



The Princess Royal Trust  
*for Carers*

**Mapping of services  
to young carers in Scotland**

**Summary report  
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## CONTEXT

The most recent survey of young carers' projects in Scotland (2006), carried out by The Princess Royal Trust for Carers (PRTC), showed that referrals to specialist services had increased by 400% in two years, with some young carers having to wait over a year for a service. The same study revealed an inconsistency across local authorities of investment in young carers' services, creating geographical inequalities in specialist service provision.

Where specialist services do not exist, it is important that young carers are identified and supported by mainstream children's services. Current children's policy dictates a mainstream approach to young carer support, but there is little evidence to show that this is working well for young carers.

In addition, 'The Future of Unpaid Care in Scotland' (2006) recommended that Scotland's young carers should have a national forum supported by a separate Young Carers' Strategy. Consultation on the format of a young carers' forum took place at the successful Young Carers' Festival in September 2008 during which The Minister for Public Health, Shona Robison MSP, said, "The issues identified by the young carers at the event will inform the development of the young carers section of our revised Carers' Strategy." She also acknowledged that only areas where there were specialist young carers' services had been represented at the Festival and said that there should be equity for participation for young carers across Scotland. Ms Robison said that it would be useful to carry out a thorough mapping exercise of Scotland's services to young carers.

With this in mind, The Princess Royal Trust for Carers submitted a bid to the Scottish Government for a short-term grant to carry out this piece of work. As the facilitator of the largest network in Scotland of young carers' services, The Scottish Young Carers' Services Alliance, The PRTC is well placed to access relevant information. Through a competitive process consultants were employed to work with The PRTC and the Alliance on the mapping exercise which was undertaken during January to April 2009.

This report provides a summary of the key issues raised through the mapping exercise to identify the level of services to young carers across each of the local authority areas in Scotland and will help to inform the development of the Young Carers' Strategy. It is also a tool which individual authorities and their partners can use to review their service provision and identify any gaps and opportunities to improve their services to young carers.

## METHODOLOGY

The first stage of research involved contacting dedicated services across the country to collect quantitative information (number of young carers receiving service, types of services delivered, sources of referrals), and to gather perspectives on the issues and gaps in services to young carers.

There was a high level of response from the dedicated services.

The second stage of the research involved a survey of all local authorities. The survey sought to:

- identify the strategic context for the delivery of services to young carers in each area (responsibility for planning of services and strategic priorities);
- explore the extent to which mainstream services are involved in providing services to young carers; and
- explore the issues and challenges for service planning and delivery in each area.

Due to the low level of response to the survey, we carried out extensive desk research to identify the local strategies and plans which include outcomes for young carers, and carried out telephone interviews with local authority staff to explore the role of mainstream services in delivering services to young carers.

Based on the information gathered through these sources, we have developed 'template reports' which for each of the 32 local authority areas. The templates summarise:

- the numbers of young carers receiving services from dedicated projects/services,
- the capacity of the services compared to the estimated number of young carers in each area,
- the types of services provided by the projects/services,
- the role of mainstream services in supporting young carers,
- the strategic context and priorities for the delivery of young carers services in each area, and
- examples of good practice.

The template reports are attached.

## OVERVIEW OF SERVICE PROVISION

### Key Points

The core element of service provision is delivered by dedicated young carers projects/services.

The research highlighted a ‘patchwork’ of service provision to young carers across the 32 local authority areas in Scotland and an uneven distribution of services within areas.

The majority of the dedicated services are delivered by voluntary sector organisations and many rely on short-term charitable funding sources. The sustainability of many of the services is under threat.

### Dedicated Services

Table 1 summarises the number of young carers who receive services from dedicated young carers’ services in each of the 32 local authority areas, and compares this with the estimated number of young carers in that area.

29 of the 32 local authority areas have a dedicated service for young carers.

- In 26 of the 32 local authority areas, the dedicated services are delivered by the voluntary sector.
- In Glasgow, there are a number of dedicated services across the city - the local authority delivers a number of area based services, while in other areas the services is delivered by the voluntary sector.
- In two areas – Inverclyde and South Lanarkshire - dedicated services for young carers are directly delivered by the local authority.

Three local authorities do not have a dedicated service for young carers.

- In Shetland, although there is no dedicated service, there is a young carers’ strategy. The strategy seeks to ensure that young carers needs are met through mainstream children’s services and a range of other voluntary sector provision.
- In the Western Isles, support for vulnerable young people is delivered by Action for Children under contract to the local authority. This is not a service for young carers but may be accessed by young carers if they are deemed to be vulnerable.
- West Dunbartonshire does not have a dedicated service, but we believe that work is under way to develop a strategy which aims to ensure that young carers can access support through universal youth services.

The scale and type of services available in each area differ (usually due to availability of funding).

- Most services offer a mixture of group work (providing a mixture of fun, confidence building and informal learning opportunities), and some level of individual support.
- Some projects provide advocacy and access to other services.
- Some projects also provide respite breaks.
- Schools work has been developed in some areas – services range from awareness raising with teachers and young people to the development of school based services and support groups.

### **Capacity of dedicated services**

20 of the 30 dedicated services that responded to the survey stated that demand for services outstripped their current capacity, and the projects operated a waiting list.

Other services reported that while they could meet the current demand for services, there were still gaps in the types of services they could deliver (for example: gaps in services to younger age groups, support for homework clubs, transition support for young carers over 16).

*“While service provision is good, it is stretched to meet the level of demand and cater for levels of individual and complex needs”*

### **Sustainability of dedicated services**

The audit highlights the reliance on the voluntary sector in the provision of services to young carers.

While a small number of projects have contracts or service level agreements with local authorities to deliver services, the majority of voluntary sector projects rely on fixed-term funding (or funding sources which were previously ring-fenced) and on charitable funding sources to deliver elements of their provision to young carers.

These funding sources are not sustainable and service provision to young carers is insecure. The mapping exercise has highlighted that a number of projects are currently at risk of ceasing to deliver services to young carers as their current funding source is about to expire.

**Table 1****Numbers of young carers receiving services through dedicated services**

The estimated number of young carers in each area is based on 10% of populations for age groups 10-15 and 15-19 in each area. These figures have been based on the mid-year estimated population for 2007, available from [www.sns.gov.uk](http://www.sns.gov.uk).

	Total population	Total 10-19 population	Estimated Young Carers (10% of 10-19 population)	Number of Young Carers supported by dedicated services
Aberdeen City	209,260	23,401	<b>2,340</b>	<b>80 (3%)</b>
Aberdeenshire	239,160	30,752	<b>3,075</b>	<b>61 (2%)</b>
Angus	109,870	13,269	<b>1,327</b>	<b>75 (6%)</b>
Argyll & Bute	91,350	11,172	<b>1,117</b>	<b>58 (5%)</b>
Clackmannanshire	49,900	6,502	<b>650</b>	<b>24 (4%)*</b>
Dumfries & Galloway	148,300	17,684	<b>1,768</b>	<b>149 (8%)</b>
Dundee City	142,150	17,428	<b>1,743</b>	<b>77 (4%)</b>
East Ayrshire	119,570	15,380	<b>1,538</b>	<b>150 (10%)</b>
East Dunbartonshire	104,850	14,061	<b>1,406</b>	<b>43 (3%)</b>
East Lothian	94,440	12,236	<b>1,224</b>	<b>66 (5%)</b>
East Renfrewshire	89,260	12,452	<b>1,245</b>	<b>50 (4%)</b>
Edinburgh, City of	468,070	49,993	<b>4,999</b>	<b>145 (3%)</b>
Eilean Siar	26,300	3,198	<b>320</b>	<b>10 (3%)</b>
Falkirk	150,720	18,715	<b>1,872</b>	<b>154 (8%)*</b>
Fife	360,500	45,303	<b>4,530</b>	<b>107 (2%)</b>
Glasgow City	581,940	68,060	<b>6,806</b>	<b>657 (10%)</b>
Highland	217,440	26,204	<b>2,620</b>	<b>300 (11%)</b>
Inverclyde	81,080	10,233	<b>1,023</b>	<b>57 (6%)</b>
Midlothian	79,510	10,424	<b>1,042</b>	<b>88 (8%)</b>
Moray	86,870	11,206	<b>1,121</b>	<b>143 (13%)</b>
North Ayrshire	135,760	17,602	<b>1,760</b>	<b>45 (2%)</b>
North Lanarkshire	324,680	41,667	<b>4,167</b>	<b>224 (5%)</b>
Orkney Islands	19,860	2,588	<b>259</b>	<b>25 (10%)</b>
Perth & Kinross	142,140	17,120	<b>1,712</b>	<b>68 (4%)</b>
Renfrewshire	169,600	20,956	<b>2,096</b>	<b>90 (4%)</b>
Scottish Borders	111,430	13,439	<b>1,344</b>	<b>128 (10%)</b>
Shetland Islands	21,950	2,901	<b>290</b>	<b>No dedicated service</b>
South Ayrshire	111,690	13,236	<b>1,324</b>	<b>75 (6%)</b>
South Lanarkshire	309,500	38,852	<b>3,885</b>	<b>65 (2%)</b>
Stirling	88,190	12,622	<b>1,262</b>	<b>163 (13%)</b>

West Dunbartonshire	91,090	11,618	<b>1,162</b>	<b>No dedicated service</b>
West Lothian	167,770	21,993	<b>2,199</b>	<b>65 (3%)</b>

\* The Falkirk number includes some young carers resident in Clackmannanshire who are supported by the PRCT Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Young Carers Project.

## Mainstream services

### Key Points

There are examples of good partnerships between dedicated projects and mainstream services, especially schools – but the involvement of mainstream services in the delivery of services to young carers is patchy and often dependant on individual officers.

Many local authorities reported that young carers would be receiving services from the range of mainstream provision aimed at supporting vulnerable children.

However, these young people would not be identified primarily as a young carer and are not recorded as such.

None of the local authorities could provide estimates of the numbers of young carers who received support from mainstream services.

In most areas, the dedicated project provides the core element of service provision for young carers.

There is evidence at the local level of the development of partnerships between dedicated services and mainstream services:

- In Highland, every secondary school has a named young carers contact.
- In Stirling, each of the secondary schools has signed a charter for young carers, has a young carers champion, and a number of the schools are taking responsibility for running young carers support groups.
- In Dundee, an Education Resource Pack on supporting young carers was developed in partnership between Dundee Young Carers Project (DYCP) and Dundee City Council Education Department. This has been distributed to all primary and secondary schools within Dundee.
- A PSE programme developed by Carers of West Lothian is being delivered across all eleven secondary schools in West Lothian.

- In Glasgow, Culture and Leisure Services provide group work activities for the young carers groups run by the Glasgow West Carers Centre.
- In South Lanarkshire, the majority of group work support is delivered by mainstream youth services, which means that young carers are linked into mainstream services and have access to other youth learning activities.
- In South Lanarkshire a pilot health project has been developed to address the health needs of young carers – this has led to leveraging funding for a health practitioner from NHS.
- In Inverclyde there has been joint work with the Careers Scotland to address transitions for young carers.
- In North Lanarkshire, Education link workers have good links with social workers in schools and can refer young carers on for additional services.
- North Lanarkshire is attempting to develop more integrated approach to services to young carers – the plan involves training youth workers to co-facilitate in young carers groups until they can deliver the group work element themselves, leaving the specialist young carers workers to focus on awareness training, assessment etc.

However, the picture shows a patchwork of mainstream service involvement with dedicated services. While there are examples of good joint working, these tend to be localised. Even in areas where there is a strategic commitment to joint working, the involvement of mainstream services on the ground was often patchy and dependant on individual officers.

Mainstream services are involved in supporting young carers in other ways. Many ‘hidden’ young carers are being picked-up by other services which provide support to vulnerable young people. For example, some young carers will be receiving additional support from schools, possibly to address attendance or achievement issues, or will be involved in youth justice services. However, in most cases, these services are not identifying the young person as a young carer.

*“Individuals will be receiving support from mainstream services on a case-by-case basis, but it’s unlikely that they will be identified as young carers”*

*“They’re all working with young carers, they’re just not identifying them”*

As a result, local partnerships cannot identify the extent to which mainstream services are involved in meeting the needs of young carers.

*“We don’t know if we are meeting the needs of young carers in this area or not”*

## **PLANNING FOR YOUNG CARERS SERVICES**

Some of the problems in gathering information for the mapping exercise stemmed from the fact that in many local authorities, there is no clearly identified 'lead' for the planning and development of young carers' services.

### **Responsibility for planning**

A number of local authorities reported that responsibility for young carers services straddled adult (carers) and children's services.

*“Young carers don't fit neatly – we have a carers strategy which mentions young carers, but responsibility for delivery of services to young carers really sits within Children's services.”*

However, responsibility for planning young carers services is increasingly transferring to Children's Services. A number of local authorities reported that they are in the process of transferring responsibility from adult to children's services.

### **Are strategies in place to address the needs of young carers?**

Only four areas currently have a dedicated young carers strategy.

- In 12 areas, priorities for young carers are contained in the Carers strategies.
- In four areas, interviewees reported that priorities for young carers are contained in the Integrated Children's Services Plan.
- A further four reported that priorities for young carers were contained in both the Carers strategy and Integrated Children's Service Plans.

While the number of young carers' strategies is currently low, the audit shows that nine local authorities are currently in the process of developing dedicated young carers strategies.

### **Issues and challenges in planning of services**

#### **Identification**

While services reported that there was an increase in awareness of young carers and an increase in the numbers of young carers being identified and referred, there were still gaps and challenges to improve identification.

*“There is still a need to raise awareness of issues and impact of caring within mainstream services and raise confidence of mainstream services to address needs.”*

A number of local authorities recognised that identification was a priority – and recognised that they needed to know more about the profile and needs of young carers in their areas to plan and develop appropriate services.

Some examples of good practice which promote identification include:

- There are a number of examples of good practice in raising awareness in schools which have increased identification and referral (e.g North Lanarkshire, Stirling, Dundee, Midlothian, Fife).
- The Stirling School project designed a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) package for school co-ordinators, which was also used in training for probationer teachers.
- Edinburgh City Council is in the process of finalising a protocol between Health & Social Work and Children & Families regarding young carers. The protocol includes steps to identify young carers and refer them onwards.
- Angus Council has done training with frontline Social Work staff to raise awareness of young carers.
- In North Lanarkshire, the adult assessment form used by Social Work has a section which prompts a check on young people in the household and possible needs, including young carer identification.
- In a pilot project in Dumfries and Galloway, a young carers worker was involved in delivering personal and social education classes, resulting in a dramatic increase in the number of referrals from that school.

A challenge for many of the areas was the tension between the recognised need to improve awareness and identification of young carers, and their lack of capacity to meet the increase in demand for services.

*“The issue is that once you identify young carers you then need to identify resources to support them.”*

The other issue was the level of self-identification by young carers – respondents confirmed the fact that there are many young carers who do not wish to be identified - sometimes because they did not wish to be brought to the attention of statutory services.

### **Assessment**

Although all carers have a statutory right to an assessment as a carer, the experience across the country is that young carers are not being assessed.

*“In 6 years I have not had a single young carer referred to me from social work already with a carers’ assessment”*

*“Young carers’ assessments are unheard of here”*

A number of dedicated services reported using the ‘See if I care’ assessment tool. Other developments in the field of assessment are:

- The Young Carers’ Project in Dundee actively promotes assessment and has developed a young carers’ assessment tool which is used by social work.
- The South Lanarkshire service reported that a GIRFEC based assessment framework is used.
- The West Lothian Children’s Services Management Group has developed a model for integrated assessments in line with the recommendations of GIRFEC.

Assessment is critical to be able to evidence the level of need among young carers and to advocate for mainstream service inputs. However, there are a number of challenges associated with rolling out assessment:

- The availability of resources to carry out assessments.
- Many young carers are unwilling to be assessed – and fear the consequences of revealing their caring commitments.
- Some interviewees highlighted an ethical dilemma associated with assessment – in circumstances where resources are limited, the assessment process identifies needs and raises expectations of services which cannot be met.

### **Involving mainstream services**

Many local authorities recognised the need to take a more holistic view of services to young carers. While dedicated projects provide the core of their provision, many local authorities recognised that the dedicated service was ‘just one piece of the jigsaw’. The challenge is to increase access to universal services to better meet the needs of young carers, thereby freeing up dedicated services to focus resources on young carers with more complex needs.

However, critical to the challenge of involving mainstream services is the need to raise awareness of young carers and improve understanding of the impact of caring on young people’s lives. Until there is universal recognition of the impact of caring on young people’s lives, young carers will continue to be ‘hidden’ and the needs of the majority of young carers will continue to go unmet.