

# Strategy 2015 - 2018



Making our charity and life for carers even better



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# foreword

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Welcome to Carers Network's new strategy, and thanks for taking the time to read this document.

Why has Carers Network decided to produce a strategy now? Well, our focus for the last few years has been to prepare ourselves to bid for and then deliver against our new contracts in Westminster and in Hammersmith and Fulham. Performing well against these contracts remains our top priority but there are other areas of activity where carers tell us they would like to see Carers Network expand our work. The environment in which we work has also changed significantly in the last few years. Funding for all charities remains tight and our strategy sets out publicly our plans for ensuring that Carers Network remains a sustainable charity so we are able to continue our work supporting carers.

Our strategy has been developed by the Board of Trustees and staff team of Carers Network in consultation with carers and our other stakeholders. It focuses on three areas where we want to do something more or different.

First, we aim to deliver more of the high quality services carers tell us they want to receive. This will start with maintaining and continuously improving the quality of our existing work and communicating to more people what we do and why. We also aim to develop initiatives to improve carers' mental and physical health, based on our previous health work.

Second, we will work to reach more carers, at the times when they most need our support. This will include work to increase awareness of carers and develop targeted support for carers at transition points, such as those new to caring.

Third, we will work to ensure Carers Network remains a sustainable organisation. First and foremost, this will mean performing well against our existing contracts and retaining these. It will also mean increasing and diversifying our resources.

As part of developing our strategy, we have rearticulated our vision: **every unpaid carer in the areas in which we operate is recognised and leads a healthy, fulfilling life with control over their caring role.**

We know we will not be able to achieve our vision on our own. We want to thank all of you who work with us already – our funders, carers, and all our other partners. We are looking forward to continuing to work with you and others to make our vision a reality.

Finally, we need your feedback – on this strategy, our services, and every aspect of our work. Whether you are a carer using our services (or even a carer who does not currently use our services – tell us why not) or another stakeholder, please continue to tell us what we do well and where we can improve.

We are very proud of what Carers Network has achieved over the past twenty years and more. Working with all of you, we are excited about what we can achieve over the next three years and beyond.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rob" with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Robert Allen,  
Chair of Trustees

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah" in a cursive style.

Sarah Mitchell,  
Chief Executive



# our vision & aims

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## **Vision**

Every unpaid carer in the areas in which we operate is recognised and leads a healthy, fulfilling life with control over their caring role

## **Aims**

1. Carers Network delivers more of the high quality services that carers tell us they want to receive
2. Carers Network reaches more carers at the times when they most need our support
3. Carers Network is a sustainable organisation with a good base of diversified funding and strong staff skills

# our objectives

Objective one	Carers Network delivers more of the high quality services that carers tell us they want to receive	
What we'll do	Timing	How we'll do it
1. Communicate more about what we are doing, and to more people	Short term	<p>Communicate any actions resulting from feedback on our work in a clear and timely way</p> <p>Increase use of targeted and timely electronic communications to promote our activities, news and successes to carers and other stakeholders</p>
	Medium term	Develop and implement a stakeholder strategy. Make more use of case studies to raise awareness of carers' roles and engage potential supporters
2. Better demonstrate the impact and quality of our work	Short term	<p>Deliver against our existing contracts</p> <p>Ensure that Carers Network meets challenging and recognised quality standards. Introduce internal audit processes for quality assurance</p> <p>Set up an evaluation for our 'End of Life' project</p>
	Medium term	<p>Improve our evaluation and feedback mechanisms</p> <p>Undertake an evaluation of the 'End of Life' project</p> <p>Work towards achieving PQASSO level two</p>
3. Develop initiatives to help improve carers' mental and physical health	Short term	Build evidence to demonstrate the need for carer support around health
	Medium term	Develop a proposal for a project to improve carers' health outcomes
4. Support the development of carer groups in Westminster and Hammersmith	Medium term	<p>Provide administrative support for meetings and events as required</p> <p>Encourage the development of carer-involvement activities run by the carer groups</p>
5. Investigate a future carers space	Exploratory	Scope opportunities for a physical space for carers and explore level of support for such a project

Objective two	Carers Network reaches more carers at the times when they most need our support	
What we'll do	Timing	How we'll do it
1. Raise awareness of the role of unpaid carers and reach out to more carers	Short term	<p>Reach out to isolated older carers through our 'End of Life' project</p> <p>Review our activities to ensure we engage with a range of carers</p> <p>Promote IT training for carers to encourage more carers online</p> <p>Publish relevant and accurate advice and support on our website for carers to use outside of phone line hours.</p> <p>Reach out to other local organisations to ensure that local partners refer into our services</p>
	Medium term	<p>Deliver activities to raise awareness of carers in the local area</p> <p>Identify and exploit opportunities to encourage health care services to support and involve carers</p>
2. Develop targeted support for carers at a transition point (e.g. those who are new to caring)	Short term	Scope the needs of carers who are at a transition point in their caring role
	Medium term	<p>Undertake a pilot project addressing needs of carers at transition point</p> <p>Complete and evaluate the pilot and seek dedicated funding</p>
3. Investigate adopting a high profile local patron	Exploratory	<p>Use networks and personal contacts in boroughs to identify possible candidates</p> <p>Consider establishing an honorary president position</p>

Objective three	Carers Network is a sustainable organisation with a good base of diversified funding and strong staff skills	
What we'll do	Timing	How we'll do it
1. Continue to deliver Carers Hub services in Westminster and Hammersmith and Fulham	Short term	Perform well against existing targets Consolidate the position of Carers Network as a responsive, knowledgeable and expert local partner
	Medium term	Continue to deliver council contracts Better evidence the quantitative and qualitative outcomes of our work including its social capital
2. Increase our resources	Short term	Increase our pool of volunteers and enable them to make a more valuable contribution to our work Enable and encourage individual giving and sponsorship activities Engage a fundraising / business development resource and develop a fundraising strategy
	Medium term	Explore possible income generation opportunities
3. Build local and political support bases	Short term	Increase joint-working with other local organisations Establish good relationships with local and national stakeholders.
	Medium term	Establish links with local businesses for in kind and other funding
4. Ensure that Carers Network staff feel valued and involved in the organisation	Short term	Undertake annual staff survey and feed back about resulting actions Run regular team awaydays Ensure provision for internal recruitment/promotion Encourage staff development through annual objectives and investment in training
	Medium term	Facilitate staff involvement in organisational development Develop an effective staff feedback loop
5. Continue to develop the board and improve links between trustees and staff	Short term	Offer governance training for trustees where needs are identified Identify additional carer trustees, including trustees from Hammersmith and Fulham
	Medium term	Ensure regular opportunities exist for trustees and staff to engage, including a joint away day Plan for succession of existing trustees

# thank you

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