

Wakefield Vanguard Initiative

**Community Anchors and  
Care Homes**  
Independent evaluation report

**Final report**  
**June 2018**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Community Anchors in Care Homes (CACH) phase two project linked six Independent Living Schemes (ILSs), located across Wakefield, with local Community Anchors (CAs). The work took much longer to implement than was originally envisaged due to a number of issues including delays in the CCG recruiting Independent Living Schemes, staff turnover in key roles at both ILSs and Community Anchors, and funding and capacity issues at Community Anchors.

Once relationships were established between the ILSs and the Anchors, however, they were able to come up with a range of interesting and relevant activities for tenants, which in many cases surpassed the expectations of all those involved. These included regular bocchia bowling sessions, links with local community radio, a dedicated men's group, a range of inter-generational work, opening up opportunities to take part in activities and volunteering at their local Community Anchors and much more. Much of this work was delivered by volunteers.

This work was very well received and found to have had a positive impact on the wellbeing of the tenants who participated. Benefits included:

- enabling tenants to access a much wider range of community contacts and facilities than were previously available;
- increasing the number of people who visited the tenants to deliver activities;
- increasing the amount of physical activity or mental stimulation for tenants; and
- reducing social isolation for tenants.

The Independent Living Scheme staff were very positive about the initiative. Community Anchors also valued being involved in the work and welcomed the close working relationships they had established with the ILSs and their tenants, whom they had not worked with before.

The arrangements for setting up and supporting the project were quite complex, for a relatively small project and, whilst they received support, the Community Anchors did not directly receive effective funding to cover the full costs of their involvement. This meant that they were subsidising this work through using their own resources. This is not a sustainable approach and proper funding of CAs needs to be addressed in future work of this kind.

Overall the project provided good value for money. The work has the potential both to continue expanding on current sites and for replication at other ILSs subject to proper funding being provided to CAs and funded support networks being set up to enable and support the work.

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This report contains the findings from an independent evaluation of Wakefield's Community Anchors in Care Homes (CACH) project (also known as Community Solutions). The CACH project is one element of the Wakefield Care Homes Vanguard programme. The overall programme consisted of a number of elements which aimed to improve the health and wellbeing outcomes for people living in care homes (which includes assisted living/extra care/independent living schemes) by providing the following:

- an enhanced service from primary care;
- a dedicated multi-disciplinary team dedicated to working pro-actively with care home residents;
- a proactive, holistic assessment and supporting planning tool for person-centred activities, and tools to fully capture the resident's experiences of their life in assisted living/care settings; and
- meaningful community activities to provide more interaction between people living in the neighbourhood and care home residents which aimed to match the needs of the residents with local voluntary support (CACH).

The above work was supported by a programme of workforce training, IT improvements and innovations and evaluation.

The CACH project was intended to create bridges between care homes and Community Anchors (community groups and organisations such as community centres). It established a range of shared projects and activities in order to:

- enable care home residents to access a much wider range of community contacts and facilities than are available to them in the home;
- increase the numbers of people visiting the care home;
- increase care home residents' physical activity and mental stimulation;
- reduce social isolation of both care home residents, and members of community anchor organisations; and
- improve the wellbeing of both care home residents, their families and carers, and members of Community Anchor (CA) organisations.

A successful CACH process could therefore represent an important means of changing aspects of the culture of care homes in Wakefield. The primary aim of the project was to improve the quality of life of those involved in the initiative.

The first phase of the initiative focused on 15 care homes and two assisted living/extra care facilities across Wakefield district. Initial internal evaluation and feedback from all stakeholders on phase one found that many residents within care homes needed more supervision and physical support to enable them to work with CAs than either the CAs or the homes were able to provide. In contrast, the pilot work at Croftlands Extra Care ILS had been very well received, with positive feedback from all involved and some promising initial data. This data appeared to show that fewer tenants than would be expected moved from Croftlands ILS into residential setting during the initial pilot period.

The approach to the CACH work was therefore amended with phase two (the subject of this evaluation) designed to focus on CA involvement with six extra care assisted/ILSs across Wakefield. For ease of reference this report will continue to use the acronym CACH.

## 2. METHOD

Niche Health and Social Care Consulting (NHSCC) were commissioned to undertake an independent evaluation of the CACH programme to answer the following research questions:

- i. What was the process for the establishment of the CACH initiative, at the borough level, at the individual care home/extra care scheme/anchor level, and (with case studies) at the level of the individual patient/service user?
- ii. To what extent are the CACH initiative's five key objectives (as detailed on page three) being met?
- iii. What aspects of context have contributed to the implementation and the impact of the CACH initiative?
- iv. What aspects of process have contributed to the implementation and the impact of the CACH initiative?
- v. How do the costs of this initiative compare to the value delivered?
- vi. What lessons have been learned which can be shared with other areas who wish to implement such a scheme in their care homes or extra care schemes?

In order to best answer the above questions, the evaluation consisted of:

- quantitative data gathering and analysis including an analysis of the costs and benefits; and
- qualitative data gathering through a series of interviews.

Face to face interviews were conducted with:

- key staff from each ILS, for example the manager/co-ordinator/senior care worker;
- key staff from each CA organisation including their lead and a sample of volunteers; and
- other professionals involved in the process (from Age UK Wakefield, NOVA, Wakefield CCG, Wakefield District Housing and Wakefield Metropolitan District Council).

This report details the finding from the evaluation.

A set of interviews were also carried out to capture the views of tenants from three of the schemes involved. These interviews were carried out by Healthwatch (Wakefield) who were commissioned to gain tenants' views on the Holistic Assessment Team (HAT) work which took place concurrently with the CA (CACH) work. It seemed sensible for Healthwatch (HW) to use the same meetings and focus groups to gather feedback on both the HAT and the CACH work in order to ensure that tenants were not burdened by two sets of interviews within a short space of time. These interviews are being reported separately.

### 3. FINDINGS

The CACH project involved six ILSs who were matched with a diverse range of local CAs as shown in table one below.

Table one – Overview of the six ILSs and their linked CAs

ILS and housing provider	CA	Summary of involvement
<b>Springfield ILS</b>  31 single and 2 double apartments  Wakefield District Housing	The Hut	Initially linked with the Hut community, sports and leisure centre, who were very keen to be involved. However, this involvement was aborted after the manager was made redundant at short notice due to some withdrawal of funding.
	Five Towns Community Radio	Tenants were involved in producing radio programmes around events in their lives and choosing music from the past. Some tenants were interviewed for radio programmes.
	Local Education College	A representative from a local adult education college held discussions with tenants to find out if they would like to attend courses or to have courses delivered on site (subject to minimum number of people signing up). An aromatherapy course will run on site from June 2018. (This is free to tenants if over six people enrol).
	Castleford Tigers Rugby Club	The club is developing a virtual online museum about rugby history and social history and have involved several tenants, with an interest in rugby in this work. They also linked into a radio programme covering this, with tenants invited to the recording.
	Castleford Heritage Trust	<p>The Heritage Trust lead and volunteers visited the ILS to run regular sessions focusing on the history of the area and other topics.</p> <p>Tenants were invited to visit the Heritage Mill, including a boat ride.</p> <p>Tenants were invited to volunteer at the Mill – two are now doing this.</p> <p>Tenants were invited to join leisure groups at the Mill such as a knitting group which two tenants now attend.</p>
<b>Hadfeild Court ILS</b>  39 single and 3 double apartments  Wakefield District Housing	Lightwaves Leisure and Community Centre	<p>Weekly boccia bowling sessions were set up and delivered by the CA staff at ILS.</p> <p>Tenants were invited to visit the leisure centre and take up any activities on offer.</p> <p>Tenants and CA organised a well-attended 'Spring Ball' celebration event for tenants, family and friends and opened this up to other schemes.</p> <p>Sports equipment purchased for tenants including pool table, dart board and curling equipment.</p>
<b>Whinn Dale Extra Care Housing</b>  60 flats and 24 bungalows  South Yorkshire Housing Association Ltd	The Well Project	<p>CA staff and volunteers attended and helped at ILS social events such as the Easter Fayre.</p> <p>The CA run a weekly men's group open to both tenants and men from the local community.</p> <p>Weekly boccia bowling sessions were set up and delivered by the CA staff at the ILS.</p>

		<p>Tenants were invited to the Well Project's weekly dining club (some tenants did already attend this).</p> <p>Wheelchair friendly greenhouse being purchased and Well volunteers helping with gardening.</p>
<p><b>Sherwood Court</b></p> <p>45 flats</p> <p>Yorkshire Housing</p>	<p>Spectrum People</p> <p>Originally linked with "The Hut" community scheme but this was unable to proceed after the manager was made redundant</p>	<p>Inter-generational work took place linking the ILS with a cohort of young people from a local school.</p> <p>This consisted of a ten-week programme developing young people's skills in carrying out manicures, nail painting and hand massages which were then offered to tenants. A second ten-week programme is now underway and a third is planned. This work was also supported by funding from a separate source (the "I Will" project funding).</p> <p>The group also organised a social event with activities which took place at the ILS.</p>
<p><b>Croftlands Extra Care ILS</b></p> <p>27 single flats</p> <p>Wakefield District Housing</p>	<p>St George's Community Centre</p>	<p>Inter-generational work took place linking the ILS with young people from the centre's youth club. This has included the young people interviewing the tenants and then producing a show based on their lives, plus a Christmas singing event</p> <p>Weekly volunteer run coffee/social mornings with quizzes, singing and other activities. Volunteers come from the CA.</p> <p>Weekly boccia bowling sessions were set up and delivered by the CA staff at the ILS.</p> <p>Regular befriending by CA volunteers.</p> <p>Tenants were invited to events at the community centre including a 1940s themed tea party.</p> <p>The CA loaned its disabled access centre van with volunteer driver to take tenants out on a number of trips.</p>
<p><b>Frickley Mews</b></p> <p>68 flats</p> <p>Together Housing Association.</p>	<p>SESKU Academy (South Elmsall, South Kirkby and Upton) Community Group</p>	<p>No work was progressed with the CA. Both organisations were keen to proceed, but first the Senior Care Manager at the ILS left leading to delays and then the CA had concurrent building work and other challenges which meant that it did not have the capacity to undertake this work. Age UK did recruit a small number of volunteers to offer befriending.</p>

The people living in the independent living schemes were mostly, but not exclusively elderly or very elderly, with some schemes including a small number of younger tenants who require additional support as a result of mental and/or physical incapacity. Tenants who require personal or social care arrange this individually, as they would if they lived in the community, although on site managers or other staff can help to arrange this. Most schemes do not have carers on site, but rather they visit individual clients as per their care plan/package of care. We did not obtain any detailed information about individual tenants, but the managers told us that they estimated that around ten percent of tenants are unable to leave their rooms without assistance.

### 3.1 What was the context into which the CACH initiative was established?

#### 3.1.1 Wakefield wide context

The CACH initiative was conceived as part of the Vanguard programme being implemented across Wakefield. This is a national programme, bringing with it extra funding until the end of March 2018, which is designed to support the improvement and integration of health and related services through new models of care. There are different kinds of Vanguards nationally with Wakefield having:

- a “Multi-Specialty Provider” (MCP) Vanguard programme, which is designed to move specialist care out of hospitals and into the community; and
- an “Enhanced Care in Care Homes” Vanguard programme which is designed to offer people living in care homes better, more “joined up” health, care and rehabilitation programmes.

Even before the Vanguard programme there were good working relationships between the local authority (Wakefield MBC) and CCG (Wakefield CCG) who cover the same geographical area. There was also a recent history of involving local third sector organisations such as Age UK and Carers Wakefield within health and social care teams. Both health and social care also have good relationships with NOVA – an umbrella organisation which helps and supports voluntary and community organisations across Wakefield District and offer capacity building support to their members. NOVA also runs Wakefield social prescribing service in partnership with South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Trust. Wakefield Public Health department has worked to actively identify and encourage CAs across the Borough.

At the same time as implementing the CACH work, the Vanguard was implementing another programme of work at the same six schemes known as the Holistic Assessment Team (HAT), this consisted of:

- group reminiscence therapy work (Portrait of a Life) – undertaken by the local mental health trust;
- individual reminiscence therapy work (Pull up a Chair) – undertaken by Age UK Wakefield; and
- linking each ILS with link workers from Age UK and Carers Wakefield who could work with individual tenants and their families.

#### 3.1.2 The context in each local area

As shown in table one (page 5), there was a diverse range of CAs involved in this work. Each local area within Wakefield, had quite different provision and availability of CAs hence the context for each was different. None of the ILSs had any previous links with their local CAs and many were unaware of each other’s existence before this project started.

In addition each ILS was also different, they:

- were managed by different providers;
- had different management arrangements;
- differed in size from the smallest (Croftlands with 27 tenants) to the largest (Whinn Dale with around 90 tenants); and



- had different amounts of activities in place for tenants with some having a varied programme and others having very few activities on offer.

We discuss the impact of this context further in the report.

### 3.2 What was the process for the establishment of the CACH initiative, at the borough level, at the individual ILS/anchor level, and at the level of the individual tenant?

The initial process for implementing the CACH initiative for phase two of this work was broadly as shown in table two below:

Table two: Process for establishment of the CACH initiative

Organisation	Role
Wakefield CCG	Identified and recruited ILSs – through approaching their housing provider (e.g. Wakefield District Housing – WDH) and asking them to nominate ILSs who they felt would be keen to participate in and benefit from this initiative. Also offered some project support and management.
Housing providers	Nominated ILSs and communicated with them about the process.
Wakefield NOVA	Identified and recruited Community Anchor organisations (which were ideally geographically close to the ILS) through the NOVA CA network. Oversaw the project.
Age UK Wakefield	Supported CAs to recruit and develop volunteers. Separately recruited and trained volunteers to act as befrienders at ILSs. (Age UK was also involved separately in the HAT project at the same schemes).
St George's Community Centre health and wellbeing lead (who took part in the pilot) who acted as CA project lead for the ILS focused work.	Assisted in recruiting CAs and supporting them in making links with their respective ILS and in developing this new way of working. The CA project lead also worked closely with the Age UK lead.

#### 3.2.1 The process for progressing the work between the schemes and the CAs

Once the links had been made between the ILSs and the CA they were supported by St Georges and Age UK leads to have a series of conversations to identify how they might work together. Following the pilot/phase one, the St George's lead was appointed as the CA lead. She was able to share stories from the pilot work about what had worked and what had not whilst Age UK offered support with recruiting and training volunteers if this was needed. The ILS leads also consulted with their tenants to find out what they would like, although this was invariably constrained by what tenants knew about. This was not a prescribed process and no one model fitted all sites. In reality it was an incremental process which also involved trying some activities to find out whether they would "go down well" .



Many of the CAs started, as a first step, by inviting staff and any tenants who wished to visit them at the CA site to find out more about what they did and what they could offer. For some who operate from a small administrative site this was not practical and in this case they visited the ILS, sometimes with one or more of their current volunteers to speak with tenants about what they might be able to offer.

These tentative first meetings were essentially focused on the two organisations getting to know and understand each other and to build up relationships between the leads from each side. As relationships were developed between the two organisations they were able to come up with more ideas, based on what tenants wanted and what the CAs could offer. And as the relationships, knowledge and understanding grew the work was able to progress at most sites with different activities being added.

It was initially envisaged that the services provided by CAs within the schemes would be largely offered by volunteers, hence the involvement of the Age UK project officer to support this area of work (as Age UK Wakefield have significant experience in recruiting, training and supporting volunteers). The CAs were at very different stages in their involvement of volunteers:

- some CAs had well established volunteer programmes and were used to recruiting and training volunteers;
- some had volunteers who were interested and willing in working with ILS tenants;
- some others had volunteers who had been recruited to do a specific task (e.g. run a food bank) and had no wish or capacity to take on additional roles; and
- some had never used volunteers before.

This is an important consideration in the process as recruiting, clearing and training volunteers to take on new roles working in ILSs can take considerable time. One CA (Lightwaves) used their own paid sessional staff to deliver weekly activities at the ILS in order to progress the work more quickly but is now looking at recruiting volunteers to take over these roles.

In addition, most of the ILSs had not worked with volunteers before and had little experience in how to manage and look after them.

### 3.2.2 Comments on the implementation processes

The implementation process for the CACH work took a lot longer than was originally anticipated. The main reasons for this were:

- delays in the CCG staff recruiting ILSs due to pressures of work (as the CCG project manager was managing a number of initiatives);
- staff turnover at two of the six ILSs with temporary staff put in place who, understandably, needed time to get up to speed with their role, meaning they did not have time to devote to setting the CACH work up;
- a significant degree of staff turnover at CAs;
- two CAs who were very keen to undertake this work had to subsequently withdraw from the project as a result of staff redundancies due to other funding being withdrawn from them. With so much short-term funding and ongoing financial pressures organisations were often very keen to get involved but then had other funding removed which meant that key staff were either made redundant or no longer available for this project. This led to delays as other CAs then had to be identified and recruited;



- difficulties in getting communication answered by both ILS and CA staff all of whom had very small numbers of permanent staff who were undertaking a very wide range of other work; and
- a wide range of non-standard working hours and staffing rotas at both ILSs and CAs, as discussed below.

There were a range of staffing arrangements across both the ILSs and the CAs which meant that making contact, in the first instance, and then supporting the links between the two organisations could be very time consuming. For example, an ILS, unlike a care home, does not have permanent staff on site 24 hours day. Care staff are mostly provided from outside or centralised bases and visit only to perform caring duties as per their agreed package of care. Some schemes only have staff on site until 3.30pm on weekdays whilst others had someone on site for longer hours, but the lead worked eight days on and eight days off, so the practicalities of setting up meetings were significant.

There was also a degree of staff turnover in these roles and when someone left the process would have to start again as there would be no deputy to hand over to and sometimes a temporary person in place in the interim. As highlighted previously, the fact that both ILSs and CAs had only small numbers of substantive staff exacerbated the impact of any key staff changes. The successful implementation of this work depended to a significant degree on developing trusting, working relationships between the two organisations – particularly during the early stages and therefore if one of the key individuals left this inevitably led to delays. It may have been easier to manage these if one or two areas were set up at a time, rather than trying to implement six at once.

In the first wave of this work, NOVA had responsibility for identifying and supporting the CAs involved. In phase two the St George's lead was appointed to take on the lead role in supporting the CAs as she had been fully involved in a very successful part of the pilot work and could bring this experience to the role as well as her considerable experience of working within a well established and regarded CA. NOVA continued with an oversight role, and Age UK continued in their role to support the volunteer role within the project and to liaise with both ILSs and CAs. The work was also supported by a part time project manager at the CCG. This was a fairly complex and slightly confusing support network which could certainly be simplified for future projects. Despite, or possibly because of the number of people involved there was a lack of clarity regarding the reporting of KPIs.

In addition to offering individual support, a series of CA network meetings were established for CA s who were involved in the CACH work (rather than for all CAs) which was felt to be both useful and workable by the CA leads who we spoke to. They valued having access to the expertise, advice and enthusiasm of the project CA lead and found it useful to hear what other CAs had been able to achieve as well as learning from what they would advise others not to do.

### **Quantitative data gathering and analysis**

We had hoped to undertake some quantitative analysis of the number of residents involved and engaged, volunteers' hours and number of volunteers recruited. However, unfortunately this data was not monitored consistently across the period of the review and so we are unable to undertake any further analysis here.

### **3.3 To what extent are the CACH initiative's five key objectives being met?**

The objectives (detailed on page three) detail a range of expected benefits for tenants, CAs and others such as families, carers and staff. We will address these groups separately.



It is clear that, during the period under evaluation, the five of the six ILSs which progressed this work established good relationships with their nominated CAs who were able to initiate a programme of activities which enabled all of the above objectives to be met, for tenants who participated.

**Tenants were able to access a much wider range of community contacts and facilities than were previously available.** Many of the schemes did already offer some activities to their tenants, but this was restricted by what both tenants and staff knew about and were often quite traditional such as bingo and coffee mornings. Bringing in the CAs made them aware of many more opportunities and possibilities.

This occurred mainly through CA staff and volunteers visiting the scheme and setting up a variety of activities, but also through enabling tenants to visit the CA to see and hear about what activities were available there.

Tenants (and ILS staff) developed a greater awareness of community activities and facilities that were available, sometimes on their doorstep, but which they did not know about previously. A number have started to access these, for example:

- attending a reading group or knitting group at the local CA;
- attending weekly dining clubs for the elderly in their local community; and
- undertaking work as volunteers themselves with their local CA.

As one manager said “...whilst social activities were arranged around what tenants wanted, tenants could only ask for what they know about. This has really opened it up and brought new activities and opportunities...”

Another manager said “...It has opened up opportunities that we were not previously even aware of...”

A group manager that we spoke to said “...this has definitely enhanced the social life for tenants. It has made stronger links with the community and made them look outwards more and consider what is there that they can tap into. Previously they were more inwards facing...”

One CA lead told us “...it’s helping to give people back their independence. It’s about networking and about tenants finding out what is going on in the local community...”

**The project successfully increased the number of people who visited the Independent Living Schemes** to deliver activities such as:

- regular social sessions (e.g. coffee morning or activity groups);
- regular activity sessions (such as bocchia bowling);
- regular social groups (e.g. the weekly men’s group at Whinn Dale); and
- befriending.

The men’s group at Whinn Dale was open to non-resident elderly men from the local community (with two or three regularly attending) which also increased the number of people visiting the ILS.



In addition, there were a number of “one off” events which were set up as part of the scheme (e.g. the St George’s 1940s tea party, the Spectrum People “prom” event and the Hadfeild Court/Lightwaves Spring Social event) which were well attended and well received. There were also additional numbers of people undertaking befriending through either the CA or via Age UK. Much of this work was undertaken by volunteers, but the paid staff from the CAs also contributed significant amounts of time. The number of hours contributed is discussed below.

**The project successfully increased the amount of physical activity and mental stimulation for some tenants in a number of ways.** Regular boccia bowling sessions (a seated activity accessible for tenants with a range of mobility) were established at three of the ILSs which were very popular and well received. Staff reported seeing an increase in the physical ability of participants to play the game, with a number of them being extremely competitive. In addition, some of the funding made available through the project was used to purchase games equipment (such as a pool table, darts board and curling equipment) and a disabled access greenhouse, all of which will enable tenants to undertake increased amounts of physical activity. Some of the social events included physical games – for example tenants at Sherwood Court had a chance to try plate spinning (with plastic plates!).

Many of the activities provided additional mental stimulation, for example through:

- sessions around local history delivered by Castleford Heritage Mill;
- sessions focusing on music from the past, undertaken with Five Towns Community Radio;
- sessions working with local young people; and
- social sessions which included quizzes and games.

One manager reported that several tenants who had “mild dementia” enjoyed attending group sessions to watch, rather than participate, and that this had been positive for them in terms of both social interaction and mental stimulation.

**The project successfully reduced social isolation for tenants by** increasing the number of people visiting the schemes and by delivering many activities in groups which enabled tenants to get to know and befriend each other in a way which many had not had a chance to do before.

There were and are still a small group of tenants (managers estimate around 10% of their tenants although this will differ by scheme) who, due to physical incapacity are unable to leave their room or flat unaided in order to join in with activities. One manager did report that one tenant (described as in a wheelchair, but with a very active mind) was so keen to join in with the CA run activities that she arranged for her daughter to attend on a different day weekly at a time when she could wheel her down to the communal lounge so that she could participate. For other tenants with restricted mobility, the lack of on-site care staff means that they are mostly unable to benefit from these activities.

Activities such as boccia bowling are accessible to tenants of different ages and staff reported that this activity, in particular, “brought people together who would not normally mix”. However, a wide variety of other initiatives were also successful in this regard.

The men's group at Whinn Dale, for example, successfully targeted men and additionally brought in men from outside the scheme, the inter-generational work brought young people into the ILSs which seemed to work really well with both young and older people benefitting from this interaction.

**The project successfully improved tenants' wellbeing.** There are many definitions of wellbeing and many papers have been written to try to define this satisfactorily. Wellbeing can be said to exist in two dimensions - subjective and objective. Whilst our evaluation did not undertake an objective assessment of tenant wellbeing we did obtain subjective feedback about the impact of this work on tenant wellbeing through our interviews. It is difficult to generalise about tenants because, of course, they differ as individuals, as much as any other individuals in society with different interests, ranges of abilities, social circles, desire to socialise and so on. However, the feedback from those people that we interviewed, regarding the impact of this work on tenant wellbeing was overwhelmingly positive.

We have included a sample of what they said, below.

*"...it gets them out of their flat, gets them talking and they enjoy it..."*

*"...it's been brilliant" ". . . i've never heard so much laughing as when they do the boccia bowling..."*

*"...the outcomes are amazing... we have really seen people benefitting by feeling part of a community again and not just socially isolated..."*

*"...the tenants absolutely loved it. They loved the attention..."*

*"...they are ready in the lounge an hour before hand. They enjoy it so much. Even tenants who don't play, e.g. with dementia, often come down just to watch. And there are always 6 or 7 people waiting for the volunteers to arrive for the coffee morning..."*

*"...this really gave tenants a new lease of life. People who normally only see the same four walls each day joined in and benefitted. They interacted with other tenants in a way they had not done so before which will provide ongoing benefits..."*

*"...the tenants were absolutely thrilled to work with the local community radio - it worked really well..."*

The numbers of tenants attending or accessing CA linked activities varied by scheme, and even for the same scheme, numbers attending a weekly activity could vary. However, both ILS and CA staff reported that the sessions that were put on were well attended and the one-off events attracted many more, for example 30 people including tenants, their family and friends and sessional workers from their local CA attending the Hadfeild Court Spring Ball and 60 attending the "prom" event (of which 26 were tenants) with young people at Sherwood Court.



### 3.4 What has been the impact of the CACH project on the Community Anchors and their staff and volunteers?

#### 3.4.1 The impact on Community Anchor staff

In addition to impacting on the tenant's wellbeing the project had key aims to reduce social isolation and improve the wellbeing of members of CA organisations. Both CA leads and the Age UK volunteer lead were clear that not all volunteers have the skills necessary to work at an ILS and have to be chosen carefully and properly trained and supported.

However, the people who had undertaken volunteer work there were very positive about it. We spoke to a number of volunteers who told us how much they had enjoyed the work and benefitted from the new relationships that it had enabled. In addition they were building on their skills and experience and, in one case, hoping to use the work as a springboard back to full time work in the future.

One volunteer said *"...I really love listening to them and they really love talking, so everyone is happy..."*

The inter-generational work undertaken at two of the schemes was highlighted by both CA and ILS leads as being very positive for both tenants and young people's wellbeing. Spectrum People worked with a local school to bring in around 12 students to do nail painting and hand massages for tenants, alongside other activities. The school reported that the students who worked on this project (although some did drop out) developed in self esteem and attitude and the staff "saw them grow in confidence" as a result of doing this work. Spectrum People undertook their own evaluation which used the Warwick-Edinburgh short wellbeing tool and demonstrated a positive impact from being involved in this project for three of the four students who completed this.

As a result of this work the school is hoping to continue to develop local ties with the ILS Sherwood Court which may include:

- providing Sherwood Court with volunteers to prevent social isolation of the older people;
- have tenants from Sherwood Court visit school to provide reading partners for the young people;
- have tenants from Sherwood Court visit to watch school performances during dress rehearsals, therefore, providing the young people with a live audience and providing the tenants with a show;
- have music students perform at Sherwood Court; and
- provide IT support to the tenants of Sherwood Court by inviting them in to school so that the young people can teach them how to use things like the Internet and Skype thereby developing an older person's social networking opportunities.

St George's also reported positive feedback from both scheme tenants and young people from their inter-generational work which they felt had been able to challenge negative stereotypes which both groups initially had of each other. Again, this is work which they hope to continue, due to benefits on both sides.

### 3.4.2 The impact on Community Anchor organisations

The Community Anchor representatives that we spoke to were very positive about the project and the work which they had been able to do. They welcomed the close working relationships they had established with ILSs who were often based very close to where they worked, but with whom they had not previously had any dealings.

They all had remits and aims to work with their local communities and saw the ILSs as a significant part of their local community and the work as very much “fitting in” with their core purpose. One manager told us that getting involved in this project had also made their staff much more aware of the needs of older people and people with disabilities.

In addition, there were spin off benefits in “getting their name out there” as, particularly with the smaller organisations, they were not always well known about. Some had also found it beneficial when putting in funding applications for other work to be able to say that they were linked to and working with local ILS tenants.

There were, however, also costs and concerns for the CAs. Some of the CAs are very small organisations with only a small number of substantive staff, although they may have many more volunteers. Using volunteer staff is not a cost-free option. In order to support this (and their other work) CAs have to pay overheads such as management time and costs, building costs, utility costs, transport for staff and so on. As far as we are aware this project did not make a contribution to the CAs to cover those costs and so they were, in effect, subsidising this work. This is not sustainable and needs to be addressed as the work moves forward or it may risk de-stabilising the very CAs it wants to support.

### 3.4.3 The impact on the Independent Living Schemes and their staff

The ILS staff were overwhelmingly positive about the CACH work. They felt it had had a very positive impact on their tenants and had not been onerous for them, as staff, to manage or oversee. They felt that they had developed strong and sustainable links with local CAs which would have ongoing benefits.

*One manager said “...this has delivered even more than we expected. Links have been so positive and the voluntary sector has been able to offer even more than was planned...”*

*A senior manager from one of the housing providers told us “...scheme managers have a role to facilitate social interaction but unfortunately have limited time (and sometimes knowledge) to enable them to do this. So they really value the extra support from the Vanguard work. ...they are just raving about it really. They feel it's a great opportunity and report only positives...”*

There was some confusion in a couple of schemes where the CACH work was implemented at the same time as other Vanguard work (HAT work). There are very limited staff resources at an ILS and any work of this nature needs to ensure that it does not overburden the staff.



The initial phase of making contact and setting things up required the most input, but once things were in place most ILSs reported that the CACH work ran quite smoothly.

Some of the ILS staff also reported that being involved in the work had enabled them to make better connections with organisations such as the local CCG and Age UK which had been beneficial, e.g. in ensuring they were better informed about other events and support available to them.

#### 3.4.4 Future and ongoing impact

Many of the CAs have either aspirations or firm plans to build on this work and develop it further going forwards. These include:

- Heritage Mill have longer term plans to introduce weekly social mornings for older people from both the local community and care homes/ILSs and aspirations to develop the programme further;
- Spectrum People has funding to repeat the ten-week programme with the local school;
- the school (Kettlethorpe High School) is keen to build closer links with the ILS;
- Spectrum People has links with groups of asylum seekers and is considering whether they can link this group up with the ILS;
- Lightwaves is keen to continue the work but using volunteers rather than sessional workers; and
- Five Towns Community Radio is investigating the possibility of undertaking work with other ILSs and possibly linking them with some of the young people who have been involved.

It is likely that there are and will be other spin offs from this work as it grows and spreads “organically”.

#### 3.5 What aspects of context and process have contributed to the implementation and the impact of the CACH initiative?

The following aspects of context and process have, in our judgement, contributed to the successful implementation of this work.

Wakefield district has a history of successful working with third sector organisations which meant that good working relationships were already in place at a number of levels which made setting this up easier than it might otherwise have been. In addition, there was committed and involved senior management who wanted to make this work. All involved could see the potential benefits of the project and felt it was the right thing to do.

The most significant “active ingredient” which made this project work was the establishment of a good and trusting working relationship between the CA lead/staff and the ILS lead/staff. Developing this required a stable and committed team on both sides (key staff changes inevitably impacted negatively here) and a recognition that this process takes time. Not least because the people involved already have demanding and wide-ranging responsibilities and were doing this work on top of their other work and with very few extra resources.



There was a little frustration in some quarters regarding the (slow) speed of implementation. However, some of those involved felt that a slower pace was more manageable (particularly as both scheme and CA managers have very limited time and resources to take on this additional responsibility) and that it was stronger for having grown organically.

The work was helped (initially) by the fact that Wakefield has an umbrella organisation (NOVA) in place which was able to identify a number of stable and well-resourced CAs.

Offering ongoing support to CAs, however, was felt to be more effective when provided through a CA lead who had experience in the pilot work and in leading health and wellbeing work within an Anchor organisation. Both CA and ILS leads reported that they found the CA lead very helpful in supporting work to make initial connections, ensuring that things moved forward and offering support and advice both from her experience of being involved in the pilot and as an experienced CA lead. CA leads also reported that they found it helpful to have a network between the CAs involved (led by the CA project lead) which enabled them to share ideas and challenges and obtain further support.

The size of ILS may be a factor in success – although it is difficult to state this definitively with such a small sample. The most “successful” and well established ILS/CA scheme involved the smallest ILS, whilst the linked CA (St George’s Community Centre) is one of the largest being well established and well resourced.

Three ILSs were run by Wakefield District Housing who chose them as being the ones most likely to succeed, so it may be that this would have been more difficult to set up at other schemes.

Funding is vital to set up and maintain a project such as this – as discussed further below. For this work to be sustainable it will require funding. There is sometimes a view that using volunteers is a cost free option, but this is far from the case. Considerable resources and expertise are required to recruit, train and manage volunteers effectively. Having someone to assist CAs with this process was felt to be useful by those Anchors who had not used volunteers in this way before.

The variety of input and activities which the CA were able to bring was a real strength of this work. It is important, to accept and encourage the development of different models which reflect both the needs of the tenants and the ILS and the skills and resources of the specific CAs. This is likely to result in work which the CAs enjoy delivering and tenants are more likely to want to get involved with and ultimately a new model that is more sustainable.

The working hours of the senior staff at the ILS can also make it more or less easy to implement such a scheme. At one scheme for example, the manager works eight days on including weekends and does sleep in’s so it is easier to organise evening activities. Some schemes only have staff on site until 3.30pm which can make it more difficult to support activities outside that time.

### **3.6 How do the costs of this initiative compare to the value delivered?**

Although this element of the Vanguard is aimed at adding value, rather than reducing costs, it is still important to understand what the initiative has cost and how this compares to its value, i.e. how do the “outputs” compare to the “inputs”?



The funding of the project in 2017/18 was £39,000. This was used to pay for:

- support from NOVA;
- support from Age UK – including recruiting and training some volunteers;
- support from CCG project lead (for part of the year);
- support from the St George's project lead; and
- some practical resources such as activity equipment and contribution towards some one-off events.

There were, however, other costs for this work which were not paid for out of the core funding. This included:

- CA management time to develop and oversee the work including managing most of the volunteers;
- CA overhead costs needed to support this work (such as travel, phone costs, printer, rent, facilities costs);
- CA sessional worker time and pay; and
- ILS staff time to attend meetings to set up the work.

In essence, the CAs were subsidising this work through using their own resources. Whilst the CAs all took on the project as part of their roles in their communities, and they were clear that this work fitted well with their core objectives within their local communities it is not something that can be delivered at no cost to them.

Some of the CAs had managed to obtain other funding to support this work (e.g. Spectrum People sourced "I Will" funding) and some of them were large enough to absorb this extra work within current resources, but for others this lack of resources, is understandably, a big concern and means that this approach is unlikely to be sustainable.

CA leads told us:

*"...I worry about the future as there was a cost to this. We used our own workers to deliver the sessions. Luckily, it's just across the road and just an hour or so, but it is still a cost to the organisation. Also overseeing and organising this. We are looking at trying to get volunteers to run these sessions in future but there is a cost to that too..."*

*"...we could do so much more but had to tailor it to match the limited resources available..."*

*"...there's a frustration because it's shown us what we could do, but don't know if there is a future because who will pay for this...?"*

*"...we are being asked to do the work at our expense. We want to help people but not at the expense of the longevity and sustainability of our own organisation..."*

The value of the work can be seen in the benefits to the tenants and others involved (in reducing social isolation and increasing wellbeing) which are discussed fully in section 3 above. There is well established research evidence that this can lead to less ill health which may lead to reduced hospital admissions and visits to GPs (for example Hakulinen et al 2018)<sup>1</sup>. This is being monitored separately, for this cohort, by Wakefield Public Health intelligence team.

The value of this work can also be seen in the number of volunteer hours which have been contributed. Unfortunately, these were not captured consistently and the total that we have is likely to be a considerable underestimate. In addition to the volunteer hours each CA also contributed management time in organising and supporting this work. The value of this also needs to be recognised, but unfortunately no data is available to enable costing of this.

Table three – summary of volunteer hours contributed to the project

Community Anchor	Independent Living Scheme	Total volunteer hours in 2017	Value of these hours if employed for this work
St George's Community Centre	Croftlands	440	£3,960
Lightwaves Community Centre	Hatfeild Court	None. Sessions delivered at no cost to tenants by Lightwaves sessional workers. Awaiting confirmation of hours contributed.	Awaiting data
SESKU	Frickley Mews	No input.	None
Five Towns Radio, Castleford Tigers, Heritage Mill	Springfields	Heritage Mill (work started March 2018) 40 hours – estimate 160 for full year. Five Towns Radio – n/k Castleford Tigers – n/k	£1,440 Heritage Mill only
The Well	Whinn Dale	200 hours to date estimate. 400 for full year.	£3,600
Spectrum People	Sherwood Court	200 hours for first cohort. Currently second cohort underway and a third is planned. 600 full year estimate.	£5,400
Total for the four CAs who provided this information. (Information not available for three others).			£14,400

\* Calculations are based on the minimum wage for 2017/18 plus 20% for on costs

So, in conclusion, the project was able to deliver key benefits across the objectives in particular in delivering improvements in wellbeing for the scheme tenants. However, using CAs and volunteers is not a “no cost” option. The CAs need to be supported and the delivery of the work, by them, requires adequate funding. If this does not happen then it risks the very sustainability of those organisations.

<sup>1</sup> Hakulinen C, et al (2018) “Social Isolation and Loneliness as risk factors for myocardial infarction, stroke and mortality“. Published in Heart online journal March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018.



#### 4. WHAT LESSONS HAVE BEEN LEARNED WHICH CAN BE SHARED WITH OTHER AREAS WHO WISH TO IMPLEMENT SUCH A SCHEME IN THEIR CARE HOMES OR EXTRA CARE SCHEMES?

There are a range of lessons to be learned from this project which we have summarised below:

1. Be realistic about timescales - it is likely to take at least 12 months to get things going.
2. You need to take it slowly as both ILSs and CAs have very limited staff resources to commit to this and if it starts to seem too much then you will lose good will and they will not be able to cope.
3. If an Anchor is really not engaging then draw a line and move to another.
4. Consider links with local schools or young people's organisations as well as traditional CAs.
5. Each CA is unique, each ILS is unique, each tenant is unique and each volunteer is unique. Therefore, the approach needs to be tailored each time, depending on the people involved. It also needs to be adaptable and not based on a single approach.
6. Linked to this - ensure you take tenant views on board regarding what activities they would like to see, however this may be best done by offering a choice of a couple of options rather than a free choice as sometimes people are not aware of all of the options which may be available.
7. Be prepared to try activities which might not work. Sometimes you don't know until you try whether a particular activity will be successful.
8. It is easier for all concerned if the CA is geographically close to the ILS.
9. Ensure the real costs to CAs are reimbursed.
10. A small number of CAs (e.g. community radio) may be able to undertake work across a number of ILSs.
11. ILSs may not have worked with volunteers before and may need advice on how to prepare to work with them (for example agreeing lines of routine and emergency communication, orientating them to the ILS e.g. toilets, fire exits, refreshments etc, safeguarding issues) and it may be useful for the ILS to prepare this key information in written form to share with any volunteers who are working on their premises.
12. Boccia bowling has been a big hit at all of the sites. It is easy to implement and brings people together.
13. Wakefield tried to set up the work at all six ILSs at the same time. It might be more workable to set these up one at a time rather than all at once.
14. Support your CAs in this work, preferably with a dedicated lead and give them the opportunity to meet with colleagues from other CAs who are involved in this work, to learn lessons and share ideas.
15. Expect staff turnover in key roles and consider methods of contingency planning to help minimise the impact, such as more formal commissioning approaches and firmer project management.
16. Consider using sessional workers, as well as or instead of volunteers, from the CAs.



## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The CACH phase two project took much longer to implement than was originally envisaged, due to a number of issues. However, once relationships were established between the ILSs and the CAs they were able to come up with a range of interesting and relevant activities for ILS tenants, which in many cases surpassed the expectations of all those involved.

This work was very well received and seen as having had a very positive impact on the wellbeing of the tenants involved.

The arrangements for setting up and supporting the work were quite complex, for a relatively small project and, whilst they received support, the CAs did not directly receive effective funding to cover the full costs of their involvement in this work.

The work has the potential both to continue expanding on current sites and for replication at other ILSs subject to proper funding being provided to CAs and funded support networks being set up to enable and support the work.

### Glossary of abbreviations

CA	Community Anchor
CACH	Community Anchors in Care Homes
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
GP	General Practitioner
HAT	Holistic Assessment Team
HW	Healthwatch
ILS	Independent Living Scheme
IL	Independent Living
MCP	Multi-Specialty Provider
MDT	Multi-Disciplinary Team
NOVA	Wakefield Network of Voluntary Organisations
Tenants	People who live in Independent Living (including extra care) schemes
WDH	Wakefield District Housing

