



NEIGHBOURHOOD AND PREVENTATIVE SUPPORT

Support that helps people thrive, nurtures inclusive communities and improves services and systems.

Why commission neighbourhood and preventative support?

In an increasingly disconnected society, building and nurturing connection has never been more important. With growing health inequalities, complexity of need, and demand upon our health and care systems, new approaches to neighbourhood-based, preventative support are needed.

Lots of public sector organisations already fund targeted prevention programmes and support for specific communities and needs. But sometimes a unified, whole-community approach is necessary when:

- You recognise that local people are unclear where to go for help and too often slip into crisis.
- You want to foster collaborative working and commissioning, and create connected, functional systems that work seamlessly together.
- You want to shift the focus of support to people's strengths, networks and communities and away from formal services as the default response to need.

The neighbourhood and preventative support we develop with councils is called Local Area Coordination.

The approach

Local Area Coordination is a form of neighbourhood and preventative support currently available to a population of a million people in over 100 different communities.

Local Area Coordinators are employed by councils and based in the local community they serve. They work without referral pathways, criteria or assessments processes. Instead, they start with an introduction and a conversation with people who need support, where trust begins to form.

By walking alongside people Local Area Coordinators get to know their strengths, existing supports and vision of a better life. Over time, strategies evolve and personal capacity to avert crises is built.

It's worth thinking about, before commissioning Local Area Coordination, whether you need to:

- Do some engagement, insights and coproduction work with communities?
- Run some courses or workshops for staff on strengths and asset-based working or neighbourhood health and wellbeing?

How we will work with you

We will start with an exploratory chat about your local context and the Local Area Coordinator model. From there, we can help with making the business case and can connect you with other areas to find out more.

Following further conversations with you and wider system partners, we will ask for a commitment to a funded development programme - guidance and support are provided by a dedicated expert from Community Catalysts over approximately 30 days, phased strategically over around 12 months.

All being well that development programme will lead to the recruitment of one or more Local Area Coordinators and your area will join the Local Area Coordination Network, with access to a wealth of ongoing support from peers and us.

What are the outcomes and impacts?

Independent evaluation and evidence shows that designing and implementing Local Area Coordination in a community helps:

- **People and families** find natural and local solutions first - leading to multiple health and wellbeing outcomes, increased sense of safety and sustained independence, increased confidence and reduced isolation.

- **Communities** have a bridge to the wider service system, helping groups access funding, enhance opportunities for co-production and develop new activity. Communities become more self-supporting places.
- **The service system** is brought closer together and benefits from greater insights and cost avoidance/reduction.

What the partnership needs from you

To successfully introduce Local Area Coordination partnering councils:

- Usually start small (in a few key locations) and build out from there as interest and input builds and buy-in from different directorates / organisations increases.
- Need a dedicated colleague in a relevant part of the system who we can work with to support operational development.
- Need to fund the costs of a Local Area Coordinator (basic salary is usually circa that of a qualified social worker).
- Pay for an initial Design and Development Partnership with Community Catalysts and an ongoing membership fee for the Local Area Coordinator Network.
- Are asked to share learning, knowledge, experience and resources and to commit to the principles, values, design and delivery of Local Area Coordination.

Quality assurance

To maintain the quality of Local Area Coordination we:

- Provide set-up and ongoing bespoke support to councils.
- Put in place annual detailed Local Area Coordination Network membership agreements.
- Adhere to core design features and principles of the approach.
- Establish, in each Local Area Coordination area, a Leadership Group to oversee the effective implementation and development of the programme. This group has representatives from local services and communities.

- Actively involve communities in the recruitment and induction of Local Area Coordinators.

To deepen the impact of Local Area Coordination we're always interested in:

- How individuals being supported by Local Area Coordinators can come together with local community groups and build greater connections and social capital.
- How the valuable insights which Local Area Coordinators gain in communities can be used to drive systems change and reform.

Our track record

Councils investing in Local Area Coordination range from London boroughs and city councils across England, to county councils covering mixed rural and urban areas:

- See more about those areas here: [Areas](#) | [LAC Network](#).
- Read more about the independent academic evaluations of Local Area Coordination in England and Wales here: [Our evidence](#) | [LAC Network](#).

Contact us

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