



Communities at the Heart of Health and Wellbeing



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Progress with Unity intends to tackle inequalities and make our towns and neighbourhoods' flourish; both of which are critical to improving health.

Communities at the heart of health can reduce health inequalities, engage those most at risk of poor health, empower people to have a greater say in lives and health, create connected, resilient and more cohesive communities.

Aligned values and principles committed to equity, prevention, inclusion & community voice.

Evolving approaches moving away from traditional service-led models to partnership driven community health creation, recognising VCSFE organisations as equal system partners not just delivery vehicles.

Long term commitment to support and sustain VCSFE provision at the heart of neighbourhood approaches to improving health and reducing inequalities, building trust & capacity for sustainable, community centered solutions.





Mental Wellbeing - Progress to Date



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Complex System Mapping Events. Shaping local approach and priorities for mental wellbeing from VCSFE, resident & partners insight and perspective.

Investment Review

Unlock & transfer of existing investment focused on treatment of mental ill health to development of positive mental wellbeing opportunities rooted and made in communities (treatment to prevention).

PH investment as a catalyst for whole system transformation.

Series of investments in 2025/26 to lay the path & shape future model to meet identified priorities.

Continuous learning and evaluation including PhD student to oversee evaluation of overall approach to community led mental wellbeing and embedded within VCSFE – with opportunity to support capacity building alongside WBCF.

Community led mental wellbeing engagement

Led by A Brilliant Thing with sponsorship from WBCF.

5 people led micro-missions which took a community research approach in defining one guiding question each which contributed to the co design of the 5 Ways to Collaboration Framework.

Thrive in Five
New investment to develop and grow creative and innovative approaches to creating better mental wellbeing, and test new approaches to community led mental wellbeing delivery across our communities.

Development of Community of Practice.
Build capacity & resilience within the sector, hyperlocal opportunities that strengthen connection, purpose & participation

2027 & Beyond
Broader ecosystem approach to scale community health creation in future years.

Moving investment upstream to build community capacity
Enabling VCSFE organisations to design and lead preventative activities
Addressing previous gaps where community mental wellbeing received little meaningful investment





Bigger Picture: Community Health Creation



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Community Health Creation approach encompasses how people and places are doing, and reflects social connections, sense of control, environment, culture and local assets. The VCSFE are integral partners in helping to shape and support communities, with an ambition to further these opportunities over the longer term.

Investment approach does not end in 12 months. This is a step change for the future embracing a whole system, community powered model. Moving beyond commissioning to co-creation & shared leadership. Reflecting a culture shift 'from doing to, to working with'.

Approach continues to ensure we are **population focused** with **prevention at the heart**. **Optimises existing resource through collaboration and shared priorities**. Targeting the causes of the causes; **maximising approaches** that address health inequalities.

5 Ways to Wellbeing - 'Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning & Give' provide a shared language for Health Creation, with a robust evidence rationale for use in public mental health. We will embed messaging across **nature, movement and creative offers, tailored to neighbourhood context** and will continue to be a core component within **Community Health Creation**.

Longer term commitment to continue to work in this way to **further scale and mobilise future ways of working** through approach to Community Health Creation, where the focus will centre on the **Creative Arts & Culture, Nature-based Green and Blue Social Prescribing and Moving More and Food for Health and Wellbeing**.

Multi-year approach that enables **continuity and trust which strengthens the VCSFE as a cornerstone of local health improvement**. Through creating the conditions for communities to thrive, drive change and shape their own health outcomes, anchoring Public Health firmly within neighbourhoods.



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Micro Missions – ABT & Sector Partners



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