

# Oxfordshire joins as sixth trailblazer for charging reform

- Oxfordshire joins five other local authorities as a trailblazer for government's charging reform
- Trailblazers will implement the new adult social care charging reform system early ahead of national roll out in October 2023
- Charging reforms will mean no one will have to face unpredictable care costs in the future

Oxfordshire is the latest local authority to join as a trailblazer for the government's social care reform. It will implement the changes of the charging reform early to end unpredictable care costs for local care receivers.

To ensure a smooth transition from the current charging system Oxfordshire joins Wolverhampton, Blackpool, Cheshire East, Newham, North Yorkshire to make changes early ahead of national roll out in October next year. This will include the lifetime cap for care costs of £86,000 for anyone receiving care in England, and a more generous means test to determine financial support from local authorities.

The government selected the six local authorities to ensure there was a representative cross section of communities so that any insight, evidence and lessons learned from this initiative would be helpful to all providers, local authorities and areas across England.

Minister for Care and Mental Health, Gillian Keegan, said:

It's great to have Oxfordshire join our trailblazers to implement the charging reform early.

Oxfordshire, along with our other trailblazers, will pave the way ensuring we learn from any insight, evidence and lessons to help providers and local authorities across England in the future. We're looking forward to working with them to make the ambitious change a reality.

Councillor Tim Bearder, Oxfordshire County Council Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care said:

We know reform in adult social care is needed to remove the unpredictable care costs people face as they get older.

Oxfordshire is a national leader in adult social care and being a part of this small group of early adopters gives us the opportunity to influence how the programme will be rolled out and share our

best practice with national government.

The government's charging reform will be funded by the Health and Social Care Levy, which is set to raise more than £5.4 billion including £3.6 billion to reform the way people pay for their social care.

From October next year, no-one starting to receive care will pay more than £86,000 over their lifetime and no-one with assets of less than £20,000 will have to make any contribution from their savings or housing wealth – an increase from £14,250.

Means-tested support will be available for people with assets between £20,000 and £100,000, with this upper limit more than four times the current limit.

The trailblazers will shape the government's approach to the implementation of the charging reform across England, by allowing the Department of Health and Social Care to trial key aspects of the reforms.

The initiative will produce valuable insight, evidence and lessons to aid the government in monitoring progress and identifying challenges to improve understanding of how it'll work in practice.

These six local authorities will work with the department to educate and inform other local authorities with a series of events taking place before the final rollout.