

Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) Paper

1. Reference Information

Paper tracking information	
Title:	Empowered and Thriving Communities - System Capability Update
HWBS Priority - 1, 2 and/or 3:	1, 2 and 3
Outcomes/System Capabilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P3 outcome: Children, young people and adults are empowered in their communities • System Capability: Empowered & Thriving Communities
Priority populations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All, but with a focus on people living in geographic areas which experience the poorest health outcomes in Surrey/Key Neighbourhoods
Principles for Working with Communities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community capacity building: 'Building trust and relationships' • Co-designing: 'Deciding together' • Co-producing: 'Delivering together' • Community-led action: 'Communities leading, with support when they need it'
Interventions for reducing health inequalities:	<p>All:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic/System Level interventions • Service Based interventions • Community Led interventions
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Sponsor(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tim Oliver - HWB Chairman and Leader of Surrey County Council • Marie Snelling - Executive Director Customer & Communities, Surrey County Council and Health and Wellbeing System Capability Lead for Empowered & Thriving Communities (non-Board member)
HWB meeting date:	21 December 2022
Related HWB papers:	Confirming the priority populations of geography ('key neighbourhoods') March 2022
Annexes/Appendices:	Annex 1 – example strategies/plans and programmes/initiatives Annex 2 – example activities in Key Neighbourhoods

2. Executive summary

In refreshing the [Surrey Health and Well-being Strategy](#) (HWB Strategy), the Board agreed that reducing health inequalities and improving community safety requires all partners to work together to create a new relationship with communities - building trust and relationships, co-designing and coproducing solutions, aspiring to community-led interventions and influence - the HWB Strategy's [Principles for Working with Communities](#).

This report provides a summary overview of how this underpinning HWB Strategy, “system capability” for Empowered and Thriving Communities has been progressed to date. Positive examples are highlighted, particularly in some of the [Key Neighbourhoods](#) where there have been focused efforts to work more creatively and collaboratively alongside communities.

Cost of living pressures will deepen in communities over the winter and all Surrey’s public agencies and VCSE (Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise) organisations face heightened budget constraints over the medium term. This very challenging context makes the work of getting closer to communities and supporting community-led action all the more imperative.

There are further opportunities to stimulate and support this across the Surrey system by progressing partnership work on strategic alignment, data and insights, capacity building and investment. Taken together these will support increased community action alongside supportive civic/system-level and service-based interventions to reduce health inequalities so that no-one is left behind.

3. Recommendations

The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to:

1. Note the progress to date, examples and key reflections from efforts to work more creatively and collaboratively alongside communities.
2. Confirm that the development of the Empowered and Thriving Communities system capability be further embedded into ways of working right across the Surrey system, with a priority focus on partnership work alongside communities in the 21 Key Neighbourhoods.
3. Agree that over the next 12 months there will be a focus on specific actions for (i) strategic direction and alignment (ii) data and insights (iii) capacity building (iv) investment .

4. Reason for Recommendations

National and local evidence confirms that to achieve lasting change in communities and reduce health inequalities it is essential the community themselves participate

and lead, working alongside agencies who are open to new types of creative and collaborative relationships with communities, particularly in Key Neighbourhoods.

This requires targeted additional efforts and investments that can support community-led action to reduce health inequalities, alongside supportive civic/system level and service-based interventions, with the whole system and individual agencies being responsive to community-identified needs and community-led activities that emerge through this work.

5. Detail

Background

The Board previously agreed to advance the ambition laid out in the Principles for Working with Communities by setting a clear, shared strategic direction to align around, combined with some specific and targeted initiatives and actions to stimulate and accelerate progress – the latter were focused on data and insights, capacity building, and investment.

Progress and examples

Strategic direction and alignment

Adopting the “Principles for Working with Communities” has created a stronger shared basis for embedding common expectations, standards and experiences across the system. The exact wording will sometimes reflect local organisational contexts, but these Principles are increasingly being placed up front in strategies and plans across the county.

The Principles were purposefully agreed alongside the addition in the HWB Strategy of those living in the geographic areas with poorest health outcomes as a priority population (the 21 Key Neighbourhoods). The Board agreed that efforts to improve health outcomes in these neighbourhoods required a particularly thoughtful and creative approach to building trust and growing shared action. The identification of the Key Neighbourhoods has also started to helpfully influence partnership work, investments, planning and commissioning across the county.

For further background **Annex 1** lists some of the strategies/plans and programmes/initiatives that have (or are being) specifically shaped around both the Principles and Key Neighbourhoods. **Annex 2** summarises some of the specific activities underway alongside communities in the five Key Neighbourhoods where the Board agreed there should be an initial focus in order to reduce health inequalities.

Data and insights

To support closer working alongside communities, assorted data sets have been collated into packs – these have been published on Surrey-i for the Lower Super Output Areas within the 21 Key Neighbourhoods ([Key neighbourhoods – Surrey-i](#)). They have been positively received by partners and are helping to support local projects, service planning, commissioning, and external investment bids.

Importantly this quantitative data needs to be considered in the round with qualitative insight from research, community listening, local knowledge and lived experience. Such insight is surfaced in a range of ways across the system, including through research and engagement teams, Healthwatch Surrey, VCSE organisations, and feedback from staff working daily alongside these communities.

Over the last six months some fantastic examples have emerged of community engagement and listening that is more joined up, creative, open ended (and not starting with a specific outcome or agenda in mind). These examples are creating space and time to explore and identify what matters to the community, to support connections and joint action. There are numerous examples that Board members will be aware of across the county, including those happening daily in the places where people meet in communities (the natural “bumping into” spaces). A few specific examples include community listening in Merstham, the “Escape to Englefield Green” Let’s Talk event, appreciative enquiry in North Guildford, the Old Dean Bingo event, and Sheerwater Together partnership in Woking.

Capacity building

In September 2021, the Board agreed some headline descriptors of what good would look like for those in different roles to fully model the Principles for Working with Communities (see Appendix 3 - [Item 6 - Health and Wellbeing Strategy Review and Refresh.pdf \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](#)). To help put this into practice two specific additional capacity-building programmes have been running over recent months involving a mix of participants from across agencies, VCSE and community groups:

- Health Creation Discovery Learning Programme – this is supporting both local action on the ground and shared learning across the system and builds on the positive impact of [Growing Health Together](#) and other health creating initiatives across the county. This is being supported by the Health Creation Alliance who are facilitating 14 Action Learning Groups that will help equip Primary Care Network staff, partners and community members to collaborate more deeply and deliver on their self-identified priorities.
- Commissioning and Transformation through the lens of Asset Based Community Development - this is challenging and supporting leaders across agencies and in the VCSE to develop approaches to commissioning, transformation and service design that are more firmly community-focused and led.

Investment

A number of additional funds are now in place in Surrey with a specific focus on investing directly in community-led action, capacity-building, and community infrastructure. These complement the wide range of existing funds and grants.

Examples include:

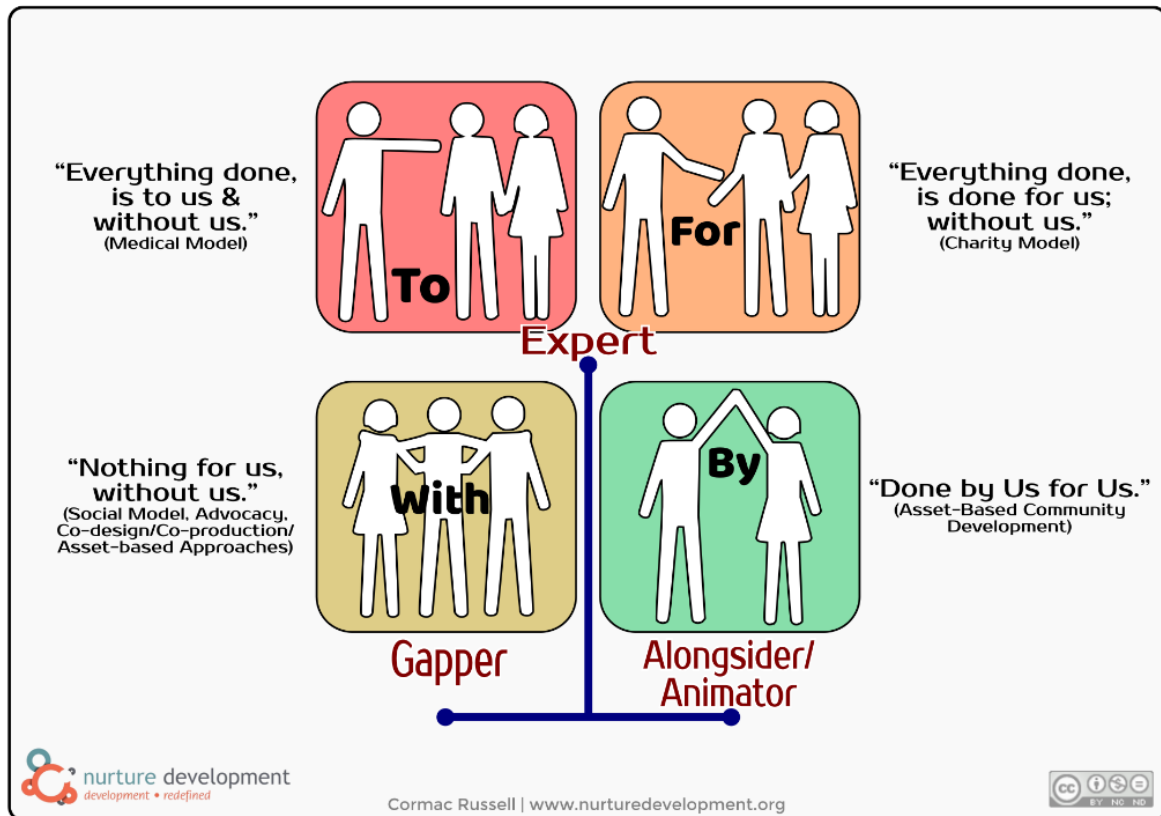
- [Your Fund Surrey](#) – community led capital projects

- [Surrey Mental Health Improvement Fund](#) – supporting people and communities to be proactive in improving emotional and mental health and wellbeing, including in Key Neighbourhoods
- Partnering with Community Foundation for Surrey to enable match funding through public donations (eg including for strategic transformation of charities, winter poverty initiatives, the Surrey Mental Health improvement Fund – above)
- Community Sparks – very small and flexible grants for local community action (will launch in early 2023 through the voluntary, community and faith sector infrastructure organisations)

Learning and reflections

Discussions across the system have identified a range of reflections from efforts to work more closely alongside communities. The summary points below are by no means exhaustive or definitive but can - along with any other key reflections from Board members - help to guide the next phase of work.

- Engaging at a local neighbourhood level is vital – this is the scale at which community members and professionals working alongside them can make sense of the range of interconnected issues and opportunities, agree common ground that bridges administrative or service silos, and make / see impact.
- Inclusive engagement and collaboration requires significant time and relies on trust and relationships
- Testing new approaches and making progress helps to reveal what more is possible; there is much more work to do to embed ways of working that are more “ground up/inside out” and based from within communities
- It can be challenging to break out of a natural, well-meaning tendencies, for agencies to assume a “fixing mode” and “doing to” attitude, thereby missing opportunities to support the strengths in the community that can act as protective factors to physical and mental health and well-being. This [Bridging the Gap framework](#) provides a helpful and simple way to consider this:



Looking ahead

Cost of living pressures will deepen in communities over the winter and all Surrey’s public agencies and VCSE organisations face heightened budget constraints over the medium term. This very challenging context makes this work of getting closer to communities and supporting community led action all the more imperative.

The ambition remains over the next year however, to continue to develop the Empowered and Thriving Communities system capability so that community-led interventions get the right type of support, and to make strides towards a more systematic approach - where the Principles for Working with Communities more consistently shape how we work with communities and fundamentally change the way things are done in Surrey.

Below are some specific areas of focus that the Board are asked to consider in order to set the strategic direction on this system capability for all partners.

(i) Strategic direction and alignment

All Board members continue to ensure that all emerging strategies, policies, commissioning and transformation programmes, and organisational and service designs clearly reflect the agreed Principles for Working with Communities.

Specifically, this requires all leaders to regularly examine and consider how far the whole system and individual agencies are shifting ways of working to be increasingly

responsive to community-identified issues and opportunities, and supportive of community-led activities.

(ii) Data and insights

In addition to the range of ongoing and planned data, research and engagement work across the county (eg Data Strategy, Population Health Management), the following specific additional initiatives will be progressed:

- Qualitative research in Key Neighbourhoods on the cost of living crisis this winter to supplement the Citizens Panels and survey data, and other local insights
- Establishing a more formal approach to youth peer researchers – this will build on existing citizen researcher approaches
- Supporting storytelling by communities about themselves, including through the creative arts

These will be progressed as part of the wider work on the HWB Strategy system capability for Data, Insights and Evidence, helping to ensure deeper community insights drive and shape future civic/system policies and service design.

(iii) Capacity building

There is an opportunity to build on the two targeted learning programmes underway and embed principles and skills for working alongside communities more deeply into our core leadership / workforce development strategies and programmes.

This includes, for example, the development work for Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (see [the Fuller Stocktake Report](#)), the consistent application of asset-based approaches to commissioning and transformation, and training opportunities in strength-based practices (eg Making Every Contact Count, Appreciative Enquiry, Community Development, Health Creation).

This will be progressed as part of the wider work on the HWB Strategy system capability for Workforce Recovery and Development

(iv) Investments

In addition to the continued delivery of the targeted investments referenced above, there is an opportunity to develop a stronger shared picture of how the county's combined resources are deployed into community capacity building.

A better understanding of the pattern between more “upstream” (prevention through individual, family and community capacity building) and “downstream” (more reactive responses once issues have arisen and/or escalated) investments and their proportional impact will help to inform future policy and resource choices. This is not

a simple or single exercise. At this stage the Board's commitment to this type of system-wide analysis is sought as a basis for further work.

There are of course many forms of investment beyond public agency budgets. Social value frameworks play a critical role in stimulating new partnerships in communities. There are also opportunities to build on partnerships – such as with Community Foundation for Surrey – that can enable additional investment into community capacity and infrastructure.

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Opportunities around future investment in community capacity and infrastructure do not sit neatly within an existing workstream, so it is proposed the system capability lead for Empowered and Thriving Communities continues to explore these opportunities with partners and determines the most appropriate arrangements to ensure new approaches are actively explored.

6. Challenges

- Active leadership from Board members within their own organisations and willingness to challenge across the system are both required to ensure the necessary focus on/impact of developing the Empowered and Thriving system capability development and reducing health inequalities experienced in the Key Neighbourhoods.
- There is a risk that the agreed Principles do not translate into changes on the ground for communities and their first-hand experiences. The developing programmes of engagement, research and insight gathering across the system will be critical in testing this.
- There is a risk that the professionals and teams working with communities day-to-day are not equipped or empowered themselves to work with communities in the way intended. The proposed work on leadership, workforce development and organisational design will be critical to understanding and addressing this barrier.
- There are key interdependencies with the system capabilities for Data, Insights and Evidence and Workforce Recovery and Development.

7. Timescale and delivery plan

The agreed strategic direction will directly inform activities completed over the next twelve months to December 2023.

8. What communications and engagement has happened/needs to happen?

The Empowered and Thriving Communities system capability and the focus on the Key Neighbourhoods has been discussed and agreed previously through the Board (March 2022) and cascaded. It has also been discussed at the Surrey Forum (April 2022).

9. Next steps

- The system lead for Empowered and Thriving Communities will continue progress the priority areas agreed by the Board, with the support of relevant colleagues across the wider system
 - Key developments will be tracked through the regular HWB Strategy reporting to the Board.
 - A further formal update will be provided to the Board in twelve months' time.
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Annex 1 – Examples of Surrey system strategies, plans and programmes that reflect the HWB Strategy’s Principles for Working with communities and / or the identified Key Neighbourhoods

Note – this is not fully exhaustive

Strategies / plans

- The developing Integrated Care Strategies (drafts) and related plans at Place and PCN levels
- County and District / Borough council strategies
- VCSE organisation strategies and plans
- Surrey Community Safety Agreement
- Fuel Poverty Plan (inc. Warm Hubs)
- Active Transport planning / funding bids
- No-one Left Behind Employment Network Plan
- Whole system approach to Poverty (TBC early 2023)

Programmes / initiatives

- Surrey’s response to Core 20 PLUS 5
- Active Surrey projects
- Your Fund Surrey
- Green Social Prescribing
- Surrey Mental Health Improvement Fund criteria
- Employment Support research / funding bids
- Residents Cost of Living research
- Emerging work on micro enterprises for health and care incl. use of Tribe platform
- Surrey CC’s new local engagement approach
- Community Sparks (TBC early 2023)

Annex 2 – Examples of work alongside communities in five initial priority HWB Strategy Key Neighbourhoods

Note: In all areas there is a strong current focus on cost-of-living support over the winter.

Key Neighbourhood	Examples of work alongside the community
Hooley, Merstham and Netherne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community listening event (a Community BBQ) in Nailsworth Crescent to start building stronger ties and action - initiatives under consideration include creation of community allotment, baby/toddler group and Health Champions • Collaborating with local organisations and using a MECC (Making Every Contact Count) approach to bring about reduction in smoking rates and other related diseases • Health promotion talks at Merstham Community Hub, participating in maternal health and wellbeing programmes, pre-diabetes health screening in at risk populations. • Active Surrey targeted projects include loaning health monitors (eg FitBit style) through the library and strength/balance classes • Support to local partners through the Health Creation Discovery Learning Programme
Canalside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheerwater Together partnership group - ensuring ongoing join up in relation to the major redevelopment in the area • Sheerwater community budget • Active Surrey targeted projects including physical activities for women and ethnically diverse groups, multi-sport activities for young people and a partnership with the Gordon Ramsey Academy, providing free online cooking sessions • Training of local, ethnically diverse women to deliver physical activity in their community including becoming swim teachers, walk leaders and exercise deliverers (Project 500 - 'More Women, Better Coaching'). • Local Area Coordinator introduced in the area supporting residents in bespoke ways to pursue their goals and connect with others locally • Tribe digital tool for enabling voluntary organisations to build the skills and meet local care needs
Stoke & Westborough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued engagement in response the local appreciative enquiry exercises

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Surrey targeted projects include Fit and Fed camps (with Surrey Outdoor Learning), and free leisure passes in partnership with Surrey Sports Park, for Be Your Best families • Dose of Nature funded by Green Social Prescribing programme to set up a second base at Dapdune Wharf to offer nature based mental health services to Guildford residents • Support to local partners through the Health Creation Discovery Learning Programme
<p>Stanwell North</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement and join up through the Spelthorne Health and Borough Transformation Group • Public Health Mental Health Development work • Whole System Approach to Obesity programme • Active Surrey targeted projects include working with Stanwell Events to offer family fitness and education sessions • Mindful Ninja – a Nature Connection Fund project for teenagers