

The business plan priorities for 2025-2027 across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland are:

- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Timeliness and proportionality
- Impact of learning

Further detail on these is provided later in the report.

Strategic Priority 1: Leadership and Partnership

The Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board brings together organisations across the counties of Leicestershire and Rutland to oversee the multi-agency approach to safeguarding adults with care and support needs. The Safeguarding Adults Board:

- Sets how organisations should work together to safeguard adults with care and support needs
- Provides multi-agency training and development resources to support good safeguarding
- Tests how well organisations are working together and the difference this is making
- Reviews serious safeguarding incidents to identify improvements needed
- Uses learning and feedback to improve and develop how agencies work together to safeguard adults.

Since May 2024, as a result of ministerial guidance, Safeguarding Adults Boards also act as an active presence in system-wide governance discussions around rough sleeping. Both Leicestershire County Council and Rutland County Council have designated a named board member for rough sleeping.

Governance and Structure

The local safeguarding adults' arrangements are led by the statutory safeguarding partners, namely the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board (ICB), Leicestershire Police, Leicestershire County Council and Rutland County Council, and Independent Chair in accordance with the Care Act 2014.

The Independent Chair for Leicestershire and Rutland is jointly appointed by the Leicester Safeguarding Adults Board. The Independent Chair has a critical role to lead collaboratively, give advice, support and encouragement, but also to offer constructive challenge and hold partner agencies to account and ensure that interfaces with other strategic functions are effective, whilst also acting as a spokesperson for the Safeguarding Adults Boards.

The Board partner agencies from the statutory, voluntary and independent sectors come together to seek assurance that the persons thought to be at risk stay safe, are effectively safeguarded against abuse, neglect and discrimination, are treated with dignity and respect and enjoy a high quality of life.

The Safeguarding Adults Board members are made up of several organisations across Leicestershire and Rutland. The full membership of the partnership can be found on the Safeguarding Adults Board website: <https://lrsb.org.uk/sab-membership-list>.

The engagement of all partners, at a Board and subgroup level, is monitored to ensure full representation in working to support prevention and protection of people at risk of harm, which is at the heart of the Safeguarding Adults Board's work. Details of attendance at Board meetings across 2025-2026 and the governance of the Board and its subgroups are available at **Appendix 1**.

The Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board is funded by contributions from the statutory safeguarding partners. Further information about finance and the budget is available at **Appendix 2**.

This is the statutory annual report of the Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board outlining the work it has carried out during 2025-2026. For more information on how the Board works, please visit <https://lrsb.org.uk/adults>.

Assessments and Inspections

Leicestershire County Council

Between September 2024 and February 2025, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) assessed how Leicestershire County Council was meeting its responsibilities under part 1 of the Care Act 2014.

On 17th September 2025, the CQC published their report which gave Leicestershire Adult Services a 'Requires Improvement' rating. The report highlighted that people in Leicestershire have access to a range of support options that are safe, effective and affordable and stated that improvements are needed in some areas.

Since the assessment, Leicestershire County Council have reported that the number of people waiting for an assessment has reduced, and new information, advice and guidance are now in place. In respect to adult safeguarding activity, revised practice guidance has been implemented, professional and care provider referral routes strengthened, and improvements made to data recording, all supported by the deployment of additional resources. An Assurance and Improvement Plan will drive forward the required changes and make sustainable improvements in the delivery of service across Adult Social Care, whilst improving outcomes for people and carers.

Leicestershire's full response is available via the following webpage:

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/news/council-steps-up-improvements-for-adult-services>.

The full report is published on the CQC's website: <https://www.cqc.org.uk/care-services/local-authority-assessment-reports/leicestershire-0925>.

Probation

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland had their Local Probation Delivery Unit (PDU) inspection, with the report published in May 2025. In addition, the East Midlands, as a region, then had an inspection and that report was published in August 2025. The East Midlands Inspection result was inadequate. Victim work overall was good. The public protection work was not strong enough. In both reports, the effect of the national context was acknowledged by the Chief Inspector, with the prioritising of national policy changes, linked to prison capacity, impacting on local delivery. An Action Plan is in place regarding both the East Midlands recommendations and the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland recommendations.

Strategic Priority 2: Performance, Quality and Audit

Quality assurance and service improvement

The Leicester and Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Boards use their [Quality Assurance Framework](#) to support assessment of whether local safeguarding arrangements for adults are effective and deliver the outcomes that people want.



Performance data

The Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Boards' Performance Subgroup collects, manages and discusses performance data and intelligence relating to safeguarding adults across the partnership.

A high-level dashboard supports the Safeguarding Adults Boards understand any fluctuation in activity or outcomes, and ensures action is taken to reduce risks, or understand and consider the practice that lies under the data, to ensure partners meet their legal duties and to seek assurance about partnership working and impact. The core dashboard stays consistent, with metrics that underpin the business plan priorities added and reviewed as priorities change.

Data is collated and discussed on a quarterly basis to identify performance challenges and potential areas of good practice so that, where necessary, action can be taken to learn from or to improve safeguarding experience and to identify data approaches.

Examples of issues explored in 2025-2026 include:

- A focus on proportionality, with additional monitoring of data relating to ethnicity. This is in support of the Boards' strategic priority across a two-year period. Work is in progress to further explore three specific equity areas through the lens of safeguarding: Asian people (under-representation in data), Transgender people (currently not visible in data), Autistic people (linked to other reports such as Learning from Lives and Deaths, people with a Learning Disability and Autistic People (LeDeR), identifying a heightened risk of harm).

- Oversight of self-neglect activity, following changes to local procedures, replacing the Vulnerable Adult Risk Management process with Section 42 enquiries. This has provided assurance that Section 42 enquiry rates relating to self-neglect have risen in all Local Authority areas in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.
- Alignment of local timescales for aspects of the safeguarding pathway with regional work, to enable confident reporting against a consistent timeliness standard.

Safeguarding Data

A “safeguarding concern” (known locally as an alert) is made to raise concerns that an adult is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect. A concern may arise because of a disclosure, an incident, or other signs or indicators. A concern can be raised by anyone including the person at risk, family, friends, professionals, and other members of the public.

Where concerns require further investigation under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014, a “safeguarding adults enquiry” is initiated. This enables concerns to be addressed promptly, minimising risk.

Leicestershire

Alerts and Enquiries

	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Total number of concerns (alerts) raised	1,732	2,908	4,337
Total number of enquiries	796	1,049	1,531
Conversion rate of concerns to enquiries	46%	36%	35%

Enquiries by Age*

	2024/2025	2025/2026
18-64	340 (36.1%)	470 (35.3%)
65+	602 (63.9%)	861 (64.7%)

*The numbers do not equal total enquiries, as there can be more than one enquiry in the year per person. This is a count of people.

Concerns (Alerts) and Enquiries by Ethnicity

	Population (2021 Census)	Alerts		Enquiries	
		2024/2025	2025/2026	2024/2025	2025/2026
White	87.5%	90.1%	89.7%	91.8%	90.4%
Asian	8.2%	2.9%	2.9%	2.9%	3.5%
Black	1.1%	0.9%	1.0%	1.0%	1.1%
Mixed	2.2%	0.4%	0.7%	0.6%	0.7%
Any other ethnic group	1.0%	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%	0.3%
Not known	-	5.3%	5.2%	3.2%	4.1%

Concluded Enquiries by Types of Abuse, as defined by the Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance*

	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Physical Abuse	28%	31%	30%
Domestic Abuse	11%	8%	11%
Sexual Abuse	6%	8%	6%
Psychological Abuse	25%	22%	20%
Financial or Material Abuse	22%	22%	21%
Modern Slavery	<1%	<1%	<1%
Discriminatory Abuse	<1%	<1%	<1%
Organisational Abuse	5%	5%	4%
Neglect and Acts of Omission	35%	39%	41%
Self-Neglect	2%	5%	7%

*% will not add up to 100% as more than one category may apply

Top 5 locations that abuse took place in 2025-2026

	2024/2025	2025/2026
Own home	44.9%	48.3%
Care home – residential	36.3%	30.7%
Other	11.9%	12.6%

Care home – nursing	6.1%	4.6%
In the community (incl community service)	4.0%	2.4%
Hospital (all types)	3.9%	1.4%

Making Safeguarding Personal

	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
% of incidents risk removed	30%	30%	33%
% of incidents risk reduced	67%	66%	63%
% of incidents risk remained	3%	5%	5%
% of Making Safeguarding Personal outcomes achieved fully or partly	95%	95%	96%

In 2025-2026, 4,337 safeguarding alerts were received in Leicestershire, as opposed to 2,908 at the end of last year (2024-2025). The increase in safeguarding alerts over the past year is considered to be a reflection of work with partner agencies in identifying and reporting potential safeguarding concerns to the local authority. Despite the rise in alerts, the conversion rate (calculated by dividing the total number of alerts received by the number of enquiries undertaken) has remained stable, providing assurance that safeguarding criteria continue to be applied consistently and that enquiries are undertaken proportionately where Care Act criteria are met.

The conversion rate over the last year was 35.4%, which is similar to the latest published national data of 34.5% and slightly above the regional rate of 29.5%.

Numbers have remained stable across both alerts and enquiries, relating to demographics including gender, age and ethnicity.

In terms of Making Safeguarding Personal, the percentage of people in the last four quarters who were asked for their desired outcomes and had these desired outcomes fully or partially met was 95.8%. This has remained consistently high over the years and was a slight improvement on the 94.8% in the year before.

“Thank you for the professionalism and the hard work that you put in to getting my Dad up to four visits a day from three. It has helped so much to take away some of the worry and stress.”

“Communication with the worker has been good throughout, if I was worried or had a question, she’d go & find out for me which was reassuring. I wish all places/departments had a person like this working for them.”

“My wife had a visit from the Occupational Therapist. She made several visits and arranged for a bed and other aids. We were mightily impressed with her, extremely professional with a strong knowledge of what was needed, you can be proud of her she is a gem.”

Feedback from people who use Leicestershire services

Rutland

Alerts and Enquiries

	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Total number of concerns (alerts) raised	458	487	674
Total number of enquiries	51	79	101
Conversion rate of concerns to enquiries	11%	16%	15%

Enquiries by Age*

	2024/2025	2025/2026
18-64	15 (24.59%)	20 (28.99%)
65+	46 (75.41%)	49 (71.01%)

*The numbers do not equal total enquiries, as there can be more than one enquiry in the year per person. This is a count of people.

Concerns (Alerts) and Enquiries by Ethnicity

	Population	Alerts		Enquiries	
		2024/2025	2025/2026	2024/2025	2025/2026
White	95.55%	84%	87%	90%	88%
Asian	1.37%	<1%	<1%	0%	0%
Black	1.34%	<1%	<1%	0%	0%
Mixed	1.28%	<1%	<1%	0%	0%
Any other ethnic group	0.46%	<1%	<1%	2%	1%

Not known	-	14%	12%	8%	10%
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Concluded Enquiries by Types of Abuse, as defined by the Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance*

	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Physical Abuse	14%	26%	14%
Domestic Abuse	3%	21%	14%
Sexual Abuse	3%	0%	3%
Psychological Abuse	3%	15%	14%
Financial or Material Abuse	22%	21%	11%
Modern Slavery	0%	0%	0
Discriminatory Abuse	0%	0%	<1%
Organisational Abuse	3%	15%	9%
Neglect and Acts of Omission	51%	56%	34%
Self-Neglect	0%	3%	1%

*% will not add up to 100% as more than one category may apply

Top 5 locations that abuse took place in 2025-2026

	2024/2025	2025/2026
Own home	44.9%	36.3%
Care home – residential	36.3%	42.9%
Care home – nursing	6.1%	12.1%
In the community	4.0%	2.2%
Hospital (all types)	3.9%	1.1%

Making Safeguarding Personal

	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
% of incidents risk removed	21%	74%	33%
% of incidents risk reduced	79%	15%	66%
% of incidents risk remained	0%	0%	1%
% of Making Safeguarding Personal outcomes achieved fully or partly	88%	85%	99%

The number of alerts received in Rutland has significantly increased from 487 in 2024-2025 to 674 in 2025-2026. This is likely resulting from a combination of factors, including that Rutland County Council are recording more concerns as safeguarding in response to the report by Durham University on Domestic Abuse Against Older Adults. There have been changes to how 'concerns' are recorded, removing an alternative option of 'concerns not safeguarding'. There has also been increased awareness across services through training activities.

Although the number of safeguarding concerns reported has increased, this has not led to a similar increase in formal safeguarding enquiries. This is partly because some new concerns relate to enquiries that are already underway and are recorded differently – they have multiple concerns linked to one enquiry. It also reflects an increase in concerns being raised about care providers, including residential and nursing homes, many of which are more appropriately dealt with through quality assurance, contract monitoring, or compliance processes rather than through formal safeguarding enquiries.

In Rutland, the emphasis on the preventative approach helps Rutland provide support and take action at the earliest opportunity, reducing the risk of issues becoming more serious and helping to improve the quality and safety of local care services.

The highest category of abuse remains neglect and acts of omission, primarily relating to care in residential settings. However, it should be noted that categories of abuse in concluded enquiries do not accurately reflect current trends due to delays in completion of some enquiries. Positive changes have now been made to "enquiry processes" to improve enquiry timescales and proportionality moving forward.

Rutland continues to see positive outcomes from safeguarding enquiries conducted, with risk reduced or removed in 99% of cases and Making Safeguarding Personal outcomes being achieved in 99%.

"They were really understanding and they also gave me options and suggestions to problem solve."

“The worker understood me and worked alongside health to get the best outcome without a question of a doubt.”

“Somebody has picked it up and dealt with it rather than brushing it under the carpet meaning there has been a change in process meaning hopefully it won't happen again to anyone.”

Feedback from people who use Rutland services

Self-Assessment

Safeguarding Adults Assurance Framework (SAAF) self-assessments are undertaken by agencies and submitted to the Safeguarding Adults Boards. Every other year, each member of the Safeguarding Adults Boards self-assesses whether their organisation is being effective in keeping adults with care and support needs safe, via a self-audit. In the years where the SAAF is not completed, a frontline practitioner survey is completed. This work is co-ordinated by the Performance Group of the Safeguarding Adults Boards. The results and learning are reported to the Boards.

Planning began in 2025-2026 for a SAAF self-assessment audit. It will be completed in 2026-2027.

Audits

The Leicester and Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Boards carried out two multi-agency audit processes during 2025-2026, in June 2025 and December 2025.

The audit process brings together safeguarding leads from different agencies to give a multi-agency view on practice in safeguarding, to identify areas of good practice and areas for learning and improvement. The audits focus on themes or parts of the safeguarding process. Practitioners are invited to give a frontline perspective on cases.

Learning from audits leads to recommendations and actions that are progressed and monitored. The learning is disseminated and informs changes required at both a system and practice level.

Threshold Decision Timeliness Audit

The first audit, completed in Quarter 1/2, focused on threshold decision timeliness. The theme was requested as part of the business plan priority on “Timeliness and Proportionality”. The Boards tasked the Audit Subgroup with analysing what is helping or hindering the ambition to make threshold decisions within five days.

A Thresholds audit was previously completed in 2023-2024. When looking at the results of this 2025-2026 audit, the group considered the impact of some of the completed recommendations identified from the earlier audit.

The findings were:

- Practitioners spoke about the challenge of trying to triage referrals effectively with the volume received and the need to work on a case-by-case basis. When there is a requirement to ask a referrer for further information, timeliness can be dependent on their availability.
- Whilst it is for the Local Authority to establish if a person has care and support needs, the system and multi-agency professionals can help Adult Social Care, by supporting and assisting the decision-making process and risk prioritisation by submitting the right information.
- In the majority of situations, it was clear that the referrer was informed of the decision. This indicated an improvement since the 2023-2024 audit.
- An issue was identified around how IT systems record working days. If the criteria refer to five working days, but the reporting system is not taking out Saturday and Sunday, the data is inaccurate.
- Further awareness raising is required around domestic abuse as a type of abuse and this being correctly identified and recorded in agencies' systems. This is a similar finding to one from the 2023-2024 audit.
- Agencies are seeing more frequent situations of domestic abuse between spouses, where one has a diagnosis of dementia.

Actions and outcomes

The Performance Subgroup are looking at how timescales are recorded on systems, moving from five working days to seven days of receipt of an alert. This will not change the process for staff but will be a system change. They are monitoring the difference that this makes to the data submitted over the course of a year. It is predicted that it will equate to an improvement in reporting timeliness.

A learning resource was produced around what makes a good referral and best practice. This was circulated via representatives on the Audit Subgroup and was shared with the Trainers' Network.

Having further investigated the identification of domestic abuse, the Performance Subgroup has seen a 3% increase in enquiries where domestic abuse is a feature, which is significant.

Further awareness raising has been carried out in relation to the category of domestic abuse and the relationship between the people involved in the safeguarding enquiry. A presentation on "Domestic Abuse and Thresholds" was delivered at the training event, Safeguarding Matters Live, in July 2025.

The Domestic Abuse procedure on the Multi-Agency Policies and Procedures has been updated, to include a new section that highlights issues to consider when

domestic abuse and dementia are both present in a relationship. This will be supported by future work from the Learning & Development Subgroup.

Self-Neglect Audit

The second audit, completed in Quarter 3/4, focused on self-neglect. This was requested as part of the business plan priority on “Impact of Learning”. The Audit Subgroup was tasked with considering if the “Responding to Self-Neglect (and Hoarding) Guidance”, launched in December 2024 as a replacement for the Vulnerable Adults Risk Management (VARM) process, is embedded and what difference it is making.

This audit was moved up the schedule because self-neglect is a priority in terms of practice and the Procedures Subgroup is also seeking to gain assurance and share feedback on how the guidance is working in practice.

The findings were:

- Self-neglect is being correctly identified, with audits including descriptions of self-neglect and what professionals had witnessed when working with people.
- Several people had co-existing conditions / issues, including homelessness, alcohol and substance use and previous trauma which are common features of self-neglect cases.
- In all cases, there were attempts to involve the person, seek consent and capture their voice. The challenges in engaging people who self-neglect were often highlighted but there were examples of persistent and tenacious work.
- Capacity was considered but there can be challenges around capacity and self-neglect.
- All of the audits involved men. Only one involved a person who was not White British. It was questioned if this lack of diversity in cases was solely down to random case selection or if there is a disproportionality.
- No medium-risk examples were selected. This means that the effectiveness of the new guidance for this type of risk is difficult to establish.
- There was positive feedback from practitioners about the “Responding to Self-Neglect (and Hoarding) Guidance”, with the risk sections guiding professionals in multi-agency meetings and the guidance supporting practitioners to understand what appropriate and proportionate actions should be undertaken based on assessed level of risk. In one audit, it was noted that, without the new guidance, the case might have been closed due to non-engagement.
- There were suggestions the guidance could be improved, through direction around risk recording, to ensure consideration of the Self-Neglect Guidance

is evidenced. It would be beneficial to consider more formalised recording to evidence initial rationale for risk assessment.

Actions and outcomes

The Procedures Subgroup is reviewing the Self-Neglect guidance and the risk assessments available, taking into account the practitioner feedback collated from the audit process.

The Procedures Subgroup is seeking information on practice around medium-risk self-neglect cases, including if there is appropriate multi-agency involvement, as required; if the right process is being used – i.e. safeguarding referrals are not being made for medium-risk cases; how medium-risk cases are recorded; and if the existing templates in the guidance are being used.

The Performance Subgroup have been asked to consider the number of referrals being received involving individuals with protected characteristics and if this needs to be interrogated through a self-neglect lens.

Other assurance work

Assurance Reports to the Safeguarding Adults Boards

During 2025-2026, the Safeguarding Adults Boards received reports on:

- The multi-agency response to Durham University's report on Domestic Abuse in Older Adults
- Safeguarding in Local Authority commissioned services
- The current arrangements for the instigation and oversight of deprivation of liberty (DoLS) applications within University Hospitals of Northamptonshire and University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trusts.

Safeguarding Assurance from Prisons

Each local prison was asked to complete a safeguarding assurance report and present it to the Safeguarding Adults Boards. They provided information on identified safeguarding issues/risks and any emerging themes; partnership links with Social Care and Housing departments; the transitional arrangements in place for prisoner release (particularly for those with housing, health and care and support needs); safeguarding referrals that had been raised, the reason for the referral and the outcomes; the number of deaths in custody and actions and improvements undertaken as a result; and training provided to prison staff in relation to safeguarding, mental capacity and trauma-informed practice.

The information shared provided a good understanding of safeguarding and the issues that are addressed within the Prison Service.

Following the presentation of the written reports, the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Adults Boards carried out prison visits. As a result, Leicestershire &

Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board are putting together a training package for local prison use.

Safe Care at Home Review

The [Safe Care at Home Review](#) was published in June 2023. This was a joint review, led by the Home Office and Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), into the protections and support for adults abused, or at risk of abuse, in their own home by people providing their care.

In light of some of the issues raised in this national review, the Leicester and Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Boards agreed to partnership agencies assessing themselves against the eight key findings. It was felt that this would provide a local overview, identifying good practice and any challenges to address.

In 2023-2024, the agencies assessed themselves against each area and provided a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rating. In 2024-2025, they updated their assessments and there were no red rated areas and an increase in green rated areas.

To address the remaining gaps in assurance, the assessments were further reviewed in 2025-2026. It was agreed that this work could be marked as complete as there are long-term plans in place to address the few remaining actions.

Local response to Rough Sleeping

Following the 2022 [Ending Rough Sleeping for Good](#) strategy, a Joint Ministerial Letter was sent in May 2024 from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities and the Department of Health & Social Care to all Safeguarding Adults Boards with recommendations for how they could support individuals rough sleeping.

In 2025-2026, the Leicester Review Subgroup and Leicestershire & Rutland Case Review Group have implemented a referral mechanism, and a process is in place for considering rough sleeping/homelessness deaths against Safeguarding Adults Review criteria.

It has been established that there were no deaths of homeless people in Leicestershire or Rutland during 2025. We will continue to monitor this.

Strategic Priority 3: Meeting statutory responsibilities

Safeguarding Adults Reviews

Safeguarding Adults Boards have a statutory duty under Section 44 of the Care Act 2014 to undertake Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) into cases where individuals with care and support needs have been seriously harmed or died, and abuse or neglect is suspected. When these reviews are undertaken, they are focused on identifying how multi-agency safeguarding systems and practice can be improved in future.

Key decisions and actions taken

During 2025-2026, the Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board received five new referrals for consideration of a Safeguarding Adults Review. This is in line with the four referrals received in 2024-2025. One of these referrals was previously considered as a potential Domestic Homicide Related Death Review.

Of the five new referrals considered in 2025-2026, it was agreed that:

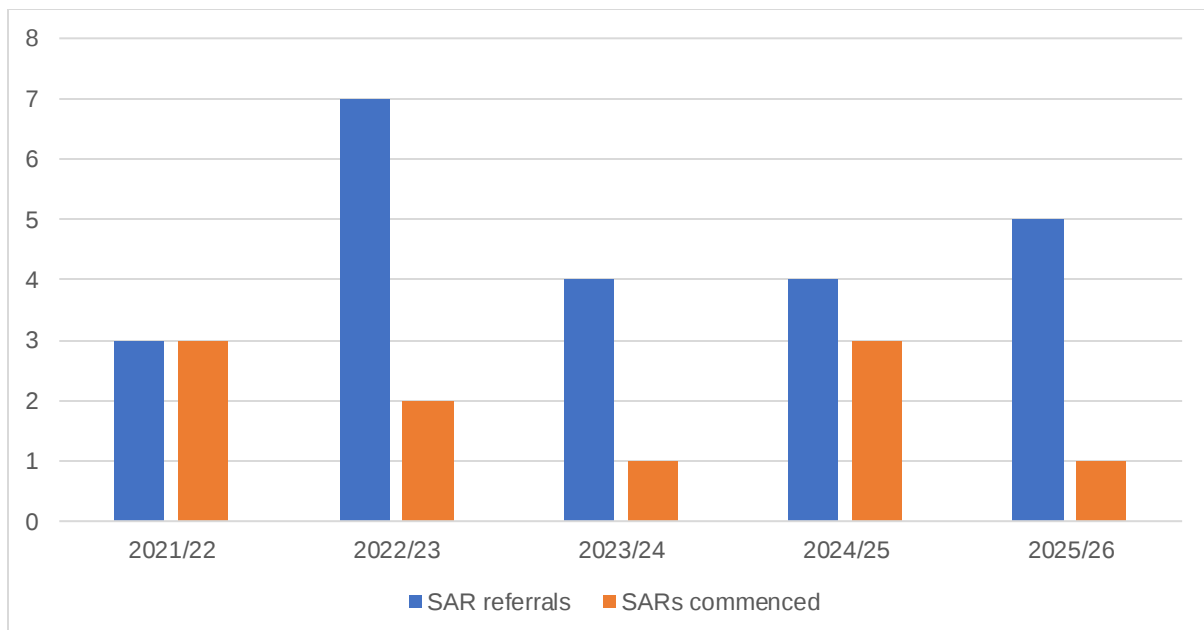
- One of these met the criteria for a Safeguarding Adults Review and a review has been commenced
- Four cases did not meet the criteria for a Safeguarding Adults Review.

The decisions were agreed by the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Adults Board.

Where a referral does not meet the criteria for a Safeguarding Adults Review, feedback is sent to the referrer, and they are asked to consider if alternative single agency processes are required.

The chart below shows the number of referrals and Safeguarding Adults Reviews commenced each year for the past five years.⁵ In some cases, a Safeguarding Adults Review may have been referred in one year and commenced in the next year.

⁵ A case is classed as commenced when it has been agreed to meet Safeguarding Adults Review criteria (Section 44 of the Care Act 2014).



During 2025-2026, the Safeguarding Adults Board continued work on five Safeguarding Adults Reviews, with one review still on hold due to criminal processes.

One Safeguarding Adults Review was completed and signed off by the Safeguarding Adults Board in March 2026. It will be published on the website in the coming year.

Of the seven people considered as subjects of reviews agreed, on hold or under way during 2025-2026:

- Three of the subjects have been male and four female
- One was aged over 65 and one was aged under 25, with three in their 50s and two in their 30s
- Five of the subjects have been White British, one Asian and one of White and Black mixed heritage
- Three have been self-neglect cases and two have involved an adult with a learning disability.

The Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board publishes Safeguarding Adults Review reports on its website for one year. It also adds its published reviews to the [National Safeguarding Adults Review \(SAR\) Library](#) developed by the National Network for Chairs of Adult Safeguarding Boards.

Actions from reviews

Action plans are in place to respond to and monitor areas of learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews. They are deemed to be completed when appropriate outputs have been achieved for all actions recorded and they have been presented to the Safeguarding Adults Board for agreement/assurance.

During 2025-2026, the Safeguarding Adults Board has completed all action plans implemented following completed/published Safeguarding Adults Reviews.

Learning implemented from Safeguarding Adults Reviews across 2025-2026:

- It has led to clarification of the Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland position, in response to national changes, regarding pressure ulcers and safeguarding adults' protocol. There has been a change to the local procedure and Thresholds guidance, as a result.
- It has informed a case scenario included in the [Building Confidence in Practice Resource on Information Sharing to Safeguard Children and Adults](#), published in February 2026.
- It is informing the review and evaluation by the Procedures Subgroup of the "Responding to Self-Neglect (including Hoarding) Guidance", which has been in place since 1 December 2024.
- It has influenced the content of the mental capacity training courses offered across the year by the Safeguarding Adults Boards. Bespoke courses on "Self-Neglect and MCA" and "Advanced MCA" were delivered in 2025, which covered assessing a person's capacity when affected by substance and alcohol misuse.

Dissemination of learning

The Safeguarding Adults Board shares key messages from Safeguarding Adults Reviews through its quarterly [Safeguarding Matters newsletter](#) and biannual [Safeguarding Matters Live events](#), as well as the regular Safeguarding Matters Digest emails. Safeguarding Matters has a wide reach, with nearly 3500 visits to the newsletter's webpage during 2025-2026. To support workers to put learning from reviews into practice, the Board continues to use [7-Minute Briefings](#). These concise documents are focused on encouraging reflection and development within teams and by individuals to develop practice in response to the learning.

How we are measuring impact

An assurance report is provided to the Safeguarding Adults Board at the point that all the actions from a Safeguarding Adults Review's recommendations have been successfully completed. In some circumstances, this may be one or two years after the publication of the overview report. The purpose is to reflect on the learning from each review; consider what assurance can be sought to identify whether or not change has been embedded in practice; and whether the lessons from the review have not only been identified but have also been learnt. It is also a way to find out whether the actions taken had the required impact.

In 2025-2026, an assurance report was delivered to the Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board regarding the four Safeguarding Adults Reviews, commissioned between 2020 and 2022, where the subject was an adult with a learning disability. These reviews are available on the [National Safeguarding Adults Review \(SAR\) Library](#).

A key outcome of the reviews was that strong links have been established with groups whose focus is learning disabilities, such as the Learning Disability and Autism Collaborative and the Leicestershire Learning Disability Partnership Board. The Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Partnerships Business Office Manager now sits on this Board.

Assurance was provided that there is a focused and sustained approach to working with adults with learning disabilities locally and the work described should lead to timelier and better outcomes for them. A lot of this work is based on co-production.

Since these Safeguarding Adults Review cases were referred to the Safeguarding Adults Board, data indicates that there has been a significant decrease in the number of referrals about adults with a learning disability coming into the Case Review Group, but this cohort of adults still leads to a number of referrals.

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Procedures

Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board works with Leicester Safeguarding Adults Board to maintain up-to-date multi-agency adult safeguarding policies and procedures locally. These policies and procedures are hosted on a dedicated website called the MAPP (Multi-Agency Policies and Procedures): <https://www.lradultsafeguarding.co.uk/>.

Throughout 2025-2026, these policies and procedures continued to be reviewed and updated in line with learning from reviews, audits, and best practice.

Updates were made to the following procedures:

- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
- Domestic Abuse
- Mental Capacity
- Safeguarding Adults Reviews
- Record Keeping
- Pressure Ulcers: Safeguarding Adults Protocol
- Managing Allegations against People in Positions of Trust (PiPoT)
- Thresholds
- Out of Area Safeguarding Adults Arrangements
- Guidance for the Oversight Process of Section 42 Enquiries in NHS Settings

New procedures have been published on:

- Stalking
- Working with Adults with Impaired Executive Function
- Working with Adults with Learning Disabilities
- Health and Care Passports

A full list of new chapters and amendments made can be found on the [Amendments](#) page of the [Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Multi-Agency Policies and Procedures](#).

Individuals can receive alerts regarding procedure updates by [registering with the MAPP](#). If they have any comments or feedback on the procedures, they can use the [contact form](#).

Learning, Development and Training

The Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board's training co-ordination and delivery function is shared with the Leicester Safeguarding Adults Board to support consistent and effective partnership working. The work of the Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Learning & Development Subgroup is underpinned by the [Learning and Development Training Strategy 2024-2026](#).

Whilst it is the responsibility of partner organisations to ensure their own staff are appropriately trained in matters of adult safeguarding, it is the responsibility of the Learning and Development Subgroup to receive assurance from organisations that they know what levels of training are expected for their staff, have audited their needs, and that they are delivering the appropriate training in the areas of understanding abuse, raising awareness, responding effectively and prevention.

The Learning & Development Subgroup continues to support up-to-date training in single agencies, including all key partners and many care providers, by providing a [Competency Framework](#) to support individuals and organisations to undertake their safeguarding roles and responsibilities in a confident and competent manner. They disseminate learning from reviews and updates to procedure and legislation.

The Learning and Development Subgroup is also responsible for promoting multi-agency training within the partnership, highlighting learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) and considering any specialist multi-agency training that may be required across the partnership relating to the Boards' priorities.

A blended approach to learning is adopted, incorporating video resources and resource packs alongside online training sessions. This allows for a wide reach.

During 2025-2026, the Learning & Development Subgroup:

- Continued its programme of Mental Capacity Act training, initiated in 2024-2025, with Edge Training providing four types of courses, including two bespoke courses. In 2025-2026, they delivered:
 - Four sessions of "Mental Capacity Act Awareness"
 - Four sessions of "Mental Capacity Act in Practice"
 - Two sessions of "Self-Neglect and the Mental Capacity Act"
 - Four sessions of "Advanced Mental Capacity Act: Assessing Capacity & Best Interests"
- Delivered a multi-agency system workshop in February 2026 for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland partners on how to work together to understand and implement the Mental Capacity Act. Mental capacity learning themes from

Safeguarding Adults Reviews were used to reflect with partners on what is working well and what needs to be developed. The aim was to enable individual agencies to reflect on their organisational learning needs.

- Sought assurance, in the form of a training needs assessment, regarding Mental Capacity Act training undertaken by and within individual partner organisations, including the level of staff attendance/participation.
- Received assurance from commissioners across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland that good work is continuing to support providers around the Mental Capacity Act and providers can access support. The Provider Forums, supported by the Safeguarding Adults Boards in 2024-2025, ceased in 2025-2026.
- Published, in September 2025, two new “Essential Safeguarding Adults” resources:
 - [Information Booklet](#) – which provides a basic overview of both adult and child safeguarding
 - [Resources & Signposting Booklet](#) – which provides hyperlinks to training courses and training resources available both locally and nationally.
- Promoted the ongoing refresh of the Safeguarding Adults Competency Framework, with the updated version being co-produced with local practitioners. The Framework supports best practice in safeguarding adults at risk of harm, abuse or neglect and can be used by everyone who works or volunteers with adults or who is responsible for improving their outcomes. The process for reviewing the Competency Framework has involved a staff consultation, which was publicised in Safeguarding Matters.
- Created a new advocacy resource, in response to learning from local audits, to support understanding of when and how to seek Care Act advocacy services for adults with needs for care and support. The [Independent Care Act Advocacy: Practitioner Briefing video](#) was published on the YouTube Channel in March 2026. It presents a training session for frontline practitioners, covering Independent Care Act advocacy and delivered by POHWER, which is an independent organisation and charity that provides all types of statutory advocacy on behalf of Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland.
- Supported the new [Building Confidence in Practice Resource on Information Sharing to Safeguard Children and Adults](#), published in February 2026.

Safeguarding Adults Week

The Learning & Development Subgroup, alongside the Engagement & Communications Subgroup, oversee the Safeguarding Adults Boards’ promotion of National Safeguarding Adults Week.

In 2025, this took place between 17 and 23 November. The focus was on “Prevention: act before abuse”.

The Leicester and Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Boards hosted a number of free online 15-minute spotlight briefings for practitioners to start their day. The topics covered included:

- Professional curiosity, by Leicestershire County Council Learning & Development Team
- Hoarding, arson threat, when to make a referral to the fire service for a home safety check and collaborative working, by Leicestershire Fire & Rescue Service (LFRS)
- The local offer of support for scams, fraud and doorstep crime, by the Leicestershire County Council Trading Standards Team
- Older adults and domestic abuse, by Leicester City Council and Age UK
- Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (Clare's Law), by Leicestershire Police.

A Safeguarding Adults resource pack was published online and an article on good practice examples and case studies, written locally, was also published in the East Midlands Safeguarding Adults Board (EMSAB) Network newsletter.

Outcomes and Impact

- Over 300 members of staff joined events over the week.
- For those unable to attend, the videos of the briefing sessions are available on the [YouTube channel](#).
- During National Safeguarding Adults Week, there was an increase in visits to the Safeguarding Adults Board websites across Leicester and Leicestershire & Rutland and 100 visitors to the YouTube channel with nearly three hours watch time between them.

Trainers' Network

The Leicester and Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Boards' Trainers' Network is a forum that brings together individuals that deliver any learning and development activities relating to safeguarding adults. Individuals that complete the Train the Trainer course delivered by the Leicestershire Social Care Development Group (LSCDG) are invited to join the Network. It enables trainers to remain up to date with training materials, processes and procedures and provides networking and best practice sharing opportunities.

During 2025-2026, the Trainers' Network ran two events, one online and one in person. Topics covered included social prescribing, self-neglect and hoarding guidance, scams, making good safeguarding adult referrals and the escalation process.

"Found the updates really useful to keep in touch with what is happening locally."

"The information shared, group discussions and peer networking."

Feedback from attendees of the Trainers' Network in response to the question, "What did you like most about the event?"

Resources

The Leicester and Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Boards provide numerous learning and development resources, and these are available and promoted via the [Safeguarding Matters newsletter](#), [Safeguarding Matters Live events](#), Safeguarding Matters Digest emails and [YouTube Channel](#). Further information is provided in **Appendix 3**.

Training Impact

The 14 Mental Capacity training events held in 2025-2026 were delivered to 246 people and were positively received.

"The training really helped to refresh my knowledge of MCA. The slides will support my role when I visit providers."

"I will use the knowledge from today to support staff with undertaking MCA. Feel better equipped in guiding staff in how to navigate MCA and what to look for."

"Fantastic day and I have learnt so much that will be utilised daily."

"Thank you so much for putting this training on, it has been the best MCA session I have ever attended and the practicality and useability of the material will be incredibly beneficial. I would hope that these sessions could be offered again, I would hope for a higher attendance from multi agency colleagues."

Feedback from attendees of Mental Capacity Act training

During 2025-2026, more than 90 people requested they be added to the Safeguarding Matters distribution list, with nearly 900 people now signed up.

Over the two Safeguarding Matters Live events, one in July and one in December, over 640 practitioners attended.

"Training was good and informative, and a refresher to what organisations are available when dealing with safeguarding. Also resources available to take back to team."

"Absolutely fantastic, very impactful and will share with colleagues."

"Fantastic coverage from all speakers. I will be reviewing our safeguarding procedures and also discussing this within our team meetings, linking in resources and signposting staff to watch this Safeguarding Matters recording."

"Learned about different agencies and how they operate and how to make contact with them."

Feedback from attendees of Safeguarding Matters Live

The [Safeguarding Basic Awareness PowerPoint](#), aimed at people who may work in a voluntary capacity or staff requiring a basic induction to children's and adults' safeguarding, has been visited over 8000 times this year on the Leicestershire & Rutland website.

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Strategic Priority 4: Understanding our communities

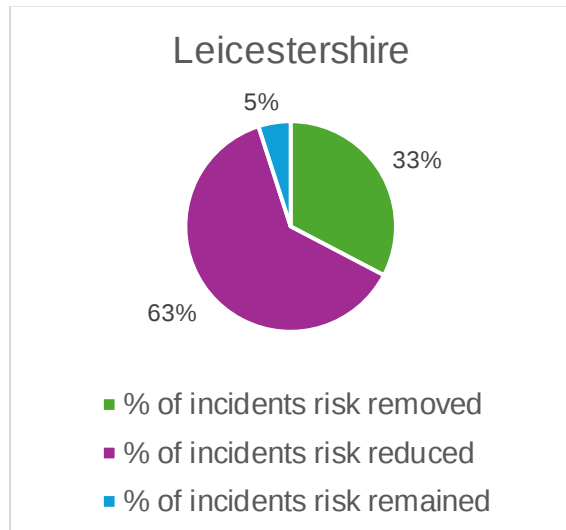
Making Safeguarding Personal

Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) is a national requirement, which puts the individual subject to an adult safeguarding enquiry at the centre of the decision-making process and supports their involvement. Members of the Safeguarding Adults Board have embedded the process into their safeguarding activity, enabling adults to communicate what outcomes they want to achieve from the safeguarding process, along with tools to support measurement. Making Safeguarding Personal data is collated on a quarterly basis and monitored.

Looking at the outcomes achieved in 2025-2026:

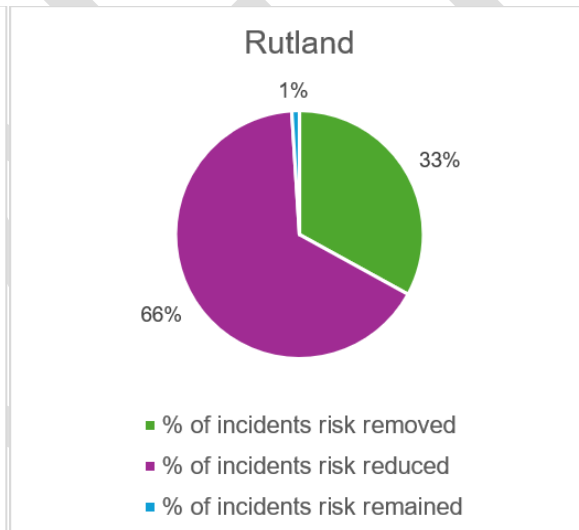
96%

% of Making Safeguarding Personal outcomes achieved fully or partly in Leicestershire



99%

% of Making Safeguarding Personal outcomes achieved fully or partly in Rutland



Local Safeguarding Campaigns

The Engagement & Communications Subgroup supported four “See Something Say Something” campaigns in 2025-2026. These campaigns are two weeks long. The group provides assets and suggested messages to partners and stakeholders so that they can support the campaign from their social media platforms.



This year the subgroup agreed that each campaign would focus on a specific theme:

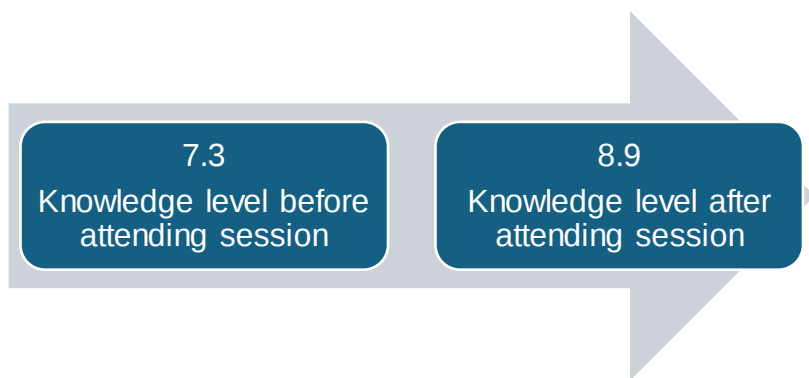
- 9-20 June 2025, Self-neglect (including hoarding)
- 8-19 September 2025, Exploitation/cuckooing, also known as home takeover
- 17-28 November 2025, Domestic abuse
- 23 February- 6 March 2026, Neglect

Information Sessions

“What is Adult Safeguarding?” online information sessions were regularly delivered to support those who work in Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland, including to community members and groups. They took place in January, March, May, July, September, and November 2025 (with the November session being part of National Safeguarding Adults Week), and January 2026. The events held in 2025 reached a total of 89 delegates with positive feedback being received.



On average, delegates' self-assessment of their knowledge level of adult safeguarding before attending the session and after attending the session (with 1 being very weak and 10 being very strong) increased by 1.6 points from an average of 7.3 before to an average of 8.9 afterwards.



"I will feedback learning to colleagues and I will refresh on the 10 types of abuse."

"Thank you for a most informative presentation."

Responses from attendees of the "What is Adult Safeguarding?" information session about how attending the session will help them going forward

Resources

In 2025-2026, the Engagement & Communications Subgroup also worked on a new Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland factsheet explaining the adult safeguarding process. This was co-produced with Leicestershire's Engagement Panel, Leicester's Making it Real group, and Rutland's Expert by Experience Participation Group. The factsheet will be used for engagement events, will be included in future local awareness campaigns and will be sent out to partners, local community, voluntary groups and religious groups so they can order copies for their use.

In terms of accessibility, Safeguarding Adults Board leaflets can be made available in other languages. The Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Partnerships website has a translation button on every webpage, allowing the user to select an appropriate language for their needs.

Leicestershire Adult Services provide a series of information videos to help people needing to access adult social care services. To support the accessibility of these videos, they worked with Sign Solutions to add British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation into them. The videos cover topics such as [Care and support assessment](#), [Coming out of hospital](#), [Eligibility for care and support](#), [Getting help to stay at home](#), and [What is a Carer's Assessment](#).

Three years ago, the Leicester and Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Boards jointly produced the "See something, Say something" animations. The videos shine a spotlight on exploitation and cuckooing, neglect and domestic abuse and are available on the YouTube Channel. Since that time, 11 other Safeguarding Adults Boards have taken up the offer to localise and rebadge these animations.

Easy Read Resources

The Engagement & Communications Subgroup has produced an [Easy Read resource on safeguarding adults](#). It is available on both the [Leaflets](#) and [Easy Read](#)

webpages of the Leicestershire & Rutland website. The latter page received over 660 hits during 2025-2026.

Further easy read information is available via the Easy Read page on the Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Multi-Agency Policies and Procedures – <https://www.llradultsafeguarding.co.uk/resources/easy-reads/>.

For the first time in 2025-2026, the Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board produced an [Easy Read version of the Annual Report for 2024-2025](#).

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Strategic Priority 5: Prevention, including awareness raising within our diverse communities

Business Plan Priorities

The Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board worked with the Leicester Safeguarding Adults Board to identify shared priorities for the [Joint Business Plan 2025-27](#). The two-year-plan allows time to embed the outcomes of the key deliverables and, subsequently, analyse the impact of these outcomes. The business priorities were identified as a result of local and national learning.

The work on these business priorities was embedded within the assurance, training, procedure and review work of the Boards outlined further in the previous sections of this report.

Updates on this joint business plan were provided throughout the business year to the Boards. Progress on the following priorities was monitored throughout the year and assurance secured that actions were making a positive difference to the lived experience of local adults with care and support needs.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

What we did in 2025-2026:

- Continued to support the work of the Transitional Safeguarding Task & Finish Group. The group is jointly owned by the Safeguarding Children Partnerships and the Safeguarding Adults Boards. It is co-chaired by children's and adults' representatives. Specifically, the group's purpose is to develop a multi-agency Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland transitional safeguarding policy or practice guidance. It is acknowledged that Transitional Safeguarding is not simply transition planning for people who are moving from Children's Social Care to Adult Social Care services.⁶
- Undertook "Gaining Meaningful Feedback" work to gather information about how other Safeguarding Adults Boards in the region and nationally have enabled partners to gain meaningful feedback from adults and carers who have experienced safeguarding interventions. Information has also been collated about how local organisations obtain meaningful feedback from people who use their services.
- Defined work on analysing safeguarding adults' data and disproportionality, to ensure that the priority has a specific focus that is deliverable. Analysis to understand which communities might require targeted work to support safeguarding engagement is in progress. Two meetings with Voluntary Action Leicester (Healthwatch) have taken place to gather soft intelligence about which communities (in the widest sense) agencies might be less engaged with. A proposal was discussed at the Performance Subgroup in December 2025, based on data disparities and intelligence from the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector.

⁶ See Local Government Association transitional safeguarding resources for more information about transitional safeguarding: [Transitional safeguarding resources | Local Government Association](#).

- Continued to develop and promote – in person, online and via social media – adult safeguarding messages and information across the locality taking into account equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Implemented, within the Leicester Review Subgroup and Leicestershire & Rutland Case Review Group, a referral mechanism and process for considering rough sleeping / homelessness deaths against Safeguarding Adults Review criteria and for learning purposes.

Outcomes and Impact

- Transitional safeguarding was an area identified in 2024-2025 as demonstrating limited progress. As a result, regular progress meetings have been held, throughout 2025-2026, with the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Adults Boards and the Independent Scrutineer for the Safeguarding Children Partnerships.

The Task & Finish Group has completed a local multi-agency mapping exercise and the report from this exercise has established that the position has not changed locally, with regard to the specific cohort of young adults/people that do not fit into existing pathways when the transition from children to adults' services occurs.

Group members have started to produce and present real-life case examples from their service which describe the journey from children to adults' services for young people, as well as practitioner experiences. A case audited for the Safeguarding Adults Boards' self-neglect audit was also fed into this process, as it was identified it highlighted key themes around transitional safeguarding.

This analysis and lived experience will inform the production of the policy / practice guidance.

- Through the Gaining Meaningful Feedback work, the group has been able to explore what works well, as well as what can go wrong. "What is Adult Safeguarding?" online sessions for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland communities continued to take place across 2025-2026.

Moving forwards

- The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland transitional safeguarding policy or practice guidance is expected to be completed by November 2026.

Timeliness and Proportionality

What we did in 2025-2026:

- Progressed work to identify how the partnership responds to safeguarding alerts/concerns, including conversion to enquiries, how long it takes to make people safe and what people are doing i.e. safeguarding plans. Work on

timeliness is in progress via the East Midlands Safeguarding Community of Practice.

- Progressed work to review the Safeguarding Adults Competency Framework, first established in 2019. The Framework is for use by the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland adults' workforce to support individuals and organisations to undertake their safeguarding roles and responsibilities in a confident and competent manner. It outlines the minimum expected level of safeguarding competence that people need to have in order to work or volunteer with adults with care and support needs.
- Completed a Threshold Decision Timeliness audit in Quarter 1/2 of 2025-2026. Further information on the findings of the audit is available in the "Strategic Priority 2: Performance, Quality and Audit" section of the Annual Report.
- Started work to address how to improve the timeliness of the dissemination of learning from reviews using effective methodologies (i.e. based on the children's rapid review model).

Outcomes and Impact

- A practitioner consultation process was initiated to support the revision of the Competency Framework, so the updated version can be co-produced with staff. Three surveys were designed to help consider what changes need to be made, what works well and what could be improved with the Framework. 70 consultation responses have been received so far.
- Findings from the Threshold Decision Timeliness audit have led to changes being implemented by the Performance Subgroup around data collection. Additionally, learning has been disseminated on making a good referral and recognising domestic abuse as a type of abuse. More information is available in the "Strategic Priority 2: Performance, Quality and Audit" section of the Annual Report.

Moving forwards

- The updated Competency Framework will be published in 2026-2027.
- Via the East Midlands Safeguarding Community of Practice work, the intention is to create a Safeguarding Pathway Timeline, setting out the actions required and timescales for these within a safeguarding alert / enquiry process. Each council will then ensure internal practice changes and data collection systems are in place to monitor safeguarding actions against the performance timelines. This may impact on metrics such as 'Threshold Decision' and 'Open Enquiries'.
- The Audit Subgroup will complete a Safety Plans audit in 2026-2027, following up on the one completed in 2024-2025 on this theme. This will seek assurance that recommendations from the previous audit have been embedded.

- The Leicester Review Subgroup and Leicestershire & Rutland Case Review Group will work in collaboration to enhance Safeguarding Adults Review processes and methodologies to improve the timeliness of learning dissemination.

Impact of learning

What we did in 2025-2026:

- Completed a Self-Neglect audit in Quarter 3/4 of 2025-2026 to establish if the local Self-Neglect Guidance, launched in December 2024, is embedded and what difference it is making. Further information on the findings of the audit is available in the “Strategic Priority 2: Performance, Quality and Audit” section of the Annual Report.
- Completed an assurance report regarding the impact of the four Safeguarding Adults Reviews, where the subject was an adult with a learning disability, commissioned by the Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board between 2020 and 2022.
- Addressed the recommendations outlined in Durham University’s commissioned report into Domestic Abuse in Older Adults, with all partner agencies across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland working collaboratively to complete this work.

Outcomes and Impact

- Findings from the Self-Neglect audit have indicated that the local guidance is supporting identification and practice around high-risk cases. More work needs to be carried out to seek assurance around medium-risk cases. This is being taken forward by the Procedures Subgroup. More information is available in the “Strategic Priority 2: Performance, Quality and Audit” section of the Annual Report.
- The assurance report on Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Reviews highlighted how the groups in place locally and the work happening should lead to timelier and better outcomes for adults with learning disabilities. It also noted a significant decrease in the number of referrals about this cohort of adults coming into the Case Review Group.
- The multi-agency response to the Domestic Abuse in Older Adults report has been robust, collaborative and impactful. All recommendations have been addressed, with changes embedded into practice, policy and training. For example, Leicestershire Police have revised their domestic abuse toolkit to include specific guidance on older victims. Training modules across Health, Social Care and Policing sectors now include content on polyvictimisation. Workshops and reflective practice sessions were held to challenge ageist assumptions. Risk assessments are now explicitly required to be based on need and risk, not age.

Moving forwards

- The Audit Subgroup will complete a Mental Capacity audit in 2026-2027, following up on the one completed in 2023-2024 on this theme. This will seek assurance that the recommendations from the previous audit have been embedded and provide an understanding of the impact of the mental capacity training delivered across 2024-2026.
- The Leicestershire & Rutland Case Review Group will continue to produce assurance reports on completed Safeguarding Adults Reviews to demonstrate their impact.
- Monitoring and audit processes are in place across each organisation to ensure sustainability and improvement around domestic abuse of older adults. It is important now to ensure that continual improvement and professional development of staff is maintained within this important area of safeguarding.

Priorities moving forwards

The two-year business planning period started in April 2025 and will run through to March 2027. Therefore, the priorities in 2026-2027 will continue to be Equality, diversity and inclusion, Timeliness and proportionality, and Impact of learning. The [Business Plan for 2025-2027](#) is available on the website.

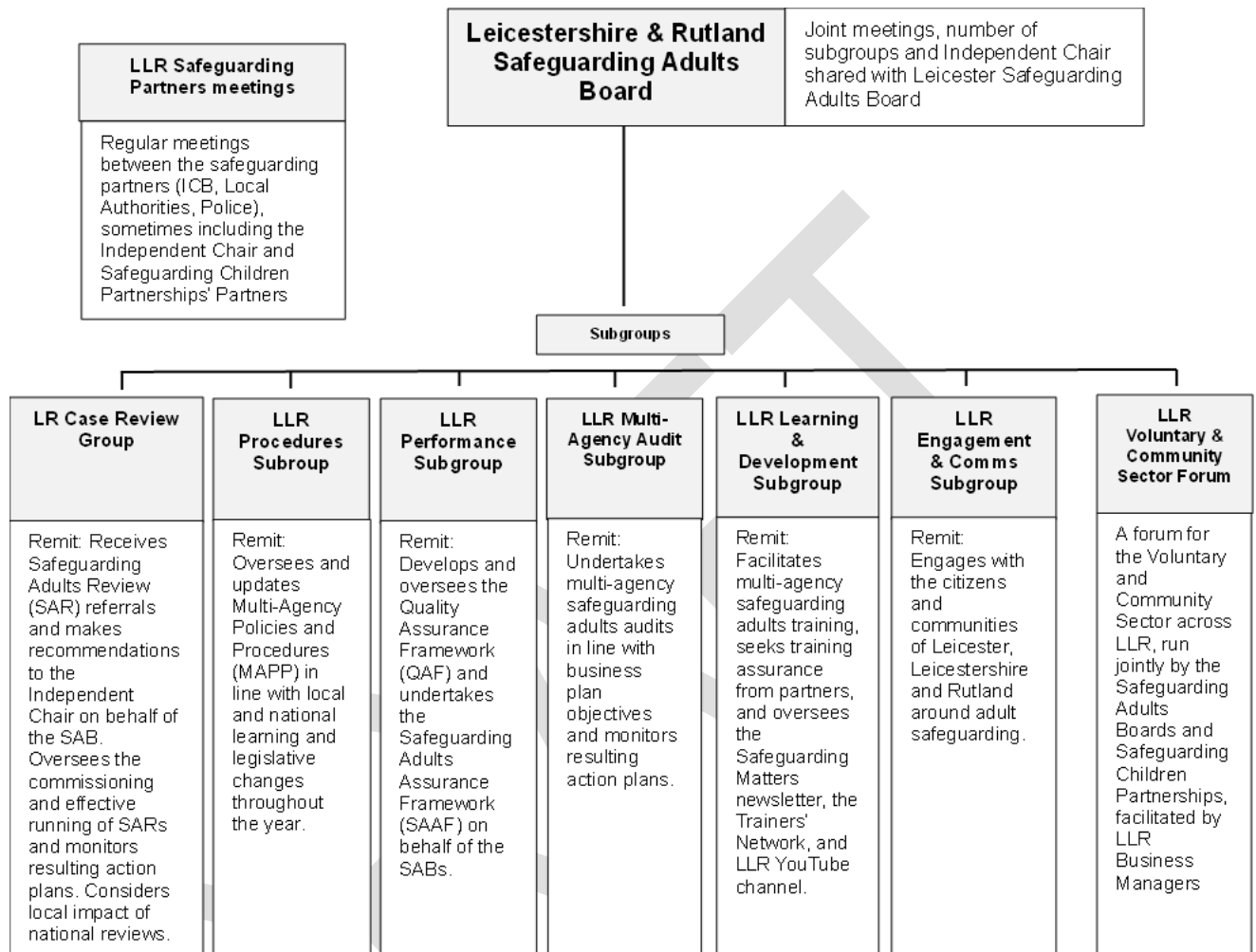
The Safeguarding Adults Boards will continue to monitor progress and secure assurance that the actions being taken are making a positive difference to the lived experience of adults with care and support needs locally.

The Safeguarding Adults Board will also work to continue to meet its statutory responsibilities and continue to develop its approach to learning and improving safeguarding of adults.

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Appendix 1 – Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board and its subgroups

The structure chart below demonstrates the governance of the Board and its subgroups.



The table below provides details of agencies that are represented on the Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board and their attendance at Board meetings in 2025-2026. It may be that the Lead Officer delegated attendance to another officer.

*Note – the Leicestershire Lead Member changed between the July and September 2025 meetings

Agency	Attendance at meetings					
	May 2025	July 2025	September 2025	December 2025	January 2026	March 2026
Leicestershire Adult Social Care	✓	✓	✓	✓	Apologies	✓
Rutland Adult Social Care	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Agency	Attendance at meetings					
	May 2025	July 2025	September 2025	December 2025	January 2026	March 2026
District and Borough Councils	✓	✓	✓	Apologies	Apologies	✓
Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board (LLR ICB)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT)	Apologies	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
University Hospitals Leicester NHS Trust (UHL)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS)	✓	✓	✓	Apologies	✓	✓
Leicestershire Police	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
HMP Prisons	Apologies	✓	✓	Apologies	Apologies	✓
Probation Service LLR	✓	Apologies	✓	✓	✓	✓
Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS)	✓	✓	Apologies	✓	✓	Apologies
Department of Work and Pensions	Apologies	Apologies	✓	✓	Apologies	✓
EMCARE	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies
Healthwatch	✓	✓	✓	Apologies	✓	✓
Leicestershire Lead Member*	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies	✓	Apologies	Apologies
Rutland Lead Member	✓	✓	✓	Apologies	✓	✓

Appendix 2 – Finance

The work of the Safeguarding Adults Board is supported by the Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Partnerships Business Office. The Safeguarding Adults Board is funded by contributions from its partners.

A single funding arrangement for the Safeguarding Adults Boards and Safeguarding Children Partnerships for 2020 onwards was agreed between the statutory partners.

The contributions from partners for the Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board for 2025-2026 can be seen below alongside contributions for the previous year:

	2024-2025	2025-2026
Leicestershire County Council	£46,375	£46,375
Rutland County Council	£20,267	£20,267
Leicestershire Police	£44,083	£44,083
Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Integrated Care Board (LLR ICB)	£44,083	£45,100
Total income for SAB	£154,808	£155,825

Expenditure for the Safeguarding Adults Board was apportioned as follows:

	2024-2025	2025-2026
Staffing	£147,241	£157,779
Independent Chairing	£9,968	£10,866
Support Services	£0	£0
Operating Costs	£7,180	£8,252
Engagement	£2,800	£874
Case Reviews	£0	£12,460
Total Expenditure	£167,189	£190,231

Staffing costs increased due to the agreed Local Government pay award (as the staff are hosted by the Local Authority). Expenditure on Safeguarding Adults Reviews increased due to the number of reviews progressing throughout the year.

Costs have risen and the Safeguarding Adults Board spent more than it received from partners' contributions. The shortfall was made up from reserves. The current reserve that is carried forward is £103,315, when the overspend detailed above is deducted. Despite budget constraints, the Board has still achieved an increased training programme linked to the previous Mental Capacity Act business priority and launched new safeguarding adults' resources.

Appendix 3 – Learning & Development Resources

The [LLR SABs' YouTube channel](#) continues to develop a bank of safeguarding videos and other resources that can be utilised by partners for learning and development – for example, in single agency training and supervision. It is used to share local and national learning content, especially that which aligns with the Safeguarding Adults Boards' Business Plan priorities.

During 2025-2026, two print issues of the [Safeguarding Matters newsletter](#) were published, with a focus on disseminating learning from reviews and audits and promoting procedural updates. The issues included a spotlight on stalking and harassment, information on Project Echo (see below), and an article on the re-launch of [My Adult, Still my Child](#). This is a pioneering UK-based website designed to support parents and carers of young adults aged 16 and over who may not be able to make decisions for themselves. It provides legal guidance, advice on health and care decision-making, and resources for transitioning to adult services.

Two [Safeguarding Matters Live](#) events were held in July 2025 and December 2025. These are live online briefings for all staff across the children's and adults' multi-agency partnerships. They share learning from reviews and audits, procedure and guidance updates, and resources to support practice. The slides from the events are made available via the website and sessions are available to watch on the YouTube Channel. For the first time, the July 2025 Safeguarding Matters Live was a hybrid event, with in-person attendance at City Hall and also online attendance. The event was focused on a specific topic, Safeguarding and Domestic Abuse. It looked at how domestic abuse can impact both adults and children and what services are available to support, with stalls from some of these local services at City Hall. Topics included domestic abuse and older adults, Economic Abuse and the Domestic Abuse Act, the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process and Transnational Marriage Abandonment. This is a type of immigration abuse mostly suffered by migrant women which had recently been recognised as a form of Domestic Abuse in legislation. Topics covered in the December 2025 event included Project Echo – a project from Safelives alongside Living Without Abuse, putting the voices of survivors at the heart of local responses to domestic abuse; and PEGS (Parental Education Growth Support), which aims to reduce the impact of Child to Parent Abuse by supporting parents and professionals.

The Safeguarding Matters Digest is a regular email, which is used to disseminate local and national safeguarding information in a concise and regular format. There was a special Digest on National Stalking Awareness Week (21 April to 27 April 2025). Other topics covered in the Digests included the national Romance Fraud Awareness Video Campaign, launched by the Met Police in October 2025; the national County Lines Awareness webinars, hosted by the National County Lines Coordination Centre; and local events linked to the 16 Days of Activism to End Gender-Based Violence.

The Safeguarding Matters newsletters and Live PowerPoints and videos are available via the website and YouTube channel. Individuals can request to be added to the distribution list so that they are informed of publication and event dates by emailing lrspbo@leics.gov.uk. The Safeguarding Matters Digest is disseminated via

email to those that have signed up to receive it. To be added to the distribution list, individuals can email lscpb@leicester.gov.uk.

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**ADULTS AND CULTURAL SERVICES OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 7 SEPTEMBER 2026**

ANNUAL REVIEW OF LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTRY PARKS

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADULTS AND CULTURAL
SERVICES**

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the ongoing work within the County Council's Country Parks service.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The Country Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2019 – 2029. Approved by the Cabinet in May 2020.
3. The Tree Management Strategy 2026 – 2031. Approved by the Cabinet in July 2026.
4. At its meeting in September 2024, the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report outlining biodiversity enhancements within the Country Parks service.

Background

5. Leicestershire County Council has a wide network of 18 parks and open spaces covering over 530ha. The service vision is "To have great parks that improve the quality of life for Leicestershire's communities and visitors". This guides service delivery and recognises the role country parks and open spaces play in supporting the Council to achieve key strategy outcomes around health, education, biodiversity and the environment.
6. The strategy sets out six destination parks: Beacon Hill Country Park, Broombriggs Farm, Watermead Country Park, Snibston Colliery Park, Bosworth Battlefield and Market Bosworth Country Park, alongside 12 secondary parks: Donington le Heath Country Park, Jubilee Wood, Sheet Hedges Wood, Burrough Hill Country Park, Sarah's Wood, Donisthorpe Woodland Park, Saltersford Valley Picnic Areas, Bagworth Heath Woods, New Lount Nature Reserve, Oakthorpe Picnic Area,

Ashby Woulds Heritage Trails, Brampton Valley Way. The six 'destination' parks attract visitors from further afield, as well as catering for the local community.

7. Three parks form part of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), these are Beacon Hill Country Park, Sheet Hedges Wood and Jubilee Wood. SSSIs are sites that have been designated due to containing unique species or habitats of high scientific value for conservation. Five parks contain Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), these are the Reed Bed Nature Reserve at Watermead Country Park; Moira Junction; Grange Nature Reserve at Snibston Colliery Park; New Lount Nature Reserve and Saltersford Valley. LNRs are sites chosen by the local authority as particularly significant for their wildlife, geology, education, or enjoyment.

2025 Country Parks Review

Visitor events and facilities

8. Throughout the year, there has been an extensive programme of events and engagement activities on the sites, ranging from livestock walks at Beacon Hill and butterfly walks at Market Bosworth. At Snibston Colliery Park B-Buddies Cycle Club runs regular mountain bike sessions for young people and the Snibston Heritage Trust runs regular tours.
9. The 'Up to the Beacon Sculpture Trail' ran from 28 June to 21 September 2025, co-ordinated by ArtSpace Loughborough. The project employed 12 local artists to create 25 sculptures and installations, sited along 2.5km of paths at Beacon Hill. Some works came from direct commissions, and some were co-created through community outreach projects. The trail was centred around the West Beacon Plantation next to the upper car park and based on the theme 'Thriving with Nature'. It included a varied programme of arts activities aimed to promote personal and community well-being and increase awareness of environmental sustainability and drawing links between the two. The outreach programme enabled vulnerable people, and young people from areas of multiple deprivation, to co-create artworks with professional artists that were exhibited as an integrated part of the programme. It is estimated that over 15,000 visitors enjoyed the art trail. The project was supported by Country Parks Service, Charnwood Arts, Intelligent Energy, The Charnwood Forest Landscape Partnership Scheme and Charnwood Borough Council.
10. The café at Beacon Hill opened in 2019, initially operated by the Council, and has since been successfully leased. The new operator opened in August 2025, investing in layout changes, new furniture, colour scheme and the menu offer, all have been received well by visitors.
11. Parkrun continues to be popular with events held throughout the year at Beacon Hill, Donisthorpe Woodland Park (Conkers), Market Bosworth and Watermead Country Parks.

Park Run site	Events 2025	Finishers 2025
Beacon	52	7,969
Conkers	54	23,500
Market Bosworth	51	8,608
Watermead	47	17,097
TOTAL	204	57,174

12. Other organised and licenced runs feature heavily at Watermead, Beacon and Bosworth Battlefield and these sites hosted a variety of league, charity and fun runs during 2025.
13. Visitor facilities continue to be improved on our sites. Principal examples include a new secure dog exercise area at Broombriggs Farm Country Park, new natural play area equipment at Beacon Hill and investment in path resurfacing works across the parks network.
14. A new Country Parks website (www.leicscountryparks.org.uk) was launched on 14 June 2024. Since launch, the site has attracted 109,273 users. The Country Parks Facebook account has over 9,900 followers. The most popular posts have a reach of between 50,000 and 130,000.
15. It is estimated that the Council's Country Parks receive about one million visitors per annum, however, there is no current mechanism to measure total visitor numbers. Historically, the service has relied on data from sites with automated car parking infrastructure to provide car numbers. This partial measure does not capture visits to sites where this data cannot be collected, or visits to sites by means other than car.
16. Car parking data for the past 5 years, including 2026 to date, is shown in the table below.

Site name	Mode of parking	2026 (31 July 26)	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Beacon Hill	Pay on Exit	93,302	150,793	155,433	131,845	133,730	154,770	153,631
Market Bosworth	Pay on Exit	30,576	52,501	47,475	47,402	48,093	45,915	42,916
Watermead ¹	Pay on Exit	25,307	N/A	5,117	29,761	29,417	30,199	26,925
Snibston ²	Pay on Exit	18,532	20,309	85,521	51,012	DNC	DNC	DNC
Burrough Hill ³	Pay and Display	-	3,220	DNC	DNC	DNC	DNC	DNC
Bosworth Battlefield ³	Pay and Display	-	17,073	16,634	DNC	DNC	DNC	DNC
Broombriggs Farm ³	Pay and Display	-	3,017	DNC	DNC	DNC	DNC	DNC
Shenton ³	Pay and Display	-	6,374	DNC	DNC	DNC	DNC	DNC

Total			253,287	310,810	260,020	211,240	230,884	223,427
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17. The parking system at Watermead was vandalised in 2024 and this accounts for the significant variance in 2024 and 2025. A new Automatic Numberplate Recognition System (APRN) was installed during 2025 and was fully operational in February 2026. ² The figure for Snibston in 2024 appears incorrect. The original data has been lost and cannot be validated. ³ These figures are an estimate and based on total income received divided by average spend. It excludes season ticket data.
18. The service is well supported by 147 Volunteers, who contributed 3,346 hours of work over 822 sessions in 2025. Volunteers undertake a range of duties from habitat management such as tree thinning, strimming, and hedge cutting to butterfly transects, gate locking, furniture building and the emptying of dog bins. These activities make a huge contribution to the successful delivery of the Country Parks Service and volunteer input could not be replicated by the ranger service alone.

Flood prevention

19. Flooding remains a challenge at Watermead Country Park, with eight flood events throughout the year, four being severe enough to warrant the closure of the country park. There was less infrastructure damage compared to previous years, but the effects of litter and silt on the park are significant and take up a lot of time for Rangers to rectify. From September 2025, 460 bags of flood-related rubbish were collected from the park
20. Working with the Trent Rivers Trust, natural flood mitigation measures were installed at Beacon Hill as part of a wider programme to protect residents within the Wood Brook catchment area of Loughborough. These works were funded by Trent Rivers Trust and costs were minimal, when compared to traditional flood management. There are also wildlife and ecological benefits to the wider Beacon Hill site. Leaky dams, swales and new ponds successfully caught, diverted and held up the flow of water over the winter of 2025.

Management and Conservation

21. A Countryside Stewardship Woodland Improvement agreement is in place with the Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) until 31 December 2026 for woodlands within most of the Council's parks. This provides funding for activity that builds upon the principles within the Council's Tree Management Strategy and promotes excellence in 'silviculture' (the care and cultivation of woodlands), increasing biodiversity and making woodlands more resilient to pests and diseases. During 2025 rangers and volunteers have undertaken thinning, coppicing and veteran tree works across sites. Contractors have completed works at Bagworth Heath, Jubilee and Sheet Hedges Woods.

22. Throughout the winter months, the programme of rhododendron clearance on certain areas of Beacon Hill was continued. This non-native species rapidly colonises areas of the park if not kept in check. The rate of recovery of areas previously covered by rhododendron has been surprising, with heather, gorse and scrub moving to cover the areas. The area of rhododendron is being retained and carefully contained within the SSSI due to popular visitor appeal.
23. In partnership with the National Forest Company, we have seen the resurfacing and improvement of paths around the Ashby Woulds Trail and the Ashby Canal from Conkers to Donisthorpe Woodland Park. These paths have shown great resilience to the wet winter of 2025 allowing for year-round access for visitors to the area
24. Paths around the Bosworth Battlefield Sundial and Market Bosworth arboretum were also resurfaced to improve visitor access over the summer of 2025
25. Habitat for great crested newts has been improved through new and reinstated ponds at Bosworth Battlefield, Market Bosworth and Donington le Heath Country Parks, these have developed and blended within the landscape. Surveys are planned during 2026/27 to review their effectiveness.
26. The service actively balances public access with the needs of wildlife at Beacon Hill and Jewels Hill between the months of April and August. This approach continues to show wildlife benefit to nesting birds and, by inference, other related heathland associated species. Reports indicate continued protection to the area will benefit red listed birds and the SSSI.
27. At Broombriggs Farm works to the car park, path and dog exercise area were completed. This was funded through the Charnwood Forest Landscape Partnership Scheme. The new dog exercise area has been a local success for visitors and aims to offer safe spaces for visitors to exercise and train their dogs away from ecologically sensitive areas of Charnwood Forest.
28. Beacons were lit at Bosworth Battlefield and Beacon Hill to mark VE and VJ Day.
29. Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) works at Beacon Hill continue to improve the Heathland environment, delivered in part through a herd of primitive breed cattle, sheep and alpacas. In 2025 new Highlands and Longhorn Cattle were purchased from local breeders to supplement the herd and its efforts in naturally controlling scrub and bracken growth for the benefit of heather and other wildflower species, as well as the fauna it supports. The highland cattle attract widespread visitor attention.

30. This wide range of work has only been possible because of the dedication of a small team of 15 Country Parks Rangers, supported by 2 casual Wardens.

Significant achievements/Areas to note

31. Green Flag Awards were received in 2025 for Beacon Hill, Market Bosworth, Snibston and Watermead Country Parks. Green Flag is the internal benchmark international for publicly accessible parks and green spaces in the United Kingdom and around the world.
32. Country Parks Byelaws were ratified by the Secretary of State and came into effect 2025. The updated Byelaws capture recent technological developments such as E-bikes and drones as well as BBQ use and restrictions to dogs inside play areas. The Byelaws are published on the Country Parks website.

Looking forward to 2026/27

33. It was confirmed in July 2026 that new Green Flag Awards have been received Beacon Hill, Market Bosworth, Snibston and Watermead Country Park.
34. Work to explore the longer-term future for Broombriggs Farm, with funding from Natural England has helped us to better appreciate the current habitat and biodiversity onsite and will inform the development of options for how it can be managed more sustainably.
35. A review of the 10-year woodland management plan is underway with a view to submit application for a 10-year Woodland management stewardship scheme. A review of Higher-Level Stewardship (HLS) is also planned.
36. A temporary replacement bridge over the river soar at Watermead, opened May 2026. This allows non-vehicular access between the Syston and Birstall sides of the site, whilst the main bridge is closed.
37. The new ANPR systems at Watermead was successfully implemented in February 2026 and income is in line with projections. The service is now looking to install ANPR at Beacon and Market Bosworth to replace the existing ageing systems, with a more reliable provision.
38. Path works to Watermead and car park improvements, line marking completed spring 2026, focusing on park run routes. Opportunity for further repairs and improvements will be reviewed throughout the year.
39. New parking tariffs were introduced in April 2026, as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. Car parking numbers have risen by 10% on the same period last year. A review of season ticket pricing is underway.

40. The service will explore how to capture more accurate visitor data to better understand who is and isn't using our parks and help inform future developments.
41. In May 2026 the Country Parks Service moved to Adults and Cultural Services Department.

Resource Implications

42. There are no additional resource implications for the service at this time.
43. The Director of Corporate Resources has been consulted on the content of this report.

Conclusion

44. Members are asked to note the report and to make any comments on the report or the Country Parks Service.

Background papers

Country Parks and Open Spaces Strategy:

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s152649/APPENDIX%20Country%20Parks%20and%20Open%20Spaces%20Strategy%202019-2029.pdf>

Tree Management Strategy:

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1292&MId=7645&Ver=4>

Report to the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee 10 September 2025: Annual Review of Leicestershire Country Parks

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/mgChooseDocPack.aspx?ID=7909>

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

Equality Implications

45. There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Human Rights Implications

46. There are no human rights implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Environmental Implications

47. The Country Park Service continues to deliver against wider Council policies through the management of its land holdings for the benefit of wildlife and people. The service works to create, enhance and maintain biodiversity found within the varying habitats found within the Councils country parks. The Council's parks are an exemplar of how wildlife and people can coexist and are a refuge for delicate habitat types such as heathland, wetlands and woodland.

Health Implications

48. The Council's parks are a resource for residents for physical and mental wellbeing, allowing visitors to connect with nature within a safe and accessible parks environment. The benefits of positive mental health through accessing greenspaces came to the forefront during the pandemic, and this trend in usage of green spaces continues.

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**ADULTS AND CULTURAL SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE – 7 SEPTEMBER 2026**

**RECORD OFFICE FOR LEICESTERSHIRE, LEICESTER AND
RUTLAND**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADULTS AND CULTURAL
SERVICES**

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the outcome of the review of the Accreditation status of the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland (ROLLR) by the National Archives (TNA).

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The statutory basis of the Archive Service delivered by the ROLLR is derived from the Local Government Act 1972, Sections 224-229. Section 224 imposes a duty on principal authorities (which includes the County Council) to make 'proper arrangements' for the safekeeping of their records, and records in their custody.
3. A statutory Code of Practice issued under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 states that 'authorities must have in place appropriate governance, organisational capability and technical measures to ensure that they manage information in accordance with the Code'.
4. The ROLLR supports the County Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026, in particular the 'Great Communities' outcome, helping to ensure that cultural and historical documents and digital records are enjoyed and conserved. It also supports 'Improving Opportunities' by enabling the Council to continue to provide high quality and targeted cultural and historic resources to schools and young people.
5. On 12 June 2018, the Cabinet agreed to develop proposals for an Archives Collections and Learning Centre.
6. Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the implications of TNA Improvement Requirements for the ROLLR in the context of the proposed development of the ACL Centre on 3 June 2024

7. On 21 June 2024, the Cabinet noted the outcome of the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee workshop and re-affirmed the development of the ACL Centre, including the development of more detailed appraisal, to compare the cost of a new building with the costs associated with continuing at the current sites over 25 years; and the review and renewal of the partnership agreements for the Record Office with Leicester City Council and Rutland County Council.
8. On the 18 February 2026, Council approved growth over the four years of the MTFS for the Leicestershire County Council's proportion of costs to address required improvements for digital preservation and offsite storage.

Background

9. The ROLLR is an Accredited Archive Service assessed by The National Archives (TNA) to meet the required national standards for preservation of and access to collections including The Public Record. It has secure strong rooms for collections, public research facilities for both original and digital records and conservation and technical facilities. The capacity of the current provision of archival standard storage for the ROLLR has now been exceeded.
10. The ROLLR is delivered by Leicestershire County Council and through two partnership arrangements with Leicester City Council and Rutland County Council on a population-based percentage share of the costs.
11. The ROLLR returned its submission for re-Accreditation to the TNA in 2023 and after review in 2024 was awarded provisional Accredited status for two years. This was dependent on meeting Improvement Requirements including the provision of archival standard storage for collections not currently preserved in adequate conditions, a plan for 25 years of collections development, and the procurement of a Digital Preservation and Access software system for born digital records.
12. Leicestershire County Council had previously proposed the development of an Archive, Collections and Learning Centre which would have accommodated the ROLLR collections and public spaces and provided 25 years of growth for collections which is a requirement of TNA Accreditation.
13. Following the report shared with this Committee on 6 November 2023, the County Council approved the provisional Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) on 21 February 2024. This demonstrated the challenging financial position facing the County Council and the need to reinforce existing financial control measures to address the budgets gaps and ensure a balanced budget.
14. At the same time, discussions with partner authorities showed they were facing similar financial challenges and given the challenging financial climate, the partnership agreed to address only the most urgent priorities, which were the two improvement requirements as set out by TNA.
15. In February 2026 Leicestershire County Council wrote to TNA Accreditation team outlining its plan to meet the Improvement Requirements.

16. The TNA Accreditation Panel met on 1 July 2026 and noted the ‘strong progress towards addressing issues, recognising the significant efforts around finance, procurement and staffing as vital precursors to delivery, and representing real institutional commitment’ and have extended the provisional award until the ROLLR’s planned regular midpoint review which is due in the summer of 2027.

Risk Assessment

17. Failure to resolve the current storage situation is expected to jeopardise the Accreditation status of the Archive Service.
18. As a provider of an Accredited archive, the Council has a duty of care in relation to the collections it holds. Secure, environmentally stable and fit for purpose buildings are fundamental requirements, alongside professional staff, to ensure long-term care and preservation of those collections and facilitate public access.
19. The ROLLR Building is in need of continued maintenance and investment and the overflow storage of archive collections in the Eastern Annex at County Hall, Glenfield falls below acceptable standards and therefore place collections at risk.

Resource Implications

20. The estimated costs of maintaining the current accommodation and commissioning external storage are outlined in the table below and based on a minimum lifespan of 25 years, and proposed apportionment of costs:

	Current site plus commercial storage		
	Years 1-5	Years 6-25	Total
County Total costs	8,068,151	34,802,297	42,870,448
City Total costs	3,136,664	10,366,016	13,502,680
Rutland Total costs	896,190	2,961,719	3,857,909

21. It is expected that running costs will continue to increase due to the age of the buildings and the requirements associated with maintaining archive Accreditation standards.
22. Officers are in the process of developing the Invitation to Tender for the procurement of commercial archival standard offsite storage and a digital preservation and access system.

Legal Issues

23. The service agreements set out the basis on which the operating costs of the ROLLR are shared across the partnership. The proportionate financial contributions are based on the respective populations of the three authorities

and the approximate percentage of archive collections relating to those authority areas. These are Leicestershire County Council - 55%; Leicester City Council - 35%; Rutland County Council - 10%.

24. The two separate partnership agreements were put in place in 1997. The partnership had intended to review and revise these agreements once a decision on the ACL centre had been reached. These agreements will now need to be reviewed following the announcement by the Secretary of State, Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on the 16 July of the decision on the future of local government across Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland.
25. The Director of Corporate Resources and the Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on the contents of this report.

Timetable for Decisions

26. The deadline to address the issues identified in the Accreditation assessment is summer 2027, as part of the TNA mid-point review of ROLLR standards. If the issues identified in the 2024 Accreditation assessment and the 2026 review of progress are resolved, and if no subsequent areas of concern are raised, then TNA may choose to confirm full Accreditation for the full six-year period.

Recommendation

27. The Committee is asked to note the report and make any comments.

Background papers

Report to County Council (Budget Meeting): 18 February 2026 - Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026/27-2029/30

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/mgChooseDocPack.aspx?ID=7862>

Report to the Cabinet 21 June 2024 - Archives, Collections and Learning Centre

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/g7507/Public%20reports%20pack%20Friday%2021-Jun-2024%2011.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=10>

Report to Adults and Communities, Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 4 March 2024 – Update on the Archives, Collections and Learning Centre

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?MId=7728>

Report to Adults and Communities, Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 6 November 2023 – Update on the Archives, Collections and Learning Centre

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?MId=7110>

Report to the Cabinet: 12 June 2018 – Archives, Heritage and Learning Collections Hub

[http://cexmodgov01/documents/s138163/6_June_Heritage%20Mus%20and%20Records%20Collections%20Hub%20final.pdf?\\$LO\\$=1](http://cexmodgov01/documents/s138163/6_June_Heritage%20Mus%20and%20Records%20Collections%20Hub%20final.pdf?LO=1)

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

28. None.

Equality Implications

29. There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Human Rights Implications

30. There are no human rights implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

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ADULTS & COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
– 7 SEPTEMBER 2026

ADULT SOCIAL CARE STATUTORY COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS
ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADULTS & CULTURAL SERVICES

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of the report is to provide members of the Committee with a summary of the complaints and compliments received in respect of adult social care services commissioned or provided by the Adults and Cultural Services Department during 2025- 26. The Annual Report is appended.
- 2 The Committee is asked to note the report and are invited to make comments.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

- 3 The Committee last received a report on complaints and compliments on 2 September 2025. This report covered the year 2024-25.
- 4 Local authorities must, each financial year, publish an Annual Report (Regulation 13(3)).
- 5 The statutory report is considered at the Adults and Cultural Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September of each reporting year.

Background

- 6 The Department has a long-standing statutory duty to have a complaints process in place for adult social care. The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009, effective from 1 April 2009, introduced a two-stage process with flexible investigation methods and timescales to suit the nature and complexity of the complaint. If the complainant is unhappy with the outcome after stage one, they can ask the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) to investigate.
- 7 The regulations provide a framework for those handling a complaint relating to a local authority's social care functions - this includes directly provided services and independent services provided through commissioning.

- 8 The actions, omissions, or decisions of the local authority in respect of social care functions are covered. The regulations do not, however, apply more generally to independent providers.
- 9 People who are paying for their own social care (self-funders) may complain to the local authority, for example, about assessment or failure to assess. Services people have arranged or purchased themselves are not covered but the local authority could be challenged if it commissions those services, for example, by a complaint that it has commissioned a sub-standard service or is not performance managing contracted services sufficiently.
- 10 The Adults and Cultural Services Department is contacted on a daily basis by service users, carers and other interested parties to share concerns, request information or seek clarity on care arrangements. These queries are dealt with and resolved at a local level within care teams or through the Directorate without recourse to the formal complaints process. The Complaints Team does, on occasion, also receive queries and concerns that suggest an adult requires immediate support or that raise safeguarding concerns. Such reports are best handled outside of the formal complaints procedure and are referred into the Customer Service Centre or allocated workers for urgent consideration as appropriate in accordance with relevant safeguarding protocols
- 11 Under the complaints' regulations, there is a further requirement to produce an annual report that reviews the effectiveness of the complaints and compliments procedures and provides a summary of statistical information. The appended Annual Report fulfils this requirement and presents a summary of the complaints handled in 2025-26.
- 12 Complaints and compliments about all other aspects of the Adult and Cultural Services Department are reported separately as part of the corporate complaints process.

Key Points

- 13 Complaint volumes increased during 2025-26 compared to the previous year (317 compared to 342) as did the number of service users from 11,035 (24/25) to 11,176 (25/26). This equates to 29 complaints per 1,000 users in 24/25 and 31 in 25/26. While the rate is relatively low, movement should continue to be monitored alongside complaint themes, causes and outcomes to understand whether it reflects changes in service demand, complexity of need, customer expectations, or areas where further service improvement may be required.
- 14 For complaints resolved during 2025-26, the proportion where fault was identified decreased from the previous year (134 complaints or 47%, compared to 143 or 45%). The principal factor affecting this was an increase where 'delay' was a primary cause.
- 15 Throughout 2025-2026, 88% of cases were responded to within the statutory maximum time allowed (65 working days).

- 16 During the year, 33 complaints were referred to a senior manager for review where the complainant remained dissatisfied with the initial response. This represents a decrease compared with 2024/25, when 38 complaints were referred. Timeliness at this stage also declined, with 57% of responses completed within 20 working days.
- 17 The most common complaint themes were around Charging, Assessment and Service Received.
- 18 There have been good examples this year of how systemic learning has been identified and implemented. In 134 cases where complaints were upheld, clear actions were highlighted by Investigating Managers to improve future performance.
- 19 Whilst the report understandably focuses on complaints, adult social care services did receive 442 compliments during 2025-26. This continues to add balance to the annual report and recognises the good work that is also taking place across the Department. The majority of compliments highlight the professionalism, support, and empathy shown by the service during difficult times, examples of which are included in the appended main report.
- 20 There is good evidence of learning from complaints at a local level with upheld complaints having clearly articulated actions to improve wider performance over and above resolving the individual issues.
- 21 During the year, the LGSCO assessed or investigated 33 new complaints. This figure compares with 20 investigations started in 2024-25.
- 22 The LGSCO published Final Decisions on 17 complaints during the year. Fault was found in eight instances.

Recommendations:

- 23 The Committee is asked to:
 - a) Note the Adult Social Care Complaints Annual Report, covering the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026
 - b) Provide comment and feedback on the content and analysis within the report

Circulation under the Local Alert Issues Procedure

- 24 None.

List of Appendices

Appendix – Adults Social Care Statutory Complaints and Compliments: Annual Report 2025-26

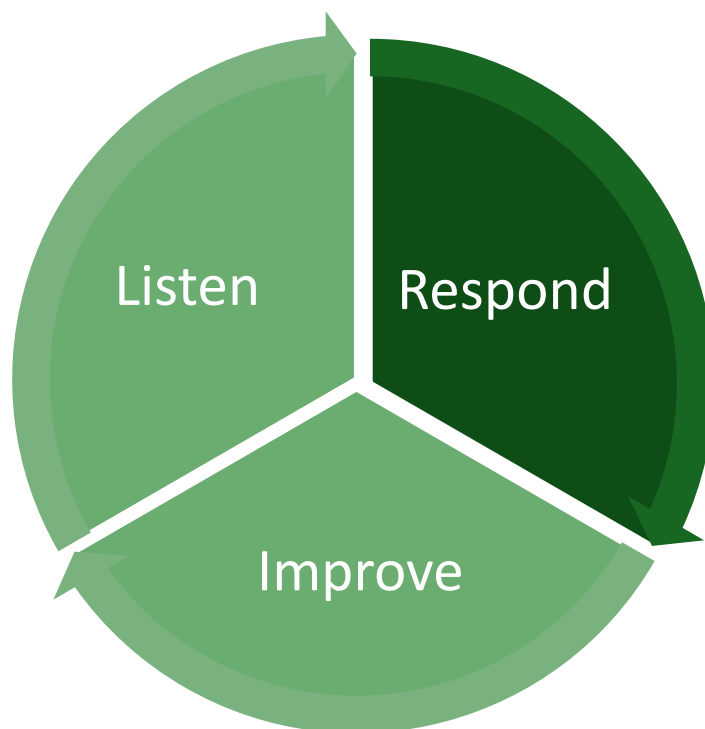
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Adult Social Care Statutory Complaints and Compliments Annual Report

2025 – 2026



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1. Purpose and Context of Report

1.1. Purpose & Scope

The purpose of this report is –

- To report on Leicestershire County Council's (LCC) adult social care complaints and compliments activity from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.
- To meet the Council's statutory duty requiring the production of an annual report each year.¹

This report provides analysis and comment for Adult Social Care Services on complaints managed under the statutory complaints process. Complaints that do not meet the criteria for the statutory process are considered separately within the County Council's Corporate Complaints and Compliments Annual Report, which is presented to the Scrutiny Commission

1.2. Background Context

The Adult Social Care Service sits within the Adults and Communities Department, the Department arranges and supports the provision of a wide variety of services.

This includes helping people to remain living independently in their own homes, with increasing levels of choice and control over the support they receive. When this is no longer possible, the department supports residential care as well as having lead responsibility for safeguarding adults at risk of harm.

The department always aims to provide high quality services that meet the needs and circumstances of individuals and their families. The department actively promotes involving clients and carers in shaping services; using their skills and experiences to help ensure they meet customer needs. However, given the personal and complex nature of some adult social care services, sometimes things do go wrong.

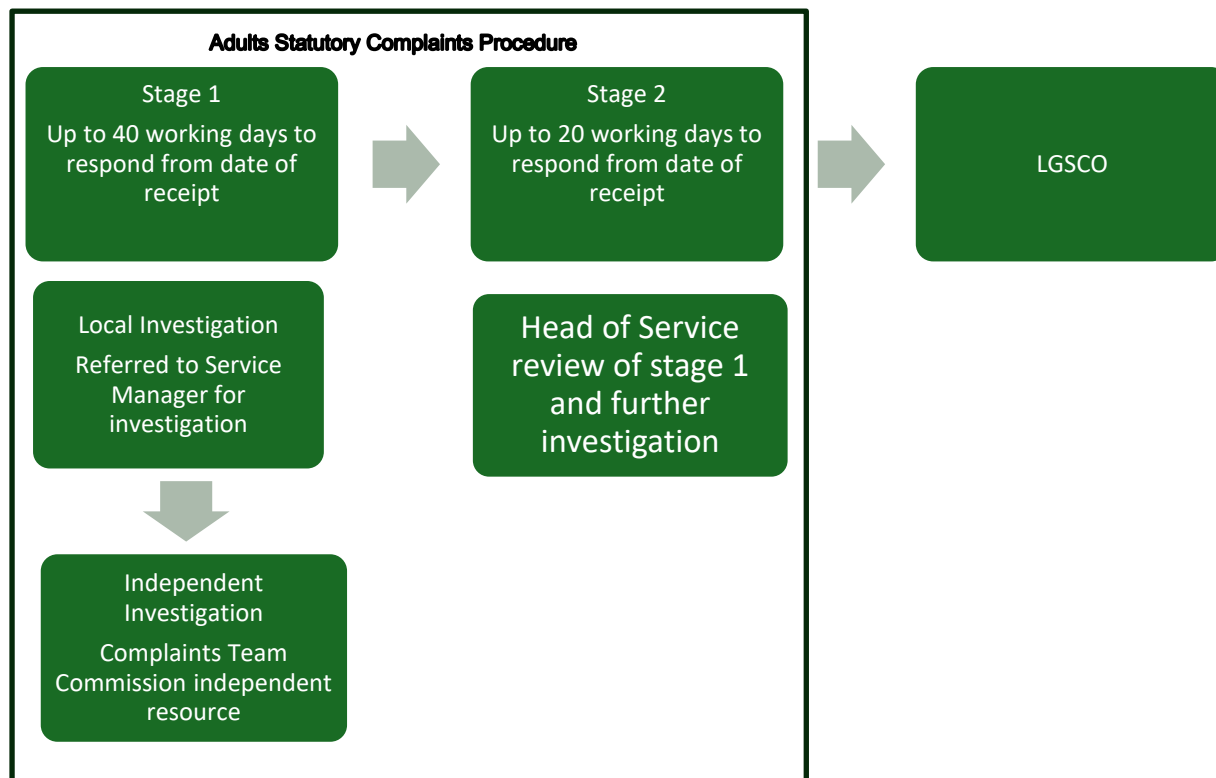
The complaints process is a mechanism to identify problems and resolve issues. If things go wrong or fall below expectation, the County Council will try to sort things out quickly and fairly. Learning from our mistakes and concerns that are raised is used to make changes and improve services.

Analysis of information about complaints received during 2025-26 gives Adult Social Care an opportunity to reflect on the quality of the services it provides and consider how well it listens and responds to service users.

¹ [Statutory Instrument 2009 no.309 \(18\)](#)

2. Adult Social Care Complaints Procedure

The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Services Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 outlines the statutory responsibilities of the County Council. This is broadly set out below:



Local policy refers to one stage, with up to 65 working days to respond to the complainant, in line with legislation. Some councils, including Leicestershire, offer an internal review. Therefore, the schematic shows two stages, one for investigation and an escalation stage of review should the complainant remain dissatisfied. Both should occur within the 65 working day timeframe. If the complainant remains dissatisfied after the council's handling, they may escalate the complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

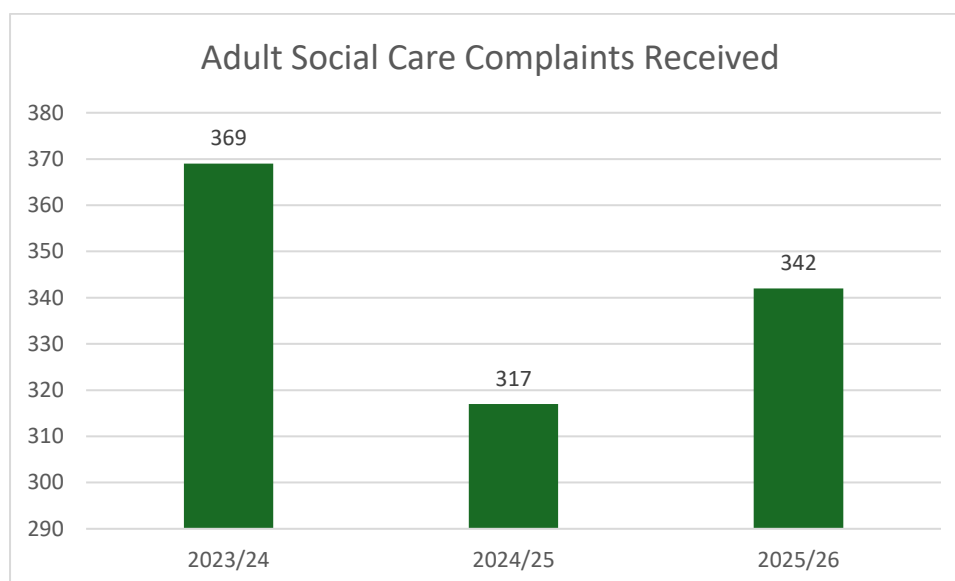
The Local Authority must advise all complainants of their right to approach the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman should an agreed resolution not be found.

During 2025-26, no independent investigations were commissioned.

3. Complaints and compliments recorded in 2025-26

3.1 Complaint Volumes

Graph 1: Adult Social Care Complaints recorded over last 3 years

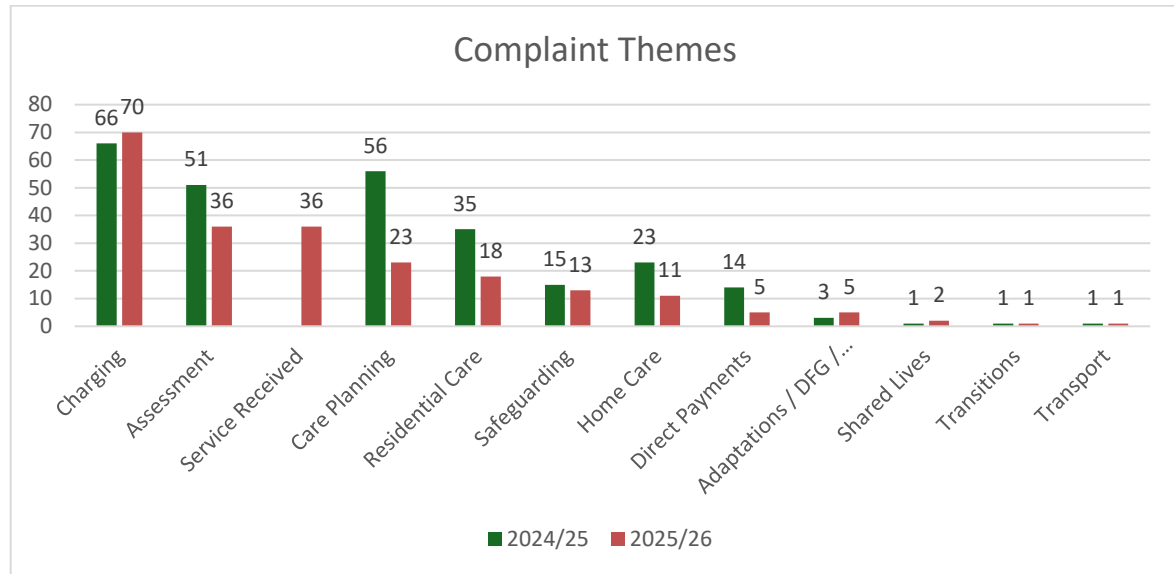


As illustrated above, the number of Adult Social Care complaints received fluctuated over the three-year period. Complaints reduced significantly from 369 in 2023/24 to 317 in 2024/25, a decrease of 14.1%. However, complaint volumes increased in 2025/26 to 342 complaints, representing a 7.9% rise compared with the previous year. Some Adult Social Care complaint fall under the Corporate Complaints policy.

The number of adult social care service users rose from 11,035 (24/25) to 11,176 (25/26). When complaint volumes are adjusted for the number of service users, the number of complaints per 1,000 users is 31 for 25/26 (29 in 24/25). While the rate remains relatively low overall, movement should continue to be monitored alongside complaint themes, causes and outcomes to understand whether it reflects changes in service demand, complexity of need, customer expectations, or areas where further service improvement may be required. Additionally, the overall number of complaints relating to the department is 431 for 25/26.

3.2 Complaints by Theme

Graph 2: adult social care complaints by theme



Complaint themes mirror the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman classifications and can provide helpful insight as to the underlying topics that are generating complaints.

Complaint themes in 2025/26 show a changing pattern of customer concerns. Charging continued to be the leading source of complaints, increasing slightly from 66 to 70 complaints and remaining the most frequently raised issue.

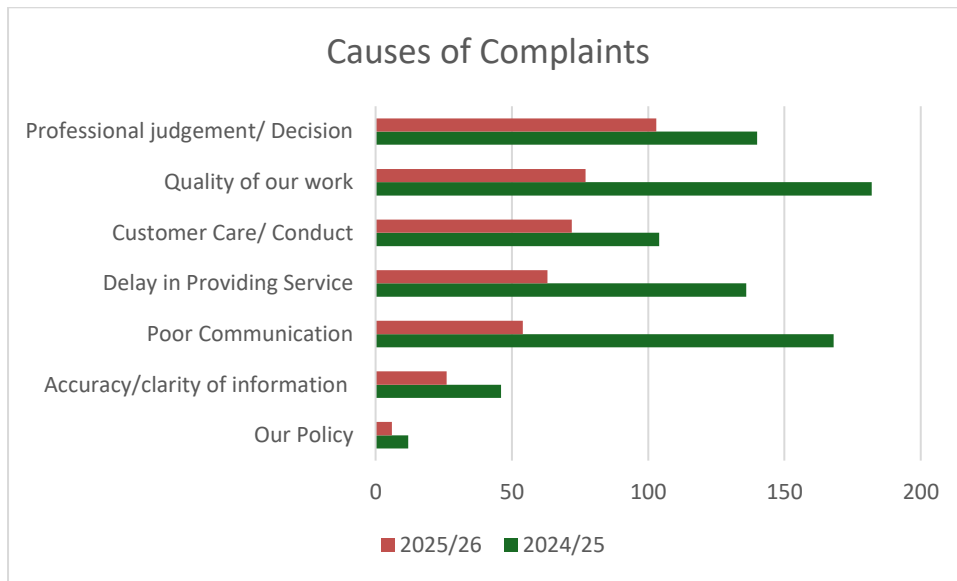
Several key complaint themes showed substantial reductions, including Care Planning (-33 complaints), Residential Care (-17), Assessment (-15), Home Care (-12) and Direct Payments (-9). The decrease in Care Planning complaints is particularly notable and may reflect improvements in planning and review processes. Whilst overall complaint volumes increased during 2025/26, some complaint themes have shown signs of improvement as well as updated complaints reporting to provide more accurate themes.

A new complaint category of 'Service Received' was added part way through 2025/26 to allow for monitoring of complaints received regarding the service provided by the service.

3.3 Primary cause of complaints.

The Complaints team also undertake analysis of each complaint to try to understand any significant factors. This can help prioritise areas for the department to focus on improving.

Graph 3: Complaint causes for complaints resolved last 2 years.



Recording allows for multiple causes to be selected. So, if a complaint features “delay” as well as “Customer Care” then both will be selected. It follows that the data above will not match the overall number of complaints resolved.

Quality of Work remains the most frequently identified topic within complaints. This category includes quality of home and residential care.

There has been a reduction in the number of complaints related to customer care/conduct (32%). There was also a reduction in complaints relating to poor communication (67%). These reductions show improvements have taken place within the service to improve customer care & communication.

3.4 Joint Complaints

The Health and Social Care complaints regulations place a duty on Local Authorities to work together with health partners in responding jointly to complaints². Leicestershire County Council accordingly has a joint complaint handling protocol, supported by a multi-agency group, which sets out common guidelines and approaches to this.

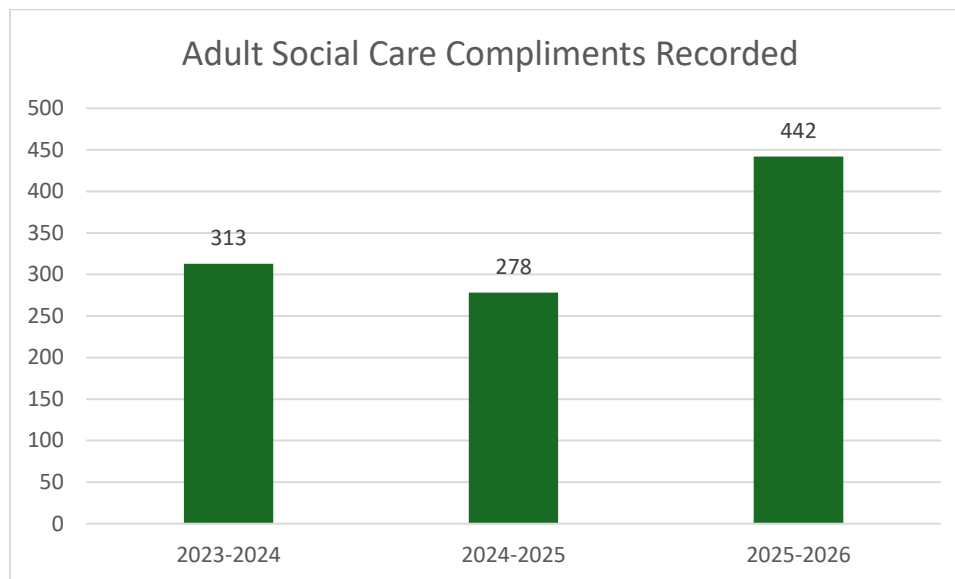
Members include Leicester City Council, the Integrated Care Board (ICB), University Hospitals Leicester (UHL) and the Leicestershire Partnership Trust (LPT).

During the year 2025-26, one complaint was considered using the Joint Complaints protocol. No difficulties were experienced this year with partnership working.

² [Statutory Instrument 2009 no. 309 \(9\)](#)

4 Compliments received 2025-26

Graph 4 below shows the long-term trend in compliments recorded.



Adult & Cultural services received 442 compliments in 2025/26, representing a substantial increase of 59% compared with 2024/25 and the highest level recorded over the three-year period. Following a decline from 313 compliments in 2023/24 to 278 in 2024/25, positive feedback increased significantly during 2025/26, exceeding the previous peak by 41%. The increase in compliments suggests that many service users, carers and families experienced positive outcomes and wished to recognise the support provided by staff. Importantly, the number of compliments recorded in 2025/26 exceeded the number of complaints received, providing a positive indicator of overall customer satisfaction and the quality of services delivered.

It is always important to recognise the good work that is being delivered by the department and to provide balance within the complaints annual report. The complaints' team encourages the service to ensure any positive feedback is shared for central recording to improve the accuracy of this data.

A small selection of the compliments received can be found in Appendix A.

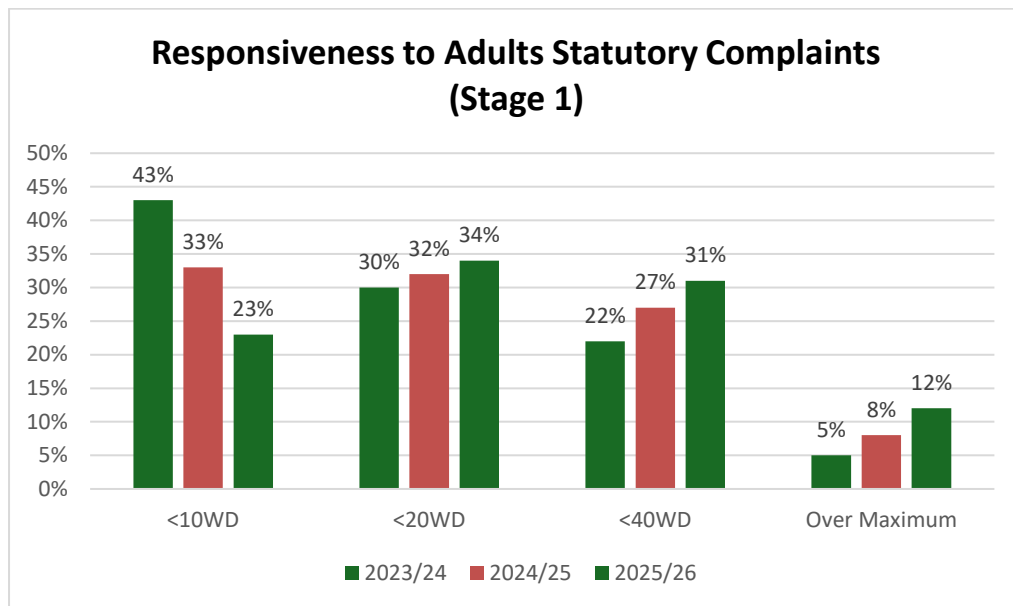
5 Complaints resolved 2024-25

The key performance indicators for speed of response, outcomes, causes and identified learning are linked to complaints that have been resolved within any given reporting period rather than received.

This is important as it ensures that full data sets can be presented, both to departments on a quarterly basis, and at year end. It also avoids the scenario whereby Ombudsman findings of maladministration might not appear in annual reports.

5.1 Responsiveness to complaints

Graph 5: Adult Social Care Performance at Stage 1



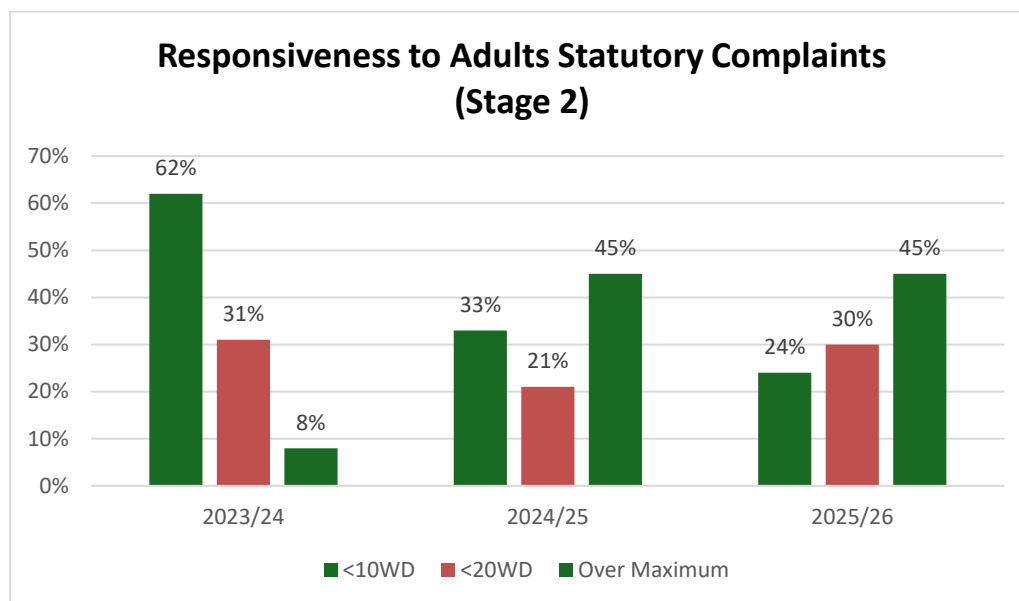
The above graph shows a slight decrease in response timescales at stage 1. 57% of all complaints were responded to within 20 working days and 88% within the statutory timescale of 65 working days. This is a slight reduction of the 92% in 2024/25 with 22 more complaints in 2025/26.

Whilst the statutory regulations give wide flexibility in terms of response times and allow up to 65 working days for complaints to be resolved, a key expectation of the public is that their concerns are dealt with promptly and this report provides good assurance of the department's commitment to this despite the challenges seen this year.

5.2 Adult Social Care Performance at Review Stage

33 stage 1 complaints escalated to the review stage and were reviewed by a senior manager. This is a slight decrease from 2024/25 (38).

Graph 6: Adult Social Care complaints reviewed by Senior Managers



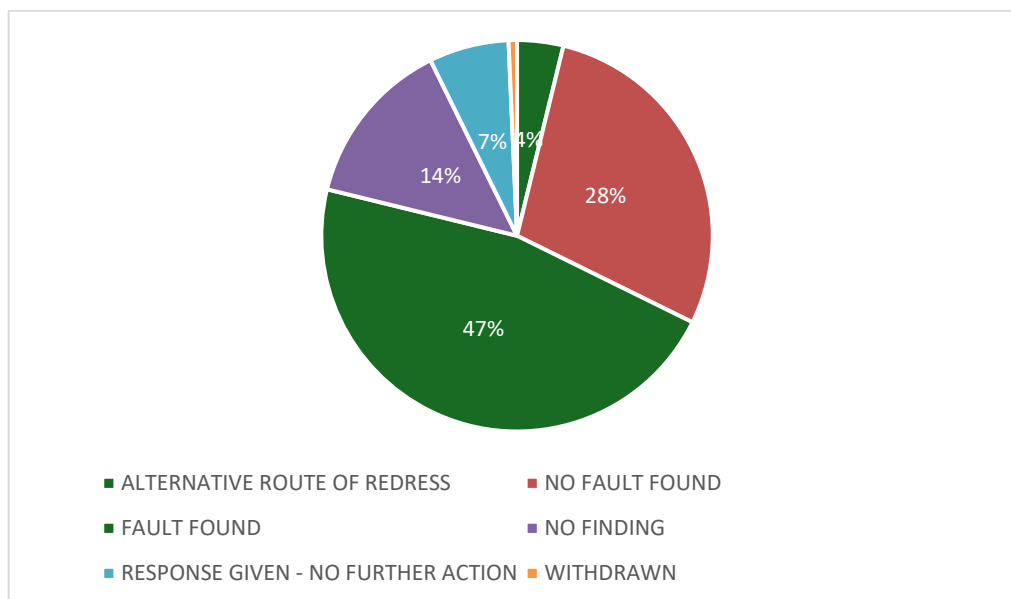
The above chart shows a significant decline in the timeliness of responses to Stage 2 Adults Statutory Complaints over the three-year period, with a corresponding increase in the proportion of cases exceeding statutory timescales.

In 2025/26, there was a mixed picture. The proportion of complaints responded to within 10 working days decreased to 24%, while responses completed within 20 working days improved to 30%. However, the proportion of complaints exceeding the statutory timescale remained high at 45%, indicating that almost half of all Stage 2 complaints were not concluded within the required timeframe.

The increase in complaints under the adult statutory policy and complexity of these complaints could have impacted responsiveness to stage 2 complaint responses.

5.3 Complaint Outcomes

Graph 7: Adult Social Care complaints recorded by outcome.



Graph 7 above shows that 47% 134 of complaints were upheld, compared to 42%/143 the previous year. Although the percentage has increased, the actual number of cases upheld is lower. Prompt acceptance and ownership of any mistakes can help prevent costly complaint escalation including to Senior Managers and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

6 Learning from Complaints

Complaints are a valuable source of information which can help to identify recurring or underlying problems and potential improvements. We know that numbers alone do not tell everything about the attitude towards complaints and how they are responded to locally. Arguably of more importance is to understand the impact those complaints have on people and to learn the lessons from complaints to improve the experience for others.

Lessons can usually be learned from complaints that were upheld but also in some instances where no fault was found but the Authority recognises that improvements to services can be made.

Occasionally during an investigation, issues will be identified that need to be addressed over and above the original complaint. The Complaints Team will always try to look at the “bigger picture” to ensure that residents receive the best possible service from the Council.

Work was completed within the year to improve complaints reporting; directorates have been added to allow for more specific complaint reporting enabling the Complaints Team to more accurately identify trends and feedback learnings.

6.1 Corrective action taken.

All the 134 complaints where fault has been found have been reviewed by the Complaints Team to ascertain what action the relevant department has taken, both in remedying the fault, and any wider learning to avoid such issues occurring in the future.

Remedial action typically consists of both individual redress (e.g., apology, carrying out overdue work) and wider actions that may affect many. 44% of complaints upheld resulted in clear actions that should improve service for other residents.

The most common action taken was staff training. There are lots of good examples of this taking place both at individual and team level. These included:

- Refresher training on processes regarding financial assessments
- Refresher training on safeguarding procedures
- Complaints training delivered to the service
- Training provided by the service to the complaints team

Financial redress was also arranged on several occasions this year to ensure that the complainant was put back in the position they would have been in had the fault not occurred. The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman have published a guide on remedy payments, and this was used to assist with monetary value for complaint remedies.

7. Local Government Ombudsman

7.1 New complaints received by the Ombudsman 2025-26

Should a complainant remain dissatisfied following internal consideration of their complaint, they can take their complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman to seek independent investigation.

The Ombudsman will usually check with the Authority whether the complaint has exhausted the Local Authority's complaints procedure. Where this has not been done, the Ombudsman will usually refer the complaint back to the Authority, to give us an opportunity to attempt to resolve the complainant's concerns through our internal complaints processes first.

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman opened enquiries on 36 complaints during the year. This represents approximately 25% of the overall complaints.

7.2 Complaints resolved by the Ombudsman 2025-26

The Ombudsman made decisions on 33 cases during the year with fault being found in 8 cases. In cases where fault had been found, these mainly related to delays in completing financial assessments, or failure to meet care needs.

There were no decisions issued as Public Reports.

For the remaining eleven complaints

- In eight cases the Ombudsman decided not to investigate, either because there was no evidence of any fault, or the matter had already been appropriately addressed by the Council.
- In three cases, the Ombudsman, after detailed investigation, was satisfied with the actions the Council had taken.

The Ombudsman also monitors remedies being carried out by the Council where fault has been found and remedial actions proposed. Failure to carry out remedies within agreed timeframes is recorded as non-compliance and can lead to public reports being issued. All of the above cases were recorded as compliant (100%).

8. Monitoring the Process

The Complaints Team continues to support Adult Social Care Services to manage and learn from complaints. The key services offered are -

1. Complaints advice and support
2. Production of Performance Reports
3. Liaison with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
4. Quality assurance of complaint responses
5. Complaint handling training for operational managers
6. Scrutiny and challenge to complaint responses

Assistance continues to be routinely provided to Service Managers and other associated managers in drafting responses to complaint investigations. This helps ensure a consistency of response and that due process is followed.

Quarterly performance reports are produced and delivered at Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and on-going work is being completed with Lead Practitioners to improve the quality of complaints data available for a wider understanding of causes of complaints and improved learning.

9. Final Comments

There has been a slight increase in complaint volumes, with the number of complaints per 1000 users increasing by 2 from 29 in 24/25 to 31 25/26.

It is clear that the service is working hard with complaints they are receiving, aiming to resolve these first time with a reduction in stage 1 complaints escalating to stage 2.

Some of the complaints concerned delivery of care by providers and in these instances, complaints data is routinely shared with our Quality and Improvement team who work closely with providers in making improvements as required.

It is vital that service users are provided with a complaints process that is easy to access and fair. This year's Annual Report shows that Adult Social Care does listen and provides a number of examples of how complaints intelligence directly drives and improves service delivery.

Appendix A: sample of compliments received 2025-26

- We had a guided tour with Francis which was great and really bought the history to life. The battle at the end was a good laugh. Thank you.
- A lovely morning at Wigston library with great crafting activities. Thank you for being so kind.
- I loved the Easter craft event at Wigston library. It was fun, exciting and I loved drawing and making things.
- The Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre is well worth a visit! The staff and volunteers were a credit to the site and the videos were a good way of showing the time-line of what occurred.
- The Roald Dahl craft event at Oadby Library was a very interesting theme for the kids, which they enjoyed and the staff were very helpful too.
- The 1620s House & Gardens is a beautiful place to visit. We enjoyed a lovely lunch in a beautiful garden, thanks to the staff for making us so welcome.
- The Wigston library fairy garden event was really good and a well planned session, the kids really enjoyed it.
- I really enjoyed the Air-Dry Clay event at Hinckley Library, amazing across all ages.
- The activities at Wigston Library was so fun, I want to do it again.
- What a lovely place, it is quite an oasis. We were greeted by enthusiastic staff most of them were volunteers and we were impressed by their knowledge of how people lived in 1620's. There were lovely gardens and splendid collection of cakes.
- Interesting exhibition at the site of the alleged Battlefield, also interesting for children and the staff are extremely friendly.
- Fantastic family adventure, exploring dragons and history! All very entertaining and informative, fantastic location, great staff and lovely atmosphere.
- My boys had a great time at Oadby Library, never seen them have so much fun in the library. The activities were great and they really enjoyed making new friends too.
- I wish to thank Joy, the Occupational Therapist who came to our home to carry out an assessment. She was extremely thorough, checked everything and offered excellent advice and feedback.
- I'd like to thank Damien who was relentless in supporting us get our lovely Mum released from Preston Lodge as the place was not as was offered to us by the hospital
- Very impressed in the professional manner a very challenging case was dealt with . Thank you to the Mental Health Act Team and Caroline Killaheen
- Heather has such a lovely but professional way in which she conducts and projects herself and she obviously knows her job inside out. I just wanted to take this opportunity to say that Heather is a credit to your department.

Appendix B: sample of LGO outcomes 2025-26

Domiciliary care 24-Jun-2025

Mrs H complained a Care Provider wrongly told her that her mother, Mrs G, would not have to pay for care she received at home for six weeks. We did not uphold the complaint. While there was some evidence to support Mrs H's account and some poor complaint handling by the Provider, this did not cause Mrs G or Mrs H an injustice.

Assessment and care plan 01-Jul-2025

Mrs X complained the NHS Trust and the Council discharged her father from hospital into an unsuitable care home. We found fault by the NHS Trust, but we could not say this would have led to a different outcome. The NHS Trust has already accepted the fault, but we recommended it apologises to Mrs X for the uncertainty caused. We did not find fault by the Council's actions, but we did find fault with how it dealt with Mrs X's complaint. We made recommendations to address this.

Domiciliary care 15-Sep-2025

We will not investigate this complaint about adult social care provided at home, and specifically about the mismanagement of medication. It is unlikely we would add to the Council's investigation or reach a different outcome. There is not enough outstanding injustice to justify our involvement; the Council apologised to recognise the impact of failings in service. We are satisfied with the actions the Council took.

Domiciliary care 13-Oct-2025

Mrs X complains on behalf of Mr and Mrs Y that the Council has not dealt with adult social care properly, causing avoidable distress and Mr and Mrs Y's needs not being met. The Council is at fault because Mrs X was not informed about bathing issues, Mr and Mrs Y missed some care, and the Care Provider did not respond to the complaint properly. Mrs X suffered avoidable distress and had to provide some care to Mr and Mrs Y. Mr and Mrs Y suffered a lack of care. The Council should apologise to Mrs X and Mr and Mrs Y.

Domiciliary care 21-Oct-2025

Mrs X complained the Council failed to ensure her mother, Mrs Y, had suitable care at home. The Council was at fault. It was also at fault in how it decided that it would not take action to safeguard Mrs Y's welfare. The faults caused Mrs X significant distress and uncertainty, for which the Council will apologise and pay her £300. It will also issue a staff reminder to prevent similar fault in future.

Other 24-Feb-2026

We do not consider Leicestershire County Council acted with fault when it decided certain care homes could meet Mrs D's assessed needs on discharge from hospital. The Council did not act with fault when it decided she should pay a top-up, despite jointly funding that placement with the NHS Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board under Section 117 of the Mental Health Act. However, the Council's communication around the Section 117 top-up arrangement and invoices amounted to fault which caused Mrs D's daughter, Miss D, inconvenience and stress. But we consider the Council has already remedied that injustice to her.

Assessment and care plan 25-Mar-2026

Mrs X complained about the actions of Leicestershire County Council (the Council), Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (the Trust) and HC-One Ltd (the Provider). She complained about faults in the way her late brother Mr Z was discharged from hospital, in his residential care and in the handling of concerns, safeguarding and complaints. We upheld elements of all three complaints. We recommended the organisations apologise and provide remedies to Mrs X. We also recommended service improvements. The organisations accepted our recommendations, so we have completed our investigation.



ADULTS AND CULTURAL SERVICES
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 7 SEPTEMBER 2026

CARE QUALITY COMMISSION ASSESSMENT 2025
IMPROVEMENT PLAN DELIVERY UPDATE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADULTS AND CULTURAL SERVICES

Purpose of report

- 1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update of the progress made to deliver the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Improvement Plan, prior to submission of the progress update to the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) due 17 September 2026.
- 2 The Committee is requested to comment on the Adults rural underrepresented communities grant scheme, included in this report.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

- 3 In November 2024, the Committee received a report summarising the position and process for the CQC assessment following the initial notification of assessment received on 9 September 2024. The report included the updated self-assessment and alongside plans to prepare for the CQC assessment site visit.
- 4 In January 2025, the Committee received an update on the position relating to preparations and readiness for the CQC assessment site visit during week of 24 February 2025.
- 5 In November 2025, the Committee received a report summarising the CQC assessment findings, highlighting key strengths and areas for development. A summary Improvement Plan was presented which outlined the actions to deliver improvements identified in the CQC assessment report. The Committee requested quarterly progress updates to align with the DHSC reporting cycle.
- 6 In January, March, and June 2026, the Committee received reports providing updates on progress made with delivering the CQC Improvement Plan.

Background

- 7 The CQC published its assessment report of Leicestershire in September 2025, giving an overall rating of Requires Improvement.

- 8 Authorities achieving a Requires Improvement rating are required to develop an Improvement Plan and provide quarterly reporting to the DHSC, demonstrating progress with improvement actions.
- 9 DHSC contract with Partners in Care and Health (PiCH) to work with councils assessed as requires improvement. The nominated PiCH Improvement Advisor is working with Leicestershire to co-ordinate the response, ongoing review and support activities, outlined below:
 - Stage 1 - response to the CQC Assessment report, submitted 27 September 2025, including a response to the CQC findings, emerging improvement priorities and action planning.
 - Stage 2 – report including the Improvement Plan and oversight arrangements and the support required to deliver the plan. Submitted 17 December 2025.
 - Stage 3 – quarterly updates to DHSC commenced 17 March 2026 with the following update sent on 17 June 2026. The CQC Improvement Plan, attached as an Appendix to this report, will be submitted to the DHSC along with a summary report provided by the PiCH Care and Health Improvement Advisor.
- 10 Programme management and governance is in place to deliver the CQC Improvement Plan; internal oversight of progress is through the monthly Departmental Transformation Delivery Board.
- 11 Communication and engagement with staff and people who draw on services is taking place to inform and deliver the Improvement Plan actions.

Improvement Plan Delivery Update

Timeliness of Assessments and Reviews

- 12 The number of people waiting significantly longer than 28 days for their assessment continues to reduce, with the introduction of temporary staff to address waiting times. In August 2026, 3.3% waited over 28 days, compared to 11% in January 2026 and 18% in August 2025. Process and practice improvements continue to support sustained improvement, alongside updated operational dashboards to monitor timescales.
- 13 Permanent social work staff have been recruited, and onboarding is underway to sustain capacity and continue addressing assessment waiting times. At the end of August 2026, 101 people were waiting for an assessment, compared to 137 twelve months previously. The maximum wait duration was 29 days on 17 August, reduced from 157 days twelve months previously.
- 14 Challenges with recruitment and retention in the new Carers' Team have affected the ability to address carer assessment. However, some additional capacity is now in place, and further new recruits are expected to commence in late summer. Process

and tools have been introduced to ensure carer assessments are consistent with other assessments, supporting positive outcomes.

- 15 The focus remains on addressing timeliness of assessment and reviews. Engaging an external organisation to undertake some assessments and reviews is underway, with close oversight from the Council and escalation processes in place to ensure quality. 65% of all Carers assessments were allocated within 28 days, a further 12% were allocated within 4-8 weeks. The median wait duration for a carer assessment over the past 12-months was 0 days, reduced from 157 days twelve months previous.
- 16 The timeliness of financial assessments has significantly improved. Additional staffing and continued improvement work have reduced waits. As of 3 August 2026, 10 people were awaiting financial assessment, reduced from 102 at the start of January 2026. The average (median) wait time for residential assessments was 9 days, down from 14 days, and for non-residential assessments it was 3 days, down from 14 days in January 2026.
- 17 Maximum wait times for financial assessments have also improved. As of 3 August 2026, the maximum wait time for non-residential assessment was 9 days and for residential assessment was 21 days, reduced from 29 days and 425 days respectively in January 2026. This work will now continue as business as usual, with further improvement through process and use of technology.
- 18 The external Occupational Therapy (OT) assessment service, which began at the end of April 2026, is showing benefits following the resolution of some initial operational challenges. As of 26 August 2026, the number of people waiting for assessment was 527, down from 740 at the start of January 2026. Snapshot data from 12 August 26 shows a 93% reduction in people waiting over 2 months, from 246 in November 2025 to 18. The median wait time over the past 12-months 26 days.
- 19 OT improvement work is progressing - a new Team Manager is in post, and a redesign is expected to gather pace, with processes and structures being implemented to strengthen capacity. Reporting dashboards to support the flow of work are nearly complete.
- 20 Review teams continue to prioritise the longest overdue reviews, with targeted work underway to ensure reviews are completed and recorded consistently across all teams. Current performance indicates that 81% of people have a review completed within 12 months, compared with the latest national average of 57%.
- 21 Annual review performance continues to improve. The average (median) waiting time over the past 12 months was 36 days and close to target, with significant improvement since July 2025. Maximum waiting time over the past 12 months is 1,204 days, down from 2,729 days in July 2025. The proportion of reviews overdue by more than 3 months is currently 40%, down from 46% at the start of January 2026.
- 22 Engagement with staff continues to inform changes to guidance, tools and practice. This is supporting more effective management of incoming referrals to teams.

Access, Information, Advice and Guidance

- 23 Additional customer service advisors are now in post and are having a positive impact on call response times. Changes to the telephone menu system have been drafted and are subject to a final round of engagement and approval prior to implementation.
- 24 Recommendations from Loughborough University Design School's review of the Council's adult social care web pages were received in June and set out a customer journey-focused revision of the website. These recommendations will inform longer-term changes to online information and advice. An approach to reviewing website content in the next 3 months has been agreed.
- 25 The adult social care chatbot has launched on the Leicestershire County Council website, making it easier for people to find the information that they need. Referral routes to support people to access information online are nearly finalised.

Reablement and Hospital Discharge

- 26 A new hospital discharge information leaflet is being distributed to people preparing to leave hospital. Seven-day working is in place where required within social care, and communications are ongoing with providers to facilitate responses to requests for adult social care support at weekends.
- 27 A business case for recruitment and retention enhancements in the reablement service has been completed and is being considered. Recruitment is ongoing and capacity has increased by 15.24 full-time equivalent posts.

Carers Strategy (2026-2030) and Support Service

- 28 Consultation on the draft Carers Strategy 2026-2030 is complete, with the strategy and delivery plan due to be considered by Cabinet in September 2026.
- 29 Work is underway to consider the structures required to deliver an enhanced carers' offer aligned with the Council's strategic priorities.

Sufficiency of Provider Services

- 30 The Community Life Choices (day services) commissioning process is starting. Contingency arrangements are being put in place to ensure that people do not experience disruption to their service.
- 31 A business case for new extra care development has been approved.

- 32 Development of commissioning dashboards is underway, supporting improved understanding of demand, capacity and gaps in services. Commissioning activity continues to promote equity of access, particularly for rural and isolated communities.

Equity of Access and Experience

- 33 A proposal to offer small grants to local community organisations is being progressed. The Overview and Scrutiny committee is requested to review the proposal prior to consideration by Cabinet,
- 34 This scheme will support the Adult Social Care CQC improvement programme by addressing inequalities in access to preventative support and strengthening community capacity in areas where provision is currently limited.
- 35 By investing in locally delivered VCSE services within underrepresented rural communities, the scheme will help people access support closer to home, reduce social isolation, better support carers, deliver greater reach into underserved communities and promote independence and wellbeing.
- 36 It is focused on supporting adults who have needs or who are likely to have needs arising from physical or mental impairment which has or is likely to have a significant impact on their wellbeing.
- 37 The scheme is comprised of two separate elements to help achieve as much impact as possible;
- 38 Connections Fund using the expertise of existing local VCSE organisations to build community capacity, stimulate the development of new types of VCSE services and support in specific underrepresented areas of the county. Awards will be to the value of £15,000 per award and made following a request for quote process.
- 39 Grant Fund to sustain and grow existing groups, alongside supporting new, emerging services by providing a funding route towards the costs associated with running and delivering services that meet the scheme criteria. This might include room rental, equipment for activities, sessional staffing costs for activities, volunteer expenses, transport, and refreshments. It will enable groups to maintain and develop current services and help to stabilise this type of support within communities. Awards will be restricted to up to £5,000 p.a. per organisation.
- 40 A budget of £800,000 over a 4-year period is available (£200,000 per annum.) and this will be shared between the two funds. Funding allocations between the two elements will be reviewed periodically to ensure they continue to reflect local needs and demand.
- 41 Ownership of both elements of the scheme will be with the ACS Department. The administration of the Grant Fund will be shared between ACS and PHCLG, which will bring expertise from colleagues who have managed former grant schemes. It is anticipated that the administration and operating costs of the scheme will be met by existing resources.

- 42 An online Grant Fund application process will be put in place by ACS, and applications received and assessed in each round of funding will be considered at a Panel Decision Meeting for approval, chaired by an ACS Lead Commissioner.
- 43 To ensure transparency and fairness, all applications will be assessed against agreed criteria and considered via the panel process. Decisions and funding outcomes will be documented, with appropriate governance and monitoring arrangements in place to ensure accountability for the use of public funds.
- 44 Within 12 months of a grant award organisations will need to provide evidence of how the grant was spent along with submitting an online grant outcomes report. As part of the overall monitoring process a selection of these organisations will be required to share their experiences and learning by delivering presentations to local communities and other stakeholders.
- 45 The County Council cabinet will be asked to approve the establishment of the grant scheme.

Safeguarding

- 46 A revised safeguarding referral form is now live, reducing barriers for professionals making referrals. An updated web page also provides clearer access to referral routes.
- 47 A mechanism to ensure referrers are informed of the outcome of safeguarding enquiries has been agreed; the required system tools are in place and supporting guidance is to be finalised before the procedure is launched.
- 48 Safeguarding pathway reporting changes have been agreed, and minor system change is complete, supporting development of a dashboard to provide enhanced reporting and monitoring of agreed target timescales.

Pathway for Adulthood

- 49 The corporate pathway for adulthood project board continues to drive change to the pathway. Workstreams are progressing and a transition panel pilot is operational.
- 50 Parent and carer engagement has been strengthened, alongside joint working between Adults & Cultural Services and Children & Family Services departments.

Workforce

- 51 A review of case complexity is nearing completion, with findings to be reported and next steps agreed, which will inform allocation of cases to appropriately skilled workers, and practice improvement.

- 52 The new audit assurance group provides oversight of all practice audits and progress with implementing practice improvement, and communicating messages with staff, such as through infographics.
- 53 The workforce plan is being finalised following consultation feedback.
- 54 The Adult Mental Health Professional (AMHP) operating model has been agreed, with recruitment and onboarding underway.

Partnerships in Joint Funding

- 55 Work with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) has resumed in earnest, with a commitment to joint working. A revised deadline of October 2026 has been set to agree the revised joint funding policy and process. The ICB is to develop a plan to increase Funded Nursing Care (FNC) determinations in 2026.

Performance and Oversight

- 56 Revised waiting list dashboards for Care Act assessments, carers assessments and reviews have been completed. Development continues on safeguarding and assessment for equipment dashboards, and of additional operational dashboards to support workflow management.
- 57 Work has commenced with an external agency, funded by PiCH, to further enhance the department's culture relating to the use of data and insights across the service.

Looking Ahead and Liaison with CQC

- 58 The chosen scenario for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) was announced by central government on 16 July. From April 2028, Leicestershire County Council will no longer exist, and two new unitary councils, Leicester Council and Leicestershire and Rutland Council, will provide services for the respective geographical areas. A major change initiative will plan and implement the necessary structures and services.
- 59 On 22 July, CQC published an update on how it will regulate councils' adult social care functions during the period of LGR. While CQC has advised that it will take a proportionate and flexible approach to assessment during this period of change, it has also been clear that regulatory oversight of local authorities will continue, with a focus on how services identify and respond to risks and deliver their legal duties.

Although the Council's adult social care services are now unlikely to be subject to a full assessment before or in the 6 months after LGR vesting day (1 April 2028), a 'focused assessment' may be conducted much sooner, for which detailed guidance was issued by CQC on 7 August.

- 60 Focused assessments will be targeted reviews of specific areas of a local authority's adult social care performance. They may be undertaken to follow up identified risks, assess progress against improvement actions, respond to concerns identified through monitoring, or provide assurance on priority areas, including those linked to the

Secretary of State's priorities for adult social care (commissioning high-quality outcomes, preventing care needs from escalating, and delivering joined-up support in communities). Focused assessments will examine up to three quality statements and may include information requests, stakeholder feedback, staff engagement and a site visit, where required.

- 61 The scope of a focused assessment is determined using intelligence gathered through CQC's monitoring, previous assessments, stakeholder feedback, and information provided by the Council. CQC will notify the authority of the scope, evidence requirements and any planned site visit, usually providing four to six weeks' notice before a visit.
- 62 A focused assessment could result in updated scores for the quality statements reviewed and a published report setting out strengths, areas for development and the direction of improvement. However, focused assessments will not change a local authority's overall CQC rating. Findings from focused assessments may also inform the timing and focus of future comprehensive assessments.
- 63 Scheduled assurance meetings are still expected to be held between CQC and the Director of Adult Social Services (DASS), the Principal Social Worker and other key officers. Assurance meetings will follow an agenda set by the CQC and will consider the Council's self-assessment, key data, areas of strength and innovation, progress with improvements since the previous CQC assessment report and may also consider emerging themes from feedback.
- 64 Preparations will include an updated self-assessment which will reflect the improvements made and their impact on outcomes for people. The Council has also drawn on learning from the key characteristics of local authorities that achieved outstanding and good overall ratings, summarised in the report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee in June 2026. This will further enhance the quality and impact of services and people's experiences.

Key Risks

- 65 Failure to make adequate progress with the improvement actions identified will result in further intervention from DHSC.
- 66 A second consecutive Requires Improvement rating would lead to enhanced support and monitoring, including direct engagement by DHSC. Although a full assessment will not take place until after LGR vesting day, there may be further DHSC intervention if a focused assessment, which may take place in the meantime, is not satisfactory.

Resource Implications

- 67 Significant resource is required to deliver the improvement actions identified in the CQC assessment report; financial resource was confirmed through the Medium Term Financial Strategy process by the full Council on 18 February 2026.

- 68 Additional short-term resource is in place to ensure sufficient capacity to reduce the waiting time for assessments. Recruitment of longer-term roles to enhance capacity in key teams is underway.
- 69 Technology will be used wherever possible to improve access to information and streamline processes to which will support improvement activities. Business Intelligence Service resource will be required to deliver enhancements to performance reporting and oversight.
- 70 The Director of Corporate Resources and Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on the contents of this report.

Recommendations

- 71 The Committee is requested to comment on the progress made to deliver the CQC improvement plan, and specifically on the Adults Rural Underrepresented Communities Grant scheme, included in this report prior to consideration by Cabinet.

Timetable for Decisions

- 71 Progress with delivering the CQC Improvement Plan will continue to be presented to this Committee on a quarterly basis.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

- 72 None.

Equality Implications

- 73 There are no human rights implications arising from this report. Any proposed changes to the Council's policies, procedures, functions, and services which may arise from delivery of its Improvement Plan will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessments.

Human Rights Implications

- 74 There are no human rights implications arising from this report. Any proposed changes to the Council's policies, procedures, functions, and/or services which may arise from delivery of its assurance Improvement Plan will be referred immediately to the Council's Legal Services for advice and support regarding human rights implications.

Appendix

CQC Improvement Plan – Appendix A

Background Papers

- Report to the Adults and Cultural Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 1 June 2026 Care Quality Commission Assessment 2025 – Improvement Plan Delivery Update
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s196399/CQC%20Improvement%20Plan%20Update.pdf>
- Report to the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 2 March 2026 Care Quality Commission Assessment 2025 – Improvement Plan Delivery Update
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s194927/CQC%20Improvement%20Plan%20Report.pdf>
- Report to the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 19 January 2026 Care Quality Commission Assessment 2025 – Improvement Plan Delivery Update
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s193999/CQC%20Improvement%20Plan%20Update%20January%202026.pdf>
- CQC Leicestershire County Council local authority assessment published 17 September 2025 <https://www.cqc.org.uk/care-services/local-authority-assessment-reports/leicestershire-0925>
- Report to the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 3 November 2025 Care Quality Commission Assessment of Leicestershire County Council's Delivery of Care Act 2014 Duties
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s192588/CQC%20ASSESSMENT%20OFF%20LOCAL%20AUTHORITIES.pdf> - item 36
- Report to the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 20 January 2025 – Assurance of Adult Social Care
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s187689/Report%20CQC%20Assessment%20of%20Local%20Authorities.pdf> – Item 50
- Report to the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 4 November 2024 – Assurance of Adult Social Care
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s186111/CQC%20ASSESSMENT%20OFF%20LAS.pdf> – item 35
- Report to the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 6 March 2024 – Assurance of Adult Social Care -
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1040&MId=7107&Ver=4> – item 65

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Care Quality Commission Improvement Plan
Updated: 26 August 2026

Improvement Area	Actions	Outcome(s)	Delivery Date	Progress	Progress Narrative
Timeliness of Assessments and Reviews	Care and Support Assessment 1. Short-term and long-term increase in team capacity to reduce waits for assessment 2. Review process and capacity required to maintain assessment wait targets 3. Implement as required recommendations of the review.	1. Care Act Assessments to be allocated within 28 days 2. Median wait times to not exceed 14 days 3. Maximum wait times to not exceed 56 days	Jun-26	75%	At the end of August 2026, 101 people were waiting for their assessment to commence, compared to 133, 12-months previous. Median wait duration: average over past 12 months - 3 days. Current snapshot on 17 August - 2 days, with a 4-week moving average of 1.5 days Max wait duration: on 17 August the 4-week moving average was 81 days, down from 150 12-months previous. Sustained decrease in the number of people waiting significantly longer than 28 days for their assessment, in August 2026 3.3% waited over 28 days compared to 11% January 2026 and 18% August 2025. Implementation of improvement in process and practice continues to support sustained improvement in waits, alongside updated operational dashboards to monitor timescales.
	Carer Assessment 1. Short-term and long-term increase in team capacity to reduce waits for assessment 2. Review process and capacity required to maintain assessment wait targets 3. Implement as required recommendations of the review.	1. Carers assessments to be allocated within 28 days 2. Median wait time to not exceed 14 days 3. Maximum wait time to not exceed 56 days	Aug-26	60%	Challenges with recruitment and retention within the Carers Team has impacted capacity to address timelines of assessment. Some additional capacity is in place with additional new recruits expected to commence late summer 2026. Median wait duration: average over past 12 months - 0 days. Current snapshot on 17 August - 1 day 65% of Carers assessments were allocated within 28 days, a further 12% were allocated within 4-8 weeks.
	Financial Assessment 1. Increase in capacity to reduce waits for assessment 2. Review process and capacity required to maintain assessment wait targets 3. Implement as required recommendations of the review.	1. Median wait times to not exceed 14 working days 2. Maximum wait times to not exceed 56 working days 3. Number of people awaiting financial assessment to not exceed 45	Jul-26	100%	Impact of additional staffing and continued improvement work has reduced waits for financial assessments to be completed, with all targets achieved over a sustained period. As of 03/08/26: Total number of people awaiting assessment is 10 reduced from 102 at the start of January 2026. Median wait time for Residential was 9 days, down from 14 days and Non-Residential assessment is 3 days down from 14 days in January 2026. Maximum wait time for Non-Residential assessment is 9 days and for Residential assessment 21 days (down from 29 days and 425 days in January 2026 respectively).

Improvement Area	Actions	Outcome(s)	Delivery Date	Progress	Progress Narrative
	Occupational Therapy (OT): 1. Review OT teams functions and capacity to meet demand for OT assessments 2. Review OT assessment process 3. Implement recommendations from the reviews to reduce waiting times 4. Work with partners to reduce the timeframe for installation of major adaptations	1. Median wait times for allocation to not exceed 28 days 2. Maximum wait times for allocation to not exceed 56 days 3. Delivery of equipment to be within 5 working days 4. Installation of minor adaptations to be within 60 days 5. Installation of major adaptations to be completed within 120 days	Nov-26	60%	An external service continues to complete OT assessments. Case completions have increased from 23 during April to 76 during July. 173 Cases completed to the end July with 119 cases in progress with the service. Development of reporting dashboards to support the flow of work is nearing completion. As of 26/08/26 the waiting lists for assessment was 527, down from 740 at the start of January 2026. Snapshot data from 12/08/26 shows a 93% reduction in people waiting over 2 months, from 246 in November 2025 to 18. Median wait time over the past 12-months 26 days.
	Annual Review: 1. Review and address current overdue annual reviews 2. Review process and capacity required to meet targets 3. Implement as required recommendations of the review.	1. Increase reviews completed within 12 months to 85% 2. Reduce Median overdue waiting time to 30 days of due date 3. Reduce Maximum overdue duration to 90 days of due date	Aug-26	60%	Current performance indicates 81% of people have a review completed within 12 months (latest national average 57%). Median Waiting Time (past 12 months) 36 days, close to target and a significant improvement since July 2025 Max Waiting Time (past 12 months) 1,204 days, a reduction from 2,729 in July 2025. The current most over due review is 649 days. Targeted work is underway to address the most overdue reviews. The proportion of reviews overdue by more than 3 months is currently 40% down from 46% at the start of January 2026.
	Waiting Well: 1. Complete the Waiting Well Audit, and recommend actions to ensure the policy is followed consistently across all teams 2. Implement ongoing monitoring of the Waiting Well policy	1. Waiting Well policy performance monitoring in place	Jul-26	65%	Findings from the Waiting Well Audit and engagement with staff has informed change to guidance, tools and practice due to be launched September 2026, to ensure effective management of incoming referrals to teams.
Access, Information Advice and Guidance (IAG)	Provision of Information, Advice and Guidance: 1. Review online information and referral forms/self-assessments, ensure they are easy to understand and accessible (including Carers Information) 2. Review access to information for people with no or limited access to digital formats, develop and implement solutions to improve/support accessibility 3. Review people's experience when contacting the Council, develop and implement solutions to improve experiences 4. Consider how the effectiveness of the signposting and IAG offer can be measured and reported	1. Improve call handling times 2. Improved customer satisfaction 3. More people state they can access the information and advice they need 4. Mechanism to be developed to seek feedback about provision of information and signposting	Oct-26	60%	Additional Customer Service advisors are in post having a positive impact on call response times. Changes to the telephone menu system are drafted for a final round of engagement and approval prior to implementation. Loughborough University Design school Information & advice recommendations received, these set out a customer journey focussed revision of the website which will inform longer-term changes. Plans and approach to review website content agreed with initial review activity underway. Website Chatbot launched on LCC website enhancing search functionality. Referral routes that support people to access information on-line nearing implementation.

Improvement Area	Actions	Outcome(s)	Delivery Date	Progress	Progress Narrative
Reablement and Hospital Discharge	Hospital Discharge: 1. Define 7-day working and practices that facilitate safe and timely hospital discharges 2. Review and update the information provided about support when discharged from hospital	1. People are discharged on the most appropriate pathway 2. Information provided to people during discharge is clear 3. Brokerage/commissioning of support does not delay discharge, increase number of discharges at weekends.	Jul-26	100%	A Hospital discharge information leaflet being is distributed to people when preparing to leave hospital. 7-day working in place within social care, communications are on-going with providers to ensure responses to requests for support at weekends.
	Reablement Service: 1. Expand reablement capacity to provide more people with opportunity to maximise independence	1. Access to reablement is available for everyone who would benefit on discharge from hospital or first presentation to Adult Social Care services	Oct-26	70%	Benchmarking and data analysis complete, informing Business case for recruitment and retention enhancements, corporate sign-off expected imminently. Recruitment is on-going with capacity increased by 15.24FTE.
Carer Support	Carers Service 1. Develop new Carer Strategy 2. Design and develop new Carers Support Service offer 3. Review information to ensure it is clear and accessible 4. Ensure carers are engaged in co-production of service development and strategy	1. Information is clear and accessible in a range of formats and places 2. Carers reported satisfaction with services and access to information is improved. 3. Revised Carers Strategy 2026-2030 and delivery plan in place	Nov-26	60%	Carers Strategy 2026-2030 consultation complete, strategy and delivery plan to be presented to Cabinet early September 2026. Consideration of the structures to deliver an enhanced carers service aligned with the strategic priorities is underway to ensure a holistic approach.
Sufficiency and quality of provider services	Commissioning Services: 1. Continue to develop support options as set out in the market position statement (Extra Care and Supported Living) 2. Re-procurement of Community Life choices (CLC) 2026-2030 to ensure sufficient capacity in day services to meet identified needs 3. Develop Commissioning dashboard to show demand and capacity across all support types 4. Ensure commissioned services are available to communities particularly rural areas	1. Recommissioned Day services (CLC) 2. Increase in Extra Care and Supported Living places 3. Commissioning dashboard in place to show any gaps in services	Aug-26	30%	CLC Day services commissioning is underway, with contingency arrangements in place Supported Accommodation options being considered. New Extra Care development business case approved and active discussions with developers continue. Commissioning dashboards scoping underway and initial development commenced.
Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion	Equity of access and experience: 1. Review access to social care support for people experiencing homelessness, develop options to address any barriers and work with partners to implement solutions as required 2. Work with community organisations to enhance engagement with and support to rural communities 3. Address digital exclusion (included in IAG Actions)	1. Homeless people with eligible social care needs are able to access social care support 2. Access to social care is equitable across the County	Aug-26	60%	Proposal to offer small grants to local community organisations grants is being progressed. Commissioning activity (home care, CLC Day services, supported accommodation and Carers) continues to promote equity of access for all and particularly rural and isolated provision. Corporate Prevention Review continues to work towards strengthening pathways between adult social care services and Public Health teams supporting access to social care for people at risk of homelessness with presenting needs.

Improvement Area	Actions	Outcome(s)	Delivery Date	Progress	Progress Narrative
Safeguarding	Application of Safeguarding Pathway and Process: 1. Enhance the functionality and accessibility of the Safeguarding Referral Portal 2. Establish a standard operating procedure to inform referrers and key partners of the outcomes of Section 42 enquiries	1. Providers and referring agencies can easily refer safeguarding concerns and concerns for welfare appropriately. 2. Referring agencies receive feedback on safeguarding concerns raised.	Mar-26	85%	The revised safeguarding referral form is live, reducing barriers to professionals making referrals. An updated web page also provides clearer access to referral routes. A mechanism to ensure referrers are informed of the outcome of safeguarding enquiries has been agreed.
	Safeguarding data and oversight: 1. Strengthen data collection and performance monitoring of the effectiveness and timeliness of safeguarding processes. 2. Establish regular audit cycles to evaluate the application of safeguarding processes, and quality of practice.	1. Management information informs operational and strategic decision making in line with safeguarding policy and procedures. Regular audits in place to evidence outcomes	Mar-26	75%	Safeguarding pathway reporting logic agreed. Development of dashboard to provide the enhanced reporting and monitoring of agreed target timescales. Safeguarding focussed case audit complete, findings informing action planning to address identified quality concerns.
Pathway for Adulthood	Preparing for Adulthood: 1. Enhance partnership with Children's services (Specialist Educational Needs and Disabilities [SEND]) to support early engagement of young people requiring adult social care 2. Improve information provided to young people and families 3. Review staffing establishment to ensure capacity to deliver improved outcomes for young people	1. Young people likely to be eligible for adult social care identified for assessment appropriately 2. Commence assessment of all young people transitioning from children's services to adult services on or before their 17th Birthday. 3. Young Adult Disability Team has the required capacity and skills	Sep-26	80%	Corporate Pathway for Adulthood Project Board driving change to the pathway. A Transition Solution Panel pilot is operational, the cohort allocation tool testing is complete for launch next month. End to end process mapping is complete and new operating processes agreed.
Workforce	Caseload Review: Review case loads and allocations across Operational Commissioning	1. Case loads across locality teams are manageable and in line with the operating model	Aug-26	65%	Case Complexity review nearing completion, findings to be reported and next steps agreed to inform allocation and practice improvement.
	Practice Assurance: Develop mechanisms to demonstrate the impact of practice assurance action plans on teams and practice	1. Evidence of the impact of PDC audit is available through staff feedback	Aug-26	85%	New Audit Assurance Group implemented, providing oversight of all practice audits & progress with implementing practice improvement Assurance feedback process being embedded and infographic designed to share audit outcomes with staff.
	Workforce Plan: 1. Complete updated Workforce Plan 2025-2026 2. Monitor delivery of the plan to address recruitment and retention challenges	1. Improvement in recruitment and retention in key roles 2. Increase uptake of professional training opportunities	Jun-26	80%	Workforce plan being finalised with feedback from consultation.
	Adult Mental Health Professional (AMHP) Establishment: 1. Review AMHP establishment and operating model	1. Revised operating model in place 2. AMHP Team capacity sufficient to meet demand	Jun-26	80%	AMHP Operating model agreed, further round of recruitment underway with on-boarding of previous recruits underway.

Improvement Area	Actions	Outcome(s)	Delivery Date	Progress	Progress Narrative
Performance and oversight	Data and insights: 1. Review current performance reporting to ensure it is relevant, accurate and informs operational and strategic commissioning 2. Ensure robust performance monitoring and oversight 3. Ensure robustness of quality assurance/audit process, reporting and feedback 4. Communicate how data is used in frontline teams to improve outcomes	1. Revised Performance reporting dashboards developed to support management oversight and inform decision making	Oct-26	65%	Revised tableau dashboards for Care Act Assessments, and Carers Assessments and reviews is complete, developments continue with safeguarding and assessment for equipment dashboards. Refinement and development of additional operational dashboards to support work flow management is underway. Work has commenced with an external agency to further enhance the development of the culture in relation to use of data and insights across the service, key priorities identified and being actioned.
Partnerships	Communication with partners: 1. Improve understanding of joint funding processes 2. Increase number of people determined as eligible for Funded Nursing Care (FNC)	1. Undertake staff training in joint funding process and practice 2. Increase in FNC determinations to 60 people per 50k population	Oct-26	65%	Work with the ICB has resumed in earnest with a commitment to joint working. Revised deadline to agreed revised Joint funding Policy and process of October 2026. ICB to develop plan to increase FNC Determinations 2026. NHS East & Rutland 42.2 per 50K NHS West Leics 43.8 per 50k

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**ADULTS AND CULTURAL SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE: 7 SEPTEMBER 2026**

LEICESTERSHIRE CARERS STRATEGY 2026-2030

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADULTS AND CULTURAL SERVICES

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Adults and Cultural Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the results of the public consultation on the Leicestershire Carers Strategy 2026-2030.
2. The Committee is asked to comment on the proposed Carers Strategy and supporting action plan which will be presented to Cabinet for approval.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

3. The Leicestershire County Council Adults and Communities strategy details the ambitions, aims and goals of the department over the next four years (2025 – 2029). It reflects the ambitions of the Council's overall strategic plan.
4. The Care Act (2014) and accompanying statutory guidance set out that where an individual provides or intends to provide care for another adult and it appears that the carer may have any level of needs for support, local authorities must carry out a carer's assessment. The local authority must also identify any children who are involved in providing care.
5. The Children and Families Act (2014) provides young carers and parent carers in England a right to an assessment of their own needs, as well as the cared for person.
6. The Carers Leave Act 2023: gives full-time employees the right to take one week (of up to five days) of unpaid leave per year to allow carers to provide or arrange care for a dependent.
7. NHS 10 Year Health Plan: the latest NHS 10-year plan was published in 2025 and sets out the next 10 years plan (until 2035) how health and care services in England is going to change. There is a focus on prevention services so support can be in place before situations escalate.
8. On 3 December 2025 the Council resolved to formally recognise carers as a group requiring consideration and support, specifically:
 - To ensure carers are consulted and involved in shaping services.
 - To review service delivery to remove barriers for carers.

- Assess future decisions, services and policies made and adopted by the Council to determine the impact of changes on carers.
 - Ensure that these commitments are incorporated into the refresh of the Leicestershire Carers Strategy and any other relevant policies and strategies.
9. In April 2026 the Cabinet agreed to launch a public consultation on the draft strategy.

Background

10. The Leicestershire, Leicester City and Rutland (LLR) Carers Strategy 2022-2025 outlined the vision of how we work collaboratively with partners including the Integrated Commissioning Board (ICB), Leicestershire Partnership Trust (LPT) and commissioned providers to achieve eight key priorities: carer identification, valuing carers, keeping carers informed, developing carer friendly communities, ensuring carers have a life alongside caring, accessing the right support at the right time and recognising young carers.
11. It is proposed that moving forward, Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council and Rutland County Council will now all have individual carers' strategies, specific to each local authority and the requirements of the respective area.
12. Having a specific Leicestershire Carers Strategy will be reflective of Leicestershire carers' voice and how the council can help carers continue with their caring role. The new strategy will also be aligned with the council's values and priorities.
13. The new Leicestershire Carers' Strategy 2026-2030 will address the areas for improvement to strengthen our support to carers. This will include actions resulting from the Care Quality Commission's (CQC) assessment of Leicestershire County Council published in 2025. which highlighted areas of good practice and also areas where improvements can be made including access to information and advice, support for carers in rural communities and timelines of assessment.
14. The strategy will also include actions to address the recommendations of a Peer Review carried out by the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) in May 2026. The review recommended the Council launch a revised strategy, re-energise governance arrangements, plan and work with partners to redesign the offer to carers. The Peer Review final letter and recommendations are appended to this report (Appendix C).

Carers in Leicestershire

15. The Census 2021 data indicates a total of 61,300 of Leicestershire respondents, aged 5 years and above, declaring that they provided unpaid care (9% of population). The highest rate of caring population was among those aged 45 to 64 (15%), followed by those 65 to 84 (11.3%), with women predominating in all but the eldest (aged 85 years and above) group of carers. There is some geographical variation amongst carers in Leicestershire with the highest rate being in Oadby and Wigston (9.8%) and lowest in Harborough (8.3%), unadjusted for age. The rate of employment among carers is slightly higher in Leicestershire compared to the national average, with slightly lower unemployment rate (2% versus 3%).

16. In 2025/2026, 1923 carers assessments were completed in Leicestershire. So far for 2026/2027, 784 have been completed with 16% of these being joint assessments with the cared-for person.
17. There are currently 1,482 carers in receipt of a service from the Council of whom, 1,328 people have a weekly direct payment. A weekly direct payment is a regular amount transferred to the persons payment account to pay for ongoing services, a one-off payment can be up to £250 per year to pay for a larger item such as a washing machine or to put towards several things that will enable the carer to continue caring. The Council does not require a financial contribution toward carer services, and they are not means tested.
18. In addition, around 2,500 carers are supported by the externally commissioned carers service per year.
19. In 2025, a total of 116 young carer assessment referrals were received, with 69 full assessments being completed by the young carer team. In addition, 94 young carers passports were issued and a total of 341 have been issued since the scheme was launched in 2022. The school census data recorded 289 young carers in 2025.

Engagement

20. During the period of October to December 2025, several key engagement activities were undertaken across the County. Carers have been offered a variety of ways to get involved and have their say and help shape the new Leicestershire Carers Strategy.
21. The engagement methods have included face to face group-based engagement and online sessions and surveys.
22. Over 300 adult carers were involved in the development of the draft strategy.
23. The Leicestershire County Council young carers team have also engaged with young carers via the online survey. A total of 19 young carers provided feedback on what is important to them and how they would like to be supported.
24. Over 20 people completed the professionals survey on the carer's strategy. Professionals who participated include - Leicestershire County Council staff, and key partners including Leicestershire Partnership Trust, GP's and local charities who work closely with carers.
25. The engagement activities helped to establish a first draft of the Strategy. Including establishing the following priorities

Priority	Description
Priority one	Carers are recognised, valued, listened to, and supported to continue caring
Priority two	Carers are provided with accurate, timely and relevant information and advice
Priority three	Carers are supported with their wellbeing and access services when needed

26. A report was presented to the Cabinet 24 March 2026 meeting, seeking approval to commence a public consultation on the draft strategy. Cabinet approved the commencement of the public consultation which started in April 2026 and concluded 14 June 2026.
27. Consultation activities included online surveys, online meetings and face to face sessions, engagement with Parent Carers and health partners.

Consultation response

28. The online survey received a total of 160 responses from the following people, some of whom categorised themselves in more than one group:
- Adult carer (122)
 - Parent carer (14)
 - Young carer (5)
 - Sandwich carer (12)
 - Working carer (19)
 - Interested member of the public (5)
 - Professional: health/ social care (5)
 - Other (9) (this includes people who self-identified as previous carers)
29. Of these, 74% thought the draft strategy 'accurately reflected carers issues in Leicestershire' either 'very well' or 'fairly well'. With 18% stating the strategy didn't reflect carers issues 'very well'. The remaining responses stated they didn't know.
30. 94% of responders said that the Priorities detailed in paragraph 26 were 'very important'. Only 5% of responders thought the priorities were the wrong ones.
31. Significant important data was received in free text where responders had kindly taken the time to detail what would make the caring experience better for them. This included areas such as: -
- a) Further respite options
 - b) Focus on young carers
 - c) Better communication between services
 - d) Additional help to understand and apply for benefits
 - e) Further crisis support and;
 - f) Clear information for carers and the cared for person
32. The written responses echoed the in-person and virtual feedback received through carers groups (covering adults, young people and parent carers). The attendance at groups enabled a further 300 carers to have their voices heard and contribute to the consultation. The groups attended were countywide and organised by commissioned services and independent voluntary sector groups. These were often emotional encounters with carers describing the daily experience and how isolating it can feel. Most carers praised the carers groups they attend with many requesting additional groups in local areas and help with transport to the group. Many groups include a place for the cared for person to receive safe support by paid carers so that the unpaid carers can interact with other carers. This model worked incredibly well to reassure the cared for persons and for the carers to feel confident to leave their loved one temporarily.

33. A series of events were held for young people with caring responsibilities and separately for parent carers. Whilst the priorities were relevant to these groups, they expressed a need to have better communication between adults and children services to ensure resilience in the transition of services. Young people specifically asked for better access to respite and to enable schools to identify when young carers are struggling.
34. It has been difficult to engage with groups of people with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010 such as sexuality and ethnicity. Around 93% of people who responded to the online survey identified as white with 6% being Asian and 1% Black. Many different approaches were tried to engage with people identifying as an ethnicity other than white. This included contacting Temples, Mosques and Churches in the Leicestershire area and promoting the consultation through VASL to community groups. Rural carers were further contacted through the Rural Council. Other disparities include 71% respondents being female and 52% of respondents being aged over 63. 4% were under 18.
35. In summary, the consultation and engagement activities further highlighted that carers want
- to be recognised and feel valued and appreciated for what they do on a daily basis,
 - they need further respite to enable them to work and have their own fulfilling life away from the caring responsibility,
 - they often feel lonely and isolated and this affects their sense of wellbeing,
 - they need better easy to understand information across the system,
 - they need access to support outside of normal office hours to support working carers and also at times of crisis,
 - the carers budget has not seen increased with inflation and this needs to be considered.
36. Following the closure of the public consultation the feedback has been analysed and incorporated into a revised draft strategy (Appendix A).
37. The priorities remain the same as the previous draft presented to the Cabinet in March 2026. Additions to the strategy include:
- A greater focus on working carers and parent carers and how the needs of these people may differ from other groups of carers
 - Commitments from health partners to ensure the carers voice is heard when the health of the cared for person is being considered
38. The strategy is accompanied by an action plan (Appendix B). The action plan will be the key document to monitor the delivery of this strategy. This action plan includes proposed commissioning intentions.

Resource Implications

39. The Adults and Communities department spent circa £3.5m in 2025/2026 on the provision of direct services to carers. The majority of this spend was delivered via Direct Payments enabling carers to have choice and control over their support. In addition, the Council spends many millions of pounds on services to people drawing on care and support in order to support carers

40. Inclusive of the above spend is the contract with Voluntary Action South Leicestershire (VASL) which is commissioned to provide advice and support to carers at an annual cost of £181,260. The existing carers support service that is operated by VASL has been extended until 31 March 2028. Any new commissioned services will be developed to deliver the priorities in the strategy once finalised. It is expected that some procurement will be necessary.
41. The Support at Home service commenced in October 2026 and has acted as a managed service for carers where a direct payment was not wanted or suitable. Support at Home supports people with eligible social care needs who need assistance with non-personal care tasks such as cleaning, grocery shopping and befriending. The service has proved to be very popular amongst carers.
42. The carers resource allocation system (RAS) used during an assessment to establish an indicative support budget has not been updated for many years. It is proposed to include the RAS in any development work resulting from the strategy.
43. There is a specific Carers Team located within the Adults and Cultural Services department to support carers assessments, and this team work closely alongside VASL in relation to completion of assessments.

Key risks

44. There is a risk that without appropriate commissioned services carers may not be able to continue in their caring role. This may lead to financial cost to the Authority. It may also mean a deterioration in the wellbeing of carers and the cared for person as they are forced to live apart.
45. The draft strategy has been written with the support and assistance of carers in Leicestershire; however, a risk remains that a proportional number of carers have not been consulted and this may lead to challenge from carers who have not been consulted.

Timetable for Decisions

46. The strategy will be presented to the Cabinet for approval in September 2026.

Conclusions

47. The Committee are asked to note the results of the consultation, make comment on the consultation responses and the revised draft strategy and supporting action plan.

Background papers

48. CQC Assessment of Leicestershire County Council - <https://www.cqc.org.uk/care-services/local-authority-assessment-reports/leicestershire-0925>
49. Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 6th June 2022
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/g6840/Public%20reports%20pack%20Monday%2006-Jun->

[2022%2014.00%20Adults%20and%20Communities%20Overview%20and%20Scrutiny%20Committ.pdf?T=10](#)

50. Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 2nd March 2026
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1040&MId=8355&Ver=4>

51. Cabinet –24th March 2026
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=8305&Ver=4>

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

52. A copy of this report will be circulated to all members of the County Council

Equality Implications

53. An equalities impact assessment has been conducted for the carers strategy. The EIA has been approved by the Adults and Communities Departmental Equality Group.

Human Rights Implications

54. There are no human rights implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Other Relevant Impact Assessments

55. A health impact assessment has been conducted on the draft strategy.

Appendices

Appendix A – Draft Carers Strategy for Leicestershire 2026-2030

Appendix B - Leicestershire Carers Strategy 2026-2030 DRAFT Action Plan

Appendix C – EM ADASS Peer Review Letter

Links to Key documents

- [The Care Act \(2014\)](#)
- [Children and Families Act \(2014\)](#)
- [The Carers Leave Act 2023:](#)
- [NHS 10 Year Health Plan](#)
- [NHS Commitment to Carers 2014](#)
- [Council's overall strategic plan.](#)

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DRAFT Leicestershire County Council Carers Strategy 2026-2030

Recognising, valuing and supporting Leicestershire carers to make a positive difference

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Introduction

This Leicestershire Carers Strategy 2026-2030 has been informed by carers who have engaged extensively with us through surveys, online meetings and face to face carers groups and community groups across the County. Over 300 carers have participated and provided an insight to how they would like to be supported to continue caring.

Thank you to all our carers who took the time to talk to us and completed the survey. Many thanks and gratitude to our key partners and professionals who participated and engaged. All input has been valuable to us in developing the Leicestershire Carers Strategy: 2026-2030.

Carers across Leicestershire play a vital role in caring for and supporting people. Every carer and caring situation is unique and different. Some carers might care for one person, whereas others might care for more than one person, such as a sandwich carer, who might care for their child and also a parent.

This strategy is a framework for developing support for carers. It recognises the increasingly important role that carers play in Leicestershire, alongside the wide variety of caring roles and the diversity of people within these roles.

Leicestershire County Council commitment to carers

On 3 December 2025 the Council resolved to:

- a. Formally recognise carers as a group requiring particular consideration and support, specifically:
 - To ensure carers are consulted and involved in shaping services;
 - To review service delivery to remove barriers for carers.
- b. Assess future decisions, services and policies made and adopted by the Council to determine the impact of changes on carers.
- c. Ensure that these commitments are incorporated into the Carers Strategy and any other relevant policies and strategies.

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Who is a carer?

For the purposes of this strategy, a carer is defined as a person who provides unpaid physical, practical and/or emotional support to a family member or friend who needs help due to physical or mental ill health, a learning disability, neurodivergent needs, age-related frailty, or problems related to drug and alcohol use. Without this support, the person being cared for would find it difficult to manage their day-to-day life or to cope. Carers can be of any age, including children, young people and adults.

Types of carers: *please note this list is not exhaustive*

Adult carer

An adult who provides care for another adult (e.g. partner, family member, friend or neighbour).

You may be working or in education and caring for an adult. You do not have to be living with the person and the help you give doesn't have to be physical care. You may be providing emotional support or practical help.

Adult carer story

'S' used to work as a receptionist at the Leicester Royal Infirmary hospital on the premature baby unit - Neo Natal Unit and is now retired. S now cares for her husband and mother who both have dementia.

S's husband was diagnosed with dementia seven years ago. The dementia is maintained by medication, and he can do most things by himself. S is there to support him if he needs her support. Both like to keep active, by going on regular walks and swims. S believes regular exercise helps keeps her husband active and occupied, which helps with his dementia.

S's mother recently had a CT scan which revealed, her having mixed dementia following a couple of falls. Prior to the diagnosis, S's mother was calling her on a regular basis during the day and at night and making complaints against her. This impacted on S's mental health. S's mother's mixed dementia is maintained by medication and S visits frequently to make sure she is okay and attends to her needs. S does have a sister who helps with online food shopping and telephone calls on a regular basis but does not live locally. S has put measures in place for her

mother including a Lifeline key safe, where emergency services can use a pin to retrieve the key to gain access to the house.

S is registered with Voluntary Action South Leicestershire (VASL): Support for Carers and Alzheimer's Society, where they have provided support, information and advice. S has built up a good relationship with both organisations and know they are only a phone call away if she ever needs their support or need someone to talk to.

S has her own health conditions but has a positive outlook in life. S makes the most of her caring responsibilities and is an advocate for people living with dementia. S is a very active member of the community and attends many dementia local charity events, talking about her caring journey and providing information and advice to other carers in a similar situation. S is very passionate about helping others and feels her experience can help carers who are looking after someone living with dementia.

Working carer

A working carer balances their paid employment along with unpaid care for someone (e.g. partner, family member, friend or neighbour).

Parent carer

A parent or guardian who supports an ill or disabled child (under 18 years) including a child or young person who is misusing or abusing substances and/or alcohol, to a degree greater than would be expected in a parenting role.

Parent carer story

'K' is a parent carer who cares for her son, 'P'. P was diagnosed with autism when he was two years old. K gave up her work to care for P.

During P's first year in college, he had autism burnout and sensory issues. K found caring for P stressful at night because he was having a sensory issue every few hours which resulted in him feeling low, annoyed, frustrated and upset. A Doctor prescribed medication however this was not working. The situation gradually worsened and his sensory issues were not initially addressed and sometimes their voices were not always heard. P lost weight and was not able to stand. K persisted with professionals and it revealed that he was suffering from side effects from the

medication. Support was put into place with regular visits by the crisis team, a specialist consultant was assigned and new medications were prescribed.

P's autism is now managed well. He has the support from their social worker, occupational therapist and physio. K supports her son with keeping him calm, encouraging, reassuring and supporting him when he is frustrated and also with personal care, medication and appointments.

K gets support and meets with other carers once a month which helps with supporting one another, talking through problems and giving some advice. K is also involved with the adult social care engagement panel where she can connect with like-minded people and can work together with them to make a difference.

Sandwich carer

A sandwich carer provides care for another adult (e.g. partner, family member, friend or neighbour) as well as their own children and/or grandchildren.

Young carer

A young carer is someone aged under 18 who cares for a friend or family member who, due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction, cannot cope without their support. Older young carers are also known as young adult carers and they may have different support needs to younger carers.

Young Carer story

My dad has been ill since I was three years old, with multiple cancers and strokes. And my sister has special needs meaning she experiences the world differently and requires a lot of attention. Growing up in this environment meant that, even from a young age, I took on responsibilities that shaped my childhood in ways most children don't experience.

I began to properly understand my role when I was about 11 years old, after my sister's support worker reached out to places to ensure that I had support in place. This is when I learned what a young carer was and how much my life was related to this.

Honestly, my first reaction was confusion. I knew my life was different from other people, but I wasn't sure if it was something to feel proud about or sad and frustrated.

What changed for me

Once I understood what a young carer was, my responsibilities stood out to me much more and I started wondering why I had to take on adult roles whilst my friends were out playing and having fun.

My routine would change when my dad had hospital appointments, and I would constantly have to be at my grandparents. I always had the best time with them, but I could never fully relax and enjoy myself as the hardest part was not knowing what was happening to my dad.

I have always been sporty and loved playing football. This helped me escape from my caring responsibilities at home and gave me somewhere to be a kid again. My friendships did not change, mainly because I never told my friends that I was a young carer. Perhaps if I did, they would have been supportive, but I was constantly worried that if they found out then they wouldn't understand, and I wasn't used to putting my needs first and allowing myself to express my emotions.

How it made me feel

I felt worried, anxious, and overwhelmed, and I struggled to trust people as I wasn't able to predict their responses or reactions. What if they got more people involved? In the end I would tell them I'm fine as it was easier to keep myself to myself.

Because I was so used to putting others before me, being vulnerable was not an option as it felt too uncomfortable and risky.

The hardest part was hiding my emotions at school whilst still being expected to achieve good grades. None of my friends had ever saw me cry, and it just felt safer that way. I didn't want to have to explain myself. But what I found out was that crying isn't a weakness, its possibly one of the strongest emotions to exist. I physically felt like I couldn't talk to anyone, and crying became a way to release everything I couldn't put into words.

What I learned

Being a young carer has helped me develop patience and empathy, which have supported me in my everyday life. I have also become more mature as I have had to grow up much quicker than most people my age.

Being a young carer has shaped the way I look at situations and people making me more understanding and resilient. Although it is challenging, I wouldn't be half the person that I am today.

Who or what helped me

When I think about it, I have been incredibly lucky as everyone has supported me in their own little ways. Even when I said I didn't need it, even without them realising I was a young carer, everyone has helped. My friends supported me the most (and still do!), by getting me out of the house when I'm at my lowest. I have also joined a young carers group which has helped me realise that I'm not alone.

Sports has helped me massively! It has made sure I did something for myself and helped clear my mind of any worries. Music has also become a huge coping strategy, helping me to relax and manage my feelings.

Looking back

Looking back to when I was 11, I feel immensely proud of how far I have come. If I would've known what the next 7 years would look like, I probably would have given up. I do still sometimes wonder why I got given this life, but I also strongly believe that everything happens for a reason and that I was chosen to be a young carer to support those who need it most.

Being a young carer now means being gifted the ability to understand other people on a whole new level, and to carry strength and determination into whatever life throws at you.

I hope for a future where young carers are not recognised for what they are forced to go through, but for all the strength, love and responsibilities that they hold quietly every day. It will be a future where support reaches them before they have to ask, because asking is the hardest and scariest part, especially when you've spent your life being the strong one.

I hope for a future where young carers are supported and reminded that their lives are allowed to be just as full of endless possibilities as anyone else's.

What might a carer do?

Carers often do not recognise themselves as carers, especially when they are caring for someone close to them, like a family member; including a husband, wife, partner, mother, father, sister and brother or a child, or extended family members. If you look after or support someone who would not be able to manage everyday life without your help, it is important that you identify yourself as a carer so you may receive the help and support you are entitled to. Carers may also care for their friends or neighbours.

Here are some examples of what a carer might be supporting the cared-for person with:

- to wash and dress
- help with personal care and housework
- food shopping
- food preparation and cooking
- picking up and administering medication
- taking someone to hospital and GP appointments
- providing company and emotional support
- help with financial paperwork
- Helping with communication and caring for siblings

Leicestershire County Council want to ensure that being a carer doesn't mean that you have to give up work (if you do not want to). It is an individual choice whether to tell an employer about a caring role but there may be extra support available for carers in your workplace if a person does identify themselves as a carer.

As a working carer, there are statutory rights people are entitled to such as applying for flexible working from their employer, time off in emergencies and to accompany

the person being cared for to appointments (paid or unpaid), protection from discrimination, parental leave.

Carers provide essential support to family members and friends who could not manage without their help, forming a vital part of the county's early-intervention and prevention system. As Leicestershire has a larger and faster-growing older population than the national average, the demand for unpaid care is expected to continue rising, driving increasing pressure on both carers and local services.

Young Carers Passports, issued by the Young Carers Service, support children and young people to share information about their caring responsibilities with professionals in schools, health settings, and the wider community, helping them access understanding and support.

Isolated Carers

Carers living in rural areas are at a particular disadvantage, more likely to experience social isolation, transport issues and housing challenges. They may experience limited access to respite, fewer peer support opportunities, higher financial strain (especially from transport and fuel costs), and digital exclusion where connectivity is poor. Smaller local networks intensify emotional strain, isolation, and the feeling of carrying sole responsibility. Cultural expectations to "manage independently" can further discourage carers from seeking support.

This strategy will help to ensure isolated carers have an equitable opportunity to receive support.

"In rural settings, where distances are greater and access to services is often more constrained, the issues faced by unpaid carers can be even more pronounced. It is imperative that we recognise and address these unique challenges to ensure that all carers, regardless of their geographic location, receive the support they need." *Kerry Booth, Chief Executive, Rural Services Network*

National Policy Context

The Care Act (2014) gives unpaid adult carers in England the legal right to an assessment where it is identified they may have needs for care and support, placing them on an equal footing with the people they care for. If the assessment identifies unmet eligible needs, local authorities have a duty to meet them, such as through replacement care or direct payments, information and advice. Local authorities must focus on the carer's wellbeing, including their physical, mental, and emotional health, as well as their ability to work and have a life outside of caring.

The Children Act 1989 prioritises the child's welfare above all else. It mandates that local authorities support families to keep children with their parents or kinship carers, duties that extend to assessing the specific support needs of parent carers and young carers.

The Children and Families Act 2014 gives young carers and parent carers in England clear legal rights to a needs assessment from their local council.

The Young Carers Needs Assessment Regulation 2015 enforces the Children and Families Act 2014, for local authorities in England to assess any young carer under 18 upon request or if it appears they have support needs.

The Carers Leave Act 2023 supports carers in England, Scotland and Wales to balance their work with their unpaid caring responsibilities. This Act gives full-time employees the right to take one week (of up to five days) of unpaid leave per year to allow carers to provide or arrange care for a dependent. Employees can take the unpaid leave flexibly in full or half days or up to a block of whole week.

Local Policy Context

Carers in Leicestershire

The Census 2021 data indicates a total of 61,300 of Leicestershire respondents, aged five years and above, declared that they provide unpaid care (9% of population). The highest rate of caring population was among those aged 45 to 64 (15%), followed by those 65 to 84 (11.3%), with women predominating in all but the eldest group of carers (aged 85 years and above). There is some geographical

variation amongst carers in Leicestershire with the highest rate being in Oadby and Wigston (9.8%) and lowest in Harborough (8.3%), unadjusted for age. The rate of employment among carers is slightly higher in Leicestershire at 3% compared to the national average of 2%.

Building on our achievements

The following are some of the achievements from the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) Joint Carers Strategy Refresh 2022-2025:

- Over 4,400 carers passports were issued and over 5,000 carers' passports were renewed
- Successful early intervention of care technology for people living with dementia
- Launched the hospital discharge grant for carers in January 2023 and successfully supported carers following the cared-for person being discharged from hospital.
- Worked with carers to review and update the LLLR carers information and advice
- Supported working carers with the implementation of the Carers Leave Act 2023
- Issued over 410 young carers passports
- Ibstock school and Kibworth Mead Academy have been awarded a young carers award -the first two schools in Leicestershire to receive this award
- Digitalisation of the carers passport – to enable carers to download and print their own copies
- Development of a standardised emergency plan for carers across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland
- A Young Carer, who is now a Young Adult Carer, was awarded a Lord-Lieutenant's Award in 2026 in recognition of her work supporting the identification of young carers across the county. She also received a separate award for her outstanding contribution to volunteering within the county.

Vision for the Leicestershire Carers Strategy 2026 -2030

Scope

This strategy applies to adults (over 18 years of age) who care, informally for a person who is living in Leicestershire. This may mean that the carer lives outside of Leicestershire but would still be entitled to an assessment from Leicestershire County Council. The strategy also applies to young carers under 18 years and the support they receive will be determined by the Council's Children and Families Service, such as offering an assessment, young carers group and passport ID card.

Through engagement and co-production with carers we have developed a clear vision for the future. Carers, people who have a carer, staff and other stakeholders want the following for each carer in Leicestershire:

- To recognise they are performing a caring role
- To know where to go to ask for support
- To receive help and support to remain physically and mentally well
- To be able to carry on in the caring role if they choose to
- To continue working alongside caring (if they want to)
- To have access to timely, good quality information and advice
- To receive training in the condition for the person they care for, if they want it
- To be able to work, take part in education and activities alongside their caring role
- To take a break from caring when they need it

Engagement and Consultation

During the period of October to December 2025, several key engagement activities were undertaken across the County. Carers have been offered a variety of ways to get involved and have their say and help shape the new Leicestershire Carers Strategy.

The engagement methods have included face to face group-based engagement and online sessions and surveys.

Over 300 adult carers were involved in the development of the draft strategy.

The Leicestershire County Council young carers team have also engaged with young carers via the online survey. A total of 19 young carers provided feedback on what is important to them and how they would like to be supported.

Formal public consultation commenced in April 2026 and concluded June 2026. Consultation activities included online surveys, online meetings and face to face sessions, engagement with Parent Carers and health partners.

The engagement activities helped to establish the following priorities

Priority	Description
Priority one	Carers are recognised, valued, listened to, and supported to continue caring
Priority two	Carers are provided with accurate, timely and relevant information and advice
Priority three	Carers are supported with their wellbeing and access services when needed

Priority one:

Carers are recognised, valued and listened to and supported to continue caring.

To achieve this we will:

- Identify and recognise carers at all points in their caring journey (including as young people prepare for adulthood and at significant life events)
- Increase the number of completed carers assessments and reviews ensuring they are personalised, proportionate, and timely
- Further develop replacement care in partnership with carers

- Promote the use of a direct payment to ensure carers have choice and control over their support. This includes young carers who are not in education, employment or training (known as NEET)
- Work with new and established groups and communities to support adult carers to be part of their local communities
- Enable carers groups to access support with running their group, to enable them to continue their group and increase membership (for example advice on promoting the group, small grants to support venue hire)
- Establish a partnership with adult learning services to look at how carers can be supported with their wellbeing
- Ensure that there is a range of cost-effective training available for carers such as:
 - understanding Carers Rights and Carers Assessments
 - manual handling techniques
 - first aid and emergency planning for young carers
 - Lasting Power of Attorney, Wills, and Trusts
 - Housing advice
- Ensure people are informed about technology aids to support the Carer and cared for person, for example talking clocks, video conferencing, smart pill dispensers and GPS wearables
- Provide training for staff across health and social care regarding carers, with a focus on: -
 - Carer awareness
 - Carers assessments
 - Recognising and valuing carers
- Add carers to health records where appropriate
- Develop mechanisms to support health colleagues signposting carers to support services for example social care, Voluntary Action South Leicestershire, Age UK
- Ensure isolated carers are aware of support and are supported to participate
- Engage with communities across the county to expand awareness of carer support services

Priority two:

Carers are provided with accurate, timely and relevant information and advice

To achieve this we will

- Co-produce information and advice with carers and agency partners, to include:
 - digital and non-digital formats
 - easy to read information
 - use of alternatives to written word, for example videos
 - support digital inclusion
- Minimise jargon and acronyms and fully explain those that are used
- Ensure that systems exist to improve access to information in relation to finance and benefits, including:
 - identifying what information and organisations are available to advise on benefit claims and other financial advice
 - supporting carers to break out of the 'benefits trap' where carers are looking for employment or training
 - providing carers and the cared for person with accurate information about financial contributions for services
 - supporting 'people who fund their own care to understand what support is available to them
- Ensure young carers and families understand what to expect from a transition to adult services in social care and health and what support is available to them.
- Developing a 'no wrong door' approach for young carers
- Ensuring information is available in all health settings
- Ensure carers information is relevant to the circumstances of the carer

Priority three:

Carers are supported with their health and wellbeing to access services when needed

To achieve this we will

- Work with health, social care sector organisations and voluntary organisations in Leicestershire to improve access to support services
- Promote contingency and emergency planning
- Support people to access appropriate carers support groups and networks
- Promote the different channels to contact social care, as we recognise that people have different communication preferences
- Ensure support is in place to enable carers to attend appointments about their own health and wellbeing
- Support working carers at times that suit them outside of traditional business working hours
- Support young carers outside of school hours
- Support young carers with signposting, self-help and online services

Who will deliver these priorities?

The commitment of Leicestershire County Council is to co-produce as much of the carers support as possible. This will involve the creation of carers engagement groups that will be facilitated by the County Council.

Carers assessments and reviews are conducted by highly trained and skilled staff in the County Council and by commissioned service partners such as VASL.

Commissioning staff in the Adults and Cultural Services department will remain responsible for the delivery of actions in this strategy.

Anyone with an interest in co-producing these developments or with feedback on the strategy can email ascengage@leics.gov.uk who will respond to answer any queries.

Measuring success

This strategy will be measured on the impact the outcomes of the priorities identified have. This will include

- increased numbers of carers assessments,
- increased number of carer reviews,
- increased number of carers identified and registered,
- increased number of carers passport issued,
- improved levels of satisfaction with services,
- increased completion of school census data return,
- improved education, health and wellbeing outcomes.

Future engagement and co-production

Following the publication of the strategy it will be essential to continue to work with carers and organisations to co-produce information and advice and to develop services in accordance with the outlined priorities.

Appendix

Signposting to organisations

Leicestershire County Council: Adult Social Care Customer Service Centre can be contactable on 0116 305 0004.

First Contact Plus helps adults in Leicestershire find information about a range of services all in one place.

The initiative allows residents who require help with one or a number of issues to access information, advice, help and support. For more information please call: 0116 3054286 (for those who are unable to refer online) or alternatively email firstcontact@leics.gov.uk

Voluntary Action South Leicestershire (VASL) Support for Carers is Leicestershire County Council commissioned providers to support unpaid carers. This is a service for adult carers caring for someone who is aged 18+ and lives within Leicestershire County boundaries.

Support for Carers provide a range of services including:

- information or advice to carers including monthly newsletter.
- Supporting carers with their finances, benefits, completing carers assessments
- providing on-going one to one support
- calling carers to check their wellbeing
- issuing and renewing carers passports
- support with completing and thinking about contingency/ emergency planning

VASL: Support for Carers can be contacted on:

Tel: **01858 468543**, Email: maureen@supportforcarers.org, or

www.supportforcarers.org

Young carers team: Email: youngcarers.leics.gov.uk

Carers can access general information and advice on caring responsibilities, carer's assessment, planning for emergencies, support on carer's health and wellbeing,

carer's breaks, financial, useful helplines and also ways to connect with other carers.

Below provides a useful list:

- [Leicestershire County Council](#)
- [Carers UK](#)
- [Carers Trust](#)

[Leicestershire Partnership Trust Carers Pack](#)

[Young carers pack \(A4\) - FINALV](#)

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Action Area (LLR Priority Area(s))		Description	Key Strategic Lead	Timescales
Priority 1	Improve how we identify and recognise carers	- LCC staff to undertake mandatory and refresher training to develop better awareness with identifying and recognising carers and signpost to services and support	Lead practitioner/ health including ICB and LPT/ commissioned provider / carers/ HR/ comms/ commissioning officer/ lead commissioner / carers lead (new post)	TBC
		- Key partners including health professionals are regularly trained with carer awareness, identification and recognition		
		- Carers training offer to include carer awareness, identification and recognition is reviewed regularly and updated to reflect any new legislations and process changes		
		- LCC to work closely with key partners to develop a campaign to improve how we identify, recognise carers		
		- Coproduce with carers to develop info sheet in carer friendly language - ways to identify carers		
		- Key partners including health, GP and hospital settings to help identify and recognise carers and signpost to commissioned provide for support		
		- Continue to promote and develop the carers passport across the County so carers are easily recognised, identified and supported in the community		
		- Work with LCC HR to improve working carer awareness and ensure working carers are supported to balance work and caring responsibilities		
		- Continue to raise the profile of carers and present carer stories to help carers self-identify and get the support they need including social media platforms and Leicestershire Matters		
		- Organise annual carers week and carers rights day events to help identify carers		
		- LCC to work closely with key partners including commissioned services to Identify and recognise all types of carers including rural parts of the County		
Priority 1	Valuing, listening and involving our carers	- Involve carers with organising annual carers week and carers rights day events	Carers lead (new post) / Carers/ commissioning officer/ lead commissioner/ commissioned provider/ LCC staff/	TBC
		- Giving carers a voice and to be listened to including: LCC staff and key partners listening to carers including their caring journey and what is best for their cared for person		
		- Carers being involved with key decisions for their cared for person		
		- Carers being involved/ having a say with shaping and developing support at Leicestershire County Council		

Action Area (LLR Priority Area(s))		Description	Key Strategic Lead	Timescales
		- Engage and consult with carers on the new commissioned support for carers service when it comes to an end	key partners including health	
Priority 2	Improve the support for carers	- Work closely with health colleagues to offer accessible appointments for carers - Carers across Leicestershire should be able to receive the same level of service - Ensure Carers know what services they can access - More health professionals to support carers including regular health checks for carers - Carers are able to balance their caring responsibilities and have a life outside of caring - Work with local business to support and develop carer friendly communities to allow carers to connect with other carers - LCC working carers are better supported balance their work and caring responsibilities, this includes reviewing the Carers Leave Act 2023 to allow carers to work flexibly - Work closely with LCC HR to look at supporting LCC working carers with taking up paid leave rather than unpaid leave - LCC HR and local businesses and organisations to support working carers by increasing awareness of carers in their workforce	Health (including ICB and LPT) / LCC staff/ HR/ commissioned provider/ lead commissioner/ commissioning officer / Carers lead (new post) /	TBC
Priority 2	Improve information and advice to carers	- Commissioned service to provide out of office hours to support working carers - Ensure information and advice for carers is accessible for all including: digitally and non-digitally means and easy reads - LCC staff and key partners are able to provide accurate information and advice and help carers to understand information that is provided to them - Commissioned service to provide general information and advice including benefits, financial advice and planning for the future - Training to be provided to new carers including: manual handling techniques, caring for someone with dementia, e-learning modules for carers - LCC carers pages are reviewed regularly with carers to ensure information and advice is up to date and accurate	Commissioned provider/ comms/ LCC staff/ key partners/ LCC learning and development/ LCC digital team/ comms/ lead commissioner/ commissioning officer / Carers lead (new post) /	TBC

Action Area (LLR Priority Area(s))		Description	Key Strategic Lead	Timescales
Priority 3	Improve carers health and wellbeing	- Work closely with LCC Heritage Team to offer annual local attraction offer carers to have a break from their caring responsibilities - Work closely with LCC Adult Learning to look at activities to help carers with their health and wellbeing - Increase number of carers groups to ensure carers are able to connect with other carers and minimise isolation - Develop carer friendly communities including 'carers connecting with a cuppa' within their communities to allow carers to connect with other carers to minimise isolation and feeling lonely - Provide support to carers who want to attend carers group but do not have facilities in place to do so - Continue to work with Care Tech to support cared for person to be independent and remain at home and allow carers flexibility to take time away from caring responsibilities	Heritage team/ adult learning/ commissioned provider/ commissioning officer/ lead commissioner/ care tech team / Carers lead (new post) /	TBC
Priority 3	Improve respite offer for carers	- Increase the respite care opportunities for carers to access respite to allow them time away from caring responsibilities to maintain their mental health wellbeing - Carers to have regular respite breaks prevent carer strain/ breakdown.	LCC staff/ care pathway carers lead	TBC

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- Priority 1:** carers are recognised, valued and listened to and supported to continue caring
- Priority 2:** carers are provided with accurate, timely and relevant information and advice
- Priority 3:** Carers are supported with their wellbeing and access to services when needed

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LEICESTERSHIRE PEER REVIEW

Final Report

March 2026

EMADASS Peer Review Report

Introduction

The Peer Review process is one of the cornerstones of the East Midlands Branch approach to Sector Led Improvement. It supports Local Authorities to both respond to CQC assessment and to evaluate their current practice and processes.

As a Branch we strongly believe that Local Authorities should work together to take collective responsibility for the performance of the sector with a focus on improving the outcomes for the people we serve. This peer review is one of 10 reviews being conducted in the East Midlands over an 18-month cycle and, in that time, each local authority will both host and lead a review.

East Midlands Peer Challenge Process



The Key Lines of enquiry are agreed between the DASS, and the reviews take a multi-faceted approach to ensure that the team can triangulate and evidence their findings.

Following evaluation of the previous cycle and ongoing learning from the CQC assessment process we have maintained our 3-stage approach but have strengthened our case audits through adding feedback from the person and/or their family and where possible involving experts by experience in the team. We have retained our pre onsite review of documentation and the format of 2 days onsite and feedback remains unchanged, focusing on areas of strength, areas to improve and recommendations for focus/ action.

Leicestershire County Council Report

The Leicestershire Peer Review, held on 25th and 26th March 2026, was part of the East Midlands Sector Led Improvement programme. The review focused on how effectively the current Advice and Information and Carers (A&C) offer supports carers' wellbeing and delivers the department's strategic vision of promoting independence and managing need.

The process brought together a diverse team of professionals and experts by experience; all committed to improving outcomes for carers.

Peer Review Team

The review team comprised of representatives from across the region.

- **Guy VanDichele** – Lead Director, Nottinghamshire County Council (Peer Challenge Lead)
- **Mary Read** – Principal Social Worker, Nottinghamshire County Council
- **Sarah Don** – Senior Practitioner, Integrated Care Coordinator & Carers Lead, Rutland
- **Adrian Hartley** – Family Carer (Expert by Experience)
- **Anna Oliver** – Head of Integrated Strategic Commissioning, Nottinghamshire County Council
- **Hayley Eccles** – Deputy Director of Adult Care & National Carers Policy Co-Chair, Lincolnshire County Council
- **Stacey Roe** – Head of Service, Improvement, Practice & Quality, Nottinghamshire County Council
- **Lucy Boulton** – Service Manager, Leicester City Council
- **Melanie Grey** – Head of Strategic Commissioning & Contracting, North Northamptonshire
- **Sue Wilson** – Review Manager, East Midlands ADASS

Methodology

The review included team-to-team sessions, case record audits, and engagement with carers, staff, providers, and partners.

Team to Team

Team-to-team sessions included 7 staff from Nottinghamshire and 8 from Leicestershire, focusing on frontline practice and conducting 17 case record reviews. The audits evaluated assessment quality and the outcomes that they were striving to deliver.

Onsite review

During the onsite review, the team engaged with a broad range of participants, including carers, adult services managers, customer services, commissioning leads, specialist carers services, voluntary sector representatives, and public health and other strategic partners.

Mystery shopper exercises were used to assess the accessibility and accuracy of information for

carers both online and from access points. Multiple sessions were held for the review team to reflect, consolidate findings, and prepare feedback.

Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOEs)

The review was guided by two main sets of questions:

1. **Does the current A&C offer for carers support their wellbeing and help deliver the department's strategic vision of promoting independence and managing need?**
2. **Are there opportunities for further development across the department and commissioned services to support carers?**

Key Findings

Culture and Leadership

Leicestershire demonstrates a strong level of self-awareness about its journey to improve support for carers. There is a clear focus on carers and a genuine desire across leadership and frontline teams to strengthen the offer.

Staff described a culture characterised by enthusiasm, compassion and commitment to carers. This was evidenced by some of the feedback we heard directly from carers "Leicestershire council is great " and "staff are kind and pleasant"

The council is developing a new carers strategy with a clear engagement plan, and there is evidence of willingness to innovate through pilots such as support at home, technology-enabled care for carers and the use of AI in assessment / One carer reported that AI had been used in their assessment and "it was a true reflection of what I said"

Alongside this clear commitment, the review found that the strategic vision for carers is not yet consistently shared or embedded across the wider system. This is likely influenced by the recent shift to a council-only carers plan. The review team identified an opportunity to further strengthen delivery through clearer leadership accountability and more visible governance arrangements.

There would be value in greater clarity about the outcomes the council is seeking to achieve through new investments, and how success will be measured.

Practice and Case record Audits

The case record review highlighted a number of strengths in practice, including clear examples of the carer's voice being captured and a strong focus on supporting carers to achieve the outcomes that matter most to them.. Records consistently used strengths-based language and increasingly demonstrated that carers had been offered relevant information and advice. Building on this solid foundation, the offer could be enhanced further through a more consistent approach to contingency planning, making best use of one-off carers' budgets, and maximising the support available through your voluntary sector partner.

As part of the review, you shared clear and credible plans to strengthen and reshape the carers pathway, supported by significant investment in additional staffing to reduce delays in carers'

reviews and respond to the increased focus on assessment. This transition also creates a positive opportunity to extend your standardised risk tools and ‘waiting well’ processes to carers, building on approaches that are already working well elsewhere in the system. To maximise the impact of this investment, you can now be explicit about the outcomes you want to achieve and agree how progress and impact will be measured and reported consistently across the partnership.

Partnerships and provision

There is clear evidence of strong partnership working within the council, particularly with Public Health, who demonstrate a shared commitment to early help and prevention for carers. This is strengthened through initiatives such as local area coordination and the First Contact Plus offer, which provide practical routes to identify need early and connect carers to timely support.

Collaboration with primary care to identify carers at an early stage is a further strength. As neighborhood health arrangements continue to develop within the emerging health landscape, there is a positive opportunity to build new partnerships and ensure that carers remain a consistent and visible priority within local plans and pathways.

Leicestershire already has a number of well-regarded elements within its carers offer. The carers passport was referenced frequently, and the new practical support offer from Enrych—while still in its early stages—has seen strong demand. The commissioned carers support service delivered by Voluntary Action South Leicestershire (VASL) is valued by carers and staff alike, with positive stories of impact that were also reflected in our mystery shopping.

The forthcoming recommissioning process provides a positive opportunity to build on these strong foundations—deepening partnership working and making the most of voluntary sector expertise to strengthen the parts of the pathway that carers experience as more challenging, such as initial contact and up to date information and guidance .

Coproduction, Citizen Engagement and feedback

Carers we spoke to shared very positive experiences of working with the council, particularly where support had been built through long-standing, trusted relationships (for example, carers of younger people). Carers of older people—especially those who are newly navigating adult social care—highlighted that they would welcome more proactive guidance to help them understand the support available. As one carer put it, “you don’t know what you don’t know”. They also noted that some information within the carers offer on the website would benefit from being refreshed and brought up to date. These insights were considered alongside our mystery shopping findings.

We tested the two main access points for carers of an older person requiring support. Our contact with the commissioned voluntary sector provider, Voluntary Action South Leicestershire (VASL), was particularly strong: the worker asked the right questions, provided proportionate and helpful advice, and added value by researching additional information relating to the cared-for person’s home area. While this reflects one contact, the review team felt confident that carers using this service are likely to receive a responsive and supportive experience. Our contact with the council’s Customer Service Centre highlighted an opportunity to build on current practice by offering a wider range of non-digital options, so that carers can access information and guidance in the way that works best for them—particularly those who may be digitally excluded.

The relaunch of the revised Leicestershire Carers Strategy provides a strong opportunity to

strengthen relationships with key stakeholders, including partners and carers, and to embed co-production within governance arrangements.

Reflections on the Key Lines of Enquiry

1. Does the current A&C offer for carers support their wellbeing and help deliver the department's strategic vision of promoting independence and managing need?

The peer team observed strong intent, good practice and a comprehensive offer. However, further work is required to **understand, evidence and measure impact**, and to ensure the strategic vision is widely understood and embedded across the system.

2. Are there opportunities for further development?

Yes. The review identified clear opportunities to strengthen governance, partnership working, co-production, data use, equity of access and consistency of practice across the carers pathway.

Areas for Development and Recommendations (NB this is not a prioritised list)

The launch of the new draft strategy provides a strong platform to further unite and reinforce the shared Leicestershire vision. Building on the positive momentum already in place, you can refresh your approach to co-production, strengthen storytelling and communications, and build wider commitment from partners—particularly through neighbourhood working and the Health and Wellbeing Board, including other council departments and external partners. This also creates a timely opportunity to re-establish and re-energise governance arrangements so they are clear, connected and fit for purpose in the current environment. **Continued and active engagement from health partners will support a confident transition from the joint strategy, reinforcing a shared commitment to carers and embedding their needs within integrated care system arrangements**

The planned redesign and investment in a refreshed carers offer and pathway provides an excellent foundation to embed a Think Family approach and further strengthen equity of access and experience for all carers. Building on your developing approach to modelling, alongside your established data capability, and tracking investment and activity consistently across the system, you will be well placed to focus improvement activity where it will have the greatest impact, clearly demonstrate the difference this investment is making, and support the system to manage demand confidently.