

Herefordshire Community Activity Strategy 2026-2028



Connecting people to live the lives they want to lead through choice, independence, community and flexibility.

How to use this document



This is an Easy Read version of: **Herefordshire Community Activity Strategy 2026-2028**



You might need help to read it. Ask someone you know to help you.

Words in **bold blue** writing may be hard to understand. You can check what the words in blue mean on **page 20**.



Where the document says **we**, this means **Herefordshire Council**. For more information contact:

Email: communityactivity@herefordshire.gov.uk

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Introduction



We are Herefordshire Council.



This is our Community Activity Strategy. A strategy is a document that sets out our plans, aims and **priorities** for the future.



Community activities are things people can do locally to meet others, have fun and stay well. They can include groups, clubs, day centres, classes or trips. They help people make friends, feel less lonely, learn skills and stay independent, with support if needed.



Community Activities are one way Herefordshire Council supports Adults who have care and support needs, their families, carers and local **organisations**.



Our strategy explains what we want for people in Herefordshire who access community activities and support.



We have developed this by listening to individuals, carers, **providers** and partners across the county.



They have told us what is important to them, what is working well, and what needs to change.

Summary

This strategy is for people who have care and support needs.



This includes:

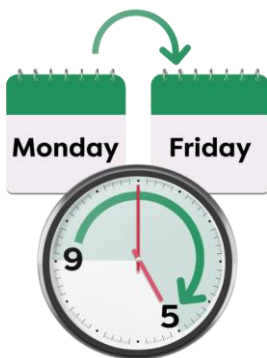
- adults with learning disabilities
- autistic people
- people with mental health needs
- people with physical disabilities
- older people

Many people find it hard to take part in everyday life in their community.



This can be because:

- there are not enough activities
- services are hard to use
- transport is difficult
- people do not feel confident



Many services:

- are run in a building all of the time
- are only open on weekdays
- have a set **programme**



This can mean people:

- feel lonely
- have fewer chances to learn new things
- cannot spend time with others
- miss out on activities they enjoy

Herefordshire Council wants to make things better.

We want to:



- remove **barriers**
- help people be **independent**
- help people feel confident
- support people to use their strengths
- help people be part of their community

Community activities are important.

They help people to:

- make friends
- learn skills
- stay active
- try new things
- volunteer or work





They help improve health, confidence and feel less lonely.



We created this strategy by listening to people.

We spoke to:

- individuals
- carers
- providers



Carers are important and need support too.

They need strategy support to help them manage work and take breaks.

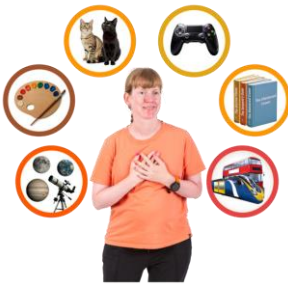
We want people to:



- have real choice
- choose how they spend their time
- access support at times that suit them (including evenings and weekends)



- have more **independence** and skills
- have more opportunities for volunteering or working



- have more services available
- take part in local activities



- have more flexible funding



- have carers that feel supported

Support will change as people's needs and goals change.

Why do we need change?

Across the country, councils are changing how support works.

They are:

- moving away from services in buildings
- supporting people more in their communities
- giving people more choice and control



Councils follow advice called national **guidance**. This **guidance** says support should:

- help people be **independent**
- help people take part in everyday life
- be local and personalised



Other **organisations** have said it's important that we do these things too, these **organisations** are:

- **NHS England**
- **CQC**
- **Centre for Ageing Better**
- **Social Care Wales**
- **Skills for Care**
- **ADASS**



All these people agree that support should be:

- in people's communities
- **flexible**
- about what the person wants and needs
- help build **independence**



A Review of Community Activities



We spoke to:

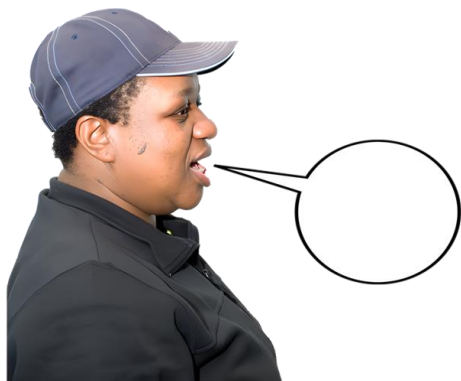
- people who go to community activities
- their families and carers
- community activity services



We used:

- events
- surveys
- conversations

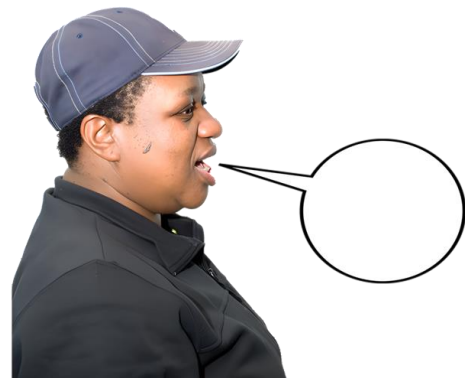
People told us:



“It’s hard to join in when there are no evening or weekend activities”

“I want to learn skills, volunteer or work”

“I want more choice about how I spend my time”

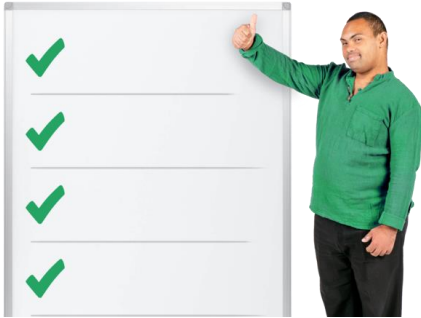


“Carers need breaks, **flexibility** and better information”

“Transport and costs are a problem”

“I want to do more in my community”

What will change?



We will use a four-step **model** of support.

This means people can get the right support at the right time.

People's needs can change over time, so support should change too.

1. **Preventative** support

This is for people who need little or no support.
It helps people to:

- stay active
- stay connected
- remain **independent**

People use:

- local community activities
- groups and services

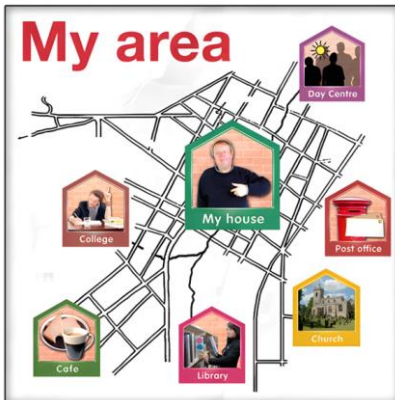
2. **Enablement** support

This is **short-term support**.

It helps people to:

- learn new skills
- build confidence
- make connections

This is for people who need help to become more **independent**.



Learn

3. Personalised support

This is **regular, ongoing support**.

It is strategy and based on the person.

It helps people to:

- stay **independent**
- manage daily life
- get regular support

This also helps give carers a break.



4. Specialist support

This is for people with **higher or complex needs**.

It includes:

- more **intensive** support
- long-term support
- **specialist** care

This is for people who may need:

- extra support to keep safe
- support with health needs





At the moment, the council supports people to buy community activities in two ways:

- commissioned services (the Council arranges your support)
- direct payments (the Council provide a budget to you or your family, for you to arrange your support.)



We will keep commissioned services and direct payments, but we will also introduce a new option called **Individual Service Funds (ISFs)**.



With an Individual Service Fund, a **provider** will be given the budget for your care and support, and they will help you decide how and where to spend it.



Individual Service Funds will help people to:

- use their money more flexibly
- choose different activities from different **providers**
- change their support more easily (without having to speak to a social worker)
- have support that fits their life

This means **the money follows the person, not the service.**



We also want to increase people's options for how they would like to spend their time.

Two ways we will do this is through options called Shared Lives – Shared Days and by working with more local **organisations**, called the VCSE Sector



Shared Lives carers support people in the carer's own homes.

People spend time as part of everyday family life.

Shared Days will:

- give people an alternative choice
- be personalised for each person
- help people feel **independent** and well
- help people make connections with others



We will also work with local groups and **organisations** called the VCSE sector, they are made up of:

- voluntary groups
- community groups
- and **social enterprise** groups

Together we will:

- help local groups grow and offer more activities
- create more choice, including evenings and weekends
- work together with people to design activities
- make it easier to find out what is available
- make sure services work well together



Some examples of what support could look like:

Example 1:

A group of older people living near each other feel isolated.



They speak with their **provider** and together they decide to start a lunch club. The **provider** made sure there was food, transport and support for the people who wanted to join in.

The people used their Individual Service Fund to make this happen.

They now have friends, some people volunteer to help the lunch club happen, and they feel happier and connected.

Example 2:

People want to go to an activity but transport is a challenge.

Together they decided they had two options of how they could use their Individual Service Fund:

- Book a regular shared taxi, instead of needing to pay a carer to take them
- Their **provider** got a vehicle and now many people can be supported at once

They can now use the money they saved for other meaningful activities



Example 3:

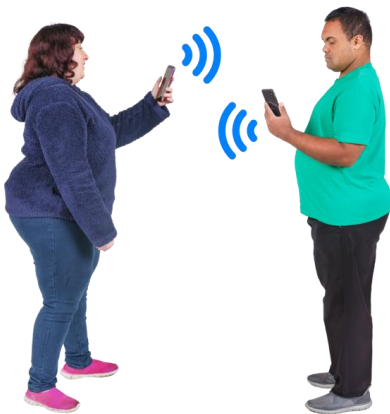


A carer works different days and times which means they don't know when they will need support.

Previously the family and the person who has support couldn't change what days and times they have support without speaking to a social worker first.

Now they can be supported by their **provider** to plan their timetable around when the carer will be at work.

Example 4:



Two people live in supported living. They don't like having a carer at a set time in the morning.

They decide that instead of paying for two morning care calls, they will use technology (like a walkie-talkie) to check in with each other.

Now they can use the money they saved on other meaningful activities.

Example 5:



This person likes the care and support they have. They don't want anything to change.

This person doesn't have to change anything; the support can stay the same.

What happens next?

What We Will Do (Next 2 Years)

Over the next 24 months we will:

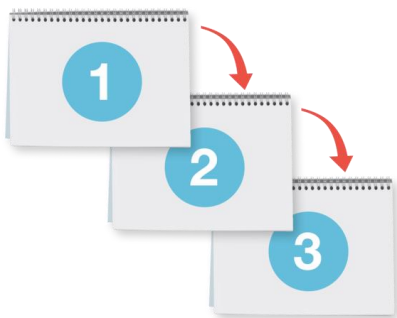
- Create a group of people to help us deliver this plan
 - This group is called the **People's Panel** and will be made up of people with care and support needs



- Work with **providers** and the community to offer more strategy activities
 - Not just activities in buildings
 - More activities out in the community



- We will do this by planning with the right people on how services need to be now and in the future





- Work with **providers** to introduce **Individual Service Funds (ISFs)**



- Work with partners to improve how we measure outcomes



- Work with **Talk Community**
 - To make sure information about activities is easy to find in one place

How We Will Do This



We will make these changes:

- Slowly and carefully
- With choice for people
- With **stability** and support

Our Goal



Together, we want to create a Herefordshire where:

- Everyone is supported
- People feel connected
- People can live a **meaningful** and **fulfilling** life

If you have any questions about this strategy, then please contact us on:

Email: communityactivity@herefordshire.gov.uk

Hard words

ADASS

ADASS is a group of leaders within Adult Social Care.

They help decide how care and support should work across the country.

Barriers

Barriers are things that make it hard to do something.

For example, no transport or not having enough support.

Centre for Ageing Better

This organisation helps people to live well as they get older.

They share ideas about how communities can support people.

CQC

CQC checks that care services are safe and good quality.

They make sure people are treated well.

Enablement

Enablement is short-term support that helps people learn skills and build confidence to be more independent.

Fulfilling

A fulfilling life means doing things that make you feel happy and proud.

It helps you feel good about your life.

Guidance

Guidance is advice about what people should do.

It helps services work in the right way.

Independent

Being independent means doing things for yourself.

It means having control over your life and choices.

Intensive

Intensive support is a high level of support.

It is for people who need more help more often.

Meaningful

Meaningful activities are things that matter to you.

They help you feel happy, valued, and included.

Model

A model is a simple way of explaining how something works.

In this strategy, it shows the different levels of support.

NHS England

NHS England helps run health services in England.

They make sure people get the healthcare they need.

Organisations

Organisations are groups that provide services or support.

This can include charities, community groups, and services.

Personalised

Personalised support is support that is right for you.

It is based on your needs, choices, and goals.

Preventative

Preventative support helps stop problems before they get worse.

It helps people stay independent for longer.

Priorities

Priorities are the most important things to focus on.

They show what needs to happen first.

Programme

A Programme is a planned list of things to do that has been decided before people attend.

Providers

Providers are organisations or people who deliver care and support.

They help people with their daily lives and activities.

Skills for Care

Skills for Care is an organisation that supports the care workforce.

They help make sure staff have the right skills.

Social enterprise

A social enterprise is a business that helps people or communities.

It uses its money to make things better, not just to make profit.

Social Care Wales

Social Care Wales supports people who work in care in Wales.

They help improve skills and services.

Specialist

Specialist support is for people with complex needs.

It gives expert help when people need extra care.

Stability

Stability means things feel safe and do not change too much.

It helps people feel secure and supported.