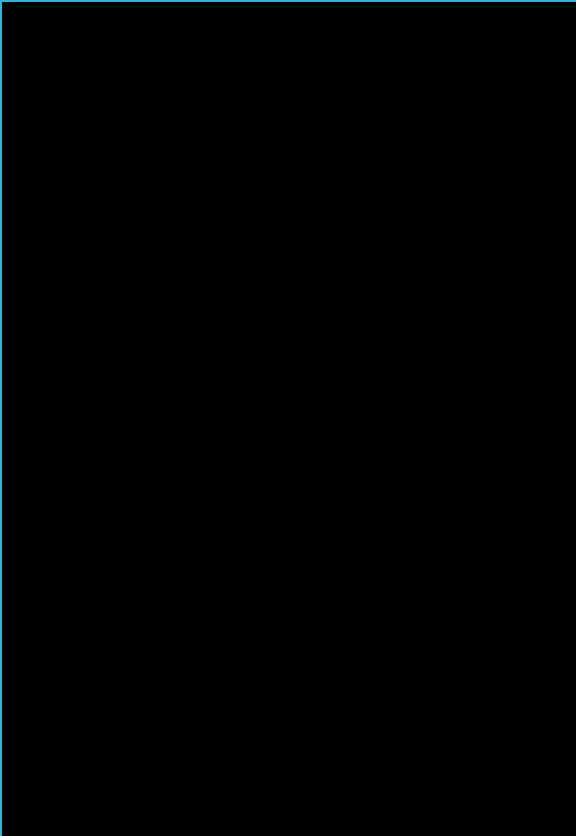




Evaluation Report

Thriving Communities

For Delapré Abbey Preservation Trust



08/07/2022

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Background

In March 2021, Delapré Abbey Preservation Trust, in partnership with General Practice Alliance, Northamptonshire Leisure Trust, Warts and All Theatre, Northamptonshire Sport, Action for Happiness, and the University of Northampton, were awarded funding from Arts Council England's and the National Academy for Social Prescribing's Thriving Communities Fund for Social Prescription.

The funding's aim was to bring together place-based partnerships to improve and increase the range and reach of available social prescribing community activities – especially for those people most impacted by COVID-19 and health inequalities.

The project group, known as the Northampton Wellbeing Partnership, aimed to establish a range of new social prescription services using a process of co-creation with residents and health and social care users. These new services were located in the grounds of Delapré Abbey, Northampton, which is a local heritage building surrounded by 550 acres of green and blue spaces. The urban greenspace of Delapré Abbey-Delapré Park shares its boundaries with some of the most deprived communities in England. Given the wellbeing benefits that can come with green-blue space and heritage engagement, Delapré Abbey is well placed within the community to engage and support the wellbeing of the communities who would benefit the most from such activities.

This evaluation documents the processes and learning of the programme, from its inception through to feedback and reflections from programme users, stakeholders, and social prescription link workers.

List of Learning Experiences

1. Membership of the Wellbeing Partnership group needs to have representation from the key stakeholders involved in existing local social prescription commissioning, referrals, and course delivery to ensure new social prescription courses align with existing systems while building on existing good practice and areas of improvement.
2. Future projects should consider how their context within the local community may shape engagement and that socio-cultural perceptions can also act as a barrier to engagement. For effective co-creation engagement with 'new' targeted communities, it is recommended that relationships are established with existing groups who represent these communities, to build rapport.
3. Following the completion of the community Co-Creation Steering Group, members requested that a WhatsApp group was established. The WhatsApp group was used by the group leader to share weekly updates of the programme and request feedback from members. This method of group working was effective as it meant members could engage at a time that was convenient for them and was perceived as a 'low-demand' task.
4. Community co-creation groups discuss the micro-details of the programmes design, such as the times and dates of courses, and feedback on public facing communication. Therefore, it is essential that social prescription course deliverers are included in these discussions to ensure clarity of community needs and expectation management.
5. Additional time and resources need investing into marketing and communications when establishing a new programme of social prescription courses. This may be facilitated by having an experienced marketing resource already working in the county-wide delivery of social prescription.
6. Attempting to pool together existing social prescription courses into one database is difficult to achieve as course leaders are often asked to provide course details in multiple formats across multiple occurrences throughout the year. The providing of information takes time and resource that is often unavailable for the course leaders. Strategic investment is needed at a local authority and healthcare commissioning level to establish a healthcare directory that brings together data from external sources and automatically updates course leader and course details to ensure the SPLWs have the correct information to refer patients into courses delivered by the VCSE sector.
7. With the establishment of new courses and time constraints it can be too easy to create a course based on what is available or being touted by stakeholders and thus this would create a course based on partner need. Rather, to address the service users' wants and needs, the courses need to have a co-creative process where courses are created bespoke to views of the people who will use them. Sufficient investment in time and resource is required to create an effective co-creative environment and thus, grant applications and project plans should acknowledge this need. Alternatively, organisations could conduct Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) workshops as part of grant application development so end-user insight can be evidenced within the project proposals of the application.
8. When establishing a package of social prescription courses, utilising a pro-forma can ensure that course marketing provides consistent and necessary details to maximise the likelihood of a successful referral. As a result of this experience, the Northampton Wellbeing Partnership created a course pro-forma that had to be completed at least 4 weeks before the course. See Aim 3 for further details of what information was acquired.
9. Ensuring the needs of referral patients are met through course structure and leader skillsets, is an essential consideration to maximise the likelihood of a successful referral. Programme co-ordinators should review course leaders' qualifications to be assured that they have the sufficient skillsets to manage patients with health needs.

Programme co-ordinators should budget for training programmes to upskill course leaders in order to build community capacity in the VCSE sector.

10. Initially, course leaders were not aware which attendees had been referred by an SPLW. Therefore, they were hesitant or uncertain about how they would support someone with a long-term health condition. This links to the previous learning experience of ensuring course leaders are equipped with the relevant skillsets to support attendees but also indicates some form of communication is needed between the SPLW and course leader to raise awareness of attendees' support needs. Considerations of patient confidentiality and GDPR are needed to determine the most suitable method to communicate attendees' needs.
11. Provide course leaders with signposting information to wider support networks for mental and physical health needs. Course leaders can then use this information to direct course attendees to professional health care networks, should they need further help.
12. Using a central hub approach for wellbeing activities provided an attractive opportunity for course leaders. As a result of the hub approach, enquiries were made by course leaders to explore the options to use Delapré Abbey as a host site for their courses. The Partnership established a Reviewing Board to assess course proposals and determine their suitability to address local needs and long-term objectives.
13. Social Prescription course marketing needs to include transport and access information as well as a longer lead-in time to courses to help SPLWs and patients determine the suitability of the course.

Recommendations for commissioners and stakeholders

1. Regular partnership meetings with the stakeholders involved in social prescription (including the public) is required to ensure that learning is shared, and the patient journey can be easily mapped as they pass from one stakeholder to another during the referral process so barriers in the enrolment, attendance, and adherence phases of referral can be identified.
2. Wellbeing hubs and groups, who accept social prescription referrals, and social prescription link workers need to meet regularly to build trust and understanding of the services that hubs and groups can provide to patients.
3. Wellbeing hubs and groups, who accept social prescription referrals, need to provide a regular offer of courses so social prescription link workers know that referrals to these courses can be made throughout the year.
4. A county-wide communications and marketing strategy is required for social prescription to clarify the two local frameworks (SPRING and Primary Care Network), as the majority of surveyed people in Northampton do not know how to access social prescription services and over half do not know what 'social prescription' means ¹.
5. Commissioners need to develop a county-wide funding strategy, including personal health budgets, for Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise Sector groups who accept social prescription referrals to (1) ensure they can sustainably meet the referral demands and (2) allow them to engage in continued professional development to upskill their work-force in order to effectively support patients who have various levels of physical or mental health support needs.

¹ Ryan, D.J., Hardwicke, J. and Kay, A.D. (2022). Evaluation report – Delapré Cycling and Walking Social Prescription – Baseline Phase. University of Northampton, Northampton, United Kingdom. URL: <https://pure.northampton.ac.uk/en/publications/evaluation-report-delapre-cycling-and-walking-social-prescription>

Local Context

Within Northampton, the life expectancy gap between the most and least deprived areas was 8 and 5.2 years for men and women, respectively ². Northampton has high levels of Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), with several Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) within the most deprived decile of IMD. Delapré Abbey is located just south of the town centre and is neighboured by a cluster of deprived communities within a 2 km radius (Figure 1) – Briar Hill (Northampton 026C, IMD: Decile 1), Far Cotton (Northampton 027D; Northampton 027A, IMD: Decile 2), and Town Centre & St James End (Northampton 021F, IMD: Decile 1).

Index of Multiple Deprivation is a hierarchical indicator made of seven weighted domains: Income, Employment, Education, Health, Crime, Barriers to Housing & Services, and Living Environment, which allows for national comparison between the 32,844 LSOAs in England.

Level of deprivation is seen as a risk factor for low social wellbeing and many of the LSOAs that rank highly for deprivation also rank highly in the Isolation Index ³. Many of these Northampton LSOAs with a high Isolation Index fall within the 2 km radius of Delapré Abbey: Far Cotton (Northampton 028E, Town Centre & St James End (Northampton 021F), Spring Boroughs (Northampton 021E), Upper Mounts (Northampton 021C).

National reviews have found that heritage sites bring many positive benefits to individual and community wellbeing ⁴ and, in combination with local data, there is an indication that the communities surrounding Delapré Abbey may benefit from social prescription services and that the locality of Delapré Abbey may serve as a suitable hub for social prescription services.

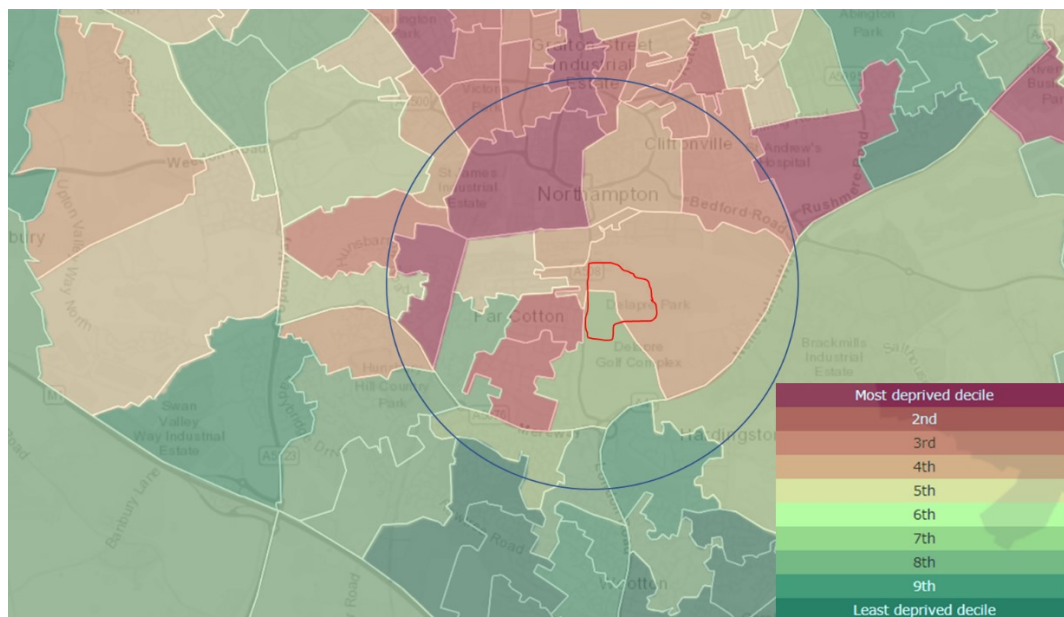


Figure 1. Lower Super Output Areas mapped by decile of Index of Multiple Deprivation for England (2019). Red boarder illustrates Delapré Abbey boundary, Blue circle illustrates 2 km radius from Delapré Abbey. Source: Consumer Data Research Centre (date accessed: 17/08/2021) -

<https://maps.cdrc.ac.uk/#/geodemographics/imde2019/default/BFFTFFT/12.666666666666666/-0.9023/52.2277/>

² Public Health, Northamptonshire County Council (2019). Inequalities in Life Expectancy – Northamptonshire. URL: <https://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/health/health-and-wellbeing-board/northamptonshire-jsna/Documents/Health%20Inequality%20in%20Northamptonshire.pdf>

³ Northamptonshire County Council (2015). Social Isolations in Northamptonshire. URL: <https://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/health/health-and-wellbeing-board/northamptonshire-jsna/Documents/SocialIsolationInNorthamptonshire2015.pdf>

⁴ What Works Wellbeing (2019). Heritage and Wellbeing Briefing. URL: <https://whatworkswellbeing.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/heritage-briefing-20-MARCH.pdf>

Northampton Wellbeing Partnership Project Structure

Delapré Abbey Preservation Trust is a charity and limited company that manages and restores Delapré Abbey, in partnership with the Local Authority. The Trust was the leader of the Northampton Wellbeing Partnership and was responsible for project management and expenditure.

Warts and All Theatre are a theatre production company who develop the craft of artists at any stage of their career as well as delivering educational programmes. Warts and All Theatre have a strong history of co-creating theatre productions with diverse communities. As part of the Northampton Wellbeing Partnership, Warts and All Theatre were responsible for leading the co-creation events to develop the new range of social prescription services with the community (it should be noted that Warts and All Theatre ceased operations in Spring-Summer 2022, which placed an impact on the final stages of the programme).

The General Practice Alliance (GPA) is a collective of Northampton GPs who aim to preserve, sustain, and develop the local health economy. The GPA are responsible for the delivery of Social Prescription Link Workers (SPLWs) in Northampton and provided social care expertise to underpin the integration of the Northampton Wellbeing Partnership into the current social prescription provision in Northampton.

Northampton Leisure Trust and Northamptonshire Sport are a local leisure facilities operator and local Active Partnership, respectively. Both organisations have a strong record of community engagement to promote physical activity and enrichment activity participation to enhance health and wellbeing. As part of the current project, both organisations provided insight into community engagement and brokered relationships with current providers in the area.

Action for Happiness Northampton Hub champion the Ten Keys to Happier Living across the county. The charity has been providing Happy Cafés to create a friendly and welcoming place to meet other people with a shared interest in promoting happiness and wellbeing. Action for Happiness helped shape the current project by implementing the Ten Keys to Happier Living throughout planning and delivery.

The University of Northampton strives to deliver social impact through their work. The University was asked to evaluate the Northampton Wellbeing Partnership so learning and outcomes could be shared to develop future iterations of the project.

Evaluation Methods

As part of the funding application, the following outcomes would aim to be achieved and thus were evaluated as part of the project:

Aim 1: Increased partnership working to enhance service provision.

Towards the end of the project, the key stakeholders of the Northampton Wellbeing Partnership completed a Social Network online survey to outline who they had frequent communications with, and why, as part of the delivery for this project. Furthermore, an online reflection diary was established that partnership members could use to document learnings throughout the project development. Finally, minutes were taken during Partnership meetings. Narrative analysis of the reflection diary and meeting minutes were used to identify key themes (learnings) that should be considered when developing future iterations of this project. Within meetings, Partnership members and evaluators both took on the role of researchers in a form of Participatory Action Research, with members and evaluators using the meetings to discuss experiences and feedback from 'Task and Finish' assignments.

Aim 2: Increased number of social prescription courses.

Organisations who delivered courses, relevant for social prescription, were contacted by email and telephone to complete an online survey that captured details about their current course provision in order to map the currently available social prescription services in Northampton. Organisations were also asked which of the 10 Keys to Happier Living (Action for Happiness: <https://www.actionforhappiness.org/10-keys-to-happier-living>) that their courses aligned to in order to identify gaps within the current course provision that the Northampton Wellbeing Partnership could address with their new provision. This stage of the evaluation created a tangible asset that local Health and Social Care providers and SPLWs could utilise to get a better understanding of the current local offer.

Aim 3: Create a social prescription hub that was simple for Social Prescription Link Workers to engage with.

The views of SPLWs can be often overlooked during the establishment of services. Therefore, link workers were asked to complete an online survey at the end of the project to gain their perceptions of the project's roll-out and future improvements could be made. Furthermore, course leaders were also asked to feedback on the project's 'hub approach' to social prescription.

Aim 4: Create a social prescription programme that the local community engaged with and enhanced their wellbeing.

Course attendees were asked to complete an online questionnaire to document their journey through the course and any changes in their physical activity and wellbeing. In addition, case-studies were collected to share individual stories.

Aims 5 and 6: Increase in Social Prescription Link Worker referrals and Reduction in health care utilisation.

This was monitored by the GPA, the University had no involvement in this aspect of the evaluation.

The evaluation, overall, adopted a process evaluation approach as this was the first attempt to create a new series of social prescription services at Delapré Abbey. This evaluation documents the learnings from the project, which can be used to refine and adapt future iterations of the project.

Aim 1: Increased partnership working to enhance service provision.

Partnership working within the Thriving Communities project split across two main work streams: Northampton Wellbeing Partnership Group and the Co-creation Steering Group. This section provides a narrative summary of the work undertaken by both groups and the key partnership working learnings that emerged.

Northampton Wellbeing Partnership Group

The core Northampton Wellbeing Partnership group met monthly throughout the project duration to provide development updates, discuss barriers and opportunities, and delegate actions. Smaller task and finish meetings took place with informal sub-groups to complete arising actions. The multi-disciplinary structure of the group facilitated delivery of the project as expertise was reflective of the different levels of organisations involved in social prescription. For example:

CEO of Delapré Abbey Preservation Trust: CEO involvement from the Heritage delivery site of the project helped streamline access to facilities, existing resources, networks, and budget management, which facilitated quick actioning and decision approval to shape the overall project.

Clinical Director of the General Practice Alliance: Clinical Director involvement was crucial for the implementation of the Thriving Communities project into the existing social prescription systems within Northampton. Insight was provided, which highlighted common issues and SPLW experiences that could be addressed during the development of the Thriving Communities project to increase the likelihood of successful implementation and patient referrals.

Physical Activity Manager of Northamptonshire Sport: Northamptonshire Sport have a successful history of delivering projects and engagement activities with the local community, in addition to liaising with SPLWs regularly as part of their wider remit. Northamptonshire Sport's community facing work enabled them to share learning experiences from similar projects, with respect to how to market the project to SPLWs and the local community as well as brokering their existing physical activity group partnership to establish a series of physical activity social prescription activities at Delapré Abbey.

Director of Sport and Health Development Operations of Northampton Leisure Trust: Northampton Leisure Trust's experience of delivering physical activity programmes to the local community provided valuable insight into what physical activity programmes are popular within the local community and how to successfully implement courses at Delapré Park.

Director of Warts & All Theatre Group: Warts & All have a history of co-creating theatre pieces with children, young people, and professionals. As part of their work, Warts & All had developed a co-creation framework that could be applied to the Thriving Communities project to ensure community input into the project's development was provided throughout. Warts & All were able to lead the development and piloting of the social prescription courses at Delapré Abbey, in particular the craft, arts and heritage opportunities.

Coordinator of Action for Happiness Northampton Hub: Action for Happiness provided expertise in approaches to deliver courses with the integration of the Ten Keys to Happier Living.

Researchers from the University of Northampton: In addition to leading the evaluation of the Thriving Communities project, the researchers were also part of the monthly meetings to provide insight on the existing research in the field, which helped with project development and implementation.

Learning Experience: Membership of the Wellbeing Partnership group needs to have representation from the key stakeholders involved in existing local social prescription commissioning, referrals, and course delivery to ensure new social prescription courses align with existing systems while building on existing good practice and areas of improvement.

Co-creation Steering Group

Initial Listening Workshops

Three face-to-face listening workshops were held in the Delapr  Abbey library during July 2021. These workshops were attended by seven members of the public and two SPLWs. From an attendance perspective, engagement was low as the workshops had a capacity of 60 people. The workshops were advertised through social media by all of the Northampton Wellbeing Partnership members, as well as stories on local BBC radio. A lack of engagement from the local community may be reflective of their views of Delapr  Abbey as a place that is not for them. This was acknowledged by one attendee during the focus group who perceived that the heritage site can have a 'stuffiness' and even the act of hosting the listening workshops in the library causes the assumption that a level of intellect was required to engage with the project.

Learning Experience: Future projects should consider how their context within the local community may shape engagement and that socio-cultural perceptions can also act as a barrier to engagement. For effective co-creation engagement with 'new' targeted communities, it is recommended that relationships are established with existing groups who represent these communities, to build rapport.

Establishment of a Co-Creation Steering Group

Following the initial listening workshops, Warts and All Theatre worked with a group of 13 adult volunteers from Northampton as part of a group called the 'Co-creation Steering Group'. Each volunteer had a level of investment in Delapr  Abbey or the surrounding Delapr  Park, by visiting regularly during lockdown as a source of escape or exercise. Some members of the group were existing active volunteers with the Abbey. This group met weekly on Zoom from October 2021 until April 2022 to plan a programme of workshops, weekly activities and outreach projects for the Delapr  Wellbeing project.

As part of the weekly sessions, participants explored budgeting, programming, and audience development. This project has fostered a mutual understanding of arts and culture in Northamptonshire and how it's developed. Co-creation takes time, considerable effort & bravery but the impact of enabling communities to understand & take ownership through transparency is how we make the work more relevant, responsive, & socially engaged.

Learning Experience: Following the completion of the community Co-Creation Steering Group, members requested that a WhatsApp group was established. The WhatsApp group was used by the group leader to share weekly updates of the programme and request feedback from members. This method of group working was effective as it meant members could engage at a time that was convenient for them and was perceived as a 'low-demand' task.

Social Network Analysis of the Partnership

Strong relationships are seen as a cornerstone of successful social prescription programmes. At a strategic level, the formation of the Northampton Wellbeing Partnership provided an opportunity to strengthen and focus efforts to develop local health strategies. The members of the Partnership felt the Thriving Communities Funding helped to raise awareness of the different strengths and capabilities that each organisation had, which has subsequently led to more joint projects and grant applications.

"The collaborative working has led to more joint projects. All organisations have different strengths and assets, which makes a strong collaborative."

"New partnerships/relationships have been formed across sectors to implement a more focused health strategy that is wider than addressing physical problems and is developing a consistent bio-psycho-social pathways, which can support our local populations."

Quotes from the Social Networking Online Survey

However, further relationship building was needed during the project as there appeared to be a lack of clarity between the input about programme development from the community Co-Creation Steering Group and the delivery organisations who were providing the Delapr  Wellbeing Hub courses.

"The internal communication from the Co-Creation group. I wasn't fully aware of the outcomes of the co-creation group and what they wanted."

"It was difficult to begin with to understand what each provider could deliver, we are now making real progress as the project comes to an end."

Quotes from the Social Network Online Survey

Learning Experience: Community co-creation groups discuss the micro-details of the programme's design, such as the times and dates of courses, and feedback on public facing communication. Therefore, it is essential that social prescription course deliverers are included in these discussions to ensure clarity of community needs and expectation management.

At a community level, the funding enabled delivery organisations, such as Voluntary, Community, Social Enterprise (VCSE) groups, to engage with the SPLWs and Host Sites for the first time within the social prescription model. The funding helped the delivery organisations to reach new audiences by engaging with the SPLWs. It was acknowledged that marketing and communication of the courses required longer lead in times and financial resourcing to maximise the audience reach.

"Marketing and comms are a crucial part of the project which requires additional resource and development for it to be effective."

"Longer lead-in times with programming and more information sharing about planned activities would help maximise marketing and communications, especially with reaching and growing new audiences."

Quotes from the Social Network Online Survey

Learning Experience: Additional time and resources need investing into marketing and communications when establishing a new programme of social prescription courses. This may be facilitated by having an experienced marketing resource already working in the county-wide delivery of social prescription.

Overall, the Partnership felt that they had successfully established the Delapré Wellbeing Hub, however the establishment took the entirety of the funding cycle because collaboration and relationship building takes time. The Partnership members felt that sustained long-term funding is needed to enable each stakeholder to fully contribute to the project and embed a consistent programme of courses into the local social prescription offer.

"A one-year (externally funded) project is always difficult. It always takes about 6 months to activate a new project before the implementation of activities actually start. It would be good to keep the project going once the funding has stopped and maintain the collaboration of the project team."

"A lot can be achieved with a small amount, but this does need sustained funding, the community and voluntary sector do require funds."

Quotes from the Social Network Online Survey

The social network analysis identified that the Partnership members were having weekly discussions about the project and wider opportunities. The majority of communications appeared to be bi-directional information sharing that facilitated problem solving and strategic planning. Notably, the majority of communications between members included the 'introduction to other relevant stakeholders to help plan, problem solve, or deliver projects', which demonstrates how the funding has enabled partners to expand their network to adopt a place-based assets approach to health strategies.

Aim 2: Increased number of social prescription courses.

Current Service Provision

The difficulty in obtaining information about existing social prescription courses in Northampton was underestimated but revealed inefficiencies in existing healthcare directories used across the county. The majority of course leaders prefer to refer people to their website as it is quicker to provide the relevant information through their website and is simpler to update, thus acting as a single point of truth for course details.

Learning Experience: Attempting to pool together existing social prescription courses into one database is difficult to achieve as course leaders are often asked to provide course details in multiple formats across multiple occurrences throughout the year. The providing of information takes time and resource that is often unavailable for the course leaders. Strategic investment is needed at a local authority and healthcare commissioning level to establish a healthcare directory that brings together data from external sources and automatically updates course leader and course details to ensure the SPLWs have the correct information to refer patients into courses delivered by the VCSE sector.

The desk-based research identified 186 courses that were offered by the VCSE sector in Northampton. These courses covered a range of topics, with the most prominent being Exercise, Languages, and Art & Media (Table 1). Multiple VCSE and Health and Care organisations in Northampton align themselves with the [10 Keys to Happier Living](#) by Action for Happiness. Therefore, existing courses were also mapped against the 10 Keys. Trying Out (61 courses), Exercise (43 courses), and Meaning (42 courses) were the most common 10 Keys to Happier Living that were addressed by the existing courses. Giving (0 courses), Acceptance (2 courses), Awareness (3 courses), Relating (4 courses), and Resilience (4 courses) were the least addressed Keys.

SPLWs had struggled to identify existing courses within the local area. Therefore, this database of existing courses, which was created as part of the Thriving Communities project, was shared with local SPLWs. This information sharing provided a short-term solution, while a long-term integrated database of VCSE sector-led courses was developed by the Health and Care sector.

Table 1. Courses already provided by the VCSE sector in Northampton.

Course Topic	Number of Courses	Target Audience (number of courses)
Art & Media	34	Adults (34)
Cooking and Healthy Eating	20	Adults (20)
Dance	2	Adults (2)
Employability Skill Development	18	Adults (16), Families (1), Informal Carers (1)
Exercise	43	Open Age (15), Adults (7), Adults with disability or long-term illness (3), Adults with obesity (1), Women-only (2), Older Adults (15)
Hobby Interests	8	Adults (8)
Languages	42	Adults (42)
Mental Health	18	Adults (11), Adults with mental health issue (6) Adults with chronic pain (1)
Music	1	Adults (1)
Stop Smoking	1	Smoker over age 12 years (1)

New Course Development

Important Initial Considerations for Course Development

Within the initial listening workshops with members of the public, key themes emerged that would be relevant to other social prescription courses:

1. Accessibility

Co-creation attendees felt strongly that booking or enrolment was a priority focus for maximising engagement with the courses. For example, online booking systems may exclude communities with limited internet access. Therefore, social prescription services should carefully consider whether a booking system is needed and how best to establish this system, e.g. physical sign-up sheets, telephone contact number. Furthermore, the offer of 'open sessions', 'taster sessions' where no booking would be required was considered a vital component of the new social prescription courses. This was also reflected in SPLW opinions who indicated that 'easy low-level commitment' for attendees should be a priority as well as a consistent long-term offer of courses, so attendees did not feel pressured or restricted to attend at specific dates and times. These thoughts align with previous reviews of the literature that indicated four accessibility themes: (1) the relationships between the SPLW and course leaders are essential to introducing 'patients' to the courses, (2) the physical proximity, which was influenced by transport access, (3) time of day the activity was offered, evening sessions may be impacted from changing seasons, and (4) the safety, provision, and availability of transport where crime, traffic, or poorly maintained streets made people less likely to engage in health programmes ⁵.

2. Representative of the Community

Attendees suggested that course activities should represent aspects of the diverse local community to celebrate their culture and help bring communities together. Such activities could help develop a 'sense of community', which is made of four components: (1) membership – feeling of belonging, (2) influence – one feels they can make a difference in the community, (3) integration and fulfilment of needs - when one feels that resources derived from their membership to the community will satisfy their needs, and (4) emotional connection – one believes they share and will share experiences and history with members of the community. Sense of community and wellbeing, particularly social wellbeing, demonstrate a feedback loop where they can both mutually benefit one another ⁶.

3. Awareness of Social Anxiety

Social anxiety was acknowledged as a challenge by the public and SPLWs. There is a need for course leaders to have an awareness and, where possible, suitable training in how to engage with members of the community who may suffer from mental health issues. Attendee perceptions of the leader's level of knowledge and skill has been identified as a key to maintaining long-term engagement in social prescription services ⁷.

4. Marketing and Identity

The course was originally known as the 'Delapré Green Happy Café' that stemmed from the legacy of the Action for Happiness' 'Happy Café' programme. However, the name caused confusion amongst the public as to what the 'café' was offering, with many assuming that another café was being opened at Delapré Abbey. Public understanding of the term 'social prescribing' is limited along with community discussions on the topic ⁸. Therefore, marketing of the courses is essential to drive knowledge and understanding, along with a strong relationship with the SPLW, so the SPLWs are well positioned to know the suitability of the courses for the patient's needs.

Initial Suggested Courses

The attendees of the listening workshops made some initial suggestions on the types of courses that could be offered at Delapré Abbey. At this time, the partnership was aware that the small workshop group may not be representative of the community and thus further consideration on the final list of courses would be needed:

Suggested Courses

1. Linking with University of Third Age (U3A)

⁵ Husk, K., Blockley, K., Lovell, R., Bethel, A., Lang, I., Byng, R. and Garside, R., 2020. What approaches to social prescribing work, for whom, and in what circumstances? A realist review. *Health & social care in the community*, 28(2), pp.309-324.

⁶ Coulombe, S. and Krzesni, D.A., 2019. Associations between sense of community and wellbeing: A comprehensive variable and person-centered exploration. *Journal of community psychology*, 47(5), pp.1246-1268.

⁷ Husk, K., Blockley, K., Lovell, R., Bethel, A., Lang, I., Byng, R. and Garside, R., 2020. What approaches to social prescribing work, for whom, and in what circumstances? A realist review. *Health & social care in the community*, 28(2), pp.309-324.

⁸ Khan, K., Ward, F., Halliday, E. and Holt, V., 2021. Public perspectives of social prescribing. *Journal of Public Health*.

2. Forest Meditation or wellbeing activities
3. Creative journaling workshops
4. Storytelling and Poetry
5. Silversmithing
6. Craft activities
7. Walking groups
8. Skill share
9. Man Shed
10. Pizza and Mocktail nights for younger adults
11. Dog Walking Groups

Learning Experience: With the establishment of new courses and time constraints it can be too easy to create a course based on what is available or being touted by stakeholders and thus this would create a course based on partner need. Rather, to address the service users' wants and needs, the courses need to have a co-creative process where courses are created bespoke to views of the people who will use them. Sufficient investment in time and resource is required to create an effective co-creative environment and thus, grant applications and project plans should acknowledge this need. Alternatively, organisations could conduct Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) workshops as part of grant application development so end-user insight can be evidenced within the project proposals of the application.

Course Piloting

In October 2021, a collection of short-term courses was offered to the public as pilots to test the delivery of courses; from advertising and booking, through to delivery and feedback. The General Practice Alliance recommended the adoption of a 'Plan, Do, Study, Act' approach (Figure 2), so pilot courses were provided to help refine the approach to marketing and delivering the full series of courses.

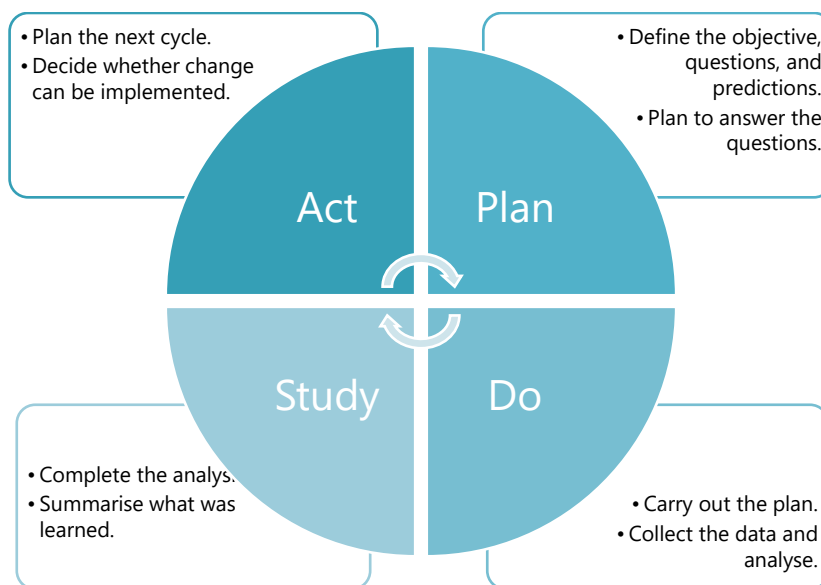


Figure 2. Model of the Plan, Do, Study, Act approach. Adapted from NHS England and NHS Improvement (2021), Date accessed: 25/10/2021, URL: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/qsir-plan-do-study-act.pdf>

Pilot courses included:

1. Couch to 5K 8-week course – aimed at inactive individuals
2. Angling Taster Day – aimed at men
3. Creative Journaling Taster Day – no specific group targeted
4. Mindful Walking

Couch to 5K

Course arrangement was managed by Northamptonshire Sport, who advertised the course on their website and had six sign-ups. Initial thoughts from Northamptonshire Sport centred around marketing. To create consistency in marketing

and communications the Wellbeing Partnership identified that a Communications Strategy was needed, which each Partnership member could follow. Furthermore, it was identified that using social media to document people's engagement with the courses helps create live case studies, which subsequently led to case-studies being written by programme attendees (Appendix 1).

Learning Experience: When establishing a package of social prescription courses, utilising a pro-forma can ensure that course marketing provides consistent and necessary details to maximise the likelihood of a successful referral. As a result of this experience, the Northampton Wellbeing Partnership created a course pro-forma that had to be completed at least 4 weeks before the course. See Aim 3 for further details of what information was acquired.

Angling

The Angling taster day was aimed at isolated men and had 14 attendees. However, there were a few children involved and two referrals from social prescribers did not attend in the end. Again, this identified the importance of ensuring the marketing was clear for each course so only members of the target audience signed-up. The taster day was marketed across Delapré Abbey's, Northamptonshire Sport's, and local news outlets' social media feeds, which created stronger messaging in comparison to the 'Couch to 5K', which was only advertised through Northamptonshire Sport. Advertising across multiple social media feeds increased the reach of the course and thus resulted in more sign-up requests.

Furthermore, the Angling coach who delivered the taster day also held a UK mental health awareness course qualification. The Northampton Wellbeing Partnership identified that additional qualifications held by the course leaders was of high importance to ensure that the course leader knew how to identify, interact, manage, and comfort attendees who may be displaying long-term mental or physical health issues.

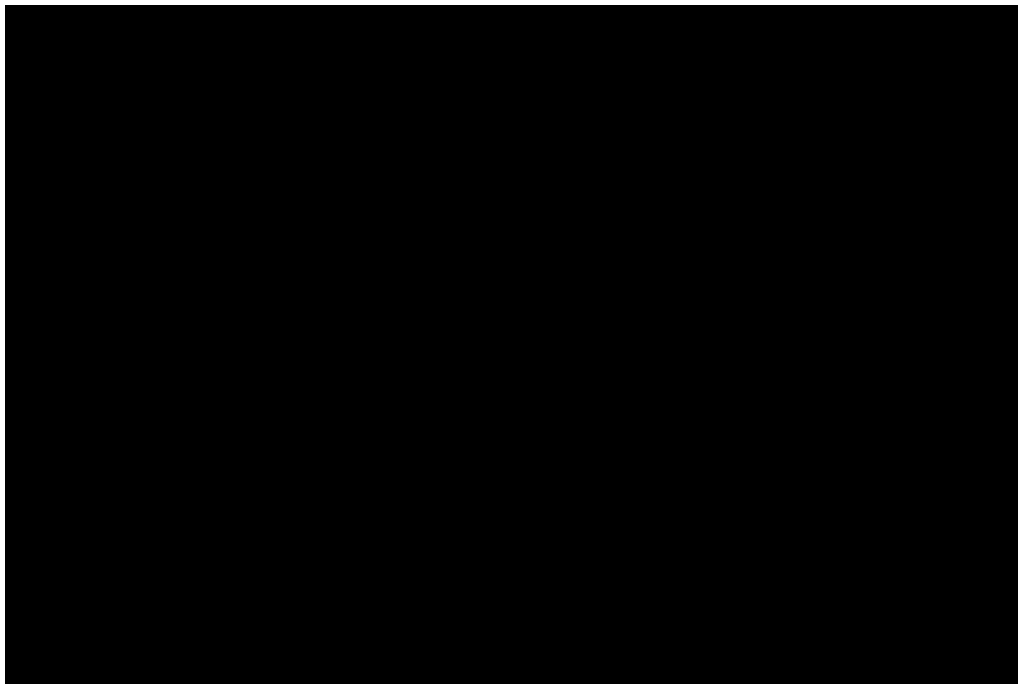
The angling taster day was attended by a local SPLW, who provided feedback during the Co-Creation Steering Group to suggest that some form of discount for refreshments would enable more of the social side of the activity. The SPLW also identified the need to consider off-line methods of marketing and communication, as many of their referral patients did not have email or regular internet access.

Learning Experience: Ensuring the needs of referral patients are met through course structure and leader skillsets, is an essential consideration to maximise the likelihood of a successful referral. Programme co-ordinators should review course leaders' qualifications to be assured that they have the sufficient skillsets to manage patients with health needs. Programme co-ordinators should budget for training programmes to upskill course leaders in order to build community capacity in the VCSE sector.

Courses offered at Full Programme

Programme Development by Co-Creation Steering Group

Co-Creation Steering Group members were asked to prepare their 'dream' programme that had variable lengths, different points of entry, and a variety of programmes. As a result of feed-in from the Steering Group members, a 16-week draft programme was developed. This included: a weekly book club where each session focussed on a chapter and creative tasks so someone can drop-in as they wish, outdoor physical activities, such as Couch to 5k, a series of one-off workshops, and a community driven art installation project. Meena, from the Co-Creation Steering Group launched the Full Programme by starring in a video to promote the range of courses being offered through the Delapré Wellbeing Hub (Video 1).



Video 1. The Full Programme was launched through online media by Meena, from the Co-Creation Steering Group. URL: <https://youtu.be/HihUPUItopc>

Courses of varying length were offered in the full Delapr  Wellbeing Hub programme (Table 2). Online-ticket bookers for the courses tended to live in Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) of the lowest level of deprivation (deciles 9 and 10) and 6% were within the top 20% of deprivation (Figure 3). The majority of online-ticket bookers were from Northampton, with a small amount from other Northamptonshire towns, demonstrating that the Wellbeing Hub was mainly attracting local communities (Figure 4). Overall there were 301 online ticket bookings between 21st February to 25th May 2022 for Wellbeing Hub events. Furthermore, three school outreach wellbeing sessions during March 2022 for the Wellbeing Festival, which engaged a total of 403 children (school years 4 to 6).

As self-referral is one of the most popular routes into social prescription courses, the Delapr  Wellbeing Hub provided 50% of places on sale to the public, for self-referral, with the remaining 50% saved for referrals from SPLWs to ensure spaces were available for both referral routes.

A pay-what-you-can model was trialled for some courses. Twenty-four percent ($n = 64$) of online-ticket bookers provided a payment, to a median value of £5, which was paid by 39% ($n = 25$) of those who provided a payment. Payments ranged between £2 - £10 and the total amount received through the online booking system was £332. In theory, the pay-what-you-can approach balances increasing access whilst supporting the ongoing resilience of the programme. There are operational realities that need to be refined to ensure its effective use. A number of sessions ran through pay-what-you-can witnessed a higher than average "no show" when compared to ticketed cultural events. Understanding the factors that contributed to this should be something that is explored further. It is not a simple case of not understanding the value, looking at the Grief Gatherings as an example, the contributing factors to not attending can be both emotional and logistical. Furthermore, enabling this route of payment, does provide an efficient process for SPLWs to sign on individuals without a punitive process.

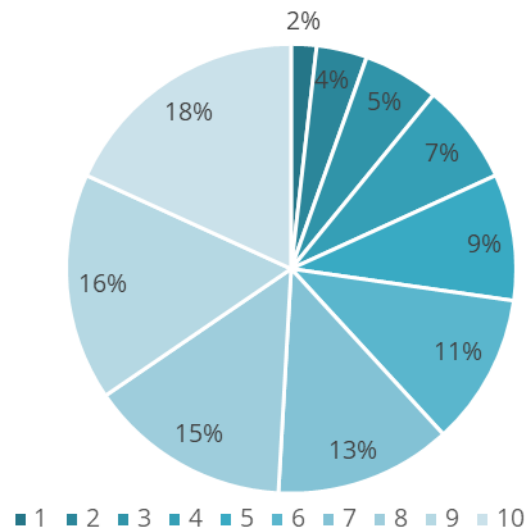


Figure 3. Postcode Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 Deciles of online-ticket bookers. 1 – highest level of deprivation, 10 – lowest level of deprivation. Postcode data was provided by 94% of online-ticket bookers. Note that Postcode Index of Multiple Deprivation reflects geographical deprivation not individual deprivation. 123 unique postcodes were provided from 257 entries.

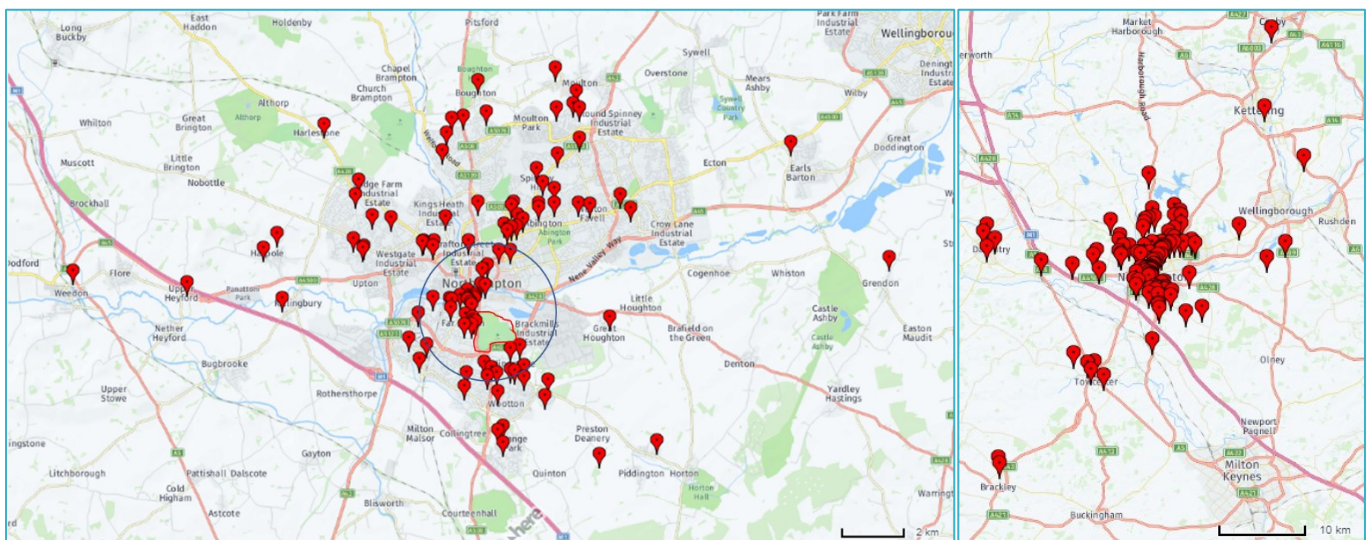


Figure 4. Online-ticket Booker postcode mapping to identify the catchment area of the Wellbeing Hub. Red icons illustrate ticket bookers. Blue circle illustrates 2 km radius from Delapré Abbey. Left panel focuses on Northampton catchment area. Right panel displays the catchment area of bookers from across the county.

Table 2. Delapré Wellbeing Hub course calendar.

Course Name	Dates	Duration	Description	Attendance
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Horticultural Wellbeing	Monday – Wednesdays and some weekends	Continuous	G.L.A.D – Growing Lovingly at Delapré, bringing people together to learn new skills, share a love of the outdoors and gardening.	591 hours of volunteering by 20 people between March and June 2022.
Wellbeing Walks	Wednesdays	Continuous	Wellbeing Walks are free, fun, leisurely walks designed for people that currently do little or no exercise. No specialist equipment is required, and anyone can turn up on the day. Although there is no special equipment required, it is advisable for participants to wear suitable clothing and footwear for the weather conditions.	Average of 13 walkers attending per week
Walk to the Future	Friday's at 11:00	Continuous	Two brand new walking groups aimed at supporting individuals and carers who have been affected by cancer. Held on Thursdays at 1pm at West Glebe Pavilion in Corby and Fridays at 11am at Delapré Abbey in Northampton, these free beginner friendly weekly walks are led by local Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Service from Kettering and Northampton General.	20 registered people with an average weekly attendance of 6 people.
Delapré Couch to 5k	23/01/2022 - 27/03/2022	10 weeks - 10 sessions	Couch to 5K is designed for complete beginners, those who have never ran before or not for a long time. The 10-week course will gradually take participants through a walk/jog programme with the aim of walking less and jogging more as the weeks progress. By week 10, participants will be able to jog for 30 minutes continuously and be well on your way to achieving 5km.	Course 1: 6 Attendees, 60% adherence over 10-weeks. Course 2: 11 Attendees, 70% adherence over 10-weeks.
The Comfort Book Club	21/02/2022 - 23/05/2022	13 weeks - 13 sessions	Read, discuss and share at the open to all 'The Comfort Book' Club. This event will be running once a week beginning on 21st February with a chapter of 'The Comfort Book' covered in each session. Meet us in this safe space for as many of the sessions as you want. Get out the house, meet new people, and voice your opinions, and emotional reactions to the book chosen by your community. Participate as little or as much as you want to- the floor is yours and we can't wait to see you.	Online Pre-Booking Total over 13-weeks: 22 people.

Snakes and Lattes Board Game Café	21/02/2022 - 23/05/2022	13 weeks - 13 sessions	<p>Grab a latte, hot chocolate or a delightfully delicious tiffin from our café and settle down with a board game! Bring along an old favourite to share with new people or choose from the selection of games on offer (Although we withhold the right to confiscate Monopoly!)</p> <p>Relax and reconnect as you spend some time rolling the dice and climbing ladders and having fun!</p>	Online Pre-Booking Total over 13-weeks: 19 people.
Mindful Walking	23/02/2022 - 23/03/2022	5 weeks – 5 sessions	<p>During this 5-week course, you will explore the local park and use mindfulness skills to appreciate the great outdoors. The course will include tree bathing, noticing the types of trees within the park and other fauna. You will use all your senses to discover the wonders of your local green space.</p>	Online Pre-Booking Total over 5-weeks: 4 people.
Photography Workshop	28/02/2022	1 week – 1 session	<p>Come along to our 'Stay in Focus' photography workshop and not only spend time hearing from a professional who has found his voice through the lens but take part in an educational and explorative workshop where you are given the tools and opportunity to explore how you see the world.</p> <p>Meet new people, learn new skills or refresh old ones amongst the beauty and history of Delapré Abbey.</p>	Online Pre-Booking Total over 1-week: 16 people.
Creative Reflection Flag Making	18/04/2022	1-week – 3 sessions	<p>Alongside 'In Memoriam', The Curator Educator worked with local schools (Delapré Primary, The Abbey Primary School and Queen Eleanor Primary Academy) to create artwork inspired by Tibetan prayer flags that encapsulates the children's experiences during the pandemic. These were displayed in the grounds of the Abbey for all to see. Visitors were encouraged to add to the artwork which grew throughout the exhibition.</p>	Total over 1 week: 403 individuals and 3 schools (30)
Share Your Truth Story Telling Workshop	7/03/2022	1 week – 1 session	<p>Want to feel heard and represented in a way that feels authentic? Need support to find the words to put across how you want to be seen?</p> <p>Join fellow creatives and explore the diverse ways in which you can tell your story- fact or fiction- through social media, journaling, blog posts, poetry and everything in-between.</p> <p>Our storytelling workshop is the</p>	Online Pre-Booking Total over 1-week: 3 people.

			perfect place for you to take that first step!	
Laughter Workshop	17/03/2022	1 week – 2 sessions	<p>We can forget so easily how vital laughter is in bringing people together, manifesting positivity and allowing us to feel free!</p> <p>Ditch the stress and come along to our 'Laugh it Off' workshop. Let go of all the pressures of everyday life...with a good ol' fashioned howl of hilarity!</p> <p>The sessions are facilitated by specialist laughter therapist Ishi Khan and are sure to put a smile on your face.</p>	Online Pre-Booking Total over 2 sessions: 29 people.
Grief Gathering	4-9-18/05/2022	1 week – 3 sessions	<p>As part of our wellbeing programme we are pleased to be working with Fevered Sleep who have created Grief Gatherings.</p> <p>They're small, free group conversations about grief and they're open to all. There is no obligation to talk, you're welcome to just sit and listen.</p>	Online Pre-Booking Total over 3 sessions: 25 people
Comic Book Workshop	12/05/2022	1 week – 1 session	<p>Could you be the next Stan Lee? Join Warts and All Theatre's 'Heroic Writer' workshop and explore the exciting world of comic book creation.</p> <p>Create your own heroes, villains and monsters, based on your imagination and the emotions that are simply waiting to be brought to life, all your wildest characters and storylines will come to fruition in this workshop!</p>	Online Pre-Booking Total over 1-week: 2 people
Maternal Mental Health Awareness Weeks	3/05/2022 – 8/05/2022	1 week – 11 sessions	Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (NHFT) Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Service (SPMHS) will be hosting events during the week raising awareness of maternal mental health conditions and providing details of the support available in Northamptonshire. The service provides assessment, advice and specialist treatment and support for women in Northamptonshire who experience moderate to severe mental	Online Pre-Booking Total over 1-week: 55 people

			health conditions during pregnancy and after having a baby.	
Wellbeing Festival	20-24/04/2022	1 week	<p>Relax and unwind at Delapr� Abbey with four days of informal talks, classes and performances designed to increase your health and wellbeing. Let loose and move your body as you soak in the beautiful surrounds of the historic Abbey and its surrounding green spaces.</p> <p>With a varied programme, you can choose which events you'd like to attend to create your own tailored experience.</p>	Online Pre-Booking Total over 1-week: 122 people

Learning Experience: Initially, course leaders were not aware which attendees had been referred by an SPLW. Therefore, they were hesitant or uncertain about how they would support someone with a long-term health condition. This links to the previous learning experience of ensuring course leaders are equipped with the relevant skillsets to support attendees but also indicates some form of communication is needed between the SPLW and course leader to raise awareness of attendees' support needs. Considerations of patient confidentiality and GDPR are needed to determine the most suitable method to communicate attendees' needs.

Learning Experience: Provide course leaders with signposting information to wider support networks for mental and physical health needs. Course leaders can then use this information to direct course attendees to professional health care networks, should they need further help.

Sustainability

As the courses progressed and attendance became consistent, discussions moved onto how to sustain the courses, such as the board game caf . It was suggested that community ownership of the courses became evident, and that the delivery of the courses could be continued with voluntary support, due to the low administrative demand. Sustainability is essential in order to embed long-term behaviour change and impact, therefore further funding, delivery solutions, and long-term monitoring is required.

Learning Experience: Using a central hub approach for wellbeing activities provided an attractive opportunity for course leaders. As a result of the hub approach, enquiries were made by course leaders to explore the options to use Delapr  Abbey as a host site for their courses. The Partnership established a Reviewing Board to assess course proposals and determine their suitability to address local needs and long-term objectives.

Aim 3: Create a social prescription hub that was simple for Social Prescription Link Workers to engage with.

As the pass-over of the patient from the SPLW to the Course Leader is viewed as a critical stage of a successful social prescription, the Wellbeing Partnership recognised the importance of a consistent and detailed overview of each programme within the Delapré Wellbeing Project. A pro-forma (Appendix 2) was created so the Marketing team could request new course details and advertise them with consistency. Furthermore, the group identified that a series of short videos could help deliver a stronger insight into what each course included, and thus assist with finding the most suitable course for the patient.

The Project's pro-formas and associated videos were uploaded to the newly created Delapré Wellbeing Hub website (Figure 5). The website was established as a single point of truth that SPLWs could visit to receive the most up to date information about the ongoing social prescription programmes hosted at Delapré Abbey/Park.

Between the 28th November 2021 and 17th July 2022, there were 2,500 visits to the Wellbeing Hub website. Of this, 1,052 visits were direct (42%), 946 were referred via social media (38%), 314 via organic search (13%), and 195 referrals (8%). In total, there were 4,755 page-views, comprised of 2,492 views of the homepage, 1,414 for the Wellbeing Festival, and 798 for Maternal Mental Health Awareness Week. In addition, during this time there was 430 page-views of content on delapreabbey.org containing the word 'wellbeing' in the title.

Since the beginning of the programme, Delapré Abbey have posted about Delapré Wellbeing 50 times on Facebook and Instagram, with a total reach of 157,459 people. On these posts they received 5,805 likes and reactions, shares, link clicks and comments. Furthermore, there were 19 Press engagements between June 2021 to May 2022 (Appendix 3).

Visit the Wellbeing Hub Website: <https://delaprewellbeing.co.uk/>

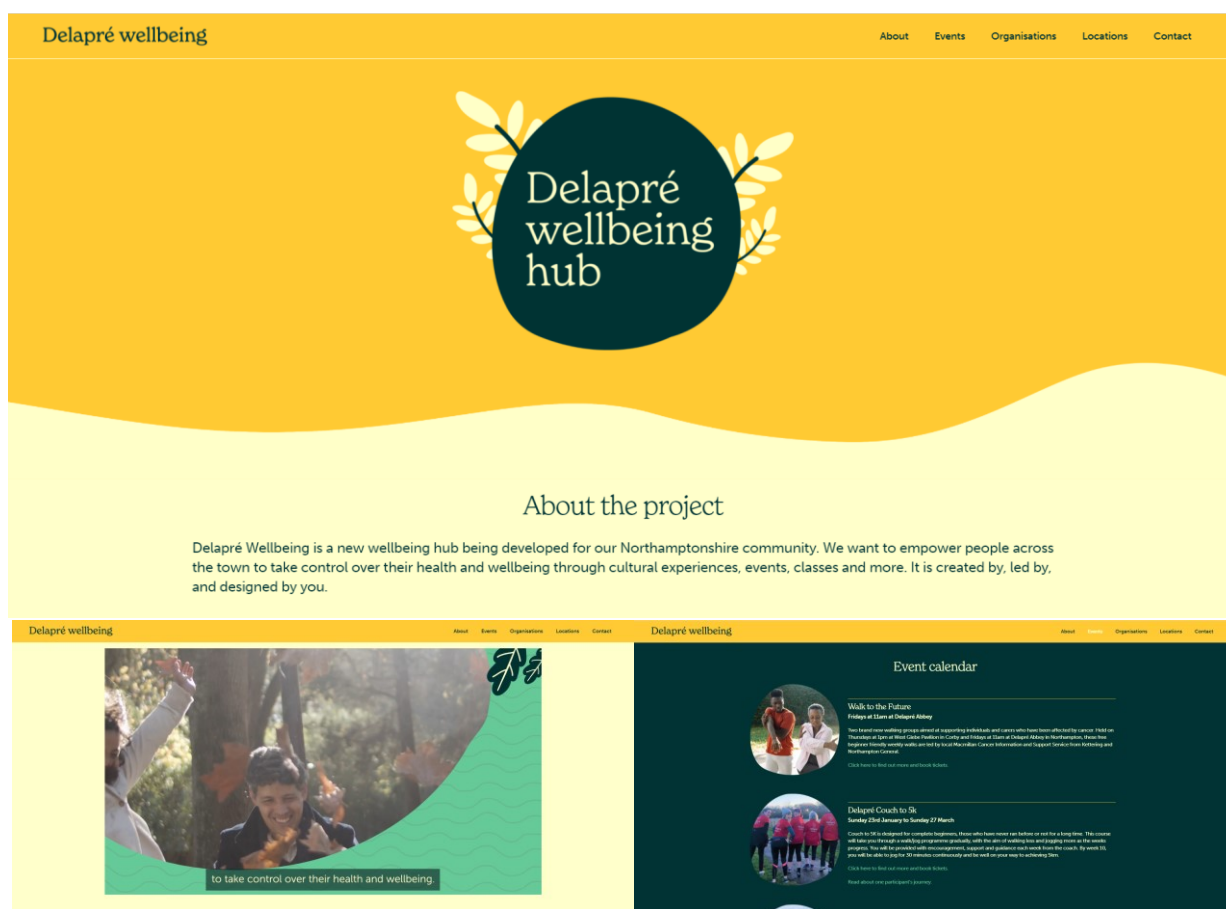


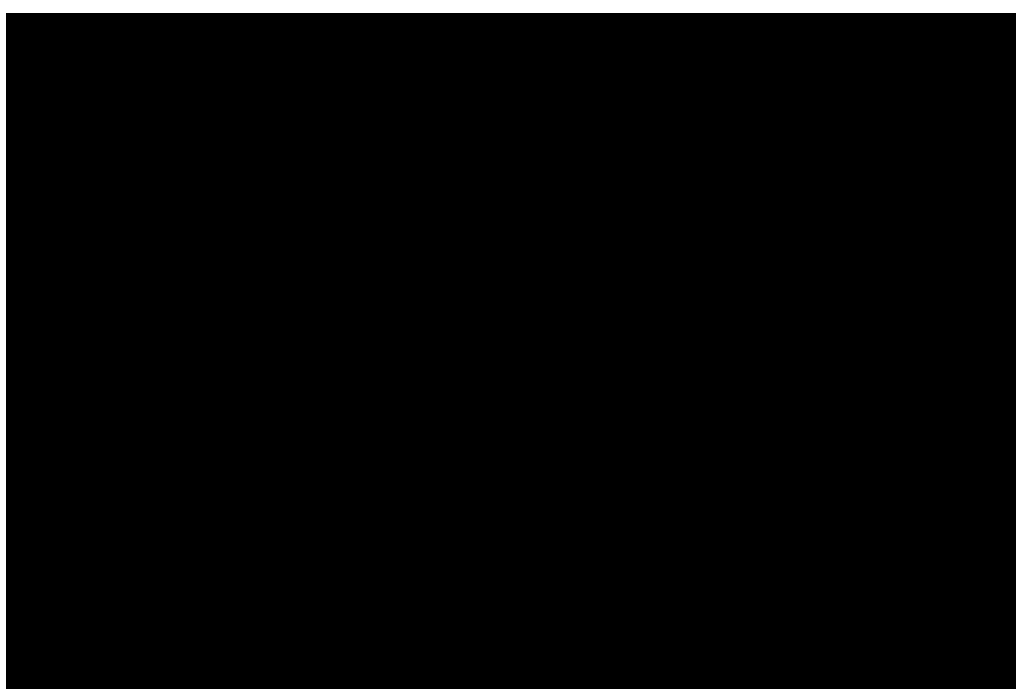
Figure 5. Screenshots of the Delapré Wellbeing Hub website.

Initial Feedback from Northampton Wellbeing Partnership

IT poverty was identified as a constant issue locally and there needed to be a county-wide IT poverty plan, within the Community Resilience Plan. The partnership identified that there are community interest companies that can be looked into for templates on how to tackle IT poverty issues. It was suggested that the creation of a brochure or a leaflet, which advertised courses that were delivered consistently throughout the year, could help overcome IT access issues. As a result, 5000 leaflets were distributed to high deprivation areas within the county to raise awareness about the Delapré Wellbeing Hub. In addition, template marketing leaflets and posters were created so course leaders could create and promote their own courses with the Delapré Wellbeing Hub brand to simplify and shorten the marketing processes.

Creating video adverts for social prescription courses.

A systematic review of social prescription referral pathways found the specifics on the particular activity on offer were felt to be important to patients' receptiveness, with reports of a fear of the unknown or elements of activities being challenging acting as a barrier⁹. Therefore, the Wellbeing Partnership commissioned the creation of course adverts that the SPLWs and potential attendees could watch during their initial consultation together. Video 2 provides an example of one of the course adverts, which were made available on the Delapré Wellbeing Hub website.



Video 2. Example Delapre Wellbeing Hub advert for a course. URL: <https://youtu.be/lcyg1OoAh44>

Perceptions of the Hub from Social Prescription Link Workers

It was hoped this project would result in an evident reduction in health care utilisation, as the service improves the mental & physical health of the individuals (i.e., less pressure on healthcare service providers such as GPs, hospitals, emergency/specialist care units), and so, a key part of the evaluation project focused on understanding the perceptions and experiences of SPLWs, as a key stakeholder is the patient referral pathway. Broadly speaking, there was an interest

⁹ Husk, K., Blockley, K., Lovell, R., Bethel, A., Lang, I., Byng, R. and Garside, R., 2020. What approaches to social prescribing work, for whom, and in what circumstances? A realist review. *Health & social care in the community*, 28(2), pp.309-324.

in exploring their engagement with the programme referral information (e.g. where did they first find out about the programmes, were they provided with all relevant information for participation, follow-up contact with programme leaders etc.) and experience (both positive and negative) with the actual patient referral process (e.g., suitability of the programme in meeting patient needs, any challenges encountered, suggestions for future improvements etc.).

Key Findings:

Programme Referral Information

Information on programmes running as part of the Delapr  Wellbeing Hub was found across a mixture of online platforms (via the Hub website and emails) and in-person interactions (via team meetings and general word-of mouth). All SPLWs commented on how valuable the information provided was, including most if not all necessary information to understand what the programme involved. However, suggestions were made by SPLWs that additional detail is required in order to fully inform the referral process. This related to *"transport links"* and *"space availability"*. It was further noted that some information included on programmes was out of date. Although a number of the SPLWs had not yet made a referral to the Delapr  Wellbeing Hub (60%), for those that had, they note how there is some room for improvement regarding obtaining key contact information for each course and indeed making contact with that course leader. Finally, the utility of promotional videos for the courses offered at the Delapr  Wellbeing Hub was reported, with one SPLW commenting they were *"very useful as a referrer"*.

Experience with the Programme

From the outset, it should be made clear, that out of five SPLWs who responded to this survey, four had not yet attempted to refer a patient into the Delapr  Wellbeing Hub service. Although this meant the extent of detailed feedback on their experience with the programme was limited (e.g., particularly around services meeting the needs of users), there were some prominent themes that emerged to consider for development and provision in the future, related to current barriers for engagement and additional needs to enhance the quality of the offer.

First, the main issue surrounding a lack of engagement with the referral process related to the transport/accessibility barriers that exist. Almost all SPLWs commented on how the Delapr  Wellbeing Hub provided a challenge to interested service users who would have trouble travelling to the site because of *"bus routes"*, *"mobility needs (i.e., the long driveway to the Hub)"* and their home location (i.e., *"most of my patients live outside Northampton, so it was not so suitable for them"*). Potential solutions from SPLWs suggested the provision of greater transport link information and a door-to-door service to pick up and return clients, would certainly encourage better commitment and engagement with the programme.

Next, SPLWs noted gaps in the marketing strategy for the Delapr  Wellbeing Hub, mainly related to the timings of information released for programmes offered within the service. On the whole, it was felt the current processes gave far too short of a lead-in time to courses. For example, one SPLW noted how they had only received the full overview of the event, four days prior to it starting and this did not give an appropriate timeframe to facilitate patient referral, buy-in, and logistics (e.g., around travel). More timely and detailed information release (suggested as at least 6-8 weeks prior to event launch so that SPLWs can co-ordinate with other colleagues and patients), was noted as a solution for future increased participation from patients. Furthermore, one SPLW suggested to extend the reach of programme promotional platforms, to include GP surgeries, libraries and local media.

Finally, SPLWs reported ideas they felt would further enhance the quality-of-service provisions at Delapr  Wellbeing Hub in the future. These ideas varied in activity type to utilise the outdoor green and blue space in our environment. On land, it was suggested there could be more wellbeing and foraging walks, wild yoga, and for the courses that already exist, provision of some complimentary refreshments. On water, ideas largely focused on making greater use of the lake and surrounding space at Delapr , to promote water-based programmes such as wild and open water swimming, kayaking, paddle-boarding and an inflatable course, as well as the development of a family beach and greater picnic (with seating) areas.

Learning Experience: Social Prescription course marketing needs to include transport and access information as well as a longer lead-in time to courses to help SPLWs and patients determine the suitability of the course.

Views from Course Leaders

Feedback from two course leaders were shared with the researchers. Overall, the leaders found their courses quite easy to set up at the Delapré Wellbeing Hub. Furthermore, both leaders felt the use of hub approach at a Heritage site provided added value to attendees:

"Participants enjoyed exploring the grounds and seeing the changes in the landscape as Spring emerged. For some, it was the first time they had visited the park and have been back to explore walks there outside of the group activity."

"The heritage site provided a great context, and enabled a participant to access a range of services through the co-location model."

Quotes from Course Leader Online Survey

Both leaders highlighted that new attendee friendships and sense of ownership of the course were the main successes of the courses they provided, which both hoped would increase the likelihood of the courses continuing. Conversely, the main barriers were the accessibility of paths for outdoor activities, such as muddy paths, and a need for a stronger brand presence to increase attendance. There was also no engagement between the SPLWs and the course leaders, which demonstrates the ongoing need to build relationships with SPLWs. The two leaders said they would welcome additional training in the areas of Psychological First Aid, Supporting Individual's Mental Health, Supporting Vulnerable People, and Keeping Records/Measuring Impact in order to enhance the overall quality of their courses.

Aim 4. Create a social prescription programme that the local community engaged with and enhanced their wellbeing.

Perceptions from Service Users

In order to evaluate the impact of the Delapr  Wellbeing Hub courses on the health and wellbeing of course attendees, it was imperative to gain an insight into the personal experiences of course attendees, to not only understand any change that had occurred through current provision, but to also use the feedback towards enhancing future delivery to meet the needs of the local community. Information was gathered across three topic areas: (1) *Programme Experience* (how they found out about the Delapr  Wellbeing Hub courses and what their expectations were at the start of the course), (2) *Wellbeing and Physical Activity* (questions about their feelings on aspects of their life and physical activity, pre- and post-involvement with the Delapr  Wellbeing Hub courses) and (3) *Service User Demographics* (to gain an understanding of who is represented in the survey).

Key Findings:

Programme Experience

A number of course attendees ($n = 9$) responded to the survey, having taken part in a variety of projects being offered through the Delapr  Wellbeing Hub, including 'Couch to 5K', 'Laughter Workshop', and 'Walk to the Future'. Their engagement with their respective course varied in length (from less than 1 month to more than 6 months), with most people initially hearing about what was on offer at the Hub, either through online or through word-of-mouth (friend, family, community group member). Similar to the findings of the SPLWs, service users found it relatively easy to access information on the courses at Delapr  Wellbeing Hub and the follow-up registration process was reported to be very straightforward via an online booking form. Interestingly, most patients testified to the accessibility of the programme (in considering its event times, location [e.g., "*Delapr  Abbey is a good central location to get to and easy parking*"] and resources provided [e.g., "*Sally was a great leader of the session*"]). However, there was feedback to suggest for others, there were issues around inaccessibility, largely relating to programme times clashing with work schedules and, in the event of poor weather conditions, the grounds of Delapr  Abbey were "*often flooded and muddy which reduced the areas we could run*".

Course attendees commented on the significance of social support for their continued commitment and to assist them in achieving their goals, which underpinned the primary reasons for course involvement in the first place. This social support was predominantly provided through their 'knowledgeable and skilled' course leader but also via their peers on the course, which for many, was a factor for engagement in the first place (i.e., to grow new or existing relationships). Participation in the courses was also noted to increase motivation levels, develop awareness of the little things in life that make them happy and to enhance overall health status (e.g., "*to become fitter, healthier and lose weight*").

Finally, respondents noted the many benefits and suggested improvements for the future delivery of courses. The sense of social connectedness shone through as a benefit of being part of the Delapr  Wellbeing Hub, particularly in recognising their shared experience (allowing them to more easily understand and relate to one another), with feedback highlighting the importance of new friendships made and developed relationships with family members, through a new-found passion for a certain activity (e.g., "*It's provided a time and space for me and my husband to enjoy a sport together.*"). Others reported their delight with health advancements, both psychologically (e.g., "*The programme conquered my fear of running*") and physically (e.g., "*Fitter*" and "*Lost weight*"). Suggestions for improved quality of future delivery surrounded clarification and provision of key course details (e.g., if it is a fitness activity - what type of exercise will this involve, exact locations), varied times and alternative techniques to consider for best performance outcomes (related to running styles and breathing strategies).

Wellbeing and Physical Activity

Overall, engagement with the Delapr  Wellbeing Hub programme demonstrated improvements on patients' wellbeing, indicated by increased levels (from pre-to post-programme engagement) in life satisfaction (with almost 80% of respondents scoring themselves 9/10 after programme engagement), that things they do in their life were worthwhile (all participants scored themselves at least 7/10 after programme engagement) and happiness (with almost 90% of patients scoring themselves 9/10 after programme engagement). All respondents noted engagement with some form

of physical activity (this varied between individuals, 2-7 days per week) for a minimum 30 minutes (i.e., enough to raise their breathing rate) in the month which they completed the survey. As expected, due to the active nature of the predominant courses which patients were engaged with (i.e., 'Couch to 5K' and 'Walk to the Future') almost all of these service users ($n = 8$), reported their programme at Delapr  Wellbeing Hub contributed to between 1-3 days of their weekly physical activity.

Survey Respondent Demographics

Service users (referring to those only who responded to this survey) were predominantly female ($n = 8$; 1 x male) and from a White ethnic group (English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British; $n = 8$; 1 x White-Black Caribbean mixed ethnicity). All reported to be straight or heterosexual, married ($n = 7$) or widowed ($n = 2$) and fell into a varied age bracket; (a) 31-45 years ($n = 2$); (b) 46-60 years ($n = 4$); (c) 61+years ($n = 3$). Participants had a mixed educational background and household income, with most ($n = 8$) reporting no health problems that would impact day-to-day activities. For those who provided their current home postcode ($n = 6$), five lived in the top 70% least deprived areas of Northampton (1 x decile 7; 2 x decile 9; 2 x decile 10) and one individual lived within a decile 5 area (40% to 50% deprived).

Case Studies

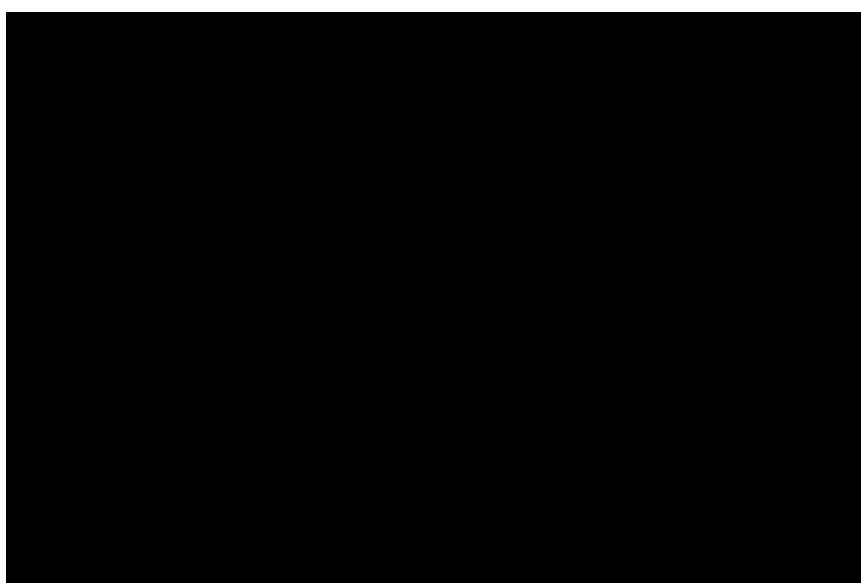
Antoinette

The volunteering course at Delapr  Wellbeing Hub has offered a wide range of opportunities, which has allowed members of the community to try different activities and develop their social networks. The below video (Video 3) captures an organic case study where one of the volunteers phoned into a BBC 5 Live radio programme to discuss the benefits that the volunteering course at the Delapr  Wellbeing Hub had brought her, particularly by developing her social network to overcome her loneliness.

"...The mix of people there volunteering as well, they come from all sorts of different backgrounds, different walks of life, different perspectives, and it's just very enriching and I've got some really close friends there now..."

"...It probably was loneliness, in a way, on reflection. I knew that I needed to go out and search for something to fill that gap and I didn't know what it was until I found it. And for me it was about trying lots of different things and eventually getting there. Now I feel very fulfilled with the volunteering, or social prescribing as you'd call it, that I am doing because it's filling that gap for me and I also feel that I'm helping fill the gap for other people..."

Quotes from BBC Radio 5 interview



Video 3. BBC 5 Live phone-in discussing the value of the Delapr  Wellbeing Hub. Content is owned by the BBC. URL: <https://youtu.be/8UNHjRwOdCg>

Aims 5 and 6: Increase in Social Prescription Link Worker referrals and Reduction in health care utilisation

Reflections from the General Practice Alliance

The Thriving Communities funding has facilitated relationship building between the SPLWs and VCSE community groups by creating a database of existing groups. The SPLWs have used this database to connect with VCSE groups to explore the suitability for and interest in social prescription. Furthermore, the database created during the Thriving Communities project has provided the foundations for an online database system, Wellbeing LaunchPad, which will host VCSE group information that can be accessed by GPs, SPLWs, and VCSE groups to facilitate social prescription referrals. In addition, the project has introduced the General Practice Alliance to other strategic level stakeholders who are passionate about tackling local health inequalities, which has opened wider opportunities to take a place-based whole-systems approach to strategic health improvement planning.

As the Delapr  Wellbeing Hub has only just been established, it is not possible to state whether the programme has resulted in a reduction in health care utilisation. However, the programme has provided a live case study that has facilitated the development of the social prescription referral process and offered learnings that can be applied to other social prescription programmes within the county.

The partnership has developed a series of opportunities to progress green and blue social prescribing. There will be ongoing development of an active map that will also link with active travel opportunities. The partnership and research opportunities have significant opportunities to address health and inequalities in the future. A significant problem of the programme has been the short timescale. We are really just getting going with some more interesting development opportunities.

At the end of the funding cycle, it is vital that some of the courses are maintained at the Delapr  Wellbeing Hub. The SPLWs require courses that have a consistent delivery structure, in terms of time, location, and cost, so they are able to refer patients throughout the year. Furthermore, a consistent delivery of courses also provides flexibility to patients, so they do not feel pressured to attend for a certain period of time.

The General Practice Alliance has valued the collaboration with local stakeholders to deliver this project and are working hard to ensure these collaborations continue once the Thriving Communities funding cycle has ended.

Dr David Smart

Clinical Director Prevention and Mental Health – General Practice Alliance

Conclusions

The Thriving Communities Fund has enabled collaborative working across health care, physical activity, heritage, nature, arts, community, and academic sectors, which has provided the foundations for further collaboration that fosters a whole-systems place-based approach to tackling health inequalities. The Delapré Wellbeing Hub has been able to establish a brand presence and range of creative social prescription programmes however, further time and investment is required to strengthen relationships with the SPLWs and local community. The Northampton Wellbeing Partnership continues to meet regularly to identify future projects and grant opportunities, such as the Department for Transport Active Travel Fund Social Prescription Pilot, in order to sustain the future of the Delapré Wellbeing Hub and wider social prescription opportunities. Overall, the project has provided a test and learn site to inform the establishment of other social prescription programmes across the county.

Appendices

Appendix 1

MY JOURNEY FROM COUCH TO 5K

- Written by Suzy

As you know, I signed up to complete the 'couch to 5K' challenge beginning my journey on Monday 4th October. I remember joking with my colleagues at Delapré Abbey and Action for Happiness about signing up. I am not known for my love of exercise! My motivation is fairly simple, I have just turned 50 and realise unless I do some form of exercise my weight will continue upwards... this may seem shallow, but I am being honest.

I remember driving to Delapré Abbey on the first Monday. I was really nervous about looking stupid. Well, Sally, our instructor put us all at ease and the first week was a minute of jogging and a minute of walking, repeated several times. After the first week, and then endeavouring to go out mid-week with the help of the NHS App, I've really surprised myself on how much I am enjoying jogging.

Through the ten weeks, I have had a busy work schedule and week six was hard. I was tired, my work/life balance was not good. The 'Delapré Joggers' as we are now known were great support and over the weeks, friendships have been formed. They were great and pulled me through. Week seven was better and we are now talking about continuing to run in the new year.

For those thinking about taking on the challenge, I would wholeheartedly say, "Give it a go"! The joy of running first thing in the morning when the streets are quiet and the sun is rising has been a wonderful experience. I'd like to share two other important lessons for me in the hope others will find them helpful: I need to jog at my own pace. I am 5ft tall so my jogging speed can be someone else's walking speed! This shouldn't deter us! The second 'lesson' that I have learned has been the importance of being with a group or jogging with friends. Going alone is difficult and having a running buddy can make an enormous difference.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow joggers without them I wouldn't have completed the challenge!

TCF - Green Social Prescribing Activity - Pro Forma

Date:	
Submitted by:	

PROJECT/EVENT

Title	
Date(s)	
Time(s)	
Capacity per time slot	
Pay on your terms suggested amount	
Location Where is it taking place?	
Blurb for web page	
Key partners	
Information for Video	<p>Video requirements: Please ensure that all videos are shot landscape, HD, 1920 x 1080 pixels (16:9 aspect ratio).</p> <p>Location and lighting Please consider location and lighting when framing your shot. Please capture b-roll footage of activity plus background shots of location which will be used alongside interviews to help illustrate the activity. Please use a tripod when filming.</p> <p>Audio The audio must be of good quality with no background noise. Please check audio quality before filming. DAPT can provide mics if needed.</p> <p>Length Maximum length: 3 mins Please note that if the video is intended to be used on social media then each platform has different time constraints so please factor this in when planning.</p> <p>Key questions to consider in footage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short overview of activity • How long does a session last? • Where is the activity taking place? • What is the group size? • Are resources or equipment provided or required? • Who is the activity for? • What will you benefit from? • If physical activity – what is the level of intensity (should be low/moderate)? • Can a previous/current participant comment on why they take part? • How does it make them feel? • What was the quality of the deliverer/leader/coach? <p>Please ensure that these questions are incorporated into the answer by the participant as the interviewer will be edited out.</p>

	Please also supply the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video type (e.g. interview, guided tour) • Required graphics (e.g. how to book) • Who is being filmed?
Requirements for Assets (Any requirements for placemarkers, meet here, activity sheets etc)	
Images for website and marketing Please attach to email or send as a link	Please ensure that these are high res, minimum of 1000px on shortest side.

AUDIENCES

Target audience Please provide a brief summary of the key audiences and groups that you would like to reach. Key stakeholder to share activity information with (SPLW, Forums, Agencies)	
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Any additional information?	
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EVALUATION

Evaluation	As part of the Thriving Communities Programme, all activities that last more than one week must distribute evaluation materials to attendees in the final week of their activity.
In person distribution	In your final activity session, please ask attendees to scan the QR code using their mobile phone camera to direct them to the online survey. If they do not have a phone with a QR reader, then please provide them with the web address: [Weblink removed] <div style="text-align: center;">[QR Code Removed]</div>
Email distribution	If your attendees have booked using an online system, then you can distribute the survey via email in addition to the in-person distribution. Please use the following email template when contacting attendees: “Thank you for attending the Delapré wellbeing project over the recent weeks. We would welcome your feedback on the structure and delivery of the programme you have been attending. Your feedback helps us improve the Project’s programmes and understand the impact of the programme on your wellbeing. You can provide your feedback using this 10-minute survey here: [weblink removed] Many thanks for sharing your thoughts. Best wishes The Delapré Wellbeing Project Team”

Evaluation Leader	Please contact [name removed] for any questions [email removed]
Point of Contact (Please provide the name and email address of the activity leader for your programme)	

Appendix 3

28/06/2021: Northampton Chronicle & Echo, [Tell Northampton's Delapré Abbey what activities YOU want to see in their new wellbeing programme](#)

28/06/2021: Northants Life, [Help shape a new wellbeing programme at Delapré Abbey](#)

26/08/2021: Northampton Chronicle & Echo, [Ribbon-cutting ceremony will open new signposted walk at Northampton's Delapré Park](#)

08/03/2022: Northants Life, [Packed programme of events now on offer at Northamptonshire's new wellbeing hub](#)

09/03/2022: Northampton Chronicle & Echo, [Storytelling classes, board games and book club now on offer at Northampton's new wellbeing hub](#)

12/03/2022: Northants Live, [Delapre Abbey launches community hub with new features](#)

16/03/2022: BBC Radio Northampton, [Live broadcast with Annabel Amos](#)

16/03/2022: BBC Radio Northampton. Drive Time Show, Laughter Workshop

05/04/2022: Northampton Chronicle & Echo, [Delapré Abbey in Northampton to host artwork in tribute to the NHS](#)

06/04/2022: Northants Life, [Artwork made in tribute to the NHS opens at Delapré Abbey this Friday](#)

06/04/2022: BBC Radio Northampton, [interview with Luke Jerram](#)

06/04/2022: Northants Live, [NHS tribute made from bed sheets unveiled in Northampton](#)

09/04/2022: BBC Radio Northampton, Interview with Richard, starts at 2:22

11/04/2022: BBC Radio Northampton, [Interview with Gabby, Wellbeing Festival](#)

11/04/2022: BBC Radio Northampton, Interview with Richard, social media content

19/04/2022: Northants Life, [A five-day festival is coming to you this April at Delapré Abbey with activities for the whole family](#)

20/04/2022: Northampton Chronicle & Echo, [Delapré Abbey to host five-day festival for the whole family this April](#)

04/05/2022: Northants Life, [Grief gatherings are set to take place around Northampton after two local businesses come together](#)

15/05/2022: BBC Radio 5 Live, [Volunteer Antoinette speaks about the programme](#)

