

Our Voice

Strategy 2025- 2030

Improving and developing
co-production across
Adult Social Care



working in partnership



**Nottinghamshire
County Council**

our
voice

Introduction

This Strategy explains how we will work towards more co-production across the Adult Social Care Department at Nottinghamshire County Council.

It has been written and developed with Our Voice Strategic Co-Production Group who are members of the public with lived experience of drawing on Adult Social Care services either for themselves or for family members.

It builds on our co-production plan called [Better Together](#) which was written in April 2022.

Adult Social Care Vision

“We want every person in Nottinghamshire to live in the place they call home with the people and things that they love where they look out for one another doing the things that matter to them “ [Social care future](#)

To move towards this vision, we want more Adult Social Care services, policies and strategies to be co-produced, so more people are supported to live their life in ways that work for them.



What do we mean by co-production?

Adult Social Care use the following definition to explain what we mean by the word co-production.

Co-production is enabling members of the public with relevant lived experience to have meaningful influence.

This means people and carers with lived experience of adult social care:

- Working together as equals alongside paid staff.
- Being listened to and sharing power when decisions are made.
- Being recognised as having skills, knowledge and experience that can help improve Adult Social Care in Nottinghamshire.
- Being involved from the start on projects. This leads to different conversations and solutions that are much more likely to work the first time around.
- Feeling valued, empowered and better connected.



“Co-production is rewarding and when done well works for everyone.”

What are the principles of co-production?

Our Voice Strategic Co-production Group have chosen the following principles for co-production projects.

Adult Social Care will:

- 1. Value and work with people's skills, knowledge, and interests to improve services.**
- 2. Let people know what we are learning and achieving.**
- 3. Make sure that any person or group of people that wants to be involved is included.**
- 4. Aim to use language, written information and other kinds of communication that works for all.**
- 5. Be honest and open to promote trust.**
- 6. Take time to look at how we do things and change them if we need to.**



What are the values of co-production?

There is no one way to 'do' co-production, but all good co-production shares values that ensure the voices of people and carers with lived experience are heard equally alongside other people.

For co-production to grow, Adult Social Care needs a culture where the following values and behaviours are the norm:

HONESTY AND TRUST

People take time to build relationships. Information is shared to help understanding and any barriers to making progress are discussed in an open and transparent way.

EQUALITY

Staff share power with people, by involving them from the start. This allows everyone to learn together about what works and what doesn't.

ACCESSIBILITY

Staff use diverse ways to communicate. We all think about what needs to change so everyone can join in.

RESPECT

Each person's contribution is respected and valued. There is a clear approach to expenses and remuneration and people understand how their contribution is being used.

DIVERSITY

People with different experiences, skills and points of view are brought together

Where can co-production happen?

Co-production occurs in various places and situations.

It can happen on a **one-to-one** basis when a member of staff works with a person to design their own care and support plan. One-to-one co-production is sometimes called strength-based support or personalised care. It means people are involved in decisions about their own care and support.

“I am appearing at Newark book festival as the interviewer of a new Newcastle author. I can do this because I have flexible support that works for me. My support helps me to live in my own home and stay out of hospital as my PA spots signs my health is going wrong and helps me get support quickly.”

Alex (Our Voice)

In a local area when people are involved in designing and running services that they or others may draw on. For example, a manager might ask people they support to design and help run some new activities during the day.

“People in Mansfield community hub take an active role in planning activities, often leading a session themselves, selecting the venue for room hire and evaluating the overall progress of the sessions as one member puts it “the hub is ours”

Rhiannon (Commissioner)

Strategically, when members of the public with relevant lived experience work together with staff and other stakeholders to design, develop or review a policy, strategy or service that aims to change things for a larger group of people.

“The Adult Social Care Local Account was developed by members of the public and staff drawing on what people said was important to them in during the Big Conversation. A Making It Real Forum is co-chaired by people with lived experience. This helps ensure progress against the Local Account priorities.

“Being part of the forum is extremely empowering and provides an excellent insight into how the department works as a whole, providing me with real opportunities to shape and change policies and practice for the best”

Dean (Co- chair of Making it Real)

We want to improve and develop more co-production in Nottinghamshire Adult Social Care. When people are supported well on a one to one or in a local level project, they can develop the confidence, skills, and knowledge to influence things at a more strategic level.

Engagement, Consultation and Co-production

Adult Social Care staff involve people in different ways:

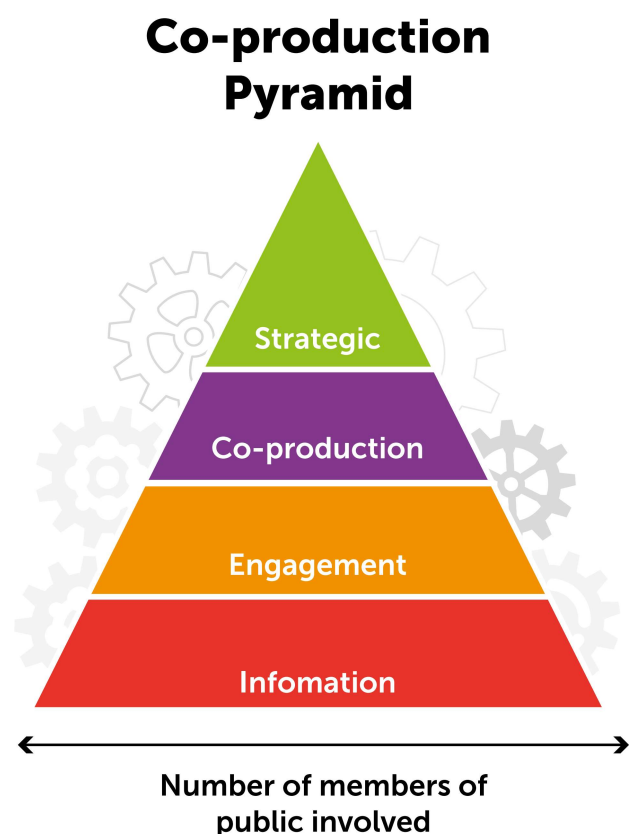
- Engagement - listening to people at events or through surveys often at the start of a project.
- Consultation - asking people their opinion or view on a service or proposed change before a final decision is made.
- Co-production - the public working with staff from the start to the finish, finding the best solutions to issues and problems together.
- Using the correct term to describe how people are being involved is important as it helps to build trust. It means everyone can understand the level of involvement that is required or has taken place. We want all staff to understand what different words mean so they can explain what they are doing clearly.



Our Voice Co-production Pyramid

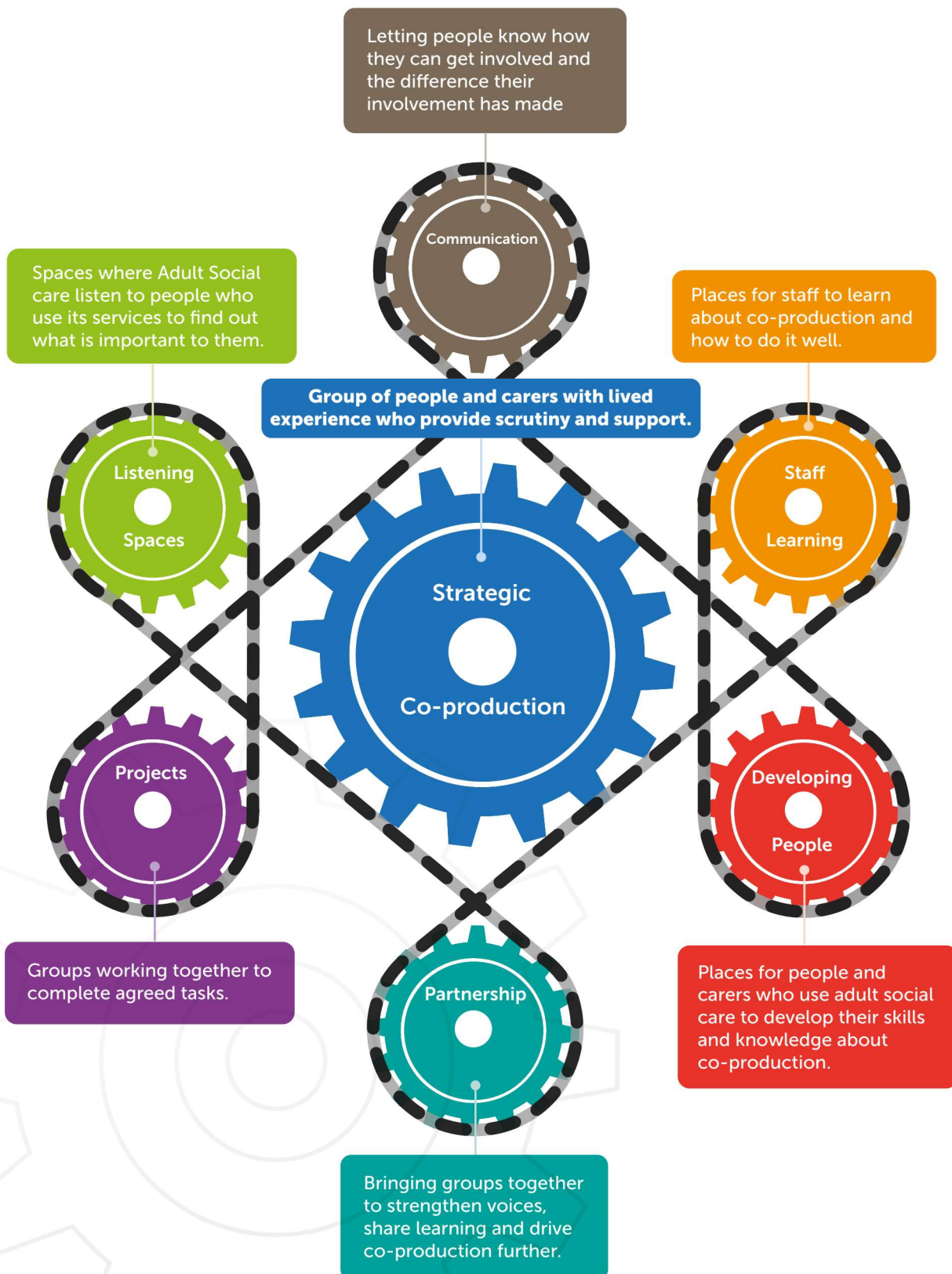
We are proud of our co-production journey and work so far. We want to build on this and for Our Voice to become something that everyone who draws on Adult Social Care in Nottinghamshire recognises and can feel part of. This means Our Voice changing from being one small group of people to all the voices who draw on care and support in Nottinghamshire. This pyramid describes what this would look like. It explains how engagement and co-production are both important and work together.

- **Information** includes data. In Nottinghamshire this includes facts like the number of people who draw on a service or feedback from different people. Anyone who draws on an Adult Social Care service in Nottinghamshire can provide feedback through compliments or complaints.
- **Engagement** involves listening directly to people at events or by visiting them at the groups and places they attend. Engagement can happen in person, over the phone, or sometimes through a survey. Adult Social Care listens to people through its Big Conversation and other listening events. By listening carefully, it can find out what needs to be done to improve its services.
- **Co-production** happens when members of the public with lived experience and staff actively work together from the start to find the best solution to something. Co-production often uses learning from engagement and information to ensure decisions made reflect the views of a bigger group of people. Developing the Local Account in Nottinghamshire is an example of taking this approach. Seven people were involved in the co-production group that decided the priorities for the Local Account, but they drew on the views of over 500 people who were listened to as part of the work.
- **Strategic co-production**, people are part of a project board or a steering group alongside paid staff. Their role is to keep everything on track. This involves the smallest number of people, but they remain connected to more voices through the other layers of the pyramid. The Our Voice strategic co-production group will work alongside senior staff to make sure this co-production strategy is implemented, drawing on information from other events and activities.



What we will do to make this plan happen

To improve and develop our approach, actions will take place across seven different but interconnected areas.





Listening

Listening means continuing to provide opportunities for people and carers who draw on Adult Social Care services to say what is important to them. Hearing different views and experiences will help to identify things that are going well or need to change.

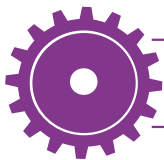
“Our Voice helped plan the Big Conversation because we understand the importance of hearing all our voices in helping to make Adult Social Care in Nottinghamshire good for everyone. We need to hear what is working and not working”.

Alyson (*Our Voice*)

What next?



Ensure there are regular listening activities happening across all areas of Adult Social Care.



Projects

Co-production projects will bring people with a diverse mix of experiences together to find the best solutions. Projects will usually be issue based, have clear aims, be time limited and wherever possible co-chaired by a member of staff and a member of the public with relevant lived experience.

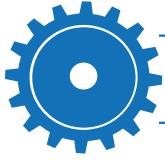
“A piece of work I have particularly enjoyed being part of is developing the Quality Assurance Framework. I felt as an expert by experience that I really helped influence the direction this was going in”.

Ed (*Quality framework co-chair*)

What next?



Adult Social Care will share its planned co-production projects with Our Voice strategic co-production so they can help shape and assure these.



Our Voice Strategic Co-Production Group

Our Voice Strategic co-production group are members of the public with lived experience of drawing on Adult Social Care and working co-productively. They have a key role in overseeing this co-production plan.

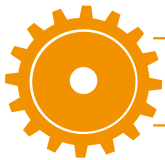
“We need a group that understands co-production and can help make sure things are moving the right way in Adult Social Care“

Eddie (*Our Voice*)

What next?



To continue to support the Our Voice strategic co-production group so its members grow in strength and expertise.



Staff Learning

Staff need support to understand what co-production is and what they can do to help make it happen.

“Co-production means many things to many people, so it is helpful that we are saying clearly what it means to us in Adult Social Care and are helping each other learn about it. I hope that moving forward we can all work with people and carers in a co-produced way. I am committed to doing this”.

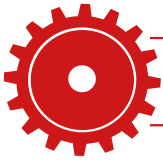
Linzi (*Commissioner*)

What next?



Provide training and support so staff are confident to do engagement and co-production activities and understand the benefits of using both approaches.





Developing People

People and carers with lived experience also need an opportunity to learn about co-production and develop their skills, knowledge, and confidence so they can work as equals with staff and other stakeholders.

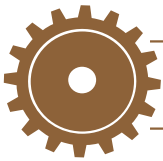
“I have learnt so much. I feel confident to tell people how I think things should work now.”

Eddie (Our Voice)

What next?



Develop our support offer for people involved in co-production, including refreshing our approach to expenses and remuneration so it is easier for everyone to understand.



Communication

People need to hear about the work that is happening, the impact it is having and how they can get involved. Adult Social Care needs to get better at sharing what it is doing, learning, and achieving together through co-production.

“Good information helps me keep independent, I can do more for myself and not ask support workers. I want to know what’s happening with the council, health, benefits and transport that affects me and I want to say what I think about it. I like information to be easy read and big print”.

Mark (person with lived experience)

“How often do you hear or say I didn’t know that. Why didn’t anyone tell me?”

Co-production depends upon accessible, clear, timely, respectful communication to support and progress its work. Everyone involved needs to be kept in the loop.

Written information requires careful consideration to ensure the language used is readily understood and clearly indicates where support can be found and where there is opportunity for future participation.

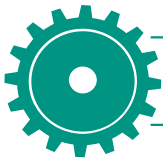
We all need to know what the outcome or next steps are when we have made the effort to get in touch. We need to communicate and celebrate what co production has achieved. Let’s be more creative about telling people what has happened and attract more people to work with us”.

Marion (Our Voice)

What next?



Ensure different people know what co-production is happening, how they can get involved and what difference their contributions have made.



Partnership

Partnership means bringing groups together to strengthen voices, share learning and drive co-production.

“Partnership means coming together to share learning, strengthen voices, and make sure everyone’s voice counts. That’s how we drive co-production that truly reflects what matters to people.”

Debbie (Quality Improvement Lead for Personalisation and Co-production Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board)

What next?



Build stronger partnerships – An Our Voice forum will help develop co-production across Nottinghamshire. The Our Voice Strategic co-production group will work with regional and national organisations to share learning and best practice.



Glossary: What key words mean?

Word	What it means?
Accessibility	Things being adapted to help a group of people or an individual get involved or understand information.
Big Conversation	The Big conversation happens every two years and involves Adult Social Care listening to people who draw on care and support through events, surveys, phone calls and visits to care settings.
Co-design	When people design a service or strategy alongside professionals but may not be involved in helping to implement or review the approach.
Commission	Services that are bought for a person or are bought to serve a large group of people or community.
Consultation	This is a type of engagement. People can be asked to complete surveys or attend meetings without having any real influence on the resulting decisions.
Culture	The way that people interact with each other across the Adult Social Care department.
Diverse	Varied, lots of different people involved.
Engagement	When people can express their views and opinions, for example at a listening event but the influence they have on any decisions will depend on what people who are listening will allow.
Guidance	Rules for adult social care staff which explain how to interpret and follow a particular policy.
Lived Experience	When a person has experience of drawing on a particular service or process.

Word	What it means?
Local account	The local account describes the work Adult Social Care is doing well and what it wants to improve. It highlights the priorities that the Adult Social Care department plan to work on based on learning from the Big Conversation
Making It Real forum	The Making it real forum is made up of senior leaders in Adult Social Care and members of the public who draw on Adult Social Care. The forum discusses progress against the Local account priorities.
Policy	A document that says what the department's approach is. Policies are agreed by councillors on a wide range of topics.
Partnership working	Organisations and staff teams working together.
Remuneration	How people are rewarded and recognised for their contribution.
Programmes of work	Programmes of work are large and often have lots of individual projects happening underneath them.
Stakeholder	Anyone who is affected by a piece of work. Stakeholders can be people who draw on a service, members of staff or organisations that provide a service.
Strategic Co-production	When members of the public with lived experience are involved from the start to the finish in an area of work that will have an impact on a wide range of people.
Strategy	A strategy is a big plan to achieve long-term goals.
Transparent	Open and honest.
Vision	Our aim, where we would like to get to.

“As the newest member of the Our Voice Strategic Co-Production Group I can see the obvious progress made so far and the solid foundation that has now been built.

The pre-existing members have clearly been allowed to build expertise and good working relationships over a long-term time frame, which when combined with their very varied lived experience, makes them extra useful in bringing public perspective into things. They have meaningful contact with some of the most senior decision makers, and there is a strong connection with wider engagement activity such as the Big Conversation.

The opportunity now is to enable a more strategic approach, and to evolve Our Voice into something that accommodates a much broader range of voices.

Very few organisations get this far on their Co-Production journey. This is one subject area where Social Care might actually get to point the way forward for the rest of the Health & Care System.

If we stay on course, step by step, making good decisions, the future could be looking very bright for Co-Production in Adult Social Care “

Paul (Our Voice)



To find out more about how we are moving towards more co-production in Adult Social Care in Nottinghamshire and to read our latest action plan visit our webpage or email: ourvoice@nottsc.gov.uk

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/adult-social-care/co-production

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