

Community Wellbeing Portfolio: Introduction

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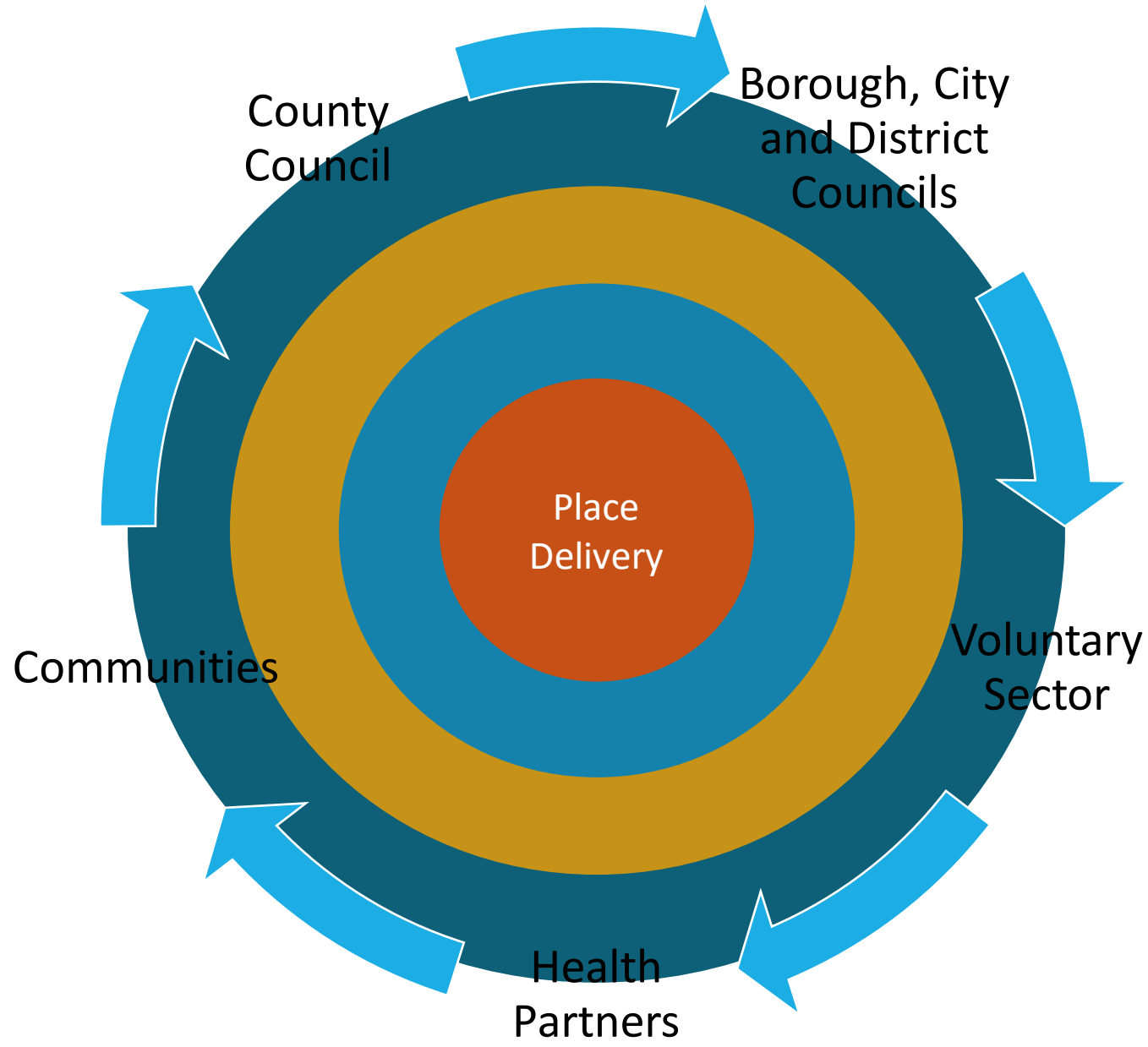
Creating the Conditions

We need to create the conditions to catalyse change. Build an ecosystem that enables us to work in such a way that invests the Authorities resources, both physical and non-physical (relationships, skills, influence, experience, social value etc), to tackle the inequalities that impact residents' lives. Shaping the way in which we invest, financially and non-financially, to the benefit of residents. Inequalities that drive the ambitions within Everyone's Essex, Levelling-Up and the factors that impact our health and wellbeing, the wider determinants.

Working with system partners to shape a collective offer to communities, that brings together our shared resources, skills and experience, to tackle inequalities. Understanding the role of ECC as an enabler to place-based working, supporting our place-based partners to realise collective ambitions. We need a focus on statutory partner collaboration, working as a system, where we ensure that the authority remains focussed on its place within the eco-system, bringing additionality and avoiding duplication, to achieve place-based ambitions, to drive and support activity at place.

Transformation of the resources within the gift of the Strengthening Communities Team is ongoing. Defining and shaping the enabling role of the team within the wider partner eco-system. This transformation is being undertaken in collaboration with system partners, as appropriate, to achieve shared ambitions and maximise shared resources. Real impact comes from bringing to bear wider resources from within the authority – removing silos, building the culture of shared ambition, and shifting the focus to place and away from “programmes” for example. levelling-up by making them business as usual and galvanising around impact that truly benefits our communities and tackles the inequalities that shape people's lives.

Working as an
Eco-System with a
focus on impact
at place



Creating the Conditions to support Place Delivery
Investment in the Infrastructure to support Place delivery - VCS, Rural, Parish Councils etc.

Resource Maximisation
Investment into Physical and Non-Physical Assets for example relationships, SV, grant provision etc, to support Place Delivery

The Offer
A Universal Offer to Essex Residents – supported by targeted investment to address inequalities in geographies and with cohorts at greatest disadvantage.

VCS INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT

ECC has been reviewing the way it invests to support the Voluntary and Community Sector over the last 2 years. The new approach focuses on building capacity within the VCS and supporting and facilitating effective system working. VCS organisations will be able to access resources in ways that suit them, either digitally via a universal standard support offer or through bespoke advice and guidance at place. The approach places emphasis on fostering learning in a sustainable way, strengthening place-based networks of assets and empowering organisations to be strong system partners.

PARISH ACTIVATION

Work with the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) to guide and support Parish and Town Councils to work to their full potential, helping to grow their capacity and capabilities to deliver effectively for their residents, with a focus on health and wellbeing outcomes and growing grassroots activity.

COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE FUND (CIF)

Administered by the EALC, this is a community grant funding pot aimed at voluntary organisations, community groups and Town and Parish Councils - supporting projects that strengthen communities and make Essex a great place to live and work. Grants of up to £10,000 are available with the current funding round due to close on 18 October 2024

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Work with the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) who support rural communities to develop a thriving and more sustainable future – addressing issues around housing, access to services and social isolation.

COST OF LIVING

Working with a variety of partners to ensure support is available to Essex residents who are struggling with essential living and financial hardship challenges. Resources and support around energy and household costs are located on the Essex County Council Cost of Living Hub - [Helping you with the cost of living: Overview | Essex County Council](#)

AFFORDABLE FOOD PROGRAMMES

Over the last two and a half years, ECC has been working with VCS and faith based groups to create an Essex network of affordable food programmes. The Community Supermarkets are a not-for-profit community assets, delivered by the community for the community and are increasing financial resilience as well as actively reducing the dependence of food banks for all but those in crisis.

Offer individuals and families an opportunity to shop for fresh, chilled, frozen and ambient food at between 30% and 40% less than the same items purchased in an affordable supermarket.

Plans are to build on the foundations created and to develop a self-supporting 'Nourishing Network' across Essex, supported by further work around increasing transition for from Food Bank usage, and an emphasis on increasing access to nutritious food options and fruit and veg.

ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Essex County Council's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant means as an organisation, we are dedicated to fostering a supportive and inclusive community for those who have served in the armed forces and their families. ECC published the first Armed Forces Needs Assessment in 2022 and have recently refreshed this in 2024, this provides us with key data and insight across a number of thematic areas such as Education, Employment & Transition, Housing and Criminal Justice.

Support for this community is facilitated through the Civilian Military Partnership Steering Group (CMPSPG) and the Civilian Military Partnership Board (CMPB)

PUBLIC HEALTH CAMPAIGNS

Our Public Health Campaigns programme will have an overarching focus on mental/emotional wellbeing and community resilience, enabling us to look at community groups and how specific mental /emotional wellbeing challenges may present for them. With the approach that we can provide them with the necessary capabilities, opportunities, and motivations to build resilience and self-efficacy, in facing difficult moments or scenarios, which may trigger uptake of risky behaviours.

**For any further information:
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