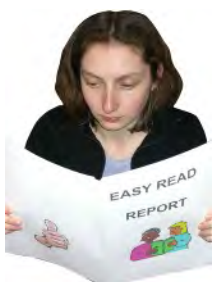




# The life you want to lead

Our plan for adult social care  
in West Sussex until 2025



Easy read version of:  
The life you want to lead.  
Adult social care in West Sussex.  
2022 to 2025



# In this booklet



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# What is this about?



This EasyRead booklet is about West Sussex County Council's ideas for adult social care.

It is called 'The life you want to lead.' It goes up to 2025.

## About social care in the UK

Councils across the country are:



- trying to improve how people get social care
- trying to improve support
- making sure people get support for their individual needs
- having support that builds on people's strengths
- working to make sure everyone is treated fairly and included
- working out how health and social care can work well together for people





- using technology to help people and save money
- helping people to stay well and continue to do things for themselves.



West Sussex County Council has **Our Council Plan** for all the different things we will do up to 2025. It says that we will:



- put people who live in West Sussex and their communities at the centre of everything we do



- have good leaders who people know about

- work closely with communities and with our partners



- value our staff

- make the way we work as straightforward as possible for the people we work for.



For a copy of the Our Council Plan, contact our Adults' CarePoint. Details on page 48.



The ideas for adult social care will help us achieve the **Our Council Plan**.



The ideas are about helping you, and others, to live a good life.

It was very important that people who use social care had a say about what the ideas would be. We worked together with:



- people who use social care now
- people who might use social care in the future



- carers
- organisations who help people who use social care
- county council social care staff.



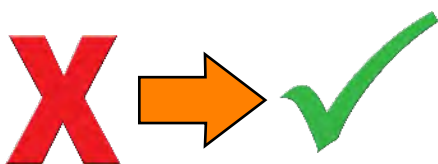
We heard from people in:

- 15 group discussions
- 6 interviews with individuals
- 1079 surveys.



We asked people what:

- a good life is
- what we need to change.



We also thought about what we know about social care:

- West Sussex spends about 34 percent of our county budget on adult and health services
- more people will need social care in the future
- the cost of social care is going up.





Some money from the national government will help.



But we will need other ways to try and help everyone who needs it.



Together, we decided on 5 important ideas for adult social care:

- building relationships and being a part of the community
- having a say in your life and making choices
- thinking about where people live
- trying to fix some social care problems
- making sure people are treated fairly, are valued and included.







This report talks about the 5 important ideas for adult social care and what we will do.



To make the ideas happen we will need to keep working together.



## Idea 1 - Building relationships and being a part of the community



Having good relationships helps people to have a good life.

People told us important relationships are:



- with family and friends
- with the people that were paid to support them
- with the community.

## Family and close support from others in the community



We heard that when friends and family are also carers they can:

- feel stressed
- need help to stay physically and mentally well.

We will work with a person's whole family when we give adult social care support. If people agree, this might mean:



- sharing information about the care
- helping family and friends to get support.



**Social isolation** is when someone may live on their own and feel very lonely. They might not know or see other people.



They often only have their community or organisations for support.



When people are socially isolated they can be more likely to:

- be sick or die
- have a poor quality of life.



We will work with community groups to try to do something about **social isolation**.

We will make changes so that services are more **joined up** and **person-centred**.



**Joined up** services means that county teams, volunteers and communities services work together well to support a person. This might include sharing information if people give their consent.

**Person-centred** services give support that meets the individual's needs.

People told us about some things that can go wrong about getting their care. They want to know:



- they will get the care that has been paid for
- if there are problems, who they can talk to.



We will tell people:

- what are the basic things they can expect when getting care
- where they can go if they have a problem with their care.

## Wider social supports



Being social and spending time with others is important for a good life.

People told us they want:



- to meet and talk to other people outside of their family and close friends
- get to know people who have had similar experiences to them.



We will find more ways for people to have **peer support**.

**Peer support** is getting help from someone who has had similar experiences.



Some people want to meet groups and people in the wider community.



We will share more information about what community groups are available. Community groups might be a group of people:



- in a local area
- with similar interests or hobbies
- who volunteer.



We will work with communities and businesses to help them be welcoming and include all people.



We will find out if there are any gaps in services and support across West Sussex and improve where there are gaps.

We will look for ways to improve how people can get to groups and activities in their community. This includes:



- community-based transport
- finding ways to make public transport more accessible
- but we need to remember that the county council can only fund transport in very few situations.



Doing activities that are meaningful is part of a having a good life.



Some people want to **volunteer** in their community.

When people **volunteer** they give their time freely to help the community, group or organisation.



We will find out how more people who use social care can be **volunteers** in the community.

## Idea 2 – Having a say in your life and making choices



People need to be treated as equal and to have a say about what happens in their lives. We can help people to do this by:



- giving people choice and control about their social care
- giving information and help so people can make decisions
- finding more ways for people to have paid work
- let staff make quick decisions and encourage them to let people have more say about the help they get.



### **Giving people choice and control about their social care**

When we think about a good life, there are many parts of our lives that make a good life, for example:

- the relationships we have
- the place we live





- the things we do.



Some people and their carers have a good idea about what help they need for a good life.



We heard that autistic adults and adults with learning disabilities would like to learn more about making plans for a good life.



We heard that care plans need to be easier to change when a person's needs change. For example, people might need a lot of support at one time and less at another time.



We will work together to help people think about the many parts of our lives that make a good life when planning care.





We will help people to feel confident and get better about making plans for their social care.



People can choose to have the money from the county council to pay for their social care support paid into a bank account.



They use the money to buy support to meet their goals. This is called **direct payments**. We found that **direct payments**:

- are only used by some people
- can save money and lead to better outcomes
- can give people more choice and control about their support
- aren't always able to be used the way people want to meet their goals.







We will find out the best ways to make direct payments:

- give people choice and control
- easier for more people to use.

We will find out about different ways to look after personal social care budgets, by:



- learning more about using Individual Service Funds. This is where a person chooses an organisation to manage the money they get from the council for their care, after saying what they want



- looking at ways groups of people can put money together to buy services.



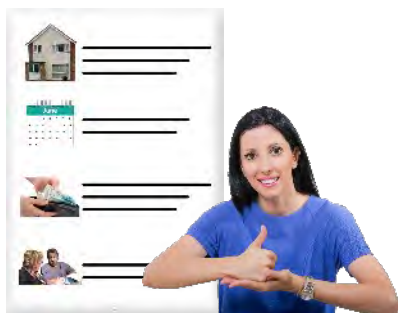
## About giving information and help

Lots of information is available but it is sometimes hard to find.



People told us they often don't know:

- what services and support are available
- what to ask for during big changes in their lives, like leaving school.



We will work together to find a good way for everyone to give accessible information and help.

## About paid work

When people have a job they earn money. Having a job is also important because people can:



- become more independent
- become more confident
- meet other people
- give back to their community or workplace.





Some research shows that people with a disability:

- work harder
- do more work
- have less sick days.



The county council is already helping people to get jobs but we want to help more people.



We will give more jobs to people who use social care at the county council.



We will work together with job support services to help more people to get jobs.



We will help everyone learn that people who use social care can get paid jobs.



We will find ways for young people to have better ways to learn about and get paid jobs.

## About changing the way we make decisions

People have told us:



- they sometimes have to wait a long time for decisions about their social care.



We will find ways to change the way we work so staff can make quicker decisions for some things.



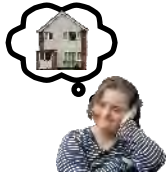
We know that **taking risks** is important for all people to grow and have a good life.

**Taking risks** means trying new things and knowing that things will sometimes go wrong.



We will find ways of working that make it okay to try new things.





## Idea 3 – Thinking about where people live



Home is about where people live.



People who are homeless need to have somewhere to stay and to feel safe.



People who have somewhere to live want their home to be accessible and suit their care needs.



People told us staying in their home was important for many reasons:

- staying with their life partner
- being near their children
- keeping their pet



- knowing their neighbours and local shopkeepers
- staying involved in local community groups
- having their own personal space
- being in control of who they lived with.

## Living in their own home

Most people told us when they get older, they want to be able to stay in their home. People wanted:



- support to stay at home
- choice and control
- their own private space
- to live independently.



We will support more people to stay in their own homes:

- make sure people's homes suit their needs when they come home from hospital.



We will find out about how community support can help people to look after and stay in their home.



We will work with district and borough councils to make sure suitable homes are built for:

- older people
- people who use social care.



## Living with others

Not everyone with social care needs lives on their own or with their families.



Some adults with social care needs in West Sussex live in:

- residential care homes
- extra-care homes
- supported living.



People who live in extra-care and supported living can:

- can have a very good experience
- feel safe
- meet other people.



Extra-care and supported living can be good when people want:

- choices about who they live with
- a private living space
- control over when they have meals and when they see family and friends





- to stay close to their family and friends
- the right support.



We will make more types of homes available and let people know about them.



We will work to help the traditional residential care homes to do more of the important things people have told us.



## Moving out of the family home

Moving out of home is an important step when we become adults. It is the same for young adults with social care needs.



It is important to talk to young people and their parents when young adults are moving out of home.





We will support young adults to move out of the family home in a planned way.



## Idea 4 – How we will try to fix some social care problems



People told us there were problems with:

- not enough care workers
- understanding and support for some groups
- when children move to adult services
- paying for care.



### Not enough care workers

It is hard to find care workers in West Sussex and across the country.



This sometimes means people aren't getting the support they need.



This is a hard problem, but some places are finding ways to get care workers.



We will work with our partners and look at the places where there aren't enough care workers. We will:

- think about what is working in other places
- try to come up with solutions.



We will keep telling people how it is good to work in social care in West Sussex.



## **Understanding and support for some groups**

We heard that some groups of people who receive social care were not understood very well.



We heard that the support needs of autistic young adults are not always understood or met.



How much support people need can change. For example, if someone has too much to deal with they may need extra support for a while.



There are more autistic young adults than before.



We heard that the support needs of people with acquired brain injury are not always understood or met.

Some examples are difficulties with:



- movement
- sensory differences, such as with hearing, seeing, touching
- communication
- managing emotions.



There are more people with an acquired brain injury than before.



We will find out what support autistic adults and people with acquired brain injury need and try to fix the gaps.



## Moving from children to adult services

We heard that moving from children's social care services to adult social services can be difficult.





Some people are not able to get social care support when they become an adult. They need to find out what will happen as soon as possible.

We heard that there are some things that can help young people with the changes when they become an adult:



- start talking about the changes as early as possible
- have good information about what will happen and when



- learn job skills when people are aged 18-25
- keep learning life skills for independence



- start plans for living outside the family home
- talk with parents where the young person agrees with this.

We will work together with children's and adult social care services to:



- check how young people are supported when they become an adult
- make sure young people feel supported.

## Paying for Care



There is not enough money for social care in the country. This affects people in West Sussex.



This means that most people living in West Sussex who need social care will have to pay for some of their care.

People are:



- angry about this
- worried about what this means for their future
- worried about when they retire.



Some people have decided to stop getting social care. This is sometimes because of the costs they would need to pay.



We can't solve the problem just in West Sussex and we need to follow the rules for the country. We can:



- give people information so they can make a plan for if they need care in the future
- be clear about when people will get support with the cost of care
- be clear about how much it is going to cost before people get care
- have fair costs for care
- make sure people can talk to the county council team that looks after finances to try and fix any problems as soon as possible.





We know in West Sussex that many people live in poverty.



Half of all people in England who live in **poverty** have someone in the family with a disability.



Carers can have money problems because of their caring role.



It is important that people can get the social care support money they are allowed.



We will look again at the way the county council works out how much people should pay towards the cost of their care making sure we follow government rules.



We will keep track of how many people say no or stop getting care to learn why they decided to do this.



We will keep working to get fair funding for adult social care.



We will work with local and national partners to support people to apply for the benefits which they can get.





## Idea 5 - Making sure people are valued and included



In all the meetings and talks we had, we heard that people wanted to be valued and included.



We also heard that not everyone felt valued and included.



We heard that not everyone could get:

- information
- services
- support





There are 3 ideas to think about:

- including people who have many **disadvantages**
- diversity and including all people fairly
- having and using computers and technology.

## Including people who have many disadvantages

People who have many **disadvantages** have had many hard and difficult experiences. They might have experienced:



- trauma
- being homeless
- sleeping rough
- mental health problems
- substance abuse
- having a learning disability
- being arrested or spending time in jail





- physical health issues
- escaping domestic violence

Everyone is an individual and everyone is different. We know that when people have hard and difficult experiences in their lives they:



- can have a lower quality of life
- might need lots of support if they don't get help earlier in their life
- might die younger than other people.



It can also make it hard for the person to trust other people and services.



People who have many **disadvantages** can find it more difficult to get their needs understood and met.

We can work best with people who have many **disadvantages** when services:



- work together and people don't have to tell their story over and over
- are person centred
- understand the person's real life and can get the services they need
- are patient and give people time to trust them
- give support as soon as they can.



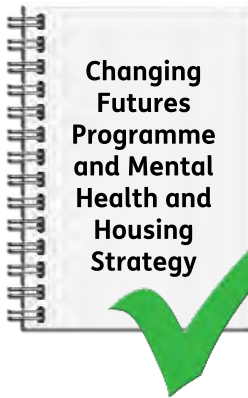
We will work with people who have many **disadvantages**.



We will work together to find ways to try and stop people from having many different **disadvantages**.



We will work with partners to find housing for people who have many **disadvantages** and who need personal care.



We will keep working with partners on the Changing Futures Programme and Mental Health and Housing Strategy.



## Diversity and including all people fairly

We want all adults to have equal and fair chance to have social care support.



Getting and using social care can be hard for some people:

- from different cultural backgrounds
- **race** is where someone is from, their history, language skin colour, religion or culture
- **sexual orientation** – if they are gay, lesbian, or bisexual
- **sexual identity** – if someone is a man, woman or transgender
- who have a disability.





## People might:



- not ask for support
- not know about support
- get support that has problems
- have support that doesn't meet their needs.

## For example, sometimes:



Year			
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec



- people are unable to find carers who understood their needs. Sometimes this is because of language barriers
- family members who provide social care don't know they can get support
- the health checks for people with learning disabilities that happen every year could be better
- same sex couples can be treated unfairly when they get social care.



There are some good programs in West Sussex. Finding ways to solve problems can be difficult but we will keep doing what we can to make things better.



We will do a better job of understanding who lives in West Sussex.



We will get better information about who is and isn't using services.



We will talk to communities to understand how to help them get services and how to include people better.



We will think about how to have more people from a variety of backgrounds working for the county council.



We will give better training about how to support people from a variety of backgrounds.

## Having and using computers and technology

Covid-19 has led to more services being online, for example:



- grocery shopping
- GP appointments.



This has helped some people. But not everyone.



People may not be online because:

- they don't have a computer or a smart phone
- they don't have access to the internet
- they need support to feel confident and learn new skills
- they want support with privacy and safety online
- they don't see how it would help them.



People who want to get online told us their support plans should say they need to be digitally connected.



When people are connected online they might travel less. This can also make a positive difference to climate change goals.



We will work with partners to help more people to feel confident and get online.



There is a lot of technology available that can improve people's lives:

- technology to help people be independent and stay in their own homes
- ways to reduce risk of falls
- many more.



Services can also use technology to improve services.





We did not hear very much about how technology can help people in our discussions. This means that people might not know yet how much it can help.



We will find ways to help people, carers and the social care workers to understand how assisted technology can make a positive difference.

## For more information contact our Adults' CarePoint



Adults' CarePoint  
Second Floor  
The Grange  
County Hall  
Chichester  
PO19 1RG



Phone:  
**01243 642121**



Call using Relay UK:  
**18001 01243 642121**

(Helps people with hearing and speech  
Difficulties)



Email:  
**[socialcare@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:socialcare@westsussex.gov.uk)**

## What the words mean

**Direct payments** - when people choose to have the money from the council to pay for their social care support paid into a bank account. They use this money to buy support to meet their needs.

**Disadvantages** – when people face problems in their lives that make it more difficult to do things.

**Joined up services** – when people get support from several services and organisations that work well together to support people.

**Peer support** - getting help from someone who has had similar experiences to you.

**Person-centred** services – giving the support that meets an individual's needs.

**Poverty** - not having enough money for the things we need like food, medicine, clothes and a place to stay.

**Race** - where someone is from, their history, language, skin colour, religion or culture.

**Taking risks** - trying new things and knowing that sometimes they might go wrong.

**Sexual orientation** – if a person is gay, lesbian, heterosexual, or bisexual.

**Sexual identity** – if someone is a man, woman or transgender.

**Social isolation** - when someone may live on their own and feels very lonely. They might not know or see other people.

**Volunteer** – when a person gives their time freely to help the community, group or organisation.



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**Speaking Up Together** - making EasyRead information.



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