



MAKING IT HAPPEN

AREA SNAPSHOT

Uckfield

Action in Rural Sussex

Nov 2019 – December 2024



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

AREA SNAPSHOT

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*)

AREA SNAPSHOT

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.

AREA SNAPSHOT

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

Uckfield

AREA SNAPSHOT

Area context

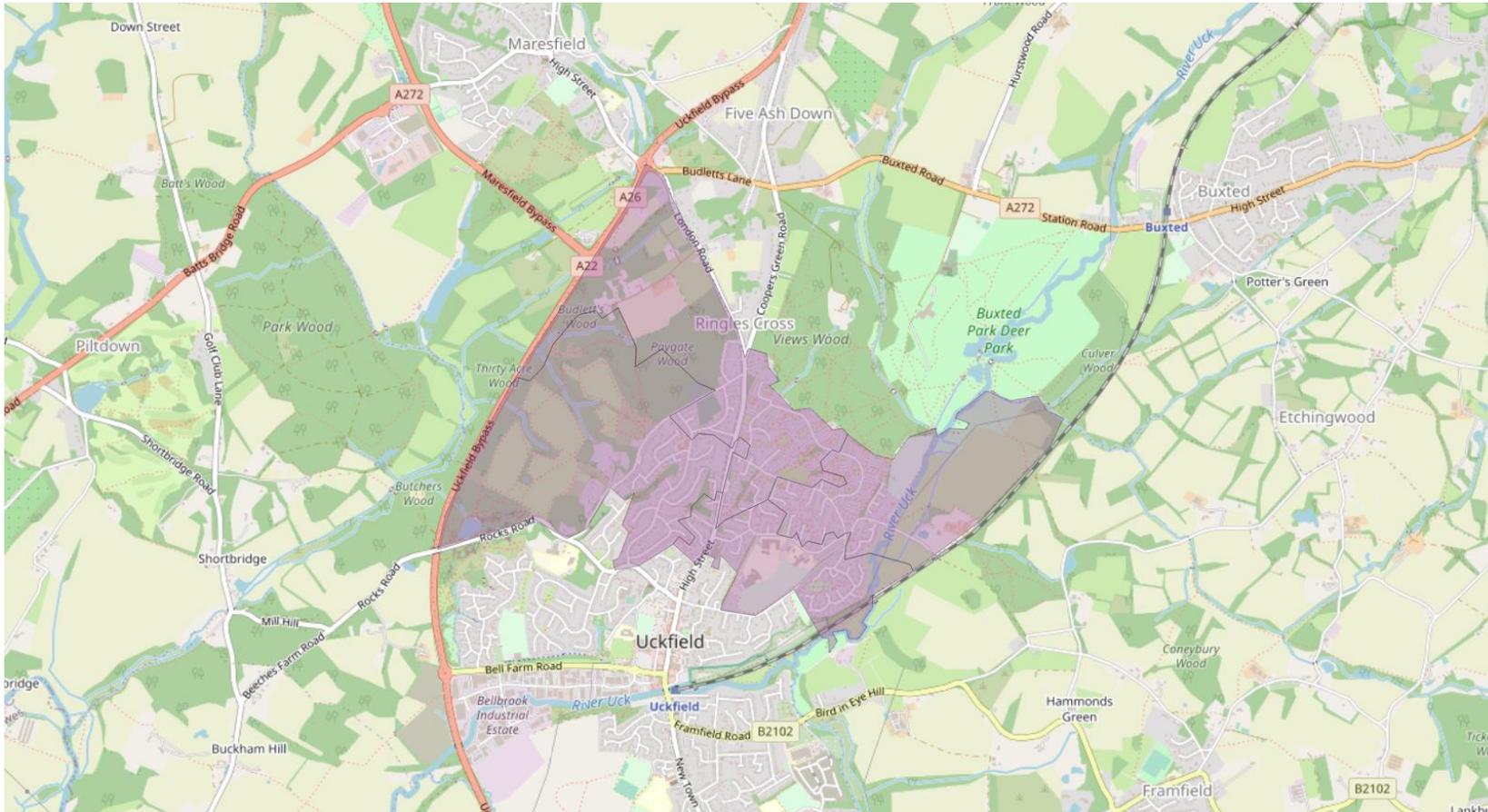
The area to the north of Uckfield includes just over a third of the town overall, split across two council wards, Uckfield East and Uckfield North, and stretching from the foot of Mockbeggar Farm to the north before stopping just short of the town centre adjacent to Bedford Place in the south. It is currently represented nationally as part of the Wealden parliamentary constituency; this will change at the next election, when it will become a title location within the new constituency of East Grinstead and Uckfield.

The Uckfield North area is primarily residential, with resources and amenities for the town generally centralised. Educationally, full nursery and 4-18 provision is available in the area, with Uckfield College, Manor Primary School, and nursery facilities all located on the same site around Downsview Crescent. This same site also houses Uckfield Leisure Centre and an established dance academy. Uckfield Rugby Club is also located on the northeast edge of the town. Beyond this, provision is limited. There is a small row of shops on Browns Lane includes a Tesco Express, chip shop, and hair salon, and a petrol station on the High Street also includes a small shop, but all other resources lie in either the centre or south of the town.

While Uckfield includes strong overall provision – including the Uckfield Hospital, a number of dentists, surgeries, large super markets, the Picture House cinema, a number of banks, a central Post Office, Uckfield Library, multiple community spaces, and Uckfield station, which provides an hourly service to London Bridge – for those living towards the northern outskirts of the town, these resources may be more than half an hour away by foot. Bus links operate across the area, but are infrequent; the 54 route that serves much of the area, for example, runs a once-an-hour service. This lack of access is significant when considering the overall profile of the area in terms of housing and wellbeing, with the area featuring a high rate of households earning below £20,000, the lowest income band, and large housing developments such as Churchcombe present.

AREA SNAPSHOT

The Area



Uckfield North includes just over a third of the town overall.

In October 2021, the patch was extended to cover the whole town.

AREA SNAPSHOT

Executive Summary

Uckfield

AREA SNAPSHOT

Executive Summary

- In 2019 JSNA data highlighted issues around lone parent households, fuel poverty, education and educational achievements, pupils with SEND and socially rented households. Relationships and trust and a sense of belonging were also flagged within more qualitative Co-op Wellbeing and WARM Ward data.
- Community Development Worker discovery work identified the Churchcoombe Community Association as a possible local asset with a focus on environment and community spirit. The Children's Centre, Food Bank and Margaret House extra care home were also cited as potential assets.
- There is correlation between some of the data and activity that has emerged since 2019
- Uckfield led the way in the establishment of a Warm Space which has evolved into the Warm Welcome café, and also in the development of a network of Warm Spaces for mutual support and peer learning.
- Churchcoombe Community Association has proven more difficult to engage with which has created a barrier to wider engagement with the community.
- However, the Children's Centre, which has evolved into a Family Hub, has worked closely with MIH to encourage community engagement and to forge links with Selby Meadow where community events have been held.
- Sussex Support Services are driving the development of a peer network for people who work and volunteer with those living with dementia, Parkinsons or other extra care needs.
- The Youth Club has not been redeveloped due to issues with the venue. New housing developments are being developed with no plans for community space.
- There is very positive interest from Wealden District Council in moving towards more ABCD ways of working as well as within the Family Hub.
- AIRS itself has undertaken a strategic review to embed ABCD within its core vision, mission and values.

AREA SNAPSHOT

The Picture in 2019

Summary of the 2019 area rationale:

Uckfield

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.

AREA SNAPSHOT

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.

Uckfield North - worse than East Sussex average in rates of:

- Lone Parent Households
- Fuel Poverty
- GCSE Attainment
- Adults with No/Low Qualifications
- Pupils with Special Educational Needs
- Socially Rented Households

AREA SNAPSHOT

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 Uckfield:

- Barriers to housing and services - 1
- Geographical barriers - 2
- Adult skills - 2
- Education - 3
- Income - 3

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

AREA SNAPSHOT

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 Uckfield:

- Economy, work and employment
- Relationships and trust

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.

Amber

- Life satisfaction
- Education
- Health
- Material wellbeing
- Strong & stable families
- Belonging
- Public services
- Crime and anti-social behaviour
- Infrastructure

AREA SNAPSHOT

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.

Uckfield

- Church Coombe Community Association – focus on environment and community spirit
- Margaret House – existing relationship
- Children's Centre
- Uckfield Food bank
- Southdown drop in sessions (issues around transport)

AREA SNAPSHOT

The Picture in 2024

Uckfield

Reflections on developments and change over time

AREA SNAPSHOT

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.

AREA SNAPSHOT

Development

- **In October 2021** the patch was extended to cover the whole town of Uckfield with specific focus on the original patch in the North of the town.
- **More collaboration-**
 - **Manor Park & HF RA** Expanded offer to other partners and keen to share experiences/resource for Warm Spaces.
 - **Selby Meadow** space- also keen for space to be used but to respect nature. More collaborative and passing reigns to other members of the action group.
- **Asking MIH for support-**
 - **UGP (Uckfield Green Partnership)**- keen to get help from other sources i.e. ideas for engagement
 - Selby Meadow -support from AirS/MIH re communication with new build.
- **Working in partnership & more ABCD-**
- **Sussex Support Services** helping with warm spaces materials, trying a network of workers/volunteers to support them etc. Art group wanting to develop exhibition skills.
- MIH working more with **green partners and food partnerships**, joined up around offer to local people and less food waste/less stigma.

AREA SNAPSHOT

Key Challenges

- Groups have had the same old people involved for some time, some groups have dwindled a bit....therefore a bit of a challenge Engaging the people that live in the areas. There is a lot going on in some areas but some is quite top down. A two pronged approach to develop more areas on the ground but help model organisations to become more ABCD.
- Young people & groups, seems to be that only really organised clubs/groups run things for young people like after school clubs, sports & guides/scouts etc. Not much in north and southern areas. Much work went into youth provision about a year ago, when the youth worker left nothing replaced them. Seems some apathy around trying again.
- Seems to be much around volunteers needed but people seem interested but maybe in a more ad hoc way.

What have you learned?

- To go slowly in some areas, perhaps not the right time but drip drip approach and being seen in the areas might be best approach.
- Engagement in some areas seems limited to what I'm invited to or otherwise bigger events.
- A good network of movers and shakers in Uckfield, some slightly 'clicky' feel to it as very competent people running things. Cllrs are very involved in supporting a lot of groups but are also stretched.
- Groups have sometimes a more aging population and they are also stretched and have health issues etc. Linking in and supporting is best approach, gradually helping them with thinking about partnership working etc.

What do you want to share with others?

- To keep up the connections, slowly get to know people. Find areas to meet locals.
- The youth activities ideas need a bit of focus in the town.
- Warm spaces – great to see things can morph from one thing and continue as another.
- And it's fine that some warm spaces didn't take off in the town.
- Message to get across...To come to us at MIH with ideas as it's not an arduous process to get a small grant to try something !

AREA SNAPSHOT

Grant Funding

Uckfield

(Between April 2020 and December 2024)

AREA SNAPSHOT

The Grant Programme

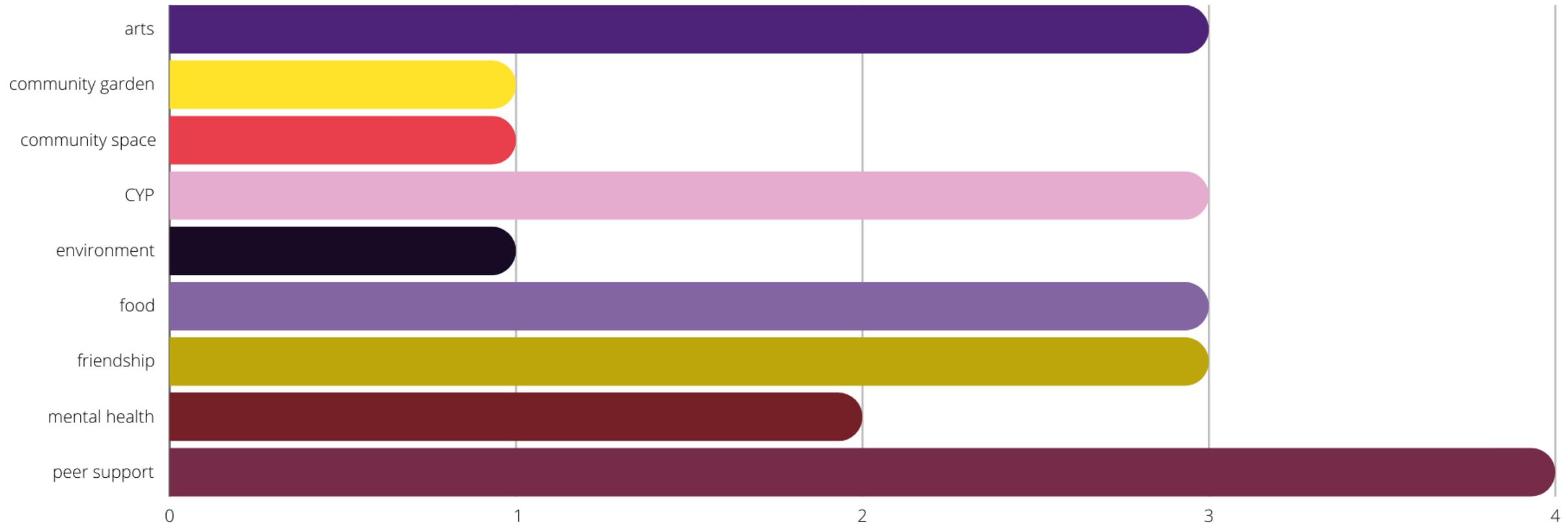
The making it Happen grant programme was designed to be flexible and offer a range of funding options to reflect the needs of different projects of different sizes. The broad aim was for projects or activity that would build from the positive things that are already present, involve local people, benefit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

AREA SNAPSHOT

Grants Awarded in Uckfield

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

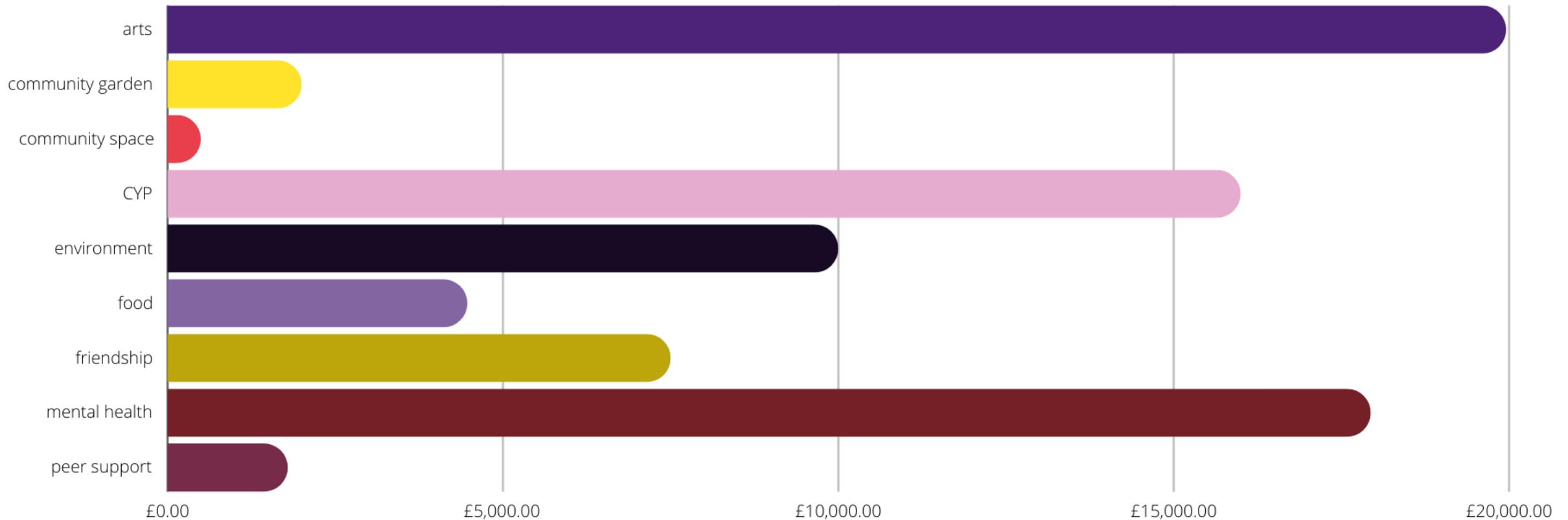


NB: It should be noted that many projects relate to more than one theme. This graph draws on the central project intention.

AREA SNAPSHOT

Grants Awarded

Total sum invested in Uckfield by primary theme:



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

AREA SNAPSHOT

Impact and Outcomes

“J told me before he met us and came to us and me introducing him to Ridgewood too he was in a black hole and suicidal. He was so grateful to have made so many new friends. 😊 S has said how it has changed her life too going out to both groups. She forgets about her aches and pains. T appreciates us and chats to everyone. 😊 He’s recently given up driving so enjoys it being in walking distance from home.”
(Feedback from the lead volunteer at the Warm Welcome Café in Uckfield)



Clockwise from top left: Family Hub picnic at Selby Meadow; Volunteer Day at Selby Meadow; Discovery Walk; Volunteer Day at Selby Meadow; and The Warm Welcome Cafe

AREA SNAPSHOT

Broader Context

AREA SNAPSHOT

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

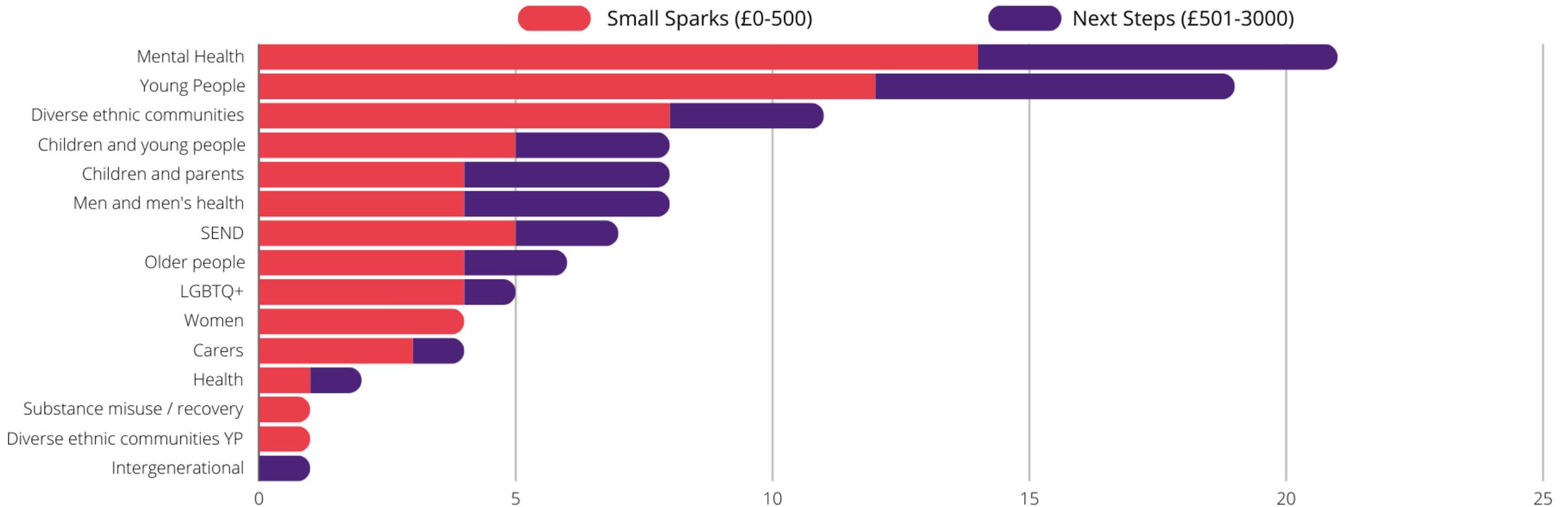
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

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.

AREA SNAPSHOT

Grants Awarded

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

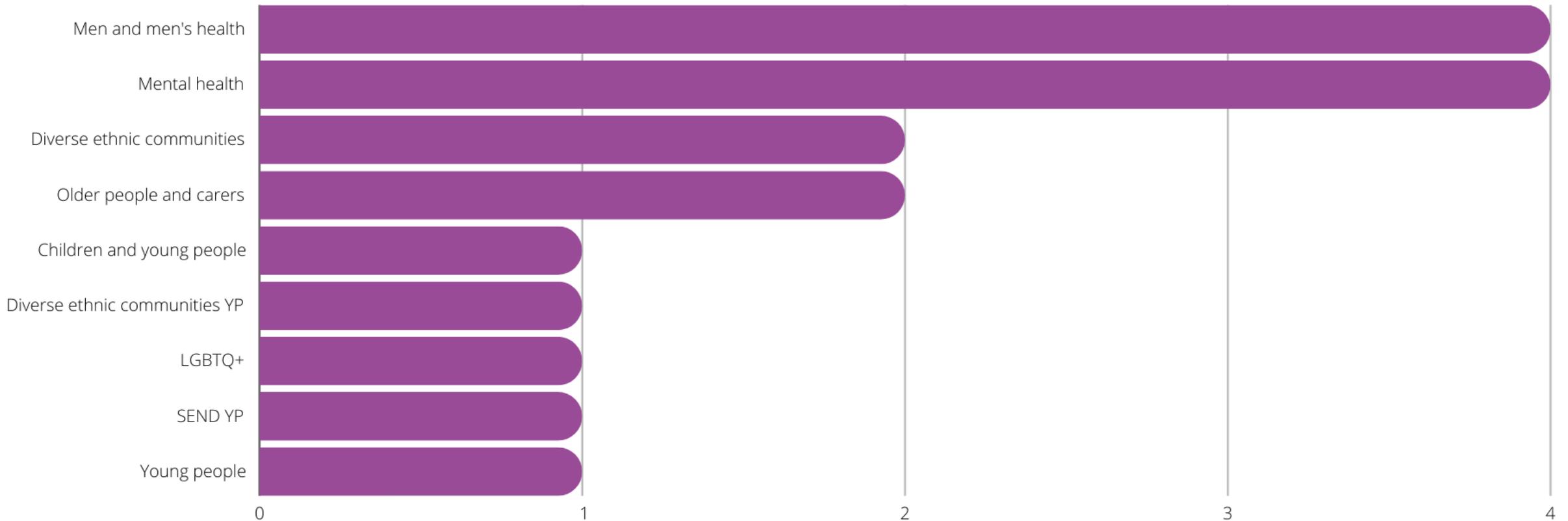


- It is important to note that many projects will have more than one core beneficiary group. Those detailed here are those that are focused on a particular group.

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.

AREA SNAPSHOT

Uckfield: 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 Uckfield, 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.

- **Families / parents**
- **Older people**
- **Children and young people**
- **Refugees and Asylum Seekers**
- **SEND**
- **Socio economic**

AREA SNAPSHOT

Stage Two Evaluation

AREA SNAPSHOT

Evaluation Reflections

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

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:

AREA SNAPSHOT

Insights

Uckfield

AREA SNAPSHOT

Insights: Changes Over Time

There is correlation between issues flagged by the data from 2019, and development which has built over time. Fuel poverty was identified in 2019 JSNA data and became more of a priority issue for the local community with the onset of the cost of living crisis. Uckfield led the way in terms of the establishment of a Warm Space prior to the arrival of national funding for warm spaces in the winter of 2022-23. The space has continued and evolved into a popular Warm Welcome café, supporting social connection. Attendees of the café have introduced games and activities and the session is popular. Friendships have grown outside of the weekly café.

2019 JSNA data highlighted challenges for lone parent families and while there remains a lack of coordination and prioritisation around support in this area, a relationship has been developed and work initiated with the Family Hub in Uckfield, and valuable connections with Selby Meadow. There have been joint events and family days in the garden which have proved extremely valuable.

The Co-op Wellbeing Index and Warm Ward data from 2019 indicated challenges around feelings of belonging, relationships and trust. Churchcombe has proved challenging in terms of engagement. Support has been offered to the local Community Association committee, but despite declining engagement by the local community, this hasn't been taken up.

There are plenty of positives when it comes to relationships, trust and belonging though. The Warm Welcome café is providing a catalyst which is bringing people together for social connection.

AREA SNAPSHOT

Insights: Changes Over Time

Sussex Support Services provides space and activities for people living with dementia, Parkinsons, and other extra care needs. With a Small Sparks grant from MIH, they are working to establish a peer support network for those who work or volunteer primarily with older people in Wealden. Their aim is to support people to link with each other to improve access to advice, ideas, resources and support.

There is still no progress in the town on a Youth Club, partly due to ongoing issues with the venue. While organisations do collaborate in some areas of work there remains a culture of competitiveness for funding and audience. There is also a lack of affordable community space, and as in many other areas, there are significant new housing developments with little or no regard to indoor community spaces.

However, there is interest and opportunity to encourage learning around more asset based ways of working, and local desire to shift some of the more 'service' style of provision. Wealden District Council is increasingly interested in ABCD, as is the Family Hub, including around working with communities to discover what they would like to see and drive within the Hub. MIH have played a key role in supporting some larger organisations to connect and collaborate in relation to the Warm Spaces Network, and smaller projects have been connected up with local Council staff and other resources.

AIRS has undertaken a strategic review to embed ABCD within it's core vision, mission and values. There is a great deal to be positive about including genuine drives towards collaboration and mutual support across organisations and sectors.

AREA SNAPSHOT

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

- **Strengths**

- Local projects which are driving opportunities for social connection and mutual support, such as the Warm Welcome Café and Selby Meadow
- Sussex Support Services drive to develop a peer support network for people who work or volunteer with older people, improving access to information, advice and services
- Interest from Wealden District Council in ABCD and ABCD ways of working

- **Challenges**

- Difficulty in engaging with the Churchcoombe Community Association has made broader engagement with local residents more difficult
- The time it takes to build relationships and trust in areas which are more isolated from town centres
- Difficulty in progressing youth activities due to ongoing issues with the venue

- **Opportunities**

- Emerging networks, such as the Warm Spaces Network
- Collaborations between organisations, such as between the Family Hub and Selby Meadow
- Wealden District Council interest in more ABCD ways of working and investment of time in exploring this
- Family Hub interest and engagement in more ABCD ways of working
- Potential for more activity in relation to green spaces.

- **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