

“It takes a generation  
to make an impact”:  
a co-produced study of the impact of  
a community-centred approach on  
mental health and wellbeing



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# Co-production and collaboration





# Mixed methods

- Diaries and 1:1 interviews with community members (n=11)
- Photo diaries with community members (n=5)
- 1:1 interviews with staff (n=8)
- ICE CAP quality of life survey piloted with residents (n=50)
- Sense-making workshops x 4 with community members
- Participant observations
- Routine quants data analysis



# Defining mental health

*Mental health is a state of mental wellbeing that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community...Mental health is a basic human right. And it is crucial to personal, community and socio-economic development.*

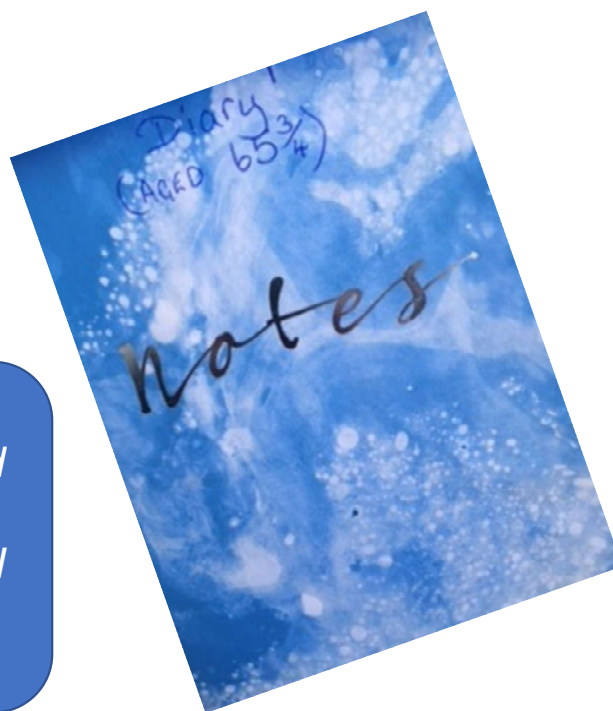
- Affordable, effective and feasible strategies exist to promote, protect and restore mental health.
- The need for action on mental health is indisputable and urgent.
- Mental health has intrinsic and instrumental value and is integral to our well-being.
- Mental health is determined by a complex interplay of individual, social and structural stresses and vulnerabilities

(World Health Organisation 2022:1 Mental Health: strengthening our response <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-strengthening-our-response>)

## Community members experiences of keeping a diary

*I put time aside to do it. It really helped us like get things out of my head instead of like worrying about it all the time. It was quite, is the word cathartic? (IV9)*

*I'm not a person who writes a lot, you know. I'd probably do it the first couple of days and then I would get bored with it (IV10)*



*It made you reflect on what you'd been doing, which you don't normally do, do you? So I found it good in that way...I tried to focus on the positive things rather than the negative, but that didn't always work because some days didn't have any positive things in it (IV3)*



A tale of two community members  
whose paths crossed over knitting  
patterns



<https://openverse.org/>



## Intersections of age, gender, class; 'stolen years'



<https://www.pics4learning.com>

*I can use the skills I used in the working environment, it makes yourself feel a bit useful. I enjoy it and at the end of the day it feels nice to be doing something (IV2)*

*...you've just stolen 6 years from women...Where are those 6 years, all these millions of women? That's what I'd like to know. Mismanagement somewhere along the line*



<https://www.waspi.co.uk/>



# Intersections of age, gender and class

What, for you, would make the biggest difference?

- *Enough money to live on. I don't want to go on massive holidays or anything. I don't want to do anything extravagant. If I can pay my bills and buy food and maybe have a trip to the coast if I want. I'm not asking for the world. I just want to be able to live.*

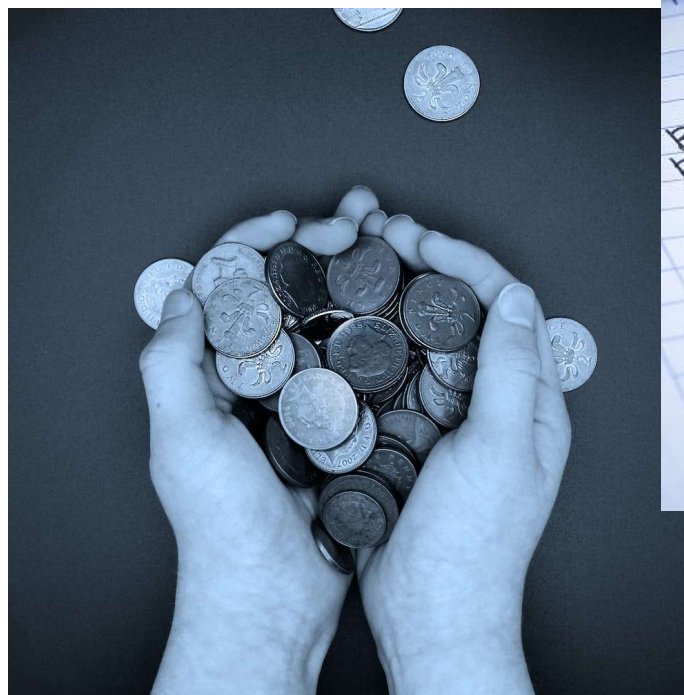


*I think now that I've started coming here and I'm not sitting thinking about everything anymore, my mind has sort of cleared a bit and I'm finding that I'm getting a bit more creative again. Coming here has helped with that (IV3)*



## Parents views of the influences on health and happiness

*This half term I've been really skint. I've not been able to take them anywhere. And then round here, the only place is just here really that I've come to. I've come to activities during half term and stuff, but other than that I've done nothing (IV8).*



<https://unsplash.com/s/photos/>

## Volunteering

- *It feels like I'm getting back to my normal self*
- *I want to be part of the solution to help people do things and work part time, that's it. Just earn enough money to pay my bills and that will be me sorted, do you know what I mean?*
- *I think the way they treat people is atrocious (IV9)*



<https://policyinpractice.co.uk/uc/>

## Volunteering during Covid-19

*I delivered the packed lunches, any homework packs, any extra food we delivered. We made craft packs and delivered them, Easter eggs, like all sorts. But that just meant we maintained our sanity as well, like we got up and got dressed because we were going somewhere, which made it a bit easier...(IV5)*





# The unequal effects of Covid-19

- What happened when the pandemic hit?

*Well, we all just stayed in our rooms. I think I stayed about three months in my room (IV7)*

*I think people, I don't think it's an exaggeration to say, were shattered by Covid...I think loads of people just hadn't done anything and were just at home scared, lonely, no connections, no communication, just really isolated (Staff IV 1).*

*We're only just hitting the start of recovery. We're not anywhere near the middle or the end. We're right at the start of it and all the fuel crisis and all the rest of it is all part of that and it's made the curve longer (Staff IV 8).*



<https://unsplash.com/s/photos/journey>

# The challenges of measuring impact

*Poverty is the great divide, isn't it?*

*I feel it's going to be extremely difficult to see the positive impact that Larkspur House has had on the community because deprivation has increased, poverty is the evil in this. It's what needs to be eradicated*  
(Staff IV 5)



*It takes a generation to make an impact*

*I'm not saying that we're not having an impact, but if you want that long term, life changing stuff, you need a lot more money, a lot more years to be able to continue the work consistently*  
(Staff IV 6)

# Eleven elements of community-centred public health: a whole system approach

Stansfield et al (2020) Sustaining and strengthening community resilience throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond

*Perspectives in Public Health*

DOI: 10.1177/1757913920949582

Source: Public Health England.16

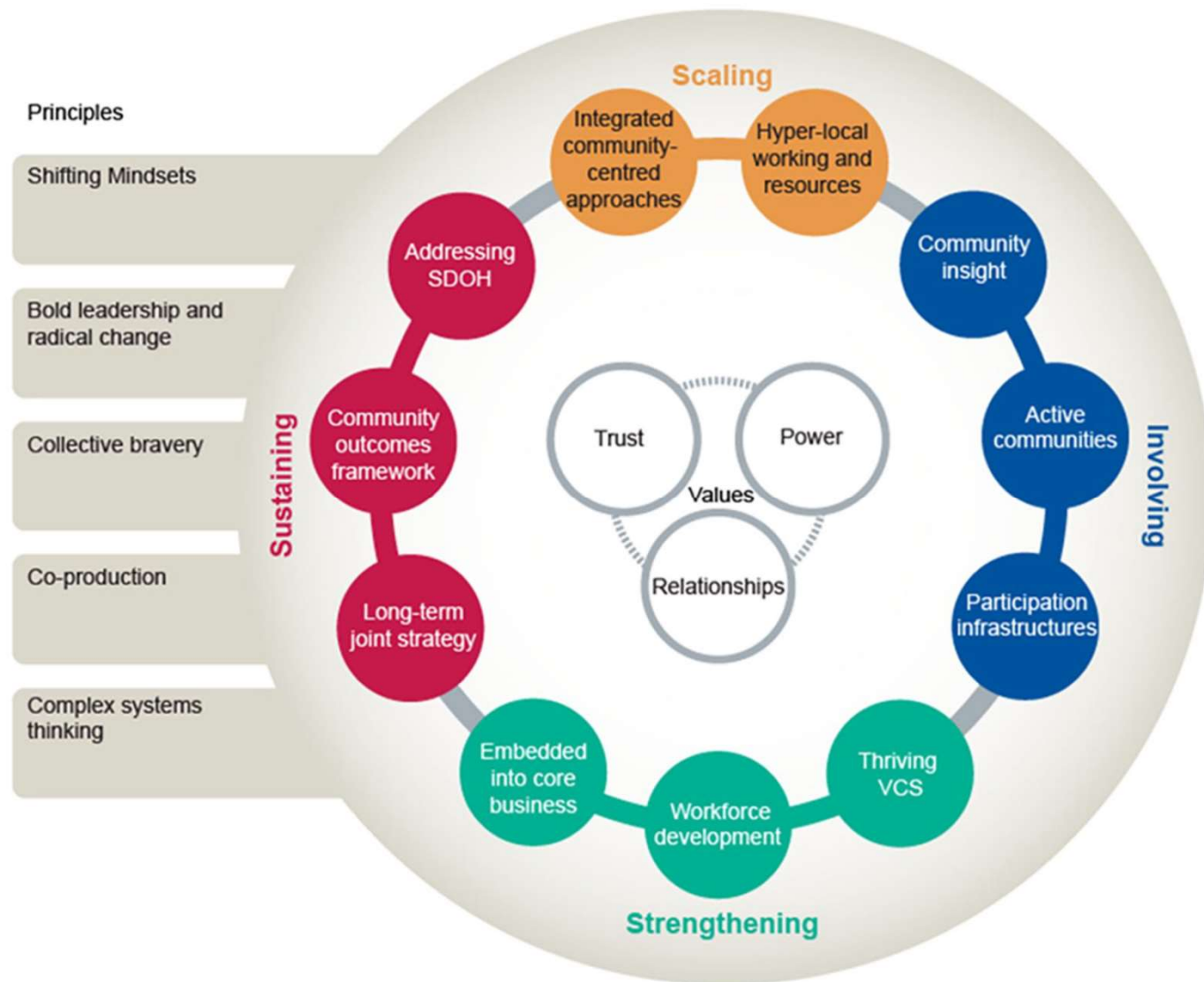


Figure is made available under the Open Government Licence v3.0. (online): <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/>.



# Reflections and learning...

- Involve communities in measuring what matters... and they're not (always) the things that can easily be counted
- Anti-social behaviour & community safety
- Crime / fear of crime / feeling safe
- Area reputation / effects of stigma / blame
- Control over decision making
- Housing / repairs
- National policy issues (pension age, UC)
- Destructive impact of Covid on mental health
- Effects of cost of living crisis
- Assets, skills and kindnesses

# Reflections and Learning

- Integrating data streams
- Defining what 'success' means in CCAAtPH
- What is making a difference, for whom
- To what extent are we shifting the balance of power by engaging people not traditionally involved in research?
- Enhancing wellbeing by co-producing solutions
- What if...unintended consequences?
- How to measure system-wide change(s)



Roger Bradshaw photo available on  
<https://unsplash.com/photos/1PPoNhMzAmY>

# Co-production and its impact

*“While research co-production can lead to demonstrable benefits such as policy or practice change, it may also have more diffuse and subtle impact on relationships, knowledge sharing, and in engendering culture shifts and research capacity-building. These relatively intangible outcomes are harder to measure and require new emphases and tools”.*

Beckett et al (2018) Embracing complexity and uncertainty to create impact: exploring the processes and transformative potential of co-produced research through development of a social impact model

*Health Research Policy and Systems 16 (118)*



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# Acknowledgements



Research participants for sharing their experiences

Larkspur House staff for supporting the research

Members of the Research Advisory Group:

Alice Wiseman (Gateshead Council),

Sarah Gorman and Fiona Pollard (Edberts House)

Peter van der Graaf (Northumbria University)

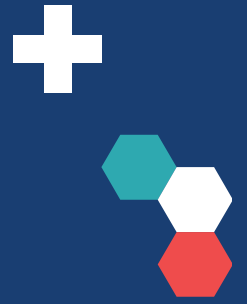
Vic McGowan and Shelina Visram (Newcastle University)

Research team members

Tom Robinson and Giovany Orozco Leal (Newcastle University)

This study/project is funded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Applied Research Collaboration (ARC) North East and North Cumbria (NIHR200173). The views expressed are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the NIHR or the Department of Health and Social Care.





Thanks for listening!

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