



Impact Report

2025/26

Working for Carers



Funded by
UK Government

NE North East
Combined
Authority





Thank you for making such a
positive impact
on my situation. Your support
and encouragement has really
boosted my
confidence
during stressful times.

~ Adult Carer

Introduction

The North East has the highest proportion of residents providing unpaid care to a friend, family member, or neighbour. This could be because of an illness, disability, mental health problem, or addiction. The North East also has the lowest rates of employment in the UK.

Reports show 73% of carers struggle to balance looking after someone with work.

The demands of looking after a friend, family member or neighbour means unpaid carers face significantly more challenges in finding and maintaining employment. Carers often have to prioritise their caring role, which can be unpredictable, time-consuming and exhausting.

The Working for Carers project supports unpaid carers across Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland, to maintain or find work, access education, training or volunteering opportunities.

Specialist Employment Advisors support carers aged 16+ to overcome work-related barriers, understand their rights in the workplace, and better balance their caring role with work or education.

The Working for Carers project also works alongside local businesses and organisations and supports them to become carer-friendly workplaces.

This involves direct one-to-one support with our Employer Engagement Officer to understand carers' needs and how to support carers in the workplace.

The project also offers specialist advice to employers on legal policies, including the Carer's Leave Act 2023 and Employer Relations (Flexible Working) Act 2023, working together with businesses to implement these on a strategic level.

The Working for Carers project is a partnership between three local carers centres: Newcastle Carers, North Tyneside Carers' Centre and Carers Northumberland.

It is funded by the UK government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, with the North East Combined Authority as the lead.



NORTHUMBERLAND

A white silhouette of the county of Northumberland, oriented vertically. The name 'NORTHUMBERLAND' is written in a bold, black, serif font, following the curve of the shape.

**NORTH
TYNESIDE**

A white silhouette of the metropolitan borough of North Tyneside, oriented vertically. The name 'NORTH TYNESIDE' is written in a bold, black, serif font, following the curve of the shape.

NEWCASTLE

A white silhouette of the city of Newcastle upon Tyne, oriented vertically. The name 'NEWCASTLE' is written in a bold, black, serif font, following the curve of the shape.

Our Impact





I had no hope, but you made things happen for me

Thank you for bringing opportunities to people like me who really need support.

If it wasn't for you I couldn't have completed the job application process - we achieved this together.

Your effort, kindness and financial support has helped massively towards me achieving my study goals.

Thank you for being supportive, non-judgemental and for simply listening to me when I needed someone to.

~ Adult Carer

Supporting carers into work and education

594 one-to-one support sessions delivered.

70%

70% of all carers supported reported a barrier removed towards work or education.

201 unpaid carers were supported throughout the year.

64 carers entered the project looking for job search guidance.

After receiving our support, 70% successfully gained employment.



78 carers were supported to remain in employment.

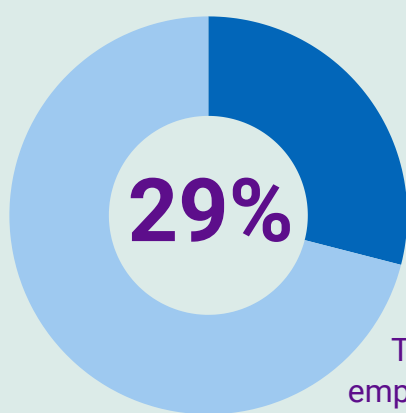
36 carers were supported into education/training.

15 carers were supported into volunteering.



Demographics

201 unpaid carers were supported throughout the year.



29% of carers supported were under the age of 25

The Working for Carers project provided tailored support to young carers and young adult carers. This enabled young people to achieve a better balance between their caring role and their wider life goals.

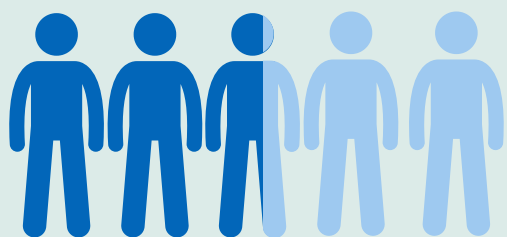
This support included young people who were previously not in education, employment or training (NEET); in a region experiencing the highest rates of NEETs across the country.



Almost two in five carers were from an ethnic minority group

Many carers from ethnic minority backgrounds face additional barriers in accessing support and employment.

The Working for Carers project has helped many of these carers into employment and education, and further support with their caring role.



58% of carers live in the most deprived areas across the North of Tyne

By supporting carers in deprived areas across Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland, we've enabled individuals to engage with support services and to enter the job market.

Grants

£3,000

has been distributed in funds to carers. The Working for Carers Progression Fund is vital grant, helping carers pursue their journey into employment and education.



By developing my skills, this training course has helped with my self-esteem and confidence to pursue a life beyond caring.

~ Adult carer who accessed the Progression Fund to complete an online training course





**This has
really made
me step out
of my shell**

Alyssa's story

Alyssa is a young adult carer, looking after her sister who has physical disabilities that make her highly prone to falls and fractures. Alyssa supports her sister with personal care every day, helping her bathe, get dressed and use the toilet, as she is unable to do this independently. She also prepares meals and accompanies her sister whenever she leaves the house to ensure her safety.

Alongside her demanding caring role, Alyssa recently graduated with a master's degree in Data Science. Finding her first graduate role in the industry proved extremely challenging, as she needed to secure employment that was both flexible and based in Newcastle to continue supporting her sister.



“ I found the Working for Carers project so helpful. I lost a lot of self-confidence whilst job searching, but my advisor was always there to make me feel better and boost my confidence. She taught me how to best write an application and prepared me for interviews; which meant I was able to get my dream job! ”

Through regular one-to-one meetings with her Working for Carers Employment Advisor, Alyssa received tailored support to identify suitable roles and navigate the application processes. This support continued outside of their meetings, with the Employment Advisor sharing current job opportunities and building Alyssa's confidence to apply for these independently.

“ One thing I particularly loved was every 'meeting' was really chill as we would go to a local café and have a chat over coffee. There were a few times I needed to leave early to go back to my sister and she was always so understanding of that. My advisor was just so lovely and we built a really nice relationship. ”

Together, Alyssa and her Employment Advisor explored training opportunities that could be completed alongside her caring role. They also reviewed and refined her CV, highlighting the transferrable skills Alyssa had gained from her caring role.

When Alyssa was invited to an interview, her Employment Advisor supported her to prepare for the day – including mock interviews, researching the organisation, reviewing the job description and planning responses to potential questions.

“ This was the first graduate role interview I've had and I was so nervous before stepping into the room, but all the prep we did together helped me focus on what I needed to say and showed me that I am well-suited for the role. I can't believe I'm writing this... they have now offered me the job! Thank you so, so much. ”

Through tailored, specialist support, Alyssa successfully secured a graduate role that gives her the flexibility she needs to look after her sister. The help she received through the Working for Carers project increased her confidence and strengthened her employability.



**You've made me realise I am capable of
so many skills. Thank you for being
invested and interested in helping me.**

~ Adult Carer

Employer support



Enabling local organisations to become carer-aware



We're incredibly grateful for the support and partnership provided through the Working for Carers project.

The guidance, training and policy support we received has strengthened our approach to supporting carers in the workplace and improved awareness across our organisation.

~ Stomping Grounds North East

STOMPING GROUNDS NE



Nexus: Creating a Carer-Friendly Workplace

“ The support provided by the Working for Carers project has been phenomenal, offering invaluable guidance and reassurance to Nexus and our employees.

This has made a meaningful difference to colleagues who are balancing work and caring responsibilities, and we are deeply grateful for their ongoing partnership. ”

~ Cornel Westfield, HR Business Partner at Nexus



Nexus is a significant employer in the Tyne and Wear region, with around 1,150 staff members. The organisation provides, plans and promotes public transport across the area, playing a key role in connecting communities and supporting the local economy.

As a large local employer, Nexus recognises that many of their employees are also juggling caring responsibilities. Reports show that across the country, one in seven people are providing care alongside paid employment.

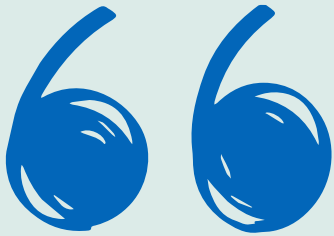
Partnering with the Working for Carers project, Nexus have continued to offer vital support to their employees who are balancing work with caring responsibilities. The Working for Carers project previously helped Nexus by updating its carer-friendly policies, providing a key element of support for working carers.

Alongside their carer-friendly policies (including the Carers Leave Act and an agile flexible working policy), Nexus have collaborated with the Employer Engagement Officer from the Working for Carers project to deliver drop-in sessions for staff. These sessions allow carers working at Nexus to access direct information and advice about managing work with care, at a time that suits them.

The Employer Engagement Officer also delivered carer-awareness training to the organisation, developing understanding and identification of carers. This training enables managers and colleagues to learn how best to support those balancing work and care.

Establishing a strong relationship with Nexus, the Working for Carers project has expanded support and identification for working carers at the organisation. This partnership has enabled carers to get the right support and has continued Nexus' approach to provide more support for their staff across the Tyne and Wear area.

Introducing policies for carers in work



We didn't have a carer policy in place before partnering with the Working for Carers project... It was great to have their involvement and suggestions.



We had already found a carer policy but needed advice on it to add VONNE's values.

The project gave us direction and even suggested that we gave carers paid leave.



~ VONNE



References

- The North East has the highest proportion of residents providing unpaid care 10.1%, Census 2021
- The North East has the lowest rates of employment in the UK 69.2%, ONS January 2026
- Reports show 73% of carers find it stressful balancing care and work Carers UK, 2024
- The North East has the highest rates of NEETs than any other region aged 16-24 Newcastle City Council, July 2024
- One in seven people are providing care alongside paid employment Carers UK, 2019

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