

Solihull Adult Social Care

Making a difference in the right way, every day

Get Involved: a shared approach to adult social care in Solihull 2025-2028



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Get Involved – our story so far

In July 2022 we launched our Get Involved Approach, which set out how we would involve people and communities in designing and improving services.

People have participated in our service development work through Partnership Boards, Carers Forum, focus groups, workshops, surveys and interviews.

The Solihull Carers Partnership Board brings together carers, people who work in health and social care and various partner organisations to promote awareness and influence support for carers. Members of the Board are also involved in working groups to support specific pieces of work for example cost of living. The board meets six times a year and membership is reviewed every 12 months.

In 2024 we also launched our Carers Forum. The forum is an opportunity for a larger group of carers to come together with council officers to influence and design initiatives within adult social care. Each meeting has a specific focus for example a recent meeting was dedicated to support for sandwich carers.

Alongside this, we have two other Partnership Boards:

- Autism Partnership Board
- Learning Disability Partnership Board

We worked with people who draw on care and support, carers, and local communities to co-design the Get Involved Approach.



Giving people who use services an equal opportunity to sit at the table to make decisions about their own lives is just fundamental. It means building up people's confidence and developing people's skills."

Sally Percival, Chair of TLAP

What is co-production?

Co-production is when people come together as equals to make decisions or create services that work for them all.

It is about creating an equal partnership between people with care and support needs, carers and people who work in care and support. Working together requires people to actively listen, share ideas and collaborate.

Co-production involves sharing power and taking risks, confronting issues together and working as a group to find solutions that work for all. Recognising that everyone has different skills and expertise, but decisions should be made together, so everyone has a say on what happens.

It can happen at an individual, service and strategic level. For example, people may work together to co-produce a person's care and support plan or a group of people could work together on a strategy. At all levels people should be involved from start to finish and have influence over decisions made.

Co-production is a movement towards 'We said, we did' rather than 'You said, we did'. At Solihull, we are committed to creating more opportunities to co-produce support and services.

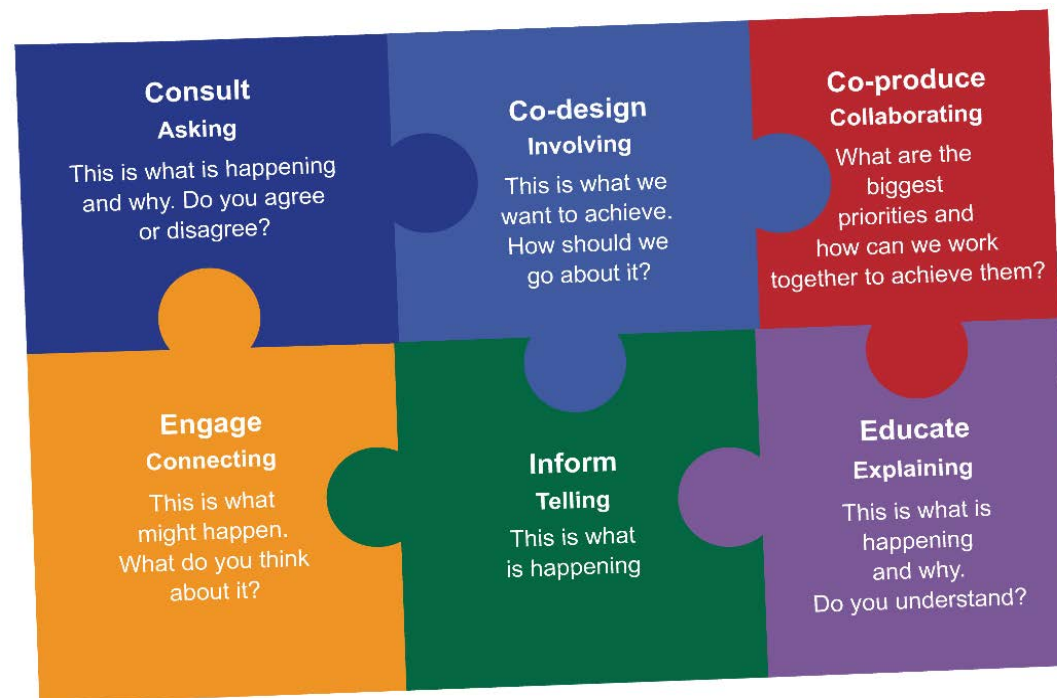


When should we co-produce

Co-production is the gold standard, but it is not always possible to co-produce everything. There are other valuable ways that we can involve people, as each element has different functions and is useful in different circumstances.

The next section of this document will explain what each element looks like in Solihull. We will start with co-production and then move through the other participatory approaches. As mentioned above sometimes co-production is not possible, for example we may ask for feedback using a survey. If we do, we will call it what it is – consultation. We are committed to being open, transparent and honest about when we can use full co-production and when we use other approaches.

The image below shows the different ways people can get involved.



Co-production principles

The principles that underpin co-production are Equality, Diversity, Accessibility and Reciprocity. These four principles ensure that co-production is inclusive for all individuals and communities in Solihull.

Equality

In co-production everyone is equal and has something to bring to the process. Some people may enjoy sharing their ideas in large groups and get involved in Partnership Boards. Others may prefer to fill in a survey or share their ideas via email.

We recognise that people should be able to get involved in ways that suit them rather than limiting them to a specific activity to suit a co-production agenda.

Diversity

It is important that co-production should be as inclusive as possible. We know that some groups are under-represented or excluded from participating in work with local authorities, and this is likely to apply to co-production.

The main groups likely to experience exclusion are:

- people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities
- people from LGBT+ communities
- people who communicate differently
- people with dementia
- older people who need a high level of support
- people who are not affiliated to any organised group or 'community'.

We must also consider where a person lives, as this can be a barrier to participation.

Reciprocity

Reciprocity means people should get something back for putting something in.

We should value people sharing their invaluable time, ideas, skills and experience with us. This could be a special recognition award, invitations to events, training, travel expenses, certificates and time credits.

Accessibility

The co-production process should be accessible so that everyone can take part on an equal basis. People should be able to access information in a way that suits them.

It is important to look at how information is presented and ensure that alternative formats are available. Jargon and hard words should be avoided where possible. If they can't be avoided, then they should be highlighted in bold and explained.

We recognise the importance of providing accessible information and we are committed to creating accessible documents. At our Learning Disability Partnership Board, we have an Easy Read version of the agenda, minutes and key papers.

Lots of co-production words, including co-production, are hard to understand. To overcome this, we will clearly define words and ensure that all people who work with us understand the words which we use.

Language is important, we are committed to using words which reflect and reinforce our values. We will take responsibility for how we say things to ensure that our language respects and values people. This includes the language we use on our computer systems, forms and documents.



Get Involved Plan



A shared approach to adult social care in Solihull 2025 -2028

Difficult words are written in **bold**. There is a list of what the words mean at the end.

Co-production values

The four principles have helped to shape our co-production values which run through everything we do in adult social care.

We ensure that the voice of the person and carer is embedded in our policies and strategies, what services we commission and how we support individuals, families and carers.

Our values centre around building long-term relationships with people who draw on services, their carers and the voluntary sector. This will help to create mutual relationships with people and ensure that they want to continue working with us.



Co-production and strengths-based practice

Co-production is often seen as a strategic concept that sits within commissioned services, but it also underpins strengths-based practice. Strengths-based practice is where practitioners work towards the individuals' own outcomes and focuses on what people can do, their strengths and abilities, rather than what they find difficult.

We will work with practitioners to create opportunities for people with care and support needs to get involved in co-production. This could range from working with a practitioner on their care and support plan or getting involved with one of our Partnership Boards, or a combination of the two!

This section sets out examples of how we have used different engagement and involvement types in practice.

Examples of strengths-based practice

Example 1 - A man with learning disabilities supported to develop his own YouTube channel finding a way to safely channel his skills and interests in using social media.

Example 2 - A newly qualified social worker helped a person who had recently come out of hospital reconnect with her wide social network which was part of her journey to regaining full independence without support.

Example 3 – A woman in a residential care placement was being encouraged by her family to visit a day centre for social interaction but the staff at the home felt that with her ability to cook, she could build on her strengths to go to college to attend a related course. All the staff at the home have been working with her to build on her cooking skills and she has now enrolled at a local college to do a cookery course. She is also making cakes for the other residents in the home.

Example 4 – The Occupational Therapy (OT) team worked with a lady who was isolated in an upstairs property. The team worked with the lady and Technology Enabled Care team (TEC) to identify the best option for maintaining her independence at home.

They looked at different options but agreed to try a smart TV. The familiarity and comfort of her own space were essential for her well-being and sense of control over her life. She can now watch films that bring her joy and engage in joint activities with her friends and family, helping to reduce feelings of isolation.

Overall, the smart TV installation has had a profound impact on her quality of life, enhancing her independence, social connections, and overall well-being.

Co-production

Co-produce Collaborating

What are the
biggest
priorities and
how can we work
together to achieve them?

Co-production happens when people with care and support needs, carers and people who work in care and support come together as equal partners to design services and make decisions.

A recent example of co-production in Solihull is a project involving changes to our **'Living well with dementia' webpage**.

We worked with the Dementia Voice Solihull Group to develop our 'Living well with dementia' webpage. The group identified key priorities such as information on driving and how to apply for a blue badge. We explored potential barriers to accessing online information. Together we designed a webpage, information sheet and looked at how the information could be shared with people.



The paper information will help the council to hear voices of people who are unable to get online.”

Member of Dementia Voice Solihull
Group

Co-design



We use co-design to agree shared priorities for improving care and support services in Solihull.

It is an opportunity for people who draw on care and support, their carers and people who work in care and support to co-design priority improvements.

A recent example of co-design is our Carers Forum.

Solihull Council launched the Carers Forum in September 2024. The forum provides unpaid carers a space to work together with people who work in care and support to discuss matters and share feedback about the care and support available for carers in Solihull. The forum will help to influence and design initiatives for unpaid carers in the borough.



Consultation and Engagement



We use consultation and engagement where we are planning to make changes and want to understand views on and the impact of those proposals.

These may have resulted from co-production or co-design, seeking to then test those with a wider audience.

For some changes we have a statutory duty to consult, for example how we plan to assess eligibility for care or support because of changes in policy or legislation.

We regularly engage with residents in Solihull. Engagement is an opportunity for people to express their views and sometimes influence decisions.

We understand that people want to engage different ways, so we have lots of opportunities for people to share their experience with us.

We regularly visit community groups and attend events so that people can ask us questions about adult social care.

We run focus groups and have one-to-one conversations about what is working well and what could be improved. We also get feedback via surveys with people.

Recent pieces of work include:

- Review of Direct Payment Service
- Review of Specialist Employment Support Service

Events

We regularly attend events ran by our partners; events are an opportunity to talk to people in the community.

We ran two free marketplace events in September 2023 to help people plan and prepare for later life. The drop in events had around 20 information stalls where people could talk to local experts.

We are now planning a further two events for June 2025.

Educating and Informing



We use education where we want to make sure people are aware of what is available and have identified areas where there is a lack of clarity about how to access support or what is available.

We inform people about their statutory rights and Council policies once set. The things we are informing and educating people on may have been determined through other engagement methods.

The [Adult Social Care](#) webpage has lots of information from support for carers to supported employment. The website is a tool to help people find out about services and the support available. However, people in the community have told us that digital resources should not replace printed information. We have worked closely with some of our communities to develop

information sheets and leaflets on a wide range of topics from Dementia to Occupational Therapy.

Partnership Boards

Partnership Boards bring together residents with experience and knowledge about the needs and aspirations of people who draw on care and support, to promote awareness and respect and to discover new ways to influence support. We welcome people with lived experience as active and equal partners on our Partnership Boards.

- **Carers Partnership Board:** meets every two months.
- **Learning Disability Partnership Board:** meets every three months.
- **Autism Partnership Board:** meets every three months.

How you get involved

Would you like to play an active role in shaping the future of adult social care in Solihull? Your everyday lived experiences of adult social care services can be used to make them better.

There are a number of projects you can get involved in. You can also register your interest in other topics which will come up in the future.

You can tell us which topics you are interested in and the level of involvement you want to have. We will invite you to join us as relevant projects come up.

This link will take you to the Get Involved project on the Council's engagement platform, [Your Voice Solihull](#).

There you'll find more information including frequently asked questions.

If you prefer to register your interest in person, please ask for a Get Involved registration form at our libraries or community advice hubs. Alternatively, you can email getinvolved@solihull.gov.uk



By bringing together people with lived experience of disabilities, Council officers and partners we're strengthening the local network. It's all about getting voices together to be as one."

Chair of the Learning Disability Partnership Board

Glossary

Accessibility

Accessibility means that people can access information in a way that suits them.

Co-production

Co-production is involving people from the start to the end. People who have care and support needs, their carers and people who work in care and support working together to design, deliver and evaluate the support and services.

Co-design

Co-design is about working with people to think about what we want to achieve and how we will achieve it.

Consultation

Consultation is explaining to people what is happening and asking what they think about it.

Diversity

Diversity means including lots of different people.

Engagement

Engagement is talking to people about what might happen and asking what they think about it.

Educating

Educating is explaining what is happening and checking that people understand.

Equality

Everyone has the same opportunities. And we value all ideas and thoughts.

Informing

Informing means telling people what is happening. For example, telling people about their legal rights.

Reciprocity

Reciprocity means people should get something back for what they put in.

Strengths-based practice

Practitioners use strengths-based practice to look at what people can do rather than what they find difficult.

