



What is a carer?

Carers are adults and children who provide unpaid care to people who are ill, frail or living with a disability and who cannot manage without them. Carers look after partners, spouses, family members, friends or neighbours. The caring role can be stressful, and isolating.

From April 2015 the Care Act 2014 puts carers on an equal legal-footing with service users giving them rights to assessments of their needs, to services and to a personal budget. We will be working with CarersUK, residents and other stakeholders to plan the services that will be needed to improve the lives of carers over the coming months.

What services are available for carers?

Adult and Community Services in Barking and Dagenham provides support to unpaid carers who care for anyone aged 18+ and who give support to family or friends not able to manage without this help due to illness, disability, mental health or substance misuse. In order to receive adult social care support the person being cared for must live in the borough, although carers may live inside or outside the borough.



Carers of Barking & Dagenham are commissioned by the Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group to provide assessment, advice, information and support for carers: <http://www.carerscentre.org.uk>. Their services include the development and delivery of training programmes, peer support, identification of 'hidden' carers and outreach work, support for carers to access employment, training, benefits and information/advice, and a programme of work with young carers.

They also provide the Memory Lane Resource Centre, providing support to carers of people with dementia, which carers and service users can choose to 'purchase' with the personal budget that is provided to them by the Council.

Do you agree with what we have said about carers?

Take part in our Local Account questionnaire and tell us what you think!

Numbers of carers in Barking and Dagenham



The 2011 Census showed that in Barking and Dagenham:

- There were 16,201 carers
- Carers make up 8.7% of the local population, compared to 8.4% of the population in London and 10.2% across England.

The number of carers' assessments or reviews carried out in 2013/14 rose to 741 from 551 in the previous year, across both the Council's social care teams and by *Carers of Barking & Dagenham*. At 31 March 2014, 492 carers were receiving a support service. *Carers of Barking & Dagenham* report having contact with around 3,000 carers via their regular newsletter.

What have we achieved in 2013/14?

- ✓ Commissioned CarersUK, to work with local carers' groups, service providers and others to draft a new Carers' Strategy, and shape the services needed for the future.
- ✓ Launched the 'Care and Support Hub', our new Adult Social Care website which has information specifically for carers to help them have greater choice and control.
- ✓ Carers of Barking and Dagenham have taken the lead for Safeguarding Awareness training for carers. Where the main carer has not been the alleged abuser in safeguarding investigations, we have involved them in the safeguarding process and ensured that their voice is heard.
- ✓ Carers have also been involved in the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLs) application process. Where they have needed support in the DoLs application process, we have commissioned Independent Advocacy for them.
- ✓ Continued to support the Carers' Group, convened by Carers of Barking & Dagenham, to highlight issues around being a carer.
- ✓ Carers Week took place in June 2013, with a range of events to highlight the issues faced by carers, and the promotion of and advice. Additionally, Carers of Barking and Dagenham ran two successful stalls on Carers Rights Day (29 November 2013) in Barking Town Centre and Dagenham Heathway.

Examples of our plans for 2014/15

- Finalise the new Carers' Strategy to set the new direction for carers' services, in line with the intentions in the Care Act 2014 and continue to involve carers in the development of new services and support.
- Join the pilot for Making Safeguarding Personal which covers carers as well as other client groups.
- Retender carers' support services, to ensure that they meet the duties outlined in the Care Act 2014 for all groups of carers
- Review the way we record the services that are offered to carers so that we can better track how we provide support and what we spend on carers' services.

What do carers say about Adult Social Care services?

Annually, we collect the views of carers through a survey. For 2013/14, questionnaires were sent to 279 carers who had had their circumstances assessed or reviewed in the last 12 months. 130 surveys were completed with 121 returned by post and nine completed over the telephone with the help of volunteers. The survey asked carers whether or not current services they receive are helping them in their caring role and their life outside of caring and for their views of services provided for the cared for person.

- 58% said they were satisfied with the support or services they and the person they care for had received in the last 12 months
- 72% said "I'm able to spend my time as I want" or "I do some of the things I value"
- 78% said "I have as much control over my daily life" or "I have some control over my daily life"
- 56% said "I look after myself"; (in terms of their sleeping and eating)
- 79% said "they had no worries about my personal safety"
- 35% said "I have as much social contact as I want" with 45% reporting "they have some social contact but not enough"
- 43% said information and advice was "easy to find"
- 58% said they felt involved or consulted in discussions about the support or services provided to the person they care for

Some of these responses raise a number of concerns: too few carers are satisfied with the services they receive; too few found it easy to get the information and advice they need; and a concerning number feel that their own wellbeing is not being looked after.

In addition, we conducted a telephone survey of 77 carers in June 2013 to explore their views and needs. 80% of them were caring for people more than 50hrs per week. People identified wanting more respite 'trips'; more opportunities to talk to people when there are difficult times; and more volunteering support for older people.

We will ensure that we are using this feedback in finalising our new Carers' Strategy and to inform the development and delivery of carers' and information and advice services in 2014/15 and beyond.