

Sandwell Health & Care Partnership

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

1.0 Introduction

Sandwell is located within the heart of the West Midlands, comprising the six towns: Oldbury, Rowley Regis, Smethwick, Tipton, West Bromwich, and Wednesbury. According to the latest population estimates from the Office of National Statistics, Sandwell has a population of around 341,835. Approximately 27% (93,100) of these are children and young people aged under 19, and 15% (49,704) are 65 and over.

In 2021, Sandwell's population size had increased by 9.6% over the last decade. This is higher than the overall increase for England (6.1%) and reflects more rapid growth among children and working age adults, meaning that our population is ageing less quickly than in other parts of the country. Sandwell is the second most densely populated of the West Midlands' 30 local authorities. Sandwell is also ethnically diverse, with 47.9% of residents from black and minority ethnic minorities according to the ONS, higher than the England average of 26.5%.

Our population is characterised by rich cultural diversity and vibrant communities but faces considerable socioeconomic challenges and health inequalities too. Ranked as the 8th most deprived Local Authority in England with a life expectancy at birth which is lower than the national average, our residents also spend more years in poor health. The borough also has the poorest air quality outside London.

Overall levels of socioeconomic deprivation and inequalities in physical and mental health have meant that the area has been among those hit hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic, austerity, and climate change. It is therefore even more important that agencies work together to provide the right care, to the right people, at the right time and in the right place.

The Integrated Care Partnerships has represented an opportunity for local health and care providers to review current ways of working with the aim of developing a new relationship between public services and citizens and addressing the long-term sustainability of services. The Place-based partnership has provided a key vehicle to drive greater levels of integration and coordination among local partners. This, in turn, has helped to reduce fragmentation within the Place and enable the delivery of more joined-up services that deliver the care citizens need in the right setting at the right time.

2.0 Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy

The partnership approach has brought together the strengths of each of the two boards, with the Sandwell Health & Social Care Partnership looking into the system to innovate, and the Sandwell Health & Wellbeing Board looking out to engage communities.

The Health & Wellbeing Strategy is jointly owned by both boards and provides our shared outcomes driving the work of the joint workstreams across the Sandwell Place. The Strategy sets out how partnership working can help to improve the health and wellbeing of people in Sandwell. Its purpose is not to overlap with other strategies from keyboards and partnerships but to demonstrate where the pieces fit together. We recognise that there will be some crossover in the work undertaken by other boards and that not everything can be included in this strategy. Therefore, the aim is to look at how we can link together to improve the health and wellbeing of people in Sandwell.

3.0 Health Inequalities

Ensuring a reduction in the Health Inequalities experienced in Sandwell is the ethos across all the workstreams at Place and form part of the Healthy Communities Workstream objectives, which have focused upon: -

- Drug Harm
- Alcohol Harm Reduction
- Smoking Cessation
- Weight Management & Physical Activity
- Children’s Health & Education
- Housing & Environment
- Social Isolation & Community Development

To further support the Partnership Outcomes a “Deep Dive” report was commissioned through Sandwell Public Health to review the need in Sandwell and the evidence base, and to propose where the Health Inequality funds could be utilised in Sandwell to reduce inequalities most effectively with regards to health and wellbeing.

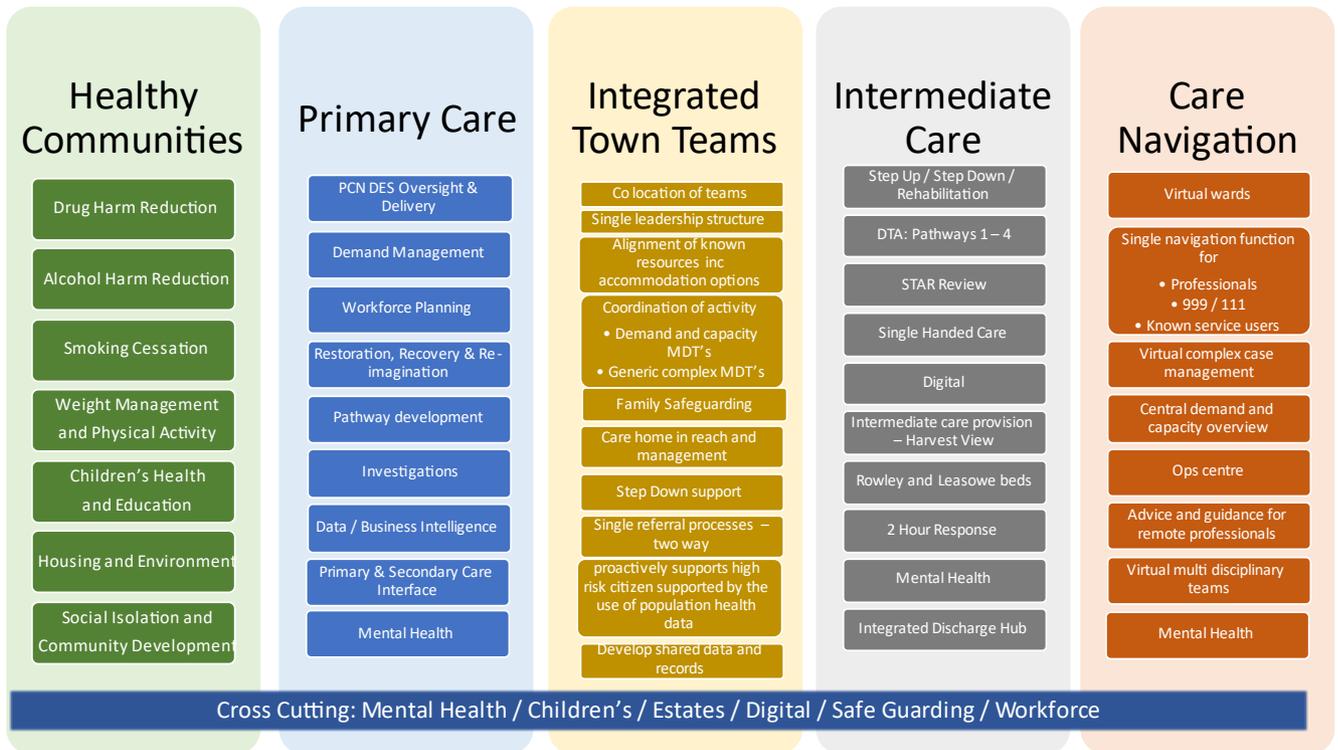
Through the partnership it was agreed that for 2022/23 the areas for provision of additional funding would be:

1. English Language and Health Literacy
2. Welfare rights support for those with Serious Mental Illness (SMI)
3. Diabetes Transition and Young Adult Care
4. Adolescent Mental Health
5. Cost of Living

The impact of this additional funding will feed into ongoing work of the Partnership.

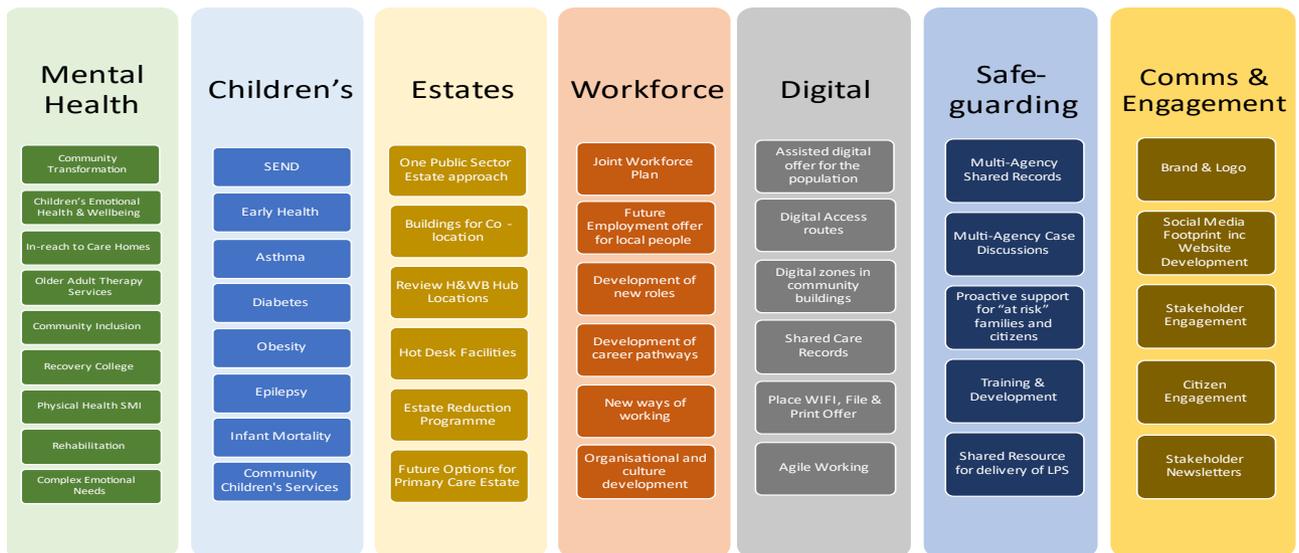
3.0 Strategic Objectives

To deliver the strategic objectives agreed by the Partnership it has been important to develop the supporting infrastructure around the governance at Place and the development of the key workstreams that support the strategic objectives and are linked to the joint outcomes agreed with the Health & Wellbeing Board to take forward the work within Sandwell Place.



Each workstream has an identified Senior Responsible Officer from the Partnership with an agreed Terms of Reference and appropriate membership made up of partners relating to the objectives of the workstream.

In addition to the main work areas there are several supporting cross cutting workstreams all supporting the Sandwell Health & Care Partnership strategic aims, these are: -



4.0 Key Achievements

Through the work of the Partnership and the workstreams, a number of achievements have been made in the following areas: -

Intermediate Care

The Integrated Discharge Hub went live in November 2020 in response to the National Hospital Discharge Guidance. The Hub was set up very quickly as a rapid response to the guidance in the height of the second wave COVID outbreak. The Hub has grown considerably in the past 2 years both in terms of staff numbers, the overall remit of the Hub and the breadth of tasks undertaken.

This has included:

- Delivering an 8am – 8pm provision over 7 days a week
- Becoming ‘post code blind’ in relation to discharges from SWBH NHS Trust
- Community bed allocation for Harvest View (previously undertake by SMBC Brokerage)
- Developing transformational processes and procedures to deliver the operational requirements from the national guidance.
- Future view of bed allocation for IMC Pathway 2 (transfer from Capacity Team) bed allocation with check and challenge process for PCCT.
- Managing Sandwell community crisis calls and all urgent care wraparound provision.
- Managing community crisis step up’s to P2 beds

During 2022 there has been progress through the “Right Sizing” and “7 Day Working” programmes of work that in April 2022 saw the Phase 1 investment agreed to increase staff and services to support the implementation of the National Guidance around D2A, and then this was further followed up by significant shift in investment with the repurposing of funding for 3 community wards within Sandwell & West Birmingham to invest into Pathway 1 capacity. Furthermore, in October 2022 the expansion of services was agreed to implement parity of provision over 7 days (historically 5-day services were stretched to cover 7 days). The increased investment has started making a real impact on the D2A pathway and improved services for the residents of Sandwell, however further work continues around the recruitment to get to full establishment and realise the expected benefits.

During May 2023 colleagues from the Department of Health and Social Care visited our Integrated Discharge Hub (IDH) as it has been highlighted as an example of best practice. The work achieved was praised as an area of excellence for integrated care and supporting citizens. It is intended that the work undertaken by the IDH will be utilised as a point of reference for other areas in national planning.

Harvest View



On the 24th of November 2022 Harvest View was opened, which is an Integrated social care and health facility in Rowley Regis.

With 80 en-suite rooms alongside communal areas for people who need specialist support from both social care and health staff all under one roof.

The focus is on reablement, helping Sandwell residents get back home after a hospital stay or those who need some structured support to avoid a hospital stay

altogether. There is also a dementia unit as part of the development. Since opening Harvest View has received and worked with 189 individuals with a view to support them to regain their independence, confidence and look to them moving on to a place they call home.

This development consolidates all existing Sandwell EAB provision and acts as our primary Pathway 2 facility with a focus on reablement activity, with a vision to support people to return to their own homes. There will therefore be no permanent residents on any of the units and the unit is operated under a 'Home First' ethos.

Integrated Front Door

We are currently developing our Integrated Front Door service, which will see a group of clinical and professional staff support our Emergency Department (ED) to ensure people attending are seen quickly and safely, transferring to community care where possible. The service will reduce waiting times in ED and ensure that people get the right care at the right time. We have undertaken a number of trials of the IFD service with an average of 30% of patients seen by the team directed into community services.

Virtual Wards

Our Virtual Wards are in operation across several specialities:

- Frailty
- Respiratory
- Palliative Care
- Paediatrics
- Cardiology
- Hospital at Home (Epicentre)

Our Multi-disciplinary Virtual Ward teams consist of acute consultant oversight and community clinical teams where acute care, interventions and monitoring can be provided in a person's own home. We currently have a total of 68 beds open and are saving an average of 3 acute bed days for each patient and 85% of patients remain in their usual place of residence following their virtual ward admission.

Patient Story (frailty Virtual ward)

Mr Khan is a 78-year-old living at home with his wife (who is housebound) and son in Sandwell. He was admitted to Sandwell ED and treated by the Frailty Intervention Team (FIT) for a fall, urine infection and delirium. He was identified as having high markers of infection on blood tests.

Mr Khan was started on intravenous antibiotics and fluids. He remained in hospital for 24 hours before being discharged with 72 hours wrap around support (social care arranged rapidly by the SHCP) and review by the Virtual Ward team. He was reviewed daily by the community team who administered antibiotics and monitored vital signs, response to treatment and overall condition. The Fundamentals of Care framework was utilised safe and effective, personalised care. A virtual Board round was completed daily by the frailty lead consultant.

Mr Khan was discharged from the virtual ward after 6 days and stepped down to district nursing support. His condition improved and delirium resolved. He has not had any hospital readmissions to date.

If the Virtual Ward had not been available, Mr Khan would have been in an acute hospital bed for at least 7 days and during this time he would not have had contact from his wife.

Sandwell ARI Hub

Established in January 2022, the Sandwell ARI Hub located at Glebefields Health Centre in Tipton has been offering face to face same day appointments with a GP during Monday to Friday for children presenting with acute respiratory infections (ARI). Access to the service was via GP referral only resulting in a booked appointment.

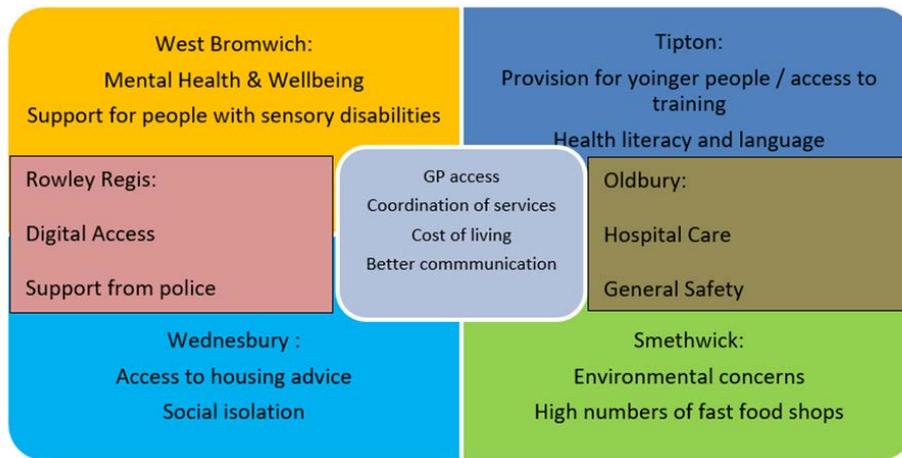
During winter 2022/23, the service was expanded to accept referrals for adults, enabled to receive referrals from NHS111 and capacity increased to provide additional appointments including weekends and cover the Christmas and New Year bank holidays. To improve access for patients a second hub was created in Smethwick. Between January and March 2023, the hubs provided a total of 4,696 appointments and helped to reduce the pressure on UTC's and A&E.

Town Team Community Engagement

Working in partnership with our local citizens is a key focus to ensure we plan services that meet the needs of our community. It is imperative that we listen to people living in Sandwell who have experience of what works well and what requires improvement. With the support of Healthwatch, we have delivered citizen forums in each of the 6 Sandwell towns to discuss the work we are panning but more importantly listen to the experiences and ideas of residents.

The events have been extremely well attended and have provided valuable insight into what we, as partners, need to do differently to support the needs of citizens. There were similarities and themes across Sandwell, but also some suggestions that were unique to individual towns. This has confirmed that a 'one size fits all'

approach is ill advised and to support the reduction of inequalities, delivering care at neighbourhood level where possible is fundamental. We are planning to utilise the key themes to support our next stage of planning for our partnership and will further engage with local people to ensure we have a truly co-produced future strategy.



Children & Education

Social care and targeted early help services for children and young people in Sandwell are delivered by Sandwell Children’s Trust, an independent company that is owned by Sandwell council. Established in 2018, the Trust has overseen improvements that include: the rating of its Youth Justice services as Good; its Fostering Services as Good; and its Adoption services as Good. Positively, its overall Ofsted rating is now Requires Improvement to be Good following a full inspection of Children’s Services in May 2022 following more than a decade of being inadequate.

A strong purpose and ethos have been embraced by the Trust Family, supported by a range of newly co-developed strategies that contribute to a positive and productive culture, including a robust approach to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion.

The Trust is undertaking an aspirational Transformation Programme, closely aligned to the Medium-Term Financial Plan, which is driving change and ensuring that resources are focused on the areas that will make the most difference to children, young people and families. Sandwell Children’s Services were inspected by Ofsted in May 2022 resulting in an overall judgement of Requires Improvement to be Good following more than a decade of being graded as Inadequate.

Sandwell Council was successful in its bid to the DfE to develop Family Hubs across Sandwell attracting additional financial investment to support a preventative offer for children and families up to the age of 19 and 25 in the case of young people with SEND.

Sandwell was confirmed as one of 55 Education Investment Areas and of the 55, one of 24 Priority Education Investment Areas attracting additional targeted resource to focus on educational attainment improvements across Key Stage 2 (primary) and Key Stage 4 (secondary) education.

Sandwell's Attendance Service launched the new attendance campaign to drive up attendance rates and address areas of persistent absence. Attendance is everybody's business has resulted in a renewed focus across the partnership and will contribute to improved educational outcomes for learners.

The Sandwell Virtual School supported all children with a social worker in education setting and welcomed and supported children and young people as international new arrivals from Afghanistan and refugees from the Ukraine.

The Sandwell early years' service continue to promote communication and language programmes with partners to further strengthen the communication challenges of young children across the borough.

The Sandwell Youth Service has engaged with the West Midlands Uniformed Organisations (YOU) to develop an integrated offer for young people across the borough. The service has replaced the two youth buses with purpose built, newly designed buses, that will be used to support targeted work in identified communities across the 6 towns.

Sandwell council's education services has developed a specialist place planning strategy to address the shortfall in specialist places required for increasing numbers of children with confirmed diagnosis's and SEND. The strategy aligns with the universal pupil place planning strategy (School Organisation Plan) to provide a coherent borough-wide review of need.

Sandwell Language Network

The Partnership supported through Health Inequalities funding the Sandwell Language Network (SLN) which has implemented a community-based pre-entry and entry level informal English classes (informal but with structured learning). The SLN has demonstrated the ability to address a key barrier to health equality.

- Proven Hub and spoke model co-ordinated by Sandwell Consortium (hub) and local delivery partners (spokes) across the borough (comprising Consortium member and non-member organisations to achieve wide reach)
- Strong partnership between VCS providers and SAFL – building on the strengths of all parties to make the best use of the resources that we already have. This will involve SAFL working closely with the programme to provide supported progression from ESOL to its community learning programmes and supporting progression from there to Sandwell College and/or employment.
- All providers involve volunteers in the delivery of ESOL.
- The project has been independently evaluated by a team at Wolverhampton University with the key preliminary findings and achievements summarised as follows:
- 524 learners and 75 local volunteers engaged across Sandwell, 41 English language courses, 3 International English Language Test System (IELTS) courses.
- 88.5% learners either achieved progression and/or took up additional support services or learning.
- Targeted reach - 64% of participants being in receipt of benefits and describing themselves as being unemployed, 37% of learners referred to employability support or training or higher education.
- 20% of learners referred to and accessed other wellbeing advice and support services including Welfare benefits, housing advice and Health and wellbeing.

- Focus groups revealed key themes of improved social connectedness and integration with new friendships emerging and a sense of the sharing cultures, foods, and celebrations.

5.0 Future Plans

As the Partnership continues to develop and strengthen the key areas for work for the next year will be around taking forward the following priorities: -

- Review and strengthen the structure and governance including streamlining workstreams.
- Partnership & Risk Share Agreement
- Refreshed JSNA to inform the strategic priorities.
- Agree and drive forward improvement based on the board level metrics.
- Strengthening the partnership and involvement contribution of all members including the voluntary sector
- Ensuring local readiness for statutory and regulatory compliance
- Develop and deliver a strategy for staff engagement.
- Develop a strategy for co-production based on the preliminary from the Town Citizen Forums
- Enhance our Care Navigation function to improve accessibility for all citizens to our services and reduce inequalities.
- Improve the quality and sustainability of care homes within Sandwell.
- Continue to develop and explore digital opportunities across the Partnership.

