2018/19
A SNAPSHOT OF OUR STORY
WHO WE ARE

Dudley CVS’s vision is for a borough that has caring, vibrant and strong communities where everyone can fulfil their potential.

We achieve this through our mission: connecting and inspiring people and organisations to achieve positive change, while championing their value to partners and the wider community.

Dudley CVS works with anyone within Dudley borough to help realise our vision. Last year we worked with people, volunteers, groups, partners and organisations, businesses, doers, makers and creatives.

In this snapshot of our year, you can learn more about how we’re connecting, inspiring and championing the people, communities and organisations that want to make wonderful things happen in Dudley borough.

Be a part of our collective story and share how you’ve been involved in our work or how you’d like to get more involved!

#dcvsstory
| **197** Groups were supported | We supported 32 successful applications from 23 groups awarded investment totalling **£1,894,980** | We engaged with over **1500** people at 56 community events and outreach activities to understand people’s experiences of health and care | **703** people who provide unpaid care got the support they needed to care for their loved ones, access services and get some time for themselves | We supported more than **150** young people to become Young Health Champions | **679** people most at risk of hospital admission were connected to support and opportunities to improve their quality of life |
Supporting people in crisis and those with complex needs through Integrated Plus’s new High Intensity User (HIU) service

Our HIU service offers a robust way of reducing avoidable frequent user activity to 999, NHS 111, A&E, and hospital admissions, freeing up front line resources to focus on more clients and reduce costs. It uses a flexible and innovative non-clinical approach, targeting high users of services and supports the most vulnerable people within the community to flourish and find purpose in their lives.

Helping people to feel less isolated and better equipped to cope with challenges

We build a network of support around individuals, ranging from practical help, financial support and community activities to help them to become more socially connected and resilient.

Diane was supported by Integrated Plus to link with a local allotment group to explore her interest in gardening and become more socially connected.

Diane described the allotment as “an investment in my mental health.”

“A&E attendances reduced by 33%, cost avoidance total £54,395
Hospital admissions reduced by 41%, cost avoidance £385,900

“I come here, look after my allotment, sit and listen to the grasshoppers, watch the squirrels and get lost in my own little bubble.”
Our support to individuals all starts with a phone call and a meeting to give us a full understanding of their situation. On the first visit, we make it relaxed to allow them to tell their story. “It’s surprising how many people say after the visit it’s the first time they have been really listened to.” Integrated Plus Urgent Care Link Worker

We continue to work with a client for up to 6 months intensively, but within clear boundaries, aiming for the support to come to a gradual end when the client is no longer feeling in crisis and is better equipped to thrive, with a strong support network around them.

“Our Carer Co-ordinator supported Paula and her family to identify options for care “The difference this support has made, is knowing that my mum has a carer coming every morning to help with washing and dressing. Peace of Mind.”

“This service, in my opinion, is vital to help people from utter despair, I cannot explain in words what this service has done for me. I was given a lifeline. My link worker from Integrated Plus is always at the end of the phone, caring and understanding, non-judgmental and listens to my every need in my recovery. My link worker takes me out for coffee and shopping, and has enabled me to laugh again and understand a future without pain. I look forward to her visits helping me to feel normal again”: HIU service user
The voluntary and community sector plays an important part in both providing and enhancing health and care services, so it is important that Healthwatch organisations are well connected and able to work across and have influence in all sectors, to ensure that local decisions are driven by the needs of our communities. I’m really proud that the Healthwatch Dudley Team sits under the umbrella of Dudley CVS representing local people from across the health and care landscape, particularly those who do not have the strongest voices.

Andy Gray, Chief Executive, Dudley CVS
The Dudley Deaf Focus Group was supported by Healthwatch Dudley to introduce awareness cards as a quick and simple way to inform people of their communication needs. Cards were introduced in partnership with Dudley CCG, Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust and Dudley Council’s Deaf Support Service. In July we teamed up with the Dudley Deaf Support Service to deliver deaf awareness sessions at local GP practices to help make surgery staff more deaf aware.

Welcoming over 100 GP practice staff to Healthwatch Dudley’s information network

Staff from local GP practices including receptionists, healthcare assistants and practice managers joined Healthwatch Dudley for Community Information training and awareness sessions. These bespoke training sessions have been made possible through NHS England funding that was allocated through Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to support practice staff to become care navigators. The aim has been to help people to play a greater role in their own health and care by being signposted to non-medical services to improve health, wellbeing and independence.
Working together to develop a Carers Information Hub at the hospital

Our Carer Coordinator identified a need for carers to easily access information when visiting Russells Hall Hospital. We connected with local voluntary sector organisations to develop the idea of an information hub for carers to be based at the hospital.

We’re now working with the hospital, Dudley CCG and Dudley MBC to create a structure within the hospital for a Carers Information Hub to provide a health and wellbeing service for carers.
Listening to children and young people’s experiences of health and care

Dudley’s Young Health Champions are young people between the ages of 11 and 25, who are using their skills, talents and networks to deliver health and wellbeing messages across the borough and beyond.

We supported Lauren, a 24 year old Dudley Young Health Champion to launch her campaign to help young women who are not able to afford sanitary products.

Projects last year have included peer mentoring, mental health first aid and a new creative arts collaboration with Health Education England.

“It might be a difficult subject to talk about but the impact of this project could make a really positive difference to the mental health of other young people.” Lauren
Supporting work that keeps older people connected and well

We’ve been working with Age UK Dudley to support the small, local groups that help to keep older people socially connected and well. We wanted to understand what small scale things are happening very locally and the impact of this activity on the people that access it, as well as provide financial and non-financial support to these small, volunteer-led groups to keep their work going.

We shared the story of the Senior Citizens Enterprise Woodwork Group, a group for older people who are interested in woodwork. It’s a fun and friendly environment offering older people a place to learn new or develop existing woodworking skills. It’s also a great place to find new friendships. Their motto, “Fed up with looking at four walls? Then come and look at ours instead!”
We linked with **Wall Heath Ladies Choir** to build a picture of potential members, promote the choir, help them to secure a venue and set up as a constituted group. We supported them to access more than **£3,000** to help kick start the choir by demonstrating the difference that this small group makes to the lives of its members, including improving their health and wellbeing and keeping people connected in their community.

**Connecting groups to funding opportunities**

Our work with **Dudley Voices for Choice (DVC)** resulted in them being awarded a grant from the National Lottery Community Fund totalling **£415,720** to maintain a regional self-advocacy network.

**Encouraging groups to become independent and sustainable**

We supported ‘**Airtime**’, a weekly group for members of the community with COPD and related conditions, to look at the frameworks within which they could operate, and the implications of running the group independently. A constitution was developed by the group and a board was selected democratically.

Dudley now has a sustained peer support group for individuals with chronic lung conditions. Members of the group have taken up roles and feel they have more purpose, their quality of life and confidence has also improved.
Bringing people of all ages together for the East Coseley Big Local Community Cinema

We worked in partnership with Black Country Touring and local dementia groups to bring a dementia-friendly community cinema to the residents of Coseley.
Raising awareness of the increased risk of county lines and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) in Dudley borough through the NAVIGATE project

Child Criminal Exploitation and ‘County Lines’, is when gangs and organised crime networks groom and exploit children, young people and vulnerable adults. Often these people are made to travel across counties and use dedicated mobile phone ‘lines’ to supply drugs.

Our work brought community and voluntary organisations, CHADD, Barnardos and Phase Trust together to design an appropriate service to link people to information, advice and other services.

We supported this group to apply to the Innovation Fund. The group were successful in attracting £160,000 from the Innovation Fund and a further £20,000 from the Early Intervention Youth Fund to recruit 3 people to work on the NAVIGATE project, working on a range of preventative resources, training sessions and one to one support for those at risk or involved in CCE and county lines.
Developing a Principles Focused Evaluation approach

We used a Principles Focused Evaluation approach in CoLab Dudley’s work so that we would be able to tell an honest and complete story of change in relation to our work which is now being invested in by the National Lottery Community Fund. This investment means that we can continue to build a platform of trust in the town, one which makes it easier for people to grow and maintain fruitful relationships.
Dudley town centre is lacking creative spaces and experiences which are open to all. This leads to an absence of cultural nourishment and relationships that people use to form place-based identity and sense of belonging. This, in turn, erodes a sense of responsibility and ownership. Through collective insights from a multitude of small experiments over two and a half years, CoLab Dudley had identified that the involvement of creatives would be critical to nurturing new creative spaces and experiences that could help to cultivate a more creative, kinder and connected town centre.

**Bringing together local doers, creatives and makers to ‘Gather and Create’**

Our CoLab Dudley team designed and hosted a series of gatherings to thoughtfully bring together local doers, creatives, makers and all kinds of people who shared an appetite to nurture new creative spaces and experiences, and to cultivate a culture of curiosity and kindness in Dudley town centre. A collective of doers, makers and creatives emerged, and went on to co-create Do Fest 2019, which they saw as an opportunity to carry out some low or no cost street experiments to inform future work.
Recognising volunteers doing great things in their communities through the Character Portraits Project

We worked in collaboration with Midland Film and Art (MFAA)/The Art Yard, a collection of artists, craft workers, writers, performers and film producers, who were applying to the Arts Council (England) for funding towards a Character Portraits Project.

Portraits were created of volunteers from across Dudley in recognition of what they do to help their local communities.
Linking people to the right opportunities

We supported Jen to find a volunteering opportunity to suit her interests at Discover U, a charity aiming to break down barriers into employment for adults with learning and physical disabilities.

“After 12 months, a new location, the addition of a tea room, and a lot of hard work from everyone, Steve (Discover U) was able to take me on as a full time member of staff.”

“The simple fact is, I wouldn’t be where I am today without the help and guidance of Dudley CVS. They helped me find a local charity, that at the time was not in the public eye so did not get the attention it deserved through other channels. With it, I found a new purpose and a new path that I had never considered.”

Jen, Discover U
Connecting local businesses to opportunities to support the local community

A local branch of Yorkshire Building Society was linked with Loaves ‘N’ Fishes. The team spent 3 days with the charity helping to sort and label donations of clothes, and household goods, which would be passed on to local people who were struggling.
We continued to share stories, and raise the profile of voluntary and community action and great things happening in Dudley borough!

We helped to promote the activities of at least 60 groups.

Last year 70 voluntary organisations that support children, young people and families signed up to iZone.org.uk, a platform for young people to find relevant services.

We welcomed over 50,000 visitors to the Brierley Hill Civic during 2018/19.

12 charity/community groups were offered the hall for free or reduced cost.
Be a part of our collective story and share how you’ve been involved in our work or how you’d like to get more involved!

#d cvsstory

Read the full story: www.dudleycvsreview.org