



Enabling Gloriously Ordinary Lives

Adult Social Care Strategy

We all want to live in a place we call home, with the people and things we love, doing what matters to us.

2026–2029



Nottingham
City Council

Enabling Gloriously Ordinary Lives

A shared civic commitment

By civic commitment, we mean a shared responsibility across the Council, partners, communities and residents to help make Nottingham a place where people can live well, stay connected and get support when they need it.

Adult social care matters to everyone, people who draw on care and support, carers, residents, the workforce, families, and communities.

Nottingham is a city of creativity, resilience, and strong neighbourhoods. It is also a city shaped by inequality, poverty, housing pressure, and health disparities. Adult social care is not a marginal service responding only at the edges of life; it is part of the everyday fabric of the city.

For too long, adult social care has been described through a single story: crisis. A system portrayed as broken, collapsing, or permanently failing.

While pressures are real, this narrative has consequences. Repeated crisis framing leads to disengagement, fatalism, and a belief that nothing meaningful can change. When residents hear only that a system is “broken,” they are less likely to support reform or imagine shared solutions.

This strategy makes a deliberate choice to tell a different story.

Not a story that denies pressure but one that explains what adult social care is for, why it matters, and how Nottingham is choosing to act. It is grounded in a simple human truth:

We all want to live in a place we call home, with the people and things we love, doing what matters to us.



What is Adult Social Care for?

Adult social care in Nottingham exists to support people who draw on care and support, carers and workforce, residents, communities to live well with dignity, safety, independence, connection, and purpose.

It also exists to:

- Support carers to sustain caring relationships without harm to their own wellbeing
- Enable residents and communities to look out for one another and prevent isolation
- Act as a steward of public resources, balancing care, safety, and sustainability.

By stewardship, we mean taking responsibility for making good decisions with people, using public money wisely, managing risk safely, and making sure support is fair, sustainable and focused on what matters most.

Adult social care is not only about services, eligibility, or responding to crisis. It is about:

- Supporting everyday life
- Sustaining relationships and belonging
- Preventing avoidable harm and loss of independence
- Enabling participation in family, community, and civic life

Adult social care works best when it starts with life, not services, and when it is shaped around what matters to people, carers, and residents.



Our Strategic Direction

Where Nottingham is going and why



This strategy is a **choice**.

Nottingham City Council is making a deliberate shift: moving Adult Social Care away from a system that waits for crisis, late intervention and the escalation of need, towards one that enables people to live well earlier, for longer and with greater control, while stewarding public resources responsibly.



Where we are going

Between 2026 and 2029, Nottingham will build an adult social care system that is:

Life-led, not service-led: Starting with what matters to people who draw on care and support and their carers, workforce, residents, communities.

Closer to home and neighbourhood-based: Organising support around where life happens, strengthening community connection.

Preventative by default: Acting earlier to reduce escalation, distress, and avoidable dependency.

Co-produced as standard: Sharing power with people who draw on care and support, carers, residents, and the workforce.

Equity-driven: Targeting effort and investment where inequality most affects people's lives.

Relational, safe, and humane: Valuing relationships, safeguarding, continuity and stewardship.

Financially responsible and sustainable: Using public money well to improve lives and reduce long-term pressure.



Why This Direction

We are choosing this direction because:

- People's needs do not begin in crisis, but systems often respond as if they do
- Late intervention costs more and delivers poorer outcomes
- People who draw on care and support and carers consistently tell us they want control, connection, and to live in a place they call home
- Residents expect public money to be used transparently and wisely
- Treating everyone the same can produce unfair and unequal outcomes
- Technology and data can support independence when used well
- Workforce development, capacity and support is required to deliver humane, safe care

This strategy is about changing the conditions, not simply improving performance within the same model.

Our Shared Vision: Gloriously Ordinary Lives

A gloriously ordinary life is not extraordinary in policy terms. It is extraordinary in human terms.

It means:

- Living in your own home (or a place that truly feels like home)
- Staying connected to people, community, and purpose shaping your own life, with support when needed, not control imposed

This vision stands for a deliberate shift away from managing people through systems, and towards enabling people, carers, and workforce, communities to live well safely and on their own terms.



Our Guiding Principles

How we decide under pressure

These five principles guide every major decision, especially when resources are constrained or trade-offs are required.

1. Putting People First

Decisions start with people who draw on care and support, alongside their carers not services or processes.

2. Improving All the Time

We learn from lived experience, practice, data, and review and change accordingly.

3. Measuring What Matters

Success is defined by better lives, not just activity or cost.

4. Ensuring Safety, Accountability, and Stewardship

Choice is supported, safeguarding is shared, and the Council does not withdraw from responsibility.

5. Financial Stewardship

Public money is used to enable independence, prevent harm, and avoid short-term savings that shift risk elsewhere.



Making It Real in Nottingham

What good feels like

This strategy has been informed by the Think Local Act Personal (TLAP) Making It Real Framework, which sets out what good care and support looks like from the perspective of lived experience.

People who draw on care and support should be able to say:

- I am listened to and respected
- I have control over my life
- I live in a place I call home
- I am supported to stay safe without losing independence

Carers, communities, and residents should be able to say:

- We work together
- We act early
- We share responsibility
- We learn and improve together

These statements guide practice, commissioning, safeguarding, performance, and investment.

Co-production:

- We have listened to people's experiences and challenges and used this insight to inform our vision, priorities and outcomes.
- The strategy reflects what people told us matters most to them: independence, meaningful participation in community life, timely support when needed, choice and control.
- Co-production will inform how this strategy is delivered, with an active role for people who draw on care and support, carers and communities in reviewing progress and shaping future improvements.



A Relational Practice Model

“I am because we are”

This strategy is grounded in a shared ethics:
I am because we are.
Good practice is relational. No one carries care, risk, or responsibility alone.

Practice:

- starts with relationship
- is done with, not to
- recognises interdependence
- balances choice and safety through stewardship

The workforce is trusted to use professional judgement, supported by:

- clear escalation routes
- reflective supervision
- leadership oversight
- learning, not blame

**When the workforce is supported,
people are safer and live better lives.**



Workforce Matters

This strategy is for the workforce, not just about them.

It matters because:

- workforce experience shapes people's experience
- relational practice requires time, trust, and clarity
- safety depends on shared accountability

The workforce are:

- co-producers of quality
- guardians of safety
- stewards of public trust

Technology-Enabled Lives

Technology will be used to:

- support independence and safety at home
- strengthen connection
- support carers and the workforce
- reduce unnecessary escalation

Technology will support relationships, not replace them.





Data With Soul

Nottingham will use data with soul combining:

- Performance data (flow, pressure, sustainability)
- Lived-experience data (control, dignity, safety)
- Data will inform prevention, investment, safeguarding, and learning not just dashboards.

Safeguarding, Safety, and Learning

Safety is not in tension with personalisation. It is what makes meaningful choice possible.

Nottingham:

- Maintains clear safeguarding pathways
- Supports informed choice and risk
- Learns from Serious Incidents and Safeguarding Adult Review (SARs)
- Evidences stewardship, not abdication

A Serious Incident / Safeguarding Adult Review Defensibility Annex supports this strategy.

How We Will Deliver This

This strategy sets out the direction of travel for Adult Social Care in Nottingham. Our Adult Social Care Improvement Plan will set out the actions, milestones and measures that will help us deliver that ambition.

Delivery will be supported through our improvement programme, performance and quality assurance arrangements, workforce development, and ongoing engagement with people who draw on support, carers, communities and partners. Together, these will help us understand what is working well, where we need to improve and what difference our work is making.

We will be open about our progress, celebrate success and take action where improvement is needed. Most importantly, we will focus on making the best of what we do the normal, reliable and consistent experience for people across Nottingham.



Conclusion

A system that enables life together

This strategy sets a clear direction for Nottingham.

By aligning people-first practice, carers, residents, workforce, prevention, equity, safety, financial stewardship, technology, and Making it Real, Nottingham is building an adult social care system that is:

- humane
- safe
- financially responsible
- rooted in community

Enabling people who draw on care and support with carers, families, residents, and the workforce to live gloriously ordinary lives, together.

