Health and Wellbeing Board

DATE	**16/07/2026**
REPORT OF	**Diane Lee – Director of Public Health**
SUBJECT	**Community Plans – Place-Based Approach**
STATUS	**Open**

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

This report supports strategic aims relating to improving health and wellbeing, reducing inequalities, and strengthening prevention through a place-based, community-led approach. The Community Plan model contributes to improved outcomes by focusing on the wider determinants of health, aligning system resources with resident priorities, and strengthening partnership working across neighbourhoods.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of progress across Community Plans in East Marsh, West Marsh, Sidney Sussex and South Ward. It highlights how a community-led, VCSE-powered and system-supported approach is beginning to build trust, strengthen partnerships, and address the underlying causes of health inequalities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to:

1. Note the progress made in developing and delivering Community Plans across East Marsh, West Marsh, Sidney Sussex and South Ward and the emerging impact of the place-based, community-led approach.

2. Recognise the Community Plans as a mechanism for improving population health, reducing health inequalities and strengthening prevention through community-led action and partnership working.

3. Support the continued development and implementation of Community Plans, including strengthening links between community priorities, commissioning, service planning and system decision-making.

4. Champion the use of Community Plan insight within their own organisations to support more coordinated, preventative and place-based approaches to improving outcomes for residents.

REASONS FOR DECISION

The Community Plan approach represents an evolving model for how partners can work with communities to understand local need and align activity around shared priorities. Board support is required to sustain momentum, embed the model across the borough, and ensure alignment with wider system decision-making, including commissioning and prevention.

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

North East Lincolnshire continues to experience significant health inequalities. Local population health work highlights that health outcomes across the borough are generally worse than England overall, with stark inequalities between different communities. Deprivation is not evenly distributed, and the pattern of inequality is particularly visible in wards where poor housing, economic insecurity, environmental conditions, transport barriers and lower levels of trust in services intersect.

The Community Plans currently cover four priority wards:

• **East Marsh** – entering year three, with a mature plan now moving from engagement into delivery and community-led decision-making.

• **West Marsh** – moving into year two, with the plan developed through wide-ranging engagement and now moving towards print, launch and grassroots delivery.

• **Sidney Sussex** – in the early development phase, with engagement underway through schools, community groups, local leaders and place-based observation.

• **South Ward** – in the early development phase, with Oasis acting as community steward and a steering group established across Nunsthorpe, Bradley Park and the Grange.

Each plan is at a different stage of maturity, but together they form a coherent programme of work. The shared model is community-led, VCSE-powered and system-supported. This means that local VCSE organisations act as trusted stewards, while the Health and Care Partnership, North East Lincolnshire Council, the Integrated Care Board and wider partners provide support, intelligence, connectivity and strategic alignment.

Ward-level progress includes:

- East Marsh: most mature, transitioning into delivery
- West Marsh: strong engagement and evidence base
- Sidney Sussex: engagement phase with emerging priorities
- South Ward: early development with diverse communities

Emerging impact includes stronger relationships, growing resident influence, and improved alignment with public health and council work.

WHAT IS DIFFERENT ABOUT THIS APPROACH

The Community Plan model differs from traditional consultation because it starts with relationships, not forms. It does not begin with a pre-determined service solution and then ask residents to comment. Instead, it creates space for local people to describe what life feels like in their place, what is working, what is missing, and what would make the biggest difference.

This represents a shift from consultation to co-production. It places community-defined priorities, local strengths, resident decision-making and local stewardship at the centre of the process. It also recognises that communities are more likely to engage when they can see that their voice is heard, their experience is respected, and their involvement leads to visible action.

The learning from East Marsh has been particularly important. Previous neighbourhood planning activity had not led to sufficient visible change, and this had affected trust. The Community Plan therefore had to be reset with honesty, patience and consistency. The work focused first on rebuilding relationships, creating safe and welcoming spaces for conversation, and acknowledging that trust had to come before action.

This learning has shaped the wider programme. Across all four wards, partners have sought to engage through places and activities where communities already are: schools, churches, community centres, parks, local events, food-based activity, ward walks, informal drop-ins and conversations with trusted local people. This approach has helped make engagement more accessible and less transactional.

The model also places statutory partners in a different role. The system is not the owner of the plan; it is a partner in the process. This has been important in building credibility and allowing VCSE stewards to lead in a way that feels more local, more relational and more trusted.

SCALE AND DEPTH OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The scale and depth of engagement across the Community Plans is significant. Hundreds of residents have been involved across the programme, including children, young people, families, older people, schools, local organisations, churches, community groups, businesses, ward councillors, police, housing partners and voluntary sector organisations.

In **East Marsh**, engagement has included community conversations, Christmas parties, breakfast clubs, roast dinners, curry nights, work with local groups and the development of the community quilt. The quilt has become more than an engagement activity; it is a visible symbol of shared story, identity and ownership, helping residents reconnect with the plan and see themselves as part of it.

In **West Marsh**, engagement has taken place through schools, churches, youth groups, local organisations, community meetings, drop-ins and regular updates at West Marsh Forward meetings. More than 450 people have been involved, with children and young people playing an important role in shaping the plan. The work

has deliberately included a second round of engagement so that residents and partners can see the draft, comment on it, and help shape the final version.

In **Sidney Sussex**, the work is newer but already providing important insight. Engagement has involved the junior schools in the ward, Pit Stop in the Park, Blundell Park, community leaders, local organisations, ward walks, visual observation work and conversations about how people identify with place. The ward presents a different challenge because it includes areas of significant disadvantage alongside areas with more visible affluence, creating a need to understand inequality within the ward as well as between wards.

In **South Ward,** the work is also in its early stage but has already established a strong foundation. Oasis is the community steward, and the steering group includes representation across Nunsthorpe, Bradley Park and the Grange. Engagement is taking place through conversations with residents, ward councillors, local organisations, schools, faith groups, family support settings and informal conversations in everyday spaces, including buses. This is particularly important because South Ward contains distinct neighbourhoods with different identities, assets and barriers.

The engagement is not only gathering views. It is also building relationships, helping partners understand local assets, and reducing the risk of services repeatedly asking the same communities the same questions without joining up the findings. As the plans mature, this shared intelligence can support better commissioning, more targeted prevention and stronger alignment between community priorities and system decision-making.

EMERGING IMPACT

The Community Plans are already showing impact, even though the four wards are at different stages.

Relationships between residents, VCSE partners, statutory organisations and elected members are stronger. Community stewards are providing trusted local leadership. Residents are increasingly shaping priorities and feeding into wider Council and Public Health work. Partners are beginning to use the plans as shared intelligence, reducing duplication and strengthening alignment.

East Marsh is moving into delivery through the community quilt, Community Roots participatory budgeting and wider links to Marmot, domestic abuse, Pride of Place and Playful Places.

West Marsh has developed a strong evidence base, completed wide-reaching engagement and is moving towards print, launch and grassroots delivery.

Sidney Sussex has established its steering group, engaged schools and families, and started feeding insights into wider work.

South Ward has established its steering group, appointed a community steward, and begun engagement across its distinct neighbourhoods.

The Community Plan approach has been developed in response to these conditions. It recognises that health is shaped not only by access to services, but by the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age. The model therefore focuses on the wider determinants of health, including homes, work, environment, transport, community connection, education, safety and access to local opportunity.

The approach is grounded in a simple but important principle: communities have a deep understanding of their own needs, strengths and challenges. By involving residents, schools, local organisations, elected members, VCSE partners and statutory services in the same process, solutions can be shaped around lived experience rather than designed at a distance.

The Community Plan approach is demonstrating how a place-based, community-led model can strengthen relationships, build trust and generate meaningful insight into the wider determinants of health. Across all four wards, the work is beginning to shift how partners engage with residents, align activity and respond to local need.

While each plan is at a different stage, there is a clear and consistent direction of travel.

To sustain momentum and maximise impact, continued commitment from the Board and system partners will be essential, particularly in embedding Community Plans within commissioning, prevention and neighbourhood delivery.

With the right support, this approach provides a strong foundation for reducing inequalities, improving population health and enabling communities to play a leading role in shaping their future.

2. RISKS, OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUALITY ISSUES

There is a clear risk of losing momentum if the work is not sustained. Communities have given their time, experience and trust. If plans become static documents or are not connected to visible action, there is a risk of undermining the relationships that have been built.

There is also a risk that the plans sit separately from formal decision-making. To maximise their value, Community Plans need stronger links into commissioning, service redesign, neighbourhood delivery, prevention work, public health planning, children and families work, housing, transport, environment, community safety and local investment.

A further challenge is capacity. Community-led work takes time. It requires relationship-building, regular communication, strong stewardship, practical support and consistent system engagement. Short-term funding does not easily support this type of work, especially in areas where trust has been affected by previous engagement that did not lead to action.

For this reason, future Community Plans should be supported by a minimum three-

year funding commitment. This would allow time to establish trusted relationships, maintain consistent presence, test local ideas, refine priorities, support delivery and demonstrate impact.

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Traditional service-led approaches were considered but do not provide the same level of community insight or flexibility.

4. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

The Community Plan approach presents a strong and positive opportunity to demonstrate visible, place-based leadership and a genuine commitment to working alongside residents to improve health and wellbeing. By focusing on what matters most to local communities, and by ensuring that residents, including children and families, are actively shaping priorities, the approach supports a narrative of openness, trust and partnership.

There are clear reputational benefits associated with this work, particularly where communities can see tangible change as a result of their input. Early engagement across the four wards has already begun to strengthen relationships between residents, local organisations, elected members and system partners, providing a strong foundation for shared ownership and credibility.

However, the approach also carries reputational risk if expectations raised through engagement are not matched by visible action or sustained delivery. The work highlights that trust is both an outcome and a condition for success. Where communities do not see change, or experience repeated engagement without follow-through, confidence can be undermined.

Effective communication is therefore critical and should focus on:

- Clear and consistent messaging about what Community Plans are, and what they are not
- Visible feedback loops, demonstrating how resident input has influenced decisions and action
- Regular updates at ward level to maintain transparency and momentum
- Recognition of community strengths, pride and local leadership alongside challenges

For members and partners, this provides an opportunity to adopt a more consistent and aligned approach to communication, ensuring that messaging reinforces the shared ambition to support communities to thrive.

Overall, when supported by clear communication, sustained delivery and visible local change, the Community Plan approach strengthens the credibility of the system, supports positive relationships with residents, and reinforces confidence in place-

based working as a long-term model for improving outcomes.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Community Plan programme is currently being delivered through existing partner resources and commissioning arrangements. The approach is intended to improve the alignment of activity, funding and resources around community-defined priorities, supporting more coordinated and preventative use of existing investment. Whilst there are no direct financial implications arising from this update report, sustaining and expanding the Community Plan model over the longer term may require consideration of future funding arrangements and opportunities to align resources across partner organisations.

6. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS

The Community Plan approach places children and young people at the centre of understanding and improving health and wellbeing at a neighbourhood level. Across all four wards, engagement has deliberately included schools, families, youth settings and informal spaces to ensure that the voices and lived experiences of children and young people shape priorities.

Children and young people are not only beneficiaries of the work, but active contributors. In areas such as Sidney Sussex, all junior schools have been involved, alongside engagement in community spaces such as parks and youth activities.
This has provided valuable insight into how children and families experience their local environments, including safety, play, transport, and access to opportunity.

A consistent message across the wards is the importance of safe, inclusive and well-maintained spaces for children and young people. Feedback highlights concern around antisocial behaviour, limited activities, and the condition and accessibility of parks and green spaces. This is particularly evident in areas such as Sidney Park, where children and families have clearly articulated the need for more varied, age-appropriate and inclusive provision.

The plans also identify wider factors that shape children and young people’s outcomes, including transport, housing, environment, community connection and family support. These factors influence children’s ability to access education, participate in activities, build relationships, and feel safe and confident within their neighbourhoods. Through this work, partners are developing a more holistic and place-based understanding of childhood and adolescence within each ward. This enables earlier, more targeted and preventive action, supporting children and young people before issues escalate and reducing longer-term demand on services.

Importantly, the Community Plan approach supports children and young people to grow up in communities where they feel connected, heard and valued. By

strengthening local relationships, improving neighbourhood conditions, and aligning services around what matters most to residents, the plans contribute to creating the foundations for children and young people to live well now and thrive into adulthood.

In the longer term, this approach supports the development of healthier, more resilient communities, where children and young people have greater opportunity, stronger support networks, and improved life chances.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE, NATURE RECOVERY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The Community Plan approach supports climate change, nature recovery and environmental ambitions by enabling residents and partners to identify and act on local environmental priorities. Across the four wards, community engagement has highlighted the importance of green spaces, parks, active travel, neighbourhood cleanliness, the quality of the local environment and access to community assets. By working at a neighbourhood level, the plans provide a mechanism for aligning local action with wider environmental objectives, whilst promoting healthier, greener and more sustainable places in which people can live, work and thrive.

The approach also supports community stewardship and local ownership of place, creating opportunities for residents to influence environmental improvements and contribute to the long-term sustainability and resilience of their neighbourhoods.

8. PUBLIC HEALTH, HEALTH INEQUALITIES AND MARMOT IMPLICATIONS

The Community Plan approach makes a direct and significant contribution to public health priorities by focusing on prevention and the wider determinants of health. It recognises that health outcomes are shaped by the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, and therefore works at neighbourhood level to influence these factors in a coordinated and place-based way.

Across North East Lincolnshire, health inequalities remain pronounced, with variation in life expectancy, healthy life expectancy and wider outcomes between communities. The Community Plans provide a practical mechanism for understanding these inequalities at a granular level, using resident insight and lived experience to complement population health data.

The approach supports earlier intervention and prevention by identifying local risk factors such as poor housing, limited transport, unsafe environments, social isolation and barriers to accessing services. At the same time, it strengthens protective factors including community connection, trusted local organisations, green space, inclusive activities and resident-led action.

Importantly, the plans move beyond a deficit model by recognising and building upon the strengths and assets within communities. This includes local pride,

volunteer action, grassroots leadership and neighbourhood knowledge, all of which are critical to improving health and wellbeing in a sustainable way.

The Community Plan approach aligns strongly with Marmot principles, particularly in creating healthy and sustainable places, strengthening community resilience, and enabling people to have greater control over their lives. By embedding this work within local neighbourhoods, the plans support fairer access to opportunity and contribute to reducing long-term inequalities.

For the Health and Wellbeing Board and system partners, this provides a clear opportunity to align commissioning, service design and investment with place-based insight, ensuring that resources are targeted where they are most needed and can have the greatest impact.

Overall, the Community Plans support a shift from reactive service delivery to a more proactive, preventative and community-led model. This strengthens the system's ability to improve population health, reduce inequalities, and support communities to thrive both now and in the future.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None

11. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

None

12. WARD IMPLICATIONS

Ward-level progress and learning

East Marsh
East Marsh is the most mature of the four Community Plans and provides the clearest example of how the model can move from engagement into delivery. The original rationale for the plan recognised persistent health inequalities, intergenerational disadvantage, poverty and poor health outcomes. The ambition was to work with local residents, community organisations, elected members and statutory partners to develop a shared vision and action plan for transformational change.

The important learning from East Marsh is that rebuilding trust takes time. The reset of the plan acknowledged that previous activity had not always led to visible change. The approach therefore focused on listening, consistency and relationship-building, rather than rushing into a delivery plan.

The plan is now moving into a more practical phase. The community quilt is being used to continue engagement and create a visible expression of local pride, story and ownership. The East Marsh Community Roots fund is developing as a participatory budgeting approach, supported by external partners, enabling residents to have a direct role in deciding which local projects should be funded.

This is a significant development. It demonstrates a shift from asking residents what they think to enabling residents to influence resources, priorities and action. It also supports the wider ambition of building confidence, increasing local decision-making and demonstrating that community voice can lead to tangible change.

East Marsh is also feeding into wider work, including domestic abuse strategy development, Marmot thinking, Pride of Place and Playful Places. This demonstrates the wider system value of the plan: it is not a standalone document, but a source of local intelligence that can inform a range of linked agendas.

West Marsh

West Marsh is moving into year two and has developed a broad evidence base through engagement with residents, schools, churches, community groups and local organisations. The plan is built around a resilient community facing a complex set of challenges and opportunities.

The West Marsh evidence base identifies five connected themes: homes, community, transport, environment, and health and wellbeing. These themes show how local conditions interact. Poor housing, empty homes, rogue landlords, damp, overcrowding and instability affect health, pride and safety. Limited transport affects access to employment, education, healthcare and leisure. Environmental issues such as fly-tipping, litter, broken glass and poor maintenance shape how safe, cared for and valued the area feels. Health and wellbeing issues are linked to access to primary care, dentistry, mental health support, substance misuse support, prevention and trusted community spaces.

The plan also highlights the strength of West Marsh. Local volunteer action, schools, churches, community groups, Grimsby in Bloom, Freshney Comrades, West Marsh Community Centre, Littlecoates School Council and other grassroots partners are important assets. Residents have been clear that they want visible improvements, clearer communication, practical collaboration and pride in place.

More than 450 people have been involved in the West Marsh plan. The feedback gathered has already influenced community-first work and domestic abuse thinking, with transport identified as a next area of focus. Early grassroots projects include a community website, noticeboards and a proposed community budget fund to help move from insight into action.

The West Marsh work also highlights an important risk and learning point for the programme. Continuity and ownership matter. Because the plan has relied heavily on a small number of local leads, sustaining the work requires strong organisational support, an active steering group and clear links to local anchor organisations. This is why the renewed focus on steering group support and wider partnership

involvement is important.

Sidney Sussex
Sidney Sussex is in the early development phase but has already generated valuable learning. The purpose of the plan is to understand the realities of life in the ward by engaging with residents, workers and service providers, and to explore how housing, work, environment, transport and community factors impact health and wellbeing.

Sidney Sussex is distinct because it includes areas of high deprivation alongside areas that appear more affluent. This creates a ward of contrasts, where streets and communities can sit geographically close together but experience very different levels of access, opportunity and health outcome. A key question for the work is whether residents identify as Sidney Sussex, East Marsh or Cleethorpes, and how services and partners respond to those identities.

The steering group has been established with support from residents, VCSE partners, police, councillors, local businesses, schools and community organisations. We Are F.I.S.H is the VCSE steward for the plan. The work is already engaging schools and young people, with all junior schools in the ward involved. Conversations have also taken place with children and families at Pit Stop in the Park and through activity linked to Blundell Park.

Emerging themes include the need for safe and inclusive spaces, youth provision, transport affordability, stronger community connection, and better use of parks and green space. Sidney Park has become a particularly important focus through the Playful Places work. Children and families value the park, but have raised concerns about safety, antisocial behaviour, limited activities, cleanliness, facilities and the need for more varied, inclusive and age-appropriate provision.

This work is helping partners think differently about how to reach communities who can be harder to engage. It is also feeding into wider Council and Public Health work, demonstrating how a new Community Plan can quickly become a source of useful place-based intelligence.

South Ward
South Ward is also in the early development phase, but it has already established an important foundation for community-led work. Oasis is the community steward, and the steering group has representation from across the ward, including Nunsthorpe, Bradley Park and the Grange. This is significant because South Ward is not a single community with one identity; it contains distinct neighbourhoods with different assets, needs and experiences.

The aim of the South Ward Community Plan is to listen to what matters most to residents and support positive, lasting improvements for the neighbourhood. The work is being shaped through residents, local organisations, schools, ward councillors, faith groups, family support partners and community conversations. Early engagement has already identified community challenges around transport and connectivity, safe spaces for young people, family support, access to opportunities, physical barriers, perception and reputation. At the same time, the

ward has significant strengths, including strong local identity, pride, engaged residents, trusted grassroots organisations, willingness to collaborate, green spaces, heritage and local love for the community.

Place-based observation has been particularly powerful in South Ward. Ward walks have shown how physical infrastructure and routes shape everyday life. A journey that should be a two-minute walk can become a much longer walk or a car journey because of walls, poor paths, unclear routes or environmental barriers. This is a clear example of how the built environment can influence access, confidence, physical activity and connection.

South Ward also has a strong link to children, families and education. It is the only one of the four wards with secondary schools, with Ormiston Academy and The Academy Grimsby – TAG sitting within the ward, and Oasis Wintringham nearby supporting many children from South Ward. This creates an important opportunity to understand the role of education, youth voice, aspiration, early help and family support in shaping future priorities.

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

14. CONTACT OFFICER(S)

Amy Quickfall – Strategic Engagement and Population Health Programme Manager (Community First – The Health and Care Partnership)

Diane Lee
Director of Public Health