

'In the community,
with the community
for the community.'



Big Local Community Plan
April 2021-March 2024



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Foreword from the Chair

Hi, I'm Zoe and welcome to our fourth, and last, Big Local Plan. In 2013 Big Local presented us with a fantastic opportunity to make our area an even better place to live. Rudheath and Witton Together have been making the most of this opportunity ever since.

We've achieved a lot, but I am particularly proud of the small grant and training grants which have made a huge impact in the community. The small grants have supported many local groups to deliver activities, which have helped local people. The training grants have allowed some of the community to gain new qualifications and start their own businesses. As Chair I'm thrilled with the amount of community activities and support we've have given to community events such as the Summer Fete and Broken Cross Festival in 2019 and the Scarecrow and Christmas Competitions in 2020 these activities had a great community response and much fun was had by all.

RWT have faced many challenges, with Covid-19 being the biggest one. The pandemic has given us a huge insight into what being a community really means and the challenges our community faces. Our aim in the new plan is to address some of these challenges with the Covid fund, activities to support mental health and support for our young people.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the partnership and the staff, both past and present, for their time and dedication shown to Rudheath and Witton Together. A huge thank you to local businesses, Councillors, volunteers and other community groups who have worked with us to deliver and achieve the Big Local outcomes so far. Working together has created many opportunities, which we will take forward into the new plan and look forward to continuing our work together. In the most recent months I would like to say thank you to those who have responded to polls, surveys and given additional feedback on the project past and present to support us to take the new plan forward. The community have been amazing in supporting RWT and without you we would never have made

the last 7 years the success it is today. So from me, Zoe the Chair, I would like to personally say a massive thank you to anyone who has helped us with any part of the past plan and hope that you will continue to support us into the final phase.

This is now an exciting opportunity for the Rudheath and Witton Together Partnership, local businesses, Councillors, community groups and the residents of the area to build on activities and successes to date. We will now work together to take RWT beyond the Big Local programme and make it sustainable for the future and continue to support our community.

If you would like to get more involved, please let us know, we'd love to hear from you!

Zoe Cadman, Chair of RWT Big Local

1. Background to the Big Local programme in England

The Big Local programme is a Big Lottery funded initiative. Across England it is investing £200 million in 150 neighbourhoods that have been overlooked for funding in the past. In terms of scale, time horizon and ethos, nothing like Big Local has ever existed. It has been designed to be radically different from other funding programmes that preceded it, underpinned by empowered, resilient, dynamic asset rich communities making their own decisions on what is best for their area.

There are 3 key features of Big Local that set it apart from all previous area-based regeneration programmes:

- **long term** – providing certainty and continuity, over 10-15 years
- **resident-led** – working directly with individuals living or working in an in areas wanting to make a difference to their community and their local area
- **Non-prescriptive** – enabling residents to spend on their own terms and in their own time, on the projects they judge to be most important to them



2. Rudheath and Witton Together Big Local

Rudheath and Witton Together (RWT) is a round one Big Local Partnership located in Northwich, Cheshire. In 2103 RWT was given £1m by the Lottery Fund to make their area an even better place to live, a grant that has since been increased to nearly 1.2m following the issue of extra dividend payments from the lottery.

Our first plan was endorsed in April 2013, our second plan was submitted in April 2016 and ran to 2018. Our third plan ran from 2018-2020, and last year was extended until March 2021 because of the COVID-19 crisis.

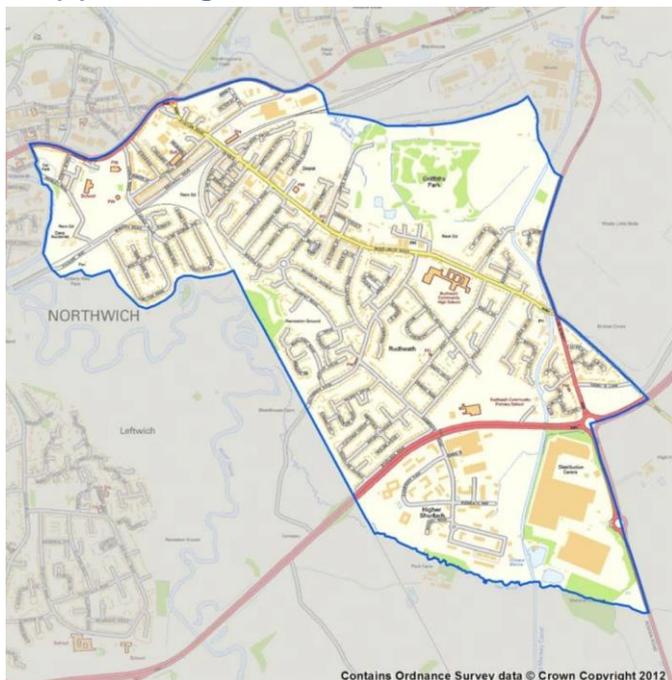
All previous plans are available on our website, www.rudheathandwitton.org.uk

(i) Our Partnership

The RWT Partnership is responsible for the development and delivery of the Big Local plan. There are currently 10 members on the Partnership, all but one of which are resident in the area (a full list is given in appendix (i)). The Partnership includes people with a range of skills, experience and local knowledge. Membership, which has changed quite substantially since the start of the

programme in 2014, is reviewed annually at the AGM and we are always looking for new members who share our vision and priorities.

(ii) The Big Local Area



Rudheath and Witton comprises two areas on the eastern side of the town of Northwich, Cheshire (see map). It is wholly within the borough of Cheshire West and Chester and two main roads run through the neighbourhood: the A556 which skirts the southern edge of Northwich, running east – west from the M56 near Altrincham to the A54 at Kelsall and Middlewich Road (B5082) that connects the A556 to Northwich town centre. The Manchester to Chester railway line crosses the area which many perceive to divide the area between Rudheath and Witton.

The population of the area is 9700, with 4026 households which means it is slightly bigger than the average Big Local area. Like most communities the area faces a number of challenges (to be taken from Local Insights) it also has a number of assets, such as nine parks, play areas, green spaces, 2 thriving community venues, great local primary schools, a senior school right in the middle of the area, a leisure centre, a fabulous Grozone facility and 3 churches, all of whom have got involved in one or more of our projects.

(iii) Our Locally Trusted Organisation (LTO)

Every Big Local area appoints a Locally Trusted Organisation (LTO) to look after the money awarded, help to make sure it is properly accounted for, and to offer other support to the Partnership where needed. Groundwork CLM (Cheshire, Lancashire and Merseyside) was appointed as the LTO for RWT in 2014 and has performed that role throughout the duration of the programme.

3. Progress so far

(i) Achievements

This is our fourth plan, which builds on the achievements of the previous three. Whilst there is still a long way to go on our Big Local journey, we are also proud of what we have achieved so far. A number of those achievements are set out below.

Supporting Community groups

- Big Local has set up and continues to support a number of community groups, including 'Knit and Natter', the sewing group, Piece by Piece SEND Parent Carer support group, the toddler group, and the Shurlach Over 55's group.



Community events

- We have organised and supported a wide range of community events aimed at bringing us together, having fun and making the community stronger. These have included over 2,000 residents attending Rudheath fete in 2019, the Scarecrow Competition and Trail, a Halloween Party, Bingo, Christmas competitions and coach trips to Blackpool, Llandudno, Buxton and Southport.



Activities and support for young people

- Providing better opportunities for young people has been a theme running through the programme, and have included the Youth Bus, school holiday activity programmes every year, the toddler group, the funding of music classes at Rudheath Senior Academy, and a football kit for the junior football team.



Activities for adults

- We have also provided a number of activities for adults, providing spaces and places where people can come together, including exercise classes, the community arts project, the craft Club, 'Welcome Wednesday' coffee mornings, the lunch club, wreath making, as well as providing a large number of volunteer opportunities.



Small grants programme

- We have given grants to a large number of groups in the area, including 19 in the last phase of the plan, which included solar panels, football kits for junior teams, music workshops, a clean-up, craft bags, a bowls competition, a new kitchen in the chapel, defibrillators...something for everyone we think!



Emergency and crisis support

Unfortunately we have had our fair share of crises to deal with of late. We have supported Fare Share/food donations, addressed holiday hunger with recipe bags during school holidays, provided family food boxes, provided support for parents/carers of children with special needs, the 'Wellness In Mind' Support Group, summer treat bags and the provision of isolation boxes, food and treats during COVID-19.



(ii) Lessons learnt

Each time we do a new plan we learn the lessons of what has gone before, of what has worked well, and what has not gone so well. We have never been afraid to attempt challenging projects where we have seen a need, or to spend time looking at where there might be new opportunities. This is something all Big Local programmes are encouraged to do, to take risks, to take a chance on ideas that may, or may not or come off. For example, during the last plan RWT invested funding looking at the feasibility of purchasing Rudheath Social Club to create a community hub which in the end did not turn out to be viable, but it was an exciting idea.

Over the course of the last 7 years we have learnt a lot as a partnership, and as a Big Local, and some of the key aspects of our collective learning are set out below:

- Some of our best results have come from the groups we have supported to get started.
- Building great relationships with key organisations is key to ensuring a legacy for Big Local.
- Building the skills and confidence of those involved in the programme is also key to it lasting beyond the official 10 years.
- Like all communities, we face challenges, but we have learnt to focus more on the areas many strengths; great play areas and green spaces, really strong community spirit and community groups offering something for everyone.
- When we work closely with other well establish organisations; our schools, local churches, the council etc, that is when things work really well, and where projects have the best chance of lasting.

These lessons have informed the writing of this plan, and feature very heavily in our Legacy document referred to in section 6.

4. Feedback from research and consultation (headline findings)

Despite the challenges and constraints posed by COVID-19, including lockdown and social distancing, we have managed to carry out an extensive programme of consultation, community engagement and research over the last few months that provides the evidence base for this plan.

This has comprised the following elements, in chronological order:

- **Discussions with partnership members and workers**
- **Local Insight analysis** We carried out an analysis of the data from Local Insight, an online tool which allows you to access data specific to your Big Local area, on indicators such as health, crime, employment, housing etc.
- **Stakeholder interviews-** We conducted 1-1 interviews with 28 key stakeholder organisations and partnership members to get their ideas and suggestions as to what the new plan should be focusing on.



• **Stakeholder workshop**, we facilitated a stakeholder workshop to discuss possible ideas for the new plan, attended by partnership members and potential partner organisations.

• **School outreach.** All local primary and secondary schools were approached, and two primary schools carried out a survey of pupils to find out what they would like to see in the plan.

• **A survey and consultation flyer**, the intention had been to post one through every door in the area, but lockdown 3 put paid to that. We therefore created an online survey, sent out to all our partners, and everyone on our contact lists, on Facebook and in the local press to get their feedback on the emerging projects, and to put forward their own ideas. We got 81 responses which, in the circumstances, we thought was a decent return.



Background

Rudheath and Witton Together is your Big Local community project providing support and activities in the local area since 2013. Originally awarded £1 million by the Big Lottery to make the local area an even better place to live, we are now in the final phase with just over £300,000 left for the project.

Amongst the things this project has supported is our community with food support for families, weekly groups such as Knit and Natter, community events such as the fete in 2019, grants to local groups and individuals, music classes and support during the Covid-19 pandemic.

A Social enterprise called 'Your Back Yard' has been commissioned by Rudheath and Witton Together to help them develop their new plan, which will take them through to the end of the programme.

Your Back Yard's website: <https://www.yourbackyard.org.uk>

Consultation so far

Over the past few months partner organisations, residents, partnership members, school headteachers, teachers and parents have been consulted remotely, via phone, email or video call. This resulted in some project suggestions that we'd like to hear your thoughts on.

The survey

Please fill the survey in through this link:
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/WNZLQLW>
 or scan the QR code
 or fill it in on paper (overleaf), then take a picture of your responses and then email them to: contact@yourbackyard.org.uk. Or if you would like someone to come and pick it up, or if you have any questions, ring/text Tony on 07970903766.

Please submit your responses by February 2nd.



Those who complete this survey will be entered into a prize draw to win £50 of shopping vouchers!



Some headline findings

A full feedback report on all the research can be found in appendix (ii). Some of the headline findings are set out below:

(i) Stakeholder interviews (including primary schools)

- There was broad support for current priorities.
- Upskilling and local people and provision of more activities were the most popular project ideas.
- Mental health problems and rising unemployment were feared would be the biggest problems to arise from COVID-19.
- In terms of creating a legacy most people supported a community hub, to continue support for existing groups and to enhance community cohesion.
- From the survey of primary school children, the most popular request was for a homework club.

(ii) Survey on project ideas (that emerged from stakeholder workshops)

- There was very strong support for all the project ideas, with at least two thirds of respondents supporting all projects.
- The most popular idea was the one to set up a young person's fund, more than 80% of respondents stating they either strongly or moderately supported this idea, with 45%, saying they strongly supported it.
- No new ideas came up that had a lot of support.

(iii) Local Insights

- The RWT area is generally less deprived than the wider North West area, with less children living in poverty, higher car ownership, higher employment and lower crime.
- Exceptions include those without any qualification which is 28% compared to 24% for the region, and the level of people on Universal Credit, which is 3.5% compared to 2.2% regionally and the % of obese children which is nearly 40% compared to 33% nationally.
- Satisfaction with the area is high, with nearly 84% being satisfied with where they live.

5. How we will deliver the plan; method and resources

(i) Project development

All the projects in the first 2 years of the plan have been the focus of significant development work. This has included identifying the need, approaching a lead organisation, talking to other partners, exploring potential sources of additional funding and creating a project timeline.

(ii) Procurement

Different methods of procurement will be used for the projects, including commissioning (e.g. the debt support project, the homework club), tendering (e.g. the green space improvement) with some projects, such as the community events and the young people's fund, being managed 'in house'.

(iii) Project management

Some of the projects in years 1 and 2 already have a project manager assigned to them, others, such as the green space improvement and improvements to leisure and sports facilities, a decision will be made when a site for each project has been decided and we know who the key stakeholders are, such as the landowners.

(iv) Resources

The partnership recognises the importance of dedicating enough resources to ensure the projects are delivered, particularly with this being the last plan and all funding need to be spent, or invested, by the end of year 3. We are lucky enough to have both a programme support worker, and a community engagement worker with extensive experience of project management. Hence we do not envisage having to bring in additional help to support project management.



6. Our Legacy



'In the community,
with the community
for the community.'

The vision of the partnership is *'In the community, with the community, for the community.'* and we are looking for Big Local to create a legacy to reflect that vision.

Our overall legacy aim is to create physical, social and economic changes that remain sustainable beyond the end of Big Local (see appendix (iii) for a full version of our legacy statement).

In this plan, the improvements to our green spaces and leisure facilities are key to the physical legacy. The projects focusing on the needs of young people, and on activities for older adults, will be key to achieving the social legacy. The apprentices hired under the Government's 'Kick Start' project, and the COVID-19 relief fund, focusing on helping people get back to work, will be key to us achieving long term economic changes.

The strength of our partnership will also be a vital part of our legacy. Over the last 2 years partnership members have undertaken an extensive programme of training. This has included safeguarding, partnership induction, first aid, mental health first aid, confidence and communication skills and attendance at a variety of Big Local training online. Also, two members have joined the Big Local Leadership Academy, and as such are the recipients of extensive group and 1-1 work aimed at making them even better community leaders.

The partnership is also planning for 'Year 11' when the Big Local funding ends. Some of this work began in phase 3 and will continue, such as developing skills around grants and finances, and looking at the possibility of setting up a small charity to continue the work of the Big Local.

7. Links to 4 Big Local Outcomes

All Big Local partnerships are given the responsibility of ensuring their plans contribute to all 4 of the national Big Local outcomes. The extent to which this plan does is set out below.

(i) Communities will be better able to identify local needs and take action in response to them.

- Partnership members have been involved in the preparation of all our 4 Big Local plans.
- Research and consultation has been carried out throughout the 6 years of the Programme which partnership members and residents have been involved in.

(ii) People will have increased skills and confidence, so that they continue to identify and respond to needs in the future.

- There is a line in the plan to support the ongoing training and development and confidence building of partnership members.
- All partnership members have been on a number of training sessions in the last 2 years, and 2 are on the current Big Local Leadership Academy.
- Members are also heavily involved in the development and delivery of a number of the interventions in the plan.

(iii) The community will make a difference to the needs it prioritises

- There is a section in the plan which sets out how change will be measured.
- A number of lessons have been learnt on our Big Local journey, and this will help ensure projects have a significant impact on our priorities.

(iv) People will feel that their area is an even better place to live.

- There was extensive support from the community for the project ideas set out in the consultation survey.
- Feedback from stakeholder organisations has also been extremely positive, about both the work the Partnership is doing, and the impact the Programme is having.
- Every effort has been made, with this and previous plans, to ensure there is something for all sectors of the community, and this is reflected in the wide support for the work we are doing.



8. Evaluation and measuring change

(i) Measuring change

As we embark on our fourth and last plan, the partnership is very aware of the need to be able to demonstrate the impact we have had, the changes we have made and the successes we have had. Our aim is to carry on with the work we are doing after the 10 years of Big Local, and having evidence to demonstrate the positive change we have made will be crucial in helping attract new support to enable us to do that.

We have therefore included a line in the plan allocating funding in year 1 to complete the establishment of baselines against which we can measure our impact. Additional funding is allocated in year 3 to measure progress against those baselines, and to carry out an overall evaluation of the programme.

The tools we will be using include those in the Local Trust toolkit, such as a resident/stakeholder survey, together with case studies, photographs and videos. We are also hoping our new 'Young People's' group will play a part in this, consulting amongst their peers to find out how Big Local has affected them, how things have changed for them and their aspirations for the future.

(ii) Evaluation

We will be commissioning an independent evaluation to look at the impact of some individual projects, and of the programme overall. We will also look at the extent to which the way we have worked, resident led since day one, has had an impact. The evaluation will also look to the future, to year 11 and beyond. Part of the research that will be carried out in the final year will ask people what work, priorities and projects they would like to continue. This feedback will then inform the work of any successor organisation, such as the charity body mentioned in the in legacy.

9. Finances and Costed Vision

The previous Vision has now been simplified to become;

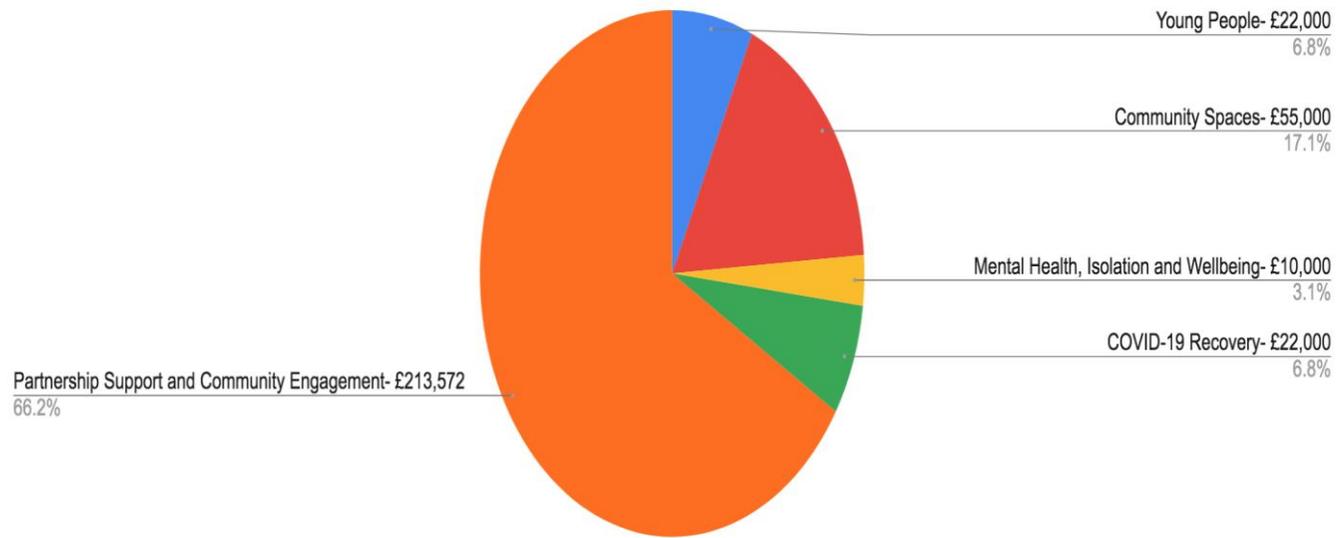
‘In the community, with the community, for the community’

Priority themes

In order to achieve that Vision, the priority themes for this plan, based on the feedback we have got from stakeholders, partners and residents are:

- Young people
- COVID recovery
- Mental health, isolation and well-being
- Community spaces
- Partnership support (including community engagement)

Each of the projects in the plan fall within one of these themes, and the split in overall funding, by theme, is shown on the chart below:



10. Projects, 2021-2024

Project name	Lead Delivery partner	Estimated costs						Big Local contribution	Other funding
		YEAR 1		YEAR 2		YEAR 3			
		PMT 1	PMT 2	PMT 1	PMT 2				
A. Young people theme									
1. Kick start Taking on up to 4 apprentices from Kick Start scheme, including the options of extending the post of 1 apprentice to 12 months.	Changing Lives Together/DWP		1000	6500	500			8000	25000 from Central Government
2. Young People's Ideas Fund The creation of a fund to be managed by young people, to meet needs and activities they identify.	RWT		2500	4000	4000	2500		13000	
3. Homework Club A pilot project to be based at Victoria Road Primary School, to provide a fully equipped space for homework and other after school activities.	Victoria Road School		1000	-	-			1000	
Total theme costs								22000	

Project name	Potential Lead Delivery partner	Estimated costs						Big Local contribution	Other funding
		YEAR 1		YEAR 2		YEAR 3			
		PMT 1	PMT 2	PMT 1	PMT 2				
B. Community spaces theme									
4. Improvements to Community Leisure and Sports Facilities The first option is the opening up of sports pitches and leisure facilities at a potential school site, such as the local academy, for community use, e.g. off peak and out of school times.	RWT		10000	10000				20000	25000 from school, Sport England, lottery
5. Improvements to Community Green Spaces The first option is Belmont road recreation area, in partnership with Northwich Town Council, and Cheshire West and Chester Council, to include play area improvements and a weather proof pathway around the perimeter of the site for walking, cycling, running etc Other sites could be explored, e.g. for a community garden, or improvements to an existing space, such as Grozone.	Northwich Town Council/CWC		5000	12500	12500	5000	35000	75000 funding from Town Council towards new surfacing and accessible equipment, and 1000 from PCC towards new benches	
Total theme costs							55000		

Project name	Potential Lead Delivery partner	Estimated costs						Big Local contribution	Other funding
		YEAR 1		YEAR 2		YEAR 3			
		PMT 1	PMT 2	PMT 1	PMT 2				
C. Mental health, isolation and well being theme									
6. Activities for older adults A programme of classes, e.g. yoga, meditation, tai chi, designed in partnership with the over 55's club, then expanded to offer classes targeted at men's mental health, and as an option for the Social Prescribing service which is being developed in the area	RWT/Over55/s club/Pathways CIC		1000	3500	500		5000		
7. Community Activities To include regular coffee mornings, activities and support for existing RWT groups	RWT	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	5000		
Total theme costs							10,000		

D. Covid response theme

<p>8. Support with Debt and Financial Management</p> <p>To include debt advice, advice on money management, and support to ensure people claim eligible benefits and maximise their income</p>	CAB		5000	2500	2500	-	10000	
<p>9. Covid Response Fund</p> <p>Grants for people who have lost their jobs due to COVID-19, to cover costs of getting back into work (interview clothes, travel, retraining etc)</p>	RWT		2000	2000	1000	-	5000	
<p>10. Larger Community events</p> <p>To include a major relaunch and celebration event once social distancing restrictions are lifted</p>	RWT		2000	3000	2000		7000	
<p>Total theme costs</p>							22000	

Project name	Potential Lead Delivery partner	Estimated costs						Big Local contribution	Other funding
		YEAR 1		YEAR 2		YEAR 3			
		PMT 1	PMT 2	PMT 1	PMT 2				
E. Programme support theme									
10. Programme management	Groundwork	17500	17500	17762	17762	36057	106581		
11. Provison for redundancy							2024		
12. Consumbles, including printing, ipad management etc	Groundwork	500		500		500	1500		
13. Community support officer	CLT	16500	16500	16747	16747	33997	100491		
14. Partnership training and development	RWT/Groundwork						2000		
15. Evaluation		1000				2500	3500		
Total theme costs							216,096		
Other theme costs							109,000		
Total Plan costs							325,096		
Big Local funds remaining, 275,000 plus estimated underspend from current plan of 50,000, total £325,000									

Appendix (i) The RWT Partnership, current partnership members, January 2021

Chair – Zoe Cadman



Andy Stott – Deputy Chair



Nic Williams



Rachael Rathbone



Amanda Bulfin



Kathi Brown



Cassie Warren



Linda Williams



Siobhan Duffy



Plus Sarah Kavanagh, new partnership member, joined Dec 2020