

Background: Improving Life Chances (ILC) Community Pilots

At the Improving Life Chances (ILC) steering group meeting of 2nd June 2016, a draft action plan was tabled and agreed which set out actions that would take forward the ILC strategy, which is underpinned by the Wirral Plan 2020.

The ILC strategy and action plan strongly supports the Wirral Plan's People Priorities: Reducing child and family poverty, making sure children are ready for school, ensuring young people are ready for work and adulthood and ensuring vulnerable children reach their full potential.

Priority Areas of the ILC action plan and community pilots

One element of the ILC steering action plan that was tabled and agreed at the meeting on 2nd June 2016, proposed that two community pilot projects be established in two areas in Wirral.

The aim of the pilots would be to target, over an 18 month period, the engagement of 500 families into services and initiatives that promote ILC.

The themes that the pilots will focus on include:

- Priority 1 Supporting parents into sustainable employment
- Priority 2 Improve Life Chances
- Priority 3 Support families to become financially resilient
- Priority 4 Tackle the immediate effects of poverty
- Cross cutting theme - Deliver annual child poverty conference
- Cross cutting theme - Provide e-learning training
- Cross cutting theme - Collate performance data and evaluate.

Where will the community pilots take place?

After much discussion at the ILC steering group, it was agreed that the pilot areas would be set up in Seacombe and Bidston and St James wards. The two wards experience high levels of deprivation according to the English Indices of Deprivation 2015 and therefore would benefit from a more intensive approach to improving life chances than other areas in Wirral.

Bidston and St James ward

Bidston and St James ward is part of the Birkenhead constituency. Life expectancy in Birkenhead is the lowest of the four Constituencies in Wirral. Child poverty is highest in Birkenhead compared to the other three Constituencies and particularly acute in Bidston and St. James ward. The number of young people 'Not in Employment Education or Training' (NEET) is one in five in Bidston & St James, the highest level in Birkenhead. The rate of looked after children in Birkenhead is double that found in the other three Constituencies. The rate of teenage conceptions in Birkenhead constituency is more than double the rate in West and South Wirral constituencies. The rate of mothers smoking in pregnancy is double the Wirral average. Less than half of all new mothers initiate breastfeeding in Birkenhead 47% compared to 74% in England. These factors have been shown to have a disadvantaging effect on people's life chances.

In the areas of Beechwood and St James, it has been reported in the ESRO study findings, which was supported by public health workshop December 2015, that there are many services and supportive initiatives available in the area. However anecdotally there are challenges in engaging people into the services particularly in Beechwood and also in St James area.

There is a strong infrastructure of community groups who would welcome the opportunity to shape their offer and explore ways to engage more people. The groups already collate data around evidencing improving life chances and they meet together as a Beechwood Big Local partnership. The ILC steering group felt that working with the existing partnership would be a good way of implementing and evaluating a community pilot. There are many local events hosted by the community groups and services and they will provide a useful vehicle for promoting the goals of the ILC community pilot.

Beechwood has a range of organisations which include:

- Beechwood Community Trust – advice and guidance, training, nursery and computer suite
- Beechwood Community Association - food hub
- Currently transferring Beechwood Community Centre and Beechwood playscheme
- St Paul’s Roman Catholic Primary School community hub – support to parents and children
- Big Local partnership in place for a further 8 years has £100K to allocate to Beechwood projects per year
- Beechwood chapel- youth groups, isolation groups
- Jigsaw/Liverpool Housing Trust- environmental and community projects
- Council Community Worker from Assets team
- Beechwood Library
- Beechwood Recreation Centre

The St James area is similar to Beechwood in that there is a strong community infrastructure that works closely with the Beechwood community. They have similar issues and are currently working together on food and child poverty projects. The community pilots will include the following key groups:

- Gautby Road play and community centre food hub and playscheme, Womens enterprising breakthrough
- St James Centre
- Livingstone Street family support centre and Utopia alternative curriculum
- Magenta Living
- Brassey Gardens Children’s Centre
- Wirral change/WMO

Seacombe ward

After further discussion, the ILC steering group agreed the other community pilot area should be Seacombe. Seacombe experiences similar levels of deprivation in terms of child and food poverty to Bidston and St James.

Life expectancy in Wallasey constituency is 78.4 years. The gap between the ward with the highest Wallasey and the lowest life expectancy Seacombe is 5.3 years. Over a quarter (26.4%) of all children in Wallasey Constituency live in poverty, slightly higher than the Wirral average with 23.8%. Children

achieving level 4 or above at Key Stage 2 is slightly below the Wirral average. One in every ten 16-18 year olds are not in education, employment or training (NEET), slightly higher than the Wirral average. The rate of Looked after Children in the constituency is 90.6 per 10,000 children, slightly less than the Wirral average with 101.3 per 10,000 children. Seacombe ward has almost half the number of Looked After Children in the constituency, with a rate of 174 per 10,000 children. The under 18 teenage conception rate for Wallasey constituency is 43 per 1000 girls aged 15-17 years. This is a fifth more than the Wirral average. Immunisation uptake for Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) in Seacombe ward is 91%, below the target uptake of 95% needed to prevent outbreaks.

There are some great community groups who are working hard to engage the community and the community pilot is hoping to work with the groups and support Seacombe residents into appropriate services.

The Community groups that we will be working with in Seacombe include:

- Seacombe Community Centre and food hub
- Allandale Centre
- St Paul's Road Children's Centre
- St Paul's Church Hall
- Serpentine Road Family Church
- Seacombe Library

The contrast between Seacombe and Beechwood and St James will be a useful in terms of looking at the most effective approaches to improving life chances in areas with diverse provision and needs. There could also be opportunities of sharing learning between the two wards.

Implementation of the community pilots

The local task group, which will be made up of key representatives in the area, will convene and develop their action plans following the key stages below. We will aim to complete the planning process by August and start the implementation stage of the projects in Autumn 2016.

Community Pilot Action plan

1. Take a paper to respective Constituency Committee outlining the community pilot projects
2. Form a small task group on a local level which includes the key people for each priority area
3. The task group will develop an action plan to go back to Constituency Committee around September/October 2016
4. Map local provision
5. Agree priority areas for improvement
6. Identify barriers and make recommendations for reshaping offer for better engagement
7. Understand what are people's concerns and observations in the area
8. Understand better specific issues identified like why people aren't using services like eg. credit unions, what can we do to address issues?
9. Establish what information and resources are needed what complete the project in terms of support eg. funds for engagement events or in kind time for evaluation and marketing
10. Are there other potential members of the task group needed to work with them on their priority area eg. improving take up of credit unions – agree who to invite
11. Is our intervention enough currently or is there anything needed over and above

12. What interventions do we need to support
13. How does it fit into ABCD
14. How do we build communities
15. Agree key measures of success and milestones for the priority areas
16. What are the key activities that will take place
17. How will it link with other project eg. health and worklessness project £2M with community connectors
18. Looking at different and practical ways of bringing people into services eg. induction pack when you move into Beechwood, up to date inventory of services available, ABCD
19. Agree what data should be collated and who will collate data
20. Evaluate outputs/outcomes
21. 12 months to implement the project so we will need to include a series of events and an annual event to promote community pilot activities
22. Take project updates to next constituency committees
23. Evaluation of collated data and case studies by Public Health
24. Sharing of learning and possible replication in other areas

Community Pilot and ILC Priority Leads

The ILC steering group also agreed at the meeting on 2nd June 2016 who the priority area leads would be and they are set out as follows:

- Priority 1: Supporting parents into sustainable employment - Debbie Veevers – Job Centre Plus
- Priority 2: Improving Life Chances - Julia Hassall or Sue Talbot CYPD
- Priority 3: Support families to become financially resilient - Carol Johnson Eyre - CAB
- Priority 4: Tackle the immediate effects of poverty - Jo Burrell, Rose Boylan, Julie Graham – Wirral Council
- Child Poverty training - Bev Morgan - Homestart
- Intelligence and Performance - Public Health

The role of the leads is to ensure they are receiving information from each community pilot task group and that the action plan is being delivered as originally set out.