

Northamptonshire Assistive Technology Service

Northamptonshire Assistive Technology Service was formed in 2010/11. It was part of Northamptonshire County Council before moving across to Olympus Care Services in 2012 and then back to Northamptonshire County Council in 2018/9. West Northants Council inherited the Assistive Technology Service along with Call Care Handling Centre from Northampton Borough Council in 2021. The Assistive Technology Service is hosted by West Northants Council and currently provides a service to both North and West Northants councils. The future of the Assistive technology in document in the New AT Strategy being developed across Health, Social Care, Housing and the other local community Organisations.

The population of Northamptonshire has grown at a faster rate than then national average over the past 30 years and is predicted to continue to grow at a greater rate over the medium term from 2018 to 2041. The county is predicted to increase by 14% or 104,900 people over this period. The growth rate over the county differs considerably by area, viewing the change within the two proposed unitary areas the growth rate is predicted to be 12.8% or 51,500 people in the west unitary area and 15.5% or 53,400 in the north unitary area.

In terms of older people, JSNA for Northamptonshire indicates that 12% more people in Northamptonshire are over 65 in 2017 than in 2014, the national average increase being a little over 5%.

Adapting effectively to the changing demographics and increasing demand, it is important to connect modern assistive technology and telecare into the heart of NASS and support services rather than see it as an add-on. These two services need to be fully embedded as a standard part of the information and advice offer and assessment and care processes.

The current spend per annum is £40,000 for the Call Handling service, supporting 2,880 customers per year and the service generates income to the Council of approximately 300k p.a. The Assistive Technology equipment is purchased on a spot basis, the annual spend is £171,000 and the service has supports 4243 approximately customers annually.

Since 2012 assistive technology and telecare have advanced hugely and is constantly evolving with new innovative equipment reaching the market. The technological scope for supporting independence, assisting, and safeguarding vulnerable people in their homes has grown immensely over the years, and ongoing this represents a great opportunity to create innovation and solutions for improving independence.

The Call Care Centre Handling service and the AT equipment provision, have the potential to greatly support the prevention agenda ongoing by supporting vulnerable adults and their families in their homes, promoting independence and prevent incidents such as hospital admissions by quick alerts and responses from key people involved and securing value for money. These services are key to prevent social isolation and loneliness too.