

# United Communities

Annual Report  
2022 - 2023



**United Communities**  
The best in everyone™

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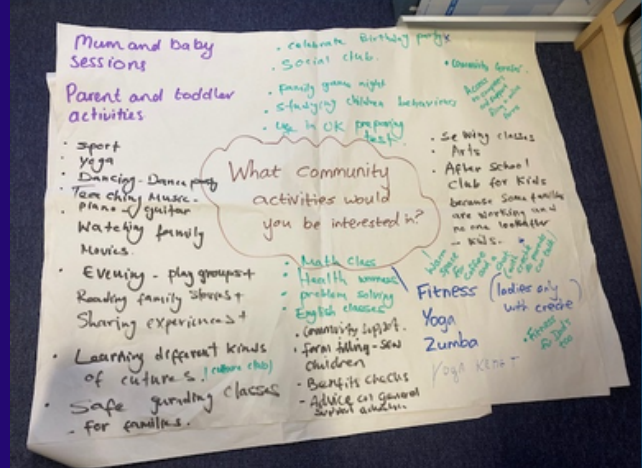
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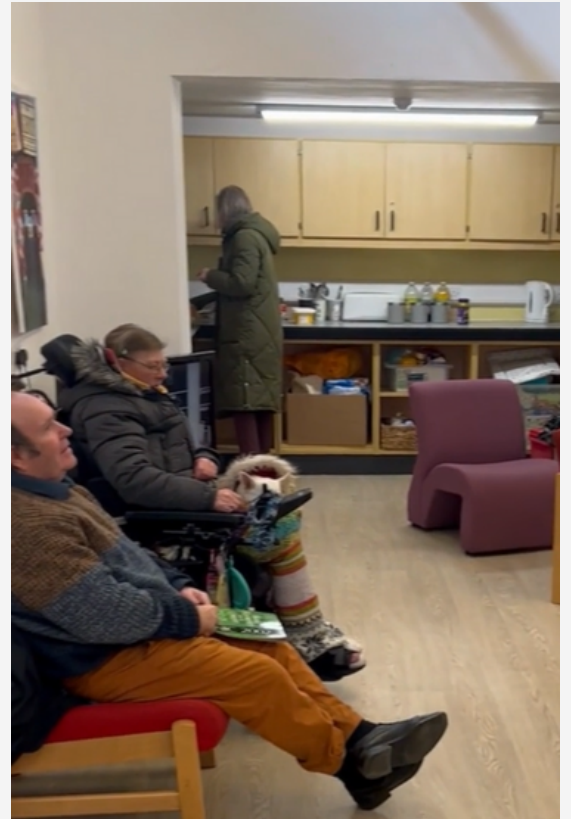
# WELCOME

A warm welcome to our first community development annual report. 2022/2023 has seen a significant commitment from schools to support their communities. We now have five established community hubs, with more emerging or developing as part of this work. We have an energetic and passionate Community Peers Network, and a collaboratively produced framework which enables schools to take a strengths-based approach to developing their community work.

The strategic ambition to develop community hubs began following the pandemic, and at the start of the cost-of-living crisis, which has seen an increase in the disadvantage gap and pushed more people into poverty. Community organisations are increasingly in crisis response mode which is resulting in more responsive than pro-active work, and schools are increasingly being looked to by their communities to provide much more than education to fill gaps. A drive for collective action is resulting in new initiatives being developed by communities. Schools, by joining or leading these conversations and providing support where appropriate, are having a huge impact on children, young people, families, and communities.

Our schools and community hubs are achieving wonderful outcomes with their communities, and we hope you are as proud as we are of the stories and transformation that this report represents.

**The Community Development Team.**



**“It is an amazing thing that [Grange] hub is doing and it is really helping people through troubled times.”**

**Community Hub Member**

# Our 2022 - 2023 Goals

## 1

### **Develop a Framework for Community Development**

Through extensive research and collaboration, we have developed a framework for our community development work comprising an overarching theory of change, community development roadmap, community hub priorities and principles, Hub participation dashboard, national partnerships, an evaluation methodology and handbook, and a Community Peers Network.

## 2

### **Develop links with community and service strand of Education with Character**

We have established clear reciprocal links between the community and service strand of EwC and our wider community development work as illustrated later in this report. We are beginning to see examples of pupils engaging in service where we have community hubs developing and are currently working together to formalise youth participation in community development and more broadly, at a local and national level.

## 3

### **Extend community hubs to total of five**

We have five established community hubs and two groups of schools developing community hubs as part of a Cradle to Career partnership.

#### **Community Hubs**

- Marlborough Community Hub
- Grange Community Hub
- Woodlands Community Hub @ High Hazels
- Hill View Community Hub
- YouthWorks @ Marsden Heights

#### **Cradle to Career Partnerships**

- Bognor Campus (The Regis, Southway and Stepping Stones)
- United Communities - Paulsgrove (Castle View, Beacon View, The Victory)

## 4

### **Develop a Governance and Funding Model for Community Hubs**

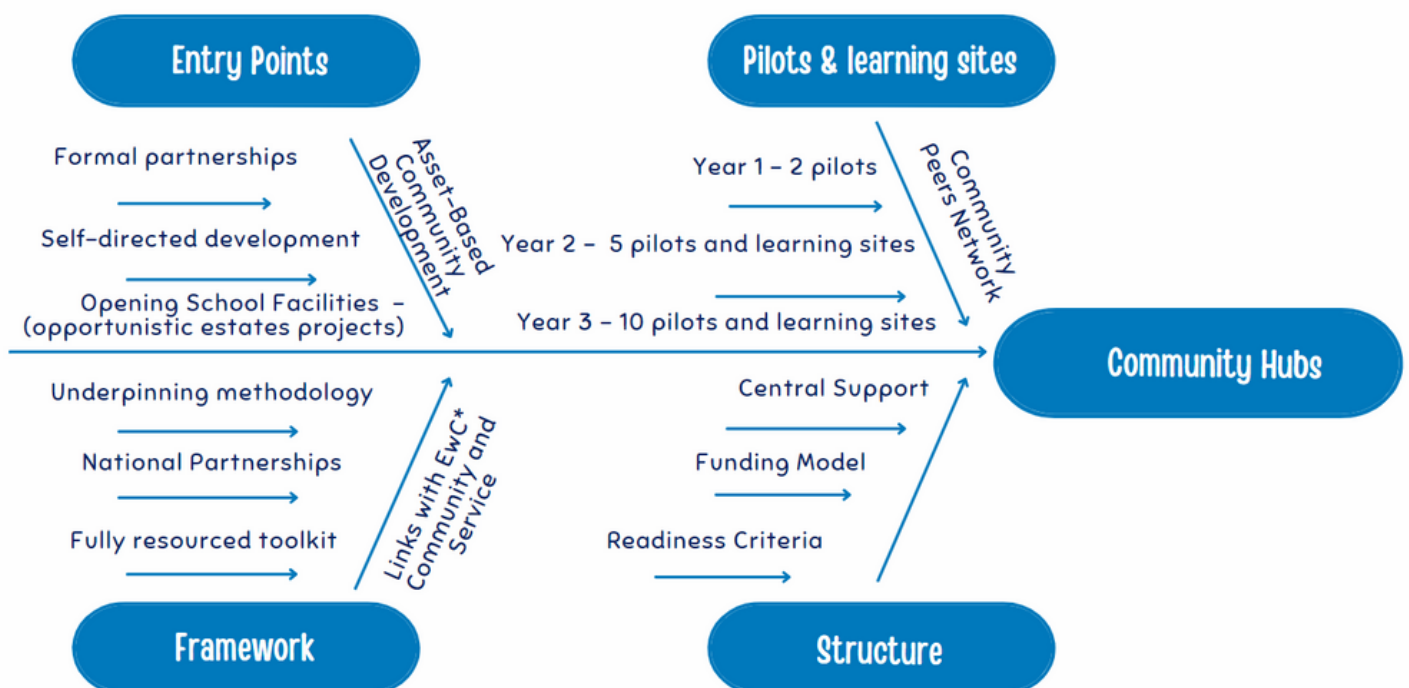
We have extensively researched governance and funding models for our community development work this year and have several options which could support this work long term. It has been agreed that we will continue to develop community hubs within our existing governance structures for the short term to enable us to take the time to ensure we develop the right approach. We have started to see success in attracting external funds, and will further develop a sustainable funding model over the coming year.



# Community Development Framework

Our community development framework has been carefully developed to celebrate, support, and build upon existing strong examples of community development across the group, whilst providing strategic direction and central support for the wider development of this work. It felt important to avoid creating a blueprint for community hubs and therefore our intention was to develop a framework that offers clear guidance and support, whilst remaining flexible enough to enable individual community hubs to emerge, meeting the bespoke needs of the different communities they are part of. As such, our framework comprises multiple entry points for schools to engage in this work, an underpinning strengths-based approach and theory of change, training opportunities, a community peers' network, and funding support.

Our next steps are to pilot an evaluation handbook and toolkit with our most established community hubs to begin to assess the engagement with and impact of this work. We have created a bespoke dashboard to capture community hub participation data linked to the outcome areas identified within our theory of change (see page 7). This has been piloted by our most established Hubs this term, and will be implemented with their feedback from September. We are currently finalising an evaluation handbook for community hubs comprising a 'menu' of evidence based evaluation methodologies. Hub leads will be invited to use the surveys in this handbook to evaluate their activities across the key outcome areas. In addition to survey and participation data, we will be collecting case studies, carrying out complex case comparisons, and implementing participative evaluation methodologies.



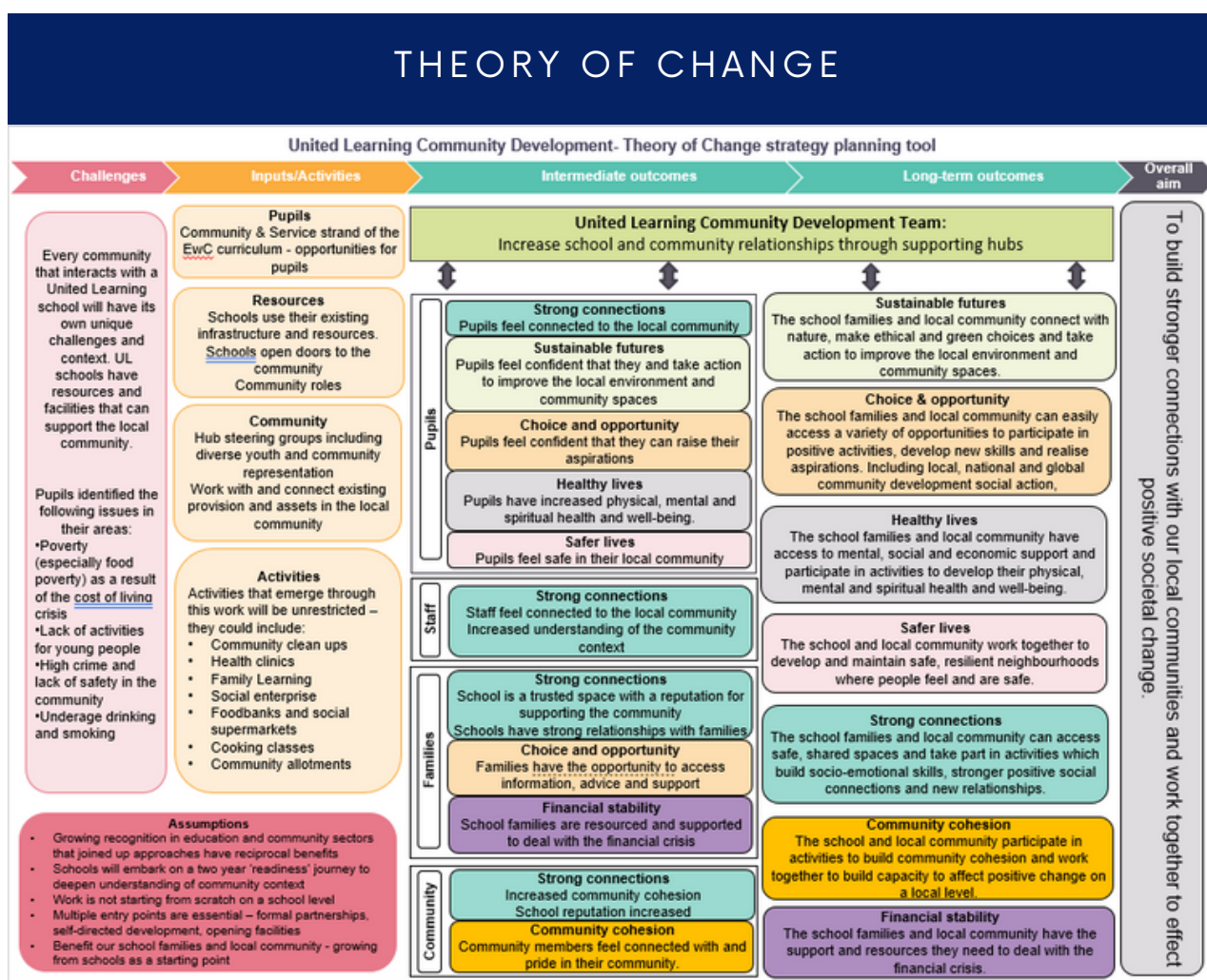
\*EwC = Education with Character Curriculum

# Framework - Theory of Change

Through collaboration and co-production with internal and external stakeholders, we have developed a working theory of change for our community hub development. This theory of change identified seven priority areas for our community hubs, and will remain a live working document for the life of this work to ensure that we can remain pro-active and responsive to emerging societal change. The theory of change provides a common language to communicate the purpose and impact of our community hubs.

The theory of change identifies expected outcomes and underpins our evaluation methodology which seeks to capture both expected and unexpected outcomes of this work. This enables us to:

- Review Hub projects activity
- Improve and implement changes
- Build trust with funders, supporters, and beneficiaries
- Cultivate a culture of learning
- Celebrate successes and achievements



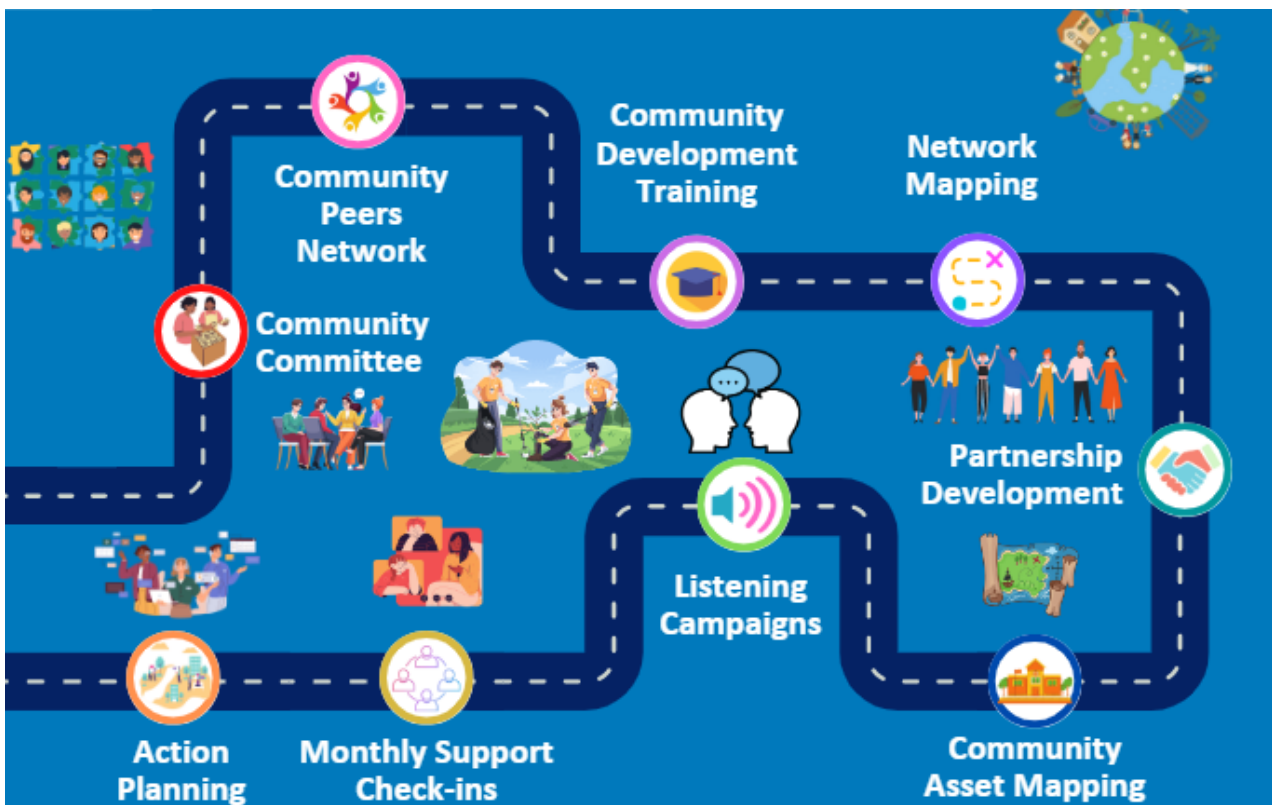
# Framework - Readiness Criteria

We have developed a readiness criteria (referred to with schools as a community development road map) which outlines activity that schools will be expected to engage in during the development of a community hub. We would expect the process from emerging to established community hubs to take approximately two years.

The readiness criteria covers expected activity at a local level, and also activity at a group level such as joining the Community Peers Network, attending relevant training, and participating in monthly support check ins with the central community development team. All of the activities are applicable, no matter what entry route a school takes to develop their community hub.

This criteria serves to ensure that schools are fully aware of the complexities and commitments involved in developing a community hub, and that hubs are truly rooted in and developed with and by their communities. The activities are designed to ensure that developing a hub has clear added benefit to the community, and mitigates risk of replication and competition with existing community provision and activity.

The criteria includes meeting key milestones designed to promote a deeper understanding of community contexts, community development principles, partnership development, youth and community consultation, collaboration, and co-production.





# Our Community Hubs

We now have five established community hubs, with several other schools being supported to strengthen their community practice with a view to developing a community hub over the coming year. In addition to this, two groups of schools have completed the first year of their Cradle to Career partnership with Reach Foundation and are making great strides in developing their community hub offer as part of their wider cradle to career model.

Supported through the framework illustrated above, our community hubs are bringing together local people, associations and organisations, offering a range of provision and support across a broad range of areas.

**Click on the hub names on this page to find out more!**

## Hill View Community Hub



## Woodlands Community Hub



## Grange Community Hub





# Our Community Hubs

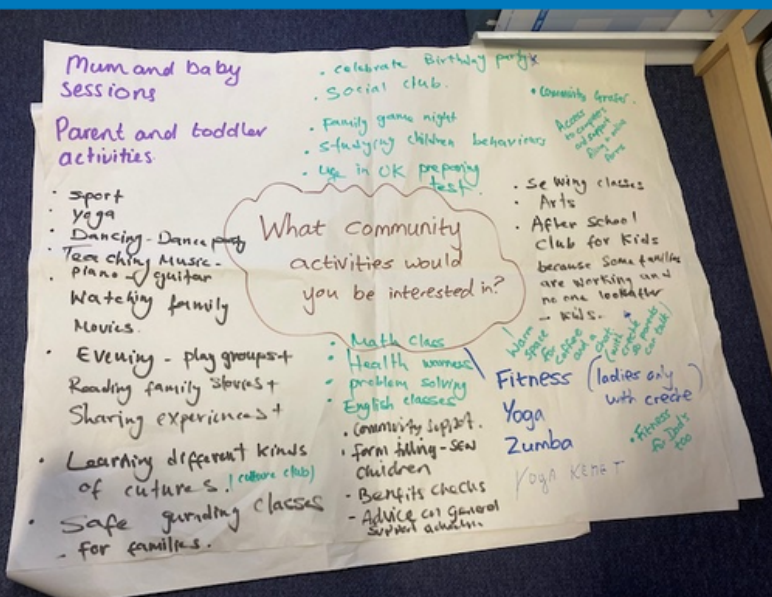
## YouthWorks @ Marsden Heights

YouthWorks @ Marsden Heights is a youth and community project delivered by a team of dedicated youth workers. The offer sees the school operating as a community hub, with strong links with local charities, organisations and community groups. Their Mums2Mums and Positive Voices programmes are award winning, with great community impact. Their community programmes include local partnerships with the mosque and food banks, national partnerships with community impact organisations and even global community partnerships! We are excited to work with them more closely next year to support their Hub development.



## Marlborough Community Hub

Marlborough Community Hub benefits from a youth and community facility on the site of Marlborough Road Primary Academy in Salford. Prior to formally engaging with our strategic community development work, the centre was significantly underutilised with only two activities running from the centre each week. The community hub now has a partnership with Salford Leisure to run a timetable of community activity for two years whilst they develop a community led offer focusing on community cohesion and food security, including a community allotment. The school is currently working to open a community pantry at the Hub during the Autumn term.



# Cradle to Career Partnerships with Reach Foundation



## Portsmouth Cluster

Three schools (Beacon View, Victory and Castle View) on the same road serving the Paulsgrove community in Portsmouth, joined together this year to develop a Cradle to Career model with their community, supported through a formal partnership with Reach Foundation. The schools have run a community listening campaign to deepen their understanding of the community context, and worked on developing stronger links between the schools with a view to establishing an all-through approach. The cluster now has a core group of parents, community members and local organisations, working together to co-create their community hub. The schools' work on curriculum through this partnership has been featured in a paper written by Reach Foundation and CST, and Beacon View have recently won a community award for their Community Christmas Lunch event.



## Bognor Campus

Bognor Campus have made significant progress in developing links across the campus and are working together with the local community to co-create their cradle to career model. This year, Bognor Campus appointed a Youth and Community Development Manager who is making great strides in shaping a community led offer across the site including establishing community partnerships and lettings, and successfully bidding for funding to deliver a range of community activity. A Community Fun Day, held on the Bognor Campus last term, showcased youth and community provision available across Bognor and was attended by over 400 community members, including young people, who engaged in community consultation to further shape the plans for the Phoenix Centre. We anticipate that the Phoenix Centre will open later this year and will form a key part of the campus' Cradle to Career model.





# 3

Child-led Community Committees established



# 8

Young People from schools across the group informed our group wide community development framework.

# 30

Young People informed the project proposal for the acquisition of the Phoenix Centre



## Community and Service

We are committed to ensuring that our community development work both benefits and is informed and led by our children and young people. We have worked closely with the Education and Character team over the past year to develop clear links between the Community and Service strand of the Character curriculum, and our wider community development. Where we have community hubs, we are keen to ensure that they provide service opportunities for children and young people within our schools and this expectation is now formalised in our community hub development readiness criteria. This year has seen many children and young people engaging with service opportunities where we have community hubs developing, and more broadly, in the group wide development of this work.

A focus group involving young people from schools across the group took place in January to inform the development of a Theory of Change for this work, which catalysed further discussions about youth engagement more broadly.

Three of our Community Hubs have established Community Committee's made up of primary school children who inform and deliver on community priorities. Grange Primary Community Committee even secured community funding for their projects!

Recently, a primary pupil from Marlborough Road Academy, Anisha, joined a Community Peers Network meeting to present a Spotlight session on their community allotment. Anisha displayed great passion for the project, discussing the benefits for the pupils, school and wider community.

Next year through the Education with Character curriculum, schools will provide at least two opportunities for all children to volunteer within their local communities.

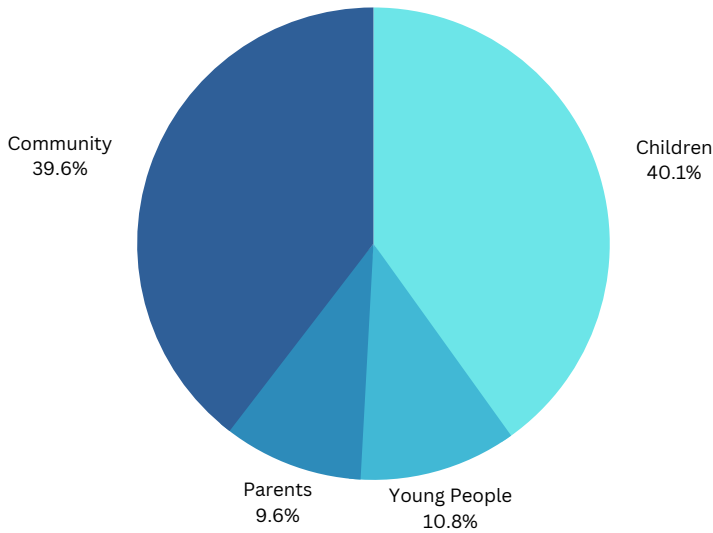


# Participation

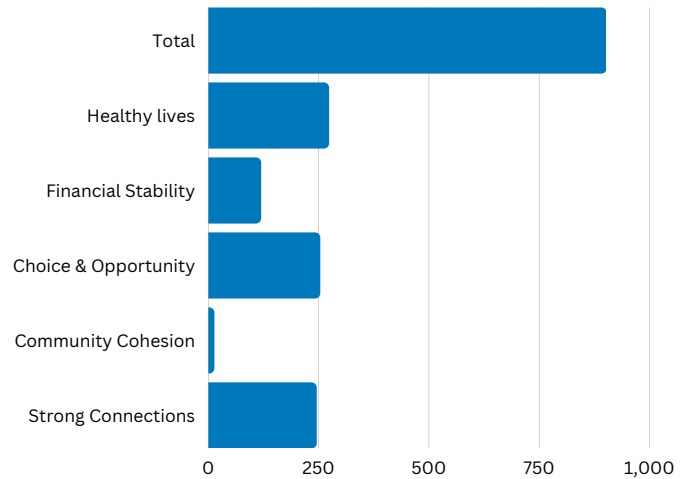
This academic year, our most established community hubs have started tracking participation data. Collectively, our hubs have recorded footfall participation of **7,389**.

Our community hubs have delivered **914** hours of community support through **465** activity sessions.

## Participation by member group



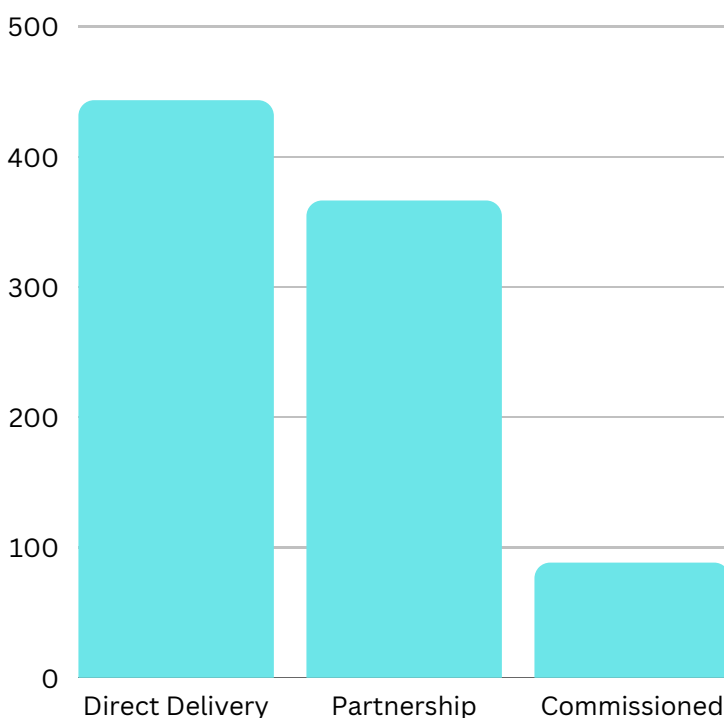
## Hours of activity by outcome area



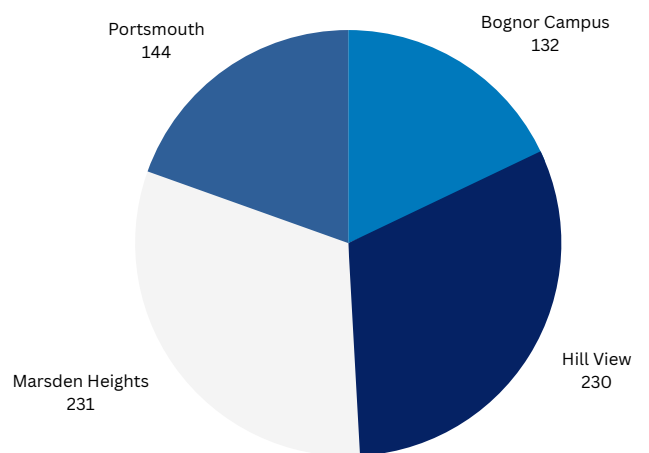
Community Hub activities are delivered through a variety of methods including direct delivery, partnership delivery and commissioned services.

**737** volunteer hours have been given by young people, parents and community members to support or lead hub activity. (not all hubs have received or recorded volunteer hours this year).

## Hours of activity by delivery method.



## Volunteer hours recorded per hub.



# 98

hours of warm spaces provided to community members through winter 2022/2023

# 400

Hot Meals provided to community members

# 15

Chromebooks repurposed for community digital inclusion

# 737

Volunteer Hours have been given to support hub activity

# 345

trees donated to a community allotment (plus 8 bathtubs!)

## Impact - Partnership Perspective

"The Grange Hub is a valuable space within its community. A number of SPRING participants on my caseload attend the Hub every week. They first started to attend last winter (2022), when the Hub was operating as a warm space/advice centre on Fridays. It soon became an important part of their week.

The participants particularly like that the Community Hub is very easy to access. It is a welcoming and friendly space where they can access hot meals and support/advice, whilst making connections with others who live locally.

With the support of SPRING, a participant, who experiences severe anxiety built up the courage to attend the hub. It took her 6 months to build up the courage to attend in January 23 with a Link Worker. She felt safe and welcomed and was able to return the following week. She now attends independently every Friday and has the confidence to welcome new attendees. She also comes to the Hub on other days of the week to attend groups delivered by SPRING and NCPS.

The impact of attending the Community Hub on her wellbeing has been remarkable and she continues to attend every week. She has formed friendships with other local residents and recently, made a social arrangement to visit a local restaurant - something she has not felt able to do for many years. She told me that the social outing "would stay in her memory forever" and that attending the Hub has changed her life.

As a Link Worker, I have found the Community Hub to be an excellent asset. It is a place where I can meet SPRING participants/introduce them to others and where I can network and link in with other voluntary organisations/NNC departments/PCSOs/local councillors, as well as being able to share details of SPRING with local residents.

During my attendance at the Hub, I have met a wide range of people – mothers with small children, homeless people seeking shelter for the day and local residents who live alone. Others have come along for advice/support and many have benefited from the hot lunches provided by Lucy and the team.

...we feel that the Hub is a valuable asset to its community and would be very pleased to see it develop further."



# Impact - Poppy and Noah's Story

## Background

Poppy is a single mum with one son, Noah. Lockdown was a difficult time for Poppy and Noah which saw Poppy's existing mental health struggles significantly increase and negatively impacted her parenting abilities. Poppy and Noah were fairly isolated with little support from family or friends. Life after lockdown was extremely challenging and getting back into the 'normal' routine of day-to-day life proved often times too overwhelming. Poppy would prefer to stay at home all day and sleep. School attendance for Noah dropped down to approximately 60% at one point, and his attention levels in class were poor (often falling asleep and not engaging in learning).

## Parental support through school

Poppy engaged well with a couple of school staff and they started supporting her by giving her the space and emotional support to feel able to talk. Once the befriending process was truly embedded, and Poppy felt comfortable and not judged, school started exploring what would give Poppy a sense of purpose and what she had a passion for. She was invited to start volunteering at the school and helping out a couple of staff members with various jobs. Poppy happily got involved in assisting with the school's pre-loved uniform provision where struggling families could request uniform. Poppy then began supporting some children in school – assisting a TA with a particular group of SEN children engage in activities and exercises. Poppy completed her official volunteering training programme at the school, which significantly boosted her self esteem and really allowed Poppy's exploration of her passions to gain momentum.



## Community Hub

On successful completion of volunteer training, Poppy set up one of the community hub's most popular offers – a Walk and Talk group where parents meet up in the community hub, make themselves a hot drink, and then go on a leisurely walk around the local area. Poppy created posters to advertise the group, organised hot drinks to be available, welcomed everyone who attended, and led the walk. She wanted something that would help boost people's mental health and well-being, but also allow people the space to have conversations and make friendships in a relaxed way. This is now a weekly activity.

Poppy has additionally contributed to the Hub's Toddler and Parent Stay and Play sessions by being available to help out regularly, as well as engaging in parent art and craft classes. Poppy has also expanded on her volunteering capacity within the school classroom where she assesses and assists children who are struggling with their hand writing.

### Outcomes - Poppy:

- o A very clear shift was noted in Poppy's mental health and ability to get up and out of the house each morning.
- o She has connected with a few other parents through her Walk and Talk efforts and made some wonderful friendships.
- o Overall sense of purpose and sense of self worth has drastically improved and she continues to be passionate about her volunteering responsibilities.

### Outcomes - Noah:

- o Noah's attendance improved significantly and his overall well-being was notably improved once Poppy had started engaging in her volunteering roles at the school and community hub.
- o Welfare concern entries for Noah decreased in all categories, which has been sustained over time, showing a long-lasting impact of parental engagement through the school and community hub on Noah's life at home and at school.



# Impact - Headteacher's View

## Portsmouth Cluster Community Update from Sally Hodgson, Headteacher, Beacon View Primary.

Since September, there has been a real shift towards linking up the three schools. The impact of this has been so positive that when the recruitment for a new secondary headteacher in the cluster took place, we [primary headteachers] led a community panel as part of the recruitment process to ensure that the new headteacher was aware of the importance of this work in the cluster. The work we are doing with parents is immense: we have run listening campaigns with our families, developed support for parents with children who have SEND, have shared practices to improving relationships with parents, and set up a regular 'tea and toast' session for parents to come together to share ideas for improving life in the community. This work is having an incredibly positive impact on our schools' relationships with parents. In 2021/2022 our attendance fell across the year from term to term, despite all our work to emphasise the importance of attendance in school, we started the year at 92.2% and ended the year at 90.7%.



Beacon View Christmas Community Lunch Team recently won a community award at the Teach Portsmouth 2023 awards!

This year due to the work we are doing with families, we had attendance in the first term of 93.8% and have managed to sustain a steady 92.5% across autumn 2 and the spring, despite multiple illnesses sweeping the school. Last year, weekly attendance hit over 94% only twice, this year it has hit over 94% weekly attendance five times already. Our wider community work is also really taking off and we recently hosted a very successful community event, have secured funding to deliver Holiday and Food activity sessions in the school holidays, and are currently exploring an edible garden project. We are actively developing connections and partnerships with local councillors, MP Penny Mordaunt, the MoD, and a newly developed local intergenerational hub. We are further developing our partnership work over the coming months, with visits to local businesses and universities scheduled. Our cluster is due to host a Family Links training course next term, which will enable us to deliver Nurturing Programmes (emotional health and wellbeing) for parents in the community. Beacon View had an internal audit recently and we were asked for our complaints folder - we don't even have one this year! This is a stark contrast to last year, and indeed the national trajectory on this, and we believe this is due to our strong focus and action on parental and community relationships.



# Acknowledgements

In addition to the invaluable support and hard work of central office and school colleagues, our progress towards our community ambitions has been made possible due to the passion, commitment and expertise of some fantastic organisations, community members and young people who have supported us with developing this work.

With special thanks to:

Young people across United Learning Schools

Reach Foundation

Oasis Community Partnerships

Nurture Development

Locality

ImpactEd

East Learning CIC



We thank you for your continued support of our community development work.