



# **MAKING IT HAPPEN**

## **AREA SNAPSHOT**

Willingdon Trees, Eastbourne

**3VA**

*Nov 2019 – December 2024*

**3VA** Wealden  
Eastbourne  
Lewes District

# AREA SNAPSHOT

## What This Snapshot Will Cover

- **The aim of this Snapshot**
- **Introduction**
  - What is ABCD?
  - What is Making it Happen?
  - Links to wider health policy, strategy and guidance
- **Executive Summary**
- **2019 Insights**
  - The area rationale approach
  - Area background and context
  - 2019 data
  - Community Development Worker discovery reports
- **2024 Insights**
  - Community Development Worker reflections on key developments, challenges and learning
  - Grants awarded by theme
  - Equalities connections
  - Learning from the Making it Happen evaluation
- **Key insights**
- **Strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats**

# AREA SNAPSHOT

## The Aim

The aim of this snapshot is to provide background information drawn from learning over the course of the Making it Happen programme to support deeper conversations about neighbourhoods in East Sussex where statistical data might suggest a challenging picture, while lived experience offers an alternative perspective. The snapshots add valuable qualitative insight to complement data about neighbourhoods in East Sussex.

Statistical data utilised in decision making about which areas to focus on at the start of the programme is revisited and reviewed in the context of development and learning gleaned from the programme over time.

The snapshots do not seek to provide a comprehensive profile of an area but draw on learning from and about the assets that are present, and developments which have occurred over time and reported on within the Making it Happen programme by local residents and by the Community Development Workers who work alongside them.

The aim of this snapshot is to start a conversation and to complement statistical data prepared through the Integrated Community Teams here: <https://www.eastsussexjsna.org.uk/resources/ict-profiles/>

This is to inform thinking about approaches and methods of engaging communities in addressing health inequalities.



# **AREA SNAPSHOT**

## **Introduction**

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## What is Asset-Based Community Development?

“Building on the skills of local residents, the power of local associations, and the supportive functions of local institutions, **asset based community development** (ABCD) draws upon existing community strengths to build stronger, more sustainable communities for the future” (*Asset Based Community Development Institute, DePaul University*: <https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute/Pages/default.aspx>)

“ABCD challenges the traditional deficit-based approach that tries to solve urban and rural development problems by focusing on the needs and deficiencies of individuals, neighbourhoods, towns, villages, etc. ABCD demonstrates that local assets (people, physical assets etc.) and individual strengths are key to ensure **sustainable community development**, and that people have a life of their own choosing.” (*Nurture Development, 2018*)

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## What is Making it Happen?

Making it Happen has adopted the principles and values of ABCD. Generic Community Development Workers (CDWs) work alongside communities in a neighbourhood context to identify, connect and build from the positive things that exist in a locality.

Because there is no set agenda other than positive action taken forward by the community, it has the potential to enrich every aspect of civil society and to feed into the whole range of local strategic priorities.

This enrichment is in part dependent on the willingness and ability of local institutions and organisations to flex and adapt in response to the broader and deeper engagement this can bring.

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## Relevant Health Policy, Strategy and Guidance

Making it Happen contributes to the delivery of numerous policy and strategy objectives and can assist in the fulfilment of a range of guidance around working with communities:

- [Mental Health](#) (World Health Organisation)
- [Community engagement: improving health and wellbeing and reducing health inequalities](#) (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, 2016)
- [Fair Society Healthy Lives](#) – The Marmot Review (Marmot et al, 2010)
- [A guide to community centred approaches for health and wellbeing](#) (Public Health England and NHS England 2015)
- [Reducing health inequalities: system, scale and sustainability](#) (Public Health England, 2017)
- [Community Centred Public Health: Taking a whole system approach](#) (Public Health England 2020)
- [Working in Partnership with People and Communities](#) (NHS England, July 2022)
- [Improving Lives Together](#) (Sussex Health and Care, December, 2022)
- [Working with people and communities strategy](#) (Sussex Health and Care, 2022)

# **AREA SNAPSHOT**

## **Willingdon Trees, Eastbourne**



# AREA SNAPSHOT

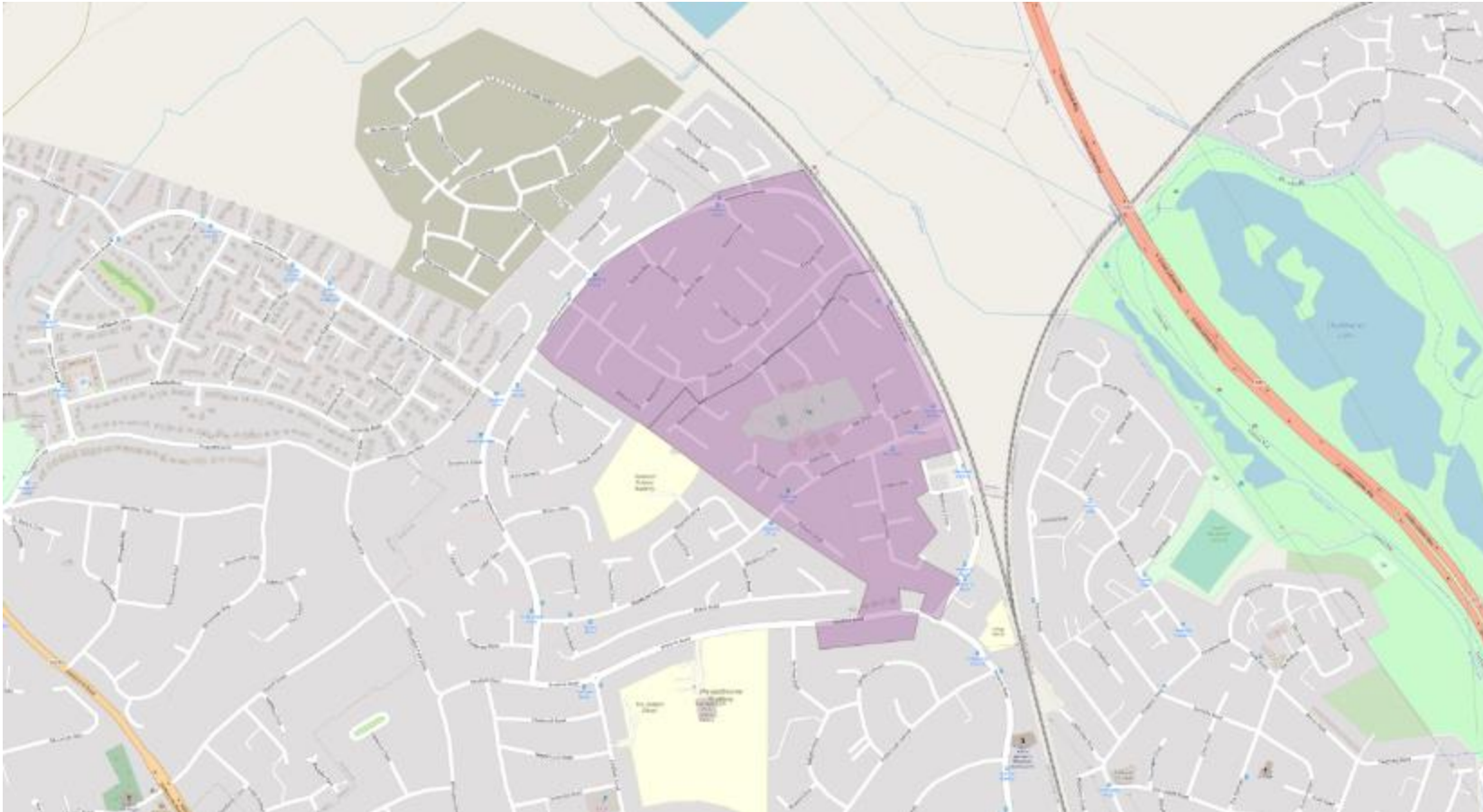
## Area context

Willingdon Trees sits to the north of Eastbourne, within the Hampden Park ward of Eastbourne Borough Council. This ward overall returned a population of 10,781 at the 2021 census. Willingdon Trees is a comparatively isolated area of the town, comprised mainly of 1970s and 1980s-build estate housing, and enclosed by wetlands and the London Mainline railway tracks. There are a number of bus stops around the area, but in spite of the close proximity to the railway lines, the nearest station is Hampden Park, approximately 30 minutes' walk from the north of the area. There is a single local shop and bakery, with primary and secondary schools at the edges of the defined area.

Willingdon Trees is, however, supported significantly by the presence of the Willingdon Trees Community Centre. The centre opened in 2001, but since 2017 it has been managed by SCDA, while been led locally by the Trees Community Association. The Community Centre forms a vibrant and growing hub for a wide range of community activities both current and future, including allotments, crafts sessions, an art network, and plans for a community cinema.

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## The Area



**Willingdon Trees** sits to the north of Eastbourne, within the Hampden Park ward of Eastbourne Borough Council.

# **AREA SNAPSHOT**

## **Executive Summary**

Willingdon Trees, Eastbourne

# AREA SNAPSHOT

## Executive Summary

- In 2019 challenges included income deprivation, income deprivation affecting children, self reported bad health, long term health conditions, and poor mental health. There were also challenges around education, and the number of pupils with SEND.
- Employment, barriers to housing and geography were also flagged. Voice and participation was also flagged as problematic, while the Joseph Rowntree Foundation defined Willingdon Trees as a transit area, suggesting high levels of transience amongst the population.
- There is some correlation between activities developed since 2019 and statistical data from that time. Projects have evolved focussed on engagement of families, and voice and representation of young people, and initiatives addressing issues related to income deprivation.
- The food bank, jumble sale and community Fridge are busy and very well used. Partnerships have evolved with the Food Partnership, local allotments and supermarkets.
- Youth Voice successfully applied for funding to undertake training and development to build the confidence and skills of young people to represent themselves in local decision making and to engage with other young people in the development of new projects and activities.
- Cup of Joy is a youth led mental health and wellbeing café which has engaged in collaborations with the Towner Art Gallery and Amazing Futures. Young people have reported improved mental health and wellbeing, self confidence, and relationships.
- A Community Cinema is developing, but is temporarily on hold, illustrating the challenge for people who work or are dealing with challenging life circumstances and the importance of working at the pace of the community.
- The Community Centre is a crucial local asset, although it's popularity has led to greater levels of bureaucracy creating barriers and frustration for some smaller groups.
- Loss of funding for the Centre is a huge blow to the area, although the Committee are keen to carry on without paid staff support.
- Groups are connecting with each other and signposting to each other. A newly formed PTFA is forging connections between the school, the community centre and local residents.
- There is interest from residents in opportunities for voice and participation and appetite for events to bring people together.

# **AREA SNAPSHOT**

## **The Picture in 2019**

**Summary of the 2019 area rationale:**

Willingdon Trees, Eastbourne

# AREA SNAPSHOT

## 2019 Area Rationales

In 2019 ahead of the launch of the Making it Happen programme, delivery partners reviewed existing data about East Sussex to inform decisions about which areas to focus activity.

Areas were selected based on relative deprivation and health inequality evidenced by 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and 2018 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). 2016-17 WARM ward and 2018 Co-op wellbeing index data were also considered. These illustrated indicators such as confidence, quality of local services, employment, experience of isolation, crime and unemployment. Broadly, the areas selected showed relative dissatisfaction with key themes in relation to living in the area and general quality of life.

Crucially, the area rationales also drew on CDW learning from previous Public Health programmes including Chances for Change, which provided a much more nuanced picture than the statistical data alone might suggest. CDWs sought to highlight the presence of local assets and opportunities to build from. They were able to highlight key connectors, appetite and ideas as well as potential challenges and blocks to community engagement.

A summary of the area rationale produced at that time is shared in the following slides.

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## Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2018

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) identifies the current and future health and wellbeing needs and strengths of local communities. These resources help to inform decisions and plans to improve local people's health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities in East Sussex.

### **Willington Trees – worse than East Sussex average in rates of:**

- Lone Parent Households
- Income Deprivation Affecting Children
- Fuel Poverty
- Early Years Development
- Key Stage 2 Development
- GCSE Attainment
- Adults with No/Low Qualifications
- Rate of Pupils with Special Educational Needs
- % of Socially Rented Households
- GP-reported Obesity in Adults
- Adults in Alcohol Treatment
- % of 40–74 year olds receiving an NHS Health Check
- People self-reporting bad or very bad health
- People self-reporting a long-term health condition or disability
- Adults with Depression
- Adults with Dementia
- Caseload rates for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- Adults claiming ESA due to mental health

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## Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019

**Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD):** The English indices of deprivation measure relative deprivation in small areas in England called lower-layer super output areas. The Indices provide a set of relative measures of deprivation for small areas across England, based on seven different domains, or facets, of deprivation. IMD's score areas between 0-5 based on levels of deprivation, with 5 representing the least deprived and 1 the most deprived. A score of 0 is registered where no data is available.

### IMD scores for Willingdon Trees:

- Income – 1
- Employment – 1
- Education, skills and training – 2
- Health deprivation – 2
- Crime – 4
- Barriers to housing – 1
- Geographical barriers – 1

	Income deprivation
	Employment deprivation
	Health deprivation and disability
	Education, skills and training deprivation
	Barriers to housing and services
	Crime domain
	Living environment deprivation



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## Co-Op Wellbeing Index: 2018 WARM Ward Data: 2016-17

### Co-op Wellbeing Index

<https://communitywellbeing.coop.co.uk/>

The index provides an insight into what is important to people in a local community. The following themes were highlighted as priorities for Willingdon Trees:

- Housing, space and environment
- Voice and participation

### WARM Ward data

WARM provided a way of understanding and identifying an area's strengths, such as levels of social capital, confidence amongst residents, the quality of local services or proximity to employment; as well as vulnerabilities such as isolation, high crime, low savings and unemployment.

#### Red

- Life satisfaction
- Education
- Health
- Material wellbeing
- Strong & stable families
- Crime and anti-social behaviour (including fear of crime)
- Infrastructure

#### Amber

- Belonging
- Public services

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## Discovery Activity 2019

In each of the areas, Community Development Workers undertook discovery activity to establish whether the conditions for Asset Based Community Development were present. This involved drawing on existing local knowledge and relationships (their own and that of their organisation), and mapping of other local assets to connect with and build from.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation described Willingdon Tress as a transit area suggesting high levels of movement of people in and out of the area, presenting a significant challenge to community building.

The team identified the following assets as having potential to build from:

- Popular and growing community centre
- Initiatives developed in partnership with the Centre through Chances4Change leading to 10 volunteers now running activities
- Presence of local assets:
  - Schools, care homes and outside space
  - Existing connections through the community centre
  - Families

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## **The Picture in 2024**

### **Willingdon Trees**

Reflections on developments and change over time

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## 2023 Reflections

In June and December 2023 Community Development Workers from the five Making it Happen Teams that work in each of the Districts and Boroughs came together at two away days to reflect on developments, challenges and learning over time in each of the neighbourhoods where they have been working.

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## Development

- Crafty Trees – started from Chances for Change
- Youth Voice and Cup Of Joy
- Toddler allotment
- Willingdon Trees Community Centre and all the projects they run, funded by the National Lottery Fund and SCDA.
- Food Bank and Jumble Sale on Wednesdays
- Volunteer meetings
- Community Fridge and larder, which is connected to the Toddler Allotment and Eastbourne Food Partnership collaboration, providing any surplus food grown on various Eastbourne Allotments, as well as various Community Champions like Asda, Morisons.

# AREA SNAPSHOT

## Key Challenges

- Volunteer staffing – DBS checks taking too long, or not being able to have one. This can mean the right volunteers for the right project are not able to help in their area of interest and expertise.
- Bank Accounts: grants being held by the centre which doesn't encourage independence and trust and creates more work for the centre staff. Pre-paid cards, especially for Small Sparks, would help solve this issue.
- Making sure that projects adhere to ABCD
- Red tape – finding the correct contact for licences, permissions has been a challenge.
- Funding for weekly Youth club sessions in the area was lost which left a huge gap in provision for young people.
- Challenges around finding out about anything outside of the centre including scope for satellite projects that could be resident led.

### What have you learned?

- Building relationships and trust takes time!
- There is a strong volunteer community
- Strong relationship between the residents and the centre with the scope for residents to create a forum, perhaps starting with a litter pick project as a result of CDWs engagement activity where a lot of residents commented on how littered and neglected the local park is
- People attending Crafty sessions for example and finding out about other stuff happening at the centre

### What do you want to share with others?

- How the centre works and the great relationships between the volunteers and staff
- How they all pulled together to make their props and costumes for their Eastbourne Carnival float
- The ending of the weekly Youth Club provision crisis, and closure of Youth Clubs across Eastbourne is a real worry. YMCA are currently looking for alternative providers (with what's left of their £24,000 grant until April 2024) but the young people are worried that the sessions won't be run by the youth workers they know and trust.



# **AREA SNAPSHOT**

## **Grant Funding**

Willingdon Trees, Eastbourne  
(Between April 2020 and December 2024)

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## The Grant Programme

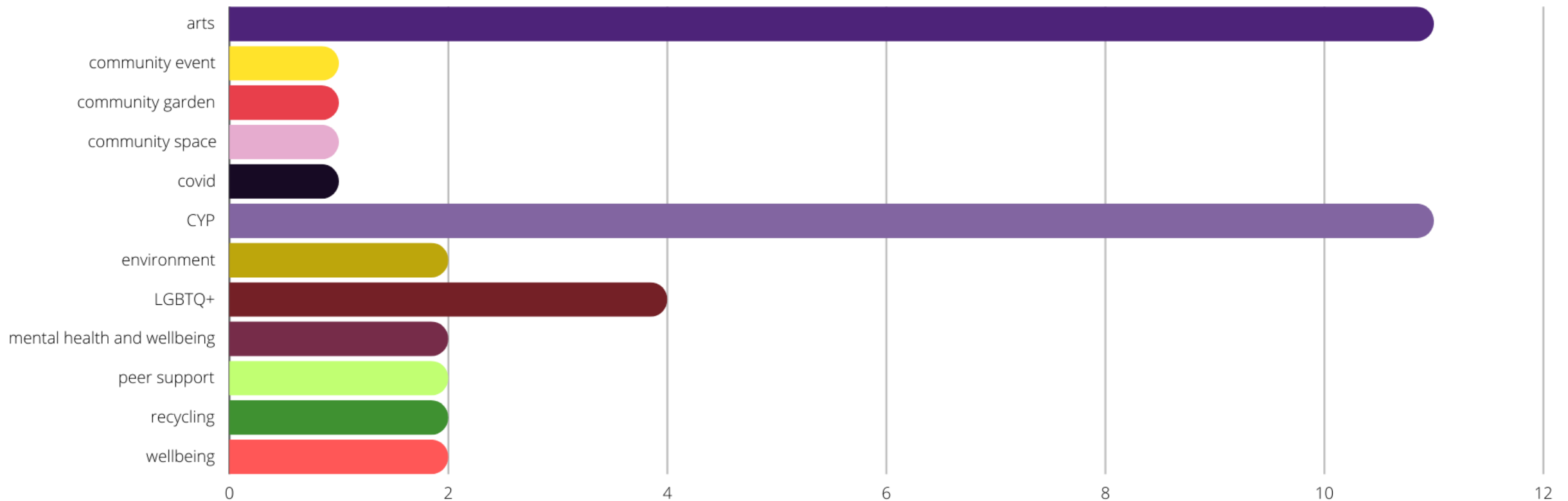
The making it Happen grant programme was designed to be flexible and offer a range of funding options to reflect the needs of different projects of different sizes. The broad aim was for projects or activity that would build from the positive things that are already present, involve local people, benefit the wider community, and encourage community led development. There were three levels of funding:

- Small Sparks – grants up to £500 for individuals or groups
- Next Steps – grants of between £501 and £3000
- Grow Grants – grants of between £3,001 and £15,000

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## Willingdon Trees

Number of grant-funded projects/activities by primary theme between April 2020 and December 2024:

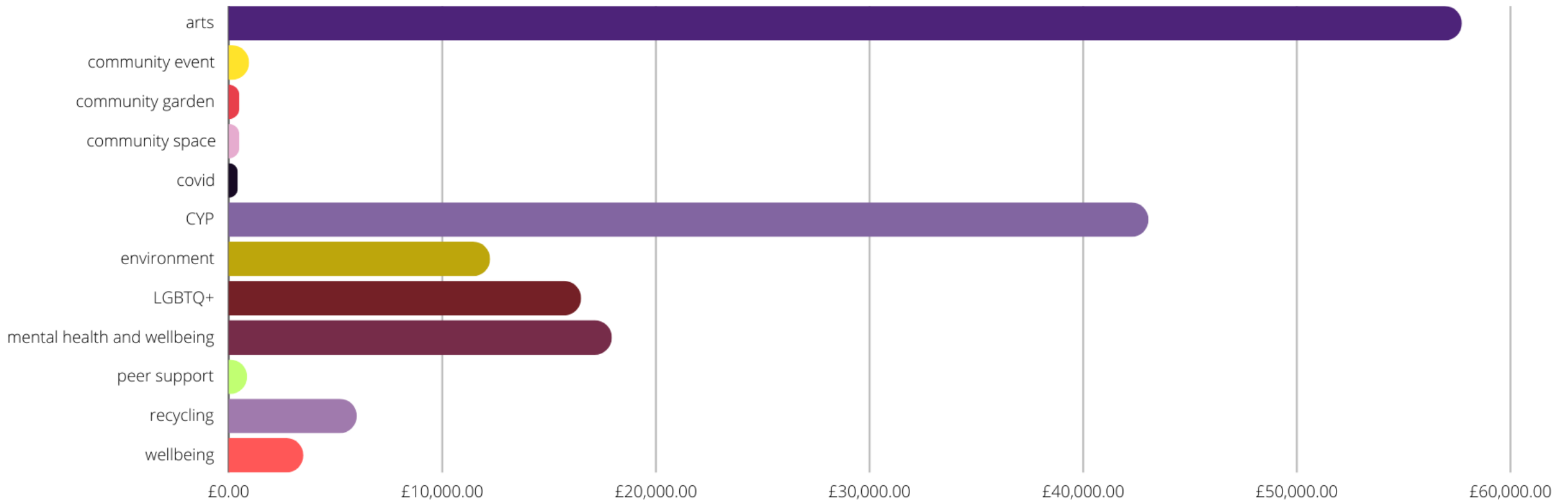


*NB: It should be noted that many projects relate to more than one theme. This graph draws on the central project intention and also includes county wide projects and activities*

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## Grants Awarded

Total sum invested in Willingdon Trees by primary theme:



*NB: This graph draws on projects local to the area in addition to county wide initiatives which may benefit local residents.*



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## Impact and Outcomes

*“One of the YP, ‘H’ really engaged and is a real anchor for the group. They’ve formed their own committee, chair, co-chair and friendship adviser. They’ve had training like food hygiene and safeguarding. Consulting with peers, campaigning for toilet access at their local school. Setting up the mental health café, it being youth led, winning the Big Sparks award, signposting other YPs, they really narrowed it down and shaped it to what they want the café to be. They now have pop up football, roller disco and are in the process of organising Pride attendance. They also have the KFC funding. They’ve successfully collaborated with Amazing Futures as Peer-to-Peer support.” (Youth Voice grant review feedback)*





**Clockwise from top left:** Youth Voice; Crafty Trees work; Eastbourne Community Table; Youth Voice and Cup of Joy feedback; Crafty Trees artwork; Willingdon Trees Community Fridge

# **AREA SNAPSHOT**

## **Broader Context**



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## Addressing Health Inequalities

Making it Happen adds value to initiatives, such as the [NHS Core 20 plus 5](#) programme, in effort to reduce health inequalities whilst also encouraging individuals and communities to take positive action for themselves.

The focus is on the role that community building plays in addressing the **wider determinants of health** by “drawing on existing human and material resources to enhance self help and social support, and to develop flexible systems for strengthening public participation and direction of health matters” (WHO Ottawa Global Conference)

In this way, Making it Happen is working with communities to develop solutions that intersect the wider determinants of health to encourage **social connection, build resilience and improve mental and physical health and wellbeing**. These outcomes are being reported across the whole range of projects which communities are driving, regardless of their original intention.

# AREA SNAPSHOT

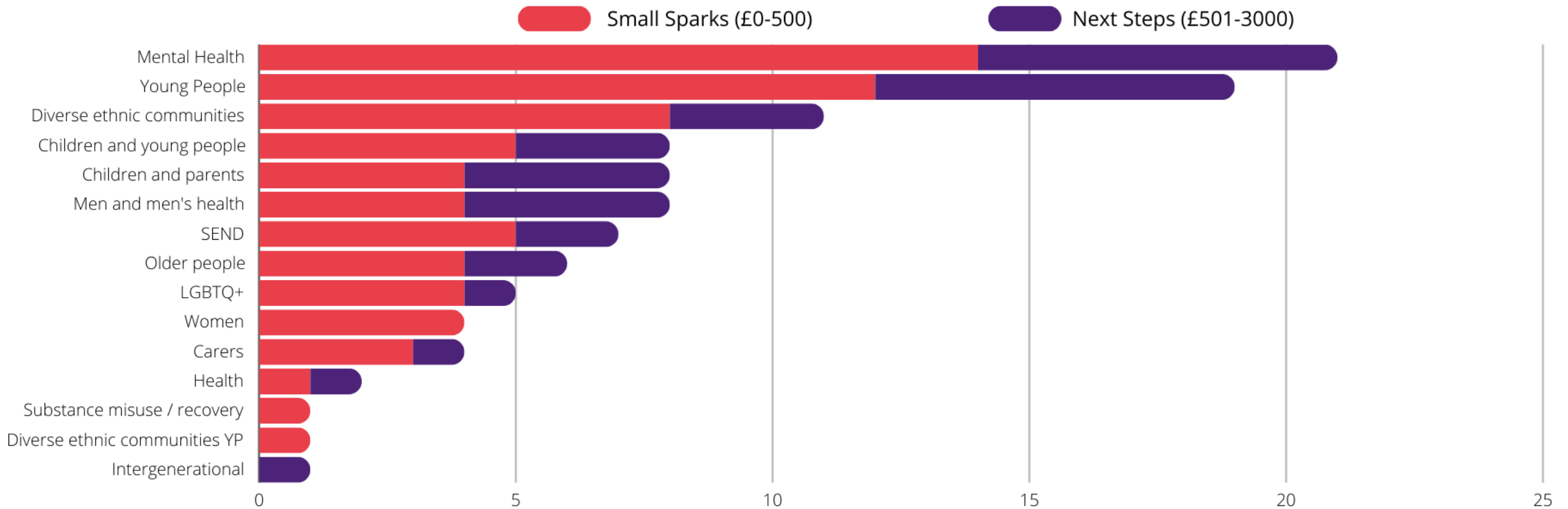
## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Through the Making it Happen programme we have sought to ensure that we are maximising opportunities to engage with those least likely to be heard. Our goal is to add additional value to more targeted health and wellbeing programmes, services and interventions by encouraging relationships, connections and trust within communities and by supporting a ripple effect of positive action, engagement and collaboration. A central objective is to build on and support positives and opportunities that already exist, and to avoid duplication. This includes working alongside individuals, groups and organisations who represent or work with those individuals and communities who are marginalised or have least access to power.

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## Grants Awarded

### Allocation of smaller grants by protected characteristic across the MIH programme:

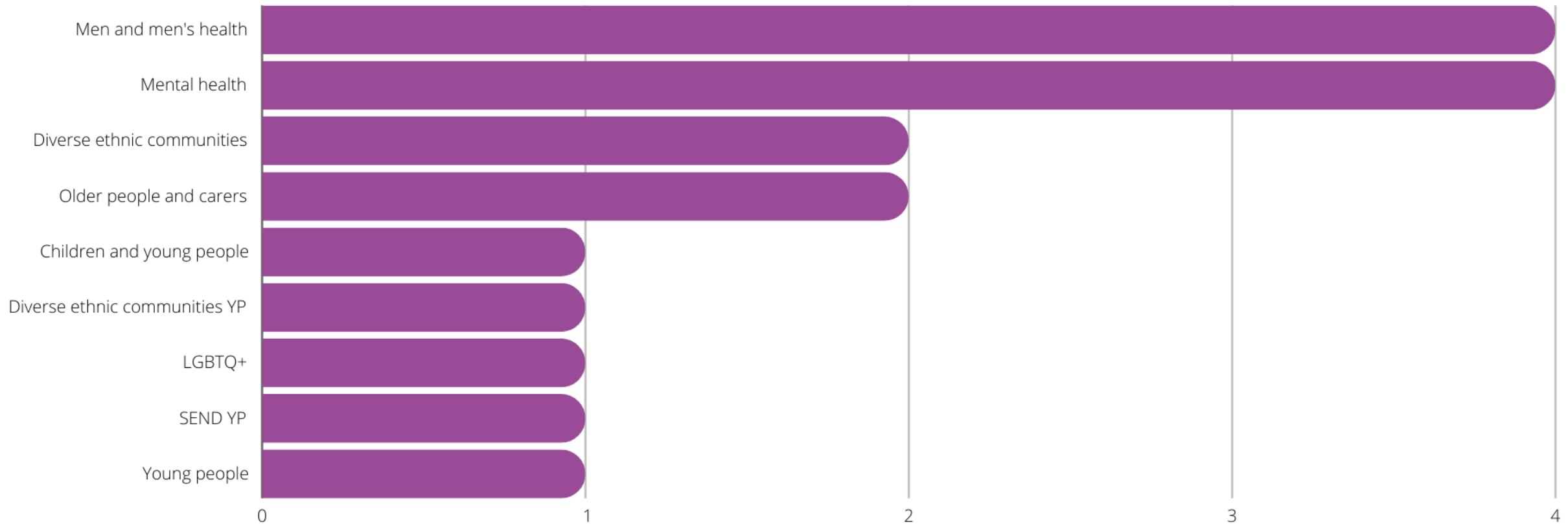


- It is important to note that many projects will have more than one core beneficiary group. Those detailed here are those that are focused on a particular group.

# AREA SNAPSHOT

## Grants Awarded

### Allocation of larger grants by protected characteristic across the MIH programme:



- It is important to note that many projects will have more than one core beneficiary group. Those detailed here are those that are focused on a particular group.

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## Willingdon Trees: Protected Characteristics

Making it Happen does not collect personal information or data. However, some groups are set up for a specific purpose, or for a specific community of identity. Broadly, in Willingdon Trees, the MIH Development workers work with people who have identified as having the characteristics detailed opposite.

It is important to note that each of the MIH priority areas is in an area of relatively low income. Therefore, socio economic inequality is likely to be a theme running across the majority of projects supported through the programme.

- **Young people**
- **Children and families**
- **Older people**
- **Low income**
- **SEND**
- **Loneliness / social isolation**

# **AREA SNAPSHOT**

## **Stage Two Evaluation**

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## Evaluation Reflections

[making-it-happen.org.uk/stage-two-report](http://making-it-happen.org.uk/stage-two-report)

### MAKING IT HAPPEN **REPORTING RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### Building A Better ABCD Movement

##### 1 IDENTIFY

Identify learning about successful approaches and processes from the programme and make them accessible, to allow them to be replicated across the wider system.

##### 2 EMBED

Embed Making it Happen more effectively into the fabric of the wider VCFSE sector.

##### 3 DEVELOP

Develop a direct strategy for enabling the wider system and sharing learning.

##### 4 BUILD

Build a movement, not just a collection of projects.

Evaluation by our Partners  
Collaborate CIC produced  
reflections on the programme  
overall through the Stage Two  
Report:

# AREA SNAPSHOT

## Evaluation Reflections

**MAKING IT HAPPEN**  
STAGE TWO EVALUATION

[making-it-happen.org.uk/  
stage-two-report](https://making-it-happen.org.uk/stage-two-report)

### How community projects have impacted communities

#### INDIVIDUALS HAVE

Reported an increase in  
**self-confidence** and **self-esteem**

Reported improvements in  
**physical and mental wellbeing**

Developed new **skills** and **capabilities**

#### PEOPLE COMING TOGETHER HAVE

Felt **deeper connections with others**

Become more likely to **reach out** to others  
to **learn, work,** and **take action** collectively

A key aspect of this was reflections on the impact projects can, and have had on communities:



# AREA SNAPSHOT

## Evaluation Reflections

[making-it-happen.org.uk/stage-two-report](https://making-it-happen.org.uk/stage-two-report)

### **MAKING IT HAPPEN**

The Asset-Based Approach to  
Community Development:

Why it Works

**BUILD ON LIVED EXPERIENCE**

**FOCUS ON COMMUNITY-LED CHANGE**

**TURN DEFICITS INTO STRENGTHS**

**ACCESSIBLE AND FLEXIBLE GRANTS**

**LEARN FROM SETBACKS**

The evaluation also reflects on why the ABCD approach is working:

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## Insights

Willingdon Trees

# AREA SNAPSHOT

## Changes Over Time

In 2019 Willingdon Trees was selected as an area of focus based on a range of data. This included challenges around income deprivation, income deprivation affecting children, self reported bad health, long term health conditions, and poor mental health. There were also challenges around education, and the number of pupils with SEND. Employment, barriers to housing and geography were also flagged. Voice and participation was also flagged as problematic, while the Joseph Rowntree Foundation defined Willingdon Trees as a transit area, suggesting high levels of movement of people in and out of the area.

Development Workers identified local assets to build from including the popular Willingdon Trees Community Centre and initiatives developed in partnership with the centre through Chances 4 Change which had led to a number of volunteer led activities. Other local assets included schools, care homes and outside spaces. The Team had connections through the community centre and families connected to it.

There is some correlation between activities that have developed since 2019 and statistical data from that time. A great deal of work has gone into supporting activity that would encourage engagement of local families and young people, and projects aimed to encourage mutual support to address issues around income deprivation, such as the Food Bank, Community Larder and local jumble sales.

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## Changes Over Time

The CDWs report that the food bank and jumble sale each Wednesday is the busiest day of the week at the centre. The Community Fridge is well utilised and connection has been established between Eastbourne Food Partnership, Eastbourne Allotments and local supermarkets which deliver surplus food to the Community Fridge. Half term and Holiday Activity Fund initiatives are always fully booked as is the Over 55's Friday Club.

Key projects that have brought young people to the fore in leading initiatives to create opportunities for young people to be heard and to improve mental health and wellbeing include Youth Voice and Cup of Joy. Members of Youth Voice were frustrated by the loss of youth service provision in the area, and applied successfully for funding from MIH to gain training and experience in campaigning, fundraising and to run activities that young people in the neighbourhood chose.

Cup of Joy is a mental health and wellbeing café led by young people which successfully collaborated with a range of organisations including the Towner and the Amazing Futures project based at Amaze which works with families of children with SEND. Young people have reported improved mental health and wellbeing, self confidence and relationships through their involvement in the projects and collaborations.

The development of a community cinema project proved hugely popular although is on hold as key volunteers are managing competing demands. This illustrates the importance of working at the pace of the community when people are giving their time for free.

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## Changes Over Time

Willingdon Trees Community Centre has played a key role in the community. There has been some frustration in relation to rigid bureaucracy even for very small, informal activities but the recent loss of funding to the centre is potentially a huge blow to the area. Their 35 volunteer and staff team made sure that there are plenty of opportunities and events throughout the year for the community to connect and get involved.

Groups act as signposting opportunities for other groups. A recently developed Parent, Teachers and Friends Association is making connections between the school, community and the centre. The centre's online presence and active social media have done a great job of promoting activities at the centre and in the local area, keeping the community informed. The loss of funding and umbrella support provided through Sussex Community Development Association is potentially a huge blow, although the Centre Committee are determined to make a go of continuing regardless.

The CDW has reflected that there is interest in residents' voice and forum opportunities and there is appetite for more events that will bring people together to encourage residents' voice, mapping local assets and ideas for local initiatives. They flagged a need to broaden engagement of local residents beyond the Community Centre to encourage the development of other local assets, which might also alleviate the pressure on the centre and its volunteers. There are residents who may not access the centre, and so effort to maximise opportunities to encourage a range of alternative opportunities would be beneficial.

# AREA SNAPSHOT

## Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

- **Strengths**

- The Willingdon Trees Community Centre
- Active volunteers supporting the development of groups and initiatives
- Development of youth led initiatives
- Growing connections between the school, community centre and local residents
- Collaborations with other key services and organisations

- **Challenges**

- Loss of funding for the Willingdon Trees Community Centre which has led to the withdrawal of SCDA management and oversight.
- Over focus on WT Community Centre as the local community hub
- Rigid bureaucracy which can make the community centre feel inaccessible for some
- Transient population can make it hard to encourage engagement
- Loss of funding for youth provision

- **Opportunities**

- Increasing connection between local groups
- Collaborations between local groups with established organisations and services potentially providing opportunities for sustainability
- Local interest in opportunities for voice and influence from residents

- **Threats**

- New programmes and initiatives that don't build from learning from Making it Happen, which risk relationships and undermine opportunities for collaboration and co-creation with communities
- Funding landscape
- Risk that ABCD is not fully embedded within local services and delivery organisations