

Anchor Programme Mapping Brief

Context

The Anchor Programme is a 5-year programme hosted by West Hertfordshire Hospitals Charity Trust (The Commissioner), funded by MacMillan Cancer Support (MacMillan), enabling West Hertfordshire Neighbourhood Integrator CIC (WHNI) in its work on Neighbourhood Transformation Funds.

The Anchor Programme focuses on contributing to reducing inequalities in the populations across South and West Hertfordshire, particularly for people from diverse communities and all of our populations living with cancer, long term conditions (including Mental Health) and frailty.

Health and wellbeing are shaped not only by clinical care but also by community infrastructure, trusted relationships and how people access support in practice. This includes mental health and emotional wellbeing which consistently intersect with long term conditions, cancer and frailty, yet remain less visible within traditional service support.

Early engagement has shown that while a wide range of support exists, access is often shaped by awareness, trust and informal networks. As a result, some communities are better connected than others and gaps in both provision and reach remain.

This is a particular challenge for services and practitioners working directly with patients. For example, the Proactive Anticipatory Care (PAC) frailty service which provides proactive, holistic support to people at risk of frailty, often operates alongside community-based provision. However, in practice, service teams do not always have visibility of the range of VCFSE organisations that could offer additional preventative support to patients, as partners in supporting people to stay well for as long as possible in the community and in their local neighbourhood.

Similarly, community organisations and frontline staff may not always have a clear view of other local services or groups that could support individuals, limiting opportunities for coordination and joined-up care.

In response, the Anchor Programme aims to map community-based support across the South and West Hertfordshire localities to understand how support is accessed in practice which communities are being reached and where gaps in provision and reach exist. This will provide a clearer, system-wide understanding of community support and inform service design, engagement and future investment.

The Anchor Programme is structured across four workstreams: Discovery and Service Design, VCFSE Capability and Learning and Evaluation. The mapping sits at the core of the Discovery workstream, building a clearer understanding of community-based support and how it operates in practice. It directly informs these workstreams:

- **Discovery and Service Design** by identifying gaps in provision and reach
- **VCFSE Capability** by highlighting where organisations are best placed to connect with different communities
- **Learning and Evaluation** by providing a baseline for ongoing insight, reflection and improvement.

This work is intended to answer key questions about how community-based support operates in practice, how people find and access support which communities are being reached, where there are gaps in provision and reach and how organisations connect with and support different communities.

This approach recognises that communities are not interchangeable or uniform. Support does not operate as a set of discrete services but through relationships, trust and social connection. The aim is therefore not only to map provision but to understand the relational infrastructure that shapes how support is experienced in practice.

Objective

The objective of this work is to develop a visualisation tool and underlying database that provides a clear understanding of community-based support across Dacorum, Hertsmere, St Albans and Watford & Three Rivers drawing on available data and local insight. It will focus on understanding what groups exist in each of the four defined neighbourhoods, who they reach, how support works in practice and where gaps exist, particularly for diverse communities, older people and those living with cancer, long term conditions and frailty.

In addition to mapping support services, the work will develop a map of relationships that reflect how people, organisations and communities connect to one another in practice, including trusted informal networks.

The tool will provide a clearer understanding of:

- how people find and access support in practice,
- which communities are being reached and where there are gaps in provision and unmet need
- how organisations connect and work together across the system
- how trust is built, maintained and experienced between people, communities and organisations
- how insights from the mapping can inform more targeted engagement, service design and investment decisions

Scope

The mapping will cover Dacorum, Hertsmere, St Albans and Watford. It will include a defined set of community-based organisations and groups in each locality, identified through existing data sources and engagement with local partners.

Inclusion will be based on a combination of existing data sources and input from local partners, with organisations and groups identified and validated through engagement to ensure the mapping reflects how support truly operates in practice.

This includes:

- VCFSE organisations
- grassroots and informal groups
- volunteer-led and salaried provision
- organisations not currently connected to CVS infrastructure

The output will be an interactive visualisation tool and underlying database. The tool will:

- allow users to search and filter by location, population group and type of support
- provide visibility of organisations within a specific area, including what support is offered, who it is for and how it can be accessed
- show how organisations and groups are connected, including the role of informal connectors such as community and faith leaders and peer networks
- highlight where gaps in provision and reach exist
- support use for planning, engagement and service development

The visualisation tool and database will be updated over time as new organisations are identified and existing information changes. The Anchor Programme will be responsible for maintaining and updating the database, working with CVS organisations and local partners to ensure it remains accurate, relevant and usable.

Data to be collected

The database will capture a set of information on organisations and groups, including:

- organisation or group name
- location and area of operation
- type of support provided
- target population or communities served
- referral or access routes
- contact information (where appropriate)
- links to other organisations, partnerships or informal networks

This dataset may evolve over time as the mapping develops and user needs become clearer. See appendix 1 for more details data fields.

Delivery Approach

The work will be delivered through a proactive and inclusive approach, identifying organisations beyond existing networks and engaging with community organisations to build a practical understanding of local support. This activity will take place across Dacorum, Hertsmere, St Albans and Watford, running concurrently across all four localities.

Delivery will focus on developing a practical tool that supports clinicians, service leads and community organisations to identify relevant local support, understand how services connect and address gaps in provision and reach. Development will be informed by defined use cases, reflecting how different user groups will apply the tool in practice. The approach will be iterative, with data and functionality validated as they are developed and reviewed against agreed use cases, and outputs tested with users to ensure they are usable, relevant and support decision-making.

Engagement will go beyond information gathering and will focus on understanding how relationships operate in practice, including who is trusted, how connections are formed and where relationships are absent or fragile.

This will include stakeholder engagement with VCFSE organisations, grassroots groups and wider partners to gather information and insight as part of the mapping process.

In parallel, co-production will be led through the Anchor Programme to shape the focus, design and intended use of the mapping. This will include engagement with local NHS organisations,

public health teams, PCNs, local authorities and patient groups to ensure the outputs reflect how support is accessed and used in practice.

The initial phase will focus on developing a minimum viable product (MVP) with core data fields and functionality and additional data developed iteratively over time.

Key activities and timeline

The initial phase will involve developing and testing the MVP within one neighbourhood with rollout to remaining localities delivered in phases.

Phase	Key activities	Indicative timeline
Scoping and design	Confirm scope, define inclusion approach, agree data sources and key user requirements	Week 1
Mapping and data gathering	Identify organisations and groups within the selected neighbourhood using existing data and partner input	Weeks 2–3
Stakeholder engagement	Engage VCFSE organisations, services and partners to gather insight and identify additional groups	Weeks 2–4
Relationship mapping	Capture connections, trusted relationships and informal networks across organisations and communities	Weeks 3–5
Validation and refinement	Review outputs with users and stakeholders to ensure the mapping reflects lived experience, trust, connection and practical use	Weeks 4–6
Development of database and visualisation tool	Structure dataset and develop initial visualisation	Weeks 5–7
Testing and refinement	Test usability with stakeholders and refine outputs based on feedback	Weeks 6–8
Final output and next steps	Finalise outputs and confirm approach to ongoing maintenance and updates	Week 8

Data, Sustainability and Continuity

The Anchor Programme will retain ownership of the dataset developed through this project and will work alongside delivery partners to ensure that the visualisation tool and underlying data are accessible to stakeholders on an equitable basis. This will be delivered through a partnership approach, including collaboration with the selected organisation representing distinct neighbourhoods.

Please refer to Appendix 2 for the detailed governance framework, which sets out the Anchor Programme's role as accountable owner and steward of the dataset, and its function as an enabling partner to West Herts Neighbourhood Integrator (WHNI) CIC in delivering Neighbourhood Transformation Funds and programmes.

This approach recognises that much of the value in this work sits within relationships, trust and local knowledge. The mapping will therefore be developed in a way that strengthens local ownership and reciprocity, working with partners to avoid extractive practices or the unnecessary centralisation of community intelligence.

The dataset will include organisational-level information and, where necessary, limited personal data (e.g. named contacts and community connectors) to reflect how access and relationships operate in practice. Any personal data will be collected and used in line with GDPR requirements, with clear consent arrangements and defined purposes.

The Anchor Programme will act as owner and steward of the dataset, ensuring appropriate governance, management, access and data quality, while VCFSE partners retain ownership of their organisation-level data and insights. This will include:

- A clear and accessible data structure
- Documentation to support consistent use and updates
- Arrangements for ongoing maintenance and regular updates
- Continuity arrangements to ensure the dataset remains accessible if delivery arrangements change

The dataset will be designed as a live resource, capable of being updated and developed over time in response to changing needs and priorities.

Next steps

This brief will be reviewed to agree the scope and delivery approach for the mapping by the Anchor Programme Steering Group. A proposed budget allocation will also be developed and presented to the Group, including the funding source, distribution across the four localities and proposed phasing of spend.

Following this, organisations with relevant experience and local knowledge will be invited to set out how this work could be delivered. Responses should provide sufficient detail to demonstrate how the brief will be met in practice, including the rationale for the proposed approach and how it will be applied across the four localities.

Submissions should include:

- **Proposed approach**
A clear and structured approach to delivering the mapping, including key activities, sequencing of work and how the approach will ensure sufficient coverage of organisations, relationships and networks
- **Approach to engagement**
How organisations, communities and partners will be identified and engaged, including how less visible or informal groups will be reached
- **Delivery across localities**
How the work will be delivered across Dacorum, Hertsmere, St Albans and Watford, including how local variation and context will be reflected
- **Timeline**
An indicative timeline aligned to the phased approach set out in this brief, including key milestones
- **Resourcing and cost**
Proposed team structure, roles and responsibilities and a breakdown of costs associated with delivery

Appendix 1 - Dataset Structure

The dataset structure below reflects the full scope of data to be captured over time. The initial phase (MVP) will prioritise core data fields, drawing primarily from Sections 1–4 with additional categories developed iteratively in later phases.

1. Organisation Details
 - Organisation name
 - Organisation type (e.g. VCFSE, grassroots, informal, volunteer-led, faith-based)
 - Legal status (where applicable)
 - Contact details (name, email, phone)
 - Website or social media
 - Borough and areas covered
 - Connection to CVS infrastructure
2. Service / Support Overview
 - Service or activity name
 - Description of support provided (reflecting how it works in practice)
 - Type of support (e.g. practical, emotional wellbeing, peer support, advice)
 - Delivery model (in person, online, outreach, hybrid)
 - Frequency and timing
 - Referral and access routes (including informal access)
 - Cost to access (if any)
 - Commissioning organisation (if applicable)
 - Funding source (e.g. NHS, local authority, grant-funded, self-funded)
3. Population and Community Reach
 - Communities reached
 - Population groups supported (e.g. older people, diverse communities)
 - Condition or need focus (e.g. cancer, long term conditions, frailty, mental health)
 - Groups less well reached
 - Accessibility and inclusion considerations (e.g. language, disability access, transport)
4. Geography and Place
 - Borough and locality
 - Neighbourhood or hyperlocal focus
 - Delivery settings (e.g. community venues, faith settings)
 - Geographic scale (hyperlocal or cross-area)
5. Access and Engagement.
 - How people hear about the support
 - How people access support in practice
 - Barriers to access
 - Enablers of access
 - Role of informal networks and trusted referral routes
6. Relationships, Trust and Connection
 - Communities where the organisation is trusted
 - Nature and strength of trust
 - Key informal connectors (e.g. community champions)
 - Links to community or faith leaders
 - Partner organisations

- Type of relationships (e.g. referral, joint delivery, informal)
 - Role as a bridge between communities and formal services
7. Connections and Networks
 - Links to wider systems (VCFSE, health, local authority)
 - Strength of organisational connections
 - Cross-organisation collaboration patterns
 8. Reach, Effectiveness and Insight
 - Estimated reach (scale of engagement)
 - Level of engagement (light-touch, ongoing, intensive)
 - Strengths and what works well
 - Community feedback or lived experience insight
 - Source of evidence (e.g. interview, survey, observation)
 9. Gaps and Unmet Need
 - Gaps in provision
 - Gaps in reach (communities not accessing support)
 - Unmet needs identified
 - Fragile or missing relationships
 - Opportunities for future development or investment
 10. Data Quality and Maintenance
 - Data source
 - Date collected and verified
 - Verification status
 - Confidence level
 - Record owner
 - Notes and contextual information
 - Update frequency

Summary

This dataset structure enables the mapping to:

Provide a clear picture of available community-based support. Show how people access support in real life. Identify gaps in provision and reach. Highlight trusted organisations and relationships. Support planning, service design, and future investment decisions. Strategically enable system leaders to sense check the resilience of the VCFSE sector, in an uncertain time of funding and capacity so as to allow system leaders to respond to both existing and emerging gaps at local levels.

Appendix 2 – Data Governance and Ownership

Governance Principles

The governance of the mapping dataset will reflect the Anchor Programme's role as an enabling function, ensuring that the approach strengthens the capacity and capability of VCFSE partners while maintaining clear accountability for the dataset.

The following principles will underpin the approach:

- Ownership with stewardship responsibility – The Anchor Programme will retain ownership of the dataset and visualisation tool developed through this project, with responsibility for its governance, quality and long-term sustainability. This ownership will be exercised in a way that ensures equitable access and shared benefit for partners.
- Partnership and equitable access – The Anchor Programme will work in partnership with VCFSE organisations and community partners to ensure the dataset is accessible, usable and beneficial across the system.
- Recognition of local insight – VCFSE organisations and community partners will retain ownership of their organisation-level data and insights, recognising that much of the value in the mapping lies in relationships, trust and local knowledge.
- Non-extractive approach – Data collection and use will avoid extracting or centralising community intelligence without benefit, instead supporting mutual value, shared learning and system-wide improvement.
- Transparency and trust – Clear agreements will be established regarding how data is collected, held, used and shared.
- Proportionality – Data collection will be proportionate to the purpose of the mapping and will not place unnecessary burden on partners.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Anchor Programme

- Retains ownership of the dataset and visualisation tool developed through the project
- Acts as steward of the dataset, ensuring appropriate governance, quality, security and ethical use
- Maintains the platform, including data standards and overall data quality
- Ensures equitable access and usability of the dataset across partners and system leaders
- Supports ongoing maintenance, updates and long-term continuity
- Co-produces aggregated insights with partners to inform planning, service design and investment

2. VCFSE and Community Partners

- Contribute data and insight based on local knowledge and relationships
- Retain ownership of organisation-level data and community insight they provide
- Work in partnership with the Anchor Programme to shape how data is used and accessed
- Support validation of findings to ensure they reflect lived experience
- Participate in ongoing updates and refinement of the dataset

3. Data Access and Use

- The dataset will be held by the Anchor Programme as a system asset, with access enabled for relevant partners for planning, engagement and service development
- Access arrangements will be designed to ensure equitable and appropriate use, with clearly defined levels of access where required
- Aggregated insights will be used to identify gaps in provision, gaps in reach, and opportunities for investment
- All use of the data will align with the principles of trust, reciprocity and benefit to communities

Summary

This governance approach is iterative and grounded in partnership and collaboration. It establishes the Anchor Programme as the accountable owner of the dataset, while ensuring that access, use and ongoing development are shaped collaboratively with partners. In doing so, it positions the mapping as a shared, trusted and sustainable system asset that balances system-wide insight with local knowledge, relationships and community trust.