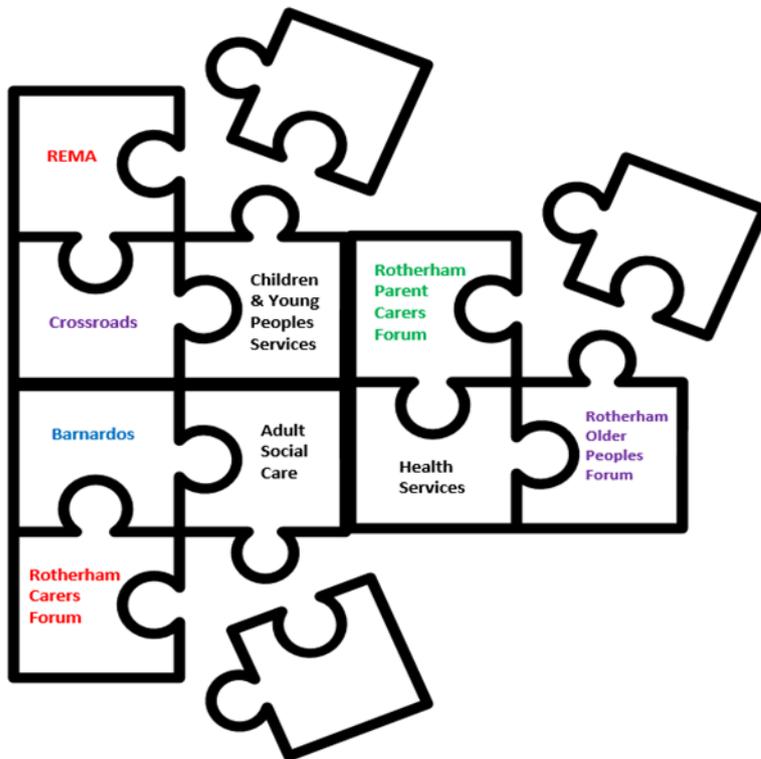


Case study: Strengthening support for carers through the establishment of 'The Borough That Cares Strategic Group'



The Rotherham Health and Wellbeing Board sets out a vision for Rotherham to be a carer friendly borough. More than 30,000 people are providing unpaid care in Rotherham, often alongside work or education, for someone who otherwise could not manage without our help due to illness, disability, addiction or mental ill health. The Covid-19 crisis has emphasised the fundamental importance of taking action to improve the way unpaid carers are identified, recognised and supported.

According to the Census figures in 2011 Rotherham had 31,001 carers. Findings from Carers UK July 2021 suggested there have been 4.5 million new carers since the start of the pandemic. Analysis showed that almost half of carers providing 20+ hours of care per week during the second wave of the pandemic were not previously providing care (45%). Locally, this would push our Rotherham number well over 45,000.

Evidence suggests that many carers feel isolated, under-valued, taken for granted and overlooked. This combination further impacts upon the physical, mental and economic health and wellbeing already experienced by many carers. As carers have been disproportionately affected during the pandemic, both socially and economically, creating a borough that cares for its carers is more important than ever. The borough's new strategic framework will be achieved through strong

partnership approaches to ensure carers in Rotherham stay mentally and physically healthy, and economically active, for longer.

Carer organisations came together in May 2020 to ensure a joined-up response to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The Unpaid Carers Group formed to support the emergency response work and this ensured the carer partnership was as strong as it could be in the most extreme of circumstances. These organisations remained connected and through 2021 shaped and created our Strategic Framework for 2022-2025. The group then became 'Our Borough That Cares Strategic Group'.

The group consists of people from health, social care, the voluntary sector and crucially people with lived experience. To create a carer friendly borough, we need to ensure carers are involved in making key decisions about action plans and the delivery of services. Our work will focus on what everyone agrees is important not just the priorities of one group. Everyone will be involved all the way through the work – from planning to delivering to evaluating. This is about real-life impact and change for carers; we have created a strategic framework from the individual stories of the people who know best about caring - our carers.