



Cumberland Adult Social Care & Housing Commissioning Strategy 2025 - 2029

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Introduction

This is the first Commissioning Strategy for **Adult Social Care & Housing** by Cumberland Council. Our aim is to clearly communicate our vision and expectations to our stakeholders and the care market. We regard all providers as essential strategic partners and deeply value our relationships. Achieving our goals is only possible with a robust, engaged, and dynamic market. Our aspiration is that everything we do, both collectively and as individuals will demonstrate the Council's values:

Our Values



Ambitious



Collaborative



Compassionate



Empowering



Innovative



Background

An **Adult Social Care & Housing Commissioning strategy ("ASCHCS")** is a plan developed by local authorities to outline how they will meet the care and support needs of adults in their community. The ASCHCS cuts across and aligns with a number of other offers and strategies. There is a need to 'read across' with other council strategies and stakeholder mapping activities and this document should also be read in conjunction with:

The **Market Position Statement** gives an overview of:

- Our place, people and adult social care workforce
- A breakdown of our market strengths and market challenges, both across Cumberland as a whole and by key service centre area.
- Clarity around what our care market looks like, including what services are currently delivered and whether there are any gaps or opportunities.

The ASCHCS is one of the ways in which we will deliver our vision for Adult Social Care and Housing:

"People live fulfilled, healthy, independent lives in the place that they call home"

Our vision for Adult Social Care and Housing is that we provide excellent care and create homes where people feel they truly belong. We support people to live fulfilled, healthy, and independent lives by focusing on what matters most to them and their wellbeing. By listening to people, offering real choice, and embracing new ideas, we will create housing and support that meets people's needs and ensures everyone has a place they are happy to call home.

Alongside the ASCHCS, is our **Vision for our in-house provision, Cumberland Care** which sets out how we propose to deliver services through Cumberland Care in the future. Our aim is to focus on delivering services which maximise independence and provide more specialist and complex care.

As a recently established Council, we are in the process of developing and finalising a number of key strategies. This period of transition and growth is essential to ensure that our plans are comprehensive, well-informed, and tailored to the unique needs of our communities.

We are committed to engaging with stakeholders, gathering insights, and refining our approaches to deliver effective and sustainable services. While some strategies are still in draft form, this iterative process allows us to incorporate feedback and make necessary adjustments to better serve the people of Cumberland.

Our key Corporate Strategies and Plans, include:

- The Cumberland Council Plan.
- The Joint Strategic Needs Analysis.
- The Extra Care Housing Strategy (in draft).
- The Unpaid Carers Strategy/Offer (in draft).
- Cumberland Council Commissioning & Procurement Strategy (in draft).

- Supported Housing Study (in draft).
- Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030.
- Social Value.
- Cumberland Council Equality Objectives.

National Legislation and Policy

Local Authorities must comply and follow the guidance of **The Care Act 2014**, and statutory housing legislation, such as the **Housing Act 2004**. **The Care Act** is a law that sets out the rights and responsibilities of local authorities, care providers and people who use services in England. **The Care Act** says Local authorities must facilitate a diverse, vibrant and sustainable market for care and support services that benefit the whole population, it outlines good commissioning which should;

- Focus on individual wellbeing.
- Support workforce development.
- Pay an appropriate pricing of services.
- Support sustainability and ensure choice.

The above should be done through strategic planning, supporting providers and good contracting mechanisms co-produced with local people who have experience of social care, while understanding and addressing disparities for those who share a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

About Cumberland Council

Cumberland Council is a newly formed unitary authority that came into being in 2023. The Council serves a population of over 300,000 people, with around 6,800 adults in receipt of some form of support from Adult Social Care and 24,000 unpaid carers (2021 Census).

Cumberland's rural geography and coastal economy offers a mix of opportunities and challenges for public service delivery. Our services operate across the following 14 Key Service Centres. These are towns and larger villages which provide a range of essential services and facilities to the surrounding rural areas.

The 14 KSCs in Cumberland are:

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| • Aspatria. | • Longtown. |
| • Brampton. | • Maryport. |
| • Carlisle. | • Millom. |
| • Cockermouth. | • Silloth. |
| • Cleator Moor. | • Whitehaven. |
| • Egremont. | • Wigton. |
| • Keswick. | • Workington. |

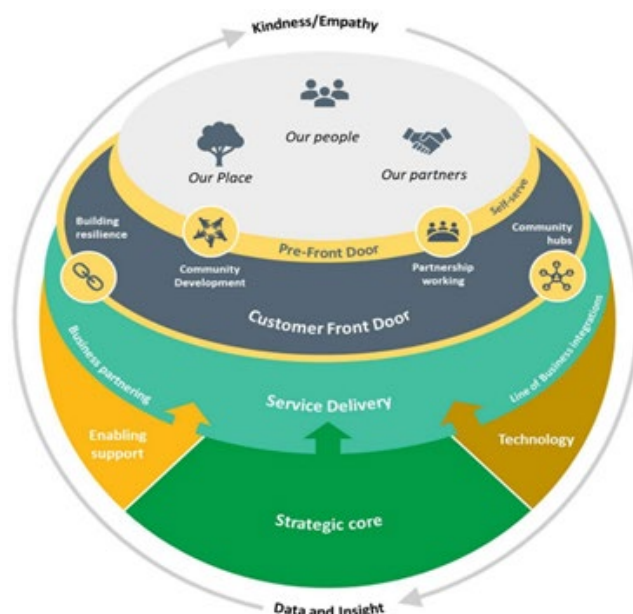
Key service centre areas that are more densely populated are smaller, whilst larger KSCs tend to be less densely populated. The rest of Cumberland is referred to as 'not in KSC' and most of these places are quite rural. Key Service Centres act as local hubs for services such as health-care, education, retail, and transport, supporting both their own populations and those of nearby smaller settlements. The KSCs vary in physical size and population density, with more densely populated KSCs tending to be in smaller areas, such as urban centres like Carlisle or Whitehaven, and larger KSCs reflecting their more rural or dispersed nature.

Our aim as a Council is to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents. It is at the heart of everything that we do. We want them to be happy, healthy and safe throughout their lives. We will promote opportunities for people to increase or maintain their independence, while making sure we provide help early when needed. When people are vulnerable, our services will support them to live well and to be treated with a kindness that respects their dignity.

In Cumberland, commissioning for Adult Social Care & Housing is delivered through the Council's Target Operating Model, more can be found about this at **Our target operating model | Cumberland Council**

As a new local authority, Cumberland is in a unique position to develop a set of new strategies and plans that are comprehensive, well-informed, and tailored to the unique needs of our communities. We will keep this Commissioning Strategy under review and will amend if there is a need to do so.

Our Commissioning Strategy has been designed to be a dynamic, organic document that is very much a part of the wider conversation around the development of a market shaping and sustainability plan. We will work iteratively in developing and reviewing the strategy based on evidence, understanding of collective impacts across contracts and outcomes for service users.



This Commissioning Strategy outlines how commissioning plays a central role within Adult Social Care & Housing services in Cumberland Council. Alongside the Council's Target Operating Model (TOM) and the [Adult Social Care & Housing Vision](#), this strategy outlines how commissioning, alongside key stakeholders and business partners:

- ✦ Shape the market to help develop a sustainable care market, especially for complex care, domiciliary care and extra care & supported housing.
- ✦ Commission services to reduce pressure on the health and care system by investing in universal and targeted prevention services, assistive technology and equipment services.
- ✦ Move towards outcome based commissioning, where providers and stakeholders are incentivised to deliver measurable improvements in residents' lives.

Our Strategic Approach and Priorities for Delivery

The Commissioning Strategy sets out the Council's approach to strategic commissioning for Adult Social Care & Housing by ensuring that we work towards:

- A stable and innovative market that delivers services that meets the needs and demands of service users.
- Provision that is equal to the challenges of an aging population and health inequalities in Cumberland.
- Addressing housing and homelessness by providing accessible and sustainable housing solutions, and support services to prevent and reduce homelessness in Cumberland.

We will achieve these outcomes through

- Services commissioned based on evidence of need and understanding of the market.
- Effective systems in place to monitor contracts and work with providers to improve outcomes, quality and efficiency.
- A strong approach to user engagement, co-production, social value, equality, diversity and inclusion.



The Strategy has been informed by the Market Position Statement which sets out the needs of Cumberland's population, demand for services and an outline of the delivery market. Based on this assessment we have further developed the following strategic priorities for delivery:

1. Supporting the health and care system through the proactive commissioning and delivery of both universal and targeted prevention services
2. Reducing the rate of older people moving into long term residential and nursing care
3. Expanding access and choice for individuals by enhancing the supply of extra care and other forms of supported accommodation
4. Expanding access and choice for individuals by enhancing the market for complex care including dementia care
5. Ensuring a sustainable market, particularly for domiciliary services
6. Transforming and streamlining our equipment services and support the development of the Cumberland Home Improvement Agency
7. Transformation of Day Opportunities through a 24/7 offer that increases skills, independence and choices
8. Working with the market to further promote and deliver outcomes-based services
9. Working collaboratively with the Integrated Care Board around joint commissioning and reducing duplication.
10. Addressing housing and homelessness by providing accessible and sustainable housing solutions, and support services to prevent and reduce homelessness in Cumberland.

During the first six months of the Strategy a delivery plan will be developed that sets out the steps that we will take in meeting these strategy priorities.

The delivery plan will be reviewed annually over the lifecycle of the strategy.



What is commissioning?

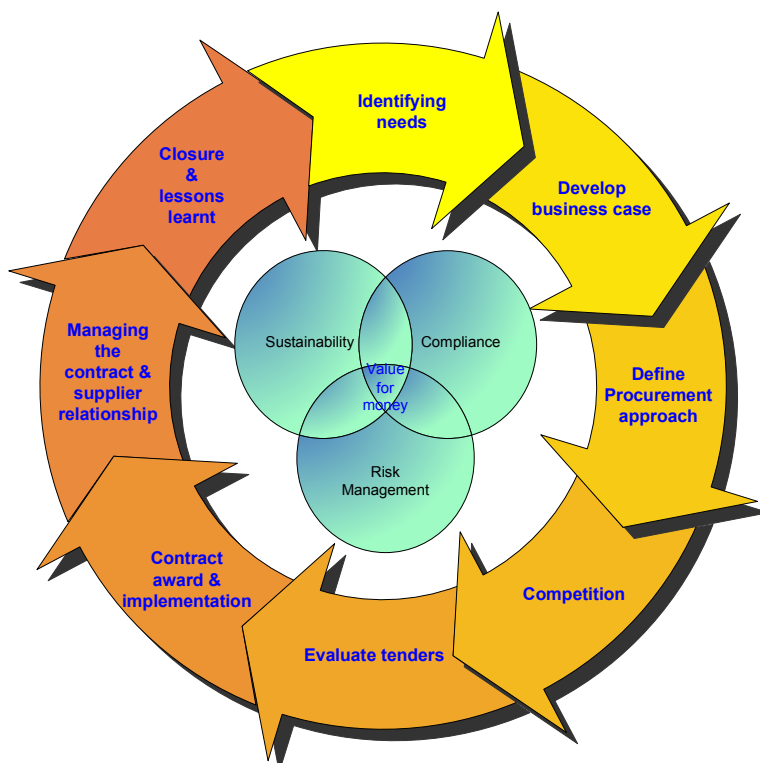
Commissioning is a continuous cycle that involves reviewing existing services, assessing current and future needs, developing strategy, engaging with the market, designing services and contracts, and managing performance and quality assurance. Each stage informing and shaping the next.

Commissioning is the cycle of activity by which the Council develops, purchases and reviews services to meet the care, support and housing needs of adults within communities across Cumberland. This process makes sure that services are tailored to the specific requirements of the population, that they are delivered efficiently and effectively, and that there is a local sustainable market for the provision of the full range of services. This process includes:

- **Needs Assessment:** Analysing the health, social care and housing needs of the local population to identify gaps in current service provision.
- **Service Planning:** Developing strategies and plans to address identified needs, setting priorities, and defining desired outcomes.
- **Procurement:** Purchasing the required services through tendering and contracting processes to ensure value for money and high-quality service delivery.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Regularly assessing the performance of service providers against agreed standards and outcomes, and making necessary adjustments to improve service quality.

This comprehensive approach helps ensure that adult social care & housing services are responsive to the needs of the community and contribute to the overall well-being of individuals.

The commissioning cycle is detailed in the diagram below:



Strategic Commissioning Priorities

To meet the needs of our Customers the Council's commissioning intentions are set out below, applying the principle that people want to remain at home for as long as possible:

Supporting People to live independent lives in their communities and in a place they call home:

1. Supporting the health and care system through the proactive commissioning and delivery of both universal and targeted prevention services.

Collaborating within the broader health and care system, we will enhance the effectiveness of prevention services to eliminate, reduce, or delay care needs. By developing a coordinated offer across all council-wide commissioned services, we aim to empower individuals to gain and maintain independence without relying on formal care services. We will maximise independence through strength-based approaches and the utilisation of community assets.

Our Carers contract includes a digital component designed to reach unpaid carers who are not yet connected to services, offering them the opportunity to complete an online self-assessment without needing to contact the Council or a Carers organisation. Additionally, we will focus on building community networks of peer carer support in our Key Service Centres, with a pilot program underway in one of Cumberland's most rural areas.

Our aim is to prevent all forms of homelessness by providing clear and accessible information and advice, working closely with partners, and supporting existing accommodation arrangements where safe and suitable. This includes following national recommendations to protect homeless individuals, increasing targeted rehousing pathways, and adopting a 'housing first' multi-agency approach to address repeat homelessness and rough sleeping.

2. Reducing the rate of older people moving into long term residential and nursing care.

Whilst recognising that the majority of people wish to remain in their own home for as long as possible, there are some occasions where residential and nursing care is the best option. We are clear that there is a need for good quality residential and nursing care and expect that the reduction of placements will be gradual as alternative services become available.

We will explore options around additional services needed for keeping people at home including improving and expanding the assistive technology offer (see below) and the provision of Night homecare services.

For working age adult residential and nursing provision we will work with existing customers and providers to explore options around decommissioning residential care services replacing with alternatives such as Supported Living.

We will work with providers and health colleagues to ensure the new generation of supported living services are suitably designed to work with complexity, behaviours that challenge and dual diagnosis. We will have agreed processes which enable additional support where required.

We will review our approach to respite care and short breaks so that people are better supported at home.

Right Care, Right Place, Right Person

3. Expanding access and choice for individuals by enhancing the supply of extra care and other forms of supported accommodation.

We will increase options for working age adults who are eligible for long term care and support. This includes developing a new strategic approach to extra care housing with the aim to facilitate more new schemes over the next 4 years combining services for older people and those aged 18+. This will be set out in our Extra Care Housing Strategy (in draft). This will include exploration of core and cluster models for working age adults.

Following the publication of the Cumberland Supported Housing Needs Study (2024 – 2039), the Council will develop a delivery plan to increase supply in identified areas and establish pathways and protocols for working with the market. The Cumberland Supported Living Framework will also be reviewed and subsequently recommissioned to meet this need.

We will collaborate with providers across the Cumberland footprint to develop comprehensive solutions for supported accommodation needs, aiming to prevent homelessness and ensure stable housing options for residents across Cumberland.

4. Expanding access and choice for individuals by enhancing the market for complex care including dementia care.

We will continue with our price banding structures, incentivising more complex care and looking for opportunities to support the market to deliver in this area.

We will work with the market and Cumberland Care, to move Customers with complex care needs back to Cumberland to be closer to their families.

5. Ensuring a sustainable market, particularly for domiciliary services.

The newly commissioned Homecare Framework is working well and has supported the Council to increase the quality assurance and diligence around Providers. Rates paid support the payment of Real Living Wage. The Council has the option to close the Framework to new suppliers should there be sufficient supply to ensure provider / market sustainability. This is subject to regular review.

Excellence in Practice and Innovation

6. Transforming and streamlining our equipment services and supporting the development of the Cumberland Home Improvement Agency.

The Cumberland Home Improvement Agency is a council run service which has been designed to help residents adapt, repair, or improve their homes so they can live safely, independently, and comfortably. As part of this service, we will conduct a comprehensive review of equipment services with the aim of transforming how they are delivered. We will also examine existing contracts to ensure that pricing tariffs accurately reflect the true cost of provision.

7. Improve and expanding digital and assistive technology solutions.

Over the next 2 years we will be working with our existing assistive technology provider and developing a number of pilot schemes to better understand how technology services can best support the market alongside, transforming and recommissioning our Assistive Technology contract. In addition to this, the Council will explore ways in which we can integrate Assistive Technology better into existing contracts e.g. Supported Living, Day Opportunities, Homecare and emergency accommodation for homelessness services.

8. Transformation of Day Opportunities through a 24/7 offer that increases skills, independence and choice.

Our new Day Opportunities Framework introduces a range of employability and skills programmes along with community outreach activities available during evenings, weekends and holiday periods. For the first time, the Framework gives providers the option to offer their own transportation which is vital enhancement in a rural area such as Cumberland.

9. Working with the market to further promote and deliver outcomes-based services.

The Council will commission outcome-focused services driven by choice by ensuring that service specifications and tender submissions clearly detail strength-based approaches. Commissioned services will be flexible where possible, and work when and where people need and want them. Social workers and operational staff will understand the range of services on offer and will respond to needs and outcomes identified in assessments and reviews.

The Council will use its Frameworks to run mini competitions where we can pilot the delivery of outcome-based commissioning. Our aim is to evidence local best practices and integrate national best practice models to achieve excellence and foster innovation in our services.

10. Working icollaboratively with the Integrated Care Board around joint commissioning and reducing duplication.

Over the next two years partners will look to collaborate at all stages of the joint commissioning process, from the assessment of needs to the planning and procurement of services and monitoring of service delivery in Cumberland.

In practice, this means that the Council and the NENC/LSC ICB will:

- Share our market intelligence and service user feedback.
- Take strategic decisions relating to joint commissioning arrangements via our Joint Commissioning Board (JCB)
- Consider how market engagement and consultation is conducted.
- Review the services that are commissioned separately and consider whether and how these could be brought together.
- Commit to considering combining resources where appropriate in order to secure the best effective services for Cumberland.
- Agree which organisation should take the lead on a particular procurement.
- Ensure evaluation panels contain representatives from both the Council and NENC/LSC ICB where appropriate.
- Share contract performance and management information.
- Take a joint role in quality monitoring of jointly commissioned arrangements.
- Share responsibility and accountability for the impact of the services put in place.
- Identify how providers can be suitably upskilled to continue to work with individuals that present with complexity.

It is recognised that the delivery of the above intentions will be impacted by increased demand the need for the Council to deliver within its budget, workforce challenges and the delay in Health and Social Care Reform (now expected in 2028). Despite this the Council is confident that by setting out the ways we will work with the market in this strategy and treating our commissioned providers and customers as partners we will deliver excellent services.



What to expect when working with the Council

The following section sets out how the Council will commission services and work in partnership with providers.

Procurement

From 24 February 2025 Local Authorities will be required to follow the new legislation for public procurement activity – The Procurement Act 2023. Cumberland Council will use this as an opportunity to improve and streamline the way procurement is done and benefit prospective suppliers of all sizes, particularly, micro/small businesses, start-ups and social enterprises. It is recognised that there will be a transition period following implementation where the Council and the market will embed the new practices together.

In terms of our strategic approach to commissioning, the Procurement Act allows us to rethink our approach to longer-term contractual arrangements where there is evidence of impact and outcomes, and work with micro-enterprises and smaller specialist providers who can demonstrate greater social value.

Support for Providers on the new guidance will be provided via

<https://www.cumberland.gov.uk/business-and-licensing/procurement-social-value-tenders-and-contracts/new-procurement-act-2023>

Further details around how Procurement Works, the Social Value Toolkit and the different types of procurement procedures can be found on the Council's webpage:

<https://www.cumberland.gov.uk/business-and-licensing/procurement-social-value-tenders-and-contracts/about-procurement>

Tender Opportunities

Cumberland Council currently advertise tender opportunities via **The Chest**, our electronic procurement portal.

The Chest provides a transparent and accessible platform for suppliers to engage with us, ensuring that all procurement activities are conducted fairly and efficiently. By registering on The Chest, suppliers can view and bid for a wide range of opportunities, helping us deliver high-quality services to meet the needs of our community.

We encourage all potential suppliers to register on The Chest to stay informed about current and upcoming tender opportunities. This approach supports our commitment to fostering a competitive and diverse marketplace, ultimately benefiting the residents of Cumberland.

Social Value

The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires organisations who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. Its aim is the wider benefit gained by a local community from the delivery of public contracts or services.

The Act is a tool to help commissioners get more value for money out of procurement. It also encourages commissioners to talk to their local provider market or community to design better services, often finding new and innovative solutions to difficult problem. Therefore, the Councils strategy is to work alongside the market (see co-production and engagement).

The Council will use social value within its commissioning activity as a tool to:

- Address inequalities.
- Support the local economy.
- Address the climate emergency.
- Promote fair employment practices.
- Strengthen the local community impact.

It is the Council's aim to include social value as part of every commission and set out the social value expectations in the specification. The Council will monitor performance on the delivery of social value via contract specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The Council is working with other public sector type organisations across Cumbria to deliver social value and support the development of stronger, more resilient communities.

To reflect the importance of Social Value we are committed to include a minimum of 20% social value scoring within all our tenders, where it is reasonable to do so. This approach ensures that our investments not only deliver high quality services, but also contribute positively to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of our communities across Cumberland.

More information on social value in Cumberland can be found here:

[Social Value Toolkit | Cumberland Council](#)



Demand

Cumberland has a 'super-ageing' population with a significantly higher proportion of people aged 65+ than the national average. This trend is expected to continue with an increase of around 35 to 40% in the number of older people (65 and over) unable to manage at least one activity on their own or admitted into hospital due to a fall, by 2040.

Nationally, expenditure on support for working age adults (for example, younger adults with learning disabilities) will increase by 50% per year by 2030. We also know that we have a significant proportion of our population that are waiting for some kind of health intervention which means their conditions are not improving, in Cumberland we have more people with disabilities who say it impacts negatively on their lives.

Based on our Market Position statement, the key areas of demand are impacted by:

- Workforce challenges (good rates of employment/reducing numbers of people economically active).
- Geography, particularly rurality and national parks.
- Transport infrastructure.
- Affordable housing.



Co Production & Customer Engagement

Co-production means working in partnership with people who have lived experience of drawing on care and support through the Council, ensuring their participation is given equal importance to that of staff within the organisation. Their contributions are valued equally, shaping both the design and delivery of services and projects.

The Council acknowledges its statutory duty to co-produce services but also recognises the broader benefits co-production brings. It helps to enhance service quality, build trust, and strengthen relationships between the Council and those who draw on its services. Co-production also fosters innovation, ensuring services are person-centred, responsive, and sustainable.

The Council is ambitious in its approach to embedding co-production within the commissioning of services. This includes designing commissioning processes that create opportunities for meaningful collaboration with people with lived experience at every stage. For example, commissioning frameworks will incorporate mechanisms such as mini-competitions to enable co-production during service design and procurement processes.

The Council also recognises that genuine co-production is a complex and ongoing process that requires sustained effort, cultural change, and capacity building. While it may take time to fully integrate co-production across all services, the Council is committed to ensuring all new commissioning projects include meaningful opportunities for co-production from the outset. This commitment includes:

- Involving people with lived experience from the very beginning of any commissioning project to ensure their insights shape priorities, decisions, and outcomes.
- Providing training and support for both staff and people with lived experience to participate effectively in co-production.
- Establishing clear feedback mechanisms to continuously learn from and improve the co-production process.
- Developing flexible commissioning models that encourage innovative approaches to co-production.
- Building strong partnerships with voluntary, community, faith, and social enterprise organisations to amplify the voices of diverse communities in co-production.

This approach reflects the Council's ambition to go beyond simply meeting its statutory obligations. It aims to place co-production at the heart of all services, ensuring they are inclusive, high-quality, and truly person-centred

As well as co producing services, each year the Council completes the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) survey. This information will be used to inform our commissioning activity and strategic direction as well as an indicator of the effectiveness of the wider Adult Social Care offer. The 2023-24 survey results placed Cumberland 14th nationally for **Overall satisfaction of people who use services with their care and support** scoring 70.4 compared to 66.8 and 65.4 regionally and nationally respectively.

The Council will also complete service specific questionnaires/consultations for major commissions.

In 2024, Cumberland Council commissioned Healthwatch Cumberland to complete an in-depth project exploring the feelings, wishes and aspirations of the population as they grow older across each of the Cumberland KSCs. Each report will give an insight into what the people of Cumberland believe they need to age “well” in multiple facets such as social activities and care provisions available to them. The findings from these projects will be used to inform future commissioning activity and enable the Council to better deliver to more localised needs.

Market Engagement

The Council values its trusted providers and welcomes new providers to Cumberland and will complete proportionate market engagement for every new commission. This may include face to face events, workshops, online sessions, one to one meetings and questionnaires. Feedback from market engagement will be used to inform commissioning activity.

Currently there is no Independent Care Group that represents the ASCH market, though there is strong representation at our supplier engagement events relating to specific commissioning activity.

Peer Support Networks

There are benefits for providers to work together and to create a supportive marketplace where good quality and sustainable services can thrive. Cumberland Council, in partnership with Skills for Care, has supported the local market to set up a Regional Care Managers Network. The aim of the network is to support staff wellbeing, discuss common issues, explore solutions, share ideas and get updates from key partners. Guest speakers are invited (based on provider feedback) to share guidance and good practice.

If you are interested in attending or being a guest speaker or chairing one of the Peer Support Networks, please contact our Strategic Commissioning Team via **strategic.commissioning@cumberland.gov.uk**

Choice

When meeting the needs of Customers the Council endeavours to offer choice on how their service is delivered and where possible, which provider supports them. The Council uses Framework arrangements, so that multiple providers can offer services to Customers. For larger Frameworks such as Care Homes, Homecare and Day Opportunities the Council will require providers to submit “Provider Information Profiles” as part of the tender process. These will be published on the Councils webpage so that Customer and their families can find out more about what is on offer to them. These webpages can also be accessed by people who are arranging their own care and support.

Details of these Provider Information Profiles can be found on the Councils webpage: **<https://www.cumberland.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/adult-social-care/care-services>**

Workforce

The adult social care workforce in Cumberland is a vital component of our local health and social care system, which is dedicated to supporting the wellbeing of its ageing and vulnerable population.

The adult social care workforce faces a number of challenges:

- Local recruitment is a major challenge with providers facing competition from other sectors.
- Cumberland has a 'super-ageing' population with a reducing working age population.
- A number of services or residents requiring support at home are in rural and remote locations, making care delivery more difficult due to transportation issues.

In response to these challenges, the council is undertaking the following workforce measures:

- We work with our Providers and the wider market to ensure that overseas workers are integrated within the areas that they settle.
- Working closely with local care providers, Skills for Care, and other key stakeholders to actively promote careers in the care sector. Through this partnership approach, we are exploring targeted recruitment campaigns, training pathways, and career development opportunities that reflect the unique needs of our communities.
- Use of technology to streamline administrative tasks and improve care delivery.
- Promotion of the Real Living Wage to support providers to recruit and retain staff within the sector.
- Supporting the development of an adult social care workforce strategy and partnership working with Skills for Care to provide training and support.
- Supporting the embedding of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion within the employment practices and organisational culture within the care sector.



Market Support

The Council wants providers to have a positive experience in delivering Adult Social Care Services on behalf of the Council. There are a number of ways in which we will support the market:

- Fair and transparent prices and uplifts
- Timely information sharing around uplifts
- Sharing of innovation and best practice
- A supportive quality management approach (see below)
- Contract Monitoring, including regular meetings
- Clear service specifications
- Prompt and efficient payment processes
- Use of Frameworks to promote transparency, opportunity and consistency
- Valued and trusted relationships - open door approach and access to commissioners via **strategic.commissioning@cumberland.gov.uk**

Quality

The Council, and its partners will operate a whole systems approach where quality outcomes are agreed, communicated and all stakeholders work collaboratively to ensure quality is delivered. A Quality Assurance Framework is in place which includes monitoring and taking clear action where quality is not meeting expected standards and supporting providers in making the required improvements. The Council will work alongside the NHS and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to ensure that quality interventions are co-ordinated and where needed in response to regulatory inspection. This approach is well embedded with 92% of Care Homes in Cumberland rated as good or outstanding (Jan 2025).

We aspire to have more people with a care qualification working in the sector and will work with the market to achieve this.

Technology

The Council is committed to using technology to its full advantage and will prioritise improving and expanding the assistive technology offer to Customers so that they live independently and safely within their own homes for longer. The Council will continue to work with individuals to assess their technology needs and to make sure that they can consent, understand, retain and weigh the options around technology, before communicating their choice and preferences.

The Council will also look at utilising online platforms to enable people with care needs and carers to access self-assessment tools and to benefit from information advice and guidance.

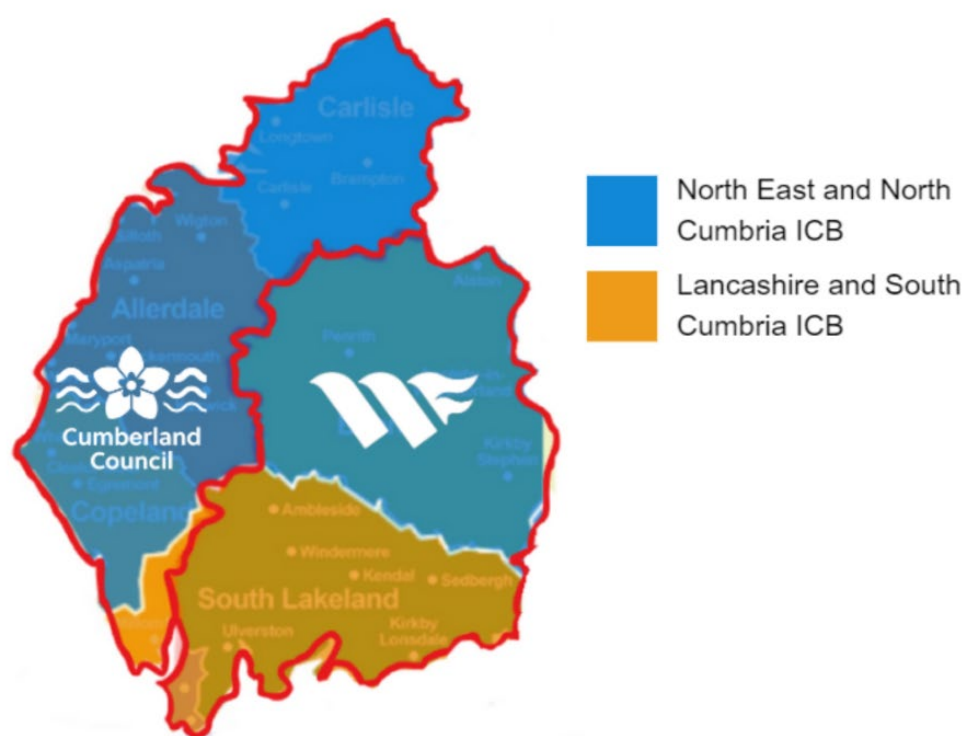
Joint Commissioning

The Council is ambitious in its plans to improve and strengthen Joint Commissioning Arrangements with its partners. This section sets out how the Council will jointly commission services in Cumberland with partners as well as, working together with Customers and their families to ensure those services provide the best outcomes. It is intended to be the foundation for partners to develop integrated commissioning arrangements as recognition that no single organisation can do this alone.

The partners involved in joint commissioning services with the Council are: **NHS North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board ("NENC ICB")**, **NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board ("LSC ICB")** and the **Joint Commissioning Board (JCB)**. The "ICBs" were created in July 2022, with the majority of Cumberland being served by NENC ICB.

The ICBs are responsible for ensuring that high quality and safe health services are accessible to communities. They have a wide range of functions including; promoting integration of health and care services, improving people's health and wellbeing, and reducing health inequalities.

A map of the ICB footprints is shown below. The ICB footprint is not co-terminus with the Cumberland Council boundaries, with Millom being in the LSC ICB footprint and Eden being served by Westmorland and Furness Council.



For the purposes of this strategy the term "Joint Commissioning" refers to the work that Cumberland Council, NENC ICB and/or LSC ICB design and buy together using shared resources and or finances, to meet our shared objectives. There are many challenges around the delivery of commissioned services, these include:

- The availability of finance and resources.
- The number of providers in the market.
- Provider workforce pressures.

Work with the market to identify support to:

- Deliver innovative services.
- Build further capacity.
- Deliver resilient services.
- Deliver good quality services.
- Deliver flexible and responsive services.

Joint commissioning will be outcomes based, using data to predict demand, improve services, and measure success.

Equality Diversity and Inclusion

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion will be key to delivery of the strategy. Structural inequalities relating to people who share a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 can result in worse health and social care outcomes.

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to prevent discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and promote good relations in the community. The Council will ensure that the Public Sector Equality Duty is embedded through each stage of the commissioning cycle.

The Council will embed monitoring of Protected Characteristics throughout our contracts so that baseline data across services is used to inform current and future market analysis. Lived experience of people who share a Protected Characteristic will shape our Service Specifications, the tender assessment process and in the development of KPIs. Our social value requirements will include addressing intersectionality between poverty and inequality, protected characteristics, deprivation, rurality, personal circumstances, life experience and cultural awareness.

It is important that where there is face to face delivery of services, Providers maintain a local presence that can easily be accessed by Customers. Where appropriate the Council will ensure that service specifications include the requirement for this.

We will work with our providers who use overseas visa sponsorship as part of their staffing model to ensure that people are supported to feel part of their local communities. Our contracts include safeguards against modern day slavery and our quality monitoring practices include routes to report as appropriate.

Useful Information

Adult Social Care & Housing Commissioning Strategy (ASCHCS)

Key Service Centres (KSC)

These are towns and larger villages which provide a range of essential services and facilities to the surrounding rural areas.

Market Position Statement (MPS)

[Market position statement for adult social care services \(full\).pdf](#)

The Care Act 2014

The Care Act is a law that sets out the rights and responsibilities of local authorities, care providers and people who use services in England.

Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) survey

Cumberland Council – Target Operating Model

[Our target operating model | Cumberland Council](#)

Cumberland Supported Housing Needs Study (2024 – 2039)

Contact Us

We always welcome conversations with stakeholders and care providers, please contact us on: [**strategic.commissioning@cumberland.gov.uk**](mailto:strategic.commissioning@cumberland.gov.uk)