# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TITLE**  | **Young Carers Action Day and publication of annual delivery plan update** |
| **DATE**  | **14 March 2023** |
| **BY** | **Julie Morgan, Deputy Minister for Social Services** |

The theme of this year’s Young Carers Action Day, 15th March, is *Making Time for Young Carers*. The aim is to encourage more professionals to listen to the challenges young carers face. I will be making time on 16th March to meet with a group of young carers to hear how Welsh Government can support young people who are struggling to balance their education and leisure time with caring responsibilities.

The Young Carers’ ID Card project is raising awareness of the challenges young carers experience at school, in health settings or in the community. £600,000 has been invested into the project and local authorities are making young carers aware of the benefits of owning a card and encouraging sign up. I want to ensure the incredible progress made over the past few years is maintained and built upon.

To ensure we continue to make time to listen to the views of young carers and hear about their experiences, we are making funding available to Children in Wales to facilitate a Young Carers Advisory Board. This board will form an integral part of our wider engagement work and help us to coproduce services that support young carers to reach their potential.

Following the huge success of last year’s event, Welsh Government is supporting a second Young Carers’ Festival in August. I attended the event last year and saw how the event gave young carers much needed time to enjoy themselves but also a chance to talk to professionals about their experiences. It was a rewarding experience for everyone who took part and I look forward to making time to attend the event again this year.

[Today marks the publication of our first annual report](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.wales%2Funpaid-carers-delivery-plan-annual-report&data=05%7C01%7CBen.O%27Halloran%40gov.wales%7C179bbaa5c6254a28281608db23a99f11%7Ca2cc36c592804ae78887d06dab89216b%7C0%7C0%7C638142983662492203%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=AUZ%2BsUGS%2FGFJOe%2B9PlH96UIqoB%2FDdJXvOney18Ycqzc%3D&reserved=0) on the implementation of the Unpaid Carers Strategy and its supporting Delivery Plan, published in November 2021. These documents map out how Welsh Government and other key stakeholders will take positive steps to improve lives for unpaid carers of all ages.

A great deal has been achieved since the launch of the Strategy in 2021. As part of our £9million investment in a national Short Breaks Fund, money has been allocated to Regional Partnership Boards to develop innovative and person-centred opportunities for unpaid carers to take a break. [A third sector grant scheme, Amser](https://carers.org/around-the-uk-our-work-in-wales/amser), was also launched in January 2023. I would like to thank everyone who has worked hard to move us closer to completing the ambitious goals set out in the Strategy. This includes members of the Ministerial Advisory Group for Unpaid Carers who helped shaped the Short Breaks Fund and Carers Trust Wales who are the national coordinating body for the project.

Finally, we are moving forward with our plans to introduce a national register for unpaid carers. Officials have written to health boards, local authorities and third sector organisations to collate a list of professional contacts that can disseminate information to unpaid carers at short notice. We are also working with Digital Health and Care Wales to explore options for the administration of the register and how it will benefit unpaid carers across Wales. Our ambition is that the register will act as a tool to disseminate quick and clear messaging from Welsh Government directly to unpaid carers.

It is important to take stock and assess how far we have come but we must also look ahead at what more we can do to ensure that unpaid carers of all ages are supported to prioritise their own health and well-being alongside caring. I am confident that by making time to listen to unpaid carers of all ages, we can achieve this.