



Young Carers Annual Report April 2022 – March 2023

Introduction

A Young Carer (YC) is anyone under 18 who provides essential and on-going care and emotional support to a family member who is physically or mentally ill, disabled, or misuses substances. Similarly, a Young Adult Carer (YAC) is anyone 18 up to 25 who undertakes an equivalent caring responsibility. The Children and Families Act 2014 is an important piece of legislation for young carers, young adult carers and their families. Local authorities who must meet their duties to identify, assess and support young carers, young adult carers and their families. Local authorities must proactively identify young carers rather than wait for young people and their families to come forward and request an assessment. Local authorities are required to take 'reasonable steps' to identify young carers in their area. Where it appears to a local authority that a young carer may have needs then they must carry out an assessment. Young carers or their parents can also request an assessment. The legislation refers to this as a 'young carer's needs assessment'.

Brent has a Young Carers Champions Group that helps to inform the Brent Children's Trust of key priorities relating to commissioning, joint planning, and developing collaborative working arrangements to support YCs. The YC Champions Group set the following 6 priorities in 2022-2023:

1. Engage and consult with YC to ensure their voice is heard
2. Raise awareness of YC across Brent to highlight their needs and the challenges they face
3. Simplify pathways and assessments to access support and ensure effective transition arrangements are in place for adult support services
4. Enable access to early help and support so that YC and their families get the right help, at the right time, and as quickly as possible
5. Help to ensure YC achievement at school is in line with their peers and they are identified and recognised as a vulnerable group
6. Improve the physical and mental wellbeing of YC and help to ensure they can access opportunities that are available to their peers.

An action plan was created to advance the work, and this has achieved positive outcomes.

Success summary

The key successes for the 2022-2023 year include:

- 104 new young carers identified
- YC continued to receive support from a range of multi-agency professionals, particularly regarding issues such as social isolation
- Young Carers contacts at sessions at Family Wellbeing Centres have doubled
- Implementing processes to ensure young carers identified in Child and Family Assessments are made aware of the Brent Gateway Support offer.



Governance

Carers Board

Members of the YC Champions Group are represented on the Carers Partnership Board. The aim of the Carers Partnership Board is to work with carers and partners to ensure carers are recognised and valued; their needs are identified and met; the improvement of health and well-being of carers in the borough by developing and monitoring the strategic direction, service development and performance of health and social care services. The partnership also provides the overall strategic direction for developing support and services for carers. During 2022-2023 substantial user engagement took place to develop the new Carers Strategy and Young Carers were included in this.

Commissioning

Adult Social Care brought together a number of Carers related services into a single 'Gateway to Carers Support Services' contract and the YC services are included in the specification. Brent Gateway Partnership (BGP), a consortium of Age UK, Capable Communities and Harrow Mencap, have been delivering the service since December 2019. The young carers element within this offer includes management oversight and 3 workers who provide direct support to young people. The BGP contract has been extended until July 2023 to align with the new Carers' Strategy. The commitments for the Strategy are being finalised and are likely to include:

- Working in partnership
- Culture of awareness and respect
- Supporting carers wellbeing
- Outreach
- Improved access to information

Data overview

The 2021 Census figures provide an updated picture regarding care in England and Wales. 7.7% of the Brent population report being involved in unpaid care. There were approximately 120,000 young unpaid carers (aged between 5 and 17 years) in England (1.4% of 5- to 17-year-olds). The census identified 127,175 young carers (aged 5-17) and 229,695 young adult carers (aged 18-24). This compares with 177,918 young carers and 254,332 young adult carers in 2011. Based on the 2011 census data the estimated number of Brent YC was in excess of 3,243 (including young adult carers). 2021 figures indicate that this figure had reduced to 1996. A higher proportion of females reported being a young carer or young adult carer than males. There was an increase in the proportion of children and young adults providing more hours of care. The data also highlighted that young carers and young adult carers in England and Wales were more likely to be living in areas of high deprivation, compared to their peers without caring responsibilities.¹

¹ Source – [Unpaid care by age, sex and deprivation, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk)

YCs identified in Brent care generally care for a sibling, then parent and then grandparents. It should be noted that some YCs care for more than one family member.

The total number of YCs registered with the commissioned carers support provider is detailed in Figure 1. There has been an increase in the number of young carers identified when compared with last year. New referrals to the service area more evenly spread across age ranges when compared with the total case load (Figure 2) which includes majority of children within the 12-15 age range. Female young carers are more likely to be supported by Brent Gateway Partnership than male carers. (Figure 4). This correlates with census figures indicating that nationally females are more likely to provide care in almost all age groups. Children and young people of Black heritages comprise 38% of new referrals this year (Figure 5), a slight reduction in their over-presentation in the wider cohort (44% of the total Brent Gateway Partnership caseload, as reflected in Figure 6).

Figure 1: Newly registered Young Carers by age (2022-2023)

Age	Total number
0-5	0
6-11	38
12-15	40
16-18	24
Unknown	2
Total	104

Figure 2: Total number of YC’s registered with the Carers Service by age

Brent Gateway Partnership Total Case Load - Age

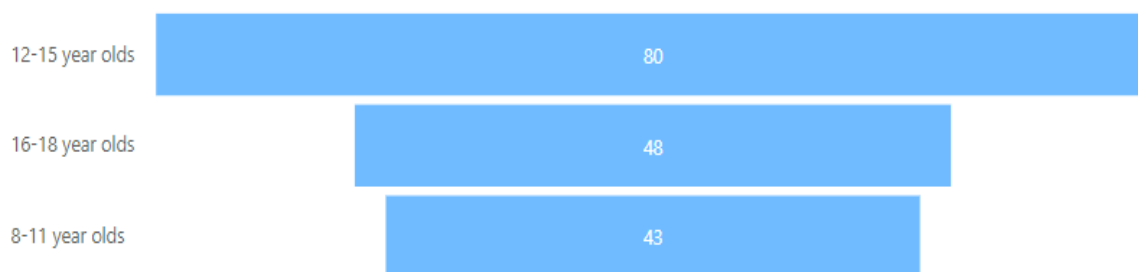


Figure 3: Newly registered YC by gender (2022-2023)

Gender	Total number
Male	45
Female	58
Transgender	0
Did not wish to Disclose	0
Unknown	1
Total	104

Figure 4: Total YC registered with the Carers Service by gender

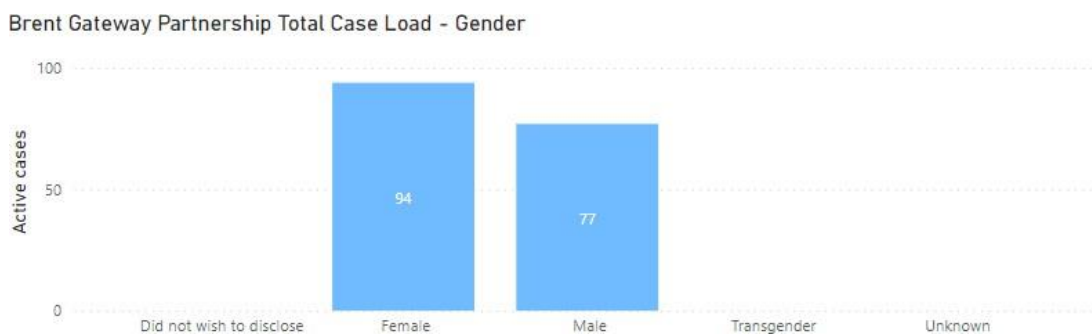


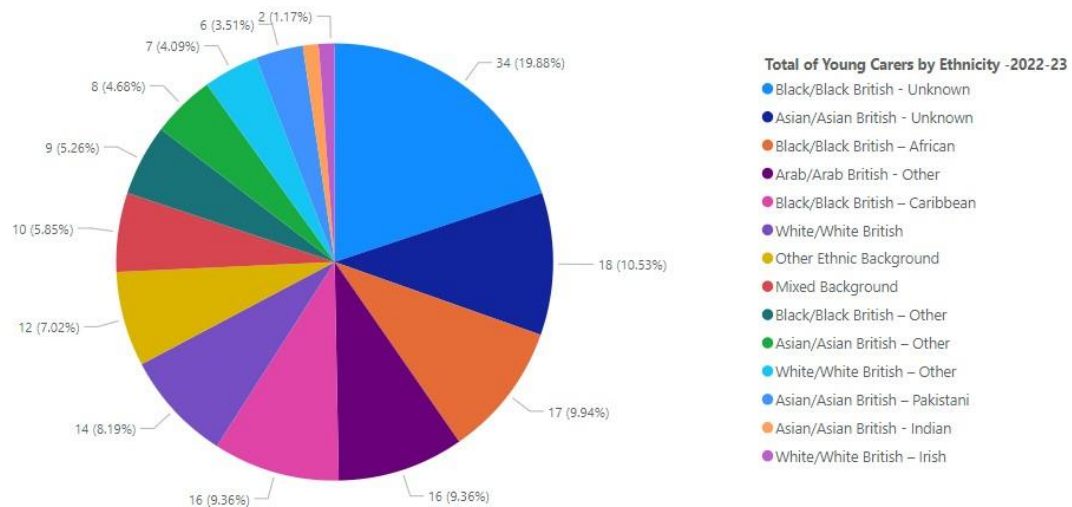
Figure 5: Newly registered YC by ethnicity (2022-2023)

Ethnicity	Total number
Arab/Arab British – Other	9
Asian/Asian British - Unknown	9
Asian/Asian British – Indian	1
Asian/Asian British – Pakistani	3
Asian/Asian British – Other	2
Black/Black British	6
Black/Black British – Caribbean	7
Black/Black British – African	10
Black/Black British - Unknown	3
Black/Black British – Other	14
Mixed Background	8
White/White British	7
White/White British - English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	4

White/White British – Irish	2
White/White British – Other	8
Other Ethnic Background	2
Did not wish to Disclose	4
Unknown	5
Total	104

Figure 6: Total YC registered with BGP by ethnicity.

Brent Gateway Partnership Total Caseload - Ethnicity



Safeguarding and referral pathways

Research has shown that caring can lead to a significant and long-term negative impact on the physical and mental health and wellbeing of YCs. When YCs are identified, they are referred to the Brent Gateway Partnership. Referrals are triaged by the Care Service Manager to identify risks and determine what support is required. YCs and their families are offered a whole family assessment when they register. Where safeguarding concerns are identified, these are referred to Brent Family Front Door (BFFD).

YC and their families can also self-refer to Brent Family Front Door (BFFD). Depending on the level of need YCs can then access support from the Early Help service or Children’s Social Care. Both the Early Help Assessment (EHA) and Child and Family Assessment (CFA) require that practitioners identify if YC are present within the family. When a Carers Assessment is completed for an adult providing care, the format of the assessment includes an annex to identify YC within the household. At present the number of Carers

Assessments is low and young carers are not consistently being identified within these assessments.

Figure 7: New YC referred by an agency

Agency	2022-23
Brent LA Adult Social Services	19
Brent LA Children’s Services	17
Other Statutory Sector Professionals	19
Health	3
Voluntary/Community partners	6
Schools and colleges	4
Self-referral	15
Word of Mouth	21
Unknown	0
Total	104

Priority outcomes progress update

Engage and consult with YC to ensure their voice is heard

YCs who have been identified and registered with the carers service provider have been consulted regarding their needs, challenges and their views obtained on what services would best support them. There is a termly YC forum in place and all YC registered with the carers provider are invited to attend and pass on the details to other YC they know.

Raise awareness of YCs across Brent

Stakeholder engagement

Publicity (posters and leaflets) with the details of the Brent Gateway Partnership is shared across agencies. Officers have met with and briefed staff from a wide range of services within the Council, Health, Schools, Community Voluntary Sector (CVS) and the Police.

National and regional YC awareness raising campaigns are also promoted annually across Brent including:

- YC Awareness Day (March)
- Carers Week (June)
- London ADASS annual carers festival (September)
- Carers Rights Day (November).

Support available to young carers is promoted through social media including Twitter, Facebook and Yammer to help raise awareness and highlight YC issues. YC information

is presented on the Brent Youth Zone, Council, Brent Gateway Partnership and Brent Carers Centre websites. Information on YC has been included in the Headteacher bulletin.

Training

A multi-agency training programme is in place to raise awareness of YCs amongst professionals. The bi-monthly training is promoted via the Pheew Learning Platform and CYP Learning and Development mail out. The breakdown of professionals attending training is detailed below in Figure 8. Attendee numbers have reduced when compared with last year (with a total of 40 attendees) with reductions in Early Help, Health, Community Voluntary Sector.

Figure 8: Practitioners trained by agency 2022- 23

Agency	Total number
Early Help	5
Health	1
Community Voluntary Sector	7
Inclusion	0
Schools	4
Police	0
Children's Social Care	3
Adult Social Care	4
Other	1
Total	25

Simplify pathways and assessments to access support, and ensure effective transition arrangements are in place to adult support services

The Children and Families Act 2014 gives YC and YAC in England a right to a Carers Assessment and to have their needs met if the assessment shows this is necessary. The Children and Families Act 2014 and the Care Act 2014 work together to make sure the needs of the whole family are met and inappropriate or excessive caring by YC is prevented or reduced. The EHA is used as the referral tool to access targeted support from the Council. The EHA and Child and Family Assessments (CFA) include modifications so that YCs can be identified and reported on.

During 2022-2023 a process was implemented to enable social workers identifying a young carer through a Child and Family Assessment, to seek consent from the family so that Brent Gateway Partnership can contact them directly to offer support. As of March

2023, just under a third (31%) of carers identified through Child and Family Assessments were assessing support via Brent Gateway Partnership.

Figure 9: Assessments completed to identify and support YC

Assessment type	Number
EHA	31
CFA	44
Adult Carers Assessment	8
Total	83

Enable access to Early Help and support so that YCs and their families get the right help, at the right time, and as quickly as possible.

The pathway for YC to access early help and support is in place and referrals are made via the BFFD. The EHA is currently used to assess the needs of YCs and their families and to plan and coordinate multi-agency support. YC and their families can access targeted support services such as mentoring, counselling and family befriending via the Early Help resource panel.

YC and their families can access the full range of support services being delivered from the FWC. A Young Carers session at Alperton FWC was implemented this year and take up numbers are lower at this site compared with Church Lane (which is the more established programme). A total of 42 young carers accessed the young carers drop-ins at Family Wellbeing Centres in 2022-2023, a significant increase of 21 on the previous year.

Help to ensure YCs achievement at school is in line with their peers and they are identified and recognised as a vulnerable group.

Work with schools to raise awareness of YC is progressing and schools are being asked to ensure YC:

- Are identified as a vulnerable group
- Highlight the negative impact that caring can have on pupil outcomes, particularly regarding school attendance, attainment, social isolation and bullying
- Have a voice within the school
- Are tracked to monitor their attainment and progress
- Are supported with interventions to help ensure their achievement is in line with their peers and to close the gap
- Are reflected in safeguarding policies and procedures
- Have a Champion identified within the school.

The Early Help service and the Gateway Partnership work together to target schools that have not engaged in YC work before. School effectiveness lead professionals within the



School and Setting Effectiveness service have raised young carer identification on visits to schools. For the first time, young carers have been included as a question within the January 2023 School Census. The school is asked to identify whether a young carer is identified by a parent or guardian or identified by the school (including where the pupil self declares). In January 2023, there were only 17 young carers identified by a parent/guardian and 47 identified by a school with 76 schools identifying no young carers within their cohorts. It is anticipated that this number will continue to grow as schools become familiar with the requirements for the Census and this may in turn result in increased referrals to support services.

The commissioned provider has identified approximately 75 schools for the young people on their caseload which includes a combination of in-borough and out of borough sites.

YC are more likely to be eligible for Pupil Premium funding due to their circumstances at home and the funding can be used to break down barriers particular to YC to help ensure they can access the same opportunities as their peers.

Improve the physical and mental wellbeing of YC and help ensure they can access opportunities that are available to their peers

The Gateway Partnership are commissioned to provide a range of services and support to YC including:

- Peer to peer support via a YC forum
- YC activities, trips and events during term time and holidays and opportunities for YCs to come together and network
- Access to information, advice and guidance relating to their caring responsibilities
- Advocacy support and champion the rights of YCs
- A YCs support worker
- As part of National Carers week an activity day for YCs and their families and celebrating other national events which help to raise the profile of YCs
- Raising awareness of YCs across Brent, including facilitating a YC Champions programme
- Delivering assemblies to schools to support with the self-identification and support of YCs in Schools
- Support some young carers to access the National Young Carers Festival.

The Gateway Partnership are also commissioned to provide a Carers Service Hub to be a first point of contact for all unpaid Carers (including YCs) seeking information, advice and guidance regarding support available in Brent. This includes:

- Information, advice and sign-posting
- Money and benefits advice
- Access to health and well-being services including delivery of Primary Care Liaison Services
- Whole family support & assessments (including advocacy)
- Access to work and training
- Caring support and training

- Emergency support.

Priorities and next steps for 2023-2024

Priority	Action	Impact
Ensure young carers' voices are included within service planning including new commissioning arrangements for Carers in the borough	Views of YCs to be actively sought in youth strategy evaluation planned for 2023-2024. Young carers activities at FWCs used to seek feedback as part of commissioning arrangements	The lived experience of young carers shapes both universal service delivery and targeted interventions to support young carers in the borough.
Continuing to raise the profile of YC across Brent and ensuring multi-agency partners know how to identify and refer YC and their families for support so that an increased proportion of young carers can access support	Communication plan from young carers group is refreshed to reach a wider audience Commissioned provider will work with young carers to create an Instagram feed to promote activities available. Schools increasingly young carers aware: Young carers information to be included in the Designated Leads in Schools (DSL) conference in 23-24. Arrangements for new commissioned service to be communicated via the Headteachers Bulletin to support increased engagement. Schools supported to ensure their census return is an accurate reflection of the young people with caring responsibilities in their cohorts. Reduction in the number of Brent schools with no identified carers by 25% The CYP Wellbeing Alliance meet termly and provide an opportunity for multi-agency professionals to come together with a focus on	Content designed by young carers helps to widen engagement with the offer from young carers Schools and other universal providers can more effectively support young carers as they are known to them. Targeted services (eg Place to be) participating in the Children and Young People's alliance see identification of young carers as an integral aspect of their role.

	<p>early intervention and prevention. Agendas will include an item on YC to share the latest information, advice and guidance and provide a forum to share best practice from different partners</p> <p>Outreach from project officer and commissioned service to support increased referrals from agencies supporting health, emotional wellbeing, social isolation</p> <p>The LA and commissioned provider will be working in partnership with Fevered Sleep in the creation of an artwork reflecting the experiences of young carers. The programme will take place in October half term 2023. It is anticipated the artwork will be innovative way of promoting the valuable role that YCs play and may attract new young carers to support services.</p>	
<p>Embedding YC support services and activities in Family Wellbeing Centres and ensuring the Centres are widely promoted to YC and their families</p>	<p>Young Carers engagement at Alperton site (currently a quarter of the proportion accessing through Church Lane FWC) to increase by 25%</p> <p>FWC Identify number of YC accessing wider FWC offer and increase this by 10%</p>	<p>Young Carers and their families are supported to make increased use of the wider Family Wellbeing Centre offer</p>
<p>Embedding processes to ensure all young carers identified through Child and Family Assessments are made aware of the Brent Gateway Support offer.</p>	<p>90% of young carers identified through CFA and EHA receive information about the support offer</p> <p>Proportion of CFA/EHA identified YCs engaging with the offer to increase by 10%.</p>	<p>The most vulnerable young carers are aware of the provision available to them through the commissioned provider and encouraged to engage.</p>

Illustration of impact

Brent Gateway Partnership case studies

Background

YP XX is 15 and cares for her mother who has numerous ongoing health conditions. The combination of the dependent's conditions makes it difficult for her to complete daily tasks which places a heavy reliance on YP XX to provide support with household chores/tasks and to look after her younger sibling who is 9. YP XX also supports her parent emotionally due to the severity of her anxiety and depression. The dependent is also heavily pregnant. As a result of her caring role, YP XX has poor school attendance, limited opportunities to build friendships and has recently started to self-harm.

How we supported

The referral came through from Children Services and immediately a YCSO made contact and arranged for an EHA to be completed. The parent was given support through mental health services and a referral was made to CAMHS to support the young carer with self-harming however, there was a long waiting list for YP XX to receive support. Whilst completing the assessment YP XX disclosed that she found it difficult having no friends and felt ugly at times. The YCSO paired YP XX with another young carer and started running weekly sessions with a focus on building confidence and self-esteem. The Young Carer's team also provided a range of respite opportunities which YP XX started to engage in. The YCSO also liaised closely with the children's Social Worker and attended Team around the Child Meetings with a range of professionals to discuss further ways to support.

Service impact - outcome / feedback

The support put in place enabled the dependent to cope better which has reduced the reliance placed on the young carer. As a result, YP XX's attendance at school has improved slightly. Her parent mentioned she seems happier in herself, enjoys attending the sessions run by the YC's team and has made some new friends.

Case study 2

Background

Young Person (YP) YY is 16 and cares for his mother who suffers with Multiple Sclerosis, and Depression and Anxiety. As a result, the dependent has reduced mobility and uses a wheelchair and walker frame. The combination of these health conditions makes it difficult for her to complete daily tasks which puts a heavy reliance on YP YY to support with personal care and hygiene, completing household chores/tasks and providing emotional support during the dependent's down days. Upon returning to school after lock down, YP YY started to experience low mood and anxiety which along with his caring commitments started to affect his school attendance, which eventually resulted in



him not attending school at all. YP YY was in year 11 and completing GCSEs but stopped attend face to face lessons as they made him feel anxious.

How we supported

A YCSO was contacted by the dependent who raised concerns school attendance, low mood and anxiety. The YCSO contacted the Head of Year to inform that he was a young carer, to highlight the issues he was facing and to find out what support could be provided the school. YP YY was put in touch with a counselling service to support with the low mood and anxiety. The YSCO contacted an Educational Welfare Officer to address the issue of attendance. A meeting with all professionals was arranged to discuss the dependent's needs and find a way forward.

Service impact - outcome / feedback

YP YY attended sessions with the counsellor learning ways to cope with his anxiety and low mood. He transitioned back to his studies through a combination of online and face to face lessons. YP YY also attended a young carers event which he enjoyed and then mentioned that he would like to attend future activities with the Young Carer's Team.