

EVALUATION OF CROXTETH GOOD HELP HUB

FULL REPORT

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Part A:

Introduction

1 Background

Croxteth Good Help Hub has been a pilot project for the government's Partnerships for People and Place programme, which has responded to and further developed the work of other recent local initiatives.

1.1 Partnerships for People and Place

In 2019, the UK Government announced a new Shared Outcomes Fund to support the levelling up agenda by testing innovative ways of working across the public sector.¹ Within this, it allocated £5 million to Partnerships for People and Place (PfPP), to test the hypothesis that better co-ordination within and between central government and local places can improve efficiency and outcomes of place-based policy.² Selected local authorities were invited to submit expressions of interest in delivering pilot projects.³ In Round 1, 13 pilot projects were funded across England, to take place over two years.⁴ The programme is managed by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

At the end of 2021, Liverpool City Council secured PfPP funding to run a pilot in Liverpool, Croxteth Good Help Hub and, in early 2022, it selected Cobalt Housing to be its lead partner.⁵

1.2 Croxteth

The PfPP project was focused on Croxteth ward in North Liverpool. According to the 2021 census, this area is home to 14,435 people in 5,989 households. Its residents are predominantly White British (86% compared with 77% across Liverpool) and a majority of households are deprived in one or more dimensions (69% compared with 58% across Liverpool).⁶ Ward boundaries in Liverpool have recently changed and the former Croxteth ward area is now covered by two smaller wards called Croxteth and Croxteth Country Park.

Disparities within the area are highlighted by data provided by Liverpool City Council in ward profiles for the new wards.⁷ For example, average life expectancy, which is 77.2 years across Liverpool, is 73.7 years in Croxteth and 82.2 years in Croxteth Country Park. Croxteth has the highest proportion of Adult Social Care users in Liverpool, at 11.3% of the adult population, while the equivalent figure for Croxteth Country Park is 4.4%.

1.3 Our Croxteth

A participatory budgeting pilot was launched in early 2022 with a £50,000 funding pot from NHS Mersey Care Foundation Trust, Cobalt Housing and Merseyside Police (using funds from assets recovered under the Proceeds of Crime Act). Called Our Croxteth, it supported 20 community projects to tackle key themes highlighted by local people.⁸

1.4 Good Help

Good Help is a multi-agency workforce development programme commissioned by Liverpool City Council and developed over three years in recognition that, regardless of the service provider, how they are funded or who their client group is, everyone deserves 'good help'.⁹ The programme is delivered over three, non-consecutive days that focus on engagement, collaboration and communication, and it is rooted in an asset-based way of working.¹⁰

The PfPP pilot offered an opportunity to put the programme's principles into practice in the design and delivery of a frontline service.

1.5 Neighbourhood working

Liverpool City Council, Mersey Care, Cobalt Housing and Merseyside Police were already moving towards more integrated ways of working at neighbourhood scale, both in Croxteth, such as through the Our Croxteth collaboration, and

more widely across the city, for example through the development of Neighbourhood Plans to complement the City Plan, and Integrated Care Teams bringing together a wide membership including housing.

A key objective of the PfPP pilot, for each of these partners, was to further test and develop approaches to neighbourhood working.

2 Evaluation approach

An evaluation of the Croxteth Good Help Hub PfPP pilot project has been carried out by the Heseltine Institute for Public Policy, Practice and Place at the University of Liverpool.

2.1 Evaluators

The Heseltine Institute is the University of Liverpool's public policy institute, bringing together academic expertise with policy makers and practitioners. It has particular interests in public sector innovation, place-based policy and co-production of research, which are relevant to this evaluation.

The evaluators are individuals whose backgrounds are in policy and practice in local government in Liverpool City Region. We have developed skills in working with local partners to co-produce research, such as through the City Conversation project in Clubmoor, Liverpool, which produced a Community Research Toolkit. We do not believe that knowledge sits with us as researchers but rather that knowledge construction is a shared endeavour. While we work within a rigorous academic framework, we have favoured an approach to this evaluation that is pragmatic and participatory.

The evaluation has been subject to the University of Liverpool's ethics policies and procedures. It was given approval to proceed by a panel of experts who reviewed detailed information on key ethical considerations including purpose and gain, risk and harm, informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality, and sharing and dissemination.

2.2 Methodology

In consideration of the contextual influences, this evaluation was designed to sit within a post-positivistic paradigm. It has sought not to prove whether or not the project met its aims, but to understand whether and how the project met its aims from the perspective of different stakeholders.¹¹ Our standpoint is that knowledge is co-constructed; practitioners, for example, are considered experts in their own experience for the evaluator to learn from.

This enables a methodological approach whereby the evaluator is not detached but works closely

with the practitioners – the project team – to gain an in-depth understanding of the project. It points to qualitative methods such as interviews, to generate rich descriptions and draw out key themes.

2.3 Evaluation type

A summative outcome and process evaluation has been carried out with the purpose of reporting, at the end of the project, what it has achieved and how. Value-for-money has been excluded from the scope; it is being addressed at programme level by Grant Thornton on behalf of national evaluator Ipsos UK.

The evaluation has been based on contribution analysis, which is used 'to identify the contribution an intervention has made to a change or set of changes'.¹² It gives an evidenced line of reasoning,¹³ usually based on a theory of change.¹⁴

It has pursued a utilisation-focused approach, which places users of the evaluation at its heart, framing them as equally if not more important than the evaluator, in the belief that such involvement makes the findings more likely to be useable.¹⁵

The evaluators identified and worked closely with the primary intended users of the evaluation, to keep the focus on the intended uses throughout and to remain responsive to any context changes. The primary intended users were individuals with strategic and operational roles in developing, delivering and learning from the pilot locally, and included members of the Strategic and Operational Boards as well as the frontline Hub team. They have been involved in all stages of the evaluation from identifying the questions through collecting and analysing the data to communicating findings.

2.4 Methods of data collection and analysis

A series of 20 semi-structured interviews were carried out at the end of the pilot phase. These were mostly one-to-one, with participants selected using a combination of purposive and convenience sampling, drawn from:

- The project funders (DLUHC)
- The project team (the frontline team of staff from partner organisations)
- The project governance structure (the Operational and Strategic Boards comprising a wider group of local stakeholder organisations).

Interviews were recorded and transcribed. They were supplemented by data from secondary sources, including:

- PfPP programme documentation, e.g. guidance for applicants, interim national evaluation report

- PfPP project documentation, e.g. expression of interest, delivery plan, progress reports, meeting minutes
- Presentations by the project coordinator
- Surveys carried out by Liverpool John Moores University (Thrive) and the Hub team
- Case study interviews of Hub clients carried out by the Hub team
- Other data requested from partner organisations or publicly available, e.g. ward profiles, census data.

The project was assessed against its Theory of Change using thematic analysis based on a process of coding the interview transcripts and other data, working both deductively – looking for data relating directly to the components of the Theory of Change, and inductively – exploring the data for potential additional themes. This resulted in the construction of an evidenced Story of Change, reflecting how the project worked in practice.

Studying data from a range of sources enabled consideration of multiple perspectives, leading to a more holistic understanding and providing greater confidence in the findings.

Unless otherwise indicated, quotes are from the interviews. They have been anonymised.

2.5 Reporting

Regular progress updates have been provided via the project boards and directly to Cobalt Housing as the evaluation client. Interim findings were presented at a PfPP event held at Liverpool John Moores University in April 2023, which showcased several PfPP-funded pilot projects, all of which were variations on neighbourhood hubs. Attendees included representatives of central government, local public and voluntary sector organisations, universities and the hub projects.

3 The pilot project

Below is a brief summary of the PfPP pilot project. More detail is provided in Part C: Process Evaluation.

3.1 Croxteth Good Help Hub

The project was led by Cobalt Housing, an anchor organisation within Croxteth. It is the largest registered provider of social housing in the area, with its main offices there, and is committed to being a catalyst for positive change in the communities it serves.¹⁶

Following funding approval, Liverpool City Council and Cobalt Housing appointed a project coordinator and worked with local partners to develop a model for a community hub, building

on the work of the Our Croxteth partnership and the Good Help training programme. The model recognised that, while many services were already available and operating in the area, for various reasons people were not always able to get the help they needed. The Good Help Hub set out to bridge a gap between universal services (GPs, schools etc.) and specialist or statutory responses such as social care.

The core partners – Cobalt, the Council, the Police and the NHS – agreed to commit staff resources, and in October 2022 the newly formed team embarked on a 12-week study-and-learn programme with the purposes of developing the team, understanding local assets, understanding local needs, and finally designing the service that the Hub would provide. Within some basic parameters, and with guidance from the coordinator and project steering groups (a Strategic Board and an Operational Board), the team was encouraged to design and deliver whatever they felt was needed.

The Good Help Hub opened on 16 January 2023 for a 12-week pilot period, located within the reception area on the ground floor of Cobalt's offices. It offered a weekly timetable of services available within the Hub, arranged around themed days. It was open to everyone. Any person could call in and talk to a team member, who would work with them to understand what a Good Life meant to them and signpost them to services that could help, providing a personal introduction wherever possible.

Following the pilot period, the operation of the Good Help Hub was extended to 30 June 2023. This evaluation is based on the pilot period, which finished on 14 April 2023.

3.2 Croxteth Speaks

Project partners agreed PfPP funding would also be allocated to the Croxteth Speaks initiative. Commissioned by Culture Liverpool (part of Liverpool City Council) it was coordinated by arts organisation All Things Considered.

Over a 6-month period, local artists worked with young people on arts activities including film-making, photography, model-making, DJ-ing and dancing, exploring how they feel about their neighbourhood and how it affects their sense of identity.

3.3 Story of change

Based on the data collected and analysed, it has been possible to construct a Story of Change for the PfPP pilot project (see Appendix 1) to reflect how the project worked in practice, identifying the key inputs, activities and change principles, the outputs and short-term outcomes these led to, and the expected long-term outcomes and impacts.



Croxteth Good Help Hub



Croxteth Speaks (credit: Michael Kirkham)

Part B:

Outcome evaluation

4 Outputs

4.1 Croxteth Good Help Hub

During Croxteth Good Help Hub's pilot 12-week operational period 23 January to 14 April 2023, there were:

- 434 visits to the Hub
- 90 visitors (clients)
- More than 25 services available within the Hub as part of its weekly timetable.

Partners agreed to extend the Hub operation for a further three months to the end of June 2023. At the end of May, there had been 715 visits in total.

The Hub team kept records of visits including postcode, primary reason for visit and notes on the outcome, i.e. support provided and any planned follow-up.

These records show that, while 35% of visits were from Croxteth residents, an even higher percentage, 41%, were from Norris Green and 15% were from Fazakerley. The remaining 9% were mostly from elsewhere in North and East Liverpool or adjoining areas of Sefton and Knowsley.

Total visits per week varied from 18 to 41 and were fairly steady throughout the 12 weeks. The second week saw 25 new clients but other than that, the weekly number of new visitors to the Hub varied between zero and 12 with no discernible trend.

The primary reasons for initial visits to the Hub were (90 total visits):

Housing	27%
Mental health	13%
General enquiry	10%
Jobs	10%
Warm hub/drop in	9%
Money	7%
Courses	6%
Other	5%
Networking	5%
Antisocial behaviour	4%
Bacon Butty Friday	2%
Health	1%

The primary reasons for overall visits to the Hub were (434 total visits):

Warm hub/drop in	37%
Bacon Butty Friday	10%
Housing	9%
Mental health	9%
Jobs	8%
Other	6%
Courses	5%
General enquiry	5%
Antisocial behaviour	3%
Money	3%
Networking	3%
Children's services	1%
Health	<1%

It can be seen that the majority of initial visits were for housing reasons, which is unsurprising

since the Hub is located within the reception area of Cobalt Housing. The figures also illustrate that many people became repeat visitors to the Hub, with Bacon Butty Friday and the 'warm hub' provision being major draws.

The recorded primary reasons are not the full story, as is clear from the accompanying notes made by the team. Many people came in for one reason and disclosed other needs or interests while talking to team members, as discussed further in the next section under 'Additional services accessed'.

4.2 Croxteth Speaks

Some of the funding from Partnerships for People and Place was used to fund the linked project, Croxteth Speaks, working with local artists, young people and others to explore ideas around neighbourhood, identity and aspiration. During a similar period, its outputs were:

- 398 participants
- 9 organisations involved
- 9 artists employed
- 3 local film-makers employed
- 69 arts sessions
- 25 films and artworks.

The organisations involved were:

- Croxteth Good Help Hub
- Croxteth Library
- Croxteth Hall
- Culture Liverpool
- Dixons Academy
- Family Matters
- Gems
- Rhys Jones Centre
- St John Bosco College.

The project also produced a series of recommendations from participants about how their neighbourhood might be improved, which were presented at an event in July 2023. The above information is from project lead organisation All Things Considered.

5 Short-term outcomes

The short-term outcomes of the pilot project have been assessed at the end of the pilot period, which ran until 14 April 2023. They can be categorised as follows.

For individuals:

- Improved access to services
- Improved networks and connections
- Improved health and wellbeing.

For the locality:

- Improved knowledge of the locality
- Improvements to existing services.

For the city:

- Improved ways of working
- Model for locality-based services.

5.1 Improved access to services

For Hub clients – the people who visited the Hub and engaged with the team – benefits including improved networks and connections, and improved health and wellbeing, flowed from improved access to services.

Improved access to services can be evidenced by:

- Level of demand illustrating a need that may have otherwise been unmet
- Clients accessing services additional to those they came in for
- Clients being supported to access services by removal or reduction of barriers, and a holistic approach.

Level of demand

That the Hub averaged 35–40 visits per week during its pilot 12-week operational phase indicates that there is a need for its services, and evidence from case studies and visitor records suggests that this need may have otherwise been unmet. For example, many clients came in for help or advice on a particular issue but ended up accessing other services.

The core partners committed to continue providing services from the Hub for a further 12 weeks after the pilot period ended, demonstrating that they had found it worthwhile. The services that have targets in terms of beneficiary numbers – Liverpool in Work, for example – found that their targets were being met or exceeded.

Demand has varied according to the service; for example, Liverpool in Work saw demand build up gradually, whereas Citizens Advice was dealing with high numbers of clients from the start of the pilot.

It is also notable that visitors to the Hub have come from a wider area than originally anticipated, i.e. not only from the former Croxteth ward but also in large numbers from Norris Green and Fazakerley. This is likely due in part to the Hub being located close to the border between Croxteth and Norris Green, and on the premises of Cobalt which has significant housing stock across all three previous wards.

It had been hoped to gather demand data during the study-and-learn phase, but, as discussed later, this was not achieved and so it has not

been possible to measure changes. However, it was hypothesised at the demand workshop that demand for some services may increase as the Hub revealed previously unmet need, and anecdotally this does seem to have been the case.

Across the board, interviewees mentioned the unexpected complexity of need they were seeing, which translated into demand for a wide range of services from the Hub. Suggested causes for this included high service access thresholds, rising levels of poverty and increased isolation post-Covid.

“From our point of view, the demand on the service has been very high. I wouldn’t say higher than expected because if you put a social welfare service anywhere at the moment, or ever, it’s going to increase. But I didn’t think it would be as high as it is...I didn’t think there would be a queue outside...Clients are coming in, haven’t had no support for a long time, and they have many, many presenting issues.”

Additional services accessed

Many Hub clients accessed services additional to those they initially came in for. This is evidenced by the records kept by the Hub team, from which it can be estimated that around 25% of visits resulted in signposting or access to more than one service. Anonymised examples include:

- A person came in to speak to Cobalt about switching to a pre-payment meter and was put in touch with Energy Project Plus. In conversation, she mentioned issues with benefits, her own mental health and her mother’s dementia, so she spoke with Rooting for You who signposted her to Life Rooms, and she was also referred to Cobalt’s welfare benefits team.
- A person came in with an enquiry for Cobalt but asked about the Grow With Us course at De La Salle Kitchens, and signed up.
- A person came in to speak to Cobalt about adaptations to her property after her upcoming operation. She disclosed that she was nervous about the operation and the aftercare at home, so was advised to return on Wellbeing Wednesday so that one of the student nurses could talk her through what to expect.
- A person came in to speak to Cobalt over a housing matter but discussed several other needs with the Hub team. She was connected to sports initiatives for her children, was assisted to access fuel vouchers, a dentist, and a credit union account, was invited back for Bacon Butty Friday, a parenting group and one-to-one mental health support later that week.

- A person came in for advice over difficulties paying for electricity and gas. They were assisted by Energy Project Plus but also helped to access food vouchers.
- A person came in for the warm hub and signposting to Enable You and Age UK. They also arranged to attend Karonga Gardens as they were interested in working on an allotment.
- A person came in to see Cobalt regarding becoming a new tenant but also wanted to quit smoking, so a referral was made to Smokefree Liverpool.

There is only limited information on individuals’ journeys with the Hub, for example records of the extent of their subsequent engagement with signposted services and their perceptions of the difference it made to their lives. Reasons for this are discussed under ‘Monitoring and evaluation’ from p.27 onwards.

However, there are three case studies of Hub clients who agreed to be interviewed by a team member about their experience with the Hub, which are included later in this section to illustrate the range of outcomes for individuals, and how they were linked. Their accounts are in their own words, although some identifying details have been changed.

CASE STUDY 1

The client heard about Liverpool in Work from Cobalt Housing. They were at college and wanted to stop depending on their family for financial support. They needed a CV and help with their job search and applications as they had never looked for work before. They said:

I saw [Liverpool in Work] in the Good Help Hub. I registered on the 3rd of April and was working by the 3rd of May.

[They] compiled a CV and [they] advised me of the position of Barista at Starbucks.

I had never had a paid job before and couldn’t believe the speed in which one was found...Not only a brilliant service but friendly and very skilful in arming me with the confidence to go to interview.

I am now in a job which I really enjoy and would not have got if it wasn’t for the absolute fantastic service from Liverpool in Work.

Barriers to access reduced

Hub clients have been supported to access services by removal or reduction of the barriers they were experiencing. There are many examples of this, relating to different types of barriers: informational, procedural, physical, financial, practical and social.

Informational barriers were reduced by promoting and signposting to services that clients may not have previously been aware of. The research carried out by the Hub team during the study-and-learn phase was invaluable in building their own knowledge of what was available locally, and their networks were widened further through the operation phase. The team produced print leaflets and flyers as well as promoting Hub activities and themed days on social media.

The institutions providing statutory and specialist responses tend to have procedures in place that set thresholds for access. The Hub expressly set out to offer a service to people who did not meet these thresholds and in doing so to bridge a gap for people who needed more than universal services could provide but who did not meet the thresholds for statutory or specialist services.

"[People] are known to services, but aren't getting the support that they need for a whole host of reasons. Probably because thresholds to access services are quite high...I feel like we've got people who have bounced around a system that screens them out rather than screens them in. And I think that's what we do, is we screen people in."

Physical barriers were reduced by delivering services locally. Service providers were brought in to the Hub wherever possible to meet with clients there, or clients were introduced to services already operating nearby. The Hub venue was fully accessible, on a main bus route and with adjacent on-road parking.

The Hub model was developed in line with the concept of locality-based services, which is often linked to the environmental, financial and exercise advantages of active travel. A further benefit of having the Hub physically located within the community it served was that it was more accessible to people whose social anxiety prevented them travelling further afield. The Hub had several clients who were lonely and had become insular.

"A gentleman who lives locally, he'd become very isolated...I started initially just walking around with him...we'd walk round the local community, pop our head into services, speak to people in the local gym..."

The Hub team had a discretionary budget, made available from the PfPP funding, which they could draw on to assist clients in any way they saw fit, and some of the partner organisations were also able to provide financial support for clients.

Examples included bus passes, food vouchers and slow cookers.

"The Life Rooms are in Walton. It's two buses...it's a barrier because people don't have the money to go on two buses...if I prescribe someone to go to the Walton Life Room, I can give them a bus pass."

Many services require some sort of application to be completed, often online. These processes can raise barriers in relation to internet access, IT equipment, literacy and technology skills, as well as, sometimes, in their inherent complexity. Helping with CVs and job applications is a key part of the Liverpool in Work service, and the Hub team helped with other similar processes such as using Property Pool to register and bid for social housing. They also made a tablet available in the Hub reception for clients to access websites themselves.

"[I helped] someone reset his password...he'd said he tried and tried...and if he couldn't get onto Property Pool, he couldn't bid for a property... something so little made such a big difference to someone."

Lastly, the team addressed social barriers to access, such as having the confidence to ask for help. They built relationships and trust with clients, sometimes over several visits, and it was often the case that clients disclosed additional needs over time, which the Hub was then able to assist with. When a client was 'handed over' to a service provider, the team aimed to do this in person, to lessen any anxiety.

Tying all these together was the holistic approach – the overall focus on a Good Life and what that meant to the individual, reinforced by partners working under the umbrella of the Good Help Hub rather than as separate organisations. One expression of this was the recognition that multiple needs might need to be addressed step-by-step, one at a time. For example, a client who ultimately wanted to return to university might have an immediate need for mental health support and then in finding more suitable accommodation, before they could get a job and pay off their debts, allowing them eventually to complete their degree.

"Having the human touch and listening to people and just making them feel like they're not being judged. And making them feel like...they're not speaking to the police, they're not speaking to the housing...they're not speaking to the Council; all their barriers are broken down."

CASE STUDY 2

The client came into the Hub at a difficult time in their life, and was able to get help with housing and mental health as well as reassurance from the police about a particular concern they had. They said:

I came in because I needed to speak to someone from Cobalt Housing. I didn't even know the Hub was here, to be honest. [A Hub team member] brought me over and said that the Hub offered help with all different things. He gave me an information sheet with all the times and dates on, and I ended up coming back to use the service.

I used the CAB [Citizens Advice], [a team member] has helped me with some police matters, and I did a course. And just to be able to sit there, speaking to people, and have a coffee has helped a lot. You know, getting out of the house and stuff, because I was isolated a lot. They do all kinds of help. It's been a really good place for me to come to, meeting loads of people and being able to support each other.

I found it very easy to get involved, because there was people there telling me what I needed to do, or telling me what help I should get, or what days the help was on, so it was easy for me to get help.

I'm moving out of the area...It's a mutual exchange, so you sort of move into each other's houses, and that's proving to be very stressful, and the Hub's been helping me with that.

I think part of my mental health suffers because I'm actually quite isolated and housebound with having nothing to do. That's where [a Hub team member] is helping me try and get a volunteer job.

5.2 Improved networks and connections

The study-and-learn phase found that there was a strong sense of community in Croxteth. However, once the Hub opened, it became clear that some residents had become disconnected, and the prevalence of loneliness and isolation amongst clients was unexpectedly high.

The Hub facilitated improved networks and connections for many of its clients, as evidenced by:

- Improved access to services, including support groups
- People using the Hub as a drop-in and attending its events.

The Hub introduced clients to support groups including Rooting for You parents' group, which met at the Hub; JAM (Just Average Men) men's group at Ellergreen Community Centre and the First Person Project CIC mental health peer-support groups at La Salle Hotel School in Croxteth.

By providing somewhere to sit in a heated space and have a hot drink and a chat, the Hub became a regular drop-in facility for several of its clients. In fact, 37% of all visits were for this reason, and 9% of first visits.

The second most popular reason for visiting (10% of all visits) was Bacon Butty Friday, which was every Friday morning on the Hub timetable. Both clients and service providers valued the opportunity to meet and chat informally, and a spin-out Knit and Natter group was set up at the suggestion of a client.

"Looking at Bacon Butty Friday when there's lots of people in there all chatting to each other and helping each other is exactly what I was hoping this would look like."

The Hub team also organised community events both during the study-and-learn and operational phases, for example a litter pick as part of a Keep Britain tidy initiative, with local schools and volunteers from the Hub:

"When it was over, we went to a community organisation called Croxteth Family Matters...and we had tea and a bowl of scouse...and you could just see those residents, retired many years ago...and you could see their faces light up that they've been involved in work together which they've seen the benefits of...and they're all talking about it."

5.3 Improved health and wellbeing

Alongside, and often related to, the loneliness and isolation, the Hub team saw a high degree of poor health, both physical and mental. Although it is not possible to quantify health improvements as a result of the Hub, the qualitative data shows that there were improvements resulting from the outcomes to individuals already discussed, namely:

- Improved access to services
- Improved networks and connections.

As well as referring to the integrated care team where a need for more intensive support was identified, the Hub team were able to signpost to a range of physical and mental health services, some of which were available within the Hub as part of Wellbeing Wednesday. Examples include Smokefree Liverpool for help stopping smoking; Together Stronger, a local gym; and Mary Seacole House, a mental health charity supporting BAMER (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee) communities.

The Good Help approach taken by the team, involving taking time to get to know clients as individuals, helped people to talk about difficulties they were having, and was particularly important in relation to mental health issues.

“You’re getting to know people really well, and then they’re opening themselves up a bit...you’re finding there’s people there with health issues, mental health issues...which all of a sudden they’re letting people into, and we’re able to help them then.”

Being able to access other, non-health services such as in relation to housing, anti-social behaviour or police matters also helped improve people’s wellbeing, as clearly illustrated by the case studies.

The simple fact of being able to speak to someone in person, rather than over the phone or through a screen, made a difference and helped Hub staff to keep an eye on clients’ wellbeing. Combined with the overall ethos of ‘one front door’ and a ‘warm welcome’, as one interviewee said:

“It’s not just a safety net, it’s a duvet of love!”

CASE STUDY 3

The client came in originally about a housing issue before finding out about the various ways the Hub could help them. They said:

I found out about the Hub by popping in to see Cobalt, originally, and I looked over to my left and seen [a Hub team member], and he had such a lovely warm, welcoming smile, and said would I like to come over and find out more about the Good Help Hub. And I sat down, we had a chat, and I haven’t looked back since.

[A partner organisation] has been helping me as well with my mental health. I do try and come and see [them] as often as I can...So, if it hadn’t been for the Good Help Hub, I wouldn’t have known that [they] even existed, so thank you so much.

I’ve been to Bacon Butty Fridays, seen Citizens Advice. Litter picking – even if the weather wasn’t nice, but it didn’t dampen the spirits.

The biggest news is I’ve just got a job... either before my shift or after my shift, depending, I come in [to the Hub] and get my specially made brew.

Can I add as well, I’m also looking forward to slow cooking [at the Hub]. That’s going to be great fun because I don’t own a slow cooker. And I’m not just joining because you get a slow cooker, I’d like to see how you work a slow cooker, and [a Hub team member] is going to be giving out brilliant recipes, so I actually can’t wait.

5.4 Improved knowledge of the locality

Each stage of the Hub project involved gathering and sharing knowledge about Croxteth and the surrounding area:

- Developing the model
- Study-and-learn phase
- Hub operation.

The study-and-learn phase was particularly focused on building a picture of Croxteth to inform the development and delivery of the Hub service. The team took an asset-based approach to their research, which included a survey completed by over 250 people, and produced a physical asset map as an output, showing the existing available services. An exercise to collect sample demand data from service providers was less successful, as is discussed later, so the team used data from public sources such as the census to help assess the additional services that might be useful. They were also able to refer to the results of the Thrive survey carried out for Cobalt by Liverpool John Moores University earlier in 2022, which asked residents about their main concerns.

While the outreach work identified possible gaps in provision relating to antisocial behaviour and environmental issues such as litter, dog fouling and fly tipping, once the Hub opened and as conversations with clients developed, a more rounded picture emerged, with high levels of food and fuel poverty and mental health need being particularly prominent. The Thrive survey had given an indication of this, Croxteth residents having placed food prices and mental health at the top of their list of concerns overall.

The operational phase, then, continued to provide important information about the area as the Hub partners learnt from clients and from each other about what was available, and what was needed.

“We’re dealing with more things than we thought. Because, back when we first set it up we were saying...we want to get people into a playgroup, or get people walking around Croxteth Park, maybe doing litter picks. No, we’re doing a lot more. We’re getting people food vouchers, we had to assist a lady into [a mental health hospital], we’ve had people here as a place of safety because they’ve been assaulted. It’s a lot more.”

Meanwhile, Croxteth Speaks was working with young people to record information and perceptions about the area, which has now been shared with partner organisations.

5.5 Improvements to existing services

Improvements to existing services in Croxteth derived from:

- Improved access to services
- Improved knowledge of the locality

- Improved ways of working.

Ways in which the Hub operated to remove or reduce barriers to accessing services have already been discussed, and there were some resultant effects on existing local services. For example, Cobalt had closed its reception during the Covid pandemic meaning that initial enquiries could not be made in person. When the Hub opened, located in Cobalt’s reception area, Cobalt also reopened its reception desk, and by the time the pilot project had completed, Cobalt had taken a decision to remodel the whole ground floor of its building to enable its ongoing use as a community hub – a large financial investment.

Local voluntary organisations were able to increase their profile through their links with the Hub, helping them to sustain provision of their services.

“Because we’re quite a new organisation, it was a good way to meet not just other people but other organisations, to get our name out there and to link in with other groups.”

Members of the strategic board commented on how their organisations had gained useful knowledge about the area from the time they spent working within the Hub, even if it was only on a part-time basis. For example:

“Because we had a new [staff member] come into place during this process, the fact that the Good Help Hub was there enabled her to really supercharge her networking.”

Another repeated theme for the strategic partners was how working ‘un-badged,’ and in a different way, was helping them to build, or rebuild, trust within the local community.

“Because people have been visible...and proactively going out rather than saying you need to come to us...I think the legacy from that can’t be underestimated because I think they see that there is a genuine desire to partner with the community, to improve the lives of people that live in Croxteth.”

While the project influenced ways of working at organisational level with potential city-wide impact, as discussed in the next section, individuals on the operational team identified changes to their own working methods and approaches benefiting their ongoing work in the locality.

“I’ve enjoyed [developing] a different network, and it’s helped me...so when I go back to my Monday morning then, I can utilise some of them partnerships that I’ve created solely from here, that I wouldn’t have known in the past.”

“For events, it really taught me the importance of how social media can impact a project.”

5.6 Improved ways of working

The project Theory of Change predicted improved ways of working across three categories, and there is evidence of each of these:

- Enhanced partnership working
- Increased understanding of partners' roles
- Increased understanding of the limits to integration.

As the wording above acknowledges, partnership working was already taking place. Our Croxteth is a good example locally, but at city-level it was fragmented, and had become more so since 2010 as political and financial changes resulted in a shift away from the neighbourhood management model. However, there remained staff within the Hub partner organisations who had partnership experience – as did the project coordinator – and who could pass on their skills. The Hub provided an environment to do this, and also to develop them further.

"We have all sat there and gone 'partnership's not new'. This is absolutely not new, but it is in a sense. It is different. To be able to run a service from somewhere else and be able to lean on your partners, that [we] most probably had not done before."

It was felt that long-term changes had taken place as a result of the project, at organisational level, in partner organisations that operate in Croxteth but also across a wider area or the whole city.

"I think some people's job plans or job descriptions will have changed on the back of the PfPP work, in a good way. I think it's hugely benefited the community and hugely benefited staff...because those of us that have been involved will take the learning with us."

Enhanced partnership working has led to an increased understanding of partners' roles, the strategic benefits of which were articulated by interviewees:

"That physical presence there has helped with understanding partners, and then understanding community needs...I think we've probably learnt a lot about who needs to be around the table."

"It's a different way for us to problem-solve some of [the community's] needs...I've never been able to use [partners] the way that I do now through that partnership working, through Our Croxteth and the Good Help Hub."

A clear example of limits to integration was provided by the difficulties around formal data sharing experienced during the demand data exercise in the study-and-learn phase. Differing priorities meant the exercise did not yield the information that was hoped for, even though partner organisations had signed up to a

Memorandum of Understanding on data sharing for the purposes of the project. More fundamental differences in approaches to data sharing are apparent, which are an ongoing limiting factor for integration of services.

There were also limits to the staff resources that partners felt able to commit to integrated working in one locality, via the Hub. Some were more prepared to commit as the pilot progressed, but there were limiting factors other than its untested nature, such as differing funding models, particularly for voluntary sector organisations.

5.7 Model for locality-based working

The experience gained from the Croxteth Good Help Hub pilot is already informing the development by partners of models for locality-based working.

The Partnerships for People and Place evaluations – the national programme-level evaluation and this local evaluation of the Croxteth Good Help Hub – will provide further information to supplement the development and implementation of these plans.

Liverpool City Council

The Council's Neighbourhoods Select Committee (until May 2023) has overseen development of a 'new Neighbourhood Model', receiving updates on the Hub at various stages. Senior Council officers developing the model also visited the Hub, and attended the PfPP hub showcase event.

The model was presented and discussed at the Committee meeting in January 2023, where it was noted by the Committee that the model builds on the recent work in Croxteth, as well as in Picton, and models of neighbourhood management in the past. The plan is for a phased approach that is initially about 'place management' and the Council's own universal service functions, but will take account of the wider work focused on people in places, led by partners including the police and the integrated care partnership.¹⁷

The new Neighbourhood Model programme was approved by the Council's Cabinet in July 2023.¹⁸ Its aims and target outcomes are listed on p.16 and provide a clear illustration of how the work and lessons of the Good Help Hub are being taken forward.

Merseyside Police

Merseyside Police is rolling out a multi-agency partnership tactic called Clear, Hold, Build, which has been designed and part-funded by the Home Office to 'rescue and regenerate' the areas most affected by serious and organised crime.¹⁹

Known locally as Evolve, it is being implemented in areas including Dovecot in Liverpool, where experience from Croxteth Good Help Hub has

fed in, via a presentation from the Hub project coordinator, to development of the 'Build' aspect, described as:

- Working with residents and partners to build the community into a more prosperous area where people would love to live, work and visit and one less susceptible to being exploited by organised crime groups.

One Liverpool

One Liverpool is the health and care partnership for Liverpool, bringing together Liverpool City Council, the NHS, and the voluntary sector. It is developing a network of neighbourhood-level integrated care teams in Liverpool and alongside this identified three trailblazer areas to pilot different approaches to working with communities, one being Croxteth where Our Croxteth has piloted participatory budgeting.

Team 100 is a key tenet of the One Liverpool delivery plan, looking at how to maximise the collective workforce in a neighbourhood to best support the needs of the community. One Liverpool has viewed Croxteth Good Help Hub and a similar project, the Living Well Hub in Warrington, as test beds for the Team 100 approach, lessons from which will feed into the review of the One Liverpool delivery plan now underway.

Cobalt Housing

Cobalt Housing plans to invest over £300 million into its homes and neighbourhoods over the next 10 years. Its Corporate Plan 2023–28 sets out what it wants to achieve, focusing on four priorities, which are:

- Providing excellent services
- Investing in quality homes
- Supporting communities to thrive
- Developing positive people.

Cobalt has taken the decision not only to continue to run a neighbourhood hub from its Croxteth premises but to invest in remodelling the entire ground floor to improve and expand the space available for partners and clients. Work is already underway and is expected to be completed in Autumn 2024.

This expansion of the Good Help Hub pilot is a commitment in its Corporate Plan, aligned to a core objective of unlocking potential and overcoming barriers to success by providing additional support to customers who need it, by proactively developing and supporting community-led initiatives, and by maximising the social value the organisation's overall investment generates.



Community litter pick

LIVERPOOL CITY COUNCIL'S NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD MODEL July 2023

Aims:

- More effective joint working across Council services locally with a focus on prevention, improving standards of delivery, maximising assets and improving outcomes
- More effective use of data to understand local neighbourhood issues and inform strategies, service design and delivery on the appropriate geographical footprint
- An inclusive, partnership approach, working together to benefit residents and communities and enabling engagement in the decisions that impact their neighbourhoods
- Reduced duplication and unnecessary complexity, particularly in resolving issues
- A clear core offer for each neighbourhood with a differentiated approach informed by data and insight to better meet the needs of different areas.

Outcomes for residents:

- They can play a key part in shaping a Good Life in their local area – they feel listened to, able to get involved and can see improvements happening as a result
- Residents know how to access local services and feel confident in the Council to deliver on its core services (they are also part of the solution – it is clear what the Council's role is versus residents')
- For those who need support, it is easier to consider their whole situation, and they are supported to address the issues that matter to them
- Services are better coordinated at a local level.

Outcomes for Council Members:

- They have clear channels to request action by Council services and to get feedback on outcomes.
- They can shape how local areas should be improved based on their insight and knowledge
- There are clear priorities for each local area, co-created with residents, partners and using data and insight
- Funding/resources for neighbourhoods are distributed transparently on the basis of need.

Outcomes for Council staff:

- There is better knowledge of the local strengths and assets in each area, which can be used to co-create solutions with residents to address complex challenges
- Work can be done earlier to prevent people from falling into crisis and needing more support later on
- Resources are distributed where they will have the most impact, and services are efficient and sustainable
- Staff feel rewarded and better able to support communities with the issues that matter to them.

Part C:

Process evaluation

Where the outcome evaluation looked at what the pilot project achieved, the process evaluation looks at how.

It is illustrated by a Change Process diagram (see Appendix 2), which zooms in on the process part of the Story of Change, illustrating how the inputs delivered the activities, how the activities supported the change principles, and how the change principles led to the short-term outcomes of the pilot project.

Some connections will be stronger than others, but each arrow represents a link that is evidenced by the evaluation data, as described in the sections below. (The different colours are simply to make them more visually distinct.)

6 Inputs

6.1 Governance

Operational and strategic boards were established to support the development and delivery of the project.

The purpose of the Operational Board was to receive updates from the team, provide them with support and guidance, check progress against the project plan and assist in removing barriers to delivery.

The purpose of the Strategic Board was to receive updates on the project, assist in removing barriers to delivery, identify opportunities to further join up activity and ensure that the developing model for locality-based services aligned with the wider ambitions of the City Plan.

The boards contributed to project development and partnership building by providing a forum for partners to discuss specific project-related issues. The Operational Board meetings were focused on the study-and-learn phase and were a way for the frontline team to demonstrate its value by collectively reporting to their managers. The

strategic board had input to the local evaluation plan, agreeing the evaluation approach, questions and methods. During the study-and-learn phase when barriers to sharing demand data were experienced, it was not possible to overcome these at the time but discussions have continued with a view to revisiting the exercise.

6.2 Lead organisation

The project was led by Cobalt Housing, a registered provider of social housing with its headquarters in Croxteth (providing a venue for the Hub) and with significant stock in Croxteth and the neighbouring wards of Fazakerley and Norris Green. Cobalt is committed to being a catalyst for positive change in the communities it serves.

Liverpool City Council had chosen Croxteth as the focus for its PfPP application in part because of previous partnership work with Cobalt in the area, including the regeneration of the Stonebridge estate with funding from the 2017 DCLG Enabling Fund.

Due in part to constrained Council capacity at the time, it was agreed that Cobalt would lead the project, providing financial and risk management using its existing frameworks. The other reason was its position as an established anchor organisation within Croxteth, committed to a continued presence beyond the lifetime of the pilot project.

Cobalt had a change of chief executive during the project period and both individuals have been supportive of the project. The organisation was praised for its leadership by both strategic and operational interviewees, being seen as committed to the locality and innovative in its approach.

"I think they want to help the community they serve and not just be seen as a housing association."

“Cobalt have historically and particularly during Covid demonstrated that they’re willing to go the extra mile...and we needed a local, trusted organisation to be able to hit the ground running instead of just bringing in a team of people that’ll then disappear afterwards.”

6.3 Project coordinator

The PfPP funding was in two tranches: an initial sum was granted on the basis of an expression of interest to support the development of a more detailed delivery plan. Towards the end of this development phase, a project coordinator was appointed to assist with finalising the development plan and then, when that was approved and funding to deliver the pilot was granted, to provide day-to-day management and coordination of the project.

The skills and experience of the coordinator were key to the success of the Good Help Hub. Firstly, to bring partner organisations together and build a consensus around the purpose of the Hub and the gap in service provision that it might fill; secondly, to support the team to design and deliver that service. In doing so, she was able to draw on existing knowledge of the area and a network of contacts.

“[She] had the ability to build partnerships and relationships but keep a real clear steer on timeframes and milestones and deliverability and keep the project clearly focused on where it needed to go.”

“She was good at letting us do what we thought should be done, pulled us in if we needed pulling in, but never clipped our wings.”

The role was part-time and the coordinator was at the Hub three to four days per week during the 6-month pilot period covering design and delivery. Not being there full-time had the effect of reinforcing the co-production ethos, encouraging the team to take initiative; inevitably, this responsibility brought some added pressure for them.

That the coordinator was freelance rather than an employee of one of the partner organisations was seen as mostly advantageous in terms of being less constrained by inter-organisational politics and competing workplace demands, while the ongoing active leadership of Cobalt provided additional weight to requests for support.

6.4 Staff

Hub staff were provided by the partner organisations at no cost to the project. A core team comprising staff from Cobalt, the Council and the Police was established for the study-and-learn phase.

It was difficult initially to persuade organisations to commit staff ‘caseload and badge free’,

particularly when the first 12 weeks was allocated to planning and developing the project, not delivery. The project did not offer funding to backfill posts, because as a pilot it aimed to test whether outcomes could be improved not by increasing resources, but by deploying them in a different way.

However, the core team was joined by others from a wide range of public and voluntary sector organisations as the project progressed and the case for involvement in the pilot was made.

One of the core team was full-time on the project throughout. Other staff were part-time but committed to regular days each week, which was important to the effectiveness of both the study-and-learn and operational phases. While this resource was generally sufficient (two staff per day being a minimum), it was stretched at times necessitating prioritisation of direct service provision over the supporting administration and communication.

That said, describing the Hub team solely in resource terms would not do justice to the considerable personal commitment and motivation they brought to the project, and their ability to work together.

“It’s a synergy. We work very well as a team, we sort of know what one can do and what the other can’t do.”

“I want to be able to look at it and think to myself, you were involved in that, and take pride from it and the people who I’ve worked with.”

Individuals were put forward by their employers with no criteria set by the project. It was noted that it was fortunate a good balance of skills was achieved, and that role descriptions and person specifications might help manage this with the aim of ensuring sufficient partnership-working and customer-facing skills while supporting the involvement and development of individuals with less experience in those areas.

The team found the work highly rewarding but also challenging. It was recognised as the project progressed that ongoing training and support for frontline staff was required. People were coming into the Hub with serious problems, poor mental health and often in some distress. While staff underwent safeguarding training before the Hub opened, a need for additional expert input was identified including Mental Health First Aid training, alongside support for staff wellbeing.

“We’re getting people with complex mental health problems and we do need some kind of official mental health training, because it can be overwhelming for us as well.”

“You do get drawn in, and invested in people...I’ve found that I wasn’t prepared for the level of personal involvement...it feels like I’m becoming more of a social worker.”

There was interest from the local community in volunteering with the Hub, initially in helping out at events like the litter picks but subsequently more involved roles such as being a Hub advocate in the neighbourhood, or running activities from the Hub. While this was a welcome development, there were resource implications for the coordinator and team in vetting (e.g. DBS checks), supervising and supporting volunteers.

6.5 Budget

The PfPP funding provided a budget for the project, from which expenditure included:

- Venue running costs
- Service delivery costs
- Coordinator
- Evaluation
- Events such as community litter picks and Bacon Butty Fridays
- Croxteth Speaks
- Discretionary budget for the Hub team.

The Hub team were able to draw on a budget for use at their discretion to assist clients with specific items; one example was a course run by the Hub showing how to use slow cookers to make cheap and healthy meals, where each participant was given their own slow cooker. Partners including Liverpool in Work and NHS social prescribers also had access to budgets for things like bus passes or interview clothes.

6.6 Venue

The venue for the Hub was an area within the reception of Cobalt's offices, which are located on the edge of Croxteth ward, close to its boundary with Norris Green.

Using Cobalt premises had the advantage of existing footfall, meaning that Hub services were being accessed from the outset. Cobalt is the main registered provider in Croxteth, where 36% of properties are social housing, so its premises were already widely known. However, one interviewee believed that some residents may have been put off attending the Hub, believing it to be for Cobalt tenants only. Around 70% of Hub visitors were Cobalt tenants (based on monitoring data reported at the end of March 2023).

Cobalt has significant stock in Fazakerley and Norris Green, which combined with the location of the Hub probably contributed to the high proportion of visitors from those areas, enabling the Hub to serve a wider population, although some queried whether it was in the ideal location for Croxteth residents, being at the edge of the ward.

The building is well appointed and well maintained, but there were some issues with the size and configuration of the spaces used by the

Hub. As well as a seating area in reception, Cobalt made available three small adjacent rooms for private conversations and a large staff kitchen and eating area for Bacon Butty Fridays.

The Hub quickly attracted a small group of regular visitors who valued the social contact it gave them and would spend large amounts of time there. Without a separate area for them to sit, this was disruptive to both Cobalt's reception and the operation of the Hub. For example, it was difficult for Hub staff to have initial conversations with clients in a way that was sensitive to their needs. The private rooms were used by the visiting services to give help and advice and were often fully occupied.

When group activities began to be offered by the Hub they tended to use the staff eating area which, although people were accommodating, was also not ideal for either Hub clients or Cobalt staff. In balance to this, the Hub was able to assist Cobalt in dealing with certain housing enquiries, such as applications to Property Pool (the register for social and affordable homes in Liverpool and other parts of the city region).

"We outgrew the space within a couple of weeks."

7 Activities

See the diagram on p.20 for a timeline of activities.

7.1 Developing the model

In early 2022, once Cobalt Housing had been selected to be the lead partner in delivering the project, a project coordinator was commissioned and there began a period of working with other partner organisations to develop the model for the Good Help Hub.

An initial stakeholder workshop in February 2022 asked:

- What have we delivered previously?
- What worked and what did not?
- What do we want to do now, and why?
- How could we do it?
- What difference will it make?

It concluded, in essence, that there was a need to improve coordination of and access to services, and to deliver services locally.

There was an existing multi-agency workforce development programme known as Good Help, and the PfPP funding provided an opportunity to test its principles in a 'live' setting.

Good Help had been commissioned by Liverpool City Council and developed over three years in recognition that, regardless of the service provider, how they are funded or who their client group is,

everyone deserves ‘good help’. The programme is delivered over three, non-consecutive days that focus on engagement, collaboration and communication, and it is rooted in an asset-based way of working.

The Hub approach was refined over three further partner workshops. A draft project plan was produced, setting out how the Hub could work in practice and key actions.

It was agreed to build on existing initiatives and partnerships within the area and bring these together into a more coherent offer, with the aim of providing ‘scaffolding’ around universal services with an all-age offer of support targeted at people not currently known to or accessing services. This would provide a ‘step down’ resource to partners so that individuals or families experiencing more complex issues could continue to receive support.

Partner organisations were asked to take a leap of faith, and commit staff to the team, and a 12-week study-and-learn programme for the team was developed.

This phase of the project took longer than expected. The PfPP application process did not allow sufficient time to have the in-depth discussions with local partners needed to fully understand the services, partnerships and initiatives already operating in Croxteth and the added value that the pilot project could bring. So, these took place after the funding had been

secured, and resulted in changes to the model that had initially been proposed. Whereas the funding application had envisaged identifying and working with a cohort of the most at-risk individuals and families, it was now understood that there were multi-agency mechanisms already in place to serve that need, and the focus of the pilot shifted instead to early intervention as shown by the Integrated Model diagram (see Appendix 3).

By the end of this phase, if not at the start, the development of the Hub was being informed by and benefiting from the foundational work carried out through Our Croxteth, which had seen the partners – the Police and NHS Mersey Care in particular – strengthen their relationships with each other and with the supported community organisations funded through the participatory budgeting process.

Lessons from this phase included that time needs to be taken to build relationships so as to avoid miscommunication around the aims of neighbourhood working, that new initiatives can sometimes be seen as ‘competition’, which might be alleviated by having a clear vision from the outset, and that a more coordinated approach might be enabled in future by having ‘someone in charge’ locally to provide a focal point for existing and emerging service delivery within a locality.



Project timeline (adapted from Rachel Flood Associates)

The coordinator role was seen as important throughout the pilot project but was perhaps most crucial during this development phase:

“Nobody sees what goes behind...that planning, that coordinating, that networking, nobody sees all that stuff...without that, you wouldn't have had that partnership, you wouldn't have had that buy-in.”

The concept of co-production – individuals, communities and frontline staff working together to help design and deliver effective services – was central to the Good Help workforce development programme and hence to the Good Help Hub. An important mechanism for putting this into practice was the 12-week study-and-learn programme.

It was a ‘hard sell’ to partners, asking them to provide staff for the study-and-learn phase when there was no expectation of delivery during this time, only that they arrived caseload and badge-free and ready to take a lead in developing the Hub service. With the PfPP programme being time-limited, there came a point where Cobalt as lead partner took the decision to go ahead with the staff resource they had secured, even though it was less than hoped for. As the project progressed, however, more partners came on board.

“It is a little bit like a bus stop...people will either get on at the terminal, or they'll jump on the next bus stop because they can see it's getting full, or you'll get people that get off the bus because it's not for them, it's not the right journey...for us, we were on that journey, and that's the decision that we made.”

7.2 Study-and-learn

The agreed model began with a study-and-learn phase with the purposes of developing the team, and together building an understanding of local assets and needs, before designing the service in detail.

An intensive 12-week programme had been put together by the coordinator. The fact that many team members were only allocated to the project part-time did present some challenges in delivering this, but it was valued by the team and their respective organisations were also able to see the benefits.

“It does take some considerable commitment from the organisation...because it's not even just the direct resource of that person that's going in there, it's the impact back on the service and their capacity and demand... you're taking away some of your direct benefits to invest in something that's going to have a bigger impact.”

In terms of length, most felt the 12 weeks was a minimum. Some felt longer was needed because it had not been possible to complete all planned elements of the programme and it felt pressurised

at times, although others suggested it could be condensed further in order to open to the public sooner.

Developing the team

This element of the programme included:

- Team building activities
- Overview of the PfPP programme
- Overview of key existing services
- Good Help training
- Safeguarding training.

The team bonded quickly and were able to practise working collaboratively. That is not to say additional time on team building would not have been beneficial, since it was found that team members arrived with considerable differences in their respective organisational cultures.

“We got to know each other, and we got to know each other's capabilities as well, before we opened the Hub.”

“[It's] been really meaningful...that soft work about getting to know each other, building relationships as well as getting that level of training and competency...you're learning together...everybody gets to a benchmarkable level of understanding about some of the key principles of collaborative working.”

The training was effective, but time constraints meant not all the Good Help training was delivered, and variations in the availability of team members meant not everyone benefited to the same degree. While there was a need for additional training – and this was picked up later in the project – team members saw benefits in ‘learning by doing’ during this initial phase.

“We were so busy setting up the Hub...a lot of it was picking up things as we went...[but it] helped us with our motivation and engagement and the fact that we don't want it to fail...we want to work at this, we want to get it better.”

Understanding local assets

An asset-based approach places emphasis on people's and communities' assets alongside their needs, and is an important principle of the Good Help programme that informed the study-and-learn phase.

Following their week-long induction, the team was tasked with understanding existing resources in Croxteth, through:

- Engaging with providers
- Engaging with residents
- Creating an asset map
- Designing and undertaking a survey
- Developing and delivering an ‘UnConference’.

The asset map was a large, physical map of the area, showing what services were available, where and when. As well as increasing their knowledge of the services they might signpost to, it enabled the team to start thinking about the gaps that the Hub might seek to fill. It created a resource that can be used at city level to help consider gaps and duplication in provision with a view to strategic allocation of resources.

The survey took an appreciative inquiry approach, asking residents what they love about Croxteth, what could be better, what they could do to make it better, and what others could do. It was completed by over 250 people.

An UnConference is a method for organising and running a conference where those attending create the agenda on the day. Attended by over 80 stakeholders, the event yielded further information on 'what a Good Life looks like in Croxteth' and how the Good Help Hub could support this. Visual minutes by a local artist became a focal-point artwork for the Hub when it opened.

The positivity of the asset-based approach was effective in gathering information and raising local awareness of the Hub while also being motivating for the team. Residents and local organisations were engaged through the survey and by the team being out and about talking to people in the area. Direct representation of residents at the UnConference would have been an additional input to service design, but its format was successful in 'capturing imagination' and bringing partner organisations on board.

"The initial 12 weeks were a real learning curve, and I don't think that the project would have been successful without doing that 12 weeks of research because it was invaluable...stepping out there and seeing who we've got on our doorstep and how passionate people are out there and what community groups there are, it was a real, real eye-opener."

"It was important to know exactly what was in the area, everything from the counsellors to the shopkeepers, because if you don't have these people on board...you can't just drop the Hub in an area."

Understanding local needs

The local conversations and survey, while focused on assets, also provided information about needs, and the intention was to supplement this intelligence with data on the demand that was being experienced by the main partner organisations.

Organisations were asked to share anonymised data relating to the demand for a specific week in June 2022. A Memorandum of Understanding was produced to provide assurances around how the

data would be used and for what purposes. The aims were to understand:

- The level of demand on services from Croxteth residents
- How many of these cases met the threshold for a specialist service or statutory response
- How many were people already known to the service and whether they were presenting with the same or different issues
- How many were dealt with by existing services and what was the outcome (e.g. no further action, referral to another agency)
- How many did not meet the threshold for a specialist or statutory response but still needed more than could be provided by universal services.

A workshop with data leads was held, which attempted to draw together a data set for a Good Life. However, obtaining the data was difficult because the work involved in providing it was deemed not to be a priority by some partners at the time. Overall, the task was unsuccessful and the team relied instead on reviewing available data from the 2021 census, Indices of Multiple Deprivation, ward profiles, Joint Strategic Needs Assessments etc.

"[The demand data] is probably the biggest challenge we had, but could've given us the biggest insight to what services are needed...so we could've advertised that, and maybe got more people through the door."

Since then, partners have expressed a willingness to revisit the exercise and make the necessary resources available. This additional data would not only help tailor the services provided by a future hub but would also provide a baseline for measuring change at locality level, a hypothesis being that some demands will increase as a hub starts to engage with people not currently accessing services, but that in time the preventative approach will result in an overall reduction.

Designing the service

A fundamental aim of the study-and-learn phase was that the team designed the service that the Hub would provide, based on their research into local assets and needs.

The team found there were many services locally and availability was not necessarily an issue. However, these services were not fully meeting community needs, which might be because of what they were offering or because they were not sufficiently well known. It was also realised that space was at a premium for voluntary organisations and that offering a venue free-of-charge for them to deliver sessions, and other low-level support such as printing flyers, would help them continue their services.

The team was given some basic parameters: don't break the law, don't blow the budget and do no harm; and, the Hub should be open to the public and should support the concept of locality-based services. Within those, team members were encouraged to design and deliver whatever they felt was needed. Together, they agreed the principles for how the Hub would work, which were:

- Listen more, assess less
- Have strength-based conversations
- Share data on cases to build a full picture of what life is like for that individual or family
- Take a common-sense approach to problems
- Encourage people to help themselves
- Focus on connecting people with what will make their life work without the Hub, i.e. ongoing public services
- Deal with issues at point of contact, pulling in resources rather than referring on where possible
- Above all else, focus on relationships.

Having spoken with service providers and secured a range of services to be provided from the Hub, the team decided to group similar services together on themed days. Some flexibility was required, but in general this helped attract further providers as they could clearly see how they might fit within the overall Hub offer. The agreed timetable was as shown in the box on the right.

Team members embraced the responsibility of co-designing the Hub despite the pressure that went with it, which was felt particularly by the full-time staff and had a number of causes. For example, the challenges around the demand data exercise meant extra time was spent gathering data, reducing available time for training, which could have been delivered more efficiently if partner organisations had been able to commit staff to more days per week. The proposed offer quickly expanded leading to some concerns around the number of service providers engaged and whether these could be effectively coordinated so that the overall quality of service remained high.

One way that concerns were managed was through a pre-mortem. Led by the coordinator, this was essentially a collaborative risk assessment, which involved spending time identifying up front all the things that could go wrong and what could be done about them.

The study-and-learn programme was recognised as crucial to the overall principle of co-production and the benefits that brought.

"They really, really, really bought into it, more than I've ever seen anyone buy into anything I've ever delivered in the past. Because we didn't tell them what it was, we just gave them parameters and some tasks, and then what they turned that into was because of them."

Hub timetable

Monday: Employment and skills

Jobcentre Plus, We Are With You, Beautiful New Beginnings, Myerscough College, Adult Learning, Liverpool in Work

Tuesday: Housing and cost of living

Cobalt Housing, Norris Green Debt Advice, Energy Plus Project, Partners Credit Union, volunteer

Wednesday: Health and wellbeing

Mary Seacole House, Liverpool City Council Community Connectors, Jobcentre Plus, NHS Social Prescriber, Citizens Advice, Rooting for You (commissioned parental resilience course), volunteer providing free-of-charge holistic therapies

Thursday: Keeping safe

Merseyside Police, volunteer Domestic Abuse Advocate

Friday: Community and environment

Liverpool City Council Community Services and Community Connectors, Transform Lives Company, Our Croxteth Working Group, Jobcentre Plus, ICT Coordinator and volunteer qualified counsellor/coach

...and **Bacon Butty Friday**

7.3 Hub operation

The Hub opened on Monday, 16 January 2023. Its hours were 9.00am to 5.00pm, which were the opening hours of Cobalt's reception. Its operating principles and timetable of themed days had been developed and agreed during the study-and-learn phase (see p.23).

The following is a discussion of the service that was delivered, highlighting key aspects of how the operating principles were put into practice and the supporting administrative activities.

A warm welcome

Anyone arriving at the Hub would be greeted by a team member, offered a hot drink and a biscuit and (usually, unless it was particularly busy) somewhere to sit. Someone from the team would talk to them to find out what services might help them, but with the first priority being to build a good relationship, in the knowledge that they may not feel comfortable discussing all their concerns immediately.

"It's an open house, you don't need to meet anybody's threshold, it literally is an open door. Just come in, have a conversation with us, build that trust up, tell us what's going on. Or don't tell us...it's non-judgemental."

If and when the conversations resulted in a referral to a Hub service, this 'warm welcome' would be extended into a 'warm introduction': the client would be personally introduced to the service provider. Also, if referring to a service provided elsewhere in the locality, such as local support groups, the Hub team would offer to accompany a client the first time that they went.

People responded positively to this approach and there are many examples of clients who gradually opened up about their situations over several visits, often disclosing multiple and complex needs.

An unanticipated consequence was that it brought repeat visitors who were not asking for specific services, but were lonely and isolated, and there was a group for whom the Hub became a social lifeline. Without space for them to sit and chat other than in the small Hub reception area, this began to impact on the experience of other clients, due to the lack of privacy or the sense of a clique. The Hub team managed this by finding local activities and groups the regular visitors could be part of, but this was only partly successful and it was an ongoing task to sensitively balance the needs of the various visitors to the Hub.

"We've outgrown our little reception area, because we're getting...people who are coming back every day. They see us as a safe place...a safe bubble... and there's lots and lots to unpick in their lives."

"If [they're] here, we know [they're] safe. [They're] not causing harm to [themselves] or others. So, I think it's really good in that sense, but I do also think we need to delve deeper and try and find them some other organisations that can give them purpose."

It was decided that the Hub would not be a food bank, although it did help people access food banks and food vouchers. It was clear that some Hub visitors were arriving hungry, and food became an important part of the welcome. Drinks and biscuits were on offer at all times, and at the end of each week there was Bacon Butty Friday, when Cobalt would make available a large upstairs staff kitchen and eating area and residents and service providers alike could call in for a tea or coffee and a bacon or egg roll.

This was hugely popular, helping to bring people into the Hub and to develop a sense of community, while also offering organisations an opportunity to get to know each other and to engage with people informally. For certain service providers, such as gambling addiction counselling, it was particularly useful as a low-key way to increase awareness of their services.

The event became central to the operation of the Hub and was mentioned specifically – and positively – by a majority of those interviewed.

"The community stuff...Bacon Butty Friday is literally my favourite day...if I could bottle that and spread that across the five days that'd be superb...We've got some volunteering spinning out...we set up a Knit and Natter group because of that."

"People really love coming together over food. And sometimes I think as well...someone thinks, 'Okay, if I'm going somewhere and I'm really anxious about it, I can just sit there with my cup of tea and my bacon butty and I don't have to talk to anyone', but then slowly but surely they'll come out of themselves."

One front door

Crucial to the Hub principles of joined-up services, delivered locally, was the idea of 'one front door': dealing with issues at the point of contact.

In practice, this meant 'pulling in' services to be delivered within the Hub, rather than referring people to a service that was elsewhere. The timetable of Hub services was put together during the study-and-learn phase, during which the team had also developed a network of contacts they could call on for additional services. Some of these services became regulars on the timetable once it became apparent there was an ongoing need for them. Services within the Hub operated without thresholds, i.e. help was available to anyone who needed it without them having to meet certain criteria.

In being centred on the needs of the person rather than the service, the 'one front door' approach also supported the focus on a Good Life.

"The main aim was to give everybody support when they needed it – not further down the line, not a phone number, not somewhere to go."

"It has been about that instant resolution. So once somebody has disclosed a problem, an issue, or a need for some support, advice, we've gone, 'wait there, we'll find it for you.'"

It was facilitated by having services grouped together on themed days:

"It's allowed similar services to link in with similar services and work as part of a multi-agency approach. They had a case the other day where they had to go and get a mental health team involved, but because we had a social prescriber here and we had a PCSO, they helped."

Information sharing

As part of joining up services, the Hub team was encouraged to share information on clients in instances where it would enable a more holistic and therefore more effective response, and there is at least one example of this approach having been beneficial. Team members were conscious of the need to respect the privacy of clients, and to share only the minimum information, carefully and confidentially.

These informal conversations about individuals were not expressly covered by the Memorandum of Understanding on data sharing between the main partner organisations, which was intended more to facilitate sharing of large, anonymised data sets for the purposes of analysing local need and demand. And while the integrated care teams have agreements and processes in place for patient information sharing, these also did not cover Hub activities unless a client was formally referred to an ICT.

Interviewees saw benefits to information sharing, including that not doing so could in some circumstances put clients or staff at risk, but also had concerns, suggesting that lack of clarity and confidence around the issue remain barriers to effective joined-up services.

"[There's] a learning point around how we iron out those things in practice...it can be a little bit difficult navigating some of the confidentiality issues."

Administration and communication

During the study-and-learn phase, a great deal of effort was put into developing the Hub timetable and raising awareness of what it would be offering. Once the Hub opened, the majority of staff time was concentrated on providing the service. The ongoing need for resources allocated

to administration and communication (including ongoing outreach) was a strong theme emerging from the interviews, particularly from those in operational roles.

The importance of consistency was stressed by several interviewees. Clients for whom it may have taken considerable courage or effort to come into the Hub needed to be confident that the help they were expecting would be available. The timetable of themed days was very useful but it was not a case of 'set and forget'; it took ongoing management. For example, occasionally, timetabled service providers did not turn up on time and needed chasing up. There were changes to the timetable, such as new services being added, that needed to be communicated.

However, consistency did not mean rigidity. By the end of the 3-month pilot period, a pattern had emerged where some days were much busier than others and it was helpful to review and adjust the timetable for the following 3-month extension.

It was reported that there were service providers who agreed to have a regular presence in the Hub but quickly reduced it due to apparent low demand, whereas with more promotion this may not have been the case. One idea was occasional days around more specific themes such as smoking cessation or dealing with anxiety, which might bring together organisations that did not feel able to commit to a weekly presence, but would require considerable organisation.

The need for regular ongoing communication with service providers was highlighted, particularly the various small voluntary organisations who were not part of the project governance structure, as well as with part-time team members who otherwise needed to get up to speed on their days in the Hub.

Social media channels were set up comprising Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. These proved very useful alongside printed flyers and timetables, to communicate what was going on at the Hub and encourage people to visit. It was felt that they reached an audience who may not have otherwise heard about the Hub, and provided an alternative way for people to make initial contact, which for some people was preferable to face-to-face.

"I think the use of social media has been really good...we've got engagement from people who are maybe...not going to come out. Because as much as the Hub is engaging with people, they're the people that want to be engaged with because they're willing to go out and go to the Hub. Social media has managed to bypass that a little bit... I've had people message me...and I've been able to give them the advice there and then."

"You do get [people] that are only on social media...that's their comfort zone. But I have seen [people] who say, 'Okay, I'll come in'. For instance,

we had a really lovely lady who said she had a load of wool. Her mum had dementia, she had a load of wool that her mum no longer used. And I was like, 'Well, if you want to drop it off at the Hub... Bring your mum in, like Bacon Butty Friday or bring her in in the week and we'll have a natter with her and we'll see if there's....' and that translates then. Having that has been really helpful, I think, to getting the word out to people."

Social media was managed by a couple of the Hub team members, who fitted it in around dealing with clients. There was a general feeling that even more value could have been gleaned from social media, and communications in general, with more time available to spend not just on generating content for the Hub but also on liaising with partners to leverage their considerable communications resources, including long-established social media accounts with large numbers of followers.

Ongoing outreach

Once the Hub opened, the team had little time available for ongoing awareness raising, other than via social media and a few community events such as litter picks. It was soon recognised that there were many people (older residents in particular) who were not reached by these methods and that ongoing outreach would be beneficial. With only two full-time team members

it was difficult to do, because someone being out and about in the neighbourhood would likely leave the Hub understaffed.

A further way to publicise the Hub might have been for some of the partner activities locally – such as Environmental Services initiatives – to be badged as Good Help Hub, but this too would have been a draw on the limited administrative resources available.

"That first 12 weeks, we were all about that being visual, being out there, waving our flag about the Good Help Hub. And then we launched, and we were...here. And we'd forgotten to go out there. So that's definitely a lesson learnt."

7.4 Croxteth Speaks

A proportion of the PfPP funding was allocated to the Croxteth Speaks initiative, commissioned by Culture Liverpool (part of Liverpool City Council) and coordinated by arts organisation All Things Considered.

This was a 6-month collaborative, socially-engaged arts-based project in Croxteth to examine the community's perception of the area, to explore ideas around social mobility, and to recognise and celebrate the potential of the community and the individuals within it.



Knit and Natter at Bacon Butty Friday

Working with three identified and targeted groups of young people aged 12, it engaged with a wide range of Croxteth residents through workshops to examine and explore:

- How you identify yourself based on the place you live
- How the place you live influences your ambitions and aspirations
- How creative interventions can support regeneration in specific communities.

The aim was that by the end of the project, participants would be able to identify and articulate the positives within the community, the need for change and be empowered to make change.

All Things Considered are a socially-engaged, female-led theatre company who create work for and with communities and partner organisations. They engaged local artists to work with young people on arts activities including film-making, photography, model-making, DJ-ing and dancing, exploring how they feel about their neighbourhood and how it affects their sense of identity.

The films and other artworks were presented at an event at Croxteth Hall in July 2023, with a challenge to the Council and other public sector organisations to think about how they might respond to the concerns and wishes of the young people who participated.

7.5 Monitoring and evaluation

There was an ongoing process of data collection and analysis by the team, which served two main purposes: project monitoring, i.e. the initial design and then continuous improvement of the Hub service, and informing this evaluation, carried out at the end of the pilot phase.

Both monitoring and evaluation have recognised that the Hub team, as practitioners, are experts in their own experience, which others involved in the project, including the external evaluators, can learn from.

Data collection and analysis

During the study-and-learn phase, the team were out and about in Croxteth, knocking on doors and talking to people, collecting informal data in that way. They also designed a survey, which was completed by over 250 people. It took an appreciative inquiry approach, focusing on what people love about where they live and what they can do to be better neighbours. They produced an asset map of Croxteth, based on their extensive research with and within the community. When the UnConference was held, visual minutes were produced by a local artist. The resulting artwork is rich with information on the area as seen through the eyes of the project stakeholders who attended

the event, and it was framed and displayed in the Hub as a reminder of what it was trying to achieve.

These data sources, together with the Thrive survey of local residents, which had been carried out earlier in 2022 by Liverpool John Moores University on behalf of Cobalt, provided a picture of the area that informed the design of the Hub service.

At the start of the operational phase, the team designed a system for monitoring visitors to the Hub, using an iPad. They then kept records of visits including postcode, primary reason for visit, and notes on the outcome, i.e. support provided and any planned follow-up. This information was analysed to provide real-time feedback on the Hub operation, which was used to refine it; for example, to identify additional services that should be sought and added to the Hub timetable, and, at the end of the pilot phase, to inform the revision of the timetable for the extension of the Hub operation.

Evidence gaps

There were a couple of areas where additional data would have provided a fuller picture of the project, for both monitoring and evaluation.

One was the demand data exercise carried out during the study-and-learn phase. It sought data from partners on the demand from within Croxteth for various services, but was largely unsuccessful in obtaining the data requested, which was intended to inform the design of the Hub service by improving understanding of the area's needs.

Another was in measuring the outcomes for individuals. Based on the qualitative data from interviews with project stakeholders and the case studies of Hub clients, it is clear that individuals saw positive changes in their lives as a result of the Hub. However, there are ways of trying to measure such changes, for example using distance-travelled tools.

Chat for Change is one such tool, and training in its use forms part of the Good Help workforce development programme. It provides a way for a client, in discussion with a practitioner, to 'score' aspects of their lives across three themes:

- Self – how people feel about themselves
- Support – how they feel about those around them
- Place – how they feel about where they live.

This can then be revisited at a later date to see if scores have changed.

It had been planned to use the tool with Hub clients but this did not happen because the Good Help training was not delivered in full, due to lack of time initially because of the knock-on effects of the difficulties with the demand data exercise and subsequently, once the Hub was open, because

the team was dealing with more complex issues than had been anticipated.

For the same reason, it was not always easy to find time to complete the iPad monitoring. The system was refined as the operational phase progressed, for example printing hard copy questionnaires as it was sometimes quicker and easier to record the data this way.

Some partner organisations kept their own records, usually to comply with their respective funding requirements. These have not formed part of this evaluation, but could provide a useful extra dimension with some work to resolve issues around data sharing, double counting etc.

Interviewees considered there was a need, on projects such as this, to try to collect and analyse data beyond simply numbers, but also that it was not necessarily easy to do so.

“A [client-reported outcome] would be really useful as a measure in this case...because it could be so different for each individual that comes through the door.”

“It’s hard to measure community confidence, isn’t it? We can go and do a load of surveys but getting that rich data around how people feel and perceptions, it’s difficult.”

8 Contextual factors

There were a number of factors external to the project that were either enablers or barriers to the change process.

8.1 Programme constraints

The PfPP application process did not allow sufficient time for the in-depth partner discussions needed to develop and refine the proposal, leaving significant work to do after funding was secured.

“It was a very tight application process from a time perspective, and some of these things naturally preclude the ability to try and pull partners in and get them all involved.”

“When the time pressures were gone from trying to submit a bid and we could sit and look at it in the clear light of day, it was like, that’s not what was needed...we needed to almost rewrite the submission that we’d done...bring key partners in to try and develop what this might look like with them.”

The impact of the time constraints at application stage was acknowledged by DLUHC, who did then allow in response some flexibility in how and when the funding was spent. However, the pilot project still needed to be delivered in a time frame aligned with the national PfPP programme, which

placed some pressure on staff, especially during the study-and-learn phase:

“Time restrictions, yeah...there was pressure all the way...it was about how quickly can you get this done, but I was more interested in the quality of how we were going to get what we were trying to get done, done within time, if that makes sense.”

8.2 Organisational change

The project had to adapt to evolving partner priorities and staff changes, which took time and skill from those involved. This was at central as well as local level: there were three different DLUHC representatives assigned during the lifetime of the project.

“[The] changes of central PfPP team member has made it more difficult...to make and maintain those relationships with the government departments and we might have been able to do more if we hadn’t had those changes. Because obviously each new team member then has to understand who’s who and how does everyone fit together.”

Since June 2021, Liverpool City Council has been subject to a ‘best value intervention’ from central government, who appointed commissioners to exercise certain functions of the Council for a period of three years. Several senior positions including Chief Executive were filled on an interim basis during the project period, although permanent appointments have now been made.

Although the Council appointed Cobalt to lead the project, its internal upheaval meant it was not able to commit consistent resource to its own role as project sponsor, which could have helped the project run more smoothly, both during the development phases by assisting Cobalt in bringing local partners together around shared aims, and throughout by facilitating joined-up working with Council departments.

“I think it lost a little bit because it didn’t have that Council presence saying ‘Come on partners, this is why you need to do it.’”

“Things like getting the appropriate level of information and data, and getting contacts and access into Housing and different elements of the Council, were more of a challenge than they should have been.”

8.3 Other initiatives

As already stated, it took time to understand the existing and emerging service provision locally, and to collaboratively develop a model for the Hub that fitted within that local landscape in a way that added value. While it would have been ideal if this partnership building had been done prior to the funding application, the focus it was eventually given led, ultimately, to a clearer vision

for the Hub that benefited from the work of other initiatives, notably Our Croxteth.

Our Croxteth was a participatory budgeting initiative through which local partners were already working in partnership. NHS Mersey Care and the Police, in particular, had built a strong relationship locally as a direct result, which was helpful to and further developed by the Good Help Hub.

An important aspect of developing the model was understanding how the Hub could add value to the existing service provision in the area, avoiding duplication and making best use of the available resources. Soon after the PfPP funding was announced, Liverpool City Council was also successful in obtaining funding for Family Hubs serving parts of the city including Croxteth, with a remit that had areas of overlap with the PfPP programme and the emerging Good Help Hub model. While the Family Hub announcement was welcome additional investment, it added to the complexity of defining the focus for the PfPP project.

“A lack of joining up nationally, with no discussions on how this funding could be aligned with existing initiatives, means we are left locally to do this (and partnership working takes time!)”

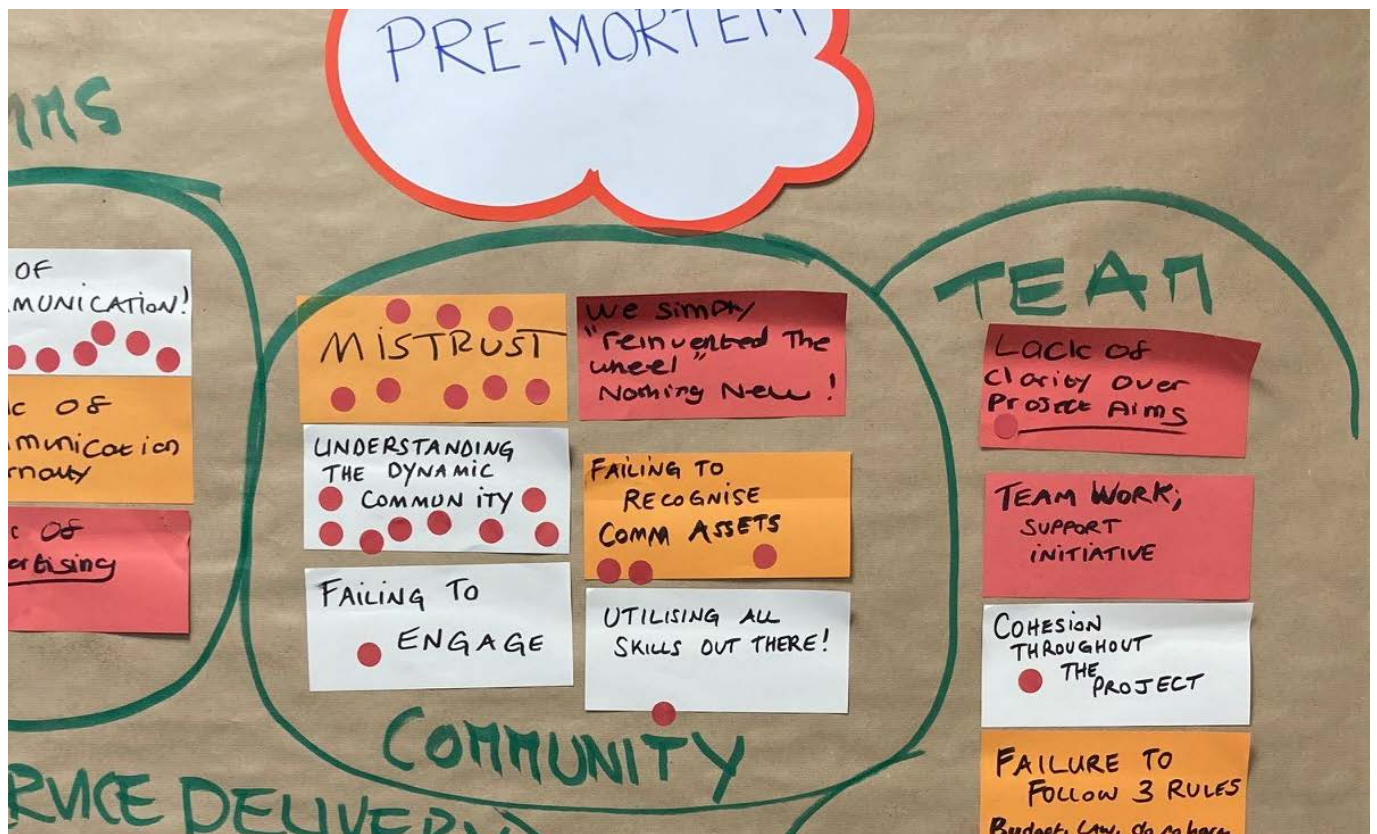
8.4 Socio-economic context

Of course, all time-limited projects operate within and often in response to a specific socio-economic context. In the case of the Good Help Hub, aspects of the national context that have significantly influenced the project include austerity, the Covid-19 pandemic and, most recently, the cost-of-living crisis.

The cost-of-living crisis, experienced by the UK since late 2021,²⁰ had a very direct, visible impact on the project in the breadth and depth of poverty-related issues clients were experiencing. Food and fuel poverty were evident and the Hub, as well as signposting to relevant advice and support, provided immediate practical help by offering hot drinks and a warm hub daily, and its weekly Bacon Butty Fridays.

Possibly linked to the general economic instability, Hub staff dealt with frequent requests for help with Property Pool applications from clients at risk of homelessness due to receiving a Section 21 notice (no-fault eviction notice).

After-effects of the Covid-19 pandemic were seen in several aspects of the project. The extent of mental health need that the Hub found itself addressing was attributed by some interviewees to increased isolation as a result of the Covid lockdowns, further exacerbated by changes in the availability of services post-pandemic.



Pre-mortem during study-and-learn phase

“Mental health and loneliness and social isolation is just...it’s got worse since Covid. I think Covid’s caused a lot of it...the isolation side of things, anyway...People are just about starting now to want to go out and about, but a lot of the groups and places that they had pre-Covid don’t exist anymore.”

There were also suggestions that changes to working practices brought about by the pandemic shaped the Hub in positive ways, for example, that there was greater recognition of the importance of face-to-face service provision, and even that the move towards hybrid working made it easier for organisations to consider co-locating staff within the Hub.

It was noted that, in Liverpool, the move away from previous models of partnership and neighbourhood working had been in part a reaction to the austerity measures imposed by central government from 2010 onwards.

9 Change principles

The previous sections have discussed how the inputs delivered the activities, and how the activities supported the change principles. This section is the final link in the chain, and looks at how the change principles contributed towards the short-term outcomes of the pilot project.

All of the principles are important to the model for locality-based services that has been an outcome. Arguably, previous models of neighbourhood working have provided joined-up services within localities, but the emphasis the pilot has placed on co-production and a Good Life, and finding out what that means for individuals and communities, is something new.

9.1 Joined-up services

Firstly, what do we mean by ‘joined-up’? One definition is ‘combined in a useful and effective way’.²¹ In the context of the Good Help Hub, ‘joined-up services’ means services acting together in a way that is useful and effective, for the benefit of individuals, the locality and the city.

We have seen that individual clients of the Hub benefited from improved access to services, in part due to the holistic approach taken. That is, understanding that they may need help from more than one service, that the different inputs may be needed simultaneously or in sequence, and sharing information between services as far as possible.

“It’s about delivering a no-wrong door project... where you can go one place and know you’re not going to be like, ‘oh well, I’m really sorry, we don’t deal with these things, we only deal with broken legs’...Actually, we deal with you as a person...we will try and bring in the resources to support you.”

At locality level, services working together from the planning stages of the Hub onwards allowed them to learn from each other, creating a clearer vision for the design and operation of the Hub, leading to improved knowledge of the area, and contributing to improved ways of working that in some cases are organisational changes that will have benefits across the city.

Joined-up communication was important to support the joined-up delivery. Partner organisations perceived that working together as the Good Help Hub and promoting their services under that new, and therefore neutral, banner helped improve their relationships with the local community.

“The other thing about calling it the Good Help Hub was that...it wasn’t Mersey Care’s, it wasn’t Cobalt’s, it wasn’t the Council’s. And I do think that’s one of the things that has been one of its critical success factors really.”

Better knowledge of other services fostered creative approaches to local problems, with the potential for multiple, linked benefits, for example:

“The allotment...it’s desperate for volunteers... there’s only two and it was going into disrepair a bit and we’ve had a number of complaints. So, I’m going to create a flyer looking for volunteers, but I’m going to try and put a bit of emphasis on, you know, it’s good for your mind, it’s good for wellbeing, and it’s good exercise as well. [We’re going to speak to the NHS and] see if they’ve got any volunteers.”

As the Hub project found in its early stages, initiatives to join up services are not inherently efficient; there is still a risk of overlap and duplication – or even conflict – between such initiatives, and of services being stretched too thinly. Good leadership and communication were required to define a clear vision for the Hub and how it related to existing local service provision.

The core partners in the Hub were not new to partnership working. It was felt that services had become less joined-up in recent years, perhaps as a result of austerity, and for several of those involved in the Hub, the project represented a welcome return to a more collaborative approach, which they had previously found to be effective.

Therefore, the Hub experience refreshed and reinforced partnership principles in partner organisations, building on other work such as Our Croxteth and systems thinking approaches, and offering an opportunity to put principles into practice, for example ideas around shared outcomes:

“Potentially, you’re taking away some of your direct benefits to invest in something that’s going to have a bigger impact...which may not necessarily directly impact on your organisational

outcomes, but will deliver against system outcomes."

Since several of the project partners operate across the city, these benefits extend beyond the project area.

There were some barriers to joined-up working, and therefore to its contribution to positive outcomes, the main ones being:

- Different organisational cultures, discussed under 'Developing the team' on p.21
- Different compliance requirements and attitudes, particularly around information sharing, discussed on p.25
- Programme constraints, discussed on p.28
- Organisational change, discussed on p.28
- Lack of joining up by central government, discussed under 'Other initiatives' on p.28.

"Sometimes, as organisations, especially when we're under stress, we will throw up the barriers, we'll pull the drawbridge up from that kind of joint working and focus on delivering what we're commissioned for and that's it."

9.2 Delivered locally

Past models of neighbourhood working in Liverpool have aimed to join up service provision at neighbourhood level without necessarily having a physical local access point, open to the public, such as that provided by the Good Help Hub.

Meeting clients face-to-face, in their own neighbourhood, helped to remove or reduce a range of barriers to access, which are discussed in more detail on p.10, leading to further outcomes of improved networks and connections, and improved health and wellbeing.

"That's part of a very positive thing...people can come. They're not having to ring up a call centre to talk about a leaky tap or the gas isn't working or whatever. They can actually physically come in five days a week."

For some Croxteth residents, if services are not local, they are effectively inaccessible due to insurmountable financial barriers:

"I think that's a priority because, with the cost of living and that, if people have to travel they haven't got the fare...everything is here...you can just walk and they're here, and if they're not here someone will help you make an appointment to see them here...They've got use of the phones...that's a good thing as well, because if you haven't got credit, you've got a problem...it can be a real obstacle, you know."

The informality and immediacy of the Hub, which was enabled by its physical location in the neighbourhood, also helped widen access to services:

"Being available, not just via an appointment or a structured access route, but people being able to get help and organisations being available on a drop-in basis, has been quite helpful for a cohort of patients, citizens, residents, clients...that find that very structured way of delivery of services difficult to engage with."

Partner organisations found that co-locating their staff within the Good Help Hub facilitated sharing of information between organisations, enhancing their knowledge of the area.

"Especially as we're coming out of Covid, and staff in all our organisations are still working in a hybrid way...the opportunity to have that face-to-face connection, and picking things up just by being together in the same room et cetera, I think has been advantageous."

The frontline Hub team reported the same benefit of learning from each other, and also of learning about the locality by being out and about meeting organisations and individuals, particularly during the study-and-learn phase.

Barriers to successful local delivery came in the form of some initial reticence of partners in committing staff to the Hub, and in the limitations of the venue, which although excellent in many ways – warm, attractive, accessible, well-located – was quickly outgrown in terms of the space available.

9.3 Co-produced

Co-production was integral to the Hub model that was developed, and was embodied in the 12-week study-and-learn phase. It led to improved knowledge of the locality, which in turn led to improved access to services for local people, because the design of the Hub was based on that knowledge.

Both strategic and operational team members noted the motivational benefits of this ethos of co-production, finding it enjoyable and rewarding to see their practical knowledge and experience put to use in designing and improving the service, and suggesting that this led to better outcomes.

"It's like it's our little baby this, so we're not clock-watching, we're not getting to ten to five, 'Oh, I'm off in ten minutes', we want to work at this, we want it to get better."

"Quite often we make people fit into frontline delivery, operational delivery, strategic planning and oversight...and it can be frowned upon if you move outside of your remit. I think we're missing a trick there...for those of us that have spanned the whole lot, there is huge satisfaction...in seeing the outcome first-hand and being involved in developing, because then it all aligns."

Croxteth Speaks also had a foundation of co-production: the young people participating produced events and artworks that expressed their feelings about their neighbourhood, through working in collaboration with local artists and organisations, and the project coordinators. One of the artists said:

“So often, projects like this start off really well-meaning but usually end up with adults placing their competitive egos at the front of the room... losing sight of the initial aims. This didn’t happen here. Quite the opposite. The adults in the room had to listen.”

Interviewees emphasised that the Hub service was co-produced not just between the various partner organisations, and between strategic and operational staff, but with the local community. There was a strong sense of wanting to ‘do the best’ for local residents, to act on their input and not to let them down, as well as acknowledgement that Hub clients, and residents more generally, bore some responsibility to be active participants in improving their lives.

“I think that the key with not letting them down is being honest and open. It’s got to be transparent, it’s got to be in their best interests...making them aware of what you can and can’t do.”

“There’s not many people that I’ve encountered that have come in here who haven’t wanted to take responsibility for their situation. They don’t want everything done for them. They want assistance and help, which is what this community hub should be about.”

Beyond some differences in organisational cultures that the Hub team worked to overcome, barriers to co-production were experienced mainly in relation to the meaningful engagement of the wider community. For example, as referenced in the quote above, the team was conscious of the need to build trust. And, while the study-and-learn programme included extensive outreach activity, it was not possible to maintain this with the available staff resource once the Hub opened. There was a suggestion, too, that greater depth of community input might have been beneficial:

“If we replicated it ever in other areas, [I’d be hoping] that there would be more community involvement or even a drop-in session of what we’ve been talking about that week...surveys can only give you a certain amount.

Overall, however, co-production was seen as a vital and innovative component of the pilot project.



Croxteth Speaks (Credit: Michael Kirkham)

“Sometimes we top-down strategy, with an expectation of what a community needs. And what they did here is they brought their frontline services to engage with the community and ask them what they wanted, and then they evolved services and responses that met that need...I think that was the key driver that...led to the measurable outcomes.”

9.4 Focused on a Good Life

One of the aims of the pilot project was to test the primary principle of the Good Help programme, i.e.

‘It doesn’t matter who you work for, or who your clients, customers, patients are, everyone deserves Good Help, the principles to deliver that are exactly the same.’

This was translated into the model developed for the Good Help Hub through its focus on a Good Life, which informed the positioning of the Hub within the local landscape of service provision (see Appendix 3). It explicitly set out to operate without access thresholds tailoring support to the needs of the individual, rather than the needs of the service.

There is a strong link between the focus on a Good Life and the principle of joined-up services, in that both engender a holistic approach. The emphasis here is on being person-centred: not only putting a package of services together, but tailoring them according to what the individual wants and needs, and taking the time to find that out. This had the direct effect of improving people’s access to services, by providing the right services in the right sequence.

“Initially, a lot of people came in for...housing issues. Slowly but surely, people are coming in with more of their actual issues, I suppose I could call it. The housing is still a big thing, but a lot of the time, the reason they can’t deal with...the stress of their housing is because of x, y and z. And actually, if you can tackle x, y and z, because you’ve built that relationship up, it’s easier to deal with your housing at that point.”

The study-and-learn programme tasked the Hub team with finding out, ‘what does a Good Life look like in Croxteth?’ This was reflected in the design of the surveys, the UnConference and the demand data exercise. During the study-and-learn phase and, even more so, once the Hub opened, people expressed a desire for community, and so the Hub offered events and facilities including a drop-in warm hub, community litter picks and Bacon Butty Fridays, and provided space for groups such as Knit and Natter, and Rooting for You parental support, resulting in improved networks and connections for many individuals.

These ‘extras’ – the warm welcome, the sense of community – that wrapped around the basic service provision and signposting were highly valued by clients and led to improvements in their

wellbeing, as shown by these comments from a client survey:

“I needed help and was very upset. I was made comfortable and I felt safe.”

“You have really supported me with my mental health and got me out of the house.”

“Just to be able to sit there, speaking to people, and have a coffee has helped a lot.”

“Love the group very much. Made friends and felt welcome.”

This was a different way of working, even for those with previous experience of locality-based service provision. The need to develop new skills could have proved a barrier to achieving the focus on a Good Life, and therefore to its contribution to outcomes. However, its emphasis from the outset and the delivery of the Good Help training meant that team members were committed to the approach. They found it a rewarding way to work, although it was emotionally demanding at times, and ongoing training and wellbeing support were needed.

Part D:

Beyond the pilot

10 Reflections

The Good Help Hub has been a pilot project – by its nature a time-limited opportunity to test a different way of working, to inform future initiatives.

It has provided a model for locality-based services with the potential for proliferation; this is the term used by partners because it allows for each local version to grow in a way that responds to its specific local context, rather than being an exact replication, as might be implied by the term scaling up.

All of the core partner organisations – Cobalt, the Council, the Police and Mersey Care – are moving towards a more neighbourhood-focused way of working and are already incorporating their own lessons from the Good Help Hub experience.

This evaluation offers a Framework Theory of Change (Appendix 4), which can guide the planning and implementation of future neighbourhood hubs. It defines key elements for success. While the details of implementation will be different depending on the local context, there are some provisos based on the experience of the Good Help Hub, relating to the inputs of the staff, budget and venue and the Hub operation activities. These are set out in more detail below.

Following these are reflections on a series of linked themes that came through in several elements of the evaluation. The aim is to draw out lessons from the project, elucidating both ‘what works’ and the remaining barriers to more joined-up working.

10.1 Staff

The frontline team and coordinator are the heart of a hub’s success, not only the individuals but also the way that they work together. Working within a Good Help Hub (or similar) is rewarding because it is making a difference, but it is also challenging at times. Team selection (including

defining job roles), team building, ongoing training and wellbeing support for the team are all important.

Volunteers can bring additional energy and experience to the team, and volunteering can be an opportunity for local residents to get more involved with a hub and develop confidence and skills. A planned volunteer programme may be the best way to facilitate this, building in the time for recruitment, DBS checks, induction, training, and ongoing management and support.

10.2 Budget

Although the Good Help Hub had external funding from the PfPP programme, the model it has demonstrated offers a way to use existing funding differently. Within the model, the size and use of the budget is flexible according to circumstances. However, there is a basic principle that the public sector partners commit staff without requiring funding to backfill the posts.

Voluntary sector partners are likely to be a crucial part of the jigsaw and may range from very small, grassroots groups to large national organisations such as Citizens Advice. Funding structures and situations differ substantially. Careful consideration is needed as to how to secure and support their involvement.

10.3 Venue

The venue should provide an ‘open door’ and a ‘warm welcome’ and in doing so it may become a regular drop-in and meeting place for some clients, which needs to be managed.

The venue does not have to be within premises of the Council or other anchor organisation, although existing footfall can help raise awareness of a hub at the outset. The venue does need to be suitably located within the area it serves, and accessible. It should have a reception area and private

rooms for individual conversations plus, ideally, additional meeting space including somewhere for clients to sit and chat with each other.

10.4 Hub operation

Administration and communication form a necessary backbone that requires adequate, dedicated, ongoing resource once a hub opens. Tasks include:

- Keeping the timetable under review and rearranging it if necessary
- Liaising with partner organisations and communicating any changes
- Promoting services, events and activities using both social media and more traditional methods such as leaflets
- Ongoing community outreach similar to that carried out in the study-and-learn phase, to update knowledge of the area and maintain dialogue about the hub and whether it is meeting local needs
- Collecting, analysing and storing data for operational, monitoring and evaluation purposes.

The coordinator is an essential leadership role and will have an involvement in all, but is likely to need additional support. These are tasks that benefit from a methodical approach that can be difficult to apply alongside the essential 'meeting and greeting' work of a hub, which is fluid and often fast-paced. The two aspects also require different skills, which should be considered when defining job roles.

10.5 Neighbourhood working

There is a wealth of experience of neighbourhood working among partners, for example from pre-2010 when many services in Liverpool were organised at neighbourhood scale. More recently, public sector partners in the city have been moving towards new models of neighbourhood working. They have seen the Good Help Hub as a test bed in this respect.

While previous models have aimed to provide joined-up services, delivered locally, the Good Help Hub has demonstrated the additional importance of co-production and focus on a Good Life. It has shown, for example, that residents have improved access to service not only because they are available locally, but because they are given time to communicate their needs and are supported to engage.

10.6 Health

The Good Help Hub pilot revealed both breadth and depth of loneliness, isolation and poor mental health locally. While neighbourhoods may vary, it is likely that the pandemic will have increased the unmet need in all areas.

It was seen that poor health – physical or mental – is a barrier to accessing and benefiting from other services, and therefore efforts to improve health and wellbeing should be central to neighbourhood approaches.

10.7 Partnership

An asset-based approach considers all the existing positive aspects of an area and looks to build on them. It is not just about mapping discrete organisations and facilities; existing relationships such as established partnerships are foundational – a starting point for understanding a locality and how it works.

When building a new team made up of staff from different partner organisations, attention may need to be given to bridging differences in organisational cultures.

Co-production has been a key principle of the Good Help Hub, and has aimed to involve local residents as well as partner organisations and Hub team members in designing and delivering the Hub service. This should involve two-way communication, not only seeking community views on what a hub might provide, but feeding back on how those views are being responded to. Discussion of expectations can also be mutual, for example consideration might be given to local charters, incorporating both community and service provider priorities and clarifying joint responsibilities.

10.8 Data sharing

Sharing case data between partner organisations is part of a holistic approach to individuals that can improve outcomes. Similarly, shared demand data could be a useful tool in planning, monitoring and evaluating neighbourhood services. However, it is vital that appropriate consents and protections are in place.

It was apparent from the Good Help Hub experience that partner organisations have different approaches to data sharing. It should be an early priority in the development of similar projects to agree principles and protocols around data handling, that are then supported with guidance and training and are subject to ongoing monitoring. Adequate resourcing of the administrative 'backbone' will help with this.

10.9 Improvement

Having flexibility to work in a different way within the Hub led to innovation within partner organisations, as staff were able to test creative approaches and share learning with each other.

Assessment of 'what works' should be based on evidence, with the service being shaped by ongoing collection and analysis of data through a planned programme of monitoring

and evaluation. The fullest picture results from a combination of quantitative and qualitative data, from involving all stakeholders in its collection and analysis, and from these processes being continued or repeated over time periods that both enable short-term responsiveness and allow longer-term measurement of trends and outcomes.

Partner organisations will be carrying out their own data analysis that can contribute to the improvement of neighbourhood-based models of service provision such as hubs. However, it can be difficult to combine these analyses in a meaningful way because performance indicators and methods of measurement are not aligned. These tend to be driven by funder requirements, usually originating with central government.

If it were possible to agree a set of shared outcome indicators, whether at central or local level, data could be more effectively used. If this could be done at local level, it would also facilitate partnership working and joined-up services, because partners could more flexibly direct their resources towards agreed local priorities.

10.10 Joining up

Organisations under stress, for example due to funding cuts or other instability, sometimes retreat from joined-up working, perceiving it to be outside their core remit. More evidence of the benefits, especially relative to cost, may help mitigate this.

Like the Good Help Hub, wider initiatives such as social prescribing and ‘community connector’ roles are improving access to services via better signposting and are being funded accordingly. It is important to retain the right balance between signposting and provision, ensuring service providers are also adequately resourced, and to utilise and develop existing resources such as the Live Well Directory.

Where initiatives overlap in geography and remit, this can lead to inefficiency. Both local and central government could perhaps do more to improve coordination. For example, at national level, better communication between government departments would reduce the potential for duplication between funding programmes, and more advance notice of new programmes would assist local authorities in planning which opportunities to bid for. Locally, strategic partnerships should be proactive in coordinating existing and emerging initiatives, which might require different structures or resourcing.

Funding cuts and the prevailing bidding culture in public finance place organisations in competition with each other in a way that can be a drain on resources. Cooperation is easier when each initiative has clarity of vision, which requires leadership from the local authority and other anchor organisations.

11 Legacy

11.1 Next steps

The Croxteth Good Help Hub project officially concluded at the end of June 2023, following the extended operational period, and work is now ongoing to share and implement some of the key messages from the pilot. For example:

- Cobalt will continue to run a neighbourhood hub in Croxteth and is investing in remodelling the ground floor of its office headquarters to improve and expand the space available for partners and clients
- Experiences and lessons from the Hub were presented at a national event marking the end of the PfPP programme
- The Croxteth Speaks films and other artworks were presented at an event at Croxteth Hall in July 2023, with a challenge to the Council and other public sector organisations to think about how they might respond to the concerns of the young people who participated
- Anonymised data from the project will contribute to further research into public service innovation by the University of Liverpool
- Liverpool City Council has approved the implementation of a new Neighbourhood Model, which it describes as the biggest shake-up in how Council services are provided and commissioned in more than a decade, saying, “We’ve seen in the Croxteth Hub that greater collaboration with other partners at a community level works.”

11.2 Framework theory of change

An output from this evaluation is a framework Theory of Change, which can guide the planning and implementation of future neighbourhood hubs (Appendix 4). The details of implementation will be different depending on the local context.

11.3 Progress towards impact

The longer-term benefits of the pilot project can be considered in terms of the sustainability of the short-term outcomes, and the progress towards the predicted longer-term outcomes and impacts. It is too soon to be able to assess these in detail, but we can highlight some information from this evaluation that may be indicative.

We discussed the short-term outcomes in Part A of this report. Some of these are likely to extend beyond the lifetime of the pilot. Many of the services accessed by Hub clients were already being provided locally, but through their interaction with the Hub, residents have increased awareness of them and in some cases increased confidence to engage with them, benefits which will potentially continue. As we have already shown, improved access can lead to improved

networks and connections, and improved health and wellbeing.

Some of the services new to the area as a result of the Hub will continue in place, for example within Cobalt's community hub or via spin-out initiatives such as the Croxteth Wombles group being established to continue the community litter picks.

It will be important not to lose the improved knowledge of the locality that was gained through the PfPP pilot. This is held in the body of evidence generated by the project and held by Cobalt as lead organisation, in the local and national PfPP evaluation, in the Croxteth Speaks evaluation by All Things Considered, and in the experience of everyone involved.

Staff experience is being carried forward into their future roles, many of which are within services that were existing in Croxteth and the surrounding area, which will now benefit from the increased knowledge, skills and motivation gained through the pilot.

"I've learned things about myself that I didn't even know I could do or I had that skill...it's opened my eyes up to what else I could do."

"I just love to think that at some point, somewhere in the future, I'll be able to take some form of pride from what we've done here."

For the city, the model for locality-based working that the Hub demonstrated is already bearing fruit, influencing the development of city-wide models and ways of working more generally.

"It doesn't matter whether you live in Norris Green or whether you live in Speke, that there will be a hub that has got similar principles, that you can genuinely just walk through the door, not have to meet a threshold, and get a service...is one of the biggest legacies that the Hub will have."

"It's influenced culture change in us. And our policies and our services, and our behaviour change, that's a legacy for us as an organisation."

The intention is for a follow-up evaluation of the Good Help Hub around nine months on from its conclusion to review its ongoing effects, including whether the short-term outcomes have been sustained, and whether there has been progress towards the longer-term outcomes and subsequent impact hypothesised by the project Story of Change.

There is also some further work to be done around evidencing this type of work. A further evaluation could provide an opportunity to develop and test a participatory monitoring and evaluation framework with potential for use by partners with emerging models for locality-based services.



Croxteth

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Appendices

Appendix 1:

INPUTS

Governance
Lead organisation
Coordinator
Staff
Budget
Venue

ACTIVITIES

Developing the model
Study-and-learn programme
Hub operation
Croxteeth Speaks
Monitoring and evaluation

OUTPUTS

Asset map
Hub visitors
Services engaged
Young people participating in arts activities
Organisations engaged in arts activities
Local people employed
Arts sessions
Films, portraits, visual art

OUTCOMES SHORT-TERM

For individuals:
Improved access to services
Improved networks and connections
Improved health and wellbeing

For the locality:
Improved knowledge of the locality
Improvements to existing services

For the city:
Improved ways of working
Model for locality-based services

OUTCOMES LONG-TERM

For individuals and the locality:
Enhanced social capital
Higher educational outcomes
Enhanced employment opportunities
Further improved health and wellbeing
Improved environment
Lower crime rates

For the city:
Earlier identification of at-risk cohorts
Reduction in people in crisis
Strengthened voluntary and community sector
More efficient use of funding
System change

IMPACTS

For individuals:
Individuals are able to live a Good Life

For the locality:
Intergenerational transmission of disadvantage is broken
Area is a destination of choice

For the city:
Services are efficient, effective and accessible

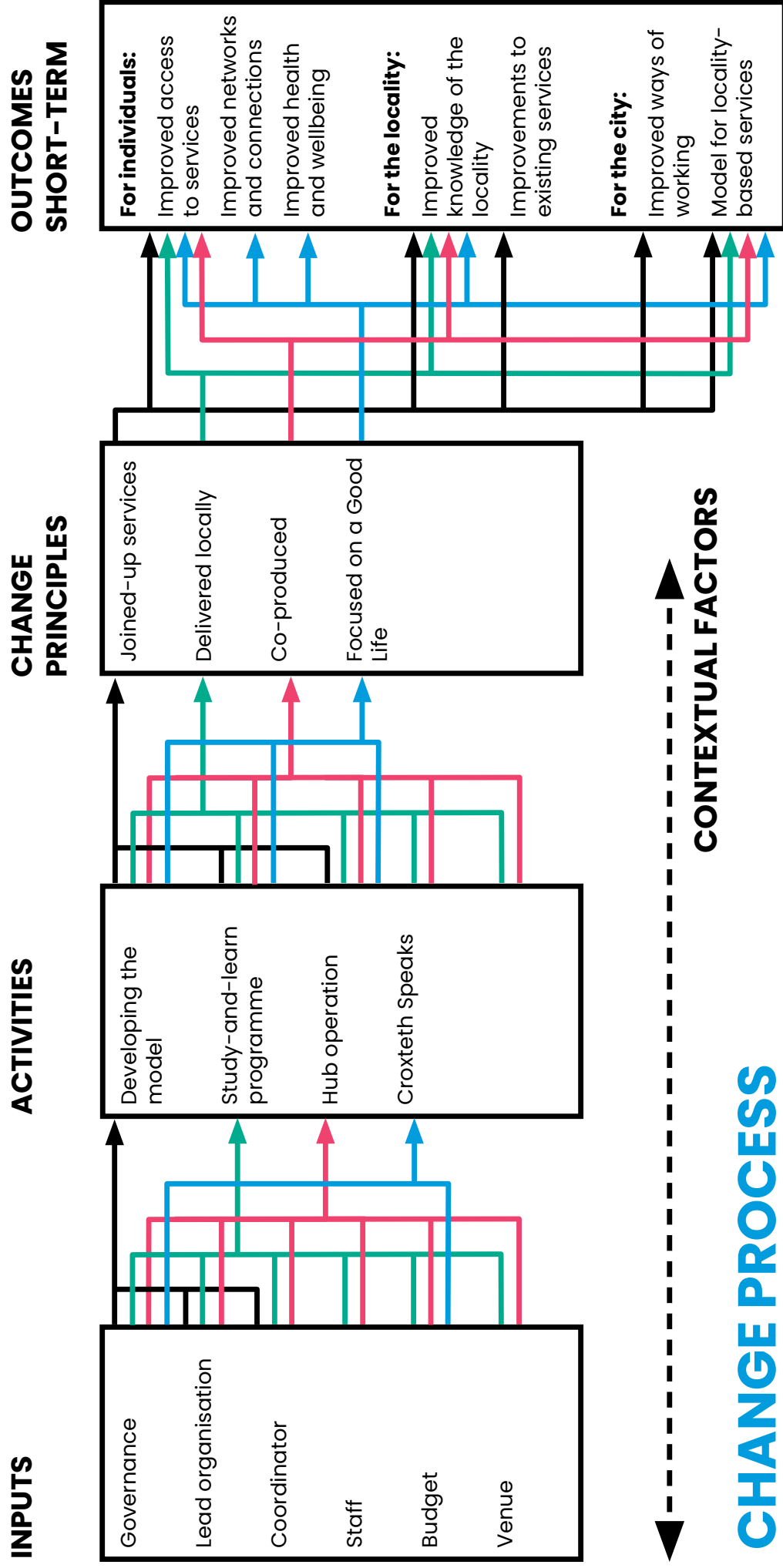
CHANGE PRINCIPLES

Joined-up services, delivered locally, co-produced, focused on a Good Life

CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

STORY OF CHANGE

Appendix 2:



Appendix 3:

INTEGRATED MODEL

Prevention

- Aim: preventing a problem from happening in the first place
- Cohort: individuals and families who only need support from universal services
- Universal services (schools, GPs, children's centres, health visitors etc.) are often the first port of call for people who need help
 - Deliver a key role as local leaders in a place
 - Hold vital information and intelligence
 - Underpin the other levels of the model
 - The Good Help Hub provides the scaffolding around universal services, an additional resource in a joint problem-solving approach to people who need help.

Early intervention

- Aim: intervening early when a problem starts to emerge, to resolve it
- Cohort: individuals and families who need support but are not yet accessing services
- Frontline staff working with universal services from an anchor organisation, focusing on both people and place
 - Proactively identifying need by working with universal services to recognise those at risk and coordinate effective early intervention
 - Support tailored to issues that may be low level but get in the way of a Good Life; e.g. debt, benefits, anti-social behaviour, environmental blight, community safety, crime, drugs, housing, green spaces, isolation
 - Trained in safeguarding and early help assessment; referring clients to ICT or social care where more intensive support is needed.

Multiple needs

- Aim: coordinating support through a lead worker/multi-disciplinary team meeting (MDT)
- Cohort: individuals and families likely to be known to services but who do not meet the threshold for specialist/statutory services, despite presenting with multiple issues and risks
- Existing integrated teams who work with people with more complex needs, e.g. the Integrated Care Team (ICT)
 - Coordinate the work of a number of professionals, sharing information on the client to develop a multi-agency plan of action
 - Consent is needed from the client to be referred to the ICT
 - Support is across all wider determinants of health; e.g. MDT meetings might include housing or Citizens Advice as well as health professionals
 - The Good Help Hub identifies people who would benefit from this coordinated response to complex needs, and provides an ongoing resource post-ICT involvement.

Specialist/statutory

- Aim: reducing the harmful consequences of a problem and managing it as best as possible
- Cohort: individuals and families likely to be known to services and who meet the threshold for specialist/statutory services
- These are people who are both 'complex and costly' to many partner organisations
 - They have likely received numerous interventions over the years, none of which have managed to stem the flow of demand for specialist/statutory services
 - Once specialist/statutory services step away, there is a need to ensure the individuals or families are not left isolated but are 'stepped down' into more local services providing continuity of support and preventing issues from re-escalating
 - The Good Help Hub provides a local response through a trusted anchor organisation
 - Good Help Hub staff work take an asset-based approach, having conversations to understand the person in front of them in the context of their life and community.

UNIVERSAL

GOOD HELP HUB

AT RISK

COMPLEX AND COSTLY

Appendix 4:

INPUTS

Governance
Lead organisation
Coordinator
Staff
Budget
Venue

ACTIVITIES

Developing the model
Study-and-learn programme
Hub operation
Monitoring and evaluation

OUTPUTS

Asset map
Hub visitors
Services engaged

OUTCOMES SHORT-TERM

For individuals:
Improved access to services
Improved networks and connections
Improved health and wellbeing

For the locality:
Improved knowledge of the locality
Improvements to existing services

For the city:
Improved ways of working
Model for locality-based services

OUTCOMES LONG-TERM

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Higher educational outcomes
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For individuals:
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For the city:
Services are efficient, effective and accessible

CHANGE PRINCIPLES

Joined-up services, delivered locally, co-produced, focused on a Good Life

CONTEXTUAL FACTORS



FRAMEWORK THEORY OF CHANGE

About the Heseltine Institute for Public Policy, Practice and Place

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