

Living well in Solihull

An ALL-AGE prevention strategy for SOLIHULL 2023-2028



A Place Prevention Strategy for Solihull

Introduction

Solihull's All-Age Prevention Strategy is a five-year strategy built on the principle that prevention and acting early is better than waiting for problems to develop. The aim is to support Solihull's children and young people to have the best start in life and help them reach their full potential and to support adults to stay as healthy, happy and independent as possible, for as long as possible. The added benefit is that this approach reduces the need for more expensive solutions. Demographic pressures and rising demands mean that we need to act as early as possible, working together better to maximise public value and enabling individuals and local communities to be resilient and make informed choices to support their own health and wellbeing

Our strategy challenges us to 'think prevention' at every stage of life and make sure we work effectively together across our partnerships. Our strategy spans early childhood to end of life and recognises the importance of the wider environment plays in prevention such as housing, employment and the economy.

Our strategy is intelligence-driven, based on what we know about our local population and place – and how this is predicted to change -using information drawn from a range of sources. A key aim is to deliver more sustainable services that meet people's needs and improve outcomes.

We already have a great range of preventative services which support local residents to live well and stay well, for example, our [Community Advice Hubs](#) and [Here2Help](#) webpages. We will continue to develop our investment model, building a strong business case to inform the continuation and improvement of future services. In turn, this will continue to improve outcomes and reduce demand. Using an evidence-based approach, we will continue to monitor the impact of our investment.

We plan to make the best use of existing resources to achieve our aims, for example, maximising the assets we have in our buildings, staff and built environment and looking at how we can better coordinate what we do. Our support offers will be built around the needs of our communities and taking a 'think prevention' approach. We also plan to embrace the role of new technologies in prevention, recognising that although it is only one part of the solution, technology is playing a stronger and stronger role in many people's lives.

We recognise that prevention should be everyone's business: schemes such as Child Friendly Communities recognise the power of individuals, community groups and large organisations to create an environment where all children can flourish, an approach that we want to build locally.

This strategy sets out our strategic context, describes our prevention model and rationale, sets out our 5 key opportunities and describes how we will deliver and monitor our progress. We set out some examples of 'what's next' in terms of what we will deliver, although further actions will continue to be agreed as part of our ongoing delivery plan. Our local case studies illustrate examples of successful local developments already in place, which we plan to build upon through this strategy.

Strategic Context

There are a wide range of multi-agency and single-agency strategies and plans in Solihull. However, the three documents outlined below are the most relevant strategic drivers of change with respect to strengthening our prevention approach:

Solihull's Council Plan 23/24

The Council Plan sets out a vision for Solihull to be a place where everyone has an equal chance to be healthier, happier, safer and more prosperous through growth that creates opportunities for all through 6 core priorities

- Improving outcomes for children and young people in Solihull
- Good quality, responsive, and dignified care and support for adults in Solihull when they need it
- Take action to improve life chances and health outcomes in our most disadvantaged communities
- Develop and promote the borough's economy, revitalise our town and local centres and maximise the opportunities of UK Central and HS2
- Increase the supply of affordable and social housing that is environmentally sustainable
- Enhance our natural environment, improve air quality and reduce net carbon emissions

Solihull's Health and Well-being Strategy 2019-2023

Led by Solihull's Health and Well-being Board, our multi-agency Health and Well-being Strategy sets out 5 themes:

- A healthy start in life
- Adulthood and work: promoting health and well-being
- Aging and later life: aging well and improving health and care services for older people
- Social connectedness
- Addressing the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Tackling Health Inequalities: a blueprint for Solihull 2022-2025

This Strategy sets out Solihull's plan of action to reduce health inequalities over the next three years. It draws on strategies where work to address health inequalities has already started (Solihull's Council Plan, Health and Well-being Strategy and the Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Strategy).

Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Strategy 2023-2033

Solihull sits within the Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care System (ICS) geography. The ICS has developed a strategy which sets out the vision for the future and the improvements we want to see over the next ten years for everyone who lives, works and receives care in Solihull and Birmingham. It includes an ambition for the whole health and social care system to be proactive in taking action on prevention at every stage of life and in every care pathway.

This includes preventing disease but also supporting changes that reduce the risk of complications and improving health in those living with long term conditions. The strategy focuses on 5 clinical condition indicators to help improve life expectancy: circulatory disease, respiratory disease, mental health, cancer and infant mortality.

Safer Solihull Partnership

Our local multi agency community safety partnership's role is to strategically plan, commission and oversee services that:

- Tackle crime and disorder
- Address drug and alcohol misuse
- Deal with anti-social behaviour

Alongside the contextual plans and strategies and as part of our overall governance at place, the Safer Solihull Partnership Board will play an important role to underpin the delivery of this strategy. It has oversight of partnership work to tackle:

- Domestic Abuse
- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Anti-social behaviour
- Exploitation
- Serious violence
- Counter terrorism
- Offender management

Our starting point- understanding Solihull people and communities

Increasingly diverse communities

We celebrate that Solihull is increasingly diverse, highlighting the need for culturally intelligent commissioning and delivering cultural safety across all our services. We recognise the need to drive specific action to address inequalities affecting communities of identity and the contribution this will make to health and wellbeing. For example, people from ethnic minorities account for 18% of the population (similar to the national average of 19% but less than the West Midlands average of 23%). Diversity is highest among young people; 28% of the school population is from an ethnic minority group. Since the 2021 Census, a number of national policy initiatives have impacted on UK immigration. In particular, since 2021, we have welcomed 4200 adults and children to the Borough through the Hong Kong British Nationals (Overseas) Welcome Programme.

Inequality

Solihull is one of the least deprived Local Authorities in the West Midlands, but incomes are unequal across the borough as is poverty, unemployment and life expectancy. 16 out of 134 neighbourhoods in Solihull are in the most deprived 10% in England, of which 6 are in the bottom 5%. All of these are in North Solihull (Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2019).

People living in the least deprived areas of Solihull can expect to live 10 years longer than those living in the most deprived areas. This life expectancy gap is due to higher mortality rates from circulatory disease, cancer, COVID-19 and respiratory diseases in the most deprived areas, particularly in men aged 40-79 years.

An ageing population

The 2021 Census shows that 45,600 Solihull residents are aged 65+ (21% of the population vs 18% England), including 6,700 people aged 85+ (3.1% vs 2.4% England).

Those aged 65 and over were the fastest growing section of the Solihull population from 2011 to 2021 (+15%, +6,000 individuals) and this is set to continue. The Solihull population aged 65 and over is expected to increase by 10,600 people (+23%) between 2021 and 2041. In particular, those aged 85+ will increase by 3,500 (+50%) and those aged 75-84 by 4,900 (+30%). 14,500 Solihull residents aged 65+ have a disability that limits their daily activity; 18,200 are in poor health while 4,600 provide unpaid care to others.

Our ambition is to facilitate an environment in Solihull where more people are able to remain well and independent, for longer. This will be positive for residents and will reduce the demand on more intensive health and social care services, helping to ensure that the right care continues to be available for everyone who needs additional care and support.

Children and young people

Solihull's population of children and young people is growing. The number of Solihull residents aged 16 and under increased by over 2,300 (+6%) between 2011 and 2021. The number of Solihull children aged 15 and under living in a low-income household increased by over 1,200 (+25%) in the 5-years to 2021.

- More children achieve a good level of development in the early years compared with England.
- A higher proportion of children (8.1%) are born at a low birth weight than England (6.2%)
- Emergency admissions to hospital for children and young people (77.7) are higher than England (70,7 per 1,000)
- The number of Children in Need in Solihull is 12% higher than England and increased 22% between 2020 and 2022.
- The number of Children Looked After in Solihull has increased each year since 2014.
- Nearly 17% of pupils attending a Solihull school have a Special Educational Need, between 2016/17 and 2021/22 this increased by 16% (979 pupils).

Our public sector design principles

Although it is hard to definitively segment the wide range of services available into a few simple categories, we generally think of our services as falling into three general categories. These are:

1. Universal Services are those offered to all of our residents and provide the foundation upon which successful, sustainable communities are built.
2. Targeted Services are there to help these residents to get things back on track, and try to ensure temporary difficulties do not escalate to become long term issues.
3. Specialist Services are received by residents who need specialised support, such as adults with long term health issues and children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities or those needing support and intervention from social workers.

Our 'think prevention' approach challenges us to think about what can be done to make sure we work effectively together across all our services and partnerships to give everyone the best chance for continuing to live the most fulfilling and healthy life they can.

Our shared prevention model

There are many definitions and perspectives about what counts as 'prevention'. To help us have a clear approach as part of delivering this strategy, we have worked together to define our common understanding of what we mean by 'prevention' and 'early help' in Solihull. This is set out in the following sections. We have done this because a common understanding of the terminology we are using is important to help us to deliver the ambitions of this strategy.

Prevention is about taking action to stop issues from arising in the first place.

In the context of this strategy, 'prevention' is meant to be taken in its broadest context. This means that it relates to prevention resulting from the impact of the actions of individuals themselves, the actions of health and council (and other public sector) services and it also takes account of the positive contribution of the wider actions that create healthy living conditions. For example, developing strong communities, good housing, reducing crime and facilitating good quality built and natural environments and a thriving economy.

Early Help is about providing support to "nip things in the bud". It is about providing help at the start of an issue to stop it getting worse and to stop it causing major problems later.

Our three-stage model, below, can be applied at different stages of life and for different services, organisations or partnerships. Put simply, we seek to offer the right response in the right place at the right time, whatever a person's age or personal circumstances.

Universal prevention is achieved via the services and developments that are accessible to all within the borough and provides the foundation for sustainable communities. It is about stopping issues from arising through the provision of accessible information, advice and services that promote physical and mental wellbeing. Everyone that works, lives and learns in Solihull has a role to play in this.

Secondary prevention is achieved via the services and support which reduce risk and stop escalation of issues. Support is usually time limited and targeted to tackle temporary difficulties or emerging issues with the aim of preventing these from becoming long term, complex issues. 'Early help' services generally fit in this level.

Tertiary prevention is formal intervention and support which aims to reduce the impact of serious issues or long-lasting conditions and to improve quality of life. The 'targeted support' services described in 'our public sector design principles' above, are often tertiary prevention services. Sometimes it might not be obvious which 'level' the preventative activity falls into because in reality the vast range of services is more of a 'spectrum' than clear levels. The most important thing to remember is that in every interaction that happens, whether with people or relating to developing infrastructure, it is essential to consider the thing that we need to do at that point to stop issues from arising or people's health, care or wellbeing needs from escalating.

Our Five Key Opportunities

There are already a wide range of services across Solihull delivering a prevention-related impact. However, we know that further improvements are possible. Our strategy is built around 5 key opportunities to make further progress over the next 5 years:

Opportunity 1: Building the preconditions for success

We will develop an approach which embeds the 'think prevention' ethos into all our strategies and policies. This 'health and well-being in all policies' approach will maximise the positive impact we can have on health and well-being through a wide set of levers such as housing, community safety, transport, regeneration and community development and a proactive approach to climate change adaptation, through incorporating existing and future climate risks into decision making.

Opportunity 2: Improving access to information and advice, including digital access to support prevention

We need to continue our work to develop information, advice and services in a co-ordinated and joined up way. This will result in a better offer for local people, making it easier for people to access the right information or service at the right point, including the use of digital technology solutions.

Opportunity 3: Improving health and well-being across the life-course

There are a number of actions we can take to improve health and well-being outcomes for people at different stages of their lives, preventing avoidable illness or avoidable harms.

Opportunity 4: Shifting our focus and resources up-stream

We need to improve the ways we measure our investment in prevention, demonstrate the impact of preventative approaches and use this evidence to inform further sustainable investment decisions. This is sometimes called 'moving resources upstream'.

Opportunity 5: Smarter prevention: using insight and intelligence to develop our approach to prevention and measure impact

We can improve our use of data, insights and intelligence to tailor our approaches to prevention and better understand and evaluate the impact of what we do. This progress will also inform our investment decisions, as per opportunity 4 above.

Our approach will need to enable us to better plan for future demographic, social and environmental challenges which may be coming down the line and 'future proof' how we work to prevent tomorrow's challenges becoming today's.

Opportunity 1: Building the pre-conditions for success

Why is this important?

A person's physical health and mental wellbeing are influenced throughout life by the wider determinants of health. These wider determinants of health are the non-medical factors that influence health outcomes. They are the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life.

They include housing, access to good quality parks and green space, transport, regeneration, community safety, the economy and our environment.

What are we doing?

The Solihull Housing Strategy Strategies - [Housing | solihull.gov.uk](https://www.solihull.gov.uk) has some clear objectives that are a vital part of the prevention agenda. This includes promoting independence for people with additional needs such as young people leaving care, people with learning disabilities and the elderly. Our new joint approach to housing and health aims to look at housing, health and care in a holistic and preventative way, including improving the quality of our housing stock and preventing homelessness.

Having the right kind of housing is important to enable people who live with disabilities to be as independent as they can be for as long as possible, while receiving any care and support they need. We are looking to shape the range of housing available in the borough to meet the range of needs and preferences, including supported housing for adults with mental health needs, learning disabilities, autism or physical disabilities. Helping younger adults to achieve and sustain their independence is a goal, and we aim to build on the success of enabling people with learning disabilities to live successfully in small group homes, supported living and with their families for longer. For older people, we aim to stimulate the development of different models of community housing with support, such as extra care settings. Help to adapt general housing through the Disabled Facilities Grant is also supported, and the use of technology to support people with care needs, also.

The Solihull Transport Strategy, '[Solihull Connected](#)' looks at why and how we travel and sets out what we are intending to do to improve travel and transport in the Borough. It includes objectives about improving access to active travel such as walking and cycling, as well as access to public transport for underserved communities and for people with disabilities. These improvements need to be implemented in a way that also helps us achieve our Net Zero Carbon ambitions.

An air quality strategy is under development and this will set out objectives to monitor our air quality in a way that is much more dynamic than is undertaken currently. This will help the Council, our partners and the public know where we should be focusing our efforts and help us all benefit from reduced levels of pollution.

Supporting residents to take an active role in supporting or getting to know their community can really support improvements in physical and mental health. The council works with local groups and organisations to develop activities and to encourage residents to use local assets, such as libraries and community facilities. My Solihull Maps shows the organisations that operate in Solihull so that people can find a variety of opportunities and activities to get involved with in their communities. www.solihull.gov.uk/communities/my-solihull-map

What's next?

- Health in All Policies (HiAP) is a collaborative approach to improving the health of all people by incorporating health considerations into decision making across sectors, policy and service areas, and addressing the wider determinants of health. We will use this as a tool to ensure that we maximise the positive impacts of these key policy areas and minimise health harms.
- Develop the council's Culture and Arts Strategy which will identify and support the council's approach to facilitating more cultural and arts activity across the borough which will support the councils approach to asset based community development, supporting places to go, where people can do things and talk to other people.

Opportunity 2: Improving access to information and advice, including digital access, to support prevention

Why is this important?

We want to make it easier for people to access the right information or service at the right time, so that it has the best impact. As partners, we have a large number of buildings, staff and facilities such as contact centres, face to face information and advice points all of which offer opportunities to better promote our universal and preventative offer. Our webpages and other digital solutions also offer opportunities for more effective information and advice provision.

We want to continue to build on our current provision of information and advice activity as an integrated, cohesive and accessible offer for the people of Solihull. This will include further developing our digital infrastructure and developing our communication platforms and websites to facilitate easier access to information, advice and services across all ages.

CASE STUDY: QUIT WITH BELLA

Nearly 6 million adults in England still smoke, and it remains the single biggest cause of preventable death, totalling 64,000 deaths a year.

The best way to quit smoking is with support, which you can get 24/7 from Solihull Council's newly commissioned service, the Quit with Bella app. Simply download from Google Play or the App Store and you can receive free help from your personal stop smoking Robo Coach! More information can be found at www.quitwithbella.com.

Since its launch in October 2022 Quit with Bella has already proven to be popular with those people trying to quit smoking with strong uptake in priority areas including: Chelmsley Wood, Castle Bromwich, Smith's Wood, Kingshurst, Meriden, Shirley, Knowle, and Dorridge.

Feedback has been positive too with 89% of people at 12 weeks rate Quit with Bella to be helpful.

"I find the app helpful because of the practical advice it gives when you want to smoke" – 30, male.

"I can get help in my own time and also can take my time making a plan with Bella, it's helped me quit and stay quit for some months now" – 38, female.



This also means maximising our physical assets and human resources across the public and voluntary sectors to best effect including libraries, contact centres, Voluntary Sector, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VSCFSE) facilities, hub buildings and GP surgeries. Aligned to this will be how we ensure our staff and professionals across our organisations, know what services are available and where and how to recommend, refer or signpost to them.

We want to strengthen our support for people to be active and engaged partners in their own health, wellbeing and care. The personalisation of data and digital tools presents an opportunity to do this.

However, we recognise that some people are currently unable to access digital solutions, whether because of digital skills, frailty, economic disadvantage, language reasons, disabilities or remote rural living with poor infrastructure. We need to continue to develop our offers taking account of this understanding, so that the design of digital and data solutions is as inclusive as possible and must complement face-to-face services where these continue to be essential.

What are we doing?

Since the pandemic, we have developed a comprehensive suite of information around a range of local services and resources through our [Here2Help](#) webpages. This sits alongside a wider suite of digital tools to provide information and advice for individuals, families and carers which also includes [Solihull's Local Offer](#) to support children and young people with disabilities or special educational needs and our [Family Information Service](#).

Our Digital Strategy 2022-27 sets out a road map to improve everyone's opportunity to engage in a positive digital way in all parts of their life. This gives a strong platform to progress work to promote social inclusion and connectedness and improve financial inclusion, help people access the information and support they need online and support people to make the shift to digital channels of help and support.

We are increasingly making use of technology to improve the reach and ease of access of our services and to bring innovation into our service delivery, building on learning from the pandemic. Technology is just one part of our toolkit and we continue to learn how we can grow this within our wider service offer.

Facilitate the distribution of digital kit and services via our libraries, encouraging and supporting residents who currently struggle to access digital channels to adapt to the technology and develop digital skills.

What's next?

- Community Wellbeing Services are those designed to bring information, advice and support to people as early as possible. The services we have now been in place for 5 years, and we are reviewing them now to see how effective the arrangements have been. Access to general advice on social care as the first port of call is always important to signpost people to more specialist services, if needed. We will review how well our Community Advice Hubs have succeeded in reaching people and helping them to gain access to the support they sought, and whether being able to seek early help has helped maintain independence and wellbeing for longer.
- We will review which services should be included in an early help/prevention offer to have the right balance and investment to meet local needs. We know that our population is having longer life expectancy, so help to make those years healthy and to access support when it is needed will be our focus.
- This will include consideration of access to benefits and advice on how to pay for social care costs, choosing the right housing options for later life, support for informal carers and help in adjusting to conditions more likely to affect those living to age 85+, such as sight loss, hearing impairment and dementia.
- We will utilise technology and digital innovation to support our goals and develop multi-agency approaches to prevention with our partners
- We will review our customer service strategy and digital and access information points to identify how we can streamline, coordinate and improve access to information and advice, including opportunities for joint solutions across partners.
- We will co-ordinate the plans for delivery of prevention related services across the physical locations we utilise, such as libraries, contact centres, family hubs and GP surgeries. This is so that we make best use of our infrastructure, informed by feedback from individuals and communities.

Opportunity 3: Improving health and well-being across the life-course

This opportunity is considered across three life stages:

1. Prevention in the early years, childhood and adolescence
2. Adulthood: work, health and well-being
3. Living longer and healthier: add years to life and life to years

Although we have set out the considerations across three life stages, we recognise this must not trigger 'siloes' developments which risk duplication of services, or confusion for people supported by our services because, for example, information and advice is not consistent and clear across our different offers. Our newly established group to deliver the opportunities in this All-Age Prevention Strategy has a role in ensuring the co-ordination and coherence of service developments, so that they are as simple, consistent and clear as possible for local residents as they can be.

Prevention in the early years, childhood and adolescence

Why is this important?

The 1,001 days from pregnancy to the age of two set the foundations for an individual's cognitive, emotional and physical development. There is a well-established and growing international consensus and a strong research base on the importance of this age range as a critical time for healthy development. But it is also a time when babies are at their most vulnerable. Some babies have a disability diagnosed; some have a developmental need identified that might develop into a special educational need once they start school. For others it may take longer for needs to be identified.

A loving and supportive environment and good attachment between parents or care givers is crucial, as is the right advice and support to identify any health or developmental issues. We know that the COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on very young children with clear impacts on some measures of early childhood development. Children born during the pandemic missed out on some key social interactions at a key point and the impacts of this are evident for some children when they start school.

In addition, there are key health programmes such as supporting parents to stop smoking and vaccination which can help reduce the risk of respiratory illnesses and preventable diseases.

Making sure all parents and carers have access to the right help and support, including informal social activities is key. And if families or caregivers need extra help, this must be easy to access with the right professional support on hand. Access to preventative healthcare, such as immunisation and dentistry, is also important for all children. This is particularly important for children who may be vulnerable or in need of extra support, including children in care.

As children grow older, they pass through a series of key transitions, from home or nursery to primary school, from primary school to secondary school and from secondary school on to higher education, training or work.

CASE STUDY: HAPPY MUMS

A parent in Knowle reached out to her local Councillor in March 2020, wanting to know where she could go for advice and support to start up a local group for new parents who may need some extra support. The parent wanted to start a post-natal support group as she noticed a gap in groups for new parents. She wanted the group to have a focus on the parent and how they are feeling being a new mum. She had anxiety and post-natal depression after having children, she wanted to “reduce the stigma of ‘not being ok’ when you’re a new mum.

The parent was supported by the Council’s Community Development Team (CDT) through:

- Linking her to access Safeguarding and Mental Health Awareness training
- Signposting her to the Solihull Parenting Team to access their support, the team now refer parents to her group who may benefit from attending
- Introduced to CAVA, helping to set up a bank account for a community group
- Support to access funding grants and sharing fundraising idea and sourcing donations from supermarkets
- Guidance on safe recruitment of volunteers including developing a recruitment process
- Room hire information and activity ideas
- Given information on training to help her to set up a not-for-profit CIC (Community Interest Company) called Nurture4Work that runs workshops and parenting packages for businesses
- Helped to promote the group via social media and flyers

Since 2020 Happy Mamas have won Solihull Civic honours award and ‘Achieves for the Community award’ at the Ladies first professional development network business awards.

The parent didn’t want any barriers for parents such as cost so has received grants from the Heart of England Community funding so that she can continue offering her groups for free.



Adolescence is a critical period of development, and a window of opportunity. Part of growing up includes experimenting and trying new things. Some risky behaviour is normal and part of growing up and may be influenced by peer pressure, social media, friends and family and the wider community. Building resilience and developing the ability to be able to bounce back from adversity can support better outcomes in young people whatever challenges they face, including mental and emotional well-being.

Home, school, communities and the environment all play a role in teenage brain development. Enriching and supportive environments can enhance development while restrictive ones do the opposite. Young people who are less resilient are more susceptible to developing anxiety and depression. We want Solihull to be a great place for children and young people to live in, where every child is valued and has the chance to maximise their potential as they grow up from birth to adulthood. Businesses, communities, voluntary groups, individuals and the public sector all have a role to play in this.

What are we doing?

The Solihull Health and Wellbeing Strategy: [Solihull Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2023: 2021 Update](#) recognises the importance of giving every child the healthiest start. Its first priority is A healthy start in life. This describes how our local Healthy Child Programme provides universal support for every family in the borough with additional services for families needing extra short or ongoing help for complex longer-term needs.

As part of our joint plans to improve outcomes for children and reduce the number of children in care we are developing and investing in a new model of prevention and early intervention. Co-designed with families and carers, this will support children and families earlier, through an improved digital offer, a series of new Family Hubs and additional support through a new Early Help programme. Voluntary and community groups will be a key part of this.

The Solihull Additional Needs Strategy: [Additional Needs Strategy](#) (solihull.gov.uk) recognises that for children and young people to have the best life they can, services must hold them at the heart of all they do – seeing children and young people first, and not simply the needs they have, so any additional support they may need can be identified and provided in a timely way. The strategy describes how everyone will work together and ensure Solihull has the services children and young people need so they can get the right support at the right time, feel included within their communities and can plan for the next stages of their lives.

We provide and promote an offer to young people that considers their views and experiences. [Solihull Local Offer](#) | [solihull.gov.uk](#) This is with a particular focus on universally accessible provision, which promotes the well-being, personal and social development of young people. In the last couple of years, our local Holiday Activity and Food Programme, has worked with nearly 40 organisations to provide free to access holiday activities and meals for children and young people in receipt of free school meals, or who might be considered vulnerable by professionals.

The new youth sector partnership, the Youth Opportunities Board for Solihull has launched with the Council's support, bringing together voluntary and community sector providers to coordinate provision, services and standard for youth activities across Solihull.

CASE STUDY: VISION 4 ALL

Their mission is to engage with disadvantaged and disengaged young people and guide them towards a positive future through sports, youth sessions and bespoke support and signposting.

The group were keen on connecting with local organisations to build knowledge and pursue potential partnership opportunities. The Community Development Team:

- Provided support with the Winter Wellbeing Fund Bid and was awarded £5000, through this they have been able to grow their offer of delivering free multi sports sessions for young people at Meriden Park.
- Connected them with Schools. V4A hoped the connection would be the start of building longer term relationships. Connected to Unity Trust, now currently work with two schools providing classes to children that might not otherwise have the opportunity.
- Linked to other potential partners to build knowledge and pursue partnership working including MAPA and Inclusive Sports Academy.
- Linked to the Youth Offending Team to pursue referral process on to YEF schemes etc.
- Connected them to North Solihull Sports Centre via Solihull Active. The Sports Centre have a large amount of weights equipment that they are replacing and wanted to donate. V4A being a relatively new group will benefit from this donation, and residents will still benefit from the equipment with it being used in the area. We provided resources such as mental health directories and other local support information to supplement the signposting the group can offer to young people.
- Connected V4A to the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), who were promoting their initiative to encourage more sport within the community for 8 – 18-year-olds. As V4A and LTA seemed to have a similar ethos in making sport more accessible to those that are disadvantaged. V4A have been offered free training, support and an equipment package worth £500 to enable them to enhance their existing multi sports offer.



What's next?

- Giving every child the best start in life will continue to be a priority, improving support in the first 1001 days of life, from pregnancy through to age two. This will include reducing the number of women who smoke in pregnancy, supporting good attachment and early brain development through continued roll-out of the Five to Thrive programme, ensuring good uptake of Healthy Start vouchers for women on lower incomes and increase uptake of vaccination.
- We will implement a new approach to prevention and early intervention through the development of a new Early Help Offer, incorporating the piloting of a single-access, Family Hub offer with local voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations and the NHS.
- We will accelerate work with nurseries, schools and external partners to improve identification of emerging needs within children and young people and provide clear pathways of support they can access to prevent needs escalating unnecessarily.
- We are developing and investing in school workforce training in identifying and meeting needs and co-producing a clear graduated pathway of support within schools, and from external agencies, to improve early help and support.
- We will further develop our offer for young people making the case for better, more coordinated and sustained investment in the youth sector, investing in more “places to go and things to do” for young people via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

- We will strengthen integrated working and our approach to youth work across SMBC. We want to develop a sufficiently sized and capable youth service/team that can work across a variety of settings in the community: youth centres, schools and early help within children's services, including Family Hubs.
- We will continue to connect the community element of the youth offer to public sector services, such as schools through the expansion of the "community around the school" model.
- We will bring business, organisations and individuals together to make Solihull a Child Friendly Community.

Adulthood: work, life, health, relationships and community

Why is this important?

Adulthood is often marked by a series of transition points that include starting work, becoming a parent or becoming a carer. It is good for life experiences to be positive and to add to health, wellbeing and fulfilment. Sometimes the life course path is 'interrupted' and is less positive, for example through ill health, unhealthy lifestyles, unemployment or bereavement.

There is clear evidence that good work improves health and wellbeing across people's lives, not only from an economic standpoint but also in terms of quality of life. ([How is work good for our health?](#)). As adults in employment spend a large proportion of their time in work, our jobs and our workplaces can have a big impact on our health and wellbeing. 'Good work' means not only having a work environment that is safe, but also having a sense of security, autonomy and feeling valued. Evidence shows that good quality work protects against social exclusion. Conversely, there is also clear evidence that unemployment is bad for your health as it is associated with an increased risk of mortality and morbidity, including poor mental health. This is a particularly important issue for people who may be furthest from the labour market or have the biggest barriers to accessing employment and therefore a focus on improving employment opportunities is important.

There are also positive steps that adults can take to prevent the onset of preventable illness, particularly cardio-vascular and respiratory disease and certain preventable cancers. As people age, early preventative actions can increase the number of years people enjoy in good health, increase overall life expectancy and delay the need for social care support later in life. We want people to have the information and tools to stay healthy and to make it easy for people to know where to go when they need additional help with problems which may affect their physical or mental health. Examples include drug and alcohol abuse, problem gambling or mental health or financial management issues.

CASE STUDY: HELPING PEOPLE TO MAKE LASTING LIFESTYLE CHANGES

- In a partnership between the five Primary Care Networks (PCNs), Gateway Family Services, Community Pharmacy, Public Health and Solihull Together Board, three Integrated hubs in Solihull were set up to focus on delivering lifestyle interventions, health checks and group consultation.
- Through data held by GP practices, the pilot targeted people who would benefit most, such as those with a high blood pressure reading or a long-term condition. They were then invited to have a lifestyle check, provided through Gateway Family Services, which included weight and blood pressure checks, who could then refer people on for more tailored support around losing weight, healthy eating, reducing stress and smoking cessation. Following the intervention, the patient was referred back to their GP for any follow up and a holistic review of their health needs.
- This partnership approach ensured that the patient care was always managed end to end through their GP practice, but with the benefit of a multidisciplinary team to carry out the checks and intervention.
- The pilot was successful in identifying those at high risk - of the 135 people that took up the offer of the health check, 1 in 5 were identified as having a high blood pressure that required medical intervention or referral back to their GP and five individuals were identified as having atrial fibrillation (irregular heart rate) and referred back to their GP.
- Nearly half of all those who took part were referred on to other support services either provided through the partners involved or through an external service. To expand this programme further it would benefit from being part of place-based working for large scale vision and resource.



What are we doing?

Solihull's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2023 has adulthood and work as a key priority. This, with additional external and internal investment has driven action to support for residents of all ages to find work or training, and support for employers who are recruiting. This extends to prevention work with young people who are at risk of not being in education, employment or training (NEET) and supporting people with Learning Disabilities into paid employment and supported internships so that people can gain experience before moving into work.

Solihull's Economic Strategy for the 10 years to 2032 will be measured not only on economic growth but also on the achievement of inclusive growth and carbon reduction. The Strategy responds to economic, environmental and social challenges in Solihull and seeks to maximise future opportunities. It looks to deliver further and better economic growth, whilst ensuring that all our communities can participate and benefit.

Our wider range of preventative services and programmes support people to stay active and healthy and promote individual physical and mental well-being. Our local community wellbeing offer brings together a range of services to deliver a tiered model of self-help, information & advice and self-management, and targeted interventions with key links and referral pathways to local services to support health & wellbeing needs. Our Solihull Community Advice Hubs are a core part of this offer.

The Community Advice Hubs act as a front door to a wide range of support delivered by the council, NHS and voluntary sector with our local [Here2Help](#) webpages providing on-line information and contact details for people who need help with food, energy, financial advice, or wellbeing. Social prescribers based in general practice are increasingly supporting patients to access local activities to improve health and well-being, reduce social isolation and loneliness. Our SMBC community development teams are working with voluntary, community and faith groups to improve connectivity, increase routes to community funding and develop local infrastructure.

Adults may develop care and support needs at any stage through physical or mental illness, newly diagnosed disability or progression of long-term needs.

Adult social care is working to support people with learning disabilities to achieve better health outcomes through accessing an annual health check. We support carers, helping them to provide vital continuous support for those they care for. To help protect their wellbeing, we offer carers an assessment of their needs, and are continuing to develop respite care solutions to meet their varied needs. Through information and advice and linking closely with health partners, we encourage access to early dementia diagnosis so that those affected can plan for their care needs as the condition progresses. Where a crisis arises, prompt help can avoid the need for admission to hospital or a care home.

Working with the NHS, our Healthcheck programme offers an opportunity to assess the risk factors driving premature death and disability in Solihull. This includes heart rate and rhythm, blood pressure and cholesterol. Individuals are supported to understand their risk of being overweight or having a high blood pressure and supported in making positive behavioural changes that can prevent and delay the onset of more serious heart disease. Our 'Solihull on the Move' programme coordinates a range of activities in leisure centres and local communities for all ages to support people to be more physically active.

This local work with the NHS supports the CORE20PLUS5 programme. This is a nationwide NHS initiative to address healthcare inequalities, with a focus on:

- The Core20 - the 20% of the population experiencing the greatest levels of deprivation.
- The PLUS - representing locally defined populations of additional need, recognising the varying needs of different regions with their own distinct demographic and geographic challenges.
- The 5 - the areas of clinical focus; maternity, severe mental illness, chronic respiratory disease, early cancer diagnosis, high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

This work also aligns with the Solihull Inequalities Strategy.

What's next?

- We will grow our range of support to help people furthest from the labour market to access employment through supported internships, apprenticeships and by working with education and local businesses.
- Working together with local communities, voluntary and community groups organisations such as our parish councils and faith groups, we will jointly identify local solutions and funding routes to enable and test approaches to working differently at local level.
- We will focus on promoting the visibility of and confidence in VCFSE organisations and groups to promote strengths and assets based practice within our communities
- We will review how we work together across the council, NHS, voluntary and community sector to provide more co-ordinated, simplified access to prevention and well-being services, to improve take-up and impact. This will include supporting implementation of the CORE20PLUS5 programme.
- Adult Social Care are about to start a new contract for the Early Response Service which provides care and support to people at home through a rapid response. For people leaving hospital, we are about to start a new contract for a Home Discharge Service. This helps people to return straight home after a period in hospital, providing immediate support to regain independence and adjust to any changes in health.
- We will award contracts for new day opportunities services shortly, expanding the range of provision to provide people with meaningful activities and opportunities to enjoy companionship and social contact, as well as providing some respite for carers.

Living longer and healthier

Why is this important?

There has been a steady increase in average life expectancy in recent decades, albeit increases have slowed considerably since 2011. The opportunity to live a longer life has brought the benefits of advanced skill and wisdom to the workplace, as well as the opportunity for enjoying retirement to the full, including the time and capacity to make increased contributions to family and community life, which for many includes enjoying the pleasures of becoming a grandparent or great-grandparent.

However, the older we get, the more likely we are to experience illness and disability of both mind and body. Our aim is to minimise this risk by promoting the concept of productive healthy ageing, which involves:

- improved health and wellbeing
- maintained independence and resilience to adversity
- the ability to be financially secure through work
- engagement in social activities
- being socially connected with enhanced friendships and support
- enjoying life in good health

With an ageing population that is working to older ages, good quality employment opportunities for older people are essential and can bring additional benefits for health and wellbeing for individuals. More generally, factoring in how we create an age-friendly environment is important given the demographic shift. This includes working through the implications for housing, planning and transport of the changing needs of an older population. The need to consider the implications for our rural areas and communities is particularly important, where issues such as public transport access can be a barrier. Social isolation and loneliness – which can affect people of all ages but may have a particular impact on older people living alone – can have negative impacts on both physical and mental health and may also be more challenging in rural areas.

CASE STUDY: ASSET BASED WORKING WITH RESIDENTS OF ALVIS WALK IN SMITH'S WOOD

Residents of Alvis walk wanted to develop their urban gardening project and were looking for permission to extend their work.

The project is led by older adults for older adults from the community.

- We met with the residents and looked at the areas they wanted to develop. We identified the land was owned by SCH. We arranged for a meeting with the residents, SCH and Love Solihull.
- The residents had permission to extend their gardening project with support from SCH to assist in improving the area.
- Love Solihull was able to offer them tools to assist with the work they are doing.
- We spoke to CARS who supported them with a water butt and other equipment.
- We managed to secure possible funding through the locality and tasking group, but the residents decided not to form a constituted group and would rather keep the project grassroots.
- They now run a monthly Coffee morning with 25-30 attending.



As increasing numbers of people grow older, they need greater support around health and care needs. All residents should be able to access the 'right care, in the right place, at the right time'. This includes a range of targeted and specialist support services to enable people to maintain or regain as much independence as possible after an illness or crisis. The continued work to increase the joined-up approach between different health and care professionals to support people, families and carers well, will develop further over the next few years, with a particular focus on improving the experiences and outcomes fastest for those currently experiencing the most inequalities.

CASE STUDY: REABLEMENT

A resident's home had become neglected over a prolonged period of time due to their deteriorating health. A Reablement Support Worker collaborated with the resident to effectively declutter their home. They supported the individual to establish a daily routine to independently maintain cleanliness and reduced clutter in the long term.

The resident now feels comfortable inviting friends to visit. This positive change has also allowed the resident to reintegrate into social activities.

Furthermore, the resident has also received support from reablement Occupational Therapy professionals to improve their mobility. Prior to this intervention, the resident had refrained from leaving their home following a discharge from the hospital, which had greatly impacted their wellbeing. With daily practice and gradual progress, including short walks around the neighbourhood to build confidence, the resident now feels safe on the stairs and whilst walking. As a result, they have regained the ability to engage in activities such as shopping with their sister using public transportation and confidently meeting friends at the local social club.



What are we doing?

Our local approach to Ageing Well is built around prevention, early intervention and promoting positive well-being for adults. The associated ambition is that people remain active and healthy and independent for as long as possible and that when people do need long term support, this is timely, proportionate, responsive, and good quality and enables people to continue to live their lives the way they want to. Our wider social care offer aims to focus on what people can do independently, whilst having a clear 'offer' when support is needed.

In Solihull we recognise and champion the role of carers, who offer a lot of their time and energy to provide the support they do. We want carers to be able to live a good life alongside their caring role, but sometimes this can be a challenge. The Solihull Carers' Strategy 2022-27 is in place which sets out the vision of how we aim to improve the lives of carers and there is an annual delivery plan for the current year, with many of the actions having a preventative approach.

Through our Solihull 'On the Move' programme we offer bespoke programmes for older adults to promote healthy aging and positive physical and mental health. This ranges from volunteer-led walk schemes to our Active Chats programme offering befriending, tips on home-based activities for people who may still be coming to terms with the challenges of returning to usual life after COVID, reduced rate activities at our leisure centres and targeted programmes for people with pre-existing health conditions.

CASE STUDY: SING FOR WELLBEING

A Primary Care Network (PCN) manager contacted the Community Development Team (CDT) to explore the possibility of developing a singing group in collaboration with a community group for patients across their PCN, as research has shown that singing can help improve mental health and reduce social isolation and anxiety for all ages.

The CDT supported by:

- Contacting a community group called Hampton Singers who agreed to work alongside the PCN to provide 'Sing for Wellbeing Sessions' for the Rural PCN Patients.
- Supported Hampton Singers in putting together a funding bid (alongside CAVA)
- Researched room hire and costings
- Social prescribers were engaged to obtain before and after information from patients attending the sessions through questionnaire to measure outcomes.
- The link between the PCN and community development team has strengthened as well as links to community groups like the Hampton Singers (who recruited more singers as a result).
- Rural PCN awarded the Hampton Singers some further funding to continue the sessions



Opportunity 4: Shifting our focus and resources upstream

Why is this important?

We need to improve the ways we measure our investment in prevention, demonstrate the impact of preventative approaches and use this evidence to inform further sustainable investment decisions. With a challenging financial position across the public sector, driven by inflationary and cost of living pressures, and continuing growth in demand, then investment in prevention is both essential and challenging.

Prevention can be difficult to achieve and sustain during periods of economic pressure and rising demands on public sector services. However, the consequences of not having a comprehensive whole-system prevention strategy are significant, with implications for the health and wellbeing of local communities, as well as for the sustainability and stability of our health and social care services. We know that under-investment in prevention often translates into higher demand for acute and specialist services for both children and adults.

There is a growing body of evidence that preventative programmes are cost effective and can result in long-term savings for the system. For example, information collated by the Local Government Association shows that housing improvements can result in savings of £70 for every £1 spent, handyperson schemes which support independent living for older, disabled and vulnerable people also show positive cost-savings and tobacco control and stop smoking programmes save £1.46 per £1 invested over a 5-year period. Investment in the early years has consistently been shown to be highly cost-effective.

Better coordination of resource at local level across agencies can help to identify opportunities for joint investment and improve local coordination of services including tailoring to local need. This approach can also reduce duplication. Practical opportunities include shared use of estates or single points of access for services, as well as joint commissioning of services and programmes across local organisations.

Evidencing local impact of our prevention services and programmes is key. This means making sure that we routinely monitor and measure impact and effectiveness and use this information to further refine and target our approach. Capturing changes such as a beneficial impact on inequalities, or on higher risk groups is particularly important to make sure that support reaches the groups and individuals who are most likely to benefit.

What are we doing?

- Through our new place-based working arrangements, we are identifying opportunities for jointly delivering or commissioning services to support prevention and improve health and wellbeing, using our universal, targeted and specialist model. This will build on and consolidate our existing services and programmes. The Fairer Futures Fund (FFF) is one example of these new working arrangements.
- The Fairer Futures Fund (FFF) is a mechanism to support the Birmingham & Solihull (BSol) Integrated Care System to move to new ways of working.
- The purpose of the fund is to bring teams and organisations together to think, plan and deliver in a different way and to improve outcomes, reduce inequalities, enhance value for money and support broader social and economic development with local bids supporting the delivery of Solihull's local Outcomes Framework (see below)
- Solihull's local outcomes framework will identify the key areas that we want to improve with partners. Drawing on local and national outcomes data, this identifies key areas where, by acting earlier and reshaping some of our services, we can improve outcomes through a stronger focus on prevention and early intervention across all ages and monitor the impact over time.
- Additional investment and redesign work is taking place to build in additional capacity to support prevention and early intervention in early years and childhood to improve outcomes for children and reduce demand on more specialist services. The new early help model from 2023 is a key component of this additional investment.

What's next?

As a key priority for place-based working, we will establish a group to develop and coordinate an effective approach to developing all aspects of our prevention-related work. This group will:

- Use this All-Age Prevention Strategy as a framework to give direction to future developments and actions, via the development of a delivery plan.
- Strengthen our 'think prevention' approach as a core ethos in our commissioning and strategy development, gradually moving focus and investment to earlier intervention and prevention where there is evidence to do so.
- Explore opportunities to remove duplication of services through smarter commissioning and joint development work across partners.
- Agree a standardised approach to measuring and monitoring impact across our prevention services and programmes and to better understand the contribution they make to improving local outcomes. This approach will include feedback from people who draw on the support we offer, as well as wider community feedback.
- We will work together with people and communities to develop and improve our services, to make sure that what is developed is effective and what Solihull people and communities want to see happen.
- Ensure that our approach to prevention and the services and programmes we commission are in line with evidence of 'what works' and best available evidence of return on investment.

Opportunity 5: Smarter prevention: using insight and intelligence to develop our approach to prevention and measure impact

Why is this important?

Strengthening the focus on prevention - underpinned by whole-system alignment on policy and funding - will radically improve our ability to do much more to drive a 'prevention first' approach. Our use of data must also support this challenge because we can only achieve this change with improved ability to identify the positive evidence of this approach over time. With improved data interoperability and more effective use of high-quality, integrated, triangulated data we will have access to more insightful interpretation and business intelligence which in turn will enable us to take more informed decisions to drive further improvement, and innovation.

We need to be able to react rapidly to demographic changes within the borough, responding to the impact of inward migration, the changing profile of our communities as well as the changing age profile locally.

Improving the coordination and analysis of data that is held locally, to better predict demand and respond to unmet need will be a key feature of our progress. By looking at some of the underlying factors, such as mental health issues or domestic abuse, that lead to people needing more specialist services, we will be able to better identify where we may need earlier intervention. Better predictive analysis will allow us to improve our direct service delivery as well as the services which are commissioned from other organisations.

This data needs to be utilised alongside feedback from local people and communities around their experiences of using our services, as well as feedback from local people and communities regarding how services need to be shaped in the future. We will continue to build our 'get involved' approaches to achieve this.

What are we doing?

The SMBC council webpages provides access to a range of data products in one place, through the '[Story of Solihull](#)' related pages. This enables understanding of local need including Census data, local surveys and specific needs assessments. These webpages gives public access to key data. Our new digital engagement platform [Your Voice Solihull](#) enables us to capture residents' views on a range of topics.

What's next?

- We will use the Census data, population projections and surveys to look at what might be forecast in terms of rising demand on services and poor health outcomes and focus our efforts in a targeted way. Topic specific needs assessments will take account of population projections and forecasts on demand and will inform the prevention agenda.
- We will develop our joint analytic capacity across partners to improve the way we coordinate data at local level to better understand and predict need and intervene earlier. This will be supported by appropriate data-sharing and data governance arrangements.
- We will develop analytic skills, capacity and capability at local level to support services to better predict demand and will review investment in analytic tools to accelerate this work.
- We will implement a shared Solihull outcomes framework across partners to measure and monitor the impact of what we do locally to prevent demand and intervene earlier.

Governance and Delivery

Delivery against this All-Age Prevention Strategy will be overseen by the multi-agency Solihull Place Committee, reporting into Solihull's Health and Well-being Board.

A delivery group is in place to turn our 5 opportunities and ongoing work in this area, into a delivery plan and to oversee implementation, which will report to the Place Committee as well as into individual organisations via the individual organisational representatives. We expect some deliverables to be led by individual agencies, and some to need partners working together on specific projects or programmes.

There will be an annual review of this strategy so that it remains relevant over the 5-year period.