

East Ayrshire Health & Social Care
Partnership
Participation and Engagement
Strategy
2023-2026

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Foreword

Our Participation and Engagement Strategy 2023-2026 sets out principles for participation and engagement to ensure that people are involved, consulted with, and actively engaged in the design and development of health and social care within East Ayrshire.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, our workforce responded to support the continued delivery of our services, often through new and different ways of working. Due to the restrictions at the time it meant we weren't able to engage with our communities in the ways that we would have liked, however that didn't stop us trying different ways to get feedback or hear your experience!

As we continue to recover from the pandemic, the duty to involve people is as important as ever. Meaningful engagement ensures that we are addressing the current challenges together and delivering services that are of a high quality and of course engaging in a way that best suits the people who use our services, carers and our wider communities.

This strategy sets out our desire to put people firmly at the heart of everything the Partnership does, involving our communities in the planning, design and delivery of our services, with the clear aim that this informs and improves the person-centred care that people who use our services receive every day.

Craig McArthur, Director

When my husband Hugh was diagnosed with Dementia our lives changed unrecognisably and suddenly he needed help in ways I had never imagined. Hugh started going to Rosebank Day Centre, which was great for him as he got out of the house and supported to do things that might interest him. For me it was also good as it gave me time to get things done that I otherwise couldn't get too. During the pandemic Hugh got worse and after a hospital stay is now in full-time care.

Around this time I received the survey for the review being carried out on Older People's Day Services, which I completed and ticked to get further involved. I attended an Option Appraisal session, which considered how the service was being delivered along with all the suggestions from the feedback and we voted on what we thought was the best model.

After this I attended an online session about the Carers Representative for the Integration Joint Board (IJB) which I put myself forward for. This also meant that I joined the Stakeholder Forum, where we review the IJB papers using our own perspectives to question how a policy or initiative will affect carers and those using services. I've also joined the Health and Care Governance group, which has given me such an insight into the vast range of activities being undertaken and I'll feed these back to the Stakeholder Forum to further inform our questions. At a time when my life at home was very much changed it has felt really good to do something constructive with our experiences and knowing that it could be helping others. I would very much encourage others to get involved too.

Isabella Paton, IJB Carers Representative

Our Vision and Purpose of this strategy

East Ayrshire’s Health and Social Care Partnership brings together East Ayrshire Council and NHS Ayrshire and Arran to work collaboratively in delivering health and social care services. The Partnership allows a more joined up approach to service delivery, resulting in better and accessible health and social care provision.

The vision, set out in our [Strategic Plan](#), is:

“Working together with all of our communities to improve and sustain wellbeing, care and promote equity”

People, compassion and partnership are the foundation of our approach to health and social care provision. This is evident in our six strategic priorities set out in our Strategic Plan:



We firmly believe that when our services, across health and social care, engage and collaborate with the communities we serve, we are more likely to get that service right. We are passionate about putting people and communities first and believe that everyone should have a say in their own local health and social care services.

This strategy sets out our commitment to

‘Hear the voices of local people and how we work together to improve the quality and delivery of our local services for everyone.’

The strategy provides a framework for our staff and partner organisations and demonstrates the reasons why, and the ways, to achieve meaningful engagement. For people and carers who use our services, the strategy demonstrates the benefits of engaging with us and how to get involved.

For the purpose of this strategy, East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership will be described as ‘the Partnership’ throughout.

Principles of Engagement

In Scotland, community engagement is improved and guided by the good practice principles set out in the seven [National Standards for Community Engagement](#). Defining community engagement as:

‘A purposeful process which develops a working relationship between communities, community organisations and public and private bodies to help them to identify and act on community needs and ambitions. It involves respectful dialogue between everyone involved, aimed at improving understanding between them and taking joint action to achieve positive change’

Simply put, community engagement is a way to build and sustain relationships between public services and communities that helps both to understand and take action on the needs or issues communities experience.



Each of the seven Standards provide statements that everyone involved can use to achieve engagement that is of good quality and has the greatest impact. They show what good engagement looks like and challenge us to aim for this every time.

Additionally this strategy and our approach is underpinned by our own principles:

1. We will facilitate **EMPOWERMENT** of individuals and communities to engage to influence health and social care services, and seek opportunities to empower stakeholders in participation and engagement activity.
2. We will be **TRANSPARENT** in our engagement activity. We will share information, answer questions fully and offer feedback on the impact that engagement with communities has on services so that people can see the benefit of getting involved.
3. Our approach to participation and engagement will be **RESPONSIVE** to feedback received and we will take action where necessary and appropriate, recognising that those with lived and living experience are best placed to inform the future of service delivery.

4. We will ensure that engagement with relevant communities and stakeholders is **TIMELY**, wherever possible taking place at the most appropriate time to support active and meaningful engagement.

5. We will be **CO-ORDINATED**, across East Ayrshire, localities and our governance groups working with relevant partners.

6. We will have a strong **LOCAL FOCUS** to our participation and engagement activity, recognising that the needs of localities are best represented by the people who live and work in those areas.

Communities and Stakeholders

Who do we mean when we say 'community engagement'? Having a clear understanding of how we define communities, as detailed in the table below, is useful, however, it is essential to understand that communities are diverse, with members often belonging to or identifying with more than one.

Community	Definition
Community of place	A group of people bound together by a shared geographical boundary to live, work or spend time. Examples include towns, villages, localities or neighbourhoods.
Community of interest	A group of people that share a common interest, passion or experience. Examples include community councils or service user groups.
Community of identity	A group of people defined by how they are identified by themselves or by a society.

The Partnership approach has to be flexible and accessible to enable effective and meaningful engagement across communities. Giving specific consideration to different ways to reach groups that may have traditionally not engaged but have a valuable contribution to make and an interest in being involved.

Stakeholders

It is also important to reflect on the range of people, groups and organisations the Partnership seeks to engage with, who we would consider to be our stakeholders. This helps us understand the scale of the challenge to engage meaningfully with all stakeholders and demonstrates the need to identify and involve the people or organisations affected by the focus of any engagement to ensure it is inclusive.

Our key stakeholders for participation and engagement include:

- individual members of the public, identified communities and groups sharing protected characteristics
- service users, patients, carers, families and their representatives or advocates
- Partnership staff and linked professionals (e.g., GP's)
- professional networks, advocacy services, care/patient opinion bodies

- volunteers
- public, third and independent sector organisations who have a health and social care remit or interest
- East Ayrshire Third Sector Interface
- providers/contractors of health and social care services
- East Ayrshire Integration Joint Board Members
- East Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership
- East Ayrshire Locality Planning Groups
- East Ayrshire Community Councils
- East Ayrshire Council Elected Members
- MP's/MSP's within East Ayrshire
- the media

This list is not exhaustive and additional stakeholders may be identified through the course of an engagement piece.

Our Approach – Policy Context

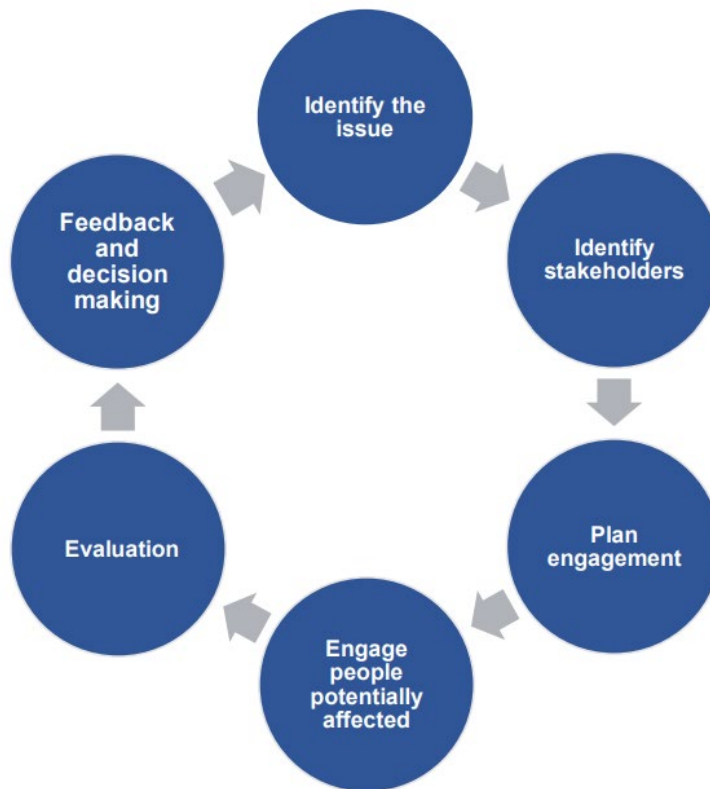
The Partnership also has a statutory responsibility to involve people in developing and delivering services and is expected to demonstrate to our communities how we are engaging with them and the impact of that engagement. The [Public Bodies \(Joint Working\) \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) not only sets out the requirement to have a Participation and Engagement strategy but also establishes that a range of people must be involved and engaged with in developing the Partnership's Strategic Plan.

In 2021 the Scottish Government and COSLA (Convention of Scottish Local Authorities) jointly published [Planning with People](#), community engagement and participation guidance for NHS Boards and Health and Social Care Partnerships that are planning and commissioning care services in Scotland. The guidance was reviewed with feedback informing the final version published in 2023.

Annex B within Planning for People details all the policy, legislation and principles relevant to engagement and participation in Scotland. While they all providing underlying direction this strategy will directly draw upon and reflect on duties contained within the legislation and guidance set out in [Appendix 1](#).

This guidance sets out an engagement cycle underpinned by principles of the National Standards for Community Engagement, to be followed in order to demonstrate good practice. Each stage is important and should be applied proportionately to the scale of the activity and level of any change proposed.

Engagement Cycle



[The Quality Framework for Community Engagement and Participation \(2023\)](#) is a self-assessment tool designed by Healthcare Improvement Scotland and the Care Inspectorate, underpinned by the Planning with People guidance. It provides a framework to help senior management, operational staff and service leads within health and care services, and those externally quality assuring and inspecting them, to understand what good quality community engagement looks like, and how well the organisation is carrying out its engagement functions. There are 3 areas that it focuses on:

1. Ongoing engagement and involvement of people. The organisation undertakes ongoing engagement with people and communities to ensure that services meet their needs, identify sustainable service improvements and to develop trust. The approach to engagement is inclusive, meaningful and is evaluated to identify learning and the impact
2. Involvement of people in service planning, strategy and design. The involvement of people and communities has had a positive impact on service change and strategy development and has been planned as part of the organisation's wider engagement strategy. People representing communities have been involved throughout the development, planning and decision-making process for service change and strategy development.
3. Governance and leadership- supporting community engagement and participation. Robust corporate governance arrangements are followed for involving people, founded on mutuality, transparency, equality, diversity and

human rights principles. To engage effectively and inform decision-making, the organisation supports and improves the participation of people by dedicating resources (in people, time and budget).

Where are we now?

The Partnership launched its first Participation and Engagement Strategy in 2016, outlining our commitment to the principles and practice of community participation and engagement. Since then we have:

- Established Locality Planning Groups in our three locality areas
- Developed the IJB Strategic Plan 2018-21 and 2021-31 in collaboration with communities and partners
- Supported Mental Health Conversations across Ayrshire to develop a Pan-Ayrshire Mental Health Strategy
- Held annual Local Conversations to showcase the work of the Partnership and learn from our communities what needed to improve

As we began to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic we also developed a Partnership Engagement Officer role, renewing our focus on participation and engagement.

Over the past year we have taken forward a number of key developments in line with the Quality Framework for Community Engagement and Participation. The Partnership participated in the pilot for this framework during 2022-23 focusing on 'Involvement of people in service planning, strategy and design'. The self-assessment process allowed us, along with key partners and people who had participated in our service reviews and planning, to reflect on what we're doing well and what could be improved upon. The findings and improvement actions from this have been embedded within this strategy and action plan and the areas of focus used to describe our engagement activities currently:

1. Ongoing Engagement and Involvement of People

Wellbeing for All Fund

The Partnership delivered the Wellbeing for All Participatory Budgeting exercise between June and October 2022, aimed at supporting community groups, organisations, projects and services that promote wellbeing for all in East Ayrshire. The process allowed local people to decide how and where money is spent to address local priorities, with five in-person voting events held across the three localities to support this. Over 1,000 people came to vote at the events and the full £250,000 of funding was awarded to 32 of the 62 organisations that took part.

Following the events, an online survey and feedback sessions were carried out with all groups that participated to identify areas for improvement and inform the process for future years.

[Local Conversations](#)

The Local Conversations are an opportunity for the Partnership to showcase the work taking place in communities and give residents and service users the opportunity to ask questions and see what supports are available. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Partnership's Local Conversations were paused, however, resumed in 2023 with a focus on providing practical cost of living support.

Staff Training

Training and support is available to staff who are delivering, or are interested in, community engagement. This includes establishing areas of focus; legislation and policy; effective planning; and, methods and evaluation. The training aligns with the objectives of the current Participation and Engagement Action Plan to increase engagement skills amongst the workforce to increase and improve participation and engagement activity.

[The ArtClub?](#)

The Promise Participation team established 'ArtClub?' a co-curated group led by care-experienced young people with an interest in contemporary visual art and activism. The group enables young people from a range of care backgrounds to creatively engage with the issues and interests that affect them.

Volunteer Expenses Policy

The Volunteer Expenses policy was developed to ensure volunteers are fairly reimbursed for expenditure incurred as a result of volunteer activities. The policy applies to members of the public, service users and carers who volunteer their time to participate in the work of the Health and Social Care Partnership and covers: travel expenses, parking fees, food and drink (where events impact on mealtimes), accommodation, and childcare/replacement care.

[What Matters to You Day](#)

"What matters to you?" Day is an annual celebration of putting people at the heart of their care or support. The Partnership celebrates 'What Matters to You Day' each year by having conversations with our users and carers about what matters to them and acting on their responses. The day helps us to establish better communication between people giving and receiving care and to ensure it is person-centred at all times.

[Care Opinion](#)

East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership joined the online 'Care Opinion' platform in 2022 to allow people who use our services to share their experiences and help us improve. Care Opinion allows people to share their story confidentially, which are then shared with staff members so they can take on board comments, respond and consider improvements that may be required.

2. Involvement of People in Service Planning, Strategy and Design

Collaborative commissioning – Partnership Provider Statement

In March 2022, the HSCP launched its new [Partnership Provider Statement 2022-24](#) and signed up to principles set out in its accompanying Charter that will benefit residents and communities through strong partnership working. The document was co-written with a range of local partner organisations to describe collective beliefs, celebrate existing collaborative success and to identify opportunities for further improving health and wellbeing.

[Best Value Service Reviews](#)

Best Value Service Reviews (BVSR) are carried out across the Partnership on a regular basis. Since 2020 this has included, Care at Home, Older People's Day Services and Financial Inclusion services. Best Value Service Reviews give service users, carers and staff the opportunity to share their views on the service and be involved in designing how it will look in the future.

[The Promise Participation Team](#)

Formed in early 2022, the Promise Participation Team help to deliver The Promise for children and young people in East Ayrshire support the participation and engagement of our care experienced children and young people and their families.

The 'Pizza and Coke' forum was established prior to COVID-19 as a way to enable care-experienced young people to talk to leaders about the things that were important to them. This is currently being refreshed by the participation team, in partnership with our young people, to have more young people and less public officers at meetings. In turn, developing more ways for young people to have their say and has been renamed the 'Care Experienced Cabinet'.

[CELCIS Bright Spots survey programme](#)

The Partnership participated in this pilot that sought to identify what was important to care-experienced children and young people in Scotland. Care-experienced children and young people, aged 4-18 years old, were invited to complete the 'Your Life, Your Care' survey giving feedback on what was good and what was worrying them about the services they receive. In 2023 a number of sessions in schools across East Ayrshire were held to feedback on what was heard and work on the children and young people's suggestions for improvement.

Recovery Lived Experience Panel

This panel brings together people with lived experience of using Alcohol and Drug Partnership services, with a focus on recovery. The panel ensures that voices of lived experience can contribute to decision-making and being involved in supporting and influencing the redesign of pathways and services. The panel is a key member of the wider [East Ayrshire Recovery Network](#) and is supported by a Development Officer.

[TEC Pathfinder Programme](#)

In 2019 East Ayrshire was selected as one of four areas to participate in the Scottish Government's Technology-Enabled Care (TEC) Pathfinder Programme, adopting the Scottish Approach to Service Design (SAAtSD) to use TEC as a key enabler to fully transform health and social care provision for people with long term health conditions living in the Irvine Valley.

The team has followed the SAAtSD to discover and define the challenges being faced by residents and professionals in the area, carrying out a wide range engagement activity in the area. The programme has now identified TEC-based solutions to support the needs of the area, which includes recruiting two Digital Health and Care Support Workers, and will move into 'deliver' stage of the programme in 2023-24.

3. Governance and Leadership – Supporting Community Engagement and Participation

[IJB Stakeholder Forum](#)

The IJB Stakeholder Forum is an opportunity for people, users of our services, carers and organisations from the community to come together to share their views on what will be discussed at our board and committee meetings. A review was carried out in March and April 2022 to establish what is working well and what could be improved on, including how to involve more service users, carers and public across our governance structures. The forum is actively seeking more members of the public to join as its areas of focus grows.

Integration Joint Board (IJB) Carers Representative

The IJB brings together members from NHS Ayrshire and Arran and East Ayrshire Council, providing oversight and direction to the Partnership. Every IJB has additional representatives bringing the voices and views of the Third Sector, Public and Carers. Following in-person and online sessions with East Ayrshire Carers Centre, the Partnership recruited two IJB Carers representatives to ensure that the views of unpaid carers are represented. The Carers representative has been in post since August 2022, with the second representative joining in March 2023.

Health and Care Governance Group

A member of the Stakeholder Forum has now been supported to join this group, which ensures accountability and provide assurances on the delivery of safe, effective, person centred care across the services the Partnership delivers. Having public representation on this group provides specific thought to the impact on users of services, carers and communities in general.

Service Manager Interviews

We are currently piloting with people who have lived experience of the services joining interview panels. Initially this has been for senior positions within Learning Disability and Mental Health services and we will look to expand this moving forward. Initial feedback from all involved has been very positive.

What have you have told us?

Through our ongoing engagement activities, we asked what's important to you and how you would like to have your voice heard. As detailed in our guiding principles, it is key that we have a strong local focus and understanding the things that truly matter to individuals and communities can only strengthen our approach and how we engage.

Here are just some of the things you told us:



Top Ten themes of what's important to you

Your thoughts on **how we involve** the public, people who use our services and carers in how we plan and deliver our services:

- More opportunities and awareness of all the ways members of the public can be involved give feedback on the services they use
- Being involved at the earliest possible point
- Topics being led and directed by members of the public
- Clear purpose as to why an engagement activity is happening
- Demonstrate and publicise how the voice of public, users and carers are heard and what improvements or changes are made based on their

involvement *“Important that members of the public can give an opinion that perhaps staff are cautious to query.”*

- Link into existing groups and activities, going to where people are and already feel comfortable
- Ensure language used is understandable and avoids terminology or jargon.
- More development of existing structures, such as Locality Planning Groups, being supported to involve more people
- Continued use and development of Participatory Budgeting as a way of local people identifying local need
- Need to support people to participate through time spent, relationships and trust built and, if needed, training provided

“I care for what happens to people when people use Health and Social Care services. Feel that being involved allows me to draw on my experiences and knowledge from my working life and personal life. It is really great to hear different viewpoints.”

We heard things that you felt we **could be better** at:

- Feeding back the difference engagement makes *“that they took the viewpoint of the stakeholders to the IJB - does this happen? Does anything get done?”*
- Accessibility of engagement activities for people with disabilities or language barriers
- Promotion of the range of ways people can be involved
- Removing the fear to participate, whether that’s the environment or concerns that it may impact on treatment or support. *“When an opinion is given members should be encouraged to give their opinion, as no point sitting there in silence and agreeing with the paid member of staff viewpoint. Removing any fear for people to speak.”*

We also heard lots of suggestions for **different methods** to suit different people, such as:


- Using a mixture of in-person and digital such as online surveys and social media
- More regular face to face community events such as local conversations, small local events or speed networking. *“More engagement events.... and listening to the community but then showing people we are listening.”*
- Small focus groups
- Direct engagement with specific services
- Specialised forums to allow people to discuss highly emotive issues *“The public having a shared voice via the forum, this enables the people of East Ayrshire to be informed, consulted and engaged in health and social care services”*

- Face to face engagement and information sharing in GP Practices, schools, supermarkets, local community centres.

Consultation was carried out with staff to ask them their views on participation and engagement. The key points from the feedback were that staff engage with service users, colleagues and families the most. The main barrier to engagement was the lack of communication that staff and the public receive and also the communication between the different services. Some staff members also felt that they did not have the available access to information, which would then lead to them having better engagement with our communities.

Levels of Involvement

As our guiding principles sets out, along with your feedback on methods used, we need to be flexible and recognise that one approach does not fit all. As you can see above, there are a range of approaches that encourage and enable people and our stakeholders to be involved in ways that best suit them. To assist with promoting an open and transparent approach when conducting participation and engagement activities, the following sets out the impact these activities have in line with the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) [Spectrum of Public Participation](#)

Increasing impact 					
	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Public participation goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decisions making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the public	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
What this looks like for East Ayrshire HSCP	Providing good quality accessible information communicated via a range of ways such as: Newsletters, Social Media, Website, Posters, Leaflets, Information Displays and Signposting.	To hear people's views and value their input into shaping our strategies and plans. This can be through paper or online surveys, public events such as our Local Conversations, discussion groups or feedback sessions.	That the people who use our services, families, carers and the wider public views are used to support the ongoing delivery, design or review of a service or process. This may be an ongoing user or carer forum or a reference group with reviews incorporating one to one interviews, paper or online surveys or discussion groups.	Working in partnership with people at the earliest possible opportunity as to how we create, design and deliver services. Our Locality Planning Groups, IJB Stakeholder Forum and Short-life working groups create these opportunities.	To put choice and control in the hands of local people and our communities through activities like our Wellbeing for All Participatory Budgeting. This process allows for communities to vote for projects or groups they would like to see deliver supports or services in their area.
The impact this has	Members of the public, people who use services, their families and carers understand the services available to them, how to access them and where to find out more information if needed.	Decision making and the strategic direction of the Partnership is informed by the views and experiences of our communities with the impact of this feedback to those communities.	That services are informed and shaped by the experiences of those that use them, families, carers and our communities aiming to achieve the best value in delivery and the best outcomes for users and carers.	Developing new or improving existing models of care or pathways of treatment actively seek out the public, users of our services, families and carers. Ensuring that services created in partnership are more likely to be right first time.	Members of the public and communities have choice and control over what matters most to them.

What will we do?

Our Outcomes

Building on where we are now, with what we have heard from our communities, our colleagues and informed by the guidance and legislation has led us to develop four outcomes we would like to achieve.

Outcome 1 – The quality and consistency of our participation and engagement activities are improved through the Partnership workforce having access to training, resources and tailored support.

As detailed above the legislation and guidance places a duty upon the Partnership to engage with our communities in the planning, design and delivery of our services. Regardless of these duties, it is quite simply the right thing to do to ensure that our services meet the needs of the people and carers using them.

The responsibility to engage sits with everyone in the Partnership, whether that is responding to feedback or leading on a review of services. Ensuring a consistency to our approach across our workforce that aligns with the principles of this strategy is key.

Key Actions:

- Engagement skills training calendar open to all Partnership staff
- Dedicated Participation and Engagement space created on the Partnership intranet containing templates and resources
- Opportunities throughout the year created to provide additional focus and interest for staff such as What Matters to You Day

“The Promise Participation and Improvement Team was formed at the start of 2022 to ensure that the voices of children and young people are at the forefront of improving the services they use. For our Participation Leads having bespoke training that provided a shared understanding of what we mean to engage and involve people, overview of the relevant guidance and legislation, time spent on how best to plan and the most appropriate methods to use was invaluable. The training sessions also provided the opportunity to share what we felt confident with and identifying the areas we felt we needed to improve in our own practice, tapping into resources and knowledge whilst sharing our own!”

- Heather Irving, Promise Implementation Lead

Outcome 2 – The public, users of our services and carers have a clear picture of the different ways in which they can engage with the Partnership via a method that best suits them.

We have heard loudly that there is a need for more opportunities and awareness of all the ways members of the public can be involved and give feedback on the services they use.

Firstly, involving people as early as possible in our planning of engagement supports us to find the right methods to use. Secondly, supporting our workforce to have the tools and resources to engage in a variety of ways allows for a range of different methods to be used, and in turn promoting these with the relevant communities. Lastly, listening to feedback on the methods used to inform what we do the next time is critical to identifying areas of strength as well as improvements and being responsive.

Key Actions:

- IJB Stakeholder Forum to lead a review of 'Get Involved' page of Living Well Website with focus on having up to date and relevant information
- Creating an engagement calendar on Living Well Website, showing the range of activities on offer at any given time, categorised in line with the IAP2 framework of Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, Empower
- Range of promotional activities to be undertaken on a rolling basis such as information stalls and our Local Conversation public events
- The different ways people wish to be involved and the methods used are informed by the public through involvement in early planning or feedback

"Whilst we can all share common experiences, our individual lives and priorities can dramatically vary from person to person. In my life working full-time, being a carer for an elderly relative I know that I wouldn't have the time to attend a discussion group but would fill in an online survey or respond to something on social media whereas for someone else an online survey may be totally inaccessible. People who use our services or carers should be listened to about their experiences to inform improvements but also listened to how it best suits them to be able to share."

- Lorna McIlreavy, Partnership Engagement Officer

Outcome 3: The public, users of services and carers are supported to participate through structured or tailored support and are clear on what this involves.

We truly appreciate anyone giving freely of their time to help ensure our services are the best they can be. The value of this should be reflected in people having a clear understanding of the purpose of any engagement activity. We heard at our recent Local Conversations that feeding back on what has been done with the information shared and any improvements or changes made is also crucial and builds on relationships made.

Additionally, offering information sessions to understand the range of opportunities for involvement, the difference these can make and the commitment required provide a fuller picture as to the why, how, where and when for anyone wishing to get involved.

Key Actions:

- Clear information provided with any engagement activity to ensure people know what the aims and purpose are. Ensuring sharing of findings and feedback of any changes made as a result.
- Working in partnership with community and third sector organisations to provide tailored information sessions providing overview of the structure of the Partnership and opportunities for involvement.
- People understand what is entailed if participating in governance or working groups, through clear role descriptions and time in advance with Chairs or support staff.

“As a mum and full-time carer I heard about the Voices Scotland sessions at the Carers Cottage in Kilmarnock from the Carers Centre. I wasn’t sure what to expect but it was quickly explained what the point of the session was, in a friendly and relaxed way. We heard about what the Health and Social Care Partnership does, chatted about what was important to us and what can get in the way of taking part. I’ve since joined the Stakeholder forum, I can’t always get to the meetings but like to keep up to date with what’s happening and recently went to a discussion group for Children with Disabilities service as it was being reviewed.”

- Laura Rennie, Carer and IJB Stakeholder Forum member

Outcome 4: We will take additional measures to involve groups with protected characteristics and people who are excluded from participating due to disadvantage relating to social or economic factors.

Specific consideration and actions are necessary to ensure that engagement activities are not only open and accessible but are targeted at those under-represented or who may encounter multiple barriers to engaging. Meaningful engagement can break down some of those barriers, build trust and provide further opportunities for development in line with our duties above.

Key Actions:

- We will pro-actively seek participation from under-represented people and communities through tailored and targeted information and promotional activities.
- All engagement activities will give thought to current social or economic challenges that may create additional barriers, in line with our Fairer Scotland Duties.
- We will begin our service reviews or policy development with an Equality Impact Assessment that is revisited at key points during any process. This will enable us to identify and involve the people and organisations that are affected by the focus of the engagement and seek their involvement as early in the process as possible
- We will identify and undertake (where possible collaboratively with external partners) relevant equalities and diversity training for the workforce to support improved participation and engagement and encourage feedback from service users and patients

“Everyone has a right to share their opinions and experiences to help shape health and social care services regardless of age, race, disability, gender or background. It is of real importance that when we are engaging with people we actively strive to reach out and involve those who may not usually be involved or may find it difficult to have their voice heard”

- Alyia Zaheed, Corporate Officer Equality and Diversity

How will we know if we are successful?

All engagement activities are an opportunity to listen and continuously improve how we engage with users of our services, carers and the public. Our draft Action Plan details a number of indicators that would provide us with a picture as to our activities and allow us to measure progress against each outcome. The Integration Joint Board (IJB) for East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership has overall strategic responsibility for ensuring that the aims of this strategy are carried out.

Additionally, as mentioned above, the Partnership participated in the pilot of the Quality Framework for Community Engagement and Participation during 2022-23. In order to embed this approach, monitor our progress and evaluate whether our actions are successfully working towards the outcomes it is proposed that we will integrate the self-assessment tool and use it as follows:

Year 1 (2024) – Domain 3: Governance and leadership- supporting community engagement and participation.

Year 2 (2025) – Domain 1: Ongoing engagement and involvement of people

Year 3 (2026) – Domain 2: Involvement of people in service planning, strategy and design.

In taking this approach, we will be honest and open about what is working well and what is not. Allowing us to review the outcomes and adjust our actions but also share the lessons learned within the Partnership and with our partners for the benefit of future engagement activity.

As the diagrams from the National Standards for Community Engagement and Planning with People show, engagement and participation in health and care services is an ongoing cycle. At every opportunity and step, we should be working with our communities to improve our engagement practices, remembering what is important to them and keeping people at the heart of what we do.

Appendix

Appendix 1 – Relevant Policy and Legislation

1. [The Local Government \(Scotland\) Act 2003](#) gave a statutory basis to partnership working between all agencies responsible for delivering public services in an area, at the heart of which is ‘making sure people and communities are genuinely engaged in decisions made on public services which will affect them’.
2. [Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#) gave new rights to community bodies and new duties to public sector authorities to help empower communities by strengthening their voices in decisions about public services.
3. [Equality Act \(2010\)](#) legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society and places a duty on Public Sector organisations to consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees

All public authorities in Scotland must comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and show how they will:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it
 - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
4. [Fairer Scotland Duty](#) places a responsibility on public bodies to seek to alleviate the effects of inequality created by socio-economic disadvantage when making decisions.
 5. [Independent Review of Adult Social Care in Scotland](#) carried out by Derek Feely in 2021, which sets out a number of recommendations for Social Care moving forward with user and carer involvement throughout.
 6. [Carers \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#) came into force on 1 April 2018, with Carer involvement being a key principle. Carers should be involved in individual level decisions that affect them as well as strategic decision making..
 7. [The Promise](#) was developed in 2020 following the Independent Care Review which took into account the views of over 5,500 children, adults and families with lived experience of care. The Promise [Plan 21-24](#) outlines key outcomes that aim to ensure children and young people grow up loved, safe and respected, and able to realise their full potential.
 8. [Social Care \(Self-directed Support\) \(Scotland\) Act 2013 \(SDS\)](#) was updated the act in 2022 to include the [Self-directed Support Framework of Standards \(2021\)](#). SDS is for everyone in Scotland who needs social care services or support, including children, adults and unpaid carers. The guidance sets out what local authorities should do to make sure people are able to access the support that is right for them. The act ensures that local authorities give access to SDS in a way that supports people’s rights to choice, dignity and ability to take part in the life of their communities.

There are a number of local strategies and plans that set out a commitment to participation and engagement and aim to involve our local communities in shaping health and social care services:

- [East Ayrshire Community Plan 2015-2030](#) provides the overarching strategic policy framework for the delivery of services by all Community Planning Partners and has the guiding principle to ensure effective community engagement in the planning and delivery of local services.
- [East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan 2021-2030](#), the Strategic Priority of 'People at the Heart of What We Do' sets out that people are at the centre of all we do and support is a positive experience.
- **Ayrshire Shared Equality Outcomes**, progress towards achieving our equality outcomes and to mainstreaming equalities is detailed in our [Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report 2020-2022](#)
- [Caring for Ayrshire](#), is a transformational change programme led by NHS Ayrshire and Arran and the three Health and Social Care partnerships in the area (South, North and East) with the principles of engagement and collaboration with our communities embedded within.

This strategy sits alongside and complements the direction and objectives set out in the [East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership Communication Strategy](#), which sets out the mechanisms for how we inform our communities of the activities we undertake and the importance of promoting the range of engagement and involvement opportunities.

Appendix 2 – Action Plan

Participation and Engagement Draft Action Plan 2023 - 2026

Outcome 1 – The quality and consistency of our participation and engagement activities are improved through the Partnership workforce having access to training, resources and tailored support.			
Key Actions	Responsibility	Timescales	Indicators
Engagement Skills training to be rolled out covering the key areas of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy & Legislation • Definitions • Planning • Methods and tools – including evaluation and feedback • Interpersonal, communication and facilitation skills • SCDC VOiCE 	Engagement Officer / Organisational Development	Phase 1 - March 2024 Phase 2 – March 2025 Phase 3 – March 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers attending training sessions • Evaluation feedback • Uptake in numbers using SCDC VOiCE • Follow up contacts made with Engagement Officer for further input or support.
Participation and Engagement dedicated area created on the HSCP intranet, containing consistent templates and resources linked to training sessions.	Engagement Officer / Communications Team	April 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of templates and resources being used, feedback being obtained through Service Managers • Website analytics
Opportunities created throughout the year providing additional focus such as celebrating annual What Matters to You Day.	Engagement Officer / Communications Team	December 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers participating and interacting with activities
Outcome 2 – The public, users of our services, families and carers have a clear picture of the different ways in which they can engage with the Partnership via a method that best suits them.			
IJB Stakeholder Forum to lead a review of 'Get Involved' page of Living Well Website. Areas requiring updated to:	IJB Stakeholder Forum / Communications Team / Engagement Officer /	December 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website traffic figures • Numbers of people contacting or attending engagement

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflect the current range of opportunities • who to contact • IJB Stakeholder Forum meeting dates and relevant information • Locality groups meeting dates and relevant information • Dedicated sub section for Wellbeing for All Participatory Budgeting 	Planning & Performance Team		activities or groups and attributing this to the website information
<p>Creating an engagement calendar on Living Well Website, to be updated by colleagues, showing the range of activities on offer at any given time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public promotion of calendar • How to use, access and promote highlighted at engagement training 	Communications Team / Engagement Officer / All Staff	March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of activities being uploaded • Categories of engagement activities, in line with IAP2 framework, providing monitoring data • Website traffic figures demonstrating interaction numbers with calendar
<p>Promotional activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Stalls • Public Events such as annual Local Conversations • Evaluation and updating of 'Get Involved' leaflet piloted through 2022-23 • Other materials created as required 	Engagement Officer	December 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of events and promotional activities carried out • Leaflet disseminated to public spaces • People getting involved following these contacts
<p>Methods of engagement used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring up to date knowledge of existing and emerging methodologies through accessing 	Engagement Officer / All Staff	December 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application of a range of methodology being shown through Best Value Service Review processes

<p>relevant national and local training and engagement networks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement of people in planning to ensure that methods are directed by the communities we're seeking to engage • Responsive use of methods based on people's feedback • Give thought to the preferences/needs of certain communities wherever possible 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variety of engagement activities demonstrated through engagement calendar
<p>Outcome 3: Members of the public, users of services and carers are supported to participate through structured or tailored support and are clear on what's entailed.</p>			
<p>Clear information provided with any engagement activity to ensure people know what the aims and purpose are. Ensuring sharing of findings and feedback of any changes made as a result. (Links to templates created for staff including cover letters for service reviews, information sheets, consent forms, evaluation forms and You Said, We Did pro-forma.)</p>	<p>All Staff / Engagement Officer / Communications Team</p>	<p>April 2024</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation feedback • Use of templates and resources being used, feedback being obtained through Service Managers • Number of activities and findings shared via communication methods
<p>Working in partnership with community and third sector organisations to provide tailored information sessions based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chest, Heart, Stroke Scotland Voices • Health Issues in the Community • Carers Collation Involvement Training. 	<p>EACVO / Vibrant Communities / Public Health Team / Engagement Officer</p>	<p>April 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers participating in sessions • People taking up opportunities for further involvement

Providing overview of the structure of the IJB and HSCP and opportunities for involvement.			
<p>People understand what is entailed if participating in governance or working groups, through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer Role Descriptors, templates provided for staff as detailed above • Chairs of groups and relevant support staff to meet with interested people in advance of first meetings, providing time for question and discussion. 	Chairs of Governance Groups / Performance & Planning Team / Engagement Officer	December 2024	<p>Quality Framework for Community Engagement and Participation Domain 3 Self-assessment used to evaluate if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People feel supported and have the information they require • Use of templates across all relevant groups
<p>Outcome 4: We will take additional measures to involve groups with protected characteristics and people who are excluded from participating due to disadvantage relating to social or economic factors.</p>			
We will pro-actively seek participation from under-represented people and communities through tailored and targeted information and promotional activities.	EAC Equality Officer / EAC Equality Forum / EACVO / Engagement Officer / Promise Participation Team / Vibrant Communities	December 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of events and promotional activities carried out • Use of different formats such as Easy Read • People getting involved following these contacts
<p>All engagement activities to give thought to current social or economic challenges that may create additional barriers. In line with our Fairer Scotland Duties. Ensuring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer expenses are reimbursed • Going to where people are in the first instance 	All Staff	April 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reimbursement of Volunteer expenses figures • Numbers engaging • Use of Healthcare Improvement Scotland Accessibility Checklist

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate refreshments are provided • Promote accessibility and inclusion • Actively remove barriers to engagement 			
<p>We will begin our service reviews or policy development with an Equality Impact Assessment that is revisited at key points during any process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn-pro module to be completed by all relevant staff • Additional training or support provided if required 	<p>Performance & Planning Team / EAC Equalities Officer / Engagement Officer</p>	<p>April 2024</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Equality Impact Assessments used and submitted • Where appropriate use of Equality Monitoring Forms to provide comparable data
<p>We will identify and undertake (where possible collaboratively with external partners) relevant equalities and diversity training for the workforce to support improved participation and engagement and encourage feedback from service users and patients.</p>	<p>EAC Equality Officer / EAC Equality Forum / EACVO / Engagement Officer / Vibrant Communities</p>	<p>December 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers attending training sessions • Evaluation feedback