



# Local Account 2020/21

## How We Served You







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# Foreword

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## Welcome to the 2020/21 Local Account for Adult Social Care in Sutton.

Our tenth local account is a summary of our achievements, improvements and challenges in adult social care in Sutton. In that, it will tell you about how we are facing these challenges by having priorities in place to continue to meet the needs of vulnerable people as well as the council's Ambitious for Sutton Plan.

Sutton is ambitious: we want all of our residents and visitors to make informed choices about their lives, to stay active, to live well independently and to stay safe. That ambition has remained a continuum throughout 20/21 though it has been a year like no other as we have faced the very unique situations presented as a result of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic. In this local account it sets out how we have responded flexibly and adapted rapidly to ensure an effective response which meant that those in most need still received the services they required to keep them safe.

In previous years local accounts we outlined the rising demand for adult social care services against a backdrop of reducing resources. Whilst demand continues to increase and the pandemic has had a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of our most vulnerable residents we are proud of how adult social care, the council and the wider local area partnership has served the most vulnerable in such exceptional circumstances. Our commitment in adult social care remains putting people first, to maximise well being by bringing together the right services to deliver the right support at the right time and place. In 20/21 strong partnerships and collaboration most notably with the NHS and the voluntary and community sector, bringing together teams has been central to supporting individuals and families; as has helping and working with our local commissioned care market including care homes so the most vulnerable have been supported.

Whilst we do not yet know the full extent of the change in demand on services, revealed by the pandemic, nor the full extent on vulnerable individuals and families our approach in adult social care will be to continue to promote individual and community independence and resilience, and targeting our resources and services to safeguard the most vulnerable in our community and help people live as safely and for as long as possible in their own homes. This will mean, as it continues, enabling individualised support through focusing on what people can do, rather than what they can't do.

Sutton is ambitious and whilst there remains challenges ahead including the impact of the pandemic, we will continue to listen and respond to what people using adult social care services have told us about their experiences, so that we can work together to achieve the best possible outcomes for our most vulnerable residents.

We would like to thank everyone in creating this local account, including the people we support, families and carers, partners and our workforce.



**Nick Ireland**  
**Strategic Director of**  
**People Services**



**Councillor Marian James**  
**Chair - People Committee**



# Introduction

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The Local Account in Sutton is produced annually to inform our residents about how Adult Social Care Services help adults with care and support needs in the borough.

This is Sutton Council's tenth Annual Local Account that sets out how Adult Social Care performed in 2020/21, including our achievements, priorities and the challenges we faced during the year.

It also aims to provide information on how we plan to build on our achievements in 2021/22 and report on new priorities to continually improve and develop the services we provide for residents.

This year we have been faced with very unique challenges as a result of the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic. This has led to the introduction of a number of new ways of working so we can continue to support the most vulnerable members of our community in need of support.

The need for face-to-face contact was carefully managed to ensure we continued to protect and support our residents and we minimised the risk of the virus spreading through contact. To this end, we ensured we fully risk assessed any direct contact in advance and during visits, we also complied with the correct use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as outlined in Public Health guidance.

# What is the Local Account?

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The Government introduced Local Accounts in 2011 for councils to explain how well local services are being delivered and areas councils wish to develop further.

Local Accounts make local services accountable to local people by sharing with the community the improvements that councils are making in Adult Social Care.



# What is Adult Social Care?

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The London Borough of Sutton Adult Social Care services aims to help residents who need support to stay healthy and active in their community for as long as possible. We do this by providing information and advice and access to services to help people stay independent and improve their overall wellbeing.

Adult Social Care services cover the provision of support for personal care and practical support for people with a physical disability, learning disability, mental ill health and also support for their carers.

# Setting the scene -

## Our response to the COVID pandemic

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No-one could have anticipated the impact of the COVID pandemic including how long it has lasted.

We responded flexibly and adapted rapidly to ensure an effective response which meant that those in most need still received the services they required to keep them safe.

The pandemic has had a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of our most vulnerable residents, some of whom have not previously had contact with Adult Social Care. We do not yet know the full extent of the change in demand on services, revealed by the pandemic, there may be a risk of increased demand for social care such as additional support, due to a deterioration in people's physical and mental health.

Sutton has an ageing population that requires increasing levels of support to live healthy, independent and socially active lives. This group has been particularly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, in terms of the risk the disease poses, and the need for changes to health and care services.

During the year, Adult Social Care continued to operate within the required legal framework and consciously chose not to use the Government's provision for COVID-19 Care Act easements. These easements would have legally allowed Adult Social Care to streamline the assessment arrangement in order to prioritise care to the most in need. Instead, we worked innovatively to provide the same level and breadth of service.

We continued to undertake essential home visits ensuring the safety of vulnerable residents and responded to emergencies as needed.

Throughout the pandemic, the local authority safeguarded its most vulnerable adults and their families. We saw a marked increase in concerns raised, pertaining to vulnerable people experiencing domestic abuse and mental ill health. Through robust and timely partnership working, residents were supported and kept safe.

In response to the pandemic and to assure the wellbeing of our most vulnerable residents, Adult Social Care has actively worked in partnership, coming together and collaborating with the NHS, voluntary and community sector partners. This strong and successful collaboration has enabled us to actively support vulnerable individuals and families in a robust, holistic and timely way during this period of crisis.

Our commitment in Adult Social Care remains putting people first, to maximise wellbeing by bringing together the right services to deliver the right support at the right time and place. Working with our local commissioned care market including care homes has ensured the most vulnerable have been supported.

Sutton has a vibrant care market, made up of a large number of care homes & supported living schemes. Throughout the pandemic Adult Social Care met regularly with partner agencies to support the care market, for example we ensured there were adequate supplies of personal protective equipment and staffing levels within the homes were maintained.

The pandemic placed an extra strain on carers of vulnerable adults, due to reduced access to services such as day centres and the need for some people to shield. Adult Social Care

conducted welfare calls to carers, especially those not receiving services and offered and arranged support where required.

We do not yet know the full extent of the change in demand on services, revealed by the pandemic, there may be a risk of increased demand for social care such as additional support, due to a deterioration in people's physical and mental health.

## Mental health

Early on in the pandemic we made sure that information was readily available to residents and our staff about the range of support that could be accessed by anyone experiencing or concerned about someone experiencing a mental health crisis.

Nationally, an increase in feelings of anxiety and depression were reported alongside an increase in urgent and emergency cases.

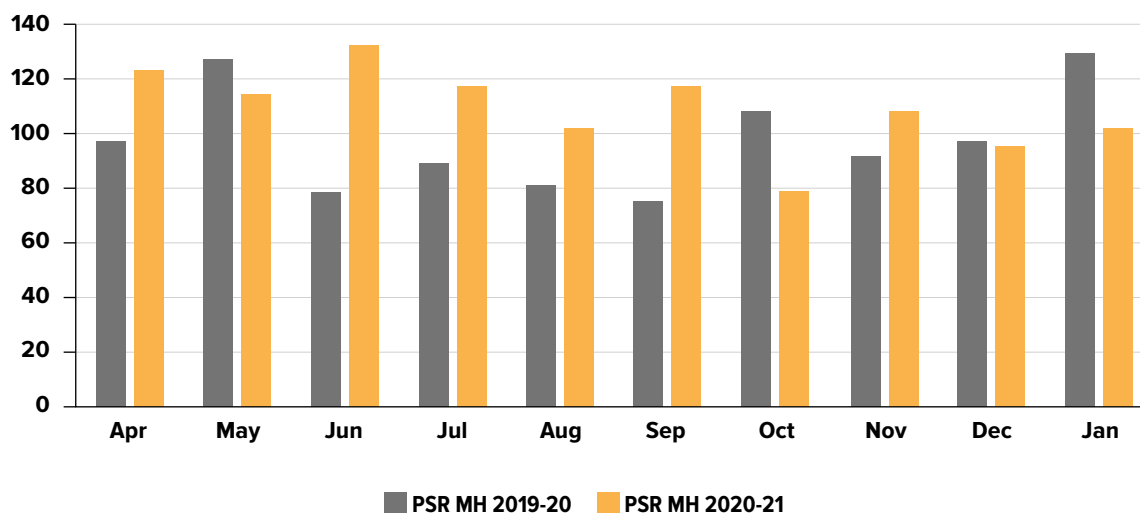
The COVID Pandemic has led to increased social isolation for many people in the Borough. Mental Health providers reported significant increases in demand and severity of people's needs.

We supported our staff to develop their awareness and understanding of mental health conditions. The Council's Mental Health Champions support people in the workplace.

Adult Social Care continued to work proactively with our health partners to support timely and supportive discharge from mental health inpatient care. We strengthened our arrangements with health colleagues to ensure that people who have been in hospital needing further support continue to receive this in the community.

We have made an increased number of referrals to mental health preventive and support services.

Referrals for Clients with Mental Health Needs



*The graph shows number of referrals from clients with a Primary Support Reason (PSR) of Mental Health Care Needs.*



## Local Account 2020/21 – How we served you

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Despite COVID we continued to provide a good level of support to enable residents to continue to live at home, and this includes:

- Sutton Health and Care at Home in partnership with health colleagues.
- START (Short Term and Reablement Team) service on discharge from hospital.
- Occupational Therapy service and the provision of equipment.
- Meals on Wheels.
- Personal Budgets to enable people to remain independent in the community following an assessment of their need.
- Direct payments which enable people to have the flexibility to purchase care from providers of their choice.
- New ways of working in response to COVID challenge.

Other services for residents with complex needs include:

- Residential care.
- Nursing care.
- Referral to Continuing Health Care to support residents with health care needs to ensure that vulnerable people receive their full entitlements.
- Admiral Nurse service.
- We have worked with health partners to ensure timely discharge from hospital.



# Our key achievements in 2020/21

In keeping with our five year Corporate Plan 'Ambitious for Sutton', we have continued to build on our exciting plans to empower and enrich the lives of our local residents.

We continue to progress on the ambitions for the borough set out under four new outcome based themes:



**Being Active**



**Living Well  
Independently**



**Making Informed  
Choices**



**Keeping  
People Safe**

- We continued to provide appropriate support to carers particularly in partnership with the Sutton Carers Centre, enabling carers to keep themselves safe during the pandemic and to continue to enable our clients to 'live well Independently'.
- We worked closely with our health partners to ensure healthcare needs are met through Continuing Health Care packages to ensure we 'keep people safe'.
- Our first priority in response to complaints is to respond in a timely way and ensure services are provided according to entitlement and enable our residents to 'make informed choices'.
- Transformation of Adult Social Care continued with additional changes to four locality based teams to align with GP practices and enhance joint working with health colleagues (Living Well Independently).
- We continued to focus on, and raise awareness of safeguarding to ensure we 'keep people safe.'
- Transformation of Adult Social Care – Phase 2 continued (Living Well Independently).
- We successfully implemented the Joint Quality Assurance Framework in Adult Social Care and are building on embedding our quality assurance approach to ensure our practice is of the highest quality to 'keep people safe'.
- We provided specific webinars to support Adult Social Care staff to recognise and respond to domestic abuse experienced by people with care and support needs.
- We have already made some key achievements in the Learning Disability Transformation Programme.



# Our key achievements in 2020/21 explained...

## Service to carers - (Living Well Independently)

Over the past year carers across Sutton have been hugely impacted by the pandemic. The carer community have continued to step up to support those they have caring responsibilities for, whilst also adapting to updated COVID guidance and restrictions. Despite these challenges, many carers have remained resilient, resourceful and inspiring.

Throughout the past year there has continued to be good joint working between partners to support carers, ensuring both practical support (essentials such as food, medication and PPE) and emotional support was provided to carers throughout the pandemic.

**In addition to this over the past year we have also undertaken the following;**

- A series of successful Joint campaigns including National Carers Week.
- Work commenced on developing the Information and Advice Hub which will create a single online information and advice platform for residents and professionals in the borough.
- The roll out of the vaccination programme to carers in March this year has also triggered further joint action to ensure that GPs care records are used to identify and also verify unknown carers, and this continues to be built upon.

## Continuing Health Care - (Keeping People Safe)

We continued to work more closely with health in a more streamlined way to identify people with increased needs who might meet the criteria for continuing healthcare.

Working with health colleagues during the pandemic we have been able to expedite timely support for individuals who needed additional care out of hospital and have received funding from health.

In developing a collaborative approach with health partners, the new process ensured that the right care is provided at the right time and place to meet health and social care needs. Joint pathways are established and agreed and the Adult Social Care service has completed over 500 joint continuing healthcare assessments with Sutton Clinical Commissioning Group colleagues.







## Dealing with complaints - (Making Informed Choices)

Adult Social Care has continued to work in a close, positive and solution focused way with the councils complaints team to achieve the following over the last year:

- Developed strategies to take a proactive approach to handling complaints.
- Increased the early resolution of complaints by encouraging initial meetings with complainants to better understand concerns and to work through how to go forward.
- Reviewed the complaints process and reinforced the procedures with staff if they receive a complaint, given different ways of working due to COVID.
- Reviewed the process to identify any potential areas of improvement in complaints handling.

## Sutton health & care at Home - (Keeping People Safe)

In response to the pandemic, the Adult Social Care Hospital Pathway Team, Sutton Health and Care at Home Service and Sutton Continuing Health Care moved into the same office base. This was to promote a multidisciplinary approach to support discharges from hospital and respond within two hours to community referrals to prevent admission to hospital.

Sutton Health and Care partners continued to work together as part of a whole system approach. This is at the heart of our move to locality working and our approach to transformation and has evidenced improved services for local residents.

We have delivered over 50,000 hours of care to people in their own homes, through our Short Term Assessment and Reablement Team (START) element of Sutton Health & Care which equated to approximately 90,000 visits. We have also delivered further care through short term stays in care homes for rehabilitation.



## Raise awareness of safeguarding - (Keeping People Safe)

We are committed to ensuring people feel and remain safe in Sutton. We aim to empower communities to better protect and look after themselves to promote safeguarding and keeping vulnerable adults safe. With our partners in the Sutton Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) we have;

- Produced a newsletter which was disseminated to members, the partnership and the wider community. The newsletter provided a range of information on keeping safe during the pandemic. There was a particular emphasis on the surge in scams, providing information on recognising these scams and actions which could be taken to safeguard against them.
- We have supported a number of Safeguarding Awareness campaigns throughout the year including, International Day of People with Disabilities, World Hearing Day - Hearing Care for All, Black Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) Population and Safeguarding across Adult Social Care and World Suicide Prevention Day amongst others.

## Transformation of Adult Social Care – Phase 2 (Living Well Independently)

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The first phase of the transformation of Adult Social Care was implemented in 2018 and established a locality structure with three localities to align with GP practices, these were Carshalton, Wallington and Sutton & Cheam. This model seeks to promote more effective local partnership and community-based working to deliver better outcomes for our residents.

As part of this transformation the Wallington pilot took this initiative further with co-location of social workers and occupational therapists, employed by the Council working alongside nurses and physiotherapists from the NHS. The pilot is based in the extensively refurbished Wallington Library.

In September 2020 we moved to a four locality model with the separation of Sutton and Cheam into dedicated locality teams. This aligns with changes made by the Sutton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), implementation of Primary Care Networks (PCNs) which are networks which integrate GP practices, working together with the community, mental health, social care, pharmacy, hospital and voluntary services in their local areas in groups of practices.

Due to the onset of COVID, progress in 2020/21 has been slower than anticipated. However, the next steps in 2021/22 will be to consider how best to integrate the new arrangements with the structure of the Primary Care Networks.



# Quality Assurance Framework - (Keeping People Safe)

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We successfully rolled out the full quality assurance framework in 2020/21 which has given us a robust insight into the quality of our practice, helping to ensure our services are of the highest quality to “keep people safe”. Through this framework, we continued to make sure that we can keep improving outcomes for adults and their families in Sutton.

We have developed our Quality Assurance audit activity programme to ensure we hear, we learn and we support each other to improve our practice and systems which will achieve sustained change for adults and families who access our services.

As part of our audit process during the year we also provided opportunities for managers and senior managers to observe frontline practice and give feedback, as well as hearing what residents in receipt of our services thought.

We use the opportunity to take this feedback and any lessons from the observations to feed into the quality assurance process and make any recommendations for improvement.

The audit programme also included robust quarterly audits on our safeguarding processes focusing on the six key principles which underpin our safeguarding practice. These principles include Protection, Empowerment, Proportionality Accountability, Partnership Working, and Prevention.

The audit confirmed that we continue to be effective and timely in our management of risk and that the ‘adult at risk’ remains fully involved in the process along with carers and family members where appropriate. There was also strong evidence of partnership working which ensured the safety of the adult at risk.

We will continue to learn from the activities within our Quality Assurance Framework, which enables us to ensure practitioners receive the professional and personal development they need, resulting in the best outcomes for the people they serve.

## Domestic abuse campaigns

Our very successful campaign to highlight awareness of domestic abuse has continued throughout the year, despite the pandemic. The Domestic Abuse Champions who were recruited last year in Adult Social Care have continued to meet regularly and receive training.

## Learning disability transformation programme

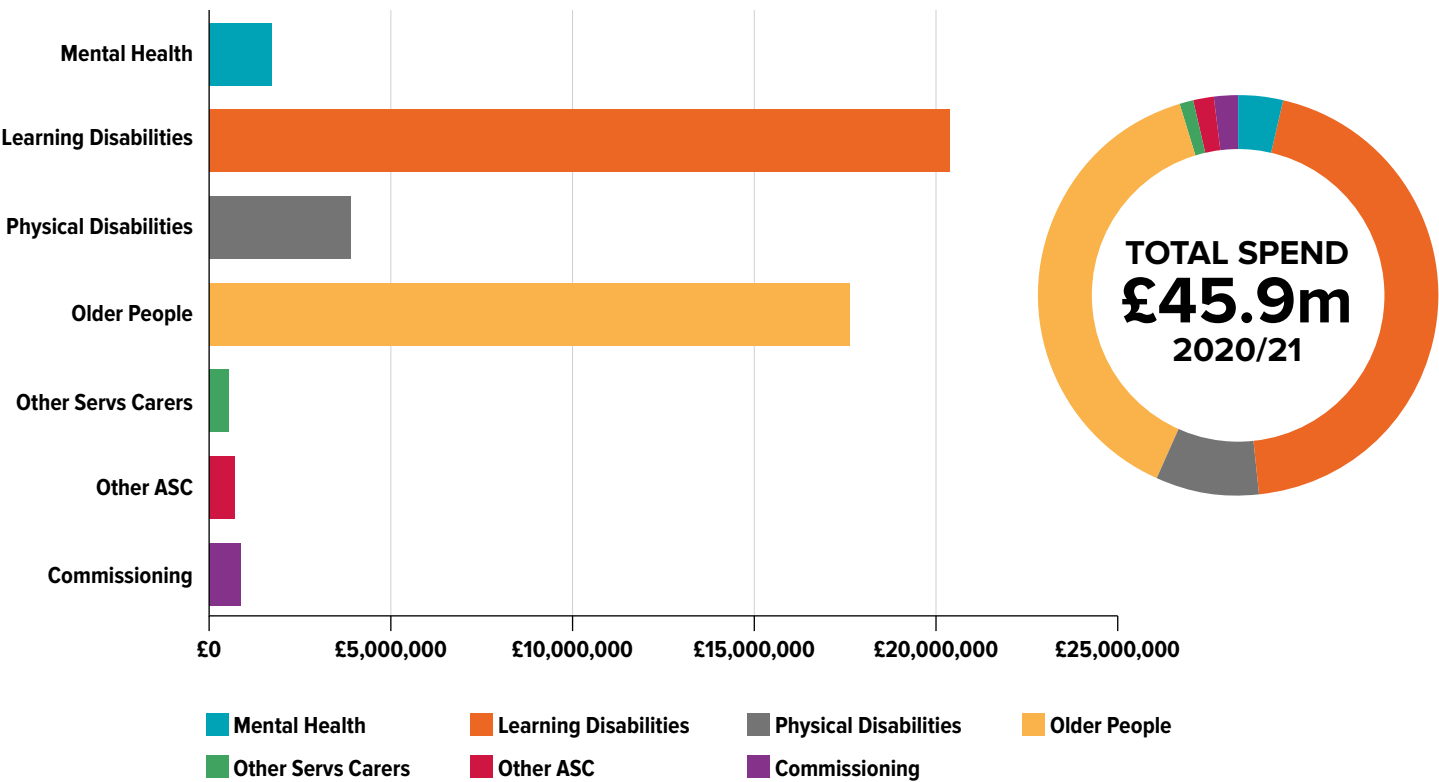
A number of key achievements in the Learning Disability Transformation Programme so far have been made:

- We have piloted health facilitators to support people with learning disabilities to take part in health checks and will continue to deliver this service.
- We have delivered a new outreach service for people with learning disabilities.
- We have enabled our Care Home Support Team and specialist learning disabilities services to work together to ensure better physical outcomes.
- We have appointed a new provider for supported living accommodation.

# What we spent in 2020/21

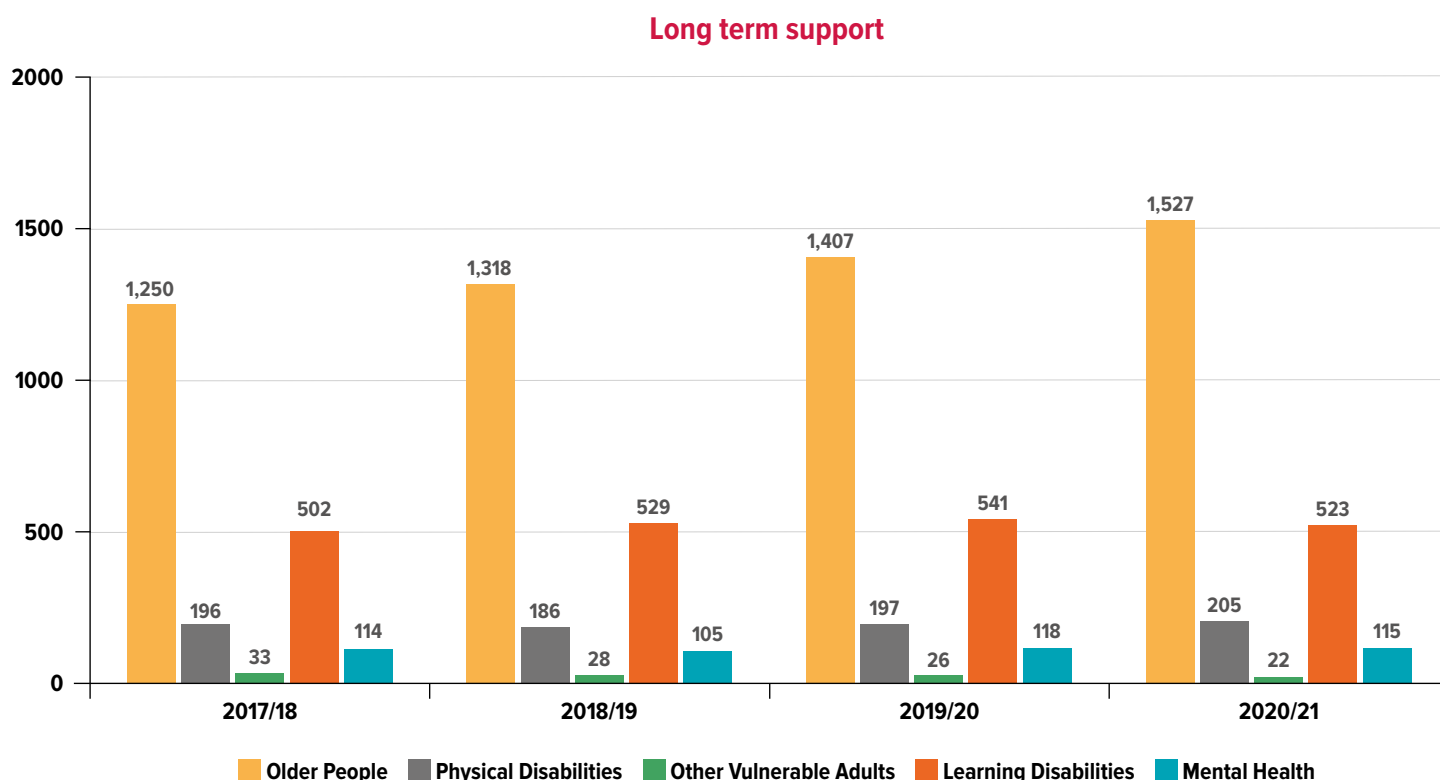
The total expenditure for Adult Social Care in 2020/21 was £45.9 million. Since 2010 the Council has had to continually deliver on-going savings in response to the Government’s policy of reducing the public sector deficit, mainly through reductions in public expenditure.

By the end of 2021/22 the Council has budgeted to make cumulative savings of £102 million. Of this total Adult Social Care has budgeted to contribute £2.1 million during the year 2021/22.





# Who we provided support to in 2020/21



Adult Social Care received a total of 3609 new requests for support in 2020/21. Most of these people were provided with either a period of reablement services, information and advice, and/or received a referral to ongoing low level support services. For example, Occupational Therapy or short term support services, which may include a short stay in nursing or residential care for a limited time.

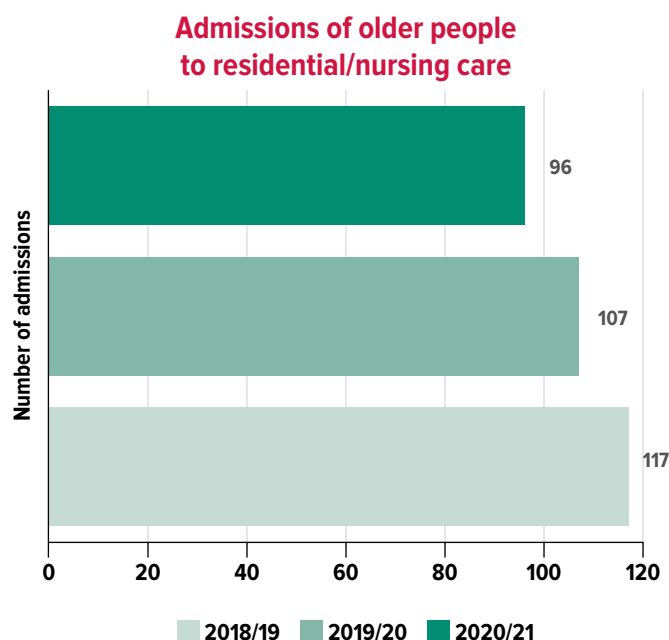
The Council supported 2,392 people in 2020/21 with a long-term support service. The breakdown of this number can be found in the graph above.

Despite the fact that there has been a further increase in demand since last year, the overall spend on Adult Social Care services has remained relatively stable, due to close working with health to manage the local responses to COVID.

By utilising our Strengths Based Approach we are continuing to enable people to be more independent at home for longer. A Strengths Based Approach has been reflected in our Quality Assurance Framework and the way we work with our voluntary sector partners to make people less dependent on services. Utilising community resources helps us to support more people for less.

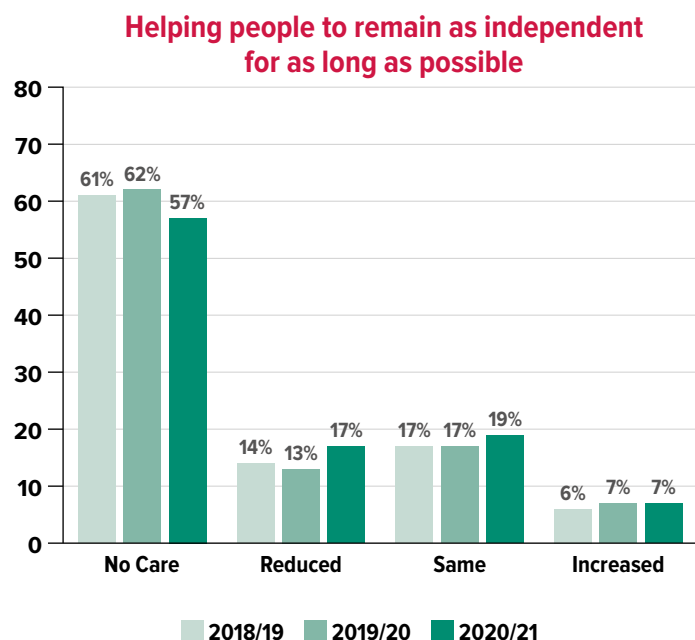
# How are we doing? Our performance

We think performance measures are important because they tell us how effective our approaches are in achieving the best outcomes for the vulnerable people we serve. This includes the Strengths Based Approach, to maximise community resilience and independence for individuals as long as possible.



In 2020/21, there were 96 permanent admissions made to a nursing and residential care home compared to 107 admissions in 2019/20.

This reduction is a direct result of efforts to support vulnerable people to maintain their independence in the community.

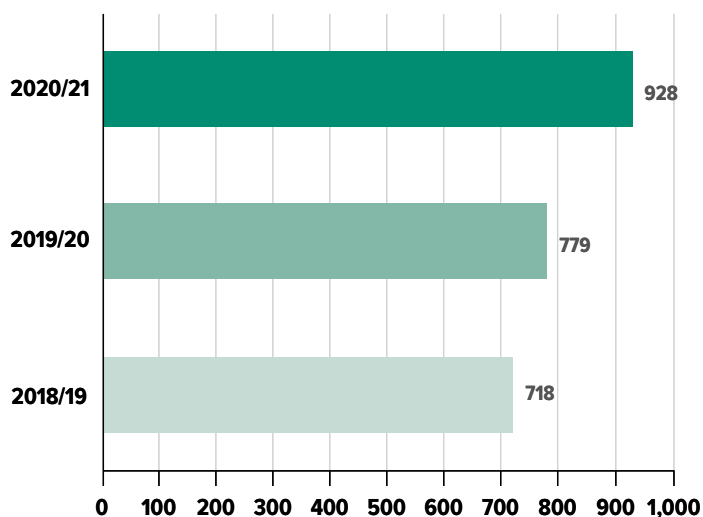


Our aim is for people to return home as soon as they are medically fit to leave the hospital. Performance in 2020/21 is similar to previous years.

The START Reablement Service aims to support people to retain their independence.

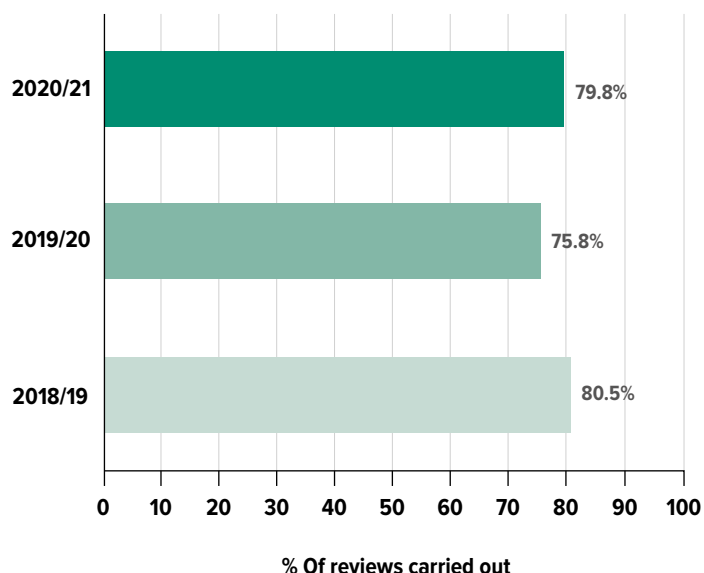
In 2020/21, 1705 referrals were received, an increase of 10.73% from the previous year. Over 57% of people who completed such a programme did not require any long-term support services following the START intervention and a further 17% saw a reduction in the ongoing support they required when the service ended. The START service still retains its position as a very high performing service.

**Number of carers supported**



During the period 2019/20, we helped 779 people to continue in their caring role. In 2020/21 we have assessed many more carers than we did the previous year, a total of 928 primarily as a result of checking carer wellbeing during the height of the COVID pandemic. Support is provided to carers via a number of methods including the provision of a direct payment, referral to other agencies (including the Sutton Carer Centre) and providing information and advice.

**Reviews**



During 2020/21 it was our aim to review 78% of people in receipt of a service to make sure that their needs were being met appropriately. By the end of the period we had reviewed 79.8% of people in receipt of services in 2020/21.

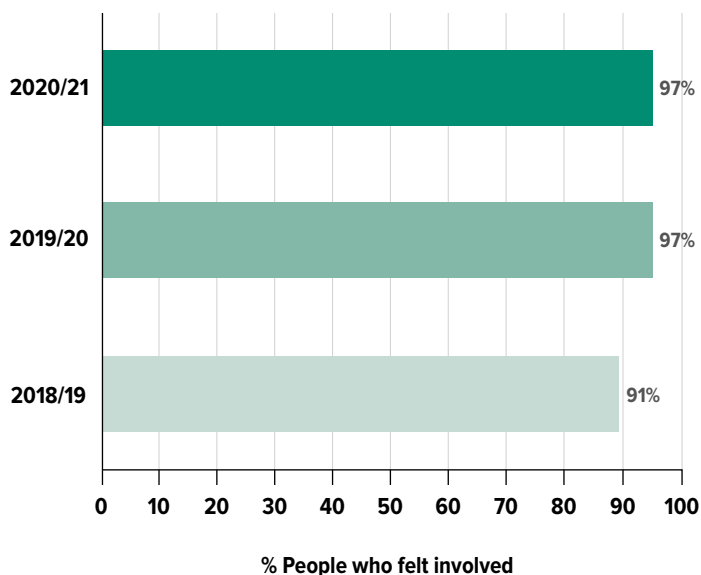
The review performance target was exceeded as the majority of our social care teams were able to continue to offer clients their annual assessments despite the onset of the COVID.

We, however, will continue to remain ambitious with our targets to ensure that they provide an appropriate challenge to the service.





### Keeping people safe from harm



This performance measure indicates the percentage of vulnerable people who have experienced safeguarding concerns and have been actively involved in the decision-making process designed to keep them safe.

We are confident that we react quickly to protect people when safeguarding concerns emerge. It is always our aim to involve individuals in the decision making around safeguarding processes.

Performance remains high. We are actively introducing a new process and recording methodology to ensure that staff continue to have conversations with vulnerable adults to make safeguarding personal.



# What you told us about our services in 2020/21

Despite a very challenging year for the community and the Local Authority we received some fantastic feedback. Here are some direct quotes from people using our services:

*I hope that you all can take a moment to pause and reflect on the great thing that has been achieved today. Our Health and Social Care Services work despite the constraints and the complex system and that is due to each and every one of you who goes that extra mile to make the right thing happen for each person.*

*I'd like to thank you all for the amazing support you've given my aunt since her discharge from hospital. I think you are all doing a fantastic job under very difficult circumstances and your dedication and support to your elderly vulnerable clients is awesome. Sincere thanks.*

*I just wanted to formalise my thanks for all the support, through what has been an extremely challenging 6 months, but especially at yesterday's Annual Review. The Transitions worker was instrumental in ensuring my views were listened to, .....We were very grateful for the interventions and support.*

*My father and I would like to thank you all for your time and insights during yesterday's review for R. We very much appreciate the care and time that all of you devote to ensuring that R is able to live the most positive life that he can at his home and day centre, and in particular the extra thought and measures that have gone into safety during very challenging circumstances for everyone.*

*I have nothing but praise for the wonderful help I received from the Start team. It really was excellent; and words almost are not enough to express my appreciation. In fact I wanted to tell the Director of Social Services that, but I don't know how I should go about it. Perhaps you could advise me? Many, many thanks. This service is a perfect example of how to get things right. It really is a team, and everyone in it is brilliant at what they do. Please don't leave these comments to gather dust on a quarterly performance spreadsheet, discussed at say, item 12 on the agenda. This should go to the head of Social Services, and, for that matter, the leader of the council!*

*Thank you to the START team from both of us!*

*A huge thank you for all the support and care that you've given to my grandmother over the last few weeks. We really appreciate you helping her to stay at home and are grateful to you, especially in the difficult conditions you're working in. Thank goodness for wonderful community services like you making such a difference to so many people - Thanks for all the trouble taken in sorting out my care.*

*Thank you so much for all the carers that came to care for my husband for the 6 weeks after his fall, everyone was so kind and professional and I was very impressed with the kindness and support we both received.*

# Caring for someone with Dementia

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We are very fortunate to have a service that focuses on carers of people with dementia and we constantly receive positive feedback on the support provided.

The Admiral Nursing Service is hosted by the London Borough of Sutton, which is one of only three councils to host such a service. The service works alongside people with dementia and their families, giving them one-to-one support, guidance and practical solutions.

In Sutton, during 2020-21, the Admiral Nursing Service supported 326 families and their carers. One such carer who is happy to share her story is Anthea - **An Interview with Anthea**

Anthea talks about her experience of being a carer and the support she has received from Sutton Council's Admiral Nurse Team.



Anthea and her husband have been receiving support from Sutton Council's Admiral Nursing team. Sutton Council interviewed Anthea about her experience of being a carer to her husband who has dementia and asked her about the help and support they have both received over the years.

## Have you heard of the Admiral Nursing before?

A few years ago, I watched a TV programme about dementia - an Admiral Nurse was talking about how Admiral Nurses have supported families of people living with dementia and there were only about 150 Admiral Nurses in the country. As an ex-practice nurse of many years, I could see the need for this kind of service. I was not aware that there were Admiral Nurses in Sutton.

## How did you come into contact with the Admiral Nurse Service? Was there a particular event or challenge that led to Admiral Nurse involvement?

My husband started developing memory problems and was diagnosed with dementia by Sutton Memory Assessment Services. He started misidentifying me, became very restless and was struggling to self-manage his diabetes.

During one of the appointments the consultant psychiatrist could see that I was struggling in the caring role and made a referral to the Admiral Nurse service straight away. I got a call from the Admiral Nurse two days later and was seen on the same day.

## How did your Admiral Nurse support you in your caring role?

The Admiral Nurse gained my trust straight away and developed a good rapport with my husband too. I felt that was important. The Admiral Nurse told me that the service will be there for me on the journey - at difficult times I could telephone or text my Admiral Nurse and knew there was someone there for me.

The Admiral Nurse was clearly very knowledgeable not just about dementia but about local and national services - Age UK/Sutton Carers Centre/Alzheimer's Society.

In particular the message in a bottle and the phone tracker helped reduce my worries especially with regards to his diabetes and his whereabouts. I found the one to one session very helpful as it enabled me to talk about issues I could not talk about with my family or friends. I also found discussing a plan and regularly reviewing the plan with the Admiral Nurse very helpful.



### **What was the most helpful thing your Admiral Nurse did?**

As a nurse I have always believed and felt I could and should manage. However, during a 'meltdown' at the shopping centre, the Admiral Nurse made me realise that help and support was needed in order to maintain the relationship with my husband. The Admiral Nurse put me in contact with local care providers and local clubs like the singing sensations and the day centre.

I also felt some embarrassment about my husband's behaviour. The Admiral Nurse accompanied us to the clubs to make it easier for both of us. He really enjoyed attending - he was a 'star' there. This not only made me feel better, but it also helped me catch up on my sleep and some 'me time'.

The Admiral Nurse also provided me with education around dementia and coping strategies including how to de-escalate difficult situations.

### **Admiral Nurses aim to support family carers to navigate health and social care systems and access other services. Was this something your Admiral Nurse did for you? If so, what was the benefit of this?**

My Admiral Nurse made me aware of how the NHS/social services and the private sector work and helped me to also understand a range of assessments - financial, social care, health, legal and the help that was available like benefits, blue badge.

The Admiral Nurse looked at ways of improving communication with professionals - attending clinic appointments with us when needed and writing letters to consultants and our GP.

When I finally could not carry on in the caring role because the risks were too high, the Admiral Nurses knowledge of suitable care homes was invaluable. I was also informed about the

procedures for applying for continuing health care from the NHS - his care is now being funded by the NHS although I am aware this is subject to reviews. This has greatly benefited us financially.

### **How did the Admiral Nurse encourage your health and wellbeing, as well as that of those of your loved one?**

The Admiral Nurse made a thorough assessment of our physical and mental health needs, including medications being taken and professionals involved. I was encouraged to see my GP as I had been neglecting my own health and to also have 'me time' when my husband was at the day centre. I became aware of the various help offered by voluntary organisations and the NHS like Talking Therapies.

### **Do you have any top tips for other carers?**

- Don't be afraid to ask - there is lots of support in the borough and most organisations are more than ready to help.
- Plan ahead - think about Lasting Power of Attorney while your loved one still has the mental capacity to decide, message in a bottle / have contact details ready
- Prioritise - getting the kitchen refitted created an enormous amount of stress for my husband and myself. It was not a top priority. Try to keep a routine and look after yourself.

### **Do you have any tips for professionals who support people with dementia and their loved ones?**

I was very fortunate to have had very good support from professionals involved in my husband's care. They listened to me, gave me time, showed empathy and they communicated the plan to me both verbally and in writing. They all showed my husband a lot of respect and tried to engage him in discussions and planning ahead.

# Highlights of the year 2020/21



## Keeping people in the community for longer and closer working with health partners to provide care closer to home

- There were 1,705 referrals made to the START service during 2020/21.
- We have delivered over 50,000 hours of care to people in their own homes.
- We have also delivered further care through short term stays in care homes for rehabilitation.
- We worked closely with our health partners to ensure healthcare needs are met through Continuing Health Care packages to ensure we 'keep people safe'.

## Safeguarding Awareness Week - Successful community & partner engagement

- The Safeguarding Awareness event held earlier in the year brought together our partner agencies to promote community engagement and to improve practice.

## Mental Health Support during the pandemic

- Early on in the pandemic we made sure that information was readily available to residents and our staff about the range of support that could be accessed by anyone experiencing or concerned about someone experiencing a mental health crisis.

## Supporting carers during the pandemic

- We continued to provide appropriate support to carers particularly in partnership with the Sutton Carers Centre, enabling carers to keep themselves safe during the pandemic and to continue to enable our vulnerable residents to 'live well Independently'.
- We made a concerted effort to conduct welfare checks on Carers to assure ourselves of their continued wellbeing during the pandemic and lockdown.

## Successful implementation of the Quality Assurance Framework

- We successfully implemented the Joint Quality Assurance Framework in Adult Social Care and are building on embedding our quality assurance approach to ensure our services are of the highest quality to continue to 'keep people safe'.

## Community Care Home Board

We developed an integrated approach in partnership with systemwide health partners to provide extra support to our 79 care homes in Sutton and quickly established a strategic board to oversee all activity and ensure our approach to protecting care homes was robust. This ensured that local care homes were well supported in implementing measures to prevent COVID infections and managing infections where these did occur.

# Future plans for 2021/2022

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## Domestic abuse campaigns

As part of our future plans in 2021/22, we intend to continue to embed our Domestic Abuse Policy to equip our workforce to recognise and respond to domestic abuse.

## Transformation of the learning disability approach

Our work is based on the Learning Disability Strategy 2017-21 and in addition, to the consultation and feedback received in developing the new Learning Disability Strategy 2022-26.

## We plan a transformation of the Learning Disability service

We are progressing key projects within the Learning Disability Service:

- We are delivering an information and advice hub to put all information in one place and make it easy to understand and provide a single point of contact. This will support families and carers to get the help and advice they need.
- To improve health outcomes for people with learning disabilities, we are developing interventions that will increase the number of GP annual health checks offered to people with a learning disability and/or autism in the community and care homes. We will also provide learning disability professional expertise within Sutton Health and Social Care.
- We will streamline assessments and reviews based on a person centred approach to achieve the best outcomes, for example, with the development of seamless pathways to adulthood/transitions.



- To achieve Best Value for money, we are, for example, reviewing our approach to how we offer accommodation to ensure better matching of individuals to services to meet their housing needs, and place them in appropriate settings.
- We will gain a better understanding of population growth to enable us to plan services in a more effective way.
- We are developing an employment and skills strategy to get people with learning disabilities into paid employment.

We will continue to work with people with learning disabilities to adapt and improve our services to promote independence, citizenship and achieve the best quality of life.

In the early part of 2021/22 there was a CQC inspection of the LD Clinical Health Team. Previously rated as good, the team was found to require improvement.



On the back of that rating we will deliver on an improvement plan, which includes;

- Compulsory training system, clear skills and specific training requirements supported by a centralised training record for front line workers.
- Risk management systems to identify anything that might affect service delivery and mitigate it.
- Performance reporting in place with agreed targets that are monitored on a monthly basis.
- Learning from feedback including service user feedback, complaints and compliments, incidents and accidents, and safeguarding integrated into team meetings.
- Return the service to a rating of at least 'Good'.
- Review arrangements for all the CQC registered services that the Council provides to ensure robust governance processes.

### Integrated services at Wallington library

Having established co-working arrangements at Wallington Library following its extensive refurbishment, NHS Community Health Services and LBS Adult Social Care are able to share the first locality office.

Co-working relationships have been developed with joint working, joint visits and discussions on how to best support clients in a more joined-up way and we are further scoping and developing joint assessments and integrated assessment documentation and further scoping of a single IT system.

### Embedding the Quality Assurance Framework

We successfully rolled out the full joint Quality Assurance Framework in 2020/21 across Adult Social Care. As part of this framework we have also developed a robust programme of quality assurance activity to ensure we continue to hear



about practice, learn from practice and continue to use coaching and development to promote change that will ensure we achieve positive outcomes for our service users and their families.

### Improving our Information & advice service

Last year we said that we will be commissioning a new information, advice, advocacy and support service. This would bring together information and advice into a central point and provide a digital information and advice hub for residents and professionals. It would bring together a number of existing sites and resources into one central place.

Unfortunately due to COVID both of these projects were suspended during 2020/21, however, work has resumed with the aim for these projects to be implemented and mobilised during 2021/22.

### Dealing with Complaints

**In the coming year 2021/22 we will continue to improve:**

- Looking at the best way of publishing Customer Care Performance to the public via our website.
- Provide training sessions for staff and managers on complaints handling.
- Continue to ensure communication is transparent and open and process is followed within the time frame in line with the Complaints Policy.

## Services to Carers

Areas of focus over the next 12 months includes;

- Carers mental health and wellbeing to address the impact of COVID.
- Adult Social Care will contribute to the council's approach to deliver joint campaigns with partners to reach carers from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities.
- Planning, post-COVID carer refresher training in conjunction with the Carers Centre all front line staff.
- Q & A panel with Admiral Nurses, Sutton Carers Centre, Age UK and Alzheimer's Society during Dementia Action Week (May 2021).
- Panel discussion following the above event during Carers Week (June 2021).
- Adult Social Care and Sutton Carers Centre are members of the Admiral Nurse Service steering group.
- Admiral Nurses will be attending a dementia peer support session led by Sutton Carers Centre to discuss our service.

## Support for young people into Adulthood

We will review our existing transition arrangements, and produce a new transition protocol in collaboration with Children's services, which will develop straight forward pathways into adulthood.

This overarching 'Approaching Adulthood' protocol will agree clear roles and responsibilities of staff and agencies within the pathway and will produce accessible information for families, carers and individuals. This will support a clearer transition of young people who continue to require services in adulthood.



# Adult Social Care - A good news story

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The Hospital Pathway Social Work team is a borough-wide service for all new and existing service users and carers. The team supports our vulnerable residents in need of care and support to be discharged from any hospital or specialist rehabilitation setting.

The past year has no doubt been the most challenging time ever for the Hospital Team having to quickly adapt to new ways of working through the COVID pandemic in line with the government guidance. The service expanded working hours to cover 7 days a week from 08:00 to 20:00 to work collaboratively alongside health colleagues in the hospital to manage a significant increase in referrals in comparison to previous years.

Separated from family and friends, the team worked hard to help vulnerable residents maintain contact with family members who were not able to visit the hospital due to the COVID restrictions. They kept families updated with plans for discharge and worked tirelessly through highly emotional circumstances.

The following is a very touching good news story, providing an insight into the work of our hospital and START team and how they often go that extra mile and especially so during the COVID pandemic.

Mr and Mrs Pritchard were due to celebrate their 64th Wedding anniversary and were separated when Mr Pritchard was admitted to hospital and diagnosed with COVID-19. Allison Brown was the dedicated Social Worker for the ward where Mr Pritchard was admitted. He was very unwell and Allison was the link between hospital and home and maintained contact with Mrs Pritchard throughout the many weeks he was on the ward.

When ready to leave hospital Mr Pritchard needed to transfer to an alternative destination where he could self-isolate for the required time and recuperate as his wife was shielding at home being a high risk vulnerable adult. This meant however that he was potentially to be separated from his wife on their 64th wedding anniversary.

Thanks to Allison Brown who organized the intervention of the START team to facilitate his return home in a safe way on the date of their anniversary they were reunited and able to celebrate together.

The photo below was taken with the permission of Mr and Mrs Pritchard by the START Senior Support Worker Lorraine Stephens who attended on the day he returned home.





