



# Making the Difference for Carers

Forward Carers  
Impact Review 2017

Supported by  
 **Birmingham**  
City Council

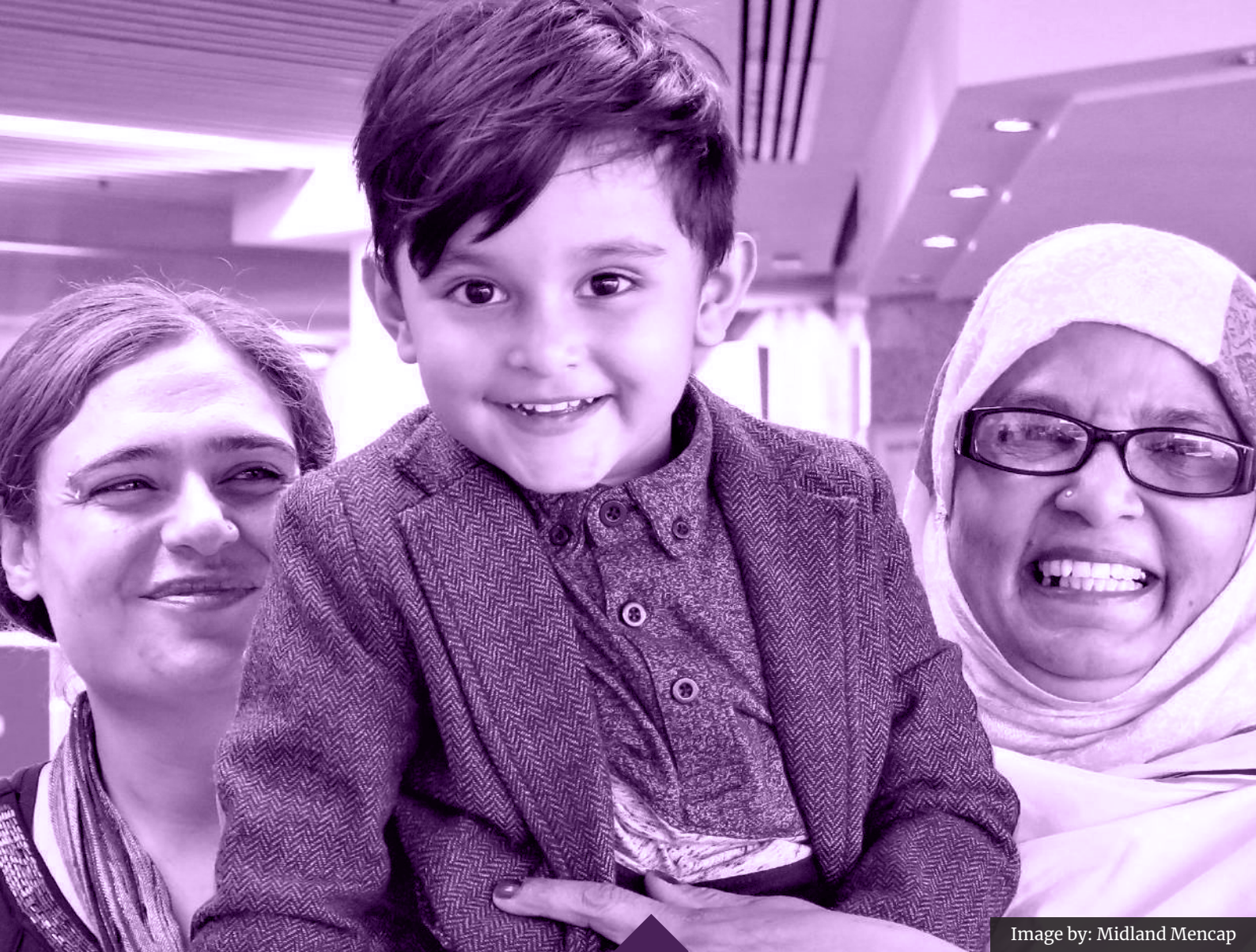


Image by: Midland Mencap

## ► Carers say it best

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“

Just talking to people and having some me-time makes a difference. It's great for physical and mental health.

”

S, carer for husband

“

Taking some time for myself has been wonderful. It makes such a difference.

”

E, carer for mum



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## ► Our Year In Numbers

**2,534**  
**CARERS**

identified and registered  
by our partners

**3,429**

1:1 Sessions

Delivered  
to

**1,172**  
**CARERS**

with complex needs



**1,311**

families with kids with additional  
needs signposted to free short breaks



**121**

carers given health MOTs



**8 OUT OF 10**

carers reported improved  
wellbeing after  
receiving our help



**32**

emergency  
care call outs



**48**

support  
groups  
brought

**384**

carers  
together



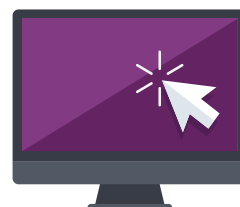
**£43,891**

awarded to carer groups to reduce  
isolation among older carers

**12** training courses for ▶ **165**  **16** Forward Carers partners provided thousands of services to carers  
carers



**5,156**  
Carers Supported



**2,000**

people use our online info services  
monthly 40% return for more help



**£651,789**

We helped carers claim hundreds of thousands of pounds in grants and benefits they and their loved ones were entitled to

**For every £1 spent on Forward Carers, £5.53 is saved by social care, that's a total saving of £7.07m each year!\***

\*based on Adass and Carers UK methodology

## A Message From Our CEO



“

Thank you to all our partners, including Birmingham City Council and Birmingham and Solihull CCG. Working together, we have continued to make a real and meaningful difference to carers across the West Midlands. And to all carers, thank you. We will continue to work together to make the difference for Birmingham carers.

**Simon Fenton**

”

2017 was a challenging and rewarding year for Forward Carers, as for carers across the West Midlands. With the stretched health and social care system creaking at the seams, we've helped more carers, in more challenging situations, than ever before.

We were pleased to see greater recognition of the caring role, yet day-to-day life for carers was tough. We learnt 8 in 10 carers feel 'lonely or socially isolated' and 1 in 4 carers have not had a break for five years\*.

That's why we focus on making the difference to carers. We've made some significant in-roads this year. We've engaged with more carers than ever before to provide the tailored support that works for them. We're supporting carers facing poverty due to their caring role. And, we're at the forefront of reducing social isolation for older carers. You can read more about all this and more in the following pages.

\*<https://carersuk.org/news-and-campaigns/news/8-in-10-people-caring-for-loved-ones-have-felt-lonely-or-socially-isolated>

2018 offers new challenges and opportunities. We're committed to doing the things we do well, even better, and to responding in new and innovative ways to the growing need.

Our value to the social care system has been recognised and we're about to take on delivery of statutory carer assessments to Birmingham carers. This greater health and social care integration means that carers will be identified and better supported, sooner. A new toolkit for employers will reduce the number of carers whose aspirations are cut short by the challenge of juggling work and care. We'll also be lending a hand to carers facing poverty. You can read more about our bold plans on page 22.

## ► We are Forward Carers

### Our Mission

Our mission is to improve the physical and mental wellbeing of carers, young and old, including parent carers, so that families stay healthier and happier together, for longer.

### Our Vision

Our vision is a world where carers are happy, healthy and have the skills and knowledge to carry out their caring role. Carers will be able to fulfil their potential and their ambitions in life and work. The caring role will be recognised for its valuable contribution to society.

### Our Values

Our values underpin everything we do. We promise to be:

**Carer-centred:** Carers at the heart of everything we do

**Impact-driven:** Making a real difference to carer wellbeing

**True-partnership:** Collaborating with others to improve carers' lives



Forward Carers is proud to be an award winning Social Enterprise.

## ► Who are Birmingham's Carers?

A carer provides physical, social or emotional support to sick or disabled family members or friends, it is a voluntary role. Each caring role is unique, but carers share many traits, they work hard and are compassionate and dedicated. Carers play an amazing role looking after their families and contributing to their community.

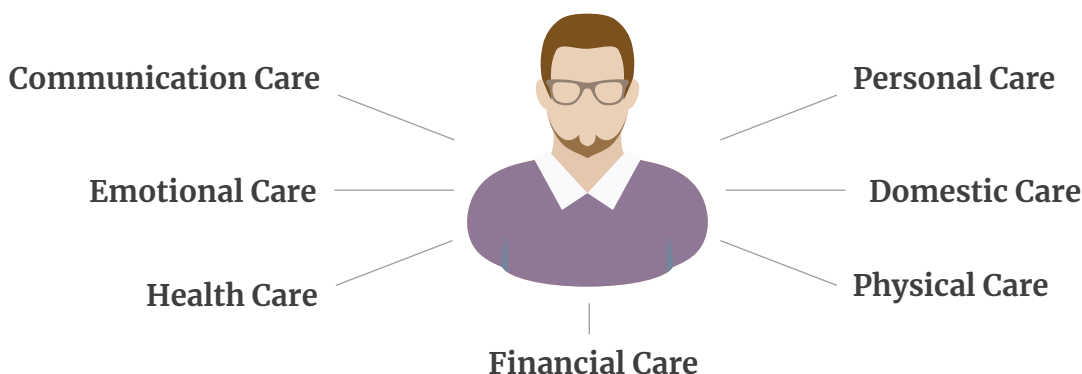


1 in 4 Birmingham homes is home to a carer

**292,866**

carers in the West Midlands

## What carers do



## ► Of the carers registered with us:



A close-up portrait of a woman with long dark hair, looking directly at the camera. The image is tinted with a purple hue. It is positioned in the upper right portion of the page, partially overlapping the main title area.

# ► Making the Difference for Carers

Our Strategy Is To Increase Carer Wellbeing By:

## 1. Engaging

with every carer who needs us

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Pages 10 - 12

## 2. Improving

carer health and wellbeing

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Pages 13 - 16

## 3. Delivering

quality in everything we do

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Pages 17 - 18

## ► 1. Engaging with every carer



1 in 8 people across the nation care for a loved one or dependant, with additional needs, that's up to 290,000 people in the West Midlands alone. Yet, many people don't realise they are a carer, and that's because they carry out their role for love.

By reaching out to, and engaging with carers, we can ensure they don't miss out on the help, services and recognition they are entitled to. Registering with Forward Carers is the first step on a journey to better support, connection and wellbeing.

### We registered more carers than ever before

**2,534** carers are no longer alone in finding help and information.

**12%** increase compared to last year

### By working with community partners

**16** partners based in local centres and high streets help us reach out to all the community

### In more innovative ways

**71** Carers Corners set up in GP surgeries to inform Doctors and patients about carers needs and our services.

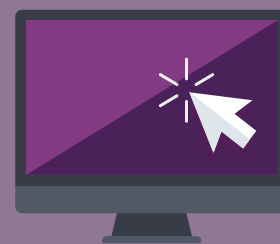
**466** carers referred to us via GPs.



## Information & Advice Line

5,156 people contacted us for support and advice

The most common queries were about accessing local support, emergency back up and support groups



## Online services

- New website launched in May 2017
- Over **2,000** people each month visit us at [www.forwardcarers.org.uk](http://www.forwardcarers.org.uk)
- Over **3,000** people receive our regular e-news and Facebook and Twitter updates

# ► Creating a Carer Friendly Community

We believe communities are best placed to serve families and those in a caring role, care happily and healthily. Our partners reflect the diverse communities across Birmingham, so we can reach every carer who needs us:

- Action for Children
- Age Concern Birmingham
- Barefoot Wellbeing
- Birmingham Buddhist Centre
- Birmingham Carers Association
- Birmingham City Council
- Birmingham Mind
- BVSC
- Chinese Community Centre
- Contact
- Disability Resource Centre
- East Birmingham Collective
- Headway Birmingham and Solihull
- Health Exchange
- iSE Digbeth
- Kids
- Midland Mencap
- NHS (local)
- Sutton Coldfield YMCA

## Case Study: GP Engagement



GPs can be the first point of call for carers who are stressed or whose health may be affected due to their caring role.

We set up Carers Corners in doctor's surgeries across Birmingham to make sure GPs knew how to identify carers and where to send them for help. Our carer posters showcased the many different faces of carers across Birmingham

**Lunchtime I'm his dietician.**

**This evening I'm his physio.**

**Every day, I'm a dad.**  
**Every day, I'm a carer.**

**If you're caring for someone in Birmingham ring us on:**

**0333 006 9711** or register online at [birminghamcarershub.org.uk](http://birminghamcarershub.org.uk)



Forward Carers Consortium Ltd  
provides the Birmingham Carers Hub

**Yesterday I took my partner to chemo.**

**Today I'm pretending everything's ok.**

**All day, every day, I'm a carer.**

**If you're caring for someone in Birmingham ring us on:**

**0333 006 9711** or register online at [birminghamcarershub.org.uk](http://birminghamcarershub.org.uk)



Forward Carers Consortium Ltd  
provides the Birmingham Carers Hub

**1pm, Lunch with Mum.**

**9pm, Mum's bath and meds.**

**All day, every day, I'm a carer.**

**If you're caring for someone in Birmingham ring us on:**

**0333 006 9711** or register online at [birminghamcarershub.org.uk](http://birminghamcarershub.org.uk)



Forward Carers Consortium Ltd  
provides the Birmingham Carers Hub

“Before I knew about Forward Carers, I didn't realise I had anywhere to direct my patient carers to. The posters are up all over the surgery. And, the Carers Corners get people talking and show them where to find help.”

Dr Liz Croton

## ► 2. Improving Carer Wellbeing



Carers regularly put other people's needs ahead of their own, all too often at the expense of their wellbeing. But, looking after a loved one and looking after oneself can and should go hand-in-hand, it's better for everyone.

Under the pressure of caring for others, it can be all too easy for carers' own wants and needs to fall to the bottom of the list.

### **This can have profound consequences:**

- Carer burnout is the primary reason family members are admitted into care homes.
- When older carers are stressed, the person they care for is at greater risk of falling, and developing medical issues.\*

“

I'm starting to learn it's really important to take time for myself. I used to think it was selfish but I realise that when I'm re-energized I can be a better carer for my husband.

Hazel

”

### **We improve carer wellbeing and keep families together by:**

- » Supporting carers in emergencies.
- » Providing relaxation and social activities.
- » Building on strengths.
- » Giving carers a voice.
- » Reducing the cost of caring.

\*<https://forwardcarers.org.uk/wellbeing/>

## ► Supporting Carers In An Emergency



The **Carer Emergency Response Service (CERS)** is a **FREE** emergency care back-up service run by Midland Mencap on behalf of Forward Carers. In the event of carer illness or accident or at times of crisis, **CERS** provide a safety net.



**CERS** also provides a free planned sitting service so carers can attend appointments that simply can't be missed.



Families registered in case of emergency



32 emergency responses



357 planned sitting responses

## ► Providing Relaxation & Social Activities



Yoga Classes



Support Groups run



Carers attended a support group



Relaxation Sessions



Tai chi Sessions

## ► Giving Carers A Voice

We work in partnership so carers have a say in the support that works best for them.

- We partnered with **Ageing Better Birmingham** to provide grants for new social groups for older carers. We helped carers to develop their plans and apply for funds. **£43,891** awarded to Birmingham carers to date.
- We interviewed **37 carers** about the services that would make the biggest difference to them. Working with **Ageing Better** and **The Big Lottery Local** to turn their wish list into three new specialist services: a phone befriending scheme, a toolkit to help carers set up support groups, and a carer sitting service.
- We hosted a meeting with Jeremy Corbyn, leader of the Labour Party, so carers could talk about their experiences



**LOTTERY FUNDED**



## ► Reducing the Cost of Caring

**£651,789**

claimed with our help

Carers tell us that caring costs can be high. We help carers claim the funds they and their loved ones are entitled to and deserve.

“

*I can't afford a social life*

*Can't afford respite*

*Suitable holidays are more expensive*

*Money is tight*

”



No carer should suffer financial hardship because of their role.

## ► Building On Strengths: Training

People can become carers unexpectedly, or their role can change with the health of their loved ones. Our training courses give people the skills and confidence to carry out their role safely.

- **5** Moving and Handling courses for **81** carers
- **7** First Aid courses for **84** carers
- **16** Hidden Carers workshops to **121** participants

We are grateful to the Big Lottery for a grant to run 8 First Aid and Moving & Handling courses in the Black Country, so vital carer training will be accessible to even more people.



**LOTTERY FUNDED**

## ► Case Study: The Hidden Carers Training Project

Hidden Carer workshops provide a support network, help attendees understand their legal position and explain what services are available to improve their wellbeing. Attendees can also train as volunteers to deliver the course to other hidden carers.

A hidden carer is someone who may not realise they are a care giver, and may need to improve their confidence and skills in English to access carer support.

“

The Hidden carers project is a breath of fresh air to those that so desperately require the support.

”

Sylvia, course attendee and trained volunteer

## ► 3. Delivering Quality

We measure our quality and impact in two key ways

- 1) **delivering value for money**
- 2) **improving carer wellbeing**
- 3) **maintaining our business**

Carer wellbeing is improved via contact with excellent support and services which meet their needs and are shaped with their input.

Improving carer wellbeing decreases social care costs, as a carer is less likely to need emergency or ongoing statutory support for themselves or their loved ones.

As an organisation, we also work to the highest quality standards to ensure our staff and workplace are quality driven.



**Impact-driven is one of our core values**

## ► Improving Carer Wellbeing

Increasing carer wellbeing is at the heart of everything we do. We strive to ensure every service we provide has a tangible and positive effect, so we know we are making a real difference.

Carers complete a wellbeing questionnaire when they first register, and again after they have engaged with our services. With the right support, carers feel better, and families stay together for longer. We have the evidence to prove it.

Our wellbeing questionnaire is based on the wellbeing domains outlined in the Care Act 2014.

### **In 2017:**

- **2,232 carers assessed**
- **8 out of 10 carers felt better after engaging with us**
- **On average carer wellbeing increased by 7.5% across all domains.**
- **The greatest improvements were in 'feeling supported' and 'emotional wellbeing'**

A photograph of a man and a young boy sitting together, looking at a violin. The man is on the right, leaning in and looking at the instrument. The boy is on the left, looking at the camera. They are both wearing polo shirts. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a living room setting.

*The support and services are amazing, I don't know what I'd do without them. Don't stop!*

H, Carer

## ► Value For Money

For every **£1** spent on Forward Carers, **£5.53** is saved by social care, that's a total saving of **£7.07m** each year!\*

\*based on Adass and Carers UK methodology

Without our support and services, many carers would need extra help. Our package of carer support contributes a substantial cost saving to the NHS, facilitates increased economic contributions from carers who remain in work, and reduces statutory costs for funded care and support.

And, most importantly, improving carer wellbeing helps carers continue in their valuable role, happily and healthily.

## ► Our Business

### A strong infrastructure

help us achieve our future goals as the Forward Carers team grows to support the growing need. We are working with Roots HR CIC, a certified HR provider for social sector enterprises to build a strong, effective team.



- ✓ Achieved social enterprise charter mark
- ✓ Worked with Roots HR CIC to invest in our team and infrastructure
- ✓ Signed the Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility

### The Social Enterprise Charter Mark

recognises our commitment to using our funds for the public good. We always invest surplus income in our work to improve carer wellbeing.



### The Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility

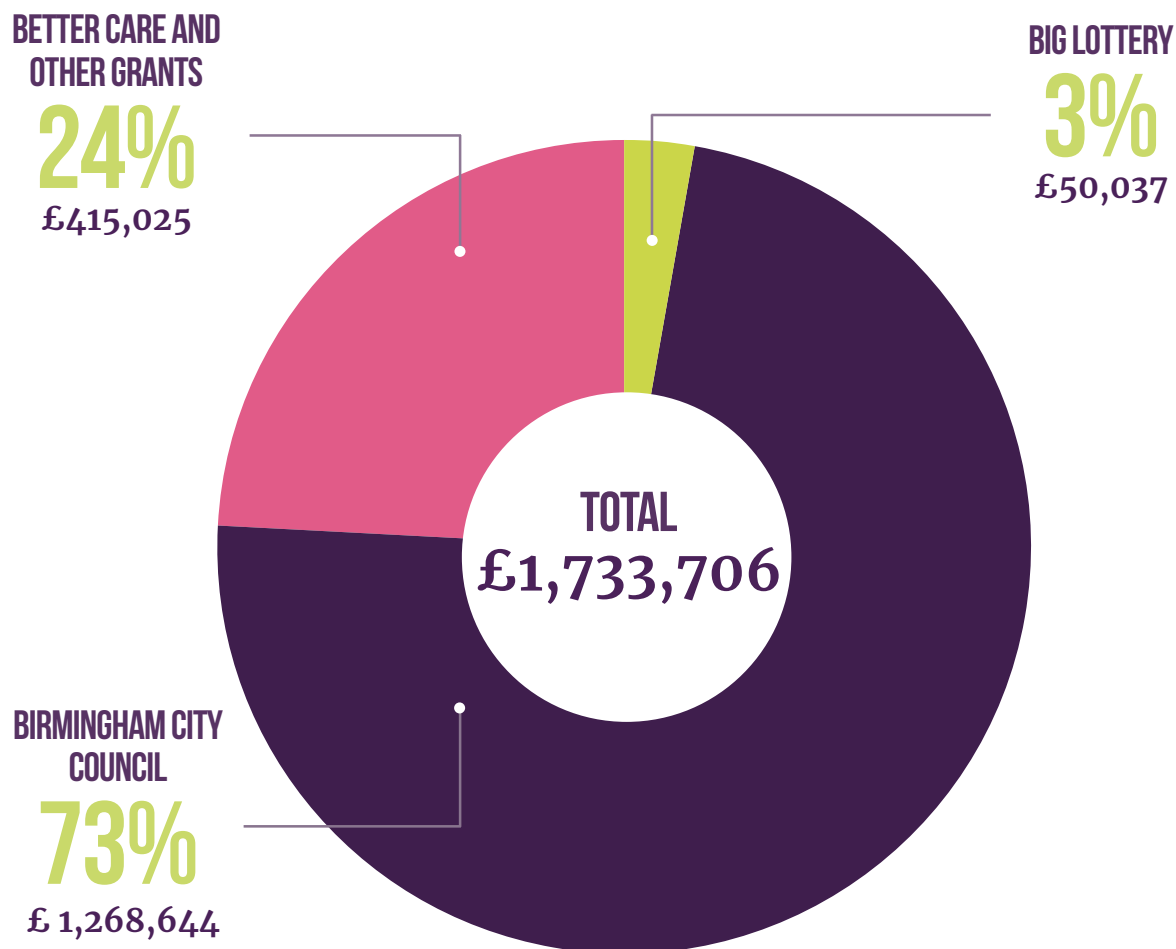
is a set of guiding principles demonstrating our commitment to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of Birmingham and its citizens.



“  
We're proud to put people  
ahead of profit.  
”

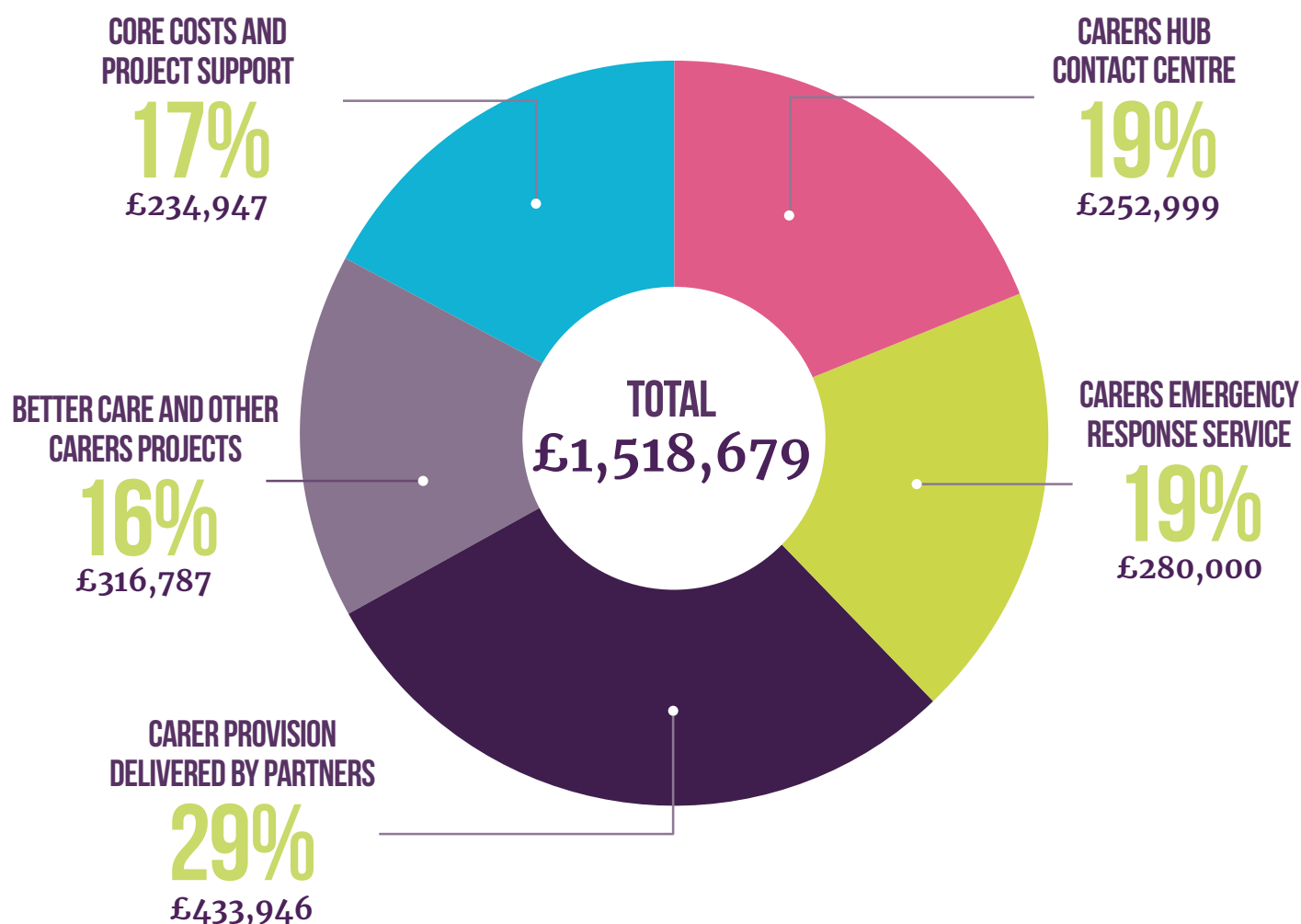
## ► Our Finances: Income

This summary financial information shows the income we raised for our activities, the core costs of raising this income, and the amount we spent on service provision and projects via our partners in 2017.



## ► Expenditure

As a social enterprise, we reinvest any surplus funds towards our goal to improve carer well-being. Surplus income in 2017 has been set aside to form an Innovation Fund to encourage our partners to develop enterprising ways to support more carers.



**For every £1 spent on Forward Carers, £5.53 is saved by social care, that's a total saving of £7.07m each year!**

## ▶ Looking Ahead: 2018 Priorities

### Recognise the Value of Carers

- Identify and support carers to improve their wellbeing
- Work with NHS and GPs to identify carers early on their journey so they can access support sooner
- We will do this by undertaking 2500 statutory carers assessments and allocating wellbeing budgets where appropriate.

### Support Working Carers

- Assist employers to better support carers in the workforce
- By producing an employers toolkit
- Provide opportunities for carers to enter employment or become self employed

### Building Carer-Friendly Communities

- Establish new partnerships with organisations wanting to improve the lives of carers.
- Shown by, improved ratings on the Carer Quality of Life Survey
- Improve online information so carers are better informed
- Shown by feedback on our improvements to website and carers packs.

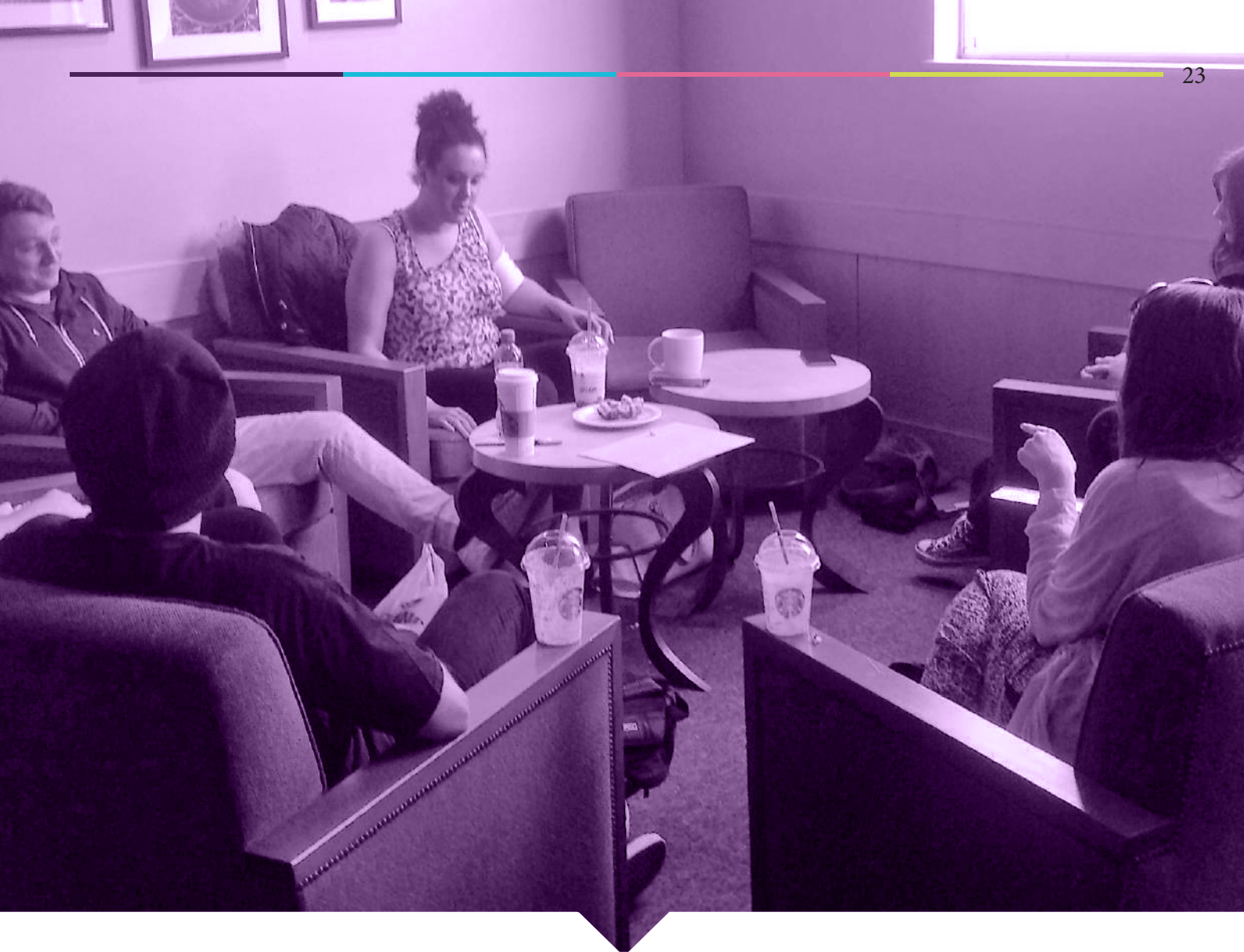
### Reduce the Impact of the Caring Burden

- Research and understand causes of and ways to reduce carer poverty
- Via Participation in Truth Poverty Commission
- Reduce social isolation and tackle the factors that lead to loneliness.
- Provide financial support for wellbeing activities
- Support more carers under 'Ageing Better in Birmingham'

### Develop our Business

- Sign up employers to Working for Carers
- Produce products and supplies aimed at improving carer wellbeing
- Seek opportunities to support more carers across the West Midlands
- Recognise carers' expertise by co-designing new projects

In 2018, as the number of people in a caring role grows, we will engage with even more carers across the West Midlands, offering them better support and more services in order to meet their needs in the home, community and at work.



## ► A huge thank you to...

### Our Partners

who provide invaluable support and services to make a real difference to life for carers.

### Our Funders



### Carers

Our thanks to the carers who feature in this review. And, thank you to all the wonderful carers who work so hard and contribute so much. You are amazing.

If you are a carer or know someone who is, please visit our website at [forwardcarers.org.uk](http://forwardcarers.org.uk) or call the Info & Advice Line 0333 006 9711

If you are a funder, commissioner, provider, employer or carer and would like to find out more about the work of Forward Carers Consortium Ltd then please contact us at [info@forwardcarers.org.uk](mailto:info@forwardcarers.org.uk)



 [forwardcarers.org.uk](http://forwardcarers.org.uk)

Touchbase Pears Business Centre  
750 Bristol Road  
Selly Oak.  
B29 6NA

 **0333 006 9711**

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