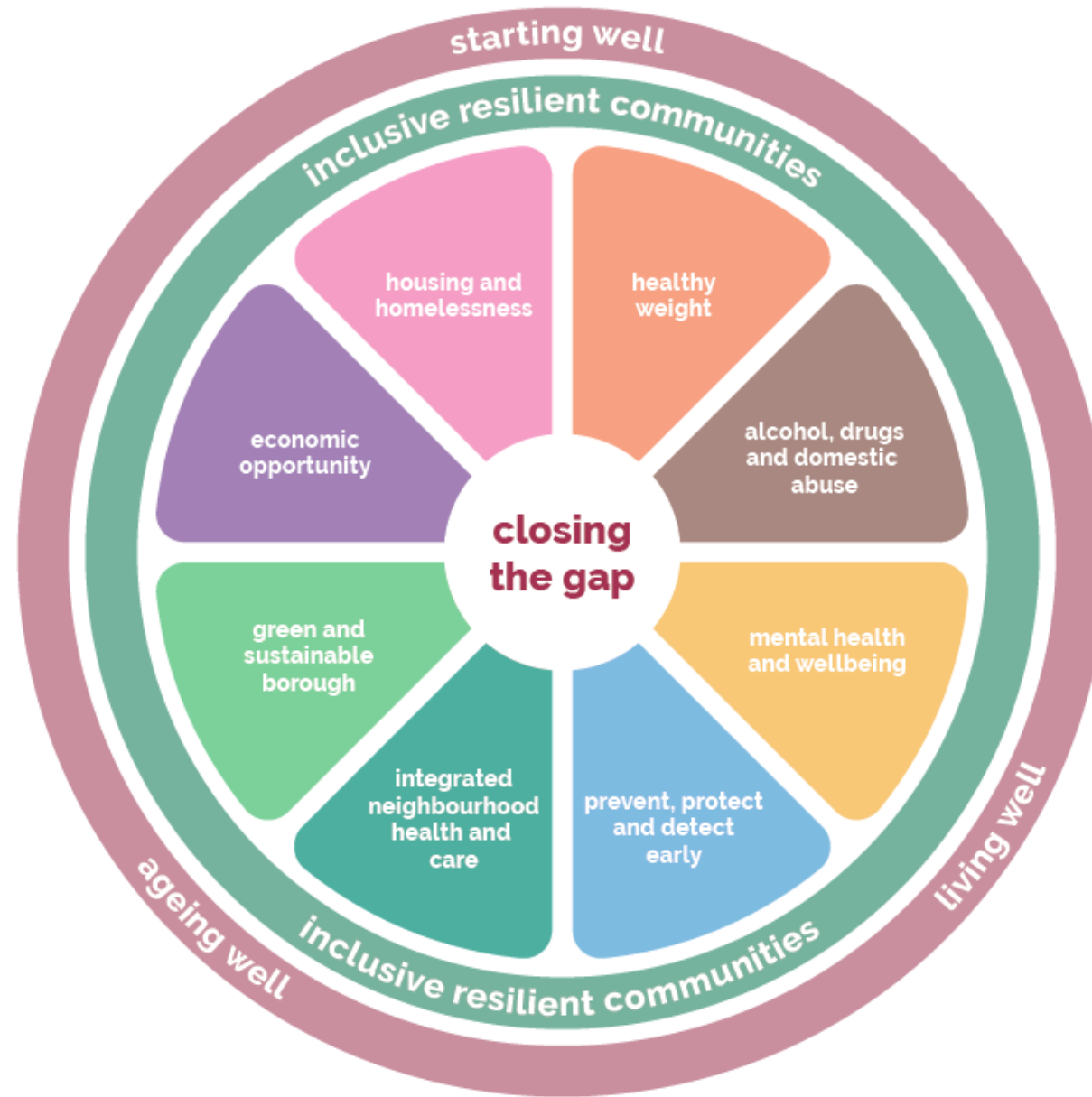




Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2023-2027

Delivery Progress Report Sept 2023

Our vision - happier, healthier, fulfilled lives



Borough Vision 2023 ambition – inclusive, healthy, independent lives

Priority Updates September 2023

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Closing the gap

- Our HWB Strategy highlights that tackling inequalities and closing the gap requires comprehensive action across our priority programmes, through a strong targeted, intelligence-led approach. Addressing wider determinants of health is crucial and the NHS has a particular focus on reducing health inequalities through its [CORE20PLUS5](#) programme (see page ? for updates on the prevent, detect and protect priority). The gaps in health and wellbeing experience are most repeatedly seen in our most deprived communities, compared to the most affluent communities - the 20% most deprived communities –“the core 20”. Particular and specific inequalities are also faced by different groups of people, often referred to as **inclusion groups** and these are closely related to characteristics which are protected in the Equalities Act.
- The HWB received an update on the inequalities programme in September 2022. A detailed review of activity and progress on closing the gap ambitions will be undertaken during the Autumn and will be presented to a future HWB. The HWB Strategy leads have provided progress updates for their programmes which are included in this report, including reference to the relevant inequalities focus for their programme. The table below summarises the groups which are most important inequalities context for each priority.

<p>Healthy Weight</p>	<p>Healthy Weight Strategy engagement focus groups with at-risk groups including people with learning disabilities, people with mental health disorders, males, ages 55+, ethnic minority groups, people living within our most deprived communities</p> <p>The schools health and wellbeing programme selects schools to take part with the highest rates of excess weight data and those in our most deprived communities</p>	<p>Integrated health and care</p>	<p>Start for Life Family Hubs: “core20” population, younger parents, black & minority ethnic group families</p> <p>Primary Care: All 8 PCNs have nominated inequalities leads and specific health inequality related projects in place for 2023/24. Health inequalities is one the prioritisation criteria the ICB Primary Care Team use to target practices requiring improvement support.</p>
<p>Alcohol, drugs & domestic abuse</p>	<p>Alcohol & drugs : Equality Impact Assessment completed alongside the Needs Assessment. Equality Action Plan to be integrated into annual strategy Action Plan</p> <p>Domestic Abuse: focus on families with complex and multiple needs. The DA Forum assessing disproportionate impact of domestic abuse and lower service uptake rates among under-served groups, improving joint working with faith groups and BAME communities</p>	<p>Green & sustainable borough</p>	<p>Green Space are Go targeted towards under-represented groups - people from lower socio-economic groups, people from ethnically diverse communities and people with disabilities/additional needs. Groups receiving grant funding include PODS, Telford & Wrekin CVS, The Chinese Cultural Centre and African Caribbean Community Initiative.</p>
<p>Mental health & wellbeing</p>	<p>Children & Young People who: have SEND, looked after/care leavers, those who are NEET, and suffer multiple disadvantage and trauma adults who experience poor mental health alongside other vulnerabilities such as alcohol and drug use and housing needs</p>	<p>Economic opportunity</p>	<p>The Cost-of-living strategy is aimed at those residents in the Borough on the lowest incomes, be they working age or pensioners.</p>
<p>Prevent, detect & protect</p>	<p>People living in the most deprived 20% of communities in England – the core 20 are a key focus given the gaps in life expectancy the most deprived and most affluent communities.</p> <p>Cancer screening: narrowing the gap in uptake of screening programmes across GP practices, linked to deprivation</p> <p>Cancer Champions & Health Champions representative of diverse communities</p>	<p>Housing & homelessness</p>	<p>People affected by trauma and poor mental health</p> <p>Ongoing focus on homeless clients who present with complex and multiple needs.</p>

Key Progress – against strategy / work plans

- Healthy Weight Strategy expected by the end of October: Survey launched for members of the public and professionals; focus groups being held with at-risk groups; stakeholder workshop planned.
- Closer working between the council’s Healthy Families team and NHS 0-19 school nursing team. Children identified as “very overweight” from NCMP measurements will be offered 12 weeks of support from the healthy families team
- Expansion of school health and wellbeing programme – 10 schools will be included in the “Tier 1” offer for the 2023/24 school year
- Green Spaces Are Go Campaign launched and grants scheme is in the delivery phase
- Healthy Lifestyles Service has supported 650 adults to lose weight during Q1 / Q2
- Delivery of community based physical activity programmes (see Living Well report)
- ICB CVD Recovery Strategy in place to strategically lead and monitor the NHS Weight Management offer and closer working with local authority public health teams

Improving outcomes - data or brief case study/ story etc.

Wrockwardine Wood Junior School has participated in the Health & Wellbeing Programme. The school have achieved a ‘GOLD’ healthy schools rating. Active learning has been implemented in the school with positive physical and mental wellbeing benefits recognised by pupils. Improvements seen in attendance, pupils confidence and enjoyment of physical activity.

Inequalities Focus:

- Engagement for the Healthy Weight Strategy will be strengthened through focus groups of at-risk groups including people with learning disabilities, people with mental health disorders, males, ages 55+, ethnic minority groups, people living within our most deprived communities
- The schools health and wellbeing programme focuses on reducing health inequalities. Schools selected to take part are schools with highest NCMP data and within our most deprived communities

Plans for next quarter – what we are hoping to achieve

- Draft Healthy Weight Strategy to be ready by end of October – to take to HWBB In December
- 230 children and families will be contacted by the Healthy Families Team to offer support with healthy weight and healthy lifestyles
- Schools engagement in the Health & Wellbeing Programme
- Training for family hubs providers to feel comfortable to raise the issue of weight with families
- Eatwell sessions delivered in the community through family hubs
- Ensuring sustainability of successful green spaces are go activities
- On going work with adult social care to develop weight management support for adults with a learning disability

Issues / challenges for HWB

- Sign up and commitment from schools to look at health and wellbeing programme as a whole systems/ whole schools approach
- Commissioned services commitment to healthy weight
- Adapted resources and weight management service offer for children and adults with learning disabilities

Domestic abuse

Key Progress – against strategy / work plans

- New [Domestic Abuse Service](#) delivered by Cranstoun and West Mercia Women's Aid became operational in June 2023
- The two Service Development Objectives for 2023/24 are:
 - developing and implementing support pathways with CYP and Families Service
 - developing a supply chain of Safe Accommodation
- The Haven, Wolverhampton delivered training to 462 frontline practitioners during Sept 2022 – June 2023, good uptake from GPs and education settings in particular

Plans for next quarter – what we are hoping to achieve

- Formal launch of new Integrated Domestic Abuse Service on 5th October
- Cranstoun attending teacher training days and college safeguarding events to raise profile of support for C&YP affected by domestic abuse
- Surveying C&YP to begin co-production process for teenage abuse campaign
- Explore reciprocal arrangements, protocols and agreements for Safe Accommodation with neighbouring boroughs
- Develop short animation aimed at starting difficult conversations with older people and their families about domestic abuse is being developed
- White Ribbon Campaign planning for November
- Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG) resident survey analyses

Improving outcomes - data or brief case study/ story etc.

- The T&W Domestic Abuse Forum continues to grow, now with 73 members, ensures the voice of lived experience strongly influences strategy delivery.
- The intelligence profile on DA related crime (stalking and harassment) produced in will be used to inform future learning and training packages for practitioners.

Issues / challenges for HWB

- Local shortage of appropriate dispersed and move-on accommodation is presenting a challenge to developing a supply chain of Safe Accommodation

Inequalities Focus:

Ongoing priority focus on families with complex and multiple needs. The DA Forum assessing disproportionate impact of domestic abuse and lower service uptake rates among under-served groups and improving joint close working with faith groups and BAME communities

Alcohol and drugs

Key Progress – against strategy / work plans

- Alcohol & Drugs Needs Assessment completed
- Stakeholder event with 60 attendees held to co-produce outcomes for new strategy
- Launched new Telford & Wrekin Alcohol & Drugs Forum to bring together operational stakeholders
- Achieved national OHID targets for numbers commencing alcohol treatment

Plans for next quarter – what we are hoping to achieve

- New Alcohol and Drugs Strategy to December HWB
- Telford A&D Forum to develop action plan to implement new strategy
- Implement local drug Alert System to communicate information about potential health harms from contaminated/extra strength batches
- Implement Real Time Surveillance System for drug related deaths
- Deliver “monkey dust” awareness training to 1200 front-line workers
- Hold the 10th annual Telford Recovery Conference

Improving outcomes - data or brief case study/ story etc.

- Telford STaRS achieved Hepatitis C micro elimination among injecting drug users [Hepatitis C micro elimination](#)
- Successful treatment completion rates for opiates (7.64%) and alcohol (44.6%) are significantly higher than national average (4.9% and 35.1%)
- Local drug related death rate (9.3 per 100,000) remains lower than the national average (10.8 per 100,000)

Issues / challenges for HWB

- Ongoing risks to users and front-line workers from “monkey dust” (synthetic stimulant drug)
- Elevated risk of fatal overdoses from increasing use of synthetic opioids nationally

Inequalities Focus: Equality Impact Assessment completed alongside the Needs Assessment. Equality Action Plan to be integrated into annual strategy Action Plan

Mental health and wellbeing: children and young people

Key Progress – against strategy / work plans

- Youth Social Prescribing – South East Telford PCN have commissioned 2 link workers through Telford MIND
- A Schools Wellbeing Charter Mark model, based on best practice from Sandwell, has been developed by our Educational Psychology Team
- A Year of Wellbeing Campaign for CYP is in development, supported by the Young People's Forum
- BeeU service improvement:
 - Crisis resolution home treatment team returned to 24/7
 - Childrens Place of Safety has opened at Redwoods
 - Referral process for Looked After Children has been reviewed and amended to improve access.

Plans for next quarter – what we are hoping to achieve

- Further discussions with PCNs to expand the Youth Social Prescribing model
- Mental Health Summit Our Future in Mind will be hosted by the Youth Parliament on 10th October
- Start of the CYP Year of Wellbeing Campaign
- Engagement insight work with YP through focus groups and wider survey as part of the annual public health report 2023

Improving outcomes - data or brief case study/ story etc.

- Over half of T&W [Primary schools are trauma informed](#) and are now able to provide extra support for social and emotional needs after receiving training from the Virtual School Team

Issues / challenges for HWB

- Inequity in Youth Social Prescribing provision as not all PCNs have Link Workers
- Lack of funding the Schools HWB Charter Mark programme
- BeeU re-commissioning - there has been a gap in ICB commissioning for C&YP MH

Inequalities Focus: children and young people who: have SEND, are looked after or care leavers, those who are NEET, and those who suffer multiple disadvantage and trauma

Mental health and wellbeing: adults

Key Progress – against strategy / work plans

- Improved relationships with housing / homelessness and substance misuse teams which improves outcomes and the experience for residents.
- Current focus on the physical health needs of those who experience poor mental health by the NHS.
- Recent establishment of place based MH Partnership Board which will oversee the development and implementation of the Strategy in due course.
- Calm Cafes operate 6 days a week.
- System work on the rehabilitation pathway will enable more people to be supported locally.
- Developing the number of supported accommodation options locally. Planning permission for one scheme awarded on 6th September – 14 flats.
- Completed recruitment to the mental health social care team which improves capacity.
- MH Alliance continues to meet and coordinate approaches to support those who find it challenging to engage in support.

Issues / challenges for HWB

- Increasing complexity across all service area, with significant increasing demand in the NHS.
- Budget pressures across the ICS

Plans for next quarter – what we are hoping to achieve

- Develop engagement plans for the MH Strategy – meeting scheduled with Senior Leadership on 20th September
- Development of an Expert Reference Group to sit alongside the Partnership Board and support the strategy development
- To improve the quality of commissioning information held about young people transitioning to adult services to inform future commissioning intentions
- Further development of accommodation for people with MH needs.

Improving Outcomes:

Mr S attended the Calm café presenting with chaotic behaviour, obsessional thoughts about harming / having harmed others and threats to harm himself. He had experienced a bereavement and had split from his partner. He was not eating well or looking after himself. On further exploration it was clear that his beliefs were driven by guilt that he could have done more to support a family member. He initially refused to go home, he wanted to be admitted to hospital. He refused to be referred to Crisis team.

Outcome: Mr S was supported by the partner involved in the Calm Café including A Better Tomorrow (ABT). He was given emotional and practical support, he was supported to collect his medication. Following several days of intensive support he was much calmer and he agreed to a referral to the Access Team for MH Assessment. Hospital Admission was avoided, risk was managed and Mr S was successfully supported to come out of a crisis with least restrictive support.

Inequalities Focus: adults who experience poor mental health alongside other vulnerabilities such as alcohol and drug use and housing needs

Prevent, protect and detect early

Key Progress – against strategy / work plans

- **NHS Health Checks** - new GP contract agreed from April 2023, Public Health Nurse met all GP Practices to agree strategies to increase uptake
- **InHIP Innovation for Health Inequalities Community Hypertension Case-finding** 16 volunteers trained, further 22 recruited, through community events 288 BP checks have been completed with 6% of those requiring 7 day home monitoring, undertaken by the Health Improvement Coordinator.
- **Smoking:** Healthy Pregnancy Support service in maternity, treatment service for Mental Health Inpatients is now live, and service for acute inpatients remodelled from July 2023. Community programmes: Pharmacy Smoking Cessation Service and Council Healthy Lifestyles
- **Early cancer diagnosis:** Cancer champion volunteers working with Lingden Davies to deliver events, Breast screening service now recovered after covid, cancer equity profile being completed, targeted lung health checks working group established, All PCNs delivering the early cancer diagnosis enhanced service

Issues / challenges for HWB

- **NHS Health Checks** - there has been a shortage of Lipid tests due to a national production issue, but this is now resolving. Staff resources and space in GP Practices can affect the ability of a practice to carry out regular clinics
- **Smoking** - challenges engaging mental health inpatients to quit and challenges re NRT supply to patients post discharge and NRT funding in maternity
- **Early cancer diagnosis** – sustainability of cancer champions programme as short-term, pilot programme funded by NHSE

Plans for next quarter – what we are hoping to achieve

- **NHS Health Checks** - further training to improve quality of checks, improve behaviour change support through Healthy Lifestyle services.
- **Smoking:** review NHS service referrals to ensure 100% of identified smokers are offered treatment, further improve delivery through community pharmacies.
- **Early cancer diagnosis:** further breast awareness community event October, continuing roll out of bowel screening age extensions (age 50-60 & >58 year olds)
- **InHIP** Two pop up BP check sessions in target communities, BP training for health champions, identify champions from the Polish community

Improving outcomes - data or brief case study/ story etc.

- **NHS Health Checks** - numbers of checks improving, point of care testing training for nurses, including HbA1c test added to identify diabetes risk
- **Smoking:** pharmacies engagement event held in June, referral pathway is now live – 10 STW pharmacies receiving referrals, a further 9 due to go live.
- **Early cancer diagnosis:** Breast cancer awareness event at Telford Ramada hotel by seldom heard voices May 2023, excellent work in south east Telford PCN video sent to non responders resulting 25% increase in cervical screening uptake amongst 25-year-olds, 100+ Cancer Champions recruited across STW with 69 healthcare and community organisations engaged to date.
- **InHIP** 28 year old BP test at Telford African and Afro-Caribbean Resource Centre Event at Hadley Learning Community, advised urgent GP appointment, now receiving medication making multiple lifestyle changes, saying this was the “wake up call” they needed.

Inequalities Focus: Cancer screening: narrowing the gap in uptake of screening programmes across GP practices, linked to deprivation, Cancer Champions recruited from range of diverse backgrounds including Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Hong Kong, Chinese, Iranian, Jordanian, Polish and Sikh communities and adults with learning disabilities, Health Champions representative of diverse communities, new NHS smoking treatment services for mental health inpatients

Integrated neighbourhood health and care: Start for Life Family Hubs focus

Key Progress – against strategy / work plans

- Successful launch (August 24th) of Phase 1 transformation Woodside and Sutton Hill Children Centres now Walnut and Silver Birch Family Hub in partnership with the two local community centres.
- CAB Baby Steps money advice set up and website launch in September.
- **Perinatal Mental Health and Parent Infant Relationships:** SeaChange successfully delivering, PODs recruited Perinatal and Infant Disability Support Worker, Caring Dads training completed, autumn term delivery.
- **Infant Feeding:** BFN successfully delivering peer support with two new groups Dawley and Sutton Hill launching Sept, BFN peer support at PRH, First Milk Matters course for professionals, breastfeeding books in libraries.
- **Parenting:** 20 practitioners trained in Triple P for Baby, telephone and peer support workshops happening, HomeStart Teenage Parent support group moved to Southwater, HomeStart starting Dads Squad in Wellington Sept, Families in Telford and HomeStart expanding 0-1 baby group offer, libraries extended bounce and rhyme and MoonBeams session
- **Home Learning Environment:** Two Early Years consultants trained to deliver early Years Talk Boost Pack, 72 Early Years practitioners accessed training,
- **Start for Life Offer:** 0-2s booklet launched in May remains popular and is handed out by professionals, currently being updated.
- **Parent and Carer Panels:** Dandelion Parents approach expanding, 3 qualified Dandelion parents now advocates for Social Care, sharing of our local best practice regionally and nationally.

Plans for next quarter – what we are hoping to achieve

- Phase 2 transformation with Family Hubs opening in Oakengates, Dawley and Hadley. Family Hub website domain name purchased TelfordFamilyHubs.co.uk, web design to design and signpost to offer, with links to LiveWell Telford.
- Eat Well Early Years project recruitment for autumn term delivery
- **Perinatal Mental Health and Parent Infant Relationship:** conference 4th December at Mercure with 3 key national speakers, Fatherhood Institute collaboration to look father friendly, roll out Caring Dads training to all partners, PNMH Social Prescribing tender award,
- **Start for Life Offer:** 0-2s booklet re-launched

Improving outcomes - data or brief case study/ story etc

“For me personally, taking part in the dandelion meetings has firstly given me hope that people in power want to listen and are willing to start making the change required ensuring better more positive outcomes for all families across the borough. It’s given me a far greater understanding of what the LA does and also why it does the things it does”

Being part of Dandelions has kind of opened up the future for me. By attending the meetings, working alongside services etc I’m gaining so much more experience than I would in paid work limited to just one role. And this makes me hopeful the experience I’m gaining now on top of the experience and qualifications I had already, will put me in a great position career wise when it is time.

Issues / challenges for HWB

- Ensuring training offers taken up across all Start for Life partners
- Maintain Dandelion membership in third year with introduction of new members.

Key Progress – against strategy / work plans

- Established a GP Board with representation from the Primary Care Networks (PCNs) Clinical Directors, ICB GP reps and the Local Medical Committee. The ICB Primary Care Team is part funding the GP Board. Has the mandate to represent the views of all 51 practices. Key forum to engage with General Practice on service redesign and pathway change.
- PCN Clinical and Estates Strategies nearing completion.
- PCNs allocated System Development Funding for transformation work including development and leadership capacity
- All 8 PCN Capacity and Access Improvement Plans have been signed off by the ICB. The aim is to improve patient ease and experience of accessing General Practice by March 2024.
- All 8 PCNs have submitted their Additional Roles Workforce Plans for 23/24 which aim to spend all this year's allocation of £12m.
- A team of GP leads has been recruited addressing six key areas of recruitment and retention support for local GPs from choosing General Practice as a career to those considering a career change/retirement
- Work started to develop better integration and increased strategic approach to the recruitment and subsequent training and development of the clinical PCN Additional Roles – i.e. First Contact Practitioners, Community Pharmacists, Physicians Associates, Paramedics etc.
- Primary care now present future needs scoping info for NHS commissioned programmes to the ICS People Team creating greater opportunity to connect the commissioning of education for STW future non-medical clinical workforce to the ICS annual system workforce planning process.
- Resource pack developed and shared with practices to ensure all have established and effective patient participation groups

Plans for next quarter – what we are hoping to achieve

- Appoint a GP Board Chair (2 year post)
- Establish a Primary Care Improvement and Transformation Board with GP access recovery and integration as core workstreams and to include the delegated pharmacy, optometry and dentistry.
- Produce a costed ICB General Practice Estates Strategy. Develop and complete a prioritisation process to support decision making on targeting the very limited ICB General Practice capital funding. Open discussions with the Council regarding optimising capital funding from housing developers for health infrastructure
- One day joint PCN Development Workshop
- Develop a System General Practice Access Improvement Plan and submit to Board with progress in November 2023
- The refreshed General Practitioner Strategy, detailing actions to attract, recruit and retain GPs in STW, is being developed and will be presented to ICB Strategy Committee in October
- Action plans in place with all practices who do not have a Patient Participation Group

Issues / challenges for HWB

- Capacity and readiness of PCNs/practices to actively engage in transformation
- Workforce recruitment and retention
- GP Access Recovery Plans will not solve the underlying capacity deficit in General Practice where demand continually outstrips supply. More appointments are provided now than before Covid.
- Lack of suitable estate to accommodate the required expansion of General Practice capacity. No source of NHS capital funding to expand the estate.
- Significant reduction in the number of GP Partners and the reluctance of newly-qualified GPs to take up this role

Inequalities focus: All 8 PCNs have nominated health inequalities leads and specific health inequality related projects in place for 2023/24. Health inequalities is one the priority criteria the Primary Care Team use to target practices requiring improvement support.

Green sustainable borough

Key Progress – against strategy / work plans

- **‘Green Spaces Are Go’** campaign launched in March to increase the use of parks and green open spaces for physical activity. Small grants fund £40k awarded to range of not-for-profit community and voluntary sector organisations to fund initiatives including ‘on the ground’ improvements, equipment, promotional materials, use of tech and/or events and activities.
- Adoption of **Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document** setting out design standards for new developments to deliver more energy efficient homes
- **Loan fund launched through Credit Union** to support households and landlords make energy improvements to properties
- Investment into **energy efficiency measures** to address fuel poverty
- **Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan** live from July 2022, Active Travel England funding £1.9m for a new Oakengates to Town Centre cycle path and delivered £800k improvements to the Silkin Way
- **Telford Bike Hub** – Bike hire and Learn 2 Ride sessions available to the general public, just completing a successful second season. Four cycle stations are now installed across the borough offering secure cycle storage
- **Bikeability and Road Safety Education** within schools continues.
- **Silkin Way Investment Plan** – 800k spent on range of infrastructure improvements including more benches and cycle parking.
- A New School Journey Pilot Project – project 4 local schools with high rate of travelling to school by car, focus on active travel and road safety education

Inequalities Focus:

- **Green Space are Go** targeted towards under-represented groups - people from lower socio-economic groups, people from ethnically diverse communities and people with disabilities, groups receiving grant funding include PODS, Telford & Wrekin CVS, The Chinese Cultural Centre and African Caribbean Community Initiative.
- **Grants for energy efficiency measures** targeted to properties in some of the Borough’s most deprived neighbourhoods

Plans for next quarter – what we are hoping to achieve

- **‘Green Spaces Are Go’** - broad range of activities including cycling, ‘Parkour’, nature walks, practical conversation work, outdoor pursuits, orienteering; outdoor gym fitness sessions, Nordic Walking and Tai Chi will extend into next year, expected to reach 8000 people. A further £28k invested to develop new geocaching trails and bench to bench walks, walking interpretation materials, plus family and individual cycling sessions.
- Telford Climate Change Borough Partnership hosting the first partnership conference October 11 at the Park Lane Centre, Woodside, bringing together businesses, and community representatives to celebrate progress explore what more we can do together on our vision to meet net zero.
- Public **consultation on new Local Plan** seeking views on planning policies to increase provision of accessible greenspaces, well designed, energy efficient homes, & more sustainable forms of travel alongside sites for new development
- Consultation on new cycle route from Oakengates – Telford Centre, purchase new adaptive bike fleet for use for hire and training
- Ongoing promotion of active travel via @TravelTelford social media & corporate comms support

Improving outcomes - data or brief case study/ story etc

- **‘Green Spaces Are Go’** new webpages social media posts seen 220,000 times. <https://healthytelford.com/green-spaces-are-go>,

Economic opportunity

Key Progress – against strategy / work plans

Since the Cost of Living Strategy was approved in October 2022, the Council has:

- Frozen general council tax increases for the second consecutive year, the council has also given all households who receive council tax reduction benefits an additional discount of up to £100 to lower their bills further.
- Supported almost 10,000 (9,864) children who receive free school meals with extra supermarket vouchers to provide food during school holidays, as well as supermarket vouchers for over 3,500 (3,549) older residents too.
- Provided direct financial support to 20% more households than ever before, as well as an extra £144,000 through its discretionary support scheme.
- Worked with Citizens Advice Telford and Wrekin and Age UK to offer debt and money advice sessions around the borough, with particular focus on helping older residents access all of the benefits they are entitled to, resulting in an extra £1m of eligible benefits now being claimed.
- In response to the increasing demand for their help, provided more than £90,000 in additional funding to local food banks.
- Funded and launched the 'Work Express' bus service, linking key employment areas in the borough with key residential areas, with fares capped at £2 each way. In January alone, this route had almost 3,000 (2,921) users, with one passenger saving over £100 a week on alternative taxi travel.

Issues / challenges for HWB

- It is not known at this stage if the government funding that has been provided to support some of these schemes will continue beyond April 2024. In particular the Household Support Fund and the Council Tax Hardship discount funding.

Plans for next quarter – what we are hoping to achieve

- Supermarket vouchers for children during the school holidays and a one-off voucher to pensioners on the lowest incomes will continue until at least March 2024
- We are continuing to operate a variety of hardship schemes for residents who are struggling financially, with increased funding agreed until March 2024
- Plans are still to be developed regarding the additional support that may be offered to residents over the winter 2023/24 period.

Improving outcomes - data or brief case study/ story etc.

The Council has provided grant funding to Age UK to enable them to expand their Older People's Benefits Advice Service in Telford & Wrekin. This has enabled them to maximise the benefit entitlement of older people in the Borough to an estimated value of over £1million. On average, each client supported with a benefits claim by Age UK has received £4,164 a year, and with most benefits awards being longer than a year, bringing significant revenue into the local community.

Case study from Age UK

Mrs D was beginning to struggle with caring for her husband, as well as with her own health. Mrs D was assessed to be eligible for Attendance Allowance and was offered assistance to claim by Age UK.

Two months later, Mrs D was awarded Attendance Allowance at the high rate. Age UK also used their expert knowledge to help Mr & Mrs D with their Pension Credit claim.

Mrs D said:

"This outcome is absolutely amazing, I can't thank your Benefits Officer enough for her knowledge and support, the information we received was excellent throughout."

Housing and homelessness

Key Progress – against strategy / work plans

- Working with partners to provide support to clients presenting as homeless
- Developing Personalised Housing Plans for clients setting out clear expectations and commitments
- Established a Landlord and Tenant support programme
- Continuing to invest in more homes for private rent including affordable and specialist via Nuplace and Telford & Wrekin Homes
- Working with Housing Associations to increase successful nominations into social housing
- Using data on housing needs across adult and children's services shaping the development market to deliver more specialist and adapted accommodation including supported accommodation, extracare and provision for care leavers
- Maintaining daily multi-agency Rough Sleeping Task Force
- Working with MPFT via dedicated Mental Health Nurse to provide rapid mental health support for rough sleepers.
- Ensuring data is captured to be used to improve interventions.
- Developing work with children's services to ensure young people at risk of homelessness are identified and supported as early as possible.

Improving outcomes - data or brief case study/ story etc.

- Since April we have prevented 149 applicants from becoming homeless
- Since April we have relieved 237 applicants from becoming homeless.
- Successfully housed 410 homeless families/individuals into social housing
- Nuplace set to deliver 780 new private rented homes

Plans for next quarter – what we are hoping to achieve

- Reviewing our website regarding homelessness advice and support
- Establish a Homelessness Forum with shared responsibility for delivering the Homelessness Strategy.
- Work with partners to manage customer expectations about the type, size and location of housing they may be offered
- Continue to work with developers and housing association partners to ensure that new properties reflect all housing needs.

Issues / challenges for HWB

- Increasing numbers of clients including families presenting to services
- More complex clients with challenging behaviours who require multi agency response and support and impact on communities
- Shortage of affordable larger accommodation reflecting increase in larger families presenting as homeless
- Shortage of one bedroom self contained affordable properties for single clients