



STATEMENT OF PROGRESS: 2019-2021

PART 3: DEVELOPING OUR PARTNERSHIP

CONNECTED **A COMMUNITY PLAN**

for Armagh City Banbridge & Craigavon Borough

CONTENTS

1. **A Message from the Chair of the Leadership & Community Engagement Sub-Committee** 04
2. **Community Planning Approach** 06
3. **Community Engagement: Involving Local People in Decision Making** 08
4. **A Learning Partnership** 14
5. **Partnership Health Check** 16
6. **Looking to the Future** 22



COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY SECTOR PANEL



A MESSAGE FROM

THE CHAIR OF THE LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE



Community planning brings together a wide range of partners to improve the lives of local people. A strong partnership is important and we continue to monitor our own partnership so that we can build on its strengths and address any issues that could hold back progress.



Catherine McFarland
Director of Finance, Audit & Assurance,
Northern Ireland Housing Executive



The initial response to COVID-19 saw an acceleration of partnership working across the board and an appreciation of the value of the relationships that had been built in the preceding years in the borough through community planning.

When the first lockdown was introduced in March 2020, the partnership was planning to embark on an ambitious programme of work to further embed community planning in the borough through Carnegie UK Trust's Embedding Wellbeing in NI Project. This involved a series of shared leadership programmes and a Participatory Budgeting project. Participatory Budgeting is a democratic innovation that puts decisions about public spending in the hands of local people.

After the first lockdown we were able to redesign all of these projects to be delivered online. I'd like to pay tribute to the partners,

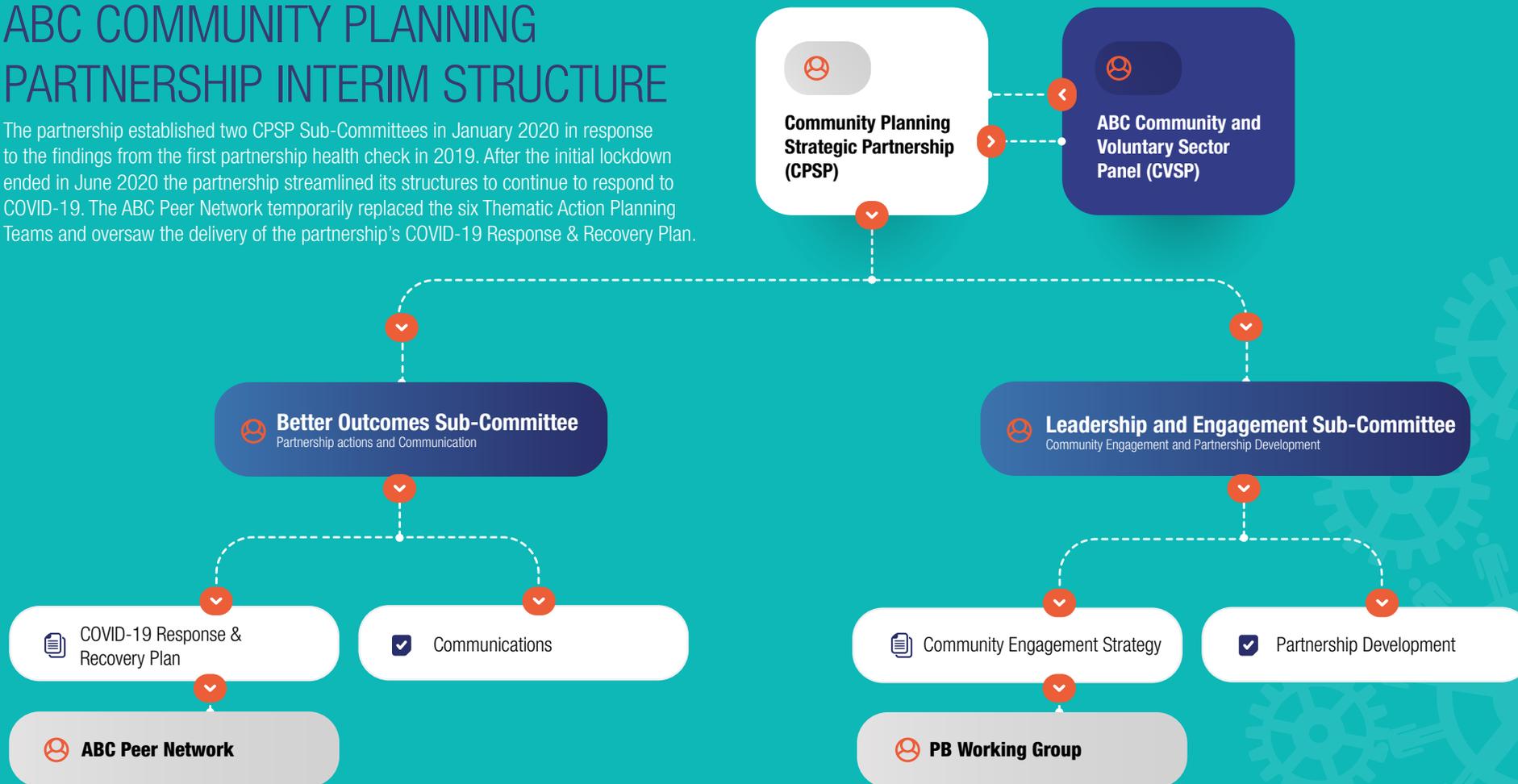
community groups and facilitators who all worked so hard to make the projects such a success at a time when society was continuing to respond to the virus. There was no better time to invest in community action and decision-making.

We also appreciate the flexibility and kindness shown by the team at Carnegie UK Trust to enable us to deliver the programme in full, albeit in a different way than we had envisaged.

We hope to build on this work over the next two years, supporting shared leadership as a driver for change and further developing ways to commission services and projects with the communities that are experts in what needs to be done and how.

ABC COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP INTERIM STRUCTURE

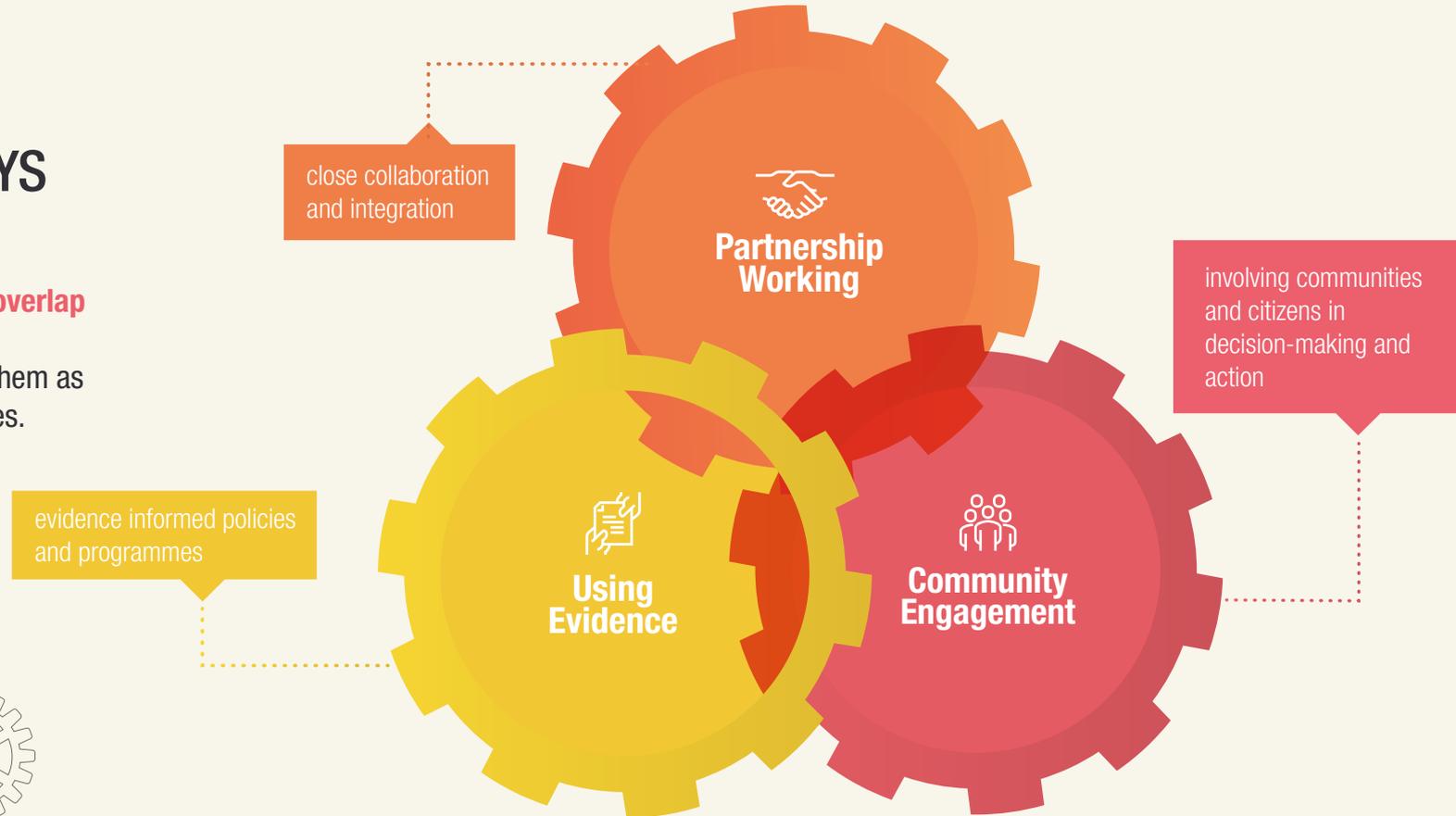
The partnership established two CPSP Sub-Committees in January 2020 in response to the findings from the first partnership health check in 2019. After the initial lockdown ended in June 2020 the partnership streamlined its structures to continue to respond to COVID-19. The ABC Peer Network temporarily replaced the six Thematic Action Planning Teams and oversaw the delivery of the partnership's COVID-19 Response & Recovery Plan.



02 COMMUNITY PLANNING APPROACH

COMMUNITY PLANNING REQUIRES WAYS OF WORKING.

These **ways of working overlap with each other** and our partnership has adopted them as an approach to its activities.

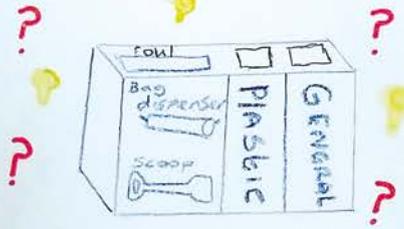




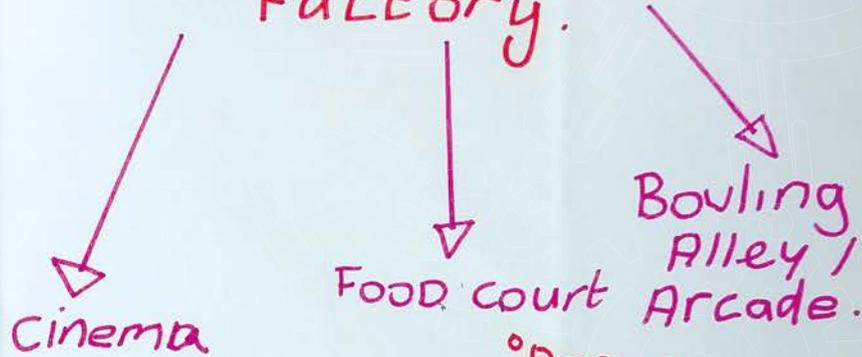
More bins in town, especially in the more popular parts of town.

- Shamble Area
- Railway street
- Cathedral Road

Also we could add a Poop scoop feature to some of the main bins to cut out the excuse of "I forgot my bag."



ARMAGH Slipper Factory.

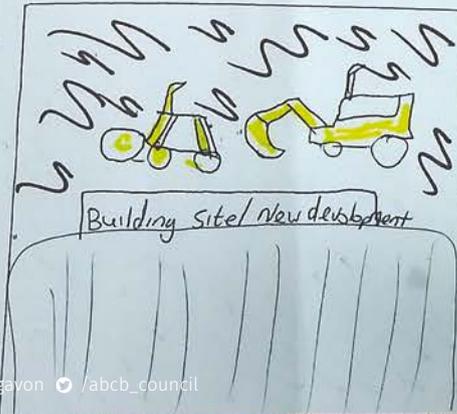


- * Boost the economy
- * Provide multiple jobs
- * Give kids/teen a place to go.
- * Attract out of town visitors

Armagh Arcadium

Put more into the redeveloping of derelict buildings instead of new developments.

Closed



* Family fun days
 * PAY RECOGNITION
 * STAFF APPRECIATION DAYS
 * EVERY FUN DAY
 TO OUR COUNCIL STAFF &
 COMMUNITY WORKERS WHO PROVIDE
 ESSENTIAL SERVICES TO OUR TOWN
 EVERY DAY

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: 03

INVOLVING LOCAL PEOPLE IN DECISION MAKING

Community planning is about bringing decisions closer to communities and giving local people a greater say in how services are delivered and their area is planned. Better community engagement leads to better decisions and increased levels of trust in government.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT 2019 TO 2021 TIMELINE



03 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

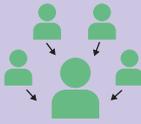
INVOLVING LOCAL PEOPLE IN DECISION MAKING

EMBEDDING THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

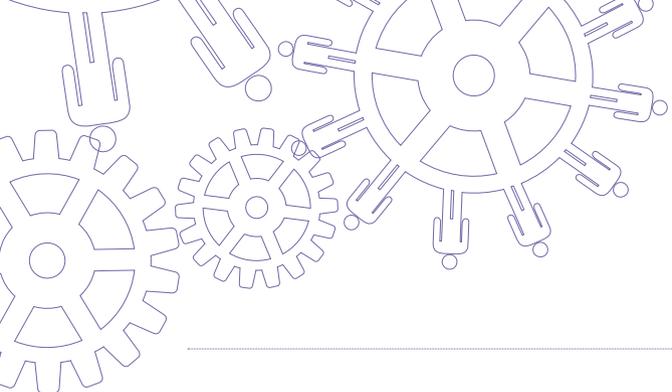
The partnership's Community Engagement Strategy takes the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation as its framework and adopts the Scottish Community Engagement Standards to ensure quality engagement.

There are three challenges identified: ensuring inclusion & diversity, quality dialogue & deliberation and showing the link to policy and decision making.

The partnership has delivered training on the spectrum and standards, continues to evaluate our engagement activities against the standards and has piloted Participatory Budgeting, a technique that addresses the challenges in the strategy.

	 INFORM	 CONSULT	 INVOLVE	 COLLABORATE	 EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution	To place the final decision-making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how community input influenced the decision	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible	We will implement what you decide

© The International Association for Public Participation (www.iap2.org)



DEMOCRATIC INNOVATION: PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

Participatory Budgeting (PB) is a democratic innovation that puts decisions about public spending in the hands of local people. This is either through community groups pitching for pots of money to deliver projects or through mainstream investments taken by a public body.

The partnership launched TAK£500 in September 2020 and invited local communities to put forward ideas to put the Take 5 Ways to Wellbeing into practice. 3,623 people votes to decide how £32,000 was allocated to 66 community projects. Voting was open to everyone in the borough over eight years old and non-constituted groups could apply for the money.

Feedback on the process from voters, community groups and partners has been overwhelmingly positive and has included ideas for improvement. The partnership recognises the potential for PB to connect communities; solve difficult problems; improve partnership working and increase trust and confidence in government and public services. The partnership is reflecting on the learning from TAK£500 and hopes to build on its success for future projects.



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The partnership's community engagement strategy includes a priority to engage children and young people in the partnership's decisions.

Children over the age of 8 years were able to apply to or vote in the TAK£500 Participatory Budgeting project. 608 children and young people aged between 8 and 24 voted in the process and there were 27 successful projects taken forward by children and young people. These include a project to revitalise a garden at a day centre, other gardening projects, an intergenerational kindness project and purchasing play equipment.

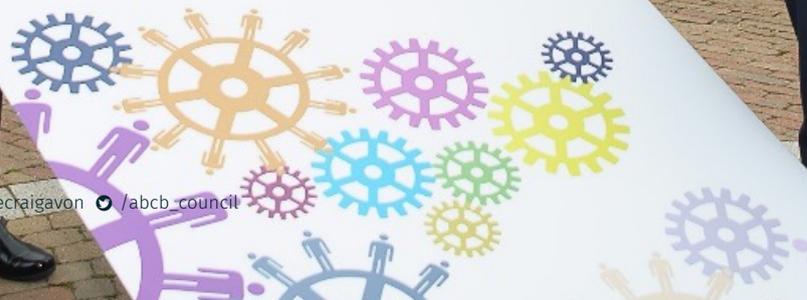
So far 172 children and young people have been consulted during the development of the Armagh Place Plan through a schools engagement pack and face-to-face workshops with a local youth club. Young people in Armagh are proud of the heritage and history of their city. They want opportunities to have friends from different religions and value green spaces. Young people are aware of traffic congestion in Armagh and there are safety issues for them walking and cycling in the city. These priorities are reflected in the draft Armagh Place Plan.



Photo: Children drawing their ideas for Armagh at the Live Engagement at the Mall in July 2021



CONNECTED
A COMMUNITY PLAN
for Armagh City Banbridge & Craigavon Borough
2017-2030



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: 03

INVOLVING LOCAL PEOPLE IN DECISION MAKING

COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY SECTOR PANEL

The Community, Voluntary and Social Enterprise Sectors make a huge contribution to the wellbeing of people in the borough. There are currently 60 members of the partnership's Community & Voluntary Sector Panel. Many panel members were involved in the immediate response to the initial lockdown from March 2021, working together to provide food and much more to people in their communities. This effort has stretched many organisations, with the impact still being felt on staff and volunteers.



AGE FRIENDLY SURVEY

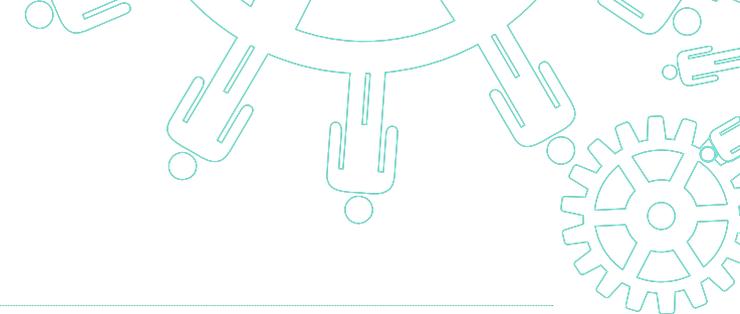
ABC Age Friendly Alliance launched a survey in July 2021 to seek the views of those over 50 living in the Borough, the survey sought to find out the positives and challenges of growing older within our communities.



593 responses to the survey was received and will help shape and inform the development of the borough's first Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan.

After completing a shared leadership programme together over the past year, the panel has reviewed its terms of reference and formed a Steering Group to drive forward the panel's priorities. During this reporting period the panel was led by Interim Chair, Geraldine Lawless¹ from Portadown 2000 and Interim Vice-Chair, Gilbert Lee² from Banbridge Twinning Association.

1 Vice-Chair from August 2018 to March 2020, Interim Chair from March 2020 to June 2021.
2 Panel CPSP representative from August 2018 to May 2021, Interim Vice-Chair from March 2020 to May 2021.



04 A LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

SHARED LEADERSHIP PROGRAMMES

Over the past two years the community planning partnership has run a range of training and development opportunities with support from Carnegie UK Trust through its Embedding Wellbeing in Northern Ireland Project.



Community planning can be challenging as our systems and organisational cultures do not always promote the close collaboration that is required. However, individuals can make a difference and we have found the idea of shared leadership useful for thinking about how we can support partners to work together to make a bigger impact for and with people in the borough.



Shared leadership is less like an orchestra, where the conductor is always in charge, and more like a jazz band, where leadership is passed around...depending on what the music demands at the moment, and who feels most moved by the spirit to express the music.

Phillip C. Schlechty, quoted by Eleanor Gill in the Shared Leadership in Practice programme.



Between August 2020 and March 2021 we delivered four leadership programmes across the partnership. These were redesigned with participants to be delivered online by Prospect Awards, ERGA Strategies and Centre for Effective Services.



4
PROGRAMMES



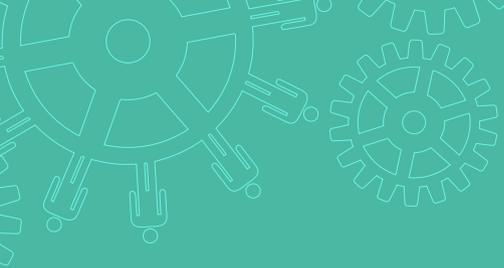
55
PARTICIPANTS



34
ORGANISATIONS



1
CONFERENCE



BENEFITS OF TAKING PART

“The programme could not have come at a better time for me in terms of Covid. I was feeling very isolated and I was able to share and learn in order to improve the work I was doing in supporting the most vulnerable in our community.”

MAKING CONNECTIONS, BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER

“I have grown hugely as a person and I can now say I actually feel like a leader.”

PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

“The learning has totally exceeded my expectations. I have used it and embedded into my everyday practice.”

KNOWLEDGE, MODELS AND TOOLS

“I learned a lot from the guest speakers and fellow Planning Partners during this programme.”

“One of the best training programmes I’ve been on ever!”

QUALITY INPUT FROM TRAINERS AND GUEST SPEAKERS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD

“The programme has allowed me to step away from traditional solutions and think outside the box”

SPACE FOR REFLECTION AND CREATIVE THINKING

“Can’t thank ABC community planning enough for running this programme.”

FEELING VALUED BY THE COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP



GUEST SPEAKERS

The partnership continues to be a place where members learn from each other and from those who are working further afield. During the reporting period there were 30 guest speakers from outside the partnership. Moving activities online meant that we could learn from and be inspired by speakers from as far away as Kenya and Australia. Details of some of the speakers are below:



Michelle Dunscombe
Jeder Institute, Australia



Catherine Wanjohi
Life Blooms, Kenya



Dr Claire Bynner
Glasgow University



Angus Lambert
United Nations Office for the
Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs



Kerry Melville
Belfast Food Network,
Sustainable Food Places



Jen Wallace/Pippa Coutts
Carnegie UK Trust



05 PARTNERSHIP HEALTH CHECK

A strong partnership is essential for realising outcomes in our community plan. We have repeated our partnership health check and can compare against the baseline we established in 2019³.

HOW MUCH DID WE DO?

COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP MEETINGS

41 meetings  **197** people from 73 organisations

5 Community Planning Strategic Partnership (CPSP)

7 Thematic Action Planning Team / ABC Peer Network

3 Action planning

8 Community Planning Strategic Partnership Sub-Committees

11 Working Groups

7 Community & Voluntary Sector Panel

Formal meetings of the community planning partnership were suspended with the start of the lockdown in March 2020 and restarted again in June that year when the partners came together to form a COVID-19 Response & Recovery Plan. The ABC Peer Network was established to oversee the delivery of the plan and temporarily replaced the six Thematic Action Planning Teams. This meant a smaller number of organisations was involved in meetings about implementation of the partnership's actions.

³ To complete the health check we distributed an online survey to partners and interviewed 4 partners. The response rate to the survey was 26%.

HOW MUCH DID WE DO?

PARTNERSHIP TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

134 people from 71 organisations  **41** training & mentoring sessions 

The reporting period covered the delivery of the partnership's programme of work through Carnegie UK Trust's Embedding Wellbeing in NI project. This involved the delivery of 41 sessions spread over shared leadership programmes, training on community engagement and Participatory Budgeting and a Shared Leadership conference.





05 PARTNERSHIP HEALTH CHECK

HOW WELL DID WE DO IT?

STATUTORY PARTNER PARTICIPATION⁴

77%

Statutory Partner CPSP meeting attendance rate



4

Statutory Partners are members of a CPSP Sub-Committee

43%

Statutory Partner attendance rate at TAP Team/ABC Peer Network

9

average Statutory Partner attendance at action planning workshops

31%

of Statutory Partners have taken on the role of Action Lead

The reporting period has been exceptional, with all partners reacting to the pandemic. Statutory Partner involvement has remained high, however attendance and participation remain skewed across the thirteen Statutory Partners.

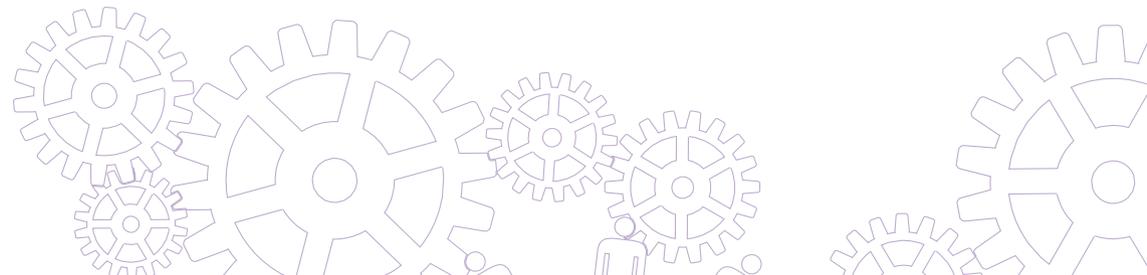
Statutory Partner attendance levels at Community Planning Strategic Partnership meetings have improved. At the implementation level Statutory Partner attendance rates at the ABC Peer Network have remained consistent with attendance levels for Thematic Action Planning Teams in the last reporting period. However, fewer Statutory Partners are leading on actions compared to 2017 to 2019. 69% of Statutory Partners were coordinating actions, compared to 31% currently.

Support Partners are the CVSP, the BPA, the Department for Communities and SRC. Their attendance and participation rates have been high across all areas.

Performance Key:

Where a percentage has improved from the first partnership health check in 2019 the text displayed is **green**, where it has remained unchanged the text is **amber** and where it has reduced the text is **red**

⁴ Statutory Partners are the thirteen statutory agencies named in the Community Planning Order 2016



PARTNER SATISFACTION

COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

92% agree

meetings are well run and papers for the meetings are clear and include relevant information



83%

agree there are clear lines of accountability



83% agree

the partnership has a **shared purpose** that is understood by all members

75% agree

have clear roles & responsibilities



67%

agree communication across partnership is effective

WIDER PARTNERSHIP

93%

meetings are well run and papers for the meetings are clear and include relevant information



71% agree

there are clear lines of accountability



71% agree

communication across the partnership is effective

63% agree

have clear roles & responsibilities⁵



80% agree

have a **shared purpose** that is understood by all members

The percentage of partners who agree there is a shared purpose remains high and has increased since 2019. Despite the move to online meetings, partners still agree that meetings are well run and papers are clear. Areas for development remain establishing clear roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability and improving communication across the partnership.

DELIVERY

86%
of actions
are on track⁶



5

Roles & responsibilities was lower for Thematic Action Planning Teams 2019 – 52%

6

updated August 2021

05 PARTNERSHIP HEALTH CHECK

IS ANYONE BETTER OFF? IMPACT OF THE PARTNERSHIP

BENEFITS OF THE PARTNERSHIP

COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

98%
reporting benefits from involvement



88% agree
agree the partnership is a learning environment

BIGGEST BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP MEMBERSHIP TO DATE



41%
shared learning &
networking

33% Collective thinking
& problem solving

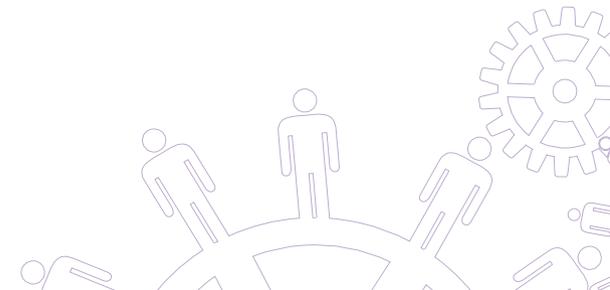


13% making a
positive impact
on the borough⁷

13% raising awareness
of issues/organisations



⁷ the % making a positive impact on the borough has decreased from the 2019 baseline – 17%

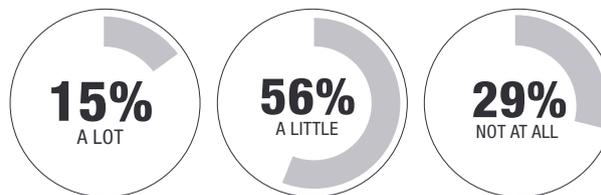




SHARING RESOURCES

71%

of partners whose resource allocation has been influenced by the community plan and other action plans



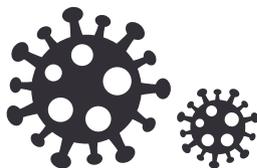
The COVID-19 crisis led to an increased appreciation of the need for partnership working and the important role of the Community, Voluntary and Social Enterprise Sectors. Partners across the public, community and private sectors worked together and at speed to respond to the pandemic. A high percentage of the Community Planning Strategic Partnership still agrees that the benefits of being in the partnership outweigh the costs, however, the percentage has fallen from 2019.

The percentage of partners whose resource allocation has been influenced by the community plan and action plans increased to 71% from a baseline of 21% in 2019. This was likely due to the number of partners contributing to the TAK£500 Participatory Budgeting Project and the development of the COVID-19 Response & Recovery Plan and Armagh Place Plan.

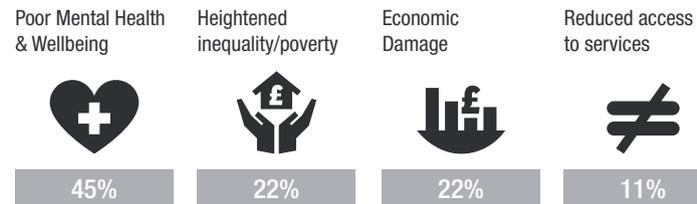
PARTNERS & COVID-19

78%

of partners surveyed say their organisation is still responding to COVID-19.



Partners see the main impacts of the pandemic on the borough to be:



06 LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

	PROGRESS 2019-2021	PRIORITIES 2021-2023
MILESTONES	We have continued to meet the legislative requirements and have met all our milestones.	We will continue to meet the requirements set out in the legislation.
DELIVERY OF OUTCOMES	<p>In response to the pandemic we set aside our thematic action plans and developed one Covid-19 Response & Recovery Plan.</p> <p>Our cross-cutting themes are more prominent in Armagh Place Plan outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Connected City • A Green City • An Engaging City • A Healthy City <p><i>13% partners agree making a positive impact on the borough is the biggest benefit of being in the community planning partnership to date.</i></p>	<p>We have further reduced our actions to increase impact through a refreshed Covid-19 Response & Recovery Plan. We will focus our activities on identified areas of need and where there is energy and momentum among partners.</p> <p>Actions are under the themes of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health & wellbeing • Tackling poverty and social exclusion • Locality planning and place
PARTNERSHIP WORKING	<p>We saw deeper levels of collaboration in the response to the initial lockdown in March 2021, continuing into the COVID-19 Response & Recovery Plan.</p> <p>Our TAKESCC Participatory Budgeting Project enabled us to work across organisational boundaries to pool our resources while putting decisions in the hands of local people</p> <p>Shared leadership programmes provided support for leaders across the partnership. Participants appreciated the support and benefited greatly from it.</p> <p>More can be done to acknowledge leadership across the partnership.</p>	<p>We will build on our work over the past two years to further deepen collaboration and continue to pool our resources to realise our outcomes.</p> <p>We will continue to support those who step into leadership roles.</p> <p>We will acknowledge those who practise shared leadership to improve services and outcomes in the borough.</p>

	PROGRESS 2019-2021	PRIORITIES 2021-2023
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	Over the reporting period 4,000 members of the public were involved in TAK£500 voting and consultations for the Armagh Place Plan.	We will build on the success of TAK£500. We will decide how to take forward Participatory Budgeting together as a partnership.
	TAK£500 was open to applications and votes from children aged 8 and over and we have heard from children and young people at schools and youth clubs over the development of the Armagh Place Plan.	We will work together to ensure the involvement of all Section 75 groups in our engagement to inform our decisions.
	Several media releases were issued during the reporting period and the community planning section of council's website was updated regularly.	We will continue to keep residents informed about the partnership's activities.
	The partnership started a Community Planning Blog with posts from business, community and statutory partners	
USING EVIDENCE	During the pandemic we came together quickly to develop our plan, prioritising immediate needs over managing performance and early intervention.	We will improve our understanding of the area by finding ways to share evidence with each other. In our actions we will move towards early intervention and prevention.
LEARNING FROM OTHERS	We have made the most of our participation in Carnegie UK Trust's Embedding Wellbeing in NI project to learn from our own and neighbouring jurisdictions.	We will continue learning activities that respond to the needs of partners.
	We have delivered online learning activities in the form of training, mentoring, guest speakers and peer support.	
	We redesigned our support from Carnegie UK Trust to be delivered during the pandemic. Partners and communities got behind the projects to make them successful and we are using the learning to determine our future priorities.	We will continue to be curious and outward looking and provide opportunities to learn from colleagues locally and further afield.
CONNECTING INTO THE BROADER STRATEGIC CONTEXT	During the pandemic there has been more cooperation and coordination between central and local government.	We will strengthen relationships with central government at strategic and implementation levels and look for opportunities to link our work into the Draft Programme for Government. We will continue to be part of the conversation started by Carnegie UK Trust on collective wellbeing.

COMMUNITY PLANNING TEAM

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