



Co-operative Councils
Innovation Network



Co-operative Case Studies

2022



Solutions to the crisis in care

A spotlight on how co-operative principles can create better ways of working in the care sector

Download: bit.ly/CCIN-care

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 Co-operative Councils
Innovation Network

 People-centred councils
driving social innovation
putting people first



People-centred councils
driving social innovation
putting people first



Co-operative Councils
Innovation Network

“We want to reclaim the traditions of community action, community engagement and civic empowerment which can transform communities and which will help us deliver radical and innovative programmes that are designed, led and delivered in partnership with communities and therefore maximise the social dividend they bring. It has also always been the purpose of the Network to share our developing good practice and to support one another in our co-operative aims and values.”



Councillor Sharon Taylor OBE

Chair of the Co-operative Councils' Innovation Network
Leader of Stevenage Borough Council



It is one of the most challenging periods in local government history. Public Sector funding continues to decline and councils are having to look for innovative ways of providing services with reducing budgets. The Co-operative Councils' Innovation Network (CCIN) was borne out of this uncertainty – a direct public sector response to delivering services differently, using the co-operative values and principles of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity.

These Case Studies demonstrate some of the many ways that Co-operative Councils are working with local people to build strong and resilient neighbourhoods. See more at www.councils.coop/case-studies.



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Growing the Co-op Economy





The Co-operative Councils' Innovation Network comprises more than 100 councils and organisations from across the UK who are committed to finding better ways of working for, and with, local people for the benefit of their local community.

The Network is a non-party-political active hub for co-operative policy development, innovation and advocacy which is:

- Action-focused: a vehicle for helping councils translate co-operative policy and principles into practice.
- Membership-based: funded by modest membership subscriptions from its member councils.
- Open to all UK councils: members share the belief that working co-operatively with communities holds the key to tackling today's challenges.
- Part of the local government family: the network is a Special Interest Group registered with the Local Government Association where we work to promote innovation in local government.

The co-operative approach to public service

Council policy is informed by experience and practice, drawing on, influencing, and framing national and international policy and political debates about the future of public services, local democracy, and communities across the country. It has enormous potential for sharing its approach elsewhere in the UK and overseas. Our work recognises the need to define a new model for local government built on civic leadership, with councils working in equal partnership with local people to shape and strengthen communities; replacing traditional models of top-down governance and service delivery with local leadership, genuine cooperation, built on the founding traditions of the cooperative movement: collective action, cooperation, empowerment, and enterprise.

The cooperative business model allows people and communities to meet their needs and aspirations, offering a unique answer to contemporary problems. The model is a proven self-help model.

Cooperative enterprises play a significant role in driving our economy, showing resilience in tough economic times by creating jobs, adapting to social change, and continuing growth and success.



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Members



Barking & Dagenham Council
Bassetlaw District Council
Birmingham City Council ♥
Brent Council
Bristol City Council
Cardiff Council
Cheshire West and Chester Council ♥
City of Edinburgh Council ♥
Greater Manchester Combined Authority
Royal Borough of Greenwich ♥
Hull City Council
Kirklees Council
Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Lewisham Council
Liverpool Council
Milton Keynes Council
Newcastle City Council ♥
North Hertfordshire District Council
Oldham Council ♥
Oxford City Council ♥
Preston City Council
Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Salford City Council
South Ribble Borough Council
South Tyneside Council ♥
Stevenage Borough Council
Stroud District Council
Sunderland City Council ♥
Tameside Council
Telford and Wrekin Council
Torbay Council
Wigan Council
Worthing Council



Billingham Town Council
Burntwood Town Council
Gloucester Labour Group
Great Dawley Town Council
Halewood Town Council
Hillingdon Labour & Co-op Group
Kidsgrove Town Council
Medway Labour & Co-op Group
Newcastle-U-Lyme Labour & Co-op Group
North Warwickshire Labour Group
Peterborough Labour Group
Plymouth Labour Group
Polesworth Parish Council
Renfrewshire Labour Group
Seaton Valley Community Council ♥
Silverdale Parish Council
Staffordshire Labour & Co-op Group
Winsford Town Council
Witney Town Council
Woughton Community Council
York Labour Group



4OC
The Active Wellbeing Society
Anthony Collins Solicitors
Bates Wells
Beartas
The Behaviouralist
Branding.coop
C.Co
Co-operative and Mutual Solutions
Co-operative Care Colne Valley
Co-operative College

Co-operative Futures
Co-operatives UK ♥
Cooperatives West Midlands
Community Broadband Network
Constellia
Cwmpas
Demos
Development.coop
Evenbreak
Governance International
Greenwich Co-operative Development Agency
ICS.AI
Ideas Alliance
Lambeth GP Food Co-op
Locality
Marks Out Of Tenancy
Mutual Ventures
Oxygen Finance
Peopletoo
POhWER
Power to Change
Public Service Transformation Academy
RedQuadrant
Royal Society of Arts
SBI/E3M
Social Value Exchange
Stir to Action
Trueman Change
Unlimited Potential ♥
Value Match
West and West
Workers Educational Association

Correct as at 30 May 2022



CCIN Statement of Values and Principles

Our values are what we believe in

Whilst not a registered co-operative, the Co-operative Councils' Innovation Network has adopted the Co-operative Values developed by the International Co-operative Alliance.

Co-operatives are based on the values of:

- Self-help.
- Self-responsibility.
- Democracy.
- Equality.
- Equity.
- Solidarity.

In the tradition of their founders, co-operative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

Our Principles guide the way we and our members put our values into action

The Co-operative Councils' Innovation Network endorses the principles of the International Co-operative Alliance:

- Democratic member control.
- Member economic participation.
- Autonomy and independence.
- Education, training and information.
- Co-operation among co-operatives.
- Concern for community.

In acknowledging that Councils are not in themselves registered co-operatives, we and our members have developed principles that have grown from those of the International Co-operative Alliance and are relevant within the context of local government.



The CCIN has developed ten icons to illustrate these principles which we have included alongside the Case Studies.



Social Partnership

We will strengthen the co-operative partnership between citizens, communities, enterprises and Councils, based on a shared sense of responsibility for wellbeing and mutual benefit.



Democratic Engagement

We will support the active engagement of the full range of residents in decision making and priority setting.



Co-production

We will develop systems that enable citizens to be equal partners in designing and commissioning public services and in determining the use of public resources.



Enterprise and social economy

We will promote community-based approaches to economic development that focus on supporting the creation of jobs, social enterprises and other businesses and providing an environment for co-operative and mutual enterprises to thrive.



Maximising social value

We will support the development of a framework and criteria for social value, giving substance to the concept and supporting Councils with the tools to ensure better local social and economic outcomes.



Community leadership and a new role for councillors

We will explore ways for councils to act as a platform for helping the community to contribute to local outcomes, and to re-think the role of councillors as community connectors, brokers and leaders.



New models of meeting priority needs

In exploring new ways of meeting the priority needs of our communities we will encourage models, such as co-operatives and mutuals, which give greater influence and voice to staff and users. in designing and commissioning public services and in determining the use of public resources.



Innovation

We will embrace innovation in how we work with local communities to drive positive change.



Learning

We will capture and 'expand' the experience and learning from individual projects and approaches in order to encourage broader application of co-operative principles within individual member Councils and across the Network.



Walking the talk

As a membership organisation we will make this statement of our principles operational by:

- Co-operation among members: Our members work together to help each other implement our values, sharing experiences and learning.
- Openness of membership: Full, Associate and Affiliate Membership is open to any qualifying Council, organisation or individual who shares our values and is committed to putting them into action.
- Co-production of the Network's work: Members help shape the Network's work programme and the content of events and written products.
- Action-focused: The network is a vehicle for helping councils translate co-operative values and principles into policy and practice.
- Membership-based: The network is majority funded by modest membership subscriptions from its member Councils, Associates and Affiliates.
- Non-party-political: Members share the belief that working co-operatively within and across communities holds the key to tackling today's challenges.

To find out more, visit:
<https://bit.ly/CCIN-Principles>.

Funded projects

Each year CCIN Members are encouraged to suggest projects where they can work with other members to find cooperative policy solutions to the challenges facing local government. We are open to all ideas, the more innovative, the better! Find out more about the process here: <https://www.councils.coop/funded-projects>. Here's a taster.

From Co-operative Councils to Co-operative Places (2017) - Led by Oldham Council working with Collaborate. "We know more about what we don't want than what we do..." It is up to Co-operative Councils to take the intellectual and policy risks required of their strong social ethos.

<https://bit.ly/CCIN-coop-places>

Community-Led Housing (2018) - The Housing Commission was led by Croydon Council, with a practical focus on encouraging local authorities to foster cooperative, community-led solutions to the housing crisis.

<http://bit.ly/CCIN-housing>

Cooperatives Unleashed: as seen from the Grassroots (2020) - Led by Plymouth City Council, this project was designed to inspire ambition and tenacity - with the people, policy, funders, projects, and business ideas and training - to put wealth directly into communities.

<http://bit.ly/CCIN-unleashed>

CCIN Action Learning: Co-operation through Covid-19 (2020) - The unprecedented impact of Covid-19 on communities throughout the UK has meant that councils have had to respond in quick and innovative ways. This publication has Case Studies from 15 Member Councils.

<http://bit.ly/CCIN-Covid>

Beyond Asset Transfer - harnessing community asset transfer to create stronger local communities (2021) - Led by Newcastle City Council and completed by Mutual Ventures. Transferring assets to communities or not-for-profit organisations is not always easy, even when you know it is the right solution. This report seeks to demystify the Asset Transfer process and encourage more councils to be bold in their plans for community assets.

<https://bit.ly/CCIN-Asset-Transfer>

Understanding the Digital Divide (2022) - Led by Cheshire West & Chester Council, this practical toolkit helps tackle Digital Poverty and the Digital Divide. The gap between those who can confidently and conveniently go online and those who cannot.

<https://bit.ly/CCIN-digital>

Cooperative Approaches to Reaching Net Zero (2022) - Led by Kirklees Council. Reaching Net Zero is the biggest and most crucial shared challenge we face globally and locally. This report and toolkit showcase how Co-operative Councils achieve this and provide resources to rapidly implement approaches most applicable to your places.

<https://bit.ly/CCIN-Net-Zero>

The Co-operative Difference in Care (2022) - Compiled by Peopletoo. Our Members' wide variety of work places a spotlight on how the cooperative principles can be applied to create new and effective ways of working, help support communities, and become part of a solution to the care crisis. <https://bit.ly/CCIN-care>

Community Economic Development Plans (2022) - Led by Birmingham City Council and Cooperative Futures. Community economic development planning (CEDP) is a process of economic development within a specific geographic area to make the economy in that area work well for that community. This report shows the value of Councils working in cooperation with communities to undertake community economic development planning.

<https://bit.ly/CCIN-comm-econ-devt-plans>

Member benefits

Join the CCIN to be part of a growing and influential network of councils committed to developing a new relationship with citizens. There is a growing interest, across the political spectrum, in how to share power and responsibility with citizens, support the development of community and civic life and find more cost-effective ways to create successful and resilient communities.

By becoming part of the Network, you will:

- Access the **latest ideas** and thinking about putting Cooperative principles into practice.
- Position your council as an **innovator**.
- Help to **influence** policy thinking at national level.
- Share examples of projects and initiatives and **learn from others** about what works.
- Co-produce **tools and techniques** to support the development of cooperative approaches.

- Be invited to **Cooperative Conferences** around the country where you can meet and work with peers.
- Join an **officer network** who are leading the development of new approaches.
- Have access to a cadre of ambitious **political leaders** who are trying to bring change to their communities.
- Access a growing body of **resources** on the new CCIN website.
- Be part of **regional and national networks** in England, Scotland and Wales.
- Join the **debate** on our active social media platforms.
- Access our multi-supplier **Consultancy Framework** of specialist organisations to help you develop policy, implement prototypes and build capacity when you need to move quickly and flexibly.
- Profile your council's **achievements** nationally.

In addition, we have several additional benefits that are specific to each membership category.

Ask us for further details.



For further information, contact:

Nicola Huckerby
Operations and Communications Lead
e: comms@councils.coop
t: 07813 687292



Barking and Dagenham Council

Becontree Forever: 30,000+ residents mark century of world's biggest council estate and start to reimagine its future

Becontree Forever was a radical programme of art, architecture and new infrastructure which the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (LBBD) launched in 2021 in collaboration with residents and local partners. It marks 100 years of the innovative Becontree Estate: the most ambitious interwar housing estate and the UK's biggest council housing estate – housing around 85,000 people (around 40% of the Borough's population).

Becontree Forever celebrated the estate's bold beginnings, but also reimaged its future as the population continues to evolve and change. The project acknowledged the importance of the place and the aspirations it was built with a century ago, while increasing the level of social and cultural engagement within the diverse community who call it home now.

This ambitious programme ran throughout 2021, in collaboration with local people, to bring arts and culture into the everyday life of the estate and had extra resonance in bringing the community together after the period of isolation brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic. Led by a Becontree Steering Group comprised of community partners and residents, the Becontree Forever programme:

- Ran public festivals and events attended by **over 30,000 people**, delivered in partnership with more than **75 local arts and community organisations**;
- Worked with **59 local schools** to shape and deliver programming across the Borough including workshops, exhibitions and collaborative artist-led commissions;
- Collaborated with **thousands** of students, families, young and elderly people to take part in initiatives focussing on heritage, culture and equality;
- Developed a **visual identity** for the programme and comprehensive online tools at www.becontreeforever.uk to make participation viable and accessible throughout the pandemic;



Becontree 100 Festival - UKON Carnival Arts by Jimmy Lee

Cultural activity for Becontree Forever has focused on key themes and programming strands to promote greater civic pride and community cohesion. Examples include:

- **Girls Like Us** - a digital programme for young Black women aged 16-18 focusing on careers in the fashion industry to challenge colonial beauty standards and
- **Speak Up!** - a programme for young Black and South Asian men aged 14-21 led by Green Shoes Arts, using VR technology to explore mental health)
- **Intergenerational programming** including: craft toolkits designed by emerging artists for elderly residents in Care Homes; TikTok Tea Dance Challenges choreographed by Barking and Dagenham Youth Dance; and Arc Theatre's In Our Own Words Verbatim Theatre project exploring the local history of Becontree through experiences of participants young and old.

- **Becontree 100 Festival Weekender**, a free arts and music festival in Parsloes Park (August 2021), produced in collaboration with Love Music Hate Racism and local partners. Promoting unity through the power of music, it featured community exhibitions, food stalls, and a heritage-inspired tearoom. Drawing on the history of the Roundhouse pub which in the 1960's hosted Queen, Led Zeppelin and Pink Floyd, artists performing included: Boomtown Rats, Frank Turner, YolanDa Brown, Don Letts and Neville Staple from The Specials.
- **A Winter Lantern Parade** (November 2021) organised with local schools and Creative Barking & Dagenham who led a series of free lantern making workshops. **370 students and their families** paraded to Valence Park with music and street performances enroute, followed by a fireworks display attended by over **6,000 residents**;
- Public realm commissions by artists including playgrounds by Yinka Ilori and Eva Rothschild, street furniture by Studio Morison, commemorative plaques by Leonor Antunes and community green spaces by nintim Architects. Commissioned with Create London, works have been developed with insight from residents and are being installed across the Estate;

LBBD worked in close collaboration with the Becontree Steering Group, residents and local partners including care homes, schools, local organisations (including Arc Theatre, Barking & Dagenham Youth Dance, East End Women's Museum, Girls Like Us, Green Shoes Arts, Studio 3 Arts, Soul&Sound and The White House) and national partners (including Love Music Hate Racism, Create London, London Jazz Festival, Focal Point Gallery, Serpentine Galleries, Arts Council England and Wellcome Trust).

Becontree was heavily impacted by declining 20th century manufacturing industries and austerity, so residents have been faced with complex economic and social factors that have impacted their daily lives over recent decades. Through Becontree Forever we collaborated with communities to ensure that people in this Borough know they matter, to highlight the history and aspiration which can be unlocked by looking at the roots from which the Becontree Estate was born.



Credit Jimmy Lee Photography

While the centenary celebrated the past, it also reimagined Becontree for the 21st century. LBBD has committed to rebuilding the estate for current and future generations, starting with investments in retrofitting, parks, transport and community spaces. Ongoing projects include extending Kingsley Hall (Becontree's first community centre), a substantial investment in sporting areas through the Parklife programme and the purchase of Dagenham Heathway Shopping Centre.

For further information contact:

Ann Marie Pena

Head of Culture, London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

e: annmarie.pena@lbbd.gov.uk

www.lbbd.gov.uk

**Barking &
Dagenham**





Bassetlaw District Council

Protecting the Vulnerable: using a community-based hub to tackle health inequalities caused by Covid-19, especially targeting extremely vulnerable persons

In March 2020, Bassetlaw District Council and its partners established a support hub in the Community Voluntary Services offices prior to a Local Resilience Forum Hub being set up. The Bassetlaw hub benefited from the Community and Voluntary experience in local delivery, which gave direct access to data on vulnerable individuals. As a result, the hub immediately made contact to assess needs, coordinate service provision and, most importantly, provide reassurance – especially to those living alone across a large geographical area with many isolated communities. The primary focus was to meet the needs of ‘extremely vulnerable persons’ (EVP). Bassetlaw had over 7,000 people in this category; over 6% of the population – the highest level in the East Midlands and above surrounding areas. The initial priority was food provision, the hub taking over from the Foodbank which suspended its operations. Following this a prescription delivery service was established for pharmacies who could not meet this need.

Development

After setting up the hub, the Council faced a much larger demand as welfare checks identified a range of complex emotional support needs beyond the EVP target group. This included those suffering the economic impacts of Covid-19, those entering the welfare system for the first time and those facing delays in universal credit. There was a huge surge in demand for food: four times more than the normal Foodbank demand. The partnership was able to access data from e-Healthscope including age, frailty and those living by themselves or who had dementia. Liaising with its County Council colleagues, it excluded those in receipt of support from social care and targeted those in age bands of 70 and above. As a consequence, a further 1,700 individuals were identified, all of whom were contacted by the Bassetlaw Hub.

Implementation

The Council’s established social prescribing partnership provided an immediate, flexible and holistic response to the myriad of local support requests that sprang from Covid-19. The partnership’s objective is to reduce health inequalities and use community empowerment to bring about long-term improvements. The value of a shared approach between the District Council, Community and Voluntary Service and the Clinical Commissioning Group was clearly shown. The Council will pilot this learning into new models to tackle health inequalities, including responding to a second wave of Covid-19 and other health inequalities, helping to relieve pressure on the NHS. Its objective is to provide a more holistic approach to improving health and wellbeing in Bassetlaw by promoting a population-based service. This will work with local communities using a community development action model to help residents act together to improve their conditions. The approach will include targeted population work dealing with specific issues linked to rurality and ethnicity.



Review

The Council's experience has demonstrated the benefits of a social prescribing link with workers embedded in health and social care settings. The partnership is at a critical point in its development; after working together for several years, the local insight gathered since March 2020 has caused it to pause and look to 'reset' how it works together. The council has discovered that in some areas of Bassetlaw, spontaneous voluntary action, with communities looking after each other, is sustaining itself in a way no partnership or programme has ever achieved. The Council has championed a 'can do' attitude while responding to Covid-19. Traditional barriers of multi-agency boundaries, data sharing etc. were quickly set aside, particularly at local level. The challenge it now sees at a strategic level is to prevent agencies reverting to their default positions. The needs of the district differ greatly, which has been the partnership's collective challenge to date. Too often, it has witnessed how national programmes and city-centric approaches fail to deliver the impact intended. Lasting change is driven by communities themselves and it has begun to see the green shoots of this appearing. The Council will build on the strength of the partnership to improve impact across Bassetlaw. Its collective vision is to work differently and better together so that people get the right support at the right time. It will measure its success by the improvement in the health and wellbeing of its community and the reduction in health inequalities.

For further information, contact:

Stephen Brown

Head of Corporate Services, Bassetlaw District Council

e: stephen.brown@bassetlaw.gov.uk

t: 01909 533767

www.bassetlaw.gov.uk





Birmingham City Council

Delivering Social Value through the MatchMyProject platform

There are many community projects delivering innovative and valuable services in Birmingham, often working with hard-to-reach groups to provide high quality, community-led and innovative services. However, many grassroots organisations fail to access funding and resources from mainstream funders - including the council itself.

To tackle this problem, we developed MatchMyProject - an online platform that matches community organisations in need of resources for the delivery of their projects and businesses working directly for Birmingham City Council or in the area. Using this tool, community organisation can post requests for support on specific projects, with businesses able to browse a curated directory of projects and make offers of support directly.

Once the project is complete, both community organisations and businesses share their feedback, with businesses receiving an overall rating derived by community feedback. This rating is then shared on the MatchMyProject leaderboard.

Since the soft launch in May 2021, we have seen 104 projects uploaded by 120 organisations. 56 community orgs uploaded a project; and 101 suppliers signed up giving a ratio of 6 community orgs for every 5 suppliers.

Birmingham City Council worked with the Social Value Exchange to create MatchMyProject from scratch. The Social Value Exchange team is currently working on a number of new features that include the speeding up community organisation verification and automatic generation of case studies. These will be released this summer.

A Birmingham based school received resources to create an allotment and told us, 'I would like to just mention what a fantastic resource the MatchMyProject portal is to enable such projects to go ahead. We are incredibly grateful.'

On a different project, a business who built a roof for a community garden, enabling outdoor education to go ahead, commented that the tool provides 'a great way to support local organisations and provide social value.'

For further information, contact:

Rokneddin Shariat

Policy & Governance Manager, Birmingham City Council

e: rokneddin.shariat@birmingham.gov.uk

t: 07504 515053

matchmyproject.org/birmingham





Birmingham City Council

Air Quality Monitoring in Schools

In January 2022 the Council launched its first Clean Air Strategy (CAS) for the city of Birmingham. This innovative strategy seeks to improve air quality across the city and not just in areas where air pollution concentrations are traditionally high. The launch took place at Lea Forest School and was undertaken in conjunction with the first discreet project under the CAS; Air Quality Monitoring in Schools (AQMiS).

The AQMiS project seeks to raise awareness of air pollution amongst primary and secondary school students and teachers and by extension amongst parents. The aspiration is to inspire a culture of behavioural change both in terms of influencing the choice of mode of transit to school and also in wider lifestyle choices.

The project is a collaboration between Public Health, Travel Demand and Environmental Health and involves the deployment of indicative air quality sensors which monitor gaseous and particulate pollutants, specifically nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM₁₀ / PM_{2.5}), at a location on the school grounds and display the pollutant concentrations via an expanded 'traffic light' based on a common air quality index (CAQI) on the sensor and also provide actual concentrations via data provision on a publicly accessible website. In this way there is an instant visual guide as to the pollutant concentration and in-depth data available behind the scenes. The project is supported by educational resources which the schools can use to incorporate the project into student learning.

The project seeks to deploy an air quality sensor at schools across the city with at least one school per ward being selected. This ties in with the Council's vision for the CAS to be relevant across the wider city and to not just focus on areas where air quality is traditionally recognised to be poor. This is underpinned by the Council's pledges within the CAS around collaboration, clean air for schools, protecting the vulnerable and measuring progress.

For further information, contact:

Mark Wolstencroft

Operations Manager Environmental Protection, Birmingham City Council

e: mark.wolstencroft@birmingham.gov.uk

t: 07766 924993

www.birmingham.gov.uk





Brent Council

Black Community Action Plan (BCAP)

Brent is the most diverse borough in the country and has the seventh highest black community in London by numbers. The Black community continue to be affected by inequalities and systemic racism. The tragic killing of George Floyd in the US brought this into sharp focus; The Covid-19 pandemic also shone a light on the deep inequalities that exist, with Black communities being disproportionately impacted in terms of the number of cases of the virus and mortality rates.

To address the inequalities our Black community continue to face, we agreed the Black Community Action Plan (BCAP) in July 2020.

The Action Plan

In June 2020 the Council's Leader, Cllr Muhammed Butt, Deputy Leader, Cllr Margaret McLennan and Chief Executive, Carolyn Downs, met with 72 black community leaders and young people from Black communities across the borough to listen to their concerns and ideas about what could be done to make black lives better; how the Black community could be supported to determine local solutions to improve outcomes, and how the Council could work with local communities to reduce inequalities in Brent. This conversation led to the development of the BCAP, which sets out the Council's 10 year commitment to tackling inequalities experienced by our Black community.

There are **nine priority areas** listed in the BCAP:

- Early intervention: children, young people and families.
- Enabling and strengthening community leadership through capacity building.
- Developing community spaces – run and managed by local communities.
- Supporting the black community and voluntary sector - grant funding to voluntary sector organisations and procurement.
- Support for employment and enterprise.
- Accountability.
- Homes and homelessness.
- Tackling health inequalities.
- Embedding equality and diversity within the Council workforce.

Our Cabinet agreed for annual delivery plans to be produced in collaboration with our black community (via thematic steering groups) over the 10-year period of the action plan to ensure the nine priority areas are successfully met. As part of monitoring progress, we developed a Community Reference Group (CRG) to have oversight of all the priority delivery plans. This group consists of community leaders who attended the initial scoping meeting back in June 2020, along with more recent members who have joined the BCAP movement. The group's membership will continue to be reviewed to ensure it remains inclusive and reflective of Brent's Black communities.

Year One – achievements

The 2021/22 delivery plan focused on three priorities:

- Early intervention: children, young people and families.
- Building sustainable community capacity.
- Supporting Black-led organisations.

Key activity in 2021/22 included:

- Working with young residents to develop the Youth Advisory Group (YAG). This enabled the direct voice of young people to be brought in to the heart of the work of the BCAP. Also, this ensured that there are long-term mechanisms to engage with young black people in the borough in settings and ways that are convenient for them..
- Co-producing a 'Pro-Vaccine - No Vaccine' livestream event with the YAG, attended by the NHS, vaccine experts, and 300 young people. This allowed the younger Brent demographic to have an open and honest conversation about the vaccine e.g. break down myths; ask about facts and the science, and pose questions relating to government, trust and leadership.
- Supporting the YAG in creating their first Insight Day at BSupporting the YAG in creating their first Insight Day at Brent Civic Centre, which had attendance from over 50 employers, including Google, HS2, Wates, Ultra Education, AECOM, and Quintain. It was attended by 300 young residents. This event raised aspirations and motivation within the Black community, and also created career pathways for many black residents..
- Working with the YAG to co-produce a leadership development programme for black young people.
- Launching the Black Business Network, which provides our black businesses with tailored support and training to thrive.

- Developing a Black Business Excellence Quality Mark to recognise Black businesses and their commitment to providing excellent services.
- Developing and delivering a pilot mutual mentoring scheme, connecting senior managers and Black staff members to increase the organisational awareness on the nature and impacts of inequality.



Year Two, and beyond

We will continue to co-produce and co-design initiatives with our Black community; this will be central to the delivery of the BCAP priorities for year two (2022/23) and the remaining years of the plan.

The Council has invested £3m to purchase and renovate the former Picture Palace on Manor Park Road in Harlesden, and transform it into a space for the African and Caribbean community with the input of black residents. This remains an ongoing key priority for the BCAP to help address the inequalities faced by the Black Community.

For further information contact:

Che-Kwon Sterling

Community Action Plan Co-ordinator, Brent Council

e: che-kwon.sterling@brent.gov.uk

t: 020 8937 6844

www.brent.gov.uk





Cardiff Council

Cardiff Living Wage City Partnership

Cardiff Council made the commitment to pay the Real Living Wage (RLW) in 2012 and was accredited as a Living Wage Employer by the Living Wage Foundation in 2015. In July 2017, the Council's administration set out its commitment for Cardiff to become a Living Wage City in response to rising housing, food and fuel prices and the increased cost of living, particularly with in-work poverty becoming a growing issue within the UK.

A Living Wage City Partnership was created to secure more jobs in the city that pay the RLW and encourage employers to become accredited as Living Wage Employers. The Partnership's membership comprises some of the city's anchor institutions such as the Council; Cardiff & Vale University Health Board; Cardiff University; Wales TUC Cymru; and Capital Law, as well as voluntary sector organisations including Cynnal Cymru (Sustain Wales) – the official accreditation body for the RLW in Wales; Citizens Cymru; Cardiff Third Sector Council; and Cardiff & Vale Credit Union.

The Partnership's Steering Group is further strengthened and supported by the political commitment and leadership of the Council's Leader, as Chair of the Steering Group, and Cabinet Member for Finance who have both driven forward this agenda and challenged other public services and employers in Cardiff to sign up to paying the RLW. This resulted in Cardiff achieving Living Wage City status in November 2019; the only UK capital city to have received this distinction.

The Steering Group developed a three-year action plan with clear targets to be achieved by May 2022. These have not only been met, but have been exceeded ahead of schedule. They included the target of 150 Living Wage Employers being accredited by May 2022, which was achieved six months in advance in October 2021. As of February 2022, the figure stands at 163. In addition, over 64,000 workers are employed by accredited Living Wage Employers against a target of 48,000, and nearly 8,000 workers have received a pay rise to at least the RLW in Cardiff, exceeding the target of 6,500.

These achievements have also impacted positively on the Cardiff economy as people have more money in their pockets to spend locally. Cardiff University has calculated that an additional £39m has gone into the Cardiff economy due to uplifts in salaries as a result of an employer becoming an accredited Living Wage Employer. This highlights the positive difference that paying the RLW makes to the city.

As well as encouraging all local employers to become accredited, the Council offers financial assistance to Cardiff-based small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSEs) who become accredited employers. The Council will pay a grant of up to £720 to qualifying employers, equal to three years' accreditation fees.

Steering Group partners have also been instrumental in Cardiff becoming home to the first two Living Wage Buildings in Wales – these are buildings with multiple business tenants, all of whom pay the RLW to their employees and on-site contractors. Cardiff University's new 'sbarc | spark' building was accredited as Wales's first Living Wage building in June 2021. sbarc | spark will be home to the world's first Social Science Research Park, where 400 researchers will share their collective expertise to solve societal challenges, and Cardiffinnovations@sbarc, the University's centre for start-ups, spin-outs and partnerships. The other building in the city is home to a number of employers, including Cynnal Cymru's own offices.

Cardiff Council is one of only two accredited Living Wage Councils in Wales and continues to work constructively with city partners to promote the RLW nationally in Wales. Cardiff Living Wage City Steering Group partners have also played a leading role in the establishment of a Living Wage for Wales website (www.livingwage.wales) by the Welsh Government, including providing financial support to help develop the website, which went live in June 2021.

In addition, Steering Group partners have played an active and influential role in calling for the RLW to be expanded into the social care sector in Wales and have lobbied the Welsh Government consistently and effectively on this issue over recent years. This resulted in the announcement by the Welsh Government in December 2021 that an additional £43m will be provided to councils and local health boards to enable the payment of the RLW for social care staff from April 2022. This is a major achievement and reflects the value placed on the people working tirelessly in this sector to support our most vulnerable citizens, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic.



sbarcispark building at Cardiff University –
the first Living Wage building in Wales

For further information contact:

John Paxton

Strategy & Development Manager, Commissioning & Procurement, Cardiff Council

e: jpaxton@cardiff.gov.uk

t: 029 2087 3713

www.cardiff.gov.uk





Cheshire West and Chester Council

Talking about poverty in Cheshire West and Chester to build a Fairer Future

Cheshire West and Chester is home to over 343,000 people with diverse, attractive and prosperous neighbourhoods that generally afford residents a good quality of life. However, there are pockets of intense inequality in opportunities and outcomes affecting both urban and rural communities.

Within the Borough almost 25,000 people live in areas within the most deprived 10 per cent in England, 15 per cent of households have an annual income under £15,000 per year and over 9,000 children live in poverty. There is also an unacceptable gap in life expectancy between those people living in the most deprived neighbourhoods compared with the most affluent areas. In Cheshire West and Chester this gap is almost a decade for men and almost 8 years for women.

Cheshire West and Chester Council facilitated two Poverty Truth Commissions held in 2017 and 2020 with the aim of tackling the root causes of poverty and addressing gaps in services across the borough.

Community Inspirers, volunteers with lived and living experience of poverty, shared their stories and the effect poverty had on them and their families. Through true listening and collaboration, members of the Commissions were able to reflect on how systems and process could better support local people.

'Sharing my story has made me feel empowered that my voice, as well as all the other community inspirers, has been heard.' Antony - Community Inspirer

There have been a range of outcomes from the commissions including:

- More collaborative and effective partnership working and increased socio-economic inclusion awareness across a wide range of local organisations
- Community Inspirers consistently reported a stronger sense of confidence, enabling them to have voice, secure employment, develop their learning, become more independent.
- New support for front line staff to understand the story of the person in front of them, their challenges, stresses and often complex problems and the need for compassion, empathy, and making any difference they can, no matter how small. As a result, one social housing provider moved from a process-driven approach to offering a person-centred, wellbeing service which focuses on early intervention and supporting people to sustain tenancies and they are now reporting a 75 per cent reduction in evictions.
- Improved access to food in schools, improved 'pick lists' at food banks.

Building on the learning from the Poverty Truth Commissions, it was agreed in early 2020 to mainstream this approach to inform and support all poverty work across the Council and with local partner agencies, developing a programme of work that retains the ethos of putting people at the heart of policy development and service design.



In October 2020 the Council declared a poverty emergency setting poverty reduction alongside tackling climate change as the foundation for a fairer, greener recovery from Covid-19. The declaration also established a commitment to work collaboratively with the academic community and to adopt a social justice approach to poverty.

'The coronavirus storm has been difficult for us all, but for people like me struggling to get by, it has been more difficult. We must remember, we are in the same storm, but not all in the same boat. In September I had my first visitor to sit and talk to me in 18 months. We must invest in systems that keep people afloat, not in policies that pull people under.' Gus - Community Inspirer

Following the declaration, a new 'Fairer Future Strategy 2022/32' has been co-produced with communities setting out an ambitious ten-year plan to reduce poverty. The strategy was developed based upon a comprehensive engagement exercise underpinned by the poverty truth philosophy of 'nothing about us without us is for us.'

The strategy underlines our commitment to hear the voices of people experiencing poverty and take action to address the issues they raise. It highlights the need to take urgent actions to alleviate the symptoms of poverty by working closely with communities and stakeholders to find local solutions to problems. This approach builds on the successful deployment of a £500k winter poverty fund which provided additional resources to voluntary and community groups to tackle winter poverty. Including £50k allocated towards a Tackling Poverty Crowdfunder to support local projects backed by communities with clear social benefits. The long-term ambition of the strategy is to address the underlying causes of poverty through economic transformation as part of the boroughwide approach to creating a more inclusive economy.

'Being involved as an Inspirer from the start of the Poverty Truth Commissions, I have witnessed first-hand what can be achieved with openness of minds - and the dedication of people from all sides to improve the lives of people in poverty. What has already been achieved is far more than we could ever have dreamed of in those early days.'

The Fairer Future strategy is the culmination of all the hard work of those involved - and going forward with the dedicated people we have and the resources they bring with them we have the tools to achieve much, much, more and have a golden opportunity to change many more lives.' Barbara - Community Inspirer

For further information, contact:

Catherine Fletcher

Strategy and Innovation Manager, Cheshire West and Chester Council

e: catherine.fletcher@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk





Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA)

Shifting the Strategic Super-Tanker: putting wellbeing and equality at the heart of our strategies and actions

In October 2021, Greater Manchester Combined Authority provided a case study for the CCIN which highlighted the work of the Greater Manchester Independent Inequalities Commission and the Institute of Health Equity Build Back Fairer in Greater Manchester. Since then the Combined Authority and its partners have been working to embed the recommendations from these reports at the heart of strategy and action, making tackling inequality 'business as usual'.

Together, these reports provided 48 separate recommendations across a range of thematic and operational domains. Woven into the reports were further suggestions and encouragement to modify our focus in Greater Manchester – putting a greater emphasis on inequality and inequity. The Build Back Fairer work also gave us a framework for action and a set of Beacon Indicators which would show us whether we have been successful in driving down health inequality in the city region.

The challenge was clear – and our politicians confirmed their acceptance of that challenge.

The Essential Pivot

Both reports called for wellbeing and equality goals to be put at the heart of the Greater Manchester Strategy, with public budgets and projects all geared towards redressing imbalances by building a strong economy and working with residents to deliver the best possible services. The Greater Manchester Strategy is where the Combined Authority, together with its GM stakeholders set out our shared vision and ambition, and the alignment of messaging, direction and action around it will be key to creating this 'essential pivot'. But to do this we would need to shift the strategic super-tanker and move away from the thematic silos around which our work was previously organised (and is still resourced).

Co-production

As the Independent Inequalities Commission pointed out 'The challenge for Greater Manchester is to combine clear leadership from the top on prioritising Inequalities, with being brave enough to share power with those most affected by inequalities'. Co-production of the Greater Manchester Strategy would be the key to its success.

Starting with a complex exercise of mapping stakeholders, GMCA reached out to partner organisations and structures, to its 10 constituent local authorities and their partners, to the business community, and to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations. We also engaged communities of identity via our GM Equalities Panels and to those affected by poverty and socio-economic inequality. The conversations started with reflection on what had gone before, moving to shared opportunities and aspirations, before identifying the 'cross-cutting' issues and enablers of success.

To inform the work of the Independent Inequalities Commission, GMCA used its online engagement platform to capture resident views. The Combined Authority also has a bi-monthly insight survey, established at the beginning of the Covid pandemic, but maintained to build understanding of how our residents feel, how their lives are being impacted by the pandemic or the cost-of-living crisis, and to inform our policy development.

Stakeholder engagement during the development of the Strategy gave us several 'lightbulb' moments, including:

- The Greater Manchester Strategy should provide a central core around which our many thematic strategies and plans should pivot
- It should enable distributed leadership. 'Levelling up' within Greater Manchester should happen from the bottom up - not seek to control activities from a GM level.
- Delivering our shared Outcomes and Commitments will depend on how we work, as much as what we work on.

- The Strategy should be supported by detailed knowledge of inequality across places and communities. Headline progress measures, targeted indicators and qualitative assessments should form the basis of a comprehensive performance framework and progress monitoring.

The Greater Manchester Strategy

Launched in March 2022, the result is not just a glossy document that resides on shelves and in digital archives. About Greater Manchester contains a vision / central pivot of 'good lives for all', supported by the three pillars of a greener, fairer and more prosperous city region. It has a suite of outcomes – and a measurement framework to monitor progress made which embraces the Build Back Fairer Beacon Indicators. There are 15 commitments against which action will be taken (and evaluated). All this is underpinned by a strong foundation formed from agreed ways of working.

We are adopting practices which will enable a consistent approach across systems, institutions and communities to come together. Finally, case studies are provided to illustrate the types of activities and ways of working that we would like to replicate and spread.

The Independent Inequalities Commission – One Year On...

In March 2022, GMCA invited the Inequalities Commissioners back to review our work. The Commission noted progress on 'process' being made, but they highlighted that, one year on, the world is different: inequalities, poverty, and deprivation are set to increase at a time when we had all hoped to be focused on building back better. Under this new reality the Commissioners called for more courage, creativity, innovation and action. Our next steps therefore are to accelerate the work that we have put in train.



For further information contact:

Anne Lythgoe

Principal, VCSE Accord Implementation, GMCA

e: anne.lythgoe@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

GMCA **GREATER
MANCHESTER
COMBINED
AUTHORITY**





Royal Borough of Greenwich

Greening Greenwich Cooperatively

The Challenge

In 2014 a group of volunteers who were concerned about the escalating pace of the climate emergency and the injustice of energy and fuel poverty formed SELCE.

The SELCE model is simple; to produce, use and share energy, generated by cooperatively owned renewables, to serve energy efficient buildings and to benefit our most vulnerable

Solution

248 local residents have raised over £500,000 in community finance to support the installation of solar PV projects.

“Community Share Offers” encourage socially minded investors to invest in solar and receive an annual dividend, whereby their investment is paid in full within 20 years. To date, their solar investment has avoided 59,703 kgCO₂e.

The scheme has now been extended to include LED lighting retrofit, which is designed to help community buildings combat the increase in energy prices.

Supporting Vulnerable Households

SELCE has used surplus funds from solar installations to help reduce fuel poverty by:

- Holding energy cafes.
- Visiting vulnerable residents in their home.
- Holding workshops for frontline workers.
- Training energy champions.
- Encouraging behavioural change.
- Installing measures such as insulation and heat pumps.

During 2021, SELCE supported 789 vulnerable households who are struggling to pay their energy bills.

They are proud to be part of a national network of community activists and co-operatives who are paving the way to a cleaner, fairer, brighter future for those households who are on the lowest incomes.



Greening Greenwich Business

In 2021, SELCE was allocated funding by the Royal Borough of Greenwich to support Greenwich businesses to develop sustainability policies, as part of a green recovery from Covid-19.

Through this programme, local businesses are supported on:

- Best practice.
- Implementing sustainability strategies.
- Energy and environmental audits.
- Green action plans.
- Financing solutions for retrofit to support LED Lighting, Solar PV, heat pumps, and insulation.

Over the last six months, dozens of local businesses have signed up for audits and are seeking ways to improve their environmental performance, to align their business to local and national policy on climate change.



Facing the toughest challenge

During the past year SELCE has set up a service to tackle one of the toughest challenges, decarbonising domestic buildings through energy retrofit.

Over 300 individuals have engaged with our Future Fit Homes project and 60 homeowners have benefited from our 1-1 sessions.

Homeowners have received thermal imaging surveys, energy performance certificates, co-ordination and advice on small and large scale deep retrofit projects.

SELCE is built on the dedication of volunteers and the goodwill of fellow co-operatives. They have thrived during one of the UK's toughest challenges and they have done this by working hand in hand with the Local Authority.

SELCE continues to support the Royal Borough of Greenwich's commitment to tackling the climate emergency and energy injustice. We continue to support our most vulnerable, making sure nobody is left behind.

For further information contact:

Mervyn Fernandes

Area Town Centres and Business Engagement Manager, Royal Borough of Greenwich

e: mervyn.fernandes@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

t: 07950 789310

www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk





Hull City Council

Delivering Enterprise Skills and Youth Entrepreneurship in a spirit of Co-operation

Hull City Council supports young people through its Youth Enterprise team that has gained a national reputation for supporting aspiring young entrepreneurs through its enterprise skills programmes. The team has a commitment to co-operation, as they practice it in its engagement with young people and its partners. This has enabled it to secure support for its services both inside and outside the authority through effective partnerships involving customers and delivery organisations.



The main enterprise programmes the Team lead on:

Make £5 Blossom Project www.hullready.co.uk in schools, in which a business loans a group of pupils £150 to see how they can make it grow, at the same time the pupils learn about the importance of Hull's Big 13 Enterprise Skills, one of which is making ethical decisions. The pupils decide where the profits they raise are spent as part of their understanding of the value of cooperation, profits are also used to develop new enterprise curriculum activities for schools as part of our eco-system. At the end the pupils get to present to an audience of political, business and education leaders in the City.

Making Changes for Careers Programme www.mc4c.co.uk which through a programme of support and accessing opportunities, enables 16-29 year old's on universal credit to become either entrepreneurs and receive a Test Market Grant and become part of Hull's ever growing network of young entrepreneurs or become an enterprising employee after undertaking a Big 13 Enterprise Skills Programme, which is often the first course they have completed in their lives.



The work of the team, and the Big 13 Enterprise Skills are grounded in the key cooperative principle of working together through local, national, regional and international structures in order to deal more effectively with social and community needs in order to create an open and supportive youth enterprise eco-system. They are also committed to ensuring that those they are working to support are involved in and help develop new activities. The youth enterprise ambassadors they have established are working with young entrepreneurs to develop a Mental Well Being booklet for young entrepreneurs as well as being involved in decisions relating to issuing of grants issued to young people.

The work of the team is internationalist, supported by a group of champions from across the country and from Australia, Egypt, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, all of which bring new dimensions of entrepreneurial understanding to the young people. The team are supporting enterprise projects in Southern Africa. The team's international dimension work sees it supporting female entrepreneurs from the Ukraine linking into GENUK programme #RestartUkraine. The team are involved in Global Entrepreneurship Week to facilitate an exchange of views and ideas with enterprising young people and their supporters from across the world.

The team owns and controls its actions, all decisions are made democratically by the team and its manager, who is a committed co-operator, ensures the team's decisions are implemented and reflected in wider Council's policies and strategies. Having this principled and democratic approach and involving those the team are supporting ensures voices of the consumers of the services and those delivering the services are heard and championed. Whenever the Team has to update Councillors, it ensures that users and partners of the services are involved. At the height of the Pandemic the team championed locally the needs of enterprising young people who were excluded from Treasury support, and championed the cause of the Community Interest Company #ExcludedUK as the team felt it was the right thing to do.



This commitment to involvement enabled the team during the Pandemic to recruit 80 mentors from across the country, many were from the excluded community themselves, to support young people, the mentors continue to promote the products and services of young entrepreneurs. The spirit of co-operation enabled the team to raise £1,120,000, to give grant support to excluded young people in the form of personal grants expenditure and restart grants for their businesses.



The team also supports two young people with Duchenne via fundraising and via its £5 Blossom programme as part of the profits made by pupils made in schools go to support Action Duchenne. This year the team, decided to support Neurodiversity Celebration Week with an image competition for young people to enter to illustrate what neurodiversity means for them. Three reasons drove the team to support this, firstly 20% of business owners identify themselves as neurodiverse and several recent participants on programme were neurodiverse, and the team leader is neurodiverse.

For further information, contact:

Charles Cracknell

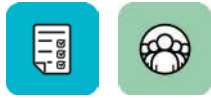
Youth Enterprise and Microbusiness Manager, Hull City Council

e: charles.cracknell@hullcc.gov.uk

t: 01482 613489

<https://youthenterprise.co.uk/>





Kirklees Council

Shaped by People – A new shared outcome

In Kirklees, we're committed to changing our relationships and to becoming an enabler of citizens, not only a provider of services. Five years ago, the Kirklees Democracy Commission asked a wide range of people and organisations what our local democracy should look like for the next generation and beyond. What emerged was a clear desire to grow a stronger local democracy from the ground up, starting with citizens and their sense of local identity and belonging. In 2021, we worked with citizens from all our communities to create a new shared outcome that raises the bar for active citizenship. Shaped by People describes, in citizens' own words, how things would be if more people felt able to influence what happens in their place.

We've developed our own systemic approach to citizen engagement. It is based on conversations, involves testing out practical ideas and is always focussed on the experiences and insights of citizens and councillors in local places. But we recognised that our ambitions for active citizenship were not reflected in Kirklees' shared outcomes.

To create Shaped by People we held workshops and conversations where citizens listened to each other's stories - stories of neighbourhoods pulling together, people taking the initiative, and simple acts of care and welcome. Then together we asked: how can more people come together to make local places better?

We worked with voluntary sector partners to design activities that would work best for engaging people from diverse groups. A project team of people from partner organisations also guided us throughout. We heard from citizens from every ward in Kirklees, with diverse life experiences, and achieved good representation in terms of age and ethnicity.

Participants shared over 600 ideas and had the chance to rate everyone's responses to help us understand which things struck the truest chord. Shaped by People was woven from those responses in the words citizens chose themselves. This new shared outcome has been adopted by Kirklees Council and our key partners. It is a call to action for everyone and a foundational outcome because everything we do can be shaped by citizens.

Our aim is for every organisation in Kirklees to help create the conditions where active citizens can have more influence over their lives and local places. We're working with people from local organisations to co-design a framework for measuring whether people genuinely feel able to shape their local place. This includes flexible, accessible tools that can be used to have meaningful conversations and to measure our progress.



Four ways in which things are being Shaped by People in Kirklees are:

- OurStoriesOurPlaces.org shares and celebrates people's stories, and we're encouraging colleagues to recognise stories as valuable citizen insight. Local animation studio Fettle has created a video-animated version of Shaped by People in which participants give both their words and their voices to the animation.
- Over 9,000 citizens have participated in conversations about our local places, using the Place Standard tool with the results published on HowGoodIsOurPlace.org.uk. Groups of citizens or councillors often lead these engagement activities in a way that reflects distinct local identities. This enables citizens to talk about what matters to them, in the place that matters, instead of responding to someone else's priorities. Citizens share their experiences and aspirations for the future in diverse settings including park benches, pubs, bus stops, cafes, and sports clubs. We've created a Place Standard Investment Fund (initially £500k for 2021), which is supporting and enabling citizens to bring their ideas to life and connecting citizens with council services so we can respond to the neighbourhood priorities they've identified.
- Our Democracy Friendly Schools programme, based on recommendations from our Young Commissioners, aims to involve all our young citizens. The programme helps young people learn about and feel part of local democracy and civic life, to connect with councillors, and to develop their own projects and activities in order to influence what happens in their local place. Having begun in Autumn 2021, 68% of our high schools have already signed up, all our special schools, and 20% of primary schools. Youth Councillors from our pilot high school have trained their peers and created a new wildlife space, working with other schools, councillors and their community.
- Our ambitious Place Based Working programme is changing the culture of our organisation. Recent initiatives include Councillor-led Place Partnerships, developing local solutions based on citizen insight (with £1m invested in mental health support in 2020-21); working differently with partners using our co-created 'Working alongside' shared values; and four Place Hubs creating operational change.

For further information, contact:

Diane Sims

Engagement and Communications Lead, Kirklees Council

e: diane.sims@kirklees.gov.uk

t: 01484 221000

www.kirklees.gov.uk





Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Knowsley Better Together in action: Borough of Culture 2022 and Shakespeare North Playhouse



Coinciding with the opening of the unique Shakespeare North Playhouse, Knowsley is Liverpool City Region's Borough of Culture in 2022 - a year-long celebration of culture and creativity through community activities and events which forms a key part of the Borough's plans for recovery from the pandemic.

The programme is encouraging collaboration and engagement across Knowsley's local communities - through cultural activities and events which will continue to have a positive impact in the future. This wide-ranging cultural events and activities programme (and, importantly, its continuing legacy) will be key to helping local communities thrive as part of the Council's ongoing COVID-19 recovery work.

The theme for the year is "Stories of people, places and magic", co-designed with local communities through dedicated "cultural conversations" and pop-up events across the Borough - demonstrating Knowsley's Better Together approach in action and giving everyone an opportunity to get involved and feel connected to the celebrations in different ways.

A New Dawn ... Moments of Light programme officially opened 2022 with thousands of people experiencing six spectacular "moments of light" events in the heart of communities, including:-

- The Twenty Two Voices project - reflecting the many diverse communities, experiences, and talents in the Borough, whilst shining a light on the stories they are proud of; and,
- Tall Tales - created in collaboration between residents, volunteers, Knowsley Council and local housing associations - telling heart-warming stories direct from the community - projected onto a 16-storey residential tower block in Stockbridge Village.

The highlight of the year is the opening of the Shakespeare North Playhouse in Summer 2022- a new theatre and education centre of national significance which represents a "once in several lifetimes" cultural development for the local community. Inspired by Prescott's historic connections with William Shakespeare, the Playhouse includes a traditional 470-seat timber-framed Jacobean theatre. The Shakespeare North Playhouse will be a place full of brilliant people with a story to tell - hosting a mix of vibrant new performances and, through its wider creative programme, providing learning opportunities and social spaces for local residents and visitors to Knowsley. In emerging from the pandemic, the Playhouse and the wider Borough of Culture programme are creating hope, confidence, and aspiration, and importantly driving economic regeneration by increasing footfall and spending across Knowsley's town centre areas and attracting complimentary businesses to Knowsley.

For further information contact:

Paula Williams

Interim Assistant Executive Director (Culture & Communities), Knowsley Council

e: paula.williams@knowsley.gov.uk

t: 0151 443 3468

www.knowsley.gov.uk



Knowsley Council



Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Knowsley Better Together in action: Investing in the future of Knowsley

By continuing to put its well-established Knowsley Better Together principles into action, Knowsley Council is working hand-in-hand with local residents and partners to ensure that local communities have the support needed to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, as together we look towards Knowsley's ambitious aims for the future.

The Knowsley Better Together principles bring people, groups, and organisations together for the benefit of Knowsley. Throughout the pandemic, putting these principles into action enabled Knowsley Council and its partners to work alongside local communities and support people when they most needed help. In the Council's role to lead the Borough's ongoing, long-term COVID recovery programme, these longstanding principles are more important than ever.

Despite the challenges faced throughout the pandemic, the Council's long-term ambitions for the Borough provide the foundations for a strong recovery – with its robust financial management and decisive decision-making in recent years putting it in a strong position to respond to existing and emerging pressures facing local people, whilst investing in Knowsley's long-term future.



The Knowsley Better Together principles have been vital in the co-design of the Council's £25m COVID-19 Recovery Investment Package. As a result of in-depth work to understand the challenges and pressures facing residents and businesses after the pandemic, the Council has made £14.6m of permanent investment to respond to extra demand for key services and support Knowsley's ambitious growth plans.

Alongside this, a further £10.4m of investment in key areas will allow the Council to fund permanent additional investment into:-

- Expansion of the Knowsley Better Together Hardship Fund, which was a lifeline for so many residents throughout the pandemic and continues to be crucial in the face of the current cost of living crisis which is facing the Boroughs' hard-pressed communities;
- Supporting and delivering vibrant town centres - enhancing and restoring each of the Borough's town centres whilst bringing new jobs, delivering physical improvements, and further raising local confidence;
- Increasing the maintenance of parks and green spaces, alongside the development of additional allotments for community use; and,
- Establishing a Knowsley Future Investment Fund of over £5m, providing the flexibility needed to respond to future challenges and opportunities.

For further information contact:

Jon Pitt

Lead Policy Advisor, Knowsley Council

e: jonathan.pitt@knowsley.gov.uk

t: 0151 443 3069

www.knowsley.gov.uk





Lewisham Council

Borough of Sanctuary

Lewisham Council's nationally leading approach to supporting refugees and ensuring the successful resettlement of refugee families has transformed hundreds of lives. In 2021 we were honoured to be the first in the UK to be formally recognised as a Council of Sanctuary.

The Council helped found the Lewisham Migration Forum (LMF), which is a space for individuals, communities, businesses, charities, universities, the Council, health providers, and more, who provide services and support to migrants in Lewisham to come together and discuss issues, share resources and collaborate on campaigns and initiatives to make the migrant and refugee sector in the borough stronger and more effective. The Forum is open to anyone working with migrant and refugee communities and to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers themselves. Experts by experience also take part in the forum, sometimes by direct involvement or through a spokesperson. Currently, the Forum involves:

- Representatives of Lewisham council.
- Organisations working in healthcare.
- Community groups.
- Charities that work with migrants.
- Faith groups.
- Civil society groups.
- Individuals.

In 2020 we appointed the country's first Sanctuary Officer, with responsibility for driving our agenda across the Council and working with partners in the wider community to make Lewisham a genuine Borough of Sanctuary. In 2020, the GLA described our work on Refugee Resettlement programme as "not only impactful on these families but inspirational for other local authorities."

Pulling together at a local level - Making innovative change possible with our partners

Making Lewisham a Borough of Sanctuary was one of our key commitments in our Corporate Strategy, and therefore a Council wide agenda. Through the LMF and other bilateral meetings we work closely with local partners to identify areas of concern to them and their service users. We are also conducting a feedback survey to collect the views of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants themselves.

Our family centred resettlement approach

Lewisham Council takes responsibility for supporting the refugee families from the moment they arrive at the airport and up to five years from their arrival date.

Alongside Refugee Council, our delivery partner, we provide intensive support for the family for the first twelve months of arrival, with the aim of supporting families towards integration within their local communities and independence.

Achieving tangible changes in the way services are delivered

Examples of successful actions taken so far include:

- Removing the embedded Home Office worker from our No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) team and using the funds saved to pay for independent legal advice.
- Promoting the Doctors of the World Safe Surgeries scheme to all our GP practices, including a joint letter with our partners. Currently 20 of 22 practices have registered and we will continue to work towards reaching all 22.
- Providing online information on services available to refugees, asylum seekers and migrants during COVID-19, and health information in a range of languages.
- Providing training on the service user experience delivered by third sector organisations and people with lived experience of using our services.
- Welcoming and accommodating 90 unaccompanied minor asylum seeking children/young people in the last two years (48 children are under 18 years old and 42 care leavers). They were helped to access their own housing, health services and education & in resolving their immigration status.
- Improving our practice in working with unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) by creating a specific UASC team and building strong links with relevant legal and third sector organisations.

- Committing to welcome an additional 100 UASC over the next 10 years.
- Ensuring that no child in Lewisham is denied free school meals because of their family's immigration status.
- Convening an English for Speakers of Other Languages working group, in partnership with the LMF, to bring together both statutory and voluntary providers to improve collaboration and consistency of practice.
- Calling on the government to suspend NRPF restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Publicly refusing to collaborate with the Home Office on the new immigration rules on rough sleeping.
- Facilitating training delivered by St Mary's School, Citizens UK, Project 17 and Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network plus people with lived experience of using our NRPF service.

Next steps

Official recognition as a Council of Sanctuary marks a major milestone in our journey as we continue to promote a culture of welcome and openness across Council services and within Lewisham's local community. Our work with individual services and local partners will continue, and although our Strategy runs until 2025, our intention is for this to be an ongoing commitment to ensure that migrants of all backgrounds are truly welcomed and supported in Lewisham.

For further information, contact:

Atika Mohammed

Head of Insight, Transformation & OD, London Borough of Lewisham

e: atika.mohammed@lewisham.gov.uk

www.lewisham.gov.uk





Liverpool City Council

Liverpool's Good Food Plan

The demand for emergency food provision in Liverpool, as well as longer-term food insecurity, was increasing in Liverpool even before the arrival of Covid-19. Last year, it was estimated that 32% of adults in Liverpool are food insecure, whilst an estimated 140,000 tonnes of food is wasted in Liverpool City Region each year.

The Covid-19 pandemic stress tested the city's food system, and brought to the surface some of the challenges that exist, particularly around uneven access to good food. Support for those experiencing food insecurity in the city has generally been uncoordinated and responsive, rather than strategic, and, with many new organisations emerging during the pandemic to offer emergency and community food provision, there was a clear need for greater partnership working and coordination.



To address this issue, and as part of Covid-19 recovery plans, Liverpool City Council and its partners established a "good food" steering group consisting of council officers, public health colleagues and members of community, voluntary and faith sector organisations. The group was tasked with preparing a food plan for Liverpool which would outline a strategic and co-operative approach to tackling food insecurity across the city.

Feeding Liverpool - a pre-existing network tackling food insecurity - took strategic ownership for developing and implementing the plan. The first phase of a Good Food Plan was published in September 2021, informed by input from a wide range of organisations and the experiences of people using food banks and community food spaces.



Phase I of the Good Food Plan is about tackling the immediate and urgent challenges that the City is facing while building a framework and foundation to create real systemic change in the medium and long term. The Plan addresses key issues including acute hunger; chronic food insecurity; access to and take-up of healthy, nutritious food; and the sustainability of food supply in Liverpool. It is focused around five goals:

- Goal 1: Ensure people in crisis get access to 'Good Food' quickly and easily.
- Goal 2: Uncover the true scale of food insecurity.
- Goal 3: Enable people to have the power, voice, resources and motivation to shape their local food environments and the food system as a whole.
- Goal 4: Shift policy and practice to enable 'Good Food' to flourish.
- Goal 5: Connect a community of people and organisations that have a part to play in achieving good food for all.

The work of those involved in the city-wide food alliance is guided by the following principles:

- Considering equity, diversity and inclusion in everything it does.
- Balancing immediate relief with addressing the root causes of food insecurity.
- Unlocking the power of people and enabling citizens to have their voice heard.

- Constantly learning, adapting and innovating.
- Making information, data, stories and best practice accessible.
- Challenging stigma and shifting narratives.



The Good Food Plan and Feeding Liverpool's network marks a new approach to tackling this complicated issue in the City. Not only will it act a central point to help co-ordinate emergency and community food responses, but it will also provide a "voice" around food insecurity and wider food related activity - recognising the need for a collaborative, whole system approach. The continued development of the plan will be firmly based on the voices of people who are food insecure, and the experiences of those who work and volunteer in communities, organisations and businesses to provide good food.

Delivery of the Good Food Plan will make a significant contribute to Liverpool's City Plan vision to create a 'thriving sustainable, fair city for everyone', and the work of Feeding Liverpool's network will be of paramount importance in the months and years ahead, as the city seeks to coordinate a response to the cost-of-living crisis.

For further information contact:

Chris Steward
Policy Officer – Liverpool City Council
e: chris.steward@liverpool.gov.uk
www.liverpool.gov.uk





Milton Keynes Council

Milton Keynes: great parish collaboration

Milton Keynes has always been a place of co-operation. Partnerships between public bodies, business and communities created our pioneering 'new city' fifty years ago and help its people thrive today.

We were actually the first unitary authority to become fully parished, with two new parish councils created just this year to serve MK's growing communities, bringing the total to 48. (We're expecting to grow from a population of 270,000 today to 500,000 – eventually becoming bigger than Edinburgh, Cardiff or Liverpool.)

We believe strongly in putting the power back in the hands of local communities, and work with our parish and town council partners to make sure the right services are being delivered in the right way, to the right people, at the right level.

In recent years we've:

- Transferred 28 popular local facilities to parish councils for them to develop, including a swimming pool, a library, community centres, depots and meeting places.
- Given parish councils £100,000 to help them keep our environment clean, funding amongst other things an innovative green chemical-free weed killing machine.
- Identified parish councils who wanted an expanded role in the delivery of local services, whether that's by influencing their delivery, topping up services or entirely taking them over. A good example of this is landscaping, where five councils have already picked up the care of green space in their parish, to be followed by eleven more – which will mean parishes care for around 30% of all green space in MK.
- Set up a Parish Advisory Group of parish councillors from across MK, a ward councillor from each main political party (often a parish councillor themselves) three officers and a cabinet member. At meetings, the group discuss and make decisions that affect parish and town councils.
- Helped parishes navigate services and build the right relationships within our unitary authority by appointing specific officers responsible for parish liaison and answering day to day queries. They attend a Parish Quarterly Forum and parish, clerk and area meetings.
- Jointly developed a Draft Framework to aid closer working and help us agree the best custodian of a service or an asset.
- Held a MK Association of Local Councils conference attended by more than 200 parish councillors.

The National
Association of Local
Councils described us
as ‘a beacon of good
practice’ for parish
collaboration, and
we’re proud to be
supporting parishes as
they use their unique
perspective to shape
and create better
communities.

For further information contact:

Kay Pettit

Programme Manager, Milton Keynes Council

e: kay.pettit@milton-keynes.gov.uk

t: 07971 102278

www.milton-keynes.gov.uk





Newcastle City Council

New Community Forest in the North East

A new Community Forest in the North East of England will see up to 500 hectares of trees planted by 2025. This 30 year, multi-million pound project will see tens of thousands of trees planted and all new woodland in the region, whether established on land owned by your local council or on a privately owned hillside, contributes to the North East Community Forest and benefits our local communities.

The initiative will bring together six local authorities – including Newcastle City Council, Durham, Gateshead, North and South Tyneside and Sunderland– alongside charities, businesses and landowners. up to 500 hectares of trees will be planted by 2025, with a long-term goal to increase canopy cover across the region 30% by 2050 – almost double the current national average.

Collectively, the work of the Forests has formed the largest environmental regeneration initiative in England, delivering urban, economic and social renewal, championing green infrastructure and creating high-quality environments for millions of people.

By planting trees and bringing woodlands back into use for both people and wildlife it provides new opportunities for leisure, recreation, and cultural activities, enhancing biodiversity, helping us become more resilient to climate change and improving education and healthy lives.

The impact of this work is colossal. Community Forests create healthy, liveable and economically rewarding places and through innovation and a long-term commitment to the areas where they work, empower communities to transform their local landscapes. Together they help to ensure that trees and woodlands are at the very heart of what it is an urban landscape today.

Operating across six local authority boundaries, its intent is to instil a sense of regional unity, sharing solutions and learning from each other's experiences while aligning objectives, funding, and resources to achieve ambitions tree planting targets.

This project exemplifies cooperative principles in local practice and will make a tangible difference across our communities.



For further information contact:

Matt Wilton
Head of Policy, Newcastle City Council
e: matt.wilton@newcastle.gov.uk
www.newcastle.gov.uk

Newcastle
City Council 



Newcastle City Council

Addressing food insecurity with VCS partners

During COVID-19, Newcastle City Council developed a joint response to address food insecurity alongside local voluntary and community sector (VCS) partners, schools and businesses. Initially over 40 organisations supported residents affected by food insecurity who had to self-isolate or were affected financially because of the virus. Food parcels, hot meals and essential items were provided, with food banks relaxing their criteria through the first wave.

Newcastle City Council and ConnectedVoice, the city's voluntary sector infrastructure organisation, set up a helpline for residents - "Citylife Line" where the majority of requests were for food and essential items. Citylife Line developed into the multi-disciplinary Welfare and Wellbeing Team, which established a proactive approach to supporting residents, addressing the causes of food insecurity, typically relating to poverty.

Originally, providing fresh produce in food parcels was a particular challenge. In 2021, the Welfare and Wellbeing team established a contract with the city centre Grainger Market to deliver fresh food parcels to residents, at an optional cost for those with means to pay. This partnership improved food quality and residents' individual agency, and supported local businesses trading during lockdown.

Newcastle City Council received a DEFRA emergency grant for food and essential items. This supported people with No Recourse to Public Funds due to their immigration status, homeless and rough sleeping communities, enhanced provision within the Early Help family support service and a grant scheme for VCS organisations. The Council provided resources and delivery drivers to support the VCS work and funded local membership of FareShare, the national food redistribution charity.

Newcastle City Council also supported free school meal entitlement during school holidays initially providing emergency support in October 2020, with partners including Newcastle United Foundation, then distributing grants through schools to alleviate the harms of 'holiday hunger'.

A Food Support Group was established as part of Food Newcastle, the city's partnership for Sustainable Food Places. This brought together many organisations supporting the food insecurity agenda and allowed them to work more closely together throughout the pandemic.

The strategic approach to food insecurity and its links to covid recovery will be led by the Newcastle Food Poverty Group. This is one of the theme groups for the Food Newcastle partnership and is chaired by Councillor Paula Holland, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills.



For further information contact:

Matt Wilton

Head of Policy, Newcastle City Council

e: matt.wilton@newcastle.gov.uk

www.newcastle.gov.uk

Newcastle
City Council 





North Hertfordshire District Council

North Herts 10,000 Tree Giveaway

North Herts Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and this declaration asserted the council's commitment toward climate action beyond current national targets. A key priority within the council's current Climate Change Strategy is 'Inspiring the Community.' The Council aims to encourage citizens and businesses to take action to go further and faster in cutting carbon emissions whilst also taking other local environmental factors into consideration, such as biodiversity. The climate emergency requires a collective effort, recognising the need for action across the district.

The North Herts 10,000 tree giveaway took place between 2021-2022. In April 2021, the budget was approved for the project and the distribution of trees to residents began in Autumn 2021, reaching completion in February 2022.

Prior to the commencement of the tree giveaway, the initiative was promoted on the Council's website, social media, magazines, emails and other media outlets, and residents were encouraged to register their interest in advance. Many residents also found out about the initiative through word of mouth.

Tree species were chosen based on a number of criteria: ensuring the species were indigenous to the UK, sourcing species which are known to do well in North Herts with the local, heavy chalk soil taken into consideration, and biosecurity. Species were generally chosen so that they would not grow too large, ensuring they were suitable for being planted in regular gardens.

In November 2021, North Herts Council's giveaway of 10,000 free trees to residents commenced. The timing was due to the need for the trees to be dormant before being taken from the ground and replanted. Tree saplings were given away on a first come, first served basis, with the only requirements being that individuals must live within the district and must have a suitable space to plant a tree. Guidance was given as to what suitable space for planting trees would be, and residents were able to choose whether they would like a tree that could grow in a small, medium, or large space. Leaflets were also provided with basic information about the species of trees available and how to plant them.



The tree giveaway continued to be promoted across many media platforms throughout the giveaway period and was heavily publicised during National Tree Week (27 Nov – 5 Dec), encouraging residents to #PlantForOurFuture. Five giveaway events were scheduled before Christmas in the five most populous areas of North Herts. Trees were also delivered to parishes for distribution and for some larger projects involving larger landowners. Initially the policy allowed one tree per household however after many requests were received by residents, this number was increased. After Christmas, trees were available to be collected from the contractor's depot.

By the end of February, the 10,000 tree giveaway was complete. The trees found new homes across the district in almost every parish and ward. The scheme has also been able to support some local planting projects in Kimpton, Royston, Ashwell and Pirton. Overall, residents were very complimentary of the scheme.

Each tree sapling planted locally will contribute towards the fight against climate change in the district. The trees will create mutual benefits across the district by enhancing local biodiversity, offsetting carbon, helping to improve air quality, and providing cooling effects in hotter weather. Those that participated in the initiative will be able to enjoy the benefits of their tree as it grows; for some, this may even include enjoying future harvests of fruit.

The 10,000 tree giveaway was a project that required collaboration, partnership, and shared responsibility between the Council and North Herts residents. The project drew on council funding, expertise, and the work of council officers, as well as relying on the involvement of local residents to receive, plant and nurture the trees going forward. Collaborative working and the mutual benefits created through this project exemplify the co-operative value of social partnership.



For further information contact:

Andrew Mills

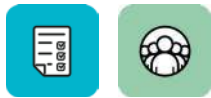
Service Manager Greenspace, North Herts Council

e: andrew.mills@north-herts.gov.uk

t: 01462 474272

www.north-herts.gov.uk





Oldham Council

Oldham Poverty Truth Commission

Oldham's Poverty Truth Commission (PTC) was launched on September 27th, 2021 and brings together 13 people with lived experience of poverty and multiple disadvantage (grassroots commissioners) with 13 civic and business commissioners to identify key issues and co-produce solutions to tackling poverty.

The PTC is co-ordinated and managed by Action Together, the borough's umbrella VCFSE organisation, and is facilitated and supported by the Council's Corporate Policy Team and colleagues from the Shared Health Foundation. It meets monthly for 3 hours and grassroots and civic commissioners are encouraged and supported to meet outside of the formal meetings to build relationships. Relationship building is a central tenet of the PTC – and requires a different way of working, one that builds strong inter-personal relationships between commissioners to achieve change rather than drive change through external targets and outputs.

From the outset the approach has been to embed the PTC within our existing policy making and decision-making structures; it is integral to our wider work to tackle poverty and disadvantage in the borough. The PTC forms a key strand of our Partnership Anti-poverty Action Plan and, once completed, will shape the borough's Anti-Poverty Strategy. The Commissioners are represented on the strategic and senior level partnership Poverty Steering Group and the VCFSE led Poverty Action Group. They have already engaged in the policy making process and provided feedback on both the refresh of the Oldham Plan and the council's Corporate Plan; and the Health Inequalities Plan.

The PTC is now half way through its schedule and three key themes have emerged from the PTC meetings so far, which are now the subject of further development and action:

- Emotionally intelligent systems and points of contact.
- Reducing stigma and raising hope.
- Places of belonging.

In addition, there is an over-arching theme to develop a best practice model of co-production.



In terms of translating PTC ideas into action, work is starting in earnest to develop some key projects under each of the themes. Recently, a link has been made between the PTC and the Council's Changing Futures programme. This programme, led by Adult Social Care, seeks to engender system change and different ways of working to support people, especially young women, experiencing complex and multiple disadvantage. Although only at an early stage, it is likely that the grassroots commissioners will have the opportunity to apply their experience to inform and potentially participate in, the development of a peer mentoring approach.

The themes in relation to emotionally intelligent responses and reducing stigma have been flagged with the council's Human Resources and Organisational Development team -with a view to informing recruitment, workforce development and training plans.

Learning so far...

For a process that relies heavily on building relationships, beginning the PTC in the midst of the Covid 19 pandemic, has not been ideal. It has been challenging in terms of engaging commissioners and maintaining attendance, especially from our civic and business commissioners, who have been under significant pressure to respond to and prioritise Covid related and crisis responses. This challenge is likely to continue as demand on services across the system escalates as the cost of living crisis unfolds.

Responding to increased demand for emergency/crisis response services, together with significant organisational change across public services makes it difficult for those leaders to protect the thinking time and space, and the additional time needed in the PTC process to develop ideas with the grassroots commissioners. This has led to frustration, particularly from the grassroots commissioners, and has generated a feeling of lack of commitment. In the PTC spirit of open-ness and honesty, these issues have been raised and are being addressed. It is vital that a solution is found as support from senior leaders across the system is essential for the PTC's success in achieving change.

From a Council perspective, the PTC was established at a time of significant organisational change including a newly elected Council Leader, changes in the Council's senior management team and significant service restructuring, which has meant that maintaining a constant ownership and commitment at a Senior Leadership level to the Commission has been particularly challenging.

Challenges exist in determining success and how it's measured – the PTC is currently deliberating and possibly redefining what success looks like in Oldham; is for example, success about new projects that the PTC has developed or about influencing existing policies and practice and driving system change?

For further information, contact:

Amanda Richardson

Corporate Policy Manager, Oldham Council

e: amanda.richardson@oldham.gov.uk

www.oldham.gov.uk





Oxford City Council

Growing an Inclusive Co-operative Economy in Oxford

Oxford City Council and partners led on delivering a test and learn pilot in 2021-2 on co-operative mapping.

The project aimed to create a directory of purposeful businesses delivering in Oxford's areas of deprivation that can be disseminated to procurement teams in local authority, anchor institutions and large employers in order to prioritise their tenders to promote social value, community wealth building and inclusive growth. The directory would also act as a pilot, 'early intervention' on behalf of the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership's (OIEP) 'Social Value and Procurement working group'.

However, after a directory of co-operatives in the cities' areas of deprivation was produced it became clear that it would go quickly out of date and other more interactive ways of bringing together suppliers and procurers could be developed. With these considerations in mind two local initiatives were identified that shared many of our objectives, namely OIEP and 'Owned by Oxford' (OBO). The test and learn pilot pivoted to support these initiatives, giving us an opportunity to document some early learnings about the challenges of mapping cooperatives as well.

The OIEP is a countywide partnership of organisations from public, private and community & voluntary sectors who have come together to develop an inclusive economy agenda with a series of working groups focusing on 4 priority areas:

- 1. Educational attainment**
- 2. Inclusive employment**
- 3. Social value and procurement and**
- 4. Place based interventions**

The OIEP includes a working group with an objective to maximise the social value delivered through procurement activity in the county. The working group sees contracting for services through local, purposeful organisations to add social value, either through direct delivery and subcontracting opportunities. The partnership is developing a locally specific OXTOMs social value framework which can be used to assess the relative social value that will be delivered through different tender responses. This will provide a robust, easily understood set of measures on social value, which could lead towards more commissioning through cooperatives and democratic enterprise. This could provide future opportunities to incorporate a subset of measures supporting cooperative development.



Names going left to right are:

Jabu Nala-Hartley, Communities Advocate,
CAG Oxfordshire

Simon Grove-White, Community Wealth Building Officer,
Oxford City Council

Anna Thorne, Owned by Oxford Coordinator,
CAG Oxfordshire

Dr Dianne Regisford, Communities Advocate,
Makespace Oxford

Alongside the Inclusive Economy Partnership, Oxford City Council is a key partner in a Community Wealth Building project Owned by Oxford (OBO). OBO is led by the Community Action Group Oxfordshire and includes Makespace, Aspire, Oxford City Council, and the Solidarity Economy Association (SEA) as founding partners. OBO's work is overseen by a Steering Group made up of these five partnership organisations and representatives from five grass-roots community projects in the City – African Families in the UK, Syrian Sisters, Oxford Community Action, Mothers for Justice Ubuntu, and Transition Lighthouse.

The ultimate objective of the project is to stimulate the development of democratic and community-owned enterprises in areas of disadvantage within Oxford with three interrelated work streams:

1. Mapping and Community Research

2. Embedding CWB Practice in anchor organisations

3. Locally Targeted Programme of Support

The mapping and engagement with community organisations highlighted a number of points of relevance to the objective of growing an Inclusive Cooperative Economy:

- Although Oxford has a wider democratic business sector than many areas of the country, the distribution of cooperatives and community enterprises tends to cluster in specific areas and among specific demographics.

- The prevalence of cooperatives and other forms of purposeful business is much lower in the areas of Oxford targeted by the project. This pattern of poor representation of co-operatives in working class communities is a challenge across the country.

- The prevalence of cooperatives and other forms of purposeful business is much lower in the areas of Oxford targeted by the project. This pattern of poor representation of co-operatives in working class communities is a challenge across the country.

- Community engagement with formally and informally constituted purposeful businesses in these areas has confirmed that awareness of democratic enterprise models is low among the target groups and further work needed to embed recognition of the distinct value provided by democratic enterprise among commissioners and decision makers.

- Oxford has a very strong Social Enterprise sector and support infrastructure and these models have successfully entered mainstream economic development discourse in the city. Although positive in its own right, this success also inhibits the visibility of, and opportunities to grow, the cooperative and democratic business sector in the city.

Following the community research, the Owned by Oxford project has successfully identified funding to bring a Coop development agency (Cooperative Futures) into the project which will increase understanding and awareness of the benefits of democratic business models at both anchor and community level, and provide direct business development support to organisations exploring these organisational models.

For further information, contact:

Policy Lab/OIEP

Clayton Lavallin

e: clavallin@oxford.gov.uk

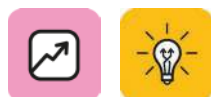
Owned by Oxford/Social Value & Procurement WG

Simon Grove-White

e: sgrove-white@oxford.gov.uk

www.oxford.gov.uk





Preston City Council

Advancing a Shared Economy in Preston

In April 2022 Preston City Council launched a new programme to strengthen institutional capacity in Preston to underpin a more democratic and collaborative economy. Funded by Preston City Council and Power to Change, Advancing a Shared Economy in Preston builds on learning from the Open Society Foundations (OSF) programme. Increased collaboration between Preston's anchor organisations, strengthened community capacity for cooperative activity and an enhanced and independent cooperative development function in Preston are the three expected outcomes of the new programme.

Specific projects will contribute to each outcome. The focus for anchor collaboration will be to engage anchors in a collaborative project with a specialist delivery partner commissioned from the renewables / decarbonisation sector. The objective will be to identify an opportunity in Preston for public, cooperative and community development of decarbonised energy systems and develop this through feasibility and detailed project development stages to delivery readiness.

Projects developed to strengthen community capacity for cooperative and collaborative activity will focus on community initiatives to address food poverty; a community/anchor partnership to support cooperative enterprise within the construction sector; and the development of the Leighton Street Traveller Cooperative (LSC) as a robust cooperative vehicle to operate and manage the Leighton Street Traveller Site in Preston.

Delivery of an enhanced and independent cooperative development function in Preston will be achieved by providing the Preston Cooperative Development Network (PDCN) and the Preston Cooperative Education Centre (PCEC) with grants to develop their offer and profile, with an explicit focus on educational activity to raise awareness in Preston about cooperative enterprise. The PCDN will target its activity on the further and higher education sectors, as well as local business advisors. The PCEC will focus on trade union education and will co-develop a new programme with Unite the Union's learning services and the Bakers and Allied Food Workers to raise awareness about worker coops and associated employment opportunities.

For further information contact:

Rachel Stringfellow

Policy Manager, Preston City Council

e: r.stringfellow@preston.gov.uk

t: 01772 903410

www.preston.gov.uk





Preston City Council

Social Partnership to Promote Climate Action in Preston

Strengthening the co-operative partnership in Preston between citizens, communities, enterprises and the Council is central to Preston's Community Wealth Building strategy, CWB 2.0. In the last 12 months this partnership has continued to grow. This case study describes a number of projects in which the Council is working with Climate Action Preston and a community film and music project to address the climate emergency.

In September 2021 the National Lottery launched the Together for Our Planet fund to encourage community action to raise awareness about the climate emergency. The Council encouraged and supported groups to bid for funding and two projects were successful. How Us Brookie Kids are Going to Save the Planet! is a community film project produced by Year 6 children at a local primary school on an estate in Preston. Drawing on their own families' concerns about energy prices and finding decent work, the children will interview local companies about skills and training opportunities in sectors like retrofit, renewable energy and low carbon technologies and communicate what they learn by creating their own film. Preston Pedals is a Climate Action Preston (CAP) project to pilot a community cycle hub to promote cycling for everyday journeys and to recondition used bicycles for low-income groups. The Council has helped the project to link with a number of community organisations across Preston and the Waste Service has offered to provide the project with abandoned bikes collected by its teams. This will improve recycling and add value to an item which regularly enters the waste stream.

The Council is working in partnership with Climate Action Preston on two other projects. Preston Solar Action aims to encourage local voluntary action to identify roofs across the city suitable for solar energy generation as a first step towards developing a community-led renewable energy initiative. Another project is actively promoting local food production in Preston by working in partnership with the Council's allotments team to clear abandoned and overgrown allotments in the city.

For further information contact:

Rachel Stringfellow

Policy Manager, Preston City Council

e: r.stringfellow@preston.gov.uk

t: 01772 903410

www.preston.gov.uk





Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council

Working Together to Bridge the Digital Gap

Context

Rochdale is ranked the 15th most deprived borough in England based on a rank of the average for LSOAs in the area (defined in the Indices of Deprivation). Many of the people in the borough were already significantly disadvantaged when the pandemic struck.

The pandemic revealed a number of inequalities but the rapid default to and reliance on, delivery of services online, highlighted the large number of people who were digitally excluded. Those without access to the internet and/or lacking digital skills were left further behind, missed out on support and access to services and provision.

Rationale

Aside from a lack of IT equipment and IT skills, one of the biggest digital barriers that people in Rochdale face is access to internet provision that is affordable. This became especially apparent when venues that offered free Wi-Fi to residents were not able to open during the pandemic. Equally, many of the drop in centres that currently offer free Wi-Fi have an internet service which is insufficient to accommodate multiple devices, resulting in access which is somewhat inadequate.

Rather than simply providing equipment and free Wi-Fi to some public buildings and households, it was recognised that a more radical approach was required. A mesh network was provided for residents living in one of the most deprived and digitally excluded areas, College Bank and Lower Falinge. It enabled provision of large-scale outdoor Wi-Fi coverage, extended from key central points across the area. It enables a much more cost effective way to provide free internet access working out at approx. 35 pence per household per month. It allows residents to access the internet when they choose in their own home. In doing so it allows individual choice and removes reliance and dependency on services for internet provision.

Implementation

While many of the organisations involved are not formal co-operatives, provision of the network has been underpinned by an ethos of co-operation. By working together to facilitate this programme, the reach and accessibility of digital provision has been increased. The funding for the scheme has been provided by Greater Manchester Combined Authority and the scheme has been project managed by Rochdale Council. The installation of equipment was undertaken by Rochdale Boroughwide Housing, the largest Registered Social Landlord in this locality. Poignantly, the original Rochdale Pioneers store, which is now the Rochdale Pioneers Museum, run by The Co-Operative Heritage Trust is the host site for the mesh network. The original Pioneers opened their store to address food poverty, it seems entirely fitting that it now plays a direct part in addressing digital poverty. The roll out of the mesh network from this location allows equitability to the people who benefit directly from it and affirms that co-operation remains relevant and is not just a thing of the past.

Having provided Wi-Fi it was recognised that many residents also had a need for digital equipment. This was provided through the borough's 'Digitech Library'. This library was established by Action Together, a community CIO supporting VCFSE organisations to provide an integral role in local solutions, in partnership with Rochdale Council. The Library, a consortium of VCFSE organisations facilitated by the infrastructure charity Action Together alongside the Council, improves access to digital equipment for those who are digitally excluded. It also provides support and training for residents to develop basic digital skills. This helps to foster autonomy, enabling easier access to services to improve to health and well-being and employment opportunities which are available online. Equally importantly it enables social interaction with friends and family and access to leisure and cultural activity.



Looking Forward

Following the success of this project, Rochdale Boroughwide Housing is keen to continue to work with the Council to widen the reach and build additional mesh networks. It is anticipated that the scheme will be extended across the borough to other areas which also have high levels of unemployment and deprivation. Talks are currently underway with another Registered Social Landlord in the borough, who is also keen to fund a mesh network for its tenants alongside other career and well-being support, which they currently provide. The Council is looking to identify further Registered Social Landlords who are also keen to participate.

The roll out of the Mesh Network, provision of equipment through the Digitech Library and equipping people with necessary digital skills is helping to address digital exclusion, caused by deprivation. This co-operative approach is providing households in some of the most deprived communities with facilities which would otherwise be unaffordable and which are needed more than ever during the current cost of living crisis.

For further information contact:

Helen Walton

Policy Adviser, Rochdale Council

e: helen.walton@rochdale.gov.uk

t: 01706 924748

www.rochdale.gov.uk





Salford City Council

Tackling Inequalities: the Salford Way

Local economies are posed with challenges of an unprecedented scale. The Covid-19 pandemic has both exacerbated deeply entrenched inequalities and exposed the need for genuine economic and societal change.

As Salford looks to the future and recovery, inclusivity and tackling entrenched inequalities must be at the heart of everything we do as we seek to build back a fairer, greener and healthier Salford for all.

This is why, in early 2021, we were proud to announce the next phase of our economic and social transformation. The Salford Way marks a turning point in our approach to sustainable economic development in the city and sets out a bold five-point plan to:

- Build greater local community wealth – stepping up our efforts to re-direct public procurement spend back into the local economy and drive forward improvements in social value standards.
- Grow the social economy – promoting greater diversity of business ownership, from co-operatives and mutuals to employee ownership, we want to create a rich ecosystem of alternative economic models to support residents to benefit from local wealth generation.
- Accelerate transition to a zero-carbon economy – delivering the new green jobs and industries of the future and investing in clean, renewable energy and transport improvements.

- Identify opportunities for insourcing – which has already begun to happen locally when Urban Vision (responsible for road maintenance, highways, and building control) was recently brought back into local authority control.
- Strengthen our local democracy – focusing on opening opportunities for greater citizen participation in our economy, in our public spaces, and in our institutions such as through our new Crowdfunding initiative working with CrowdfunderUK.

Salford has a proud history of resilience and pioneering progressive change. And this work harnesses the city's roots in the co-operative movement, which has already seen Salford become the Northwest's first Social Enterprise City and more recently, the first place in England to commit to becoming a Real Living Wage City.

It's now time to look to the future and The Salford Way is our plan for how we can create community wealth from within and retain it in the city, tackle poverty and economic disparity, improve population health and support each other to create a more prosperous Salford for all.

For further information contact:

Jonathan Stancombe

Policy and Partnerships Manager (Service Reform), Salford City Council

e: jonathon.stancombe@salford.gov.uk

t: 01619 251089

www.salford.gov.uk/thesalfordway

Salford City Council



Salford City Council

Salford Living Wage City

Salford City Council became the first council in Greater Manchester to pay the real Living Wage and be accredited by the Living Wage Foundation in 2013.

November 2019 saw Salford recognised by the Living Wage Foundation for its activity and ambition to become the first Living Wage City in England: tackling poverty, boosting business and creating a fairer society.

Its Action Plan to achieve this being to:

- Target large and iconic employers in the city for accreditation.
- Engage low pay sectors in real Living Wage take-up and accreditation.
- Support small/ medium sized enterprises to commit to the real Living Wage.
- Raise awareness of the Living Wage Movement.
- Spread practical guidance on the real Living Wage within the procurement of services, works and goods across all sectors (but particularly 'anchor organisations').

Whilst Salford is the fastest growing economy in Greater Manchester, nearly 40% of its workforce (44,600 people) earn below the real Living Wage, compared to 30% nationally.

A key target is to double the number of accredited Living Wage employers and employees in the city over a 3-year period (2019-22). To date:

- 59 Living Wage Employers with Salford HQs have become accredited – up from 38.
- There have been 1,993 up-lifted workers – up from 1,744.
- 9% of workers in Salford are now covered – up from 7%.

In December 2020, over 3,000 care workers employed in Salford were given a pre-Christmas pay rise thanks to the Council and Salford NHS Clinical Commissioning Group setting aside £1 million. Their hourly rate increased to between £9 to £9.39 an hour – a step towards them all receiving the full real Living Wage of £9.50 per hour.

Progress is overseen by the Salford Living Wage Action Group, consisting of representatives from local businesses, the Council, the University of Salford, other public sector organisations, trade unions and the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector.

Salford's ambition has been recognised earlier this year when it received three awards:

- Salford CVS was awarded the Living Wage Champion Awards, for using their funding and grant-making process to promote the real Living Wage.
- The Salford Living Wage City Action Group was awarded the Places Champion Award for its success in increasing the number of accredited Living Wage employers in the city.
- Worsley-based Anchor Removals won the Against All Odds industry award for being the only real Living Wage, no zero hours removals company in the UK.

For further information contact:

Alison Burnett

Head of Skills and Work, Skills and Work Commissioning Team (People),
Salford City Council

e: alison.burnett@salford.gov.uk

t: 01617 932535

www.salford.gov.uk/jobs-skills-and-work/help-make-salford-a-living-wage-city/

Salford City Council





South Ribble Borough Council

Developing a Charter to support our residents living with Dementia...

The South Ribble Dementia Action Alliance is a partnership of local groups and organisations aiming to improve the quality of life for people living with Dementia, and their carers. Enabling residents to become 'Dementia Friends' and develop a deeper understanding of life with Dementia and how they can help support those living with Dementia.

A priority of the DAA is encouraging involvement in the Dementia Charter, an independent Charter created by the DAA and unique to South Ribble. The charter comprises a variety of organisations including businesses, schools, VCFS and public bodies with 20 certified members. The Charter aims to encourage organisational involvement in becoming Dementia friendly, ensuring those with Dementia feel understood, valued, and able to contribute.

A key element to the charter is continued co-production, developed through consultation with people living with dementia, the input of partners, and continual events to challenge, develop and improve. Actions and decisions are always completed in conjunction with people living with Dementia.

The **four key pledges** members make:

- 1.** Members of our group / organisation will become Dementia Friends.
- 2.** When we consider new policies or strategies, we will make sure people living with Dementia are considered.
- 3.** Our place of business/work is friendly and welcoming, and we consider the way it is designed to help people with Dementia have a positive experience.
- 4.** For any events we hold we will make sure we consider the needs of people living with Dementia so that they are able to fully participate in community life.

This initiative is a social partnership delivered through democratic engagement, sharing knowledge, skills and best practice to enable organisations to improve their accessibility. An example that grew from participation in the Dementia Charter is St Mary's Catholic High School who hold a monthly Dementia café, hosted by year 7 students who undertaken Dementia Friends' training. Students provide hospitality, entertainment and engagement. There is music, entertainment and games providing a safe and accessible space for people with Dementia to enjoy activities, socialise and meet new friends; providing a fantastic opportunity for inter-generational engagement for both guests and school students.

The Dementia Charter continues to co-produce and grow with more events, training and organisations signing the charter planned for 2022.

For further information contact:

Louise Davies

Community Development Officer, South Ribble Borough Council

e: louise.davies@southribble.gov.uk

t: 01772 625625

www.southribble.gov.uk





South Ribble Borough Council

Supporting Communities to ‘resocialise’ following the Covid-19 pandemic...

Throughout the Pandemic the ‘South Ribble Together Hub’ offered support to vulnerable residents. Several issues residents faced were highlighted as exacerbated and targeted contact with residents at risk was made. Data including those on council tax support, single occupant discount, assisted bins, and poor energy efficiency identified residents at elevated risk. A cohort of 198 residents completed assessments making an average of 1.18 referrals were made per resident. Outcome measures shown improved levels of wellbeing, loneliness, and activity, highlighting the benefits of proactive support.



A theme identified was loneliness and isolation created or increased by the pandemic. Residents remained anxious to socialise and felt nervous about attending established groups. When asked residents shown more interest in new, socially distanced groups to meet new people.

New ‘drop-in café’ events were organised across South Ribble, providing a safe, new space for people to meet, have a brew and chat to reduce loneliness. Ten community venues, supported with grants and a Council Officer, delivered weekly cafés. Each venue developed their own ideas helping the venues get people back through the doors. Attendance varies with some averaging over twenty and thirty but all being successful in enabling Covid-safe ‘resocialisation’. In a survey carried out all respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they felt less lonely and isolated since starting to attend.

The café’s achieved their objectives; and the next phase is to develop them into Community support ‘hubs’ to enable support for wider post-pandemic issues such as the cost of living crisis. Working with partners such as CAB, Christians Against Poverty, Unify Credit Union, Key and others, staff will now attend and discuss issues, supporting or making referrals.

This is part of a development of a ‘Financial Inclusion Network’ linking organisations offering financial support in South Ribble, increasing co-working and referrals and improving support both for service users and providers. This will be developed throughout 2022 with residents already benefiting from services being brought to them in their own communities.

For further information contact:

Jack Barnes

Community Development Officer, South Ribble Borough Council

e: jack.barnes@southribble.gov.uk

t: 01772 625625

www.southribble.gov.uk





South Tyneside Council

Supporting People with Dementia to Live Better Lives

A partnership between South Tyneside Council and Age Concern Tyneside South has resulted in improved day opportunities for people with dementia. For the first time, both community and building-based support is on offer, depending on the nature and progression of the illness.

The new model for day opportunities sees staff from Age Concern talking to people to

identify their needs, interests and aspirations and help them access community support to promote independence and wellbeing. This will enable people with dementia to remain connected to their communities and reduce social isolation, whilst providing carers with a much-needed break from their caring role.

By co-producing a solution with Age Concern and placing more of an emphasis on talking to people about their aspirations, more person-centred care can be delivered to help people to live better lives by achieving the things that really matter to them.

For those with more advanced dementia, day opportunities are provided at a purpose-built centre for residents, with sessions now running seven days a week – an increase on the five days previously offered. Those attending can take part in arts and crafts, watch a film, play music or games or just chat.

The new model is helping the Council deliver on its priority of supporting older or vulnerable communities.

Resident Alan Atkinson, 72, is one of those who accesses day opportunities.

His daughter, Corrina Roche, added: *"I was a little apprehensive dropping my dad off at the centre as he has been stuck in the house for nearly two years, so it was a massive change for him. However, I need not have worried as he came out of the centre very happy, and he couldn't praise the staff enough."*

It's a great service that is much needed for the people of South Tyneside and it is allowing their families to have a break for a few hours, knowing their loved ones are safe and happy at the centre."



Dementia day care user, Alan Atkinson looking at old photographs of South Shields with Councillor Anne Hetherington, Lead Member for Independence and Wellbeing.

For further information contact:

Vicki Pattinson

Director of Adult Social Services and Commissioning, South Tyneside Council

e: vicki.pattinson@southtyneside.org.uk

t: 0191 424 4749

www.southtyneside.gov.uk



South Tyneside Council



South Tyneside Council

Pledging to do Right by South Tyneside

A partnership between South Tyneside Council and public and private sector organisations are working together to create a thriving future for the Borough.

The South Tyneside Pledge is a charter which aims to boost local economic activity, reduce health inequalities, cut carbon emissions, and enhance civic pride for the benefit of the whole Borough.

It is hoped that by working collaboratively with a common set of objectives, based on the principles of co-operation and community wealth-building, collective steps can be taken to boost the prospects of the Borough and its residents.

The Pledge sets out a number of commitments which are focused on keeping things local. Those who have signed up will be asked to demonstrate how they are meeting those commitments through a short report every six months. The Pledge has already encouraged organisations to look at their own practices and see what more they can do to support the borough.

Best practice will be shared, advice and support provided, and impact monitored by the South Tyneside Partnership and its Economic Regeneration Board.

Just three months after its launch, more than 100 organisations - from big public organisations like the local Foundation Trust and CCG to large private organisations like the Port of Tyne to small voluntary, cultural and private business - had signed up.

The 100th company to pledge its commitment was commercial funding specialist, Advanced Funding Solutions. Its Director, Chris Adlam, said: "We signed up to the Pledge because we are passionate about keeping business within South Tyneside and helping local firms to support one another."

"We are really excited about the ethos in South Tyneside and the idea of working together across the public and private sectors to bring about real change for local people."

The Council is currently analysing information from those already signed up to assess what organisations are doing to meet the Pledge. This will then help the Council and the wider South Tyneside Partnership to promote best practice and shape the support that will be offered to help local organisations. This will include a menu for employers to engage with local schools, a climate change toolkit for businesses and dedicated events at South Tyneside Business Week later this year.

Organisations, public and private, big, and small, can sign up at any time and become part of the Pledge South Tyneside network at www.southtyneside.gov.uk/southtynesidepledge



Chris Adlam, Director of Advanced Funding Solutions and Cllr Tracey Dixon, Leader of South Tyneside Council

For further information contact:

Rory Sherwood-Parkin

Corporate Lead, Policy and Insight, South Tyneside Council

e: rory.sherwood-parkin@southtyneside.gov.uk

t: 0191 424 6259

www.southtyneside.gov.uk



South Tyneside Council





Stevenage Borough Council

Community Wealth Building Together



This project is funded by the UK Government through the UK Community Renewal Fund.

Summary

In July 2021, Stevenage Borough Council (SBC), were supported by the Hertfordshire Growth Board and collaborated with colleagues from all district and borough councils, as well as the county council, to convene a working group exploring opportunities to develop a partnership approach to Community Wealth Building (CWB) throughout Hertfordshire. This initial activity culminated with a successful bid to the UK Community Renewal Fund.

Background

Funding is being used to support local businesses and voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector organisations as well as examining both the strategic planning and procurement opportunities across the county. Each district and borough in Hertfordshire have been provided with funding that they are able to utilise to deliver against the defined outputs and outcomes of the programme. In Stevenage we have been working closely with our Social Inclusion Partnership, one of the thematic groups of our wider Stevenage Together Partnership, to develop a joined up approach to CWB and the partnership itself. Additionally, we have been working with business support organisations to provide both workshop and one to one provision for organisations to:

- Expand their reach.
- Improve their ability to attract further funding.
- Develop their business planning and sustainability.
- Look at their sustainability.
- Remove the barriers to entry for VCSE organisations in accessing this kind of business support.

Achievements to Date

- Secured over £700,000 in funding to support the development of CWB across Hertfordshire.
- Working with the Centre for Local Economic Studies to help develop understanding of CWB and Social Value.
- Alongside Dacorum Borough Council exploring opportunities to take learning from their approach to strategic planning as part of their revised Supplementary Planning Document.
- Commissioning the University of Hertfordshire, as a key local anchor institution, to work alongside us to deliver the programme's evaluation.

Next Steps

The Community Renewal Fund activities will finish by the end of the Summer 2022, with a full evaluation and further feasibility studies due to complete by the end of the year. Beyond this we will be exploring further opportunities to build on this work, especially around the delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

For further information contact:

Daryl Jedowski

Co-operative Neighbourhoods Programme Manager, Stevenage Borough Council

e: daryl.jedowski@stevenage.gov.uk

t: 01438 242918

www.stevenage.gov.uk





Stevenage Borough Council

Housing First

EMERGING FUTURES



Summary

Stevenage Borough Council's (SBC) Housing First Strategy (HFS, 2019-2024) outlines SBC's ambitions around assisting rough sleepers into accommodation, including holistic support. The service was created in partnership with council staff, residents and homeless individuals of Stevenage.

Background

In March 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic was announced and the initial lockdown occurred, which brought the 'Everyone In' directive from central government. All rough sleepers were offered accommodation regardless of priority need and most were placed into hotels on short term, emergency basis to safeguard them. Directly resulting from the pandemic, the HFS was launched. Government funding enabled SBC to place 28 individuals into the private rented sector, as hotels stays ended in July 2020.

SBC worked closely with organisations such as; Hertfordshire County Council, Haven First, No More Service & Emerging Futures to launch HFS. Multiple accommodation sites were set up and adapted, which now has 42 bed/unit capacities. Additionally, further support is provided by the No More Service, Haven First & Emerging Futures, as well as SBC's internal Rough Sleeper Team.

Achievements to date

- 42 rough sleepers and homeless clients have moved into secure, private rented accommodation since July 2020.
- HFS is discretionary, with clients deemed non-priority under Homelessness law. Therefore prior to HFS being operational, these clients wouldn't have been offered accommodation or dedicated support, instead referred to local agencies and hostels with a higher possibility of returning to sleeping rough.
- Partnership working with internal teams and external organisations has improved due to better communication and collaborative approaches to problem solving. This is having a positive effect on service delivery and outcomes for residents impacted by homelessness and rough sleeping.

Next Steps

- Continue refining and improving the HFS to make a long-term sustainable scheme which continues to assist rough sleeping clients in Stevenage, improving their lives and increasing long-term independence.
- Carry on building strong relationships with local partner agencies and support organisations to create even better pathways to suitable and correct support for clients.

For further information contact:

Will Peters

Housing First Project Manager, Stevenage Borough Council

e: william.peters@stevenage.gov.uk

t: 01438 242939

www.stevenage.gov.uk





Stroud District Council

Supporting the development of a Community Hub Network in Stroud District

Community Hubs are places that act as a central point of contact and support for their communities. Hubs are connectors of people, communities, local groups and voluntary sector organisations and a place where people can find friendship, positive things to do, acquire new skills and share their expertise, and get help and advice on food, housing, finances, health and wellbeing.

In Stroud District, there are a number of Community Hubs already established and a great network of voluntary and statutory organisations working together alongside parish, town and district councils.

At the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, communities came together to play an active role in responding to the emergency with countless acts of kindness and solidarity. Informal networks sprung up all over the district, helping to reach people in need of support and ensure everyone knew where and how to get help. This enhanced the response on the ground and demonstrated how important it is to understand, value and support the strengths, capacities and skills held within communities in order to be better prepared for future emergencies.

The Community Hubs Development project aims to ensure learning from the pandemic is used to inform a plan that seeks to build community resilience through the development of a network of Community Hubs across Stroud district. It is at the centre of a new partnership between Gloucestershire County Council, Stroud District Council and Creative Sustainability CIC plan will look at how to:

- Ensure there is coverage across the whole of the district and appropriate distribution of resources and responsibilities.
 - Reduce the strain of responsibility on volunteers in supporting the most vulnerable people in their local area.
 - Share knowledge, training and skills between the Hubs.
 - Ensure best practice around inclusion, diversity, safeguarding and volunteer management.
 - Improve cross sector working and collaboration
- Community Hub Support.

Communities will be supported in a number of different ways: Community groups who want to do more to support their places, will be supported to grow sustainably, making sure they have the resources and training they need before taking on more responsibilities. They will be helped to manage expectations of what they can do with what they've got and making realistic plans for their next steps. Some communities have more 'social capital' than others, they have resources and know how to use them but some do not. Part of this project is about supporting communities who don't have the resources or confidence to use them. Relationships can be built between community groups and other agencies to encourage cross sector working, making it easier for people to reach the support they need. This also means volunteers don't have to feel that they must hold all the answers.



Community Hubs Development Lead Role

The partnership has funded a Community Hubs Development Lead role for the project. This role is hosted within the voluntary and community sector with strong links across the VCS network for the Stroud District. The role is guided by a Steering Group made of the host organisation, County, District and Town Councils, Clinical Commissioning Group, a leading Community Development charity and established Community Hubs. This well-rounded Steering Group has helped spread the learning from the project across sectors in the county, influencing change in how the public sector works with the community sector.

In addition to the 'systems change' work with the Steering Group, the Development Lead role works with community groups who are looking to grow into more formalised Hubs. The Lead role also works in areas where no Hub exists to explore how partnerships between community groups could be evolved in functioning Hubs. The ambition for the project is that every locality has a well-functioning, properly resourced Hub.

Funding for Hub managers and project workers has been provided by the District Council's Community Wellbeing Grant. In the first year of the project four new Hubs have been funded in addition to the 3 existing Hubs in the District. The Steering Group has also leveraged in funding for the emerging Community Hubs from the CCG.

The next steps for the project are to:

1. Create a map of established and emerging Community Hubs for the District.
2. Develop a 'check list' guided to help Hubs prioritise their plans.
3. Continue to support the peer network of Community Hubs to share good practice and resources.
4. Develop a costed plan for what it takes to set up a Community Hub.

The Hubs project is becoming a key platform for joint work around food poverty, digital inclusion and support for families in the cost of living crisis. By working with Hubs on the ground in the estates and villages across the District, the council is able to reach into areas of need and enable stronger communities better than ever before.

For further information, contact:

Emma Keating Clark

Community Health and Wellbeing Manager, Stroud District Council

e: emma.keatingclark@stroud.gov.uk

www.stroud.gov.uk





Sunderland City Council

Southwick Altogether Raising Aspirations (SARA) – City-wide Partners working collaboratively for the benefit of residents

In April 2019, following concerns raised in Southwick (ward within Sunderland) by local councillors, a multi-agency partnership was created. City Partners agreed to a targeted piece of place-based work across 12 streets in the Southwick ward area. An action plan was developed focusing on education, prevention and enforcement. Community engagement needed to be a strong part of the plan, as Sunderland Council were concerned that residents had lost confidence in reporting issues to services, or indeed knowing who to report to.

Sunderland Council and their partners also acknowledged that there was a range of other factors affecting the community and neighbourhood.

- Anti-social behaviour and crime
- Unemployment
- Low Income
- Poor housing standards
- Health issues



The partners working collaboratively within the SARA Project are:

Sunderland City Council, Northumbria Police, Gentoo (Sunderland's Social Housing provider), Altogether Better Health partners, Public Health, Voluntary and Community Sector Alliance, Fire and Rescue Service, GP Alliance, Together for Children, Violence Reduction Unit.

To assist in meeting the outcomes within the SARA Action Plan, and ensure cross-sector involvement, a number of approaches have been developed and these include:

- Priorities lead meetings for all operational leads.
- Daily multi-agency neighbourhood solution meeting attended by all relevant officers.
- Voluntary and community sector partnership meeting for local agencies and organisations.
- Other relevant sub-group meetings as and when required.

The work that SARA carries out is reported through the agreed governance structure to the SARA Strategic Board which is in place to drive forward the work and ensure it is successful

The foundation of SARA is all about:

- Working effectively on cross-priority work and interventions to improve outcomes.
- Increasing access to services.
- Improving relationships and establishing partnerships that understand and respect the extensive and vital contributions of residents, voluntary and community organisations and statutory services.



A snapshot of the outcomes achieved to-date by the SARA project :

- 252 residents referred to social prescribers.
- 1,108 community contacts made.
- 30 residents now volunteering through SARA.
- 8 consultation events.
- 142 hours of patrols - equivalent to one full month of working days patrolling.
- 309 warning letters and 59 notices issued for environmental actions.
- 51 proactive housing inspections.
- 144 victims of crime or anti-social behaviour supported.
- 28 young people supported in their tenancies.
- 152 adult safeguarding reports and concerns referred.
- 1,925 bulbs and flowers planted.
- 720 items of intelligence submitted to police.
- Winners Northumbria Police Southern Command Problem Solvers of the Year!

For further information, contact:

Sandra Mitchell

Assistant Director Community Resilience, Sunderland City Council

e: Sandra.mitchell@sunderland.gov.uk

t: 07896 213432

www.sunderland.gov.uk





Tameside Council

Living Well at Home

Tameside Council is working to improve the quality of care and support that vulnerable people receive by maximising the choice of support available and by creating better quality of life and experiences for individuals. As part of the Living Well at Home programme, we have been committed to enabling local people to remain well and living independently in their own homes and communities of choice. Younger adults and older people who, because of long term health conditions need additional support, can expect a good quality service that is person centred and meets their needs, is available when it's needed and is sustainable.

To achieve this in the context of long-standing financial pressures and increasing demand, we have embraced innovative opportunities and support solutions. Whilst Living Well at Home will continue to assist with the practical help that people need, it is committed to changing the way this support is provided; shifting the focus of care away from tasks and back to the person.

Changing the way support is commissioned will, in turn, enable a more collaborative relationship between the person needing support and the staff providing that support; putting the individual at the centre and, wherever possible and appropriate, exploring options that are not necessarily all about paid support.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the focus for homecare has been on facilitating discharge, managing infection control and keeping people safe.

The status of the project

Inevitably, some of the initiative/momentum around the Living Well at Home project - particularly community connectivity and involvement - became lost. However, by March 2020 in our West neighbourhood we ran a small pilot to encourage 'bottom-up' development and spread innovative ways of working through rapid testing and roll-out by those that deliver services locally re-casting the operating model. Through our integrated approach to developing solutions and implementing these at a neighbourhood level, significant improvements have emerged, with positive impact for the individuals supported and for staff across health and social care teams.

These included:

- Receiving care from the same keyworker/ key nurse improves the continuity of care;
- Independent sector providers being regarded as integral partners who know the person supported really well; their voice/knowledge/expertise is respected;
- Improved relationships between Neighbourhood teams, independent sector providers, commissioners and District Nursing teams;
- Staff surveyed reported that new ways of working have made a positive difference to the care they have been able to provide (100%), and to their job satisfaction (92%);
- There has been a reduction in people having to wait for interventions (e.g. awaiting a District Nurse to change a wound dressing);
- There have been reduced risks associated with poor communication across organisational boundaries.

Consequently we found a significant reduction is being realised in District Nursing time, enabling District Nurse hours to be freed up to complete more complex nursing tasks. This is based on the pilot cohort of people supported in their homes, once scaled up over a 12 month period this will equate to freeing up 239 District Nurse hours, and a total of 957 less 'knocks at the door' for those receiving support.

Increasingly members of staff (both new recruits and existing staff) are embracing the model and the additional roles and responsibilities specifically. Staff report that they like being a named team member, knowing that their knowledge can be used to make a difference to someone's care and support and, hence, their wellbeing.



How we hope to develop further still

We continue to be in constant contact with both Salford City Council and Kirklees Council, ensuring that we share what we and they are learning through their own integration of services. We also continue to update the Greater Manchester Heath & Social Care Partnership on progress, so that they can assess the possibilities of rolling the programme out in other GM areas.

We are currently exploring digital and other tech options that we can incorporate into the project. We are also improving links with voluntary and community groups; while building on the up swell in local mutual aid groups, neighbourhood initiatives, age friendly networks and the Greater Manchester Ageing Hub.

The pilot of an app developed by Manchester University called Keep On Keep Up which gamifies a series of exercises especially designed so that people can start doing them without the involvement of a physio or OT is currently in use. These exercises are designed to reduce the likelihood of falls and is being trialled across two neighbourhoods, three homecare providers and a cohort of 80+ people.



For further information contact:

Dave Wilson

Joint Commissioning and Performance Management, Tameside Council

e: dave.wilson@tameside.gov.uk

www.tameside.gov.uk





Telford & Wrekin Council

Betty the Bus drives Covid vaccine take-up

One of the biggest challenges Telford & Wrekin Council faced during the pandemic was boosting vaccinations in areas where there had been low take up of the vaccine. Data and insight gathered with partners revealed vaccinations were lowest in the borough's most disadvantaged communities, which included some of its most vulnerable residents. The solution? Take the vaccine to local neighbourhoods via Betty the Vaccination Bus. The initiative epitomises the council's co-operative values – working in partnership around a shared sense of responsibility at a time of urgent need and embracing innovation by collaborating with local communities to drive positive change.

Working with a range of partners, including the CCG, GPs, voluntary and community organisations and the Army, Betty delivered the Covid vaccine to local people across the borough, mobilising rapidly in response to the fast-spreading Omicron variant. This highly targeted operation saw locations chosen based on data identifying the lowest Covid vaccine uptake at a hyper-local Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) level. It has reduced the number of unvaccinated people in the most disadvantaged areas and among ethnic groups where uptake was the lowest.

Stu Pardoe, who is homeless, got his jab via Betty when the bus visited Wellington, a town in the north of the borough. Speaking to the BBC in December 2021 he said: "Without places like this, homeless people are at risk."

Betty the Vaccination Bus was complemented by pop-up community clinics which particularly targeted children who had had missed vaccination opportunities in school during the autumn term. As a result, Telford & Wrekin has one of the highest rates of vaccination coverage for 12-15-year-olds in the country.

Andrew Woodall, the council's Library Service and Digital Inclusion Manager, was one of many officers who took on new responsibilities during the pandemic. As lead coordinator on numerous Betty the Vaccination Bus visits, he saw its impact first hand. "I've spoken to a lot of people who had struggled to get a (first) jab for whatever reason – some was transport or geography-related but the majority cited work shifts as the biggest barrier. I encountered overwhelming positive feedback, people seemed glad the clinics had 'come to them'."

Betty has delivered more than 1,500 vaccines since mid-December and statistics show the scheme has narrowed vaccination-related inequalities in Telford & Wrekin, particularly with respect to an increase in first doses.



One of the key success factors was the use of targeted communications via emails, texts and social media – including local influencers such as grassroots Facebook groups and councillors – that informed people of Betty’s location in advance.

On top of that, the council’s customer contact centre team made calls (from 9am–7pm, seven days a week) to residents encouraging them to get their jab and providing them with advice and support to find their nearest vaccination centre. Calls were targeted using the GP data of unvaccinated patients and residents in the areas of the borough which were known to have the lowest take-up rate. Over one 5-week period alone a total of 28,774 text messages were sent to local residents. Council leader Cllr Shaun Davies described it as “a real team effort”. “We know not everyone can travel to one of the usual walk-in clinics. Betty allows our residents to just pop out down the road to go and get their vaccination. Bringing vaccinations to people’s doorsteps like this makes it as easy as possible for people to get protected. The hard work we have put in with partners across the public sector to get Betty up and running in response to the Omicron variant is paying off – this is great to see.”

In the latter stages of the pandemic, the bus was deployed to major employers around the borough to enable people to get vaccinated without having to travel or book an appointment. *“Telford & Wrekin has contributed to the ongoing success of the vaccination programme, especially when targeting those areas with low vaccine uptake,”* said Angie Wallace, Senior Responsible Officer for the vaccination programme in Shropshire. *“Working with council colleagues to identify areas and taking the mobile vaccination buses to these areas in the community that need it most has improved the availability and convenience of getting a vaccination.”*

In addition, the great work of community engagement colleagues on the ground has encouraged and provided an opportunity for residents to speak to our local experts about vaccination and discuss any concerns in a more intimate environment, ultimately encouraging vaccine uptake.”

For further information contact:

Anthea Lowe

Director: Policy & Governance, Telford and Wrekin Council

e: anthea.lowe@telford.gov.uk

t: 07903 747303

www.telford.gov.uk



Telford & Wrekin
Co-operative Council

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Torbay Council

Transforming Lives – Whole Systems for Whole People

The Whole Systems for Whole People (WS4WP) initiative was driven by a shared understanding of how the existing system had failed people with multiple complex needs. Supported through a bid to the Devon Clinical Commissioning Group Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) for funding in 2018, lead officers from a range of organisations in Devon came together with an ambition to reimagine their response to Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (DASV).

Services in Devon, Torbay and Plymouth were seeing increasing numbers of people with highly complex presentations of substance misuse, poor mental health, sexual violence, domestic abuse, offending behaviours, and a range of other challenging circumstances such as debt and homelessness. People with complex needs are often on the margins of society and can often be managing high levels of trauma without the right support.

There was growing recognition that the system of issue-specific services did not create positive outcomes for some vulnerable people. There were also instances when individuals and families found themselves bounced between services and falling beneath increasing thresholds for support. A focus on the symptoms was not addressing the cause. People were getting stuck, repeatedly coming back into services which did not feel supportive, even when professionals were doing their best.

The WS4WP team could see that complex problems need a collaborative approach. The team went on to carry out a system wide transformation that centred on the needs of people with complex needs, including an improved offer for people experiencing DASV.

The programme objectives were to:

- Develop systems around complex lives.
- Respond to the whole person.
- Treat causes/inequality.
- Consider people's assets and use strength-based approaches.
- Develop health response to DASV.

The biggest success was to raise the profile of sexual violence and make sure it is no longer seen as a poor relation to domestic violence. As a result of working with people with lived experience the WS4WP team received funding from NHS England, along with Cornwall colleagues, to become the first Sexual Violence Trauma Pathfinder site in the England.

Funded by the WS4WP programme, several pilots were commissioned, each exploring different system changes. This included pilots within general practices, the learning from which is now shaping the commissioning of an interpersonal trauma service for adults and children in primary care settings.

Other achievements include:

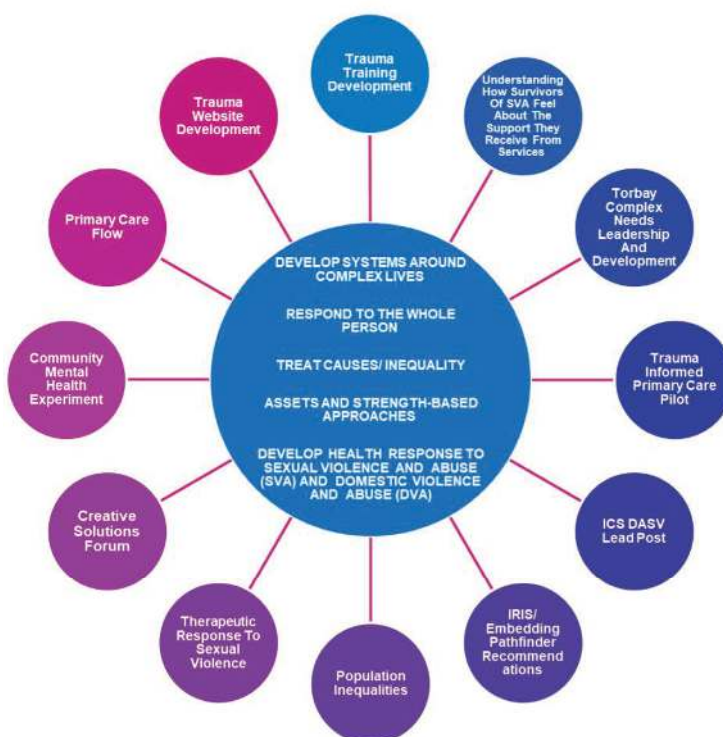
- The creation of a Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Lead role within Devon Clinical Commissioning Group to implement recommendations from the Devon Domestic Abuse Pathfinder best practice recommendations for the NHS in provider services across Primary Care, Secondary Care and Mental Health settings.
- Core funding for two hospital based Independent Domestic Violence Advisors with grants secured to pilot five more.
- Training Social Prescribers in Plymouth in trauma informed practice and acting as champions within their GP practices; linking to specialist community-based assets and improving relationships with commissioned services and other agencies.
- Development of Trauma Informed self-assessment tool, with Plymouth Trauma Informed Network, for use in GP practices.
- Development of a regional LGBT+ Independent Domestic Abuse Advisor role.
- Supporting the development of a Trauma Informed Plymouth website.

- Complex needs leadership and development support in Torbay in preparation for implementing a Multiple Complex Needs Alliance of services supporting those experiencing homelessness, drug and/or alcohol misuse and/or domestic violence and abuse.
- Supporting continuous cultural change within Torbay's systems to address root causes. This is being undertaken alongside a Trauma Informed Practice workforce development programme across agencies working with people with complex needs and vulnerabilities.

WS4WP is innovative in the way it approaches partnership working. Instead of a Terms of Reference, there are shared values and vision that enable the ambition to create change. There is no team leader, instead everyone involved works to shared values. It is now one virtual team continuing to build on experience and skills.

The next stage is to implement the Trauma Pathfinder work over the next three years and support local activities to address sexual violence and harmful behaviour.

The following graphic depicts the various work areas linked to these objectives.



For further information contact:

Kate Spencer

Head of Policy, Performance and Community Engagement, Torbay Council

e: kate.spencer@torbay.gov.uk

www.torbay.gov.uk

TORBAY COUNCIL





Wigan Council

The Deal for Business



In early 2021, Wigan Council formed the Business Consortium to involve local businesses at a strategic level to understand how we can work together to support the borough's long-term recovery from Covid-19 and build a more resilient economy through a community wealth building approach.

Wigan Council has collaborated with the Business Consortium to refresh the Deal for Business, an informal agreement originally launched in 2015 in which the Council and local businesses each have pledges to work together to create a successful and sustainable local economy.

Together, we have co-designed a new enhanced offer which signifies our shared commitment to work together to tackle economic inequality and build an inclusive and low-carbon economy.

Several new features have been introduced which respond directly to businesses' feedback, including: a tiered gold, silver and bronze award structure, mentoring service and

online directory which allows businesses to search for others with the same values, opening opportunities to connect and collaborate with local suppliers.

The award criteria and refreshed Council and business commitments under the 'Our Part/ Your Part' agreement recognises commitments to ethical and inclusive employment, investing in local supply chains and environmental sustainability as priority areas to deliver upon.

Upon completion of the self-assessment form, a membership level and 'Areas of Focus' document is produced to support the business to develop in line with community wealth building principles. Colette Parr, owner of Boutique X Colette said: *"The new refresh is fantastic, and it's helped me to concentrate on areas of my business that I can improve."*

The Business Consortium is now the guardian of the Deal for Business and will continue to re-assess the deal to ensure it meets the needs of businesses now and in the future.

The project has delivered true partnership working; it is not owned by one organisation but is a joint effort. Existing relationships have been strengthened and dialogue deepened on what we can achieve collectively, and we are now looking to identify future projects to collaborate on.

For further information contact:

Claire Burnham

Service Lead: Place and Neighbourhood Working, Wigan Council

e: c.burnham@wigan.gov.uk

t: 07711 578509

www.wigan.gov.uk





Wigan Council

Let's Innovate



There is so much talent and creativity which exists in Wigan Borough amongst our residents, local businesses, and VCFSE sector organisations. In early 2022, we launched Let's Innovate to enable local people to develop their own solutions to challenges and opportunities identified in the public sector, take ownership and determine how investment should be spent.

Inspired by the SOUP model popular in the USA, Let's Innovate is a small but powerful way of creating a collaborative situation to bring entrepreneurialism directly into communities, inspire new ideas and democratically allocate funding.

Presenters are given five minutes to pitch an idea which responds to the Let's Innovate theme and criteria that has been published in advance. Audience members are encouraged to vote for the idea they think deserves to be awarded £5,000 of investment from Wigan Council.

The Let's Innovate pitch event also provides attendees with the opportunity to meet like-minded people and presenters the chance to network where they can build connections, find new opportunities to collaborate or receive invaluable support and advice as a result.

For the first Let's Innovate event, we looked for projects which provide unpaid carers in central Wigan and the surrounding areas with the opportunity to have respite, relax, have fun, connect with people in similar situations and maintain their health and wellbeing.



Carers were actively engaged in priority setting and decision making from the outset; their feedback determined the criteria for project proposals, volunteers formed the shortlisting panel and local carers attended the pitch event to cast their vote and have their say. Together, they decided which idea would have the most impact for carers: 'Respite in the Tranquillity of Amberswood Nature Reserve' by Groundwork will support carers to enjoy and access nature and wildlife during dedicated sessions, by providing free transport to a local beauty spot, equipment, refreshments, and guides.

Let's Innovate will continue throughout the year with a new theme each time.

For further information contact:

Claire Burnham

Service Lead: Place and Neighbourhood Working, Wigan Council

e: c.burnham@wigan.gov.uk

t: 07711 578509

www.wigan.gov.uk





A challenge shared locally and globally

How are Co-operative Councils working towards Net Zero?
How are they using an effective place-based approach?

Download: bit.ly/CCIN-Net-Zero



Billingham Town Council

Collaboration through Covid and Beyond

Billingham Town Council, in conjunction with local organisations BCT Aspire, Fighting Chance Boxing Club and Belp launched it's Covid Response on the 23rd of March 2020.

Working with existing organisations within the town meant we were able to scale up a solution that saw over 100 local residents volunteering to assist with shopping for food items, making up emergency food parcels and distributing them to residents that were unable to visit local shops or access supermarket deliveries. By collaborating with Stockton Borough Council's Covid Helpline, we were able to support residents not only with food parcel deliveries, but also delivering their prescriptions, dog walking and making weekly wellbeing calls to local residents to check on their wellbeing and just for a chat. One of the issues we were able to identify early in the lockdown was the lack of access to good quality fresh food. As a result of this, we reimagined our Community Lunch service which had, prior to Covid, brought together isolated residents for a free three course meal in the Town Council managed Café in the Park. With just a small amount of tweaking, we were able to launch a free meal delivery service to shielding residents which saw in excess of 200 hot three course lunches being delivered each week ensuring residents, often with complicated health needs, had access to a nutritiously balanced hot meal. This service was such a success that we have continued this service with funding secured through to March 2022. To date, we have cooked and delivered over 10,000 hot meals and our small team of volunteers won the Mayors Award at the most recent Stockton Borough Council Civic Awards.

As we started to emerge from lockdown, we were keen to build on the great relationships we had established with local organisations and regularly deliver collaborative solutions to shared problems. We continue to work in partnership with organisations such as Belp, BCT Aspire and Billingham Boxing Academy as well as other new organisations to ensure a coordinated holiday enrichment project which provides local residents with access to holiday activities and a free meal throughout the school holidays with over 1000 residents supported across every holiday in the last year.



For further information contact:

Councillor Clare Gamble

Chairman, Billingham Town Council

e: cgamble@billinghamtowncouncil.co.uk

t: 01642 551171

www.billinghamtowncouncil.co.uk





Burntwood Town Council

Community-Wide Partnership Delivers Its Community Woodland

That first phone call was very welcome, the start of what's already proved to be a productive and mutually positive relationship. The Marketing Manager for a large and internationally recognised local company, Mercian Labels was asking for advice and support as the company wanted to give something back to our town but to do it with the community rather than to the community: specifically, a community woodland. Hayley Cashmore had been asked by her company to lead on this project coinciding with HM The Queens Platinum Jubilee and Burntwood Town Council were delighted to be part of it and to make the community connections.

Working alongside Lichfield District Council, we identified an area of open space that would be ideal and close enough to Mercian Labels' premises for their employees to be part of the scheme. It was also within a couple of hundred yards of a local Primary School who were enthusiastic about the possibilities of a nearby woodland to help plant, maintain and to use as an outdoor classroom. Along with a local parent-led children's centre, a local nursery provider and a local high school, a whole consortium of local groups and organisations was gathered to progress the scheme.

We consulted with nearby residents, worked with the Woodland Trust to source the trees and with the District Council's Parks team on planning. A local organisation offering gardening day opportunities to adults with learning disabilities were also drafted in to help with preparing the area for planting and the schoolchildren were recruited to plant the saplings.



Hayley, our Town Clerk and I had numerous video calls and visits to the site as the project went forward. There were a few bumps in the road but on 14 January 2022 the trees were planted. Unfortunately, our VIP guest tested covid-positive on launch day but it went ahead with a good crowd of supporters and well-wishers, creating a great deal of interest from locals, including dog-walkers.

To me, this was a great example of cooperation and co-production, bringing together private, public and voluntary organisations for the benefit of our community and our environment. And the best is yet to come as the woodland develops and matures over the years ahead.

For further information contact:

Councillor Sue Woodward

Leader, Burntwood Town Council

e: susan.woodward@burntwood-tc.gov.uk

t: 07779 473961

www.burntwood-tc.gov.uk





Kidsgrove Town Council

Bringing the Community Together – Kidsgrove Events Committee

Kidsgrove Town Council has been at the heart of the Kidsgrove community since its conception back in 1894. Formed with the amalgamation of the Civic Parishes of Hardings Wood, Kidsgrove, Newchapel and Talke, Kidsgrove Urban District Council became Kidsgrove Town Council in 1974 and 128 years on is still the beating heart of Kidsgrove. Whilst the Council continues to deal with its core business of Allotments, Environmental concerns and Planning responses, the key focus for its elected Councillors has always been its residents, and this was brought into no greater focus than during the recent ‘Covid’ years.

What we did

Whilst the Town Council offered the use of the Town Hall free of charge to various volunteer groups and health authorities, covering Covid-19 Testing and Support Schemes, a small group of Councillors were acutely aware that as we left Lockdown, our residents would be eager to meet with friends and socialise again. The need for key events would be central to enabling that to happen.

What happened

Under the stewardship of Cllr Sylvia Dymond, the Events Committee was empowered to establish a leadership role in all noteworthy events in the area, providing administrative capacity and ensuring that the town had a wide array of events in various locations across the Parish as a whole.

Cllr Dymond brought together key partners such as the Rotary Club, Royal British Legion, and the local community interest company “Go Kidsgrove” (An organisation with the sole purpose of joining local businesses and local communities together) and the local Co-op Stores. This ensured annual events such as the Christmas Panto, Remembrance Parade and Fireworks and Bonfire Display were reestablished and were bigger and better than ever before.

The Events Committee also offered administrative support to groups with long-standing events to improve logistical issues. It helped the community take greater pride in the Parish and support numerous charities, many of which had seen funding slashed over the last two to three years as funding was diverted to essential services.



Kidsgrove Town Mayor Cllr Angela Cooper and Kidsgrove Rotary President Maria Watts at Kidsgrove Firework Display

For further information contact:

Councillor Mike Stubbs

CCIN Lead, Kidsgrove Town Council

e: cllr.stubbs@kidsgrovetowncouncil.gov.uk

t: 07500 091504

www.kidsgrovetowncouncil.gov.uk





Polesworth Parish Council

Polesworth Volunteer Support Group

The Covid-19 pandemic brought the Polesworth community together to help one another in the most difficult of times. As the country locked down, Polesworth stepped up. Within a matter of days of the first national lockdown, a call was put out for volunteers and one by one, over 70 people turned up in masks to register at the Parish Council's Tithe Barn with their ID and volunteer sign up form.

Within a matter of a couple of weeks the Tithe Barn had been transformed into a community shop – The Polesworth Food Hub. This wasn't the council doing something, it was the council, the community and local businesses cooperating that made this happen. Volunteers used their contacts and connections to find fridges, freezers, suppliers, and volunteers to help run a weekly food hub. Users were asked to pay what they could afford with the Parish Council providing the venue, businesses providing goods and the Borough Council contributing thousands of pounds in grants to make it all happen.

Thousands of people were fed at a cost they could afford with safe access to fresh and tinned produce available in a socially distanced environment. It provided more than just food though with it providing a great opportunity to help with other challenges as well. Relationships were built, trust was established, and friendships were made. Referrals happened to help people secure mortgage breaks, council tax support and even new white goods supplied by a local charity.



The volunteer group set about helping support people in every way they could think of. A meals on wheels service fed hundreds of elderly people with a hot meal each week and socially distanced events were put on to bring the community together when lockdown restrictions eased.

You might think that a 2022 case study about a 2020 problem is a bit outdated, but the support group hasn't stopped. The Food Hub may have closed in late 2021 but the group continues to put on events and provide support to the vulnerable members of the community and of course, the friendships that were built will last a lifetime.

For further information contact:

Adam Farrell

Councillor, Polesworth Parish Council

e: adamfarrell@polesworth-pc.gov.uk

t: 07539 196114

www.polesworth-pc.gov.uk





Woughton Community Council

Building a community approach to sustainable, affordable food

Woughton Community Council has taken a proactive approach to filling some of the gaps left at principal authority level; provision of youth services, delivery of an 'in house' advice service, a wellbeing worker with a dedicated 'Wellbeing Room' and much more.

Recently, the issue of access to affordable food has become a pressing issue – whilst 'Food Banks' are cited as an essential element of managing food poverty, Woughton has taken a different approach, building a project that encompasses a range of services that build resilience, skills development, and community involvement.

This started with the **Community Fridge**; a waste reduction project, originally sitting within the Youth and Environment Teams. This collects food that would be wasted, and then redistributing. This includes 'Food Connect', an environmental distribution system utilising electric bikes and trailers. Whilst primarily about waste reduction, this also addresses hunger, including provision to the Youth Service, feeding dozens of young people each week.

The Community Café was started during the summer of 2020, where the fridge donations were used to create an outdoor café, with upwards of 100 people attending each day (running three days each week) and at times, volunteers and staff serving upwards of 80 hot meals.

The café has continued, moving indoors alongside the Community Larder, a food subscription scheme that provides a weekly session where members can collect items of their choosing, plus extras that may be helpful (bread, fruit veg).

The three sessions see around 400 visits per week. With two other Community Larders and another community fridge on parish (run by other groups) and more being planned, this gives some idea of the demand for low-cost food.

With increasing demands on the services, there are some large-scale projects coming that build food sustainability into the parish. Small gardening projects have previously taken place, bringing previously unused / unloved spaces back to life, providing fruit and vegetables for participants. And our **Community Growing Space**, offering 2000 square metres of land, will provide dedicated space, orchard, classroom, and welfare facilities. Built 'off grid', using solar and wind, water collection, composting toilets, and methane collection, this will be an exemplar of ecologically sound delivery.

This project builds food security and sustainability – whilst this small area won't sustain everyone, supporting residents to develop spaces and grow food will contribute to these aims. This supports the Community Food approach, will also act as the 'Hub', with spokes reach into estates of the parish, finding new spaces, support with building confidence and knowledge. Working with our Principal Authority, we aim to develop guidance to enable this flexibility, within safe and sustainable parameters, contributing to the aspiration to the 'the greenest city'.

For further information contact:

Steve McNay

Council Manager, Woughton Community Council

e: steve.mcnay@woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk

t: 01908 395681

www.woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk/





The Active Wellbeing Society working with Birmingham City Council

Reclaiming the Commons

The Active Wellbeing Society (TAWS) is a community benefit society and cooperative working to tackle inequality and promote community wellbeing. TAWS work with communities and councils across the country, in areas of high deprivation, to provoke system change and address barriers.

The disruption and change in our day-to-day lives, over the last few years, has created an opportunity for communities to rethink and reimagine how we engage with the public realm. As people became better acquainted with their local parks and canal paths, and streets were transformed for outdoor dining and activity, we began to see the benefits of doing things differently. At the same time, the inequalities that have been so starkly illuminated by the pandemic, are yet again reinforced in the inequitable access to good quality outdoor and greenspace across our cities.

In Birmingham, where over 40% of the population live in the most deprived households nationally, access to greenspace is amongst the lowest per person in the UK. Over the last year TAWS have been working with Birmingham City Council and the Birmingham Growing Network to redress this inequality and improve access to – and ownership of – greenspace within our most deprived communities.

The Birmingham Growing Network emerged from the city's Covid-19 Community Response, which brought hundreds of partners together to distribute food to communities during lockdown restrictions. Now a standalone group in its own right, with 170 members, the network is supporting communities to reclaim and activate greenspaces across the city for community benefit.

In partnership with Birmingham City Council, the Birmingham Growing Network are developing a new process to support communities to use public land for growing and exploring community land governance models. TAWS are working with communities to promote food skills including growing, cooking and composting and are committed to working cooperatively with partners across the city to ensure everyone has access to greenspace.

For further information contact:

Amit Dattani

Assistant Director of Food, Sharing & Growing, The Active Wellbeing Society

e: amit.dattani@theaws.org

t: 0121 728 7030

www.theaws.co.uk





Bates Wells working with P3 Charity and West Lindsay District Council

Boosting housing provision in Gainsborough

We advised the ‘people first’ organisation P3, a registered charity, housing provider and social enterprise on aspects of its 10-year partnership with West Lindsay District Council (WLDC) to provide high-quality, sustainable affordable housing in Gainsborough.

Through the partnership, WLDC granted £1m to P3, and transferred 11 properties to the charity. P3 was able to leverage WLDC’s funding to raise £4m in social investment, to refurbish the homes and purchase additional homes. P3’s goal is to refurbish, manage and rent 110 homes through the project.

In addition to refurbishing the houses, P3 is then letting out the homes through an impactful letting policy agreed with WLDC, and also providing wraparound support to tenants; the aim is the creation of a new housing ecosystem where people will benefit from long-term stability and thrive.

The project illustrates the huge impact which outcomes-driven collaboration between councils and civil society (including charities, social enterprises and social investors) can bring.

Our role as legal advisors to P3 was to assist WLDC and P3 to ensure that the project met legal requirements, and that the legal documents aligned with their purposive agreement – navigating tricky issues around grant funding, and the EU state aid and UK subsidy control regimes, alongside the transfers of the properties themselves.

For further information contact:

Suhan Rajkumar

Associate, Bates Wells

e: s.rajkumar@bateswells.co.uk

t: 0207 551 7718

www.bateswells.co.uk





Branding.coop working with the CCIN

Building the Co-operative Council network

Established in 2016, branding.coop provides hands-on support and guidance to organisations wishing to promote their cooperative identity.

With both local government and international cooperative experience, Nicola has managed the operations and communications for the Co-operative Councils' Innovation Network since June 2016. She provides a focal point for CCIN Members, prospective members and other organisations wishing to learn more about the Network.

Committed to exceeding expectations, their services comprise:

- Communications & Marketing – production and dissemination of member communication via publications newsletters, member promotions, member-specific news, WhatsApp Groups etc. Brand guardian for the CCIN's visual identity.
- Event Strategy – planning, organising, and attending events, conferences, and exhibitions (in person and online) on behalf of the Network, acting as an Ambassador and Spokesperson.
- Website strategy – launched a new website in February 2022 highlighting the Network's Statement of Values and Principles and its membership's Coop Difference. Managing and updating website content, including collating case studies, blogs, member news, and publications. Case Studies have grown from 70 to 400 over the last six years.
- Social Media management, engagement, and content – managing the reputation and profile of the Network.



**L:R Steve Reed MP, OBE - CCIN Honorary President,
Cllr Sharon Taylor OBE - Chair of the CCIN and
Leader of Stevenage Borough Council, Nicola Huckerby -
Branding.coop**

- Membership recruitment, servicing, and retention – Since 2016, membership has grown from 20 councils to over 100 members and supporters. There are now three membership types: Full, Associate, Affiliate, and a Supporter category.
- Provision of CCIN Secretariat and Governance Support – organising Governance meetings, managing agendas, taking minutes, recording, and tracking decisions and actions. Organising elections.
- Officer Network Support – engaging officers in Network activity.
- Project management of Network funded projects – known as Policy Labs and Policy Prototypes. This activity is a significant body which requires monitoring and tracking through to sign-off by the Governance and launch.
- CRM & GDPR – as the Network has grown, so has the volume of member data. There are now more than 1000 contacts across seven audiences.
- Strategy and Action Plan – managing monitoring and tracking delivery.
- Dynamic Purchasing System – promoting the DPS and managing relationships with Suppliers.

For further information contact:

Nicola Huckerby
Director, Branding.coop
e: hello@branding.coop
t: 07813 687292
www.branding.coop

branding.coop



Co-operative Care Colne Valley working with Kirklees Council

Great care is possible through co-operation

At Co-operative Care Colne Valley, we started offering care and support in our community in March 2021. We offer quality care that is powered by our community and that goes beyond fulfilling basic needs – we want our members to live good lives.

The local authority has played an essential role in our success. Firstly, we were able to apply and received start-up grant funding which has been key to our set up. Then, despite the hard work we put in, we found it difficult to overcome some of the challenges – like recruitment of the Registered Manager, an essential person for a regulated care service operation. Our local council has stepped in creatively – we were offered a secondment of an experienced and enthusiastic person with the right skills and expertise for the job. With their support, we were able to prepare everything that was needed for the Care Quality Commission (CQC) registration so that we can start offering care and support in our community.



We have an ongoing dialogue with the local authority who, while being bound by procurement rules, are very keen to work alongside us to pilot new ways of working. The council have found a way to signpost people needing services in our direction, which has been very helpful in our financially fragile start-up period and have worked alongside us to support recruitment of both care staff and volunteers.

We still need to be patient and continue to learn and work hard to establish our fledgling care co-operative. We would not be able to get this far without the support of our local community and the local council as well as co-operators up and down the country. Yet it's great to know that our members already benefit from and value what we do.

Alison, our care staff member says: 'I started work in June and haven't looked back! I absolutely love it. It's so rewarding it doesn't feel like a job. I have already learnt so much in the short space of time I have worked here through the training I have been given.'



For further information contact:

Veronika Susedkova

Board Member, Co-operative Care Colne Valley

e: sharingcare@valleycare.coop

t: 07899 814410

www.valleycare.coop





Co-operative College

Youth Co-operative Action – Giving young people the tools to make a positive change in their communities

Delivered in towns and cities within several areas of England, the Co-operative College's ground-breaking Youth Co-operative Action (YCA) programme focuses on youth activism and empowers young people to make real change in their communities. It is currently the only co-operative youth social action programme of its kind in the country.

During 2021/22, YCA has worked with cohorts of young people, aged between 12 and 20, in various areas of Greater Manchester, Plymouth and London. As a participant-led programme, it's up to the young people to decide what issues they want to address, and last year these included hate crime, climate change, youth safety, loneliness and the difficulties that young people face as they get older, such as getting a foot on the career ladder and managing money.

The programme, delivered in collaboration with youth organisations imbedded in the local communities, provides participants with the opportunity to visit local co-operatives and/or community businesses to learn more about their work and be inspired while developing their own co-operative social action project. Throughout the programme, young participants gain skills and hands-on experience of how, by applying the co-operative values and principles, and working collaboratively, they can take control, influence and make a change over an important aspect of their lives.



The YCA programme has supported 123 young people during 2021/22, including engaging with 30 young people via online Youth Sessions.

Feedback shows that YCA participants demonstrated improvement in key skills and qualities including co-operation (58%), problem solving (29%), resilience (33%), and empathy (14%). And while statistics are important, the real impact of Youth Co-operative Action can be summed up with this quote from a participant based in the Rochdale Co-operative Council area: "The project changed my life and the way I see the world."

For further information contact:

Daniel Cox

UK Project Manager, The Co-operative College

e: daniel.cox@co-op.ac.uk

www.co-op.ac.uk





Co-operatives UK working with the South Yorkshire Combined Authority

Empowering co-operation

As the voice of the UK's co-operative movement, we empower and support co-ops with specialist knowledge and expertise. By giving our members a stronger voice, delivering effective support services, and demonstrating that co-ops do business better and improve lives, we will grow the co-operative economy and create a fairer society.

We know co-ops. Our expert advice team support co-ops with incorporation, governance, HR, membership strategy and much more. In 2021 we helped bring 113 co-ops into existence, a 33% increase from the previous 12 months.

We also work with partners and funders to deliver co-op development programmes covering general co-operative business support, while also focusing on priorities such as worker co-ops, community shares and the platform economy. Our innovative work is externally funded and in 2021 we secured £1.68 million to advance the sector.

We proactively encourage national and local policymakers to target co-operative growth and are ready to partner with local authorities to help them take practical action. For example, following our successful campaign to build cross-party support, Scottish government is now committed to supporting co-operatives in its policy programme and strategies. And we are enabling local support for co-operatives through our Ownership Hub programme. A joint project between Co-operatives UK and the Employee Ownership Association, the Ownership Hub promotes and supports worker co-ops and employee ownership at a city-regional level. In June 2021, the South Yorkshire Combined Authority became the first city-region to join the programme. We are now working hard to replicate the success across other authorities and will be making further announcements in 2022.

Also in 2022, we will be launching major new programmes to support investment in co-ops and position co-ops in local economic transformation.

For further information contact:

James Wright

Policy and Development Lead, Co-operatives UK

e: james.wright@uk.coop

t: 0161 214 1775

www.uk.coop





Community Broadband Network working with Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council

Using the Thin Layer Model for infrastructure development

In the last 5 years Tameside MBC and its public sector partners, including the NHS, education and social housing providers, have been building a borough-wide digital infrastructure, including a fibre network and data centre.

Using an innovative model developed by Tameside and CBN, the public sector partners are able to share the benefits easily - including with the private sector. This is the 'thin layer model' or 'cooperative neutral host'.

Now CBN is working with partner authorities to apply the model to other use cases, including EV charging point deployment and local energy markets.

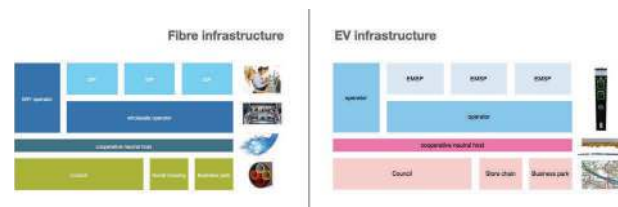
How it works

Digital infrastructure is made up of layers - from the raw, physical infrastructure on the bottom layer to the applications and services at the top.

The thin layer model offers a way to sew together infrastructure elements at the bottom layers, so that they can be shared at the upper levels - without creating complex joint ownership structures.

What's more it allows the private sector to join in, without the grant of any subsidy, and without any form of exclusive concession arrangements or joint ventures. The cooperative model ensures absolute neutrality, and opens opportunities for smaller and local businesses to access the infrastructure directly, so that they can add more value, innovate and differentiate their products.

Cooperative Network Infrastructure (<https://cni.coop/>) now provides access to over 200km of spine fibre infrastructure and multiple carrier-neutral data centres. It has 9 local authority members alongside more than 15 telecoms industry members.



How it can be extended

Durham County Council is developing a layered model for neutral-hosted EV charge points called STEP. Drawing on CBN's work in this area, Durham is looking at applying the cooperative model, making it easier for public sector partners to collaborate, and as a way to ensure neutrality in dealing with EV charger operators.

Blackpool Council is working with partners (including CBN) to create a unique local energy market, leveraging local opportunities such as off-shore wind and data centres using a new international fibre route. The cooperative thin layer model is envisaged as the mechanism to reduce complexity in transactions between multiple energy users and generators.

For further information contact:

Shaun Fensom
Chair, CBN
e: shaun@networks.coop
t: 0161 283 2675
www.broadband.coop





Cwmpas working with Social Care Commissioners in Wales

Supporting social care commissioners to transform social services

Social value models of service delivery for great social care and added social value. Demand for statutory services continues to outstrip capacity and available resources. Cwmpas is leading on a new approach to create a sustainable pattern of social care by supporting commissioners and procurement teams to invest in social value delivery models. Our approach embraces the realities of current social care markets and contract procurement regulations.

The longer-term goal of well-being legislation in Wales is for care and support services to help people to achieve great well-being outcomes. This involves embedding five principles into the work of commissioners to act 'beyond the care market', to explore the role of commissioning in developing community self-help activities through organisations working upstream of social care provision.

The five principles are:

1. Do what matters for people as they define it for their well-being.
2. Co-production for people's voice and control and active involvement in decision-making.
3. Collaboration and partnership to offer opportunities and resources that people need for their well-being.
4. Prevention and early intervention to maintain or restore people's independence as an important to well-being.
5. Added value that is social, economic and/or environmental value. This not just about the well-being of people receiving care but the whole community.

Everyone who stepped forward to work with us stayed the course of a programme and had their thinking and aspirations broadened by refocusing on five key principles. Commissioners, managers and service providers in Carmarthenshire and Powys worked to reshape care services, embrace community assets and use collaboration to create an eco-system of services focused on lifting people's well-being in their own communities.

Commissioners and others valued opportunities to step back from their daily activities and reflect on areas of challenge at a higher level and on a wider footprint, thinking about principles and strategic goals, and learning about what is working and not working in other parts of the country.

They identified the scope for and nurturing of more joined up services, more use of community and third sector assets, and a shift from service silos to a place-based approach to commissioning and delivery. This has created an environment in which co-operatives, social enterprises and the third sector can flourish.

For further information contact:

Donna Coyle

Co-operative Care & Support, Cwmpas

e: donna.coyle@cwmpas.coop

t: 07766 316945

www.cwmpas.coop

cwmpas





Ideas Alliance working with the Royal Borough of Greenwich

100 Day Challenge in Greenwich: re-thinking day opportunities for people with learning disabilities

The Royal Borough of Greenwich (RBG) wanted to transform their learning disabilities day opportunities through a collaborative design process, with a particular interest in moving away from building-based services to community-level solutions. Ideas Alliance spent nine months supporting collaboration and innovation between the council, people with learning disabilities and their families, providers and supporters to kickstart change and action in the borough.



This started with a scoping phase, where we learnt more about people's needs and desires, which then led into a 100 Day Challenge. A 100 Day Challenge is a rapid-results, action-based way of collaborative working which puts the people with the most knowledge about a problem in charge of the solutions. However, the ongoing disruption and challenges of COVID meant that this time, the project had to be almost entirely delivered online. The scope of the work in Greenwich also meant that we needed to run an expanded version - with three teams working in parallel tackling slightly different aspects of the problem, including one team led by people with learning disabilities.

The results: One of the most transformative parts of the challenge was the shift in ideas, action, relationships and mindsets from where we started to where the 100 days ended. In particular, people said they wanted to see an improved range of inclusive leisure activities, as well as work and social opportunities. Some new ideas that emerged from the challenge were:

- Using a hub and spoke model for day support, where there is a "home base" for all to explore community activities as they are able.
- An ongoing calendar of taster days run by providers for families.
- Four "One Stop S\$hops" visibly hosted within leisure centres, run collaboratively by providers, third sector partners, people with learning disabilities and their families and council officers.
- Transport options and travel support to be developed alongside the activities and included in taster sessions.
- High-level discussions with local business and an employment group to develop more and better opportunities for paid work and volunteering.

For our part as facilitators of the challenges, it was incredible to work alongside committed and passionate people - those that use services, those that care for them and staff that support them. It is testament to the work and will of everyone involved that people felt "inspired", "listened to for the first time" and that there is so much appetite to go further, do more and get others involved.

For further information contact:

Helen Sharp

Director, Ideas Alliance

e: helen@ideas-alliance.org.uk

t: 07711 093942

www.ideas-alliance.org.uk

IDEAS
ALLIANCE



Lambeth GP Food Co-op

Gardening for health programme supporting stroke patients

Lambeth GP Food Co-op brings together patients, nurses, doctors and local people who work together to grow food. It is a co-operative that works in and for the NHS and since 2013 has built vegetable gardens in GP surgeries and hospitals often in the most deprived areas in the Borough. It has been recognised by the NHS for its contribution to improving health and wellbeing with its tested track record for highlighting food as medicine especially for patients with long term health needs including stroke and long Covid.

Development

A monthly stall at King's College Hospital provides hospital staff to buy locally grown vegetables from patients who have grown them themselves. This is also a contribution to reducing food miles and is aligned to the hospitals Sustainability Plan.

Implementation

This is a Borough wide initiative which provides evidence of creating social value and practical support for its partners which include Lambeth Council, NHS partners, local surgeries and the local community. At the Pulross Centre in Brixton it provides a gardening for health programme for stroke patients which includes weekly gardening mini workshops and free seeds for patients to take home on discharge.

Review

Lambeth GP Food Co-op is part funded by local GP's, with additional funding from NHS partners.

With proposed funding from an external construction partner it is planning to develop 3 more GP based surgery vegetable gardens in 2023.

Key Takeaways

- Working partnerships between councils, GP's, hospitals to deliver benefits of food for health to patients and communities in areas of health inequalities.
- Co-operation in action which demonstrates imaginative use of vacant estate in public spaces including council, NHS and surgery locations.
- Patients, residents join health organisations as equal members participating in the organisational life of the Co-op.

Action Opportunity

This is a future focussed model which potentially contributes to Council collaboration with local health partners to deliver social objectives including increased food production, support for patients managing long term health conditions, joint sustainability and biodiversity plans.



For further information contact:

Edward Rosen

Project Director, Lambeth GP Food Co-op

e: edward.rosen@nhs.net

t: 07908 834203

lambeth.gpfoodcoop.org.uk





Mutual Ventures working with West Lindsey District Council

Thriving Gainsborough 2024: regeneration of the town centre to revitalise the economy and tackle economic deprivation strategy

Mutual Ventures supported West Lindsey District Council (WLDC) to develop a strategy for regenerating Gainsborough town centre, and the successful application for a £10.3m grant from central government's 'Levelling Up Fund'.

Gainsborough is a historic market town in Lincolnshire that is economically and culturally left behind. Its market place is stagnant and suffer low footfall, shop and market stall vacancies are high, and it has no night-time economy. Its population experiences acute economic deprivation, with one ward ranked within the country's 0.1% most deprived. WLDC had ambitious plans to support the inclusive growth and regeneration of the district's communities, but lacked capacity and specialist expertise to realise them.

Our support

WLDC appointed Mutual Ventures to lead the development of the plans for Gainsborough and the application to the Levelling Up Fund, working closely with council colleagues. We were supported by our partners Project Centre to bring together a team with business case, strategy, public realm and economic regeneration expertise.

The strategy was developed together with the council and stakeholders, to ensure it was right for the whole community and would establish the physical, economic, social and environmental conditions required to address local challenges. It was widely consulted and secured the support of residents, local traders, the local MP, private investors, owners of heritage assets, and the Town Council.

The plan set out the need for investment in the construction of a cinema, redesign of the market place, refurbishment of heritage buildings and shop fronts, creation of a new park, and refurbishment of the bus station. It demonstrated how and why investment would act as a catalyst for clean economic growth, attract private investment and provide residents with employment and training opportunities. We undertook detailed economic modelling to identify the financial and non-financial benefits of the interventions and the measurable impact on communities.

Once the strategy was agreed, we 'held the pen' on the application to the Levelling Up Fund to translate them into a high-quality LUF application, which provided a compelling strategic narrative and clear delivery strategy. Through this we also supported the development of WLDC's in-house capabilities, enabling them to develop their own high-quality bids for central government funding in the future.

Outcome of our work

WLDC learnt it had been successful in securing the full value of the grant for £10.3m requested in the bid. Work is now underway to implement the strategy and realise the benefits for local people, business and social enterprise, and Mutual Ventures is continuing to support the council.

"Investing in Mutual Ventures support has accelerated our wider place-making agenda and resulted in a high-quality case for investment in Gainsborough. Their inclusive approach helped this to become a real team effort and ensured significant corporate learning and buy-in of stakeholders to our plans."

Sally Grindrod-Smith, Assistant Director Planning and Regeneration, West Lindsey District Council

For further information contact:

John Copps

Managing Consultant, Mutual Ventures

e: john@mutualventures.co.uk

t: 02037 143901

www.mutualventures.co.uk





Oxygen Finance working with South Tyneside Council

Introducing the Supplier Incentive Programme



South Tyneside Council spends £207m every year with over 3,000 suppliers who help the council to provide a wide range of key services.

One of the ways the council is working to ensure best value for money is through the Supplier Incentive Programme – an early payment scheme. The initiative provides mutual benefits for both the council and businesses, with suppliers having their invoices fast tracked in exchange for a small rebate.

The Supplier Incentive Programme forms part of the council's Procurement Strategy, which aims to ensure its spending on goods and services gives value for money for Borough residents through efficient and effective buying practices.

South Tyneside Council partnered with Oxygen Finance to introduce the programme and the council has become a role model for other Local Authorities that wish to improve their purchase-to-pay (P2P) processes, boost suppliers' cash flow and generate a new income stream.

"Stimulating economic growth is one of our key priorities here in South Tyneside. Businesses, particularly small and medium sized firms, are the backbone of our economy, therefore we feel it is important we do all we can to support them through these challenging financial times. Through the Supplier Incentive Programme and paying businesses early we can help our key suppliers to keep their cash flowing and hopefully ease the financial burden for businesses, which often need to fund the gap between payments. It is also an excellent way for us to strengthen our relationship with suppliers."

The scheme will also benefit the council with invoices dealt with much more efficiently and with money generated from early payments going straight back into protecting the vital council services our residents value and deserve."

Leader of South Tyneside Council

A Suppliers view

"The improved cash flow that we receive from being on the programme allows us to settle more of our own supplier accounts earlier and we therefore benefit from increased 'early payment' discounts. This and other advantages of the programme such as increased invoicing efficiency are also mirrored having a beneficial effect on the whole supply chain. I would highly recommend the programme to other suppliers to the council."

Catherine Ridley, Finance Director, McVickers

For further information contact:

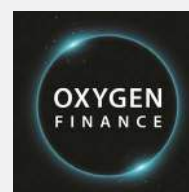
Karen Gilbert

Head of Marketing, Oxygen Finance

e: karen.gilbert@oxygen-finance.com

t: 01212 954038

www.oxygen-finance.com





Peopletoo working with Doncaster Council

Cost of Care Exercise, April 2022



Following the Government's announcement in December 2021 of more funding for the Adult Social Care market to support sustainability and for local authorities to move towards paying providers a fair rate of care, Peopletoo were commissioned by Doncaster Council to lead the Cost of Care exercise and produce a provisional Market Sustainability Report.

In order to receive future funding, local authorities would need to submit evidence of work they are doing in the following areas:

- Cost of care exercises for 65+ care homes and 18+ domiciliary care.
- A provisional market sustainability plan.
- A spend report detailing how funding allocated for 2022 to 2023 is being spent.

Peopletoo's dedicated Business Intelligence Hub is also providing additional analytical capacity to provide an in-depth understanding of the current financial situations, and the impact of current systems and practices which will provide added value to Doncaster Council above the requirements of this specification. This will aid Doncaster Council in engaging with their providers to ensure they are kept up to date on any potential impact the new funding would have on the local market, as well as their own relationships.

As part of the Cost of Care exercise, Peopletoo are reviewing the LGA recommended Cost of Care toolkits to ensure alignment with the local context of Doncaster, as well as designing and implementing a detailed communication and engagement plan to keep Doncaster Council's providers informed at every stage and supporting providers who may be impacted by the Cost of Care proposals. We are also undertaking necessary market analysis to understand what constitutes a reasonable profit to maintain a sustainable local care market in the area.

The provisional Market Sustainability Report, due for submission later in the year, will consider the results from the Cost of Care exercise, consider the impact of future market changes, particularly in the context of adult social care reform, and set out an outline action plan for addressing the issues identified and the priorities for market sustainability investment.

As well as driving the Market Sustainability Report and Cost of Care exercise, the Peopletoo team are also upskilling the Doncaster Council team to ensure future Government funding rounds can be completed in-house.

For further information contact:

Mike Butler

Managing Director, Peopletoo

e: mike.butler@peopletoo.co.uk

t: 07540 553303

www.peopletoo.co.uk

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Power to Change working with Liverpool City Region

Kindred CIC and investing in Liverpool's social economy

Liverpool City Region has a thriving social economy, but its resilient community businesses are frequently operating on tight margins. The sector needs access to finance to realise its full potential, yet many struggle to get mainstream investment. To respond to this challenge, Power to Change teamed up with Liverpool City Region (LCR) Combined Authority and local social economy leaders to develop Kindred, an independent CIC offering social investment and support.

Kindred is not just another grant or loan programme. Co-designed by the sector, it is a social investment vehicle which supports socially trading organisations (STOs) – businesses that deliver social benefits and trade commercially, with social purpose at their heart. Owned by the sector and for the benefit of the community, Kindred's philosophy is 'pay back and pay forward'. Businesses invested in by Kindred in turn reinvest back into the fund so that other businesses can benefit.

The process for allocating this money and support is also unique. Investments by Kindred are awarded in a non-competitive process – a radical departure from most grant processes which frame STOs as competitors rather than collaborators. With Kindred, STOs can decide on the combination of funding that meets their needs. The collaborative investment process develops an ongoing relationship with and between local STO investees.

This new model of investment and support required Kindred's funders to behave in new ways to reflect the cooperative, emergent and democratic nature of the social economy. Early on, Metro Mayor Steve Rotherham pledged £5.5M in support, which Power to Change matched with £1M. LCR Combined Authority then established key links and participated in Kindred's co-design. As the lead partner, Power to Change guided the early development of the fund, facilitating the relationship between the sector and the Combined Authority. As the fund was established, Power to Change brought robust accountability and credibility to Kindred's governance and incubated its organisational development.

Kindred demonstrates a new approach to place-based investment in the social economy. It may be firmly rooted in Liverpool City Region, but its approach serves as a blueprint and inspiration for places everywhere.

For further information contact:

Danielle Cohen

Local Economies Manager, Power to Change

e: danielle.cohen@powertochange.org.uk

t: 07917 252606

www.powertochange.org.uk





Public Service Transformation Academy working with Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Commissioning Academy for GMCA

We have worked with GMCA to develop a bespoke training programme, the Commissioning Academy for Manchester. We have so far run six cohorts each consisting of over 30 individuals. GMCA focused on bringing together public sector partners from across the area to deliver the GM devolution deal. GM particularly wanted the Academies to use local speakers wherever possible and to reflect local good practice through the use of case studies. As part of this custom design, groups carried out “organisational raids” related to their challenge projects / 100-day plan topics. We also employed Open Space methodologies to enable participants to share their own learning and expertise.

Participating commissioners have come from the health, social care and police agencies. We helped local commissioners share good practice and develop their professional skills and innovation in order to deliver robust improvements in social outcomes for the people of Greater Manchester.

Impressive transformational plans were created by both individuals and cross functional teams. Participants have built networks and relationships across health and social care and facilitated shared capability development for further integration. The integration of health and social care and between local authorities and primary care across Manchester has drawn on the relationships and capabilities built through the Academy. One outcome has been a mindset shift amongst participants which led to behavioural changes resulting in greater collaboration across geographies and disciplines. Alumni of the first two cohorts have contributed to organisational change through the design of the re-commissioned programme and have shared their experience of being challenged and supported to think differently. Alumni have told us that this led to culture and practice changes - for example, commissioners working collaboratively with providers to develop service specifications, asset-based approaches to planning service provision for populations, and engagement with a much wider range of stakeholders in specific localities.

For further information contact:

Sarah Johnston

CEO, Public Service Transformation Academy

e: sarah.johnston@publicservicetransformation.org

t: 07701 049836

www.publicservicetransformation.org





RedQuadrant working with Southeast Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP)

Equality, diversity and inclusion support for Southeast Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership

We have worked with SEMLEP on both strategic and operational levels to work with them on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I). They wanted ensure that their ED&I policies and commitments were fully embedded into their strategy, delivery, and governance in order to ensure ED&I becomes a core value going forward.

Governance

We provided input into the SEMLEP's board recruitment including:

1. Working with SEMLEP to agree a revised approach which focused on identifying the specific skills they were seeking and making sure these were clearly referenced in the job description and advertising; and
2. Having a greater focus on evidence-based recruitment decisions.

This approach enabled a larger and more diverse applicant pool, and a successful recruitment outcome which contributed to SEMLEP's aim to increase the board's gender balance and ethnically diverse representation.

We identified some opportunities to further improve prior to the next recruitment activity which include carrying out a further Board skills audit and inclusive recruitment training.

Strategy

We worked alongside SEMLEP and their economic development consultants to ensure that ED&I was fully embedded in their Covid-19 Economic Recovery Strategy. Our intervention supported a clearer focus on groups that may have been particularly impacted throughout the pandemic and beyond. More generally, our input enabled inclusive recovery to be a golden thread running through the Economic Recovery Strategy.

Delivery

We have worked with SEMLEP to use their diversity monitoring of delivery programmes to understand their current reach and to consider how they may need to target future communications and engagement to drive inclusive recovery and support.

We have provided support and advice in several areas, including reviewing assessment frameworks and proposal considerations for future programmes, programme reporting, business diversity monitoring, and refreshed ED&I statement and policy.

We continue to support SEMLEP and are looking forward to seeing even more progress to truly embed ED&I in both their internal and external delivery.

For further information contact:

Benjamin Taylor

Managing Partner, RedQuadrant

e: benjamin.taylor@redquadrant.com

t: 07931 317230

www.redquadrant.com





SBI/E3M working to support co-operative councils

The Procurement to Partnership Toolkit



Procurement has long frustrated commissioners wanting to collaborate with purpose-aligned, public benefit partners. E3M's ground-breaking publication of 2016, "The Art of the Possible," was notably influential in breaking down myths and perceptions about process-driven procurement and regulations as a barrier to commissioning for social value.

But for many commissioners, the question of "how" remained. E3M has observed a common pattern whenever a public authority or a social enterprise proposes a partnership-based approach. Once local authority or other commissioners are in support of such an approach, and are in discussion with progressive, purpose-aligned partners, momentum grinds to a sudden halt when someone shouts "stop – there's a procurement issue."

In response E3M launched the online, free to access, Procurement to Partnership Toolkit, containing multiple case studies of Public Service Community Partnerships, including in Oldham, Croydon, Plymouth, Leicestershire and elsewhere.

The case studies cover a range of service areas. They demonstrate that procurement rules have long offered the opportunity to embrace innovation, build partnerships and prioritise social purpose and social value.

"It is not necessary to prioritise procedure and process above purpose," says E3M's Jonathan Bland, "By embracing the enabling, permissive and flexible nature of public contracts regulations, these exciting, innovative and impactful partnerships have brought the 'Art of the Possible' to life."

The case studies are accompanied within the Toolkit by a set of five "Fundamental Correctives" for practical innovation and reform in public services. Toolkit users have mapped their own initiatives against these correctives.

It also includes example documentation and processes – practical models and outlines including a set of social value imperatives: conditions of qualification to participate in the provision of public services for public benefit. These were used by Oldham Council in its invitation to tender for its pioneering Innovation Partnership.

The Toolkit also offers users the opportunity to put questions to a panel of experts and features webinar recordings.

It is available at <https://e3m.org.uk/from-procurement-to-partnership-a-practical-toolkit-for-commissioners>

For further information contact:

Jonathan Bland

Managing Director, Social Business International/E3M

e: jonathan.bland@socialbusinessint.com

t: 02033 722878

www.e3m.org.uk

E3M



The RSA working with Nechells Community Assembly, Birmingham

We have Power as a Community

“I think we realised that we do have power as a community. There are things that we can do. We don’t have to wait on the council, we can organise meetings as a group”.



The RSA worked with residents in Nechells, Birmingham to see whether a deliberative process could be used to explore and respond to realities and challenges people might face in the specific place they live. We drew strongly on deliberative methods, and in particular the citizens’ assembly model, to work at a more localised level and to answer the specific challenge of residents playing a more active role in decision-making around their homes and neighbourhoods.

The Nechells Knows Community Assembly responded to the question: what do we need from our home and neighbourhood, now and in the future, for everyone in Nechells to live a good life? 18 residents came together over 8 sessions contributing 245 hours of time to deliberate on the question and developed 48 recommendations which were shared at a resident-led Sharing Event. These recommendations were a mix of ones that residents could catalyse themselves, ones that need some external support, such as funding or advice, and ones that needed to be taken up by other stakeholders, like the local council or local organisations. Recommendations were grouped around four themes: Having a neighbourhood that is nice to look at, Creating different community spaces for residents to come together, Making our streets safer and more walkable and finally Creating a more positive narrative about Nechells.

Without being funded or directed by a local authority or other decision-making body, the Community Assembly could not follow that typical route to impact. However, lots of great outcomes came out of the Community Assembly, including some unexpected ones, creating exciting channels for impact. One of the most positive, immediate, and still evolving outcomes of the Community Assembly was a clear sense of building community power and community organising throughout the process, and an active interest from most of the group to stay engaged in trying to make positive change in their neighbourhood.

By developing a community assembly model in this way, which is hyperlocal, and resident led as opposed to local authority commissioned the RSA has developed a participatory model is hopes to explore and test elsewhere.

For further information contact:

Ruth Hannan

Joint Head of the People and Place Programme, The RSA

e: ruth.hannan@rsa.org.uk

t: 07765 672787

www.thersa.org





Trueman Change working with Birmingham City Council

Strategy Consultation for Birmingham City Council

Birmingham City Council and the city's local Health and Wellbeing Board had prepared a draft strategy on Health and Wellbeing from 2022-2030. They launched a public consultation to help to shape the final strategy based on views and experiences in local communities.

At Trueman Change, our key challenge was doing justice to the importance of reflecting community voices in policymaking. We made sure that people's voices were heard in groups that can sometimes be underrepresented and it's great to know that these voices have become an important part of shaping the future of health and wellbeing in the city through our work.

We mapped out the Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Board draft strategy and broke it down into its components. We used these to build up structured discussion sessions that we scheduled in variations with 12 different communities: faith, leisure providers, young people, homeless/ temporary accommodation, BAME, LGBTQ+, deaf and sight loss, adults and learning disabilities, traveller, businesses, food businesses, digital exclusion.

We engaged with local networks through a series of focus groups and analysed key findings. We presented these thematically back to our client in detailed reports with summaries. Birmingham City Council have used our findings to gain unique insight into lived experience and professional experience in the city.

Birmingham City Council have been able to share the views of people from less represented communities with partners through our findings. Our work for this client has shaped their final strategy, influencing health and wellbeing priorities and provision across the city between 2022-2030. Our client was able to ensure that a more diverse range of voices were heard as a result of their consultation, bringing the Council and its partners closer to people in the local community.

We delivered value through giving detailed insight in long-form reports to reflect the depth of views gathered and made recommendations for future activity to make community engagement more inclusive with greater participation in the longer term.

For further information contact:

Lucy Trueman

Managing Director, Trueman Change

e: lucy@truemanchange.co.uk

t: 07715 001140

www.truemanchange.co.uk





Value Match working with Oldham Council

Public Procurement Training

Oldham Council appointed several apprentices into their procurement team and were looking for a facilitated training session to provide an overview of public procurement to enhance their knowledge.

Solution

Lindsay Rosul, our Services Director, is a qualified procurement professional and has worked extensively within the public sector therefore, Lindsay was the ideal consultant to facilitate the training and use her previous experience to enhance the training provided.

- Lindsay discussed the training detail in advance, ensuring refinements were made to the presentation deck to incorporate additional detail on areas of importance for the customer.
- The training was facilitated via Microsoft Teams, promoting a relaxed and open environment for discussion.
- Learner objectives captured at the outset to ensure information was provided on topics of interest.

Results

All attendees were issued with a satisfaction questionnaire on completion

- • • • • Timescales for delivery against your expectations
- • • • • Quality of training received
- • • • • Overall customer service experience from Value Match

*Ratings out of 5 stars.

Steve Boyd, Head of Procurement stated: "After speaking with the attendees, it is clear that the training was well received and pitched at the right level, so thank you very much"

For further information contact:

Lindsay Rosul

Services Director, Value Match

e: lindsay.rosul@value-match.co.uk

t: 07702 823648

www.value-match.co.uk



Meet us in 2022

11 June

Cooperative Party Local
Government Conference -
London

17 - 18 June

Cooperative Congress -
Birmingham

18 - 19 June

Labour Local Government
Conference - Coventry

28 - 30 June

LGA Conference & Exhibition -
Harrogate

17 - 20 September

Liberal Democrat Party
Conference - Brighton

24 - 29 September

Labour Party Conference -
Liverpool

8 - 10 October

Cooperative Party Annual
Conference - Leeds

11 November

NALC - London



Growing the Co-op Economy

Local councils are preparing detailed plans to emerge from the impact of COVID-19 and the cost-of-living crisis which now engulfs us. One of the critical areas that they are considering is how to restart the local economy and minimise the impact of the recession on their local communities.

Being a Co-operative Council is something to be proud of. It demonstrates a genuine commitment to cooperative innovation, best practices, and the communities we serve. Collaboration is at the heart of our approach.

Alongside the various WhatsApp Groups, regular newsletters and mailings, the Officer Network meets monthly to discuss cooperative approaches to common issues. We have also established a Leaders/Cooperative Leads Group to help drive forward initiatives to grow the co-op economy. This Group has identified some of the key themes and activities that Councils can follow. Although not exhaustive, these are a good framework for the type of activities occurring across the country.

There are two key themes:

- Community Wealth Building, and
- Cooperative Placemaking

To support these key themes, we have developed a training programme with the Co-operative College for councillors and officers to help explain the concepts. Find out more: <https://bit.ly/CCIN-grow>.

We look forward to meeting you in person this year.

For further information, contact:

Nicola Huckerby

Operations and Communications Lead

e: comms@councils.coop

t: 07813 687292



Tackling digital poverty

Closing the divide between those who can confidently and conveniently go online ... and those who cannot

Download: bit.ly/CCIN-digital



Find out more about the UK local authorities who are driving
global public sector policy with a common belief in the
Co-operative Values and Principles

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