

Councils Keeping It Local

Jeff Scales of Locality and Jenny Zienau of Hackney Council

locality
the power of community

About Locality

Locality is the national membership network supporting local community organisations to be strong and successful. We believe in the power of community to transform lives and create a fairer society.



Direct support
and advice



Membership network
for connection



Tools and
resources

Influencing for a
better operating
environment



About Keep it Local

Keep it Local is a movement of councils across England committed to turning the tide on large-scale outsourcing.

Councils have long faced challenges in providing local services. Budgets have shrunk and demand has risen. While many have sought to make savings through big outsourcing contracts. However, the Keep it Local principles provide an alternative solution which recognises the value of working with local people and organisations.

Keep it Local councils embrace six principles for working with local community organisations to deliver services that:

- Respond to needs and transform lives
- Reduce long-term pressure on the public sector
- Invest precious public resources in the local economy.

We want to build on and strengthen our relationship with our VCSE sector as we develop a new approach to providing services for local people and communities. We're joining the Keep it Local Network because we recognise the power of learning from other councils in the Network as we make this shift.

Toby Savage
Leader, South Gloucestershire Council

6 Keep it Local Principles

1. Think about the whole system not individual service silos

Recognising that social problems are complex and require a joined-up approach from all local actors to address them

4. Focus on early intervention now to save costs tomorrow

Supporting preventative community-based interventions to reduce the need to for costly treatment services later down the line.

2. Co-ordinate services at a neighbourhood level

Using local community organisations to deliver services which address the particular needs of the neighbourhoods in which they work

5. Commit to your community and proactively support local organisations

Maximising the value of the local VCSE sector by helping to grow their capacity, capabilities, assets, and resources.

3. Increase local spend to invest in the local economy

Commissioning local community organisations to provide services is a key way keep money within a place. They spend their money on local projects, employ local people, and use local suppliers.

6. Commission services simply and collaboratively so they are “local by default”

Bristol City Council has recognised the need to enable greater collaboration between organisations when producing people-centred services.



Keep it Local Councils



Hackney Council

Keeping it local: system-wide work on poverty reduction, early intervention and prevention



System-wide work on poverty reduction



FOCUS ON EARLY INTERVENTION

- **Proactive support for organisations working in communities with residents who are struggling and do not trust statutory services**
- **System conveners and work on 'fairer help'**



JOINED UP SYSTEM-WIDE APPROACH

- **Collaboration to equip frontline staff across Council, health and VCS,**
- **Coordination of services at local 'place-based' level ('neighbourhood', 'ward' and 'hyper-local')**

INVEST IN LOCAL ECONOMY AND COMMISSION SIMPLY AND COLLABORATIVELY

- **Core funding 'community infrastructure organisations'**
- **Embedding learning as a tool for service improvement and to embed ways of working that are anti-racist, trauma-informed and strengths-based**

Joined up system-wide approach to tackling poverty



- ❖ **System-wide group** with leaders from Health Council and VCS working implement the poverty reduction framework
- ❖ **Equipping frontline staff** working with residents who are struggling: trusted referral route for crisis/ emergency support (household support fund), fortnightly tools session
- ❖ **Place-based delivery of support:** joining up and developing the service offer in communities to support residents earlier through trusted relationship addressing barriers to good health and wellbeing

System conveners in Hackney



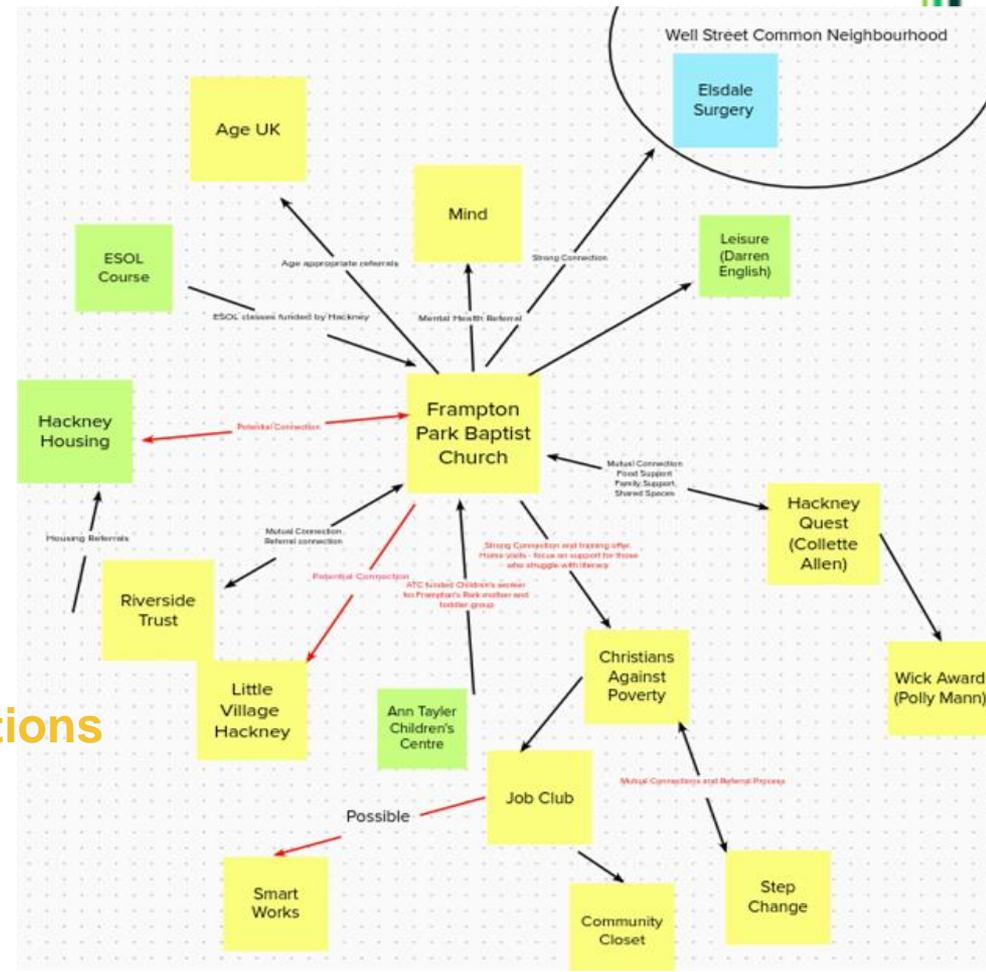
- ❖ Two roles were created to **nurture relationships** and act as the glue between services on the ground, helping to **unlock resources across the system**
- ❖ **Create and utilise spaces for learning with and from communities** so we can develop **new ways funding** simply and collaboratively
- ❖ **Influencing commissioners and transformation leads** delivering children and family hubs; super youth hubs, neighbourhood working (adult social care, and health) and building capacity in the system (of health and council services) for working in **strengths-based ways with communities**.



Understanding relationships

Our system conveners started by taking time visiting organisations to understand what the residents they work with needed and to understand what relationships help

Council Services
Voluntary and Community Organisations
Health Services





Nurturing relationships

Building on, strengthening and making new, connections in the places where residents live helps to enhance the relationships and web of support/ safety net/ ecosystem supporting residents in moments of crisis.

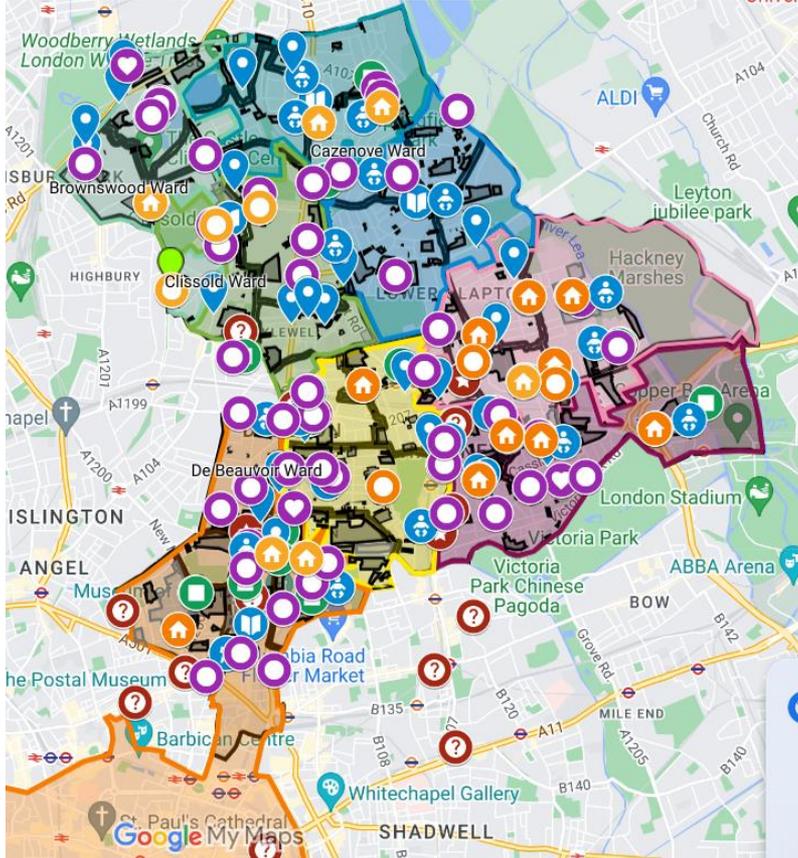
We know our community partners are working with residents who've had negative experiences of statutory services and relationships in the past - so this helps us to help them via the community groups they trust.

98 Meetings, Forums or Visits with external partners (VCS or Health)

80% of these meetings have been in person and in the community.

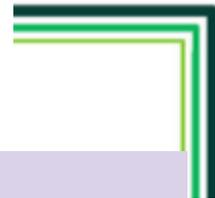
42+ Meeting with Council Services

Strengthening community infrastructure



- Core funding for 24 organisations across Hackney with trusted relationships with residents furthest away from our services
- Taking frontline staff and teams, leaders and commissioners on the journey with us (warm introductions/relational leads)
- Working collaboratively on 'capacity building', 'VCS strategic influence', 'Measuring impact' and 'Service Transformation'

Community infrastructure partners (list [here](#))



Essential criteria

1. Meets the holistic needs of residents by building trusted relationships that are strengths-based and person-centred to help individuals and families to address the barriers and challenges in their lives (e.g health/ childcare/ housing/ finance/ immigration support)
2. Prioritises developing relationships, partnerships and collaboration with other services within Health, Council and other VCS organisations to try and ensure that each resident they are working with gets the help and support that they need
3. Has relationships of trust with specific communities furthest away from statutory services

Additional criteria

4. Recognise that in order to meet their organisational/ charity objectives they need to establish relationships with residents in order to address their wider needs and build resilience
5. **The lived experience of service users and beneficiaries shapes and informs the organisation**
6. 'Holds' residents or families with complex needs and difficulties recognising they may need additional support to access help from others and are well placed to enable this
7. Community-based / place-based providing a hub/ space for community connection and support
8. Prevents harm and escalation of need and difficulties in those they work with (reducing demand on statutory services)
- 9 Empowers residents and other organisations to take action to improve their circumstances and / or to help others
10. Uses innovative and creative approaches to community development, service design and development that responds to the needs and circumstances of residents and communities

Developing 'fairer help'



- ❖ Working relationally, directly, transparently and consistently with communities and those supporting residents who are struggling but may not approach council or health
- ❖ Shifting our role and working in partnership to shape and strengthen the quality and value of community-based preventative and early intervention support by learning from and with residents and communities
- ❖ Help residents take control of their lives and reduce the likelihood of them needing to access statutory and specialist services in future

Key challenges



- ❖ Non-recurrent funding for roles and budget pressures (no surprise there!)
- ❖ As a cross-cutting Council and system-wide priority it is no one service or directorates responsibility leaving the long-term work feeling precarious
- ❖ Approaches to working with communities vary between services and directorates which leads to inconsistency that can undermine the work
- ❖ Relational and system-wide partnership work across the system is critical, time-consuming, skilled (and exhausting) work but success and impact is very difficult to measure in ways that

Questions



Comments

How are you
keeping it Local?

Other Council's Keeping it Local

- Wirral Council – Health and Wellbeing Alliance / Family Toolbox
- Liverpool City Council Thirteen Neighbourhoods
- North Yorkshire Council investment in community anchor organisations

How to join the Keep it Local Network

policy@locality.org.uk

The Keep it Local network

Become part of a growing movement of councils reshaping local services.

The Keep it Local network provides insight, support, and events to help councils make their local aspirations a reality.

Contact us below to become a Keep it Local council

Join the network



[Our latest report](#)



[Our manifesto](#)



[Resources](#)



Locality supports local community organisations to be strong and successful. Our national network of over 1,600 members helps hundreds of thousands of people every week. We offer specialist advice, peer learning and campaign with members for a fairer society. Together we unlock the power of community.

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