

Impact Report

2024/2025





About Carers Leeds

3 in 5 of us will provide unpaid care at some point in our lives.

Carers Leeds believes all care counts.

What is an unpaid carer?

An unpaid carer is someone who provides help and support to a family member, friend or neighbour who couldn't manage without their help. This could be due to illness, disability, mental health problems or substance misuse.

Established in 1996, Carers Leeds is a charity that provides information, advice and support to unpaid adult and parent carers across our city.

This includes our Support Line, carers support groups, one-to-one support and support in hospitals. Some of our services are universal – open to all carers – and some are targeted at specific groups of carers. Our services are provided to communities throughout Leeds.

We work in partnership with others to deliver our service and to influence them to act to benefit unpaid carers. This involves those working in health and social care, and employers.

Foreword

Andy Rawnsley, Chair of Trustees

Once again, I am pleased to provide this foreword to our latest Impact Report.

The report provides both a record of our activity over the last year and, more importantly, an insight as to how this activity has supported carers across Leeds.

The stories and quotes from carers themselves are the real testament to the work of all the staff and volunteers at Carers Leeds - demonstrating the increasing variety of ways that carers have been supported and in which their lives have changed as a result.

All our activity is focused on our mission of improving the lives of unpaid carers. We do this to ensure that they are supported, recognised and valued for their role in caring for their loved ones.

Much of our work is undertaken directly by our team of staff and volunteers and we increasingly work with a range of partners across the city to ensure that the needs of carers are considered and addressed in their work; and that the voice of carers is heard.

As always, I would like to thank the staff team, volunteers, partners and funding organisations – without whom, none of the impact we collectively achieve, would be possible.

And lastly, to all the carers out there, providing support to your loved ones – you have my best wishes and respect.



Andy Rawnsley,
Chair of Trustees, Carers Leeds

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Review of the Year

Claire Turner, Chief Executive

Our vision at Carers Leeds is that all unpaid carers in our city are recognised, valued and supported to live a fulfilling life. Our mission is to improve the lives of unpaid carers across the city.

We provide information, advice and support to unpaid adult and parent carers in Leeds, and aim to influence others to act and create positive change for unpaid carers.

Being an Unpaid Carer

You might not always see yourself as a carer, but if you help someone with everyday tasks — like shopping, cooking, cleaning, managing medication, offering emotional support, or assisting with personal care such as getting dressed — you are providing unpaid care.

For some, caring comes naturally. For others it develops slowly, and for some, it arrives suddenly. Some carers live with the person they support, while others help from a distance.

Many people in Leeds care for more than one person, and the level of support can vary — from a few hours a week to around-the-clock care, 24/7.

Being a carer can be incredibly rewarding, but it can also be exhausting and overwhelming. You shouldn't have to sacrifice your own health, wellbeing, finances, or relationships while caring for someone else.

Carers Leeds wants unpaid carers to have the information, advice, and support they need to be able to care and live a fulfilling life.

This annual report highlights what we achieved and the impact we made between April 2024 and March 2025. I am very proud of what the Carers Leeds team — staff, volunteers, and trustees — accomplished over the year.

“You shouldn't have to sacrifice your own health, wellbeing, finances, or relationships while caring for someone else.”

April 2024 to March 2025 marks the third year of our 4-year strategy. Our strategy has been focused on delivering an excellent service, influencing others to act, and four key pillars:

- Equality, diversity, and inclusion
- Carer engagement
- Partnerships
- Digital

Our strategy is guided by five strategic principles, which are reflected throughout the activities and achievements shared in this report.

**Want to chat
more about
this report?**



Please email
comms@carersleeds.org.uk

Our Guiding Principles

- To reach more, and more diverse, carers.
- To start with carers' strengths and skills, working with carers to improve their own lives, rather than doing for or to carers.
- To communicate and engage earlier: working preventively or on the cusp of crisis rather than once carers are already in crisis.
- To provide direct information, advice and support to carers and work to influence others to act to benefit the lives of carers.
- To be more intentional. Decide what we want to do, based on what carers tell us and tested through our strategy criteria and seek funding to do it.

**Claire Turner,
Chief Executive, Carers Leeds**



Service Delivery

This year 8,834 unpaid carers turned to Carers Leeds for support, including 3,736 contacting us for the first time. Our advice line handled over 10,425 calls, and 172 carers used our drop-in service.

Most referrals came directly from carers, with 1,028 referred by professionals. The triage process introduced last year continues to help us respond quickly and provide the right support when it's needed most.

We remain committed to reaching all parts of Leeds' diverse carer population. Of those who shared demographic information: 14% of carers who contacted us for the first time were carers from BAME communities, 86% were White; and 75% were women while 25% were men (with less than 1% transgender or nonbinary).

Through this frontline work we offer timely, effective support, enabling carers to care for others while maintaining their own wellbeing.

Universal Support for Carers

At Carers Leeds, we know that caring can be demanding, and having time to connect, relax, and enjoy yourself is essential.

Our universal support activities are designed to do just that — giving carers a chance to take a break, meet

others, and access information in welcoming and supportive settings.

This year we ran 18 monthly peer support groups, which were attended by 950 carers. Most groups are open to any carer, but we also have targeted groups: for those caring for people with dementia, mental health, neurodiversity, substance misuse, and personality disorder. We also ran a women's group and a men's group.

Additionally, we hosted 37 social and wellbeing events, welcoming 176 carers and providing opportunities for connection, relaxation, and support. These events included trips to the pantomime and theatre, roadshows across Leeds, and monthly walk-and-talk groups in local parks, giving carers the chance to socialise while enjoying the health and wellbeing benefits of being outdoors.

Our annual evaluation of groups showed high levels of carer satisfaction. 68% of carers reported that attending groups improved their wellbeing and helped them feel less isolated. By bringing support directly into communities, we make it easier for carers to stay connected, informed, and supported.

Financial Wellbeing

Carers are more likely to experience poverty than people who don't provide unpaid care (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, UK Poverty 2025). In our State of Caring 2024/25 survey, 30% of unpaid carers reported that money and the cost of living were a major concern.

Carers Leeds has been committed to supporting carers through this challenging time, providing practical help via grants, vouchers, and benefits advice.

Over the year, we were able to provide £128,750 in grants and vouchers to 538 carers. Just over half of these were for carer breaks, while the remainder helped carers with essentials such as food, energy, and day-to-day living costs.

Unfortunately, funding for this initiative has decreased significantly, meaning we were unable to distribute as much support as in previous years.

We invested in expanding our benefits advice provision. In 2024–2025, Carers Leeds supported 132 carers to claim a total of £731,636.88 per year in state benefits, including Child Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, and Personal Independence Payments. We also helped carers secure backdated lump sums totalling £179,287.81.

This represents a 132% increase in total benefits claimed compared to the previous year, reflecting both a 169% rise in the number of carers supported and the impact of our enhanced benefits advice service.

Learning and development

Carers Leeds recognises that knowledge and confidence are key to empowering carers in their caring roles and beyond. Throughout the year, we delivered a programme of 18 training sessions, attended by a total of 235 carers.

This included 10 Dementia Information Sessions, and six information sessions about services and support for adults with learning disabilities, in partnership with Aspire. To mark Carers Rights Day in November, we offered workshops on Carers Assessments, Welfare Benefits, and Employment Rights.



Targeted Support

Our teams continued to deliver high-quality, targeted support at a time of rising demand, stretched public services, and increasingly complex needs — both for carers and the people they care for.

Of all referrals to Carers Leeds this year, 814 carers received more intensive one-to-one support.

To assess the impact of our one-to-one support, we use the Carers Star evaluation tool, which asks carers to rate outcomes on a scale of 1–5.

This year, we applied the tool both before and after providing one-to-one support, with a total of 116 carers.

The table below presents the results across the seven key areas, highlighting the improvements achieved through our support work.

Carers Star	Start	Finish	Impact Score
Health	3.20	3.60	+0.40
Caring Role	2.80	3.90	+1.10
Managing at home	3.40	4.00	+0.60
Time for yourself	2.90	3.70	+0.80
How you feel	2.80	3.70	+0.90
Finance	3.90	4.80	+0.90
Work	4.50	4.60	+0.10

Bereaved carers

Over the period, the Bereavement service supported 71 carers, helping them navigate grief, access resources, and build coping strategies, while promoting open conversations about loss and ensuring carers receive the support they need.

The Bereavement Service facilitated a Death Café for staff and continued partnership work with Sue Ryder and Full Circle Funerals. The Support After Loss group remains vital for bereaved carers, offering emotional and practical guidance.

Befriending

Between April 2024 and March 2025, our befriending service supported 34 carers, each receiving 12 sessions with a dedicated befriending volunteer.

Carers reported feeling less isolated, more confident, and better connected to their social networks.

“Speaking to my befriender is like a breath of fresh air. I don’t have to explain what being a carer is—they just get it. It’s my time to just be me.”

Unpaid Carer supported by a befriender

Concerned Others

The Concerned Others team runs three support groups monthly for carers of people affected by substance misuse (drug or alcohol), which are well attended and highly valued.

Over the period, 98 Concerned Others received guidance, emotional support, and access to resources to help themselves and those they care for.

The team also delivered training and awareness sessions to Forward Leeds staff, Probation, Fiveways (Day Rehab), and engaged with Newhall Prison.

Dementia

We provided one-to-one support to 197 carers of people with dementia, helping them build knowledge and understanding of the condition.

Carers received practical guidance, strategies, and information, leaving them more confident and better equipped to manage the challenges of dementia care.

We also ran monthly support groups for carers of individuals with young onset dementia in Leeds and surrounding areas, offering peer support, tailored advice, and a dedicated space to share experiences.

Parent carers

We supported 121 parent carers of children with additional needs this year. The Parent Carer Team remained highly active across the city, attending regular SEND information drop-ins, the SEND Next Choices event, the Leeds Local Offer event, and Autisticon.

The team continued to represent carers' voices through the Parent Carer Forum and organised another successful family fun day, our annual event which brings families together to connect and have fun.

Mental health, learning disability, neurodiversity

We supported 205 carers of people with mental health needs, learning disabilities and who are neurodivergent.

By regularly attending and contributing to Triangle of Care meetings, we promoted Carers Leeds services and ensured carers' voices were heard. We organised an Autumn 2024 session on the Mental Health Transformation programme in Leeds, engaged with LYPFT's Carers sub-group on key concerns, and facilitated a WRAP course to support carers' own well-being, resilience, and capacity to care.

Hospital

When those they support are in hospital, it can be a stressful time for carers. Carers Leeds has two hospital carer support workers based at St James Hospital, who work across Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust (LTHT).

The team helps advocate for carers in the hospital setting and during discharge. This year was another period of increasing demand for our hospital support service. We supported 329 carers across LTHT, with a significant increase in referrals from Chapel Allerton Hospital and a rise in complex cases.

Recovery Hubs

We were pleased to secure a third year of funding from Leeds Community Healthcare, allowing us to continue supporting carers of people in the six Leeds Recovery Hubs (intermediate care beds). This year the Patient Flow team provided tailored support to 241 carers, where the person with care needs will be self-funding a package of care on discharge.





"I'm so glad I was told me about Carers Leeds. I think it really has all happened at the right time for me and I really appreciate you finding space to talk to me. It means such a lot to find a resource like this and people who understand and want to listen.

I've had years of people glazing over, even therapists, as it's just such a twisty, difficult thing to explain and talk about. I have a good feeling about all of this new approach to dealing with it. I feel like I've been given a proper chance to deal with the trauma."

Unpaid Carer supported by Carers Leeds.

Anne's Story

I'm 63, I should be drawing a pension but instead I'm a full-time carer. But then I've always been a carer, it's how I was brought up.

My son lives at home – he's 26, autistic, with learning disabilities and type one diabetes. My dad was always poorly and eventually got lung cancer. I did his washing, cooking, cleaning, and took him for his shopping, haircuts and appointments.

When he died in 2009 I wondered what I'd do with myself. Then my husband got ill with a rare brain disease. I also look after a cousin, who's 63 now.

As a carer, I'm completely frustrated with medical professionals. The system's failing everybody. Our GP's moved to the Patches system, but it doesn't work for us. They don't visit people at home – and us especially because they know I'll look after him.

Professionals waste time trying to explain things to my husband when he can't understand. I'm doing a good job of keeping my family healthy.

But I'm not a medical professional, just a housewife trying to do my best and then when I reach out for help, they're not available.

I'm confident and believe in myself. A lot of people don't have a voice, and that's where Carers Leeds comes into it. When you're a carer you can't discuss things with your family or moan at them, because they don't come to you to listen to that.

Carers Leeds is an outside ear. They don't tell you what to do, they support you to make your own choices. It's really difficult to do but I worked it out myself and got support with those choices.

The best thing about being a carer is that I know the people I love are being looked after. I do it right, I know they're the safest and healthiest they can be, and can achieve their best outcome.

“Carers Leeds is an outside ear. They don't tell you what to do, they support you to make your own choices.”

Year in Numbers

2024/2025

52

Staff
members



For every £1
spent, £11.11 of
social value is
generated.



8,834

Referrals
recieved



10,425

Advice Line
calls



950

Carers attended
groups



1,111

Professionals
attended our training



Our Expenditure 2024/2025

Our total expenditure for the year ending March 2025 was £1,902,038.

- Providing support and advice to unpaid carers (79%)
- Small grants paid out to unpaid carers (10%)
- Organisational development and costs (11%)



Influencing Others to Act

Carers Leeds works closely with the health and social care sector and employers to raise awareness of carers needs to support the early identification of carers and their access to support.

Over the past year, we delivered 58 training and information sessions, attended by 1,111 professionals. This included 39 sessions for primary care staff, reaching 875 attendees, ensuring GP practices and other primary care services are better equipped to identify and support carers.

We worked with the Leeds City Council (LCC) Carers Assessment Team, providing comprehensive support to ensure the quality of referrals from Carers Leeds and the recording of outcomes. Carers Leeds made 188 referrals, a 15% increase from the previous year. Of these 170 were carers who were new to our service.

We co-delivered tailored training to social workers who undertake or are likely to undertake carers assessments, four times this year. We also delivered regular 'Getting to Know Family Carers' training for social work teams.

We ran a Carer Champions Network for social work staff, which has 35 members.

Our thriving Employer Forum brought employers across the city together quarterly, to share good practice and ideas for identifying and supporting carers in their workforce. This year we saw a 61% increase in membership to the Forum from 31 to 50 employers. Forum membership comprises of employers from across legal, finance, public sector, manufacturing, retail, third sector, broadcasting and IT.

Our free bespoke consultancy service to individual employers helped businesses identify and support carers in their workforce. We worked closely with six employers this year.

In the run up to the 2024 General Election, Carers Leeds wrote to all Leeds constituency candidates, asking them to pledge support for carers. We will continue to follow up to ensure carers' voices remain on the political agenda.

During Carers Week, we combined activities for carers with targeted efforts to influence employers and professionals.

This included a presence at the Reginald Centre in Chapeltown, lunchtime webinars for working carers, and presentations at GP practices and St James's Hospital.

Our CEO and senior managers played an active role in partnership boards and strategy groups, and in the design and implementation of key transformation projects.

As a result of this work, carers are now a priority in both the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Leeds Suicide Prevention Action Plan.

Carers Leeds' input has ensured carers are now considered in transformation projects addressing health inequalities and outcomes, including those focused on advanced respiratory disease, intermediate care (Home First 1), and home care (Community Health and Wellbeing Service).

Our role in the Leeds Mental Health Transformation programme ended in December, but carers' voices shaped its outcomes, resulting in training for professionals on engaging with carers and a WRAP course supporting carers' mental health and wellbeing.

Partnerships

Carers Leeds maximises its impact through strong partnerships across Leeds, helping us reach more and more diverse carers.

This year, we have worked closely with Leeds Young Carers Support Service (LYCSS) to ensure a smooth transition for Young Adult Carers, and maintained strong links with grassroots organisations, including Leeds Parent Carer Forum, Refresh Carers, Lotus Links, ABA Leeds, and Better Action for Families. Throughout the year, we provided in-kind support such as training, advice, and room hire.

Through the Leeds Oak Alliance with Age UK Leeds, Care and Repair Leeds, and St Gemma's and Wheatfields hospices, we delivered a single point of contact service in hospitals for people

living with frailty or at the end of life and their carers.

Partnerships with Aspire and Inspire North provided tailored support for carers of people with learning disabilities or young-onset dementia.

Carers Leeds has staff embedded across key health and care services, including hospital, community, and mental health settings, while working with the LCC Carer Assessment team to support and train social work staff. Ongoing engagement with city-wide partners ensures carers' experiences influence local priorities.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

This year, Carers Leeds has focused on reaching a growing and diverse range of carers across Leeds.

We strengthened partnerships with local organisations to identify and support carers from underrepresented communities.

We worked jointly with LGBTQ+ organisations such as Out Together, MESMAC, and Trans Leeds to identify and engage LGBTQ+ carers, offering LGBTQ+ carer break grants.

We continued collaborating with Mencap, Aspire, and Leeds Mind to reach carers of people with learning disabilities or mental health challenges, and partnered with Hamara, ABA Leeds, and Touchstone to engage carers from ethnically diverse communities.

This year, we ran five community-based information events and roadshows, distributed culturally appropriate materials, and ran staff awareness sessions. These initiatives resulted in referrals from ethnically diverse carers rising from 10% in 2023/24 to 18% in 2024/25, with a notable increase among carers of South Asian heritage.

Embedding ED&I as an employer

As an employer, we are committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion. Our learning programme for staff and volunteers, focused on 'hearts and minds', included workshops on disability, gender, and beliefs. We also hold a quarterly ED&I staff network for discussion, learning and idea-sharing.

This year, we completed our latest ED&I survey of staff, volunteers, and trustees, helping us understand our workforce and how it reflects the communities we serve. We use the findings to inform actions to continuously improve Carers Leeds commitment to ED&I.

Over half (56%) of our staff are working carers, including members of our senior management team, trustees, and volunteers. Carers Leeds is the only local carers organisation in the UK to achieve the highest Carers UK Carer Confident Award – Ambassador Level. We offer gold-standard employment support, including two weeks' paid carers leave, a carers passport, and an internal working carers group.

Gender Pay Gap

2025

Our Team

April 2025



- We had 52 employees
- 42 staff identified as female
- 10 staff identified as male

Mean 9.6%

Gender pay gap as % based on average men's hourly pay.

So for every £1 men earn, women earn 90p

Median 1.3%

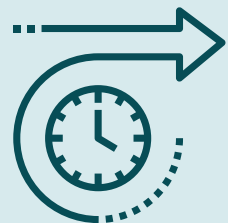
Gender pay gap as % based on average men's hourly pay.

So for every £1 men earn, women earn 99p

Our Next Steps

Carers Leeds will adopt the following recommendations:

- Review our recruitment processes
- Train our staff on bias in candidate selection
- Carry out improved monitoring



Carer Engagement

We involve carers in all aspects of our work and value their voices in shaping how we deliver services. Listening carefully to carers helps us understand their needs, experiences, and the challenges they face.

In 2024, 679 carers contributed to our second State of Unpaid Caring in Leeds report.

This survey reached more male carers, carers from ethnic minority communities, and LGBTQ+ carers than the first, highlighting the diversity of unpaid caring. The report revealed that too many carers feel invisible and undervalued, with many at breaking point. Carers need support for their health and wellbeing, relief from poverty, assistance in their caring role, and opportunities to take a break.

Our website's new feature, 'My Carer's Story', shared nine carers' personal experiences, capturing both the joy and challenges of caring.

Carers also actively contribute to our work by participating in recruitment panels and helped to develop carer specific suicide prevention training, in partnership with academic Siobhan O'Dwyer from the University of Birmingham.

The 2024 Carer's Allowance repayment scandal highlighted the inadequacy of this benefit and the unfair treatment of carers. Leeds carers shared their experiences online, ensuring their voices were heard nationally.

In December 2024, a Leeds carer and our CEO attended a Carer Poverty Coalition Parliamentary event in London, speaking to MPs about the financial impact of caring.

"I earnt £15 more than the allowed amount and had to repay six weeks of carers allowance. This was extremely stressful and degrading."

Unpaid carer who responded to our survey.

The State of Unpaid Caring in Leeds

**Read our Annual Survey
2024/2025 findings**



**Scan to
read**



Digital

This year, Carers Leeds has focused on enhancing digital access, confidence, and engagement through resources, online guidance, advice, and new digital services.

Digital Inclusion for Carers

As a Digital Health Hub, we continue to support unpaid carers to get online and access digital information, advice, and services, helping them stay informed and connected. In this year we supported 45 carers, distributed 13 pieces of equipment, and provided 5 SIM cards to ensure carers can fully benefit from digital tools.

Our dedicated Digital Inclusion Support Worker plays a key role in helping carers gain confidence and overcome barriers to using technology.

Carers UK Digital Resource for Carers

We played an active role in the West Yorkshire Digital Resource for Carers project, supported by Carers UK. In 2024–25, the project expanded from a Leeds based pilot, to cover West Yorkshire, and the number of Leeds-based carers registered to use the resource doubled to 1,197, increasing access to a wide range of online guidance and support.

Digital Carer Support

Over this period we have started to further develop and integrate our digital information, advice and support offer.

We secured additional funding from the Accelerating Reform Fund for a Digital Carers Support Worker, who started in post in January 2025. This role, and associated funding, will help us develop a webchat service, online advice videos, online booking system and increased social media presence.

These developments will help us reach more and more diverse carers, across Leeds.



Volunteering

Volunteers contributed an estimated 1,450 hours to Carers Leeds, making a meaningful difference to both carers and the organisation.

Their impact was felt in many ways—offering connection, practical help, attentive listening, and creating spaces where carers felt less alone.

Volunteers provided 168 befriending sessions, 55 keeping-in-touch calls, and regular book group meetings that fostered community and conversation. They gathered valuable feedback through 73 evaluation calls, helping us understand what was working well and where improvements could be made.

Volunteers processed 513 Time for Carers grants, supported 462 GP referrals and Max Card applications, and distributed 236 emergency cards alongside 231 cost-of-living vouchers.

They sent out 36 specialist information packs and contributed to training, proofreading, and welcoming new staff and volunteers.

Volunteers also represented Carers Leeds at community events, including Leeds Pride and our Family Fun Day.

Our volunteering work was formally recognised when we were awarded the Celebrating Excellence: Leeds Volunteering Quality Mark, reflecting the positive culture and care embedded in our volunteer programme.

"I feel that we make a difference to those people who are caring for others, often in difficult circumstances."

Volunteer from Carers Leeds

Communications

Carers Leeds continued to broaden its reach across communities throughout the city.

We distributed approximately 7,000 tailored flyers, posters, and booklets across healthcare settings, workplaces, places of worship, and universities. In addition, we delivered 15 information workshops and three roadshows, including a collaborative roadshow with the NHS.

We hosted our first 'In Conversation' event, held in partnership with Leeds Libraries, featuring the carer, author and activist Emily Kenway.

We continued to maintain an active social media presence reaching over 6,000 followers, and provided clear online information through our e-newsletter, increasing our reach to 8,500 subscribers.

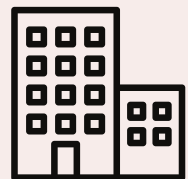
During this period, we completed the development of our new website, scheduled to launch in the next reporting period, and undertook work to refresh the organisation's branding, as reflected in the design of this report.

Moving to Mabgate

In 2025, Carers Leeds moved from our long-term home on The Headrow to our new base at Mill 6 in Mabgate.

After more than 20 years in the city centre, the move marked a new chapter for the organisation, providing a smaller but higher-quality and more welcoming space for carers, staff, volunteers, and visitors.

The relocation has also helped us reduce costs, ensuring we can continue delivering vital support to unpaid carers.



**Help us support
unpaid carers in Leeds.
Your donation makes
a difference.**



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donate**





Carers Leeds

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Support Line
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