ADULT SOCIAL CARE STRATEGY 2026-2031

Supporting the Life that Matters to You

WHAT IS ADULT SOCIAL CARE IN READING?

Adult Social Care is one of Reading Borough Council's most important services. It supports adults stay independent, safe and live the life that matters to them. We work with people, families and carers to find the right support.

- Information and advice
- Staying independent
- Care and support
- Supporting carers
- Keeping people safe

PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGY

Our strategy sets out how we will work together to make Adult Social Care better in Reading over the next five years.

OUR COMMITMENT

We want everyone's experience of Adult Social Care to be:

Simple

Easy to find, understand and navigate.

Supportive

Focused on you, your strengths, your goals and what matters most.

Seamless

Services work together so you get the right support, when you need it.

WHY WE NEED THIS STRATEGY

1. **Reading is growing and changing**

   More people are likely to need support in the future, and demand for Adult Social Care is increasing.

2. **People's needs are becoming more complex**

   People increasingly need support across health, housing, mental health and community services.

3. **We need to make the best use of our resources**

   Demand is increasing faster than available resources, so we need to focus on prevention, partnership working and where we can make the greatest difference.

YOU TOLD US

- Carers need the right help and support.
- Services need to work better together
- People want help before problems get bigger.
- People need support while they wait.
- Information and services need to be easy to find, understand and use.

What you told us helped shape our five priorities.

OUR FIVE PRIORITIES FOR 2026-2031

This strategy is part of Reading's ongoing journey to strengthen Adult Social Care. It has been shaped by what residents, carers, staff, partners, performance data and Care Quality Commission (CQC) insight have told us.

These priorities will guide our work and the way we work together.

1 CARERS

Recognising and championing the people who make Reading stronger

- We will identify carers early
- We will provide the support carers need
- We will involve carers in shaping services
- We will connect carers to right support
- We will support carers' wellbeing

For carers, this means you will:

- Be recognised early and treated as a partner in care
- Understand support available and how to access it
- Feel confident and connected in your role
- Balance caring with your own wellbeing, work and life

2 PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Working together so people experience joined-up support

- We will work with communities
- We will create one connected system
- We will strengthen neighbourhood working
- We will work together to prevent needs from increasing

For residents, this means you will:

- Experience joined-up and coordinated support
- See services work together clearly
- Know who is supporting you and what happens next
- Move between services easily

3 PREVENTION

Supporting people early to prevent needs from increasing

- We provide support early
- We build on people's strengths
- We make support easy to access
- We prioritise support where it is needed most
- We make prevention fair and inclusive

For residents, this means you will:

- Get help early, before problems get worse
- Stay connected to local services and your community
- Maintain your health, wellbeing and confidence
- Stay safe and well at home, including through the use of technology

4 WAITING WELL

Supporting people while they wait

- We will keep you informed
- We provide support while you wait
- We work together around you
- We respond when your needs change
- We continuously improve waiting times

For residents, this means you will:

- Know what is happening and what to expect
- Understand how long you may wait
- Know who to contact if your situation changes
- Access help and advice while you wait
- Feel safe and supported throughout

5 ACCESSIBILITY OF INFORMATION AND SERVICES

Making it easier for people to find, understand and access support

- We will provide clear and easy-to-find information
- We will offer flexible ways to access our services
- We will communicate clearly and inclusively
- We will make the journey easy to understand
- We will continue to improve accessibility

For residents, this means you will:

- Know where to go to get help
- Understand information clearly and easily
- Access services in ways that suit your needs
- Receive clear and timely communication

HOW WE WILL DELIVER THIS STRATEGY

We will deliver the strategy through an Improvement Plan.

The plan will include:

What we will do

When we will do it

Who is responsible

How we will measure success

Our approach is built around 3 pillars

PEOPLE

We will invest in our workforce so they have the right skills, confidence and support to do their best work.

PRACTICE

We will use consistent, person-centred practice focused on what matters to people.

PERFORMANCE

We will use data, feedback and KPIs to measure progess, learn and make improvement.

Some examples of what we will do

CARERS	Set clear standards to make sure carers are identified, offered support, referred to the right services, regularly reviewed, and helped with financial advice and benefits.
PARTNERSHIP WORKING	Increase communication between adult social care and the VCS particularly around knowledge of Care Act Assessment criteria.
PREVENTION	Ensure a shared understanding of what prevention means for Adult Social Care specifically and then how we embed prevention within our relationship with partners and local communities.
WAITING WELL	Deliver efficient processes, policy and guidance which is followed consistently by staff, ensuring the best use of our capacity available to meet the needs of our residents.
ACCESSIBILITY OF INFORMATION & SERVICES	Increase consistency in the accessibility of information and services for all.

READING 2031: WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE

By 2031, we want Adult Social Care to be simple, supportive and seamless.

CARERS FEEL VALUED AND SUPPORTED

Carers know their rights, are involved in decisions and get support for their own wellbeing.

SUPPORT FEELS COORDINATED

Services work well together, people do not have to keep repeating their story, and changes between services are well managed.

PEOPLE GET HELP EARLY

People get support before problems get worse and are helped to stay independent, active and connected.

PEOPLE FEEL IN CONTROL

People know what help is available, what to expect, and support is built around what matters to them.

INFORMATION AND SUPPORT ARE EASY TO ACCESS

information is clear and easy to find, and people can access support in ways that work for them.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

AUGUST

- Consultation closes on 31 August 2026

SEPTEMBER

- We will look at all the feedback and consider changes where we see common themes and patterns.

OCTOBER

- The final strategy will be presented to the ACE Committee for approval.
- We will launch the final strategy and begin delivering it through our Improvement Plan.

For questions about the strategy, email strivingforexcellence@reading.gov.uk