



A CALL FOR CHANGE: INVEST IN THE CARING ECONOMY

A manifesto for employers

Caring is everybody's business

We have all and will all need care at some point in our lives and we are highly likely to be a carer at some stage. We need to see, recognise and value this work more, making adjustments so that we can make a choice to care for each other without it costing our careers, mental health or financial well-being.

Caring cuts across all the pillars of society – education, employment, health, social development, and finance. Caring is fundamental to the infrastructure of our society and the foundation of our communities. If we continue to undervalue caring as the core of our societal well-being, we will continue to see the breakdown of society.

“Caring responsibilities have increased since the pandemic, and 38% of carers are providing more care because of local services reducing or closing.”

JSNA Health and Wellbeing Profile 2023/24, Bristol City Council



What is the Caring Economy?

Caring economics supports the work and well-being of all those delivering care through provision of flexible work, transport, training and skills.

It rewards those who work in the caring economy rather than so many having to rely on low wages and food banks.

It prevents people with caring responsibilities having to choose between working and caring.

“In a caring economy, everyone gives and receives care on the basis of their capacities and needs.”

Women's Budget Group (2020) 'Final Report Summary: Creating a Caring Economy: a call to action



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We ask:

- Do you know how many of your workers are carers – of adults as well as of children?
- What has your organization done to support these employees?
- Where is care on your priority list for the future or your staff and organisation?
- What can you do to support a caring economy across your organisation?
- How will you ensure this commitment becomes a reality?

We are an of alliance of Bristol organisations representing its diverse communities: Bristol Black Carers, Bristol Women in Business, Bristol Women's Commission, Bristol Women's Voice, Carers Support Centre, Chinese Community Wellbeing Society, Co-Produce Care, March of the Mummies Bristol, West of England for Independent Living and Women's Budget Group.



Invest in the Caring Economy for Carers

1. Include paid time allowances across all contracts e.g. five days that can be taken in addition to statutory sick days and separate to annual leave for caring responsibilities. This should include emergency caring for adults as well as for children and employees should be able to take it in two-hour slots.
2. Include flexible working in all contracts as the rule not the exception to support those with caring responsibilities and childcare needs.
3. Ensure these policies are promoted to all staff and managers are aware and staff are encouraged to make appropriate use of the allowances.
4. Sign up to the Women in Business Charter.
5. Ensure the organisation knows how many carers are in the employee cohort and their experience of accessing rights and entitlement in relation to caring responsibilities.
6. Ensure provision for childcare and carer support across all training programmes outside of a workers usual hours.
7. Ensure part-time workers have access to the same opportunities for promotion training and progression as full time workers; ensure there is a method for assessing this.
8. Provide tax and national insurance-free Workplace Nursery places for your employees through engaging in the Workplace Nursery Scheme, to support staff retention and productivity.
9. If your organisation owns a building with un-used space, consider providing low-cost rent to an early years provider as part of your Corporate Social Responsibility.
10. Add your organisation's voice to national lobbying in support of free early education, childcare and social care as economic infrastructure reinforcing the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill.

Get involved

Follow us on social media: **#valuecaringeconomy**

Contact us: **info@bristolwomensvoice.org.uk**

Visit our website: **www.bristolwomensvoice.org.uk/caring-economy**

