

# Early Help For All Strategy Refresh (2026 – 2030)





# Contents

- Foreword .....4**
- Executive Summary .....5**
  - Our vision .....5
  - Our principles.....5
  - Our priorities.....5
- What do we mean by early help and why early help matters?..... 6**
  - Financial Impact of early help on Local Government.....7
- The case for early help in Enfield ..... 8**
  - Start Well..... 9
  - Live Well..... 9
  - Age Well..... 9
- Key Achievements: Early Help for All Strategy 2021-25 ..... 10**
- Links to other strategies .....11**
- Our principles..... 12**
- Our Priorities ..... 13**
  - Priority One: Provide clear and accessible information, advice and support..... 13
  - Priority Two: Empower and strengthen communities ..... 13
  - Priority Three: Embed early help as a system of prevention ..... 13
- Governance ..... 14**
- What success will look like by 2030 ..... 15**

# Foreword

I am delighted to introduce Enfield's Early Help for All Strategy 2026–2030.

---

This strategy reflects our commitment to ensuring that every resident in Enfield can start well, live well and age well. Prevention and early intervention are central to that ambition. By identifying need sooner and responding effectively, we can improve outcomes, reduce inequalities and help prevent problems from escalating into crisis.

We are delivering this strategy at a time of rising demand, increasing complexity and significant pressure on public services. In that context, acting earlier is both the right thing to do and essential to building a more sustainable system. This strategy sets out how we will strengthen our local offer by intervening earlier, targeting support where it is most needed, and working more effectively together across the council and with partners.

Our vision is clear: wherever possible, crisis should be prevented rather than managed after the event. That is why access to timely, effective early help must be a core part of how we work across the whole life course.

We have already made important progress. From developing our Start for Life and Family Hubs offer, to expanding trauma-informed practice in schools and improving digital access to support, we are building a more joined-up and accessible system for residents. This strategy builds on that foundation and sets a clear direction for the next phase of our work.

I would like to thank all those who have contributed to the development of this strategy. Delivering prevention requires shared ownership, strong partnerships and sustained focus. By working together, we can keep early help at the heart of our approach and ensure that Enfield's residents and communities are supported to thrive now and in the future.

**Tony Theodoulou**  
Executive Director – People  
London Borough of Enfield



# Executive Summary

## Our vision



**'We will work together to provide early help so that every resident starts well, lives well and ages well.'**

## Our principles

Our principles underpin the delivery of this strategy and guide how we design, deliver, and evaluate early help in Enfield. They ensure that support is fair, inclusive and effective for every resident:



**Equality, Inclusion and Anti-racism**



**Partnership and Collaboration**

## Our priorities

We will achieve our vision by focussing on the following three priorities:



### Priority One

Provide clear and accessible information, advice and support



### Priority Two

Empower and strengthen communities



### Priority Three

Embed early help as a system of prevention

These priorities build on the Early Help for All Strategy 2021–25 and reflect extensive feedback from council services and external partners. As a result, the refreshed strategy places stronger emphasis on **accessible support, coordinated services, resilient communities, targeted interventions, and a confident, well supported workforce and local leadership.**



# What do we mean by early help and why early help matters?

Early help is a system of support that provides people with the right help at the right time, as soon as needs or risks emerge, to prevent problems from escalating into crisis or statutory intervention.

Nationally, *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)*<sup>1</sup> defines early help as support that improves family resilience and outcomes or reduces the likelihood of problems worsening. It is not a single service, but a coordinated system delivered through shared responsibility across local authorities and partners.

While grounded in children's safeguarding, early help is underpinned by principles of prevention, proportionality and

relational practice, which apply across the whole life course. In Enfield, this is reflected in a "cradle to grave" approach, supporting residents from pre-birth through to older age.

This approach aligns with the national public health model of prevention, endorsed by Public Health England (now UKHSA), the NHS, the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Early Intervention Foundation (EIF). The lifecourse model recognises that people's outcomes are shaped

1 [Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/441416/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2026.pdf)

by a wide range of social, economic and environmental factors, and that timely intervention at key points in life can significantly improve outcomes and reduce inequalities<sup>2</sup>.

Effective early help focuses on:

- early identification of need and risk
- addressing root causes rather than symptoms,
- intervening proportionately at the earliest possible stage, and
- supporting longterm resilience, independence and wellbeing.

A universal offer is available to all residents, complemented by targeted support for those experiencing greater disadvantage, improving outcomes across the population.

For children and families, Enfield's approach is delivered through Family Help, in line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)*. This provides a single, joined-up model that brings together targeted early help, Child in Need and safeguarding. Families are supported by one lead practitioner, a shared assessment and a single plan that adapts as needs change, ensuring continuity and clear accountability.

Family Help is delivered in partnership with Family Hubs, education, health, early years, youth services and the voluntary and community sector. Clear thresholds, pathways and practice expectations are set out through the Family Help Working Protocol to ensure consistency across the system.

Early help extends beyond children's services and is a core responsibility across the council and its partners:

- In adult services, it promotes independence and reduces escalation to higher-cost care.
- In housing, early intervention helps prevent homelessness and reliance on temporary accommodation.
- In community safety, early action reduces harm from domestic abuse, antisocial behaviour, exploitation and serious violence.

Collectively, this supports residents to start well, live well and age well.

National evidence consistently shows that acting early is more effective and more cost-efficient than responding once problems have escalated. The NSPCC<sup>3</sup>, Early Intervention Foundation and LGA<sup>4</sup> highlight that early help improves long-term outcomes, reduces inequalities, strengthens resilience and lowers demand on specialist and statutory services.

Delivering early help well requires a coordinated and connected system—local government, health, education,



**Family Help is delivered in partnership with Family Hubs, education, health, early years, youth services and the voluntary and community sector.**

police, housing, voluntary and community organisations working together to provide accessible, joined-up, person-centred support.

Strengthening early help across the life course will enable Enfield to improve outcomes for residents, reduce inequality, and build a more sustainable system for the future.

## Financial Impact of early help on Local Government

Delayed intervention places significant financial pressure on local authorities. Research from the Local Government Association shows that Early Access and Support (EAAS) can deliver substantial savings—around £3.17 for every £1 invested, potentially generating £7.6 billion in net benefits if adopted nationally. On average, an investment of £23 million per council could lead to savings of approximately £11.1 billion across councils, the NHS, and charities.<sup>5</sup>

We acknowledge that early help is not appropriate or possible for every situation, with some cases requiring complex intervention and statutory responses. Therefore, we cannot completely stop spending on late intervention, however, we can reduce the cost by providing effective and timely early help.

2 [Health matters: Prevention - a life course approach - GOV.UK](#)

3 [Early help and early intervention | NSPCC Learning](#)

4 [15.66 Early Help resource pack May 2019.pdf](#)

5 <https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/earlier-action-and-support-case-prevention-adult-social-care-and-beyond>

# The case for early help in Enfield

These measures combine evidence of need in Enfield with outcomes that show where early help is making a difference. Together, they set out why early intervention matters locally and how progress will be tracked across Start Well, Live Well and Age Well.



## Start Well

**27.1%**

of Enfield's population was under 2 (July 2024)

Higher than London (23.1%) and England (23.4%).



**18%**

of children aged 15 and under live in relative low-income families (In 2024)



**14.9%**

live in absolute low-income families.

Enfield ranks among the most deprived

**20%**

of English districts and is the 7th most deprived London borough.

As of March 2026, there were



**385**

Children in Care,



**438**

Children in Need,



**264**

Child Protection Plans.



**70%**

of two to two and a half year reviews were completed.



**65%**

of five-year-olds are fully vaccinated against measles

In 2024/25, only **64% of 5 years**

olds were fully protected against measles, which is lower than the London Average (69.6%)



**25%**

of reception children are overweight or obese – in 2024/25 (3rd highest in London)

**100%** of primary and secondary schools in Enfield were rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted in 2024/25.



**4.8%**

of 16-17-year-olds were NEET (including unknowns) – higher than London (3.4%) and the average of our statistical neighbours (4.1%), but lower than England (5.4%).



First-time entrants to the Youth Justice System rose by

**11%**

(2023/24 to 2024/25).

Youth violence victims increased by

**11.7%**

during the most recent 12-month period ending October 2025, while London overall saw a 16% decrease.



**31.7%**

of pupils in Enfield's nursery and primary schools, in 2025 – and

**34.7%**

of pupils in secondary schools – were eligible for Free School Meals



**69.2%**

of children achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD) at end of reception, in 2024/25.

Permanent exclusions have fallen as a result of targeted work with families and schools.



**9,967**

pupils in Enfield were identified as having SEND.



## Live Well



**13.6%**

of Enfield's population had a disability (2021), which is lower than the disabled population in England.



**Domestic abuse**

incidents have fallen every year since 2020/21.

The most frequent causes for homelessness in Enfield are:



**Friends/family unable to accommodate**



**End of private tenancy**



**Domestic abuse**



**7.6%**

of working-age adults in Enfield (15,955 people) were claiming either Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) or were unemployed and claiming Universal Credit (UC), in July 2025.



In May 2025, around

**35%**

of households were receiving Housing Benefit or Universal Credit for housing.



**3,085**

households were in temporary accommodation (11% fewer than 2020/21)



In 2023/24

**62.7%**

of adults in Enfield were physically active.



**13%**

of households have no members with English as a main language.



## Age Well

Between 2021-2023, the average life expectancy, in Enfield:



**Women**

**84.7**



**Men**

**80.5**



**83.3%**

of older people aged 65+ were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/rehabilitation. (2024/25)



**1,540**

people per 100,000 population aged 65 and over experienced emergency hospital admissions due to falls (2022/23) – This is the second lowest rate out of the London Boroughs.



In 2023, the mortality rate for under 75s was below the London and England average per 100,000 (280.15).



**60.7%**

of those aged 65+ had the flu vaccination in 2024/25, this has seen a downward trend since 2020/21.



Income deprivation among people above the age of 60 is at

**26.3%**

with stark ward level variation (7.3% in Grange and 61.3% in Edmonton Green).

Working together across services is essential to making a meaningful difference. By coordinating support and making full use of the resources and strengths within Enfield, challenges can be addressed earlier and more effectively. The voluntary and community sector (VCS) is a key partner, offering local knowledge and practical support that is easy for residents to access. By using this expertise and working closely together, we can reach people sooner and help stop problems from getting worse.

# Key Achievements: Early Help for All Strategy 2021-25

Over the lifetime of the Early Help for All Strategy 2021-25, Enfield Council and its partners have strengthened prevention, improved access to support and delivered measurable outcomes for residents. Through a more joined-up and community-based system, early help is reaching children, young people, adults and families earlier, improving resilience and reducing demand for more intensive services.

---

## Access to support has improved through stronger digital and community offer for residents of all ages:

- The Youth Activities Portal recorded over 69,000 page views and nearly 20,000 active users
- The Early Help Directory for All was viewed almost 20,000 times with nearly 7,000 engaged users
- The Parenting Directory has received more than 16,750 views since launch, with over 1,000 families participating in parenting programmes
- The SEND Local Offer has also supported more than 440 children and young people with SEND through targeted activity, with over 3,500 visits to the SEND Local Offer homepage

## Enfield's Best Start in Life offer has been transformed through five integrated Family Hubs, including two flagship Youth and Family Hubs at Ponders End and Craig Park, creating a joined-up offer from pregnancy to early adulthood:

- Between April 2025 and March 2026, 3,416 families registered with Family Hubs, 6,602 families attended and over 28,000 contacts were made across the network.
- The offer has been supported by £5.85m investment between 2022 and 2026, with a further £5.44m secured for 2026–2029.

## Community hubs and libraries are now a stronger part of Enfield's preventative offer:

- Over 26,500 resident enquiries have been supported between April and September 2025 and connecting residents to employment, welfare, housing and health support.
- Delivered over 500 family-focused activities and support session annually.

## Alongside this, targeted programmes have delivered wider community benefit:

- ETIPSS has reached over 9,000 children and trained almost 1,500 staff across 70 schools
- The Assistive Technology pilot delivered over £6,000 in reduced in-home care savings and over £5,000 in avoided hospital stays.

- The Supporting Families Programme supported 1,118 families in 2024/25 and over 7,400 families across the life of the programme.
- Welfare and Debt Support Officers made 2,507 referrals in 2024/25, supporting 429 households with crisis payments or essential goods, helping 22 households clear rent arrears and enabling 213 residents to access their full benefit entitlement.

## The council has also strengthened support for residents facing complex needs:

- In 2024/25, Early Help Independent Domestic Violence Advocates supported 73 families and 235 individuals, with a further 117 referrals into specialist services.
- Through MyEnds, 1,478 young people were engaged through outreach, 76 received targeted mentoring and 12 community organisations were funded, supported by a 28-member Parent/Carer Panel helping to shape services through lived experience.

## Prevention work on youth crime is delivered through early help, with Project Dove supporting those at risk and Project Engage improving outcomes for children in custody:

- In 2024/25, 46 children received tailored support, including assessments, action plans and referrals to key support services through Project Dove
- In 2024/25 Project Engage improved engagement significantly, with 80% consent rates for in-custody sessions and low disengagement (17%), while 40% accessed diversionary activities and 45% of those NEET received tailored EET support.

## Overall, the Early Help for All Strategy has helped establish a stronger, more preventative and more connected system of support for Enfield residents:

- In the last financial year alone, 2,701 contacts led to 565 accepted referrals, concerning 1,062 children and 973 parents and carers, alongside 689 Early Help Assessments and 1,461 interventions.

These results show that Enfield is increasingly able to identify need earlier, coordinate support more effectively and deliver meaningful impact for residents before issues escalate.

# Links to other strategies

Early Help for All is aligned to key council strategies and plans.<sup>6</sup> The Council Plan 2023-26 identifies collaboration and early help as a cross-cutting principle. Embedding early help across strategies helps to prevent problems from escalating, reduces pressure on specialist services and gives residents better life chances.

The Strategy takes account of the Integrated Care Board’s (ICB) developing work on neighbourhoods and the likely influence this will have on local ways of working in future. While the detail of how neighbourhoods will operate in Enfield, including governance and delivery arrangements, is still emerging, the Council recognises the importance of staying aligned with this direction of travel. As the neighbourhoods’ approach becomes clearer, the Council will work with the ICB and partners to ensure that the aims of this Strategy continue to support shared priorities agreed to deliver neighbourhoodlevel activity.



<sup>6</sup> The Local Government Association (LGA) identifies that councils that embed early help in all strategies achieve better outcomes and financial stability. The NSPCC also highlights that making early-help a theme across all services ensures fairness and consistency. <https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/early-help-resource-pack> <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/early-help-and-early-intervention>

# Our principles

Our principles underpin the delivery of this strategy and guide how we design, deliver, and evaluate early help in Enfield. They ensure that support is fair, inclusive and effective for every resident.

---



## Equality, Inclusion and Anti-Racism

We want everyone in Enfield to be treated fairly and feel included. We value our residents' diverse cultures and identities. We also recognise that some residents continue to face unfair barriers and unequal outcomes.

To ensure our Early Help services are accessible and effective for all, we will:

- **Deliver staff training** – Ensure staff can recognise, challenge and address bias and racism
- **Analyse data on local need** – Use data analysis to target resources and support to reduce inequality for different protected groups.
- **Collect and analyse data on the protected characteristics of service users** - Identify inequality in accessing our services and residents who might need support but are not accessing it.
- **Provide services that are culturally responsive** – Ensure support feels relevant, respectful and appropriate to the residents who use it.
- **Prioritise funding for community led organisations** – Secure funding that represents and supports underrepresented communities.



## Partnership and collaboration

We believe Early Help is most effective when it is shaped with residents and communities. To achieve this, we will:

- **Decisions shaped by lived experience** – Collaborate with residents to deliver support that informed by those most affected by services and ensure their voices meaningfully influence decisions.
- **Strength-based approach** - We will work within and across organisations to assure service quality and apply strength-based approaches that consider personal, social and community resources to maximise positive outcomes for those requiring support

# Our Priorities



## Priority One: Provide clear and accessible information, advice and support

We want to make it simple for residents to get the information and support they need at the first point of contact without delay. To do this we will:

- **Ensure universal access** - Make sure everyone can find and use early help services, including residents with limited digital access, language barriers or additional needs.
- **Use technology and AI** - Use digital tools and AI carefully and responsibly to give residents more personalised support and make services work more efficiently.
- **Focus on integrated signposting** - Strengthen links between council teams, the NHS, schools and voluntary groups so residents can access the right support from the first point of contact.
- **Provide Best Start in Life offer to help children be school ready** - Ensure all new parents can access support and advice for health, wellbeing and parenting.



## Priority Two: Empower and strengthen communities

Strong, connected communities reduce isolation, build confidence and support independence. We want to help residents take charge of their own lives and support their communities. This means creating strong local networks and hubs where residents of all ages can access the help and opportunities they need. We will:

- **Co-produce early help offer with residents** - Ensure lived experience shapes services.
- **Support local leaders and mentors** - Help community leaders, volunteers and mentors so they can make positive changes and encourage others, led by the EVA and VCS and wider voluntary sector hubs.
- **Expand early intervention and support through family and community hubs** - set up local hubs and outreach services to offer advice, activities, and direct support for wellbeing, relationships, behaviour, and communication from pre-birth through adulthood.
- **Health and wellbeing literacy and resilience** - Engage communities to promote health, resilience and independence.



## Priority Three: Embed early help as a system of prevention

We want an integrated Early Help System as the foundation for prevention that prevents harm and improves outcome. To do this we will:

- **Embed early help across all services** - Ensure early help is a core priority across the council
- **Build on strong partnership working** - Strengthen partnership working to share information, pool resources and deliver services in new ways.
- **Use data well** - Use data and insights to spot needs early, see what is working, and keep improving services.
- **Use evidence based approaches** - Deliver what works and continuously improve outcomes and develop a confident, skilled workforce and strong local leadership that champions prevention.
- **Re-engineer early help for children and families to deliver Family First Partnership reforms** - Refocus the system on early intervention as the foundation of prevention. Through Family Help, we will integrate early help, Child in Need and safeguarding into a single, relationshipbased model with one lead practitioner and a single plan, delivered alongside Family Hubs and community provision to ensure timely support, effective safeguarding and clear escalation where needed.

These priorities have been developed from the previous early help for All Strategy 2021-25. The updated vision and priorities were shared with relevant council services and external partners for feedback. They now have a stronger focus on universal and inclusive access, integrated and joined-up support, community empowerment and resilience, proactive and data-driven engagement and a strong workforce and local leadership.

# Governance

The Early Help for All Strategic Partnership Board will implement this strategy, ensuring shared ownership, collective decision making and system-wide leadership.

---

The Board will bring together senior leaders across Council, health, police, and the voluntary and community sector. This ensures a collaborative approach to identifying and resolving strategic issues and coordinating progress towards achieving the strategic priorities.

The outcomes of this strategy will be reviewed and reported to the Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Safeguarding Adults Board. As part of the review, we will update the strategy if needed, based on any changes in circumstances and lessons learnt – keeping our approach responsive, effective and forward looking. The progress of the strategy will also be reported to the Health and Wellbeing Board.



# What success will look like by 2030

By 2030, Early Help in Enfield will be a trusted, joinedup system of prevention that supports residents to start well, live well and age well, while enabling staff to work confidently and collaboratively.

---

## Start Well - Children, young people and families:

- Know where to go for help and get the right support first time
- Have needs identified earlier, reducing escalation to statutory services
- Feel supported, confident and resilient
- Children achieving good levels of development and are school ready

## Live Well - Residents and communities:

- Can easily access information, advice and support to address issues early
- Experience fewer crises as problems are resolved sooner
- Play a stronger role in prevention through communityled support

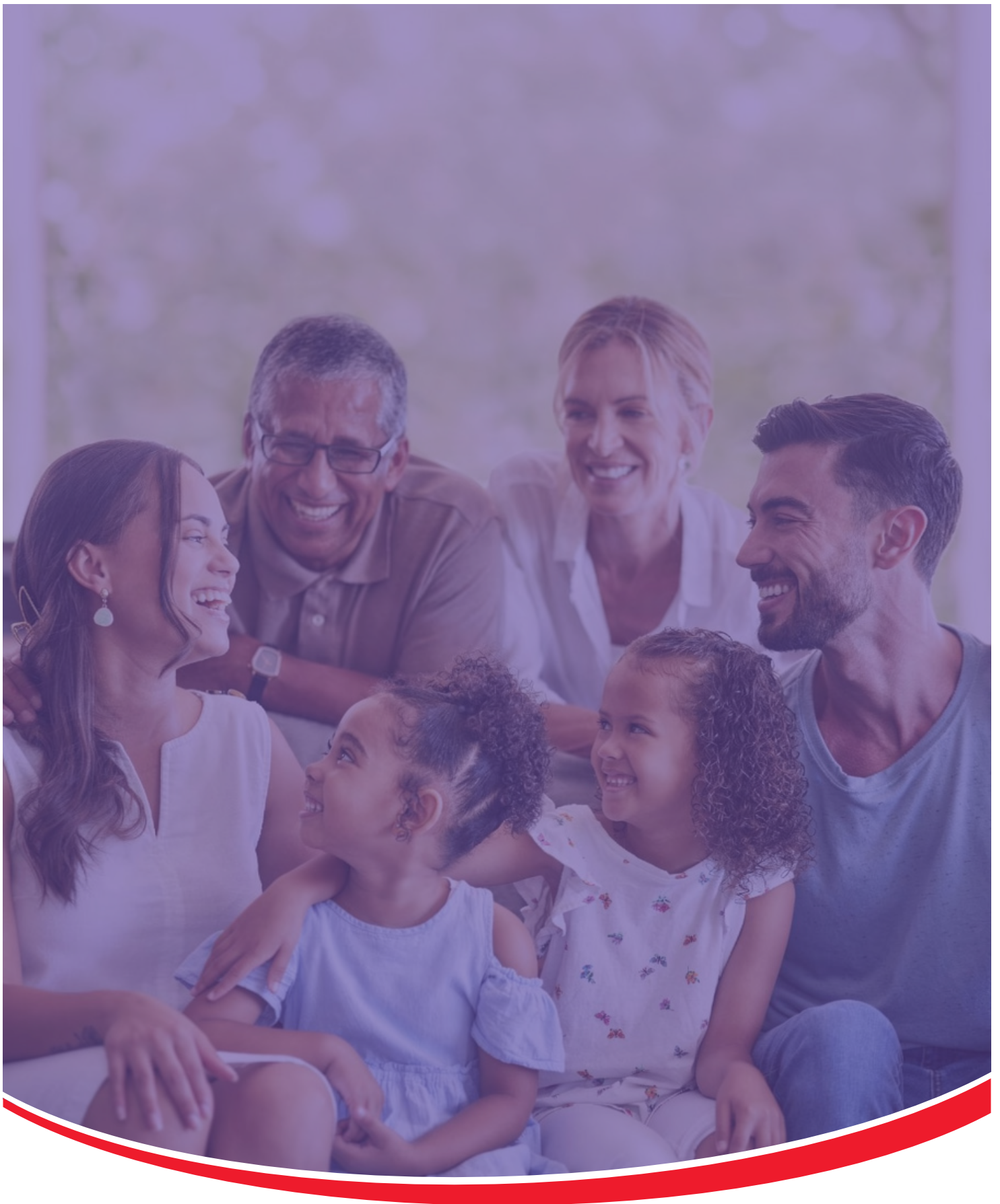
## Age Well - Older residents and people with longterm needs:

- Receive early, preventative support that helps them remain independent
- Experience better coordination between services, reducing avoidable crisis and statutory intervention

## For frontline staff across all life stages:

- Staff share a clear early help approach and work as one prevention system
- Information is shared appropriately, reducing duplication and delays
- Professionals spend more time supporting residents and less time navigating systems

This Early Help for All Strategy 2026–2030 confirms Enfield’s commitment to prevention as a shared, systemwide responsibility. By embedding early help across services, strengthening partnerships with communities and the voluntary sector, and focusing on equality, evidence and workforce confidence, Enfield will identify need earlier, reduce crisis and improve outcomes for residents. Through strong governance and continuous learning, prevention will remain nonnegotiable, enabling residents to start well, live well and age well.



[www.enfield.gov.uk](http://www.enfield.gov.uk)