



Making a difference in tough times

Coventry: A Marmot City



Introduction

To improve the health, wellbeing and life chances of the people of Coventry, reducing inequality is vital. Where someone is born, where they live, whether they work or not and what they do all affect how long someone will live, how healthy they will be and what quality of life they will experience. Recent statistics from Public Health England show that men in the most affluent areas of the city will live, on average, 11.2 years longer than men in the most deprived areas, while for women the difference is 8.6 years. These inequalities in life expectancy and health arise out of inequalities in society – they are not inevitable – and there are ethical, social and economic reasons why they should be prevented. As well as improving health outcomes, reducing inequality in society has been shown to lead to improvements in wellbeing, better mental health, better community and social relations, reduced levels of violence and better educational attainment. Tackling the causes of health inequalities cannot be done through health services alone. The transfer of public health services to local authorities in April 2013 provided Coventry with an opportunity to continue to broaden the ownership of the health inequalities agenda. Coventry committed to delivering rapid change in health inequalities by 2015 and was one of seven cities in the UK invited to participate in the UK Marmot Network and become a Marmot City. Being part of the Marmot Network has provided Coventry with access to the international expertise of the Marmot Team based at University College London. Being a Marmot City has brought together partners from different parts of Coventry City Council and from other public sector and voluntary organisations,

whose decisions and activities have an impact on health. The Marmot principles which aim to reduce inequality and improve health outcomes for all have been embedded into the core functions of the council and its partners, so that the impact on health, equality and social value is considered in everything that we do. Improving health and reducing inequalities in Coventry is not only a priority for the NHS and public health – it is a priority for everyone who is working to improve the lives of people in the city.

The recent economic downturn, spending cuts and welfare reforms have created challenges for putting the Marmot principles into action. Households across Coventry have seen reductions in income as the cost of living rises faster than wages and changes to the amounts and eligibility criteria for benefits have taken effect. This will have the most significant impact on those with the lowest incomes, and will increase demand on a range of health and social services at a time when they are under increasing financial pressure. Coventry has risen to these challenges while dealing with severe cuts to budgets and services by developing communities using an asset based approach: empowering people to do more for themselves. There is evidence that this approach to community development is cost effective and can lead to improved health and wellbeing outcomes, can build resilience and social capital in communities and can help people to remain economically secure.

Since Coventry became a Marmot City in 2013, there has been progress in outcomes across health and across society. There have been improvements

in educational development, health outcomes, life satisfaction, employment and reductions in crime in priority locations. A number of innovative projects and initiatives have been set up which are starting to yield positive results for the people of Coventry. This report, Making a difference in tough times, focuses on the stories of individuals and communities and the difference that Coventry's work as a Marmot City has made to them, focused around the six policy objectives outlined by Professor Sir Michael Marmot in his report Fair Society, Healthy Lives. The stories have come from different organisations within Coventry: from Coventry City Council, Coventry and Rugby CCG, West Midlands Police, West Midlands Fire Service and Voluntary Action Coventry, and highlight the importance of partnership working between these organisations and communities.

Reducing inequality remains a priority in Coventry. As well as continuing to roll out asset based development approaches, future work with businesses will continue to ensure that growth and economic success in Coventry has a positive impact on all residents, particularly the most deprived and the most vulnerable. Additionally, work within Coventry City Council will focus on ensuring that significant council decisions are made with the impact on the health and wellbeing of Coventry residents in mind. By continuing to work together and to prioritise health, equality and social value in everything that we do, we can make a difference and we can improve the health, wellbeing and life chances of the people of Coventry.

Giving every child the best start in life

“The foundations for virtually every aspect of human development are laid in early childhood. What happens during these early years, starting in the womb, has lifelong effects on many aspects of health and wellbeing – from obesity, heart disease and mental health, to educational achievement and economic status.”

In Coventry, the Acting Early Programme has been designed to improve the capability of parents and to enable them to effectively support the health and development of their children. By reconfiguring the delivery of community midwifery, health visiting and children’s centre services into integrated teams, the programme aims to improve the health and wellbeing of children in Coventry.

The new model has been co-designed with parents and health professionals and includes the voluntary sector, Midwifery, Health Visiting, General Practice, Sure Start Children’s Centres, and Coventry City Council’s Children’s Services teams. As part of the co-design of the new model, information sharing and communication amongst professionals were identified as areas for improvement, as well as better links into other agencies such as social care.

New Acting Early Programme supports parents to give their children the best start in life

Since April 2014, Hillfields Children’s Centre staff are now attending the Meridian Ante-Natal clinic. A parent at the clinic shared that she had no equipment ready for the baby. She has two older children but this was the first one born in the UK. The family were being supported by the National Asylum Support Service but were struggling financially, and the older girls were not in school. A joint visit was arranged the following week between the Children’s Centre worker and the Common Assessment Framework coordinator. The team was able to provide support with a food bank voucher and some essential equipment for the baby as well some furniture through ‘Carriers of Hope’.

A Midwife referred a young couple with their first baby to the service as she had concerns that they were co-sleeping and over-wrapping the baby. The Children’s Centre staff were then able to go on a new birth visit with a health visitor to offer immediate support to the new parents. Following the visit, the parents came to register at the Centre and began attending some of the groups. Because of the relationship that was started at the new birth visit, which developed much earlier than would have happened otherwise, the mum felt able to drop into the centre and ask for support with feeding and dealing with the baby crying.

“Most parents know their midwife and health visitor by name and how to contact them; they also know what services are available from their Children Centre and how to access them.”

Case Studies from Public Health, Coventry City Council



Enabling all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives

“The acquisition of cognitive and non-cognitive skills are strongly associated with both educational achievement and a whole range of outcomes including better employment, income and physical and mental health.”

The Pod is a Coventry City Council specialist mental health social resource that is part funded by Coventry and Rugby CCG. The service focuses on the recovery model and believes that people have the capacity to develop personal resilience and to manage their mental health and wellbeing.

Workers from the Pod build on people’s assets to enable them to manage their mental health and wellbeing

“I was referred to the Pod in May 2013 by my social worker. From day one, the focus of discussions was very different to conversations I had previously had with mental health professionals. We looked with fresh eyes at assets – this was a very different approach.

One of the key stressors in my life was housing – I was living in private rented accommodation that was sub-standard. The Pod asked me to get involved in a project to improve housing in Coventry. I met with the project lead – this wasn’t a paid officer, this was someone like me, someone that had a mental health diagnosis and who had been forced, by circumstance to live in poor housing, and someone that wanted to make a difference.

The project lead made a huge impact on me – she had so much experience to share. Whitefriars committed to the project group doing a ‘live evaluation’ of their service, warts and all – they wanted us to help them look at how they could improve the service they offer to people with severe and enduring mental ill health.

As a project group, which included members of the Pod team and people with mental ill health that live in social housing, and expert guidance and support from Whitefriars, we got involved in writing a project plan, developing research questions, interviewing professionals both in the housing

sector and in the local authority, working out how to recover the project plan when it fell out of sync, which it often did, and interviewing tenants.

What was unique and refreshing was that we didn’t need to tip-toe around people and they didn’t need to tip-toe around us as a project group. All too often people (mental health professionals) try to over protect you from life’s stresses but you don’t recover unless you take positive risks and do new things, things outside of your comfort zone but things that are important to you. If it’s important, you find a way and help to sustain each other’s motivation.

On 10 October, World Mental Health Day, we launched the report. It was a fantastic event, we had a full house and a very attentive audience, but what is more fantastic is that all parties are moving forward with the recommendations – true collaboration.

A lot has happened as well on a personal level for both me and for the project lead. She is studying for her degree in Counselling. Through the project work and lived experience she has found her vocation, and I have secured a post at the Pod and secured a new tenancy.”

Case Study from The Pod, People Directorate, Coventry City Council

For many offenders who have a mental health issue or vulnerability, prison can make their situation worse. Nearly half of all prisoners have anxiety or depression, and nearly a third of all 13-18 year olds who offend have a mental health issue.

In Coventry, the Liaison and Diversion (L&D) service exists to identify offenders who have mental health, learning disability or substance misuse vulnerabilities when they first come into contact with the criminal justice system. These services identify mental health issues and vulnerabilities so that offenders can either be supported through the criminal system pathway or diverted into a treatment, social care

service or other relevant intervention or support service. The service aims to improve health outcomes, reduce re-offending and identify vulnerabilities earlier, thus reducing the likelihood that offenders will reach crisis-point. This case study describes the journey of a 42 year old male and his experience with the Liaison and Diversion Service.

The Liaison and Diversion Service identifies mental health issues and supports individuals with mental health needs

Mr K had happy childhood. He liked school and was a champion athlete for cross-country running. He started his working career at the age of 17 and everything was going well for him in his life until he had a hernia, had to stop running, got involved with the wrong crowd and started drinking and taking amphetamines. When he was 22, Mr K was charged with fraud and received a Community Order.

By the age of 28, Mr K was entrenched in the criminal lifestyle, and was attacked with a broken glass bottle which resulted in him losing his left eye. Four months after losing his eye Mr K was homeless and was arrested for driving whilst disqualified. He saw his GP who diagnosed him with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, but he was sent to prison for his offence.

When he was 39, Mr K moved and met his partner. They planned to have a child together, but there were a number of allegations of assault, drug use, and domestic violence, and Mr K was arrested and sent to prison. Social Services advised Mr K that he would have limited access to his child once the baby was born.

Through the support of the Offender Management Unit, Mr K had his first contact with the Liaison and Diversion team. They assessed Mr K's mental health needs and confirmed that Mr K was experiencing Post Traumatic Stress Disorder due to his attack, establishing a connection between this and his offending behaviour: nightmares, low self-esteem, associated feelings of anxiety, fear and self-blame.

The Liaison and Diversion practitioner referred Mr K for one-to-one counselling and helped him to find secure and supported accommodation. Mr K is now taking a college course for plumbing so that he will be able to get a job and support himself, and eventually to have his own business. He has regular contact with the Liaison and Diversion service and is no longer using drugs or offending. Mr K says: "Without the Liaison and Diversion service I wouldn't have had the support that I needed. I would have been homeless and in prison again. With this support my life has stopped being purposeless and the team have given meaning to my life and helped me to stop offending."



Creating fair employment and good work for all

“Being in good employment is protective of health. Conversely, unemployment contributes to poor health. Getting people into work is of critical importance for reducing health inequalities. However, jobs need to be sustainable and offer a minimum level of quality.”

The Coventry Job Shop, based at the Bull Yard in Coventry City Centre has been supporting local people into work since it was established in 2013. Coventry City Council’s Employment Team based at the Job Shop offers a bespoke service designed to help each customer gain sustained employment. Customers are given the opportunity to attend employer events and apprenticeship fairs, where they are able to meet with employers and gain first-hand knowledge of how to be successful when applying for vacancies and securing quality job opportunities.

The Coventry Job Shop offers a personalised service to support people into employment.

The support provided by the Job Shop has changed the lives of many local jobseekers, including A, who signed up as the Job Shop’s 10,000th customer in May. A, through her own admission had always struggled with a lack of confidence and low self-esteem when applying for jobs and felt that this was holding her back in her pursuit of long term employment. She had suffered from ill health for many years and her husband was forced to give up work himself to support her and their three children. She had spent the last nine years on Job Seekers’ Allowance.

A was able to sit with an employment advisor who asked her about the sort of

job she would be interested in and offered her tailored support in applying for work available. She also met a money advisor who carried out a “better off” calculation, to ensure it was financially viable for her to return to employment.

She said: “It’s amazing the time and effort they put in to sit with me and help in any way they could. It’s made an enormous difference and totally turned mine and my family’s life around. I feel so much more positive and happy and it’s all thanks to the staff there, I couldn’t have done it without them.”

**Case Study from Place Directorate,
Coventry City Council**

Coventry City Council was awarded the Best ‘Small Business Friendly’ Procurement Policy as part of the Federation of Small Businesses’ annual Local Authority awards.

The awards celebrate and promote local economic development and the judges’ comments said ‘Coventry City Council’s application showed how an innovative approach to keeping trade local has helped local firms to access contracts’. The Council is determined that local businesses should have the opportunity to bid for supply chain work for major projects and by holding the Meet the Buyer event in partnership with Costain, local companies had the opportunity to show what they could do.

**Case Study from Place Directorate,
Coventry City Council**

Coventry City Council is committed to working with businesses to ensure there are sustainable and high quality job opportunities for the people in Coventry. Working in partnership with national construction company BAM Construct UK, Coventry City Council has identified the barriers that were facing construction employers when taking on apprentices and have developed a model to combat those barriers, and Coventry City Council was awarded the Best 'Small Business Friendly' Procurement Policy as part of the Federation of Small Business's annual Local Authority awards.



The construction shared apprenticeship scheme helps provide training and employment for people in Coventry.

Coventry City Council works in partnership with BAM Construct UK to provide the construction shared apprenticeship scheme. Through the Council's ambitious three year Jobs and Growth Strategy for the city and their Social Value Policy they ensure local people and businesses benefit from training and employment. BAM Construct UK are the host employer and carry out the full human resource function for the scheme. BAM provide the scheme manager who has the responsibility of securing new placement providers and ensuring that the apprentices are linked up to appropriate placements. They then deliver pre-start and day one on-site induction. Together, BAM's workforce manager and scheme manager deal with any issues apprentices have on site regarding appropriateness of work available and when a 'carousel' would be advantageous to the apprentice and benefit the employers. Local Colleges provide the academic training needed for the young people to achieve their Apprenticeship Framework, coordinate site visits for NVQ assessors and monitor the progress towards framework completion.

The Scheme won the Apprenticeship Scheme of the Year at the National Federation of Builders Awards 2013. It was also a highly commended shortlisted finalist in the National Local Government Chronicle Awards 2013 for Public/Private Partnerships. Furthermore, apprentice Mr S was commended for his determination and efforts to further his career in construction in the Young Builder of the Year competition.

Case Study from Place Directorate, Coventry City Council

Ensuring a healthy standard of living for all

“Having enough money to lead a healthy life is central to reducing health inequalities. Poverty and low living standards are powerful determinants of ill health and health inequity.”

Homelessness can affect someone’s health, employment, learning and overall wellbeing. Homeless people are more likely to suffer from mental and physical ill health, whilst also finding it more difficult to access health services. The average age of death for homeless people still remains shockingly low at just 47 years old, with the average age for homeless women being even lower at 43.

The Council plays a frontline role in tackling homelessness in the city by providing or

enabling homeless preventative services that focus on tackling the root causes of homelessness, as well as housing options to those in need. From 1 April 2014 the Council commissioned the Salvation Army to manage supported accommodation and floating support for homeless people and ex-offenders. Floating support is aimed at supporting service users with the transition to independent living to prevent future homelessness.

Support for homeless people tackles the root causes of homelessness to support people to live independently

CM came to Harnall Lifehouse in June 2014 following a mental breakdown that led to the end of his marriage. He took an assessment bed at Harnall where he began his road to recovery. CM began working towards his resettlement straight away by bidding on Coventry Homefinder for settled housing and rebuilding his self-esteem and confidence. During his stay, CM integrated with the service and support offered and participated in the Meaningful Activities programme, which included: ICT; cooking and eating well; social activities; sports tournaments; and days out. In July 2014, CM was offered a Whitefriars Housing property. CM and his support worker applied for a community care grant so that he could purchase basic provisions for his new home. With the help of floating support, he is settling into his new flat. He has also expressed an interest in volunteering with the Salvation Army to ‘give something back’ and to develop a career in this field.

Case Study from People Directorate, Coventry City Council



Fires happen more often to people who live and work in deprived areas and to people who can least afford to lose their home, business or possessions. Evidence demonstrates how limited life chances, and issues such as low educational achievement, unemployment, poor housing and poor health

are closely linked to an increase in fire risk. West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) works tirelessly to reduce the incidence of fires, fire deaths and arson by tackling the 'cause of the causes', by engaging with those people that are most at risk of harm. West Midlands Fire Service Coventry Command

have developed a range of locality based, innovative and evidence based programmes to help tackle a wide range of issues such as dysfunctional neighbourhoods, homelessness, anti-social behaviour, unemployment, dementia and disability.

West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) Coventry Command have developed a range of programmes to tackle a wide range of health and social issues

K is an 84 year old lady and a heavy smoker who lived in a one bedroom bungalow which she had filled with a significant hoard. K was referred to the Fire Service Vulnerable People Officer (VPO) service by her Social Landlord as they could not access the property to undertake essential maintenance and because of the dangers her smoking caused alongside the hoard. Working with the landlord and their team, the VPO began to make in roads into reducing the hoard. KS had no heating or cooking facilities and used a camping stove to heat her bungalow and cook with. Subsequently, a small gas explosion from the stove caused a significant fire that destroyed her home. She survived the incident with relatively minor injuries but was subject to a Serious Incident Review because of the continued risk she posed. Following a short stay in hospital, K was discharged to the care of her granddaughter. The accommodation was unsuitable as she shared a one bedroom flat with her granddaughter and son. Her Social Landlord, due to the risks she posed and the fact that this was the second serious fire she

had had in their property, was not prepared to house her in a single private dwelling. K was a feisty and independent individual who would not consider housing with care options as they took her away from her local neighbourhood and friends she was familiar with. Work has been ongoing by WMFS to keep the risk of fire to a minimum and to keep her engaged with services. After much encouragement she agreed to a care assessment and housing with care accommodation was identified very close to her previous address. K finally agreed to move into this new accommodation where she will also receive care and support from the Local Authority. WMFS has provided equipment which includes fire retardant bedding and throws and a portable suppression system which help to minimise the risk of fire. Wardens at her new home continue to monitor her living accommodation. This has enabled her to continue to live independently within a community she is familiar with and also for the professionals concerned to minimise the risks posed to K and others.

Case Study from West Midlands Fire Service

Following his discharge from hospital and a prolonged period of illness, Mr E was referred by the Integrated Discharge Team for assessment by the Coventry Contact and Connect Service (C & C). He had several significant and long term medical conditions and as a result was unable to leave his home and was being supported by his wife who was his sole carer. With Mr E's agreement, C & C arranged for a personal alarm to be fitted and referred his wife for support from the Coventry Carers Centre. Due to his declining medical condition it was also arranged for a Pension & Benefit Officer to visit Mr E in his home and conduct a complete assessment of his needs to ensure that he was in receipt of his full Benefit entitlement. A WMFS Home Safety Check was arranged where the Fire Service fitted new smoke alarms. C & C also provided Mr E with information on Age UK Coventry's Trusted Traders Service, as Mr E was worried about how to maintain his home and garden. As a result, Mr E and his wife now feel safer and better supported in their home.

Case Study from West Midlands Fire Service

Creating and developing healthy and sustainable places and communities

“The health and wellbeing of individuals is influenced by the communities in which they live. People’s health is affected by the nature of their physical environment; living in poor housing, in a deprived neighbourhood with a lack of access to green spaces impacts negatively on physical and mental health.”

In Coventry, 36% of households where at least one resident has a disability are in fuel poverty. These residents can’t afford to keep their homes warm enough, and as a result their health and wellbeing can be adversely affected by the cold and damp. The City Council’s Sustainability and Low Carbon Team was successful in winning £597,000 of project funding from the Department of Energy and Climate Change, to provide insulation and heating improvements for disabled householders likely to be fuel poor. An additional £223,000 of Energy Company Obligation funding was secured from British Gas, and the final phase of work is being carried out in the winter of 2014/15.

All of the householders benefitting from the project are either owner occupiers or private tenants, and previously had disabled adaptations carried out in response to recommendations made by an Occupational Therapist. Over 80 homes have now had insulation and heating improvements carried out, with the majority getting external wall insulation. This could save them up to £460 each year on fuel bills.

The Council’s Sustainability and Low Carbon team have provided insulation and heating improvements to disabled householders to improve their living conditions

Mrs R has mobility problems, is housebound and lives downstairs in her house with carers calling daily. She was prone to urinary infections and colds, and received treatment for anxiety. She called out her GP roughly once a month. Since the installation of external wall insulation, Mrs R has not suffered any recurrent infections or colds. She hasn’t had to call out her GP as often, says she feels more alert than before, and is content and settled with none of her former anxiety. Her son said that “she is a changed person”. The house now holds the heat much better and has no condensation problems any more.

N is a young girl who has congenital myasthenia and relies on a wheelchair most of the time. She is sensitive to the cold and has suffered from respiratory infections resulting in admissions to the Intensive Treatment Unit in Birmingham during the winters of 2012 and 2013. Since the installation of external wall insulation, N doesn’t feel the cold and hasn’t had to be admitted to hospital at all so far this winter. Previously there was a lot of condensation and mould around the house, but now it’s completely dry and warm. The whole family feel happier and don’t need to turn the heating on as much as they did before.

Case Studies from Place Directorate, Coventry City Council

The Cycle Coventry project is a three year project which aims to reduce health inequalities by improving facilities for cyclists and pedestrians by targeting areas of higher deprivation and greatest health need.

Between April 2013 and October 2014, almost 2,400 adults attended cycle training, bike maintenance, Dr Bike and route planning sessions. Additional Public Health funding has enabled over 1,100 children to access cycle training and bike maintenance sessions. These include free Bikeability courses in areas of higher deprivation and greatest health need. For some of these children, these sessions have been the first time they have ridden a bike.

A personal travel planning project has targeted over 12,000 households in the most deprived area of Coventry to promote cycle training, bus rides and offer other information and support to encourage cycling, walking and bus use. This method proves effective at reaching those most in need of improving their lifestyle. These initiatives are enabling more people to get to work, education and training using the 32km of new and improved cycle routes that have been created as part of the project. These routes serve all of those areas of the city where health inequalities are greatest.



The Cycle Coventry project is delivering a comprehensive programme of free cycling, events and support to get more people cycling and using public transport

When the resident was a teenager he was hit by a car while cycling home from school. Following this incident, he stopped cycling. Since starting a family, he has been eager to take his family cycling on the weekends. However, he wanted his wife and teenage daughter to know the basics of cycling, including how to stay safe. The Travel Advisor and the resident discussed the various programs and resources that related to cycling, including cycle training with BikeRight! The Travel Advisor and resident also looked over the Coventry Cycle Map to identify safe and quiet cycle routes. The resident's wife and daughter attended one lesson with Bike Right and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. BikeRight! also provided literature and websites that focused on staying safe while cycling. The Coventry cycle map and the Sowe Valley Footpath map were also noted as very helpful. The resident was able to identify a cycle route that he was most comfortable with. His family now cycles at least once a week together and enjoy the time together and he also noted that he feels much happier and more confident when cycling, and as a family they feel healthier.

"I think the cycle training program was simply amazing. It really helped us cycle together as a family. We feel healthier and happier. The Coventry cycle maps provided by Niall were great in finding off-the-path cycle routes...

these allowed me to build my confidence when cycling around. Thank you to the program for helping my family get cycling."

Having retired just over two years ago, the resident generally used the car for all trips. However, at the urging of his family and GP, he had been looking into taking the bus more often. The resident and the Travel Advisor discussed the many benefits of taking the bus – freedom, lack of stress, safe transport, social aspect, etc. Following this conversation, the resident agreed to try the bus at least once (to the delight of his family). The resident received his travel pass for over 60. It took him two weeks to set a date to use the bus. When he did, he travelled with his granddaughter. The resident enjoyed the experience and mentioned that the bus is not 'as scary' as he had assumed. He now takes the bus three times a week. The resident shared that the Travel Advisor gave him the final push he needed and receiving the pass was a sign to use the bus.

"I use the bus three times a week. The Travel Advisor and I talked about using the bus and I agree, it is not that bad. He gave me the final push I needed and the bus pass arriving through my letter box three weeks later was a sign that I need to get on the bus. My family is happy and so am I."

**Case Studies from Place Directorate,
Coventry City Council**

Strengthening the role and impact of ill health prevention

“To ensure better health for populations, and better distribution of health, demands a refocus on health rather than on preventing specific diseases. Investing in ill health prevention can, if implemented effectively, improve health and life expectancy as well as reduce spending over the long term.”

NHS Coventry and Rugby Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) funded Foleshill Women’s Training (FWT) in Coventry to deliver a new community project to encourage women from ethnic communities to attend a cervical screening test. Uptake for cervical screening tests is particularly low in the city compared to other areas in the country. It is estimated that early detection and treatment can prevent up to 75% of cervical cancers.

Foleshill Women’s Training delivered a programme to address cultural issues and barriers to encourage women to have their cervical screening test

Women aged between 25 and 64 years were encouraged, educated and empowered to have their cervical screening test. Community workers gave them key healthcare messages. FWT delivered a culturally appropriate programme and captured issues and attitudes to cervical screening that communities were experiencing. The programme addressed cultural issues and barriers that helped to encourage women to understand what cervical screening means. The important messages surrounding this topic were shared through the use of language support, education and myth busting. Foleshill Women’s Training (FWT) targeted the hard to reach

community, through bi-lingual staff and volunteers. A 27 year old local resident in the area shared her experience of being contacted through the FWT project. She said: “I didn’t know about this test at all. One of the peer support workers from FWT approached me and made me aware of this check and explained why women have this procedure. “I now feel confident to share this message with other female family members and friends so that they are aware of this test too. I think it’s very important to promote this message to ethnic women within our own communities.”

Case Study from Coventry and Rugby Clinical Commissioning Group

A number of projects delivered by voluntary and community organisations, aiming to increase the uptake of HIV testing have been supported by Coventry Public Health, Coventry and Rugby CCG and Voluntary Action Coventry.

Voluntary and Community Organisations tackle the issue of late diagnosis of HIV in Coventry

Dumi International Aid held an HIV awareness raising event in June 2014 reaching over 390 people. The event included a fashion and music show created by young people over a series of Saturday morning sessions. This enabled young people to talk about healthy lifestyles, sexual health, HIV, exercise and wellbeing. The young people then showcased their work and talked about HIV, AIDS and drug use at the show alongside speakers from health and religious communities. A 17 year old girl came to talk about her experience of living with HIV, which she had had since birth: “I thought I would never be fit and thought I’ll never be able to achieve my dreams. I thought for a very long time that I was going to die, but now I have accepted who I am and understand that I’m not different. I can still have a relationship without transmitting HIV as long as I take

my tablets every day, and I can have babies. I share my story because I want to make a change and stop the stigma and wrong information being spread about HIV/AIDS. I want to help some young people to change their behaviours, protect themselves and others, live positive and achieve their goals. I want to go out there and be heard to help stop others from being afraid and hurting. I no longer have any shame about being HIV positive.” Coventry Somali Resource Centre has trained 12 HIV Champions and held three events raising awareness of the facts about HIV, treatments, how it can be transmitted and the precautions to prevent it. The Champions accompany people to doctors and hospital visits and provide moral support and language support.

Case Studies from Voluntary Action Coventry and Coventry Public Health

NHS Health Checks is a public health programme in England for people aged 40-74 to prevent or delay the onset of diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease and strokes, and to keep people healthy for longer. The health check consists of both a risk assessment and can include a referral, lifestyle advice, or clinical interventions. The number of people who received a Health Check this year has increased by more than 100 per cent compared to 2012/13, 3% of those who completed health checks were identified as having a long term condition and placed on a disease risk register with their GP and over 65% of health checks have been delivered in GP practices which are based in the most deprived areas of the city.

Health Checks provide risk assessments and advice to enable people to change their lifestyles

Dietmar, age 70, is a former football player for Coventry City Football Club and now works at Tesco Arena where the Outreach Team deliver health checks on a regular basis. In September 2013, Deitmar volunteered to have the very first health check there. Leading up to the health check he suffered a calf injury, which led to him stopping exercising. At the same time, he was eating an unhealthy diet. The Health Check identified that he had high blood pressure, high cholesterol, was overweight and consuming too much alcohol. Deitmar felt that the screener was very thorough and the advice was very good, and that the results sheet from his health check was “eye opening”.

Deitmar was referred to his GP who prescribed him a statin, to which he suffered an unusual reaction. Rather than taking medication, Deitmar decided to change his lifestyle. He now exercises five times a week by power walking and swimming, has lost a stone in weight and has seen his cholesterol levels and blood pressure reduce as a result of the changes.

Case Study from Public Health, Coventry City Council





www.coventry.gov.uk/health