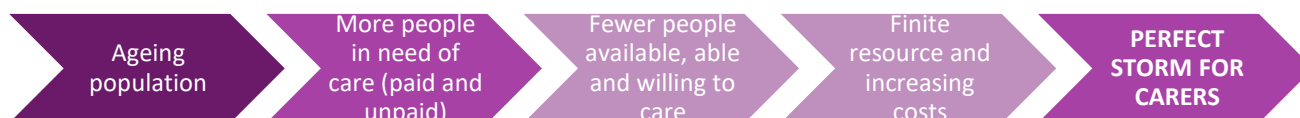


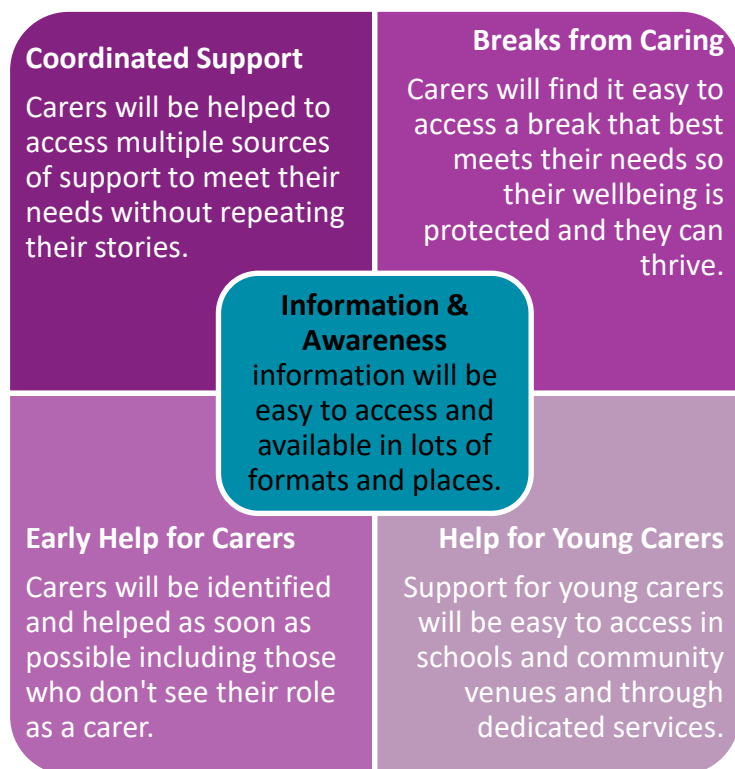
Demand for support for and from carers is increasing; the number of carers estimated in Fife is up by 27% to 44,222 in 11 years since the 2011 Census Scotland. The capacity of the commissioned services is not increasing at the same pace due to increasing costs and financial constraints, the finite availability of a skilled workforce, and general awareness among carers and professionals of what is available already. Additional money to support carers has not been made available by Scottish Government since 2023.

Demand for support is increasing; resources are not increasing at the same pace. The problem is best illustrated in this diagram:



The current strategic assessment emphasises the pressures we are facing, which are well known, and the impending challenges from the new duties of the Care Reform Act, the details of which are unclear at the time of writing. However, it is reasonable and prudent to plan for the new rights which, once implemented will have a significant impact; already breaks are widely requested, often costly, and lacking in availability; we anticipate this position will become ever more challenging.

Our consultation with carers and commissioned partners has confirmed, by a significant majority, that the priorities in the 2023 – 2026 strategy remain current. They have agreed our suggestion to retain a priority focus on these areas in the next strategy. Therefore, we will build on the excellent foundations already set down and plan for greater investment where possible to meet the specific needs carers have told us are important to them and which will help them to meet their own needs for support.



Five Priority Outcomes

Information and awareness raising are an essential priority which will support the other four. This includes specific actions relating to digital awareness and service access; however, many carers tell us they do not access information using online resources therefore our information will continue to be made available in traditional formats.

This strategy and these outcomes are fully aligned to meet the national carers strategy, the Duties of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 and the Fife Health & Social Care Partnership's Strategic Plan for Fife 2026-29.

Delivering support will be through local partnerships wherever possible. Our locality-based carer support staff play an integral role in this focus which will lead to easy and quick access to support services and a better experience for carers.

Additionally, we will look at what other support we can introduce for carers with specific characteristics. These may include working carers, carers within the Armed Forces and veterans, kindred carers, and carers of under-represented groups. While some support is universal, the nature of these groups may necessitate additional support to help them balance their caring roles with other specific commitments and needs.

Fife Health & Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan

"Support unpaid carers so they can stay healthy and well while balancing and maintaining their caring role"

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016

Carers' Strategy Vision

"All carers will have access to high quality information and support at a time and place that best meets their needs, which enables them to make positive choices to thrive and flourish as a carer for as long as they want to, and to help them live a happy and fulfilling life alongside their caring role"

National Carer Organisations Involvement

National Carers Strategy

National Carer Manifesto Priorities

Outcome 1

Information & Awareness

Develop a communication and information sharing plan

Deliver quarterly awareness raising campaign

Create a new carers digital self-service information tool

Introduce tools and learning that support carers' self-help

Carers' benefits

Carers can easily access high-quality information and support where, when and how they want it

Outcome 2

Coordinated Support

Improve how we complete high quality ACSP/YCS

Invest in workforce skills development

Complete a full support services recommissioning exercise

Improve value for money from commissioned services

Carers' benefits

Carers have access to support quickly from partners that deliver excellence and value for money

Outcome 3

Breaks from Caring

Commission a market gap analysis study of breaks options

Develop a market options appraisal and stimulation plan

Commission and promote new options for breaks for carers

Refresh and publish the Short Breaks Service Statement

Carers' benefits

Carers have access to a range of breaks opportunities that support their wellbeing and life balance

Outcome 4

Early Help for Carers

Embed a faster timescale to offer and complete ACSP

Support GPs and professionals to identify carers routinely

Embed the use of AI in self-service support for carers

Help school staff to identify carers earlier, including pupil carers.

Carers' benefits

People who look after others will be identified as soon as possible and given information

Outcome 5

Help for Young Carers

Develop support tools that help teachers to support carers

Introduce more support for young carers in transition phases

Ensure young carers can access support at all times of the year

Develop short breaks options specifically for young carers

Carers' benefits

Young carers have a clear choice to be a young person first and supported to be a carer as well