



**Co-operative Councils**  
Innovation Network



# Co-operative Case Studies

**2023**



# Cooperative solutions in local government

How the CCIN and Co-operative Councils are addressing  
the challenges in our communities

Download: [bit.ly/CCIN-projects](https://bit.ly/CCIN-projects)

“Today, in the face of the cost-of-living crisis and the financial challenges facing the public sector, our collective work is crucial. Together, we must continue reclaiming the traditions of community action, community engagement, and civic empowerment that can transform communities. It has always been the purpose of the Network to share our developing good practice and to support one another in our cooperative aims and values.”



**Councillor Louise Gittins**

Chair of the Cooperative Councils' Innovation Network  
Leader of Cheshire West & Chester 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 Cooperative Councils' Innovation Network (CCIN) was borne out of this uncertainty – a direct public sector response to delivering services differently, using the cooperative values and principles of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity.

These Case Studies demonstrate some of the many ways that Cooperative Councils are working with local people to build strong and resilient neighbourhoods. See more at [councils.coop/case-studies](https://councils.coop/case-studies).

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Meet us in 2023  
Growing the Co-op Economy





## The Cooperative 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.

The Cooperative Councils' Innovation Network comprises more than 120 councils, organisations and supporters 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 cooperative policy development, innovation and advocacy which is:

- Action-focused: a vehicle for helping councils translate cooperative 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 cooperatively 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.



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**Barking & Dagenham Council** ● ● ●  
**Birmingham City Council** ● ● ●  
**Brent Council** ● ● ●  
**Bury Council** ● ●  
**Cardiff Council** ● ●  
**Cheshire West & Chester Council** ● ●  
**City of Edinburgh Council** ● ● ●  
**Glasgow City Council**  
**Greater Manchester Combined Authority** ● ●  
**Royal Borough of Greenwich** ● ● ●  
**Hackney Council** ● ●  
**Hull City Council**  
**Inverclyde Council** ●  
**Kirklees Council** ●  
**Knowsley Council** ●  
**Lewisham Council** ● ●  
**Liverpool City Council** ●  
**Medway Council**  
**Milton Keynes City Council** ● ●  
**Newcastle City Council** ● ●  
**Newham Council**  
**North Hertfordshire District Council** ●  
**Oldham Council** ● ● ●  
**Oxford City Council** ● ● ●  
**Plymouth City Council** ●  
**Preston City Council** ● ● ●  
**Rochdale Council** ●  
**Salford City Council** ● ●  
**South Ribble Borough Council** ●  
**South Tyneside Council** ● ●  
**Stevenage Borough Council** ●  
**Stoke-on-Trent City Council** ●  
**Stroud District Council**  
**Sunderland City Council** ● ● ●  
**Tameside Council** ●  
**Tamworth Labour & Co-op Group**  
**Telford and Wrekin Council**  
**Torbay Council** ●  
**Trafford Council** ● ● ●  
**Wigan Council** ● ●  
**Worthing Council**



**Adur Labour Group**  
**Billingham Town Council** ●  
**Burntwood Town Council**  
**Gloucester Labour Group**  
**Great Dawley Town Council**  
**Halewood Town Council**  
**Hillingdon Labour Group**  
**Kidsgrove Town Council**  
**Llanelli Town Council**  
**Midcounties Gloucester & Swindon Coop Party Council**  
**Newcastle-U-Lyme Labour & Co-op Group**  
**North Warwickshire Labour Group**  
**Peterborough Labour Group**  
**Polesworth Parish Council**  
**Renfrewshire Labour Group**  
**Seaton Valley Community Council** ●  
**Shropshire Green Group**  
**Staffordshire Labour & Co-op Group**  
**Winsford Town Council** ●  
**Witney Town Council**  
**Woughton Community Council** ●  
**York Labour Group**



**4OC**  
**Active Wellbeing Society**  
**Anthony Collins Solicitors**  
**Bates Wells**  
**Beartas**  
**Branding.coop**  
**C.Co**  
**Co-operative and Mutual Solutions**  
**Co-operative Care Colne Valley**  
**Co-operative College**  
**Co-operative Futures**  
**Co-operatives UK** ●  
**Community Broadband Network Limited**

**Constellia**  
**Cooperatives West Midlands**  
**Cwmpas**  
**Development.coop**  
**E3M/SBI**  
**eCulture Solutions**  
**Evenbreak** ●  
**Governance International**  
**Greenwich Cooperative Development Agency**  
**Human Engine**  
**ICS.AI Ltd**  
**Ideas Alliance**  
**Innovation Cooperative**  
**Lambeth GP Food Coop**  
**LocalGov Drupal**  
**Locality**  
**Marks Out Of Tenancy**  
**Mutual Ventures**  
**Outlandish**  
**Oxygen Finance**  
**Peopletoo**  
**POhWER**  
**Power to Change**  
**Public Service Transformation Academy**  
**RedQuadrant**  
**Royal Society of Arts**  
**Social Value Exchange**  
**Stir to Action**  
**Sunbelt Rentals**  
**TechResort**  
**Trueman Change**  
**Unlimited Potential** ● ●  
**Urban Agriculture Consortium**  
**Value Match**  
**Workers Educational Association**

*Correct as at 11 May 2023*

**Key:**

- Fair Tax Accredited
- Living Wage Employer
- Modern Slavery Charter
- Welsh Govt's Code of Practice: Ethical Employment in Supply Chains



# CCIN Statement of Values and Principles

## Our **values** are what we believe in

Whilst not a registered cooperative, the Cooperative Councils' Innovation Network has adopted the Cooperative Values developed by the International Cooperative Alliance.

Cooperatives are based on the values of:

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

In the tradition of their founders, cooperative 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 Cooperative Councils' Innovation Network endorses the principles of the International Cooperative Alliance:

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

In acknowledging that Councils are not in themselves registered cooperatives, we and our members have developed principles that have grown from those of the International Cooperative 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.



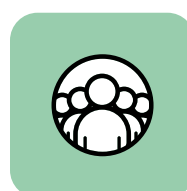
### Social Partnership

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 cooperative and mutual enterprises to thrive.



## Learning

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



## 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.



## 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 cooperative 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 cooperatively within and across communities holds the key to tackling today's challenges.



## 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 cooperatives 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.

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 local government challenges. We are open to all ideas; the more innovative, the better! Find out more about the process here: [councils.coop/funded-projects](https://councils.coop/funded-projects). Here's a taster of those already published:**

**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.  
[bit.ly/CCIN-CoopsUnleashed](http://bit.ly/CCIN-CoopsUnleashed)

**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 Cooperative Councils achieve this and provide resources to rapidly implement approaches most applicable to your places.  
<https://bit.ly/CCIN-Net-Zero>

**The Cooperative 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>

**Cooperation at the Grassroots (2022)** – Burntwood Town Council, North Herts District Council, Stevenage Borough Council and Sunderland City Council, worked together throughout the policy lab to demonstrate how cooperative councils can embed neighbourhood working to deliver better outcomes and better value for money, through a cooperative model of organisation and delivery at a local level. This report includes a fabulous set of video case studies.

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

**Growing an inclusive Cooperative Economy (2022)** – Led by Oxford City Council, this policy lab report captures learning from test-and-learn pilots in Oxford, Stevenage and Torbay on areas such as embedding social value in procurement across anchor organisations; community mapping; financial support; advice and awareness-raising.  
<https://bit.ly/CCIN-inclusive>

**Study visit to Mondragon (2022)** – The CCIN led a study visit to the Mondragon Corporation in the Basque Country in October 2022. Over two intensive days, 15 delegates underwent an immersive experience visiting their headquarters, industrial and R&D enterprises, and the university campus.  
<https://bit.ly/CCIN-Mondragon>

# 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.



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## Community Wealth Building

## Birmingham City Council

# Community Economic Development Plans - Policy Lab

**As part of the Levelling-up Birmingham agenda, Birmingham City Council is investing in its local landscapes and communities to create a better, bolder Birmingham. Funded by the CCIN, the council undertook Community Economic Development Planning (CEDP), a process of economic development within a specific geographic area, to make the economy in that area work well for that community.**

In CEDP, the power to drive this change rests within the community of residents, local businesses and local service providers – including councils, community groups and voluntary sector organisations – with a direct stake in the economic health of an area. These groups have the best insight into how to tackle the interconnected environmental, social, and economic issues in the area and recognise the importance of connections between the local, regional, and national layers of the economy. Each project aims to build on the knowledge, experience, and resources in that community, to identify and maximise the local economic opportunities available to re-shape the underlying economic system in the area.

In Birmingham, three CEDPs were delivered with the support of the EU-funded project USE-IT!, which ran from 2017-2019, and the Local Innovation Fund (LIF). The development of CEDPs was part of the legacy strand of the project.

The Summerfield CED plan grew out of a coalition of voluntary organisations and local residents. Initially it focused on bringing a local playing field next to the Edgbaston Reservoir back into community use. The field is owned by Birmingham Settlement (a local charity) and had not been actively used for a number of decades. Prompted by growing activity in the area, the charity began to think more about how the space could be utilised by the community. Several open community days were held on the field to explore its potential and raise awareness of the

space. Birmingham Settlement has since secured funding and put up a community building on the field, and has allowed local groups to use some of the space to grow food.

One indicator of the success of a CED plan is the emergence of cooperatives, community-led businesses and social enterprises following implementation. In Ladywood in 2019, EAT MAKE PLAY was established. The organisation has gone on to open a 'Share Shack' in a local empty retail unit, in conjunction with another local cooperative, the Active Wellbeing Society. This is essentially a 'library of things', where residents can borrow tools and equipment instead of buying them.

Using a CEDP approach evolved into a mechanism to empower the community and bring them together with the City Council to explore the future of the whole reservoir. Rather than campaigning against redevelopment plans that they felt did not meet their needs, residents used the CEDP process to create an alternative. This ultimately led to better partnership working with the City Council and enabled the residents to essentially co-produce the regeneration plans.

The programme was successful in galvanising a key group of organisations and making them believe they could affect change. It also encouraged Birmingham Settlement to take action and invest in the area which led to the formation of several cooperatives, including EatMakePlay and Warm Earth.

Following the success seen in Summerfield, BCC launched another CEDP in Ward End and is planning to replicate the model in other parts of the city. The current work focuses on women in the economy and the social economy potential in two assets: the Women Dolphin Centre and the Unity Hubb.

Our CEDPs have led to a change in the way communities engage with Local Authorities, as they are better placed to advocate for themselves and enable constructive conversations. Local Authority support in community economic development planning can enable systems change to take place, rather than small-scale activities; it also compliments other activities that Local Authorities are undertaking. This is a powerful tool for change when embedded within wider policies, strategies, and plans.

"Eat Make Play provides everyday opportunities for the people of Ladywood to connect through sharing, learning, making, and doing together," says Birmingham City Council's Karolina Medwecka. "This involves activities around practical skills like food preparation, growing, art, crafts, sewing and DIY and also social activities and events which cost nothing to attend. We have an emphasis on making good use of resources, sharing, and improving our environment while reducing waste. Our project aims to benefit all of the residents of Ladywood working with them to shape the programme and development of the organisation to meet the needs and aspirations of our community."



## Community Economic Development Plans as a Tool for Fostering Co-operative Working Between Councils and the Community



March 2022

In 2022, Birmingham City Council published a report on how community economic development plans can be used to foster cooperative working, following a policy lab workstream funded by the Cooperative Councils' Innovation Network (CCIN)

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Poverty

## Brent Council

# Community Wellbeing Project

**A collaboration between Brent Council, delivery partners Sufra NW London and local organisations, aiming to tackle food poverty, build resilience within local communities and reduce long-term dependency on support services.**

Brent is one of the most diverse areas in the country: it was the first Local Authority in the UK to have a majority Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic population and is home to speakers of 149 different languages. Levels of poverty in the borough are high, lending to our residents being one of the worst impacted during the Covid-19 pandemic and harshly affected by effects of the cost-of-living crisis.

In response, easing effects of the cost of living crisis became a strategic priority for Brent Council with an aim to provide more holistic support to residents, tailored to complex needs, co-designed with local stakeholders and co-produced with key partners. Brent Council recently became a Right to Food borough, creating a unique opportunity for alternative models of support for residents with complex needs.

The Community Wellbeing Project emerged through a cross-council and system-wide Outcomes Based Review (OBR) conducted by Brent Council. The process spanned four phases: Discover, Define, Develop and Deliver, and used comprehensive community engagement and research methodologies to gather new perspectives from a range of stakeholders, ensuring the Brent response is tailored around local needs. A successful 'Visioning' event was hosted at Brent Council in September 2022, bringing together over 80 partners, community organisations and residents to collaborate on generating ideas.

The review identified three priority ideas for testing, one being a Community Shop and Kitchen model, later named The Community Wellbeing Project. At the heart of this model is the importance of building resilient communities, tackling social isolation and preventing



### Visioning Day

residents with complex needs from falling into crisis. The model is based on a range of interventions in a warm community space and includes access to nutritious food in a way that enhances dignity, reduces stigma and provides more autonomy to those in need.

The Community Wellbeing Project pilot began in February 2023 and will be trialled over a six-month period, with capacity to support up to 200 residents throughout the trial. The pilot is a collaboration with delivery partners Sufra NW London, a local charity playing a crucial role in addressing the causes and consequences of poverty in the borough through its services, coordination of the Brent Food Aid Network and by working with Brent Council as part of a VCS engagement group.

The Community Wellbeing Project is open two days a week, on Mondays and Tuesdays, in Stonebridge and operates on a membership basis. A £3.50 per week membership fee gives members and their families access to a host of support, including:

- A weekly food shop worth approximately £25
- Free lunch from the Community Café and a sit-down evening meal at the Community Kitchen, also open for free use and benefit by the wider community
- Access to one-to-one sessions with an advisor and specialist welfare advice, workshops and health and wellbeing support, including gym access.

Over 20 partners will participate in delivering specialist support to members of the programme, ranging from borough-level groups to national advice and support organisations. The pilot will continue into Summer 2023. Understanding demand and evaluating success of the pilot will make the case for expanding operations across the borough, tailored to specific ward-level needs. Success will be measured against indicators focused on improved resilience, mental and physical wellbeing, access to affordable food and improved knowledge of, and access to, local services.

Other pilots emerging from the OBR include:

- A Crisis Response Fund: a partnership with three voluntary sector partners to provide rapid financial aid of up to £200 for residents facing emergencies
- An Upskilling Frontline Staff pilot: delivering a series of training sessions to council and partner frontline staff on topics such as benefits and grants, homelessness and spotting the signs for early prevention. The second phase of the programme will develop increased debt advisory capacity within Brent Council and partner organisations.

The Community Wellbeing Project model, along with other financial support and advice mechanisms for residents, like our Resident Support Fund and Brent Hubs, are crucial in effectively responding to the different needs of local communities, and support priorities for our draft Moving Brent Forward Together Borough Plan for 2023-2027.

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## Social Outcomes

## Bury Council

# Co-producing Boroughwide Inclusion

**In Bury we've truly put inclusion at the heart of everything we do.**

A short while ago we reviewed our ways of working in the Council and identified a real passion and commitment to equality from our workforce, communities, and leaders. This review also highlighted room for improvement in how we place inclusion at the heart of our systems, processes and culture, both internally and across the borough.

We started by getting the basics right; putting in place a clear Inclusion Strategy which included a new set of equality objectives. To develop the strategy and drive our inclusion priorities we brought together a wide cross section of people in an Inclusion Working Group. The group is a mix of senior leaders with responsibility for some of our core functions, as well as staff from all service areas who have a passion for building inclusion across our borough and communities. It provides a unique mix of governance, co-design and engagement all in one and has been the engine room behind all things inclusion. Over the past year the group has developed even further, expanding its membership and reach as part of our public service partnership, Team Bury, and working to drive the inclusion agenda across public service partners in the borough.

While we started at the top with our Inclusion Strategy and appointment of a director-level post with a focus on inclusion, the last year has seen an emphasis on practical activity to put inclusion at the heart of how we work in Bury.

### A shared definition of what inclusion means for Bury

In designing our approach to inclusion, we looked at what is important to Bury people. That's why we give equal consideration to 13 protected characteristics, which as well as the nine legally protected characteristics also includes looked-after children and care leavers, military personnel, reservists and veterans, carers and the socio-economically vulnerable. What this means in practice is that our Equality Impact Assessments consider all 13 areas and, when we talk to our staff and communities about inclusion and

celebrate diversity, we give equal weight to each of these groups.

Talking about inclusion the Bury way has also seen us work together with staff and residents to agree the right language and terminology to talk about equality. This cooperative approach led to us developing a guide to inclusive language and bringing together staff to explore openly and honestly what this means in practice. A good example of this is how we're now working to avoid using the term 'BAME' and instead talk about our Communities Experiencing Racial Inequality.

### Shouting about our commitment: Celebration, education and involvement

A key focus for us has been the creation of a shared calendar of events and celebrations we can shout about across public services in Bury. The Inclusion Working Group, alongside the Cohesion Sub-Group of our Community Safety Partnership agreed that our communications should not just be about telling people about inclusion and specific inclusion related celebrations but, importantly, should be an opportunity to celebrate what's happening in Bury and what's important to Bury people, educate people to understand more about equality and feel confident to speak and act around inclusion; and encourage people to get involved. Our shared inclusion calendar includes over 70 celebrations where we're taking this approach.

### Focusing our efforts

As part of our Inclusion Strategy, we've used data and worked in co-operation to tell us what matters most. As such, in 2021/22 we focused on race and delivered a year-long programme of engagement with communities experiencing racial inequality across the borough. Learning from this has supported the development of a new, inclusive Council website and laid the foundations of a Race Steering Group with our VCSE partners. This year our focus has been on disability and much of the work here has been about pathways into employment. We've



also worked hard to celebrate disability inclusion in the workforce and have made a particular effort to educate our colleagues about hidden disabilities.

### Mainstreaming inclusion

In Bury, we know inclusion is about everything we do, not the responsibility of one person or team. Here's just a few day-to-day examples which demonstrates our commitment:

- Bury has one of the largest Jewish populations outside of London. We actively advocate the knowledge that there isn't a homogeneous "Jewish community". We have worked on engagement with Jewel – an employment support service created to enhance the economic sustainability of Greater Manchester's
- Jewish community – to set up a Haredi community Jewish liaison officer position. In the last month we have worked together with the Jewish communities, faith leaders and local schools to create a Holocaust Memorial event.
- Our Work & Skills and ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages) team have built relationships with local businesses to work together on employing people with neurodiversities and disabilities.
- Co-design is at the core of our approach in both Adults and Children's social care. We have commissioned co-production networks for Autism, Learning Disabilities, Mental Health and Older People. 140 Bury people with learning disabilities and 200 Bury young autistic adults are involved in our networks in various ways.

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**Bury**  
COUNCIL





Young People

## Cardiff Council

# Planning Pioneers

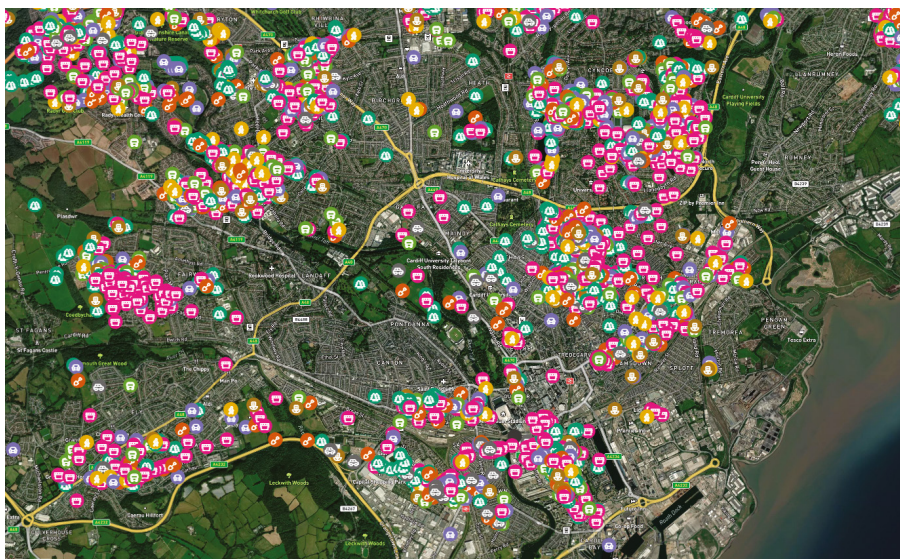
**As one of the first cities in the UK to apply for UNICEF Child Friendly City Status, Cardiff Council wants to create a city where all children and young people can share their voice and have an input on decisions being made that will affect them. This approach will seek to ensure that the rights of children and young people are respected by all.**

As part of the Council's work on the replacement Local Development Plan (LDP), a project was developed to embed child rights into the process and provide children with an opportunity to become informed citizens. The aim of the project was to understand children's views regarding different aspects of the LDP and their local area through different engagement activities.

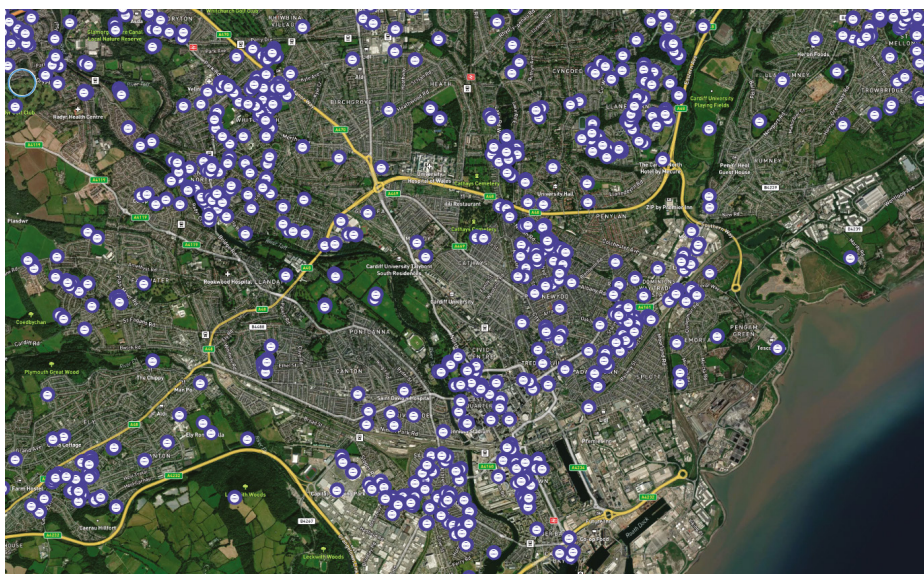
When looking for tools to gather data from engagement activities, it became evident that it would be beneficial to move away from using online forms in favour of a more interactive engagement tool. This approach enables children and young people to communicate more effectively and maximise pupil engagement. Several options were considered and after careful research, the

online platform 'Maptionnaire' was selected as it also provided an innovative gamified element.

A survey using Maptionnaire was designed collaboratively with teachers from three focus primary schools; Tim Gill, an independent consultant on child-friendly planning; Cardiff Planning Department; and the Cardiff Curriculum Team. Initially, the survey was trialled with 180 pupils from the three focus primary schools. Based on the pupil and teacher feedback, small amendments were made to the survey. The survey utilised map-based and traditional survey questions in a format that was appealing to pupils. This enabled survey data to be collected using a map, such as asking pupils to drop a pin on their favourite place in their local area, where they play in their local area, etc. This then provided us with a map showing all of the pins the pupils had dropped across the city relating to certain questions and the exact locations. The gamified element developed this further, with pupils being allocated an amount of money that they could spend on public realm improvements for their local area. This enabled us to visualize the data collected and identify exactly where pupils would like improvements as well as hot spots across the city.



Interactive map where children marked their favourite places to play



Map showing where pupils would spend their budgets

Feedback from pupils in relation to Maptionnaire has shown that it allowed them to confidently share their own views about their community. Feedback included:

- "I really enjoyed using Maptionnaire because I had the wonderful feeling of being responsible and I felt very grown up using it, I really thought about my decisions."
- "I really loved Maptionnaire as it gave me the freedom to express my opinion."
- "I loved using Maptionnaire because it put my opinions about Cardiff out in the world."
- "The budget game at the end was fantastic, as I considered my choices and thought about what all the space could be used for which made me feel responsible."

Another aspect of the engagement work with children and young people has included visits to local schools by Planning Officers where children were given the role of 'Planning Pioneers' and led the officers on walks around their local areas to give their views on what worked well and what could be improved. Pupils were able to share their views with the planners about specific parts of

their local area, as well as having an opportunity to ask questions, and the planners had the rare opportunity to hear the children's ideas first-hand. This helped to create a dialogue with the children and empower them, as their opinions were being listened to by changemakers.

In June 2022 the survey was launched as part of Cardiff's first Virtual Grand Council which was open to all pupils in the city in Years Five and Six. During the virtual meeting, the Council's Head of Planning spoke about the importance of involving children in the LDP process. Participation in this event was high and over 300 questions were asked during the session. A suite of resources such as lesson plans, videos and presentations were created to further develop teaching opportunities within the project. These all link to the new Curriculum for Wales and support teachers in providing rich, dynamic learning experiences, set in an authentic context.

Over 1,500 pupils completed the survey from 39 schools across Cardiff sharing their views on their local areas. Feedback from teachers involved in the project was extremely positive. One teacher stated "The project was excellent and was closely aligned with the new Curriculum for Wales providing opportunity to give pupils a voice and share their views in an authentic, meaningful context."

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## Health and Social Care

# Cheshire West & Chester Council Future of Adult Social Care Commission

**Cheshire West and Chester Council established a Commission on the Future of Adult Social Care in 2021 to consider 'What does a good life look like for you and your family and how can we work together to achieve it?'**

The eight-strong Commission comprised six elected councillors along with two leader representatives – one from the NHS and one from the community and voluntary sector – who consulted expert and service users to understand the issues and opportunities facing the sector.

Adult social care is fundamentally about people, as was this Commission, which started each meeting by hearing the experience of someone who draws on social care. People spoke about the practical difference that the services make to their lives, the financial and practical support from family that allows them to live and not just survive, and the range of temporary services that need to be accessible quickly to prevent people from falling into crisis.

The Commission worked in a clear, open and accessible way. All Commission meetings were held in public and all evidence that the Commission considered, its notes, final report and videos of its meetings are available at:  
<https://bit.ly/4547SXc>

The Commission's final recommendations were summed up under six overall themes, with the report giving a brief explanation of why each theme is important, the current position, some strategic and the operational recommendations, and then a summary of the learning of the Commission against each theme.

## 1. Take a human rights approach to disability

Around 61,000 people in Cheshire West are disabled. The Commission called for a commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and to the social model of disability – recognising that disability is created by an inaccessible society and the physical, social and attitudinal barriers it puts in people's way.

## 2. Make 'nothing about us without us' real

We need to put lived experience at the centre of decision making. Giving people not just a voice but an active role in setting arranging, planning and delivering services.

## 3. Keep it simple

When people first encounter the social care system it can be confusing and overwhelming. We need to do all that we can to make processes streamlined and understandable.

## 4. Think local

Local services that help people remain in their communities, keep communities sustainable, support and build on new and existing relationships and networks, and help to reduce the carbon emissions and lost time associated with travelling.

## 5. Support a fairer future

Cheshire West and Chester Council has declared a poverty emergency and launched the Fairer Futures strategy. Those on fixed incomes are being hard hit by the cost-of-living crisis and we need to consider the impact that the cost of care has on people.



A discussion during the Commission's second meeting

## 6. Strong leadership, strong workforce and good use of data

The new Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership is a significant opportunity to deliver more joined-up services that focus on, and benefit, those who draw on care. We need strong leadership to push that forward and to tackle challenges such as the recruitment issues causing problems across the care sector.

## Early outcomes

All recommendations were accepted by Cheshire West and Chester Council, which has passed a motion to commit to the United National Declaration on the Rights of People with Disabilities and adopt the social model of disability. The Council has also begun a new three-year programme to mainstream a community-led support approach, and is working with local community sector leaders to develop a new approach to commissioning and a common understanding of, and commitment to, co-production.

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## Poverty

## Hackney Council

# Working Collaboratively to Support Residents in Financial Crisis

**Tackling poverty has been a priority since 2018, alongside shaping a more inclusive economy. Before the pandemic, Hackney Council was already concerned about ways that the benefits system, housing costs and low wages have driven up levels of poverty – especially in-work poverty. Despite visible affluence, we estimate that a third of Hackney households and half of children are in poverty after housing costs, and that groups experiencing structural inequality are more likely to be in poverty.**

### Developing our collaborative approach

By 2020 we were developing a more co-ordinated approach to tackling poverty. During the pandemic we built on this approach, recognising, unfortunately, that we expected people to be in a worse financial position coming out of the pandemic and we would need to ensure support was still in place. Collaboration continues to be at the heart of this approach.

### Framing the issues the right way

Hackney adopted a Poverty Reduction Framework in March 2022. The causes and effects of poverty are varied and complex. No single service or organisation can tackle the scale of the challenge or reach the diversity of people struggling.

The framework helps balance these considerations. It identifies the importance of early years and advocates for an early help approach for all ages. It sets out how the Council will work with partners to improve the crisis support and makes the connection between crisis support and early help, outlining the importance of learning for frontline workers. The external drivers of poverty are highlighted and we set out what the Council is doing to intervene, while being honest about the limitations.

The rest of this case study focuses on collaborative approaches to delivering crisis support, that still seeks to develop more preventative ways of working.

### Community leadership

The framework is steered by a task group of four Cabinet Members who between them cover equality, health and social care, financial support and early years. They provide leadership and insight into the practical difference this work is making.

### Social value

The Money Hub team within the Council creates a single point of access for emergency funding. Residents in financial distress now only have to fill out one form instead of four, and Money Hub also uses data proactively to contact people we know are in financial difficulty. When offering financial support, we also look for opportunities to maximise income and encourage benefit take up. The Money Hub's outreach workers collaborate with community partners and share their resources, so that they have a wider value and impact.

### Social partnerships

Community partners are better able to reach the diversity of residents than the Council. By investing in them, we are also building community wealth. We have mapped organisations large and small and created open ways for people to co-ordinate and work together. We direct some of the funding we receive from central government (for example the Household Support Fund) to community partners to make sure this resource reaches those that need it.



Woodberry Aid – community shop

### Enterprise and social economy

We have worked with community partners to develop more sustainable ways to support residents through community shops. Together we have invested in the infrastructure needed to manage food surplus so it can be centrally stored and distributed to a wide range of partners. We are exploring how we can better tackle food poverty in schools, looking at ways we might offer healthier food that costs less, through different business models and collaboration with community organisations.

### Radical innovation

We bring health partners together with community partners and council services to join up support in a way that has never been done before. Since February 2023, health and care partners have been able to make fast referrals for financial support, so we ensure that funding like the Household Support Fund gets to residents who need it, without going through more hoops. This builds reach that can help us offer more preventative support to those in need.

### Engagement and co-production

We are developing hyper-local partnerships, supported by two “system convenors.” This has aided the mobilisation and animation of warm spaces and the set up of a new network of 20 organisations that have been funded because they have good reach into communities. We are then able to plug more support into these areas – for example, social prescribers and members of the Money Hub team and employment support. This also creates connections between Council-led services, like children and family hubs and grassroots support.

### Learning and walking the talk

We are equipping frontline staff to better support residents. Key work to date includes regular partnership-wide communications describing what help is available and a fortnightly ‘tools for frontline practitioners’ session that is open to all people working in the City and Hackney NHS area to support residents.

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Community

## Inverclyde Council

# Meliora Festival: Summer celebrations, reconnecting communities

**The Meliora Festival was a celebration of Inverclyde delivered for and with our communities. A summer programme of events saw thousands of people visiting the area along with local people coming together to socialise and reconnect after pandemic restrictions. Community groups were supported as they delivered their own activities alongside flagship events.**

Meliora means “in the pursuit of betterment” and this year we wanted to bring our local communities together to celebrate the resilience and compassion they have shown over the last two years.

In addition to our headline events we offered a supportive funding opportunity for local community groups to deliver events in their area. Inverclyde Council allocated a fund of £120,000 to be split across the six locality areas. Community organisations were invited to apply for funding to provide an event within their area so people could gather and celebrate togetherness.

These funding applications were put to a public vote with members of the community encouraged to choose the activities that they would like within their locality. This approach is part of wider work to deliver on Participatory Budgeting (PB), a form of citizen participation in which citizens are involved in the process of deciding how money is spent, giving local people greater influence and say in the decisions that affect their lives. Inverclyde Council’s vision for PB is that it provides a means for communities to discuss and deliberate priorities and assist the Council in guiding its work at a local and Inverclyde level. Our model



focuses on empowering local communities and ensuring that everyone is provided with the opportunity to take part.

Community events were complemented by larger-scale celebrations over the summer. These included family fun days, community Platinum Jubilee events, festival parades and village fetes. They ran alongside the 2022 Kip Regatta, the first major regatta of the Scottish sailing season, the British Pipe Band Championships, Scotland v England girls’ under-15s international football match, Inverclyde Warrior 5k obstacle course and an arts and culture weekend at the Beacon Arts Centre, which featured events, workshops, experiences and live performances from big-name stars.

Meliora Festival was a great success with family and friends coming together, and visitors being welcomed to enjoy Inverclyde.

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**Inverclyde**  
council



Climate Change and Environment

## Inverclyde Council

# Inverclyde Climate Beacons: Linking culture, creativity and climate action, helping everyone in Inverclyde to better understand how to contribute to becoming a net-zero society

**Working in partnership with local group Bellville Community Garden Trust, RIG Arts (an arts charity) and Beacon Arts Centre (a contemporary theatre and arts centre), Inverclyde Council created a Climate Beacon, in an initiative funded by the Scottish Government's Climate Change and Culture Division, Creative Scotland and Museum Galleries Scotland.**

The aim of the Climate Beacon is to bring together shared resources and knowledge and provide a space where members of the public, artists, environmental scientists and policy makers can discuss and debate COP26 themes and climate actions that are specific to their local area.

Over the last year the Beacon has planned and organised a range of events such as workshops and talks to engage with the local community. This has included Chat & Change talks, Make It Up Upcycling Sessions and Eco-Exchange events.

The Beacon worked with a local youth theatre group to research, write and perform a new play about climate change, which was performed at the theatre and will soon be available as a film.

Galoshans is a festival centred around Halloween traditions. Its recent content has linked into the Climate Beacon work, featuring an emphasis on climate programming and new songs about climate change from local musicians.

Building on its current offering, Inverclyde Council's South West Library is introducing a 'Lend and Mend Hub', funded by The John Lewis Partnership's £1m Circular Future Fund, which will help the local community to repair, reuse, rent and upcycle everyday items, with free access for everyone to keep items in use for longer, rather than them being thrown away. This uses a co-design approach with service teams bringing local knowledge and expertise to the delivery to ensure the hub is tailored to community

needs. The hub is also introducing an education programme to support new skills development, helping to reduce inequality through equitable access to resources.

In 2022 Inverclyde Council's libraries service team was recognised for their commitment to sustainability, taking home the 'Project of the Year' award at the 2022 Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) Awards.

The Inverclyde Climate Beacon work was described as 'inspirational' in the way in which it grew the sense of community while linking the 'local' to the 'global' through a series of special events.



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## Community Wealth Building

## Kirklees Council

# Kirklees VCSE Investment Strategy: Working together to make our local places even better

**In Kirklees we know that our voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector is an essential part of our economy, our communities and our service delivery landscape. This was particularly the case during the Covid-19 pandemic and remains so with the cost-of-living crisis – but is true when we're not in crisis, too. For this reason Kirklees Council and our VCSE infrastructure organisation Third Sector Kirklees (TSL) have co-developed a VCSE Investment Strategy to ensure the sector remains resilient and able to play a powerful role in making our local places even better.**

Our principles of People, Partners, Places go through the way we work and our third sector partners are key. The strategy builds on our Working Alongside Principles. Kirklees Council, our partners and citizens are working together to make the local places where we live, work and play better. Here's how we're working alongside each other in our local places, including our values, our stories and practical ideas to help you and others to get involved.

We are....

- coming from a different place
- learning by doing
- working on trust
- growing confidence
- taking courage from kindness
- sharing with each other
- listening with curiosity
- being open and honest
- involving others early
- recognising everyone

Development of the strategy was led by a well-respected figure from the local third sector and was co-produced through a mixture of one-to-one conversations and focus groups with over 30 VCS organisations and 14 Council teams/officers. Conversations were based around some

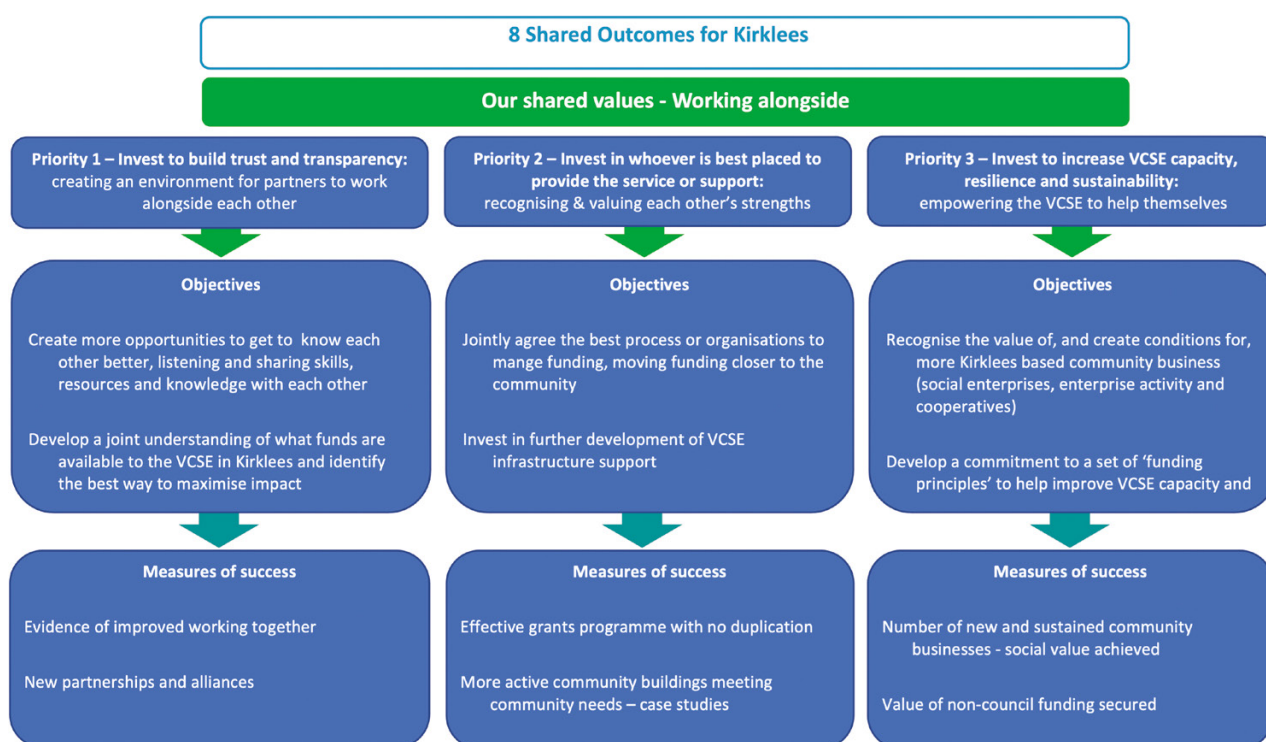
identified topic areas covering a stock take of the current situation, the aims of the work, priority areas and potential impact. However, they also incorporated flexibility to follow the conversation and allow other ideas to be uncovered and investigated.

The key themes of the strategy are:

- building trust and working together
- building on existing work
- how we can work together to attract more non-council funding
- developing a set of funding principles for multi-year funding that encourages transparency and builds capacity and resilience
- communication: what's happening locally, sharing our stories
- asset transfers: responding to community need and avoiding liability transfers
- increasing social enterprise start up and support.

Since work began on the strategy, closer relationships have developed between the Council and VCSE colleagues. One workstream is around procurement. It aims firstly to strengthen the ways in which community organisations can benefit from social value commitments made by suppliers to the Council while reducing the capacity required to serve this process. It is also building capacity in the sector to engage with social value in procurement when bidding for contracts and identifying possible areas where these processes may create barriers to VCSE organisations.

Promoting social enterprise is another workstream. Work has already been done to create a single Kirklees page that provides information about social enterprises and cooperatives as well as running the first Kirklees Social Enterprise Awards in 2022 in partnership with Locala – our local community healthcare provider which is one of the largest employee-owned businesses in the country.



## Overview of the Kirklees VCSE Investment Strategy

More recently the strategy has provided the basis for a conversation among senior leaders around the development of community power in Kirklees. These exciting discussions lay the foundations for a greater releasing of power to communities to shape their places and make decisions based on the things that are most important to them.

gives us the basis on which to continue to strengthen the way in which we work alongside as partners. We continue to have challenging conversations that allow us to work together to make our local places even better.

The VCSE Investment Strategy articulates the local recognition of the importance we know the third sector plays up and down the country. As a shared strategy it

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## Community

# Knowsley Council

## The Knowsley Offer and Hardship Support

**While taking steps to support residents through the cost-of-living crisis, partners in Knowsley are working together to develop the Knowsley Offer – where information, advice, services, support, facilities and much more are accessible in one place to help residents to thrive and not just survive. The Offer sees Knowsley Better Together partners, residents and businesses working together to identify ways to achieve the Knowsley 2030 Strategy ambitions.**

The Knowsley Better Together Partnership has recognised that while it already delivers a comprehensive offer of support to residents and businesses, the prolonged challenges arising as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis show that we can still do more to promote and connect with the needs of our local communities. The Knowsley Offer has been developed following consultation with residents to address the challenges they face and to meet the needs of our local communities.

Building on the aspirations of the Borough's Knowsley 2030 Strategy, the key purpose of the Knowsley Offer is to work with residents and businesses to identify what needs to be in place to enable them to thrive and to enable the Borough to achieve its 2030 ambitions. This has been translated into a public-facing Knowsley Offer, articulating what the Offer is, where we are working together to strengthen this Offer and, in return, encouraging residents and businesses to consider what they can be doing to also enable themselves and the Borough to thrive.

A programme of engagement with residents, community groups and businesses took place in 2022, achieving significant levels of participation with over 800 surveys completed, 65 engagement sessions held, and 1,450 residents engaged with in person. Residents gave positive feedback on the progress made since previous 'Let's Talk 2030' engagement undertaken in 2019. They also told us that they are proud to live in the Borough and are particularly proud of the community spirit. Overwhelmingly,



### The Knowsley Offer – residents' top five priorities

people are facing significant challenges as the impact of Covid-19 and the pressures of the cost-of-living crisis are felt.

Using feedback from this engagement, the Council and the Knowsley Better Together partners have developed The Knowsley Offer – a package of support, information, and services available to residents right now. From money matters and living independently through to access to childcare and getting involved in their local area, the Knowsley Offer outlines what is available across the Borough. It sets out the plans in place to strengthen services and facilities for residents and businesses over the coming months and years.

The Knowsley Offer builds on the Knowsley's Better Together Partnership's long-standing ambition that more can be achieved when organisations, groups and individuals work together. This previously led partners to collaborate on the Borough's Knowsley 2030 Strategy, which sets out a long-term ambition for the future of the Borough, delivered via the Knowsley Better Together principles:

- be a strong community leader and always champion Knowsley
- build better partnerships and work with others cooperatively to improve Knowsley

- spend locally, invest locally and recruit locally to build social value
- help people to be independent, doing more for themselves and each other
- prevent problems occurring or stop them getting worse
- listen to the community when making decisions
- use the best way of delivering services that leads to improved outcomes for Knowsley.
- support for community organisations to deliver 'Warm Hubs' during the Winter months
- enabling community organisations to provide fuel vouchers for pre-payment meters, working with Energy Projects Plus to deliver advice and guidance to residents on all aspects of heating, and funding for Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service to provide appropriate heating sources (such as oil-filled radiators)
- funding for local community and voluntary sector organisations to provide advice to residents on finances. This includes a bespoke advice offer for people who are engaged with local health services and debt management support.

These principles have underpinned the approach taken by the Knowsley Better Together Partnership to tackle hardship during the cost-of-living crisis and is reflected within The Knowsley Offer. A key component of the 'Your Money' offer is the range of emergency support enabled through the Knowsley Better Together Hardship Fund; a fund developed by Knowsley Council to invest in projects and services that address and tackle hardship, delivered across the Knowsley Better Together Partnership.

Some examples of funded support include:

- free school meals for eligible children during school holidays
- support for community organisations to provide community-based food and essentials to residents in need

- housing support offered to residents in both social and private sector rented housing. A Registered Social Landlord Social Impact Fund supports social housing providers to extend existing support, such as fuel, access to food, and hygiene packs
- funding direct to front line social works, family case workers and schools to address hardship issues quickly and effectively as and when they arise.

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**Knowsley Council**





## Social Outcomes

# Lewisham Council

## The High Street Headcount and Survey

**This represents the first time a council has conducted a survey to better understand the demographic make-up of businesses in its town centres (for example ethnicity, gender, etc of business owners, plus the split between independent and larger firms) and to champion and support the diversity of the high street retailer offer. The headcount and survey have recently been repeated with the results due shortly. An analysis of the results will allow the council to establish how Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) businesses have fared in the wake of the pandemic.**

The inaugural survey saw the Council win at the Federation of Small Businesses Local Government Awards 2022 for its support for the small business community. The authority won the Covid-19 Support and Recovery category, aimed at highlighting those that had made the biggest impact on local SMEs during the pandemic and beyond.

The disproportionate deaths due to Covid-19 among Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities shone a spotlight on the systemic inequalities they experience in all areas of their lives. That includes businesses. The ground-breaking census of Lewisham's high streets reflects the Council's commitment to tackle inequalities; rebuild the local, post-Covid economy; and to ensure everybody has the opportunity to succeed.

Post-pandemic recovery in the retail sector is considered fragile, given the huge impact of the crisis on customer footfall, sales and business liquidity. The Council commissioned this first-of-its-kind study to understand and address the unique challenges local retailers face as they emerge from the pandemic – with an emphasis on identifying any disparities for BAME business owners.

The initial independent survey was conducted by London South Bank University Business School in April 2021 across 10 of the busiest high streets in the borough, including Catford, Deptford and New Cross. The study offered students, many



Lewisham Mayor Damien Egan and Business Owner

of whom have local connections, a valuable opportunity to apply their learning in a critical business setting. In addition, it is a chance for the University to engage with the local community and contribute to the Council's Covid-19 recovery plan for independent high street businesses.

The insight gathered from the survey helped the Council shape its services and future approach to the needs of ethnic minority-owned and run businesses, who serve Lewisham's communities and play such a vital role in the local economy. The second survey was conducted in early 2023.

### Key findings from the first survey

70% of businesses on Lewisham's high streets are independent. These businesses want to be more self-sufficient, so they are in a better position to weather any future crisis. In response, the Council is offering a range of practical support to empower them to strengthen their

businesses, from free courses in book-keeping to building local networks to share knowledge and experiences.

Two thirds of the independent shops and services on the borough's high streets are owned by BAME entrepreneurs. Mistrust of authorities is a common issue and has led to poor uptake of Council-led business support. Lewisham is addressing this through increased face-to-face engagement, developing local peer-led initiatives and partnering with trusted business networks. The Council is also offering discounts on Federation of Small Businesses memberships for BAME retailers.

Local retailers need an increase in footfall. High street business owners rely on in-person sales to bolster revenues, but footfall levels are still perceived to be lower than they were pre-pandemic. The Council is implementing a series of environmental improvements to make town centres more appealing places to visit, alongside running initiatives such as the ongoing Shop Safe Shop Local campaign to actively encourage residents to support their local businesses.

Lewisham's intention, subject to funding, is to conduct a business headcount study every year and to re-evaluate its strategies in light of the findings to ensure they are having the desired impact on the high streets. Although the Council already offers a robust programme of support for local businesses, the findings from the surveys mean it can be even more targeted in the types of support offered. This is about ensuring Lewisham is giving all entrepreneurs



Cllr Kim Powell (Cabinet Member) and Business Owners

the tools to succeed, regardless of their ethnicity or background.

For the full findings of the first report or to read the executive summary, please visit [lewisham.gov.uk/highstreetsstudy](https://lewisham.gov.uk/highstreetsstudy)

Cllr Kim Powell, Cabinet Member for Business and Community Wealth Building, introduces the report via a short film – [youtube.com/watch?v=buNcLm7Ee3s](https://youtube.com/watch?v=buNcLm7Ee3s)

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Community

## Liverpool City Council

# Liverpool's Good Help Hub

**The Good Help Hub was launched in Croxteth, North Liverpool in January 2023.**

Devised during a 12-week study and learn phase, which saw responsibility for service design and delivery transferred to a frontline team, the Good Help Hub brings together over 20 community partner agencies. These include Cobalt Housing (a local registered housing association acting as the anchor organisation and co-lead), Liverpool City Council, Merseyside Police, NHS teams, Jobcentre staff, local voluntary and community organisations and more.

The Good Help Hub offers a 'one stop shop' for a variety of essential local services so residents can access support quickly and easily without travelling across the city. The range of services on offer are:

- **Monday:** Employment and skills
- **Tuesday:** Housing and cost of living
- **Wednesday:** Health and wellbeing
- **Thursday:** Keeping safe
- **Friday:** Community and environment. Friday also sees 'Bacon Butty Friday', offering a safe, warm space for people to come and grab some breakfast and speak to a range of people who can offer support.

Cobalt Housing has provided a free space for the hub to operate out of in its Croxteth-based offices, which sits in the heart of its North Liverpool communities. It is available for all residents of Croxteth and members of the community are

invited to drop into the Hub at any time – no appointment is required.

The Hub has a 'coffee/tea first; support later ethos', with staff given the time to develop trusting relationships with the community, and providing support once they have a better understanding of the person in front of them, in the context of their own lives; this makes it different from any other service in the city.

The initiative has taken a community-led approach, building on the assets which exist locally. Through joint-working between partners from the Council, housing, health, police, and employment services, it seeks to tackle a broad range of social and economic issues – understanding the often complex and interwoven nature of challenges within communities. The aim is to support all residents so they can live a 'good life' – whatever that means to each individual person.

The Good Help Hub offers additional support to universal services within the locality and provides a more robust response for those people who are not known to services and/or not yet accessing services – with the focus very much on early intervention and prevention. It is hoped that learning from the project will strengthen local partnerships, and inform the city's wider rollout of a new approach to neighbourhood living.

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## Housing

# Liverpool City Council

## Community Led Housing in Liverpool

**In January 2023, Liverpool City Council adopted a new Community Led Housing Policy, which aims to unlock vacant land and properties for community groups to convert into new homes.**

The proposed policy echoes the ambition of the city's Victorian and Edwardian ancestors who created the first social housing scheme in Europe and the UK's first community-led housing group. It also draws on learning from the Co-operative Councils Innovation Network's previous community-led housing commission.

A key focus of Liverpool's new policy is to stimulate new affordable housing in areas blighted by empty or derelict properties and to empower community organisations to deliver the design and build of more local homes. Whether it's an old school, the site of a long-forgotten baths or vacant, abandoned houses, community groups will have the opportunity to transform this brownfield land into the social housing our city so desperately needs.

The Council has worked closely with local community groups to devise the policy, the application process and selection of initial sites, and will continue this collaborative approach as the programme enters into its delivery phase. While the due diligence process will be rigorous – with an emphasis on financial deliverability – the community sector will have support. Local groups are already forming land trusts and co-ops and will be working with trained community led housing advisors – alongside council officers and partners at the combined authority – to assist in realising their ambitions.

At its heart, the new policy shows the Council's commitment to community wealth building and sits alongside its new Community Asset Transfer Policy. Both policies encourage Council Officers to balance financial benefits alongside social value – considering how communities might benefit from the use of Council assets and be supported as stewards of them, delivering services that make Liverpool's neighbourhoods better places to live.

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## Community

# Milton Keynes City Council

## The City of Milton Keynes: Involving stakeholders and communities in a historic bid

**In June 2021, the Government announced a competition for city status across the United Kingdom, and its crown dependencies and overseas territories, to mark the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. This is the first such competition since 2012.**

For Milton Keynes, this was its fourth bidding opportunity to become a city and it was agreed a different approach would be needed this time – one which involved as many stakeholders as possible, along with residents, and reflected on multiple aspects of local life including culture, faith, business, learning and community.

The benefits of cooperation were twofold: not only did we source more fascinating, diverse, and authentic material in the bid than the Council could on its own (ensuring more voices were included); we also amplified support for the bid across everyone's networks and as such could maximise local pride in Milton Keynes' achievements regardless of whether the bid won or lost.

### Developing the bid through cooperation

The Council brought together more than 70 knowledgeable local people and organisations to create the bid, all gifting their time, including local figures who had played a role in Milton Keynes' development from the very beginning.

Three working groups were established, with people interested in heritage and culture; the built and natural environment; and diversity, volunteering and communities. The groups met regularly to shape the bid, and also separately explored their own networks and partnerships to develop themes, source evidence, and uncover unusual stories and memories – making sure a wide range of voices were included.



Bid material produced by each group was woven into a central narrative by the Council's communications team to become the formal application.

Alongside this, the Council ran a photo competition to involve residents in the bid, co-ordinated by the local tourism organisation. Local people were asked to send in a photograph of their favourite view or place in Milton Keynes. The competition was extremely popular and some of the photos submitted featured in the final bid itself.

A competition was also organised for schools to design 'a flag for MK' and, from hundreds of entries, a design created by Thea Callaghan (aged 12 at the time) showcasing Milton Keynes' natural spaces was chosen as the winner.

### The bid submission

The bid set out key reasons for Milton Keynes to become a city, including:

- being home to great diversity, with more than 140 languages spoken in its schools. Its population of nearly 300,000 people is noted for their willingness to serve and volunteer: per head, more citizens volunteer in MK than in any other place in the UK



Leading a digital parade to celebrate city status



His Majesty King Charles visits Milton Keynes to formally mark the honour of city status

- this 'city in the forest' has more biodiversity today than in the agricultural land it replaced, with one of the highest amounts of green space per resident in the UK
- a surprising amount of significant heritage: Wolverton is the home of the Royal Train, the world's oldest Shrove Tuesday pancake race takes place in Olney (where the hymn Amazing Grace was written), and Bletchley Park's amazing achievements during World War II
- it's a trailblazing place of firsts and innovation, the base for 14,000 businesses, and a living laboratory for sustainable smart city projects, giving other cities a glimpse into the future.

Local dignitaries, the 'flag for MK' competition winner, and organisations who contributed to the bid gathered at MK Gallery in December 2021 to formally send the bid to Buckingham Palace. Representing MK's unique mix of heritage and innovation, the bid was covered in vellum produced by WG Cowley of Newport Pagnell – the last parchment and vellum works in the country, which still provides the vellum for declarations of royal births – and was sent in an autonomous delivery robot from Starship Technologies, the company which has been providing a grocery and hot food delivery service to MK residents since 2018, powered by zero-carbon electricity.

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Jobs

## Newham Council

# The Royal Docks Internship Programme

**The Royal Docks' Internship Programme is a pioneering partnership between the Royal Docks Team at the Greater London Authority, the London Borough of Newham and local employers in the Royal Docks, Newham. It gives young people aged 18-30 living in Newham the opportunity to gain skills and experience with employers during a one-year internship paid at the London Living Wage (£11.95ph).**

It was launched in 2021 and 10 young people have already successfully completed the programme. Now in its second year, it has 15 interns based at organisations across a wide range of sectors from construction to the creative arts, and a commitment has been made to expand for year three. It has successfully supported 25 young people as they enter work while encouraging a wide range of organisations to become Living Wage employers. It is a cornerstone of the work being undertaken to make the Royal Docks a Living Wage Place by 2025. The goal is to increase by 50% each year the number of accredited Living Wage employers in the Royal Docks.

Employers in the public, private and third sector based in east London – from international companies to local SMEs – are participating in the programme and offering comprehensive work-based training and skills development which provides young people from all backgrounds a springboard start to their career.

The programme is being delivered as part of the Royal Docks Enterprise zone, a partnership between the Mayor of London and Mayor of Newham working with



key stakeholders and local communities to ensure the successful transformation of the area. It is London's only enterprise zone.

A key ambition is to create an inclusive economy where local people benefit from growth. To help achieve this, there is a shared commitment to invest in the skills and talents of local people. With the Borough having the second-youngest population in the UK, this commitment includes the creation of more youth employment opportunities – with the Royal Docks Internship Programme a leading example.

The programme will recruit another cohort of up to 20 interns this year. Given the benefits the scheme is delivering to young people and companies in the Royal Docks, there is enormous potential for this model to be replicated and scaled up across the country.

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## Social Outcomes

# Newham Council

## People Powered Newham

**The London Borough of Newham is on a radical mission to transform the area through local participatory democracy. Our People Powered Newham programme empowers staff to work with residents to develop strategies and shape budgets that lead to action on the ground; it is already delivering lasting change.**

Under the leadership of Mayor Rokhsana Fiaz OBE, we have established the country's first Permanent Citizens' Assembly, invested £3.2 million in eight Community Assemblies, launched the UK's first community-led longitudinal research through the Newham Citizen Science Academy, enabled young people to develop a Young People's Charter and are delivering a Tackling, Racism, Inequality and Disproportionality programme.

Our Permanent Citizens' Assembly is breaking new ground in scale and ambition. Our most recent Assembly is helping to deliver a £40 million 15 Minute Neighbourhood programme, with new cycling and walking infrastructure improvements informing our new Local Plan. By removing barriers to participation through financial support for childcare, providing ICT training and equipment, as well as paying the London Living Wage, we have ensured that the Assembly reflects the high levels of diversity and lived experience of Newham residents.

By putting funding in the hands of residents they decide how it is invested in their community. Our Community Assemblies have £100,000 to spend on community projects to enhance the quality of life for residents. These are bringing people together and delivering positive change within local communities.



Newham Permanent Citizens Assembly

The Council has signed up to Newham Young People's Charter – a series of principles which young people say matter to them – and other organisations can be signatories to as well. It highlights our commitment that the voices of young people will be central to the design and delivery of services provided to them.

Our Tackling Racism, Inequality and Disproportionality programme addresses long-standing structural inequalities and discrimination faced by Newham residents, 72% of whom are not White British. Through this programme we are facilitating honest conversations to address racism, disproportionality and racial inequality. This includes introducing more inclusive recruitment practices, recruitment training, embedding anti-racist practices, promoting inclusive leadership, allyship and developing conscious inclusion.

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## Community

# North Hertfordshire District Council

## Community Support for Asylum Seekers in Hotels

**In October 2022 the Home Office took over a hotel within North Herts to temporarily house approximately 70 asylum seekers. The residents were a mix of families, single men and single females and had recently made their way across the Channel to flee war or persecution in their own countries. The original hotel location chosen was particularly unsuitable for families.**

Following representations from Local Authorities, the local MP, police, social services, and NHS, the families were relocated to more suitable accommodation.

When the families first arrived, we were approached by Herts Welcomes Refugees, a local charity formed in 2015 to assist Syrian refugees displaced by the civil war.

After the charity was contacted by residents of the hotel asking for clothes, it emailed the District Council's Community team to ask if we could assist.

We were aware that Gemma Maret at Stevenage Borough Council had formed a group of VCFSE organisations to offer support in a similar situation in her area. We attended some of these meetings and replicated the model to benefit the asylum seekers in North Herts.

The Community team contacted local churches, charities, community groups, the local centre for voluntary services and Citizens Advice and set up a meeting with the Manager at the hotel to find out exactly what needs the residents had. The staff at the hotel kindly assessed the residents room by room to get information on gender, age, and sizes so that we could find clothes that were suitable and seasonal. By this time, it was December, and the southeast was experiencing snow and icy conditions.

Once representatives from the groups visited the residents we found out that they would benefit from activities which would give them a break from the hotel, which was in a remote location. Residents highlighted various items and



Feeling safe and welcomed by the local community

services which would help them. For example, bicycles would help them access local towns and villages, English and IT classes would help them to navigate life in the UK, and a new baby car seat would help a pregnant lady to bring her new-born home from the maternity hospital.

Linking up with a bicycle recycling scheme we managed to find some bikes for the residents to share and help them access local activities.

North Herts Minority Ethnic Forum set up English classes both at the hotel and at a local village hall that is within walking distance.

The local Churches Together sourced and sorted clothing that was delivered to the hotel and we also linked up with a Muslim women's group who provided culturally appropriate clothing for the small group of ladies based there.

The Voluntary Community Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) groups we have been working with include:

- Herts Welcomes Refugees
- Citizens Advice
- Asylum Friends
- NHCVS
- Create Community
- Citizens Advice
- Churches Together
- Hitchin Pantry
- North Herts Minority Ethnic Forum (NHMEF)

At first, weekly feedback meetings were set up, moving to fortnightly as more actions were identified and allocated to the groups. As the network groups become embedded and develop good relationships with each other and the hotel management, the District Council will withdraw and allow the network to continue with arm's length support.

The statutory authorities are working hard to support these groups locally with healthcare, education and transport where necessary but don't have the resources to provide

the additional extras that can make life that bit more bearable.

The process of bringing together the community to support asylum seekers has been very rewarding and has demonstrated some of the CCIN's values and principles. Social partnership has been the key principle of this work as we have supported cooperation and collaboration between residents, community groups, asylum seekers, and the Council, to benefit the wellbeing of some of our new and vulnerable communities. Through this process we have found numerous groups and individuals who have been willing to assist and share responsibility for the welfare of asylum seekers, indicating a strong sense of solidarity from within the broader community.

This model of bringing together a range of groups and individuals to provide support within the community has proved very successful. With the Home Office having commissioned another hotel in the district – this time in a town centre location – we are again taking the approach of creating a local VCFSE network to provide additional support. So far, we have been able to provide toys, activities, clothes, assistance with making applications for the right to remain in the UK, and translation services from within the local community.

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Poverty

## Oldham Council

# Responding to the Cost of Living Crisis

**On 27th July 2022, the Council hosted a Cost of Living Crisis Summit which brought together a range of partners, residents, senior officers, elected members and frontline staff to focus on actions that could be taken quickly to maximise support for residents through the winter.**

Members of Oldham's Poverty Truth Commission and Youth Council worked in smaller groups to explore how resources could be best aligned to address five key priorities: food; energy and fuel; income maximisation, advice and support; housing and childcare costs.

Based on feedback from this session, an action plan was developed which was considered and approved by the Council and Oldham's Partnership Board in October 2022, along with the allocation of £3 million from Council reserves to fund its implementation.

Given the urgent need to ensure the support was available before the Winter, many of the actions built on current initiatives, including extending the Council's Warm Homes and Local Welfare Assistance Schemes. Other actions – such as the funding of additional staff within Citizens Advice and the Council's Support and Inclusion Team; the creation of Warm Banks; and the launch of community engagement teams – continue to inform and accelerate the move towards the place-based integration of services in the longer term.

A Cost of Living Working Group was established and continues to meet, to provide cross-departmental and inter-organisational oversight and ensure delivery of the action plan. Reflecting clear and urgent political priorities, the group is chaired by the Council's Assistant Chief Executive and comprises service managers and key officers from across the public service system. The group includes service leads from Welfare Rights, Revenues and Benefits, Customer Experience, Housing, Place-Based Integration, Finance, Communications and the VCFSE sector. Given



**Council Leader Amanda Chadderton joins colleagues on the Council's dedicated We Can Help helpline**

the tight timescales and the need to react quickly to the unfolding crisis, the group meets weekly to update on progress, remove barriers to implementation, share learning and identify and address emerging issues.

From the outset, the various workstreams and support offers in the Action Plan have been closely aligned with marketing and communications from the Council and key partners such as Action Together, Oldham's VCSFE umbrella organisation. We Can Help, the Council's overarching cost-of-living campaign, has ensured a co-ordinated approach to support for both residents and staff. This has included the We Can Help Helpline – a central number residents can call to access a wide range of advice and support; the publication and distribution of the We Can Help brochure to every household in Oldham; promotion of the Money Advice Referral Tool (MART) developed in partnership with Greater Manchester Poverty Action; and the associated development of face-to-face training with frontline and back office staff across Council services and partner organisations. This was accompanied by bitesize online training sessions for the MART, which staff could access via the Council's online learning platform and the promotion



Council Leader Amanda Chadderton joins one of the Community Engagement Teams to provide advice and support to residents on the doorstep

of different support services via Action Together's online Wednesday Weeklies.

The need to move quickly to deliver the Action Plan accelerated the development of a data and intelligence tool to enable its impact monitoring and measurement. A Cost of Living Dashboard was created to track progress against the actions, using a range of indicators directly relating to each of the workstreams. These indicators included: the number of warm homes payments made; food parcels issued; number and nature of calls to the We Can Help helpline, Support and Inclusion Team and the Council's Contact Centre; issues emerging from the doorstep in conversations with our community engagement teams and number of households in temporary accommodation. The dashboard is now a standing item on the weekly Working Group meetings at which progress, impact and changes in service demand are tracked. This informs and enables an early system-wide response to flex the resources available; supporting those parts of the system under most pressure.

The Action Plan and associated funding comes to an end at the end of March; however, certain aspects of the plan will continue for another year – such as the community engagement teams and additional staffing for Citizens Advice and Welfare Rights services.

With this in mind, the Cost of Living Working Group is beginning to explore how the Council and its partners meet the significant challenge of supporting residents with the rising cost of living in the medium to longer term. To this end, the learning from the cost-of-living response is being used to inform broader system thinking in the move from crisis response to early intervention and prevention. Tackling poverty and disadvantage at a place-based level is key; together with the creation of an anti-poverty strategy that builds upon learning from our cost of living response, the findings of Oldham's Poverty Truth Commission and the borough's previous anti-poverty action plan.

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## Community Wealth Building

## Oxford Council

# Food Doing Good in Oxford

**Residents at an extra care housing site gained a vibrant community restaurant serving healthy meals from food that would otherwise go to waste, thanks to local public and community anchor organisations taking a cooperative, community wealth-building approach to local economic development.**

From May 2023, Waste2Taste will be providing affordable and ethical food at Shotover View, serving residents and local people through a community café, and providing a catering service committed to a vibrant, healthy and sustainable food culture.

The café will be highly sustainable, using food surplus for its main ingredients, and inclusive, providing a pathway into work to homeless and vulnerably housed people through food-related mentoring and training opportunities.

The community café space and commercial kitchen is leased at no cost, under a cooperation agreement between Waste2Taste and a local housing association, bpha, which will enable Waste2Taste to grow as an ethical catering business.

### How did this come about?

When local ward Councillor and Small Business & Inclusive Economy Champion, Ajaz Rehman, visited the extra care housing site at Shotover View, he noticed the onsite restaurant/café had been closed for some time. He immediately saw the potential and contacted the Council's Community Wealth Building Officer to discuss the opportunity.

Through the Owned by Oxford project, a grassroots community wealth building project aimed at addressing inequality in the city, Council Officers had built strong relationships with local organisations and were well placed to identify suitable potential providers.



Waste2Taste

Rather than seeking to maximise rental income by appointing a for-profit café operator, Shotover View recognised the deeper benefits to their residents and the wider community of appointing a community-led business to provide meals to their residents.

Council Officers alerted the OX4 Food Crew to the opportunity, recognising their members' unique position to meet the community benefits that Shotover View were looking for.

OX4 Food Crew member Waste2Taste CIC was chosen by bpha to take up the café at Shotover View, moving from their base at Oxford's Ark T community arts centre.

Oxford Community Action (OCA), a multi-ethnic community group working in OX4, have also benefited from these developments and will take on the café space at the Ark-T centre to expand their global food enterprise arm, OCA Kitchen.

This network of local public and community anchor organisations, working collaboratively and putting community needs ahead of profit maximisation, demonstrates the potential of community wealth building to generate new, people-centred economic opportunities in the city.

### Spotlight on:

**OX4 Food Crew** is an alliance of nine organisations, who came together during the Covid-19 pandemic to tackle the high levels of food inequality experienced by people living in the OX4 area of Oxford. Learning from wider networks such as Good Food Oxford, the partnership has begun to work towards a system change in how we think about food and eating well and addressing the food inequalities that exist within the community.

**Waste2Taste** was started by two local women and passionate food activists, chefs and community workers Sandra and Marie. The community interest company is a café and catering business that works with homeless people, providing hot meals, cooking classes and volunteer opportunities for work experience and skill development.

**Oxford Community Action (OCA)** is a multi-ethnic community group working in OX4, running children and youth activities, providing 320 families a week with emergency food parcels and leading on community research. OCA has been supported by Flo's Social Enterprise Kitchen and the Owned by Oxford project to launch their own social enterprise, OCA Kitchen, which trains and employs people from migrant communities to work in the catering trade. OCA Kitchen will provide a revenue stream to support OCA's unfunded community work.

**Flo's Place in the Park** is a community-owned hub in Oxford's Florence Park neighbourhood. The organisation

leases a former children's centre building from the council, providing a place for people to meet, work, play, create, learn, eat and connect. Their Social Enterprise Kitchen works with emerging, diversity-led social enterprises, including OCA, supporting communities to generate sustainable income and creating employment for people who may otherwise face barriers.

**Owned by Oxford** is a community wealth building partnership supporting locally led, community owned businesses that meet local needs and tackle Oxford's inequalities. It combines community led economic development with the purchasing power and assets of larger organisations and focuses on relationship building and authentic community engagement. It has provided enterprise development support and grant funding to Oxford Community Action and six other grassroots-led community enterprises.

As a major public anchor, **Oxford City Council** has corporate priorities to enable thriving communities and a more inclusive economy. The council seeks to do this through:

- buying from local organisations that 'do good'
- accounting for social value as well as commercial value in its decision making
- using assets and spaces creatively to support inclusive economic activity
- being led by the needs of community and authentic engagement with those voices
- enabling inclusive ownership of the economy by supporting social enterprises, cooperatives, and VCSEs to play a more prominent role in the city's economy.

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Enterprise and Social Economy

## Preston City Council

# Growing the Cooperative Economy in Preston

**As the programme Advancing a Shared Economy in Preston (ASEP) extends into its second year, a culture of collaboration between anchor institutions and community and cooperative initiatives is emerging in Preston. The ASEP programme is jointly funded by Preston City Council and Power to Change with the overarching aim of strengthening institutional capacity to underpin a more democratic and collaborative economy. The programme has three objectives focused on decarbonisation, community development and raising awareness of the cooperative model. It is fostering closer working, the sharing of insights and learning and the creation of shared resources.**

Two projects are focused on raising awareness and developing the infrastructure to support cooperative development over the long term. The Preston Co-operative Education Centre is reaching out to trade unions to raise awareness and explore opportunities for union backed worker coops in the city.

The Preston Co-operative Development Network's (PCDN) project is reaching out to the business and social enterprise sectors, building on the learning from the Ownership Hub in Sheffield, overseen by Co-operatives UK. By targeting business advisors within existing support networks including Boost (the Lancashire Business Growth Hub), SELNET (the Social Enterprise Lancashire Network) and the Preston Community Network, the project has three aims: to increase awareness of the cooperative model across the business advisory community; to develop understanding

of when it might be an appropriate model for an advisor to propose to a client; and to ensure that advisors know how to signpost their clients to more specialist support. To underpin this approach, the project is creating bespoke resources and delivering webinars.

The PCDN project is also targeting specific audiences in Preston. Online and face-to-face events for students at the University of Central Lancashire are creating an awareness of how cooperatives can address challenges they face around housing and employment, particularly where freelancing is common, including in the creative, film and technical sectors. Growing community interest in renewable energy generation and in insulating homes to improve energy efficiency and reduce bills is also creating opportunities to promote practical cooperative models.



Preston

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## Community

# Preston City Council

## The Leighton Street Cooperative

**In 2019 Lancashire County Council (LCC) agreed to dispose of three traveller sites in the county, including one at Leighton Street in the centre of Preston, managed on its behalf by Preston City Council. The Irish Traveller community at the site had been living there for over 30 years since it was established in the late 1980s. The families were well integrated into the local area and their children attended local schools. LCC's decision created a great deal of uncertainty for the community.**

With support from a local group and from Preston's Cooperative Development Network (PCDN), community representatives proposed to Preston City Council that if the Council agreed to adopt the site, a newly established Leighton Street Cooperative would take on the day-to-day management and operation of the site and all residents would be invited to join the cooperative. At Full Council on 24 February 2022 it was unanimously agreed that Preston City Council would adopt the site and on 18th May the Local Authorities signed a lease to this effect.

The Leighton Street Cooperative was formally established with support from the PCDN and directors have received training in their legal duties and responsibilities with a grant from the Advancing a Shared Economy in Preston programme. One of the directors is an elected representative of the residents. Preston Councillors were invited to appoint an observer to the board.

Complications arising from the escalating energy crisis during 2022 have delayed formal handover of management responsibility to the cooperative. This has not prevented it from playing an active role in the site's operation, including by helping residents to claim all the benefits to which they are entitled and encouraging more careful use of water on site. Rent collection is over 95% and among residents there is a growing sense that the cooperative has given them more influence over their future.

Established working relationships between Council Officers and the community have benefited from the leadership provided by the cooperative. Officers and Directors worked together during 2022 to apply for an external grant to undertake major improvement works on site. The bid was successful and the Council will be working with the cooperative and the community during 2023 to deliver the project. This will improve the condition of the site for residents and underpin the financial sustainability of the cooperative, providing the community with much greater certainty about its future.

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## Education and Training

# Rochdale Council

## Cooperating Through Good Help in Rochdale

**In 2021, Rochdale Borough Council outlined a plan for Good Help in the Borough through a previous case study. What happened next?**

Our intention was to embed the approach into the parts of the system that have contact with people to support the building blocks of a good life in the Borough. This included putting Good Help into strategies; understanding how people experience it so we can do more, and building that in to our workforce and organisational development; commissioning and services.

Outputs-wise, the overall metrics really helped us assure ourselves that things are happening (numbers of people attending trainings; new good help programmes being set up). We set these metrics as the steps towards Rochdale Borough being a Good Help Place: We can't claim that by achieving these, we are all doing good help everywhere in the Borough with high demand, low resources and crises on many fronts. Of course not: There are times when any help is vital, whether it fits the characteristics of good help or not.

The state of help in our system is too fluid to pin down to a fixed definition or metric. But Good Help is about culture change so it's also true that by focusing our attention on the way we do our help, we can move beyond the sugar rush of achieving metrics. We can share an understanding of what makes those metrics meaningful; building trust and relationships so that we can solve problems in proximity to their origin in ways that make sense to us all.

1. Recognising and building upon the influence and control that each person brings (**power sharing**)?
2. Having conversations that enable people to feel safe and ready to take action for themselves (**enabling language**)?
3. Helping people define their own purpose and plans, and responding to their individual needs (**tailoring**)?
4. Offering practical and emotional support that helps people take and sustain action, then stepping back as they build confidence to take action alone (**scaffolding**)?
5. Helping people connect with and take action with other people they identify with (**role models and peer support**)?
6. Expanding opportunities for people to take action (**opportunity making**)?
7. Sharing information between practitioners and the people being supported (**transparency**)?

### Characteristics of good help

So what's changed as a result? We can now see the language and approach of Good Help in so many parts of our system. Using the tools has been really useful in creating neutral, shared space for innovation. Because Good Help doesn't belong to any part of the system; it belongs to the borough. And specifically to the Borough's shared vision for people, place and prosperity. The more we can use service neutral lenses to look at, and improve our system, the more we can solve problems cooperatively and create shared opportunities and solutions.

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## Poverty

# Rochdale Council

## Tackling the Cost of Living Crisis in Rochdale

**When the cost-of-living crisis started to bite in 2022 we knew it would hit some of our people and communities particularly hard. It's a Borough which already had significant disadvantage and deprivation - with 15.3% of households in fuel poverty, 29.8% of children living in relative poverty and 30% eligible for free school meals.**

### The response

A cross-sector Anti-Poverty Group was quickly brought together. It included the local voluntary sector infrastructure organisation, social housing providers, DWP, Groundwork, the Fire Service, the NHS and a range of council teams (strategic housing, public health, revenues and benefits, work and skills, communications, policy, early help, and the customer contact centre).

### Immediate support

Offering a range of support was vital to alleviate the immediate issues people faced. Over 40 warm spaces



were set up in different community locations. They didn't just offer a hot drink, but also provided access to activities, advice and information. Funding for winter warmer packs was made available. Community groups set about making sure they were designed to meet a range of needs and could be made bespoke for different communities. Food banks and food clubs have also continued to offer a vital source of help. This was underpinned by our "helping hand" communications campaign to let residents know that help was available.

### A longer lasting approach

Integrating Good Help and community wealth principles has also been key to our response. We want to provide the type of support which will help people out of poverty and provide long term outcomes. Money Max roadshows have provided advice and information on financial support, training, wellbeing and energy-saving. We've been promoting the local credit union to make sure residents have access to responsible lending and saving. The Warm Homes Programme was expanded to offer vulnerable people access to a range of interventions including boiler repair and replacement, cavity wall insulation, extra radiators and thermostats, as well as fuel vouchers, heaters and blankets.

Partnership and collaboration have been vital to tackling the cost of living crisis in Rochdale. It has provided the networks, co-ordination and communication to enable us to provide immediate relief and longer lasting interventions for people facing the hardest of circumstances and living the most difficult lives.

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## Community Wealth Building

# Royal Borough of Greenwich Community Wealth Building

**The Royal Borough of Greenwich has a long history of cooperative development, dating back to the origins of the cooperative movement. The cooperative approach fits with the Council's support for developing alternative models for economic growth to help grow a more locally beneficial and sustainable economy.**

## Community Wealth Building

The Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) was commissioned to produce a Community Wealth Building (CWB) strategy for the Borough. The Council adopted the strategy in July 2022 and is developing an Inclusive Economy Strategy alongside the CWB strategy.

## Anchor Partnership

A key aim of the CWB strategy was to establish the 'Anchored in Greenwich' partnership to bring together organisations rooted in the local economy, with a stake in the borough as major employers, alongside considerable purchasing power, land and assets, or as cooperatives or community interest organisations, such as the University of Greenwich, Peabody, London and South East College Group (LSEC), Peabody Housing Association and Greenwich Co-operative Development Agency (GCDA).

Partners launched an Anchored in Greenwich Charter in November 2022 to publicise the work of the partnership and its commitment to using spending and employment

power and land and assets to achieve its goals. CLES estimated that the combined value of the Council and anchor organisations' annual spend is £1 billion. A modest 1.8% increase in spending with local supply chains could add £18m to the local economy and create almost 600 jobs a year, alongside other multiplier effects and savings to the wider public purse.

## London Living Wage

In addition, promoting the London Living Wage (LLW) is one of the Council's and anchor partners' key priorities for economic development, job creation and tackling poverty and the cost-of-living crisis in the borough.

Since 2013, the Council has been an accredited LLW employer and is proactively supporting local businesses to also become LLW accredited employers.

During Living Wage Week (14th to 20th November 2022), the Council announced a grant scheme to help 150 small businesses (of 250 employees or less) to become accredited Living Wage Employers over the next three years.

A total budget of £65,000 has been allocated towards the London Living Wage campaign. This will support the cost of paying the fees for employers to become London Living Wage Accredited Employers and other costs associated with running the scheme.



Living Wage Employers joined Cllr Denise Hyland, former Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economy and Skills, for a Living Wage Week celebration

### Greener Greenwich

As part of the Anchored in Greenwich partnership, Royal Greenwich joined forces with the University of Greenwich and other anchor institutions in the Borough, including South East London Chamber of Commerce and Visit Greenwich, to launch a series of events; Greener Greenwich, Journey to 2030.

The programme is aimed at demystifying the process of emissions reduction for businesses, sharing best practice and developing a toolkit they can access in their own time. The first event, the Greener Greenwich Summit, brought together large organisations from both the public and private sector, with a stake in the borough, and SMEs with students and academics to share ideas and best practice.

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Community

## Salford Council

# Women Have Their Say

### **“Deeds not words has to be our permanent motto” Emmeline Pankhurst**

In 2022, the Salford Women and Girls’ Commission was established in the aftermath of the appalling murder of Sarah Everard.

Made up of 17 women leaders from across Salford’s public, private and voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors, its purpose was simple – to generate a conversation, and develop local solutions, to address issues affecting women and girls’ safety and prosperity in Salford.

For 12 months, the commission heard countless stories and reviewed numerous pieces of evidence of very real experiences and challenges faced by women living and working in the city.

These amazing women, from a range of different communities, cultures, and backgrounds, told the commission about the complexity of issues affecting their lives and helped the commission identify three themes to focus on:

- Women in Poverty
- Women’s Safety
- Women’s Voices

After the information gathering phase, the commissioners compiled their findings and formulated recommendations in a final report launched at an event on International Women’s Day (8th March 2023), where partner organisations pledged to help turn ideas into action.



It's only by working together with people with lived experience can we ensure these recommendations are taken forward and help make a real difference to women and girls in Salford.

Councillor Sharmina August, Lead Member for Inclusive Economy, Anti-Poverty and Equalities said: "It was fascinating to hear from women across the city and a huge thanks to everyone who took part.

"Good quality, flexible employment is key to tackling poverty and women want more help with skills and training opportunities. Boosting local employment for everyone is already part of our skills and work plan.

"Women also want more involvement in local decision-making and democracy so we're considering ideas around that and exploring how local partners can better work together to improve women's personal safety, particularly at night and on public transport.

"The report contains a series of recommendations. Our hope is that Salford partners and community organisations will now come together to deliver them."

Other recommendations from the commission include:

- agree a joint commitment across public agencies, education providers, businesses and the VCSE sector to

prioritise the upskilling and retraining of women furthest from the labour market as part of the city's new skills and work programme with a clear plan for rollout

- explore the opportunity to provide additional council tax support (or exemptions) for women fleeing domestic abuse – those who currently live in the city and those relocating to Salford
- map existing women's mentoring, development and coaching opportunities across Salford's public, VCSE and private sectors to identify good practice and create further low-cost, stigma-free, personal and professional development opportunities for Salford-based women
- develop networking opportunities for women to continue to share their lived experiences in a safe environment and deepen the understanding of the support services landscape within the city to improve.

We're proud that Emmeline Pankhurst, a women's equality campaigner was raised in Salford and through this commission we want to continue her legacy.

To find the full report and work of the commission visit:  
[partnersinsalford.org/salford-women-and-girls-commission](https://partnersinsalford.org/salford-women-and-girls-commission)

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**Salford City Council**





Finance

## South Ribble Borough Council Waste Contract Insourcing

**South Ribble Council's recent insourcing of its waste contract marks a significant shift in approach toward waste collection services. For the past seven years the council's waste services had been delivered by contractor FCC, but following a decision by the Council, the service was brought in-house for the first time in 30 years. The move allows the service to respond quickly to changes in national policy for waste and recycling, improve terms and conditions for employees, and localises decision making.**

A total of 44 staff TUPE'd across to the Council. These staff now benefit from South Ribble Council terms of employment, resulting in better rates of pay and benefits. The majority will also receive a more beneficial pension through the Local Government Pension Scheme which provides a 12.5% contribution compared to a 3% contribution for most staff under FCC terms. On South Ribble terms and conditions, staff receive improved sick pay and additional annual leave. Further there is also a commitment from the Council to expand new and improved terms and conditions to the entire South Ribble workforce, including Waste Services, by year end. This protects jobs and provides greater stability for workers, in line with the principles of Community Wealth Building.

### Maximising Social Value

By retaining wealth within the Borough and directing it towards staff, residents and the local area, the insourcing demonstrates the maximising of social value. Under FCC's delivery of the contract, profits immediately left the local economy because the firm is a subsidiary of a European holding company. By bringing the contract in-house, the Council ensures that wealth remains within the local economy. Furthermore, the insourcing secures real benefits for the local community through local governance allowing higher quality service provision for end users. As a local anchor organisation, the Council holds a genuine stake in outcomes for the area and is better placed to responsibly



South Ribble Council's waste contract was brought in-house for the first time in 30 years

steward the delivery of waste services. The Council can now more readily incorporate and adapt to local needs without undertaking complex contract negotiations.

### Community Leadership

By taking direct control of the waste collection services the Council demonstrates community leadership. The move gives the local area more control over how waste is collected in the future, with significant changes likely as we look to reduce the amount of rubbish and increase the amount that is recycled in response to the climate change emergency. The Council's decision to take full responsibility for the waste contract is a significant example of community leadership, demonstrating a commitment to providing high-quality services while also ensuring that workers are treated fairly and with dignity by providing better terms and conditions.

## New Models of Meeting Community Needs

The insourcing of the waste contract represents a new model of meeting community needs. This approach allows the Council to incorporate local needs without needing to negotiate these as terms of a delivery contract, enabling it to better respond to local requirements as well as changes in national policy for waste and recycling. The commitment also meets community needs by ensuring that workers across the service receive improved employment terms such as conditions, pay and pension.

## Innovation

In-house delivery of the contract enables greater innovation in service delivery by giving the Council more flexibility to adapt waste collection services so they are fit for purpose in a fast-changing world. The amounts and types of rubbish we need collecting will change, and waste collections can increasingly become more about what we can recycle and what is best for the area rather than just what is most profitable. Furthermore, the insourcing of the waste contract presents opportunities to extend waste services for other products such as commercial waste, offering the potential to create more jobs, increase revenue, and further support local services.

## Learning

The insourcing further supports the Council's ongoing efforts to learn, grow, and adapt to the changing needs of the community. Running the service provides an opportunity for the Council to learn and grow as an organisation. By taking a more active role in service delivery, it is able to gain new insights into the challenges and opportunities facing the community, and develop new approaches to service delivery that better align with local needs and priorities.

## Walking the Talk

The insourcing of the waste contract clearly demonstrates the Council's commitment to walking the talk when it comes to meeting the needs of the community. By taking a proactive approach to service delivery and prioritising the wellbeing of employees and residents, the Council has demonstrated a genuine commitment to making a positive difference in the community.

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## Social Partnership

# South Tyneside Council South Tyneside Pledge

**The South Tyneside Pledge is a South Tyneside Partnership-led Community Wealth Building initiative which has brought together organisations located in South Tyneside around a commitment to think proactively about what practical steps they can take to help the local area to thrive. Its aim is to focus minds across both the public and private sector on small decisions which can have a real local impact.**

Focusing on nine specific activities, the Pledge asks organisations to commit to 'Spend', 'Recruit', and 'Support' South Tyneside.

In terms of 'Spend', this includes helping to 'maximise the South Tyneside Pound' by increasing the proportion of procurement spent locally or in the wider area, supporting local small businesses as they bid for opportunities and participate in supply chains, and encouraging employees to contribute to the local economy by spending, shopping, eating and visiting local businesses.

In terms of 'Recruit', the focus is on organisations consciously hiring locally, and advertising and offering career opportunities to local residents (with a particular focus on groups such as care leavers and those with learning difficulties), as well as supporting employees and promoting employee wellbeing.

In terms of 'Support', focuses specified in the Pledge include encouraging employees to volunteer locally, contributing to climate change mitigation activities and carbon reduction targets, and engaging actively with local green spaces and cultural offers.

The Pledge has been heavily promoted to local organisations. Those interested are invited to register their details online and officially sign up to the Pledge. Importantly, it's an ongoing Pledge, with those signing up asked, twice a year, to show what they are doing to meet its nine commitments. However, from the start, South



Cllr Ruth Berkley with Inspire's Charlotte Harrison, Stuart Sharpe from Colloide Engineering System and Elena Dickson from Dicksons at Boldon CA's warm space.

Tyneside Council and partners were keen to ensure that it was not an onerous task for organisations (particularly for SMEs). As such, Pledgees do not have to meet all nine commitments and can choose what to prioritise; this means the Pledge is flexible and agile, allowing a large multinational (of which there are a number signed up) to focus on areas such as volunteering and local recruitment and less on local procurement which can be more difficult for a large global corporate organisation.

The Pledge is managed, championed and monitored by the South Tyneside Partnership, the local partnership forum that brings together Council, NHS, business and third sector representatives, and its sub-board, the economic-growth-focused Economic Regeneration Board. The Boards play a key role in reviewing bi-annual feedback from participants around what they are doing to meet the Pledge, and compiling and sharing best practices, advice and information to help all participants go further with their commitment.

This feedback also helps the Council and other involved partners to design initiatives and communicate relevant information and opportunities to Pledge signatories. This ranges from providing toolkits around climate change and advice on how to engage with schools around skills and careers opportunities, to developing and offering dedicated South Tyneside Business Week events on how to make the most of the Pledge.

Established in January 2022, the Pledge has already seen over 165 organisations (big and small, public and private and across sectors) sign up; they are making a huge difference to our local economy (through driving more local spend), our residents (by offering job opportunities, work experience and careers talks), our workers (by driving better health at work), our communities (through more volunteering) and our planet (through a focus on climate change).

Pledgees range from large organisations such as the Council, NHS Foundation Trust, Tyne Coast College, Port of Tyne, and Hitachi and Equinor through to key local firms and voluntary organisations like Dicksons, Shower Pass UK, Wealth of Advice, HTG, HLA Services, and Hebburn and South Shields Football Clubs.

As Leader of the Council, Councillor Tracey Dixon, explained: "South Tyneside is known for its sense of community and civic pride and its business community is no different. The Pledge has encouraged organisations to look at their own practices and see what more they can do to support the borough. As individual organisations we can only do so much, but collectively, with a common set of objectives, we can make a real difference.

"Be it Cell Pack engaging with local schools, Northern Rights taking on young people, Tyne Coast College working with local employers, Turtens fundraising for Hospitality & Hope, Far North banging the drum for micro businesses across the borough, Goldfinch encouraging staff and others to make

use of our fabulous beaches and green spaces, Torgensens working with local suppliers or Glendale buying local trees – the list goes on and on.

"By signing the Pledge, organisations, big or small are saying that they will do all they can to spend, recruit and support our local area and bring about positive change to help us meet our 20-year vision ambitions."

The impact of the Pledge is already being felt; over 17 organisations are now doing more local volunteering with many others expressing an interest; 10 organisations signed up to the Better Health at Work Award; more than 10 organisations increasing their use of local suppliers; nearly 20 organisations giving talks in schools, providing work experience or attending careers fairs; over 50 new apprenticeships created from Pledgees; and more than 10 Pledge organisations expanding their presence in South Tyneside over the past year.

There are plans to continue to drive the community wealth building approach enshrined in the Pledge in 2023 including more networking events (a Pledge networking event in January had over 50 attendees and over 100 more online), further support for Pledgees and using the Pledge to push more of a focus upon fair work and fair payment terms.

We believe there is real scope to help boost sustainable and inclusive growth through the Pledge and help the borough achieve its ambition of 'Our South Tyneside – A place where people live healthy, happy and fulfilled lives.'

## Links

**South Tyneside Pledge overview:** <https://bit.ly/3LTMDJw>

**Case studies:** <https://bit.ly/3nlwx8B>

**Ways the Council and partner are supporting Pledgees:**  
<https://bit.ly/413yKTG>

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**South Tyneside Council**





Strategy

## Stevenage Borough Council

# Re-framing Leisure Delivery Through a Cooperative Lens

**Stevenage Borough Council set up a new leisure trust in 1998 with a 25-year contract. While this was right at the time, ahead of it coming to an end in 2022-23, we set about a whole system review working extensively with residents and community and sporting groups, which resulted in the Stevenage Leisure Eco System. An innovative approach to procurement has resulted in a leisure contract that is no longer limited to physical assets but rather focused on health creation in communities, maximising open spaces, community assets and informal networks.**

This was coupled with an options appraisal resulting in a mixed economy approach to delivering leisure functions, with some services delivered in-house and some delivered through partnering arrangements. This was to ensure that we were prepared to meet not only current demands but also consider how residents' needs may continue to evolve.

Stevenage has a £1 billion regeneration scheme and at the time of going to market we were uncertain about some key areas of future development, including our ambition for a new leisure centre. Therefore, it was important for any operating partner to be able to match our ambitions for the town by providing a unique delivery model that could develop with us on that journey.

The answer for Stevenage was to develop a detailed, bespoke specification and contract comprising of a series of method statement requirements for bidders to respond to, with Social Value being 10% of the overall scoring. Part of the specification was an Active Communities Service to

promote health creation outside of the core leisure facilities.

This has resulted in a once-in-a-lifetime change for the Council and its residents with Stevenage gaining a partner who understands its ambitions. Staff included as part of the transfer are excited and reinvigorated to be involved.

A new Stevenage leisure membership card – the Everyone Active card – has a target of 32,400 cards by year two of the contract. And over the term of the contract, we also aim to engage people currently not in education, employment or training (NEETs) to fulfil 20 full-time equivalent worker positions, and recruit four apprentices per year – with an overall contract value of £412,516. We will be using a bespoke dashboard to offer key performance data and invaluable insight into a wide range of interventions – such as those above – which will demonstrate the real social value this contract has added.



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## Community Wealth Building

# Stevenage Borough Council

## A Cooperative Approach to Social Inclusion in Stevenage

**Since September 2018, Stevenage Borough Council, in collaboration with partners throughout Hertfordshire, have been working collaboratively through the Hertfordshire Growth Board, an alliance consisting of the Leaders of all the Local Authorities and the Chair of the Local Enterprise Partnership.**

In November 2021, Stevenage Borough Council, on behalf of the Community Wealth Building Pilot Group, was awarded Community Renewal Funding via the Hertfordshire LEP to pilot various CWB approaches. As part of this, each district and borough council were encouraged to build a bespoke approach that best addressed key local challenges rather than a more rigid county-wide approach.

In Stevenage, a key focus of our project has been on the development of our Social Inclusion Partnership. This is a group of key local VCSE organisations who are committed to working together to tackle social exclusion and augment the support structures that are in place throughout the town through cooperation between local agencies, information sharing, promoting good practice and developing practical responses to community needs.

Funding was used to bolster the capacity and capabilities of the group, with a focus on four key areas:

- A joint research project to determine the impact of the increasing cost of living and headline gap on Stevenage residents
- Raising awareness of services and support in Stevenage. Identifying how services are found and

how reach may be increased

- Workforce support for VCSE volunteers, leaders and managers Identify need and ideal outcomes
- Formalisation of the partnership into a multi-stakeholder cooperative to create a unified voice and mechanism for drawing in partnership funding and resource

The project finalised delivery in December 2022 with the partnership successfully achieving:

- 17 organisations provided with grants, support and given opportunities for knowledge sharing
- 10 organisations supported with funding to deliver Warm Spaces throughout the Autumn and Winter in response to the cost-of-living crisis
- 67 individuals receiving training and life skills support
- Feasibility studies produced around the cost of living and the headline gap
- Process of multi-stakeholder cooperative formalisation begun, with a view for this to complete in 2023 – working directly with a Hertfordshire-based business support organisation.

This work will continue to feed into the Cooperative Councils Innovation Network, specifically through ongoing participation in the Co-operative Options Training and helping community projects to become Policy Labs.

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## Climate Change and Environment

# Stroud District Council

## Low-Carbon Heating in Historic Listed Buildings

**Stroud District Council has completed a project for the design, installation and commissioning of water source heat pumps at the sites of two Grade II\* listed, former woollen mills.**

The buildings are occupied as offices while the site at Ebley Mill also serves as the Council's main administrative headquarters.

The project was primarily conceived to reduce direct carbon emissions from two of the Council's major buildings, removing the reliance on heating the buildings from burning fossil fuels and to sustain the economic life of the historic buildings.

### Historic Buildings Containing Traditional Heating Systems

Brimscombe Port Mill sits within the former Brimscombe canal port that is undergoing a major redevelopment which will include the reinstatement of the Stroud water canal together with the historic canal basin. The former woollen mill will be the only building retained as a part of that redevelopment and will form a prominent landmark within the completed scheme.

The existing gas boiler plant was located in a building due for demolition although it is only some seven years old and a suitable housing would be required should the boilers be salvaged and re-located.

The boilers at Ebley Mill pre-dated the building's conversion to offices in 1989 and replacement gas boilers or alternative fuel sources for the space heating needed to be considered.

### Strategic Context

Both sites required a solution to the replacement heating

system for different reasons but prime motivation in coming up with the solutions was the drive to reduce carbon emissions and cut dependency on fossil fuels for space heating and domestic hot water.

The buildings are both sited immediately beside the main river, which is owned by the Council; this led to the decision to harness the latent heat from the river.

In both locations, connections between heat pumps and external river collectors was relatively short – and with ground floor spaces only partly occupied, there was room to install internal plant rooms for the new heat pumps. The relatively limited alterations meant that neither Listed Building Consent nor Planning approval was required.

The Council has adopted a 2030 strategy to achieve carbon neutrality and the decarbonisation of both buildings is an intrinsic part of that strategy.

### Timeline for the Project

The heating from the new sources at both sites was achieved by November 2021 and the commissioning and completion of works was achieved by December 2021. The initial feasibility studies were drafted in March 2019 and the schemes were finally tendered in June 2020, with the successful contractor appointed in December of that year.

Initial feedback from building users is very positive with good distribution of heating and very few problems with the commissioning and running of the plant.

The project provided a very practicable solution to the future heating of the buildings and coupled with successful applications to the Office of Gas and Electricity Market's (Ofgem) renewal heat incentive scheme ensured a satisfactory return on the capital investment.



The water source heat pumps at Ebley Mill, Stroud

### Key Project Learning

The project was undertaken in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic resulting in supply delays for some materials and the interruption of programmes where contractors' operatives were isolating due to illness.

Early engagement with consenting authorities, especially the Environment Agency, was required to ensure works could be substantively completed before space heating was required.

Both buildings required an upgrade to their mains electricity supplies and the extent of the upgrade and early engagement with the District Network Operator was required to avoid further delay.

There has been a very positive response from publicity of the completed schemes, generating interest in the technology from a number of groups/organisations.

It is obvious from such discussions that few people are aware of such options for harnessing water to heat any building – let alone historic, large, typically draughty mill buildings. To tackle this, publicity will improve knowledge, encourage innovation and provide confidence to owners who are considering options for their buildings.

### Co-Benefits

The project has a significant impact on extending the economic life of both buildings which have considerable prominence in the Council's building portfolio.

Encouraging too, is the staff and tenant adoption of the changes to the method of heat generation which further shows the intent of the District Council in reducing carbon emissions wherever it can directly have influence.

The comfort levels for occupants will be enhanced and the buildings will suffer less from peaks and troughs in internal temperatures. Wasteful lead-in periods will also be avoided in raising buildings' temperatures to comfortable levels.

The return to the Council's investments through the RHI scheme coupled with unforeseen escalating fuel costs make the project all the more viable both in financial terms, public relations and for fuel certainty.

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## Health and Social Care

# Sunderland City Council

## Social Prescribing: Co-producing a citywide, innovative community support programme to meet the needs of Sunderland's residents

**Sunderland City Council (SCC) has for many years worked in partnership with the city's Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS), most recently to support the delivery of Community Covid Hubs, Covid Champions, Household Support fund and provision of Warm Spaces across the city during the ongoing cost of living crisis.**

The funding allocated to the voluntary sector grows the capacity of those organisations to ensure they can be active within communities and deliver, or enhance the delivery of, essential local services and activities to meet the needs of the most vulnerable in our communities. Those organisations are supporting residents who continue to live with the after-effects of the Covid pandemic compounded by the cost-of-living crisis. In doing so they are helping to grow the wider community support programme and social prescribing offer in the city, and tackling health inequalities and the wider determinants of health in the heart of communities. The social prescribing model in Sunderland is not all about the GP prescribers and link workers: it also involved the growth of capacity in communities to enable residents to access support. For those with additional support needs, this can be done via the help of the prescriber / link worker.

Sunderland Council is leading the partnership in Sunderland, working alongside the Integrated Care System (ICS) (formerly Sunderland CCG), GP Alliance, Sunderland All Together Health Alliance and Sunderland Voluntary Sector Alliance to embed and develop further those social prescribing services within communities across the city. They hope to further develop the physical environment, digital accessibility, devices, activities and support programmes on offer within those Social Prescribing Hubs.

Sunderland is building on learning to date and adapting the programme of activities in response to feedback from

residents and their lived experiences, as well as the learning from the Better Mental Health Programme and the emerging Community Mental Health Transformation programme.

To achieve this the Council is investing in the digital infrastructure and facilities in the city's community buildings. This investment will strengthen and embed the social prescribing model into the built environment, demonstrating that social prescribing only works if the offer is available on the doorstep for all residents to access, particularly those in crisis or isolated. The offer in Sunderland is about reducing health inequalities and addressing the wider determinants of poor health and resilience. Digital poverty is a big issue in Sunderland, as are health inequalities, and by broadening digital inclusion within the social prescribing offer, more residents, of all ages, can improve their skills and knowledge and increase their access. This will help to improve their long-term health, wellbeing, and resilience (including financial resilience – support to access best offers online, job searches, training courses, access to benefits, etc.)

Integrating primary care is a key agenda for the whole country and delivery models at place must meet the needs of residents. Sunderland is reviewing all the space available in each system, service by service, to inform the ICS estates infrastructure strategy. These reviews help us to understand what the city has and what we can fix locally, and to prioritise funding as and when capital becomes available. Sunderland's approach to social prescribing is about capacity building within communities, taking a 'one public estate' approach and thinking creatively about primary care estates. We are developing primary care estates plans from the perspective of access, population health and health inequalities, making use of Local Authority, third sector and community assets, and building on the approach to Covid-19 vaccination, including places of worship, community centres.

Social prescribing in Sunderland is co-production, building on and supporting the work being undertaken to promote self-care and prevention. It provides social prescribing through an integrated, city-wide service, delivered by multiple providers, operating under a single point of access and sharing referrals and resource, regardless of organisational barriers. This means the service is seamless and proactively improves the health and wellbeing of the people of Sunderland – that’s innovation, and that’s developing new models to meet community needs.

The specific aims within the co-produced social prescribing programme in Sunderland aims to:

- develop, communicate, and promote a social prescribing **identity** across Sunderland, designed through collaboration and taking into consideration the life course approach of the model
  - develop **standards** and associated process and policies for partners within the Social Prescribing Model for Sunderland
  - design and implement a ‘**digital community support platform**’, to ensure access to good quality and timely community-based support and self help
  - develop a **research, evaluation, and knowledge exchange** programme to support the Social Prescribing model
- The overall goal is greater inclusion of, and engagement with, people who may be typically under-represented and improve health inequalities at a neighbourhood level
- all organisations working together to ensure best outcome for the resident
  - place-based interventions
  - working with, and from within communities
  - valuing lived experience and co-production
  - partnership working to grow the market
  - services integrated into community life
  - VCS Capacity Building – through the Alliance model
  - evaluation to inform change – University
  - empowering residents and communities – enabling self-help and resilience.

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Poverty

## Tameside Council

# Developing a Poverty Strategy & Charter

**The onset of the cost-of-living crisis put into sharp relief the issue of poverty in Tameside. The Local Authority began the process of developing a Strategy for the Borough early last year but it was clear that this could not be done in isolation.**

Tameside's Health & Wellbeing Board took the mantle of generating the appetite for a joint approach to develop a Strategy which unlocked resource commitments from partners across the system to better understand the picture in Tameside.

Firstly, to clearly describe the issue and provide a resource for all to use, we developed a Poverty Needs Assessment. This work and the subsequent development of the Strategy were informed by a broad range of engagement and consultation:

- Tames Poverty Truth Commission – the commission brought together grassroots commissioners, people with lived experience of poverty and senior civic, political and business leaders on an equal footing to identify a shape a series of recommendations
- Focus Groups – commissioned from an independent organisation, a series of focus with people from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds to examine in more granular detail some of the key issues

- Partnership Engagement Network – poverty was the headline focus for a Partnership Engagement Network Conference with members of the public and Partners
- Inequalities Reference Group – with membership drawn from statutory and VCFSE Partners, this group produced a range of papers looking at topics relevant to this issue.

Finally a range of public surveys concluded the development of our "Building Resilience – Tackling Poverty in Tameside" Strategy which was launched in March 2023. The Health & Wellbeing Board will oversee its implementation over the next four years.

To reinforce this a Charter was signed by members of the Board as a symbolic show of support and commitment to jointly deliver the ambitions set out in the Strategy. The Charter mirrors the 10-point plan from the Strategy to reduce poverty in Tameside by 2027.

Running concurrently was our 'Helping Hand' campaign to assist residents who were struggling with the cost of living and link them with local support services. Having one resource for all partners' information, supplemented by a series of roadshows delivered jointly ensured the system was delivering one message for the people of Tameside.

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 **Tameside**  
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Young People

## Tameside Council

# Early Help Strategy and Rollout of Family Hub Model

**The Tameside Early Help Strategy 2023-2026 sets out a refreshed approach to early help, recognising the landscape for early intervention has changed significantly, both locally and nationally, since 2020. Acknowledging current challenges facing families, exacerbated by the cost of living crisis, this new Strategy emphasises the importance of multi-agency working, incorporating lessons from the Covid-19 response.**

Recognising the importance of early intervention locally, Tameside has developed a new Thresholds Document (Tameside Framework for help and support) which reinforces delivery of the Early Help Strategy by supporting professionals to identify signs that families need help and the appropriate level of support required.

A key component to the Strategy and the ethos of it encapsulated in practice is the development of a Family Hub and Spoke model within each of the four neighbourhoods (North, East, South and West) of Tameside. Through these Hubs and their satellite locations, families will be able to access services from a variety of community partners for right help at the right time.

Family Hubs bring together existing family-help services to improve connectivity between families, professionals and services, placing relationships at the heart of our approach. Key partners include the likes Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust, Pennine Care, Schools, Leisure/wellbeing Providers, Libraries, Greater Manchester Police and a variety of specialist VCSE providers.

Given the range of services required to deliver these projects operationally and strategically, developing the approach to the Strategy, the new Thresholds and the Family Hub model simultaneously has elevated the Partnership network around Early Help to new heights. What seemed a daunting task has led to a renewed energy.

Complementing and informing this work has been the depth of engagement required to fully understand the requirements and design an approach that meets the needs of families in Tameside – this has encompassed and will continue to encompass a range of workshops and Parent Panels and, importantly, the voice of the child. The Family Hub model will also continue to evolve through ongoing, dedicated Parent & Carer Panels attached to each Hub that will co-design the approach and act as champions and advocates for Family Hub services.



Family Hub Launch

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Metropolitan Borough





## Climate Change and Environment

## Torbay Council

# Creating Better Masterplans for Everybody

**One of our priorities is to improve our relationship with local people and communities. This case study is an example of how we are changing the way we engage to support this.**

Due to climate change, and the need to protect our residents and businesses from flooding, in December 2020 we consulted on proposals for new sea defences in Paignton, one of the three towns that make up Torbay. It was clear from the feedback that our residents wanted us to look at more than just providing a sea defence wall. Our residents and local community wanted to be more involved in how the scheme will look, work and benefit everyone. Because of this feedback, in May 2021 the decision was taken to pause moving forward with the original scheme.

Our residents generally accepted that a coastal sea defence scheme was needed. We agreed to develop a revised approach to our community engagement. It would now be a collaborative process to develop a scheme that is right for the residents, local community and businesses. We knew any revised scheme would need broad community support and would have to deliver the required protection to as many properties and businesses as possible.

In February 2022 the Council commissioned an independent design consultancy, LDA Design, to work on this revised community engagement. Together we carried out a more collaborative public engagement and consultation. It involved talking to as many people as possible that would be impacted by the changes and help us to co-design a new Paignton and Preston Seafront Masterplan.

The key objectives for this new Masterplan were to:

- protect and improve the precious open spaces along the seafront
- create a happy, healthy, and vibrant place, and;
- celebrate the special qualities of our seafront areas.

A three-phase engagement programme followed.

**Phase one** – understand the existing situation, what people liked and didn't like about the seafront areas.

**Phase two** – firm up the vision and principles following the feedback from phase one. This led to two options being produced for people to look at and comment on.

**Phase three** – incorporate all the feedback from phase two and presented a final option to be reviewed.

Online consultation ran alongside focus groups and workshops with those that would be affected. These groups included:

- businesses that were based on or around the seafront
- event organisers – this space is one of the main event spaces in Torbay
- hospitality sector
- Mencap
- local disabled groups
- over 50s Forum
- students at the local college
- Community Partnership
- Ward Councillors
- a range of Council teams including Active Travel, Community Safety, SWISCo (who look after our green spaces), Harbours and Parking.

We noticed we were receiving feedback mainly from residents aged over 50. These seafront areas are used by everyone in the community, and we wanted to make sure



Engagement tent ready to go at English Riviera's Airshow



One of three workshops held for local businesses

that we heard from as wide a range of residents as possible. We knew we needed to be where our families and young people would be. During phases two and three we hired stalls at two popular events on the seafront. At these events we spoke to and engaged with just under 600 residents, which included families, younger people, visitors and business owners.

Co-producing and engaging in this way meant that when we reached the end of phase three, asking if the final design that had been co-produced was a positive step forward: 91% of those who took part said they thought it was. Feedback we received during phase three included "big improvement over the previous designs" and "a great step forward".

The Masterplan has now been approved by our Cabinet and work will start on the planning application for the sea defence part of the masterplan.

It has been agreed that this model of engagement, co-producing with our residents and local community from the start, is the best way forward for similar larger projects across Torbay. We will continue to encourage all Council teams to look at how they can use aspects of this method of engagement.

While monitoring the online responses we noticed we were receiving feedback mainly from residents aged over 50. These seafront areas are used by everyone in the community, and we wanted to make sure that we heard from as much of a wide range of residents as possible.



How Paignton Seafront will look after receiving 90% support from local residents and businesses

We knew we needed to be where our families and young people would be.

During phases two and three we hired stalls at two very popular events that took place right on the seafront that this masterplan was for. At these events we spoke to and engaged with just under 600 residents, which included importantly families, younger people, visitors and business owners.

Co-producing and engaging this way meant that when we reached the end of phase three, asking if the final design that had been co-produced was a positive step forward, 91% of those who took part responded that they thought it was.

Feedback we received during phase three included "big improvement over the previous designs" and "a great step forward".

The Masterplan has now been approved by our Cabinet and work will start on the planning application for the sea defence part of the masterplan.

Feedback from our residents, community and businesses on this way of engaging has been very positive. So much so it has been agreed that this model of engagement, co-producing with our residents and local community from the start, is the best way forward for similar larger projects across Torbay. As a Council we will also continue to encourage all Council teams to look at how they can use aspects of this way of engaging, ensuring the right audiences are having the opportunity to let us know what is right for them.

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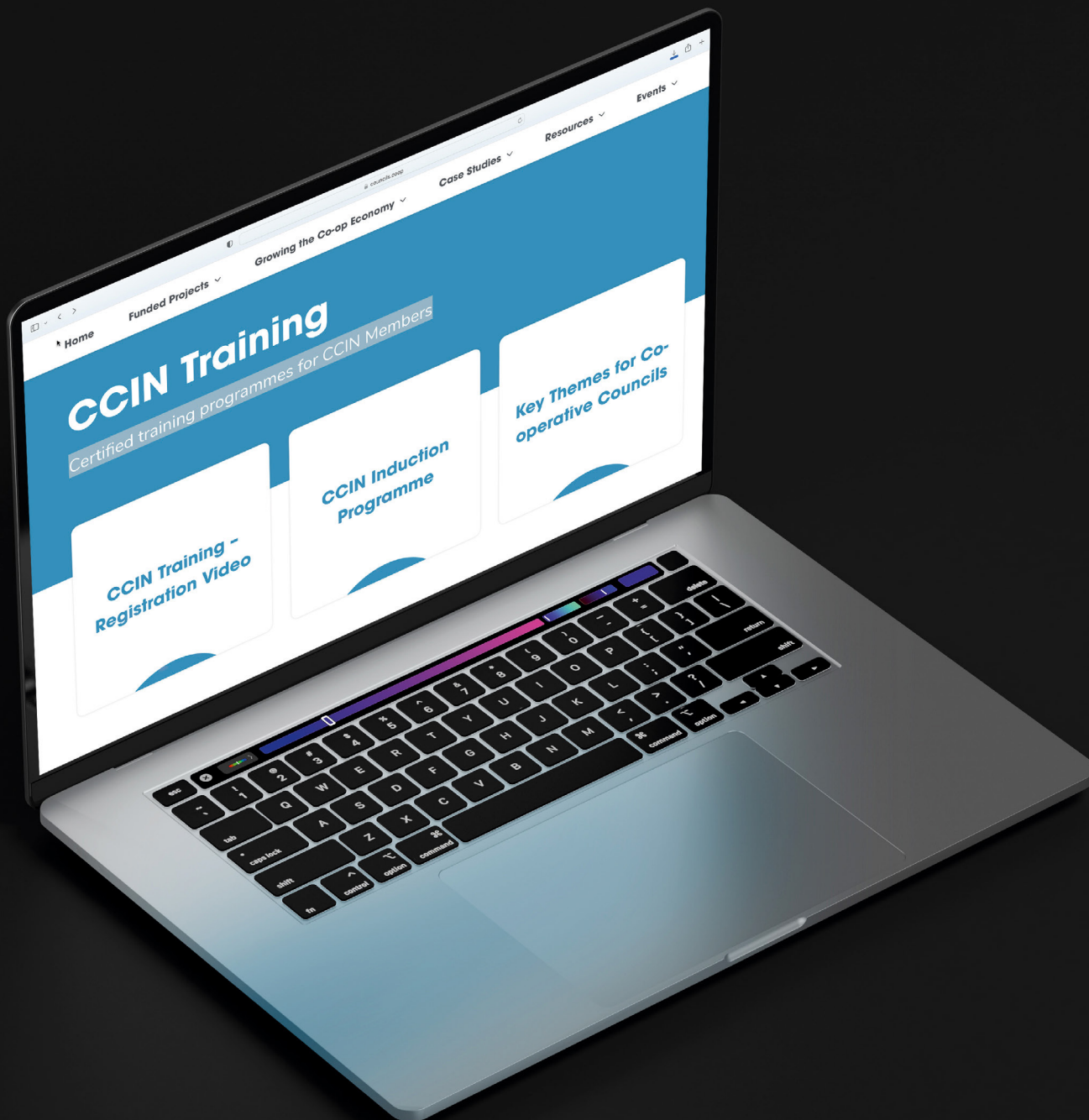
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**TORBAY**  
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# CCIN Training

Certified training programmes for CCIN Members

The Network currently offers two certified training programmes on the Co-operative College's Learnworlds Platform

Visit the programme here: [bit.ly/ccin\\_training](https://bit.ly/ccin_training)



co-operative  
college



Co-operative Councils  
Innovation Network



People-centred councils  
driving social innovation  
putting people first



# Growing an Inclusive Cooperative Economy

Supporting community wealth building and social value procurement through mapping the local economy to enable cooperative growth

Download: [bit.ly/CCIN-inclusive](https://bit.ly/CCIN-inclusive)



## Community

## Trafford Council

# Trafford Community Collective

**Our communities told us they wanted to work together more collaboratively to ensure they had a representative voice and active role in planning, designing, delivering, and improving services – shortly thereafter the Collective was born!**

Inspired by the Ladder of Coproduction (TLAP), the Council, CCG and VCFSE partners adopted a coproduction approach to explore how we could garner the expertise, knowledge, and enthusiasm of the sector to shift the balance of power and empower Trafford communities to 'take charge' ensuring residents play both a more strategic role in planning and design of health and care services and a more active role in the continuous improvement journey.

### A member-led collective

Trafford Community Collective is a member-led organisation that supports the development of the VCFSE sector in Trafford by promoting a partnership approach to service design, development, and delivery.

The Collective is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation that represents the Local Voluntary Community, Faith, Social Enterprise (VCSFE) sector in Trafford. It became a registered charity in March 2021 following years of organic growth and consultation and engagement with:

- Trafford people
- VCFSE organisations in Trafford
- Trafford Council
- Trafford Clinical Commissioning Group
- Health delivery partners (NHS Trusts, Primary Care)
- Statutory partners

### How did it grow?

The Collective has grown from an idea based around organisations coming together to promote, support and connect with each other and become a strategic partner in the development and delivery of services for residents. This genuine partnership will support the Trafford system to minimise the impact of poverty and the cost-of-living crisis, reduce inequality and minimise the impact of the climate emergency for Trafford to be carbon neutral by 2038.

### What is the 'Collective'?

The Collective provides a framework and structure for organisations to come together with one voice to ensure the sector is recognised as a strategic partner at all levels in the development and direct delivery of health and social care services in Trafford.

### What does the Collective do?

It supports the development of community-based services at a neighbourhood level. Effectively communicating, engaging, and involving individuals, families, communities and communities of interest. Bringing a focus on the wider determinants of health and new ways of working designed to reduce health inequalities.

Playing a pivotal strategic role, ensuring the sector and all the system partners:

- Design and deliver services in an integrated and holistic way – building from our communities
- Maximise investment in the borough – making best use of the Trafford pound
- Develop strategies that complement and connect different sectors to reduce inequalities and tackle poverty – including the coproduced VCFSE Strategy (2022)



Phoenix Garden, an Our Sale West community space

- Gather and utilise community intelligence and insight to drive 'bottom up' priorities

### Investing in our communities

Securing greater value for money for local residents is critical to the success of the Collective. Building on the strengths and assets of local organisations, it has capitalised on targeted investment of £70K to generate over £350K in funding from awards and grants in 2022. This money is reinvested in our communities to drive forward the localities local wealth building approach and help achieve maximum impact on the aspirations of the Trafford Social Value Charter.

The Collective has specifically led the successful implementation of new and innovative models of care working alongside our statutory partners: VCFSE broker in Trafford Team Together; VCFSE connector in Living Well model for mental health services; Mental health children's service link worker; Reducing parental conflict coordinator; and Violence reduction coordinator.

### The Impact of the Collective

The Collective plays a unique neighbourhood role that is intrinsic to deliver the nationally driven neighbourhood model, promoted by the NHS, and prominent regional strategy (Greater Manchester Strategy) to have connected



Stretford Public Hall, Trafford

and vibrant communities. To enhance a predominantly health and care orientated neighbourhood model the Collective created a bespoke role for Neighbourhood

'Lead Partners': Age UK (West); Our Sale West (Central); Family and Counselling Centre (South); St Johns Old Trafford and Stretford Public Hall (North) neighbourhood.

### A voice for Trafford

Through the Collective we have created a direct link between individuals, families and communities and strategic decision making in Trafford.

Membership is rooted in Trafford communities. Our workforce that includes our volunteers are residents. The communication framework within the Collective, our community-based approach to engagement with Trafford residents, and our role within the strategic decision making framework enables us to ensure that residents are heard at all levels of decision making and that they are involved in the development, delivery, review, and evaluation of services.

**Case Study** – delivered community consultation and involvement through inclusive economic development of Stretford Masterplan and Power to Change Pilot for 'Community Improvement District' and wider regeneration of Stretford town centre.

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**TRAFFORD**  
COUNCIL





## Health and Social Care

# Wigan Council

## Care To Join Us?

Adult Social Care has long struggled to attract people into a sector often viewed as low skilled and low paid with little opportunity for progression. The pandemic compounded the issue. Add to this, an aging workforce and low numbers of under 25s and there was clear case to act and do things differently.

The Care To Join Us campaign was born out of a need not only to fill our own pressing vacancies, but those of our ethical care framework providers, our wider workforce.

A new, creative and different approach was needed to build the attractiveness of the sector, to appeal to young people and to find the many people in the borough who we know have the people and life skills, the experiences and the heart to work in care.

We are committed to matching the need to fill job vacancies in social care with the needs and aspirations of adults and young people living in the borough. The campaigns and approaches we embarked on support community wealth building, focusing on providing local jobs which enable local people to earn a sustainable salary working with the Council and ethical commissioned providers in roles which offer real career prospects to those who aspire further. The cyclical benefit is that residents are working in their own communities, in areas they know and can earn a wage which goes back into their community helping them to live well.

Care To Join Us was deliberately designed with a friendly, welcoming tone and colloquial language to appeal to the everyday person. It was to be something you could chat to your friends about and so we tested it first with staff asking them to promote out the advert and opportunity. The results were astounding – we had to turn off the tap three days after starting – with 68 applications and 33 appointable people. We were on to a winner.

We used a range of marketing channels from social media to a cross-borough outdoor campaign to reach our target audiences of young people seeking a career and then those people with life skills, maybe with experience of caring for a family member. The message was that you don't need any professional experience; we're looking for individuals who can bring the smiles, who enjoy people and, with their big heart, have a desire to help others.

We created 7 videos featuring staff at work in interesting scenarios in which you might find yourself as a support worker which also served to explode the myths about what support working entails. This, as well as photography, brought the roles to life. Real staff supporting real people provided the content that resonated with those who saw the ads.

In 4-months we'd reached 320,000 people via social media, received 7584 website visits, 9479 page views and attracted 361 applications. Half were kept in house and half sent to providers. 131 interviews resulted in another 38 appointments for the Council. We have no quantifiable data from providers other than anecdotal feedback that they have recruited through the campaign.

The application to appointment ratio is 8:1. We changed the recruitment process by creating Care To Join Us web pages, introducing a simple expression of interest form asking only for contact details and why the applicant is interested. The screening process is less rigid to make sure diamonds don't slip through the net because of their ability to present on paper. We're giving more people a chance to shine through value-based recruitment focused on care and compassion as opposed to extensive qualifications or experience. We are also able to respond to applications as they come through rather than advertising posts with close dates.

The campaign resumed in August and we've seen over 1100 applications with 114 people having cared to join us.

We also created and piloted the Step Into Care Traineeship, a partnership between the Council, Wigan & Leigh College and our homecare providers. Aimed at young people who are not particularly academic and do not want to stay in education, the traineeship offered 70 hours work experience following induction training introducing some of the basics of care including first aid certificate, manual handling, end of life care and office administration. Those without Maths and English were supported to work towards these and received employability skills. These were opportunities for young people to gain skills and an open door to employment in the borough with placements designed to be close to home to remove the barriers presented by travel.

Fourteen young people embarked with 9 completing. All were guaranteed an interview at the end and have entered the world of social care work. Viewed as a success, we are taking learnings into the next pre-employment programmes one aimed at young people and another aimed at those looking to re-enter the world of work.



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# A practical guide for councils to help and grow **community businesses**

Download: [bit.ly/CCIN-CoopsUnleashed](https://bit.ly/CCIN-CoopsUnleashed)



Community

## Burntwood Town Council

# Warmer Welcome Across Town

**Last summer, as the country sweltered, our Council picked up on the warm spaces initiatives being implemented across the Network in advance of winter and the huge energy prices being anticipated. As summer rolled into autumn and no actions were being taken on this front by our principal councils, District or County, we decided that we should take the initiative and kick-start a Warmer Welcome (WW) scheme for our town.**

Our funds are limited as a parish council, but the community and voluntary sector in our town is engaged, thriving and very supportive of the Council's push for a #BetterBurntwood. So we agreed to commit £2,000 (only) to engage with local groups, businesses and organisations to open up their premises to invite residents to share their warm spaces and offer refreshments. We hired a key local community activist to compile a log of these venues and now have 15 groups operating in a town of 28,000 residents! No-one is far from receiving a Warmer Welcome.

The scheme is growing, with venues now also offering a range of additional activities – from games and light lunches to signposting advice. Our District Council has also recognised the value of our scheme in terms of its reach and impacts, and has passported funding of £5000 to allow the Town Council to offer grants to our WW groups to continue and develop their offer.

Councils don't have to commit huge resources to support residents; just some creative thinking, the will to make things happen in and with our community and the ability to move quickly.



The Council's Leader and Deputy Leader, Sue Woodward and Darren Ennis, get a Warmer Welcome at Chasetown Football Club

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# Making local economies work for communities

The value of Councils using a place-based approach to undertake community economic development planning

Download: [bit.ly/CCIN-comm-econ-devt-plans](https://bit.ly/CCIN-comm-econ-devt-plans)



Poverty

## Active Wellbeing Society working with Birmingham City Council

# Share Shacks: A holistic, place-based Approach to tackle inequalities and support wellbeing

**Share Shacks are community-led initiatives providing a welcoming space where people can borrow a wide range of household and sporting equipment for free to help save money, reduce waste, and promote a continual use of resources. Share Shacks also run different co-produced sessions where people can teach and learn different skills such as upcycling, woodwork or clothing repairs.**

We've been working with Birmingham City Council and other voluntary and community sector organisations to help grow a network of free-to-use Warm Welcome sites in response to the cost-of-living crisis.

*"I started coming here every week just before Christmas. I never felt so confident in myself for many years... I found everybody so friendly, no judgement. I felt safe and it's a fantastic place."* – Natasha, Share Shack visitor

Using a circular economy model and anti-poverty response, Share Shacks create safe spaces where the local community can meet up, connect with others, take part in activities, access a social welfare model of support with links to food provision or specialist support. We've provided slow cookers for free on long-term loan alongside our popular, weekly slow cooker sessions that show community members how to cook affordable and nutritious new recipes.

*"This is the only place I come to, apart from home. It's the only place I feel safe."* – Anon., volunteer

Share Shacks help to protect the wider environment and advocate a more sustainable way of living. They are there to benefit everyone, particularly people experiencing barriers from being more physically and socially active. Over 89% of Share Shack users and visitors are from the top 20% of the most deprived households nationally.

We work effectively with partner organisations such as MIND, Age UK, housing providers, social prescribers and other local groups. Share Shacks host activities delivered by different organisations to create a holistic, wraparound model of support.

We know that people feel better connected to the places and people around them when visiting a Share Shack. The sharing of skills and meeting people helps to build confidence to manage and prioritise self-care, reduce loneliness and isolation, and supports people to live happy, healthier lives.

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## Strategy

# Beartas working with Hounslow Partnership Borough-based Partnership Communications

**We were asked to manage the coordination of the entire communications function for the Hounslow Borough-Based Partnership (BBP). This brought together partners from the Council, NHS partner organisations and voluntary, community or social enterprises (VCSEs) to develop the principles and deliver the objectives of the Hounslow BBP across Public Health and Prevention, Staff and Public Engagement and priority projects.**

## Our Approach

- Assumed the role of Communications Manager for the Hounslow BBP, working alongside partners to deliver against a three-year strategy;
- Designed a 12-month strategy with monthly deliverables across campaigns, engagement and public affairs;
- Project managed the creation of an improved online presence for the Hounslow BBP, which included leading the development of a brand-new website and a portal which allowed staff to access and share learning, research, insights and case studies into one online place;
- Led the implementation of the public consultation for the borough's new Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 – 2025;
- Organised a series of public engagement events alongside key partners, bringing together Council personnel with NHS partner staff and VCSE

organisations around issues such as health inequalities, diabetes and intermediate care. This included coordinating community meetings, focus groups and press engagement;

- Coordinated public health and prevention campaigns between the Council, NHS and VCSE partners, providing strategic counsel to the Assistant Director of Communications, Programme Manager and communication and project leads.

## Outcomes

- Borough-Based Partnership End of Year Report developed with key partners and circulated to over 3,000 stakeholders;
- 12-month communications strategy for the entire programme approved at SLT level, consulted on with stakeholders and delivered on time and to budget;
- Increased awareness of Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes amongst key demographics in the borough with a 23% uptake in blood testing as reported by the Health Outreach Team in June and July 2022 – Hounslow has the highest prevalence of diabetes in London;
- Increased the profile of the Hounslow BBP amongst Secretaries of State, Members of Parliament, Mayor of London office, APPGs and special interest groups around the themes of innovation and transformation in the Health and Social Care economy.

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## Strategy

## Branding.coop working with the CCIN

# Putting Cooperative Values and Principles into Practice

**COOP Brand Ltd (Branding.coop) was established in January 2016; its director, Nicola Huckerby, is on a mission to help co-ops become mainstream. She believes that if people can identify a cooperative when they walk along the high street, visit a website, or browse a publication, then choosing cooperatives above businesses owned by their shareholders will be more likely, leading to a better and fairer world.**

With 18 years in local government, including economic development and marketing, and more than a decade working in the cooperative movement including five years at the International Cooperative Alliance, Nicola Huckerby established COOP Brand Ltd to help deliver this mission. Since June 2016, she has managed the operations and communications for the Cooperative Councils' Innovation Network. During that time, the CCIN has grown from 19 councils to over 120 members and supporters. Nicola provides a focal point for Members, Prospective Members, and Partner Organisations, ensuring the smooth running of the Network.

Committed to exceeding expectations, services comprise:

- Communications & Marketing
- Event Strategy
- Website Strategy
- Social Media management, engagement and content

- Membership recruitment, servicing, and retention
- Provision of CCIN Secretariat and Governance Support
- Project management of Network funded projects
- CRM & GDPR
- Strategy and Action Plan – managing monitoring and tracking delivery.



Left to right: Cllr Louise Gittins – Chair of CCIN & Leader of Chester West and Cheshire Council, Baroness Taylor of Stevenage, Lisa Nandy MP – Shadow Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing, Communities and Local Government, Nicola Huckerby – Director, Branding.coop at the LGA Conference 2022.

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## Education and Training

## Co-operative College

## New Cooperative Training Modules set to Launch for CCIN Members

**How the Co-operative College's distinctive learning approach is helping CCIN go from strength to strength**

CCIN members will soon be able to benefit from three new training modules created by the Co-operative College. The modules have been developed following in-depth collaboration between CCIN stakeholders and the College and are designed to address specific training needs while appealing to a wide range of CCIN members.

With over 100 years of experience in delivering innovative training solutions across complex organisations, and a proven track-record of co-designing impactful training with CCIN, the College is the perfect partner to develop this new suite of training materials, which will ensure the Network continues to go from strength to strength.

The first module, 'Bringing Cooperatives to life in Cooperative Councils', explores how cooperatives differ from other organisations, both in the UK and globally, with plenty of practical examples of cooperation in action. Learners will have the opportunity to create a networking strategy and communication plan, tailored to their role and organisation, to help them encourage a cooperative culture within their council.

'Cooperative Engagement' is the theme of the second module. Looking at engagement from different viewpoints (members, the wider community, staff, and councillors), this

module explores different ways of engaging with others, and how cooperation can help influence advocacy and policy decision making.

The final module is called 'Walking the cooperative talk – a toolkit for Cooperative Councils'. Combining a mix of different resources, such as step-by-step guides and case studies, to support good practice and professional development, this module helps CCIN members find ways to apply the cooperative difference to their day-to-day work.

All three modules will be delivered online, via the Co-operative College's interactive learning management system, LearnWorlds.

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## Health and Social Care

# Cwmpas Working with the Welsh Government and Bridgend Council Digital Hardship Project

**Cwmpas identified that many people leaving hospital did not have the financial means to access technology or an internet connection. Technology has the power to enable people living with long-term health problems to better manage their care and maintain or increase their independence.**

The projects:

1. Identified the most appropriate device for the person's needs by factoring in their health, accessibility issues, digital skill level, access to broadband etc;
2. Provided the organisation with funding for the device and connectivity;
3. Supported the organisation to provide the person they were assisting to make the most of their new device, linking them to sources of health and care, digital training, ideas for making the best use of their device and activities to uplift wellbeing.

The projects ran for eight months in 2022 and supported 111 people all over Wales. The average funding awarded was just £295, but the impact of the project was far-reaching. People were able to use their new digital devices to increase their independence, relying less on care and support services.

For example, Cwmpas received an application from a 'community connector' working with someone with

COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) who was in financial hardship, including fuel poverty and debt. They had struggled to manage since their health forced them to stop working, and they were using food banks to survive. They were unable to afford an internet connection or device so the Hardship Fund provided a tablet and a 24-month pre-paid SIM card. As a result, the person was able to manage their finances more effectively using online banking and shopping online to save money. They could also identify cheaper energy suppliers and reconnect with old friends via social media.

They told us, "It's great. It's so easy and fast, I'm so grateful. I am back in contact with people and don't feel so secluded in the flat."



The initiative has enabled recent hospital leavers improve their tech skills and connectivity to combat isolation.

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**cwmpas**





## Community Wealth Building

## E3M working with Oldham Council

# E3M Alchemy: Supporting councils to harness place-based social enterprise innovation

**E3M Alchemy supports the development of new, place-based social enterprise solutions to work at scale. It uses an event-based methodology developed with the E3M partners: an intense, 24-hour, place-based innovation event that brings together social enterprise leaders, bold commissioners and social investors with the local council and other stakeholders to explore solutions to local challenges. The relationships established during the Alchemy events are then a resource that people can draw on afterwards, to support the development and implementation of new ways of working.**

Prior to Covid, E3M organised Local Alchemy events working with councils in Oldham, Rotherham and West Lyndsey. Participants collaborated to discuss and work through the development of a range of exciting and transformative ideas, and the events levered in over £12m in social investment to support local partners tackling issues ranging from domestic abuse (in Rotherham) to addressing blighted, privately owned and poorly maintained social housing (in Gainsborough).

In Oldham, the Alchemy process supported the development of Northern Roots, the UK's largest urban farm and eco-park on 160 acres of green space in Oldham – a unique new community asset and visitor destination. Holding the Alchemy event engaged and empowered people to think differently and gave the council confidence that such a project could work.

With support from the Council, a new, charitable social enterprise was established to take the project forward. In



E3M Alchemy (Oldham 2018)

October 2022, Oldham Council issued approval of planning permission for the scheme, which includes detailed planning permission for a Visitor Centre, Learning Centre, Forestry Hub, solar array and sports pitches, and outlines planning permission for a market garden and swimming pond.

The project has now won significant additional investment from the Towns Fund and Levelling-Up Fund for capital works, including the Visitor Centre and the Learning Centre. Work is underway to improve access to the site and a range of activities are already happening, engaging the local community. Work will start on the Visitor Centre and other elements in late 2023.

Covid put E3M's Alchemy events on hold for a while, but we are now looking for other councils to work with, so if you would be interested in holding an Alchemy event, please do contact us.

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# E3M



# What works in community asset transfer?

What are the barriers?

What makes them successful?

Download: [bit.ly/CCIN-Asset-Transfer](https://bit.ly/CCIN-Asset-Transfer)



## Community

# Human Engine working with London Borough of Brent

## Employee-Led Change: Making services more accessible for vulnerable residents

**Human Engine supported officers from the Customer Service Centre (CSC) and Community Hubs to align customer service access points, strengthen collaborative working, empower staff and improve customer experience.**

We firstly identified a series of business problems, including no joined-up approach between back-office teams and frontline teams; no consistent understanding of Community Hub vision or expectations of partnership working between access points; and inconsistent customer communications, meaning customers' expectations were not set at the correct level, resulting in low satisfaction levels.

We used our signature Improvement Drive methodology, delivered over 12-weeks to facilitate employee-led change and leave teams with the skills and tools to deliver continuous improvement:

- Discover: Build knowledge base about business problems we want to solve;
- Design: Co-design solutions to overcome these;
- Deliver: Test solutions with stakeholders through pilot schemes, focus groups/workshops;
- Determine: Review impact and rollout solutions.

The project team delivered four key solutions. **Priority telephone numbers** were piloted to reduce the time taken to support vulnerable customers. **Letters and correspondence templates were redesigned**, presenting

important information upfront with clear 'call to actions'. The Community Hubs team **attended training** to inform customer service officers of the hub model, answer questions and take feedback. And a **referral form** was built to create better handoffs for customers.

The project team also proposed solutions to address the way in which customers in a crisis are supported:

1. Food voucher availability: Food parcels and vouchers were available and distributed at Hub locations, however not in the CSC. There are now £5 vouchers available for nearest supermarkets across all locations that officers can distribute;
2. Payment Card availability: Contrastingly to food vouchers, crisis loans for customers were only available from the CSC and not Hubs. Payment cards have been made available at all locations;
3. Officer Empowerment: Close working with the Welfare Assistance Team has resulted in officers being able to 'make the call' to prioritise crisis payments;
4. Improved Insight: By allowing Community Hubs to deliver the process, frontline officers can ensure payments reach the customers most in need.

These small but critical improvements increased frontline teams' ability to support customers at the first-point-of-contact, empowering officers to act when they recognise crisis – improving satisfaction, customer outcomes and experience.

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## Strategy

# LocalGov Drupal working with Local Councils

## Co-creating a Public Asset for the 21st Century

**LocalGov Drupal (LGD)** is a collaboration between over **34 local Councils from across the UK and Ireland. It's a public digital asset, created by Councils, for Councils. As more Councils participate, the greater its value. This stretches beyond simply the platform itself and into our shared pool of user research and expertise.**

Together we've developed a best-practice, open-source publishing platform that is freely available to all Councils.

Many Councils have already built their website using our platform. These include Barking and Dagenham, Milton Keynes and Croydon Council.

### The problem we're solving

398 UK Councils are each rebuilding their main websites every 3-5 years. The user needs are largely the same, but councils don't swap notes or collaborate, instead creating expensive standalone solutions to shared problems. LocalGov Drupal is the antidote to this.

### Our Community

We're a community of experts, working together openly and transparently. We're motivated by a desire to help other councils deliver the best possible digital experience for citizens and reduce the risks and costs associated with Council websites.

We take our inspiration from other code sharing organisations and initiatives and recognise that we are part of a wider international movement and community.

We want as many people as possible to benefit from this project.

*"LGD is what proper local gov digital collaboration looks like. A single platform where everyone gets the benefits of each other's investment for free. Solving problems once, together. I'd urge any Council to get on board, it's a no-brainer!"* – Neil Williams, Chief Digital Officer at Croydon Council, former head of GOV.UK

### A new cooperative

In January 2023 we established Open Digital Cooperative to help run, develop and ensure the financial sustainability of the project. Councils and suppliers pay a subscription fee (voluntary for Councils) to keep our unique collaboration going. We have previously received funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

LocalGov Drupal was founded for the public good, so we will always:

- Publish our code and documentation freely under an open-source licence (GPL2);
- Respond to pull requests from all of our users, whether they are members of LocalGov Drupal or not;
- Provide information to any public body or supplier wanting to find out more about our work.

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**LocalGov**  
Drupal





## Strategy

# Mutual Ventures working with Lewisham Council

## An Economic Vision and Plan to Create a More Vibrant and Prosperous Town

**Mutual Ventures supported Lewisham Council and its partners to develop a vision and plan for regenerating the economy of Lewisham town centre.**

Lewisham is a borough on the outskirts of inner London. At its heart is Lewisham Town Centre, a retail and community space that is in poor condition and 'punching below its weight' in economic terms. At present, it has a limited range of economic activity, no significant night-time or evening economy, and overall footfall is declining.

Despite this, Lewisham town centre has significant scope for improvement. Its position as a transport hub, a proliferation of modern development around the town centre, and a proud, loyal local population mean that it has the potential to be a thriving town centre.

### Our support

Lewisham Council appointed Mutual Ventures to support the economy team to develop a strategy for the town centre. Key questions included: What is the vision for Lewisham town centre? How do we increase economic activity in Lewisham Town Centre? What do we want it to be 'famous' for? How can we link economic and civic activity?

Our role involved bringing together evidence on the performance and potential of Lewisham town centre, engaging with town centre stakeholders through interviews and workshops, and creating a vision and set of goals. The principle of cooperation was at the heart of this.

A key feature of the process was that it needed to involve a wide range of partners and listen to what local people say is important about the past, present and future of their town centre.

Stakeholders were clear that they wanted to see a vibrant but authentic town centre, celebrating the diversity of the local communities through enterprise, food, arts and culture. People supported the need for change but wanted that change to recognise and contribute to the town centre's heritage and identity.

### Outcome

Working together, Lewisham Council, Mutual Ventures and partners have set a clear direction for the future of the town centre. Alongside the vision and goals, partners agreed a series of short and long-term commitments and measures of success for delivering the strategy.

In the long-term, the anticipated outcomes include an increase in overall economic output in the town centre, improvement in the perception by residents and their pride in place, and a change to the category of Lewisham with London to become a 'metropolitan' centre.

The strategy sits alongside Lewisham Council's successful bid to the Government's Levelling Up Fund, which will bring £24m new capital investment in the fabric of the town. Led by the Council, a cooperative approach to future plans will help achieve real transformation for Lewisham residents, bringing all partners on the journey together and making the most of their individual strengths.

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Finance

# Oxygen Finance working with Cooperative Councils

## FreePay: Accelerating Payment to Small and Micro Businesses

**FreePay realises social value outcomes by helping Councils accelerate payment to small and micro suppliers, getting cash to the local businesses that need it most.**

### The issue

Small and micro businesses are the lifeblood of the UK economy, but many struggle to get paid. FreePay delivers true social procurement, supporting local economies by treating suppliers fairly and responsibly, and in the process helping public authorities achieve their social value goals.

Unlike other products which levy a discount on suppliers, FreePay does exactly what it says: it allows public sector buyers to pay small business invoices early without charge. Over £1bn has been paid to local firms to date.

As a small business, good cash flow is essential.

"I've worked for my local council for well over ten years," says Stewart Turkington, Owner of Stewart Turkington Photography. "I take photos and videos at events such as festivals, openings of libraries and new leisure centres, right through to the occasional royal visit. It's all part of letting local people know what's happening in their local community.

"I've been part of the FreePay scheme at the local Council for just over a year and it's been fantastic. Not only knowing



Stewart Turkington, Owner of Stewart Turkington Photography

that I'll get paid quicker, which is great for cash flow, it's also having that certainty that I will get paid. I work for many different clients and sometimes I end up chasing unpaid invoices which is time consuming and stressful at times, so just knowing that I'm going to get paid is brilliant.

"As a small business, good cash flow is essential. Payments from the local Council have always been quick, but now they are even quicker, often within two or three days, which is brilliant. I'm really pleased to be part of the scheme."

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## Health and Social Care

# Peopletoo working with Torbay Council Developing a Family Hubs Model

**Peopletoo worked with Torbay Council to support the co-production of a partnership Family Hubs model. This was in response to an earlier review which had identified that whilst there were a range of early help resources across the Bay, they were not sufficiently joined up or co-ordinated to be able to have a real impact on the rising levels of demand for Children's Social Care.**

This work focused on building partnerships and establishing how partners could work together under a new 'model'. We supported the implementation of this work and the following deliverables:

- The development of an Early Help Framework with defined pathways between services;
- The development across a wide range of partners of an agreed understanding of what good "Early Help" looks like;
- The development of three Locality Networks, bringing partners from across the public and voluntary sectors to work closer together whilst also identifying and focusing on local priorities;
- Introducing the concept of a Community Connector role to act in a social prescribing role, building on the strengths of local assets to keep needs at the lowest level possible;

- Co-producing of a new approach to Early Help Assessment as a means of identifying and assessing the early help need of children, young people and their families;
- Implementing the Torbay Promise, a pilot programme offering an Early Help and offers to a cohort of families into a which a child had been born in a particular area of need;
- Developing infrastructure to support sustainability and quality such as a partnership Workforce Development Strategy, Outcomes Framework and Quality Assurance Framework.

Fundamental to our approach was the development of a Family Help Hub Network. We worked extensively with the Voluntary and Community Sector to identify a wide variety of dynamic, existing community assets that families already know and trust.

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**Peopletoo**  
it works better with you



# 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](https://bit.ly/CCIN-Net-Zero)



## Education and Training

# Public Service Transformation Academy

## 10 Step Introduction to Outcomes-based Commissioning

**We have developed a new introductory programme, the 10 Step Introduction to Outcomes-based Commissioning. It enables commissioners to develop their understanding of how to commission to produce positive community outcomes and work with local partners who are also commissioning services and support.**

We have now run five cohorts, some of which were run in partnership with APAC2E (Association of Police and Crime Chief Executives) and others of which were run as open programmes. Cohorts run as four half-day sessions over a 4-8 week period.

Our philosophy is that this is a learning programme, not a teaching programme. We bring together commissioners from across organisations and enable them to build a network. They are also able to act quickly with confidence using a commissioning mindset and call on their network of fellow participants for support and challenge.

### Outcomes, according to participants:

"I learnt a lot about different approaches in commissioning and gained confidence in how to apply new concepts and new knowledge."

"I got a lot of information concerning other commissioning approaches and confidence in our approach."

"I have started to write our Commissioning Strategy and this included the models of outcome and asset-based approaches. There is a lot of learning that I have taken away and will take into practise."

"I was new to commissioning when I started my new role on the 1st of November. I have already made changes to the current systems and created a Commissioning strategy to drive forward our approach as a team."

"I have changed a lot of things, especially around being more inclusive in commissioning and in pre-commissioning workshops/engagement"

"I consider more what our common purposes is rather than just focusing on need. Challenge some of our existing processes not continue to do things a certain way just because that's how they have always been done."

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## Education and Training

# RedQuadrant working with London Borough of Newham

## Reciprocal Mentoring Scheme: RedQuadrant and London Borough of Newham

**The London Borough of Newham launched Tackling Racism, Inequality and Disproportionality (TRID), an ambitious work programme aiming to dismantle systemic racism and ensure Newham is a beacon of social change. RedQuadrant was appointed as a provider and partner with the council to design and deliver the introduction of a best-in-class reciprocal mentoring scheme, a key element of the TRID programme.**

We co-developed the programme with Newham, running design workshops with a design group including TRID programme leads and senior managers, and Black, Asian, African, Caribbean, and minority ethnic and heritage staff. We ran a 'train the trainers' programme to help Newham develop the capacity to continue the scheme into the future.

The core training consisted of a launch event with an exercise exploring identities in the group; four half-days of deeper group work focusing on self-awareness, developing self within a (mentoring) relationship, and skills development. During this core training, the co-mentor pairs were formed and started their contracting process. Action learning sets in peer mentor groups (Black Asian, African, Caribbean, minority ethnic, heritage non-senior staff and senior managers) occurred after the 1st and 4th mentoring sessions followed by a learning workshop with the cohort.

The whole programme has been delivered online on a Zoom platform. The initial client and participant feedback is overwhelmingly positive. We have been recommissioned to support the next phase and the client sponsor is more than happy to recommend our work.

Results have been positive – we have completed two cohorts and a third is launching in early 2023. We have also begun cohorts of similar programmes at other local government bodies.

Initial feedback received – “blended approach and interactive – opened up”; “empowered to act”; “safe space and open for vulnerability”; “equal coming together”; “provocative, challenging”; “Being challenged to go out of comfort zone”; “focused sharing of lived experience and identified personal strengths – and do things differently”; “Have been a victim – but now stand up – a platform to speak openly about racism to a white male”; “Space to express and reflect and find a voice”; “Breaking barriers – a sense of belonging ...learning about assumptions and biases” .

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## Education and Training

# TechResort working with East Sussex Council Tailored Digital Skills and Inclusion Help

**Since the Covid-19 pandemic, TechResort has seen a massive increase in people asking us for digital skills and inclusion help. We provide refurbished devices, skills drop-in sessions, coding clubs and more.**

One of our main activities is refurbishing donated devices and passing them on to people who need them most.

We wipe any data, check the devices work, upgrade the hardware and install fresh software. Then we put it in a new bag with accessories and instructions on getting started. We're also a partner in the Good Things Foundation's National Databank and have distributed 100 SIM cards this year. People tell us that donated devices make a "life-changing" difference.

Confidence is another hurdle to getting online. We now offer drop-in sessions offering patient and friendly 1:1 coaching, covering whatever digital skills people need.

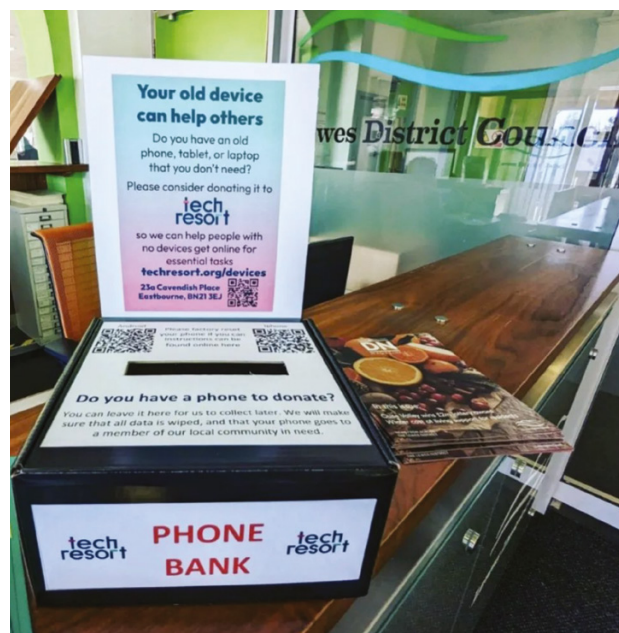
Digital exclusion presents itself in many ways, so there's no one-size-fits-all solution. For example, several of our clients are neurodiverse or have limited English and need the tailored help we provide.

TechResort also helps people with more advanced digital activities such as coding. Women and girls are under-represented in tech and we're doing our best to fix this.

When the East Sussex County Council Library Service asked us to run some workshops specifically for women and girls to coincide with Women's History Month, we were keen to help.

Our "Coding for Mums" session helps women better engage with what their children learn at school so that they can help at home. We started using post-It notes and then moved on to platforms such as Scratch and Hour of Code. They're both brilliant free resources that we and schools use and can be accessed from home.

TechResort also supports the Digital Inclusion Toolkit in partnership with 100% Digital Leeds. This national website provides advice and case studies for local councils to help guide digital inclusion efforts in their area.



TechResort have phone donation boxes around the county

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**tech  
resort**



Community

## Trueman Change working with Birmingham City Council

# Strategy Development Focus Groups for Birmingham City Council

**Birmingham City Council are preparing to write their new iteration of a 2023 to 2033 arts and culture strategy, “Creatively Birmingham.” This strategy will grow and develop Birmingham’s diverse creative, cultural and arts sector over the next decade. Birmingham City Council set out a clear statement of intent emphasising “the creativity of Birmingham’s people, our communities, businesses, and organisations, as part of our past, our present and our bold future as a city” and wanted to hear voices from all around the city, from people of all cultures and backgrounds, especially silent and quiet communities.**

Led by their Public Health Team, Birmingham commissioned a series of 24 groups held in the community to help to shape the strategy based on people’s lived experience. At Trueman Change, we delivered 21 of these groups. Our key challenge was doing justice to the importance of reflecting community voices in policymaking. We made sure people’s voices were heard in underrepresented groups and it’s great to know that these voices have become an important part of shaping the future inclusive arts and culture strategy for Birmingham. We reached out to communities across the city in the places where they live, work and socialise, building relationships and setting up safe listening spaces where people could share their views and lived experience comfortably.

We delivered listening and discussion sessions with 21 different communities, such as ethnic communities across the city, including South Asian, African Caribbean, Chinese and Polish people. We worked with people from a range of religious communities such as people from Muslim,

Sikh, Hindu, Christian and Jewish faiths. We engaged with carers, people with learning disabilities, people with sensory impairments, and physical impairments as well as people over 55 and over 80, and people not in employment.

Our work brought us to people in spatial communities of place in different geographical areas across the city. We engaged with local networks and built relationships with groups from the voluntary, faith, charity and social enterprise sector, and our own experiences are richer for it. We heard what was important to the people we spoke with, delivering their views to Birmingham through themes, direct representations, and their unique voices. We presented views back to our client in a set of reports, supported by demographic mapping, and brought the programme together in a thematic overview and summary of the project, its learning, and our recommendations for working with silent and quiet communities in the future. Birmingham City Council are using our findings to gain unique insight into lived experience in the city and are now able to share the views of people from less represented communities with their teams and partners.

Our work for this client will shape Birmingham City’s 2023 to 2033 strategy, influencing arts and culture priorities and provision for the next decade. Our client is able to ensure a diverse range of voices are heard as a result of this work, bringing the Council and its partners closer to people in their local community. We delivered value by providing insight, supported by evidence, in our reports to reflect the depth of views gathered, and we made recommendations to make future community engagement more inclusive with greater participation in the longer term.

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**TruemanChange**





## Education and Training

## Value Match

# Scaling Up: Achieving cost savings and compliance in implementing a financial management system for a growing Multi Academy Trust

## Challenge

A North East Multi Academy Trust (MAT) required a new financial management system before the 2022/23 academic year and commissioned Value Match for strategic procurement and commercial support. The MAT required a scalable solution with advanced reporting capabilities to create a "one-stop-shop" for the finance team. The MAT's objectives included pulling bespoke reports, achieving value for money, managing internal finances and school payments, creating cost certainty, and achieving procurement compliance. The MAT needed a compliant and rapid appointment of a service provider to implement the system and demonstrate best value for money.

## Solution

Value Match provided strategic support for the procurement of the new financial management system by identifying the appropriate route to market, running a compliant tender process, advising on contractual documentation, understanding the requirements, creating a clear specification, managing the end-to-end process, supporting the evaluation process, providing project management and weekly briefings, managing the contract award process, and providing ongoing contract management support as required.



## Outcomes

1. As a result of this procurement, the MAT were able to
2. Complete a compliant, cost-effective procurement process resulting in the most cost-effective provider to be awarded.
3. Contracted with a service provider that offers a scalable solution, allowing for bespoke reporting capability specific for this MAT.
4. Appoint a service provider who can engage rapidly with the MAT for mobilisation, with the system implementation ready for the new academic year.
5. Over the 4-year contract period the MAT was able to achieve a 6% saving against market average costs for a comparable system for similar sized MATs, and an 18% saving on their annual fees against the market average for a financial management system.
6. The project was completed simultaneously as part of a multiple projects undertaken across the school term ensuring the school were able to fully mobilise in advance of the contract start date.

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# Co-operation at the Grassroots

Councils work at a localised level with their residents as co-producers of local communities and neighbourhoods

Download: [bit.ly/CCIN-coop-grassroots](https://bit.ly/CCIN-coop-grassroots)

councils.coop

 Co-operative Councils  
Innovation Network

 People-centred councils  
driving social innovation  
putting people first

## Meet us in 2023

**28 January:** North & East Cumbria Coop Party Regional Conference

**11-12 February:** Labour Local Government Conference – Nottingham

**17-19 February:** Scottish Labour Conference – Edinburgh

**3 March:** National Association of Local Councils (NALC) – London

**11-2 March:** Welsh Labour Conference – Llandudno

**19-20 May:** Stir to Action Urban Playground – Trafford, GM

**16-17 June:** Co-operative Congress – Manchester

**17 June:** Coop Party Local Government Conference – Manchester

**4-6 July:** Local Government Association Conference and Exhibition – Bournemouth

**September:** Study visit to Emilia Romagna TBC

**23-26 September:** Liberal Democrat Party Conference – Bournemouth

**8-11 October:** Labour Party Conference – Liverpool

**1-2 November:** Annual Conference & AGM – Sunderland



## 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 Cooperative 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:

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# Tackling digital poverty

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

Download: [bit.ly/CCIN-digital](https://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 Cooperative Values and Principles

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People-centred councils  
driving social innovation  
putting people first

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