

Hertfordshire Multi-Agency Carers Strategy, as at 1 March 2006

1. Background

The Strategy has been in place in a variety of forms since 1996. It has been designed and reviewed to incorporate all the main headlines raised in consultations with carers, the Carers' Topic Group, the Hertfordshire Carers' Strategy Group (carers and professionals from a range of agencies) the *Black and Minority Ethnic Carers' Forum* and by *Listening to Carers Days* etc.

Currently there are 14 sub-groups working on aspects of the strategy.

The strategy won Hertfordshire Beacon Status for 2005-06 for Supporting Carers.

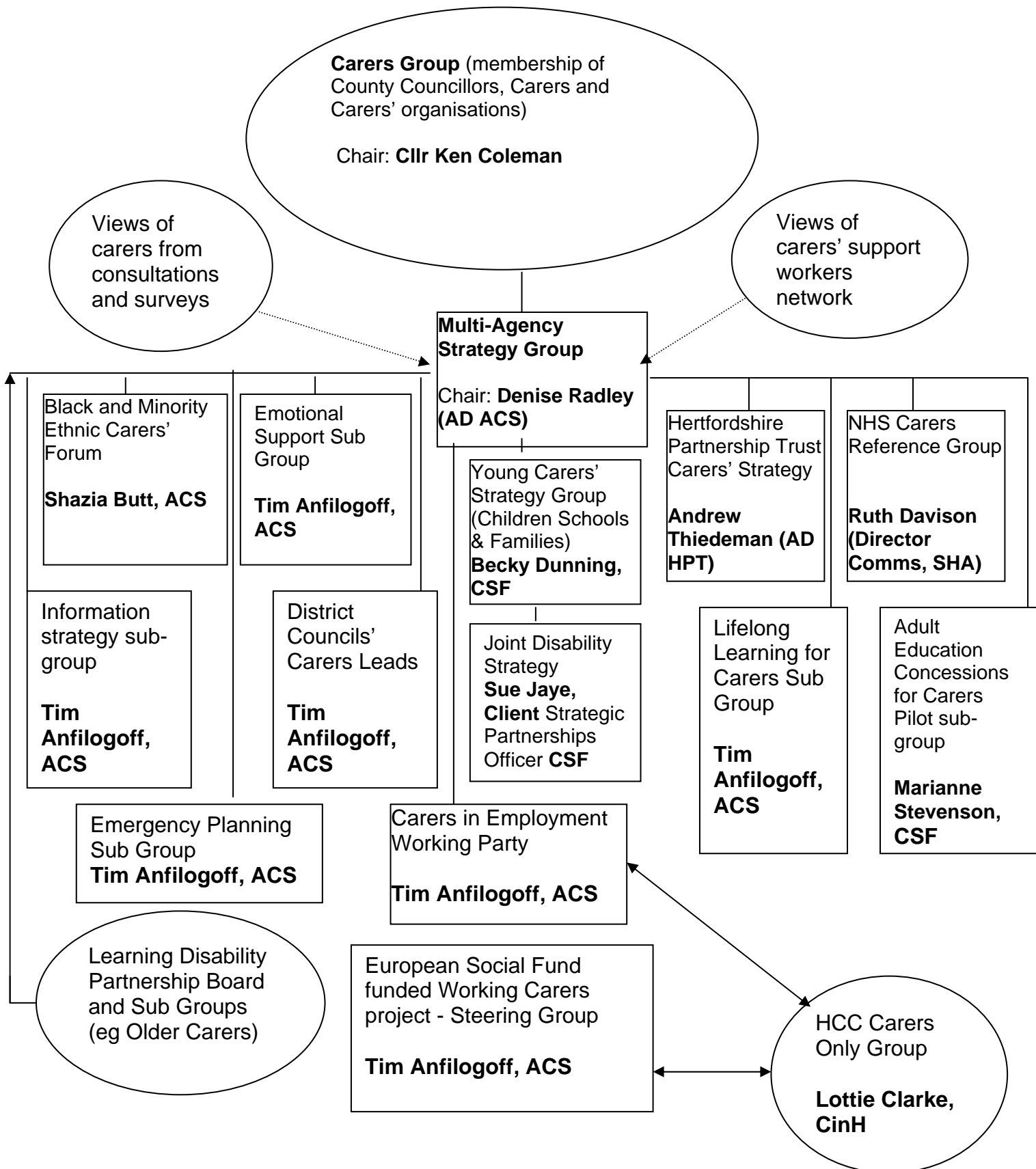
The Strategy is coming to the end of its 5 year life.

The intention is to relaunch the strategy in Spring 2007. The steps towards the relaunch are as follows:

- Event (provisional date 5 June) to 'close' the Beacon Year in Hertfordshire (taking stock of what has been learnt and how the strategy can be improved) to launch new guidance on working with carers for statutory sector front line staff and to begin a 'conversation' with carers and partners about what the new strategy should look like.
- Further event (autumn 2006) to pull together thoughts from carers and partners alongside further details from the Department of Health about their White Paper Proposals in the New Deal for Carers
- Launch of new 5 year strategy, Spring 2007

2. Multi-Agency Carers' Strategy Groups as at 23 February 2005

Note: All groups are multi-agency



3. International Involvement

- The Carers in Employment Manager visited Estonia in January 2006 as part of the European Union Funded *Action for Carers in Employment* (ACE) Partnership to look at models of supporting working carers there. Reciprocal visits to Hertfordshire are being planned
- The Hertfordshire Carers in Employment Project is presenting with ACE and the European Institute of Social Services (Kent) to the European Social Services Conference in Vienna in June, with a carer employee of HCC as one of the presenters.

4. National Involvement

- HCC is bidding with the three other Beacon authorities (Rochdale, Sefton, Sunderland) for Office of the Deputy Prime Minister monies so as to be able to extend Supporting Carers Activities into 2006-07 (original Beacon Year ends June 2006)
- Sarah Pickup continues as carers' lead for the Association of Directors of Social Services and chairs the Carers Reference Group
- Discussions are in hand around a 'Beacons Closing Event' with Carers UK and others
- Tim Anfilogoff will represent HCC at the London launch in April of the Social Care Institute for Excellence Practice Guide to the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act. This is available on-line at www.scie.org.uk
- HCC's Carewise Policy was joint winner with BT of the *Working Families* Employer of the Year Award (Carers)
- HCC's strategy was used as the framework for the toolkit designed to help local authorities assess their own strategy's performance – this is now available at www.idea.gov.uk/beacons/carers and is being used by other authorities as part of their action planning
- HCC has carried out mentoring work with a council in the region around their carers' strategy (*'We found the support given by Herts CC excellent in helping us to analyse areas where we need to focus our efforts. They helped us to identify gaps in staff training, partnership working and how to become more effective with the work that we are doing and become more carer outcome focussed.'* Council Carers' Officer)
- Hertfordshire's Supporting Carers Beacon Open day on 23 November was a great success. Over 150 delegates attended including representatives from 50 local authorities. (One delegate said: *'This is the first conference that I have attended that was worth getting up at 6am for to get here! Informative, networking with others and sharing good practice – well done!'*)
- HCC is working with CSCI and regional carers leads through the ADSS network to design a more helpful performance management tool around carers' support (Leicester, 10 March 2006)
- HCC is co-ordinating a best practice sharing event for Shire Counties in April in Cheshire

- DH have asked that HCC and the other Beacons have a role in helping with the development of the New Deal for Carers in the recent White Paper (see attached paper)

5. The Ten Key Themes of the Strategy: A few examples of Recent Developments

5.1 Information

- A new information strategy is being designed, building on successes in work between *Carers in Hertfordshire* and Primary Care. The aim is to use a new *Carers in Hertfordshire* leaflet as the main tool, linked to a 'credit card' with the main statutory contact numbers on it. Groups of front-line staff in Primary Care, District Councils, Job Centres and the Pensions Service will receive bespoke training on how to identify and refer carers on. The pilot will also ensure monitoring of the effectiveness of this process and feedback to referring agencies and staff on the differences they have made for individual carers.

5.2 Recognition

- The new information strategy above will be this year's key strategic activity around helping 'hidden' carers to identify themselves and will link to activities during Carers Week (commences 12 June)
- Getting in Touch video clips for Asian Community Groups and carers available in March (Urdu and Gujarati and English) and being piloted
- Carewise CD Rom – video testimony from working carers – a training tool to help managers in HCC to support their working carers as effectively as possible, in line with the award-winning Carewise policy
- There is evidence that carers' assessments are increasing in absolute terms in Adult Care Services, although there have been some recent data quality issues, particularly where the new IRIS system has been introduced. This has revealed some technical difficulties which are being addressed through an 'enhancement' and revised training materials
- The Carers in Employment Project and the new Older Carers Project are specific examples of promoting additional recognition for the relevant groups of carers
- *Carers in Hertfordshire's* survey of 900 carers on its mailing list, and a smaller survey of carers using primary care in Hertsmere have shown that carers want more follow-up, more emotional support and that they are concerned about issues around medication. On this last point, Carers in Hertfordshire are planning a Medicines Matters conference for February 2007 and looking to identify how the new pharmacy contracts can benefit carers. They have also linked with the University of Hertfordshire on a related bid for some research
- Carers in contact with *Carers in Hertfordshire* has reached about 6,353 (a 6% increase in the last six months)
- CSF have developed a Young Carers Forum in partnership with Learning and Development which gives ACS and CSF practitioners an opportunity

to share good practice, hear about new developments and meet as a group 3 times per year

- A new Carers of People Misusing Drugs or Alcohol strategy is being proposed. A first meeting of a new Sub Group looking at these issues will build on joint work between *Carers in Hertfordshire*, the Joint Commissioning Team and HPT. Bespoke guidance for Community Drug Action Teams and voluntary sector support providers is planned as part of the suite of Carers Guidance to be launched in June 2006

5.3 Time Off

- Carers Grant increased for the last time in 2005-06. 4,627 carers received breaks services in 2004-05 and we predict a further 10% increase this year. A detailed report will be compiled for the Commission for Social Care Inspection in May and will be available then
- 568 carers received flexible carers' services (up 83% on the previous year) at an average cost of £302 per carer. This allowed a huge range of low-level flexible responses. More details of this work can be read (as a beacon 'case study') at www.idea.gov.uk/beacons/carers. We are expecting an increase this year of at least 10%
- A wide range of breaks have been offered to Young Carers in 2005/06 including funding to access school trips, drama activities and transport to support groups, plus specific activities organised by Carers in Hertfordshire Young Carers Project.

5.4 Emotional support

- The questionnaire designed with PCTs, CSF, HPT, *Carers in Hertfordshire*, Relate, Age Concern last year produced only 30 responses. A small amount of Beacon resources have been applied to pay Carers in Hertfordshire information staff to ring those agencies who did not reply to collect their details. The Information Officer (Users and Carers) has produced a database which can be developed into an on-line directory accessible to all those seeking sources of emotional support for carers

5.5 Training and support to care

- *Carers in Hertfordshire* are working on 'toolkit' for the Support Project for Education and Advice Across Hertfordshire (SPEACH) to enable mental health teams to deliver this established package of training with carer trainers involved in its delivery and to design a new package for more experienced carers

- Carers in Hertfordshire are also designing generic carers training with specialist sessions according to the need of the group e.g. MH, LD, EPD, parent carer, substance misuse etc. The programme will aim to give info, develop practical skills, allow carers to meet others in a similar position to themselves and to look at health issues in particular stress management
- Moving and handling course for carers has been rolled out across the county – 8 sessions will have been held by the end of March supporting about 80 carers who have provided excellent feedback
- We eagerly await details from the Department of Health as to how the Expert Carers Programme (see separate report – New Deal for Carers) will be funded and delivered through the NHS. This will form an invaluable aid in developing the carers' agenda in terms of health promotion in primary care
- Carers in Hertfordshire Young Carers Project have offered first aid courses and in partnership with North Herts College a range of development sessions have been offered.

5.6 Financial security

- Carewise training for middle managers using the new CD Rom including HCC-employed carers talking about the benefits of Carewise will begin in April 2006
- The Carers in Employment project commenced in May 2005. It has now dealt with about 150 carers in all, 33 of whom had in-depth casework relating to the effectiveness of services in supporting their working aspirations. Work is already in hand to produce toolkits and other resources based on the learning from this project as part of the Exit Strategy (project ends May 2007)
- New Guidance on the Act will incorporate learning from this project and 4 new Continuous Professional Development tools are being designed to help practitioners and their managers demonstrate changes and improvements to practice through working with the project
- Latest (verified) figure for the Carers Grant funded Money Advice Unit Carers Project for 04-05 is £417,641 money raised for carers and users. The project has now made more than a million for carers since it started in 2002-03
- The Money Advice worker for the Carers and Employment project provides different benefit options to people who are considering what to do in relation to working. So far advice has been provided to 100 people since the project started. In addition project has raised at least £13,645 in extra benefits verified so far.

5.7 A voice

- In partnership with HPT and *Carers in Hertfordshire* a face-to-face survey of 24 mental health carers is being carried out during March by Quality Monitoring Officers (QMOs) to learn from their experiences of Carers' Assessments, and ensuring those assessments comply with s2 of the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act

- As part of the review of arrangements around the new Specialist Mental Health Teams for Older People (SMHTOPs), QMOs interviewed 32 users and carers in February. Most were very happy with the service they received both through the SMHTOPs and through EPD, and carers seemed to value a greater accessibility on the part of SMHTOPs
- Homecare Enablement Pilot – QMOs surveyed 22 homecare users and their carers who had experience of this pilot in January. This revealed higher satisfaction than users and carers not on the pilot. Much of the satisfaction related to the Occupational Therapy input rather than improvements in the work of the home-carers
- *Carers in Hertfordshire* Young Carers Council have organised a range of 'speak easy' events raising awareness of professionals in Hertfordshire. Young Carers are also involved in a consultation event giving their views on a new service being developed for children and young people whose parents use drugs and alcohol.

5.8 Quality Services

- 3 workers (2 whole time equivalents) commenced work in December and January on the Older Carers Project that supports carers over the age of 75 looking after adults with learning disabilities. These are permanent posts helping to deliver on the Valuing People White Paper's aspirations about better support and planning for older carers
- Carers in Hertfordshire are working with Mencap to explore a partnership approach to supporting Learning Disability Carers
- 2 full time Young Carer Professional Assistants have been piloted in the East Area of CSF to complete assessments of young carers referred to CSF and offer support, information and services. 83 assessments have been completed from April 2005 – Dec 2005. Bids have been put into the CSF Growth and Change Plan for a further 2 workers to cover the West Area
- Data from ACS Having Your Say forms, based on 191 carers clearly identifying themselves as such showed that 95% were satisfied (of whom 57% were very satisfied) that they were offered choices about the way in which we met their needs.

5.9 Equity of access and appropriate support

- The BME Involvement Worker's secondment has been extended until the end of December 2006. During this time the role will be reviewed and a permanent job advertised
- In the meantime, the focus of the post will be less on interviewing ethnic elders and carers (though this will continue) and more on ensuring that appropriate links are in place between EPD teams and CLDTs and Black and Minority Ethnic Community Groups, and that commissioning processes fully reflect the needs of these communities
- There are plans to turn the Black Carers Forum (currently county-wide) into 4 quadrant based forums. This will allow better local networking while

ensuring that the Overarching Strategy is informed by the experience of the local forums.

5.10 Quality management information about carers

- Carers Performance Indicator: Nine per cent of all adults who received one or more community services in England in 2004-05 had a carer who received a specific carers' service according to Commission for Social Care Inspection Performance Indicator (AO/C62). HCC scored 7.5% (3 'blobs' out of a possible five). However, the indicator is agreed to be flawed by ADSS and CSCI who are looking to improve it. HCC is involved through the Beacon Process in work to come up with a more effective performance measure
- We are working to persuade CSCI and DH of value of satisfaction measures of carer outcomes (like *Having Your Say* and QMO work) rather than just outputs (numbers of assessments etc).

Tim Anfilogoff, Policy Manager Users and Carers, 1 March 2006